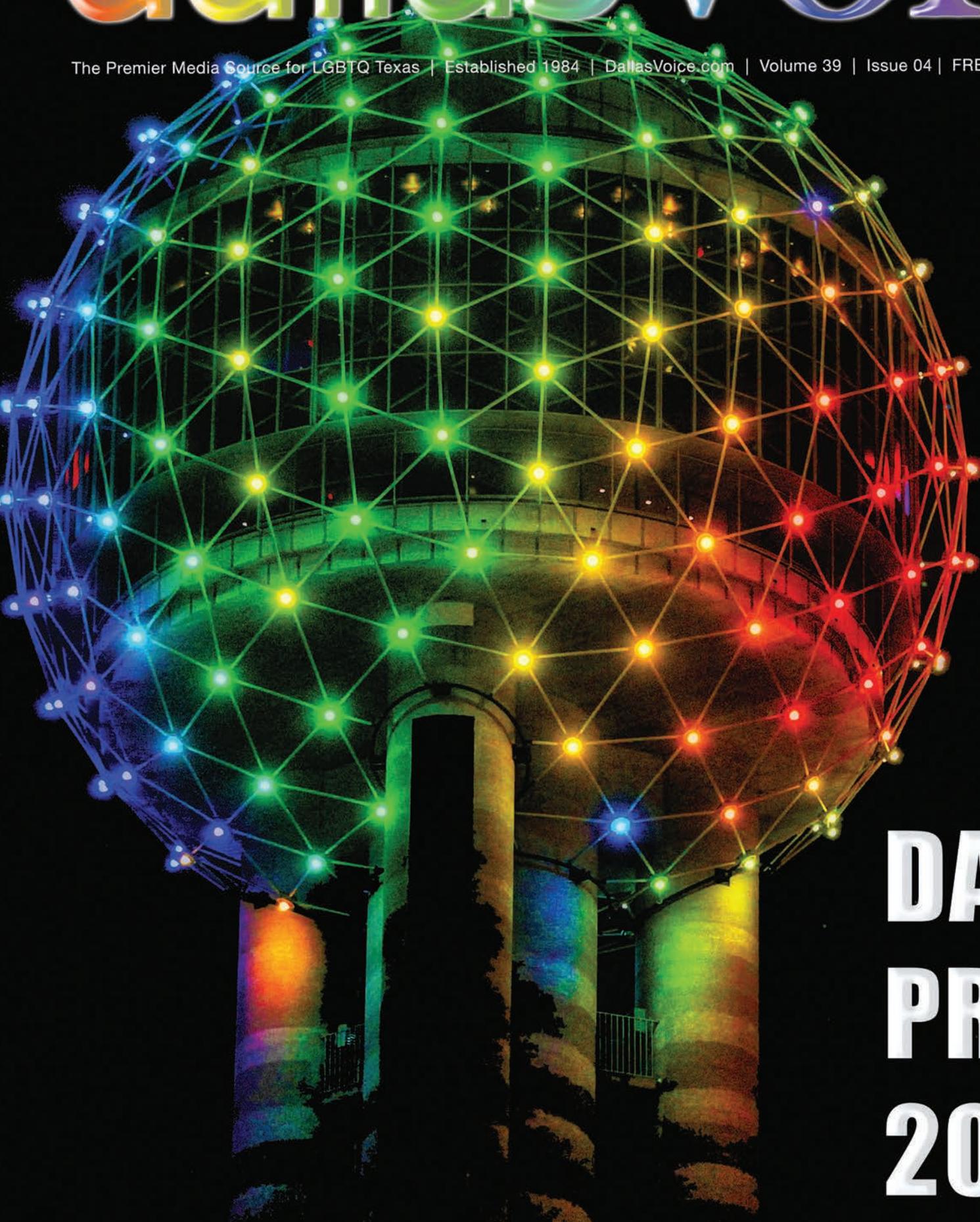


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PUBLISHER Leo Cusimano, leo@dallasvoice.com

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 | Larry The Fairy, DVtv Host

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR Linda Depriter, distribution@dallasvoice.com

FOUNDERS Robert Moore | Don Ritz

AFFILIATIONS | MEMBERSHIPS

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Pride flag flies over Love Field

The Dallas Pride flag was raised in a brief ceremony over Love Field, the first city-owned location to fly the Pride flag this year, on Wednesday, June 1, at 8 a.m. The ceremony was led by Council members Omar Narvaez and Jesse Moreno.

Narvaez reminded those attending that the council voted last year to make the city Pride flag the official flag of the city of Dallas each June. That flag was designed by Tracy Nanthavongsa and consists of the city of Dallas seal emblazoned over a traditional rainbow Pride flag.

Dallas is the only city with its own official Pride flag.

In his remarks at Love Field, Narvaez said Pride started out as a protest. While it's evolved into a celebration, the LGBTQ+ community is under attack right now — especially trans children and their families — and Pride is once again a protest, he said.

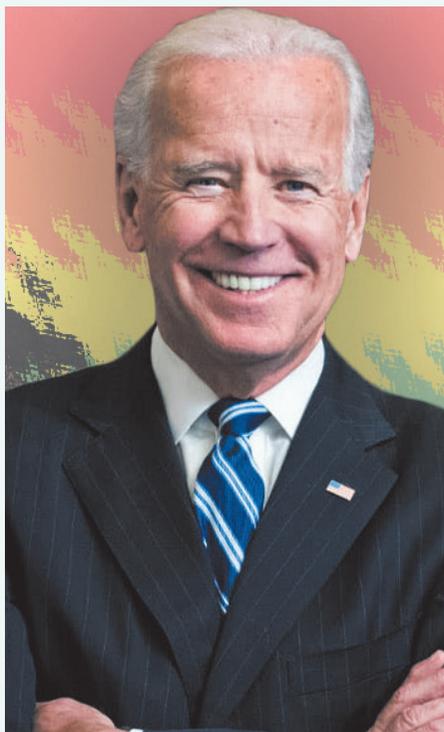
The flag was raised at Dallas Police headquarters at 11 a.m. and at Dallas City Hall Plaza at noon, Wednesday. Because of a delay in delivery of new flags, four flag raisings have been delayed until Friday — at the main library, DFR training facility on Dolphin Road, Dallas Executive Airport off Hampton Road and Fair Park.

— David Taffet

President Biden issues Pride Month proclamation

The White House on Tuesday, March 31, released President Joe Biden's proclamation honoring Pride Month and LGBTQ+ Americans. The proclamation begins:

"During Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex (LGBTQI+) Pride Month, we reflect on the progress we have made as a Nation in the fight for justice, inclusion, and equality while reaffirming our commitment to do more to support LGBTQI+ rights at home and abroad. I often say that America can be defined by one word: possibilities. This month, we celebrate generations of LGBTQI+ people who have fought to make the possibilities of our Nation real for every American.



"Today, the rights of LGBTQI+ Americans are under relentless attack. Members of the LGBTQI+ community — especially people of color and trans people — continue to face discrimination and cruel, persistent efforts to undermine their human rights."

The full proclamation is available at DallasVoice.com.

— Tammye Nash

March For Our Lives events set for June 11

In the 10-day span between May 14 and May 24, 32 people were murdered and 25 others injured in mass shootings in the U.S. Of those, 10 were killed and three injured while shopping at a supermarket in Buffalo, N.Y.; one was killed and five injured at a church gathering in Irvine, Calif., and 21 were murdered and 17 injured in



a mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.

Two of the shootings — Buffalo and Uvalde — were carried out by 18-year-old males armed with semi-automatic assault-style rifles. Two of the shootings — Buffalo and Irvine — were motivated by prejudice and hate.

On Saturday, June 11, hundreds of thousands of people are expected to participate in Washington, D.C., or in one of the many March For Our Lives events scheduled around the country to demand that our state and federal officials respond and find a way to effectively address this epidemic of gun violence.

You can find more information and a march near you, including marches in Dallas, Fort Worth, Frisco and Rowlett, at the March For Our Lives website, MarchForOurLives.com/March22.

— Tammye Nash

Old Parkland is expanding across Maple Avenue

Trammell Crow Holdings is expanding the nine-acre Old Parkland office campus across Maple Avenue.

Existing structures in the block bounded by Maple Avenue and Throckmorton, Fairmount and Reagan streets have been demolished. A restaurant along Maple Avenue and an apartment complex are in the process of being torn down.

An office building in the style of Old Parkland will replace them. The building will have a domed roof, according to plans that were submitted to the Oak Lawn Committee last summer. The maximum height of the building is 240 feet, the same height as the new clock tower that was recently completed on the main Old Parkland campus.

— David Taffet

See queer artist Romulo Martinez's exhibition before it closes this weekend

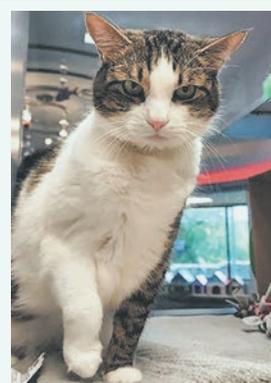
Daisha Board Gallery opened Romulo Martinez's one-man exhibition *Reflejos* in early May. The colorful collection of his works — many with rainbow-centric tones — will be on display through Saturday, June 4. Founded by Daisha Board, the West Dallas gallery works to feature under-represented artists such as BIPOC, differently-abled and LGBTQ+ creatives on its walls.

Martinez's show focuses on modular compositions where color captures feeling and drives dialogue in the form of mixed-media using various techniques such as drawing, painting, collage and silkscreen.

A closing reception will be held Saturday from 5-8 p.m. For more information, visit DaishaBoardGallery.com.

— Rich Lopez

Adoptable / RORY



Meet **Rory**, an older cat at the SPCA of Texas who is looking for a forever home. He is a domestic shorthair mix who is over 5 years old and weighs in at 17 pounds. He has white and gray fur with unique marking patterns. Rory came to the SPCA of Texas from another shelter after his original owner ran into landlord and insurance

issues surrounding his residency. He is a very strong-minded and particular cat who would prefer to be the only pet in the home. He has had issues in the past with becoming overstimulated and a calm, quiet home would be the best place for him. He would also love to have a home in which there are no children under the age of

15. He does very well with cat wands, and he has been declawed in his front paws. Rory is waiting at the Rees-Jones Animal Care Center for his forever home.

Adult dogs and cats normally have a \$75 adoption fee from the SPCA of Texas. Puppies and kittens under the age of six months are \$150. Adoption fees vary for small mammals, equestrian and livestock. Fee includes spay/neuter surgery, age-appropriate vaccinations, a heartworm test for dogs six months and older and a FIV/FelV test for cats four months and older, initial flea/tick preventative and heartworm preventative, a microchip, 30 days of PetHealth Insurance provided by PetHealth, a free 14-day wellness exam with VCA Animal Hospitals, a rabies tag and a free leash. The Jan-Rees Jones Animal Care Center is open for adoptions every day from noon-6 p.m. and is located at 2400 Lone Star Drive in Dallas. Animals are available by walk-in on a first-come, first-served basis. Appointments are also available for select animals. Please browse available animals at SPCA.org/FindAPet and visit SPCA.org/DogAdopt to inquire about a dog or SPCA.org/CatAdopt to inquire about a cat.

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Prepping for summer with your pets

WOOF! DR. JOSH TALKS TO THE ANIMALS



Summer is here and so is my monthly column, so welcome back! As you know, our Texas summers have unforgiving temperatures that can be life-threatening to our dogs and cats. For this month's column, I would like to discuss tips for basic pet care during the summer.



Dr. Josh
Woof

Texas heat in the summer is no joke. Imagine walking around barefoot on hot concrete; that is how it feels for our babies. Ideally, you should avoid walking your dog (or cat, if leash trained) during the hotter times of the day. I recommend going on walks early in the morning or later at night, after sunset. If you are unsure of how hot the ground may be, you can touch it with your own hand or foot to see if it is bearable or not. You can also have your baby wear boots when walking outside, although many dogs will walk funny or not walk at all when you put boots on them the first time.

A very nice way to cool off is enjoying some pool or lake time. If this is something that your baby enjoys, make sure to consider the use of sunscreen for light-colored pups and short-haired fur babies. There are sunscreen products for pets, but if you elect to use a product for humans, avoid products that clearly warn against ingestion, as pets may lick the lotion off their skin.

The areas where they would need the most protection are going to be the bridge of the nose, lips, paws, ears and belly (areas with no hair or little hair). Please remember to apply regularly, as you would with yourself.

While it may seem like a common sense, rule, it bears repeating: DO NOT EVER leave your pet inside your car without AC, not even for a minute, even if you crack the windows! This one is a big no-no, as it gets really hot very quickly inside the car. It is also very important to always have water available at all times for your babies, especially during the summer.

Summer would not be summer without our big holiday: Fourth of July. Needless to say, many pets are terrified of fireworks, so it is important to manage and prevent those phobias. Consulting an animal behaviorist is always recommended, but there are some products out there that you may try, even in

combination. The most popular and effective options are ThunderShirt, Zylkene nutritional supplement and Adaptil (for dogs) or Feliway (for cats) products.

These are the more holistic approaches to help with fear of fireworks. But if none of these work, consider asking your veterinarian for a prescription that can help your baby.

Part of having an amazing summer is having social gatherings that include our furry loved ones. Because there are so many diseases and parasites out there, it is important to make sure your babies have their annual or bi-annual check-ups with their veterinarian.

I am not a fan at all of vaccinating every dog and cat against everything, as lifestyles determine exposure to certain diseases and parasites. However, a conversation with your veterinarian will help you determine what would be the best plan for your pet. It is also important to make sure your babies are on flea, tick, and heartworm prevention year round, especially during the warmer months of the year.

These are just some of the basic things to be aware of in order to provide better care to our babies. If you have a veterinarian, feel free to consult with her or him to help you develop a plan of action that will ensure the best care for your pup or kitty during the summer. If you do not have a veterinarian, do not hesitate to contact my hospital, as I would love to be part of that plan of action for your baby.

Let the summer start, and let us enjoy it safely with our furry loved ones! Abrazos, mi gente!

Dr. Josh owns Isla Veterinary Boutique Hospital at 14380 Marsh Lane, Ste. 110, in Addison (next to Tom Thumb). You can call him at 972-738-1111 or visit IslaVet.com.

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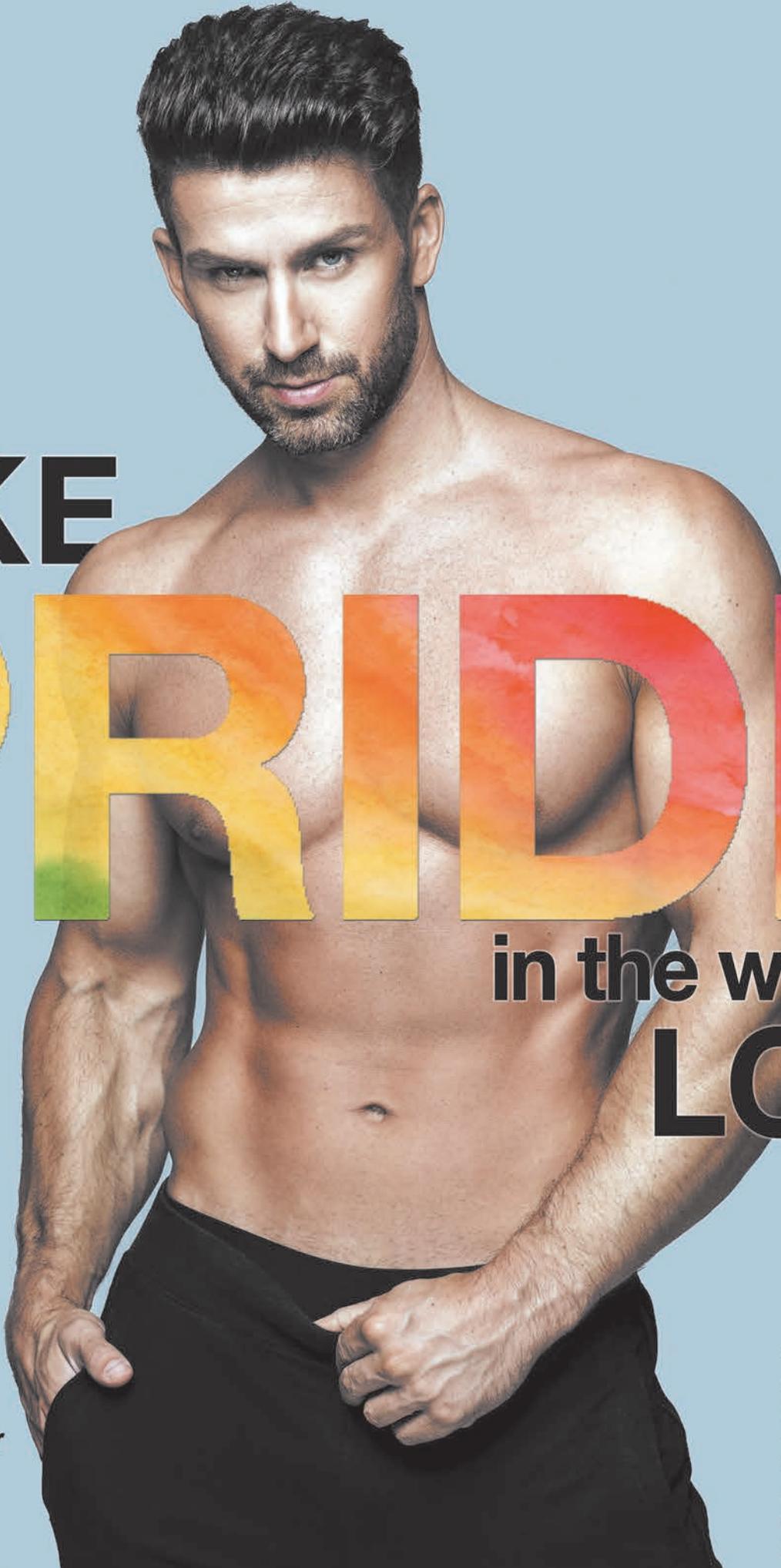
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VOICES

OPINIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY

We're here; we're queer, we belong!

Stop sanitizing Pride to make it acceptable and 'normal'

From the early days of Pride parades in Dallas, the discussion of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable has been a hot topic. I distinctly remember the Pride committee debating the appearance of drag queens and leather folk in the parade and the "problematic image" those groups might project.

In other words, "We don't want to scare the straight people."

It seems silly now, since the appearance of both leather and drag have become integral to the parades. And yet the discussion has surfaced once again: "Does kink belong at Pride?"

I guess that all depends on your view of what the queers at the Stonewall Inn were rebelling against.

In the sanitized view, they were standing up for equal rights against an oppressive society. In the real world, they were a group of people who were tired of being exploited by organized crime and demonized and brutalized by corrupt police.

They were hardly a respectable bunch, at least in the sense that they didn't look or act like the heteronormative world around them. They shocked the media and the police by fighting



Hardy Haberman
Flagging Left

back. They were un-abashedly queer and transgender and far from a bunch of politically savvy activists. They were just young people

who didn't fit any particular mold who were tired of being pushed into the shadows. And they rebelled! We celebrate that rebellion and that rebellious spirit every year, yet we continue to "tone it down" and, in the case of Dallas, to make Pride "family friendly."

Just whose family are we trying to appease?

My family includes transgender, drag, leather and outwardly queer folks who want just one day a year to celebrate our "differentness" and be proud of who we are. That includes a lot of leather folk who are proud to put on their leathers and brave the Dallas heat to march in an event that has been pushed out of the gayborhood and into

the lovely, if isolated, venue of Fair Park.

It must make the developers in Oak Lawn happy. No longer will there be a



disruption to the gentrification of what was a vital neighborhood and center of LGBTQ life in Dallas.

Beyond the exiling of Pride to Fair Park, the idea that kink and leather do not belong at Pride is offensive. Leather folk are unafraid to wear their sexuality as an outward sign of that same spirit of rebellion that started the whole Pride thing to begin with.

LGBTQ people who want to just blend in and look and act like ev-

eryone else have a right to be at Pride, but they do not have a right to coerce those who don't, won't or can't pass as straight into invisibility. We have a right to celebrate our differences just one day a year without being intimidated into hiding our culture and our sexuality.

One damned day!

So if you are afraid of the "impression" seeing leather folk, drag queens, gender non-conforming and other queer people out in the daylight celebrating who they are might make, then stay away. If you are

worried about how to explain the guy in a harness or the man dressed like Devine to your kids, take it as a teaching moment.

Give them a chance to see that the world is far more diverse and wonderful than they ever thought. It might even give them permission to express their own sexuality more freely when the time comes.

If we are not proud of our queerness, our sexuality, our otherness, then what are we marching about? ■

Hardy Haberman is a longtime local LGBT activist and chairperson of the Woodhull Freedom Alliance board. Read his blog at DungeonDiary.blogspot.com.

Be authentic

A message for advertisers that want to effectively reach the LGBTQ consumer

TODD EVANS | Rivendell Media



Todd Evans
Rivendell Media

It is all you hear about these days: authenticity. Everyone wants to be authentic in their advertising campaigns and efforts, yet why do so many fall short? Of course, I am focused on the LGBTQ market and consumer, but certainly it is the same with other niche markets.

We all want the same thing: to be accepted — as a

customer, as a consumer and, well, as a person. We all want to be heard. Everyone is a certain slice of the pie that companies want, and they want as many pieces as possible. They want the teenager, the senior, the Black consumer, the LGBTQ consumer, the new mom — you get the idea.

Everyone is something at some point, and the trick for any company is connecting with that consumer at the right time in the right place with the right message.

No matter your message or timing, it all starts with showing up in the right place. To reach the LGBTQ consumer, that means showing up in LGBTQ-specific media, LGBTQ-owned and -operated media in particular.

Makes sense, right? Show up in the most authentic place for the market, and no matter your market, there is always a media outlet by and for that slice of life.

With so much media today to choose from, you can't always reach everyone in a community in the same way. Some LGBTQ consumers don't have access to LGBTQ media, and so maybe they get your message through television or digitally. But without a doubt, any authentic campaign should be based in "the" community's media and grow from there. By doing so, you know you are starting out on the right foot, and as everyone knows, a solid foundation is always the first step.

It all sounds so simple. And, really, it is simple. But the LGBTQ market's own

media is mostly local, and even our national media does not have the large circulations that other minority markets have — like People En Español or Essence. We also do not have any national radio or television networks, so it takes some digging.

I find that today so many don't do the research necessary to base their campaigns in LGBTQ-owned and -operated media — because it takes work. Most of these media outlets are not listed in the same places other larger media properties are listed. But for those that do their homework, it gives instant credibility. When I see national ads in top local LGBTQ titles, I know immediately they have done their homework.

Also, for those less versed in advertising or marketing, the person seeing the ad knows immediately that this company, product or service is speaking to them directly. A friend told me once: "When I see a national ad in 'our' national media, I know they are reaching

out to 'us,' but when I see that ad in my local LGBTQ media outlet, I know they are speaking to 'me.'"

Folks, that's what it's all about.

So, if you want to be authentic, base your campaign in media by and for the community you are pursuing. First off, every media property of the community you are pursuing is going to want your efforts to be successful, so immediately you will know if you have your messaging wrong or something is off or even if it is wonderful.

Second, sometimes a campaign to, say, the LGBTQ community can be news itself, and if so, you may have your first free editorial and a basis for a conversation and a relationship.

Third, as you move to other venues, perhaps TV or Instagram, you have the foundational step of being able to tell your consumers your campaign is based within the community itself.

Authenticity 101.

This year, as Pride comes back in per-

son and people are starting to carefully step out again into the world, I think everyone everywhere should be careful that their messages are based in the foundational media of the group they want to reach.

Even if a last-minute COVID surge or something equally disastrous were to happen, your messaging will still be in the right starting place. During these past two years when Pride was not in person, all LGBTQ media still had their Pride issues and still covered what was important to "us."

The question now is: Will your messaging show up in an authentic way where your target is expecting it to be? ■

Todd Evans is president and CEO of Rivendell Media, America's leading LGBTQ media placement firm which represents 95 percent of all LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS media in the United States and Canada. He currently resides in Mountainside, N.J., and can be reached at todd@rivendell-media.com or 908-232-2021, ext 210.

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Living loud, living proud

PRIDE 2022

Dallas Pride returns in force with a weekend full of in-person celebrations

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

Dallas Pride returns to a full weekend of in-person celebration at Fair Park this weekend, with the Miller Lite Music Festival kicking off at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 4, followed at 2 p.m. on Sunday, with the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade.

This year's theme, noted Dallas Pride Executive Director Jaron Turnbow, is Live Out Proud, and it has two meanings: "We should always Live Out Proud as an LGBTQ community, but we can now also Live Out Proud by coming together again after two years of mostly isolation from each other."

Turnbow said that he has been very encouraged by the enthusiasm he has seen building over the last few months as organizers have been putting the final touches on planning for the 39th Dallas Pride events. "I have heard so much excitement in literally every communication about how ready and happy everyone is to be able to gather for an in-person Pride again," he said. "We need the kind of togetherness that this one weekend brings every year for every age, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and subculture — including our amazing allies.

"It's going to be the biggest year yet."

In 2019, Turnbow had just stepped into Michael Doughman's enormous shoes as executive director of Dallas Pride, and the celebration had been switched not only from Oak Lawn to Fair Park but also from September to the first week in June. It was a year of huge changes, but organizers were excited about the first Pride in Fair Park and were already looking forward to 2020, armed with all



Dallas Pride Executive Director Jaron Turnbow, second from left, and members of the Dallas Pride Committee (Photo courtesy of Dallas Pride)

the experience of 2019 and a good foundational idea of what worked best and what needed to be tweaked next time around.

And then came COVID-19. The pandemic forced the cancellation of Pride in 2020, with the committee putting together a virtual Pride party that streamed in July. In 2021, as the COVID delta variant again squashed plans, organizers offered a drastic re-imagining of Pride, holding an in-person event but replacing the traditional festival-one-day-parade-the-next format with a two-night stage show at the Fair Park Coliseum, with COVID safety protocols firmly in place.

Throughout last year, the pandemic continued to ebb and flow, with new variants popping up regularly, leaving Pride organizers up in the air as to whether Dallas could return to a traditional Pride this year. Because of the lingering uncertainty, Turnbow said, organizers have been left scrambling, trying to put a whole year's worth of work into just a few months.

And because of that, he added, rather than evolving and expanding plans this year, the Pride committee's top priority for 2021 has been just making sure the events happen.

"But," Turnbow said, "having to go virtual and figure out how to stream Pride in 2020 and 2021 brought us a slew of ideas for future years. We have certainly learned some new skills over the last couple of years, and we will be implementing those in 2023, once we have regained our footing."

The COVID pandemic has seemed to be waning over the last few months, and yet, new variants continue to pop up, and the rate of new infections has begun to rise again in some areas. Because of that, Turnbow said, organizers will absolutely "remain vigilant" in terms of COVID-19 awareness and prevention measures.

Turnbow said uncertainty over what would happen had initially slowed registrations by vendors for this year's Miller Lite Music Festival, but as deadlines neared and people realized Pride would be happening — and soon — registrations picked up considerably.

"We already have a ton of new vendors that we've never had before," Turnbow said, adding that organizers anticipated reaching or even surpassing 2019's record high 150 entries in the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade by the time the parade steps off on Sunday.

Despite the hectic schedule — something that always happens in the last days before Pride but made even more hectic by the uncertainties and delays of the last year — Turnbow said he is excited and ready to see how this year's events play out.

"I think people need to know how much this community is loved — how much we love each other and how much our allies love us," he said. "It brings tears to my eyes to hear from so many of our allies about how excited they are for us as a community to be able to celebrate in-person again and to be able to stand with us side by side. It truly is inspiring.

"It reminds me," Turnbow continued, "that the fire within our community and among our allies is spreading. People need to know that it's going to be a great year for Pride. Let's get out there and Live Out Proud!"

THE MILLER LITE MUSIC FESTIVAL

North Texas native and drag performer extraordinaire Shangela will be headlining the Live Out Proud show at the Miller Lite Music Festival on Saturday.

Shangela, who is from Paris, Texas, and last fall received Black Tie Dinner's inaugural Vanguard Award, first came to national attention on *RuPaul's Drag Race* Season 2 then again on Season 3 and on *Drag Race All Stars 3*. She appeared in the award-winning 2018 movie *A Star is Born* with Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper, and later went on to star in two seasons of the inspirational and award-winning HBO series *We're Here* with Eureka O'Hara and Bob The Drag Queen.

This is Shangela's first appearance at Dallas Pride since becoming one of the best known drag performers in the world.

Local drag entertainers performing in the show will be Jada Pinkett Fox, the Sisters-in-Action, Sister Helen Holy and A'keria C. Davenport, another local performer who gained national acclaim thanks to *Drag Race*.

Honoring Don



Dallas Pride 2022 is dedicated to the late Don Maison

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

The Dallas Pride Committee has dedicated the 2022 Dallas Pride celebration to Don Maison, the attorney who carried the battle for LGBTQ equality into the courts in the late 1970s and through the 1980s before taking over as executive director of the agency then known as the PWA Coalition of Dallas (now known as AIDS Services of Dallas) in 1989.

When Maison retired as president and CEO of AIDS Services of Dallas at the beginning of 2019 after 32 years as head of the organization, he was the longest-serving head of an AIDS service organization in the country. He died on Feb. 21 this year following a long illness and a short battle with esophageal cancer.

Maison's first big battle in the fight for LGBTQ equality was when he represented several men arrested during a 1979 Dallas police raid on a gay bar called Village Station, then located at the corner of Throckmorton and Cedar Springs. Maison used one of the arresting officers' sworn testimony — he said that while standing near the bar's entrance he had seen men touching each other on the dance floor — to bust the prosecution's

case, using a copy of the bar's floor plan to prove that the officer was lying because they could not possibly have seen the dance floor from where they said they had been standing. He was also the attorney for Gregory Wilson, the man who sued Southwest Airlines when Wilson applied for a job as a flight attendant only to be told he was "the wrong sex" for the job. The class action employment lawsuit *Wilson v. Southwest Airlines* eventually guaranteed that the airline would hire men as flight attendants and ticket agents.

As head of AIDS Services of Dallas, Maison helped focus the agency on providing housing for people impacted by HIV/AIDS, becoming a national leader in the area of housing for people with HIV/AIDS within just a couple of years. He led ASD through continued growth, starting with purchasing and renovating a facility known as Ewing House and including Revlon House, Hillcrest House and Spencer Gardens. Shortly before his retirement at the beginning of 2019, Maison and his team acquired another small apartment complex down the street from the other facilities. ASD broke ground on that renovation just weeks before the COVID pandemic hit and everything was locked down. The project was further delayed a year later by a fire that destroyed one of the two buildings and damaged the other.

Work on that property is underway now under the direction of his successor, Traswell Livingston, and it will become part of Maison's ASD legacy.

Leading the way

2020's grand marshals return for their day in the sun

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

In 2020, for the first time since 1982, Dallas' Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade and the annual Festival in the Park, planned for the first weekend in June, were cancelled as Texas continued to see record or near-record numbers of new COVID-19 cases daily. In addition, most of the attention of our country, including here in North Texas continued, rightfully so, to be focused on the ongoing protests happening across the nation in the wake of George Floyd.

Dallas did celebrate Pride that year with a virtual party in late July. And even without an in-person parade, Pride needs grand marshals. But instead of submitting a list of nominees to the community for a vote as in the past, in 2020 the Dallas Pride committee decided to name the top six nominees — seven actually, because "one" nominee was a couple who have dedicated their lives together to helping the community — as 2020 Dallas Pride Co-Grand Marshals.

Since there was no Pride parade in Dallas in 2021, thanks again to the COVID pandemic, this weekend's celebration will see Dallas' first Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade since 2019. And since those seven co-grand marshals from 2020 never had the chance to mark that honor by appearing in a parade, Dallas Pride Executive Director Jaron Turnbow explained, the Pride committee opted to name them as co-grand marshals for 2022 and give them their day in the sun.

So this year's grand marshals are, listed in alphabetical order, Danny Cabrera (aka Liquor Mini), David Hearn, Bill Lindsey and his husband, the late Michael Champion (aka Linze Serrell and Sable Alexander), James Love (aka Cassie Nova), Adam Medrano and Kristi Wilson.



Danny Cabrera, aka Liquor Mini

Danny Cabrera has been a flight attendant for American Airlines for 24 years and helps organize events with the American Airlines PRIDE Employee Business Resource Group, appearing in 2018 as one of the six drag queens representing American Airlines on the main stage at the D.C. Pride festival. In 2019, on the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, Cabrera was the captain for the drag queens in the March for World Pride in New York City, and he was one of the drag queen crew members for American's history-making Pride Flight from Philadelphia to New York City LaGuardia Airport.

Cabrera volunteers with the Wings Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization that helps American Airlines flight attendants in need, and with several other organizations including co-chair for Lip Sync Dallas. He describes himself as "a proud member of the Dallas recovery community." And he is the resort director for VACAYA, an LGBTQ travel company that charters cruises and resort destination vacations, and the lead flight crew drag queen member for FABSTAYZ, a company specializing in vacation rentals that are safe and friendly for the LGBTQ travelers. He hosts regular drag brunch events at Reservoir at the Toyota Music Factory and performs at other drag events around the DFW Metroplex.

David Hearn



David Hearn moved to North Texas in 1988 when he was transferred to the JCPenney Corporate Office in Plano. He worked at the corporate headquarters for

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Having a ball

PRIDE 2022



David Hearn, left with a friend at the 2019 Miller Lite Music Festival (Photo courtesy of Dallas Pride)

MetroBall returns after 2 years, with Tiffany as headliner, to kick off Pride Weekend

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

Organizers of MetroBall, the dance party that is the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund signature fundraising event each year, were all set to celebrate the party's 15th anniversary the first weekend of June in 2020. Eighties superstar Tiffany was on board to headline a line-up of first-rate entertainers, and tickets were selling like hotcakes.

Then came COVID-19, and by the end of March 2020, everything was shut down and everyone was huddling in quarantine. MetroBall — along with just about every other event folks had been looking forward to for Pride Month — was cancelled.

Organizers were disappointed but not deterred. They set their sights on

June 2021 and confirmed that Tiffany and other entertainers could be there for the party then. But disappointment hit again when, as June 2021 rolled around and the COVID delta variant rolled out. Out of an abundance of caution, organizers again cancelled the party.

But now it's 2022. The pandemic, while not over, has been muted thanks to vaccinations and boosters. And MetroBall is coming back with a vengeance, with Tiffany still on board as headliner, joined now by dance queens Martha Wash and Thea Austin as well as local favorite Chris Chism.

And organizers are excited and ready to hit the dance floor on Friday night.

"We are excited about MetroBall coming back, and we know people are ready to get out and get back to a new normal," said GDMAF and MetroBall organizer David Hearn. "We are expecting a large crowd this year. Ticket sales and sponsorships, even in this environment of coming out of COVID, have increased. And we picked up a new liquor sponsor, Pride Vodka, to help with the event.

"We are also excited to work with Dal-

METROBALL. Page 26

Tiffany returns

PRIDE 2022

Pop star headlines MetroBall's 15th anniversary

Tiffany Darwish, known to her legion of fans simply as Tiffany, has been singing since she first learned the words to Tanya Tucker's hit, "Delta Dawn."

Although she started out singing country music — she was "discovered" in the early 1980s by Hoyt Axton who took her to Nashville — it's as a pop star that she

Ky., for a concert at the ECU Center for the Arts).

Despite her hectic schedule, Tiffany took time recently to answer a couple of questions for Dallas Voice in advance of her show here tonight.

— Rich Lopez

Dallas Voice: How does it feel to return to Dallas to play MetroBall? Tiffany: It feels wonderful to return to the MetroBall. Last time, in 2016, was a blast, and this time we're gonna have even more fun!

How have LGBTQ audiences been for you throughout your years as a



found fame.

Tiffany released her first, eponymously-named album in 1987 and in 1988, her second single from the album, a cover of the 1960s hit "I Think We're Alone Now," hit number one on the Billboard Hot 100 list. That was followed up with two more giant hits — "Could've Been" and "I Saw Him Standing There" — which helped her set a record as the youngest female artist to top the Billboard charts with a debut album.

Tiffany has released at least one album in each decade since then, and these days she tours with her own band (after her Friday night, June 3 show at MetroBall in here in Dallas, she heads to Richmond,

performer? I love all shows, but my gay audiences are very special to me. I feel with my music, especially the retro stuff, those audiences really enjoy the shows. Most of us grew up together, and a lot of my early songs are about young love, feeling awkward, being scared and finding who you are. So a lot of true stories and real life played out to those songs.

Do you feel like any one song of yours (single or not) has either resonated with your gay fans more than others and why is that? I think some of the ballads, like "Could've Been" or "All This Time," these are songs that still hit hard. Love that didn't work out is hard on anyone at any age and any gender it never gets easier to go through love unwanted or broken.

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On the board

EDUCATION

Out candidate Ileana Garza-Rojas placed first among 5 candidates for a seat on CFBISD board

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Ileana Garza-Rojas was elected to the Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD school board earlier this month when she placed first among the five candidates running. Voters were tasked with selecting three out of five people running, and Garza-Rojas brought in the most votes of any of the five.

Her victory makes her the first openly-LGBTQ person elected to the CFBISD board.

Garza-Rojas grew up in Garland. She is a first generation American who learned English when she attended public school. She and her wife, a NICU nurse, have lived in Farmers Branch for more than a decade, and they have two children — 4 and 7 years old.

Garza-Rojas said she got involved in the school board race after participating in a program called Leader and Me. Although the city is 60 percent Latinx, she said, she was the only Latina who took part.

"I was just a volunteer and a mom," she said of her involvement. But others saw things differently: "You're involved," they told her.

Not only has she been involved at her son's school, Garza-Rojas also been an active CASA volunteer. CASAs are court appointed special advocates who are assigned a child who has experienced abuse or neglect and is in the custody of Child Protective Services. CASAs help caseworkers, who Garza-Rojas said are overwhelmed with work.

She has worked with more than 10 kids, Garza-Rojas said, and each case takes about a year. So she brings a special skill to her new position as school board member. "I know how to work



Ileana Garza-Rojas

with at-risk kids," she said.

Garza-Rojas said working as a CASA "can make a difference in one child's life." But what happens when politics gets mixed up in the process? "Now they're working with trans kids?" she questioned. "What?"

So based on her experience, Garza-Rojas decided to run for the school board. And she was, she said, the only candidate who looked like that 60 percent of the city's residents.

Noting that one of the two candidates who didn't make the cut in this election CFBISD board incumbent, Garza-Rojas suggested the voters may have been signaling that they are ready for some change.

CFBISD has 26,000 students in 24 elementary schools, six middle schools, five high schools and three special learning centers. About 35 percent of the district's students are native English speakers, while 55 other languages are spoken at home by the rest of the district's stu-

dents. About 11 percent of the district is white, and more than half is Hispanic.

Garza-Rojas talked about what change might look like at CFBISD, and even offering some "radical" ideas — like letting school librarians do their jobs and allowing them to choose books appropriate for the children in their schools.

"I trust our librarians to do their job," she said. "We do them a disservice when we remove books. This takes away opportunities and different points of view."

After all, Garza-Rojas said, the point of a public education is to let students learn to see the world from different perspectives.

After the massacre at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde on May 24, the security and safety of students and teachers is her top priority, Garza-Rojas said, noting that the only way anything will get done is if all sides work together to come up with solutions.

Her school district, she continued, may have an advantage over some oth-

ers. Since CFBISD covers not just Carrollton and Farmers Branch but also parts of Irving, Addison, Coppell and Dallas, she hopes police resources for each of those cities will collaborate.

As for the safety of LGBTQ students, Garza-Rojas said she hopes to talk to the district's high school principals about where the schools stand with gay-straight alliances. The district established an Equity and Equality Task Force, indicating they're already moving in the right direction, she said.

Should a "Don't Say Gay" law come Texas' way next session, Garza-Rojas said that would interfere with her son being allowed to talk about his two moms. Her son's teacher told her he proudly talks about his moms in class all the time now. And recently, when his cub scout troop was delivering flags for the holiday, she saw that for herself. When one child commented that it was weird that he had two moms, her son responded: "Hey! Don't you talk about my family that way."

Garza-Rojas said public school is a place where kids should be exposed to a little bit of everything, because, after all, "It's where you learn to be a better citizen."

On the campaign trail, Garza-Rojas said, she ran into people on all sides of issues, and she learned to listen and take in all viewpoints. Her response, she noted, was often, "I appreciate your perspective."

She was, she added, "elected to represent everyone," even the voter who called her a "liberal, pot-smoking lesbian," and the one who thought school librarians were letting children read pornography.

"Pornography?" she responded. "My kids are reading *Curious George*."

As for any future political aspirations, Garza-Rojas said, "I want to just see how this plays out." ■

Garza-Rojas was due to be sworn in on June 2. This interview took place before she took office, so she made it clear at that time, "My individual comments don't reflect the views of the Carrollton Farmers Branch Independent School District."

A TIP FROM A
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Brian, age 45, California

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The Summer of LifeWalk

RAISING MONEY

Previously a 5K run/walk, LifeWalk is transitioning to a summer of events

Events that have been gone for two years are back, and it's great to see them return. But the pandemic provided a lot of time to rethink some events, and LifeWalk is one of them. The Prism Health North Texas fundraiser, which for years has been a 5k walk/run for charity, is definitely coming back, but it's coming back in a new format, organizers have announced.

The Summer of LifeWalk is a series of events that continue the 32-year tradition of raising money for the area's largest HIV-care provider as well as a group of partners. It's just raising that money now in different ways

Until now, LifeWalk was a 5k walk, usually through Oak Lawn and Uptown. For several years, the walk was routed through downtown and even included a detour through Neiman Marcus. But this year, Prism Health hopes to reach more of the community with its new multi-event format.

The Summer of LifeWalk kicks off with Marketpalooza & Pub Crawl. The event begins on June 19 at 11 a.m. in the Caven parking lot behind 4001 Cedar Springs Road. Marketpalooza will feature 30 local vendors and artisans selling their wares, PHNTX staff offering resources to attendees and a DJ providing the music.

Once attendees have shopped, they can use their Pub Crawl passports at participating bars and restaurants along the strip, visiting stations operated by different Prism Health departments. Participants will be entered into drawings for gift cards, a hotel stay and round-trip airfare.

Then participants are encouraged to enter a number of events organized by both longtime and newly-minted LifeWalk teams and to volunteer during the Gay Softball World Series that Dallas will host later in the summer.



Above, Team Clover Open has long been one of the most popular pre-LifeWalk team events. Now it is one of the major events in the Summer of LifeWalk. (Photo courtesy of Prism Health North Texas). Left, Lining up a shot in the Team Clover Open, which this year is one of the major events in the Summer of LifeWalk. (Photo courtesy of Prism Health North Texas) and Terry Walker, below

"We look forward to seeing familiar faces and a lot of Health Event Manager Terry Walker said. "We encourage our attendees to sign up for fundraising as a team with friends or coworkers."



On July 9, LifeWalk Brunch begins at 11 a.m. at Roy G's, 4001 Cedar Springs Road. Then the annual Team Clover Open takes place along the Strip on Aug. 20.

The Summer of LifeWalk concludes with the annual Miss LifeWalk pageant on Sept 25 in the Rose Room. Along with announcing the 17th Miss LifeWalk, the

new ones too on top fundraiser of the season will be announced during that pageant. —from staff reports



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Foreclosed

FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION

A couple charges that a local bank has conspired to take their land and that homophobia is at the heart of the bank's case

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Mark Mattlage said his land in Crawford has been in his family since 1883. But now the bank has foreclosed on the property, and Mattlage charges homophobia was involved.

Mattlage said his grandfather purchased the ranch through the Texas Land Grant program, and, Mattlage explained, that through that program, his grandfather could only close on the property after the fourth year of farming it. So the family's actual ownership of the land maybe only dates back to 1887.

In 1941, ownership of the farm passed to his parents. And in 2005, Mattlage and his husband, Rob Snowden, who have been together for 42 years, began the process of purchasing the land from his parents.

"Dad was in failing health," Mattlage said, adding that his father passed away before they could complete the transaction. But his mother was still alive, although no longer living on the property.

Mattlage said his brother assumed he was going to just inherit the property, so he sued to stop the purchase. Mattlage prevailed in that lawsuit, but the case took four years and went as high as the state Supreme Court, he said.

The property is quite valuable because the farmland is watered by a spring-fed creek that Mattlage said he's never seen dry. Over the last 20 years, it's become even more valuable because of its location — about four properties away from the ranch owned by former President George W. Bush.

Mattlage's mortgage was held by a lo-

cal bank, TFNB/Your Bank for Life. He said his family's relationship with that bank or its predecessors goes back 130 years.

"My grandfather's money went into building that bank," he said. "I trusted them."

But, he claims, the bank was after the property because of its value. Mattlage said the bank's current president's

and holiday customers, a hostel and a rec center. He had plans to add a 40-person restaurant and bar and 12 transient and six permanent RV pads, as well.

The final loan Mattlage and Snowden needed from the bank was \$32,000 to complete the septic system that, he said, was already 95 percent finished and was necessary to complete the RV sites and the restaurant and bar.

Mattlage that he declare bankruptcy. That would delay the bank getting its hands on the property, but ensure they get it in the long run. The bank CEO told him, "That'll give you time, but the judge will rule in our favor and we will get the farm."

Mattlage and Snowden filed suit after the bank tried to foreclose. The state court denied a jury trial and ruled in



grandfather was after Mattlage's grandfather to sell him the property a century ago. But his grandfather wouldn't sell.

Now the bank had a way to get the property — through foreclosure — and Mattlage believes bank officers' homophobia is adding impetus to that effort.

After securing the property more than a decade ago, Mattlage said he got the idea to turn part of the land into a men's resort. He borrowed money from TFNB to build a 3,800-square-foot pool house, a replica of the original house with five apartments to be rented out to weekend

"The bank denied us the last \$32,000, which would have generated about \$14,000 income per month," Mattlage said. In other words, that final piece of the loan would have been repaid quickly.

"The bank CEO knew the restaurant would have put us over the top," Mattlage said. "But he wanted the property himself."

Mattlage said he was told this by people who work at the bank, but who are not willing to testify because they are afraid of being fired.

The bank CEO even suggested to Mat-

tlage the bank's favor. Every brief the bank filed included wording referring to the property as the "homosexual resort" or the "homosexual nudist camp," which it never was, Mattlage said.

The bank is a federally-chartered national bank, and Mattlage filed bankruptcy, which falls within federal jurisdiction, so Mattlage said the case belongs in federal court, and he has a suit pending.

At this point, Mattlage is awaiting two rulings. From the federal court, he's waiting to hear if the court will put the case under federal jurisdiction. From a



state court in Waco, he's waiting to hear if the judge will order a jury trial.

The property is worth between \$1-3 million more than what the couple owes on the mortgage and in attorney's fees. And Matlage said, he's been advised that the bank keeps any profit from the sale of property after a foreclosure above and beyond the actual debt.

Matlage said the man who is president and CEO of the bank has been removed from his position but remains chairman. He claims the bank is under investigation by the FBI for falsification of records and that there's false information in his bank records and possibly

forged documents.

On April 4, the bank did complete its repossession of the property, which Matlage claims is also illegal because of the pending fraud lawsuit as well as the bankruptcy. The couple is currently living in a cottage on an adjoining, but separate, tract of land. ■

On Monday, June 6, several friends — including Nestor Estrada and Joe Pacetti — are holding a fundraiser to help defray legal costs. They're having a dinner at Cathedral of Hope's Interfaith Peace Chapel from 6-8 p.m. Tickets are available for \$50 on Eventbrite. For information, visit Facebook.com/events/3154181564793488.



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METROBALL, From Page 18

las Pride in being the major kickoff event for Dallas Pride Weekend," he added.

MetroBall grew out of a house party that Hearn and his partner and the foundation's namesake, Greg Dollgener, started in 1990. They would hold a pre-party for Razzle Dazzle, Dallas' longtime Pride Month party, at their home, "charging" attendees a non-perishable item to donate to an AIDS service organization.

"The parties soon outgrew my house, so [GDMAF board member] Rony Rox suggested we have a dance party and build an event," Hearn explained. "So in 2006, we had our first MetroBall event at TMC. That year, we only had a little more than 100 people attend. Our entertainment was DJ Tator Tot and some dancers."

But that was just the beginning. After the first two MetroBalls, "we learned that you have to have something special if you want to compete with all the other events going on in Dallas," Hearn said. "So MetroBall became our marketing handle for GDMAF. We started bringing in different headliners to help grow the

event and attract larger crowds.

"We decided to dream even bigger and seek out some well-known talent. With leadership from our president, Barry Robertson, and the steering committee team, we worked on some great line-ups for the last five or six years before the pandemic. And we added silent auctions, raffles and some other perks."

Of course, COVID hit all the nonprofits hard, Hearn said. And smaller organizations like GDMAF saw their primary revenue-generating events shut down. But they refused to let the pandemic defeat them.

"Our board looked at other ways to raise money and remain active in the community," Hearn said of GDMAF during the pandemic years. "We had online silent auctions for Mother's Day, Father's Day and Christmas to help bring in extra money. And we tested out a new auction system on Mother's Day this year, so that your guests will have a smoother silent auction experience in person at MetroBall."

"In 2020, we partnered with the WNBA's Dallas Wings to host an event online

with Del Shores," he continued. "Then we had our first in-person event, Night of Stars, last September, and we saw how hungry the crowd was for live entertainment. So that inspired us in planning this year's MetroBall."

Hearn said organizers were thrilled that Tiffany was available to perform again this year, despite the event being cancelled the last two years. She and Debbie Gibson were co-headliners at MetroBall in 2016, but then GDMAF board members Michael Screws and Barry Robertson saw the singer perform in concert with her band and "knew it was a whole new vibe," Hearn said, explaining why organizers chose to ask her to return.

"Everyone has been great to work with, despite the delays," he continued. "We're excited to have Tiffany back, and having a band will be a first for MetroBall."

Since the first MetroBall in 1996 through 2021, Hearn said, GDMAF has raised a total of \$1.3 million, and about 35 percent of those proceeds have come from MetroBall. With that money, he said, GDMAF has helped 4,457 clients — individuals and families — impacted by HIV/AIDS "by providing last-resort

assistance when other AIDS service organizations are unable to help."

Hearn said that tickets to MetroBall will be available for \$50 at the door of \$4 on Friday night, and in addition to the entertainment, there will be a silent auction with more than 125 items to bid on through clickbid online. The link and a preview of auction items is available at GDMAFAuction.org, and bidding is already open, through 10:30 p.m. tonight.

Among the raffle items available at the event are two VIP tickets to the Lady Gaga concert at Globe Life Field later this summer (a \$2,000 value) and tickets near the stage on the field at the stadium for that concert plus a \$200 VISA gift card. The concert experience includes hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, a dessert bar, beer, wine and signature Lady Gaga-inspired cocktails, a hot point music video experience and green screen photo booth to share on social media, interactive cell phone charging stations and more.

The 15th anniversary MetroBall is Friday, June 3, at 84, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. The event features Chris Chism, Thea Austin, Martha Wash and Tiffany and her band, along with raffles and a silent auction. Doors open at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$50 at the door.

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Also in the entertainment lineup at the festival includes the cast of the Rose Room, Black Girl Magic, Dallasite and rising country music star Kameron Ross from America's Got Talent, Kylee O'Hara Fatale and the finalists from The Queer Off, The Roommates, The Saloon Girls, Mi Diva Loca, Double Trouble Does Pride with Raquel Blake and Bleach, The Etheridge Experience and performers from Uptown Players.

Also featured will be performances by Averi Burk, Cameron McCloud of Cure for Paranoia, Carley Bearden, Johnny Bee & The Leo Sun Project, Kaatii, Lorelei K and xBValentine.

American Sign Language interpreters will be present at each stage to perform live translations. Saturday evening concludes with a rainbow-themed fireworks display over Fair Park.

TEEN PRIDE

Teen Pride, organized each year by Real Live Connection, offers a full day

of top-notch entertainment, vendors and more, all focused around this year's theme, "We're All In This Together." That theme, Real Live Connection cofounders Amanda Robinson and Sherrell Cross said, was chosen to pay special tribute to the lives of youth lost to COVID-19 and to pledge support for trans youth in the face of continued exclusionary efforts in schools.

Robinson and Cross are "beyond thrilled [for the Pride weekend and Teen Pride] to be in person again for the first time since 2019," Cross said. "These past two years were hard for our youth; even though we did things virtually, it wasn't the same as being able to gather in person to hug and talk face to face with them.

"So many youth were in unsafe environments during the pandemic with no outlet or place to go. We are excited for them to know that we are here, and we are standing with them, especially now with the current actions that are being taken against LGBTQIA youth," Cross continued, "We love the community

support, and we need it now more than ever."

Teen Pride is a space at Dallas Pride exclusively for LGBTQ youth, and this year, as in the past, it will feature a live DJ, local performers, arts and crafts tables, vendors and opportunities to connect with local organizations and businesses offering resources for LGBTQ youth.

"As you know, Dallas Teen Pride is known for having a crazy line-up of entertainment," Cross said. And this year, that includes "famous RuPaul's Drag Race girls, amazing bands from all parts of Texas, youth poets, singers and two amazing DJs who will keep everyone dancing."

Teen Pride will also feature eight bounce houses, games, a mechanical bull, obstacle courses, photo stations and guest speakers. Some of the vendors participating include Great Wolf Lodge, Work/Shop and HOT 93.3 FM, Cross said.

On stage entertainment at Teen Pride

will include some special surprise guests you don't want to miss, Cross said. And the list of entertainers that has been announced is already exciting enough to make everyone happy.

Entertainers include Barbie Davenport Dupree, Beyondshade Lee Starr, Kiana Lee, Hakeem Davenport, Devin Bryant Banx, Ruby Scott, Glam Davenport, Ariel O'Hara, April Rition, Ivan Nolan and Suki O'Hara.

There is no additional cost for admission to Teen Pride section, which will be in the Automobile Building, but admission is restricted to teens and to older individuals attending with a teen.

Teen Pride will be open from 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

FAMILY PRIDE ZONE

Family Pride Zone returns for the in-person Pride party as well this year with games, entertainment, bounce

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Pride from the top down

BUSINESS PRIDE



Wendy Lopez (Photo courtesy of AECOM)

AECOM is proud to be recognized as a top employer for LGBTQ inclusion, and executive Wendy Lopez helped make it happen

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

AECOM, an infrastructure consulting firm that relocated its headquarters to Dallas last year, this year was named one of the best places to work for LGBTQ equality by the Human Rights Campaign. And it was through the leadership of Wendy Lopez, the company's

senior vice president, Texas executive, that helped the company reach that goal.

Lopez, formerly the CEO of Wendy Lopez and Associates and of LopezGarcia Group, founded her own company and grew it from a one-person minority/women-owned engineering consulting firm to a multi-disciplinary engineering and environmental services company in less than 20 years. Under her leadership, the company worked on a number of high-profile projects, including AT&T Performing Arts Center, the Dallas Cowboys stadium, George Bush Library and Perot Museum of Nature and Science.

Lopez sold her company in 2008 to URS Corp., and the URS Corp. was acquired by AECOM.

Lopez is executive sponsor for AECOM's Pride Employee Resource Group, helping make sure the global

company leads by example and draws local talent to build diverse teams and create inclusive environments. She has been recognized through the years with several awards, including the Regional Hispanic Contractors Luna Lifetime Achievement Award, the D CEO Dallas 500 Leaders award and ENR's Legacy Award.

This week, Lopez took a few minutes off from helping prepare AECOM's float for the 2022 Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade to answer a few questions for Dallas Voice.

Dallas Voice: You spent 20 years as CEO of your own company, and now you are senior vice president and Texas executive for AECOM. I know it's been a few years since you made the transition, but talk a little bit about going from

being head of your own company to working for someone else. What were some of the things you were hesitant about in making that change, and what have been the biggest advantages for you? (Also, what does "Texas executive" mean?) Wendy Lopez: I remember waking up on the day of the sale of LopezGarcia Group and feeling a little nostalgic, as I knew this would be the last day I would walk into the office as CEO. On the positive side, the risks associated with ownership are now off the table. Financially, selling the company was the right thing to do for all of my business partners. We all walked away with great return on our investments.

The biggest changes in going from owner/entrepreneur in a privately-held firm to an officer in a publicly-traded company were the adjusting to my new level of

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COMPASS

OLUMC to ordain two LGBTQ pastors

RELIGION

Church will go through with ordination despite refusal from the bishop

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Oak Lawn United Methodist Church's pastors and congregation are set to perform an act of sacred resistance at this Sunday's Sabbath service after the local bishop refused to appoint two qualified candidates as associate pastors. The reason for the bishop's refusal is that both Ryan Wagner and Isabel Marquez are in same-sex marriages.

The Rev. Rachel Baughman, senior pastor at Oak Lawn UMC, said both were married when they were allowed to enter the ministerial program.

The United Methodist Church has been split over same-sex marriage for a number of years. It's been the main topic of contention at each of the UMC conventions in recent years. Rather than coming to a compromise that would allow each church or diocese to decide whether to recognize these relationships, the church seems headed for a split.

Baughman said Sunday's service will include some powerful storytelling and conclude with the ordination of Wagner and Marquez.

Although the bishop has refused to recognize Wagner and Marquez as clergy, they will remain on Oak Lawn UMC's books as staff persons so they can be paid by the diocese.

Because of the rules of discipline within the Methodist Church, anyone from a different UMC church can bring charges against a pastor. In Dallas, charges have been brought in the past against pastors who have performed same-sex marriages. Baughman said she is expecting charges to be brought against her for ordaining Wagner and Marquez.

Baughman said both were allowed into the process and was surprised by the bishop's denial of ordination.

"Everyone knew they were married," Baughman said. "Isabel [has been] for 25 years."

But Baughman said she wasn't worried about the consequences.

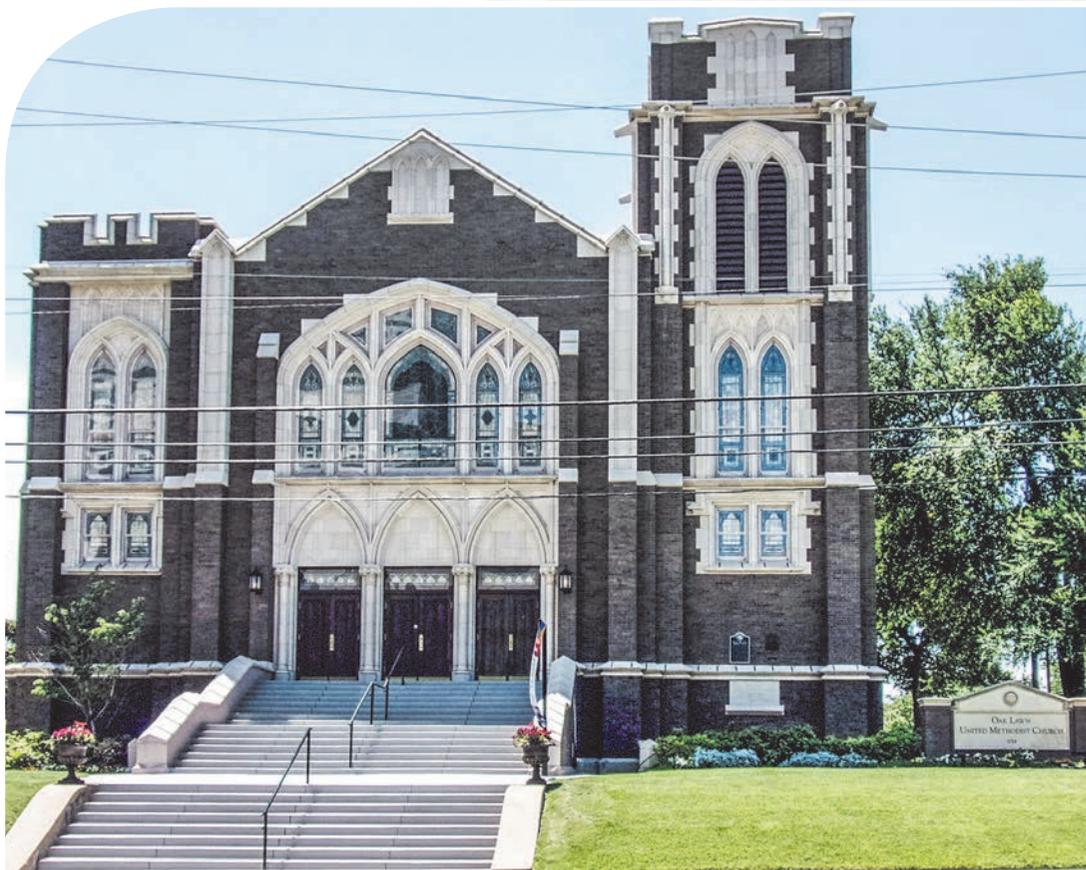
One of the quirks of the church's judicial system is that once charges are brought against a pastor, other pastors are prevented from bringing further charges in the same case. Since most Methodist ministers in the Dallas diocese favor same-sex marriage, a network of friendly clergy has emerged. So Baughman expects a "friendly complaint" to be filed. She referred to this as a tactic.

The first step after a complaint is filed is to bring the two sides together to try

to come to a resolution through mediation. If a gay-friendly pastor has filed the complaint, coming to a satisfactory resolution with Baughman shouldn't be difficult. It is, Baughman said, a little bit



The Rev. Rachel Baughman



In the case of the Rev. Frank Schaefer, who performed his son's marriage to another man, Schaefer was found guilty. He would have been able to retain his ministry if he promised to never perform another same-sex wedding. But because he had two other gay sons, he couldn't promise not to do for one son something he had done for another.

So Schaefer left his Massachusetts church and moved across country to a diocese where he was again welcomed as a Methodist minister. Baughman saw that as a worst case scenario.

In the meantime, she said, Sunday's service will include some "powerful storytelling" from the new history book of Oak Lawn

more complicated than that; the bishop could stand in the way and send the case to trial.

Baughman said the resolution would then be up to the church's court.

UMC. Everyone is welcome to attend the 11 a.m. service.

Oak Lawn UMC is located on the corner of Cedar Springs Road and Oak Lawn Avenue. Parking is available off Welborn Street.



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In the wake of tragedy — again

RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE



Once again, we find ourselves struggling to understand, respond after another mass shooting

This was going to be a very different column — until 19 children and two adults were shot and killed by a gunman at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas.

As I started composing this column in my head, something about that first sentence made me pause. I then realized it was nearly identical to what I'd written almost a decade ago when 20 children and six adults were killed by a gunman at an elementary school in Newtown, Conn.

Have we learned nothing as a nation about protecting our children since then? Apparently not.



Dana Rudolph
Contributing Columnist

The unconscionable shooting at the mostly Latinx Robb Elementary School in Uvalde comes just 10 days after 10

Black people were murdered in a shooting in Buffalo. And while the victims of any shooting are someone's children, when the victims are young children, their deaths hit me — and I'm sure many others — like a gut punch.

School shootings have been one of my main fears as a parent and remain so, even though my son is grown. My heart breaks for the families of the victims and for the children who survived but will have to grapple with ongoing

fear and trauma.

In 2022 so far, there have been at least 77 incidents of gunfire on school grounds in the U.S. (six in Texas), resulting in 14 deaths and 45 injuries, reports Everytown for Gun Safety, the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country. The first half of the 2021-2022 school year was the deadliest in recent history, they say. "Deadly" and "school year" in the same sentence — consider how horrifying that is.

As a society, we give much lip service to doing things "in the best interests of the children." Repeated mass murders of children, over decades, are as far from their best interests as one can get.

The right-wing, which has done nothing to further gun control, nevertheless has wielded a "best interests of the children" argument against LGBTQ parents and LGBTQ kids (particularly transgender ones). It claims to care about the lives of fetuses but will do nothing to protect children from gun violence after they are born.

There is something deeply wrong with that ideology.

A country has failed its citizens when it cares less about protecting them and more about allowing them access to firearms — particularly semi-automatic weapons like those used in Newtown, Buffalo, Uvalde and many other mass shootings.

Gun control is only part of the solution — the Buffalo shooting, for example, underscored the continuing need for increased action against White supremacy and racism — but it is a key step. We need stronger background checks and bans on the sale of semi-automatic rifles and high-capacity magazines, among other restrictions.

(And no, armed guards, much less armed teachers, in schools is not an alternate solution. Studies have shown this is not effective, and there are high risks of hitting a child rather than an attacker during a chaotic and stressful situation. See Valerie Strauss' piece in the May 25 Washington Post.)

I write this on the cusp of Pride Month — the original subject of this column. Pride has come to be a time of celebration, but this year it feels wise to remember its roots as a protest.

LGBTQ equality is facing some of its biggest challenges since the marriage equality battle, with a surge of anti-LGBTQ, particularly anti-trans, legis-

lation around the country. Reproductive rights are under attack, impacting both queer and non-queer people. And gun violence continues to rise.

No one is immune from gun violence in the U.S., but for those of us in marginalized communities that have been targeted by such violence because of our identities — LGBTQ people, people of color and Jews, among others — the fear and the need for change may feel even more pressing, bound up with our other work towards social justice.

I therefore hope you'll consider joining one of the "March for Our Lives" protests across the country on June 11 in support of stricter gun control (see MarchForOurLives.com). Please also call or write to your elected officials about this issue, and make gun control a factor when you vote. Support organizations working for gun control; donate if you can and help elevate their messages regardless.

For those looking for ways to help young children process their feelings around this latest shooting or around ongoing active shooter drills in their schools, I recommend Sesame Street's resources — visit SesameStreetInCommunities.org and search for "gun violence." Additionally, publisher A Kids Company About is making their A Kids Book About School Shootings downloadable free at AKidsCo.com. Written by a survivor of the 1999 Columbine High School shooting, it is aimed at ages 5 to 9.

And for people who need it, the Disaster Distress Helpline, 1.800.985.5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline with immediate crisis counseling for people experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.

I'd like to say I have hope that things will change, but I said the same after Columbine and after Newtown and after all the other shootings. In the absence of much hope that we will see change anytime soon, I find myself turning for strength to a saying from my Jewish tradition: "You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it."

We must resist, persist and not desist. We owe it to our children. ■

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory, with a searchable database of 1000+ LGBTQ family books, media, and more.

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TWCD presents Divas

MUSIC

After two years of downtime, The Women's Chorus of Dallas returns with some ambitious goals

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

The pandemic has been hard on all arts organizations, but particularly on choruses. The Women's Chorus of Dallas Artistic Director Melinda Imthurn said her singers took off their masks in March and are anxiously looking forward to their upcoming concert, *Divas*.

Divas includes music from pop divas like J Lo, Gloria Estefan, Whitney Houston, kd lang, Cher, Patsy Kline and more.

The music will be performed by the full chorus, small ensembles and soloists.

"This concert's just for fun," Imthurn said of the event.

The already sold-out concert takes place at the Sammons Center for the Arts on Harry Hines at Oak Lawn on Saturday, June 4, and will be combined with a fundraiser. Guests will enjoy desserts and beverages from Lakewood Brewing Company, gourmet popcorn from Avery's Savory Popcorn, a photo booth by Picture This and a silent auction.

The Pride weekend show will be host-



Melinda Imthurn with The Women's Chorus of Dallas

ed by Raquel Blake.

Imthurn said the last two years have been very difficult for the chorus. Concerts were virtual and stitched together by an AV editor, a position she had to add during the pandemic. Each singer recorded herself singing to the music track, and then the voices were layered, one singer at a time. Then the video went through the same process.

Conducting the chorus virtually was an additional challenge since the sing-

ers' mics were turned off. So Imthurn conducted, but she couldn't hear the sound. Even a soloist couldn't perform, because the voice wouldn't synch with the instrument.

In addition, the chorus lost the camaraderie of singing together as well as the acoustic sound that comes from choral singing.

Imthurn said the chorus is in rebuilding mode after losing two years of auditioning and adding new singers to the

chorus. With that time lost, you would think she'd add any new voices that came along, but she employed a different strategy.

"We're vocally rebuilding," she said.

About 10 new voices have been added to TWCD this spring.

"We have a very strong group of new singers," she said.

From among those who've applied to join the chorus, Imthurn added those

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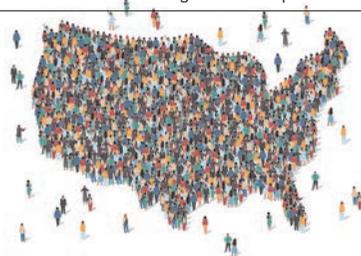
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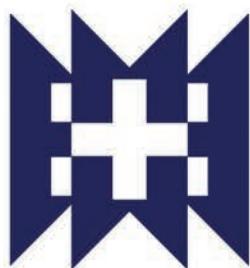


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TWDC, From Page 34



The Women's Chorus of Dallas performs.

who read music and already have vocal skills. Some are music educators; others have experience performing.

But when she realized what a difference a background in music could make for chorus members, the educator in Imthurn jumped in, and she's creating classes in reading music and in vocal skills for potential and current chorus members would like to develop their music skills.

While the Turtle Creek Chorale is coming out of the pandemic with a performance on July 9 at Carnegie Hall in New York City that should give that group good momentum, the Women's Chorus had just performed at the famed New York concert hall when the pandemic brought things crashing down. Imthurn hopes the new season she has planned will give the group new momentum.

She has a line-up of more new singers who would love to join the chorus. And travel always adds excitement: The chorus is scheduled to sing at the Tapestry International Festival in Vancouver next May.

In addition, the chorus has commissioned some new works for the season.

Moving forward, Imthurn's goal is to branch out and explore different musical genres more deeply rather than just performing what she called token pieces.

She said most musicians are trained in "old, white European music. I'm having to learn" so the chorus can perform music from Africa more authentically and perform spirituals with the emotion they evoke. Imthurn said she wants more people to see themselves represented on stage.

But can she learn what she wasn't originally trained to do? "I wasn't trained to do videos," she said, but that didn't stop her from learning how and using those new skills to keep the chorus going during the pandemic.

So maybe the downtime of the pandemic will result in even better music and a broader selection of music than ever, performed by the best group of singers the Women's Chorus has ever presented. At least, that's Imthurn's goal. ■

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COUNTRY LIFE

Nestor Estrada and his husband, Cesar Aragon are working to create an organic paradise at Bella Hampton Farm

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

Nestor Estrada moved with his family from Guatemala to the U.S. to find more opportunities for their future. But it was on a trip back to Guatemala to escape the drugs and depression that were consuming him that Estrada found his life mate, Cesar Aragon. Now the two men own Bella Hampton Farm in Kaufman County where they are working to create a paradise on earth for themselves and others.

This week, Estrada talked with Dallas Voice about where he's been and where he's headed.

Dallas Voice: Tell me about yourself. You are from Guatemala, right? How did you end up in North Texas? And why did you decide to have a farm? Nestor Estrada: I'm originally from Guatemala City. My parents wanted to provide a safer, more diverse future for my sister and me, so they migrated to Dallas in 1994. During the nine years that I lived in Guatemala, my family owned a coffee plantation, so I was surrounded by all the farm animals and fell in love with the farming lifestyle. We were fortunate enough that we had farm hands that could handle the day-to-day care of the animals, so my only job was to show up to pamper and love them.

I remember on one of my many trips from Dallas to Guatemala: It was during Christmas; five of the pigs were giving birth in the middle of the night, and I was woken up to witness the birth. I noticed that one of the piglets wasn't breathing, so I immediately got a straw and performed CPR on the lifeless baby. Because of my actions, he survived. It was then that I knew that I was meant to take care of animals and



Nestor Estrada and one of the four horses that live on Bella Hampton Farm

give them the best possible life.

My love for horses was embedded in me as a young boy. I had horse riding lessons every Sunday.

How did you meet your husband, Cesar Aragon, and how long have you been together? Fast forward to 2001: I was self-medicating with methamphetamines, cocaine and ketamine to battle my depression and anxiety. I developed psoriasis all over my body; I thought I had HIV, leprosy or some kind of horrible infection from the drug use. I was at the lowest part of my life.

Then I was given the opportunity to travel back to Guatemala to stay with my aunt to detox. I started going to therapy three times a week. I was diagnosed with psoriasis [and started receiving] light treatments to help control the symptoms.

It was then that destiny stepped in. I was invited to a birthday party in Rio Dulce Guatemala for someone I didn't know. I was hesitant to go because I only knew one person that was going, and it was an eight-hour trip from Guatemala. Halfway there, we met up with the other half of the party at a market on the side of the road. That is when an angel stepped out of the other car, and I immediately knew that my forever soul mate was standing in front of

me — Cesar.

We spent five days together during that trip, getting to know each other. I confessed about my drug abuse and the state of my mental health, [and] I told Cesar that he could move to America and get a work visa so that we could build an amazing life together. We are now going on 19 years of an amazing journey together.

What did you do before you decided to become an organic farmer? During the process of getting Cesar's citizenship, the company that sponsored his work permit was bought out by a company in Austin. So six months after we purchased our first home in Oak Cliff, which Cesar named The Bella Hampton, we moved to Austin and emerged ourselves in our new hippie environment, where we raised 50 chickens in our backyard. We sold the eggs to our family and friends for \$6 a dozen.

Whole Foods wanted to purchase our eggs, but 50 chickens was the maximum our property could properly sustain.

Fast-forward eight years: Cesar and I were married in San Francisco, and he no longer depended on a work visa. So we decided it was time to come back to The Bella Hampton. We devoted our energy and extra time to develop our own little

piece of paradise in the backyard of The Bella Hampton.

Eventually we rented a farm to get out of the city. We woke up to horses and different animals every day, and we quickly realized that this is the life that we wanted to live. We know tomorrow is not promised, so we began the search for our future farm. We searched all over East Texas and fell in love with a little city named Kemp.

Before COVID, Cesar and I started Bella Hampton Garden and Design, a remodeling and design business. But it quickly became a burden due to the high demand and limited availability of goods. Navigating through COVID led me to a nervous breakdown. Cesar came in and rescued me once again from a black hole, allowing me to put a pause on Bella Hampton Garden and Design letting me focus on my well-being and total care of the animals.

Where exactly is the farm, and how large is it? Where did that name come from?

The Bella Hampton Farm is located east of Dallas in Kaufman County, in the city of Kemp. Our forever home is a 900-square-foot house that sits on 10 beautiful acres full of endless possibilities. We named the farm Bella Hampton due to our love of our first piece of paradise in Oak Cliff.

About how many chickens do you have there? And about how many eggs do you get a day, and what do you do with the eggs? Can folks buy them anywhere?

We currently have around 30 chickens that lay eggs daily, around 25 that will soon be laying and 45 baby chicks. Cesar and I have been raising healthy chickens that produce the most nutritious, most amazing tasting and colorful eggs, and Dallas has fallen in love with them. We also have added 30 meat chickens that will be processed in eight weeks and will be available to our customer base. These chickens are being pasture-raised where they are able to have fresh grass and sunshine and can forage for all the bugs their little hearts' desire. We believe if we are consuming meat and poultry, we should give them the best life possible. You can get information on how to sign up for our weekly newsletter that includes a menu and order form on our Facebook page, Facebook.com/BellaHamptonFarm.

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What other kinds of animals do you have on the farm? Do you grow your own vegetables, too? And do you do run the farm yourself, or do you have people who work for you? We currently have four horses, two donkeys, three cows, seven dogs, five cats, two rabbits, 14 dairy goats, nine ducks, 60-plus chickens and 20 turkeys, four of which will be the forever breeding pairs and live out their entire life on the farm. The remaining 16 turkeys will be processed and available to purchase for your holiday meals beginning in November.

We currently are growing watermelons, herbs, zucchini, squash, tomatoes, peppers and sunflowers. It takes village to operate something of this magnitude; Cesar and I are putting a lot of hard work into this, along with our friends. My friend Jennifer and her family moved onto the farm and are huge contributors in the day-to-day operations.

Bella Hampton is an organic farm. Tell me what that means, exactly? Organic, to me, is a way of life. We source the best quality food and allow our animals to graze on pasture that is chemical-free. We



Life on Bella Hampton Farm

believe in doing things as naturally as possible, which in turn produces a healthier and tastier product. Once you have eaten fresh from the farm products you will never want to eat conventional grown again.

I saw on your social media that you are a cyclist. Tell me about that. How did you get started? John Terlingo created Terlingo Cycle which, for me, became a way for me to find my voice and spin my anxiety away. John created a 45-minute spin class that allows you to let go of any stress, depression or anxiety. [He] asked me to become an instructor at Terlingo Cycle which contributed to me getting out of my shell and becoming the person I am today. COVID and moving to the farm have restricted my participation in the classes, and I miss them terribly. But I hope to bring [classes] to Kaufman County in the near future.

Tell me about your other hobbies and interests. And tell me about your involvement in the community — both the LGBTQ community specifically and the community in general. I am a very giving and loving person, and I've made

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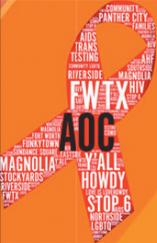
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Streaming our lives

TELEVISION



Damian Pelliccione founded LGBTQ streaming service Revry when no one else was streaming LGBTQ content

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Revry CEO Damian Pelliccione said when they bought the original Apple TV that used only propriety apps and started searching for LGBTQ content, they found none. Then they watched Apple CEO Tim Cook giving the company keynote, saying it would allow developers to create apps for the

fourth generation Apple TV.

That's the short version of how Pelliccione got the idea for Revry, the first LGBTQ streaming service. That was in 2015. Revry launched in 2016 at San Francisco Pride, and now it's a fast-growing streaming service with 20 million monthly viewers.

Conveniently, Pelliccione's husband is an entertainment attorney who had worked for Shark Tank and has written more than 750 licensing contracts.

Today, Revry can not only be found on Apple TV but also on Roku, Tubi, Comcast, Cox, DirecTV, Samsung Smart TV and more. Or just visit Revry.tv and sign up.

Once Netflix and Amazon TV did finally get the idea that LGBTQ people might be a category to add to their

streaming services, Pelliccione noticed all the stories were about white gay men and plenty of drag. Revry, on the other hand, “is the first streaming platform championing diversity,” Pelliccione said.

And while other streaming channels might offer a few dozen titles, Revry had a selection of more than 5,000 titles and is quickly growing as it adds more and



more original content to the mix.

“Timing is a big part of our success,” Pelliccione said. By that they mean Revry was there as a freestanding streaming service as well as a channel to include as part of other streaming services before others were offering LGBTQ programming channels.

Timing was also right because marriage had recently been legalized across the country, and more and more people were coming out. Same-sex relationships were in the news. And, Pelliccione said, “Data drives opportunities.”

And the data was showing things like the trans community was at least twice as large as had previously been estimated. And more and more people were coming out as non-binary. While other content-providing companies were trying to understand what that even meant, Pelliccione himself came out as non-binary.

More than other streaming services,

Revry understands queer culture isn’t a single race, culture, sexual orientation or gender identity. So for every story about a white boy coming out, there’s a trans story, a Black story, a BIPOC story, a variety of lesbian stories and bisexual stories.

And not everyone speaks English, so Revry has launched Revry Latinx.

While Revry has a subscription model like Netflix, Pelliccione said, “We’ve embraced our free side.” They said many of their viewers can’t afford or don’t want to spend the \$6.99 monthly fee and are used to watching TV with commercials.

Pelliccione said, “Finding filmmakers is the greatest joy of my job.” Uplifting and amplifying new stories is what keeps the job new and exciting, they said.

One category of film and series they enjoy is on ball culture. “Have you ever experienced a ball?” they asked. “It’s our version of team sports.”

Revry is seen around the world. From the week Revry went online, viewers from more than 40 countries signed up for the service.

One of the first letters they received on social media was from a queer kid in Saudi Ara-

bia.

“He said he didn’t know there were people out there like me,” Pelliccione said.

While Revry is there to entertain and inform and educate, in some cases it just saves a queer kid’s life. In 2019, Pelliccione was the keynote speaker at a film festival in Mumbai. Afterwards, they had a lineup of queer Indian women who wanted their autograph. They asked the third or fourth person, “Why do all these women want to talk to me.”

The answer? In 2016, the lesbian series *The Other Love Story* was filmed in Bangalore, and in 2018, homosexuality was decriminalized in India, although not widely accepted. For their Tindr pics, women in India were using shots from the video to indicate they were looking for other women rather than checking the box for women looking for women.

And that, Pelliccione said they learned, is “how film can make a difference.” ■

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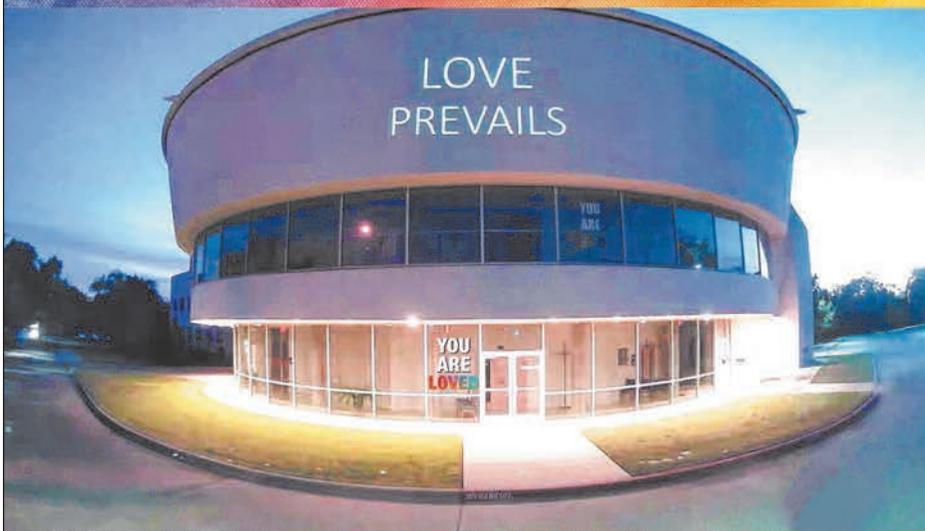
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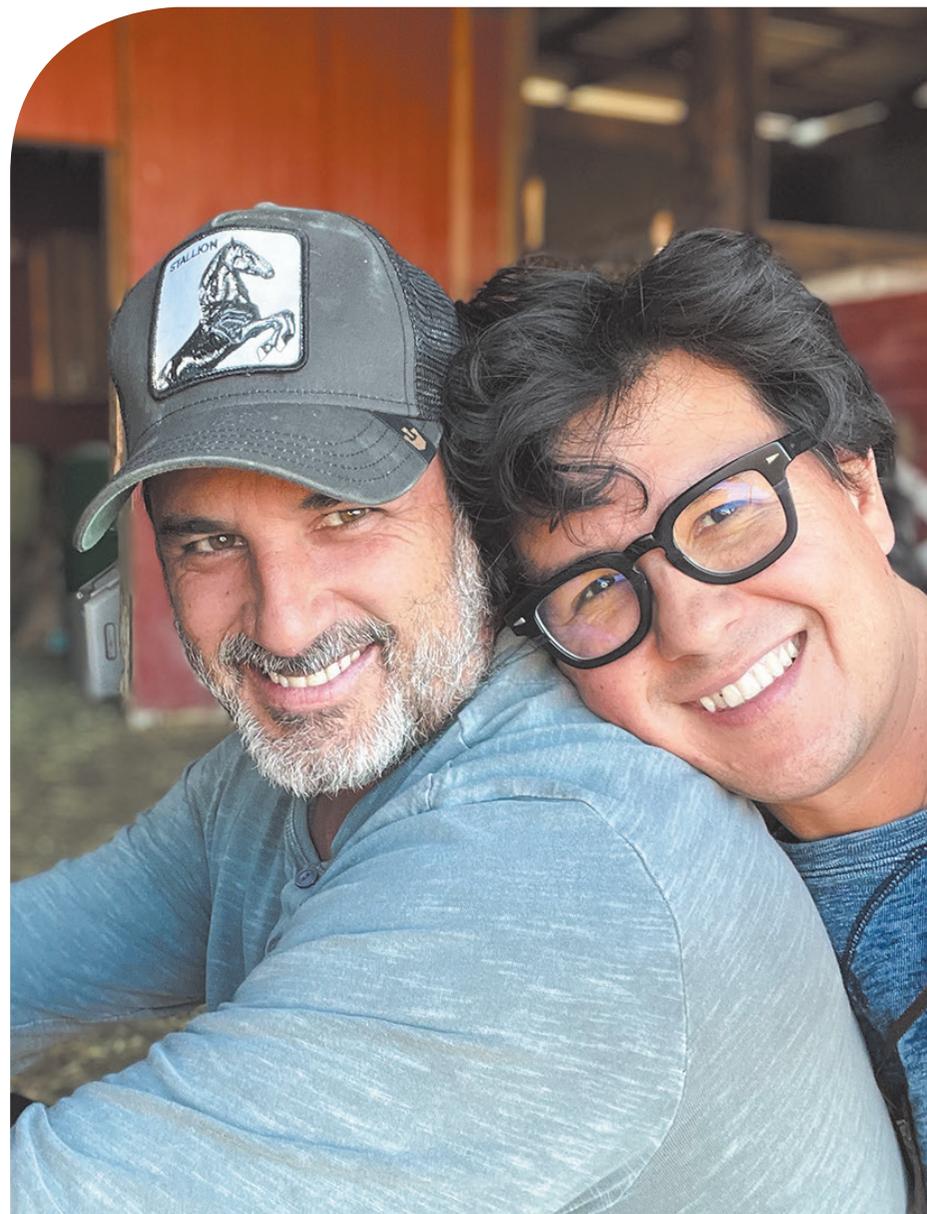
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FARM, From Page 42



Nestor Estrada, left, and his husband Cesar Aragon

a commitment to offer nutritious food options that will help to cure HIV, AIDS, cancer and mental health issues. I have dedicated my life to bringing awareness to HIV/AIDS, mental health issues and suicide prevention. The nonprofits that I am involved in are Suicide Crisis of North Texas, Fashion Stars for a Cause with Yvonne Crum, AIN Access and Information Network, Legacy Founders Cottage, The Dallas Red Foundation, Black Tie Dinner, DIFFA and many more nonprofit organizations in Dallas.

I saw that you are involved with an event called Fundraising to End Discrimination and Hate, which Arnold and Joe Pacetti are hosting on June 6. That's the Monday after Pride weekend in Dallas, right? Tell me about that. We are raising funds to help offset the mounting legal fees of Mark Mattlage and Rob

Snowden [who are] fighting in court to regain their property, including their gay men's resort, The Homestead at 3218, in Crawford. (Read the interview with Mattlage on Page 24 of this issue of Dallas Voice.) I am outraged by what Mark and Rob are going through and that people can be this hateful in 2022. We are having an event at The Cathedral of Hope on June 6 to raise awareness and the funds they need. There is a GoFundMe page to raise money for them, too.

What have I not asked about that you want people to know about you and about Bella Hampton Farm? Cesar and I are creating an oasis for people to get away and live the farm lifestyle and participate in taking care of the animals. Follow our journey at @bellahamptonfarm on Facebook and @bella_hampton_farm on Instagram.

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FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION

Abbott's anti-trans directive to DFPS is a political ploy, but it has significant impact on real people

SAR AL-ANSARI | Guest Contributor
salansar@usc.edu

SAN ANTONIO – Iris Johnson, who asked to use a pseudonym to protect her privacy, received a puzzling email from her colleague. They stated that they would be attending a scheduled meeting due to the recent announcements concerning gender-affirming healthcare in Texas. Johnson, a medical professional in Texas and a mother of a transgender child, had not heard about the news.

So Johnson proceeded to google two words: "Abbott" and "Transgender."

All the air suddenly left the room, and Johnson's world came crashing down. Her body grew tense to the point of shaking, and she was barely breathing. She burst into tears as articles about Gov. Greg Abbott's anti-trans letter appeared on her computer's screen.

"I was really hurt," Johnson said. "I was deeply hurt at having my own government come in and turn against me and attack me as a parent and attack my child just for existing."

"After the hurt subsided, all that was left was anger," she added. "I am very angry, and I am not going to be silent about it. I refuse to be."

On February 22 this year, Abbott sent a letter to the Department of Family and Protective Services stating that gender-affirming medical procedures provided to transgender youth should be categorized as "child abuse"



Demonstrators gather on the steps to the State Capitol to speak against transgender-related legislation bills in May 2021

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and demanding that DFPS perform “prompt and thorough” investigations based on Attorney General Ken Paxton’s non-binding opinion declaring that gender-affirming care for transgender children is child abuse under Texas law.

As per Abbott’s letter, all licensed professionals in first-hand contact with children are obligated to report such cases. Reporting requirements are also extended to members of the public, and failure to do so can result in criminal penalties.

One family affected by the directive filed suit, and on March 21, a Texas appeals court affirmed a lower-court judge’s ruling blocking CPS from investigating that family specifically, and a second ruling blocking investigation of all such families in the state. The Texas Supreme Court has overturned the restraining order blocking such investigations in general, and DFPS has started up those investigations again. The restraining order blocking the investigation into the family that filed suit remains in place.

Abbott’s directive is part of a broad wave of national policies targeting transgender Americans, particularly transgender adolescents. In January this year

in Texas, Senate Bill 29 went into effect, forcing transgender student-athletes to participate on sports teams that correspond to their sex assigned at birth. According to NBC News, state lawmakers proposed a record number of 238 anti-LGBTQ bills, with about half aimed at transgender people, in less than three months this year.

San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg has condemned the governor’s anti-trans directive, calling it “cruel and inhumane.” Joe Gonzales, the district attorney of Bexar County, described Abbott’s directives as “un-American.” And former San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros joined in to explain that the directive was intended to “rile up the base by saying the most outlandish things.” He insisted that it was a distraction and an order that would not stand.

Over the next couple of days, Johnson reached out to a network of individuals, families and organizations in similar situations to hers. She reached out to Equality Texas, the statewide LGBTQ advocacy organization, to get connected to a network of families in similar situations. She also hopes to be involved in

advocating for policy change and accessible healthcare for transgender people.

Her family also left their non-denominational church after they did not affirm her transgender child. Instead, they plan to visit a new local church, Hope United, another non-denominational church that is openly affirming and accepting.

“Part of what I love about religion is the fellowship and community. Being around people who are affirming and supportive of our family is important,” she said “It is what we need right now.”

But Johnson faced another obstacle when her son’s surgery was canceled. After Abbott’s directive, some hospitals announced they would no longer provide gender-affirming treatment to transgender or nonbinary adolescents. Texas Children’s Hospital, the largest pediatric hospital in Texas, announced it would stop such care to protect the staff and patients’ families from “criminal legal ramifications.”

“These attacks are tied to a political moment where politicians are exploiting misinformation about transgender peo-

COST, Next Page



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COST, From Previous Page

ple to gain votes," said Rachel Hill, the government affairs director for Equality Texas. She stressed that Abbott's directive is not legally binding, but he "inserted so much confusion into the process."

Equality Texas is working with lawyers from Lambda Legal to support and share resources with affected families. Legal experts provide advice on how to prepare for a DFPS investigation. They are also collaborating with the Department of Health and Human Services to work with healthcare providers and clarify that they are not legally obligated to discriminate against patients based on their gender identity.

"We are seeing a lot of impact from this decision. We have seen medical providers stop care. We have seen CPS actually open investigations on loving families," Hill said. "The effects of this are just really profound on the community."

Nicholas Guillory, a Tyron Garner Memorial Law Fellow at Lambda Legal, said they received many calls from families seeking attorneys and legal advice. "We have heard of instances within 24 hours of CPS getting contacted and investigations pursued. That was the case with one of our clients," he said.

Guillory explained that the consequences of pursuing investigations against families in Texas could be severe. If a case is referred to the courts, children could be taken away from their families. A 2019 Family Court Review found that mothers who affirmed their child's non-

conforming identity lost physical or legal custody of their children. Many families are also concerned about being on the state's child abuse registry, which would restrict them from having jobs requiring contact with children or vulnerable populations. It would also forbid them from fostering or adopting children.

Vinny Vega, an unhoused transgender adolescent seeking accommodation at Thrive Youth Center, a San Antonio-based LGBTQ homeless shelter, felt perplexed upon hearing the news as his opportunity to transition could be taken away.

"To have parents that accept, love, support, and take care of me is like the whole world right there for me. [The directive] is not fair; it is not right for all trans youth," he said.

Vega, 21, grew up without receiving any acknowledgment or support from his biological and foster parents during his transitioning process, leaving him with significant trauma. He expressed his fears about Abbott's directive and how it may lead trans children to relive his situation, despite coming from "healthier homes."

"These kids getting taken away from their parents who love, support and take care of them is ripping their world right out from them," he said. "They are going to get put in foster care, but we do not even have enough room for the kids in foster care in the first place. Kids are

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A label outside of Vinny Vega's room at the Thrive Youth Center in San Antonio



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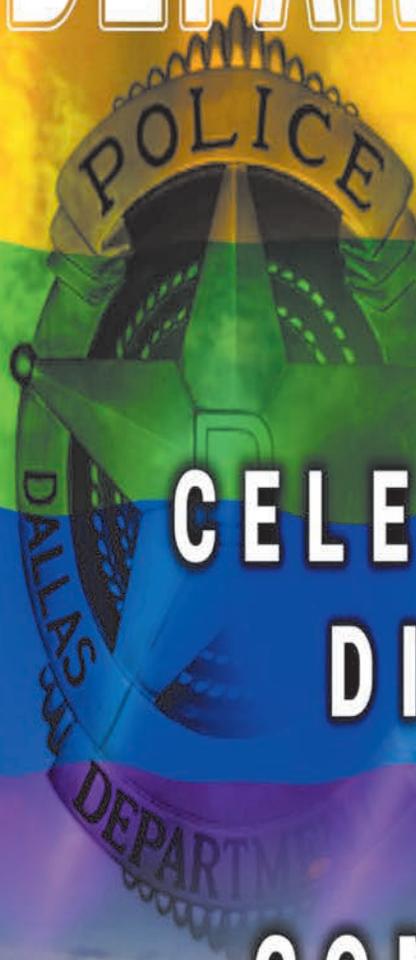
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Landscape architect aims to bridge the gap between classical and contemporary

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

In his two decades as a landscape architect, Adam Kober has worked on many different internationally-recognized resort projects, including Hotel Drover and Mule Alley in the Fort Worth Stockyards. And last year, after 16 years as principal and lead designer with well-known Lifescapes International, he launched his own company, Kober Design Group.

This week, Kober talked with Dallas

Voice about his career, his company and his ties to North Texas.

Dallas Voice: Tell me a little bit about your background — where you grew up, where you went to school. Tell me about your family. Do you have a spouse or partner? Adam Kober: I grew up on a large farm in Indiana where we raised corn and soy beans. After high school I went to Purdue University, where I studied landscape architecture and eventually took an internship out in Orange County, Calif. During that internship I fell in love with the West Coast, and so that's where my husband and I now live with our two children.

I read on your website that Kober Design Group is based in Newport Beach, and that is where you live. But what ties do you have to Texas, especially North Texas? During my childhood we showed

horses, and my love of horses has continued throughout my life as I now show and breed American Quarter Horses. Because some of the top trainers are in Pilot Point, Texas, I have been keeping horses at facilities in that area for over a decade now. Additionally, I've shown my horses multiple times at the Will Rogers Memorial Center in Fort Worth.

What drew you to a career in landscape design? What advice do you have for someone who was interested in that field? I was always artistic as a kid, so I wanted to find a way to channel that creativity in order to make a living. Additionally, growing up on a farm helped

direction I wanted to take in my career. Fortunately, an opportunity came my way that afforded me the courage to make the leap. While I've worked more in the last nine months than I ever have in the past, the benefits and continued growth have been incredibly rewarding. And, luckily, being so busy has helped keep my mind from getting tangled up in the anxiety of being out on my own.

Tell me about your style, your aesthetic. Do you change your style at all to fit a project, or do you tend to choose projects that fit your style? What made you want to design for Hotel Drover and Mule Alley in the Fort



Adam Kober's design in Mule Alley combines traditional with modern

Worth Stockyards? And what has been your favorite of all the projects you have worked on?

I always tell people that my personal style is East Coast on the West Coast. I love old classic architecture with more traditional bones but that has a more contemporary twist in the way it's decorated or finished. I think my personal aesthetic allows me to bridge the gap

create a love for the outdoors. So, when I heard that Purdue had one of the best landscape architecture programs in the country, it all seemed to fall into place. Landscape architecture is incredibly diverse in that there are many different areas in which one can choose to focus their career. For example, I love designing resorts and super high-end residential projects. However, some landscape architects prefer to design hiking trails for large parks. Both are very different paths, but both are under the umbrella of landscape architecture. My advice is to pursue the path that you're naturally drawn toward.

between traditional and contemporary fairly well, and makes me more diverse in my design abilities and appealing to a broader range of clientele.

Hotel Drover is a great example of my style. While the Fort Worth Stockyards setting is incredibly traditional with a rich history, Hotel Drover and Mule Alley use a traditional foundation and infuse contemporary components to make it more relevant to the customers of today. For example, there is a 500-year-old solid limestone water trough that we found in a meadow in Belgium that we turned into a water feature, but there is also a brand new, contemporary metal water feature that I designed in the front of the hotel. There is a blending of both styles at Hotel Drover, and, somehow, it seems to work.

So you spent 16 years with Lifescapes International as a principal and lead designer and just started your own firm last year. What prompted you to make that change? What are some of the advantages of running your own company compared to working for someone else? And what was the scariest part of striking out on your own? I love Lifescapes and am incredibly grateful for my time there. Making the decision to leave the safety of a well-known firm where I received a steady paycheck was incredibly hard and one of the most stressful things that I've been through. However, I was beginning to get restless, and I had started to yearn for a new challenge which included being more in control of the

I don't know if I have a favorite project. I'm invested in all of my projects and want them all to be successful. Of course, there are projects where I stop myself for a second to make sure I've taken in and appreciated the opportunity to work on such high-profile and historic properties, like Rockefeller Center in New York and the historic Fort Worth Stockyards.

Find out more about Adam Kober and his work, visit KoberDesignGroup.com. For more on Hotel Drover, located at 200 Mule Alley in Fort Worth, visit HotelDrover.com.



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The gay film we've waited for

BEHIND THE SILVER SCREEN

Take a rom-com trip to 'Fire Island,' premiering today on Hulu

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

Fire Island could be the movie queer men have been waiting for. We might have thought it was *Brokeback Mountain*, even though the leads were straight. Then it could have been *Love, Simon* a sweet film that just felt a bit too adolescent. *Call Me By Your Name* was lovely and sexy but again, straight guys gone gay.

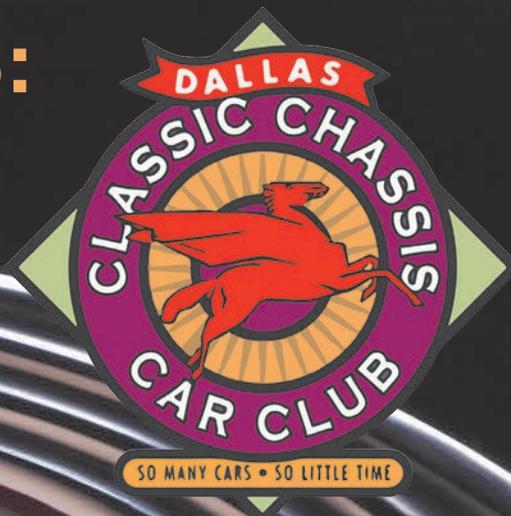
Billy Eichner's *Bros* may be on the

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FILM, From Page 54



horizon, but *Fire Island* has gotten here first. And with its cast and creatives, *Fire Island* could be as good — or as gay — as it gets.

Queer comedian and screenwriter Joel Kim Booster wrote the romantic queer comedy inspired by *Pride and Prejudice* that premieres today on Hulu. It centers on two friends, Noah (Booster) and Howie (SNL's Bowen Yang) as they meet up with friends Luke (Matt Rogers), Keegan (Tomás Matos) and Max (Torian Miller) to head to Fire Island for a week of partying and hooking up. Howie is more interested in finding love, while Noah is a bit more unapologetic about hooking up with a selection of men and is happily single. The gang stays with Erin (Margaret Cho), as they always do, until they learn she has to consider selling the house which could mean the end of Fire Island for all.

Written by a gay screenwriter and directed by queer filmmaker Andrew Ahn, the gay perspective is abundant throughout the film that is part rom-com, part relaxing meditation. Fire Island itself is a character with its isolated surroundings providing an escape for primarily gay men.

Ahn and cast member Zane Phillips sat with the Dallas Voice in a promotional tour last month to discuss the film and how a queer-centric movie tells a gay story differently than others.

Dallas Voice: What's immediately noticeable is the cast chemistry in *Fire Island*. This feels like a distinct group of friends who have known each other for a long time. Ahn: Everyone was really excited to make this movie and knew that it was special. So I think that energy made it. We all grew really close, and that allows the friendships in the film to feel really lived in.

Some had already known each other though, right? Ahn: Exactly. Tori Miller, who plays Max, knew Joe from years ago in Chicago. Joel cast him in his first play. Bowen and Joel have been friends. But Tomas — who plays Keegan — was a discovery. What I love about even all the new people is that they all have a good heart and came with a passion for this film. I just had a feeling everyone would get along beautifully.

You have this strong cast but *Fire Island* itself is a character. This almost feels like a love letter to the place. Can you talk about the intention you had in filming the locations? Ahn: Joel has been to Fire Island a number of times throughout the past few years. And he gave so much observational insight about the island in his writing. I asked him a bunch of questions, and I went to the island as much as I could during pre-production. I went to the underwear party with our cinematographer doing these shot listings while shirtless. People were looking at us funny.

Phillips: But probably not the weirdest thing to see at the underwear party.

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Cho on 'Fire'

BEHIND THE SILVER SCREEN

Margaret Cho talks about her queer characters in 'Fire Island,' 'The Flight Attendant'

GREGG SHAPIRO | Screen heat
GreggShapiro@aol.com

Could there be an Emmy Award in Margaret Cho's future? In Hulu's *Fire Island* (premiering Friday, June 3), as well as on HBO Max's *The Flight Attendant*, Cho's uncharacteristic restraint gives her queer characters, Erin and Utada respectively, an admirable depth and humanity. Additionally, Cho has an upcoming appearance on the Emmy



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Award-winning *Hacks* (as herself), and ongoing guest-starring roles in a multitude of popular shows.

Never one to sit idle, Cho will be taking her stage act on the road throughout the coming months. Busy as she is, Margaret was gracious enough to make time to answer a few questions.

Dallas Voice: In the new movie *Fire Island*, you play Erin, who's described by one of the characters as a "career brunch server, age unknown, lesbian queen." What was it about Erin that spoke to you and made you want to portray her? Margaret Cho: I just love the script. I'm a big fan of Joel Kim Booster — his comedy and his writing and as a person. I wanted to be a part of the film. I love Andrew Ahn's direction. I love Bowen (Yang). It was really special to do this.

The "career brunch server" was so appealing. Everything about this character is a lot of fun, and so it was just perfect. We had a blast doing it.

It looks that way! Erin is the wise lesbian housemother to her gaggle of younger gays. Is this an aspect of your personality that also transfers to your offscreen life? Absolutely! The elder gay,

the crone — it's also the old lesbian who's burned all of her bridges with the current lesbians her age and has to mine the younger generation for friendship. It's very fun; it's really cold, and it's very realistic to me.

What was the best part for you about acting with rising comic actors such as Bowen and Joel, whom you mentioned, as well as Matt Rogers? We laughed every day. We had such a good time. Outside of my dressing room, every day, there were full-on re-enactments of entire *Real Housewives* episodes. Full Tiffany Pollard monologues from *I Love New York*. It was like Shakespeare in the Park, but it was *Real Housewives* by the trailer. It was exciting. I just love those guys.

Erin was able to afford to purchase the *Fire Island* house following winning a settlement involving a piece of glass and a major Italian chain restaurant. Do you think our current culture is more litigious than necessary? I don't know. I think the character is just really savvy and knows where to make an opportunity for herself. I think that's really more it. I don't know if it was necessarily because of the culture or the time or whatever. But I think that she's just smart about knowing where she can get something.

Was your first trip to Fire Island as a performer or as a vacationing guest? Every trip I've made there was as a performer, and then I stayed for vacation. So, I made it work and pleasure, both at the same time. I've been going there since 2008. I love spending time there and just hanging out.

I'm actually more of a Provincetown lady. I've been going to Provincetown since the 1980s to work and perform and just hang out. These are very much important areas for me. It's the gay beach life that I really love.

You mentioned Andrew Ahn, the gay filmmaker who directed *Fire Island*, and he also directed the lauded 2019 film *Driveways*. Is he a director you could see yourself working with again? Absolutely! I love Andrew. I think he's quite an incredible director. Not only is he so great with actors, the way that he creates films is so visually stunning, and they're so emotionally rich. I really admire him and his vision as an auteur. I would love to work with him again.

You were one of the performers in the line-up for the LGBTQ comedy show *Stand Out*, which was part of Netflix is a Joke: The Festival. Stand-up comedy has received increased attention

with Jerrod Carmichael coming out as gay in his HBO Max comedy special *Rothaniel*, as well as the controversy surrounding Dave Chappelle's Netflix comedy special. As a performer whose roots are in stand-up comedy, do you think there's the possibility of healing? Yes, I think so. We need to hear from LGBTQIA voices in comedy. I think that queer comedy has always been a part of the larger comedy world. We've always had a very strong presence within comedy. I see so many more of us participating and out there in this conversation. I was glad to be part of the festival and I'm so grateful to be part of the queer comedy community.

Finally, I live in Fort Lauderdale, and I noticed that Florida is not on your tour schedule. I know that I've seen you perform in West Palm Beach, Miami, and, more recently, in Fort Lauderdale. With the political climate being what it is under the current governor, do you foresee performing here at any point in the near future? Yes, definitely. I think it's important to be out there. I was actually just there a few weeks ago. I think that we need to be constantly out there, and we definitely need to be heard. Yes, I'm sure I'll be returning again soon.

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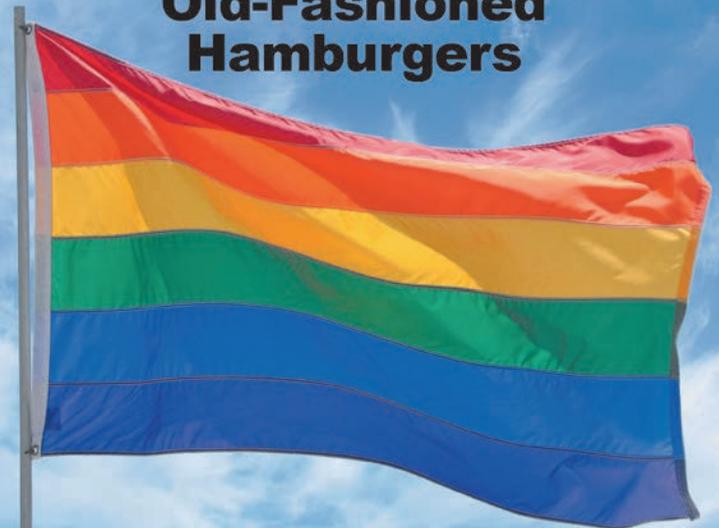
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FILM

From Page 56

Ahn: We really wanted to capture the magic of the place and the beauty of landscape. I think I was just trying to be a sponge and soak it in and find a way to portray the island — its good, bad, beautiful and ugly sides — all in one film.

Phillips: Everyone who has been to Fire Island who has seen the movie says to me the island has never looked more gorgeous. It truly is a testament to when you go there. Sure there are other gay meccas but there's something so bucolic and quiet about it.

Congratulations on snagging a major studio to get behind *Fire Island*. How did that happen? Ahn: To this day I don't know how Joel bamboozled Searchlight [Pictures], but I'm so glad they took on this film that has two queer Asian-American leads and helped us make this movie. A couple years ago, it was probably unimaginable, but audiences have been asking for it for years.

Fire Island exists in indie film land, and I'm hoping that more and more films — indie and studio — get to center queer people of color in a way that creates a more equitable cinema culture; that we get to show off the diversity of the culture our

communities.

Was there an inclination to either focus on the Asian-American identity or to simply not? Ahn: Joel and I never wanted to be heavy handed about it. We're not that way in our own existences. ... But it's this thing where we wanted to show these characters as human beings, as three-dimensional and that a lot of other things make them who they are.

You have Noah and Howie, two gay, Asian-American men who check off the same demographic boxes but are super different. They have different attitudes about love and sex and romance and can still be friends. We're just showing it's not a monolithic experience. That feels really cool and radical to me.

OK, time for some tea: Who was the biggest diva on set? Ahn: (Laughs) Margaret Cho's dog Lucia had some needs. You know, there was something about the energy of the movie that's about chosen family, community, and we all had that perspective. It really felt like a team effort. Now, this was Joel's baby, and he wanted to do great in this. But there were no divas.

Phillips: Everyone believed in the material. We wanted it to be good and have a

devoted interest in it. Look at you trying to TMZ us.

Who was acting for the Oscar the most? Ahn: Everyone was trying to do their best. No one was snoozing this in; no one was coasting. I really love Matt Rodgers though. He will stay in the frame as long as he can. If his body is leaving the frame he'll leave his face in. His hand sneaks into every frame.

I'll say this about Bowen and Joel: They are comedians, but they got to do some dramatic stuff here. They give such beautiful, dramatic performances here. I want them to become huge stars and get big movies from this.

Some of the conversations in *Fire Island* felt very real. I feel like I've had similar chats with friends. Was that all script or was there any improvising? There were some good reads in there. Phillips: I would be in the background during some of that, and I knew I wouldn't even have to work on this. (Laughs)

Ahn: We use the script as our guide throughout the filming, but I really empowered the actors to do fun runs, do an ad lib. I think that adds to the naturalness of the comedy. A cast like this with so many comedi-

ans, so much fun stuff came out of that. **What's the significance to you that *Fire Island* was written by a gay man and directed by a gay man in comparison to many other queer films from Hollywood or major studios?** Phillips: It has to do with this separation. You are separated from straight people. I think it is such an intimate look at what it looks like when we are at our most comfortable. On the island you feel totally insulated from everything else.

So much queer media we see, the representation is great, but they don't have a queer voice behind it, or there's this idea like, is this for teen girls? This is very specific because you see the honesty behind it.

Ahn: That specificity was a big part for me making this. Yes, I'm so excited for a big audience to see this, but I made it for queer people. I made it for queer Asian-American people. To get really specific, I made it for Joel to give it a sense of being super personal. We made *Fire Island* out of love and not out of any desire for fame or money.

Stream Fire Island beginning Friday, June 3, on Hulu.

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PRIDE, From Page 28



Wendy Lopez, cheering on the Dallas Cowboys (Photo courtesy of AECOM)

authority in the new position and speed in which decisions could be made. In a small company like LopezGarcia Group, if you could get the right two or three people in a room, almost any major decision could be made. With a larger company, not so much. Another thing that changed, was my control over my schedule. As CEO, people scheduled around my availability, now I was constantly adjusting for others' availability.

As Texas executive, I am the face and voice of our business in Texas. I am responsible for setting the strategy for growth across all business lines in Texas.

Was there ever any issue, in transitioning from owning your own company to being an executive in a larger company, with you being openly LGBTQ? Did you ever have any concerns that you might be expected to "tone it down" or even go back into the closet? To appreciate my answer to this question, you must first understand that I sold my business to URS in 2008, and then AECOM bought URS in 2014. In the beginning with URS, we just didn't talk much about being LGBTQ. I got the feeling no one wanted to know about it. But to be fair, no one

talked much about their personal lives. So it was kind of "don't ask, don't tell"-ish.

Then when we were purchased by AECOM, everyone was really encouraged to adjust to AECOM's culture which was much more open. AECOM's philosophy is that we are all more creative and productive when we are allowed to be ourselves. I know more about my colleagues' personal lives now than I ever did at URS.

The culture at AECOM is very similar to the culture of LopezGarcia Group; we're like a family that looks out for one another.

What was the company culture like in terms of being open and accepting when you joined AECOM, and in what ways you have helped the company become more diverse and have a more open and accepting corporate culture? AECOM was open to the LGBTQ community from the start, encouraging both LGBTQ staff and allies to join forces. I recall that during the first June that I was with the company, our Great Place to Work committee was busy scheduling Ted Talks, guest speakers, happy hours, etc., in celebration of Pride month.

We have now further evolved as a company to include the establishment of Employee



Wendy Lopez, right, and her wife, Connie Moorer (Photo courtesy of AECOM)

Resource Groups. The Pride ERG, along with the BeBold (Black) and Women's Leadership Alliance were the first ERGs rolled out a couple of years ago. I was asked to serve as the executive sponsor of AECOM's Pride ERG, and I am completing my second year in that role.

AECOM has since added the Mosaic (Asian Pacific Islander), LatinX, Native/Indigenous, Veterans and Early Careers ERGs. It is important to note that the ERGs not only draw members of each community, but allies of each group are also encouraged to join.

As executive sponsor of AECOM's Pride Employee Resource Group, you work to "ensure the global firm is leading by example and drawing local talent to build diverse teams and create inclusive environments." How do you accomplish that goal, and why do you feel like it is important? Each ERG has an executive sponsor, president, vice president, treasurer and secretary structure. This year we also added committees to work on marketing, communication, events, fun, etc. My role as executive sponsor of the Pride ERG is to be a strategist, change agent, innovator, broker and agent for the ERG.

We believe that we can grow and strengthen our business by reaching all members of society. For example, we recruit staff using the oSTEM organization (Out in STEM), and we have discussed hosting happy hours with our clients' corresponding ERGs with the goal of strengthening our relationships with them. The ERG leadership has no shortage of great ideas, and I find myself mostly in the "broker" role, making connections to people and organizations inside and outside of AECOM.

AECOM has maintained a perfect score of 100 on the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2022 Corporate Equality Index and has been designated as a Best Place to Work for LGBTQ+

Equality in the United States. How important is that to you, individually, and to AECOM as a company to maintain that score and that Best Place designation? This recognition of AECOM as a Best Place to Work by the Human Rights Campaign is hugely important to me, our ERG and AECOM leadership. It is like the "Good Housekeeping" seal of approval. On a personal note, my spouse, Connie, and I have been major donors to HRC for many years, so it is personally satisfying to see AECOM recognized in this way.

One of the activities the Pride ERG is investigating ways to improve our health insurance coverage to include gay couple insemination, without gay couples first having to try to conceive "naturally."

One last question: AECOM relocated its headquarters to Dallas last year. But in the last couple of years, the Texas Legislature and some of our elected officials have kind of lead the way in attacks not just on LGBTQ equality — especially transgender rights — but on women as well. Have any of those political decisions perhaps made the company officials question the decision to relocate here? What if any role does AECOM see for itself when it comes to politics and some politicians' efforts to attack our community? AECOM promotes equity, diversity and inclusion and encourages our employees to be who they are and have the same rights as all citizens. Moving our HQ from Los Angeles to Dallas had more to do with the great business climate in Texas, and the availability of corporate staff in Texas. AECOM's leadership believes when we are free to be ourselves, we thrive.

Is there anything I haven't asked about that you wanted to mention? AECOM is excited to be marching in this year's Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade, participating in the Dallas Pride Festival and raising funds for the Silver Pride Project, which supports the senior LGBTQ community. Look for us on the fancy float!

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Remembering Reggie

PRIDE 2022

32 people died when an arsonist set fire to New Orleans' Up Stairs Lounge, 49 years ago this month. Dallas native Reggie Adams was one of them

FRANK PEREZ | Special Contributor

Reggie was a young Black man from Dallas studying to become a Jesuit priest. Ricky was a young white Mormon from New Orleans preparing to go on a mission trip to China. Their divine callings would be radically altered when they met each other one night at a neighborhood gay bar on the edge

of the French Quarter in New Orleans. There, they found a calling in each other. You might even call it destiny. But it was a destiny that would take a tragic turn neither one could see coming.

Reginald Eugene Adams was born on May 31, 1949, in Dallas, and grew up near the projects here. Gifted intellectually and musically, Reggie, as he was called, won a scholarship to Jesuit High School. Upon graduating in 1968, he attended the University of Dallas before transferring in 1969 to St. Charles College in Grand Coteau, La.

At St. Charles, Reggie began the long, arduous process of becoming a Jesuit. In the process, he confessed his homosexual feelings to a superior who nonchalantly brushed off his admission. That same official then recommended Reggie be sent to New Orleans to attend Loyola University.



Reggie Adams

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Firemen gave first aid to survivors of the deadly blaze that destroyed the Up Stairs Lounge on June 25, 1973, in New Orleans. (AP Photo/G.E. Arnold)

One wonders if this man was aware of the temptations and “sinful” opportunities New Orleans had to offer.

Orleans was still firmly closeted, but the French Quarter boasted a lively gay bar scene, and it was only a short street-car ride away from the novitiate house

In 1971, the LGBT community in New

where Reggie lived. And so, when Reggie wasn't studying or praying, he explored the city's underground gay bar scene.

Bars in New Orleans were still segregated at that time, not only by race but also by sexual orientation. Gay male bars didn't want women patrons, and the lesbian bars didn't want male patrons. Reggie became a regular at the Safari Lounge, which catered to African-American men.

Within a block of the Safari Lounge were a few other gay bars, as well as an alley, which, at night, became a popular cruising area for gay men. There was also the Midship, Gertrude's and Gene's Hideaway, all of which hosted a robust hustler business.

The Up Stairs Lounge, however, was different. It occupied the second floor space above a straight bar below. The Up Stairs Lounge was not a seedy hustler bar or even a cruise bar; in fact, it had a family-friendly environment (the notion of a family-friendly bar is not strange in New Orleans). It was a neighborhood joint that catered to the gay working class.

The newly formed Metropolitan Community Church, an LGBT-friendly denomination, held Sunday services there for a while. The bar also featured a room where, on some nights, the regular crowd would stage what they called “nelly-dramas.” Notably, it was one of the few bars that allowed women and African-Americans.

It was at the Up Stairs Lounge that Reggie met Richard “Ricky” Soletto, a local performer just beginning to experiment with what was then called “female-impersonation.” The two hit it off and soon found themselves in love. Those who knew them say they were a natural fit for each other.

Reggie and Ricky both abandoned their religious ambitions and moved into an apartment together. Ricky gave Reggie her class ring. Reggie called Ricky “My Queen,” and nick-named her Regina. The promise of a shared life was sweet, despite the challenges they faced as an interracial gay couple.

But a shared life was not to be.

On Sunday night, June 24, 1973, Reggie and Regina were at the Up Stairs Lounge

REGGIE, Next Page

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REGGIE, From Previous Page



Regina Adams (Screen capture from Robert Camino's documentary, *Upstairs Inferno*)

had just ordered another Scotch and soda, and besides, Regina wanted to also get and return a hat she had borrowed from a friend who was at the bar.

Reggie acquiesced and returned to his conversation while Regina ran home for a few minutes.

By the time Regina returned to the bar, flames were shooting out of the windows at the Up Stairs Lounge, and the street scene was chaotic.

She searched the crowd for Reggie, but Reggie was not there. She went to the hospital, but Reggie was not there, either. Reggie Adams perished in the fire, his body so charred he eventually had to be identified through dental records.

Regina was in a daze

enjoying the weekly beer bust. The bar was full; the music was good, and spirits were high. But not all was well.

One patron, a hustler named Rodger Dale Nunez, was drunk and had started a fight with another regular, Mike Scarborough. The bartender ejected Nunez, much to the relief of the regulars whom Nunez had been annoying. But as he was escorted out of the bar, he threatened to come back and "burn you all out."

Within minutes, a fire was started on the stairwell and soon erupted, engulfing the bar in flames and smoke. Within 19 minutes, 29 people were dead; three more died in the burn ward at Charity Hospital in the following days.

It was the deadliest crime against LGBT people in 20th-century America. No one was ever arrested, and Nunez killed himself a year-and-a-half after the fire.

Just before the fire was set, Reggie and Regina were sitting by the piano when Regina decided to run to their apartment a few blocks away to retrieve her checkbook. The couple was going to dinner soon with bartender Buddy Rasmussen and his boyfriend, Adam Fontenot, as soon as Buddy's shift ended.

Reggie offered to go instead but Regina insisted on going, noting Reggie

for weeks. Unable to accept she had lost her beloved, she dutifully laid out his clothes on the bed each morning. Regina recalls her mother came to stay with her at the French Quarter apartment to support her.

Reggie's mother traveled from Dallas to New Orleans in early July 1973 to bring home the remains of her son. Reggie received a Catholic funeral — something Archbishop Hannan in New Orleans had denied other victims of the fire. Adams was buried in Calvary Hill Cemetery on July 11. He was still wearing Regina's ring.

Regina today lives as a trans woman in New Orleans, where she still performs regularly. In 1980, she legally changed her surname to Adams.

Reggie Adams' grave remained unmarked until 2021, when Marc Schmitz, a high school friend of Reggie's, and the LGBT+ Archives Project of Louisiana, a nonprofit based in New Orleans, shared the cost of having a headstone placed at his grave.

Dallas filmmaker Robert Camina released his award-winning documentary, *Upstairs Inferno*, about the deadly Up Stairs Lounge blaze in 2015. His film includes information about Reggie and Regina Adams and an interview with Regina Adams.

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Diversifying a classic

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Trans actors add to the tapestry of a revived 'Oklahoma!'

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

Of all the Broadway musicals that could be reworked to dive deep into a world of modern inclusion and diversity, *Oklahoma!* probably isn't the first to come to mind. Perceived as a wholesome, family-friendly musical, *Oklahoma!* would seem forever steeped in a different time.

And yet, its 2019 revival by director Daniel Fish changed the way we often see the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic.

The cast is a minimal dozen playing across one set to the familiar songs and story of *Oklahoma!* But the cast is a diverse mix of actors, including two trans actors, bringing a distinctive amount of representation to the stage.

Hennessy Winkler plays Will Parker and Sis plays Ado Annie Carnes in *Oklahoma!* which opened Tuesday, May 31, as part of the Broadway Dallas season at the Music Hall at Fair Park and runs through June 12. The two actors recently discussed their parts in *Oklahoma!* and what that means to today's theater scene.

Oklahoma! marks Winkler's first national tour. He has a longtime love affair with these classic musicals, but he loves them in a more examined way.

"Some of them are so super corny, and I'd be very judgmental. But there were ones that had these darker undertones, like *Oklahoma!*, and those always held my attention more," Winkler said.

He laughs about how many musicals have these tragic or sinister elements that are just glossed over through song. But Winkler thinks that Fish's version of *Oklahoma!* almost gives light to such elements.

"In our musical, Curly wants Judd to



Hennessy Winkler, Sis, and the company of the national tour of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* (Photo by Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman for MurphyMade)

commit suicide. And then there's this whole song about the over-sexed woman of the town. There's this weird race shit and colonialism that was danced around before and [left you] with this good feeling, but it's really kind of dark," he said.

In some ways, Winkler said, it was those undertones that led him to musical theater.

"You have these grownups dressed in silly costumes singing these provocative, sexy songs. There's a rawness I love about all that," he said.

But for this particular experience — albeit an ensemble one — Winkler is front and center as a trans actor on a big stage. Not only is it a big experience for him as an actor, it's also an important one.

"I feel so grateful to be one of the first trans actors in a national tour like this. It's really humbling and exciting. But also, I was awkward for a long time socially and physically while transitioning. I'm so grateful to look at myself now,

and it feels very affirming to be in this show," he said. "Plus, it feels like the industry is on the right track."

After Winkler came out, he didn't transition for more than a decade, so he was at a crossroads. His acting resumé at that time identified him as female, and, he admits, he was good at that and had a voice he didn't want to give up just yet.

In short, there was this wall he had hit as an actor.

"People didn't know other than there was something going on with me. I think they picked up on this in my auditions," he said.

Today, Winkler brings his authentic self to the stage — especially when the director wanted everyone to do so. In this environment Winkler feels empowered to not only take on his character Will but to be that representation on-stage.

"I'm just performing as myself up there. Daniel wanted all of us to bring

ourselves to the role rather than diving into the character, and so while Will isn't necessarily a trans man, I play him as one."

For his first role in a national tour with a deep authenticity to his role, Winkler has the best of all worlds during his *Oklahoma!* experience. "Everything about this has been a learning experience and a gift," he said.

With the role of Ado Annie, Sis has found her dream come true. She was familiar with the show already after doing it in college, but this time is a far different experience.

"I think being a part of the show authentically is kind of what everyone is going for — allowing the show to tell the story and just lean into the text a bit more," she said. "When you take out the fluff you see these people and the words truly."

When she was cast, Sis said she was excited about taking on such a role and

continuing to redefine it. In the 2019 revival, Ali Stroker won a Tony award for the role as the first wheelchair-using actor. For the tour, Ado Annie is now played by a Black trans woman.

"It was exciting to be cast in this big of a role," she said. "I can redefine and change the character's narrative while also showcasing myself."

She also appreciates how this new *Oklahoma* delivers something different to audiences. Theater used to be more straightforward entertainment. Sis sees

this and other shows as giving people something deeper and serving a bigger purpose.

"You would go to the theater for fun. It was a distraction. Now we're turning the tables," she said. "We should take life and art and look at everything in much more honest ways."

Although there is much to celebrate about Sis bringing representation to the stage, she talks about how labels can distract from who she essentially is.

"I don't have this trans flag on my

chest. In a way I try not to give it too much credit. I want my existence as a woman and taking up space in this world to be known above all else," she said. "No one may have expected a plus-size Black trans woman in this role before, but the representation here is that anyone can tell this story and that I'm in the mix of it all. I want to just be me."

For Sis, while she understands the representation she brings, normalizing that is the ultimate goal.

Originally from Houston, Sis said she

is happy to be back in her home state. Currently based in Los Angeles, she said she is ready to serve it onstage to her fellow Texans and family coming up to see the show.

"I miss the people and the comfort here. There really is no place like it," she said.

Oklahoma! runs through June 12 at Music Hall at Fair Park. For tickets, visit BroadwayDallas.org. The tour will play at Bass Hall June 21-26. For tickets, visit BassHall.com.

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A royal ride

DRIVE



2022 Toyota Tundra takes us forward to 1794

CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
AutoCasey@aol.com

I'd like to believe the 2022 Toyota Tundra 1794 takes its moniker from the year a hearty bunch of patriots staged their Whiskey Rebellion against revenueurs. They're my kind of people. But it's more likely a nod to the Tundra's assembly location near San Antonio, that's built where a ranch was founded in 1794 by Juan Ignacio de Casanova on land given him by The King of Spain.

Either way, it wears its brand well. Recently redesigned, this Texas-sized pickup flaunts a towering chrome grille, squinty LED headlamps, chiseled fenders and long cab. At the aft end is an aluminum-reinforced composite bed that is a bit lighter, but should also stand up to a beating. Press the tailgate button to deploy it, and you'll find a step for climbing into the bed with LED lights and sliding anchors to secure cargo.

It's a very sophisticated-looking

truck that's ready to work.

The interior was clearly crafted for the ranch owner, not a ranch hand. Cream beige leather seats are heated and ventilated front/rear, but probably aren't the best color for those slogging hay and tromping mud. Real wood graces the dash; 12-speaker JBL audio fills the cabin with sound, and a twin-panel sunroof lets in the light. Rear passengers luxuriate on a couch with ridiculous legroom.

But, that's not what you notice upon entering: Smack in the middle of the contrast stitching and timber is a 14-inch infotainment screen with a gigantic volume knob beneath. Connect devices via wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto; keep them humming with wireless charging in the forward console. A flatscreen gauge cluster and 10-inch color heads-up display keep drivers focused ahead.

Drivers get more assistance from the extensive suite of safety gear. Key are automatic emergency braking with pedestrian detection, lane keep assist, blind spot alert and rear cross path detection. Add to that adaptive cruise control, lane tracing steering and a trailer brake controller. And a

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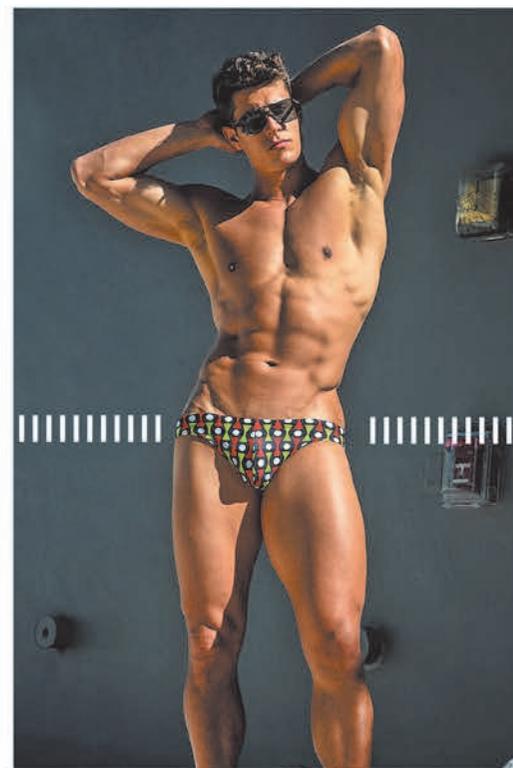


Blue and purple flame print pattern 4" inseam swim shorts with a drawcord elastic waistband and mesh lining, in a slim, tailored fit.

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Royal and white hexagon print pattern 4" inseam swim shorts with a drawcord elastic waistband and mesh lining, in a slim, tailored fit.



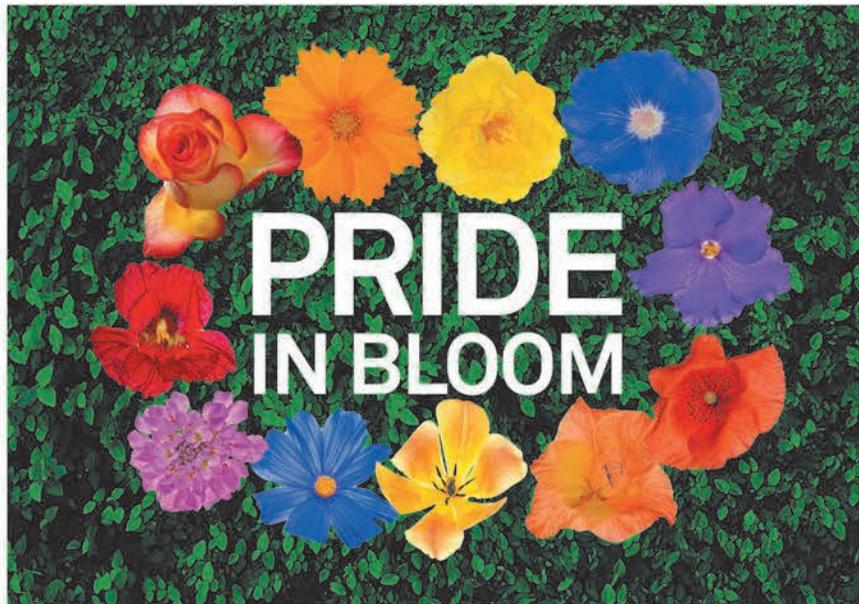
Red, black and citrus pin head geo print pattern micro-low swim briefs with a covered elastic waistband and interior drawcord.



Navy, fuchsia and white honeycomb print pattern, classic low rise swim brief with a contoured pouch, contrast elastic waistband and front drawcord.



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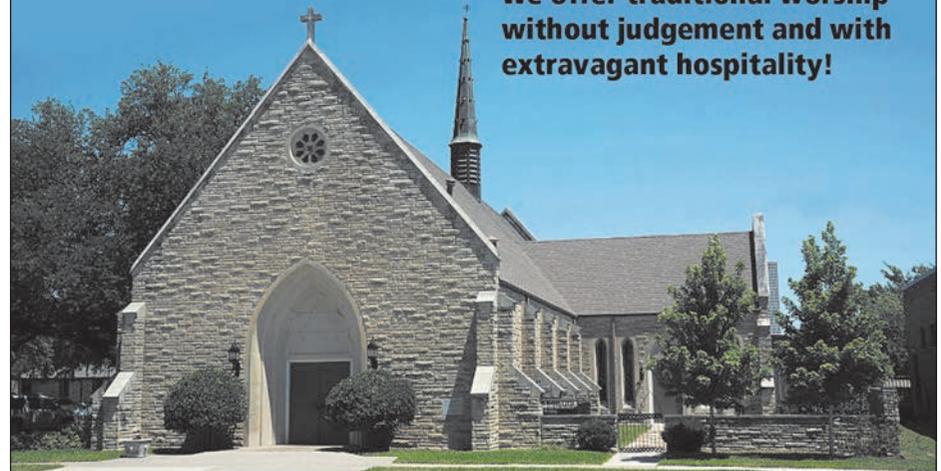
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This Tundra is the most pleasant pickup I've ever driven. The mirrors are too big for daily driving, and it feels absolutely huge even on open Interstate, but the powertrain is a delight. And that may not be the best part as the truck rides on an air suspension that can be raised/lowered



for off-roading or entering, but drive modes configure the suspension, steering and throttle from wafting comfort to sport truck.

I found Normal mode the best for

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if they are just getting to the office or a state park. Wherever you roll, you'll do it with ample power and plentiful comfort for all of life's activities.

That's reflected in the price, though: Tundras start at \$35,950, but ours came



to a lofty \$66,395. Competitors include the Ford F-150 King Ranch, Chevy Silverado High Country and Ram Limited Longhorn.

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Send comments to Casey at AutoCasey@aol.com; follow him on YouTube @ AutoCasey.

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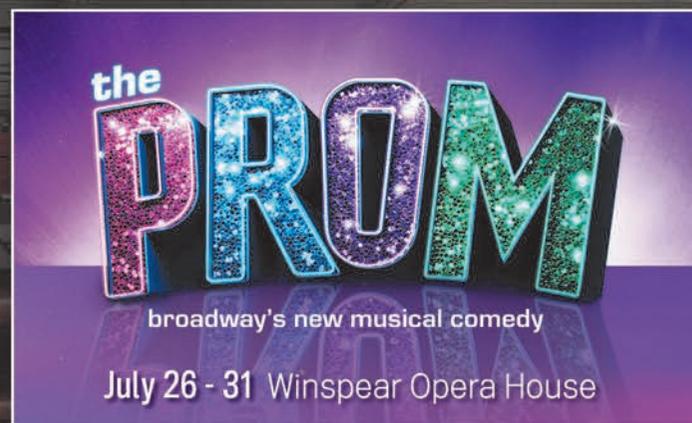
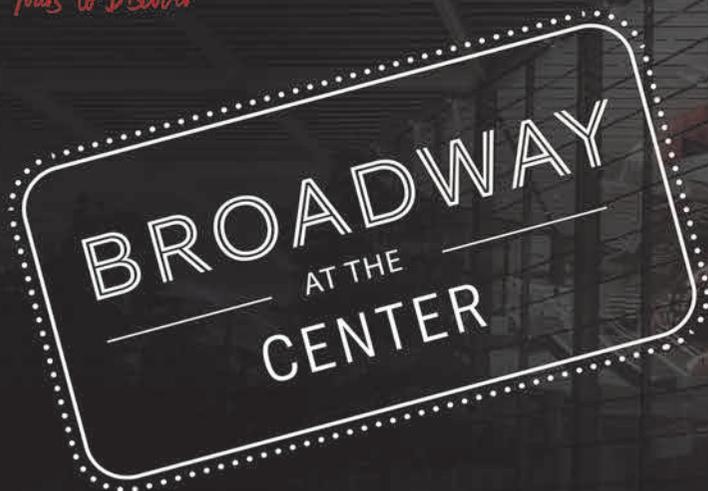
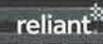
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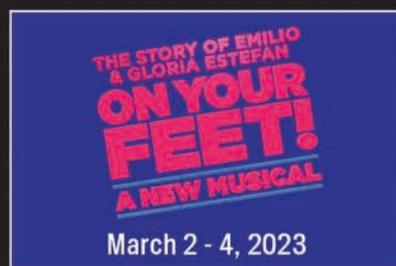
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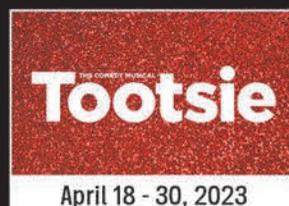
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COST, From Page 50



Protesting for transgender equality at the Texas Capitol (Photo courtesy of Equality Texas)

sleeping in juvenile, just to have somewhere to sleep, and they did not do anything wrong.”

Texas has faced a housing capacity crisis for children in the foster care system, also known as children without placement. Many facilities — many of which were considered unsafe for children — decided to close or were shut down, resulting in the loss of beds for some of the most vulnerable youth in Texas. In addition, officials struggled to house children in proper facilities, resulting in record numbers of children living and sleeping in motel rooms, churches, CPS offices and out-of-state facilities, which are typically unsafe.

“Last summer, Texas had more than 400 children without placement,³ and that number has been going up and down,” Guillory said. “Part of the problem is that the child welfare agency is

under years of long court orders as they [do not] meet the goals they have been held in contempt of court several times.”

The order made Johnson and her family hesitant to stay in Texas for fear of more anti-trans legislation. She said they will relocate to another state if the situation worsens, and she has already searched for other states and communities that share her political and social beliefs.

Johnson said she wants her family to feel safe in a supportive political climate and for her son to have access to adequate gender-affirming healthcare.

“The turning point will be during the November elections. If the climate stays the same here, and the same people remain in power, we will leave the state,” Johnson said. “We will not stay because my son will not be safe here. My whole family will not be safe here.” ■



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DALLAS PRIDE SCHEDULE

• The Dallas Pride Miller Lite Music Festival begins at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 4, and runs through 9 p.m. at Fair Park. Tickets are \$10 for adults age 20 and older, \$5 for teens ages 13-19 and free for children 12 and under is free.

• Teen Pride will be in the Automobile Building and will be open from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, June 4. There is no additional entry fee for Teen Pride.

• Family Pride Zone will be inside the Automotive Building, and will be open from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, June 4. There is no additional entry fee for Family Pride Zone.

• Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade steps off at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 5, inside Fair Park, starting at The Coliseum before circling the Cotton Bowl, passing in front of the Hall of State and concluding back at The Coliseum.

DANCE THROUGH PRIDE

Dallas Pride returns to in-person events this weekend, with the Miller Lite Music Festival on Saturday and the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade on Sunday. But the Pride party is non-stop all weekend, starting Friday night, June 3, and going through Sunday evening, thanks to Daddy Ersin, Baker+Calagna and Purple Found-

ation, who are coming together to present the Dallas Pride official dance parties.

The dance parties will feature DJs Ale Lo, Calagna, Danny Verde, Isis Muretech, Jamey Boozer, Karsten Sollors, Las Bibas from Vizcaya, Nick Stracener, Rue D and TDon.

— From Staff Reports

Friday, June 3, 9 p.m.

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Calagna and Karsten Sollars
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Saturday, June 4, 3 a.m.

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ticketleap.com

Saturday, June 4, 1 p.m.

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Danny Verde and Tdon
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1950 Market Center Blvd.
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Saturday, June 4, 10 p.m.

Mega RAM Pride
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Tier 1 tickets (sold out)
Tier 2 \$40
VIP Mega Ram, Tier 1 \$70
ram-gear-party.ticketleap.com

Sunday, June 5, 4 p.m.

Spectrum Tea Dance
Isis Muretech and Rue D
S4 Patio, 3911 Cedar Springs Road
Tickets \$15-\$40 at EventBrite



LOUD, From Page 27

houses, face painters, vendor booths and much more. Entertainment will include ventriloquist Dennis Lee with Nana Puddin' and the singing group The Micro Chicks. Magician Daryl Howard will be there, and the folks from Creature Teacher will also be on hand, giving the kiddos — and the grown-ups too — a chance to get up close and personal with some fascinating animals.

Spiderman and other costumed characters are expected as well.

Family Pride Zone is a designated safe space for families with children. It will be inside the Automotive Building and will be open from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. To ensure that the area remains a safe space for children, security professionals will staff the balloon-festooned entrance to make sure no coolers and no alcohol are taken inside and that those entering are properly dressed for a child-friendly area. ■

No additional admission free is required for Family Pride Zone.



the company until 2011 when he retired after 38 years with the company.

Hearn has had two partners who died of AIDS: Gerald Kennedy, his partner from 1972 to 1980, who died in 1987, and Greg Dollgener, his partner from 1989 to Dollgener's death in 1994. In 1996, Hearn and a group of his friends founded the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund, and Hearn has served on the organization's board since its founding. After serving as president and treasurer, Hearn is now the organization's assisting treasurer.

Through the years, Hearn has participated in numerous organizations, including GALA North Texas, GALA North Texas Business Group from 2013-2017, AIDS Services of McKinney, and Prism Health North Texas (previously known as AIDS Arms), and he has been recognized many times for his volunteer awards, including receiving KRLD Citizen of the Week, the 2009 Open Heart Award, the Randy Franklin Memorial "I Care" Community Service Award, the Hearts and Heroes Spirit Award, the John Leaphart Memorial Award for Community Service, the 2016 Readers Voice Awards LGBT Role Model, the Heart and Hands Award, the Linda Sparkman Memorial Spirit Award and the Diamond Rose Award.

Hearn is a member of Cathedral of Hope UCC and each year helps organize MetroBall, the signature annual fundraiser for GDMAF.



Bill Lindsey and Michael Champion, aka Linze Serrell and Sable Alexander

For more than 30 years, Bill Lindsey and his husband Michael Champion put their time, talents and passion to use advocating for LGBTQ equality and raising money for LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS causes, until Champion's untimely death from COVID in January 2021, which he contracted while caring for patients at the nursing home where he was director of nursing. Since then, Lindsey has continued their work with the support of the extensive chosen family he and Champion had created.

As a registered nurse, Champion worked to educate the community about HIV and on dealing with LGBTQ people in the aging and long-term care communities. He received the National Director of Nursing in Administration award in 2009 and again in 2017.

Beginning in the late 1980s through the mid-1990s and beyond, Lindsey and Champion founded and led an organization called Glitz-n-Glitter that brought together a variety of performers to stage regular fundraising shows. Both competed in drag pageants as Linze Serrell and Sable Alexander, and both won several titles. Lindsey sings live and was a Voice of Pride semi-finalist. His drag titles include Miss Charity America (twice) and 2005 Miss Gay Texas At Large. Champion was Miss Charity America Emeritus 2006 Miss Gay Texas State at Large.

In 2008 Lindsey and Champion founded the Miss Gay Texas State Pageant System which, like the couple's other undertakings, focuses on fundraising for the community.

Since his husband's death, Lindsey continues his work, living by his motto, "Raising one dollar at a time for any cause!"



James Love, aka Cassie Nova

James Love grew up in and around Dallas, performing in drag for the first time at a Presidents Day show benefitting the Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance. He was president of DGLA's youth group, GLYA, in the early 1990s.

Love has worked in the Rose Room, the largest show bar in the South, as Cassie Nova, since 1993, and he became the Rose Room show director about seven years ago. He is the regular emcee of the Rose Room shows, hosts Cassie's Freak Show each Monday at JR.'s Bar & Grill and in 2020 hosted Dallas Voice's virtual Pride Party.

As Cassie Nova, Love has participated in numerous fundraising efforts over the years, and each December he hosts Cassie's Annual Freakmas Party at JR.'s,

LEADING, Next Page

DEBBIE GIBSON

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LIVE NATION

PHOTO CREDIT NICK SPANOS

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LEADING, From Previous Page

a drag show and raffle that raises money for the Secret Santa Program which purchases Christmas gifts for students in the Personalized Learning Preparatory program at Sam Houston Elementary Program.

Love is also a contributing columnist for Dallas Voice, offering help and humor in his Ask A Drag Queen column, published online and in print on the second and fourth Fridays of every month. He and his husband of 17 years, Jamie, live in Midlothian with their five dogs and a giant tortoise named Ruby.



Adam Medrano

Former Dallas City Councilman Adam Medrano was first elected to that office in June 2013. In his final term on the council he was one of three openly-

gay council members and Dallas mayor pro tem, after being chosen by his colleagues as deputy mayor pro tem in his third term. Medrano was chair of the city's LGBT Taskforce for more than seven years. Under his leadership, the taskforce supported full inclusion of spouses and partners of LGBTQ employees in city pension benefits for civilian and first responder employees, full inclusion of spouses, partners and dependents of LGBTQ employees in city healthcare benefits, and fully-inclusive city healthcare benefits per WPATH standards for trans employees and their spouses and dependents.

The taskforce organized a meeting between community leaders Dallas Police Department officials in 2016 to discuss updates regarding a then-on-going spate of attacks in the Oak Lawn and interfaced with Mobility Planning to explore safety implementations in the Oak Lawn area that same year. The taskforce also established the Outlast Youth 501(c)(3), installed 10 rainbow crosswalks in Oak Lawn and Cedar Springs and championed a resolution to fly the custom-designed city of Dallas Pride Flag in each June since 2020.

Before being elected to the city council Medrano served on the Dallas ISD

Board of Trustees. First elected in 2006, he was elected first vice president of the school board in 2007, then was elected board president three separate times. He also worked as a supervisor with the city's Parks and Recreation Department.

Medrano continues to volunteer with a variety of public service projects and organizations.



Kristi Wilson

Kristi Wilson is the national accounts manager for Andrews Distributing and a longtime LGBTQ community advocate. She's worked for Andrews for 16 years,

and, since the beginning of her career, has served as Andrews' primary representative for the company's partnership with the Dallas Tavern Guild.

Wilson regularly attends Dallas Tavern Guild meetings and said she appreciates the chance to support the LGBTQ community through building relationships and spreading awareness. Her goal as the voice of Andrews has always been to work hard to earn the trust and confidence of those in the LGBTQ community.

In addition to her work with Dallas Tavern Guild and supporting bars and organizations, Wilson has, for the last decade, also worked with Caven Enterprises' The Holiday Gift Project for Sam Houston Elementary.

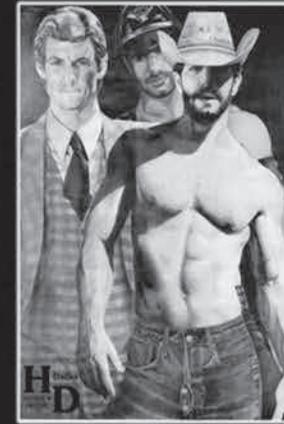
Wilson and her husband Mike, an active LGBTQ advocate for the last 27 years, have been married for 17 years and have two children, Garrett and Brylee. When asked what the grand marshal nomination meant to her, Wilson said, "It means so much to even be acknowledged as someone who has made an impact in this community; that is what I have wanted from the beginning. I hope to continue to work closely with the Dallas Tavern Guild and all the bars and organizations contributing to this community.

"Pride is not about one day or one event," she added. "It's supporting everyone all year. I'm blessed to even be nominated for such an honor." ■



PRIDE

2022



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Creating Jumper

ART AND EQUALITY

Houston artist Jumper Maybach uses art as a weapon against hate

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

Coming out stories are often more complex than the mere act of revealing one's authentic self to someone else. The stories often stem from adversity, revelation or mere love. Once that closet door is open though, the rest is — for the most part — a blossoming.

That's what happened in Jumper Maybach's case.

Maybach (nee Ben Workman) is an artist based in Houston. His work is contemporary and abstract — but behind it is a deeper message. He was ostracized for years in his career, but in truly coming out, he opted to take that pain and create something beautiful.

"I think everyone is bullied in some shape or form," Maybach said by phone from his Houston studio. "I believe that led to my whole point in doing art. If you own a Jumper Maybach, you are part of my mission to end hate in the world."

Maybach began creating his art in 2011, and since then, he's grown by leaps and bounds, with shows throughout the U.S. as well as having shown in Paris and Dubai.

Along with his artwork itself for sale, he's also created a line of merchandise that includes scarves, shirts, bags and more. Recently, he partnered with Proform to launch an exclusive line of area rugs inspired by his works.

"Proform is proud to announce our licensing agreement with Jumper Maybach to bring their passion for art to the commercial and residential flooring markets," Proform President Mitchell Saltzman stated in a press release. "We look forward to working with our dealer partners to bring these unique and exciting artistic expressions to the worldwide

market for area rugs."

For Maybach, it's another step forward: "What better way to stand up and walk the path of ending the bullying, hate and intolerance within society than to have people standing literally

and then filed a lawsuit. He said after working there for 37 years, he refused to leave because of harassment.

"I deserved to have my retirement. They were not gonna force me out," he said of his determination. "Finally, I won

Perhaps it was still his grandfather's spirit, but Maybach discovered a talent that erupted out of him.

"I had no clue I had this in me," he said. "But I just know this spiritual path is for me."



with my art woven into a rug under their feet," he said. "There is no better way to join the movement of change than that."

Now consumers will literally stand up for inclusivity by standing on a Jumper Maybach rug.

But it was definitely dark before all the light Maybach can bask in today.

Now retired, Maybach worked in virtual technology at the Department of Veteran Affairs where he figured that, since it was a government office, official non-discrimination policies would be respected. But that was not the case during his tenure.

"They hired this guy, and he would just attack me," Maybach recalled. "I didn't wanna go to work. I was being harassed to the point that I had to do something."

He said he went into deep prayer —

my case, and I think it kind of helped some gay rights as well in the workplace."

He filed suit in 2012, then retired seven years later, August 2019.

During the course of the lawsuit, Jumper Maybach came out.

(To clarify — Jumper Maybach is Ben Workman's alter ego, or perhaps artist ego. He is also, quite literally, a clown.)

"I'm sure people thought I had lost it when I started dressing as a clown and painting, but I was channeling my grandfather who was a clown in the '60s," he explained. "It was just this spark in me to create Jumper. I was trying to show that however different a person I may be, you should leave me alone because I'm just as human."

Maybach admitted he was never an artistic person. So when he started creating, even his husband was perplexed.

And he lives up to his self-proclaimed mission of fighting hate and homophobia. Maybach doesn't just paint with that in mind — he gives back.

"Right now, when we have a show or event, proceeds will go to the Matthew Shepard Foundation, the AIDS Foundation of Houston and Lady Gaga's Born this Way Foundation. I'd love to create a foundation to distribute money to all the charities."

If Maybach has his way, he'll turn his brand into a multimillion dollar company just to give to LGBTQ and related agencies.

"That's my goal, and I think it could happen," he said.

With his own merch and a high-profile partnership already, it's easy to believe him. ■

Learn more about the artist and shop his designs at JumperMaybach.com.

Happy Pride Month

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Folks in the northern part of DFW are just as proud and just as ready to celebrate as anybody, and Carrollton Pride is the proof. Carrollton is home to many diverse communities, and all of those people are invited to celebrate together on Saturday, June 4, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Horizon Unitarian Universalist Church, 1641 W. Hebron Parkway. There will be vendor booths, food, music and more. Check out the Facebook event page for more information.

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@hopecottage.org.

■ **Every Monday: THRIVE**
Resource Center's THRIVE Monday Support Group for LGBTQ adults 50 and older meets virtually and is led by interns from the SMU counseling program. For more information on the support group and how to join, please send an email to THRIVE@myresourcecenter.org.

■ **Weekly: Frontrunners**
Running club for the LGBTQ community and allies of DFW. Meet at 7:15 p.m. on Wednesdays and 8:30 a.m. on Saturdays at the corner of Hall Street and Turtle Creek Boulevard in Turtle Creek Park for a one-hour walk/run on the Katy Trail.

JUNE

■ **June 3: Music in the Square**
The free concert summer series is a family-friendly event with local musicians performing

each Friday in June. at 7 p.m. through June 24 at Frisco Square's Simpson Plaza, 8843 Coleman Blvd. FriscoSquare.com.

■ **June 3: Pride Kickoff**
Pinkstar with performances by Ruby Diamond Doll, Mannequita Diamond Doll, Vogue by Xa'Pariis Ebony from 10 p.m.-2 a.m. at Ruins Deep Ellum. Tickets at DiscoTX.com.

■ **June 3: MetroBall**
Thea Austin, Martha Wash, Tiffany and Chris Chism perform. Fundraiser for GDMFAF at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road at 7 p.m. Tickets \$40 at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/metroball-2022-tickets-218071697317>.

■ **June 3: Pride at The Echo**
The Echo Lounge & Music Hall, 1323 N. Stemmons Freeway, hosts Pride at the Echo, presented by Live Nation, on Friday, June 3, an all-ages event featuring DJ Level and a full lineup of some of Dallas' best drag entertainers. Tickets are \$10; doors open at 7 p.m. See the Concerts.LiveNation.com for tickets and info.

■ **June 4: Dallas Pride's Miller Lite Music Festival**
The Dallas Pride Miller Lite Music Festival takes place in the Centennial Building, the Automobile Building and the Esplanade at Fair Park. The festival begins at 11 a.m. Events in the Centennial Building and the vendors will be open until 7 p.m.; Family Pride Zone and

Teen Pride, both in the Automobile Building, are open until 6 p.m., the festival events and concerts take place in the Esplanade until 9 p.m. Admission is free for children 12 and under, admission for teens ages 13-19 is \$5, and admission for those 20 and older is \$10. Visit DallasPride.org for details and to purchase tickets.

■ **June 4: Carrollton Pride**
Carrollton Pride Celebration is from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Horizon Unitarian Universalist Church, 1641 Hebron Parkway, Carrollton. Visit Facebook.com/events/926718201339975 for more information.

■ **June 4: Jade Jolie**
Jade Jolie from RuPaul's Drag Race and Boulet Brothers Dragula at 9 p.m. at Urban Cowboy Saloon, 2620 E. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth.

■ **June 4-12: Newsies**
Presented at Casa Mañana, 3101 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. TicketMaster.com.

■ **June 4: The Women's Chorus of Dallas**
Divas is a fundraiser for TWCD. Doors open at 7 p.m. for dessert, drinks and silent auction. Music at 8 p.m. Auction closes at 10:30 p.m. at the Sammons Center for the Arts, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd.

■ **June 4 and 11: Pride in Longview**
Live Out Loud Longview will continue its Family Style Event in the park on June 4. Pride



For more than 30 years now, The Women's Chorus of Dallas has been helping to ensure that women's voices are heard by helping promote strength, diversity and empowerment of women through music. On Saturday, June 4, TWCD hosts "DIVAS," its signature fundraising cabaret event, beginning at 7 p.m. at the Sammons Center for the Arts, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd. Party in style with dessert, drinks and a silent auction full of fabulous finds — and, of course, amazing music — and help TWCD keep raising their melodic voices for the next 30 years and beyond. Tickets start at \$50; purchase tickets and find more information online at TheWomensChorusOfDallas.com.

East Texas Longview's festival on June 11, at Heritage Plaza in downtown Longview at the heart of Longview's Arts and Cultural District.

■ June 4: ShrevePride

ShrevePride hosts Field Gay, a day of outdoor intramural sports competitions designed to foster community and teamwork, with check in at 9 a.m. and games beginning at 10 a.m. at Shreveport's A.C. Steere Park. ShrevePride.com.

■ June 4: Pride Brunch

Pride brunch benefiting Promise House. The bubbly will flow, the food is continuous and the music nonstop from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Paradiso, 308 N. Bishop Ave. Tickets start at \$250. PinkPartyParadiso.Eventbrite.com.

■ June 4: Pride Blowout Drag Show

Hosted by Brittany Broski and Bleach featuring Jada Fox, Barbie Davenport Dupree, Shalissa, Victoria Fox, Fagedelics. Mechanical bull, vibrator races, drag queen dunking booth by Raquel Blake from 8 p.m.-2 a.m. at Doublewide and Thunderbird Station.

■ June 4: Pink Cellophane Club Party

Crystal Queer Riot returns with the Pink Cellophane Club Party starting at 10 p.m. at Ruins, 2653 Commerce St. in Deep Ellum. The event features music by DJ Vanity Roux and a special appearance by performance artist Hermajestie The Hung. Party is for those 21 and up; tickets start at \$10. See the Facebook event page for more information.

■ June 5: Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade

The 39th Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade steps off at 2 p.m. inside Fair Park. The parade will begin at the Coliseum, circle the Cotton Bowl and pass in front of the Hall of State before returning to the Coliseum. Admission is free. Parking in the State Fair parking lots is \$10. The DART Rail Green Line goes to Fair Park.

■ June 5: Pride Storytime

PriDenton presents Pride Storytime in collaboration with Spiderweb Salon and Outreach Denton at 3 p.m. at Denton Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1111 Cordell St, Denton.

■ June 5: Country Diva Pride Brunch

Pride brunch with special guests Rocco Steele and Jade Jolie hosted by Raquel Blake and Daphne Rio from noon-2 p.m. at Cedar Springs Tap House, 4123 Cedar Springs Road.

■ June 5: VIP Closeout Show

Willam, Bleach, Krystal Summers, Pinche and Kylee O'Hara Fatale from 6-10 p.m. at Doublewide. Tickets at DiscoTX.com.

■ June 7, 14: The Golden Girls

Six episodes of The Golden Girls, including two with Blanche's gay brother, will screen at 7 p.m. at local AMC and Cinemark theaters.

■ June 7: Pride Frisco

City of Frisco proclamation at Frisco City Council Chambers, 6101 Frisco Square Blvd.,

Frisco at 6:30 p.m. Attendees will walk to Jake's Burgers, 6195 W. Main St., Frisco, for a celebratory reception afterwards. Wear rainbow colors.

■ June 7: PrimeTimers

First Tuesday lunch and games at 11:30 a.m. at Flaming Buffet, 11722 Marsh Lane.

■ June 7: 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.

■ June 8: Same-sex spouse grief group

Grief support group for people who have lost a same-sex spouse or partner meets on Zoom on the second Tuesday of the month from 6:30-8 p.m. For notifications, contact Richard DeKnock at tastefullyrichard@gmail.com.

■ June 10: Silky N. Ganache

Silky N. Ganache from *RuPaul's Drag Race* Season 11 and *All Stars 6* at 9 p.m. at Urban Cowboy Saloon, 2620 E Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth.

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



IS THERE AN ECHO IN HERE?

The Echo Lounge & Music Hall, 1323 N. Stemmons Freeway in Dallas, hosts Pride at the Echo, presented

by Live Nation, on Friday, June 3, an all-ages event featuring DJ Level, Josephine Ohara Andrews, Taylor Summers, Jade Summers, Kandy Cayne, Mulan Alexander and Raquel Blake. And the icing on top? DVtv's newest addition, Larry the Fairy is event coordinator. Tickets are \$10, available online at Concerts.LiveNation.com. Doors open at 7 p.m.



LET'S GET RIOTOUS!

Dress as you are. Express yourself. No Judgments: That's the mantra driving the **Pink Cellophane Club Party** happening from 10 p.m.

Saturday, June 4, through 2 a.m. Sunday, June 5, at Ruins, the Deep Ellum cocktail bar and live music venue located at 2653 Commerce St. Crystal Queer Riot, Lady Vanity Roux and Ruins are joining together to host a Pride party that will feature music by DJ Lady Vanity Roux and a special appearance by Hermajestie The Hung, the whimsical, horrifying, defiant and seductive performance artist who "unapologetically articulates the Afro-Queer Experience, transcends the gender binary and transports audiences to another dimension." This is an LGBTQ Pride party for those 21 and up. Tickets start at \$10. See the Facebook event page for more info.



GONNA SPIN YOU RIGHT 'ROUND

Back in the day, if you wanted to find all the best dance music all in one place, there was only one place to look:

Oak Lawn Records. Next Friday, June 10, The New Beat, Lizard Lounge Presents, Robotiko Rejekto and Trees Dallas present **The Oak Lawn Records Reunion**, featuring C.C.C.P., T-4-2, Microchip League and Lesson Seven Live. You'll find all the Oak Lawn Classic bands performing in Dallas for the first time in decades. It's a one-night-only throwback to Dallas history, and it all starts at 7 p.m. at Trees, 2709 Elm St. General admission tickets are \$35, and VIP tickets are \$65. Check out the Facebook event page for details.

Jenny Block

GIRL ON GIRLS

Why can't every day be Pride?

I wish it was Pride every day. I don't mean the parties and the parades and the rainbow-themed outfits, although all of those are great. I mean the sense of community.

So many more people feel safe being out that month and supporting friends and family who are out. People want to connect to one another, and it's easier because you know that people at Pride events are either LGBTQ themselves or allies.

But it's only one month. And, in many places, it's only one day really. And then, BAM! It's back to business as usual, which for some members of our community can mean feeling really, really alone.

Being a member of the LGBTQ community is so weird in some ways. To my mind it has the power to both connect people and to isolate them. I recently had a bit of an epiphany on a Celebrity Cruise. I was on their brand-new ship, the Beyond. It's captain, Kate McCue, is the first American woman to ever captain a cruise ship of this size ("this size" meaning massive). She's an incredibly accomplished and intelligent woman.

She also happens to be beautiful and a lot of fun, which has helped her to amass an incredible social media following, with three million follows on TikTok alone. And she has an Elf Sphynx cat named Bug Naked who has more of a personality than many people who I've met.

So, there's that, too.

Captain Kate has created an environment on that ship that is friendly and open and inclusive — so much so that staff and crew and guests alike can be overheard talking about how much they adore her.

Just to give you an idea of that adoration, on the 10-day cruise, there was an event that she and Bug Naked were the stars of called Bug Naked Trivia. It was scheduled to be held in a small-to-medium-sized venue and instead had to be moved to the main theater because so many people showed up. That's what I'm talking about. People love her — and they love Bug, too.

(This may feel like a digression. But stay with me here.)



I have been on lots of cruises, and many of them do a nice job of holding LGBTQ happy hours or get-togethers at least once during the trip. The thing is, that can create momentary connection but not necessarily overall community.

The difference is not how many are held or what they consist of. The difference is the surrounding environment. Without a supportive environment, being gay on a cruise — just like in life — can be isolating.

It can be nerve wracking wondering if people are watching you and your partner dance or kiss. Even if you don't give two hoots what they think, it can still be off-putting. You can be yourself at the happy hour, and then you have to go back to being cautious or aware or something on that scale, even if you're the most out person in the world. Safety before all else, right?

On this cruise — and I have to give at least some credit, a lot of credit, to Captain Kate — the surrounding environment made it such that I felt comfortable



Captain Kate and Bug Naked

all the time. Instead of creating isolation in any way, the cruise specifically created community, whether they were aware of it or not, simply by being led by someone who clearly would not tolerate anything less. That tenor, in turn, inspired me and the people I met at the LGBTQ happy hour on the first day, to suggest we do it every day, which we basically did.

I felt comfortable enough to go up to strangers who appeared to be LGBTQ and invite them. It was like I knew the cruise had my back. The cruise felt like Pride. It felt like an amnesty

day, like homophobia simply would not be tolerated. And so, for any change, it felt like if there were any homophobia around, it had to stay in the closet, not us.

Instead of creating isolation, being gay actually gave me an "in" of sorts. It gave me a reason to reach out and a way to fit it. "Oh, you're gay too? Come sit with us!"

Like I said, being gay has the power to both connect people and to isolate them. Seems strange that one thing could have

two diametrically opposite effects.

So, that's why I wish it was Pride every day. That's why I wish I lived on a cruise ship, figuratively if not literally, with Captain Kate McCue or someone like her at the helm, of course. It's not about any one event, it's about the tone set in the environment in which that event — and you — exist.

If homophobia is tolerated, it will rise. And being LGBTQ will result in isolation. If homophobia, instead, is condemned and even ridiculed for how ridiculous it is — as it should be — homophobia will fall, and being LGBTQ will result in connection.

Listen, I don't write these columns because I have all of the answers — or any of them, for that matter. I write them to inspire us all to think about where we are and how things could be different. I write them to make connections in the world around me.

I'd like to see the tenor of Pride last all year round. I'd like all corporate entities to support us for real and not just for profit. I'd like more of us to join together and more allies to be like Captain Kate and do the easiest thing in the world for them — expose their kindness and support and love and acceptance of every kind of human and every kind of love for anyone to see and make it clear that hate has no place at sea or on the planet.

this week's solution

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D	Y	K	E			M	E	A	S			S	E	N	S	E	

 **browse**
For a more complete Community Calendar online, visit Tinyurl.com/dvevents.

 **submit**
To submit an item for inclusion in the Community Calendar, visit Tinyurl.com/dvevents.

HAPPY PRIDE Y'ALL



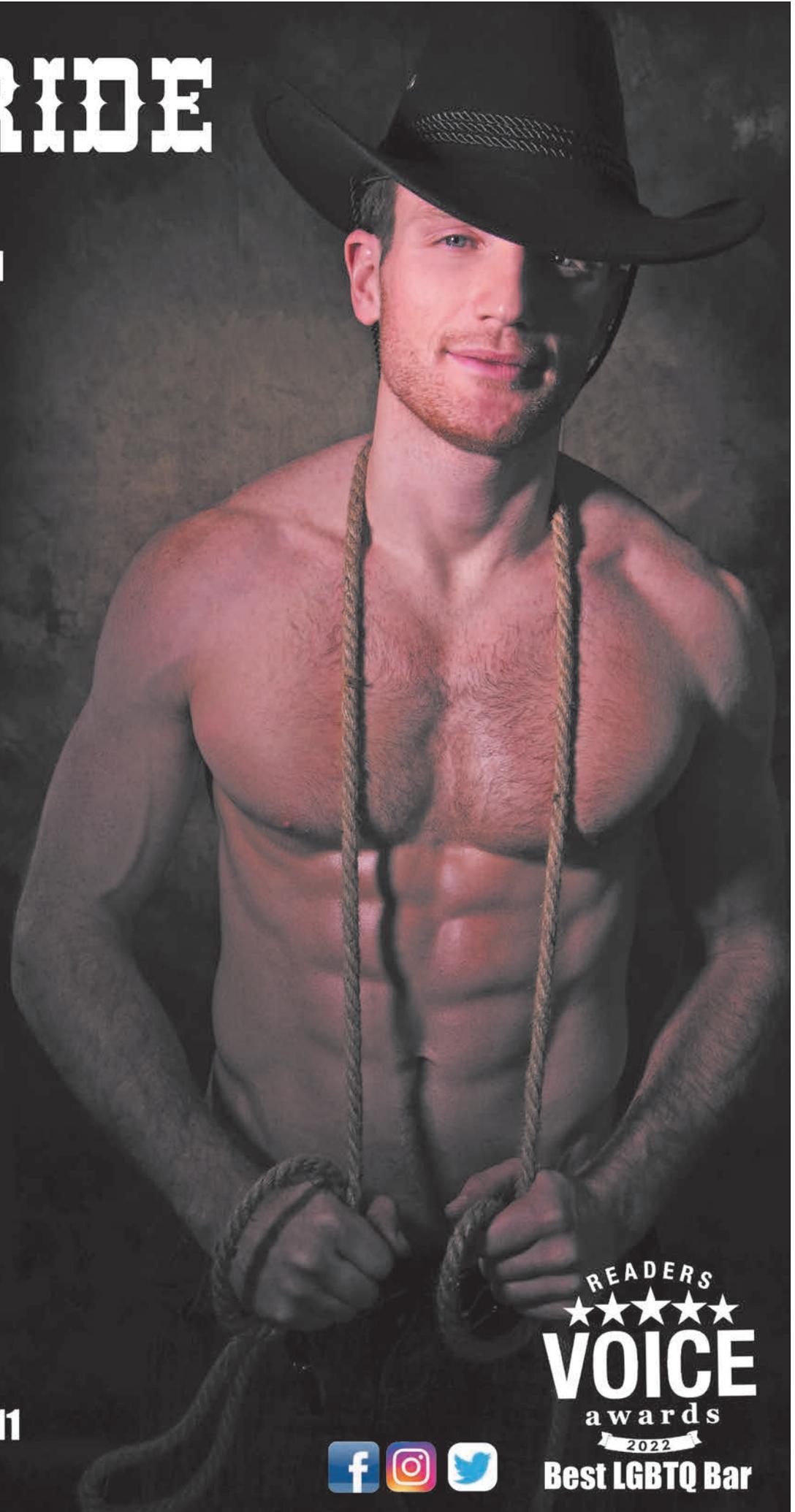
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Sunday June 5
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SCENE

PEOPLE, PLACES AND FACES



A little angel at Pride



Daniel Kuhn, Wes McCormack and Thomas Dykes at Miami Beach Pride 2022



Pride Frisco



Denton Pride



Kellye and friends celebrate Pride



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2022

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SHANGELA

SATURDAY | JUNE 4 | 11 AM - 9 PM



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FIREWORK SHOW
AT 9 PM**



**DALLAS PRIDE'S ALAN ROSS
TEXAS FREEDOM PARADE
SUNDAY | JUNE 5 | AT 2 PM**



dallaspride.org



Lindsay with Grae and Evie



Jolene and Sona



Rob Corbello and Thomas Dykes at Miami Beach Pride 2022



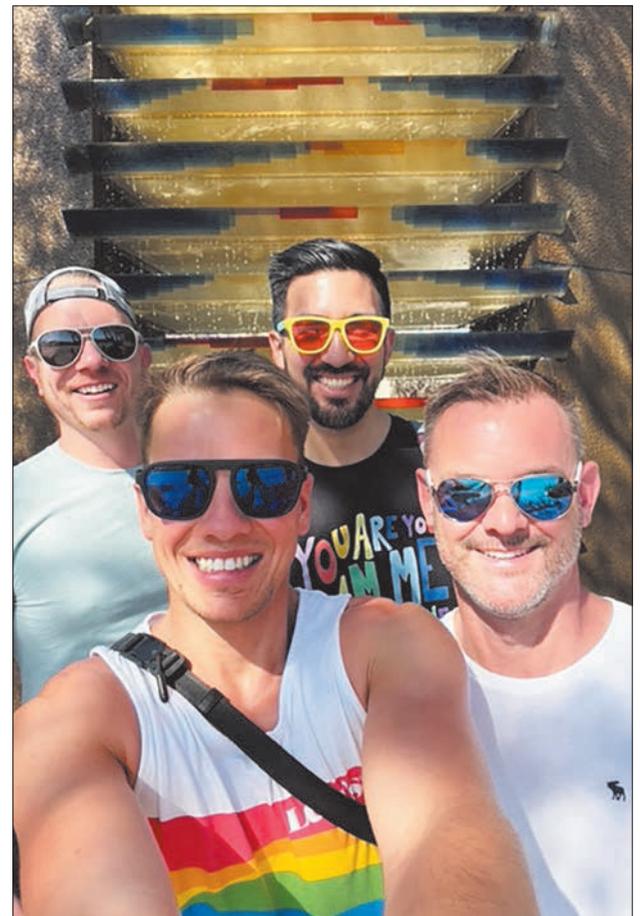
Larissa and Dawn



Liquor Mini showing her pride!



Keith, Taylor and Brian



Josh Humphreys, Thomas Dykes, Paul Ruedas and Rob Corbello (Deep Ellum Art and Music Festival 2022)

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Robb shows his pride



Shelley showing her sick kicks



Liquor Mini with Ian and Mike



Jess keeping cool



Hollywood Feed celebrating the Pride growing season

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Pretty in pink



Portia shows her Pride



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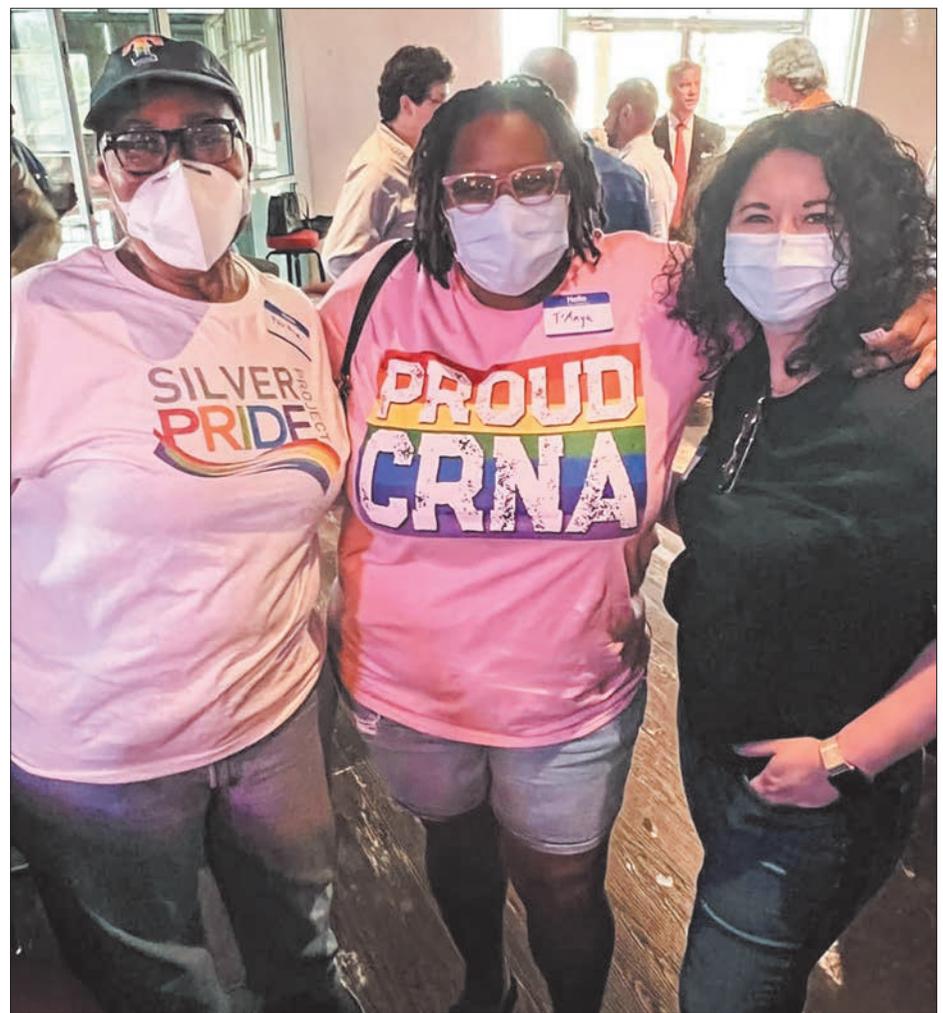
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Proud group



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1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13		
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60							61					62				
63							64					65				

Solution on Page 88

Across

- 1 It's a good thing
- 6 Like a Marc Jacobs ensemble
- 10 ___ to swallow
- 14 Boyfriend
- 15 Poet Adrienne
- 16 Peace Nobelism Wiesel
- 17 Where a queen may rule
- 18 Think tank output
- 19 "A" in radio lingo
- 20 Start of why Frankie said she would never get a hearing aid
- 23 Milk dispenser spouts
- 26 Nursery noisemaker
- 27 Place for orientation secrecy
- 28 Contemporary Christian
- 30 Title for Feinstein (abbr.)
- 31 It's sold in bars
- 32 Capital in the Andes.
- 34 More of the quote
- 38 Spread out, as troops.
- 39 Kit ___ candy bars
- 42 Child-care writer LeShan
- 45 Be a voyeur, e.g.
- 46 Paths through leaves of grass
- 48 Like some weights
- 50 Dick that isn't a name?

Down

- 1 Cont. of Chad
- 2 Get a load of
- 3 '70s abductors
- 4 Like the orbit of Uranus
- 5 Hot dish for Susan Feniger
- 6 Manger, to Mary, and more
- 7 Be hard to find
- 8 He plays with B.D. Wong on *SVU*
- 9 Place to call for stats
- 10 Jane Rule's *Desert of the ___*
- 11 Puts out
- 12 Shuffle method
- 13 Stun with noise
- 21 Came upon
- 22 Keep an ___ the ground
- 23 Gomer's Sgt. Carter, for one
- 24 Will descriptor
- 25 Hart Crane work
- 28 "Dad" of some lesbian families
- 29 Pop of pop
- 32 Tendency to get pissed
- 33 "It's not only me who thinks this"
- 35 Tone of many Stein photos
- 36 Rainbow coalition?
- 37 Skin designs, for short
- 40 However, in verse
- 41 Digits used to "render unto Caesar"
- 42 Chewed the scenery
- 43 Bear the expense of
- 44 Busy in the office
- 46 Sinking ship's call
- 47 Performs self service, with "off"
- 49 German white wine
- 50 The other Nemo creator Verne
- 52 Long-ago time, to Shakespeare
- 53 *Beginning With O* author Broumas
- 57 Maj. opposite, for Rorem
- 58 Hypotheticals
- 59 Fair grade

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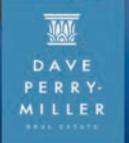
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