

# dallasvoice

The Premier Media Source for Dallas, Texas

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Kirk Myers-Hill  
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## Restaurant, *reformed*

Owner/chef Michelle Carpenter says  
Restaurant Beatrice is redefining 'best'

By Rich Lopez, page 12



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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, Sean Baugh, Gary Bellomy, Jenny Block, Joey Casiano, Jesus Chairez, Lawrence Ferber, Januari Fox, Hardy Haberman, Scott Huffman, Lisa Keen, Mark Lowry, Jonathon McCellan, Cassie Nova, Dr. Josh, Josh Robbins, Gilberto Rodriguez, James Russell, Howard Lewis Russell, Terri Schlichenmeyer, Leslie McMurray, Gregg Shapiro, Casey Williams

**ADVERTISING DIRECTOR** Chad Mantooth, mantooth@dallasvoice.com  
**CONTENT MARKETING SPECIALIST** Mathew Dominguez, mathew@dallasvoice.com  
**NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE** National Advertising Representative  
Todd Evans, Rivendell Media Inc. | 908-232-2021

**ART DIRECTOR** Kevin Thomas, thomas@dallasvoice.com  
**MULTIMEDIA** Jimmy Bartlett, Website Management  
Israel Luna, DVtv Video Producer  
Tom Roma, DVtv Producer; Joseph Herrera, Producer

**DVtv Hosts** Regina Lyn, Larry The Fairy, Corry Williams

**CIRCULATION DIRECTOR** Linda Depriter, distribution@dallasvoice.com

**FOUNDERS** Robert Moore | Don Ritz

**AFFILIATIONS | MEMBERSHIPS**  
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# Bites from our blog

WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com

## Texas Senate approves anti-drag SB 12



Sen. Bryan Hughes

The Texas Senate on Tuesday, April 4, voted 12-10 to approve a measure limiting which drag shows children can attend. SB 12 is, according to reports by Texas Tribune, a “scaled-back version” of other bills introduced in the Texas Legislature this session that would have defined anyone dressed in drag as being “sexually explicit.”

SB 12, the kinder, gentler homophobia, just bans kids from any “lewd” drag performance and prohibits any public library that hosts a drag queen story hour from receiving any public funds.

While SB 12 is “not an outright ban” on drag performances and would not automatically classify every drag show as lewd, the Tribune notes, it would assess a \$10,000 fine on any business hosting a “sexually oriented” drag show in front of children. Drag performers performing “lewd” drag in front of children could be charged with a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to a year in jail,

a \$4,000 fine or both.

A “sexually oriented” performance, as defined by SB 12, is one that includes someone who is naked or in drag and “[appealing] to the prurient interest in sex.”

Sen. Bryan Hughes, a Mineola Republican, successfully introduced an amendment during debate that expands SB 12 to cover any sexually explicit performance, not just drag.

— Tammye Nash

## Category is ... Build-A-Bear realness



In a move certain to cause right-wing heads around the country to explode, Build-A-Bear has launched a new bear with the world’s most famous drag queen, RuPaul (described by NewsNation-Now as an “Emmy Award-winning entertainment mogul.”)

The newest bear available to build is “ready for any Eleganza Extravaganza,” and you can buy it on its own or as part of the “glamazon gift set”

which includes gold pumps to go with its blonde wig and gold-sequined dress, the Build-A-Bear website notes.

To top it all off, there is a *RuPaul’s Drag Race* logo on its paw.

“Category is: Teddy bear realness.”

— Tammye Nash

## Bliss Adult Arcade bans transgender patrons



Transgender patrons are no longer welcome at Bliss Adult Arcade & Theater Swingers Club,

located at 9109 John W. Carpenter Freeway (at Regal Row) in Dallas, according to a paper sign posted on the business’ glass doors.

The sign, a photo of which was provided to Dallas Voice, reads: “No Transgender’s [sic] allowed in building or on property.” Added in small type in the lower right corner is “Per Johnny March 23, 2023”.

According to an employee who answered the phone at Bliss, the ban on trans customers was put in place after the manager, who he identified as Curt, “was attacked by a group of them.”

The employee said that a group of about four transgender individuals “attacked somebody else, and when Curt went to break it up, they attacked him. He even got bit.”

The employee on the phone also indicated that a group of transgender individuals also got into “a big fight” in the Bliss parking lot. But he did not indicate whether these were the same individuals who allegedly attacked the manager, or if the fight in the parking lot was a separate incident.

While the sign on the door indicates that no transgender customers are allowed in the business, the employee said that there “are a few of them” allowed in, based on prior approval by Bliss management.

— Tammye Nash

### ■ Adoptable / BENSON



sophisticated, but tasty treats can get him to break character pretty quickly. He likes to go for walks and does splendidly on a leash. He’s made a few doggie friends at the shelter, so he might make a good second pet. Come down to the Dallas Animal Care Center and meet him.

Adult dogs and cats are normally 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 Insurance provided by MetLife, a free 14-day wellness exam with VCA Animal Hospitals, a rabies tag and a free leash. The Dallas Animal Care Center is open to the public seven days a week from noon-6 p.m. Appointments are required for foster animals and animal housed in the Russell E. Dealey Animal Rescue Center. Please browse available animals at [SPCA.org/FindAPet](https://www.spcatexas.org/FindAPet) and visit [SPCA.org/DogAdopt](https://www.spcatexas.org/DogAdopt) to inquire about a dog or [SPCA.org/CatAdopt](https://www.spcatexas.org/CatAdopt) to inquire about a cat.

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# Are you ready to adopt?

WOOF! DR. JOSH TALKS TO THE ANIMALS

Welcome to my April Woof column! First of all, congratulations to all of the Dallas Voice's 2023 Readers Voice Awards winners. I am very proud of Isla Vet for winning "Best Veterinarian" for four years in a row, thanks to my amazing team and wonderful clients and followers. You guys made that happen, and at Isla Vet we are humbled to have been chosen for such an honor. Thank you all again.

I recently had a request to discuss a very important topic that I think many of us animal lovers have thought about at least once or twice in our lives: How do we know if we are ready to and capable of adopting an animal and adding such an important family member to our lifestyles?

It all starts with truly knowing and understanding the real reason for our interest in adding a fur member to our family. Based on that, we should then consider if having a pet is actually possible for us. If the reason is superficial or related to a temporary situation, please understand that you are most likely not ready to add a pet to your family.

Once you have made the decision to adopt a pet, there are different factors to consider when it comes to selecting a pet. The first reason is related to our spare time and schedule. Are we going to be able to devote time to our new family member, or do we need to consider a pet that may not require a significant time commitment?

Certain pets need to bond with us humans more than others, especially dogs. If we do not devote the appropriate time to them, not only can they feel alone, but they can also become destructive out of boredom and/or anxiety.

Just like human kids, many of our pets need to stay busy or mentally stimulated to be as healthy and happy as possible. We also need to remember they require time to be trained, and, in moments of sickness, they require time for medical care through your veterinarian.

In addition to having available time for the potential new family member, we also have to consider whether we have enough space and if our home is ready to receive a fur baby. This includes making sure we are pet-proofing our homes to avoid exposure to any potential dangers, including access to toxic plants/chemicals, electric cords or dangerous situations. Some pets like to chew on things such as shoes,



Dr. Josh  
Woof

clothing, hair ties, plastics, cardboard and more.

When choosing a pet, we must think about the species and the breed. It is extremely important that we research the unique traits among different

pets and breeds. For example, if we have very busy lifestyles, it is best to avoid breeds that need to be constantly stimulated and active. Some pets shed more than others or need more regular grooming appointments.

If we might not have enough time to train a dog, it is best that we avoid certain breeds that need intensive training.

If we already have a pet that does not like other dogs or cats, we have to take that into consideration.

In short, please thoroughly research the species and breed you are interested in and don't make any decisions solely based on how adorable a kitten or puppy or other potential pet might be.

Be sure to find out whether family members are allergic to any pets. If we have children, remember that some pets are better with kids than others. If we have elderly family members remember that a dog that is not well trained can be dangerous to some elderly people. And if we have immunocompromised family members, take that into consideration, too.

It is vital to remember that adding a pet to the family is a financial commitment that involves more than just providing food and water. Pets need vaccines, preventive care, toys and medical care — and more. Pet health insurance plans are additional financial investments that while vital, can prove challenging to some families and need to be taken into consideration when deciding whether we are ready to adopt a pet or not.

When our pet is very mature or has recently passed away, it can be very challenging to determine when may be the best time to get another fur baby because everyone grieves differently. Would having a new fur baby before a current one passes away help in coping with that death, or do we need to wait until after losing a loved one before adopting a new pet? There is no right or wrong decision, as long as we have analyzed all the pros and cons and avoid making a decision based on emotions alone.

Whatever that decision may be, please know that no baby will ever be a substitute. Every pet is different.



As you can see, deciding whether to adopt a pet is a big decision. After all, this is a commitment for life, as both dogs and cats can live for many years. I truly believe pets should never be given as a gift to someone else, but rather pet ownership should be discussed to make sure that everyone is committed to the well-being of the potential new family member.

I hope this column will be helpful to you in deciding if you are ready for that next big step. Thank you for taking the time to read my column, and I am looking forward to our next topic in May. Abrazos, gente linda.

Dr. Josh owns Isla Veterinary Boutique Hospital at 14380 Marsh Lane, Ste. 110 in Addison. Call him at 972-738-1111 or visit IslaVet.com.



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## Can't happen, won't happen ... did happen!

A grand jury upholds  
the rule of law

There is a long history in this country of folks saying one thing and doing another. From the man who wrote "All men are created equal" owning 600 people to professed Christians seething with intolerance, betrayal of humanity has been the id battling America's superego for 247 years.

The latest example is Donald Trump. Using what conservative columnist George Will once called feral cunning, Trump has played our lowest impulses like a virtuoso.

Fortunately, American history also includes freedom struggles and course corrections. On March 30, Trump, whose privilege and brazenness long permitted him to flout the law without consequence, finally experienced what many people feared would never happen: a criminal indictment.

It surprised no one when the GOP, which has long portrayed itself as the law and order party, circled the wagons around the former president. Determined to hold onto power, regardless of election results, they have embraced Richard Nixon's statement to David Frost: "When the president does it, that means it is not illegal."

Republicans think their contradictions don't matter. They invoke freedom in opposing an assault weapons ban even as they push bans on abortion, vaccines, literature, history and drag queen reading time. Thus they ignore real threats in favor of culture war incitements.

Another ploy is the quaint assertion that it is unseemly to bring a former president to justice. Any concern about unseemliness should also extend to Trump's unseemly behavior as president.

Respect is a two-way street, and he did much to disrespect the office of president. We do not have kings; the president is a public servant, and when he so egregiously serves himself instead, fail-



**Richard J. Rosendall**  
Contributing Writer

ing to hold him accountable sets a dangerous precedent.

Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg persuaded a grand jury to indict Trump on 34 felony counts, demonstrating what most Americans believe: that presidents and former presidents are not above the law. Trump pleaded not guilty and will have an opportunity to defend himself in court.

Former Attorney General Bill Barr said it would be a bad idea for Trump to testify at his own trial. As journalist Brian Krassenstein wrote, "Trump's own attorney general thinks he 'lacks all self control,' yet Republicans want him to control the nuclear codes."

MAGA minions are forever trying to impose their alternate reality. For example, those exploiting the Nashville school shooter's reported gender identity to engage in group blame ignore what the Human Rights Campaign noted: "that transgender and non-binary people are much more likely to be victims of violence, rather than the perpetrator of it."

Republicans, intent on dividing the country to gain power, respond to tragedy by seeking scapegoats rather than solutions.

Trumpists are flooding the zone, especially on social media, with projecting and gaslighting. One tactic to "keep your



head above Twitter" is frequent muting and blocking to reduce noise from right-wing trolls.

Prior to Trump's April 4 arraignment, New York Mayor Eric Adams warned protesters, "Behave yourselves." Georgia Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene appeared briefly outside the courthouse. Earlier she saw fit to compare Trump to such arrestees as Nelson Mandela and Jesus Christ.

There are signs that Trump's hold on his supporters is weakening, despite his dramatics and the media circus of news helicopters following his motorcade, a scene that recalled O.J. Simpson's car chase with police in 1994. But voter suppression and election denial remain in the Republican playbook.

One rather desperate tactic on Trump's behalf is the claim that his indictment boosts his gangsta cred. Benny Johnson of Turning Point USA said after the indictment, "Democrats just turned Donald Trump into Tupac."

Really? Not even a little!

The man who demanded the death penalty for the Central Park Five — and refused to apologize after their exoneration — deserves no glamour, only comeuppance.

Not that he will go quietly. His lawyer in the Stormy Daniels case, Joe Tacopina, tried to grab a document from Ari Melber during an interview on MSNBC. The consigliere in *The Godfather* had greater decorum. Tacopina and his client deserve each other.

But the rest of us do not deserve either of them. If the Republican Party wins the next election after doubling down in defense of a compulsive liar, grifter and wannabe dictator, the rule of law will be gone.

Let us rise to our best to defeat the fascists, for we may not get another chance.

Richard J. Rosendall is a writer and activist at rrosendall@me.com. Copyright © 2023 by Richard J. Rosendall. All rights reserved.



# Abounding Prosperity founder has died

## A LEADER LOST

Kirk Myers-Hill will be remembered as creator of South Dallas AIDS agency and Dallas Southern Pride

**DAVID TAFFET** | Senior Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

**P**eople gathered outside Abounding Prosperity headquarters on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Tuesday morning, April 4, as news of the death of the agency's founder, Kirk Myers-Hill, spread. As crowds filled the sidewalk in front of the building, grieving family and staff remained inside the office, asking for privacy "so we may process and mourn the loss of our beloved leader."

Myers-Hill, who often worked nights and early mornings in his office, was found unresponsive at his desk as staff arrived on Tuesday morning, April 4.

"I am just devastated," longtime community leader Betty Neal said when she heard the news.

Her comment was typical of the reaction by members of the Black community, government officials and leaders of other HIV organizations around DFW.

Myers-Hill founded Abounding Prosperity in 2005 in response to the growing number of cases of HIV in the Black community. As noted in a press release written by his staff shortly after his death, he "was a tireless advocate for the health and wellness of the Black family, particularly Black LGBTQ+ community members in Dallas."

But his efforts reached far beyond that community. He coordinated vaccination and information efforts to bring the mpox epidemic under control throughout North Texas in 2022 and was recognized for his work in that area during a regional Zoom conference with the White House.

He also created Dallas Southern Pride and developed it into one of the largest Black Pride celebrations in the U.S. The

weekend of events draws thousands of people from out of town and another 10,000 or so local participants for parties, ballroom events, workshops and a huge picnic.

This year's Dallas Southern Pride is scheduled for June-teenth weekend.

"A lot of people looked up to Kirk," said James Gipson of the Afiya Center. "He was Dad. He took a lot of people under his wing."

An area pastor who came by AP Inc. to pay his respects called Myers-Hill a great friend and brother. He said his contribution to the community was tremendous.

"We get credit for what Kirk did," the pastor said.

Another person said Myers-Hill's work "humanized HIV" and de-stigmatized the virus in the local community. "His efforts brought change to South Dallas," she said.

Buster Snapp Craft, who first met Myers-Hill more than 25 years ago at St. Luke Community United Methodist Church, said news of his friend's death left him in "complete shock."

"Over the years," Snapp Craft said in a social media post, "I watched Kirk grow in various capacities, confront some really challenging circumstances that would test his faith and eventually evolve into this larger-than-life public persona and leader. At his core, my brother Kirk was a leader. Yes, he could be very strong-willed but most visionaries are, and Kirk was a visionary extraordinaire."

### His mission

From the beginning, Myers-Hill's goal was to get those with HIV into treatment.

Prism Health's South Dallas clinic



was located across the street from AP Inc.'s original headquarters. HIV testing was part of the original menu of services offered by the start-up agency.

Myers-Hill said at the time that often when someone tested positive, he'd walk across the street with them to introduce them to the doctor and make sure they got immediate care.

As AP, Inc. grew, it moved its head-

quarters a few blocks away to the corner of MLK Jr. Boulevard and 175. After Prism Health moved its South Dallas clinic to Dolphin Road, Myers-Hill rented additional space nearby to open AP, Inc.'s own clinic.

Myers-Hill fought for funding as the number of HIV cases continued to grow among the Black community. In Texas, Blacks make up 11 percent of the population, but represent 38 percent of people living with HIV.

As part of its statement to the press, AP, Inc. staff announced its offices will be closed until further notice.

### Reaction

As news of Myers-Hill's death spread, reaction came in from political leaders.

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Omar Narvaez called Myers-Hill "a pillar in Dallas," adding that "his legacy will live forever through his work and advocacy through Abounding Prosperity. The impact he made was felt across Dallas, and I am extremely saddened to have lost a dear friend."

"I am saddened by the loss of Kirk Myers-Hill," Dallas County Commissioner Dr. Theresa M. Daniel said. "He was a force in the LGBTQ community, the African-American community and the HIV-positive community. His work with

Abounding Prosperity and Dallas Southern Pride gave voice and power to people who had been overlooked and ignored.

"Dallas County is a lesser place for his leaving but so much better because he was with us. May he rest in power," Daniel added.

The reaction from those leading the fight against HIV across the region was swift.

AIDS Walk South Dallas founder Auntjuan Wiley and AIDS Services Dallas CEO Traswell Livingston both stood vigil on the sidewalk outside AP headquarters and expressed their shock at the news.

"Kirk was a good friend, and this loss is personal," said DeeJay Johannessen, CEO of HELP Center for LGBT Health and Wellness in Arlington. "But my thoughts are with the Black community and those he served. What a tremendous loss this is. He was a powerhouse."

Former Legacy Cares Executive Director Melissa Grove said she was stunned and saddened by the news, and Resource Center CEO Cece Cox called Myers-Hill a mentor.

"It leaves a giant loss and heartache," Cox said. "He contributed so many things in terms of services and programs at Abounding Prosperity."

She called Dallas Southern Pride a significant institution and, in terms of numbers of participants and impact on the community, compared it to Black Tie Dinner and DIFFA.

"The events he created for the Black community built friendships and created organizations," Cox said, noting that at a time when public resources weren't going to the Black community in a proportional way, Myers-Hill got those funds redirected.

He was "an important voice for the Black community for HIV prevention and treatment," Cox said. ■

*Community vigil and balloon release is set for 6-8 p.m. Saturday, April 8, at Trigg-Myers Prosperity Park, 2215 Warren Ave., to celebrate the life and legacy of Kirk Myers-Hill. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be directed to Abounding Prosperity, Inc.*



# High end vs. economy

## DRIVE

The Mercedes EQE and the Chevy Bolt EUV: Opposite bands on the EV spectrum

**CASEY WILLIAMS** | Auto Reviewer  
AutoCasey@aol.com

We should all know by now that the future belongs to electric vehicles. Go shop for one, though, and you'll realize the future may not be affordable for everyone. Those bitches are expensive! But there are affordable options.

Hailing from opposite bands on the EV spectrum are the 2023 Mercedes-Benz EQE 350 and the 2023 Chevrolet Bolt EUV, and one of these could be your dreamy new EV.

### 2023 Mercedes-Benz EQE350

Mercedes rolls into the future with saturating luxury and tech wrapped in a slippery new design.

Gone are the traditional chrome grille and the star on hood, both replaced by a sweeping aerodynamic shape. Viewed head-on, it's an amorphous blob with a big star hung on a black background embedded with smaller stars. But from the side, it channels the CLS four-door coupe profile for clean airflow.

Check details like 20-inch wheels and digital headlamps with millions of pix-



Chevy Bolt EUV, left and Mercedes Benz EQE350, right

els. Inside, expansive wood panels the dash while flatscreen gauges and large touchscreen integrate technology. It takes a hot minute to master, but it's easy to access navigation, Apple/Android connectivity and drenching Bowers & Wilkins 3D audio.

Ethereal lighting encircles the dash, doors and seats at night. Adaptive cruise, automatic emergency braking, lane keep assist, rear cross path detection and lane change assist augment safety.

Harbored within the sleek skin are lithium ion batteries and twin motors to send 288 horsepower and 391 lb.-ft. of

torque through the all-wheel-drive system. It runs 0-60 mph in just 5.6 seconds.

Charging is accomplished in 9.5 hours on a 220v home charger or 10-80 percent in just 30 minutes on a DC fast charger. Range is about 240 miles.

With battery weight low in the chassis, drivers can toss the heavy sedan with abandon. It slips through city traffic with bursts of torque, but wafts down the interstate with that iron sponge feeling of Mercedes past. Four-wheel steering turns rear wheels opposite 10 degrees to provide compact car maneuvering or turn in the same direction to provide stability at speed.

The EQE350 costs \$74,900 or a few grand more with 4MATIC.

### 2023 Chevy Bolt EUV

How about similar performance and technology to the EQE for nearly \$50k less? Unlike the Mercedes, the 2023 Chevy Bolt EUV can drive itself.

It's billed as a crossover, but the EUV is just a tall car with step-in height and flip-down rear seats for luggage, bicycles and gear. Recent updates include a facelifted nose that brings a sleeker vibe with tight creases. Narrow squinty running lamps over stealthy triangular inserts for LED headlamps plus a floating rear roof tie styling to other Chevy crossovers.

It's a handsome devil.

Inside, designers graced the Bolt with a sweeping new dash harboring a wider touchscreen, flybridge center console and twin-panel sunroof. Heated/ventilated front seats, heated rear seats, Bose audio and automatic climate control add comforts.

Tap into navigation, wireless Apple/Android connectivity and wireless phone charging. All imaginable safety devices are present.

The car is rated 247 miles all-electric range. Ample 200 horsepower and 266 lb.-ft. of torque enable a rapid 0-60 mph sprint in under 7 seconds. All-wheel-drive is not available, but the car is whisper quiet with instant power. Just tap and zoom.

Optional Super Cruise allows hands-off driving on approved highways, but sensors on the steering column ensure you're paying attention. It's fantastic for long treks and felt natural after a few miles.

Recharging is not fast, taking 75 minutes for 80 percent recharge on a DC fast charger or 7.5 hours on a 240v home charger.

Prices start at just \$26,500 for the Bolt or \$27,800 for the EUV.

Storm forward!

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

### Check out the EV options at EarthX

EarthX Earth Day Expo 2023, billed as "the world's largest green gathering," comes to Fair Park in Dallas April 21-23.

Admission to the Expo is free, but those planning to attend are encouraged to register so they can take advantage of the innovative experience planner that lets guests tailor their schedules and select from a range of events and experiences that align with their personal interests.

One of the experiences available is the Electric Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Showcase and Ride-and-Drive.

The showcase and Ride & Drive will feature all aspects of EVs, BEV, PHEV and FCEV models and styles and will include electric cars and trucks, EV charging solutions and e-mobility options to demonstrate the importance of electric vehicles to the environment.

Visitors can expect to see battery electric vehicles (BEVs) that rely on electricity and are rechargeable via a plug-in outlet; plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) that are powered by gasoline and electricity with batteries charge via an outlet and use gas to extend the range when the electric battery is due for a recharge; and hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) that are similar to plug-in hybrid electrics, using gasoline and electricity, relying on the electric motor when driving and gas when increasing load or speed.

For more information, visit EarthX.org.

— From Staff Reports



# Getting charged up

## DRIVE

The key to going EV starts with installing the right charger

**CASEY WILLIAMS** | Auto Reviewer  
AutoCasey@aol.com

Probably from now until the end of your natural life, you'll be hearing about and driving electric vehicles. Obviously, they're not for everybody yet. Sure, they drive like jet-powered dreams, silent and swift. But keeping them charged presents the greatest challenge.

Take it from me: I drive them regularly, and charging at home on a 110-volt outlet or trying to find public chargers for a faster replenishment is neither



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### Luis Valdes Castillo, FNP-C,

has joined Dr. Marc Tribble at MD Progressive Care, located in the heart of the Oak Lawn community. Luis has over 12 years of medical experience. His areas of clinical interest include primary care, Diabetes treatment, HIV Treatment & Prevention (PrEP), STD treatment, and LGBT care. He is a member of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and the American Academy of HIV Medicine. He accepts all major medical insurance plans and speaks English & Spanish.

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Jason D. Flatt, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, UNLV, School of Public Health

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# High laurels, big work

## ON THE TABLE



Executive Chef Terance Jenkins, Pastry Chef Bryan Mendoza, and Executive Chef Owner Michelle Carpenter. (Photo by Kate Voskova)

Restaurant Beatrice basks in its James Beard nomination, but there's always work to do to reform the restaurant industry

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

In late March, the news hit that lesbian-owned Restaurant Beatrice was up for a James Beard Foundation Award, and owner/Chef Michelle Carpenter and her team are up for Best New Restaurant.

The Oak Cliff-based eatery will learn on June 5 in Chicago if they take the gold.

Once the news broke, Carpenter — who also owns Zen Sushi — is busier than before, and, “For that, we are grateful,” she said. But she did take the time to talk with Dallas Voice about the nomination and what it means to operate a restaurant that recognizes more than just the menu.

**Dallas Voice: Congratulations! How was you and your team's reaction to the big news?** Michelle Carpenter: Thank you! The original nomination was a shocker because the Beard Foundation doesn't give nominees notice. We're a small business, and I've been working in the industry for 35 years. I am acquainted with working studiously to build customers one-by-one. That's really the only kind of success I've ever known.

**What's this feeling like then?** Being a finalist is a new feeling. We can't label it yet — some kind of mix of gratitude and shock. Whatever feeling we have probably won't sink in — settle — until after they announce the winner in June. For the first semi-finalist notice, our vendors heard the news, and they texted us. We didn't know until other people told us.

This time, we just checked the news.

**When you received the news, what happened first?** Like anyone else, it was a great feeling of validation and recognition. Working to change the industry is reform work. Reform work is met with resistance, every day, all the time. We haven't really had time to celebrate.

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Join our welcoming supportive group for LGBTQIA+ caregivers who are currently caring for anyone 50 years or older.

Groups are lead by A. Beth Jackson, MS, LMFT Associate, Supervised by Nicole Vargas, PhD, LMFT-S.

### When:

3rd Tuesday of every month  
6PM - 7:30PM  
Via Zoom

### RSVP Required:

CSP@TheSeniorSource.Org or call  
214-823-5700

*This support group is supported in part by  
The Coalition for Aging LGBT.*



We're busy with guests and restaurant operations.

**How do you describe Restaurant Beatrice?** Contemporary Louisiana. I am half-Cajun, and my co-executive chef, Terance Jenkins, is Creole. We offer two concepts in one location — casual boils on the patio and a more formal fine dining interior — And this represents the two different facets of how great Louisiana food is.

**What led you to open this restaurant?** Restaurant Beatrice was the other part of my identity that I had not shared to my supporters. Opening Restaurant Beatrice made me feel I was able to finally pay tribute to my father's Cajun side. Zen Sushi honored my Japanese heritage. My dad was a Cajun airman who married a Japanese woman from Tokyo. I was born in Tokyo and spent the first five years of life in Japan.

Restaurant Beatrice is emblematic of my life in Louisiana and pays tribute to my Mamaw, Beatrice Carpenter.

**What do you feel Restaurant Beatrice has that stood out to the James Beard Foundation?** JBF recognized us for undergoing B-Corp certification and trying to live our values. The toughest lesson that I had to learn — I am still learning — as a chef was that making good food isn't enough. Dining is about the overall experience.



Duck and Andouille Gumbo, Photo by Kate Voskova

**There was a worldwide reckoning that happened during the pandemic. Today, younger generations are questioning if the means justify the ends. What is the point of making the very best food on earth if the restaurants are being wasteful of the earth's resources or exploitative of marginalized groups?** If women are being abused in the kitchens and BIPOC are being underpaid compared to their white counterparts? If queer folks are being fired for being queer? If line cooks and chefs are throwing away meat and vegetable scraps that can easily be repurposed?

Then what is the meaning of being the "best?" Do paradigms of the culinary

industry have to be so wasteful, sexist, homophobic or racist? Of course not.

**You and your team certainly represent a unique perspective.** Every incoming generation redefines what it means to be human. It is due to the legacy of civil rights advocates of yore — which includes the work of LGBTQ activists — and it is due to the young protestors that carved the narrowest of corridors that a face like mine and a face like Terance's could be recognized at the regional and national level.

Terance and I were groomed in kitchens that were abusive and hot-tempered, and all of that was normalized. Faces like my own have been in the industry for ages. But marginalized folks in the service industry are generally invisible.

This recognition of chefs for their own biographies and personal integrity is still developing in mainstream culture. This is a kind of a lifetime recognition I did not anticipate. I'm grateful I am the beneficiary of this kind of reckoning that has spread into the culinary world.

I do not have faith that, had Restaurant Beatrice opened five years earlier, we would have been recognized for any of our operational differences. We certainly have made our mistakes, but Restaurant Beatrice operates with this larger responsibility in mind. We have endless unlearning to do.

**What do you like about owning and operating a restaurant here in Dallas and particularly in Oak Cliff?** Oak Cliff is my 'hood. I can't imagine living anywhere else. I never feel like I don't belong. As a restaurant owner in the Bishop Arts, I have always been proud of the fact that not only are the retailers and restaurants independent, but so many of the operators are BIPOC and/or LGBTQ+. Black, brown, queer, trans, straight, white, working class and upper crust folks — almost anyone can feel comfortable in

Oak Cliff. Most neighborhoods are not so inclusive.

I am able to make a direct impact in the very neighborhood that I live in and work in. Over 70 percent of my staff are locals. It's our neighborhood.

I don't happen to be located here. I don't just work here. I'm investing in the betterment and empowerment of Oak Cliff, a part of the city that has been and continues to be under-resourced. Restaurant Beatrice is a product of Oak Cliff so this success is OC's success, too.

*Restaurant Beatrice is located at 1111 N. Beckley Ave. RestaurantBeatrice.com.*

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# Life on the road

## BEHIND THE CURTAINS

'Anastasia' cast member is all about living his best theater life

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

**T**hese are exciting days for dancer and actor Louis Brogna. He and the rest of the cast of *Anastasi-aland* in Dallas this week for another stop on Brogna's national tour debut. And this ensemble cast member is soaking it all in.

"It's going so great. I have lots of professional experience, but nothing on this scale," Brogna said by phone from Amarillo during *Anastasia*'s run there. "It's all very unique, but I love this show."

*Anastasia* plays as part of the ATPAC Broadway at the Center series through Saturday, April 8, at the Winspear.

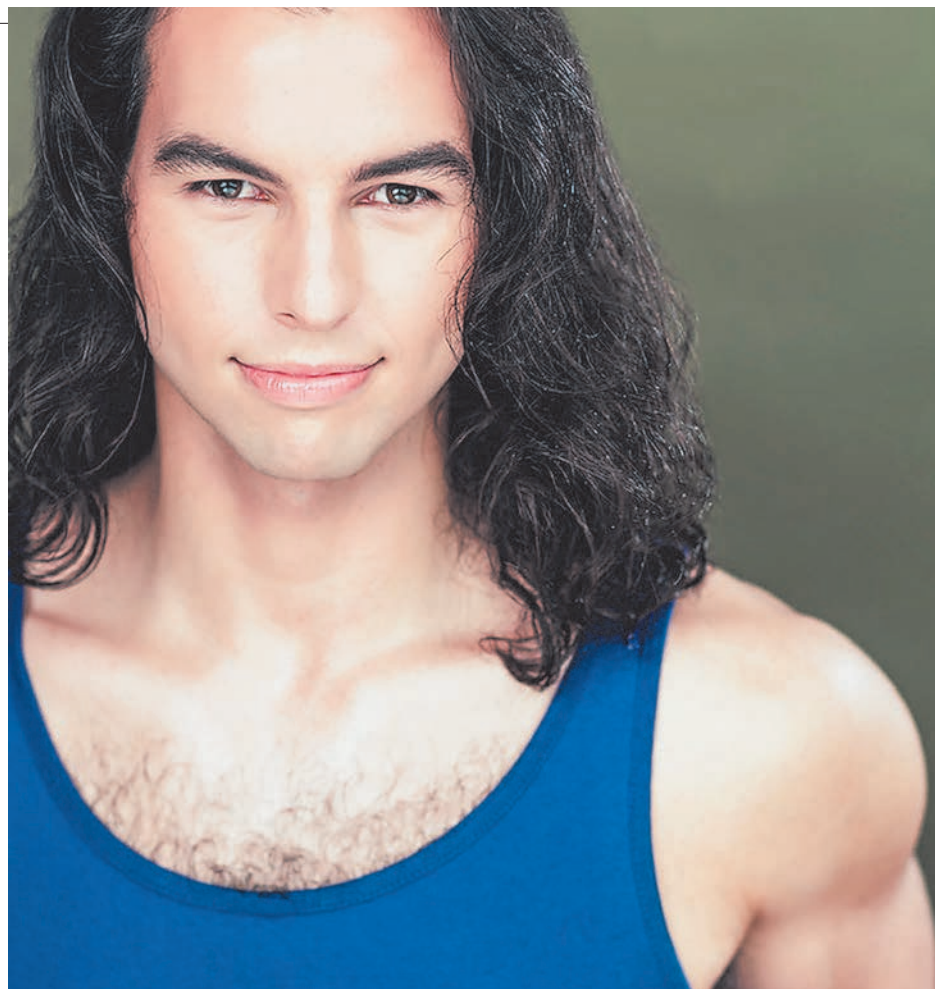
Written by Terrence McNally, with music and lyrics by Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens, the show centers on the true story of a young woman who investigates her past, leading her to an aristocratic family.

Brogna found that family is a big theme with this show, whether it be chosen or natural. That goes for offstage, too.

"I think that's why I love this show. There's this happenstance where she runs across Vlad and Demetri who become her chosen family, much like a queer chosen family," he said. "That helps her discover who she is."

And with his castmates, Brogna said,

**LIFE**, Page 20



Louis Brogna



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Performing Arts Fort Worth, the nonprofit organization that owns and operates Bass Hall, also presents touring productions, including the **Broadway at the Bass Series** presented by PNC Bank and the **BNSF Popular Entertainment Series**.

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# 30 years of love and progress

IN PERSPECTIVE



Looking back on where we've been, ahead to where we're headed

**M**y spouse Helen and I recently celebrated our 30th anniversary. While that's not a record-breaking number, we've nevertheless experienced many changes in both our relationship and in society during our three decades together.

At a time when the LGBTQ community is being attacked on all sides, this personal milestone also reminded me that despite the many challenges for LGBTQ folks right now, progress can happen and queer joy is real.

In 1993, when we started dating, LGBTQ parents were far less visible than today. Helen, who had always wanted



**Dana Rudolph**  
Contributing Columnist

to have kids someday, thought she would have to give up that dream when she started dating a woman.

For my part, I was a few years younger, and the idea of kids wasn't on my radar screen as I focused on the transition from graduate school to gainful employment.

Two things shifted my perspective. The first was when my brother-in-law and his wife became parents, and I got an up-close look at what early parenthood could be.

The second was 9/11. I had been working on the top floor of the World



Financial Center, right next to the World Trade Center, until two business days before that date when I took a new position in the company's New Jersey office. Instead of being on the commuter train under WTC at 8:46 a.m. when the first plane hit, I was driving into a suburban parking lot.

I realized suddenly just how short our time in this life could be, and I knew I didn't want to miss the opportunity to be a parent.

I suspected Helen and I would be a good parenting team. We agreed on the core values and skills we wanted to teach our child, but we each brought different things to the table.

I grew up on the East Coast; she on the West. She's an engineer; I'm a literature and history geek. I'm an athlete who's been competitive in several sports; she prefers to get her exercise gardening or building things. (We're both always up for a good hike in the woods, though.)

We figured we could expose our child to a variety of activities and experiences, and he would find his own path among (or beyond) them. (Spoiler: He has.)

When Helen and I began our journey to parenthood via reciprocal in vitro fertilization (my egg, her womb), no state had yet enacted marriage equality. We knew we would need to take steps to secure my legal parentage (something still recommended even today for nongestational or nongenetic parents in married same-sex couples, unfortunately). A lawyer helped us become only the second RIVF couple to get a pre-birth parentage order in the state. The first had gotten theirs just a month before. We were happy to be part of a burgeoning trend.

We were hardly pioneers, though. Out LGBTQ parents had been known since the time of World War II, mostly in the context of cases that denied them child custody after divorce from different-sex spouses. The 1970s saw more two-mom couples and single women and even some queer dads starting their families together. And three years before we started dating, a Newsweek article contained what seems like the first documented instance of the term "gayby boom."

By sheer coincidence, our time as parents has paralleled a spike in rights and visibility for queer couples and families. The year our son was born, Massachusetts became the first state in the U.S. to

declare that same-sex couples had the right to marry. Initially, only in-state couples could do so, however, and we lived elsewhere.

Then, while I was staying home with our son, Helen got a job in Massachusetts. Her new company no longer offered health insurance for unmarried partners, so we had to marry for me to be covered. We therefore planned for and had our wedding in the span of two weeks — and we still like to joke about our "shotgun wedding" after 13 years together.

By total coincidence, the day we chose was Nov. 18, three years to the day after the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decision that made it legal. Now, we always have a small celebration in November, too (because it's an excuse for more cake), but our April anniversary is our real one.

Today, too, LGBTQ families and individuals across the LGBTQ spectrum are far more visible in real life, in the media and in children's books and television. I envy today's families that have such resources, though I know they have new challenges as well.

Helen and I have been together half our lives, through six interstate moves and several career changes for each of us. We've supported each other through the deaths of all four of our parents. We met as graduate students and now have a son in college.

If there's a secret to having a relationship last this long, I'm not sure what it is. I think we started with a good foundation of both common interests and complementary differences. We delight in each other's company but also do things separately. Yes, we argue sometimes, but after this many years, we know that storms will blow over. And I think we've never forgotten that ineffable something that drew us to each other in the first place.

Although LGBTQ rights are under renewed attack right now, I'm heartened by thinking back on all the change we've seen and know is possible. And thinking of the love we have, I know why I want to keep fighting. ■

*Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory, plus a searchable database of 1200+ LGBTQ family books.*

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he's found his own new family.

"Oh yeah, they are [family], and we've built these incredible connections. I know I'll be seeing these people probably for the rest of my life," he said.

The story doesn't lend itself to really any gay storylines, and Brogna says only a couple of characters are queer-coded — like his second act feature as the club's head waiter and bouncer. Still, Brogna said, he does find a heart in the show that speaks to his own gay identity.

"The show is a great story for young women. It tells them they can be whatever they want and to reach for their dreams," he said. That also resonates with young gay children.

When he has some downtime, Brogna said he likes to take to the streets of whatever city the show is performing in. He describes it as a privilege of touring.

"I love exploring a city as much as I have time to," he said. "I would never have this opportunity if I wasn't on the road with this show."

Brogna talks about his *Anastasia* time with enthusiasm. He joined the company



The cast of *Anastasia* (Photo by Evan Zimmerman)

last April and went onstage last May, so he's got a year under his belt. But he also knows what's ahead.

"I know all good things come to an end, and I'll be hustling and pounding the pavement once this is over," he said. "But I know I've learned a lot more about

myself in this time."

Until then, Brogna is going to work the magic of theater as much as he can to bring a positive message and representation to the stage.

"I hope that I'm able to bring some joy or freedom or hope to audiences,"

he said. "I know other shows have more queer representation or drag queens, but it's still amazing to know the representation is onstage without queer trauma — just our stories or characters for everyone to see."

For tickets, visit [ATTPAC.org](http://ATTPAC.org).

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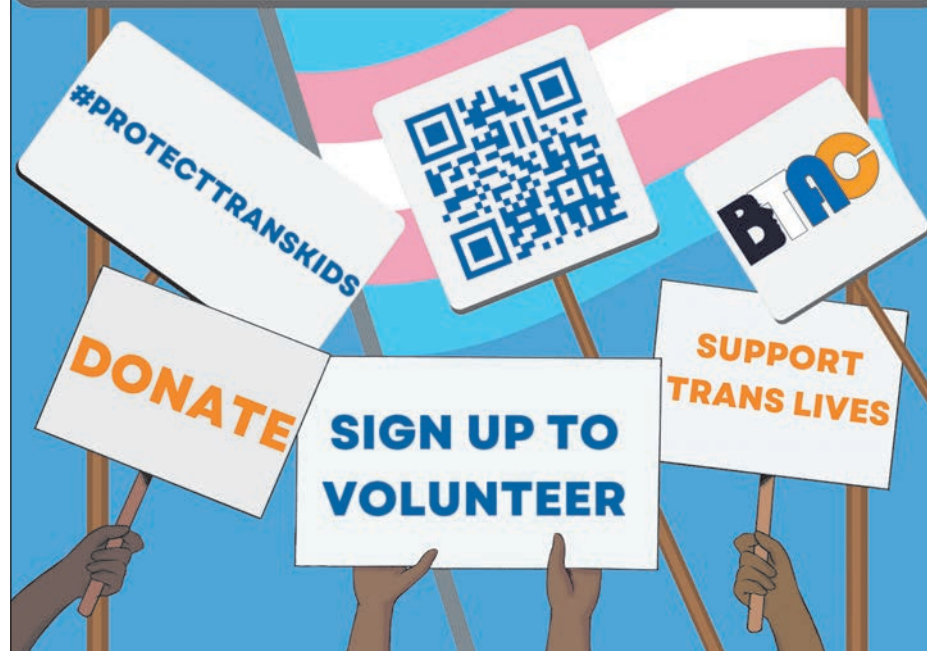
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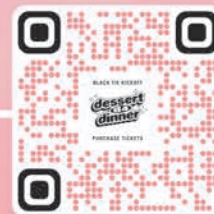
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# PLAN YOUR WEEK - The Gay Agenda... Our LGBTQ community calendar!



Scarborough Renaissance Festival, located at 3511 FM 66 in Waxahachie opens Saturday, April 8, at 10 a.m. The festival runs Saturdays and Sunday through May 28, and closes Memorial Day Monday, May 29. Go early, go often to get in on all the fun.

- Red for community events
- Blue for arts and entertainment
- Purple for sports
- Green for nightlife
- Orange for civic events and holidays

## ■ 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.

## APRIL

### ■ April 7: Good Friday

#### ■ April 7-30: 'Into the Woods'

Community fave Joel Ferrell directs this fairy tale mashup musical by Steven Sondheim for the Dallas Theater Center. Performances held at the Wyly Theatre. DallasTheaterCenter.com.

#### ■ April 8-May 29: Scarborough Renaissance Festival

Open Saturdays and Sundays and Memorial Day Monday from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. 2511 FM 66, Waxahachie. SRFestival.com

#### ■ April 6-8: 'Anastasia'

Broadway at the Center presents the musical Anastasia. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. ATPAC.org.

#### ■ April 8: Dallas Spring Arts Festival

Bruce Wood Dance participates in a free event at Klyde Warren Park from 1-5 p.m.

### ■ April 9: Easter Sunday

#### ■ April 9: Easter in the Park

Dallas Symphony Orchestra brass quintet concert, Pooch Parade, photos with the Easter bunny and more from 1-4 p.m. in Turtle Creek Park.

#### ■ Through April 9: 'Disaster the Musical'

For a good time, head to Grapevine for this campy offering. Disaster is imminent for high profile celebs on a cruise ship in 1979, but thankfully the soundtrack of retro hits helps it all go down smoothly. Runway Theatre. RunwayTheatre.com.

#### ■ April 11: Coalition for Aging LGBT

LGBT Life and Financial Planning: Protecting and Respecting Relationships from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Arts District Mansion, 2101 Ross Ave. Reserve a free spot at Eventbrite.com. CFA.LGBT.

#### ■ April 11: 'The Musical Theatre Game Show'

Texas Pride Realty Group's Mikey Abrams shifts gears into game show host to test your show tune knowledge with interactive games and trivia. 7:30 p.m. at Pocket Sandwich Theatre, 1104 Elm St., Carrollton. Free. MikeyAbramsRealtor.com.

#### ■ April 12: Carrollton Pride Meetup

Meetup from 7-8 p.m. at Nico's Cocina, 3065 N. Josie Lane, Carrollton.

#### ■ April 12: 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 Wednesday of the month from 6:30-8 p.m. For notifications, contact Richard DeKnock at tastefullyrichard@gmail.com.

### ■ April 13-15: Lyle Lovett

The country crooner will always be in our hearts when he covered Tammy Wynette's "Stand By Your Man." He performs three nights here in Dallas at the Majestic Theatre. AXS.com.

### ■ April 14: Arts District Changing Perspectives Block Party

A free cultural festival features Close-Act Theatre's Birdmen, a trio of large, illuminated birdlike animals that extend 23 feet high and 19 feet long with a wingspan of 13 feet that will come to life on the streets of the Dallas Arts District coming from the Netherlands. Close-Act Theatre is renowned for interactive street theatre. Food trucks, artisans and a community muralist.

### ■ April 15: 25th Anniversary LGBT Law Section

25th anniversary celebration of the LGBT Law Section of the State Bar of Texas at the Arts District Mansion, 2101 Ross Ave.

### ■ April 15: Wigchella Gaybingo

Gaybingo at 6 p.m. Play for a chance to win cash and prizes. Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Tickets at myresourcecenter.org/gaybingo.

### ■ April 15: Legacy's Neon Jungle

Crozier Hall, 2218 Bryan St., Suite 105 from 7-10 p.m.

### ■ April 15: Drag brunch

Monthly drag brunch featuring Layla Larue at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Ebb & Flow, 7300 Lone Star Drive C 125, Plano. 18+ only. Ebbandflowtx.com.

### ■ April 15: HRC Spring Luncheon

HRC DFW Spring Luncheon – Equality Matters features a panel that includes state Rep. Julie Johnson, Tari Hanneman, director of the health and aging program at HRC and Leslie McMurray, transgender education and advocacy associate for Resource Center. Warwick Melrose Hotel, 3015 Oak Lawn Ave. from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Tickets at hrcdfw.org.

### ■ April 15-16: Dallas Festival of the Arts

Formerly known as Turtle Creek Spring Arts Festival includes an outdoor art gallery featuring 125 local and regional painters, photographers, sculptors, metalwork, glass artists, jewelers and more from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. on Sunday at Reverchon Park, 3505 Maple Ave. DallasFestivaloftheArts.net.

### ■ April 16: David Sedaris

Arts and Letters Live presents David Sedaris at 7:30 p.m. McFarlin Auditorium, 6405 Boaz St.

*Have an event coming up? Email your information to Managing Editor Tammye Nash at [nash@dallasvoice.com](mailto:nash@dallasvoice.com) or Senior Staff Writer David Taffet at [taffet@dallasvoice.com](mailto:taffet@dallasvoice.com) by Monday at 5 p.m. for that week's issue.*

*Look for extended listings online at [DallasVoice.com](http://DallasVoice.com)*

Easter returns to Turtle Creek Park, Sunday, April 9, with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet performing, photos with the Easter Bunny, the Pooch Parade and more





# Jenny Block

## GIRL ON GIRLS

### Driving Miss Jeanne: Highway Meditations

A couple of weeks ago I drove my grandmother, Jeanne, from Michigan to Florida. She’s actually my wife’s step-grandmother. But Jeanne says that’s just a technicality, that “step” business and the “relative by marriage” business. I am her granddaughter.

Even without knowing anything else, it’s hard not to love someone who says things like that.

Then there’s the fact that she’s lived the most marvelous life: Was married to the love of her life for almost 50 years before he passed. Traveled the world. Attended balls. Had a successful career at a time when that was not possible for many women. Had a beautiful family and loads of friends. Filled retirement days with tennis games and long walks in the sun.

She’s smart and sharp witted and just, well, fun to be with.

Jeanne has been going to Florida for the winter months for years, first with her husband and then alone once he passed. For a while now, family members have given her a lift. It just makes sense that she not make that trek alone. This year, though, the usual suspects weren’t available.

I had always joked that I would be happy to do it if she could handle my slow driving and Dateline podcasts. So when she called to make the request, I didn’t hesitate to say yes.

It was fun and hard and eye-opening — and I couldn’t be happier that I agreed to the adventure. Jeanne took the first shift, which I think she will forever tease me about. “I’m so glad you called and asked me to drive you to Florida,” she said, ribbing me after I had drifted off to sleep in the car.

The truth was, I was exhausted. I hadn’t slept for two nights in a row, anxious about the trip. Would I be comfortable driving her car? What would we talk about? What would we listen to? How will I manage 20 hours of driving? What if? What if? What if?

I needn’t having worried — about anything.

After that, I did all of the driving, save



for a couple of hours leaving Atlanta when my navigating skills were more necessary than my driving skills. We ate at Cracker Barrel (Yes. I know. Not my choice obviously). And we stopped at every Buc-ee’s we could find. It was her first Buc-ee’s experience. She LOVED it. And I loved that she loved it.

We talked and laughed and listened to Coffee House radio and my Taylor Swift playlist.

I got road rage in traffic, and she — sweetly and incredibly unsuccessfully — tried to calm my nerves. We shared a king-sized bed at the Hampton Inn and the baked fish at a diner. She lost her earring back, and I discovered we left the car door open all night in Valdosta, Ga.

It was fun and relatively easy, all things considered, barring the traffic and the last 20 minutes of the drive when I had to pee so badly I felt like I was at a concert where I hadn’t wanted to miss one song.

When we arrived, we encountered all sorts of dilemmas, as one does after not being in one’s condo for three years — a water heater that dies, a fridge that had to be replaced, a few cracked tiles, a bulge in the ceiling.

I stayed for five days, and my wife joined me for a couple of those. We all

worked together to get things running smoothly again.

The whole experience got me to thinking about karma. When Jeanne needed help, she had no trouble getting it, even from a brand new, step-granddaughter by marriage who was immediately promoted to granddaughter. Why? Because Jeanne is kind and thoughtful and generous. She loves without hesitation, and she considers others before herself.

The world could learn a lot from my grandmother. Sure, she’s quirky and set in her ways (which, by the way, is exactly how I plan to be when I’m pushing 90). But she has also created a legacy of kindness and acceptance. It can’t be easy losing the love of your life or being the step-parent/step-grandparent, or, heck, just getting old in a world that hasn’t been tended to properly for a long time.

And yet she manages to do it with enough grace that people are ready to jump in whenever needed.

Someone in my own family asked me to transport them over a number of state lines a number of months ago. I reluctantly agreed and then heeded my wife’s and sister’s and daughter’s urgings to decline because it would be unsafe physically and emotionally. It would have been the absolute opposite of this jour-

ney for a number of reasons, and there was no one else to do it for many of those same reasons.

It makes me sad to think about it.

We reap what we sow.

And, so, I will continue to tend to my gardens. I hope you’ll do the same.

### this week’s solution

GRAS	ABYSS	CASH
LOBO	CHERI	LIPO
AMERICA	ASGOOD	AS
DELETE	MOUSSE	
	HINT	MAPS
MIME	TRIOS	EARL
OCEAN	ITS	PATIO
PARDO	PEA	EUROS
URI	PROMISE	ETE
PETERED	CYPRESS	
	ROD	NEA
BARBARA	JORDAN	
MAGI	NOTIN	IPOD
GRIN	TOMMY	USES
MING	STEAM	SELL

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# PUZZLE | What the People Want

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
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	52	53				54	55	56				57	58	
59					60						61			62
63					64						65			
66					67						68			

## Solution on Page 24

### Across

- 1 End of a favorite holiday  
5 Immeasurably vast hole  
10 Stuff stuffed in G-strings  
14 WNBA star Rebecca  
15 1920 Colette novel  
16 Cosmetic surgery that sucks  
17 Start of what the people want, per 52-Across  
20 Cut  
21 Hairstylist's dessert?  
22 Help in puzzle-solving  
24 *Damron Road Atlas* pages  
25 Communicate with the body  
28 Threesomes  
30 The Chicks' *Goodbye* \_\_\_\_  
34 South Beach setting  
36 \_\_\_\_ *De-Lovely*  
37 Barbecue site  
38 Don of game shows  
39 Musical pea under a mattress  
40 Current coins of Amsterdam  
41 Ocean State sch.  
42 End of the quote  
45 Season abroad  
46 Lost an erection, with "out"?

- 48 Evergreen conifer  
50 Poet McKuen  
51 Three R's org.  
52 First southern African American woman elected to the House of Representatives  
59 Christmas threesome  
60 Part of *NIMBY*  
61 Apple that isn't a fruit  
63 Express pleasure orally  
64 The Who's rock opera  
65 Takes advantage of  
66 \_\_\_\_-Na of *Mulan*  
67 Get the cappuccino foamy  
68 Hawk, but not chicken hawk

### Down

- 1 Like gay heteros  
2 *Julius Caesar* setting  
3 His brother laid him in his grave  
4 Symptom of the clap?  
5 Gomer's drawl, e.g.  
6 Food preservative  
7 King James word before verily  
8 AARP members  
9 Beginning and end of Socrates  
10 *The Pink Panther* inspector  
11 Quilt subject  
12 Sauna bath sites

- 13 Part of a vacuum that sucks  
18 *That's \_\_\_\_ quit!*  
19 Alley from Moo  
23 Guy with a "third leg"  
24 Colorful subway art  
25 Clean a pirate ship deck  
26 Words of empathy  
27 Type of Boy Scout badge  
29 Ted Casablanca bit  
31 Kilmer simile phrase  
32 Historic Stonewall disturbances  
33 Gets a butt-whuppin', maybe  
35 Easygoing response  
37 One of the balls in your head  
43 Colony inhabitants  
44 Odd, to queer  
47 Screwing up  
49 Spoke for Dykes on Bikes  
52 Adriatic seaport  
53 Gomer's *Encore!*  
54 Cheer for the Chicago Sky, e.g.  
55 Where to look, in *Misty*  
56 Iwo \_\_\_\_  
57 Area in the Cathedral of Hope  
58 Witty Coward  
59 *The Wizard of Oz* studio  
62 Broadband connection



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