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The Premier Media Source for LGBTQ Texas

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## Applause

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coming to DFW stages

Coverage by Rich Lopez starts on Page 8

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Dancer Rena Butler performing with TITAS. Photo by Erin Balano.  
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# Bites from our blog

WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com

## Lost Souls competing in Bingham Cup



Lost Souls Rugby is in Ottawa, Canada, competing in the Bingham Cup international gay rugby tournament. Normally held every two years, the last competition was held in 2018. The 2020 games were canceled due to COVID. The games started on Thursday, Aug. 18.

22 players made the trip to the Canadian capital to compete in Tier 2, dubbed the Hoagland Cup Division, which the team won in 2018.

The first three games are against the Boston Ironsides, Columbus Coyotes and Chicago Dragons

The Bingham Cup is named after Mark Bingham, a gay rugby player, who is credited as being the hero of United flight 93, the plane that crashed in a field in Pennsylvania on September 11.

— David Taffet

## Southern HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is Saturday

Southern HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is Saturday, Aug. 20, and Kirk Myers, founder and CEO of Abounding Prosperity Inc., reminds the Dallas community of the continuing importance of HIV/

AIDS awareness, advocacy and services.

"It's no secret that the HIV epidemic disproportionately impacts the American South," Myers said. "While we have made strides toward ending the epidemic, the fact that Dallas and the rest of the South bear so much of the burden on new diagnoses and lack of resources for prevention and care is alarming.

"Organizations like Abounding Prosperity must continue our mission of providing testing, prevention and treatment services to the community to fight this epidemic while also managing other urgent public health issues like COVID-19 and monkeypox," he said.

The southern part of the U.S. currently experiences the greatest burden of HIV of any region in the U.S., accounting for an estimated 51 percent of new HIV cases annually, even though just 38 percent of the U.S. population lives here, according to the CDC.

— Tammye Nash

## North Texas LGBT Chamber accepting BACE Award nominations

The North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce is now accepting nominations for the 2022 Business and Community Excellence Awards, Chamber President and CEO Tony Vedda announced this week.

Award recipients will be announced at the September 30, 2022, BACE Awards Luncheon at the Warwick Melrose Hotel in Dallas.

Since its founding in 2005, the Chamber Excellence Awards have "spotlighted the busi-

nesses, organizations and individuals who have achieved business success or have worked in support of the chamber's mission to achieve equality through business," according to a chamber press release.

The 2022 Business & Community Excellence Award Categories are:

- Business Excellence
- Employee Group of the Year
- Excellence in the Arts
- ExtrAA Mile / Community Service award sponsored by American Airlines
- Supplier Diversity Champion
- Corporate Ally

Nominations may be made online until Friday, Aug. 26.

— Tammye Nash

## Uptown Players closes its season this week with 'The Little Dog Laughed'

The Uptown Players 2022 season will close with Douglas Carter Beane's 2006 drama, *The Little Dog Laughed*. The show opens Friday and runs through Aug. 28 for a total of seven perfor-



mances at the Kalita Humphreys Theater.

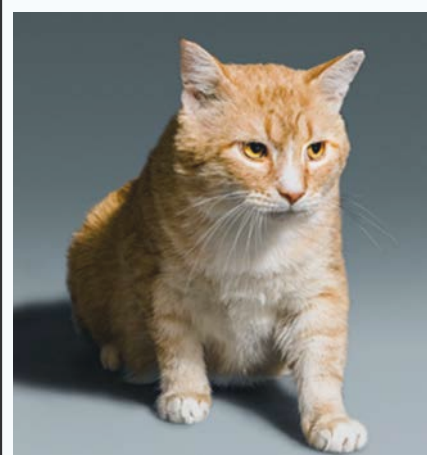
The play tells the story of two lovers fighting against the world to keep their passion for each other alive. Mitchell, an up-and-coming actor, and Diane, his agent/producer, pretend to be a couple to avoid negative press about Mitchell's homosexuality. The plan works until Mitchell falls for Alex, a young male prostitute, who changes Mitchell's views about relationships and convinces him to love, much to the dismay of Diane who tries desperately to avoid a scandal.

The play takes aim at the entertainment industry, sex and sexuality, and the way happy endings "should" look. Beane's story is a satiric look at the challenges of being true to yourself when that truth isn't what works for everyone else.

Robin Armstrong serves as the play's director. For tickets, visit [UptownPlayers.org](http://UptownPlayers.org).

— From staff reports

## ■ Adoptable / WILLIAM



Meet **William**, a domestic shorthair mix just over 3 years old. He has fiery-striped orange hair and weighs in at 13 pounds. William came into the care of the SPCA of Texas in May from the community cat program. However, it was discovered he is exceptionally affectionate with humans, and he would actually love to be in a forever home. Due to his background, William can come off as extremely shy on first meeting, but that can change rather quickly. Once he has warmed up to someone, he can become a rubbing, purring and soft head-butting machine (treats help this little process along nicely). William is an FIV-positive cat, which is a manageable condition. He would need to be the only cat or paired with another FIV cat in a home.

The Jan-Rees Jones Animal Care Center is open to the public seven days a week, noon-6 p.m. Appointments are required for foster animals. Browse available animals at [SPCA.org/FindAPet](http://SPCA.org/FindAPet); visit [SPCA.org/DogAdopt](http://SPCA.org/DogAdopt) to inquire about a dog or [SPCA.org/CatAdopt](http://SPCA.org/CatAdopt) to inquire about a cat.

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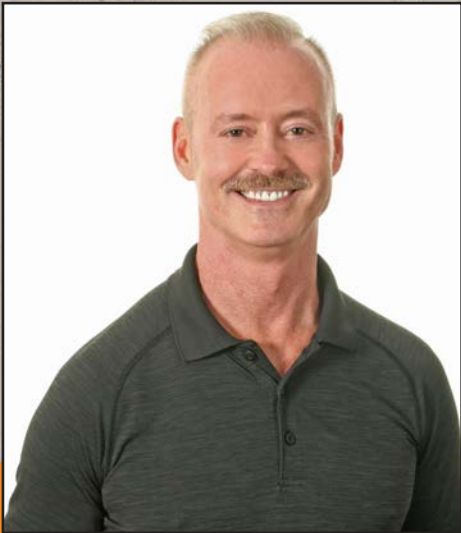
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## And on the other hand ...

This country's two main political parties are not the same at all, and voting matters

**A**re you tired of being told how bad things are? Are you sick of being bombarded with terrible news all of the time? Do you wish that you could read about something positive for a change? Then you might want to skip this column.

Just saying.

Man, where do I start?

How about we start with the primary election. As many suspected would happen, Tudor Dixon — who I just found out used to be an intern on *The Rosie O'Donnell Show*...Wut? — won the Republican Primary, and now Michigan voters have the choice between Gov. Gretchen Whitmer or flushing Michigan down the toilet. Dixon is wildly unqualified to run the state and hates LGBTQ people to boot. Not great.

But she is endorsed by Trump who was just (checks notes) waxing wistful about fascism during his speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference.

Texas Monthly reporter Michael Hardy live tweeted Trump's speech and didn't mince words: "Trump's rhetoric is significantly more extreme than even a few years ago. This might be [the] most frightening speech I've ever heard. Full-on, unapologetic fascism. Trump has either been reading *Mein Kampf* or having someone read it to him....This is some seriously bloodthirsty shit."

Keep in mind, this is the same man who inspired thousands of people to violently attack the Capitol Building and try to overturn the election just a couple years ago. And now he's even more extreme.

According to Hardy, Trump also shrugged off the right-wing extremists who plotted to kidnap and kill Gov. Gretchen Whitmer: "Gretchen Whitmer was never in any danger."



**D'Anne Witkowski**  
Creep of the Week

Trump has already made his disdain for Whitmer very public, so one can only imagine how ugly he and his supporters are going to get in their support of Dixon. Not excited about it.

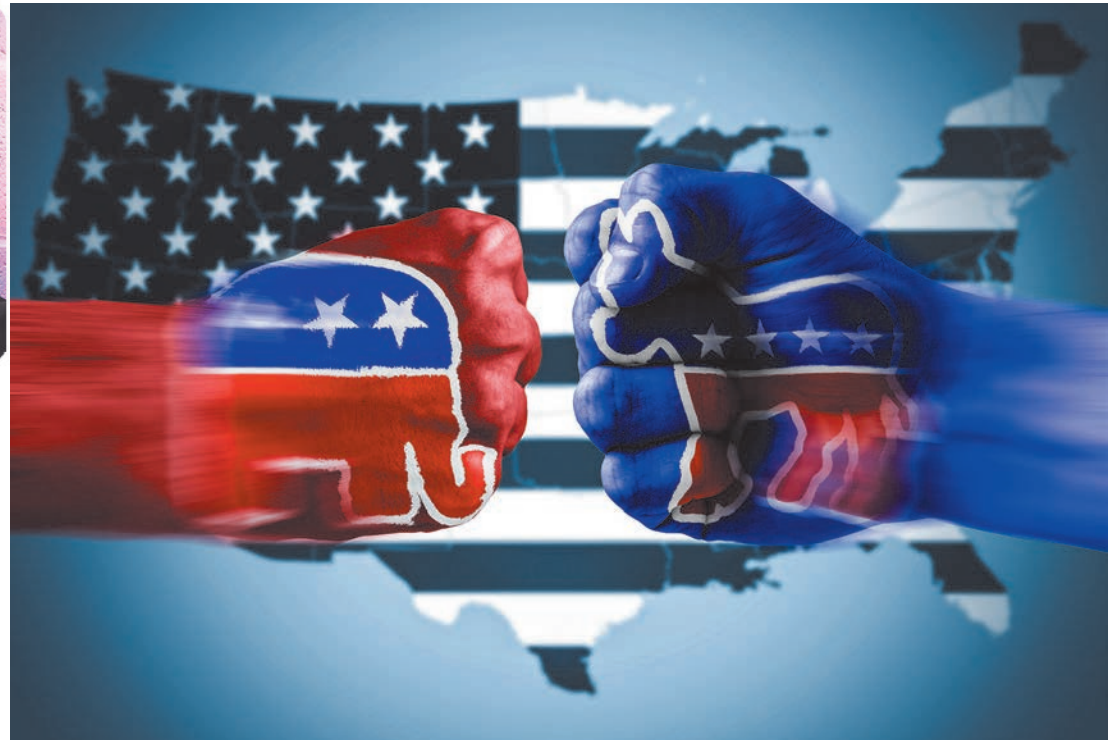
Besides Trump, CPAC featured Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who received a standing ovation. Orbán is racist and anti-Semitic, something he seems proud to admit to, and also anti-LGBTQ and anti-democracy.

As Robin Abcarian writes in the Los Angeles Times, "It's a measure of how badly our political discourse has deteriorated that a man responsible for taking his country from democracy to autocracy over the course of his long political career is being celebrated as a hero by American conservatives who clearly yearn for a Viktor Orbán of their own. (And very nearly had one in Donald Trump. It's terrifying to contemplate what this country would look like had the former president prevailed in 2020.)"

I have contemplated it. And yes, it is terrifying.

But this is who conservatives are: celebrating autocrats and insurrections and hate. Not just as CPAC. Everywhere. Every day.

And yet the media continues to present political news in the old "horse race" fashion, as if both sides are equal. They



aren't.

On the one hand, you have Democrats who want everyone in this country to have reproductive freedom. On the other hand, you have Republicans who say that 10-year-old rape victims should have to carry a pregnancy to term.

On the one hand, you have Democrats who are in favor of fully funding public schools and treating teachers like the professionals they are. On the other hand, you have Republicans who want to do away with public school altogether in favor of Christian education and who accuse any LGBTQ or allied teachers of being "groomers."

On the one hand, you have Democrats who want to protect and expand voting rights. On the other hand, you have Republicans who continue to lie about the 2020 election being stolen, claim the Jan. 6 insurrectionists are martyrs, and want to radically curtail voting rights so that they may remain in power no matter how unpopular their policies.

On the one hand, you have Democrats who support LGBTQ+ rights and recognize LGBTQ+ people as full human

beings deserving of love. On the other hand, you have Republicans who want to see marriage equality overturned and any books about LGBTQ+ people banned from libraries and schools.

On the one hand, you have Democrats who oppose racism and know that the police killing unarmed Black people is bad. On the other hand, you have Republicans who want to make it illegal to teach about our country's racist past and present and who find the declaration "Black Lives Matter" offensive.

The parties are not the same. Voting matters. Electing Democrats matters at all levels of government. Republicans claim to be the party of freedom, but that's a lie.

Stop saying Republicans are using dog whistles or "saying the quiet part out loud." They're using sirens and screaming from the rooftops. Heed their call and vote them the fuck out. ■

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

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# Daddy's home

## BACK ON STAGE

Terry Martin marks a first for his return to the stage

**RICH LOPEZ** | Staff writer  
rich@dallasvoice.com

For those familiar with theater in North Texas, Terry Martin is a recognizable name. He is perhaps most famous as the longtime director of WaterTower Theatre in Addison, serving in that role from 1999 to 2016. In that time, he built a reputation throughout the Dallas and North Texas theater community as one of its most prominent and prolific directors.

And yet, he just wanted to be onstage himself.

"Yeah, my preference has probably always been acting," Martin said by phone.

Now, thanks to Joey Folsom and The Classics Theatre Project, Martin is about to get back onstage, starring as Big Daddy in Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. The show opens Aug. 26 and runs through Sept. 11 at the Addison Theatre Center.

Taking the role wasn't just a chance for Martin to get back onstage; it had sentimental value as well.

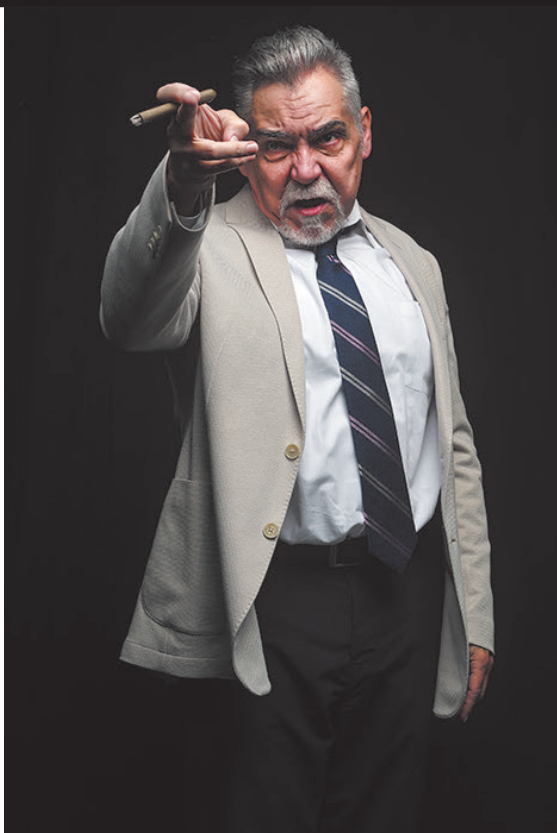
"Joey is a former student of mine, and I've cast him several times at WaterTower," Martin said. "I've seen The Classics' works and have been supportive. We were just sort of talking and this show came up."

Martin recalls his last venture into acting was in *All My Sons* with Folsom — and also a one-man piece for Uptown Players' Pride Festival four years ago.

For Folsom, having Martin in the cast raises the bar.

"Terry Martin is a consummate artist. He elevates the spirit and work of everyone around him with the energy he brings," Folsom said by email. "He has a kind of effortless presence and force that demands your attention, which is exactly the role. Big Daddy is a giant; so is Terry."

By day, Martin serves as the head of Fine Arts at Greenhill School, overseeing all the arts from pre-kindergarten to high



Terry Martin

school seniors since 2016. He's found artistic fulfillment in that role, even directing young actors in school productions.

"I directed a middle school production of *Elf*, and you learn a lot directing a cast at that age," he said with a laugh. "But we have good stuff at Greenhill, and it keeps my artistic mind going."

But Big Daddy turned out to be perfect timing for Martin.

"It was serendipitous that it worked out and fit so well in my life. The timing was just right, with the last part of summer and the first few weeks of school," he said. "Plus, finding something that really compels me to want to tread the boards" was an added bonus.

Big Daddy is a first for Martin. His previous experience with Tennessee Williams includes directing *Tin Roof* and acting in a high school production of *The Glass Menagerie*. It appears he has officially obtained his daddy status.

Martin said he understands the role, having grown up in the South. But he was also interested in bringing his own take to the iconic role of Big Daddy.

The Classics Theatre Project describes *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* as the "telling of a family in crisis examining the themes of truth, lies, sexual desire, repression and decay against a backdrop of familial relationships, social mores and mortality." Maggie is the frustrated spitfire of a wife to the resigned Brick, who's heyday as a football player has bypassed him. There's speculation that Brick has an attraction to his teammate, which riles Maggie. Brick's father Big Daddy, who enters in the second act, is about to celebrate a landmark birthday for a variety of reasons when the couple comes to visit.

"My understanding comes from a reflection in my own family," Martin explained. "There's a familiarity that is interesting to explore, and Big Daddy has lots of backstory you may not remember. He's mean and obnoxious but also tender and vulnerable, which has been fascinating to dive into."

The show is directed by another local theater luminary: Susan Sargeant, founder of Wingspan Theater, which recently announced its closing.

"I've known her for nearly 30 years, and I think she's the perfect choice for this show. She's directed a lot of Tennessee Williams in her career," Martin said.

Another interesting aspect of this production is its venue. Its interesting in the sense that it takes Martin back to his former home — sorta.

The Addison Theatre Center is home to the Karol Omlor Studio Theatre, where *Tin Roof* will be staged, and it is home to WaterTower Theatre which holds the Terry Martin Main Stage.

"It's like coming home, just not to the WaterTower. It feels both comfortable and uncomfortable, especially acting next to a place that has your name on it," Martin said. "Can you imagine if I performed a show on that stage? That would be a bit weird."

Or kinda fabulous.

The Classics' last two shows were performed in the Margo Jones Theater at Fair Park, so this will be a different theater experience all around, but one not completely unfamiliar to Folsom.

"We're very lucky to have been able to get in at Addison for the show. We felt very welcomed by the community during our outdoor run of *Much Ado About Nothing* there last summer," he said.

Being back in the theater in today's time is not lost on Martin. The conversations have changed in a short time as companies are expanding their diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Martin has worked to have that dialogue all along by staging productions such as *The Laramie Project* and *Spring Awakening*.

But the theater is a very different scene for him now.

"The nature of the conversations we are having now are different than what we could have had in 1999 or 2000," he said. "From LGBTQ to racial and diversity, the #MeToo movement, colorblind casting — all things I was trying to do at WaterTower anyway, just without that conversation and on a more tentative scale. Now it's not only necessary but demanded of theater by younger people and society, and I can understand their impatience for such."

Martin knows that it's not an overnight process but he has seen the efforts by theater companies across the landscape.

"I appreciate that impatience by the audience. I hope they continue that. It's a different atmosphere now, but I think the theater community has to go through these growing pains," he said.

After *Tin Roof*, Martin said he has no plans as of yet for his next theater outing. Instead, he has Greenhill to oversee, and he will get back to his writing.

"I can't believe that I've been making theater in Dallas for 30 years," he said.

Clearly, theater is ingrained in Martin. Patience may be what's needed for his next appearance. ■

Visit [TheClassicsTheatreProject.com](http://TheClassicsTheatreProject.com) for show information and tickets.



# New role, expanded vision

Applause

## BEYOND THE STAGE

Bruce Wood Dance opens a new chapter

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer  
rich@dallasvoice.com

In July, Bruce Wood Dance announced the appointment of Elizabeth Van Vleck as the company's assistant executive director, a newly-created position signifying growth for the much-loved local company. In her new role, Van Vleck will oversee BWD's touring programs and expand its community impact initiatives such as masterclasses, workshops and more.

Van Vleck talked this week with Dallas Voice about her vision for BWD and how joining the company is somewhat of a full circle moment for her.

**Dallas Voice: Congratulations on this appointment. How did you connect with Bruce Wood Dance?** Elizabeth Van Vleck: I met executive director Gayle Halperin when I was at the Dance Council of North Texas. Then I went to TITAS six years ago where she was on the board. She asked me to be on the board of Bruce Wood. We got to talking and part of that was bringing my experience as a dancer, director, arts administrator and fundraiser. They were thinking about the future, and the company was in a place to hire for this new position.

**What does that future look like to you?**

Bruce Wood was well on its way to touring nationally, but then COVID hit, and that momentum was lost. We are going to reignite that and increase our visibility and streamline our processes as well as get the company touring.

**What are some things audiences can look forward to already with BWD?** The company has started a relationship with Lar Lubovitch, and the dancers are going to do some of his works and add them to the repertory. Only a handful of companies around the world perform his work. He came to town last fall and agreed to a three-year relationship with Bruce Wood.

When I was in New York as a dancer, I studied with Lar, who also worked with Bruce. I took a class with him, which kind of makes this a full circle moment.



Elizabeth Van Vleck

### BRUCE WOOD DANCE'S SEASON

• **Sept. 17: Homecoming.** Bruce Wood Dance returns to Fort Worth for one night only at the W. E. Scott Theatre. The performance features two nationally-acclaimed works by Bruce Wood — *RED* and *Lovett!*

• **Nov. 18 and 19: Awake.** The company premieres Dvořák Serenade by Lar Lubovitch at Moody Performance Hall. Lubovitch has been named "one of the ten best choreographers in the world" by The New York Times.

• **April 8: Dallas Spring Arts Festival,** co-produced by Bruce Wood Dance and The Dallas Conservatory, kicks off Dallas Arts Month. This free, family-friendly festival at Klyde Warren Park features a diverse range of music and dance for all to enjoy.

• **April 29: A Spring Concerto,** featuring repertoire from Lar Lubovitch at Moody Performance Hall.

• **June 9-11: Grace.** Three performances at Moody Performance Hall feature two world premieres: one by award-winning artist Ben Needham-Wood and one by Bruce Wood Dance Artistic Director Joy Bollinger.

**You're just shy of two months into your position. What have you noticed or learned already?** There is something about this company that's been so special. It's kind of intangible. Our artistic director, Joy Bollinger, and rehearsal director, Matt Rivera, bring the dancers to a level of ensemble, and they are rehearsed so well that they are allowed to transcend the choreography and ... that also makes it experiential for the audience.


I am here to serve them because I think the more people who see them, the more impact they have. As an ambassador now of this company, I will be a part of building relationships with audiences and we have some collaborations to work out here in the next couple of months.

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# What to watch for

## THE HIGHLIGHTS



Broadway Dallas will present the Tony-award winning musical *Six* at the Winspear Opera House this December. (Courtesy photo)

The upcoming stage season is here, and it is queer

**RICH LOPEZ** | Staff writer  
rich@dallasvoice.com

Whether it's because they are anxious to get the news out or to get audiences stoked early, North Texas performing arts companies have been announcing their upcoming seasons for the next year already. Premieres, classics and original works are all on the horizon for area stages, and while we're still pandemically challenged, this may be the season that feels like the stage is back to if not normal, then next to normal.

This season we'll see big shows like *Six* and *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* while local productions range from a Tennessee Williams classic to a comedy by local gay playwright Matt Kyle. TITAS/DANCE UNBOUND brings an eclectic selection of dance performances with queer sensibilities to the 2022/23 season. And the Turtle Creek Chorale and Women's Chorus of Dallas will show off their vocal skills.

In short, expect a whole lot of fabulous representation — on stage and off.

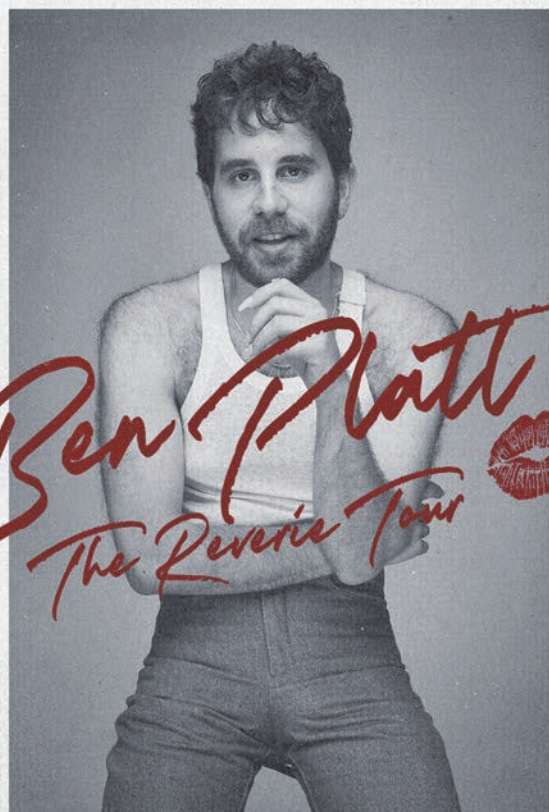
Whether it's through the producing company, the show itself or the creatives behind each production, here are selections from the 2022/23 season that audiences can go totally gay for:

- **Aug. 24-28:** *Mamma Mia!* by Lyric Stage. The company opens its 29th season at the Majestic Theatre with this popular musical based on the songs of ABBA and centering on Sophie, a young woman in search of her birth father on the eve of her wedding. LyricStage.org.

- **Sept. 1-25:** *Big Scary Animals* by Theatre Three. Local playwright Matt Kyle's comedy about an older white couple who move into a gay neighborhood returns to the stage after its strong run in 2017 on the Theatre Too stage. Theatre3Dallas.com.

- **Sept. 9-18:** *Rent* by North Texas Performing Arts (NTPA). NTPA's repertory company in Plano is not short on rainbow-friendly shows this season, starting with this Jonathan Larson classic, a contemporary take on *La Boheme* about struggling artists in New York's East Village during the HIV/AIDS epidemic. NTPARep.org.

- **Sept. 17:** *Homecoming*. Bruce Wood Dance returns to Fort Worth for one



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# The comedy section

## FOR A LAUGH

These comics bring a rainbow of laughs to area stages

**RICH LOPEZ** | Staff writer  
rich@dallasvoice.com

LGBTQ comedy is on the rise in the Dallas area, but it's also still finding its audience. There are a number of queer-centric comedy shows currently happening, from Deep Ellum to the Design District, with three comedians working to help spread the laughs around the town and eventually in the gayborhood.

All three performed in June at the Pride Edition of the B'POC Show at the House of Blues. Now they are performing at various shows spreading the gay love and laughs. Please meet these three talents.

### Frankie Benz



**Works as:** Comedian/show host/cybersecurity DEI guru

**Identifies as:** Nonbinary/genderfluid and solo poly

**Pronouns:** She/they/the Viola Davis of comedy

**Follow:** @FrankieDoesComedy on Instagram

**New to comedy:** "My first comedy

class was in November of last year, but I did comedy writing in 2013, and my first time onstage was in 2015."

**Onstage representation:** "I'm solo poly, I'm bi, and I don't see a lot of comedians talk about their identities in the mainstream. I like talking about the uncomfortable stuff like sex and relationships, but we don't see that. For me, I built a place for myself where I can say whatever the fuck I want."

**Show time:** "After the pandemic, after George Floyd, we did not heal properly. I left my six-figure career in cybersecurity educating on diversity, equity and inclusion and took a break. It wasn't what I wanted to do. The term BIPOC – Black, Indigenous, People of Color – was often in my vocabulary, so I did a take on that and created The B'POC Show for the 'Best People of Comedy.'"

**POC and roll:** "We had our first show in January and our first contract with House of Blues in February. This next will be our fifth episode, and we're growing with a Houston show this fall and Chicago next year. For each show, I source the best comedians that align with the heritage or awareness that month. They either identify with or are allied with that community. I wanted to walk in my purpose, and DEI was that, but doing it my way."

**Pride and beyond:** "In June we had our Pride edition at the Foundation Room in House of Blues. Other themes or episodes were focused on neurodiversity, women's history; we had an AAPI Heritage month show, and we even had a show for police officers and first responders with Protect and Swerve. In August, we'll have a back to school theme with teachers onstage."

**Queer comedy in Dallas:** "Props to the Dallas Comedy Club. They're doing a great job promoting shows like Queer Factor. But there isn't a big queer comic scene. Hopefully we can be a beacon for more representation. I'd love to bring B'POC to other venues and to the gayborhood. We can be everywhere."

The B'POC Show Bak 2 Skool Edition will be at 8 p.m. Aug. 25 at the House of Blues Foundation Room. [HouseOfBlues.com](http://HouseOfBlues.com).

### Josh Edwards



**Works as:** Comedian/improv team member/technical recruiter

**Identifies as:** Cis male, gay

**Pronouns:** He/him

**Follow:** @JEdwardsComedy on all socials

**Living off laughs:** "I've been doing comedy for four years now. Right around this time, I did my first open mic in 2018. I could say I am a professional because I do get paid, but I still have my regular job that pays the bills. But I am trying to make a living off of comedy."

**He's that guy:** "It's pretty cliché but for a reason: I've always been the funny guy. Comedy looked fun, and I felt I could do that. I wanted to make people laugh. My best friends and family were supportive and told me to go try it. I found an open mic and had a three-minute set and bombed horribly, but I fell in love with it."

**Step by step:** "I began researching and found the Dallas Comedy House, which is now the Dallas Comedy Club, and got into their internship program. Knowing you're funny enough definitely comes from delusions. But you have to have that inner confidence and take it to the stage. For me, it wasn't scary, just new,

but that's what's inspiring about it. I knew I could do it. I just have to work harder to get on stage more often."

**Coming out with comedy:** "It has basically helped me with my identity. I started comedy in 2018 but didn't come out until February 2019. When I came out, I remember it was by telling a joke onstage. I felt I could share this and feel safe and make it known. I had this realization recently that getting into these queer comedy groups and being more open helps me understand myself. Comedy helps me power through it all, and things I can't say in normal conversation, I can say onstage."

**All over the place:** "I do stand-up, but I also do improv. I've been on the house team at Dallas Comedy Club since it opened. I do Short Form and Musical Improv at DCC. I'm also in the *Queer Factor* show there produced by Stefan G. That's a once-a-month variety show for the LGBTQ community. And then, over at Stomping Grounds Comedy Theatre, I'm in *Sassy Night Laugh*, another LGBTQ sketch comedy show. I'm also in a new show, *Press Play*, with Frankie at House of Blues (Ed. note: The show debuted Aug. 18). It's a music-based comedy show."

**Community service:** "I have not performed in the gayborhood but I want to. We do want to make this more accessible to the community. I'd love to get into the Round-Up or S4 or even Roy G's or Woody's. I see so many opportunities for comedy there and get involved on the Strip."

### Alex Berrios

**Works as:** Comedian/claims adjuster

**Identifies as:** Ally, believes she's straight but says it's sometimes suspect.

**Pronouns:** She/her

**Follow at:** @AlexBerriosComedy

**Short hair, don't care:** "I recently cut my hair short, and it opened up a lot of experiences. So now I have all these new jokes and material about being approached by other women. It's a major compliment to attract both sexes. Frankie has heard my set before, and that's

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## WATCH

From Page 10

night only at the W. E. Scott Theatre. The performance features two nationally-acclaimed works by Bruce Wood — *RED* and *Lovett!* [BruceWoodDance.org](http://BruceWoodDance.org).

- **Sept. 30-Oct. 1:** The Gibney Company makes its Texas debut with *TITAS/DANCE UNBOUND*. The company is led by out choreographer Gina Gibney, who also founded the company, the performance opens the T/DU season at Moody Performance Hall. [TITAS.org](http://TITAS.org).

- **Oct. 8 and 9:** *That '70s Show: A Sing-Along Sensation* by Turtle Creek Chorale (TCC). In a rare instance, audiences can be members of the Chorale for this concert of music from just 50 years ago. Performances will be held at SMU's McFarlin Auditorium. [TurtleCreekChorale.com](http://TurtleCreekChorale.com).

- **Oct. 13-Nov. 13:** *Young Frankenstein* by Theatre Three. The musical is produced in partnership with Fort Worth's Circle Theatre and directed by Joel Ferrell with music direction by Cody Dry. [Theatre3Dallas.com](http://Theatre3Dallas.com).

- **Oct. 16:** *Suffrage Cantata* by The Women's Chorus of Dallas (TWCD). No information or venue has been posted as of press time. [TheWomensChorusofDallas.com](http://TheWomensChorusofDallas.com).

- **Oct. 21-30:** *Heathers the Musical* by NTPA. Another cult classic on the horizon, this production is based on the 1989 dark comedy film *Heathers* centers on Victoria who longs to be popular at any price. [NTPARep.org](http://NTPARep.org).

- **Oct. 26-30:** *The Rocky Horror Show* by Lyric. Dust off that costume and celebrate Halloween by doing the "Time Warp" in the aisles of the Majestic Theatre with this queer fave and cult classic. [LyricStage.org](http://LyricStage.org).

- **Nov. 4-19:** *Gypsy* by MainStage Irving-Las Colinas (MainStage ILC). Everything's coming up roses this fall at the Dupree Theater for this season opener. Directed by Michael Serrecchia, this classic musical tells the tale of an ambitious stage mother and her daughter's success. [MainStageIrving.com](http://MainStageIrving.com).

- **Nov. 11:** *BodyTraffic* by TITAS/DANCE UNBOUND. The Los Angeles company brings a sexy program to the Winspear Opera House with this revealing piece featuring male dancers wearing only dance belts. The company also has LGBTQ representation in its team of dancers. [TITAS.org](http://TITAS.org).

- **Dec. 2-18:** *Head Over Heels* by Uptown Players. This musical love story is set to the music of The Go-Go's, including "We Got the Beat," "Our Lips Are Sealed" and "Vacation" and Belinda Carlisle's "Heaven is a Place on Earth" and "Mad About You." The show was planned for the 2020 season but now launches the 2022-2023 season at the Kalita Humphreys Theater. [UptownPlayers.org](http://UptownPlayers.org).

- **Dec. 6-25:** *Six* by Broadway Dallas. The six wives of Henry VIII are remixed into pop princesses in this new



*Moulin Rouge! the Musical* (Courtesy photo)

Tony-winning musical. The musical is included in the Germania Insurance Broadway Series and performed at the Winspear. BroadwayDallas.org.

• **Feb. 15-19:** *Elton John and Tim Rice's Aida* by Lyric. Based on the Verdi opera of the same name, John and Rice's music and lyrics carry this tale of love, loyalty and betrayal about an enslaved Nubian princess who finds her heart entangled with an Egyptian soldier who is betrothed to the Pharaoh's daughter. Drama! At the Majestic. LyricStage.org.

facility will be presented on the Theatre Three stage. UptownPlayers.org.

• **March 15:** *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* by Broadway Dallas. Baz Luhrmann's glitzy, showy movie comes to life on-stage with a new mix of song mashups and glamorous splendor. The musical is included in the Germania Insurance Broadway Series and performed at the Music Hall at Fair Park. BroadwayDallas.org.

• **March 25:** *Voices of Women 8* by TWCD. No information or venue has



BodyTraffic by TITAS/DANCE UNBOUND (Photo by Tomasz Rossa)

• **Feb. 18-March 12:** *To DIE:GO in Leaves* by Cara Mia Theatre. The company devised this show that's inspired by artist Frida Kahlo's paintings and biography. The queer icon's story will be performed in repertory in English and Spanish at the Latino Cultural Center. CaraMiaTheater.org.

• **March 2-12:** *Silver Foxes* by Uptown Players. The world premiere by *Golden Girls* writers James Berg and Stan Zimmerman about three older queer men who save their best friend from his living

been posted as of press time. TheWomensChorusofDallas.com.

• **April 7-30:** *Into the Woods* by Dallas Theater Center. Classic storybook characters come together in this now-classic musical by James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim. The production will be performed at the Wyly Theatre. DallasTheaterCenter.com.

• **April 20-23:** *Broadway Our Way 2023*. Uptown Players annual fundraiser is truly a gay old time with its cast of Up-

WATCH, Page 18

# #LITTLE DOG LAUGHED

By Douglas Carter Beane



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# Turtles in New York

## MUSIC ON THE MOVE

### Turtles (and more) coming right up

The Turtle Creek Chorale's 22nd season, *Forward*, includes three concerts. The group has moved its season to coincide with the calendar year, meaning it kicks off its 2022 season with a throwback to the age of disco balls and bell bottoms in October, then ends the season with its signature holiday concert in December.

The Women's Chorus of Dallas has also announced the dates of its new season of concerts, so there is no shortage of opportunities to hear amazing voices throughout the next year.

#### Turtle Creek Chorale's Forward season:

**Oct. 8 and 9:** *That '70s Show*  
 — *A Sing-Along Sensation*

Attendees are invited to sing along with the chorus in this show at McFarlin Auditorium that will feature some disco icons, big hits and a tribute to the late Olivia Newton John.

**Nov. 6:** *Words* — *A Small Ensemble Showcase*

In this concert at First Presbyterian Church, TCC's small vocal ensembles will present the regional premiere of *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* by Atlanta-based composer Joel Thompson along with other pieces that explore the power of words.

**Dec. 17 and 19:** *Love is All You Need*  
 TCC's annual holiday concert will first be performed at First United Methodist Church Richardson followed by a performance at the Meyerson.

Visit [TurtleCreekChorale.com](http://TurtleCreekChorale.com) for tickets and information.

#### TWCD season:

**Oct. 16:** *Suffrage Cantata*

**Dec. 4:** *Holiday Rhythms*

**March 25:** *Voices of Women 8*

**May 2023:** *Tapestry International*

Visit [TheWomensChorusOfDallas.com](http://TheWomensChorusOfDallas.com) for updates.

The Turtle Creek Chorale traveled to New York last month where they premiered *Dreamland: Tulsa 1921* at Carnegie Hall to standing ovations on July 9. The Philadelphia Gay Men's Chorus performed with the chorale, and soloists Denise Lee, singing "The Journey Isn't Over," and Major Attaway, performing "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to be Free," brought down the house as well. (Photos courtesy of Dan Wright with Turtle Creek Chorale and David Taffet of Dallas Voice)





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**WATCH**, From Page 10



*Tootsie* by BroadwayDallas (Courtesy photo), above and Bruce Wood Dance, below.



town actors performing showtunes but all with signature and fabulous twists. Written and directed by B. J. Cleveland, the show will go on at the Kalita Humphreys Theater. [UptownPlayers.org](http://UptownPlayers.org).

• **April 21-30:** *Kinky Boots* by NTPA.

This feel-good, empowering musical centers on a shoemaker and his fateful encounter with Lola. [NTPARep.com](http://NTPARep.com).

• **May 4-21:** *Cruel Intentions: the '90s Musical*. Based on the film starring Reese Witherspoon and Ryan Phillippe, this co-production pairs Uptown Players with Stage West for its run that features hits from the '90s through a tale of revenge and passion. [UptownPlayers.org](http://UptownPlayers.org). [StageWest.org](http://StageWest.org).

• **May 5-20:** *The Light in the Piazza* by Mainstage ILC. Directed by Bruce R. Coleman, this music with book and lyrics by Craig Lucas and Adam Guettel centers on the emotional journeys of love and loss through families. [MainstageIrving.com](http://MainstageIrving.com).

[ving.com](http://ving.com).

• **April 18-30:** *Tootsie* by Broadway Dallas. Based on the Dustin Hoffman film about an actor, whose life is a drag who then turns to drag for a more fulfilling life. The musical is included in the Germania Insurance Broadway Series at the Music Hall. [BroadwayDallas.org](http://BroadwayDallas.org). The show will move to Bass Performance Hall May 9-14. [BassHall.com](http://BassHall.com).

• **June 14-18:** *Xanadu* by Lyric. Based on the 1980 musical movie that starred the late Olivia Newton-John and Gene Kelly, the show goes from Mount Olympus to Venice Beach with music and lyrics by ELO's Jeff Lynne and book by Douglas Carter Beane. [LyricStage.org](http://LyricStage.org).

• **July 14-29:** *The Underpants* by MainStage ILC. The theater closes its season with this Steve Martin farce about a public wardrobe malfunction that could either cost one bureaucrat his reputation...or not. The comedy is directed by B.J. Cleveland and presented at the Dupree Theater. [MainStageIrving.com](http://MainStageIrving.com).



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# Healing power?

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## CONCERT ON TAP

Lady Gaga's 'Chromatica' tour to stop in Dallas

CONNER BEHRENS | Contributing Writer  
jakeconnor94@gmail.com

Can dance music heal? Lady Gaga will ask audiences that question when she brings *The Chromatica Ball* tour to Arlington at Globe Life Field next Tuesday, Aug. 23.

Originally announced via Gaga's social media in 2020, the tour was first postponed to summer 2021 then postponed again until this summer due to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic. This concert marks the pop singer's first performance in the Dallas area since 2017's *Joanne World Tour*.

Given that I haven't seen the Mother Monster herself since 2014's *Artrave* tour, this show is happening at an inter-

esting time in my life.

In the last two years, I — like many others — have dealt with heartache. With the pandemic raging across the country, I fell into depression. If it wasn't for my boyfriend (who I started dating right before the lockdown began), I am not sure I would have survived the cabin fever I experienced while working from home and staying isolated 24/7.

On top of that, my mother passed away suddenly in 2021. She was my biggest fan, someone who always had my back in every stage of my life.

What got me through the grief was music. I used music to escape the pan-

Lady Gaga and Mark Ronson performing "Shallow" at the 61st annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles in February 2019. Gaga brings her twice-delayed *Chromatica* tour to Dallas next Tuesday, Aug. 23.

(Matt Sayles/Invision/Associated Press)



### What: Lady Gaga: The Chromatica Ball

When: Tuesday, Aug. 23, at 7:30 p.m.

Where: Globe Life Field,  
734 Stadium Drive, Arlington

Tickets: TicketMaster.com

Info: LadyGaga.com

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dem, escape my grief, escape the uncertainty of the future. In particular, I used Lady Gaga's music.

Her sixth studio album, *Chromatica*, was a form of escapism for me. Filled with serious themes and lyrics set to an upbeat, hopeful '90s club sound, I found solace in it. I listened to it when I jogged, when I was traveling in the car, when it was late at night and I couldn't turn my brain off to sleep.

It was an album that got me through a lot.

When I see Gaga in concert next week, it will be the culmination of two years of pain, love and sorrow. The tour will, in a lot of ways, give me a sense of closure to the things that happened in my life over the last two years.

I will be thinking of my mother most of all. She was a huge Gaga fan, and we talked a lot about the new album when it first came out. Her memory will be on my mind while I watch all five acts of this spectacle stadium tour.

Can dance music heal? I sure hope so.

Watch for Connor Behrens' review of Lady Gaga's Dallas concert in the Aug. 26 issue of Dallas Voice.



## COMEDY, From Page 12

how she brought me onto the Pride show in June"

**Queer alignment:** "I am an ally. I feel comfortable, and I see myself better when I'm among the community. I've made really good friends, and really, you can't go wrong with your own truth whatever it is. And while I'm definitely an ally, the word bothers me because it feels more like it's saying 'I tolerate or I will tolerate.' We are all just one big happy family."

**Language barrier:** "I'm Honduran, and I was telling this woman that I enjoy eating pupusas which is one of our cultural dishes. She thought it was like a code word for something else."

**At first you don't succeed:** "I've been in comedy for five years because I failed at everything else. I wanted to be a dental hygienist. I wanted to be a Spanish teacher. I looked into architecture, but I could barely spell it, and I failed geometry. Comedy turned out to be the only career I can become successful from my failures."



Alex Berrios

**Kings over queens:** "I was watching Latin Kings of Comedy and that inspired me, but I also saw four Latin men. My parents wanted a daughter they could brag about — a lawyer, doctor. I think I'm their favorite disappointment, though. But the power of believing in yourself is something. Once I did stand-up it unleashed something that I was scared to admit. I came out of the closet, if you will."

**Comedy comfort:** "What I like about this is that I don't feel alone. I can talk about myself and my self-worth, and women will come up and say they share the same experiences. It really makes me wish I spoke up sooner. When I started going to therapy, my jokes started getting better. I could examine my life deeper and comedy helped process that."

Berrios performs on Sept 14 at the Addison Improv. She can also be heard on the Kink'D AF podcast hosted from the "perspectives of five Black and Brown women" including co-host Benz at linktr.ee/KinkdAF.



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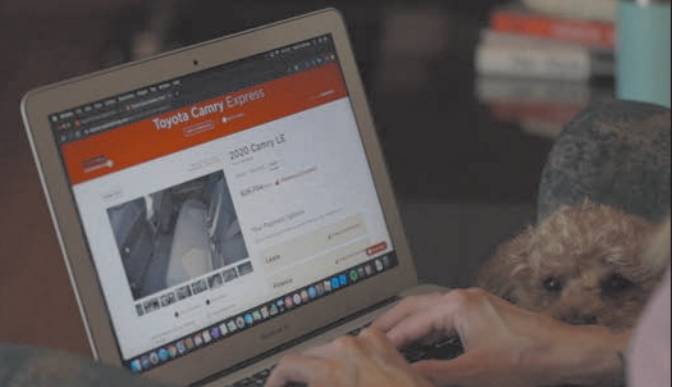


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# Finding home

RELOCATING



John Rogers, left, and Zac Campbell on balcony of their Mexico City apartment

John Rogers, Zac Campbell left Dallas to make a new home for themselves in México City

**JESUS CHAIREZ** | Contributing Writer  
Facebook.com/JesusChairez

**M**ÉXICO CITY — As a writer and artist from Dallas and now living in México City, I often get questions via social media from Dallasites about traveling to México City. They ask about things like where to eat, which hotel to stay at and which places to visit. I am always helpful and reply to these kinds of questions.

But questions about moving here? I never did get those. Well, not until now.

This year on March 23, I got a Facebook message from John Rogers: “I’m a friend of Ron Allen. My boyfriend Zac [Campbell] and I are moving from Dallas to CDMX (México City) in the next few months. He suggested that I get in

contact with you.”

I was like, Wow! Two Dallas gay men that want to leave Dallas and move to México City!

But why not? México City is very LGBTQ-friendly, has two gay entertainment districts, has excellent spring weather all year round and more than 150 museums. And it is a city rich in architecture, history and an indigenous cultural past still vibrant today.

When one has been living in Dallas for such a long time — 42 years for Rogers and 12 for Campbell — you accumulate lots of stuff. These guys sold most of their household items, but Campbell said they kept some personal items, such as antiques and art, to decorate their new apartment in Mexico City.

They sold their cars because in México City the public transportation system is excellent; the subway, called the Metro, runs across most of the city. Plus, the couple say they use Uber or walk most places.

Though they landed in México City on June 7, which also happened to be Rogers’ birthday, they didn’t move into their apartment until the first week in July. They found it wasn’t easy finding

an unfurnished apartment because, as Rogers said, “one-third of the apartments are AirBnb, and one third are short-term rentals.”

Rogers and Campbell eventually found an apartment of the 23rd floor of a building on Avenida Paseo de la Reforma, the well-known street that cuts through the middle of the city that was designed at the request of Emperor Maximilian and opened in February 1867. Walking into their living room, one cannot help but be attracted to the floor-to-ceiling windows offering spectacular views of the city.

Their apartment building is in the Col. Tabacalera neighborhood, where Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz (Fidel Castro) and Ernesto “Che” Guevara lived in the 1950s while planning the Cuban revolution. This is not one of the trendy neighborhoods that new residents moving into the country tend to flock to, like Col. Condesa and Col. Roma, a neighborhood that was featured in the 2018 movie Roma. Campbell said that was an intentional decision. He said he and Rogers “made a very conscious effort not to fully asso-

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## Seeking safe refuge



Bob McCranie

**TAMMYE NASH** | Managing Editor  
Nash@dallasvoice.com

**J**oe Biden may have defeated Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election, but Trump’s brand of hateful politics continues to dominate the Republican Party in many locations, including right here in Texas. In a state already controlled by the right wing of the GOP, anyone in any category of “other” — people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ people — walk around with a target on their backs.

That is especially true for the state’s transgender residents, most especially for transgender youth and their families. The Lone Star State is no longer a safe place for them.

“There are people who need to get out of this jurisdiction right now,” gay Realtor Bob McCranie said. “People are on edge. Some people are already leaving,



others are saying if the state turns any more to the right, they are leaving. Almost everyone I know is having this conversation with me. Some people already have their Plan B in place — Puerto Vallarta in Mexico, Spain, different states even. Some are looking at New York, at Portugal.

He continued. “Some are saying, ‘Maybe it’s time to take that retirement and get out.’ Others are families with trans kids who have to get out now — right now. It’s the time for going back to school, and that’s putting a lot of pressure on people. You have to deal with teachers, with doctors — lots of people who might decide to turn you in because you are providing your child with gender-affirming care. And before you know it, CPS has come in and taken your child, and it’s too late.”

But those trying to sell their homes and move before the authorities come for children, or maybe before someone turns them in for having — or just considering having — an abortion, can’t necessarily just turn to any Realtor, McCranie said.

“You don’t want to hire a real estate agent who will turn you in when you are trying to move somewhere safe. And

the worst thing you could do is get out of this state only to end up somewhere even worse,” he said.

That’s where FleeTexas.com — and now, FleeRedStates.com — come in.

McCranie — who founded Texas Pride Realty, an agency where “our entire brand is built on diversity” — came up with the idea of creating a virtual safe space for those who need to move and are looking for real estate professionals they can trust to help them do that.

“Our goal is to help you get out of town now and to find an agent you can trust in the city you’ve chosen to relocate to,” he explained. Launched in May, FleeTexas.com already has had more than 1,600 hits, he said, adding, “We’ve had people contacting from all over Texas, even from other parts of the country, looking for agents to help them sell their homes and find new ones. We have people calling from all over to be referrals, too.

“I’m not going to talk about which listings we have gotten through this. The whole idea is to keep people safe,” McCranie said. “We have to get people out before their kids are taken away. I don’t want anyone on ‘the last train out of Par-

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## IMMIGRATION

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## Stepping out, speaking up

INSIDE THE SQUARED CIRCLE

Impact Wrestling Knockout  
Gisele Shaw just came out as  
transgender in a big way

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor  
[nash@dallasvoice.com](mailto:nash@dallasvoice.com)

**G**isele Shaw has always loved professional wrestling, going all the way back to her childhood days, growing up in Edmonton, Alberta, when she watched wrestling on TV with her family, especially with her grandmother.

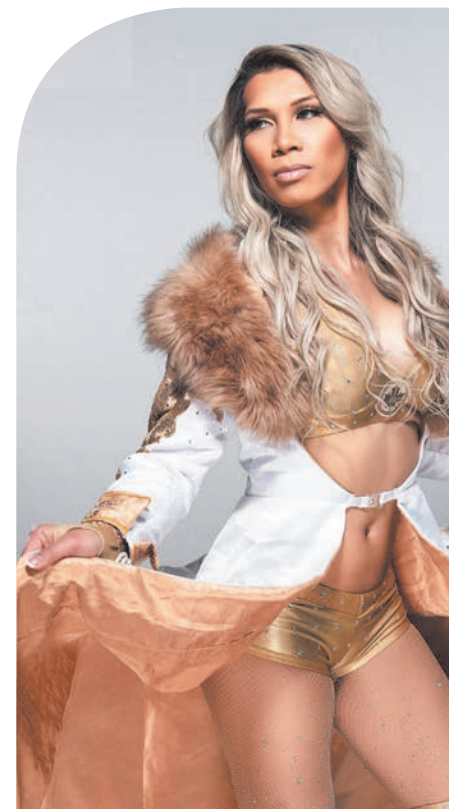
"It was something we had in common, something we shared," Shaw said of watching wrestling with her grandmother. And after her grandmother fell ill and passed away, she said, it was their shared love of the sport that helped Shaw maintain a connection to the grandmother she loved.

She was still living in Edmonton and working as a flight attendant, Shaw said, when the doors into the wrestling world began to open for her. "I would go to the gym with friends, and those friends were friends with some wrestlers. One day they asked if I want to go to a [wrestling] show with them.

"First I asked what kind of wrestling they meant — Olympic wrestling or professional wrestling, because I tried Olympic for about three months in high school. I wasn't good at it," she continued with a laugh. "They said no, it was professional wrestling, so I said sure. I went then, and I just fell in love with wrestling all over again."

That was when Shaw admitted to herself that being a professional wrestler was her dream. And if she wanted to realize that dream, she just had to take a leap of faith and make it happen. So she found a top-notch wrestling school — Storm Wrestling Academy in Calgary — and enrolled.

It was about seven years ago that



Gisele Shaw

Shaw started her career as a professional wrestler. Her goal was to join the Impact Wrestling team and become an Impact Knockout (the women wrestlers at Impact are Knockouts, a name they chose for themselves). But she was finding out that the opportunities to become a contract wrestler for Impact, rather than just freelancing, were pretty slim at the time.

So Shaw decided to take another leap of faith: She moved to the United Kingdom. "I felt like moving to the U.K. would give me a chance to do a lot of wrestling and really start to make an impression. I wanted to build up my reputation, make a name for myself, so that Impact would see me as someone they wanted on their team," she explained.

Shaw lived and wrestled in the U.K. for about four years before moving back to North America. And about a year ago, she accomplished her goal: She was invited to join the Impact Wrestling team.

Shaw was finally living her dreams. But she was also living with a big secret:

She was transgender.

Shaw said that she was 20 years old and still working as a flight attendant when she transitioned. So she was already living as her authentic self by the time she started her career in professional wrestling. None of her colleagues or the fans knew about her past, and she saw no reason to tell them.



Josh Alexander

"I wanted them to see me as a professional wrestler. Being transgender had nothing to do with it; that was part of who I was, but it was not all I was. If they were going to judge me, I wanted them to judge me as on my skills and abilities as a wrestler, not on something that was just part of me and not about wrestling."

But it turned out, Shaw's secret was a heavier load than she realized.

Shaw and a number of other Impact wrestlers were in Dallas last April for Wrestlemania. GAWTV was in Dallas that same weekend, partnering with the Tag Me In United mental health initiative for Dresslemania II, an auction allowing fans to bid on dresses and gowns donated by stars in the world of women's wrestling. Shaw attended the event, held at Fairmont Dallas.

"At that event, there was a transgender woman who came up and was talking to me, thanking me for participating and telling me her story, about her struggles," Shaw said. "And it made me uncomfortable. I didn't want to talk to her, and I had to think really hard about why it made me uncomfortable."

Then, a couple of months later, Shaw was out with a friend, another woman, at a bar, when she was approached by a woman she did not know, who was obviously inebriated. "She walked up to me, and she said, 'Can I ask you a question?' I said ok, and she said, 'You're a boy, right?'"

"It caught me totally off guard. I just froze; I couldn't defend myself, and anyway, defending myself would make it seem like there was something wrong with being transgender. And as a wrestler, I'm a public figure, so I can't just deck people in the face in public.

"So I just took it on the chin. I went home that night, and I cried. A lot," Shaw continued. "But when I was finished crying, I just realized, I'm done. I'm done with keeping secrets. I am going to live my life authentically, and if people can't deal with it, that's their problem."

One of her first steps was to come out to her friend and fellow Impact wrestler,

**STEPPING**, Next Page

## A WRESTLING STAMPEDE

Impact Wrestling world champion Josh Alexander "the quintessential diva" Gisele Shaw will be in Dallas Aug. 26-27 for Lone Star Stampede, two back-to-back nights of professional wrestling starting at 6:30 p.m. each night at The Factory in Deep Ellum, 2713 Canton St. Tickets start at \$28 and are available online at [AXS.com/events](https://www.axs.com/events).

Shaw, who just came out as transgender at Toronto Pride, will also speak during opening ceremonies of the Gay Softball World Series happening Monday, Aug. 29, from 5-9 p.m. at Gilley's Texas. She will also be throwing out the first pitch at several games during the series.

— Tammye Nash

## GSWS

More than 250 teams will participate in the Gay Softball World Series in Dallas on Aug. 29-Sept. 3. That's includes 5,000 players and attendees representing 48 cities competing in seven divisions.

Play will be spread over fields in four parks — Kiest Park in Oak Cliff, The Parks at Texas Star in Euless, McInnish Park in Carrollton and the Waxahachie Sports Complex in Waxahachie.

Teams will be staying at the Hilton Anatole and Crowne Plaza Market Center.

The host committee needs to fill 1,000 volunteer slots at the games, the hotels and related events. To volunteer, visit [Volunteer-Mark.com/gsws](https://Volunteer-Mark.com/gsws). For more information about the Dallas games, visit [DallasGSWS.org](https://DallasGSWS.org).

— David Taffet

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## STEPPING From Previous Page

world champion Josh Alexander. Then step two: an appearance on Toronto's *Breakfast Television* in June. That is, Alexander explained, Canada's version of *Good Morning America*, "so it's a big deal."

Shaw went to the studio for the TV appearance along with Impact's head of media relations Ross Forman and wrestler Scott D'Amore. "I remember sitting there, shaking, wondering, 'What am I doing here?'" But at the same time, I knew that once I said it, once I came out, there would be this huge weight taken off my shoulders."

Then came step three: Toronto Pride.

Various Impact wrestling stars were — and still are — in the process of filming individual documentaries, each telling their own story in hopes of providing inspiration and education about their personal struggles and triumphs and about the world of professional wrestling. The intention was for Shaw to attend the Toronto Pride celebration — her first — and "just kind of stand on the side and watch everything" while filmmakers shot footage for her documenta-

ry segment.

"But then Ross said, 'Hold on a minute.' Next thing I know, he had contacted the Toronto Pride organizers, and they were just ecstatic to have me there to participate," Shaw said.

So she participated in the Trans March and gave a speech, coming out once again, at the opening ceremonies. Then on Sunday, the climax of the weekend, Shaw was asked to lead the Pride parade.

"It was a lot," she laughed. "I mean, I went from zero to 100 just immediately."

As exhilarating as it was, Shaw said, "I was really scared. I've had some terrible experiences in the past. So I was worried how people, the other wrestlers would respond. I call them my family, and we are all so tight-knit. So I was incredibly nervous about going back to work after coming out."

Fortunately, the response has been amazingly positive: "Everyone has been incredible!" she declared. "I haven't had any blow-back at all." And she won't see any backlash in the future over it, either, Alexander pledged. "We take care of each other. We police



Gisele Shaw, center, with fellow Knockouts Tenille Dashwood and Taya Valkyrie

each other, and we police ourselves." The Impact family, he said, has no room for bigotry.

"Wrestling is a safe space for everybody," the Impact world champion said. "We will keep it that way. As a dad, thinking of my two kids, I want them to not be afraid to be who they are or to go for their dreams."

Shaw said her message — not just for other trans people, but for everyone — is to not be afraid to live authentic lives and to reach for their dreams.

"Everyone has their own journey, and no one else can tell you how you have

to live," she said. "I feel like as a pro wrestler, I have a platform. And I want to use that platform to educate and inspire people. I hope people are inspired by my story and find a way to live their authentic life."

"Oh, and I want people to look at me and be inspired to follow their own dreams. I want them to know that it's not always the one with all the talent that comes out on top. If you have a good work ethic, then you can always outwork the person who has talent but doesn't want to do the work."

"So don't be afraid to go for it." ■



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ciate in the expat world." They prefer living like nationals.

The men spoke with excitement and enthusiasm, as they described not only getting to see México City's Pride parade on June 25, but getting to be in it, as well. Campbell said that he and Rogers, "by a stroke of luck," ended up on the top floor of the double-decker bus that was leading the parade.

Campbell said the parade took their breath away. "And it wasn't a strictly gay crowd. It was a celebration for humanity," he said. "In Dallas, standing at JR.'s is fun and exciting, but it is very insulated. Here [the parade] takes up the whole city, and people fly in from around the world."

Rogers said that while at Dallas' Pride parade, there are "floats and people are standing on the side," with candy and beads thrown from the floats, México City's parade is different: "It was a marcha (march), with everyone walking down the streets, and it was a mob of people."

At least 1.2 million people attended the México City Pride parade this year.

Both men has tested positive for COVID since the Pride parade, but neither had any significant symptoms, probably both were vaccinated even before moving to México City. They said they both have health insurance and would fly to see their primary health physician in the Dallas if necessary. But, they noted, if they did have to go to an ER in México City, the visit would be substantially cheaper here than in the United States. And Campbell, who lived in Puerto Vallarta before moving to Dallas, said he knows that the quality of health care in Mexico often far surpasses what he found in the States.

As for the monkeypox outbreak currently plaguing the U.S., including Dallas, the two men say they aren't worried about it for a number of different reasons. They will probably get monkeypox vaccine when they visit Dallas, but it's not an issue in México.

### Why move?

It was Campbell's idea to move to México City, and he said there were a number

of reasons why. While Dallas is a great place — a great city for business with lots of opportunities and many friends — he just never felt at home there because he had grown up outside the U.S.

"I was a born expat, [and] I feel more at home in México City or Bangkok than I do in the United States," Campbell explained.

He and Rogers said they both feel that México City is much more relaxed, too. Rogers said when Campbell suggested it was time they moved to México City, he was "totally on board from the get-go."

Another reason for the move, Rogers said, is that México City is "more tolerant and open-minded with no homophobia." They both said they felt like the U.S. is "about to implode." Noting the recent Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*, Rogers said, "America is becoming a fascist Christian dictatorship, and I do not want to be there for that."

Campbell and Rogers said they both love being comfortably out and open. LGBTQ people in México City can hold hands and kiss in public, and no one cares; no one blinks an eye. Everyone

goes about their own business.

And it's that way all around the city, not just in gayborhoods.

That is an interesting turn of events, since it wasn't that long ago that gay Mexican men would cross the border into the U.S. to seek — and get — political asylum because they feared for their life in homophobic, macho Mexico.

But that is no more.

Rogers is retired and doesn't plan on working in México City. But Campbell will be working at Journey Mexico, planning luxury weddings and events throughout Mexico and Costa Rica. He has been working fulltime to get their website ready for the company's launch, which should happen any day.

Campbell and Rogers said they do miss Dallas, especially their friends there. Rogers went back to Dallas the end of July to pick up their two cats, Zazu and Harvey, who had been boarded with a cat sitter in their old condo building. The trip was, "weird," he said, because "it felt sort of like being

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## REFUGE From Page 25

is, if we can avoid it.

"I hate to say that, but I'm not the only one saying it."

McCranie said since launching the site, he has been getting calls from real estate professionals around the country, telling how they should have done or should do something similar. One agent told him he had tried to create a site for Indiana, "but his major brand [the large real estate company with which he is affiliated] made him take it down. I said he should change major brands," McCranie declared.

For some, it is odd indeed to see McCranie, who has been an out, loud and proud LGBTQ rights activist since the early 1990s, encouraging people to, in effect, run.

McCranie said that when he and his former partner bought their first house together in 1998, "our agent at the time introduced us to everyone as brothers. When we went to get homeowners insurance, you couldn't put two men's names down as owners. We had to be listed as owner and tenant. Guess who was the tenant — me. I didn't like it."

"There are a lot of people these days who don't remember what it was like to be illegal people, just because of who you were, who you loved. But I remember," McCranie said. "We don't need to go back to that. But it could happen. We went to sleep somewhere along the line, and now they are taking us back."

"They are already changing the election process. They plan to overturn *Obergefell* and *Lawrence* and more. This is a systematic dismantling of democracy. I worry about LGBTQ people."

There is hope. Democrats challenging Republican incumbents in Texas government at the state level are gaining ground. Beto O'Rourke trails Gov. Greg Abbott by only 7 points, while Democratic challenger Mike Collier trails incumbent Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick by 5 points. And in the race for attorney general, incumbent Republican Ken Paxton is in a near tie with Democrat Rochelle Garcia.

Still, McCranie said, even if LGBTQ-friendly candidates win some races, the danger remains.

"There are a lot of people saying we all need to stay and fight," he acknowl-

edged. "But I have been fighting since 1992, and I am at the place where I feel like, I've done my fight. Don't get me wrong, I am going to keep on fighting, but some people have to protect their families first."

"I will keep fighting, but I know that

part of this fight is saving our people, getting our people to safety."

Those looking for assistance in selling their property or in finding property in a location safer for LGBTQ people can visit [FleeTexas.com](http://FleeTexas.com) or [FleeRedStates.com](http://FleeRedStates.com). ■



## HOME From Previous Page

home, and at the same time it kinda felt like a foreign county."

But the hot weather in North Texas was almost unbearable, he added.

Both men said that many people have misconceptions about their new home that are totally off base. "Whatever you think about Mexico City is, it's wrong," Rogers said. "You need to come here and see it. I guarantee it's different from what you imagined what it is." ■

*Jesus Chairez is a México City based freelance writer formerly from Dallas. He was the producer and host of North Texas' first bilingual LGBT Latino radio show, Sin Fronteras, on KNON 89.3 FM from July 1993 to July 2005. He can be reached at Facebook.com/JesusChairez.*



Zac Campbell and John Rogers at the Pride Parade

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Uptown Players is getting ready to start a smashing 2022-23 season (read all about it in the Applause section in this issue of Dallas Voice), but first, they have to wind up the 2021-22 season. And they do so in fine form with Douglas Carter Beane's *The Little Dog Laughed*, opening Friday, Aug. 19, and running through Aug. 28. The show stars Kevin Moore, Elizabeth Kensek, Carson Shofner and Shyama Nithiananda and tells the story of an up-and-coming actor pretending to be in a relationship with his female agent so no one will know he is gay. Performances are at 8 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and at 2 p.m. Sundays for the run of the show. Tickets range from \$30-\$50 and are available online at [UptownPlayers.org](http://UptownPlayers.org).

## GAY AGENDA



### METROPLEX-WIDE DRAG

The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex is never at a loss for first-class drag, whether you are headed to the famed Rose Room or munching down at one of the areas many drag brunches. This Friday night, Aug. 19, is no exception, with two top-notch opportunities on opposite ends of the Metroplex. In Dallas, drag and queerlesque troupe **Mustache Envy** performs at Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St., beginning at 9:30 p.m. And in Fort Worth, Drag Race Thailand cohost Pangina Heals returns to her "U.S. home bar" Urban Cowboy, 2620 E. Lancaster Ave., for a special performance at 9 p.m. benefitting HELP Center for LGBT Health and Wellness. Check out the listings for details.



### YOU SAW ME STANDING ALONE ...

It's time for the August installment of **Blue Moon Dance** — a women-only event that happens the third Saturday of each month, which is, thankfully, much more frequent than a blue moon — from 7 p.m.-midnight. So put on your dancing shoes, BYOB and head on to Dance Makers Texas, 6125 SW 820, Ste. 140. We bet you won't be standing alone for long. Admission is \$10; see listings for details.



### A GAY AND A GAY ICON

It's a good week for music lovers in North Texas, whether you are a country/western fan or a pop prince(ss). Openly gay country star **Ty Herndon** performs Saturday, Aug. 20, at 8 p.m. at Arlington Music Hall, and Mother Monster herself Lady Gaga (finally) brings her Chromatics Ball show to North Texas, with a concert Tuesday, Aug. 23, at 7:30 p.m., at Globe Life Field in Arlington. Ty tickets are available at [EventBrite.com](http://EventBrite.com), and Gaga tickets are available at [TicketMaster.com](http://TicketMaster.com). Check listings for more details.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:THRIVE@myresourcecenter.org).

### AUGUST

#### ■ Aug. 19: Mustache Envy

Mustache Envy drag and queerlesque performs upstairs every third Friday at Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St., at 9:30 p.m. [MustacheEnvy.com](http://MustacheEnvy.com).

#### ■ Aug. 19: Pangina Heals

Pangina Heals, cohost of *Drag Race Thailand* and a competitor in *Drag Race UK vs The World*, returns to Urban Saloon, her U.S. home bar, 2620 E. Lancaster Ave., for a special

performance a 9 p.m., sponsored by HELP Center for LGBT Health and Wellness. Tickets range from \$25-\$150, available at [EventBrite.com](http://EventBrite.com).

#### ■ Aug. 19-28: *The Little Dog Laughed*

Uptown Players closes its season with Douglas Carter Beane's drama that tells the story of two lovers: Mitchell, an up-and-coming actor, and Diane, his agent/producer, who pretend to be a couple to avoid negative press about Mitchell's homosexuality. At the Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. [UptownPlayers.org](http://UptownPlayers.org).

#### ■ Aug. 20: Blue Moon Dances

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

#### ■ Aug. 20: Team Clover Open

Team Clover holds its seventh Team Clover Open to raise money for The Summer of LifeWalk along the Strip on Cedar Springs Road.

#### ■ Aug. 20: Ty Herndon

Openly gay country western music star Ty Herndon performs in concert at Arlington Music Hall, 224 N. Center St., in Arlington. Tickets range from \$15-\$50, available at [EventBrite.com](http://EventBrite.com).

#### ■ Aug. 20: Twan Stakz Birthday Bash

Chocolate Lounge, 1011 Corinth St., hosts the

Twan Stakz Birthday Bash and Official Copa Reunion, beginning at 10 p.m. The evening features performances by Ruby Scott, T Bell, Jody Malone and more, with music from DJ Ace Flames. Admission is \$10.

#### ■ Aug. 20: Austin Pride Parade & Festival

Austin parade along Congress Avenue. [AustinPride.org](http://AustinPride.org).

#### ■ Aug. 21: Marsha & Friends Drag Brunch

Marsha Dimes hosts Marsha & Friends Drag Brunch at Cedar Springs Tap House, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. Performers include Miss Big Thicket Betty SiSonnet, Shantae Morgan, Ginni Beefeater, Ivanna SiSonnet, DeManda Refund and Aunt Marge. Tickets are \$15-\$120, food and drink not included. Shows start at noon at 2 p.m.

#### ■ Aug. 23: Lady Gaga

The pop star and Oscar winner brings her Chromatics Ball to North Texas. Finally! 7:30 p.m. at Globe Life Field in Arlington. [Ticketmaster.com](http://Ticketmaster.com).

#### ■ Aug. 24: 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 and fourth Wednesday of the month from 6:30-8 p.m. For notifications, contact Richard DeKnock at [tastefullyrichard@gmail.com](mailto:tastefullyrichard@gmail.com).

# Ask Howard

## HOW TO DO THE WRONG THING RIGHT

When size matters ...

Size queens, rejoice! Honey, I got chills, and they're multiplying! Yes, it's August. Yes, it's venomously hot. Yes, everybody's vacationing (at least those who are not, unfortunately, stuck back in school already are vacationing). And, yes, everybody has exactly the same question on their minds: Where in the world can I find one last big summertime dick to play with?

Well, bois, as crooned so sultrily, in the chords of our recently lost ONJ, "Have you never been mellow? Have you never tried?"

Well alrighty, Howard here has some statistics for you on losing all control: Simply Google "international penis size comparisons." Instantly, you'll land upon WorldData.info, whereupon (to the shock of absolutely nobody) you'll discover that the single most-asked question is, "What is the average erect size of a male genital?"

Believe it or not, of all the countries on planet Earth, erections in the United States are but the median-average standard bearer, pulling up at 13.58 centimeters or, rather, 5.38 inches.

"That's it?" you ask. "Gurl, wha?"

Yes, in fact, global-wide, the U.S. ranks way down at number 60, slap-dab in the middle-range area — just one middling rung above Japan at number 61 (13.56 cm) and an infinitesimal rung beneath number 59, Israel (13.60 cm). Earth's largest man-cocks, at 17.61 centimeters (6.93 inches) may be enjoyed in Ecuador, and the smallest are found in Cambodia, 10.04 centimeters (3.95 inches).

So guys, if it's an abundance of big cocks around which you're planning to build that Labor Day vacay flight schedule, then your top 10 list of destination countries goes, internationally, as follows: 1. Ecuador, 2. Cameroon, 3. Bolivia, 4. Sudan, 5. Haiti, 6. Senegal, 7. Gambia, 8. Netherlands, 9. Cuba and 10. Zambia.

Uhm, yeah. Everybody caught up on all their yellow fever and meningococcal immunizations, I trust?

Now, everyone's girth experiences versus expectations are personal, of course. But I know for a fact that should somebody in Gayville boast they're packin'

a whopping 7 inches of Ecuadorian trouser snake (biggest in the world!), they'd be laughed plumb off Grindr. Everybody knows that 7 inches is the starting point of gay measurements, not the end game.

I mean, Lordy-mercy, ain't nobody in Gayville gonna ever admit to some 7-inch baby dick! Like, what fantasy island does the world think we're living on?

Everyone's in a persnickety mood, lately. Everyone's slangin' 'tude. Everyone's short-tempered, long-exhausted and deciphers no candlelight at the end of this perpetual heat tunnel — rather, this pyroclastic tube. Everyone hears similar shades of greenly-pale perplexment: "Now, I've been through plenty Texas summers in my lifetime, but I just don't never remember nothin' like this." It's the vehemently unspoken that has starting turning everybody, one by one, a lighter shade of moribund. You can read it in the invisible thought balloons above their heads: "The end days, they're here! We're living in them now!"

But, then again, doesn't every cicada season, with its dog-days' heat, create these same sentiments? On the dashboard inside my car last week, a piece of tissue paper burst into flames; witnessed it with my own eyes, standing there in the Tom Thumb parking lot! Just lemme grab my portable fan and let's get paper-fryin' right to it: Deep ... deeper ... DEEPEST!

**Dear Howard:** This is a serious question, dude. I'm not making it up. My landlord lets me live rent-free if I fuck him every week. Last weekend, I had to go to the emergency room because my sphincter sucked up a butt plug he insisted I ride. I tried for over three hours to get the thing out on my own, but it just kept going in deeper and deeper. Do you know anybody else this ever happened



to? I've never been so embarrassed in my life. My hospital bill after the deductible was nearly five grand! If I hired a lawyer, do you think he could get the butt plug manufacturer to pay for it?

— Italian Sausage

**Dear Wiesnershmitzel:**

Your living arrangement wouldn't exactly be the first time a college bro agreed to sample some expired salami for a roof over his head;

however, the downside to being treated like the exhaust pipe of a junkyard Ferrari is that one's sexual tale of lament must at least be somewhat sordidly believable.

This is the best you could come up with? Yet one more lame, lost in the Grand Canyon scenario? Why not just claim rape? Where's your originality, Hot Dog?

If you're going to try to sucker Howard, you need to start by being inventive. Gurl, this one is so unoriginal, it's not even worth pretending sympathy over, say nothing of horror. Next time, at the very least give me gore. I don't mind fake questions, but I do mind drama-free ones.

**Dear Howard:** I'm over 40, an entrepreneur with two failed businesses behind me. Recently, I fell in love for the first time ever. He's 26 and thinks he can conquer the world. But he wants to open a mobile pet grooming business. He thinks it's a market with "unexploited" potential.

I've tried my best, but Uri won't listen to reason or to me. He's about to invest his entire inheritance from his grandparents into this cockamamie dream. I've used every argument I can think of to deter him, but it's like he's gone mad. He "knows" it will work. Hell, to my knowledge, he doesn't even like pets! Howard, help me drive some sense into this kid.

You're my last hope. He's a complete amateur. — **Anonymously Concerned**

**Dear AC:** What in a Texas warehouse is wrong with you here? Amphetamines? Autism? An addiction Abercrombie's August sale? Am I missing something, or does not everyone in this world always start out as a complete amateur? Were you, alone, born as an already fully-formed/twice-failed 40-year-old businessman? AC, you act as though your 26-year-old twerks for nickels as a side hustle. Economics 101 couldn't state the truth more bluntly: Amateurs built the Ark; professionals built the Titanic. I think this "kid" needs to drive some sense into you. Merely because you failed (twice!) doesn't mean Uri won't succeed. Never fear going for broke. After all, is there any other way to go? Even Hallmark concurs, "Leap and the net will appear!"

And, men, that's August for you! Oh, and FYI, for those of you who are further curious: It's only a five-and-a-half-hour flight from DFW to Quito, the capital city of Ecuador — hope you find a big one, bois! "You're the one that I want/Oo, oo, oo!"

—Howard Lewis Russell

Have a sizzling hot question for Howard? Just send it to AskHoward@dallasvoice.com. Sizzle is Howard's specialty!

## this week's solution

A	B	I	T	E	N	U	F	A	B	O	M	B			
L	O	D	E	D	E	B	I	L	A	B	O	R			
A	L	E	A	G	U	E	O	F	G	R	E	T	A		
S	T	A	R	R	A	T	V	B	R	O	W				
K	E	L	S	E	Y	T	H	E	I	R	O	W	N		
A	D	S	E	E	L	S	G	R	A	N	N	Y			
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# SCENE

PEOPLE, PLACES AND FACES



Fanning Pride



Let's take a selfie



Who is this lady in red?



Cash only for these guys



Getting low with Marissa



Urban Cowboy beauty queen



This girl can SANNNG!



Lunch is served at Roy G's



Allies Cathy and John



Allen and Jack



Pouring it just right at Alexandre's



Pretty in pink at JR's



Brad and Jackson at Bass Hall



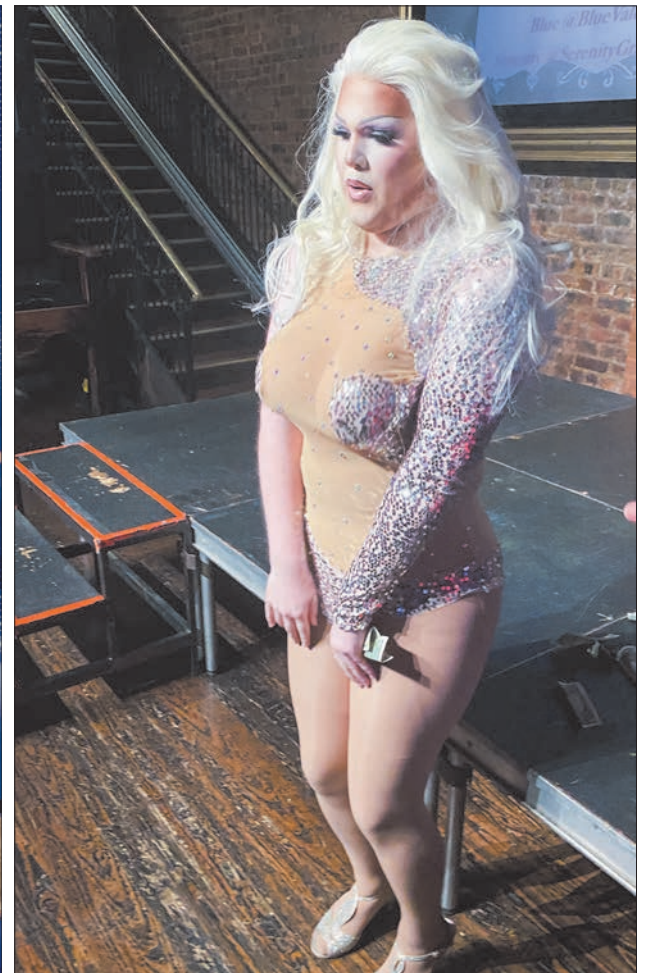
Allies Myra and Arron



Armando hangs with actress Eva Longoria at Goody Goody in Oak Lawn



Cassie belts one out!



Double Trouble at JR's



Showing off those pearly whites



The Shepherds Band playing at Punch Bowl Social

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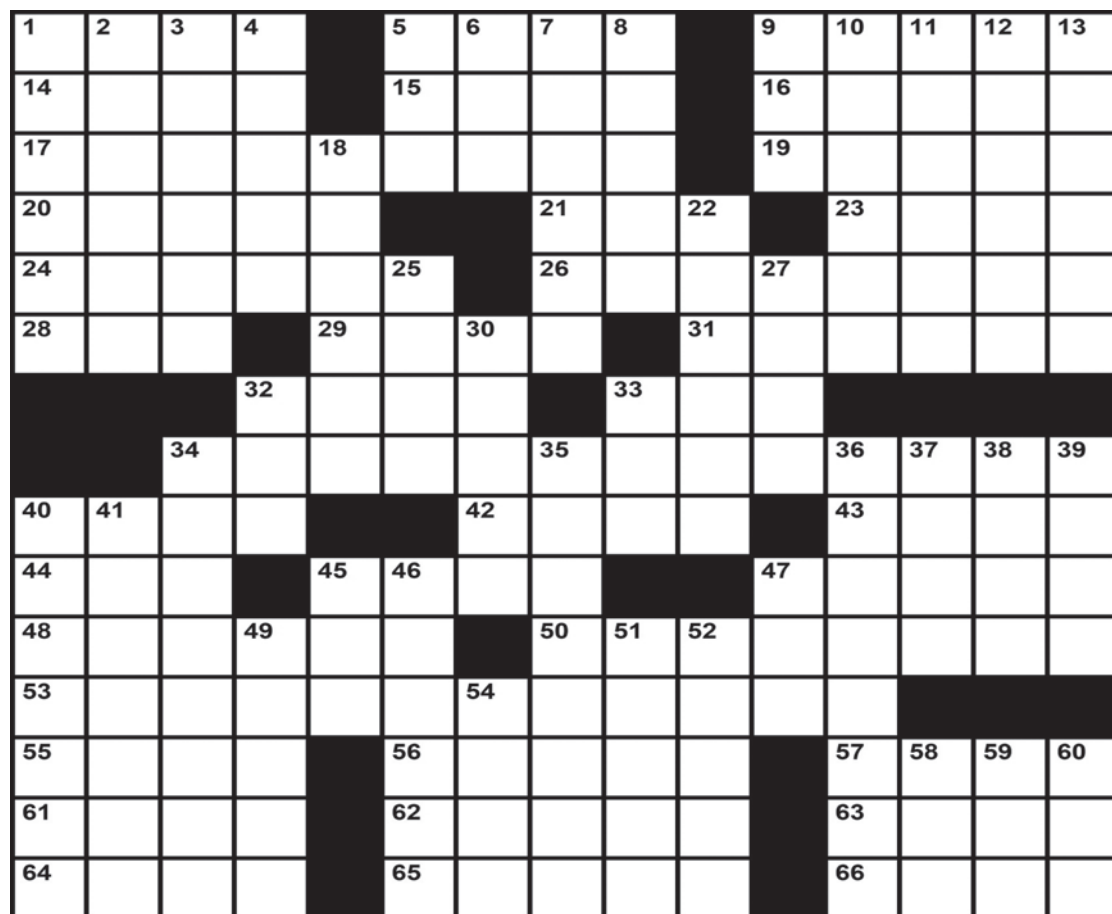


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# PUZZLE | Of Baseball and Viagra



Solution on Page 32

**Across**

- 1 What's in the stallion's mouth  
5 "No mo'!" to Gomer  
9 Mushroom source  
14 Where to find great stones  
15 *Younger* actress Mazar  
16 Party in Ian McKellen's land  
17 With 26-Across, baseball movie and source of this puzzle's quote  
19 Screen siren Garbo  
20 Rocker Ringo  
21 Off-rd. transport  
23 Facial characteristic  
24 *Fraiser* portrayer  
26 See 17-Across  
28 Certain plugs  
29 Phallic fishes  
31 Relative of Jethrine Bodine  
32 Adult film store aisle  
33 Org. for Vijay Singh  
34 With 53-Across, a quote about a difficult task... or about Viagra  
40 Spills one's seed  
42 Portion (out)  
43 Early caucus state  
44 Rudy Galindo's milieu  
45 Straight \_\_\_ arrow

- 47 Black key for Elton John  
48 Drag queen Varla Jean  
50 Good looker in a gay bar?  
53 See 34-Across  
55 Like a top  
56 Copland composed for it  
57 Words after "bears"  
61 Barcelona boy  
62 Came to a halt  
63 Queens rule over them  
64 Palm starch  
65 Arrow shaft  
66 Dixie Chicks' "Goodbye \_\_\_"

**Down**

- 1 State of polar bears  
2 Gobbled down  
3 Models of perfection  
4 Discharge on one's face  
5 Univ. URL ending  
6 Born, to Bonheur  
7 Subs from Hirschfeld's country  
8 Bottle of whiskey  
9 Math subj.  
10 "People" person  
11 Moon of Uranus  
12 Detroit record label  
13 Like beefcake

- 18 *What the Dead Remember* writer Harlan  
22 Someone who won't eat your meat  
25 Positive reply  
27 Gershwin and namesakes  
30 Andean pack animal  
32 They come before sneezes  
33 Summer setting in Ore.  
34 It's nothing but a butt dance  
35 Loose cannon  
36 Either lesbian at the altar  
37 *Baby Doll* band  
38 On their field  
39 Jodie Foster's *Little Man* \_\_\_  
40 Diet guru Richard  
41 *South Pacific* setting, broadly  
45 Some sex-toy batteries  
46 Shoots from cover  
47 Home st. of Harper Lee  
49 Words for opposing sexual abuse  
51 Synthetic fiber brand  
52 Hollow stone  
54 Salon offering  
58 "Isn't \_\_\_ little old for you, dear?"  
59 Sea for Debussy  
60 Big initials in fashion



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