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Local theater company sponsors gay playwriting competition

Uptown Players moved its Pride Play Fest from September to June this year, so it seems TeCo Theatrical Productions is stepping in to the fall spot. The Oak Cliff-based company, which is celebrating its 20th season this year, has sent out a call for scripts for its inaugural PlayPride LGBT Festival, which will run Sept. 4-14. Playwrights will compete to benefit their favorite local LGBT group with a $1,000 donation to the winner’s charity of choice.

TeCo is soliciting short (15-20 minutes) unpublished/unproduced scripts of any style, as long as they contain LGBT themes, have a maximum of four cast members (though more characters would, presumably, be OK) and not come with scene changes or blackouts. The author must be a resident of Texas.

The deadline for submission is July 1, and must be submitted in PDF format to info@tecotheater.org (no hard copies accepted). Get crackin’!

—Arnold Wayne Jones

T3, TITAS unveil 2014-15 seasons

It’s art awareness week in Dallas (unofficially), with Theatre 3 and TITAS announcing their new seasons, and WaterTower’s due on Thursday.

Theatre 3’s mainstage season officially opens in August, with Candy Barr’s Last Dance, by local playwright Ronnie Claire Edwards. It tells the story of the colorful Dallas stripper of the 1940s and ’50s. (Aug. 7-31.) It’s followed in the fall by gay Dallas-bred playwright Doug Wright’s most recent Broadway show, the musical Hands on a Hard Body, based on the documentary set in Texas. (Sept. 25-Oct. 19.)

The holiday production will be a musical by lesbian playwright and Pulitzer Prize-winner Paula Vogel (How I Learned to Drive) called Civil War Christmas, set along the Potomac during the bitter winter of 1864. (Nov. 20-Dec. 14.)

Texas favorite Jaston Williams is on deck for the debut of Jay Presson Allen’s Tru, a one-man show about Truman Capote. Williams has performed the play elsewhere, to great acclaim. (Jan. 8-Feb. 8, 2015.) That’s followed by Hot Mikado, an outlandish adaptation of the Gilbert & Sullivan classic. (March 12-April 5.)

The sixth show of the season (scheduled for May 2015) has not be announced, but the season closer will be The Liar, Commedia’s classic comedy adapted by David Ives. (June 25-July 19.) In addition, the black box Theatre Too space will, once again, bring back gay writer Joe DiPietro’s I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change in time for Valentine’s Day. (Jan. 15, 2015 with no set closing date.) You can see more about the season, including season tickets, at Theatre3Dallas.com.

Over in the Arts District, TITAS — which is recent seasons has cultivated a dance-centric program — brings back some old favorites and new groups. The season kicks off with the popular experimental dance troupe MOMIX for two shows Sept. 12-13. MOMIX will be quickly followed by the debut of Senegalese singer Youssou N’Dour — a music, not a dance program — on Sept. 19, then as quickly followed by the debut of Spectrum Dance Company on Sept. 27. All of those performances will be at the Winspear Opera House.

TITAS moves across the street to City Performance Hall for another debut, Brian Brooks Moving Company, Nov. 21 and 22. It’s back to the Winspear in January for Ronald K Brown/Evidence on Jan. 17 (at the Winspear), then two shows from debut music artist Maya Beiser on March 6 and 7 (at CPH). The architectural movement of Diavolo returns (again at CPH) for two shows on March 27 and 28, and the popular Parsons Dance Company is back at the Winspear with its sexy choreography April 25.

The season wraps up in May with two shows from Malandain’s Ballet Birritz (May 1 and 2, at CPH), and the local debut of Ballet West (May 29 and 30, at the Winspear). And as always, TITAS hosts its Command Performance Gala at the Winspear on May 16. Tickets and more information available at ATTPAC.org.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

LOVIN’ IT | Sir Richard Branson crowdsurfs at The Rustic May 5 in support of allowing Virgin America to fly out of two gates at Love Field when the Wright Amendment expires in the fall.

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Vote this Saturday for Miguel Solis

Miguel Solis is endorsed by:
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"Miguel Solis brings an idealistic and pragmatic perspective to the DISD board. He is an asset, and should be returned for a full term." — Pam Gerber

"He's working well with the teachers and keeping the kid's education as #1 priority." — Mike LoVuolo

"Mr. Solis always puts education for youth first, including LGBT youth. He understands and cares about all communities. Miguel Solis is a breath of fresh air on the DISD board." — Dallas County Schools Trustee & Former Stonewall President Omar Narvaez

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For more information and a complete list of endorsements visit: www.solisforschoolboard.com

Pol. Adv. Paid for by the Miguel Solis Campaign | John Loza, Treasurer
County Commissioner Elba Garcia wants to include everyone, but with no federal mandate, governments find it hard to expand their programs.

Last month, Parkland Memorial Hospital was recognized for its commitment to supplier diversity. A quick email to a hospital spokeswoman about whether any LGBT companies were included among its diverse suppliers drew a terse response.

“Our program does not include the LGBT community,” Indria Hollingsworth, Parkland’s director of supplier diversity and ethical sourcing, wrote in an email. “We are governed by County Code and the focus of the County Code is ethnic minority and women owned business enterprises.”

Indeed, county code does define minority business as a company that is “at least 51 percent owned by minority persons, or in the case of publicly owned businesses, at least 51 percent of stock is owned by one or more minorities.”

Minority is defined as well. “Minority persons include Black, Hispanics, Asian-Pacific Americans, Asian-Indian Americans and Native Americans.”

A separate category for women is included.

Finally, the hospital district has a nondiscrimination policy regarding its suppliers.

“The district, its contractors and subcontractors shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or physical handicap in the award and/or performance of contracts.”

By current national definitions, sex discrimination includes the transgender community. The hospital’s nondiscrimination policy does not include sexual orientation based on sexual orientation.

So while choosing between two Hispanic suppliers, for example, the hospital might decide to choose the straight over the gay supplier and not be violating the County Code.

The hospital’s employment nondiscrimination policy, however, does include sexual orientation and in 2013 was expanded to include gender identity and expression.

The county and hospital have funded a half million-dollar disparity study to find inequities. Commissioner Elba Garcia said the city did something similar while she served on the Dallas City Council and she was surprised the county hadn’t done this.

“Our goal has been to include everyone,” she said.

She said the study will take until the end of the year, and she was more concerned with them doing a thorough job. She’s already passed along suggestions from several community leaders who have called her about the issue and said she thinks recommended changes will be implemented.

“The court knows it’s something we need to do,” she said.

Resource Center Communications and Advocacy Manager Rafael McDonnell has been in touch with Garcia’s office and asked about several areas of disparity the city is fixing. Among those are family medical leave and bereavement leave.

When an employee takes off under the FMLA act, it is unpaid leave that allows the person to care for a parent, child or spouse. Under current policy, an LGBT employee would be given leave for a parent or child, but not for a spouse.

Assistant County Administrator Gordon Hikel said the county currently has a good faith program. He said that means it has no teeth.

He said the legal basis to make programs more inclusive comes from a 1989 Supreme Court decision. The justices wrote that set-asides are suspect, unless a study shows past discrimination the governmental body wants to remedy, Hikel said.

“The problem is the Supreme Court hasn’t ruled that LGBT is a suspect class,” Hikel said.

For the classes already listed in the County Code, the remedy is different.

“Things we have learned and what the law doesn’t allow us to do,” he said.

He noted just as corporations did with providing partner benefits, they are leading the way in supplier diversity.

When IBM wanted to do business with gay and lesbian companies, the National Chamber developed a certification program. Now, more than 140 corporate partners look for that LGBT-certified designation.

Vedda said the program is still new, and less than 1,000 companies have been certified throughout the U.S.

Gaining certification requires an application disclosing financial information and ownership information proving the company is at least 51 percent LGBT owned and operated, followed by a site visit. Vedda said locally he or Tim DeWitt, a former North Texas GLBT Chamber board president, will conduct the visit.

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For the classes already listed in the County Code, the remedy is different.

“If the study shows, yes, we have discriminated, we can set numerical goals,” he said.

Tony Vedda, president and CEO of the North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce, has been in touch with the commissioners court about its supplier certification program. That program is administered by the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. He agreed with Hikel on mandates for LGBT suppliers.

“There’s no federal requirement for doing an LGBT spend,” Vedda said.

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Should Dallas County decide to include LGBT companies in its diverse supplier program, despite lack of federal inclusion, at least 25 local companies have already qualified.
Parenting workshop

HRC The Family Project presents a workshop for prospective parents. One- or two-parent adoptions by gays and lesbians are legal in Texas and encouraged by a number of agencies in the Dallas area.

Five speakers include a fertility specialist, an attorney specializing in adoption, egg and embryo donation and surrogacy, Jonathan’s Place’s director of foster care and adoption and others. Parents who have children through adoption and surrogacy will also speak.

Jonathan’s Place, 6065 Duck Creek Dr., Garland. May 10 from 1-3 p.m.

Queerbomb creating video

Queerbomb, the alternative Pride event planned for June, will do a video shoot this weekend. Anyone who would like to participate should just show up.

“We are looking for outgoing, upbeat individuals to help us tell the world about Queerbomb!” organizer Daniel Cates wrote about the shoot.

He asked participants to arrive camera ready. Be creative, dress colorfully, celebratory or in a way that reflects your unique queer identity.

Queerbomb will provide a script, but participants will be given an opportunity to use their own words as well. A model release form will be provided. Plan to be there several hours.

Beauty Box Salon, 4209 Herschel Ave. May 11 at 4 p.m.

Second Give Out Day

On May 9, 2012, President Barack Obama came out for marriage equality. That date has been named Give OUT Day. Last year, 5,474 people made 6,592 donations to 500 organizations totaling $602,920.

Search for organizations and make a donation at GiveOut.Razoo.com.

The event’s 24-hour contribution drive on May 9 is aimed at showing support for the queer community and its issues. Among the local organizations participating are TransPride Initiative, GeEQUAL and Equality Texas.

Happy Hours

GALA Gay and Lesbian Alliance of North Texas, formerly Collin County Gay and Lesbian Alliance, holds third Thursday happy hour mixer at On The Border, Preston Road at Highway 121 on May 15 at 6 p.m. Lambda Legal’s Spring Mix and Mingle is May 14 at Sambuca, 2120 McKinney Ave., 5:30 p.m.
Candidates vying to replace Burns back LGBT issues

3 of 6 Fort Worth City Council hopefuls talk about the importance of queer community in Cowtown and their need for representation

FORT WORTH — When Fort Worth Councilman Joel Burns announced his resignation from his post in February, the thing on the LGBT community’s mind was how would they replace him.

Burns took the seat in 2007 when Wendy Davis resigned to run for the state Senate. During his seven years on the council, he’s helped improve the city’s infrastructure and green initiatives, but has also been a voice for the LGBT community as an openly gay council member.

Millions have watched his 2010 “It Gets Better” video where he became emotional at the horseshoe, sharing his experiences growing up and being bullied.

Now, six candidates are lining up to replace him. Of them Ann Zadeh, Bernie Scheffler and Greg Hughes spoke to Dallas Voice about their support for the LGBT community as an openly gay council member. Millions have watched his 2010 “It Gets Better” video where he became emotional at the horseshoe, sharing his experiences growing up and being bullied.

Scheffler and Hughes all expressed interest in expanding the city’s healthcare for transgender employees, adding the LGBT protections outlined in the city’s nondiscrimination ordinance on housing and job applications within the city, including LGBT issues on the city’s legislative agenda and creating or altering city forms to be gender neutral.

Currently the city’s plan doesn’t cover anything for its trans employees, including hormones. Adding comprehensive trans healthcare, which would include gender reassignment surgery, is the one outstanding item on a list of recommendations made by the Diversity Task Force after the Rainbow Lounge raid in 2009.

Hughes, 57, an engineer at Lockheed Martin, is a former member of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority board. He said his record on LGBT issues date back to 2009 when he testified before the council on adding gender identity to the city’s nondiscrimination ordinance barring bias in housing, employment and public accommodations.

“I didn’t have anyone in my family that would be particularly affected by that, to my knowledge anyway, but that as a straight Chris-
Out & Equal plans 2nd ‘Frame Your Love’ event

Out employees in Metroplex are encouraged to place a picture of their significant other on their desk, meet up later to discuss reactions in workplace at Sue Ellen’s.

As same-sex relationships continue to gain acceptance in the political arena, LGBT people have come to hope and expect acceptance in the workplace. And Out & Equal DFW is helping achieve that.

The group is planning its second “Frame Your Love” event Tuesday, May 13, where LGBT people across the Metroplex are encouraged to place a picture of their spouse, partner or boyfriend or girlfriend on their desks.

Paul von Wupperfeld, a founder of the DFW regional affiliate and the group’s market and communications officer, said the event is intended to help more people come out at work or come further out with co-workers. Since National Coming Out day doesn’t apply to many professionals who are already out, he said the event is a way for out people to take another step.

“We were thinking about what would be a workplace-appropriate way to allow people to express their relationship,” he said. “Being able to put your loved one’s picture out in a public area really seems very central to the idea of an inclusive workplace.”

The first event was held in the fall of 2012 with about 50 people showing up to discuss their experiences, both positive and negative. Von Wupperfeld said the negative experiences at that event were people who weren’t quite ready to put a picture on their desks yet. Others had great experiences.

“It was a very powerful thing,” he said about the first event. “It was a much more powerful thing than I think a lot of us expected.”

He expects more people to participate this year and to share their stories afterward.

“Coming out is not a one-time event,” Von Wupperfeld said. “It’s something that you do in stages, and being able to put your loved one’s picture out is an important step in that process.”

Frame Your Love takes place Tuesday, May 13. Participants will gather at Sue Ellen’s from 6-8 p.m. to discuss their workdays.
tian person, I was supporting it because it was the right thing to do," he said.

He said he’s also been an outspoken advocate for marriage equality and even served on the diversity council at Lockheed.

As for trans healthcare, he said he knows the cost would be minimal to the city, but he’d request the city manager to analyze the numbers, and he would even bring it to the council for consideration.

“I would certainly bring that back and instruct the city manager to bring us the numbers,” Hughes said. “I would make the case for it.”

Bernie Scheffler, 35, is a bicycle shop owner and appointed to the park board by Burns. He said he knew the LGBT community is watching the race because they’ve had a representative in office and now have to determine who to look to now.

“I think they’re watching closer because they, in talking to some of them, they’ve had it really good the past seven years, and certainly people don’t want to take steps back,” he said, adding that it’ll be tough for anyone to replace Burns.

“I don’t know if anyone can follow Joel’s footsteps for the LGBT community. Those are hard shoes to fill,” Scheffler said he’d push for LGBT issues to be included on the city’s legislative agenda for the city lobbyists to take to Austin and support a statewide ban on LGBT job discrimination, which the city already bans. He worked for state Sen. Wendy Davis during her first term and said that experience showed him the impact cities have on policy.

“The weight that a city carries when they come and lobby for something is pretty tremendous,” he said. “If Fort Worth believes that it’s the right thing to do, which they have shown that they have, then they need to advocate for other cities to adopt ordinances as well, and I would include lobbying for it at the state level.”

Ann Zadeh, 47, is a certified planner who served six years as the mayor’s appointee to the Fort Worth Zoning Commission. She was endorsed by the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

She said she wasn’t as knowledgeable about trans healthcare to make a decision to fully back a comprehensive plan, adding that she’d want to look at all the coverage for employees and see how the change would fit into the city’s plan.

“I would have to look into that more thoroughly. That is a new issue to me,” Zadeh said. “It’s not something I’m opposed to. I’m definitely interested in looking into it to make sure anybody who works for the city gets the health coverage they need to help them lead a happy, healthy life.”

Along with lobbying efforts by the city, Zadeh said she’d encourage people from every community to apply to serve on boards and commissions. There are only two known openly gay members on city boards and commissions.

“I would encourage LGBT people to serve on boards and commissions to be involved and be heard,” she said.

David Mack Henderson, president of Fairness Fort Worth, said the slate is “a pretty descent flock to work with.”

Of the five who appeared at the forum, he said they all seemed open to working with the LGBT community. But he said the community also needs to be more present in municipal issues instead of relying on Burns or his replacement to do the work.

“All of the five candidates who appeared, they all seemed open to working with the LGBT community. But he said the community also needs to be more present in municipal issues instead of relying on Burns or his replacement to do the work.”

Election Day is Saturday, May 10. In the event of a runoff, it’d be held on June 21.
Sam receives award

AP — Michael Sam, the college football player who is likely to become the first openly gay player in the NFL, has been selected the winner of the Arthur Ashe Courage Award.

Sam will receive the award given to individuals who transcend sports at the 2014 ESPYs on July 16. The award is named after the late tennis star who became an early campaigner for AIDS awareness.

The Missouri defensive end, who is SEC Defensive Player of the Year, announced earlier this year that he is gay. ESPN is honoring Sam for “his courage and honesty that resonates beyond sports.”

Sam said he was honored to receive the award. “You know I don’t think there is anything courageous I did. I look forward to when we can live life in a world when gays don’t have to come out in public,” he said, adding that he has received support from athletes in all sports, “from football to basketball to softball to soccer, everyone.”

“I am thrilled to be living in a time when you can be accepted for how you live.”

Sam joins a prestigious list of winners ranging from Jim Valvano, the first recipient in 1995, to Muhammad Ali, Billie Jean King, Cathy Freeman, Nelson Mandela and Pat Summitt.

Ashe, the first black tennis player to win the singles title at Wimbledon, in 1975, died in 1993 after contracting AIDS from a blood transfusion. After learning he had the disease, Ashe campaigned to raise awareness about AIDS.

“Arthur always believed in and practiced leading by example,” said Ashe’s widow, Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe. “When Michael Sam announced that he is gay, he courageously stepped forward to engage an issue that still remains a pervasive problem in many professional sports. Michael has displayed true leadership both on and off the field.”

Sam, from Hitchcock, Texas, is one of eight children. Two of his siblings have died and one disappeared and has not been found.

Maura Mandt, executive producer of the ESPYs, calls Sam a “humble guy who isn’t looking for any accolades.”

“In deciding to give Michael this honor, while his courageous act of coming out is a part of it, the story is about the life he led growing up,” Mandt added. “A man who has consistently lived his life with integrity, is never afraid of living this truth.”
Houston ordinance passes another hurdle

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
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HOUSTON — While some Houstonians voiced concerns about Mayor Annise Parker’s proposed nondiscrimination ordinance, the City Council didn’t face the rancorous protests that accompanied passage of San Antonio’s ordinance last fall.

On Tuesday, the Houston City Council heard public comments about the proposed ordinance that will cover employment, housing and public accommodations and create a human rights commission to monitor complaints.

Among those speaking against the proposal was Houston Community College Trustee Dave Wilson who won his seat in a minority district by insinuating he was black in his campaign literature. He is known in Houston for the anti-gay literature he had sent during each of Parker’s campaigns. Parker is lesbian.

Wilson introduced himself to the council as president of Houstonians for Family Values.

“This ordinance is not about equal rights,” Wilson told the council.

He called it payback by Parker to her constituency.

“Homosexual behavior is immoral and unnatural,” he said and claimed it will lead to the collapse of society.

One person who applauded when he finished was told public displays of approval or disapproval are inappropriate in the council chamber.

Most of the comments were more like those of January Leo, who works at Legacy Community Health Services, one of Houston’s AIDS Service providers. She talked about her daughter, who was bullied at school.

“It’s not easy being an ally for what’s often an unpopular belief,” Leo said.

When the council met on Wednesday, Parker accepted amendments to the ordinance from councilmembers.

Among the amendments was a change in number of employees. The draft ordinance covers employees of companies with 50 or more. The amendment would reduce that number to 25 in one year, and in two years, all companies with 15 or more employees would be covered. That would bring it in line with the Dallas ordinance.

Another amendment would clarify restroom usage for transgender people. One council member wanted to eliminate criminal penalties for a first-time offender under the ordinance.

As Parker ended discussion on the ordinance, she said amendments would be debated at the next meeting.

The Houston City Council meets on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Houston is the largest city in the U.S. without any nondiscrimination ordinance and the only major city in Texas without those protections. Dallas, Austin, Fort Worth and El Paso have had nondiscrimination ordinances in place for more than a decade. San Antonio put those protections in place last year.
A Moonie mass wedding inspired a travel agency owner to take nuptials to the high seas

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

The captain of the cruise ship Carnival Pride won’t be performing 50 same-sex weddings aboard ship next spring. Instead, ordained minister Karen Emery of A Wedding for You will perform those 50 weddings onboard ship while it’s still docked in Baltimore.

Tom Pecena, owner of Ahoy Cruises in University Park, blocked 50 cabins for same-sex couples who’d like to combine their shipboard wedding with a honeymoon cruise.

He said he can accommodate up to 50 couples as well as additional family and friends who’d like to witness the wedding and accompany the newlyweds on their cruise.

The seven-day cruise departs April 26, 2015. That’s a Sunday, but couples must arrive in Baltimore by Friday morning to get to the county clerk in time to pick up a wedding license. Maryland has been a marriage equality state since 2013.

Emery called the Carnival Pride the perfect name for a ship to host the weddings.

“Hopefully, the 50 couples will come from all over the country,” Emery said.

She said she arranged a cocktail party after the ceremony and then a beach party at Port Canaveral, Fla., the ship’s first port of call.

Pecena said the preferred departure ports were Galveston or Fort Lauderdale, but Texas and Florida don’t have marriage equality. Cruises leave from San Diego and Los Angeles, but California requires people to make appointments to apply for a marriage license, so this type of event couldn’t be arranged.

Making those type of arrangements can be challenging for anyone planning an out-of-state wedding.

Cooper Smith, who refers to himself as bridezilla, is getting married this summer in San Francisco. He said he thought a wedding cruise was a wonderful idea.

“Because anyone’s wedding from Texas has to be a destination wedding, we’re looking at where everyone will stay,” Smith said. “We’re having to play tour guide. A cruise would have taken care of that for us.”

Pecena’s company specializes in cruises, safaris and luxury trains. Among the trips he features is a river cruise up the Thames from London to Stratford-upon-Avon. His Egypt trips are with an Egyptologist rather than a tour guide. Among his favorite train trips are scenic routes between Cape Town and Victoria, South Africa, and Singapore to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

While this is the first same-sex wedding and honeymoon cruise he’s put together, he done a number of specialty cruises. He said a big band cruise with Jan Garber and His Orchestra attracted more than 100 couples.

“We danced our way through the Caribbean,” he said.

A nine-day golf cruise included stops in Nice and Corsica.

What inspired the trip may seem odd.

“I saw an old picture of a Moonie mass wedding,” Pecena said.

But once he got his inspiration and connected with Emery, he began promoting it to his clientele and has already had inquiries from more than 100 interested couples around the country.

To reserve a cabin, contact Pecena at 214-761-1968. A $250 per person deposit must be paid by May 30.
Ripping the hunks with brains might make us feel better about ourselves, but it shows our insecurities

EMERSON COLLINS | Contributing Writer

The scene. A gaggle of gays, bedecked in their Sunday Funday finest, stand sipping top-shelf cocktails at the bar. One guy stops abruptly halfway through his forty-seventh scan of the crowd, his jaw drops, and he exclaims, “Oh my god! Check that one out, he is guuuuuorgeous!” The rest of the circle turns to check the object of affection, and a second guy banters back, “Yeah, but he’s probably dumb as a box of hair.” The first guy, undeterred, responds, “I do not care. I would (insert appropriately graphic analogy here) to him.” Fin.

It’s a scene that occurs with clockwork frequency at gay bars, parties, gatherings or fundraisers, for where two or three guys have gathered together, eye candy shall be judged in their midst. I think it’s in the gay Bible.

It’s also a fascinating insight into how we judge ourselves and each other. I’ve never once heard the opening commentary about an attractive man be followed by, “And I bet he’s brilliant.” We just aren’t open to that possibility. Why is that?

We’re open to intelligence and witty conversation from those who are deemed cute, attractive, handsome or quirky, but when someone is that unquantifiable kind of gorgeous where everyone kinds of has to acknowledge their beauty, whether they are your personal type or not — we do not like them smart.

It can be seen in the nonchalant and regular judgment of gogo boys, porn stars, models, shirtless runners and those guys at the gym with the annoyingly low body fat and eight-packs that are visible through the bulkiest of sweaters. Entirely too regularly, there’s the assumption that if they look like that, they must be stupid.

I think it’s because some subconscious part of many of us believes the universe is supposed to be fair. It should not be possible to be the kind of Greek-god-attractive that turns every head in the darkest of rooms and be intelligent, insightful, truly hilarious or phenomenally talented. Definitely not all of the above, because one person should not win everything in the genetic lottery. Because if they do, what does that say about the rest of us? For many who have accepted the reality that on the generalized modern beauty aesthetic we are somewhere on the scale below the perfect 10, part of the way we have created our own self-esteem is in giving the appropriate value to the other strengths we bring to the table. As adults who are looking for a partner for life’s adventure we’ve realized that surface attraction is a single component in a very complicated formula. We may not turn every head, but once the conversation starts, we shine brighter the longer it lasts.

This is not a “be nice to the poor super-hot Adonis at the bar” defense of the personality and intelligence of the uber-beautiful. Given many of our visceral reactions to them, they probably do just fine. Nor is it an attempt to defend those who, with longer viewing and interaction, do turn out to be the disgusting template for the eye-roll inducing, dumb, narcissistic hot guy assumption. They’re certainly out there.

I’m more concerned about what the assumption says about the rest of us. If we need them to be stupid in order to feel equal, or superior, to them as a total package, we’re looking at it wrong. It means that in the split second leading to the need to decide, without knowing them, they must be a moron, we’ve looked at them, compared ourselves to them and found ourselves wanting on a purely aesthetic comparison. Then we searched for something to even the playing field — and called them stupid.

We shouldn’t do that to them, sure, but far more importantly, we shouldn’t be doing that to ourselves. Would it be nice to be that top tier level of attractive? The narcissist in me says absolutely. There was a time in late adolescence where I legitimately had the thought that I would trade all of my other gifts and talents to be that Abercrombie V-shaped perfect specimen, even if I was below average in every other way. And I meant it. I thought it would be so much easier not to have to reassure myself continuously that “once they get to know me, it usually gets better.”

I don’t feel that way anymore, but I still have to aggressively resist the urge to look at those I perceive as hotter than me and compare myself to them, totally objectively of course. It’s one of the strange aspects of homosexual attraction and dating. We can do a one-to-one comparison with potential paramours of everything from intelligence and talents to knowledge to athletic ability to … well, sizes — all of them, and that one. We should really, truly, definitely not do that to each other or ourselves.

It’s ultimately about our confidence and perception of others, but it starts with how we view ourselves. It’s looking in the mirror and not seeing the traumas of bullying or adolescence, but acknowledging the man standing there now. It’s seeing the things that make him beautiful, both inside and out, and loving and truly embracing the uniqueness of him as a total package.

If we can truly do that, then that eerily symmetrical and perfectly presented example of male desirability at the bar will not be a threat, nor someone we need to measure up to. He will just be a beautiful man we can appreciate without needing to bring him down to the level where our insecurities express themselves prior to engaging with him.

After all, if we didn’t let our personal issues rush us to an unfair prejudice, we might find ourselves chatting him up and finding we love him, just as we do with a passion for life that makes a great new lover. Or friend.

But, if he proves to be that stereotypical self-absorbed jackass who we were predisposed to assume he was, well then it’s a perfect opportunity to remind him that beauty fades, but stupid is forever, and his Instagram photos won’t keep him warm when he is old and alone. We can feel good about that, too. We just won’t need hot guys to be stupid in order to enjoy them.
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Reader offended by reporting, not by anti-gay slurs

Dear Editor,

I am appalled at the fact that you took students’ social media posts and made them out to be homophobic. Coming from a lesbian girl, there isn’t a single homophobic student here at SMU. I hate you for portraying SMU as “Nazis” and taking social media posts and quoting them out of context.

A friend of mine, Sarah Gimbel, was interviewed and expressed her intelligent and well thought-out comments on why she voted no, but you left all of that out and used her quote out of context to show support for your article. Those “faggot” posts mean nothing.

As the great Louis CK once said, “I’m fine to see two guys sucking dicks, but if one take it out and says ‘people from Phoenix are Phoenicians’ I would say ‘quit being a faggot and suck that dick’.” I demand you run a retraction article and apologize to the students of SMU.

Name on file

Dear Editor,

I read, with interest, your article regarding the second defeat of a vote that would have included an LGBT on the student Senate. The article troubled me, but I think it is representative of the apathy that I see growing in the gay community. I put most of the blame on social media.

I have lived in Dallas since 1978. There were no such things as Twitter, Facebook, cellphones or computers. People talked to each other, and incidents got noticed by word of mouth.

The first time I ever took any kind of political action was against a Dallas judge named Jack Hampton. He gave a lighter sentence to the killers of gay men because he said, basically, that the victims brought it on themselves by cruising in the parks.

That lit a match under a lot of us, and I would guess there were about 200 of us picketing at City Hall soon after that was printed in the paper. I remember the March On Washington, when the first George Bush was president, when we ascended on Washington D.C., by the thousands, displayed our beautiful quilt, had a candlelight vigil and shook our fists in defiance as the president took off (or landed — can’t recall which) in his helicopter from/to the White House. We were united, and we were defiant, and we were Larry Kramer-like angry.

Then the cell phone, computer, Twitter and Facebook come along. With it, came the ability to post things anonymously and viciously. With it came, what I would call, a fragmentation of outlets for people’s thoughts and actions. For example, now, when there is some petition going around, an easy example would be about something outrageous that Rick Perry said, it is simply sent to my email and from/to the White House. We were united, and we were defiant, and we were Larry Kramer-like angry.

The pro-choice people have rallied by the thousands in support of the courage of Wendy Davis. Now, it seems as if the gay community couldn’t care less. And the most troubling aspect of this is that it is young people — the same demographic that seems to overwhelmingly support gay marriage and gay rights in general.

So apparently these supposed “intellectuals” I mean, let’s face it, SMU is not easy to get into, are being influenced by anonymous, hateful Twitter messages and allowing it to influence their vote.

Quite frankly, I am surprised they voted at all, but the fact that they did, in higher numbers than in the first election, shows that the time for sitting back and allowing this to happen without any kind of public reaction is just plain wrong. Granted, this is an SMU issue. I am hopeful that there are enough students and professors on campus who will rally to try and educate students about the effects of discrimination.

The fact that this vote ended up going against an LGBT representative is, in my opinion, the continued influence that previous generations still have on our young people. The people who wrote the hateful tweets had to learn that line of thinking somewhere, and it has to be from their parents or from the parents of their friends.

I am still very hopeful that as the older generations fade away, the younger ones will see the errors of their ways. Until then, we must not continue to sit at our computers and hope someone else has the courage to stand up for what is right. We must all come together, once again, to assist in forwarding the message that discrimination in any form is wrong.

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Not many people can ordinarily call Kylie Minogue their personal matchmaker, but Stephen Massey, 36 — better known as DJ Grind — is far from ordinary.

“I actually met my partner because of Kylie,” Massey, who currently resides in Portland, says playfully. “I was asked to open for her in San Francisco on her Aphrodite Tour. My [current] boyfriend was in the audience and messaged me afterwards. That’s how we got together.”

Remarkably, Massey’s link to Minogue doesn’t end there. His career as a world-class remixer was launched by a remake of Minogue’s single “Into the Blue,” a track that he and Philippines-based producing partner Toy Armada created.

“We did it as a bootleg,” Massey says. “The record label loved it and licensed it from us. From there we started getting more and more remix work.”

Recent chart-topping remixes from the duo include tracks from Cher, Betty Who and former American Idol contestant Kimberly Locke, among others. “Kylie’s team commissioned a second remix, which I will be debuting at Purple Party called ‘Beautiful,’ a duet with Enrique Iglesias,” Massey says.

This may all seem a far cry from his prior career as a fitness instructor, but Massey first started recording mix sets as a hobby and for use as workout soundtracks.

“I loved dance music and used to post a daily music review for my friends that I called the Daily Grind,” he says, referencing the notion that in life we are always grinding our gears. “That’s how I got my [DJ] name.”

His first live performance was an unexpected stroke of luck. A friend who owned a Castro District nightclub was in a bind when a scheduled DJ canceled at the last minute. He called Massey to fill in. “He thought it was time for DJ Grind to debut,” says Massey; he was up for the challenge.

His tireless search for emerging dance tracks continues today. He now distributes his exhibition sets online as monthly podcasts. “I developed a strong fanbase through the podcasts,” Massey explains. “I try to scout the new producers and DJs.” To date, his podcasts have astonishingly achieved more than four million downloads worldwide.

Stylistically, Massey admits to preferring music with uplifting vocals and bright melodies. “I am sort of an unapologetic fan of happy music, and that is the type of experience that I like to deliver to the dance floor,” he says. “When we come together for an event [like Purple Party], it is a celebration of our community. I like to try to create a really joyful experience through the music.”

Although this weekend’s event may be Massey’s debut on the Purple Party roster as a DJ, it is not his first visit to the annual charity event that benefits local HIV/AIDS organizations. Last year, he was here … as a reveler.

“I attended Purple Party last year because I had heard so much about it. I was really struck by the party,” he says, describing the event as positive, upbeat and well produced. “I wasn’t even on the lineup, but they were really grateful that I had come. A lot of DJs who were not on the lineup were actually there. It was kind of like a DJ reunion.”

For Massey, the most rewarding aspect of being a DJ is the opportunity to make unexpected connections with complete strangers.

“I am really humbled by the people who reach out and tell me how the music has changed their lives, he says. “I have gotten notes from people who say they are feeling down, but my music makes them feel better. The power of music can be humbling.”

As an in-demand DJ headlining circuit parties around the globe, Massey also enjoys the opportunity to travel, often with his partner. This year alone, Massey has headlined at premier events including Sydney’s Mardi Gras and Palm Springs’ White Party. He is slated to appear later this year at NYC Pride’s Dance on the Pier.

“It can be a tough business,” Massey admits. “There are lots of DJs and talent, but supportive friends have encouraged me, and it’s been really inspiring.

I’m trying to soak it all in and enjoy it while I can.”

But if you should ever happen to catch a ride with Massey, don’t expect dance music in the car. “I listen to NPR,” he says. “I’m a total news junkie.”
Abel Aguilera, professionally known as DJ Abel, has been a circuit party fixture and top tier club DJ for nearly two decades. But as much as anything, he considers himself a teacher, passing along gay culture’s exceptional dance music tradition — both through his booming live sets and his frequently released podcasts.

“I just feel that it’s my duty to educate my crowd,” says Aguilera, who lives in Miami. “I want them to hear our history. It’s a culture that we have. Our nightclubs are not just nightclubs where you meet and dance. There is a culture to it, just like [with] fashion.”

Aguilera also dispels a common misconception that the DJ’s job is an easy one. “[People] don’t realize how much work goes into a night,” he says, recounting the number of overnight hours he spends scouring the Internet in search of each week’s best new releases. “You have to dig through so much crap!”

Aguilera’s live sets are stylistically broad, and his signature sound defies a tidy label.

“I probably describe it easily as a progressive, tribal, vocal house,” he says. “It’s hard to say a particular name. I don’t want to call myself a tribal DJ, because I’m not just pots and pans. Progressive house is the most common word to use.”

Descriptive eloquence aside, proof that DJ Abel returns (finally) to Dallas to headline Purple Party’s opener, Ignite

SCOTT HUFFMAN | Contributing Writer
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At 25, monologuist John Michael discovered himself by serving old folks

The cliché advice to authors is, “Write what you know.” For John Michael, that’s always come fairly easy. Or at least, it did.

John Michael has always burned to express himself creatively. He tried acting, but he was not good at it. “I can’t impersonate other people, which is what actors do,” he says in frank self-reflection. So he did the next best thing: He took to the stage as a monologuist (preferable to the dreaded portmanteau term “performance artist”) and put his life up for all to see. Every. Awful. Detail.

How awful? Well, working in fast-food to start. Then talking about what a slob he is, and how it got him kicked out of his parents’ house (twice) and even a commune of hippies. (Note: If hippies think you’re sloppy, you should probably have your own reality TV series.) Then about how he contracted syphilis. Then his fantasies about giving Harry Potter (“the defining character of my generation,” he says) AIDS.

But all that was just him. It changed when he looked outside himself. That seemed too personal.

John Michael’s new solo performance piece, Crossing Your Is, was already in the works and once again, it was being directed by John Michael’s former collaborator and mentor Matt Tomlanovich. Then earlier this spring, Tomlanovich gave him his approval. It was OK to freely about his own tragedies, but incorporating someone else’s seemed grotesque.

But then the unexpected happened: Tomlanovich gave him his approval. It was OK to mention the paralysis — that’s what artists do. “I didn’t want to talk about him, but I realized that what I do the most — I talk about my life,” John Michael says. “Then Matt said it was OK … just don’t ask my wife for permission first.”

KERNELS OF TRUTH | A mentor’s personal tragedy, and a job serving dementia patients, put John Michael on the right path — and fueled his latest monologue. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)
Perhaps ironically, exploring Tomlanovich’s illness segued into the theme of Crossing Your I’s: How John Michael, at 25, is ready to grow up.

It’s something neither he, his family nor close friends thought would ever happen. And it started with a job.

About 15 months ago, after a series of jobs that lasted no more than four months, John Michael went on Craigslist and typed in the qualities he felt he best embodied: “Clever,” “creative,” “out-of-the-box.” (Phrases he didn’t use: “Professional,” “on time,” “clean.”) And what came back was a job working with elderly dementia patients in a Dallas nursing home.

It seemed at first an odd fit. Indeed, it was. Early on, he was constantly on the brink of being fired, criticized constantly for what he did wrong. But he also knew his traits should work in this setting.

“I had to break out of my selfish shell and being me at work,” he says. “Now, I do things I couldn’t see myself doing two years ago. And I get comments about being a better friend, a better person.”

All of this led him to think, what would it be like if his future self visited his present-day self … and he had gotten dementia? What would that experience be like?

It would be a lot like — no, exactly like — Crossing Your I’s.

The piece would not have been possible without channeling at that he has learned about older people and more importantly, himself, by hanging with the residents of his facility. (“I’m not doing impersonation of the residents,” John Michael stresses. “It’s one thing doing an impersonation of a one-night; it’s another to do it with someone suffering from dementia.”)

Some of the lessons he’s gleaned from his role with the residents is how not to make every moment of every day about him; patients with encroaching senility have a world view that has shrunk, with their oldest memories usually the easiest ones to remember (and the last to fade).

Sometimes, that means they make racist comments that would not have raised an eyebrow 50 years ago; sometimes it means being annoying as a mechanism for asserting their presence in a situation. And what John Michael does is help them maintain their dignity.

“A lot of my day is figuring out how I can get them to do things,” he says. “Some dementia patients don’t even know they are hungry, and you want to get them to eat. Some do things like this one woman who started to brush her hair with a knife. I didn’t say, ‘Put that down! That’s a knife, it can hurt you!’ I say, ‘I love that brush — can I borrow it and give you another one?’”

Recently, he offered one female patient a bowl of popcorn (“we make a lot of popcorn there — because of the smell and how easy it is to do, and everybody likes popcorn!”), and when she proceeded to take off her shoe and pour the popcorn into it and offered it to him. Rather than correct her, he just rolled with it. “But I didn’t bring anything for you!” he said, accepting the offer.

He was recently given a promotion and a new job title: To help devise activities for the lower-functioning residents — a job he’s embraced with gusto. And perhaps that’s the most surprising development in his life so far.

“It’s not about me” is a lesson everyone needs to learn, and one that John Michael has turned into his latest stab at art. (He’s performing as part of the Dallas Solo Festival, a week-long one-person play which features eight performers, including local actor-playwrights Danny Tomlanovich and Marko MILLINICH.)

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Dysfunctional divas
Fitting in with ‘Sherlock’ and ‘The Lyons’

The Lyons begins with the end. Act 1, set entirely in a hospital room, is about a dysfunctional family tentatively coming together while dear ol’ dad (Terry Vandivort) is in the grip of a death-rattle that includes spewing contempt for his gay son Curtis (Austin Tindle) and compassion for his flaky daughter Lisa (Kristen McCullough) while wife Rita (Georgia Clinton) prattles on about redecorating as soon as he’s a corpse. It’s dark humor with a Jewish accent, where guilt trips are about the only vacations these combative folks take together.

When Act 2 starts, however, the tone changes substantially; it’s all about Curtis (just part of the ensemble in Act 1), and his back-story seems darker, more pathetic than we imagined. We always knew he was damaged goods, but he’s sadder now, awkwardly flirting with a Realtor (Christopher Deaton, pictured below right, with Tindle) in a spiral of desperation. Then it ends up, more or less, where it started: Back in a hospital room, though the dynamic is different.

That all makes Nicky Silver’s family comedy-drama a strangely bifurcated—or really, trifurcated—play. What’s it about? What’s its focus? It feels more like the pilot of a premium cable TV series than a self-contained play. You could just as easily follow the sister, or the mom, on the misadventures that got them to this point. Why just the son?

Nevertheless, Silver shows facility with the kind of sharp one-liners Neil Simon used to specialize in, updated for the current millennium, and it coasts well on those. It helps that the best of them are delivered with laser-like snark by Clinton, chief narcissist in this hive of self-involved losers. Vandivort’s slow-boil rage, expressed with spits of anti-paternal disappointment, are priceless as well, and Tindle embodies a defensive posture than makes you believe he’s not at home in his own skin. When your skin comes courtesy of these genes, why would you feel comfortable?

Almost as dysfunctional, though far more famous, is Sherlock Holmes (Chamblee Ferguson, pictured above), the OCD-afflicted, drug-addled consulting detective of Conan Doyle’s many stories, who solves crimes using pure logic (he’s sort of a 19th century Sheldon Cooper from The Big Bang Theory, without the understanding of astrophysics). But has the time finally come when Holmes will allow himself to be blinded by feelings for a woman (Jessica D. Turner), and make a misstep that will cost his life at the hand of the villainous Professor Moriarty (Regan Adair)?

Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure is based on a century old play by William Gillette, one of those Victorian-era impresarios who traveled the world performing his best-known character for decades. Playwright Steven Dietz has updated the language and structure, but left intact the melodrama, which director Kevin Moriarty happily emphasizes: Brooding, spooky-house music, moody lighting, elaborate sets and costumes and even more elaborate entrances. If you can allow yourself to be swept away in the camp of it all, there’s a certain delicious enjoyment of experiencing the iconic detective, well-played by Ferguson.

But the script eschews some basic bits of Holmesiana (Mrs. Hudson, the Baker Street Irregulars, Sherlock’s violin solos) and you find your mind darting toward missed opportunities. When you serve up this much ham, you expect all the fixin’s with it. That’s not rocket science; it’s elementary.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

The Lyons, through May 18. UptownPlayers.org.
The Ford Fusion Energi, a plug-in hybrid, posts fuel economy near 100-MPG, but it’s all so complicated, what with the cord and stuff. We don’t need all that complication. Most people don’t want it. But those same folks will probably cuddle up to the ever-so-simplified 2014 Ford Fusion Hybrid.

When you learn how it works, you may not think the Fusion Hybrid is so simplified, but at least it does all it does without looking for an outlet. Under the fast hood is a 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine working in parallel with Lithium-Ion batteries, electric motor, start/stop technology, and regenerative disc brakes to deliver 47/47-MPG city/hwy. All of that nets 188 horses. It takes a few miles to get used to the grabby brakes and silence at stoplights, but it soon feels as familiar as Garland and rainbows.

Unlike some hybrid science projects from other automakers, the Fusion is attractive. As with other Fusions, it hits the wind with an Aston Martin-inspired chrome smile and flows back with a taut multi-faceted hood, tight body sculpting and swept roofline. It is sporty and elegant, but allows for a roomy interior and trunk. Without finding the Hybrid logos, you’d have no idea how much technology hides beneath.

When I last drove the Fusion Energi, the trunk was disappointing. To achieve the Energ-i’s impressive performance, it has a ginormous battery pack that hogs much of the trunk and prevents items from passing through to the rear seats. There’s still a pretty big battery pack in the Hybrid, but you can fold down the rear seats, toss in a bicycle or stroller, and hit the highway. What you give up in fuel economy you gain in practicality.

The rest of the interior is pretty and practical. Our test car came with heated leather seats, automatic climate control, leather-wrapped multifunction steering wheel, USB input and Bluetooth calling/audio streaming. Techies will play with the instrument screens that display recent fuel usage, infotainment functions, or a cool branch that “grows” and “withers” leaves depending on how environmentally-friendly you drive. Woodgrain and silver finishes on the dash and doors, and intricate mesh stereo speakers, echo Audi.

There’s much more tech to impress. MyFord Touch infotainment places a touchpad in the console for climate and audio controls. Above, drivers use a touchscreen to access audio, navigation, phone, and climate controls. Or, just command the starship by voice. Forward collision alert, blind spot warning, lane keeping system, reverse sensing, rearview camera and adaptive cruise control are part of the considerable safety suite. Not good at parallel parking? No problem; Active Park Assist kicks it in for you.

Beyond all of the wizardry, the Fusion Hybrid is a nice car to drive once you get over the hybrid quirks. Its chassis is a good balance of competent handling and soaking up rough American city streets. On the highway, it wafts along unbothered. Cornering on the low-rolling-resistance tires will not have you wishing for backroads. There’s not enough power to snap your neck either, but nobody buying this sleekster will be displeased.

I like the Fusion Energi and its nearly 100-MPG, but if you want to simplify your life, the regular Hybrid has its virtues.

Perhaps most of all is a base price $7,500 lower than the Energ-i. Stickers start at $27,280, but came to $35,160 as tested.
The gift of gay

Wedding season unofficially kicks off this month, and with more and more states deeming same-sex marriages legal you’re bound to receive an invitation to your friends’ fabulous nuptials any minute. And that means you’ll need to buy a gift.

But instead of sticking to the registry — do they really need more stuff? — think outside the Crate & Barrel and opt for a practical-but-still-thoughtful present that the happy couple can put to good use. Here are 10 ideas to get you started.

1. **Date-planning subscription.** Date-planning services — like HowAboutWe Couples and Kahnoodle Concierge — are tricky because they often only serve a limited area (New York City for the former; San Francisco and D.C. for the latter), but you may be able to find a similar concept in the area in which your newlywed friends live. Date options run the gamut of uncommon experiences like ring-smithing classes, fencing lessons and body-painting sessions to tamer outings, like comedy shows and wine tastings. To help keep the first year of marriage fresh and fun for your friends, gift a year subscription to one of these services so the pair can enjoy quality time together while participating in an activity they may never have thought of themselves.

2. **Moving crew.** Remember the last time you moved and you swore you’d never do it again without the help of (preferably hard-bodied, shirtless) movers? If your just-married pals are re-locating soon, do them a solid and hire the same for them. Such an act of largesse can set you back, so you can always go halvesies with other friends, pay for just several hours or put that F-150 to use and get your best group of gays to commit to helping the couple start anew. The only cost of going this route is time and energy, plus you’ll get in a great workout without having to go to the gym.

3. **Dance classes.** If the two who are saying “I do” have four left feet, present them with a pre-wedding gift of dancing lessons. Attending several sessions a few months before the wedding will give the rug-cutting duo more confidence on the dance floor when they take center stage as husbands or wives for the first time. This comes with an additional cost, however: It will also be your responsibility to stay alert throughout the night so you can simmer ’em down when they start to get too jiggy with it after the fourth celebratory cocktail. Just wait; it’ll happen.

4. **Home repair supplies.** Home repairs (even small ones) start to add up quickly — especially if you have to hire someone to do them for you. To alleviate some of those costs, surprise the lawfully wedded with a hodgepodge of tools and other house...

**PRESENT LESS TENSE |** Steer clear of the traditional registry with these clever ideas for celebrating queer couplehood.

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Alyssa Edwards to host bachelor(ette) auction

RuPaul's Drag Race Season 5 veteran Alyssa Edwards is staying busy this month, In addition to her scheduled performance at the Purple Party this weekend, she'll be back at the Rose Room on May 22 as hostess with the mostes' for the Noche de Rumba date auction. Sponsored by The LULAC Young Adult Rainbow Council, this is the third-annual bachelor/bachelorette auction, where you can win a night on the town with a hot thang. And it's all to benefit LULAC's LGBT scholarship fund and LifeWalk team.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

The Rose Room at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. May 22. Doors at 7 p.m., show at 8 p.m. Cover: $15. To check out the models, visit LULACRainbow.wix.com/4215.

hold must-haves given in a nice toolbox for convenient and aesthetically pleasing storage. Another helpful around-the-house idea is to gift painting essentials (trays, rollers, brushes, drop cloths) with a gift certificate to a nearby hardware store so they can choose their favorite colors to freshen up their home.

5. **Cooking lessons.** Cooking isn’t everyone’s favorite hobby (in most cases because they don’t know how to do it well, so they avoid it), but it’s one of those few daily opportunities in which spouses can take advantage to grow closer by creating something they’ll both savor. If your friends aren’t exactly kitchen savvy, introduce them to the wonderful world of from-scratch satisfaction with cooking lessons. Private lessons can be held in their home, or you can find a local establishment that offers them, like Sur la Table. The latter will be much less expensive than the former, and it’ll give your friends an opportunity to mix and mingle with other couples with whom they have something in common.

6. **Specialty-brewed craft beer.** If your pals are known beer lovers, add a personal touch to one of their favorite beverages by brewing a case of homemade suds. To add more flair, dress the bottles with custom labels that you can order online that celebrates their wedding day. The recipients will enjoy kicking back and relaxing with what you’ve made exclusively for them, and they’ll likely think fondly of your creativity and care every time they crack off a cap.

7. **HitchSwitch gift card.** It’s not as common in gay marriages as it is in straight unions for one partner to change their last name to the other partner’s, but plenty of LGBT couples are traditionalists ... and more power to them. To make the name-changing process stress free, set them up with HitchSwitch, an online name-changing service that removes all the hassle of assembling, filling out and filing forms for just $50. True, it’s not a super exciting gift, but it’s one less thing they’ll have to worry about as they start their new life together — and they’ll appreciate that sentiment very much.

8. **Frisque Gay Box membership.** There are numerous sex-toy subscription services available these days, but most of them cater to the hetero crowd. Enter Frisque Box, a sensual subscription service that caters specifically to gay and lesbian couples. Boxes filled with bedroom toys and other pleasure products to keep the spark flickering and frolicsome are sent bimonthly, discreetly to their doorstep, for $55 per cycle. If you don’t want to commit to a year’s worth of service, there’s also the one-time-only option called Frisque Honeymoon Box.

9. **Deep cleaning service.** We guys like to keep a clean house (most of us anyway), and while weekly spot-cleaning is a breeze, the twice-yearly deep clean is a burden. Help ease it for your freshly married friends — who should be spending their first year having fun under the sheets instead of sweeping behind the stove — with several hours of cleaning services scheduled for the beginning of spring and fall.

10. **Language-learning software.** One of the advantages of your friends being gay and bound by marital law is that they’re likely a DINK (dual income, no kids) couple that has money to burn. (No offense to all you gay parents out there, of course, but your days of jet-setting are over for a while.) Thus, they have the incredible opportunity to see the world at their leisure if they’re savvy savers. You can help make their vacation even more enriching and fulfilling by gifting them language-learning software. If you know them well, you probably know which language to choose; if not, pry for some information. The beauty of language-learning software — besides becoming part of an entire population of people with whom they can now converse — is that it’s conducive to couples using it together, which will help fortify their relationship even more.

— Mikey Rox

Alyssa Edwards to host bachelor(ette) auction

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— Arnold Wayne Jones

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It’s coming up on National Gay Pride Month, and groups from all over are reaching out to make sure you know it. Best of all, not everything takes place in June — there are attractions all through the summer.

Nevada
This year, Las Vegas will welcome a wide-variety of special events, conferences and programming specific to the LGBT community, from one end of the Strip to the other. Among the activities:

The biggest gay dance festival of the summer, Matinee Las Vegas, takes place May 23–26. The four-day festival will take over the Rumor Hotel with events at Havana Room at The New Tropicana, Share Nightclub and Rain at the Palms Casino Resort. Matinee Las Vegas features eight parties, 20 DJs and welcomes thousands of LGBT partiers from around the world. And you have a chance to make a name for yourself, too: Just enter the 2014 DJ contest to win a prize package, including flights, accommodations and a chance to do a guest DJ set at the main party.

Bears should rally behind Bigger Vegas, July 9—14, at the Tuscany Suites & Casino. Special hotel rates, activity packages, pool parties, poker and karaoke are among the activities at one of the largest social events for chubby gay men and their admirers.

Show off your high kick and high score at the Las Vegas Showgirl Invitational bowling tournament, Aug. 29–31. The gay event takes place at Sam’s Town Hotel & Gambling Hall and includes team competition, singles and doubles tournaments during Labor Day weekend.

Like Dallas, Vegas pushes its main gay celebration a little later than most — Las Vegas Pride takes place Sept. 5–7 with a lineup of events that celebrate the diversity and pride within the Las Vegas LGBT community. Events include the annual Pride Night Parade on Sept. 5; the Pride Festival in Downtown Las Vegas on Sept. 6; and a Sunday pool party to close out the weekend. And for the third year in a row, Southern Nevada welcomes Gay Days Las Vegas, Sept. 2–8. This all-encompassing event features four full days of pool parties, guest DJs, a travel-retail expo and various events around town. At the same time, lesbians take over Vegas for She-donism (Sept. 4–8), at the Rumor Hotel. Hosted by DJ Lisa Pittman, and some of the hottest female DJs, this ladies-only event features day par-
Purple Party Weekend gives Dallas-bred DJs a share of the spotlight

Purple Party weekend is widely known for the superstar DJs it brings to its thundering collection of dance parties each year, but the event has now become equally known for showcasing Dallas DJs in its opening sets.

“It’s worked out really well,” Blake Baker, Purple Foundation board president, says. “Having local DJs open the parties not only gives them exposure, but also helps to promote the events.”

DJ Paul McElroy will kick off Ignite, Purple Party’s Friday night opener at S4, for headliner DJ Abel Aguilera. McElroy proudly claims S4, where he is a resident DJ and lighting engineer, as his own playground.

DJ Benson Wilder opens Saturday’s pool party for DJ Grind. Wilder is a self-professed longtime lover of house music. “I have always hoarded music,” he says, “and am proud of the tracks I have collected over the past 16 years.” Wilder is equally passionate about sharing his love for music with the dance floor.

DJ Brandon Moses will man the VIP room at Saturday’s main event. “I love music. I love to dance and I love making people happy,” says Moses, a rising talent whose fanbase now reaches well beyond Dallas.

DJ Michael Tank, pictured, opens for the Purple Party’s DJ Isaac Escalante. Tank cut his teeth spinning in Texas clubs (The Brick, among others), and his hard work has paid off: Now a resident of Fort Lauderdale, Tank has earned his status as an in-demand remixer and headlining circuit DJ.

DJ Aqualight will open Sunday afternoon’s tea dance headlined by DJ Alyson Calagna. Aqualight is perhaps best known for his energetic tribal sets as a former resident DJ at S4.

DJ Mike James, a former resident DJ at the Brick, will open the closing party, headlined by Danny Verde.

— Scott Huffman
will be tired. I will be tired the day they take me away from this. I want to make a difference. I want to bring it back to what it used to be when you looked forward to going out. That’s what I would love. That’s how we made our culture.”

Besides, Aguilera enjoys the sense of pride he derives from accomplishment. “The most rewarding [feeling] is when you know you did a good job,” he says. “When you get applause or a cheer or when people say thank you for what you have done. It is rare today to hear somebody say thank you. When you hear it, you get a little teary.”

Texas

Galveston Island was recently named one of the “Top 10 Destinations on the Rise in the U.S.” by Trip Advisor, and with a variety of new experiences offered in 2014. And you can help make a little news with one of them.

One June 7, The Hotel Galvez & Spa will host a complimentary wedding vow renewal ceremony to honor the most popular month of matrimony (and the hotel’s 103rd anniversary). They’ve done it before, but never with an LGBT couple, though all are welcome. While not legally binding in Texas, it’s a fun way to show your commitment including a small reception hosted by the hotel. And you can stay the night and enjoy special rates on a wedding package (Visit WyndhamHotelGalvez.com and click on “special offers.”)

For new Galveston lodging venues, visit the newly renovated Moody Gardens Hotel, which just completed a massive update of its 428 guest rooms and spa. Or stay at the waterfront Harbor House Hotel & Marina at Pier 21, which unveiled a full renovation in February. For more information, visit Galveston.com.

Galveston’s inland neighbor celebrates Gay Pride Week June 20–29, with a slate of queervent. Pride Houston starts Friday, June 20 with Edero: A Girl Party at Pearl Bar, and keeps up the pace all week, with Pride Unleashed, the Salvation Pool Party, Wonderland Houston and culminating in the Pride Festival and Parade on June 28 and Foam Party on June 29. For more information, visit PrideHouston.org.

New Mexico

Angel Fire Resort, the resort located in the Rocky Mountains of northern New Mexico, has launched a new summer Adventure Pass. The pass will give all guests access to the Southwest’s No. 1 bike park, New Mexico’s only zip line tour, full use of the resort’s 18 hole PGA Championship golf course and lodging. For $109/night, guests can spend the nights in our newly renovated rooms and spa. Or stay at the waterfront Moody Gardens Hotel & Marina, which unveiled a full renovation in February. For more information, visit MoodyGardens.com.

Angel Fire Resort

If you don’t mind the heat — and if you’re in Dallas, you must like it some — Scottsdale offers rates as low as 60 percent discounted during the off-peak season (May 21–Sept. 3). Start deciding now whether you’ll perfect your summer glow poolside, explore the Sonoran Desert or visit attractions like Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin West. Consider the gay-friendly W Hotel, the Phoenician or the JW Marriott Scottsdale Camelback Inn & Resort for your accommodations.

— Arnold Wayne Jones
Mark Morris Dance performs

TITAS is wrapping up its season with the work of one of the most acclaimed modern dance troupes around, the Mark Morris Dance Group. Known for evocative and groundbreaking choreography that was misunderstood when first introduced, Mark Morris is now considered an important leader of the movement.

DEETS: Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. $12–$135. ATTPAC.org.

Carmen Menza makes art for equality

The ilume Gallerie is always focusing on art relevant to Dallas’ gay community, and there’s no better indication of that than the new show opening this weekend, featuring Dallas artist Carmen Menza. The exhibition, called simply Equal, explores equality in various abstract ways, including an HRC style neon butterfly. You can get your picture taken with it and experience great art with a purpose.


Mama’s Party: All in the Family Edition back in Grand Prairie

When Mama says you’re part of the family, you’re part of the family. Mama — aka Amy Stevenson — has been hosting the cabaret Mama’s Party for years, and it’s time for another adventure in showtunes, pop favorites and covers from Stevenson and her special guests. The All in the Family Edition takes place Monday, and best of all, you don’t need to bring a covered dish. Mama takes care of everything.

DEETS: Uptown Theatre, 120 E. Main St., Grand Prairie. 7:30 p.m.

Moses’ May Mix is online now!
dallasvoice.com/moses-mixology
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ARTSWEEEK: NOW PLAYING

THEATER

The Lyons. A dark comedy about a family reuniting as the patriarch (Terry Vandivort) is dying. Directed by Bruce Coleman. Reviewed this week. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through May 18. UptownPlayers.org.

The Masks of Sor Juana. Play about the feminist Mexican saint (recently portrayed in the opera With Blood, With Ink at the Fort Worth Opera Festival). Teatro Dallas, 1331 Record Crossing Road. Through May 17. TeatroDallas.org.


The Breakfast Club. The iconic '80s movie is adapted to the stage. ArtCentre Theatre, 5220 Village Creek Drive, Plano. Final weekend. ArtCentreTheatre.com.

VENUS IN FUR. The hit production, which played earlier this year at Fort Worth’s Circle Theatre, moved to Addison Studio Theatre, Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through May 18. WaterTowerTheatre.org.


OPERA

Fort Worth Opera Festival. The opera company’s spring festival returns, with most performances at Bass Performance Hall, 535 Commerce St., Fort Worth. Final weekend. FWOpera.org.

FINE ARTS

TJ Griffin: Animal Instinct. The gay artist opens a new show concentrating on masks and patterns. at Ro2 Art Downtown, 110 N. Akard St. Through May 25. Artist’s reception Friday, 7–10 p.m. Ro2Art.com.

FRIDAY 05.09

COMMUNITY

High Tech Happy Hour. Monthly LGBT mixer, sponsored by TI’s gay social group. PHD — Pour House Dallas, 1300 W. Davis St. 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Purple Party Weekend. The annual party and fundraiser kicks off. For details on the schedule of events, visit PurpleFoundation.org.

SATURDAY 05.10

FESTIVAL


DANCE

Mark Morris Dance Group. TITAS continues its season with this modern dance troupe, known for using live musicians at every performance. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. $12–$135. ATTPAC.org.
MEMBER FREE WEDNESDAY!

- Buy a six-month Club Membership in May and get a 7th month FREE!
- Purchase or renew your six-month or yearly gym contract in May and get an extra month FREE!
- Goodie bags FREE with every Club Membership purchase in May!
- Half price rooms Friday, May 16th, 8am-Midnight!
- DJ Ryan Tiffin spins afterhours every Friday in May!

18-25 year olds only

$10 all day, everyday...
FREE on Friday!

Cookouts/buffets every Saturday and Sunday at 1pm!
MEMorial Day Cookout Monday, May 26 at 1pm!

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FILM
The French Connection. The Magnolia Theater continues its Tuesday Big Movie (sponsored by Dallas Voice) with this five-time Oscar winning police flick, directed by William Friedkin (who also helmed The Boys in the Band and Cruising). Landmark’s Magnolia in the West Village. 7:30 and 10 p.m.

COMMUNITY
Frame Your Love Community Celebration. Out & Equal DFW presenting this event of storytelling and sharing, where LGBT persons are encouraged to display pictures of their families in the workplace. Kickoff event at Sue Ellen’s, 3014 Throckmorton St, 6–8 p.m.

MAY is MEMBER APPRECIATION MONTH!

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FINE ART

FASHION
Light the Runway. The third annual fashion show benefiting Dress for Success. 5905 Desco Lane. 7–10 p.m. DressForSuccess-Dallas.org.

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MONDAY 05.12
BROADCAST
RuPaul’s Drag Race. The sixth season nears its finale, with only three queens remaining, heading into the final. Logo at 9 p.m.

CABARET
Mama’s Party. The “All in the Family” theme for the monthly cabaret, led by diva Amy Stevenson. Uptown Theater, 120 E. Main St., Grand Prairie. 7:30 p.m.

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TUESDAY 05.13
FILM
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THURSDAY 05.15
THEATER

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To submit an item for inclusion in the Community Calendar, visit Tinyurl.com/dvsubmit.
For a more complete Community Calendar online, visit Tinyurl.com/dvevents.
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<th><strong>AIDS SERVICES</strong></th>
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<td><strong>NORTH TEXAS CHRISTIAN ROCK COALITION</strong> — 214-632-5162; ntxchristianrockcoalition.com.</td>
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<td><strong>LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF DALLAS COUNTY</strong> — P.O. Box 572137, Dallas, TX 75237-0137; libertariantexas.org.</td>
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Making the SCENE the week of May 9–15:

Alexandre’s: Denise Lee on Friday at 10 p.m. Shelia P and Infinity on Saturday at 10 p.m. Sheran Keyton on Wednesday at 9 p.m. Alicia Silex on Thursday at 9 p.m.

Changes: Cowtown Leathermen meeting at 7 p.m.

Club Reflection: Cowtown Leathermen cookout. Sunday at 4 p.m. Texas Gay Rodeo Association show at 7 p.m. Wall of Food show at 8 p.m.

Dallas Eagle: National Leather Association bar night. Saturday at 7 p.m. The United Court of the Lone Star Empire presents Broadway Duets. Saturday at 7 p.m. Benefits Resource Center Food Pantry.

Garlows: Miss Gay Texas State and State at Large pageants present Disco Fever featuring Caress Riata and Sabrina Starr benefiting AIDS Outreach Center. Saturday at 9 p.m.

Round-Up Saloon: Round Up Employee Turn About Show Does Your Mother Know? features Round Up employees as they’re rarely seen. Sunday from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Benefits Round Up Employee Benevolent Association.

Sue Ellen’s: Mojo Dolls on Friday. Chix on Saturday. Kathy Corbin and Barefoot Hippies on Sunday.

Woody’s Sports & Video Bar: Dallas Woody’s Extra Innings on Sunday 4–7 p.m. Oak Lawn Bowling Association on Monday 7–9 p.m. Dallas Invitational Volleyball Association awards on Wednesday 7:30–9:30 p.m.

To view more Scene photos, go to DallasVoice.com/category/photos.
Walter and Darius-Anthony at Woody's Sports & Video Bar.

Tony, DJ BWIERD, David, Travis and Ashley at Sue Ellen's 8th Annual Music Festival.

Shelby, Andrew and Sam at Scarborough Renaissance Festival.

Cole, Christopher and friend at a pool party.

Michael, Darrel, Victoria and Josh at Salon Aura.
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- Dougwingfield.com
- ThePinkstonGroup.net
- DallasGayAgent.com
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You cannot miss this SALE!!!

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Volunteers will be trained to conduct
HIV outreach in the GLBT commu-
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Risk Reduction Specialists. For
more information contact Sonny
Blake @ 214-522-8660 Ext. 236

Pegasus Squares, an
LGBT North Dallas Square Dance
Club, meets the first and third
Sundays of each month,
3pm-5pm at the Resource Center.
Lessons beginning March 9th.
Contact Rob Miller at
214-320-9598
for more information.

Co-Dependants Anonymous
(CoDA) is a Twelve Step
Fellowship of men and women
whose common
purpose is
recovery from codependence and
the development and mainte-
nance of healthy relationships.
CoDA meetings in the area meet:
• St. Thomas Episcopal Church
6525 Inwood Road (Inwood at
Mockingbird)
Dallas, Texas 75209
• LAMBDAGROUP
6:30 PM, Friday; 1 hour
OAK LAWN CoDA GROUP
7:30 PM, Wed; 1 1/2 hours
Meeting Type:
Open, Sharing, Steps, Welcoming
to all, Safe for GLBT

Join us for Catholic Mass for the
LGBT community
First Sunday of each Month
Dignity Dallas Mass held at
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EXAMPLE OF NEW PATIENT SAVINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>UCR FEE*</th>
<th>MEMBER PAYS</th>
<th>SAVINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Exam</td>
<td>$114</td>
<td>NO CHARGE</td>
<td>$114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Mouth X-Rays</td>
<td>$157</td>
<td>NO CHARGE</td>
<td>$157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panoramic Radiographic Image</td>
<td>$110</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophylaxis – Adult (Cleaning)</td>
<td>$111</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>$41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcelain Crown (Includes Core Buildup)</td>
<td>$1,910</td>
<td>$900</td>
<td>$1,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$2,402</td>
<td>$1,030</td>
<td>$1,372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*UCR Fee is the Usual and Customary Rate. The UCR fee can vary by location.

Clark Steffens, D.D.S.
Practice Owner

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