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ON THE COVER: Ocean Cay Marine Reserve, MSC Cruises' private island. Photo by Jenny Block

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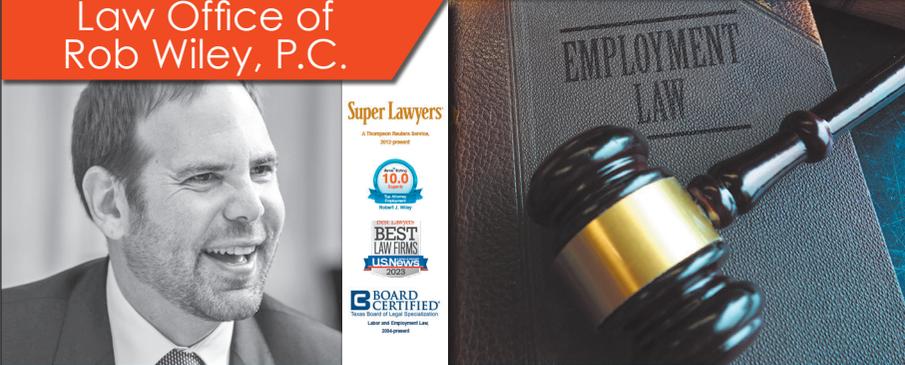
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WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com

HB 50 passes third reading in the Texas House



State Rep. Venton Jones

State Rep. Venton Jones' bill to offer HIV testing in Texas when someone is screened for other STDs passed its third reading in the Texas House of Representatives on Tuesday, April 29. It brings Texas in line with CDC guidance and public health best practices.

The bill doesn't require HIV testing but simply offers it to anyone already getting tested for other sexually transmitted diseases.

"Today, we are one step closer to ending the HIV epidemic in Texas," Jones said.

The bill passed with strong bi-partisan support — only 25 Republicans voted against the measure. With passage in the House, the bill was sent to the Health and Human Services committee in the Senate.

—David Taffet

U.S. House and Senate Democrats reintroduce the Equality Act



Rep. Julie Johnson

Democrats in the U.S. House and Senate introduced the Equality Act, which would make sexual orientation and gender identity protected classes.

To pass, the bill would need bipartisan support in both houses. In 2022, more than 50 Republicans voted for the Respect for Marriage Act, which enshrined same-sex and interracial marriage into federal law.

"As a Co-Chair of the Congressional Equality Caucus, I'm proud to help reintroduce the #EqualityAct this Congress to explicitly prohibit LGBTQ discrimination, strengthen prohibitions on sex discrimination, and expand protections for minority communities in public accommodations—which makes EVERY American's rights safer!" Rep. Julie Johnson posted on social media.

— David Taffet

Ahmad Goree receives key to the city



Ahmad Goree

At the April 17 Balch Springs City Council meeting, Councilwoman Tartisha Hill recognized Ahmad Goree with the key to the city of Balch Springs for his unwavering dedication to enrich, enhance, and foster innovative ways to transform the city with his vision and timeless efforts.

Goree is a native of Balch Springs and has helped to bring about strong economic development to the city by supporting the local community and helping create hundreds of jobs. The last recipient of the key to the city was Opal Lee for her efforts to make Juneteenth a national holiday.

— David Taffet

Victory Fund endorses Ballmann for FW city council



Jason Ballmann

The LGBTQ Victory Fund has issued a late endorsement in Texas current local elections.

Jason Ballmann is running for Fort Worth City Council District 3. If elected, he will be the first out member of the council since Joel Burns served as councilman for District 9.

District 3 cuts a wedge west of downtown Fort Worth. District 9 is south of downtown.

According to his campaign website, Ballmann served on the Marfa City Council.

Ballmann is a brand strategist for Texas Instruments. He's a volunteer at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens.

Before moving to Fort Worth, he worked at USC's Southern California Earthquake Center leading disaster preparedness for earthquakes, tsunamis, wildfires and landslides.

"At home, I'm a proud partner to Jake, dog dad to Wrangler and caretaker of 11 backyard chickens," he reports. "Now, I'm ready to bring my experience and passion for service to Fort Worth City Council. I hope to earn your support, and your vote on May 3 so we can build a stronger, safer, and more resilient Fort Worth together."

Early voting is underway and continues through Tuesday, April 29. Election Day is Saturday, May 3.

— David Taffet

Adoptable / SOPHIA



Looking for a smart, snuggly companion who's equal parts sweet and silly? Meet **Sophia**, a 2-year-and-3-month-old mixed breed pup weighing in at 49 pounds, the perfect size for someone seeking a medium dog with a big personality. Sophia is friendly, playful and just a little bit goofy in the best way. According to our Borrow a Buddy volunteers, Sophia is the "happiest girl ever," and she walks like a dream on a leash. She's making great progress with house training and is eager to keep learning, and Sophia gets along well with other dogs.

Her adoption fee is \$75, and she's available at the SPCA of Texas' Dallas Animal Care Center, 2400 Lone Star Drive. Stop by any day from noon to 6 p.m. to meet her or meet her online at [SPCA.org/adoptable/sophia](https://www.spcatexas.org/adoptable/sophia). Learn more about the SPCA of Texas at [SPCA.org](https://www.spcatexas.org).

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Celebrating National Pet Week the right way

DR. JOSH TALKS ANIMALS

Hello, Dallas Voice fans, and welcome back to my Woof column. With National Pet Week just around the corner — starting May 4 — there is no better time to focus on showing our furry companions just how much they mean to us.

This week is all about raising awareness of the important roles pets play in our lives and promoting responsible pet care. Wait — who are we kidding?! This is not about just responsible care, but about spoiling them!

To celebrate, I have put together a list of thoughtful ways to pamper our kiddos, ensuring they feel loved and appreciated every day. I will be addressing the topics of nutrition, relaxation, exercise and self-care. Enjoy!!

First things first, let's talk about food! While giving our pets the best nutrition is important, we can go a step further by offering some amazing treats. From healthy fruits and veggies like carrots, apples, cucumbers and frozen blueberries to fun DIY treats made with natural ingredients like pumpkin, oatmeal or peanut butter, the options are endless. You can even experiment with homemade recipes that you'll feel good about sharing with your pet.

However, remember that moderation is important and that those treats should be enjoyed in small quantities to avoid weight gain or other issues. For cats, who tend to be a bit pickier, look for natural options that keep their preferences in mind. Every pet needs their own cozy space, right? Wrong! We are spoiling them: They need their multiple cozy spaces (lol)! Think about upgrading their bed if it has been a while since they had a new one. You can mix things up by introducing a variety of beds, from plush cushions to orthopedic options that cater to different sleep styles and see which ones your kiddos like more.

Also, consider setting up relaxation spots in multiple rooms of the house. If your pet loves snuggling with you in bed but struggles to jump up or down, pet stairs are a perfect solution.

(I do recommend training them to use



Dr. Josh
Woof

the stairs correctly to avoid injuries, as some pets still choose to ignore them.)

For a truly fancy experience, why not treat your pet to a professional massage? Yes, that is a thing! Some

cities have specialized pet spas that offer soothing massages designed to relax and rejuvenate your furry friend. Even if we don't treat ourselves that way, our pets deserve the best!

Physical activity and exercise are essential for both dogs and cats, and, just like with humans, it helps with living better and longer. We want them to live forever, right?

Regular exercise can keep your pet in shape, enhancing their quality of life. If your pup cannot go on longer walks, consider shorter and more frequent walks. Just be mindful of the weather during this time of the year, since pets can easily overheat or burn their paws when outside. The best times to go for walks are early mornings or late eve-

nings when the ground is cooler.

And if you are in an area with high pollen counts or allergens (which pretty much includes all of DFW), it is wise to keep an eye on any signs of itchiness, such as excessive licking or scratching. If allergies become a concern, consult your veterinarian or call our office in Addison. Our pets also deserve a bit of self-care. One of the best ways to pamper them is by simply spending quality time together. I get it; life can get busy. But try setting aside time each week to bond with your pet through play, cuddle sessions or taking them around the neighborhood.

But pampering doesn't end there. While they may not like this idea, regular veterinary checkups are a must. Annual visits for younger pets and bi-annual exams for more mature pets (especially after six years of age) are crucial for maintaining their health and potentially identifying issues as early as possible. During these checkups, your veterinarian will assess everything from organ function to overall health.

Also, do not forget about grooming! Regular baths, nail trims and brushing are not just about keeping your pet clean; they also help avoid skin issues and discomfort from overgrown nails.

Also consider getting them new toys and/or rotating which toys they have access to at different times. For our kitty parents, you may want to get a new, nicer cat tower, too. Are you an animal lover but don't currently have a pet of your own? No need to worry; there are still plenty of ways you can make a difference. Consider volunteering at a local animal shelter or donating to a rescue organization. Fostering a pet in need can also be a rewarding experience, even if it is just for a little while.

National Pet Week is the perfect time to celebrate all the ways we can give back to our furry friends. This week, make a special effort to show your pets just how much they mean to you. Whether you are spending extra time with them, giving them special treats or scheduling a veterinary checkup, it is a great reminder of the joy and love that pets bring into our lives.

Let your creativity flow and have fun pampering your kiddos!! Abrazos fuertes para todos! ■

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

VOICES

OPINIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Immigrants are our neighbors. Isn't that enough?

At the end of the day, compassion doesn't have to be complicated

I recall seeing a sign in a yard in my small hometown of around 12,000 residents: "No matter where you are from," it said, "we're glad you are our neighbor."

It was positioned defiantly, facing a Trump sign that had been plunged into the neighbor's yard across the street. It poignantly illustrated the tensions in my rural Ohio town, which — like many similar communities — has experienced a rapid influx of immigrants over the last 20 years.

The sign's sentiment was simple yet profound. I found myself wondering then, as I wonder now, when compassion had become so complicated.

It seems everyone has become pre-occupied arguing over the minutiae of immigration that they've missed the most glaring and essential point: We are neighbors.

While writing this piece, I gathered studies and prepared a detailed analysis of the ways immigrants have transformed and revitalized the economies of the Rust Belt. I was going to explain how immigrants have helped fill vacant housing and industry in this region's shrinking cities to reverse the toll of population decline.

I gathered statistics showing the economic growth and revitalization that's happened as immigrants have brought flourishing small businesses to their new communities. Like: Despite making up only around 14 percent of the U.S. population, immigrants own 18 percent of small businesses with employees — and nearly a quarter of small businesses without employees.

(And immigrants in Rust Belt cities are even more likely to be entrepreneurs.)

Small businesses are the backbone of the U.S. economy, a truth so widely acknowledged that it bridges the ever-growing partisan divide. Both Vice President JD Vance and former Vice President Kamala Harris have promoted the critical role of small businesses in economic flourish-



Meredith Lehman
Special Contributor

ing. I was going to describe the experiences of my recently-immigrated high school peers, who sometimes fell asleep in class from sheer exhaustion after working night shifts at meatpacking plants and attending school for seven hours the next day.

I was going to explain why communities not only benefit from immigrants but need them.

Without immigrants, I learned, U.S. communities would lose the nearly \$1 trillion in state, local and federal taxes that immigrants contribute annually.

This number is almost \$300 billion more than immigrants receive in government benefits.

Without immigration, the U.S. working-age population is projected to decline by approximately 6 million over the

ing.

I was going to tell a story about Joe, a vendor at my local flea market. He and other vendors were heavily averse to migrants purchasing the

next two decades — a shift that would carry significant consequences, especially for the Social Security system. Sustained population growth is critical to preserving a balanced ratio of workers contributing to Social Security for every beneficiary receiving support.

As immigration is expected to become the sole driver of U.S. population growth by 2040, restrictive immigration policies threaten to undermine this vital program, as a cornerstone of the American social safety net. With broad public support for strengthening Social Security, embracing immigration is not just beneficial — it is essential to ensuring the program's long-term stability and success.

I was prepared to comb through every dissent in an effort to prove why our neighbors are deserving of empathy and compassion. But none of these answers address the larger, more urgent question: When did being neighbors cease to be enough?

Most Americans still tell pollsters immigration is good for their communities and reject cruel deportations, especially those that separate families, target people without criminal records or penalize people who came here as young children.

My rural Ohio town, and countless communities like it, are slowly learning the most important lesson about this supposedly complicated issue: Compassion doesn't need to be complicated. ■

Meredith Lehman is a research associate at the Institute for Policy Studies. This op-ed was distributed by OtherWords.org.

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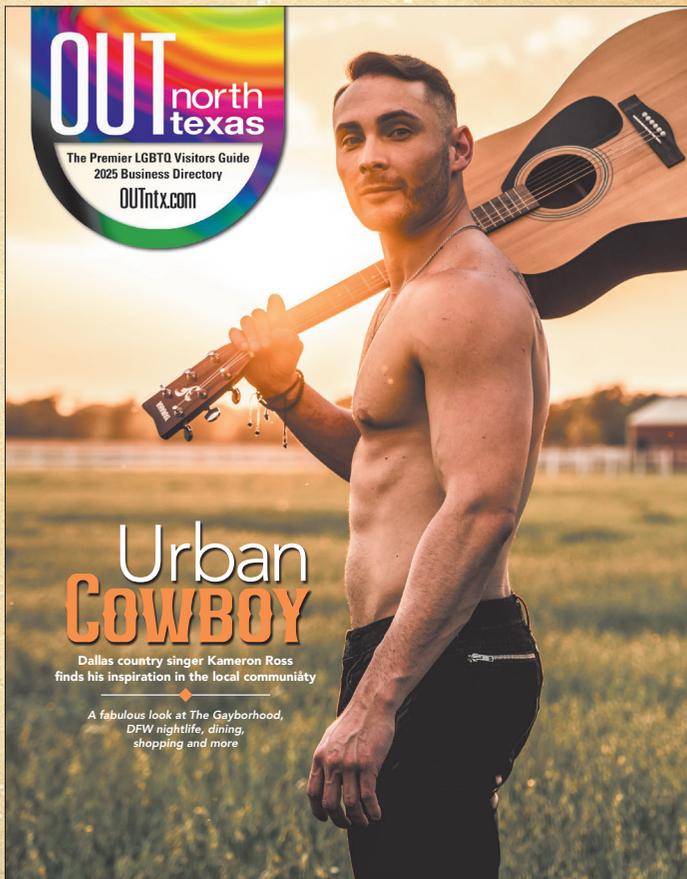
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TRAVEL

MSC Cruises just launched the brand new ship, MSC World America, and it is HUGE

JENNY BLOCK | Contributing Writer
JennyEBlock@icloud.com

Just when I thought cruise ships could not get any bigger or more extravagant or more well-equipped to do nearly anything and everything, along comes the official launch of MSC Cruises' brand-new ship, MSC World America. And this ship is MASSIVE!

To say the MSC World America has everything would be a huge understatement. MSC's goal with this new release was to offer the comfort American cruisers have come to expect coupled with the kind of culture offered by European lines

Well, MSC, congratulations: Mission accomplished.

MSC World America's inaugural cruise left Miami on April 12. But from April 9-12, invited media and VIP guests were welcomed aboard for a preview cruise that I was thrilled to take part in.

There was a media briefing the very first afternoon that included appearances by "godmother" Drew Barrymore and her partner in advertising the new ship, Orlando Bloom. They star in an adorable commercial that speaks to the line's desire to delight an American audience both with the new and the familiar.



Jenny Block on board the *MSC World America*

A naming ceremony was held, also with Barrymore, who was as charming and adorable in person as you may imagine watching her on big and small screens over the years. She seemed

downright tickled to be the godmother and over the moon to cut the ceremonial ribbon.

That evening, there was a gala dinner, and, afterwards, drones filled the sky with absolutely incredible images, including the ship itself and MSC's new tagline: "Let's Holiday."

And just when it didn't seem like things could get any more over the top, there was a private, outdoor concert poolside with Gloria Estefan where you could dance right up next to the stage or even ankle deep in the pool. And guests absolutely did both.

The whole celebration was wild.

The next two days allowed for all kinds of opportunities to check out the massive ship. Just to give you an idea of

its size, MSC World America was built for 6,700+ passengers and 2,100+ crew. It has six pools and 14 hot tubs. It has 20 bars and lounges. It has two buffets, four main dining rooms and six specialty restaurants, including Paxos, Eatly at Sea, Kai Sushi, Kaito Teppanyaki, Hola Tacos & Cantina and Butcher's Cut Steakhouse.

The ship is divided into seven districts: The Yacht Club, the World Galleria (complete with LED domed ceiling), MSC Luna Park, the Zen Area (for adults only), the Aqua Deck, the World Promenade, the Terraces and Family Aventura.

It also has three live venues, a slide that drops 12 decks, and "The Cliffhanger," which allows guests to dangle their feet and swing out over the ocean.

There are shows, activities, bumper cars, a zip line, a ropes course, a comedy club, a speak easy, a spa, a casino, a candy shop, a smoothie and gelato shop, a pizza and burger joint ... Even a cotton candy stand! Everywhere I looked there was something going on: scuba divers and sea life swimming overhead on LED screens, live painting, a sunset concert. Whatever you were in the mood for, you could likely find it without even looking very hard.

I think what I liked the best about the ship, though, is how it offered so many different kinds of places and spaces to spend time in. There were areas that were clearly for kids, although adults were more than welcome. There were loud spots and quiet spots. There was furniture set up clearly for gatherings of groups and little hideaway spots clearly for more intimate conversations.

It's a giant ship. But it often felt quite cozy, depending on where you were on the ship. I loved that I could choose the mood and that choosing to be on a ship didn't automatically mean that the mood was chosen for me.

Because it was a super short cruise, we only made one stop. But it was a really good one: Ocean Cay Marine Reserve, MSC's private island. It is basically my heaven on earth.

The island offers visitors access to multiple beaches and lagoons, including



MSC World American's godmother, Drew Barrymore



private areas and cabanas for Yacht Club guests, food trucks, a cool lighthouse you can climb up, cabanas for rent, excursions like snorkeling and jet skiing, shops to browse and a ton more.

We had one full day there and one half day. To be honest, I think I could be happy spending a week living on a ship docked at the island. I mean, what more could one possibly need.

The cabins were simple and well-designed. It is obvious that they are intended as bedrooms with private baths, where you spend the majority of times in your living rooms and dining room (i.e.,

the ship). Unless, that is, you are in the Yacht Club.

The suites and the service there are truly incredible. Some even boast multiple rooms and two stories. Plus, you have use of the private club and dining and the best service at sea to be sure.

I didn't travel in the Yacht Club this trip. But it is definitely my favorite way to cruise on MSC.

I go on a lot of cruises, and I love a lot of lines. And what I love most is a thoughtfully designed ship and staff that care. You certainly get both on MSC.

And while MSC World America won't be docking in Galveston any time soon, one of the MSC fleet will be operating out of Galveston starting this fall. It is the MSC Seascape, and she is a beauty — not as big as MSC World America, but equally well-appointed and staffed.

If you want the comforts that Americans know and love but you also long for the style and comfort of all things European, MSC World America just might be your sweet spot — and Miami, where the ship calls home, is only a hop, skip, and a jump away, after all. ■

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Live — and let live

TRAVEL

Some expert travel advice from a professional nomad

MIKEY ROX | Contributing Writer
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As a nomad who regularly updates an experience-based Instagram account, I see a lot of algorithmic memes, reels and comments about travel. From articles on how to keep your money safe from pickpockets to video tips on scoring the cheapest airfare to user anecdotes on hidden gems in some of the wildest places on the planet, there's no shortage of adventure-forward content.



For Mikey Rox, the nomad life is an all-or-nothing adventure.



There's an interesting underbelly to this content, however, where keyboard warriors express their first-world privilege of shaming other travelers for traveling like tourists.

It's American-on-American bullying, at its finest, because we're a nation of never-ending micro-aggressions. It be your own people, as somebody once wisely observed.

Recently I ran across a social media post that put down picky eaters traveling to foreign countries. The caption, under a video of Americans in a fast-food

restaurant, asked, "What kind of people travel abroad to eat at McDonald's?"

It's me. I'm that kind of people.

I don't strictly eat at fast-food restaurants when I'm traveling abroad; I support local establishments. But I also have a limited palate and plenty of self-imposed dietary restrictions.

I was in Tokyo, and I don't like fish. There's a lot of fish in Tokyo. So I shopped at the supermarket for food for my mini-fridge; I dined at steakhouses (find the one on my Instagram for a hot tip on the butteriest, most mouth-wa-



teringist Wagyu you'll ever put between your lips), and, if I was out pounding the urban pavement all day, I popped into McDonald's for lunch.

In my own defense, I don't eat McDonald's at home often.

That says nothing about the quality of the food, but rather that I'm still traumatized by pandemic fast-food prac-

tices where I had to order through an app but couldn't pick it up because my van, a Ram ProMaster 2500, wouldn't fit through the drive-thru.

I feel differently about foreign McDonald's, specifically.

I love the instant familiarity in a place where everything that surrounds me is new. I love looking at interesting menu items that we don't have at home. And I love ordering a McChicken when I want protein without emptying my pockets.

For some reason, that offends people. And that idea interests me.

The idea that someone is privileged enough to travel the globe, experience the wonders of distant worlds, participate in unique cultures and customs — and they're annoyed that not everybody wants to eat tiger balls and monkey paws?

That sentiment speaks to a broader offense, I think: We've largely forgotten why we're traveling.

A high-school buddy asked me on Facebook, after a new series of travel photos I posted, why I didn't start a YouTube page dedicated to van life when I started it five years ago. He suggested that it probably wasn't too late, as if I'd miss an opportunity if I didn't seize it.

But it was never about missing that proverbial boat; I consciously chose not to get on it.

When I started planning my van-life adventure in 2018, I had a successful media career in Manhattan and all the material things that came with it. But I was burnt out, and I needed a change.

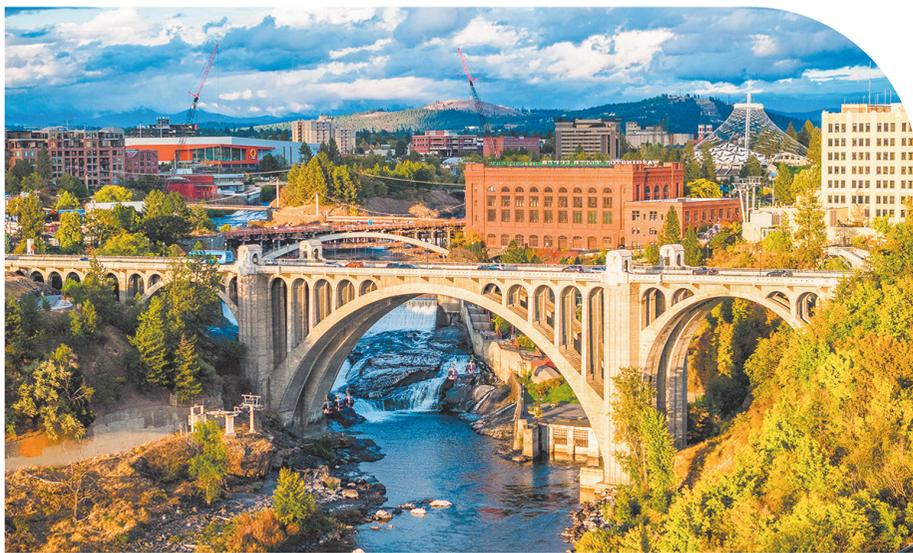
So I sold my real estate, bought the Ram and hit the road. I only intended to explore the country for a year before settling back down. But that's somehow morphed into a half-decade in the wild. And I have another couple years planned.

From the onset, I decided this experience was all or nothing, and a detractor from that would be to turn this into a content-fest. I have an Instagram, and I enjoy updating it. But it's more about showing off dope 'fits and chronicling this adventure for myself, so I have

LIVE, Page 15

The beauty of historic Spokane

TRAVEL



The Monroe Street Bridge spans the Spokane River in the heart of the city, above. Duncan Garden is a classical European Renaissance-style garden in Spokane's Manito Park. (Photos courtesy of Visit Spokane)

You'll find waterfalls and much more in the biggest inland city in the Northwest

BILL MALCOLM | Contributing Writer
BillMalcolm@gmail.com

Spokane is an amazing historic city situated in far eastern Washington that offers plenty of gorgeous natural attractions. With its very walkable downtown, the city combines an urban feel with the best of the outdoors.

The Riverfront Park, for instance, features huge, stunning waterfalls and the new 40-mile Centennial Trail, which starts in Riverside State Park and runs all the way to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

There are towering ponderosa pines that give the city a feel more of the Rocky Mountains than the Cascades. And the basalt-lined Spokane River features a lengthy bike and hike trail.

What to do

Make your first stop Riverfront Park downtown. The 1909 Loeff Carrousel in Riverfront Park is nice, as is a Sky Ride gondola ride over roaring Spokane Falls. The huge waterfalls plunge along basalt-lined banks and converge

as three rivers in a spectacular finish.

I've never seen anything like it, much less in a city downtown. It's what makes Spokane unique.

Dinner at Sarnac Public House is great. Try the blackened salmon sandwich. Across the street you can grab a salad to go at the salad bar at the Market, 44 West Main. It's a health foods grocery store with a broad selection of local beer and wine.

The Steam Plant Restaurant and Brew Pub at 1159 South Lincoln is also good. The restaurant is in an old steam plant built in 1916 that has been carefully repurposed. The salmon was excellent and served with a spicy sauce.

Visit Spokane's oldest neighborhood, Browne's Addition. It is accessible on the new Spokane City Line rapid express bus which runs every 10 minutes and makes limited stops.

The Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture is a must. Check out the new exhibits on fire in the Northwest and the West, *Fire: Rebirth and Resilience*. Check out the evolution of the Japanese Sword Exhibit along with *Samurai Sunrise*.

Also on now is *Andrea Joyce Heimer: No Name That I Know Of*. Heimer was a Washington-based artist who "reconstructs tangled memories of her upbringing in rural Montana." Check out all the current exhibits at NorthwestMuseum.org.

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35 years of Olivia

TRAVEL

Iconic Olivia Travel marks a major milestone with a special cruise

JENNY BLOCK | Contributing Writer
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Olivia Travel just celebrated a major anniversary: 35 years spent curating all kinds of trips, including cruise and resort takeovers and adventures to far-flung locations. That's what they do.

But what they ARE is a curator of a way of life, one that is founded in kindness, acceptance, happiness and, of course, fun.

My first trip with Olivia was 15 years ago. I went as a media guest, and I just remember being completely enthralled the minute I boarded. It was just like summer camp — all these new friends and activities and shows. There was even a "camp song." Everyone was so nice and so welcoming.

There was no one "cool kids' table," either. Every table was the cool kids' table. And no matter where you were on the ship, there was always room for one more. Everyone was just so happy to be there, so happy to be living out loud, so thrilled to be living — as Judy Dlugacz, a founder of Olivia, always says — "Life as it should be."

I've been on a number of Olivia cruises and resort trips since then. I've even had the honor of speaking and performing and emceeding on a few. And every time feels like coming home. Every time feels like a family reunion — the fun kind.

Every time feels like a dream from which I never want to wake up — a dream where there are no cliques, no judgment, no jealousy, no haves and have nots. Just plenty of everything for everyone in an environment of joy and respect.

Olivia Records, the company from



which Olivia Travel stemmed, celebrated 50 years in 2023. Olivia Travel celebrated 35 years of traveling the world with their 2025 Coral Jubilee Caribbean Cruise: 35 Years of Olivia Travel aboard Holland America's Nieuw Statendam.

I don't use this word lightly when I say it was epic.

The ship has a capacity of 2600 and was completely sold out. Of those guests, 40 percent were new to Olivia and at least 20 percent were single.

I was invited to talk about my books and to host a spoken word open mic night and host In Bed with Jenny Block, where I talk about sex and host a Q&A from — you guessed it, bed — All of those were amazing.

But nothing compared to how amazing the trip was when it came to creating community. There was a ton of entertainment — from musicians like Roxanna Ward, Cris Williamson, Lisa Koch and Sarah Potenza to comedians like Dana Goldberg, Gina Yashere, Vicki Shaw, and Karen Williams to DJs like DJ Luna Rosa, DJ Rockaway, DJ Mary Mac, and DJ Dawn Michaels.

The entertainment was top-notch, as always. But I think it was the programming that really made this cruise. First, there was the stellar cruise director Tisha

Floratos-Silano, who is also the company's vice president. She set the tone of togetherness and fun for the week right from the start and kept that going all week long.

And then there's the new program manager, Ashe Brown, whipping up a new kind of magic just when I didn't think Olivia could get anymore magical. She created all kinds of amazing programming that really created the summer camp vibe complete with the kind of friendships that make you wish you could take all of your new BFFs home with you — Prom Night, Under the Sea Night, White Night, Hometown Day, Pajama Night, Rainbow Pride Day, and so many activities and gatherings and moments throughout the cruise that you couldn't possibly do them all. Brown is officially the fairy godmother of making all things sparkly even sparklier.

Because of the magic of Olivia and the women behind Olivia, more than 2,500 Olivians came together and became a family of sorts. We dressed up and showed up. We participated and played. We laughed and danced and sang. We forgot, for that one week, that the world can be petty and hateful and unkind and lived out loud leading with joy and kindness and respect for others.



And we had fun. We breathed. We let go of the rest of the world if only for a short time. And I like to think that, like a voodoo doll, we put a thorn in the side of every single person who wants to take away our rights or cancel us or disappear us or otherwise hurt us.

Sorry bad guys — too much love here for your hate to cancel.

It was an amazing week. But more than that, it was proof that we can live together in harmony. Yes, all of us on the cruise were lesbians and LGBTQ women. That is what makes us the same. But the list of things that make us different is significantly longer: age, race, jobs, upbringing, religion, class, education, you name it.

But here's the thing: None of that mattered. Because those things don't matter, not when it comes to who should be treated with love and kindness and respect. Because that's an easy answer: Everyone.

The best part of Olivia is not the incredible entertainment. It's not the amazing programming. It's not even the gorgeous ships or resorts or the awe-inspiring destinations. The best part of Olivia is what it proves: We can all live and love together, all we have to do is choose to. ■



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Drag and dance

BEHIND THE CURTAINS

Trockadero dancer helps to keep the company's longtime legacy on pointe

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
Rich@DallasVoice.com

Last year, the famed dance company, Les Ballet Trockadero de Monte Carlo — perhaps more commonly known as The Trocks — celebrated 50 years of its signature all-male, ballet spoof in drag. Part satire, part slapstick and all top-notch skill, the company has grown beyond its niche into an internationally respected and revered troupe.

For newer dancers like Trent Montgomery (he/him), that legacy isn't lost.

"They have such a great legacy, and to be a queer-based company for that long is a big thing," Montgomery said.

That tenure says a lot to Montgomery these days. As the government works to chip away at LGBTQ rights and visibility, The Trocks push through with its out loud display of men in drag, serving up pirouettes and arabesques in fine form.

"Right now, it is so important, and not just for queer people, but for everyone to see this type of work," Montgomery said.

"I'm a queer kid from a small town in Arkansas, and I wasn't around a lot of queer entertainment," he continued. "But our shows engage the audience, and we give a joyful space to people who may not even understand ballet or drag. Then we just leave the rest for the audience to decide and enjoy."

As part of its 50th anniversary tour, the company heads to Dallas this weekend as part of TITAS/Dance Unbound's current season. The company performs Friday and Saturday, May 2-3, at Moody Performance Hall.

T/DU Executive Director Charles Santos says of The Trocks, "They're



Les Ballet Trockadero de Monte Carlo on stage, above, and Trent Montgomery as Ludmilla Beulemova, right (Photos courtesy of Les Ballet Trockadero)

fantastic because they are all superior dancers who don't take themselves seriously," Santos said in a promotional video.

"They are spoofing the classics," Santos said. "What's interesting is, you're watching this comedy, and then you go, 'Oh my god, they are such good dancers.' On top of it they're being funny."

Montgomery first auditioned for The Trocks in February 2020 while in grad school. They had no contracts open then but told him to keep in touch. COVID slowed things up a bit, but a year later, he was asked to join, and his first tour was in January 2022.

Montgomery plays two roles within the company — literally. "Ludmila Beulemova" and "Jens Witzelsucht" are his onstage personas.

"These characters are handed down, and the names are recycled. But I definitely make them my own," he said. "When I put on that makeup — especially for Ludmila — I become that

character."

Prior to The Trocks, Montgomery wasn't about drag outside of the occasional Halloween night out. Being with the company hasn't changed his mind as much as it has expanded it. He may not be a full-on drag queen, but he now realizes drag is something special.

"Oh, it's very liberating, and when I'm putting on the wig — I mean, this is my mother! I see her!" he said. "But

then, in my early ballet years, I was learning both male and female roles, and I always wanted to do pointe work. So to bring that all together and get on stage is so freeing to me."

Being able to do that pointe work Montgomery practiced for so long is clearly rewarding and the thing he always wanted in his dance career. But he has another favorite part of being a Trock: "It's the people, the dancers. For me, it's the relationship I build with this team. In a traditional company, you do a show then go home, but we're touring all the time, and it's this close and safe queer space. That's amazing."

For tickets, visit [TITAS.org](https://www.titas.org).





something to look back on fondly when I'm old.

Thus, no YouTube content then, no YouTube content now.

Regardless of my willingness to do it, that space didn't need another voice pretending that this lifestyle is a dream. It's a lot of things — a lot of things for which I'm grateful — but easy it isn't. And I've deduced that much of the rose-colored, self-edited, social-media nomad content is glorified BS.

Permit me to explain something else: Before van life, I was feral. I spent four years snorting coke inside a Virginia fraternity house before moving to downtown Baltimore to steal alcohol from neighborhood bars before running the streets of New York City for 10 years, where, in my neighborhood of Harlem, the residents affectionately called me White Mike.

The point of that is that I've lived, in my own little way but, admittedly, not always in the best or even healthiest way.

It's only dawned on me recently that I enjoy living. I was sick and sad for so

long, inundated from all sides all the time, that I completely forgot who I am and what I'm here for.

That's not to sound grandiose, either. Quite the opposite. It's just to say that I think I finally get what they mean by "We're here for a good time, not for a long time."

Those things I thought were most important in the past — the material ones — have become the least important part of my life. The anger that's had a stronghold on my heart since I can remember has loosened its grip.

My creativity is returning, and I'm starting to forgive people for however I think they've wronged me. But, more importantly, I'm starting to forgive myself for how I've wronged them.

That forgiveness hasn't come without apologies, either. In a move that surprises even myself, I've reached out to individuals to formally apologize for my past behavior, and I plan to continue that.

These years of solo travel have afforded that growth, and a full-time, nomadic life on the road also has changed my per-



spective on travel.

I don't travel to show off or to pretend that I'm cultured — although I have been guilty of that in the past. Instead, now that I'm comfortable with who I am, I travel to see stunning sights with my own eyes, meet interesting people and elevate my understanding of the world and my place in it.

That's the experience that appeals to me, and that's what I want out of this life experience as well. Furthermore, those epiphanies have only come from dedicating myself to a purposeful life of open-minded exploration without worrying about what other people are doing with theirs.

People make a big deal because some travelers only want to hit tourist traps or

grab a Big Mac at McDonald's on their vacations. So what? That's what they've deemed the best experience for them, so who should argue?

Living — and letting people live in whatever way brings them joy and peace and happiness — is all any of us should strive for in these United States that are consistently divided among people who are increasingly negative and dissatisfied, especially online (both the cause and the effect) and in a world that often seems hopeless.

Travel, for whatever reason we're doing it, helps us forget about those soul-crushing constants, however briefly, and in best-case scenarios, sometimes restores our faith in ourselves and each other.

At the end of the day, I'd like fries with that. ■

Mikey Rox is an award-winning freelance journalist whose passion for travel has taken him to all 50 states, 17 countries, and a couple drive-thrus he couldn't get into. Follow his continuing adventures on Instagram @mikeyroxtravels.

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ON THE STAGE

Undermain's new show, 'H*llo K*tty Syndrome,' bends every genre while giving big queer energy

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
Rich@DallasVoice.com

Playwright Brian Dang is bringing more than a show to Undermain Theatre's stage this weekend. *H*llo Kitty Syndrome* sounds more like a theatrical tornado that's about to sweep everyone into a frenzy in this professional premiere.

Swirling with noir, romance, music, poetry and seemingly any and all other stage elements that can be wedged into the show, Dang and director Garret Storms are intent on challenging the audience that centers on fans of a popular character.

The title character, HK, loses their job as a police officer, breaks up with their cowboy partner and has a beef with their brother-in-law. HK is flailing amid family drama.

But why is nobody talking about HK's outfit, which is a Hello Kitty mascot costume?

Not even Dang or Storms can answer. Or maybe they just prefer not to.

The show opened Thursday, May 1, and runs through May 25. Although



Noir, romance, music, poetry and more come together in the theatrical tornado that is Undermain Theatre's *H*llo K*tty Syndrome* (Photos courtesy of Undermain Theatre)

*H*llo K*tty Syndrome* features an approximation of a children's character, it is definitely not intended for children under 13 years old.

Ahead of the opening, Dang and Storms discussed the show's beginnings and where it just might land for audiences.

The inception of mayhem

Dang: The show came from this interview on NPR where a reporter stated that Sanrio, the creator of *Hello Kitty*, corrected the public record that it was not a cat, but a little girl. That was already enough for a show, but then the reporter was so adamant about her view of the character.

Part of me was angry, and part of me was intrigued and curious. We have a lot of feelings about her, and I began excavating the way she was perceived to set the play.

MEOWDY, Page 18

H*llo K*tty Syndrome

Written by: Brian Dang
Directed by: Garret Storms
Cast: Jess Anoruigwe, Ryan Michael Friedman, Marianne Galloway, Parker Gray, Captain Milbourn
Costume Design: Aaron Patrick DeClark
Sound Design: Claudia Jenkins Martinez
Music Director: Paul Semrad
Lighting Design: Luke Atkison
Scenic Design: Leah Mazur
Properties Design: Rayven Harris
Stage Manager: Julissa Hernandez
Assistant Stage Manager: Joseph Martinez





nYne Bar and Bistro serves pub food and has events such as drag shows and more. (Photo by Bill Malcolm)

Next door is the historic Campbell House which is included with the museum admission.

Built in 1898, it was designed by architect Kirtland Cutter. After your visit, walk around to check out the historic homes in this historic neighborhood.

You can enjoy Best of Broadway Productions like *Hamilton* at the First Interstate Center for the Arts, which is across the street from the Grand Hotel along the Riverfront Park.

Where to stay

I stayed at the Davenport Grand Hotel, one of the many Davenport brand hotels, which overlooks Riverfront Park. I had a room with a magnificent view of the river and points north. Everything was perfect including the lobby bar.

However, the amenity fee of \$20 per night (which was subject to tax) and an unknown TPA fee of \$5 per night (a city tourism fee) were both annoying.

The Ruby River Hotel is another option. There is also a Doubletree right along the Riverfront Park.

Nightlife

The nYne Bar, situated in an historic building at 232 W. Sprague, is fun. It has a display on the history of LGBTQ activity in Spokane. Friday nights feature a great drag show, and the food is good — especially the burgers. It's a fun, local crowd.

The new Q Lounge next door is really fun. Local women own both. The Blind Buck/Globe Night Club at 204 N. Division is another great option.

All these bars are close by in the downtown area and walkable from the down-

town hotels.

Getting there

I took Delta through its Salt Lake City hub. Delta offers great service, free WiFi and a great new terminal in SLC. From Seattle, you can take Alaska or Delta. It is a drive of just over four hours, and there is even an Amtrak option although the return hours from Spokane are bad (3 a.m.).

I took the #60 Spokane Transit bus for \$2 from the airport to downtown. The line runs every 30 minutes and takes 20 minutes.

Insider tips/More information

Try the local microbrews and Washington State wines.

Salmon is on the menu everywhere in the Northwest, and Spokane is no exception.

You can find SGN in the bars along with a weekly alternative paper called *The Inlander* that is full of fresh local news. It is in print and online at inlander.com.

The *Spokesman Review* just went to a nonprofit business model but covers the local news.

VisitSpokane.com is your source for traveler information.

I really enjoyed my trip to Spokane and plan to return to explore nearby Coeur d'Alene and other attractions. ■

Bill Malcolm is North America's only syndicated LGBTQ travel columnist who focuses on value travel and local experiences. He is based in Indianapolis.

Find more photos of Spokane online at DallasVoice.com.

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But then it also started to morph away from that.

Morphed into a whole mix of theater genres

Storms: Yeah, I mean, we're still figuring it out. What you'll see is a group of great actors and a story that interrogates the ideas of theater and asks us what we want to see. And also, hopefully, at the end of the day it is also wildly entertaining.

There's the *Alice in Wonderland* trope, where everything is weird, and we just go with it. This story is like that, but it defies your definitions of what it is or wants to be. Yes, there's a lot of genre work in it, and then it breaks down into something else so it's a shifty little play — shifty in a way that causes you to lean into it.

Dang: What you'll see is a family drama, a noir, a romance with a quartet, an open mic, a dance, a confession. You'll see poetry, and, so, when Garret says it's

a shifty play that's true. It's a suspicious play, because when I first started, I did not know exactly where it would end up.

Queer 'K*tty'?

Dang: Ultimately, its approach to theater is informed by a queerness. I would also say it is explicitly quite queer in the content, and HK has a framing of being nonbinary and trans, but also, it's a little opaque on purpose.

Storms: Brian's exactly right. The structure of this play is queer, and it sort of uses that to its advantage. This show inverts that expectation in some ways. I think we could spend so much time unpacking that, but I feel it parallels many people's queer journeys.

Dang: We've put what we think of queerness into a syringe and have mainlined it into the bloodstream of this play, and now we're watching it ooze out, like we've put too much, and this body of a play is bleeding out, and we're just watching it, like, die.



This is made by and for queer people, but also it's about how do we move forward together beyond the sort of assign-

ment-based queerness that might be actually quite harmful.

For tickets, visit Undermain.org

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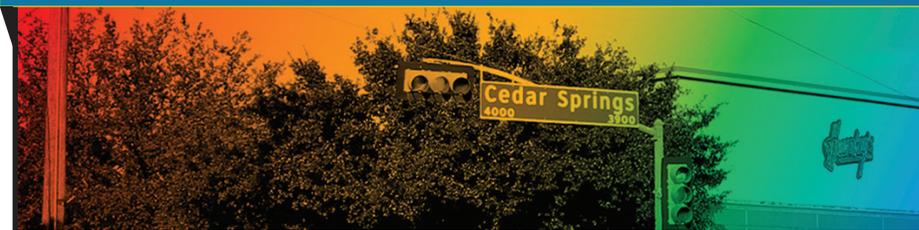
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PLAN YOUR WEEK - The Gay Agenda... Our LGBTQ community calendar!



Veda Von Bergen and Kyle Breaux own the stage in the "Kings and Queens Scene" in *House of DIFFA: Royalty Untamed* in 2024. The 2025 runway event, *House of DIFFA: Dreamstate*, benefitting HIV/AIDS service organizations in North Texas, takes place Saturday, May 3, at Sheraton Dallas. See listings for details. (Photo by Thomas Garza)

■ 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.

May

■ May 2-4: Lone Star Smokeout

Lone Star Smokeout makes its debut this weekend offering three days of country music, world-class barbecue, retail shopping and more at AT&T Stadium on North Collins Street at East Randol Mill Road in Arlington. Headlining performers Jon Pardi, Cody Jinks and Midland lead a lineup of 18 C&W performers. Find more information and purchase tickets online at LoneStarSmokeout.com.

■ May 2: 'RISE' Friday Pool Party

Purple Foundation presents *RISE*, the opening pool party for Purple Party Weekend 2025, from 1-6 p.m. at Dallas Marriott Suites Medical/Market Center, 2493 N. Stemmons Freeway. Music by DJ Tyler Moore with an opening set by DJ Josh Sanders. Find event information and tickets as well as a complete Purple Party schedule at PurpleFoundation.org.

■ May 2-5, May 8-11: 'A Dallas Hedda'

Bishop Arts Theatre Center, 215 S. Tyler St., presents *A Dallas Hedda*, playwright-in-residence Franky D. Gonzalez's re-imagining of Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*. Starts at 8 p.m. Visit BishopArtsTheatre.org for tickets and information.

■ May 3: Pickle & Tacos

UKirk SMU hosts a pickleball tournament at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church, 9800 Preston Road, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Cost is \$50 per person. Register at Ukirksmu.org/register.

■ May 3: Human Rights Alliance — Santa Fe

After 32 years, the first permanent LGBTQ+ Center for Santa Fe's queer community holds its grand open house from 1-4 p.m. at 1189 Parkway Drive, Suite E2, Santa Fe, NM. HRA Executive Director Kevin Bowen, HRA President Tim Struck and the HRA Board of Directors will host.

■ May 3: 'SHINE' Saturday Pool Party

Purple Foundation presents *SHINE*, the main Saturday pool party of Purple Party Weekend 2025, at 1 p.m. at Dallas Marriott Suites Medical/Market Center, 2493 N. Stemmons Freeway. Music by Purple All-Star DJ Dan Slater and DJ Tristan Traxx from Dallas Eagle and S4. Find event information and tickets as well as a complete Purple Party schedule at PurpleFoundation.org.

■ May 3: 'AFTERBURN'

Purple Foundation presents *AFTERBURN*, the first of three afterhours events taking place as part of Purple Party Weekend 2025, at 2 a.m. at Dallas Marriott Suites Medical/Market Center, 2493 N. Stemmons Freeway. Music by DJ Geovanni Pacheco of Houston and DJ Rue D of San Antonio. Find event information and tickets as well as a complete Purple Party schedule at PurpleFoundation.org.

■ Through May 3: Les Ballet Trockadero De Monte Carlo

TITAS welcomes *Les Ballet Trockadero de Monte*

Carlo to Moody Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St., 8-10 p.m. Visit ATTPac.org for tickets and information.

■ May 3: 'House of DIFFA: Dreamstate'

DIFFA Dallas presents *House of DIFFA: Dreamstate*, from 6-11 p.m. at Sheraton Dallas Hotel, 400 N. Olive St. Tickets start at \$500. Visit the Facebook event page for details.

■ May 3: TAG Monthly Co-Ed Dinner

Tyler Area Gays hosts its monthly Co-Ed Dinner at 6:30 p.m. at Clear Springs, 6519 Broadway in Tyler. Visit TylerAreaGays.com for information.

■ Through May 4: 'Xanadu'

Uptown Players presents *Xanadu* at Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Visit UptownPlayers.org for tickets and showtimes.

■ Through May 4: Savor Lifestyle Festival

Omni PGA Frisco Resort & Spa hosts its food and lifestyle festival at 4341 PGA Parkway, Frisco. Visit SavorOmniPGAFrisco.com for tickets and information.

■ May 4: 'REVIVAL' Sunday Pool Party

Purple Foundation presents *REVIVAL*, the grand finale pool party of Purple Party Weekend 2025, from 1-6 p.m. at Dallas Marriott Suites Medical/Market Center, 2493 N. Stemmons Freeway. Music by DJ Deanne and DJ Philip Webb. Find event information and tickets as well as a complete Purple Party schedule at PurpleFoundation.org.

■ May 4: 'GLOW' Closing Tea Dance

Purple Foundation presents *GLOW*, the closing tea dance of Purple Party Weekend 2025, from 6-11 p.m. at Dallas Marriott Suites Medical/Market Center 2493 N. Stemmons Freeway. Music by Purple All-Star DJ Drew G., DJ Mohammad and superstar DJ Anne Louise. Find event information and tickets as well as a complete Purple Party schedule at PurpleFoundation.org.

■ May 3: 'AFTERMATH' Final Afterhouse Party

Purple Foundation presents *AFTERMATH*, the closing

afterhours party of Purple Party Weekend 2025, from 2-5 a.m. at Dallas Marriott Suites Medical/Market Center, 2493 N. Stemmons Freeway. Music by DJ Cesar Hernandez and DJ Eric Ibiza. Find event information and tickets as well as a complete Purple Party schedule at PurpleFoundation.org.

■ May 6: 'Outspoken Voices: Virtual LGBTQ+ Storytelling Circle'

Family Equality hosts *Outspoken Voices*, a virtual LGBTQ+ storytelling circle, from 6-7 p.m. The theme is "Commitment." Register at FamilyEquality.org under the "Get Connected" drop-down menu at "Attend An Event" to receive the Zoom sign-in information.

■ May 6: Prime Timers of DFW Lunch

Prime Timers of Dallas/Fort Worth host lunch at Flaming Buffet, 11722 Marsh Lane, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Visit Chapters. ThePrimeTimerswww.com/dallasfortworth for more information.

Have an event coming up? Email your information to [Mathew Dominguez at Mathew@dallasvoice.com](mailto:Mathew.Dominguez@dallasvoice.com) by Monday at 5 p.m. for that week's issue.

Look for extended listings online at DallasVoice.com



Superstar DJ Anne Louise headlines *GLOW*, the closing tea dance of Purple Party Weekend 2025, on Sunday at Dallas Marriott Suites Market Center. Purple Party weekend starts Friday, May 2, with the *RISE* pool party and continues through the weekend to end in the wee hours of Monday morning, May 5, with *AFTERMATH*. Find all the details and purchase tickets at PurpleFoundation.org.

Jenny Block

GIRL ON GIRLS - THE TRAVEL EDITION

Jenny and Emily's Big Adventure

When I got married, I hit the jackpot when it came to second families. I love my new family, (and, despite them being from the Midwest and liking cheese more than I could ever possibly understand) and me from the East Coast (and knowing that pizza should always be triangular and foldable), we get along better than I could have ever imagined or dared hope for.

That is especially true when it comes to my cousin Emily. She's not actually my cousin. She's my cousin by marriage — is that a thing? Her mother is the daughter of my father-in-law's sister. So ... I'll let you do the math.

Anyway, we got along famously from the moment we met, despite our 17-year age difference. She's super smart and hilarious. And she's as free a spirit as they come. She's game for any of the shenanigans I come up with, including traveling with me whether it's a cruise to the Caribbean or a Texas road trip.

Our most recent trip was the latter. Her son was off to Mexico with friends for Spring Break, so she asked if I might have any adventures in my back pocket. And, of course, I did.

Here's the thing about traveling with Emily and what makes her literally the perfect traveling companion. She is truly cool with whatever. She doesn't just say she is and then sigh when she sees the menu or the hotel or the day's activity. She is literally wide open to whatever the day might bring and finds joy in every moment, every interaction, every activity.

So when I suggested we head to Austin to check out the famous Driskill Hotel and eat our way through the city then head to Camp Lucy in Dripping Springs, she was more than happy to oblige. I ordered us the obligatory matching crewneck sweatshirts and tees, and we hit the road.

The Driskill is a super cool old hotel. Our room was charming, and the hotel itself is gorgeous. Now, rumor has it its haunted but only by friendly ghosts. Don't worry. And, I will admit, we did DIY a Ouiji board, which we used to great success.

Or maybe that was the cocktails. Either way, it made for a very fun evening,



Checking out the Driskill

We did literally eat our way through Austin, starting with brunch at Cafe No Se, a chic little coffee shop with the best beverages and bites and a totally inviting space.

Then, after spending some time exploring the incredible ballrooms and shelves of books and massive mirrors at the Driskill, we went to Social Hour at Lutie's — DO NOT MISS social hour at Lutie's. From the simple entrance to the hundreds of plants hanging from the ceiling to the decadent and inventive menu, I cannot stop thinking about this place.

We had fritto misto, snapper crudo, roasted carrots, crispy chicken wings, Yonderway Pork and pistachio matcha soft serve, and the not-to-be-missed-under-ANY-circumstances Sourdough English muffins. I would drive to Austin just for those.

Although we could have happily stayed there all evening, off to our reservation at The Kitchen we went. And we were glad we did. They have an impressive menu already, but they even made Emily a custom menu for her birthday, complete with images of her favorite things all printed up in her favorite colors.

The food was delicious. But it was the staff and the vibe that made for such a nice evening.

The next day we enjoyed lunch at Uptown Sports Club with its super-groovy

old-school bustling vibe, high wooden booths, lunch counter service and a charming staff wearing "Gumbo Weather" sweatshirts.

The tuna crudo was out of this world. And — I am saying this as someone who is not a major gumbo gal — their chicken and sausage gumbo is perfection. Plus, their spiced chai is definitely worth writing home about.

That night we had dinner at Aba, and I think we ordered almost everything on the menu — mostly sharable, small plates, my favorite way to dine. We had hummus, kabobs, Brussels sprouts, crab cakes, chicken thighs, orzo — it was enough to feed an army and SO delicious.

The next morning, we ended our Austin feasting with brunch at Serenade on the ground floor of the W Austin. It is so incredibly chic, from the entrance to the décor to the plating of their fabulous food, including their house-made gougères, roasted rainbow beet salad and buttermilk pancakes with cinnamon apples, candied pecan butter and caramel.

Then it was off to Camp Lucy. The only bummer is that it was cold — like, really cold. Like, freezing cold. Like can-barely-walk-from-the-car-to-the-restaurant cold. Luckily our room was fantabulous, thoughtfully appointed with anything one could need, including pour over Vietnamese coffee! And the décor is un-

real. It's like stepping into an art museum where you're allowed to sit on the furniture.

We got to say hello to the adorable llamas. (We'll have to go back in order to have our planned hike with them.) Emily did yoga, which she loved. And we got to briefly visit the chickens, who graciously gave us the prettiest colored eggs.

All of the other activities — things like archery and fly fishing, which I cannot wait to do — will have to wait for a fair-weather visit.

We were just happy to be tucked into this beautiful hideaway, making our visit all about the food. We enjoyed breakfast, lunch and dinner at their onsite restaurant, Tillie's, and the only thing better than the food — everything was delicious — was the service. We also got to enjoy afternoon tea and a bubbles tasting/pairing with chocolate-covered strawberries and charcuterie.

It was heavenly. All of it. And I cannot wait to go back.

When you get married, the second family you get, is well, the second family you get — for better or worse. So I feel terribly lucky and incredibly grateful to have gotten the one I did, especially when it comes to Emily. The only question now is, where shall we go next?

For more photos from Jenny and Emily's Big Adventure, visit DallasVoice.com.

this week's solution

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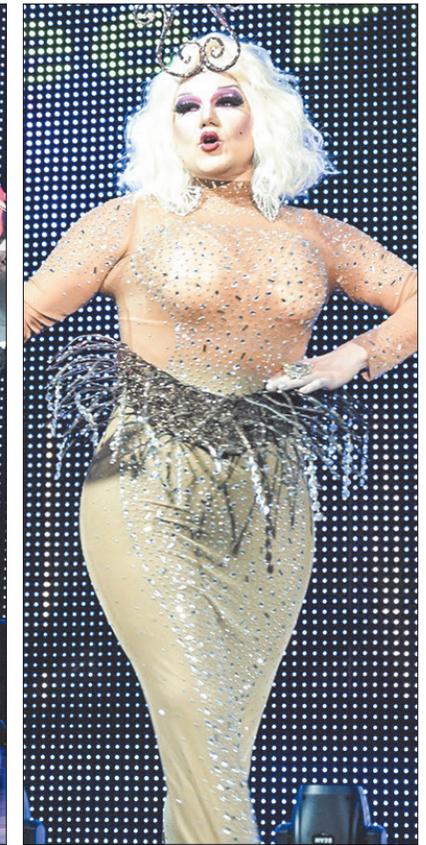
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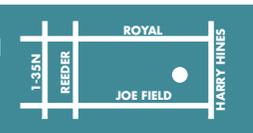
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Solution on Page 20

Across

- 1 Verdon, who portrayed Lola in *Damn Yankees*
- 5 Leather band
- 10 Sally portrayer of *Cabaret*
- 14 Deep pink
- 15 Madrid museum
- 16 *Tearoom Trade* author Humphries
- 17 Jungle warning
- 18 One of the *Maneater* singers
- 19 Lascivious look
- 20 Start of a Chamberlain quote
- 23 Boo-Boo's buddy
- 24 Manly man
- 25 Cross-dresser Joan of ___
- 28 Dick, for short
- 29 Help out
- 30 West of Hollywood
- 33 Experimental place for ocean bottoms
- 35 Shrek's girlfriend
- 37 More of the quote
- 41 Italian wine center
- 42 Streisand nickname, and namesakes
- 43 Look at a hottie in a bar
- 44 "Faboo!"
- 46 Disencumber

Down

- 47 Mother-and-son piece
- 48 Services for metrosexuals
- 51 End of the quote
- 54 Actor Chamberlain (1934-2025)
- 58 What we eat
- 59 Painter of ballerinas
- 61 *Frasier's* response to a client
- 62 Icon letters
- 63 Catch basin cover
- 64 Actress Foch
- 65 Pull a boner
- 66 Ruhr industrial center
- 67 ___ Garcia Bernal of *Cassandra*

- 10 Andrew ___ Webber
- 11 He did Moor good, then harm
- 12 Communications Z
- 13 Fruity drink
- 21 The I's of Socrates
- 22 Play loose with truth
- 25 Lake Nasser dam
- 26 Witherspoon of *Legally Blonde*
- 27 Letter from Lorca
- 30 Knock-down-drag-out
- 31 It's a good thing
- 32 Former NFL player Tualo
- 34 Recurring theme
- 36 Smacking your lips
- 38 Pirates and such
- 39 Will portrayer
- 40 Like stones
- 45 Bonehead
- 47 Chest muscle, for short
- 49 Give a gentle push
- 50 Out of bed
- 51 "Got it" to Ginsberg
- 52 Chinese prefix
- 53 Peter by the piano
- 55 Samurai's continent
- 56 Artist Capone
- 57 Hand out some queens, maybe
- 60 *Jumpin' Jack Flash*, to Mick Jagger

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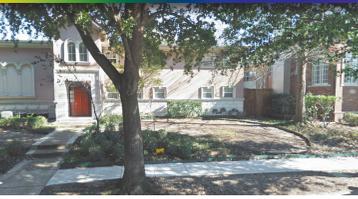
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