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By Melissa Whitler, page 8

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Bites from our blog

WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com



David Archuleta (Photo by Wes and Alex)

David Archuleta to headline MetroBall 18

Singer/songwriter David Archuleta will be headlining MetroBall 18, set for June 6 at S4 nightclub in Dallas, Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund officials announced Tuesday, Dec. 10.

The annual dance party, held each June, is GDMAF's largest fundraising event each year, and MetroBall 18 will be celebrating GDMAF's 30th anniversary of supporting those living with HIV/AIDS and promoting awareness around the ongoing HIV pandemic.

A GDMAF press release announcing Archuleta's headlining appearance noted that the *American Idol* runner-up from season 7 is "known for his heartfelt voice and emotional performances... Over the years he has captivated audiences with his powerful vocals and anthemic pop hits, including his chart-topping single, "Crush."

"His unique combination of passion, talent and authenticity has earned him a loyal fan base and a prominent place in the hearts of music lovers worldwide."

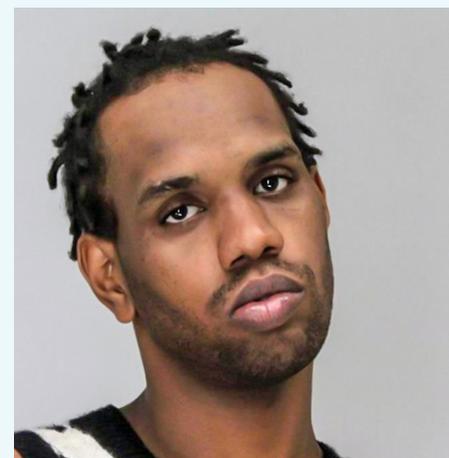
Supporting artists and other details for MetroBall 18 will be announced soon, a GDMAF spokesperson said, and tickets will also be available online soon.

GDMAF was founded in 1995 by David Hearn in memory of his partner, Greg Dollgener, who had passed away due to complications from AIDS. The organization provides financial support to persons living with HIV/AIDS and helps fund programs that promote education, prevention and care.

— Tammye Nash

Arson suspect identified, arrested

The suspect in a Nov. 29 arson fire that severely damaged a house on Roswell Street and a section of the wooden fence along the backside of the alley in the 4000 block of Cedar



Jatory Chatman

Springs Road has been identified as Jatory Dione Chatman, 28.

Chatman was arrested Thursday, Dec. 5, after a security guard at the Kroger on Cedar Springs saw them and notified police, then followed the suspect until officers arrived.

Dallas County Sheriff's Office records that Chatman was booked into the county jail on Thursday at 3:32 p.m. Chatman faces charges of arson and failure to identify as a fugitive/giving false information.

Book-in records identify Chatman as male. But their Facebook profile uses female pronouns, and all the photos of Chatman show them dressed and presenting as feminine.

Records available through the Dallas County courts portal show one misdemeanor traffic violation charge, four cases with misdemeanor charges and one felony charge of burglary of a habitation.

— Tammye Nash

DSO's Terry Loftis appointed CEO of New Jersey Symphony

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Obituary



Gregory Warren Kennon, lovingly known as Greg or “Gogi,” passed away peacefully at home on Nov. 2, 2024, with his beloved partner Bill by his side.

Born on June 12, 1961, in Cleburne, Greg brought kindness and warmth to

everyone around him. He graduated from Cleburne High in 1979 and, after high school, held various positions in the automotive field. In 1997 Greg eventually partnered with his brother Johnny to start GMC Leasing in Arlington. Several years later, they relocated the business to Bedford.

Greg’s dedication and great, often dry, sense of humor endeared him to countless customers that did business with GMC Leasing. He had a knack for making friends with anyone he met and touched the lives of many.

His kindness, compassion, his good humor, wit and charm will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Greg loved dogs and, in lieu of flowers, his family invites donations to the ASPCA.

Greg was preceded in death by his father, John Wesley Kennon. He is survived by his devoted partner Bill De Hoyos; his mother Jackie Smith Wood; brothers and sisters-in-law Johnny and Deda Kennon, Rick J. and AnnMarie Kennon and Mike and Shannon Kennon.

Greg also leaves behind an extended family and many friends who loved him dearly.

Symphony announced Terry D. Loftis as the organization’s new president and CEO. Loftis joins the New Jersey Symphony from his position as chief advancement and revenue officer for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. He starts his new job in early March.

In his fundraising role at DSO, Loftis oversaw the \$100 million, five-year endowment campaign and was directly responsible for securing a \$10 million endowment gift as well as being instrumental in the procurement of a \$25 million matching gift. Prior to working for the DSO, Loftis was the Donna Wilhelm Family president and executive director of TACA (The Arts Community Alliance). He is also the Tony-nominated producer of the shows *Bandstand* and *The Visit*, which starred Broadway legend Chita Rivera.

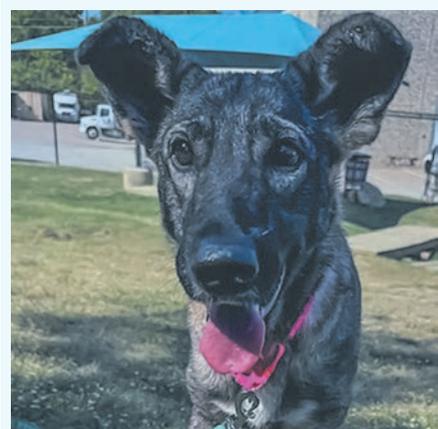
Upon Loftis’ move, his fiancé Jon Adams will be joining the styling team at Nordstrom in Manhattan.

— From staff reports



Terry Loftis

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Like all pets from the SPCA of Texas, Honey has been spayed and microchipped and is up to date on all her vaccinations. She is at the Russell E. Dealey Animal Rescue Center, so you’ll need an appointment to meet her. Simply find her bio on our website and click the “Make an Appointment” button. Animals are available for adoption at both the SPCA Dallas Animal Care Center, 2400 Lone Star Drive, and the Ellis County Animal Care Center, 2570 FM 878 in Waxahachie. It’s Empty The Shelters time at the SPCA of Texas, and, thanks to the generosity of the Bissell Foundation, all adoptions at both the Dallas and Ellis County shelters are only \$25.

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Who's shading who?

Democrats blaming Harris' loss on trans people need to take a better look

In the days following the election, some Democratic lawmakers and talking heads were blaming Vice President Kamala Harris's loss on transgender people — or, more specifically, on Democrats being too nice to transgender people.

"The Democrats have to stop pandering to the far left," Rep. Tom Suozzi, a Democrat from New York who won reelection, told *The New York Times*. "I don't want to discriminate against anybody, but I don't think biological boys should be playing in girls' sports."

Another Democrat, Rep. Seth Moulton of Massachusetts, told NYT, "Democrats spend way too much time trying not to offend anyone rather than being brutally honest about the challenges many Americans face. I have two little girls. I don't want them getting run over on a playing field by a male or formerly male athlete. But as a Democrat, I'm supposed to be afraid to say that."

You know, saying, "I don't want to discriminate against anyone, but..." just smacks of true sincerity, especially when you follow it up by targeting an extremely small and specific group of marginalized people.

And no, Rep. Moulton. It's not that you're supposed to be "afraid to say that;" it's that you should know better. Again, you're a grown-ass man, and you're blaming Democrats for not viciously demonizing a specific group of kids.

With all due respect to these guys and others who want to blame election losses on trans people: Fuck off.

Anyone who thinks that the Democrats' best chance of success is to become MORE like Republicans is kidding themselves. Too many people already believe that there's no difference between the parties because too many people don't see who sits in the White House as di-



D'Anne Witkowski

Creep of the Week

rectly impacting their lives.

If you're someone who actually pays attention to politics, you know that, on the whole, Republicans and Democrats are

actually quite different when you look at their platforms as a whole. But most people don't pay attention to politics.

And that's something a lot of folks who live and breathe campaigns and elections forget.

On Nov. 12, the *Times* published an opinion piece by Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear, a Democrat leading a state that went for Trump by 30 points. Beshear knows that abandoning our "important values and principles" isn't a winning strategy.

"As governor, I have vetoed numerous anti-LGBTQ and anti-choice bills, yet I still beat Mr. Trump's handpicked

candidate last fall," Beshear wrote. "That happened because even if some voters might have disagreed with the vetoes, they knew my focus and effort was on their daily needs and that our gains as a commonwealth would help every single one of our families."

Beshear continued, "Earning trust and showing people you care about them [requires]...that we are not afraid to share our 'why.' For me, my why is my faith, and I share it proudly.

"I vetoed anti-LGBTQ legislation last year because I believe all children are children of God. And whether people agree with my decision, they know why I'm making it. They know where I am coming from."

The reasons why Trump won again are many, and there's no simple solution. Anyone who is telling you that treating trans people like fully human beings sunk the Democrats isn't doing much work to ensure Dems don't lose again.

It's lazy and unproductive.

Erin Reed, a journalist who writes extensively about LGBTQ issues and politics including her own experiences as a transgender woman, published an exceptional piece on her *Substack* *Erin in the Morning* on Nov. 6 in which she

places this election in historical context and reminds us that even when things are dark, there is some light.

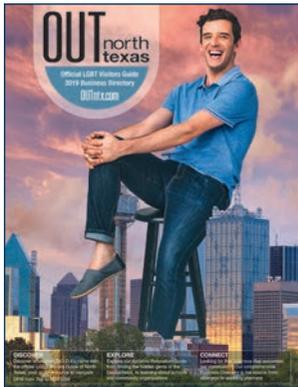
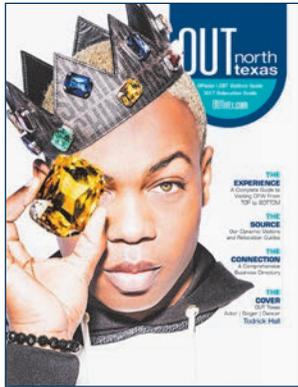
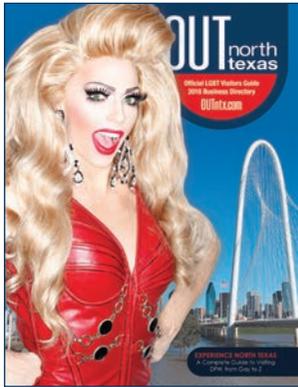
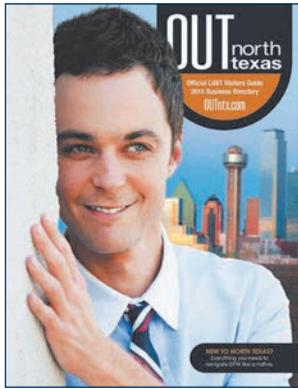
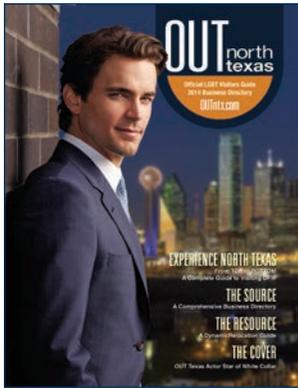
"There's a famous quote: 'The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward.' When I look back, I see that the fight for rights is rarely a steady path forward; it's a journey filled with turbulence, despair and hope appearing in the most unlikely places and times.

"Today, this truth resonates deeply: this has always been a generational fight — one few of us ever chose but one we've been drafted into nonetheless."

Reed reminds transgender people that their very lives are a testament to forward movement: "The greatest thing you can do is live; continue to exist and continue tending the seeds we're planting today," she writes. "They will grow into trees that will shade those who come after us — and with luck, we may get to enjoy some of that shade ourselves."

And if that takes throwing shade at Democrats who want to throw trans people under the bus, so be it. ■

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



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Crafting the pickle

ARTS AND ARTISANS

Dallas Glass Art is offering unique ornaments and glass blowing classes for the holidays

MELISSA WHITLER | NBCU Fellow
Melissa@DallasVoice.com

This year Dallas Glass Art is introducing a new ornament in its annual lineup of sparkling, hand-crafted holiday decor: the Pickle. It was inspired by the tradition many households have of hiding a pickle in the Christmas tree for young ones to find.

"The history of finding the pickle on the tree was rich with fun and good fortune, so we thought we would offer our guests the opportunity to be a part of having their hands make the one for their tree," said Tatara Siegel, manager at Dallas Glass Art.

Ornaments can be purchased online, or you can make your own at the studio. Dallas Glass Art is also offering tiny snowmen and round- or teardrop-shaped ornaments created in the color of your choosing.

No matter your holiday aesthetic, there is an option for you.

In addition to ornaments, the studio also creates vases, bowls, drinking glasses and other seasonal items.

Carlyn Ray started Dallas Glass Art in 2013 so she could have a place to share her passion for glassblowing with the community and create her own site-specific art. The studio's stated mission is to educate and inspire creativity while offering a unique experience.

Dallas Glass Art employs young glass artists who were either students in the glass department at the University of Texas in Arlington or people who are passionate about glass as an artistic medium. These employees teach the majority of the public and private programming at the studio.

The team also includes shop dog Chai, who might not know a lot about glass



Dallas Glass Arts Manager Tatara Siegel is one of the artists who teaches programming at the studio. Ornaments customers can create this year include the Christmas pickle and a snowman. (Photos courtesy of Dallas Glass Art)

blowing but provides lots of encouragement.

The studio also participates in an outreach program called Art Reaching Out, that provides students in grades six through 12 in underserved communities with hands-on experience with glass art. In workshops, instructors explain how science, technology, engineering and math apply to the creation of blown glass art. The organization also works with local glass professionals to create glass sculpture installations for these communities.

Carlyn Ray Designs and Dallas Glass Art operate out of one glassblowing studio.

"It's pretty cool to watch Carlyn and her team of artists create these large-scale beautiful glass installations," said Siegel. "It is equally fulfilling to watch the general public come into the studio



four people per class.

The studio also offers a series of different tiers of private events, ranging from a formal glass blowing demonstrations by Carlyn Ray herself to hands-on opportunities to make your own blown glass piece. These events can house 25 to 30 people and are perfect for birthdays or other special events.

The classes are very hands-on and interactive, as participants are able to choose the shape and color of what they make. After they've

decided on the basics, the instructor gives each person the opportunity to use the punty — the metal rod used to gather and blow glass — and participants apply the colored pieces of glass to the base piece themselves. Then the customers get to shape the piece and remove it from the punty.

The final process of cooling the glass, or annealing, can take between 12 to 24 hours, so pieces are not available to take home immediately. Five days after the event guests are able to pick up their piece or have it shipped to them.

If you're looking for something special to decorate your tree, Dallas Glass Art just might have the ornament for you. And if you don't see what you want, you can always go down to the studio to craft it yourself. ■

For more information and to purchase ornaments, go to DallasGlassArt.com.

On the **move**

COMMUNITY



Puerto Vallarta

LGBTQ Americans explore moving to Mexico amid post-election fears

CAROLINE SAVOIE | Contributing Writer

Following the U.S. presidential election, many LGBTQ Americans have been grappling with concerns about their future, with many even considering leaving the U.S. for safer and more inclusive destinations. And Mexico, particularly Puerto Vallarta, has emerged as a favored option for those seeking a new home.

With affordable living, vibrant LGBTQ communities, and proximity to the U.S., it's becoming a serious consideration for many.

"The fear is palpable"

Lance Blann, a Dallas-based Realtor, said he has seen an unprecedented rise in inquiries about moving to Mexico. Known for his TikToks about navigating tricky real estate transactions in both the U.S. and Mexico, Blann said he has seen a dramatic increase in LGBTQ people reaching out to him about moving south

of the border since the election.

"It's crazy, the number of people that are contacting me wanting to know how to get residency in Mexico," Blann said. "I don't think people are overreacting to be scared. You can hear the fear in their voices. It's palpable."

Blann said he has been helping people explore real estate opportunities in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico's top LGBTQ destination. He said Puerto Vallarta has a reputation as a safe haven for LGBTQ people, attracting expats from all over the world.

"Puerto Vallarta, alongside Palm Springs, is one of the safest places in North America for the LGBTQ community," Blann said. "It's not like Cancun or Playa del Carmen. You feel safe from the cartels here, for the most part, and the community is strong."

Blann's social media presence has made him the go-to Realtor for LGBTQ individuals considering making the move. His TikToks offer practical advice on everything from obtaining dual citizenship to buying property in Mexico, and his expertise has led to a surge in inquiries since the election.

"People are scared about the next four years, and it's not just retirees; it's people in their 40s who feel alarmed," Blann said.

MOVE, Page 16

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The nice list

BEYOND THE STAGE

Nina West dishes on her love of Christmas, John Waters, Broadway and the milestone holiday drag show heading to Dallas

STEVEN LINDSEY | Contributing writer
StevenCraigLindsey@gmail.com

For years, Mary Tyler Moore turned the world on with her smile. But it's worth arguing that Nina West has taken over the role of cheer spreader to millions of fans. The moment her out-of-drag alter ego, Andrew Robert Levitt, popped on the Zoom screen for this interview, that infectious grin lit up the laptop screen and set the stage for a fun half-hour of banter.

Voted "Miss Congeniality" by her peers on the 11th season of *RuPaul's Drag Race*, Nina West deserves her reputation for kindness and positivity. They'd certainly be the first to pop over with a cheese-laden casserole the moment she heard someone had a sniffle.

So, who better to host the epic 10th anniversary tour of *A Drag Queen Christmas* when it makes its Dallas stop next week at the Music Hall at Fair Park?

Tickets for this always-hilarious holiday extravaganza start at only \$45, quite the bargain for a lineup of eight beloved queens, including several past *Drag Race* winners. Next week's scheduled cast includes Roxxy Andrews, Sasha Colby, Sapphira Cristál, Plane Jane, Jimbo, Crystal Methyd and Angeria Paris VanMichaels.

To get in the festive spirit for the show, Nina West chatted with Dallas Voice just before Thanksgiving about career high points leading up to today.

Dallas Voice: To get in the proper frame of mind for our interview, I listened to "Cha Cha Heels" again, and now I have a new earworm I can't get rid of.

So thank you. Thank you, and fk you!**
Nina West: (laughs) You're welcome!

I fell in love with that song when you first released it in 2019, and it's such a great tribute to all of John Waters' great movie characters. I am a super fan. I love him so very, very much. And he's, like, the nicest person in the entire world.

I think many people would be surprised to know that he's also a massive fan of Christmas. It seems so against type for him. But clearly, you love Christmas, too. I love — I LOVE the holidays. I love Christmas. I love drag. I love touring around the country, especially during the holidays. I mean, there's nothing like getting off of your tour bus in the morning, walking around and seeing little holiday villages or little ice rinks that have been put in, trees that have been erected for the holiday. It's really cool to see how every community celebrates. And I mean, loving Christmas as much as I do, it's just awesome to host this tour for the fourth time.

So, I'm always morbidly curious about life on the tour bus. Is it like Jean Smart on *Hacks* with fabulous rooms? (Laughs). No, it's bunks. We have bunks. There're no individual rooms, and there's a common space at the front of the bus. There are eight or nine queens on the tour, plus two dancers, so that's 11, and there are 12 bunks. So usually, after the show, we sit around and we will snack on food, watch something on TV, laugh and kind of process the evening. Then, everyone slowly fades to their bunks again. We're still getting used to it.

After such a rigorous schedule and doing the show night after night, do you still like Christmas after the tour? I love it so much. I think I'm the only one who secretly listens to Christmas music while the tour is happening. Everyone else has kind of got their Charlie XCX or something else blaring, and I'm over here with all my Christmas music out. I'll find a different Christmas playlist to listen to every single day. Or I'll put on a Hallmark Christmas movie. I love it.

Are there any queens on this tour you haven't performed with before? It's my first time performing with Plane Jane, Plasma [not on the Dallas roster] and Sapphira. I've never worked with any of the season 16 girls and they're so much

fun.

Anything special planned for this 10th anniversary tour? I mean, everything is just bigger. There's a bigger light show, bigger screens, you know, bigger production. It's fabulous. And no one does this like Murray and Peter.

How do you all decide who's performing which songs? The only song we're not allowed to do is Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas." People start submitting ideas, and Murray and Peter work with each queen — cultivating, creating the show surrounding that. And all those conversations are had individually with every queen. And then they put the show together as a whole and create this really wonderful kind of tapestry of holiday, queer, drag, art, fun.

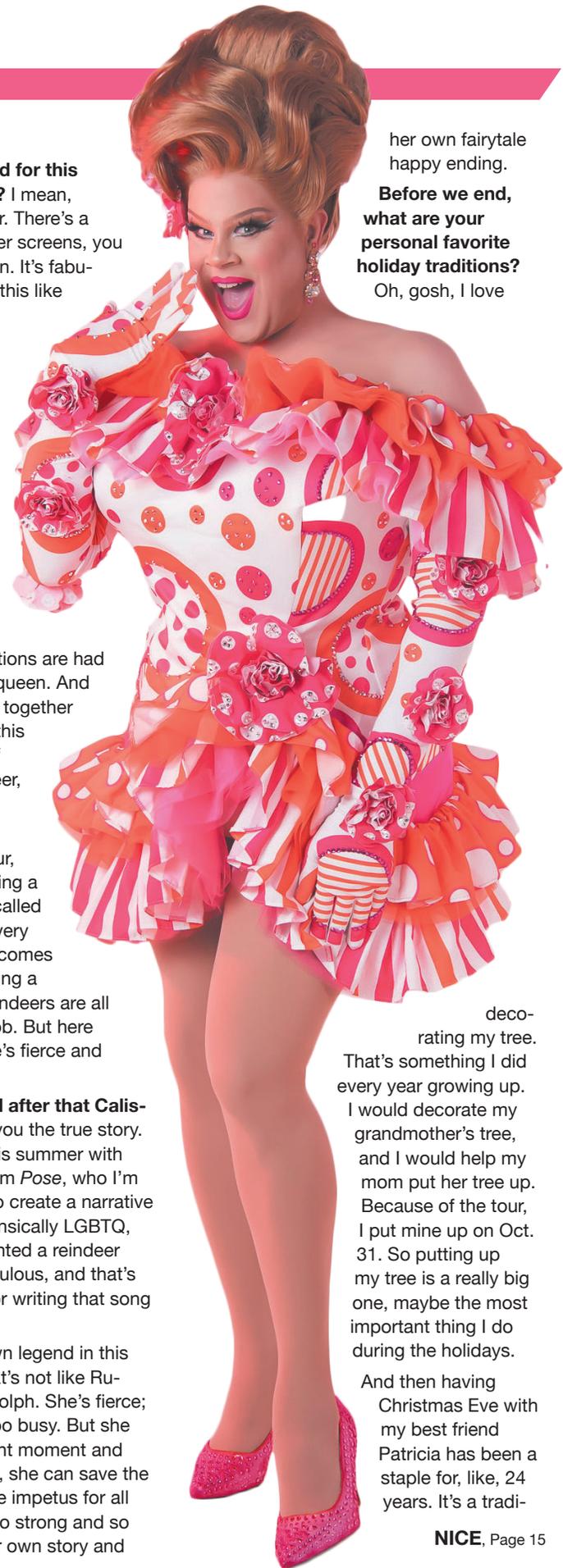
I myself tend to do an original song for the tour, and so this year I'm doing a new song that I wrote called "Calista," which is my very fabulous reindeer who comes to save the holiday during a time when the other reindeers are all sick and can't do the job. But here comes Calista, and she's fierce and fabulous.

Was the reindeer named after that Calista? Honestly, I will tell you the true story. I worked on a movie this summer with Dominique Jackson from *Pose*, who I'm in love with. I wanted to create a narrative of a story that was intrinsically LGBTQ, intrinsically queer. I wanted a reindeer that was queer and fabulous, and that's where my inspiration for writing that song came from.

I wanted to create this own legend in this own holiday classic that's not like Rudolph, but it is like Rudolph. She's fierce; she's fabulous; she's too busy. But she comes in just at the right moment and with a switch of her tail, she can save the day. Dominique was the impetus for all of that because she's so strong and so fierce and deserves her own story and

her own fairytale happy ending.

Before we end, what are your personal favorite holiday traditions?
Oh, gosh, I love



deco-
rating my tree. That's something I did every year growing up. I would decorate my grandmother's tree, and I would help my mom put her tree up. Because of the tour, I put mine up on Oct. 31. So putting up my tree is a really big one, maybe the most important thing I do during the holidays.

And then having Christmas Eve with my best friend Patricia has been a staple for, like, 24 years. It's a tradi-

NICE, Page 15

All the lights

HOLIDAZE



Camp Director Lonnie Hanzon at ATTPAC's Camp Christmas

These immersive experiences around town will make the holidays shimmer

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
Rich@DallasVoice.com

The holidays are upon us, and there is no shortage of the season's greetings around town. Tea services, stage productions, Hallmark movies and dining events can all add to your holiday joy.

Or you can go deeper into a more immersive and interactive experience filled with dazzling lights, hot cocoa and feel-good vibes and Instagram-ready sites. Driving around neighborhoods to look at lights is nice and all, but these grand installations will put you right in the middle of those lights. And they offer a lot more — like cocktails, drag queens, sweet treats and, best of all, some unforgettable memories.

Camp Christmas

This fully immersive art installation brings everything you love about the holiday season to the Annette Strauss Square at the ATT Performing Arts Center through Dec. 29.

Conceived by the fabulous Camp Director Lonnie Hanzon and his band of merry magic makers, this dreamscape will touch all your senses with its lighted displays, nostalgic sounds and scenes and cocktails and snacks at its Base Camp and Fairy Bar.

You can go on your own or try one of the Drag Camp Christmas tours. Book a queen-led tour on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7:45 p.m., 8:15 p.m. or 9 p.m., with Raquel Blake, Kylee O'Hara or Cassie Nova as your tour guide for a whole different type of experience. ATTPAC.org/event/Drag-Winter-Wonderland

Coca-Cola's Classic Christmas

Choctaw Stadium in Arlington is

LIGHTS, Next Page

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LIGHTS From Previous Page

home to this festive event co-produced by Enchant Christmas and Coca-Cola and running through Dec. 29. This event offers guests a number of activities to enjoy across a 55,000-square-foot space featuring the Larger-Than-Life Light Maze that includes light sculptures and interactive displays along with a Market Square, ice skating and the Classic Christmas Snow Slide.

Guests can also enjoy live entertainment, seasonal foods and beverages as well as a visit with Santa in his workshop. ClassicChristmas.com.

Dallas Zoo Lights

This year's theme of "Once Upon a Wild Light" focuses on more than two million lights creating Visions of the Wild filled with diverse biomes from around the world in the 360-degree immersive wildlife experience and lit-up dinosaurs in DinoLand and the Dino Lumina: A Jurassic Adventure, a one-of-a-kind immersive projection experience, bringing the prehistoric world to life as

guests roam with dinos.

What's Christmas at the zoo without Santa? Dallas Zoo Lights also features Santa's Holiday Storyland, live performances, holiday treats, animal-shaped lanterns and numerous photo ops through Jan. 4. DallasZoo.com.

Holiday at the Arboretum

This Dallas tradition returns with the grounds of the Arboretum transformed into a magical Christmas Village and the 12 Days of Christmas Gazebos through Jan. 5. This year's celebration is of special significance because the Arboretum celebrates the 10th anniversary of The 12 Days of Christmas, the exhibit that started it all. Plus, it's always romantic as hell for a cozy date night. DallasArboretum.org.

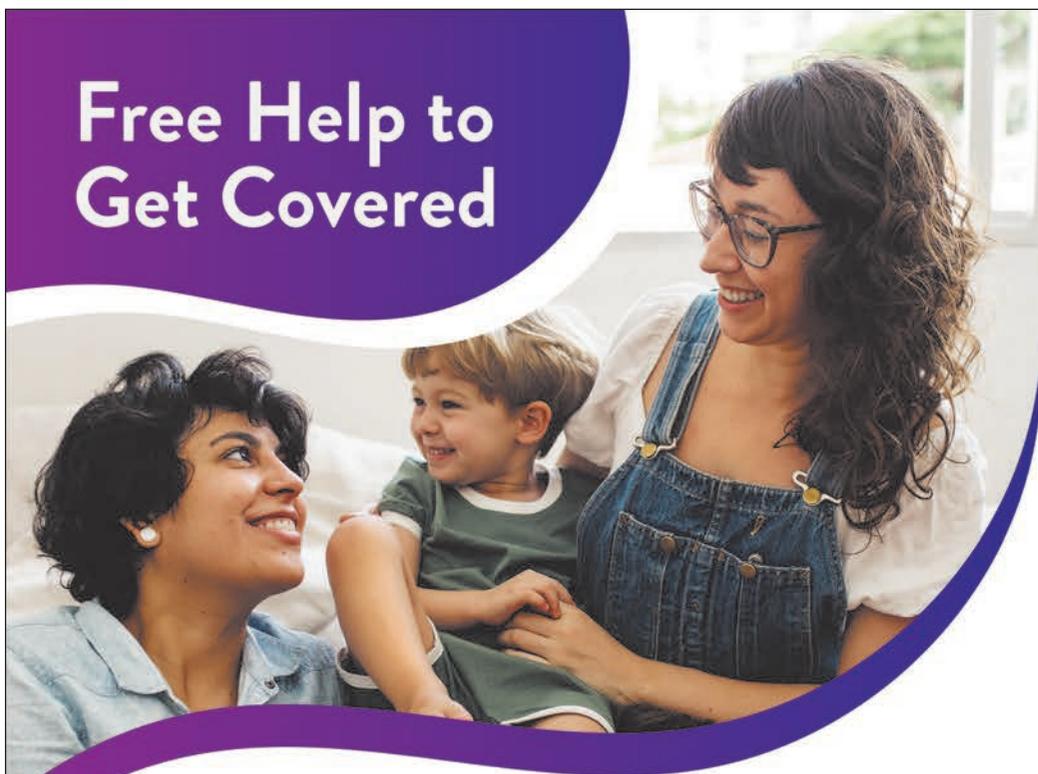
Ice, Lights & City Nights

The Omni Dallas offers magical experiences with this themed event, lasting through Jan. 5, that includes a brand new



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Slip in to Blitzen's Bar at The Omni Dallas for some refreshing adult beverages

outdoor ice skating rink, a hot chocolate bar and a whimsical Santa-themed Presidential Suite as perhaps the destination for holiday cheer in Downtown Dallas. Skate beneath the glow of holiday lights and the skyline and then warm up at the Over-the-Top Hot Chocolate Bar, all on the Pegasus Lawn. Capture St. Nick strolling for selfies and photos on prop-

erty. And snag a seasonal craft cocktail at Blitzen's Bar along with a selection of Christmas cookies.

Or just stay at the Omni in the Santa Suite that features an exclusive in-room milk and cookie delivery from Santa's helpers and is complete with an over-the-top sweet treat amenity crafted by Omni Dallas' pastry chef, Elizabeth Ro-



Get fully immersed in the holiday spirit at Camp Christmas

driguez and a \$400 daily spending credit. OmniHotels.com/Hotels/Dallas. ■



NICE From Page 12

tion of just being together and doing our own little holiday tradition. We'd always go to the gay bar after we were with our families. It was like commemorating the holiday with a bunch of people who didn't have a home to go to.

As queer people, we kind of create our own traditions, and I love the things that I've created with my friends and my chosen family.

What Christmas wish would you like to throw out in the universe? In these very challenging times, I hope that people are able to come together, specifically our LGBTQIA+ community. I hope we're able to use our collective power to stand up and defend and protect one another. I think we're stronger together than we are apart, and I hope that we as a community can further unite to make the next chapter of our lives together successful and thriving for each and every one of us.

A Drag Queen Christmas stops in Dallas on Wednesday, Dec. 18. Doors open at 7 p.m.; showtime is 8 p.m.. The tour is 18+ only. DragFans.com



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MOVE, From Page 9

Larry Cook, a gay man who retired to Puerto Vallarta in May 2024, said he is living proof that a move to Mexico can be life-changing. Cook and his husband bought a condo in Puerto Vallarta's Zona Romantica in 2021.

"I never thought I'd retire here. I always imagined Greece," Cook said. "But after visiting Puerto Vallarta several times, I never wanted to leave."

Cook said he is now building a home in the up-and-coming Fluvial neighborhood, just three miles from Zona Romantica.

"It's got a residential feel, but you're still close to the action," he said. "Puerto Vallarta is a true community, not just a tourist destination."

Cook pointed to the city's affordable healthcare and low cost of living as major benefits.

Cook's experience echoes what many LGBTQ expats discover: Mexico offers not only affordability but a sense of safety as well.

"I feel safer here than I did in Oak Lawn at night," Cook said, referring to Dallas's Gayborhood.

For Bob McCranie, a Dallas-based Realtor who created FleeRedStates.com, the current wave of LGBTQ Americans exploring a move to Mexico isn't surprising. He said he has spent years helping LGBTQ individuals and families relocate through his real estate network, and he's seen interest skyrocket in the wake of political shifts in the U.S. He said website traffic went sky high on Election Night.

"Queer migration has been a constant conversation among my friends for the last three to five years," McCranie said. "But election years always drive it up. This time, we've seen a flood of inquiries."

McCranie's FleeRedStates.com connects LGBTQ people with Realtors across the country who understand the unique concerns of queer clients. The website features an interactive map that allows users to see pertinent information regarding state government and LGBTQ protections

"When I first started [the website], people told me I was fear-mongering," McCranie said. "But the things I've been talking about are happening. Parents of trans children, same-sex couples — they're all worried about their safety and rights."

McCranie said he is also part of the LGBTQ Real Estate Alliance, an organization supporting LGBTQ individuals in finding homes and navigating the housing market.

"When you're moving, you need someone who understands your family's needs," McCranie said. "That's even more important when moving abroad."

McCranie said that while some feel compelled to stay and fight for their rights, others are deciding that leaving the U.S. is the only way to feel truly safe.

"I'm scared that the rights we fought for will be reversed and swing back even harder against us," he said. "I used to tell people that Dallas or Austin would always be safe for LGBTQ people. Now, I can't say that with confidence anymore."

Mexico as a sanctuary

Puerto Vallarta has long been a beacon for LGBTQ travelers, but it's now becoming a permanent home for many. Blann notes that Mexico legalized same-sex marriage in 2022 nationwide, with the state of Jalisco, where Puerto Vallarta is located, leading the way as early as 2016.

"This city is a safe haven, even for LGBTQ Mexicans," Blann said.

Beyond legal protections, Cook said the sense of community is what draws people to Puerto Vallarta.

The city is home to about 80,000 expats and offers a vibrant, diverse community for people of all ages and backgrounds. Cook said there are plans for a new community center for LGBTQ youth and seniors, providing much-needed services that Cook said he took for granted in the U.S.

"It's a place where you can truly be yourself," Cook said. "There's a community here for every age and background."

Affordable and accessible healthcare

Cook said he was surprised to find that healthcare in Mexico is on par or better than what he was used to in the States.

"Healthcare here is excellent, better than what I was getting in the U.S.," Cook said. "Doctors own their own businesses, and you can just walk in without an appointment. I've had visits where they spent an hour with me, and I only

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paid \$35, including two prescriptions.”

Cook, who once paid \$4,500 for surgery for his dog in Dallas, said he was astonished when the same procedure in Puerto Vallarta cost just \$850.

Property taxes are also remarkably low. In 2023, Cook said he paid only \$75 in taxes for his condo in Puerto Vallarta, compared to the \$8,000 he used to pay in Dallas.

Navigating the move

McCranie stresses the importance of working with real estate agents who understand the unique challenges LGBTQ individuals may face when moving abroad. He said that, in his own experience, agents have introduced him and his partner as “brothers” to avoid potential discrimination, or listed one partner as a tenant on an insurance policy.

For those concerned about safety, McCranie said that understanding local laws and communities is crucial.

Blann, Cook and McCranie all agree that while moving to Mexico can be life-changing, it’s not a decision to make



Realtor Bob McCranie created the FleeRedStates.com website

lightly. Cook advises spending at least six months in Puerto Vallarta on a tourist visa before making the move permanent.

“Explore the neighborhoods, figure out what terrain and weather you’re comfortable with,” Cook said.

Cook said that moving to Mexico isn’t just about escaping political instability in the U.S. it’s about finding a new home.

“Don’t move here just because of Trump,” Cook said. “Make sure you want the lifestyle Puerto Vallarta offers. It’s not enough to just want to leave the U.S.; you need to want to live in Mexico.”

Planning the move

Jamie, 72, and her wife Carrie, 77, said they have been considering relocating to Puerto Vallarta since Trump won the election in 2016. The two, who have been together for 10 years and married for two, have known Cook and his husband Clint since they lived in Dallas. Jamie and Carrie said they have been talking about moving for a while, especially since their friends made the jump.

“We visited Portugal a while back, but it just didn’t feel right,” Carrie said. “We’ve been thinking about moving since Trump won in 2016. It’s not just

about escaping; it’s about finding a place where we can live without constantly being afraid of policies that will take away our rights.”

Carrie said she was active in marching and protesting for LGBTQ rights in the 1970s. But, she said, the energy to continue the fight just isn’t there anymore.

“When the gay community started pushing back and fighting for protection, we were there. But now, we’re just tired,” Carrie said.

Having heard Larry and Clint rave about Puerto Vallarta, Jamie and Carrie said they are seriously considering the move.

“They talk about it in such positive, glowing terms,” Jamie said. “We even had dinner with Clint and Lance, and it was all good things. We’re planning to go for 10 days in February to check it out ourselves.”

The couple, who have two dogs, said they are especially drawn to the good vet care and healthcare in Puerto Vallarta.

“We’ve heard that many of the doctors

MOVE, Next Page

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MOVE From Previous Page

there were trained in the U.S. or Canada, and the healthcare system sounds really good," Carrie said.

Jamie said they would get a six-month rental like Cook suggested, mainly to experience the country's rainy season. Then, she said, the couple would make a permanent decision.

Jamie said that she always pictured herself living out of the country when she was younger, but family obligations

kept her in the U.S.

"Now, my family understands my concerns about the political climate, and they're supportive," she said.

Jamie, who has a background in wild-life rehabilitation, said she is excited to continue that passion in Puerto Vallarta.

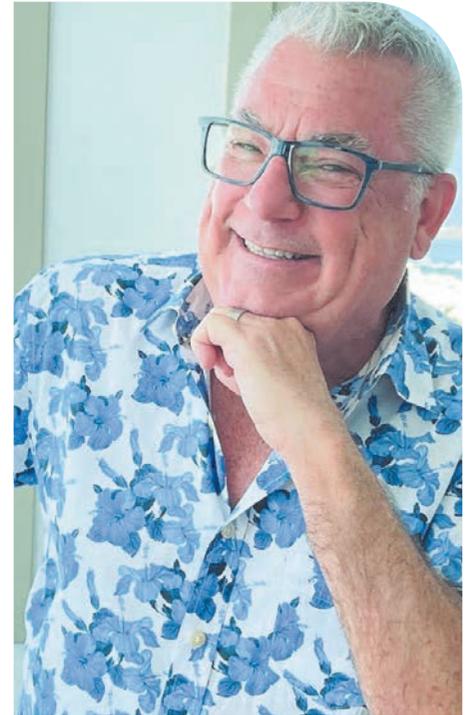
"It was important to find a place where I don't have to give up the things I love," she said. "There's a place for everything there — open markets, food, flower mar-

kets. It feels like the right place."

A final decision

Jamie said that the potential erosion of LGBTQ+ rights in the U.S. weighs heavily on her mind.

"I think it's possible that gay marriage could be overturned," she said. "If that happens, it's just one more sign that things are eroding," she said. "When



Former Dallasite Larry Cook retired to Puerto Vallarta in May this year

I saw us winning our rights, I always knew the pendulum could swing back.

"I knew that at any time, those rights could go away."

Despite the emotional ties to Dallas, Jamie said she's ready to let the future guide her decisions.

"We'll see what happens after January and after our trips to PV," she said. "I'm so grateful that my lifetime has been blessed. Now it's time to look at my options."

Blann said he is planning an informational seminar to address the flood of inquiries he's received from people, like Jamie and Carrie, considering the move.

"People are scared about Project 2025, about the future of LGBTQ rights in the U.S.," Blann said. "But Puerto Vallarta offers a sanctuary, a place where you can feel safe and be part of a community." ■

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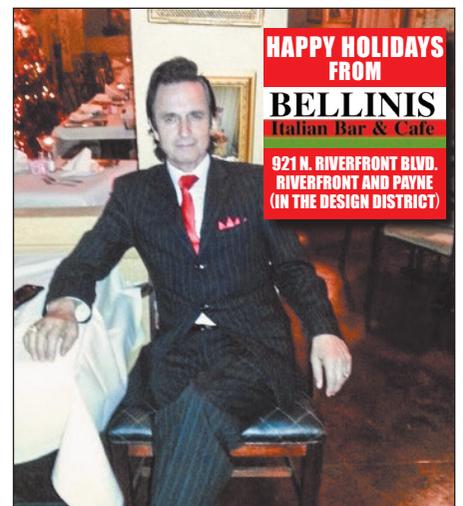
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The Turtle Creek Chorale spreads the holiday cheer across DFW this year with *Wonder: The TCC Holiday Tour* at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth on Dec. 13, and at First United Methodist Church Richardson on Dec. 17. See listings for details.

■ **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.

DECEMBER

■ **Dec. 13: Turtle Creek Chorale Holiday Concert**

Turtle Creek presents *Wonder: The TCC Holiday Tour* at 7:30 p.m. at Broadway Baptist Church, 305 West Broadway Ave. in Fort Worth. Tickets are \$50, available online at TurtleCreekChorale.MySalesForce-sites.com.

■ **Dec. 13: Cowboys & Toys Toy Drive**

Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road, hosts this toy drive benefitting Scottish Rite Children's Hospital, beginning at 7 p.m. Bring a toy instead of cover.

■ **Dec. 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.

■ **Dec. 14: CoH Christmas Concert**

Cathedral of Hope hosts its annual Christmas Concert at 7 p.m. in the main sanctuary at 5910 Cedar Springs Road. Visit CathedralOfHope.com for more information.

■ **Dec. 14: 9th Annual Very Beary Christmas Bar Crawl**

This event will begin at Woody's Sports and Video Bar, 4011 Cedar Springs Road, at 8 p.m. and continue on to J.R.'s, TMC then the Dallas Eagle. Must present I.D. to enter bars. Visit event page on Facebook for more information.

■ **Dec. 14: Winnetka Heights Holiday Home Tour**

Winnetka Heights Neighborhood Association presents the 36th annual Winnetka Heights Holiday Home Tour, featuring six private properties in the Winnetka Heights Historic District, from noon to 6 p.m. Advance tickets are \$20, available online at WinnetkaHeights.org. Tickets the day of the event are \$25.

■ **Through Dec. 15: 'Auntee Explains Xmas'**

Jubilee Theatre presents *Auntee Explains Xmas* at Scott Theatre, 1300 Gendy St., Fort Worth.

■ **Dec. 17: Jingle & Jive Dance Contest**

Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road, hosts the Jingle & Jive Random Partner Dance Contest with sign-up at 7:30 p.m. and the contest at 9 p.m. Entry is free; winners receive cash prizes.

■ **Dec. 17: 'Christmas Actually'**

Emerson Collins and Blake McIver bring their holiday cabaret show to Kalita Humphreys Theater as an add-on to Uptown Players' 2024-25 season. Show starts at 8 p.m.; tickets start at \$30, available at UptownPlayers.org.

■ **Dec. 17: Turtle Creek Chorale Holiday Concert**

Turtle Creek presents *Wonder: The TCC Holiday Tour* at 7:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church Richardson, 503 North U.S. 75/Central Expressway

1000. Tickets are \$50, available online at TurtleCreekChorale.MySalesForce-sites.com.

■ **Dec. 17: Up & Out: LGBTQ Caregiver Support Group**

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

■ **Dec. 19: OASIS LGBT+ Monthly Social Support Group**

Oasis is an online, 90-minute monthly social support group for LGBTQ folks 18 and older providing a safe, welcoming space for people to connect. To register email Oasis.Tag.Plus@gmail.com.

■ **Dec. 19: Log Cabin Republicans Christmas Meeting**

Join the Log Cabin Republicans Dallas for their December meeting at Cremona Bistro Italian Kitchen, 2704 Worthington St. at 6 p.m. Visit LogCabinDallas.com to RSVP.

■ **Dec. 19: Black Tie Dinner 2024 Wrap Party**

Celebrate the 2024 Black Tie Dinner beneficiaries at The Empire Room Dallas, 1225 N. Riverfront Blvd., from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Visit BlackTie.org for more information and tickets.

■ **Dec. 19: 'The Variety Show'**

Arts Mission Oak Cliff, 410 S. Windomere Ave., hosts Brian Harden's *The Variety Show* from 7-9:30 p.m. The show invites artists to test out new acts in a supportive and relaxed environment. Tickets are \$15, available online at TicketTailor.com.

■ **Dec. 19: The Showdown Drag Competition Finale**

Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road, presents the finale of The Showdown Drag Competition, season 7, at 10:30 p.m. Contestants include Celestial, Nova Gina, Lola Love Bug, Insomnia, Pintony, Juno Juice, Kolby Jack Davenport, Deja Dubois, Kiyolji Kuntzuné, Momo Ross and Gimmia Tention.

■ **Dec. 19-21: 'Rare Magic'**

Magician Drew Murray takes the stage at The Adolphus, 1321 Commerce St. Visit Adolphus.com for information and tickets.

■ **Dec. 21: Pride & Joy: A Festive Concert**

The Oak Lawn Band presents *Pride & Joy: A Festive Concert* at Latino Cultural Center, 2600 Live Oak St., from 4-6 p.m. Visit OakLawnBand.org for more information and tickets.

■ **Dec. 24: Christmas Eve at the Cathedral**

Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road, celebrates Christmas Eve with three services at 7 p.m., 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. Childcare is provided for the 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. services.

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



Emerson Collins and Blake McIver Ewing bring their Christmas show and their fabulous hair to Kalita Humphreys Theater on Dec. 17 in a special add-on to the Uptown Players' season. See listings for details.

Jenny Block

GIRL ON GIRLS

Just be kind

My friend Shell and her wife spent the weekend at our house celebrating Shell's birthday. I made cupcakes covered in sprinkles with little toppers of cartoon versions of Shell doing her favorite thing — fishing.

She could not have been more tickled by the display of cupcakes with the toppers atop toy boats. She told me how loved and seen she felt. I can't think of many things that make me happier than making others feel loved and seen.

We spent the weekend eating and drinking and laughing and playing Scrabble. Shell won. She and my wife fished, catching more than enough catfish for a Sunday fish fry. And, despite it being her birthday weekend, Shell spent Sunday cleaning and frying them.

Half of the time she was frying outside while we were busy eating inside. But she seemed so happy, cooking for friends and watching the sunset over the lake.

As I bit into the hot fried fish, which could not have been any more delicious, I felt loved and seen.

It's the best thing in the world taking care of others, doing nice things for people you love and for strangers alike. Just being kind ...

Like the hat bar artist at a quaint shop called Gobel West who designed and crafted a hat for Shell.

Like the neighbor who told me to help myself to her pantry while she was out of town when I realized I had forgotten a few ingredients for Thanksgiving.

Or the woman at the front gate in our neighborhood who happens to be a notary and is happy to notarize documents for free.

Or the staff at my new doctor's office — taking every call, answering every question, being genuinely sweet and attentive time and again despite my unnecessary nerves and need for info.

Being nice costs nothing and yet buys so much.

Then there are the people who just cannot get out of their own way to do the right thing, like the hotel who swears up and down that their valet didn't scratch my Jeep's bumper in spite of all evidence to the contrary.

Like the cop who literally cut into



slow moving traffic, separated me from the herd, and gave me a ticket without so much as a, "Hello, how are you? My name is Officer Needs a Lesson in Manners and Respect."

Or the flight attendant who asked me if I had headphones when I asked — very nicely — a fellow passenger if she had any since she was playing an obnoxiously loud video game that was clearly annoying everyone. "Is it bothering you?" the passenger asked me. "It's bothering everyone," I said.

I was taken aback by how thoughtless both of them were.

The list goes on and on: People who cut you off on the road. People who cut in line. People who take the last piece without asking if anyone else wants it. People who listen to videos on their phone when others are around.

I call it not being nice. You could also call it being rude or self-absorbed. The point is that these people are not thinking of anyone but themselves.

The world is hard enough. We are all busy. We are all overworked. We all want to do what we want to do when and where we want to do it.

But the world is filled with other people, and, not only doesn't it revolve around any one of us, it shouldn't.

We should think of others, always. It's what keeps us human. It's what reminds us that we are a herd.

It's what makes life livable.

It's easy enough to do. Just ask yourself if you would want to listen to someone else's Zoom call or video game or TikTok in any tiny, shared space. Would you want to be cold or hungry when there are blankets and food available?

You are important. You are special. But you are not more important or more special than anyone else.

Considering the election and the inevitable stress that the holidays bring, this message is more important now than ever. It's kind of old school, the Golden Rule: "Do unto others" and all that jazz.

But just think, for one second, before you do anything: Is it kind? Might I bother someone? Do I need to do this right here, right now?

I get it. You just want to get home or play the game or take the call or eat the tuna fish sandwich. But someone else wants to get home, too, and they need to finish their work or take a nap or otherwise be unbothered.

The world is bothersome enough. We owe it to one another to, at the very least not bother others, and, at the very most, be actively kind.

It's easy; listen: Go second. Take the smaller piece. Use your headphones. Take up only as much space — physical and otherwise — as you truly need. No one — NO ONE — needs to man spread. I'm not talking about sacrificing your own wants and needs. I'm talking about being thoughtful.

You deserve to both be respected and to be respectful.

If we all do that, then hopefully no one will feel the need to act unkindly, which I know is a reaction to being treated unkindly. But we have to restart the cycle, and there's no better time now.

Let the kindness games begin!

word search solution



this week's solution



browse

For a more complete Community Calendar online, visit Tinyurl.com/dvevents.

submit

To submit an item for inclusion in the Community Calendar, visit Tinyurl.com/dvevents.

SCENE

PEOPLE, PLACES AND FACES



Paul loves this time of year!

Visit Dallas 2024 LGBTQ+ Community Leaders Reception

(Photos by Jaren Collins, JCi Creatives)



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TICKETS

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Visit Dallas 2024 LGBTQ+ Community Leaders Reception (cont)

(Photos by Jaren Collins, JCI Creatives)



Visit Dallas 2024 LGBTQ+ Community Leaders Reception (cont)

(Photos by David Andrews)



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Feb 15	Pop Icons & Divas	Aug 16	Galaxy Glam
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April 19	Drag Queens & Dragons	Oct 18	Post Apoca-Lips -Survival Never Looked So Good
May 17	GaybingoLAND -The Gayest Place on Earth	Nov 15	Noir Ball
Jun 21	Tutti Frutti		

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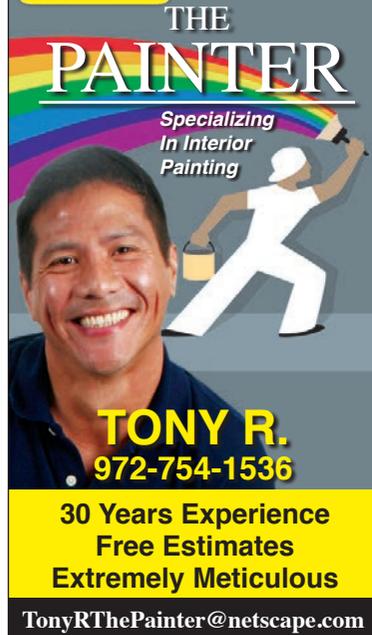
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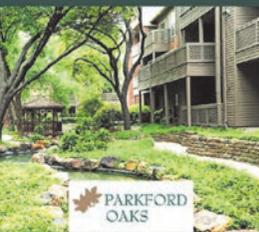
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Erin Duhaime is a dedicated Physician Assistant with 16 years of experience in HIV care. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Biology from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies from Stony Brook University. Credentialed as an HIV Specialist, Erin is also a member of the American Academy of HIV Medicine and the International Anal Neoplasia Society.

Erin emphasizes patient-centered care, empowering individuals to manage their health. She specializes in HIV prevention, treatment, and complex case management, with expertise in PrEP, gender-affirming care, Hepatitis C, and more. Passionate about advocacy, Erin works to reduce stigma and raise awareness in her community. In her free time, Erin enjoys live music, travel, and board games with friends.

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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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