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by David Taffet, Page 8

LifeWalk 2016
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headlines

TEXAS NEWS
9 The Group celebrates 10 years
14 David Mack Henderson fights cancer
16 LGBT candidates on the ballots

LIFE+STYLE
20 Orlando performer inspires community
22 Charlotte Rae pens memoir
25 Designing Homes: Patti le Build Safe

ON THE COVER
LifeWalk photo by Chuck Marcello
Design by Kevin Thomas

departments

6 The Gay Agenda 8 News 18 Community Voices 20 Life+Style 31 Calendar 35 Jenny Block 36 Scene 40 MarketPlace

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Republican former Dallas mayor comes out against Trump

Former Dallas Mayor Steve Bartlett signed a letter co-authored by 30 Republican former members of Congress who called Donald Trump a man who “has proven himself manifestly unqualified to be president.”

Bartlett served as Dallas mayor from 1991-1995, serving after Annette Strauss and before Ron Kirk. He represented a North Dallas district in Congress from 1983-1991 that is now represented by Sam Johnson.

In the letter repudiating Trump, the 30 Republicans wrote:

“Every day brings a fresh revelation that highlights the unacceptable danger in electing him to lead our nation.”

And:

“Sadly, our party’s nominee this year is a man who makes a mockery of the principles and values we have cherished and which we sought to represent in Congress.”

And:

“Given the enormous power of the office, every candidate for president must be judged rigorously in assessing whether he or she has the competence, intelligence, knowledge, understanding, empathy, judgment, and temperament necessary to keep America on a safe and steady course. Donald Trump fails on each of those measures, and he has proven himself manifestly unqualified to be president.”

— David Taffet

Body found in Anna field appears to be Anthony Gurley

Anna police believe that a body found early Tuesday morning, Oct. 4, is that of an Anna man last seen Sunday, Sept. 18, leaving his job at the Kentucky Fried Chicken on White Street. Anna PD Lt. Jeff Caponera said that investigators found ID for Anthony Gurley, 43, on the body. The body has been sent to the Collin County Medical Examiner’s office for positive identification, “but as a precaution, officers and a chaplain have gone to notify Anthony’s next of kin,” Caponera said.

Gurley, who previously lived in Dallas and was well-known in the LGBT community here, left the home he shared with his mother and sister on foot Sunday morning to walk to the KFC where he worked. The KFC is located in the same building with a Taco Bell restaurant at 2605 W. White St. Gurley’s coworkers told his mother that he left work early that day, about 1 p.m., saying he wasn’t feeling well. They said he walked to the Carl’s Jr. restaurant located just down the street in the Love’s truck stop, at White Street and 75 then returned to the KFC to check his work schedule. He left shortly after and was not seen again.

Gurley may have been headed to Dallas to attend the gay Pride parade, and some friends said they thought they had seen him in Oak Lawn that day. But his mother said that was unlikely because he did not have a car and had not, as far as she knew, arranged for someone to give him a ride to Dallas.

An APD officer “was patrolling along West White Street (FM 455) and noticed what he believed to be the very strong smell consistent with decomposing flesh,” according to a statement released by Caponera. “In a field east of the Taco Bell located at 2605 West White Street he found what he believed to be human remains and notified our CID.”

Police have not given any information on a possible cause of death.

— Tammye Nash

Mitzi Lemons and Nathan Robbins presented Connie Britton the Ally for Equality Award at the 35th annual Black Tie Dinner and in the middle of his move to New York to star in Kinky Boots, Todrick Hall stopped in Dallas to perform at the event. (Photos by Cassie Quinn)
See you this Sunday!

LifeWalk 2016

5K Walk/Run & Festival
lifewalk.org

Sunday, Oct. 9, 2016
Lee Park, 3333 Turtle Creek Blvd.
Registration 11 am, Walk 1 pm, Festival 2 pm, Dog Friendly
Duke is a shepherd mix who is a little over 2 years old currently living at the Chuck Silcox Animal Care and Control Center, 4900 Martin St. in Fort Worth. He is a medium-sized black-and-white guy who has been neutered and is ready for his forever home. Duke’s ID number is 31660990.

All animals at city of Fort Worth Adoption Centers have had a health and temperament assessment and have been deemed adoptable by a licensed veterinarian. Additionally, every animal has been spayed or neutered, vaccinated, microchipped and licensed by the city. Dogs are available for adoption for $49. Cats are available for $25.

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

**OCTOBER**

- **Through Oct. 29: Screams** Three haunted houses, Carnevil, clown maze and zombie wasteland. 7:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights at Scarborough Faire site, Waxahachie.

- **Oct. 7: A Little Night Music** St. Matthew’s Cathedral, 5100 Ross Ave., presents “A Little Night Music,” featuring the music of Stephen Sondheim and the annual SMCA Silent Auction, benefitting the church’s free public art programs. Tickets are $70 for one; $120 for two; $700 for a table of 10 or $1,000 for a VIP Table of 10. Seating is limited; reserve tickets by calling 214-887-6552.

- **Oct. 7: Big Night Out** To raise awareness and support for sexual assault victims from 7:30-11 p.m. at event1013, 1013 E 15th St., Plano.

- **Oct. 7: DIFFA cella** Burgers & Burgundy presents a DIFFA fundraiser from 6:30-9:30 p.m. on the Ron Kirk Bridge, 109 Continental Ave. $150.
**Obituaries**

**Michael Emilio Felan**

Died Oct. 1, 2016, after a battle with leukemia.

Born July 23, 1956, in Edinburg, Texas and raised in Bay City, Mich., Michael graduated from All Saints High School in 1974. A devout Catholic, Michael knew at an early age that he wanted to dedicate his life to God and the service of others. As a lay minister of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Bay City, Michael served the Hispanic community and migrant workers, helping meet their needs, fighting for better living/working conditions and ministering to their spiritual needs.

In response to the call on his life, Michael felt drawn to Texas, where he continued his quest to rely on him for an uplifting change when you were feeling down.

Christopher is survived by his partner, Thomas Dance of Dallas, and his father, Stan Reed of Mineral Wells. A celebration of his life was held Oct. 1, and the family asks that memorial contributions be made in his name to the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund, gdmf.org.

Texas but had lived in Dallas for the past 20 years. He worked as an administrator with Bank of America.

His friends and family said: “We will miss his smile and contagious laugh. You could always rely on him for an uplifting change when you were feeling down.”

Christopher is survived by his partner, Thomas Dance of Dallas, and his father, Stan Reed of Mineral Wells. A celebration of his life was held Oct. 1, and the family asks that memorial contributions be made in his name to the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund, gdmf.org.

**Oct. 10: A Celebration of Rose Pearson**

Celebrate the life of Rose Pearson (1947-2016), the founder of Circle Theater, from 6-9 p.m. at Red Oak Ballroom, 304 Houston St., Fort Worth.

**Oct. 11: Kol Nidre service**

Congregation Beth El Binah holds Kol Nidre service at 7:30 p.m. at NUMC, 11211 Preston Road.

**Oct. 11: Outrageous Oral 23**

Adrian Cooks, Alex Eller and the Rev. Colleen Darraugh are the featured speakers at 7 p.m. at Willis Library, University of North Texas, 1506 W Highland St., Denton.

**Oct. 12: Yom Kippur services**

Congregation Beth El Binah holds Yom Kippur services beginning with morning musaf service at 10 a.m. followed by study session, yizkor at 3 p.m., afternoon session at 4 p.m. and neilah service at 5 p.m. followed by break the fast at 6:30 p.m. at NUMC, 11211 Preston Road.

**Oct. 13: Gray Pride**

6 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

**Oct. 13: For Once in My Life**

Fort Worth Human Relations Commission presents Movies That Matter. For Once in My Life will be shown at 7 p.m. at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, 3200 Darnell St., Fort Worth, Free.

**Oct. 13: Business Connection Mixer**

GLBT Chamber presents mixer at 5:30 p.m. at Sushi Zushi, 3636 McKinney Ave. #150.

**Oct. 14: NTSO Movie Magic Gala**

Gala evening of dinner, drinks and entertainment featuring cabaret singer Angie McWhirter to support the New Texas Symphony Orchestra at 7 p.m. at Simmons Center, Meadows Hall, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd. $100.

**Oct. 14: Oktoberfest High Tech Happy Hour**

From 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Lakewood Brewing Company, 2302 Executive Drive, Garland.

**Oct. 14: Lory Masters 70th Birthday Roast**

Master of Ceremonies Tim Seelig and comedian Paul J. Williams, friends and community leaders past and present roast community legend Lory Masters from 7-10 p.m. at The Rose Room at 54, 3911 Cedar Springs Road.

**Oct. 14: Rocky Horror Jack-O-Lantern Halloween Spooktacular**

Join Amber Does Dallas for their most anticipated show of the year at midnight at the Angelika Theater, 5321 E. Mockingbird Lane.

**Oct. 14-16: Dallas Fan Days**

Comic, sci-fi, horror anime and gaming event from 4-7 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Sunday at Irving Convention Center, 300 W. Las Colinas Blvd., Irving.

**Oct. 15: Party for Peggy**

Friends of Peggy Drury, a longtime bartender at Jugs and, later, Joe’s Place, invited to a party in her honor Saturday, Oct. 15, from 7-9 p.m. at Liquid Zoo Bar and Grill, 2506 Knight St. See listings for details.

Friends of Peggy Drury, pictured here, left, with her longtime boss and friend the late Joe Elliott, are invited to attend a party in her honor Saturday, Oct. 15, from 7-9 p.m. at Liquid Zoo Bar and Grill, 2506 Knight St. See listings for details.
26th annual LifeWalk steps off Sunday at Lee Park

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Texas’ largest AIDS fundraiser — the 26th annual LifeWalk — steps off at 1 p.m. on Oct. 9 from Lee Park.

LifeWalk usually takes place the first Sunday in October. This year, however, lead agency AIDS Arms moved the event to the second Sunday after the Black Tie Dinner was pushed up to the beginning of October.

The second Sunday isn’t a perfect date either. The Texas-OU game takes place in Dallas the second weekend of October. And the unofficial Gay Day at the State Fair of Texas is held the Sunday before National Coming Out Day — coinciding with LifeWalk this year.

So to boost attendance, LifeWalk cut the registration fee to $20 for the last week until the day of the event. AIDS Arms Development Director Tori Hobbs said that while the move has boosted registrations, a few days before the event, this year was still lagging slightly behind last year in terms of number of walkers.

Upping the number of walkers will help increase revenue from the event. But Hobbs said the walk is about more than just raising money. “It’s a great way to remind the community that we still need their support despite all the medical advances,” she explained.

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LifeWalk benefits several Dallas agencies that provide HIV care as part of their work. Abounding Prosperity, AIDS Interfaith Network and AIDS Services Dallas are primarily AIDS service providers, and they are LifeWalk beneficiaries.

UT Southwestern community prevention and intervention unit, another beneficiary, offers risk reduction programs and steer people with HIV into medical care.

But then there are the beneficiaries that serve the HIV/AIDS communities in other ways, like the Turtle Creek Chorale and The Women’s Chorus of Dallas.

The Chorale maintains a fund called Turtle Cares, which can provide help in paying for medication or rent for chorale members with HIV in need. Despite the medical advances made, medications required to maintain health remain unaffordable without insurance.

The Miss Big Thicket pageant, which benefited the Turtle Creek Chorale AIDS Fund during the height of the AIDS crisis, is now a benefit for LifeWalk. The chorale has become one of the walk’s top 10 fundraisers.

“Other beneficiaries include Tucker’s Gift and Dogs Matter. Dogs Matter offers foster care for dogs while their owners are in the hospital. Hobbs said having a pet can help keep a person healthy. Worrying about their dog during a hospital stay can have a negative effect on a person’s health.

Tucker’s Gift give owners with HIV access to veterinarian services and dog food for their pets. After the walk, a festival runs until 3:30 p.m. with food trucks, a DJ, vendor booths and dog adoptions. WFAA news anchor Marcus Moore is the emcee for the afternoon.

Last year, LifeWalk raised more than $687,000, making it the largest LGBT or AIDS fundraiser in North Texas whose entire proceeds benefit local organizations. LifeWalk was even able to take the title of largest AIDS fundraiser in Texas after topping the Houston AIDS walk, whose proceeds dipped below $600,000.

In addition to street parking, free parking is available across Turtle Creek around the Kalita Humphries Theater and in the Centrum garage. Registration in the park the day of the event begins at 11 a.m. The festival after the walk begins at 2 p.m. and runs until about 3:30 p.m.
The Group for African-American MSMs with HIV celebrates 10 years as organizer Auntjuan Wiley gears up for the 2nd annual Strength Conference

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

"I look for the need, and then try to find a way to fill that need," says Auntjuan Wiley, who has been a soldier in the battle against HIV and AIDS in Dallas for more than a quarter of a century. It was about 12 years ago, he says, that he became acutely aware that there was no safe space in his city for African-American men who have sex with men — MSMs — to get together to talk about their lives, their struggles and their victories.

"It took a couple of years. I always wait to hear from the universe, and it took me a couple of years to hear from the universe on this," Wiley, the president and CEO of AIDS Walk South Dallas, explains. But when he did hear that call, he answered quickly. And on Oct. 12, 2006, The Group held its first meeting.

The Group, Wiley explains, is a place for black MSMs to gather for "support, empowerment and education." Over the last 10 years, more than 100 men have participated. The Group meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, and in the decade since it first formed, Wiley says, "we've only cancelled three meetings. Two were due to bad weather, and once, I was sick."

The Group, Wiley says, offers "no gift cards. There's no food; there aren't any 'incentives' to get the men to come." But still, they come, he says, because The Group offers them a safe place to gather and to talk.

Wiley says about 15 to 20 men attend each meeting. At the second Thursday meetings, "we focus on a topic, one of the ones the group has chosen in advance. At the first of the year, we come up with a list of topics we want to talk about that year, and each month, I choose a topic from that list and facilitate discussion on that topic."

The fourth Thursday meetings, he continues, are "open discussion" meetings. It's an opportunity for the men to just talk. They talk about what's

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going on in their lives, what’s going on in the world. It’s a chance for them to get to know each other.”

Sometimes representative’s from a local doctor’s office or maybe from one of the local AIDS service organizations will attend the meetings to offer information and answer questions.

And once a month, The Group’s member get together for Social Saturday. They meet at a member’s home to talk, to eat, play cards games — “What we do all depends on who’s hosting the event that month,” Wiley says. “It’s a way to keep the men interested and engaged throughout the month.”

Meeting places, Wiley notes, are not publicized. Anyone who is interested in attending can call him directly for information. “There’s a screening process,” he explains. “I want to make sure that whoever is asking to attend is who they say they are, and that they aren’t someone who wants to make trouble. And we’ve never been ‘invaded,’ never had any problems.”

2nd annual Strength Conference

The Group, Wiley says, “has been a life-changing experience,” for him and for the other men who attend. And a couple of years ago, he says, he realized that he wanted to find a way to offer similar opportunities to a wider range of men. Thus was born The Strength Conference for Men Living With HIV.

“I was getting so many calls from men who didn’t meet the demographic for The Group — support, empowerment and education,” Wiley says.

Last year, the first Strength Conference drew 54 men from Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, San Antonio, East Texas and even Kansas City, Mo. This year, Wiley says, he is expecting to see about 100 men attend the second annual Strength Conference, set for Nov. 11-13 at Embassy Suites Love Field.

The weekend begins with check-in and a speaker to welcome participants on Friday. Saturday will be filled with break-out sessions, education seminars and plenary speakers. Among those speaking at the event will be Robert Suttle from the Sero Project, who will discuss HIV criminalization; Will Horn with Cosmopolitan Congregation of Dallas, who will discuss faith-based elements of living with HIV; David Wiley of Nashville, who will talk about successful relationships in a heteronormative society; and Jeremy Teal, who will talk about disclosing one’s HIV status.

Wiley notes that he asks for a $50 donation from participants, and that nominal fee covers everything from the hotel room — “Every one has to have a roommate” — to the food to speakers to special events. And for those who want to attend but just can’t pay the $50, some scholarships are available.

“We have an amazing list of really phenomenal sponsors in this community who are stepping forward to make this happen,” Wiley notes. They include J. Anderson Lester, AIDS Healthcare Foundation, AHF Pharmacy, Pride Pharmacy, Avita Pharmacy, American Specialty Pharmacy, VIIV Healthcare, Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies, Metro PCS, The Original Cupcakery, Arcus Media and C.U.R.E.

The Strength Conference, Wiley says, is “the only conference of this type in the U.S. serving all HIV-positive men. I have based it on The Grace Project [an annual conference for HIV-positive women], creating something like that for men. I saw a need and responded to that need, and next year, my hope is that it will become a truly national conference.”

It is already on its way to national status. In addition to participants from across the state and from Kansas again, Wiley says he has already received inquiries from men in Memphis, Nashville and Atlanta.

“This conference is about having seen a need and trying to fill that need,” Wiley says. “And now, we have guys coming in from all over to participate. I am very excited about what’s to come.”

The Group and the Strength Conference for Men with HIV are both programs of AIDS Walk South Dallas. The next AIDS Walk South Dallas is set for March 25, 2017.
David Henderson prepares to hand over the reins of FFW as he concentrates on his personal battle against cancer.

David Mack Henderson admits that he is a bit of a “control queen.” But now he finds himself up against a situation even he can’t control.

The long-time activist and Fairness Fort Worth president announced last week that he has stage 4 esophageal cancer. He said he knows he faces a battle where the odds are stacked against him, and when it comes to this disease, the control he treasures will be in short supply.

Still, he’s made up his mind that it won’t control him, either.

Henderson said that after months of ever-building stress, steadily dropping weight and mounting exhaustion, on Aug. 23, he went for tests, looking for the cause. He went to sleep for an endoscopy, and woke up to a diagnosis of stage 4 esophageal cancer.

It started, Henderson said, in the spring when Tea Party darling Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick decided to focus his efforts on forcing the Fort Worth Independent School District to rescind its comprehensive protections for transgender students. Henderson rushed to rally the troops, turning up for meeting after meeting to stand in opposition to Patrick’s anti-trans hate.

In the end, the district’s policy was revised, but not rescinded. “Through all that drama,” Henderson said, “once again quiet, sleepy little Fort Worth showed that we wouldn’t stand for their hate. We proved that we have this coalition that is there, ready to step up and speak out. We showed that we can work pretty quickly, and we can work miracles when the call goes out.”

“I remember on May 10, that first [school board] meeting when Dan Patrick came up here, when I came around the corner and saw those 300 or more people standing there in those red shirts [to show support for transgender students], the line going all the way around the building — I almost cried,” Henderson said.
Then came June 12 and the mass murder of 49 men and women in a gay bar in Orlando. It happened in the early morning hours of Sunday, June 12 at Pulse nightclub. By early Monday evening, Henderson had helped the Rev. Carol West and her staff at Fort Worth’s Celebration Community Church organize a candlelight vigil that packed the church to overflowing.

Then there was the so-called preacher in Sansom Park who went on YouTube with a video declaring the victims at Pulse got what they deserved. A group of outraged activists in Dallas began making plans to protest outside his church. Henderson found himself in the middle, he said, urging the activists to move with caution — the preacher had already declared he and his congregation carried guns and weren’t afraid to use them — while at the same time trying to work with Sansom Park police to organize security for the protest.

The rally eventually went on without any problems. But it could have easily gone the other way. “We’re not worried about most everybody who has good intentions,” Henderson said. “It’s our job to worry about those one or two bad actors. You know, everything is fine until somebody shoots a bullet. Then nothing else matters. Whatever the message was that you were sending — it’s gone then.”

Then came July 7 and the attack following a Black Lives Matter rally in Dallas that left five officers dead. And still, the uproar over transgender students continued.

“I was feeling worse and worse and totally worn out,” Henderson said. “Here I was, I could barely swallow, and the press was everywhere, salivating for those of us in Texas to provide trans children for them to interview. I even had calls from BBC. We had become a flashpoint.”

And while he understood the importance of helping create the narrative around this issue, he also knew that many of the transgender children in question came from “underprivileged families and went to tough schools and had negligible support systems in place. I had already come to distrust a number of reports I knew by name. You can bet I wasn’t about to put some 15-year-old kid out there in front of reporters I don’t know, from Georgia or the BBC or wherever.”

The stress continued to build. The weight continued to drop. The fatigue continued to mount. And at the same time, Henderson’s financial resources were dwindling.

“A lot of people think that Fairness Fort Worth has been paying me all along, but that’s not true. Until recently, the only pay I got came from the sensitivity training teaching jobs every now and then,” Henderson said. “In July, I approached the [FFW] board and told them I couldn’t keep going at that pace. I told them, if we want professional advocacy, it needs to be paid. I’ve been doing it for free,” and it was causing his work as a tax accountant to suffer.

“My practice was feeling it,” he said. “I have turned down work because it was more important to focus on activism at that moment. That doesn’t pay my rent. It turns out, that the person paying for it all along was me, and the cupboard was bare.”

The FFW board agreed to begin paying Henderson for his work, but by then his body was letting him know something was really wrong. He had lost about 40 pounds since the spring, and the exhaustion had reached the point where he could no longer ignore it. So he went to the doctor. He had the tests. He received the diagnosis.

His world changed.

“Even this control queen has to let go eventually,” Henderson said with a smile. “It’s time. I have to start taking care of me now and those I call my family. It’s time for me to pass the mantle.”

Henderson said he has spoken with the Fairness Fort Worth board and has arranged to hand over his office and his duties in as orderly a manner as possible.

“It’s time for Fairness Fort Worth to make some decisions about what we want our own advocacy to look like and we’re going to do to create that,” he said, adding that he will be stepping aside as president “no later than the end of November when we would be electing new officers anyway.”

“Plans are in place to responsibly transfer all the accounts, and the banks of knowledge that comes with this job,” Henderson said. “I will help foster the relationships that this is all about, among other things, so this work can continue to grow, exponentially, with the next set of dedicated people ready to step up make the commitment.”

The cancer, Henderson acknowledged, is incurable. “But I am trying to be both an optimist and a pragmatist about this. I need both those things. Whether it’s three months or a year, for whatever time I have left, my plan is to wrap it all up, as best I can, so others can take over and keep going.

“It has been my privilege to serve and to grow, to trip and fall and get back up again with this community,” he said. “And I am proud to say that we are now on solid footing that we didn’t have 10 years ago in Fort Worth. I think this community is ready now to step up to the plate and create a collective legacy with real staying power. Our kids deserve nothing less.”

For more on David Henderson, his history and his legacy, visit DallasVoice.com.
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On the ballots

Anti-gay tactics still exist, but a record number of LGBT candidates are making an impact across the country

LISA KEEN | Keen News Service
lisa.kee@mac.com


Republican supporters of a Congressional candidate dubbed a “mini-Trump” in Minnesota used a family photo of his Democratic lesbian opponent to draw attention to “her female marriage partner and their four teenage sons.”

Democratic opponents of a gay Republican candidate for sheriff in Arizona ran an ad that claimed, “We can’t trust him with our kids.”

In Oregon, threats and taunts against incumbent Gov. Kate Brown, a bisexual, have escalated in recent months over her calls for tighter gun controls, prompting an increase in her security detail.

And a story in the conservative Des Moines Register characterized Iowa’s openly-gay Republican candidate for the state senate as a 50-year-old man “living with his mom” and described his Democratic opponent as having a “muscular campaign organization.”

But while anti-LGBT sentiments and tactics might still be in evidence these days, there is much to be appreciated for how matter-of-factly the sexual orientation of most LGBT candidates is being regarded.

A record number of LGBT people are running for seats in the U.S. House this year. Of the 12 openly-gay U.S. House candidates, six are incumbents expected to easily win re-election. Of the six newcomers, only one is said to have a good chance at winning.

Add to that at least 21 openly-LGBT people running for state senate seats, 61 running for state house seats, one candidate for governor and four candidates for other statewide offices, at least 53 candidates for local offices and 17 candidates for seats on various state and local courts. Add them all together for a total of 170 — a new high, compared to 152 in 2012 and 164 in 2010.

Here’s a look at some of the most high-profile races involving LGBT candidates next month:

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown

Brown, who identifies as bisexual, took office in February 2015 when her predecessor resigned amid scandal. She’s considered a safe bet to keep that job. A Portland-based polling firm found her eight points ahead of Republican challenger Bud Pierce in early September.

Brown was previously secretary of state; Pierce was an oncologist.

Despite the good poll numbers though, there have been some troubling moments for Brown this year. Earlier this month, pro-gun demonstrators burned her in effigy, and the Oregonian reports that Brown’s security detail has been increased. The paper reported that someone posted a message on Twitter, calling Brown a “sexually confused progressive” and blaming her for the death of a man who joined a group trying to occupy a federal wildlife refuge in the state. Another threatened an “attack” on her house in response to a ruling by a state labor commissioner who ordered a bakery to pay $135,000 to a same-sex couple for refusing to sell them a wedding cake.

Six new candidates for Congress

In addition to Jim Gray of Kentucky who is running for the U.S. Senate, six LGBT challengers are running for seats in the U.S. House this year. Most of them are considered long shots, but Angie Craig in Minnesota has the best chance of getting there. Her race is polling as a “toss-up,” according to RealClearPolitics.com.

Craig, a vice president of global human resources for a medical devices manufacturer in St. Paul, left that position to run for Minnesota’s 2nd District seat in the U.S. House. Craig’s website bio features a photo of her, her wife, and their four boys.

She’s the Democratic Farmer Labor Party candidate for a seat opened up by retiring Republican John Kline, and she’s running against a former talk show host, Jason Lewis, whose provocative statements prompted The Atlantic magazine to dub him “Minnesota’s mini-Trump.”

Among other things, Lewis has argued, “Gay couples are no more discriminated against than the polygamist, the drug user, or the loan shark.”

One state GOP official used a photo of Craig’s family to solicit attendance to a Lewis fundraiser, noting that Craig is “liberal and this is her family. She and her female marriage partner and their four teenage sons.” Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund President Aisha C. Moodie-Mills said Angie Craig’s family photo was used “to attack both her and LGBT families” and that the GOP state official’s decision to do so was “more indicative of the hate her opponent Jason Lewis spreads, than it is of politics for LGBT candidates nationwide.”

Craig has raised almost $1.5 million for her campaign, according to Federal Elections Commission records. Lewis has raised $369,000.

Washington State Rep. Brady Walkinshaw, 32, is running for the state’s 7th District seat in the U.S. House against another progressive Democrat, State Sen. Pramila Jayapal. Jayapal got twice as many votes as Walkinshaw during the primary, but, as one of the top two vote-getters in the nine-person field, Walkinshaw advanced to the general election.

Oklahoma State Sen. Al McAffrey is making a second run for a U.S. House seat to represent Oklahoma’s 5th Congressional District. He won
In addition to incumbent U.S. Rep. Kyrsten Sinema, there are two new openly-gay candidates for Congress in Arizona on Nov. 8 — a Republican and a Democrat, running in separate districts.

Former Arizona State Rep. Matt Heinz, an emergency room doctor at Tucson Medical Center, is running for the state’s 2nd Congressional District House seat, currently held by former Air Force Col. Martha McSally, “the first woman in our nation’s history to pilot a fighter plane in combat and command a fighter squadron.” Heinz is the Democrat. An independent poll released Sept. 26 shows Republican McSally with a 19-point lead.

In Congressional District 1, openly-gay Sheriff Paul Babeu of Pinal County is the Republican, running seven points behind the Democrat for an open seat. Babeu’s campaign seems hobbled by news that he approved of the use of controversial discipline measures against students at a school he ran for at-risk youth in Massachusetts. An attack ad from Democrats focuses on that scandal and says, “We can’t trust him with our kids. How can we trust him in Congress.”

In Connecticut, openly gay Republican Selectman Clay Cope of Sherman, a Texas native and Donald Trump supporter, is out to unseat Democratic incumbent U.S. Rep. Elizabeth Esty, of the state’s 5th Congressional District. Esty earned a perfect score from the Human Rights Campaign for her voting record.

And in Kentucky, openly gay Lexington Mayor Jim Gray, a Democrat, has taken on Republican incumbent U.S. Senator Rand Paul. Gray told the Washington Post that his being gay has not been an issue in the campaign, but he’s also trailing 12 points behind Paul, according to the most recent poll.

Statewide races: old and new

There are some familiar names and some new ones among the 87 known openly LGBT candidates running for statewide offices next month.

In addition to Kate Brown in Oregon, there’s Democrat Tina Padlofski, a long-time lesbian political, running to become Washington’s secretary of state. Podlofski left a successful career at Microsoft in 1995 to win a seat on the Seattle City Council. She’s up against an incumbent Republican.

Toni Atkins is another well-known lesbian politico running for statewide office.

She served as California Assembly Speaker of San Diego, but is now running for the seat representing Senate District 39. Because she won more than three times the votes her Republican challenger did in this year’s open primary, Atkins is considered likely to win on Nov. 8.

Daniel Hernandez made headlines five years ago as the openly-gay staffer who helped save the life of U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords following a mass shooting in Tucson. A Democrat, he’s now running for a state house seat against a Democratic incumbent and a Republican challenger. The top two vote-getters represent the district.

Less well-known is television producer and winter of three Emmys for sports coverage, Beth Tuura, a Democrat who is challenging a Republican incumbent for a House seat representing Orlando, Fla.

And another new name on the horizon is Sam Park, an attorney and the son of Korean immigrants who was born and raised in Georgia. He’s making his first bid for elected office, seeking a seat in the state house.

Local races to watch

Fifty-three openly LGBT candidates are vying for public office in local races, including two candidates for mayor — incumbent Alex Morse in Holyoke, Mass., and Kriss Worthington in Berkeley.

Meanwhile, Berkeley’s first openly-gay black city councilman, Darryl Moore, is fending off a challenge from Nanci Armstrong-Temple, who Bay Area Reporter says identifies as queer.

Next door, in Oakland, two other LGBT candidates are squaring off for one seat on that city’s Council: Oakland mayoral aide Peggy Moore is challenging incumbent Rebecca Kaplan for one of the city’s at-large seats.

Kimberly Alvarenga is running to be the first lesbian in 16 years to serve on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. And according to the Bay Area Reporter, her election could maintain an important part of LGBT history.

Since 1977, when Harvey Milk was first elected to the Board, “there has been at least one LGBT supervisor,” notes the paper. But new term limits are jeopardizing that trend. Plus current gay board member Scott Wiener is running for the state senate. That leaves lesbian union leader Alvarenga trying to fill the void. She is up against another union leader.

In Texas, Jennifer Rene Pool made history as the first openly transgender person to win a primary in Texas. She defeated a fellow Democrat and took 78 percent of the vote for a seat on the Harris County Commissioners Court in Houston. She’s now running against an incumbent Republican.

Not surprisingly, California has the most openly LGBT candidates (43), followed by Texas and Florida (with nine each), Massachusetts and Georgia (with eight each, and Washington state (with seven). Michigan has four.

“LGBT candidates are running strong races in parts of the country thought unviable just an election cycle or two before,” said Victory Fund’s Moodie-Mills.

Among the more “unviable” states where LGBT candidates are running this year are the solidly conservative Republican states of West Virginia, Montana and Wyoming.

Moodie-Mills said candidates in these more difficult environments “can make an outsized impact on equality if elected in November.”

“Voters are viewing LGBT candidates holistically — so qualified LGBT candidates with the right message can run competitively and win,” she said. “It is rarely easy, but we are making enormous progress, and it upends the narrative that LGBT candidates can only win blue or purple states and districts.”

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**commUNITY voices**

**Takes one to know one**

Was Trump coked up during the debate?

Back in the 1980s, I was in the film production business. I directed commercials and short films for commercial clients. It was a fun business, but very intense, and it was also rife with cocaine.

Some clients expected it as part of the production process, some suppliers provided it as an incentive, and I indulged in it because it was plentiful and frankly fun for a while.

Cocaine was the 1980s’ equivalent to a cocktail of which most likely went to buy the drug.

Second, it gave me a feeling of not just well-being but self-importance. Suddenly, whatever blather flowed from my lips seemed deep and intellectual. Using coke prompted a lot of rash — and often bad — decisions.

Third, cocaine made me sniff constantly, like someone suffering from hay fever. I would sniff between words and between sentences, and clench my jaw like a prizefighter. It also made me sweat and suffer a nagging cotton-mouth feeling that had me gulping water like a thirsty camel.

And finally, it kept me up all night — reading, chatting, making pronouncements because whatever I had to say was “important.” Had there been Twitter back then, you can bet I would have been on it.

Thanks to a 12-step program, today I no longer need mind-altering drugs, and my rants have become more sedate and less self-righteous. I now sleep all night, unless awakened by my cat walking across me to get my attention. It has been about 30 years since those wild, coke-filled days.

I confess all this only to let you know that the manerisms and affectations I observed in Donald Trump during the first presidential debate were all too familiar. The inability to stay on topic, constant sniffing, excessive sweating and water swilling — all familiar. Afterward, the late-night Twitter storms filled with self-righteous blather and the self-justification were also familiar.

What am I saying? Well, to put it into the parlance Donald Trump uses, he “could” be high on cocaine. He “could” be strung out, sweating and sniffing and interrupting himself with “brilliant” insights and asides. His performance had all the earmarks, and you can trust me on this, because I have been there.

In the 1980s, we had an expression: “Cocaine is God’s way of telling you that you have too much money.” For me, it was a way to let me see money drain from my bank account like water down a funnel. For someone as wealthy as Donald Trump, it’s most likely not an economic problem. But for our country it could be a political nightmare.

Trump’s brash statements about his future policies look like bad news for anyone other than white male, heterosexuals. His “brilliance” consists of schoolyard taunts and body-shaming insults. His foreign policy ideas are right out of a protectionist fantasy.

Do we really want a guy who “could” be strung out on nose candy to have his trembling finger on the button of the most powerful nuclear arsenal in the world?

Do we really want a guy who “people say” is high selecting the next Supreme Court?

Do we really want a man who “might” pay no income tax while “possibly” spending thousands on drugs to manage the economy of our country?

OK, so yeah. Most of what I just wrote was complete conjecture. I can’t prove any of it. So why even bother to say it?

Well, it all boils down to this: I love my country and I do not want to see the progress LGBTQ people have made in the last 45 years go up in a snort. We have fought too hard and our forefathers sacrificed too much to hand it over to a spoiled rich kid with too much expendable income and no self-control.

As children would say in the schoolyard, “Takes one to know one.” As I would say today, “I was one, and I recognize one when I see one.” Call it my “blow-dar.”

Hardy Haberman is a longtime local LGBTQ activist and a board member of the Woodhull Freedom Alliance. His blog is at DungeonDiary.blogspot.com.
High stakes

PGN Exclusive: Democratic presidential candidate addresses LGBT equality

BY HILLARY CLINTON

Editor’s Note: The following op-ed was written by Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton for Philadelphia Gay News, which has made the content available to Dallas Voice and other LGBT news publications. PGN reached out to both Clinton and Republican candidate Donald Trump, giving them the opportunity to discuss LGBT issues in advance of next month’s election. Clinton provided PGN this exclusive op-ed detailing her LGBT-rights record and her goals for future LGBT-equality efforts. The offer remains open for Trump. This is the first time a major-party presidential candidate has written an op-ed for an LGBT newspaper. Dallas Voice endorsed Clinton for president in September. It was the first time in the paper’s history we had endorsed a political candidate.

More than a century ago, at Independence Hall, participants at the first Annual Reminder march picketed, chanted and sang. They did this to show their fellow Philadelphians that the LGBT community lacked fundamental civil rights.

In the decades since those protests, our country has come a long way. Marriage equality is the law of the land. This year, the last state law prohibiting same-sex couples from adopting was finally struck down. And President Obama signed an executive order protecting federal workers from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. We should celebrate that progress.

But the simple truth is that even now, in 2016, there are still too many states in America where LGBT people can be fired or evicted from their home because of who they are or who they love. Pennsylvania is one of them. Here, you can get married on Sunday and fired on Monday just for being gay or transgender. [Editor’s Note: The same is true in Texas.]

That goes against everything we stand for as a country.

We need to act on the federal level to take on discrimination in all its forms. That’s what I’ll do as president — with your help.

But first, we have to win this election.

Donald Trump must not be elected president. He would rip away so much of the progress we’ve made. He would appoint Supreme Court justices who would overturn marriage equality and rescind many of President Obama’s executive orders — including those protecting LGBT people.

It’s not just Trump’s policies that reveal the kind of president he would be. So does his choice of running mate. Mike Pence is one of the most anti-LGBT public officials in America.

As governor of Indiana, Pence supported a bill that legalized discrimination against LGBT people. As a member of Congress, he voted against expanding the definition of hate crimes to include sexual orientation and gender identity. He opposed the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” saying doing so would be “social experimentation.” And he’s said that homosexuality would bring about “societal collapse.”

That’s why the stakes in this election are so high. If I’m fortunate enough to be elected president, I’ll protect the progress we’ve fought so hard to achieve — and I’ll keep fighting until every American can live free from discrimination and prejudice.

That means working to pass the Equality Act. It would finally provide LGBT people full federal nondiscrimination protections in housing, employment and so much more.

I know that differences of opinion on LGBT equality still exist in the hearts of some Americans, but they should not exist under our laws. As president, I’ll be your partner in bringing about the vision of the inclusive nation that advocates, activists and allies have been seeking for decades.

I also believe we must address the ongoing issue of violence against the LGBT community. LGBT people are now more likely than any other group to be the target of a hate crime. America saw the effects of hate in Orlando, with the attack on the Pulse nightclub — the deadliest mass shooting by a single person in our history.

The danger is compounded for LGBT people of color, who face intersectional pressures and dangers, particularly transgender people of color. Last year, more than 20 transgender women were killed in America. Recently, three were murdered right here in Philadelphia.

We need to stop the violence and save LGBT lives. We need to collect more data around gender identity and sexual orientation in hate crimes, so we can stop them in a smarter, more effective way.

And we need to finally pass common-sense reforms to address the gun violence epidemic. Along with the vast majority of Americans, I believe that we can protect the rights of law-abiding gun owners while still making sure that guns don’t fall into the wrong hands.

Finally, we need to continue our fight to achieve our goal of an AIDS-free generation. HIV and AIDS still disproportionately impact gay and bisexual men, communities of color, transgender people and young people. We need to increase research, expand the use of effective prevention medications like PrEP, cap out-of-pocket drug costs and reform out-dated HIV-criminalization laws.

Like many, I’ve lost friends and loved ones to AIDS. We owe it to them — the people we love and miss, and the people whose names we’ll never know — to continue this fight.

As first lady and senator, I fought to significantly expand funding for AIDS research. As secretary of state, I changed the rules so that State Department employees in same-sex relationships were treated the same as their colleagues and so that transgender Americans could obtain passports that reflected their true gender identity.

So these fights aren’t new to me.

And as president, I’ll keep fighting for LGBT rights, because — as I told the world in one of the most important speeches I gave as secretary — they are human rights. And I won’t quit until all our laws reflect that basic reality.

The story of Hillary Clinton's PGN op-ed

MARK SEGAL
PGN Publisher

Editor’s Note: The following is an explanation by Philadelphia Gay News publisher and owner Mark Segal on how his newspaper obtained the op-ed piece by Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, reprinted with permission in Dallas Voice, and why he chose to publish the piece on the cover of PGN this week.

Philadelphia Gay News has always sought participation from the presidential candidates in our election coverage. We ask both the Republican and Democratic candidates to participate (usually it’s only the Democrat who takes up the mantel).

We’ve been doing this going back to 1976 with the Jimmy Carter campaign. That year we received a signed letter from Carter about his LGBT positions. Four years later, when he was challenged for the nomination by Sen. Ted Kennedy, Kennedy sat for a Q&A with this paper.

A lot of back-and-forth happens before something of this importance finds its way onto the front page. The first step is that we make the ask of the candidate and his or her staff. Then, we figure out what format the piece is going to take. Usually it’s an interview or we’ll submit written questions. Those were options this year as well.

It should be noted that PGN has a history of communicating with both Hillary Clinton and former President Bill Clinton, so navigating the perils of a campaign were understandable by both sides. At the same time the campaign was deciding what form this piece would take, we at PGN were being asked to join various coalitions, all of which we felt we could not do while this process was in formation. It made for a stressful time.

Why?

At that same time, we were also in contact with senior campaign representatives for Donald Trump. Again, these connections were made from people we came to know over the years. We offered space to allow Trump to express his views in these pages, but we made it clear that in the end, we most likely would be supporting Clinton. We just wanted to be fair and allow the Republican candidate to express views for our readers.

Here’s the point: Trump claims to be the candidate of change. Clinton moved the needle with this op-ed, while Trump did what almost every other Republican usually does: refuse to speak directly to the LGBT community.

Note the year when Democratic candidates for president began to speak to the LGBT community: It was 1976.

Republicans seem to be stuck in the 1970s, and that is not change. “Make America great again” by taking us back to the 1970s, a time we had no rights? That said, we and other LGBT publications will continue to ask to hear Trump’s views. That is our job.

As for the piece, the following op-ed was written by Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton for Philadelphia Gay News...
Dance can heal; we know that. It can be a cathartic soul-soother, as it’s been, ironically, in Orlando since the June 12 shooting at Pulse Nightclub that claimed 49 lives and injured 53 others, leaving the city, and the world, devastated and shaken and scared.

It can heal people like Blue Star who, at the age of 4, began ballet classes that fixed her “weird, turned-in legs.” And now it’s healing her once again, as a 42-year-old professional dancer who finds comfort in her art — the same art that brought light to the Orlando community when it needed it most.

“You look around,” says the out dancer, recalling the days after her space, The Venue, re-opened, “and everybody is just smiling and having a great time and they’re loving the song and they’re dancing and they’re dancing.”

In the hours and weeks after the tragic shooting, those in Orlando’s LGBT community kept moving, only stopping to make noble contributions. Water, gift cards, paper towels, food — you name it.

Blue, along with others in the community, organized the call for donations, putting together care packages for the victims, the victims’ families and Pulse employees, whom she calls her “family.”

“I always say that I’m the facilitator of fun, and I became a facilitator in another way,” says Blue, affectionately known to the community as the “Mother of Burlesque.”

She continued, “I had these volunteers show up, and it was amazing to watch that happen — my staff just pulling together. To be able to walk into a place that we established four years ago — you never know what you’re preparing for, but these last four years have really been preparation for what happened.”

Since 2012, Blue has been the brains behind The Venue, a rental and performance establishment — a “safe space” for people to come together in artistic unity, or even to celebrate the impending birth of a child. Located on Virginia Drive, just a few miles from Pulse, The Venue has hosted a variety of gatherings, from cabarets and burlesque shows to baby showers and bar mitzvahs.

But then the massacre happened, the deadliest mass shooting in modern American history, and suddenly Blue knew the community needed this space, which she says she “built with love,” even more.
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There is an entire generation of queer and straight people who grew up watching actress Charlotte Rae on television — first as Molly the Mail Lady on Sesame Street and later as Mrs. Edna Garrett, the beloved housemother on the popular ’80s sitcom The Facts of Life.

But there is so much more to Rae, including the many years she spent as a stage actress and singer, as well as all of the TV commercials she did in the early days of her career.

Rae’s aptly-titled memoir The Facts of My Life (BearManor Media, 2016) tells you everything you could ever possibly want to know about Rae, who turned 90 earlier this year, including what occurred when her husband came out to her as bisexual.

— Gregg Shapiro

Dallas Voice: What inspired you to tell your story at this time in your life?

Charlotte Rae: A couple of years ago my son [and co-author, Larry Strauss] said to me, “Ma [laughs], you’re 87½. I think it’s time you wrote your memoirs.” I said, “I’m not a writer.” He said, “Well, I am.” He’s a wonderful writer. He’s written many novels. He said, “You talk and I’ll write.” I’m glad we did. After I started telling my story, my history, I re-
alized I was going to let it all hang out. All of it. And I
did. The real truth of everything. Yeah, that's what I
did.

So, are you someone who kept a journal or a diary
from which you could draw on these memories?
No, I didn’t. But it was wonderful having Larry there.
I talked about the struggles we had with my firstborn,
Andy, with his autism. All of the challenges for him
and for us, because it was so many years ago and
nobody knew about autism. Then all about alco-
holism, my husband and me, and then later on, after
25 years of marriage, my darling [husband] John
[Strauss] told me he was bisexual.

You write about being from Milwaukee and Shore-
wood, and you attended college at Northwestern
in Evanston. What kind of impact do you think
being from the Midwest had on you personally
and professionally? Coming from the Midwest,
which I love very much, Milwaukee was wonderful.
But New York really opened my eyes. There were so
many different nationalities and marvelous artists.
I felt like I was home for the first time in my life when I
went to New York; all these young people who were
musicians and actors and dancers and artists. It was
a wonderful experience.

How long did it take for you to write the book with
Larry? I think, on and off, about a year.
You mentioned that you were, in your words, going to
“let it all hang out.” Did you have a discussion with
Larry about how much you would be including per-
sonal details about him prior to working with him on
the book? Yes, absolutely. He was very accepting
and loving. We loved his dad. There was no problem
with that. Dad was dad. He was a terrific dad.

You also mentioned alcoholism, which is another
subject in the memoir about which you are espe-
cially forthcoming; drinking, and your more than
40 years of sobriety. Was it important for you to
include that in the book? Very important! Not that I
want people to join me. I'm not trying to get people to
join Alcoholics Anonymous. That's not what we’re
supposed to do. I just want them to know that I did
have a problem and I’m eternally grateful for this pro-
gram. I still go to meetings. It’s just incredible. I don’t
want to sell it to people [laughs]. That’s not the point.
It saved my life. I can’t go into detail because you’re
not supposed to advertise it. But it’s a warm, wonder-
ful community and you learn how to be of service to
other people. You learn how to change your attitudes.
It’s extraordinary. I owe everything to Alcoholics
Anonymous.

Throughout the book you have kind words to say
about other actors, but you didn’t pull any
punches when it came to speaking your mind
about other actors who might not have been nice
to work with, such as Peter Bull and Bern Hoff-
man. Did it feel good to get that off your chest?
Yeah. Normally, I don’t do that sort of thing [laughs].
Bern Hoffinan, I loved him afterwards, but it was
hideous working with him. Peter Bull was so anti-Se-
mite. That was so shocking to me – smiling at you
and then writing such a vicious thing. It was very up-
setting to me. I don’t wish them any ill. It’s just that
they were very offensive to me.

In the chapter titled “Earthquakes,” you write about,
as you mentioned, your ex-husband John’s com-
ing out as bi, saying “no need to condemn the
man for being human.” Later you also write about
seeing him and his partner in a social setting. Do
you have any advice for people going through a
similar situation?
Well, I did go through a period of
feeling less than a woman and feeling betrayed. But
then I realized that he was going through an awful lot
at that time. It was a very hush-hush period. It was
not acceptable then. He was going through what he
was going through.

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**Facts**

Next Page

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Love abounded in the days following the massacre, and The Venue was full of overflow from The Center. Orlando’s pre-eminent LGBT community organization. “From sunrise to sunset,” Blue remembers, “it was this ongoing energy field of hugs and donations and coping.”

And healing.

When The Venue officially re-opened the following Friday with a burlesque show, Blue recalls the vibe being “gentle.”

“These four walls, that’s our imagination land,” she says, “and that’s where we get to get away from things. Unfortunately, that was taken away from [the Pulse victims].”

After Pulse, Blue’s movement-oriented hashtags — #ArtHeals, #BurlesqueHeals and #HealingOrlando — have helped mend the community’s wounds.

“She’s sort of grassroots, low-budget while simultaneously shining like a diamond in both dance and song,” says Billy Manes, editor of Watermark, Florida LGBT publication. “She’d just as soon play Donna Summer’s ‘On the Radio’ and lose her mind in the living room as she would kick a leg up, collapse and cry within the span of seconds on stage in front of hundreds. Blue Star is the real deal.

“She has changed this town for the better. She’s changed me for the better.”

For Blue, her compassion for her fellow Orlando friends and “family” is a no-brainer.

“You do what you’re supposed to do,” Blue says, simply, “and we are here to help one another and I feel like it’s kind of just the way it goes.

This is what you need to do and you’re gonna do it. And then the next step comes and you’re gonna do that, too.”

Even before Pulse, Blue was offering hope in the midst of tragedy through other altruistic endeavors. In 2014 she co-founded the Barber Fund, a grassroots organization established to assist men, women and children with cancer. The nonprofit is named in honor of Blue’s friend, the late John “Tweeka” Barber, who died of sinonasal carcinoma in 2011.

The Barber Fund’s “One Love” slogan, inspired by a David Guetta and Estelle song of the same name, “has been so important since 2011.” In recent months, following Pulse, “it’s everywhere,” she says.

“When [Barber] died, she gave her all to start the One Love Foundation to fund others who are dealing with the terrors of cancer,” Manes says. “When the Pulse massacre happened, she danced this city through its pain, showing up where necessary and never showboating.

“Blue is a sort of pivotal bar of light in Orlando, an insurmountable force of nature in her compassion for others,” he continues. “You wouldn’t think a classically trained dancer with that smirk and wit would give a damn about anyone, but she gives all the damn.”

Chris Azzopardi is the editor of Q Syndicate, the international LGBT wire service. Reach him via his website at www.chris-azzopardi.com and on Twitter (@chrisazzopardi).

— Chris Azzopardi
Rodd Gray, pageant-winning female impersonator and professional hair stylist, puts down the make-up brushes and scissors and picks up the paint brush and jackhammer to remodel his Richardson home.

Rodd Gray’s new neighbors in Richardson have embraced the former Miss Gay America in a way he never expected. The Richardson Heights Neighborhood Association already informed him that this year’s Christmas party will be at his house. In fact, the only neighbors not thrilled having Gray — aka Patti le Plae Safe — in the area is one of the gay ones. “They’re not the neighborhood’s favorite gays anymore,” Gray explained.

Gray purchased a four-bedroom home just north of Spring Valley Road in May 2015. In the about 16 months since then, he has turned the 1961-era home into a showplace.

The house had been home to eight people. Gray said there were bunk beds in the garage; there was a restroom sign on the bathroom door, and church had been held in the house on Sundays.

Gray decided to drastically change the floor plan. He gained space by tearing down walls to remove dark hallways and combine two bedrooms into one master. He replaced a wall between the kitchen and dining room with a long counter, and
both the kitchen and dining area now open to the living room.

Gray added light by adding windows throughout the house. Putting in double sliding glass doors from the master bedroom to the fenced backyard brought in even more light. But to add the windows and doors, he had to replace load-bearing walls with new support beams. And to accommodate five square, evenly-spaced windows, he had to move column beams.

None of the home’s closets remained in their original place. But now the master bedroom’s closet has enough space to keep Carrie Bradshaw happy.

“It’s big enough to be used as an office,” Gray said.

One bedroom’s closet intruded into the bathroom. So Gray appropriated that space to make a new shower, build a linen closet inside the bathroom and turned the old hall linen closet into the smaller bedroom’s new closet.

Rodd Gray did most of the work in his house himself. That included welding together his bathroom vanities in a class he’s taking, below right. The counter in the kitchen was made by Decocrete, a McKinney company, and matches the floor, below left and bottom.
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DFW Metroplex cities top several ‘best of’ lists

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WalletHub, a website based in Washington, D.C. and owned by Evolution Finance Inc., launched in August 2013 as a “personal finance social network” offering reviews of financial advisors. But the site has quickly branched out into producing research reports and surveys on everything from “best and worst cities to find a job” to “2016’s states with the biggest bullying problem” (Texas is No. 6 on that last list, by the way).

Some of the website’s most recent studies put a number of Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex cities right at the top of some lists that are much more admirable than the “biggest bullying problem” rankings. Take, for example, the list of “2016’s Best Real Estate Markets” report, authored by Richie Bernardo and released Aug. 30. The top three best markets are Metroplex cities, and two more local towns hit the top 10.

While lots of Americans don’t seem to really trust what appears to be a significant upswing in the housing industry, there’s plenty of evidence that housing is “on its feet again,” the report says the No. 1 city for “gay-friendly retirement” by McKinney — ranked No. 8, and three other Texas cities — League City at No. 2, Midland at No. 7 and Bryan at No. 10 — made the top 10. Grand Prairie at No. 27 and Irving at No. 38 rounded out the list of Metroplex cities in the top 50. Austin was at No. 26, while Allen placed at No. 53, For Worth was No. 70, Richardson was No. 85, Denton was No. 162, Garland was No. 231, Plano was No. 260, Flower Mound was No. 268 and Dallas was at No. 296.

Real Estate Markets” report, authored by Richie Bernardo’s report — which compared “300 U.S. cities of varying population sizes based on 14 key indicators of rapid economic growth.” While Frisco is No. 1 on that list, another Metroplex city — McKinney — ranked No. 8, and three other Texas cities — League City at No. 2, Midland at No. 7 and Bryan at No. 10 — made the top 10.

Grand Prairie at No. 27 and Irving at No. 38. Among other information in the report is the fact that Frisco ranked fourth on the list in terms of highest median home-price appreciation, and No. 1 on the “lowest maintenance as a percentage of income” list. Allen was No. 3 on that last list. Frisco also topped the “2016’s Fastest Growing Cities” list, again authored by Bernardo. This report “compared 515 U.S. cities of varying population sizes based on 14 key indicators of rapid economic growth.”

While Frisco is No. 1 on that list, another Metroplex city — McKinney — ranked No. 8, and three other Texas cities — League City at No. 2, Midland at No. 7 and Bryan at No. 10 — made the top 10. Grand Prairie at No. 27 and Irving at No. 38 rounded out the list of Metroplex cities in the top 50. Austin was at No. 26, while Allen placed at No. 53, For Worth was No. 70, Richardson was No. 85, Denton was No. 162, Garland was No. 231, Plano was No. 260, Flower Mound was No. 268 and Dallas was at No. 296.

Austin topped the list of “large” cities with the highest growth, and Frisco was No. 1 among “mid-size” cities with the highest growth. On the list of cities with highest income growth, McAllen, Midland, Odessa and College station were the top four.

Frisco was also No. 1 in highest job growth, and McKinney hit No. 5 on that list, while Wichita Falls ranked on the other end of that spectrum with the fifth-lowest job growth. McKinney was No. 1 in “highest poverty rate decrease.” WalletHub’s list of “Best Cities for Families” puts Plano at No. 3, the only Texas city in the top 10. On the more localized “2016’s Best and Worst Cities for Texas Families” list, the top 8 were all DFW locales — Southlake, University Park, Colleyville, Allen, Flower Mound, Frisco, Coppell and Keller. Dallas ranked near the bottom of that list — No. 107 out of 112 — and Wieslaco was the worst. Fort Worth was No. 62 on the list, one place ahead of Austin.

Not a single Texas city made the top 20 in WalletHub’s list of best places to retire. In fact, Austin had the best ranking of any Texas city on the list at No. 34. But SeniorAdvice.com, a website designed to help family members find the best assisted living and senior care for their loved ones, says the No. 1 city for “gay-friendly retirement” is Austin. “Austin is a very progressive city where tolerance is the norm,” the website says. “Over 5 percent of the population identify as gay and there is a thriving social scene to go along with this large community. There is also a general acceptance of the LGBT community by the population at large and strong support for gay-owned businesses.”

— From Staff Reports
Kitchen fixtures come from Ikea. But the two bathroom vanities — industrial steel tables — Gray built himself in his welding class. When the plumber came to install the drain from the sink, he wasn’t sure how he was going to hide the plumbing. Gray explained the pipes would be exposed and he’d have to use polished metal.

“We need to use pretty stuff, not plastic,” he told the plumber.

Gray’s welding teacher was so impressed with how the vanities turned out, teacher and student are starting a new business this winter making free-standing, open-faced steel bathroom vanities.

The floor throughout the house is now stained concrete. But to get there, Gray jackhammered out the old floor tile until he got down to the slab. Then he poured a porcelain finish that he spread with a trowel. The liquid flowed across the floor to make a smooth finish with the cement showing in places where the floor was a little higher. The entire surface was covered with a hand wax finish.

“It looks like carrera marble,” Gray said.

The kitchen features an island with a counter that matches the floor, made by Artisan Decocrete, a McKinney company that had been featured on HGTV. When Gray first contacted them, they were apprehensive about making the piece. Not only was it the largest countertop they had ever produced, but they’d never worked with the porcelain finish Gray used.

Under the kitchen counters, he installed drawers rather than cabinets, because with drawers, “I don’t have to get down on my knees,” Gray explained. “I’m too old to get down on my knees.”

Gray has done most of the work himself, and “What code didn’t allow me to do myself, I hired [out],” he said. That included the plumbing, electrical and air conditioning.

Because he wanted to use some corrugated metal siding as an accent to the exterior and use the siding to cover the garage, which juts out into the fenced backyard, he hired a professional to do that as well. City code didn’t prevent him from using the corrugated siding, but inspectors objected to an industrial material being used in a residential area. Gray pleaded his case to the Richardson City Council and won.

He also got help from Howard Okon, former owner of The Brick, who gave him advice and referrals.

“Howard was amazing support for this project. A big shoulder,” Gray said.

For such a major project, before issuing permits, Richardson wanted to see plans. As a gift for all of the fundraising Gray has done for the community over the years, Okon had his architect draw up professional plans to submit to the city.

As amazing as it is that the pageant-winning female impersonator and professional hairdresser did the jackhammering, welding and rebuilding of load-bearing walls himself, is how he made the time to do this much work.

“I did it after work, days off and when not working on a charity event,” Gray said.

As he’s finishing construction on his own house, it looks like his time will be consumed with more projects. His work spurred both of his next-door neighbors to remodel their kitchens, and a neighbor down the street has decided to do a makeover and has asked Gray to stop by to give them ideas for their redo.
Singer Anne Steele performs retro show at the Rose Room

The Rose Room is used to seeing big hair and big dreams, but that usually is accompanied by a drag queen. But what about a Midwestern girl growing up in the 1980s? That’s part of the one-woman show that out singer Anne Steele brings to Dallas. A night of nostalgia and song, Steele — the partner of former Dallasite Kelli Carpenter — moves through Madonna, Wham!, Sheena Easton, Janet Jackson and more in this all-new musical revue.

DEETS: The Rose Room inside Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. doors, 8 p.m. curtain. $10–$30. AnneSteele.tix.com.

Local actor Terry Vandivort unveils world premiere play

Dallas theater audiences will recognized Terry Vandivort from his many stage performances, often as a sardonic observer and cynical presence. But his real-life experiences as a gay man living in Dallas in the 1970s — especially one harrowing night in 1979 — will reveal an entirely new side to him. Vandivort wrote and performs in The Incident, his solo show, presented by The Drama Club about a mystery that has haunted him for more than 35 years.

DEETS: Bryant Hall at the Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. TheDramaClub.org.
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DanceAfrica. A weekend celebration of the influence of African culture on dance. City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St., Oct. 7–8, 7:30 p.m. Annette Strauss Artists Square, 2389 Flora St., Oct. 8, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Presented by Dallas Black Dance Theatre. ATTPAC.org. DBDT.com.

FINE ART

EXHIBITION

SATURDAY 10.08
CONCERTS
Barbra and Frank: The Concert That Never Was. A tribute concert to Barbra Streisand and Frank Sinatra, estimating their “missing” concert. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, 2351 Performance Drive, Richardson. 7:30 p.m. EisemannCenter.com.

MONDAY 10.10
CABARET
Mama’s Party. Local singer Amy Stevenson hosts her ongoing cabaret series, always with special guests and a good time. Uptown Theatre, 120 E. Main St. Grand Prairie. $10.

THEATER
Dance with the Sun: A One-Act Coming Out Story. UT Dallas’ Falerstein Women’s Center is hosting a free one-act, one-night-only performance. Tickets are free, but require RSVP. Jonsson Performance Hall on the UTD campus. 7:30 p.m. To RSVP and for more information, contact Matthew.Johns@utdallas.edu.

TUESDAY 10.11
FILM
High Noon. The greatest Western ever made, this intense and thoughtful thriller ticks off in real time as the noonday train brings the Frank Miller gang into town, intent on killing Sheriff Will Kane. Gary Cooper won an Oscar. 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 10.13
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.
Glitterbomb Denton. Weekly queer variety show with a new lineup every Thursday. Mable Peabody’s Beauty Parlor and Chain Saw Repair, 1125 E. University Drive, Denton. 9:30 p.m.
THEATER

BROADCAST
RuPaul’s Drag Race All Stars. The new season of All Stars, with Dallas’ Alyssa Edwards in the pack. Airs on Logo at 8 p.m.
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Girl on Girls

Jenny Block on living authentically as a gay parent

My daughter just came out to her boyfriend. No, she didn’t come out as gay. She came out as the daughter of a gay mom. She had told me she was nervous about telling him. She knew she wouldn’t want to date him if he was a homophobe — and she knew she wanted to date him.

She’s 17 years old. So, naturally she told him via text.

She could immediately see the bubbles. “I was so nervous. It was taking forever,” she told me.

And then the text came through: “Baby, I love you more than anything. You don’t have to hold anything back from me. Don’t ever be scared to tell me anything. Even things that are running through my head. I love you Hannah Abi-rides with a friend when she was maybe 4 years old: “Ken and Ken can’t get married,” the other child said to my daughter. “The law says they can’t,” she told her friend. “But God says they can. He loves everybody and says all the kinds of love are all good kinds.”

I was beaming. I’m not a religious person. But I am certainly a spiritual person and God did come up. Clearly it had stuck and it had stuck in just the way I had hoped.

In that moment, I guess the other kid believed her, because I heard the nuptials ensue. Inside was one of the loveliest emails I have ever received. It said that she knew I was gay and that she wanted me to know that she knew so that I wouldn’t worry that there was some sort of monster in the room or shoe threatening to drop.

It said that she admired me and my work, that she adored my daughter, that she so appreciated all the things her daughter got to do with us — go the theater and the ballet and to travel with us. She said she didn’t care who I loved. She cared that I was a kind person with whom she trusted her child.

I remember crying and crying that day. I remember telling myself to remember that people are good and not to make assumptions about them. I remember being grateful for this person and for being able to live authentically.

I feel like I’ve been lucky. I know that’s not the case for all parents, especially gay parents. Sure, as a teenager, my daughter has screamed, “Do you know how hard it is to have a lesbian mom?” and left me feeling very guilty about being born gay and living authentically.

I am sure there are parents at the schools she’s attended who aren’t fans of mine — either because I am gay or because I am so publicity gay. But no one has ever said a word to either me or my daughter.

In some ways, the thing that has made parenting as a lesbian mom a challenge has been the stress both my daughter and I have about what others will think, despite the fact that we haven’t had any direct negative reactions. I admit, I do get hate mail about my “abominable lifestyle” and all of the horrible things I am doing to my daughter.

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I have a question about sex you want Jenny to address? Email it to GirlOnGirlsJenny@gmail.com.
Making the SCENE the week of Oct. 7–13:

• Alexandre's: Three Drunk Monkeys on Friday. Chris Chism and the Band on Saturday and Wednesday. Wayne Smith on Sunday. K-Marie on Tuesday. Ilumin on Thursday.

• Club Changes: Imperial Court show at 8 p.m. on Saturday. Cowtown Leathermen meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday.

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

• Dallas Eagle: Bear Trap happy hour and contest on Friday from 4–10 p.m. NLA-Dallas club night on Saturday. United Court of the Lone Star Empire Candidate Show #1 from 7-10 p.m. on Saturday.

• JR.'s Bar & Grill: Cassie's Freak Show with Fantasha, Your Highness, Mulan and Daphne on Monday.

• Marty's Live: Wet Willie Wednesday with Dannee.

• Rainbow Lounge: Kiana Lee hosts Pride Week Drag Show from 7-9:30 p.m. on Friday.

• Sue Ellen's: Kyomi McCluskey (Hunter Valentine) and Tina Goddess & She on Friday. Heather Mae and Aly Tadros on Saturday. Kathy and Bella at 3:30 p.m. and Bad Habits at 6 p.m. on Sunday. Tiffany Sheas is special guest for open mic on Wednesday.

• The Rose Room: Kaleidos, Cassie, Layla, Brooke Lynn Hytes, Krystal, Sasha Andrew and Jenna on Saturday.

• Two Corks and a Bottle: Four Corners Jazz Quartet on Saturday, 8-11 p.m. Show Tune Night from 7-10 p.m. on Wednesday.

• Woody's Sports & Video Bar: Open at 10:30 a.m. for the Texas-OU game on Saturday. Cincinnati at Dallas at 3:25 on Sunday.

Scene Photographers: Kat Haygood and Chad Mantooth

Byron at The Hidden Door

Handsome man behind the bar at Dallas Eagle.

Boys’ night out at TMC: The Mining Company

Smiling for the camera at Dallas Eagle
Sherrie Wilson, Dallas’ first female firefighter, with a friend at Sue Ellen’s Beer-thirty at The Round-Up Saloon.
Formal fun at the 35th annual Black Tie Dinner Saturday night, Oct. 1, at Sheraton Dallas Hotel. The evening featured Debra Messing, Connie Britten, Deborah Cox, Todrick Hall, Greg Louganis and more.

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• Prices, Specials and Availability can change at any time.
• All rebates or move credits must be approved by the person paying the commission.
Albee Seeing You

Solution on page 33

Across page 33

1 Part of a strap on a stallion
6 Manger for Mary’s boy
10 Rip off
15 Cut off from escape
16 Oscar-night transport
17 Frequent Scrabble companion of Q
21 Common later
22 Bearse of Married with Children
23 Sea bottom captain
24 Ironically-named burning software
26 Gregory Doran’s partner Anthony
28 To do, to Debussy
30 One way to cook fruit
34 Doctoral hurdle
37 Emulated Neil Patrick Harris
38 Quaint sigh
39 Concerning one’s coming out?
40 One blessed in a Billie Holiday song
41 More of the quote
42 Notre Dame coach Rockne
43 Member
44 Albee, who died September 16, 2016
46 Word with fruit or family
47 Liberace piece, perhaps
49 Dildo, e.g.
51 Crazy prank
56 End of the quote
62 Baiss
63 Out and then some
64 Threesomes
66 Occasional cross-dresser comic Milton
67 Has to
68 Slowly, to Sondheim
69 Show of contempt
70 Guilty or not guilty, to Perry Mason
71 A Room of One’s Own, e.g.

Down page 33

1 Walk-way connector
2 Gather, after spilling one’s seed
3 Balls for cannon, e.g.
4 Fairy-tale ball attendee
5 Bowie collaborator
6 Closemouthed type
7 Latvian capital
8 Bowie married her
9 Malcolm, who wrote the book in 11-Across
10 Beaver covering
11 Ministers who read Are You Running With Me Jesus?
12 Field of Woolf and Wilde
13 Warhol critic Greenberg
14 Chaplain Judge of the NYFD, e.g.
15 Cut off from escape
16 Oscar-night transport
17 Frequent Scrabble companion of Q
21 Common later
22 Bearse of Married with Children
23 Sea bottom captain
24 Ironically-named burning software
26 Gregory Doran’s partner Anthony
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43 Member
44 Albee, who died September 16, 2016
46 Word with fruit or family
47 Liberace piece, perhaps
49 Dildo, e.g.
51 Crazy prank
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