

# dallas voice

The Premier Media Source for LGBTQ Texas

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Dallas Pride 2024

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MOMIX: Alice	Sat, Feb. 22 at 8:00 PM
Sammy Miller and The Congregation	Sat, Feb. 22 at 8:00 PM
<i>Franz Schubert</i> (KC3)*	Mon, Feb. 24 at 7:30 PM
Rhythm India	Sun, Mar. 2 at 4:00 PM
<i>The Ugly Duckling</i>	Sun, Mar. 9 at 2:00 PM
<i>The Hip-Hop Orchestra Experience</i>	Sat, Mar. 15 at 8:00 PM
Anoushka Shankar	Tue, Mar. 18 at 7:30 PM
<i>Trailblazing Women of Country</i>	Sun, Mar. 23 at 2:00 PM
Mandy Gonzalez	Fri, Mar. 28 at 8:00 PM
Jazz at Lincoln Center Presents: <i>New Orleans Songbook</i>	Sat, Mar. 29 at 8:00 PM
<i>The Pa'akai We Bring</i>	Sun, Apr. 13 at 2:00 PM
<i>Beatbox Meets Popping</i>	Sat, Apr. 19 at 8:00 PM
<i>Humor in Music</i> (KC4)*	Mon, Apr. 21 at 7:30 PM
Paula Poundstone	Sat, Jun. 14 at 8:00 PM



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# Bites from our blog

WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com

## Runoff results a mixed bag for LGBTQ Texans

### Cook wins Senate District 15 runoff

Molly Cook — the bisexual woman who in April became Texas' first openly-LGBTQ state senator when she won a special election to fill the District 15 Senate seat through the end of this year, on Tuesday, May 28 — won the runoff to become the Democratic nominee for that seat in the November general election.

John Whitmire had represented District 15, which encompasses a portion of the city of Houston, since 1983. He stepped down late last year after winning his bid to become mayor of Houston. Cook then placed second to Jarvis Johnson in the Democratic Primary in March to determine who will hold the seat for the next four-year term, forcing the race into a runoff.

On Tuesday, Cook defeated Jarvis for the second time this month, winning by 74 votes, based on complete but as yet unofficial results. Cook, an emergency room nurse and community organizer, now faces Republican candidate Joseph L. Trahan in the November general election.



Lupe Valdez

### Dallas County Sheriff

Incumbent Marian Brown on Tuesday defeated former sheriff Lupe Valdez to win another four-year term as Dallas County Sheriff.

When she was first elected sheriff in 2005, Valdez became the first woman, the first Latina and the first openly-LGBTQ person to hold that office. She stepped down in 2017 to run for governor of Texas, winning the Democratic nomination — the first openly-LGBTQ person to win a major party's nomination for a statewide Texas elected office — but lost to Greg Abbott in the general election.

Valdez conceded the election to Brown shortly after 11 p.m. Tuesday, saying, "This race was never about us. This race was about highlighting the many problems at the Dallas County Sheriff's Department and bringing light to a failing department. Our campaign was honored to be able to bring attention to the many issues affecting deputies, morale and the safety of our inmates and the citizens of Dallas County. Our hope is that our campaign brought light to these issues and that they will lead to an improved sheriff's department. "I would like to thank all of my supporters, friends and the many deputies who worked so tirelessly for our campaign," she said.

Campaign official Mike Hendrix added, "Lupe Valdez would like to thank Commissioner John Wiley Price and Sheriff Brown for a well-fought campaign. Lupe would also like to thank the many LGBTQ+ voters and volunteers who campaigned so hard for equal representation. We could not have done it without each and every color of the rainbow."

### Texas House District 146

Openly-LGBTQ candidate Lauren Ashley Simmons defeated anti-LGBTQ Democratic incumbent Shawn Nicole Thierry in Tuesday's runoff for the Democratic nomination in Texas House District 146, 64.6 percent to 35.4 percent.

Simmons will now face off against Republican

Lance York in the November election.

Equality Texas, the largest nonprofit in Texas focused on securing full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people and GLAAD, the world's largest LGBTQ media advocacy organization, are responding to the results of Tuesday's Texas House District 146 Democratic Primary runoff between LGBTQ candidate Lauren Ashley Simmons and incumbent Shawn Thierry, who had voted for anti-LGBTQ legislation during the last state legislative session.

Simmons has said she decided to run against Thierry last year after Thierry broke ranks with her Democratic colleagues to vote in favor of right-wing Republican legislation denying gender-affirming health care to transgender youth. In her election night speech on Tuesday, she said, "I had no idea how any of this was going to turn out almost a year ago when I set out to do this. But I knew I wasn't happy with what was going on around me, and I wanted to be the change that I wanted to see."

LGBTQ advocates applauded Simmons' win. Ricardo Martinez, CEO of Equality Texas said, "This is a victory for all Texans, a clear message to the establishment that Texans won't tolerate hate against their neighbors. You can't stand on the House floor and amplify dangerous disinformation about trans Texans. If you do, the rest of us will step up to demand accountability and equality for our neighbors."

"We're in this together, and lawmakers should take heed: Using the LGBTQIA+ community as a scapegoat has consequences," he added. "Texans' hearts are bigger than narrow-minded policies. Today, Lauren Ashley Simmons won because she has consistently stood with her community, fighting alongside us, not against us."

Sarah Kate Ellis, president and CEO of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), said, "As a member of the LGBTQ community, Simmons has promised to fight for all Houstonians and against the rising tide of anti-LGBTQ bills in the Lone Star State," Ellis said.



Lauren Ashley Simmons

"Simmons' primary win proves that Texans will use their voices and votes for leaders who advocate for all, including the LGBTQ community."

### Texas House District 21

Dade Phelan, the incumbent Republican in House District 21 and the Speaker of the House, won his runoff over challenger David Covey with 50.7 percent of the vote.

The runoff has proven to be an expensive race, with Southeast Texans bombarded daily with TV ads and mailers from the two candidates. Covey was hand-picked by Gov. Greg Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton to challenge Phelan in the primary after Phelan repeatedly refused to back Abbott's school vouchers plan and after he led the effort to impeach Paxton.

### Texas 12th Congressional District

Craig Goldman, a Republican Texas state representative who opposed Greg Abbott's school vouchers program and voted to impeach Attorney General Ken Paxton, has defeated Paxton-backed businessman John O'Shea to



Molly Cook

succeed retiring Congresswoman Kay Granger as the 12th District representative in the U.S. House. With nearly 84 percent of the ballots counted, Goldman led Shea 63.2 percent to 36.8 percent.

— Tammye Nash

## Ellen DeGeneres bring final stand-up show to Dallas

Ellen DeGeneres is bringing her self-described last stand-up show to the Music Hall at Fair Park in Dallas on Wednesday, July 10.

Tickets go on sale through Ticketmaster at 10 a.m. Friday, May 31.

The ground-breaking comedian — who came out as her character, Ellen, in her self-titled ABC sitcom on April 30, 1997, and who came out as herself on April 14, 1997, on the cover of Time — will take her show on a multi-city tour launching June 19 at the Balboa Theatre in San Diego. She will also be filming a new special for Netflix to premiere later this year on Netflix.

— Tammye Nash

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"Fetch A Friend" for free throughout June! Free adoptions for all adult dogs and cats and half-price adoptions for puppies all month at both the Dallas and Ellis County Animal Care Centers.



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# UPCOMING SHOWS



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HOUSE OF BLUES DALLAS  
JUNE 7



**ALANIS MORISSETTE**  
DOS EQUIS PAVILION  
JUNE 14



**SARAH MCLACHLAN**  
THE PAVILION AT  
TOYOTA MUSIC FACTORY  
JULY 3



**JENNIFER LOPEZ**  
AMERICAN AIRLINES CENTER  
JULY 6



**PVRIS**  
HOUSE OF BLUES DALLAS  
JULY 7



**HANNAH MONTANA CLUB NIGHT**  
THE ECHO LOUNGE & MUSIC HALL  
JULY 13



**MISSY ELLIOTT**  
DICKIES ARENA  
JULY 21



**JANET JACKSON**  
DICKIES ARENA  
JULY 25



**MATT FRASER**  
MAJESTIC THEATRE  
JULY 27



**SAPPHIRA CRISTAL**  
HOUSE OF BLUES DALLAS  
AUGUST 2



**RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE**  
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MUSIC HALL AT FAIR PARK  
AUGUST 23



**SQUEEZE & BOY GEORGE**  
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AUGUST 28



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SEPTEMBER 17



**SOFI TUKKER**  
SOUTH SIDE BALLROOM  
SEPTEMBER 21



**CHARLI XCX & TROYE SIVAN**  
AMERICAN AIRLINES CENTER  
OCTOBER 9



**MEGHAN TRAINOR**  
THE PAVILION AT  
TOYOTA MUSIC FACTORY  
OCTOBER 12



**ZARA LARSSON**  
HOUSE OF BLUES DALLAS  
OCTOBER 27



**CHELSEA HANDLER**  
MUSIC HALL AT FAIR PARK  
NOVEMBER 16



**LITTLE BIG TOWN + SUGARLAND**  
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NOVEMBER 22



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# Standing Together

## PUBLISHER'S LETTER

Dallas Voice Publisher  
Leo Cusimano calls for unity,  
activism amid ongoing challenges

**D**ear Dallas Voice Community,  
As we come together for this special Dallas Pride issue, I am reminded of the profound significance of unity within our community, which is this year's theme for Dallas Pride. Ours is a unity forged through shared struggles we've fought through, shared victories we've celebrated and, at times, heart-wrenching losses we have endured.

This year, as we celebrate Pride, we do so with a somber awareness of the challenges and triumphs that have shaped us. That's why the start of this year's Dallas Pride Parade will be led by walking groups, not floats, as a stark reminder that Pride started as a protest.

Today, our community is being attacked from every corner, even from our own government at the local, state and national levels. Rights and privileges that have taken us decades to win are in serious danger, and things are changing every day. That is why it is important to support local LGBTQ journalism.

For four decades, Dallas Voice has championed the power of our voices — your voice — to create change in our community. Creating change is one of the pillars of our passion for the work we do. Founded on the principles of truth, justice and integrity, our publica-

tion serves as a beacon for LGBTQ civil rights.

Today, on the eve of Pride Month for 2024, we recommit ourselves to amplifying those voices that are often marginalized or silenced. We stand with our rainbow family in the fight against discrimination and inequality. We fight and protest with integrity.

Yet our challenges do not end at the doorstep of external forces. As anti-LGBTQ lawmakers threaten our hard-won equality, we must stand firm. From legislation targeting transgender children to efforts to suppress diversity in education, the battle for our rights rages on. As parents, advocates and allies, we must ensure that every child has the opportunity to live and to thrive in a world that celebrates diversity and inclusion. Everyone should have the opportunity to live their own authentic lives.

But even in the midst of these titanic struggles, we find stories of hope and resilience that inspire us. As the publisher and owner of Dallas Voice, I have shared my personal journey of creating a forever family through adoption ([DallasVoice.com/Creating-A-Forever-Family-Takes-Looking-Inside](http://DallasVoice.com/Creating-A-Forever-Family-Takes-Looking-Inside)). This narrative reminds us that love knows no bounds, and that building a family is a journey of self-discovery and unwavering commitment. And let us not forget: Mar-

riage equality is not just a legal issue, but a fundamental affirmation of love, dignity and equal rights for all.

As we navigate the road ahead, let us remember the transformative power of our collective voices and the importance of unity within our com-

munity. Let us continue to raise our voices in solidarity, demanding justice and equality. And above all else, let us never forget the profound impact of standing together as one resilient and unwavering voice.



PHOTO BY ADAM BOUSKA

In solidarity and with heartfelt pride,  
**LEO CUSIMANO**  
Publisher, Dallas Voice

## IMPORTANT FACTS FOR BIKTARVY®

This is only a brief summary of important information about BIKTARVY® and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and your treatment.

(bik-TAR-vee)

### MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BIKTARVY

#### BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects, including:

- ▶ **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** Your healthcare provider will test you for HBV. If you have both HIV-1 and HBV, your HBV may suddenly get worse if you stop taking BIKTARVY. Do not stop taking BIKTARVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check your health regularly for several months, and may give you HBV medicine.

### ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY is a complete, 1-pill, once-a-day prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults and children who weigh at least 55 pounds. It can either be used in people who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before, or people who are replacing their current HIV-1 medicines and whose healthcare provider determines they meet certain requirements.

**BIKTARVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS.

#### Do NOT take BIKTARVY if you also take a medicine that contains:

- ▶ dofetilide
- ▶ rifampin
- ▶ any other medicines to treat HIV-1

### BEFORE TAKING BIKTARVY

#### Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- ▶ Have or have had any kidney or liver problems, including hepatitis infection.
- ▶ Have any other health problems.
- ▶ Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if BIKTARVY can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Talk to your healthcare provider about the risks of breastfeeding during treatment with BIKTARVY.

#### Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- ▶ Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, antacids, laxatives, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- ▶ BIKTARVY and other medicines may affect each other. Ask your healthcare provider and pharmacist about medicines that interact with BIKTARVY, and ask if it is safe to take BIKTARVY with all your other medicines.

### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF BIKTARVY

#### BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects, including:

- ▶ Those in the “Most Important Information About BIKTARVY” section.
- ▶ **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that may have been hidden in your body. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ **Kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys. If you develop new or worse kidney problems, they may tell you to stop taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious but rare medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, stomach pain with nausea and vomiting, cold or blue hands and feet, feel dizzy or lightheaded, or a fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- ▶ **Severe liver problems,** which in rare cases can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, or stomach-area pain.
- ▶ **The most common side effects of BIKTARVY** in clinical studies were diarrhea (6%), nausea (6%), and headache (5%).

These are not all the possible side effects of BIKTARVY. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking BIKTARVY.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.FDA.gov/medwatch](http://www.FDA.gov/medwatch) or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

#### Your healthcare provider will need to do tests to monitor your health before and during treatment with BIKTARVY.

### HOW TO TAKE BIKTARVY

Take BIKTARVY 1 time each day with or without food.

### GET MORE INFORMATION

- ▶ This is only a brief summary of important information about BIKTARVY. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more.
- ▶ Go to [BIKTARVY.com](http://BIKTARVY.com) or call 1-800-GILEAD-5.
- ▶ If you need help paying for your medicine, visit [BIKTARVY.com](http://BIKTARVY.com) for program information.





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\*Note: This information is an estimate derived from the use of information under license from the following IQVIA information service: *IQVIA NPA Weekly*, for the period week ending 04/19/2019 through week ending 05/19/2023. IQVIA expressly reserves all rights, including rights of copying, distribution, and republication.

Scan to learn more about the latest BIKTARVY update.



Please see Important Facts about BIKTARVY, including important warnings, on the previous page and at [BIKTARVY.com](https://www.gilead.com/medicines/hiv/biktarvy).

**KEEP  
BEING YOU.**

## The strange allure of destructive madmen

Trump's threat proves America unexceptional

Javier Milei, the new strongman in Argentina, brandishes a chainsaw at rallies to show his plans for the political elite. His own people call him "El Loco." He won not despite his madness, but because of it.

He is but the latest in a series of tough-talking demagogues with destructive impulses to have take power across the globe. And America has proven to be no exception.

One question we would do well to ponder is why there is such hostility toward elites. If you think class-based resentment — which inevitably mixes with racism, misogyny religious bigotry, homophobia, transphobia and xenophobia — is a good motivation for voting choices, please give us an example of such decisions leading to a happy result.

Hillary Clinton has her faults, including a tendency to be undiplomatically blunt. But if she had been elected in 2016 we would not now have a right-wing supermajority on the Supreme Court, and we would not be in danger of losing our constitutional republic.

Incidentally, please name a male politician who has been defeated for being blunt.

Another way of putting Hillary's failure to be more diplomatic is that she is insufficiently demure. Her unapologetic assertion of her right to pursue a political career has been held against her purely due to sexism.

We are in grave danger if we refuse to confront our cornucopia of bigotries. Horrible people all too often gain power by appealing to others' lowest impulses.

Can you think of a single uplifting sentiment that Donald Trump has ever expressed? He is all lies, grifting and revenge. He thrives on others' willful ignorance. How is it that a man born with a silver spoon in his mouth, who refuses to pay his contractors and who hires the very undocumented immigrants he de-



**Richard J. Rosendall**  
Contributing Writer

monizes, exemplifies business success?

He holds up a Bible to display his religiosity while being unable to cite a single scriptural passage and openly

embodying the Seven Deadly Sins.

In the end, however, we cannot blame Trump. His crudeness, dishonesty and viciousness were on display from the moment he rode down the Trump Tower escalator in 2015 to announce his candidacy.

This is on us.

It is frankly obscene even to mention an aspiration for national greatness without first aspiring to national goodness.

The fake Christians who are determined to turn America into a Christo-fascist theocracy show no more familiarity or respect for the Gospel than does Trump. If you try to tell the "Diapers Over Dems" crowd the parable of the Good Samaritan or invoke the call in Matthew, Chapter 25 to feed the hungry and welcome the stranger, they will curse you or give you the finger. The closest equivalents to the arrogance and pride of Justice Samuel Alito in the New Testament are the Pharisees who despised Jesus.

There is one honest Christian in the presidential race who strives to help others. His name is Joe Biden. He supports abortion rights because he knows that women's reproductive choices are none of his business. He would never say "It is God's will" in response to a woman dying of sepsis in a hospital parking lot while the doctors and their attorneys discuss whether she is near enough to death to be given emergency abortion care.

In addition to all the other radical pro-



posals from the far right, there is an effort to overturn the separation of church and state embodied in the First Amendment. If you think I overstate this, you are not paying attention. One example is Justice Alito, in his *Dobbs* decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*, citing a 17th century British jurist who convicted women of witchcraft.

It is tempting, in the face of the extremists, to laugh them off. I myself have practically been surviving on wisecracks to avoid losing my mind. For example, someone on X/Twitter recently wrote, "Mar-a-Lago is a warehouse full of old broads who think they are still 25." I replied, "Please resist your impulse to romanticize the place."

I love the sorts of people who are dismissed as "old broads." Plenty of successful movies are centered on older women reliving their youth. Such stories are far more appealing than the prospect of exploring the fevered brain of our 45th president who wishes to be our 47th.

I stress "our" because Trump is our collective responsibility. We must awaken and motivate our friends and family, especially young people who don't know their history and take their freedoms for granted. We stand on the edge of an abyss. To quote Hillel: If not now, when?

Richard J. Rosendall is a writer and activist at rrosendall@me.com. Copyright © 2024 by Richard J. Rosendall. All rights reserved.



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# A weekend jam-packed with **Pride**

PRIDE 2024

Dallas Pride begins Saturday with the Music Festival, continues into Sunday with the festival and parade

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

**F**or some, Pride means parades, music, elaborate outfits, parties and lots and lots and lots of rainbows. But Dallas Pride Executive Director Sherrell Cross reminds us that there is a lot more to Pride than just partying. It is, as Cross said in her letter to the community in this year's Dallas Pride Guide, a chance to "come together to celebrate our identities and our stories" and to "recognize the importance of intersectionality and allyship in our fight for equality."

Dallas Pride, Cross wrote, "has long been a beacon of hope, resilience and celebration for the LGBTQ community and its allies. It is a vibrant tapestry of diversity, unity and unwavering strength." And, she added, the theme for this year's Dallas Pride — Unity in the Community — "encapsulates the spirit of empowerment, authenticity and advocacy that defines our community working together."

Dallas Pride has gone through many phases in its 41 years. The first two Pride Parades in Dallas — held in 1972 and '73 and not counted in this 41 years — were more like protest marches, with the community crowding into the streets of downtown to march in demand of equality. After a hiatus of some years, the third parade was held on Cedar Springs Road in June. There was a second parade in June 1982, then in August of that year, Judge Jerry Buchmeyer issued a ruling declaring the Texas sodomy law to be unconstitutional. And Dallas activists organized a September rally in celebration.

By 1983, the Dallas Tavern Guild had



Teen Pride

taken over organizing and funding the Dallas Pride celebration and chose to move the event to September, in part to celebrate Judge Buchmeyer's ruling (which was, unfortunately, overturned on appeal) and in part to escape the brutal heat of June in Texas. And that's where the parade stayed for 36 years — in September on Cedar Springs Road.

In 2018, though, organizers announced that by the following year, Dallas Pride would be moved again — back to June and to Fair Park. It was a decision that drew plenty of debate and controversy, but even through the controversy and through the COVID pandemic, Dallas Pride has persevered.

This year Dallas Pride covers two days, with the Music Festival, presented by Miller Lite, happening all day Saturday, June 2, and featuring an entertainment headlined by dance queen CeCe Peniston as well as the Family Pride Zone, for LGBTQ families with younger children, and Teen Pride for LGBTQ youth ages 13-19. There will also be more than 250 vendors community organization booths and at least another

20 food vendors, most if not all of which will be taking advantage of this year's expansion of the festival into Sunday. Then the Dallas Pride Parade steps off at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 3, with more than 150 entries registered to participate.

## Grand marshals, honorary grand marshal

Grand marshals for the 2024 Dallas Pride Parade are Betty Neal and Steven Pace.

Betty Neal has been active in the North Texas LGBTQ community since she first moved here from Fayetteville, Ark., in 1979. She has played an integral role in organizing within the Black LGBTQ community, helping found Dallas' annual Black Gay Pride and Black Lesbian Pride events and the annual Juneteenth celebrations and volunteering with Dallas Southern Pride as it has continued those events.

Neal has also worked tirelessly to bring HIV information and testing services into the community as well as to bring North Texas' various LGBTQ com-

munities together. She has volunteered with Dallas Pride for many years, currently serving on the Dallas Pride board. She also volunteers with the city's second Pride celebration each year, Pride in Dallas.

Steven Pace retired in December 2023 after 40 years as CEO of AIN — the organization originally known as AIDS Interfaith Network and which Pace helped found — he had spent more time as the head of an HIV/AIDS organization than anyone else in this country. He has been a major force in the fight against HIV/AIDS from the beginning, starting in 1982 when he was the first clergy member to offer solace and support to Dallas' first AIDS patient.



Betty Neal



Steven Pace





Kennedy Davenport

Pace was the first on-site house director for the PWA Coalition's residential facility (now AIDS Services of Dallas), and he worked with the late Dr. Ron Anderson to create a clinic at Parkland Hospital devoted exclusively to HIV/AIDS healthcare services. He helped find and develop nursing home facilities for hospice care for those with HIV/AIDS; he played a central role in founding what is now the Resource Center Food Pantry, and he was a case manager at AIDS Arms Inc., now known as Prism Health North Texas. As a minister, he presided over more than 500 funerals and memorial services for those with HIV/AIDS.

Actor, singer and activist Billy Porter is Dallas Pride's 2024 honorary grand marshal. Since his debut album, *Billy Porter*, in 1997, Porter has won a Grammy, an Emmy, a Tony Award as an actor, a Tony Award as a producer and a special Tony Award for his activism and advocacy around HIV/AIDS. He has released four more albums — *At the Corner of Broadway and Soul*, *Billy's Back on Broadway*, *The Soul of Richard Rodgers* and, the most recent, *Black Mona Lisa* which came out last fall. He has also released several singles, including "Love Yourself," "For What It's Worth," "Finally Ready" and, for the HIV/AIDS benefit album *Red Hot + Free*, "Caught in the Middle."

It was his Tony Award-winning turn as Lola in *Kinky Boots* on Broadway that was Porter's breakthrough to superstardom. But for many, Porter's often heart-wrenching portrayal of Pray Tell in the ground-breaking hit TV series *POSE* has been his most impressive work to date. In October 2021, Porter added "au-

thor" to his list of accomplishments with the publication of his memoir, *Unprotected*, and, in 2022, he checked another accomplishment off his list as film director with the trans love story *Anything's Possible*.

When he won the Primetime Emmy Award for "Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series" for *POSE*, Porter made history as the first openly gay man to win that award. The next year, *Time* Magazine named him as one of the "100 Most Influential People" of that year.

## Entertainment

The Dallas Pride Music Festival, presented by Miller Lite, offers a full day of entertainment on Saturday, June 1, with a stellar line-up planned for both the outdoor main stage and the indoor community stage.

The festival begins at 11 a.m. Saturday and runs through til 9 p.m. Tickets at will be \$10 for those 13 and over in advance at [FairParkDallas.com](http://FairParkDallas.com) and at the gate, and \$8 for seniors 65 and over at the gate only. Admission is free for those 12 and under.

CeCe Peniston tops this year's list of festival headliners, which also includes Ha Sizzle, Loren Allred and Jordy (See page 18 for an interview with Jordy). Also in the lineup are RuPaul's Drag Race alumni Aquaria and Morphine, local recording artist Lardi B and DJ Sedrick.

## Family Pride Zone

"What we create in Family Pride Zone is a place for LGBTQ parents to enjoy



Family Pride Zone

Pride with their kids in a comfortable, safe environment," explained Leo Cusimano, one of the three FPZ event directors.

Kimberly Kantor and Ashley Regalado are the other two Family Pride Zone directors. They represent Rainbow Round-up, an LGBTQ non-profit organization that provides social activities and education for LGBTQ families and connects resources to individuals and families.

This year, Family Pride Zone is expanding along with the Pride Festival to span two days: Saturday, June 1, from 11 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sunday, June 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (when the Pride Parade starts).

Entertainment on the Family Pride Zone Stage starts at noon with *The Micro Chicks*, followed at 1 p.m. by *Wildlife on the Move* and a *Magic Show* at 2 p.m. *The Micro Chicks* are back at 3 p.m. for another performance, more *Wildlife on the Move* at 4 p.m., and another *Magic Show* winding up the day at 5 p.m.

The SPCA will be there offering opportunities to adopt new furry family members, and there will be *Pickle Ball* with *Chicken* and *Pickle*, a petting zoo from *Cathy's Critters*, Librarian KayCee Choi from the Dallas Public Library with books and reading and DJ Bri keeping the space filled with music. There will also be *Lorenzo Party Balloons*, bounce houses, *The Pride Train* from *Clown Around Party Rentals*, *Fun Time Entertainment* offering face painting and temporary tattoos, the tech truck and a booth

by The Perot Museum, and books from authors Lerone Landis, A.J. Chilson and Danii Oliver.

## Teen Pride

Drag icon Kennedy Davenport headlines the entertainment planned for Teen Pride, all happening Saturday, June 1. Teen Pride's main stage entertainment kicks off at 11 a.m. and goes through 7 p.m. Other performers include Leché Diamonté, Devin Banks Davenport, Aundra Mikyles, Daniel Dean Scott Skyy, Barbie Davenport Dupree, Bronz Dior Davenport, Glam Davenport, Kiana Lee, Loretta Armani Mack, Ruby Scott, Sapphire Davenport, Zimora Evans and I.V. Marks Skyy.

Also from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. on June 1, Teen Pride presents the *Kiki Ball*, with competition in four categories competing on one runway. *Xa'Pariis Nike Ebony* and *JRock Ebony* are hosts for the *Ball*, with *Bleu 007*, *Kai GZ*, *Kam Von Dutch*, *Lunari Old Navy*, *Prince Narco Juicy* and *Princess Xi Nike* judging. Other activities include a roller-skating rink, a dedicated area for Trans services and organizations, a job fair hosted by Starbucks, empowerment discussions by *Trust the Process*, jump houses, vendors featuring merchandise for LGBTQ youth and much more.

There is no added fee for admission to Teen Pride, but admission is restricted to those ages 12-19 and those over 19 attending with a teen. ■

# From 'Boy' to **man**

PRIDE 2024

See why Pride Music Festival performer Jordy has entered his sexy era

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

**L**ast year, queer pop singer Jordy dropped his sophomore album, *Boy*, putting himself on the radar of GLAAD and Queerty. The album was a pop delight, with wholesome singles about queer love and emotions.

This year, though, Jordy has gone from boy to man with his new album *Sex with Myself*, due out on June 14, featuring his newest single "Can U Host."

But before the album release, Jordy will perform on Saturday, June 1, at the Dallas Pride Music Festival.

"I love it. I'm so excited to play there," the singer said of Dallas Pride. "Pride Month is such a sacred time for many of us."

Along with Jordy, festival headliners include Loren Allred ("Never Enough" from *The Greatest Showman*), bounce artist Ha Sizzle ("Getcha Sum") and dance club diva CeCe Peniston ("Finally," "We Got a Love Thang").

*Drag Race* queens Aquaria and Morphine join the lineup along with Dallas-based artist Lardi B and beats by DJ Sedrick Dayton.

Playing specifically to queer audiences is a point of gratitude for Jordy. His music is very outwardly queer, and he'll share those songs and stories with those who get it. Being an out artist and speaking the same language as a Pride audience is more than just a show.

"That's such a special thing — to be in this queer space where queer art is happening. I didn't see much of that as a kid, so it's so cool to see it and be a part of it for young audiences now," he said. "I think this is a time to lift each other up and be a voice for that and have a good time. I'm so grateful."



With new music and steamy videos (check out his visual on YouTube for the titular track), the pop singer is actually on the rebound from a shaky 2023, when Jordy went from major highs to a low point. Last year, he received nominations in the GLAAD Media Awards, the Queerty Awards and iHeartRadio Music Awards. He was featured on *Good Morning America* and appeared on the *Kelly Clarkson Show*.

And then ....

"I was dropped by my label," he said. "But you know, there are highs and lows in the life of an artist. I was

doing so well last year, and after being dropped, I was spiraling. But first, therapy was essential, and I was surrounded by people who remind me of my value.

"Mental health was key to cope with all that."

He said he makes time for himself to not get too caught up in the life of a rising pop star.

"I started reading more. I'm hiking more. I make a point to really take care of myself because of this life," he said.

As for this new album, what happened between the wholesome *Boy*

album and now this hypersexualized new Jordy of *Sex with Myself*?

He calls it a new era.

His past two records, *Boy* and 2021's *Mind Games* had a more romantic bent. Strong pop songs filled both, but, as he put it, those albums were more emotional with heart-on-sleeve material. Now he's traded heart-on for hardons with *Sex with Myself*.

"I'm excited about this era. My last two albums have a lot of emotions, and that's how I am. But I think also, this album is about a second queer adolescence exploring my sexy side," he said.

Jordy added that he's had a lot of shame attached to sex. This album is his way to liberate himself from that.

Plus, without the label, he had more freedom to be super gay about it.

"The possibilities were endless, and, at the end of the day, this project was about coming into my own and letting go of any shame," he said. "There's an anthem of self love but also a song for people not going through this. I think there's something for all listeners on this new project." ■

Learn more about the singer at [JordyMusic.com](http://JordyMusic.com). For tickets, visit [DallasPride.org](http://DallasPride.org).

# Pride Around the state

## PRIDE 2024

**W**herever you live in Texas, Pride is there. And if it is not RIGHT there, then it is close by. Here is a list of Pride events happening between now and the end of the year around Texas.

### Denton

- > PriDenton Pride Path  
June 1 from 8-10 a.m.  
Courthouse Lawn, Denton
  - > PriDenton Night Out  
June 8 from 6-10 p.m.  
Denton Civic Center
- PriDenton.org**

### Dallas

- > Dallas Pride  
June 1-2 • 11 a.m.-9 p.m.  
Pride Music Festival in Fair Park  
June 2 • 2 p.m.
  - > Pride Parade in Fair Park
- DallasPride.org**

### Carrollton

- June 1 • 11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Horizon UU Church  
1641 W. Hebron Pkwy.  
Chalk artists, 50+ artists, non-profits,  
retailers

### Bastrop

- June 1 • 5-10 p.m.  
Street Faire in Downtown Bastrop
  - June 2 • 1-7 p.m.  
Pride in the Park  
Fisherman's Park
- BastropPride.org**

### McKinney

- June 2 • noon-5 p.m.  
Dr. Glenn Mitchell Memorial Park,  
300 W. Louisiana St., McKinney

### Beaumont

- June 8 • noon-10 p.m.  
Betty Greenburg Center for Performing Arts,  
4155 Laurel St.

### Arlington

- June 8 • 6-11 p.m.  
Levitt Pavillion
- ArlingtonPride.org**



Big Gay Fans at Arlington Pride



Trinity Pride in Fort Worth

### Longview

- June 8 • 3-8 p.m.  
Maude Cobb Center, 100 Grand Blvd.,  
Longview
- PrideETX.com**

### Pride in Bloom

- June 8-9 • 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Dallas Arboretum, 8525 Garland Road
- DallasArboretum.org**

### Juneteenth

- Unity Weekend Celebration  
June 13-16  
Host hotel: Crowne Plaza Downtown,  
1015 Elm St.
- DallasSouthernPride.com**

### Fort Worth

- Trinity Pride Fest  
June 15  
Magnolia Green Park, 1201 Lipscomb St,  
Fort Worth
- TrinityPrideFW.org**

### Arts District Pride Block Party

- June 21 • 6 p.m.-midnight  
Dallas Museum of Art,  
Nasher Sculpture Center, Flora Street

### Gun Barrel City

- Cedar Creek Pride  
June 29  
South Beach for a day on the lake

# Princeton cancels Pride

PRIDE 2024

ACLU charges ISD with restricting free speech

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer  
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**J**ohn Kusterbeck, founder of Princeton TX Diverse, said his city's Pride event, originally scheduled for June 29, has been canceled for now because the venue they had intended to use has canceled the contract.

Pride was scheduled to return to Princeton ISD's high school, but the school district canceled use of the venue for two reasons: the organization failed to include a disclaimer and it has been distributing banned books.

The ACLU has filed a complaint on behalf of the group based on the fact that the group has consistently included a disclaimer in promotional materials that the event is not sponsored by the school district and the fact there is no list of banned books.

Princeton is a fast-growing Metroplex suburb, located 30 miles northeast of Dallas near the center of Collin County. The population at the time of the 2010 census was just over 6,000. Today it is about 26,000. And that population includes a large number of LGBTQ residents.

Several hundred people attended last year's Pride celebration that took place in a Princeton ISD school, organizers said.

Because the first Pride event was so successful, Kusterbeck reserved the school for this year's Pride. But then he received a letter from Princeton ISD Superintendent Donald McIntyre canceling the agreement.

"Board policy," McIntyre wrote, "clearly states that any and all communications with the public by the lessee shall clearly state the event is not sponsored by the district as well as identify the nature of the activity and sponsoring organization."

Kusterbeck was careful to include

a disclaimer on all information about Pride. However, in a Facebook post after the event thanking the board president for her support, no disclaimer was attached. The post was facetious since the board president had done everything she could to NOT support the group.

"Therefore, based on this information and the terms of the agreement that specifically provided that 'violation(s) of rules and regulations for use of district facilities may result in permanent cancellation of the non-school user's use of district facilities,' you and Princeton TX Diverse are no longer able to rent and utilize district facilities," McIntyre wrote.

In its complaint against the school district, the ACLU found that the policy has not affected the relationship between Princeton ISD and several churches that meet on school property.

"For example, the Heart+Soul Church hosts worship services at Princeton High School and has often failed to include the required disclaimer in its social media post about these events, even when prominently advertising that its services take place on district property," the ACLU wrote in its complaint. Examples from three Instagram posts accompany the assertion.

The church lists the address of Princeton High School as the place where the church worships, but there is no disclaimer.

Holy Ghost Ministry holds services at Southard Middle School and has a physical sign announcing the location of its services. Missing from the sign is the required disclaimer.

Faith Baptist Church held a National Day of Prayer celebration at Lovelady High School, which it promoted on Facebook. No disclaimer ran on the Facebook page or the event registration page, the ACLU found.

Faith Baptist Church charged from \$25 to \$800 to reserve seats and tables at the event. That is a clear violation of Princeton ISD's prohibition on charging admission to events on their property.

In its complaint, the ACLU notes that it is not asking the school district to can-



cel use of its buildings by these churches. Instead, the ACLU simply wants Kusterbeck and Princeton TX Diverse to be treated equally.

In addition, the school district charged Kusterbeck and Lee with distributing "inappropriate material at a Lion's Club event" that took place on school property.

"Specifically, it has come to my attention that you had a basket of 'banned books' with inappropriate reading materials for children under the Princeton ISD Board Policies and intended to award this basket to winners of the coloring contest," McIntyre wrote in a separate letter.

Among the "banned books" were *And Tango Makes Three*, the true story of two male penguins who hatched an abandoned egg and raised the chick at the Central Park Zoo in New York.

So Kusterbeck filed a "Request for Information" form: "I would like a list of all books that have officially been banned from Princeton ISD libraries," he requested under "Public information requested."

In responding, Officer for Public Information Jean Ann Collins checked off

a box that read, "The information you requested does not exist."

Despite a banned book list not existing, McIntyre threatened to have Kusterbeck and Lee removed from any school property and charged with criminal trespass.

"The district's letter fails to explain what board policies were violated, if any, by the distribution of so-called 'banned books' when no books are actually banned by the district," the ACLU pointed out.

Kusterbeck noted that on the most extensive banned book lists circulating and being cited around the state, more than half of the books challenged have LGBTQ or racial content. However, the Bible is also included on the lists on the grounds that it includes violent and sexual content. Yet at the city's Onion Festival, which took place on school grounds, one vendor distributed Bibles.

In addition to asking for an apology, the ACLU requested that Princeton ISD "immediately reverse your decisions to terminate PTX Diverse, Mr. Kusterbeck's and Ms. Lee's equal access to Princeton ISD facilities, including their ability to serve as vendors and to rent district property, in accordance with each of the neutral rules established by the district."

They also request, "that you provide training to all district personnel on the First Amendment and on LGBTQIA+ cultural sensitivity."

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# Making **Pride** for all

PRIDE 2024

There is a lot more to making Pride accessible to everyone than handicapped parking and restrooms

**P**ride Month is a time to bring everyone in our community together and celebrate — like the Dallas Pride theme for 2024 says: Unity in the Community. But for many, Pride events can still feel exclusionary.

For those with certain disabilities or sensory issues, large festivals like Dallas Pride are inaccessible. There are many barriers that can arise for disabled people, including at the information level.

Fair Park boasts handicapped accessible parking, yet it is only labeled on one parking lot out of 15. Its website has a list of ADA-accessible areas inside the park, yet this is nowhere to be found on their accessibility page.

Navigating these kind of events is already hard enough for those with physical disabilities, but without access to information, it is impossible. While there are accessible restrooms throughout the park, there is no map online to help navigate. The Dallas Pride website (DallasPride.org) offers no additional help, saying they include more information but just linking to Google Maps with the promise of “maps and more information coming soon.”

Allison Martin, local disability advocate, recalled how the last two years of Dallas Pride have proven a challenge just to participate in.

“I’m really grateful that these events are happening,” said Martin, “but it feels like it wasn’t put together with people like me in mind.”

Difficulty began when she first arrived at Fair Park, as it was hard finding accessible parking. That meant she had to walk a significant distance just to get to the festival.

“As someone with POTS [postural



**Melissa Whitler**  
NBCU FELLOW

orthostatic tachycardia syndrome], I’m really sensitive to heat, and get dizzy and low blood pressure. Having to walk and stand for extended periods of time is really hard on my body,” Martin explained. While there were some spaces inside which helped with the heat, there was still a lack of seating, which added to her exhaustion.

So lack of consideration given to accessibility makes it harder for people like Martin to participate in Pride.

There are some accommodations that have been arranged this year, as Satur-

day’s festival will have several picnic tables for use around the festival grounds, and some limited seating will be available near the Centennial Stage. But it is easy to imagine these filling up quickly, considering the amount of people who attend. Sunday’s parade will have designated handicap viewing areas reserved for attendees with wheelchairs, mobility scooters and similar devices setup at three locations along the Parade route. That provides more accommodations — but only for those with a visible disability.

One of these locations will include an ASL interpreter. The parade will be broadcast on CW33, so it is possible for people to enjoy it without having to physically go.

With the theme of Unity in the Community, one would hope for more consideration for those of the community who are not neurotypical or able bodied. This is an important concern for

our community, as new research shows LGBTQ people are more likely to have a disability than the general population.

But how do we create events that are truly open to everyone? It takes envisioning a new way of doing things. Many of our “traditional” events feature loud noise levels and flashing lights, which can cause sensory overload even for those not as sensitive. For already marginalized groups, their needs are often forgotten in the planning stages of such events.

For example, how are we accommodating trans and gender non-conforming folks? For those chest binding, the heat and exertion are especially hard and can come with increased risk. What would a Pride parade look like with more tents and shaded areas for those watching?

With the number of buildings at Fair Park, why not dedicate one as a sensory area, where there is quiet and lots of

PRIDE, Page 28

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BRYAN PLACE



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EAST DALLAS



4677 Junius St

4 BD 2.1 BA 2,775 SF \$899,000

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COMPASS

# A Summer full of Pride

PRIDE 2024

Hit the road (or the skies) for some queer fun across the continent

**STEVEN LINDSEY** | Contributing writer  
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As our city bursts to life under rainbow-hued flags in anticipation of a weekend of Dallas Pride festivities, I can't help but look ahead to other LGBTQ celebrations. When choosing summer vacation destinations, my husband and I often look at Pride calendars so we can maximize the gayness of our travels.

We've met some great people — and the occasional lifelong friend — during our out-of-town forays. Plus, we think it's crucial to support the queer communities in cities that, like Dallas, have the unfortunate circumstances of being in red states with anti-LGBTQ laws and attitudes. The more of us that show up, the harder it is to deny our existence.

So, if you're game for a last-minute trip or wish to plan something later this summer (or even next year), I've rounded up 14 June-September Pride events across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Each takes place in a personal favorite destination, ready to satisfy your cravings for everything from mountains and beaches to bustling metropolises and tiny towns.

## June Pride Events

### Bend Pride | June 1

Bend, Oregon

Cool off in the Pacific Northwest at one of the coolest Oregon towns out there (sorry, Portland). Though Pride is smaller in scale than its Winter PrideFest each March, any excuse to visit Bend is good. And now that there's a new non-stop flight from DFW to Redmond, Ore., it's easier than ever for a quick getaway. [BendPride.com](http://BendPride.com).



George Takai will be Icon Grand Marshal in the Los Angeles Pride parade



New York City — the mother of all Prides

### Aloha Maui Pride | June 1-9

Maui needs tourists now more than ever, and what could be better than uplifting the island's queer community than a week or so in paradise? June 8 is the big day of celebrations, so consider cashing in those air miles for a trip next weekend. YOLO, after all. [AlohaMauiPride.org](http://AlohaMauiPride.org).

### New Orleans Pride | June 7-9

Perhaps a little less crazy than Southern Decadence each August/September, New Orleans Pride makes one of the gayest cities in the South even gay-er. Best of all, you can jump right in and march through the French Quarter or stand on the curb and cheer on the crowds with a hurricane in hand. [NewOrleansPride.org](http://NewOrleansPride.org).



Pride in Mexico City  
(Photo courtesy of Jesus Chairez)

### FLoatarama | June 8

The 5th annual flotilla sets sail as the largest Pride-on-Water celebration in the nation in Fort Lauderdale, with more than 30 boats decked out in all the colors of the rainbow. Make sure to visit the interactive exhibit, Stonewall "INN" Stonewall, while you're in town. [FLoatarama.org](http://FLoatarama.org).

### LA Pride | June 8-22

Join Ricky Martin (who will headline the festival in the park) for a flamboyant extravaganza next week. The celebratory parade down Hollywood Boulevard features Icon Grand Marshal George Takei and is followed by a block party. Other Pride events unfold throughout June, from Dodgers Stadium to Universal Studios. [LAPride.org](http://LAPride.org).

SUMMER, Page 90



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# An 'Idol' goes Metro(Ball)

PRIDE 2024

Hernandez will be one of the featured performers at the 17th anniversary MetroBall on June 7

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

**M**etroBall 2024, the 17th anniversary of the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund's premiere annual fundraising event, starts at 7 p.m. Friday, June 7, at S4, 3911, Cedar Springs Road. The event includes a silent auction, and will be hosted by Paul J. Williams as Sister Helen Holy.

Pre-sale tickets are available online at GDMAF.org for \$40. Tickets will also be available at the door for \$60, and a limited number of VIP packages, with Diamond Access Meet & Greet included, are available. Again, see the GDMAF website for details.

This year's event features American Idol finalist David Hernandez opening for '90s dance music queen Crystal Waters, both of whom sat down recently to answer a few questions for Dallas Voice. See below for our interview with Hernandez, and then watch for our June 7 issue to read our interview with Waters.



**Dallas Voice: The world of entertainment has changed considerably over the last four years in response, mainly, to the COVID pandemic. But your website said that during the height of the pandemic you still delivered more than 70 virtual performances. Do you think adapting to virtual performances and the demands of the pandemic has changed your performance style overall?** David Hernandez: Well, I think it definitely made me have an appreciation for technology, LOL. I learned how to run my own sound and lighting, which I had never previously done. It also gave me the experience of performing without applause which is really interesting



because typically, as a performer, we feed off of the audience. When doing a virtual stream, you kind of have to clap for yourself.

**Also in the last four years, you completed a six-month residency in Naked Boys Singing, and you won a Broadway World Award for best performer in a musical. Was it difficult changing gears to go from being a solo performer to being part of a cast? And what effects, if any, did that have on your solo performance style?** Actually, my first-ever gig in entertainment was when I was 7 years old and performed in a musical called *The Canterville Ghost*. I'm used to being part of the cast, as I also toured with a Broadway-type production after American Idol years ago. There were two singers and about 20 dancers. I love being part of the cast because it takes away some of the pressure just being a

solo performer. It was nice to go back to my musical theater roots, and then to win an award for it was incredible. I had a lot of fun portraying a character and not just myself. There's an escape in that which I love.

**What was it like to win the Broadway World Award? Did that maybe make you think about switching your focus to the world of theater?** Totally! It made me want to go back and really pursue it. One of my dreams is to actually be on Broadway one day. I've always had that dream. I think that winning the award and being a part of that cast just reignited my passion for musical theater. I think you can do everything and anything you want to do. I don't feel like I have to pick a lane. I can do all of it if I set my mind to it!

**You released "Beautiful" in 2016 and then came out as a gay man. How has your focus as a performer and just as a**

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person changed since then? As a gay man in the public eye, do you feel like you have a responsibility to the LGBTQ community to be a role model, to represent the community to the world at large? I think I'm still the same person deep down inside. But I do feel like I have

a responsibility to the community to be a voice and advocate for change. I do think that once I came out officially to the public, there was a sense of freedom that I got and that I still have now.

I'm constantly evolving and growing into myself, and it is nice to not have to hide any part of who I am.

**What is next on the agenda for you?**

**What is your next goal?** Well, I'm releasing a single and music video on May 31, which is my birthday. The song is called "I AM," and it is probably the most personal song that I've released thus far. I'm really excited for people to hear it and relate to it. It basically just talks about staying true to your roots and remembering where you came from.

Additionally, I've been doing Pride dates across the country and have a few more coming up. I'm looking forward to my acting career and what that has to offer. The future feels limitless!

**You are performing here in Dallas at MetroBall on June 7; do you have a message for your fans in North Texas?**

Come out and celebrate yourself and each other for a great cause! I can't wait to see all of your beautiful faces!



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seating. Many places still only have male and female separated bathrooms, posing another safety risk for trans people. Can certain restrooms at Fair Park be labeled as gender neutral and well-marked on maps for Pride?

Inclusivity does not always take big, sweeping changes — just considering things from different perspectives.

One local organization making strides in accessibility is the Dallas Social Queer Organization, aka DSQO. While still relatively new, the founders hosted a visioning session before it was created to make sure they were meeting the needs of the community. This led to the creation of three levels of leadership: DSQO team, which is open to anyone who wants to give any amount of their time; development team, comprising nine people and no more than 50 percent cis or white; and the three executive coordinators who help carry out the will of the teams and delegate work.

Javier Enriquez, one of the three executive coordinators, talked about how their



Accessibility for everyone is a core concern for DSQO

group, and others, can work toward being inclusive for all.

“The goal of DSQO is to bring together the whole LGBTQ community,” Enriquez said. “We want as many people to feel comfortable and able to participate in our spaces as possible.”

This includes people from the whole spectrum of sexual and gender identities, as well as disability status and accessibility needs.

One of the most basic steps DSQO has taken is to share specific accessibility information about each of their events. “At the beginning we weren’t as active in recognizing accessibility needs,” Enriquez explained. “One person started asking for these accommodations and it sparked a larger conversation with the development team.” Now the organization makes sure to include alt text on all their social media posts for those with vision difficulties and includes information about wheelchair accessibility and other concerns.

“It’s important to share this informa-



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tion so that people can make the decision for themselves if they want to attend,” Enriquez said.

In addition, DSQO offers masks, ear plugs and a stimulation/sensory bin at all their events, and dedicated smoking areas and spaces away from flashing lights and loud music. They also offer virtual components to as many events as possible and have many members who attend exclusively remotely.

“We can’t make all spaces accessible all the time,” Enriquez said. “But just because we can’t do everything doesn’t mean we should do nothing.”

Even for those who are old enough to legally drink, there are many reasons why someone might not feel comfortable at an event surrounded by alcohol.

So how can we reimagine events outside of bars?

This is why DSQO has a commitment to make the majority of their events sober and only hosts a max of two events a month with alcohol. The organization also has a system of “DSQO parents,” who remain sober for these events and specifically look out for everyone. This way attendees are safe and able to get home.



Inclusivity must be intentional and can’t be done overnight. It takes actively listening to people, pushing against unconscious biases, and deliberate actions. It might also take a reorganization of leadership. Ensure you have a diverse group organizing events. Disabled people should not just be included in events, but be present in leadership.

Another consideration is where events happen. Many of the Pride festivities take place at bars and clubs, limiting attendance to 21 and up. While the Dallas Pride Festival and Parade are open to everyone regardless of age (including Teen Pride and Family Pride Zone), many of the other scheduled events are only for those 21 and older.

The core of accessibility and accommodations is inclusion. Enriquez recalled how one of their members was able to attend their first-ever house party because of DSQO’s inclusivity.

“One of our attendees is semi wheelchair bound, and expressed how big the DSQO community has been for them,” Enriquez remembered. They had never been able to be a part of queer spaces before and showed a lot of appreciation for the accommodations.

This is how we show unity in our community, by committing to inclusivity and compassion. There are many online resources about how to make events more accessible. When celebrating Pride, we must ensure dignity and inclusion for all. ■

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# Is he or isn't he? **Who** cares

PRIDE 2024

Dixon Dallas brings his horny western swing to Arlington Pride

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

**D**ixon Dallas describes country music as all about sex — only it's not as explicit as say, rap or some pop songs. You have to read between the lines for C&W's persistent horniness. At the same time, Dallas said, he wanted more from the genre.

He never heard any country songs about booty bouncing and bussy kissing. So he set out to make one of his own.

Then his track gained some traction — particularly on TikTok

"I never really expected to do more than one song about bussy," Dallas said with his remarkably pronounced Southern accent. "I wanted to do country music differently, though. Say some wild shit you don't always hear."

"He got me singing, 'When we get to sippin' whiskey

"And we get a little frisky

"I climb up on him, ride him like an F-150."

— "F-150"

People will catch his saucy vibe when he performs at Arlington Pride 2024 on June 8, in the Levitt Pavilion.

Dixon Dallas is the alter ego of alt-rapper Jake Hill. Only, Dallas never says that. Jake Hill is a good buddy of his.

Dallas is just chill about any and everything, whether it's his sexuality or his next song.

"No, I haven't disclosed my sexuality. I could be gay. I could be straight. I could be bi. At the end of the day, I feel like it doesn't matter," he told *Pride.com* last August.

Take what you will from that.

He's even chill about his Pride performance.



"There's no difference, I think, in playing a gig and playing a Pride. You show up, be around people in a place where they are themselves and have a good time. It's all gonna be a big party," he said.

That could be an understatement.

What Dallas does well is craft songs with a lot of appeal that have lewd humor and hummable hooks. Yes, they are explicit, and yes, he paints a picture. Only, you don't feel cringe singing them to yourself.

"Yeah, you can use me as you please; I'm on my knees

"I'll go and grab a couple candles, you grab me by the throat

"Nothin' I can't handle; it's just a little choke."

— "Something to Feel"

Gay social media boys post this stuff all the time on Insta or TikTok — and certainly on X, formerly known as Twitter. Just maybe not to a song. So Dallas isn't just being some kind of baiter — maybe more of a mirror.

"I never expected the response be-

cause I kinda just threw it out there," he said. "But it means something to me when a gay man tells me that he doesn't have this music and that he feels seen or it makes them confident to come out."

Dallas does have his tender side, too. He's dropped singles about break-ups and boyfriends that equally address the feelings of, primarily, a young gay male.

"I held you at your worst (Worst): you left me at your best (Best)

"You broke me down until there wasn't much left

"Picked myself up out the dirt (Dirt), and then I caught my breath (Breath)

"You can try to kill me, oh, but I ain't dyin' yet (No, I ain't dyin' yet)"

— "Better Without You"

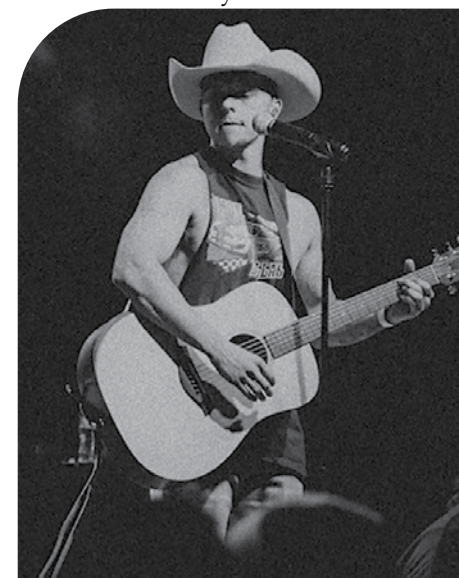
So however "he" identifies, it's fair to say that Dallas is putting out material that is sex-positive and gay positive — both ideal motifs for Pride.

"The feedback makes me keep doing it, and I'm glad to be able to. I can't wait to come to Texas where Pride events probably get protested and bring my songs. It's not just gonna be a loving

space, but also — and yes, everyone's entitled to their opinions — a big 'fuck you' to those people who protest Pride," he said.

This year's lineup of entertainment for Arlington Pride includes a mix of local and national talent. *Drag Race* icons JuJuBee and Dallas's own Alyssa Edwards will be AP's drag headliners.

The music headliner is Betty Who along with Dixon Dallas, Kameron Ross and DJ Al Farb. Liquor Mini will serve as the AP emcee this year.



Arlington Pride is presented by HELP Center for LGBT Health & Wellness. The event is free but a \$10 suggested donation will go toward paying performers and festival workers as well as support charities, nonprofits and community programs. ■

For more information, visit [ArlingtonPride.org](http://ArlingtonPride.org) or on social media @ArlingtonPrideOfficial.

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# A gay couple and their surrogate discuss family

## LGBTQ FAMILIES

A court ruling and new legislation give embryos personhood and threaten IVF

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

**R**andall and Daryl, who have been together 15 years, said they talked about having children on their first date. Zarah, their surrogate, said she's proud of helping them grow their family.

Surrogacy has become a common route to parenthood.

But a recent Alabama Supreme Court decision recognizing frozen embryos as people, with possible liability and penalties for the destruction of those frozen embryos — has sent shockwaves through the in vitro fertilization or IVF community. SurrogateFirst, an IVF agency, completed a survey soon after the Alabama ruling.

Of intended parents surveyed, 98 percent reported concerns over new legislation that will hinder their family-building efforts. Of those, 67 percent of same-sex couples intending to use IVF are more concerned they'll be targeted. And 55 percent of surrogates "are deeply troubled by legislative effects on IVF."

Among those surveyed, 20 percent report postponing surrogacy and half report increased costs already.

Four states — Alabama, Arizona, Georgia and Missouri — have enacted laws "granting personhood rights" to embryos. The law was blocked from taking effect in Arizona.

Twelve more states have introduced legislation. Texas isn't among them, but only because the legislature didn't meet this year. Expect to hear more out of Austin on the issue next session in January 2025, although Gov. Greg Abbott earlier this year declared his support for IVF



Randall and Daryl with their surrogate, Zarah, above and, Caleb, left

and Texas' junior U.S. senator, Ted Cruz, filed a bill in Congress

to protect IVF.

### One family's journey

Randall and Daryl explained the steps they went through to conceive their son and how these new laws may affect surrogacy.

Before a surrogate was chosen, the couple chose an egg donor. Fourteen donated eggs were fertilized with sperm from the two men. Three developed into viable embryos.

Two women are involved in the IVF process — an egg donor and a surrogate. An egg donor's eggs are fertilized and implanted into a different woman acting as the surrogate. That prevents the surrogate, who carries the child to term, from claiming to be the child's biological parent and from having parental rights.

Once the couple chose Zarah as their surrogate, one of the embryos was suc-

cessfully implanted in her. Had pregnancy not been achieved, another embryo would have been unfrozen, and they would have tried again.

But because Zarah became pregnant on the first try, the two remaining embryos have been kept frozen. And now, according to the Alabama court ruling and new laws proposed in states such as New York, Massachusetts and Illinois, those embryos are people and cannot be destroyed — even if the parents have no intention of having more children.

Among surrogates surveyed by SurrogateFirst, 54 percent said the new laws had no impact on their determination to help others start a family. In fact, 36 percent said the legislation only increased their motivation to be a surrogate.

Randall and Daryl are glad they went through their surrogacy several years ago. Zarah, who said being a surrogate was something she has wanted to do since she was a teenager, is considering becoming a surrogate again for another couple.

"It started when I had a 7th grade teacher who was a surrogate herself," she said, explaining that she had asked her teacher questions and learned she had met, through an agency, a couple

who couldn't have a baby themselves.

Once Randall and Daryl had viable embryos, they found Zarah through their agency. One embryo was unfrozen and implanted, and two years ago Caleb was born.

And while some parents don't keep in touch with their surrogates or only send, at best, infrequent updates, "We do FaceTime [with Zarah] once or twice a month," the two men said.

"I feel love in my heart when I hear from them," Zarah added. "I'm appreciative of the relationship I have with them."

The couple and their surrogate live in different states, but the two men will be visiting Zarah this summer, which is the happy end to a long process that began when the men attended a Men Having Babies conference in San Francisco. After the San Francisco conference, the two men talked to several agencies and chose the one that they were most comfortable with.

They and Zarah agree that making the right connection is key to a successful surrogacy.

Zarah described how they met as being like online dating. She created a profile, and, once the couple chose her, she got to read their profile.

"I liked everything about them," she said. "They had a dog. Love mountains. We developed a strong connection. A mutual connection."

Zarah said she loves telling people about her experience but the question she's often asked is, "How did it feel giving away your baby?"

But, she said, "That's not how it works."

"That adds to how special you are, Zarah, helping bring life into this world for another couple," Randall said.

"You're pretty damn special," Daryl agreed.

Zarah said her relationship and friendship with the two men was just beginning.

"I'm super excited to see where it goes," she said. ■



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# Justice for Armani

## SPECIAL REPORT

7 years after Armani Morgan was found dead, his family is still fighting for answers

**CAROLINE SAVOIE** | Contributing Writer  
CaroSavoWrites@gmail.com

**S**even weeks after Armani Morgan's cousin reported him missing in the summer of 2017, Oak Cliff residents found Morgan's bones scattered in the Texas heat alongside a South Dallas street. Seven years after his disappearance, Armani's family is still searching for answers, imploring anyone who will listen to help uncover the facts of his case.

After allegedly enduring a series of stalkings and assaults, 27-year-old Armani disappeared on June 3, 2017. On July 24, two residents found his body just blocks from his apartment in the 2500 block of Wilhurt Avenue.

In spite of conflicting evidence, pleas from family members and the suspicious circumstances leading up to his death, Dallas Police "shrugged his death off as an overdose," despite having found only skeletal remains at the scene, said Robin Johnson, Armani's aunt.

She believes that her nephew's identity as a gay Black man who often dressed in drag contributed to what she describes as negligence by the Dallas Police Department throughout the investigation.

Thanks to Johnson, the investigation into Armani's case is active today, and Johnson is still working to get the answers she's been seeking for nearly a decade.

### Who Was Armani Morgan?

Johnson said her nephew was a bubbly latchkey kid, full of personality and always willing to help out. She said he always tried to make people smile, but she acknowledged that he wasn't a perfect person. By middle school, he had an



Armani Morgan

arrest record, used drugs and had started skipping classes. Johnson said she even started sitting in his classes to make sure he was showing up.

"He wasn't an angel, but that does not make it okay for someone to take his life," she said.

Johnson said Armani met a group of people while attending middle school in Oak Cliff who led him down a dangerous path. After he got out of juvenile detention, he dropped out of school in eighth grade.

Armani, who identified as a gay man,

continued to live with his mother, and he started dressing in women's clothing. His family, she said, was accepting of his identity, encouraging Armani to live his truth.

Johnson said Armani was involved in sex work for a time, and she fears that the attacks on him in the last weeks of his life had to do with either his profession or his gender presentation.

### Several alleged assaults

In the weeks leading up to his disappearance, Johnson said Armani's partner and two other people allegedly assaulted him in May 2017, although Johnson didn't know why. She said the group of three knew his habits since they often all hung out together. And on May 22, at a strip mall on the corner of Bonnie View and Overton roads, Johnson said the group of two men and one woman physically assaulted Armani.

Of the two men allegedly involved in the assault, Johnson said one is in jail now, and the other is dead.

A week later, on May 30, Johnson said, the woman involved in the assault called Armani's home landline several times, trying to "lure him outside" his home.

"Armani stayed inside for several days, trying to avoid her after the assault," Johnson said. "But she just kept calling."

The next day, May 31, while Armani was sitting on his sofa watching TV, a bullet came flying through his living room window, just above his head, according to his mother, Eurette Morgan.

Johnson said Royal Crest Apartments' security surveillance cameras didn't get footage of the shooter, and no bystanders ever came forward to identify who it was. But the same woman who had been involved in the alleged assault on Armani on May 22 was seen standing outside the apartment in the Royal Crest Apartment complex around the time of the shooting. (It was in the parking lot of that same apartment complex, two years later, that trans woman Muhlaysia Booker was beaten by a group of men while bystanders watched and laughed. Less

than a month later, she was murdered in Dallas.)

Euretta went to the leasing office after the shooting to ask staff to check the cameras. While she was there, another person ran to tell Euretta that her son was being assaulted. The two women attacking him fled the scene, Johnson said.

A 13-second cell phone video shows two people, one of whom was a woman, assaulting Armani outside of his front door. They got into a dark-colored SUV with stolen license plates, according to the Dallas North Tollway Authority. While the person who filmed the incident gave police a copy of the video, no arrests were ever made.

Johnson said Euretta waved down a patrol car, and the officer wrote a report and collected the bullet as evidence. According to police records, it does not appear that there was any subsequent investigation into this shooting.

After the fight, Armani visited two friends in the apartment complex. It was the last time he was seen alive.

Three days later, his family reported him missing.

## Finding Armani


Days after Armani was last seen, his cousin suspected something was wrong and filed a missing person report. The case went cold until July 24, 2017, seven weeks after his disappearance. That's when two Oak Cliff residents saw a dog walking on Wilhurt Avenue with a human skull in its jaws.

They called the police, who then found a plethora of evidence.

Police found six bones, black curly hair scattered around the site, a pair of torn tan-and-white shorts, a pink bandana, a bra, a navy blue tank top, a black sock, a glass pipe, a lighter, a brush and a gray purse containing a phone number. Police also recovered a black plaid pajama shirt and pants, black shorts, a rusty necklace reading "get tested" and a Chrysler key fob, according to the medical examiner's autopsy report.


On Aug. 1, 2017, police returned to the scene and found 28 more bones later identified as Armani's. Four months later, in October 2017, DNA testing proved the bones recovered at the scene were Morgan's.

Seventeen days after DNA testing identified the remains as Armani's, a



# DALLAS COUNTY CRIME STOPPERS

## HOMICIDE VICTIM



<b>Victim Name</b> Armani D. Morgan	<b>Dallas Homicide Case</b> 168170-2017
<b>Location</b> 4200 Block of Balch Dr. and 2900 Wilhurt Ave. Dallas, Texas.	<b>Contact</b> angelsarmanis797@gmail Special Investigations Unit (214) 671-3677
<b>Date</b> June 3, 2017	<b>Tipsters can remain anonymous</b>

### DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

The family of Armani D. Morgan resident of Dallas, TX is desperately seeking answers to his June 3, 2017, sudden disappearance. His skeletal remains were discovered on July 24, 2017, near a vacant field a few feet away from his home. Armani's murder remains unsolved and his family is pleading with the public for help with solving his murder.

Our family is devastated and heartbroken as we continue grieving Armani's tragic death. We love and miss Armani's beautiful smile. It's still extremely painful and upsetting that we never got the opportunity to see Armani say a proper goodbye because his body was skeletonized.

Armani was 27 years old at the time of his sudden disappearance and the unexpected discovery of his tragic death. He was reported missing by his cousin, shortly after family and two friends had last spoken with Armani on the day of his sudden disappearance in the Royal Crest Apartment complex where he lived.

Armani did not simply disappear nor was his tragic death an accident as falsely insinuated by law enforcement. Our family is pleading with those of you with first-hand information to please come forward with vital tips, leads and information to help bring Justice on behalf of Armani.

Week of May 22, 2017, Armani was relentlessly pursued and violently assaulted by one of three perpetrators. May 31, 2017, Armani was shot at

while inside his home and also immediately after the shooting occurred, he was violently assaulted right outside his front door by evidence of cell phone video footage that was submitted to DPD Homicide Detective.

Armani was last seen alive on June 3, 2017, shortly after he was violently attacked by a female and male perpetrator. Dallas Police have yet to arrest Armani's killer(s).

Someone out there knows something. If you have any first-hand information please contact us immediately, via Armani's Angels angelsarmanis797@gmail.com and Dallas Police Dept.'s Special Investigations Unit (214) 671-3677. It is extremely important to our family for willing individuals and witnesses to the crime to speak up if you know something. We as Armani's family understand that there may be good reasons why someone would have kept the information to themselves and have not yet come forward but now is the time and any little tip could be the one piece of information that Dallas Police need. Your help will be greatly appreciated in helping our family and Armani receive the Justice that he deserves.

Please help our family solve this crime, your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

detective spoke to Johnson. "He told me Armani died of a drug overdose where we found him," she said. "In 17 days, you can say matter of factly with six bones that he OD'd under a tree? How is that possible?"

## More questions than answers

Beginning with the detective's overdose theory, Johnson said she's been left with more questions than answers about how her nephew died.

Jolynn Rice, who founded Cold Case Advocacy, said that the number one issue stopping DPD from investigating Armani's case as a homicide is the fact that the medical examiner ruled his manner of death "undetermined."

Johnson said that according to the

case file, it is not clear if there was any attempt to check the phone records of the two women Armani saw after the assault and before his disappearance. "Armani didn't have a working cell phone, so he may have used one of the two ladies' phones to contact someone else before he left their apartment," Johnson said.

She also questioned the apparent lack of forensic testing on several items, including the clothing found at the scene. "If these torn shorts were being worn by Armani at the time of his death, could they indicate a sexual assault? Could they be related to an incident of transphobic violence?" Johnson asked. "Is there DNA from Armani or a possible assailant on them?"

The medical examiner's office noted that these clothing items were "retained

for submission to the Criminal Investigation Laboratory," but there are no existing records indicating what testing, if any, was conducted on these items.

Family members believe that the Chrysler key is not Armani's because he did not have a vehicle at the time. "If Armani's home key was not on that key ring, perhaps the keys belonged to an assailant. If that is the case, was there any attempt to identify the owner of the keys?" Johnson asked.

The medical examiner also reported that a condom was found at the scene.

"Was this a condom in its wrapper or a condom that had been removed from its wrapper and possibly used? Either way, this would have been a good source to test for DNA," Johnson suggested.

She also said that DPD reports indicate the homicide division did handle Armani's case for a period of time, indicating their belief in her theory that he did not overdose but was instead murdered.

But in 2019, a police spokesperson talked to The Daily Beast about Armani's case. "There is insufficient information thus far to indicate that [Armani's] death was the result of a criminal act," the spokesperson said.

## Struggles with DPD

Johnson stayed closely involved with Armani's case updates for two years, even though they were sparse, she said.

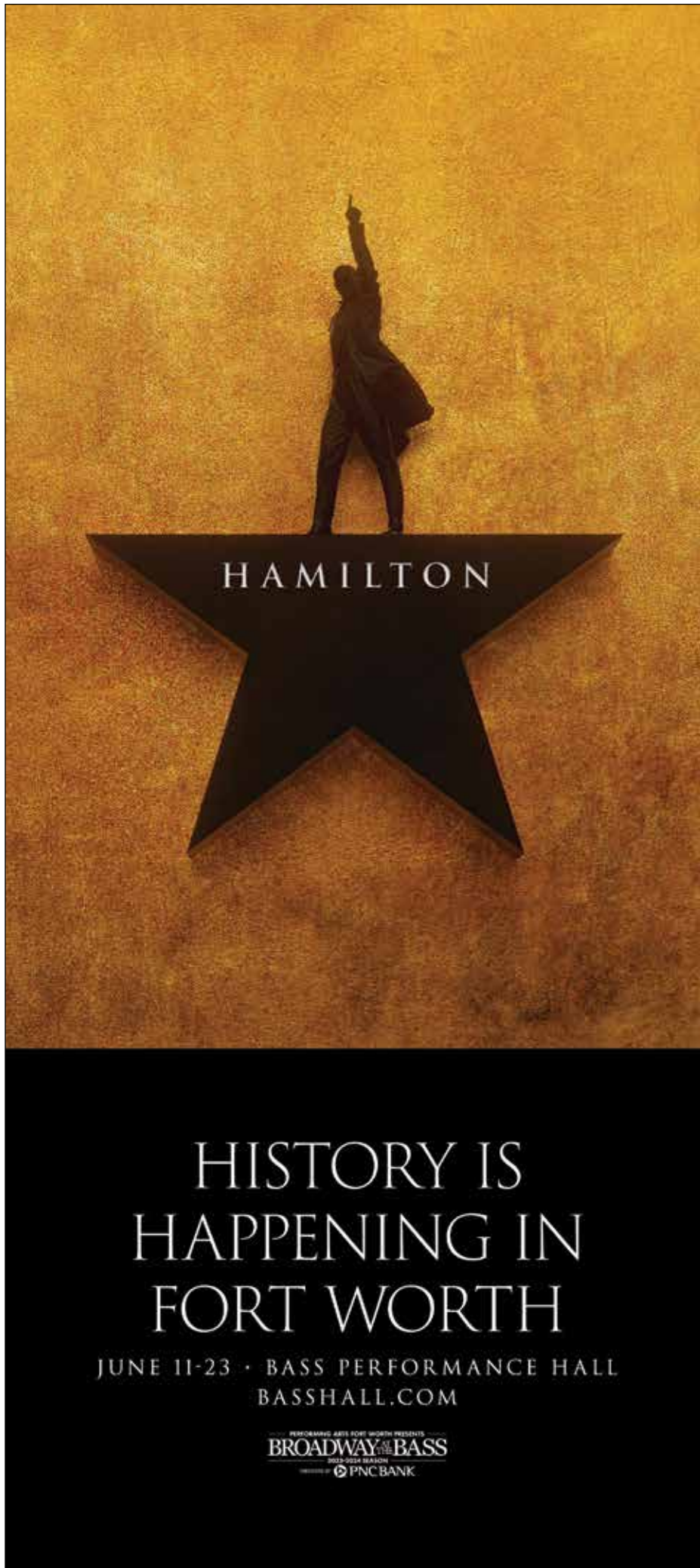
In May 2019, the statute of limitations on the shooting at Armani's apartment ran out. But, Johnson argues, the statute of limitations on murder did not. And investigating the shooting could help detectives determine who was intent on harming her nephew that day.

When Johnson brought this up to police before the statute of limitations ran out on shooting incident, the detective she spoke to said DPD didn't have the bullet anyway. So Johnson thought it was a dead end — until she spoke to police after the statute ran out, and they told her they did, in fact, have the bullet in evidence.

Six months later, on Jan. 2, 2020, Johnson met with DPD detectives again, who told her they'd "wasted enough time and money on Armani."

Rice said that often, people in law enforcement are not trauma-informed, meaning they aren't trained on how to

**ARMANI**, Next Page



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**ARMANI**, From Previous Page



speak to people who have experienced trauma. There's always a question in her mind when she's advocating for victims who identify with minority groups, she added.

"If the victim doesn't belong to groups that normally get advocated for, it's often much harder to get attention and news coverage," Rice said. "It's harder to get taken seriously, and that makes me sad, because fighting for cold case victims is already an uphill battle."

In November 2020, Johnson sent an email inquiry to Texas Ranger Unsolved Crimes Investigation Program seeking an investigative review of Morgan's case. The unit spokesperson replied, saying that the agency only offers investigation assistance when law enforcement or the district attorney's office requests they get involved in a cold case.

So Johnson acted as a liaison between the Rangers and DPD and asked law enforcement to make that request.

"We finally thought we had someone on our side when DPD Assistant Chief Avery Moore was handling Armani's case," Johnson said. "But he retired a year after our conversation, and that put us back at square one. He was the only hope I had."

Since then, Johnson said she's been trying to get a new point of contact with DPD Homicide supervisory staff, but she's been unsuccessful.

She said she's hired two private investigators to help solve Armani's case.

Rice said that unlike crime victims, families of victims often don't have advocacy groups and resources to turn to. "There are families who have waited decades for answers, and they deserve resources and direction to carve a path forward," Rice said. "There's no one to call, no group to attend. They're just sup-

posed to wait around for police to give them closure.

"There's no mechanism to say 'I have the right to a case update.'"

So Armani's family waited.

### A glimmer of hope

In 2019, DPD showed a renewed interest in Armani's case after a series of attacks on transgender women, including the headline-grabbing murder of Muhlaysia Booker, saying that they were investigating whether there was any connection between the violent acts.

But after DPD made arrests in those cases, Armani's went cold again.

In 2021, Johnson said DPD called her and said it would facilitate a simultaneous review by the Rangers and the Texas Attorney General's Cold Case Unit, a step Johnson believes is due to a true crime podcast by Gandhi, *Method and Madness*, covering Armani's story.

Johnson sent the podcast to the DA and Dallas City Hall.

"Over the past nine months I have made numerous phone calls as well to the DPD Homicide Division, leaving messages asking for a return phone call," Johnson said. "I haven't gotten one."

Rice said that with the rise in true crime content, like podcasts and YouTube videos, there are two groups of people emerging from the audience: "There are people who want to consume the content around true crime, and there are active true crime listeners who involve themselves in moving cold cases forward," she said. "Not everyone just consumes for fun. We want to use this digital medium to do more for victims and their families."

Rice said when it comes to cold cases,

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**ARMANI**, From Page 36



Robin Johnson, aunt of Armani Morgan

voices need to be loud and numerous to get police interested in re-investigating.

#### Looking forward

On what would have been Armani's 34th birthday in December 2023, Johnson put up an online petition to gain traction with DPD and "demand a renewed and intensified effort" investigating Morgan's case. The petition has 1,490 signatures.

Rice said that with cases like Armani's, it can't just be family members fighting on his behalf.

"There needs to be more voices, louder voices, than just [his aunt's]," Rice said. "She's done everything she can, and there needs to be an extra push to see anything move forward in Armani's case."

"Signing the petition says 'I want to know more, I support this, and I want forward action.'"

Johnson pointed out five requests she's fighting for on her nephew's behalf. She's requesting that Texas Rangers and Texas Attorney General's Office complete the review of Armani's case and recommend that DPD reopen his case as a homicide. As far as forensic testing goes, Johnson is asking that DPD conduct ballistics tests on the bullet shot into Armani's apartment before he went missing. She's also requesting another, more extensive search of the spot where Armani was found in Oak Cliff to find any more skeletal remains and evidence.

In order for DPD to investigate Armani's case as a homicide, Johnson said she insists on changing the cause of death on

his death certificate from "unexplained" to "homicide."

Johnson said she doesn't want other people with family who have been deemed "cold cases" to suffer the way she has suffered since her nephew's disappearance. She is advocating for Dallas to establish a dedicated cold case homicide unit. At present, DPD has a cold case squad, but Johnson believes a bigger unit would allow for more hands-on cases where leads have run cold.

"A lot of times, police departments will move detectives off of one case to handle another case, so dozens of detectives will get this case passed through their hands," Rice said. "It would be more efficient to have a cold case unit to handle older homicides."

According to Project Cold Case, 43 percent of the 1,473 homicides in Dallas County between 2017 and 2022 remain unsolved.

"We understand that the DPD faced challenges related to 'burn-out' and a lack of financial and human resources," Rice continued. "However, increased attention and leveraging new technologies can help advance all cold case investigations, including Armani's. Other states have seen success using dedicated cold case units or forming external partnerships."

Johnson said that in one regard, the amount of time between Armani's death and a new investigation could be an advantage.

"Every individual contacted during the initial investigation should be re-interviewed, and if they were withholding information previously or providing false information, they may be forthcoming and honest now," she said.

Johnson said she will not stop fighting for justice in her nephew's case.

"This has taken so much from Armani's family," she said. "It's unbelievable, the toll his death has taken on us. But until we know what happened to him and someone is brought to justice for killing him, I will not stop calling and pushing and fighting. He's my family." ■

A DPD spokesperson said if anyone has any information regarding this case, they should contact Detective Cayce Shelton at 214-671-4740 or [Cayce.shelton@dallaspolice.gov](mailto:Cayce.shelton@dallaspolice.gov). To sign the Change.org petition demanding justice for Armani Morgan, visit [Change.org/p/justice-for-armani-morgan](https://www.change.org/p/justice-for-armani-morgan).



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# I've been diagnosed with Parkinson's

## HEALTH JOURNEY

Learning to take pills on an empty stomach has been my biggest challenge in treating the disease

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

**T**oday is a good day. The toothpaste ended up on the toothbrush and not on the floor, and I got my pants on without leaning against the wall.

Dallas Voice Publisher Leo Cusimano was the first to notice how I was walking — slowly, stiffly and stooped over, without swinging my arms. After he pointed it out last summer, I noticed that, in addition to those signs, I was curling my hands inward.

Then I began to notice several other things: I was using my right hand — and I do nothing right-handed. I noticed a tremor in my left hand. Balance was a problem at times. I was even having some speech issues.

So I made an appointment with my doctor at the time, who brushed off the symptoms I listed for him. He was good at reading the results of blood tests, but there is no blood test for what was wrong. So my doctor quickly became my former doctor.

I made an appointment with Nick Bellos, my former doctor who is now, once again, my current doctor. He had retired from practice but had recently reopened his business. After an exam, he had me get an MRI to rule out stroke. With a stroke ruled out, we made an appointment with a neurologist specializing in Parkinson's Disease.

My Parkinson's specialist spent quite a bit of time with me on that first appointment. After observing my movements, giving me several motion tests, asking and answering a number of questions, my new neurologist gave me a tentative diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease or a related syndrome with parkinsonism



David Taffet says, due to Parkinson's Disease, he sometimes has trouble getting the words in his brain to come out of his mouth

symptoms.

He prescribed a medication that replaces dopamine in the brain and said it should slow progression of the disease. He said he's seen patients thrive on the medication for 10 years, and we caught it early.

So I began taking levodopa/carbidopa, slowly amping up to full dosage. I began with half a pill in the morning and half in the late afternoon. The next week, I added a half a pill at midday. Then a week later, one of the half pills became a full pill.

Then two. Then three.

Each time I increased dosage, I felt as if there were little explosions going off in my head.

The biggest challenge was taking the pills on an empty stomach and giving them time to absorb.

The morning pill is the easiest. I get up around 6 a.m., take a pill and go back to bed for an hour. Then breakfast is at 7 a.m.

In my office, I usually sit at my desk and nibble. Now nibbling stops at 10 a.m., pill at 11 and lunch at noon. Repeat at 3. Stop eating for an hour. Pill at 4 and dinner when I get home.

After a few weeks, the routine got easier. Days in the office when I'm sitting at my desk are simpler than days off when I could be anywhere and not where my pills are. So I keep extra pill bottles not just in my office but also in my car.

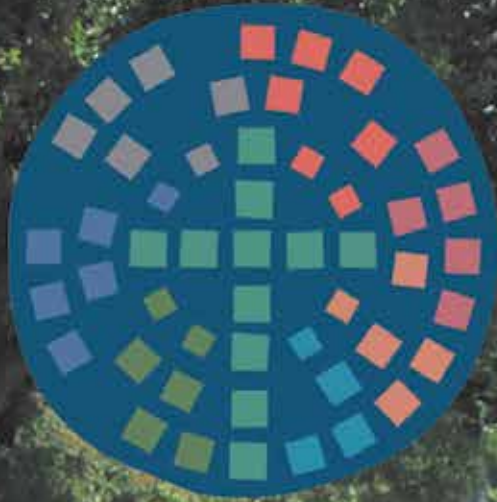
And once I got used to the routine, I began feeling pretty good.

## What is Parkinson's Disease?

According to The Michael J. Fox Foundation, "Parkinson's disease occurs when brain cells that make dopamine, a chemical that coordinates movement, stop working or die." It affects about one million people in the U.S.

And the symptoms? A cure?





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## PARKINSONS

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“Because PD can cause tremor, slowness, stiffness and walking and balance problems, it is called a ‘movement disorder,’” the foundation says on its website. “Constipation, depression, memory problems and other non-movement symptoms also can be part of Parkinson’s.”

“PD is a lifelong and progressive disease, which means that symptoms slowly worsen over time.”

I’ve had some tremors. My walking was what others noticed first. Balance issues I noticed not just when getting dressed but sometimes even when lying in bed. Pissed off, but no signs of depression. Memory? Names. More than once I’ve caught myself calling Jeremy, my partner of about two years, by my late husband’s name. (My husband Brian passed away more than seven years ago.)

I’ve had some speech problems. The thought is there, but I have to push the words out. Brain to fingers on keyboard? No problem. Brain to mouth? Problem.

Not great for a talk show host, but so far no one’s particularly noticed. Three of us host the radio program *Lambda Weekly*, and we’ve been a team for 25 years. So we already tended to finish each other’s sentences. Patti and Lerone have done a good job of covering for me.

The first thing I worried about after getting my diagnosis was that I’d have to retire. So I began speaking to friends and relatives who’ve retired. Over and over again they told me it was the best thing they’ve ever done. One after another said they’re doing all the things they’ve always wanted to do.

Hmm. I’m already doing what I want to do. I love writing and telling stories of people in our community. I love doing radio. As a kid, I hung a curtain in my basement. Behind the curtain was a sofa and a desk. *Like The Merv Griffin Show*, which I watched every night. (Johnny Carson was on too late). Even after more than 34 years doing *Lambda Weekly*, I’m not ready to give it up.

But I have pulled back on some responsibilities. I’ve been permanent guest DJ of a music show on KNON, but we’ve found a new, permanent host for the show. I stepped down as presi-

dent of Congregation Beth El Binah. I’m still on the board, but someone else can deal with the bomb threats and the FBI.

When Brian died during a collapse of the 911 system in Dallas, I wrote about it. Several other people who had recently lost their husbands contacted me and we started a support group for people who had lost a same-sex partner. The group still meets to help newly-widowed spouses through their grief.

I decided to handle my recent diagnosis the same way. I’m writing about it. It’s how I handle things. Maybe it will help someone else who’s suddenly experiencing strange symptoms — stiffness, balance issues, walking without arms naturally swinging, even memory problems.

My best advice is talk to your doctor about it, and if your doctor doesn’t take these symptoms seriously, make an appointment with a different doctor. See someone with experience in geriatric medicine.

Geriatric medicine? Yikes!

For the past 20 years, when anyone has asked my age, I’ve said, “I’m in my extremely late 40s.” I completely skipped my 50s and 60s. Now that I’m in my ... more-than-60s, just please don’t make me play pickleball.

Parkinson’s can strike at any age. Michael J. Fox was diagnosed with the disease at age 29. Today, he’s 62. The average age of diagnosis is 60. Younger than 50 is considered early onset Parkinson’s.

I’m trying to not let my Parkinson’s diagnosis keep me from doing things I’ve always enjoyed.

The rest of my family doesn’t do old age very well. For example, my mother’s younger sister recently turned 96 and just traded in her old car for a little red Honda sports car. That’s how I picture aging.

So, we’ll see how it goes and I’ll keep posting.

And as for my diagnosis, when I last saw my Parkinson’s doctor, he said I looked much better than I did when I first came to him. That means the medication is working. But good news/bad news: Without a blood test to screen for the disease, Parkinson’s medication working pretty much confirms the Parkinson’s diagnosis. ■

# Navigating the pathwork

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND IDENTITY



JP Morgan Wealth Management Team authors white paper on ID document complexities for trans people

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

**P**ersonal wealth management can be complicated even in the simplest of circumstances. But for people in the LGBTQ community, the complexities are often multiplied.

For the trust lawyers and CPAs and other professionals who make up the wealth planning and advice team at JP Morgan Wealth Management, the whole purpose is to make those complex topics more accessible, said Shelby Anderson, a member of that team.

Toward that end, she said, “We write a lot around financial issues and some legal issues, things like estate planning and taxes. And as we were going through that process, we were struck by the lack of information that is out there for LGBTQ+ individuals.

“Wealth management issues are unique to each person. There is no one-size-fits-all plan or solution,” Anderson continued. “And when

you are talking about transgender issues, that’s even more true.” With that in mind, Anderson said, the team set out to write about some of those issues facing, especially, transgender individuals. Thus was born the JP Morgan Wealth Management white paper, “Transgender adults face daunting challenges in financial, legal and estate planning.”

Dallas-based Joseph T. Hahn, executive director of Wealth Planning and Advice for JP Morgan, is the primary author of the paper, available online at JPMorgan.com in the wealth management documents section. Anderson and others participated in the ideation and as reviewers and contributors.

“Because most of the members of the team were former practicing attorneys, we have represented individuals across the gamut,” Anderson said. “So it was an issue we were all attuned to to some degree, and in the breadth of JP Morgan, we have clients and advisors who are touched by this issue specifically.”

Anderson acknowledged that the white paper is “really not saying anything that members of the transgender community don’t already know. They live and breathe these issues daily.” The idea, she continued, is “really to educate transgender people’s loved ones, their families and friends, on the challenges that transgender people face every day.”

**PATCHWORK**, Next Page



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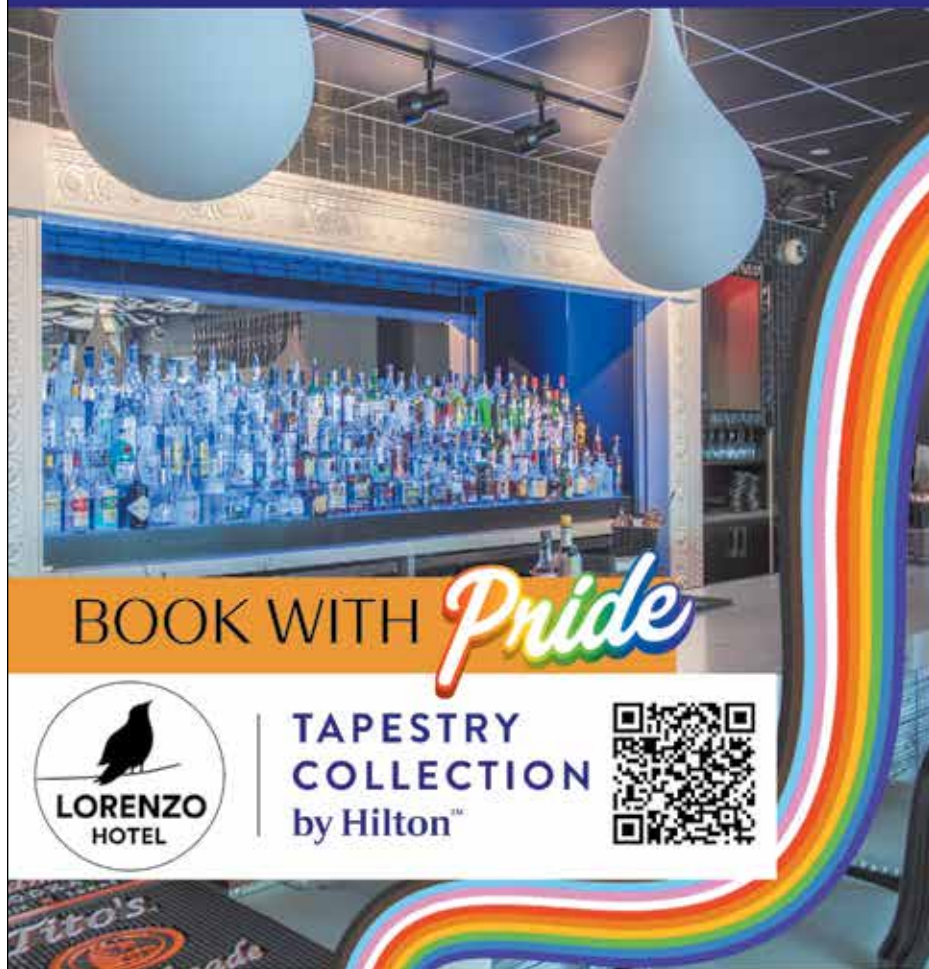
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## PATHWORK From Previous Page



Shelby Anderson

Take, for example, Anderson said, the issue of identity documents — driver’s licenses, official government-issued IDs, birth certificates.

These are all “a foundational issue” of wealth management, she said. “ID documents are essential to so many aspects of everyday life — from applying to school and jobs to finding a place to live or to work. You can’t board an airplane without a valid ID.”

Now imagine going through life with ID documents that do not reflect your identity and appearance.

“What would our lives be like if we lacked those basic documents?” Anderson asked. “And correcting these documents is time-consuming, difficult and expensive.”

On top of that, she said, it can be difficult for even the experts to offer specific advice for trans people on obtaining updated and accurate ID, because the laws governing such things are a confusing patchwork that varies not just from state-to-state but can also vary even at different levels of local government — from city to county to state and then the federal level, even from one courtroom to the next within the same jurisdiction, sometimes.

“But,” Anderson said, “as we were working on this paper and looking at that patchwork framework, what stood out to us is that U.S. passports can be the most efficient form of ID you can use. It is one of the easiest forms of ID to update, and a passport is valid for 10 years.

“That adds some level of protection against potential changes in policy from one administration to the next.”

There are different agencies and organizations that have put out state surveys talking about the different processes in different states required to legally

change one’s ID documents. The JP Morgan team cited Lambda Legal as one such organization, and Anderson noted that even though the name-change process happens through the state court system, “organization’s like Lambda Legal can give a holistic view of ‘where does my state lie’” on the spectrum of changing ID documents.”

Credit can be an even more complex. “Unlike changes to one’s last name, just telling a credit agency about a new first name doesn’t automatically update their files.

“We have a framework in our country where updated last names are par for the course,” she continued, pointing to how easily a last name can be changed when one marries.

“So if I notify one agency of an update to my last name, that will trickle down to all the other agencies. But first names are not automatically updated, and that can cause problems with credit reports, which are frequently checked in areas outside of just applying for a loan or a credit card. Credit checks are used for employment purposes, getting utility services, renting a home. And usage of a different name can lead to problems.”

Again, Anderson said, the patchwork of laws and policies and processes can throw up major road blocks. So, “We have to go to each individual credit agency and check their policies and follow their rules. Then you have to make sure to follow up with them, make sure the changes were made and that they didn’t affect your credit score.”

Anderson pointed to the National Center for Transgender Equality as another valuable resource on changing one’s name and ID documents, but she said, many companies have human resources departments that “are there to help administer benefits. That is a good first step — go to the benefits administrator of your HR department.”

In the end, Anderson said, “Knowing that there are these issues and getting the proper documents in place is crucial. Each state has the ability to create its own laws and its own policies just through declarations. Each one has its own nuances and its own framework. Every method for changing ID documents may not be suitable for every person. So find the method that works best for you.” ■

# Accepted, but **NOT** really?

## DISCRIMINATION

9 members leave Women's Club of Fort Worth after group accepts transgender member



This photo from Wikipedia shows what The Woman's Club of Fort Worth campus looked like in 1926

**JAMES RUSSELL I**  
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**A** century-old woman's club accepted a transgender woman last year, only to later see nine members — including the transgender woman — resign.

In a statement to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, which first reported the story, The Woman's Club of Fort Worth said it received and accepted an application for membership from a transgender woman in November 2023.

The nonprofit social club, founded in 1923, has more than 1,100 members. Its goals, like those of many other clubs founded at the time, include promoting community involvement, personal and professional development and the advancement of education and knowledge of the arts, humanities and sciences.

It also is involved in the preservation of its historic campus on the Near Southside and has given more than \$620,000 in scholarships to local students.

In a statement, the club said that it is "empathetic to the identity and experiences of transgender individuals as integral to the broader spectrum of womanhood." While members need to formally address the matter of admitting transgender women, "it is a conversation we will need to have in the near future but one that we are not prepared for today," the statement noted.

The statement continued, "Our organization has always strived to be a safe and welcoming space for women of all

backgrounds, and we will continue to do so as we reflect on the evolving understanding of gender identity in our society."

In 2020, the board of directors adopted an inclusion statement, calling the organization "a safe and welcoming place for women of all backgrounds, and it does not condone any form of racism or intolerance."

When it came to a transgender woman joining, however, at least one member seemed to disregard that statement — albeit three years later. In a Facebook post spotted by the Dallas Morning News, Barbara Roberts said she was one of the members who resigned. She blamed the organization's current board for allowing "biological men" to join, then later referred to the transgender woman as a "man (in a dress)."

The nine resignations won't plunge The Woman's Club of Fort Worth into financial crisis. After counting liabilities, the organization reported \$3.4 million in assets in 2023.

But the decision by the members is a reminder of the ongoing hostility toward transgender people.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, at least 14 transgender and non-binary people who have been murdered so far this year. Of them, 79 percent were people of color; 29 percent were Black transgender women; 64 percent were killed with a gun; 56 percent died due to intimate partner violence, and 36 percent were misgendered or deadnamed by authorities or the press. ■

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# Fun in the Chicago sun

## SUMMER TRAVEL



The Chicago RiverWalk

### Tips for a summer getaway in the Windy City

**BILL MALCOLM** | Contributing Travel Writer  
 BillMalcolm@gmail.com

Chicago is a great city to visit any time of year. But it is even better in the summer: the Lakefront trail, the beaches, bicycling, festivals, and more. And it's one of the most LGBTQ-friendly cities in the world. And the beaches along Lake Michigan are simply incredible.

### WHAT TO DO

Osterman Beach is the LGBTQ beach, and it has an outdoor restaurant. It's a wonderful way to spend the day enjoying the refreshing Lake Michigan waters. (CTA Stop Thornton on the Red Line, then walk east and south to the beach.) Many of Chicago's great beaches feature magnificent views of the stunning downtown skyscrapers.

Sunday Funday at the bars on Hal-

ed Street is a must and the fun starts early. Sidetrack — the mega video bar with a great rooftop terrace — features sing-a-long showtunes on Sundays, and the crowd goes crazy when they see a scene from *Mommie Dearest* or *Evita*. There is something fun going on there every night. Drink prices are reasonable (\$9 for Chandon champagne).

Up the street, dancers — men and women — are featured at Hydrate, and you can dance the afternoon and evening away with a live DJ. You will find them at 3458 N. Halsted. Cell Block has a frisky leather crowd and a great beer selection. Stop for dinner at the Whole Foods Market.

Find a complete list of bars and a map in GRAB Magazine (GRABChicago.com). Most of the bars are in North Halsted neighborhood (formerly known as Boystown, between Addison and Belmont on Halsted), although a few are found in Andersonville north of that area.

I walked with the Frontrunners. They meet at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday at the Totem Pole on the Lakefront Trail at Addison and then have dinner afterwards. Lots of runners and walkers.

Walk the new RiverWalk along the Chicago River downtown. It's new and

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Dr. Allen B. Safir

now offers restaurants and bars as well as architecture boat tours. They even have a new winery, City Winery. There are boat rentals, water taxis, kayaking, and more. It's a new attraction right near the shopping on Michigan Avenue.

Mark your calendar for Chicago Pride with a festival June 22-23 and a parade on June 30 as well as a Pride in the Park celebration in Grant Park on June 30. Also fun is Halsted Market Street days in August, another signature LGBTQ festival which runs for two days on Halsted.

## WHERE TO STAY

I always stay at the Hotel Versey, 644 West Diversey Parkway, at Clark and Broadway, in the very walkable Lakeview neighborhood. Trader Joe's is across the street if you need anything, and Stan's Donuts is next door. You can walk to the bars in North Halstead, and Broadway Avenue is full of quaint local shops and restaurants including a Marianos, an upscale grocery store featuring fresh

Andersonville offers free parking and is walkable to the north side leather bars and shops and restaurants in Andersonville. I avoid the Loop hotels like the plague. There is nothing to do there, and they cater to tourists.

## GETTING THERE

I drove from Indy which is fine until you get near Chicago which features horrendous traffic. Make sure you have an I Pass for the Illinois Tollway and Skyway, which now charges \$7.20 to go eight miles.

O'Hare and Midway both offer flights with CTA subways into town. You can also take Amtrak. The CTA has an excellent bus and elevated transit system. Fares are just \$2.50. Buy a VENTRA transit card to make boarding the bus or subway train hassle-free. The Versey is closest to the Diversey L Line Station on the Brown Line.

ChooseChicago.com is the visitor website. I thank them for their helpful



North Halsted Street

juices, a salad bar, a hot food bar and a wine bar. Hotel Versey guests enjoy free entry to the LA Fitness in the Century Plaza next door which also has a Landmarks Art Theater if you want to catch a film. Parking is just \$30 for three days. Watch out for the \$6 charge for bottled water on your bill, though.

Hotel rates vary by demand, so avoid Cubs weekends and other festivals. Weekday rates tend to be lower. Other hotels in the Lakeview/North Halsted neighborhood including the Willows, Best Western Hawthorn Terrace, City Suites, and the Majestic. Another option is the Heart of Chicago Motel north of

travel ideas.

You will continually be amazed by this friendly Midwestern city of walkable, interesting neighborhoods. Chicago is an under-rated city to visit. The beaches alone are worth a trip in the summer.

Put Chicago on your radar. You won't regret your visit to the true Paris of the Midwest.

*\*Bill Malcolm is North America's only syndicated LGBTQ+ travel columnist. He came in second place for travel writing in the 2023 Florida Press Association Excellence in Journalism awards for his columns on Milan and Chicago run by Embrace Magazine of Ocala.*

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# Activist to author

## BEYOND THE PAGE

Charlotte Taft, a longtime advocate for the women's, reproductive and LGBTQ rights, has published her first novel

MELISSA WHITLER | NBCU Fellow  
Melissa@DallasVoice.com

**R**eproductive rights advocate Charlotte Taft has published the first book of her new trilogy, *Without Permission*. The novel follows the life of Jane Smith beginning in Paris in 1939 when Jane is 25 years old.



Charlotte Taft

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Taft said she was first inspired by the *Madeline* books, written by Belgian author Ludwig Bemelmans in 1939. Despite this being a year before the Nazis invaded Paris, in Bemelman's stories there's no sense of the distress of the time. Taft wanted to write something a little closer to the truth.

Her novel deals with questions of morality, such as "You can't be good in occupied Paris without doing things against the law," Taft explained. So Jane must figure out what she is willing to risk to follow her own sense of morality, as well as sort out her romantic feelings toward other women.

Taft said she first began drafting this story back in 2016. "I was writing in a different mindset because I expected us to have a woman president, for things to get better for abortion care," Taft recalled.

But with the actual results of the 2016 presidential election and the 2022 Supreme Court ruling overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, Taft found herself writing for a very different political climate. "This story goes back to a time when care was

based on the needs of the person pregnant and not politics," Taft said.

Charlotte Taft has an extensive history fighting for women's rights. She was in college before the U.S. Supreme Court issued its landmark ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, and she witnessed the beginning of the second wave of the feminist movement.

"There was so much happening at that time," Taft said. "There was education and big demonstrations. It felt like we were going to solve some of this."

She continued her work for reproductive rights after the 1973 ruling, eventually running an abortion clinic in Dallas. One of the things she emphasized was allowing patients as much time as they needed to come to a decision about their pregnancy.

"We just assume people know how to come to terms with it, but they don't," Taft explained. "The process takes time and is not something we necessarily can do by ourselves."

Her staff developed a lot of tools to identify patients who needed more time to come to peace about a decision, sometimes spending hours with a patient un-

til they came to a decision right for them. Taft wanted her patients to know that whatever they decided about such an important question would be respected, and she wanted them to have confidence in and be at peace with their decision.

"I have spent 50 years trying to find something abortion is the same as," said Taft, "and there is nothing pregnancy is the same as."

Having a child is a unique and complicated experience, with implications for one's physical and mental health. That is why, Taft said, she felt compelled to write a book, because she wanted to describe abortion care that was based on emotional and spiritual needs, not just a medical process.

She felt like fiction would reach a wider audience, while a nonfiction book wouldn't have a chance of reaching anyone not already convinced. Her hope for *Without Permission* is that it will reach those who have had abortions who feel like they have to live in silence and shame. There's the possibility, she hopes, that someone who has not gotten resolution with their own experience can have

healing.

"It has never been about convincing people to get abortions," Taft explained. "It's about allowing people to come to the decision that is right for them."

She feels it is reductionist to say abortion is just a medical procedure, that it is much more complicated and involves emotional and spiritual aspects of well-being. Her work has been to give people the tools to deal with it — not to provide them with the answer but to help them look at their values in a deeper way and decide for themselves.

"If someone can't square what they did with their values, they will put it away and ignore it," said Taft. "A person's wholeness and sense of their own goodness is essential, otherwise they can't make sense of it and feel ashamed."

She wants to flip the concept of morality, focusing on the issues of having a baby without really choosing it. It takes love and courage to make a decision about a pregnancy, no matter what one chooses to do.

Taft also recognizes the parallels be-

ACTVIST, Next Page

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## ACTIVIST , From Previous Page

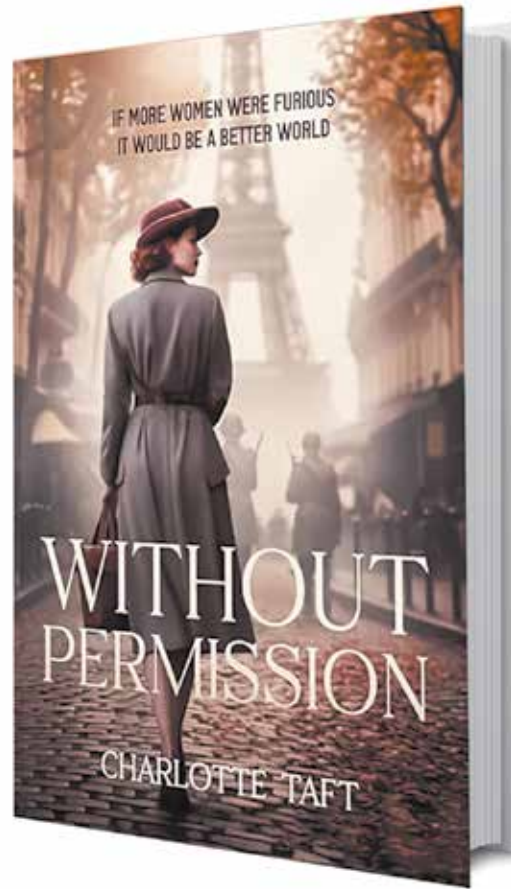
tween the fight for reproductive justice and LGBTQ rights. In 1985, while continuing her activism, she was outed as a lesbian by her opposition. Thankfully, almost everyone in her inner circle was supportive, and it didn't change the work she was doing.

"No one would ever be able to guess the number of lesbians in the abortion movement," Taft said.

For this group, there is a much lower probability of them needing an abortion, yet they recognize that it's not safe to live in a world where women aren't allowed autonomy.

"The silence on abortion is similar to the historical silence and shame of the queer community," explained Taft, as religious and social norms teach there is something wrong with certain ways of living. Because of Taft's identities, she has experienced firsthand how reproductive rights and LGBTQ rights are intertwined.

The fights echo each other and are based on some of the same legal precedents. *Roe v. Wade* was not only the basis



for access to abortion, but a legal basis for the right to privacy, on which court rulings on marriage equality and the overturning of sodomy laws rest.

"The ruling of *Roe v. Wade* was about more than abortion," explained Taft. "It was the country recognizing our wholeness as human beings and respecting us."

Now doctors are scared to intervene in life-threatening pregnancies because trigger laws put them at risk of criminal charges. Those who might want to receive an abortion are in survival mode and rushed, not allowing them the time to process and come to a confident decision.

By sharing stories like Jane's in *Without Permission*, Taft hopes to show readers a different way forward where we accept nothing less than what we deserve. ■

*Without Permission* is currently available as an eBook and will be released in paperback on June 12. For more information on the book as well as reproductive resources go to [BeforeAndAfterAbortion.com](http://BeforeAndAfterAbortion.com).

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# Finding Hope

LGBTQ FAMILIES



Hope Cottage

Hope Cottage focuses on building a village to support adopted and foster children

dren orphaned by the Spanish Flu, the non-profit has over 100 years of experience serving the community.

The agency has become known for facilitating infant adoptions and foster placement. But they take a much more modern approach than what we traditionally think of.

Hope Cottage works with both birth and adoptive families to find the right match for a child. A birth mother chooses the family her child will go to, with the goal of both families working to-

One of the organizations doing important work here in Dallas is Hope Cottage. Originally founded to help chil-



**Melissa Whitler**  
NBCU FELLOW

gether as the child grows. This ensures there will be a village of people to support the child.

While not an

these kids," Bohan said.

In addition to adoptions, Hope Cottage also works to place kids in the foster system in safe, loving homes. With the high percentage of LGBTQ youth entering the foster care system, it is important to have affirming families licensed to care for children. Of course, the goal is usually to reunite the child with their birth family, but many times couples foster to adopt.

Hope Cottage works not only to facilitate fostering but also offers parental support and education.

As the organization continues to expand to meet the needs of the community, Hope Cottage, in collaboration with HHM Health, opened a maternal health clinic earlier this year. CeCe's Place offers maternal health services from the diagnosis of pregnancy to the first post-partum appointment. Patients are able to deliver at a hospital with the doctor they see at the clinic.

In addition, the clinic can also point patients towards other social service resources for food and housing insecurity.

"We don't want to lose more people to pregnancy-related deaths," Bohan said. "Our goal with this clinic is to get people connected earlier and maintain that connection throughout the pregnancy."

Even though the focus is put on mothers, anyone experiencing a pregnancy is welcomed and served at the clinic, no matter their identity.

While Hope Cottage helps the community, it also needs the local community's support. Governmental assistance alone does not allow the organization to adequately help their clients. Supporting families involves more than adjusting fees with a sliding scale, but providing diapers, food, and high-quality medical care.

Anyone who wishes to support its mission with a financial contribution can do so on the website. One can also host a diaper drive or volunteer directly with Hope Cottage and the families it serves. ■

*For LGBTQ+ couples or individuals looking to adopt, foster, or for pregnancy support, there is a place for them at Hope Cottage.*

LGBTQ-only organization, Hope Cottage makes a point to be affirming in all it does. The agency's hiring practices ensure no one will discriminate against members of the community. They have worked with many LGBTQ couples in adopting infants and becoming foster families. And all their parenting services are open and inclusive for everyone, including single parents.

"A loving family is a loving family," said Stephanie Bohan, CEO of Hope Cottage. "All families can create a loving environment for children to be raised."

Over the years, Hope Cottage has grown to be more than just an adoption agency. They meet many familial needs, offering educational programs for parents as well as relationship programs for youth that are specifically LGBTQ-affirming. Everything is all centered on the family, and helping children find safe environments to grow up in. And they've had great success in helping LGBTQ-families.

While it is not legally challenging for LGBTQ couples to adopt, it is all about finding the right match. While this might take some time, it is completely worth it.

Just recently Hope Cottage placed an infant adoption with a queer couple that was a perfect fit. At the annual Christmas party, both the couple's extended family as well as the extended birth family were there to celebrate. Bohan recalled getting to hold the baby and seeing the joy on everyone's faces.

"That's where the joy of our job really comes from, getting to see such beautiful families come together to support

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# Pride perfection

## DRIVE

No Pride parade is complete with a line-up of sexy cars carrying rainbow royalty

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

**P**ride Parades are a celebration of freedom, highlighted by frisky fun, skimpy outfits and sexy cars. Here are five of the sexiest cars that can help make your parade a dream.

### 1976 Cadillac Eldorado

It's difficult to discern whether this Queen Mary is an ocean liner, parade float or just about the biggest, plushest Cadillac ever to ply America's motorways. One thing's for sure: She looks better than a Macy's balloon as she peacocks and rocks down the boulevard with an orgy of boys piled inside.

Its 8.2-liter V8 produces just 218 horsepower, but a self-leveling rear suspension keeps its chrome bumpers from dragging. The Bicentennial Edition — with white paint and dual red-and-blue pinstripes — is especially festive.

Fans partied hard in 1976, because this Eldo was billed as the last American convertible. But alas, the party eventually continued with droptops dropping their tops.

### 2024 GMC Hummer EV Pickup

"Sun's out, guns out" applies to this jumbo-sized, go-anywhere, open-air pickup with the electric brawn to accentuate its physical "beauty." Removable transparent "Sky Panels" toss to the bed for Pride events, and it can tow 12,000 pounds of parade float.

Check its digits: 1,000 horsepower, 381-mile range, 0-60 mph in 3 seconds. Fast charge 100 miles in 12 minutes. Rear-wheel steering allows the big truck

to crabwalk to curbs and turn on tight city streets.

Video game maker Epic Games developed the 13.4-inch center touchscreen and digital gauge cluster. You can even cruise hands-off on the way to the celebration. But you may need to be revived when you spy the \$96,550 base window sticker.

### 1961 Lincoln Continental Convertible

The car most famous for carrying President Kennedy during his last parade has become a style icon perfect for carrying a cadre of cowboys or a pride of princesses though its center-opening doors.

Compared to the high-finned drama queens from Cadillac at the time, the debonair Continental was dressed for a new decade. Sharp fenders and flat decks cut a swath through candy, balloons and crowds of partiers while providing wide expanses on which to be seen.

The twin-cowl dash, wood veneers and supple leather sofas treat passengers like prom royalty. And, if you have to get away in a hurry, the 300-horsepower 7.0-liter V8 and competent handling whisk you on your way.

### 2019 Volkswagen Beetle Final Edition

Volkswagen has long stood for standing outside social norms, and it has been recognized for its open acceptance of the LGBTQ community. And does any car represent Volkswagen better than a Beetle Cabrio? I mean, every parade needs its clown, so might as well take off your top, too.

Exhibiting both pageantry and panache, the Final Edition 2019 Beetle Convertible — wearing blue paint, blue cotton top and beige interior accents — was born parade-ready. All Beetles pave their own path, but this one is especially cool, powered by a 2.0-liter turbo-four engine that delivers 174 horsepower and 26/33 MPG city/highway. She's a keeper.



Top to bottom, Corvettes through the years, 1962 Lincoln Continental Convertible, 1976 Cadillac Fleetwood Eldorado, 2019 Beetle Convertible Final Edition

### Any-year Chevrolet Corvette

Pick a Corvette. Any Corvette from throughout its 71-year history. Whether it's Dallas Pride or the high school homecoming parade in Anytown, U.S.A., there will be Corvettes.

From the moment it debuted at the Waldorf Astoria for 1953 wearing Polo White paint, Sportsman Red interior and powered by its Blue Flame Six engine, it was a marketing dream. It's long, curved ... nose, wide, accentuated ...

fenders and deep, pulsing ... interior are super sexy, whether it's a 1963 Stingray or 2024 E-Ray hybrid.

Cheerleaders, no matter their orientation, ride high when the top is stowed, and their cheeks are planted on the rear deck as they wave at crowds and toss candy to the wind.

And after the festivities, this red-blooded American supercar will be ready to get busy.

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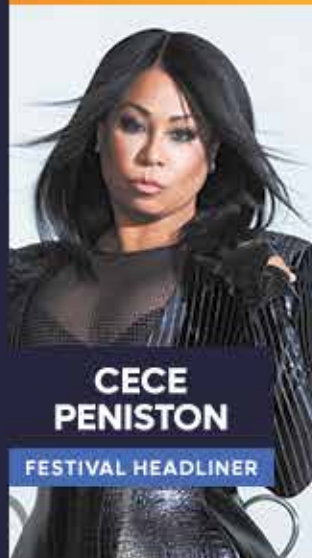
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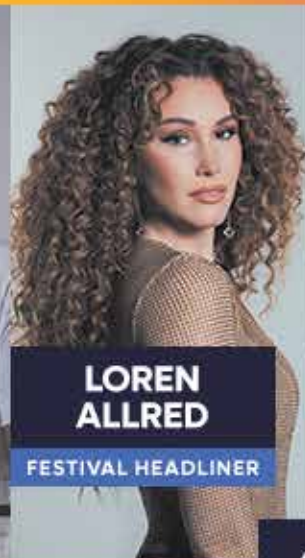
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## DRIVE

The 2025 Toyota 4Runner and the classically included Fiat 500E EV are all new this year

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

**E**ach of us have our type. For some, it's the outdoor scout who breathes gasoline and enjoys a good hike. Others prefer the cultured fashionista who prefers trendy lattes and walks in parks. Automotively, you should find companionship in either the redesigned 2025 Toyota 4Runner SUV or the all-electric Fiat 500e city car.

### Classic fashion

**4Runner:** Wears its wrap-over quarter glass and wind-down rear window like ancestors from the MTV generation. But they still play well today. Fiat: A cute face with round lamps, bubble rump and simple digitized interior honor Rome. It's classic style with a modern fit.

### Comparing (screen) size

**4Runner:** It's packing an 8-inch or extended length 14-inch multimedia touchscreen and 12.3-inch digital gauge cluster. It supports wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto plus wireless device charging. **500e:** Feeling inadequate with its 10.25-inch center screen and 7-inch digital cluster, the



2025 Toyota 4Runner

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2025 Toyota 4Runner Limited Interior

500e displays its wares in a dashboard that pays homage to the 1950s.

### Flexing power

**4Runner:** Bi-curious? Choose between a 2.4-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine making 278 horsepower or a hybrid employing a 2.4-liter engine, electric motor and battery pack for 326 horsepower. **Fiat:** OMG, you are such a

Mary. This bitch is all electric, so charge at home, at work or some purgatory between and enjoy 117 horsepower and quick 8.5-second sprints to 60 mph.

### Fully trimmed

**4Runner:** Wannabe overlanders choose Trailhunter trim with special shocks, tires, roof rack, high-mount air



Fiat 500e

**BUTCH,** Page 69



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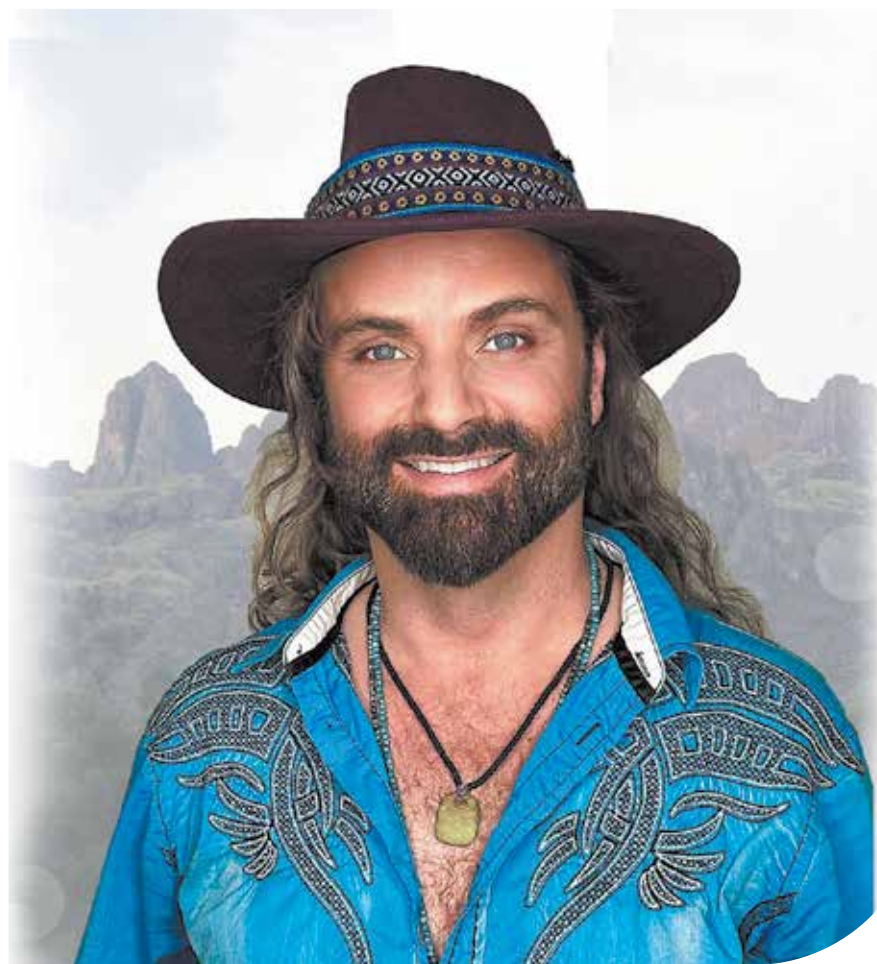
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# A different path

SPIRITUALITY



Darrin Davis

Darrin Davis grew up in the Mormon church, but now he carves his own path and helps others do the same

**CAROLINE SAVOIE** | Contributing Writer  
CaroSavoWrites@gmail.com

**M**ulticolored cushions, candles, statues and figurines are strewn about the floor of the living room where Darrin Davis sits criss-crossed on a pillow in the middle of the floor in his plaid shirt, jeans and bedazzled belt. The smell of incense and sound of tranquil ceremonial music fills the air as seven people sit on cushions and couches, ready to

begin Medicine Monday, Davis' weekly offering.

Davis, a Dallas gay man, might not have stuck to his Mormon roots, but that doesn't make him any less spiritual. And, he said, he thrives on sharing his spirituality with others.

Davis, who shares shamanic Peruvian tours and plant medicines with Dallas residents, said he grew up in a strict Mormon family and struggled with embracing his sexuality. This led him on a spiritual quest to find meaning and connection, which ultimately brought him to Peru and the world of plant medicine and shamanism.

He said his journey of becoming more open and unapologetic about his multifaceted identity, including his spiritual work and role as a leader in the LGBTQ community, has opened him up.

"I've always known I would be a leader; I just thought it would be through the church," Davis said. "Now, I see



Darrin Davis with a recent group he took to Peru

that I've always been meant to inspire and guide others on their own paths of self-discovery and empowerment."

### Medicine Mondays

"Medicine Mondays" is a community gathering focused on spiritual practices, meditation and integration of transformative experiences. It is intended to provide "a safe space for LGBTQ+ individuals to explore their spirituality and support one another," Davis explained.

The night starts with a rapé ceremony in which Davis blows a tobacco powder into participants' noses. Attendees first connect with the plant, setting an intention for their meditation. Then, they sit with the plant for 10 minutes in meditation before blowing the tobacco out.

Next, Davis facilitates a "check-in," in which attendees can share their experiences with plant medicine and demonstrate vulnerability. On May 20, one father shared how his experience with plant medicine allowed him to get closer to his son and helped him stop abusing alcohol. Another attendee said he's experienced "healing and relief through plant medicine."

"Having a community and a place to share has been life changing," the man said. "I've rarely missed a Medicine Monday in years."

One man, who's been on two Peru tours with Davis, said he's attended

Medicine Mondays for five years, and he likened the experience to group therapy. He said it is a wonderful place to start the journey of self-discovery.

The next portion of the evening consists of singing medicine songs, tunes that are sung during plant ceremonies. The sound of music, instrumentation and voices of attendees fills the room. Some, who know the songs better than others, sing with their eyes closed. Newbies sing lyrics from a piece of paper Davis hands out.

Then, Davis speaks about a topic that's piqued his curiosity that week. On May 20, he spoke about engaging in a curious approach to self discovery.

"It's important not to conform to what anyone expects of us, even ourselves" he said. "We must look within and find our own song to sing. We're always in the process of becoming, so there's no need to put ourselves in boxes."

He described growing up in his Mormon community as a gay boy, knowing that his family would not accept him if he were to show them his true self. He said he counted down the days until he could leave home and begin his self-expression journey.

In the last year, he said, he "cleared the energy" with several of his family members, showing them his authentic self and explaining why he was so ready to leave home. Even if the conversation

PATH, Next Page

# Happy Pride!

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**PATH**, From Previous Page



Darrin Davis and friends at Machu Picchu

wasn't received as well as he'd hoped, he said it was important to express himself in a genuine and vulnerable way. And he encourages other LGBTQ folk to do the same.

vis answered questions about his favorite offering, leading tours in Peru.

### Quest Peru

The night ended with a movement meditation and snacks while attendees talked and shared their experiences. Da-

Davis described his extensive experience leading immersive retreats in Peru, including a stint at Machu Picchu where



Wachuma!

participants engage in a variety of plant ceremonies, like ayahuasca and practices to promote healing and personal growth.

Davis has been to Peru 30 times. He said he first started taking friends and family there before leading more formal retreats with up to 14 participants. His next offering is in July 2024.

"I call it a 'buffet of shamans,'" he said. "I found the best shamans I've experienced and put them all in an 11-day trip to get a well-rounded experience. It's truly transformational."

He emphasized the importance of integration and community support in his work, which is where Medicine Mondays come into play.

"I feel like in the States, we aspire to sedate through alcohol or pills," Davis said. "We have this need to push down bad feelings, but it's really life-changing when we can turn our minds on, integrate our pain and share it with other people without the desire to numb out. That's when we gain clarity and make better decisions."

He said his offerings are especially apt for the LGBTQ community.

"A lot of us have experienced negative self-talk and negative talk from the world," he said. "We need places that are safe and can build us up."

Josie Salas, a transgender woman who went to Peru with Davis in 2022, said the trip was transformational.

"I had made peace with who and what

I am, but it was in ceremony that any confusion about what that would look like in my life was cleared up," she said. "I am grateful to Darrin for making it easy to visit so much in a short period of time and with the timing of those things as well."

Tiffany Fitzgerald, another transgender woman who went to Peru with Davis in 2023, said Peru changed her life in several ways.

"It grounded me deep within myself allowing me to sit with the good, bad and all in between, which wasn't easy," she said. "It allowed me to strengthen my bond with my new-found friends as well."

"Darrin holds space allowing for a community of openness, closeness and over all oneness, which is understanding, being seen and heard! This is very important especially for one like myself."

She said being a trans woman comes with judgment and hardships, but Davis' influence on her community allows her light to shine through acceptance from others.

Davis said his goal is to bring an all-queer group of participants to Peru. "The healing that can happen there is out of this world," he said. "And if I can help my LGBTQ brothers and sisters on their journeys, I know I will have fulfilled my purpose." ■

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# Activist in exile

## HUMAN RIGHTS

Steven Kabuye had to flee his home in Uganda after being stabbed because he is gay. Rainbow Railroad helped him escape and is helping him continue his activism

**CAROLINE SAVOIE** | Contributing Writer  
CaroSavo@gmail.com

**A**fter 26-year-old gay Ugandan activist Steven Kabuye was stabbed on Jan. 3, this year, he made the difficult decision to flee his home country in Africa and move to Vancouver, Canada, with the help of Rainbow Railroad, an organization that helps LGBTQ people who face violence find safety.

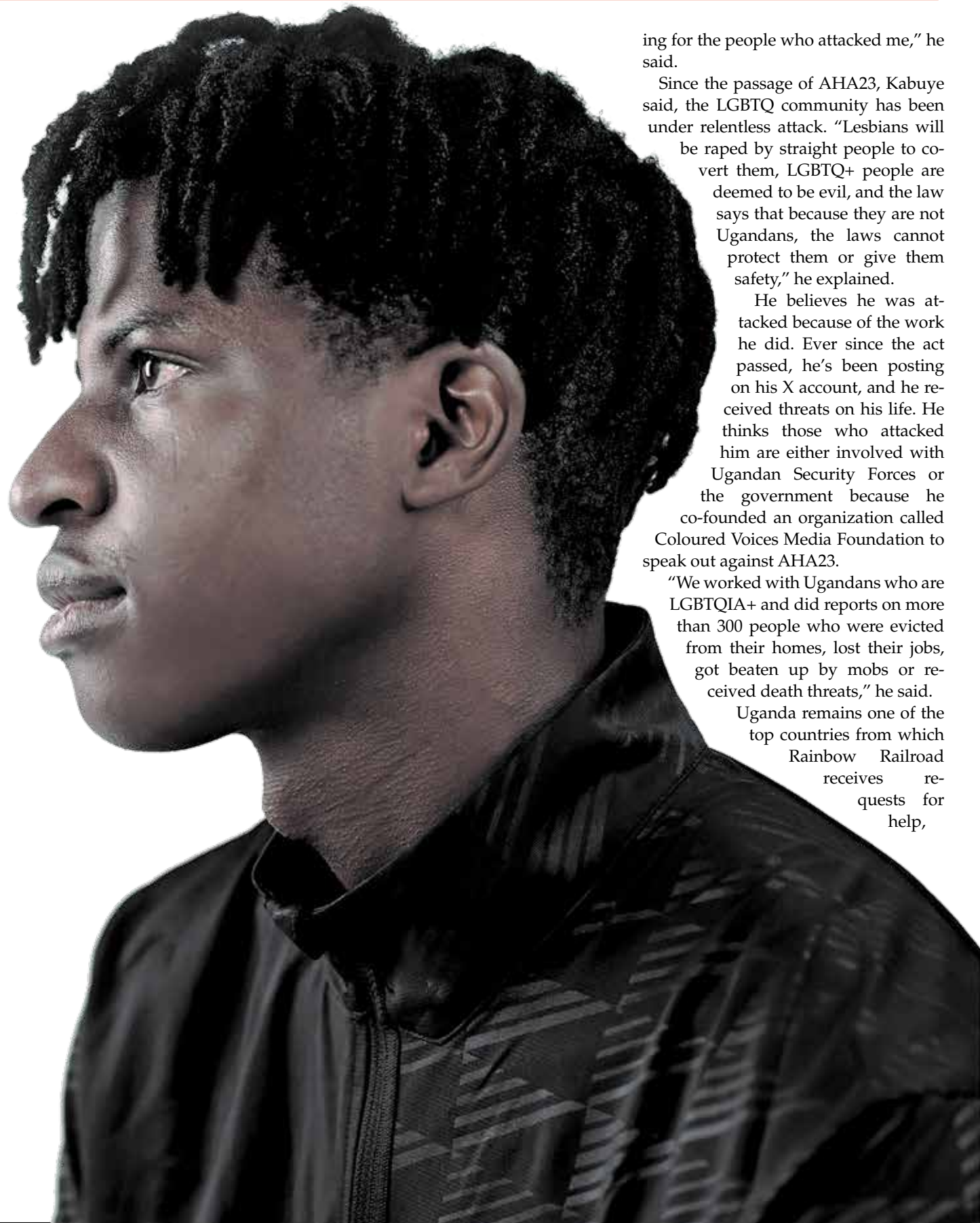
Kabuye said on Jan. 3, he was attacked by two helmeted men riding on motorcycles who yelled homophobic slurs at him. The two men stabbed him in the neck and stomach before he was able to escape and get help from a friend who got him to a hospital. He was hospitalized for three days.

"The people at the hospital were worried I would get arrested, so they helped me find safety," he said.

"Kabuye's story underscores the deadly reality LGBTQI Ugandans face since President Museveni signed the Anti-Homosexuality Act into law nearly one year ago," said Timothy Chan, director of communication for Rainbow Railroad.

Kabuye said AHA23 stops LGBTQ people from being employed and can result in lifelong imprisonment for those found in homosexual acts, including LGBTQ minors. So when Kabuye was in the hospital, he was worried he would be arrested and thrown in jail, even though he knows that the two people who attacked him will not be brought to justice.

"Ugandan Security Forces want to arrest and imprison me instead of look-



ing for the people who attacked me," he said.

Since the passage of AHA23, Kabuye said, the LGBTQ community has been under relentless attack. "Lesbians will be raped by straight people to covert them, LGBTQ+ people are deemed to be evil, and the law says that because they are not Ugandans, the laws cannot protect them or give them safety," he explained.

He believes he was attacked because of the work he did. Ever since the act passed, he's been posting on his X account, and he received threats on his life. He thinks those who attacked him are either involved with Ugandan Security Forces or the government because he co-founded an organization called Coloured Voices Media Foundation to speak out against AHA23.

"We worked with Ugandans who are LGBTQIA+ and did reports on more than 300 people who were evicted from their homes, lost their jobs, got beaten up by mobs or received death threats," he said.

Uganda remains one of the top countries from which Rainbow Railroad receives requests for help,





with a 49 percent increase in requests for assistance in the first two months of 2024 compared to the same period last year, according to Chan.

"We continue to receive disturbing reports of persecution that include torture, suicide, loss of employment, violent arrests and evictions of LGBTQI+ people," he said.

Kabuye said that after having to leave his mom and his siblings in Uganda without saying goodbye, he's starting fresh in Vancouver. "All I had when I left was my passport and a few clothes," he said.

After he escaped Uganda and spent two months being treated at a hospital in Nairobi, Rainbow Railroad got Kabuye to Toronto on March 6. From there, he flew to Vancouver, where he lives now.

"I fear for the lives of the people I left behind," he said. "I have colleagues who have come to me for protection, and I want to stay in a position where I can help my brothers and sisters around the globe, but majorly in Uganda. I hope they receive liberty."

Kabuye said he is continuing his work for the Coloured Voices Media Foundation remotely, explaining that people can support the cause by going to his X account, @stevenkabuye5, and finding the linktree in his bio.

He also said Americans can help by supporting grassroots organizations like Rainbow Railroad, holding politicians accountable for their role in oppressing LGBTQ people, supporting activists and standing up against organizations who work against the rights of LGBTQ people across the globe, like Family Watch International.

"This organization goes against all human rights under the guise of promoting family values," Kabuye warned.

He said he is healing, and he's made friends who help him stay strong.

"It will be difficult, but I'm the kind of person who takes everything one at a time," Kabuye said. "Vancouver is a nice place with diversity and inclusivity, with cultures from around the globe. I can be on the street without worrying that someone will attack me for who I am and the work I do." ■

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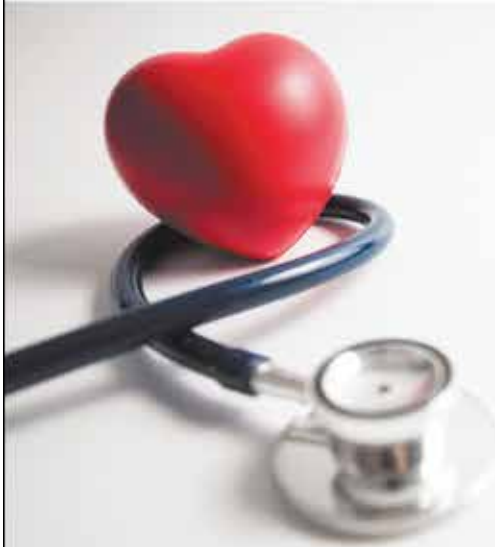
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# Road to freedom

## HUMAN RIGHTS



Rainbow Railroad helps LGBTQ refugees escape dangerous countries and resettle in safe places, now including the U.S.

MELISSA WHITLER | NBCU Fellow  
 Melissa@DallasVoice.com

This past November, Rainbow Railroad, partnering with Welcome Corps, placed its first queer-identified refugee in the United States. Founded in 2006, Rainbow Railroad started as a volunteer run organization to address the violence and criminalization LGBTQ people face all over the world. The organization started with resettlements in Canada and has since expanded to place people in more than 20 dif-

ferent countries.

In order to connect with individuals located in other countries, Rainbow Railroad works with local governments, grassroot networks and resettlement organizations. Most of the refugees they place are relocated alone, so Rainbow Railroad works to create for them an environment of support in their new communities.

Moving to a new country is incredibly daunting, especially if you don't know anyone. Rainbow Railroad works to help with reintegration as well resettlement, which has spurred its partnership with the US Welcome Corps Program.

Welcome Corps was launched by the federal government in 2023 as a way for Americans to support refugees relocating into their communities. This new program works with private sponsorships and calls on individuals in the community to play a greater role in sup-

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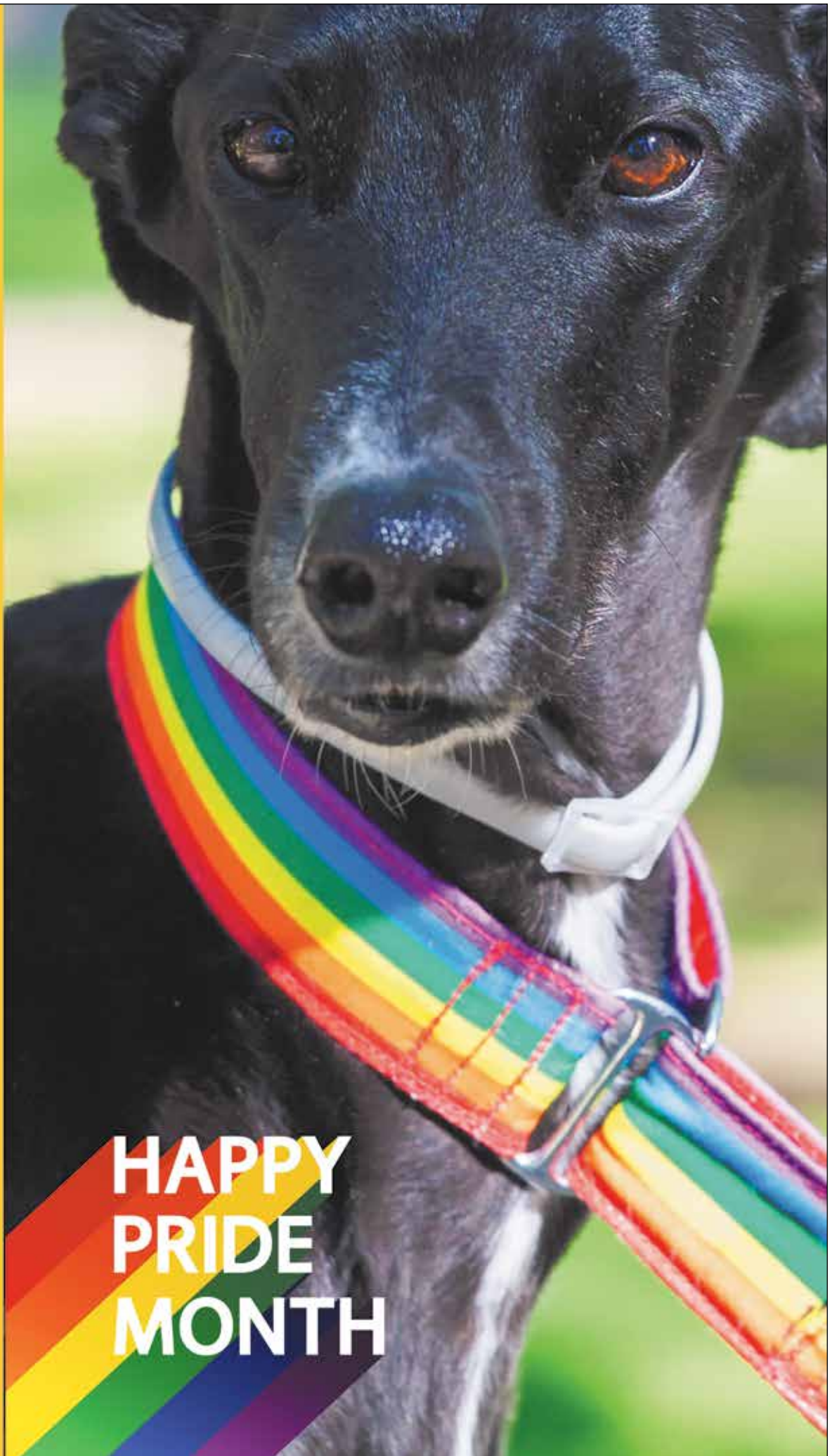
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\*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



**FREEDOM**, From Page 66



porting refugees.

With many members of the international LGBTQ community seeking to flee to the U.S., Rainbow Railroad wanted to ensure they weren't left behind in government policies. The beauty of the Welcome Corps program is that folks don't have to worry about the challenges of seeking asylum. And in addition to finding safety, these refugees are also offered post-relocation support.

For those who are looking for assistance from Rainbow Railroad, the process begins with the online intake form. This allows the organization to learn more about the individual's circumstance and start referring them to resources in their home country.

Rainbow Railroad assesses what is the best course of action in each particular case, as travel can be limited by access to passports and visas.

What country one is trying to leave is also taken into consideration. Sometimes someone can be internally relocated and doesn't have to move to a new country. Otherwise, refugees are relocated primarily to Europe and

North America.

The first LGBTQ refugee placed by Welcome Corps arrived in D.C. back on Nov. 16. The community there has been very supportive, and the newcomer is flourishing. Latoya Nugent, head of engagement at Rainbow Railroad, remarks how this is a testament to what the LGBTQ community can do when we stand in solidarity.

"The community of care has been really remarkable," Nugent commented. "People have rallied around folks, and it has been transformative for the volunteers."

Nugent explained that almost every time there is a geopolitical crisis, Rainbow Railroad sees an increase in requests.

"Queer people are disproportionately affected and displaced," she said. "For example, when the Ugandan government passed the anti-homosexuality bill, we saw a spike in requests."

Rainbow Railroad wants to ensure governments and international aid organizations don't forget LGBTQ people and their needs.

For those looking to get involved and support, the most critical need is time and money. It takes a minimum of five people each dedicating a couple hours a week to sponsor one refugee. Nugent described the transformative impact this has.

"For the first time in our history we are able to rally the LGBTQ community outside of fundraising," Nugent said.

For the people fleeing their home countries, an LGBTQ community is one of the biggest things they are looking for. This kind of program ensures there is already a group of people waiting to support the refugees before they even arrive. The more people who show interest in the Welcome Corps program means that more refugees can be brought to the U.S. and live out and proud.

"We are committed to global queer liberation," Nugent concluded. "Our goal is to co-create a world where LGBTQ people can live, work and play with pride."

For more information visit [RainbowRailroad.org](http://RainbowRailroad.org) or email [community@rainbowrailroad.org](mailto:community@rainbowrailroad.org).



intake and LED light bar. If that's not butch enough, get this thicc boy in TRD trim to run deserts and mountain trails. **500e**: There's nothing sexier than social responsibility, so check out the debut RED trim that's curated to commemorate World AIDS Day. It was joined by U2's Bono for its December debut.

### Charge time

**4Runner**. \*Burp\* Scratches hitch nuts on trail brush. Headlamps flicker, then go dark.

**Fiat**: Bruh, I take an 80 percent fast charge in 35 minutes or full-up in six hours on a home charger. I'm good for a quick 5-minute nap for another 31 miles.

### Night out

**4Runner**: Clips on its snorkel and claws through streams and fields for a moonlit stomp. It'll take a date downtown for sushi, but it's much happier sitting streamside watching poles flex. **Fiat**: Slips on its short shorts and man bag for a quick whoosh to the martini bar. It enjoys a fireside chat ala vodka but is happiest clicking its adorable ass through tight city streets for dinner.

### Happy trails

**4Runner**: Its stabilizer bar disconnects to maximize suspension articulation at the push of a button. No matter the terrain, this boy scout keeps tires in contact with the trail. **500e**: The Acoustic Vehicle Alert System "sings" to pedestrians with a song titled "The Sound of 500," authored by Flavio Ibba-Marco Gualdi, to warn of the little twink's impending arrival.

### Drive modes

**4Runner**: Multi-Terrain Select offers adjustable settings to control wheel spin on terrain as varied as mud, dirt and sand. Down on all fours, CRAWL Control behaves like off-road cruise control so drivers can focus their course of action. **500e**: Sallies forth with city-friendly one-pedal driving and regenerative braking to maximize range. Sherpa mode limits top speed to 50 mph, stretching runways between charging stations.



2024 Fiat 500e interior

### Sunday driving


**4Runner**: You may sneak away on hybrid power, but once the gas engine fires up, you're had. All the spouses will swoon. **Fiat**: With 149 miles all-electric range, you can sneak off to gay brunch without attracting judgement from the old ladies. They may not approve of your choices, but when they finish singing, you'll be gone.

### Boy rent

**4Runner**: If you want a trick who can deliver a weekend in the wild, expect to pay at least \$43,000. To get one who can also ford streams with a snorkel or run deserts like Army Rangers, pay closer to \$60,000. **Fiat**: A life of fun starts at \$32,500, but getting the boy dressed for the club will cost more. He's a pricey trick without much stamina, but look at that cute little body.

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# Butter and honey

## BEHIND THE CURTAIN

All the signs pointed Sheridan Monroe's return to the stage at Theatre Arlington

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

**A** helping of *Chicken and Biscuits* is about to be added to the menu at Theatre Arlington. The Douglas Lyons play centers on a family, with its own ties to Pride Month, at a funeral. Amid the family drama is Kenny, attending his pastor grandfather's funeral with his boyfriend, the one white person among the Black family congregation.

Actor Sheridan Monroe plays Kenny, and Monroe discovered he has a lot in common with Kenny.

### Chicken and Biscuits

June 6-23

TheatreArlington.org.

Presented by: Theatre Arlington

Written by: Douglas Lyons

Directed by: Sheran Goodspeed Keyton

Cast (in alphabetical order):

- GeCamri Amberay
- Ken'ja L. Brown
- Tyrone King
- Denise Lee
- Karl Martin
- Sheridan Monroe
- Shaundra Norwood
- Tayla Underwood

"On the surface, I am sort of like him. When you see the show, Kenny is kind of everyone's favorite person, and, not to sound arrogant, I feel a bit like that among some people," Monroe said.

And like Kenny, Monroe has a partner — a husband, to be concise.

But that's where the similarities stop. "Kenny does have a lot to deal with on the inside, and that whole gay issue is something the family isn't quite on board with. And then he brings his boyfriend, Logan," Monroe said. "I, fortunately, didn't have that with my family."



Photos by Gloria Adame

His mother knew all about Monroe's other half, and, in his words, it was pretty cool that it worked out.

*Chicken and Biscuits* runs June 6-23. The show has just moved into the stage space for the final tech week, and Monroe is getting the feel for the room to help continue shaping his character.

His casting in the show is a bit serendipitous. The 30-year-old hasn't been onstage since 2021. Health issues, surgery and recovery kept him away — which must have been hard.

Theater runs deep with this one: He explained that when his mother was pregnant with him, her water broke while she was performing onstage.

As for himself, "I've been doing theater since I was two with my mom's gospel group," Monroe said. "I felt lost without being onstage, but I had to step away from it. So to be cast in this is kind of like coming back home. And it feels good. That's all I know."

That being said, he initially missed



the auditions for *Chicken and Biscuits*. Because of that, another actor was set to play Kenny.

Then Fate stepped in.

"I wasn't the original actor, but then he bailed out just as rehearsals were about to begin. When I finally auditioned, the actual rehearsals were starting in an hour, and they told me to fill in," he said. "I was hesitant, but I decided to stick around."

Monroe was then cast as Kenny.

"There's so much craziness about all this, but it felt like this role was meant for me to do it," he said.

Monroe also feels at home with these characters, many of whom parallel some of his own family.

"I definitely have these aunts and cousins in my family, and that's what I love about this show. You don't feel like it's a bunch of Black actors being characters. They are real and the audience will likely relate to or identify a character in the show that they know in real life," he said.

"Really, this show is about family, and I hope people come with an open heart and mind and ready to receive this lovely story."

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

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# Find yourself in dance

## COMMUNITY

DMC offers queer people a place to dance outside of the bar scene

**CAROLINE SAVOIE** | Contributing Writer  
CaroSavo@gmail.com

**I**n an old church with a new purpose, a group of self-proclaimed “weirdos” gather on Sundays to worship and engage in ceremonies, outside of religion. They gather to celebrate life’s highs and lows, the dark and the light, through dance.

The Dallas Movement Collective gathers to embody all that is seen and unseen.

Some dancers in the LGBTQ community have found that through somatic embodiment practices, growing the connection between the body and the mind, they’ve been able to get in touch with their queerness in new ways. Peyton Baker, a 30-year-old artist and feminine embodiment coach, said that through dancing with the collective since 2016, she’s found a new ability to take up space as a queer woman.

“Besides finding my first real girlfriend there, the dance offers a space of acceptance and non-judgement,” Baker said. “At dance, I’m allowed to take up space and express my queerness through dancing with other women.”

Stephanie St. John, a queer 48-year-old



yoga, energy and somatic worker, said she’d been dancing for years before she found the movement collective. When she found DMC, she felt like she “found her people.” She’s been with the group for nine years.

In New York and Boston, dances are popular spaces for queer people to meet up and express themselves, especially around Pride events, St. John said.

“A lot of queer kids are dance kids,” she said. “Spaces that are open to sensuality, that allow you to dress and present yourself however you want, draw our

kind in — and for good reason.”

The self-proclaimed “punk rock queer” said she can dress really feminine or “shave [her] head and wear [her] flannel and rock [her] chains” at dance.

“Every version of life is represented at dance,” St. John said. “It’s a beautiful thing.”

Baker said that at first, she was hesitant to “come out” to people in the collective because she specializes in women’s embodiment, and she didn’t want people to think that just because she was attracted to women that she was hitting

on the women she works or dances with.

“Now I realize how silly that is and how little people care who I’m attracted to,” Baker said. “It’s freeing to be openly queer and provide a space for other women, especially queer women, in my work and through dance.”

Darrin Davis, a 54-year-old gay artist and performer, said he felt the same way Baker did when he started dancing with the collective. He was protective of his sexuality because he thought keeping his gayness a secret would protect others.

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"I wanted to share a dance with other men without them thinking I was being creepy," he said. "Now that I'm being authentically myself, people see me more than they did before. Now I share dances with straight people, and we find a dance through our shared masculinity."

SolAmor Heumada Ildefonso, a 43-year-old who identifies as two-spirited, gay/bisexual and polymonogamous, said she faced similar hesitance in discussing her sexuality with people in the DMC community. "Before finding community, I faced ridicule and judgment, and I was hesitant to come out because of fear of rejection," she said. "But when I heard people talking about being poly[amorous], it made me feel safer, like I wasn't the only one."

She said she casually found herself making comments about gayness in conversation, and "I felt that in those conversations, I was able to discuss my worldview, the way I love, in a space of non-judgment."

Davis said although many people in the collective are LGBTQ, he yearns to see more gay men in the space. He said DMC offers gay people a space to explore acceptance in an environment shared with straight folks.

"It gives people a chance to dance in a space that might be more neutral than super gay, a space outside of Cedar Springs," he said, referring to Dallas' gayborhood.

He said that the movement collective's

agreements for the space — to be sober, non-verbal, barefoot, vulnerable and without cell phones — offers LGBTQ people an avenue to the ecstatic outside of the clubs and bars.

"The club scene and party circuit are so ingrained in the gay community, but getting to explore dance without having to have a couple drinks in you first helps you heal and grow in a different way," Davis said. "Most of our lives are lived in a sober space, so connecting with people without the extras is important."

"Over time, people you meet give you different connections than you get out in a club."

St. John said presenting a sober space to the LGBTQ community is asking people to move in a way they're not used to.

"There's a learning curve there, and it can be uncomfortable at first. But I think our people are ready for it," she said. "Be open to reprogramming, to learn what goes on in your tissues, what needs to be birthed, and give it some space."

Kelly Harrod is a 32-year-old non-profit operations manager who identifies as bi/pansexual. She found the DMC two years ago, and it's been "a pivotal part" of her healing and sobriety journey. She said she learned about the DMC from someone in her Alcoholics Anonymous group.

"At first I just showed up to dance with no want or need for the community aspect," she said. "But over time I have come to see dance as not only a move-

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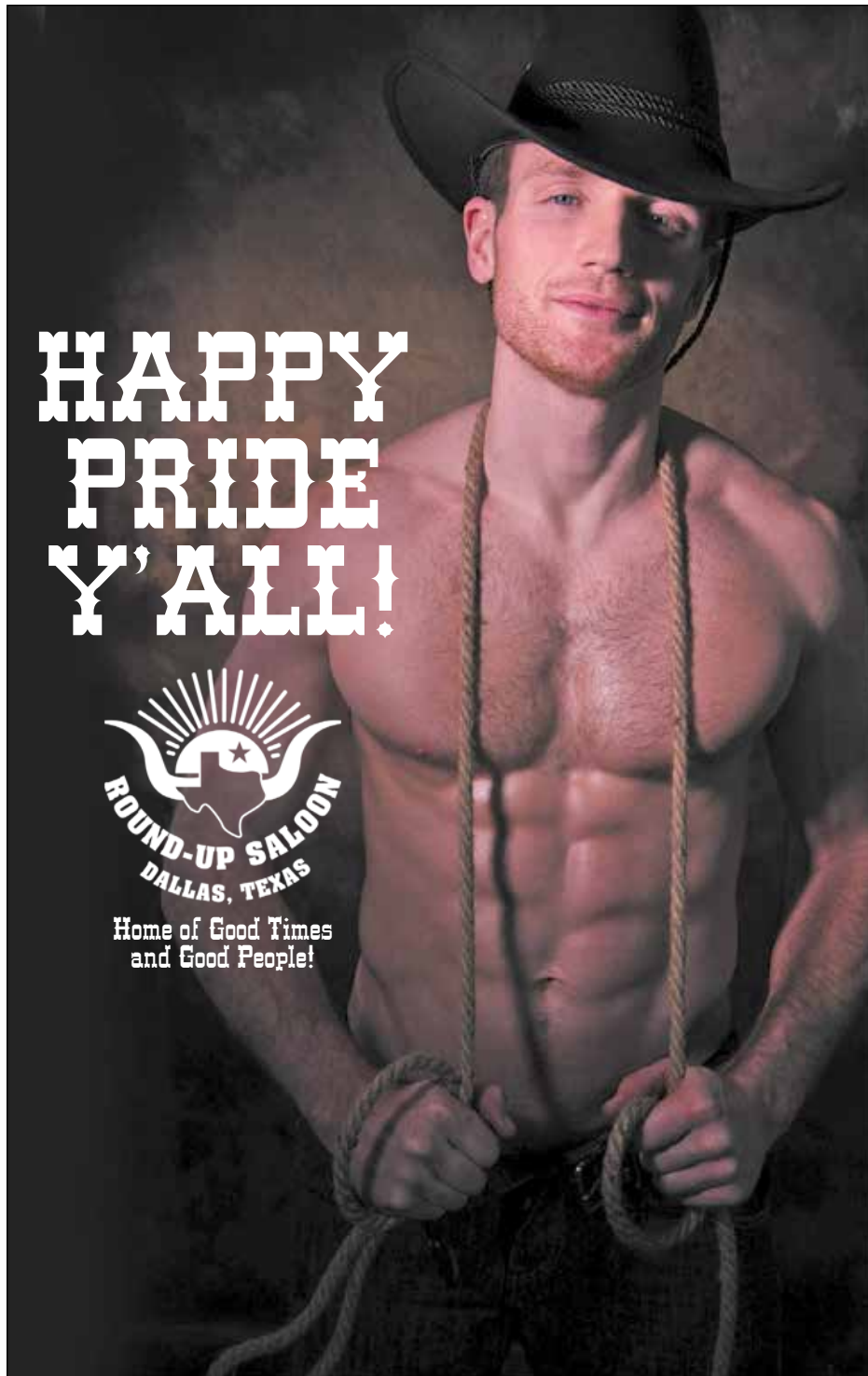
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**DANCE**, From Page 74

ment practice but a spiritual and community practice just like going to church was as a child."

Baker said she danced in clubs professionally before she found the movement collective, and it has helped her explore sobriety and sexuality in a safe, embodied way. "I got to find my own dance instead of dancing for others, especially men," she said. "Instead of dancing for someone else's pleasure, I was dancing for my own pleasure."

Both Davis and Baker said meeting queer people and allies through DMC has given them some of their most fruitful friendships.

"At dance, I don't have to wear a mask," Baker said. "And that has helped me make the most authentic friendships I have. People there are just as weird as me, and they see me as a human first and foremost. Labels are thrown out the window when you're in a non-verbal space. Any space that supports dudes wearing skirts and women dancing sensually is a space that supports queer expression."

Ildefonso said that at dance, labels aren't the most important thing about her, and she doesn't feel like she has to exist within the confines of a label. "It's an open and free space welcome to all, a space where I could just be me and shed all the labels," she said. "At dance, it's just 'come as you are, all of you is welcome here.'"

Baker said there's no threat of being harassed at dance, both because the space is non-verbal and because leadership will remove anyone who doesn't respect dancers and consent.

"The agreements around consent allow us to honor our 'yes' and our 'no,'" Baker said. "If you don't want to dance with someone who wants to dance with you, it's totally okay to stay in your own dance and explore there."

St. John said she learns more about herself through every dance, through listening to her body's inherent wisdom. "When the space is non-verbal, all you can do is listen and feel, and that's valuable."

Victoria Aris, a bisexual 35-year-old personal spirituality coach who identifies as genderfluid, said she's been doing ecstatic dance since she was a teenager. Now, almost a year into her journey with DMC, she said it has heavily impacted her life.

"Dance laid a foundation for me to get in touch with my own inner world, to learn how to express myself and feel free in the moment," she said.

When Aris was growing up, she said, she heard about different queer experiences and was interested in exploring. She took the foundation dance gave her and built upon her identity.

"The movement collective found me at just the right time," she said. "It gave me a period of release. It allows me to tap into moving in a way that feels right to me outside of gender norms and compulsory heterosexuality."

Sarah Sampson, executive director of DMC, said she's personally been someone people "come out" to, which she considers an honor and source of joy.

"There have definitely been people who come out through their journey with ecstatic dance," she said. "This space is a place where they can begin to experiment with dressing how they want to dress, using the pronouns and names they want to use. We're an incubator where people can try on embodying truer parts of themselves before bringing that out into the larger world."

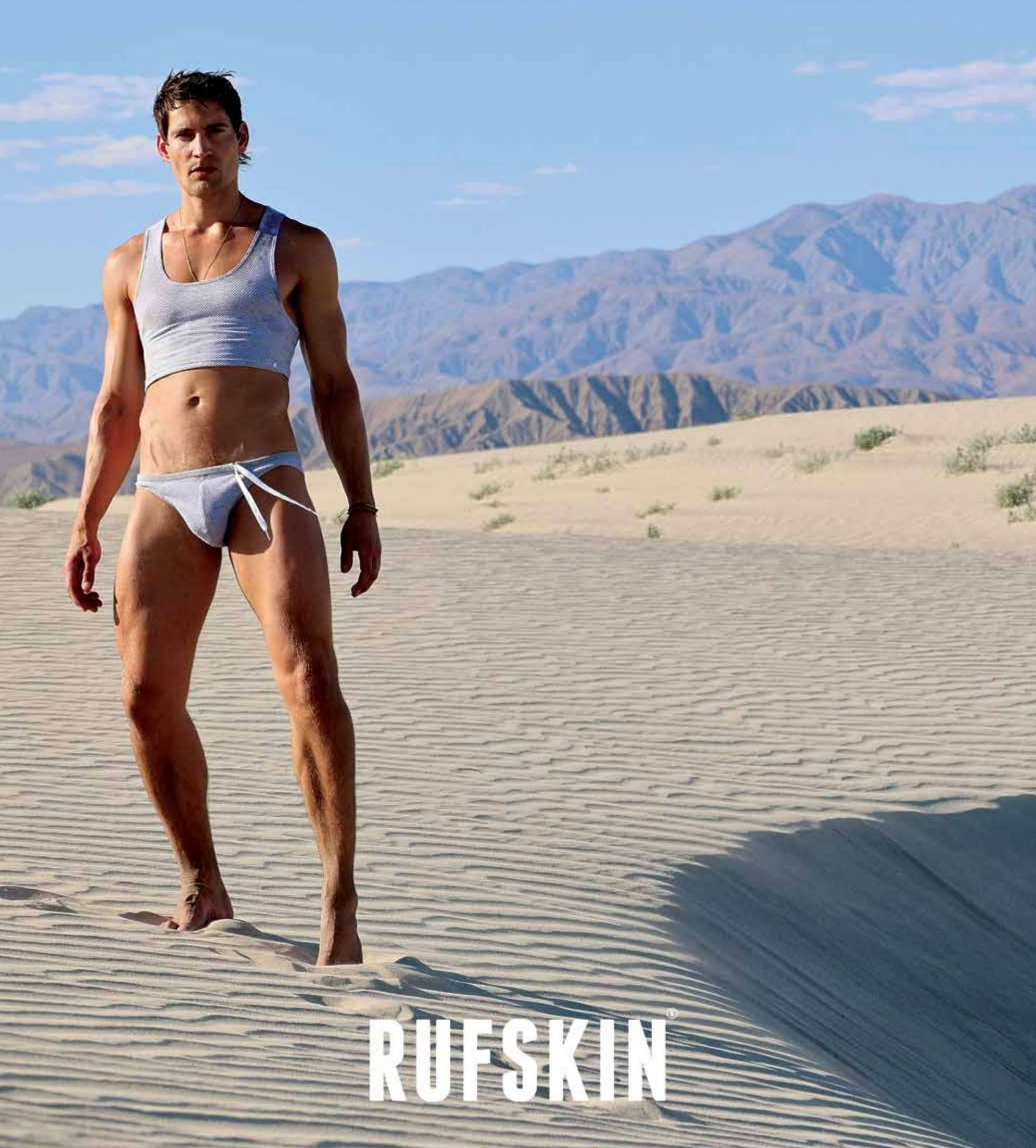
Baker, Harrod and Davis said they feel like their voices are heard, included and celebrated in the DMC. St. John, who leads the movement collective's BIPOC dance, said she felt like in the past, her voice may have fallen on deaf ears, but now she feels comfortable to speak up, like her input will be valued.

"If you fell out of dance for one reason or another, I always suggest trying it again," she said. "I really love the direction the collective is moving in."

Aris said she feels trusting of not only the people at dance, but of Sampson and her leadership style: "I know if I ever need to talk to anyone about something I experience, Sarah will lend her support."

Sampson, who considers herself an ally, said overall, the DMC is designed, curated and cultivated so people can drop what's different and hone into the common spaces of body and breath.

"The deeper layers of the dance also get into the idea that we all share the land and the planet," she said. "No matter who we love, how we love, where we come from, where we're going, there's a deep common humanity that binds us together."



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## DANCE

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She said while common ground is valued, the other side of that coin is individuality.

"The space is also there to give people the ability to express their uniqueness, to practice and unleash the expressions in the body and in the voice that in the past may have been criticized, judged or met with cruelty and violence," she said. "I think the space gives people of all genders the opportunity to express how they feel on the inside."

Sampson was 13 when she lost her transgender aunt to suicide, and it had a huge impact on her. She wants queer youth to feel like there's a safe space for them, especially in Texas.

"It's fucking life or death in some of these situations for queer people in the South who feel unsafe," she said.

Harrod said her family growing up was very homophobic, and her parents wouldn't let her or her siblings "do or see anything that may be perceived as gay," Harrod said. But DMC and ecstatic dance practices have helped her be more open in her queer expression, experiment with her fashion and be open to shaving her head.

Aris said her gender expression moves and flows like the dance. "I can flip through the stages of my expression and move through the kaleidoscope of everything I am all in one cohesive experience — dance!" Aris said.

Harrod said that many queer people have unhealthy relationships with their bodies, and dance can help "sort that out."

St. John said that she's seen dance help people release shame in their bodies, and that has a cascading effect that helps release shame about other things, like sexuality and sensuality.

"It's a space of intersectionality where you learn that it's safe to play," she said. "Invite yourself there, and mine whatever comes up for you. You can do all types of therapies, but the dance is the space where you go to integrate. You can talk all you want, but if the body isn't online, it's much harder to integrate your emotions."

Davis said emotions of all sorts are accepted on the dance floor.

"People are dancing for all different reasons — grief, joy, passion, trauma, healing — it's all welcome in ecstatic dance. That kind of environment is in-



valuable for gay people."

Aris said if she were speaking to a queer person interested in dance, she would prepare them to feel overwhelmed or uncomfortable with the radical freedom they would feel at dance.

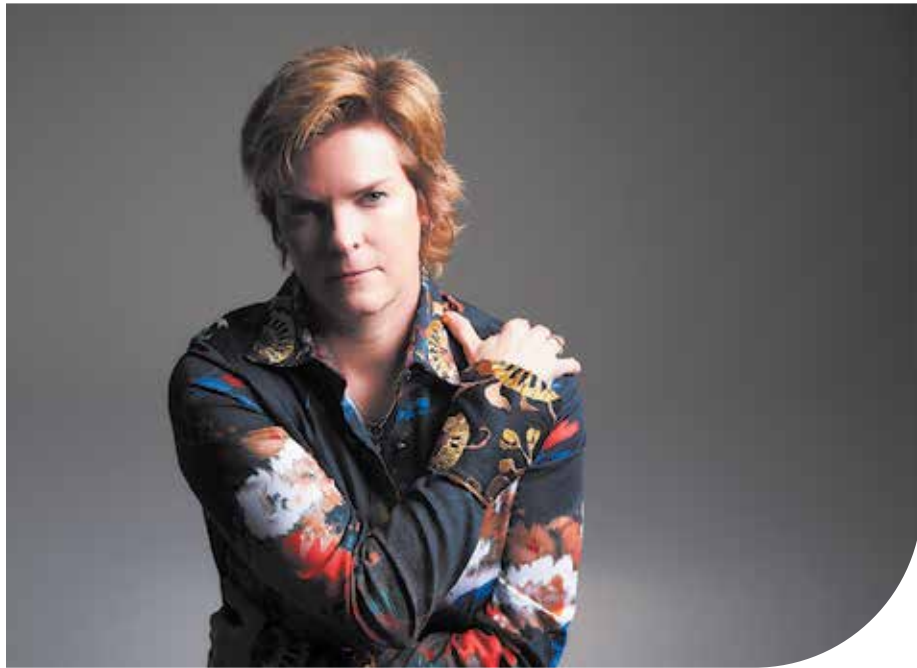
"Be prepared to feel radically accepted, not just through dance, but with the overall atmosphere," she said. "Freedom can feel uncomfortable or overwhelming, and you may cry. But slowly, you'll feel your heart start to open up and rest in the acceptance of a loving community. You'll peel back layers of yourself you didn't know existed."

St. John said queer people need spaces like the ones DMC provides. "With all of our brothers and sisters who have died of suicide and struggle with addiction, we need spaces like dance: safe spaces, brave spaces," she said. ■

For more information visit [DallasMovementCollective.com](http://DallasMovementCollective.com).

# Time **after** time

MUSICALLY INCLINED



Singer Stephanie Sammons digs deep into discomfort for her new album release

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

**I**n early May, local singer-songwriter Stephanie Sammons debuted her first full-length album. She had dropped two previous EP albums, but in *Time and Evolution*, she's expressing herself deeper than before — not just through her personal thoughts, but also through her craft.

This was the moment for her to bare it all.

"I've come a long way with my songwriting since my two previous releases," Sammons said. "I've always had a sense of melody in my writing and the ability to write a song, but I'm at a whole new level now."

The Dallas-based Sammons has been traveling to Nashville to work on her songwriting. Classes and workshops with Grammy winners and established songwriters such as Mary Gauthier, Emily Saliers and Beth Nielsen Chapman have helped her break through into diving deeper and unlocked feelings she hasn't expressed before.

Now she's sharing all that new music with an album release party on June 8 at Opening Bell Coffee.

*Time and Evolution*, would seem more than an appropriate title, because this album reflects just that. But it also seems to serve as something of a catharsis for Sammons. She described the songs as representing difficult themes in her life that've been on her mind for the past few years.

"For me, it's a tough subject matter around my upbringing and being lesbian and growing up in a traditional Southern Baptist home," she said. "I had this struggle of shame that most of us are familiar with, and I had to explore what faith really is for me. So all these are themes throughout the album."

Sammons admits that in her previous releases, she was frightened to be vulnerable. She didn't want to talk — or sing — about things that might upset her family.

The magic of music, though, is that the right songs happen at the right time.

"I'm ready now, I feel. This is the most authentic I've ever been," she said. "It's scary. 'Billboard Sign' is my coming out story. But being immersive in those workshops gave me the space I needed and the permission to have the courage to write."

The song was released as a single in

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April and perfectly appropriate for Pride Month.

Sammons is also glad to release the music now in this chapter of her life. Self-described as middle aged, she feels like her own life and the years in it have led to this particular moment of expression.

Could she have done the same at say 25?

"I questioned that, but I've lived some. I got some wisdom, and only now I think I could do this," she said. "There's a stigma about being past a certain age in the business, but I also wondered, why not me? Why can't anyone over 50 pursue their art just as intensely?"

"I got more experience to draw from for my songs,"

If her name is familiar, she does have an audience in a different arena. By day, Sammons is a certified financial planner and often focuses on LGBTQ clients. She's been doing that for more than 25 years in her own boutique firm, Sam-

mons Wealth.

"I love what I do, and I take good care of my clients," she said.

And in her time as a financial planner, she's released three albums. Clearly, Sammons has found her balance between the two vastly different careers. But there is one particular clash between the two: "It doesn't leave any room for me to tour the country.

"I have to be strategic about live performances," she said. "But I've found so many opportunities, like a festival in Montana or shows in Nashville."

Sammons was recently named a Kerrville Folk Festival New Folk finalist, and she appeared at the festival just recently.

Sammons is fine without any massive touring schedule. She's figured it out.

"I get to be selective, but the best part is, I'm creating my own adventure," she said. ■

Visit her website at [StephanieSammons.com](http://StephanieSammons.com). For tickets to her album release party, visit [OpeningBellCoffee.com](http://OpeningBellCoffee.com).

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# Advocating for **children**

## VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

Becoming a CASA Dallas volunteer provides opportunities to help kids when they need help the most

**I**f you are not yet familiar with Dallas CASA — Court Appointed Special Advocates — let me share with you a little bit about the important work that the organization does. In short, CASA works to ensure that every child in Dallas County who has been placed in the care of the state has an advocate to look out for their overall wellbeing. This includes confirming that they are in a safe environment and have access to educational and medical support.

Also, one key role of a volunteer advocate is to make recommendations to the court to help the judge decide the best permanent home for the child. A CASA volunteer can be thought of as a bit like a volunteer social worker.

I have always admired how CASA helps children directly and thought about volunteering with Dallas CASA for some time. My husband, Matt Hein, and I have adopted two girls, and my extended family includes a number of children who were adopted as well. So the idea of being able to have a direct impact and help a child is something very close to my heart.

So I applied to be a volunteer and completed a rigorous and comprehensive 30-hour training course. I was sworn in on May 4, 2023, and I accepted my first case a few weeks later. Then I began reviewing case documents to get up to speed.

Since that time, I've been able to build a really great relationship with my CASA kid. I have become another caring adult in their support system, working with foster parents, caseworkers, teachers, mentors, therapists and placement agency personnel.

It has been wonderful to help in such a direct way. Bringing these resources together, I have helped get the child clothes when needed, provided a Chromebook



**Jeremy Watkins**  
Special Contributor

for school, coordinated resources so they could go on a much-anticipated school trip and supported their education and outside interests.

These are just a few of the many examples where I have had a direct impact.

Also — and probably most importantly — I have helped coordinate regular visits between the child and their family. Having this connection with family can be essential to a child's wellbeing, and I know that these visits would not be possible without my direct involvement as a Dallas CASA volunteer.

My background is in the technology industry, but I have used so many different skills in working to gather information and bring people together to help. The system can be frustrating, but it is really encouraging that there are so many people and nonprofit organiza-



tions working to help kids in protective care and their families.

Dallas CASA provides a volunteer for every child in Dallas County who needs one. Recruiting, training and supporting these volunteers is a monumental job. Because of the diverse children that Dallas CASA works with, it is important to have staff, volunteers and support from communities that reflect that diversity.

According to Shashaunda Williams, the DEI director with Dallas CASA, "Currently more than 30 percent of

kids in foster care nationally identify as LGBTQ+. Having volunteers who support these kids is vital to a positive outcome."

There is always a need for volunteers who are part of the LGBTQ community — not just to serve kids who may identify as LGBTQ but because having volunteers from diverse backgrounds and with differing experiences helps create a stronger group of volunteers to advocate for the best interests of every child.

Dallas CASA is particularly in need of bilingual Spanish-speaking volunteers, male volunteers, Black volunteers and LGBTQ volunteers.

If you want to make a difference and help a child today, consider volunteering with Dallas CASA. Visit DallasCasa.org for upcoming volunteer information sessions and more details on how you can help.

Also, this year I'm on the board of directors for the Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas (GLFD), and I am so excited for the opportunity to bring these two great organizations together to help raise money to send kids in foster care to summer camp.

To learn more about that project or donate to our efforts, check out GLFD.org.

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# Adoption organization wants to give you **money**

## LGBTQ FAMILIES

Help Us Adopt wants to help more LGBTQ prospective parents to expand their families through adoption

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

**C**ost is the biggest reason many prospective parents give up on the idea of adoption. So after adopting her two children, Becky Fawcett decided to help others adopt.

Fawcett started a financial grant program called Help Us Adopt. In the 18 years since she started her nonprofit, she's granted 737 families up to \$20,000 to go toward their domestic, international or foster adoptions.

But more of that money needs to go to LGBTQ parents, Fawcett said. So on June 5, Rainbow Roundup will host an online panel discussion in connection with Fawcett to discuss how to apply for an adoption grant.

Fawcett said she's tried to figure out why more LGBTQ prospective parents don't apply for grants from her organization. First it was because same-sex couples couldn't get married. But once they could get married, the number of applications didn't increase.

Then she was told gay men have double high incomes and lesbian couples have lower incomes. But she knew that wasn't true in either case.

And, some people thought, no one would let transgender folks or single gay men become parents, so why apply?

Apply, Fawcett said, because Help Us Adopt is granting throughout the LGBTQ community. In fact, she noted, a recent grant went to a single, Black trans person in Kentucky who's now a parent.

"We don't get enough LGBT applicants," Fawcett said. "We have money



Maury and Immanuel got a grant from Help Us Adopt



Help Us Adopt helped Alison and Erica build their family

to give you to adopt. We have a board supporting you. Apply."

Fawcett said the average adoption costs from \$40,000 to \$70,000.

And she's noticed that since the pandemic, adoption fees have risen, as has the average income of those applying.

Fawcett is a natural fundraiser. She said she started by asking her friends to contribute. While she still relies heavily on individual donors, she gets some corporate funding as well.

"I started with people I knew," she said. "Everywhere I go I'm raising money. I tell the story and people love what we're doing."

When they ask, "What can I do?" she asks for money.

While Help Us Adopt is not an adoption agency or adoption law firm, its website has very good advice on how to get going.

"The first thing you need to do is to decide how you want to adopt — domestic adoption, international adoption, special needs, foster-to-adopt," the organization advises.

Next, find an adoption specialist. Jonathan's Place and Hope Cottage are two agencies in Dallas that welcome the LGBTQ community.

Several good resources are listed to help in finding agencies or attorneys. For foster-to-adopt, classes are required that your agency will provide or refer you to.

In Texas alone, 70,000 kids are in the foster system without homes. Around the world, hundreds of thousands of children need homes. The cost of adopting shouldn't be what's keeping them from having a good, loving home.

"You might not need this help," Fawcett said, "but you have to know someone who does. There are countless gay and lesbian couples and singles who want to be parents."

Visit [HelpUsAdopt.org](https://www.HelpUsAdopt.org) and apply for a grant to make adoption less financially daunting. ■

*LGBTQIA+ Family Building Info Session on June 5 at 7 p.m. Visit Rainbow Roundup's Facebook page to sign up for the online session.*

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# The sounds of Pride

PRIDE 2024

From the Pet Shop Boys to Billy Idol, there's plenty of beats to move your feet during Pride Month

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## PET SHOP BOYS

A new Pet Shop Boys studio album is always cause for celebration, especially because it's been four years since the last one was released. In the interim, PSB released the extraordinary (and aptly titled) *Smash 2023* box set, easily the duo's most complete hits compilation. On the just-released 10-song vinyl LP *Nonetheless* (Warner/Parlophone), Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe get us on our feet and dancing with opener "Loneliness," "Feel," and "Bullet for Narcissus."

Dancing is a theme here, not only sonically, but in song titles, including the epic club track "Why am I dancing?" and the lite funk of "Dancing Star," as well as in the slow number "A new Bohemia" (including the line, "Who dances now to their sweet old song?").

The '80s vibe of "New London Boy" — which asks the question, "Is everyone gay?" — is taken seriously with the inclusion of an '80s-style rap. PSB has always had a way with a beautiful tune, including the previously named "Feel," as well as "The Secret of Happiness" (featuring a full orchestra and harp!).

## BRETT ANDERSON

When Brett Anderson was lead vocalist of the band London Suede (the name the band Suede was called in the U.S. after members lost a lawsuit brought by lesbian trumpeter Suede, who had been using the name for years), he described himself as "a bisexual man who never had a homosexual experience." Sounds gay, he's in!



Pet Shop Boys (Photo by Alasdair McLellan)

Interestingly, Anderson's former London Suede bandmate Bernard Butler recorded a few albums with gay singer/songwriter David McAlmont as the duo McAlmont & Butler. Anderson's latest music project is Paraorchestra, a marvelous collaboration with British conductor Charles Hazlewood, featuring guest artists Nadine Shah, Gwanno, Portishead's Adrian Utley and Sons of Kemet's Seb Rochford. Paraorchestra's gorgeous new album *Death Songbook* (World Circuit/BMG), available as a double vinyl LP, reimagines songs by Echo & The Bunnymen ("The Killing Moon"), Mercury Rev ("Holes"), Japan ("Nightporter"), Black ("Wonderful Life"), DEPECHE Mode ("Enjoy The Silence"), Skeeter Davis ("The End Of The World"), Scott Walker ("My Death") and even the London Suede ("She Still Leads Me On," "The Next Life," and "He's Dead," in stunning orchestral arrangements you never realized that the songs required.

## BLOOMSDAY

These days, it seems like you can't listen to SiriusXMU without hearing "Hand to Hand" by queer singer/songwriter Katy Kirby, from her wonderful *Blue Raspberry* album. If you dig that song, you owe it to yourself to explore



Torres (Photo by Ebru Yildiz)

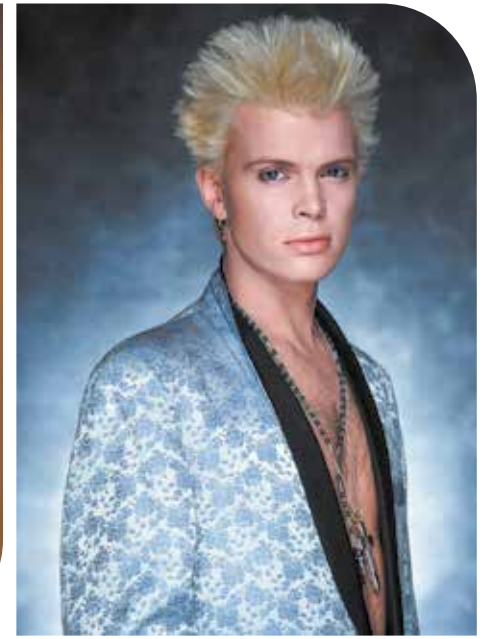
*Heart of the Artichoke* (Bayonet), the layered new album from Bloomsday. Led by non-binary singer/songwriter Iris James Garrison, Bloomsday (which also includes Alex Harwood) are purveyors of glorious enby music that is as lush as it is luminous. Before you know it, you will find yourself singing along to "Virtual Hug," "Where I End and You Begin," "Bumper Sticker," "Artichoke," "Look After" and the subtle twang of "Dollar Slice."

The only complaint is that at just over 33 minutes, the 10 songs on this breathtaking album go by much too fast.

## TORRES

Non-binary lesbian singer/songwriter Torres (aka Mackenzie Scott, not to be confused with the ex-wife of Jeff Bezos) has returned with *What An Enormous Room* (Merge), their sixth full-length album in 10 years.

Down to just Torres, co-producer and multi-instrumentalist Sarah Jaffe (with additional assistance from TJ Allen), you might expect *Enormous Room* to sound stripped down. On the contrary, these musicians fill up the enormous room with blazing guitars, synths and other keyboards, and plenty of beats, as you



Billy Idol (Photo by Ebru Yildiz)

can clearly hear on "Life As We Don't Know It," "Collect" and "Jerk Into Joy."

The mesmerizing and unexpected piano+vocal closer "Songbird Forever" alternates between an unsettling "you and me" and "you own me" state of mind.

## BILLY IDOL

Billy Idol isn't queer, but that hasn't stopped countless gay men from fantasizing about him. And why not? Between his sharp cheekbones, pouty lips and accompanying sneer, bedroom eyes, six-pack abs and penchant for dressing (or being half-undressed) in leather, Idol amassed a considerable queer following beginning with his days in the band Generation X and continuing through his lengthy solo career.

*Rebel Yell* (Capitol/UME), Idol's second solo album originally released on Chrysalis in 1983, has been reissued in an expanded double LP vinyl edition featuring eight bonus tracks, including a cover of Rose Royce's "Love Don't Live Here Anymore," delivered in his trademark growl. Among the nine songs on the original album were some of Idol's highest charting singles, including the title track, "Eyes Without A Face," and "Flesh For Fantasy." ■

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# Rob Smith is winning

## INCLUSIVITY

Why the Phluid Project founder left the corporate world to promote gender inclusivity

SARAH BRICKER HUNT | Q Syndicate

**T**hanks to the era of “new media,” where no stone is left unturned when it comes to invading the privacy of every public figure from social media influencers to the Hollywood elite (and not-so-elite), you’d be hard-pressed to find more than a handful of influential people who are truly as good as they’d like us all to believe.

Few and far between are people like Mr. Rogers, Dolly Parton and, apparently, Tom Hanks. I’d like to humbly request we add a new name to the nice list: Rob Smith, founder of The Phluid Project. Here’s my case.

First of all, Smith spent a good chunk of time at the beginning of our recent call trying to figure out how to tag my LinkedIn to a recent post he shared of an article I wrote about an upcoming collab between Phluid and the Detroit Pistons.

“Come on, Rob. I can do this,” he assures himself (and me).

“Really, it’s fine,” I tell him.

“I just always try to give credit to authors. It’s important,” he insists.

Eventually, we figure it out. And you know what? It does feel nice to get that recognition. Score one for the guy who seems to thrive on making other people feel better. We could use more of that in 2024.

Smith knows a lot about how important validation can be, having grown up as a closeted kid in Grosse Pointe, Mich. in the ‘80s. He’s nearly in tears when I ask about those growing-up years (oops). But in what has already become, to me, signature Rob Smith behavior, he starts off by making sure I know that this difficult time in his life had nothing to do with his supportive family.

“I’ll start off there. I have a wonderful

family — I love them so much,” he says. “But a young kid doesn’t understand. I mean, your school is your world, and words that I heard all the time as a kid — ‘sissy, faggot’ — you hear those words and you intuitively, instinctively understand that being gay is dangerous.”

As much as he knew his family loved him, Smith says he was somehow afraid they might disown him if he didn’t hide his queerness. His brothers played football and baseball, and his dad was a Pittsburgh Steeler. “And I was the creative kid. I loved theater and art and playing with my sister’s dolls,” he explains.

By high school, “I’d butched myself up,” he recalls, joining the football team and hoping the change would make it easier to go through life. “And I finally had friends, but I don’t know if it was fully authentic.”

Before he came out, Smith says, he couldn’t fully accept his family’s love because he didn’t feel they knew him authentically. “I just didn’t fully receive their love because I didn’t know if they would really fully love me if they knew I was gay,” he re-

members. “That was my own voice talking to me.”

Smith attended Michigan State University after high school. And then, he was gone. Miami Beach was calling, and it was hard to imagine a place more polar opposite to East Lansing or a more affirming atmosphere in which to come out in his early 20s.

Still, coming out to his family was a daunting prospect in the late ‘80s. True to those “he’s a really good person” vibes, Smith was worried more about protecting them than how he was feeling.

“It was this time when you came out and usually followed that up with ‘I’m also HIV positive,’” he says.

“I was so afraid to tell them, because I knew they’d feel like, ‘My son’s gonna have AIDS and die.’ There was a lot of trauma around coming out to your family because of the HIV crisis. They weren’t just worried about you getting through life as a gay person. They were worried about you living.”

After college,

Smith’s career path followed a jet-fueled trajectory many fashion industry pros would envy. As he scaled the corporate ladder, executive vice president positions at major corporations (Macy’s and Victoria’s Secret) led Smith to the global chief product officer role at Haddad Brands (Nike, Levi’s, Jordan, Hurley and Converse).

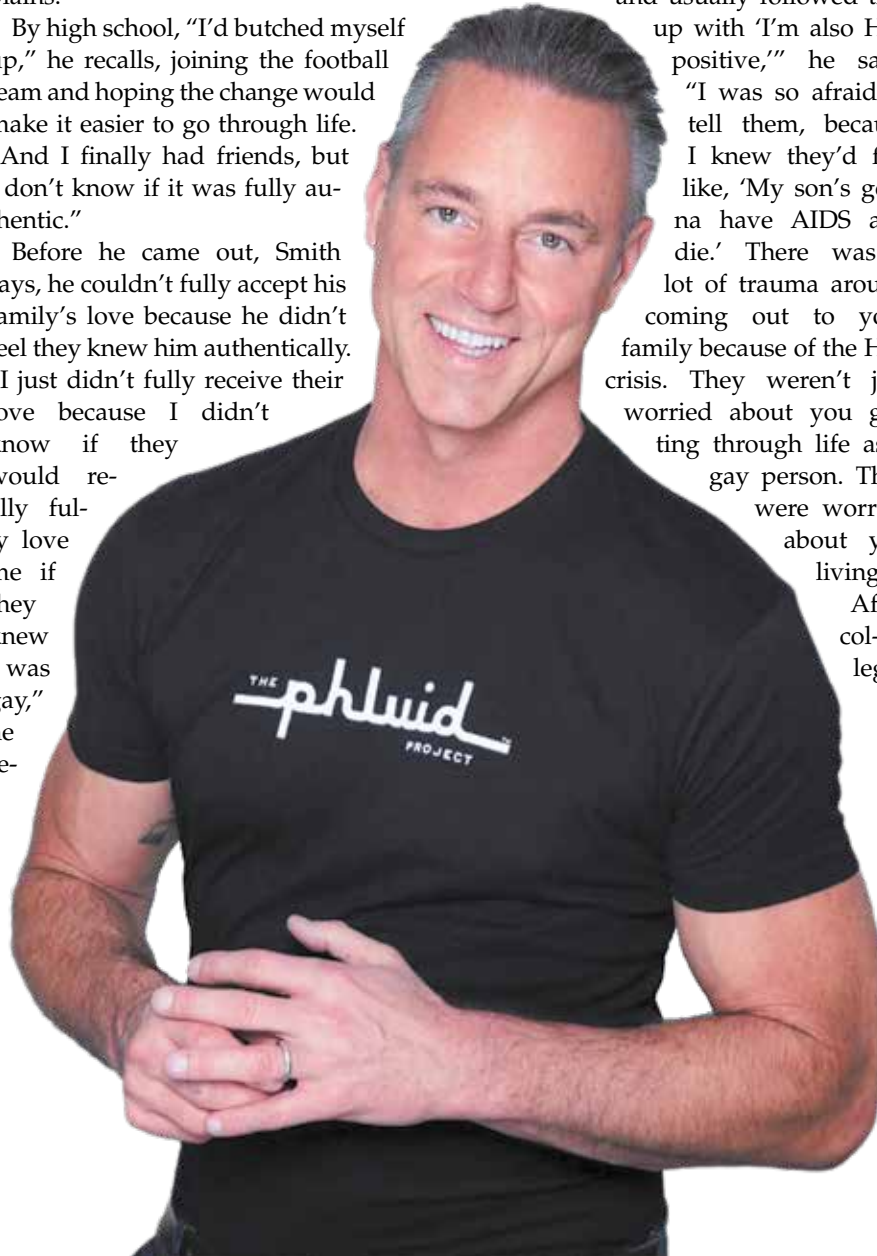
A quick trip through Smith’s LinkedIn reveals all the expected corporate lingo from an era he left behind in 2017: lots of “vertical retail growth” and “positioning the company” fodder.

And then there’s a shift — a good guy shift, if you will — from corporate executive to the founder of Phluid, a gender-free clothing, accessory and beauty brand targeting the LGBTQ community. His role at Phluid now encompasses the organization’s educational aims, which has him traveling to companies as a diversity coach and consultant on gender inclusivity policies and gender-expansive practices.

“We are Phluid,” a page on the brand’s website reads. “Phluid in our expression, externally to the world and internally to ourselves. Phluid means dissolving the artificial boundaries of gender, skin color, and status, we and they. Phluid means following like water, free from contracts we never agreed to sign. Phluid means embracing the core idea that this is our world and that the way things are is unrelated to how things could be.”

“Honestly, a big part of creating Phluid was making my little self proud,” Smith says. “It’s something that maybe my younger self would look at and say ‘Wow. I’m really proud of you.’ Because I shut him out at 14 years old. I erased him.”

These days, Smith’s trips home to Michigan include family visits and, often, a little philanthropy and community-building. For the first time, Phluid is partnering with a pro sports franchise through a line of all-gender apparel created by Smith that was released in March. Fans can purchase “Basketball for All” sweatshirts, T-shirts and hats at [Pistons313shop.com](https://Pistons313shop.com) and at the team







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CROWNE PLAZA

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JUNE 16TH**

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HOST HOTEL  
CROWNE PLAZA

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## SUMMER From Page 24

### 10 Mile Pride | June 13-15

High temperatures in the 60s — if that's not enough to get you booking a flight to Denver to attend 10 Mile Pride in nearby Breckenridge, perhaps Jade Jolie as Taylor Swift and Coco Montrese as Janet Jackson will increase the temptation. [10MilePride.com](http://10MilePride.com).

### Guadalajara Pride | June 15

Puerto Vallarta and Mexico City have earned their reputations as LGBTQ meccas in the country to our south. Guadalajara ranks right up there, with more than 50 queer bars, restaurants and businesses. As host of the Gay Games in 2023, it's easily one of the most prominent destinations for our community and full of lovely, friendly people. [@GuadalajaraPrideOfficial](https://www.facebook.com/GuadalajaraPrideOfficial) on Facebook.

### March LGBT CDMX | June 26-July 1

Mexico City never ceases to amaze as one of the most culturally rich cities on the planet. Pride only showcases the diversity of people here even more. Head

to the massive parade on June 29 to truly experience the energy of CDMX in a whole new way. [@MarchaLGBTCDMX](https://www.instagram.com/MarchaLGBTCDMX) on Instagram.

### Northwest Arkansas Pride | June 28-30

Pack up the car for a five-hour road trip to Northwest Arkansas for the NWA Pride Parade and Festival Weekend, the largest of its kind in the state. Drag stars Maddy Morphosis, Plasma and Kylie Sonique Love strut their stuff at the Glitterville event after the sun sets on the 20th anniversary parade in Fayetteville. [NWAPride.org](http://NWAPride.org).

### Seattle Pride | June 30

Downtown Seattle's 4th Avenue transforms into a massive party celebrating 50 years of Washington's largest parade. The fabulous Jinx Monsoon co-stars in a vaudeville-style show at Seattle Rep ([SeattleRep.org](http://SeattleRep.org)) now through June 23 if you want to head to Seattle a week early to bask in her charismatic glow. [SeattlePride.org](http://SeattlePride.org).



Pride in Montreal (Photo courtesy of Damian Siqueiros)

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Maui Kū Hā'āheo Maui stands with Pride



## NYC Pride | June 30

Everyone needs to experience the O.G. Pride celebration in the United States at least once. It's hard to imagine Manhattan possibly getting any better than any day the rest of the year, but during Pride, it's pure queer magic. The unmatched sense of community and outpouring of love still elicits goosebumps — and maybe a few tears. [NYCPride.org](http://NYCPride.org).

SUMMER, Page 94



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<https://www.ststephenmctx.org/>



**STATE**, From Page 19



Carrollton Pride

## Tyler

June 22 • 10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
W.T. Brookshire's Conference Center  
2000 W. Front St., Tyler 75702  
[TylerAreaGays.com](http://TylerAreaGays.com)

## Lubbock

June 22  
Lubbock Pride Fest at LHUCA Plaza  
Lubbock Cultural District,  
5th Street and Ave. J  
[LubbockPride.org](http://LubbockPride.org)

## Rowlett

Sweet Taste of Pride  
June 28 • 6-9 p.m.  
Downtown Rowlett Green,  
4001 Main St., Rowlett  
Vendors, music, dancing, food,  
activities for kids

## Sherman

Grayson County Pride  
June 29 • 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Municipal Ballroom, 405 N. Rusk St.,  
Sherman  
[GraysonCountyPride.org](http://GraysonCountyPride.org)

## Amarillo

Pride on the Plains  
June 29  
Parade at 10 a.m.  
Thompson Park • 9 a.m.-6 p.m.  
[PanhandlePrideInc.org](http://PanhandlePrideInc.org)

## Princeton

June 29 – facility rental canceled  
by school district.  
See story page 20

## Houston

June 29  
Festival and Parade  
Downtown Houston  
[PrideHouston365.org](http://PrideHouston365.org)



Bastrop Pride Festival Drag Show

## San Antonio

Pride Bigger Than Texas  
June 29 • 11 a.m.-7 p.m.  
Crockett Park, 1300 N. Main Ave.,  
San Antonio  
[PrideSanAntonio.org](http://PrideSanAntonio.org)

## El Paso

Pride Parade  
June 29 • 10 a.m.  
Downtown along N. Campbell Street  
Followed by parade picnic in Houston Park  
[SunCityPride.org](http://SunCityPride.org)

## Austin

August 10  
Austin Pride Festival  
Edward Rendon Sr. Park at Festival Beach  
in Town Lake Metropolitan Park,  
2101 Jesse E. Segovia St., Austin  
[AustinPride.org](http://AustinPride.org)

## Texas Latino Pride

Sept. 14 • 3-9 p.m.  
Reverchon Park, 3505 Maple Ave.  
[TXLatinoPride.org](http://TXLatinoPride.org)

## Dallas

> Pride in Dallas  
Sept. 21  
Cedar Springs Road from Wycliff Ave.  
to Oak Lawn  
[PrideinDallas.org](http://PrideinDallas.org)

## Wimberley

Pride March  
Sept. 21  
[WimberleyPride.org](http://WimberleyPride.org)

## Frisco

Pride Frisco  
Oct. 6 • 1-5 p.m.  
Toyota Stadium  
free admission. Ticket required  
[PrideFrisco.org](http://PrideFrisco.org)

## North Texas Pride

Oct. 12  
Haggard Park, Plano  
[NorthTexasPride.org](http://NorthTexasPride.org)



**SMITH**, From Page 88



Phluid is a line of gender-free clothing and accessories targeting the LGBTQ community

store in Little Caesars Arena.

Smith stresses that the Pistons project is about more than a simple clothing collaboration. In fact, he feels strongly that sports can be a gateway to LGBTQ acceptance all over the world.

"It's about changing people's hearts and minds in a place where there is rampant transphobia and homophobia," he says. "You're tapping into a huge community of players and massive fan bases. If there is some way to have sports open up to show inclusion and acceptance for all — not just queer folks — I think it's a game changer that sets the stage for many organizations to follow."

Unsurprisingly, Smith only had good things to say about working with the Pistons team, from the support staff all the way up to the executive suite.

"The team has been amazing. They

have really been leaning into wanting to do what's right and showing what real inclusion looks like for queer folks," he says. "Whatever is going on with their season, the thing is that winning comes in many forms, as far as I'm concerned. And they are winning in this space of inclusion and celebration.

The values of their organization show in the way they treat people, and the way they're willing to step up and be courageous. That's winning, too."

We could say the same thing about ultimate nice guy Rob Smith.

*Sarah Bricker Hunt, a proud Eastern Michigan University alum and the managing editor for Pride Source/Between The Lines, believes in the power of intentional journalism focused on people building their communities through everyday acts of love and service.*



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**EMPLOYMENT**, including brokers, sales agents, lenders, mortgage brokers, insurance agents and sellers;

**PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION**, service in restaurants, theaters, retail store, and non-governmental public services (relative to sexual orientation only).

If you suspect discrimination in these areas and wish to file a complaint call:

**214-670-FAIR (3247)**

The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government.

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**SUMMER**, From Page 91



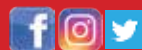
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**July Pride Events**

**SD Pride | July 13-21**

Los Angeles' laidback sister to the south welcomes more than 300,000 members of the LGBTQ community and allies to the palm tree-lined streets of San Diego's queer hub, Hillcrest. Todrick Hall, Rico Nasty and Sheila E. headline the festival immediately afterward in Balboa Park. [SDPride.org](http://SDPride.org).

**August Pride Events**

**Fierté Montréal Festival |  
Aug. 1-11**

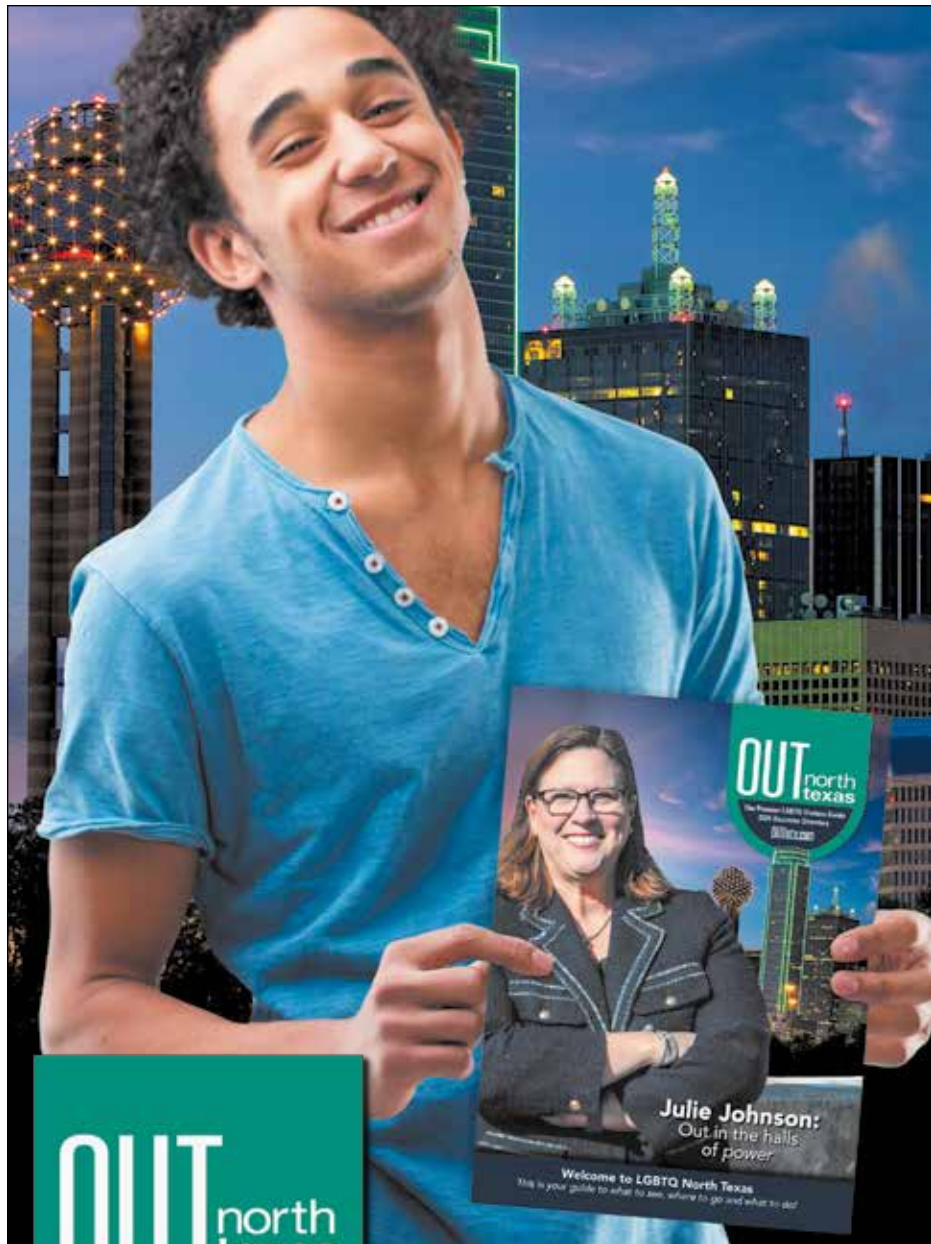
Practice your French (kissing counts) for another mild-weather escape from the brutal Texas heat. Last year's Pride

events attracted nearly half a million people, so you know you'll meet plenty of fun people along the way. And Montréal gives us major European vibes without the jetlag. [FiertéMontreal.com](http://FiertéMontreal.com).

**September Pride Events**

**Curaçao Pride | Sept. 27-Oct. 6**

Part of the "ABC Islands" (with Aruba and Bonaire), Curaçao offers clear turquoise waters and a rainbow-colored Willemstad year-round. Yet this end-of-summer gathering adds even more vibrant beauty to the island. It's a tiny event (usually around 2,000 celebrants), so this one can't be beaten if you're not into the massive crowds of other Prides. [CuracaoPride.org](http://CuracaoPride.org).



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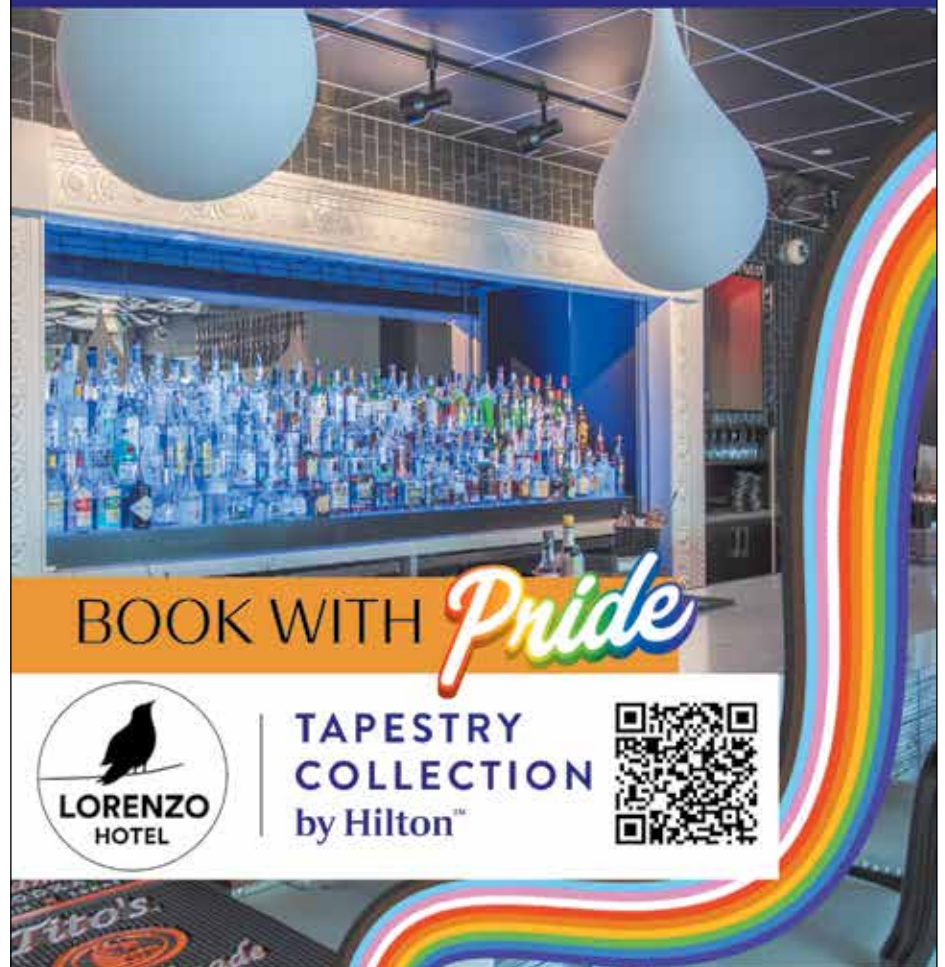
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The city of Dallas will help kick-off Pride Month with a ceremony to raise the official City of Dallas Pride Flag over City Hall on Friday, May 31, starting at 5 p.m. After the flag-raising ceremony, the party continues at AT&T Discovery District. See listings for details. (2022 FILE PHOTO by David Taffet)

## ■ Every Wednesday: THRIVE

Resource Center's THRIVE Wednesday Support Group for LGBTQ adults 50 and older meets from 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. at Resource Center Community Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road, and is led by interns from the SMU counseling program. For more information on the support group and how to join, send an email to [THRIVE@myresourcecenter.org](mailto:THRIVE@myresourcecenter.org).

## MAY

### ■ May 31: Dallas Pride Pre-Party

Kick off Pride weekend with the Dallas Pride Pre-Party presented by Crystal Queer Riot at Thrive Nightclub, 1015 Elm St. 10 p.m. Visit the event page on [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) for tickets and information.

### ■ May 31: Sue Ellen's VIP Pride Launch Party

Celebrate the launch of Pride month in style at Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St., starting at 8 p.m. Visit the event page on [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) for tickets and information.

### ■ May 31: City of Dallas Pride Flag Raising

Join the city of Dallas as city officials raise the Pride flag to celebrate Pride Month at City Hall Plaza, 1500 Marilla St., from 5-6:30 p.m.

### ■ May 31: Pride Kickoff Party

Celebrate the start of Pride month at the AT&T Discovery District, 308 S. Akard St., from 7-10 p.m. This is also the city of Dallas' official party after the City of Dallas Pride Flag is raised over City Hall, The Discovery District will be lit in a rainbow of colors

while a DJ keeps the party going. Enjoy food from The Exchange Hall or Cowboy Chow and sip on the Pride Month cocktail, Out & Proud.

### ■ May 31: He.She.They – Dallas Pride Edition

Bleach and May May Graves present the Dallas Pride Edition of He.She.They, a polysexual dance party, featuring Rochelle Jordan. 9 p.m. at It'll Do Club, 4322 Elm St. For ages 21 and up; admission is \$10. Visit [HeSheThey.me/faq](https://www.thesheandthey.com/faq) for more information.

### ■ May 31: 'Skipping Stones: An Artists Showcase'

Watering Hole Collective presents Skipping Stones: An Artists Showcase at Life In Deep Ellum, 2803 Taylor St. 7-10 p.m. Visit [WateringHoleCollective.org](https://www.wateringholecollective.com) for information.

## JUNE

### ■ June 1: 'Rhapsody' 2024

Turtle Creek Chorale's annual gala, featuring Cyndi Lauper, comes to the Omni Hotel, 555 S. Lamar St. at 6:30 p.m. Tickets and sponsorships are available at [TurtleCreekChorale.com](https://www.turtlecreekchorale.com).

### ■ June 1: Dallas Pride Music Festival 2024

Miller Lite presents the Dallas Pride Music Festival in Fair Park, 3809 Grand Ave. Starts at 11 a.m. and features a variety of musical and dance performances on the outdoor main stage and the indoor community stage, plus age-appropriate entertainment at Teen Pride and Family Pride Zone in the Grand Building. More than 200 vendors will be on hand as well as a variety of other activities,

entertainment and information booths. Visit [Pride.org](https://www.pride.org) for tickets and more information.

### ■ June 1: Carrollton Pride Festival

Join the city of Carrollton as they celebrate Pride from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Horizon Unitarian Universalist Church, 1641 W. Hebron Parkway. For more information visit [Horizonuu.org](https://www.horizonuu.org).

### ■ June 1: Dallas Eagle Pride

Dallas Eagle, 525 S. Riverfront Blvd., celebrates Pride from 8 p.m.-2 a.m., with happy hour before 8 p.m. Special gift for the first 50 people. Features DJ Nina Flowers. Free parking but ride-share services encouraged. Admission is \$10 in advance at [EventBrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com); \$15 at the door. See the Facebook event page for more information.

### ■ June 1: Mega RAM Party

Daddy Ersin presents the Mega RAM Party – Dallas Pride Main Party+Afterhours Edition at Crowne Plaza Dallas Downtown, 1015 Elm St. 10 p.m.-6 a.m. Music by DJs Eliad Cohen, Tristan Jaxx and Vicky Juba. Tickets are \$25-\$50, available at [RAM-Gear-Party.TicketLeap.com](https://www.ram-gear-party.com).

### ■ Through June 1: 'Cloud Tectonics'

Teatro Dallas presents *Cloud Tectonics*, directed by Sasha Maya Ada, about a lone motorist and a beautiful, pregnant hitchhiker who find each other. Friday- Sunday. 8 p.m.

### ■ June 1: Primetime Saturday Night Improv – Pride Night

Dallas Comedy Club, 3036 Elm St., hosts Primetime Saturday Night Improv – Pride Night featuring some Queer Factor cast members including Stefan Newman, Emily Baudot, Josh Edwards, Sabrina Lichtenstein, Lucia Hardaway, Hannah Hudson and Paco James. 8:30-9:30 p.m.; 18 and up only. Tickets are \$15, available at [Prekindle.com](https://www.prekindle.com).

### ■ June 2: Dallas Pride Parade and Festival

Corona presents the Dallas Pride Parade and Festival at Fair Park, 3809 Grand Ave., with the festival from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and the Dallas Pride Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade at 2 p.m. Admission is free. The parade will be more than a mile long and will feature more than 150 entries. Visit [DallasPride.org](https://www.dallaspride.org) for more information.

### ■ June 2: McKinney Pride

McKinney celebrates Pride at Dr. Glenn Mitchell Memorial Park, 300 W. Louisiana St. in McKinney, from 12-5 p.m.

### ■ June 2: Dallas Pride After-Party

Join Dallas Pride and Crystal Queer Riot at Thrive Nightclub, 1015 Elm St. at 6 p.m. for the ultimate

Pride after-party. Visit the event page on [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) for information and tickets.

### ■ June 2: Queen Kennedy Davenport

Hamburger Mary's Dallas, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, Ste. 101, celebrates its one-year anniversary with a one-show-only special appearance by the queen: Kennedy Davenport. 7 p.m. Reserve seats now on [Yelp](https://www.yelp.com) or by calling 214-377-7446.

### ■ June 2: SPECTRUM Dallas Pride Tea Dance

Purple Foundation presents SPECTRUM the Dallas Pride Tea Dance on the patio at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 4 p.m. Get more information at [PurpleFoundation.org](https://www.purplefoundation.org).

### ■ June 3: TAG Co-Ed Dinner

Tyler Area Gays hosts its monthly Co-Ed Dinner at Clear Springs, 6519 S. Broadway Ave. in Tyler. 6:30 p.m. Visit [TylerAreaGays.com](https://www.tylerareagays.com) for information.

### ■ June 3: Alexandre's MOM

Alexandre's Bar, 4026 Cedar Springs Road, hosts Monday Open Mic (MOM) featuring professional and amateur comedians. 9-11 p.m. Those interested in performing can sign up at [Form.com](https://www.form.com) [JotForm.com/222497530917058](https://www.jotform.com/222497530917058).

### ■ June 4: Classic Chassis Car Club

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

### ■ June 6: Queer Factor: Pride Edition

Stefan G hosts Queer Factor: Pride Edition at Dallas Comedy Club, 3036 Elm St. 9-11 p.m.; doors



Icon and ally Cyndi Lauper performs Saturday night, June 1, at the Omni Hotel for Turtle Creek Chorale's gala fundraiser, *Rhapsody*. See listings for details.



open at 8:45 p.m. Features Butt Gay Improv, Andra Ginny Jacobs, Lucia Hardaway, Kin Wadsworth and, from *RuPaul's Drag Race season 2*, Mystique Summers. Tickets are \$20, available at PreKindle.com.

#### ■ June 6: July 6: 'Hundred Days'

Circle Theatre, 230 W. Fourth St., Fort Worth, presents *Hundred Days*. Showtimes and tickets are available at CircleTheatre.com.

#### ■ June 7: An Evening With Lee Asher

Lee Asher, star of the Animal Planet series *My Pack Life*, performs at the Eisemann Center, 2351 Performance Drive in Richardson, at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at EisemannCenter.com.

#### ■ June 7: MetroBall 2024

MetroBall 17, featuring Crystal Waters and David Hernandez, and hosted by Paul J. Williams as Sister Helen Holy, at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. Proceeds benefit the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund. Visit GDMAF.org for details and tickets. VIP packages and sponsorships available.

#### ■ June 7: 'The Boulet Brothers' Dragula: Season 5 Tour'

*The Boulet Brothers' Dragula: Season 5 Tour* comes to House of Blues Dallas, 2200 N. Lamar St. Features the reigning Drag Supermonster Niahuru X, Orgotic, Blackberri, Throb Zombie and special guests. Doors open at 7 p.m.; show starts at 8 p.m. Tickets start at \$61, available at Concerts.LiveNation.com. For special VIP seating contact HOBHDallasVIP@LiveNation.com.

#### ■ June 7: Never-Ending Pride Party

Pride is never ending at AT&T Discovery District, 308 S. Akard St. Photo ops, a DJ in the Globe and more to keep the party going. 7-10 p.m.

#### ■ June 7: Taste of the Cowboys

North Texas Food Bank and the Dallas Cowboys host the 20th annual Taste of the Cowboys fundraiser, presented by Ashley Home Furniture, at Ford Center at The Star in Frisco. The event features singer John Michael Montgomery and raises funds to support children in North Texas facing hunger. For information and tables visit NTFB.org/cowboys.

#### ■ June 7-9: Fan Expo Dallas

Fan Expo Dallas returns to the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, 650 S. Griffin St., with family-friendly attractions, celebrities and the ultimate playground for comics, sci-fi, horror, anime and gaming enthusiasts. 4-9 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. Tickets start at \$35; three-day passes start at \$110. Get tickets and information at FanExpoDallas.com.

#### ■ June 8: East Texas Rainbow Market

Join Tyler Area Gays the second Saturday of every month for the Rainbow Market from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Bergfeld Park, 1501 S. Broadway Ave. in Tyler. For more information visit TylerAreaGays.com.

#### ■ June 8: Arlington Pride

Arlington Pride takes place from 6-11 p.m. at Levitt Pavillion, 100 W. Abram St. in Arlington. More information is available at ArlingtonPride.org.

#### ■ June 8: Lambda Legal Women's Brunch

Join Lambda Legal for their Women's Brunch from

11 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Turtle Room, 3535 Turtle Creek Blvd. Event registration will open in April.

#### ■ June 8: Longview Pride 2024

Celebrate Longview Pride at the Maude Cobb Center, 100 Grand Blvd. in Longview, with entertainment, vendors, food trucks and more. 3-8 p.m. Visit the Facebook event page for details.

#### ■ June 8: 'The Monarchs Ball: An '80s Flashback'

Regent Emperor 49 Craig Summers and Regent Empress 49 Valerie DeVasquez Wings of the United Court of the Lone Star Empire present *The Monarchs Ball: An '80s Flashback* at The Rose Room inside S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 5:30-9 p.m. Benefits Elevate North Texas Youth Shelter. Find more information on the Facebook event page.

#### ■ June 8: Guerilla Queer Bar

Collin County Stonewall Democrats host its monthly takeover of a straight bar in Collin County. Check Facebook.com/groups/CollinCountyStonewallDems for details.

#### ■ June 8: Mindi Abair and Greg Karukas

Bishop Arts Theatre Center, 215 S. Tyler St., hosts a night of jazz featuring Mindi Abair and Greg Karukas. 6:39-8:30 p.m. Visit BishopArtsTheatre.org for details.

#### ■ June 8-9: 'Pride in Bloom'

Dallas Arboretum, 8525 Garland Road, hosts its 3rd annual *Pride in Bloom* event. Visit DallasArboretum.org for tickets and information.

#### ■ June 9: DFW Sisters' Rainbow Party

DFW Sisters paint the town in rainbows with their Pride Month celebration at Dallas Eagle, 525 S. Riverfront Blvd. 7-9 p.m. Proceeds benefit Dallas Hope Charities, supporting Dallas Hope Center, the city's LGBTQ-focused homeless youth transitional living center.

#### ■ June 9: Online Queer Book Club

Fern Connections hosts their online book club at 2 p.m. Reserve your spot at Eventbrite.com.

#### ■ June 12: Same-Sex Partner Grief Group

Meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month on Zoom and in person. Contact Richard DeKnock for details at tastefullyrichard@gmail.com.

#### ■ June 13-17: Dallas Southern Pride

Dallas Southern Pride takes place at the Crowne Plaza Downtown, 1015 Elm St. For more information, visit DallasSouthernPride.com.

#### ■ June 13: Second Thursdays at the Carter: Cosmos & Curiosity

Visit the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, 3501 Camp Bowie Blvd. in Fort Worth, from 5-8 p.m. for this FREE event. Visit CarterMuseum.org for more information and to RSVP.

#### ■ June 14: 'Alanis Morissette – The Triple Moon Tour'

*Alanis Morissette – The Triple Moon Tour*, featuring Joan Jett and the Blackhearts and Morgan Wade at the Dos Equis Pavillion, 3839 S. Fitzhugh Ave.

8 p.m. Tickets start at \$37, available at Concerts.LiveNation.com.

#### ■ June 15: Legacy's Pride Variety Show

Legacy's Pride Variety Show, benefitting Legacy Cares, features comedians, dance troupes, singers, drag performers and more, at The Rose Room inside S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 6:30-9 p.m. Tickets are \$50, available at EventBrite.com.

#### ■ June 15: Gaybingo

The Resource Center hosts this event each month from 6-9 p.m. at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Tickets go on sale at 3 p.m. the Wednesday following each Gaybingo event at MyResourceCenter.org.

#### ■ June 15: Dallas Arboretum Fathers Day Event and Car Show

Celebrate Father's Day with Classic Chassis Car Club at the Dallas Arboretum, 8525 Garland Road. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Visit DallasArboretum.org or ClassicChassis.com for more information.

#### ■ Through June 16: 'Meadows/Arco Spotlight: Teresa Lanceta'

The Meadows Museum will present works by the fiber/textile artist in its exhibition. For more information visit MeadowsMuseumDallas.org.

#### ■ June 18: Up & Out: LGBTQ Caregiver Support Group

Up & Out is a welcoming supportive group for LGBTQ caregivers who are currently caring for anyone 50 and up. This is a virtual event from 6-7:30 p.m. RSVP at CSP@TheSeniorSource.org.

#### ■ June 20: OASIS LGBT+ Monthly Social Support Group

Oasis is an online, 90 minute monthly social support group for LGBT+ folks 18 and older providing a safe, welcoming space for people to connect. To register email Oasis.Tag.Plus@gmail.com.

#### ■ June 21: Dallas Arts District Pride Block Party

Dallas Arts District celebrates the 7th annual PRIDE Block Party from 6 p.m.-midnight in the heart of the city's arts district. For more information visit DallasArtsDistrict.org.

#### ■ June 21: HRC DFW June Social

HRC DFW holds this monthly social event at The Fleischner Courtyard on the main level of the Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 N. Harwood St., from 6-8 p.m. Register at DallasArtsDistrict.org.

#### ■ June 22: Legacy's Pride Variety Show

Legacy

Care celebrates Pride at 6:30 p.m. in The Rose Room inside S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Visit LegacyCares.org for tickets and information.

#### ■ June 22: Strut Dallas Pride

Virgin Hotels, 1445 Turtle Creek Blvd., hosts this Pride month extravaganza featuring Brooke Lynn Hytes of *RuPaul's Drag Race* and *Canada's Drag Race* from 8 p.m.-2 a.m. Visit the event page on Eventbrite.com for more information and tickets.

#### ■ June 22: Pride Bar Crawl

Pride Crawl presents the 7th annual Pride Bar Crawl on Cedar Springs Road and Throckmorton Street. Tickets start at \$10 and include two drink vouchers, free cover to the Pride Crawl drag show, a stadium party cup for the first 400 check-ins, drink specials and more. Check in time is 4 p.m. Visit Facebook.com/PrideBarCrawl for information.

#### ■ June 22: LGBT Pride Pole Showcase

Mesode presents the LGBT Pride Pole Showcase at Twisted Grip Fitness, 430 N. Coit Road, Ste. 300, featuring pole dancers showcasing their skills and creativity, 8-10 p.m.

*Have an event coming up? Email your information to 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*

Drag superstar Kennedy Davenport makes a special one-show-only appearance Sunday, June 2, at 7 p.m. at Hamburger Mary's Dallas to help celebrate the restaurant's one-year anniversary. Kennedy also performs Saturday, June 1, at Teen Pride as part of Dallas Pride in Fair Park. See listings for details,



# Deep inside Hollywood

ROMEO SAN VICENTE

## Finding 'Elizabeth Taylor: The Lost Tapes'

Elizabeth Taylor lived the word "ally." Along with other towering 20th-century women like Judy Garland, Taylor was a friend to the LGBTQ+ community, and in the 1980s she became a fierce advocate for people living with HIV/AIDS. She's also one of the most well-documented actresses who ever lived, so you might think there's nothing left to learn. But "Elizabeth Taylor: The Lost Tapes," from documentary filmmaker Nanette Burstein (*Hillary, American Teen*) dives deeply into Taylor's personal archives and over 70 hours of previously unheard audio interviews, turning her into the film's guide and narrator as she talks about her career, her marriages and everything else. Premiering at the Cannes Film Festival, the film will drop on HBO and Max in August.



Elizabeth Taylor

## A Supremes 'All-You-Can-Eat' buffet

*The Supremes at Earl's All-You-Can-Eat*, from queer writer-director Tina Mabry, is not a film about the legendary girl group, Motown or Diana Ross. Instead, the upcoming Hulu/Searchlight Pictures project — based on Edward Kelsey Moore's novel of the same name with a script co-written by Cee Marcellus — centers the joy of women's friendships. Starring Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor, Sanaa Lathan and Uzo Aduba, it's the story of three life-long friends who call themselves "The Supremes," and who find their relationships tested and life directions examined (presumably at the titular diner). There are some men on the menu, too, with co-stars Mekhi Phifer, Julian McMahon, Russell Hornsby and Vondie Curtis-Hall adding support, but the main course here is going to be the surprising twists and turns of women's lives. Look for it on Hulu to wind up summer on Aug. 23.

## Ellen and Einbinder prep stand-up specials

Two queer comedians, two specials, the first for one, the stated last for the other. Ellen DeGeneres, after the end of her daytime talk show, and following



Bisexual actress Olivia Wilde stars in an upcoming erotic thriller from Gregg Araki

she says she'll talk about "it" — the controversy over an allegedly toxic workplace culture on her show — and everything else. Not to be missed. Meanwhile, *Hannah Einbinder: Everything Must Go*, the first-ever stand-up special from the career-ascendant bisexual *Hacks* star, recorded last month in Los Angeles, is taking its first bow at June's Tribeca Film Festival before streaming on Max later this year. Call it passing the queer torch. We can't wait.

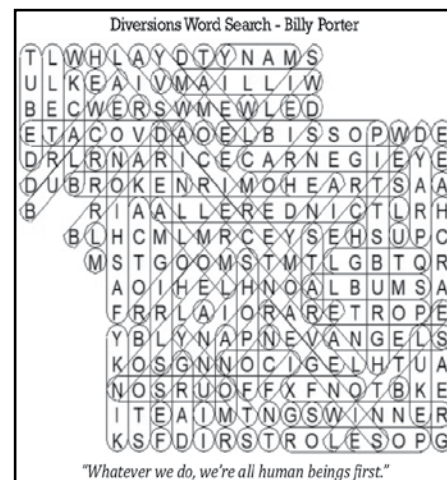
## Gregg Araki to direct Olivia Wilde in 'Want Your Sex'

Don't let the title confuse you. It's not a George Michael biopic. Instead, New Queer Cinema icon Gregg Araki (*The Living End*, *Mysterious Skin*) has something on-brand up his sleeve: Olivia Wilde as a sexual Svengali. *I Want Your Sex*, co-written by Araki and Karley Sciortino (*Slutever*, *Now Apocalypse*) follows

provocative artist Erika (Wilde) and her protégé, a young man named Elliot, as she turns him into her sexual muse. What follows, as per the official plot synopsis, is a complicated world of limit-smashing domination, desire, obsession and murder. In other words, the '90s erotic thriller is back, and we couldn't be happier for the genre to trend all over again. Besides Wilde, the film has yet to lock down a complete cast, but it's a certainty that sexy roster will show up when shooting begins this summer in Los Angeles.

Romeo San Vicente is ready for all indecent proposals.

## word search solution



## this week's solution



## browse

For a more complete Community Calendar online, visit [Tinyurl.com/dvevents](http://Tinyurl.com/dvevents).

## submit

To submit an item for inclusion in the Community Calendar, visit [Tinyurl.com/dvevents](http://Tinyurl.com/dvevents).

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### AIDS SERVICES

**ABOUNDING PROSPERITY**  
214-421-4800 | AboundingProsperity.org

**ACCESS | PARKLAND**  
5151 Maple | 214-590-5632

**AHF DALLAS WELLNESS CENTER**  
7777 Forest | 972-383-1060 | HIVcare.org

**ACCESS & INFORMATION NETWORK**  
2600 Stemmons | 214-943-4444 | aindallas.org

**AOC | AIDS OUTREACH CENTER**  
817-335-1994 | AOC.org | Ft. Worth

**ASD | AIDS SERVICES OF DALLAS**  
214-941-0523 | AIDSDallas.org | Dallas

**CAN COMMUNITY HEALTH**  
817-693-1000 | cancommunityhealth.org

**CHE | CTR FOR HEALTH EMPOWERMENT**  
972-432-7783 | checlinic.org | Dallas

**GREG DOLLGENER MEMORIAL AIDS FUND**  
972-743-6323 | GDMAF.org | Dallas

**HELP CTR FOR LGBT HEALTH WELLNESS**  
817-332-7722 | helpfw.org | Arlington/Ft Worth

**LEGACY CARES**  
4054 McKinney | 214-520-6308 | legacycares.org

**LEGAL HOSPICE OF TEXAS**  
214-521-6622 | LegalHospice.org | Dallas

**NELSON-TEBEDO HEALTH CENTER**  
214-528-2336 | MyResourceCenter.org

**PRISM HEALTH NORTH TEXAS**  
3900 Junius | 214-521-5191 | prismhealthntx.org

**RESOURCE CENTER**  
214-521-5124 | MyResourceCenter.org

**TUCKER'S GIFT**  
214-985-7297 | TuckersGift.org

**UT SOUTHWESTERN AIDS PREVENTION**  
8150 Brookriver | 469-291-2899 | Dallas

**WHITE ROCK FRIENDS MINISTRY**  
214-320-0043 | WhiteRockChurch.info | Dallas

### EDUCATION

**INVISIBLE HISTORIES PROJECT**  
InvisibleHistory.org

**LGBT CHAMBER FOUNDATION**  
214-821-4528 | lgbtchambrfoundation.org

**LGBT EMPLOYEE ASSOC. OF DALLAS**  
info@dallasLGBT.org | dallaslgbt.org

**LGBTQA PROGRAM at UT ARLINGTON**  
817-272-2099 | UTA.edu/lgbtqa

**NORTH TX LGBTQ EMPLOYEE RESOURCE**  
Group Coalition | ntcoalitioninfo@gmail.com

**PRIDE MUSEUM OF TEXAS**  
pridemuseumtx.org

**SMU WOMEN & LGBT CENTER**  
3140 Dyer St. | 214-768-4792

**SPECTRUM**  
214-768-4792 | people.smu.edu/spectrum

**STUDENTS DEMAND ACTION PLANO**  
646-324-8250 | dallasdieinadayeverytown.org

**SYNERGY WESLEY FOUNDATION**  
214-227-9527 | SynergyWesley.org

**TRANSGENDER EDUCATION NETWORK**  
419-330-9124 | transtexas.org

**UNT | PRIDE ALLIANCE**  
940-565-2589 | ied.unt.edu/pridealliance

**UNT | LGBT ARCHIVES**  
Discover.Library.UNT.edu

**UNT DENTON SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**  
940-565-2769 | texashistory.unt.edu

### MUSIC | THEATER

**DALLAS THEATER CENTER**  
214-522-8499 | oaklawnband.org

**KITCHEN DOG THEATER**  
KitchenDogTheater.org

**MBS PRODUCTIONS**  
MBSproductions.info

**OAK LAWN SYMPHONIC BAND**  
OakLawnBand.org

**THE DALLAS WINDS**  
214-565-9463 | DallasWinds.org

**THEATRE THREE**  
Theatre3Dallas.com

**TURTLE CREEK CHORALE**  
214-526-3214 x 101 | TurtleCreekChorale.com

**UPTOWN PLAYERS**  
214-219-2718 | UptownPlayers.org

**WATERTOWER THEATRE**  
972-450-6232 | WaterTowerTheatre.org

**WOMEN'S CHORUS OF DALLAS**  
214-520-7828 | twcoffice@tecd.org

### POLITICAL

**DALLAS/FORT WORTH FEDERAL CLUB**  
214-428-3332 | DFWFederalClub.org

**LOG CABIN REPUBLICANS OF DALLAS**  
202-420-7873 | LCRDallas.org

**METROPLEX REPUBLICANS**  
facebook.com/groups/metroplexdfw/about

**STONEWALL DEMOCRATS OF DALLAS**  
214-506-3367 | StonewallDemocratsofDallas.org

**TARRANT CO. STONEWALL DEMOCRATS**  
817-913-8743 | TarrantStonewall.org

### PRIDE

**ARLINGTON PRIDE**  
ArlingtonPride.org

**CARROLLTON PRIDE**  
sites.google.com/view/carrolltonpride

**DALLAS PRIDE**  
214-421-4800 | DallasPride.org

**DALLAS SOUTHERN PRIDE**  
214-421-4800 | DallasSouthernPride.com

**DENTON PRIDE FOUNDATION**  
936-443-3617 | DentonPride.com

**GRAYSON COUNTY PRIDE**  
P.O. Box 913756 | Sherman

**LONGVIEW PRIDE**  
903-658-5829 | Facebook.com/LongviewPride

**MCKINNEY PRIDE**  
PrideMcKinney@gmail.com | McKinneypride.org

**NORTH TEXAS PRIDE FOUNDATION**  
NorthTexasPride.com | Plano

**PRIDE FRISCO**  
972-665-6452 | PrideFrisco.org

**PRIDE IN DALLAS**  
hello@prideindallas.org | prideindallas.org

**REAL LIVE CONNECTION - TEEN PRIDE**  
469-666-7325 | DallasPride.org/teenpride

**TEXAS TRANS PRIDE**  
TXTransPride.org

**TEXAS LATINO PRIDE | DALLAS**  
P.O. Box 192111 | Dallas | TexasLatinoPride.org

**TRANSGENDER PRIDE OF DALLAS**  
facebook.com/transgenderprideofdallas

**TRINITY PRIDE OF FORT WORTH**  
P.O. Box 656 | Fort Worth | TrinityPrideFW.org

### PROFESSIONAL

**DALLAS LGBT BAR ASSOCIATION**  
2101 Ross | DLGBTBA.org

**LAMBDA PRIDE TOASTMASTERS**  
214-957-2011 | lambdapride@freetoasthost.us

**LEADERSHIP LAMBDA TOASTMASTERS**  
214-215-3745

**LGBT LAW SECTION OF TX STATE BAR**  
800-204-2222 ext. 1420 | LGBTLawTx.com

**LGBT+ REAL ESTATE ALLIANCE**  
972-754-0582

**NTX LGBT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
214-821-4528 | LGBTChamber.com

**OUT & EQUAL DFW**  
415-694-6500

### SERVICES

**BEARDANCE**  
Beardance.org

**BLACK TIE DINNER, INC.**  
469-224-0436 | BlackTie.org

**COALITION FOR AGING LGBT - DFW**  
972-528-8190 | CFA.lgbt

**DIFFA DALLAS**  
214-748-8580 | DIFFADallas.org

**GAY AND LESBIAN FUND FOR DALLAS**  
3824 Cedar Springs Road, Ste. 371 Dallas GLFD.org

**LAMBDA LEGAL SOUTHCENTRAL REGION**  
3500 Oaklawn | 214-219-8585 | lambdalegal.org

**LGBT+ HOUSING INITIATIVE**  
LGBTHousingInitiative.com

**LGBT NATIONAL HELP CENTER**  
415-355-0003 | LGBTHotline.org

**OUT OF THE CLOSET**  
214-559-2173 | OutOfTheCloset.org | Dallas

**JONATHAN'S PLACE**  
224 W. Page Ave. | 214-941-8578 | JPKids.org

**PURPLE FOUNDATION**  
PurpleFoundation.org

**TAKE BACK OAK LAWN**  
facebook.com/takebackoaklawn

**TEDDY BEAR PARTY**  
TeddyBearParty.org

**TEXAS PRIDE IMPACT FUNDS**  
214-421-4800 | TxPIF.org

**THE DALLAS WAY**  
214-942-1414 | TheDallasWay.org

**UNLEASHED LGBTQ**  
UnleashedLGBTQ.com

### SOCIAL

**CCCC | CLASSIC CHASSIS CAR CLUB**  
ClassicChassis.com

**CHICK HAPPY HOUR**  
facebook.com/ChickHappyhour

**COUPLES METRO DALLAS**  
P.O. Box 192116 | CouplesMetroDallas.com

**DALLAS BEARS | TBRU**  
P.O. Box 191223 | DallasBears.org | Dallas

**DFW FUSE**  
214-540-4435 | DFWFuse.com

**DFW SISTERS O PERPETUAL INDULGENCE**  
sistemistress@dfwsisters.org DFWSisters.org

**DISCIPLINE CORPS**  
disciplinecorps.com

**EAST TEXAS PFLAG**  
903-372-9524 | Tyler | PFLAGEastTexas.org

**FORT WORTH FIFTH**  
facebook.com/groups/131006360969130

**GENDERBRAVE**  
214-540-4415 | MyResourceCenter.org

**GOH | GRUPO ORGULLO HISPANO**  
214-540-4433 | MyResourceCenter.org

**IMPERIAL COURT DE FORT WORTH**  
careteam@icfw.org | ICFWA.org

**LEATHER KNIGHTS**  
214-402-4105 | facebook.com/LeatherKnights

**LVL/PWA CAMPOUT**  
campout@lvpwa.com | LVL/PWA.com

**NATIONAL LEATHER ALLIANCE - DALLAS**  
tender\_mistress@nladallas.org | NLADallas.org

**OLITA - OAK LAWN SOCIAL GROUP**  
olita@dfw@gmail.com

**OTBC - ONE TRUE BOOK CLUB**  
609-306-2238 | onetruebookclub@gmail.com

**PEGASUS SQUARES**  
214-924-0263 | Pegasus-Squares.com

**POZ DALLAS**  
212-242-2163 | poz.com/tag/dallas

**PRIME TIMERS OF DALLAS/FT. WORTH**  
214-218-0912 | primetimersDFW@gmail.com

**RAINBOW GARDEN CLUB**  
rgcdfw@gmail.com | RainbowGardenClub.com

**RAINBOW ROUNDUP**  
469-443-8993 | info@RRUp.org | RRUp.org

**SAPPHIQ LGBT+ women age 18+,**  
214-521-5124 | MyResourceCenter.org

**SILVER PRIDE PROJECT**  
972-793-8352 | info@silverpride.com

**THRIVE | FOLKS 50+**  
214-521-5124 | MyResourceCenter.org

**TYLER AREA GAYS**  
P.O. Box 6331 | Tyler | TylerAreaGays.com

**UBE | UNITED BLACK ELLUMENT**  
214-760-9718 | UBEDallas.org

**UNITED COURT OF THE LONE STAR EMPIRE**  
DallasCourt.org

**VALOR LATINO**  
214-540-4433 | acarabajal@rcdallas.org

### SPIRITUALITY

**AGAPE MCC**  
817-535-5002 | AgapeMCC.com | Fort Worth

**CATHEDRAL OF HOPE**  
214-351-1901 | cathedralofhope.com

**CHURCH OF ONE LOVE**  
972-245-6520 | ChurchOfOneLove.org

**CELEBRATION COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
817-335-3222 | Celebration-Community-Church.com

**CELEBRATION ON THE LAKE CHURCH**  
903-910-3184 | COTLChurch.org | Mabank

**CONGREGATION BETH EL BINAH**  
BethElBinah.org

**CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
214-520-9090 | CrossroadsCommunityChurch.us

**EPISCOPAL - ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE**  
214-352-0410 | TheDoubter.org

**FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF DALLAS**  
214-528-3990 | DallasUU.org

**GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
214-824-2533 | GraceUMCDallas.org

**GREENLAND HILLS METHODIST CHURCH**  
214-826-2020 | GreenlandHills.org

**HARVEST MCC**  
Denton | HarvestMCC.org

**KESSLER PARK UNITED METHODIST**  
214-942-0098 | kpumc.org

**NORTHAVEN UNITED METHODIST**  
214-363-2479 | Northaven.org

**OAK LAWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
214-521-5197 | oaklawn@olumc.org

**ST. STEPHEN UNITED METHODIST**  
972-279-3112 | ststephenumctx.org

**TRINITY MCC**  
817-265-5454 | TrinityMCC.org | Grand Prairie

**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST**  
972-296-2155 | Duncanville | TUMCD.org

**WHITE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
214-320-0043 | WhiteRockChurch.info

### SPORTS

**BORN SPORTS LEAGUE**  
info@bornsportsleague.com BornSportsLeague.com

**DALLAS DIABLOS**  
5300 Martel Ave., Dallas | dallasdiablos@igrugby.org

**DALLAS INDEPENDENT VOLLEYBALL**  
214-563-9717 | DIVADallas.org

**DIFFERENT STROKES GOLF ASSOCIATION**  
info@dsgadallas.org | DSGADallas.org

**FC DALLAS**  
FCDallas.com

**FRONT RUNNERS DALLAS**  
817-455-3934 | facebook.com/groups/

**LGBT OUTDOORS**  
214-430-4257 | LGBTOutdoors.com

**LOST SOULS RUGBY FOOTBALL**  
LostSoulsRFC.org

**NORTH TEXAS WOMEN'S SOFTBALL**  
817-823-1839

**OAK LAWN BOWLING ASSOCIATION**  
facebook.com/oaklawnbowlingassociation

**OAK LAWN SKI AND SCUBA CLUB**  
214-521-5342 ext. 1769

**OAK LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION**  
2807 Allen St., Ste. 385 | OLTDallas.org

**PEGASUS SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL ASSOC.**  
972-879-7900 | DallasPSSA.org

**RAINBOW ROLLERS BOWLING LEAGUE**  
817-540-0303 | rainbow\_rollers\_league@yahoo.com

**TEXAS GAY RODEO ASSOCIATION**  
214-526-1115 | TGRA.org

### SUPPORT

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS LAMBDA**  
214-444-9080 | DallasAl-Anon.org

**BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS LONE STAR**  
888-887-2447 | BBBSTX.org

**BLACK TRANSMEN INC.**  
855-446-5691 | BlackTransMen.org

**CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY NTX**  
214-345-8230

**CEDAR SPRINGS MERCHANT ASSOC.**  
thestriconcedarsprings.com

**CODEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS**  
214-868-7350 | 817-834-2119 | CoDependents.org

**DALLAS HOPE CHARITIES**  
214-301-9407 | DallasHopeCharities.org

**DFW TRANS KIDS & FAMILIES**  
972-850-8405 | dfwtkf.com

**ELEVATE NORTH TEXAS**  
214-556-5616 | elevatenx.org

**FAMILY PRIDE COALITION**  
817-881-3949

**GAY AND LESBIAN ALLIANCE OF N. TX**  
GALANorthTexas.org

**GAY LESBIAN ANGER MANG. GROUP**  
469-328-1980 | Marial33@gmail.com

**IMPULSE GROUP DALLAS**  
424-672-5567 | impulsegrp.org/dallas

**LAMBDA GROUP NICOTINE ANONYMOUS**  
214-629-7806 | NICADFW.org

**LEZ TALK DALLAS**  
815-905-2985 | LezTalkDallas.com

**LGBTQ SAVES | TEEN SUPPORT GROUP**  
LGBTQSaves.org | Fort Worth

**LGBTQ+ SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCE**  
899-273-8255 | 877-565-8860 | 888-234-SAGE

**ONE SAFE PLACE**  
817-916-4323 | Fort Worth | OneSafePlace.org

**PFLAG-DALLAS | FORT WORTH**  
972-849-0383 | 817-382-7353

**SAME SEX PARTNER GRIEF GROUP**  
TastefullyRichard@gmail.com

**SEX & LOVE ADDICTS ANONYMOUS**  
6525 Inwood Road | Dallas 469-609-7762

**SHARED HOUSING CENTER**  
214-821-8510 | SharedHousingCenter.weebly.com

**THE SENIOR SOURCE**  
3910 Harry Hines | 214-823-5700 | TheSeniorSource.org

**TRANS EMPOWERMENT COALITION**  
TransEmpowermentCoalition.org

**TRANS KIDS & FAMILIES**  
Carrollton | 972-850-8405 | DFWTKF.com

**TRANS PRIDE INITIATIVE**  
214-449-1439 | TPride.org

**TREVOR PROJECT**  
866-488-7386 | TheTrevorProject.org

<

# Official LGBTQ Business Directory 2024

FROM THE PAGES OF OUT NORTH TEXAS

**OUT** north texas  
The Premier LGBTQ Visitors Guide  
2024 Business Directory  
OUTntx.com

**Julie Johnson:**  
Out in the halls  
of power

Welcome to LGBTQ North Texas  
This is your guide to what to see, where to go and what to do!

## ACCOMMODATIONS

■ **Lorenzo Hotel Dallas**, Tapestry Collection by Hilton | lorenzohotel.com | 214-273-3000

## ACCOUNTANTS - CERTIFIED PUBLIC

■ **Aishman, Rick, PC**  
4228 N. Central, Ste. 225 | 214-520-7363  
■ **Allen, Ron, CPA** | ronallencpa.com  
2909 Cole Ave., Ste. 119 | 214-954-0042  
■ **Bax, Terry, CPA**  
accounting@jbtcpa.com 214-434-1470

## ADULT

■ **After Hours Video** and much more!  
2528 W. Walnut | Garland | 972-276-0893  
■ **Alternatives** of New Fine Arts  
1720 W. Mockingbird Lane | 214-630-7071  
■ **Club Dallas** | theclubs.com  
2616 Swiss Ave. | 214-821-1990

## AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING

■ **Jade Air** | Air Conditioning & Heating  
jadeairdallas.com | 214-522-2805

## ANTIQUES | CONSIGNMENT

■ **Antique Gallery** of Mesquite  
antiquegallerymesquite.com | 972-270-7700  
■ **Dulce** Interior Consignment | 214-219-5656  
1208 N. Riverfront Blvd. | mydulce.com

## ATTORNEYS

■ **Burch, Lorie, L.** | burch-law.com  
7920 Belt Line Rd, Ste. 700 | 972-385-0558  
■ **Guelich, Holly B.** | holly-guelich.com  
12740 Hillcrest Road | 214-522-3669

## ■ KBFamilyLaw.com

12222 Merit Dr., Ste. 1200 | 214-764-9888  
■ **Olinger, Lynn S.** | LSOlaw.com  
3710 Rawlins St., Ste. 1420 | 214-396-9090  
■ **Seidel, Adam L.** | adamseidel.com  
8150 N. Central Expwy. | 214-528-3344  
■ **Wiley, Rob** | robwiley.com  
2613 Thomas Ave. | 214-528-6500

## CLOTHING RETAIL

■ **Outlines Men's Wear**  
3906 Cedar Springs Road | 214-528-1955  
■ **Rufskin** | rufskin.com

## COMPUTER SUPPORT SERVICES

■ **DFW MSP** | DFWMSP.com  
3626 N. Hall St., Ste. 505 | 888-423-5372

## CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAUS

■ **Visit Arlington** arlington.org/lgbtq  
800-342-4305  
■ **Visit Dallas** | visitdallas.com  
1807 Ross Ave., Ste. 450 | 800-232-5527  
■ **Visit Irving** | IrvingTexas.com  
800-247-8464

## COUNSELORS - LICENSED PROFESSIONAL

■ **Baker, Renee, LPC** | 214-607-5620  
■ **Owen, Jimmy, LPC-S** | jimmyowen.com  
3838 Oak Lawn, Ste. 1000 | 214-546-8852  
■ **Porter, Feleshia, LPC** | 214-454-8144  
■ **Room For Change** | 214-385-5445  
3500 Oak Lane, Ste. 200 | roomforchange.info

## CRUISES & TRAVEL PLANNERS

■ **Dream Vacations** - Doug Thompson  
bigDcruises.com | 214-254-4980

## DENTISTS

■ **Vogel, Jonathan** | knoxdental.net  
4514 Cole Ave., Ste. 905 | 214-521-6261  
■ **Terrell, Kevin** | terrelldental.com  
2603 Oak Lawn Ave, Ste. 100 | 214-329-1818

## EDUCATION

■ **Dallas College** | dallascollge.edu  
214-378-1500

## ELECTROLYSIS | HAIR REMOVAL

■ **Hair & Now Electrolysis**  
hairnowelectrolysis.com | 214-865-8345  
■ **Hair Today Gone Tomorrow**  
htgetelectrolysis.com | 682-593-1442

## EYEWEAR

■ **Fashion Optical** | 214-526-6006  
fashionopticaldallas.com | 3430 Oak Lawn Ave.  
■ **Uptown Vision** | 214-953-3937  
uptownvisiondallas.com | 3710 Rawlins, Ste. 100

## FINANCIAL PLANNING

■ **Anderson, Sandy, CPA**, 214-500-6385  
andersonandassociatesfinancial.com  
■ **Sammons, Stephanie, CFP**  
sammonswealth.com | 972-440-1194  
■ **Sherman, Judy S., CFBS**  
2273 E. Continental | 817-488-0660

## FLORISTS

■ **All Blooming Florist** | 214-238-3283  
allbloomingflorist.com | 2615 Oak Lawn Ave.

## HAIR SALON | BARBER SHOP

■ **Salon Aura** | salonauradallas.com  
3910 Cedar Springs Road | 214-443-0454

## HEALTH CARE SERVICES

■ **AIDS Outreach Center** | aoc.org  
400 N. Beach St., Ste. 100 | 817-335-1994  
■ **AIN** | aindallas.org  
2600 N. Stemmons, Ste. 151 | 214-943-4444  
■ **CAN** | cancommunityhealth.org  
616 Matlock Centre Circle | 817-693-1000  
■ **HELP Center for LGBT Health & Wellness** helpfw.org | 817-332-7722  
■ **Planned Parenthood** of Greater Texas  
plannedparenthood.org | 800-230-7526  
■ **Prism Health** North Texas | phntx.org  
3900 Junius St., Ste. 300 | 214-521-5191  
■ **Resource Center** | 214-521-5124  
myresourcecenter.org | LGBTQ services & info.

## INSURANCE

■ **Alex Long Agency** | 972-236-6128  
Allstateagencies.com/AlexLong  
■ **Irvin, M. Angel** | Farmers Insurance  
4807 W. Lovers Lane, Ste. 303 | 972-367-6200  
■ **Medicare4USA** | Individual & Group  
Medicare4USA.com | 214-989-7900  
■ **Steven Graves Insurance**  
abchomeins.com | 972-423-0005  
■ **Wise Insurance**  
wiseinsurancegroup.com | 469-464-5740

## MATCHMAKERS

■ **Fern Connections**  
fernconnections.com | 469-785-6136

## MEDIA

■ **Dallas Voice** | The Premier Media Source for LGBTQ Texas | dallasvoice.com  
1825 Market Center Blvd. # 240 | 214-754-8710  
■ **He Said Dallas** | Must see, do, eat & more for gay Dallas | hesaiddallas.com  
■ **Lambda Weekly** | knon.org  
89.3 FM | 214-828-9500  
■ **Local Media Foundation**  
localmedia.org | 615-229-5181  
■ **National LGBT Media Association**  
nationalgaymediaassociation.com  
■ **News Is Out** | NewsIsOut.com  
214-754-8711 | Queer Media Collaborative  
■ **OUT North Texas** | The Premier LGBTQ Visitors Guide | 214-754-8711 | outntx.com  
1825 Market Center Blvd., Ste. 240

## MORTGAGE & REFINANCE

■ **Ramirez, Armando** | Supreme Lending  
214-263-5507 | mandoramirez.supremelending.com  
■ **Selders, Derek** | Common Sense lending  
CSLoans.com | 214-224-0987

## MOVERS

■ **Fantastic Moves** | FantasticMoves.com  
214-349-6683 (MOVE)

## MUSEUMS

■ **Amon Carter Museum** of American Art  
cartermuseum.org | Fort Worth | 817-738-1933  
■ **Nasher Sculpture Center**  
nashersculpturecenter.org | 214-242-5100

## NURSERIES & GARDEN CENTERS

■ **North Haven Gardens** | NHG.com  
7700 Northaven Road | 214-363-5316

## PET ADOPTION & ANIMAL SHELTERS

■ **SPCA of Texas** | spca.org  
2400 Lone Star Drive | 214-742-7722

## PHOTOGRAPHERS

■ **Proud Family Portraits Terry Rickman** | 972-877-9546 | LGBT-BE

## PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS

■ **Bellos, Nick** | Texas Speciality Clinic  
2603 Oak Lawn Ave., Suite 101 | 469-496-2454  
■ **LeDoux, Mark** | MarkLeDouxMD.com  
3500 Oak Lawn, Ste., 380 | 214-888-3900  
■ **NTX Infectious Diseases** Consultants  
ntidc.org | 3409 Worth, Ste. 710 | 214-823-2533  
■ **MD Progressive Care** | 3500 Oak Lawn  
mdprogressivecare.com | 214-521-0100  
■ **Pounders, Steven** | drpounders.com  
3500 Oak Lawn Ave. | 214-520-8833  
■ **Uptown Physicians Group**  
uptownphysiciansgroup.com | 214-303-1033

## PRINTING SERVICES

■ **PrintBurner** | PrintBurner.com  
214-702-5135  
■ **UPS Store** | theuspstore.com | LGBT-BE  
4848 Lemmon Ave. | 214-780-0877

## PSYCHOLOGIST

■ **Johnson, Alan, PsyD** | 214-945-2727  
Eudaimonia Wellness | edmwllness.com

## REAL ESTATE

■ **Atkinson, Steve** | Dave Perry-Miller  
DavePerryMiller.com | 214-334-7404

## REAL ESTATE

■ **Carnes, Scott**, GRI, ABR, SRS, EPRO, ASP  
DavePerryMiller.com | 214-490-6895  
■ **Chris Hickman Group** | Ebby Halliday  
chrishickmangroup.com | 469-569-1106  
■ **DeuPree, Joe** | Better Homes & Gardens  
Real Estate Winans | 214-683-7224  
■ **Durstine Jr., George H.**  
Scottwood Realty | 214-616-4030  
■ **Hobson, Phil, H Group** | Berkshire  
Hathaway weknowtx.com | 214-659-3624  
■ **LaPierre, Paul, GRI**  
Century 21 Judge Fite Realtors | 214-564-7741  
■ **Narey, Jay, ABR, ALHS** | jaynarey.com  
Keller Williams Realty | 214.207.4462  
■ **Scott, Danny Alan** | Scottwood Realty  
Broker | 972-588-8304

## RECRUITING

■ **DEI Recruiting & HR Consulting**  
deirecruitingandconsulting.com | 214-432-4642

## RESTAURANTS

■ **Cremona Italian** | cremonabistro.com  
2704 Worthington | 214-871-1115  
■ **Mama's Daughter's Diner**  
mamasdaughtersdiner.com | 214-742-8646  
■ **Nerdvana Frisco** | nerdvanafrisco.com  
5757 Main St., Ste. 112 | Frisco | 214-618-9732

## ROOF CONTRACTORS

■ **NorthStar Roofing** | NorthstarRFG.com  
Roofing | Fencing | Gutters 214-274-5596

## SHIPPING AND RECEIVING SERVICES

■ **UPS Store** | theupsstore.com #5254  
4848 Lemmon | 214-780-0877 | LGBT-BE

## SIGNAGE & BANNERS

■ **FASTSIGNS Love Field** | fastsigns.com  
1555 Prudential Dr. | 214-267-0600

## SURROGACY & FAMILY SERVICES

■ **Family Solutions International**  
713-827-0301

## TITLE COMPANIES

■ **Independence Title** | JT Williams  
independencedfw.com | 214-623-5589  
■ **Republic Title** | republictitle.com  
3131 Turtle Creek Blvd. | 214-528-8916

## TRANSPORTATION

■ **DART** | dart.org | 214-979-1111

## VETERINARY SERVICES

■ **Isla Veterinary Hospital** | islavet.com  
14380 Marsh Lane, Ste. 110 | 972-738-1111

## VITAMINS & SUPPLEMENTS

■ **Sundrops Vitamins** | sundrops.com  
4306 N. Central Expressway | 214-521-0550

## WEDDING PLANNERS & SERVICES

■ **LGBTWeddings.com**  
844-899-LOVE x 501

## YOGURT SHOPS

■ **Monster Yogurt** - Shop & Truck  
scarytastesgood.com | 214-321-6363

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# SCENE

# GLFD Happy Hour at Fibonacci Plants

PEOPLE, PLACES AND FACES





# Celebrating Pride through the years



# Free Condoms & Lube Delivered



*the*  
**CONDOM  
SHOP**



*the*  
**CONDOM  
of the month CLUB**

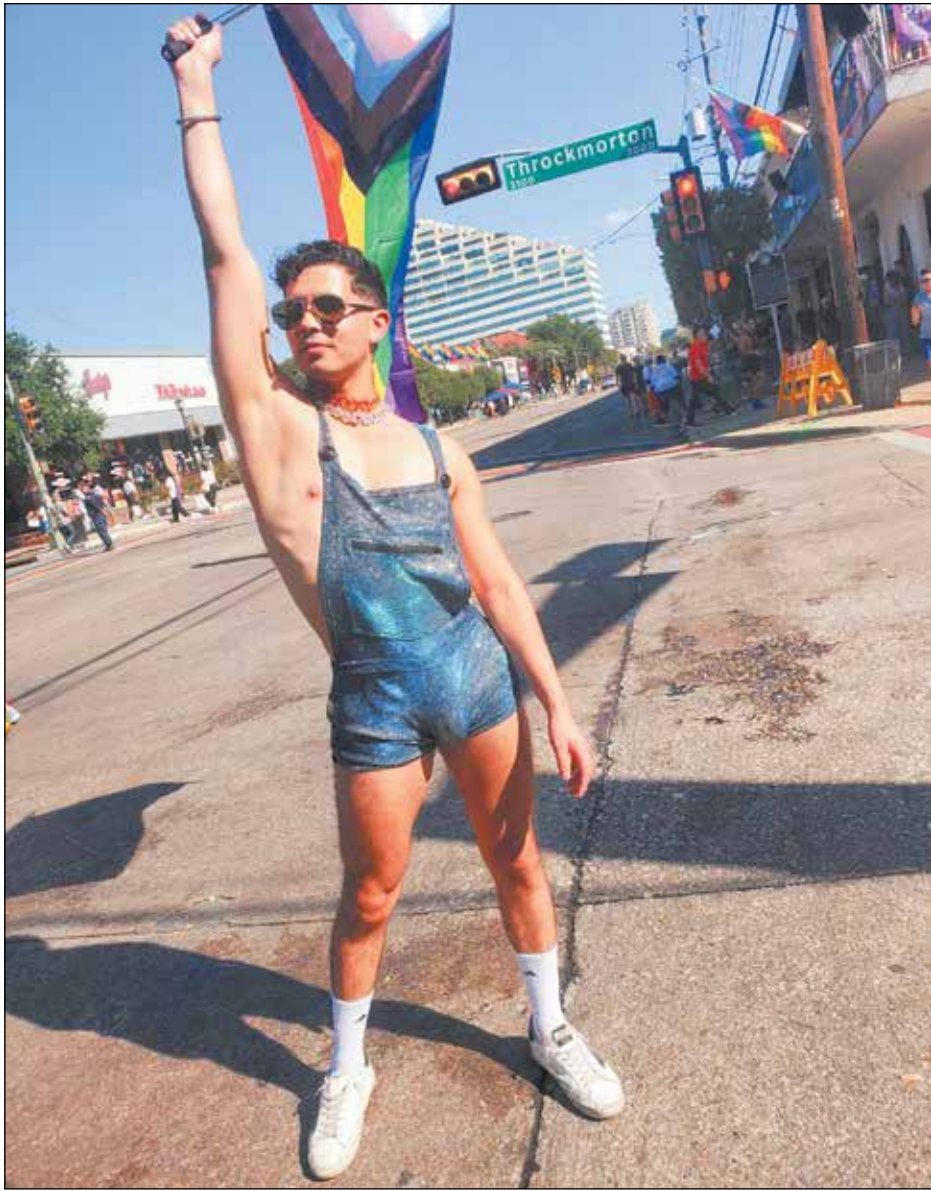


**HELP Center**  
*for LGBT Health and Wellness*

f @ t i n | **HELP**CenterTX.org  
FORT WORTH 817-332-7722  
ARLINGTON 817-200-6500



# Celebrating Pride through the years



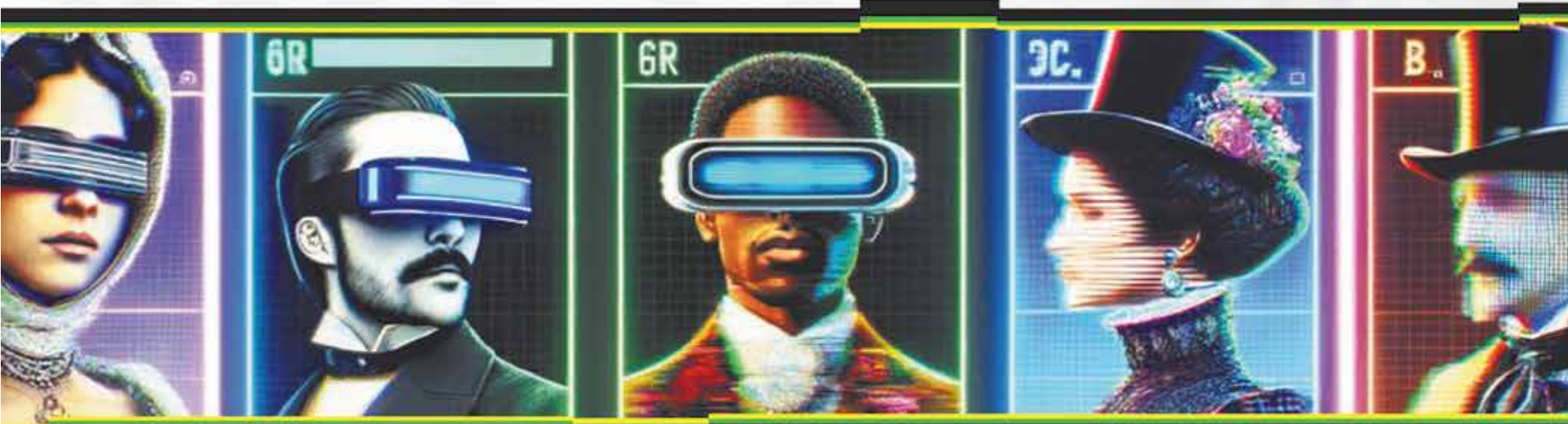
# Celebrating Pride through the years



BLACK TIE DINNER

# SIMULATION

43RD ANNUAL BLACK TIE DINNER  
**NOVEMBER 16, 2024**



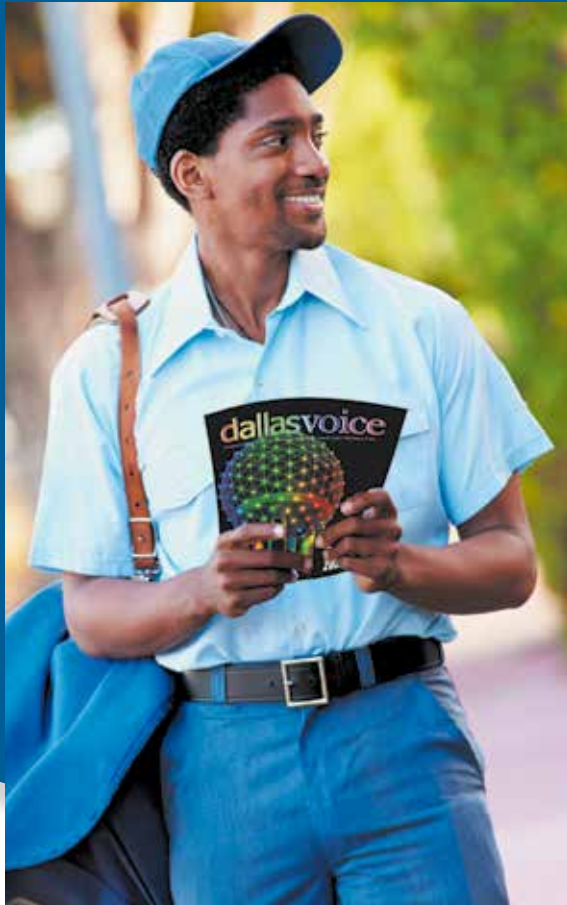
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# Celebrating Pride through the years





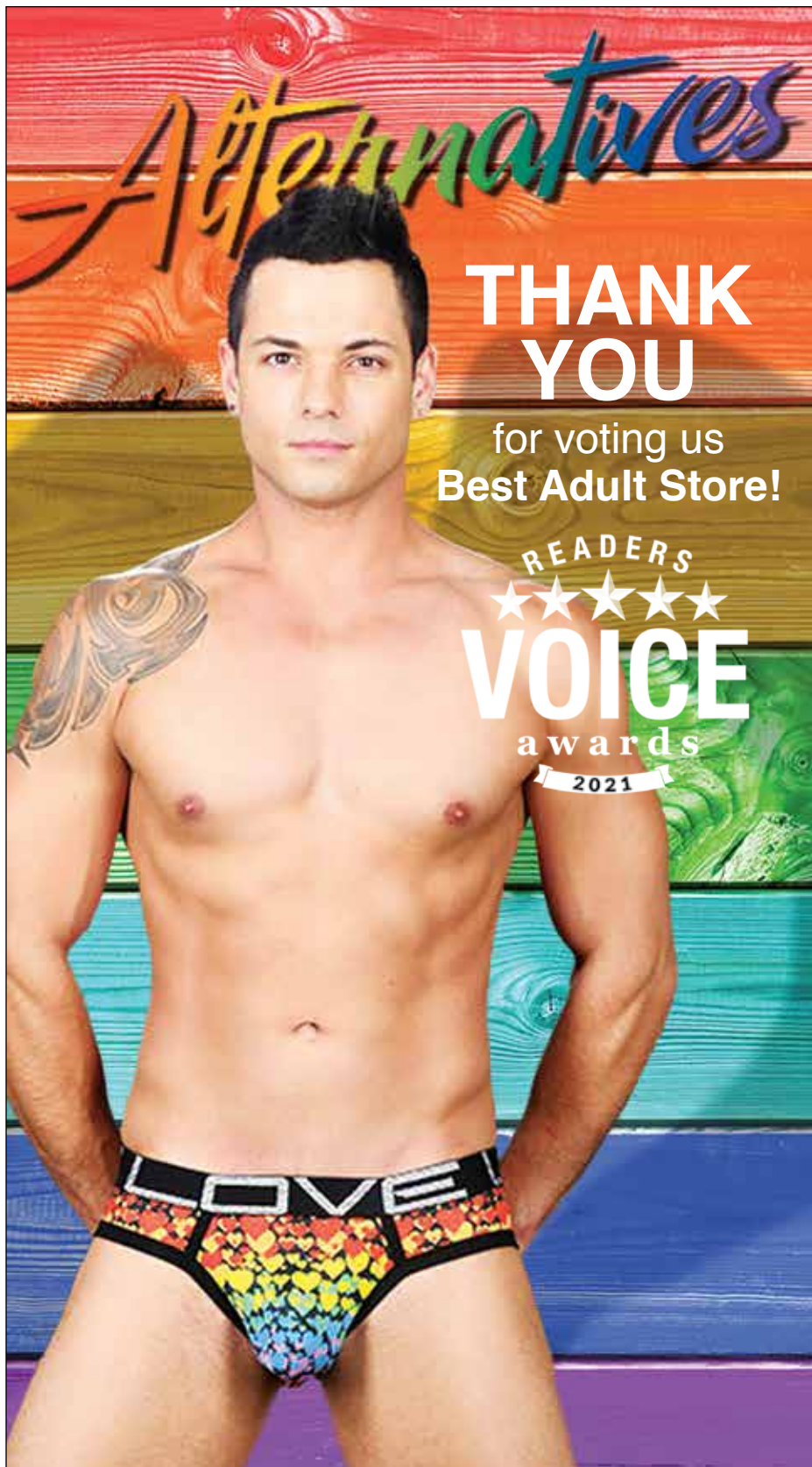
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*(enter in rear behind New Fine Arts)*

# Celebrating Pride through the years



## WORD SEARCH

### Diversions Word Search - Billy Porter

Find the words in the list hiding across, backwards, up, down and diagonally in the grid. Words separated by a slash "/" are found individually in the puzzle. Words in parentheses "("") are not in the puzzle. The unused letters starting at top left and going down by row will reveal a quote by him!



T	L	W	H	L	A	Y	D	T	Y	N	A	M	S						
U	L	K	E	A	I	V	M	A	I	L	L	I	W						
B	E	C	W	E	R	S	W	M	E	W	L	E	D						
E	T	A	C	O	V	D	A	O	E	L	B	I	S	S	O	P	W	D	E
D	R	L	R	N	A	R	I	C	E	C	A	R	N	E	G	I	E	Y	E
D	U	B	R	O	K	E	N	R	I	M	O	H	E	A	R	T	S	A	A
B	B	L	H	C	M	L	M	R	C	E	Y	S	E	H	S	U	P	C	
M	S	T	G	O	O	M	S	T	M	T	L	G	B	T	Q	R			
A	O	I	H	E	L	H	N	O	A	L	B	U	M	S	A				
F	R	R	L	A	I	O	R	A	R	E	T	R	O	P	E				
Y	B	L	Y	N	A	P	N	E	V	A	N	G	E	L	S				
K	O	S	G	N	N	O	C	I	G	E	L	H	T	U	A				
N	O	S	R	U	O	F	F	X	F	N	O	T	B	K	E				
I	T	E	A	I	M	T	N	G	S	W	I	N	N	E	R				
K	S	F	D	I	R	S	T	R	O	L	E	S	O	P	G				

William/Ellis/Porter (II) Actor/Singer/Fashion Icon/LGBTQ/Advocate (Born in) Pittsburgh (PA) Carnegie/Mellon/Grad Star/Search/Winner (1992)

Many/Broadway/Roles: Grease/Dreamgirls Little/Shop of/Horrors Angels (in)/America Lola (in)/Kinky/Boots Tony/Award (Winner)

Pose/on FX (2018-21) (as) Pray/Tell Lead (Actor)/Emmy (The) Broken/Hearts Club (2000 film) Cinderella (2021)

Anything's/Possible (2022) Directoral/Debut Our Son (w)/Luke/Evans ('23) Five/Albums (including) Black/Mona/Lisa (2023) Memoir:/Unprotected (2021)

Visit <https://www.facebook.com/DiversionsPuzzles> for more free puzzles and book info by Kerry Shatzer!

Solution on Page 98



# MarketPlace

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Solution on Page 98

### Across

- 1 Island of Mead's research
- 6 *Peter Pan* critter, for short
- 10 Type of defense for the Indiana Fever
- 14 Mushroom source?
- 15 Big-time defeat
- 16 Got a little behind
- 17 Start of a quote from 21-Across
- 19 Laura of *Recount*
- 20 Turned tail
- 21 Singer/songwriter Perry of the film *Let It Die Here*
- 22 Paul Newman role in *Exodus*
- 23 Ready to go in
- 25 More of the quote
- 32 Cary of *An Affair to Remember*
- 33 Dad's bros
- 34 Some like it hot
- 35 Gets ready to shoot off
- 36 Sharp pain
- 38 Earthy pigment
- 40 Toto outburst
- 41 Bigwigs, to Britten
- 42 Sources of 411 of old
- 43 Barneys event
- 44 Editor Roshan
- 45 More of the quote
- 49 Maria's *Do-*

53 Trojan, but not a condom

- 54 Female hormone
- 56 Cry of pride
- 57 End of the quote
- 59 *If \_\_\_ I Would Leave You*
- 60 Michelangelo's painting and sculpture
- 61 Place to perch in Cincinnati
- 63 Mike Brady portrayer Robert
- 64 Ford lemon that was not fruitful

### Down

- 1 Lammy winner Rednour
- 2 Type of seaman
- 3 Drop down like a chickenhawk
- 4 Linc portrayer in *The Mod Squad*
- 5 Side by side for female nudists?
- 6 Backseat driver, e.g.
- 7 Deep pink
- 8 Excelling
- 9 Coins w. Abe images
- 10 Gemini's guys
- 11 Wilson of *Zoolander*
- 12 Overly brainy sort
- 13 Harvey's *Hairspray* role
- 18 Georgia spread on

- the screen
- 21 Suit type
- 24 Bears org.
- 25 Diva's piece
- 26 Drivers get off on it
- 27 Officer in the navy (abbr.)
- 28 Scores for Burke
- 29 End of a Beatles song title
- 30 Not even once, to Dickinson
- 31 Long-jawed swimmers
- 32 Like the "fruit loop" section of a city
- 36 Bright light in the Little Bear
- 37 His brother laid him in his grave
- 39 Looked like
- 41 Atlas acronym
- 42 Social stratum
- 43 Applies, as body paint
- 44 Came together
- 45 Spud, to Gomer
- 46 Word before "ho!"
- 47 Pulled the plug on
- 48 Classic Chevy
- 50 *Great Caesar's ghost!*
- 51 Come together
- 52 Company that can help you double click your mouse
- 55 Rub the wrong way
- 58 Rough stuff underground

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