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Don’t forget to visit us Saturday from 9am-1pm for our Saturday PrEP Clinic, and be sure to have a safe, happy Pride!

Sincerely,
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Remember to PrEP for Brunch!
Get a coupon to Zephyr Bakery Cafe when you come in for our Saturday PrEP Clinic.

Dr. Steven M. Pounders is excited to announce a new Saturday PrEP clinic. If you haven’t heard about PrEP, it’s a one pill a day regimen that can help stop you from contracting HIV.

The clinic will run on Saturdays from 9am to 1pm, appointments are encouraged and walk-ins are welcome! Most insurances are accepted, and cash pricing will be available for those without.

Please call the office for more information.

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3500 Oak Lawn Ave., Ste. 600
Dallas, TX 75219
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Medical Practice of
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  James Love as Cassie Nova as Betsy Ross. Photo by Tammye Nash.
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Lyft offering discount on rides to Pride
We all know that parking in and around Oak Lawn can be a real hassle for those going to the Miller Lite Music Festival at Reverchon Park on Saturday, and to the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade on Cedar Springs on Sunday during Pride Weekend.

Now Lyft is offering a solution: a 35 percent discount on rides to and from the festival on Saturday and the parade on Sunday for those who use the code PRIDEFTEXX.

Lyft’s DFW Market Manager Yohan Bobcombe also noted that Lyft will have a float in the parade on Sunday, and the company will be offering additional discount codes to bars throughout the parade route to share with their patrons.

Bobcombe said the company has supported Pride “throughout the country” and participated in events in Portland, San Diego, Denver, Miami, New Orleans, New York City and more. The company also recently announced that since it first partnered with the Human Rights Campaign in June 2017, Lyft passengers have made more than two million individual donations to raise $1.4 million for HRC.

Pride in downtown: The One Eyed Penguin
So, as we gear up for the 35th annual Pride celebration here in Dallas, it feels good to know that, despite what sometimes seems like an oppressively right-wing extremest environment these days, there are still plenty of non-LGBT-specific people and places that are happy to celebrate with us.

Thanks to Joshua Rogers who clued us in to the One Eyed Penguin, a bar in downtown Dallas that not only is celebrating Pride this weekend, but also designating every Wednesday night as LGBT Pride Night. I double-checked with the bar staff through their Facebook page, and they assure me it’s true.

One Eyed Penguin is celebrating Pride with $3 well drinks and $3 domestic bottled beers all day and all night, along with $5 Fireball, Jager, Rumple and Tuaca shots. Plus DJ DAPOW will be spinning the tunes.

So go check it out if you get the chance and #ShowYourPrideAtOneEyed. Those who support us deserve our support in return.

One Eyed Penguin is at 1404½ Main St. ~ Tammye Nash

Photo tribute to hang on Street’s Fine Chicken wall
Photos of 74 people will hang on the outside wall of Street’s Fine Chicken during Pride this weekend, along with this explanation: “The lives of each of these men and women were affected by the brutal murder of a member of this community. He was a good man.”

While Lee Covington’s name and photo will not be among those hung, a transparent bow tie has been added to each photo. A bow tie was Covington’s trademark. And the portraits are all of members of Cathedral of Hope where Covington worked.

One of 74 photos that will hang as a tribute to Lee Covington Covington, who was personal assistant to Cathedral of Hope’s senior pastor, the Rev. Neil Cazares-Thomas, was murdered a year ago. His killer was sentenced in August to life in prison for the murder.

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Meet Saydie, an 8-year-old, brindle-and-white pit bull mix weighing 60 pounds. She’s a gentle girl who came to the SPCA of Texas when she was rescued, and after lots of TLC, she’s ready to find a forever home. She’s a little shy around new people and unfamiliar places, but once she gets to know you she is a total lovebug. She’s calm, and enjoys lounging on the couch or bed with her people. She gets along with other dogs but prefers to hang out with chill, laidback dogs like her. Due to her shyness, she’d do best in a quiet home without small children. Saydie has been spayed, microchipped and has received all age-appropriate vaccinations. Come meet her today. #164494

— David Taffet

pet of the week / SAYDIE

Meet Saydie, an 8-year-old, brindle-and-white pit bull mix weighing 60 pounds. She’s a gentle girl who came to the SPCA of Texas when she was rescued, and after lots of TLC, she’s ready to find a forever home. She’s a little shy around new people and unfamiliar places, but once she gets to know you she is a total lovebug. She’s calm, and enjoys lounging on the couch or bed with her people. She gets along with other dogs but prefers to hang out with chill, laidback dogs like her. Due to her shyness, she’d do best in a quiet home without small children. Saydie has been spayed, microchipped and has received all age-appropriate vaccinations. Come meet her today. #164494

— David Taffet

Dallas Wings
2019 season tickets now on sale
Season for the Dallas Wings’ 2019 season are now on sale, starting at $125. The tickets are good for the Wings’ 18 home games at College Park Center, and highlight three different ticket packages to let each Dallas fan choose their own best fit.

Season ticket holders get plenty of benefits, like discounted ticket prices, playoff ticket priority, discounted merchandise and chances to win prizes through the 2019 season.
To see all the benefits and the available renewal prizes, visit DallasWings.com.
To purchase season tickets call the Dallas Wings ticket office at 817-469-9464.

— Tammye Nash

Gary Bellomy put the installation together.
“About a year ago a group of activists, mental health professionals and various leaders in the LGBTQ community began meeting to discuss the threat of predatory violence targeting our community,” Bellomy wrote in a letter to Pride organizer Michael Doughman. “These photos are a final tribute to a good man’s life.” Coalition For Aging LGBT developed and funded the initiative.
The 74 images are each 3 feet x 6 feet. Originally, Bellomy thought the pictures should be laid out on the street, in a style similar to the AIDS Memorial Quilt. However, Dallas ordinances prohibit that sort of display for safety reasons. Bellomy then approached Street’s who welcomed the tribute, he said.

— David Taffet

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SEPTEMBER

• Through September: Pride at the Library
From UNT’s LGBT Archive, the library will exhibit collections from UNT’s LGBT Archive, documenting the history and culture of the LGBT community in Dallas at the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library, Dallas History & Archives (7th floor), 1515 Young St.

• Sept. 13-Oct. 18: The Journey: A Coming Out Workshop
Did you come out recently or have you been out for awhile. No matter where you are on your coming out journey, you will benefit from this six-week interactive workshop open to all LGBT persons, family and friends facilitated by Rev. Robin Booth, Rev. Jane Graner and CoH member Will Fields on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. at Interfaith Peace Chapel, Conference Rooms A/B, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. Register at CathedralOfHope. ChurchCenter.com/groups/coh-care-ministry-groups/the-journey-workshop. For more info email will.fields@live.com.

• Sept. 14: Drag Bingo
SMU Pride Alumni and Spectrum present drag bingo from 8-11 p.m. at Hughes-Trigg Student Center Ballroom, SMU Main Campus. Drag optional. Pride@alumni.smu.edu.

• Sept. 14: DFW Pride Happy Hour
From 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Terilli’s, 2815 Greenville Ave.

• Sept. 14: Pre-Pride Party
Pre-Dallas Pride Party in Plano with DJ Sideshow at Henry’s Tavern, Shops at Legacy, 5471 Legacy Drive, Suite 100, Plano.

• Sept. 14-16: Purple Does Dallas Pride
Purple Foundation presents DJ Grind at opening party Grind, DJ Ben Baker at pool party and DJ Dan Slater at tea dance Spectrum.

• Sept. 15: Miller Lite Music Festival in the Park
Dallas’ annual Pride weekend festival featuring more than two stages of entertainment, vendors, food and beverages, as well as Teen Pride Zone and Family Pride Zone, from noon-7 p.m. at Reverchon Park, 3501 Maple Ave.

• Sept. 15: Impulse Dallas presents BEAT: Dallas Pride Weekend
Impulse Dallas presents BEAT: Dallas Pride Weekend party featuring DJ Paulo at Stereo Live Dallas, 2711 Storey Lane, beginning at 9 p.m. Free shuttle service provided from The Cedar Springs Strip to the venue. 18 and up admitted, must be 21 and up to drink. All guests must show a government-issued ID for entrance. Tickets are $29.99 in advance, available through the Facebook event page, and $39.99 at the door.

• Sept. 15: Rainbow Gaybingo
Monthly fundraiser for Resource Center takes place from 6-9 p.m. at the Rose Room at 54, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 214-540-4458. MyResourceCenter.org/gaybingo.

• Sept. 15: TAG Parking Lot Sale
Sale benefits Tyler Area Gays from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at 1917 S. Beckham Ave., Tyler.

• Sept. 15: Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade
At 2 p.m. on Cedar Springs Road from Wycliff Avenue to Turtle Creek Boulevard.

• Sept. 15: Kol Nidre
Congregation Beth El Binah service begins at 7:30 p.m. at 1211 Preston Road.

• Sept. 15: Classic Chassis Car Club
See, share and enjoy classic cars the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at JR.’s Bar & Grill, 3923 Cedar Springs Road.

• Sept. 15: Vision of Equality luncheon
Resource Center fundraising luncheon from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Resource Center 5750 Cedar Springs Road. RSVP to kfields@myresourcecenter.org.

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THE BEST PART OF FACEBOOK ISN’T ON FACEBOOK
35th annual Dallas Pride celebration includes Saturday festival, Sunday parade

David Taffet | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

As Dallas Pride celebrates its 35th anniversary, Dallas gets ready to say farewell to Michael Doughman, the man who has been executive director for the Dallas Tavern Guild and Pride for the last 18 years, while at the same time looking toward the future with the newly announced executive director, Jaron Turnbow.

Although North Texas has gotten pretty well waterlogged over the last week or so, and the forecast includes continuing chances for more rain, Doughman said the party will go on, regardless.

“We’ve never canceled the parade or the festival, in all the years we’ve been doing this,” he said. “We’ve walked in the rain. We’ve festivaled in the rain. And anyway, according to every forecast I’ve seen, there’s only a 20-to-30 percent chance of showers this weekend, and in Dallas, we know how hit-and-miss that is.”

Doughman said organizers do have a Plan B in place in terms of the layout at Reverchon Park for the Miller Lite Music Festival there on Saturday, simply because some elements of the festival — like the big main stage, for example — are too heavy to put on the too-wet ground without causing permanent damage to the grass. But even if it is operating under Plan B, the festival will continue.

“Maybe a couple of minor things would have to be eliminated, but the food and beverages and vendors and the entertainment are designed to go, rain or shine,” Doughman said. “And the parade is the parade. It will happen. We have no intentions of cancelling. Everybody should just bring an umbrella and be prepared to have a good time.”

The Miller Lite Music Festival in the Park

Recording artist Thea Austin headlines the Main Stage lineup at the Miller Lite Music Festival in the Park, happening Saturday, Sept. 15, from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. in Reverchon Park on Maple Avenue.

Austin, known for her mega-hit “Rhythm is a Dancer” and more, will appear on stage at 6:15 p.m., and her set — along with all the other entertainment — is included in the $10 admission ticket.

Local entertainers will perform on the Community Stage from noon-5 p.m., with DJs playing music between sets.

In addition to the music stages, the park will be filled with community and merchant vendor booths and pet adoptions. Two sections of the park will be set aside for The Family Pride Zone and Teen Pride.

Doughman said he expected to see about 12,000 people in the park for the festival. The festival includes the Family Pride Zone, a special section set aside just for LGBT parents and their children up to age 13. The Family Pride Zone stage will feature a singing group of five very talented young adults called the Micro Chicks, billed as “the world’s most adorable group of singing divas,” and Dennis Lee, a family-oriented ventriloquist, comedian and musician.

Wildlife on the Move will also be at the Family Pride Zone, teaching people of all ages the importance of conservation. They will bring with them a number of animals including reptiles, snakes and other critters that are sure to delight.

Rainbow Roundup’s Kimberley Cantor said her group will lead games throughout the afternoon. Ray Sablack, Dallas Public Library’s Gruewyler branch manager, said the library will be reading stories to children as well as doing crafts and other activities. Four bounce houses will be set up, and a train will circle the park. Face painters and balloon animal makers will keep the kids entertained all day.

The festival also again includes Teen Pride, a safe space for LGBT+ teens ages 13 to 19. Teen Pride is free for teens and $5 for adults accompanying teens.

It will include vendors, contests, bands, DJs and interactive booths.

Teen Pride Coordinator Amanda Robinson said there will be everything from bounce houses big enough for teens to specially-chosen entertainment. She said Kennedy Davenport from RuPaul’s Drag Race has been helping with planning for Teen Pride and will be there to perform and to spend time visiting with the teens in the park.

The Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade

The 35th annual Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade steps off at 2 p.m., following its usual route down Cedar Springs Road, from Wycliff Avenue to Turtle Creek Boulevard. The last of the 135 entries should cross Oak Lawn Avenue by 4:30 p.m., according...
Honoring the past with a vision for the future

“...in four or five days, it will all be behind me.”

That’s what Dallas Tavern Guild and Dallas Pride Executive Director Michael Doughman said earlier this week as he and his committee and volunteers rushed to put the final pieces in place for the 35th annual Dallas Pride celebration this weekend.

This will be Doughman’s final Dallas Pride as executive director, as of Oct. 1 he will be officially retired and by the end of October, he will be living in Puerto Vallarta. Jaron Turnbow, who has been on the Pride steering committee since 2005, serving most recently as parade director, takes over as executive director upon Doughman’s retirement.

“It’s an odd feeling, as I guess one would expect, now that it is coming to an end so quickly,” Doughman said this week. “We are all so busy with all the last-minute details, that I don’t have time to dwell on this being the last time. I am just focused — we all are — on making this the best Pride ever.

“Every year when Pride is over, we all go through a kind of post-partum period. I guess it will probably be stronger for me this year,” he continued. “But at the same time, I will also be very busy those last two weeks [of September] getting ready to move to Puerto Vallarta and taking care of all those last-minute details. I don’t know when it will all really sink in, probably not until I have been there awhile and no longer have to worry about alarm clocks and deadlines and meetings.”

Doughman said he is “really proud of the growth the progress” that has marked Dallas Pride over the last 18 years. And, he notes, “I am only part of the whole process. I know that there is a real vision for Pride to go to the next level, and now that we have underwriting, through strong, solid sponsorships from companies that are committed to diversity and inclusion, we can continue to grow and invest in more and bigger activities, bigger-named entertainment and a variety of other events and activities.

“The goal is to make Dallas Pride a destination event,” Doughman continued. “And I think it is on the right track and the right family” to him, and he will miss them all.

“I moved here 38 years ago, in 1980. Living in Puerto Vallarta will be very different,” he said. “But life is full of transitions, and this is the next transition for me. I won’t be disconnected from Dallas completely. I will stay in touch with my team here, and if there is anything I can help with moving forward, I will just be an email away.

“Thinking about retiring, my concern has always been, would I be leaving [Pride] in a good place? I think I am leaving it in the best place I possibly could. I am content to walk away at this point knowing everything will be OK.”

Turnbow stepping in

Dallas Tavern Guild announced late last week that Turnbow had been hired as the new executive director.

Turnbow said this week he began volunteering for the organization as the person who drove the VIPs around, and that comedy writer and actor Bruce Vilanch was the first celebrity he hosted.

After a couple of years of that, he said, he talked to Doughman about getting more involved and has been on the steering committee ever since. But, “As a volunteer, I never thought I’d become the executive director of Dallas Pride,” he said.

Turnbow said that when Doughman announced his retirement, he decided to apply for the job because he’s had experience working all on aspects of organizing the parade and festival each year, from fundraising to navigating Dallas’ complicated special event permit process, from arranging for police protection to complying with barricade placement and trash collection rules, to the final street cleaning after the parade is done.

Turnbow said he has been a “stay-at-home hubby,” and wasn’t looking for a job when the executive director position opened up. “But I put my blood, sweat and tears into this organization,” he added. “I have lots of ideas, and I want to do this.”

Turnbow said he hopes to build on what Doughman has built over the past 18 years. “I want to make this the best party we can make it,” he said. “I want it to be the Pride all the other Prides want to be.”

A week before the 2018 Dallas parade and festival, Turnbow said, “We’re already talking about 2019.”

One thing he’s learned from working behind the scenes is that every year the parade becomes more expensive. “It takes a lot of money to throw a big party,” he said. And some of that money this year is coming from parade sponsor The Dallas Mavericks.

“Does any other city have a major [sports] team sponsor for their Pride parade?” he asked.

While he has lots of ideas of how to make next year’s Pride weekend even bigger, Turnbow said he wasn’t ready to announce anything. Still, “My head is swimming with ideas,” he promised.

Next year will be a busy one for Turnbow. In addition to his new job, he said he and his partner have finally set a wedding date for next July, after having been engaged for three years.

— David Taffet and Tammye Nash
Some people may be wondering about the story behind the cover of this week’s Dallas Pride edition of Dallas Voice. Well, it all started with Chad Man-tooth ….

Chad is the advertising director for Dallas Voice, and he is never shy about sharing his ideas and opinions on the Voice’s cover each week. And a couple of months ago, he and I were talking about a way to make this year’s Pride issue cover really special.

Chad suggested that we ask Dallas Voice columnist and Rose Room legend Cassie Nova, aka James Love, to be our Pride cover model. We talked about different possibilities — a rainbow wig, unicorns, etc. And then I remembered this year’s Pride theme — Vote NOH8 in the Lone Star State — and how vitally important the upcoming midterm elections are to our community.

And it hit me: Cassie Nova as Betsy Ross, sewing a Rainbow Flag. Then Chad added the detail of making it a rainbow TEXAS flag.

Cassie agreed to the idea, so Chad went online and found us a suitably revolutionary wig and the flag. And our publisher, Leo Cusimano, contacted his friends at Norcostco Texas Costumes, who then provided us with a suitably revolutionary dress for the photo shoot. I took the photos, then we handed it all over to our graphic artist, Kevin Thomas, who came up with the finished product.

But wait! There’s more!

This weekend, we are celebrating the 35th annual Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade, Dallas Pride celebration. That’s quite a milestone. And in nine months, the whole country will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, that series of seminal events that took place in and around a tiny bar in New York that are now known as the beginning of the modern LGBT rights movement.

Everyone knows — and if you don’t you should — that transgender women and drag queens played a BIG role in the Stonewall Riots. And they have played BIG roles in the life of our communities ever since.

Honoring the past, celebrating the future
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I don’t put up with any negativity. So cigarettes and their toxic chemicals are definitely OUT of the picture. Because this life is non-toxic.
• Sept. 18: Stonewall Democrats of Dallas
  Stonewall Democrats monthly meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Mattito’s, 3102 Oak Lawn Ave.

• Sept. 19: Yom Kippur
  Congregation Beth El Binah morning service at 10 a.m., study session at 1 p.m., Yizkor service at 3 p.m., Neilah evening and concluding service at 4:30 p.m. followed by break the fast at 11211 Preston Road.

• Sept. 20: BTD Sponsor appreciation
  From 6:30-8:30 p.m. at a location to be announced.

• Sept. 20: Vote 2018 Town Hall
  Sen. Royce West and a panel discuss voting rights. Unregistered voters, 18-24 year-olds, college students, ex-offenders, senior citizens and others interested in new voter laws should attend from 7-9 p.m. at Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center, 1300 Wilson, Denton.

• Sept. 20: BTD sponsor appreciation party
  Black Tie Dinner sponsor appreciation party from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Samuel Lynne Galleries, 1105 Drago St.

• Sept. 21: Suicide Awareness event
  Members of the Greater Dallas Suicide Prevention Coalition including the Suicide and Crisis Center and Prism Health North Texas remember more than 500 people lost through suicide last year at 10 a.m. in the lobby of Dallas City Hall, 1500 Marilla St.

• Sept. 22: Leslie Jordan Exposed
  Leslie Jordan returns to raise money for Legacy Counseling Center at 7 p.m. at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. $35-100. LeslieJordanDallas.com.

• Sept. 22-23: Give A Fetch
  Camp Bow Wow holds Give A Fetch, a weekend-long celebration benefitting local animal shelters, with a 7-foot tennis ball dispenser holding more than 1,000 balls in Klyde Warren Park, 2012 Wood Rodgers Freeway, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For every ball dispensed, Camp Bow Wow will donate $5 to the local shelter of the participant’s choice, and there will be a chance to win a free year of Camp Bow Wow services. Shelters, vendors, food trucks and more will be on site.

• Sept. 23: LGBTQ Teen Community Forum
  Meet other teens in the community, munch on popcorn, play games and tell library staff what you want to do at your local library from 2-4 p.m. in O’Hara Hall, 7th Floor, Erik Jonsson Central Library, 1515 Young St.

• Sept. 23: Trump’s Invisible Wall
  Attorneys George Rodriguez and Michelle L. Saenz-Rodriguez will discuss immigration at 6:30 p.m. at Walnut Hill Recreation Center, 10011 Midway Road.

• Sept. 24: Texas Justice screening
  A work-in-progress screening of the documentary Texas Justice: Brandon Woodruff by Scott Poggensee. Reception at 6 p.m., film at 7 p.m. and Q&A at 8:30 p.m. at Texas Theatre, 231 W. Jefferson Blvd. Free.

• Sept. 25: Grief support group
  LGBT grief support group for people who have lost a same-sex partner from 7-8:30 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.
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BENEFITING AHF
Back where it all began

Local ’90s sensation Jane Doe reuniting for one night only

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

ack in the mid to late 1990s, if you were looking for the best in all-girl rock-n-roll, you went to Sue Ellen’s, because that’s where you were gonna find the best. And one of the bands who helped create Sue Ellen’s reputation for top-notch live music — a reputation that remains in place today — was Jane Doe.

Jane Doe — quartet made up of Susan Carson, Deborah Drouin, Gloria Cortez and Vicci Stewart

Carson explained that she and Drouin were in a band called Bratz together in the early 1990s, and after that band dissolved, “we still wanted to make music together. Lucky for us, the band [Cortez] was in — Liquid Velvet — had just broken up, too. We just needed a drummer. Then we saw [Stewart] play, and we knew she was perfect.

“We didn’t set out to be an all-girl band that all liked girls, it just happened,” she said.

That was 1994. In 1995, Jane Doe became the first group to perform live at Sue Ellen’s, starting on Wednesday nights then moving to Sundays. Soon they were in demand in Deep Ellum, too.

The band dissolved in 1998, but the women remained good friends and their legacy in Dallas lives on. Jane Doe reunited in 2010 in Los Angeles when Carson, Cortez and Drouin surprised Stewart for her birthday, and then again the next year, in August 2011, when they regrouped in Dallas to be the opening act for another Dallas girl, Deborah Vial, at House of Blues.

But if you missed those two gigs, never fear: Jane Doe reunites this weekend, for one night only, back where it all began. The band will be playing at Sue Ellen’s on Sunday night, Sept. 16, at the 35th annual Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade.

Here’s a little bit of info to help you catch up on where they’ve been and what they’re doing now:

Susan Carson is the only one of the four who still lives here in Dallas, and said she has been taking singing lessons, writing music, playing open mic nights and sitting in with local musicians.

Carson said she believes she and her fellow Jane Doe members are “forever sisters in music and life,” and that “all of us take Pride in each other’s musicianship and friendship.”

Gloria Cortez, guitarist, has been living in New York City for four years, teaching guitar in Times Square Broadway District. She is studying classical guitar with Maestra Virginia Luque from Spain and performs with the New York Classical Guitar Society Orchestra. She performs solo at several gallery openings in Montclair, including the Mont-Claire Museum of Art, and in NYC accompanying various vocalists. She also sits in with rock/funk groups on occasion.

“Can’t wait to perform with Jane Doe!” Cortez said. “We old-timers are gonna rock it out!”

Deborah Drouin, lead singer and songwriter, currently lives in Santa Fe, N.M., where she guest sings with local bands, as well as hitting the road “whenever Jane Doe gets a gig.” She also continues to run her advertising agency and works as a mentor for young girls at Girls Inc. of Santa Fe.

Drouin said, “Vicci, Gloria and Susan are my family, and we have stayed very close. I’ve never found such a powerful group of women I connect with creatively. We can write a new song in two minutes. I can’t wait to rock the house in Dallas again!”

Born in Los Angeles and raised in Lubbock, Texas, drummer Vicci Stewart moved back west and has lived in Hollywood for 18 years. She moved there after Jane Doe disbanded to continue her musical career. And that career includes playing with Pink and drumming in her video “Just Like a Pill,” as well as with various original bands as well through the years. She also “dabbled” in TV, she said, appearing on a couple of game shows and doing a motorcycle stunt in a movie. Stewart currently works in the entertainment lighting industry and continues to write and play music daily.

“Jane Doe is family,” Stewart said. “We will always be family. We always take up where we left off, and we are never lacking in the collaborative writing process. We can write and create music at the drop of a hat. We love each other dearly, and we are always making each other laugh.

“It’s so awesome to get to play with these amazing women,” she added. “We will probably continue to play from time to time when we have the chance. It’s tough, since we are all spread out, but that doesn’t keep us from our music. Jane Doe music will live on forever.”
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TOYOTA
From Queen to Queer: The Evolution of Drag in Dallas

Villa Fontana, Dallas’ first gay bar, opened in the 1950s. The laws in Dallas back then prohibited cross-dressing but that didn’t stop Dallas queens. Tammye Nash, the managing editor of the Dallas Voice, recounts a story from her friend Joe Elliot: Every man had to wear some item of “male” clothing. Drag queens and trans women always made sure to have men’s underwear on under their dresses.

Drag (and Dallas) has changed A LOT since then.

Bars like The Landing, the Blue Parrot, Illusions, Buddies, Anchor Inn and Hardfords — the place for comedy drag and boy strippers in the 1980s — that featured drag shows have come and gone. The Old Plantation of the ‘80s became the Village Station of the ‘80s and ‘90s and the S4 of the 2000s.

The Rose Room inside S4, established in 1986 when it was Village Station, has undergone three remodels, including a major expansion in 2004.

Along with the places in Dallas that house drag, drag itself — and the faces of those who perform it — have changed, to the applause of some and the disdain of others. We can credit (or blame) RuPaul’s Drag Race all we want, but the fact of the matter is drag — like any other art — is evolving.

And with drag’s current all-inclusive evolution, it’s far too easy for drag newbies to see the diversity of shows happening on any given night in the DFW Metroplex and believe that it was always so.

It wasn’t. Dallas drag has evolved from its roots of being a queens-only city to being a drag artist one. But that shift didn’t come easy, and it definitely didn’t happen overnight.

Drag in Dallas in its early years was about entertainment. But that focus shifted with the onset of the AIDS crisis in the ‘80s — something that Michael Doughman reflected upon in a 2015 interview with Dallas Voice. “When AIDS started to really become an issue here,” he said in the article, “drag shows became a way to fight back… That’s when it started, the mantra of charity drag.”

What Dragging Up Dallas History, a 2015 article by Tammye Nash, also pointed out was that even within the queens themselves there was a divide, a “huge gap between the pageant girls and the charity girls.” In 1995 a charity queen named Patti La Plae Safe became the first to bridge that gap by winning the Miss Gay America title.

The ‘90s would prove to be a big pivot point for Dallas drag as well.

Two under-represented and marginalized groups, lesbian women and the black gay community, soon found themselves front and center on the stage.

All-girl drag shows were already popular at bars like High Country and Buddies, when in 1990, Kathy Jack brought The Strip’s first all-female show cast to Sue Ellen’s with her Thursday Drag Extravaganza, later dubbed The New Sue Review. The show was a big hit.

As Dallas drag historian Richard Curtin recalls, “It was what I called Femme la Drag. And it really was the birth of women performing drag in the Dallas scene.”

Then in 1995 Miss Wanda, aka Jasper Lightsey, birthed his Miss Wanda Show, which became JR’s Bar and Grill’s first and only drag show. The Miss Wanda show ran for 10 years at Caven before moving to other Dallas clubs. It now calls Deja Vu, formerly Tekilas, its home. On the more traditional drag front, in 1996 one of the nation’s most iconic drag pageants, Miss Gay USofA, moved its national pageant permanently to Dallas. The first Miss Gay USofA happened at the Dallas Grand Hotel, which is now the Statler, and Natasha Richards was crowned. Along with the now infamous Rose Room, USofA pageant’s move to Big D helped further solidify Dallas as one of the capitals of drag.

By the time 2000 rolled around, Dallas was slowly shifting from the land of the queens to the land of the all. Richard Curtin had brought the now infamous and much beloved Drag Queen Mud Wrestling to TMC in 2003; and an uber-talented Michael and Janet Jackson impersonator named Sonja was slaying the Thursday night amateur show, as it was called back then.

But the prominent representation of drag others that was strong in the ’90s was starting to fizzle. That changed in 2005 with the drag king troupe Dukes of Dallas.

While there had been drag kings on the Dallas scene before, The Dukes of Dallas were the first king collective to have a re-occurring gig and a home bar — Buddies II. The Dukes of Dallas was started by Ian Patrik, Nate Jones, Blaze Rayvn, and Papi Levi. The group dissolved in 2009 when Buddies II owner, Mama Dawn, decided to retire and the much-beloved bar closed.

Within that same timeframe, in 2007, Resource Center paired one rising star drag queen — Jenna Skyy — with another — me — to head the entertainment committee for their monthly fundraiser Gaybino. Together we created SOMETHING FABULOUS!!!.

But what Jenna and I didn’t know at the time was that SOMETHING FABULOUS was Dallas’ first and only all-inclusive show cast. Our cast of 10 to 12 performers ran the entire gamut of the LGBTQ and drag spectrum: drag queens, kings, trans, lesbian femme, a female drag queen (faux queen) and male entertainers all performed together every third Saturday. And soon we...
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Dallas celebrating 21st annual Black Pride

Dallas Southern Pride presents the 21st annual Dallas Black Gay Pride Weekend Sept. 27-Oct. 1, coinciding with the opening of the Texas State Fair and the annual State Fair Classic game between Grambling University and Prairie View A&M.

This year’s theme is “Infinite Shades: Black, Bold and Beautiful,” and the weekend includes a variety of events intended to “promote an atmosphere of positive interaction and celebrate the intersectionality of our lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer identities and our black identity,” according to the Dallas Southern Pride website.

In addition to parties to celebrate, the weekend will include participation by organizations addressing health, education, economic and social issues affecting the North Texas black LGBTQ communities.

Dallas Black Pride Weekend, which includes the Ball/House and Pageant Communities Conference, is one of the biggest LGBT events in North Texas each year. Last year, more than 15,000 people participated in the weekend, and at least that many are expected again this year. And while “historically, Prides have been predominantly gay male events,” Dallas Southern Pride organizers said via their website that they are proud to continue building alliances and partnerships inclusive of women and transgender people “to ensure the needs of all communities are addressed with workshops on relationships, health, wellness and financial planning. We also honor and acknowledge our allies, those who stand in the gap for us in spaces and conversations where we are not able to be present.”

The 2018 Dallas Black Gay Pride Weekend begins with the iCandy Megaparty Friday, Sept. 28, at Marty’s Live!, 4207 Maple Ave. The party is hosted by Rudeboy Dallas and Nicole O’Hara Munro, and features DJ C’Wade and Hypeman Dupree. Admission is free before 10:30 p.m.

On Saturday, Sept. 29, the Black Pride 2018 Pool Party, featuring K. Michelle and Jazmine Sullivan, will be held from 4-10 p.m. at the Cedar Canyon Dude Ranch, 4523 N. Houston School Road in Lancaster.

The party continues on Saturday with the Return of the Masquerade Ball, hosted by Dallas Southern Pride and Abounding Prosperity Inc., from 11:45 p.m. to 8 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 30, at the Longhorn Ballroom, 216 Corinth St. in Dallas. General admission is free. General tables on the floor at runway level are $200 each. VIP Section 2, 3 and 4 tables overlooking the floor and runway are $424.35 each, or an entire section of three tables for $1,200. VIP tables on the stage — four are available — are $500 each.

Each table seats eight people.

The Masquerade Ball will feature as commentators Icons Jack Mizrahi and Jay Blakknik, along with Legendary Dashaun Lavin.

Black Pride Weekend winds up Sunday, Sept. 30, with the 2018 Unity BBQ, from 3-7 p.m. at Bachman Lake Park, 3500 W. Northwest Highway. This event is free.

Host hotels for the weekend are Aloft Dallas Downtown, 1033 Young St., and Springhill Suites Dallas Downtown/West End, 1907 Lamar.

For more information visit DallasSouthernPride.com

— Tammye Nash
Fundraising still underway for annual LifeWalk event
DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

LifeWalk, an annual 5K that raises funds for Prism Health and other nonprofits whose missions include care of people with HIV, wraps up Dallas’ fall Pride month activities, stepping off from Oak Lawn Park at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 7. The route this year is the same as in recent years, but “we’ll be walking in the opposite direction,” said Prism Health Development Director Tori Hobbs.

Hobbs said although the organization changed its name from AIDS Arms, “We’re the same organization at heart. No one is turned away who needs our care.” That includes people with HIV who don’t have insurance as well as people seeking PrEP who are uninsured.

Other AIDS organizations participating in the walk include AIDS Services Dallas that provides housing, GDMAF that covers some emergency expenses for people with HIV that other grants at other agencies won’t cover, and Southwestern Medical Center’s Community Prevention and Intervention Unit that works to prevent sexually transmitted diseases throughout the community.

Other participants include organizations like the Turtle Creek Chorale. According to TCC marketing director Tri Truong, “We have Turtle Cares for members with HIV who need help with anything in their life like medication or groceries.”

Hobbs said there’s still plenty of time to sign up to walk either as an individual or to join a team. If you want to walk as part of a team, just go to the LifeWalk website, LifeWalk.org, and choose one. Hobbs said every team is always looking for additional support.

While not favoring one team over another, Hobbs suggested people who don’t know which team to join may help LifeWalk the most by joining the MAC team because, she explained, “Anything you raise [personally as a MAC team member] gets doubled by MAC.”

Different MAC stores and counters are competing among themselves for top fundraiser, “so pick your favorite location,” Hobbs said.

Teams are still hard at work fundraising through personal appeals and team events, including events like The Artsy Monkey Art Show and Music Night at the Deep Ellum Art Co. at 6 p.m. on Sept. 26, which benefits a newly formed LifeWalk team.

And Bear Happy Hour at the Round-Up Saloon on Sept. 14 is also LifeWalk T-shirt night at the bar. Some proceeds benefit LifeWalk, and new participants can sign up to walk. Other t-shirt nights are Sept. 22 at Cedar Springs Tap House and Sept. 29 at the Caven bars.

One new feature of LifeWalk this year is that every walker will get a ribbons on which to “write a person’s name in honor or memory,” Hobbs said. After finishing the walk, participants will tie the ribbon to a tree that will be placed at one of Prism Health’s facilities.

Also, this year’s raffle winner will be pulled just before the walk begins.

Although the walk starts at 1 p.m., the park opens at 11 a.m. Anyone who hasn’t registered online can sign in at the park. The program begins at 12:40 p.m. to get everyone ready to walk.

And fundraising will continue right up until the walk steps off. Some teams will be giving away mimosas in the park and asking for a donation.
Resource Center Expands and Relocates HIV Dental Clinic

Continuing over three decades of improving health and wellness for all people affected by HIV/AIDS, we are excited to announce the expansion and relocation of our HIV Dental Clinic to North Dallas.

The HIV Dental Clinic will relocate from its current location at 4012 Cedar Springs Rd., Dallas to a new home near North Central Expressway and I-635 in January 2019. Staff will work to accommodate scheduling for existing and new clients.

For more information about the HIV Dental Clinic or to schedule an appointment, call 214-528-2336.

www.myresourcecenter.org

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Access to PrEP is available at Resource Center's Nelson-Tebedo Clinic!

PrEP (Pre-exposure prophylaxis) is an HIV prevention protocol including medication that can help you stay negative, even if your partner might be positive.

Prevention is key. When taken every day, the prescription in PrEP can provide a high level of protection against HIV, and is even more effective when combined with condoms and other prevention tools.

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*Undetectable means keeping the amount of HIV in the blood at very low levels (less than 50 copies per mL).

IMPORTANT FACTS
This is only a brief summary of important information about JULUCA and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and treatment.

About JULUCA
- JULUCA is a prescription medicine that is used without other antiretroviral medicines to treat Human Immunodeficiency Virus-1 (HIV-1) infection in adults to replace their current anti-HIV-1 medicines when their healthcare provider determines that they meet certain requirements.
- HIV-1 is the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).
- It is not known if JULUCA is safe and effective in children.

How to take JULUCA
- Take JULUCA 1 time a day exactly as your healthcare provider tells you.
- Always take JULUCA with a meal. A protein drink alone does not replace a meal.

Do not take JULUCA if you
- have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine that contains dolutegravir or rilpivirine.
- are taking any of the following medicines: doxefludil; carabamazepine; oxcarbazapine; phenobarbital; phenytoin; rifampin; rifapentine; proton pump inhibitors (including esomeprazole, lansoprazole, omeprazole, pantoprazole sodium, rabeprazole); St. John's wort (Hypericum perforatum); or more than 1 dose of the steroid medicine dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate.

Before taking JULUCA
Tell your healthcare provider if you:
- have ever had a severe skin rash or an allergic reaction to medicines that contain dolutegravir or rilpivirine.
- have or have had liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- have ever had a mental health problem.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if JULUCA will harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take JULUCA. You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby. It is not known if JULUCA can pass to your baby in your breast milk. Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:
- Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with JULUCA.
- Do not start taking a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider.

Possible side effects of JULUCA
JULUCA can cause serious side effects, including:
- Severe skin rash and allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop a rash with JULUCA. Stop taking JULUCA and get medical help right away if you develop a rash with any of the following signs or symptoms: fever; generally ill feeling; tiredness; muscle or joint aches; blisters or sores in the mouth; blisters or peeling of the skin; redness or swelling of the eyes; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue; problems breathing.
- Liver problems. People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus who have certain liver function test changes may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening changes in certain liver tests during treatment with JULUCA. Liver problems, including liver failure, have also happened in people without history of liver disease or other risk factors. Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your liver function. Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop any of the following signs or symptoms of liver problems: your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice); dark or "tea-colored" urine; light-colored stools (bowel movements); nausea or vomiting; loss of appetite; pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- Depression or mood changes. Tell your healthcare provider right away or get medical help if you have any of the following symptoms: feeling sad or hopeless; feeling anxious or restless; have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself.

The most common side effects of JULUCA include: diarrhea and headache.

These are not all the possible side effects of JULUCA. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking JULUCA. You may report side effects to FDA at www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Important Facts about JULUCA continued on the next page.
My doctor and I are proud of how far I’ve come. Now, I want to ask about staying undetectable with fewer medicines in my HIV pill.

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Learn more at JUlica.com

IMPORTANT FACTS (cont’d)
Get more information

- This is only a brief summary of important information about JUlica. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more.
- Go to JUlica.com or call 1-877-844-8872, where you can also get FDA-approved labeling.

*Rodney is a real patient with HIV paid by Viiv Healthcare.
Miller Lite Music Festival

Main Stage Schedule:
11 a.m.-noon: House Music
Noon-1 p.m.: DJ Deanne
1-1:30 p.m.: 2018 Voice of Pride Winners
1:30-2:30 p.m.: DJ Deanne
2:30-3:30 p.m.: The Rose Room Cast
3:30-4 p.m.: Asia O’Hara and Dancers
4-5 p.m.: DJ Deanne
5-5:30 p.m.: Effie Passero
5:30-6:15 p.m.: David Hernandez
6:15-7 p.m.: Thea Austin

Community Stage Schedule:
11 a.m.-noon: DJ
Noon-12:20 p.m.: Nicole Abeth
12:20-12:35 p.m.: Cleremiah Boswell
12:35-12:55 p.m.: DJ
12:55-1:20 p.m.: Skinny Cooks
1:20-1:40 p.m.: DJ
1:40-2:05 p.m.: The Roommates
2:05-2:35 p.m.: DJ
2:35-2:55 p.m.: DTNS
2:55-3:20 p.m.: DJ
3:20-3:45 p.m.: DJ

Family Pride Zone Schedule:
3:45-4:15 p.m.: PriMaddona
4:15-4:40 p.m.: DJ
4:40-5 p.m.: Hailey Good

Family Pride Zone Schedule:
Noon-1 p.m.: Micro Chicks
1 p.m.: Wildlife on the Move
2 p.m.: Dennis Lee
3-4 p.m.: Micro Chicks
4 p.m.: Wildlife on the Move
5 p.m.: Dennis Lee

Teen Pride Schedule
12:30 p.m.: Dance competition
1-1:30 p.m.: Alasaceapone
1:30-2 p.m.: Meshia Brown, Elliott Puckett
2:24:35 p.m.: Jake Sak Competition
2:45-3 p.m.: Sponsorship introduction
3 p.m.: Teen Pride drag entertainment
4:45-5:15 p.m.: Hula Hoop competition
5:30-6:30 p.m.: Rock bands

Parade Schedule
2-4:30 p.m. along Cedar Spring Road
from Wycliff Ave. to Turtle Creek Blvd.

Wayne Davis, best known for his community fundraising with Dallas Bears, and the Rev. Neil Cazares-Thomas, senior pastor of Cathedral of Hope, are this year’s grand marshals. Adam Bouska and Jeff Parshley, who created the NoH8 photo campaign, are honorary grand marshals.

Doughman said because of interest in the upcoming election that has energized the LGBT community, he expects attendance to be up this year to around 50,000 people. He said a record number of individuals and groups will be doing voter registration throughout the weekend.

Parade-goers and participants will be protected by 120 police officers.

New corporate sponsors for the parade this year include the Dallas Mavericks, Thompson Reuters and Walmart. Each sponsor will have an entry in the parade, as will at least a dozen new groups and organizations.

While the festival needs about 120 volunteers, the parade uses about 60 volunteers. In addition to putting out trash boxes and liners along the parade route and setting up barricades the length of the parade, others will feed parade entries onto Cedar Springs Road that are lined up on either side Wycliff Avenue and then direct entries where to go when they hit Turtle Creek Boulevard.

In case you need a restroom, head over to Oak Lawn United Methodist Church, which will be open for bathroom breaks and offering water as relief from the usual September heat.
So as a way of paying tribute to the trans women and drag queens who so often go unrecognized and under-appreciated, we are planning a series of special Dallas Voice “theme” covers between now and next June, each one featuring a different transgender woman or drag queen, all leading up to our very special Stonewall 50th anniversary cover.

We are very excited about our plan, and I hope you all enjoy these special covers as much as I know we will enjoy creating them!

Betsy Ross

And now for a little history: We took the idea for our cover shoot from the paintings of Betsy Ross sitting there sewing the first American flag as George Washington stands nearby, watching.

For those who might not know, Betsy Ross was the woman who, as legend has it, sewed up the first star-spangled banner for Washington and his Continental Army. According to the stories handed down in her family, when Washington came to visit her in 1776 with his design for the flag, she convinced him to change the shape of the stars he had sketched out from six-pointed stars to five-pointed stars, because five-pointed stars would be easier and faster to cut out.

There is no hard-and-fast proof that it actually happened that way. But there is proof that Betsy — then a 24-year-old widow trained as an upholsterer — did, indeed, make flags for the Pennsylvania navy during the American Revolution. She also worked repairing uniforms and making tents and blankets and stuffing paper tube cartridges with musket balls for prepared packed ammunition in 1779 for the Continental Arm, according to Marla R. Miller’s book, Betsy Ross and the Making of America.

So yeah, maybe Betsy didn’t sew THE flag, but she definitely sewed SOME flags as well as doing her part to help the American soldiers.

The Rainbow Flag

The Rainbow Flag, or LGBT Pride Flag, was originally created by Gilbert Baker, a gay rights activist and artist living in San Francisco who, in 1977 was challenged by Harvey Milk to come up with a gay Pride symbol. Baker came up with an eight-striped rainbow flag that first flew over the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade celebration on June 25, 1978. It has been suggested that Baker was inspired by the multi-striped “Flag of the Human Races” used by protestors demonstrating for peace in the 1950s. It’s also possible that he took inspiration from gay icon Judy Garland singing “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.”

The first rainbow flags were commissioned by San Francisco’s Pride committee and produced by a team led by Baker and including artist Lynn Segerblom, who was then known as Faerie Argyle Rainbow. Segerblom created the original dyeing process for the flags, and 30 volunteers hand-dyed and stitched the first two flags for the parade.

The eight colors in the first flags each stood for something: hot pink for sex; red for life; orange for healing; yellow for sunlight; green for nature; turquoise for magic and art; indigo for serenity and violet for spirit.

The Rainbow Flag has evolved over the years for a variety of reasons. The pink stripe was dropped in 1978 when Baker couldn’t find the hot pink fabric. And Paramount Flag Co. in San Francisco started selling a surplus of Rainbow Girl flags, which had slightly different stripes and colors.

In 1979, the turquoise stripe was dropped. Over the last year, some have started adding black and brown stripes to the flag to represent LGBT people of color, and some have added back in the pink and turquoise stripes to honor transgender people. And of course, there are other variations, such as the rainbow U.S. flag and the rainbow Texas flag, like the one on our cover this week.
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Both a book and a documentary take a closer look at the prosecution of a Texas gay man who says homophobia played a role in his conviction.

Handsome twink Brandon Woodruff shed his country skin at 18, joining the private gay party circuit, dancing late nights in a flashy Oak Lawn disco and flying to Florida to star in pornographic movies under the name Bradley Rivers after a studio scout spotted him shirtless on the dance floor.

The gaiety seemed illimitable, but it all came to a tragic halt after only a year when he was charged in connection with the 2005 double murders of his parents in Royse City and a jury later convicted him and sentenced him to life in prison. He is now serving that sentence in the Hughes Unit of the Texas Department of Corrections in Gatesville.

Woodruff — who has claimed his innocence all along — never emerged from behind bars, except for court appearances, after his arrest. Unable to make the $1 million bond, he went from jail to prison. He recently answered questions submitted to him by a Jpay.com email in a telephone recording after spending 13 years behind bars.

Now, Woodruff is again proclaiming his innocence and asking for help following the recent publication of a book about his case that alleges an unjust, homophobic investigation, prosecution and conviction. There is also a documentary about the case that will screen in Dallas this month.

Woodruff, now 31, hopes the book and the documentary will gain him public support and a review of his case that will lead to freedom.

Woodruff said that at the time of the trial he always believed he would ultimately be acquitted of the murders, and that his conviction devastated him. He said that he loved his parents, that he never had serious problems with them and that he could never harm anyone, let alone the two people he loved the most.

His reaction, he said was “undescribable.” In fact, he was so sure he would be acquitted, he and his grandmother had made plans to go out for a celebratory dinner in anticipation of him leaving court and regaining his freedom after three years in jail.

“I was shocked,” Woodruff said. “I was confused. I was angry. I was scared. I was sad. It was like a tidal wave of emotions going through my entire system. I specifically remember standing there, trying to stand tall and firm with what I knew was the truth: I did not kill my parents,” he recalled. “But yet there were 12 people over there that just said they believe I did it. It was a gut-wrenching moment. Later, I threw up all my lunch in the jail cell. It was disbelief, but at the same time it was coming together like one big nightmare. I really wanted to talk to the jury. It was horrible.”

Woodruff said his life changed overnight, catapulting him into a bizarre, terrifying environment where he was exposed to types of people he never before encountered.

“I kind of got plucked out of reality as a normal person would know it and put in this whole other world,” he said. “I had to grow up really fast.

“At first it was really terrifying. I was afraid of my own shadow. I had never had any serious fights growing up, and so just being put in this environment was really nerve-wracking for a while,” he said. “I’ve kind of relaxed a little, but you can never relax completely, because you are constantly having to watch your surroundings. I’ve never been severely beaten up or raped, so I feel like maybe my mom and dad are still watching over me.”

Woodruff said that despite the trauma of losing his parents, being arrested, confined in jail for three years before the trial and then being convicted and sent to prison, he has never lost hope that he will one day be exonerated of guilt in the hideous stabbing and shooting deaths of his parents.

“I can easily say I’ve never lost hope,” Woodruff said. “There’s a line in a book I read once that said, you can put a bird in a cage but you can’t stop it from singing. I won’t ever stop saying I’m innocent. I won’t ever stop fighting for the truth. I won’t just sit around and wait for other people to help me. I’m going to talk to as many people as I can. Everything worth holding onto is worth protecting.”
can to get the story out there.

“I think the more people learn about my case and go digging they will see I’m innocent. And they will see what that town did,” he said. “I think the more exposure we get on it that they will eventually have to do the right thing. I do believe justice will eventually prevail. Right now, there’s been no justice for my mom and dad. There’s people walking around out there that really committed the crime.”

The book, the documentary

Woodruff’s story is the plot of Railroaded: The Homophobic Prosecution of Brandon Woodruff for His Parents’ Murders, a new book authored by retired lawyer Phillip Crawford Jr., and of Texas Justice: Brandon Woodruff, a documentary under production by Scott Poggensee. The filmmaker has also established Free Brandon.org, a website devoted to restoring the freedom of the former Abilene Christian University freshman and weekend party boy.

Crawford, a former New York litigator who now lives in Florida, and Poggensee, an emergency medical technician and novice filmmaker who lives in a Dallas-Fort Worth suburb, are convinced that Woodruff, now 31, is innocent of the brutal murders of his parents in their home in Royse City in October 2005. They contend the investigation of the bloody murders of Dennis and Norma Woodruff — who died from multiple gunshot and stab wounds — and the prosecution and conviction of their son in March 2009 in homophobic Greenville reflected an anti-gay bias.

In their view, law enforcement officials, prosecutors, the judge and the jury all allowed their religious convictions to overrule their reason, resulting in an innocent youth being incarcerated while the real killer — or killers — escaped punishment.

The prosecution theorized that Woodruff killed his parents after they confronted their son about him being gay, his failing grades in college and his fledgling porn career. The prosecutors also said Woodruff had motive in the form of a life insurance policy his parents owned that named him as a beneficiary, which would have let him continue his party life without interference.

Woodruff’s supporters have countered that prosecutors presented no evidence to show any conflict ever existed between parents and son.

Crawford, who is also the author of The Mafia and the Gays published in 2015, said he became aware of Woodruff’s case in April 2017 when he was browsing profiles on the Write a Prisoner website after reading about the program in a news story. He came across Woodruff’s profile and decided to research the case.

After reviewing the briefs of the case and the news coverage of the trial, Crawford had doubts about Woodruff’s guilt. He viewed the evidence against Woodruff as flimsy, and he noted the prisoner had passed two polygraph tests.

“The case bothered me to my core,” Crawford said. “The risk that Brandon Woodruff was convicted based on the prejudicial effect of the homophobic narrative employed by state prosecutors was amplified, in my opinion, due to the weak evidence against him. Something just did not seem right about his conviction; none of it made sense to me.”

The prosecution of Woodruff raised ethical questions early on, before the trial even started. Woodruff’s lawyers discovered prosecutors had eavesdropped on their tele-
Chaselyn Wade reached for the stars by painting the stars

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Chaselyn Wade has always looked for ways to express her creative side. But although she’s been expressing herself artistically throughout her life, it wasn’t until recently that she decided that she was really going to reach for the stars, and that she would do it by painting the heavens.

“I’ve painted all my life,” Wade said in a recent interview, recalling what her first grade teacher told her parents. “She said, ‘This child is extremely talented,’ and she went out and bought an art kit and gave it to me. That was the first person who ever told me I was good at something. That really stuck with me.”

Wade said there are still murals on the walls of her high school that she painted when she was a student there. And she has continued to “paint,” so to speak, in her career as a freelance makeup artist, and her work as an actress and drag performer has meant that “art has always been with me.”

But as for picking up a brush and putting paint on canvas — well, that had taken a back seat to life.

“I painted, but I never did anything with it,” Wade said. “I always said that when I retired, I would be a painter.” She was putting her dreams on hold.

And then, a little more than two years ago, Wade’s boyfriend, Jake Ray, died suddenly. And everything changed.

“After Jake passed away, I realized, I can’t keep waiting for some day. I need to live my life the way I want to live it, and I need to do the things I want to do. And I need to do it now,” she declared. “There’s no reason not to.”

So about a year-and-a-half ago, Wade said, she made the conscious decision to start painting again.

“I just started painting, just stockpiling paintings. My walls are covered with my own paintings,” she said. “But I had never shown any paintings publicly. I’d only ever given away paintings to my friends.”

Wade said most of her work is “abstract stuff,” like “fragmented, color-block pieces,” although she can do photorealistic works, too — “just no people. I don’t paint people.”

Right now though, she continued, “my current style is all about space and galax-
The exhibition was a dream come true for Wade. She had been preparing for this moment for a long time. She gathered up some of her paintings and headed to the venue without even knowing exactly what the space actually looked like and how much room there actually was.

"But like they say, art will find its place," she said. "When I got there, it was perfect. I had pieces that fit on every wall. There was no question where each piece would go because it was perfect, like I had painted each painting for a specific place on a specific wall. And it all just looked so good!"

"I cried the whole day. The whole day!" Wade continued. "I called my mom, just want to look at another bird in a tree. I want to look at something otherworldly. There’s just so much out there we have never seen, and it fascinates me!"

Wade said she gathered up some of her paintings and headed to the venue without even knowing exactly what the space actually looked like and how much room there actually was.

"I remember, when I was little, putting glow-in-the-dark stickers of moons and stars on my ceiling," she said. "And when I was like 10, I took white sheets and made them into curtains, and painted silver stars on them. I mean, who does that?? Me — I did that."

When her friend Michael Moran’s birthday rolled around, Wade gifted him with one of her paintings to hang in his apartment. Another friend, Corbin Milam, saw that painting and asked Moran who had painted it.

Coincidentally, Corbin’s mother, Vickie Little, is the person in charge of booking artists to exhibit at a local restaurant called Café Izmir. So, when an artist scheduled to exhibit at the café backed out the day she was supposed to bring in her paintings, Corbin told his mother, I know somebody who has a bunch of paintings around her house.

"It was, Wade said, “a dream come true! It was exactly what I had been wanting, and it just fell into my lap! You know how people tell you that you have to be prepared for ‘that moment’ when it finally comes? Well, honey, I was prepared for it!”"
sobbing. She said, ‘Why are you crying?’ Because of all the things I have accomplished, of all the things I have done, this means the most.”

Wade noted that she has made a successful career for herself as a makeup and hair artist over the last 20 years, and she also is successful as a drag performer, including being a cast member in the “Girls Like Us” show every Tuesday at JR.’s. She has appeared in several movies and is one of well-known local filmmaker Israel Luna’s “go-to actresses” in films like Ticked-Off Trannies With Knives and Kicking Zombie Ass for Jesus. She also recently landed her first lead actress role, and has shot the pilot for a TV series in which she will be, she said, the first transgender actress playing a cisgender woman in a recurring TV role.

But her first art exhibit outshines it all, she said.

“I come from a tiny little town of about 1,500 people, and now I am here in this city of over six million, and my art — MY art — is on exhibit in one of the most popular restaurants in the city,” she said. “I think about it and I am just so amazed at what I have accomplished, and with such little support.

“I mean, my family are wonderful people, but they don’t know anything about art, or about drag. They didn’t know what transgender is. And so much of what I do they’d never understand,” she said. “They’re like, oh, you’ve been on the radio? You’ve been in a movie? They don’t really grasp that. But if I say my paintings have been exhibited in a restaurant, they get that.”

Even if they didn’t though, Wade said, the exhibit would still mean the world to her — because it is the beginning.

“I’m proud to say that I am living my dream now,” she declared. “I’m being an artist. I am creating beauty — whether that’s on canvas, in makeup or on screen. I’m living my dream.”

Wade’s exhibit at Café Izmir ended at the end of August, but she is already planning for a second exhibit, set to go up in The Granite Room at S4 in time for Pride weekend. Wade said that from what she understands, she is the first artist with an exhibit in The Granite Room, and her paintings will be on display there for two months.
were opening the Rose Room show. By the time SOMETHING FABULOUS!!! took its final bow in 2013, another group was emerging that would marry and expand upon the themes and ideas we embodied and helped launched.

A Dukes of Dallas former member, Frankie4Play, and Cher Musico, a photographer and producer, had worked together to create Mustaches & Music, a drag king group that got booked at Sue Ellen’s. That group would eventually turn into Mustache Envy, but the next shift in the Dallas drag scene occurred when they brought in burlesque performer Lillith Grey to emcee shows in 2011.

Cher recalls, “Both Frankie and Lillith’s work during this time was so pivotal in building the current queerlesque and gender-inclusive performance community. These kings worked hard to create community, and kings are still working hard to be seen. Yet we’re also seeing more gender fluid performers.”

That same year, Lillith bridged another gap between the drag and burlesque community when she began Panty Raid at Sue Ellen’s. Panty Raid was the first queerlesque show in Dallas.

Lillith said she started it because she was “working on a show and one of the drag kings wanted to tap dance, and the producer said, ‘Kings don’t tap dance; it’s not manly.’

“So I started a show where kings could tap dance.”

What is now a regular occurrence — inclusivity in drag — on and off the strip was once an anomaly. In a way, it still kinda is.

And while it’s easy to look back on how far we’ve come and celebrate the diversity of drag’s lineup in Dallas today — Drag Queen Jello wrestling, Kylee O’hara Fatale’s The Queer Off, Drag Brunch at Hard Rock Cafe, and the Texas Queerlesque Festival — we are nowhere near done evolving.

Because despite all this growth we’ve done, despite all the work toward inclusivity by those mentioned above and the one’s whose names have been lost and forgotten with time, we still have not built what I believe are the most important bridges: the one’s within ourselves.

The drag scene and drag community in Dallas has yet to connect and bridge themselves with Dallas’ thriving Ball/House community, which is hosting their next Ball/House and Pageant Community Conference on Sept. 27, as part of Dallas Southern Pride’s Black Pride Weekend. And the drag community still has yet to connect with Latin drag icons like Paty Palacios, who played an integral role in bringing the Latino tradition of Show Travesty to Dallas in the ‘90s.

So, yes, the Dallas drag scene has overcome many barriers and knocked down many walls. But now its time we knock down our own.
Hippity hop hop

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The North Texas Rabbit Sanctuary began in 1993 with “one bunny my husband had seen” in a pet store, founder Barbara Yule explained. “Not a good situation. Then a vet found me [and] I ended up with 26” rabbits. Yule decided that if she was going to start a rabbit sanctuary, it needed to be self-sustaining. So now she, along with volunteers like Anthony Madrid, do adoptions, sell hay and other bunny food along with litter, cages and a variety of supplies.

They also board bunnies when owners are away.

Madrid said he got involved in 2008 after his boyfriend sent him a picture of a bunny and said, “I always wanted a rabbit.” Since he knew they’d have rabbits one day, he decided to learn about them. That led him to Yule’s rabbit sanctuary where he became hooked and quickly went from volunteer to board member.

Yule said there are about 50 breeds of rabbits, but said “They’re just bunnies to us.” Madrid added that they have no way of knowing if the rabbits they receive are pure bred or mixed breeds. They just love them all equally and try to find them good homes.

There are a couple of breeds, though, that are pretty distinctive and recognizable. They have one rescue with a sizable “mane” that Madrid said looks like the lionhead breed. And two others that have so much hair you can’t tell where their heads are, he said, are probably angoras.

“They each have a personality of their own, and [they] don’t all do well with little children,” Yule said of the rabbits, warning that rabbits tend to kick or even bite if they’re frightened or hurt.

“Hold them like a baby,” Madrid said, demonstrating how to cradle the animals’ feet with one hand to keep them from kicking.

There are a lot of other things people should know about rabbits before buying or adopting one as a pet. For instance, Madrid said, when rabbits mate, it’s often for life. In fact, several happily bonded pairs currently live at the sanctuary, and they wouldn’t split them up. Domesticated rabbits that are kept indoors may live 10 to 12 years.

While different breeds of rabbits may interbreed, rabbits and hares are actually different species and can’t interbreed. Hares tend to be larger, with longer hind legs and ears, and are less social than rabbits. Rabbits remain the same color all year, while hares get a lighter coat in summer.

Hares gestate for 42 days, while a rabbit’s pregnancy lasts only 30 days. Hares live entirely above ground, while rabbits — other than cottontails — burrow to breed. Rabbits hide from predators underground while hares tend to run from whatever is hunting them.

One thing both species have in common: they both have quite a few predators. “They’re the bottom of the food chain,” Yule said.

Hares aren’t good pets because they don’t do well in captivity.

Madrid said rabbits, on the other hand, can be great pets. They can be trained to use a litter box (the litter the rescue has available is a natural product and not the same as cat litter, by the way).

“Some are better at [using a litter box] than others,” he said. “Spaying and neutering is also necessary.”

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adopting one as a pet. For instance, Madrid said, when rabbits mate, it’s often for life. In fact, several happily bonded pairs currently live at the sanctuary, and they wouldn’t split them up. Domesticated rabbits that are kept indoors may live 10 to 12 years.

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“She’s better at [using a litter box] than others,” he said. “Spaying and neutering helps fix that problem.”

He recommends spaying and neutering rabbits being kept inside as pets, noting that “Females get mean and males spray when they’re not fixed.”

Rabbits are also trainable — although you aren’t going to get them to sit or offer a paw to shake. They do love their raisins, though, and some can be taught to get in their pen by shaking a box of raisins and then giving them a few as a treat.

Madrid said if anyone who’s never owned a rabbit before is interested in adopting, the rescue staff and volunteers can show you how to set up a pen and how to bunny-proof your home. If you have other pets, they’ll also show you how to introduce a rabbit to the other animals.

North Texas Rabbit Sanctuary adopts out 60 to 70 rabbits a year. They’re adoptable at five months, but Yule said closer to a year is better.

She said finding a vet who specializes in bunnies isn’t the challenge it once was in the Dallas area. City Vet on Oak Lawn Avenue does a great job with them.

North Texas Rabbit Sanctuary is located in Garland. If you are interested in adopting a rabbit, check their website at NTRS.org. To schedule an appointment, ask questions or inquire about adopting contact by email at ntrs_tx@yahoo.com.
Russell Freeman Foundation opens Pride House sober living facility for LGBT people

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According to the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more than 21 million Americans age 12 and older battled some form of substance abuse disorder in 2014. And the relapse rate among those battling addiction ranges between 40 and 60 percent. Add in the mix an addict’s struggles with issues around sexual orientation and gender identity, and the LGBT relapse rate may well be even higher.

But studies have also shown that those in recovery who stay within a “recovery community” are much more likely to stay clean and sober. Still, even these “recovery communities” can be problematic for LGBT people in recovery if they don’t feel safe to be open about the truth of their lives.

But now, LGBT people in recovery in North Texas have an option: the Russell Freeman Foundation’s Pride House Sober Living residence.

Pride House owner and co-founder Chris McGuire said that he has been in recovery for 13 years, but getting to this point wasn’t easy. Being in a sober living house made all the difference for him.

“Before, I always felt like I wasn’t good enough. I had a lot of self esteem issues. But then when I moved into the sober living house, I finally felt like I was part of something good.”

But, he said, on his one 13-year road to recovery, he had noticed that LGBT people in those facilities had a rougher time.

“It just seemed like, if someone was gay or transgender or whatever, I’d see a lot of harassments and discrimination toward them,” McGuire said. “That certainly wasn’t going to help them in recovery.”

McGuire already owned other sober living houses, but decided he wanted to open a house specifically for LGBT people. Then he met drug and alcohol counselor Nancè Headley at a party and realized he found someone who shared his goal.

So the two of them set out to open Pride House, operating it as a program of the non-profit Russell Freeman Foundation — named after Headley’s brother who had struggled with addiction and died of AIDS two years ago — so that they could make it more accessible to people who might not be able to afford other recovery living facilities.

Headley is executive director of the foundation as well as cofounder.

Kyle Infante, who is himself in recovery and works with Infinite Recovery, an Austin treatment center for those in recovery, is a volunteer and board member with Pride House. He said that he chose to volunteer with Pride House because, in his experience, “sober living is the most critical part of the recovery process.”

He also noted the lack of LGBT-specific sober living options in North Texas.

Infante said that while some sober living and recovery agencies in the area claim to have LGBT programming, what that usually means is that they have procedures and policies in place addressing LGBT clients, and maybe they have some LGBT people on staff.

But until now, McGuire said, there has been “no true LGBTQ sober living [facility] in the Dallas area.” But that is exactly what Pride House is: All the residents will be LGBT, and the staff — if not all LGBT themselves — will be specially trained to help LGBT people in recovery.

In a successful sober living house, McGuire said, “you’ve got individuals living in a house, acting as a family and learning together to live drug- and alcohol-free. When you are living together that way, you get to know each other. You can identify when someone in the house is struggling and hopefully work together to help prevent a relapse.”

But often, for LGBT people in recovery, there are distinct issues that can come into play in the recovery process. So often an LGBT person’s idea of community can be rooted in the bar scene — gay bars have long been the LGBT community’s ad hoc community centers. The LGBT community has been, at least in the past, “a culture root-
McGuire said. And in bars, he added, drug use is often as prevalent as drinking.

In addition, for many LGBT people, burdened by society’s disapproval of who they are, especially their sexual identity, their sex lives are often bound by unhealthy ties to their substance abuse.

For those reasons and more, learning to trust and learning to develop healthy intimate relationships, which are almost always difficult for people in recovery, can be even bigger hurdles to overcome for LGBT people in recovery. Those are just a few of the reasons, the Pride House founders said, that a sober living residence specifically for LGBT people can help them be more successful in their recovery.

McGuire and Headley said that while there have been agencies in the DFW area that offered recovery services specifically to LGBT clients, Pride House is “the first [service] of its kind in the Metroplex. And since DFW is a major hub for the LGBT community in Texas, we believe it is very important” to have this kind of sober living option available here.

McGuire said Pride House, with room for eight residents, will have a live-in house manager to help residents with the day-to-day issues and activities, like leading the morning meditations and the weekly house meetings. There will also be a recovery coach to help residents, and regular support groups meeting at the house. He said they are looking for people from the LGBT community who can come in and lead meetings and workshops to help residents develop the variety of skills they need to live successfully in recovery.

McGuire said residents must be alcoholics or addicts, and the cost to live in Pride House is $1,500 a month, which pays for the room, food, utilities, internet service and group leaders that come in to assist residents. It is, he noted, significantly less that the $3,000 to $5,000 similar sober living residences usually charge.

McGuire said the main reason he and Headley chose to make Pride House part of a nonprofit foundation was so that “we could do fundraising to get money for scholarships to help people who need to live there but can’t pay the $1,500 by themselves.”

That’s important, Infante said, because those starting their recovery journey have often hit rock bottom financially as well as in other ways. “I know that when I first got sober, I sure wasn’t coming in on a winning streak,” he said.

Headley and McGuire said their board of directors has 12 members, six are LGBTQ and six are not. LGBT activist and fundraiser Deiadra Burns is the foundation’s board chair.

For information, visit RussellFreeman.org, email info@RussellFreeman.org or call 469-213-1380.
Kentucky whiskey expert Marlene Holmes has joined the team at Ben Milam Whiskey, an award-winning distillery in Blanco.

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They take the business and traditions of making whiskey very seriously in Kentucky. And now a Texas whiskey distillery is bringing in some of that Kentucky whiskey know-how to mix it with a lot of Lone Star pride to help continue to build a new tradition here with an already-award-winning bourbon.

Marsha Milam was already well known in Texas as a music festival producer when she decided to try her hand in the whiskey business, opening up Ben Milam Whiskey distillery in Blanco, Texas, just west of Austin. She named the company after Ben Milam, a hero of the Texas Revolution, who was her “first cousin, six-times removed,” as a way to “honor the Milam spirit of independence and action” and make “a whiskey as authentic as Texas.”

Ben Milam Whiskey has already made a name for itself. Earlier this year at the San Francisco Spirits Competition, Ben Milam won Double Gold for its flagship bourbon, the Single Barrel Straight Bourbon Whiskey, for the second year in a row. Ben Milam’s Barrel Proof whiskey and the Small Batch Rye also took home a gold medals this year. The rye won silver last year.

According to Gear Patrol magazine, more than 40 “food scientists, drink reviewers, bartenders and industry experts” serve as judges at the San Francisco competition. To win a Double Gold, “the spirit has be given Gold medal status by every single judge that tastes it — as you might imagine, very few are given out,” the magazine noted.

But Marsha Milam wasn’t done. She knew she needed the best people to make the best whiskey, so she went to the land of whiskey — Kentucky — to find a head distiller.

She found Marlene Holmes.

Holmes said her journey in the whiskey business started “back in the fall of 1990” and working with UPS when a friend suggested that look into a “unique” job opportunity at the Jim Beam distillery in Boston, Ky. The master distiller there was a guy named Booker Knowles who was “always experimenting with things, with different ideas. He got this idea of using dried grain [used in the distilling process] as fish food. So he got these 1,000 catfish fingerlings and put them in a cage, and was looking for someone to go down once a day to feed this dried grain to the catfish.

“I lived near there, so I said sure,” Holmes recalled. “I could go by on my way home and feed the fish.”

As the time passed, Holmes said, she got the chance to talk to folks who worked at the distillery, and was impressed with the “really, laid back environment. I had been working at UPS for about eight years then. It was a very regimented environment with some really long days. Just not my cup of tea. So I left UPS and just kind of did my own thing for awhile” before starting work at the distillery.

There are two Jim Beam distilleries. The one in Claremont, Ky., “is the one you hear a lot about, the one where they do the tours and where the craft house is,” Holmes said. But the one in Boston, renamed after Booker Knowles in about 2005, “is the workhorse. Today, it is the largest bourbon-producing distillery in the world.

“When I left last spring, we were making...
enough bourbon to fill 1,400 barrels in a 24-hour period,” she said. “We were putting out a lot of bourbon.”

Although she “just kind of fell into” the job with Jim Beam, it was a job she loved and excelled at. When she retired from Jim Beam last April, she was the senior operator at the Booker Knowles distillery, “running the still, making the mash, fermenting the mash.”

As much as she loved working for Jim Beam, Holmes said that “for the last couple of years — I just turned 62 — I’d been kind of anticipating doing something different. I even said to a guy who used to work with me, Randy, I’d love to go to a new, small craft distillery, get involved in a new product and help build something from the ground up.”

It wasn’t long before Randy gave her a call. He had been doing consulting work for a new distillery down in Texas, he said. They were looking for a new distiller, and he thought it would be perfect for her.

“At first I said yeah, sure. Then he said, it’s down in Blanco, Texas. I said, holy crap! Texas?,” Holmes laughed. “I had never thought about leaving Kentucky. I just thought I’d be somewhere else in Kentucky. I said, man, I don’t know about Texas. Tell me what you know about this place.”

So her friend gave her the rundown on what he knew about Ben Milam, and Holmes went home and did some research herself, googling Ben Milam Whiskey, Marsha Milam, Texas Hill Country, Blanco.

“I read about it and I thought, yeah, I need to check this out,” she said. Then she made a trip to Texas, met the owners and the investors and checked out the product. After that she said, “it was pretty much a no-brainer.”

Holmes said that during that first visit,
New York from the water

New ferries are a great way to get around New York and the best new way to see the city for the cost of a subway fare.

DAVID TAFFET  |  Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Six new ferry lines run up and down New York City’s East River, and they are the best new way to get a great view of New York and to get around.

Each route takes 30 to 60 minutes to travel end-to-end, and each costs only $2.75, the same as a subway fare, and transfers are available. All of the lines terminate at Pier 11 at Wall Street. So you can start in The Bronx — Clason Point along the Harlem River — transfer at Wall Street three stops later — and take another ferry all the way to Rockaway.

For commuters, this is a wonderful way to get around the city while avoiding the subways that are in worse condition than ever. The Astoria route, for example, starts in Queens, crosses the river to Roosevelt Island, crosses again to pick up passengers in Long Island City and returns to Manhattan to stop at 34th Street and end at Wall Street.

On a recent trip to NYC, we picked up the ferry on Roosevelt Island. We took the F train from Briarwood, Queens. Actually it was an E train running on the F train tracks because of track and station repair along the route the E train normally runs. And it was part local and part express. And if I wasn’t with a cousin who understood what construction was going on where, I would never have gotten to Roosevelt Is-

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land because the explanation of the change in service that was posted in the station was small print and literally floor to ceiling. What a mess.

But we got to Roosevelt Island, which is in the East River, and walked about three blocks to the pier.

And that’s where you see the first New York sites — the overhead tram and the Feelin’ Groovy Bridge (the 59th Street Bridge officially known as the Ed Koch or Queensboro Bridge). Buy your ticket on an app available at ferry.nyc or in a ticket machine similar to those at DART rail stations.

The ferry travels under three more bridges on its way to Wall Street — the Williamsburg, the Manhattan and the Brooklyn bridges.

From the river are wonderful views of New York’s two greatest skyscrapers — the Chrysler Building and the Empire State Building. From 42nd to 45th streets the United Nations stands along the shore and it is best seen from the river. On the Brooklyn side, get a great view of DUMBO, the neighborhood between the Brooklyn Bridge and “Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass.”

From Pier 11 at Wall Street, we could have...
transferred to a ferry to Governor’s Island in the harbor between lower Manhattan and Brooklyn, one of New York City’s latest attractions, open May 1-Oct. 31. Art and cultural events take place on the 172-acre island that has been developed into a park. About 50 historic buildings from the former military base on the island still stand and are awaiting redevelopment.

We walked around the Battery. Helicopter tours of New York are offered from the next pier. A separate ferry that carries vehicles to Governor’s Island leaves from the next building. Then the Staten Island Ferry and finally the boats to Liberty Island and Ellis Island are next.

The Staten Island Ferry used to cost a nickle to ride. Then the fare went up to match subway fares. Now it’s the best bargain in the city: It’s free.

As the boat pulls out of its berth in The Battery, you get the best view of Lower Manhattan from the stern. The new Liberty Tower stands framed by other high rises at the tip of the island. A little farther out, a new and surprisingly large skyline on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River balances the skyline on the New York side.

The Staten Island Ferry is about a 20-minute ride across the harbor and passes within a mile of Ellis Island and then the Statue of Liberty. Although both islands are clearly in New Jersey waters, the islands are part of New York. The statue faces the New York side with a great view from the ferry, while her ass points directly at New Jersey.

In the Staten Island terminal, there are a variety of places to eat. On the weekend I visited, though, few were open. We stopped in one that sold salads and bright red MAGAwear, reminding us this is New York City’s one conservative borough.

There’s little to do on Staten Island, but a train does run from the terminal at St. George across the island to Tottenville facing New Jersey. The National Lighthouse Museum is next to the terminal.

The ferry returns to Manhattan every 30 minutes, more often during weekday rush hour.

We spent half a day on our water tour of New York but certainly could have continued throughout the day or longer had we incorporated trips to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island or even a Circle Line Tour that takes several hours as it travels up the Hudson and Harlem Rivers before returned to its berth down the Hudson.
Freedom Tower from the Staten Island Ferry (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)
When a lesbian business owner needed help getting her entertainment company up and running, a gay BoA banker gave her just the help she needed.

TAMMYE NASH  |  Managing Editor
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racy Brown said she has been “banking with Bank of America for longer than I can remember.” But last year when she and her former business partner dissolved one company and she was scrambling to get her new company up and running, a gay BoA banker gave her just the help she needed.

When a lesbian business owner needed help getting her entertainment company up and running, a gay BoA banker gave her just the help she needed.

TAMMYE NASH  |  Managing Editor
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racy Brown said she has been “banking with Bank of America for longer than I can remember.” But last year when she and her former business partner dissolved one company and she was scrambling to get her new company up and running as quickly as possible, BoA small business banking specialist George Goforth really stepped up to the plate.

Brown and her former partner had been in business for 15 years, but last year that partnership came to an end. Her business partner went his own way, Brown said, “and the rest of us went on to form Amplify Entertainment Group.”

While she explained, “at Amplify, we provide record label services to independent artists and small labels. The bulk of what we do is radio promotion, getting radio stations to play our clients’ music. “We build what we lovingly refer to as a ‘virtual label.’ We build a team based on clients’ needs. We also do management consulting for those without management who are looking for some prudence, wisdom and guidance. We actually created the idea of a freestanding promotion field staff.”

The company, with seven employees, is based “all over the country, but we all office out of our homes. I am in Grapevine.”

The dissolution of the former company and the beginnings of the new, Brown said, “was a very rough ride.” Thankfully, though, she added, she had BoA and Goforth on her side.

She said that because of how her former partner timed things, with the dissolution of the former company coming at the very end of 2017, it was a mad dash to get Amplify up and running by the beginning of 2018. “When George came in and started working with us, we were under so much pressure. We were trying to form the company, get a bank account, make sure it suited our needs as a company. We couldn’t have done it without George and without our track record with Bank of America and our creditors.”
Who Says Boys Don’t Make Passes At Boys Who Wear Glasses?

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“I was on the phone with George five or six times a day through the entire month of January,” Brown continued. “He got special permissions for me, joined me on calls to make sure we got what we needed. He made a real investment in understanding our company and what we do and how we do it, so that he could give us the help we needed.

“And I still owe him a drink for all that!”

The biggest reason for the rush was an event planned for the spring called the Gathering on the Whiskey Trail in Kentucky. Amplify brings together musicians, bloggers, entertainment writers, record label executives, radio programmers, music supervisors and more for three days of live music, all designed to get new performers and new music in front of the people who can help them succeed.

“It takes an immense amount of credit on the front end to make this work,” Brown said. “This is our biggest event each year, and we wouldn’t have been able to have the gathering if George had not been there to facilitate the right amount of credit to allow us to swing for the fences.”

Goforth, congratulating Brown on putting together an outstanding event, noted “coming off the restructure and new branding, it’s just huge that you were able to do that.” Helping her company do that, he added, is what his company is all about.

“That’s one of our core values, making financial life so much better for our clients,” he said. “Tracy helps people in the music business find management so they can have a better career, a better brand. We do that for our customers; we help them make a better business and a better brand.

“My job as a small business banker is to go to the client, to put time into them and to understand what’s most important to the client,” Goforth said. “When we get into a rush, when we don’t put the time in to get to know them, we can easily overlook what’s really most important to them.”

That ties back, he said, to the scramble throughout January to get the new Amplify brand established and the company up and running. “It wasn’t just getting on the phone. It was understanding what was really important, what had to be accomplished. Without that, we would just be spinning our wheels.”

Goforth said he started with BofA 25 years ago as a teller in a branch bank. Through the years, he said, he has developed a passion for getting to know clients and understand their needs. Now, as Tracy and her business grow, I grow with them.”

Goforth, who is openly gay, said he is also proud of the way that Bank of America values its employees and the full range of their diversity as well as diversity in the communities they serve. BofA is involved in LGBT communities throughout the country in a variety of ways.

BofA was the first financial services company to offer partner benefits, and as BofA Regional Media Leader Britney Sheehan noted, the company also has been sponsoring and participating in the Out & Equal Workplace Summit since 2008. “We do a lot of sponsorships in the LGBT community, but Out and Equal is the really big one for us.

“We have a commitment to diversity over all,” Sheehan added. “We recognize that being diverse makes us better. It makes us stronger, and better able to deliver for our clients.”

Sheehan also said BofA has 14,000 members in its LGBT Pride Group and 18,000 visible LGBT employees and allies.

That, Brown said, “hits the nail on the head.”

“My brother used to work for Bank of America, and he’s the one who recommended George to me. He said George is an ass-kicking mofo. He didn’t tell me then that George is gay, but having someone with whom I could really connect made all the difference.

“Amplify came into the new year with no cash in hand. All that got spent in ‘the divorce,’” Brown continued. “To have someone step in and absorb that situation, and to have some empathy for it as well, and then to have such a direct connection on both a professional and a personal level was very meaningful. I knew from the start George was on my side.”

“In these crazy times where people can deny you service based on what they want to call your ‘lifestyle,’ it’s very refreshing to see a giant corporation like Bank of America embrace diversity so fully,” Brown said. “That’s huge.”

Brown said that even now when everything is established and running, Goforth “still checks in with me regularly to make sure everyone is going the way it needs to go. We know if we have any issues, we can go right to George. It’s rare to get that kind of service in this day and age.”

It is, Goforth said, “a partnership. That’s what makes it work. It’s all about partnership.”
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phone conversations with the defendant in the Hunt County Detention Center where he sat, unable to make a $1 million bond. The presiding judge ruled prosecutors had violated Woodruff’s 6th Amendment right to counsel, and he ordered the Hunt County District Attorney to recuse himself so the Texas Attorney General could take charge.

In May 2017 Crawford wrote to Woodruff expressing his interest in writing a book, and the prisoner quickly responded with answers to the questions posed by the author. Soon, Poggensee also reached out to Crawford, offering to share information he had acquired while working on the documentary.

They joined forces in a combined effort to raise awareness about Woodruff’s case. “The principal motivation was that I believe Brandon Woodruff has been wronged by the so-called criminal justice system — railroaded, if you will — and the deeper I got into the case the more outraged I became at the cumulative injustices against him, from arrest through trial, and conviction through appeals,” Crawford said. “The main focus for me was the homophobic narrative by state prosecutors against him in which a young gay boy’s coming out process was treated as some sinister double-life, essentially evoking The Talented Mr. Ripley.”

Woodruff said he was shocked early on to realize that investigators and prosecutors began focusing on his sexual orientation as a major factor in his case. “The state wanted to argue...that people that because I didn’t tell certain people I was gay, that if I could lie about being gay I could lie about being a murderer, and that’s just not the case,” Woodruff said. “I was coming to find myself, and I didn’t feel like I needed to go around telling everyone what Brandon was doing in his private life. I do know the state was telling people they had evidence. But when asked what it was, the state said, ‘We can’t tell you, but just trust us.’ The main central issue was if I could lie about being gay I could lie about being a murderer. That’s just not true.”

Poggensee said he first became aware of Woodruff’s case in 2005 immediately after Woodruff was arrested. He was at dinner with two friends when Woodruff’s mug shot flashed on the television screen in the restaurant. One of the friends said, “Oh, my God. That’s my ex-boyfriend.”

The filmmaker-to-be immediately became intrigued by the case. “I had no idea who Brandon was at that point, however his mug shot did not look like someone that could commit such a cold-blooded double homicide,” Poggensee said. “I realize you can’t spot a murderer, but he just looked too innocent to do something like that.”

Poggensee followed the case through its climax more than three years after Woodruff’s arrest. After the conviction, Poggensee wrote to Woodruff in prison, and the pris-
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Breaking the leather ceiling

Western art is considered a man’s domain and the world of stagehands may be considered male domains, but that doesn’t stop Buzzy Gamble from excelling in both.

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Buzzy Gamble describes her art as realistic impressionist oil paintings of western, wildlife and sporting scenes, with a few portraits and landscapes thrown in.

The Fort Worth-born artist began drawing in the lid of a suitcase when she was two. By the age of four she was copying Walt Disney animation and became prolific in her drawing. When her mother mailed the pictures to Disney, she got a letter back with a Mickey Mouse doodle next to his signature.

By the time she was six, Gamble had found her mother’s old set of oil colors and painted her first portrait, a painting of her grandmother. She credits Bea Dunning, a Fort Worth modernist and Paschal High teacher for taking her under her wing and giving her art direction when she was in high school.

Gamble’s first college foray at University of North Texas wasn’t as successful. After butting heads with teachers in the art department, she said she dropped out and didn’t paint again for several years. She returned to college several years later, but this time as a biology major.

During that second stint in college Gamble took a stagecraft class. That class led her back to painting, but, she said, on a larger scale: “I was sucked in by the theater department,” she explained, “and biology faded away.”

After doing summer stock at Casa Manana, Gamble transferred to the theater department at Texas Wesleyan. She said that while she had “always looked at science as easy; all you had to do was memorize stuff,” theater presented new problems with every show.

“In college, I wanted to paint bigger,” she said. “They painted props and drops” in theater.

She decided to try another painting class with the teachers at Wesleyan she described as impressionists. During that time, she studied the Western artist James Bama and was mesmerized by the realism in his images. So, Gamble said, she combined her teachers’ impressionism with Bama’s realism and began developing her realistic impressionism style.

Gamble said the West had always inspired her. She said her family often took trips to Yellowstone and to Montana, and she remembered the camera her parents bought for her that she didn’t use.

“At some point they asked why I wasn’t taking pictures,” she said. “I said, ‘Why? I can draw.’”

As an adult, Gamble has managed to mingle her painting career with a career as a stagehand. When there wasn’t enough stagehand work, she said, she’d teach.

“It took 15 years to get in the stagehand union,” she noted. “They didn’t allow women.”

But Gamble was persistent. She became a member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and was the first woman in the southern U.S. elected president — twice. She went on to become a founding member of the studio mechanics union in Texas and is currently president of the wardrobe union.

The world of theatrical stagehands wasn’t the only male-dominated area in which Gamble has fought to survive and thrive: “Only guys paint real western art,” she said. “Or so goes the rule.”

But, she declared, she spends her life “busting through the leather ceiling.”

Gamble moved to L.A. where she painted theatrical sets. She said she came home for Christmas and then went back out to the West Coast determined to break into Hollywood.

“I walked into four or five offices until someone hired me,” she said.

Gamble said she hired extras for the Dennis Christopher thriller Fade to Black. And she worked on the Kevin Costner–Rene Russo film Tin Cup in Houston. But she...
may be most proud of working on props for one of the \textit{jaws} sequels, filmed in Florida, mostly because the shark’s fin ended up in her house in Dallas.

She has also worked on a number of rock tours — Tina Turner, Bette Midler, Hootie and the Blowfish, Melissa Ethridge, the Beach Boys, Eric Clapton, “and \textit{Chicago} — so many times I can’t count,” she said.

Gamble said she always loved working concerts at Reunion Arena and said the city was stupid to tear the venue down. She also loves working at outdoor arenas and was a “houseman” at Starplex “or whatever they call it this year.”

But she hated Lilith Fair. “Why are they playing that whiny girl music?” she said she asked herself during that event. “I love metal.”

But no matter how much she loves working in movies and theaters and concerts, painting keeps drawing her back.

Gamble described stage backdrops as giant impressionist paintings: From the audience’s perspective she said, the picture pulls together, like Monet’s \textit{Waterlilies}. But up close, a drop is dashes and dots of paint.

Her canvasses are similar. A bear she recently donated to the Black Tie Dinner auction may, up close, just look splashes of color, but step back and the dashes become a black bear walking across a stream bed lined with rocks and pebbles under an ominous sky.

She named that canvas \textit{Julia’s Bear}. “Julia was a friend who recently passed away,” Gamble explained. “She was a respiratory therapist.”

The colorful painting “Buster” depicts a cowboy from the waist down, on horseback, wearing his fringed chaps. She said that painting, which was turned down for a fundraiser, sold within an hour of being posted online.

Her landscapes range from “Lewis Falls” — whose foreground is a clear depiction from the Yellowstone Park falls and river downstream, but whose mountainous background is shrouded in mysterious haze — to her painting “North Shore.” In that canvas, the white caps frame the opaque waves in a more stylized waterscape.

But just because she’s been spending time on her art recently, that doesn’t mean she wouldn’t jump at the chance of working another rock tour: “I’ve done rigging, electrical, lighting,” she said. “I’ve done pyro — that’s fun.”

And how do those tours travel with all the flammable pyrotechnic equipment and gear?

“Carefully,” she said.

\textit{More of Gamble’s work can be viewed at BuzzyGamble.com and on Facebook search Buzzy Gamble Fine Art. She is represented by Eastman Gallery in Garwood, Texas. EastmanGallery.net.}
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INNOCENT, From Page 54

The filmmaker said he obtained all of the public court records from the trial, and he studied the massive paperwork to get the “true picture.”

“I am the attorney who tried the case for Brandon,” she wrote. “Mr. Crawford has done an excellent job of setting forth facts — not speculation or prejudice — that show Brandon Woodruff is innocent.”
she “tasted the mash, tasted the spirit run. Both were a lot different from what I had tasted before. The mash had a sweet taste to it, and the distillation just had a real pure, clean taste about it. So I knew then that these folks had a good recipe, a real good product.

“That’s a big part of the reason I came down here,” she acknowledged. Now she is Ben Milam’s head distiller, overseeing production and “making product every day. We are putting whiskey in barrels as fast as we can.”

When she talked to Dallas Voice earlier this summer, Holmes had been in Texas for about three months, and had spent most of that time, she said, looking for a house. “I want to get settled in so I can get my family down here as soon as I can. Between that and work I haven’t had the chance to really explore what Texas has to offer. I did see the bats at the bridge in Austin, and I’ve been the Fredericksburg and saw the Green Dance Hall. I’m a real history buff, and I love what I have seen so far.”

Holmes said that her family consists of her spouse — they’ve been together 37 years — and their fur babies: a golden retriever, a German shepherd and two cats.

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Holmes said that since she has been in Texas she has been “very transparent from day one” about being a lesbian, and “the folks down here have been wonderful, very open-armed. I met a woman who asked me what brings you from Kentucky to Texas. I told her about my job at the distillery. She came over and gave me a big hug and said, ‘Oh honey, we just love our whiskey here in Texas!’”

Back in Kentucky, Holmes said, it’s a bit different. “It’s a little more conservative in Kentucky, believe it or not,” she laughed. “It can be a little more rural there. But we [she and her spouse] never made an issue of it there. We just did our thing and didn’t talk about it.”

She said she is really looking forward to getting to know her new home in Texas, and is anxious for her family to join her. But she is also glad to maintain some connections to her old Kentucky home.

“There is history behind the name of Ben Milam whiskey, and there’s a Kentucky connection there,” she said. “The whiskey and the distillery are named after Marsha Milam’s sixth-cousin Ben Milam. He was a Texas hero, but he was born in Frankfort, Ky. So yeah. That’s kinda cool.”

Holmes said that since she has been in Texas she has been “very transparent from day one” about being a lesbian, and “the folks down here have been wonderful, very open-armed. I met a woman who...
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Dr. Daniel G. Sena, DDS. passed away Friday, August 31, 2018 at age 64. Dr. Sena graduated Baylor School of Dentistry in 1985, and practiced and lived in Dallas since then. Dr. Sena was born March 25, 1954 in El Paso, TX. Dr. Sena was also a registered AKC (American Kennel Club) "Breeder of Merit", professional dog breeder, of English Springer Spaniels and bred a substantial amount of champions through his DANSEN bloodlines, and had dogs in the Westminster dog show. He was also an AKC dog show judge. Dr. Sena was also an amateur body builder and had hobbies of art painting and home project construction. Dr. Sena is survived by his older sister Carmely Hamilton (husband Ray Hamilton) of New Mexico and his younger brother Errol Sena (wife Martha), 6 nephews: Cary Hamilton, Ray Hamilton Jr., Aaron Hamilton, Christian Sena, and 2 nieces: Krystal Moya and Carin Uranga, and twelve grand nephews and nieces.

Services will be: Memorial Mass, Friday September 14, at 12pm preceded by a rosary at 11:30am, at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, 6306 Kenwood Ave., Dallas, TX.

In lieu of flowers, friends of Dr. Sena have established a Go Fund Me account to assist his family with burial services. The "Go Fund Me" link is: www.gofundme.com/dr-daniel-sena-funeral-expenses
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My dad loved gadgets. He died in 1987, just before the first SXSW festival. A home computer then was the IBM PS2. A mobile phone in 1987 would have been the Nokia Cityman 900, which weighed more than a pound-and-a-half and had no video screen. The battery would let you talk for almost an hour before it had to be recharged. TV back then was black-and-white.

My dad didn’t have either a computer or a mobile phone. I didn’t grow up with them either. I’m from that magical generation that grew up spending summers outside with no sunscreen or cell phones, just riding bikes, goofing off, playing with friends or hanging out at the beach.

“Just be home by the time the streetlights came on,” my mom always pleaded. There was no way for her to reach us easily, and mostly she only had a vague idea of where we were.

But in my lifetime, we’ve seen the United States put a man on the moon and a moron in the White House.

We’ve gone from being out of touch most of the time — our only “phone” mounted on the wall, with a fairly short cord keeping us nearby if we wanted to use it, and having to dial 1 for “long distance” but only seven digits for most local calls — to having more computing power in the small cell phones than they had on Apollo 11.

The internet’s our phones connect us to contains almost the sum total of all of human knowledge. It’s a mini TV that can show us almost anything we want to see.

These tiny handheld computers have changed the way we consume media and process information — and the way we connect to one another.

Not long ago in my home, we turned over many of our more mundane chores to Google Home. It plays music and talk radio stations, turns lights on and off, handles the thermostat and a ton more. We can also interact with Google via my phone. I’m continually amazed by all it can do!

I like to ride my road bike for exercise. I ride around a lakeside trail in Coppell. It’s a multi-use trail, used by pedestrians and cyclists alike.

I marvel constantly at the number of people who are walking around a tranquil lake full of egrets and ducks, the sky ablaze with the brilliant colors of sunset. But they don’t even notice, because they have their eyes glued to the screens of their phones.

It’s getting to be an epidemic, and it’s getting dangerous.

I almost collided with one such woman, who was walking and not paying attention. I was on the far right side of the trail doing about 15 mph; she was walking towards me, her eyes riveted to her phone. Not looking where she was going, she veered towards me. I hit my bell, and she looked up at the last second, barely avoiding a collision.

But did she put the phone away? Nope. I was in the Coppell post office, and a woman waiting in line behind me was talking on her phone. Personally, I think yakking on the phone in a retail setting is the epitome of rudeness. Then she left and returned with a second phone!

I’m not sure why she needed two phones, but overhearing her conversation wasn’t hard as she told the person on the other end of the conversation that she had to go to her car and get her cell phone.

Five times. She told them about it five times. No exaggeration.

I remember the Pokémon Go fad, too — people losing their minds, eyes glued to their phones as they stumbled about erratically, trying their best to “catch them all.”

What a great idea that was!

Look, I carry a phone like the rest of the world. But it spends most of its day in my purse. It’s more of a tool than a companion; I’m partial to human interaction.

And I marvel at so many of the millennials that can’t seem to go 10 seconds without checking their phone. For what? People in the supermarket on the phone, oblivious to what’s around them. I even saw a woman on a bike texting!

Please! Enough! Put Down The Phone!

We are killing each other in cars with distracted driving, and we are becoming socially isolated. Twitter is no substitute for a real conversation, people!

Texting can’t convey facial expression or tone of voice. And don’t start with me about emojis as a replacement. I really believe that our phones, tablets and what-not are in no small part responsible for the divide in our society.

Social media is great at dehumanizing and anonymous chatter. I think the “Mean Tweets” segment that Jimmy Kimmel does on his Jimmy Kimmel Live show is genius. It illustrates that there are people who can be hurt by words carelessly typed into a phone — words that the tweeter would probably never have the guts to say to their face.

And dining out has become a frustrating experience of either overhearing others’ phone conversations or watching a table of four people not talking to each other because they are in their own little phone world.

That makes me sad. One of the better solutions I’ve heard is to all sit down at the table and each person place their phone face down on the table stacking one phone on top of the other. The rule of the game? First person to touch their phone picks up the check. I think my dad would have liked that.

Leslie McMurray, a transgender woman, is a former radio DJ who lives and works in Dallas. Read more of her blogs at lesliemichelle44.wordpress.com.
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In full ‘Bloom’

Singer-songwriter Troye Sivan comes into his own as an out pop sensation. Deal with it.

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com
I

in photos, Troye Sivan strikes an image of being waifish and delicate. He has the lost, vulnerable appearance of Falconetti in Dreyer’s *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, or Kate Moss modeling a thin chemise on a windswept heath.

But take a moment to watch him — like, really watch — as he moves around in one of his videos; He’s self-possessed and confident, aware of his body; he can appear panther-like in his decisiveness. The man may not be as innocent as the image suggests.

Which is kinda the point.

At 23, Sivan is startlingly young for someone who has met with such success, but he’s still an old pro at this music thing. South African by birth but reared mostly in Australia (he now makes his home in the Hollywood Hills, but retains the accent), he is by no means an overnight sensation. True, *Bloom* — only his second full-length studio album — dropped just two weeks ago (following 2015’s *Blue Neighbourhood*), but don’t discount his Australian EPs and singles before that, or his live TV appearances starting when he was just a tween. And then there’s his acting career (his latest? A supporting role in Joel Edgerton’s highly-anticipated *Boy Erased*, a true story about the horrors of gay conversion therapy). How about being a huge YouTube star since 2012 (his channel has 6.5 million subscribers and more than a quarter of a billion views)? There’s his world tour in support of *Bloom*, which kicks off next week in North Texas at the Toyota Music Factory. (See our interview with Sivan’s guest on the tour, Kim Petras, on Page 82.)

Sivan has done all this (he writes his own music as well), while simultaneously living out-and-proud as a gay music icon who doesn’t shy away from being upfront about his sexuality. The first track on *Bloom*, “Seventeen,” is about a young man exploring his first sexual encounter with an older man; the title track — with its lyric “Promised me you’ll / Hold my hand if I get scared now / Might tell you to / Take a second, baby, slow it down / You should know I, you should know I / I bloom just for you,” has been described as perhaps the first anthem about bottoming.

You don’t get as far personally and professionally as Sivan has without having a steely sensibility, his twinkly bone structure aside. Sivan was happy to discuss all these points — including his first Pride event, the anniversary of his coming out and his dream collaborators — when we chatted just before the album’s release.

Dallas Voice: You came out almost exactly five years ago... Troye Sivan: Did I? I didn’t realize.

Well, you’ve had other things on your mind lately, I suppose... Was coming out a big deal for you? It definitely was a big deal. I think personally it’s a big deal for anyone; I had a fairly traditional [coming out experience] with my parents — I sat them down and told them. It’s not like I brought a boyfriend home or anything. It definitely felt like a pivotal and momentous moment. It was the best thing I ever did.

Despite being very hot as a pop star and headlining a tour, you’ve remained very connected to the gay community... That feels both intentional and something even I find interesting. I’ve always wanted to make pop music — that’s what I really love — but also something that feels challenging and interesting to me. You have to do what feels right and you find what makes you [express] your individuality, so I can do [Wango tango] and then turn around and perform at a gay club.

And you’ve been very, very out — you put a gay porn actor in one of your videos, the lyrics for the single “Bloom” are, ummm, suggestive .... For sure. I just put that song out. ... Yeah [laughs]. Honestly, I never would’ve thought I would have written that song. That song came out of a session that I felt wasn’t going too well. [So we said], “OK, well how do we make the most of this day? Let’s just start messing around and having fun.” And we wrote it that night — never, ever thought that it would see the light of day. We ended up with something that I thought was really, really cool and interesting and real.

Writing a song like “Bloom” or using the pronouns that feel honest to me [is important]. That’s stuff I could never have imagined I would be able to do when I was a kid. Getting to make the music I want is [amazing].

What influenced you to deliver something more queer-specific? It was having all of these really inspiring experiences and meeting all of these really inspiring people. Whenever I start writing music, my number one goal, always, is to keep things honest and real, because I think it’s the only way to stay relevant and stay true over a long career. I wanna be doing this for the rest of my life, and I don’t know if I’m gonna be able to be thinking about cool concepts and things like that for the rest of my life. But I’ll always be able to speak about where I am in my life, that’s always gonna be there. So I fall back on that, and I wanted to not hold anything back. It’s so cool to me to be able to celebrate all of those things I was celebrating in my real life. So, why not go for it and talk about that on the album?

The album feels like it might help gay fans work through issues of self-acceptance.... A lot of the residual issues that queer people deal with have also completely followed me into my older life, just internalized homophobia that I’ve held onto without meaning to from when I was, like, 13 or whatever. It’s like, “Oh no, you can’t talk about that or you can’t sing about that.” I’m
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Kim Petras never knows when her musical muse might strike. She could be traveling, shopping, attending a party or simply hanging out with her besties when inspiration flashes unexpectedly. To capture these oft-fleeting thoughts, the quirky diva with a side bun (or side ponytail, depending on her mood) has learned to keep her smartphone within reach at all times.

“It’s always really embarrassing to walk around in public and mumble into your phone and sing a weird melody,” Petras says, describing how she regularly uses a voice memo app to record her ideas. “Then I go back to it in my studio when I’m home. It’s definitely worth the weirdness.”

Petras, 26, has been obsessed with pop music and songwriting since her early teens, growing up in her native Germany. She researched and collected information about pop lyricists much in the way that her peers might have followed the careers of their sports heroes. And when her classmates were hanging out together at parties, Petras was at home writing songs and making beats.

“I was just always really dedicated to it, but it never really felt like a sacrifice,” Petras says of songwriting. “This was always what I wanted to do most — to be on stage or write a song. It’s been my dream since I was a kid. I never really felt like I was missing out or making a sacrifice. I’ve just kind of worked really, really hard and didn’t have much free time for a long time. But I’m so cool with
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- **SUNDAY OCTOBER 7**
  - VÉRITÉ

- **MONDAY OCT 8**
  - Jungle
  - Monday Oct 8

- **THURSDAY OCT 11**
  - Garbage
  - Thursday Oct 11

- **SUNDAY OCT 14**
  - Lily Allen
  - Sunday Oct 14

- **TUESDAY OCT 16**
  - Tamia
  - Tuesday Oct 16

- **WEDNESDAY OCT 24**
  - Maggie Rogers
  - Wednesday Oct 24

- **THURSDAY OCT 25**
  - The B-52s
  - Thursday Oct 25

- **MONDAY OCT 29**
  - Jessie J
  - Monday Oct 29

- **TUESDAY NOV 6**
  - Poppy
  - Tuesday Nov 6

- **WEDNESDAY NOV 14**
  - Walk the Earth
  - Wednesday Nov 14

- **MONDAY NOV 19**
  - Internet
  - Monday Nov 19

- **SATURDAY DECEMBER 1**
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  - Saturday December 1

- **SUNDAY DEC 2**
  - SoMo
  - Sunday Dec 2
that, and I love it.”

Petras’ unyielding devotion to high-energy music is now paying off. On Sept. 21, the pop princess joins gay heartthrob Troye Sivan for his Bloom Tour, which kicks off at Toyota Music Factory in Irving (see our interview with Sivan, starting on Page 64). Petras has spent the last few weeks rehearsing and preparing herself both mentally and physically — “Most importantly, learning a lot about vocal health and how to take care of my [vocal cords] because I have to sing really high-pitched songs every single night,” she says — to meet the tour’s demanding schedule.

While the upcoming tour will be her first, the charming chanteuse is certainly no stranger to public performances. After years of playing at (among other venues) gay clubs, Petras has garnered a strong LGBT fan base. Last June, she performed for a sold-out West Hollywood crowd as a featured artist during L.A. Pride. Petras says her gay fans were “definitely the first to jump on this train and love these songs,” and she is grateful for the support from a community to which she, as a transgender woman, also belongs. She aspires to use her newfound spotlight as a platform for advocacy.

“I care about transgender kids so much,” Petras says. “I want to make it easier for transgender kids. I just want to normalize being transgender more. I just want people to understand it’s a thing that’s been happening since forever and not something freaky. I just want to help make it better and easier for the next generations to come. I really, really care about that.”

Petras prefers, however, to be known more for her vibrant music than for her gender identity. Despite being among the youngest candidates worldwide to transition fully (she was 16 at the time), Petras is grateful for the success she has enjoyed in a relatively short time, and she has no intentions of throttling her musical efforts. She focuses daily on growing professionally and improving her craft. And while she has issued a number of popular singles like “Hillside Boys” (one of her favorites to perform) and “I Don’t Want It At All” (a track which landed on Billboard’s dance chart), Petras says she “can’t wait to put out an album.” For motivation and inspiration, she considers words of wisdom her mother gave her.

“My mom always told me that you only have one life and why not be happy in this one life,” Petras says. “My parents just kind of taught me to go for it and to be happy and to be accepting and to be nice. Also, being gracious and nice and humble is always great advice to get… and to give to people.”

“Pop music is not Petras’ only preoccupation. A perhaps little-known fun fact is that she also has a fascination with the praying mantis. She features the slender green insect in at least two of her music videos, including that for “Heart to Break” in which Petras portrays a fragile princess locked away in a purple crystal tower.

“But I just like praying mantises,” Petras says. “And the thing about them is that they always, like, move upwards. So I guess there is some positivity there. And in [the music video] “Heart to Break,” [I thought] every princess needs a sidekick, so I was just like, ‘Why not have it be a mantis?’”

Why not, indeed.

What’s it like launching a tour and dropping an album? For me the scary part of the process is now, lining stuff up. Now is when I am slammed and once I am on stage in Dallas all the hard work will pay off. Then you are on the road and get to enjoy it.

What do you want to accomplish with the live show? I think the goal of the show is to achieve, first, a really great, theatrical, dramatic show — I’m really excited about it — but also to foster an environment that is a special one. I want people to meet like minded people — a meeting place for people to get together and celebrate who they are.

How do you characterize your own sound? On your new album, “My My My” is a
British singer Lucy Spraggan returns to the U.S. with more fame, but the same priority: connecting intimately with her audience.

At first listen, the lyrics to Lucy’s Spraggan’s latest single, “Modern-Day Frankenstein,” sound both specific and angry. You’re like a poltergeist, a ghost / With its hands wrapped round my throat she sings. That’s the makings of an old-fashioned breakup song.

But when we spoke over the phone with Spraggan — an English lesbian singer-songwriter with a large following in her home country trying to make her name in the U.S., including a tour that brings her to Dallas this week — she clarified that the intent was something much different.

“It’s actually about my relationship with my wife... Which sounds really bad!” she says. But Spraggan means it in the best way. It’s a song about the truth of long-term commitments, their hard parts and great parts, all about a personal interest she and her wife share. “The song is kind of like how you’re the best person and the worst person” she says. “Also we love Halloween in our house. I wanted it to be a gruesome family ballad.”

That’s one thing that sets Spraggan apart as a recording artist: She comes at a genre often weighed down by obvious choices — sad breakups songs, strummy acoustic guitar chords — and plays with it in a completely new way. Her lyrics are smart, often playful, sometimes intense and always a twist on what you’d expect.

On her latest album, I Hope You Don’t Mind Me Writing, she alternates slower, low-key songs with poppy, snappy ones. These latter tracks are the most fascinating, a complicated mix of happy tunes and dark imagery that, in turn, Spraggan uses to describe rather happy circumstances.

Take “Loaded Gun,” an upbeat bit of folk-pop that describes a pair of young friends as, well, loaded guns. We can eat sundaes because it is Sunday / And waste our change in the arcade / We can get tattoos and maybe some seafood / And then you might be feeling ok.” Sounds like a fun day, until you remember the track opens with the sound of a gun being cocked.

Making music this way requires the kind of openness and penchant for risk-taking that makes a mark in a crowded pop field. Spraggan has that in spades. Take her habit of hanging out after shows for a pint or two with her fans.

“I’m going to be saying to people at the show, ‘does anyone fancy a beer after we’re done? I’d love to chat with you then and know who you are,’” she says.

It’s that type of connection that becomes a recurring theme in our conversation. Spraggan seems to thrive on it. Her only other tour of the U.S. occurred 12 years ago, when she was 18. Even then, she fostered relationships with strangers. She had come from the U.K. with little more than her guitar and a lot of gumption, tackling concerts in 32 states in just three months. More often than not, she’d walk into a cafe and simply ask to play, sometimes in exchange for food and the use of a booth as a bed for the night. “I spent quite a bit of
There is not so much a bright line separating Southern pride from a racist history, so much as a murky shadow where distinct boundaries are all but invisible, where principled positions are more intuited than inherent. Take down a statue of Robert E. Lee from a Dallas park in 2017? We can all get behind that. Protest the University of Virginia because founder Thomas Jefferson was a slave owner? Well, now you’re in a weirder area. If you boycott every destination with a less-than-pristine history of inclusiveness and social progressivism, then you’d basically have to back away from the entire American South... and North, and West, and England, and Rome, and the entire Middle East, and... well, I think there’s an ice floe in the Arctic Circle where nothing bad happened. Maybe.

Which poses a conundrum for a city like Charleston, S.C. Its harbor is the recognized launching point of the Civil War, when Fort Sumter was fired upon in April 1861, making its ties to the Confederacy inescapable. It’s also a vibrant city of the 21st century, populated by plenty of liberals (even gay ones!) who enjoy its climate, its culinary traditions, its age. So is it possible to reconcile one’s part with the present... and the future? Let’s hope so. (Texas was one of the Confederate States, too, after all.)

A visit to Charleston can (and should) be greeted as an opportunity to explore one of the most storied cities in America — a once-powerful economic juggernaut and cultural hub with an active gay community today — to learn about its history and reflect on it soberly, rather than judge it harshly out-of-hand. Yes, it is the location of the recent and notorious massacre at Mother Emmanuel Church and the horrific, racially-motivated police shooting of Walter Scott, but the area is also the home of Stephen Colbert, the Spoleto Festival, Gullah culture (including lowcountry cuisine) and some of the most exquisite antebellum architecture you’ll see in one place. If you dismiss Charleston, you dismiss a sizeable chunk of worthwhile enterprises with far-reaching legacies.

Located midway down the coast of South Carolina, intermediated between the raucous Spring Break destination of Myrtle Beach to the north and the lazy
gentility of Savannah, Ga., to the south (Charleston, as someone once told me, “has a shorter skirt” than Savannah), the city sits on a peninsula buffeted from the Atlantic Ocean by a phalanx of barrier islands. The estuary of the Cooper and Ashley rivers form the bay known as Charleston Harbor, which serves as a de facto gateway to the American past.

The past isn’t always pretty, of course. A still-popular marketplace of repurposed 18th century buildings never was a slave market, as legend sometimes holds, but there’s no denying that slavery was, for a time, a central driver of the local economy. But, typical of many coastal towns, Charleston has also long accepted diverse cultures and has been religiously tolerant (since the late 17th century, it has welcomed Jewish residents; its first synagogue was founded in 1749, and South Carolina was the first state to install a Jewish elected official).

That’s also true of the gay community. It’s Unity Church of Christ proudly welcomes gay congregants, while old-school Charleston society types like activist Linda Ketner (who, as an openly lesbian Democrat, ran in 2008 for Congress’ 1st District seat, near-missing with 48 percent of the vote) give queer visibility to the region, as do several gay bars — Club Pantheon is the HiNRG disco bar, while across the street, neighborhood hang Dudley’s is a center of socializing and drag shows that’s hoppin’ on a weekend night.

Still, the city’s complicated past is never far from the surface, and is best embraced head-on. Middleton Place, located about a half hour northwest from downtown, is a former plantation and site on the registry of National Historic Landmarks. It’s amazing grounds — once 7,000 productive acres, it’s now preserved as 100 acres of a living museum; it still holds livestock and farmworkers, as well as historical reenactors). Docents can tour you through the main restored buildings, or you can wander its curtilage and well-manicured gardens and old-grown trees dripping with Spanish moss. An anthropologic initiative unearthed details of the 3,000 enslaved men and women who worked the plantation (about 150 at any given time), and an exhibit of its slave history is a necessary stop. (There are also overnight accommodations at the inn for those who wish to explore in more depth.)

History is inescapable in Charleston, even in the city center. Visit the century-old Gibbes Museum of Art in the French Quarter, or roam the streets of the Battery (especially Rainbow Row) on your own (King Street is a popular high-end shopping district); be sure to stop into City Market along Meeting Street, four blocks of 18th century buildings that now serve as vendor booths for all kinds of tchotchkes and whatzits, as well as some unique snacks and charming local crafts. For a more structured and informative experience, sign up for a walking tour or horse-drawn carriage tour. Old South Carriage Co. is one of several relaxing rides around downtown that has updated its look for the current climate. The previous uniforms of the drivers included a French kepi-style forage cap of Johnny Reb; that has been replaced by a wide-brimmed boater less...
evocative of the Confederacy (still, the gray suit with red sash remains). The rides are informative and fun — learning about the city’s past is illuminating. And touring the amazing architecture is its own reward — verandahs peppered with rocking chairs and pitchers of iced tea overlook moss-covered centuries-old live oaks.

For a faster frolic around the area, Coastal Expeditions offers high-speed boat tours through Charleston Harbor, that bring you within shooting distance of Fort Sumter, Sullivan’s Island and the low-lying marshes of the environs.

Southern charm has currency in this city, and there’s no more charming home base than Belmond Charleston Place. Although undeniably a large hotel (more than 400 rooms) with a mixed-use concept that includes high-end boutiques and salons, its courtyard entrance oozes discreet elegance; the lobby then welcomes you with its grandeur (dual staircase and an amazing chandelier). The club level — a key-card-only access floor — serves complimentary continental breakfast, afternoon tea, evening apps and a full bar.

Stop in for a treatment — facial, manicure, massage, you name it — at the luxurious Spa at Belmond, which also boasts a full-sized enclosed swimming pool.

Its fine-dining restaurant, Charleston Grill makes for an easy and rewarding celebratory dinner. Chef Michelle Weaver has divided the menu into paired categories: Roots & Stems, Waves & Marsh and Field & Pasture (as well as the Social & Shared to lubricate a social gathering). You can mix-and-match dishes from each category to tailor your own culinary experience; the Bourbon-blackberry foie gras and Colorado lamb chops with mint chimichurri are surefire hits for discerning carnivores, as are the tartare and mini crab cakes.

Charleston is a foodie city by any standard, and a cornucopia of inviting aromas waft along the winds: pralines, barbecue and especially lowcountry cuisine, named for the area of Carolina and stretching down the Georgia coast where essentials of soul food (blackeyed peas, shrimp and grits, pork and okra) got their earliest expression in the New World, the foodstuffs of West Africa imported during the slave trade.

As its name suggests, Hominy Grill is a breakfast destination for lowcountry flavors, especially shrimp and grits (natch) but also its famed “nasty biscuit” in a down-home setting … literally: It’s housed in a converted family residence. On East Bay Street, stop by for lunch or dinner at Magnolias Uptown Down South, where chef Kelly Franz whizzes together breathtaking dishes like a Gullah take on bouillabaisse (chock full of scallops, mussels, okra and grilled bread) and the most refined fried green tomatoes you’ll ever taste (strips of
& Pasture (as well as the Social & Shared to lubricate a social gathering). You can mix-and-match dishes from each category to tailor your own culinary experience; the Bourbon-blackberry foie gras and Colorado lamb chops with mint chimichurri are surefire hits for discerning carnivores, as are the tartare and mini crab cakes.

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country ham and onion chutney seal the deal).

Oyster bars are common here, though oysters are hardly the only draw. Leon’s Oyster Shop is a buzzy hang, with good cocktails and specialties like whole fried fish as well as the necessary po’ boy. And Darling Oyster Bar is an inescapable brunch destination, not just for its smoked salmon benedict and raw bar, but The Captain — a massive bloody mary garnished with hush puppies and a king crab leg. It’s intoxicating in multitudinous ways.

Lone Star State loyalists should make the effort to pay a visit to Lewis Barbecue, where a transplanted Texan brings the joys of smoked brisket to a region that considers “barbecue” to be pulled pork in a mustard sauce. Pitmaster John Lewis and company serve up prime beef, pork ribs and hot links to rival any Hill Country smokehouse — further evidence that even a city as old and settled as Charleston continues to progress and learn.
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JOIN US FOR PRIDE NIGHT WEDNESDAY, FEB 13!

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Danny Whitman and Robert Bartley have been a couple for nearly 20 years. Five years ago, they started their greatest project together: having a child through surrogacy. It resulted in the 3-year-old son that bounces around during our interview.

Yes, parenting is their greatest project... but not their longest. That superlative belongs to The Cuban and the Redhead, a musical they wrote and composed that has been well more than a decade in the making. And this month, the two men don’t need a surrogate: They are giving birth to it themselves. (Well, with the help of Pegasus Theatre, two dozen actors and a host of craftsmen, designers and technicians.) Whitman and Bartley are producing, directing and choreographing the musical, inspired by the amazing love story (and cultural success) of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. It spans both their lives — Lucy from her days as a B-movie studio actress, Desi from immigrant to bandleader, and going on together for their most enduring achievement, I Love Lucy — the sitcom that basically invented the sitcom.

We spoke with the couple about their process, the subject of the show and what it says to us more than 50 years after the show ended.

Dallas Voice: How long have you been together? Whitman: It’ll be 20 years in January.
How did you meet? Bartley: I met Danny at the gym. He was working in general management with a friend of mine and we starting talking about [our mutual friend]. Then I asked him out on a brunch date, and it was love at first brunch. It ended up being a five-hour long date. We had our second date that same evening.
How did you move from acting and management into writing and composing? Bartley: Danny had been writing for a long time, since college, and I pulled him over to the dark side of acting. [We toured], but he finally said I don’t wanna be an actor — I wanna write.
So how did this show come about? Whitman: I had been working on a family musical when Bob said, “Let me tell you about this idea I have.” He told me a story from beginning to end [about Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz] and it was so dramatic and so

BOB & DANNY, Page 94
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engaging and so passionate and interesting — just heartbreaking and challenging. Bob knew a lot about Lucy. I started reading all the books about them and reading all sorts of interviews.

What was your initial interest, Bob? Bartley: Early on, it was because I was obsessed with Lucille Ball — I thought she was just genius. She became queen of the B pictures but couldn’t advance past that. Then [Ball] was offered a DeMille picture, *The Greatest Show on Earth*, but turned it down to do *I Love Lucy*. When she was with Desi, she blossomed. She felt safe with him.

[The more research I did], the more I realized that Desi is the true hero of our story. I interviewed Edie Adams and Kaye Ballard and others who knew them, and they all immediately gravitated toward Desi. His father was the mayor of Santiago, Cuba and was just elected to congress when the Battista revolution happened [and the family fled to Miami]. He reinvented himself several times over — a true American Dream story that is more valid now with the whole immigration/building walls nonsense.

Ego plays a big part in our story, too. In a way, he let her go first, which was a big step in the Latin community of the time. The bigotry that Desi faced as an early biracial couple [was remarkable]. They didn’t survive as a couple, and the business took them over in a way, but I believe they loved each other till the day they died.

Bob, you’re directing and co-choreographing, but you wrote it together. How do you share your writing duties? Bartley: We’ve been doing this a long time. We’re very connected at the hip. One of us will have an idea for a song, and then the other will flesh it out and share it, or one of us will come up with a tune and adjust it at the piano.

I’m picturing Buddy Sorrell and Sally Rogers sitting at a piano... or maybe Oscar Levant and Nanette Fabray. Bartley: I’d rather be Nanette Fabray. But basically that’s it — in New York, we have a piano that overlooks the city and we pretend like we’re actual writers. But this is the first real production.

How has it changed over all these years? Bartley: I reached out to Arthur Laurents, who wrote *Gypsy*, asking [advice for how to write a biographical musical]. He wrote a very funny email back saying, “The only thing that was true were the names of the theaters. Everything else I made up. You just gotta write the story.” When we freed ourselves of the facts, it enabled us to create a real show. I mean, we still have tons of facts, but chronologically it does not have to maintain the same order.

We really learned [in development] that people cared less about the historical aspects than the love story and the relationship challenges.

What’s it like going from workshops to full-on production? Whitman: It adds like 20 layers onto the process that are wonderful and inspiring and complicated. Telling a story that covers this much territory, even from a costuming perspective, presents new challenges. It also helps identify moments. Early in our process it was really hard to make cuts, but we learned early on when you’re willing to let go, the more important moments [stand out].

Bartley: Putting together a show like this is massive — we have 24 in the cast playing multiple roles. We try to keep it moving in the spirit of *Evita* or *Dreamgirls* because we cover 20 years. We will ask, “Oh, do we really need this set-piece there? Well, it really is beautiful.”

The Dallas community has been fantastic just jumping in and helping us. Pegasus typically does one-unit-set plays and are very supportive of new writers, but this is a big leap for them.
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Pride monster
Out ‘American Idol’ alum David Hernandez embraces the increasing diversity of Pride celebrations

SCOTT HUFFMAN | Contributing Writer
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As an entertainer headlining Pride events nationwide, David Hernandez has noticed a gradual but important change in crowd demographics. While he continues to see a majority of LGBT faces in his audiences, lately he notes a larger-than-ever number of support-ive straight allies.

“You know, Pride used to just be sort of a gay thing when I first started,” Hernandez says. “Now I feel like it not just for homosexuals. It’s also for the heterosexual world. It’s for anyone within the community wanting to be accepted for who they are authentically without hiding. I think Pride is loving yourself and the people you love.”

Hernandez, who was bitten by the singing and acting bug at age 6 when he landed a local musical theater role in his native Arizona, made a 2008 career breakthrough as a Season 7 contestant on American Idol. The singer-songwriter, though, was not always openly gay. During his Idol tenure and even a while afterwards, Hernandez chose to keep most aspects of his personal life outside the spotlight. It was not until 2016 with the release of his single “Beautiful” — a song celebrating uniqueness and diversity — that Hernandez publicly acknowledged his sexuality. He says that living openly has not only been a liberating experience, but it has also made him a better artist.

“I felt obligated [to come out] for kids who were taking their own lives or struggling in small cities around the country, to say that you can pursue your dreams and do what I do and still be gay … or be who you are, whether that’s trans or bi or whatever,” Hernandez says. “That’s why I did it. I didn’t do it for attention. I didn’t need the attention. Everyone who knows me knows I’m gay. But it has — and I didn’t even know this at first — it has made me a much more transparent artist. I feel very comfortable in my own skin. I don’t have to hide that part of myself anymore.”

Hernandez, who with multi-platinum recording artist Thea Austin headlines Saturday’s Miller Lite Music Festival in the Park, says his career has offered many upsides. In 2009, he opened for John Legend in Washington, D.C., at an inaugural ball for President Obama. But his career also has exacted a toll. As an L.A. resident, Hernandez doesn’t get to spend as much time with his family in Arizona as he would like. He also finds it challenging to balance a demanding tour schedule with sufficient time for serious romance.

“I think I’ve sacrificed so many relationships,” Hernandez says. “I’ve had some long term relationships that didn’t work out because more often than not the person is not secure enough to deal with the fact that I’m always on the road. I’m always on tour. I do a lot of gay Prides and gay events.”

When Hernandez is not logging frequent flier miles and racking up hotel rewards points, he is often at home writing songs — “It’s always in the shower [when ideas strike]” — either for himself or for others to perform. He recently wrote an ‘80s-inspired song called “Our Day in the Sun” which producers will use in the remastered and rescored classic Baywatch TV series soon to be released in high definition. For Hernandez, creative inspiration often comes from simple, everyday living.

“I find it really easy to write slow, sad songs,” Hernandez says. “I find it more challenging to write upbeat songs, [although] I generally am a happy person. I think life in general inspires me, [things like] whether I’m in a relationship … how friendships are going … how business relationships are going … or when I wake up, what kind of mood I’m in.”

Even though Hernandez makes frequent appearances at Pride celebrations and other gay events, he finds he does not necessarily have a large gay fan base. It’s an issue that perplexes him. He would like to change that, both for himself and for other artists like him.

“The gay culture is really finicky when it comes to supporting gay male artists,” Hernandez says. “I notice a lot of gay men idolize the big black girl singers. I feel like we all have inside of us … that big black girl. [But] I think it’s really difficult in the gay community to get recognition or respect from your fellow gay man.”

As for the future, Hernandez plans to continue making music. But he does not want to restrict himself to that pursuit alone. In fact, he lists a number of additional goals on his career bucket list.

“When I’ve done a lot of really cool shit,” Hernandez says, “I still have dreams and aspirations. I’d like to be in a feature film. I just started a podcast with my co-host. I’m diversifying a little bit. There are a lot of things in the entertainment industry I would love to do, including hosting and television and stuff like that. Music is sort of one aspect of who I really am. I want to do a lot more, man.”
Another look

History and self-reflection fuel two new books

The Boys of Fairy Town by Jim Elledge

Dates, times, and old dead guys: When you were in school, that’s all history was to you: a list of years and names to memorize and then forget, 20 minutes after Finals Week. So maybe now it’s time to find a history book that’s relevant to you.

Because Chicago was considered to be a “largely male frontier city” when it was established in 1837, the Windy City has always been home to a strong population of gay men, cross-dressers and male sex workers. Here, Elledge tells the stories of some of the ones who might otherwise have been forgotten.

Take, for instance, John Wing who, says Elledge, was “a sodomite” — the word many post-Civil War Chicagoans would have used for Wing, although most people then only had a vague idea of what a sodomite was. They knew it was something bad, though, even as Wing did something good: he was a faithful diarist, and left his volumes for historical posterity.

Female impersonators were tolerated in Chicago in the latter 1800s, but sometimes only barely. Those who were most accepted were men who put their feminine sides to work as entertainers; for others, the desire for women’s clothing was meant for strictly private times. For families, such things were often an embarrassment: Elledge cites a story of “Mrs. Noonan,” who was married and worked at a nearby military fort. Despite her final wishes, the “women at the fort” went to prepare her body upon her death, and discovered that Mrs. Noonan was a man. Her third husband swore that he hadn’t known but he was ashamed, and killed himself.

Gay men posed nude for other gay men in perfectly respectful and artful ways that went mainstream. Newspapers reported on same-sex love — sometimes kindly, sometimes scandalously. Gay lectures were open to the public; entire neighborhoods became hubs of openly gay life; and living as another gender was easy until, alas, the tide started to turn in the 1940s and being gay could suddenly get a man arrested.

At first blush, it may seem like The Boys of Fairy Town is just another historical tome
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WEB WORLD WONDER
— dates, times, old dead guys. But look deeper and you’ll see why you should want to read it: it’s bursting with stories that are irresistible.

In his introduction, Elledge explains how he chose the tales he shares in this book, and why recording these stories for public consumption is absolutely essential. In addition to being lively and ever-relevant, the tales show an interesting historical arc of acceptance and persecution, displaying a youthful America that’s just dipping her toes into the pool of difference and duality. Readers are lent a feeling of pride but may also be particularly affected when Elledge shows the tide turning.

The Boys of Fairy Town contains nudity, but also the kind of delight you get when you come across a pile of old newspapers in Grandma’s attic: it’s quaint, informative, and entertaining. It’s totally worth your time.


Ellis Judd rarely thought of reading anymore, though there were books piled around his apartment. They were Annie’s, so he ignored them. He mostly ignored the picture sitting among them, too, and he tried not to think about the people in it.

But, of course, that was impossible; his face was one of the three in the photograph. And there was Annie, his wife and the love of his life, five years dead from an automobile accident. And Michael, his best childhood friend.

He’d never forget the day he and Michael met: Ellis was visiting Mabel, an older woman and the local greengrocer, when Michael arrived to stay. Both 12 years old, they’d become on-the-spot friends. Years later, Michael was the reason Ellis met Annie, and she instantly loved him, too. Ellis was glad for it.

But not too long after Annie and Ellis were married, Michael seemed to disappear and Annie pestered Ellis on and off. Didn’t he wonder where Michael had gone? Didn’t he want him back in his life? Didn’t Ellis miss his best friend?

He did — and one day, Michael walked back in, as if nothing had happened and things seemed to pick up where they left off. Ellis was content again with his day-to-day until the car accident, and his entire world died.

It took a while to heal — as if that would ever fully happen — but his losses made distant memories keener, and Ellis began thinking about a painting that his mother and Michael had particularly loved. Having it would mean a lot so, knowing that it was stored in his father’s attic, Ellis fetched it. That’s when he found a boxful of Michael’s things, including a notebook.

There are a thousand emotions that you’ll feel when you read Tin Man, starting with a melancholy sense of foreboding. Don’t beat yourself up for it, though. Every character here has reason to feel that life is no good.

That alone might make you not want to read this book — why try something when you know it’s going to depress you, right? Wrong: Winman also repeatedly offers a most persistent flame of hope in her story, from Ellis’ mother, who finds beauty in a booby-prize painting; to Annie, who happily understands Michael’s needs; and Ellis himself, who learns again what he already knew.

Truth be known, readers will know it, too, long before they get to the pinnacle of this book. But the love-story-not-love-story that pulses to the lingering end is worth the journey, times two. And that makes Tin Man a book you should picture yourself reading.

— Terri Schlichenmeyer
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In our head-to-head for SUVs, the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon takes on the Subaru Crosstrek.

Not all campers are equally adventurous — some pull up their boots, strap on their packs and head up the roughest trail they can find for a night under the stars; others prefer to make a day of it, stop for a nice picnic and return to the lodge when finished. Those are the two sides of the same coin in SUVs we explore today — the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon and the Subaru Crosstrek.

— Casey Williams

Ruggedly handsome looks:
Crosstrek: Smoother flanks and a wider chiseled ass accentuate gray cladding placed to keep rocks from ruining its beautiful paint. Get it in Cool Gray Khaki or Sunshine Orange.
Wrangler: It’s all new with a faster windshield rake, fender vents, and grille inspired by classic CJ7s, but the Rubicon’s snarling hood, LED headlamps, and off-road tires go beyond. Order up Mojito Green, Punk’n Metallic, or Hellayella!

DNA:
Crosstrek: Traces its roots back to the homely little 1975 4WD wagon. Compared to 4x4 trucks, it represented civilized off-roading.
Wrangler: It looks the spitting image of its 75-year-old war-tested grandfather, but has gone all metrosexual. Slipperier skin and a nose job only make it more handsome.

What she’s packin’:
Crosstrek: A 152 horsepower 2.0-liter 4-cylinder, connected to either a 6-speed manual or continuously-variable transmission. A turbo would help fill the trousers.
Wrangler: The boys are squeezed tight with a 283 horsepower V6, 270 horsepower turbo-four eTorque hybrid, or 260 horsepower 3.0-liter diesel — paired with a 6-speed manual or 8-speed automatic transmission. Whip one out and go to town.

Taking hydration:
Crosstrek: It absorbs rough roads like Patti LaBelle takes deserts. Jacked up to 8.7 feet of ground clearance, only purpose-built SUVs can top her.
Wrangler: It finally rides more like a car than a tractor — perfect for the house hubby who likes to channel Rambo. With up to 10.8 feet of ground clearance, mountain goats seem wussy.

Favorite gadget:
Crosstrek: X-Mode that will modulate the throttle and brakes to ease you down steep grades with zero pain.
Wrangler: Disconnecting sway bars keep the chassis limber and flexible to take all nature gives it.

Flip your lid:
Crosstrek: Open the cute little moonroof to sniff lilacs.
Wrangler: Flip back a manual top, toss aside hard panels or get the power-retractable canvas center section (the latter is definitely the sassier option).

Favorite workout:
Crosstrek: Backpacking to a peaceful lake, trekking through a rock quarry, or sprinting down highways. It’s athletic, but prefers moderate trails to mountain trials.
Wrangler: Rappelling off mountains, swimming through rivers or four-wheeling through mud pits that make Woodstock look like damp dirt. If it’s not extreme sport, then it’s just sunbathing in skivvies.

Celebrity alter ego:
Crosstrek: Zac Efron. Hey, he’s buff and pretty, but probably not the type to rough it in the wilderness. The Subie will enjoy the hike, but will be glad to return to its life in Malibu.
Wrangler: Danielle Boone: The explorer sliced through wilderness with his hands and a machete. The Wrangler adds air-conditioning, heated leather seats, and a booming audio system in its Swiss army knife.

Wallet dent:
Crosstrek: Handsome and capable with a $21,895 base price, or about $30k dripping with accoutrement, the Subaru is a very affordable date.
Wrangler: Marrying the alpha Jeep will cost at least $27,945, closer to $50k with all the toys, but get rough and you’ll come back whistling camp songs.
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Redesigned 2019 VW Jetta is a swell alternative to crossovers

CASEY WILLIAMS  |  Auto Reviewer
autocasey@aol.com

You may have noticed as compact and sub-compact crossovers have grown in popularity, so have their prices. I recently tested a popular model, based on an inexpensive car that cost $28,000. That’s without any crash avoidance systems, but with cloth seats and manual climate controls. Only a Bose audio system and power sunroof kept it out of the cellar. If you’re willing to crossover to a sedan, a fully-optioned 2019 Volkswagen Jetta rolls out for less money.

It wears a crisp suit, fronted by a grille lifted from the big Atlas crossover and distinguished by chiseled sheetmetal comprising the hood, bodysides and rear flank. It looks especially fetching in Sage Green Metallic paint over 17-in. dark alloy wheels. LED headlamps, driving lights and taillamps equal luxury cars. Look close at the squinty taillights and you’ll see amber turn signals. Classy. It’s a more dynamic look for the Jetta, but it’s still very much a Jetta.

Volkswagen interiors had historically been known for their style and quality, but the last generation Jetta contained way too much black plastic. This one hearkens back to earlier models with a tech-laden cabin that embarrasses several luxury cars. Our SEL-grade sedan was lavished with soft dash and door coverings, faux aluminum trim and piano black finishes that feel upscale. Heated and cooled leather seats, sporty steering wheel, dual-zone automatic climate control and large power moonroof back first impressions.

Move inside and intuitive technology will make you a believer. Our car came with Volkswagen Virtual Cockpit, which as in Audis, puts a full-width reconfigurable flatscreen in the instrument cluster so drivers can project navigation maps/directions, vehicle stats, range/speedometer or audio settings in front of their faces. I kept in navigation, making it almost as good as a head-up display. To the right is a driver-focused 8-in. touchscreen that can be swiped for radio tuning or browsing music libraries. Proper volume and tuning knobs keep it simple. I still miss the crisp German dynamo.
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Safety tech is ladled on as if the Jetta was a top Audi. Front sensors enable adaptive cruise control, forward collision warning and forward crash mitigation with auto braking. Blind spot warnings, lane keep assist, rear cross path detection, rearview camera, parking sensors and rain-sensing wipers do their parts too. Drive confidently and remain safe.

One assumes a GLI version of the Jetta is on the horizon, but for now, even premium versions run with a 1.4-liter turbocharged 4-cylinder engine delivering 147 horsepower and 184 lb-ft of torque. The Jetta is only front-drive, but shifts crisply through an 8-speed automatic transmission. While it won’t toast sports cars, or even abundantly powered crossovers, it returns a very frugal 30/40-MPG city/highway.

You might think a car harboring a small engine that delivers sweet fuel digits wouldn’t be much fun. A quick run from Indianapolis to Pennsylvania and back proved that wrong. It doesn’t have stupid amounts of power, but the turbo and transmission keeps the engine right in its happy place with the turbo’s torque carrying it through hills. The chassis — independent up front, torsion beam out back — is not overly sophisticated but keeps the car planted and unhindered no matter the road. Grippy brakes add confidence at all speeds.

Here’s your choice: Buy a basic crossover just because you think crossovers are cool, or buy a fully-maxed German sport sedan that coddles your soul while inviting it to stomp the left lane. The new Jetta is stylish, comfortable and a joy to drive. It’s also a really good value given a base price of $18,545, advancing to $27,795 as-tested. Competitors include the Honda Civic, Hyundai Elantra, Chevy Cruze, Toyota Corolla and Nissan Sentra.
Brutal and funny, “The Predator” reboots a dying franchise with panache

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

The films populated with the character known as The Predator must be the least memorable of movie franchises. The first film, 1987’s Predator, was a modest hit for Arnold Schwarzenegger a year before he really established himself as a major movie star (it figured outside the top 10 grossers for the year; Dirty Dancing made more money). Where Predator was a cat-and-mouse with commandos thriller, the first sequel, Predators 2 (released in 1990 but set a decade later), was more an urban allegory for street violence. It grossed half the original, and seemed to kill the series… except for a coda at the end that tied its story to that of the Alien universe. More than a decade later, two Alien vs. Predator films were exceptionally cheesy lo-fi actioners; a third out-right sequel, 2010’s Predators (creative naming, huh?), was more like a “most dangerous game” hunt film. I saw it, but I can’t remember much about it. Every film has a completely different cast. They feel disposable. So who needs a sixth?

Turns out, we do.

Need? Well, maybe not. But in the same way Mission: Impossible really hit its stride this summer with its sixth installment, The Predator seems to reconceive the premise of the original in an exciting and surprisingly funny way.

It starts, again, in the jungles of Latin America. A sniper name McKenna (Boyd Holbrook) is about to execute a drug kingpin when a predator ship crashes. McKenna takes his helmet and gauntlet as insurance to prove aliens are among us, and mails them back home to the U.S. before the military attache (Sterling K. Brown) captures him. Meanwhile, the predator is taken to a lab where the government has been, a la The X Files, planning a defense to the increasing attacks by the creatures on planet earth. What do they want with us? And who is that 11-foot predator tracking down the one in U.S. custody?

Add to all of this a bus full of unhinged veterans nicknamed The Loonies (led by Trevante Rhodes), a xenobiologist (Olivia Munn) brought in to figure out the DNA of the predator and McKenna’s son with Asperger’s (Jacob Tremblay) and you’re staring at a densely-packed plot that at first feels unwieldy and overly complicated… until it starts to sort of come together.

The director and co-screenwriter, Shane Black, has a spotty record with some big successes as a writer (Lethal Weapon, Kiss Kiss Bang Bang) and some disasters (Last Action Hero, Long Kiss Goodnight; Iron Man 3, which he also directed, stands as one of the worst films in the MCU). He strikes an ideal balance of elements here. It’s a hard R rating — some of the attacks, while not gruesome, are exceedingly brutal and visceral. But there’s also tons of humor that Black lets play out leisurely and organically without impeding the pacing.

The beats come just as you need to catch your breath. And there’s enough heart to actually make you care (not just for the boy, played skillfully and without tics by Tremblay, but also a bromantic love between Keegan-Michael Key and Thomas Jane.) And Black lets us see the predator — the gimmick of most of the films has been his ability to cloak and seem almost invisible, but that’s a minor consideration this time out. It lends weight and a threat beyond merely the fear of being picked off by an unseen hunter. The stakes feel more personal.

There’s also more wit than you’d expect. An attack inside a schoolhouse ups the ante for the meaning of “school shooting,” and the decision to have the predator land in Mexico and wreak his havoc in the U.S. has to be seen for what it is: A sly jab at Trump’s anti-immigrant policies. Go ahead and build a wall… see what good it does to the real threat.

Now playing in wide release.
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“Best Cocktail Menu”
**BLOOM, From Page 84**

great dreamy electronica ballad, but I also detected shades of Bon Iver, Simon & Garfunkel, Belle & Sebastian on the chillwave synthpop of “The Good Side.”

Totally. The references were really all over the place — from Toto and Phil Collins who I listened to when I was growing up [from my dad] to Carly Rae Jepsen and This Mortal Coi. It’s a mish-mash. I found myself in the middle of all those.

Do you think actively about then when you’re writing? I try to make music. I think it’s impossible to have any real perspective on something you’re real close to. I don’t even know if it feels cohesive [I just know I like it].

You’ve done your share of “celebrity” — Alessia Cara, Betty Who, and most recent, Ariana Grande on “Dance to This.” From a creative standpoint, what’s it like to pair up with other established artists? For me that’s one of the cheesiest parts about making an album — when you write a song that begs for another voice on it, or another perspective. [So you find a collaborator], and get to brainstorm and work with these insanely talented people. It’s so incredible to be able to work with Ariana Grande, or this Australian artist I’m obsessed with [named] Gordi is so special, and I’m very thankful they were willing to give me their [talents].

Is there anyone you dream about doing a song with? I would love to work with Taylor Swift and Christine and the Queens would be a great with me. Amy Winehouse was the one who made me want [to write music] so I would … well, I would be too intimidated to actually write with her, but I would love to be in the room while she was writing.

You are 23 and have been singing professionally for 12 years. Do you recall a life before music? I honestly don’t, really. Some of my earliest memories were being in talent shows and going to singing lessons. It’s been a constant.

You have a role in the upcoming gay conversion drama Boy Erased. You’ve acted before, but what led you to take on this role? I just couldn’t put the script down. It really tore at me. Then I read the book and started immersing myself as much as I possibly could in that world. My coming out experience — and the moment where I accepted my sexuality as something that I couldn’t change — was a weight off of my chest. This wasn’t for me to deal with; it was more for everyone else. I had come to the point where I had accepted it within myself, and then it was about navigating through the rest of the world: my family, my friends.

So, the thought of going to a program like the one in the film at that crucial, vulnerable moment being told, “No, this is 100 percent back on you, and you’re filling a God-shaped hole in your life with these tendencies” was one of the most harmful and hurtful things that I can imagine. It’s been proven to be ineffective and extremely dangerous, and you’re signing these kids up for an impossible task. It really hit home and struck a chord with me, and I haven’t wanted anything as bad as I wanted this role in this movie.

Lots of things are going on with you right now — the album, the tour, the movie ... and you will be a judge on the next season of RuPaul’s Drag Race. Where do you see your career headed? For me, I think the reason why I feel lucky every day is, I really have no idea what I’m going to do next. When I feel lost or wonder what to do, I ask myself, “What feels exciting, what feels cool?” I think I could be doing this the rest of my life because it has taken the craziest twist and turns. If I keep that formula going, then people will [continued to] be interested and I will keep doing it.

(Additional reporting by Chris Azzopardi)

**LUCY, From Page 85**

time in Rehoboth Beach in Delaware, just going up and down the street like that,” she says. “At South By Southwest, I met friends for life, just people I bumped into on the street.”

In the U.K., Spraggan plays large venues and music festivals, and she’s well-known for her stint on the Irish version of reality TV competition franchise The X-Factor; her fame in her homeland makes such bard-ish wanderings difficult, if not impossible. It’s just a different vibe. So her goal for flying under the radar on this tour is to recapture her beginnings.

“Normally, I’m freaking out about whether we are gonna get past X-thousand people at the show,” she says. “But if there’s like 20 people in the room, I’ll be like, ‘This is unbelievable — I’m in Dallas and 20 people came. It’s amazing that you took the time to travel, took the time to find tickets.’ It really does make me feel like meeting people.”

Throughout our phone chat, Spraggan’s sense of wonder and appreciation grows more and more clear. She’s that rare artist who is circling back to her origins, and finding something new there while bubbling over with an appreciation for it all.

“In my mind, this is like going back to that first tour — just getting on a plane, getting on a bus, and just going. It’s that proper sense of freedom,” she says. Still, she notes with a laugh, “I guess it is different in that I’ve got an AirBnB for every night.”

— Jonanna Widner

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Tasting notes: Pride edition

Whiskey a go-go! … plus some bubbles for brunch

ARNO LD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

If you want to get Pride kicked off right, we have a suggestion: Perle on Maple, the new restaurant inside the Stoneleigh Hotel, is doing its inaugural Pride Brunch on Saturday, just as the music fest in Reverchon Park is getting started a few blocks away. You can come by for a tasting from chef Wade Burch that will include, of course, mimosas and other bubbles to enchant your tongue. Our friends at He Said Magazine, Cooper Koch and Steven Lindsey, function as hosts for the event. Brunch (order a la carte) is served 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; shade continues throughout the day.

Then you can conclude Pride weekend in a similar fashion. Chefs for Farmers will host its annual Mixoff, with local bartenders coming up with unique recipes featuring Maker’s Mark — appropriate, since September is National Bourbon Heritage Month — as well as Patron tequila. Mixologists participating this year include Heather Polie from The Statler, Ricky Cleva from Harlowe MXM (which celebrates its one-year anniversary this week), Rye Patton from The Standard Pour and Sun Joon from Parliament. In addition, area sous chefs will pair bites for the drinks, including Kevin Keas from Five Sixty, Michael Lawson of Macellaiio,
Yonathan Joel Bustillo from Uchi, Cody Sharp from Wheelhouse and Andrew Vu of the newly-opened Fine China. The benefit takes place right after the parade in the Design District. DEC on Dragon, 1414 Dragon St. $55. ChefsForFarmers.com.

Bourbon Heritage Month just happens to coincide with one of the largest tastings of its kind coming to Dallas. Whiskies of the World at the Frontiers of Flight Museum will feature more than 200 brands, including quickly identifiable names like Basil Hayden’s, Bulleit and Knob Creek, as well as less familiar brands of scotch, bourbon, Canadian, Irish and Japanese whiskies. Frontiers of Flight Museum, 6911 Lemmon Ave. 6 p.m. $120. WhiskiesOfTheWorld.com.

To honor all of this abundance, we decided to do a wide-ranging tasting of our own — not just of bourbons, but a variety of whiskies you might wanna check out (listed in order of price point).

A Fistful of Bourbon ($25). Scotch whiskey company William A. Grant & Sons took the remarkable step of releasing, for the first time, a blended bourbon of five Kentucky whiskies. (As its name supports, they launched it this month here in Texas.) An approachable, savory whiskey with hints of baking spice and cinnamon, it works best straight up or lightly mixed as an old-fashioned. ***

Maker’s Mark 46 ($25–$40). Brassy color, slightly spicy with notes of cinnamon and vanilla set off this reliable but more sophisticated version of the storied bourbon. ***

George Remus Bourbon ($35–$45). A high-rye blend. Pallid, sippable and smooth, but undistinguished. **½

Reilly’s Ginger Rock and Rye ($45–$50). Sugary, like the rock candy that inspires it, and so sweet for a whiskey you might drink before dinner. Even so, it would work well as a dessert with ice cream or mixed with something dry. ***

Fire & Cane ($48–$50). Scotch maker Glenfiddich has been rolling out new expressions of its classic scotch in recent years, and this one is something rare for the brand: A peaty, smoky taste rarely associated with Glenfiddich... and it’s a total success, with sweetness on the back-end. ***½

Woodford Reserve Double Oaked ($45–$65). Smooth but with a tangy aftertaste. Viscous and caramelly with a distinct aroma of hazelnuts, and a nutty flavor, it’s new and delightful. **** (best value)

Arkansas Black Applejack 21 Year ($125–$140). Part brandy, part whiskey, the super long finish has the unmistakable flavor of apples and vanilla. ****½ (not widely available)
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**Saturday 09.14 — 10.07**

**Charming Irish musical ‘Once’ makes locally-produced debut**

The Irish indie film *Once* became a surprise hit, winning an Oscar for best song (for the dreamy ballad “Falling Slowly”). When it was adapted into a Broadway musical, it managed to be a surprise hit again, this time by dominating the Tony Awards. The first local production of the musical — about a street busker who falls in love with an immigrant girl and woos her with music — arrives at Theatre 3 this week. Marianne Galloway directs.

**DEETS:** Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. In previews through Sunday; opening night Monday. Theatre3Dallas.com.

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**Saturday 09.15**

**Kristin Chenoweth headlines DSO’s gala concert and party**

Kristin Chenoweth is a diva for the new millennium — a devout Christian who also happens to be one of the most vocal gay allies out there. She’s also, ya know, super talented. (A Tony and an Emmy, thank you very much.) So of course we’re all excited that she’s the featured entertainer at the Dallas Symphony Orchestra’s annual gala concert and after-party on Saturday. Come for the singing, stay for the dancing.

**DEETS:** Meyerson Symphony Center, 2301 Flora St. 8:45 p.m. MyDSO.com.

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**Saturday 09.22**

**Leslie Jordan returns for Legacy fundraiser with ‘Exposed’**

Leslie Jordan, the reliably hilarious fey Southerner who drops bon mots like breadcrumbs, has enjoyed a rangy career over 40 years. And he remembers a surprisingly large amount of it, as he recounts in his one-man confessional show Exposed. As he has done for years, Jordan is back in Dallas with the show, this time at the Cathedral of Hope, as a fundraiser for Legacy Counseling Center and Founders Cottage. (And read our exclusive interview with Jordan in next week’s Dallas Voice.)

**DEETS:** Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 8 p.m. $35–$100. LeslieJordanDallas.com.
**ARTSWEEK**

**THEATER**


**An Octoroon.** Stage West presents the Jerry Herman musical, one of the splashiest of B’way shows, with Jacquelyn Piro Donovan and David Hernandez. Final weekend. Stage West, 3101 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. CasaManana.org.


**EXPO**


**FRIDAY 09.14**

**COMMUNITY**

**DFW Pride Happy Hour (formerly High Tech Happy Hour).** Monthly queer mixer sponsored by the TI Pride Network, and open to everyone. Terilli’s, 2815 Greenville Ave. 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.

**CONCERTS**

**Dallas Symphony Orchestra Gala.** Tony and Emmy winning actress Kristin Chenoweth is the featured entertainer at this year’s fundraising gala. Morton H. Meyerson Center, 2301Flora St. MyDSO.org.

**PRIDE**

**Pride Brunch at Perle on Maple.** A special Pride brunch, featuring a menu prepared by chef Wade Burch and including, of course, mimosas. Inside the Stoneleigh Hotel, 2927 Maple Ave. 10 a.m.—1 p.m.

**Beat: Dallas Pride Weekend.** DJ Paulo spins for this party, sponsored by Impulse Group Dallas. Stereo Live Dallas, 2711 Storey Live. 9 p.m. $30–$40.

**Miller Light Music Festival in the Park.** Performances by Asla O’Hara. Theda Austin. David Hernandez, Effie Passero, DJ Deanne, the Rose Room cast and the Voice of Pride winner. Reverchon Park. 11 a.m.—7 p.m. DallasPride.org

**SUNDAY 09.16**

**PRIDE**

**Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade.** Annual gay Pride parade along Cedar Springs Road. Starts at noon.

**CONCERTS**

**Games of Thrones Live Concert Experience.** Emmy winning composer Ramin Djawadi conducts an orchestra in recreating the thrilling music for the epic fantasy series. American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Ave. Ticketmaster.com.

**FOOD**

**The Mixoff: Chefs for Farmers.** Bartenders create drinks. Sponsored by Maker’s Mark. DEC on Dragon, 1414 Dragon St. 5–8 p.m. $55. ChefsForFarmers.com.

**MONDAY 09.17**

**CABARET**

**Mama’s Party.** Weekly cabaret night with special guest performances. Uptown Theater, 120 E. Main St., Grand Prairie. 7:35 p.m. $10.

**BROADCAST**

**70th Annual Emmy Awards.** The best in primetime and streaming TV. Airs ch. 5 at 7 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY 09.19**

**COMMUNITY**

**The Queer Off!!** Weekly variety show with 14 contestants, 12 weeks and one eventual winner. Sue Ellen’s, 3014 Throckmorton Road. 10 p.m.

**THURSDAY 09.20 — NORTH TEXAS GIVING DAY**

**CABARET**

**Glitterbomb Denton.** Weekly queer variety show with a new lineup every Thursday, now at a new locale and new time. Andy’s Bar, 122 N. Locust St., Denton. 8 p.m.

**FESTIVAL**


**FRIDAY 09.21**

**CONCERTS**

**Troye Sivan Bloom Tour.** The out musician launches his world tour in support of his new album in North Texas, with special guest Kim Petras. See stories beginning on Page 78.

**CONMIX**

**Saving Private Ryan.** Presented by the Arlington Film Society. Texas Theatre, 1211 Haskell Ave., Arlington. Doors 1:30 p.m., showtime 2 p.m.

**MURRAY Show.** The Emmy winning comic Murray Kobrick performs tickets available at MURRAYShow.com. 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. 7:30 p.m. MurrayShow.com.

**YOUNG ARTS**

**Fort Worth Young Wonders Art Show.** Artworks by kids in grades K-12 will be on display. The Spy Museum, 1801 Commerce St. Noon–8 p.m. SpyMuseum.org.

**COMMUNITY**

**The Cuban and the Redhead.** World premiere of a musical about Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. Presented by Pegasus Theatre. See Story on Page 98. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. 2TT.co.
The Mixoff: Chefs for Farmers. Bartenders create drinks. Sponsored by Maker’s Mark. DEC on Dragon, 1414 Dragon St. 5–8 p.m. $55. ChefsForFarmers.com.

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Troye Sivan Bloom Tour. The out musician launches his world tour in support of his new album in North Texas, with special guest Kim Petras. See stories beginning on Page 78. Toyota Music Factory, 300 W. Las Colinas Blvd., Irving. 7:30 p.m. Ticketmaster.com.
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Ugly crying and aliens in our midst

Hey, y’all. Why is it that as we get older we get more emotional? Maybe it’s just me. I blame NBC — between America’s Got Talent and World of Dance, I have ugly-cried 13 times this week. Those damn backstories on these folks are made just to get you all up in your feelings and I fall hook, line and sinker every time.

Ninja Warrior had a guy who gave a friend a kidney and does his run to bring awareness to organ donation. They even have the girl whose life his kidney saved there to cheer him on. I was such a blubbering mess by the time he hit that buzzer that I was ready to give away all of my organs. America’s Got Talent had a guy who had adopted a whole bunch of kids — like six of ‘em — and when he sang… oh my Gaga, even Simon Cowell cried. I was damn near inconsolable.

Let’s not even get me started on the damn internet. The adorable little girl that found out she was being adopted and immediately busted into tears. Well little girl, so did I. Any video of an animal rescue and I will do that cry that children do when they are little: mouth wide open, no sound, no air. It looks like they are gonna pass out so the parent has to blow in their face to get them to breathe. I do that.

I even remember the first time I cried because of a movie. I was 8 or 9 years old. I was at my grandparents’ house in Italy, Texas. They had just gotten cable, which was a big deal back then. They were the first people I knew that had HBO — very bougie. The movie was called Without a Trace. An 8-year-old didn’t come home from school one day, and the mother spent the entire movie overacting and being upset. The last 10 minutes of the movie, the detective finds him and brings him home.

The scene that got me was the mother walking down the street with her groceries and the boy’s dog. She realizes there are cops parked outside her townhome about half a block away and she stops. Her son steps out of the detective’s car and she throws the groceries and the dogs leash to the side and takes off running.

The kid yells “Mommy!” and then they embrace. My eyes when I see that guy but I always ask how his mom is doing.

Now, I want to ask a serious question. Does anyone know anything about the government building at 4211 Cedar Springs Road? It’s on the corner of Cedar Springs and Douglas, where the parade route starts. You may have never even noticed it until that drugged-out guy decorated it for Christmas, complete with a tree and lights back in, like, March. It’s a very non-descript, tan, three-story building with heavily tinted goldfish mirrored windows. It creeps me out. I have never seen anyone go in or out of it, and there are always cars parked in the back.

I do have a theory, though: I think that it is a front for a Men in Black-type of organization. Think about it: There are a lot of weird folks running around Oak Lawn. Maybe they are escaped aliens from that government facility. I bet that inside that building there is an elevator that goes miles underground. It’s the only way you can get to the giant city under our little gay world. Remember Resident Evil? I bet it’s just like that but hopefully with better security.

It looks haunted or something. It always looks like there is someone or something watching you from behind that reflective glass, waiting… but for what? Did you see Cabin in the Woods? Maybe it houses all of the world’s monsters and we are one lazy, bored security guard away from certain doom. What if it holds a secret lab that is making the next super flu? I’ve read The Stand — could the next pandemic be just down the street from that place with the great street tacos? Oh, the humanity. Thank God for Trump’s Space Force! Finally someone to police the skies. (Sarcasm! If he found out there really are aliens, from space and not Mexico, he’d say fuck the wall, let’s build a dome! Hell, maybe he is the alien sent to our world to destroy us from the inside. Sneaky fucking space aliens! Your plan is working.)

Y’all know I’m bullshittin’ ya, but I bet next time you drive by that cold, creepy building, you will think about what I said. But what if I am right. I guess if I disappear soon, then you know I was taken by them to shut me up. Beware! You could be next!!

I am weird. Remember to always love more, bitch less and be fabulous! XOXO, Cassie Nova. If you have a question or comment, email it to AskCassieNova@gmail.com.

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Making the SCENE the week of Sept. 14-20

- Cedar Springs Tap House: Drag on Tap at 9:30 p.m. on Monday.
- Club Changes: Closet Ball 2019 from 8-10 p.m. on Sunday.
- Club Reflection: Sapphire Davenport hosts Twisted Tuesday at 11 p.m. on Tuesday.
- Dallas Eagle: DJ John Pacheco presents Bossy Bottoms Party at 10 p.m. on Friday. Discipline Corps Club Night on Friday. BearDance at 9 p.m. on Saturday. Dallas Bears and Onyx: Central Southwest Chapter Club Night on Saturday.
- Havana: Show at 10:30 p.m. and Twerk Contest at 11 p.m. on Sunday.
- Henry’s Tavern: Pride Pre-Party until 11 p.m. on Friday.
- Hidden Door: Messy’s Gay Pride Show: Pride Glamour Couture benefiting AIN from 7-10 p.m. on Saturday.
- JR.’s Bar & Grill: Cassie’s Freak Show at 11 p.m. on Monday.
- Liquid Zoo: Pride After Party from 6-9 p.m. on Sunday.
- Marty’s Live: Friday night at 10 p.m. the Saturday surprise guest from RuPaul’s Drag Race Season 10 will be announced. On Saturday, doors open at 9 p.m., meet-and-greet at 10:30 p.m. and showtime at midnight.
- Pekers: I Love the ’90s Karaoke at 9:30 p.m. on Friday.
- Round-Up Saloon: Project Runway, a fashion game show with $100 prize at 10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- S4: Lewk’s Pride with special performance by Alyssa Edwards on Friday.
- Sue Ellen’s: Strangle Love on Saturday. Jane Doe on Sunday.
- The Rose Room: Roxy Brooks on Friday. Saturday and Sunday. Miss Gay USofA at Large presents Harlem Nights Prelims Wednesday and Thursday.
- Urban Cowboy: Dallas Pride Kickoff Party from 4 p.m.-2 a.m. on Friday.
- Woody’s Sports & Video Bar: Back Lot Party from noon-8 p.m. on Sunday.

Scene Photographers: Kat Haygood and Chad Mantooth

Laci and her wife-to-be get in some dance practice at Sue Ellen’s to be ready for the wedding.

David shows his artistic side at Club Stallions.
Gay Day at Six

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Thank you to everyone who submitted photos.
Ada Vox & A Night of Stars

Photos courtesy of Chuck Marcelo and Terry Walker

Joshua and Tomancy having a ball(oon) at The Round-Up Saloon
Joshua and Tomancy having a ball(oon) at The Round-Up Saloon

Casey shows off his Oak Lawn couture

Lighting up the night with his smile on The Strip

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Solution on Page 118

Across
1 Bargain sign at Barneys
5 Basketball to Eliza Doolittle?
9 Gave a butt whipping to Perry Mason
14 Guilty or not guilty, to Perry Mason
15 Constellation bear
16 Sticky stuff
17 Opera solos
18 Dark greenish blue
19 Nickname for Brian and source of the quote at 10- and 36-Down
22 Birds’ abodes
23 Rubber
24 Climb, as a tree
26 ‘N ___ (boy band)
29 Whoopi Goldberg plays one in Ghost
33 After “New” ___ (Urvashi Vaid birthplace)
37 “More” singer Perry
39 Type of seaman
40 Stick in the fridge?
41 Masters
42 Rowlands of An Early Frost
43 R. Nureyev’s land, once
44 Like the 13 Amer. colonies
45 Mullally of Will & Grace
46 Fitzgerald character
48 Lorca’s house
50 Dawn direction
52 Walk, in Sue Wicks’ sport
57 With everything counted
60 Kevin Keller is a character in this TV teen drama series
63 Bitch and moan
64 From square one
65 Gomer’s “anti”
66 Cause to come out
67 Mae West’s “She ___ Him Wrong”
68 Former anchor Roger
69 “God loves everybody,” to Jane Spahr
70 Sooner city
71 Takes advantage of pupils?

Down
1 Patrick Stewart’s final frontier
2 What you better not be calling me
3 1st lesbian magazine Vice
4 Makes less difficult to bear
5 Yell upon leaving the closet?
6 Milk go-with
7 Pre-coll. exam
8 Preserves meat
9 Member, in slang
10 “His name may be Moose, but I’d describe a certain ____...”
11 Does a circumcision, e.g.
12 Leave the stage
13 Changes colors
21 Melissa Etheridge’s “___ Am”
25 Med. care grps.
27 Home st. of Maupin
28 Margaret Cho, for one
30 “___ to differ!”
31 Bone by the radius
32 Lindsay Lohan’s Girls
33 Skater Mattis
34 Lohengrin soprano
35 In case
36 “...of his as ___”
38 Prefix with byte or hertz
41 Vibrators and such
45 Golf sportscaster Dave
47 What Cassie teaches on Glee
49 Like some mushy fruit
51 It may be rough
53 Affleck’s Chasing Amy crush
54 Like the Ambiguously Gay Duo?
55 Write “The Hot’l Baltimore”
56 Gives temporarily
57 Rapper who’s a thespian
58 Church section
59 Shakespearean stream
61 Aware of
62 Caesar’s post-orgasm cry?
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