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by Tammye Nash
Design by Kevin Thomas

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Betty Neal wins B/HAP’s 2015 Tommie Ross Pioneer Award

Every morning when I get up, as I wait for my turn in the shower, I log on to Facebook to check in with my “friends” and see what’s trending in the world of social media.

And every morning in my timeline, there’s a post from my friend — on Facebook and, for many, many years, in real life — Betty Neal. Betty always posts something inspiring and uplifting. Even as she is herself going through trying times, such as the recent death of her brother from cancer, Betty offers something positive to start the day.

And when you “like” the post, or comment on it, Betty comes back right away to say hello.

“Good morning Tammye Nash.”

“Good morning Betty Neal.”

So even though I rarely see Betty in person these days, I “talk” to her every day. And I was glad to hear that someone who always brightens my day is being recognized this weekend for her years of hard work and contributions to Dallas’ LGBT and same-gender-loving communities.

During Dallas Southern Pride weekend — Dallas’ black Pride celebration — Betty will be presented with the B/HAP Tommie Ross Pioneer Award in recognition of her “longstanding presence, her grace, her poise and her many accomplishments within both the pageant and the house/ball communities.”

“B/HAP stands for Ball/House And Pageant communities. The award is named in honor of pioneering and iconic entertainer, and Pageant Hall of Famer, Tommie Ross. The award recognizes and honors an individual whose work, art and achievements have demonstrated a legacy of passion, commitment, grace, style and transcendence within the pageant community.”

Betty Neal, who helped originate Dallas’ black Pride celebration back in the 1990s and who is a long-time volunteer with the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade, will receive the award Saturday, Oct. 3, during the B/HAP Awards Ceremony, starting at 3:30 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Dallas – Market Center. The awards ceremony is part of the Southern Regional B/HAP Communities Health Disparities and Leadership Conference, being held in conjunction with Dallas Southern Pride.

For a full schedule of conference events, visit the conference website. For a complete list of black Pride events, visit the DSP website.

In a statement on Facebook, Betty said she is “humbled to be receiving this prestigious award from the Ballroom/House And Pageant system, and to have been nominated by the legendary Tommie Ross herself. I am a huge fan and friend. What an honor! Thank you all from the depths of my heart.”

I just want to say congratulations Betty. You deserve this recognition and more. And I am proud to call you my friend.

— Tammye Nash
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Lotus is a proud, confident girl with a happy personality. She is a terrier mix and is about a year old. She has the curiosity and energy of a young dog and would be a great companion to take on walks, go on hikes or travel the world with. Lotus is highly intelligent and is easily motivated by both toys and food; training with Lotus should be a breeze. Like most puppies, she would benefit from daily mental and physical exercise, such as a game of hide and seek. Lotus would do best as an only dog. If you are looking for a lovable, adorable dog come visit with Lotus today.

Events listed in BLUE this week are Dallas Southern Pride events. Those listed in RED are Tarrant County Gay Pride Week events.

**OCTOBER**

* Weekly: Lambda Weekly every Sunday at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-FM with this week’s guest, Janis Ian.; 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 at ilume, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, apt. 2367; Fuse Connect every Wednesday from 7 p.m. at the Fuse Space. For more information call or e-mail Ruben Ramirez at 214-540-4900 or rramirez@myresourcecenter.org.

Have an event coming up? Email your information to staff writer James Russell at russell@dallasvoice.com by Thursday at 10 a.m. for that week’s issue.

THE GAY AGENDA

Disparities—A Record Breaking Win!
The fourth annual conference addressing health disparities, HIV prevention and PLWHA care in the LGBT communities includes workshops, cultural competency training and more. Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7050 Stemmons Freeway. For more information call 214-421-4800 or e-mail info@bhapconference.org or visit BHAPConference.org/bhap-2015-agenda.html

**Oct. 2: “Black Love and Unity” Fashion Show**
United Black Ellument and Dallas Southern Pride partner for fashion show and concert at 7 p.m. Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7050 Stemmons Freeway.

**Oct. 2: Fort Worth Teen Pride**
Youth and young adult event includes free food, entertainment, drag show, prizes and more from 6-10 p.m. at Agape MCC, 4615 E. California Parkway, Fort Worth. Free for teenagers 13-18 with valid ID. $5 suggested donation for accompanying adults. For more information contact info@RLC365.org or LGBTQSaves@gmail.com.

**Oct. 1-3: Southern Regional Ball House and Pageant Communities Health Disparities Conference: Going ‘Viral’: BHAP Communities Beat Down**


**pet of the week / Lotus**

Lotus is a proud, confident girl with a happy personality. She is a terrier mix and is about a year old. She has the curiosity and energy of a young dog and would be a great companion to take on walks, go on hikes or travel the world with. Lotus is highly intelligent and is easily motivated by both toys and food; training with Lotus should be a breeze. Like most puppies, she would benefit from daily mental and physical exercise, such as a game of hide and seek. Lotus would do best as an only dog. If you are looking for a lovable, adorable dog come visit with Lotus today.

Other pets are available for adoption from Operation Kindness, 3201 Earhart Drive, Carrollton. The no-kill shelter is open six days: Monday, 3-8 p.m.; closed Tuesday; Wednesday, 3-8 p.m.; Thursday, noon-8 p.m.; Friday, noon-5 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon-5 p.m. The cost is $110 for cats, $135 for kittens, $150 for dogs over 1 year, and $175 for puppies. The cost includes the spay/neuter surgery, microchipping, vaccinations, heartworm test for dogs, leukemia and FIV test for cats, and more. Those who adopt two pets at the same time receive a $20 discount.
October 2: Brandon Michael Fugate Memorial Golf Tournament
Golf tournament benefits the BMF Project for Search and Rescue, which provides funds and resources for search and rescue agencies and provides emotional support for families during the process from noon-6 p.m. Tee off at 1:30 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. at Riverchase Golf Course, 700 Riverchase Dr., Coppell. $100 before Sept. 28 or $125 after. For more information and to register online visit thebmfproject.org.

October 3: COSMOPOLITAN Congregation Workshops
COSMO Congregation hosts “Love Matters” workshop for women and “Keeping It 100” workshop for men from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. followed by a joint “The Bible and Homosexuality” workshop and question and answer session from 1-2 p.m. with pastors Will Horn, Dante Bowie, therapist Davion Wallace, sister Sarita Latchison and minister Stephanie Michele. Crowne Plaza Hotel, 7050 Stemmons Freeway.

October 3: 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@dfwtgladies.org or visit dfwtgladies.org.

October 3: Tarrant County Pride Parade and Street Festival
Parade begins at noon in downtown Fort Worth followed at Main Street and 9th Street featuring live entertainment, vendors, and food.

October 4: Tarrant County Pride Picnic
Family-friendly annual event from noon-6 p.m. at Trinity Park Arts Pavilion, 2401 University Dr., Fort Worth. Live entertainment, group activities, food, vendors and Pride Kids Zone.

October 4: LVLPWA Camp Outs Fundraiser
Trinity River Bears host benefit for camp outs for gay men living with or affected by HIV and AIDS at 6 p.m. at Club Reflection, 604 S. Jennings Ave. For more information contact 604 S. 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host benefit for cam...
Kathryn Omarkhail already had a lot to do ahead of the 34th Annual Tarrant County Gay Pride Week Association festivities, taking place now through Oct. 11. Aside from her duties as media director for and member of the TCGPWA board, the Fort Worth resident is the artistic director of QCinema. And she is president of her neighborhood association. And she also has a full-time job with Tarrant County.

With all her duties, she sometimes just can’t make a meeting. Even if she missed a TCGPWA meeting or two, her fellow board members evidently weren’t offended. She was named grand marshal, along with the Rev. Curtis Smith and Terry Covington.

She knew she was nominated. The thing is, she didn’t find out she won until putting the Pride guide together.

“I was shocked and surprised,” she said. “The Fort Worth, Tarrant and surrounding communities have been great to be a part of, and I humbly accept this opportunity to represent them in our celebration of gay Pride,” he said.

But Omarkhail, Smith and Covington will find plenty of time this weekend to celebrate, and a few other familiar faces will be joining in. This year, former grand marshal and Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price kicked off the celebration with the mayor guiding citizens across various neighborhoods.

Smith was just grateful for the honor. With all her duties, she sometimes just can’t find out she won until putting the Pride guide together.

“I was shocked and surprised,” she said. She couldn’t afford to be surprised for long: the TCGPWA board was tasked with choosing grand marshals and honorees, arranging the schedule, raising funds and choosing a theme. Choosing to focus on families corresponds with more recent shifts in the parade’s overall focus.

This past fall, organizers held multiple educational and entertainment sessions exploring what “family” means in the LGBT community. The Family Connections Series highlighted issues facing LGBT people of all ages, but emphasized youth in particular.

The series was initially a grassroots effort to bring the disparate LGBT community in Tarrant County together, said Tony Coronado, treasurer of the TCGPWA board.

“We wanted to bring together folks who didn’t even know we exist,” he said. “We wanted to be ahead of the curve, too, asking ‘What do our families need?’”

If any group knows what it means to be a family, it’s the thriving Fort Worth chapter of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. The 25-year old political group is a parade mainstay, said John Harse, vice president of PFLAG-Fort Worth.

“PFLAG Fort Worth chapter and its host church, First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist, serve as this year’s honorary marshals.

“It’s quite an honor,” said Ruby Harse, vice president of PFLAG-Fort Worth. The honor is important, but so is the opportunity.

“Our goal is to get people to know about PFLAG. We want people to see we’re regular folks,” Harse said. “We also want the LGBT community to see us and not just our name. It’s important for them to see us, and it’s amazing how they respond when they do.”

Another group who wants to make sure they’re seen is the Tarrant County Libertarian Party. Family may not be their overriding theme, but acceptance certainly is.

The fiscally conservative and socially accepting political group is a parade mainstay, said John

Mayor Betsy Price, above, opens Tarrant County Pride celebrations. Right, Joshua Adam Rogers with his parents and husband David Apolonio Hernandez will lead the parade. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)
Spivey, an active member and former president.

“Tarrant County Gay Pride Week is one of our ‘must attend’ events of the year. We want the thousands of attendees to know that there’s an option for their vote. Our parade float slogan is ‘Equality Through Liberty’ and we’re promoting Outright Libertarians — a Libertarian group that focuses on LGBT policy issues,” he said.

It’s worth pointing out, Spivey added, that the Libertarian Party has long embraced LGBT equality, too.

“[We were] the first political party to support LGBT rights back in 1971 and remain steadfast in protecting the rights of all individuals,” he said.

By “Coloring Our World with Pride,” organizers wanted to celebrate diversity and give a sense of what’s to come next year as well. The TCGPWA celebrates its 35th anniversary next year. And organizers want to be ahead of the curb with promoting what they’re calling a family reunion.

But for now, the focus is on the 34th parade, which includes the celebration’s other crown jewel: QCinema.

With a “new, vintage look” and new venue, Trinity River Bears host benefit for campouts for gay men living with or affected by HIV and AIDS at 6 p.m. at Club Reflection, 604 S. Jennings Ave. For more information contact Michaelkaye2003@yahoo.com.

For Oct. 4: LVLPWA Camp Outs Fundraiser
Trinity River Bears host benefit for campouts for gay men living with or affected by HIV and AIDS at 6 p.m. at Club Reflection, 604 S. Jennings Ave. Line up begins at 5 p.m. For more information e-mail Jerika Talar at Phoenyxjxo@gmail.com.

For Oct. 11: National Coming Out Day

TC Pride Schedule

- Oct. 2: Rhonda Mae’s Wall of Food show
  8 p.m. at Club Changes, 2637 E. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. Hosted by Wall of Food Committee.
  For more information contact RhondaMae1@aol.com.
- Oct. 2: Fort Worth Teen Pride
  6-10 p.m. at Agape MCC, 4815 E. California Parkway, Fort Worth.
  For more information contact info@RLC365.org or LGBTQSaves@gmail.com.
- Oct. 3: Pride Parade: “Color Our World with Family Pride”
  Line up at 10 a.m. Parade begins at noon in downtown Fort Worth.
- Oct 3: Pride Street Festival
  When the parade ends, head to the street festival with food, entertainment, vendors and more from noon-6 p.m. in General Worth Square (in front of the convention center) in downtown Fort Worth.
- Oct 4: Pride Picnic
  Family-friendly entertainment and winner of the Raina Lea Awards for community service from noon-6 p.m. at Trinity Park Arts Pavilion, 2401 University Dr., Fort Worth.
- Oct. 4: LVLPWA Camp Outs Fundraiser
  Trinity River Bears host benefit for campouts for gay men living with or affected by HIV and AIDS at 6 p.m. at Club Reflection, 604 S. Jennings Ave. For more information contact Michaelkaye2003@yahoo.com.
- Oct. 8-10: QCinema’s 17th Annual Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival
  Annual film festival showcasing the best of LGBT movies features 16 movies, including 15 premieres, receptions and an awards ceremony at Ridgelea Theater, 6052 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth.
  For tickets and more information at QCinema.org.
- Oct. 11: Pirates of Steampunk: Plundering for Charities Turn About Pageant
  Imperial Court de Fort Worth/Arlington crown Mr. and Ms. Turn About at 6 p.m. at Club Reflection, 604 S. Jennings Ave. Line up begins at 5 p.m. For more information e-mail Jerika Talar at Phoenyxjxo@gmail.com.
- Oct. 11: National Coming Out Day

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Eco-friendly Rob Schlein runs his house and car on solar power. Since installing solar panels on his house earlier this year, Schlein says he’s saving about $200 a month on gas — depending on the price of gas at the time.

The Chevy Volt can go 40–50 miles before needing recharging. As a backup, it can run on gas as well. He said he’s only used about four tanks of gas.

“Since installing solar panels, Schlein says he only has paid an electric bill twice. During those two hottest months of the year, Schlein has only owed money on an electric bill twice. As his halogen lights burn out, he’s replacing them with LED bulbs. The recommended output is 10 kilowatts of energy. As his solar power kicks in, he starts replacing the bulbs. He points out he also didn’t pay full price for his electric car. The cost of electricity and gas changes.

First, he researched solar panel manufacturers. He chose TXU’s plan that charges high rates on energy usage months, his bill went down high energy usage months, his bill went down.

High energy months, his bill went down. Down in the 60s? It uses less. Going to rain? It postpones needless watering.

A program on his computer shows Schlein what’s sucking energy and what’s working efficiently. As his halogen lights burn out, he’s replacing them with LED bulbs. The recommended output is 10 kilowatts of energy. As his solar power kicks in, he starts replacing the bulbs. He points out he also didn’t pay full price for his electric car. The cost of electricity and gas changes.

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A South Dallas neighborhood is emerging as one of the nation’s first black gayborhoods

JAMES RUSSELL | Staff Writer
russell@dallasvoice.com

A neighborhood in south Dallas bound by Fair Park, I-45 and I-30 is among the many neighborhoods in the historically blighted area beginning to garner real estate developers’ attention. Thanks to a push by civic and business leaders to provide affordable housing and more infrastructure investments such as transportation, the storefronts by Fair Park are slowly filling up.

The neighborhood is also on the verge of becoming one of the first African-American gayborhoods in the region, if not the country.

Historically, the Fair Park area has been one of the poorest in all of Dallas County. According to The Fair Park Neighborhood Study conducted by the University of Texas at Dallas, incomes in the area range from $8,600 to $35,000. The three-mile radius around the 2,000-acre Fair Park grounds is home to 26,000 residents, most of whom are African-American. But there is also a growing Hispanic population as well.

The recent infrastructure improvements, including expanded public transportation services like the bus and light rail, have spurred additional development and a renewed interest in the neighborhood.

Driving down Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, you wouldn’t know the neighborhood is burgeoning. But Kirk Myers, chief executive officer of Abounding Prosperity, has seen the area develop. In fact, his organization’s office is at one of the gateways to the gayborhood, situated at the intersection of Martin Luther King Boulevard and Interstate 45.

His vision is this: Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard could not only serve as a gateway to Fair Park — which he calls “the crown jewel of South Dallas” — but to an entire vibrant and creative neighborhood with residential and commercial appeal.

But before commercial activity there must be evidence of residential activity, Myers acknowledged. And commercial development may not even look like retail boutiques, but maybe general services instead.

For instance, the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce and Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center are already located along the boulevard. And Myers said he has already seen development across from Fair Park, including new housing developments as well as salons and restaurants.

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The main thoroughfare would be further from Fair Park itself, however, with the convergence at MLK Boulevard.

“If it happens, that’s where it’ll be,” Myers said. “We are seeing a movement where black gays in Dallas are moving into the neighborhood. It may be 10 people at its highest right now, but the neighborhood is becoming increasingly visible.”

At a recent block party ahead of the black Pride events, fairgoers didn’t seem to mind the exuberant partygoers across the street. It was late in the evening, but those attending a pre-Dallas black Pride event were contributing to the neighborhood. It may be 10 people at its highest right now, but the neighborhood is becoming increasingly visible.”

“In a neighborhood you’d think was homophobic we were accepted,” Myers said. “We were creating a vibrant environment.”

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On the verge of history

LifeWalk teams near record-breaking totals

Last year LifeWalk participants raised $592,628 for AIDS Arms and other North Texas AIDS service organizations.

This year, on the 25th anniversary of the event, LifeWalk participants want to exceed that goal. So far, teams and individuals have raised $465,814.84, but they still have time left to top last year’s total.

At least one team also wants to break the all-time LifeWalk team fundraising record for a single year of $86,359, set by Guys and Dolls in 2013. Because fundraisers have until Friday, Oct. 23 to turn in funds, both goals may just get reached.

Seven teams and three individuals have raised $10,000 or more so far. Four of those teams — Team Clover, Guys and Dolls, Green Team and Team Metro — have raised more than $20,000 each.

Surpassing last year’s half-million dollar haul isn’t an impossible feat. Consider the dollars brought by two of the top teams, Guys and Dolls and Green Team. Since 1997, Guys & Dolls has raised $835,000 total. The Green Team has raked in $260,000 in 24 years.

Another team, Team Metro, has raised more than $100,000 in its eight years. Team Metro is a LifeWalk Partner, with funds benefitting the Greg Dollener Memorial AIDS Fund.

The fundraising doesn’t end the day of the walk.

On Saturday, Oct. 10, LifeWalk hosts One Night in Bangkok at the Brick. On Tuesday, Nov. 10, LifeWalk hosts its Celebration Party, where one lucky fundraiser will be rewarded for his or her efforts.

For every thousand dollars they contribute to the total, individuals get their name in a drawing to win a week-long vacation to Maui, courtesy of the Brick.

Terry Bax with the three-year old Team Clover is one of the teams most determined to beat Guys & Dolls’ 2013 haul. They are nearly there.

After factoring in sponsorships, Bax’s three-year old Team Clover has raised $86,018 this year. This year he wants to raise $100,000, he told the Voice in an April interview.

Every dollar counts when it comes to providing services for people with HIV.

“Twenty-five years of dedicated fundraising and walking by an amazing and supportive community has resulted in crucial medical care and other social services for those HIV-positive in need. Your efforts have made the difference between someone living or dying,” said Tori Hobbs, chief development officer of AIDS Arms.

“If people hadn’t stood up and raised awareness for this long, we’d still have people dying in the streets. Every dollar makes a difference, and no gift is too small,” she said.

The 25th Annual AIDS Arms LifeWalk and festival begins at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 4 at Robert E. Lee Park 3333 Turtle Creek Blvd. Registration begins at 11 a.m.

– James Russell
thriving neighborhoods. Myers pointed to the gentrification of Cedar Springs in the 1980s and 1990s. The push to create a welcoming and safe space for LGBT people transformed a blighted area into what it is today — one of the nation’s most well known and frequented gayborhoods.

But now the high rent has pushed a lot of people to look elsewhere. If history is a guide, then where the gays go, so will more development.

“Gay history is intertwined with gentrification. We make neighborhoods beautiful,” Myers said.

The goal, if the neighborhood emerges, is to create a neighborhood in which to live, work and play.

Several LGBT African-American residents have already moved in. A rainbow flag, sitting undisturbed first turned Myers’ attention to the phenomenon.

Buster Spiller lives near Bachman Lake in North Dallas, but most of his civic activities happen in South Dallas. He’s worked with the Martin Luther King Jr. Friends of the Library and doing HIV outreach with the Dallas Urban League among others. He even briefly lived in the neighborhood in the 1993.

“That was a while back!” Spiller said. He agrees with Myers that a gayborhood could certainly emerge. But, he added, “it’s always been there, but just a lot more quiet.

“The social climate is just changing. A transgender person could go into Wal-Mart without it being a big deal,” Spiller added. “People are just freer and everything’s a lot more open.”

The neighborhood’s development is long overdue, which may explain why there hasn’t been pushback by the neighborhood. The fact that there is a real disparity between North Dallas and South Dallas may also create a more welcoming climate.

“Typically the southern sector of Dallas has gotten the short end of the stick even though the largest chunk of the city’s population lives in South Dallas,” Spiller said.

Now that apartments and newer single-family homes have popped up, Spiller gets why more African-American LGBT citizens would re-consider the Fair Park area.

“As it’s revamped, it’s the people who are going to contribute to the betterment of South Dallas,” he said.
HRC unhappy with Dallas for release of MEI score

Fairness Fort Worth voices concerns about favoritism by the organization for Texas’ larger cities

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Dallas has worked hard to improve its Municipal Equality Index score and is excited that score may be 100 this year.

Human Rights Campaign, which compiles the MEI, understands that excitement and is even proud that their report generates that sort of excitement in a growing number of cities. That’s much better than the alternative — cities that don’t care what HRC thinks, or worse, cities that don’t care how their LGBT employees are treated. And there are lots of those.

But while it’s compiling its scores and sharing preliminary reports with cities to verify, it requires an amount of confidentiality.

Dallas Ethics and Diversity Officer Cheryl Orr set off a firestorm recently when she reported to the Dallas City Council Budget, Finance and Audit Committee that the city originally scored a 96 this year, but after she submitted additional information, the four points it needed to make a perfect 100 would be added.

The problem was her report was delivered during a public meeting that was broadcast on the Internet.

The Dallas Morning News and Dallas Observer both reported the news. Dallas Voice had the information a week earlier, but was told the information was off the record, so held off on publishing it.

Fairness Fort Worth President David Henderson decried Orr’s early release of the information. “This was nothing short of a preemptive, crass marketing move to establish a first impression of superiority over other cities, citing un-vetted scores of quite a few,” he said.

He criticized the headlines “Dallas gets perfect score” and “Dallas hits 100,” saying it was not a done deal. He also criticized Dallas LGBT leaders for not calling the city out.

“Sadly, the list of Dallas’ LGBT leadership publicly disavowing this behavior is practically non-existent, tacitly approving what should be vocally denounced,” Henderson said.

HRC responded to the release of the preliminary score with a letter to Dallas City Manager A.C. Gonzalez.

“I am writing to express the serious concerns of the Human Rights Campaign related to the recent release of Dallas’ draft Municipal Equality Index score,” HRC Legal Director Sarah Warbelow wrote in the letter.

Part of the research process involves allowing cities to review the draft to provide feedback. That feedback potentially raised the Dallas score by four points. Orr reported the city partnered with Coalition for Aging LGBT to host a conference on aging and city employees formed an employee re-
source group. In addition, Dallas had never gotten points for its LGBT mayor’s task force.

But Warbelow, in her letter explained that every page was clearly labeled “confidential draft not for publication,” in bold red and added an additional warning.

While scolding the city for its release of information, Warbelow tempered her anger.

“HRC is encouraged by the pro-equality efforts Dallas has undertaken in the past year,” Warbelow wrote but also warned, “As a result of this, the MEI Team is exploring potential ways of penalizing cities for willfully breaching our terms of confidentiality.”

Orr responded that she was asked by the council for a briefing on where Dallas stands on LGBT issues. By ordinance, she’s required to deliver quarterly briefings to the council as part of the law that passed last year requiring equality throughout city government.

“It’s unfortunate the news has focused on the scores,” she said.

She said she repeated throughout the briefing that all scores were preliminary and could change until publication in November.

She and Gonzalez are writing a letter to HRC and next year, she said, she’ll postpone the briefing on the MEI score until after its public release.

Still, Henderson called the release of the preliminary scores unethical and said information about scores other cities would receive compromised their work to Dallas’ advantage.

“Those who purport to be the arbiter of equality and ethics must practice what they preach,” Henderson said.

Task Force member Erin Moore said, “We understand protocol was broken, but we’re really proud of the work Dallas has done to achieve this score.”

Inconsistencies

In addition to his outrage about the release of the scores of area cities, Henderson said he spoke extensively with HRC about how the MEI is compiled and what he called inconsistencies.

He was particularly concerned with how Texas cities were scored for their anti-bullying policies and in particular the inconsistency between how Dallas and Fort Worth were rated.

Part of the problem is that school systems in Texas are independent governmental bodies. The maps of the Dallas and Fort Worth independent school districts do not correspond to city limits. Many students who live in Dallas attend Richardson, Mesquite, Plano and even Highland Park ISD schools, and suffer from these school systems’ varying anti-bullying policies, while students in cities like Wilmer, Hutchens and Seagoville, all within DISD, benefit from Dallas anti-bullying policies.

While DISD has comprehensive, enumerated anti-bullying policies, RISD does not. Lake Highlands residents, for example, all attend Richardson schools.

Fort Worth is similarly divided. But in the last MEI, Dallas got credit for DISD’s anti-bullying policy and Fort Worth lost points because some of its residents who live in other ISDs weren’t covered by FWISD’s anti-bullying policy. And Fort Worth’s policy has become the model for school districts across the state that are serious about tackling the bullying problem.

In Texas, what can a city do about school district policy? Absolutely nothing. Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings has virtually no power over RISD policy, even though most of northeast Dallas falls into that district.

In addition, Henderson claims HRC favored large cities — Dallas and Houston — that host major fundraising events for the organization. “Scores from 2014 met with considerable mistrust for inconsistencies as yet unexplained that led to perceived favoritism of large Texas cities that are home to considerable fundraising streams,” he said.

Additional work

Even if Dallas receives a final score of 100, both Dallas and Fort Worth have work to do on a number of transgender issues. Transgender healthcare is not fully covered. Trans homelessness is a problem that both cities must address.

In addition, Dallas does not have the Human Rights Commission that Fort Worth has to oversee compliance.

Those issues may become more important in the future when marriage equality won’t be an issue.

To see the full letter HRC sent to the Dallas city manager, visit DallasVoice.com.
Pope’s first visit to the United States instills hope, raises questions for LGBT Catholics

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In his first visit to the United States since his papacy began in 2013, Pope Francis spoke before a joint session of Congress on Sept. 24. It was the first time a pope had spoken to the U.S.’s top legislative body.

Cliff Garinn was delighted by his message. “I felt inspired by his general demeanor and ability to be non-judgmental,” Garinn said. “He told Congress, ‘I’m not here to lecture you.’ His plea to [Congress to] stop fighting was refreshing and inspiring.”

Garinn, a former priest who serves with his husband Jon Anthony as co-chaplain of Dignity Dallas, a group of LGBT Catholics who worship at Cathedral of Hope, was also relieved. “I’m glad he didn’t call out same-sex marriage [in his speech before Congress],” he said.

Francis’s messages are encouraging, he has left many LGBT Catholics, as well as advocates for women’s ordination and reproductive rights activists, begging for him to be more specific. “People want him to be definitive,” Garinn said. “[The Catholic Church’s] strong on the Eucharist and Last Supper, which Francis emphasizes in his teachings,” Garinn said. What the Pope is saying, is that we’re not all sitting at separate tables, but together in communion at one table, Garinn added.

Francis once wrote the faith is a warm fire. “He wasn’t looking at the cold ashes,” Garinn pointed out.

Garinn’s sentiments are shared by many other Americans — LGBT, Catholics and Protestants. According to a study released in August by the Public Religion Research Institute, Francis himself is actually more popular than the Catholic Church as a whole.

Two-thirds, or 67 percent, of Americans have a favorable view of the pope, compared to just 56 percent who hold a favorable view of the Catholic Church. Among Catholics, approximately nine in 10 view both the pope and church favorably.

“It’s what the center called the ‘Francis effect.’” Two-thirds, or 67 percent, of Americans have a favorable view of the pope, compared to just 56 percent who hold a favorable view of the Catholic Church. Among Catholics, approximately nine in 10 view both the pope and church favorably.

“While there is only one official Roman Catholic Church, politically speaking, there are increasingly two American Catholic churches,” said Robert Jones, chief executive officer of PRRI. In his visit, Francis was addressing the two demographically different churches.

The two different churches have two different
views, too. Among the majority of Catholics who support same-sex marriage, for instance, nearly half believe the pope supports their view. Among the minority of Catholics opposed to same-sex marriage, however, 62 percent believe the pope supports their view.

Francis’s elusive views may have endeared him to many Americans, but speeches in Washington, D.C., New York City and Philadelphia had some national LGBT advocates skeptical.

Even before a private visit with Rowan County, Ky. Clerk Kim Davis, who was jailed for refusing to issue any marriage licenses after citing religious objections to same-sex marriage, some national LGBT groups expressed skepticism towards some of the pope’s past statements condemning same-sex marriage and other LGBT issues.

Statements released during his visit reinforced that skepticism.

When news broke Francis privately met with Davis but declined to meet LGBT Catholics, Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin expressed disappointment.

“We welcome Pope Francis’ advocacy for the ‘Golden Rule’, which calls on everyone to ‘do unto others as you would have them do unto you.’ But this doesn’t seem to apply to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people and our families,” she said in a statement.

Francis’ commitment to eliminating poverty and unemployment, support for comprehensive immigration reform and better stewardship of the environment, for example, should intersect with a positive view on LGBT issues. “It’s unfortunate a leader who can be so good on these issues can be so out of touch to others,” she said.

Still, Garinn, interviewed before the news broke that Davis privately met with Francis, sees the pendulum swinging in another direction.

The change is evident even in the decline in attendance at Dignity Dallas’ services.

“We're seeing a change in membership,” Garinn said, suggesting that the group’s members are returning to services at traditional Catholic churches, rather feeling they have to segregate themselves.

“It could be either LGBT Catholics are comfortable going to their own church or not going to church at all,” Garinn said. “They could simply be practicing their own communion with God.”

Pope Francis waves to the crowd during a parade Saturday, Sept. 26 in Philadelphia. The pontiff has drawn praise from the LGBT community for what some see as a more welcoming attitude toward LGBT people, but his visit with anti-gay Kentucky County Clerk Kim Davis during his trip to the U.S. has caused others to rethink their position. (AP/Matt Rourke, Pool)
Abounding Prosperity and AIDS Arms receive grant money to address HIV in minority and marginalized populations

David Taffet | Senior Staff Writer
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The Centers for Disease Control awarded 90 high impact prevention grants to AIDS service organizations in June. Only six went to organizations in Texas, and of those six only two — Abounding Prosperity and AIDS Arms — are in North Texas. The grants are intended to fund work with people who are at high risk of contracting or spreading HIV.

Thanks to the grants, some people who are negative will be able to go on PrEP, a prevention regimen that includes taking the HIV medication Truvada.

AIDS Arms will use the grant funds to target people recently released from prison. That population is at high risk of spreading HIV unless they are connected to care.

AIDS Arms’ goal is to enroll those former inmates into their system, and within a short period of time get them to a doctor to prescribe the proper regimen so there’s no interruption in their medication.

While waiting for the federal AIDS Drug Assistance Program that covers the cost of AIDS medication to kick in, AIDS Arms has temporary funding options.

“That’s what some of your LifeWalk money is for,” said LifeWalk Director Tori Hobbs.

Abounding Prosperity is using its funding to target African-American men and Latino and African-American trans women.

Kirk Myers, AP founder and CEO, said the grant is part of a new national prevention strategy that focuses on following the epidemic. And the epidemic, he said, is spreading most rapidly among minorities across the South.

Myers listed a number of reasons for that conservative states refusing Medicaid expansion, thus preventing many people from seeking medical care; homophobia; church doctrine that stigmatizes and encourages shame, guilt and self-hating.

The project uses a multi-layered approach targeting high-risk minority populations using social networking strategies, social media and tangible incentives.

“Our approach is primarily testing,” Myers said. “We already have a robust testing program.”

AP is charged with identifying at least 24 new infections per year. Since the grant period began this summer, Myers said, they’ve already found eight, and during a normal year, AP identifies 70-100 people who test positive.

Tampa Stepney, AP associate director, calls herself the mother of the agency.

While her main position is quality assurance, making sure grant money is spent within the terms of the grant, she described what she does for the partners of HIV-positive individuals or those engaging in risky behaviors, Myers said, there are a limited number of slots for those who are uninsured or underinsured to get on PrEP.

Myers said trans women of color are also at high risk for HIV for a number of reasons. Many are unemployed or underemployed, and their inability to obtain identification that matches their presentation contributes to that problem. Many trans people lose family and friends when they transition and, as a result, become homeless.

Myers said some have no other options for survival than engaging in sex work. And sharing needles for silicone or hormone injections adds to the problem of HIV infection for some trans women, he added.

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I was invited to capture what Pride means to me. For many that is an easy request. It means solidarity, social justice, becoming more visible, finding a voice, being with a larger community with a similar story to commiserate and celebrate.

I remember my very first Pride parade many, many years ago in Austin. The thing I remember most is the continual unfolding of the sense of being “not alone.” It was wonderful. I felt more courageous in expressing my truth.

And yet, I can struggle. I struggle with special days set aside to really “be who we are,” or to “be recognized and celebrated.” It smacks a little of tokenism and I don’t want a day, I want every day, and I want that for every person — that steady trickle of acceptance, celebration, being seen and heard.

I want Pride to have a shelf life, for every group that finds themselves labeled in any way.

Poet David Whyte has written: “Courage is a word that tempts us to think outwardly, to run bravely against opposing fire, to do something under besieging circumstance, and perhaps, above all, to be seen to do it in public, to show courage; to be celebrated in story, rewarded with medals, given the accolade, but a look at its linguistic origins leads us in a more interior direction and toward its original template, the old Norman French, Coeur, or heart.

“Courage is the measure of our heartfelt participation with life, with another, with a community, a work, a future. To be courageous, is not necessarily to go anywhere or do anything except to make conscious those things we already feel deeply and then to live through the unending vulnerabilities of those consequences. To be courageous is to seat our feelings deeply in the body and in the world: to live up to and into the necessities of relationships that often already exist, with things we find we already care deeply about: with a person, a future, a possibility in society, or with an unknown that begs us on and always has begged us on. Whether we stay or whether we go — to be courageous is to stay close to the way we are made.”

For me Pride parades are an invitation to the much deeper soul work of “staying close to the way we are made,” and in so doing, getting closer to the way those around us are made. It’s a clarion call to relationships that is deep and vulnerable work.

Pride is an external, embodied ritual that will hopefully lead us to the internal ritual of recognizing our own beauty and worth. The challenging part is that it asks us not only to do that for ourselves and those who understand our stories because they share some piece of our story, but to also cast the net wider and see the same beauty and worth in those beyond our stories, including those who protest and want to suppress our stories.

The Pride event is a way to practice our courage, so that when we step away from that space into the larger space of the larger world we do so with our whole heart and “heartfelt participation with life, with another, with a community, a work, a future.” It takes great courage to live this way.

Stay close to the way you are made. Have courage. Happy Pride to all of creation in every day.

The Rev. S. David Wynn Sr. is lead pastor of Agape MCC Church in Fort Worth. He has a Masters of Theological Studies degree from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and is a shamanic practitioner and reiki master.

Feedback

Tents interfere with enjoying the parade

I really enjoyed the [2015 Alan Ross Texas Freedom] Parade, but it took a long time to find a spot to watch the parade because of the tents up and down the street allowing only their party — no matter how small — to see the parade.

This has gotten totally out of hand in the last couple of years. It doesn’t represent the message of inclusivity and equality of the parade when the city or the tavern owners guild allows people to claim space to see the parade.

Most people with tents weren’t even watching the parade. They were sitting around playing with their phones, playing beer pong, or the tents were almost completely empty but still had “do not enter” caution tape draped around their claimed space. I have a few pictures showing this.

I have never seen any other city allowing this during a parade. These are not the businesses that sent up the space between their business and the street I am addressing (to make a few extra bucks, which is also sleazy). Evidently anyone can set up a tent along the route and keep anyone else out as long as you show up early and have an obnoxious tent.

This is wrong. Tom Cunningham, via email
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Building relationships has helped Phillip Murrell rise quickly in the real estate profession. And he has a lot of insights into what you should know about the market.
Defining Homes

Phillip Murrell has always been filled with what he calls “an entrepreneurial spirit.” That’s why he set out to build his own business and his own brand in real estate. And in just three years, he has done just that. He was Keller Williams’ Rookie of the Year in 2012, and this past spring was voted Best Realtor in Dallas Voice’s Readers Voice Awards.

Born in Houston, Murrell moved to Michigan as a child, but returned to Texas to attend Baylor University. He moved to Dallas to work in marketing with SJR Communications, then started his real estate career with Keller Williams, before joining Dave Perry-Miller & Associates in January. It was the move to Dallas that helped him get on the right track.

“I grew up as a conservative Baptist boy, and then I went to Baylor,” Murrell says. “But when I got to Dallas, my life opened up, and I started growing into my own skin. I was able to really start making friends and building true relationships, and that lets me keep it real. It is that keeping it real aspect that helps me build trust with my clients.”

Murrell started in real estate at just the right time. Three years ago, what had been a depressed market was really beginning to rebound, and he was able to put his skills, his talents and his personality to good use and grow with the market.

“I have only been a Realtor for three years, but I have already had some repeat clients,” he says. “That’s because people who bought three years ago already have a lot of equity in their home, because of where the market was then compared to where it is now. And a lot of people have already recouped what they lost [in terms of equity] when the market went down.”

Murrell specializes in properties in the Uptown, Turtle Creek and Oak Lawn neighborhoods, but he noted that more and more LGBT couples are having children, and are looking beyond the traditional gayborhoods for their homes.

“I do have more and more clients who are having kids now,” Murrell says. “That’s not new, of course, but it is becoming more prevalent. A lot more gays and lesbians are looking beyond the usual neighborhoods when they are looking to buy a home. They are more concerned about the schools and finding a neighborhood that’s best for their kids.”

For many, that means looking at suburbs. “I had a couple just recently who wanted me to find them a home in Frisco,” says Murrell. “I told them I can find them a house, but that’s not my area of expertise. You can’t be an expert in every area, and that goes back to having a honest relationship with my clients.”

It’s not just couples with kids that are looking outside the gayborhoods. “I help gay people move everywhere now,” he says. “Overall, there is a very optimistic mood. And younger gays aren’t just looking for the gay areas. They are looking for homes with real character, they’re looking for treed neighborhoods.”

When it comes to Oak Lawn, Murrell has some tips for homeowners looking to sell, as well as those looking to buy. Pointing out that there are a lot of older homes in Oak Lawn, Murrell suggests, “It’s usually a good idea to do some upgrades” when you’re getting ready to put your home on the market. “A lot of people are looking for homes that are move-in-ready,” he says. “Besides, people don’t always have the vision [to see the potential in a house], so it’s not a bad idea to spend a little money so you can make more money on a house.”

Because he “flips” houses himself — buying a house that needs repairs, remodeling it and then reselling for a profit — Murrell offers some insight into what it takes to make a house sellable, and some hints for others who want to get on the flipping wagon.

“The thing is, you make the money when you buy the house,” he says. “That means that you have to know up front what needs to be done, how much it will cost to get it done, and how much you need to sell it for to make a profit. You have to always be thinking about the resale. Know the prices of things — can we get this much done in that length of time, and can we resell for this price?”

Don’t skip the design process, Murrell counsels. “Know where to put the walls, how to select the right tile. There are places to save money, and then there are places not to worry about saving money. Anything that involves the structural integrity of the home, don’t skimp on those. If you have wood floors, you need to make sure those are perfect.”

There are ways to save, however. For instance, subway tile is very popular but not expensive. “The trick is to make sure it is installed perfectly,” he says. It also helps to know the area — what’s hot, and what’s going to be hot. “The market is going up again, so it’s getting harder to buy properties [to flip] in the really hot areas, because the prices are going up. Instead of trying to buy in an A area, buy in a B area that’s on its way to being an A area.”

Flipping homes in Oak Lawn is a way of keeping alive the unique character of the neighborhood, and a way of helping the LGBT community that has long seen Oak Lawn as “home base.”

“It’s awesome to watch how fast Oak Lawn is changing,” Murrell says. “I hate to see some of the older places being torn down, but at the same time, that has to happen sometimes. We have a really walkable community now, with developments like ilume. I hope a lot of the developers coming into the area will continue to build that kind of mixed use community. Oak Lawn is becoming an even more affordable and urbanite place to live.”

— Tammye Nash

You can contact Phillip Murrell at phillip@philliprealestate.com or 989-859-2275.
Dallas’ gay Pride parade may have been in September, but Pride in North Texas is far from over. In addition to Tarrant County’s planned Pride events (see story Page 8), Dallas Black Gay Pride Weekend continues. And while some question whether “Pride” is even worth doing anymore, organizers of black Pride feel it provides an important service — not as a separate event, but a supplementary one.

“Black Pride often [focuses] on matters of HIV and AIDS, which are still so important in the black community,” says Jalenzski Brown, who heads the Resource Center’s United Black Ellum (U-BE) project. “There are parties but some serious things, too. We decided to add some artsy events — and we still want to do things where people can get something free.”

Events that U-BE is co-sponsoring with Dallas Southern Pride include everything from a skate party show to a barbecue. It kicks off Friday with a fashion show at the host hotel, the Crowne Plaza Market Center. That’s followed on Saturday with a mini-conference and workshops with topics like “What is love?” and “Polyamory and team building.” Even though these events technically aren’t free, “scholarships are available for those who can’t afford to attend, so they can get it for free,” Brown says.

Sunday, a “unity” barbecue at Bachman Lake — hosted by several different groups — is “sort of like this year’s festival at Reverchon Park, only it’s free,” Brown says. There’s also a roller skating party (again, free, including admission and skate rental).

There are more traditional “circuit” events, though, Brown promises.

“Lil Kim is in town performing at Gas Monkey, and DJ Rude Boy, a Dallas DJ will be spinning. And the straight ally Beat King — a rapper from Houston — is performing at The Brick Friday,” Brown says.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

To see a complete schedule of events (official and unofficial), visit DallasSouthernPride.com.
Ya gotta have heart

Turtle Creek Chorale opens 36th season with renewed energy and purpose

When Bruce Jaster, the executive director of the Turtle Creek Chorale, heard the slogan for the men’s choir’s upcoming concert Heartland, it brought a smile to his face. “America Never Sounded So Good,” he repeats. “I’m totally enamored of that. The music is across-the-board stunning.”

There’s something about the slogan that subtly hints at the recent victory for gay rights this summer on the constitutionality of marriage equality, though Jaster dismisses that as its intent. Yes, there is a new sense of pride in the gay community that we have collectively earned an important degree of widespread respect. But Jaster thinks in this case the pride is more personal: The chorale has rarely been better.

It’s a sling-shot reversal from a year ago, when the group’s artistic director stepped down and prospects were looking anemic. But a celebratory 35th anniversary concert led by returning former artistic director Tim Seelig, the appointment of both Jaster and new A.D. Sean Baugh and tremendous enthusiasm among the singers and audiences has energized the chorale in tremendous ways. Season ticket subscriptions have shot through the roof; membership has increased (an astonishing 180 live singers will appear at the inaugural concert); and best of all, the music is great.

Jaster credits Baugh’s leadership for a lot of it, especially the opening concert of the season. Called Heartland, it features everything from folk to standards to jazz to showtunes, with special appearances by the Lone Star Wind Orchestra and the TCC’s Partners in Harmony, who will balloon the performers in Act 2 to 250, including about 40 women. And, as always, there will be a sense of humor that goes over the top … but shouldn’t offend anyone. (The opening number, “This Land Is Your Land,” will feature a pageant that only the minds of the chorale would conceive.)

Heartland will kick off the full season at CPH (followed by Home in December, Heroes in March/April and Heartstrings in June), while a soon-to-be-announced “second season” offers a series of smaller concerts at venues across Dallas-Fort Worth.

Jaster is a cheerleader, no doubt, but it’s rare for arts groups to have such a sunny outlook nowadays. This season marks the renewed emphasis on the chorale’s longstanding Sterling Circle membership, which offers VIP treatment for contributors above and beyond ticket sales (including two free tickets to the second season). And to hear Jaster tell it, that’s well worth the investment.

“When I attended the first rehearsal in mid-August, I promise, they could have done a concert the next night,” he insists. “They were that good.”

ARNOlD WAyNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

TCC: HEARTLAND
City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. Oct. 9–10, 7:30 p.m.
TurtleCreekChorale.com
For LGBT Texans and their allies, Feb. 26, 2014 was noteworthy if not revolutionary. On that day, San Antonio federal judge Orlando Garcia ruled that Texas’ ban on same-sex marriage was unconstitutional. While Judge Garcia stayed his ruling pending appeal, it was a watershed moment for out Dallas filmmaker Rebecca Rice.

“My partner and I looked at each other and said, ‘My God! We’re going to have marriage equality in Texas!’” Rice recalls. “I honestly thought that it would never get here. I thought it would move on from state to state to state for years, maybe for decades.”

Rice, who earned a graduate degree in filmmaking at SMU, immediately knew that she had to suspend these moments in time. She feared that once same-sex marriage was legalized, the struggle to achieve it might begin to fade from the collective memory. Rice felt the best way to memorialize the changing tide was to film first-person interviews with LGBT couples about their relationships and pursuit of marriage. The result of her efforts is the documentary *We Do*, which will screen at Fort Worth’s Q Cinema next Saturday. (For reviews of several other films at the festival, including the opening night movie, see sidebar, Page 29.)

“I love all that history. I thought it was a chunk of time that was going to be lost,” Rice says. “The younger generation would take [marriage equality] for granted. They are going to think we’ve always had these rights. I wanted to preserve something so we won’t forget — to document what happened and what people had to do.”

Rice’s film profiles three same-sex couples: Leta and Anne Kalfas of Denver, Mariel and Viviana Baluja of Austin, and Michael and Michael Serrecchia-Robinson of Dallas. The film also features an interview with Jim Mitulski, a former pastor at the Cathedral of Hope. Rice’s original idea was to keep the film brief and limited in scope. After completing the first interview with Mariel and Viviana, though, the project took on a life of its own.

“I originally intended to do a 20-minute documentary,” Rice says. “I just wanted to get people’s stories about getting married. I had no idea how much they were going to share and how rich their stories were and how much bigger this was going to be in terms of their stories.”

Rice’s second interview was with Leta and Anne Kalfas. The fact that the couple were starting a family together (Anne was pregnant at the time and has since given birth to their son Apollo), gave the film a new dimension. Jaxson, Leta’s biological son from a previous relationship and half-brother to Apollo (the couple used the same donor’s sperm), also participated in the project.

“They had an equally compelling story, but a little bit different,” Rice says. “They had the sup-
port of both of their families. The angle was when Leta began talking about when gays and lesbians have children — that it’s so intentional and never accidental. There are so many things that we have to think about in life that straight people don’t. That’s a big one. Having children takes a lot of effort if you are LGBT.”

Rice’s introduction to the film’s third couple was a gift of sorts from her longtime friend Donatelle Mascari. She insisted that Rice meet “the Michaels,” as they are known — one of whom, Natelle Mascari. She insisted that Rice meet “the Michaels,” as they are known — one of whom, Serrecchia, shares his coming out story in New York City at the time of Stonewall. It was as if the final piece of the puzzle had fallen into place.

“I went over to their house — a complete stranger that they had never met,” Rice says. “They let me interview them. They told me their story. I felt their story was amazing. I feel each of these couples embodies a different decade. It overlaps in our collective gay and lesbian history. It adds to the story arc of what we’ve been through to get to this point in time.”

While the new documentary Out to Win offers a survey course on the topic of LGBT athletes, Game Face — which opens Q Cinema’s 17th season on Thursday — is more specialized, focusing on just two. Belgian cinematographer Michiel Thomas, directing his first feature, follows lesbian transgender mixed martial arts fighter Fallon Fox and gay college basketball player Terrence Clemens as they compete for championships and face their biggest struggle: coming out.

Fox is older, having a daughter in high school. Her daughter is supportive but her own parents rejected her when she transitioned, leading her to consider suicide. Professionally, she thought she was in the clear when California and Florida licensed her after she was honest on her applications; sore losers, prejudiced fans and a general lack of understanding made things more difficult. She got support from LGBT organizations and her friend Kye Allums, who was the first transgender college basketball player.

Clemens had a rough time in high school when a gay rumor led to his close friends and teammates abandoning him. He switched schools, fell in with a bad crowd and wound up spending eight months in prison. Eventually he got into Northeastern Oklahoma A&M, a two-year college whose basketball team won the regional championship in his second year. NBA player Jason Collins came out about the time Clemens needed a role model and mentoring, and gave him good advice.

Between having cameras around and taking advantage of clips from a long list of credited sources, the filmmaker was able to assemble comprehensive stories of the two subjects. We don’t get into Clemens’ ‘love life, but Fox finds a girlfriend in the midst of the firestorm surrounding her.

As Fallon and Terrence were helped by those who came before them, they are committed to helping those who will follow, until the whole thing becomes a non-issue. This film will reach many young people they won’t get to touch personally. (Oct. 8, 6 p.m.)

In the Grayscale, there aren’t 50 shades of gray in this Chilean drama, but it’s repeatedly made clear that not everything in life is black or white.

This is a story of one of the Qs in LGBTQ. Bruno (Francisco Celhay) is a 30-something architect who takes a break from marriage and raising a 10-year-old son, moves into his grandfather’s workshop and takes some me time. (He says “I want to be alone” more than Garbo.)

Hired to design some kind of landmark by the kind of guy who gives rich people a bad name, Bruno is paired with Fer (Emilio Edwards), a historian and tour guide in his late 20s who is openly gay. Although it takes a while, Bruno and Fer come together faster than Bruno’s projects; but Bruno’s still not sure that’s what he wants. When Fer says “I hate happy endings,” it could be an omen.

Directed by first-timer Claudio Marcone, In the Grayscale develops at a slow pace that’s sometimes appropriate, sometimes annoying. Some plot elements, such as why the Santiago native would need a full-time consultant, are strained or fuzzy; but the acting is good, the basic story plausible (if frustrating, since we’re likely to side with Fer in wishing Bruno would make up his damn mind already), and the men have a hot sex scene about halfway through. Approach with reasonable expectations. In the Grayscale will deliver. (Oct. 8, 8:30 p.m.)

— Steve Warren

All screenings at the Ridglea Theater.
Light the lights!

Aurora, the dazzling display of light and the arts, returns to Downtown

When Aurora first shone its way into the Arts District two years ago, the one-night-only event ended up being one of the defining moments in the neighborhood’s history and really helped cement Downtown as a place where things happen after the businessmen exit the skyscrapers. Now it’s back for an encore.

The light, sound and performance display, which also includes 80 participating artists from across the country, turns the AT&T Performing Arts Center into an open-air urban playground. On Oct. 16 from 7 p.m.–2 a.m., the event takes over 19 city blocks and will attract 30,000-plus attendees to see performances from the Dallas Museum of Art to the Crow Collection of Asian Art to the Winspear Opera House and everywhere in between. And it’s free ... though you can purchase VIP access to a lounge, DJ and after-party (or just the after-party alone).

— Arnold Wayne Jones

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Rice has recently screened the film at festivals in Austin and Palm Springs and at special events. Two Dallas screenings bookended the week of June 26 when SCOTUS announced its ruling. Audience response has been positive, and Rice is enjoying the fruits of her labor.

“It’s not like, ‘Hollywood, here I come!’” Rice jokes. “This film is a little snapshot film. It’s going to speak to certain people. It’s going to be important to our community. It feels similar to finishing graduate school. It feels like I accomplished something I wanted to do.”

Despite documenting the matrimony of others, Rice and her partner Rose have yet to marry themselves. They do, however, have a plan.

“[We] want to get married on our 10th anniversary,” Rice says. “We don’t have any children besides two cats. They don’t get any inheritance rights. I think because we put all our financial and legal ducks in a row, we have the luxury of waiting until it’s a romantic moment for us.”
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Gay Latinas get hip-hop treatment in Cara Mia’s ‘Blu’

Here’s a story you don’t hear told every day: A queer Latina couple raising a family in a society ravaged by gang violence, told in the form of an epic poem flavored with hip-hop. But that’s exactly what Cara Mia is taking on with Blu, a play by San Antonio native Virginia Grise. Rene Moreno directs the mix of modern musical and spoken word.

DEETS: Latino Cultural Center, 2600 Live Oak St. CaraMiaTheatre.org.

Live ‘La Vida Ricky’ at Gexa concert

From Menudo cutie to daytime hottie to international pop sensation to gay icon, Ricky Martin has been in the public eye (and he’s an eyeful) for decades. And he hasn’t slowed down. The guy who popularized Spanglish and electrified dancefloors with his sultry moves on songs like “Livin’ La Vida Loca” and “She-Bangs” is in concert Sunday. If you were lucky enough to win our ticket giveaway, you already have your plans in place, but there’s still time to get seats to what may be the last big outdoor concert of the summer season. (Opening acts are Wisin and Ha’ash.)


Denise Lee sings the blues ... again

Is it typecasting or the role of a lifetime? Frankly, we don’t care — we just know that, even though M. Denise Lee has portrayed Billie Holiday in two prior productions of Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar & Grill, we’re happy she’s back in a new version at Jubilee Theatre about the final concert by the legendary blues singer and tragic figure. This is the same role that won Audra McDonald her fifth Tony. Eh. We still prefer to see Denise in it.

DEETS: Jubilee Theatre, 506 Main St., Fort Worth. JubileeTheatre.org.
ARTSWEEK

THEATER

The Droll. A world premiere, about a world where theater is illegal, launches Undermain’s 22nd season. Undermain Theatre, 3200 Main St. Through Oct. 17. Undermain.org.


Matilda The Musical. Tony Award-winning musical, based on the Roald Dahl children’s classic, about a resilient little girl — sort of a Dickensian Annie. Final weekend. Reviewed this week. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. ATTPAC.org.


The Mountaintop. Play about the final hours of Martin Luther King Jr. Studio Theatre of the Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through Nov. 15. DallasTheaterCenter.org.


COMEDY

Dysfunctional Divas. Steven Jay Crabtree’s many personalities come out in his one-man show about women. Pocket Sandwich Theatre, 5400 E. Mockingbird Lane. Oct. 2–3 at 11:15 p.m. $12 (plus one food item).

RIPPED | ‘Creep,’ Dallas composer/author/actor Donald Fowler’s world premiere musical about Jack the Ripper, opens this weekend at WaterTower Theatre. (Photo by Kelsey Leigh Ervi)

FINE ART

N.S. Harsha: Sprouts, reach in to reach out. A site-specific mural, the first in Dallas for the Indian artist, transforms the main corridor of the DMA. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Feb. 21, 2016. DMA.org.


COMMUNITY

18th Annual Dallas Black Gay Pride Weekend. The annual Pride celebration, which includes numerous parties, celebrities, cookouts, pool parties and more, many divided into “for him” and “for her” categories. For a complete schedule, visit DallasSouthernPride.com.

FRIDAY 10.02

COMMUNITY


Panoptikon. The weekly retro disco dance party, presented by Lord Byron. Red Light, 2911 Main St. Doors 9 p.m.

DINING

Burgers & Burgundy. The 7th annual foodie fundie for DIFFA. Gardens of the Seanor Estate, 4637 Meadowwood Road. Oct. 2. 6:30–9:30 p.m. $85–$150. DIFFA Dallas.org.

Taste of the Anatole. Three-night event includes world tasting, grand tasting, workshops, brunch and after-parties at SER in the Hilton Anatole. TasteOfTheAnatole.com.

HALLOWEEN


Dark Hour Haunted House. Gay-owned chills attraction with multiple sinister-themed areas. 701 Taylor Drive, Plano. Open select nights throughout Halloween. 7 p.m.–midnight. $26 and up. DarkHourHauntedHouse.com.

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Stage review: ‘Matilda’

The history of kid-lit (and adult literature, for that matter) is populated by stories of neglect, privation and resilience. It makes sense: There’s no drama, really, if the tyke dies at 6 of malaria. From Oliver Twist to Harry Potter, the heroes of these tales are often young boys, but Matilda, the protagonist of novelist Roald Dahl’s tale, is a scrappy little girl. (She’s like a British Little Orphan Annie.)

I wasn’t familiar with the story going into Matilda The Musical, except what I picked up through cultural osmosis over the years. But the show, now at the Winspear, seems to combine a dystopian society where learning is frowned upon, reading is for suckers, TV is the height of human achievement and cruelty goes unjudged except by sensitive souls. (All are typical Dahl exaggerations of actual life the 1960s.) In other words, this is kid-lit that doesn’t really play to kids. And clocking in at two hours 45 minutes, is past the bedtime of a few critics, as well.

I don’t quite get the audience of Matilda, which is plot-thick, long and rangy. Personally, I didn’t pick up until midway through Act 2 that Matilda possessed telekinesis, and I didn’t understand why the school librarian was so rapt in her storytelling (the way children usually are of avuncular figures like Grandpa in The Princess Bride). And anytime you litter a stage with a half-dozen pre-adolescent voices pitched so only a dog can hear, you’re playing with acoustic fire. (At least half the lyrics sung by the young ensemble are as garbled and unintelligible as Cockney rhyming slang.)

But even with its shortcomings and “wherefore?” puzzles, ultimately Matilda The Musical works in some clever and unexpected ways. The set resembles a set of playroom building blocks; the costumes are Mod London-Meets-Dickensian BDSM; and best of all are the actors, including the little dynamo as Matilda (a rotating slate of young actresses) and Bryce Ryness, dragging it up as the hatchet-bodied headmistress Miss Trunchbull. Unacknowledged cross-dressing villains? It’s like a British panto gussied up with steampunk attitude. Adults should enjoy that more than the kids.

— Arnold Wayne Jones
Cassie Nova

Cassie’s in a mood this week! She riffs on the death of modern civility

“Good evening, idiot hookers.” That is one of my favorite lines from the new show Scream Queens. Not to spoil anything, but what they did to Ariana Grande I have thought about doing to her a thousand times. Oh my Gaga, that poor deaf Taylor Swift girl. If you haven’t watched it yet, you just gotta. It’s so awful … but in a good way.

First off, to the people who have decided to turn smoking into some kind of performance piece, we get it, you vape. I don’t have a problem with vaping or people who vape if you show common courtesy while doing so. I have a problem with these asshats that use these super-vaping things that make you look like you are attached to a fog machine on a dance floor in hell. One guy in JR.’s last week was creating so much damn “vapor” that it looked like a smoke bomb had gone off, and it smelled like Red Bull. He was so proud of how cool he thought he looked. Not only did he just look douche, but between his Red Bull-scented vape and his Axe body spray, I thought I was going to throw up.

To the people that walk to their car in a busy parking lot, get in their car, start it, put it in reverse and then decide to sit and stare at your phone: Go to hell. Go directly to hell. Do not pass go. Do not collect $200. This has happened to me three times in the past two months. When did people become so damn self-absorbed? They have such a lack of empathy for their fellow man. I swear, I was about to have a Fried Green Tomatoes moment and ram their car and their stupid face into oblivion. It is people like those assholes that would benefit from the three-day waiting period to buy a gun. Usually by the third day I’m not mad anymore. Usually.

To the people that make TV shows, can you please just end the show before it just gets ridiculously stupid? I am talking to you, Under the Dome and Lost. So many shows start off strong and then, because they do well in the ratings and make money, they think, let’s see how long we can drive this cash train. I would rather have one or two strong, well-written seasons than 10 seasons of watered-down, confusing crap. I loved Smallville, but c’mon, Clark should have flown by season three. The last few seasons were just painful, but I watched them because I am a loyal idiot viewer.

I also have an unhealthy amount of rage when it comes to electronic devices not working right. When my DVR or Netflix puts up the logo saying that “signal has been lost,” or “please re-enter password,” I want to punch someone in the throat. Slow WiFi when I am trying to read something gossipy or important makes me feel like an angry cartoon character turning red and blowing steam out of my ears. Don’t get me started on the stop and start action of a YouTube video I am trying to show someone. Even the word “buffering” make me want to scream and rip the eyes off a teddy bear. I fear one day they will find my body with one hand clutching my chest and the other hand holding a smashed phone. Damn you devil devices!

To you wonderfully enthusiastic patrons that come and watch a drag show: I adore you, but if you spend the entire show trying to video the performances on your ghetto-ass phone like you are a cameraman filming the Olympics, please quit it. We see you trying to film “up” the girls’ dresses and we do not find it amusing. If you are up dancing in the aisles, at least tip the girl that has you on your feet. If you are drunk, broke and in the way, please stop it before I have to rip you a new one on the microphone. I can make you go from “fun guy dancing” to “dumb drunk ass-hole” with one witty quip. So don’t test me. The amateur show is every Thursday night.

While we are on the subject of being a good audience member, please don’t move the chairs. That isn’t your living room so don’t rearrange the furniture. I cannot tell you how many bruises I have gotten from walking into a moved chair or table. That spotlight is bright, so we are nearly blind — hell, some of us are actually blind. You wouldn’t rearrange the furniture at a blind person’s house. That is just mean.

There is a door outside our dressing room that goes out to the patio of Station 4. A door, like all doors, that opens and closes. So to the people that like to stand outside said door and act all but hurt when the door opens and hits them. I have one thing to say: Move bitch get out tha way, get out tha way bitch get out tha way! It’s a freaking door!

When my husband and I go to a restaurant, the server always ask if we are paying together or separately. I always say together — no big deal. But when they bring the check they always hand it to my husband. Do I look poor or something? Do I look like I need someone to take care of me? So because he is the masculine one in the relationship he automatically pays. If that is how independent women feel on the regular, I feel you ladies. It’s annoying.

Oh, and one last thing. If someone is nice enough to book you to do a paid show, and instead of showing up you send a message 11 minutes before curtain, you are an ass. Not only did you miss out on a great opportunity, but you screwed someone else out of a booking with a check. I could have called someone else in. No tea, all shade. If you think I am talking about you, I am. Sometimes a bitch gotta put a bitch on blast. No hard feelings, I just wish people would handle things differently sometimes.

I apologize for being such a Debbie Downer this week, but it feels good to vent and get some shit off my chest. God, reading back over this I come across I also have an unhealthily amount of rage when it comes to electronic devices not working right. When my DVR or Netflix...
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Making the SCENE the week of Oct. 2–8:

• Alexandre's: Girls Night Out with Peggy Honea on Friday. Jason Huff on Saturday. Chris Chism on Wednesday.

• BJ's NXS!: Jada Pinkett Fox moves the amateur hot body contest to Wednesdays.


• Changes: Patrons invited to join Changes at Tarrant County Pride as part of the last float in the parade on Saturday at noon.

• Club Reflection: Texas Gay Rodeo Association meeting at 2 p.m. and cookout at 4 p.m. on Sunday. PWA Show at 7 p.m. on Sunday.

• Dallas Eagle: United Court of the Lone Star Empire candidate shows Friday and Saturday from 7-10 p.m. Women in Leather social night on Friday at 9 p.m. Dallas Bears and Leather Knights club night on Saturday. Dallas Girls of Leather monthly meeting on Sunday at 5 p.m.

• Hidden Door: Mr. Hidden Door contest at 7 p.m. on Saturday.

• Marty's: Recording artist Fly Young Red and twerking contest with $300 prize on Friday.

• Rainbow Lounge: Tarrant County Gay Pride show at 9 p.m. on Saturday.

• Round-Up Saloon: Dance lessons at 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

• S4: Out & Equal party at 6 p.m. on Wednesday.

• Sue Ellen's: Panty Raid on Friday. Cherry Bomb on Saturday. Kathy & Bella and Barefoot Hippies on Sunday.

• Zippers Hideaway: Judy Chamberlain on Thursday.

To view more Scene photos, go to DallasVoice.com/category/photos. Scene Photographer: Kat Haygood.
Paul at Zippers.

Friends partying at Woody's Sports & Video Bar.

Getting ready at Woody's Sports & Video Bar.

The friendly staff at Cedar Springs Tap House.

Dana and Kellye at Sue Ellen's.

Marissa DeAmour, left, and Valerie Jackson, right, performing at The Rose Room in S4.

Friends' night out at TMC: The Mining Company.
No Tie Dinner for ASD

Above: Don, Marie, Angel and Don.
Left: Cameron and Darlene.
Below: Crissy, Rob and Deanna.

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Bi Songs by ...  

Solution on page 37

Across
1 Olympic award for Ireen Wüst
6 Supporter of Julia Morgan?
10 They were under Hoover
14 Adul hallmark
15 Global rights org.
16 Drumbeat start
17 They’re green when you pluck them
18 “I Kissed A Girl” singer
20 Non-Judy garland
21 “I’ve ___ had!”
23 Annoyances
24 Meat that may be tender
26 *With 45-Across, “Baby Blue” singer
27 The “T” in T.E. Lawrence
29 Doesn’t feel up
30 Old PC program
33 Poe visitor
34 Miss, to Mauresmo
35 Leafy veggie
36 Ball of film
37 Cold-cocks
38 “Art of Love” poet
39 Umlaut pair, in Rilke’s language
40 Shaft output
41 Tee shot for Rosie Jones
42 That, south of the border
43 Abel’s assassin
44 Word after bottom
45 “See 26-Across
46 Raunchy British sitcom
47 Gets to second base, perhaps
50 Comic strip dog
51 Family magazine
54 *Pete, who sang “Rough Boys”
56 Full of the latest
58 The African Queen author
59 Early Ron Howard role
60 More cunning
61 First of the Democratic ass drawers
62 Fairy godmother’s stick
63 Former NFL player Tuao

Down
1 Edifice complex
2 Novelist Wiesel
3 /*Cool For The Summer” singer
4 Greeting to Maria
5 L of GLAAD
6 V ehicles for some dykes
7 Flair
8 Literary rep.
9 Erections with ribbons wrapped around them
10 “Coming Clean” singers ___ Day
11 “Terri!”
12 “To be” to Henri
13 “Over my dead body!” and more
19 Small shooters shoot them off
22 Tennessee Williams twosome
25 Black pussy cats, e.g.
26 Leaves at the altar
27 It may be rough
28 Circles overhead
29 “Bicoastal” singer Peter
30 “John, I’m Only Dancing” singer
31 Kind of dandr
32 Passover dinner
34 Richly deserve
35 Land of Margaret Cho’s ancestors
37 Place to exam someone’s dinghy
41 Man-to-man, to Sue Wicks
43 Disney frames
44 Crime-fighting org.
45 “Tonight’s The Night (Gonna Be Alright)” singer Jackson
46 Changed from a pair to a threesome
47 Owner of a gay dog on South Park
48 Cicero’s garment
49 Some of Mary’s lambs
50 Way to come
52 Web surfer
53 Supermodel Banks
55 MPG monitor
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