Ride 'Em
Cowboys, cowgirls head to Dallas for Texas Tradition Rodeo
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IF YOU WANT A SINGING CAREER, STAY AWAY FROM SECONDHAND SMOKE.

Ellie, Age 57
Her partner, Karen Florida

Ellie’s severe asthma attacks were triggered by secondhand smoke at work. She and her partner have to live with its effects forever. If you or someone you know wants free help to quit smoking, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

#CDCTips
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FWISD superintendent signs new guidelines protecting trans students

Fort Worth Independent School District Superintendent Kent Scribner this week announced that he has signed a set of detailed guidelines designed to protect transgender students by clarifying the district’s existing anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies.

Clint Bond, FWISD’s external and emergency communications director, said Scribner made the announcement at the Tuesday night, April 26 meeting of the district’s Board of Trustees. “He just wanted the board to know that he had signed these comprehensive guidelines,” Bond said.

In 2011, the district, then under the leadership of interim Superintendent Walter Dansby, the FWISD school board expanded the district’s anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies to include protections based on gender identity and gender expression. Protections based on sexual orientation were already included.

Bond said the new guidelines were designed to give “more specificity” to existing policy.

Sharon Herrera, founder and president of LGBTQ S.A.V.E.S, on Wednesday, April 27, praised Scribner for issuing the guidelines, saying the superintendent “is indeed walking his talk. He genuinely means all students, preparing them for college, career and community leadership.”

She added, “I applaud FWISD and anticipate that along with these guidelines, there will be training.”

LGBTQ S.A.V.E.S is an organization created to “foster the well-being of LGBTQ students and staff in the public schools of Fort Worth and surrounding communities by promoting safe, egalitarian and supportive environments and policies,” Herrera explained. She said the organization works to provide LGBTQ students and their families with resources related to LGBTQ issues and safe spaces for social and personal development.

Herrera noted that her organization continues to hear reports from local districts of bullying, not only from students but also adults, including teachers and administrators. “Until our LGBTQ youth can feel safe on their school campuses, our work is not done,” she said.

Fairness Fort Worth President David Mack Henderson said Wednesday that he and his organization “applaud Dr. Scribner and his staff for working to insure our most vulnerable students have both equal protection and opportunity.”

Henderson continued, “My read is that FWISD is making their proactive, inclusive position clear. They not only intend to comply with federal Title IX guidelines, they’ve elucidated best practices to accomplish just that. The beauty of these guidelines is that one group of students isn’t being compromised to help another. They’ve actually found a means to assure privacy for every student, regardless of their views, while still providing equal access.

“These guidelines serve as an excellent template for other schools seeking a reasonable solution to this issue,” Henderson continued. “My hope is that other school districts quickly implement similar guidelines so we can all get on with the business of educating our kids.”

FWISD’s expanded policy notes that the district “prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. The district prohibits dating violence, as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of district policy and is prohibited.”

The guidelines — which, Henderson pointed out, can be put into force with just the superintendent’s signature whereas a policy change requires
ONE

COMMUNITY

Out of the Closet Thrift Store
3920 Cedar Springs Road
Dallas, TX 75219
(214) 599 - 2173
Monday - Saturday: 10:00 - 7:00pm
Sunday: 10:00 - 6:00pm
Domino is a handsome dog. He is very sweet, loves to be close to his people, and craves affection. Domino deserves a second chance at a happy life. He’s two years old and weighs 60 pounds.

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.

Have an event coming up? Email your information to Managing Editor Tammye Nash at nash@dallasvoice.com or Senior Staff Writer David Taffet at taffet@dallasvoice.com by Wednesday at 5 p.m. for that week’s issue.

• Weekly: Lambda Weekly every Sunday at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-FM with this week’s guest is counselor Candy Marcum; United Black Ellument hosts discussion on HIV/AIDS in the black community (UBE Connected) at 7 p.m. every fourth Tuesday of the month at 3116 Commerce St., Suite C; Core Group Meeting every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.; Fuse game night every Monday evening except the last of the month at 8 p.m. at the Fuse space in the Treymore Building, 4038 Lemmon Ave, Suite 101; FuseConnect every Wednesday from 7 p.m. For more information call or e-mail Jalenzski at 214-760-9718 ext 3 or Jalenzski@myresourcecenter.org.

APRIL
• Through May 1: National Black Advocacy Conference
Fifth annual conference of Black Transmen and Black Transwomen and awards gala. The Dallas/Addison Marriott Quorum, 14901 Dallas Parkway. BlackTrans.org.

• Through May 30: Scarborough Renaissance Festival
Scarborough Faire features 200 quaint shops, food and grog from around the world, swordplay, comedy, birds of prey, magic and more. Weekends from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. at Scarborough Village, 2511 FM 66, Waxahachie.

• April 29: The Emperor & Empress Ball: A Formal Affair
Their majesties of The United Court of The Lone Star Empire host a show benefiting The Resource Center Nutrition Program. Cocktails at 7 p.m. Showtime at 8 p.m. at Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave.

• April 29-30: Lesbian Film Festival
Qcinema presents its fifth annual Lesbian Film Festival with the films Clambake, Vickie Shaw: I’m Not Your Role Model and ToY. Andrea Meyerson and Vickie Shaw will be in attendance. 7 p.m. at Fort Worth Community Arts Center, Sanders Theater, 1300 Gendy St., Fort Worth.
• May 1: Sandcastle Sunday with Rainbow Roundup
Rainbow Roundup celebrates International Family Equality Day with its annual Sandcastle Sunday, 1 p.m. at Little Elm Park on Lake Lewisville, 704 W. Eldorado Parkway in Little Elm. Pack a picnic lunch and bring your sand tools. Prizes awarded for the best sandcastle. For information email info@rrrup.org.

• May 1: Miss Big Thickette 2016
Turtle Creek Chorale hosts the 2016 Miss Big Thickette Pageant, a comedy pageant to raise funds for AIDS Arms’ LifeWalk, emceed by Jada Pinkett Fox and featuring live talent rather than lip sync. 6 p.m. at The Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road. (New location because of construction in the Turtle Creek entrance.)

Congregation Beth El Binah welcomes Rabbi Gene Levy of Little Rock who discusses his new book at 7:30 p.m. at Northaven United Methodist Church, 11211 Preston Road.

• May 4: LifeWalk Kickoff Party
A silent auction and hors d‘oeuvres are featured at 2016 LifeWalk’s kickoff from 6:30-9 p.m. at 3015 at Trinity Groves, 3015 Gulden Lane.

• May 4: Bloomin’ Ball
Ron Corning is the honorary chair of Sewing Seeds of Hope benefiting AIDS Interfaith Network at 5 p.m. at Hilton Anatole Hotel, 2201 N. Stemmons Freeway.

• May 6: Who’s Your Daddy?
The United Court of The Lone Star Empire will hold a show and auction benefiting the UCLSE General Fund. Cocktails at 7 p.m. Showtime at 8 p.m. at Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave.

• May 6-8: The Grace Project
The world’s largest conference for women living with HIV takes place at a hotel in the Cott/LBJ area. For more information contact Angela Huddy at Legacy Counseling Center at angela@legacycounseling.org or 214-520-6308 ext. 384. Information at legacygraceproject.org.

• May 7: Red in Wonderland Party
Dallas Red Foundation, Clay Cooley Auto Group and Stoli Vodka present “Red in Wonderland,” a silent and live auction party to raise funds for Dallas Red Foundation. Features a DJ, dancing, a performance by Miss Red Raquel Blake and a live musical performance by Chris Chism. Tickets are $35 in advance at RedInWonderland.EventBrite.com, and $50 at the door. From 8-11 p.m. at Seven for Parties, 150 Turtle Creek Blvd., Ste. 107.

• May 7-8: Dance with the Sun
An autobiographical one-act play written and performed by mother and son Stella Hlad and Scott Ramsey, 7 p.m. on Saturday and 2:30 p.m. on Sunday at Interfaith Peace Chapel, 5910 Cedar Springs Road.

• May 10: Awareness about the care needs of LGBT older adults
Light dinner, the film Gen Silent and a panel discussion about challenges of LGBT aging in our culture presented by Ed-U-Care. 6 p.m. at The Senior Source, 3910 Harry Hines Blvd.

• May 12: Outrageous Oral 20
The Dallas Way’s oral history project welcomes Dickie Weaver, Mary Mallory and Michael Doughman at 7 p.m. at the Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road. (New location because of construction in the Rose Room.)

• May 13-14: Contemporary Relationships Conference
Learn and discuss ways to strengthen LGBTQ dating, relationships, and parenting with over 30 international and national speakers from 8 a.m.-5:15 p.m. on May 14. Pre-conference institutes take place May 13. Both events are held at St. David’s Bethel Hall, 301 E. 8th St., Austin. For more information and to register visit Bit.ly/1ZKkyeoor e-mail info@contemporaryrelationships.com.

• May 14: Yoga of 12-Step Recovery Workshop
Yoga of 12-Step Recovery Workshop featuring Y12SR-certified instructor Julie Wright, and including detailed discussions, handouts and an all-level asana practice, is from 1-3 p.m. at City Yoga, 4311 Belmont Ave. Admission is $30 in advance and $35 at the door. For information visit CityYogaDallas.com.

• May 14: TAG’S Annual Ball
“007: A Night With Bond,” Tyler Area Gays’ 2016 Annual Ball, features casino tables, cash bar, live music, heavy hors d’oeuvres, silent auction and more. Tickets are $40 in advance, $45 at the bar, student tickets are $35. For tickets and more information visit TylerAreaGays.com. For information email info@TylerAreaGays.com or call 903-312-2081. 6 p.m.-midnight, at Holiday Inn Tyler South Broadway, 5701 S. Broadway Ave.

• May 14: MetroBall Winstar Casino Party Bus Trip
Buses leave Sue Ellen’s parking lot at 8:30 a.m. and Collin Creek Mall at 9 a.m. Arrive Winstar Casino at 10:30 a.m. and depart Winstar at 2 p.m. Arrive Plano at 4 p.m. and Dallas at 4:30 p.m. $75 for one person, $125 for two and $150 for three. Proceeds benefit the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund and MetroBall. Tickets at MetroBallExpress.BrownPaperTickets.com.

• May 15: 33rd International AIDS Candlelight Memorial
AIDS Walk South Dallas presents the local observance from 3-5 p.m. at Cosmopolitan Village, 5910 Cedar Springs Rd.

• May 16: AIDS Outreach Center Evening of Hope Benefit Gala
Benefits AOC’s services and programs. Cocktails at 6:30 p.m. Dinner at 7:30 p.m. at Winstar Casino, 3636 McKinney Ave. For tickets and more information call 817-916-5224.

• April 28-May 1: TGRA’s A Texas Tradition Rodeo 2016
Rodeo and music fest benefits Texas Gay Rodeo Association and its charities. Texas Horse Park, 811 Pemberton Hill Road.

• April 30: Free day at the zoo
Free day at the zoo for residents of council districts 1, 2, 7 and 14 (council members Adam Medrano, Philip Kingston, Scott Griggs and Tiffany Young). Proof of residence required. From 9 a.m.-noon at Dallas Zoo, 650 S. R. L. Thornton Freeway.

• April 30: Turtle Creek monthly clean up
Join Turtle Creek Association’s monthly clean up of the shores of Turtle Creek. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Beasley steps at Hall Street and the Katy Trail. clarke@turtlecreekassociation.org.

• April 30: Steve Grand in concert
Steve Grand appears in concert. Chris Chism also performs. Concert begins at 7 p.m. at Cathedral of Hope 5901 Cedar Springs Road.

• May 1: LifeWalk Kickoff Party
LifeWalk’s kickoff party begins the fundraising season for AIDS Arms and other agencies that will partner in the event. This year’s partner organizations will be announced at the event kicking-starting the largest AIDS walk in Texas and the largest Dallas fundraiser for local organizations. Sponsors Equality Vodka and Miller Lite provide drinks and Sushi Zushi the food. Tokyo Pop is the theme and Miss LifeWalk Charlotte Bordeaux performs. Raffle tickets for two-night trips to a Montage Hotel resort in California and a trip to Newport Beach including airfare go on sale. A drawing will be held at the party for two Southwest Airlines tickets. May 4 from 6:30-9 p.m. at 3015 at Trinity Groves, 3015 Gulden Lane.
His love of animals and community involvement inspired Andy Steingasser to take the reins as board president of Equest

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
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As Equest marks its 35th anniversary with expanded equine therapy services at the new Texas Horse Park in South Dallas and a gala celebration, Andy Steingasser is taking over as chairman of the board for the organization.

Over the years, Steingasser has served on the boards of a number of organizations around the city, and he is currently a member of the Dallas Summer Musicals board. Community involvement and volunteer work are something, he said, that come naturally. In fact, it runs in the family: his mother was very philanthropic.

But it was a much darker event that first prompted Steingasser to dive into community involvement.

On Jan 28, 1990, he and his partner, Daniel Mijares, were walking to their car, which was parked in the 4100 block of Dickason Street, after an evening out in Oak Lawn. As they walked, the couple passed a man and a woman who were standing at a street corner. Steingasser and Mijares continued on to their vehicle, and had already gotten in — Mijares in the driver’s seat — when the man and woman they had passed approached the car.

The man was pointing a pistol at Steingasser and Mijares while the woman tried to open the locked car door. As Mijares tried to drive away, the man fired several shots at them, striking Mijares in the head and shoulder, before the two suspects fled on foot.

Mijares was shot at about 3:15 a.m. on that Sunday morning; he died the next day Parkland Hospital. The shooting was one of a series of attacks that police at the time believed to be gang related. It remains unsolved.

Steingasser was unharmed physically, but the emotional trauma was a different story. In an effort to help him heal, friends encouraged him to join the Turtle Creek Chorale.

That year was the height of the AIDS crisis in Dallas, and the chorale was doing much more than performing concerts. Members were dying and the chorale performed at every one of their funerals. Rehearsals were more than just rehearsals: They were a place that survivors comforted each other.

Steingasser remained a member of the chorale for 23 years.

Steingasser said he grew up around animals in Austria where his father worked at the U.S. Embassy. His family always had dogs and cats back then, so in Dallas, he volunteered at the SPCA and became a board member for the Humane Society of Dallas County.

Equest was a natural fit for him. Steingasser became familiar with the organization 12 years ago when he toured the organization’s facility in Wylie with his Leadership Dallas class and began volunteering with the Autistic Teaching Center.

He described some of the triumphs he’s seen — both large and small — at Equest. One of Equest’s clients was Jonathan Wentz, who was born with cerebral palsy. He trained at the Wylie facility and entered the 2012 Summer Paralympics, finishing fourth in his equestrian event. At the time, he was a senior at SMU.

About a month after the paralympics, Wentz died at the age of 21. The cause of death wasn’t reported.

Steingasser said he’s seen so many successes at Equest where they work with children with more than 100 different types of disorders. “The kid who usually sits on the side becomes the center of attention,” he said.

He described working with an autistic child who was wearing a t-shirt with a picture of Grumpy from Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. As the boy was riding, Steingasser walked alongside the horse, holding the boy in place. As he walked, Steingasser mentioned that he liked the boy’s shirt. The child responded: “Best Picture 1939.”

After the ride, a teacher told Steingasser the child doesn’t speak and doesn’t let anyone touch him.

Equest CEO Lili Kellogg had even more stories. She said some are simple, but many are

HORSING, Page 11
Ridin’, ropin’ and wranglin’

Texas Tradition Rodeo moves to Texas Horse Park for 2016

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Organizers are expecting between 80 and 85 cowgirls and cowboys to compete this weekend, April 29-May 1, in the 2016 Texas Tradition Rodeo, being staged at the new, city-owned Texas Horse Park at 811 Pemberton Hill Road in Dallas.

Marcus Hood, rodeo director, said this week that as of Wednesday morning, April 27, 65 contestants had already pre-registered to compete. He said he was expecting to see another 15-20 competitors sign up during official registration Friday, April 29.

Hood also noted that the music festival that was added to the rodeo weekend last year is returning, and will feature headliner Billy Gilman along with Big City Outlaws and Time Machine.

The rodeo events will be held in the Texas Horse Park arena, which is covered, even though it is an outdoor arena, Hood noted. “That way, even if it does rain, you can watch the rodeo and stay dry,” he said.

Gilman’s performance, originally scheduled to be held outdoors, has already been moved inside the event center at the park, Hood said. The center will hold about 300 people, he said, but organizers have already arranged for a 30-foot by 30-foot, three-sided tent to be set up right outside the event center to shelter any overflow crowd.

“The event center has glass walls, and we are going to open all the doors so those who are watching from under the tent instead of inside will be able to see and hear everything,” he said.

Texas Tradition Rodeo is the statewide contest for the Texas Gay Rodeo Association, and Hood said that cowboys and cowgirls from around the state will be competing, alongside men and women from Oklahoma, Florida and California for sure, with others likely.

“We have a really good line-up of cowboys and cowgirls coming in for the rodeo,” he said. “It’s going to be very competitive.”

Hood said the Texas Tradition Rodeo will include “all the usual” LGBT rodeo events. There will be speed events — barrel racing, the flag race and pole bending — and roping and rough stock events — chute dogging, bull riding, steer riding, calf roping on foot, team roping and mounted break-away roping — you would expect to see at mainstream rodeos.

But, the rodeo director continued, Texas Tradition Rodeo always includes the “camp” events that set LGBT rodeo apart, providing an added dimension of entertainment for spectators, and giving newcomers a way to get in on the competition. Camp events are goat dressing, steer decorating and the Wild Drag Race.

In goat dressing, competitors work in teams of two to tie a ribbon on a goat’s tale faster than any other team. Competitors start off behind a line drawn near the chute gates, and when the buzzer sounds, the run to a goat, tied by a long rope to a stake near the center of the arena. They have to catch the goat — not as easy at it sounds, by the way — and tie the ribbon around its tale.

Steer decorating works pretty much the same way — tie a ribbon on a steer’s tale faster than any other team. (Steers, for those that do not know, are male cows that have been castrated. They tend to be smaller and less muscular than bulls.)

Steer decorating always involves teams of two. They start off with one team member holding a rope tied around the horns of a steer that is closed in a chute. When the buzzer sounds, the chute door opens and the team member holding the rope pulls the steer out of the chute and across a chalk some feet in front of the chute. Once the steer crosses the line, the second team member moves in to tie the ribbon on the animal’s tale while the first team member works to hold the steer still.

The most popular camp event is the Wild Drag Race, involving teams of three. It starts with a steer in a chute, while one team member waits outside holding the rope tied around the steer’s horns. When the buzzer sounds, the chute opens and team members one and two work to get the steer out of the chute and across a line near the center of the arena. Once the steer crosses the line, the third team member — who must be dressed in “drag” to some degree — has to get on the steer’s back and remain mounted as the other two team members coax the animal back across the line.

Hood was quick to note that just because these three contests are called “camp” events, that doesn’t mean they aren’t dangerous. “You can get head butted, bucked off, stepped on, kicked, drug across the ground,” he said. “Every event in the rodeo has the potential for injury.”

Another difference in the LGBT rodeo is that men and women can compete in all events. In mainstream rodeos, few men compete in the speed events, and even fewer women — if any — compete in rough stock events.

The rodeo events run from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday night, April 28, and 2016 winners will be crowned Friday night, beginning at 7:30 p.m. The weekend winds up with an awards ceremony Sunday at 7:30 p.m.

For tickets, see the rodeo website, www.texastradition.com. Tickets will be sold for $20 daily for Saturday and Sunday events, or $30 for a weekend pass.

The rodeo director said this week that the organizers were expecting to see another 15-20 competitors sign up during official registration Friday, April 29.

The event center has glass walls, and we are going to open all the doors so those who are watching from under the tent instead of inside will be able to see and hear everything,” he said. “Everybody needs to come on out, grab some barbecue and a cold beer and cheer on your favorite cowboy or cowgirl.”
Turning Red

Dallas Red Foundation has a new board and a new commitment to diversity, parties for the people and is raising a lot more money.

David Taffet | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Dallas Red Foundation has an exhaustive schedule of fundraisers to benefit Legacy Counseling Center and an ambitious new fundraising goal. Last year the organization raised $26,000 for the agency. This year they hope to raise considerably more.

“Melissa’s the inspiration,” board President Cody Lynch said. “She has more resilience than anyone I’ve ever met.”

“Melissa” is Legacy Executive Director Melissa Grove who attends just about every fundraiser thrown for her organization. The resilience Lynch refers to is her non-stop energy despite battling a rare form of muscular dystrophy.

DRF throws a number of parties and other events through the year. That many parties means a lot of hard work, and all that work had taken its toll on the board. By the end of last year, only three board members remained.

Lynch accepted the position as president, then added nine members to the board. He and his board then recruited a dozen committee members to do marketing, plan events, recruit volunteers and expand diversity and inclusion.

Wil Turner is the diversity and inclusion chair, and he said the group wants to appeal to a broader demographic.

“My goal with these parties is to embrace everyone,” Turner said. “My mission is to figure it out so we don’t have that problem [of a narrow audience] again.”

Turner said Red had gained a reputation of being for older gay white men and their “twink” boyfriends. But, he said, this year’s events are “parties for the people.”

Lynch said he hopes more lesbians and trans people begin attending Red Foundation events, because “Red parties are for everyone.”

“Our board members’ families are coming,” Lynch said of the new parties. “My parents are coming.”

Grove was impressed with the low price points, saying she hopes lower costs will attract a wider variety of people.

To reach a wider audience, the foundation is participating in a number of events, including a contraception convention recently held at University of Texas Dallas. Lynch said they brought information about Legacy and DRF and signed up 25 people up interested in attending or volunteering.

Lynch realized that while Dallas Red Foundation had been raising thousands of dollars a year for Legacy, no one on the board had ever visited the agency. So the new board took a trip to Legacy Cottage in Oak Cliff.

Turner said the most moving part of their visit was when one of the residents needed some help in his room. Everyone jumped at the chance to pitch in.

“That really put things in perspective,” Turner said — especially when they heard that client had died a week later.

Lynch said they learned some of the facility’s needs, so money from the auction at the May event, Red in Wonderland, will go toward building a new back deck. Board members also hope to replace older TVs in the seven client rooms with flat screens on arms that swing.

Lynch also said his group will collaborate more this year with other fundraising organizations, like Purple Foundation, Black Tie Dinner and Impulse. At their Sweethearts Party in February, the development staff of AIDS Interfaith Network served as bartenders, donating their $1,000 in tips to AIN.

Lynch said he loves that sort of collaboration, because had the foundation hired bartenders for the event, those bartenders would have kept their own tips. This way, Legacy lost nothing and AIN raised some money.

“Cody has been working tirelessly,” Grove said, adding that she loves what the group does, because they’re focused on the prevention message.

“They’re making HIV prevention sexy, cool, fun and hip,” she said.

DRF has small events — like its DRF Takeovers that have been held so far at Cedar Springs Tap House in Oak Lawn, at Barbara’s Pavilion in Oak Cliff and Azure in Addison — and large events, like the upcoming Red in Wonderland or the big Red Party held during Pride weekend in September.

But Grove said there’s no such thing as a small event, because of all the work that goes into making any event successful. She said the work of DRF allows her to focus on the business of Legacy.

“The fundraising side of managing an agency takes so much time away from providing actual client services,” Grove said. “Red Party and the people who put it on keep me excited about my work.”

Red in Wonderland features a DJ, dancing, performances by Miss Red Raquel Blake and Chris Chism, and a silent and live auction. From 8-11 p.m. on May 7 at Seven for Parties, 150 Turtle Creek Blvd., Ste. 107. Tickets are $35 in advance at RedInWonderland.EventBrite.com, and $50 at the door.

Red Summernight’s Dream with current Drag Racer Cynthia Lee Fontaine at The Brick.

The Red Party on Sept. 16 at Sixty Five Hundred, 6500 Cedar Springs Road.

45th Anniversary

Vivienne Armstrong, left, and Louise Young celebrated their 45th anniversary on April 18. They met in 1971 at the University of Colorado at Boulder, where they helped found the local Gay Liberation Front.

The couple moved to Dallas in 1976, and quickly became an integral part of the city’s LGBT community, which was growing quickly in terms of visibility and influence. They were among the founders of the Dallas Gay Political Caucus, which has morphed over the years into the Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance, and of the Lesbian/Gay Political Coalition. They have been members and leaders of a variety of organizations through the years.

When Vermont became the first state with relationship recognition in 2000, Armstrong and Young were the first Texas couple to get a civil union. They were married in California in 2008 but celebrate their anniversary on the date they became a couple.

Young was a founder of Texas Instruments’ LGBT employee resource group and when her division was sold to Raytheon, she helped found the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Allies resource group there. She was a key player in Raytheon’s addition of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression into the EEO policy and the adoption of domestic partner benefits.

Armstrong worked many years with Visiting Nurses Association, which cared for many AIDS patients during the height of the epidemic in North Dallas. She’s now a board member of Ed-U-Care, which works with caregivers for LGBT older adults.

In 1993, the couple rode on a float celebrating American families in Bill Clinton’s inaugural parade in Washington D.C.
more complex. One of her favorites is about a family who adopted 11 special needs children. “Nine of those rode with us,” Kellogg said. One of the nine children was doing therapeutic running and was sitting on her horse waiting her turn. As she waited, the horse began sneezing and the girl started laughing. “Seven years we’ve had that child and never heard her laugh,” Kellogg said the mother told her.

Another client, this one with Down Syndrome, showed remarkable progress in school after participating at Equest. At a parent-teacher conference, the teacher told the parents their daughter’s handwriting had recently improved dramatically. The parents couldn’t imagine why, but said they had recently doubled up on her riding lessons at Equest.

Kellogg attributed the improvement in the girl’s handwriting to the strength she developed in her wrist from holding the reins and her increased confidence that came from controlling a 1,200-pound animal.

Equest opened in 1981 with five clients, two horses, one instructor and 10 volunteers. Today, the organization serves 400 clients with 45 therapy horses, 12 certified riding instructors, four therapists and more than 500 volunteers who donate more than 40,000 hours of service a year.

Each client costs $6,500 per year.

Equest’s clients also include military veterans, some with PTSD, others with physical disabilities. Most costs are subsidized for clients, but for veterans, 100 percent of the fees are underwritten.

Every Equest client since the organization was founded has experienced improvement in at least one category — the top five being physical, social skills and confidence, communication, daily living skills and behavior, Kellogg said. One out of five clients has reduced or eliminated daily medications.

Kellogg called Steingasser a phenomenal board president. “He’s very involved with various aspects of our operation and keeps the directors involved,” she said.

She said he has a lot of common sense and passion, something apparent to anyone who hears him talk about Equest.

On May 7, Equest’s 35th anniversary gala takes place from 6-10 p.m. at the Texas Horse Park, 811 Pemberton Hill Road. Steingasser called the dress, “equestrian western chic.” The down-home cooking will be served family-style. Cary Pierce provides entertainment and horse and rider demonstrations will take place. Tickets are $250.

On May 14, more than 70 client-riders will compete at the Spring Show from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Wylie facility, 3800 Troy Road. The event is free to spectators.

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On May 7, Equest’s 35th anniversary gala takes place from 6-10 p.m. at the Texas Horse Park, 811 Pemberton Hill Road. Steingasser called the dress, “equestrian western chic.” The down-home cooking will be served family-style. Cary Pierce provides entertainment and horse and rider demonstrations will take place. Tickets are $250.

On May 14, more than 70 client-riders will compete at the Spring Show from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Wylie facility, 3800 Troy Road. The event is free to spectators.

Equest’s clients also include military veterans, some with PTSD, others with physical disabilities. Most costs are subsidized for clients, but for veterans, 100 percent of the fees are underwritten.

Every Equest client since the organization was founded has experienced improvement in at least one category — the top five being physical, social skills and confidence, communication, daily living skills and behavior, Kellogg said. One out of five clients has reduced or eliminated daily medications.

Kellogg called Steingasser a phenomenal board president.

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commUNITY voices

An open letter to the Texas Legislature
(Or, ‘The Donkey in the Bathtub’)

Dear Lawmakers: What have we, as transgender people, actually done to frighten you so much? I mean, what have we actually done that is making you consider taking up precious time that should be allotted to conducting important business for the great state of Texas to instead enact cruel, pointless and potentially harmful laws against a group of people that comprises .3 percent of the population?

What is it that we have done? Why do we scare you so?

Look, I am concerned about the health and safety of women and children, too. Matter of fact, I think everyone should be permitted to live their lives without fear of violence or intimidation. But “everyone” includes trans people, too. And the simple truth is, trans people are no threat.

Enacting mean-spirited laws to inhibit our ability to obtain proper identity documents or to somehow regulate which bathroom we use or to try and tell us who we really are will do nothing but harm to a vulnerable and already marginalized population.

We need your help; we need your protection. We don’t need your foot on our necks. Our lives are difficult enough as it is.

During the last session of the Texas Legislature, four bills were introduced that would criminalize bathroom usage by transgender people. Rhetoric supporting those bills hammered on the idea that these new laws are necessary to protect women and children from predators in restrooms.

And yet, there isn’t a single documented case of a trans woman attacking another woman or a child in a restroom. Believe me, I’ve looked. Don’t you think that if there was even one that it would be plastered everywhere as evidence of “the evil that lurks in stall No. 2”?

Fact is, Republican Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert all by himself is more of a threat to children than all the transgender women put together!

When it comes to bathroom hi-jinx, I’ve known the next legislator on the block. Larry Craig — another Republican — has actually given far more reason to keep law-makers out of public restrooms than transgender people ever could.

“Look, I understand — you want to protect something. But shouldn’t you be looking someone or something that actually needs protection and make laws about that? I used to do a regular radio show and once of the bits we’d do was making fun of “Stupid Laws.” For instance:

- It is against the law in Alaska to push a live moose out of a moving airplane.
- It is against the law in Arizona for donkeys to sleep in bathtubs. Although, I’m not sure who gets the citation — the donkey, or it’s owner?
- It is against the law in the small town of Chico, Calif., to detonate a nuclear device within the city limits. They’ll fine you $5000 if you do.

Sure, we laugh at these stupid laws and at the idea that someone would actually need a law to keep trans people out of public restrooms, then perhaps we need a law to keep donkeys out of bathtubs, too.

And of course, a donkey in a bathtub isn’t necessarily the same thing as an ass in a bathub. I’m thinking Texas definitely needs a law to keep asses out of the Legislature.

I’m originally from California and while I’ve been to Chico, I’ve never felt the need to detonate a nuclear device in their town — not because of the $5000 fine; it just wouldn’t be right.

I love Dallas. It’s my home now. I’ve lived in Houston as well, and travelled this state from one end to the other. I’ve met many interesting and wonderful people. I have also used the women’s restroom in more places than you can count — all without incident.

I never felt the need to attack anyone. I just needed to pee, maybe take a minute to fix my hair, then wash up and leave.

And before you go running off half-cocked and try to solve a problem that doesn’t actually exist, you need to know another thing about trans people: There are trans MEN!


Do you really want to force these guys into the women’s room?

They don’t want to be in the women’s restrooms any more than I want them there. They are dudes. They have their own room. Let them go in there and leave us ladies to ourselves.

Besides, by avoiding a needless trip to Big-Otville, you can help your state avoid the wrath of individuals — like Bruce Springsteen — who have had it up to here with official oppression and legislative bullying. And companies like Pay Pal, Wells Fargo and the NBA who won’t stand for it.

Don’t make the same mistake North Carolina did. We are better than Mississippi. (Really, we are. I checked.)

Texas isn’t immune from enacting our own Stupid Laws. For instance, the entire Encyclopedia Britannica is banned in Texas because it contains a formula for making beer at home.

But please, don’t add another Stupid Law to the books. Spend your time during the next legislative session wisely; we have plenty of real problems that need to be addressed.

Leslie McMurray, a transgender woman, is a former radio DJ who lives and works in Dallas. Read more of her blogs at leslemichelle44.wordpress.com

Leslie McMurray
Accidental Activist
a vote by the board of trustees — reiterates a number of points related to the nondiscrimination policy while elaborating on protections for transgender students.

The guidelines “seek to ensure that no student experiences an unsafe or unwelcome learning environment,” while acknowledging “Transgender youth may experience additional challenges at school” and that “support from classmates and school personnel may help transgender students who otherwise feel ostracized or disengaged.”

The eight-page guideline package presented to the board pointed to “growing support for research indicating that enforcing fixed notions of what it means to be a boy or a girl may have negative effects on children,” especially in a learning environment. The school district is implementing the guidelines, the statement noted, “to provide direction for personnel to address issues that may arise concerning the needs of and challenges facing transgender students, and to foster an inclusive and productive learning environment for all students.”

The guidelines include an extensive list of terms and definitions regarding transgender people and issues, but also points out that “not all people will agree on terminology and definitions.”

The guidelines require faculty and staff to “acknowledge the gender identity that each student consistently and uniformly asserts,” without need of a medical or mental health diagnosis or treatment. Campus counselors are designated as allies for students who need or want to discuss gender identity issues.

The guidelines also require district personnel to use a student’s preferred name and pronouns unless otherwise required by law for record keeping purposes. “Continued intentional misuse of a student’s new name and pronouns coupled with reference to the student’s former gender,” the guidelines state, “undermines the student’s desires and is contrary to the district’s goal of treating students with dignity and respect.”

The guidelines stress that a student’s name and gender on official records can be changed only with the consent of a legal court order. But no such order is necessary to tell the parents.

Regarding restroom facilities, the guidelines say, “If other students feel uncomfortable sharing a restroom with a transgender student or if a student has a need or desire for increased privacy, the school must allow the student(s) to access to a single stall restroom, gender neutral restroom or the opportunity to visit the facility when other students are not present. A single user restroom, however, must not be given as the only option for transgender students who need or desire increased privacy.”

The schools are required to make similar accommodations for locker rooms, and the guidelines prohibit school personnel from using dress codes to prevent a transgender student from living full time “in the role consistent with his or her gender identity.”

The new guidelines also require schools to give all students, including transgender students, “equitable access to all activities and programs,” including cheerleading, homecoming, prom and sports. But the guidelines acknowledge that “UIL may have ultimate authority to determine the team on which a student can participate in league play.”

That, Henderson said, remains a problem because of rules recently adopted by the University Interscholastic League, which governs intermural sports in Texas public schools, which requires students’ gender be determined for the purpose of such sports teams based on their physical gender at birth.

“The new UIL rules still leaves districts in the untenable position of either complying with Title IX for federal funding or with the sports authority to quality for team play,” Henderson said. “The UIL rule is clearly in violation of federal law. The question remaining is will UIL and UT, their host organization, force Texas schools and trans students to pay the price for UIL’s illegal rule?”

He concluded, “When we permit loud voices to err on the side of fear, the result is hysteria. I say we don’t let them play that game with us anymore. We’re done reacting to every nonsensical cry of social Armageddon.”

“These are our lives, our families and our children, too,” Henderson declared, “and we get to set the tone and the narrative from now on, period.”
For Cyndi Lauper, music runs deeper than her voice. It's not just about having fun anymore. For Cyndi Lauper, music runs deeper than her ‘80s-era eccentricities may have seemed to suggest. A collection of classics from the Great American Songbook, deep Memphis-based blues, the feel-good Broadway romp Kinky Boots, which won her a Tony in 2013 for best score — Lauper changes musical guises like she changes dye jobs. The 62-year-old singer takes another sharp turn on Detour, her latest reincarnation, this time as a full-on Southern belle. The spunky pop priestess trades in her pink for plaid and saddles up with a slew of Nashville mainstays, including Willie Nelson, Vince Gill and Emmylou Harris, to sing signature mid-20th-century country ditties.

To talk about her twangy transformation, Lauper called just as she was leaving Los Angeles, where she recently received her much-deserved star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Lauper was her usual chatty and chirpy self as she dished on longing to be the “unknown singer,” shoe struggling and forever wanting to take on Joan Crawford and Bette Davis’ infamous revenge relic What Ever Happened to Baby Jane? How exactly? By starring in a version of it alongside Madonna.

By starring in a version of it alongside Madonna, of course.

— Chris Azzopardi

Cyndi Lauper: I love the irony of you, mega LGBT activist, taking on a genre that’s not historically known to embrace the LGBT community. Cyndi Lauper: There are a lot of LGBT people who love early country music! They love Patsy Cline, they love Loretta Lynn. I loved Loretta Lynn when I was little and when I heard her sing “The Pill” [a cheeky take on birth control] it was like, “Holy cow!”

But I just know that when I went to Nashville everyone was very kind and they were sweet to me, and it feels like a small town and it doesn’t seem like everybody is like that — it just seems like they don’t talk about it a lot. I talk about it because we did a lot of research about the kids running away, the homeless LGBT kids [in 2011, Lauper opened a homeless shelter in NYC for LGBT youth]. We found that if the parents just said, “You’re my kid and I love you and you gotta give me a minute to get my head around this gay thing,” because where the heck are parents gonna go? You can’t go to the preacher man because he’s gonna condemn you and your kid to hell. You’re not gonna go to the school and out your kid. You can’t go to the neighbors. So, where do you go? You have to have an outreach program for the parents and the kids, but you have to have the information to help parents because, you know, I think most parents just love their kids, and when they’re teenagers, you’re gonna fight about everything — I know, I have a teenager. You fight. Hell, that’s the dynamic.

I didn’t think about that; I did this for the love of music. I did this because I saw a segment on CBS’ The Early Show about all the great Nashville session players. One group called the Nashville Cats played with everyone back in the ’60s and ’70s, and I was a little jealous because I felt like I missed out, I saw the Muscle Shoals documentary and I kind of wished sometimes — I felt like I was born in the wrong time. I was so busy being famous that I missed out on all these wonderful things. I just wanted to go back. In the beginning everything is, “You can’t do this! You’ll be ruined!” And you believe it!

At what point in your career did you feel creatively liberated? I guess in 1991. I wanted to work with Muff Winwood [English songwriter and record producer known for his work with Dire Straits] and he believed in me as an arranger and as a producer. You know, I should’ve moved to England but I didn’t. I loved New York. I was born there and I would’ve missed my family and my friends, so I didn’t go. But it was a lot easier in England; the English people were different. And he wanted me to do this thing for him. It was around that time that I realized, “If you’re gonna be doing this, maybe you should start practicing the rhythm of your own beat and sing your story, not try and do a story with other people’s stories,” which is OK because that’s what singers do, but at that point I wanted to do that and then I wanted to work with [Detect producer] Seymour Stein. I wanted to go and do a blues record. I wanted to do the blues since 2004, and then when I finally got to do it in 2010, you know, I felt blessed because I was able to do something I really wanted to do as a singer. And then I wanted to do this country record, and I hoped that I could sing as best as I could sing. I wanted to do a good job.

You’ve called your new label, Sire Records, your “dream label.” Madonna’s self-titled 1983 debut was released on the same label. Do you think you and Madonna might have done a duet if you’d been on the same label back in the day? Was there ever talk of that happening? Oh, not by business people. You know, I always felt for me, I would’ve loved to do What Ever Happened to Baby Jane? with her... ’cause I think that’s very funny! [Laughs]

Which part would you play? Come on! Who do you think I’d play? I’d play Baby Jane — I’d be torturning her. Because she’s always viewed as the bad girl, you know! They’d make her the good girl and I’d be the bad one. Or [we could do] Joan Crawford’s 1954 western-drama Johnny Guitar — she’d be the righteous one [laughs]. But whatever. Who knows! For me, all I wanna do is a good job. I wanna be a great singer. I
wanna learn. I wanna always learn. I study music constantly. I try and listen to what’s happening. I try and listen to what’s happened, to what I might have missed. I love music... I love it and I think it lifts people up. I think I finally did a record that makes people happy, ya know? Maybe I learned that from Kinky Boots.

Pop, rock, country, blues. Is there anything you can’t sing? Really, this is the roots of rock, that’s what I sang, you know what I sayin’, hun? It’s all the roots. The blues was the roots of what we sing and so is this. There was a time when country and R&B were very linked. The songs would go from R&B to country, country to R&B. A perfect example of that would be the Wilma Burgess hit “Misty Blue,” that was a hit in 1966 and then in 1975 for Dorothy Moore. But they were pop songs.

When I was little, Patsy Cline was on the radio. She wasn’t country radio — she wasn’t segregated to country radio, and neither was Loretta Lynn and neither was Johnny Cash. Those guys were on the pop stations. And we had three AM stations, and everybody was on ‘em in New York. You know, some of the stuff, especially Funnel of Love, it was a rockabilly song and Wanda Jackson was one of the earlier rockers, and when I was in Blue Angel [Lauper’s pre-solo career rockabilly band], oh, she was prominent on my playlist because she was an early rocker and there weren’t a lot of women rockers that you listened to, but you always listened to her. You listened to the amazing Brenda Lee, but Wanda Jackson was just a little dirtier.

Do you have your cowgirl boots picked out for the tour? I’m having trouble with shoes — a lot of trouble. I think some of the shoes I wear are ugly but they don’t hurt. I just don’t want my feet to hurt anymore. You know, I just want a nice pair of wide combat boots and I’d be happy. But I don’t know. I’ll probably find somebody who can actually make me shoes that don’t hurt so I can dance! I don’t want to dance barefoot anymore because I think I beat my feet up that way too.

How about some comfy slippers? Slippers aren’t strong enough. We do rock. When you slam your foot down, you gotta have some weight to it. You can’t just have a little slipper on.

Why is it important to you to perform in North Carolina despite the state’s new discriminatory “bathroom bill”? North Carolina is a very important place to go because once people are disenfranchised the way they have been, it’s very important to bring light to a place where people have none and also educate people on what the real concerns are and get people involved in their own destiny.

It’s hard to ask this, but because you were on Celebrity Apprentice I must: What if Donald Trump becomes president? Ugh. Everybody keeps asking me the same question. I don’t know. I really don’t know. I wouldn’t feel that good about it. I don’t think people should campaign to stop Trump. I think people should vote for one, and vote for the person they feel is most responsible and can really understand the way the government works right now and make it move forward instead of stopping it every frickin’ two minutes and costing people who pay taxes a lot of money. It’s a little deconecting — the whole frickin’ thing — and it’s gone on for too long.

You’ve won just about every major award — so, then, what does getting a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame mean to you? It’s funny because I had been approached a few times over the years and this time felt right. It was surreal — and to get a star on the same day as my good friend Harvey [Fierstein] felt awesome.
Raw POWER

Though entered in his first strongman competition, out lifter Jake Briscoe believes he’s already won.

Jake Briscoe is all about numbers these days. At 6-foot-4 and 320 pounds, he’s been training five days a week in two different gyms for months. He consumes up to 8,000 calories a day. And he has one thing in mind.

He’s doing all this to make his strongman debut Saturday, April 30, at the Ronnie Coleman Classic in Fort Worth.

“Where I would really like to be is at 350 pounds,” the 28 year-old says. See? Numbers.

Named after the winner of eight Mr. Olympia contests (the apex title in bodybuilding), the annual classic consists of competitions in weightlifting, arm wrestling, CrossFit, bodybuilding and strongman. Briscoe will be competing in the 275–355 weight class and yes, he’ll be doing the stuff people see on television’s World’s Strongest Man.

“It’s that on an amateur scale. This is a Level 2 event which is a starting point,” he says. “And I’ll be doing the Atlas Stones. That’s become the quintessential even most people identify strongman with.”

In escalating weights, Briscoe will have to lift each stone, carry it 15 feet and place it on a pedestal. But even those may weigh less than what’s he’s carried with him to this moment.

“I was a huge late bloomer. I had very low self-esteem and body dysmorphia,” he says. “I’ve always seen myself as fat and weak and even small. That carried well over into my adulthood.”

In many ways it turned Briscoe self-reliant and independent — almost. He hasn’t needed any external inspiration because of his self-motivation — but he changed his mind.

“You know, my dad inspires me. He got me into strength sports. He’s 60 and supposed to be in a wheelchair due to a degenerative disease in his lower back but he’s still actively competing in bodybuilding,” Briscoe says.

Briscoe also credits his boyfriend Robert Rowella. The two have been together for two years and in that time where Briscoe is consumed with training as well as his day job of hair stylist at Salon Aura and a virtually nonexistent social life, Rowella has actually bolstered him.

“I am much happier with myself because of him. He’s been nothing but supportive,” Briscoe says. “He’s supported my dream and loves being a part of it. He likes my ambition and drive and it’s nice to be with someone who shares my dream.”

The profile of gay athletes has grown over the past few years, of course. Michael Sam was out before he joined the NFL. Derrick Gordon was the first openly gay Division 1 NCAA basketball player. Strongman has even had pro Rob Kearney come out in 2014.

While he’s not working to be some kind of advocate for other gay athletes, Briscoe is glad to maybe help shatter clichéd images of gays in sports.

“This isn’t a statement I’m making,” he says. “I’d rather be significant than successful. If that is inspiring to someone, great. I just think that people’s perceptions have become a lot less two-dimensional and that any type of person can do anything.”

He has been working on a documentary about athletes defying stereotypes tentatively called Untitled.

“It still in the beginning stages, but the premise highlights LGBT people competing in different sports strongman, he says. “We just want to show how diverse sports really are.”

The doc would follow Briscoe around as he prepares for future strongman contests. But for now, it’s all about the Coleman. So it’s back to 1 a.m. gym times, four-to-five-hour training sessions and a minimum of 10 eggs per his daily 2,600 calorie shake. And if the numbers add up, perhaps he’ll walk away with his first win at his first competition.

But Briscoe is keeping it simple.

“The fact that I’m doing this and have the balls to compete, I feel like I’ve won,” Briscoe says. “Hardly anyone takes first in their debut, but this is going to motivate me to work harder to get to a higher level. This gets my foot in the door and with that, I can’t lose.”

The Ronnie Coleman Classic, the Fort Worth Convention Center, 1201 Houston St., Fort Worth. April 30, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. $35. MetroFlexEvents.com.
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An Evening of Broadway Music.. with a Twist!

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uptownplayers.org
Emmy-winning filmmaker Jane Anderson becomes the subject of a film: a documentary about her tragic aunt — a great artist persecuted in her time.

Jane Anderson is comfortable being on a film set. A three-time Emmy Award-winner, Anderson has written some of the most acclaimed TV movies of the past 20 years, including Olive Kittredge, The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader-Murdering Mom, When Billie Beat Bobby, If These Walls Could Talk 2 (about lesbian relationships) and Normal (about a man who comes out as trans ... a decade before Transparent). She even directed the last two, as well as the beautifully-rendered period film The Prize Winner of Defiance, Ohio.

What she was not used to was being in front of the camera. But that was a requirement of her latest project, the documentary film Packed in a Trunk: The Lost Art of Edith Lake Wilkinson, available this week on VOD and for rental. Wilkinson was an artist of great talent (but virtually no acclaim) in the early 20th century, until she was institutionalized, spending decades in an asylum, her art enjoyed only by members of her extended family ... including Anderson, a niece.

When Anderson, her wife Tess and filmmaker Michelle Boyaner set out to tell Wilkinson’s story and share her sometimes rule-breaking art with a wider audience, they had no idea the project would reveal unexpected parallels between Wilkinson and Anderson’s lives ... enough that it made Anderson something of a believer in the mystical connection between artists separated by a generation.

— Arnold Wayne Jones
ART DETECTIVES | Anderson — opposite bottom, and with her wife and son, above — uncovered amazing similarities in her life and the life of her aunt Edith, a gifted painter in the Fauvist tradition who was institutionalized starting in the 1920s ... possibly for being gay.

has to be through me. I “got it” as a filmmaker, and my filmmaker-self told my personal-self to get over it. It was the best thing for the project. My main concern was I wanted it to be about her and not some ego-driven project on my behalf. I did get cranky once in a while.

Were you tempted to insert your own aesthetic into the filmmaking? I had that impulse, but I so trusted Michelle’s eye and [it turns out] she had much better judgment than I did. And actually, it looks like I’ll be directing a narrative film next year, and the experience of being in front of the camera should give me immense empathy for my actors.

Was there a tendency to want to perform, instead of just being you? I was able to give up the performance, mostly because I had an active job: to find out about Edith. So I just followed what I had to do. It was very emotional for me [as you can tell in the film, and] I don’t enjoy being emotional in public. When we were editing, I kept wanting to cut out the damned tears! I gave up watching myself, thanks to having a camera crew follow me around Provincetown. When you have a camera crew at your back, you come in a place with a certain authority. That’s what got everyone [involved]. If I had gone in alone, as I had back in the 1970s when I was flatly dismissed and ignored, it might not have worked. The documentary opened up doors for us and helped get her known. The film world has given Edith her second life.

What brought Edith to the forefront again, after all this time? I’ve had my own life to worry about so I have often shoved away [my thoughts of Edith], and she would pop up again sometimes years later. This pressing need to do something about her came up when I turned 58 — about the age she was when she went into the asylum. I do believe some of us are visited, or we hold the life force of someone else inside us, who is depending on us to tell their story.

There is an unexpectedly, shall we call it, “mystical” element to the film, starting with your discovery that Edith’s partner had given her a book about Joan of Arc ... the exact same book Tess would give you decades later, unaware of the history. And you even consult a medium onscreen, who proves eerily insightful. The Joan of Arc thing really just blew us away. It was just chilling. But I will say that my entire life I have felt [Edith] tapping at my shoulder. I am a pragmatist and I don’t jump to the psychic world easily, but I have felt Edith’s artistic influence and her spirit influence [all my life]. She has always been there [especially] when I have traveled abroad with my sketchbooks. As a younger woman, there was a moment I was on the African veldt on the Serengeti, looking over a flock of antelope. And at that moment, I literally thought that Edith was sitting beside me, guiding my hand or celebrating that I was able to record something that she would have wanted to paint.

Do you feel steered in your career by that mystical aspect? Does it in any way diminish your own achievements, or do you think of Edith as a kind of muse? I love questions like that... Not at all! ... mainly because painting and art is a sideline for me. It’s not my career. My career is a writer-filmmaker-playwright, and it is totally my own. Honest to God, it’s a sheer delight [to be inspired by Edith]. Her color palette was a gift, but all the art I have produced is my own. I don’t feel subsumed by Edith at all, but all visual artists are influenced by other artists. I just think [of myself as having been] influenced by her work.

Edith lived fairly openly for her day, and it was interesting to see that even in the 1920s, Provincetown was a kind of gay mecca. Did making the film inform you in any way about your gay heritage? When I went to Provincetown in the 1970s, the town was very gay but the gallery owners were not. I never mentioned that narrative when I went to the museum back then, which was very stuffy. I was very shy about being out back then because there was still this oppression. It took my maturity to accept my sexuality and this wonderful long-term relationship with Tess to talk about. So by the time we did this film, I had already been out and comfortable as a gay woman for a decade — once we hit [the year] 2000, gay people became trendy!

I also have to mention: You’re famous for writing The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader-Murdering Mom, and When Billie Beat Bobby, about Billie Jean King ... both TV movies set in Texas. Do you feel your own psychic connection to the state? You know, I love the Texas culture — I love the bigness and the generosity of spirit. Molly Ivins was one of my all-time favorite writers. I think there is nothing like a strong sassy Texas woman.
Frank (Drew Wall) and Jamie (Alex Organ) haven’t seen each other in 25 years, but have met at a Brooklyn coffeehouse to catch up on old times. Jamie — a buttoned-down journalist with a bad memory — still visits the boys’ old babysitter, who’s in an old-folks home; Frank — tatted and pierced — lives with his boyfriend in Upstate New York. It’s all just so much awkward reminiscing, until Frank mentions that he’s instituted a criminal case against his own father for molesting him, and other boys, when they were children. And, he says, since Jamie was one of his admitted victims, would he like to participate.

Say what, now?

Jamie balks at the suggestion. He has no recollection of being molested, and only vague memories of Frank’s dad at all. His mom (Cindy Beall) dismisses the suggestion out of hand; his girlfriend Paige (Natalie Young) assumes it means nothing. But Jamie’s dad (Bob Hess) is concerned. Doesn’t Jamie remember staying over at Frank’s house for several weeks at age 4? Might something have happened?

I don’t think it spoils anything to say (1) there’s never any proof or acknowledgment that Jamie was abused; and (2) there’s no doubt in our minds that he was.

Such is the intriguing premise of Amy Herzog’s *The Great God Pan*, a one-act mental gut-punch of a play — a mystery whose central conceit is shrouded only by man’s capacity for self-deception. But unlike, say, other similarly basically-unresolvable dramas like *Death and the Maiden* or *Extremities*, revenge is not the thrust of the story; how we deal with the spectre of trauma is.

Herzog approaches the material obliquely. We only learn elliptically about Jamie’s occasional impotence, his inward-looking homophobia (“you get weird around gay men” Paige observes), we infer his commitment issues (six years with Paige and still no engagement ring), and capacity to put off confronting unwelcome truths. “You listen, you don’t act,” Paige diagnoses; Jamie is a Hamlet for the post-modern world.

The play itself is almost the inverse of *The Glass Menagerie*: It doesn’t filter the past through the unreliable narrator’s memory, but rather sets up an opaque screen that the narrator himself cannot pierce.

Not all of it comes together. Herzog’s thesis can’t quite sustain the structure, and a side plot about Paige counseling a bulimic girl feels like wasted time. But you can’t deny the power of its message: That some things are worth forgetting.

It comes off strongly with Alex Organ in the lead. Organ is the artistic director of Second Thought, but he looks like he might be Chris Hemsworth’s understudy for the *Thor* movies: Tall, handsome, imposing but also vulnerable. He modulates the sine-curve of Jamie’s emotional journey like a surfer, exploding in denial only after smilingly dismissing the idea of being a victim while desperately trying to convince himself as much as anyone else.

He’s helped along by veterans like Beall and Hess, as well as Wall and Young (a mini-reunion of STT’s memorable *Red Light Winter* a few seasons back). Director Carson McCain also reinvents the Bryant Hall performance space with an angular but utilitarian and oddly nostalgic set designed by Jeffrey Schmidt. The dead branches of ominous, unseen trees linger through upstage windows, menacingly brooding over the action that flows briskly on the stage. Like Neil LaBute’s *In a Forest Dark and Deep*, *The Great God Pan* unfolds the psyche like a dark piece of origami, revealing its crevices while destroying what makes it whole.

— Arnold Wayne Jones
Purple Party spins a weekend of partying for a cause

Although they call it the Purple Party (singular), there are actually five events all weekend long at this circuit party and fundraiser from the all-volunteer Purple Foundation. It kicks off with the Ignite party on Friday, followed by a daytime pool party at Sisu Uptown on Saturday and the main event that night at South Side Music Hall. Sunday welcomes a tea-dance and then closing-night party. Among the spin doctors coming to town are DJ Paulo, Isaac Escalnate, Eddie Martinez and more. Get your Purple on!

DEETS:
For details of the events, prices on passes and a full schedule, visit PurpleFoundation.org.

Steve Grand goes unplugged

We have no shame in admitting we love Steve Grand — sure, his music is good, and he’s an out-and-proud gay man ... both excellent reasons to be fans. He’s also quite dreamy. And why not love a performer for how they make us feel as we watch them entertain us? We’re not monks! He performs Unplugged at the COH Saturday.

DEETS: Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. CathedralOfHope.com.

Uptown Players returns with Broadway Our Way

When Uptown Players presents their annual benefit revue Broadway Our Way — where the actors flip the sexes of who sings the songs — it usually previews the entire season. Well, this year the first show (End of the Rainbow) came first, and if it’s any indication, you don’t wanna miss what they are up to for the rest of the year. B.J. Cleveland directs an all-star cast, that also features stalwarts like Coy Covington, pictured. Fasten your seatbelts, dolls — it’s gonna be an adventure.

DEETS: Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. $40–$50. UptownPlayers.org.
**ARTSWEK**

**THEATER**

**The Big Meal.** A romantic comedy about a modern family, from first date to old age. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through May 8. WaterTowerTheatre.org.


**The Great God Pan.** The second show in Second Thought Theatre's current season is this drama by Amy Herzog about child sexual abuse and recovered memories. Reviewed this week. Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through May 14. 2TT.co.

**I’ll Eat Your Last: A Chat with Sue Mengers.** This limited run performance features B’way veteran Karen Murphy as the excoriating Hollywood legend. Final weekend. Milburn Theatre, 120 S. Main St., Fort Worth. AmphibianStage.com.

**Feather and the Tempest.** An allegorical play about a youth (at times a boy, at others a girl) in a hostile, every-changing world. Final weekend. Teatro Dallas, 1331 Record Crossing Road. TeatroDallas.org.

**Jonah.** A world premiere from Len Jenkin, a contemporary retelling of the biblical myth. Undermain Theatre, 3200 Main St. Through May 7. Undermain.org.

**The Lady, The Empress and The Pearl, Part One: The Empress and the Pearl.** Local favorites M. Denise Lee and Marisa Diotalevi team up for this world premiere play about Bessie Smith and Janis Joplin. Final weekend. In Theatre 3's Theatre Too space, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Theatre3Dallas.com.

**Memphis.** The Tony Award-winner for best musical and best score is this nostalgic but racially-aware portrait of the early days of rock ‘n roll. Co-written by Joe DiPietro. Stars Kyle Ignezi (Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Aida) and Ebony Marshall-Oliver. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through May 22. Theatre3Dallas.com.

**The Road to Appomattox.** A regional premiere about the price we as a people pay for unity. With Jeff Swearingen, Kevin Moore, Catherine DuBord. Greenville Center for the Arts, 5601 Sears St. April 29–May 22. ContemporaryTheatreofDallas.com.

**Wicked.** The return of the mega-hit by Stephen Schwartz, which Dallas gets but North Carolina won’t now! Music Hall at Fair Park, 901 First Ave. Through May 22. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

**OPERA**

**Show Boat.** For the first time in its 57 year history, the Dallas Opera performs a musical which basically is an early American operetta — Kern and Hammerstein’s socially aware romance. Final weekend. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. DallasOpera.org.

**Fort Worth Opera Festival.** The Fort Worth Opera returns with its 16-day festival, including the world premiere JFK (May 1 and 7), Rossini’s popular The Barber of Seville (April 30, May 6 and 8) and two one-act operas, Embedded and Buried Alive (April 29, 30, May 3 and 7). Performances at Bass Hall, 525 Commerce St., and the Scott Theater, 1300 Geddy St., Fort Worth. FWOpera.org.

**DANCE**

**The Rite of Spring.** Joshua Peugh updates Stravinsky’s electrifying ballet of sexual awakening by moving it to a senior prom gymnasium, circa 1954, plus some cross-dressing romance. The program also features Dark Circles Contemporary Dance performs an updated version of ‘Rite of Spring,’ set at a senior prom, in Fort Worth this weekend. (Photo courtesy Karen Almond)
features a new commission. Emma Lowe Hall on the TCU campus, 3000 S. University Drive, Fort Worth. April 29-May 1. DarkCirclesContemporaryDance.org.

FINE ART


FILM
5th Annual Lesbian Film Festival. Q Cinema presents this two-day mini-fest, focusing on films about women. Sanders Theatre, 1300 Gandy St., Fort Worth. April 29–30. QCinema.org.

APPEARANCE
David Sedaris. The queer memoirist and humorist settled in for three shows at City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. April 27–29. ATTPAC.org.

FESTIVAL

CONCERTS
Steve Grand: A Night Unplugged. The popular out singer performs at the Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 7–9 p.m. $25. CathedralOfHope.com.

SPORTS
Dallas Elite Women’s Football. Dallas’ successful young women’s team meets Kansas City. Bishop Lynch High School Field, 9750 Ferguson Road. 7 p.m. $10. DallasEliteFootball.com.

MONDAY 05.02
CABARET
Mama’s Party. Local singer Amy Stevenson hosts her ongoing cabaret series, always with special guests and a good time. Uptown Theatre, 120 E. Main St., Grand Prairie. $10.

TUESDAY 05.03
FILM
Repulsion. Roman Polanski established his reputation as one of the film world’s most exciting directors with this 1965 film, starring a nubile Catherine Deneuve as a young woman riddled by demons. A masterpiece of psychological horror. Part of the Tuesday Big Movie New Classic Series at Landmark’s Magnolia Theatre in the West Village, 3699 McKinney Ave. Sponsored by Dallas Voice. Screens at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.

THURSDAY 05.06
FUNDRAISER
Broadway Our Way. Uptown Players’ annual fundraising show, a four-performance revue where men sing showtunes written originally for women and vice versa, plus a preview of this season’s musical, The Toxic Avenger. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. May 5–7 at 8 p.m., May 8 at 2 p.m. $40–$50. UptownPlayers.org.

this week’s solution

P E S O  A T T E N D  S L A T
E L A M  R O A M E D  T U N E
N E V E R  S A Y  T H E  W O R D S
A C E L A  D E S I N A R I E S
T R E S S  G R I D S
T H E Y  R E G O N E
T I E S  G O U L E T  S L O B
A N Y  A U B L E  U E N I N E
T H E Y L L  P R I N C E
S O D I O  D A M N  A D E E R
N O O N  A L O E  N A D A
L O C K  C O M E B A C K  R Y E
A R T E  M O R I T A  T I E R
V O O M  A N T L E R  O V A L
A F R O  R E S E N T  M E R E

MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED
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This week’s advice and questions are a little hard-core. So weak or small-minded peeps look away now…

Dear Cassie, My boyfriend and I have been together for 13 months. We have had our ups and downs, but what relationship hasn’t? [Throughout] the entire relationship, he has been extremely insecure. He gets weird when straight guys talk to me, people like my photos on social media, etc. I always blew it off, saying it was because this is his first real relationship and it’s just his age showing. Also his friends and roommate have never tried to get to know me. They always just say “Hi, how are you?” then walk off. His roommate actually leaves the room when I come over. It always bothers me because I feel like I’m a likeable guy. I have no enemies. My friends have gone out of their way to get to know him and they have formed a friendship with my boyfriend. Why haven’t his friends done the same?

Last week — two weeks after our one-year anniversary — he broke the news he has been sleeping with his roommate since September … the roommate that never gives me the time of day, that I’ve always been told was straight. He says it only happens when they get super drunk and when I’m not around. Obviously, I cried. A lot. I told him the trust is now gone and I don’t know if it will ever come back. Plus, he still lives and works with this guy. The guy has blocked me on all social media. I would never out someone, but I feel like when you sleep with someone who is in a relationship, you are taking the risk of your secret getting out.

Now when I play back our past arguments based on his insecurities, I realize it is because he had a guilty conscience. I told my boyfriend I needed time to decide if this is something I can move past. I haven’t told anyone because I know they will tell me to end it now and that I deserve better. I personally feel like a fool for trusting in someone so much. I was completely blinded by love — I never thought this is something he would do. As of now, I told him I never need to be in the same room as his roommate. When I kiss him, it’s just not the same. And when I’m not with him, I’m constantly wondering where he is and if he is cheating again. He has been doing some major ass-kissing trying to make up for it. I was wondering what your thoughts are on cheating. Is it something that is always a deal breaker? Should alcohol ever be an excuse? Is it something that gets better with time? And if this relationship ends, do I keep my mouth shut on why it ended? I feel like I was never in the wrong — I didn’t fuck up, he did. Thank you in advance for any advice you can give. Signed, Bamboozled!

Dear Bamboozled, Where the fuck do I even start with this? Of course the roommate left the room when you came over — he was jealous of you and he was fucking your boyfriend. Forget his friends, they all sound like assholes anyway. Your boyfriend didn’t seem very confident in your relationship from the beginning. His getting weird when a straight guy would talk to you or your Facebook likes stem from his own insecurities. He was projecting what he was putting out there. He feared you would do exactly what he did to you.

To be honest, you are a better man than I am because in the heat of the emotion and anger and heartbreak, I would have probably not only outed my motherfuckin’ roommate, I would have probably needed to punch him as well. I might have anger issues. I’m proud of you for not reacting in that manner. Keeping the high road is always the way to go, although not as fulfilling.

Now, as far as the boyfriend is concerned, do you love him? I mean really love him? Trust, when gone, is not easy to get back. Possibly impossible. If him cheating makes you feel like you get a free pass to cheat, then move on. Two wrongs just make more wrongs. Ask yourself: Is he even worth this bullshit? Probably not!

It’s easy to give advice and tell you to dump the bum and throw him out of your life forever, but this is your real life. I think you need to step away from the situation. Take some time away from him. The fact that he is still living with the guy that he cheated on you with should be a deal-breaker. How could he ask you to move past something that is there when he gets home? No ma’am, Pam.

Cheating, even if you’re drunk, is still cheating, and it is not OK. But whether you can get past it is up to you. Step back, take stock of your feelings. Spend some time alone. Go from there. If the relationship does end, whether or not you tell people why you broke up should be on a person-by-person, need-to-know basis. Nobody needs to know your business, but you have every right to talk about it to whoever you want, without guilt. Because, after all, you didn’t fuck up. He did. Stay strong, Cassie.

Dear Cassie, Why does the “everyone’s a top” stereotype exist? What’s the deal with the implied shame of being a bottom? Thanks, G.P.

Great question, G.P. People seem to think that being a bottom makes you less of a man. I’m guilty of perpetuating that stereotype by calling out bottoms at my show like it’s a shameful thing, but the truth is, anyone can be a top but it takes a special flair to be prepared to take a dick like a champ. We all act like the top is in control but we all know who really wields the power.

I feel there are a lot more proud bottoms out there right now. Some like to feel dominated, others just know what they like and go for it aggressively. I think about 90 percent of us are actually versatile. What’s wrong with liking and doing more than one thing in every part of your body, inside and out!

So this week I give a special shout out to all those badass bottoms out there. You know who you are! Viva, le dick takers! You rock.

Remember to always love more, bitch less and be fabulous! XOXO, Cassie Nova.

If you have a question of comment, email it to AskCassieNova@gmail.com.

Photo courtesy Kristofer Reynolds
Making the SCENE the week of April 29-May 5:

- **Alexandre's:** K-Marie on Friday. Jason Huff on Saturday. Karaoke with Wayne Smith on Sunday. Chris Chism on Wednesday. So Strung Out with Spencer West on Thursday.
- **Brick/Joe's:** A bevy of entertainers salute Adrian Michaels at a 35th anniversary roast from 6-9 p.m. on Saturday.
- **Club Changes:** Miss Outta Sight 2016 at 9 p.m. on Saturday. Leather Perspectives from 1:30 p.m.–5 p.m. on Saturday. Dallas Girls of Leather monthly meeting at 5 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Dallas Eagle:** United Court of the Lone Star Empire show at 8 p.m. on Friday. National Leather Association–Dallas presents Leather Perspectives from 1:30 p.m.–5 p.m. on Saturday. Dallas Girls of Leather monthly meeting at 5 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Marty's:** Kickback Wednesdays with Hip-Hop, R&B and throwbacks for the mature audience from 10 p.m.-2 a.m.
- **Round-Up Saloon:** Miss Big Thickette 2016 presented by the Turtle Creek Chorale at 6 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Sue Ellen's:** M Diva Loca on Friday. Clao Bella on Saturday.
- **The Rose Room:** Cassie, Layla, Valerie, Dee Range, Krystal, Sofia Andrews and Jenna on Saturday.
- **Two Corks and a Bottle:** Denise Lee at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

Scene Photographers: Kat Haygood and Chad Mantooth.
The youth brigade rules at Sue Ellen’s

Derek at The Grapevine

Krystal Summers at The Rose Room

Terrance and Sean at The Tin Room

Thom at Pub Pegasus

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Poker
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Epitaph
Solution on page 23

Across
1 Coin for Kahlo
5 Not cut, say
11 Supporter of bedroom activity
15 Jack of old Westerns
16 Emulated Kerouac’s On the Road
17 Dancer Tommy
18 Start of a quote from a song about
lost loved ones
21 Speedy train
22 Ball lover
23 Ram as far up as you can get?
24 Snake, to Medusa
26 Big squares above crossword clues
27 More of the quote
32 Butch lesbian accessories
35 Robert of Camelot
36 Partner of Felix, for example
40 E. Lynn Harris’ ___ Way the Wind
Blows
41 Cooked immediately
42 Hero’s ending
43 More of the quote
46 Writer of the song
47 Colonel, to Cammermeyer
48 Lupino of Women’s Prison
50 Vocalist Vic
51 Gives a heads-up to
52 Disney’s The Goonie- ___
53 Spruce up
54 Maria’s “do” equivalent
55 Time that goes either way
56 Homeopathic plant
57 Lorca’s zip
58 Start of a footnote abbr.
59 End of the note, and title of the
song
62 Deli sandwich holder
64 Painting and such, to da Vinci
66 The Karate Kid star Pat
67 Layer beneath two plastic brides
68 “Va-va-va-___!”
69 Sign of horniness?
70 Shape of George Frenn’s track
71 Pomo ___ Homos
72 Feel rancor about
73 Moliere’s mom

Down
1 Elizabeth of Transamérica
2 Word on a Stonewall Democrat’s
poster
3 Pack rat
4 Brunch dishes
5 Pirate interjections
6 Sticky-tongued critter
7 “The Black Clark Gable” Diggs
8 Vital team
9 Old fruit drink
10 JFK’s predecessor
11 Some Willa Cather works
12 Appealingly shocking
13 Warthog’s range?
14 Gay wedding guide author Ayers
19 Too hasty
20 Shoot off a flare, e.g.
25 George of It’s My Party
26 Crawled out of bed
28 “Getting to Know ___”
29 Obstacle, to Shakespeare
30 Wright angle?
31 Beginning to whiz
32 Skin designs, for short
33 Commemorating
34 Examiner of the balls in your
sockets
37 Solid hit, in Glenn Burke’s sport
38 Like annual sex
39 One with a foamy head
44 “___-hoo! Fellas!”
45 Bad Squad character
47 Colonel, to Cammermeyer
48 Lupino of Women’s Prison
50 Vocalist Vic
51 Gives a heads-up to
52 Disney’s The Goonie- ___
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58 Liquid that’s shot off
60 Nicky, in “Funny Girl”
61 It shouldn’t come before the horse
62 Gardner of mystery
63 Alt-rock genre
67 Hulce of Amadeus

Solution on page 23

Epitaph

Across
1 Coin for Kahlo
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Solution on page 23
VIRTUOSIC INNOVATION

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ARGENTINA'S
ESTAMPAS PORTEÑAS TANGO
October 26-29 2016
Dallas City Performance Hall

JESSICA LANG DANCE
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Winspear Opera House

PILOBOLUS
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Dallas City Performance Hall

DALLAS DEBUT
BRIDGMAN PACKER DANCE
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Dallas City Performance Hall

DOUG VARONE AND DANCERS
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Winspear Opera House

DIAVOLO | ARCHITECTURE IN MOTION
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Winspear Opera House

TEXAS DEBUT
ARGENTINA'S CHE MALAMBO
April 14-15 2017
Dallas City Performance Hall

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