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The Travel Issue

Nobody does Dia de los Muertos like San Antonio

By Steven Lindsey, page 10



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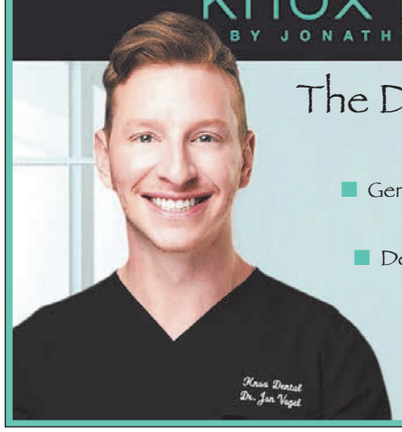
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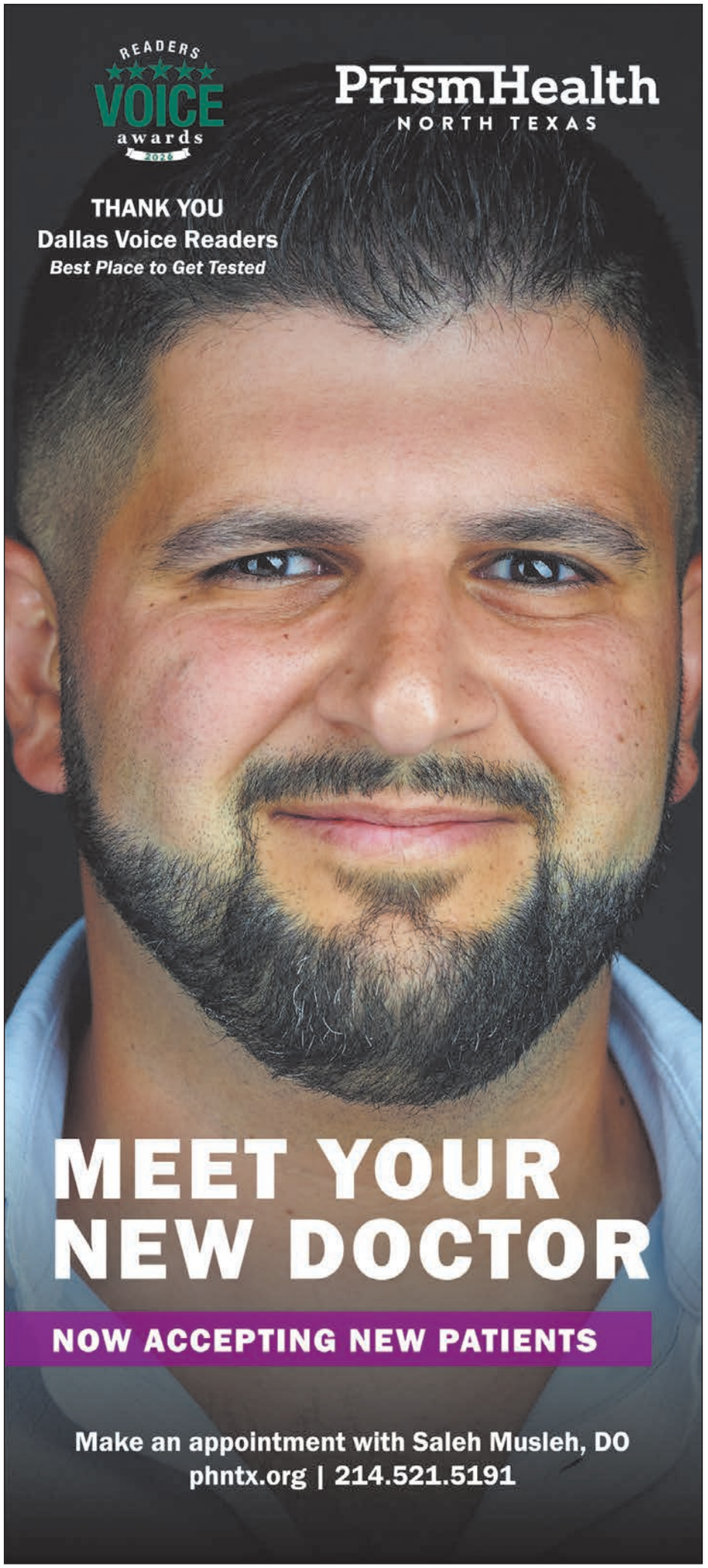


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KNOX DENTAL
BY JONATHAN VOGEL DDS



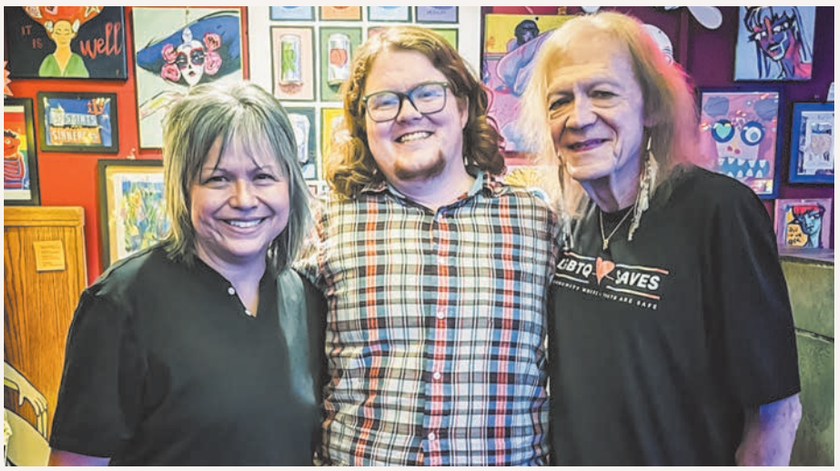
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WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com

Sharon Herrera stepping down as LGBTQ SAVES executive director



LGBTQ SAVES Founder and now-Executive Director Emeritus Sharon Herrera, left, with the organization's new Executive Director Bertie Gardner and Board Chair the Rev. Rhi Jones

Officials with LGBTQ SAVES announced Tuesday, Sept. 1, that "after 15 years of visionary leadership as founder and executive director," Sharon Herrera is transitioning into the role of founder and executive director emeritus, passing leadership of the organization to the current program director, Bertie Gardner.

Herrera said, "We cannot build the future by erasing the people who built the path that brought us here. Our history matters. The people who stood up, organized, created community and made space for LGBTQ+ young people before it was easy or safe to do so deserve to be remembered and honored.

"I am incredibly proud of what we have built," she added, "and I am even more excited to see Bertie carry this work forward."

Gardner, who has "already played an integral role in the organization's work with LGBTQ+ youth and is deeply familiar with its programs, community relationships and mission," according to the press release, said, "Our commitment remains clear: LGBTQ+ young people deserve community, safety, affirmation, opportunity and a place where they can fully be themselves."

Herrera will remain connected to the organization as founder and executive director emeritus, continuing to provide "institutional knowledge, historical perspective, sharing the mission and legacy of the organization and educating the community about the vitality of LGBTQ SAVES, supporting as Gardner assumes executive leadership," according to the press release announcing the transition.

— Tammye Nash

Kimberly Alexander to emcee ASD's Blues & Barbecue

ASD – A Home for Life presents Blues & Barbecue from 5:30-9:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 12, at Gleneagles Country Club in Plano, an event featuring live blues, barbecue, entertainment and opportunities to support the mission of ASD. Main event tickets are $75.

Dallas-based keynote speaker, health advocate and community connector Kimberly



Kimberly Alexander

Alexander, founder of KimCONNECTS, will emcee the event.

Alexander has built a reputation for bringing people, businesses and causes together through her work and community involvement including cancer and health advocacy, philanthropy, media and service within the Dallas community, including involvement with DIFFA/Dallas.

Alexander brings a deeply personal connection to health advocacy. Following her late husband Elijah Alexander's battle with multiple myeloma, she became an advocate for cancer patients, caregivers, and greater awareness of health disparities. She has continued using her voice and relationships to bring attention to causes affecting families and communities.

— David Taffet

State Rep. Venton Jones marries longtime partner



Texas state Rep. Venton Jones married his longtime partner, Gregory D. Scott Jr., on Aug. 29

Texas state Rep. Venton Jones, Texas House Democratic Caucus whip and vice chair of the Texas LGBTQ Caucus, on Saturday, Aug. 29, issued a statement announcing his marriage to Gregory D. Scott Jr.

"With full hearts, immense joy, and deep gratitude, Gregory and I are proud to share that we are officially married. Surrounded by our families, loved ones and community, we have taken this sacred next step to build our lives, our family and our future together," Jones said in that statement.

"From the day I asked Gregory to marry me on the floor of the Texas House of Representatives, our journey has been grounded in the belief that love conquers all, "Jones continued. "In a time when the LGBTQ+ community and our families continue to see our rights and our very existence challenged — often within the halls of government itself — living, loving and celebrating our union openly and unapologetically is an act of resilience.

"Gregory and I stand together as living proof that love wins, progress is unstoppable and no amount of hate can erase the truth of who we are," he said.

Jones is currently serving his second term in the Texas House. He was first elected in 2022 to represent HD 100, the district where he was "born and raised," and which is located "in the heart of Dallas County and includes South Dallas, West Dallas, East Dallas, Victory Park and Oak Cliff," according to a press release including Jones' statement on his wedding.

Jones added that as he and his new husband celebrate this milestone in their lives, "my commitment to the people of House District 100 and to every Texan fighting for dignity, equity, and justice is stronger than ever. We will continue to use our voices and our platform to ensure that every family is protected and that Texas becomes a place where all love is celebrated, not marginalized.

"To our community, our colleagues and our loved ones who have walked beside us: Thank you for your enduring support, prayers and strength," Jones concluded. "We step into this next chapter united, energized, and ready for the work ahead."

— Tammye Nash

2 killed in anti-LGBTQ+ shooting outside Tucson bar

A shooting at a Tucson LGBTQ+ bar left three people dead, including the shooter, and police there said the shooter was carrying a list of several other LGBTQ-related businesses when he died.

According to numerous media reports, shortly after midnight on Monday morning, Aug. 31, Ousman Ceesay, 44, shot Vincent Anthony Siquieros, 42, and Cameron Davis Capara, 33, in the parking lot outside Venture-N, an LGBTQ+ bar near downtown Tucson that, according to Gayety.com, has been "a beloved fixture in Tucson's queer nightlife scene since the 1980s."

Tucson police have confirmed that there was no prior connection between Ceesay and the two men he killed and that the shooting was, indeed, an anti-LGBTQ+ hate crime.

Police have also confirmed that Ceesay shot himself to death after killing Vincent Anthony Siquieros and Cameron Davis Capara and that, while searching Ceesay's home Monday afternoon, they found a note indicating the shooting was "a targeted attack motivated by hate toward the LGBTQIA+ community" and that he acted alone.

According to The Tucson Sentinel, "Tucson officers also spoke to the owners of other businesses on Ceesay's list and are now working with 'supporting community organizations' to provide them with support."

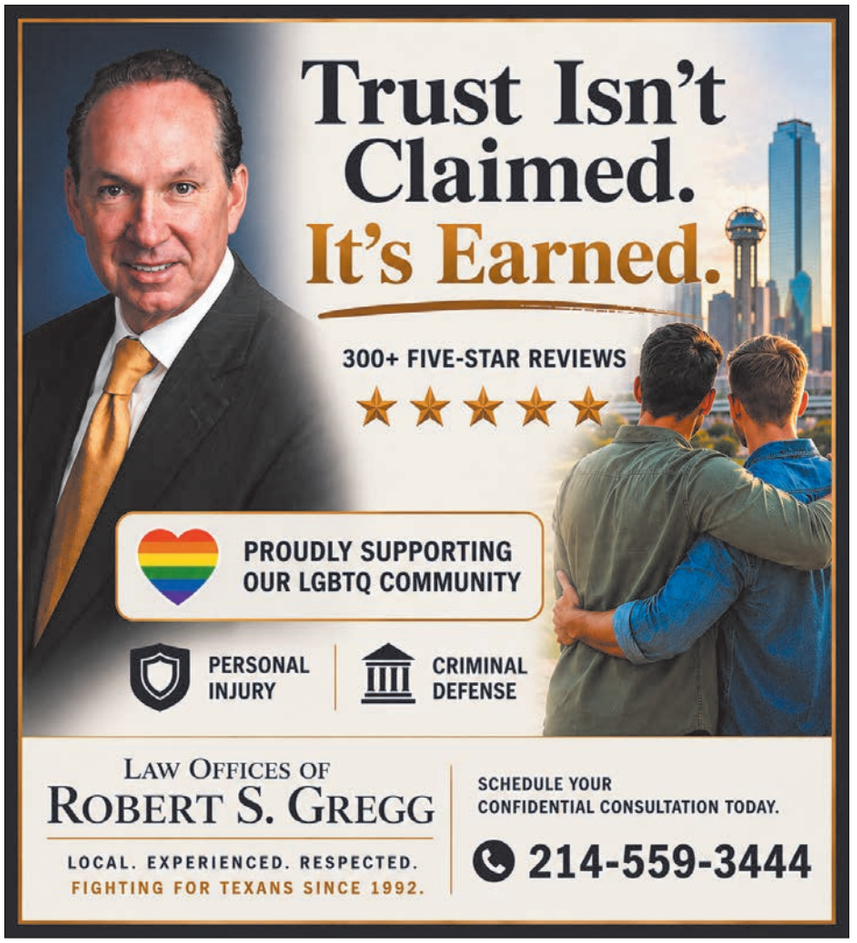
— Tammye Nash

■ Adoptable / SAIGE



Meet **Saige**, a 2-year-old grey tabby with soft eyes, a sweet spirit and a heart that simply needs a little time to bloom. At 8 pounds, she's a petite girl with a wonderful appreciation for the peaceful things in life. Saige can be a little shy when she first meets someone, but once she decides you're her person, she will let you know she trusts you.

Saige is looking for someone who will appreciate her gentle nature and give her the time she needs to feel safe and comfortable. And as an SPCA of Texas Longtime Lovable — a pet who has been in the shelter more than 60 days — Saige's adoption fee is free. Come meet her any day of the week from noon-6 p.m. at the Jan Rees-Jones Animal Care Center, 2400 Lone Star Drive. Saige has been spayed and microchipped and is up to date on her vaccines.





Democracy depends on us

VOICES: OPINIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Why we must protest the Republican Convention in Dallas



Robert Emery
Contributing Columnist

Dallas is about to become the center of the American political universe. When Republicans gather in Dallas for their national convention, they will come here to demonstrate their political strength, rally their supporters and present their vision for America's future.

And we have every right — and every responsibility — to answer them.

We must protest the Republican Convention in Dallas because democracy depends upon citizens being willing to stand up, speak out and make their voices heard.

Voting is essential. But between elections, democracy requires citizens to organize, petition, demonstrate, write, march, speak and demand accountability. When a major political party comes to our city to showcase its power, the absence of opposition can create the illusion of unanimous support.

We must not allow that illusion to take hold.

A peaceful demonstration sends a simple message: We are here. We are watching. We are engaged. And we intend to vote.

Peaceful protest is democracy in action. The First Amendment protection belongs to every Texan who believes the government should be accountable to the people. We should exercise that right proudly and peacefully.



Texas is often portrayed as monolithic — a state where conservative politics are inevitable and dissent is somehow an intrusion. That is not true. Texas is enormous, complicated and changing!

Millions of Texans hold political beliefs different from those of the Republican establishment. Millions of Texans are LGBTQ+. Millions are immigrants or members of immigrant families. Millions are women concerned about reproductive freedom. Millions are young people worried about their future.

Millions simply believe that government should protect individual liberty rather than dictate how people live their lives.

Dallas has a proud history of communities organizing when they have been ignored. The LGBTQ+ community understands this particularly well.

There was a time when LGBTQ+ people in Dallas were expected to remain invisible. There was a time when coming out could cost someone their job, their home, their family or even their life. Our visibility changed that.

People stood together, marched, protested, told their stories, demanded recognition and, eventually, the impossible began to look inevitable.

The Stonewall Uprisings taught us: Progress begins when enough people refuse to remain silent.

Let the television cameras see us. Let the delegates see us. Let the politicians see us. Let our neighbors see us. Let young LGBTQ+ people see us. Let every Texan who has ever wondered whether anyone else shares their concerns see us.

Thousands of ordinary people standing peacefully together can send a message that no press release can match. We are citizens. We are voters. We are neighbors. We are Texans. We are Americans.

The Dallas Against the Trump Agenda Coalition is sponsoring a march Thursday, Sept. 10, beginning at 1 p.m. at Pike Park, 2807 Harry Hines Blvd. Our protest will be disciplined and joyful. We will march with peace. We will speak with love. We will carry signs that communicate ideas and solutions. We will bring our friends, our families, our pets and our communities.

We will sing. We will laugh. We will tell our stories. We will register voters. We will remind one another that political participation is not something to be embarrassed about. It is something to be proud of! Democracy thrives when ordinary people decide that their participation matters.

So come to Pike Park. Let's make sure the world hears another message alongside the speeches, the banners and the applause inside the convention hall.

Democracy belongs to the people. And if we want to keep it, we have to show up for it. See you in Pike Park. ■

Robert Emery is a longtime community activist and organizer.

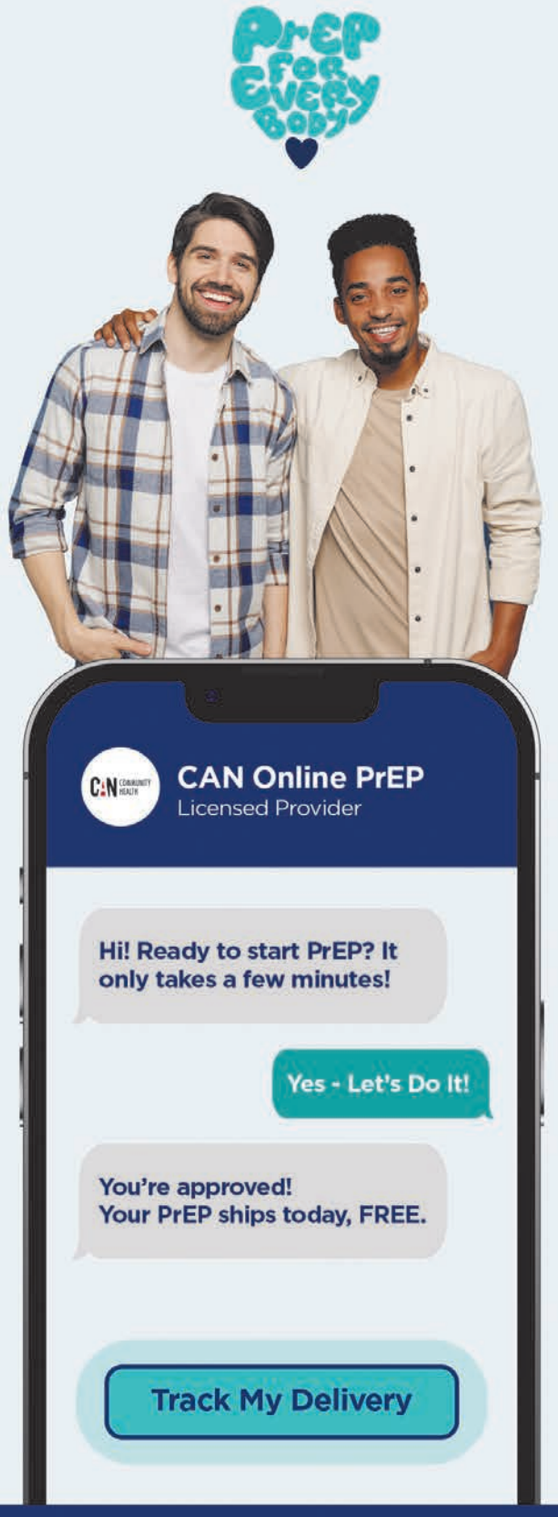


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Cassie goes national

DRAG AND COMMUNITY

Caven show director and Texas drag icon Cassie Nova is hosting the national 'Ryot Tour' in September

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
Nash@DallasVoice.com

Local drag legend Cassie Nova is taking her show on the road this month, giving audiences across the country a peek at what Dallas drag excellence is all about.

Cassie is the host for *Ryot Tour: Icons*, a show featuring Willam, Discord Addams, Coco Montrese, Kylie Sonique Love, Sasha Allen and Adore Delano, with Mia Starr joining the cast for the final show on Sept. 30 in St. Petersburg, Fla. This week she talked with Dallas Voice about the show and her role as host.

Schedule for *The Ryot Tour: Icons*

- Sept. 9: Seattle
- Sept. 16: Dallas
- Sept. 18: Salt Lake City
- Sept. 20: Denver
- Sept. 21: Orlando
- Sept. 23: Louisville
- Sept. 24: Nashville
- Sept. 28: Akron
- Sept. 30: St. Petersburg

Tickets at RyotTour.com



Cassie Nova's first drag show was in 1993. Today she is a Dallas drag legend and is taking her show on the road as host of *The Ryot Tour: Icons*

Dallas Voice: Tell me all about the *Ryot Tour.* When does it start? How many cities? Who is on the tour with you? I think I saw where you are gonna miss one weekend because of Pride in Dallas, yes? Cassie Nova: RYOT TOUR is a premium live touring brand dedicated to creating unforgettable concert experiences. This tour stars a bunch of literal icons of our community, singing live and performing their asses off. It's a very different style of show than I am used to, but I am super excited to bring something different to Dallas. (*Ryot Tour: Icons* comes to Dallas on Sept. 16.)

The show is the baby of entertainment producer Michael Benedetti along with Scott Mosher of Purple Mountain Recovery. Michael founded the fabulous *Dragapalooza* touring show a few years ago, and they co-founded *OutLoud Comedy Festival*. So, they know how to put on an incredible show.

It starts Sept. 9 in Seattle and ends Sept. 30 in St. Petersburg, Florida, stopping in Dallas, Salt Lake City, Denver, Orlando, Louisville, Nashville and Akron in between. I, unfortunately, won't be able to make it to the Salt Lake City or Denver shows because those fall on Pride in Dallas weekend, and I couldn't miss that. Pride in Dallas is something I am crazy proud to be a part of.

Most of the *Ryot Tour* performers you know from *Drag Race*. Sasha Allen you may know from Season 21 of *The Voice* where he competed as a duo with his dad. And then, of course, there's me — superstar of the Rose Room. And I had a small part in *A Very Sordid Wedding* with Leslie Jordan. Oh, and I was the lead "trombie!" in the tour de force film *The Dead Don't Die in Dallas*, which is free to watch on YouTube. You can watch my dick fall off then see me get killed at the 1 hour, 9 minute mark.

Tell me about how you got the hosting gig? Did they come to you? Was there an audition process? I actually got the gig because a queen in Denver told Michael about me and said I was a funny bitch. I need to send her flowers or something.

What is the one thing you are most looking forward to? Is there any one of the performers that you are especially excited to be working with? I am really looking forward to traveling. They haven't heard my jokes there, so win-win. I'm excited to work with all of these performers, especially Willam. We've known each other for years, and she is always a good time.

Just for anyone who has been living under a rock, give us a quick run-down of your career in drag. How (briefly) did you get started and when? When did you join the Rose Room cast, and when did you become show director? AND what are your other regular gigs (Freak Show, Pride in Dallas, etc)? I got my start as Cassie when I was asked — actually, forced — to participate in a Presidents Day show and fundraiser. The DGLA (Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance) asked the presidents of all of their organizations to participate. I was president of G.L.Y.A. (Gay and Lesbian Young Adults), which was our local youth group. I gave in and decided to do drag.

It went really well, so I went upstairs to the Rose Room later that night and entered the talent show hosted by Donna Day. I won 100 bucks, and I was hooked. Making money while having a blast — hell yes!

Then later that same year, I was asked to be a part of the cast of a new show called *New Kids on the Block*! Or was it, *New Kids — The Next Generation*? My very first paid booking was on Thanksgiving night in 1993, and I am still there. I was made show director over the Caven clubs 11 years ago. I am showgirl in the Rose Room on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and I've hosted my Freakshow at JR's on Monday nights for nearly 12



Cassie Nova is host for *The Ryot Tour: Icons*, starting Sept. 9 in Seattle, coming to Dallas on Sept. 16 and making stops in six other cities before winding up with a Sept. 30 show in St. Petersburg, Fla.

years.

I am also an award-winning writer for the Dallas Voice. Granted, the award was for 3rd place, but it still counts.

I know you aren't afraid of being political, so talk a little bit about the "current political climate" regarding drag. Has that affected your work at all? Why do you think they are targeting drag the way they are? Do you think they see drag/drag queens as an easy target, or is there really something about drag, even just as a concept, that actually scares them? I fucking hate politics. Drag queens are being used as a distraction to outrage right wingers and idiots. Luckily, SB 12, the senate bill that was banning a lot of drag shows, was recently struck down — for the second time. Hopefully that means that all of those companies and places that used to book drag queens for Pride events or parties or whatever can go back to booking the queens again without fear of backlash or fines.

The drag ban has absolutely affected us, especially our money.

Especially given the political targeting of drag these days, how do you see your role as a drag performer? Are you just about entertainment, or do you feel like you have a larger responsibility to the community? I do feel I have a larger responsibility to the community, even though I never asked for it. But, for some reason, my voice carries and, sometimes, people listen. I've spoken at the State Capitol in front of the House State Affairs Committee when our jobs were in danger, to try to educate people that vote on things they are clueless about but affect our community directly.

Lastly, what I have not asked you about that you want to mention? You didn't ask me if I am going to be okay being away from my little family for so long! My poodle Penny and my pom Riley are going to have to learn how to use Facetime or Zoom. Jamie and I have not been apart for more than 48 hours since we got together 23 years ago. During the longest part of the tour, I will be away from home for 11 days.

They say absence makes the heart grow fonder … Well, they better be fonder as fuck when I get back!



Death becomes them



TRAVEL



The nighttime Day of the Dead San Antonio River Parade happens this year during the weekend of Oct. 23-25

San Antonio does Día de los Muertos better than any other place in Texas.

STEVEN LINDSEY | Contributing Writer
StevenCraigLindsey@gmail.com

Attracting tourists to a city to celebrate the afterlife might've once been a tricky marketing proposition. Ever since Pixar Animation Studios gave us the surprisingly poignant *Coco* in 2017, however, the Mexican tradition of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) has become considerably more mainstream in the United States.

Of course, Americans embracing the holiday's joyful rituals can be attributed to more than a single movie, but that's a story better suited for Reader's Digest.

Regardless, it's impossible not to think of the film while pausing to appreciate the colorful ofrendas, altars filled with family photos and other mementos of the deceased, snapping photos of the larger-than-life catrina skeletons and mythical alebrije sculptures, or grooving to the delightful sounds of mariachis drifting through the air around every corner in San Antonio.

Throughout October — and culminating with the official Día de los Muertos on Nov. 1 — San Antonio brings beloved, time-honored customs to vibrant life better than anywhere else in Texas — quite possibly the entire country. While most of us grew up with Halloween traditions that emphasize terror, treats and crazy costumes, Day of the Dead turns the concept of the great beyond into something altogether beautiful. Dare to say, comforting even.

No matter your religious beliefs, or lack thereof, Día de los Muertos, at its core, gives people the chance to remember friends and loved ones who left this world behind. Rather than mourning the loss, it's about happily acknowledging the traits that endeared them to us in the first place. Alongside that simple construct comes a whole lot of incredible food, art, music, storytelling and community — five characteristics of a San Antonio visit that always shine.

From Fiesta and Pride in the spring to the November/December holiday season, it's abundantly clear that the Alamo City always knows how to throw a party.

This year's Día de los Muertos season is no different. The weekend of Oct. 23-25 serves as the centerpiece weekend of the month. Highlights during this time include the nighttime Day of the Dead San Antonio River Parade, which showcases the city's iconic River Walk as decorated barges float by and crowds cheer for the performers and participants



The St. Anthony in San Antonio offers 210 rooms in a 1909 National Historic Landmark building

aboard each. At Hemisfair, Muertos Fest features a five-stage gathering of artists and musicians alongside food and drink vendors and ofrendas galore. Then head to Historic Market Square for more altars, live music, food and festivities.

Other highlights of the month-long event include the Día de los Muertos Tradition Trail, the Calavera Run 5K and Family Walk, plus additional Día de los Muertos commemorations at Pearl, La Cantera and La Villita. In between all this thoughtful revelry, pop over to San Antonio's Pride Cultural Heritage District, home to several LGBTQ+ bars, restaurants and the city's infamous new rainbow sidewalks that legally get around the elimination of rainbow crosswalks.

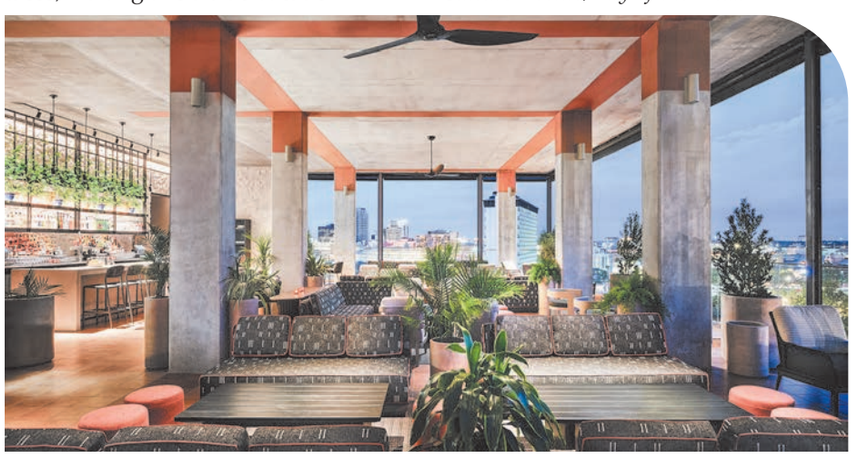
No matter which dates you visit, make a full weekend of it, and choose a home base close to all the action. Two of the city's best hotels offer luxury accommodations, excellent restaurants, swimming pools, access to nearby spas, plus excellent blackout curtains so you can sleep late each morning before breakfast tacos, making this a true vacation.

Located near Hemisfair, the Kimpton Santo San Antonio — Riverwalk is a boutique 347-room property that incorporates a 19th-century schoolhouse in the design for a mix of historic and contemporary. Complimentary wine each evening makes for a nice touch. The rooftop is the city's highest open-air luxury concept.

Across from Travis Park and two blocks from the River Walk, The St. Anthony, a Luxury Collection Hotel, San Antonio, offers another glimpse into the city's past. A mere 210 rooms occupy a 1909 National Historic Landmark, which also boasts a rooftop and classic design elements that have stood the test of time.

Whether you've never participated in Día de los Muertos before or you've been marking the occasion for decades, now's your chance to experience this autumnal holiday in the kind of fun, friendly, authentic style that only San Antonio can achieve. ■

To learn more or build your own itinerary, head to VisitSanAntonio.com/Events/Arts-Culture-Events/Day-of-the-Dead.



The Kimpton Santo San Antonio — Riverwalk's rooftop is the city's highest open-air luxury concept



Keep Austin queer



TRAVEL

A new film, music, drag and art festival debuts in the capital city

STEVEN LINDSEY | Contributing Writer
StevenCraigLindsey@gmail.com



One of the components of The Beer Queer Weekend in Austin later this month will be a queer artist and artisan marketplace

Launched with fewer than 1,000 attendees, South by Southwest (SXSW) has grown into an internationally celebrated entertainment festival attended by more than 300,000 fans each year. This Sept. 24-27, the All Genders, Lifestyles and Identities Film Festival (aGLIFF), the Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce and SXSW have joined forces to create The Big Queer Weekend.

The brand-new four-day festival brings together a variety of entertainment options at venues across the city. Showcasing feature films and documentaries, red-carpet arrivals, filmmaker Q&As, drag shows, queer music, art, a queer artist and artisan marketplace, parties, after-parties and a Sunday brunch, the gathering offers a little something for every interest.

Films presented by aGLIFF and SXSW Film will all be screened at Galaxy Theatres Austin. Titles include *Lady Champagne*, a high-camp comedy sequel starring Peaches Christ, Jackie Beat, Alaska and Varla Jean Merman; documentary features *The Best Little Tiny Park in Texas*, *The Dads*, *Give Me the Ball*, *Out Laws*, *Assembly* and *Wicket* and the coming-of-age short *Aiden & Dean Don't Fall in Love*.

SXSW Music and the ALGBTCC combine their resources to present the Pride In Local Music Showcase, a night of queer music, drag and art at Drinks Backyard. The evening event will be hosted by Maxine LaQueene and feature live music sets from Maru Haru, Painterly and headliner Melissa Carper. DJ Gabriel "Bboy Wicket" Jaochico (the subject of the *Wicket* documentary screening the same weekend) rounds out the dance inspirations at this free public event.

The Big Queer Weekend culminates at Hotel Indigo in Downtown Austin for a networking brunch for local filmmakers, musicians, artists and other creatives.







The Big Queer Weekend networking brunch at Hotel Indigo, with a suggested donation of $10, includes a guest pass to use the hotel's pool in addition to a taco buffet and cocktails available for purchase.



San Francisco's drag laureate D'Arcy Drollinger stars in the campy comedy film *Lady Champagne*, screening at Galaxy Theatres as part of Austin's Big Queer Weekend

Attend for a suggested $10 donation, which includes a breakfast taco buffet, cocktails for purchase and the added bonus of a guest pass to use the hotel pool, transforming it into the queerest scene in Austin for the afternoon.

Though it may be small in its debut year by comparison to other festivals in this neck of the Texas Hill Country, The Big Queer Weekend has the potential to become a major draw for LGBTQ+ pop culture fans from around the state and across the globe. So, consider a road trip in two weeks to be part of the next big thing from the get-go. ■

In addition to the free music festival, a la carte general admission tickets are $20 and weekend passes are $50. For the most up-to-date information and a full schedule, visit bigqueerweekend.com.

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At home on the Outer Banks



TRAVEL

Taking the family vacation old school

JENNY BLOCK | Contributing Writer
JennyEBlock@icloud.com

As much as I love a luxury beach resort, for me nothing beats a house high on stilts on the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

I started going there years ago when I lived in Richmond, Va. We'd pack the car up to the ceiling with chairs and toys and towels and coolers. Our duffels and boat bags were overflowing with bathing suits and cut off jean shorts and sundresses with ribbon ties at the shoulders.

We'd leave town early hoping to beat the traffic on the bridge — only one way in and one way out. So, Saturdays and Sundays, when the rental contracts there typically begin and end, were the busiest days on the bridge.

One summer, I was a company member at the country's oldest outdoor drama, *The Lost Colony*, that tells the story of "Sir Walter Raleigh's final expedition to the New World and the 117 men, women and children who disappeared into mystery," nestled in the woods in Manteo Island.

I was a dancer in the show. We performed every night — except for Mondays and nights when lightening filled the sky — all summer long, 83 shows if memory serves.

It was one of the best summers of my life, one I would go back to in a minute if I could.

When my daughter was born, I began taking her to the Outer Banks, and she fell just as hard for the sandy dunes covered in hearty beach grass and sea grass, the cedar shake and clapboard houses and the miles of waves crashing into the shore.

This summer, despite living 20 hours away instead of three or four, we packed up the car — just as I had so many summers before — and headed for the Outer Banks. I rented a house months in advance, as one is well-advised to do, and we arrived early on a Sunday morning after three days of driving, gratefully missing the typical traffic.



Jenny Block, left, and her wife during their vacation on The Outer Banks



You don't have to be good at Fly Ball — the outdoor version of Skee-ball — to enjoy playing

We stopped for breakfast at Biscuits and Porn as soon as we arrived. No. That's not a typo, it is indeed called Biscuits and Porn. It's little more than a counter in a gas station that happens to sell dirty magazines. But the biscuit sandwiches will knock your socks off. Trust me.

We rented a two-bedroom house from Joe Lamb Jr. and Associates, one of the best and longest-running agencies in the Outer Banks. The house is right on the ocean in Kitty Hawk, close to all of my favorite haunts.

Each day we packed a cooler with lunch and drinks and set up our comfy matching Copa chairs and sun shade in the sand. Nothing tastes as good as a turkey sandwich and a bag of chips on an old school family beach vacation.

And, of course, we'd launch the kite we bought at Kitty Hawk Kites, another annual tradition.

My daughter and I sat for hours right at the water's edge. Her fiancé and my wife came and went. Only she and I can commit to six hours barely moving. It is literally our happiest place.

Some days we played Fly Ball in the sand (think outdoor Skee-ball). I was terrible at it, but I could not have cared less.

In the evenings we had all-you-can-eat crab legs and gobs of seafood at the buffets at Captain George's and Jimmy's Seafood Buffet. We ate crab cakes sandwiches at Sam and Omie's. We ate ice cream at Fatboyz Ice Cream one night, ordered pizza in from Slice another, and, the night we went to see the *Lost Colony*, we had sandwiches at Poor Richard's on the pier.

We set a puzzle out on the dining room table that we worked on throughout the week. We ran out for hot dogs from Capt'n Franks one afternoon. We sat out on the deck and in the porch swing and marveled at the sunset despite having seen them countless times before.

HOME, Page 18



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A lot to love



TRAVEL



After seeing Billy Ocean in concert, it's no secret why his fans are still as enthusiastic as ever

If you are looking for a fun-filled weekend not too far from home, you're looking for Lake Charles

JENNY BLOCK | Contributing Writer
JennyEBlock@icloud.com

I honestly didn't know what to expect when I set off for Lake Charles, La., with my bestie. I had been told there were casinos and Cajun food and outdoor adventures to be had. But I didn't know much more than that.

Turns out it's a great place to getaway that's not too far away.

We started our adventures with lunch at Nina P's Café, which was delicious. The only problem was that the menu had way too many great options to choose from, including fried green tomatoes, Cajun boudin balls, gumbo (of course), and fried chicken stuffed spuds.

After lunch, we headed over to the Mardi Gras Museum of Imperial Calcasieu where David Faulk, the executive director, gave us the tour. I am ashamed to admit that I had no idea Mardi Gras was so big in Lake Charles. There are more than 65 Krewes in Southwest Louisiana, some more than 70 years old.

The museum is packed with fantabulous — and way over-the-top — headdresses and gowns. And the building itself is all shiny and new since it's rebuild after Hurricane Laura in 2020. They are billed as the world's largest display of Mardi Gras costumes, and, after taking it all in, I don't doubt it for a second.

We checked in to Lauberge Du Lac Casino Resort after our museum visit, and I could not believe how massive it is — 26-stories with a 70,000-square-foot casino, 1,000 rooms, 147 luxury suites, a golf course and club, a spa, eight restaurants, pools, a lazy river and, of course, lots of shopping.

And the rooms were really nice — spacious and nicely decorated with beds that I quickly discovered might have been a little too comfy.

Cadillac Mexican Restaurant inside the Golden Nugget — right next to Lauberge — was our next stop. Although I have no idea how we could have eaten another thing, it was the dinner hour and who are we to say no to a flight of margaritas and enough fajitas for an army?! They were delicious, and our waiter was delightful, making the evening all the more fun.



Oh, and the margaritas came on a little tree. All I have to say is, I'm glad we shared!

One of the biggest surprises of the trip was brunch at The Bekery. Their bakery case was filled with the most beautiful scones, biscuits, muffins, quiches and a zillion other treats. There were baskets of baguettes and sourdough bread, and, of course, a wealth of coffee and other drink options.

I am not going to lie to you: We drastically over ordered. But also — full disclosure — I could not have been happier that we did. We sat outside by the gas fireplace to keep warm, sipping coffee and enjoying the crisp morning. We tasted every single one of the goodies we got, and I'd do it all over again in a second.

Then it was time to do some walking, for sure. And we were very lucky to be in town for the *Rodrigue: A Louisiana Cowboy* show, which featured the work of George Rodrigue (of *Blue Dog fame*) at the Historic City Hall Arts and Cultural Center, which is a stunning building. The show was amazing, and we even had the honor of meeting his widow, Wendy, who was lovely.

The show "features over 50 paintings, the iconic cow sculpture, and a selection of mixed-media works that reflect Rodrigue's fascination with Western themes, Louisiana prairies and the spirit of the open landscape."

After that, we slipped into the sweetest little gallery downtown called DPR Art Gallery. You might miss it if you're not paying close attention. But you won't want to miss it once you step into the charming little space. They have rotating exhibits from a variety of regional artists. The work is top-notch, and the gallery host was delightful, ready to answer any questions and guide us through the work.

The truth is we did not have as much time as we would have liked to explore downtown Lake Charles. There was just too much to see. It is definitely on our list for our next visit.

For lunch, we went to Darrell's Famous Poboys, as per the advice of the amazing Annie Schindler, owner and permanent jewelry artist at Soudé Welds. There we got fabulous BBF bracelets. Prior to that visit to Darrell's I would have told you that I liked poboys well enough. After that visit, I will be the first to tell you that I love them — the ones at Darrell's any way. That bread!

I have been craving the Darrell's Special Poboy — their signature sandwich made with ham, turkey, roast beef and roast beef gravy and dressed with provolone, American and Swiss cheeses, lettuce, mustard and mayo (or jalapeño mayo) — ever since. I see another road trip in our not so distant future for sure.

We made sure to time our visit with one of the many festivals Lake Charles is home to: the Rum Revival Grand Tasting at the Golden Nugget. There we indulged in a ton of cocktail and rum and tequila tastings, along with Caribbean-inspired bites including the best pork straight from the pig on a spit right there onsite. Needless to say a nap was required following the sun-soaked and music-filled afternoon.

That night we went to see Billy Ocean at L'Auberge. As a child of the '80s, I

LOVE, Page 20





Nothing beats a day of just sitting on the beach



The deck at the rental house on The Outer Banks was the perfect place for watching the sunset

There were sunburns and arguments and stomach aches. There was a long line or two at the restaurants. And mini-golf was too crowded the night we wanted to go. But all in all, it was a week none of us will long forget.

My favorite part was how simple it was and how much really concentrated time I got with my daughter. That's not so common these days, now that she's in her late 20s.

I love the beach, and I am grateful to get to visit it so often — sometimes on cruises, sometimes on a quick run to Galveston to stay in my favorite rental — the perfectly appointed and decorated Pier House, just a quick couple of blocks to the beach. Plenty of sun and seafood and ocean waves to be had there.

But nothing beats the Outer Banks of North Carolina for me. It feels different there — the sand, the air, the water, the people, the food.

All of it.

It feels like home. ■



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LOVE, From Page 17

love his music. I had no idea until I researched him when we decided to see him perform that he has sold more than 30 million records to date. I honestly wasn't sure what to expect. The guy is 76 years old, after all.

But let me tell you: He is a powerhouse. He danced and sang and flirted with the ladies running up to the stage to touch his hand and dance with him. It was so much fun. I had no clue how avid his fan base remains and, after seeing him perform, I now know why.

The crowd went crazy when he sang "Caribbean Queen" and "Get Outta My Dreams, Get Into My Car." (My BFF had even designed and made custom tees for us to wear that bore the lyrics of the latter.)

The next day, we were grateful to spend time at The Golden Nugget Spa that offers nearly every kind of service from HydraFacials to full body treatments. The staff there was really wonderful, from the super-sweet women at the front desk who got us checked in to the fantabulous spa therapists with whom we had the most wonderful massages and facials.



Jenny Block and her bestie get their drink on at the Run Revival Grand Tasting at The Golden Nugget

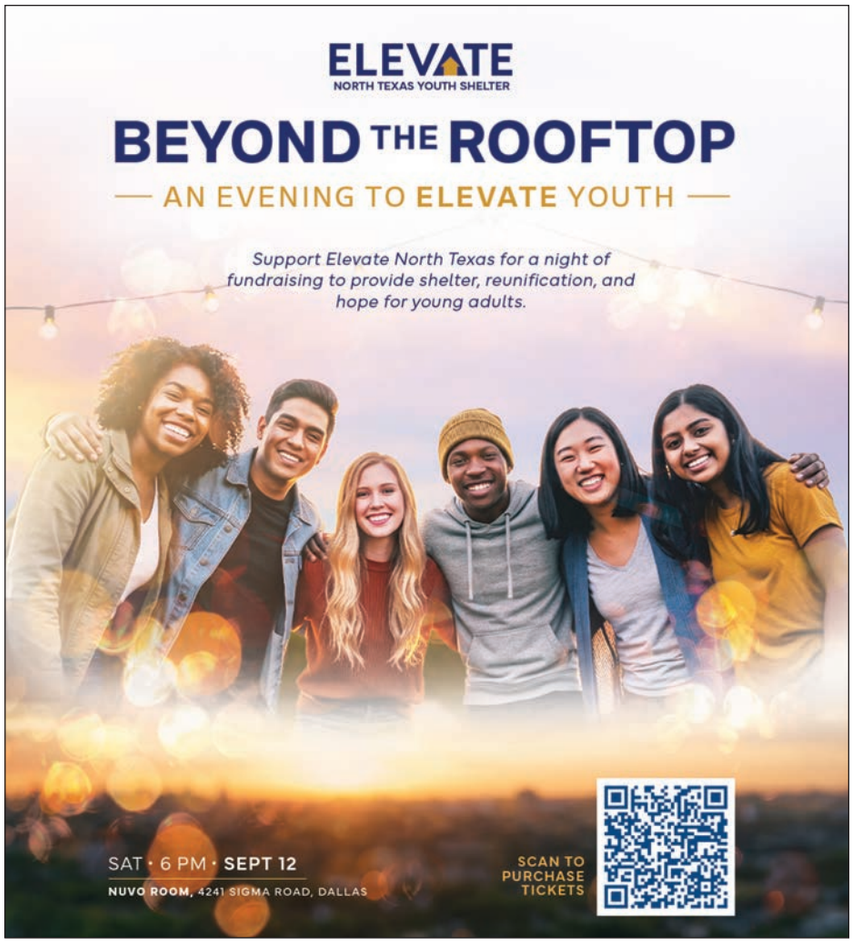
We ended our trip with Zydeco Brunch at Rikenjacks. Every Sunday they offer live music by Zydecane alongside a menu that offers multiple hangover cures that, luckily, we did not need that morning — although the chicken and waffles we had would have done the trick for sure.

I honestly had no idea what Lake Charles had to offer. The answer is: A lot. Whether you like gambling or dining or shopping or gallery-going or outdoor adventuring, you're going to love Lake Charles. Just one favor to ask: May I hitch a ride when you go? ■



Don't miss the fried green tomatoes at Nina P's Café in Lake Charles







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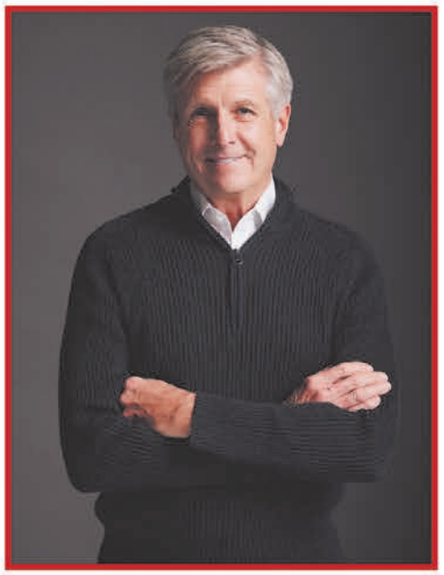
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RSVP today! Location: Astoria Event Venue in Irving Tuesday, September 29th!

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





Author Dr. M. Rhys Dotson will be signing copies of his book *The Dallas Way*, Saturday, Sept. 5, at Cathedral of Hope. See listings for details.

September

Sept. 5: Dr. M. Rhys Dotson presentation and book-signing

Revive Dallas and Cathedral of Hope UCC host acclaimed author Dr. M. Rhys Dotson at the church, 5910 Cedar Springs Road, at 2:15 p.m. for a short talk on their historical account of the evolution of the Dallas LGBTQ+ community, *The Dallas Way*, followed immediately by a book-signing hosted by Sources of Hope bookstore. To ensure you get a signed copy of *The Dallas Way*, preorders are recommended via SourcesOfHope.MyShopify.com.

Sept. 5: REVIVE Pride revival

Pride in Dallas hosts *REVIVE*, a Pride revival, from 1-6 p.m. at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road, centered on healing, liberation, joy and spiritual renewal — reclaiming sacred space for LGBTQ+ people, allies, families and seekers with a tone that is vibrant, gospel-rooted, affirming and unapologetically hopeful. There will also be vendors and food, and applications for booths are available at Eventeny.com.

Sept. 6: DHHR Museum Permanent Exhibition Tour: Jewish Upstanders

Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum, 300 N. Houston St., offers a special themed tour of the museum's permanent exhibition exploring the exhibition through the lens of the Jewish people and led by one of the museum's docent educations, starting at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are $12-$19. Visit DHHRM.org for information.

Sept. 6: Brunch Royale

Asia O'Hara presents Brunch Royale, hosted by Layla Larue from noon-2 p.m. in The Rose Room inside S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Tickets available now at OctoEntertainment.com.

Sept. 6: TAG+ Role With Pride

Tyler Area Gays+ host an afternoon of DnD and tabletop games from 1-5 p.m. at Geek World Games, 1859 Troup Highway. Visit TylerAreaGays.com for information.

Sept. 8-25: 'Journey: The Art and Legacy of Grant Halliburton'

Grant Halliburton Foundation and Center for BrainHealth, part of the University of Texas at Dallas, present *Journey: The Art and Legacy of Grant Halliburton* at The Center for BrainHealth, 2200 W. Mockingbird Lane. The exhibition, being presented during the foundation's 20th anniversary year and National Suicide Prevention Month, connected Grant Halliburton's creative legacy with work to strengthen youth mental health and prevent suicide. For more information visit GrantHalliburton.org/Journey.

Sept. 8: NorTex College Fair

For the first time ever, Texas Women's University hosts the 2026 NorTexas College Fair, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Student Union at Hubbard Hall on the school's Denton campus, 303 Administration Drive in Denton. This is a free event open to students, parents and anyone interested in meeting representatives from more than 90 colleges, universities and trade schools and attend a financial aid breakout session. Registration is required at TWU.edu/Visit/Nor-Tex-College-Fair.

Sept. 9: DHHR closing program for exhibit on Disney and WWII

Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum, 300 N. Houston St., hosts a closing program for the current exhibition, *The Walt Disney Studios and World War II*. A reception for the event starts at 6 p.m. followed at 7 p.m. by the program featuring historian Katherine Sharp Landdeck, author of *The Women with Silver Wings* about Texas-trained Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) and their mascot Fifinella. Visit DHHRM.org for details.

Sept. 9: Dallas Frontrunners

Dallas Frontrunners meet for their weekly run/walk at 7 p.m. at Turtle Creek Park. All runners and walkers welcome.

Sept. 9: TAG+ Men's+ Dinner

Tyler Area Gays+ host Men's+ Dinner. All are welcome. Visit TylerAreaGays.com for information.

Sept. 10: March on the Republican National Convention

The Dallas Against the Trump Agenda Coalition and its partner organizations are holding a march on the Republican National Convention, with marchers asked to gather by 1 p.m. at Pike Park, 2807 Harry Hines Blvd., then march about half a mile to the American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Ave., where the Republican National Convention is being held.

Sept. 10: 3rd Annual Suicide Prevention Vigil

Dallas Hope Charities and the Collective Hope Coalition host the third annual Suicide Prevention Vigil from 6-8 p.m. at Union Coffee Lawn, 3705 Cedar Springs Road. Those attending are invited to bring a photo, shirt or other small memory item to place on the community remembrance table in honor of someone impacted by suicide. Those interested in speaking or performing or in hosting a vendor or resource table can email CHC@DallasHopeCharities.org.

Sept. 10-12: 'Portalgraphs'

Bishop Arts Theatre Center, 215 S. Tyler St., presents *Portgraphs*, a magical musical about Beverly, a sharp, spirited grandmother, and her sassy granddaughter on the day of her husband's funeral when a photo album becomes a time machine, transporting them into key moments in Beverly's life. Visit BishopArtsTheatre.org for information and tickets.

Sept. 10: TAG+ Book Club

Tyler Area Gays+ host theoir Book Club from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Village Creamery, 109 E. 8th St. in Tyler. Visit TylerAreaGays.com for information.

Sept. 11-13: Fan Expo Dallas

Fan Expo Dallas returns to the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, 650 S. Griffin St. Open 4-9 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. One day tickets start at $33 in advance; three-day passes are $99 in advance, ultimate packages start at $139 in advance, and full-price ultimate packages start at $155. VIP Packages start at $519, available only in advance. Tickets and more information at FanExpoDallas.com.

Sept. 12: Blues & BBQ

Purple Foundation sponsors the second annual Blues & BBQ fundraising party benefitting ASD — A Home for Life, from 5:30-9 p.m. at Gleneagle Country Club, 5401 W. Park Blvd. in Plano, with live blues music. Tickets start at $75, available at GiveButter.com.

Have an event coming up? Email your information to Nash@DallasVoice.com by Monday at 5 p.m. for that week's issue.

Look for extended listings online at DallasVoice.com



Layla Larue headlines Asia O'Hara's Brunch Royale Sunday, Sept. 6 at The Rose Room. See listings for details.

Jenny Block

GIRL ON GIRLS

A reminder in Mobile that art matters

I love art. Always have. I have to credit my parents for that. They took me to art museums starting when I was small.

I remember sitting on the floor of the Baltimore Museum of Art and drawing my own version of the masterpiece that loomed above me. I don't remember the artist or even the full composition. But I do remember the lion I was doing my 4-year-old best to draw.

Being in the art museum made me feel happy and safe. It also made me feel excited and inspired.

At home we would play the board game *Masterpiece* where players buy and sell master works. I can still name every painting and artist in the game. I loved trying to "trick" my parents into buying pieces worth very little for massive amounts of play money.

In college, I studied art history. As a college instructor years later, I taught humanities, including a section on art. I even bought several *Masterpiece* games on eBay for my students to play.

Now when I travel, I almost always seek out the local art museum. I have been to Museo del Prado and Reina Sofía Museum, both in Madrid. I cried upon seeing *Las Meninas* and *Guernica* for the first time.

I went the Chicago Museum of Art and marveled at O'Keeffe's clouds hanging in the massive stairwell. I walked Kusama's infinity rooms at the Tate in London, and I flew to Brooklyn to see the work of KAWS.

I even sat in a pit of thousands of oversized beads at the Cj Hendry *Pastel* show at Salon 94 Design on the Upper East Side. And I trekked all the way to Cannes to witness the opening of the cheeky new gallery and concept La Scène des Artistes.

I have seen art, written about art, reviewed art. I have interviewed artists. I have gotten lost in the labyrinths of galleries all around the world.

I almost always expect to be wowed. And I almost always am.

On a recent trip to see a gallery show, though, I honestly didn't know what to expect. The show is in Mobile, Ala., not the first place — or even in the top 10 — to come to mind when it comes to art, especially edgy contemporary art.



The Mobile Museum of Art



Evolution Revolution (2023) — one of two works by Kenny Scharf that take up one whole wall in the Mobile Museum of art as part of *GATEWAY: From Graffiti to Gallery*

But brace yourselves, because after seeing *GATEWAY: From Graffiti to Gallery* at the Mobile Museum of Art, I only have one thing to say: Wow!

The show features five artists: Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat, KAWS, Banksy and Kenny Scharf, all of whom "transformed street art from acts of self-expression to a widely recognized art form."

These are not only artists you are unlikely to get to see together. They are artists that, when it comes to an art museum and especially one down South, it's unlikely you'd get to see at all, not to mention so many of their works collected in one place.

Gateway is organized by Masterworks and Level & Co. Gallery in partnership with the Mobile Museum of Art with sponsors that include presenting sponsor Lexus Mobile. Those sponsors make the show possible funding-wise.

But it is the vast community of people who support the arts in Mobile that are already making this exhibit a success, with more than 400 people at the show's opening members-only party, five days in advance of the shows official opening on Sept. 1.

The show is stunning. It doesn't hurt that the building itself is gorgeous — modern, open and strangely warm and inviting despite its size and open concept.

To be honest, I almost couldn't believe what I was seeing at first:

- Two works from Scharf that completely filled the length of the walls on either side of the gallery space
- A massive Banksy titled *Banksquiat: Boy and Dog in Stop and Search*, Banksy's work in direct conversation with Basquiat's work and the political climate
- Enormous cut out Chums in an array of colors from Kaws
- Harings the likes of which I have never seen before.
- Ephemera relevant to the artists and their work
- Even a real bench on which you are invited to sit with the back drop of waiting for a bus at the corner of Broadway and Canal in New York City.

I could not keep walking around the show. And I could not stop thinking about both how vital these shows are and how imperative it is to have them in places like Mobile, Ala., a place about which people who have never been there make all too many assumptions. I am here to remind you: Most of those assumptions are wrong. All of them are dangerous.

I was honored to get a preview of the show. I loved staying at the gorgeous Admiral Hotel, eating at local faves like Noble South and digging through their impressive array of vintage shops.

But what I could not get enough of was the people. Everyone was so warm and welcoming. Everyone seemed invested in making Mobile a place to love, a place of art and culture, a place of joy. Everyone was so invested and excited and alive, from the museum's stunning board chair, Hayley Van Antwerp, to the museum's electric executive director, Jon Carfagno, to the staff and guests and museum board members.

I left incredibly inspired — by the work, by the people, by the truth to which I was witness once again: Above all else and perhaps now more than ever, art matters. ■

this week's solution

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SCENE • Pride in Dallas pool party

PEOPLE, PLACES AND FACES













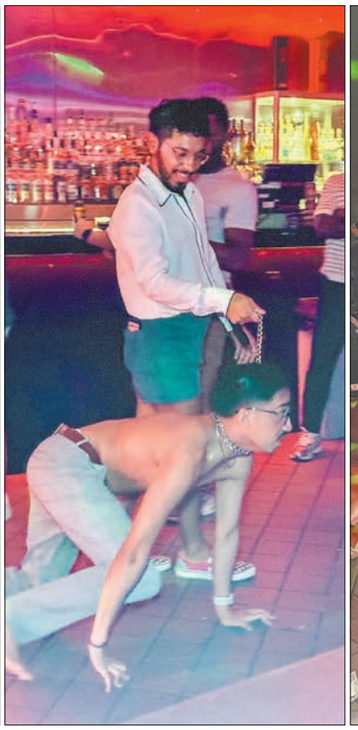




Strip on The Strip at TMC













Pride in Dallas is OUT on the town!



On the patio at Fizz



Sue's crew



Tearin' up Sue's dance floor



TMC patio vibes



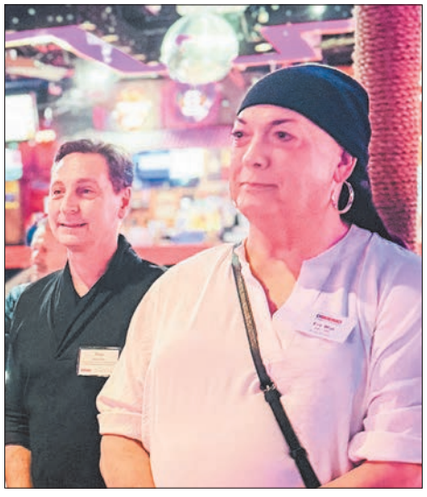
Best friends



Bryan and Sam



Smile for the camera



Mark and Evie at a Chamber event







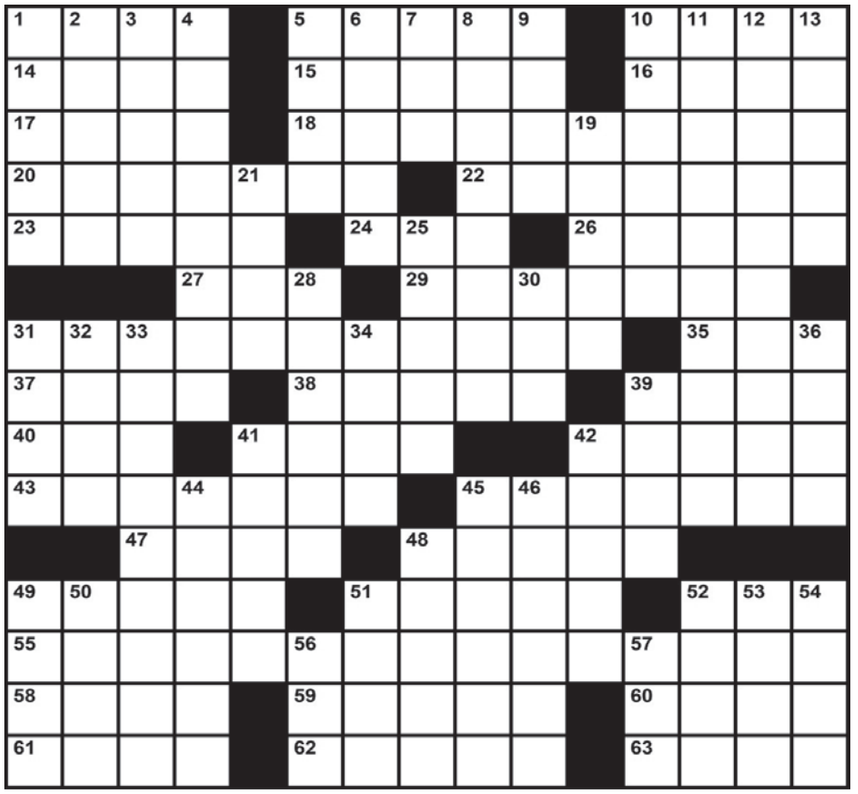
Sexy bitch



Gettin' low low low low



PUZZLE | Horror at Any Price



Solution on Page 24

Across

1 "Beat it!"
5 Lifeboat lowerer
10 *Peter Pan* reptile, for short
14 Collette of *The Hours*
15 Where you live
16 Tow job
17 German auto
18 Stationery for Aaron Copland
20 Price of horror films
22 Start of what Price said he was impersonating
23 Forest moon in *Return of the Jedi*
24 Dupont Cir., on the Metro
26 Box to Vidal
27 Set burning
29 Wall Street workers
31 More of the quote
35 M.I.T. or N.Y.U.
37 Golda from the land of the cut
38 Buffalo bunches
39 Where a cobbler puts the tongue
40 Boy played by Martin and Duncan
41 Tough place
42 Fingerprint ridge
43 Patrick of the *Moby Dick* miniseries
45 Censored the word "lesbian," for example
47 Catcher's need
48 Tail feather
49 Overhand stroke, for Mauresmo
51 Strokes from Sheehan
52 Schnozz add-on
55 More of the quote
58 Baudelaire's liver
59 Nursery rhyme Peter, to a pumpkin
60 End of the quote
61 They aren't straight
62 Great balls of fire
63 Make beer

Down

1 Where Susan Feniger shows a range of skills?
2 "Climb aboard"
3 Erect
4 Medium for Rosa Bonheur, perhaps
5 Dramatic word for the Yankees
6 Is adjacent to
7 Your, to Proust
8 Musher's race
9 Stage crew worker, briefly
10 Phone receiver's spot
11 Mechanics' milieu
12 Music for *Aida*, e.g.
13 Tops that pop
19 Range features
21 One of the Waltons
25 Car in the song *Fun, Fun, Fun*
28 Casual top
30 Suffix with lecher
31 They call balls
32 Like Felix of *The Odd Couple*
33 Like Fassbinder's work
34 Relief of Lincoln
36 Didn't give way
39 *A Boy Named Sue* writer Silverstein
41 Clean up
42 Like the Ladies of Llangollen
44 Trio of genie grants
45 Rhett of *GWTW*
46 Water units
48 Clerk's minimum at Barneys
49 Love seat, e.g.
50 *Dial ___ Murder*
51 Excellent, in slang
52 Barbra's *Funny Girl* costar
53 Make more potent
54 From the top
56 *STNG* crew member Crusher
57 Metro area

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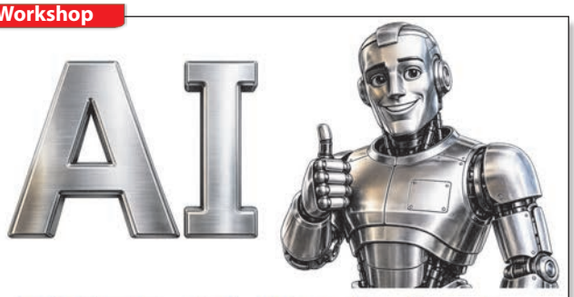
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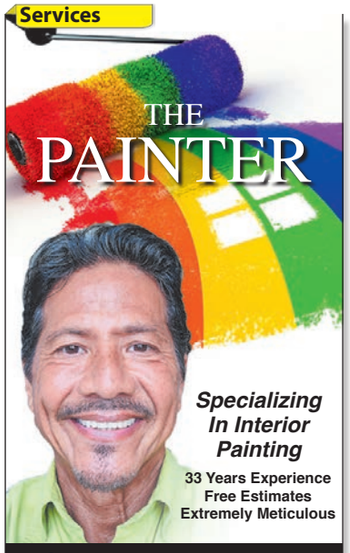
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