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Blue Agave by Douglas Winters III
Discrimination at NAS Fort Worth
Vasquez converts practice
Stonewall comes to East Texas
Cruising out of the closet

15 years of Uptown Players
Don Jones interprets for TCC
Alyssa Edwards returns to 'Drag Race'

Laura Michelle Kelly in the original Broadway cast of 'Finding Neverland'
Copyright Carol Rosegg
N.C. governor losing supporters

Gov. Pat McCrory

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory, who has been a steadfast supporter of the anti-transgender law HB2 despite overwhelming evidence of the damage the law has done to his state, has been steadily losing the support of North Carolinians.

McRory faces N.C. Attorney General Roy Cooper in a tight race for governor’s race. Cooper immediately condemned HB2 and has refused to defend the law in court.

In a Public Policy Polling survey, 58 percent of North Carolina voters said HB2 is hurting the state, compared to 22 percent who think it’s helping. Oddly, 19 percent actually believe HB2 has had a positive effect on the state’s national reputation.

The poll was taken after the NBA announced it would pull its 2017 All Star game from Charlotte. In addition, North Carolina has lost millions of dollars in lost conventions and tourism. Companies have pulled expansion plans from the state as a result of the passage of HB2.

Tallywackers is closed; owner says watch for new location

Tallywackers has closed, but owner Rodney Duke says the closure is only temporary until the restaurant can find a new location. Duke told GuideLive.com, “What it boils down to is the location we had [at 4218 Lemmon Ave.] didn’t work for us and our lease was up.”

A Facebook post promised the restaurant is growing “larger and better,” and ended, “Do you wanna see Tallywackers in your city?? Tell us how much by commenting below! See you soon world 😄.”

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— Tammye Nash

Texas Bar won’t sanction Paxton for telling county clerks to ignore Obergefell ruling

AG Ken Paxton

Even though he told county clerks across the state of Texas that they could ignore a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court and refuse to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, the State Bar of Texas won’t be sanctioning Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton.

The state bar has dismissed a complaint filed against Paxton by more than 200 Texas attorneys, who said the AG “violated his own official oath of office” in June 2015 when he issued a written opinion telling county clerk’s they could ignore the high court’s ruling in Obergefell v. Hodges, which established marriage equality as the law of the land, if same-sex marriage goes against their personal religious beliefs.

Paxton originally promised to back up any county clerks who were sued for refusing to issue licenses, but as it turned out, he didn’t mention that if they were sued it would be them, personally, paying the costs of defending themselves and paying any settlements that might be awarded.

— Tammye Nash

Resource Center signs letter against BYU entering Big 12

Resource Center has signed onto a letter from Athlete Ally opposing the addition of Brigham Young University to the Big 12 conference.

Brigham Young University has in its so-called “honor code” that homosexual behavior is forbidden.

“Homosexual behavior is inappropriate and violates the Honor Code. Homosexual behavior includes not only sexual relations between members of the same sex, but all forms of physical intimacy that give expression to homosexual feelings.”

In its letter, Athlete Ally wrote:

“We are writing to express our concerns about Brigham Young University’s (BYU) candidacy for Big 12 Conference membership.

As organizations committed to ending homophobia, biphobia and transphobia both on and off the field of play, we are deeply troubled by this possibility.

“Currently, the Big 12 as a conference is overwhelmingly LGBT-inclusive. Nine out of ten of your member schools have explicit protections for students based on their sexual orientation. Eight out of ten of your member schools have explicit protections for students based on their gender identity. And nine out of ten of your member schools have explicit protections for students based on their sexual orientation.

BYU has no protections for LGBT students or faculty and openly discriminates. On this year’s Princeton Review list of homophobic schools, BYU earned the No. 6 spot.

Oddly, 19 percent actually believe HB2 has had a positive effect on the state’s national reputation. Companies have pulled expansion plans from the state as a result of the passage of HB2.

Locally, the Big 12 includes Texas Christian University in Fort Worth and the league is based in Irving.

BYU’s athletic director Tom Holmoe responded with a tweet: “LGBT players, coaches and fans are always welcome to the BYU campus. Everyone should be treated with respect, dignity and love.

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Cali, a 5 ½-year-old domestic tabby, is a large, fluffy girl who is very friendly and easy to handle. She has beautiful green eyes and loves having her cheeks scratched. She seems to be a very social lady and talks to you when you say her name. Cali is a calm cat and probably would love someone to cuddle with.

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.

Doris Jean Mitchell, a long-time resident of Oak Lawn, died Aug. 4 several hours after she suffered a hemorrhagic stroke.

Born April 23, 1939 in San Antonio, Doris lived briefly in Chicago with her parents — Dr. Holland Mitchell of Weatherford and Hazel Jones Mitchell of Floydada, Texas — before moving to Waco where she attended Waco High School. She graduated from Texas Tech University in Lubbock in 1960, and earned her masters in Library Science at the Texas Women’s University in Denton.

Doris began her working life as a librarian at Jefferson High School in Dallas, but it was at the newly-opened Richardson Public Library in 1970 that she spent more than four-and-a-half decades as a reference librarian, ending her long career this past April at the age of 77.

Respected widely for her easy laugh, inquisitiveness and vast store of knowledge, and especially for her willingness to help her patrons and fellow workers, Doris will be remembered by many for her attachment to her cats, her Halloween costumes and her love of gentle people of all shades and hues of the rainbow.

Doris was preceded in death by her parents and by her brother, William Nelson Mitchell, of Reno, Nev. She is survived by her cousins, Lovene Moore and Sharon Decker Henson, both of Waco, and Charlotte Decker Henson, of Auburn, Ala.

A memorial service will be held on Sunday, Aug. 14, from 3-6 p.m., at Seven for Parties, 150 Turtle Creek Blvd, Ste. 107, in the Design District near downtown Dallas.

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Before

After

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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 88.3 KNON-FM. This week’s guest is Helen Holy: 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 Halenze@myresourcecenter.org.

• August 13: Back to School Block Party Clothing and school supplies collected for homeless and in need LGBT youth and allies through the summer will be distributed from 4-7 p.m. at Oak Lawn UMC, 3014 Cedar Springs Road. For information visit RLC365.org.

• August 13: U.S. Rep. Veasey’s Fort Worth August Town Hall U.S. Rep. Marc Veasey, D-District 33, hosts a town hall to give residence the chance to share their thoughts and concerns on issues affecting their communities, 6 p.m. in the Forest Hill Library, 6962 Forest Hill Drive. For more information call 817-920-9086.

• August 14: Top Dog Couture An evening of high canine fashion benefiting Tucker’s Gift’s LifeWalk team from 6-9 p.m. at The Rose Room, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Free parking.

• August 14: AIN’s 30th anniversary Celebrate 30 years of service with champagne, cupcakes and live tunes from Denise Lee from 2:30-4:30 p.m. at Interfaith Peace Chapel, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. RSVP at Facebook.com/AINDallas.

• August 15: Adam Medrano’s Budget Town Hall Learn about the fiscal year 2016-17 Dallas city budget and provide your input from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Dallas Heritage Village at Old City Park in Browder Springs Hall (the brick building with the Dr Pepper mural), 1515 S. Harwood St. Free parking.

• August 16: Stonewall Democrats of Dallas Stonewall Democrats of Dallas holds its monthly meeting upstairs at Sue Ellen’s, 3014 Throckmorton St. Featured speaker will be Dallas County Sheriff Lupe Valdez. Cocktails at 6 p.m., meeting at 6:30 p.m. For more information visit StonewallDemocratsOfDallas.org.

• August 18: The Wisdom of Inside Out Counselor Molly Behannon presents “a truly unique wellness and wisdom event,” featuring a screening of the movie Inside Out followed by a “feelings check,” at the Angelika Film Center and Cafe, 5221 E. Mockingbird Lane, 6:30-10 p.m. Tickets are $30 each, available at EventBrite.com. For information call 214-526-3374.

• August 18: LGBT-Friendly West Coast Swing Dallas Pride Dance country-western dance group invites couples and singles of all gender identities and skill levels to learn basics and beginning, intermediate, and advanced moves with award-winning dancer and instructor Lori Hayor. 9 p.m. at You Can Dance studio, 4533 Inwood Road, Suite 600, Addison. $15 suggested donation per person; no one turned away for inability to pay. 817-500-4962; 214-566-1260.

• August 18: Back to School Mixer and School Supply Drive Rainbow LULAC and Congregation Beth El Binah teamed up for a mix and school supply drive from 6:30-8 p.m. at Havana Lounge, 4006 Cedar Springs Road.

• August 18: East Texas Stonewall Democrats Dallas resident Craig McCartney will speak in his hometown at the first Stonewall Democrats meeting to be held in Tyler from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Chamber of Commerce, 315 N Broadway Ave, Tyler. That meeting will be followed by the Tyler Transgender Support Group from 7-9 p.m.

• August 19: Cabaret & Cabernet Sammons Center for the Performing Arts, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd., presents Cabaret & Cabernet, featuring emcees Tracy Fulton along with Denise Lee, Linda Petty, The Larry Petty Combo, Teddy and Lorena Davey, Jay Gardner, WT Greer, Sheran Goodspeed Keyton, Keran Jackson, LaLa Johnson, Carolyn Lee Jones, Shelley Kenneavy, Pam Musgrove and Diana Savage. Wine tasting at 7:30 p.m., performances at 8 p.m. Admission is $400 for a table of eight; $300 for a table of six, available by calling 214-520-7788 and online at bit.ly/CabaretAndCabernet.

• August 20: Flame Games Gaybingo Monthly fundraiser for Resource Center takes place 6-9 p.m. the third Saturday of the month at Rose Room at 54, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Doors open at 5 p.m. For more information, call 214-540-4488 or email Bscott@myresourcecenter.org.

• August 21: Holocaust survivor speaks If you have never heard survivors tell their stories, this is your chance at 12:30 p.m. at Dallas Holocaust Museum, 211 N. Record St #100.

• August 25: Pineywoods Voice LGBTQA support group meets at 6:30 p.m. at Special Health Resources of Tyler, 1300 Clinic Drive, Tyler.

• August 25: Trivia Night North Oak Cliff Branch Library hosts Trivia Night at Barbara’s Pavilion, 325 Centre St., with prizes for the winners. For information email NorthOakCliff@DallasLibrary.org.

• August 26: Back-to-School fundraiser for Youth First Resource Center’s Young Professionals Advisory Council hosts a special “after-work recess” to raise funds for the upcoming school year to benefit Resource Center’s Youth First program, featuring DJ Brandon Moses, Stoli cocktails and light bites. 6-9 p.m. at 1626 Hi Line Drive, #C. For information email jwilliams@myresourcecenter.org or visit MyResourceCenter.org/ypac.

• August 27: Austin Festival and Parade Festival at Fiesta Gardens, 2101 Jesse E. Segovia St., Austin. Parade starts at the state Capitol.
A North Texas man has filed suit against the U.S. Navy, charging that officials at Naval Air Station Fort Worth at Carswell Field allowed officers and other staff to target him with anti-gay harassment and bullying throughout his 10 years as a civilian employee there.

Allen Almodovar served as secretary to the fire chief at NAS Fort Worth — commonly known as Carswell — from 2006-2015. During that time, he saw the military scrap its Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy — which prevented open military service by LGBT people and also, supposedly, prevented witch hunts intended to find and discharge closeted LGBT people.

Almodovar never “told” during his time at NAS Fort Worth. But in fact, DADT never applied to civilian employees anyway.

“At work, I never said anything about being gay,” Almodovar said. “It was nobody’s business at work.”

But still, the harassment continued. His attorney, Chad Norcross, said bullying started soon after Almodovar began working there, following an internship at the base.

Almodovar said while he never denied he was gay, he never came out at work, either. He simply didn’t talk about his personal life at the fire station.

“I never did things that made them think I was gay,” he said. “I never gave them a reason to believe otherwise.”

The bullying began with derogatory remarks and fat jokes. Almodovar has asthma and when he used his nebulizer, he’d get comments like, “What are you sucking on today?”

Once at the fire station, he was giving an assignment to a firefighter and was correcting him about something related to his task. Rather than accept the correction, the firefighter said to him, “Don’t get mad at me because you can’t get married in Texas,” and then bragged about the comeback to two others.

A chief repeatedly referred to Almodovar as a “big girl.”

Even though Almodovar told the chief that the name bothered him, the man continued using it. In one instance, as Almodovar was leaving the fire station with one chief, a second asked if they were going to the post office. The first chief replied, “Yeah, I’ll take that big girl anywhere she wants to go.”

In another instance, while Almodovar was on the phone with a vendor, one person in the office asked loudly, “Who are you talking to?” to which a second person replied, “Probably his boyfriend.” Both comments were made loudly enough for the vendor on the other end of the telephone line to hear.

“I had to apologize to the vendor,” Almodovar said. “It was done to humiliate me.”

Such incidents, Almodovar said, were endless. In one case, someone gave Almodovar a photo of actor Erik Estrada pointing his finger, with the caption, “I just want you to know you’re a homo.” In another, Almodovar said, he was talking to one of the supervisors when someone in the office grabbed...
Louganis to receive BTD’s Birch Award

Organizers also announce special performance by Todrick Hall set for Oct. 1 dinner

FROM STAFF REPORTS

As the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio reach the halfway mark, here in North Texas, Black Tie Dinner officials are getting in the spirit by announcing that openly gay Olympic gold medalist Greg Louganis will receive the 2016 Elizabeth Birch Equality Award.

Louganis will receive the award at the 35th annual Black Tie Dinner, set for Oct. 1 and the Sheraton Dallas Hotel. The Birch Award is given in recognition of “demonstrated national impact on LGBT rights.”

Dinner officials also announced today, Friday, Aug. 12, that entertain Todrick Hall — an Arlington native who gained national attention when he advanced to the semifinals in the ninth season of American Idol and who recently brought his Straight Outta Oz tour to the DFW Metroplex — will make an appearance at the dinner.

Nathan Robbins, 2016 BTD co-chair called Louganis “an American icon and trailblazer whose story and contributions to our community have impacted countless individuals around the world.” He added that BTD is “truly honored to present him with the Elizabeth Birch Equality Award at this year’s dinner and look forward to honoring all of his great work.”

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Louganis’ first Olympic appearance: He placed second in the tower event in the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal. He went on to win a total of five Olympic medals — gold medals in spring board and tower diving in Los Angeles in 1984, and again in Seoul in 1988.

Those victories in Seoul came despite the fact
Collin County jail guard who called out bigotry has lost his job

Derek Boyd says harassment against him intensified after a story about his situation ran in Dallas Voice while nurses who harassed him kept their jobs.

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

A Collin County corrections officer has lost his job after publicly accusing two nurses working at the jail of harassing him, and accusing his immediate supervisor of retaliation.

Derek Boyd also said that retaliation against him didn’t just continue, it intensified after a story appeared in the June 3 issue of Dallas Voice about his situation and the fact that he had filed suit against his supervisor, Christopher Perepiczka, and Collin County Sheriff Terry Box.

Boyd’s original lawsuit, filed in May, was dismissed because of procedural errors. But he has retained a new attorney who has filed the case with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The new attorney is waiting for the EEOC to conclude its investigation before requesting a “permission to sue” letter.

Boyd said the conflict began in March when he heard two nurses at the Collin County jail make derogatory remarks about a male inmate with pur-
ple and pink hair. He said the nurses said the inmate should be “with the other faggots in pod D1,” then continued to discuss their dislike of “faggots” in front of Boyd.

Boyd also said that after he spoke to the two nurses privately, letting them know he found their statements offensive and inappropriate, one of two stopped making the comments. The second nurse, however, responded by calling Boyd a faggot, he said.

The next day, Boyd said, he spoke to the jail’s head nurse, who said she’d advise nurses in the department to be careful of their statements on the job. But the nurse that called Boyd a faggot began to harass him in response to his complaint to her supervisor, he said.

Boyd said when he called the head nurse’s office again, she told him that the nurse couldn’t be replaced, and the nurse responded by escalating the situation.

In his original lawsuit, Boyd accused the offending nurse of intentionally creating a hostile and unsafe environment in his pod “by deliberately disobeying safety orders, telling Officer Boyd she does not have to listen to him, laughing at him, calling him derogatory names, and entirely undermining his authority in the presence of potentially violent or sexually aggressive inmates.”

Boyd said he was subjected to a lie detector test while the nurses, who work for a private contractor, were not.

Boyd has since lost his job, he said, but the nurses continue to work at the jail. He said he was told the internal investigation into the case was “unable to unequivocally establish whether such comments were made,” even though Boyd passed his polygraph test.

In his initial interview with Dallas Voice, Boyd said retaliation against him had become so severe he was unable to perform his duties. But instead of taking any action against the nurses, Boyd said his supervisor, Perepiczka, began harassing him filing a complaint. Boyd said the harassment left him in a dangerous situation, for example, when he’d radio for help from his pod in the county jail and get no response.

Boyd noted that Collin County added protections against discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation to its policies in 2015. But the policy change didn’t actually protect him.

After the story ran in Dallas Voice, Boyd said, the retaliation against him worsened. He said he was required to take a class in sexual harassment, while the nurses who harassed him were not. He also said that he was targeted by several investigations, including one instance in which he was interrogated in the prisoner interrogation room. Again, the nurses who began the harassment were not questioned, Boyd said.

“After every investigation, no disciplinary action was taken against me,” Boyd said, although he was written up for being one minute late on one occasion.

“In the weeks after the suit was filed, the behaviors of Collin County continued and escalated, which led to a medical diagnosis,” his attorney said.

Boyd said his family doctor suggested he find a new job instead of continuing to work in the toxic environment at the Collin County jail. But before he could resign, he received two letters from his health insurance company, dated June 30, about applying for COBRA. The first, printed July 9, said Boyd was no longer eligible for health insurance through his employer because he was terminated. The second, also dated June 30 but printed Aug. 3, says his ineligibility for coverage is because of a reduction in hours.

On his license to serve as a corrections officer, Boyd’s attorney’s noted the inconsistencies in claims by Collin County.

Boyd applied for unemployment insurance. He was turned down on Aug. 4, because, county officials claimed, he “didn’t make a reasonable effort to protect your job while you were out due to illness.” But without appealing the decision himself, he received a call on Aug. 5 that it was being reviewed and on Aug. 8 was told he would receive unemployment benefits.

According to documents from the Texas Workforce Commission, Boyd said, “Our investigation shows you quit your job for cause,” because his family doctor told him that reporting to work would be detrimental to his health. Therefore, “We will bill your employer’s account” for his unemployment benefits.

Boyd’s attorney said he’s going to see what the EEOC discovery process finds in this case before taking the next step toward suing Collin County. He said he believes the EEOC investigation will turn up a number of inconsistencies such as the ones related to Boyd’s COBRA benefits.

Meanwhile, while Boyd is out of work, the nurses whose harassment against him initiated the problems have had the IDs allowing them entrance to the jail revoked by county officials. They continue, however, to be employed by Southwest Correctional Medical Group, Inc., which has reassigned them to a jail facility elsewhere.
Vasquez announces affiliation with MDVIP, changes in practice

Oak Lawn doctor says change will allow him to give patients more personalized, thorough care, but some question the cost of new model

OAK LAWN area physician Dr. Jaime Vasquez announced in a recent letter to his patients that he has affiliated with a Boca Raton, Fla.-based company called MDVIP and as of Nov. 22, will be changing his practice to what many people refer to as “concierge medicine.”

Vasquez said the membership fee, which breaks down to about $4.50 a day, can be paid quarterly, semi-annually or annually.

Patients are still responsible for applicable copays and co-insurance and for maintaining primary-care insurance coverage, including Medicare.

Vasquez said the new practice will allow him to develop “real relationships” with his patients and work “as a team” with them to create “personalized wellness plans” that will help them reach their health and fitness goals.

“My patients have indicated through feedback surveys that they want more time with me, which is nearly impossible to provide in a traditional, high-volume primary care practice,” Vasquez said. “The MDVIP model will enable me to deliver more personalized care with a greater focus on total wellness and prevention to patients who join.”

“Vasquez said, “I’ve been practicing in the local community as a family doctor for more than 25 years, treating patients from all walks of life. This new practice is one that I’ve considered and researched for many years.

“My new practice opens in November, which gives me and my staff several months to explain the benefits to my patients,” he continued. “Many of my patients have already committed to joining, and I’ve been humbled by the response. For those patients who choose not to join my new staff, I will provide a list of physicians in the community who are accepting new patients.”

In his bio on the MDVIP website, Vasquez notes that his practice has welcomed “all ages, from pediatrics to geriatrics,” and that he is fluent in Spanish, which “creates an important bridge to providing adequate care for the Hispanic/Latino community.”

It also notes that Vasquez has treated “those affected by HIV disease since the beginning of the epidemic in the 1980s,” and that he “has also welcomed the LGBT community for all these years and looks eager to many more healthy years.”

In his letter to patients, Vasquez said that reducing the size of his practice will make it easier for patients to schedule same-day or next-day appointments, easier for all doctor visits to start on time and easier for patients to reach him “during and after hours.” He also wrote that it will allow
him to call patients with lab results “in a timely manner and explain by phone or in person how they pertain to your condition. In short, I’ll be available whenever you need me.”

Vasquez has scheduled two informational sessions for his existing patients in the coming weeks, and said that patients will be added to the new practice on a first-come, first-served basis. Once he reaches capacity for the new practice, interested patients will be added to a waiting list.

One patient said that although the annual membership fee is a significant amount, he will likely enroll in the new practice for at least the first year. He said he considers the cost an investment in his own health.

But another patient was not pleased with the change. “It’s just another way for doctors to get around [the Affordable Health Care Act],” said the man, who asked that his name not be used. “I love Dr. Vasquez. He’s my favorite of all the doctors I’ve ever had. And if I could afford it, I would definitely [pay the membership fee]. But I can’t afford that, and I’m sure there are a lot of other people who can’t afford it either.”

He added that as a 60-year-old, HIV-positive man, he’s concerned that he won’t be able to find another primary care doctor, and that he’ll have to again resort to going to Parkland Hospital for medical care.

“Dr. Vasquez said he will give us a list of doctors taking new patients, but finding one who will accept you as a patient and that you like is not so easy,” he said. “Who wants to take an old person anyway, besides the HIV on top of that?”

Winter Laurel Mullenix, a local transgender activist, said that while Vasquez is not her doctor, she has many transgender friends who do go to him and rely on him for the hormone treatments they need. Once his practice changes to the new model, she said, many of those transgender women, who fall in lower income brackets could be left without a doctor.

“I’ve trustingly recommended Dr. Vasquez to trans individuals I’ve mentored,” Mullenix said. “As an activist of 20 years, it is impossible not to see a move to concierge service as potentially exploitative of an already-marginalized community.”
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East Texas LGBTs forming Stonewall Democrats chapter

"It can be hard to be gay in East Texas, but it can be harder to be a Democrat"

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

East Texas Stonewall held its first meeting on Aug. 1 in Longview with an ambitious plan: become the largest Stonewall group in Texas.

That goal may be possible, because East Texas Stonewall covers a 30-county area stretching from the Oklahoma and Arkansas borders on the north, to the Louisiana border on the east, to the Lufkin and Nacogdoches areas on the south and the DFW area on the west.

While 30 counties out of the total 254 in Texas may not seem like that much, its actually almost 1 percent of all counties in the U.S. Fifteen states have fewer than 30 counties and these counties cover an area larger than New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware and Rhode Island put together.

But new Stonewall group’s organizers are scared off by the size of the area they’re looking at coordinating. And, according to Dallas Stonewall President Jay Narey, organizing such a large geographic area under one umbrella isn’t unique in Texas. The Central Texas Stonewall group also covers a large multi-county area, he said.

The first East Texas Stonewall meeting was held in Longview and the next one will be in Tyler. But over the next couple of months, the group will also hit Ben Wheeler, a tiny community halfway between Tyler and Canton, and Nacogdoches, situated about 70 miles south of Longview, as well.

Josh Gibson from Longview went to the state Democratic convention for the first time as a Hillary Clinton delegate from Senate District 1. He met Karen Wilkerson from Tyler and became reacquainted with Patrick Franklin, who’s also from Longview. Franklin became the first openly gay person to run for office in East Texas when he ran for a Texas House seat in 2006.

Wilkerson said starting an East Texas Stonewall group was something she’d thought about for years, but “We’ve never been able to..."
LGBT community apparently no longer needs to have special, secret parties on cruises. We’re just part of the crowd

DAVID WEBB | The Rare Reporter
nash@dallasvoice.com

It was bound to happen eventually: “Friends of Dorothy” meetings, once posted on daily cruise ship programs as mysterious, informal get-togethers, now tend to be noted for what they really are — LGBT mixers.

That came to my attention during my trip on the Carnival Vista, July 9-19, cruising from Barcelona to Athens with port stops in France, Italy, Turkey and Greece along the way. One of three straight women with whom I traveled asked me before we flew to Spain what “Friend of Dorothy,” a phrase she had noticed so often on cruise ship programs, actually means.

I explained that cruise ships began using the term decades ago, when homosexuality was still illegal in many places, to signify to passengers who wanted to meet other gay men or lesbians that they could do so at a designated spot, usually one of the smaller ship bars.

“Well, who is Dorothy?” my friend persisted.

I had always assumed that Dorothy referred to the main character in the Wizard of Oz, a role played by Judy Garland, because Garland and her song from the movie, “Over the Rainbow,” became favorites of gay men. Turns out, I might have been wrong about that.

Some gay historians theorize that “Dorothy” actually refers to Dorothy Parker, the poet and scriptwriter who produced “A Star Is Born.” Parker was infamous for her glitzy social circle in the 1940s and 1950s that included many gay men and bisexuals.

The term “Friends of Dorothy” gained widespread use after World War II, and investigators for the U.S. military began to suspect that the mys-
terious organization might be a spy ring, according to the gay historians. Given that many gay activists prior to the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969 belonged to the U.S. Communist Party, it’s easy to see how the organization became somewhat notorious, even though it really never officially existed.

“That’s interesting,” my friend said about the history of the term. She noted that she had always wondered what “Friends of Dorothy” meant but never before met anyone who could tell her. “I know a lot of lesbians,” she said.

She asked me what went on in the gatherings, and I said that I really didn’t know. I never went to one. I tended to turn wherever I partied into a gay bar, whether it be a country-and-western bar, jazz club, casino or whatever.

“Do you want to go?” I asked her. “It might be interesting to see what they do at them.”

My friend said that would be OK with her because she harbored no anti-gay bigotry. Four times divorced with three children, I knew she was unlikely to be confused about her sexual orientation, just curious — as I had become by that point, too.

But much to my surprise, when we got on the ship and perused the schedules I couldn’t find a reference to “Friends of Dorothy” anywhere. My last cruise, in September of last year on Holland America’s Amsterdam going to Alaska out of Seattle, had included such a meeting on the schedule in one of the bars.

“That strange,” I said.

Then my friend asked me another curious question: “What is LGBT?”

So I looked at the schedule again, and I told her that the ship apparently had dropped the “Friends of Dorothy” ruse and was outright publicizing a gay and lesbian party.

“But what does LGBT mean?” she asked again.

I explained it referred to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people. I was surprised she wouldn’t have a clue as to what I meant. It looks like the LGBT community has come so far that it no longer needs any sort of special meetings, no matter what the cruise ships might call them.

We agreed to check out the LGBT gathering. And that led to another shock. The bar turned out to be open to one of the ship’s hallways, and it included about a dozen barstools and a few tables with chairs. The bar was packed — but not with the people I expected to see.

Straight couples sat at all of the seats, enjoying pre-dinner cocktails. I didn’t bother asking any of them if they had come to attend the LGBT party. I knew they wouldn’t have a clue as to what I meant. It looks like the LGBT community has come so far that it no longer needs any sort of special meetings, no matter what the cruise ships might call them.
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that Louganis hit his head on the diving board during the springboard preliminaries and suffered a concussion. He refused to drop out of the competition, though, and went on to win the gold in springboard by a 25-point margin. That and his much narrower win in the 10-meter tower dive earned him ABC’s Wide World of Sports’ Athlete of the Year honors in 1988.

(He had been favored to win gold in 1980 at the Summer Olympics in Moscow, but an American boycott of those Games left him hanging until Los Angeles.) In addition to his Olympic victories, Louganis has won five world championship titles and 47 national titles — more than any person in U.S. history — and his records remain unbroken.

It was also in 1988 that Louganis first tested positive for HIV. He did not disclose his HIV status — or come out as a gay man — until 1995 when he released his autobiography, Breaking The Surface, which spent five weeks at No. 1 on the New York Times bestseller list.

Back on Board, the documentary about Louganis’ return to the world of diving as a mentor for young athletes which was initially released in 2014 and nominated for a Producers Guild Award and an Emmy, is now showing on HBO.

The story of Louganis’ life “has inspired millions,” BTD officials said, noting that he “regularly speaks to the most significant organizations and companies in the world to share that story. Today, as an author, actor, activist and humanitarian, clothing and jewelry designer, he continues his tradition of excellence in every field he touches.”

Todrick Hall

Todrick Hall has a long list of accomplishments after his name: singer, songwriter, dancer, actor, choreographer, playwright, costume designer, Broadway performer, American Idol finalist, star of his own self-titled MTV Show and viral YouTube sensation.

His Broadway credits include Oprah Winfrey’s The Color Purple and The 2010 Tony Award-winning musical Memphis! In the four years he has been a full-time YouTuber, he has opened the Nickelodeon Kid’s Choice Awards, been a judge on RuPaul’s Drag Race and Gay for Play, choreographed music videos for Beyoncé, written and starred in the Virgin America safety video, Fiat commercials and the theme song for the new online version of Jim Henson’s Sesame Street.

Hall has also teamed up with The Trevor Project, the city of West Hollywood, HIV Equal and HIV Beats to help raise awareness of several issues within the LGBT community.

BTD 2016 Co-Chair Mitzi Lemons said, “Todrick Hall is truly a force of nature, and we are sure that his special performance at this year’s dinner will be a highlight of the evening. Todrick has used his unique gifts and platform to entertain and inspire and we are thrilled to have him as a special guest.”

For more information on Black Tie Dinner, visit BlackTie.org. Raffle tickets, sponsorship tables, tables and individual tickets are currently on sale at the website.

LOUGANIS

From Page 9

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The Australian women’s basketball team, which includes Dallas Wings guard Erin Phillips, has won three consecutive games. By press time, the team had beaten Brazil, Turkey and France. They were scheduled to play Japan on Thursday, Aug. 11, and Belarus on Saturday, Aug. 13, all in pool play.

Phillips has averaged 22 minutes play per game. In the game against France, she made four out of four free throws and two field goals.

Phillips is from Melbourne, in south Australia and played for the Adelaide Lightening before coming to the WNBA in 2006. She has played in the WNBA for Connecticut, Indiana, Phoenix and Los Angeles before being traded to Dallas this season. She lives in McKinney with her partner.

In other gay athlete news:
- Rafaela Silva of Brazil won a gold medal in judo (officially coming out after her victory).
- British diver Tom Daley won a bronze medal for Great Britain in men’s synchronized 10-meter platform. Daley is engaged to writer Dustin Lance Black.
- Canada’s women’s rugby team, including lesbian Jen Kish, beat Great Britain 33–10 in women’s sevens to win a bronze medal.
- Linda Villumsen, from Denmark, is the only out cyclist competing. She finished sixth in the women’s time trial on Wednesday, Aug. 10, and 23rd in the women’s road race.

According to OutSports, a record 49 athletes competing in this summer’s games and three coaches are out. Of the 11 out male athletes, none are American. Helen and Kate Richardson-Walsh, a married couple, both compete on Great Britain’s field hockey team.

Here’s a list of out athletes, their country and sport:
- Nicola Adams (Great Britain, boxing)
- Seimone Augustus (USA, basketball)
- Tom Bosworth (Great Britain, race walk)
- Isadora Cerullo (Brazil, rugby)
- Dutee Chand (India, track & field)
- Tom Daley (Great Britain, diving)
- Carlien Dirkse van den Heuvel (Netherlands, field hockey)
- Lisa Dahlkvist (Sweden, soccer)
- Elena Delle Donne (USA, basketball)
- Katie Duncan (New Zealand, soccer)
- Nilla Fisher (Sweden, soccer)
- Amini Fonua (Tonga, swimming)
- Larissa França (Brazil, beach volleyball)
- Edward Gal (Netherlands, equestrian)
- Kelly Griffin (USA, rugby)
- Brittney Griner (USA, basketball)
- Carl Hester (Great Britain, equestrian)
- Michelle Heyman (Australia, soccer)
- Mélanie Henique (France, swimming)
- Jen Kish (Canada, rugby)
- Stephanie Labbe (Canada, soccer)
- Alexandra Lacrabère (France, handball)
- Hedvig Lindahl (Sweden, soccer)
- Ari-Pekka Liukkonen (Finland, swimming)
- Robbie Manson (New Zealand, rowing)
- Hans Peter Minderhoud (Netherlands, equestrian)
- Ian Matos (Brazil, diving)
- Angel McCoughtry (USA, basketball)
- Nadine Müller (Germany, discus)
- Marie-Eve Nault (Canada, soccer)
- Ashley Nee (USA, kayak whitewater slalom)
- Maarten Paumen (Netherlands, field hockey)
- Mayssa Pessoa (Brazil, handball)
- Jillian Potter (USA, rugby)
- Megan Rapinoe (USA, soccer)
- Helen Richardson-Walsh (Great Britain, field hockey)
- Kate Richardson-Walsh (Great Britain, field hockey)
- Tassei Savelkoul (Netherlands, judo)
- Carolina Seger (Sweden, soccer)
- Caster Semenya (South Africa, track & field)
- Rafaela Silva (Brazil, judo)
- Martina Strutz (Germany, pole vault)
- Susanah Townsend (Great Britain, field hockey)
- Sunette Stellie Viljoen (South Africa, javelin)
- Julia Vasconcelos (Brazil, taekwondo)
- Marleen van Iersel (Netherlands, beach volleyball)
- Linda Vilumsen (New Zealand, cycling)
- Jeffrey Wamnes (Netherlands, gymnastics)
- Spencer Wilton (Great Britain, equestrian)
and twisted his nipple.

He reported that to the commanding officer, who dismissed it as “horseplay” based on what others in the office said.

“Had that happened to a woman,” Almodovar said, “any reasonable person would know it wasn’t OK.”

Almodovar said he is suing because of how long the harassment lasted, because of the intensity of the bullying and because it was coming from management. He said he began by going through the EEOC process.

“Dallas EEOC summarily dismissed it,” Norcross said. “Allen appealed the case to D.C., and we cited several Supreme Court cases of hostile work environment based on sexual orientation.”

Those cases included Oncale v. Sundowner from 1998, in which the Supreme Court ruled that same-sex harassment is sex discrimination under Title VII. Justice Antonin Scalia wrote for the majority that this wasn’t the problem Congress was addressing, but “statutory prohibitions often go beyond the principal evil to cover reasonably comparable evils, and it is ultimately the provisions of our laws rather than the principal concerns of our legislators by which we are governed.”

Another case Norcross cited in the appeal is Heller v. Columbia Edgewater Country Club, in which the court wrote, “If an employer subjected a heterosexual employee to the sort of abuse allegedly endured by Heller — including numerous unwarranted offensive comments regarding her sex life — the evidence would be sufficient to state a claim for violation of Title VII. The result should not differ simply because the victim of the harassment is homosexual.”

Norcross said he recently received the go-ahead from a federal EEOC administrative law judge to work out the complaints before going to court. But he will take the case to court if the issues aren’t resolved in arbitration.

While penalties assessed in such cases are usually monetary, Norcross said the people who harassed and bullied Almodovar at work could be prosecuted for assault, a state charge that could be filed in federal court.

Almodovar has solicited statements from some fellow employees that corroborated his story.

One co-worker called him “knowledgable and shy” and said the chief often called him a “fag,” in violation of the Navy’s no tolerance policy. Another wrote about having seen Almodovar “being abused,” saying that others in the office “were messing with him.” That same person described Almodovar as “a pleasure to work with.”

And another former coworker called Almodovar “professional, knowledgable and among our most reliable IT representatives.” That co-worker then recalled how Almodovar worked out and lost weight, but was then harassed for that, too.

Almodovar said the rising level of bullying over the years might have been retaliation for him having reported to the Office of the Inspector General that one of his coworkers — someone who often called him “fag” — didn’t have the “secret clearance” necessary for the job he was doing. That man no longer works at the base.

Almodovar said he also reported to officials after discovering that four or five people at the fire station, including the fire chief, had fake college degrees they had paid for. Those individuals claimed they didn’t realize the degrees were not authentic, and after that, Almodovar said, the harassment against him increased.

Norcross said his client put up with the abuse because he had to “in order to keep his job.”

Now, though, Almodovar has no interest in going back to work at NAS Fort Worth. He’s been working at the Bush Presidential Center where, he said, everyone from the former president to his supervisors and co-workers are very pleasant. He said neither his weight nor his sexual orientation is an issue in his new job; he’s judged only by the work he produces.

But what Almodovar would like to see — among other things — is the Navy issue him a letter of apology and a good reference, and then put letters in the files of those who were bullying him.

“I want the chief to know what they did was wrong,” he said.

Almodovar said he wants to publicly shame base officials for allowing the harassment and bullying happen to him, because if it happened to him, it was and is happening to others.

“They need to do something when someone reports something,” he said.

Norcross said the case will probably take a year or two to be resolved.
get enough people interested.”

But that changed this year. “Patrick and I discussed the idea at the state convention,” Wilkerson said, adding that they formed a steering committee at a convention lunch.

After returning from the state meeting, Wilkerson said they met a few times by phone and email and set up their Facebook page. Gibson said they wrote by-laws and were ready to meet by the beginning of this month. They met at RMC, a gay bar in downtown Longview.

Attendees included Shirley McKellar who’s running for the U.S. House against the man many call the stupidest person serving in Congress, Louis Gohmert of Tyler.

Gibson said this was just a good time to organize the area’s LGBT community politically. “People in East Texas are fed up with the leadership in Austin and D.C.,” he said.

Wilkerson acknowledged that organizing in a 30-county area will be a challenge. “There are no political organizations for LGBT people in those areas,” she noted, adding that Stonewall organizers’ goal is to help activists become more aware and give them more tools to have a voice in their representation.

“It can be hard to be gay in East Texas, but it can be even harder to be a Democrat in East Texas,” Wilkerson said, comparing the original Stonewall rebellion in New York to gay people living in East Texas now.

“They’re backs were against the wall and had nothing to lose,” said of the Stonewall rioters. “That’s how we feel in East Texas, where meddlesome bigots still control the political power. We’ve had it.”

On Friday, June 26, 2015, the day the U.S. Supreme Court issued its marriage equality ruling, Wilkerson and her partner went to the county courthouse to get a marriage license and were denied. After they threatened a lawsuit and officials held closed-door meetings, a deputy clerk issued the license the following Monday. Wilkerson had to travel to Rusk in nearby Cherokee County to get East Texas P-FLAG member Judge Dwight Pfifer to sign a waiver of the three-day waiting period, so that she and her partner could marry that day.

With that paper in hand, their minister married them and they became the first same-sex couple to marry in Smith County, where Tyler is located.

Wilkerson compared her ordeal to what happened in Dallas, where nearly every judge was available to sign waivers and perform weddings on Marriage Equality Day and other elected officials came out to celebrate. “There’s a pall of oppression here [in East Texas], especially on politically-charged matters,” she said.

Wilkerson said a number of factors came together this summer — Trump, a Democratic candidate in Hillary Clinton that people could rally around, the need to organize to oppose the bathroom bills expected to be introduced in the next Texas Legislature.

“It’s time for everyone to get on the same page and push for equality,” she said.

“Stonewall wants to be fighters for candidates,” Wilkerson said. That will involve lots of fundraising and block walking. And she knows it’ll be an uphill climb. The last time Smith County voted for a Democrat in a presidential race was in 1948 for Harry Truman.

But Gibson is optimistic East Texas Stonewall will make a difference. He thinks it just makes sense to organize in all 30 East Texas counties, because “There are gay people in every one of those counties.”
Gender-neutral facilities are so hard to adjust to, after all

A s I pushed open to door of the men’s restroom, I was met by a woman who was just leaving. It was a little bit of a shock, but then I remembered that the signs had included the words “Gender Neutral Restroom.”

You see, I was attending the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Summit in Washington, D.C. over weekend, and the hotel had agreed to make the change to gender-neutral facilities throughout the conference areas to accommodate our attendees.

When I say “we,” I refer to the fact that I am co-chair of the Woodhull Freedom Foundation, organizer of the annual conference. As believers in social justice for all sexual orientations and gender identities and forms of expression, having gender-neutral restrooms was a natural extension of what we stand for.

But surprisingly enough, I hadn’t experienced gender-neutral restrooms prior to our conference.

I guess I assumed that only transwomen and transmen would be affected by the change. But I forgot the word “neutral” is pretty hard to misinterpret. Since we have a large number of women attending — both cisgender and transgender — the initiative also had the bonus effect of eliminating the “potty parity” problem all facilities face:

Most men never have to wait more than a few moments for a urinal or stall at a public event, but women’s restrooms are notoriously too small and with too few stalls for a crowd.

As the weekend progressed, I became more and more comfortable with the occasional woman in what was previously the “men’s” room. And frankly, so did everyone else.

Why the American psyche is too fragile to deal with people of either gender in a restroom has long puzzled some Europeans. When I was a teenager, my family visited France, and I distinctly remember walking into the restroom at the Paris Opera and seeing women walk past the row of men at the urinals to access the stalls.

And frankly, so did everyone else.

Why the American psyche is too fragile to deal with people of either gender in a restroom has long puzzled some Europeans. When I was a teenager, my family visited France, and I distinctly remember walking into the restroom at the Paris Opera and seeing women walk past the row of men at the urinals to access the stalls.

Today, unisex toilets are common throughout the continent, though most are single-stall facilities.

Meanwhile, back at our conference, I still found myself going only into the facility that had previously been the “men’s room,” never quite getting up the nerve to visit the other gender-neutral restroom. I suspect I would have felt uncomfortable there, perhaps because the last time I was in a women’s restroom was when I was 13 years old and accompanied by my mother.

Even at 3, I felt somehow my masculinity was being challenged by using the women’s restroom — and maybe that is the problem. Why does a sign on a door say anything about our gender anyway?

Woodhull’s weekend conference went off without a single bathroom scandal, and though I know it was more of a statement than a practical solution, the unisex bathrooms did dispel a few fears.

No women were assaulted while in the restroom and no men were solicited. No transgender people were made to feel uncomfortable, and no one was stigmatized for using the wrong restroom.

Though I suspect it will be years before a multi-stall restroom in a public space is actually specified to be gender neutral, our experiment showed it is possible. And while that’s not surprising, considering that our attendees are enlightened individuals when it comes to sex and gender, I am pretty sure that the general public could adapt pretty easily.

Our curious obsession with bathrooms in America leads to some real problems, specifically political ones. The specter of the “man in the ladies room” is always good for a few votes, and lately it is being trotted out both as a fear tactic to drive people to the polls and in boneheaded laws also intended to generate support for an otherwise failed elected official.

Until we get over our obsession with gender and who’s in what bathroom, we will always stigmatize transgender people as potential threats to the “sanctity of the toilet.” We need to admit that restrooms are good for two things — relieving ourselves and washing our hands — and neither of the two should be the basis for public policy.
Uptown Players at 15 — Page 28
ASL interpreter Don Jones — Page 32
Alyssa Edwards, better than ever — Page 36
Planning your season of the arts — Page 38
‘Bootycandy’ playwright Robert O’Hara — Page 44
Artist Danny Rose — Page 46
In the summer of 2001, two friends, both local actors — Jeff Rane and Craig Lynch — decided they were tired of looking for good theater; they wanted to create their own. They planned and raised money to produce a play with a gay sensibility called *When Pigs Fly*. Then 9/11 happened, but that didn't discourage them. Why would it? This was a one-off, a toe-in-the-water production. "We wanted to do one show — maybe one every year or two," Rane recalls.

They gave their production company a name: Uptown Players. They were just playin', after all. It's not like this would become a career or anything.

Fifteen years later, it has become far more than they could have imagined. "The second week into *When Pigs Fly* is when our patrons were saying, 'You have to do more,'" Rane says. "'So we put together a season, a budget and found funding very quickly.'"

The theater landscape in North Texas has never been the same. Uptown Players, quite literally, reconfigured what audiences in one of America's largest cities would become accustomed to. Established troupes like the Dallas Theater Center and Theatre 3 took notice, including more racy, adult content (full-frontal nudity! Men kissing!) and expanding the scope of their seasons.

"I felt like when WaterTower did *The Laramie Project* was the first show we thought would be really good for us that went to someone else. That's when we saw other theaters were applying for titles [they probably wouldn't have before]," Rane says.

That hasn't deterred Lynch and Rane from compiling seasons — usually comprised of two musicals, a comedy, a drama, their...
fundraising Broadway Our Way revue, as well as the Pride Performing Arts Festival and occasional concert-version shows and drag comedies at the Rose Room — that speak directly to the gay community... and a wider audience as well.

“Initially we ended up with a majority of the audience as gay men in that first season. This was another thing to do other than go to bars at night,” says Lynch. “It’s a social outing. ‘Phillip [Hearne, Lynch’s husband] has a cult following behind the bar — I could plop a cute boy up there, and his regulars will still come to get a drink from him.’

“It has become a four-times-a-year social thing — seven or eight couples will plan their [trips to the theater together],” Rane says. And not just gay men, either.

“People think, ‘I can go to the theater and take my girlfriend from work.’ They bring their friends and their moms and their aunts,” Lynch says. UP’s manager of patron services, in fact, is Nancy Rubin — a married straight lady.

Gay plays aren’t that difficult to come by — heck, they would spend a lifetime just doing plays by Paul Rudnick, Terrence McNally, Del Shores and Charles Busch, all of whom have been represented multiple times. Musicals are sometimes more difficult to curate. Lyric Stage does wonders recreating the classics of past decades; newer, gayer musicals (Fun Home, Kinky Boots, The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert, The Book of Mormon) are harder (and more expensive) to get the rights to... and more challenging to do justice.

“I would say Next to Normal [the Pulitzer Prize-winning musical about a family coping with mental illness] was the first one we said, ‘We have to do this one right,’” says Rane. “We were the first regional theater to get to do it and the first time, and it was pretty massive: A three story set, etc.” (No surprise: the production was a stunning success.)

He and Lynch agree, however, that one show stands out as the hugest of the huge: The Producers, which came with more costumes than they’d ever seen.

That could be eclipsed in their upcoming 16th season, however, by two shows. First, their production of Angels in America Part One: Millennium Approaches, Tony Kushner’s seminal work about gay issues in the 1980s. It’s a perfect fit for their mission, and the first time the show will be presented at the Kalita Humphreys Theater since DTC’s controversial staging in 1996. (Reaction from their subscribers was so incensed, a planned production of Part Two: Perestroika, never took place; UP says they fully intend to mount Part Two in their 2018 season.)

Then next summer, La Cage aux Folles should rival The Producers for grandiosity... and once again, dovetail perfectly with the company’s mission to bring art by, of and about the queer experience to their audience.

The question may soon become: How can Uptown up itself?

They haven’t done many repeats — Kiss of the Spider Woman and Pagant are the only shows they have mounted full productions of in separate seasons. But that could happen more in the future. And they are always looking to create an overall experience for their patrons from show to show.

“There are things that, over time, audiences have come to expect. I don’t know that we are necessarily targeting [the works of specific playwrights, for instance], but we are always looking for the freshest things — even if they are older plays,” Rane says.

“We concentrate on developing a season that isn’t all one thing — it has to follow [an arc],” Lynch says. Sometimes they are able to “snatch up” a show that has just become available.

And after 15 years, they are no longer low-troupe-on-the-totem-pole for winning production rights to some primo shows. Their reputation, it seems, has grown with them beyond Texas. They may be called Uptown Players, but the sky’s the limit.

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Even when he’s chatting over a nosh at La Madeleine, Don Jones lets his hands do most of the talking. His fingertips dance across the tabletop to make a point, then his palms gently meet as punctuation. When his left hand topples a coffee cup — as it did during a recent interview in Oak Lawn — Jones laughs. Big gestures often lead to little spills.

Fans of the Turtle Creek Chorale will recognize Jones — the silver-haired gent in the tux, standing on the skirt of the stage — as the American Sign Language interpreter for all the group’s concerts since 1989. Jones has also signed for the Catholic Diocese of Dallas for 40 years, is currently signing mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in East Dallas and is now in his sixth year with the Dallas Independent School District as an “inclusion teacher,” traveling school to school to check on classroom accommodations for hearing impaired and dyslexic students.

It’s the concerts with the TCC, however, that allow Jones to use his signing skills with an artistic flair. Signing musical performances isn’t done word-for-word, he explains. “It really is an interpretation of the words, the music and the message. I use ‘poetic motion,’ you can call it, to put across the meaning and the emotion.” That includes not just ASL signs and some finger-spelling, but body language and facial expressions.

Jones recalls his first appearance with the chorale as one of his toughest assignments. He’d been hired mid-season when Dr. Tim Seelig, then in his second year as TCC’s artistic director, saw him sign the Lord’s Prayer at a spiritual conference and asked him to sign for the chorale’s next concert: Verdi’s Requiem, which required a signer to interpret three different texts being sung simultaneously in Latin.

“I studied it beforehand, of course, but I highlighted the sections in different colors to get everything in,” says Jones. “When you’re signing with a choir, you can’t have that time delay that you normally have in interpreting speech. In music, you need to be right on the words. You have to know the words.”

Pre-performance homework for Jones can mean learning the libretti of operas sung in German, French or Italian. Jones spends hours rehearsing signing lyrics, from hymns to Broadway show tunes to the rapid-fire
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WE'LL MAKE YOU GET UP AND DANCE
When Alyssa Edwards walked onto the set of RuPaul’s Drag Race for Season 5, she was shocked to see her longtime rival Coco Montrese among the queens she’d be competing with. The drama made for delicious television, but probably threw Edwards off her game — she finished in the Top 6, but failed to be declared America’s Next Drag Superstar.

So when she was asked to join the cast for the second incarnation of Drag Race All Stars — which begins airing on Aug. 25 on Logo — she decided to play a smarter mental game. She didn’t ask past All Stars for advice. She didn’t worry about who would or would not be her competition. She went all Zen on those bitches’ asses.

“I told myself don’t overly coach — go in there and be you,” Edwards says. “Don’t get inside your head. You need to do this like you do every single day of your life — whether you’re in the studio teaching, or on stage performing, you’re tackling the challenges you’re faced with. You should avoid letting it become a mental battle.”

That was certainly good preparation, because once filming began, it was a free-for-all. First up was the discovery that the rules had changed.

“This season is borderline Big Brother, because Ru doesn’t make the decisions this time,” she says. “We found that out on Day One. We had no clue! And you’ll see how cracked out we are. All of your dreams have been crushed because guess what? We were told, ‘You are going to be sending yourselves home.’ And I’m just like oh-my-gosh.”

This surprise definitely changed dynamics among the contestants, because even though the competition has always been cutthroat, this development took it to another level of intensity.

“I was looking around the room like, ‘Well OK, I’m glad I’m kind of friends with everyone almost.’ Luckily, I do have a good rapport with the girls. That doesn’t mean that they don’t want to send you home, honey, because you’re a threat or you’re the possibility that could get in the way of cashing that check.”

One of the girls in the room, it so happened, was Coco Montrese … again. And three other queens from Season 5, making it a reunion of sorts (though not necessarily the good kind).

“I was a little shocked [that] five of the 10 girls came from [my] season. I thought there would have been two, maybe three of us. But we all knew each other — you know somebody and you know when they’re having a bad day or moment, and therefore not overanalyze things that they say,” says Edwards.

That pressure was modulated by other rule changes … including the ultimate reward.

“The stakes are a little different this time around. I’m talking about the coin, the dollar,” Edwards says. “I think everyone that watches the first episode is going to be in for a treat because they totally ru-vamped the idea [of the show]. ‘Coming for you’ is a nice way of putting it.”

But Edwards was prepared this time. Before, she was a pageant queen with a long list of titles. Now, she has not only one season of RPDR under her belt, but the web-based series Alyssa’s Secret and a work ethic rivaled by no one. She went in a stronger queen than ever before, but also a wiser one: She has a solid grasp of her strengths and weaknesses — as well as those of her competitors … and where they would best be served.

“We are all good in one thing [or another],” she says. “I would never want to step foot on a runway or a photoshoot [to challenge] Violet Chachki, but we can lip sync [against each other] all day. I don’t even want to get into a Snatch Game battle with Chad Michaels. And why on God’s green earth would I ever ponder a comedy challenge against Bianca Del Rio?”

But Edwards — aka Mesquite native Justin Johnson — also knows something about showmanship. She worked with former Dallasite Rey Ortiz — a fashion designer and himself a former Project Runway contestant — to come up with her smashing debut look, a dazzling ruby gown with a majestic collar.

“I told Rey, ‘I’m OK with doing something fashionista. I don’t consider myself a fashion girl and I don’t think I have the body to model. But I wanted something avant garde, something sexy with my platform heels. I wanted something that just speaks royalty — like she’s the queen. It has a touch of regalness to it but a touch of okurrrr. He was like, that’s a lot of inspiration.’

That costume may have contributed to her secret weapon: Attitude.

“This time I presented myself to be open, confident … and not to tell myself ‘no.’ Just like I teach my kids every day: ‘Can’t never could.’ You better get up there to sing and sew,” she says. “Alaska said it very well: When you’re in Drag Race it’s kind of like a constant fight-or-flight mentality.”

Her newfound calm even informs how she wants fans to watch All Stars this time out.

“I hope the fans watch it this time from a different angle. Drag Race is such a sport — we all get caught up in it, so involved. Just watch it this time: laugh, giggle, have fun with it. Ride it like a rollercoaster; let the ups and downs be equally exciting. Support all the girls, all the queens. It is so difficult when there is a platform and you’re under a microscope. Remove that microscope and live for what it is. Cheers to that.”
There’s so much offered by the North Texas arts community, it’s easy to get lost in it all. So once again, we’ve curated a list of the best of the best. Culled from all the currently-announced events around the Metroplex from now until next summer, we’ve narrowed down the standouts to four or five must-see shows each for Autumn, Winter/Spring and Summer. And always check out Dallas Voice for updates, late-comers and the hottest goings-on year-round. (And check out our full lineup of more than 20 arts company seasons, starting on Page 40.)

AUTUMN

**Camelot** at the Irving Arts Center, Sept. 9–18. On the cusp of an historic presidential election, Lyric Stage revives this charming chestnut of the JFK era, often dismissed as sentimental but with a lush score and great opportunity for design indulgence. And if there’s one company that knows how to go overboard on old-school B’way, it’s Lyric. Presented by Lyric Stage.

**Moby-Dick** at the Winspear Opera House, Nov. 4–20. Gay composer Jake Heggie wowed audiences a few years ago with this world premiere opera, which prepares for a triumphal return. Presented by Dallas Opera.

**Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches** at the Kalita Humphreys Theater, Nov. 4–20. It’s been about a decade since a local troupe has produced Tony Kushner’s muscular dissection of AIDS during the Reagan Era — a sobering, gorgeous, literary and frequently humorous look at society at a crossroads. Presented by Uptown Players.

**Bruce Wood: Six** at City Performance Hall, Nov. 11–12. Any time you can see this company perform, it’s cause to celebrate. Presented by Bruce Wood Dance Project.

WINTER/Spring

**The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time** at the Winspear Opera House, Jan. 11–22. Novelist Mark Haddon’s 2003 book, about an autistic boy who investigates the death of a neighbor’s dog, was adapted to the stage with award-winning results. Presented by ATTPAC.


**Passing Strange** at Theatre Three, March 2–26. Underground musician and playwright Stew went Uptown in 2008 with this autobiographical musical, one of the smartest and rockiest shows of the decade. Presented by Theatre Three.

**Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** at the City Performance Hall, March 31–April 1. One of the most acclaimed contemporary dance troupes returns. Presented by TITAS.

**New Works Festival** at the Trinity River Arts Center, June 9–July 1. The festival this year was as good as its ever been, so our hopes are high for next year’s centerpiece production, *Br or Cotton*. Presented by Kitchen Dog Theater.

**Hood** at the Wyly Theatre, June 29–Aug. 6. Playwright Doug Beane and hubbie composer Lewis Flinn team again for a comic riff on a classic tale — Robin Hood — in this world premiere musical. Presented by Dallas Theater Center.

**La Cage aux Folles** at the Kalita Humphreys Theater, July 14–30. Uptown Players has finally gotten around to producing the musical practically designed for their audience — this empowering comic drag gem. Presented by UP.

**The Life and (Cruel) Times of Conchita Zaragoza: A Mambo Musical** at the Stone Cottage Theatre, July 14–Aug. 6. Mark-Brian Sonna produces sassy comedies with a Latin flair, so we’re looking forward to this flamboyantly titled show. Presented by MBS Productions.

**Sunday in the Park with George** at the Addison Theatre Centre, July 28–Aug. 20. This rarely-performed piece from Stephen Sondheim has one of his brightest scores, and will finally get a big local production. Presented by WaterTower Theatre.

SUMMER

**The Illusionists** at the Fair Park Music Hall, Feb. 28–March 5. This return engagement is an eye-popping feast for lovers of magic, legerdemain, showmanship and comedy. Presented by Dallas Summer Musicals.

**Hood** at the Wyly Theatre, June 29–Aug. 6. Playwright Doug Beane and hubbie composer Lewis Flinn team again for a comic riff on a classic tale — Robin Hood — in this world premiere musical. Presented by Dallas Theater Center.

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Choose between 6 and 10 shows! Call 214.880.0202 or visit ATTPAC.ORG/TITAS
PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Dallas Summer Musicals and Performing Arts
Fort Worth (Broadway at the Bass)

The two companies again share marketing and booking this season, with plenty of overlap. DSM’s season starts a bit later than usual, with its holiday show, Broadway Christmas Wonderland, a family-style revue of carols and ditties (Dec. 6–18). That’s followed in 2017 with the Tony Award-winning hit An American in Paris (Jan. 31–Feb. 12); the Beatles-inspired musical Let It Be (March 7–19); the return of the dragtastic musical Kinky Boots (March 28–April 9), about a staid shoe manufacturer that stays afloat making sassy couture for drag queens. Next will be Circus 1903: The Golden Age of Circus (May 23–June 4), which combines the efforts of the puppeteers who created War Horse with producers of magic for a tribute to the animal-filled circuses of the last century. The season ends with the musical adaptation of The Bodyguard (July 18–30), starring diva Deborah Cox. (The season will also feature four add-on bonus shows: Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical (Nov. 25–27); Cheers Live On Stage (Jan. 6–8); Stomp (Feb. 14–19); and The Illusionists (Feb. 28–March 5.) All performances at Fair Park Music Hall. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

PAFW still has two more shows this summer and fall (the wonderful redo of The Sound of Music, Aug. 17–21, and The Phantom of the Opera, Oct. 20–30), before beginning its 2017 season in January with the return of Annie (Jan. 17–22); An American in Paris then heads from Fair Park to the Bass Hall (Feb. 14–19), followed by Let It Be (March 21–26). Fort Worth then gets the charming kid-friendly musical Matilda (June 13–18); The Bodyguard (Aug. 1–6); Beautiful: The Carole King Musical (Sept. 12–17, 2017); the ongoing 20th anniversary tour of Rent (Oct. 17–22, 2017) and finally Irving Berlin’s White Christmas (Nov. 14–19, 2017). (Bonus shows also include Rudolph (Nov. 22–23), Cirque Dreams Holidaze.

A season of the arts...at a glance

Your handy guide to a year of theater, dance, music and the arts

In addition to our Best Bets rundown of the arts (Page 38), here’s a comprehensive guide to what’s going on in North Texas for the next 12 months (and beyond). You’ll never be able to say “I’m bored — there’s nothing to do!” again.

—Arnold Wayne Jones
Dec. 28, Wyly). The final show of 2016 will be the add-on tradition (Sept. 22–Oct. 23, Wyly). As usual, the winter offers set in the Old West, (July 28–Oct. 9, Wyly). Next up is the premiere musical Book of Mormon (June 13–25, 2017), starring Coy Covington. (Bonus shows include its annual fundraiser, Broadway Our Way (March 2–5), and the concert version of Titanic, performed with the Turtle Creek Chorale at City Performance Hall (May 5–7).) All performances (except Titanic) are at the Kalita. UptownPlayers.org.

WaterTower Theatre
The first season in 17 years without Terry Martin as artistic director begins with Ring of Fire: The Music of Johnny Cash (Oct. 7–30). That’s followed by Silent Sky (Jan. 20–Feb. 12, 2017); The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens and Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord (April 14–May 7); Native Gardens (June 2–25); and finally Sondheim’s Sunday in the Park with George (July 28–Aug. 20). (A bonus show, Sister’s Christmas Catechism: The Mystery of the Magi’s Gold, will play Dec. 2–23. The 16th annual Out of the Loop Fringe Festival should be expected in the spring.) All performances at the Addison Theatre Centre. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

Lyric Stage
The magnificent stagings from this all-musical company continue with Lerner & Loewe’s Camelot (Sept. 9–18), the Gershwin musical Of Thee I Sing (In Concert) (Nov. 3–6); Jerry Herman’s fomboyant treasure Mame (In Concert) (Jan. 26–29, 2017) and then two world premieres: Quanah starring Larry Gatlin (April 28–May 7) and Pure Country (June 9–18). All performances in Carpenter Hall as the Irving Arts Center. LyricStage.org.

Theatre 3
Theatre 3’s seven-show mainstage season has already begun with The Novelist (through Aug. 28), and continues with The Wedding Singer (Sep. 22–Oct. 16); Day Light, a world premiere from out interim artistic director Bruce R. Coleman (Nov. 17–Dec. 11), the Southwest premiere of Laugh by Pulitzer Prize-winner and T3 alumna Beth Henley (Jan. 5–29, 2017); Passing Strange, the funky autobiographical musical by underground artist Stew (March 2–26); the classic Susan and God (April 20–May 14) and finally Sondheim’s A Little Night Music (June 8–July 2). The smaller space, Theatre Too, offers its own season: The gay comedy-drama.
The Sum of Us (Sept. 1–25); the return of A Christmas Carol: The Radio Show with B.J. Cleveland in a one-man show; the return of the revue I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change (Dec. 29–Feb. 12, 2017); The Empress, The Lady and the Pearl Part II (March 23–April 16); and finally Conor McPherson’s stage adaptation of The Birds (May 25–June 18).

**Kitchen Dog Theater**

Kitchen Dog spend the last season as an itinerant company, moving from locale to locale, but next season will settle in at the Trinity River Arts Center. The season begins with A Stain Upon the Silence: Beckett’s Bequest (Oct. 7–29). Four generations of playwrights contributed to this evening of short plays celebrating Nobel laureate Samuel Beckett. Next is the regional premiere of Feathers and Teeth (Nov. 18–Dec. 17), about monsters under the bed; Paper Flowers (Feb. 17–March 11, 2017), another regional premiere; and Trevor (April 14–May 6). The mainstage production during the 2017 New Works Festival will be the world premiere Br’er Cotton (June 9–July 1). KitchenDogTheater.org.

**MBS Productions**

North Texas’ only company dedicated to both forgotten classics and original works and new translations (often with a gay slant) returns with Slave Letters (Oct. 13–Nov. 6), its holiday classic A Bur-Less-Que Nutcracker (Nov. 25–Dec. 29), the world premiere Love, Lust & Lies (Feb. 2–26); . . . A Moment in the Life of Willa Dean Arvis (March 30–April 23); The Soul Gatherer (June 1–July 2); and finally the world premiere The Life and (Crue) Times of Conchita Zaragoza: A Mambo Musical (July 14–Aug. 6). All performances at the Stone Cottage Theatre on the campus of the Addison Theatre Centre. MBSProductions.net.

**WingSpan Theatre Co.**

The mainstage production for the company’s 19th season at the Bath House Cultural Center is the local premiere Breadcrumbs, a fractured fairy tale about a reclusive writer and her caretaker. (Oct. 6–22). WingspanTheatre.com.

**Echo Theatre**

The company dedicated to plays about women opens with Marsha Norman’s award-winning Night Mother (Sept. 8–24); then The Echo Room Presents: Her Song Music and Dance Revue (Feb. 9–25); and finally Brides of the Moon by the Five Lesbian Brothers (June 8–17). All performances at Bath House Cultural Center. EchoTheatre.org.

**Contemporary Theater of Dallas**

The troupe finishes out its current season with Brian Friel’s Dancing at Lughnasa (Sept. 9–Oct. 2) and the musical As We Lie Still (Oct. 28–Nov. 20), directed by Michael Serrcchia. All performances at the Greenville Center for the Arts. ContemporaryTheatreOfDallas.com.

**Stage West**

Fort Worth’s grandaddy of theater concludes its season with Bootycandy (through Sept. 11), about being gay and black in America (see story Page 44), followed by An Iliad (Aug. 25–Sept. 18), co-written by Denis O’Hare. StageWest.org.

**Jubilee Theatre**

Following a tumultuous year, Fort Worth’s musical-tinged theater targeting African-American issues starts with Working: A Musical (Sept. 20–Oct. 30); The Gift of the Magi (Nov. 25–Dec. 24); Thurgood (Jan. 27–Feb. 26); August Wilson’s Two Trains Running (March 17–April 16); Having Our Say (May 26–June 27) and finally Beehive: The 60s Musical (July 28–Aug. 27). JubileeTheatre.org.

**Circle Theatre**

This Fort Worth company’s season continues with the feminist comedy The Taming (Aug. 18–Sept. 17) and concludes with Bruce Graham’s Funnyman (Oct. 20–Nov. 19). CircleTheatre.org.

**OPERA AND MUSIC**

**Dallas Opera**

The Dallas Opera is coming off a legendary season or premieres and exciting shows. For its follow up season, expect Tchaikovsky’s Eugene Onegin (Oct. 28–Nov. 5); the return of the Jake Heggie-Gene Scheer modern work Moby-Dick (Nov. 4–20); Puccini’s Madame Butterfly (March 10–26, 2017); Britten’s The Turn of the Screw (March 17–25); and finally Bellini’s Norma (April 21–May 7). DallasOpera.org.

**Fort Worth Opera**

North Texas’ oldest opera company continues with its festival format, Left: The Tony Award-winning ‘An American in Paris’ dances into Winspear and Bass Hall this winter; opposite top: the March Hare might be late, but you shouldn’t be, for Texas Ballet Theater’s ‘Alice in Wonderland’ next May; opposite bottom: the Dallas Museum of Art looks at Art and Nature in the Middle Ages in an exhibition opening in December.
The Soul Gatherer (June 1–July 2); and finally the world premiere of Slave Letters (June 9–July 1). KitchenDogTheater.org.

Paper Flowers (Sept. 1–25); the return of the Jake Heggie-Gene Scheer Opera Theatre3Dallas.com.

Brides of the Moon (Oct. 28–Nov. 5); the return of Tchaikovsky’s Moby-Dick (Nov. 4–20); Puccini’s La Bohème (Nov. 25–Dec. 24); and finally the world premiere of Br'er Cotton: A Mambo Musical (Dec. 27–Feb. 26); August Wilson’s Two Trains Running (March 17–April 16); and finally Getting African-American issues starts with Cruzar la Cara de la Luna (April 14–May 6). The Dallas Opera is coming off a legendary season with Bizet’s Carmen, the mariachi opera Cruzar la Cara de la Luna and Voir Dire. The festival runs April 23–May 7, 2017. FWOpera.org.

Turtle Creek Chorale
The men’s chorus’ 2016–17 season, called Contrasts, features three mainstage shows: It’s holiday tradition, A Not So Silent Night (Dec. 8–11); Topsy Turvy: Songs You Thought You Knew (March 23–25, 2017) and In Your Dreams (June 2–4). They also team with Uptown Players for a concert staging of Titanic (May 5–7). And on Sept 16 at Trinity Groves, the TCC will put on After Dark, a fundraiser with wine and dessert pairings, auction and performances by Janelle Lutz and Amy Stevenson. All performances take place at City Performance Hall. TurtleCreekChorale.com.

BALLET AND DANCE
Texas Ballet Theater
The Fort Worth-based company’s 55th season will be performed, as has become the custom, both at Bass Hall and Dallas’ Winspear Opera House, starting with Carmen/Danse a Grande Vitesse (Sept. 16–18 at Winspear, Oct. 7–9 at Bass), then The Nutcracker (Nov. 25–Dec. 4 at Winspear, Dec. 9–24 at Bass); The Nutty Nutcracker (Dec. 16, Bass only); Rooster & Smith & Scher (March 3–5 at Bass only); and concluding with Alice in Wonderland (May 19–21 at Bass, June 2–4 at Winspear). TexasBalletTheater.org.

TITAS
The lineup includes 10 companies, starting with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet (Sept. 16–17) and Estampas Portenas (Oct. 28–29) at City Performance Hall, then the return of Jessica Lang Dance (Dec. 10) at the Winspear. 2017 begins with Pilobolus (Jan. 13–14 at CPHT); Bridgman Packer (Jan. 27–28 at CPH), Doug Varone and Dancers (Feb. 18 at Winspear), Diavolo (March 10–11 at CPH), Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (March 31–April 1 at CPH), Che Malambo (April 14–15 at CPH) and Ballet BC (June 3 at the Winspear). There will also be the annual Command Performance Gala (May 13 at the Winspear). ATTPAC.org.

Bruce Wood Dance Project
The company’s sixth season continues, appropriately with Six at CPH (Nov. 11–12), followed by the annual fundraiser called Mistletoe Magic (Dec. 20). BruceWoodDance.org.

FINE ART
Dallas Museum of Art
The DMA’s new executive director, Agustin Arteaga, will begin his tenure in September (look for an interview soon thereafter), but the upcoming season already includes this lineup of exhibitions: Waxed: Batik from Java (Sept. 25, 2016–Sept. 10, 2017); Divine Felines: Cats of Ancient Egypt (Oct. 9–Jan. 8); Shaken, Stirred, Styled: The Art of the Cocktail (Nov. 18–Nov. 12, 2017); Art and Nature in the Middle Ages (Dec. 4–March 19); and Iris Van Herpen: Transforming Fashion (May 21–Aug. 20, 2017). DMA.org.
Booty-licious

Out playwright and director Robert O’Hara tackles the twin minorities of being black and gay in Stage West’s provocative ‘Bootycandy’

Playwright and director Robert O’Hara has been a rising name in theaters around the country for nearly a decade, but he hasn’t been introduced in North Texas — until now. And we’re about to get a double dose of him — first with the regional premiere of his breakout play Bootycandy, a series of satirical vignettes about being black and gay, premiered in Washington, D.C., in 2011 and moved to off-Broadway in 2014. It’s now playing at Fort Worth’s Stage West; next he’ll direct the world premiere of Kirsten Childs’ musical Bella at the Dallas Theater Center in September.

Mark Lowry, with our content partner TheaterJones, chatted with him about his career, the works, and the title Bootycandy, which is explained in the first scene of the play. (Read more of the interview at TheaterJones.com.)

Mark Lowry: Bootycandy is autobiographical?
The character of Sutter is you, right? Robert O’Hara: It is based in autobiography, but not everything in it is exactly what happened with me. My doppelganger would be Sutter, who is seeing things from a world that exists to him.

Did your mother really use the euphemism “bootycandy” for “penis”? My grandmother, yes. Although after she saw the play, she said that what she said was “bobocandy.” I had to pull it out of her memory.

The play comes from your experience of being both black and gay. You’ve always been black; when did you figure out that you were gay? Both of them come from birth. I was born black and gay. I was not socialized to be gay. I always knew I was different; I was always interested in something that a lot of kids were not into. So I found myself in the theater, where a lot of gay kids seek refuge. I think my family accepted it when I came out in college. By then I was highly political, but I was always outspoken. I wrote a letter to my mother and my father, I wrote them separately because I didn’t grow up with them. My mother called and left a voice message and asked if I was going to be wearing a dress, but then that she always knew I was gay. She ended up crying and said she would always love me. Now I think she
The play comes from your experience of being... Did your mother really use the euphemism... what she said was "bobocandy." I had to pull it out... yes. Although after she saw the play, she said that... things from a world that exists to him.

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The character of Sutter is you, right? My doppelganger would be Sutter, who is seeing... O'Hara: It is based in autobiography, but not... Bootycandy is autobiographical?

My grandmother, Robert... mother and my father, I wrote them separately be-... but I was always outspoken. I wrote a letter to my... seek refuge. I think my family accepted it when I... something that a lot of kids were not into. So I... knew I was different; I was always interested in... and gay. I was not socialized to be gay. I always... Both of them come from birth. I was born black... when did you figure out that you were gay?

Djore' Nance, Justin Duncan and Aaron Green in one of... now running at Stage West in Fort Worth. Bootycandy is a series of 11 scenes, mostly... by Robert O'Hara continues at Stage West through Sept. 11. 821 W. Vickery Blvd., Fort Worth. StageWest.org.

Don Jones has been translating the arts for the hearing-impaired for more than a quarter century, but he's not the only one... at least not anymore. Last month, Theatre 3 announced its partnership with the Deaf Action Center to begin interpreted performances of its shows this coming season, in both the main-... and smaller Theatre Too space.

The first show to received simultaneous perform-... American Sign Language is The Novelist, pic-... to interpret in American Sign Language? Wagner’s Ring Cycle would be all but impossible, impossi-... Jones, now 65, was drawn to sign language as... Having outlived two partners, Jones now is single and says he thinks of the TCC as his com-... Jones worked as a teacher and interpreter in New Orleans before coming to SMU in the mid-1970s to earn a graduate degree in “deaf ed.”

After graduating from University of Oklahoma, Jones worked as a teacher and interpreter in New Orleans before coming to SMU in the mid-1970s to earn a graduate degree in “deaf ed.”

Having outlived two partners, Jones now is single and says he thinks of the TCC as his community and extended family. “If I weren’t the ALS interpreter for the chorale, I would sing in it,” he says. “The music is beautiful, of course, but the message of the Turtle Creek Chorale is what keeps me there... their basic philosophy of inclusion — of different races, sexual prefer-... identity, physical abilities. Providing a means for persons with hearing impairment to be included is a natural part of this philosophy.” He says he also experiences something the audiences at TCC’s concerts can’t see. “I am in the unique position of looking out at the crowd and feeling their reaction, looking into their eyes and seeing their faces,” says Jones. “It can be emotionally overwhelming.”

The chorale, now led by artistic director Sean Baugh, adds singers through open auditions once a year (coming up on Sept. 3, at the Sam-... mons Arts Center). The first major concert this season — the seasonal A Not So Silent Night from Dec. 8–11 — is at City Performance Hall, a venue whose onstage acoustics are tricky for clearly hearing speakers and singers, Jones says.

Is there any piece of music too difficult to in-... interpret in American Sign Language? Wagner’s Ring Cycle would be all but impossible, impossi-... Jones says. “I’m getting arthritis in my thumbs,” he says, “but using my hands so much is good physical therapy for it. I don’t think arthritis will interfere with signing.”

He fans his fingers over the table. Are those manicured nails? “I do get a manicure,” says Jones, his blue-gray eyes twinkling at the ques-... ‘I’m very proud of my hands.”
Drawing Dallas

Artist Danny Rose may not be bound for Broadway, but he lives for his art

Mark Stokes | Illustrator
mark@markdrawsfunny.com

Danny Rose, 27, is a painter who was born in Charleston, S.C., and spent his formative years “on the edge of the world,” as he says— in Blair and Altus, Okla. The only son (with four sisters) of industrious parents, Danny expressed an early interest in art. At 17, he was accepted at the Dallas Art Institute where he earned a bachelor’s degree in fine art.

After a few years working odd jobs, Danny found a position teaching art and design in South Asia. He visited several different countries, including Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, and learned to speak Indonesian. He returned to the U.S. one year ago, and settled here in Dallas.

About coming out. “I’m always coming out in a continual discovery of myself,” he says. “I’m a little bit strange. I’m happy to be strange.” He admits he wants to become more involved and be more connected to queer culture and the LGBTQ community. “I’m a maker/artist. I’m doing what’s best for me. You should, too.” Travel helps. And meditation, which he does every day. It helps him calm his mind, alleviate anxiety and keep track of his thoughts. “My art is a form of meditation. It keeps me from going to a dark place.”

Making art: The landscapes and colors of Indonesia have inspired some of his work. He is represented by Galleri Urbane Dallas + Marfa. The focus of his recent work is the exploration of different Inner and Outer Landscapes. Danny’s first solo exhibition, titled The Sun Shines Blue, opened at Galleri Urbane in June.
Tony musical favorite ‘Gentleman’s Guide’ opens at Winspear

In 2014, A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder beat the odds, winning the Tony for best musical against heavy hitters like Aladdin and Beautiful. Certainly it won over voters with its plot, taken from the old Ealing Studios comedy Kind Hearts & Coronets, but also a jaunty score, lush sets and a showcase for versatile actors, including one who plays eight characters — all the intended victims of a social-climbing killer. But it’s all in good fun. The national tour debuts in Dallas this week, kicking off ATTPAC’s Broadway Series season.

DEETS: Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. ATTPAC.org.

Texas Theatre screens restoration of John Waters’ classic ‘Multiple Maniacs’

Many people know John Waters from his popular successes like Hairspray and Cry-Baby (and their musical adaptations), but he really put cult camp filmmaking on the map with micro-budget counterculture films including the rarely-seen Multiple Maniacs. Now, a restored version of this gloriously grotesque 1972 vehicle for Divine gets a proper theatrical showing. Prepare to be hilariously appalled.


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Friday 08.19

Sunday 08.14

AIN marks 30 years of service with music and cupcakes

The AIDS Interfaith Network has been serving the HIV community for decades — 30 years to be exact. And this weekend, they will mark that anniversary with a little party, featuring snacks from the Original Cupcakery, champagne and live music courtesy of Denise Lee, above. Stop in and say “congrats!” ... and also “thank you.”

DEETS: Interfaith Peace Chapel, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 4–7 p.m. AINDallas.org.
ARTSWEK

THEATER

One Man, Two Guvnors. Recent Tony host James Corden shot to fame in the original production of this madcap comedy, and now former Dallasite (and current Broadway star) Brian Gonzales takes over the role of a man trying to hide the fact he is working for two different men, with equally different agendas. A regional premiere based on Goldoni's commedia dell'arte masterpiece. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through Aug 28. WaterTowerTheatre.org.


CIRCUS

FINE ART


FRIDAY 08.12
COMMUNITY
High Tech Happy Hour. Monthly mixer, open to all but sponsored by the queer techies at T.I. Matchbox Kitchen+Spirits, 7859 Walnut Hill Lane. 5:30–7:30 p.m.

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

SATURDAY 08.13
COMMUNITY
Back to School Block Party. School in starting up, and Real Live Connection is serving its mission to provide programs for at-risk youth ages 13–19. To help out, come by and enjoy music, food, raffles, and even contribute supplies to help homeless, LGBTQ and allied youth get their education started right. Oak Lawn United Methodist Church, 3014 Oak Lawn Ave. 4–7 p.m. Free.

SUNDAY 08.14
CELEBRATION
AIDS Interfaith Network 30th Anniversary Celebration. AIN, the HIV service group, marks 30 years of making a difference with a party featuring champagne, cupcakes and music from Denise Lee. Interfaith Peace Chapel, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 2:30–4:30 p.m. AINDallas.org.

MONDAY 08.15
CABARET
Mama’s Boys. 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 08.16
FILM
Death on the Nile. Agatha Christie at her best in this star-studded puzzler set in the 1930s in Egypt. Funny, glamorous (an Oscar for costume design) and just campy enough to be a hoot. Stars Peter Ustinov, Maggie Smith (in very un-Dowager Countess mode), David Niven, Angela Lansbury and Bette Davis. Screens as part of the Tuesday Big Movie New Classic Series at Landmark’s Magnolia Theatre in the West Village, 3699 McKinney Ave. Screens at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.

THURSDAY 08.18
CABARET
Judy Chamberlain Jazz. The jazz vocalist’s weekly cabaret performance in the back room of Zippers Hideaway, 3333 N. Fitzhugh St. 9 p.m.

FRIDAY 08.19
FILM
Multiple Maniacs. A restored print of John Waters’ 1972 debut, a grotesque assortment of maulings, mayhem and murder, starring the inimitable Divine. Texas Theatre, 431 W. Jefferson Blvd. 10 p.m. $10.
TheTexasTheatre.com.
Girl on Girls

Jenny Block examines: The good and the bad of relationship texting

Texting can be a sticky wicket. It can serve as a tremendous way to communicate with your partner, especially if you’re long-distance dating. But it can also cause all sorts of misunderstandings. In fact, what makes texting so good is sometimes precisely what can make it go so badly:

Good: It can keep you in near-constant contact. Although it can be hard to take a phone call midday for many folks, nearly everyone can take a few moments to write a text without worrying about privacy since you don’t have to say a word out loud.

Bad: It can keep you in near-constant contact. Since you are likely available all the time, your partner may want you to be available all the time. Text-lag caused by one partner can send the other spiraling into a panic about the reason for the delay. And constantly talking all day long can lead to communicating about nothing, as well taking away the fun of seeing each other after you’ve been apart — even if you’ve only been apart for a few hours!

Good: It can help you to get flirty, and maybe even a little dirty. If you’re a little shy, especially when it comes to all things sexual, texting can offer you a super-safe way to play. You can let your inner freak flag fly and do it with a little distance to help you feel safe enough to do it.

Bad: It can help you to get flirty, and maybe even a little dirty. It can be a little too easy to go a little too far a little too fast and a little too soon. Flirt away and dare to step onto the wild side … just don’t forget the person you’re talking to. Know her sensibilities. And keep in mind that texts can be copied, photographed, and otherwise shared. You share it, it could be shared. That’s a rule live by.

Good: It can give you plenty of time to think about just what to say and how to say it. It can be hard to instantly say just what you’re thinking — or at least what you think you’re thinking. Having a little time to digest what is being said to you and to think about just exactly what you want to say and how you want to say it can be very helpful whether you’re talking about what’s for dinner or where you want to go for the holidays.

Bad: It can give you plenty of time to think about just what to say and how to say it. Conversations can go terribly wrong when you think and think and think to the point of thinking yourself over and out of what you wanted — and maybe even needed — to say. Overthinking what has been texted to you, reading and rereading and rereading texts, dwelling on every word and semi-colon can lead you down a path of no return. Don’t go down it!

In order to do your text best, there are a few things you can do. First, use punctuation wisely and consistently. If you always use an exclamation mark, don’t suddenly leave your sentence naked as a jaybird. It’s nearly impossible for your recipient to not read into that sort of omission.

Second, use emojis and emoticons judiciously. Things can go downhill fast if you’re using those silly faces to lighten the mood and the person on the other end of the text conversation thinks what’s being discussed is anything but a joke. One girl’s silly face is another girl’s stab to the heart.

Third, don’t text anything that is life or death. This means both literally and figuratively. If someone passes away; if your relationship is not going particularly well; if you’re upset or you’re angry … you get the idea. The biggest problem with texting is that you don’t have the benefit of the person’s intonation, body language, eye contact, etc. That’s no big deal when you’re discussing what you need to pick up at the hardware store that weekend. But it can be a monumental mess maker if you’re discussing having your feelings hurt or wanting to see other people.

And, perhaps most importantly of all, be more clear than you can even imagine could ever be necessary. It’s better to be understood and thought to be a little over the top when it comes to language than to give your textee the wrong idea … or even room to have to try to figure out what idea you were hoping to express.

Texting can be a fun way to keep in touch with someone you care about even if time or distance doesn’t allow you to be with one another as much as you would like. You simply have to be smart about how you use it. It can be helpful to think about how you might take a certain thought expressed in a certain way as long as you also keep in mind how the person you’re talking to thinks.

If your partner is a sensitive soul, keep the teasing to a minimum. If she tends to be super literal, steer clear of anything that might sting if taken to the letter. If the receiver of your message never remembers a convo that was text only, then don’t share important details using that method. You get the idea.

Texting does not, cannot, should not replace face-to-face, or even telephonic, conversations. In other words, think of it as an extra, an add-on, a bonus track when it comes to communication and you’ll be just fine.

Block is the author of The Ultimate Guide to Solo Sex by Jenny Block, foreword by Betty Dodson. Have a question about sex you want Jenny to address? Email it to GirlOnGirls.Jenny@gmail.com.
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Front Row: (l to r) Michael Duane, Imani Handy, Colby Geyer, Steve Patterson & Alvaro Ramalho
Back Row (l to r) Maurice Doniphan, Eric Way, John Gilstrap, Gloria Devine & Nikolas Dombkowski

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- Cedar Springs Tap House: Hangover Drag Brunch, showtimes 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Saturday.
- Club Reflection: Cowtown Leathermen cookout at 4 p.m. on Sunday. Wall of Food and Imperial Court show at 8 p.m. on Thursday.
- Dallas Eagle: Texas State Night of Queens benefit show for GDMAF and CURE from 7-10 p.m. on Friday. Discipline Corps club night at 10 p.m. on Friday. National Leather Association — Dallas club night at 7 p.m. on Saturday.
- JRL's Bar & Grill: Dream Girls with Chanel, Raquel, Alexis, Athena and Kandy on Saturday.
- Marty's Live: Rudeboy Dallas at Kickback Wednesday.
- Rainbow Lounge: Bon Qui Qui at 10:30 p.m. on Sunday.
- Round-Up Saloon: Lost Souls Rugby School supply drive benefitting Mi Escuelita from 1-4 p.m. on Saturday. Project Funway from 8-10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- S4: Trash Disco with host Craig Reed on Friday.
- Sue Ellen's: Flashback Friday '90s dance party from 8-11 p.m. benefiting LifeWalk. Bad Habits in the Music Lounge at 10 p.m. on Friday. Ashley Bradberry on Saturday. Kathy and Bella at 3:30 p.m. and Marsella at 6 p.m. on Sunday.
- The Rose Room: Tucker's Gift LifeWalk benefit from 6-9 p.m. on Sunday. Miss Gay Southwest America on Thursday.
- Two Corks and a Bottle: Show Tune Night from 7-10 p.m. on Wednesday.

Scene Photographers: Kat Haygood & Chad Mentooth
Jenna Skyy channels Poison Ivy

Murphy and Krystal get cuddly.

Dancers at Marty’s Live strike a pose.

Best buds are all smiles at Sue Ellen’s.

Victor and Jason at the Round-Up Saloon

Gary and Keith at The Tin Room
Looking good at Sue Ellen's

Sarah at Dallas Eagle

Cody and Sean at The Tin Room

Alissa hits The Strip

Jonah serves it up at Woody’s
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ACROSS
1. Activist Milk of this puzzle’s quote
2. Hathaway of The Devil Wears Prada
3. Uncommon, to Caligula
4. Early fiddles
5. College web address suffix
6. To date
7. Where a trucker parks his bottom
8. Off-rd. ride
9. You can stick your tools in these
10. Polo of The Fosters
11. Sound grate?
12. Lines from Lesbos
13. With 47- and 59-Across, what a gay activist said about the shot that would kill him
14. Statue’s modesty protector
15. Claremont’s All___ the Guy
16. Tip of a thick tool?
17. Lincoln’s side of the penny
18. Big top performer
19. The Batmobile, e.g.
20. Offspring of a queen
21. Market corrections
22. Area of tongue usage
23. Giant quarterback Manning
24. Hill with a flat top
25. Some bitches put it in their mouths
27. Larry Kramer’s alma mater
28. Like sourballs
29. Reeves of My Own Private Idaho
30. With 47- and 59-Across, what a gay activist said about the shot that would kill him
31. Dinah of a golf classic
32. Whale finder
33. Close at hand, to the Bard
34. Split
35. Like sourballs
36. European nuts
37. The, to the Greeks
38. Some bitches put it in their mouths
39. Tasty tubers
40. Italian well
41. ___ Miz
42. Night alright for fighting, to Elton John
43. Crack fighter pilot
44. Whitman work
45. Makes into law
46. Like Edna Turnblad
47. Mardi ___
48. Dahl of Hollywood
49. Martin’s Ed Wood role
50. Italian well
51. Long pants, for short
52. Lorca’s grocery
53. Activity of a siren
54. Good with the hands
55. See 30-Across
56. “I” of Socrates
57. Cheers barfly
58. Perry Mason’s field
59. See 30-Across
60. Gay guy, to Brits
61. Grand ___ Opry
62. Close at hand, to the Bard
63. Split
64. Eagle appendage
65. Drag queen’s leg scraper
66. They’re performing, in Fame
67. Garbo, for one
68. Tasty tubers
69. Whistler’s mother
70. Wallflower

DOWN
1. The rainbow flag has six
2. Hathaway of The Devil Wears Prada
3. Uncommon, to Caligula
4. Early fiddles
5. College web address suffix
6. To date
7. Where a trucker parks his bottom
8. Off-rd. ride
9. You can stick your tools in these
10. Polo of The Fosters
11. Sound grate?
12. Lines from Lesbos
13. Bruce Jenner at the Olympics
14. Activity of a siren
15. Straight to the point
16. Coming
17. Lincoln’s side of the penny
18. Big top performer
19. The Batmobile, e.g.
20. Offspring of a queen
21. Market corrections
22. Area of tongue usage
23. Giant quarterback Manning
24. Hill with a flat top
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53. Activity of a siren
54. Good with the hands
55. “I” of Socrates
56. “I” of Socrates
57. Cheers barfly
58. Mardi ___
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