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Established 1984 | DallasVoice.com | Volume 41 | Issue 19
| FREE | Friday, September 13, 2024



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— Taylor Schmidt

Taylor Schmidt grew up in Elmore City, Oklahoma, and graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 2012 with a degree in history. He then moved to Dallas, Texas, for medical school at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and graduated in 2017. His education continued at UT Southwestern with a residency in Internal Medicine in 2020 and a fellowship in HIV Medicine in 2021. He was awarded with a national clinical fellowship from the HIV Medical Association in 2020. His interests include HIV primary care and prevention, general internal medicine, and transgender medicine.

In his spare time, he enjoys playing the piano, reading non-fiction books, running at the Katy Trail, learning new recipes, and spending time with family.

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Associated Press - Associate Member
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Bites from our blog

WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com

Sarah McBride wins Democratic Primary in Delaware congressional race



Sarah McBride with HRC's Kelley Robinson

Delaware lawmaker Sarah McBride is on her way to making history as the first openly transgender person elected to Congress after winning the Democratic Primary for Delaware's sole congressional seat.

Noted a press release from the LGBTQ Victory Fund, which has endorsed McBride, "Sarah is going to do amazing work in the U.S. House. She's spent her career prioritizing trans voices, ensuring that our lives are valued and prioritized.

"And now, she'll be taking the fight to the U.S. Congress, where transphobes will be forced to justify their terrible policies to her face. She's going to hold them accountable, and we couldn't be more excited for her."

McBride became the country's first openly transgender state senator in November 2020 when she racked up a runaway victory over Republican Steve Washington in the race to represent Delaware's 1st Senate District.

Delaware is a heavily Democratic state, which, according to NBC News, makes McBride the favorite to win the general election and replace Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, who is running for the U.S. Senate.

The Republican candidate is John Whalen III, a retired police officer and former owner of a construction company.

At her election night celebration in New Castle, McBride told supporters, "Alongside the immense amount of gratitude I feel tonight, I also feel the deep responsibility that comes with being your nominee for this seat. While tonight we celebrate our victory in the primary, we all know that our work is far from over, and we know what

is at stake in this election.

"We know what is on the line with the MAGA extremists who are on our ballot here in November in Delaware. We know what happens if Donald Trump wins and Republicans get the full control of Congress. They will not hesitate one second to pass their Project 2025 agenda."

She added, "Our rights and our freedoms, our dignity and our democracy are on the line in this election, but so, too, is the promise of tomorrow, because we aren't just here because of what's at risk. We are also here because of what is possible. ... Y'all, hope and joy are making a comeback in America."

— Tammye Nash

Stage Notes: WaterTower Theatre announces changes

Sounds like major but not-great changes are ahead for WaterTower Theatre. In an email Friday, WaterTower officials wrote that changes are coming to The Addison Conference and Theatre Centre — and, inherently, the theater itself, since a recent study by the city proposed a plan that will slash WaterTower's initiatives.

According to the email, "On May 28, the Town of Addison received a proposed plan from a firm in New England to increase programming at the theatre center. The changes in this plan carry a structural shift that severely cuts funding to WTT (40 percent less than previous seasons) along with directing WTT to completely vacate the offices, box office, props, costume, scene shop and other areas of the building starting Oct. 1 of this year."

The hit to the theater came a week ago when the theater laid off its associate producer, Elizabeth Kensek. The email went on to say that the Addison Conference and Theatre Center is still home to WaterTower. But the question is, at what cost?

— Rich Lopez

LCR endorses candidates, announces fundraiser with Kid Rock



Kid Rock, Kimberly Guilfoyle and Richard Grenell will appear at Log Cabin Republicans' 'Red, White and Rock' event

Log Cabin Republicans PAC this week announced its fourth round of endorsements in the 2024 election cycle, with Log Cabin Republicans President Charles Moran noting that the endorsements were made after "strong recommendations from grassroots members and chapters nationwide."

Moran said, "These candidates are committed to recapturing and strengthening conservative majorities in the U.S. House and Senate. Armed with the determination and experience to reverse the destructive policies of the Biden-Harris administration, they are ready to steer our country back in the right direction." Moran added that while the candidates are "diverse in their backgrounds, stories and skills," they share a common vision of "expanding economic opportunity, defending individual liberties and ensuring the safety and security of all Americans. They exemplify values that resonate across our LCR family, and we are confident that they will make us proud as members of the 119th Congress come January."

Candidates endorsed in this fourth round are: Kelly Cooper (AZ-04), Michael Maher (CA-21); Congresswoman Michelle Steel (CA-45); Randy Niemeyer (IN-01); Austin Theriault (ME-02); Paul Hudson (MI-03); Scott Fegler (NJ-06); Alex Dodenhoff (NY-10); Congressman Mike Lawler (NY-17); Congresswoman Elise Stefanik (NY-21); Congressman Brandon Williams (NY-22); Congresswoman Claudia Tenney (NY-24); Addul

Ali (NC-12); Congressman Mike Turner (OH-10); Congressman Dave Joyce (OH-14); Congresswoman Stephanie Bice (OK-05); Rob Mercuri (PA-17); Congresswoman Celeste Maloy (UT-02); Congressman Burgess Owens (UT-04); Mark Coester (VT-AL); Derrick Anderson (VA-07); Drew MacEwen (WA-06); Kari Lake (U.S. Senate - AZ) and Hung Cao (U.S. Senate - VA).

Earlier in the week, Log Cabin also announced its signature event for 2024, "Red White & Rock" featuring Kid Rock, with special guest speaker former U.S. ambassador Richard Grenell and

emcee Kimberly Guilfoyle.

The reception and concert, presented by co-hosts Steve Smith, Tom Sturdivant and Robert Ritchie, will be held Sunday, Sept. 29, from 3-6 p.m. at a venue in Nashville. (The location and additional details will be provided to those who RSVP.)

General admission is \$1,000 per individual and \$1,500 per couple. For more information or to RSVP, contact Charles Moran at 310-774-1258.

— Tammye Nash

QMN: New Music Monday with tracks by Zolita, Billy Porter and Kehlani

Queer Music News is a smattering of what's going on in music by LGBTQ artists and the artists we love.

Here's a wrap-up of this week's New Music Monday.

Zolita is headed to Dallas

OK, actually this dropped in late August, but the timing is right to hear it now. Zolita will headline the House of Blues on Sept. 16. The queer pop princess dropped the new track "Hypocrite," which follows her spring album release *Queen of Hearts*. Quite a year for the sapphic singer who kicks off her new tour on Sept. 13 in New York before her show on Sept. 16 in Dallas.

BLOG, Next Page

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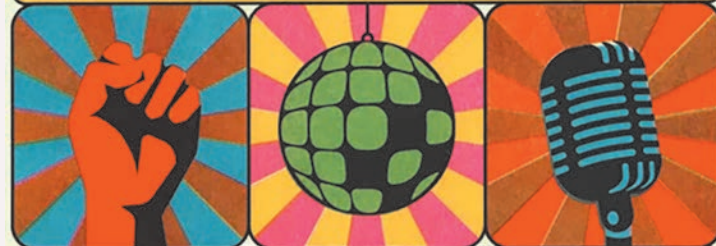


Bites from our blog (Continued)

BILLY PORTER



BLACK MONA LISA VOL. 2:



THE COOKOUT SESSIONS

Add this track to your break-up playlist as she sings about the residual effects of a breakup and hooking up with new ladies. We hear you, Zolita!

Billy Porter releases *Black Mona Lisa Vol. 2: The Cookout Sessions*

Tony and Emmy winner Billy Porter has dropped the follow-up to his 2023 full length album *Black Mona Lisa* — or perhaps more of an accompaniment to the album. In Vol. 2, he pays homage to the music of the '70s.

The single "Not Today" sounds as if it could've been written for a classic seventies Blaxploitation flick. Between the horns and sly disco bounce, it exists somewhere between The Paradise Garage and Motown—entirely in Billy's

own incomparable world.

He leans further into the seventies sound in his yearn for unconditional love on the Peter Zizzo penned "Skin Deep." And he taps queer bounce artist Big Freedia for the new rendition of his signature "Black Mona Lisa."

"I love Big Freedia, The Queen of Bounce! She's been knocking down the doors for a while now and the idea of having two mainstream artists comfortable in their intersectionality as both Black and queer coming together on this afro-tinged remix

by my friend Lofey is monumental," Porter said in the press release. "If you didn't know I was blackety-black by now, Big Freedia will let you know!"

Kehlani collabs with Lucky Daye on new track

Multi-Platinum singer-songwriter Kehlani unveiled the new single, "When He's Not There" last month with Lucky Daye. The track is found on the queer artist's new mixtape, *While We Wait 2*.

Kehlani recently kicked off her *Crash World Tour* which heads to Dallas on Oct. 11 at the Pavilion at Toyota Music Factory. Tickets are available now.

—Rich Lopez

Adoptable / EMMA



Meet **Emma**, a beautiful 4-year-old domestic shorthair with a stunning multicolored coat of black, brown, orange and white, weighs just 12 pounds, making her the perfect size to curl up in your lap or on a sunny windowsill. Emma is a sweet, calm cat who thrives in a peaceful environment. She has a shy demeanor and takes her time to warm up to new people and surroundings. But once she feels safe and secure, Emma's gentle and loving personality truly shines. She enjoys soft, cozy spaces where she can relax and observe the world around her. Emma would do best in a quiet home where she can be her true self. She is not a fan of loud noises or lots of activity, so a tranquil setting with a patient owner who understands her need for a calm atmosphere would be ideal.

Like all pets from the SPCA of Texas, Emma has been spayed and microchipped and has had all her necessary vaccinations. She is housed at the Dallas Animal Care Center, 2400 Lone Star Drive, so come by any day between noon and 6 p.m. to meet her. Animals are available for adoption at both the SPCA Dallas Animal Care Center and the Ellis County Animal Care Center, 2570 FM Road 878 in Waxahachie. Through Sept. 10, all adoptions at both SPCA of Texas locations are free.

Not voting is not an option

The people elected on Nov. 5 will make decisions impacting every area of life. Make your voice heard

“Im not really political.” It’s easy to understand why people feel that way. Political discourse has grown increasingly divided as we continue to grow and progress as a country. But this statement indicates an aversion to engaging in difficult, uncomfortable conversations about the issues that affect our everyday lives.

It’s easy to complain about gas prices, inflation and the rising costs of living. These are influenced by policies created at the local, state and federal levels. But so is access to health care for people of trans experience, immigrants, women and the overall LGBTQ+ community.

Texans have a responsibility to be politically engaged, and that starts with being an educated and active voter.

According to the Texas Secretary of State Office, there are almost 22 million people eligible to register to vote in this state, versus almost 18 million who are registered. Of those registered, 18 percent voted in the Democratic and Republican primaries last March. Due to gerrymandering, primaries overwhelmingly decide who will serve a district for the next two-to-four years despite the general election not being held until Nov. 5. This means 18 percent of registered Texans decided who would occupy policy-making spaces such as the state legislature and federal Congress.

If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu. What’s on the table that 82 percent of the Texas voting populace has yet to consider?

- **Critical funding for HIV treatment and prevention services:** For funding years 2025-27, the Texas Department of State Health Services has forecasted a \$38 million budget shortfall for the Texas HIV Medication Program PER YEAR. This critical service provides medications to Texans living with HIV



Januari Fox
Contributing Columnist

who have no other options. If funding is not allocated, there is the possibility of people being removed from the program, a waitlist being enacted, no new medications being added to the formulary and increased concerns for improved public health outcomes.

How does this tie back to voting? Elected state representatives and senators will decide during the 2025 legislative session how much funding, if any, this program will receive.

- **Decreased funding for nonprofit workforce and services:** Those who work in nonprofit or publicly funded environments have probably seen a reduction in funding for programs designed to mitigate obstacles in public health, education, infrastructure, immigration and much more. Fewer resources for programs almost always equals a reduction in highly trained and specialized staff who are underpaid and overworked.

How does this tie back to voting? Elected state representatives and senators will decide during the 2025 legislative session how much funding, if any, these programs will receive. Elected congresspeople and senators will do the same on a federal level.

- **Elimination of gender-affirming care for adults of trans experience:** During the 88th Texas Legislative, virtually all



gender-affirming care for Texans under the age of 18 was eliminated. Expanding these prohibitions to include adults is assuredly the next step.

How does this tie back to voting? Elected state representatives and senators will debate and decide during the 2025 legislative session what restrictions will be signed into law.

There’s still time to have your voice heard and affect change! The last day to register to vote is Oct. 7. To check your registration status, visit the Texas Secretary of State’s website at [SOS.State.Tx.US](https://sos.state.tx.us). Online registration is not available in Texas, but you can print an application and mail it to the listed address.

If you have moved or changed addresses since you last registered, you need to register again. If you receive a message saying you are on a suspended list, don’t panic. It just means the county voter registrar was unable to verify your residence. Fill out another application and make sure you write clearly.

This can also be done at the voting site and your ballot will still count.

Research the candidates and see where they stand on the issues important to you. The League of Women Voters Dallas publishes a comprehensive, non-partisan voting guide that allows candidates the opportunity to share their vision for Texas.

If they have served as an elected official, visit Texas Legislature Online to search their voting history.

Most importantly, commit to vote. Make it an event and take a friend or family member! In most Texas counties you can vote at any polling location within the county where you are registered; no need to find your designated polling location. If Election Day being on Nov. 5 poses barriers, there are two weeks of early voting, from Oct. 21-Nov. 1.

This is one of the most decisive elections we may see in our lifetime. Participation is crucial. Register, do your research, create a voting plan, and execute. It’s time to get political. ■

Januari Fox is director of policy, advocacy and community engagement at Prism Health North Texas.

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Para La Comunidad

Celebrating 10 years of Texas Latino Pride

Despite numerous attempts to recognize his efforts, Juan Contreras, founder and president of Texas Latino Pride, remains committed to a collective approach in celebrating not one but two communities.

For far too long, celebrations of the Latine and LGBTQ community have been rare and often do not receive the recognition they deserve. That is where Texas Latino Pride comes in.

Founded in 2014, Texas Latino Pride and its annual Texas Latinx Pride Festival celebrate the contributions, diversity, complexity, artistry and community of Latine and LGBTQ folks in Texas, just in time for Hispanic Heritage Month. Since then, the organization has grown into a collection of folks who celebrate each other at community-powered events that emphasize an intersectionality of cultures.

Texas Latino Pride celebrates our community through numerous events. Our signature festival in September is our biggest celebration.

Ten years ago, Juan had an idea. This Saturday, Sept. 14 at Reverchon Park, that idea will manifest in the form of a 10-year celebration, recognizing the values and beauty of, not one, but two communities.

The Texas Latinx Pride Festival is set to include numerous special guests including artist La Goony Chonga, *Drag Race Mexico* winner Cristian Peralta, *RuPaul's Drag Race* fan favorite Jessica Wild, DJ Rosez from Houston and dance and pop artist P1nkstar. Emmy award-winning drag artist Lushious Massacr will host throughout the day's festivities. Additionally, local vendors and entertainers will be in attendance.

These and other co-sponsored events are just a few examples of what makes Texas Latino Pride so unique. Collectively, the efforts of Texas Latino Pride have seen numerous successes even though



Jacob Reyes
Contributing Columnist

the struggle for LGBTQ equality and Latine representation in Texas continues.

The rights of trans folks, particularly

trans youth, are being stripped away by a small minority in the state government. Inaccessibility to HIV prevention or education on how to prioritize sexual health is ongoing. Financial resources for



first-generation Americans are few.

These are all challenges that both Latine and LGBTQ Texans face.

Sure — what seems like an annual festival, surrounded by other events, may give one the impression that Texas Latino Pride's efforts are, at most, bringing folks together for a drink or two or more. Though no one is denying our love for raising a glass or two or three, what is important to remember is that, through these events and shared experiences, re-

siliency, community, empathy and hope grow stronger.

Board members, past and present, have left their mark on the organization's lasting impact on the community.

Last year, our board suffered a great loss with the passing of Matthew Paul, Texas Latino Pride's director of finance. Matthew's dedication to the organization and the impact he had on all of us on the board remain as we look ahead.

Today and every day after, we honor

his memory.

As I look ahead at the next 10 years, I have only hope. I can't help but think that our commitment has only just begun.

To be Latine is complex; to be queer is to be brave.

Oftentimes, there are moments when we question our contributions to our own people. Do we do enough to ensure that our communities are secure and our values upheld? Those are responsibilities and concerns we should not take lightly.

I think about the dedicated board members, hundreds of volunteers, attendees, vendors, sponsors and, of course, our community members. Their dedication to ensuring our values are upheld must also be celebrated.

That is what Texas Latino Pride is all about.

Here, our differences and similarities are embraced. Whether you're queer, trans, no sabo or a native Spanish speaker — at the Texas Latinx Pride Festival, you will be celebrated.

You will be loved.

And it will be because you are home. ■

Jacob Reyes is communications director for Texas Latino Pride.

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

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- ▶ **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 or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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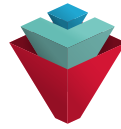
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Big gay weekend

PRIDE 2024

Pride in September gets into full swing

This weekend is so packed with Pride, you're gonna need a plan. So get hydrated. Find comfy shoes that go well with your rain-bow ensemble. And fill your calendar with all the queer-tastic events happening this Pride in Dallas weekend.

Friday

- Impulse Group (ImpulseGrp.org) brings back its *Down to Float 6: Neon Cowboy* pool party at Lee Harvey's Dive In at 7 p.m., followed by ...

- Impulse's afterhours party at 11 p.m. over at JR.'s Bar and Grill.

Saturday

- Texas Latino Pride (TxLatinoPride.org) celebrates 10 years with its community festival from 3-9 p.m. at Reverchon Park, featuring music, vendors and more.

- The DFW Sisters present *Glittering Hope: A Drag Spectacular* benefiting Dallas Hope Charities at 7 p.m. in the Rose Room.

Sunday

- The Pride in Dallas (PrideInDallas.org) parade route on Cedar Springs Road runs from Wycliff Ave. to Oak Lawn Ave., and the parade steps off at noon with state Rep. Venton Jones as grand marshal.



LGBTQ voting trends

ELECTIONS 2024

Voting expert David Grasso discusses how the LGBTQ community votes and the impact it makes

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
Taffet@DallasVoice.com

“The gay community is diversifying politically,” according to journalist, television commentator and media entrepreneur David Grasso. “As we get older, we take voting more seriously than younger people,” he added, suggesting that older people will vote despite the obstacles, whereas when a younger person hits one of those obstacles, they’re more likely to just not bother.

Grasso said a number of things were done in 2020 to make voting easier and that translated into more votes. For example, in Dallas and some of the surrounding counties, rules were changed to allow registered voters to cast their ballot in any precinct. Some other states allow individuals to register to vote online or to print out an application for a mail-in ballot. That means more voters casting their ballots.

On the other hand, straight-party voting was eliminated, making the process of voting take longer for those who weren’t splitting their ticket.

“The power of politics is local,” Grasso said, saying local politics are the minor leagues that are building for the big leagues. And the LGBTQ community is participating in that successfully.

Locally, Julie Johnson gained experience by serving three terms in the Texas Legislature. This year, in the Democratic Primary to replace Colin Allred in Congress, she accomplished the rare feat of defeating 10 opponents without a run-off. She’s expected to win the general election in what is a heavily Democratic district. And she is



David Grasso

running a smart get-out-the-vote campaign to assure victory.

Grasso, who lives in Florida, said his state is not a swing state right now. But, like Texas, Florida’s progressive communities are building upwards from the local level. And that’s made a difference.

“There’s been a huge transformation,” Grasso said. “Sodomy was illegal when I was in college,” but today same-sex couples can marry.

In elections, especially in swing states, the LGBTQ community can make a difference. In Arizona, for example, Joe Biden won in 2020 with just a 10,000-

vote margin. There are an estimated 300,000 LGBTQ residents in Arizona, and even with an estimated 15 percent of the community backing former President Donald Trump, the LGBTQ vote could make the difference in that state this year.

Nevada, Wisconsin and a handful of other states may be decided by similar margins, he said.

But should we assume the LGBTQ community will be voting for Democratic candidates?

“A lot of gay people are entrepreneurs — DINKS,” Grasso said. “They care about taxes.” A large portion of the community remains independent, giving the GOP “a big opportunity to make inroads.”

How? It’s simple, he said: Concentrate on issues that really matter. Stop attacking the transgender community; stay out of our bedrooms, and focus on the economy.

For several reasons, the LGBTQ demographic skews younger. For legal, family and religious reasons, it was harder to come out decades ago. Also, AIDS decimated what’s now the older generation of gay men.

And “because we are a youthful vot-

ing block,” Grasso said, “we feel the system isn’t built for us.”

Younger LGBTQ voters care about healthcare, education and housing — all things that have become harder for younger people to afford. And recent inflation, while it was a result of digging out of the pandemic that began during the Trump administration, happened during the Biden administration.

That could turn some of those voters away from the Democratic Party.

Over the last decade, Texas has been growing much faster than California, Grasso said that’s because of our state’s conservative policies, which has kept the cost of living down.

For all those reasons, he said, the LGBTQ vote is not a monolith. And it is still up for grabs.

“The Harris campaign has mentioned down payment assistance” for buying a home, and that should play with with LGBTQ voters he said. And prioritizing finding a solution to student debt is important to the LGBTQ community.

“Both parties need to understand the power of our vote and outreach to our community if they want to win,” Grasso said. “And don’t underestimate our al-

VOTING, Page 72

A dream come true

COMMUNITY



Resource Center CEO Cece Cox cuts the ribbon to officially open the Oak Lawn Place senior housing facility. See more photos of the grand opening ceremonies online at [DallasVoice.com](https://dallasvoice.com) (Tammye Nash/DallasVoice)

Resource Center cuts the ribbon on Oak Lawn Place senior living apartments, announces new health care facility

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Leaders of North Texas' LGBTQ community spanning the years gathered Tuesday morning, Sept. 10, outside a colorfully-appointed five sto-

ry building situated right at the curve of Sadler Circle to celebrate the grand opening of Dallas' first living facility focused on LGBTQ seniors.

Although Resource Center broke ground on Oak Lawn Place just a little more than a year ago in July 2023 and saw construction completed in early July 2024, with residents beginning to move in by mid-July, the road to this accomplishment is a lot longer than that.

As Resource Center CEO Cece Cox pointed out at the grand opening ceremony, "Forty-one years ago, Resource Center's founders dreamed of a home

like this, by us, for us.

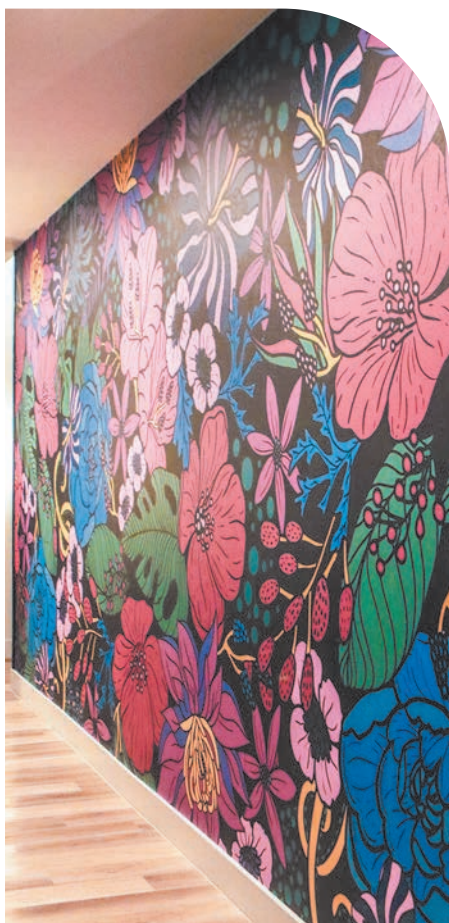
"Their dreams were interrupted by a nightmare, the nightmare of going to funeral after funeral for friends, decimated by the early days of the AIDS pandemic," she said. "Our community was also fighting discrimination everywhere we turned — in houses of worship, in our families, and at work. And even though much progress has been made since then, Oak Lawn Place is one of only a handful of residential settings designed to affirm and support members of the LGBTQIA+ community, ages 55-plus."

Cox also oversaw the triumphant

opening of Resource Center's iconic community center and headquarters just eight years ago and about two blocks down Inwood Road from Oak Lawn Place. And on Tuesday, while celebrating Oak Lawn Place, she got to introduce the Center's new health care facility, located directly in front of the apartment building and facing Inwood Road. Nelson-Tebedo Clinic, formerly located at the intersection of Cedar Springs Road and Throckmorton, has already moved its operations to the new Inwood Road location, as have some of the staff and services that had been housed at the



A crowd that included state Rep. Rafael Anchia and a host of other community leaders and dignitaries attended grand opening ceremonies for Oak Lawn Place, pictured above. Tours of the facility highlighted the carefully-curated art, including murals, found throughout the building. (Tammye Nash/Dallas Voice)



Center's health care campus on Reagan Street at Brown.

All of the center's health care programs — including HIV testing and care, primary care, gender-affirming care, immunizations, mental health care and more — are expected to be moved to the new location on Inwood by the end of the year, Cox said.

"The creation of an affirming and inclusive housing option for LGBTQ se-

niors in North Texas is a critical component of Resource Center's vision for an equitable society in which all community members are afforded the opportunity to thrive without bias or barriers based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or HIV status," according to a written statement from Resource Center about the opening of the new apartment building.

DREAM, Page 73



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Reimagining OLUMC

IN THE GAYBORHOOD



Design firms are reinvigorating spaces throughout the historic Oak Lawn United Methodist Church

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
Taffet@DallasVoice.com

Dustin Ward has put together a team of design firms and a growing number of vendors to, he said, reinvigorate a number of the spaces at Oak Lawn United Methodist Church.

The historic main sanctuary opens to Cedar Springs Road and has been serving the community for 110 years. Behind the sanctuary are two floors of offices, meeting rooms both large and small, and areas where the church operates Dallas Responds, its outreach program and welcoming center.

Ward said it's been decades since the spaces have been renovated and refreshed. So he created Dallas Walks the Walk to "elevate and reimagine spaces" around the church.

"A group of design firms have come

together, pro bono, to help Oak Lawn do what it does best — community service," Ward said.

The goal is to make a more welcoming and inviting space for those who come to the church and to create better rental space for events such as weddings or even a gathering place after a funeral.

A large all-purpose area called The Hospitality Center on the second floor, as it is currently decorated, may remind you of your grandmother's out-of-date living room — only 10 times larger. "We want to keep the warmth but create an area that can breathe a little more," Ward said. "Maybe showcase art. We're conceptualizing it as an old hotel lobby."

Down the hall, a room called the parlor is being re-conceptualized as a bridal suite that can be used as a conference room where six-to-12 people can meet comfortably. And across the way, another room is being turned into a care room where a pastor may offer counseling in a more comfortable setting than an office.

"The first floor is where the project was born," Ward said. That's where the church's community outreach projects take place.

Among the projects is the warming

OLUMC, Next Page

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center where, on freezing nights, the church provides a place for up to 80 unsheltered persons to sleep and have a meal. The welcoming center offers asylum-seekers clothing, food, a space to rest, travel arrangements assistance, medical assistance, a know-your-rights workshop and transportation to the airport.

Ward said The Clothing Closet is being reimagined more as a store “to elevate the experience of being a guest at Oak Lawn UMC.” Adding dressing rooms gives the “shopper” “more ownership of the items they’re leaving with.”

The redesign will change “everything from how a donation comes in to the time it goes out.”

“The second floor can financially support what’s going on on the first floor,” Ward said, “so the church can continue doing this another 150 years.”

Benjamin Moore and Texas Paint are the official paint sponsors of the redesign/refresh project. That’s a great start, Ward said, but they’re looking for office furniture sponsors for the pastors’

offices. And they need a flooring sponsor to replace the dated linoleum floors throughout the first floor.

The participating design firms, each working on specific areas of the church, include Angeline Guido Design, Layered Dimensions, Yates Desygn, Fonde Interiors, Amy Joyce Designs and Burkle Creative. Axioim Builders is spearheading construction.

Additional participants include Aaron Dougherty Photography, Organizing Spaces with Kim, Get Neat With Lisa, Hello Happy Homes, Practical & Happy Spaces, Loloi Rugs, Moss Home, Riad Tile, JM Junk Removers and The Dove Agency.

Ward said he hopes the list of those participating will inspire other companies to sponsor or donate to the project.

He said in addition to design firms and décor vendors, individual donors are encouraged to participate. Fundraising events may be coming later, but donations can be made online at OLUMC.ChurchCenter.com/Giving to cover incidental costs. Ward said, for example,



OLUMC’s Clothing Closet is being reimagined to elevate the experience for those using the service.

furniture might be donated, but if so, a truck may need to be rented to haul the load.

While this is an ongoing project, Ward said he hoped it won’t be going on during the winter. When temperatures suddenly plummet below freezing, the church jumps into action to shelter people from the cold, and Ward doesn’t want the Walk the Walk project to be in

the way or prevent the church from doing what it is there to do — serving the community.

Oak Lawn United Methodist Church, on the corner of Oak Lawn and Cedar Springs Road, began construction in 1911 and opened in 1915 and enlarged in 1928 and 1950. The gothic revival building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

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Photos by Monika Normand

DINING

Clifton Club on Fitzhugh offers immaculate service, good food

Arriving at the bodacious bungalow that is the Clifton Club entrance, I feel like a VIP immediately — and kinda sexy. I've always thought this; I've been here a couple of times before — once when it first opened and another time with my beautiful mother for happy hour. I was casing the joint, ok?

This third time, I was joined by local celebrity and prudent Dallas City Councilman Chad West. Suffice it to say I had a blast, and I always have at Clifton Club, formerly Zippers (if you know, you know).




Joey Casiano
DV Dining Reviews


The energy in this place is amazing, and the service is immaculate. While the food is good and has great presentation value, I do think

they can make some improvements. Other than that, there is no reason you shouldn't go check out Clifton Club for yourself. Like, now.


I want to start off with the decor. As I said, as you're walking in, it kinda







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makes you feel like you're one of the cool kids walking into the cool kids' club. I think that's what Greg Katz is going for.

Greg used to be my boss' boss' boss when I was just a wee little host at CBD Provisions downtown in the Joule Hotel. He's always had great charisma, great taste and great humor — one of the coolest, friendliest guys I've ever met. And his personality shows through in the ambiance at Clifton Club, from the tasteful brass accents to the molded ceiling, painted in a beautiful, sophisticated

green. Chad West, my tasting partner for the evening enthusiastically agreed.

Speaking of charismatic characters, this was my first formal meeting with Councilman West, and I don't think I could have picked a better guest. He came in chipper, smiling and excited to be a part of a Dallas Voice scoop. There's little more I can say about Chad other than he is just simply salt-of-the-earth nice and genuine, and he knows how to have a good time.

After talking and getting to know

him for a bit, I was delighted to learn he comes from a rural upbringing. So I knew he knows good cookin,' and that he wouldn't hold back in his opinions about the food.

The first time I ate at Clifton Club, I had a falafel-type dish with a green garbanzo hummus base. While it was good, and I could tell there was a good amount of thought put into the spices and flavor profile, it lacked the salt necessary to carry the flavor. I don't mean it wasn't made with enough salt but rather that even

just a garnish of some coarse kosher salt would have rounded out the dish.

(This is a comment I'll be making a lot in this review.)

Since the pieces of coarse kosher salt are individually larger than grains of common table salt, the flavor lasts longer in your mouth, giving the optimum taste-to-low-sodium ratio.

People act like they don't like salty food, but then they go to a chain restaurant and get the bottomless dish offered and, little do they know, one of the reasons they like it is because it has so much salt cooked into the sauce. Well, salt and sugar. But I digress. By no means do I think the chef should compromise his recipes in this way.

I also got the chocolate mousse on that first visit which was absolutely fabulous — at the time.

The next time I went, my mom and I got the whipped ricotta, the deviled eggs and the three mini wagyu smash burgers. As far as the whipped ricotta goes, I think the confit tomatoes were a succulent addition. But I do wish they were chopped so you could mix it together

VIP, Next Page



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VIP, From Previous Page



The deviled eggs are delicious

and get a little bit of everything in one bite. It also could have benefitted from a little kosher salt.

I'd say the same for the deviled eggs, although I think the smoked trout roe was an attempt at adding that salty, briny-ness we love in deviled eggs. I think it just needed an additional touch. Still tastes amazing though.

Everything is good here; I just think there's opportunity to balance the cuisine a tad bit more.

The wagyu smash burgers were to die for, honestly — to kill and die for. The pickle-and-pepper relish is the perfect combination of sweet, salty, tangy, minimally spicy goodness that just makes a burger slay the house down, bootz, Mawma! No other way to say it.

The seatings at Clifton Club are always quick, which tells me the host stand is run well. You should never have to sit there and think about where to seat a guest while they're in front of you. So it was no shock when I showed up for my third visit, and my table was immediately ready for me. Not long after, Chad West entered, and we began our culinary experience.

We started off with the crispy chicken skewers, the brussels sprouts and the shrimp tempura. My tasting partner pointed out the chicken skewers were TOO salty, and I happen to agree. Although I think we both liked the way the way the herb yogurt mellows it out.

The brussels sprouts were pretty wonderful, although we thought they were a little too soupy and gooey. Really reduc-

ing that miso butter glaze into a true glaze would make the dish much more appetizing.

The shrimp tempura was our least favorite of the three dishes. I think when someone sees that kind of thing on the menu, they think "flavor," and these were just bland. I'm not really sure what the squid ink salsa does for it but maybe ... if there's that kosher salt garnish, I'd eat more than two.

The councilman and I talked politics for a bit until deciding to split the steak frites — a phenom-

enal choice. We were both eyeing it the whole time.

This I have no notes on, just compliments. The peppercorn sauce is divine and pairs well with the buttery cut of the filet. The fries are nice and crispy with a zesty little seasoning. So as not to look completely pig-like, I did not eat the plate clean, even though I want to.

Lastly, we HAD to get the chocolate mousse. It came out looking beautiful, garnished with whipped cream and a toasted cookie crumble. While we were initially satisfied, we noticed that we were mainly gleeful about the garnish rather than the "mousse" itself. I'm not sure how far in advance it is prepared, but the texture was more like a pudding or a thin custard — not the same as when I first had it.

But again, it's good, and, after Chad left, I ate the rest of it!

I have to say, I had such a wonderful time, and the service at Clifton Club is just simply what you want when you go out to eat. As one of my mentors used to say, "Everything they need, and nothing they don't." I love the music and the little piece of experimental sculpture that sort of ornaments the room in a playful way. The moody flower textiles on the back of the bar seats give me something pretty to look at while sitting at the table.

There's something really special at Clifton Club. I hope you get to experience this space for yourself soon. ■

Clifton Club is located at 3333 Fitzhugh Ave. in Dallas. Buen provecho, ciao!

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That movie guy

ON SCREEN AND PAGE

Film critic Alonso Duralde returns to Dallas for USAFF screening and book signing

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
Rich@DallasVoice.com

The way Alonso Duralde rattles off deep knowledge about films is extraordinary. In one fell swoop, he'll drop a film recommendation and his reasoning behind it and then throw in a bit of its trivia for good measure.

This isn't surprising, considering he currently serves as the chief U.S. film critic for *The Film Verdict*, is the co-host of three film-based podcasts and has dropped knowledge on PBS, NPR, TCM and CNN.

Part of his origin story is set here at Dallas Voice, where he covered films in the '90s, when the gay wave of cinema was starting to happen.

Duralde returns to Dallas on Thursday, Sept. 26, to work again with the USA Film Festival, even though it's been a while since he's been back here.

Film association

Before film critic Alonso Duralde heads to Dallas for his appearance at the USA Film Festival's screening this month, he dropped a few recommendations. In a slight variation on Word Association, we mentioned some "categories," and he gave us his first responses.

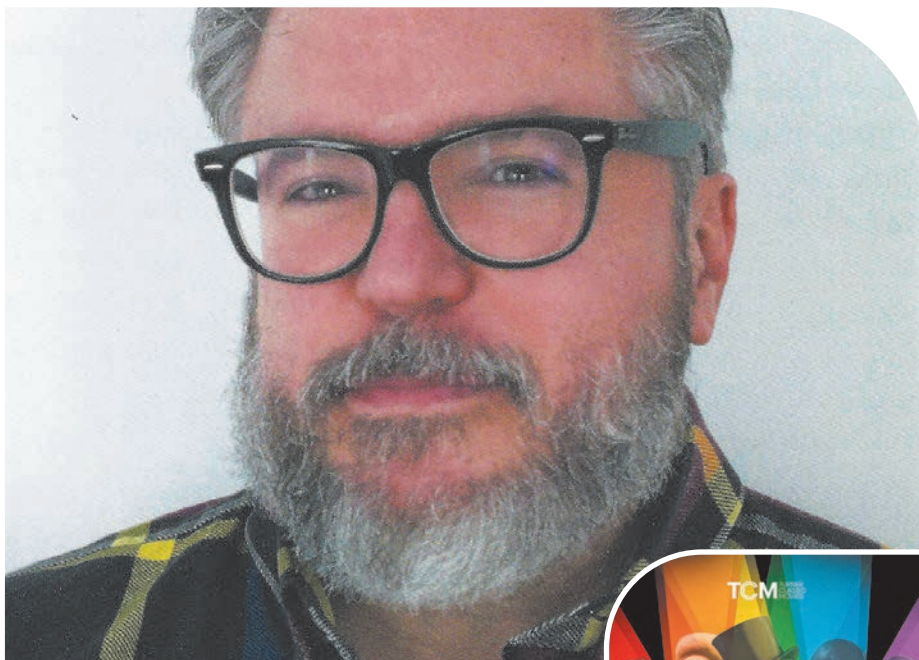
Now go find these on your streaming services stat.

Category is:

• **Movie for younger queer folks:** *Go Fish*. It's still so funny. It's a love story but also about friends and community.

• **Movie for trans representation:** *Close to You* with Elliot Page. This film came out earlier this year. I believe it was mostly improvised. It really captures that sense of family trying to do the right thing but also grapples with things like the language.

• **Overrated queer film:** You're trying to get me in trouble with this one. So, I never loved *The Birdcage*. I don't begrudge that movie, because it's a gateway movie. But yeah, it's not one that I love.



Alonso Duralde

"I was going regularly to the USA, and then COVID happened. So — about five years now? But I've stayed in touch over the years," he said. "They were very supportive when I worked there and when I left. So this sounded like a fun thing to come and do and sign some books as well."

The USAFF will screen the 1973 film *The Last of Sheila*, with Duralde in attendance to introduce the film, at the Angelika Film Center Dallas. Duralde will also sign copies of his new book, *Hollywood Pride: A Celebration of LGBTQ+ Representation and Perseverance in Film*, that came out earlier this year.

"The festival is pleased to welcome back our great friend and alumni curator Alonso Duralde to present this fun, whodunnit cult classic and celebrate his latest book," USAFF Managing Director Ann Alexander said in a press release.

In the film, James Coburn stars as a ruthless Hollywood producer whose wife is killed during a party. A year later, he reunites the guests for a week of fun and games on a yacht in the French Riviera that turns deadly.

USAFF describes the film as a deliciously bitchy showbiz comedy mixed with wickedly twisted vibes. Stephen Sondheim (*Into the Woods*, *Company*) and

Anthony Perkins (*Psycho*) wrote the screenplay, which was mostly based on games they themselves created for their friends.

"It's such a crowd pleaser film, and I'm astonished it hasn't been more heard of," Duralde said. "It still feels like a discovery to some, but it had a bit of resurgence as Rian Johnson named it as an influence on *Knives Out* and, especially, *Glass Onion*."

The film may not be particularly gay, but Duralde does consider it a queer film.

When the film came out, the production code was over, and queer characters were being featured in mainstream Hollywood films — only not in the best way.

"They were these grotesque characters then," he said. "But with *Sheila*, the idea of queerness is not pathologized in a way that time in Hollywood would usually do."

In *Hollywood Pride*, which came out this summer, Duralde takes a look at films that chart the evolution of LGBTQ

storytelling but also at the creatives in front of and behind the camera since the beginning of film up to today.

In a short time, he documented a comprehensive history of LGBTQ impact on film.

"I stand on many shoulders for this book, mostly Vito Rizzo and William Mann," he said. "Vito Russo's *The Celluloid Closet* was about the films, and William Mann's *Behind the Screen: How Gays and Lesbians Shaped Hollywood* was about the filmmakers. This book puts all that together."

Turner Classic Movies presents the book that follows similar releases *Hollywood Black* and *Viva Hollywood* which explored specific demographics of Black and Latine communities in Tinseltown.

With all his coverage of queer films in his career at Dallas Voice, The Advocate and other publications, Duralde went into the project with confidence.

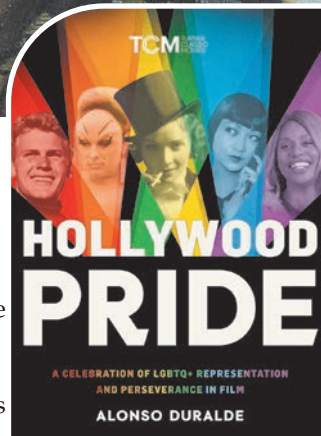
"I was thinking 'I got this,' but there was this constant process of finding new things," he said. "I never realized how the production could affect the lives of people in the industry not just onscreen but off as well."

Duralde had a "snug" year to work on this vast project. Along the way, he learned more about cinematographer James Crabe who was part of The Gay Girls Riding Club, an informal association of queer men who made a slew of short films. Duralde learned about Angela Morley who in 1974 became the first openly trans composer nominated for an Oscar.

The book highlights the present as well as the past, and, as identifiers and orientations expand, Duralde gives his own glimpse into the future of queer cinema.

"Younger, upcoming generations are having these coming out conversations at an earlier age. And when they grow into filmmakers, films will likely reflect that in the stories they tell. And their queer experience will be far different than yours and mine, and I look forward to seeing what those are like," he said. ■

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Role play

BEYOND THE STAGE

Actor Kat Lozano finds a bit of herself as Mark Antony in Shakespeare Dallas' 'Julius Caesar'

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
Rich@DallasVoice.com

Although *Julius Caesar* is in previews as of this past Wednesday, Sept. 11, Shakespeare Dallas opens the show officially today (Friday, Sept. 13). With the play's inherent and brutal drama, Friday the 13th seems almost appropriate for the show's opening night. But there's no bad luck for actor Kat Lozano, who is confident in delivering her spin on the character of Mark Antony.

Shakespeare in the Park: *Julius Caesar*

Directed by: Katie Ibrahim

Cast: Marisa Duran, Elizabeth Evans, Aren Hugo, Nicole Johnson, Josk Kok, Kat Lozano, Caleb Mosley, Claire Parry, Tanner Pieper, Ben Stegmair, T.A. Taylor, Brandon Whitlock.

Associate Director: Caroline Hamilton

Stage Manager: Alett Gray

Set Design: Adrian Churchill

Costume Design: Jasmine Woods

Lighting Design: Aaron Johansen

Sound Design: Noah James Heller

Fight Choreography: David Saldivar

Properties Design: Zareen Afzaal

Gore Effects: Isa Flores

Dramaturgy: Dante Flores

Through Oct. 13; Performances at Samuell-Grand Amphitheater, 1500 Tenison Parkway Dallas. ShakespeareDallas.org.

For Lozano, 28, the character comes at an interesting time. She discovered, under the direction of Katie Ibrahim, that she could bring some of her own personal journey to the character. At the same time, she knows she can still deliver a compelling character.

"He has this mysterious element going on. He's kind of a dark sheep in the play that really comes out of the blue," Lozano said. "The process has been



Kat Lozano

great because personally, I've been exploring my own gender identity and fluidity, and I'm excited to bring that to this character."

Lozano identifies as genderqueer with she/they pronouns, a journey that only recently began. She found that, in this show, she could explore that with a character who is crucial to the story's structure. Women and female-presenting actors playing male-presenting characters isn't new to theater in general or to Shakespeare specifically, but Lozano found a creative middle space with Antony.

"The process has been great, and, to me, Antony is one of the more emotional characters," Lozano said. "Just thinking about gender and men expressing emotion — it's interesting to play with that while also pulling out some light femme qualities. I gotta make this really queer."

For Lozano, Shakespeare is queer anyways — well, the stories, really. She talked about how his shows aren't only

timeless but also leave room for interpretations that allow for LGBTQ actors to add a hint of mint to the characters. Exploring Antony this way has perhaps helped Lozano with her own life.

"My journey is a fairly recent one," she said. "For a really long time, I struggled coming out queer as my sexual identity. I recently came out to my close family as being queer," she said.

Therapy has been a big help for Lozano. She credits her internal family systems therapy (IFS) with discovering her authentic self.

"Going to therapy and exploring this part of me that I hadn't really spent time with or dug into has been great. You learn about yourself and all the parts you're made of, and, as queer people, we all probably have a lot of stuff that's buried," she said.

It's a process, Lozano continued. Therapy has helped her be more comfortable with her identifiers, but it's still something to navigate. Heck, with all the labels for queer people now, she

admits there is a "figuring it all out" process.

"I think for me, I sexually identify as queer or lesbian, and then, for gender, I've started to see myself as genderqueer. For me that's a bigger umbrella term that can fit various labels."

As Lozano is into her own journey of self-discovery, her theater path shifts with it. She's mostly been, in her words, typecast in femme/female-presenting roles. Now, she's seeking characters that can be construed as genderfluid or nonbinary.

"Playing Antony is more than me being in drag playing a man," she said. "I feel like I'm genuinely playing something I identify with. And this makes me want to advocate more for trans and nonbinary and genderqueer roles and characterizations.

"As queer people, we fought so hard just to exist, and now we exist to be seen, because our stories are important."

For tickets, visit ShakespeareDallas.org.

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Alyssa, international

ON THE SCREEN

Texas drag queen represents the U.S. in 'Drag Race Global All Stars'

YOLANDA LENGE | Special Contributor
GLAAD Communications Director

R*uPaul's Drag Race Global All Stars* premiered Aug. 16, featuring beloved queens from various countries who will each represent their countries as they vie for the prestigious title of "Queen of the Mothertucking World."

The winner will receive a grand prize of \$200,000 and a coveted position in the "International Pavilion" at the Drag

Race Hall of Fame.

Representing the U.S. is Alyssa Edwards of Mesquite, a multifaceted entertainer known for her work as a choreographer, drag performer and television personality. Alyssa commenced her drag career at the renowned Rose Room, located on the upper level of Station 4 in the iconic Dallas Gayborhood. This venue has been the starting point for numerous Texans starring in *RuPaul's Drag Race* over the years, including Shangela, Asia O'Hara and Kennedy Davenport.

Today, the Rose Room — led by show director Cassie Nova, another Texas drag icon — has become an essential stop for many of the nation's leading queens on their tour circuits.

In 2012, Alyssa was selected as one of 14 drag queens to participate in the fifth season of *RuPaul's Drag Race*. She quick-



Alyssa Edwards, center in white, represents the U.S. in 'Drag Race Global'

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ly rose to prominence in the cast, thanks to her honest confessions, impressive tongue-pops and distinctive personality.

In 2016, Alyssa returned as one of 10 contestants in Season 2 of *Drag Race: All Stars*, captivating the audience and securing a fourth-place finish. She spoke with reporters recently at the Statue of Liberty in New York City, promoting the latest *Drag Race* show.

Alyssa discussed the premiere season, emphasizing that the show is a celebration of drag, and that queens from around the world have inspired her to abandon traditional performance norms and embrace authenticity without apology.

Alyssa revealed that this season, viewers will witness a fresh perspective from the queens, with the competition being more intense than ever before.

As a native Texan, in a state where regressive forces continue to try and push the LGBTQ community back into the closet, including legislation targeting drag performers, Edwards expressed her solidarity with the LGBTQ community.



While LGBTQ Texans today face an ever-growing roster of restrictive legislation — including bans on books and laws targeting health care for transgender people — Edwards encouraged her fellow Texans to “embrace your true self, take pride in who you are, and walk confidently with your head held high.”

Choosing Alyssa Edwards as the representative for the United States in this season of *RuPaul’s Drag Race: Global All Stars* was a deliberate decision made in the context of this election year. Hailing from the South, where numerous laws aimed at restricting the rights of the LGBTQ community have been passed

in recent years, Alyssa embodies the resilience of valuable LGBTQ individuals who deserve recognition and visibility. She secured a position in the top two during the season’s premiere episode, showcasing a powerful lip sync that signaled her determination to compete for the title and indicating that her performances will continue to improve.

Alyssa’s presence in the new series underscores the message that, regardless of the prevailing legislative climate, the voices of queer individuals will not be silenced and ensures that all voices will be amplified and represented.

In celebration of the new series, MTV, home of the flagship *RuPaul’s Drag Race* series, and World of Wonder have partnered with All Out — an international organization that fights for LGBTQ+ rights around the world — making a \$100,000 donation to start the new fund.

The series is streaming now on Paramount+ and will also be available on Paramount+ in Latin America, Brazil, Italy, Germany, Switzerland and Austria beginning Sept. 20, and in France the following day, with Japan to follow later this year.



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Grand design

FASHION FORWARD



An interview with Steve Grand

GREGG SHAPIRO | Contributing Writer
greggshapiro@aol.com

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you think of gay singer/songwriter-turned-fashion-designer Steve Grand? Some folks will undoubtedly answer his breakout hit single, "All American Boy," and the accompanying video. Both were significant in that the song was an unabashedly queer country tune with visuals to match.

Of course, it didn't hurt that Grand was model-handsome and had a flawless body on display.

So far, we have his singing voice, songwriting chops and impressive looks and physique. It's that gym body — and his own personal interest in the kinds of garments that show off that kind of body — that has led him to create his Grand Axis (ShopGrandAxis.com) clothing line, featuring men's un-

derwear and swimwear.

Steve was kind enough to make time for an interview, and after you finish reading it, you'll want to follow him on his socials: @GrandAxis (Instagram/TicTok) and @Grand_Axis (Twitter). You won't be disappointed.

Gregg Shapiro: Since the release of your debut single in 2013, the country-oriented "All American Boy," several other male country artists — including Ty Herndon, Billy Gilman, Orville Peck and TJ Osborne — have come out as gay. Do you feel that your being an out musician had anything to do with that?
Steve Grand: I think, more than anything, it had to do with the major cultural shift that was happening across this country. According to the Gallup polls, public support for gay marriage went from 40 percent approval in May 2009, to 60 percent approval in May 2015. Gay marriage was a big topic of discussion in the early 2010s for a lot of reasons. You had artists like [Lady] Gaga frequently talking about her gay fans; you had gay characters coming out in TV shows; you had the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" in 2011 and then Obergefell in 2015.

I think the internet and the rise of social media had more to do with it than anything. Before social media, corporate press and

big movie and TV studios drove the narrative on these sorts of things. And because they are beholden to advertisers which are more conservative and risk-averse, they would often avoid even acknowledging LGBTQ+ people for fear it would upset large sections of the country.

But I think social media gave regular people an opportunity to be their authentic selves. And it gave artists/content creators like me the ability to make music and videos that could be seen by millions without needing the backing of a big record label.

Almost 10 years ago, in 2015, you released your full-length debut album *All American Boy*. When you look back on that time, how would you describe it? It was a whirlwind. I remember being cognizant of the fact that it was all moving fast and that I needed to make a conscious effort to stop and take in all the cool, special, unique experiences I was having. Looking back, I don't think I listened to that voice inside me enough.

I always felt like my best days were ahead, that my moment had yet to come, and I just needed to hunker down and keep working. And, unfortunately, that often kept me from embracing the present moment.

It's funny; my best memories of that time end up being all the times in between, like the road trips with my tour manager and whatever members of the band I was traveling with. I was always thinking about what I needed to be doing better or focused on the show, but it is those conversations on the road — when we were tired, hungover and stressing about

where we needed to be, traveling from one venue to the next — that I remember most fondly.

What kind of music are you listening to for enjoyment these days? I am loving the new Billie Eilish record. And the country record Post Malone just made. I continue to appreciate him more and more. Whenever I see him in interviews I am just so impressed with how centered and genuine he is, how he seems to know exactly who he is. There is a real depth and a goodness in him, and I think that really comes through in his voice.

Am I remembering correctly that for a while, you left Chicago for Los Angeles? If that's correct, what was that experience like for you? I spent some time in LA while I was making my first record. I stayed with a friend of a friend. Funny enough, I had never met them before the day I showed up at their door with my bags. It was on my 24th birthday. They gave and gave to me and never expected anything in return.

I don't think I ever went out and did any nightlife there. The friends I stayed with had a large group of friends and threw a lot of parties and events, so I really benefited from having their sort of built-in group of guys to hang out with when I stayed out there.

How long have you been back in Chicago? Other than the several months I've spent in LA, my summers in P-Town and winters in Puerto Vallarta, I've been in the Chicago area the whole time.

What do you like best about being in

GRAND, Next Page



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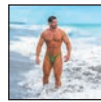
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GRAND, From Previous Page



Chicago? The lakefront in the summer. The fact that the crummy winters are something we all endure together, which means we also experience the beauty and aliveness of the spring and summer together. The winters are so cold and dead, but it makes you appreciate the beautiful weather in the summer, and all the plant life that comes back to life.

The whole city comes alive when it starts getting nice. Everyone's mood is lifted, and there is a real sense that we need to make the most of the summer because it's fleeting. I also love the people. Chicago is not as transient as cities like LA and New York, where most people are not from there. Most Chicagoans have roots here. And people are genuinely nice and kind.

In 2019, you launched Grand Axis, a clothing line designed by you that includes underwear, swimwear, shorts, socks, t-shirts and hats. How did you come up with the name Grand Axis?

I was about two weeks from going into production with the name "Grand." I stupidly assumed I could use it because it was my name, but decided I should hire a trademark attorney just to be sure. I was

told there were about 200 other companies that could have a copyright infringement claim, so I needed to come up with a name very quickly.

I used word generators and all sorts of other methods of coming up with names. I went with "Axis" because I just like how it sounded together. I thought the word "Axis" was very strong, and I liked that it had the letter X in it, which just looks cool and strong.

Was designing this kind of clothing a lifelong passion of yours, or was it something you stumbled upon and decided to run with it?

Like a lot of gay men, I had my sexual awakening in the men's underwear aisle at our local department store [laughs]. And personally, I've always found an attractive guy in a speedo, briefs or jockstrap even more sexy than seeing him naked.

Even when I was a college student working a \$10 an hour job and didn't even have many regular clothes, I was buying more of this attire for myself than anything else. I started to get very fixated on the design and fit. I didn't know how to sew, but I learned enough to make basic alterations to design and fit.

Then I found some sites that made custom pieces. I began drawing my own patterns and having them sewn up. When I posted them on Instagram, I'd get lots of guys asking where they could buy them. And at that point I decided I should just produce them en masse. I thought it would be a side gig. I had no idea all that was involved.

I think, if I knew how hard it would be, I may not have started it [laughs]! So, my ignorance kind of worked out to my benefit, because now I am deep in it and I'm happy I made it all work. So far at least.

What's the most rewarding part of Grand Axis? Going to the beach and seeing guys I don't even know wearing my brand! It is so rewarding to see guys enjoying and looking great in something I spent hundreds of hours obsessing over every detail. That makes it all so worth it.

What's the most challenging part? A few things. Delegating. Dealing with factories to get them to make the pieces exactly how I want. Always having to make decisions about every aspect of the products and the business. The stress of wiring tens of thousands of dollars of my own money before I see any product.

At the end of the day, if the factory goes under, you really don't have any recourse. I've heard horror stories from other brands.

You shared your recent pec tear work-

out injury, as well as your recovery, on social media. Are you fully back to 100 percent or still taking it easy? I am very grateful to be able to say recovery has been easy and painless. I had an excellent surgeon. The first surgeon I saw said it could not be repaired, so I am very glad I got a second opinion!

The worst part has been not being able to move much weight with it. There are so many exercises I can't do. I'm afraid to say I have only had a handful of workouts in the last 10 weeks. I will be 75 percent healed at 12 weeks, but it will still be a few months before I can lift heavy.

But in the scheme of things, I am just grateful I had a problem that could be fixed!

Your second album, *Not The End of Me*, was released in 2018. Because most people came to know you as a singer/songwriter first, I'd be remiss if I didn't ask if there was more music from you in the works. I still will write music, but most songs are incomplete. I wish I could say I had another record ready to go, but when the pandemic happened, and I wasn't able to perform and lost 90 percent of my income that year, I had to make Grand Axis my full-time job to pay the bills. And now that it has, I struggle to find the time and creative energy to make that [new music] happen. But I am still hopeful I will get back to it one of these days.

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TRANSGENDER SERVICES

Twan McGary leads Houston-based The Normal Anomaly's new Dallas office

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
Taffet@DallasVoice.com

Twan McGary, who calls himself a passionate trans man, was recently appointed program manager for The Normal Anomaly Initiative's new Dallas office. His goal is to create community empowerment initiatives that will reduce stigma for marginalized communities.

"I'm using my platform to build visibility for trans men," McGary said, "to promote visibility and reduce barriers."

From the new office in Deep Ellum, McGary said he and his organization will provide comprehensive support, which he called "a safe space to navigate through the unique challenges through our gender journey."

While providing a nurturing space, the center will offer legal services to assist with name changes, counseling and mental health services.

McGary said it's hard for a trans person to navigate through society already but even harder when the community is always under legislative attack.

"We have to deal with so much," he said. "Every day is a fight. That's why visibility and representation are so important. Visibility saves lives."

But over the past few weeks, the trans community hasn't been under legislative attack in Texas — only because the Legislature isn't in session. Still, Attorney General Ken Paxton has done what he can to make the lives of trans people miserable.

On Aug. 20, the Department of Public Safety unilaterally and without prior public notice decided to stop accepting judges orders to amend the gender marker on drivers licenses. Instead, DPS will create a database of individuals who



Twan McGary

request such a change on their license or state-issued ID.

The policy change closely follows Paxton's request that DPS provide his office with records of individuals who have changed their gender marker on their state-issued document.

Then on Aug. 30, the Texas Department of State Health Services announced it will no longer accept certified court orders to change gender markers on a birth certificate, even though Texas law allows a birth certificate to be amended

if proven "by satisfactory evidence to be inaccurate." A court order was considered "satisfactory evidence."

Commenting on those sudden changes, McGary said, "When you think things are progressing, he tries to find a way to target us for some reason."

Whether ignoring a judge's orders is legal will have to be argued in court, but, he said, there's so much more to do. Healthcare is a huge issue in the transgender community.

"We deal with healthcare," McGary

said. "We don't have access to healthcare because of someone's personal beliefs." Healthcare concerns he listed included more than just transitioning, but also contraception, pregnancy and abortion access.

And discrimination in the workplace takes place even in companies with the right policies in place.

"It has to stop," he said. "We're all human. Some of us have family. Some of us are married and have children."

McGary said he started as a promoter, and during that time, he realized what was missing in the community: The larger LGBTQ community wasn't considering the needs of the trans community.

"So we created a space for us to party," he said.

And then he created a podcast and went out and did street interviews. He said some of those videos went viral.

McGary said he collaborated with Resource Center and Black Trans Advocacy Coalition. He said he brings experience working as a gender-affirming case manager, assisting with legal referrals for name and gender marker changes, doing STI and HIV testing and more.

McGary said that with The Normal Anomaly Initiative's new drop-in center, he hopes to have more interaction and training with police as they build community and build a safe space. And he hopes to offer workshops and panel discussions working with Teen Pride, a group he's already working with. With that group, he said, "I've seen a lot of our trans masculine youth come out of their shells."

The office is open for anyone looking for legal referrals, HRT assistance, healthcare referrals or mental health support, McGary said. His Trust the Process Project aims to increase awareness about trans individuals to "share our stories and experiences with youth."

Most of all, he hopes to bring some of the success The Normal Anomaly Initiative has seen in Houston to Dallas. ■

The Normal Anomaly Initiative drop-in center is at 1910 Pacific Ave., Ste. 17210, and is open Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Contact McGary at twan@normalanomaly.org.

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Award winning author Jandy Nelson returns with first novel in 10 years

MELISSA WHITLER | NBCU Fellow
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Jandy Nelson, bestselling author of *I'll Give You the Sun*, is back with a new novel, *When the World Tips Over*, publishing Sept 24. She weaves a beautiful tale of the Fall family and their generational curse. Readers will get lost in the lives of Dizzy, Miles and Wynton Falls as they work through their own pains and the legacy that has been passed down to them.

The three siblings aren't able to communicate with one another until rainbow-haired Cassidy falls into their lives. She becomes a savior in more ways than one, unraveling a history spanning centuries.

Before the book's release, Nelson met with Dallas Voice to discuss her writing and inspiration.

Dallas Voice: How does it feel to have your first book released in 10 years?

Jandy Nelson: I'm like Rip Van Winkle waking from a hundred-year sleep! It feels amazing! I couldn't be more excited for this passionate, unwieldy crew of characters to hit the world. They're almost more real to me at this point than my actual family, and I can't wait for readers to finally meet them and go with them on what I hope will be a pretty wild adventure.

Where did you come up with the idea for *When the World Tips Over*?

It all started with an abandoned house. For years, I'd travel north from San Francisco, through wine-country, and I'd pass this white Victorian tucked away in the redwoods by a creek. It seemed enchanted to me, and I was totally mesmerized by it. Each time I'd drive by, I'd stop and tromp around, peek in the windows, sit on the porch. And soon I began imagining a family — the Falls.

The front door would blow open, and I'd see 19-year-old human-minefield Wynton Fall, violin in hand. Or I'd catch a glimpse through the second-story window of 17-



Jandy Nelson (Photo by Sonya Sones)

year Miles Fall, brainiac, dog whisperer and raving beauty harboring a multitude of secrets. Or I'd spot through the kitchen window 12-year-old Dizzy Fall, pulling a chocolate-raspberry soufflé out of the oven, a wild commotion of a girl who sees spirits and wants to be the heroine of a romance novel.

And then, as time passed, I started imagining the previous generations of this same family that lived in the house, finally wondering who built the house and where did they come from? What were they running from? Were they cultural pioneers that came to Northern California from Europe at the turn of last century to create a kind of queer dream life for themselves? I decided they were.

But I didn't begin the novel in earnest until a rainbow-haired girl showed up in my mind and began knocking at the front door of the brewing story. I knew who she was and that everything was about to change for the family.

I dropped the big white house into dreamy half-magical Paradise Springs, a fictional Northern California wine town, and 10 years later, here we are!

But the strangest part of this origin story is that recently I drove north, and the house

was gone! If I hadn't taken a ton of pictures, I'd almost think I imagined it. Now, I just think maybe it left the real world to live forever in this fictional one.

You deal with many different topics like generational trauma, coming out, family relationships and mental health. What draws you to these, and how do you write about them in such a real, authentic way? First, thank you! I'm so happy it feels real and authentic. I spend a great deal of time getting to know my characters, really trying to live in their skin. So I hope to come at whatever issues they're dealing with from the inside out, whether it's their own troubled mental landscape or their sexuality or whatever struggles and triumphs, joys and sorrows, that make them who they are.

Some of my characters' issues are my issues or the issues of people close to me, but many aren't. And in that case, I do a lot of research and then set out to utterly lose myself inside the characters until I feel capable of speaking for them from a place of authenticity.

More generally, I absolutely adore both reading and writing novels about families. I feel like every family is its own civilization with its own pathos and ethos, its own

laws, rules, language, humor. Each is its own unique dramatic and/or comedic pressure-cooker, and that's just perfect fodder for storytelling.

Also, because *When the World Tips Over* is a multi-generational family saga, for the first time I really got to explore all sorts of intergenerational issues that fascinate me — how the past shapes the present; how trauma as well as joy are passed down; how choices of relatives made a hundred or fifty or 20 years ago still affect us today, and, most important, how harmful generation patterns, once understood, can be broken.

All your books have very distinct, colorful covers. How did you decide on the cover designs? I have such an amazing cover designer: Theresa Evangelista. She makes magic! The one thing I asked for with both *I'll Give You the Sun* and *When the World Tips Over* was bright color. I had a feeling when finishing both novels that, by the end, the characters had really begun to break free of societal, familial and personal constraints, and, to me, all the amazing color reflects that personal liberation.

When *The World Tips Over* goes through

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many different POVs as well as jumping back and forth between the past and present. How did you keep track of it all? Honestly, no idea! It's definitely a kaleidoscopic novel, a chorus of voices, really four novels in one. In early drafts, I wrote some of the narrative threads separately: the ancestral fairy tale, the mother/daughter story and the Fall siblings' mother's story that reveals her past. And then I spent years and several million brain cells



(it was tough!) braiding them all together with the contemporary story of the Fall siblings. I worked tirelessly on the structure because I knew it was all

one story and desperately wanted all the narrative threads to flow together into one cohesive whole. At one point, the novel was over a thousand pages! It's half that now.

Where did the inspiration for the character Cassidy come from? Cassidy was one of those characters that arrived almost fully formed, as if she'd been living inside me for a very long time, waiting for a chance to tell her story. Same with her mother, Marigold. When I was in my 20s, I read a bunch of mother/daughter novels and loved them: *Anywhere But Here* by Mona Simpson, *Ghost Dance* by Carol Maso, for instance. Cassidy and Marigold gave me a chance to do my own, a very extreme version: a renegade mother and daughter who live in an RV, perpetually searching for a California town to settle down in, much like the pioneers a century before them, caught up in their own unique version of the California dream/nightmare.

Music is a very important element of the book. What song would you say describes the novel? Two come to mind: "California Dreamin'" by the Mamas and the Papas and "Invisible String" by Taylor Swift.

What do you want readers to walk away with from this novel? I just hope readers enjoy the story and the characters, and I guess, walk away — preferably float away, actually — with a full heart and a hungry belly, perhaps thinking about

what I was thinking about while writing it: that safe harbor is found in other people, that joys are sometimes hidden away in sorrows, that splendor is everywhere, and soufflés are the most heavenly food on earth, bar none.

Did it feel different writing this book from your other two? It did feel different. It was more difficult, and *I'll Give You the Sun* was very challenging for me. But I also really loved writing this novel so much — maybe even more than the others — because it's everything I ever wanted to write packed into one story. My whole heart's in there. It's a multi-generational family saga. It's a story of a mother and daughter who live in an RV at the edge of the world. And it's also a fairy tale, a food memoir (aphrodisiacal soufflés!), a scrapbook, a ghost story, a love letter to California and an ode to storytelling itself. It's full of family curses, rivalries, road trips and love stories upon love stories.

It's a lot a lot a lot!

The book incorporates some elements of magic realism. How did you decide what supernatural elements to add while still keeping the story relatable and grounded in reality? Are you saying your dog doesn't talk to you! In my mind, in the novel, there are two kinds of magic realism or fabulism. The first is one of perception which stems from a character's deep psychological need. For example, Miles's ability to speak with his dog.

I think/hope this type of supernatural element feels grounded in the story because as a reader you're inside the character's POV and it makes sense to the character. (An aside: I also wrote this novel during the pandemic when I was very isolated and spending too much time with my cat! So, there's that.)

And I think it's similar with Dizzy's ability to see spirits. She never questions it because it jives with her world view.

The other kind of fabulism in the novel is the fairy tale told by one character to another about the family's ancestors. That story is outright magical, full of men who float and others who glow; women who have flowers growing out of their heads, and giants who eat houses. I wanted to tell the family's ancestral story this way because I think we all tend to mythologize the past. Perhaps that's why the novel might still feel grounded with this utterly magical story in it — because we all kind of naturally partake in mythological perception/recollection of the past, don't we? The impulse is just wildly exaggerated here. And it was so fun to write!

Celebrating with man's **best** friend

COMMUNITY AND PETS

GLFD partners with SPCA to host Fur Ball

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The Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas is partnering with the SPCA to host this year's Fur Ball, taking place Oct. 4 at 6:30 p.m., at the Frontiers of Flight Museum, 6911 Lemmon Ave.

This is the first time the GLFD has helped host Fur Ball, but the two organizations have worked together before. Back in 2016, they organized a big fundraiser, Project Ruffway, to benefit the SPCA. That event raised more than \$110,000, and the money went towards purchasing emergency response vehicles for animals.

As part of the host committee, GLFD is hoping to continue its support with Fur Ball. Last year's Fur Ball raised more than \$465,000, and organizers this year are hoping to top that.

The evening will be emceed by NBC 5 News Anchor Brian Curtis and will feature live entertainment including the Georgia Bridgwater Orchestra. The theme is "You're My Best Friend," and guests will enjoy a night of dinner and dancing. There will be a special VIP bar for GLFD members and allies, and the group will have designated tables.

It's one party you won't want to miss.

The Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas was founded in 2000 to highlight the philanthropic power of the LGBTQ community. The group focuses on working with nonprofits that are not LGBTQ-specific, giving to all kinds of organizations including the Dallas Museum of Art and the Dallas Arboretum. GLFD recently conducted a fundraiser for Dallas CASA, raising money to send foster kids to summer camp.

These kinds of local relationships are what the fund is based on. Over the past 24 years, the organization has raised more than \$1.7 million for the communi-



ty across many different causes.

GLFD's activities are based on member interest and driven by the board of directors. Jeremey Watkins, who serves as GLFD's treasurer, saw that some members had made repeated donations to the SPCA and reached out to see how the fund could support the organization. Partnering on the already-scheduled Fur Ball was easy, and, "Everyone can get behind wanting to help animals," Watkins explained.

All money raised will go towards the SPCA's campaign to update its facilities. Any donations to the SPCA made by individuals through GLFD's link will be attributed to the group, and the amount will determine naming opportunities.

"Opportunities like this are important

for visibility," Watkins said. "It shows Dallas that the LGBTQ community is invested in the city."

"GLFD's commitment to helping animals and their people in our community is truly inspiring," commented Chris Luna, president and CEO of SPCA of Texas. "Their support helps us care for rescued animals, keep pets in homes and prevent and prosecute animal cruelty.

"We are deeply appreciative and proud of this partnership and look forward to continuing our work together to make a lasting impact on the lives of animals in need and the people who love them," Luna added.

Tickets for the Fur Ball can be purchased at [SPCA.org/Support-Us/Events/Fur-Ball/#/form](https://www.spcatexas.org/Support-Us/Events/Fur-Ball/#/form).



OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS' APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE

An ordinance appropriating funds for fiscal year 2024-25 for the maintenance and operation of various departments; authorizing the city manager to make certain adjustments; appropriating funds for public improvements to be financed from bond funds and other revenues of the city of Dallas for fiscal year 2024-25; providing for publication; and providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, the city council, in accordance with the Dallas City Charter, state law, and the ordinances of the city of Dallas, have given the required notices and have held the required public hearings regarding this ordinance; Now, Therefore, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DALLAS: SECTION 1. That for the purpose of providing the funds to be expended in the budget for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2025,

the available revenues of the city of Dallas are hereby appropriated for the maintenance and operation of the various city departments and activities as follows:



City of Dallas



DEPARTMENT AND ACTIVITIES PROPOSED 2024-25

City Attorney's Office	24,667,393
City Auditor's Office	3,214,170
City Controller's Office	9,071,874
City Manager's Office	3,234,367
City Marshal's Office	22,898,830
City Secretary's Office	3,666,127
Civil Service	2,897,379
Code Compliance	44,596,235
Dallas Municipal Court	11,726,719
Dallas Animal Services	19,697,228
Dallas Fire-Rescue	
429,751,499	
Dallas Police Department	
719,168,010	
Election	1,957,274
Facilities and Real Estate Management	31,581,058
Housing & Community Development	4,462,320
Human Resources	8,909,365
Independent Audit	767,071
Judiciary	5,467,988
Lew Sterrett Jail Contract	7,878,250
Liability/Claims Fund Transfer	1,217,943
Library	44,485,495
Mayor and City Council	7,769,654
Non-Departmental	
130,313,162	
Office of Arts and Culture	20,568,305
Office of Budget and Management Services	4,578,495
Office of Data Analytics and Business Intelligence	
	5,811,154
Office of Economic Development	3,783,770
Office of Management Services	48,574,076
Park and Recreation	21,827,152
Planning and Development	6,755,392
Procurement Services	4,247,838
Transportation and Public Works	
146,108,407	
Salary and Benefit Stabilization	1,000,000

GENERAL FUND TOTAL 1,902,654,000

GRANT, TRUST, AND OTHER FUNDS PROPOSED 2024-25

Convention & Event Services	
Convention Hotel Tax Rebate (0756)	7,974,153
Sports Arena Lease Rental (OA71)	9,000,000
Venue Project Fund (0820)	18,555,555
Dallas Fire-Rescue	
Fire Various Task Forces-State (S226)	8,100,000
Facilities and Real Estate Management	
ARPA Redevelopment Fund (OA72)	7,500,000
Housing & Community Development	
FY 2024-25 Community Development Block Grant (CD24)	6,979,444

FY 2024-25 HOME Investment Partnership (HM24)	5,578,453
Human Resources	
Fitness Center (0323)	837,569
Information & Technology Services	
Information Technology Equipment (0897)	3,000,000
Judiciary	
Juvenile Case Manager Fund (0396)	985,705
Library	
Central Library Gifts and Donations (0214)	31,775
Children Center Trust (0T22)	16,780
Edmond & Louise Kahn E. Trust (0208)	185,555
Hamon Trust (0458)	13,644
Meadows Fund (0734)	22,042
Parrill Estate (0716)	1,152
Office of Arts and Culture	
OCA Hotel Occupancy Tax (0435)	10,437,500
Office of Budget and Management Services	
FY 2024-25 Community Development Block Grant (CD24)	3,553,446
FY 2024-25 Emergency Solutions Grant (ES24)	
	23,000
FY 2024-25 Housing Opportunities for Persons w/AIDS (HW24)	139,163
Office of Economic Development	
Dallas Downtown Improvement District (9P02)	9,817,596
Deep Ellum Public Improvement District (9P01)	1,824,636
Infrastructure Investment Fund (5117)	5,987,810
Klyde Warren Park/Dallas Arts District Public Improvement District (9P03)	2,252,300
Knox Street Public Improvement District (9P04)	736,137
Lake Highlands Public Improvement District (9P05)	1,766,171
Midtown Improvement District (9P15)	1,929,650
North Lake Highlands Public Improvement District (9P06)	873,505
Oak Lawn-Hi Line Public Improvement District (9P07)	772,533
Prestonwood Public Improvement District (9P08)	855,674
South Side Public Improvement District (9P10)	437,693
Tourism Public Improvement District (9P11)	20,991,032
Ultra Inc Sales Tax Fund (0680)	418,975
University Crossing Public Improvement District (9P12)	1,373,180
Uptown Public Improvement District (9P13)	4,420,535
Office of Management Services	
FY 2024-25 Community Development Block Grant (CD24)	1,951,877
FY 2024-25 Emergency Solutions Grant (ES24)	1,190,719

FY 2024-25 Housing Opportunities for Persons w/AIDS (HW24) 9,725,420

Park and Recreation

City Park Maintenance Fund (2133) 702,000
 Fair Park Debt Service (2134) 5,604,639
 FY 2024-25 Community Development Block Grant (CD24) 738,301
 Golf Improvement Trust (0332) 61,883
 Park and Rec Beautification (0641) 475,835
 Park Land Dedication Program (9P32) 200,000
 Samuel Park Exp. Trust (0330) 647,602
 Southern Skates Roller Rink (0327) 444,000
 White Rock Lake Beautification Fund (9P30) 205,355

Planning and Development

Reforestation Fund (0T06) 5,926,512

Sanitation Services

Dallas Environmental Clean-up Fund (TQ01) 10,490,000

Transportation and Public Works

ARPA Redevelopment Fund (0A72) 9,164,840
 Bike Lane Fund (0791) 2,026,734
 Dallas Streetcar System Fund (0992) 1,877,419
 Freeway Traffic Signals (0670) 147,449

GRANT, TRUST, AND OTHER FUNDS

GRAND TOTAL 188,972,948

ENTERPRISE/OTHER FUNDS PROPOSED 2024-25

Aviation 208,098,739
 Convention and Event Services 137,358,763
 Dallas Water Utilities
 Stormwater Drainage Management 85,852,114
 Water Utilities 826,863,664
 Municipal Radio 451,077
 Planning and Development 60,418,651
 Sanitation Services 63,192,313
 Transportation and Public Works - Transportation Regulation 519,534

ENTERPRISE/OTHER FUNDS TOTAL 1,482,754,855

INTERNAL SERVICE/OTHER FUNDS

PROPOSED 2024-25

Employee Benefits 2,151,595
 Equipment and Fleet Management 73,487,289
 Express Business Center 2,227,113
 Information and Technology Services
 911 System Operations 15,337,709
 Information Technology 139,630,975
 Radio Services 18,999,681
 Office of the Bond Program
 Office of Management Services 4,363,746
 Park and Recreation 4,719,283
 Transportation and Public Works 15,760,450
 Office of Risk Management 7,327,556

INTERNAL SERVICE/OTHER FUNDS TOTAL 284,005,397

ENTERPRISE/INTERNAL SERVICE/OTHER FUNDS GRAND TOTAL 1,766,760,252

SECTION 2. That, in conformity with Chapter XI of the Charter of the City of Dallas, the transfer of an unencumbered balance of an appropriation made for the use of a department, division, or purpose to any other department, division, or purpose, or an increase in appropriation, may be made by the city council upon written recommendation of the city manager.

SECTION 3. That the city manager is hereby authorized to make the following adjustments:

(1) Reduce the allowed expenditures of departments or activities if, in the judgment of the city manager, actual or probable receipts are less than the amount estimated and appropriated for expenditures.

(2) Transfer appropriations budgeted for one account classification or activity to another within any individual department or activity listed in Section 1.

(3) Transfer appropriations from the Salary and Benefit Stabilization to any individual department or activity listed in Section 1, to be used for salaries and benefits.

SECTION 4. That the city manager is hereby authorized, upon written notice to the city controller, to make the following adjustments:

(1) Transfer internal service fund equity from unanticipated excesses to contributing funds.

(2) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$19,333,500, from the Convention Center Operating Fund 0080, Department CCT, Unit 7840, Object 3870, to the 2009 Convention Center Debt Service Fund 0980, Department CCT, Unit P505, Revenue Source 9219, for the payment of debt service on Hotel Occupancy Tax Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2021 for improvements to the Dallas Civic Center Convention Complex.

(3) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$1,217,943, from the General Fund 0001, Department BMS, Unit 1997, Object 3621 to the Liability Reserve Fund 0192, Department ORM, Unit 3890, Revenue Source 8525, for payment of small and large claims against the city.

(4) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$26,019,294 from the Water Utilities Operating Fund 0100, Department DWU, Unit 7015, Object 3690, in the amounts not to exceed \$7,500,000 to the Public/ Public/Private Partnership Fund 0352, Department ECO, Unit P151, Revenue Source 9201 and \$18,519,294 to the General Fund 0001, Department BMS, Unit 1991, Revenue Source 9201, as payment in lieu of taxes by the water utilities department to support economic initiatives of the city.

(5) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$10,437,500, from the Convention and Event Services Operating Fund 0080 Department CCT, Unit 7840, Object 3690 to the OCA Hotel Occupancy Fund 0435, Department OCA, Unit 1841, Revenue Source 9201, for the promotion of cultural arts.

(6) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$418,975, from the General Fund 0001 Department BMS, Unit 1991, Object 3690, to the Ultra Sales Tax Fund 0680, Department ECO, Unit 6696, Revenue Source 9201, for sales tax rebates in accordance with the terms of the sales tax grant agreement pursuant to Chapter 380 of the Texas Local Government Code.

(7) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$446,883, from the City of Dallas Regional Center Fund 0067, Department ECO, Unit P682, Object 3090, to the General Fund 0001, Department ECO, Unit (Various), Object 5011, in support of economic development activities.

(8) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$200,000, from the New Markets Tax Credit Fund 0065, Department ECO, Unit P607, Object 3899, to the General Fund 0001, Department ECO, Unit (Various), Object 5011, in support of economic development activities.

(9) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$100,000, from the Clean Energy Program Fund 0750, Department ECO, Unit W183, Object 3899 to the General Fund 0001, Department ECO, Unit (Various), Object 5011 to reimburse the General Fund for costs incurred in administering the Dallas PACE Program.

(10) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$2,000,000, from the General Fund 0001, Department PBW, Unit 1579, Object 3637, to the Bike Lane Fund 0791, Department PBW, Unit W660, Revenue Source 9236, for the purpose of citywide bike lanes.

(11) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$1,871,043, from the General Fund 0001, Department PBW, Unit 3671, Object 3690,

to the Dallas Streetcar System Fund 0992, Department PBW, Unit W670, Revenue Source 7051, for streetcar operations and maintenance.

(12) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$3,000,000, from the Information Technology Operating Fund 0198, Department DSV, Units 1622, 1641, and 1667, Object 3690, to the Information Technology Equipment Fund 0897, Department DSV, Units 3717, 3718, and 5319 for information technology servers, computers, storage, network and other IT equipment including related software, hardware, and implementation services.

(13) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$5,502,324, from the General Fund 0001, Department BMS, Unit 1991, Object 3690, to the Infrastructure Investment Fund 5117, Unit X037, Department ECO, Revenue Source 9201, for infrastructure projects in areas of the City that lack infrastructure or that have outdated or undersized infrastructure.

(14) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$9,000,000, to the General Fund 0001, Department BMS, Unit 1999, Revenue Source 9229, from the Sports Arena Lease Fund 0A71, Department CCT, Unit 8851, Object 3690, to support general fund operations.

(15) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$3,711,111, to the Fair Park Debt Service Fund 2134, Department PKR, Unit 7893, Revenue Source 9201, from the Venue Project Fund 0820, Department CCT, Unit 7893, Object 3690, to support Fair Park Debt Service payment.

(16) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$1,987,000, to the General Fund 0001, Department BMS, Unit 1999, Revenue Source 9229, from the Revenue Stabilization Fund 0731, Department BMS, Unit 5353, Object 3690, to support general fund operations.

(17) As part of the restructuring of the Department of Public Works and Department of Transportation, authorize any and all actions necessary to effect the following changes on funding and/or City Council resolutions authorized by City Council or via Administrative Action through 10/01/2024: authorize any other reassignment(s) and/or reallocation(s) and/or transfers of Department of Public Works and Department of Transportation funding and/or contracts and/or encumbrances that had been authorized by City Council or via Administrative Action through 10/01/2024 that may be part of any program moving into the Department of Transportation & Public Works (TPW).

(18) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$3,357,270 from the ARPA Redevelopment Fund (0A72), Department MGT/OEL, Unit AR33, Object Code 3070, to the ARPA Redevelopment Fund (0A72), Department PBW, Unit AR26, Object Code 3099, for the purpose of pavement markings.

(19) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$7,500,000 from the ARPA Redevelopment Fund (0A72), Department MGT/OEL, Unit AR33, Object Code 3070, to the ARPA Redevelopment Fund (0A72), Department FRM, Unit AR60, Object Code 3099, for the purpose of the purpose of major maintenance of city facilities.

(20) As part of the restructuring of the Department of Aviation (Transportation Regulation Division), authorize any and all actions necessary to effect the following changes on funding and/or city council resolutions authorized by city council or via administrative action through 10/01/2024: authorize any other reassignment(s) and/or reallocation(s) and/or transfers of the Department of Aviation (Transportation Regulation Division) funding and/or contracts and/or encumbrances that had been authorized by city council or via administrative action through 10/01/2024 that may be part of any program moving into the Department of Transportation and Public Works (Transportation Regulation Division).

(21) As part of the restructuring of the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, authorize any and all actions necessary to effect the following changes on funding and/or city council resolutions authorized by city council or via administrative action through 10/01/2024: authorize any other reassignment(s) and/or reallocation(s) and/or transfers of Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization funding and/or contracts and/or encumbrances that had been authorized by city council or via administrative action through 10/01/2024 that may be part of any program moving into the Department of Housing & Community Development.

(22) As part of the restructuring of the Office of Management Services (Office of Emergency Management and Office of Integrated Public Safety Solutions), authorize any and all actions necessary to effect the following changes on funding and/or city council resolutions authorized by city council or via administrative action through 10/01/2024: authorize any other reassignment(s) and/or reallocation(s) and/or transfers of Office of Management Services (Office of Emergency Management and Office of Integrated Public Safety Solutions) funding and/or contracts and/or encumbrances that had been authorized by city council or via administrative action through 10/01/2024 that may be part of any program moving into the Office of Management Services (Office of Emergency Management and Crisis Response).

(23) Transfer and administer gifts and bequests to the city in accordance with the terms and conditions accompanying the gifts or bequests and, for this purpose, the appropriation of donated amounts is hereby made.

(24) Decrease appropriation of any fund described in Section 1 to reduce expenditures within the fund when, in the judgment of the city manager, actual or probable receipts are less than the amount estimated and appropriated for expenditures.

SECTION 5. That the City Manager is hereby authorized to make a one-time reduction in the annual transfer from the General Fund, Fund 0001, to the Infrastructure Investment Fund, Fund 5117, from \$5,987,810 as authorized by resolution 23-0220, to \$5,502,324, to support library services.

SECTION 6. That the city manager is hereby authorized, upon written notice to the city controller, to transfer funds between the Employee Benefits Fund 0260 and other employee benefit funds for the purpose of allocating employee and retiree revenues to the appropriate claims funds and maximizing investment yields.

SECTION 7. That, in conformity with Chapter 40A, "Retirement," of the Dallas City Code, as amended, an appropriation of \$7,046,202 is established in the Employees' Retirement Fund Trust Fund 0275, Department ERF, Unit 5821, to provide for costs of administration of the employees' retirement fund office, with services to be paid out of income from investments.

SECTION 8. That the city manager is hereby authorized to make payments, in a total amount not to exceed \$6,500,000, for the City's allocations as part of the approved Dallas Central Appraisal District, Collin Central Appraisal District, Denton Central Appraisal District, and Rockwall Central Appraisal District 2025 budgets, pursuant to Section 6.06 of the Texas Property Tax Code.

SECTION 9. That, for the purpose of establishing reserves, the increase or reduction of restricted fund balances may be by city council resolution upon written recommendation of the city manager.

SECTION 10. That the projects listed in Section 10 are hereby adopted as the capital budget of the city of Dallas for public improvements to be financed from the proceeds of bond funds and with funds from other sources for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2025.

SECTION 11.(a) That the following amounts are hereby appropriated from the funds indicated for the projects listed in the FY 2024-25 capital budget:



CAPITAL FUNDS	PROPOSED 2024-25	
		From the Library Facilities (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y42) 3,029,900
From the 2023C Water Revenue Bonds TWDB LM221535 Fund	(120334,000,000	From the Mall Area Redevelopment Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0049) 1,586,289
From the 2025 Certificates of Obligation Fund	(2135)39,838,025	From the Parks and Recreation (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y00) 69,413,629
From the 2025 Equipment Acquisition Notes Fund (0776)	34,500,000	From the Public Safety Facilities (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y33) 50,199,235
From the 2025 Master Lease-Equipment Fund (ML25)	48,000,000	From the Public/Private Partnership Fund (0352) 7,500,000
From the Aviation Capital Construction Fund (0131)	24,850,000	From the Sanitation Capital Improvement Fund (0593) 10,000,000
From the Capital Construction Fund for City and Cultural Facilities (0671)	18,689,523	From the Sports Arena Tax Increment Financing District – North Parking Garage Fund (0514) 500,000
From the Cedars Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0033)	380,000	From the Storm Drainage Management Capital Construction Fund (0063) 15,950,875
From the Convention Center Capital Construction Fund (0082)	69,575,000	From the Street and Transportation (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y22) 93,879,198
From the Cultural Arts Facilities (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y49)	7,809,300	From the Transit Oriented Development Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0062) 5,271,774
From the Cypress Waters Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0066)	9,316,167	From the University Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0051) 3,146,659
From the Downtown Connection Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0044)	31,243,803	From the Vickery Meadow Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0048) 2,276,332
From the Downtown Connection TIF District – Newpark Sub-District (0045)	16,476	From the Wastewater Construction Fund (0103) 15,108,000
From the Economic Development (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y52)	9,789,632	From the Wastewater Capital Improvement Series F Fund (4116) 63,500,000
From the Farmers Market Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0036)	4,629,297	From the Wastewater Capital Improvement Series G Fund (5116) 27,400,000
From the Flood Protection and Storm Drainage (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y23)	1,799,106	From the Water and Wastewater Public Art Fund (0121) 50,000
From the Grand Park South Tax Increment Financing District Fund (0054)	812,399	From the Water Construction Fund (0102) 32,395,500
From the Homeless Assistance (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y43)	3,800,000	From the Water Capital Improvement Series F Fund (4115) 123,550,000
From the Housing Infrastructure (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y54)	5,280,000	From the Water Capital Improvement Series G Fund (5115) 32,200,000
From the Information Technology Facilities (2024 GO Bonds) Fund (1Y61)	5,000,000	
From the Infrastructure Investment Fund (5117)	5,987,811	
		CAPITAL FUNDS TOTAL 912,273,930

(b) That in order to reimburse and finance certain 2024 General Obligation (GO) bond funds capital project expenditures authorized in section (a) (Street and Transportation 1Y22, Park and Recreation Facilities 1Y00, Flood Protection and Storm Drainage 1Y23, Library Facilities 1Y42, Cultural and Performing Arts Facilities 1Y49, Public Safety Facilities 1Y33, Economic Development 1Y52, Housing and Neighborhood Infrastructure 1Y54, Homeless Assistance Facilities 1Y43, and Information Technology Facilities 1Y61), the City intends to issue one or more commercial paper notes as part of the General Obligation Commercial Paper Notes Series A, and Series B, and use the proceeds thereof to reimburse disbursements incurred.

(c) That in order to reimburse and finance the lease/purchase acquisition of equipment authorized in section (a) (2025 Master Lease-Equipment ML25), the City intends to execute, acknowledge and deliver a Schedule A (as defined in the Master Equipment Lease/Purchase Agreement) pertaining to such equipment including all attachments, financing statements and schedules thereto.

(d) That the following amounts are hereby appropriated from the funds indicated for payment of the FY 2024-25 Debt Service Budget:

DEBT SERVICE FUNDS PROPOSED 2024-25

From the General Obligation Debt Service Fund (0981)

485,754,134

DEBT SERVICE FUNDS TOTAL 485,754,134

(e) That these appropriations and all previous appropriated funds for these projects remain in force until each project is completed or terminated.

(f) That the appropriations listed in Subsections (a) and (d) may be increased by the city council upon the recommendation of the city manager.

SECTION 12. That a project will be considered completed when the requisitioning authority informs the city manager of completion by written notice. Any remaining unencumbered balance in an appropriation for a project that has been completed shall then revert to the appropriate fund.

SECTION 13. That the city manager is authorized to make the following adjustments:

(1) Transfer amounts from one project appropriation to another within the same fund, provided that the total appropriation for each fund is not exceeded by this action.

(2) Decrease appropriation of any fund described in Section 10 to reduce expenditures within the fund when, in the judgment of the city manager, actual or probable receipts are less than the amount estimated and appropriated for expenditures.

SECTION 14. That the city manager is hereby authorized, upon written notice to the city controller, to make the following adjustments:

(1) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$2,425,000, to the General Fund 0001, in the amounts of \$200,000 from the Oak Cliff Gateway Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0034; \$200,000 from the City Center Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0035; \$145,000 from the Farmers Market Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0036; \$185,000 from the Sports Arena Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0038; \$225,000 from the Downtown Connection Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0044; \$100,000 from the Southwestern Medical Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0046; \$75,000 from the Vickery Meadow Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0048; \$100,000 from the Mall Area Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0049; \$115,000 from the Design District Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0050; \$100,000 from the University Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0051; \$110,000 from the Skillman Corridor Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0052; \$125,000 from the Grand Park South Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0054; \$125,000 from the Deep Ellum Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0056; \$110,000 from the Fort Worth Avenue Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0058; \$135,000 from the Davis Garden Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0060; \$150,000 from the Transit-Oriented Development Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0062; \$100,000 from the Maple/Mockingbird

Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0064; and \$125,000 from the Cypress Waters Tax Increment Financing District Fund 0066, for reimbursement of tax increment financing administration costs. Transfer funds not to exceed \$25,000 to the General Fund 0001 from the Downtown Connection TIF District-Newpark Sub-District Fund, Fund 0045 for reimbursement of tax increment financing administration costs.

(2) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$47,558,000 from the Water Utilities Operating Fund 0100, in the amounts of \$32,400,000 to the Water Construction Fund 0102; \$15,108,000 to the Wastewater Construction Fund 0103; and \$50,000 to the Water and Wastewater Public Art Fund 0121, for projects listed in the FY 2024-25 Capital Budget.

(3) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$6,083,045, from the Storm Drainage Management Operating Fund 0061 to the Storm Drainage Management Capital Construction Fund 0063, for projects listed in the FY 2024-25 Capital Budget.

(4) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$3,500,000, from the Sports Arena Lease Fund 0A71, Department CCT, Unit 8851, Object 3690, to the Capital Construction Fund 0671, for the purpose of maintenance and repair for city facilities.

(5) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$1,000,000, from the General Fund 0001, Department FRM, to the Capital Construction Fund 0671, for the purpose of maintenance and repair of city facilities.

(6) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$9,715,750, from the Water Utilities Operating Fund 0100 to the Street and Alley Improvement Fund 0715, for the purpose of funding citywide street and alley improvement projects.

(7) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$4,167,318, from the Sanitation Enterprise Fund 0440 to the Street and Alley Improvement Fund 0715, for the purpose of funding citywide street and alley improvement projects.

(8) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$5,500,000 to the Street and Alley Improvement Fund 0715, in the amounts of \$5,500,000 from the General Fund 0001 for the purpose of funding citywide street, alley, and sidewalk improvement projects.

(9) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$3,434,085, from the Stormwater Operations Fund 0061 to the Street and Alley Improvement Fund 0715, for the purpose of funding sidewalks and neighborhood infrastructure.

(10) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$30,757,554, from the Convention Center Operating Fund 0080 to the Convention Center Capital Construction Fund 0082, for projects listed in the FY 2024-25 Capital Budget.

(11) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$15,305,842, from the Sanitation Services Fund 0440 in the amounts of \$12,004,254 to the Sanitation Capital Improvement Fund 0593, and \$3,301,588 to the Designated Environmental Protection/Closure/Post Closure Reserve Fund 0442, for capital improvements and equipment.

(12) Transfer funds, not to exceed \$18,942,958, to the General Obligation Debt Service Fund 0981, from any internal service or enterprise fund incurring civilian payroll costs based on the pro-rata allocation of the actual civilian payroll costs incurred during fiscal year 2024-25, for payment of debt service on the Pension Obligation Bonds Series 2005A and 2005B.

SECTION 15. That the city manager is authorized to make the following adjustments:

(1) Transfer amounts from one project appropriation to another within the same fund, provided that the total appropriation for each fund is not exceeded by this action.

(2) Decrease appropriation of any fund described in Section 9 and in any General Obligation Bond Program Funds to reduce expenditures within the fund when, in the judgment of the city manager, actual or probable receipts are less than the amount estimated and appropriated for expenditures, and make accounting adjustments between various bond programs and funds when, in the judgement of the city manager, it is necessary to do so to effectively and efficiently administer the General Obligation Bond Programs.

SECTION 16. That it is the intent of the city council, by passage of this ordinance, to appropriate funds for the city departments and activities. No office or position is created by the appropriations.

SECTION 17. That following the public hearing and passage of this ordinance on first reading, the city secretary shall cause the ordinance to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the city with a separate schedule setting forth the items in the

city manager's estimate that were omitted or changed by the city council, if any. The ordinance must then be presented to the city council for final reading at least 10 days after the publication. Upon final passage by the city council, this ordinance becomes effective immediately and the funds appropriated become available October 1, 2024.

FY 2024-25 BUDGET

September 4, 2024

General Fund Amendments

Source of Funds - \$1,139,145

- \$485,486 – Reduce Non-Departmental transfer to the Infrastructure Investment Fund
- \$653,659 – Eliminate expenses related to Bullington Truck and Pedestrian Terminal (includes Thanksgiving Square)

Use of Funds - \$1,139,145

- \$485,486 – Add funds to restore Skillman Southwestern Library to 53 hours/week and 6 days a week including 9 staff
- \$653,659 – Set aside funding for further consideration related to the Bullington Truck and Pedestrian Terminal (includes Thanksgiving Square)

Other Fund Amendments

Source of Funds - \$5,807,570

- \$5,807,570 – Reallocate and reprogram American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) interest earnings and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement for testing and vaccination funding

Use of Funds - \$5,807,570

- \$5,807,570 – Add Transportation and Public Works funding for street maintenance

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

TAMMY L. PALOMINO, City Attorney

By _____
Assistant City Attorney

PASSED ON FIRST READING SEPTEMBER 4, 2024

City Secretary

PASSED ON SECOND READING SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

City Secretary



City of Dallas

ConAm or **NO** ConAm?

ELECTION 2024

Hawaii voters asked to ensure protection of same-sex marriage

CHAD BLAIR | Honolulu Civil Beat

Distributed by Associated Press

In November 1998, Hawaii adopted a constitutional amendment giving the Legislature the power to restrict marriage to opposite-sex couples after it received a clear majority in the election.

Twenty-six years later, voters will have an opportunity to reverse that decision, which has already been made irrelevant — at least for now — by a U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing same-sex marriage nationally.

In the Nov. 5 general election, a new ballot measure will ask: “Shall the state constitution be amended to repeal the legislature’s authority to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples?”

The proposal comes as the island state has developed a reputation as a leader in the legal effort toward marriage equality. Same-sex marriage was legalized statutorily in Hawaii two years before the 2015 Supreme Court ruling. But the state constitution still has wording granting lawmakers “the power to reserve marriage to opposite-sex couples.”

Supporters say passage of the new constitutional amendment would remove discriminatory language from the constitution and make it crystal clear that Hawaii supports equal rights.

The U.S. Supreme Court’s 2023 ruling repealing *Roe v. Wade* on abortion rights has also raised fears that same-sex marriage and other rights could be threatened by a conservative court. But opponents of the 2024 ballot measure say it amounts to political bullying from the state’s liberal Democratic majority, and that marriage has traditionally been between one man and one woman.

Changing attitudes

In 1998, 59 percent of voters said yes to giving the Legislature authority over



In this 2013 file photo, Shaun Campbell, left, and Tony Singh are congratulated by guests after their wedding at the Sheraton Waikiki in Honolulu. (Marco Garcia/Associated Press)

gender and matrimony. Barely one-third of voters, or 34 percent, voted against the proposal. The Legislature never acted on that authority, but same-sex marriage advocates want the language removed from the constitution so there’s no ambiguity.

In April, the Legislature agreed to place the ConAm question on the ballot. Of the 76 members, only one Republican in the Senate and five in the House voted against the measure, as did one House Democrat.

U.S. Rep. Jill Tokuda was among those who testified in strong support of the legislation, referring to last year’s Supreme Court decision on *Roe v. Wade*.

“As someone who fought to establish and protect marriage equality in Hawaii for more than a quarter of a century, I refuse to stand by and watch this court take a hatchet to rights won that had previously been denied,” she wrote.

Honolulu Mayor Rick Blangiardi, City Council members Esther Kiaaina and Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii and the Democratic Party of Hawaii also sup-

ported the proposed amendment.

Only a handful of testifiers opposed it.

“This is an attempt to codify a political opinion into the state constitution,” wrote Cari Sasaki. “If the opposite were being proposed, that the legislature constitutionally couldn’t define marriage as anything other than one man and one woman, liberals would honestly lose their minds. This bill is political bullying by the majority party.”

“Marriage is between a man and a woman,” testified David Ruiz.

Worries about blank votes

So far this year the marriage ConAm has not received anywhere near as much attention as the 1998 version did. That year, for instance, marked the beginning of the political career of Mike Gabbard, who publicly and vigorously denounced homosexuality.

Last year, however, state Sen. Gabbard voted for the 2024 ConAm, explaining that his views on marriage have changed over the years.

Jeff Hong was chair of the Change 23

Coalition, the local group that pushed for a ballot initiative. (The marriage clause is in Section 23 of the state constitution.) Its partners include the Hawaii LGBT Legacy Foundation, the Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center, ACLU Hawaii, Papa Ola Lokahi and the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement.

Hong said the coalition has evolved into a nonprofit Hawaii civil rights voter education fund. It has embarked on a campaign to urge voters to vote yes on the constitutional amendment, one of two on the fall ballot. The other is on the judicial selection process.

A major concern for supporters is that many voters may not bother to vote on the ConAm.

For a proposed amendment to be ratified it must be approved by a majority of all yes and no votes recorded, and in addition that majority must constitute at least 50 percent of the total votes cast at the election, including blank and over-votes.

“While we see a lot of positive momentum forward, the apathy of the blank vote goes against us,” said Hong. “And we need to ensure that the voters of Hawaii realize that in this election, if you’re for the initiative, you need to vote for it. Don’t leave the question blank.”

The Hawaii Family Forum, a faith-based group formed in 1998, played an active role in the passage of that year’s ConAm. The forum has a partnership with the local Catholic Conference.

Eva Andrade, president and CEO of the Hawaii Family Forum, said the group has not decided whether to take a position on the ConAm. She said the group is focused this election year on consumer issues, given concerns about the economy.

The forum’s 2024 voter guide, for example, does not mention the ConAm. But Andrade said the forum would conduct an educational campaign to make sure voters are aware of what it means to leave a ballot question blank. ■

This story was originally published by Honolulu Civil Beat and distributed through a partnership with The Associated Press.

'It's **not** that difficult'

ELECTION 2024

Walz touts Democratic record of defending LGBTQ rights, says Harris will advance cause if elected

MORIAH BALINGIT | Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz touted Vice President Kamala Harris'

record of defending LGBTQ+ rights on Saturday night, Sept. 7, pledging to a supportive crowd that she will advance their cause if she is elected president.

Walz, the Democratic vice presidential nominee, was headlining the national dinner for the Human Rights Campaign, an event he praised as being "the best party in the nation."

He entered the sprawling ballroom of 3,500 attendees to John Mellencamp's "Small Town" and a boisterous standing ovation from members of the nation's largest LGBTQ organization.

Walz noted how Harris worked alongside President Joe Biden to issue executive orders protecting the rights of LGBTQ people in health care, the military and education.

"And the reason she did it was pretty simple: Kamala Harris believes in equal justice under law, and that means proper, complicated, equal justice under law. It is not to be debated," Walz said. "It's not that difficult."

Transgender youth and adults are facing growing restrictions in red states. Last year, HRC declared an emergency for LGBTQ people in the United States because of the proliferation of state laws restricting their rights. If elected, Republican Donald Trump has said he would replicate some of those restrictions at the federal level.

Not long after Biden dropped out of the 2024 race and endorsed Harris for president, HRC announced that it, too, would back the vice president. The organization also applauded her selection



Gov. Tim Walz speaks at the 2024 HRC National Dinner

of Walz as her running mate, citing his own long record of supporting LGBTQ youth and backing same-sex marriage.

On Saturday night, Walz recounted how he taught social studies and coached football at a Minnesota high school in the 1990s — and was unexpectedly approached by a student asking him to serve as the faculty adviser of the Gay-Straight Alliance.

He also outlined a litany of Harris' achievements on LGBTQ issues, recalling an instance when, as attorney general of California, she had to personally call a Los Angeles clerk who was declining to issue marriage license to same-sex couples.

"You must start the marriages immediately," Harris told the clerk, according to Walz. "She had the best line then. She told the clerk, 'Have a good day. It's going to be a fun one.'"

He urged the crowd to work to help elect Harris, outlining what could happen if Trump got a second term in the White House. Trump's policy proposals would "restrict freedom, bully this community, demonize vulnerable children," Walz said.

Trump has made attacks on transgender people a mainstay of his campaign rhetoric as he seeks his second term in office. It marks an about-face for the Republican who, in his 2016 address to the Republican National Convention, called for the party to protect LGBTQ people.

If re-elected, Trump has pledged in his policy platform to stop public

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Being **bi**

FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION



Even though the 'B' comes third in 'LGBTQ,' bisexuals often face discrimination from within and outside of the LGBTQ community

LGBTQ community.

Studies across the world have shown that bisexual humans, and especially bisexual women, face unique challenges within the LGBTQ community, and personal experiences described by bi people back those studies up.

In 2022, Jayna Tavarez studied nine bisexual students engaged in LGBTQ spaces on a college campus. The participants all experienced bisexual-specific stress within LGBTQ spaces, the report said.

There's a popular discourse online and in LGBTQ spaces when it comes to desirability of bisexual women within and outside of the LGBTQ community. Sex researcher Zhana Vrangalova, writing for Julie E. Hartman's study

CAROLINE SAVOIE | Contributing Writer
carolinesavoie@gmail.com

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Bisexual Awareness Week is Sept. 16-23, culminating in Celebrate Bisexuality+ Day on Sept. 23. In this article, Dallas Voice examines the bi-phobia often found in the*

Another Kind of 'Chilly Climate:' The Effects of Lesbian Separatism on Identity and Community, noted, "Lesbian women and communities are notorious for rejecting bisexual women as potential friends and



as sexual and romantic partners due to stereotypes that bisexual women are untrustworthy, unreliable, incapable of monogamy, disease carriers and 'sleeping with the enemy.'"

Brian Kennedy, an LGBTQ-affirming therapist at Room for Change in Oak Lawn who identifies as gay, said that during the coming out process, LGBTQ humans can go through a phase where they reject heteronormativity as a way of turning anger outward.

"Sometimes biphobia shows up because there is a misconception of bisexuals as half-gay, half-straight, and there is a rejection of the perceived heterosexual part," Kennedy said.

He continued by saying that in society, "There is a desire for others to be like

us."

"These misconceptions about bisexuality can stem from wanting others to identify like ourselves to validate our identities instead of dating others that appear to uphold heteronormative ideals," Kennedy said. "I would encourage people with that belief to explore where it comes from — [determine] if it comes from insecurity or negative messaging in culture that forms our cognitions about self."

Vrangalova said bisexual men are stigmatized by gay men to some extent. But because of gay men's lesser cultural emphasis on monogamy, how much bisexual men are desired by potential partners is less affected by these stereotypes.

Kennedy noted that oftentimes when men identify as bisexual, people think they're not really bi, "they're just not all the way out yet."

Another study — *Bisexual prejudice among lesbian and gay people: Examining the roles of gender and perceived sexual orientation*, — suggests that these stereotypes could be due to what researchers call the androcentric desire hypothesis: the idea that people perceive bisexuals as being more sexually attracted to men than they are to women.

"Indeed, the stereotypical perception of a bisexual man is often a 'gay man in denial,' but the stereotypical perception of a bisexual woman is a 'heterosexual in disguise' who's hooking up with women temporarily for 'fun,' or to attract the attention of straight men," Vrangalova wrote regarding Harman's study.

Tamera Lanay, a 28-year-old Dallas resident and queer woman who uses she/they pronouns, said that while she hasn't experienced feeling ostracized in the LGBTQ dating scene, she has felt objectified by the straight men she dates.

"I've faced a lot of fetishization from straight men who are interested in dating," Lanay said. "[Straight men] often ask if I would want to engage in a threesome. They almost feel like I'm an object. They assume that I don't want to date women, that I just want to have sex with women."

"They don't have the maturity to understand what my sexuality really is," they continued. "It's off-putting and disheartening. I'd love for them to have more of an understanding."

In both examples, the sexuality of bisexual women and men is perceived as oriented mainly toward men.

BI, Next Page

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BI, From Previous Page



In the study by Matsick and Rubin, 165 lesbian women and gay men in undergraduate school were asked to answer questions about how they feel their group — lesbians or gay men — viewed bisexual women or men and to what extent they thought bisexuals were attracted to men or women.

“Confirming past research,” Vrangalova wrote in Hartman’s study, “lesbian women were more negative toward bisexuals than were gay men, and they were more negative toward bisexual women than gay men were toward bisexual men, in particular.”

Lanay suggested that this is an example of the patriarchy at play.

“Even though we live in a society that is more accepting of the LGBTQ community, I still feel like maleness and gay men are still centered in that,” they said. “We know when it comes to the trans community, they face erasure and far more oppression. When it comes to bisexual women and dating, it’s hard.”

Vrangalova continued, “Furthermore, the results mostly supported the androcentric desire hypothesis. Lesbian and gay participants both agreed that bisexual men are significantly more attracted to men than they are to women, and lesbian women felt that this was true of bisexual women as well.

The only exception to this pattern were gay men who felt bisexual women were equally attracted to men and women.”

Lanay said that she does worry about facing judgment when dating femmes:



“For a lot of queer women, there’s this concern that I might face judgment because I’m not as experienced with women,” they said.

In June 2024, a discourse on TikTok arose around bisexual women bringing their straight boyfriends to Pride events. Some lesbian women felt that bringing a straight person to Pride infringes upon the safe space Pride provides members

of the LGBTQ community. Other creators pushed back, saying that any person who supports the community and loves its members should be allowed at Pride.

Lanay said that rhetoric like this further divides the community during a time where it must band together: "I think that response from Sapphics pushing back on queer women bringing straight partners to Pride is the exact reason some feel ostracized or judged in the community," they said. "I think it gives into this black-and-white thinking. If someone's straight partner is an ally, isn't that what Pride is about?"

"We live in the state of Texas, where anti-trans or anti-LGBTQ laws have been passed in our legislature," they added. "To further divide our community is an injustice considering the oppression we're up against. We need community; we need to accept others."



Kennedy said that he believes exposure and visibility is something that helps the LGBTQ community.

"When we silo off, we're not doing anybody a service," he said. "I know we haven't always been allowed to be ourselves in public spaces, but I also believe that when we separate ourselves from the rest of society, that's when stereo-

types prevail. We need to be seen to be understood."

He said that if he were to speak to someone with the belief that straight people don't belong at Pride, he would approach them with curiosity: "What is the irrational belief you're attaching to that behavior?" he said he'd ask. "Is it because they're in that place that is not accepting of anything heterosexual? I'd ask, 'Why is that coming up for you?'"

Kennedy said that he would encourage the community to bring straight allies to Pride if they're respectful, so those people can go back into their circles and influence others.

There's another unique challenge bisexual humans face: feeling like they have to "prove" their queerness if they're in a relationship with someone of the opposite gender. Because their sexuality is not obvious to the rest of the world, it can feel like their queerness is minimized.

"When I'm in straight spaces, people tend to assume that I'm straight," Lanay said. "That's when I feel like I'm not seen in my fullness. I don't like when someone assumes I'm straight."

Kennedy said that in society, we've been indoctrinated to believe that seeing a man and a woman in partnership "equals straight, not bi."

"We're constantly challenged with our identity in a heteronormative society. Know who you are, be okay with who you are and who you want, and at the end of the day the rest is no one else's business," he said. "You don't need popular opinion on your identity. You're gonna hear negative things, as our own culture and community is steeped in stigma."

Lanay said they have found two spaces in Dallas that are accepting and non-judgmental of their bisexuality, where they feel safe to be in their full expression: Dallas Social Queer Organization and the Dallas Black Queer Collective.

Lanay said the Dallas Social Queer Organization provides monthly social events for LGBTQ people, and the Dallas Black Queer Collective brings Black queer people together for activities and community service. Both have been a safe space for them to express their sexuality within the LGBTQ community.

"Oftentimes, the LGBTQ community revolves around drinking culture, and

BI, Next Page

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it's not something I want to participate in, so it's been relieving to find a pocket of the community that is totally accepting," Lanay said.

Kirsten McLean's research study *Inside, Outside, Nowhere: Bisexual Men and Women in the Gay and Lesbian Community*, explores the impact of biphobic attitudes within the LGBTQ community on 60 bisexual men and women in Australia. McLean discovered that many of the participants weren't active in the LGBTQ scene because they believed they would be rejected or discriminated against. And those who did participate in community events tended to keep their bisexuality hidden "for fear of being unwelcome."

"This raises a number of issues about the maintenance of a bisexual identity, including the impact of secrecy and staying closeted on self-esteem and mental health," McLean wrote.

Samantha R. DeCapua, in her study *Bisexual Women's Experiences with Binegativity in Romantic Relationships*, found that although more people are open about



being bisexual in the United States in recent years, bisexual women still have to manage objectification, stereotyping and hypersexualization in both straight and LGBTQ spaces.

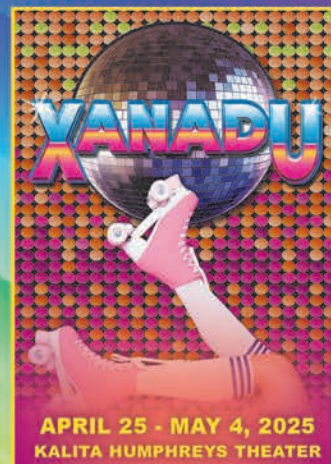
"Thus, despite increasing visibility of bisexuality, there is still a lack of acceptance and understanding in the gay and lesbian, and straight communities, directly affecting the lives of bisexual women," DeCapua wrote.

Kennedy said that because he is not bisexual, he doesn't assume that he can understand the experience of being bisexual. He said that as a therapist, it's his job to try to understand to the best of his ability.

"As a person in the community, it's my job to be an ally to everyone else in our community," he said. "I believe that if I hear biphobia or transphobia, it's important to speak up because we know the support isn't always coming from the outside.

"I encourage people facing stigma to go to therapy to challenge the irrational thoughts that may come up."

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VOLUNTEERING

Fort Worth couple volunteer with Tarrant County's CASA program

JAMES RUSSELL | Contributing Writer
james.journo@gmail.com

Here's Ryan and Michael Kite-Hedges' typical week: Go to work, walk their dogs, take care of the house and advocate for neglected and abused children.

The Fort Worth couple are volunteer advocates with CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Tarrant County, a not-for-profit focused on advocating for children in foster care.

The job is as easy as it sounds — as in, not easy at all.

Ryan and Michael are among the 600 advocates who go through hours and hours of intense training to navigate a troubling and dysfunctional system. The system has been stuck in federal courts for the past 13 years, with plaintiffs representing children arguing it is so dysfunctional that it violates the children's constitutional rights.

CASA volunteers are appointed by judges to serve as navigators for children in custody of the state. They do everything, from providing companionship to the children to nudging the various players across government and private organizations to keep doing their jobs on behalf of the child.

"The child is one piece of it. Think of it as part detective work and part maintaining consistency," Michael said.

It's a lot of work in Tarrant County, which has the third-highest number of abused or neglected children in the state. In fact, Tarrant County has the highest per capita child abuse rate of all urban areas in the state.

When it comes to communicating with the child, Ryan said, "you have to



ask, 'Are you okay? Are you talking to your parents?' You maintain the relationship so they can trust you."

Volunteers keep everyone accountable, too.

The volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and in a variety of ages. Volunteers can be as young as their 20s and as old as their 80s.

Ryan is a marketing executive. Michael is in construction management. (The couple, while not in their 20s, are as youthful as 20-year-olds.)

Yet what all volunteers share is a doggedness. They take the role seriously and are committed for the long term, said Jennie Parker, a child advocate at CASA who works with volunteers. Each paid staff member is assigned 25 volunteers; 499 volunteers were assigned cases in 2023.

"Michael and Ryan are among my favorite volunteers and humans," Parker added.

She's been with the agency for six years after having previously worked for Child Protective Services and also as a police officer. She's seen the system change, which makes her oversight role more critical.

These days, Parker said, she's seeing more babies taken into state custody and laws making removal of younger children much harder.

Given all the changes, and given that these trained advocates are also volunteers, Parker said she's "hands on as much they need me."

She and the CASA staff are also steadfast LGBTQ allies: "When you're with us you know you'll be supported," she said.

Fortunately, nothing horrible has happened with volunteers, Parker said. The horrible stuff has "mainly been with foster parents," she added.

"In training they say, 'don't worry, the kids will love you,'" Michael said. "It's true."

The couple are in the process of adopting a child. If they're anything as parents like they are as advocates, their future child will love them, too. ■

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BEYOND THE STAGE

'Visiting Mr. Green' can resonate with gay audiences through its heartfelt truths

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
Rich@DallasVoice.com

On the surface, the play *Visiting Mr. Green* may sound a bit like *Tuesdays with Morrie*: A young man develops a profound friendship with an older man.

Got it.

But according to the play's director, this one has a lot more shade to throw. In *Green*, these two characters don't get off on the right foot.

"They both have a lot of past heartache and trauma, and so communication is very difficult between the two," Director Steven D. Morris said.

Theatre Arlington opens the Jeff Baron-written play on Friday, Sept. 13 and it runs through Sept. 29.

After the two are involved in a traffic accident, Ross is given six months of community service in which he is ordered to visit Mr. Green, an elderly widower. Both are Jewish. Ross is gay, and, in Mr. Green's eyes, there is no such thing as a gay Jew.

"He's very firm in his beliefs, and he's very devout," Morris said. "Ross has gone back in the closet so his family would accept and speak to him again after he came out, so he comes in with this struggle of acceptance. Mr. Green reflects that to Ross."

The two-actor play stars Parker Gray as Ross and David Coffey as the titular older widower.

Morris assures it's not just a play filled with barbs and insults back and forth between the unlikely pair. For the director, the story is about healing and getting through those difficult moments to find something more in each other.

"I've been very blessed with these

actors because they are unbelievably talented and extremely professional," Morris said. "The play is also so well-written. There are lots of laughs and comedy within these difficult moments. And there are tears.

"I hope gay audiences will come out because I think this play is very heal-

ful I am.

"I didn't come out until I was 30 but my family never blinked."

Morris said that while this play is about family and relationships, it is also about grief. Where Ross is initially shunned by his family for coming out, his struggles with closeting himself run

ecutive producer — and the breadth of diversity featured in its seasons. Each season often has a production that gives attention to queer, Black and female communities mixed in with shows that are fan favorites or classics. Next year, they open with the Latine-centric musical *In the Heights*.



Parker Gray, left, and David Coffey star in *Visiting Mr. Green* at Theatre Arlington (Courtesy photo)

ing — even if we don't think we need some."

Morris added that this play has been a bit of an emotional experience. He doesn't relate to Ross' family situation directly. Instead, he sympathizes with the character's decision to hide away for family acceptance.

"When I see people struggling with sexuality in a time where you can be accepted, it's so hard and challenging," he said. "I'm shocked it still happens. The things that choke me up in this play also make me realize how blessed and grate-

deep. Mr. Green is stuck in deep emotion after having lost his wife. Without giving away too much, let's say the tension between the two begins a journey of personal growth.

Theatre Arlington has not shied away from stories that feature a queer perspective. Last year, they presented a stellar production of *Avenue Q*, and in 2022, the company presented *The Cake*.

Queer stories in the suburbs? This isn't new, but Morris has intentions with Theatre Arlington — he's also the TA ex-

"Our audiences are typically older and white, and they are great. But my goal with many shows is to present different stories and different people," Morris said. "If you don't know people different from you, this is a way to experience that. Seeing it on stage might open up conversations and bring in a new perspective.

"And ultimately, I think everyone will see that we all want the same things."

And just like that, Morris has expressed the power of theater. ■

For tickets, visit TheatreArlington.org.

A **gay** dark horse?

ELECTION 2024



The Libertarian Party nominated party activist Chase Oliver for president at its convention in May. (AP Photo/Ben Gray, File)

Openly gay Georgian Chase Oliver is the Libertarian Party's candidate for president

JOHN FERRANNINI | Bay Area Reporter

Reprinted courtesy of BAR and News Is Out

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Libertarian Party of Texas will host Chase Oliver, the openly-gay man who is the party's presidential candidate, Saturday, Sept. 21, at the Plano

Balloon Festival at Red Tail Pavilion in Oak Point Park. The festival opens at 6 a.m., with the balloon launch at 7 a.m., and closes at 10 p.m. An LPTexas spokesperson said Oliver is expected to be at the event for most of the day. Visit LPTexas.org for more information.

Chase Oliver, the gay Libertarian from Georgia who is his party's presidential nominee, got an unexpected boon Aug. 23, when Democrat-turned-independent Robert F. Kennedy Jr. dropped out of the race and endorsed Republican nominee former President Donald Trump.

Oliver's message to disappointed RFK Jr. supporters — who at the time he sus-

pected his presidential bid was polling nationally around 5 percent according to 538's average of polls — is that they need look no further.

Running with Oliver as his vice presidential nominee is Mike ter Maat, a retired police officer from Virginia.

"I can say first I empathize with the many who feel very disappointed; they were supporting RFK to declare themselves independent of the two-party system, and they may be feeling frustrated or let down," Oliver told the Bay Area Reporter in an Aug. 26 phone interview. "We welcome them into the tent.

"Many of the issues they care about — corporate capture, medical freedom — these kinds of things are very much in line with the Libertarian philosophy, so many people can feel at home and welcome in the Oliver/ter Maat campaign, and we hope they join us."

Initially, ter Maat ran against Oliver for their party's presidential nomination.

"I said if you'd like to be my running mate, I accept it and he accepted it on the [convention] floor," Oliver said. "I knew he was the person who could help us with a unifying ticket for the party we

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HORSE, From Page 58

can move forward with throughout the country.”

Starchild, who uses one name and is the chair of the San Francisco County Libertarian Party, was a delegate at the Libertarian convention that was held in Washington, D.C. in late May. He told the B.A.R. he was initially hesitant about ter Maat but now supports him.

“He also was my second choice, despite being an ex-police officer, which gave me misgivings, but he is one of the very few good cops who understand and respect civil liberties,” Starchild, who is pansexual, told the B.A.R.

Oliver, 39, had spoken with the B.A.R. back in August 2023, when he was the first-ever third-party candidate to speak at the Iowa State Fair Political Soapbox. At that time, the former U.S. House and Senate candidate in Georgia had said, “We have extremely high voter dissatisfaction with the two parties.”

Outlining a platform meant to maximize personal liberty, whether it’s on transgender people in sports or regula-



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tion of the economy, Oliver said, "I want to run with a message that's confident, aspirational and taps into Gen Z."

Oliver, who is single and lives north of Atlanta, had been an Obama Democrat. But he soured on then-President Barack Obama due to his expansion of the security state, the continuation of U.S. detention of foreign nationals at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the expansion of international counterterrorism efforts of dubious legality under international law. He called those moves a "slap in the face to the anti-war movement that helped [Obama] win both the primary against Hillary Clinton and the White House."

He discovered the Libertarian Party in 2010 at a booth at the Atlanta Pride festival. Fourteen years later, he became the party's presidential nominee at a raucous convention in Washington, D.C., that saw Trump unsuccessfully ask for the nomination.

Slim chance of victory

The B.A.R. asked Oliver what he'd say to the argument that the threat to democratic elections posed by Trump necessitates uniting behind Democratic nominee Vice President Kamala Harris, who formally accepted her party's presidential nomination Aug. 22 at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

"I would argue the conditions that allowed someone like Trump to make their way to the forefront of American politics is the two-party system we have that polarizes and creates hyper-partisanship, and allows the worst voices to rise to the top," Oliver said. "If we had a democracy with more voices and more choices, we'd have more honest and civil elections."

Starchild agreed, saying that nobody's vote is the deciding factor in the election and pointing to the fact that even the razor-thin margin in Florida's 2000 presidential election was in the hundreds.

"The chances of Chase Oliver getting elected president is better than the chances your one vote is going to change the outcome," Starchild said. "Anyone who says, 'He can't win; I don't want to waste my vote,' they are throwing away their vote on an even slimmer chance."

Oliver has been accused of being a spoiler before. In 2022 he was credited with forcing the U.S. Senate race in his home state of Georgia into a runoff between Democratic Senate candidate the

Rev. Raphael Warnock and Republican former football player Herschel Walker after he got more than 2 percent of the vote. Warnock went on to win the runoff.

Policies, positions

Oliver said that in his view, government is "the least efficient way to help people."

"My opposition to the authoritarianism on the left is their need to use central planning and government programs to run every aspect of our lives," Oliver said. "Every time a problem arises, the left says, 'Let's use central planning to clamp that down.' And, like a hydra, that creates more problems than it solves."

"That's my biggest gripe with big government folks. ... Just because we don't want a huge welfare state doesn't mean we don't want to help people who are in need."

Oliver, who will be in North Texas next week, said he is planning a California swing toward the end of September, including a stop in the Bay Area. He contrasted the national focus of his campaign with Trump and Harris keeping their "focus on a handful of swing states" in the Electoral College.

"I'm focusing on where we can grow the Libertarian Party," Oliver said. "We're looking at ballot access and party status, which makes it easier to run more candidates and be more visible to voters."

The Libertarian Party, so far, has ballot access in 40 states and the District of Columbia this cycle. With more than 700,000 members, it's America's third largest party by voter registration.

Starchild thinks what the two major parties need is a "time out." Oliver is "the real peace candidate in the race," Starchild said, and he can see him bringing balance to the Oval Office.

"Hyper-partisans will find things to dislike about his politics — being out and gay, supporting trans rights, supporting the Second Amendment, what have you," he said. "In an era when the tensions are so heightened that people are talking about a second Civil War, electing someone like Chase who can be seen as being from the middle — even though it's the radical middle — could be a national pause."

"Both sides can realize maybe there's more than two camps here, and this is a nuanced situation." ■

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'Very demure, very mindful'

MEDIA



TikTok creator Jools Lebron, left, with talk show personality Guillermo Rodriguez on the set of *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, on Aug. 19 in Los Angeles. (Randy Holmes/ABC-Disney via AP, File)

A trans woman made the phrase go viral. Now she wants to trademark its use

WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — “Very demure, very mindful” has become the latest vocabulary defining the internet’s summer. And TikTok creator Jools Lebron is working to trademark uses of her now-viral words.

Lebron recently filed to trademark “very demure very mindful” for various entertainment and advertising services, including the promotion of beauty products, with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Two filings dated Sept. 5 are under her legal name, a representative for Lebron confirmed to The Associated Press.

Social media’s love for “very de-

mure” content started in early August, when Lebron took to TikTok to describe the hair and makeup she was wearing to work. Her delivery took off, and she kept going, with “mindful” and “cute-sy” flooding the internet as scores of fans, including big name celebrities, shared their own playful takes to describe just about any detail of day-to-day life.

Content creators can make meaningful income after gaining social media fame through avenues like direct brand sponsorships and viewer donations. And for Lebron, who is a transgender woman, her viral moment allowed her to finance the rest of her transition.

Trademarks, on the other hand, can help secure rights to maintain certain business down the road. Lebron’s own trademark filings are still pending, and it could be a while before there’s a final determination. But the move is particularly notable after several other individuals with no known connection to Lebron separately tried to register demure-related trademarks in an apparent effort to capitalize on the success of those phrases, much to the dismay of

Lebron's fans.

The saga, while unfinished, has spotlighted the complex process of filing trademarks that capture a viral moment — and the battle that social media content creators face to both get credit and find protections to monetize off the trends they popularize.

Can you trademark a viral phrase? Yes. But in the U.S., there needs to be an attached commercial use.

"It's not just coming up with a phrase ... (or) using it on social media and making it go viral," said Alexandra J. Roberts, a professor of law and media at Northeastern University, explaining that there must be a connection to the sale of concrete goods or services. She calls trademarks a "source indicator," as they help consumers understand who is producing what they're buying now, but not necessarily who came up with a name in the first place.

The law is complicated, and trademarks are often determined on a case-by-case basis. Applications are specific to certain uses, allowing multiple brands to operate under similar names — like Dove chocolate and Dove soap, or Delta Faucet and Delta Airlines. Courts greenlight this when it's assumed that consumers will easily be able to distinguish between such different products or services.

But a phrase or name that's strongly associated with a particular individual can sometimes supersede that.

"Simplistically, the entire reason the trademark exists is to prevent consumer confusion," said Casey Fiesler, an associate professor of information science at the University of Colorado Boulder. "And if [someone else] created a social media marketing service and called it 'very demure, very mindful social media marketing,' that would confuse consumers because they're gonna think it's associated with" Jools Lebron.

Trademarks should not be mixed up with copyright. Anyone who has ever made a unique TikTok, for example, owns the copyright to that video, Fiesler explains. But there are still limitations to what's copyrightable, and short phrases themselves almost never apply.

In today's ever-digitized world of online trends, creators are increasingly expressing concerns about getting credited for their work. And for something like trademark rights, experts stress it's a battle of both getting there first and having resources to see it through.

Some phrases have been determined

to be used too pervasively, making it harder for consumers to recognize it as a brand indicator. It can also be difficult when credit isn't given to the creator who starts a trend in the first place — and experts note the consequences of that haven't been felt equally in the past.

Historically, young women of color who start a viral trend or put a new phrase on the map have often seen their work get appropriated online — and potentially "get scooped" on trademark rights from someone with more resources, like connections to a lawyer, Roberts explained.

Beyond trademark-specific disputes, Fiesler added that creators seeing their work stolen and reposted in other platforms for monetization continues to be a "huge problem" today, but she hopes the tide is starting to turn. That includes with Lebron, who has been so widely-credited for the "very demure" trend.

"I hope to continue to see there being very strong social norms that are enforcing this," Fiesler said.

Three applications that were submitted before Lebron's filings are still listed as live in the USPTO's records — which would essentially make her "fourth in line" in consideration, Roberts said. But it's possible that others might later suspend their filings. And one of the applicants told NBC said that she filed in efforts to help Lebron hold on to trademark until she could transfer it.

Lebron's legal team could potentially fight off rival filings or strengthen her own by negotiating with other applicants and updating her filing to reduce any overlap. She could also oppose a rival application down the road on the grounds of false association.

The trademark process could outlast the trend itself, taking anywhere between six to nine months, and sometimes closer to a year. And that can drag out even further with a legal battle or requested extensions.

Still, Roberts stresses that Lebron can currently "do whatever she wants in terms of use" and start selling merchandise.

There's also nothing stopping someone from putting "very demure, very mindful" on the front of a t-shirt — as that technically qualifies as ornamental use, not trademark.

But getting those words as a brand, seen on something like an attached clothing tag, is when trademark rights would kick in. ■



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Matteo matters

Photos courtesy Troy Hallahan.

COMEDY

Gay comedian Matteo Lane talks social media, Liza Minnelli and more

GREGG SHAPIRO | Contributing Writer
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When it comes to comedy, everyone has their own ideas about what is or isn't funny.

Things that make you laugh might have the opposite effect on someone else.

In the ongoing evolution of stand-up comedy, the presence of LGBTQ comics continues to increase at a fast pace. While lesbian comedians have long dominated, gay male comics are making their presence felt, with Matteo Lane being — far and away — the best.

Lane, who combines Midwestern and European influences in his material, has a distinctive delivery style that often has audience members struggling to catch their breath between jokes and laughs. It also helps that he's easy on the eyes — very handsome with a hot gym body!

Matteo was kind enough to make time for an interview in advance of his upcoming comedy tour.

Gregg Shapiro: Matteo, I had the pleasure of interviewing you for the first time in 2017 in advance of your performance at the Dania Beach Casino. Matteo Lane: I think I remember that. I wasn't headlining, right? Was I opening for someone else?

Someone else who was not very funny. OK, now I remember. Sam Jay and I were both opening for ... [laughs] yeah, I remember that.

Since then, your social media and online presence have increased greatly. How important is it to you to maintain that? I don't know that I think about it in terms of maintaining it so much as it's nice to reach out and have people reach back. It's also a great way of letting people know that I'm on tour, so they get to

see what I work on all the time, which is stand-up.

I don't think I've ever thought about it that way, as maintaining. I just think of it more as a great opportunity to express yourself and have people enjoy it.

Your conversations with comedians are inspired and hilarious, and the ones with Jessica Kirson are a particular favorite of mine. I love Jessica!

That face! Are you having as much fun as you appear to be having [Laughs] Yes! What do you take me for? I wouldn't be doing it if I wasn't enjoying it [laughs].

It's not like it's MGM in 1935 and I have to pretend with Mickey Rooney that I'm having a good time. I'm choosing to do this!

Speaking of Mickey Rooney, do you know if Liza Minnelli is aware of your impression of her? I don't know. But I feel like I've been getting closer [laughs]. Now I'm at the point where I know close friends of hers. I don't even think she would be offended if she heard it. I think she's got tough skin. I think she would laugh, and probably ask me what I wanted for dinner. She seems nice.

She has a memoir coming out, and at least 10 people texted me yesterday saying that I should do the audiobook.

The way the audience becomes part of your shows has become something of a trademark of yours. They actually haven't.

It's a big misconception. It takes a really long time to write material. I do about 20 shows a week at The Comedy Cellar in New York, strictly working on material that

I've been writing. Twice a year — just two times a year — I record my advice special where I just talk to the audience, because it's fun, and it is a skill that I have. But it allows me to also use that in place of material that I need to build for a special in the meantime. When you come to see me live in a giant theater, I don't do any talking to the audience. It's all well-prepared, well-written

material. It is a bit of a misconception. I understand where people would get that impression.

Probably 11 months out of the year I'm consistently working on new jokes, crafting them, redoing them, practicing them over and over until they're ready for the road. When I'm on the road, I practice them and practice them until it's ready for a special, so that it's a fully ready, well-written special. I only do crowd work literally twice a year.

Your cooking videos continue to be as informative as they are entertaining. Could you foresee doing a cooking show on the Food Network or the Cooking Channel? I feel like at this point they would have asked me. It's always so strange when people see a special night on YouTube and they'll say, "Next time, Netflix!" I'm like, "But you're watching it right now, so what's the difference?" If I'm on the Food Network or YouTube, isn't it the same thing [laughs]?

It's all an excuse to be funny. The cooking is secondary because I'm using it as an excuse to be very comedy driven. The benefit of not doing it for someone like the Food Network is I get to have full control and air it the way I like it.

You own it. Yes. I guess it does look more official if it's on the Food Network, but I don't know, I'm enjoying it.

I went to Emerson College in Boston, and I lived in the North End, kitty-corner from Bova's Bakery, which at the time was open 24-hours. Did you have chance to stop in there when you were in the North End shooting that video, or did you only go to Mike's Pastry on Hanover Street? We went to Mike's Pastry because everyone's like, "If you want cannoli, you've got to go to Mike's." I went in with my friend Francesco (De Carlo) from Rome and my friend Amina Imani. They were speaking Italian to us; they gave us the cannoli for free. They were so sweet about it. It was a great experience. It's a nice little street in Boston. I enjoyed it.

The Asia and Chris DeBurgh tour t-shirt you're wearing in the wonderful cooking video with your mom and your aunt made me wonder who are some of your favorite musical acts? I promise you those shirts I wear, I wear them just because they fit well [laughs]. Someone was like, "Are you a huge AC/DC fan?" I go, "What? No, I listen to Bill Evans Trio



and Maria Callas.” If it fits well, that’s all I care about.

I didn’t even know what was on the shirt, to be honest with you. I guess I should pay more attention to it.

What can you tell the readers about your colorful ink which is very visible in that video? I have three tattoos now, all of which I’ve designed. One is Maria Callas, one is Poison Ivy from *Batman* and the other side is Storm from *X-Men: The Animated Series*.

You are also known for your shopping videos, such as the ones at Trader Joe’s and Mall of America. Do you enjoy in-person shopping as much as you enjoy poking fun at it, or would you rather make all your purchases online? I’m on a plane and in hotels most of my life. So when I’m home in New York, the last thing I want to do is go shopping.

Sometimes I’ll go to thrift stores if I’m on the road. A comedian friend of mine and I will go to thrift stores.

Usually, I’ll just order online. I don’t have that much stuff. Besides furniture that I’ve ordered online, it’s basically groceries and that’s about it.

Do you think you might have a cookbook or memoir — or a combination of both — in

MATTEO, Page 71



Local LGBTQ+ Media Giving Day October 8th!

Celebrating 100 years of local media for and by our community.

The first gay publication in America was 100 years ago this year—1924’s *Friendship & Freedom*, produced by Henry Gerber. It was shut down by police after just two issues. Through the years, LGBTQ+ media faced similar censorship and hardships. But 100 years later, there is a chance to revitalize this journalism and make it stronger to face the anti-LGBTQ+ backlash, providing critical coverage of this vital part of the U.S. media landscape.

This first year, with one donation, you can support six of the top LGBTQ+ outlets serving our community:

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This project is a program of News Is Out, a collaboration of six of the top local LGBTQ+ media across the country, supported by Local Media Foundation, a 501(C)(3) organization. Tax-deductible donations can be made anytime from now until Oct 8th.

Learn more here: givebutter.com/LGBTQequityfund

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The 2024 Chevy Colorado Z71 will make you question whether you really need that big, giant ... pickup after all

CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
AutoCasey@aol.com

I love my dad, but he sometimes lives in the 1980s. He still believes he needs a full-size pickup to tow my parents' camper and fishing boat.

When I was a kid, he drove a 1979 Chevy C10 full-size pickup, with the 167-horsepower 5.7-liter V8. Towing capacity? Around 6,000 pounds. He could be forgiven, though, because the compact Chevy S10 of the day moved 2,000 pounds less.

But Chevy's smallest truck today, the 2024 Colorado Z71, tows up to 7,700 pounds. How it does that may surprise you.

2024 Chevy Colorado Z71

Five-passenger, 4WD Pickup
Powertrain: 2.7-liter T-4, 8-spd
Output: 310hp/430 lb.-ft.
Suspension f/r: Ind/Solid axle
Wheels f/r: 18-inch/18-inch alloy
Brakes f/r: disc/disc
Towing capacity: 7,700 lbs.
Fuel economy city/hwy: 19/23-MPG
Assembly: Wentzville, Mo.
Base/as-tested price: \$29,800/\$47,550

Likes

- Turbo-four engine
- Buff styling
- Twin-screen interior

Dislikes

- No tuning knob
- No headlamp switch
- No sunroof

And you'll wonder if you really want that big, giant ... pickup after all.

The Colorado Z71 is a hunky lad with its black mask of a grille, squinty LED headlamps and chiseled hood. The crew cab body flaunts its wares with crisp, beefy fenders hulking over 18-inch



wheels wearing all-terrain tires.

Around back, check pre-wiring for trailers, hitch receiver and spray-in bedliner. Concealed storage in the tailgate, household-style power plug and tie-down points make activities more convenient. The bed's a little short for commercial work, but large enough to haul mulch or a couple of bicycles.

Interiors crib Chevy's new EVs like the Blazer and Silverado. Big air vents, red stitching and textured vinyl are suave, but can also be easily wiped down after a day of play.

Our Z71 added luxury touches like

heated/ventilated front seats, heated leather-wrapped steering wheel and Bose audio. There's no sunroof, but devices connect easily with wireless Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, and a charging pad.

Drivers even get an underbody camera for navigating challenging trails.

There are some missing controls, however: There's a volume knob, but none for tuning. One must swipe or tap-tap on the touchscreen. No matter the system, all cars should have two knobs.

On my way to get coffee early one morning, I looked for the headlamp



1975 Chevrolet C10 Pickup

switch. The stalk has wipers and brights a la old-school GM, but only the trailer brake controller is on the left dash.

Headlamps are automatic, so it makes sense, but manual controls are hidden on the touchscreen! OK, but really?

At least safety will be of little concern as the truck comes with automatic emergency braking, lane keep assist, adaptive cruise, front/rear pedestrian alerts and rear seat child reminder.

My dad would lose his entire kit over this truck's 2.7-liter "TurboMax"

can squeeze down narrow side streets and is easier to parallel park. The Z71 off-road suspension soaks up potholes in the city and bridge joints on the highway ... and absorbs the rough stuff beyond streets.

Going slow or fast, the Colorado's turbo-four seemed always to have power in reserve.

I don't suspect I'll ever get my dad to buy a smaller four-cylinder pickup, but the Colorado Z71 is a smart choice for many. It does everything most full-size



four-cylinder engine. But he should just chill as it whips up 310 horsepower and 430 lb.-ft. of torque — sent to the road through an 8-speed automatic transmission and electronic four-wheel-drive.

That's a fair bit more than my dad's old Chevy pickup on which I learned to drive, and it gets considerably better fuel economy, too: 19/23-MPG city/highway.

A key advantage of driving a smaller pickup is maneuverability. The Colorado actually fits in my urban driveway,

pickup owners need, but with enhanced efficiency and maneuverability. It's also priced reasonably, starting under \$30,000 and coming to \$47,550 as-tested — about the same as a proper mid-size crossover.

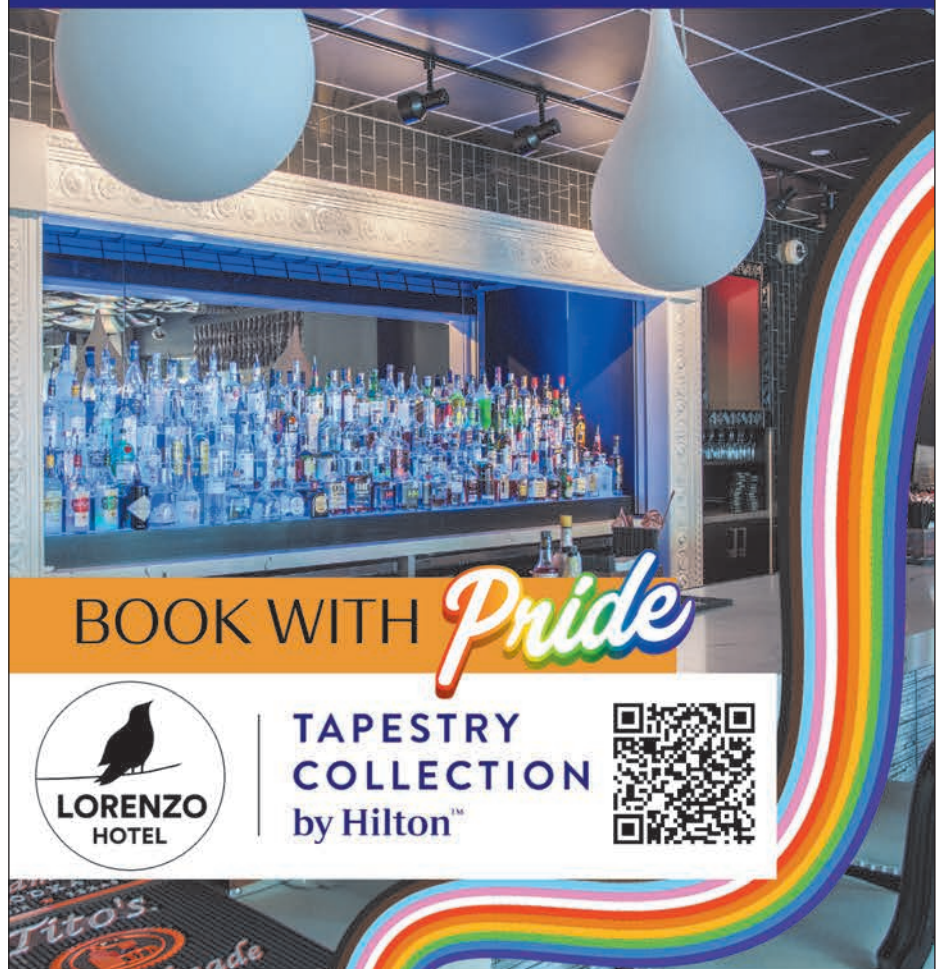
Competitors include the Ford Ranger, Nissan Frontier, Toyota Tacoma, Honda Ridgeline and similar GMC Canyon.

Storm Forward! ■

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



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Unleashed 2024 announced

COMMUNITY

Conference/festival will be held in the heart of the Gayborhood

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Unleashed LGBTQ+ Conference/Festival returns Oct. 4-6, and this time the event is set in Oak Lawn, at the heart of the Dallas Gayborhood, organizers have announced.

Gabe Gentry, Unleashed's director of operations, said holding the conference on the Cedar Springs Strip was a natural choice.

"We originally wanted to host our events on The Strip last year, but with time constraints and conflicts of schedule, it did not work out," Gentry said. "Our best option was Gilley's. It served us well, but we are glad to bring Unleashed 2024 to the Dallas LGBTQ+ neighborhood."

The conference will be held at The Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road, with additional events happening at bars, shops and other locations in the surrounding area.

The three-day conference will feature speakers, panels and performances from a variety of well-known names in LGBTQ film, television, music, business and tech, organizers said. Last year's featured speakers included Billy Eichner, Indya Moore, Antoni Porowski, Daniel Franzese and Nico Tortorella. Businesses and organizations represented at the event included Meta, Adobe, HRC, Black Tie Dinner, Dallas Voice, OUT North Texas, The Advocate and iHeart Media.

This year though, organizers said they are putting more focus on Dallas and Texas LGBTQ trailblazers.

Wesley Smoot, founder and chief programming officer, said, "With so many amazing queer pioneers in our own area, it makes sense to produce this year's events around those who make us even prouder to be LGBTQ+



Unleashed founder Wesley Smoot

in Texas.

"We are still bringing in panelists and performers from outside the Lone Star State — like The Trevor Project CEO Jaymes Black and comedian Daniel Webb — but even they, while based in Los Angeles now, have Texas roots.

Other featured panelists and speakers include the Rev. Neil Thomas, senior pastor of Cathedral of Hope UCC; Brooke Henderson and Shannon Mitchell-Percell of Legacy Cares; Melodia Gutiérrez with HRC; Shelly Skeen with Lambda Legal; Dr. Steven Pounders; Dallas Voice publisher Leo Cusimano, and Leslie Magazine founder and publisher Michael Hendrix.

Former Disney executive Jim Fielding with talk about being openly gay in a corporate leadership role before it was more accepted, and singer Ashlee Keating with participate in a live interview followed by a live performance.

Melissa Grove, former executive director of what is now Legacy Cares — formerly Legacy Counseling — will be presented with The Unleashed LGBTQ+ Lifetime Achievement Award.

More featured participants will be announced in the coming weeks, along with book signings, photo ops and surprise celebrity appearances, organizers said. Tickets are on sale now at UnleashedLGBTQ.com.



MATTEO, From Page 65



you? I think that's definitely possible in the future.

When you do a hometown show in Chicago, what do you like best about it?

When I go home to Chicago, it's great, because all 31 of my cousins come to the show. I get to go to my Aunt Cindy's house for Sunday sauce. It's always a good time. I go see my grandparents.

By the way, I talk to them every day. It's not like it's some family reunion. I talk to them all the time, but it's always nice to go home to Chicago and see my family.

Matteo Lane performs two shows at the Majestic Theatre in Dallas on Nov. 16. For tickets and more information, visit Matteo-LaneComedy.com.



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VOTING, From Page 17

lies. Once you feel like you're a part of the community, you care about us."

Big tent politics win, and inclusivity is the best type of campaigning.

PROJECT AMICUS

Grasso has created Project Amicus as a way for the LGBTQ community to influence politics abroad. Sodomy is still illegal in 64 to 67 countries, he explained. The U.S. Can be a beacon of hope for people in countries where their very existence is criminalized.

"American leadership has so much power to change the world," he said.

In round numbers, he estimated 1 billion people have marriage equality, 2 billion people are criminalized for who they are and 3 billion live somewhere in between.

"U.S. policies can make the difference abroad," he said.

In Jamaica, sodomy is illegal. As much of the LGBTQ population from the island that has been able to leave have left and are now living in Canada and the

U.K.

"Their economy revolves around tourism," Grasso said. "I don't recommend traveling there."

During the pandemic, a number of countries, especially in the Caribbean, decriminalized sodomy — including Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Belize. And Guyana is working on it, Grasso said.

In other parts of the world, India, Namibia, Mauritius, Bhutan and Botswana have moved toward equality.

Ukraine is more pro-LGBTQ than it was before because they see it as more of an American value than a Russian one. LGBTQ soldiers have fought for their country, and Ukraine is working to join NATO.

"Foreign policies translate into wins abroad," Grasso said. ■

On his website ProjectAmicus.org, Grasso explains, "The American LGBTQ+ community has a responsibility to promote equality worldwide, given our remarkable political and purchasing power."



DIFFICULT, From Page 49

schools "from promoting gender transition" and to revoke federal funding from any school that teaches what he calls "radical gender ideology."

In a video posted online last year, Trump also said that he would punish doctors who administer gender-affirming care to transgender youth by cutting them off from Medicare and Medicaid, and that he would punish teachers who "suggest to a child that they could be trapped in the wrong body."

At a recent event for Moms for Liberty, Trump went after Algerian boxer Imane Khelif, continuing to spread misinformation about the Olympic gold medalist being transgender and having an unfair advantage over her competitors. He then pushed the outlandish claim that public schools are performing gender-affirming surgeries: "Your kid goes to school. And comes home a few days later with an operation," Trump said at the group's national summit.

He repeated the assertion at a rally on

Sept. 7. In actuality, transgender youth rarely undergo gender-confirmation surgery anywhere, much less at school.

Asked about the comments, campaign spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt could not provide any examples to substantiate Trump's claim. But she pointed to reports that thousands of K-12 schools have rules that bar teachers from telling parents if their child asks to use pronouns that deviate from those on their birth certificate.

"President Trump will ensure all Americans are treated equally under the law regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation," Leavitt said, adding that the former president does not believe children should be allowed to have what she called "permanent gender mutilation surgeries." ■

The Associated Press' education coverage receives financial support from multiple private foundations. AP is solely responsible for all content. Find AP's standards for working with philanthropies, a list of supporters and funded coverage areas at AP.org.

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Photos by Tannye Nash/Dallas Voice



By recognizing and addressing their unique needs, Oak Lawn Place empowers individuals to age with dignity, foster a sense of belonging and preserve their invaluable contributions to society," the statement continues. "The goal of the project is to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, have access to safe and supportive housing as they embark on their golden years."

Oak Lawn Place has 79 one-bedroom units and five two-bedroom units in a new, five-story building with a large outdoor terrace that overlooks a creek and, from the upper levels, allows for views of downtown Dallas.

Amenities include a lobby, community room, conference/dining room, kitchen, fitness room and a business center. The apartments are income-restricted

to those earning between 30 percent and 60 percent of the area median family income.

Resource Center financed the \$31 million project with \$25 million in public funding, \$4 million from a capital campaign in 2020 led by Lynn McBee and Phil Clemmons and a \$750,000 Affordable Housing Program grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas

through Veritex Bank.

Resource Center was founded in Dallas in 1983 and was originally named the Foundation for Human Understanding. It is the nation's third-largest center providing a wide range of programs and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual and more community members and critical assistance to people living with HIV and AIDS and for their families.

More than 62,000 people each year access services through Resource Center, including medical, dental, nutritional, legal, mental health, housing and financial support through multiple clinics and facilities throughout the Dallas area.

For more information, go to MyResourceCenter.org.

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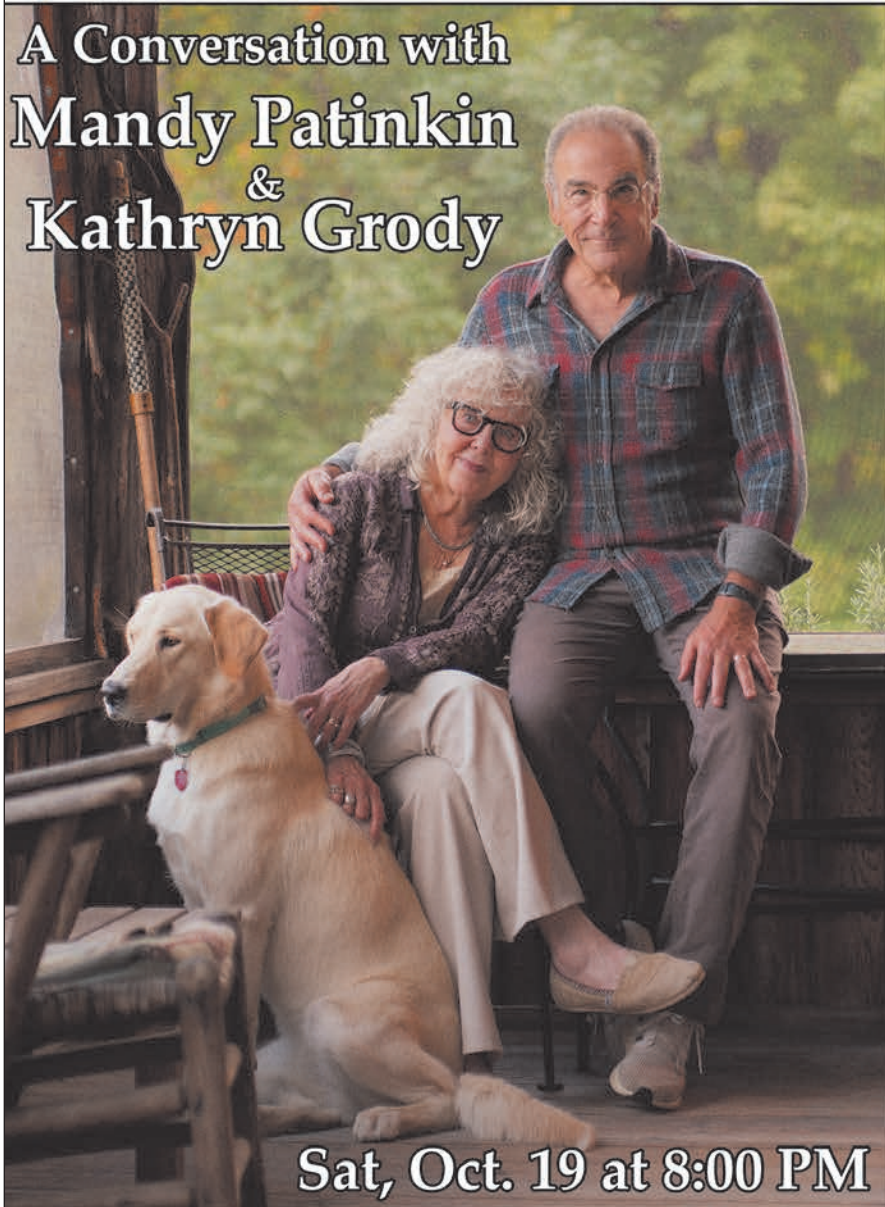
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PLAN YOUR WEEK - The Gay Agenda... Our LGBTQ community calendar!



North Texas' annual Texas Latinx Pride festival happens Saturday, Sept. 14, from 3-9 p.m. at Reverchon Park on Maple Avenue. See listings or visit TXLatinoPride.org for details.



TheDallasEagle.com for tickets and information.

■ Sept. 14-15: Dallas Arboretum celebrates Hispanic Heritage

The Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden holds its seventh Hispanic Heritage Celebration from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. each day to kick off Hispanic Heritage Month. Tickets are \$10-\$16 and are available online at DallasArboretum.org or by calling 214-515-6615.

■ Sept. 15: Pride in Dallas Parade

The 3rd Annual Pride in Dallas Parade on Cedar Springs takes place from 12-4 p.m. Visit PrideinDallas.org for more information.

■ Sept. 15: Spectrum Pride Tea Dance

Purple Foundation hosts this signature Pride event at The Patio at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Doors open at 4 p.m. Visit PurpleFoundation.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

■ Sept. 15: Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum celebrates anniversary

Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum celebrates the fifth anniversary of the opening of its permanent home by offering free admission to all visitors. Visit the museum's Facebook page for more information.

■ Through Sept. 16: 'Jet Fuel'

Amy Evans' new play *Jet Fuel*, inspired by the story of Olympic sprinter Caster Semenya and focusing on the intersection of gender, race identity and the quest for fairness in athletics, runs Sept. 12-16 at Bishop Arts Theatre Center, 215 S. Tyler St. Visit BishopArtsTheatre.org for details.

■ Sept. 17: Gay & Lesbian Fund for Dallas Happy Hour

Join the Gay & Lesbian Fund for Dallas at Winetastic, 4140 Lemmon Ave., #130, from 6:30-8 p.m. for their monthly happy hour event. Visit GLFD.org for more information.

■ Sept. 18-19: 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.

■ Sept. 20: 2024 Pride in Business Awards

The North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce hosts this awards ceremony from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Renaissance Dallas Hotel, 2222 North Stemmons Freeway. Visit LGBTChamber.com for more information.

■ Sept. 21: Libertarian Party hosts Chase Oliver

The Libertarian Party of Texas hosts openly gay presidential candidate Chase Oliver at the Plano Balloon Festival at Red Tail Pavilion in Oak Point Park. The Libertarian Party of Texas will host several other party candidates throughout the balloon festival, happening Sept. 19-22, including Railroad Commissioner candidate Hawk Dunlap, Texas House District 58 candidate Richard Windmann and U.S. Congressional District 32 candidate Kevin Hale.

■ Sept. 21: 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.

■ Sept. 21: Fairway to Equality Golf Weekend

The 27th Annual Fairway to Equality Golf Weekend takes place from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at Cedar Crest Golf Course, 1800 Southerland Ave. Visit Act.HRC.org to RSVP.

■ Sept. 21: 'Disco Divas Drag Brunch'

Enjoy a fabulous drag brunch benefitting the LGBT Chamber of Commerce at the Dallas Eagle, 525 Riverfront Blvd., at 11 a.m. or 2 p.m. Visit the event page on Eventbrite.com for more information and tickets.

■ Sept. 22: Legacy Angels PositiviTEA Brunch

The Legacy Angels PositiviTEA Brunch returns at Howell & Dragon, 1130 Dragon St., #120, from 1-4 p.m. For information and tickets visit LegacyCares.org.

■ Sept. 22: Omar Apollo 'God Said No' Tour

Omar Apollo presents his *God Said No Tour* at The Pavilion at Toyota Music Factory, 300 W. Las Colinas Blvd., Irving, at 7:30 p.m. Visit Ticketmaster.com for tickets.

■ Sept. 24: Pride Happy Hour

Join the North Texas LGBT Chamber for Pride Happy Hour at the Lorenzo Hotel, 1011 S. Akard St., from 5:30-7 p.m. Visit LGBTChamber.com to register.

■ Sept. 26: Dallas Zoo After Dark: Wild Canvas

The Dallas Zoo hosts this art-themed event for adults 21 and older from 6-9 p.m. at 650 S. R.L. Thornton Freeway. Visit DallasZoo.com for more information.

■ Weekly: Frontrunners

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

■ 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.

■ Bi-Weekly: Hope Cottage Foster Parent Information Meeting

Hope Cottage holds informational meetings for those interested in becoming foster parents. The meetings are held alternately on Saturdays at 10 a.m. and Thursdays at 6 p.m. For information email Clyde Hemminger at chemminger@hopecottage.org.

SEPTEMBER

■ Sept. 13: 'Slide with Pride'

Impulse Group Dallas hosts this pool party for a cause at Epic Waters, 2970 Epic Place, in Grand Prairie. Visit ImpulseGrp.org for more information.

■ Sept. 13: 'Down to Float: Neon Cowboy'

Impulse Dallas presents the city's premiere LGBTQ pool event featuring Lala Ri of *RuPaul's Drag Race*, Kameron Ross and others at Lee Harvey's Dive In,

1315 Beaumont St., from 7-11 p.m. Visit the event page on Eventbrite.com for tickets.

■ Sept. 14: Mr., Ms. Hidden Door informational meeting

Producers of the Mr. and Ms. Hidden Door Contest, set for Oct. 18-20, will hold an informational meeting for anyone interested in entering the contest at 2 p.m. at The Hidden Door, 5025 Bowser St. Current titleholders will be on hand to answer questions and talk about the contest and what being the titleholder entails. Contestant applications will be available beginning Sunday, Sept. 15, at the front bar of The Hidden Door, on the Hidden Door website and on The Hidden Door Facebook page.

■ Sept. 14: 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.

■ Sept. 14: 'Glittering Hope: A Drag Spectacular'

DFW Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence and Novice Sister O.M. Gee host this show to raise funds for Dallas Hope Charities. Event begins at 7 p.m. at the Rose Room, 3911 Cedar Springs Road.

■ Sept. 14: Texas Latinx Pride Fest

A free community festival celebrating LGBTQ Hispanic/Latinx intersections takes place from 3-9 p.m. at Reverchon Park, 3505 Maple Ave. Visit TXLatinoPride.org to register and for more info.

■ Sept. 14: 'FURBALL Dallas Eagle Pride'

Dallas Eagle, 525 S. Riverfront Blvd., hosts this underwear and gear party at 9 p.m. Visit

■ **Sept. 27: WETT: Official Dallas Lesbian Pride**

Takes place at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road, at 9 p.m.

■ **Sept. 27: LGBT & Straight Ally Social Mixer**

Fern Connections hosts an evening of mixing and mingling at Times Ten Cellar, 6324 Prospect Ave., starting at 6:30 p.m. Visit FernConnections.com for information and tickets.

■ **Sept. 27-29: Love Bizarre Weekend**

Dragonfly Campground, County Road 1135, Ravenna, hosts this weekend filled with fascination, curiosity and open-mindedness. Visit DragonflyTexas.com for more information.

OCTOBER

■ **Oct. 1: Classic Chassis Car Club**

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

■ **Oct. 3-26: 'The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity'**

Circle Theatre, 230 W. Fourth St., Fort Worth, presents *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*. Tickets and showtimes are available at CircleTheatre.com.

■ **Oct. 3: Cedar Springs Wine Walk**

Purchase your \$10 glass in front of Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road, from 6-9 p.m. and join the fun. Purchase benefits the Cedar Springs Merchants Association.

■ **Oct. 4: SPCA of Texas Fur Ball**

The Gay & Lesbian Fund for Dallas hosts this annual gala at 6:30 p.m. at the Frontiers of Flight Museum, 6911 Lemmon Ave. Visit SPCA.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

■ **Oct. 4-6: Unleashed LGBTQ 2024**

Join LGBTQ professionals, entertainers and brands for a weekend of networking and connecting at Round Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road. Visit UnleashedLGBTQ.com for information and to register.

■ **Oct. 5: Lambda Legal Landmark Dinner**

Visit LambdaLegal.org/Events/Landmark-Dinner for details.

■ **Oct. 6: Pride Frisco Festival 2024**

Celebrate Pride in Frisco at Toyota Stadium, 9200 World Cup Way, Frisco. This is a free event from 1-5 p.m. Ticket is required for admission. Attendees, sponsors, vendors and volunteers can register at Eventny.com.

■ **Oct. 6: DMA First Free Sundays**

Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 N. Harwood St., offers free admission on the first Sunday of each month from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Visit DMA.org for more information.

■ **Oct. 8: Outrageous Oral Volume 33**

Join The Dallas Way at The Rose Room, 3911 Cedar Springs Road, at 6 p.m. for a discussion of groundbreaking non-discrimination ordinances passed in the city of Dallas. Visit TheDallasWay.org for more information.

■ **Oct. 11-Nov. 3: 'Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors'**

Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd., presents *Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors*. Information available at DallasTheaterCenter.org. NorthTexasPride.com.

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



State Rep. Venton Jones, pictured here with community leader Betty Neal, is grand marshal of the 2024 Pride in Dallas Parade, stepping off down Cedar Springs Road at noon on Sunday, Sept. 15. See listings for more information.



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Cassie Nova

ASK A DRAG QUEEN

A cracked phone, a so-so movie and a fabulous book

Hello beautiful people. This will be another episode of brain vomit. For those of you that are new to reading my column, "brain vomit" basically means that what you are about to read will be all over the place.

Some days I have the attention span of a toddler after they have eaten an entire bag of Sour Patch Kids. Today is one of those days. First off, I am pissed. I have had my cell phone for at least three-and-a-half years. I am one of those people that will use the same phone until it disintegrates, and I am forced to buy a new one. Sure, I would like a new phone every time a new one comes out. But I am also a creature of habit, and I get easily annoyed having to learn new shit. I have had the same phone case since I first got this phone. It is one of those Ot-toBox covers and has worked beautifully. I drop my phone ALL of the time — I am a klutz — but never once have I broken a screen or had any problems with it.

Recently though, the rubber around the edge of the case has started to thin, tear or break off. That is pretty good considering how much I handle my phone — in and out of my pocket all day. I touch my phone and manhandle it more than I did my own penis as a teenager.

A few days ago, I decided to replace my cover. So I went on Amazon and saw a cute, blue, "military grade" cover. I bought it. I also invested in a privacy screen protector, so if I am in public — let's just say, y'all don't need to see what I am looking at.

It made my old phone look and feel new.

Fast forward a few hours, and I am onstage with the girls, rehearsing a new production before the bar opens. I go to pull out my phone to show Kelexis the costume ideas for the production, and I drop my phone. It slipped out of my hand and fell from waist high. Not only did the privacy screen fly off and crack, but the corner of the phone's screen shattered, with one thin crack running across the upper third of the screen.

Military grade my ass!



This is exactly why I keep shit that works until I absolutely have to replace it. Grrrrrr! I am going back to the Otto-Box case just as soon as I get my fucking screen replaced.

By now most of you have watched the *Beetlejuice* sequel. It was okay — just too many convoluted stories and not enough heart. It was fun to watch, but it didn't capture much of what I loved about the original.

I may be being overly critical of the movie, but if you are gonna wait 36 years to do a sequel, fucking nail it. I was welmed — not overwhelmed, not underwhelmed.

If you haven't seen the musical *Beetlejuice*, do yourself a favor and get tickets for it as soon as possible. It will be at Bass Performance Hall at the end of October. It is amazing and definitely one of my new all-time favorites.

Not many people have even heard of the movie *Strange Darlings*, but it was a surprisingly good little fucked-up movie. Stephen King tweeted about it a few weeks ago and said he loved it and was glad he went into it without knowing anything about it. That was all I needed to hear; we saw it the next day.

Good, twisted fun — although I feel like the movie may have given me lung

cancer. So many close-up scenes of people smoking. So very not glamorous. But it's definitely worth watching.

One of my new favorite books is called *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt. It is a light, easy read, but is so damn good. I usually stick to my dark, spooky, apocalyptic-type of fiction to calm my brain. (I know: There is a lot to unpack with that last sentence, but that is for another time.) I haven't clicked with a book like this since *Where the Crawdads Sing*, and — just like WTCS — I couldn't wait for someone to make that story into a movie.

Anytime I read a book I always cast the actors I picture in my head for my mind movie. In *Remarkably Bright Creatures*, the main character is an older lady named Tovah. In my head, I pictured Sally Field from the jump. Every person I told about this book, I would say, "if they ever do a movie of this book, I want Sally Field to play Tovah."

When I only had about two chapters left in the book and was not wanting it to end, I decided to Google it, to see if there were any plans to make *Remarkably Bright Creatures* into a movie. The first thing that popped up was a Vanity Fair article that said Sally Field had just signed on to be the lead in the movie ad-

aptation of *Remarkably Bright Creatures*.

I got fucking goosebumps! I CANNOT WAIT!

One last thing: I wanted to say a heartfelt thank you to every person that reached out with a kind word or a hug after my last article about the "Always There." I didn't want to send it in after I wrote it, but I am glad I did because the response has been very overwhelming and uplifting. Knowing that so many of us have that voice in our heads, and that I am not the only one, makes it easier to quiet that bitch. So, thanks again.

Remember to always love more, bitch less and be fabulous! XOXO, Cassie Nova

word search solution



this week's solution



browse

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submit

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SCENE

PEOPLE, PLACES AND FACES



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Black Tie Dinner UnTux



Black Tie comes to "UnTux"



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Queer Justice opens (Continued)



WORD SEARCH

Diversions Word Search - Omar Apollo



Find the words in the list below 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 more info about him!

E	N	O	Y	A	D	N	U	S	C	H	S	M	I						
G	F	R	E	E	U	Q	N	I	I	E	M	U	A						
T	O	I	S	O	E	D	N	S	S	P	Z	U	G	F					
O	R	M	B	E	T	S	D	L	T	N	D	U	P	T	R	A	B	O	H
E	O	L	S	C	W	N	C	S	D	I	M	A	E	E	S	K	L	T	A
W	M	I	A	O	E	D	R	I	A	A	N	M	T	R	E	I	A	M	I
O	A	F	S	I	N	V	I	N	C	I	B	L	E	E	P	M	T	E	6
R	R	T	R	U	R	G	A	G	C	E	D	G	M	O	A	A			
L	P	F	O	E	I	R	W	E	R	D	A	N	R	G	T	K			5
D	A	S	N	Y	I	V	S	R	A	T	T	U	O	Y	X				
R	V	N	A	P	O	L	O	N	I	O	O	T	F	F	I				
A	I	H	S	G	I	T	I	R	G	T	C	R	E	I	M				
W	L	N	A	P	M	E	E	M	Y	H	E	Y	V	T	A				
A	I	W	P	A	L	H	G	U	I	T	A	R	I	O					
R	O	I	V	E	L	A	S	C	O	S	Y	A	L	P					
G	N	I	M	O	C	P	U	D	S	S	G	N	O	S					



Omar (Apolonio)/Velasco (Born in) Hobart, Indiana Singer/Songwriter/Actor Plays/Guitar (Started on) SoundCloud (and) Spotify (2017)	Albums/Mixtapes (& Eps) Stereo (2018) Friends (2019) Apolonio (2020) Ivory (2022) Live For Me (2023)	God Said No (2024) Inspira/Award/Winner (2023) Hispanic/Heritage Songs:/Ugotme/Invincible Tamagotchi/Ice Slippin Bad Life/Kamikaze	Upcoming/Film/Queer (with) Daniel/Craig (2024) (God Said No) World/Tour Sunday/September (22nd) (At The) Pavilion (at) Toyota/Music/Factory
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Visit <https://www.facebook.com/DiversionsPuzzles> for more free puzzles and book info by Kerry Shatzer!

Solution on Page 78



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PUZZLE | All the Way Out

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
20						21					22			
			23					24					25	26
27	28	29				30	31			32				
33						34		35	36			37		
38				39	40						41			
42			43							44				
45								46						
47					48	49	50			51		52	53	54
			55	56				57	58					
59	60	61				62					63			
64						65					66			
67						68					69			

Solution on Page 78

Across

- 1 Quintain rhyme scheme
- 6 Nicky, in *Funny Girl*
- 10 One born in a Cukor title
- 14 Attachments for fake glasses
- 15 Coin for Kahlo
- 16 Via, briefly
- 17 Perineum, in slang
- 18 Russian singing duo
- 19 Steed stopper
- 20 Start of a Britney Griner quote
- 23 Guy who avoids sex with women
- 24 Dustup in *A League of Their Own*
- 27 More of the quote without a cause
- 32 Dean character
- 33 Line from *Rent*?
- 34 Rings one's chimes
- 37 Maugham's *Cakes and* ____
- 38 MGM rival, once
- 39 Rainbow T-shirt, perhaps
- 41 *La Traviata*_solo, e.g.
- 42 More of the quote
- 45 *Game of Thrones* star Emilia
- 46 Longtime NFL coach Chuck

47 *It* ____ *Necessarily So*

- 48 AAA handout
- 51 Former NFL player Tuaolo
- 55 End of the quote
- 59 Virgin Mary's messenger
- 62 Fall out of contention
- 63 Give a lot of mouth
- 64 Drag queen's garment
- 65 Added stipulations
- 66 Buster Brown's dog
- 67 Music style for Ricky Martin
- 68 Head honcho
- 69 Aspen vehicle

Down

- 1 Climactic start
- 2 *The African Queen*, e.g.
- 3 "Yeah, right!"
- 4 Fund-raiser for AIDS research, e.g.
- 5 In the rear, of a seaman
- 6 Withdraws, with "out"
- 7 Angry in., for example
- 8 John Jacob, who went to the bottom with the Titanic
- 9 Type of trade
- 10 Dance floor flasher
- 11 Cinema's first sex symbol
- 12 He gave Jackie her O
- 13 Score for Glenn Burke

- 21 Get behind
- 22 Cather's *One of* ____
- 25 Joan of Arc keepsake
- 26 Not rosy
- 27 Watergate judge John
- 28 Acid neutralizer
- 29 Beefeater, for example
- 30 Anatomical passage
- 31 Tina's *What's Love Got* ____ *with It*"
- 35 *Coal Miner's Daughter* singer
- 36 Blocks off the toy aisle
- 39 Fab Five syllable for many a straight guy
- 40 Michael Musto's tidbits
- 41 A great variety
- 43 Unlike the Dodger of *Oliver!*
- 44 Pleasured orally
- 49 BBC sitcom
- 50 Copland composed for it
- 52 Response to an on-line personal
- 53 It's low for a butch's voice
- 54 Paid to play
- 56 *Frozen* queen
- 57 Gets the bottom line
- 58 Untouchable head
- 59 Certain plugs
- 60 Org. that likes to shoot off
- 61 Come together

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