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Max Hightower and his castmates will get to stage their production of 'Oklahoma' at Sherman HS after all

By Tammye Nash, page 10



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Bites from our blog

WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com

Ethics Committee report: 'Substantial evidence' shows Santos 'violated federal criminal law'



Republican Rep. George Santos

The House Ethics Committee on Thursday, Nov. 16, released its report concluding there is

“substantial evidence” that gay Republican Rep. George Santos has “violated federal criminal laws,” including using campaign funds for personal purposes and filing false campaign reports.

The release of the report comes less than a month after the most recent effort to expel Santos from Congress failed to get the two-thirds majority necessary to pass. However, many of those who voted against that effort on Nov. 1 said they wanted to see the results of the House Ethics Committee’s investigation into Santos.

The New York lawmaker faces a 23-count indictment accusing him of an array of corruption, including 10 felony counts that federal prosecutors added last month. Santos’ campaign fundraiser Samuel Miele, who had previously identified himself as the chief of staff for former House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, pleaded guilty to charges of wire fraud on Tuesday, Nov. 14. And Santos’ former campaign treasurer, Nancy Marks, pleaded guilty in October to a series of charges, including conspiring with a congressional candidate to commit wire fraud.

Santos has pleaded not guilty to the charges against him.

According to the report released today, the Ethics subcommittee found “a complex web of unlawful activity involving Rep. Santos’ campaign, personal and business finances ... Rep. Santos

sought to fraudulently exploit every aspect of his House candidacy for his own personal financial profit.”

The report also says Santos, “blatantly stole from his campaign” and “deceived donors into providing what they thought were contributions to his campaign but were in fact payments for his personal benefit. He reported fictitious loans to his political committees to induce donors and party committees to make further contributions to his campaign, and then diverted more campaign money to himself as purported ‘repayments’ of those fictitious loans.”

The report also alleges that Santos “used his connections to high-value donors and other political campaigns” to enrich himself, and that he did it all “through a constant series of lies to his constituents, donors and staff about his background and experience.”

The Ethics Committee said it is referring its findings to the Justice Department but did not make a recommendation to the House.

— Tammye Nash

Apologizing to Judge Phyllis Frye

Judge Phyllis Frye spoke at the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum on Wednesday, Nov. 15, but before I went to hear her

speaking, I felt that I owed her an apology.

Through the 1990s, I was a board member of the Lesbian and Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, now known as Equality Texas. While equality was our goal, we were singularly focused on getting a hate crime bill through the Legislature. And every version of the bill that was written only included protection based on sexual orientation.

At one board meeting, Houston transgender activist Phyllis Frye came to speak to the board to ask us to encourage the Legislature to add gender expression or identity to the list of covered hate crimes. While no one disagreed that the transgender community was the target of hate crimes, most board members believed we could get a bill passed if it included sexual orientation but not if it included gender identity.

Two of us voted with Frye to add the transgender language to our goals. The rest of the board voted no.

Although I was one of the two who voted with her, I felt I needed to apologize for not being able to convince anyone else to vote with us. (The other yes vote on the board came from Mitchell Katine, a Houston lawyer who later became the first defense attorney in the case that became *Lawrence v. Texas*).

If a board dedicated to gay and lesbian rights

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couldn't be convinced that transgender rights were equally important by the woman who's come to be known as the grandmother of the transgender rights movement, that at least proves what a tough road the transgender community has had to navigate.

Frye notes that not until 2008 did HRC finally agree to include the trans community as part of its mission. Why? "A lot of gay and lesbian people with money didn't want to fuck with us

and dilute the message," she said.

But just as the hate crime bill in Texas was rejected multiple times and, when finally passed, was vetoed before passing once more and being signed, what's currently known as the Equality Act has been introduced in Congress for decades and has continued to fail — even when the trans community was excluded.

Excluding people isn't a winning strategy.

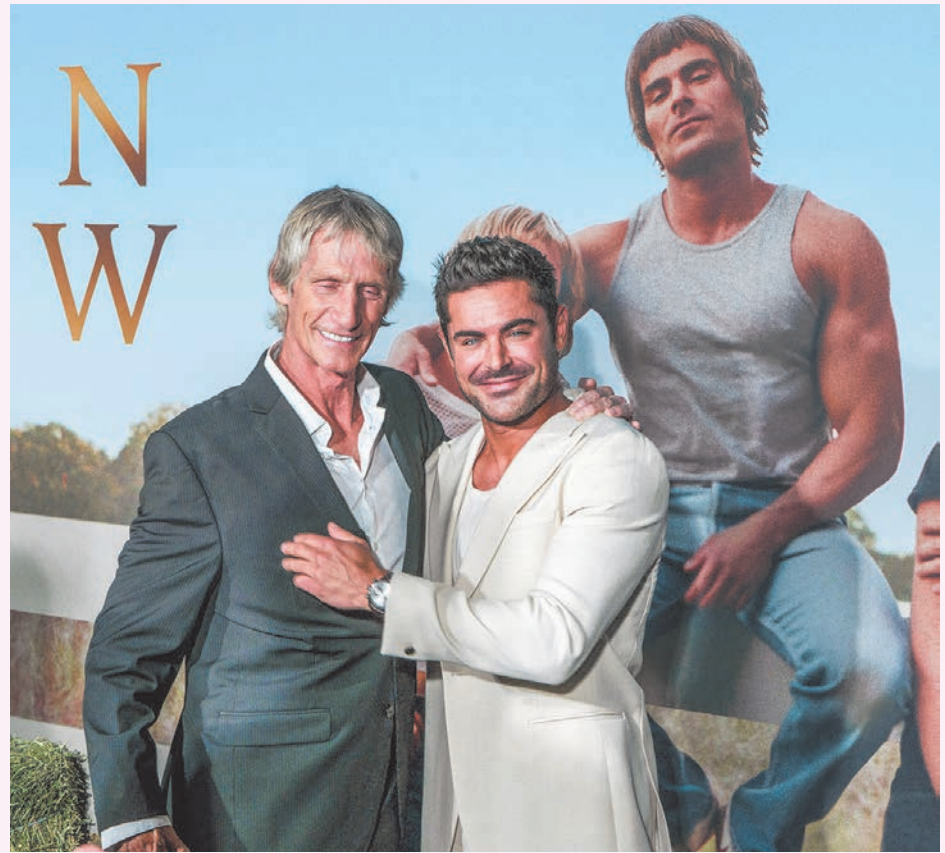
— David Taffet

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The world premiere of *The Iron Claw*, the biographical sports film based on the Von Erch wrestling dynasty from Texas, was held Nov. 8 at The Texas Theatre in Dallas, with the film's stars, including Zac Efron, right, as Kevin Von Erch and Kevin Von Erch himself, left — the only surviving brother of the original Von Erch clan — in attendance. See more photos from the premiere online at [DallasVoice.com](https://www.dallasvoice.com/). (Photo by Vincent Urrabazzo)

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A frayed Thanksgiving

Praise to seekers of peace and justice

Thanksgiving is a good day for reconnecting. The importance of friends and family was never so clear to me as it was during the Covid-19 shutdown in the spring of 2020. I felt so isolated that I was concerned about my mental health.

Since then, I have been uplifted by many acts of kindness I have witnessed, whether in local shops or in WhatsApp calls with struggling friends in Africa. From people with plenty to people with nothing, I have encountered generous, brave spirits who provided soothing respite from the fanaticism and strife reflected in the news and social media.

Their grace, whether amid light or darkness, is a victory in itself.

The strength of character and simple goodness of these people lowered my stress level as I watched a parade of threats to our liberties march by. That helped me avoid clinging desperately to every meager scrap of good news that came along.

For example, The Advocate recently had a headline, "Vatican Rules Transgender Catholics and Babies of Same-Sex Couples Can Be Baptized in the Church." That is welcome as far as it goes but feels too little and too late.

Though brought up in the Catholic Church, I managed to get through much of my life as a gay man outside its good graces. How grateful do they expect me to be for their baby steps of tolerance? How long is one expected to wait wretchedly in the cold before being welcomed into the feast?

Happily, I am on a more solid footing with my family. Thanksgiving dinner will be at my youngest sister's house. I suppose it is a blessing that the Republican voters in the family will be at a different gathering. I love them all, mind you, but who needs an argument over whether America should invade Mexico, elect a demented dictator wannabe or wheth-



Richard J. Rosendall
Contributing Writer

er Nikki Haley was right to call Vivek Ramaswamy "scum" at a recent debate?

I suppose we could say things like, "Hey turncoat, please pass the stuffing," but that hardly sounds familial.

Besides, my plate at Thanksgiving is so full to start with that I barely have room for pie, much less seconds of anything. That's something to be grateful for: a day when overeating is considered a sign of patriotism, so no one will fault my dietary choices.

On the other hand, I could warm to a discussion of whether Sen. Tim Scott will drop girlfriend Mindy now that he has suspended his presidential campaign. But beards are useful in Washington; maybe she'll settle for being a member of the senatorial wives club.

Would this be a bad time to mention that the Justice Department has investigated a high-end brothel network with politicians as customers? Personally, I think we should let them off as long as they didn't spill national secrets, charge it as a work-related expense or demonize others for indulgences they themselves were enjoying. Otherwise, hey, we all get lonely.

I am not especially grateful that fashion critic Vanessa Friedman of The New York Times saw fit to describe Ivanka



Trump arriving at her father's civil fraud trial "in a navy wool coat and navy pantsuit, a black leather tote clutched in one hand, tiny pearl studs in her ears and with her blond hair falling in soft waves around her face, the picture of gentle, pulled-together professionalism and good will."

Really? Ivanka certainly should be able to dress nicely after she and husband Jared used their positions to grift fortunes from the Chinese and Saudis.

Nor am I grateful that Speaker "MAGA Mike" Johnson, one of God's answers to those who asked how much worse it could get, flew to Paris for a right-wing confab a week before a looming government shutdown.

I am thankful, however, for the journalists digging up the goods (or bads) on Johnson's far-right record; for the prosecutors holding Donald Trump account-

able for his various crimes; for my fellow citizens defending women's reproductive rights; for Democrats stepping up to challenge right-wing officeholders (for example, Colin Allred running against Sen. Ted Cruz in Texas, and Lucas Kuncze running against Sen. Josh Hawley in Missouri).

I am not thankful that the world is on fire. It seems that hate is built into our DNA.

The people I am most grateful for this Thanksgiving are those who dedicate themselves to overcoming the destructive proclivity of humankind. Here's to the peacemakers, who persevere despite crossfire from all sides.

Amid the tumult, may you find sustenance for body and soul. ■

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

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Standing in the spotlight

FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION

Being the center of media attention has been scary for high school senior Max Hightower, but he's glad he took a stand

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

Max Hightower doesn't mind at all being in the spotlight on stage. In fact, he works hard in his theater class to earn that place in the spotlight. But over the last few weeks, the 17-year-old Sherman High School senior has found out that being in the national media spotlight really isn't that much fun at all.

Ironically, it was the fact that he had earned his place in the stage spotlight that ended up turning the media spotlight on him.

In mid-October, when Max found out he had won the role of Ali Hakim in the school's planned production of *Oklahoma!*, he was thrilled.

Then SHS Principal Scott Johnson contacted Max's parents, and the parents of other students cast in the planned production, to let them know there was a new policy in place: Only males could play male roles, and only females could play female roles, with "male" and "female" defined by gender markers on birth certificates.

That meant that not only could Max no longer play Ali Hakim but that the two female students who had been cast in male roles couldn't play those parts either.

The students, including Max, were devastated.

"This was my first big role in any of the plays I've been in," said Max, who has been out as a transgender male since starting high school. "I had a bunch of speaking lines. I had my own song. So I was really, really excited."

So when the "new policy" was an-



Max Hightower, in the upper photo and at the center in the lower photo, will get to play Ali Hakim in the SHS production of *Oklahoma!* after all.

nounced, he added, "I was pretty angry. Everyone was angry. I didn't know if it was illegal, really, but I just kept saying, 'This is illegal!'"

"My Fine Arts director was like, 'It will be okay.' I looked at her and said,

'I want to sue!' All the color just left her face. We have not sued anybody, but that's what I said."

The parents of the students, especially Max's dad Phillip Hightower, were furious, too. And when Phillip couldn't get

a straight answer about when this policy was put in place, and who actually put it in place, he called the media.

Over the next two weeks, Sherman ISD Superintendent announced the production, scheduled for mid-December, was going to be delayed til mid-January. Then he announced that the musical was full of profanity and sexual content and adult themes unsuited for a high school production, so students were going to stage the revised version intended for "youth." (The revised version is actually intended for pre-high school-age students.)

Then Bennett released a wildly self-contradictory statement explaining there was no policy regarding the gender of actors playing specific roles, except in this one instance in which only males could play male roles, and that non-policy wouldn't apply to future productions, except maybe it would.

By the time the Sherman ISD Board of Trustees gathered Monday night, Nov. 13, for their regular meeting, the story had made headlines around the country. Max was definitely in the spotlight.

Some 65 people signed up to speak during the public comment portion of that board meeting, and "all but five or six" were there to support Max and his castmates, noted Phillip Hightower afterwards.

By the end of that meeting, following a closed executive session, the SISD board had voted to reinstate the original cast to present the original version of the musical. The board has also called a meeting for Nov. 17 to discuss possible disciplinary action against Bennett.

The show will still be delayed until sometime in January because, as Max noted, "we've lost about three weeks of rehearsals, and we have already taken down the sets."

Phillip Hightower admitted that he was surprised — though happily so — when the board voted to reverse the decisions Bennett had made to change the cast, change the musical and delay the production. But, he added, "When you have the New York Times sitting in the

A quiet TDoR

TO REMEMBER, TO HONOR

22 victims will be remembered in annual Transgender Remembrance Day events

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
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On Transgender Day of Remembrance, 22 names will be added to a growing list of victims of deadly anti-trans violence in the U.S. Around the world, 320 trans people have been murdered so far this year. Those numbers, while horrifying, don't set a record in a year that has seen a dramatic increase in hate crimes in all categories.

In 2022, 32 trans people were killed in the U.S. and 327 around the world. The statistical year runs from October through September. Deaths that occur this month will be counted in 2024.

Since statistics have been gathered, 4,600 trans and gender non-conforming people have been murdered. The actual numbers are probably higher since so many hate crimes go unreported and because trans victims are often misgendered after their deaths.

This year, TDoR will be commemorated in Dallas with smaller events than in past years but spread out across the area.

Pam Curry, who organized the first TDoR event in Dallas, said liberal churches across the area are incorporating remembrances of trans victims of hate into their Sunday worship. She said that includes at least three Dallas County churches — Northaven, Oak Lawn and St. Stephens UMCs.

Cathedral of Hope UCC “will be honoring our trans community during the service on Sunday with special liturgy,” according to church spokesman Scott Stout.

On college campuses across the area, small gatherings will mark the day. The UT Dallas Gender Center will hold a



The Hon. Phyllis Frye spoke at the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum for Trans Awareness Week. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

vigil. And Trust the Process Project, Nu Trans Movement and Trans Empowerment Coalition will conduct a panel discussion in the library at Dallas College — Cedar Valley campus at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 20. That discussion will be streamed online.

Trans Empowerment Coalition is hosting a week of programming. The opening event takes place on Sunday, Nov. 19, at 6 p.m. at Owenwood Farm & Neighbor Space, 1451 John West Road in East Dallas. Equality Texas, House of Rebirth and others are co-sponsors.

The Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum marked Transgender Week of Awareness, the week leading up to TDoR, by bringing in Houston Judge Phyllis Frye, the first transgender judge in the U.S. In 1980, Frye got the Houston City Council to repeal an ordinance banning crossdressing after years of lobbying, and she was the first out trans-

gender person to lobby for rights at the Texas Legislature.

Frye spoke about her discharge from the army, the engineering degree she was never able to use because of discrimination and her “accidental” law degree. A&M was offering a combined business and law degree, and while she enrolled for the business degree, she found she excelled in law, she explained.

She opened her own practice and was the first attorney in Texas to convince a judge to not only do a name change for a transgender client but also a gender marker change. And in 2010, Mayor Annise Parker named Frye a municipal court judge, making her the first trans judge in the U.S. and probably the world.

Frye said in an earlier interview that it wasn't until the internet came along that transgender people could find each other and begin to organize. Unlike the gay and lesbian communities, there weren't

bars, and most cities still didn't have community centers, she said.

In a chat group on America On Line, Frye and others learned of the stabbing death of trans woman Rita Hester in Massachusetts; they compared that case to a similar murder, that of Chanelle Pickett, the previous year. Most in the chat room hadn't heard of Pickett.

Gwendolyn Ann Smith, a reporter for the Bay Area Reporter, started a website called Remembering Our Dead in 1999. That was the year the film *Boys Don't Cry* was released, which brought awareness to the problem of anti-trans violence. The web project grew as they tracked violence against the trans community around the world and became Transgender Day of Remembrance.

Curry noted that while some TDoR commemorations include those lost to suicide, TDOR “was never about sui-

Arrival times

BEYOND THE STAGE

Bruce Wood Dance and Norbert De La Cruz collab for a world premiere

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

Norbert De La Cruz III is returning to Dallas for two world premieres — clearly this city has been good for the queer choreographer who's based in New York. He premiered a commissioned piece for TITAS last year at its Command Performance Gala, and this year, he's



Norbert De La Cruz III (Photo by Sharen Bradford)

bringing new pieces to Dallas Black Dance Theater and Bruce Wood Dance.

For BWD, he will introduce audiences to "Arrive" this weekend.

De La Cruz shares his personal experiences in this world premiere for "SOAR", alongside Wood's "Home," returning for the first time since 2014. The program also includes artistic director Joy Bollinger's "In My Your Head," set to music by Radiohead.

De La Cruz said his new piece for BWD stems from a gift he received.

"I was given this illustration book by Shaun Tan, *The Arrival*, and I was mesmerized by the illustrations," De La Cruz explained. "Immediately I was thinking, how can I translate these images into a dance, because it's a wordless illustration book. I wanted to convey its movement.

"And so, I thought it would be brilliant to do a dance to images that are very familiar to us."

For him, the story was about alienation but also finding your ground and rebuilding your community. As an artist, De La Cruz said he felt compelled to create a piece that speaks to different truths — especially his own.



Ismail Boodhwani
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"I think it ties a lot into my immigration story as being Filipino-American and moving to the United States in 1982," he said. "This piece is really an homage to my older sisters and brothers and my parents, too."

He understands too that those themes also often apply to queer lives — a truth not lost on this new piece where he employs same-sex duets as a way to bring queerness into the vocabulary of "Arrive."

To bring that part of his life into his art isn't just fulfilling; it's also comforting.

"That all really reminds me of the people in my life, like the best friends that I've had, who have really carried my weight — my partner, my ex partners who have broken my heart deeply but who have also taught me a lesson about who I am, and how I embrace my own sexuality," he said.

"I see that there is comfort in being able to pursue that with them. I think it's important to see those dynamics when it's not so traditionally hetero."

With that, De La Cruz also notes how, within his work and queer perspective, a certain undertone has become part of



Rehearsing "Arrive"

his art.

"There's queer melancholy in my body that I like to explore as well, like just the sadness of hiding, the sadness of coming out of the closet in many different ways," he revealed. "Even though I'm out, there are certain aspects of my life I'm still

keeping to myself.

"I just want to be able to showcase more of these couples on stage so that it becomes more normalized, and [so the audience] can be reminded of their gay son or daughter who are exploring who they are."

Eleven days: That's how long it took De La Cruz to conceive and create "Arrive." From there it was planning and workshopping the music. He had to arrange the soundscapes to create the arc he wanted. He knew that when he then got to the Bruce Wood Dance studio with the dancers, he had to be mentally prepared for the fact that everything he created would be likely altered.

He said he had to be okay with destabilizing his original plans so that the dancers could bring their own translation into his piece.

Although he hadn't quite expected to build a relationship here in the Dallas world of dance, De La Cruz said, "I've absolutely loved Dallas. The people I've met who are mobilizing our art scene are really inspiring. It is inspiring for me to engage with the city and its people and what it has to offer," he said. "It's been really empowering to support these two organizations and have them receive what I have to offer.

"Oh, and the food is amazing here too!"

For more information and tickets, visit BruceWoodDance.org.

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Shawn Cudé, aka Tara St. Stone, promises your feet will get royal treatment at Pink Pedi

MATHEW SHAW | Contributing Writer
mathews.yb@gmail.com

Recently opened in the heart of Deep Ellum, Pink Pedi salon offers a space where customers can “treat” their feet with candy-shaped, environmentally-friendly products and be pampered like a queen. And the owner certainly knows something about how a “queen” should be treated.

The scent of chocolate and gentle pink walls invite customers inside, where owner Shawn Cudé, aka award-winning drag queen Tara St. Stone, will hand them little shopping baskets so they can select from six flavors of bath bombs, body butters and sugar scrubs.

“You’ll notice that our products look like candies and confectionaries,” Cudé explained. “We market ourselves as a beauty bakery. Our bath bombs look like macarons; our body butters look like little wrapped candies; our sugar scrubs look like mini cupcakes, and the hot cocoa socks are all made with cocoa butter in them so they smell like chocolate. It’s delicious.”

Cudé added that all the goodies are made fresh weekly by the franchise owner. The products are “all made with 100 percent therapeutic-grade essential oils and food-safe products, so they’re technically edible,” he explained. But, he cautioned, although the products smell delicious and are technically edible, patrons still probably should not eat them.

Cudé’s shop is Pink Pedi’s second location. It is located on Ross Avenue and opened just a couple of months ago. The original location opened in 2017 on Sylvan Avenue.

Pink Pedi shops are committed to be-



Pink Pedi owner Shawn Cudé, left, and his alter ego Tara St. Stone, right

ing eco-friendly, as well as fume- and toxin-free. Husband-and-wife duo Lucy and Brandon Lyon came up with the idea, envisioning a spa haven committed to the environment and to the health of their consumers and nail technicians, the press release noted.

Cudé, Brandon Lyon’s best friend, shared that vision. So he partnered up with the couple to open and lead the second Pink Pedi location.

Becoming Tara

Cudé’s road to being a Pink Pedi owner took him to Austin and back.

After turning to theater in high school to conquer his stage fright, Cudé ended up in Austin at the age of 21. That’s where he discovered the world of drag and met his drag family. That’s also where his alter ego, Tara St. Stone, was born and where he worked to perfect

his stagecraft, expanding his education in make-up and working with runway shows and weddings.

Cudé performed for years as Tara St. Stone, competing in numerous drag pageants and winning several awards including runner-up at the state level and Miss Gay Dallas. He eventually became the sole promoter of Miss Gay Lone Star, taking the lead on the whole production while also providing consultation for other queens.

Coming back to the Dallas area and reconnecting with his old friend Brandon Lyon, gave him the chance to become the first drag queen owner and first LGBTQ owner of a clean beauty salon.

And the Pink Pedi on Ross established its royal bona fides right from the start: The grand opening back on Sept. 27 featured a drag show starring Tara St. Stone, Miss Gay Texas America Kylee

O’Hara Fatale, Dulce Strutts and more.

As an LGBT-owned business, Pink Pedi offers a selection of books, magazines and coloring books for patrons to read as they relax on a wall-length bench with pillows.

“Everybody’s welcome here,” Cudé said. “We try to make it comfortable for everybody.”

The layout, which Cudé described as “updated retro,” consists of natural material and natural wood, so that the floor looks like pebbles. Cudé added that it is a layout not seen in regular nail salons. ■

The new location, at 3510 Ross Ave., Ste. 120, is open from 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Wednesday through Saturday, and 10a.m.-5 p.m. Sundays. The original shop is at 1888 Sylvan Ave., Ste. F140.

Those interested can visit PinkPedi.com to book an appointment and for more information.

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Medicare for LGBTQ

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MATHEW DOMINGUEZ |
Content Marketing Specialist
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Medicare is the nation's health insurance program offered to senior Americans, 65 years or older, typically retired workers who are receiving Social Security, according to lgbtagencycenter.com. For many American seniors, there can be some confusion when it comes to signing up for Medicare. But the LGBTQ community can face more and different obstacles than their straight peers.

Steven Graves, owner of Medicare4USA.com, recently spoke about some of these concerns. "While we have made progress against discrimination, many in our community are still concerned about talking openly about medical issues, concerns and lifestyle," he said.

One of the biggest obstacles comes as no shock to some and that's discrimination.

All people should be able to see their



doctor without worrying about being mistreated or denied service. But LGBTQ people face disturbingly high rates of health care discrimination, ranging from harassment and humiliation by medical providers to being turned away by hospitals, pharmacists and doctors. AmericanProgress.org states that "discrimination in health care settings endangers LGBTQ people's lives through delays or denials of medically necessary care."

Among lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer respondents to a Center for American Progress survey done this year, 8 percent said that a doctor or other health care provider refused to see them because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Another 6 percent said that a doctor or other healthcare provider refused to give them health care related to

their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

According to the same survey, 29 percent of transgender people who had visited a doctor or health care provider's office in the past year said that a doctor or other health care provider refused to see them because of their actual or perceived gender identity. And another 12 percent said a doctor or other health care provider refused to give them health care related to gender transition.

It's also important for same-sex couples to know about Medicare coverage for spouses. Married same-sex couples can get coverage under the same Medicare and Medicaid rules as married heterosexual couples in all states. But while where they live or where they were married makes no difference, how long they have been married can affect their right

to benefits.

Given that Medicare was established to care for retired workers, it is required that individuals have participated in the workforce to be eligible, according to LGBTAGinCenter.org. This can pose a challenge for members of the LGBTQ community who have been marginalized and excluded from the traditional work force. It can be especially problematic for transgender individuals whose work history documentation may not match their post-transition identity and documentation.

The Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund states that "securing gender-appropriate identity documents may be a daunting task involving interactions with courts."

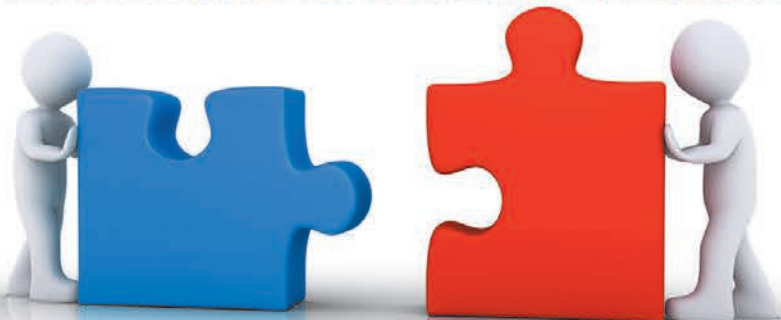
Additionally, when employment is secured, it may be fragile due to on-the-job harassment based on gender identity and expression. This results in many transgender people facing chronic underemployment, unemployment and poverty.

When it comes to the LGBTQ community, it's important to know the resources that are out there to help. Medicare4USA is an independent brokerage firm that provides Medicare supplements, advantage plans, drug and dental insurances to people who are 65 and older. More importantly, the agency is gay-owned and -operated, allowing customers to openly discuss any medical concerns and needs.

"With a positive reputation, members

MEDICARE Page 22

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Drawing the 'Lines'

MUSIC



Lesbian singer LP is feeling good vibes on their new LP

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

Singer LP is celebrating their seventh record release with their current tour that stops in Dallas on Sunday, Nov. 19, at the South Side Ballroom. *Love Lines* marks the latest chapter in the lesbian singer's catalog, and they are bringing some big time queer energy. But even with a new album after a healthy career of album and tours, LP (Laura Pergolizzi) still feels like she's just getting a little better each time.

Before their stop in Dallas, LP talked about the new album and their approach to the record along with the gayest thing they've ever done because of this album.

Dallas Voice: *Love Lines* just released in September, and it's got some upbeat vibes different from your last record *Churches* which came out just two

years ago but a bit more moody. What happened in between? LP: I was pretty open about how I feel about relationships on *Churches*. I get too open but not feeling like I'm in bad places. I was feeling a little darker then. This one though felt very apropos, because I got back to my friendships. I've been on tour hardcore for years, and it separates you, but there's this purity in friendship that this record got me back to.

The record almost feels a bit freer. Is that fair? I wanna be the best person ever. I was feeling the people on this record, and we all hit it off, and it helped me enjoy these friendships. This is definitely a real LP record, and it does feel very free. It's like this is a different room in my LP house.

Relationships seem very important to you, particularly in music. Does songwriting and music help you process all that? I for sure own that. I think I'm super generous in relationships, but I'm not an angel either. I got fucked up shit like everybody, and I'm not looking to be exonerated for anything. I'm forever trying to right a wrong, but I do my best with all my friends and lovers.

You've been out and proud since the beginning, but it's never felt like it was your thing, either. Any queer label didn't seem to be part of how

you were received. Did that happen by accident or deliberately? I feel like, if I was a straight woman, I'd be somewhere different. I think when "Lost on You" got one billion streams, nobody expected to see me on the other end of that. It was a shock for some, but you never know. I never used the gay thing to get me anywhere. It's just my side of the story.

But you did do that "Dayglow" video which was pretty gay. I mean it was shot on location in Prague at the city's annual Pride Festival. It was like coming

out again! We were gonna do an epic video for "Long Goodbye," but Vodafone wanted to put all this money toward "Dayglow." As gay as I am, and I'm the gayest motherfucker ever, that was the gayest fucking shit I've ever seen. It was so cinematic and all these colorful explosion of gayness. What I get to do with my life is pretty special, that's for sure.

Love Lines is streaming now on major music services. For tickets, visit SouthSide-BallroomDallas.com.



TDoR, From Page 11



Oak Lawn United Methodist Church will incorporate TDoR into its regular Sunday service.s

cides. That's suicide awareness. TDoR is about violence perpetrated by hate."

She continued: "TDoR memorializes the straight guy, perceived to be a freak because he held his wife's bag while she tried on clothes and helped an elderly man to the restroom, who was shot dead in a department store" in 2002. Then there was "the trans woman stabbed, shot multiple times and burned on a pile of tires."

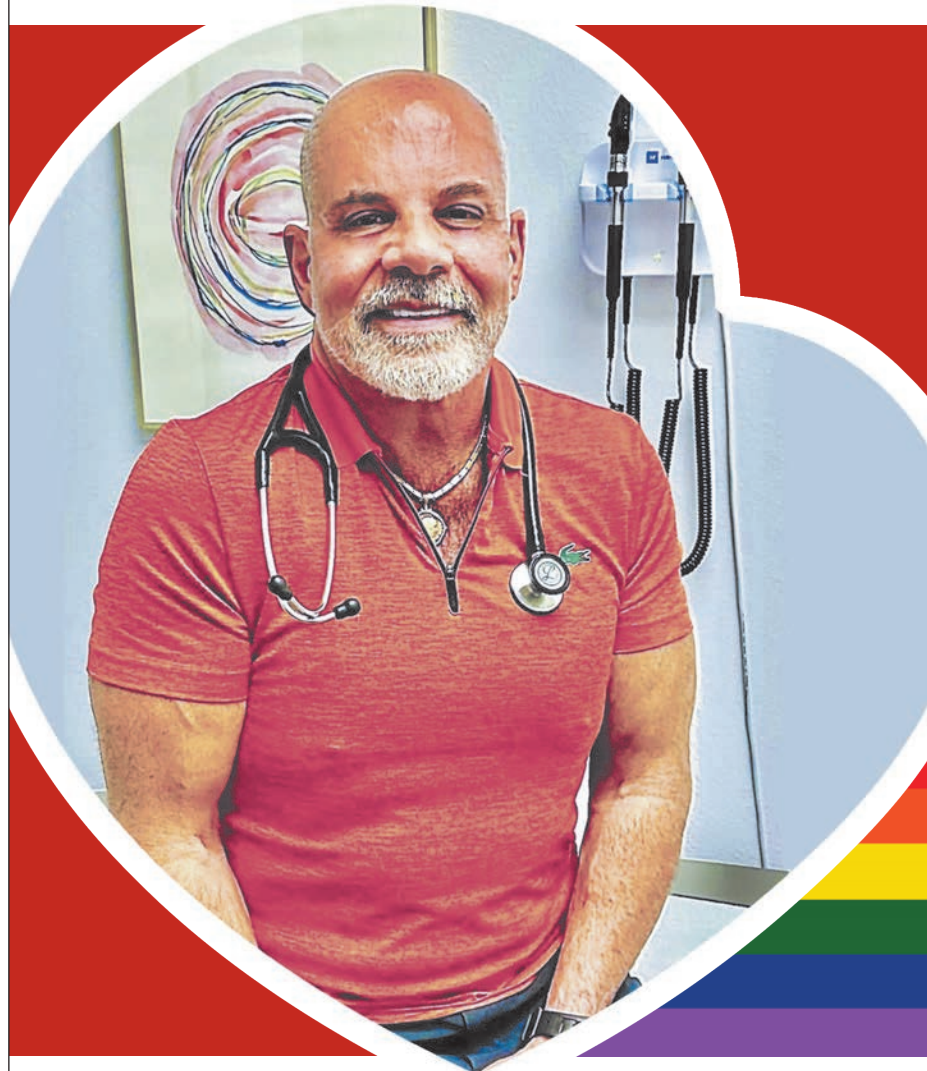
And then there was Muhlaysia Booker, who was assaulted in an apartment complex parking lot in 2019, then murdered a month later by a different attacker. A video of the parking lot assault went viral, so when she was shot three times and her body dumped in the mid-

dle of the street in East Dallas, the murder got national attention. The body of a second trans woman, Chynal Lindsey, was found floating in White Rock Lake on June 1.

The two murders turned out to be unrelated, with just one thing in common — the belief no one cared about these women.

In 2021, Ruben Alvarado was convicted of first degree murder for killing Lindsey and sentenced to 37 years in prison. And Booker's murderer, Kendrell Lyles, was finally convicted just last week, four years after the murder, receiving a 48-year sentence. The murders of numerous other trans women in DFW, however, remain unsolved. ■

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SPOTLIGHT

From Page 10

front row of the Sherman ISD school board meeting, cooler heads do tend to prevail!"

For Max, the whole ordeal has been trying. "It was really scary," he said, to suddenly find himself the center of so much attention.

"It was a lot, being in the spotlight that way," Max said. "But I thought, if I could be the voice for other people, people who are not out yet, I wanted to do that. I wanted to be the voice for everybody who couldn't speak for themselves."

Although he has been openly transgender for about four years now, Max said this is "the first time I've done anything like this," referring to his decision to stand up and fight back against the school administration's discriminatory decisions.

"It's been scary, but I am glad I did it," Max added. "I have seen that there are more loving and accepting people in my hometown than I ever knew. I was not expecting this overwhelming support and acceptance that I've gotten."

Max said he has heard of a couple of instances in which some high schoolers have posted negative comments online,

but "I heard they got in trouble for it."

Phillip said he has gotten "zero hate" from anyone, despite his outspoken stance in support of his son. "Of course, I am 6-foot-5 and about 270 pounds, so for some reason, no one has anything ill to say to me about it! ... Seriously though, we've all just been blown away. Even on Facebook, it's been nothing but love."

For now, Phillip said, Max is "a little bit burned out" on all the media interviews, and was getting ready for a theater retreat that would hopefully get him out of the spotlight. But that is only for a little while.

High school graduation is just around the corner, and, Max said, "So many colleges have reached out to me this past week. I wanted to go to college for music, but this has sort of pushed me into wanting to go into theater, instead."

And a role as an activist isn't out of the question, either: "I think I would like to do that," he said. "I like sticking up for people."

See more on the Nov. 13 SISD board meeting online at DallasVoice.com.



MEDICARE

From Page 16

of the LGBTQ community can rely on us to help them understand and select the right Medicare policy," said Graves of his company.

With more than 28 years of insurance experience in Texas, Graves ensures that the highly-trained agents at Medicare4USA are dedicated to helping the LGBTQ community. They also understand how Medicare works and the steps necessary when applying for Parts A and B and when selecting a Medicare supplement or advantage plan.

As the only Medicare insurance agency that is totally focused on the LGBTQ community, Medicare4USA represents many Medicare insurance companies, not just one.

"We take the time to understand your specific Medicare needs and concerns, research all the companies that we represent and make a recommendation," Graves explained. "Our focus is to help you secure a policy that will best meet your specific medical benefit needs."

He also emphasizes that anyone with questions concerning how Medicare



works and its coverage — from how to apply for Part A and B or a Medicare Supplement or Advantage plan, when to apply or anything else — can give them a call.

Although there has been much progress when it comes to LGBTQ rights and the fight for equality, there is still much work to be done. Many in the community still face discrimination when it comes to medical care and although that can cause much anxiety and fear, it's important to know there are resources out there like Medicare4USA that will take the time to answer any questions and concerns.

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



Get your naughty self over to S4 on Saturday night, Nov. 18, for Gaybingo for a chance to win a nice bit of cash! This month's Gaybingo theme is "Naughty or Nice," and proceeds benefit Resource Center. Gaybingo starts at 6 p.m., and tickets are available at the door.

- 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.

NOVEMBER

■ HRC DFW November Social

HRC DFW holds its November Friday Social from 6-8 p.m. at Hamburger Mary's, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, #101, sponsored by Susan Melnick Team at Dave Perry Miller. Attendees will receive a wristband for free admission to the 8 p.m. drag show. Space is limited, reserve tickets at EventBrite.com.

■ Nov. 17: Versa-Style Dance Company

Eisemann Center continues the 2023-2024 season with *Freemind Freestyle* by Versa-Style Dance Company at 8 p.m. in the Hill Performance Hall, 2351 Performance Drive in Richardson. Tickets are available at Eisemanncenter.com or by calling 972-744-4650.

■ Nov. 17-19: 'Soar'

Bruce Wood Dance presents *Soar* at Moody Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. Information and tickets are available at BruceWoodDance.org.

■ Through Nov.18: 'I'm Proud of You' by Tim Madigan and Harry Parker

Based on the book *I'm Proud of You: My Friendship with Fred Rogers* by Tim Madigan. Production takes place at Circle Theatre, 230 W. 4th St, Fort Worth. Tickets and information available at Buy.TicketstotheCity.com.

■ Nov. 18: Naughty or Nice 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.

■ Nov. 18: "Forbidden Part 2! Gear & Dance Party"

Get ready for an extraordinary night at Forbidden Part 2 at 11311 Harry Hines Blvd., Building 2, Ste. 203. Tickets and info available at Universe.com.

■ Nov. 18: Coat Drive Drop-Off

Oak Lawn United Methodist Church is hosting a coat drive from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at 3014 Oak Lawn Ave. Gently used shoes, jeans (sizes 28-36), new socks and underwear are being accepted as well.

■ Nov. 18: Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week Resource Fair

Dallas Hope Charities is connecting the Dallas community with free-to-low cost LGBTQ services from participating community partners. The event takes place from 12:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Visit DallasHopeCharities.org for more information.

■ Nov. 18: Wreath Auction

The Sharon St. Cyr Fund presents its 2023 Wreath Auction featuring wreaths, entertainment, auction and more from 6:30 p.m.- 9 p.m. at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road.

■ Nov. 21: Stonewall Democrats of Dallas

In person and hybrid meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road.

■ Nov. 21: Classic Chassis Car Club

Classic Chassis Car Club meets 6-8 p.m. at Ojeda's, 4617 Maple Ave.

■ Nov. 21: Up & Out: LGBTQIA+ Caregiver Support Group

Up & Out is a welcoming supportive group for LGBTQ caregivers who are currently caring for anyone age 50 or older. This is a virtual event from 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. RSVP at CSP@TheSeniorSource.org or call 214-823-5700.

■ Nov. 23: Thanksgiving

■ Nov. 30: Season's EATings Oak Lawn Kick-Off Party & Toy Drive

Enjoy craft holiday cocktail specials and light bites at Hamburger Mary's, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, #100, from 6-9 p.m. Visit KeithInnovative.com for more information.

■ Nov. 30-Dec. 26: 'Beulaville Baptist Book Club presents A Bur-Less-Q Nutcracker'

Join the Beulaville Baptist Book Club for a twist on the traditional holiday production. Info and tickets are available at MBSProductions.info.

■ Dec. 2: Holiday Classics Concert

The Richardson Symphony Orchestra (RSO) is putting on its annual concert to ring in the holiday season. This event will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Charles W. Eisemann Center, 2351 Performance Drive in Richardson. Tickets are available at EisemannCenter.com or by calling 972-744-4650.

■ Dec. 2: Dallas Mavericks Pride Night

Join the Dallas Mavericks as they face the Oklahoma City Thunder and celebrate the LGBTQ community at American Airlines Center at 8 p.m. For tickets and info visit Mavs.Spinzo.com.

■ Dec. 3: 'Sandyland Presents: Stand With Texas'

Performer, actress, compelling storyteller Sandra Bernhard is taking a *Stand with Texas* at The Kessler, 1230 W. Davis St. at 7 p.m. For info and tickets visit Prekindle.com/promo/id/532452770569066469

Have an event coming up? Email your information to Managing Editor Tammye Nash at nash@dallasvoice.com or Mathew Dominguez at Mathew@dallasvoice.com by Monday at 5 p.m. for that week's issue.

Look for extended listings online at DallasVoice.com

DECEMBER

■ Dec. 1: World AIDS Day

■ Dec. 1: Red Ribbon Gala

AIDS Outreach Center presents its annual Red Ribbon Gala: Boots & Bling at 6:30 p.m. at The 4 Eleven, 411 S. Main St., Fort Worth. \$100. AOC.org.

■ Dec. 1-10: 'Jada Bells - A Holiday Extravaganza'

Join Uptown Players for a festive holiday show at Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. For times and to purchase tickets, visit UptownPlayers.org.

■ Dec. 1-17: 'Season's EATings' Foodie Crawl

For two weeks, enjoy the festive season in Oak Lawn by enjoying mouthwatering specials from participating Oak Lawn restaurants. For information and list of participating restaurants visit KeithInnovative.com.



The Sharon St. Cyr Fund holds its annual wreath auction Saturday, Nov. 18, at Cathedral of Hope. See listings for more information.

Ask Howard

HOW TO DO THE WRONG THING RIGHT

Sex machines and true friendship

Ah, ode to joy, the holiday are amongst us again! Yes, and isn't it all just too faboo — peppermint bark, celophane snow, pardoned turkeys, Pocahontas and pilgrims sipping pumpkin-pie-spiced lattes, candy canes the size of prosthetic limbs, cannabis-laced gingerbread nutcrackers! It is a season of such spiked derangement, one only wishes for a warm bath in which to drift away, enchantedly, into Santa-red, spruce-scented oblivion.

I'm sure the only thing anybody truly prays for during this season of lunatic giving is but to come out on the other side of Jan. 1 still capable of standing naked, unassisted atop the bathroom scales, exhaling a warning nod over towards sleeping, sweet baby Jesus in his manger: "OK, kid, understand me loud and clear. The first number I see had better damned well still be a fuckin' 1! That's all I've got to say to you!"

And, yes guys, on the heels now of several G-rated columns in a row (as you've so vociferously pointed out to me) what you desire most from Howard is certainly nothing you'd ever want your grandmother to catch you reading. So here we go, bois — exactly what you've been jonesing for, in all its pruriently-distilled, XXX-rated holiday punch. Let's just get smuttily right to it, shall we?

Dear Howard: What's the hottest-trending sex toy this year? I got me a brand spankin' new wildcat boyfriend — more fun than any toy Santa ever left me under the tree — but he's high-maintenance, you know? These new kids, the Gen Zeers, they don't get into plain vanilla. Showin' up with just a pack of condoms of and lube gets you laughed right out of the sling. So, what's every playroom's moonshot toy this year, Mister Howard?

— **Everready Teddy**

Dear Everhard: Well, seeing as how you asked me, why don't we begin by filling-in some backstory. You see, kidz, first there came tornado rooms until the tornadoes never hit. So they all then got converted into "safe" rooms — safe against those nonexistent bands

of marauding, hooligan thieves — until, finally, our love of imaginative fornicating replaced our fears of imaginary psychopaths, and the dungeon playroom was born, today's modern dwelling being all but inconceivable without one.

You've already mentioned the now-requisite sling (including, assumedly, all its accessory necessities anticipatory of your company's arrival). But if you ain't got a butt-fuck machine yet, Mr. Everready, you ain't got nothin'.

Bois, fuck machines are suddenly everywhere — small enough to fit in your backpack, or something capable of raping a mastodon. COVID's burned out, the world's in flames, and everything now behind closed doors is all about the gape. No self-respecting playroom, circa 2024, would dare look a leather dom in the face without offering a fuck machine of such myriad complexity as to render even the Antikythera Mechanism envious.

To the tune of a mere \$999, Fort Troff's latest technological marvel sets the new gold standard in automated penetration, promising an orgasmic nirvana of pumping power by which all other such mechanisms of your piggier fantasies can only dream. All I can say is, thank God, it doesn't cost a full grand, right?

That said, dear readers, Howard here is not employed to reveal for you the name of this latest, greatest piston-pumping fantasy fuck toy; hence, you'll instead have to make do with but a few salivating highlights: Boasting water-loaded ballast tanks, this is the only fuck machine guaranteed to remain 100 percent bed-stable and scooch-free "even during the heaviest poundings," incorporating 3-inch thrust capabilities, at 190 strokes per minute, replete with E-Z grip handles for solo play, multiple toe curlin', hole boppin' vibration patterns and turbo-torque rotation speeds.

Yeah, fuck paying the rent. Who needs that when you can just pay to screw your own self, over and over, eternally?!



Dear Howard: The scariest thing in my life happened the other day: I went by myself to a museum, and was asked if I'd like the senior discount. All of a sudden, like, I got dizzy. And then it hit me: OMG, I'm 60 friggin' years old!

Where the hell did the time go? What am I doing all alone?

I'm about to retire. I'm financially solvent. I own my own business. I'm in good health, I'm attractive still (twinks on Grindr flock to me). But I've nobody I could call a real friend. And now, from out of nowhere, I'm suddenly eligible for the senior discount.

Where did everybody go? The friends I once knew? Somehow, they all just drifted away. I worked like a demon all my life to become successful, own a beautiful home, retire in comfort — and what has it gotten me?

Howard, I did everything right. How did my life turn so empty?

— **Anonymous Aaron**

Dear AA: OK, listen closely. Friendships take investment — personal, one-on-one, long-term investment. Friendships aren't facilitated via Facebook. As a wizened old neighbor of mine when I lived in NYC sagely imparted to me, "Within any given lifetime, a man is lucky who can count on one hand all his true friends."

Seldom before, or since, have I heard a truer statement.

The formula for maintaining and strengthening friendships isn't brain surgery, bois. Nonetheless, it does require using one's noggin. Friendships aren't organic. They don't just maintain themselves. They require a consistent enrollment of one's time.

And for those who believe they don't have even an extra minute to spare, consider this: Minimally, 50 hours of time is what it takes to transform a casual acquaintance into a friend, followed by a further 40 hours on top of that to become regular friends and 200-plus hours to solidify a true, best friendship.

If, anywhere along the way, you start dropping the ball at your end, guess what? Your newly developing friend-

ship, just like a proverbial house of cards, will all come crashing mightily down.

There are other crucial, maintenance factors essential to deepening friendships, too. Always express curiosity about what's new in the other person's life. Don't be afraid to show vulnerability; express what scares you and what you're struggling with. Let your guard-rails down. Keep things vibrant.

Share and compare your bucket lists; brainstorm new adventures; go off-script; permit spontaneity to flourish! And, crucially, just show the fuck up.

Moments that are milestones to your friend — be it a death in the family, a disease diagnosis, divorce or a diploma — all you gotta do is make sure you're there for him/her. The value and future of your friendship depends on it.

Happy Thanksgiving to you all, everyone! And should you know of any individual within your day-to-day orbit who's either lonely, hungry or possibly both, give them a second thought the next time your paths cross. Anything you give, it always comes back only better.

—Howard Lewis Russell

Santa's comin' next month, kidz! Any Christmas mischief you men plan on getting' up to, then do please come scooch over here next to me at AskHoward@dallasvoice.com.

this week's solution

G	L	A	M	C	A	S	T	W	I	S	P	S					
I	O	T	A	E	C	H	O	E	N	L	A	I					
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B	E	L	A	R	A	T	E	S	S	P	A	S					

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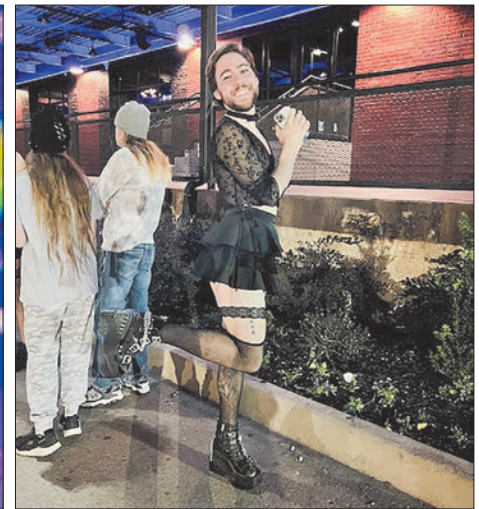
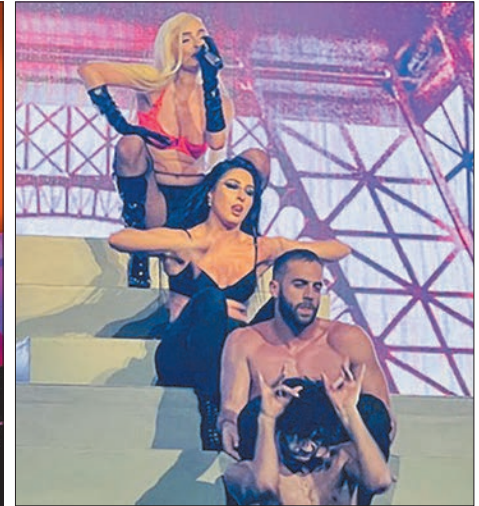
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A Night at the Kim Petras concert

(Photos by Mathew Dominguez)



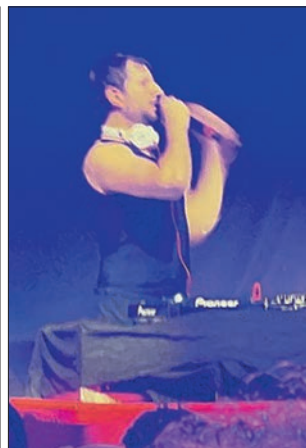
Texas Rangers celebrate their World Series Championship (Photo by Joey Retana)



Pride Frisco honors LGBTQ veterans (Photo by Terrie Leonard)

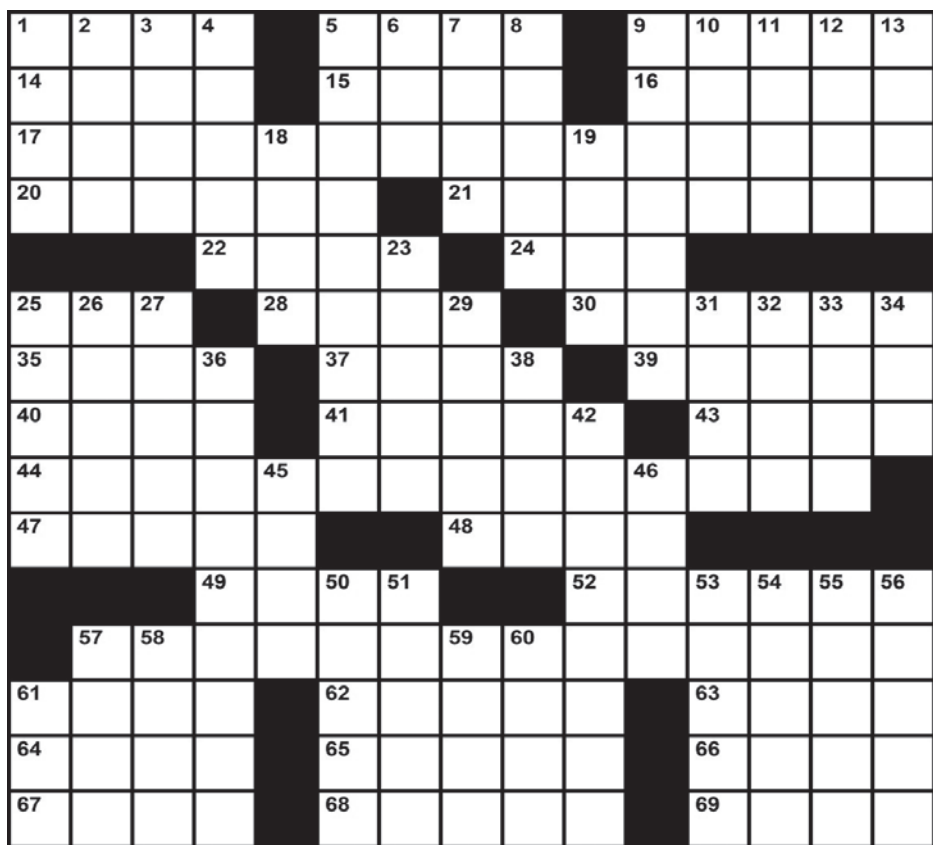


Texas Rangers: 2023 World Champions



PUZZLE |

Matthew Shepard's Dad



Solution on Page 24

Across

- 1 David Bowie genre
- 5 *Hairspray* list
- 9 Thin puffs
- 14 "I" of Socrates
- 15 Cave ricochet
- 16 Big name in China
- 17 Start of a quote from Dennis Shepard
- 20 Pass on
- 21 Place to say "Ooh, long!"
- 22 Thousandths of an angry inch?
- 24 Parting words, old style
- 25 Cold-cocks
- 28 Tools for woody targets
- 30 More of the quote
- 35 Broadway acronym
- 37 Tiny bottle
- 39 One who says "Hi, I'm Mr. Right"
- 40 Thespian stage piece
- 41 Religion of Allah
- 43 Fateful March day
- 44 More of the quote
- 47 Ike's opponent
- 48 Come quickly
- 49 Look lecherously
- 52 Tony of *Some Like it Hot*
- 57 End of the quote
- 61 1963 movie role for Liz

Down

- 62 Become inedible
- 63 Bars for gay chefs
- 64 Start of a Shakespeare title
- 65 Fred's first partner
- 66 Little bit
- 67 Martin's *Ed Wood* role
- 68 Hotel quote
- 69 Places for sweaty embraces, perhaps
- 1 Colette's Parisian heroine
- 2 Fruit of the ___
- 3 Lying on
- 4 Lady's title
- 5 "Oh, well!" to Rimbaud
- 6 NCAA org. of the Boston College Eagles
- 7 I ___ *Andy Warhol*
- 8 Oscar winner Marisa
- 9 Exploded
- 10 *Cunt* author Muscio
- 11 Oscar, to Felix
- 12 Winfield who played MLK in *King*
- 13 Something to build on
- 18 *The Unicorn* author Murdoch
- 19 He did Moor good, then harm
- 23 Sound of a flaming queen

- 25 K on Lesbos
- 26 "No Right Turn ___"
- 27 Seat at the Stonewall Inn
- 29 You may pick one up at a bar
- 31 *A Streetcar Named Desire* director Kazan
- 32 Middle of Caesar's boast
- 33 Put out
- 34 OCS grads
- 36 Hardy stallion of the West
- 38 Volcanoes shoot it off
- 42 Janis Joplin's ___ *Benz*
- 45 Place
- 46 Blow away
- 50 Samantha not of *Bewitched*
- 51 Mary's "MTM" girlfriend
- 53 Inn offerings
- 54 Amsterdam export
- 55 "___ Kick Out of You"
- 56 Madonna wore 45 pairs of these in *Evita*
- 57 Pronoun for Proust
- 58 Jodie Foster title role
- 59 "Yeah, sure" in Las Vegas
- 60 Barneys event
- 61 Where a trucker parks his bottom



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Self-Portrait (detail), 1923. Abraham Ángel. Oil on cardboard. Museo Nacional de Arte. INBAL / Secretaría de Cultura, Mexico City.