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Man sentenced for deadly sexual assault with HIV as the weapon

Matthew Louis Reese, 31, was given 95 years in prison this week, in part because he gave HIV to a minor.

The Dallas man pleaded guilty to three charges — aggravated sexual assault of a child with a deadly weapon, aggravated sexual assault with serious bodily injury and sexual assault of a child. The deadly weapon is HIV.

The victim was a 15-year-old girl at the time. She is now 17.

The two met on a chat line and spoke for months before first having sex. Reese never told the girl he had HIV and did not use a condom.

Missing from any reports is why the girl’s parents bore no responsibility for monitoring who their 15-year-old daughter was dating.

Apparently Reese was not in treatment for his HIV and had a viral load count high enough to pass along the disease. He must serve half of his sentence before he is eligible for parole.

— David Taffet

Who owns Gay Pride?

There’s a lawsuit in New York City right now that asks the question, “Can one group own Gay Pride?”

Heritage of Pride, Inc., is a nonprofit organization in New York responsible for organizing the city’s annual Gay Pride Parade. In recent years, Heritage has expanded its reach to stage multiple events (dances, etc.) during June.

But Heritage isn’t, of course, the only group that organizes Pride events; gay promoters Brandon Voss and Jake Resnicow have been putting on Pride Month events since 2003. In 2011, Heritage filed a trademark claim to the phrase “NYC Pride,” and is now trying to enjoin Voss and Resnicow from using that term.

Obviously, you cannot trademark the concept of “Pride.” But what about the name? Are they inseparable?

It’s an interesting conundrum. Both “Disney World Gay Days” and “Gay Days Orlando” are competing groups that sponsor events every June. But neither owns outright the words “Gay Day.” Can one company own “NYC Pride”? Don’t we all kind of own it, as the Stonewall Riots were in New York and spawned the modern gay rights movement?

Could Voss et al. get around it by calling their events “Pride NYC” or “NY Pride”? Should any corporation be able to control the word Pride in any way — isn’t it an expression, not a piece of property?

Thoughts?

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Senate confirms two openly gay judges

The Senate confirmed three federal judges on Tuesday — one is gay and one is lesbian. This marks the first time two out judges have been confirmed on the same day.

Judge Darrin Gayles, confirmed to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, is the first openly gay African American man to be confirmed as a lifetime-appointed federal judge in our nation’s history.

Judge Staci Yandle, confirmed to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois, is the first African American to serve on her court and the first openly gay lifetime-appointed federal judge in Illinois.

The third judge confirms is Salvador Mendoza, who will serve on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington. He is the first Hispanic judge to serve on his court.

President Obama has now appointed more female judges than any other President, breaking the record previously set by President Clinton. He has also has now appointed more Hispanic judges than any other President, breaking the record previously held by President George W. Bush.

— David Taffet

OK candidate says stone gays

Last week, Oklahoma state House candidate Scott Esk said he thought it was OK if the state stoned gays to death.

“ignoring as a nation things that are worthy of death is very remiss,” said Republican candidate Scott Esk.

He did clarify to Salon magazine that he wouldn’t try to amend Oklahoma law to call for the death penalty for gays. Oh, well, that qualifies him to be a responsible state representative.

— David Taffet
Make conversation before you make out.

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Gay For Good

The Gay For Good June event takes place at Equest Therapeutic Horsemanship in Wylie on Saturday. Participants will be lending a hand with different chores around the stables and grounds including assisting with facility and stable improvements, general barn chores or administrative office work.

Founded in 1981, Equest was the first therapeutic riding center in Texas for children and adults with all types of disabilities and learning differences. Its programs are about children and adults who reach beyond the confines of their disabilities with the assistance of equine-assisted therapy.

Gay For Good energizes and mobilizes the LGBT community to interact with the greater DFW community by volunteering time to various social welfare and environmental service projects. To participate in a Gay For Good event, visit GayForGood.org/dallas_tx.

Dallas Post Office celebrates Harvey Milk

The U. S. Postal Service marks the release of the Harvey Milk stamp with an event at City Performance Hall on Saturday. This is the first stamp honoring an openly gay elected official. Milk won a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977, becoming one of the first openly gay elected officials in the U.S. Less than a year later, a fellow supervisor killed Milk and Mayor George Moscone, a supporter of San Francisco’s LGBT community.

Joining in the celebration will be a representative from the Harvey Milk Foundation, Rafael McDonnell of the Resource Center, members of the Turtle Creek Chorale and political leaders. 2520 Flora St. June 21 at 5 p.m.

Black Tie Happy Hour in Fort Worth

Black Tie Dinner hosts happy hour June 26 in Fort Worth. Representatives of Black Tie will be selling raffle tickets for the 2015 Mercedes Benz GLA250. The winner will be announced at the dinner on Nov. 15 at the Dallas Sheraton Hotel. 24 Plates, 407 W. Magnolia, Fort Worth. June 26, 6-8 p.m.

Jungle theme at this month’s Gaybingo

The theme for this month’s Gaybingo at The Rose Room on Saturday is Jungle Gaybingo. Jada Fox hosts and NBC5 reporter Deanna Dewberry is special guest. S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. June 21. Doors at 5 p.m., show at 6 p.m.

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Queenie is a 2-year-old grey merle short haired kitty with personality plus. She’s very playful and friendly and so laid back she’s not even bothered by living in the shelter. Her coat is spectacular and her green eyes will melt your heart. She’s been at the shelter more than two weeks so her adoption fee has been waived. When you take her home she’ll be spayed, vaccinated, and microchipped — all for free! But the best part is you’ll have a terrific companion and playmate! Please visit her at Dallas Animal Services, 1818 Westmoreland Rd, and ask for Queenie, A834291.

The Adoption Center is open 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 12 noon until 5 p.m. on Sunday. All adopted pets are spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped. Standard adoption fees are $80 for dogs and $50 for cats. They also offer discounts on adoption fees for pets over 6 years of age, to any senior citizen that adopts a pet, and to anyone adopting more than one pet at a time. For more information, visit www.DallasAnimalServices.org or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DallasAnimalServices. Photo contributed by Judi Burnett.
Inappropriate responses by the immune system cause allergies and asthma triggered mostly by white blood cells known as T helper 2 or Th2 cells. These cells that are supposed to fight parasites are also behind the symptoms of asthma and allergies.

Dr. David Farrar, associate professor of immunology and molecular biology at UT Southwestern Medical Center, and his team, found that interferon blocks the development of Th2 cells.

“Th2, under normal circumstances, eradicates infections from worms and parasites,” Farrar said.

Those types of infections are not something we worry about much in the Western world, but everyone produces those cells.

“When it goes wrong, Th2 cells develop inappropriately, fighting against things they should ignore,” he said.

The immune system mounts a response that manifests itself as allergies or asthma. While a number of medications help control asthma and relieve an asthma attack and a series of shots may control severe allergies, Farrar believes his lab may have found a cure for both.

Farrar said interferon treatment could be used to stop this response. Interferon is used to fight hepatitis C, multiple sclerosis, AIDS-related Kaposi’s sarcoma among other diseases. However, interferon treatment in high doses can have severe side effects. A recent study of hep C treatment at UT Southwestern involves a drug regimen without interferon. Farrar said the dose used to treat asthma would be about one-tenth the amount used in the earlier hep C trials that did include interferon as part of the treatment.

“In low doses, the side effects are minimal,” he said.

Farrar explained that interferon is a natural chemical produced by the body.

While a clinical trial tied to his study has not been approved, a related study is going on in Europe.

“The goal wasn’t to reverse asthma, but to inhibit viral infections using inhaled interferon,” he said.

That study may find that interferon does block some upper respiratory viruses that cause asthmatic reactions, but may also find that the asthma goes away. Farrar said anecdotal evidence among people treated for hep C with interferon who also happened to suffer from asthma found similar result. Their asthma disappeared.

However, since neither the European study nor the evidence from the hep C patients directly studied the affect of interferon on asthma, a clinical trial is needed with a control group receiving a placebo.

For allergies, Farrar is only proposing his treatment for severe allergic responses. Low dose inoculations would link the allergen to a molecule compound to prod the body to produce interferon on its own.

Almost 30 million people in the U.S. suffer from asthma. That’s 13 percent of the adult population in the U.S. and more than 17.5 people suffer from hay fever, according to a report from UT Southwestern.

Gay Dallas researcher may have allergy/asthma cure

Clinical trials needed to confirm research, but anecdotal evidence promising

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com
Joe Riggs and Jason Hanna never expected to make national news after a surrogate mom gave birth to their twins.

Riggs, 33, and Hanna, 37, have been together almost four years. They’re best known in the community for collecting teddy bears at Christmas for Children’s Hospital to donate to children going through chemotherapy or other serious procedure. They’ve donated about 1,000 bears so far. At their Christmas parties, they also collect money to divide between the Family Equality Council and Stand Up to Cancer.

“I always wanted a family,” Hanna said. “We both grew up in loving households.”

Riggs said he just came out to his family in 2013.

“My dad was surprised,” Riggs said.

He described his father as an anti-marriage equality Republican who did an about face. They already knew Hanna but didn’t know about the relationship.

Last summer, the couple married in D.C. and in August had their religious ceremony at Cathedral of Hope. Riggs parents walked him down the aisle. His grandparents flew in for the ceremony as well.

But what would make the family complete for them was children. So last year, they enlisted the services of a surrogate to give birth to their biological children. Because Riggs had fertilized one of the eggs and Hanna the other egg that was implanted in the surrogate, they didn’t know which baby was biologically which dad’s when the boys were born. The eggs came from an anonymous out-of-state donor. So neither father’s name went on the birth certificate in the hospital.

So they went to court to end the surrogate’s parental rights and get their names on the birth certificates. The surrogate had signed the paperwork to relinquish her rights. (The woman who carried the babies had acted as surrogate before, but this was the first time she had done so for a gay couple.)

But the judge turned them down.

“The judge stated she couldn’t grant the adoptions with the petition in front of her,” Hanna said.

They had DNA tests and presented those tests as part of the petition. It didn’t matter. Not only did the judge turn down the surrogate’s request to end parental rights and have her name removed from the birth certificate, the judge refused to place the name of the biological dads on the birth certificates.

Finally, the judge turned down a request for each of the dads to adopt the other’s baby. So legally, the boys have one unrelated biological dads on the birth certificates.

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Finally, the judge turned down a request for each of the dads to adopt the other’s baby. So legally, the boys have one unrelated surrogate listed as their mother and no father.

“There are issues with these documents,” the judge said, without indicating what those issues were, according to Hanna.

“I was initially very shocked,” Riggs said.

He said their attorney argued that with biological dads willing to adopt their own sons and no one disputing the adoption, there was no reason to deny the petition. In Texas, gays are routinely allowed to adopt children.

Tarrant County attorney Lauren Duffer specializes in reproductive technology law and recommends refiling elsewhere to get the situation resolved as fast as possible.

“I don’t file any of my same-sex adoptions in Tarrant County,” she said.

She said Dallas is fine. Couples from around the state have filed in San Antonio for years. Travis is good. She’s even had some good results in Denton. “Houston is making strides,” she said. “But absolutely never in Tarrant.”

She repeated one last bit of advice she’d give them if they were her clients. “Refile elsewhere,” she said. “Definitely do not refile in there.”

Duffer said venue is a choice in Texas and in this case, the paperwork should be filed as three separate motions. First file to end the surrogate’s parental rights and have her name removed from the birth certificates.

The next step, with paternity determined by DNA tests, is to have each biological dad’s name placed on the birth certificate of his own son. Duffer said those two things can be done at the same hearing as well as having each dad named as the other child’s joint managing conservator.

In Texas, a second parent adoption can’t be done for six months. Since it’s an adoption, a home study needs to be done during that period and then should be filed in Dallas or San Antonio.

Riggs said they’re not sure what their options are yet. He said they could appeal or refile elsewhere.

Hanna said whatever they do, it will be whatever is in the best interest of their sons. He called it scary that if something happened, they have no proof they have custody of the children.

When the boys were born, he said it was magical when he placed his sons in his mother’s arms. Hanna said fatherhood is a whole new world.

“Our entire world is focused on our boys,” he said.

He said everyday it’s something new. He said their eye contact is new.

“Smiling. Laughing. Those moments are priceless,” he said.

“Being a father is a whole new love I’ve never experienced before,” Riggs said. “Two boys are entirely dependent on us.”

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Hanna took two months paternity leave from work. When his leave is over, Riggs will take 10 weeks. During that time, they’ll decide about when to hire a nanny or find daycare. And during that time, they hope the paternity is resolved.
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What a difference a decade makes

It’s been 11 years since Lawrence v. Texas, but the major advances in LGBT rights have taken place in the 12 months since Windsor.

LISA KEEN | Keen News Service
editor@dallasvoice.com

June 26 is the most historic date on the LGBT civil rights movement’s calendar for several reasons. It is the day, in 2003, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states could not enforce laws prohibiting same-sex adults from having intimate relations. It is also the day, in 2013, when a Supreme Court procedural ruling enabled same-sex couples to marry in California. And it is the same day in 2013 when the high court ruled that the federal government could not deny married same-sex couples the same benefits it provides to married male-female couples.

While the decision that allowed couples in California to marry provided important momentum to the marriage equality movement, the decisions in the 2003 Lawrence v. Texas and 2013 U.S. v. Windsor cases are undeniably the most significant Supreme Court decisions ever issued on LGBT-related matters.

Lawrence brought a crashing end to the longstanding presumption by society and the law that gays were “deviate” and should be singled out for disfavor.

“When homosexual conduct is made criminal by the law of the State, that declaration in and of itself is an invitation to subject homosexual persons to discrimination both in the public and in the private spheres,” wrote Justice Anthony Kennedy for the 6 to 3 majority in Lawrence. “...The State cannot demean their existence or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime. Their right to liberty under the Due Process Clause gives them the full right to engage in their conduct without intervention of the government.”

It was Justice Kennedy again, writing the 5 to 4 majority decision in Windsor last year, who struck down the key provision of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) that barred every federal entity from treating married same-sex couples the same as married heterosexual couples for the purpose of any federal benefit.

“The Constitution’s guarantee of equality ‘must at the very least mean that a bare congressional desire to harm a politically unpopular group cannot, “justify disparate treatment of that group,”’ wrote Justice Kennedy in Windsor. “DOMA’s unusual deviation from the usual tradition of recognizing and accepting state definitions of marriage here operates to deprive same-sex couples of the benefits and responsibilities that come with the federal recognition of their marriages. This is strong evidence of a law having the purpose and effect of disapproval of that class. The avowed purpose and practical effect of the law here in question are to impose a disadvantage, a separate status, and so a stigma upon all who enter into same-sex marriages made lawful by the unquestioned authority of the State.”

DOMA undermines both the public and private significance of state-sanctioned same-sex marriages; for it tells those couples, and all the world, that their otherwise valid marriages are unworthy of federal recognition,” wrote Kennedy. “This places same-sex couples in an unstable position of being in a second-tier marriage. The differentiation demeans the couple, whose moral and sexual choices the Constitution protects. ...And it humiliates tens of thousands of children now being raised by same-sex couples. The law in question makes it even more difficult for the children to understand the integrity and closeness of their own family and its concord with other families in their community and in their daily lives.”

Kennedy’s words in both Lawrence and Windsor have been repeated in numerous court decisions since. And the powerful influence of words and decisions has almost obscured the fact that they were narrow victories.

In Lawrence, Kennedy wrote for just five of the six justices who considered sodomy laws to be unconstitutional; while Justice Sandra Day O’Connor provided a sixth vote concurring in the judgment, she did not join Kennedy’s opinion to the extent that it overruled the 1986 case Bowers v. Hardwick, which had upheld state sodomy laws. O’Connor said she would simply strike Texas’ law on equal protection grounds. (“Moral disapproval of this group, like a bare desire to harm the group, is an interest that is insufficient to satisfy rational basis review under the Equal Protection Clause.”)

In Windsor, Kennedy wrote for just five justices. One of those five, Elena Kagan, had been on the bench for less than three years and recused herself from a similar DOMA challenge that had reached the high court sooner because it was initiated while she was serving as Solicitor General. If the court had taken that first case, Gill v. Office of Personnel Management, the court likely would have rendered a tie vote and DOMA would still be in effect in most states.

Often forgotten, too, is the enormous influence the sitting president had on the impact of each decision.

The administration of President George W. Bush took no action in 2003 to see that the Lawrence decision was quickly and thoroughly respected by various federal programs, such as the military’s “Don’t ask, don’t tell” law banning openly gay servicemembers. It continued enforcing the ban that had been approved by a Congress that pointed to sodomy laws to justify its hostile treatment of gays. Bush said nothing about the Lawrence decision, and the White House press secretary brushed it off as a “state matter.” Then, in 2004, Bush spoke in support of a Congressional bill that sought to ban marriage for same-sex couples.

In contrast, President Obama spoke out quickly in support of the Windsor ruling and ordered his administration “to review all relevant federal statutes to ensure this decision, including its implications for Federal benefits and obligations, is implemented swiftly and smoothly.”

Legal activists responded differently following both decisions. Too, LGBT-friendly lawyers were still wary of mounting lawsuits that would wind up in front of the Supreme Court. Even as late as 2009, they thought it was “too early” to put another issue to a vote at the Supreme Court.

But since Windsor last year, activists have filed more than 70 lawsuits in short order, challenging state laws in 30 states that banned marriage for same-sex couples.

Prior to the Windsor decision, 12 states and the District of Columbia allowed same-sex couples to marry; one year later, 18 states and D.C. have marriage equality and another 14 states have had courts declare their bans on same-sex couples marrying unconstitutional.

Also prior to Windsor, 18 percent of the U.S. population lived in states with marriage equality. Today, not counting Wisconsin or Pennsylvania (whose bans are still subject to appeal), 39 percent of the population lives in marriage equality states.

U.S. Deputy Assistant Attorney General Pam Karlan shared with DOJ Pride attendees earlier this month some of her memories of having clerked for Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun in 1986 when he authored the dissent to the court’s Bowers v. Hardwick decision, upholding state laws prohibiting private consensual sex between same-sex adults.

Karlan said she suggested to Blackmun that the majority opinion was resting on “an unexamined assumption that gay people were different in a way that permitted denying them the right to intimate relations. When Blackmun wrote his dissent, she said, he made a subtle change to her suggested language, saying the majority opinion was based “on the assumption that homosexuals are so different from other citizens....”

“In making those changes, Justice Blackmun was doing two things,” said Karlan. “First, he was emphasizing that gay people are citizens — that is, true members of our national community. But second, and just as important, he was rejecting the idea that there is an ‘us’ for straight people — and that gay people are somehow a ‘them.’ And he was laying the groundwork for an understanding that the central constitutional claim is not just one about liberty; it is about equality as well.”

THEY STARTED IT ALL | Tyrone Garner, far left, and John Lawrence, far right, filed and won the suit that decriminalized gay sex, but it took another decade before real progress was made in enforcement and recognition of marriage equality. (Dallas Voice file photo)
Outrageous Oral project charts Dallas’ LGBT past

11th quarterly oral history event returns this week to the Rose Room

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Planning an Outrageous Oral presentation can be a challenge for a speaker.

Pam Curry, one of presenters at the next oral history project organized by The Dallas Way spent a week frantically deciding what she’d include in her presentation.

“I was just going to tell my story,” she said. “Until today, I thought I knew,” she said. “I was just going to tell my story.”

She quickly learned, however, “just telling her story” in the 10 to 15 minutes allocated for each speaker isn’t as easy as it sounded. As she poured through her own history, she said she learned some things about herself that she hadn’t realized before.

Created to collect the history of the LGBT community in North Texas, The Dallas Way and its Outrageous Oral project work in conjunction with the University of North Texas. Next week’s presentation is the organization’s 11th quarterly event, and draws a growing crowd of LGBT history buffs to the Rose Room.

The storytellers are mostly long-time-members of the LGBT community who share their inspiring, humorous and emotional experiences with an audience determined to let this rich past not be forgotten.

Bruce Monroe, one of The Dallas Way’s founders, said his group is collecting oral histories two ways. The first is through interviews. Some people aren’t comfortable making a presentation in public, but willingly sit down in front of a camera for interviews that may last an hour or two.

Others make shorter presentations that are part of an evening of LGBT history at The Rose Room. Most of the presentations are about 15 minutes. And that’s part of Curry’s dilemma.

Speakers want to engage their audience while presenting an honest picture of their piece of the LGBT community’s history.

Curry said she began writing her story, which she called a roller coaster ride that would include everything from a Muppet to a suicide attempt.

She said she always thought of herself as a health and disability activist who happened to be trans, but as she began writing, she discovered something about herself. She’s a trans activist who happens to have a passion for health and disability issues.

“I evolved in writing this,” she said.

Bruce Jaster, a former Outrageous Oral presenter who now organizes the program, said this installment of the quarterly program reaches deeper into the community to illustrate just how diverse Dallas’ LGBT community is. In addition to Curry, the speakers are Alpha Thomas, Sister Polly von Acoccker and Master Z.

Thomas, an African-American lesbian, is committed to young people’s acceptance of themselves, especially among LGBT youth. Master Z has been active in BDSM and leather events for more than a dozen years. He is a frequent presenter on the master/slave and leather lifestyle. Sister Polly von Acoccker is a member of the playfully activist Dallas branch of the San Francisco-based Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

He said when the sisters first came to Dallas, he sometimes felt more like Ronald McDonald walking around The Strip. Now he’s more confident about his presentation and he’s in full face within 90 minutes.

While he hasn’t decided which stories he’ll tell at Outrageous Oral, he promised a mix of funny and touching. He said sometimes just talking to someone at an event makes a difference in someone’s life.

The stories are recorded on video and made available later on the organization’s website. University of North Texas is also including the videos as part of its collection of North Texas LGBT history.

The Rose Room inside S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. June 26 at 7 p.m. TheDallasWay.org. Free.

What would you share about your sexual history?

AIDS organizations call reporting useful for reaching at-risk people

More than half the people who responded to a recent online poll at DallasVoice.com said they would not reveal sexual partners to a county health official if they were found to have HIV or another STD.

When someone tests positive for HIV or a sexually transmitted disease in Texas, that case is reported to the county health department for the purpose of tracking. County health employees will ask for information about sexual contacts to encourage them to be tested and, if positive, help get them into treatment.

But an informal survey found none who would reveal names or other information about their sexual contacts. They offered a variety of reasons to refuse offering names — everything from not necessarily knowing the names of the other people involved to not wanting to deal with the drama. One said it was simply not the county’s business but would contact partners himself. Another who had dealt with the county called its staff intrusive, over-the-top and annoying. Another said he’d let the county know only the names close to him, not odd information about people he didn’t really know.

The program isn’t new, but has been in the news because of employees falsifying records. But local AIDS agency officials call the it an important part of controlling sexually transmitted diseases.

Abounding Prosperity CEO Kirk Myers said, “It’s a valuable tool if people are willing to give information. If people are not willing, that needs to be respected, too.”

Myers said sometimes turning in names of others who may have been exposed and letting the county inform them can sometimes be easier than telling the person yourself. He gave the example of a partner who thinks he’s in a monogamous relationship.

He said many people think it’s a witch-hunt, but that’s not the case. The information is coded. The county keeps no lists of who’s had sex with whom. When the program is working properly, county health officials are only interested getting people tested and into treatment.

“They get immune to the stories and are not judging you,” he said.

Myers said people sometimes ignore syphilis because it’s curable. That’s exactly the reason people need to get tested — so they can get rid of it.

According to Bret Camp, Texas regional director of AIDS Healthcare Foundation, county officials are persistent. If someone doesn’t respond to phone calls, they’ll show up at the door.

In the gay community, the person who’s been exposed may not have the person’s name, only a screen name from Grindr or other hookup site. The county will contact a connection on the app, if that’s the only way to find that person.

Camp said they may ask if you went to someone’s house, what the address was. They’ll make personal visits. If someone came over, they’ll ask what kind of car he was driving.

Myers said the point of the questions is not to pry, but to jog your memory.

AIDS Arms Executive Director John Carlo called it an important program, but understood the misgivings.

“It’s unpleasant but necessary,” he said. “It does work when done correctly.”

He said healthcare workers get lots of training before going out into the field contacting those who have been exposed.

“We’re not going to get ahead of the game,” Carlo said, unless partners who have been exposed are contacted and those who are positive are treated. He said the program isn’t new and when the program is working as it should, it’s the most effective tool we have to combat STDs and HIV.

— David Taffet
What is STRIBILD?

STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. It combines 4 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. STRIBILD is a complete single-tablet regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS. To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking STRIBILD. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

STRIBILD can cause serious side effects:

- Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis), which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.

- Serious liver problems. The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark or “tea-colored” urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.

- You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.

- Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection. If you also have HBV and stop taking STRIBILD, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. STRIBILD is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

Who should not take STRIBILD?

Do not take STRIBILD if you:

- Take a medicine that contains: allopurinol, dihydroergotamine, ergotamine, methylergonovine, cisapride, lovastatin, simvastatin, pimozide, sildenafil when used for lung problems (Revatio®), triazolam, oral midazolam, rifampin or the herb St. John’s wort.

- For a list of brand names for these medicines, please see the Brief Summary on the following pages.

- Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection, or the medicine adefovir (Hepsera®).

What are the other possible side effects of STRIBILD?

Serious side effects of STRIBILD may also include:

- New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure. Your healthcare provider should do regular blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with STRIBILD. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD.

- Bone problems, including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.

- Changes in body fat can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.

- Changes in your immune system. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking STRIBILD.

The most common side effects of STRIBILD include nausea and diarrhea. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don’t go away.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?

- All your health problems. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.

- All the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.

- If you take hormone-based birth control (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc).

- If you take antacids. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD.

- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.

- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in STRIBILD can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with important warnings on the following pages.
STRIbild is a prescription medicine used as a complete single-tablet regimen to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.

I started my personal revolution

Talk to your healthcare provider about starting treatment.

STRIbild is a complete HIV-1 treatment in 1 pill, once a day.

Ask if it’s right for you.

STRIbild®

evlitegravir 150mg / cobicistat 150mg / emtricitabine 200mg / tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets
Patient Information

STRIKING® (STRY-bild)
(evitegravir 150 mg/cobicistat 150 mg/emtricitabine 200 mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

What is STRIBILD?

- STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD is a complete regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.
- STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS. You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others. Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

STRIKING can cause serious side effects, including:

1. Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis). Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take STRIBILD or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:
   - feel very weak or tired
   - have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
   - have trouble breathing
   - have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
   - feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
   - feel dizzy or light-headed
   - have a fast or irregular heartbeat

2. Severe liver problems. Severe liver problems can happen in people who take STRIBILD. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:
   - your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
   - dark “tea-colored” urine
   - light-colored bowel movements (stools)
   - loss of appetite for several days or longer
   - nausea
   - stomach pain

You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time.

3. Worsening of Hepatitis B infection. If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take STRIBILD, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking STRIBILD. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.

Do not run out of STRIBILD. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your STRIBILD is all gone.

- Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider.
- If you stop taking STRIBILD, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking STRIBILD.

Who should not take STRIBILD?

Do not take STRIBILD if you also take a medicine that contains:
- adefovir (Hepsera®)
- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- cilastatin (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quickso®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Catergot®, Migretor®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®), Wigraine®), Wigrettes®), and methylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altospre®, Mevacor®)
- oral midazolam
- pimozide (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John’s wort

Do not take STRIBILD if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:
- Other medicines that contain tenofovir (Atripla®, Complera®, Viread®, Truvada®)
- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine, lamivudine, or ritonavir (Atripla®, Combivir®, Complera®, Emtriva®, Epivir® or Epivir-HBV®, Epzicom®, Kaletra®, Norvir®, Trizivir®, Truvada®).

STRIKING is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.

What are the possible side effects of STRIBILD?

STRIKING may cause the following serious side effects:

- See “What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?”
- New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure. Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking STRIBILD. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- Bone problems can happen in some people who take STRIBILD. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.

- Changes in body fat can happen in people who take HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the middle of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.

- Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.
The most common side effects of STRIBILD include:

- Nausea
- Diarrhea

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

- These are not all the possible side effects of STRIBILD. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?

Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:

- If you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B infection
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take STRIBILD.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in STRIBILD can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in STRIBILD can pass into your breast milk.
  - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:

- STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Hormone-based birth control (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc)
  - Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD
  - Medicines to treat depression, organ transplant rejection, or high blood pressure
  - amiodarone (Cordarone®, Pacerone®)
  - atorvastatin (Lipitor®, Caduet®)
  - bepridil hydrochloride (Vascor®, Bepadin®)
  - bosantan (Tracleer®)
  - buspirone
  - carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®)
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin®, Prevacox®)
  - clonazepam (Klonopin®)
  - clorazepate (Gen-xene®, Tranxene®)
  - colchicine (Colcrys®)
  - medicines that contain dexamethasone
  - diazepam (Valium®)
  - digoxin (Lanoxin®)
  - disopyramide (Norpace®)
  - estazolam
  - ethosuximide (Zarontin®)
  - flecainide (Tambocor®)
  - flurazepam
  - fluticasone (Flovent®, Flonase®, Flovent® Diskus®, Flovent® HFA, Veramyst®)
  - itraconazole (Sporanox®)
  - ketoconazole (Nizoral®)
  - lidocaine (Xylocaine®)
  - mexiletine
  - oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®)
  - perphenazine
  - phenobarbital (Luminal®)
  - phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
  - propafenone ( Rythmol®)
  - quinidine (Neudexta®)
  - rifabutin (Mycobutin®)
  - rifapentine (Priftin®)
  - risperidone (Risperdal®, Risperdal Consta®)
  - salmeterol (Serevent®) or salmeterol when taken in combination with fluticasone (Advair Diskus®, Advair HFA®)
  - sildenafil (Viagra®, Cialis®) or vardenafil (Levitra®, Staxyn®) for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). If you get dizzy or faint (low blood pressure), have vision changes or have an erection that last longer than 4 hours, call your healthcare provider or get medical help right away.
  - tadalafil (Adcirca®), for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension
  - telithromycin (Ketek®)
  - thioridazine
  - voriconazole (Vfend®)
  - warfarin (Coumadin®, Jantoven®)
  - zolpidem (Ambien®, Edular®, Intermezzo®, Zolpidem®)

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.

Keep STRIBILD and all medicines out of reach of children.

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about STRIBILD. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about STRIBILD that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to www.STRIBILD.com.

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Away from politics for 17 years, the former out city councilman returns to the limelight as diversity advocate

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If you weren’t in Dallas in the 1990s, Chris Luna’s name might not ring a bell, even though he was a trailblazer in local politics. First elected to Dallas City Council in 1991, Luna became one of several openly gay elected officials to serve on the council during the 1990s. When he left office in 1997 to return to his law practice, he stepped away from limelight.

In the last year, he married his partner of 18 years in New York and he was recently appointment to T-Mobile’s diversity committee. Other phone companies have perfect HRC Corporate Equality Index scores, and T-Mobile hopes Luna will help it raise its score to the same level.

During his first campaign for city council, Luna didn’t want to be known as “the out candidate.” Indeed, before committing to a run, he spoke to Resource Center Executive Director John Thomas and Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance President Bruce Monroe about keeping his private life private. He told them he’d never lie about who he was, that he’d never work against the LGBT community or do anything that would hurt it. But in a predominantly Hispanic district, he wondered: could he get elected as an openly gay man? The only person previously who tried to run as openly gay, Bill Nelson, failed in his attempt.

Thomas and Monroe agreed with the strategy. And while many in the media knew he was gay, they respected his privacy and waited for his coming out announcement. Luna went on to serve three terms on the Dallas City Council for District 2, two as deputy mayor pro tem.

The LGBT community likewise kept Luna’s secret in that first campaign. Luna said he decided during his first term, he would provide excellent constituent services so that his sexual orientation wouldn’t matter in later elections.

When the city was redistricted into the current 14-1 plan, Oak Lawn was split in half. The intent was to ensure the LGBT community could never elect a gay or lesbian candidate. Instead, the plan backfired. By 1993, both Oak Lawn seats had gay councilmen when Craig McDaniel was elected to District 14.

Luna’s decision to come out was made for him, even if by accident. Just before the 1993 election, Luna attended the March on Washington, the historic rally in support of gay rights. Standing on the Mall in D.C. with the Dallas contingent, he didn’t expect to hear his name read from the podium near the Capitol among a list of gay elected officials at the march. But it was.

Reporters from Dallas respected Luna’s privacy on the issue, he said, and were waiting for him to “officially” come out. But “for some reason, the Houston papers picked up on it,” Luna said.

Knowing his father read the paper cover to cover each day, Luna changed his return plane ticket to Houston, so he could come out to his family in person.

“Was, ‘What took you so long to tell us? We always knew,’” he said.

Luna’s proudest memory of his three terms in office was the day the council passed a nondiscrimination policy for city employees. He said the
smartest thing the LGBT community did was get a letter of support from civil rights pioneer Coretta Scott King. “It basically said this is the right thing to do,” Luna said. “This is what Martin stood for.”

That gave black council members the cover they needed to stand up to pastors in the council chamber opposing the ordinance and vote for equality, Luna said.

After the vote, he remembered the crowds standing and in overflow room outside the council chamber and being congratulated and treated like a rock star.

For Luna, leaving the council was an economic decision. The pay at the time was low: $50 for attending a council meeting and $500 for a committee meeting — $100/week. He started up his law practice and has served on a number of boards in the interim, including the Visitors and Convention Bureau, Parkland Hospital, the Dallas Zoological Society and AIDS Arms. Several years ago, he became legal director for Metro PCS and is its highest ranking Hispanic employee.

In 2013, that company merged with T-Mobile. While the two brands continue to operate separately, some functions have merged. Recently, Luna was appointed to T-Mobile’s diversity committee. “I’m very proud of that,” he said.

In addition to categories such as race and sexual orientation, the company is looking for people from across the country who are a variety of ages and hold a number of positions.

“Something that’s an issue to someone in a retail store might not be a problem for someone in upper management,” he said.

Luna is enjoying his current career, but could see eventually running for a county-wide office. Although always the optimist, Luna is practical when it comes to politics. He respects people who run for office so that entrenched incumbents don’t go unchallenged, but that’s not for him. He lives in Garland now where his state and federal representatives are Republican, so those positions aren’t options. But he’s keeping his options open.

“I have one more race in me,” he said. “But I see it as a capstone to my career.”
Gay lawyer shares how Dallas has evolved on LGBT issues in 26-year career

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John Rogers remembers a time when his sexuality hindered him from working at a Dallas law firm.

After working at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas for a time, he hired a headhunter to help him find another job in law.

He interviewed with a law firm and went through four interview levels with them. The final lunch interview brought all the partners together for one final approval. He was sure of himself going in, as his headhunter told him no one had made it to that point and not received an offer. But when a partner asked if he was married, and he said no, the next question was what neighborhood he lived in. He told them: Oak Lawn.

“And man, that lunch shut down so fast,” Rogers said, adding that they then knew he was gay and he never received an offer from them. “It was very, very obvious that they put two and two together. At the time, if you were an out gay man, you could not get a job at a law firm. It’s still that way in the big law firms.”

He was later told to apply for a position with the city of Dallas. And he was determined to be himself from day one. When Ron Kirk, who would later go on to be mayor, hired him in 1988, he told him: Oak Lawn.

“He’s promise has come true,” Rogers recalled. “I have never had any problem with the city being an out gay employee. The rest is history. I’ve been here for 26 years now.”

But that time is coming to an end. Rogers will retire from the city attorney’s office on June 27.

During his time with the office, Rogers was the first person to successfully prosecute a water pollution case. He developed the investigation procedures to prove the custody of water, knowing that if the city couldn’t prove the reason behind its citations, there was no point writing people up.

He was later promoted to City Hall for litigation and general items, including zoning issues. That’s where he became passionate about the city’s weak, decades-old historical preservation ordinance, which allowed anyone to tear down an old building if the city couldn’t find a buyer within 90 days. His revision of the ordinance went into effect in 2001, when the council approved his changes. It now prevents the demolition of a historical building unless it falls into one of four categories (such as a court-ordered demolition or if it’s in poor, unlivable condition). That remains one of his favorites projects he’s led during his service.

Another is the recent local-option election that turned the whole city wet for restaurants, which he said helped develop South Dallas because grocery stores and restaurants were avoiding the area because it was dry.

Rogers now primarily handles zoning for the city, and he’s done everything in that department from working with the landmark commission and inspection board to the planning committee and City Council.

In the 26 years at the city, Rogers has also witnessed a lot of civil rights developments. He remembers the push to include sexual orientation in the city’s nondiscrimination policy in the 1990s. At the time, the move was controversial, and many employees, while out, were afraid to talk to the press. But not him.

“It was so controversial at the time,” he said. “At that time, there were people who really did not like me talking to the press and did not like me being a gay employee. But then that passed.”

The next step forward for LGBT employees and citizens came in 2002 when City Council passed its citywide nondiscrimination ordinance, preventing bias in housing, employment and public accommodations based on sexual orientation. Gender identity is included in the ordinance’s definition of sexual orientation.

Rogers said the ordinance was “a little bit controversial but not nearly anything like” the city’s policy change years before that. “You could kind of see the world changing a little bit,” he said. Flash forward to last March, when the council passed its comprehensive equality resolution to study ways in which the city as an employer, advocate and place to live could be a more welcoming place to the LGBT community. Rogers was one of two out employees asked to make recommen-
Asst. city atty. John Rogers is stepping down.

John Rogers, shown in his office at City Hall, he’s been a Dallas assistant city attorney for 26 years. He will retire to spend time with his husband on their chicken farm in East Texas. (Photo courtesy Anna Waugh)

dations to the council, and he was pleased to see the amount of support for the measure.

“Everybody except for two council members were falling all over themselves to be the champion of that thing, and there was almost no comments from the public about that,” he said. “So it really shows how the world has changed from the 1980s to 2014.”

The level of support for the resolution mirrored the message the city sent out last year with an It Gets Better video featuring a dozen out employees, including Rogers, about their experiences growing up and working for the city, accompanied by comments from the city manager and mayor.

While Rogers will retire later this month, he said he plans to stay involved at some level with the city, including following the pension plan debate. Its Employee Retirement Fund is still debating how to make the municipal pension plans equitable, an issue he quietly mentioned in the past and brought up to ensure it was a focus of the resolution.

Currently, same-sex spouses cannot receive benefits for life if their spouse dies. Instead they are listed as a beneficiary with benefits for only 10 years. Rogers said his husband is still listed as a beneficiary since the plan hasn’t changed yet, and he expects the issue to arise during the debate on the plan’s changes to ensure that retirees can have their same-sex spouses fully recognized.

“They’re going to have to address their married gay employees who are already retired who didn’t get that option,” Rogers said.

Even though the city has offered domestic partner benefits since 2004, the pension system is its own entity with its own board.

But for now he plans to take six months off and spend some time with his husband on their chicken farm in Canton in East Texas, where his husband has lived and cared for the 400 chickens, 200 ducks and 20 geese since they bought the place three years ago.

After that, he’s not sure what he’ll do, saying he’ll reevaluate another job or some volunteer work. As a former board member of the Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance in the ’80s, he said his heart is in the city of Dallas and with its LGIT community.

“I’m hoping I can continue to have some role with the city, not with the city government, but maybe some nonprofit,” Rogers said.
Dallas’ new diversity officer plans citywide program

In newly-created position, North Texas newcomer Cheryl Orr still learning about city’s gay community

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Cheryl Orr has spent more than two decades working in human resources, but she’s never quite had a position like the new role she’s taking on in Dallas.

Orr moved here from Washington, D.C., in mid-May to serve as the city of Dallas’ ethics and diversity officer. Since the position was recently added, Orr said she’s still getting her feet wet, describing the position as being in “a formative stage.” But her goal is to plan and implement a citywide diversity program by the fall. And although the ethics aspect of the job is new to her, she said her background in human resources and working with equal employment opportunity policies has prepared her to take on the diversity component.

“The diversity side of this job is probably where I am strongest because of my EEO history,” she said. “The diversity side is really one, the whole value of diversity in the workplace and the other is what I call managing the diversity of the workforce and they both are done so we can get work done.”

Since starting a little more than a month ago, Orr has been meeting with groups, and while she has yet to meet with the city’s LGBT employee resource group, she plans to. And she’s met with the city’s LGBT Task Force, which is comprised of local LGBT leaders and headed by Councilman Adam Medrano.

She’s planning to continue the meetings and discussions with various committee leaders on race, culture, gender and LGBT issues in order to develop the ethics initiatives and diversity programs.

“I want a lot of input,” Orr said about the diversity program. “This isn’t something you come in and just do. You craft it around what people want.”

Orr held a meeting with the Fair Housing Office, which handles complaints filed under the city’s nondiscrimination ordinance that prevents bias based on sexual orientation in housing, employment and public accommodations. Gender identity is included in the ordinance’s definition of sexual orientation. The new program will, of course, include an LGBT component, but Orr said it will encompass every diverse aspect and demographic included in the workplace.

“All the areas of diversity will be part of the training,” Orr said. “It’s really valuing differences and it’s about relationships and who you’re interacting with. The bottom line is the workplace is about getting work done, so [the training is about] what’s the best way to get work done with all the different people in the workplace.”

Even though Orr brings a strong background in H.R. and in EEO policy to Dallas, she doesn’t have any experience working directly with the LGBT community. She said she’s working on further understanding the issues affecting the community, especially transgender issues, adding that she’s sought advice...
Persecution claims debunked by PFAW

Studies of right-wing tactics to portray Christians as victims meant to forestall marriage equality

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An Air Force sergeant is fired because he opposes same-sex marriage. As part of an anti-bullying program, two middle school girls are forced into a lesbian kiss by school officials. A man fixing the lights on a Christmas tree falls victim to War on Christmas violence.

Heart wrenching stories of political correctness gone wild — these and a list of others. But according to a report from the People for the American Way, they’re simply not true. None of these things ever happened.

“Religious Right leaders hold themselves up as the victims,” People For the American Way’s President Michael B. Keegan said. “This is a powerful talking point, even if not true.”

Claiming religious persecution is the latest tactic of the religious right, according to PFAW spokesman Drew Courtney. “Fox News is the source of a lot of these things,” Courtney said.

He said Fox commentator Todd Starnes, in particular, can take credit for either making up these stories or taking events that happened and twisting them into outrageous lies. The Air Force sergeant went on the air with Starnes and claimed he made anti-marriage comments and was then transferred to another assignment.

Upon investigation, PFAW found those two things were coincidental. The sergeant was in a unit when his assignment ended. He was moved to his next position as scheduled. During that time, he made homophobic comments. However, there was no demotion or discipline. The move was planned before he began making the public anti-gay statements.

According to the report, these unfounded stories feed into a narrative that portrays conservative Christians as the victims of LGBT rights.

Courtney said it’s a shame because in some parts of the world, Christians actually are persecuted. Churches are burned and Christians are the victims of violence.

He said a major point in the report is the unique role Fox News has established in fanning the flames of intolerance. Since last year’s U.S. Supreme Court decision striking down part of the Defense of Marriage Act, one court after another has found in favor of LGBT equality. None has upheld a state marriage ban.

The right-wing uses the religious discrimination argument with reproductive rights as well, according to the report. The report says, “By re-framing political losses as religious oppression, the Right has attempted to build a justification for turning back advances in gay rights, reproductive rights and religious liberty for minority faiths.”

Frantic warnings coupled with myths of persecution feeds into a narrative that the U.S. is about to institute “hate speech” laws that will criminalize religious behavior. “The gas in running out on their arguments,” Courtney said.

In addition to the PFAW report, others are working to counter the religious discrimination arguments. The United Church of Christ was joined by the Union for Reform Judaism in a lawsuit against North Carolina’s marriage laws. The denominations claim religious discrimination because they are prevented from practicing their religions, which allow and encourage same-sex couples to marry.

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TX Pride roundup

What you need to know about Pride events in Texas this month

Longview holds 1st Pride event
GLBT Pride Festival in Longview takes place in Heritage Plaza in Downtown Longview on Saturday.

Music, refreshments and local organizations and business from Longview, Tyler and the Shreveport area will have booths. DJ Cody Jack provides the music. A drag show that evening features the ladies from RMC drag cast starts at 7:30 p.m. and there will be a doggie drag show. Heritage Plaza, Longview. June 21 from 5–9 p.m.

Big Long & Proud dance party in Arlington
Los Angeles DJ Manny Lehman headlines the Big Long & Proud Dance, Party billed as the biggest dance party to ever hit Tarrant County. Local DJ Ryan Tiffin is the opener. The event is part of Tarrant County’s HIV Community Mobilization Program.
1010 Collins Entertainment & Event Center, 1010 N. Collins St., Arlington. June 21. 9 p.m.–2 a.m.

Stonewall Denton Pride
In lieu of its regular meeting, Stonewall Democrats of Denton hosts its June LGBTQ Pride Month event. Denton Mayor Pro Tem Jim Engelbrecht plans to attend to proclaim LGBTQ Month event. Denton. June 21.

Stonewall Inn rebellion.

Houston Pride
Houston Pride, the largest Pride celebration in Texas — attended by more than 400,000 people each year — takes place June 28. The state’s largest city always celebrates on the fourth Sunday and this year that falls on the 45th anniversary of Stonewall. Houston has been celebrating for the last 36 years.

Unlike our perfectly delightful summers in North Texas, Houston is so damn hot and humid, the parade is held at night, preceded by its afternoon Pride festival.
Festival at Westheimer Road and Yoakum Blvd. June 28, 1–7 p.m. Parade, 8:15–11 p.m. PrideHouston.org.

The official after-party takes place at South Beach, 510 Pacific St., Houston. Until 3 a.m.

Queerbomb’s Pride events
Queerbomb Dallas is getting ready for June Pride. On Sunday, gather to wave queer wands at the crafting painting cutting drying hanging crying drinking eating laughing loving over hefty amounts of cardboard glitter and glue for the Pro-cession signs and banners.

San Antonio Pride
June’s not quite hot enough for any Texas Pride celebration, so San Antonio waits until July.
San Antonio Pride takes place July 5 in Crockett Park, 1300 N. Main Ave. The festival takes place 11 a.m.–7 p.m. and the parade kicks off at 9 p.m. Before the parade, a one-mile Rainbow Dash takes place at 8:15 p.m. and a high heel dash at 8:30 p.m. Shangela, Tom Goss and Christopher Anton are the entertainment headliners.

For more information, visit PrideSanAntonio.org.

— David Taffet
Pride Prom moves to COH

Church to open early, volunteers do hair, makeup for youth who do not feel safe at home

Casey Rickert went alone to his high school prom in Eustace near Cedar Creek Lake, but he didn’t stay long.

“My school was against anything gay,” he said.

In high school, Rickert was out. He said his brother and sister always knew he was gay but when his mom found out during his sophomore year, “we had to split ways.”

A teacher in his school took him in. She and her partner attend the Cathedral of Hope, and Rickert went with them and became active in youth activities.

After he graduated high school last month, he moved to Dallas where he’s living with friends. In the fall, he will attend El Centro College.

But this week, he’s helping himself — and others — enjoy the prom they missed. He’s decorating for the Pride Prom that takes place in the Interfaith Peace Chapel on Friday.

“I want to make sure everyone has a good time,” he said.

The theme of the prom is masquerade, and Rickert said the chapel will be decorated in green, gold and violet. Several days before the prom, he said he was still working on his own mask.

Kinya Lowvley, who has been attending Youth First since February, said the prom is an important event for LGBT youth.

“It gives us a chance to have that special night and be who we are,” she said.

Many schools don’t recognize LGBT youth, she said, and if they’re not recognized in school, they won’t be allowed to attend prom with a same-sex date.

Youth First and Cathedral of Hope teamed up to present this year’s prom. When the first prom was held in the 1990s, it was presented by P-FLAG and was one of the first of its kind. People attended from across the country. When its original venue, the Dallas Grand Hotel, closed, the prom moved to Southern Methodist University.

Since then, many schools have created gay-straight alliances and have welcome all of their students to their proms — but not all, as Rickert found at his East Texas high school.

Yadi Martinez is Cathedral of Hope’s youth and young adult minister who is making many of the arrangements for the prom. She said doors open at 5 p.m. for youth to get ready for the prom. Some youth aren’t comfortable or are forbidden to attend their school proms with a same-sex date.

“Some may not have a safe environment to get ready,” Martinez said. “Others may not be able to attend their school prom as their desired gender.”

Martinez said Cathedral and Youth First have made arrangements for those youth to attend. Scholarships are available for those who can’t afford to pay. Cathedral members have donated formal clothes. Hair stylists and make-up artists have volunteered their time. Others will be doing nails.

Last year, Martinez said the event was low key attended mostly by Youth First.

“This year we decided to go out into the community,” Martinez said.

That included inviting students from gay-straight alliance from around the area as well as residents from shelters like Promise House.

The collaboration between Youth First, a program of Resource Center, and Cathedral of Hope began when Youth First contacted Cathedral about renting space for the prom.

“I felt it was very important for our own youth, not just to host, but to partner,” Martinez said.

She said many of Cathedral’s youth come from churches that have told them they are going to hell and kicked them out. She said youth frequently tell her they didn’t think there was a church for them and they were condemned.

Many of the volunteers from the church said they couldn’t attend their own proms so they asked what they could do to help.

— David Taffet
Gay Pride! (and prejudice)

Emerson Collins: Gay Pride, however celebrated, is nothing to apologize for.

June is Pride Month across the U.S., and the kickoff to a season of Pride. Every weekend from June through September, somewhere, the LGBT community amasses in official events and activities celebrating our diversity. And every year, about the same time, complaints about Pride will begin, too. Everyone has an opinion about what Pride should be — and should not be.

Some of these conversations are incredibly valuable as the big-tent community continues to consider what it is, where it is going and how it should be represented. Each voice contributing to this discussion provides a greater celebration of who and what we are as a collective of varied individuals coming together to celebrate us.

There are important questions that are worth asking in order to define what each community wants and needs Pride to be. What is Pride? Is it a parade? Is it a celebration? Is it a political demonstration? What are we saying — to each other, and to the non-LGBT community? How do we want to present ourselves? Who do we want to represent us? Are we represented?

These are all good questions. Unfortunately, some of the answers are not. The greatest rejection of the very idea of Gay Pride is typically expressed as: “Pride does not represent me.” That’s a valid feeling. It’s the specific objections — and suggested solutions — that so often include judgment of other parts of our community that are problematic.

The main objection is often one based on personal sensibilities — that certain modes of dress and flamboyant presentation become the main images associated with Pride. The go-to examples are often drag queens, go-go boys and “those guys in the assless leather chaps.” The frustration is that these are the visuals that the (mainstream) news media will gravitate toward; the goal is to get ratings or page views, and they do not represent all of us.

But let’s acknowledge a basic fact about the news. The goal is to get ratings or page views, and media do so by finding the most sensational and media do so by finding the most sensational news. The goal is to get ratings or page views, and everyone has an opinion about what Pride should be — and should not be.

Second: Don’t make a mess. It is embarrassing large-scale gatherings. This isn’t an LGBT thing, it’s a civilization thing. It should be a personal pride thing. Find a trash can; it’s not rocket science.

Finally, smile at everyone, and cheer for everyone. The LGBT Accountants Association should receive the same whoops, hollers and cheers that the LGBT veterans and the float full of the foam-covered boys from the club receive. The entire point of the celebration aspect should be celebrating us all equally. Appreciating everyone who took the time to be a part of the parade is literally the least you can do.

The second major objection to Pride festivities is rooted in the goal of having Pride be kid-friendly and acceptable to straight allies in attendance. First, what, exactly, does “kid-friendly” even mean — or more directly, what about Pride is not kid-friendly? The semi-nudity? One of the great joys of coming out of hetero-normative, puritanical society is the ability to pull back the curtain on so many cultural and social mores.

Children have access to extreme amounts of unfiltered violence, but the display and celebration of the human body and sexuality may be damaging? Those assless chaps? Literally every person in the world has a butt. What is so scary and scarring about seeing it? What is so incredibly difficult about explaining drag, or leather, or fishnet as a costume of personal expression? How terrifying for children to learn that all the shapes, sizes and colors of the human body are beautiful and that being a sexual being is something to be cherished and celebrated? Stop blaming your own puritanical sexual inhibitions on the children. The kids will be just fine.

I’ll be honest — I have three favorite personality types I see every year at Pride, and each make me giddy. The first is the Rubenesque lesbian — toless, with duct tape Xs across her areoles. I don’t see the same set every year, but I always see one (or, rather, two). This always makes me smile — for the celebration of her body, for her rejection of objectification, for the casual way her getup says, “I love my body and who I am.”

Now, she may just like being kind-of-naked, but for a guy who had crazy body issues for years on a long journey to self-love, she makes me feel like we are on the same team of loving ourselves, regardless of external beauty standards. Yes, it is a massive projection on my part; I don’t think she would mind too much.

The second Pride persona I love to see is the newbie. The first-timer. When it’s a boy, he’s often clad in barely-there shorts or swimwear, the result of his recent discovery of brands geared specifically to gay men, where “extra large” means “30 inch waist.” Some version of face paint or makeup is usually beginning to melt down his face and his best girlfriend is being half-dragged through the crowd toward the next, new, exciting, shiny thing.

What I love most about him is the smile from ear to ear that seems impossibly big and permanently attached. The thrill is visceral, radiating from him, and it is a wonderful reminder of the Oz-meets-Club Babylon feeling I had at my first giant gay celebration. I don’t know his story, his journey or how easy or difficult coming out was for him, but I do remember fondly that moment...
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of excitement upon looking up and down a crowded street and seeing my people gathered en masse for the first time. I appreciate him for reminding me of that. For me, Pride is as much about remembering where we have come from as it is a celebration of where we are now.

My final favorite Pride character — and he is the same guy every year — is the gentleman, likely in his 70s, dressed in rainbows from head to toe: A rainbow top hat, a rainbow harness, rainbow polyester assless pants, a rainbow thong and rainbow combat boots. The piece-de-resistance is a set of rainbow butterfly wings. He stands beside the parade route, smiles and waves at everyone who passes.

And I love him for it all — for the outfit, for the freedom evident in it and for the positive energy he gives to anyone who glances his way. He inspires me. When I step outside of the privilege I have for growing up in an era where Pride celebrations are expectedly common annual events, it helps me imagine what the world was like for him. When he was my age, Pride was unimaginable, equality was a pipe dream and there were few if any LGBT clothing and bookstores selling rainbow ensembles. He, and his celebration, reminds me how fortunate I am and how completely I stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before me — people who made even writing this article possible. Again, I’m projecting, but in doing so, I’m getting out of Pride what I want, and sometimes need.

Each of us has that opportunity. Pride should be what you want it to be, but not at the expense of judging those who express themselves in ways that are different from your self-expression. Wanting to be represented is great; wanting others to not be represented is doing to them exactly what was done to our entire community for so long. Pushing anyone into the shadows because they do not fit your personal narrative makes you no different than those who wish the LGBT community to be silent in the greater segment of American society.

Every Pride march or parade or street party or festival has a process for participating. If you do not see yourself reflected in it, change that. Sign up. Create a float or booth for lesbian doctors, the drag queens to tone it down or the straight neighbors think?” The entire point is that we should not have to care. Any of us. We should be long past the misguided idea that “the more we look like them, the more they will accept us.” Seeking equality does not, and certainly should not, have to look like seeking acceptance. Accepting us or not is on them. Changing who we are to gain that acceptance defeats the entire purpose of being proud of who we are. And being proud of who all of us are.

The overarching theme of modern day Pride may not be as much about political demonstration, but the important message of rejecting judgment should remain clear. “You cannot judge us” is a part of the message Pride sends to non-LGBT society. Not judging each other is even more important. Young, fit gay boys sneering at the appearance of others is just as disgusting as those who wish to hide the porn stars, the drag queens, the gender-nonconforming or the scantily clad at the back of the acceptability bus. Our cries for equality seem hollow and hypocritical if we cannot first accept each other.

The rainbow continues to be symbolically appropriate for Pride, because every shade of every color should be welcome. Denying each other the ability to let whatever version of our freak flag fly that we choose to is really the only thing we should ever have to be ashamed of about Pride. It is telling that in the 1969 proposal for the first Pride demonstration at the Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations, the phrase, “No dress or age regulations shall be made for this demonstration,” was included. If they knew how important unfiltered self-expression was then, long before the LGBT community had gained any measure of visible acceptance, how can we possibly forget the important lesson of allowing every form, version and iteration of personal LGBT Pride to be something we are all proud of now?
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Executive Order vs ENDA?  
It’s a mixed bag either way.

Our movement for equality has been working to gain passage of meaningful nationwide workplace protections for LGBT Americans for decades now, and while we’ve made some gains in a few states and municipalities, the goal of a federal law that includes us once and for all has seemed perpetually out of reach. So now comes President Barack Obama this week directing staff to draft an executive order that would expand existing protections by prohibiting federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating against their employees based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and he will sign it.

“Woohoo!” right? There is no question that this president has done more to advance LGBT equality than all of his predecessors combined. In the face of a stalled Congress that prefers bickering and symbolic votes to meaningful action, Obama in his 2014 “year of action” plan has further vowed to use his power of “pen and phone” to accomplish through executive order some things that Congress has not acted on. With strong bipartisan passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) in the Senate and zero action on it in the House, many in the LGBT movement have been pressuring him to take precisely this action — namely, to institute workplace protections for LGBT Americans via executive order.

There are pros and cons to both pathways to workplace protections, and how they balance for any given LGBT person is a matter of personal opinion and perspective. Neither is perfect, and there are serious problems with both. But we have no federal workplace protections in law or regulation right now, and gay workers in 29 states and transgender employees in 32 states can still be fired simply for being who they are. So something is better than nothing.

The planned executive order would bring immediate relief for what the Williams Institute estimates to be more than 16.5 million Americans and their families, but it would cover only LGBT Americans employed by federal contractors. And an executive order is not law — it can be wholly rescinded by the simple pen stroke of a future president in 2017 or beyond.

So why not focus on ENDA? One, the bill has stalled for decades in Congress, and odds are that it will not pass this Congress or the next. A federal ENDA would certainly have the full force of permanent law and would protect all LGBT Americans nationwide, but putting all of our workplace equality eggs in the ENDA basket would be a long indefinite wait for everybody.

But there is another significant downside to passing ENDA right now: In its present form, ENDA contains the broadest religious exemption in the history of civil rights legislation — completely gutting the spirit and intent of the law, in the eyes of many. The baseline 1964 Civil Rights Act Title VII has been the “religious exemption” benchmark until now, providing only a narrow allowance for religiously-affiliated organizations to create a community of believers of the same faith while still requiring such religious organizations to comply with nondiscrimination for all protected classes beyond religion. ENDA in its current form would expand the Title VII standard to carve out a huge unprecedented “special” religious exemption for employers to legally discriminate against LGBT employees.

Many major LGBT organizations, including National Center for Lesbian Rights, no longer support the current version of ENDA. Others, including the Human Rights Campaign, only cautiously support it, expressing “grave concerns” about the breathtakingly far-reaching religious exemption as written. All of these organizations would wholeheartedly support an ENDA that includes only the standard Title VII religious exemption.

Still, this week LGBT organizations and individuals across the country are enthusiastically applauding the president’s plan to sign an employment non-discrimination executive order. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force’s Rea Carey hailed it as “the single largest expansion of LGBT workplace protections in our country’s history.” HRC’s Chad Griffin cheered the move and deftly noted that while most federal contractors already provide these protections, major corporations who are federal contractors and have refused in the past will now be required to comply. “This order will bring much-needed relief to ExxonMobil’s LGBT employees,” he said, pointing out that for almost 20 years Irving-based ExMo has held the lowest spot in HRC’s Corporate Equality Index — the first and only company to receive a negative score.

The president said it best himself this week to a group of LGBT Democratic leaders: “Because in the United States of America, who you are and who you love shouldn’t be a fireable offense. It would be better, by the way, if Congress passed a more comprehensive law that didn’t just cover federal contractors. And we need to keep working on that, so don’t take the pressure off Congress.”

Patti Fink is president of Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance and a host of Lambda Weekly on KNON-FM.

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When it comes to your health, experience counts.
What started out simply as a beautiful idea while vacationing in France, transformed into an everyday reality for partners Michael Crigger and Mario Gallegos: The business that is not their passion.

“It really stemmed from a trip to Paris,” Crigger says. The couple was celebrating Gallegos’ birthday in Parisian style when they fell in love with the old-school French approach to fashion. “Mario had never seen how, in the boutiques [there], they take so much time on every customer. They assist you immediately upon entering, they pick things out [and bring them to you] based on your tastes so customers don’t have to hunt, and they wrap every item, even in the lower end stores,” says Crigger. “We wanted to bring some of that back with us and for our space to have a touch of the old world.”

So when they returned to Dallas, they opened their own studio storefront, appropriately called Petit Atelier (“little workshop” en français), a multi-purpose studio space in Deep Ellum which offers custom design through its resident designers.

Gallegos (himself a custom couture designer) and Crigger (a designer with a passion for teaching) combined their multifaceted perspectives on fashion to add to the rich complexity of services offered at Petit Atelier.

“We come from different aspects of it,” Gallegos explains. “I come from the improvisational creative side and [Michael] is more from the technical, academic setting where ‘this is exactly what you’re supposed to do’ — it’s precise. Sometimes, we have to meet in the middle but it balances everything out.”

This unique balance led the founders not merely to offer a re-

Couturier couple Mario Gallegos and Michael Crigger turned their Deep Ellum loft into the Parisian-style fashion studio Petit Atelier.

J. DENTON BRICKER | Contributing Writer
dentonbricker@gmail.com

KEY TO THE CITY | One of the walls at Petit Atelier in Deep Ellum is lined with keys — a nod to a bridge in Paris covered in keys. It’s a reminder for partners Mario Gallegos, left, and Michael Crigger of where they got the idea for their couture studio. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)
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The structure of *Jersey Boys* — the hit Broadway musical about the career of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, now adapted for the screen — resembles, oddly enough, the Harry Potter series. Like Harry, Frankie (played by its stage star, John Lloyd Young) is someone identified as having special, inimitable gifts, and who must be protected at all costs. All his friends want him — need him — to succeed, so they form a phalanx around him, taking the rap for his crimes, overlooking his slip-ups. In that way, *Jersey Boys* is really a story about loyalty and its inevitable limits.

The first person to recognize genius in Frankie was a neighborhood goombah named Tommy DeVito (Vincent Piazza), a mobbed-up wannabe who would steal a cigarette lighter from his own record producer just because it would never occur to him to be honest for more than five minutes. But the relationship that warms our hearts is the one between Frankie and Bob Gaudio (Erich Bergen), the fourth member of the Four Seasons and the composer of virtually all the group's hits. Early in their careers, Bob and Frankie had a handshake deal to share in each other's financial successes, and that deal's enduring nature — one of the last lines of the play — is a testament to what it really means to be from New Jersey.

Only that scene isn't even in Clint Eastwood's film of *Jersey Boys*, a gross oversight but hardly the only one in this disappointing stab at bringing a musical from stage to screen.

In recent years, Eastwood has become better known for lecturing to an empty chair at the 2012 Republican national convention than for his movies, and watching that fiasco was more entertaining than most of the musical numbers he stages here.

It should have been obvious from the start. Eastwood, like Woody Allen, is a jazz connoisseur whose pop music tastes ended when Glenn Miller died. He's temperamentally ill-suited to turn a show known for its doo-wop energy into an engaging song-and-dance show. The goal seems to be making *The Godfather* with singing rather than a musical with some weight to it.

Musicals have to be just that — musical, full of singing and dancing. But Clint's history with the form isn't exactly toe-tapping. He costarred in 1969's *Paint Your Wagon*, by consensus one of the worst movie musicals of all time. In the 1980s, he directed *Bird*, a biopic about jazz musician Charlie Parker. This film more closely resembles *Bird* than it does the stage version of *Jersey Boys* — a dour drama set in a minor key than only incidentally seems interested in the music of the Four Seasons. If you go in expecting to be delighted by two hours of nostalgic pop songs from the 1960s and '70s, you'll leave as frustrated as I did. Valli and company turned out about 10 catchy singles in their heyday, four are barely performed at all here, crammed into the closing five minutes of the film.

Eastwood also tinkers with the structure of
the storytelling, which uses each Four Season as a narrator for one “season” of the band’s life. But Valli never becomes our narrator, and the point seems lost on Eastwood altogether.

The saving graces are the performances, especially by Young (enchanting as the naifish Frankie, potent as an adult), Piazza (astonishingly convincing as the self-destructive Tommy) and Mike Doyle as Bob Crewe, the gay record producer who guided the group through its career. They convey, in precise ways, a history of America as seen from the ground up, with their eyes on the stars. Casey Kasem would have been proud.

Bob Crewe could be more-or-less out in the New York record business of the 1960s; the same wasn’t true of Chauncey Miles, a burlesque star of the 1930s known for playing “the nance,” a stock character who minced flamboyantly for laughs between scenes of girls taking their clothes off. 1937 was a dangerous time to be gay, when even the whiff of scandal could derail any career, and cops raided gathering places for sport, just to mess with the queers. But somehow homosexuality survived.

The Nance, Douglas Carter Beane’s Tony Award-winning Broadway hit of last season — like Brokeback Mountain — is about both the sad cost of being closeted in an intolerant world and the profoundness of needing to connect with another person, despite that cost.

If you didn’t catch The Nance it during its Lincoln Center run last year, you can remedy that this week, as the filmed version of the play screens at local theaters.

Despite a degree of fame in the footlights, Chauncey (Nathan Lane) lives much of his life in the shadows. He trolls the local automat to pick up down-on-their-luck victims of the Great Depression who, for a slice of pie and a ham sandwich, will spend the night with Chauncey before he sends them off in the morning.

But this time, one piece of trade (Jonny Orsini) doesn’t want to go. He’s not some gay-for-pay hobo, but a genuinely confused rube exploring his sexuality in the big city.

In scenes that shift fluidly between Chauncey’s home life and his outrageous stage act, we get a taste for the comedic guts it took to spoof a character who he was in real life: to turn into a buffoon the reality of his own existence ... and the paradox that he’s a blindly loyal lifelong Republican. (“A pansy who’s a Republican? one character observes, “that’s like a Negro Klan member.”) When the era’s moral police force him into the closet, even stop him from mincing amusingly onstage, he’s faced with a conundrum about how much he can compromise.

Lane is perfect at these kinds of roles, with his exaggerated personality and unexpected underplaying. He’s heartbreaking and hilarious by turn.

But it’s Beane’s gift with words — his ability to land a one-liner while imbuing a campy intellectualism into it — that sets the script apart.

“...for future references, there are only three things that I am ever talking about, dear heart,” Miles says, his voice dripping in syrupy wit. “There were four, but then they’ve gone and cast Barbara Stanwyck as Stella Dallas.” Those kinds of lines are awash in pop culture references — not just contemporary, but historic.

It would be nice if The Nance could open up and turned into a full-on movie, but I have a suspicion it would lose a lot in the process. This is theatricality at its most wizardly, a story as born to the stage as a vaudeville.

Still, that’s no reason not to catch it on the big screen — it’s the next best thing.
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Makeup artist and actress Jenine Galante proudly gets in touch with her inner Gaga.

**Name:** Jenine Galante  
**Occupation:** Lady Gaga impersonator, dancer, singer, actress and makeup artist  
**Spotted in:** Junius Heights  

A transplant from Fairlawn, N.J., Jenine grew up in Arlington, where she started dancing at age 6 at the Creative Arts Theatre & School (CATS). Jenine received an associates degree in musical theater from the Performing Arts Musical Theatre Conservatory, then continued her studies in New York. She is part of the never-ending national tour of Tony N’ Tina’s Wedding, but works mainly as a special effects makeup and hair/wig designer.

**How Gaga came to be:** “Well, it was this one night at karaoke. My best friend’s husband asked if I would get up and sing ‘Paparazzi,’ so I did. As I walked off the stage, my friends had this look in their eyes and they kept saying that that was my calling — to be a Lady Gaga impersonator. I had already been told several times that I sort of look like her, and though I didn’t see it at first, it just all made sense. So I went for it... and now here we are.”

In her spare time, Jenine plays with make-up and wigs, and tends her succulent garden.
any people enjoy celebrating birthdays with a party. But for Justin Tranter — the gender-bending rocker and frontman of alternative band the Semi Precious Weapons — every work day is a party. So, when he turned 34 just a few days ago, he traded his birthday cake and ice cream for a leaf rake and work gloves. And (because he prefers to consume his occasional off-diet calories in the form of drink) perhaps a bottle of Chardonnay.

“The whole band lives together in a house here in Los Angeles,” the singer/songwriter says. “What I wanted was for everyone to hang around the house. We have this awesome backyard, but there is a sad, beautiful tree that is dying and it sheds all over the place. For my birthday, we turned my backyard into a nice backyard.”

For Tranter and his three straight band mates — guitarist Stevy Pyne, bassist Cole Whittle and drummer Dan Cream — pulling together to achieve a common goal is the rule rather than an exception to it, a fact that holds true whether they are performing onstage, recording in the studio or cleaning the backyard.

In April, Semi Precious Weapons issued Aviation, a frustratingly delayed third studio album held back as the result of some unresolved record label issues. The delay, however, gave the band time to produce a number of tracks and then pick 12 of their favorites for release. Tranter feels that Aviation reflects the band’s evolution from a NYC “fun, party band” — one that caught the early attention of Lady Gaga and led to a gig as the opening act for her Monster Ball Tour — to a group of more serious and truthful artists.

“The early stuff was not really my stuff,” Tranter carefully explains, referring to the band’s glam roots. “[But] the early stuff wasn’t really telling our life stories. The new album is our chosen musical voice — what we always wanted to do and dreamed of doing. In the early albums I was kind of screaming. Now I’m singing. Everything is calmer and a lot more hopeful.”

On June 25, the band brings its promotional tour to House of Blues Dallas. “We love Texas,” Tranter enthuses. “It’s probably our favorite place to play in America. Right now we are on this radio promo tour. It’s finally happened which is pretty crazy. We’ve been to Austin with these new songs, and we are excited to bring them to Dallas.”

Tranter’s fashion aesthetic has also evolved with his music, so don’t expect necessarily to see him performing in his former trademark heels and stockings. “I have been wearing men’s shoes for this album cycle,” he says. “For the first time in my life, I’m being inspired by menswear which is really fun. The clothes that I am wearing most men wouldn’t wear, but it’s still technically menswear.

While Tranter generally dismisses labels, he admits that most of his personal relationships have been with guys. He states, however, that things “got confusing” when he had a six-month relationship with a woman. Regardless, he is grateful for the insight and perspective that his relationships have offered.

“I cannot imagine what it’s like to walk into a room with strangers to write a song and not have a queer point of view,” he says. “I think that there have definitely been some [record label] executives who were very scared of it and don’t know what to do with it. For me, it’s one of the best things in my life.”

And Tranter has no regrets about any of his choices. “I’ll make jokes like ‘Oh, goddammit, we should have moved to L.A. the minute we graduated college’ because things are going so great out here,” he says. “But then again, I don’t even regret that. We moved to New York and that’s the reason why the band sounded the way it did — and that’s why Lady Gaga became a huge fan of ours even before she was Lady Gaga. If we had moved to L.A., none of this would have happened.”

Interestingly, a few simple words of advice from Mother Monster at a tough time in his life were the best council Tranter remembers getting. “Lady Gaga told me that ‘Cool is priceless,’” he recalls. “When all of this [record] label drama was happening, I talked to her. She said ‘Stop panicking. Cool is priceless.’”

If Tranter had not managed to earn a living as a performer, he imagines that he would still be involved with the music business, probably as a manager. “I like to be in charge of things,” he states. “Before music, I was always working in retail. But I think I would like to work managing artists, helping them figure out their artistic journeys.”

Could his penchant for control suggest that Tranter is perhaps a bossy bottom? “Listen,” he laughs before giving an unsurprisingly ambiguous if not flirtatious answer. “I’m not agreeing with you, but I’m also not saying that you are wrong.”

Glamouring for Attention | Semi Precious Weapons invades Dallas with Justin Tranter, second from right, leading the charge. (Photo courtesy Ryan Aylsworth)
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Dallas Voice: Outside of the rhinestones and big platinum hair, why do gay people identify and empathize with you?

Dolly Parton: Did you say empathize or sympathize? [Laughs] I think there’s some of both! Actually, I’ve been around so long people just kind of feel like they know me. They’ve seen me enough. I’m more like a favorite aunt or an older sister or something, so I just think people know so much about me they just feel like I’m part of them. I hope that’s what they think. That’s what it seems like!

I see you as our fairy godmother. Yeah, I do look like the fairy godmother!

You’ve acknowledged that you felt like an outsider since you were a kid. “Coat of Many Colors” really is about feeling different. What role has that feeling of being an outsider played in the relationship that you have with the gay community?

Well, I do believe that I have a lot of gay fans because I think they do accept me as I am — the differences in me — and I think they know that I see that and love that in everybody else. I am not a judgmental person. I’m a very loving and accepting person. I try to see the good in everybody, and I don’t care who people are as long as they’re themselves, whatever that is. That old saying “to thine own self be true” — no truer words were ever spoken, and I’m just honored and proud to be accepted.

It’s more than just you being non-judgmental. You said growing up you felt different, something many gay people can empathize with. Do you sense that relationship? Yes, I do. I’ve always felt that. I’ve always felt that’s one of the things that’s drawn my gay fans to me. They do know that I do feel different, and all of my life I will be different. I always have been. But I enjoy and appreciate and respect that difference in myself just like I do in other people. God made me the way that I am and it’s my business to be true to that.

If everyone was free of judgment like you are, what might the world be like? It’d be a lot better, I can tell you that. But people love to hate, and it’s just unfortunate but that’s the way it is. People like to judge, they like to condemn, they won’t accept anything they don’t understand — that’s just too bad. We have to work at those things anyway, but most people are not willing to. A lot of people are just blind and they’re not seeing through the spiritual eye, and we need to look that way and then we would be more forgiving, more loving and more accepting.

You were one of the first major country artists to advocate for gay rights. Why did you decide to take that step and stand up for LGBT equality?

Why wouldn’t I stand up for everybody, for all people? In the country field, we’re brought up in spiritual homes, we’re taught to “judge not lest you be judged,” and it’s always been a mystery to me how people jump all over things just to criticize, condemn and judge other people when that is so un-Christian — and they claim to be good Christians! We’re supposed to love one another. We’re supposed to accept and love one another. Whether we do or not, that’s a different story. But that’s what we’re supposed to do.

What are your thoughts on the progress the country music community has been
Dallas Voice: Outside of the rhinestones and big platinum hair, why do gay people identify and empathize with you?

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The Tony Awards are over, and the nominees and winners in the musical category will be forever remembered by theater queens the world over. But how do the cast recordings of the hit shows stand up? We decided to take a look at many of the nominees.

The Bridges of Madison County. This year’s Tony for best score went to the only nominated show that had closed before awards voting ended — the commercial disappointment Bridges of Madison County. Adapted by Marsha Norman from the cloying novel by Robert James Walker, it’s a showcase for the songs of cult composer Jason Robert Brown, who hasn’t had a huge hit (Parade is the biggest) but whose shows (The Last Five Years, Songs for a New World) have become staples of smaller theater companies nationwide.

Brown’s style is plainly influenced by Sondheim, especially apparent on Bridges for his choice of minor keys and unexpected shifts in tone. That’s true on “Wandering,” Steven Pasquale’s soulful ballad that will surely be a cabaret favorite. But the score is also jumpy, from operatic numbers to dream chorale arrangements. The songs feel better than the show as a whole.

A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder. This season’s breakout success — it won the best musical Tony — is a tribute to old-time British music hall shows, but with a snarky American air about it. Culled from the same early 20th-century novel that gave birth to the 1950s Brit film Kind Hearts and Coronets, its style is reminiscent of both The Mystery of Edwin Drood and Curtains, two serviceably entertaining musicals with a theatrical bent. However, you get the impression that the stage production is more interesting to watch than the cast album is to listen to. (That was true also of a past Tony winner, Urinetown, which seemed bland as a cast recording, but was a triumph onstage.)

Despite the lyricists’ love of wordplay — the lyrics are frequently clever, with many internal rhymes — the songs are often gimmicky, resorting to such Victorian-era clichés “as deepest darkest Africa.” And it suffers from underorchestrated, two-dimensional arrangements. It also feels derivative, particularly the Act 2 opener, which recalls The Pink Panther theme, with high-pitched horns and a loping rhythm.

If/Then. You could probably add If/Then to the subcategory of rock musicals, though it lacks the hard-driving bass lines of Hedwig and the Angry Inch or the unbridled teen angst of Spring Awakening. It’s closer in tone to Rent, without the operatic motifs.

The Rent comparison is further enforced by the presence of Idina Menzel and Anthony Rapp as the stars here as well. Menzel plays Elizabeth, a 38-year-old urban planner who returns to NYC, wondering how her life might have turned out if she had followed one of two paths — as Liz, with her lesbian friend Kate (LaChanze), or as Beth with her bisexual fuck buddy Josh (Rapp). From there, the arcs diverge, with each
future playing out independently.

If you think it'll be easy to tell whether you’re with the Liz or the Beth storyline just by listening to the cast recording (written by Tony- and Pulitzer-winners Brian Yorkey and Tom Kitt, who did Next to Normal), you’d be wrong. The sounds of the songs are of a piece — if not interchangeable, not tweaked for each character. You'll need to read the liner notes to keep track of what's happening.

But who cares? The team of Kitt and Yorkey may be the most exciting Broadway composers working right now. Imagine, writing original music not based on a movie, novel, TV show or other pop culture icon. Their shows say something about the way we live and how we communicate — they have weight, without being ponderous. (Of the four scores nominated for Tonys this year, If/Then is the only one not to have already been a movie.) There's a compelling energy to the songs, which provide the gay icon Menzel with plenty of power-ballad moments. I can’t wait until karaoke fans discover her humorous Act 1 solo “What the Fuck?” and startle the patrons in the other room while belting it out.

This show is a better song cycle than any of the other musicals this season, and one you know will prove to have staying power. Don’t take my word for it. Its first week in release, it landed at No. 19 on the Billboard chart. That’s higher than any cast recording debut since ... Rent. And we already know Menzel has a history of defying gravity.

**Beautiful: The Carole King Musical.** When you hear the first vocal track of Beautiful, you may, like I did, double-check to make sure this is an original cast album and not a compilation soundtrack. After all, you've probably heard King’s “So Far Away” often enough that you know the original when you hear it — her plaintive, expressive voice is instantly recognizable. But listen closer: it is a new recording, delivered with equal parts impersonation and interpretation by Jessie Mueller, who won a Tony Award earlier this month for her performance.

The latest in the trend of jukebox musicals pulled from existing songbooks, Beautiful courses King’s rise from Brill Building hit-maker for others (more than 100 made the Billboard pop chart, including “Natural Woman,” “The Loco-Motion” and “Up on the Roof”) to the most successful female singer-songwriter of a generation (Lolita is still mandatory for any serious pop music collector). Over its 25 familiar songs, the album escorts us through the ’60s music scene — like Jersey Boys, but without a falsetto. The production values on the recording are strong, though the arrangements sometimes sound slightly rushed. And led by Mueller, the singers all deliver the goods. It's like a greatest hits album visited afresh. Lucky for Bridges (and all the other nominees) it wasn’t eligible for the best score Tony — nothing comes close.
Big Mandy on campus

Out DJ Manny Lehman headlines this weekend’s Big Long and Proud dance party in Arlington

SCOTT HUFFMAN | Contributing Writer
scott_in_dallas@yahoo.com

Don’t let Manny Lehman’s cool exterior fool you. This humble DJ, producer and remixer — or, as he puts it simply, “a Puerto Rican male from New York” — regularly headlines circuit events and club engagements both stateside and abroad. On Saturday, Lehman brings what he proudly calls his “divas and drums” sound to the Big Long & Proud Party in Arlington.

Lehman’s passion for music began as a teenager when, at NYC’s legendary Paradise Garage nightclub, he first experienced renowned DJ Larry Levan seamlessly mixing records. “I saw this thing happening between the DJ and these people that was just, like, unbelievable,” Lehman says. “One person [was] making so many people have a good time just by playing records together. I said, ‘That’s crazy! That’s amazing!’”

Eager to try for himself, Lehman soon purchased his own turntables and mixer and began emulating the sound that he was hearing. “It kind of was a hobby — a creative outlet,” he recalls. “I just taught myself.” Lehman also found work at Vinylmania, a prominent New York City record store, which, in turn, led to his first paying gig at a bar in NYC’s Chelsea gayborhood. “That’s when the bug bit me,” Lehman says. “It’s been a slow build ever since. Before I knew it, because of my connections at the record store, I was playing on the radio live in New York on the hot stations. Then it snowballed.”

Contacts he developed while working at Vinylmania led to a job with A&M Records. “Back then, in the ’80s, a large source of finding domestic dance records and crossover records was through imports,” Lehman says. “On Wednesdays and Thursdays, when the imports would come in, people from Atlantic and Warner Brothers, the record labels, would ask [about] the hot new records.” Lehman’s reputation for selecting winning tracks made him a shoo-in within the corporate ranks. During his tenure at A&M, Lehman worked with several established recording artists like Sting and Janet Jackson (“sweet, amazing down-to-earth homegirl,” he says). He also discovered and produced new talent, including vocalist CeCe Peniston who scored a major hit in the early 1990s with her self-penned single “Finally.” However, Lehman never completely abandoned his love for spinning record. As winds of change began sweeping through the music industry, he opted to return full-time to the DJ booth.

“While I was at the record company, I always deejayed on the side to stay on the pulse,” Lehman says. “Then mergers started happening with the record companies, so I began to focus more on deejaying, and all of a sudden, I had all these gigs.” Alongside hard-earned successes, Lehman has endured his share of heartbreaking disappointment, including the unauthorized leak of a remix of Madonna’s “What It Feels Like for a Girl,” the first remix that garnered him any attention, he says. It showed up on the controversial free music-sharing site Napster in the early days of digital music, and the label went ballistic, shelving his work.

Proudly calling himself a ‘boys’ DJ,” Lehman gives full credit for his success to the gay community. But he’s an equal opportunity music-maker.

“Even if straight people want to jump on board and come hear some good music, then bring it,” he says.
making as a whole when it comes to embracing its gay listeners? In defense of a lot of people, they didn't have as true of an understanding as they do now. Now people really see that this is real, these are real people with real feelings, that this is who they really are. I think a lot of people, anytime you talked about gay people, thought “perverse.” Now, they’re being more educated that this is who people really are. There’s just been so much made of [gay rights] in the last two or three years, and it’s been brought to the front so people can really see it and be like, “Yeah, I guess there are a lot more gay people than we ever knew! I have a better understanding of it now. I know that these people are for real.” I think they’re getting that now.

I think it was just a lack of knowledge. And when you’re with someone, of course you should have your rights. You’re gonna be with who you’re gonna be with even if you starve to death and have no privileges and no rights. I think people understand that more now.

You’ve been such a wonderful ally to us … so much so that people have actually mistaken you as a lesbian yourself. Well, you know what, it’s true. In fact, there was some story recently [in the National Enquirer] where I was supposedly marrying my longtime friend Judy [Ogle] and that my husband was OK with it! I thought, “Where did they come up with all this?” I am not gay, but I have a better understanding of it now. I know that these people are real.” I think they’re getting that now.

My life has been such a wonderful ally to us … so much so that people have actually mistaken you as a lesbian yourself. Well, you know what, it’s true. In fact, there was some story recently [in the National Enquirer] where I was supposedly marrying my longtime friend Judy [Ogle] and that my husband was OK with it! I thought, “Where did they come up with all this?” I am not gay, but I have a better understanding of it now. I know that these people are real.” I think they’re getting that now.

And right into Judy’s arms? Yeah, who knows! I might’ve said, “Judy, you wanna get something going with me?” But our friendship is just a precious friendship.

What do you say to “From Here to the Moon and Back,” your love duet with Willie Nelson on Blue Smoke, being used for the first dance at a gay wedding? I would be honored. That would be a beautiful wedding song. “From Here to the Moon and Back” — wow! People often use “I Will Always Love You” — I wrote “I Will Always Love You” as a wed-

[Image of Dolly Parton]


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DOLLY, From Page 46

DOLLY, From Page 44

L+S profile
Queer Careers

For Bradley Sutton, a vocation in the funeral business wasn’t a job — it was a calling

To commemorate Pride Month, we’re kicking off a new series to highlight those in the LGBT community with interesting-yet-offbeat vocations — the kind guaranteed to break the ice at the next cocktail party. Queer Careers hopes to bring a face to those who work in unusual professions, from lesbian lion tamers to gay golf ball divers, we’ll find out how these folks chose their career and what keeps them coming back for more.

To inaugurate the series we tapped Brad Sutton, a veteran of more than 20 years in the funeral and embalming business. Sutton explains his passion for this “grim & bear it” profession.

— Jef Tingley

Name and age: Bradley V. Sutton, 42
Your queer career: Owner, North Texas Cremation Society
Is your career choice something you wanted to be when you grew up?
I actually had a “calling” when I was about 7 years old. I always felt that the funeral business would be my life’s work. I also cut hair and barber part-time, but the funeral business is my main gig.

How did you end up on your career track?
After graduating high school in Sherman, I did some research and found that Dallas has a great learning institution specifically for funeral service called the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service (DIFS). Back when I enrolled, it was a 12-month program, and you had to take courses for both funeral director and embalmer; now you have the option to take one or the other. After mortuary school, I served an apprenticeship under another licensed funeral director and embalmer, and completed 60 cases for each of my licenses. I hold two licenses: a funeral director’s license and an embalmer’s license. I’ve been actively in the business for over 20 years now, and I’ve never looked back!

How do you describe your job to people at a cocktail party?
I try not to bring up my vocation at parties. It freaks a lot of people out, or I get the curious one who tags along all night wanting me to talk about every case I’ve worked on.

What’s your favorite part of your job?
I love being able to help people in need. It’s a great feeling to help walk people through this journey of dying, death and grief. It’s really not my job — it’s my passion.

What’s one of your most memorable “on the job” stories?
I was working a memorial service for a woman who passed away at the age of 104. I heard a family member of the deceased become very emotional. I went to check on her, and put my arm around the grieving family member to console her.

What’s one of the most common questions you get when you tell people you are a funeral director and embalmer? [They] usually want to know what was the hardest case I’ve embalmed, or what was the most emotional case I’ve worked on. People are curious about the funeral business. I sometimes get asked about dealing with my own family when death occurs. I occasionally get questioned about the cremation process or embalming process in great detail. I try to answer all questions honestly, but with a little tact. When dealing with death, dying, funerals and cremations, there is no such thing as a stupid question. If you don’t know, you need to be informed.

What are the biggest misconceptions about your job/industry? Public opinion would portray us as a greedy, heartless business. That may be true in some places, but I have many professional peers in the area that are honest, caring people. Some people think that we steal gold teeth out of bodies, or steal body parts and sell them on the black market! I get ticked at what people think we’re capable of. At the end of the day, we are a business, and must make a profit to stay in business.

And your least favorite part?
Some people think that funeral professionals dress in fancy clothes and drive around in fancy cars all day long. My job is far from that. The stress level of having to pull together funerals and memorial services quickly is too much for some of us, and we burn out after a few years. Also the fact that occasionally I may have to go pick up a body that is already in advanced stages of decomposition doesn’t make my day pleasant by any means.

What’s a hidden talent or skill you possess that people would not expect?
I don’t have a part-time, but the funeral business is my main gig.

How does your profession fit in with your love life?
I don’t have a partner. Being the owner of a business that demands your attention 24-7-365 makes it hard to attempt relationships. I have lots of friends who have over the years gone with me to make body removals, when I needed an extra hand and [they have] actually liked the experience. I haven’t been on a date in years. Some people think that I lie when I say I can’t make dinner because someone died. It’s really true!

What’s your opinion about embalmers being needed?
I don’t have a part-time, but the funeral business is my main gig.

What do you know someone with a queer career deserving of a moment in the spotlight — even if it’s yourself? If so, send your suggestion via e-mail to jef@tingleycomm.com.
Name and age: Bradley V. Sutton, 42

Your queer career: Owner, North Texas Cremation Society

Is your career choice something you wanted to be when you grew up?
I actually had a “calling” when I was about 7 years old. I always felt that the funeral business would be my life’s work. I also cut hair and barber part-time, but the funeral business is my main gig.

How did you end up on your career track?
After graduating high school in Sherman, I did some research and found out that Dallas has a great learning institution specifically for funeral service called the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service (DIFS). Back when I enrolled, it was a 12-month program, and you had to take courses for both funeral director and embalmer; now you have the option to take one or the other. After mortuary school, I served an apprenticeship under another licensed funeral director and embalmer, and completed 60 cases for each of my licenses. I hold two licenses: a funeral director’s license and an embalmer’s license. I’ve been actively in the business for over 20 years now, and I’ve never looked back!

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What’s one of your most memorable “on the job” stories?
The great thing about my job is, no two cases are the same. Every day is a new day. Never say that you’ve seen it all, cause tomorrow you’ll experience something new that will top the last one. Early in my career, I was working a visitation of a woman who passed away at the age of 104. I heard a family member of the deceased become very emotional. I went to check on her, and put my arm around the grieving family member to console her. As I was hugging and consoling this person, through her tears and sobs, she told me that the death was “completely unexpected.”

How does your profession fit in with your love life?
I don’t have a partner. Being the owner of a business that demands your attention 24-7-365 makes it hard to attempt relationships. I have lots of friends who have over the years gone with me to make body removals, when I needed an extra hand and [they have] actually liked the experience. I haven’t been on a date in years. Some people think that I lie when I say I can’t make dinner because someone died. It’s really true!

What’s a hidden talent or skill you possess that people would not expect given your vocation?
My life is very full circle. Every skill or talent that has been bestowed upon me connects with another. I am blessed to be able to do hair and makeup. I was a church pianist and organist for many years — that comes in handy when the CD player goes on the fritz right before a service. I think that most people would be surprised to know that embalming is my passion. It’s becoming a lost art. Not many people are doing it, and as cremation takes a bigger place in our business, embalmers are not needed.

Do you know someone with a queer career deserving of a moment in the spotlight — even if it’s yourself? If so, send your suggestion via e-mail to jef@tingleycomm.com.
The problem with old-fashioned fairy tales? Not enough fairies. At least, not the modern kind.

That’s not the problem with Soho Cinders, a present-day updating of the Cinderella story. There are no magical fairies here, not the kind who wave a wand and turn pumpkins into carriages. Instead, it’s just a story of two gay guys — out-and-not-so-proud Robbie (Peter DiCesare), a college student, launderette owner and sometime rent boy; and James Prince (Sean Burroughs), a dour, closeted politician who’s Robbie’s secret paramour — who try to make a relationship work in the absence of honest communication.

It’s quite a chore. James has no idea he’s in love with a professional escort (and not even a high-class one — he lives on Old Compton Street, which looks like the London equivalent of Skid Row). Robbie knows James has a fiancé, but seems to have convinced himself it doesn’t matter. Meanwhile, Lord Bellingham (Francis Henry), a sleazy powerbroker, wants Robbie to himself, while Robbie’s hideous step-sisters, Dana (Kim Borge) and Clodagh (Stephanie Felton) are trying to steal his business away from him.

Things aren’t any better on James’ homefront. He’s a vague kind of politician, the kind who talks about honesty while lying about who he is. He allows a sinister campaign manager (Ian Mead Moore) to plot underhanded goings-on behind his back while pointedly not sleeping with his girlfriend Marilyn (Janelle Lutz).

Soho Cinders is best when it’s sticking to the romance and comedy of the piece, and steering clear of the politics and backstory. Eliot Davis’ book is rife with two-dimensional clichés and cut-out characters. Even the very existence of a relationship between Robbie and James seems odd — they met online? Like Grindr? And James plans to be mayor? Well, stranger things have happened.

But musicals like this aren’t meant to be take too seriously. It’s a lark, ripe with engaging songs.

It starts off well with the ensemble “Old Compton Street,” which explains the working-class roots of the neighborhood while introducing us to most of the main characters. (It recalls “Skid Row” from Little Shop of Horrors or “We Live on Avenue Q” from Avenue Q.) There are some more delights in the bubbly score, including the love duet “Gypsies of the Ether” and the torch song “Let Him Go,” which showcases not only Lutz’ beauty but her deft interpretation of an emotional number.

The truly memorable numbers, though, come courtesy of...
The James Beard Foundation, the top culinary organization in the U.S. (founded by the late gay gourmand), will bring to Dallas its second annual Local Flavor from Coast to Coast, a national epicurean tour celebrating America's culinary diversity, the foundation announced this week at an event at the new San Salvaje by Stephan Pyles.

The weekend-long itinerary in Dallas starts Sept. 26 at the Hilton Anatole with A Night of Culinary Stars, an exclusive dining event benefiting the foundation in partnership with chef Chad Houser, far right, and his Café Momentum. Local TV newsman Ron Corning will M.C. the event. The evening will start with a reception with food and drinks planned by five local chefs, all of whom have either cooked at the Beard House (or will soon), or have been nominated for a Beard Award. Participants will be Omar Flores (Casa Rubia), Matt McCallister (FT 33), Janice Provost (Parigi), David Uygur (Lucia) and Tim Byres (Smoke).

Then all-star chef Patrick O'Connell (a Beard Award winner for his work at the acclaimed Inn at Little Washington in Virginia) and Dallas' own Stephan Pyles, who have been paired together to create a one-of-a-kind menu. “Patrick is a longtime friend — we've known each other for 25, 30 years,” Pyles says. “But it's been a long time since we cooked together and I'm looking forward to it.”

Festivities will continue on Sept. 27 with a series of free consumer events at Sur La Table on Travis Walk, including a cooking demo with O'Connell, book signings, tastings from local producers and artisans. For the full schedule and to RSVP, visit jbftasteamerica.org/events.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

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As a young referee, Ryan Powell heard a coach yell at a youth soccer player: “Stop being a fairy! And play!” Powell red-carded the coach. The official’s supervisor then called and said sharply, “Don’t let your personal life interfere with your work.” Powell was upset. “That meant, as a gay man I should ignore remarks on the field. Well, the first lesson of refereeing is to have conviction. Blow the whistle, give the card, issue the send-off. I will never back down from that.”

Not long after, during an intense Under-17 boys game, Powell called a foul. After a brief scuffle, one player called another a “faggot.” Again, the referee issued a card. Again, there was a protest. Again, Powell was told not to let his personal feelings hamper his career.

Sports fans often focus on athletes, coaches and games. But without officials, there would be no matches. And in every other aspect of life — including sports — some referees are gay or lesbian.

Ryan Powell is not his real name. He’s using an alias because he is not yet out to all his colleagues. He is not ready to be looked at as “the gay ref.” But he knows who he is. He’s proud of himself. And his story is very instructive.

When Powell was a high school senior, his coach made all the players become certified as referees. The idea was that they would learn more about the game. Powell enjoyed officiating (and the money he earned). He moved quickly up the ranks, earning praise as a fair, knowledgeable official.

Being a referee is “our way of giving back to the game,” Powell says. Referees have a great deal of influence over player development. “We teach the game as much as coaches,” he notes.

Powell came out to friends and family members at 19. But for several years, he was not out to even one fellow official.

Referees are “a brotherhood,” he says. “We support each other, solve problems together, spend a lot of time together.” Yet because he felt uncomfortable sharing his sexuality — he had not heard anything that led him to believe his colleagues would support him — he stayed in the soccer closet. That was difficult, professionally and personally. “When you don’t share anything about yourself, people think you’re standoffish,” he explains. “It’s not true, but that perception becomes reality.”
Gradually, Powell trusted a few fellow officials enough to come out. They were fine. But word spread. At a regional tournament — an important step in a soccer referee’s advancement — his assigned roommate refused to share a hotel room with Powell. Throughout the five-day event, Powell felt awkward. “There was animosity in the air,” he says.

He did not think he could discuss the situation with anyone. He did not want to create trouble, or pit one group of officials against another.

And, he notes, referees are “independent contractors.” They lack labor protection.

“It’s hard to advance as a referee when you are open about your sexuality,” Powell says. “It’s true that athletes now have an easier time. They’re young, and there’s a new mentality. Some of the coaches are young too.”

However, referees — particularly those in powerful positions — tend to be older and “conservative,” according to Powell. “The people who make important referee decisions in local and state organizations are, for the most part, over 60.”

If older officials do talk positively about sexuality, Powell says, they often add the caveat, “I just don’t think they should broadcast it.”

That is “very hurtful. It’s the same as saying, ‘Don’t open up and share anything about yourself. Just come to the field, then leave.’”

Referees working their way up the soccer ladder travel often. Yet, Powell says, “It’s taboo to mention that your boyfriend is staying back at the hotel. And you can’t encourage him to come to your game to support you.”

That isolation drove Powell’s first partner away. “I was too ashamed to bring him to events,” Powell says with regret. “I just wanted to keep myself out of the headlines. I didn’t want any ‘drama.’ So he never got to understand my love for soccer, and for refereeing.”

It’s a love that’s burrowed deep in Powell’s persona. His goal is to become a top-level referee. Still, the older he gets, the more he realizes “I don’t want to shelter myself for the sake of getting ahead. I want to earn what I have on my own merits.”

It won’t be easy, but Powell is inching out of the professional closet. Besides, he adds, “The number of world-class officials who are gay would surprise a lot of people.”
More Pride — north of the border

Niagara, Ottawa among the gay gems of Canada

Last week, we previewed WorldPride, the international gay celebration taking place this weekend in Toronto. But Canada’s largest city isn’t the only place Texans interested in headed toward the Great White North can find queerlicious destinations. In Part 2 of our series, we offer suggestions for other Canadian delights. And all are just overnight getaways from Toronto, so you don’t have to miss out on anything.

Niagara-on-the-Lake and the Shaw Festival. It takes about 90 minutes to drive around the southwestern edge of Lake Ontario to reach one of Canada’s most celebrated winemaking regions and most charming historic colonial towns, Niagara-on-the-Lake, which is a gateway for exploring Niagara Falls, just 15 miles south.

Famous for its early military history (the town was a key setting of the War of 1812), the town is home to several battlefields and related sites as well as the excellent RiverBrink Art Museum, and a compact, pedestrian-friendly downtown abounding with gay-friendly country inns and B&Bs, sophisticated restaurants with shaded courtyards and patios, and the prestigious Shaw Festival, which presents a mix of works by the iconic 19th-century playwright George Bernard Shaw along with plays by other notables (both Cabaret and lesser-known Tennessee Williams play A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur are during the summer season) in four theaters.

More than two-dozen wineries are set throughout the Niagara-on-the-Lake region. Most have tasting rooms and some present concerts or other entertainment, especially during summer. The wine culture here has contributed to a superb dining scene, with many chefs in these parts sourcing locally and organically and turning out first-rate contemporary cuisine.

Niagara Falls. In some ways the aesthetic and pace of Niagara Falls, a small city of about 82,000, is the antithesis of Niagara-on-the-Lake, which is relatively quiet. Downtown Niagara buzzes with souvenir shops and touristy diversions, and the community is beset all year long, and especially during the busy summer, by visitors viewing the three immense waterfalls that cross the U.S.-Canadian international border: Horseshoe Falls (the largest, with a drop of 173 feet), American Falls and Bridal Veil Falls.

Stratford and the Shakespeare Festival. A mecca for theater aficionados, anchoring a largely agrarian swath of southwestern Ontario, the friendly Canadian town of Stratford abounds with art galleries and boutiques, cafes and romantic inns and B&Bs. The community, named for the town in England associated with Shakespeare, is famous for its theaters (the Avon, Studio, Tom Patterson and Festival) which present a mix of Shakespearean and classic works by both established and emerging playwrights during its April—October festival season. You can also attend great music concerts during the summer. Just a 90-minute drive from Toronto, this spirited community is a must-see for anyone with a genuine love of the performing arts.

Ottawa. Canada’s national capital, Ottawa is a bit farther from Toronto than some of the other places mentioned here (about a five-hour drive), but this city of 825,000 contains enough notable attractions and diverting neighborhoods to be worth a visit of at least a couple of days — and ideally three or four. Also, it’s a handy stopover en route to Montreal, which is roughly another two hours east. Keep in mind as well that Ottawa hosts its own well-attended Pride festival in mid to late August.

Downtown Ottawa and its regal government buildings occupy a high bluff looking over the Ottawa River — the picturesque Rideau Canal extends south through the city and is a lovely place for a summer stroll. Neighborhoods of note close to downtown include a compact but lively Gay Village along Bank Street, a hip and bustling dining and entertainment precinct called Byward Market (there’s even a great gay nightlife spot, Lookout Bar), and, a bit farther afield, the quirky and artsy Glebe neighborhood, which abounds with cafes, galleries and retail establishments.

Top attractions in Ottawa include Parliament Hill, with its grand government buildings, most of them dating back to the mid-19th century; be sure to ascend the 300-foot-tall Peace Tower for stunning views of the city and surrounding countryside. The Canadian Museum of Civilization, National Gallery of Canada, Rideau Canal National Historic Site and Canada’s National Arts Centre are also all well worth budgeting time for.

— Andrew Collins

CHATEAU CONSPIRACY | Gorgeous French Canadian chateaux are just some of the architectural delights of Eastern Canada, especially in the national capital of Ottawa, which enthusiastically celebrates Pride. (Photos courtesy Ottawa Tourism)
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SNEAK PEEK AT PARK PLACE MOTORCARS, JULY 24, 6:30-8:30pm
At opposite ends of the eco-drive range are electric cars — like the best-selling Nissan Leaf — and fuel-sipping diesel pickups — like the new Dodge Ram 1500 EcoDiesel. Each has its talents, but the big questions is, "Which is butch and which is femme?" We'd normally peg the pickup as the daddy, but as anyone who's ever been to the Round-Up can attest, you can't tell a top by his ride. Still, you can't go wrong with either of these green-friendly rides, which let everyone know you care about the environment (and fuel prices).

Who drives it:
Ram: A perfect ride for bull-hugging rodeo boys without much money.
Leaf: Perfect for those monetarily-endowed metro boys stalking shoulder bags on Rodeo Drive.

Sippin' fuel:
Ram: EcoDiesel is the most fuel-efficient full-size pickup with 18/28-MPG city/hwy.
Leaf: Claims 126/101-MPGe city/hwy.

Corral the horses:
Ram: Only 240 horses, but 420 lb.-ft. of torque will tug almost anything.
Leaf: 107 hp and 187 lb.-ft. of torque to move the lightweight like a flyweight.

Getting plugged:
Ram: Ah, watch it, that's my tailpipe — I'm not that kind of guy.
Leaf: Overnight (5-8 hours) for 84 miles of fossil-free frolicking.

How she works:
Ram: 3.0-liter turbo-diesel V6 with high-dispersion nozzles and advanced-technology servovalve that can squirt eight times per cylinder cycle to minimize obscene engine noises while reducing fuel consumption and emissions. Check the 8-speed torque-flite transmission — while complicated, it goes all night without polluting or asking for a cookie.
Leaf: 24 kWh Lithium-Ion batteries, electric motor, re-generative brakes, three-mode drive system (Normal/Eco/Re-gen). What happened to three-on-the-tree and a gas pedal?

Exhaust smells like…:
Ram: French fries, if you load up on bio-diesel from your local hamburger joint.
Leaf: New Jersey, especially if the driver has been loading up at his local hamburger joint.

Slipping wind:
Ram: Although beefy, the big truck is plucked and pruned with active grille shutters to pet air and an aluminum hood that sheds pounds.
Leaf: Getting the full shave aerodynamically helps it go the furthest with the leastest.

Ancestors:
Ram: WWII Dodge field truck, Fiat Ducato.
Leaf: 1915 Detroit Electric Brougham, re-chargeable body trimmer.

Alter ego:
Ram: Andrew Sullivan — a little gruff and crusty on the outside, but impressively intelligent underneath.
Leaf: Johnny Weir — glides like a waif, but can be a little pissy if you don't press all of his buttons.

Steamy heaters:
Ram: Automatic climate control and heated seats if you want 'em. Get the engine block heater for that summer trip to the arctic.
Leaf: There's one for the battery pack (winter and batteries go together like Miley and awards shows). There's a hybrid heater. Then, there are those demanding passengers who want warm air. Yeah, and four of them queens get standard ass warmers. Geesh.

Favorite toy:
Ram: Optional air suspension to smooth whatever road you romp.
Leaf: Smartphone app to schedule and monitor vehicle charging.

Best view:
Ram: A big chrome grille looks like the air intake for a GE turbine engine.
Leaf: Uh... hmmm... Give me a minute ... How 'bout we go with the LED taillamps. Yeah, taillamps...

Favorite musical:
Ram: Oklahoma. It loves it there, where it can roam free and live large while rarely emptying its tank. Besides, it can wake up every day singing, "Oh what a beautiful morning..."
Leaf: Rent. Seriously, I'd rent one. Lease it, baby. Let the batteries be somebody else's lock collar. "Five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes" may be all you want.

Bottom sticker:
Ram: $24,200 + $2,850 diesel premium (see RamTrucks.com for rebates).
Leaf: $28,980; $21,480 including federal tax credits. Could gather additional incentives, depending on state and city.
At opposite ends of the eco-drive range are electric cars — like the best-selling Nissan Leaf — and fuel-sipping diesel pickups — like the new Dodge Ram 1500 EcoDiesel. Each has its talents, but the big question is, "Which is butch and which is femme?" We'd normally peg the pickup as the daddy, but as anyone who's ever been to the Round-Up can attest, you can't tell a top by his ride. Still, you can't go wrong with either of these green-friendly rides, which let everyone know you care about the environment (and fuel prices).

Butch Divine redux
Reminiscences on 'A View from a Broad'

You never forget, nor should you want to, your first life-altering experience with the Divine Miss M.

Bette Midler first hit big in the early 1970s with her swing-influenced pop hits, then got serious cred as an actress in 1979 when she starred in The Rose, a thinly-veiled biopic of Janis Joplin. But I was a kid back then, who thought of swing as something in my backyard, and The Rose was an R-rated film I wouldn't be allowed to see for several more years.

No, my first exposure to La Bette was through her trashy, wildly unfocused quasi-memoir and tour diary A View from a Broad. I didn't even know what I was looking at when I first picked up a copy as a freshman in Catholic school. I think it had been left on a bench by a forgetful priest, who probably secretly enjoyed the campy extravagance of Midler's ribald jokes, tales of debauchery on the road in Europe and in-your-face out-there-ness — traits that have distinguished her, and built her gay following, since her days performing in the Continental Baths.

My teenaged eyes were scandalized by the humor of Madame Sophie, Bette's inspired-by-Sophie-Tucker alter ego who told racy jokes about her boyfriend Ernie. "Soph, you've got no tits and a tight box," Ernie said, and she retorted, "Ernie, get off my back."

I dashed through the new re-release of A View from a Broad with the purposeful mission to relieve that exciting discovery, and right there on Page 106 it sat — or rather, sort of. The line is cut off, an editing error in the reprint that causes my heart to sink. It's like seeing your hero out of makeup and realizing how frail he really is. I was let down.

But only for a moment. The dishy, collage style of the book — complete with a new introduction by Midler that puts the 34-year-old collection of behind-the-scenes photos, one-liners, gags, journal entries and factoids in some historic context — could never disappoint a true fan, because it's really all about her, arguably our greatest diva and most devoted ally. I may not see it through the eyes of a kid anymore, but it still has a power over me.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Petit Atelier offers sewing/construction classes for anyone interested in learning how to make fashion at any level, taught by both Crigger and Gallegos. And these guys mean business—they have a diverse collection of commercial-grade equipment, dress forms in every size (not just fit-model slim) and a multitude of seasoned advice and guidance to offer. The tall ceilings, large windows that open onto Commerce Street, exposed bits of brick, French décor and diverse tools come together to conjure a sense of French industrial chic realness.

“There is no back of the shop — everything is done out front,” Gallegos says. “We want people to find interest by walking by and looking into the windows and asking, ‘Hey, what are they doing in there?’”

Whether it’s the first time you’ve sat down at a sewing machine or you’re ready to construct your first Chanel coat, the resources, environment and sense of community can help you take your design skills to the next stage, the couple insists.

“You’re getting a condensed university level education. The curriculum changes based on the student’s skill level. I teach a lot of the couture techniques I learned from studying in Paris,” says Crigger.

Stitch N’ Bitch is an open session that Petit Atelier offers each Thursday evening, allowing designers/students to bring the project they’re working on, pay 10 bucks, and get four hours of access to the equipment — and they even open the session to B.Y.O.B. (This ain’t your grandmother’s sewing circle.) Cathy, one of the Stitch N’ Bitch regulars, is working her way through an entire book of Vionnet designs a la Julie and Julia.

Appropriately enough, beginning and burgeoning designers can rent out the workspace by the hour. This smart, multi-layered set-up allows Crigger to teach, Gallegos to design and the fashion design community of the greater Dallas area to grow and develop. (They even encourage any local designers looking to try out for the next season of Project Runway to stop in for a few classes to refresh their sewing skills.)

“We thought, Why not start a studio and treat it as an incubator for those looking to get into fashion but lack the funds to do so?” Because [starting a fashion line] is quite an investment. We already had a lot of the equipment and materials from being in school/working and we’ve expanded,” says Crigger.

Indeed, Petit Atelier has expanded sooner than either expected — the space next door became available and they opted to snatch it up to open a fabric store. Called Tissu, it will open its doors in July. (Tissu will reinforce the French motif both in name and concept.)

“It’s a natural extension of what we wanted to do, but it happened faster than we planned on,” says Crigger. This synergistic relationship between the two should be beneficial because according to Gallegos “Fabric normally attracts people looking to sew and design.”

The couple rarely get a break from fashion — they also live in the loft apartment over Petit Atelier. Unavoidably, their personal and professional lives tend to bleed over into each other, but they don’t let that stop them from keeping a menagerie of beloved animals: An unnamed diamond dove, their dog Gaia, and a turtle called Speedy all make up the store mascots.

“At this little boutique in Paris, the storeowner had a little apartment upstairs. It’s again part of the old world shopkeeper specialty theme. There’s glitter and sequins upstairs all over the place because we work everywhere and sometimes in our pajamas,” laughs Gallegos.
T3 opens ‘By the Way, Meet Vera Stark’

The only shot a black actress in the 1930s had in Hollywood was stealing small scenes in big blockbusters. This satire by Pulitzer Prize-winner Lynn Nottage introduces us to Vera Stark, whose guile was as glorious as her talent. The regional premiere shows both the hilarity and the poignancy of an absurd moral and cultural climate.


Chorale closes season with diva-licious concert

The Turtle Creek Chorale’s last concert of the season — and the last one for departing artistic director Trey Jacobs — is a diva-licious evening honoring some of the finest female vocalists in the world — sadly, all who have left us. Divas Gone ... But Not Forgotten features songs made popular by stars like Whitney Houston, Amy Winehouse, and Karen Carpenter, spanning genres from C&W (Tammy Wynette) to hard rock (bisexual Texan Janis Joplin, pictured).

DEETS: City Performance Hall, 2420 Flora St. Friday–Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 2:30 p.m. TurtleCreek.org.

Eddie Izzard play The Majestic

Anyone who has ever seen Eddie Izzard perform his standup act will not soon forget it, and it’s not just the cross-dressing (he doesn’t do that as much any more). The Brit’s razor wit and wickedly smart jokes will send you rolling in the aisles. He performs two shows in Dallas this week as part of a nationwide tour.

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ARTS WEEK: NOW PLAYING
THEATER


John XII. Mark-Brian Sonna’s racy 2009 play about the notorious pope. Stone Cottage Theatre at the Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through June 29. MBSProductions.net.


Titanic. Lyric Stage brings back this Tony Award-winner for best musical. Reviewed this week. Final weekend. Irving Center for Performing Arts, 3333 McArthur Blvd. LyricStage.org.

FILM
Oak Cliff Film Festival. The third annual event includes documentaries such as a short film about gay artist David Hockney and one about Cherry Pop, the most pampered cat in the world, by gay filmmaker Kareem Tahsib. Texas Theatre, 321 W. Jefferson Blvd. Through Sunday. OakCliffFilmFestival.com.

CONCERTS
Divas Gone ... But Not Forgotten. The Turtle Creek Chorale concludes its season — and Trey Jacobs’ last show as artistic director — with this tribute to the late women of music who still captivate gay audiences, from Whitney to Selena to Donna. City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. Friday–Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday matinee at 2:30 p.m. TurtleCreek.org.
THURSDAY 06.26

SPoken word

Outrageous Oral. A special Pride Month edition of the oral history project, presented by The Dallas Way. The Rose Room inside S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Doors at 6:30 p.m. Free.

FRIDAY 06.27

SPoken word

Queerly Speaking: The Rainbow in Our Clouds. The South Dallas Cultural Center pays tribute to the late Dr. Maya Angelou with a program of songs, poems and movement, presented by the Fahari Arts Institute. South Dallas Cultural Center, 3400 S. Fitzhugh Ave. 9 p.m. $5 donation at the door requested.

THEATER

TUESDAY 06.24

COMEDY

FILM
Soylent Green. The film film in the Magnolia Theater’s Tuesday Big Movie (sponsored by Dallas Voice) concludes with this dark vision of the future, when a food shortage leads to the discovery of something shocking, Landmark’s Magnolia in the West Village. 7:30 and 10 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 06.25

CONCERTS

Semi Precious Weapons. The indie group performs in support of their new album, Aviation. With Tove Lo. House of Blues, 2200 N. Lamar St. Doors at 7 p.m.

MAYA TRIBUTE | The Fahari Arts Institute’s Queerly Speaking program performs a tribute to the late poet Maya Angelou at the South Dallas Cultural Center on June 27.
So if you’ve got two white dads or an Asian dad, or one Caucasian, one somewhat ambiguously tinted.

Not so much a “line” as it is a Father’s Day eCards. Well, it’s came out with a line of gay Father’s Day eCards. When Hallmark makes a line of gay Father’s Day eCards, that’s a start. 

There’s been with the show a scant four months — how positively Hollywood of him. 

In his wake, the lovely Andrew Rannells, pictured, will don the Hedwig drag, which begs the question: Are people dying to see Hedwig or Neil Patrick Harris in heels? If they take a chance, they’ll surely be in for a treat — Rannells wow’d ‘em when he played the role in Austin way back in 2001. 

If you can’t get to NYC, you can check him out on BillyMasters.com. 

Large penis stories are always gobbled up by my readers, so why not share some stories? 

Ben Flajnik was The Bachelor, he chose as his fiancée a vicious vixen named Courtney Robertson. Of course, they broke up, as Bachelor couples are wont to do. But that didn’t stop Court from writing a book (a miraculous feat since I find it hard to believe she’s ever read a book). I Didn’t Come Here to Make Friends: Confessions of a Reality Show Villain just came out, and one of her anecdotes is about a tryst with Entourage star Adrian Grenier. She recounts meeting him at a party and hooking up with him due to “mutual loneliness in L.A.” I can’t tell you how many times I’ve used that line. She claims they never had sex because she didn’t feel a spark. Perhaps, but she certainly felt something. “He had the biggest penis I’d ever seen — and the biggest bush!” she writes. Hmm. 

Hold onto your hat (does anyone still wear a hat?)! It’s time for another installment of Fayewatch! Oh, Miss Dunaway, we’ve missed you. And yet, it sounds like her absence won’t be ending anytime soon. Remember the long-awaited movie version of Master Class that Faye was going to make? After shooting about half the film, the production shut down due to some issues with the moneymen. It’s been inactive for a couple of years, and that’s a problem. You see, Faye owned the rights to the play for a certain period of time. Since that period has lapsed, the rights have reverted back to playwright Terrence McNally. Of course, Faye could buy the rights again, but she hasn’t got the money to finish the film. 

I’m told one of the many people approached to jump in is someone who knows a thing or two about rights and made the film herself? A call went out to Barbra Streisand to see if she is interested in producing the film. If Streisand would buy the rights, she could finish it. Upon further investigation, it was learned that the stuff already filmed is unusable, so they’d have to start the project from scratch. And that led to a brilliant idea: What if Streisand bought the rights and made the film herself? A call went out to two of Babs’ good friends — Dustin Hoffman and Al Pacino. Would either of them be interested in playing Onassis opposite her Maria Callas? I can only imagine the voice messages Faye will leave Barbra when she hears about this! 

Our Ask Billy question this week comes from Travis in Dallas: ‘Hey Billy. Glad to have you back in Dallas Voice. I heard from a friend that a gay porn star is on a new reality show. Can you find out who it is?’

Reality television and porn are strange bedfellows these days. That’s because there are about a zillion reality shows. And since most computers have webcams, everyone in the world is a potential porn star. 

The most recent addition to the reality/gay porn alumn is Jesse Blum on the new E! series Escape Club (he previously appeared on MTV’s Parental Control). Apparently, Jesse built up quite a following during his time on Fratmen.com under the moniker “11billy.” Perhaps, but I know my fans are far more interested in his past than his present. And we’re happy to present it to you on BillyMasters.com.

When Streisand is considering a musical remake of Mommie Dearest, it’s definitely time to end yet another column. I hope all of my readers who are dads had a lovely Father’s Day. And I hope the rest of you find a daddy of your own. While you’re cruising online, do check out BillyMasters.com, the site that isn’t ashamed of anything. Should you have a question for me, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I finish plucking glitter out of my teeth! 

Until next time, remember, one man’s filth is another man’s bible.

To contact Billy, email to Billy@BillyMasters.com.
Making the SCENE the week of June 20–26:

Alexandre's: Jason Huff on Friday at 10 p.m. Mi Diva Loca on Saturday at 10 p.m. Lala Johnson on Wednesday at 9 p.m. Alicia Silex on Thursday at 9 p.m.

Changes: Wall of Food meeting on Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Club Reflection: Texas Gay Rodeo Association cookout on Sunday at 4 p.m.

Dallas Eagle: Mr. Dallas Eagle 2014 Kody Nance celebrates his birthday with a food drive for the Resource Center Nutrition Program. DFW Leather Corps seminar on Saturday 2 p.m. United Court of the Lone Star Empire presents Some Like It Hot with host Larry Carter on Saturday at 7 p.m. Benefits AIDS Services of Dallas. Leather Knights presents Camp-A-Lot and Dragon Lady of the Realm shows.

JR's Bar & Grill: JR's Potluck with Edna Jean, Onyx, Chanel, Kamara and Chanel LaMasters on Tuesday.

Los Rieles: Voice of Pride on Sunday at 9 p.m.

Round-Up Saloon: Voice of Pride on Wednesday at 9 p.m.

S4: Beginning of Summer Party: Come out in your hottest Summer wear on Saturday.

Sue Ellen's: Heather Knox Band on Friday. Cat a Tac on Saturday. Tyla Taylor Band on Sunday. Little Chalupa karaoke on Monday and Thursday.

The Brick: Voice of Pride on Tuesday at 9 p.m.

TMC: The Mining Company: Now open Tuesdays and Wednesdays. No cover.

To view more Scene photos, go to DallasVoice.com/category/photos.
Birthday party at The Brick.

Chris and Keith at JR.'s Bar & Grill.

Ryan performing at Kaliente.

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Alexis Rayn at JR’s Bar & Grill.

Robin, Nick, James, Michael and D.J. at The Tin Room.

Chalupa at Alexandre’s.

Jenna Skyy at Havana.

Harlow and Renee at TMC: The Mining Company.
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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.

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So Sophia

Solution on page 65

Across

1  Not rosy
6  Wild pig
10 Top
14 Palmer of The Boys From Brazil
15 Tops
16 Kahlo’s cross
17 Visibly shocked
19 HIV exam, e.g.
20 Sophia Burset’s job on Orange Is the New Black
23 Film set VIP
24 Chicago paper, for short
25 Hot stuff
27 Advocate.com, for one
30 State of being gai?
32 One-armed bandit’s opening
33 Love Songs poet Sara
35 Succeeds a la Log Cabin
38 Thomas ___ Edison
39 Erie, to fifty million Frenchmen
41 Hard to come by
42 Whoopi and others, in The Lion King
45 Annie showstopper
48 Knock off
49 The King and I setting
50 Plague for payment

51 Act up, e.g.
54 “I ___, I float, I fleetly flee, I fly”
56 Went down on
57 Sophia’s job before transitioning
62 Puts on the dog?
64 NASCAR driver Yarborough
65 Use your tongue forcefully
66 Sitting sound
67 Sometime defender of gay rights
68 A bit, informally
69 “I’m too ___ for my shirt”
70 Maude producer
71 In a state, in southern states

Down

1 Vanilla
2 __ Gay Hamilton
3 Educational level of many fairy tale lovers
4 On the ball
5 Family
6 Glenn Burke’s sport
7 Expresses awe
8 Biscotti flavoring
9 Gear for going to the rear
10 Be in a cast
11 Type of fraud for which Sophia was imprisoned
12 Samuel Barber’s output

13 Word on some condom wrappers
21 Musical meter maid
22 ___ in the hay
26 It’s human
27 Place for Young men?
28 Depend (on)
29 Transgender actress who plays Sophia
31 You really suck if you use them
34 Less nuts
36 Drop ___ (moon)
37 Assured, with “up”
40 Synonym of 20-Across
43 “Yeah, right!”
44 Impressive
46 Bamako’s country
47 Cry of panic
51 Sounds like Fierstein
52 Scrabble piece that often goes with the Q
53 Smidgen
55 Ecstatic spasm, like an orgasm
58 Anne Hathaway’s ___ Enchanted
59 Pastry with fruit, perhaps
60 Caesar’s last question
61 Realize, as profits
63 Professional voyeur?
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*UCR Fee is the Usual and Customary Rate. The UCR fee can vary by location.

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