

# UNT opens LGBT resource center

Facility is first of its kind among North Texas universities

College expands nondiscrimination policy to include gender identity

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### Dallas Stonewall Dems targeted by PAC, but complaint dismissed

A tea party political action committee that has filed three complaints with the state ethics commission against the San Antonio Stonewall chapter also filed a complaint against the Dallas chapter.

The Texas Ethics Advisory Board, which has no affiliation with the state ethics commission, reviewed the San Antonio chapter's campaign finance report because it's an LGBT organization and supported the city's recently passed nondiscrimination ordinance.

It found violations in three categories. The group alleges that San Antonio Stonewall didn't disclose political contributions and expenditures required by the ethics rules, including not listing the occupation of people who donated more \$50 and didn't identify the candidate or party the group supports.

Elena Guajardo, a former San Antonio City Councilwoman and now co-chair of the San Antonio Stonewall chapter, said the allegations will be found to be baseless.

She said Stonewall is "mindful and respectful of our need to be transparent and accountable in our financial reporting."

Omar Narvaez, president of the Dallas chapter, said he thought the man behind the PAC targeted Stonewall chapters because they are LGBT groups. He said the complaint against the Dallas group centered around a wrong address. The group received a letter Tuesday from the state ethics commission dismissing the claim for a lack of sufficient information in the PAC's complaint.

"Basically this organization — and it's one guy — has decided that he has nothing better to do in the world than look for any organization that has supported anything to do with LGBT equality," Narvaez said. "I guess he saw the name Stonewall and is trying [to look into every group with that name]."

Mike McCue, Stonewall treasurer, said the group made a donation to the Texas House Democratic Committee in June of \$250 and disclosed it on its report. He said the PAC found the item wasn't listed in advance of the donation, though it was listed on the report for the proper dates. In addition, he said the address of the new treasurer hadn't been updated, which must be done with the ethics commission when a new one is appointed.

Narvaez said that the group "shouldn't be in any kind of trouble" in the future. He said as the state gains momentum in the fight for equality, conservative groups will target LGBT organizations any way they can.

"I just look at it as every step forward with equality always brings the haters out," he said. "They're going after anything they can."

Eli Olivarez, president of the Texas Stonewall Democratic Caucus, said the PAC has only targeted the San Antonio and Dallas chapters so far, but it's also investigated other liberal, progressive groups.

"They're attacking us because they don't want these [equality] issues to move forward," he said. "They're not as powerful as they think, so they're going to start attacking."

He said the accusations are false and said the state group will back up the chapters throughout the state.

Stonewall organizations across the state include the Dallas chapter and a local young Stonewall

chapter, as well as the state group and chapters in Denton and Tarrant counties, San Antonio, Austin, Houston, Young Stonewall Houston, Rio Grande Valley, Central Texas and Southeast Texas.

— Anna Waugh

### Efforts to repeal San Antonio nondiscrimination ordinance fail

A petition drive to repeal San Antonio's new nondiscrimination ordinance has failed after organizers didn't have enough signatures in time for the deadline this week.

The drive was led by a megachurch pastor who claimed 50 churches launched petition drives to overturn the law. The group had 40 days from the time the ordinance passed to collect signatures from 10 percent of the city's voters. They needed more than 60,000 signers and got about 20,000.

Some churches were worried about their nonprofit statuses. Federal law prevents a nonprofit from actively participating in political campaigns or endorsing candidates.

The church is still working on a recall petition against Councilman Diego Bernal, who sponsored the ordinance. Most churches are staying even



Councilman Diego Bernal

farther away from that petition effort, which comes even closer to endorsing or opposing a political candidate and jeopardizing their nonprofit status.

A recall election would occur if 10 percent of voters in the council member's district signed the petition.

— David Taffet

### El Paso drag queen dies in police custody after being Tasered

An El Paso drag performer died in police custody after police used a Taser on her during a domestic disturbance call on Sunday.

Fernando Gomez, 36, was known on stage as Mercedes Demarco and was known as a role model. A number of younger performers in El Paso have taken Demarco as their last name in her honor. She competed in the Miss Texas at Large pageant.

Another performer described her as trans.

Demarco performed Saturday night at Club Prism in Downtown El Paso. At 4 a.m., police were called about someone screaming outside a motel in the sunset Heights neighborhood.

A witness saw Demarco trying to get into the motel office, which was locked, and screaming for help.

An officer arrived and tried to subdue and cuff Demarco. After a struggle, four more officers arrived. Demarco, who was described by a witness as hysterical, was Tasered, cuffed and put in the squad car. While being transported, Demarco became unresponsive and did not respond to first aid. Paramedics were called but she was pronounced dead at the hospital.

Police said they are waiting on an autopsy and toxicology test to determine the cause of death.

— David Taffet





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# UNT opens LGBT resource center



**PUTTING THE T IN UNT** | Gilda Garcia, vice president for institutional equity and diversity at the University of North Texas, reads the university's nondiscrimination policy during the grand opening of the LGBT center, Pride Alliance, on Oct. 11. The policy now includes gender identity and expression, along with sexual orientation. (Anna Waugh/Dallas Voice)

Facility is first of its kind among N. Texas universities; college also expands nondiscrimination policy to include gender identity

**ANNA WAUGH** | News Editor  
waugh@dallasvoice.com

DENTON — LGBT students at the University of North Texas will now have a designated place on campus to find support and resources.

Gilda Garcia, vice president for institutional equity and diversity, said the idea for the center has been in the works for years as the campus' LGBT population continued to grow, but the plan came up officially last month. The response from the administration helped push the center's creation along quickly, she said.

"There's been tremendous growth in the LGBT student community," Garcia said, adding that the student LGBT group, GLAD, is one of the largest student groups on campus. "In addition, there's been work over a very long time by many people who had a vision for an LGBT center."

A grand opening reception was held Oct. 11 in the center's space on the third floor of Sage Hall. Artwork of students lined the walls and furniture from the student union will soon be added to furnish the space. Garcia said the timing of construction on a new student union allowed some of the supplies to be given to the new center.

And while the center is already open, she said funding has been allocated for a full-time LGBT coordinator, who will be hired in the near future. In the meantime, temporary staff will help run the center.

Pride Alliance is the fourth venue of its kind in the state.

UNT is the largest public university in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and the fourth-largest public university in Texas. The three largest public universities in the state — Texas A&M, the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Houston — have LGBT resource centers, though UT's is called the Gender and Sexuality Center.

In North Texas, many colleges and universities have LGBT student groups and LGBT-specific programming. Last year administrators at the University of Texas at Arlington — the sixth-largest public university in the state — allocated \$42,000 to expand LGBT programming with intern positions and peer volunteers.

Garcia said she wants Pride Alliance to bring resources, research projects and scholarship opportunities for LGBTQ students together in one

location.

"We want it to be a place that supports and showcases the work of LGBT students, as well as providing them support and resources," Garcia said. "We want this to be a place that can help someone through the questioning phase or someone who is dealing with the challenges of gender identity and perhaps transitioning. This would be a place we could support them by connecting them to resources."

Among the resources on campus are the LGBT archives at UNT's library, which were collected with help from Resource Center and The Dallas Way. An exhibit opened this week, displaying items from the archives, which library staff began putting together more than a year ago.

Along with the center's opening, the university also announced its expanded nondiscrimi-



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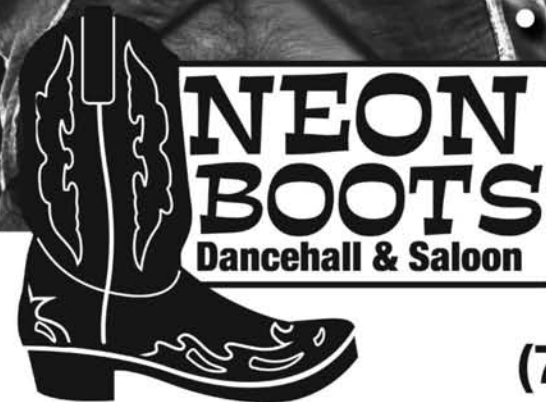
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## localbriefs

### A Feathered Affair on Saturday

A Feathered Affair, sponsored by the Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas, takes place Saturday and benefits the Trinity River Audubon Center.

The funds will be used to repair, upgrade and maintain its Outdoor Wildlife Pond in the Children's Discovery Garden and to support its science and environmental education program that reaches more than 22,000 Dallas pre-K through 12 students annually.

Former councilwoman Veletta Forsythe Lill, her husband, John, and SMU Dean David Chard and his partner, Richard Lena, are the event's honorary co-chairs. U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson will attend and make brief remarks.

GLFD promotes equality and raises awareness of the personal and financial contributions of gays and lesbians to Dallas by bundling donations to recipient agencies that do not discriminate in their hiring, employment and service practices. Since 2000, the Gay & Lesbian Fund for Dallas has raised more than \$1.2 million to support Dallas nonprofits that value and foster diversity.

The 120-acre TRAC is located on Great Trinity Forest Boulevard (South Loop 12) in South Dallas along the Trinity River. The living laboratory of forest, grassland, and wetland habitat introduces nature as a context for life-long learning and enriched life.

A Feathered Affair at Trinity River Audubon Center, 6500 S. Loop 12. Oct. 19 from 7-11 p.m. \$75. For more information, visit GLFD.org.

### TENT seeks trans military veterans for Texas Outserve-SLDN conference

The Transgender Education Network of Texas is looking for trans veterans to serve on a panel at the 2013 Outserve -SLDN leadership conference.

TENT needs those who can attend the Oct. 25-27 conference in San Antonio and are comfortable telling their stories but is also looking for people who are not comfortable speaking in public to privately share their stories to collect for a "public narrative."

Although "don't ask, don't tell" ended for gay and lesbian service members, trans personnel may still be thrown out of the military.

The Saturday afternoon panel is entitled "Transgender Veterans: Stories to Move the DADT Transgender Service Members Forward." Those interested in participating should contact Oliver Blumer at olblumerdc@aol.com. Those interested in participating in the public narrative should contact TENT's Katy Stewart at katy@transtexas.org.

Among the other presenters at the conference are the American Military Partner Association that has been following the Texas National Guard's refusal to register same-sex partners of military personnel so they can receive an ID and federal benefits.

The conference will be held in San Antonio on Oct. 25-27 at the Marriott Rivercenter. Tickets are available online. For more information, visit TransTexas.org.

### pet of the week / STELLA

Meet **Stella!** She is a precious 2-month-old chocolate Labrador retriever who was brought to Operation Kindness from a city shelter. Stella is a fun-loving puppy who enjoys playing fetch with tennis balls and cuddling up in your lap. She has big brown eyes that will melt your heart. She has a lot of energy and is looking for a family that will spend time with her as she is still a puppy. Stella will do best with an active family that has a backyard for her to run and play in throughout the day. Please come and meet Stella at Operation Kindness. She is very special and will make a wonderful family pet!



Stella and other pets are available for adoption from Operation Kindness, 3201 Earhart Drive, Carrollton. The no-kill shelter is open six days: Monday, 3-8 p.m.; closed Tuesday; Wednesday, 3-8 p.m.; Thursday, noon-8 p.m.; Friday, noon-5 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon-5 p.m. The cost is \$110 for cats, \$135 for kittens, \$150 for dogs over 1 year, and \$175 for puppies. The cost includes the spay/neuter surgery, microchipping, vaccinations, heartworm test for dogs, leukemia and FIV test for cats, and more. Those who adopt two pets at the same time receive a \$20 discount.

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**AND THE SURVEY SAYS** | UNT's Elizabeth With said a campus climate survey last spring found that LGBT people felt somewhat accepted on the university's campus. (Anna Waugh/Dallas Voice)

■ **UNT**, From Page 6

nation policy that now includes gender identity and expression. It already included sexual orientation.

Garcia said the change was made last week after discussing how to revise the policy. She said updating the policy to include gender identity and expression "reflects where we already were."

Pride Alliance's opening comes several months after the Texas Legislature tried to defund LGBT resource centers at public universities with a bill authored by state Rep. Bill Zedler, R-Arlington.

Mark Vosvick, co-director of UNT's LGBT Studies Program, recalled the legislation and said the university took a stand by creating a space specifically for LGBT faculty and staff.

"I think what's really also exciting just on the heels of less than half a year ago of Texas trying to stop money for LGBT centers, we sort of turned it around and said, 'Hey, we want an LGBT center here. We want the Pride Alliance,'" he said. "That's a big deal. When the whole state was going in one direction, the voices of our communities got together and stopped that direction, and we're now taking it a step further."

Elizabeth With, vice president for student af-

fairs and enrollment management, said she hoped the center shows how much the university values the needs of the LGBT community. She said a campus climate survey on sexual orientation and gender identity last spring found that respondents who identified as heterosexual viewed the campus as very accepting while LGBTQ people viewed it as somewhat accepting.

"I'm more than hopeful that our new center will be a big step in the right direction," With said.

Kathleen Shattuck, a junior who's been involved with GLAD since her freshman year and is now the group's president, said the organization has been part of the Multicultural Center but hasn't had its own space until now.

"The fact that there's an actual space for us means so much," she said. "It's just nice to be recognized as a community."

Shattuck said many GLAD members sought out UNT because of its inclusive reputation, something the center will only help in the future.

"UNT already has a really great reputation for being really LGBT-friendly," Shattuck said. "So having something official to say that instead of just word-of-mouth is going to do wonders for the university's reputation." ■

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# The changing Oak Lawn landscape



**BRICK-A-BRAC** | Historic buildings in Oak Lawn, like this 90-year-old one at 3322 Knight St., has been sold and will likely be torn down to make room for more higher density developments. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

As older properties throughout the gayborhood are replaced with large developments, residents wonder if the area is losing its character

**DAVID TAFFET** | Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Like many properties in Oak Lawn, the building at 3322 Knight St. has been sold and the 90-year-old building most likely will be demolished for future development.

Unlike many other buildings in Oak Lawn,

this one may be worth saving. Built in 1924, the brick building has original hardwood floors and tiled bathrooms. Sitting on a third of an acre, the landscaping is well maintained and the residents and neighbors love it.

Residents must be out of the building by Dec. 1. And area resident Richard DuPont said the building has value and the community should do something to save it.

The building's owner did not return calls seeking comment about the future plans for the building.

Historic status is one way to save the building.

However, historic status is rarely given to a

property without the owner applying for it. It's something rarely imposed against the property owner's will.

Age or architecture is not always enough to get a building historic designation. An important owner or an event taking place at the site is also taken into consideration, which is why Oak Lawn United Methodist Church and the Melrose Hotel have historic status but little else in Oak Lawn does.

## High-rise takeover?

Oak Lawn Committee Secretary Michael Miliken said that with property values in Oak

Lawn rising, it's highly unlikely that a house or building not currently being used to the maximum value of the property is going to be saved.

Councilman Philip Kingston, who represents the district the Knight Street building is located in, had a slightly different take on it. He said loose credit distorted the market, making the dirt under the building more valuable than the older building itself.

Property throughout Oak Lawn is being developed at a frantic pace.

An old house on Lemmon Avenue that most recently housed an antique store was torn down this week. That property will be redeveloped.





### Maintaining a Legacy of Love

The Oak Lawn Committee is raising funds to maintain the Legacy of Love monument on the corner of Oak Lawn Avenue and Cedar Springs Road.

When the monument was built in 2006, money was saved for maintenance, which runs about \$5,000 a year, including electricity for lighting, clean up, watering the garden, insurance and rental of the small parcel of land from the city.

Over the years, damage from several car wrecks have eaten into the fund.

"Some has been recouped from insurance," Oak Lawn Committee Secretary Michael Milliken said.

Only one driver who crashed into the monument had insurance that covered the damage. Others did not.

In addition, the Frank Caven Garden originally included a tree. The first tree died and was replaced. The second tree was destroyed in one of the car accidents and has not been replaced.

Also, the garden ground has settled with a depression in the middle.

"When it rained, it became a pond," Milliken said.

He said the garden needs to be redesigned with Texas-friendly xeriscaping.

Since Oak Lawn Committee first planned the monument, it's become much more of a rallying point than was expected. Most recently, a rally after the U.S. Supreme Court decisions overturning California's Proposition 8 and the Defense of Marriage Act were held on the triangle and spilled over on Cedar Springs Road.

In addition to working with the Tavern Guild and Oak Lawn Merchants Association, Oak Lawn Committee is appealing to the community for donations to replenish its maintenance fund, which is maintained by Communities Foundation of Texas and donations are tax deductible.

Donations can be made at OakLawnCommittee.org.

— David Taffet

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# Dallas County sees steady decline in new AIDS diagnoses

Health Director Zach Thompson says county must be vigilant to see a drop in infections among all age groups and categories

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

The number of new AIDS diagnoses in Dallas County decreased in 2012, according to new statistics released by Dallas County Health and Human Services.

While the number of people living with HIV has steadily increased, the number of people diagnosed annually has decreased over the past 10 years. About 15,000 people are living with AIDS in Dallas County, a 62 percent increase since 2003. The number of people diagnosed each year has decreased 27 percent over that same period.

AIDS Healthcare Foundation Texas Regional Director Bret Camp sees this as good news.

"Increased testing over the last few years led to more people linked into care that lowers the community viral load," he said.

The incidence rate among African-Americans and Hispanics decreased from the previous year and over the past 10 years. That is despite a spike in 2010.

Camp said that was when the county became more aggressive in testing and in keeping people in care.

Among whites, the rate has shown a 10-year decrease but is up slightly over the previous year. But the new infection rate among blacks,

Hispanics and men who have sex with men remains high.

Of the 780 new cases reported in 2012, 74 percent were among men who have sex with men. Among racial groups, 49 percent of new cases

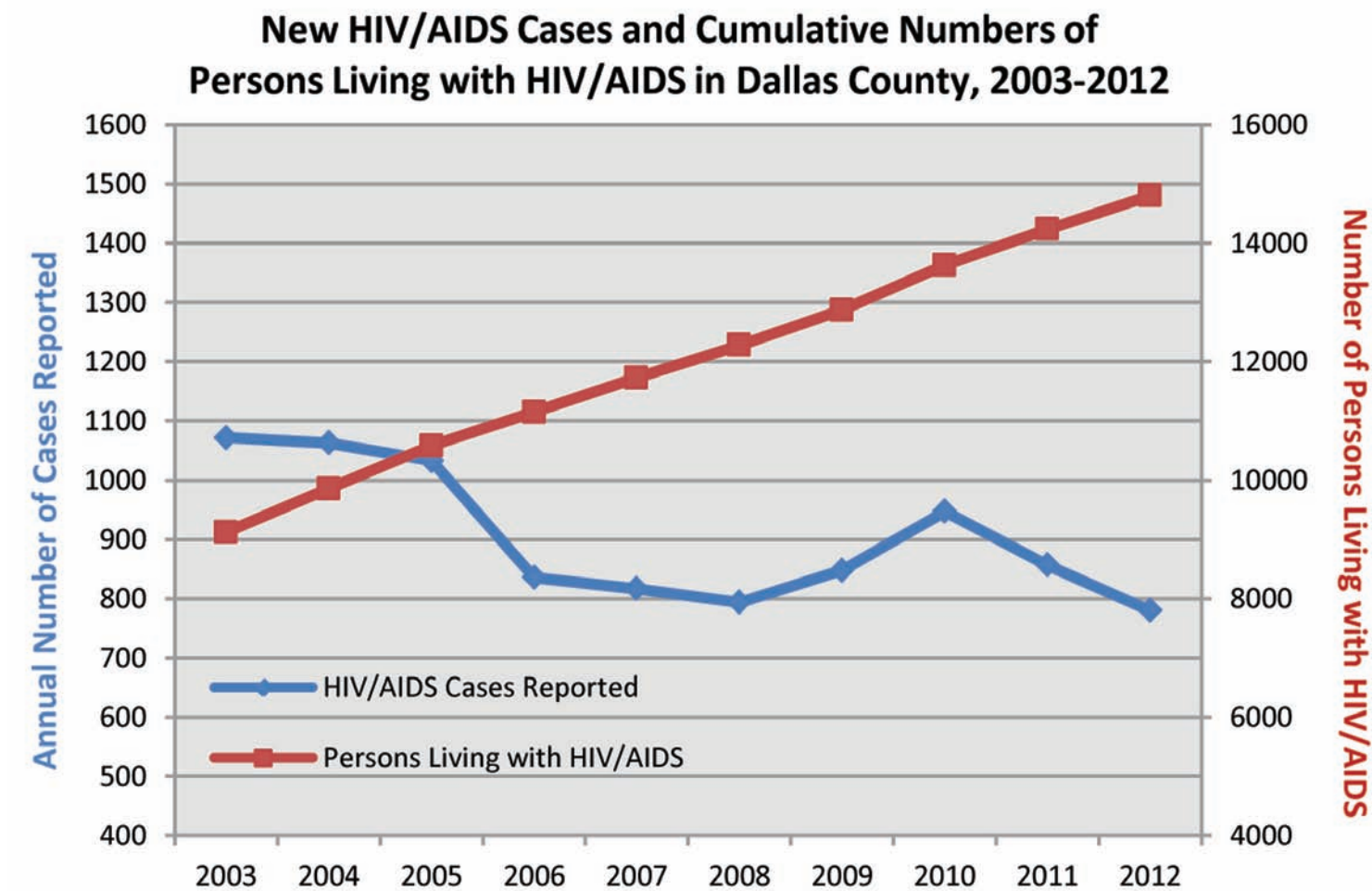


Bret Camp

were among African-Americans and 26 percent among Hispanics.

Dallas County Health and Human Services Director Zach Thompson saw the overall decrease in new infections as positive but called the rate among African-Americans and Hispanics disproportionately high.

He said he expects Dallas will continue to have the highest rate of new HIV infections, but Harris County, which includes Houston, will



Zach Thompson

report the highest number of new HIV cases. The rate in 2012 was 31.4 cases per 100,000 people in Dallas County.

Eric Reece, clinical manager at Abounding Prosperity, also noted the disproportionate rate in the black community but noted the number of new infections among African-Americans was also down.

"Targeted testing is working," he said. "Now we need to look at structural changes to take place."

He said because 55 percent of new infections were among people ages 13 to 34, that age group isn't getting the message.

"We shoot ourselves in the foot with abstinence-only education," Reece said.

He also said availability of condoms is a key to prevention.

Once people test positive, they need to be linked to care, he said. That was one of the reasons Abounding Prosperity was founded and located across the street from AIDS Arms' Peabody Clinic.

But people who need a place to live are less likely to seek medical treatment or adhere to a drug regimen, so Abounding Prosperity has been working to help clients resolve all of these issues.

From 2008 through 2011, 34 percent of people newly diagnosed with HIV in Dallas County progressed to an AIDS diagnosis within 12 months.

Reece said that was a result of waiting until symptoms began appearing before ever testing.

Camp agreed that frequent testing was important. An early diagnosis and access to medication can prevent damage to the immune system.

"Once you have immune damage, it's harder to restore," Camp said.

In 2012, 55 percent of new HIV diagnoses were in people under the age of 35. About 82 percent

were among men. The incidence rate decreased in every age group from 2011 and the rate has decreased in all groups except among those aged 13 to 24 over the past 10 years.

"The 13 to 24 rate alarms me," Camp said. "That's a generation that doesn't know the devastation."

He said it indicated how little schools are doing to teach prevention.

Thompson said that generation didn't see the devastation of the AIDS crisis.

"They're coming in at a time when people are living," he said. "They see people fully functioning."

Over the coming years, he wants to see a steady drop in the rate of new infections in Dallas County, especially in all of the most affected demographics.

"The only way is through education, reduce the stigma and target the 13 to 35 age group," Thompson said.

Globally, UNAIDS reported a similar decline in new infections.

In 2012, the agency reported 2.1 million new infections, down from 3.4 million in 2011, a 33 percent reduction in new cases. The UN goal is to halt and reverse the spread of HIV by 2015. ■



# Dallas County's DP benefits plan unpopular among employees



County Judge Clay Jenkins

No county employees have enrolled in hard-fought plan in 10 months since it began, but Judge Jenkins says plan won't change soon

**ANNA WAUGH** | News Editor  
waugh@dallasvoice.com

After trying for two years to approve domestic partner benefits for Dallas County's LGBT employees, no one has taken advantage of them since they went into effect in January.

Under the county's plan employees can enroll their same- or opposite-sex spouse in a voucher program, which reimburses 45 percent of the spouse's privately purchased insurance plan up to \$295.78 monthly — the amount the county contributes toward employees' coverage — whichever is less.

The voucher plan passed the Commissioners Court last October after County Judge Clay Jenkins spent months trying to go around the Public Employee Benefits Cooperative, a self-insured government partner agency that helps keep the cost of benefits affordable. While a majority of members from the PEBC supported adding the benefits, members from Tarrant and Denton counties threatened to veto the change, which they could do as founding members. The PEBC is comprised of representatives from Dallas, Tar-

rant, Denton and Parker counties and the North Texas Tollway Authority.

The board voted down offering DP benefits in 2011 by one vote. Even if the PEBC had approved the benefits last year, each entity's governing body would then have had to approve the plan before any of them could offer the benefits.

Jenkins has said he'd consider working toward leaving the PEBC so the county could offer equal domestic partner benefits, but he said this week that the path toward changing the plan was far off. Dallas County's Commissioners Court would have to approve leaving the co-op and give a year's notice before leaving, so the earliest they could be free to offer the benefits is January 2015.

"It's an increasing challenge for a wide sector of the political spectrum to agree on charting a course on health benefits," Jenkins said. "And I favor us finding a path that will allow us to provide the best quality insurance to our employees at the best price for the taxpayers that also factors in and promotes our shared progressive values here in Dallas County."

Julia McDuff, a spokeswoman with the county's Human Resources, said this week that none of the county's roughly 6,000 employees had enrolled in the domestic benefits program.

By comparison, Parkland's DP benefits took effect in January 2012, and 21 of the hospital's 9,408 employees enrolled in the program within the first six months.

Jenkins said the enrollment could change in the future as private insurance becomes more afford-

■ **BENEFITS**, Page 15

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**GOING, GOING...** | The view of the building, which is 7,808 square feet, is shown at the corner of Knight and Rawlins streets. It currently serves as an apartment complex, but residents have been told to vacate the building by Dec. 1, after which the building will likely be torn down. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

■ **LANDSCAPE**, From Page 10

oped by the Taco Bueno next door into a drive-thru, Milliken said.

Two two-story office buildings on Carlisle at Bowen streets were torn down last year and a 17-story apartment building will open on the site soon.

The former driving range on McKinney Avenue in West Village is being replaced by an office tower and mixed use high-rise.

While the emphasis on high-rise density is concentrated in Uptown right now, Milliken sees that type of density continuing to head up Central Expressway and toward Love Field.

He said that direction comes from the city to build tall to increase population with heavier density to add to the tax base.


Former Old Oak Cliff Conservation League President Michael Amonett said without homeowners, people aren't as invested in their neighborhood.

"I wouldn't be like I am if it wasn't for watching Oak Lawn get torn down," he said. "It's why I'm so persistent."


Amonett helped build OOCCL into an alliance of more than 30 neighborhood organizations that work to preserve the area if not all of the older buildings.

But redeveloped properties adhere to setbacks, neighborhood architecture, landscaping

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requirements and other style features.

That doesn't mean no older buildings will be saved. Kingston said it's taken on a case-by-case basis.

### Neighborhood groups

In areas of the city like East Dallas and Oak Lawn, strong neighborhood associations are helping to preserve neighborhoods. Some have organized into historic districts based on national guidelines.

Others become conservation districts that maintain the scale and character of a neighborhood through special regulations.

Kingston said the conservation district is a very flexible tool for a neighborhood to use.

"Some have demolition standards," he said. "Others have divided into sub-districts."

Kingston said his neighborhood's conservation district's goal was to preserve the look and feel of an arts and crafts-style neighborhood. That stopped the intrusion of McMansions in his area that were being built in some parts of East Dallas that overpower lots and are bad neighbors to smaller, surrounding houses.

Oak Lawn has a few neighborhood associations, notably Maple Springs and Perry Heights, which have successfully helped preserve those areas.

But Oak Lawn has something unique in the city. In 1982, Oak Lawn Committee was formed to address quality of life issues and respond to planning and growth issues.

The organization makes recommendations

throughout the Oak Lawn public improvement district that roughly runs from Central Expressway to Mockingbird Lane and Highland Park to Woodall Rodgers Freeway, with some carve-outs.

West Village, for example, is no longer included and the State Thomas area has always been its own entity. But Uptown is part of Oak Lawn on the city plat.

Milliken said Oak Lawn Committee only becomes involved in the area's development when the developer is looking for a zoning variance.

"If someone wants to tear down and rebuild within zoning, they most likely won't come to us," he said.

Often the city tells developers to go to the Oak Lawn Committee to get support before approaching the plan commission or city council.

Milliken said that while the organization has no official power, it often trades its endorsement for something beneficial to the neighborhood. That might be landscaping or setbacks or additional parking in exchange for height variance or other code exemption.

As Oak Lawn continues to be developed, Amonett said Oak Lawn is losing its neighborhood vibe.

Kingston disagreed but said one of his major concerns is keeping neighborhoods pedestrian friendly.

But for resident DuPont, the area has lost the neighborhood feel it was once known for.

"Oak Lawn is not for us anymore," DuPont said. ■

### ■ BENEFITS, From Page 13

able when the Affordable Care Act goes into effect next year. He said there are many reasons that no one has used the benefits voucher yet, among them cost and coverage.

"There is a big difference between what you can actually get for your family by paying a portion of your spouse's benefits under our policy and what an individual with supplemental domestic partner voucher can get on the open market," he said. "That's why I'd like to see us move in a direction that allows equal benefits for same-sex partners equal to the benefits available to spouses."

The county's plan came under review by officials over the summer after Attorney General Greg Abbott issued a non-binding opinion that governmental entities offering domestic partner benefits violated the state's constitutional marriage amendment.

But Jenkins said the review found that no changes needed to be made and he hopes that after that hiccup employees will be encouraged to enroll in case they feared the benefits would be threatened.

"There will be no watering down of our policy based on the attorney general's opinion," Jenkins said. "I do hope that we get to a place in Dallas County where we can offer full benefits, not just vouchers."

Lesbian activist Cd Kirven said the county

should seriously consider leaving the PEBC in the future in order to have more equal benefits.

"I feel like that co-op is not only hindering healthcare for LGBT families and children but it's also kind of fostering the homophobic atmosphere," Kirven said. "There should be a community action taken against the co-op to let them know that this subversive attack on LGBT workers and children will not be tolerated."

Rafael McDonnell, communications and advocacy manager at Resource Center, said the enrollment highlights the minimal amount of employees who actually use health benefits when the estimated number that's originally budgeted is much higher. Still, he said the turnout was a shock.

"Zero is a surprising number," he said. "I would have expected at least a handful."

McDonnell said the voucher aspect of the program makes it more difficult to use versus other DP benefits programs that allow partners to be added to an employee's plan.

He said the county should work on promoting the plan to employees, as well as consider leaving the PEBC to be self-insured on its own so the county can have different DP benefits.

"I wouldn't construe the lack of people signing up with the lack of demand," McDonnell said. ■

For more information about Dallas County's DP benefits plan, visit [DallasCounty.org/department/HR/domestic.html](http://DallasCounty.org/department/HR/domestic.html)



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# viewpoints

## Dems and their selective social justice

The left doesn't have consistent commitment to LGBT equality, while more and more Republicans are coming out in support of us

Last week I staffed a booth at a local fair for IMRU, the LGBT radio show I co-host. We were collecting and recording stories — any stories that people might want to share about their lives or points of view. Our only requirements were that the stories have something to do with LGBT issues and that they not be so long as to constitute bogarting the microphone.

This was good fun, especially when I got to cajole people into the idea that they, too, have a story to share with the world. They'd get giddy and nervous, but as soon as the record light went on, they were off like greyhounds. Everyone has something to talk about, if given enough encouragement.

And there were the people who were bothered by the very existence of our show. Ironically, these people needed no cajoling at all to talk to us. They just needed to read our sign, "The nations' longest running LGBT radio show!" One guy, dressed in coordinated velour leisure attire asked if we were communists. Thinking he was just messing around, my colleague replied with a hearty, "Yes!" He then launched into a spiel

about how we wanted to throw away his tax dollars.

OK, his wasn't such an off-the-wall question, since we broadcast out of one of the oldest public radio stations around. If you shook our building

hard enough, some old leftover reds would probably fall out from the cracks. But as far as I know, none of us on our little gay show is or has ever been a communist. We would have been happy to record his story, too, if it had any sort of LGBT theme, but he hurriedly



**Abby Dees**

Contributing Columnist

rushed away before we could ask.

There are always a few versions of this sort of thing when we go out to meet the public at large. Since before the beginning of the gay movement, people have had a propensity to associate homosexuality with communism. We are, sadly, used to it.

I haven't yet gotten used to what happened next, however. A woman challenged us from the left: "Why does your show have to be gay? Isn't poverty more important?" Which begged the question, Is there only room in the world for one

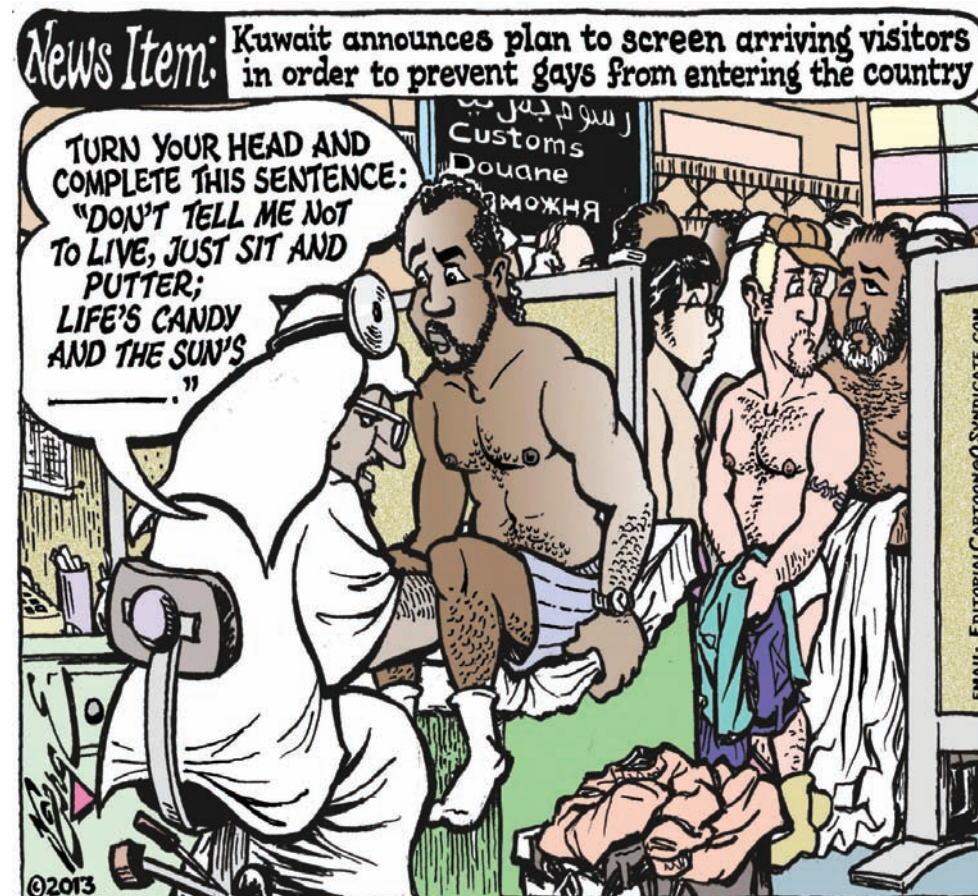
radio show? We explained the usual facts: That LGBT people are at high risk for poverty, we have particular concerns that other shows rarely address and that there's nothing wrong with dedicating an hour a week of interminable pledge-drive-funded radio to a marginalized population anyway. Hell, no one seems to mind the entire oeuvre of Judd Apatow movies, which, as far as I can tell, are created primarily for and about 18-to-30-year-old white guys getting hit in the crotch by something. If it meets their needs.

This isn't the first time I've heard a lefty suggest that LGBT activists are taking resources away from "more important issues," but this time it lingered with me for days. I could invoke Dr. King's adage, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," but it's not enough, even if it's true. There's still a peculiar resistance to actively supporting LGBT equality that has nothing much to do with where one resides on the left/right continuum. I could go on about the high suicide rate among LGBT teens, or the persecution of gays in Uganda, or the fact that millions of LGBT Americans have no family or workplace protections at all, and it won't trump the notion that we are all rich white men living in WeHo or Chelsea, and thus not truly subject to injustice somehow.

So why does our community keep giving the left a pass on our issues? In my many years as a progressive, I've never seen consistent commitment to LGBT equality that squares with the left's stated ideals of social justice. Meanwhile, more and more people on the right are standing up for our rights as a matter of individual freedom, contrary to stereotype.

I'm done with making assumptions about who is in my corner based on a check box on a voter registration card. I'd rather just ask. ■

*Abby Dees is a civil rights attorney-turned-author who has been in the LGBT rights trenches for 25-plus years. She can be reached through her website: [queerquestionsstraighttalk.com](http://queerquestionsstraighttalk.com).*



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# From 'Diva' to devil

Saucy, satiric siren  
Margaret Cho hits  
the 'Mother' lode

"Well of course I'll talk about my mother," she adds.

And she embraces the elevated distinction. For her, it's symbolic of the perpetual family experience of the LGBT community. Even if it is a mass of fans cheering her on, being their "mother" gives her people she can care for.

"I love it so much and when people first called me that, I thought it was because I'm bossy," she says. "But in the gay community, a lot of us are looking to be parented. Family lives were difficult and so we create new one through friends. We always have. You *can* have other parents."

Despite no children of her own at 44, Cho says she's a total mama in all aspects, and finds that life isn't so bad being a mature woman. She hasn't met the AARP requirements yet, but in all aspects of celebrity, she is just fine at this stage in life.

"I'm so glad not to be young. I'm so grateful to not be insecure or scared," she says. "I don't care about stuff now. Some people are so afraid to age and get way too sad about their youth."

Cho was at a loss when posed with a hypothetical: How would she feel with an all-straight audience? The idea almost perplexed her into silence. Almost.

"Ummmm... that would be weird," she finally offers up. "I would feel sad because I'd miss my friends. I've definitely had straight audiences. But then, I don't know if anyone is truly straight."

There are blurred lines for sure in Cho's eyes. And those lines don't discriminate. She's con-

vinced that everybody's a little bisexual — just like she is. So then the gay boy might just have a chance with the hot straight guy at school/gym/coffeeshop?

"I'm just saying that it's beyond sexuality and everybody has degrees of it. There is a degree of straightness among gay people and vice versa. They just don't wanna acknowledge it. They think they don't belong here. It's complicated."

When Cho arrives, Dallas' Halloween Block Party will be just around the corner. She hasn't given much thought to dressing up — she's more of a dinner party type — but she has pondered the possibilities. What about Jody Arias?

"Oh my God, yes. And I can always go as Lisa Ling," she ponders. "Oh, what about the Octo Mom before she had the babies?"

Problem solved.

Cho doesn't give an aura of celebrity. Comedy, television, whatever — that's all work. But she gets that she *is* a celebrity.

And the proof presented to her came from eBay.

An autographed photo on the site was priced at \$90. She was rather happy with that.

"Oh my gosh, it's gone up! In the 90s, it was \$4. And it slowly went up to \$6, which was the same amount for an Andy Dick photo. I'm glad that it's gone up," she says.

Perhaps shocking her more was the \$148.79 price tag for a DVD of the 1997 movie *Fakin' Da Funk* that she starred in with Pam Grier, Tatyana Ali and Ernie Hudson.

"Buy it! Even I don't have that one!"

— Rich Lopez

## MARGARET CHO

The Majestic Theater, 1925 Elm St.  
Oct. 24, 8 p.m. \$45-\$65.  
Ticketmaster.com.

When Margaret Cho returns to Dallas, you might think her new show, *Mother*, will be all about her perpetual mom issues. Those impersonations of a strict and naive Korean mother are a signature among her sets. But you'd be wrong.

"I'm old enough to be the kinda fag-hag where people call me 'Mother,'" she says. "If you stick around the gay community long enough, you become a mother, no matter what your gender. I think we turn everybody into mothers." So no more mother issues?

## Look at me, I'm Sandra B

It's hard to describe what Sandra Bernhard's act is, because nobody does what she does but her. It's standup comedy ... only it's not. She's herself ... except when she's in character. She sings ... but sometimes with tongue in cheek. It's cabaret! It's theater! It's burlesque! ... She's her sister *aanndd* her daughter! Forget it, Jake, it's Sandratown!

Or rather, *Sandyland*, the name of her show coming to the Kessler on Wednesday. We got a few minutes to ask the bisexual multi-threat about her art, her politics and her show.

**You're truly one of the multi-threat performers: Cabaret star, recording artist, comedian, actress, author, activist-celebrity. How do you think of yourself — entertainer, satirist, goddess?** Bernhard: First and foremost, I am an entertainer who has the abilities to incorporate all of these other skills into the big soufflé I like to call my career.

**As a self-described bisexual, is B the underrepresented letter in the LGBTQ alphabet?** I am totally comfortable being in my skin. I guess I al-

ways viewed sexuality in a very sophisticated, groovy way and although I understand the need to politicize it for the obvious reason, I like to leave it loose. I like being multi-faceted in every area of my life.

**You've never shied from controversy. What are your thoughts about all the political infighting?** It's a lot of posturing and theater by a bunch of bad actors. Politics [attracts] a lot of crackpots. We've been in this stink since they tried to bring Clinton down.

**What have the developments in recent years in gay rights meant to you, and how do you see it in the scheme of the larger fight for equality?** It's part of the evolution of post-feminist race equality that we fought for back in the '60s. Those were the foundations for a bolder, sweeping change in [our] culture.

**If you have just a few adjectives to describe *Sandyland*, and what people can expect out of your show, what would they be?** Brassy, crazy, demanding, musical ... wild!

— Arnold Wayne Jones

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# The queen of ol' Broadway

There are musical theater queens, there are *musical theater queens* ... and then there's **Seth Rudetsky**

**ARNOLD WAYNE JONES** | Life+Style Editor  
 jones@dallasvoice.com

**S**eth Rudetsky is the quintessential Noo Yawkuh: He talks a mile a minute, to the point he sometimes sounds more like a ticker-tape machine than a human voice, and always in the Bawwwbraaaa drawl that can practically peg him to a few square blocks. He's of course the preeminent gossip historian of contemporary Broadway, with an encyclopedic knowledge not just of singers and shows, but composers, scores, back-up dancers and stage door managers that he dishes about with abandon on his Sirius/XM radio show and on his YouTube channel.

So you might not realize what strong ties, and great affection, he has for North Texas.

"I spend a lot of time down there!" he admits

on the phone from New Orleans, where he is performing.

Consider: Rudetsky's husband, James Wesley, is a local boy, and his all-time favorite diva, Betty Buckley, is a Cowtown native. And add to that Rudetsky's undying respect for one of our own theaters.

"Thank God for Lyric Stage," he shouts. "If you listen to my radio show, you know my biggest cause célébré is what they do to orchestras on Broadway. What, Lyric [can mount 40-piece orchestras performing classic musical scores] and on Broadway we cannot afford it? *Mamma Mia* is probably one of the five most successful musicals ever, they perform in the same theater as *West Side Story* and what do they have?! A 9-piece band! Why aren't the critics saying this is a complete shame? It's infuriating."

If you sense passion driving Rudetsky's opinions, you're not far off. Love of musicals isn't just

## DECONSTRUCTING B'WAY

Seth Rudetsky with the Turtle Creek Chorale, **Meyerson Symphony Center**, 2301 Flora St. Oct. 20. 8 p.m. TurtleCreek.org.

**COME AND MEET THOSE DANCING FEET** | Seth Rudetsky doesn't two-step in his show, but he does tap dance around some of the great — and awful — diva moments of all time.





## LIFE+STYLE

### concerts

came known as archivist of the awful, he only attracted more material.

"It grows because people know I'm obsessed," he says. "People send me DVDs of impossible-to-find stuff, like *The Brady Bunch Variety Hour* where I get to show Alice the maid disco-dancing to 'Shake Your Booty.'"

That's not even among the best of his stuff. "I just did it in London and The Osmonds singing a medley from *Fiddler on the Roof* brought the house down," he says. It's not about bad singers doing bad songs, either. A lot of the show mocks legends of theater: There's Liza Minnelli hitting (in a bad way) a high B-flat, Bea Arthur singing "Don't Rain on My Parade" and even one of the singing icons of the 20th century, Aretha Franklin, screwing up with a rendition of "I Dreamed a Dream."

"It's about inappropriate pairings, but also [the humor comes from] someone like me, who has a lot of inexperience in the music business, analyzing *what* went wrong — I put the exact verbiage to why it's horrific. Just knowing the inside story makes it a lot funnier." Anyone can listen to Leonard Nimoy singing badly and know what went wrong; it's harder when the singer is Barbra Streisand. (And there are no hard feelings, he reports. "Most people are so thrilled when I put them in my show.")

As curator of all things amazing about B'way, Rudetsky has his pets and his pet projects. His favorite musical of the last decade? *In the Heights*. But going back further is harder. "I can't get enough of *Funny Girl*, *Gypsy*, *A Chorus Line*. *West Side Story* is a tragedy, but there are so many hilarious moments in it. And in terms of an entire show, the music is so unbelievably advanced. The dance breaks are entirely symphonic works that can be performed alone."

His latest preoccupation is his own stab at putting on a musical that reflects his aesthetic: *Disaster!* is his just-opened off-Broadway jukebox musical, a send-up of 1970s-era disaster movies, with a score comprised of 37 songs from the disco era, inserted to fit into the plot.

"It's amazing," he crows.

But he's still enthusiastic about his Dallas appearance.

"The show itself never gets old," he says. "People clap in the middle and fall on the floor laughing. I love doing it every time." ■

a job for him, it's been an obsession since he was 3 years old.

"My parents were educators, and there was a record player constantly playing in my house. My sister played piano, so I became obsessed with that. My parents took me to see *Hair* when I was 4, and when I was 11, I had a pen pal — but instead of sending her a letter, I sent her a 45-minute recording of myself singing songs from *Annie*."

That recording, as personally embarrassing as it is for him now, makes an appearance in Rudetsky's show *Deconstructing Broadway*, which he brings to the Meyerson Sunday as a guest of the Turtle Creek Chorale. It's only fair: In the show, which he has performed in various forms for more than 10 years, Rudetsky celebrates and eviscerates the best and worst of the Great White Way, poking fun of the boondoggles and cheering on the divas that make American musical theater one of the world's great art forms.

It's like *America's Funniest Home Videos*, but for Broadway," he says. "It's a love letter to Broadway, but also its horrificity. I do a whole segment on Betty Buckley and how unbelievably brilliant she is, and I analyze why she's so good. Then I show the biggest mistakes on Broadway, and I have evidence of it, all this inside scoop. It's totally for insiders and totally for novices." His proof? "I did it in Waco, and if it can go over in Waco, it can go over anywhere."

The germ of the show was when he used to perform bits of it in his comedy act. One time, Rosie O'Donnell saw him do it and said he could build an entire act around it. And once he be-

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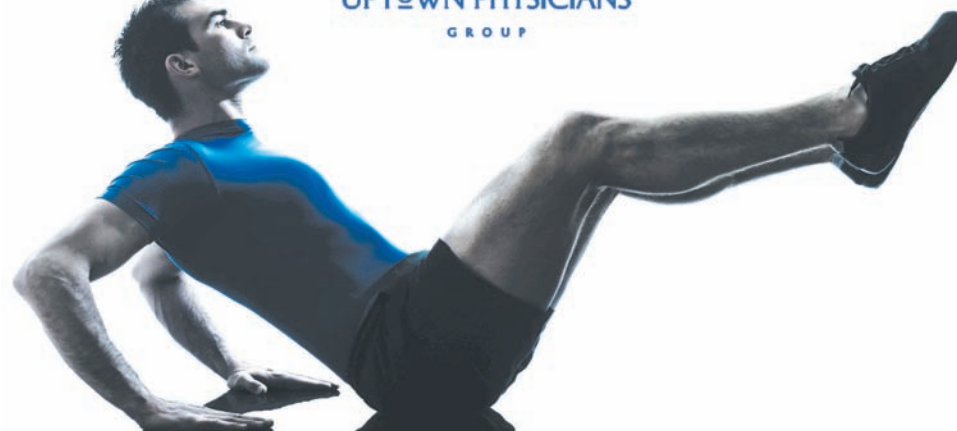
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L+S clubs



Before Boy George, the '80s music icon, sits down for an interview, his handlers offer specific instructions: Fill out this form. Do *not* discuss his most famous decade. Do *not* discuss his personal life. Or his Grammy-winning stint in the band Culture Club. They could have just summarized it with this admonition: "Don't piss him off."

In the shadow of his dramatic and impressive weight loss, as well as a new album, my date with Boy George (and cohort Marc Vedo) put me on eggshells before it began.

After fumbling for several minutes with Skype, eating into our brief interview window, I learned that, while Boy George has earned diva status, his reality was anything but. Both George and Vedo were a tag-team of humor and professionalism, but mostly they were two good friends getting to hang out all over the country playing their music.

George and Vedo discuss who's on top and bottom, their friendship and the flip side of fame to George's second career. And to not totally ignore the Culture Club era, questions can be sung in the tune of their biggest hits. You're welcome.

— Rich Lopez

**Dallas Voice:** It's a miracle, it's a miracle and dreams are made of you coming to Dallas. Boy George: Well, we were put at the mercy of our promoter to go on the road [laughs].

Marc Vedo: We'd been planning an American tour for quite a while but it was a long process for his visa to get approved. And when we decided to hit America, the [electronic dance music] scene had exploded. Now we'll be playing this now-famous club [It'll Do] in Dallas. It's exciting!

**Time don't give you time, and did time make you feel a place in the current dance music scene?**

George: I don't think we do, but we're not the stereotypical sound that is engulfing America right now. People think we're playing very European stuff, but what we'll be playing is early Chicago disco and house music. It's very soulful.

**Do you really want to hurt your audience, do you really want to make them cry?** George: We've done three shows [so far], and all of it has been an experiment. We play stuff we think is great. You know, it's funny when we played in Boston because the pro-

moters thought we were gonna attract a totally gay crowd — but it was a straight crowd!

**You know all there is to know about the crying game, you've had your share.** George: It's an interesting time for me. It's been about seven years that people don't recognize who I am and it's great! John Travolta walked right past me recently. But being under the radar and looking different, I've been working hard and loving what I do. Whether my sound works over here from a DJ perspective or in terms of my new album, it just feels like endless possibilities.

**First there are kisses, then there are sighs, then before you know where you are, you're saying goodbye.**

George: It's the flip side of fame. In the beginning, I had a hunger for attention

but then I grew up a bit and finally I'm back to the thing I do where the job is fun.

**Who's the man without conviction? Who's the man who doesn't know how to sell a contradiction?**

Vedo: Well, I'm the one who sets the mood so I like arriving early and get the crowd grooving to what our sound is like, what the club is about and check the

### BOY GEORGE/MARC VEDO

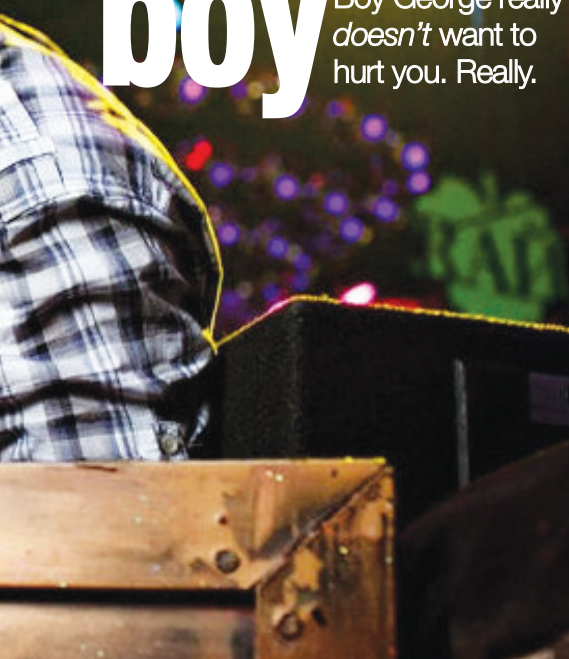
It'll Do Dancing Club,  
4322 Elm St. Oct. 19, 9 p.m.-2 a.m.  
\$30. TicketFly.com

**CURIOUS BOY GEORGE** | The Culture Club icon teams with DJ Marc Vedo for a set at It'll Do Saturday. Just don't expect him to spin 'Karma Chameleon.'



# Boy, oh boy

Boy George really doesn't want to hurt you. Really.



system. Then George comes and we'll have a chat and I fill him and he ignores everything I tell him. At the end of it he realizes he should have listened to me [laughs].

George: Yeah, right! I guess I am a bit of a diva that way. But he gets me on my toes. You know dance music in America, what you call EDM, is very white and kids get carried away these days by what's popular. What we're requiring is for people to shake their hips from these pioneering sounds of Chicago and Detroit.

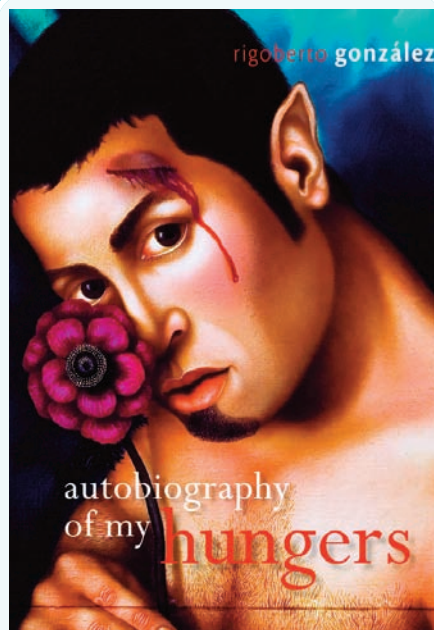
Vedo: I know. I've talked to some younger folks and they think dance music started like five years ago!

George: And let's not forget disco. America has this rich dance history. I grew up in '70s and then the '80s with the early part of acid house. It's important to stay on the times but respect the legacy like Daft Punk. I think Daft Punk has this advantage of being *uber-cool*, you don't know who they are and they and Pharrell are in this moment.

**Would you give everything you own to the Dallas gig?** George: My sets are eclectic and I don't know what I'm gonna play. I'll have some '80s references and I'm always buying new things, but these days, to be an interesting DJ, you gotta be different. I'm not like all those people playing the same records. Although, I believe I do have a Rihanna song in there. Hmm. But you can't program me! And there's always the request for a song that you'd *never* play originally.

**You never wanted to be a hero, you never wanted to be a man?** George: I'm a good DJ and I love it and have been doing it for 25 years — since the late '70s. Obviously I had the band, but I don't see why I can't be both. Maybe it confuses people, but I'm a Renaissance man. I do art. Make clothes. I don't see why I have to do one thing. I now have a second career and I'm able to do the pop/rock thing as well. I felt like the big fish in a big DJ pond, but Mark looked after me. He took the screws out of me, this broken doll in the gutter of life and put me back together.

**You know we've missed you, you know we've missed you blind.**



**Food for thought?**  
Gay memoir gorges on sadness

*Autobiography of My Hungers* by Rigoberto González (2013, University of Wisconsin Press) \$19.95; 113 pp.

When he was a young boy living with his family in Mexico, Rigoberto González's kitchen job was to separate the *piedrta* (pebbles) from the beans before his mother put them in the pot. He enjoyed the small stones then; *piedrta* followed him into adulthood.

Although his parents' oldest child, Rigoberto was close to his *abuelo* and *abuela*. The entire family was poor, but they "were not going to starve, despite what Abuelo had said the week before." Despite their poverty, Abuela made sacrifices for him, especially after the family moved El Norte — to the U.S. González didn't fully understand her gifts until many years later.

He did understand loss, however, starting with the loss of his mother, who returned from California to Mexico to die. González was still a boy, missing his mother — and that, too, was something he didn't fully appreciate until he was a man.

Following her death and his father's remarriage (and subsequent departure), Gonzalez continued to live with his grandparents in a tiny apartment, where all the home's residents slept in one room. He went to school, but felt out of place, with one foot in Mexico and one in his new country — eventually left alone to finish school in New York.

In was in college where he found a girlfriend, only to come to terms with his "hungry gay body." It was there that he tried to commit suicide, tried to starve himself, felt unloved and finally dealt with memories of embarrassment in childhood and the hurt he held from his abusive, alcoholic father. He came to realize that he could fall in love too quickly with a man, but "if the waters got rough, I could always beat him to the exit."

Looking for a quick little pick-me-up read? You'd be *half* right with this book. Yes, *Autobiography of My Hungers* is skinny (fewer than 120 pages), but it feels like one of the longest books I've read this year. Gonzalez writes with deep, soul-crushing sadness. He pens with the beauty of a poet, and I'll admit I enjoyed his nuanced observations on the tidbits of life. To find those subtleties, though, is like searching through a garden of despair, which I'm not sure is worth the leftover feeling I got when finished. Ultimately, *Autobiography of My Hungers* is just too full of sorrow to delight or inspire.

— Terri Schlichenmeyer

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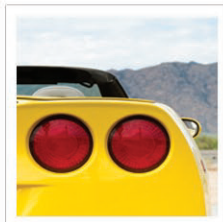
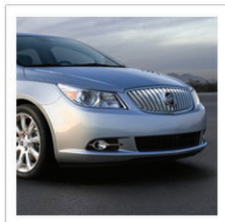
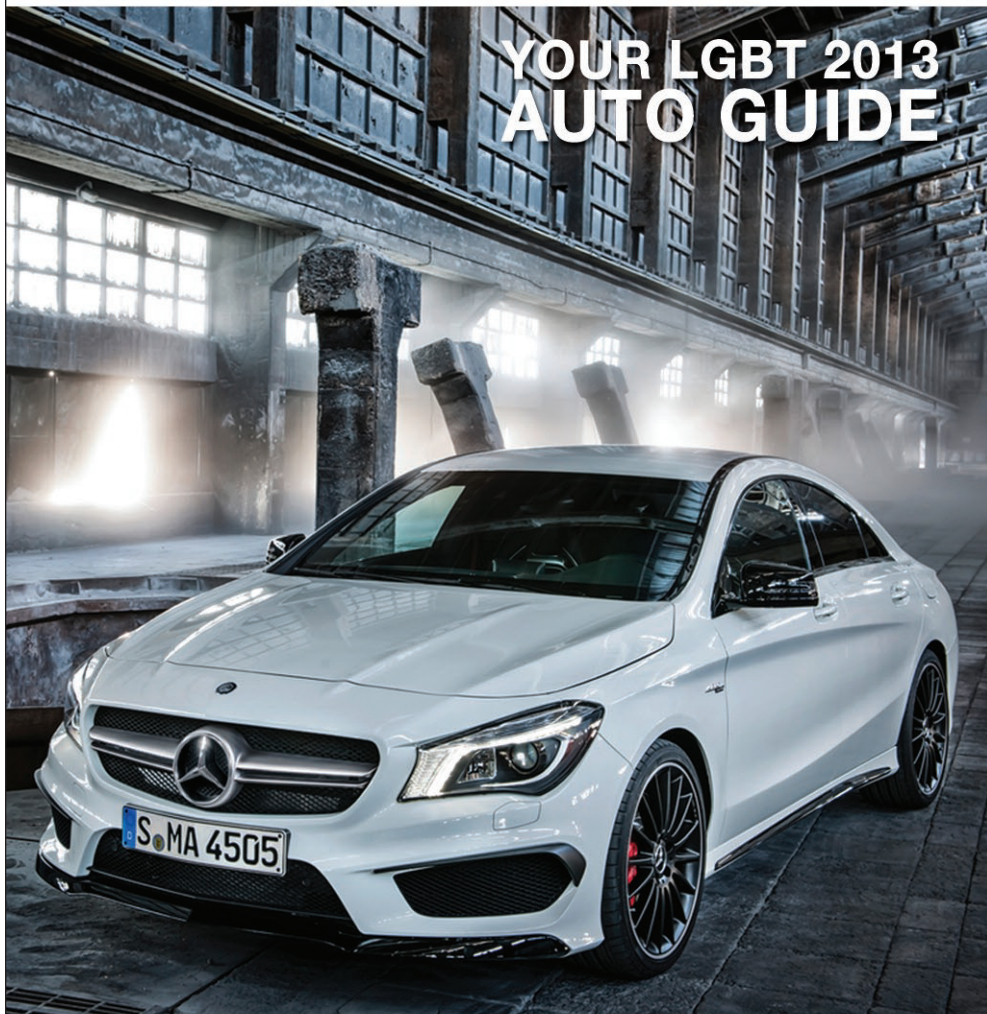
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L+S screen

## The Gabrielle word

More than a decade after her iconic role on 'Xena,' Texan Renee O'Connor plays in a contemporary story about family that hits home

JONANNA WIDNER | Contributing Writer  
jonanna.widner@gmail.com

If you were a lesbian in the 1990s, it's virtually certain that you remember actress Renee O'Connor. She played Gabrielle, the ass-kicker with a heart of gold and trusty sidekick of Xena (Lucy Lawless), the title character in the cult television show *Xena: Warrior Princess*. Since then, she's started her own production company (ROC), played various roles in movies and plays, been divorced, re-married and had two children. She's also written and directed films.

But, of course, for our purposes, let's begin with what's important: She's a Texan.

You might not know that from *Xena*. Born in Houston and raised in Katy, O'Connor moved to New Zealand, where *Xena* was filmed, in the mid-'90s, and she notes the experience distilled both the good and bad of growing up in the Lone Star State.

"The expansiveness of the country ... I remember growing up and everyone said Texas is its own country," she says. "I never quite saw the irony of that statement until much, much later, especially when I lived overseas for such a long time, during a very pivotal time, the 1990s. To be brutally honest, there were times I lived overseas that I was kind of unwilling to say I was from Texas."

She got over it (more on that in a bit), and it's a good thing, too, as O'Connor returned home to take on a primary role in the indie film *Beyond the Farthest Star*, a feature filmed entirely in

Texas. The faith-based movie's plot revolves around a preacher who must choose between his family and fame as a TV evangelist. O'Connor plays Maureen, the preacher's wife.

It took more than a little while to get the independently-made film completed. Dallas Voice last interviewed O'Connor about the project in 2010, when she was doing principal photography in North Texas. *Beyond the Farthest Star* finally receives its Texas premiere this weekend, with a red carpet opening in Plano Friday at which O'Connor will be in attendance.

"It's a story of a family who stops relating to each other," she says. "They do not know how to communicate, they move inside this house in complete isolation, and I found that extremely sad. So when I read the script, I was moved by the transformation the characters go through, I found it compelling."

Over the years, O'Connor's been very honest about growing up in a house with a stepfather who was both physically and emotionally abusive, and she found connections between her experience and her role in the movie.

"The underlying feel in this script and with Maureen is a sense of shame, of imperfection and it just feels like a burden on her heart. For more, growing up in a situation with domestic violence, you always had this feeling that you were different from everybody else, so I related to Maureen," she says.

**XENAPHILE** | Renee O'Connor — Gabrielle on 'Xena' — plays a woman hiding a devastating secret in 'Beyond the Brightest Star,' opening today.







### QUEER CLIP: 'Carrie'

Brian DePalma's 1976 film *Carrie* is most memorable now, nearly four decades later, for three things. 1. Its campy sense of humor. 2. A twist ending that rattles you. 3. A dreamy opening sequence where teenager Carrie White, innocently but joyously exploring her body in a high school locker room shower, experiences her first menstrual cycle, panics, and becomes a laughing stock of the cool girls in her class.

In the new remake, director Kimberly Peirce pushes the shower sequence back a little bit, instead opening with an even bloodier sequence: Carrie's birth, as horrific as the one from *Breaking Dawn*.

It's a fitting metaphor for all of the disturbing, bloodsoaked imagery that Peirce and screenwriters Lawrence D. Cohen and Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa conjure in this creepy but fitting take on a classic of modern horror. They hardly need to fiddle with the formula, and they don't — King's story is an almost elegantly simple tale of teen angst built around the microcosm of prom night. A little YouTube, some more explicit lesbianism, and we're good.

But that's *Carrie's* curse: The filmmakers cleave so close to the source, the film can frighten but it cannot surprise. It's effective but less stylish than DePalma's split screens. Peirce, instead, uses multiple angles during the "drenching" scene, and it plays more like homage than a reimagined take on the original.

Peirce is no stranger to violence and humiliation against teenagers. She cut her teeth with the Oscar-winning drama *Boys Don't Cry*, and her *Carrie*, appropriately updated to 2013, takes on a subtext of bullying that gains potency in a post-Tyler Clementi America.

Chloe Grace Moretz, among the most self-possessed of child actresses (she plays the ballsy superheroine Hit-Girl in the *Kick-Ass* movies) projects *Carrie's* skittish fragility well — perhaps too well, as there's little development in her character in the first half. That changes when hunky teen Tommy (Ansel Elgort) invites her to prom, and *Carrie* blossoms. Sissy Spacek's prom queen always seemed awkward and deluded; Moretz gives *Carrie* the promise of fitting in, only to have that ripped away from her. (Julianne Moore's crazed, fanatical Mrs. White has less of the spoof about her than Piper Laurie did, which makes her slightly more terrifying.)

If nothing else, this *Carrie* proves that King tapped into something universal about teen thoughts of revenge and justice. Who'd've thought the tale was so timeless?

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Two-and-a-half stars. Now playing.

Speaking with O'Connor, you get the feeling that she's come to terms with the pain caused by her childhood, and in fact that she's developed into a kind, compassionate person (case in point: she's still good friends with her ex-husband) — characteristics that, in fact, could be used to describe her character in *Xena*.

It's easy to sort of forget, but that show, in all its campy, humor-filled glory, was practically revolutionary. Of course, there was the barely concealed subtext that *Xena* and Gabrielle were lovers (in an era when portrayals of queer couples on television were rare), but even more than that, there was the basic fact that this was an hour-long show that didn't center on men at all.

"There was a beautiful sense of love and friendship and honesty and growth between two women that was never seen on television before," O'Connor says.

The words "honesty" and "growth" swing us right back around to O'Connor's thoughts about Texas and how they reflect her own personal journey. This go-around, her time filming in Texas gave her, she says, "a sense of comfort." She notes that her attitude in the '90s has a larger context, one that envelops several themes, from her upbringing to her latest role.

"It plays right into that sense of shame," O'Connor says. "I didn't see the bigger picture, that we don't have to own it. The things that people can't hold for themselves, that they can't be accountable for themselves, we don't have to own that. And it took me a long time to realize that." ■

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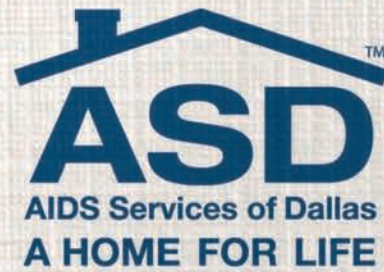


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## LIFE+STYLE

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### Saturday 10.19

#### 'Drag Race' champ Jinkx Monsoon to appear at Gaybingo

Jinkx Monsoon was an early fan favorite on Season 5 of RuPaul's Drag Race, and although she was never part of the in-crowd, her goofy persona and clever, comic turn impressed Ru and the judges as much as her fans, winning the title Next Drag Superstar! Well, you can see her skills in person on Saturday, as she arrives as special guest performer for Gaybingo at its Scarytales pre-Halloween edition at the Rose Room, in a show benefiting, as always, Resource Center.

**DEETS:** The Rose Room inside Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Doors 5 p.m., curtain 6 p.m. \$25-\$30. RCDallas.org.



### Friday 10.18

#### IGRA's World Gay Rodeo Finals ride into Cowtown

The International Gay Rodeo Association is the preeminent organization overseeing gay cowboys, if you don't count guys who hang out at the Round-Up Saloon. It's October, so that means the World Gay Rodeo Finals are here, and once again will be whooping it up in Fort Worth. The weekend-long event continues through Sunday, with bull riders, bronc busters, ropers and assorted lariat-throwing cowboy and cowgirls showing their skills ... and their butts in tight Wranglers. Either way, it's exciting.

**DEETS:** John Justin Arena at the Will Rogers Coliseum 3401 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. Oct. 18-20. GayCowboyCentral.com/gay\_events.

### Friday 10.18

#### 'Avenue Q' returns to Theatre Too, with new cast member

Theater, not just politics, makes for strange bedfellows. Consider: For more than year, Matt Purvis played Rod and Princeton in Theatre Too's production of the hit *Avenue Q*. When the show closed this summer, Purvis moved on to *Altar Boyz* at Theatre Arlington. Now, *Avenue Q* is back for a five-week run, and Rod/Princeton will now be played by Angel Velasco ... Purvis' co-star in *Altar Boyz*. Maybe they shared some idea about how to do the musical, in which puppets interact with humans in sassy ways. Even if not, we'll still be there to see most of the original cast reunite. Again.

**DEETS:** Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. Oct. 18-Nov. 24. Theatre3Dallas.com.

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## calendar highlights

### ARTSWEEK: NOW PLAYING

#### THEATER

**A Raisin in the Sun.** Dallas Theater Center presents the acclaimed classic by lesbian author Lorraine Hansberry about an African-American family striving for the American Dream. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through Oct. 27. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

**Clybourne Park.** This racy, unofficial sequel to *A Raisin in the Sun* follows up with the white folks on the other side of the story; Tony winner for best play. Reviewed this week. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through Oct. 27. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

**Assassins.** Stephen Sondheim's acclaimed musical about infamous killers. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through Oct. 27. Theatre3Dallas.com.

**Avenue Q.** The foul-mouthed, gayish musical returns to Theatre Too, with most of the original Dallas cast intact, plus Angel Velasco as Princeton/Rod. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Oct. 18–Nov. 24. Theatre3Dallas.com.

**Dante: Inferno.** Mark-Brian Sonna's fall Halloween show, a revival of his take on *Inferno*. Stone Cottage Theatre, 15650 Addison Road. Through Nov. 3. \$23–\$25. MBSProductions.net.

**Detroit.** Two couples, new neighbors, begin a friendship that veers out of control in this dark comedy, presented by Kitchen Dog Theater. The MAC, 3120 McKinney Ave. Through Oct. 26. KitchenDogTheater.org.

**Hank Williams: Lost Highway.** A revue about the country-western singer. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through Nov. 13. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

**Happy Days.** Beckett's bizarre, hilarious two-character dark comedy about a preternaturally perky woman.



**THE DEVIL MADE THEM DO IT** | 'Dante: Inferno' returns to the Stone Cottage Theatre in Addison.

Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Drive. Through Oct. 26. WingSpanTheatre.org.

**The Lion King.** The magnificent Disney production, featuring music by Elton John, returns, courtesy Dallas Summer Musicals. Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. Through Oct. 20. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

#### BALLET

**Romeo & Juliet.** Texas Ballet Theater begins its 2013–14 season with Ben Stevenson's version of the classic story. Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. Oct. 18–20. TexasBalletTheater.org.

#### FINE ART

**Jim Hodges: Give More Than You Take.** A living retrospective of the gay artist's eclectic work. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Jan. 12. Special exhibition fee: \$16. DallasMuseumofArt.org.

**Ai Weiwei: Circle of Animals.** The controversial Chinese artist reimagines zodiac figures of the Chang dynasty. Crow Collection of Asian Art, 2010 Flora St. Free. CrowCollection.org.



### 'Clybourne Park:' Agent provocateur

It's hard to tell if playwright Bruce Norris, who wrote the unofficial sequel to *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Clybourne Park*, is practicing serious social science or merely kicking a hornet's nest. In Act 1 of the play, which the DTC is running in rep with *Raisin*, we see Karl Lindner (Steven Walters), the only white guy in *Raisin* who tried to buy out the Younger family, unraveling in his white suburban enclave. He's genuinely concerned that if the races mix, it will be the death knell for the perfect little utopia he and his kind have built, triggering White Flight. He seems like a seething racist. Then in Act 2, he's shown to have been right all along.

That's a bold position to take: Implying that once the Younger family invaded suburbia, they brought with them crack dens and lack of pride in ownership, leaving the neighborhood to be rescued only when, 50 years later, the young whites return when low prices and a sense of vision will permit opportunistic gentrification ... not exactly P.C.

It's hard to resolve whether Norris truly is as cyni-

cal as the plot dictates, but ultimately, the race issues are subsumed by a greater discussion about economic inequality and the tyranny of social norms. Telling someone to "fuck off" in the 1950s?! Unheard of! ... and yet it happened. And the language gets coarser (and more hilariously inappropriate) as the play grinds on.

The family who sold the house to the Youngers never appear in *Raisin*; here, they are front and center, with a heartbreaking backstory that makes the sale seem less an act of defiance than a last-ditch effort at sanity. That feeling is reinforced by Chamblee Ferguson's breathtakingly fragile performance as a father crushed by the death of his son, and Sally Nystuen Vahle's feathery voice, nearly broken from years of walking on eggshells. Walters humanizes Lindner even as you detest him. *Clybourne Park* does push a lot of buttons, but its portrayal of how quick people are to be offended softens the blow.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through Oct. 27. Oct. 26, High Tech Happy Hour Day, comes with a 15 percent discount, code HITECHCLYB.





**PUMPKIN TIME** | The Turtle Creek Association's annual Pumpkins in the Park event returns Saturday.

## FRIDAY 10.18

### RODEO

**World Gay Rodeo Finals.** Will Rogers Coliseum, 3401 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. Oct. 18–20. GayCowboyCentral.com.

### COMMUNITY

#### Dick's Happy Hour: Season 2 Launch Party.

The gay mixer kicks off its second year with a new format: Every month a new location. DJ Mike James spins at Sisu Uptown, 2508 Maple Ave. 6:10 p.m. No cover, but RSVP at DHH1018.eventbrite.com.

**State Fair of Texas.** The month-long event continues at Fair Park. Open daily through Sunday. BigTex.org.

**Dark Hour Haunted House.** 701 Taylor Drive. Weekends through Nov. 2. DarkHourHauntedHouse.com

**Screams.** The Halloween theme park introduces the Hotel of Horror for its annual frightfest. Screams, 2511 FM 66, Waxahachie. Open weekends through Oct. 27. \$27. ScreamsPark.com.

## SATURDAY 10.19

### DINING

**A Feathered Affair.** The Gay & Lesbian Fund for Dallas presents this foodie event that includes bites from chefs like Abraham Salum (Komali and Salum), Nathan Tate (Boulevardier) and Jeff Harris (Bolsa). Trinity River Audubon Center, 6500 Great Trinity Forest Way. 7–11 p.m. \$75. GLFD.org.

### COMMUNITY

**Pumpkins in the Park.** The Turtle Creek Association, which preserves the Uptown corridor along the creek, holds its fourth annual event, with food trucks, activities, pumpkin purchases and more. Intersection of Hall Street and Turtle Creek Boulevard. 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Free. TurtleCreekAssociation.org.

### FUNDRAISER

**Evening of Hope Gala.** The iconic '90s alt-rockers Gin Blossoms perform at this benefit for the charity Hope's Door, which fights domestic violence. Hotel InterContinental, 15201 Dallas Parkway. 7 p.m. \$175. HopesDoorInc.org.

## SUNDAY 10.20

### PETS

**SPCA of Texas 75th Anniversary Celebration.** The SPCA of Texas, which protects animals, commemorates its 75th birthday with a free party that includes food, activities, photos, a pumpkin patch — and, of course, animal adoptions. Jan Rees-Jones Animal Care Center, 2400 Lone Star Drive. Noon–3 p.m. SPCA.org.

### FOOD

**Texas Veggie Fair.** The annual dog-friendly celebration of vegan food and culture returns to Reverchon Park, 3505 Maple Ave. 11 a.m.–6 p.m. Free admission. TexasVeggieFair.com.

### FINE ART

#### Nasher Sculpture Center 10th Anniversary

**Commemoration.** The museum turns a decade, and in addition to the official debut of all the 10 citywide art projects via NasherXChange, the museum will be open free all day with extended hours and events planned almost hourly. 2001 Flora St. 10 a.m.–10 p.m. Free. NasherSculptureCenter.org.

## WEDNESDAY 10.23

### THEATER

**Tony n' Tina's Wedding.** The interactive play and party simulates an actual wedding, with the audience as the guests becoming part of the fun. A sit-down dinner "reception" is included. McDavid Studio at Bass Hall, 525 Commerce St. Oct. 23–27. BassHall.com.

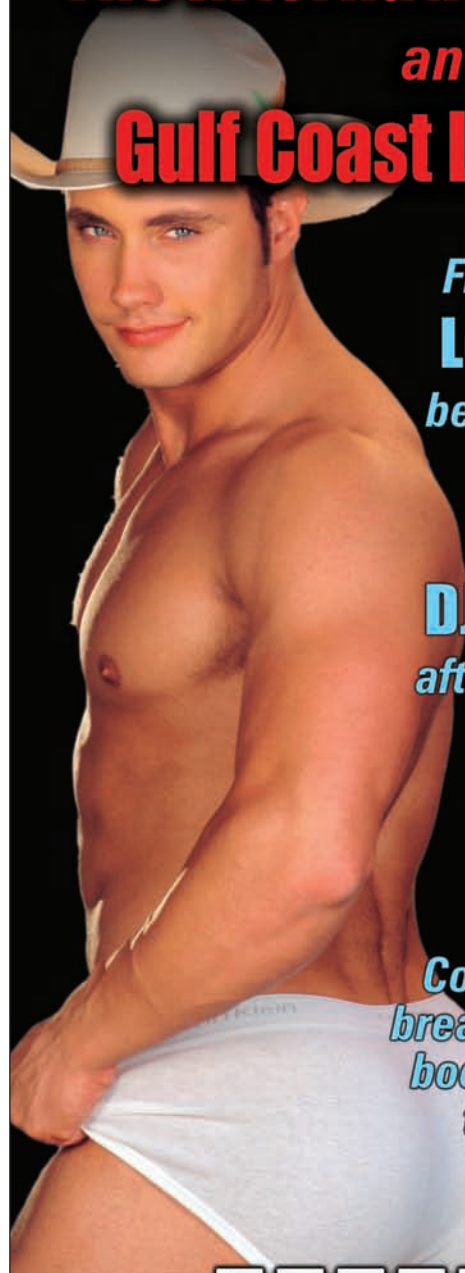
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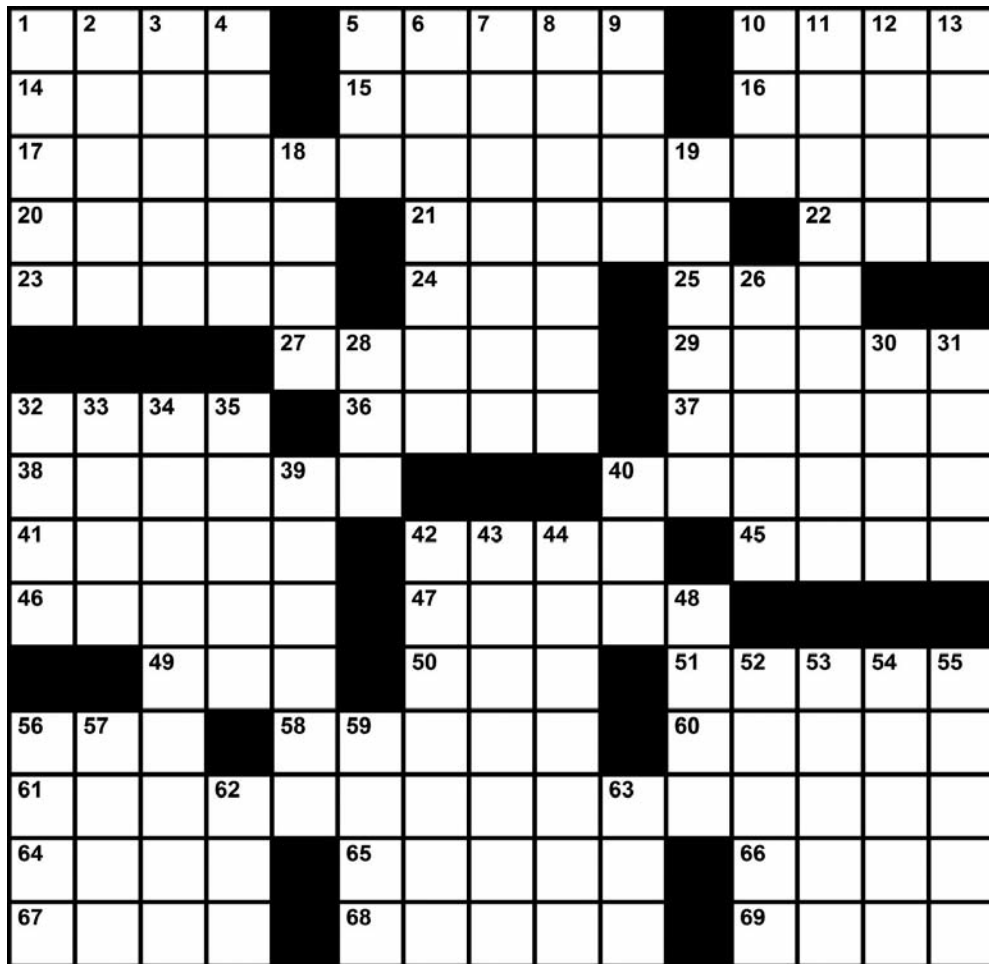
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# Queens of Diamonds

Solution on page 29

**Across**

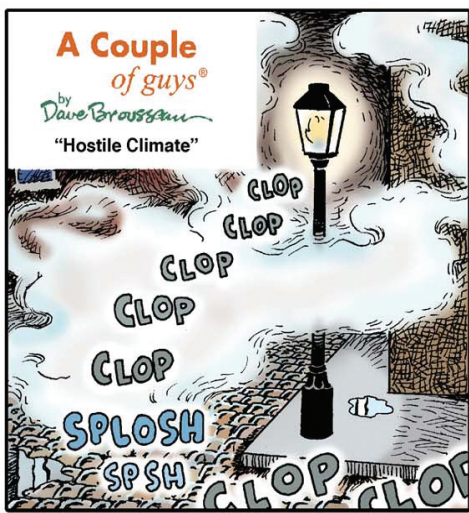
- 1 *Ed Wood* role
- 5 Infection fighter
- 10 James VI, e.g.
- 14 Bard's river
- 15 More shifty
- 16 Island of Diamond Head Beach
- 17 "\_\_\_ diamonds" (Elizabeth)
- 20 Sexual favors obtained while surfing?
- 21 Palindromic form of address
- 22 Acapulco article
- 23 Nathan and family
- 24 Prez who shared a bed with Joshua Speed
- 25 Chemical suffix
- 27 Mary Tyler Moore's costar Ed
- 29 Josh of *The Deep End*
- 32 Cathedral of Hope area
- 36 Homes away from home
- 37 Ill-suited
- 38 Elizabeth
- 40 Marilyn
- 41 Parish priest
- 42 Bear that may be a minor
- 45 Network for armchair athletes
- 46 "*Mary*" and "*Nelly*," e.g.

47 "Unhand me!"

- 49 Spring month for Debussy
- 50 Sex Crimes division, to B.D. Wong
- 51 The Village People's kind of man
- 56 I problem
- 58 Weird Al Yankovic song about oral sex?
- 60 Yearned
- 61 "Diamonds are a \_\_\_" (Marilyn)
- 64 Tickled-pink feeling
- 65 Prickly bush
- 66 "Bet you can't," e.g.
- 67 Give some lip
- 68 Houston hurler
- 69 Direction from Rick Rodgers

**Down**

- 1 Tower of many tongues
- 2 Madonna title role
- 3 Screenwriter John of *Sweeney Todd*
- 4 Rolling Stones' hit of 1973
- 5 Cold War abbreviation
- 6 Liv of *Persona*
- 7 Edith Eyde pseudonym
- 8 Sites of auto dents
- 9 Kind of code or rug
- 10 Gay guy, to Brits
- 11 Way to go, in San Francisco
- 12 John Goodman's *Normal*, \_\_\_
- 13 Harbor pushers
- 18 Ingrid's *Casablanca* role
- 19 Estevez of *Bobby*
- 26 *My Favorite Wife* costar Irene
- 28 Elton John's title
- 30 Per person
- 31 Tommy's gun
- 32 Many P-town beach vehicles
- 33 Beach toy
- 34 Graceful trees
- 35 *Riverfinger Women* writer Dykewomon
- 39 Wild parties
- 40 The Advocate, briefly
- 42 Heavy coats
- 43 Come back to
- 44 Type of step
- 48 Barbra's *Funny Girl* guy
- 52 Etching fluids
- 53 Unfaithful lover
- 54 Painter Matisse
- 55 More queer
- 56 Omelet ingredients
- 57 Arizona river
- 59 "*Dancing Queen*" band
- 62 \_\_\_ Miz
- 63 To's partner







Jude and Jeff at the Round-Up Saloon.



Joe and Nathan at Station 4.

Crazy, outrageous and sexy costumes are encouraged at **BJ's NXSI** on Oct. 19 for **Welcome To Wonderland: Where Wonder Becomes Reality**. **DJ Stevie Ray** and **DJ C ROD** will tag team as they host the CD release party for **DJ C ROD** with specials all day. ... **Kathy Corbin & The Barefoot Hippies** and **Reno Roberts** open for **Kristy Lee** at **Sue Ellen's** on Oct. 18. **Anton Shaw** and **the Bang Ups** perform on Oct. 19. **Bad Habits** closes out the weekend on Oct. 20. ... **Crystal Ramon** performs at **Alexandre's** on Oct. 18. **Three Drunk Monkeys** are at the mike on Oct. 19. ... **JR.'s Bar & Grill** celebrates the release of **Donna Summer's** hit **Hot Stuff** reworked by **Frankie Knuckles** and **Eric Kupper** on Oct. 22 with exclusive downloads. ... Compete in **Mr. Darkside** at **Randy's Club Cherries** on Oct. 24. Open to all male performers and drag kings with a \$250 prize to the winner. ... **Mi Diva Loca** performs on the rooftop at **Eden Lounge** on Oct. 19. **Lone Star Ride** holds its wrap party on Oct. 20 at 3 p.m. with a rooftop performance by **David Cote**, awards presentation and recognitions and checks distributed to **AIDS Outreach Center**, **AIDS Services of Dallas** and **Resource Center**. ... **Gulf Coast Leather Sir/boy & Community Bootblack Contest Weekend** takes place at the **Dallas Eagle** on Oct. 18-19. The meet and greet is on Friday night and the contest on Saturday night. Voting continues for the **United Court of the Lone Star Empire** on Oct. 18 and presents a show on Oct. 20. **DFW Leather Corps** holds a seminar on Oct. 19. ... Get ready for next week's big **Halloween Block Party**. ■

To view more Scene photos, go to [DallasVoice.com/Category/Photos](http://DallasVoice.com/Category/Photos).



Butta, Rocky and Street at BJ's NXSI!



Tim and Thom DeWitt and Steven Pace at the Great Gatsby fundraising party for AIDS Interfaith Network.





A.J. at the Tin Room.



Joe and Jason at the Rainbow Lounge.



Jason and A.J. at the Dallas Eagle.



Mikey at TMC: The Mining Company.



Stephanie and Domino at Sue Ellen's.

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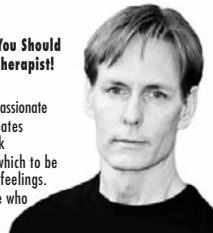
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