Homophobic bakers aside, many businesses seek out the gay wedding market

By David Taffet
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Red on the Runway fashion show and fundraiser

The Red Party Foundation — the charitable fundraising wing of Legacy Counseling and Founders Cottage — held its third annual runway fashion show at Sisu Uptown on Saturday night, and the stars were out … as were a few moons if you stood in the right spot. The Dallas Red Foundation announced the lineup for its seventh annual Red Party, which will take place during the Dallas Pride Week in September. The featured entertainer will be recording artist DEV, and moves back to the gayborhood at Sixty-Five Hundred on Cedar Springs Road. The event takes place from 9 p.m.-midnight on Saturday, Sept. 19. Tickets are $55. — Arnold Wayne Jones

Spike! Dallas will host 2016 national gay volleyball tourney

If it seems like Dallas keeps getting picked to host national tourneys, you’re not wrong; since 2004, nine national championship gay sporting events have come to Dallas; NAGVA will make it an even 10 in 12 years.

“NAGVA could not be more excited about coming back to Dallas for the third time,” NAGVA’s president, Jason Fallon, said in a statement. The tournament will be held at the at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center May 27–29, 2016.

Porn expo coming to the Kay Bailey Hutchison … and we’re shocked

I rarely call it the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center. But in this case I will. On Aug. 7-9, the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center hosts eXXXotica. That’s a porn expo.

Mayor Mike Rawlings is “deeply concerned,” according to the Dallas Morning News. Of course he is. He has to say that. I’m deeply concerned as well.

Dallas is a wholesome city where same-sex couples come to get married and raise our children. (Dallas Voice is even hosting its own Wedding Party and Expo this Sunday at the Anatole.) It’s not a city where we go with friends to … gulp! … the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center. So consider this a warning. We’re shocked — shocked, we tell you! — that something like this could take place in our fair city. Oh, and you can get tickets at eXXXoticaexpo.com. — David Taffet
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My name is BONNIE. I am a spayed female, tan and white Collie - Smooth mix. The shelter staff think I am about 1 year and 2 months old. I have been at the shelter since Jul 07, 2015.

The Adoption Center is open 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m., Mon-Sat, and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. All adopted pets are spayed or neutered, vaccinated and microchipped. Standard adoption fees are $85 for dogs and $55 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 DallasAnimalServices.org or find us on Facebook at Facebook.com/DallasAnimalServices.

Photo contributed by Judi Burnett.

Due to an oversight, the photographer credit for the cover photo on the July 24 edition was omitted. The photographer was Chaunva LeCompte. She can be reached at 817-368-1166, Chaunva.com

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The actions that are covered by the City Ordinance are:

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Including brokers, sales agents, lenders, mortgage brokers, insurance agents and sellers

ADVERTISMENT
Including brokers, sales agents, lenders, mortgage brokers, insurance agents and sellers

EMPLOYMENT
Including brokers, sales agents, lenders, mortgage brokers, insurance agents and sellers

PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION
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If you suspect discrimination in these areas and wish to file a complaint, call:

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If you have any questions, please call
214/670-3247.
JULY

• Weekly: Lambda Weekly every Sunday at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-FM. This week’s guest is Candy Marcum; United Black Ellument hosts discussion on HIV/AIDS in the black community at 7 p.m. every second Tuesday of the month at 3116 Commerce St., ste. C; Fuse game night every Monday evening but the last of the month at 8 p.m. at the Fuse Space in the ilume, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, apt. 2507; Fuse Connect every Wednesday from 7 p.m. at the Fuse Space.

• July 31–Aug. 1: Seventh Annual Texas Transgender Nondiscrimination Summit Summit addressing transgender issues in higher education with keynote speakers, workshops and panels. 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m. on Friday, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m. on Saturday at University of Texas at Dallas, 800 West Campbell Road, Richardson. Register online at Txtns.org/register. For more information, contact Josephine Tittsworth at josephine@txtns.org.

• Aug. 1: AIDS Interfaith Network Leo Party 8 p.m. at the Hidden Door, 5025 Bowser St. For more information, visit AIDSInterfaithNetwork.org.

• Aug. 1: SPCA of Texas and Jack FM Host Mutts at the Movies Free, family-fun screening of Beethoven, the Loveable Saint Bernard at 8:30 p.m. at the Shops at Park Lane, 8080 Park Lane. Seating begins at 7 p.m. Free.

• Aug. 1: DFW Trans Ladies Monthly Meeting Meets from 7–8:30 p.m. on the first Saturday of every month at Agape MCC, 4615 E. California Parkway, Fort Worth. For more information, email info@dfwltgladies.org or visit DFWLTGLadies.org.

• Aug. 2: Dallas Voice Wedding Party & Expo Marriage equality expo sponsored by the Dallas Voice and the North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce includes wedding specialists and vendors to answer your questions and help you plan your wedding. Performances include Turtle Creek Chorale and a fashion show 12–6 p.m. at the Hilton Anatole Hotel Stemmons Ballroom, 2201 N. Stemmons Freeway. Free admission.

• Aug. 4: DFW Transcendence Trans/SOFA Meeting Trans and ally support group meets monthly on first and third Tuesdays from 7–9 p.m. at Agape MCC, 4615 East California Parkway, Fort Worth. For more information, call Finn Jones at 214-499-0378 or email at sfinn.jones@gmail.com.

• Aug. 6: Black Tie Dinner Sneak Peek Sneak peek of 34th annual Black Tie Dinner features complimentary cocktails, wine and tacos with announcements at 6:30 p.m. at Park Place Mercedes-Benz, 6113 Lemmon Ave. To RSVP, visit On.fb.me/1I54CbD.

• Aug. 5: Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas Cocktail Party Fundraiser for Dallas Theater Center celebrating the group’s world premiere of Moonshine: That Hoe Hav Musical 6–7:30 p.m. Pay what you can. For location and to RSVP, email Robin Rose at robin.rose@dallastheatercenter.org.

• Aug. 5: First Annual Adult Protective Services Community Board Caregiver Awards Luncheon Awarding excellence in professional elder care advocacy, promotion and best practices 1:30–4:30 p.m. at 5 Star Premiere Residences, 5455 La Sierra Drive. For more information, call John Dornheim at 214-341-7133.

• Aug. 6: LGBTQQ Saves Back to School Gathering for area LGBT youth at 7 p.m. at First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. For more information, visit LGBTQQ Saves.org.

• Aug. 6: Fort Worth PFLAG Meeting Meets every first Thursday of the month from 7–7:30 p.m. at First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. For more information, call 817-428-2329 or visit PflagFortWorth.org.

• Aug. 7: Youth First Art Show Young Professionals Advisory Council Reception Learn about YPAC and ways to support Youth First from 6–8 p.m. at ilume Gallerie, 4123 Cedar Springs Road.

• Aug. 11: Ed-U-Care Building Bridge Network: “Awareness – The Care Needs of LGBTQ Older Adults” Training group for caretakers of LGBT seniors hosts a dinner followed by screening of the movie Gen Silent and LGBT senior and caretaker needs 6:30 p.m. at The Senior Source, 3910 Harry Hines Blvd. For more information and to RSVP e-mail Sharyn Fein at educaredallas@gmail.com.

• Aug. 12: Jenny Block Book Launch Party Dallas Voice contributor Jenny Block hosts a party for her new book O Wow! Discovering Your Ultimate Orgasm at 7 p.m. at Komali, 4152 Cole Ave. Copies available for purchase at Tinyurl.com/owowbook.

• Aug. 13: Savor Dallas Toast of the Town Series: Jameson, Dude! Goody Goody Liquor sponsors year-round events hosted by Dallas chefs pairing signature dishes with a variety of alcohols. Dude, Sweet Chocolate’s Katherine Clapner and Jameson Irish Whiskey Brand Ambassador Darren Mooney partner this month for a chocolate and whiskey pairing at Dude, Sweet Chocolate, 1925 Greenville Ave. Tickets are $25. Purchase tickets at Bit.ly/1Vj1kFF.

• Aug. 14: High Tech Happy Hour Texas Instruments Pride, the LGBT and ally diversity group, hosts its monthly High Tech Happy Hour to increase professional and social contacts between groups and individuals and to foster community. 5:30–7 p.m. at Lake House Bar & Grill, 7510 E. Northwest Highway. For more information e-mail Paul von Wupperfeld at pavw@hi.com.

• Aug. 15: Tarrant County Gay Pride Week Association Presents Family Connections Seminar on LGBT family topics includes workshops on effective communication skills, education, health, wellness and more from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. at Artes de la Rosa Cultural Center for the Arts at Rose Marine Theater, 1440 N. Main Street, Fort Worth. Free but registration required. To RSVP visit Bit.ly/1I55ZP9.

• Aug. 15: Lambda Legal’s Sixth Annual Landmark Dinner 6 p.m.-2 a.m. at the Adolphus Hotel, 1321 Commerce St. For more information, call Roger Poindexter at 214-219-8585 ext. 224 or email rpoi@lambdalegal.org.
A vote this week allows Boy Scout troops to decide whether to have LGBT leaders and the organization to have gay employees.

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

News this week that the Boy Scouts of America had voted to change its policy about LGBT adults serving openly in Scouting was met generally with approval, but for many in the gay community, the victory was qualified at best.

This week’s vote “was progress, not a final victory,” said Zach Wahls, an Eagle Scout raised by two lesbian moms who founded the nonprofit Scouts for Equality. There will still be discrimination in some areas, though. “Any discrimination sends a harmful message to kids,” Wahls said.

In May, Robert Gates — the former Defense Secretary who oversaw the implementation of the end of Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell and is now president of the Boy Scouts of America — told the organization that its policy on gay adult leaders was “unsustainable” and said he would no longer try to revoke the charters of Scouting units with gay leaders.

As recently as this spring, the Boy Scouts were still discriminating in employment. An Oklahoma Eagle Scout was offered a job at a summer camp as a merit badge counselor. When the camp director found out he was gay, the offer was rescinded.

The new policy still permits individual troops associated with churches to discriminate against LGBT adults. About two-thirds of all troops have such an affiliation. The national organization will also not discriminate.

That’s good news for Stevie Meng, who earned his Eagle Scout when he was 17 and now works for the BSA. He called the July 27 vote to allow gay adult Scout leaders and employees a relief.

“I’ve been in the Scouts for 20 years,” Meng said. “Now I’m not afraid of losing my job.”

Meng works a Dallas Scout shop, selling uniforms, badges and a full line of camping supplies. He has never talked about his sexual orientation at work or even mentioned his a partner to co-workers.

He was aware of the ban on gay Scouts when he was in high school. He had met someone who completed all requirements for his Eagle but never got the award, because his council wouldn’t sign off on it because he was gay. Meng was determined not to let that happen to him.

“If I keep my mouth shut, I can get that Eagle,” he reasoned.

So he didn’t tell anyone in Scouting that he was gay… and achieved Eagle Scout.

Despite the ban on gay employees, Meng applied for a job working in the Dallas Scout shop at Circle 10 Council headquarters on Harry Hines Boulevard, while he finishes his degree at North Lake College. Although his sexual orientation hasn’t come up at work, he’s friends on Facebook with one of the people he works with, so he assumes they know he’s gay.

But now his position is safe. He’d like to continue to work in the store for now and in the
Soon after marriage equality became law, partners Martin Guerra and Bill West decided to get married. They were, after all, constitutionally entitled to the same state and federal benefits afforded heterosexual couples. Guerra went to his human resources department to add West to his insurance. He also wanted to obtain a name change.

The H.R. department said a name change had to be filed with the Social Security Administration; a Social Security office south of Oak Cliff refused to process a name change for a same-sex couple but a persistent effort forced them to relent.

Married but not yet equal

A Social Security office south of Oak Cliff refused to process a name change for a same-sex couple but a persistent effort forced them to relent.

David Taffet  | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

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Marriage equality opens a burgeoning market for businesses anxious to help couples plan for their special day

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

During the first day of marriage equality in Texas, the clerk in Travis County issued twice as many licenses as much larger Dallas County. Still, that wasn’t surprising — since a wedding must take place within 90 days of obtaining a license, the more casual Austin residents were more likely to opt for a quick ceremony. But Dallas’ LGBT community organizes and plans way more — instant wedding isn’t the Dallas way.

Most gays and lesbians never gave a wedding day of their own a second thought — especially in Texas, where red state bona fides seemed destined to make same-sex unions more ceremonial than legal. But while news about same-sex weddings has been accompanied by a parade of homophobic florists, bigoted cake bakers and biased photographers (not to mention one pizza place in rural Indiana), those vocal minorities are ignoring a huge and anxious new market. And countless pro-marriage-equality companies are more than happy to show you how much they care.

One way to begin the planning process is at The Wedding Party and Expo. More than 90 exhibitors — many straight-but-not-narrow — are anxious to get a piece of the lucrative same-sex wedding business, and ply their wares and help couples plan their special day.

Wedding planner Marion Adele Marshall welcomes the idea of consulting with any couple whose commitment to each inspires them to tie the knot. “All I see are two people who want to get married,” she says.

Unfortunately, that’s not what all vendors see. Marshall says bakers are in the news because they feel like they’re being discriminated against. She wonders why anyone would want to do business with those bakers. Find a cake baker who’s happy you’re getting married and wants to bake you the best cake possible.

Find a photographer who’s going to enjoy spending the day with you and your guests. An uncomfortable photographer is going to do a poor job, she warns.

For years, couples have been leaving the state for Vermont, Massachusetts or Canada that have the longest history of marriage equality. Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau President Phillip Jones says that, said for the first time, couples are coming to red state central to get wed.

“Dallas is a gay friendly wedding destination,” he said and couples are coming for that “Texas mystique. We’re positioning Dallas as a great wedding destination.”

Jones says the CVB has been hearing from people from around the world thinking of Dallas for their wedding since the marriage equality decision.

“We’re a three hour flight from either coast,” he says. “We have great hotels — five-star properties that could be $800 in New York or California for $300. The best shopping. Great activities. Churches that welcome.”

He called the Arboretum or Klyde Warren Park great backdrops and said a reception in the Arts District is something that didn’t exist five years ago.

Plenty of local vendors embrace the gay market, and are happy to help out. Melissa Miller with G Texas Catering represents several venues in The Cedars has lots of advice for a couple beginning the planning process.

The number of attendees is one of the biggest de-
cisions in planning a wedding, Miller says. The guest list directly affects the budget; having more than 200 people begins to limit the choice of venues. “Have an idea what’s important to you and how you want to spend your money,” Miller says.

If food is most important, start with the caterer, she suggests. If atmosphere is most important, begin with the venue. If it’s venue, Miller has some interesting options. Most people wouldn’t think of Gilley’s as a great venue for a gay event, but Gilley’s wants to get into the same-sex wedding business. To prove their cred in the community, Miller points out that Gilley’s hosted Be An Angel for Legacy Counseling Center, the Miss Gay USA pageant and the Purple Party.

Southside on Lamar offers a number of interesting options from a rooftop venue for up to 200 guests with a panoramic view of downtown to an underground space that offers an industrial urban setting.

“There’s also an art gallery that’s lovely for a ceremony,” Miller says.

When talking to venues, she recommends, find out what’s included in your quote. One location might seem like a bargain, but could end up costing twice as much as another similar space.

The more expensive venue might include the tables and chairs, linens, glasses and china and even the bar service. The cheaper spot may be just for the location and the caterer would have to bring everything else in.

“Those things add up,” she says, and the higher priced venue may actually be the greater value.

Marshall counsels to “talk to someone before you spend money.” Before making any recommendations, Marshall asks a lot of questions. She wants to know who the couple is and what they really want. When talking to vendors, couples can’t be shy.

Marshall said people usually contract with her eight months to a year before their event, but she’s put together a wedding in 30 days.

“Unless they want something super particular, we might get a great deal at the last minute,” she says.

For those on a budget, a morning wedding can just the thing. Marshall said breakfast is much cheaper to cater and venues are less likely to be booked so the rental rate will be lower.

She warns couples to be careful what they put on social media. If the guest list is going to be limited, don’t broadcast all the details and invite people to get angry they weren’t invited.

“You wanted to get married so long, it should be about the two of you being happy shared by the people who supported you all along,” she says.

Dallas Voices’ Wedding Party & EXPO takes place Aug. 2 at the Hilton Anatole.
Hundred year old Oak Lawn landmark has been repurposed, preserved and reproduced

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

When the new Parkland Hospital opens in August, the current Parkland facility will close. The original hospital – a property located at the intersection of Oak Lawn and Maple avenues, known as Old Parkland — hasn’t seen a patient in more than half a century, but has in recent years itself become the patient: rescued, resuscitated and rebuilt to become a new Oak Lawn landmark.

Harlan Crow — a member of the famed family of Dallas developers — is the person largely responsible for returning a moldering building to its former glory. Crow was part of a consortium looking to commercially develop the property. After Parkland moved to its current, soon-to-be-decommissioned location on Harry Hines Boulevard in 1954, Old Parkland went through an identity crisis. The county still owned the land, and repeatedly repurposed the building. During its stint as a halfway house during the 1980s, crime in the area soared. Finally abandoned by the county, it stood empty and deteriorating for a number of years until Crow Holdings, Harlan Crow’s company, purchased it.

Property manager Cathy Golden says Crow thought it would be a shame to lose the historic building to just another commercial development, so he bought out the partners who preferred it razed.

Rather than follow the Dallas tradition of tear-
Crow was keen on preserving the property, paying close attention to the details. Crow also did something urban developers rarely do: He added trees, many more than Dallas zoning requires. The building itself, as well as the sculpture garden, is obscured from Maple Avenue as a result of so much greenery.

It’s a rare-for-Dallas preservation effort to pay tribute to one of the city’s oldest properties. Parkland Hospital dates to 1872, when the city hired a doctor to care for its prisoners. In 1894, Dallas acquired 19 acres of land at Maple and Oak Lawn, which was outside Dallas city limits. The original clapboard buildings were replaced with the current building in 1913. The property is now only 9.5 acres — half the land was taken in the 1960s to build the North Dallas Tollway.

In 2006, Crow Holdings began renovation of the original hospital building and moved its corporate headquarters into the building two years later. Other tenants, which include a number of nonprofits, have been moving into the office space as its been completed. They expect the campus to be finished later this year.

Golden says as much architectural detail was preserved as possible. Stairs and railings are original; as much of the leaded glass as possible was preserved; wooden rockers seen in old photographs were reproduced and sit on the front porches of the buildings.

The Nurses’ Quarters, built in 1922, was also preserved and reopened in 2009. Functioning fireplaces and original moldings were restored in that building. Heavy bronze doors and wood floors in the style of the era were added.

One corner of the ceiling above the elevator shaft in the main building remains exposed and in its original condition to show what the molding and brickwork looked like.

As the project progressed, Golden says doctors and nurses who worked at the original hospital donated uniforms, medical equipment and yearbooks. Some of those items are displayed in the lobby.

Once renovation of the original buildings was finished, construction began on the rest of the campus. Most notable is Parkland Hall, with its copper dome at the western corner of the property. A 45-foot bronze column is the central focal point of the campus interior. Topped by Eos, the goddess of dawn, it stands on a granite pedestal with quotes from Jefferson, James Madison, John Locke and Adam Smith engraved on the base.

Across Maple Avenue, Crow is developing two blocks for commercial use, with restaurants that will be housed in traditional Oak Lawn Craftsman-style buildings. One is already built and will house 18th and Vine, a Kansas City barbecue joint. A Mexican restaurant and an Italian Roman tavern are planned with construction for those just begun. New pavers, antique reproduction light poles and monument signs will enhance the neighborhood’s ambiance as the project is completed.

Not visible from the street is the most recent addition. The Pavilion, just inside the gate off Oak Lawn Avenue at the Scottish Rite traffic light, features a rotunda above a three-story building. That building was inspired by Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello. (Golden says much of the campus was inspired by Jefferson’s designs for the University of Virginia.)

Parking is mostly underground. Below the parking level under The Pavilion, The Debate Chamber is being built. Modeled after a parliamentary chamber, the oval hall will be used for events such as an annual debate Crow sponsors to engage youth in important issues to Crow Holdings’ annual partners meeting. Golden expects it to be used for a variety of events they haven’t even imagined yet.

The six-story building at the end of Reagan Street is the only building on the campus not owned by Crow Holdings. Maple Place is owned by TRT Holdings and is the corporate headquarters for its Omni Hotels and Gold’s Gym divisions.

Much of the property pays homage to the “American Experiment” in its monuments, statues, engravings and design. One of the two private restaurants in Parkland Hall, The Green Dragon, is a tribute to Boston’s Green Dragon Tavern, established in 1654. Plans for the invasion of Lexington and Concorde were overheard there at the start of the American Revolution, prompting the ride of Paul Revere. Books that revolutionaries would have read are commemorated in stone in a garden outside Woodlawn Hall.

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Wendy Williams

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After the decision didn’t apply to them so he called Dallas Voice to relate the story and ask for any suggestions.

Ken Upton, a senior staff attorney with Lambda Legal, said earlier this month that he expected some glitches as the legal decision was implemented. County clerks deciding not to issue licenses was the obvious first reflex. Guerra was probably the first from a same-sex couple that applied at this particular office.

As newlyweds begin to apply for other benefits that marriage offers, some clerks may not understand that those requests need to be processed and same-sex couples now get all the same benefits as opposite-sex couples.

West recommends couples facing similar hurdles remain be persistent. He’ll have insurance for the first time in 12 years as a result of the ruling and for the first time in 20 years, the couple will share a name.

Bill West and Martin Guerra marries earlier in July after 20 years together.

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future, he’s considering a leadership position with a troop or pack.

For Jon Langbert, the decision is too little, too late: like Wahls, he calls the decision a partial victory.

Langbert was known as the “Popcorn Colonel” because he raised thousands of dollars selling popcorn for his son’s Highland Park Boy Scout troop. When parents of two other children learned he was gay, they complained. The troop leader asked those parents if they would step up and take over the fundraising position. When they refused, the troop leader wouldn’t remove Langbert. But the parents persisted and with the backing of Boy Scout headquarters in Irving, got Langbert fired from his volunteer position.

“I believe it’s the Scouts taking a nice step into the 20th century,” Langbert said about the vote.

Despite the change in policy, Langbert doesn’t think he and his son will rejoin the Scouts. That would involve finding a welcoming new troop and having a long talk with leaders and other parents to guarantee there would be no discrimination. He said he isn’t excited about doing that at this point.

“The whole experience left a bad taste in all our mouths,” he said.

Neither side seems particularly happy with the vote.

The Mormon Church, which sponsors the most Boy Scout troops in the U.S., said it was “deeply troubled” by the vote in a news release. The church had requested a delay in the vote, claiming members of the governing council were out of their offices in July and unable to vote.

“The Church has always welcomed all boys to its Scouting units regardless of sexual orientation,” the church claimed in its press release. “However, the admission of openly gay leaders is inconsistent with the doctrines of the Church and what have traditionally been the values of the Boy Scouts of America.”

Girl Scouts has maintained an inclusive policy for more than a century and that policy has worked well for it, according to Monica Contreras Gonzalez, director of marketing and communications for Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas.

“I can tell you that our membership is a cross-section of America with regard to opinions on religious and social issues and practices,” Gonzalez said. “We do not discriminate or recruit on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, national origin, or physical or developmental disability.”

The current push to change BSA policy toward gay Scouts and Scout leaders began in 2012. When Jennifer Tyrrell, a Cub Scout den mother, was removed from her position because she was lesbian, she began a Change.org petition. After collecting 300,000 signatures, a group of LGBT Scouts and leaders delivered the petition to Boy Scout of America headquarters in Irving.

In 2011, Wahls testimony before the Iowa House Judiciary Committee about the state’s proposed ban on same-sex marriage went viral. In 2012, after his book My Two Mums was published, he organized Scouts for Equality and began working with others like Tyrrell who wanted change in the Boy Scouts.

Wahls spreads awareness among the public of the harm discrimination in the Scouts does and made an impact on the organization by pressuring companies to stop making donations to the Boy Scouts. LGBT discrimination violated their giving policies, he told them. Over a period of a few months, the BSA lost hundreds of thousands of dollars from companies like Intel, UPS and Merck.

While he would like to see all troops accept LGBT leaders, Wahls says Scouts for Equality plans to work with progressive faith groups and other sponsors to build good new alternatives. He wants his organization to be a resource to help those interested in Scouting find accepting troops and is trying to figure out how to monitor that.

By 2013, BSA leadership had changed from Rex Tillerson, CEO of ExxonMobil, to Wayne Perry, retired McCaw Cellular president. McCaw had been purchased by AT&T, a company with a long history of progressive policies toward the LGBT community. ExxonMobil is known for taking benefits away from Mobil employees it merged with Exxon in 1999 and stubbornly refusing to add an LGBT nondiscrimination policy for 15 years.

The Boy Scouts lifted its ban on gay Scouts up to the age of 18 in 2013. But that meant someone could earn his Eagle Scout the day before he turned 18 and be removed from the organization the next day.

Gates experience introducing openly gay and lesbian troops into the armed forces may make him the perfect leader to oversee the Boy Scouts doing the same with openly LGBT employees and troop leaders. His term ends in 2016. The position of president will pass to Randall Stephenson, chairman of AT&T, who is expected to continue a smooth implementation of the new policy.
HIV is not the enemy

Please don’t be afraid of HIV. It doesn’t deserve it, and you deserve better. Don’t get me wrong: I’m not anti-fear. I’ve got a whole mess of fears myself — of failure, of illness, of crossing the hectic street outside my office in Manhattan. I’ve got fear pretty well down pat.

Heck, it’s even healthy. Fear is one of our most fundamental human instincts. It helps keep us safe.

I even think it’s healthy to have some fear when it comes to HIV. It’s OK to fear becoming infected with HIV, and it’s OK to be scared of what HIV might do to your body if you’re positive, or if to be concerned about the potential side effects of treatment.

Those fears can be good if they result in action that makes us better. If we’re appropriately afraid of becoming infected with HIV, we’ll (hopefully) learn more about how the virus is transmitted and the right ways to protect ourselves, and we’ll seek to make changes in our lives that reduce our risk. For some of us, that will mean using condoms or starting pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). For others, it may mean leaving an abusive relationship, or challenging conditions such as poverty and lack of safe housing that put many at greater risk.

If we’re living with HIV and afraid of what comes next, we’ll (hopefully) talk to our doctors and read information on reputable websites, like the four sites who have teamed up to write this monthly column, so that we can ease that fear with information and a plan forward.

But to fear HIV itself? That’s where I think we run into problems. Fearing HIV because it exists isn’t logical: HIV itself is not some kind of cold, calculating, devious enemy that seeks to destroy us. It doesn’t care about us at all. It just wants a place to live, and we happen to be a pretty hospitable environment.

Nonetheless, a whole lot of us fear HIV itself. Maybe part of that is sheer, animal instinct, but I think much of it is learned. Over the years, an endless array of awareness campaigns has cast HIV as a villain to be conquered, as though it were some kind of inherently evil creature. We’re at war with HIV, the common refrain goes (I’m as guilty as anyone of using it), and in that life-or-death fight, the virus is the big bad.

But here’s the thing: When we see HIV as a vicious enemy, many of us — far too many — tend to start seeing HIV-positive people as enemies by extension. “Those people!” we think. “They allowed this thing to get inside them. They’ve put us at risk.”

This can also be the reaction when HIV-negative people find out that a person they’ve been intimate with has HIV, even when there’s little or no risk of transmission and they remain negative.

This is how stigma happens, and when it happens, discrimination follows. It’s how people — Americans, in 2015 — get sent to prison for HIV exposure, some serving terms that are longer than sentences for voluntary manslaughter. These people didn’t share their status because they were afraid. Afraid to be judged. Afraid of the stigma. Afraid to be alone. And, in some cases, maybe at least a little afraid of themselves.

It’s a cycle that feeds on itself. We see it in too many HIV education advertisements; one recent campaign features a couple in bed, one partner facing toward us, the other sitting behind them and looking down at them, wondering, “Do I trust him (or her)?”

Screw that. Preventing HIV isn’t about whether we trust our partner. It isn’t about fearing the virus or people who live with it. Those instincts are the reason HIV continues to thrive in so much of the world, the U.S. included. Fear breeds stigma, and stigma breeds silence.

No, preventing HIV means caring about ourselves enough to understand what HIV is, how it works and what the risks are. And it’s about respecting ourselves enough to know that we’re worth the steps we can take to keep ourselves, and others, as healthy as we deserve to be.

I’m not saying it’s easy to do this, neither for us as a society nor for you and me as individuals. But we need to, or HIV will continue to hurt us in ways that go far beyond the damage it does to our bodies.

Maybe it can start with HIV education efforts that focus less on fear, and more on self-respect.

In mid-July, humanity lost a man named Bob Munk. He was diagnosed with HIV in 1987, and immediately dove into AIDS activism, which became his passion. He was a brilliant, kind, deeply caring man. One of his most enduring legacies is AIDS InfoNet, a Web-based effort he started in the early years of the Internet to create and distribute a huge array of fact sheets on HIV-related topics to as many people, in as many languages, as he could possibly manage.

These fact sheets are short, to the point, easy to understand and deeply rooted in reliable research. They say to people: “Here’s what we know. We trust you with this information. Read it, learn it, and use it to make life better.”

In a world so often gripped by an obsession with using fear as an HIV prevention tool, Bob Munk opted to take the high road: education, empowerment, self-care. His fact sheets have helped countless thousands, and they push back against what sometimes feels like a relentless tide of fear, stigma and ignorance.

I think he had it right. Fear of HIV isn’t the answer, and doesn’t help anyone. We need to respect ourselves, and each other, enough to ensure that we each understand HIV so that we can help one another get past it. We deserve that.

Myles Helfand is the editorial director of TheBody.com and TheBodyPRO.com.
Violet’s not blue

‘Drag Race’ winner Violet Chachki is feeling in the pink, with a figure that leaves queens green with envy

We all know that drag offers the opportunity for drag artists to develop different and unique styles, personalities and acts, but no queen has been quite like Violet Chachki. The champion of the most recent season of RuPaul’s Drag Race, Chachki (real-life name Jason Doran) was a divisive choice among fans, but there’s no doubt she will pave the way for the next generation of drag. One of the youngest to win the show (at 22, she’s slightly older that Season 2 winner Tyra Sanchez was), her longtime passion for vintage fashion recalls the day of an early Bettie Page, mixed wildly well with a dash of S&M (that cinched waist!) and her notoriously exuberant confidence.

“Love moment from the season was winning — obviously — but going in, you have no idea if you’re going to make any friends or not,” she says. “I actually made a lot of really good friendships, hopefully lifelong. I think it is really amazing that drag can bring people together … and all that sappy shit.”

“Sappy shit” aside, we all remember that unforgettable scene where she reactively spat her disdain for Michelle Visage after a rough critiquing from Ru’s BFF. “I haven’t gotten a chance to hang out with her after the show,” she says. “Every time I see her, it is super cordial so there is no bad blood. It’s OK to have different opinion on things and I think I am learning that you don’t have to agree with everybody. I think about what she said, it’s still touchy for me, but she’s allowed. It can be frustrating not really having a voice when they critique. You just got to take it, do what they say and hope you do better next week.”

Though she is the reigning queen of RPDR, Chachki’s origins in drag are humble. “I started watching Season 3 of Drag Race around the same time I first started doing drag,” she recalls. “I was dressing up in my own room — I wasn’t trying to be a drag queen, just fooling around with gender when I started. A lot of new drag queens are watching the show or learning on YouTube, I think we touched on that this season, the culture generations of queens that was raised on the show,” says Chachki. (Cough, cough Kennedy Davenport.)

What a progression, then, to the finale this season. Though all of the queens were on point at the season finale, Violet’s hair-to-toe purple ensemble was simply unforgettable. “I wanted to look like I was dripping in purple goo,” she admits. “It evolved. I wanted to be glam and corseted. I like my drag to be super-uncomfortable and I don’t think a lot of people do hobble skirts. I wanted to drip in violet, amethyst and lavender — all of those purple hues. It was a rush job, actually. All of my friends hovered over my skirt with tweezers and went to town with rhinestones and beads.”

Her unique and enduring spunkiness carries through in her newly-released album — appropriately named Gagged — that deals with serious issues. The video for her newest single, “Vanguard,” depicts Chachki as the victim of a group of bullies before she turns the tables with the restaurant patrons and issues her own fetish-warrior justice alongside a vicious poodle.

CHA-CHA CHACHKI | Violet performs from her new album at The Brick Saturday.
“The idea for the music video is based off of a real life experience I had in Australia,” she says. “I kind of got fagbashed at a McDonald’s at 3 in the morning. It didn’t get as physical as I took it in the video, but it served as inspiration.”

Avant-garde visuals have become a theme of her art. Her first single, “Bettie,” explored fetish roles and presentation versus reality; it was been No. 11 on the Billboard dance charts for two weeks in a row.

“I love fetish, because the line between right and wrong is blurred in a controlled, safe way. It is harmless fun that can really give new meaning to someone’s otherwise humdrum life. I also love the fashion,” says Chachki.

Though she did have the chance to clown around, Chachki never really had the opportunity to show off one of her more physical talents, such as work in silk acrobatics, which are gracefully featured in the “Vanguard” video.

“My latex designer in Atlanta is a jack of all trades. She does aerial acrobatics, silk, trapeze, fire dancing, bullwhip. She got me into it,” she says. “It’s a really beautiful way to get a good workout which is why I really like it.” (So that’s how she keeps that famously itty-bitty waist.)

Even during her comparatively brief career, Violet has noted the sensations associated with the process — and the community’s response to being out and about in drag.

“When you’re a real queen, you do it once and you get addicted to the attention and to the creativity,” she says. “It’s one of the most creative things you can do; you’re literally [inventing] a person. Halloween is when a lot of drag queens are born. Halloween happens and you get all of this attention and love. You feel great for your art and get addicted to the notoriety.”

Her success nationally and in her home base of Atlanta has helped her inspire a resurgence of drag there … at least when she isn’t busy traveling the world — including Dallas, where she’ll be this weekend.

“There really wasn’t this large drag scene in Atlanta when I first started. I, my drag mom and my drag sister,” she says. “I don’t want to say started a drag scene [there], but there definitely wasn’t a lot of drag and now there are a number of new queens. Like I was saying, it is really easy to get a lot of attention. Some queer boys got addicted [to drag] and I like to think I had a hand in that.”
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Out actor Jesse Nager heats up ‘Motown’ as Smokey Robinson

ARNO LD WAYNE JONES
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Jesse Nager was born in Boston, raised in New York and touring the country on a show set in Detroit, but Dallas holds a special place in his heart: It’s the hometown of his husband, Jacob.

“I love it here!” he says enthusiastically about the city. “Jacob loves to show me around where he grew up — when we got here yesterday, the first thing we did was go to Dickey’s Barbecue.”

It’s not the first time Nager has been in Dallas for work; a few years ago, he was in the national tour of Xanadu. But appearing in the role of Smokey Robinson in Motown The Musical, which plays through Aug. 16 at the Winspear Opera House, has been an especially rewarding experience:

“I was in the original New York company playing one of the Temptations,” Nager says. He left the show a few months before it closed on Broadway to take on the meatier role of the legendary frontman of The Miracles and best of Motown Records founder Berry Gordy.

“I am onstage less now than I was before, but it’s a more focused experience. You’re sort of working harder physically in the ensemble, but you dig a little deeper when you’re a principal,” he says. “You spend more time creating the character.”

In fact, getting to meet the people who made the music, and started an entire genre of pop culture (who doesn’t have an instant idea of what “the Motown sound” means?) was one of the genuine thrills of Nager’s career so far.

“Mr. Gordy wrote and produced the show, so he was always [in rehearsals in New York], at every preview, always giving notes. Because Motown is such a family, the [people who are characters in the show] were always around. At first, you’re in awe and then your walls go down and you talk to them as normal people. That’s when the real details come out that you can put into the performance. You learn more from the people around them.”

Nager gleaned most about developing Robinson for the stage not from the legendary singer himself, but someone else.

“When I met him I wasn’t playing him yet, but once I was cast, I think the most influential person for me [to understand the character] was Claudette Robinson, his first wife. She would text me [suggestions and stories]; she’s sort of a friend now, which is unbelievable,” he says.

There have been many unbelievable moments in Nager’s journey. Among the highlights were meeting Stevie Wonder, and one event that he’ll never forget.

“Mr. Gordy was being honored and was performing with the Jacksons. Growing up, my biggest obsession was with the Jackson 5. We ended up performing with them at an event outside the show — that was probably the most starstruck I’ve ever been,” he says.

Meeting them has also been a learning experience — not just as a singer, but as a professional.

“I think the biggest lesson for me is that most of these Motown artists — the ones that are still alive — are still performing. The reason is, they worked so damn hard to get where they are, they say, why would I ever give it up?” Nager says. “In this time of American Idol and Youtube stardom, it’s important to remember actual longevity reflects how hard you work, no matter how popular you seem at the moment.”

Back in Dallas | Nager loves Dallas, not only because he toured here before, but because it’s his husband’s hometown.
With Mad Men off the air, lovers of the 1960s must be craving a fix. That’s all that could explain why three shows — Catch Me If You Can from Uptown Players, Sweet Charity from WaterTower Theatre and Motown the Musical (See story Page 26) — opened within a week of each other. And what different visions of the Hippie Decade they present.

Catch Me isn’t actually from the ’60s, it’s just set there — not the pot-fueled crazy ’60s you probably think of. In 1967, The Stones, The Doors and The Beatles all had No. 1 Billboard hits … but so did Frank and Nancy Sinatra and Lulu; it’s the latter that speak to Catch Me’s demographic.

The concept of the show is best expressed in Act 2, when a conservative Southern family gather ‘round the TV to watch Mitch Miller’s Sing Along: It’s the new TV generation where variety shows make American life seem glamorous. That’s the experience Frank Abagnale Jr. (Anthony Fortino) had, believing the world was a shiny, consequence-free oyster, a message proudly passed along to him by his glad-handing tax-cheat dad Frank Sr. (David Lugo, as slick as seagull next to the Exxon Valdez). Frank Jr. learns early to become a con man in an era before cell phone and Internet connectivity, kiting checks, impersonating airline pilots and medical doctors, all before he was old enough to vote … and all with a smile and a flirtatious glance. No Nigerian prince needed to bilk these marks out of their money. That irks the by-the-book FBI slogger Carl Hanratty (Christopher Curtis), who employs yeoman detective work in tracking him down.

The book of the musical, by Terrence McNally, is wafer thin (based on the equally trivial-if-entertaining movie by Spielberg); there’s no there there. We’re meant to be charmed by Frank — he’s a classic anti-hero — but I felt rather bullied into “admiring” him, when really, he was just some petulant kid who robbed people. The score (by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman) reinforces this effervescent inconsequentiality; the songs are melodically interchangeable, at least until the sentimentality sinks in in the second half with the lovely ballads “Seven Wonders” and “Fly, Fly Away.” For the first half hour, I wasn’t sure when one song ended and other began.

But if the show itself has all the substance of a meringue, this production is a delicious, hearty dessert. Director Cheryl Denson’s staging is one of the most effort-less in recent memory, quickly changing scenes (and exquisite costumes — it’s one of the best-looking shows of the summer) with a magician’s sleight-of-hand. It’s infectiously energetic, and the first act breezes by so quickly you barely notice when intermission arrives.

Many of the performers are just wonderful, far surpassing the material. Fortino is one of North Texas’ most charismatic young actors, with a strong voice and a winning smile; you see why people fell for Frank’s schtick, since you feel the same about Fortino. In addition to Lugo, ...
Miguel, Wildheart. Carnal sex is the gateway to bittersweet romanticism on Miguel’s modern-lust-and-love odyssey, Wildheart. And the pompadoured R&B seducer’s third studio album is not beating around the bush. Or is it? In the most literal sense, it is; real-life sex is a raw, uninhibited XTube clip — at least in Miguel’s dirty mind.

I’m your master, babe declares on “The Valley,” getting his rocks off D’Angelo style as a pulsating drone and his fan-inducing falsetto works in conjunction with the song’s X-rated setting: the San Fernando Valley, the world’s notorious porn mecca.

Its sex-positive takeaway is commendable on its own. Miguel, though, is much too artistically discerning for such simplicity (you’ve obsessively listened to his debut, Kaleidoscope Dream, right?), and when he contextualizes his sexual desires, he takes you to the third dimension. Sex isn’t just sex anymore. It’s “coffee in the morning,” and, of course, cuddles and conversation — all of which are the basis for “Coffee,” the post-fuck phase. And then, maybe it’s love (“Waves”). Or maybe it’s not... anymore (“Leaves,” a devastating dose of summertime sadness). Despite a hypersexualized exterior, there’s an unexpected plethora of psychological feelings to sift through on Wildheart, and an even wider range of musical influences. One of those muses is, without question, Prince. The veteran’s presence is undeniable throughout this rock- and electro-infused R&B scorcher, a sumptuous, intoxicating and top-shelf set. 4 stars

Kacey Musgraves, Pageant Material. Kacey Musgraves was part of the change that country music needed. Guys can love guys and girls can love girls and so what, she proclaimed on “Follow Your Arrow.” Though her Grammy-winning breakthrough anthem matter-of-factly advocated for queer acceptance, the 26-year-old Texan was knocking down doors left and right on her defiant gem-of-a-debut Same Trailer Different Park. That hasn’t changed much with Pageant Material, which works both for and against her. On the follow-up to Same Trailer, Musgraves assures us she’s not done taking the piss out of people who sniff around in other people’s business (“Biscuits”), and despite modest fame, she maintains an outsider disposition on the title track. She’s also still smoking pot. That easy-going, every-girl authenticity gives Musgraves a leg up on Pageant Material, when some of the album’s weightless songwriting can’t live up to its predecessor’s sly, no-sweat scribes. “High Time” is a grass-swaying good time that epitomizes Musgraves’ sonic simplicity; that feet-up, chill-out sound is her trademark, but on Pageant Material, it’s paired with vague, vanilla riffs that only scratch the surface of family, love and dogma from her seemingly endless supply of “be yourself” stock. Buttons are still being pushed, just not with the same innovativeness as before (remember “It Is What It Is,” about casual hook-ups?). “Biscuits” is a fine song, though. And even if it’s another shoulder shrug to all the haters, you can’t deny the cuteness of every metaphor on “Cup of Tea.” Pageant Material, then, is the dreaded sequel: Same trailer, different, less-interesting park. 2 stars

Florence and the Machine, How Big, How Blue, How Beautiful. The dog days are gone... and so are the days when English super-vocalist Florence Welch unleashed her colossal voice like a fireworks show finale. Her belt still bursts from within the deepest depths of her soul, but on her junior release, it’s used sparingly. Welch’s career so far has been, in large part, defined by her lung power. Not anymore. This one’s a big, beautiful slow-burn. 3 stars

— Chris Azzopardi
Char & Emily McGaughy didn’t wait a bit to get legally wed in Texas

Names and ages: Char McGaughy, 31 and Emily McGaughy, 32.
Occupation: Co-owners of Gold Dust Tattoos & Fine Art on Lower Greenville where Char is an artist. Emily is also a freelance writer for AfterEllen.com.
Spotted at: Dallas County Courthouse, June 26, 2015.
How long together? 5-1/2 years.

Although Char and Emily had a commitment ceremony with close friends and family at Winfrey Point on White Rock Lake in May of 2013, they rushed to the courthouse on Marriage Equality Day to make it official. “We’d been waiting for this day for two years,” Emily says. “When we woke up that morning and learned that SCOTUS had made the right decision, we rescheduled our whole day so we could be a part of this historic day, which was full of hugs, tears, laughter and so much love. Being there and celebrating with so many other couples who’d been waiting just like us was an amazing thing. We got to witness the first legal same sex marriage in Dallas when Jack and George’s ceremony was performed. We’ll never forget it.”

What was the process like? “It was pretty seamless, actually. It was clear that John Warren and the staff at the clerk’s office had been preparing for this outcome. Everyone was patient and kind and supportive. Our judge was so sweet and happy to perform our ceremony. She cried with us!”

What does it mean to be legally recognized as a couple in your home state? “It’s a feeling I’m not sure we can articulate; we’ve been waiting so long to have our marriage recognized. It still feels surreal sometimes. We’ve been committed to one another for some time now and married in our hearts, but there is a confidence that comes with knowing that is finally mirrored in the eyes of the law. We know that there is much work to be done before we reach full equality, but this has been an important step. But we no longer lose sleep at night wondering if the other will be taken care if something should happen.”

MARK STOKES | Illustrator
mark@marksdrawsfunny.com

Drawing Dallas
Char & Emily McGaughy

JULY 24 — AUGUST 16, 2015
Book by Neil Simon | Music by Cy Coleman
Lyrics by Dorothy Fields | Directed by Michael Serrecchia
Based on an original screenplay by Federico Fellini, Tullio Pinelli and Ennio Plaiano
Produced for the Broadway Stage by Fryer, Carr and Harris
Conceived, Staged and Choreographed by Bob Fosse

“...a musical triumph of theatrical style...” The New York Times

Meet the ever-optimistic Charity, a hostess at a dance club, who wants to leave the world of raunchy nightclubs and start a more “respectable” life. She sings, dances, laughs and cries her way through one misadventure after the next. Get ready for famous tunes and high-energy dance numbers that will make you glad you decided to “spend a little time” with Charity and her crazy, frenetic friends.

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Land of Men
Remote and unsullied, gay-friendly Marquesas Islands are heaven on earth

Applause
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Burly, tattooed men. Really. And this is not an Atlantis cruise.
Just 6,000 miles southwest of DFW lie the Marquesas Islands, among the most remote places on the planet. Herman Melville wrote about the Marquesas in both *Typee* and *Moby Dick*; a visitor there himself, he escaped being eaten by cannibals. (Google “Marquesas cannibals German” for some interesting news.)

But, hey, this is 2015. All is A-OK, isn’t it?

Nearly 1,000 miles north of Tahiti, the Marquesas — an archipelago of 20 islands and atolls of which only six are inhabited — depend on supplies from Papeete, the major port in French Polynesia. Interestingly named *Ua Pao, Nuku Hiva, Ua Huka, Oa, Thauata*, and *Fatu-Hiva*, they are situated southeast of Hawaii, just south of the Equator. The names of some of the islands and villages loosely translate to “Land of Men.”

Your cruise ship, the Aranui 3, is a freighter, but the lifeline to the outside world. It provides supplies of Coca-Cola, containers of frozen foods, Pampers, modern outrigger canoes, a Primavera Vespa scooter or two, perhaps a Toyota 4Runner, or a Caterpillar D10 bulldozer to the small villages situated in Marquesan bays. Representatives of the 9,000 inhabitants of the Marquesas are enthusiastically waiting on the docks or at the community centers when the Aranui arrives with food supplies for their small general stores and 150 passengers.

Members of the “muscular” crew — as even Aranui literature refers to the staff — double as longshoremen loading and unloading freight when they are not assisting with the whaler-tenders that ferry you to and from the islands’ often primitive docks. Unlike Tahiti, Moorea or Bora Bora, the Marquesas are relatively young volcanic islands with spectacular, cloud-capped, rain-forested mountains encircling some of the world’s most beautiful small harbors. They are not protected by coral reefs and calm lagoons, although some have spectacular beaches.

When the Aranui is unable to dock, your tender excursions may provide the equivalent of a 10-coupon amusement park ride to a weathered wharf or flat beach. Dramamine anyone? (Note: the ship, tenders and islands are not equipped for the mobility challenged.)

Cutey-shy Jacob, the dining room manager, and his staff, and the hot and out-there Manaarii, the entertainment coordinator, are not in the beefy category, but the hunky Polynesian dancers dressed in loin cloths, with tusks and bones adorning their classic Marquesan tattoos and accentuating well-defined chests, will tease your fantasies as they perform on deck!

Tattoos are significant in Marquesan culture. According to one of the French lecturers onboard the Aranui, categories of tattoos are reserved for particular types of individuals depending on their personality and occupation. It’s not uncommon to see males with their face entirely decorated with geometric patterns. Marquesan women frequently have tattoos from back of...
CHARITY CASE | Whitney Hennen, center, squeaks her way into our hearts.

Maranda Harrison as his girlfriend stands out among the strong cast. (The weak spot is Curtis’ Hanratty, who gets away with more mugging than Central Park on New Year’s Eve. He’s less Eliot Ness than Barney Fife.)

Even without much meat on its bones, Catch Me If You Can is in some ways the perfect August theatergoing experience: As lightweight, cool and diverting as a beach read, or as perky as a summer jam.

Up in Addison, the ‘60s look bleaker for Charity Hope Valentine (Whitney Hennen), the unlucky-in-love taxi dancer who gets abused by a series bum relationship. If you’re asking, “What in the hell is a taxi dancer?” well, that’s the time-capsule effect of doing a 50-year-old musical about a “modern” woman. Surprisingly, though, Sweet Charity — written by Neil Simon and with a score filled with some showtune staples (“Big Spender,” “I’m the Bravest Individual,” “If My Friends Could See Me Now,” “There’s Gotta Be Something Better Than This”) — still has the power to entertain, quaint old-fashioned-ness and all.

But while Catch Me is a weak show getting a great treatment, Charity is a solid show on some shaky production footing. The brass section — key to the score — is off-key, much of the dancing lacks both precision and force and the wigs are a disaster; Charity gets only two costume changes the whole night. Shame, shame.

But Hennen’s squeaky Lina Lamont voice, her upbeat attitude and moon-faced smile strikes the perfect note that brings both pathos and comedy. And Luke Longacre, who plays two of Charity’s boyfriends, expertly transforms himself from smooth movie star Vittorio to nebbishy hypochondriac Oscar. A good laugh can hide a lot of sins.
their ear down to the collar line of the neck.

During our cruise, the handsome husband of a Dutch couple arranged for an arm tattoo of a traditional Marquesan pattern from one of the Aranui crew. His son in Amsterdam was not amused. “It’s all downhill from here, Dad. The next thing you’ll do is buy a Harley,” he texted. You may want to add to your collection or get your first tattoo, too. (This service was not an advertised part of the cruise.)

The Aranui cruise is a 14-day adventure visiting the six populated islands, plus Takapoto and Rangiora (the world’s largest atoll) in the Tuamoto Archipelago, and Bora Bora in the Society Islands. Each of the islands offers a different experience: swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, fishing (the Aranui chef will prepare your catch for dinner), visits to the museums of artist Paul Gauguin and singer Jacques Brel (and their tombs), exploring the most significant tikis outside Easter Island, hiking to ancient petroglyphs, purchasing stunningly iridescent black pearls — you’ll have the option to visit a pearl farm where you may acquire pearls in a rainbow of colorful shades, various shapes and quality; meeting woodcarvers producing tikis, jewelry and masks for souvenir hunters; observing tapa being made and purchasing paintings on tapa, trying on some colorful pareos (sarongs) for that South Seas themed party back home, swimming with sharks and rays, take a helicopter tour... your days are slow-paced but busy. (If you plan to snorkel, pick up your ship-issued gear as soon as possible. There may not be enough for every passenger who wants to swim with the humuhumunukunukuapua’a.)

Cruising the Marquesas, you occasionally get “lei’d” in the villages, or at least have a traditional, fragrant tiare flower placed behind your ear. Warrior-like “savages,” tender hula dancers and tribal musicians entertain in several communities. Local children may scurry up to you to have their photo taken.

While ashore in some ports, take advantage of the chance to dine on traditional foods at a simple local restaurant. Goat, pork and fish cooked in a Marquesan earth oven are accompanied by vegetables, fresh salads and fruit desserts.

As an openly gay couple, we were always at ease in Papeete and on the islands. In fact, the Polynesians are well known for their acceptance of LGBT citizens (GenderCentre.org.au). Onboard the Aranui, we easily made many friends with the straight couples during the social events. Passengers were quick to “bravo” us during the Polynesian costume night (we took cheap tropical stuff from Walmart); the fashion show (couture provided by the ship’s boutique) also provided for multi-lingual camaraderie.

Graduates of the dance class gave a talented performance after dinner at the last night at sea. Manaarii would have had great success teaching dancers at the Round-Up Saloon how to line-dance Marquesan style! He also provides classes in ukulele, pareo fashion and palm frond weaving.

Aranui 3 has a variety of accommodations with standard cabins featuring twin beds, port-hole, a desk, closet, under bed storage, television, intra-ship telephone, a safe for your valuables and bath with shower. Larger suites feature private balconies, queen size beds, sitting areas, mini-fridge and full size tub with shower. The Owner’s Suite can accommodate larger parties. For those who may be more budget-minded, there are even dormitory style accommodations. And speaking of budgets, tipping is not expected or appreciated on the ship or any of the islands including cosmopolitan Tahiti.

Coming in August: Part 2 of the Marquesas Islands

OUT AND ABOUT | A tour of Bora Bora on an outrigger makes for a lovely side trip.

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*2013 Gay Press Report
Friday 07.31 —
Sunday 08.16

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus settles into North Texas

Before there was Cirque du Soleil, there was the Greatest Show on Earth, aka Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. The traditional extravaganza — with lion tamers, clowns, acrobats and more, settled into Dallas for a few weeks, then head west for a series of shows in Cowtown, with multiple performances most days.


Saturday 08.01 —
Sunday 08.02

Wedding Party & Expo pops the cork at the Anatole

We’re pretty pleased that marriage equality has arrived, and those who wanna get married will never have a better chance to earn all they need to than this weekend when Dallas Voice hosts its inaugural Wedding Party and Expo, with 80-plus vendors, musical performances and a runway show. And best of all, it’s free admission and free parking. Fabulous lifestyle guru Steve Kemble, pictured, serves as master of ceremonies.


Sunday 08.02

Winslow’s is one of the newest hangouts in the Cedar Springs area, but so far, it’s only had a soft opening. Well, it’s time to go big. All weekend, the eatery will mark its grand opening with brunches and dinners on Saturday and Sunday, and will even hand out raffle prizes hourly, and one $200 gift certificate each day. A portion of proceeds will even go to LifeWalk.

DEETS: Winslow’s, 3908 Cedar Springs Road. Brunch 10:30 a.m.—2 p.m, dinner 4 p.m.—midnight.

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calendar highlights

LIFE IS A CABARET | Jazz vocalist Judy Chamberlain performs a weekly cabaret night each Thursday at Zippers Hideaway.

ARTSWEWEEK

THEATER

Festival of Independent Theatres. Multiple theater companies present their one-act plays and stage projects. Final weekend. Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Drive. For a complete schedule, visit FestivalOfIndependentTheatres.com.


The Glass Menagerie. The first show of Theatre 3 new season — and the first without the late Jac Alder’s leadership — is this classic Tennessee Williams drama. Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. July 31–Aug. 23. Theatre3Dallas.com.

Othello. The final show of Second Thought Theatre’s season is Shakespeare’s classic tragedy of jealousy and revenge; directed by Joel Ferrell. Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Aug. 8. SecondThoughtTheatre.com.


The Quixotic Days and Errant Nights of the Knight Errant Don Quixote. A world premiere, commissioned for Amphibian Stage Productions, about the comic escapades of Cervantes’ timeless hero. Final weekend. 120 S. Main St., Fort Worth. $18–$33.


I’m Always On My Mind. A world premiere one-man show about a narcissist who doesn’t realize it ... yet. Theatre 166, 2425 Parker Road, Carrollton. Through Aug. 28. Eventbrite.com.

CIRCUS

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey: Legends. The world-famous Greatest Show on Earth settles into North Texas for several weeks in Dallas before heading to Fort Worth for a few more shows. American Airlines Center,
FRIDAY 07.31
COMMUNITY
PantoPiklon. The weekly retro disco dance party, presented by Lord Byron. Red Light, 2911 Main St. Doors 9 p.m.

SATURDAY 08.01
FUNDRAISER
The Leo Party and Miss Leo Contest. Now in its 28th year, this annual pageant, celebration and fundraiser for AIDS Interfaith Network returns. The Hidden Door, 5025 Bowser St. 8 p.m. AIDSInterfaithNetwork.org.

SUNDAY 08.02
EXPO
Dallas Voice’s The Wedding Party and Expo. The inaugural event celebrating nationwide marriage equality includes 80 vendors, a live performance by members of the Turtle Creek Chorale and a fashion show, hosted by lifestyle guru Steve Kemble. Hilton Anatole, 2200 N. Stemmon Freeway. Noon–6 p.m. Free.

MONDAY 08.03
PRESENTATION
An Evening with Sarah Koenig. The podcaster responsible for the addictive Serial shares her thoughts on the phenomenon. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 7:30 p.m. ATTPAC.org.

TUESDAY 08.04
FILM
42nd Street. One of the earliest screen musicals, and one with a classic story and score. Screens as part of the Tuesday Big Movie new Classic Series at Landmark’s Magnolia in the West Village, 3699 McKinney Ave. Sponsored by Dallas Voice. Screens at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.

THURSDAY 08.06
CABARET
Judy Chamberlain Jazz. The jazz vocalist’s weekly cabaret performance in the back room of Zipper’s Hideaway, 3333 N. Fitzhugh St. 9 p.m.
Girl on Girls

Jenny Block declares: Love me, Tinder — dating in the age of apps

Some argue that Tinder will be the demise of love and dating — that the ease and speed of swipe-right/swipe-left makes it too easy to both accept and dismiss a seemingly endless supply of dating possibilities.

I can see how that could be the case. But it certainly hasn't been my experience. Tinder, like any other social media — or any technology, for that matter — is as good or as bad as you allow it to be. Use it wisely, it can serve you well. Use it with abandon and, well, it'll likely abandon you.

I can speak with some authority on this subject. My girlfriend and I have been together for more than eight months and we met on Tinder.

I'll admit: I was cautious when it came to swiping right. I looked at each picture carefully, searching for clues about who that person really was. Where are they? Who are they with? What are they wearing? Holding? Doing? If all signs point to trash, I don't hesitate to swipe left.

Then I'll see what Facebook friends we have in common, then go to Facebook to find those mutual friends and then find the person's last name so that I can Google them. I know what you're thinking: "This girl is cyber-stalking people she doesn't even know. She crass." But I have been down Crazy Street — heck, I owned property on it, dating someone who, in my non-professional opinion, suffers from Narcissistic Personality Disorder. And I met this girl through a mutual friend whom I adore. So I'm a little gun shy now.

We are talking about meeting strangers here. So even though it might sound a bit creepy, I don't think there's anything wrong with doing your homework. And that little vetting ritual is precisely what I did when I met my now girlfriend. I was amazed at how many people we had in common and how close I was to many of the people.

Googling her allowed me to discern two things: 1. If she did indeed do what she told me she did. 2. If she indeed was who she said she was. We started out by messaging on Tinder and, when that became too tedious, which happened relatively quickly, we exchanged numbers and began texting by phone.

Although her Tinder profile was short, as most are, it became readily apparent to me that she was indeed who she said she was and — don't laugh! — I was already starting to fall for this girl. Or, at the very least, the idea of this girl.

Here's a bit of our earliest exchanges:

Me: So other than a good conversationalist, what do you look for in a girl?
Her: Someone smart. I try to go after people who will I think will keep me in line if I'm about to do something stupid or bad for my career. I have to go to a decent amount of events in Dallas, so someone isn't intimidated by conversation with strangers and who can hold their own is a plus. And someone who believes in philanthropy and using her powers for good. A woman who not only doesn't mind chivalry, but actually enjoys it. I'm a little old school, growing up in the south so I hold open doors, bring flowers, and just generally try to make a person feel special. However, I know that isn't what some people want. What about you?

Me: Wow. Sorry. I think you just swept me off my feet. Just do you know, there is quite an age difference between us. Is that an issue for you? Her: I don't care about age as long as we have things to talk about. Without that, I wouldn't care if you are a fashion model biologist working for Chanel to find a superhuman DNA strand. It would just be boring.

As you might imagine, we quickly made a date after that conversation, meeting for a drink at the Black Tie Preview Party. Things went so well that we ended up going to Black Tie together the next night. And the rest, as they say, is history.

It's fascinating to me that in a world where we are so overly connected, it can be very difficult to make real connections with real people. So it should come as no surprise that apps like Tinder would appear.

But like every other app, Tinder, despite any and all of its intentions, is still just an app. It's just an application. It is still just a computer program. And it is still only as good as its creator and then its users, which means that it can be used as well as abused.

So as much as Tinder worked for me, I get why it hasn't worked for so many others. The problem with Tinder is the same problem that plagues any virtual means of meeting someone — it allows us to disguise ourselves and it allows us to put forth only a fantasy self.

The problem with doing that is that once we then meet the person in person, we are unable to be that fancy version of ourselves and we are often disappointed by the lack of fantasy version of the person who we are meeting.

So the only way to use Tinder — or any other virtual medium — effectively is to be our true, authentic selves,warts and all, and that is something most people have a difficult time in the real world, let alone in the virtual one.

The problem remains. As an adult, it is difficult to meet people to become friends with let alone to date. The virtual world can help but only if we help ourselves by using it cautiously and honestly.

There is a very funny meme going around now, something to the effect of "my face when I see someone on tinder whose profile says not looking to hook up." The accompanying photo is of Tom Cruise laughing maniacally.

The truth is, Tinder has become known as a hook up app and if you are looking for anything more than that, you may not be taken seriously. Whatever the intentions are when it comes to an app's creator, the bottom line is that once it's in the hands of the public, the public will use it as it wishes, and you end up with dating sites filled with people looking for hook-ups and hook-up sites filled with people looking for relationships. In other words, you can't really win but you still have to play.

To my mind, all we can do is continue to put ourselves out there and be honest about what we're looking for and then hope that the other person is doing the same, knowing that the likelihood of that is, well, sometimes better than others. I do think that vetting a person is a fairly bit creepy, if someone doesn't want you to Google them, you have to wonder what it is that they have to hide.

So, Tinder on with caution. You never know.

There's no guarantee that you'll find the "one" on an app. But I can guarantee that you won't find her if you never even bother to look.

Jenny Block is the author of the new book O Wow! Discovering Your Ultimate Orgasm. Have a question about sex you want Jenny to address? Email it to GirlOnGirlsJenny@gmail.com.
Making the SCENE the week of July 31-August 6:

• Alexandre’s: Walter Lee at 10 p.m. on Friday, Ashleigh Smith at 10 p.m. on Saturday, Chris Chim at 9 p.m. on Wednesday. So Strung Out with Spencer West at 9 p.m. on Thursday.

• Brick/Jo’s: Violet Chachki at midnight on Saturday.

• Cedar Springs Tap House: Kandy Cayne hosts Calling All Stars talent contest with $150 prize at 10 p.m. on Friday.

• Changes: Wall of Food Show at 8 p.m. on Thursday.

• Club Reflection: Empress Birthday Bash at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Texas Gay Rodeo Association meeting at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Cowtown Leathermen cookout at 4 p.m., International Gay Rodeo Association show at 7 p.m.

• Dallas Eagle: United Court of the Lone Star Empire presents CPR Beach Ball benefiting AIDS Interfaith Network at 8 p.m. on Friday, Dallas Bears and Leather Knights club night on Saturday.

• Hidden Door: 28th annual Leo Party and Miss Leo Contest benefiting the Howie Daire Center at 8 p.m. on Saturday.

• Round-Up Saloon: Slide On in pool party and barbecue at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Round-Up Synergy and Round-Up Dive host Underwear and Basket Auction benefiting World Series qualifying teams at 6 p.m. on Sunday. Karaoke Out Loud on Monday, Miss Gay USofA Newcomer 2015 at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

• S4: Cassie, Layla, Valerie, Kennedy Davenport, Krystal and Jenna on Friday.

• Sue Ellen’s: What’s Up Band on Friday, Kickback on Saturday, Kathy & Beila at 3 p.m. on Sunday and Barefoot Hippies at 6 p.m. on Sunday.

• Woody’s Sports & Video Bar: Win! Las Vegas drawing at 9 p.m. on Saturday.

• Zippers Hideaway: Judy Chamberlain at 9 p.m. on Thursday.

To view more Scene photos, go to DallasVoice.com/category/photos.

Scene Photographer: Kat Haygood.
Bianca, Jordan, William and Jocelyn at Cedar Springs Tap House.

Dancer man at TMC: The Mining Company.

Jason and Jesse on The Strip.

Boys’ night out at Alexandre’s.

Asia O’Hara, Miss Gay Texas America at S4.
Girls’ night out at Sue Ellen’s.

Guys’ night out on The Strip.

Ty and Marcus at JR.’s Bar & Grill.

Staff at Zippers.

Doing the limbo at Liquid Zoo.

Mike at Woody’s Sports & Video Bar.

Girls’ night out at Sue Ellen’s.

Guys’ night out on The Strip.

Ty and Marcus at JR.’s Bar & Grill.

Staff at Zippers.

Doing the limbo at Liquid Zoo.

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Part-time cook/caterer position to oversee preparation of weekday lunch for 100+ people. Includes menu planning, food preparation and supervision of volunteer staff. Food service manager license required. To apply, follow instructions on employment page at myresourcecenter.org.

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Part-Time Personal Care Aide Needed. Aide will provide assistance with daily living, nutrition, hygiene, and support for non-profit organization. Weekends Required. NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE. SEND RESUME. sdelgado@aidsdallas.org

Full-time position for clerical assistant with accounting/accounts payable experience preferred. Position requires extensive record keeping and attention to detail in a fast-paced and diverse environment. Two years college, or comparable experience and computer literacy required. View details at www.myresourcecenter.org.

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Join us for Catholic Mass for the LGBT community First Sunday of each Month Dignity Dallas Mass held at CATHEDRAL OF HOPE Interfaith Peace Chapel, Lower Level dignitydallas@hotmail.com 972-729-9572 www.dignitydallas.net

Pegasus Squares, an LGBT Square Dance Club, meets every Sunday from 2:30PM-4:30PM at the Resource Center. Beginner lessons start in October. Contact Rob Miller at 882-238-3442 for more information or visit pegasus-squares.com.

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