

Outsmart

SEPT. '19

HOUSTON'S LGBTQ MAGAZINE



PLUS

TUTS' DAN KNECHTGES
BRINGS BROADWAY TO THE BAYOU CITY
Pg.74

REP. GARNET COLEMAN
COMMUNITY WARRIOR AND ALLY
Pg.48

ANTONIO ARELLANO
RUNS TEXAS' LARGEST LATINO CIVIC-ENGAGEMENT ORGANIZATION
Pg.40

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT ISSUE

KINGS OF HOUSTON

DRAG ISN'T JUST FOR QUEENS ANYMORE

Hugh Dandy
H-Town Kings cast member
Pg.54

A CHORUS LINE

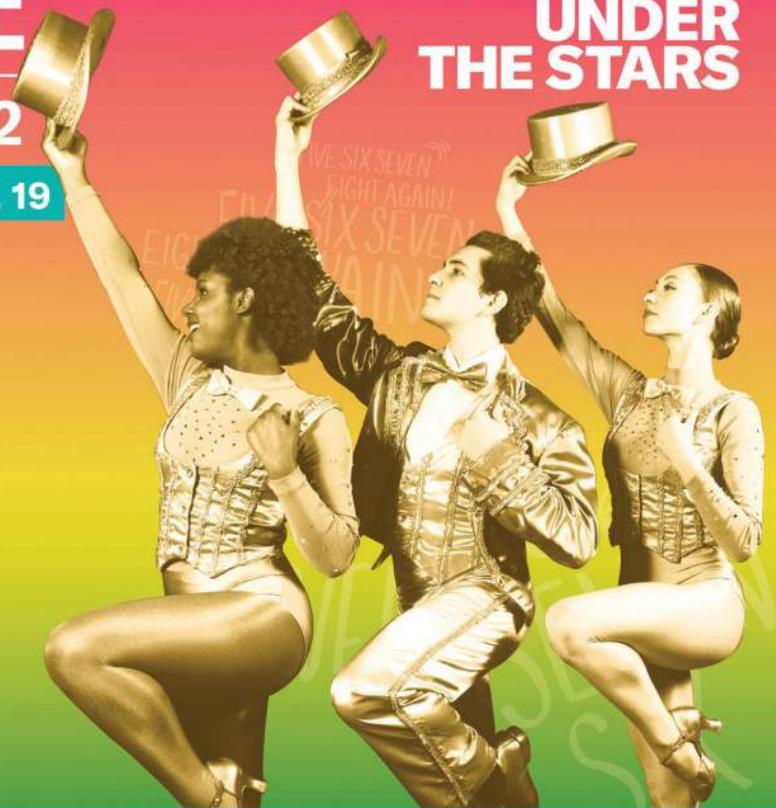
SEPTEMBER 10 – 22

OUT@TUTS AFTERPARTY THUR. SEPT. 19

HOUSTON'S PREMIERE NIGHT OUT FOR LGBTQ
MUSICAL THEATRE FANS,
HOSTED BY REGINA BLAKE-DUBOIS!

TUTS.COM/OUT

THEATRE
UNDER
THE STARS



SPRING AWAKENING

OCTOBER 8 – 20

OUT@TUTS AFTERPARTY THUR. OCT. 17

TUTS.COM/OUT



RECOMMENDED FOR MATURE AUDIENCES.
CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE AND ADULT THEMES.

GET TICKETS AT TUTS.COM OR CALL 713.558.8887

SEASON SPONSORS



OUT@TUTS SPONSORS



THE EYE GALLERY

THE SEMI-ANNUAL
SAMPLE SALE IS HERE!

FROM 8/29-9/29

UP TO 60% OFF ALL IN-STOCK FRAMES



EYEGALLERYHOUSTON.COM

1806 WESTHEIMER RD - RIVER OAKS

713.523.1279

1700 POST OAK BLVD - POST OAK (NEXT TO WHOLE FOODS)
POST OAK LOCATION NOW OPEN SUNDAYS!

713.622.7470



74



54



40



78



82

54 COVER STORY

KINGS OF HOUSTON

Drag-king group proves to be a local fan favorite.

38

A SENIORS' HAVEN

LOAF provides much-needed social support for lesbian women

40

MAN OF ACTION

Antonio Arellano leads the largest Latino civic-engagement organization in Texas

44

HOUSTON'S VERY 'MODERN FAMILY'

PFLAG President Janice Anderson is proud of her three LGBTQ children

48

A COMMUNITY WARRIOR AND ALLY

Rep. Garnet Coleman reflects on his three decades in the Texas Legislature

52

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK

Longtime LGBTQ activist and radio star Jack Valinski leads KPFT into a new era

60

SONG FOR DAD

Musical fundraiser David James Barron is Daddy of Montrose 2019

62

PERU AND THE CITY

Gay actor and writer Peru Flores discovers Houston's vibrant theater scene

66

CREATIVITY IN MOTION

Meet Matt Johns, the man behind the experiential art

68

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

OUTSMART's fall 2019 guide

74

BRINGING BROADWAY TO THE BAYOU CITY

Dan Knechtges scores major achievements as TUTS' artistic director

78

SHAPED BY THE SOUTH

Gay Texas-born Eugene Lee Yang uses online stardom to advocate for underrepresented communities

80

'A CHORUS LINE'

Houston native Logan Keslar plays Bobby in the TUTS musical

82

COMEDY WITH A CAUSE

Stand-up artist Kari Burt discusses blackness, gender, and sexuality in the era of Trump

84

TEXAS-SIZED TALENT

Montrose-raised Lovie Olivia explores being a black queer woman through visual art

86

FROM BAD TO BEAUTIFUL

Queer sculptor Damon Thomas creates art in the face of adversity

90

UNMASKING MASCULINITY

Filmmaker Brian Ellison gets men talking about the pain of "toxic masculinity"

92

RAISING HELL

Houston film producer helps bring Lone Star legend Molly Ivins to the big screen

95

WEDDING GUIDE

Fit couple: healthcare professionals Jeff Benavides and John Ramirez married 12 years after first meeting

PrEP

IS FOR EVERYONE

PrEP decreases the risk of contracting HIV by more than 90%.
Whether or not you have insurance, PrEP may be available with no
out-of-pocket cost.

**Talk with your healthcare provider to find out if
PrEP is right for you.**

Avita

PHARMACY

avitapharmacy.com



DEPARTMENTS

NEWS & COMMENT

13 NEWS

26 LEFT OUT

Not just dumb . . . but fancy-dumb

30 UNAPOLOGETICALLY TRANS

School days: have a wonderful 2019-2020 school year

32 MONEY SMART

Does Uncle Sam want to tap your retirement savings? Yes, thanks to the SECURE Act

36 TIME OUT

OutSMART's readers and recommendations

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

102 QUEER QUOTES

Kathy Griffin, Joshua Rush, Chen Arieli, and Rammstein

OUT & ABOUT

104 OUT THERE

106 BAR/CLUB GUIDE

112 SIGN OUT

114 SCENE OUT

ADVERTISERS INDEX

108 ADVERTISERS

110 CLASSIFIED MARKETPLACE



SOUTH SHORE HARBOUR
resort & conference center

HOST YOUR NEXT CONFERENCE WITH US!



PLAN YOUR EVENT

Corporate Meetings | Training Sessions | Experienced Meeting Planners | On-site Catering and Banquet Services | 25,000 Square Feet of Flexible State-of-the-art Meeting Space



2500 South Shore Blvd. League City, TX 77573

Located halfway between Houston and Galveston, one mile from Kemah Boardwalk

SSHR.COM
281-334-1000



GET HIRED!
Energy Recruiting and Outsourcing Firm

POPPI Z MELERA
Managing Director



5353 W. Alabama #300
Houston, TX 77056
713-877-8582 x104

zfirm-us.com
poppizmelera@zfirm-us.com
ICE: Poppi Melera



the **Z** firm
Energy Recruiting + Staffing

ON THE COVER



KINGS OF HOUSTON
Photography by ASHKAN ROAYEE
Art direction by ALEX ROSA
Drag king Hugh Dandy was photographed at Pearl Bar Houston prior to the H-Town Kings' weekly performance show. Pg. 54



Mitchell Gold
+ Bob Williams **30**

THIRTY YEARS OF DESIGN AND INNOVATION

HIGHLAND VILLAGE | MGBWHOME.COM

COLINA HOMES

BUILDING IN
MID-TOWN, HEIGHTS,
GARDEN OAKS, & GALLERIA



- Single - family home with balcony and backyards
- 2 and 3 story homes
- Chef's Kitchen with double sided cabinet prep-island

Call today to schedule an appointment to view these beautiful homes.

STARTING AT
\$318,990



WWW.COLINAHOMES.COM/INNER-CITY-1

Inner City Living | (281) 410-2776
innercityliving@colinahomes.com

NOW PUBLISHING IN OUR 26TH YEAR!

OutSmart

Houston's LGBTQ Magazine

Publisher/Editor-in-Chief Greg Jeu
Associate Publisher Tom Fricke

Creative Director Alex Rosa
Entertainment Editor Blase DiStefano
Assistant Editor Lourdes Zavaleta
Copy Editor Howard Maple

Web Editor Lourdes Zavaleta

Contributing Writers

Omar Afra, Rich Arenschielt, Bill Arning, Susan Bankston, Jenny Block, Sam Byrd, Andrew Edmonson, Steven Foster, Olivia Flores Alvarez, Sarah Gish, David Goldberg, Martin Gonzalez, DL Groover, Marene Gustin, Kim Hogstrom, James Hurst, Lisa Keen, Ryan M. Leach, Don Maines, Zachary McKenzie, Joanna O'Leary, Monica Roberts, Lilly Roddy, Terri Schlichenmeyer, Gregg Shapiro, Janice Stensrude, Henry V. Thiel, Megan Wadding, Brandon Wolf, Grace S. Yung

Photographers/Illustrators

Edgardo Aguilar, Dalton DeHart, Mark S. McCray, Theresa DiMenno, David Eduardo Flores Perez, Ashkan Roayae, Yvonne Feece

Account Executives

Jack Berger, Joanna Jackson

National Advertising Representative

Rivendell Media - 212.242.6863

OutSmart Media Company

Publishers of OutSmart Magazine
3406 Audubon Place • Houston, TX 77006
713.520.7237 • 713.522.3275 Fax

Subscriptions: \$30/12 Issues, \$58/24 Issues

E-mail: letters@outsmartmagazine.com

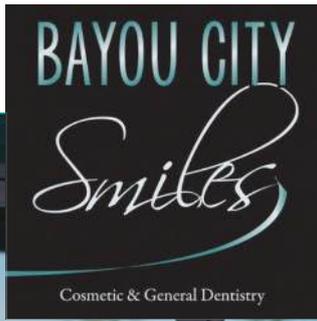
Website: OutSmartMagazine.com

OUTSMART is published monthly. Estimated readership in Houston and surrounding areas is 60,000. OutSmart Media Company is not responsible for claims and practices of advertisers. The opinions and views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the staff or management of OUTSMART. Inclusion in OUTSMART does not imply sexual orientation. ©2019 by OutSmart Media Company. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without permission of the publisher is strictly prohibited. Unsolicited material is accepted. No manuscript returned without SASE.



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF KEEPING HOUSTON SMILING!

UNCOMPROMISING EXCELLENCE in DENTISTRY



Dr. Marcus de Guzman

Dr. Cynthia Corral



Voted Top Dentists by Outsmart Readers | Dr. Cynthia Corral Voted Best Female Dentist by Outsmart Readers

FREE Whitening- for Life!

Veneers, Implants, Esthetic Fillings & Smile Makeover | In House Financing
Your Dentist is Certified in Oral Conscious Sedation | Most Insurance Accepted

BAYOU CITY SMILES
Cosmetic & General Dentistry
713.518.1411



Arts District @ Sawyer Yards
2313 Edwards St., Ste. 150
Houston, TX 77007

BAYOUCITYSMILES.COM



One pill. Once a day. Prevent HIV.



GET TESTED

Know your status! Testing is the only way to know if you have HIV. No matter what your test results are, you can take steps to help protect your health. FREE, FAST and CONFIDENTIAL HIV testing is available at Legacy.

Visit:
legacycommunityhealth.org/gettested
to learn how easy it is to get tested!

GET PrEP

Talk to a Legacy Pharmacist about the steps to getting PrEP for the prevention of HIV. PrEP is an FDA-approved medication that, when taken once daily, offers people who do not have HIV a powerful way to protect themselves. PrEP significantly reduces the risk of contracting HIV.

Talk to a Legacy Pharmacist today to learn if PrEP is right for you and the steps needed to get PrEP!

GET TREATMENT

Starting and staying on treatment can help a person with HIV live a longer and healthier life. Treatment also lowers the amount of virus in an individual's system which helps prevent the spread of HIV to others.

Legacy has been providing expert care to people living with HIV for almost 40 years and we're ready to care for you too!

Legacy Pharmacy - Montrose
1415 California Street
Houston, TX 77006
(713) 665 8800

Legacy Pharmacy - Fifth Ward
3811 Lyons Avenue
Houston, TX 77020
(713) 366 7400



Caring and supportive Pharmacists | Personalized health and wellness coaching
One-on-one medication counseling | PrEP Assistance
Health screenings | Vaccinations | Easy prescription refills | Shorter wait times

BEFORE

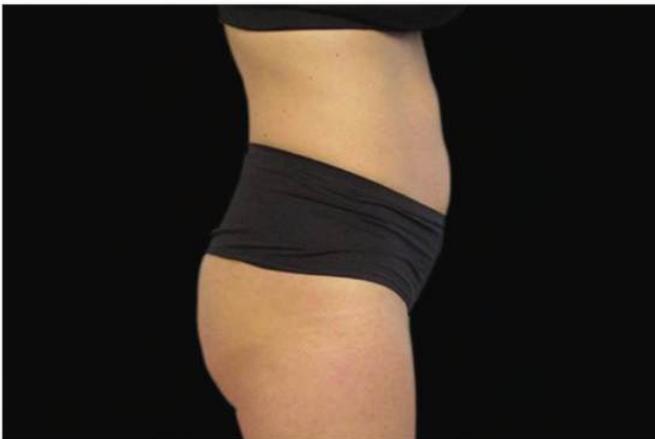


AFTER EMSCULPT



AFTER 4th TREATMENT, COURTESY OF: ANITA STURNHAM, M.D.

BEFORE



AFTER EMSCULPT



12 WEEKS AFTER 4th TREATMENT, COURTESY OF: MICHAELA PERSKY, M.D.

The **EMSCULPT** is the only procedure to help both women and men build muscle and sculpt their body. In addition, the **EMSCULPT** creates the world's first non-invasive buttock toning procedure. It uses electromagnetic energy to contract muscles, just like you would at the gym. A quick, but moderately uncomfortable, 20-minute session is equivalent to literally tens of thousands of sit-ups and can be used to strengthen both ab and butt muscles.



**VISIT WEST AVE
PLASTIC SURGERY**

713.559.9300
2800 Kirby Drive, Suite B-212
Houston, TX 77098
westaveplasticsurgery.com

FORREST ROTH, M.D.
WEST AVE PLASTIC SURGERY

OUT OF THE CLOSET[®].org

THRIFT STORE • PHARMACY • FREE HIV TESTING



Win this Buddy Scooter!*

Take a FREE HIV Test
for a Chance to Win

Now Open!

1435 WESTHEIMER RD

* See www.outofthecloset.org/contest for full rules and regulations.
No donation, payment or purchase necessary.

Houston Walk for Mental Health Awareness

Founder Patrick McIlvain discusses stigmas surrounding neuropsychiatric illness prior to this year's event.

By ZACHARY MCKENZIE



Becoming Visible

Houston Walk for Mental Health Awareness founder Patrick McIlvain (c) is surrounded by supporters. Plan now for the 2019 Walk, which takes place on Saturday, October 12.

Standing in front of news cameras less than 24 hours after 31 people were murdered by acts of gun violence in El Paso and Dayton, President Donald Trump suggested that those vile acts were due, in large part, to mental illness. “Mental illness and hatred pull the trigger, not the gun,” Trump stated on live television.

Mental illness continues to be stigmatized by many in politics and the media, leading to many misconceptions about the root causes of our nation's epidemic of gun violence.

2019 marks the ninth year for the Houston Walk for Mental Health Awareness, and its founder, Patrick McIlvain, a Vietnam-era veteran, is hoping to combat the recent negative statements in the press while also fostering an environment of safety, growth, and camaraderie.

“We are trying to get away from using the term ‘mental illness.’ I inherited some ‘neuropsychiatric illnesses’ from both of my parents—depression, PTSD, paranoia,” McIlvain states, wearing a lime-green shirt with shoulder-length hair tucked behind his ears. “Many people [with neuropsychiatric illnesses] feel invisible. People talk around us, like we don’t have a voice or a right to speak up. After 30 years of therapy, I rediscovered that we all have a birthright to speak up and be heard,” he emphasizes.

McIlvain uses his personal experiences with neuropsychiatric illness to inspire others to speak openly and freely, and to advocate for themselves. “We do not know how to strongly advocate as a community. Historically, [mental-health services] are the first to be cut. When someone speaks from their own personal experience [in front of the Texas Legis-

lature],” McIlvain explains, “that energy is felt and it has a much better impact.”

The ongoing debate about mental health as it relates to gun violence is something McIlvain feels will be unofficially addressed at this year's event. “I think it's sad that the walk has to deviate from empowering to correcting, but I feel like I'm having to correct the false stigma that is there. It has only been intensified by what #45 is saying.”

Every time a politician makes a comment linking the all-encompassing term “mental health” to gun violence, there is an immediate ripple effect in the media. U.S. Representative Veronica Escobar has spoken out against the negative rhetoric: “I would also call on those who use ‘mental illness’ as an excuse [for gun violence] to please stop. Please stop.”

So much false information only adds fuel to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR BIKTARVY®

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

(bik-TAR-vee)

MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects, including:

- ▶ **Worsening of Hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you have both HIV-1 and HBV, your HBV may suddenly get worse if you stop taking BIKTARVY. Do not stop taking BIKTARVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check your health regularly for several months.

ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY is a complete, 1-pill, once-a-day prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults. It can either be used in people who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before, or people who are replacing their current HIV-1 medicines and whose healthcare provider determines they meet certain requirements.

BIKTARVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS. HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS.

Do NOT take BIKTARVY if you also take a medicine that contains:

- ▶ dofetilide
- ▶ rifampin
- ▶ any other medicines to treat HIV-1

BEFORE TAKING BIKTARVY

Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- ▶ Have or have had any kidney or liver problems, including hepatitis infection.
- ▶ Have any other health problems.
- ▶ Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if BIKTARVY can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- ▶ Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, antacids, laxatives, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- ▶ BIKTARVY and other medicines may affect each other. Ask your healthcare provider and pharmacist about medicines that interact with BIKTARVY, and ask if it is safe to take BIKTARVY with all your other medicines.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects, including:

- ▶ Those in the “Most Important Information About BIKTARVY” section.
- ▶ **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ **Kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys. If you develop new or worse kidney problems, they may tell you to stop taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious but rare medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, stomach pain with nausea and vomiting, cold or blue hands and feet, feel dizzy or lightheaded, or a fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- ▶ **Severe liver problems,** which in rare cases can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, or stomach-area pain.
- ▶ **The most common side effects of BIKTARVY** in clinical studies were diarrhea (6%), nausea (6%), and headache (5%).

These are not all the possible side effects of BIKTARVY. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking BIKTARVY.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.FDA.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Your healthcare provider will need to do tests to monitor your health before and during treatment with BIKTARVY.

HOW TO TAKE BIKTARVY

Take BIKTARVY 1 time each day with or without food.

GET MORE INFORMATION

- ▶ This is only a brief summary of important information about BIKTARVY. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more.
- ▶ Go to BIKTARVY.com or call 1-800-GILEAD-5.
- ▶ If you need help paying for your medicine, visit BIKTARVY.com for program information.



Get HIV support by downloading a free app at
MyDailyCharge.com

BIKTARVY, the BIKTARVY Logo, DAILY CHARGE, the DAILY CHARGE Logo, KEEP PUSHING, LOVE WHAT'S INSIDE, GILEAD, and the GILEAD Logo are trademarks of Gilead Sciences, Inc., or its related companies.
Version date: December 2018 © 2019 Gilead Sciences, Inc. All rights reserved. BVYC0102 01/19



BIKTARVY[®]
bictegravir 50mg/emtricitabine 200mg/
tenofovir alafenamide 25mg tablets

LOVE
WHAT'S
INSIDE[®]

KEEP PUSHING.

Because HIV doesn't change who you are.

BIKTARVY[®] is a complete, 1-pill, once-a-day prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in certain adults. **BIKTARVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.**

**Ask your healthcare provider if BIKTARVY is right for you.
To learn more, visit [BIKTARVY.com](https://www.biktarvy.com).**

Please see Important Facts about BIKTARVY, including important warnings, on the previous page and visit [BIKTARVY.com](https://www.biktarvy.com).



the fire, McIlvain says. “Those who repeat that rhetoric are only validating that belief, intensifying that belief, and reinforcing the shame and guilt that someone who has a mental challenge feels.” It’s a dialogue McIlvain is willing to engage in, in order to be the role model he had always looked for as a child. “I’m feeling an added pressure, an added burden. [Beyond just doing] the fundraising, now there’s a need to make sure people know that just because you have a neuropsychiatric illness, it doesn’t mean you will be a mass-murderer.”

While the conversation about mental health can become tense, the Houston Walk for Mental Health Awareness is all about solidarity. “The walk is about fun, freedom, empowerment, camaraderie, and friendship. That’s what’s on participants’ minds,” McIlvain notes with a smile stretching from ear to ear. “We’ve been blessed from the very first walk, [where] we had over 300 participants. It has stayed pretty consistent. Maybe this is the year we can do 500, but I am pleased that we have been a success from the very first walk.”

He also touts success stories that happen organically every year. At the end of the walk, for instance, volunteers are on hand to distribute medals of accomplishment to each participant. Each year, McIlvain stands in awe as each walker receives their symbol of

victory. “Many people with neuropsychiatric illnesses don’t like to be touched, so we instruct our volunteers to pick up on those signs. In the last eight years, we’ve never had one person refuse being draped with the medal. I think this really speaks to the power of the walk, and what we do.”

McIlvain lights up when asked about what the younger participants at the walk will experience. He has created a “Children’s Corner” interactive learning center for kids and their parents, and its tagline is “Developing healthy minds today for the future.”

“The Children’s Corner is for toddlers up to 15 year olds. We talk about body image, depression, and more. All of these things start in kindergarten or first grade—the judging and bullying. We talk [with the kids and their parents] about using *kind* words.”

Another element of the walk is the “Nutrition Corner” with information about healthy diets. “We know a healthy diet is important for any kind of chronic illness,” he explains. “At the Nutrition Corner, restaurants donate food samples so people can see what a healthy meal looks and tastes like.” This has proven to be formative for McIlvain and his journey. “For me, with my social anxiety, after I get home [after a long day] I don’t have the energy to cook. These restaurants [provide me with easy meal ideas

so that] I know where to go.”

There is indeed something for everyone at this event. With a grin on his face, McIlvain boasts, “We even have a ‘Pup Tent’ for dogs on a leash.”

The important message that organizers and volunteers at this year’s walk want everyone to know is that neuropsychiatric illness is not a struggle, but a journey. “Neuropsychiatric illness can seem like the most powerful thing on Earth. When it senses that we are trying to gain control of our thoughts, it really digs those stiletto heels in and intensifies—[often leading to] your biggest fears coming true.”

McIlvain looks forward to another year of fun and personal breakthroughs at the 2019 Walk for Mental Health Awareness. Sitting up in his seat, he is quick to add, “And we have wonderful door prizes!”



What: The Walk for Mental Health Awareness

Where: Stude Park, 1031 Stude St.

When: Saturday, October 12. Registration at 7 am, Walk starts at 8 am, Mental Health Expo with door prizes is 9:30–11:00 am

Info: thehoustonwalk.org

NEWS CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MONTROSE CENTER

The Law Harrington Senior Living Center will serve thousands in need. AARP in Houston, like The Montrose Center, is committed to creating a new vision for aging—one complete with diverse stories and innovative ways for everyone to pursue their passions—equally, openly and proudly.



PRIDE
is ageless

Learn more at
aarp.org/pride.

AARP® Real Possibilities
Houston



Best
Getaway
EVER

#VISITLAKECHARLES

VISIT
Lake Charles

SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

VisitLakeCharles.org/NoLimits



Remembering Tracy Single

22-year-old Houston trans woman's death sparks grief, anger, and action.

By BRANDON WOLF

Tracy Single had an eye for fashion and an ear for music. The 22-year-old Houston transgender woman had a passion for working with fabrics and creating stylish clothing. Someday she wanted to become a part of Houston's rap music scene.

Instead, she became the latest statistic in the relentless violence against trans women of color.

During the early morning hours of July 30, Single's body was found in a gas station parking lot at 11009 Katy Freeway, near Wilcrest and I-10. Houston Police Department (HPD) homicide detectives determined that she died from a puncture wound and multiple lacerations.

Single's death marks the 16th murder of a trans individual this year in the U.S.—the 15th trans woman of color, and the 12th under the age of 30. It was the third murder of a trans woman of color this year in Texas.

An Energetic Spirit

Single was known by many in the Houston LGBTQ homeless youth population. She was a frequent visitor at two safe spaces in the area—Montrose Grace Place (MGP) and Tony's Place.

Courtney Sellers, MGP's executive director, says that Single grew up in the New Orleans area before moving to Houston. She was the oldest of six siblings.

Natalie Ferguson, an MGP direct volunteer, says that Single loved to go into the MGP clothing closet. "She could put together a great outfit from the random assortment of donations. During my last interaction with her, we had an activity to teach how to make bags out of T-shirts. But Tracy made a super-cute skirt and a halter top instead. That so encapsulated who she was—a very creative person."

Asia Foster, one of Single's close trans friends, says that Single began hormone treatments about two years ago. Her transition created tension at home, and Single moved out on her own. As she struggled to find a decent job, she felt that she was usually brushed off because she was trans. "She definitely did not want to get involved with drug dealing or survival sex. That was so not her," Foster says.

Madonna Land, program director at Tony's Place, recalls that Tracy always had a game



ASHA FOSTER/SIMPCHAT

Happier Times

Tracy Single (r) with close friend Asia Foster.

plan. "She was very clear that she didn't want to remain on the streets. She wanted to get employment and housing, and to be productive. She took advantage of any homeless resource that we offered. Tracy was the sweetest girl—very personable and charismatic. She was well-liked and supportive, and had lots of friends."

Single's mother, Joyce Williams, declined an OUTSMART interview request. However, she did briefly share her thoughts with KPRC-TV: "My child is no longer with me, and I have to deal with this every day. This is sad. I wouldn't wish this on nobody's child."

A Tragedy Unfolds

Single was last seen at the MPG youth-night dinner on Monday, July 29. Early in the morning of July 30, HPD reported finding a woman's body in the parking lot of a gas station in west Houston.

On Saturday, August 10, HPD's LGTBQ community liaison, Sgt. Alexa Magnan, was notified that the victim was a trans woman.

She immediately contacted leaders of Houston's trans community, asking for their help in identifying the victim. Longtime trans activist Dee Dee Watters organized a meeting at the Montrose Center on August 11. That event was both a memorial service for the victim and a town-hall discussion. During the meeting, Single was finally identified from crime-scene photos.

A memorial fund was established to help Single's mother pay for burial expenses. Watters says that Williams agreed to respect Tracy's self-identification as a trans woman as the funeral arrangements were being made. A funeral service was held on the evening of August 23 at the Fort Bend Memorial Planning Center in Rosharon, Texas.

On August 23, HPD arrested and charged Joshua Dominic Bourgeois, 25, with Single's murder. Bourgeois was considered a suspect after investigators learned that he had been in a dating relationship with the victim. Police say Single threatened to end her relationship with Bourgeois just hours before she was found murdered.

"The community has really helped us to be better," Magnan said. "We are very lucky to be working as closely with them as we are."

The Community Reacts

Houston's LGBTQ community has quickly pulled together in the wake of Single's murder. Kindred Montrose, where the Montrose Grace Place youth program is housed, posted the message "Tracy Rest in Power. Say Her Name" on their sidewalk billboard. A table space was reserved in honor of Single at the youth-night dinner on August 12. "We usually cut off the dinner line [after serving] the first 25 youth in line," Sellers says, "but we opened the doors to everyone in line—nearly 45 youth."

Local news media covered the developing story of Single's death with respect for her gender identity, and Fox 26 News produced a segment that delved deeper into the tragedy by including an interview with both Dee Dee Watters and Monica Roberts.

Harrison Homer-Guy, who chairs the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board, worked to have

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



LOVE

“ WHEN YOU GET TO KNOW HOUSTON,
IT'S EASY TO FALL IN LOVE. ”
WE DID - WITH THIS CITY AND EACH OTHER.

- KENDALL & MELANIE -

- COMMUNITY
- CHEERS
- EXPLORE
- TASTE
- LOVE**
- STAY



EXPLORE MORE ABOUT HOUSTON AT
WWW.MYGAYHOUSTON.COM/LOVE

PHOTO LOCATION: SABINE ST. BRIDGE & BUFFALO BAYOU



\$999,000
MLS #2473009

STUNNING SUBURBAN ESTATE



Custom built estate sitting on 5 beautiful acres with gorgeous 150-year-old live oak trees. NEVER FLOODED. This Mediterranean masterpiece boasts new HVAC system, GE Monogram appliances, surround sound in/out, large outdoor kitchen, Generac Generator, Radiant Barrier windows, wet bar, wine closet and chiller, security system w/cameras, a safe room, fenced backyard, and separate guest quarters with kitchen and full bath. Welcome home!



kw METROPOLITAN
KELLERWILLIAMS, REALTY

THOMAS PHILLIPS
t.phillips@kw.com | 832-305-7848

ALL ROADS LEAD TO CENTRAL HOUSTON CADILLAC!



Get the Central Houston Cadillac Advantage Plan

- COMPLIMENTARY LOANER CARS
- FREE OIL CHANGE
- FREE TIRE ROTATION & FLUID TOP-OFF
- FREE CONCIERGE SERVICES



Central Houston
Cadillac as
Best Domestic
Auto Dealership!

Ask for
**TONY
McCLELLAND**

**CENTRAL
HOUSTON**
CADILLAC
CentralHoustonCadillac.com

Central Houston Cadillac
2520 Main Street
Houston, TX 77002
CentralHoustonCadillac.com

Sales
832.981.7590
Mon-Fri 9am-7:30pm
Sat 9am-6pm

Service
832.981.7590
Mon-Fri 7:30am-6pm
Sat 8:30am-2pm

REMEMBERING TRACY SINGLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

Houston City Hall and the six Montrose I-69 freeway bridges lit up in the colors of the trans Pride flag in memory of Single on the evenings of August 14 and 15.

Sellers says that members of Montrose Grace Place miss Single "immensely." Group members have written messages to Single and drawn pictures in her memory as they work through their grief.

A Culture of Hate

Watters and Roberts say that the underlying core issues that drive violence against trans women of color are complex, and involve numerous intersecting layers.

Roberts has been tracking incidents of assault and homicide against trans individuals for several years. She says that violence has increased as hate rhetoric increases, especially when anti-trans legislation is in the news. In 2015, Houston's equal-rights ordinance (HERO) led to the 2017 "bathroom bill" (SB2) that failed during a special session of the Texas Legislature. Most recently, the Trump administration filed lawsuits banning transgender workplace protections and military service, in addition to supporting so-called "religious freedom" legislation that further legalizes discrimination.

Watters and Roberts agree that the first step in breaking this self-perpetuating cycle is to call out transphobia, both online and within our personal circles of influence. The social-media reaction to Single's murder included numerous transphobic reader comments aimed at blaming the victim and invalidating her self-identification.

A renewed attempt to finally pass HERO is in the planning stages, after a local referendum by right-wing groups killed Houston's civil-rights ordinance in 2017. Emmett Schelling, executive director of the Transgender Education Network of Texas, says that new strategies for neutralizing right-wing attacks have proven to be successful in other cities, and a recent "bathroom bill" attempt in Massachusetts was defeated in 2018. "They laid the groundwork over a three-year period," Schelling notes.

Watters, Roberts, and Schelling say that the biggest myth about the cause of trans violence is that transgender individuals are seeking to deceive others in intimate settings. This is similar to the "gay panic" defense long used in gay murder cases, where the murderer claims that the victim was acting in a sexually suggestive manner.

Watters says that the bottom line for winning the battle against trans violence is the full realization that "trans rights are human rights." ▼

Brandon Wolf is a frequent contributor to OUTSMART magazine.

LGBT CRUISES & TOUR EVENTS

aquafest

family at sea...

10 days - 4th Annual Kenya African Safari

January 5 - January 15, 2021

ABERCROMBIE AND KENT

from \$4999 pp

2020: India Land Tour, March 7-18 / Machu Picchu Land Tour, May 23-30
Amadeus Provence River Cruise, July 9-16 / Egypt Nile Cruise, Oct 2-13
2021: Africa Safari, January 5-15 / Japan Cruise, April 14-23

(800) 592-9058 - AquafestCruises.com

By LOURDES ZAVALETA

QUEER THINGS to DO

Resolve to stay involved with the help of our weekly planner. Visit OutSmartMagazine.com



Safe Place

The second annual Woodlands Pride takes place September 28. Pictured are a few of last year's attendees.

COMMUNITY

September 28

The Woodlands Pride

LGBTQ Pride is still being celebrated all over Texas, and the state's next queer festival occurs at Town Green Park. The Woodlands is hosting its second annual Pride this month, and attendees can expect guest speakers, performances, DJs, food trucks, a kids zone, and a plethora of LGBTQ-affirming vendors who want to show their support for the community.

Jason Rocha, The Woodlands Pride CEO and founder, launched the event with his team last year to give folks in his suburban hometown the opportunity to show their pride. "We want to be heard in our own communities, and we want to be accepted," Rocha told *OUTSMART* in June 2018. "More towns should set aside time to recognize LGBTQ people. We shouldn't have to leave town to

feel safe about who we're holding hands with, even if it is for just a day."

Because the September 28 celebration reflects the community it serves, The Woodlands Pride is a family-friendly event. Tickets are free, but you must register to attend. General admission and VIP tickets, sponsorship information, and vendor registration can be found online at thewoodlandstxpride.org.

MUSIC

SEPTEMBER 23

Charli XCX with Tommy Genesis

Pop icon Charli XCX (pictured) brings her tour to the White Oak Music Hall. The singer, who has been a longtime LGBTQ ally (even performing a special show for Houston's queer community at Pearl Bar last September), will be joined by Canadian rapper Tommy Genesis.

tinyurl.com/y5lb8vvp



COMMUNITY
SEPTEMBER 21

Transgender Unity Banquet

The Houston Transgender Unity Committee (HTUC) hosts its annual Transgender Unity Banquet at the Sheraton North Houston hotel. The banquet raises money for scholarships, Houston Pride activities, Transgender Day of Remembrance events, recognition awards, and grants. HTUC is now accepting donations from sponsors, as well as selling tickets to the event.

tinyurl.com/y3cgksrf



Just a few of the participants at the 2018 Transgender Unity Banquet, including guest speaker Shane Whalley (third from right).

COMMUNITY
September 4

CHARITY GAME NIGHT FOR AFCI

Drag performer Kofi hosts a charity game night for the Association for Family and Community Integrity (AFCI) at Hamburger Mary's Houston. The event features raffles and prizes, and proceeds help AFCI provide free resources for counselors to share with the parents of LGBTQ children.

tinyurl.com/y5t9ards

COMEDY

September 5 KATYA'S 'HELP ME, I'M DYING' TOUR

RuPaul's Drag Race star Katya brings her new tour, *Help Me, I'm Dying*, to the University of Houston Cullen Performance Hall. The live stage show is a fusion of stand-up comedy, storytelling, video, and dancing.

tinyurl.com/yycpnqld

COMMUNITY

September 7 ZINE FEST HOUSTON

The fourth annual Zine Fest Houston occurs at Lawndale Art Center. This year's festival features artists Erik Sultzer and Emily Halbardier from the Center for Imaginative Cartography and Research. Zine Fest Houston is a free event dedicated to promoting zines, mini-comics, and other forms of small-press, alternative, underground, and DIY media and art.

tinyurl.com/y5s4opy2

SOCIAL

September 7 QUEER LATINA DISCUSSION

Find out what it means to identify as a queer Latina at *Latinas Rising*. Join in on a panel discussion with other LGBTQ Latinas, including featured panelist and out Houston Fire Department captain Iris Rodriguez.

tinyurl.com/yyn7eww

SOCIAL

September 12 ABUNDANTLY QUEER

Houston artists Space Kiddettes and Stoo host *Abundantly Queer*, a monthly LGBTQ performer showcase at Pearl Bar Houston. The first installment is slumber-party themed, and features performances by DJ Hyperfemme, She Rex, and more. A signature *Abundantly Queer* cocktail will be available, along with treats from the lesbian-owned *Sinfull Bakery*. For more info or to perform: email spacekiddettes@gmail.com or send a direct message to [@stooizm](https://www.instagram.com/stooizm) on social media. tinyurl.com/y5whqbn7

SOCIAL

September 14 GROWN-UPS HOMECOMING

Attend an adults-only homecoming at Etro Nightclub. The '80s-themed event will include dancing, drinks, and friends. Proceeds from the dance will benefit Montrose Grace Place, a day-shelter for homeless youth of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

tinyurl.com/yw72o6h



COMEDY

September 19 NON-STOP IRONIC CABARET

The queer Houston duo Space Kiddettes star in the *Non-Stop Ironic Cabaret: A Cosmically Crazy Variety Show* at The Secret Group. The monthly comedy show kicks off in September, and features the Space Kiddettes hosting and performing sketches, comedic bits, short videos, musical numbers, and audience-participation activities. This month's special guest is Zigtebra from Chicago.

[facebook.com/SpaceKiddettes](https://www.facebook.com/SpaceKiddettes)

COMMUNITY

September 20 ETHICS CEU EVENT: LAWS AND CHALLENGES

SGA Services Texas presents a discussion about current laws and threats to LGBTQ folks. Hosted by transgender activist Lou Weaver, the event will include a breakfast provided by Kemah Palms Recovery addiction treatment center.

tinyurl.com/yxpguh4t

COMEDY

September 21 QUEER QUEENS OF QOMEDY SHOW

The Queer Queens of Qomedy return to Houston for a show at Neon Boots Dancehall & Saloon. Watch and laugh out loud as Poppy Champlin and her lesbian comedian colleagues perform their stand-up routines live.

tinyurl.com/y4sogbv7

SOCIAL

September 22 BUNNIES IN HEAT

Bunnies on the Bayou hosts *Bunnies in Heat*, the first official event of the group's 41st season, at Bar Boheme. Proceeds from the event benefit *Bunnies on the Bayou*, a nonprofit that funds local LGBTQ charities.

tinyurl.com/y2d3x9ka

COMMUNITY

September 22 EQUALITY BRUNCH

The Houston GLBT Political Caucus' 10th annual Equality Brunch takes place downtown at The Corinthian. Presented by Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee, all proceeds from the event will help elect pro-LGBTQ candidates in the November 5 election. The Caucus has recently endorsed a number of queer-affirming local candidates, and that list can be found online at thecaucus.org.

tinyurl.com/yb4p9kj

MORE QUEER THINGS TO DO →

BUY NEW

BUY USED

Houston
CAMERA
 Exchange

TURN YOUR CAMERA INTO CASH
@ HOUSTON CAMERA EXCHANGE



**YOUR MOST EXTENSIVE
 SELECTION OF
 USED PHOTO GEAR
 IN THE SOUTHWEST**

HOUSTON CAMERA EXCHANGE

5900 Richmond Ave.

(at Fountainview)

Houston, TX 77057

Mon-Fri: 10am-7pm; Sat: 10am-6pm

713-789-6901 1-800-CAMERA-5

houstoncameraexchange.com

Follow us on



@hcehouston

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

QUEER THINGS to DO

SAVE the DATES

MUSIC

October 4

Lizzo



Even though Houston native Lizzo had to cancel her performance at this year's Pride festival, the artist is making up for it by bringing her Cuz I Love You tour to Space City this fall. The longtime LGBTQ ally recently "set a new bar for being a trans ally," according to the LGBTQ Nation online magazine. In a televised July performance, Lizzo introduced new queer-affirming lyrics to several of her hit songs. "Love is love, man," the singer says. Lizzo's Houston concert will be opened by performer Ari Lennox.

tinyurl.com/y449dy6k

COMMUNITY

October 11

Out for Good

In honor of National Coming Out Day, the Montrose Center presents Out for Good at The Ballroom at Bayou Place. The annual dinner honors LGBTQ folks who work to better Houston's queer community. This year's emcee is Deborah Duncan, and the legendary Tommie Ross will receive the 2019 LGBTQ Community Vision Award.

tinyurl.com/yykru8t6

COMMUNITY

October 12

Pearl Bar's Sixth Anniversary

Pearl Bar turns six this year, and the lesbian club will celebrate with an on-site party. Owned by LGBTQ activist Julie Mabry, Pearl Bar debuted in 2014 as a safe space for queer women to drink, dance, and mingle. Mabry's creation, along with her activist work, has been recognized by several queer Houston organizations. In 2018, Mabry was named a Pride Houston honorary grand marshal, and in 2019 she received the Human Rights Campaign's Community Equality Award. More information on Pearl Bar's sixth-anniversary celebration will be featured in next month's edition of OUTSMART magazine.

tinyurl.com/y4uxjrw9



Submit your events at calendar@outsmartmagazine.com

Stay on top of your health this year.

Call 713.526.0005 for your appointment.



GORDON E. CROFOOT MD PA

Houston's favorite LGBTQ+ focused health center.

Not Just Dumb

... but fancy-dumb.



It's on Tape

Arizona State Senator Sylvia Allen says, "We are not reproducing ourselves, the birth rates. It's because of immigration."

Arizona Republican State Senator Sylvia Allen is off on a tear. She is ten pounds of pissed-off in a five-pound bag, Honey.

She found herself at the state's Republican Party headquarters speaking to the "Mormon Political Pioneers." I would like to stop right here and thank Sweet Jesus that I have never been asked to speak to that group, and particularly at that location. In the future, any time I start feeling sorry for myself, I will say, "Yeah, Babe, but at least you ain't havin' to speak to the Mormon Political Pioneers at the Republican headquarters in sizzling damn Arizona."

After Allen warmed up her audience by using the phrase "the browning of America" (and Child, she does not mean tanning beds), she said (and yes, it's all on tape): "We needed to be able to control our immigration process so that we have time to assimilate people into our society and economic system. Jobs, housing, education, and healthcare. Plus, to be able to

teach them about the American form of government. The median age of a white woman is 43. The median age of a Hispanic woman is 27. We are not reproducing ourselves, the birth rates. It's because of immigration."

Now, we don't ask Dewayne and Thelma in Crapcrack, Alabama, not to have babies until we can assimilate them and teach them not to pick their noses at the dinner table. (That's a law worth considering, however, since it would make dining out in Alabama much more enjoyable.)

State Senator Sylvia's speech wasn't just plain dumb. It was fancy-dumb. It was dumb with pecans in it. It was the winner of the French National Dumb Day, with an advanced degree in Chemical Dumbography. It was like carrying a 50-foot dumb hose while eating dumbalicious on a stick... oh please, Sweet Jesus, somebody stop me.

When the tape of Allen's comments was released, she claimed she was just talking about the fact that some South American coun-

tries are "socialist" and we need to "retrain" the next generation on how America works. She also said that we needed to make sure we had jobs for them before we let them in to the country. I guess what she means is that they're okay if you need some yard work or roofing done. You could just go down to the border and borrow an immigrant for the day.

She further defended her comments by explaining that there's a book named *The Browning of America* by Dr. James Johnson. But we know she didn't read it, because the book actually explains that immigrants give more to America than they take. But somehow, the title of his book caused her imagination to run wild. (Did I mention she watches dumb on her cable with TiVo Dumbamotion?)

Now, if all this has a familiar ring to it, that's because this isn't Sylvia Allen's first trip to the beauty salon.

Nope, she's the same Sylvia who wanted to make church attendance on Sundays mandatory.

And as we learned earlier, she's the same woman who clutches her pearls over socialism.

What's more, she thinks the Earth is 6,000 years old. Period. No arguing allowed. Those old dinosaur bones? God put them there to test your faith because, apparently, he's a clever prankster.

Now we finally come to why I'm telling you this story. I spent some time this weekend with a longtime friend who has been pondering on this religious stuff and all of these new Super Deluxe-brand Christians. She said that she believes the religious right sees America the same way they see heaven: it can't be paradise if everybody gets to go.

I think she's right. They need their country-club heaven and their exclusive America so they can have more people to look down on.

Susan Bankston lives in Richmond, Texas, where she writes about her hairdresser at The World's Most Dangerous Beauty Salon, Inc., at juanitajeans.com.

FEATURED PROPERTIES

RIVER OAKS SHOPPING AREA

Elmen Street | \$1.2+mil
4/4.5 - ±3,691 sf

Architecturally stunning custom contemporary home in deed restricted Lewisdale. Gourmet kitchen with all the bells and whistles. Master bedroom with electric shades, office and a bonus room with [a] wall of windows overlooking the pool with balcony access. Lush landscaping and wonderful curb appeal on this oversized lot with a backyard oasis.

Danny Pleason
832.661.1502



GALVESTON

Shiraz Passage | \$1.1+mil
4/3.5 - ±3,353 sf

Unparalleled and majestic beachside masterpiece meticulously crafted by renowned island builder in coveted Beachtown boasts panoramic beach, ocean and harbor vistas from 5 spectacular verandas. Stellar custom upgrades, hand-scraped hardwoods, surround sound audio system, French doors and uber chic designer touches throughout this extraordinary home.

Jim Rosenfeld
713.854.1303



MONTROSE

Willard Street | \$820s
3/2.5 - ±2,493 sf

This property is filled with modern yet traditional charm and has a great open floor plan. Luxury radiates through this home with features like stainless appliances in the updated kitchen and quartz countertops in every bath. Cozy patio and giant pool.

Mike Spear
713.204.7653



Martha
Turner

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

sothebyshomes.com | 713.520.1981

Important Facts About DOVATO

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

What is the Most Important Information I Should Know about DOVATO?

If you have both human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV-1) and hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Resistant HBV infection.** Your healthcare provider will test you for HBV infection before you start treatment with DOVATO. If you have HIV-1 and hepatitis B, the hepatitis B virus can change (mutate) during your treatment with DOVATO and become harder to treat (resistant). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in people who have HIV-1 and HBV infection.
- **Worsening of HBV infection.** If you have HIV-1 and HBV infection, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking DOVATO. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. Worsening liver disease can be serious and may lead to death.
 - Do not run out of DOVATO. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your DOVATO is all gone.
 - **Do not stop DOVATO without first talking to your healthcare provider.** If you stop taking DOVATO, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your liver.

What is DOVATO?

DOVATO is a prescription medicine that is used without other antiretroviral medicines to treat HIV-1 infection in adults: who have not received antiretroviral medicines in the past, **and** without known resistance to the medicines dolutegravir or lamivudine. HIV-1 is the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take DOVATO?

Do Not Take DOVATO if You:

- have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine that contains dolutegravir or lamivudine.
- take dofetilide.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DOVATO?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- have kidney problems.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. One of the medicines in DOVATO (dolutegravir) may harm your unborn baby.
 - **You should not take DOVATO if you are planning to become pregnant or during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.** Your healthcare provider may prescribe a different medicine if you are planning to become pregnant or become pregnant during treatment with DOVATO.
 - If you can become pregnant, your healthcare provider will perform a pregnancy test before you start treatment with DOVATO.
 - If you can become pregnant, you should consistently use effective birth control (contraception) during treatment with DOVATO.
 - Tell your healthcare provider right away if you are planning to become pregnant, you become pregnant, or think you may be pregnant during treatment with DOVATO.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you: (cont'd)

- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. **Do not breastfeed if you take DOVATO.**
 - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
 - One of the medicines in DOVATO (lamivudine) passes into your breastmilk.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Some medicines interact with DOVATO. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with DOVATO.
- **Do not start taking a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider.** Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take DOVATO with other medicines.

What are Possible Side Effects of DOVATO?

DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- Those in the “What is the Most Important Information I Should Know about DOVATO?” section.
- **Allergic reactions.** Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop a rash with DOVATO. Stop taking DOVATO 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 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 may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening changes in certain liver tests during treatment with DOVATO. Liver problems, including liver failure, have also happened in people without a history of liver disease or other risk factors. Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your liver.
Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get 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; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. **Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms that could be signs of lactic acidosis:** feel very weak or tired; unusual (not normal) muscle pain; trouble breathing; stomach pain with nausea and vomiting; feel cold, especially in your arms and legs; feel dizzy or lightheaded; and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Lactic acidosis can also lead to severe liver problems,** which can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the signs or symptoms of liver problems which are listed above under “Liver problems.” You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female or very overweight (obese).**



©2019 ViiV Healthcare or licensor.
DLLADV190009 June 2019
Produced in USA.



Learn more about
Leo and DOVATO
at DOVATO.com

ViiVConnect

For information on access and coverage to help
you get your prescribed ViiV Healthcare medications
Insured • Underinsured • Uninsured



1-844-588-3288 (toll free)
Monday-Friday, 8AM-11PM (ET)



www.viivconnect.com

SO MUCH GOES INTO WHO I AM

HIV MEDICINE IS ONE PART OF IT.

Reasons to ask your doctor about DOVATO:



DOVATO can help you reach and then stay undetectable* with just 2 medicines in 1 pill. That means fewer medicines[†] in your body while taking DOVATO



You can take it any time of day with or without food (around the same time each day)—giving you flexibility

DOVATO is a once-a-day complete treatment for adults who are new to HIV-1 medicine.

Results may vary.

*Undetectable means reducing the HIV in your blood to very low levels (less than 50 copies per mL).

[†]As compared with 3-drug regimens.



Dovato

dolutegravir 50 mg/
lamivudine 300 mg tablets

What are Possible Side Effects of DOVATO (cont'd)?

- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having new symptoms after you start taking DOVATO.
- **The most common side effects of DOVATO include:** headache; diarrhea; nausea; trouble sleeping; and tiredness.

These are not all the possible side effects of DOVATO. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Where Can I Find More Information?

- Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Go to DOVATO.com or call 1-877-844-8872, where you can also get FDA-approved labeling.

Trademark is owned by or licensed to the ViiV Healthcare group of companies.

LEO[†]

Living with HIV



[†]Compensated by ViiV Healthcare

Could DOVATO be right for you? Ask your doctor today.

School Days

Have a wonderful 2019–2020 school year!

School has started across the State of Texas and throughout our nation, both for K–12 and at the collegiate level. That also means our trans kids are returning to those school campuses to get their learn on.

And yes, some of our teachers tasked with the job of educating our next generation are also members of the trans community. I wish them and their students a wonderful and drama-free school year as well.

Whether you are at the elementary-school level, making the jump to middle school, starting your freshman year of high school or college, or doing postgraduate work for an advanced degree, know that I and your trans elders are exceedingly proud of you, and wish you nothing but success in your educational endeavors.

During this school year, some of you high-schoolers will blaze trails by becoming the first out trans kids to become homecoming or prom kings or queens. You may be inclined to participate in sports, academic contests, or other school activities—or maybe you'll just find that group of school friends that have your back, now and into the future. Hopefully, one day I'll get the opportunity to write about the first out trans student to become the valedictorian or salutatorian of their class.

And yes, some of you will face challenges this year—obstacles put in your way to make it harder for you to get an education as your true selves. Trans students of all ages are facing a 2019–2020 school environment that has been made more hostile by Secretary of (Mis)Education Betsy DeVos.

Cruella DeVos has rolled back trans-student protections put in place by the Obama administration, leaving trans students vulnerable to bullying by their fellow students and administrators. Those students now have little recourse but to fight back with lawsuits in federal court.

Cases have been litigated over many issues, from allowing trans students to run for



homecoming queen or king to dressing for prom in the attire that matches their gender expression.

And yes, we're still going to battle over bathrooms, taking yearbook pics that match your gender identity and expression, and forming Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) on high-school campuses.

Since the evilgelicals wish to fight us, fight we must for our human rights and our very humanity in school settings, because an education is priceless.

When it comes to fighting peeps at the local, state, or national level on your behalf, rest assured that I and your trans elders will do our part.

The ACLU, GLAD, GLSEN, PFLAG, and other community organizations are standing by to help you. Collectively, they have a track record of success in fighting for the rights of all transgender students to get an education as their true selves.

You also have amazing allies—teachers, support staff, and administrators—that you can turn to if and when you need help.

I have no doubt that you trans students will do well in school, make lifelong friends, and even make a little history as this school year progresses into the third decade of the 21st century.

Know that as you sit in your classrooms, you have an entire community cheering you on to become the best students you can be. And as for those ignorant folks who will throw shade your way, bear in mind that the best way to silence them is to excel in your classwork.

May this 2019–2020 school year be an enjoyable and successful one for all of you.

Monica Roberts, a native Houstonian, is the founding editor of the GLAAD award-winning blog TransGriot. Her ongoing mission is to educate people on the lives of transgender people and fight for everyone's human rights.



LGBTQ Houston's Premier Annual Dinner

Out FOR GOOD

honoring the Legendary Tommie Ross
2019 LGBTQ Community Vision Award Recipient

Friday, October 11

6p VIP Reception | 7p Doors Open | 7:30p Dinner & Program

The Ballroom at Bayou Place | 500 Texas Street | Houston TX

benefiting  the Montrose
Center

montrosecenter.org



Does Uncle Sam Want to Tap Your Retirement Savings?

Yes, thanks to the SECURE Act

With the constant and unpredictable ups and downs of the stock market, it can be difficult (at best) to feel like your retirement savings are stable. But you may soon have even more reason to be concerned about your retirement nest egg.

This comes by way of the pending SECURE Act, which was recently drafted to address the difficulty that Americans are having with saving and investing for retirement. A recent study showed that one in three Americans have less than \$5,000 in retirement savings, and that one in five Americans have no retirement savings at all.

On top of that, given that life expectancy is much longer than it was just a few decades ago, retirees must make their savings last for around 20 years or more once they've entered retirement. That can prove to be a challenge, especially after accounting for future inflation.

In order to provide more flexibility to retirement savers, and to reduce some of the penalties that investors face with regard to contributing and accessing funds in their retirement plans, the SECURE Act has been introduced in Congress.

But taking a closer look at this bill shows that its biggest beneficiary could be Uncle Sam!

What the SECURE Act Could Mean for You

The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (or SECURE) Act is a bipartisan bill that is designed to help Americans save for retirement in a number of different ways, such as:

- Providing tax credits and protections on collective Multiple Employer Plans, which will make it easier for small businesses to offer their employees 401(k) retirement savings plans;
- Making long-term, part-time employees eligible for retirement benefits;
- Doing away with the maximum age limit of 70½ for making contributions into certain types of retirement plans (such as 401(k)s and traditional IRAs);



- Increasing the required minimum-distribution age from 70½ to 72 on certain retirement plans (again, 401(k)s and traditional IRAs);
- Allowing retirement-plan participants to make withdrawals of up to \$5,000 penalty-free when they have or adopt a child;
- Allowing penalty-free withdrawals of up to \$10,000 from 529 college savings plans if the money is used to repay certain types of student loans;
- Relaxing the rules on companies that offer annuities via sponsored retirement plans; and
- Revising certain areas of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that raised taxes on benefits that are received by family members of a deceased veteran, as well as from a

student and some Native Americans.

While the SECURE Act is not yet law, the bill has passed the House of Representatives in a 417 to 3 vote. And although components of the SECURE Act could be beneficial to some investors, it may not be as ideal as it initially seems.

Under current tax law, funds that are invested in traditional IRAs, as well as in many other types of employer-sponsored retirement plans, are allowed to grow tax-deferred. This means that there is no tax due on the gain each year, which can allow these savings to grow and compound faster than they could in a taxable account.

Currently, if an IRA owner passes away without having spent all of the money in the account, it is possible for another individual

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

September 21 House Concert in Houston

Experience the Magic of Women's Music

Two Singers • Two Songwriters • Two Guitarists

Deidre McCalla + Dianne Davidson



Women's Music
Concert Series
brought to you
by LOAF



Saturday, Sept. 21 at 7 PM

St. Peter's UCC • 9022 Long Point at Campbell Road
Meet the Artists 7 pm • Performances starts 7:30 pm

\$20 advance or at the door

For reservations:

713-907-5378 or email at lavitasm@aol.com

September 21 House Concert in Houston



KPFT 90.1

WELCOME HOME

PEOPLE POWERED RADIO



LISTEN LIVE 90.1FM | ONLINE AT KPFT.ORG

**IF YOU HAVE ONLY ONE SMILE IN YOU,
GIVE IT TO THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE.**

Maya Angelou

LIFE SMILES
by
RANDY MITCHMORE, DDS



1722 W Alabama Street, Houston, TX 77098
713.592.9300 | lifesmiles.us

MEDICAL | RESEARCH | DENTAL | PHARMACY | VISION

“Your Patient
Centered Health
Care Home”



ARE YOU **(PREP)ARED?**

*Find out if PreP
is right for you.*



For More Information About Treatment

713.778.1300



OFFERINGHOPE.ORG

Money Smart | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

such as a spouse or child to inherit that account and to “stretch out” the mandatory distributions (based on the younger beneficiary’s life expectancy).

Likewise, non-spousal beneficiaries (regardless of their age) must take required minimum distributions (RMDs) that are based on their own life expectancy. So the younger the beneficiary is, the lower the required minimum distribution will be. In turn, this “stretching” can allow more funds in the IRA to continue growing over time.

Under the proposed SECURE Act, it is possible that any IRA account that has a balance of \$400,000 or more when inherited by a beneficiary will have to be distributed—and in turn, taxed—within ten years of the passing of the initial IRA owner.

So, what exactly does this mean for IRA beneficiaries?

It means that his or her tax liability will most likely increase substantially on these mandatory withdrawals. For example, if the 55-year-old child of a traditional IRA owner inherits his mother’s \$1 million IRA, under the current law, he or she could “stretch” out the distributions (and the accompanying taxation) for almost 30 years (based on his life expectancy). That would help the IRA nest egg continue to grow, and the taxes due would be lower, due to the smaller annual withdrawals based on the child’s life-expectancy calculation.

But under the proposed SECURE Act, any IRA account balance that is over \$400,000 (which in this example is \$600,000) would have to be withdrawn within ten years. Given the much shorter period of time, the IRA beneficiary’s income-tax liability would increase substantially because the beneficiary would be required to take a much larger annual distribution.

Taking More Control of Your Money

Although this proposed legislation is still being debated, now would be the time to consider how to prepare and plan ahead, should this law come into effect. This starts by working with an experienced financial professional.

Due in large part to the non-spouse beneficiary rules for inherited IRAs and other retirement savings vehicles, making sure that all accounts are properly set up is even more important for those in the LGBTQ community. Otherwise, you could run the risk of letting Uncle Sam take an even larger percentage of your loved one’s savings.

Grace S. Yung, CFP, is a certified financial planner practitioner with experience in helping domestic partners plan their finances since 1994. She is a principal at Midtown Financial Group LLC in Houston and was recognized as a “Five-Star Wealth Manager” in the September 2017 issue of Texas Monthly. Yung can be reached at grace.yung@lpl.com.

WINDOW/WINDSHIELD REPLACEMENT - PAINT AND BODY WORK

**Ryan
Automotive**

716 Fairview - RyanAutoGlass.com - 713.552.3602

CONVENIENTLY LOCATED IN MONTROSE

M-F 8:30am-6pm SAT 9am-4pm SUN By appointment

10% DISCOUNT when mentioned this ad in Outsmart

No Drama
...Just Results



Debbie Levine

TOP PRODUCER 2001-2018



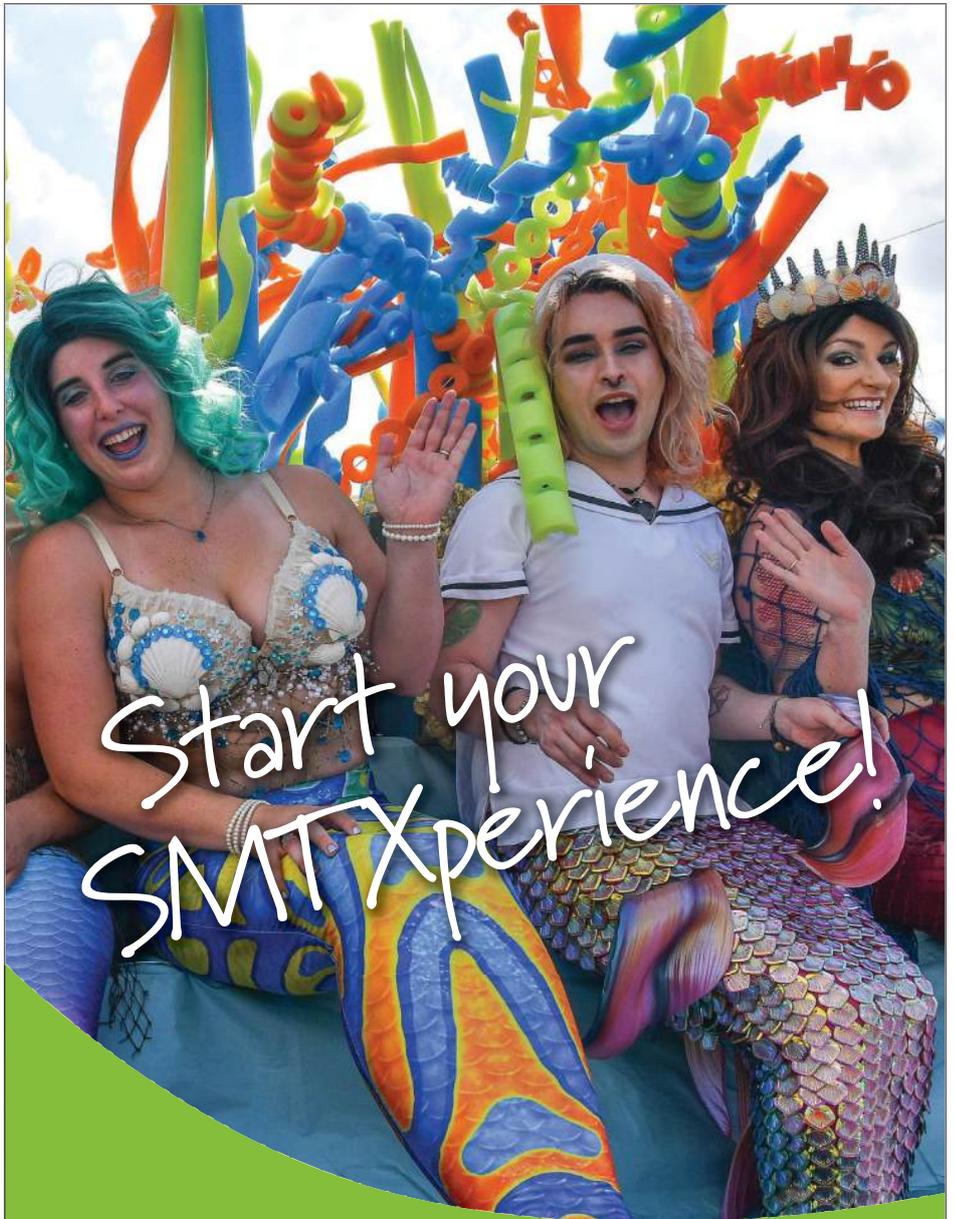
Voted BEST FEMALE
REAL ESTATE AGENT
6 years in a row.

Outsmart Readers'
Choice 2013-2018

**GREENWOOD KING
PROPERTIES**

dlevine@greenwoodking.com

713.942.6857



Start your
SMTXperience!

San Marcos, TX is a groove. An experience.

Where you can soak in some murals, music, mermaids and more. With quirky shops, breweries and farm fresh eats in our hip little downtown square, you'll definitely want to stay a while. Check out these upcoming events and plan your trip at VisitSMTX.com.

SEPTEMBER 7: SMTX PRIDE PARADE AND FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 20: MERMAID SOCIETY BALL

SEPTEMBER 21: MERMAID PROMENADE & AQUA FAIRE

SAN MARCOS

@TourSanMarcos

VisitSMTX.com | 512.393.5930

GLORIA'S

RESTAURANTS



Come try our Award Winning
SUNDAY BRUNCH 11am-3pm!



WINNER
BEST BRUNCH



COME FALL IN LOVE WITH US!

FINALIST
BEST MEXICAN

GLORIA'S HOUSTON

2616 LOUISIANA ST.
SUITE 101 • HOUSTON, TX
OPEN SUN-THU: 11AM-10PM
AND FRI-SAT: 11AM-2AM

WWW.GLORIASCUISINE.COM

TIME OUT

with OutSmart

TimeOut in Thailand



Joe Carpenter (left) and David Wang took OUTSMART to Ayutthaya, Thailand.

Show Us Your OutSmart

GOING OUT OF TOWN?

Take OUTSMART along. Snap a high-res pic of yourself with the magazine and send it to us. Send to: Letters@OUTSMARTMAGAZINE.COM. Tag us on Facebook, or on Instagram #OutSmartTimeOut

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Check out these fabulous events co-sponsored by OUTSMART and our marketing partners.

September 19: Out@TUTS Night

presents *A Chorus Line*. After the curtain goes down, the party continues. Mingle with members of the cast and crew and sing a few show tunes. All are welcome! INFO: tuts.com/out

September 21: 2019 Annual Houston Transgender Unity Banquet.

INFO: unitybanquet.com

September 26: ActOut at the Alley Theatre

presents *The Winter's Tale*. Pre-curtain event (included with ActOut ticket) 6 pm, show at 7:30 pm. INFO: alleytheatre.org/actout

September 26-28: The Texas Tribune Festival

one of the largest nonpartisan gatherings of elected officials, policy experts, and community leaders in the nation. INFO: festival.texastribune.org

October 11: Out for Good

LGBTQ Houston's premier annual dinner honoring the legendary Tommie Ross and benefiting the Montrose Center. INFO: montrosecenter.org

October 12 & 13: Bayou City Art Festival Downtown

INFO: artcolonyassociation.org

October 12: The Houston Walk for Mental Health Awareness

at Stude Park. INFO: thehoustonwalk.org

October 17: Out@TUTS Night

presents *Spring Awakening*. INFO: tuts.com/out

October 25-26: The Annual Gender Infinity Conference

INFO: genderinfinityconference.org

Be social! Connect with us!



@outsmarthouston



/outsmartmagazine



@outsmartmagazine

FRED HAAS TOYOTA WORLD

20400 I-45 N. • Spring, TX 77373
FredHaasToyota.com

#1 VOLUME TOYOTA DEALER IN TEXAS
16 YEARS IN A ROW FOR A REASON!†

We make car buying fun!

ALL-NEW COMPLETELY REDESIGNED 2019 TOYOTA RAV4 LE

OVER 200 TO CHOOSE



LEASE FOR ONLY **\$259** A MONTH FOR 36 MOS.†
OR **\$1,250** TFS CASH†



Experience the many reasons people choose Fred Haas Toyota World.

Our state-of-the-art facility offers customers a unique blend of comfort and amenities combined with an extensive inventory of over 3,700 new and pre-owned vehicles.

JUST MINUTES FROM DOWNTOWN!

832.764.8913

Vehicle must be purchased from the listed dealer only. Promotion subject to change and/or termination at any time without notice. (1) Offers mutually exclusive; with approved credit. Based on 36 month closed-end lease with approved credit; \$0 security, 12k miles/year with \$15 per mile overage; Early termination fees may apply; \$2,999 due at signing excludes TTL, insurance & \$150 dealer fee and includes \$2,740 down payment & 1st month's payment of \$259 with approved credit. \$0 security; Model 4430, Stock KD009018, MSRP \$26,860, \$24,042 Net Capitalized cost; \$9,684 total monthly payments; Residual \$16,633. †\$1,250 TFS CASH toward down payment on a new 2019 RAV4. TFS CASH is not available with Special APR or Lease offers. Must finance through TFS and must be used for down payment on a new 2019 RAV4 with approved credit, not all will qualify and valid only with standard APR rates. †Claim based on Total Retail Sales volume per GST 2003-2018 and Total Dealer Stock volume per GST 2006-2018 for Fred Haas Toyota World. See dealer for details.

GALVESTON ISLAND



Joe Tramonte Realty
(409) 765-9837
TramonteRealty.com



EAST END

921 Ball Street
3/1+1/1+ 1,800sf \$349,900



CLOSE TO BEACH

3506 Cove View Blvd
1/1 732sf \$84,900



MIDTOWN

3317 Avenue Q 1/2
4/2/2 1,656sf \$329,000



DOWNTOWN

202 Rosenberg (25th)
2/2 1,186sf \$250,000



12,600sf LOT

2116 Grover
4/2/2 2,208sf \$154,900



BEACH VIEW

16630 Jamaica Beach Rd
3/2.5 1,578sf \$499,500



HAYES HUNTER PC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Get the attention that **YOU** deserve

- Accidents
- Business
- Wills & Estate
- Consumer Fraud
- Divorce & More

Call NOW! 281-768-4731

Principal place of business 4265 San Felipe, Suite 1000 Houston, Texas 77027 281-768-4731. Not Certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Charles Hunter is responsible for the content of this ad.

A Seniors' Haven

LOAF provides much-needed social support for local lesbian women.

By JENNY BLOCK



Deidre McCalla



Dianne Davidson

There is an amazing group of Houston lesbian women committed to staying socially connected as they get older. Sadly, the more we age, the more isolated we can become—even after a lifetime of happy relationships, friendships, and family-building. LOAFers, Inc., more commonly known as LOAF or Lesbians Over Age Fifty, is a nonprofit organization that was created to alleviate that kind of isolation by providing “social and educational activities for lesbians 50 and older, and their partners of any age.”

Their mission statement’s stated goals are “to provide a safe haven for women who are exploring their sexuality; to provide a safe environment for lesbians to gather for a variety of social activities and interaction; to have a diverse group of lesbians, all inclusive, regardless of ethnicity, creed, or class; to recognize the collective wisdom of our members in order to nurture the others within LOAF; to occasionally provide knowledgeable speakers who can inform members on issues of importance to lesbians; to provide a social support system for lesbians who are isolated; and to recognize and address internalized homophobia.”

The group was started in October of 1987 to provide a safe space for lesbian women to explore their sexuality, enjoy one another’s company, and be supportive of those who may be isolated. The group sponsors affordable monthly socials with activities that include dances, museums, picnics, pool parties, Top Golf, bowling, restaurants, and quarterly women’s music concerts.

The Founding Mothers of LOAF are Ruth Sathre, a nurse; Jane Corinne, a social worker; Bonnie Kell, a gerontologist; Barbara Brum-

field, a psychotherapist; Linda Snook, a certified counselor; and Roxanne Cherico, who is also the current president. Cherico says, “I was a generation older than these women, but they had the knowledge of the community necessary to start a group of this kind.”

LOAF has received a wealth of positive feedback from members and non-members alike. “We are a unique group in that we are not aware of any other organization like this in the U.S.,” Cherico explains. Because the group is so unique, it appeals to all kinds of women for a variety of reasons, filling a wide range of needs. Cherico says that for her, “It provided a much-needed social outlet for me after my 20-year relationship dissolved. Now I enjoy the company of wonderful women.”

For Margaret Thibodeaux, acting treasurer of LOAF, the organization has provided the kind of “good company” she was searching for. “It is a safe, non-religious, non-political group of women of varied backgrounds and experiences.” Some women say LOAF has even been good for their mental health.

Board member Lucretia Copeland explains, “LOAF allowed me to be ‘out,’ socialize, and attend events of interest to me. It is a safe space, drug- and alcohol-free, where I meet a variety of women—some professionals like me, and others that I would not have met otherwise. This social group has helped me transition into retirement and not isolate.”

For some members, staying connected is the most powerful purpose of the group. “It is important to me to be part of LOAF because we are lesbians helping lesbians thrive by staying active and connected. LOAF’s mission is to combat isolation among lesbians—it just doesn’t get better than that,” explains Lavita

Marks, vice president of the organization.

LOAF has some exciting events coming up. Because of two generous grants they received from Texas United Charities and the John S. Kellett Foundation, they are now sponsoring quarterly women’s music concerts. The next one is on September 21 at a Spring Branch church. The concert will feature singer-songwriters Deidre McCalla and Dianne Davidson.

The Kellett Foundation is underwriting the concert expenses, allowing ticket proceeds to go directly to the artists. “St. Peter’s UCC is an intimate setting to hear and support wonderful women musicians,” Cherico adds, noting that it should be an ideal event for current LOAF members and friends, as well as anyone who might be interested in joining the organization.

The Kellett Foundation grant, Cherico says, is also enabling them to create a new interactive website. “We are currently taking bids for the design, and hope to have it up by the end of the year.” Cherico explains that their grants will also allow them to underwrite the costs of our socials and outings, in order to enable more women to participate. And although the group is focused on the older set, LOAF also interacts monthly with Hatch Youth, providing speakers and mentors to the Montrose Center’s LGBTQ teen group.

As for the future, the group hopes their new website, social events, and educational outreach activities will help them connect with as many lesbians in Harris County and the surrounding areas as possible, and encourage them to participate in the LOAF community. “Isolation is a detriment to all people, and it is important to form connections with other like-minded individuals,” Cherico explains.

The September LOAF Meet and Greet is Sunday, September 15, at the Montrose Center, and visitors are welcome. Cherico notes that their speaker for the event “will be telling us of the history and importance of Hatch Youth.”

Members of LOAF want people to know that they are not a dating service, nor are they political or religious. “We are active, vital members of our community that contribute our time and knowledge.” And more than anything, the board and members of LOAF work hard to raise awareness about the organization and its mission “to alleviate isolation in older lesbians and provide diverse social and educational opportunities for our members.”

What: Singers Deidre McCalla and Dianne Davidson in concert

When: 7:00 meet-and-greet with the artists, 7:30 performance

Where: St. Peter’s United Church of Christ, 9022 Long Point Road at Campbell

Tickets: \$20 in advance or at the door, 713.907.5378 or lavitasm@aol.com

SKIN Renaissance
LASER CENTER



Dermal fillers can take years off, even decades; giving a natural, pleasant, and well rested look. Dr. Barrios added volume to patient's upper & lower cheeks and chin to reverse the signs of aging.

- NON-SURGICAL
- IMMEDIATE LASTING RESULTS
- AFFORDABLE

Botox® • Restylane® • Radiesse®
Belotero® • Sculptra®

Wrinkles • Rosacea • Facial Sagging
Acne (active & scars) • Face & Leg Veins
Laser Hair Removal

Call for your FREE Consultation
713.942.SKIN (7546)
517 West Gray St. • Between Montrose and Taft
www.SkinRenaissance.net

Dr. Octavio Barrios, MD is a Fellow of the American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery & American Academy of Aesthetic Medicine Member.



VOTED ONE OF THE BEST
Dr. Octavio Barrios
Best Physician 2005-2018
Skin Renaissance
Best Skin Care Center 2005-2018



Weight Loss Clinic

Your Medical Approach to Weight Loss

PERSONALIZED | COMPREHENSIVE | DOCTOR SUPERVISED



OCTAVIO BARRIOS, MD



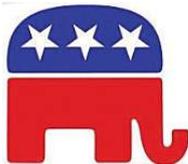
LUCIA MANGLE ARNOLD, MPAS, PA-C

CALL TODAY!
713.942.7546



MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF BARIATRIC PHYSICIANS

The Log Cabin Republicans of Houston voted to proudly support the following candidates for the City of Houston elections November 5, 2019.



LOG CABIN
REPUBLICANS
OF HOUSTON

Mayor:
Bill King
At Large Position 1:
Mike Knox
At Large Position 2:
Emily DeToto

At Large Position 3:
Michael Kubosh
At Large Position 4:
Anthony Dolcefino
At Large Position 5:
Sonia Rivera

District A: Amy Peck
District C:
Both Greg Meyers & Daphne Scarbrough
District G:
Greg Travis

The candidates above were determined to be those most able to lead our city in a better direction, and reflective of the values of the members of the Log Cabin Republicans of Houston, although many in several races were found to be candidates that the Log Cabin Republicans of Houston could support.

The Log Cabin Republicans of Houston conducted a transparent, impartial endorsement process with questions and interviews open to any candidate. The majority of candidates in the races above responded, including the leading candi-

dates for mayor. No funds nor group paid memberships were accepted from any candidate during the months-long vetting process, nor were any offered or promised.

The Log Cabin Republicans of Houston strives to be an advocate for legal and political equality for all Houstonians, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or status, under the framework of the conservative principles of limited government, individual liberty, and personal responsibility.

For more information,
visit www.logcabinhouston.org, or email houstonlcr@aol.com

Paid for by Jim Bartley & Leslie May



**RIGHT IN
THE MIDDLE
OF IT ALL.**



midtown
HOUSTON

midtownhouston.com



MAN OF ACTION

Antonio Arellano leads the largest Latino civic-engagement organization in Texas.

By LOURDES ZAVALETA

Antonio Arellano was three years old when his parents left Mexico and migrated to the U.S. in pursuit of a better life for their five children.

“That was one of the most difficult decisions they ever had to make,” says Arellano, now 29. “You never want to leave the country and the family you love behind, unless it is absolutely crucial. For my parents, it was. Poverty was extreme, and most people in our town didn’t have access to secondary education.”

Arellano, a gay undocumented man, grew up in a middle-class Georgia neighborhood. When he graduated high school and told his father about his aspirations to become a journalist, the family moved again—this time to Houston, where Arellano’s dream became a reality.

While attending college in Space City, Arellano garnered over 95,000 followers on

Twitter by using his social-media platforms to advocate for civil-rights and immigration issues. Impressed by his status as one of the nation’s leading Latino influencers, KTRK-TV (ABC13 News) hired Arellano as a social-media correspondent in September 2016.

One month later, after President Trump was elected and journalists faced a new president spewing hateful rhetoric about Latinos and other marginalized communities, Arellano admits he found it “hard to stay objective.” Outside of work, he continued to advocate for social-justice issues online, and in September 2018 he left his reporting job to work as the director of communications for Jolt, a non-profit organization that increases civic participation among Texas Latinos ages 18 to 32.

On August 1, Arellano became the interim executive director of Jolt. His predecessor, Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez—who in 2016 launched Jolt in her living room as a response to Trump’s election—stepped down from the

organization to run for U.S. Senate. Today, Jolt is the largest civic-engagement organization in Texas, and reaches thousands of young Latinos across the state through their offices in Austin, Houston, and Dallas.

“[My new position] is a massive responsibility, and I don’t take it lightly,” Arellano says. “The work we’re doing is necessary. Racism has always existed in America, but recently it has been emboldened and discrimination has been empowered. Because of this, we’re mobilizing Latinos like never before.”

Latinos currently make up nearly 40 percent of Texas’ population, and are on track to become the largest group in the state by 2022, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s latest report. “The reason Latinos are under attack is because we are so powerful,” Arellano says. “People who are in power realize that Latinos have the potential to vote them out of office and to replace them at every level of government—all the way to the White House.”

In three years, an estimated one in three Texans eligible to vote will be under the age of 30. However, currently only 43 percent of Latinos under 30 are registered to vote, according to the Jolt report *We Are Texas: An Analysis of Young Latino Voters in the Lone Star State*.

Fortunately, the Jolt report also found that young Latina women are voting at higher rates than their non-Latina female counterparts. "If you want to win an election in the state of Texas, you have to convince young Latinas that you're deserving," Arellano says. "This is why Jolt invests heavily in women. We like to believe that the future is female, and she's a Latina."

In addition to block walking and phone banking, Jolt uses innovative ideas to reach young Latino voters. The organization recently launched Poder Quince, a campaign that brings voter-registration opportunities to some of the 50,000 quinceañeras held in Texas each year.

Every weekend in Austin, Houston, and Dallas, Jolt volunteers go to register voters at quinceañeras (traditional Latino celebrations of a girl's 15th birthday, marking her passage from childhood to womanhood). Jolt provides a free photo booth for the party, along with

a voter registration booth, and prepares the 15-year-old girl to deliver a powerful speech in which she asks her guests to register and vote.

"It's been proven that voter registration is more effective when a family member suggests it," Arellano says. "So when the princess of the night tells you that this is what she wants from you for her quinceañera, people listen. It's so beautiful to see Latinos get political in spaces where politics were never discussed."

Instead of focusing on hate rhetoric targeted at Latinos and undocumented individuals, Jolt empowers Latinos and celebrates their cultures in order to inspire them to vote. Because Jolt's target audience is typically active internet users, the organization maintains a strong digital presence across its social-media platforms.

"You hardly ever see red, white, or blue on any of Jolt's pages," Arellano notes. "Instead, you see a mixture of traditional Latino colors, shapes, sizes, and materials that reflect us. This powerful imagery speaks to a new generation of people who have never been inclined to be politically engaged, because they have never before seen themselves reflected in politics."

Arellano says being the openly gay, undocumented executive director of Jolt adds another

dimension to the work that the organization does. Over the summer, Jolt attended several LGBTQ Pride parades across Texas to register voters and ask them what issues mattered to them.

"Many of our team members identify as queer, and we are predominately female-led," Arellano says. "We try to stay true to the voices that we reflect. Being a gay man at the helm of Jolt only emphasizes the commitment we have to our diverse community members."

Arellano says it is because of his parents' sacrifices that he was given the opportunity to be successful.

"Everything I do is to make my parents proud," Arellano says. "I understand the amount of racism they've had to tolerate, the odd jobs they've had to take, and the oppression they had to endure, just so I could have a chance." ▼



Jolt has volunteer opportunities every Tuesday from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at its Houston headquarters, 3507 Navigation Boulevard. For more information about Jolt, visit jolttx.org. Follow Antonio Arellano on Twitter at @AntonioArellano and Instagram at @antonioarellano_



We are an open, welcoming and compassionate group of seekers inviting you to become a part of the life of our church and school.



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

1601 Sunset Blvd. Houston, Texas 77005 www.fcchou.org 713-526-8125
Sunday Service at 10:30 am • Now enrolling students ages 12 months to 5 years

Fly High Above The Rest. Goosehead Insurance.

The smarter, simpler way to purchase insurance.



Best Insurance Agent
Finalist

Patrick Torma

Agency Owner

Call 281.723.1294

3420 Rusk St., Ste. 22
Houston, TX 77003



You are Cordially Invited to

**THE 2ND ANNUAL
LGBTQ VETERANS & ALLIES
MILITARY BALL**



Join us for an evening of camaraderie, frivolity, and fun honoring our LGBTQ veterans and celebrating their service to our country. Featuring guest speakers, a color guard, an open bar, and plenty of dancing

**SATURDAY | SEPTEMBER 21ST 2019
6:30-10:00PM**

**JULIA IDESON LIBRARY
550 MCKINNEY ST. | HOUSTON, TX 77024**

presented by

COMBINED ARMS

LGBTQ Veterans Group ★

HONORARY
CO-CHAIR
CONSTABLE
ALAN ROSEN

HARRIS COUNTY PRECINCT 1

HONORARY
CO-CHAIR
KEVIN DOFFING

COO - COMBINED ARMS
UNITED STATES ARMY

HONORARY
CO-CHAIR
REGGIE GRAY

PRESIDENT - THE HOUSTON
INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

HONORARY CO-CHAIR
SCOTT EVANS

PRESIDENT - THE SOCIAL BOOK

CHAIRMAN
BROOKS
BALLARD

COMBINED ARMS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CO-CHAIR
CURRY GLASSELL

HONORARY
CO-CHAIR

JOHN BOERSTLER

CEO - COMBINED ARMS
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HONORARY
CO-CHAIR
ROLAND

MALDONADO, MD.

HONORARY
CO-CHAIR
LAUREN GORE

COMBINED ARMS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
UNITED STATES ARMY

HONORARY
CO-CHAIR

CARLIS MILLER

COMBINED ARMS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HONORARY
CO-CHAIR

WINSTON ELLIOTT

COMBINED ARMS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
UNITED STATES ARMY

MASTER OF CEREMONY
ROY ALVAREZ, JR.

COMBINED ARMS COMMUNITY LEADER

RSVP ONLINE AT GO.COMBINEDARMS.US/LGBTQ-BALL

Houston's Very 'Modern Family'

PFLAG President Janice Anderson is proud of her three LGBTQ children.

By BRANDON WOLF



From left - Gwen Lambert, Dean Lambert, Janice Anderson, Greg Lambert, and Lynndon Lambert

"I gave birth to what I thought were three little girls," says Janice Anderson. But that eventually changed for the newest president of PFLAG-Houston (Parents, Family & Friends of Lesbians and Gays). Two of her children now identify as gender non-binary, and her youngest child is now a trans man. They are a happy, close-knit "modern family," thanks in part to the nurturing support that Anderson received from Houston's local PFLAG chapter.

From Oklahoma to Houston



Anderson was born into a military family at Fort Lewis, Washington, in 1967. "I was born in a hospital hallway, because they were treating so many wounded soldiers from Vietnam," she says. She graduated from Cameron University in Lawton, Oklahoma, in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in English. In 1995, she completed a master's degree in library science at the University of Oklahoma.

In 1992, Anderson met Greg Lambert, a fellow librarian and friend of her brother. Two years later, they were married and soon began raising a family of three children. "He is perfect for me. We have the same thoughts about every issue that is important. I would not want to parent our children with anyone else," Anderson says.

In 2003, the family moved to Houston when Lambert got a position at the University of Houston's law-school library. Tropical Storm Allison had flooded the library, and Lambert was put in charge of rebuilding it.

Anderson most recently taught a series of creative-problem-solving classes at Paul Revere Middle School in the Memorial area, and will begin a new position as librarian of a Spring Branch middle school whose principal is supportive of gay-straight alliance groups.

Anderson describes her family as "an open house" where the children are encouraged to freely express their thoughts and emotions. Her own childhood was "free range," and she wanted to pass that along to her children. Still, she hadn't expected to discover that her children are all LGBTQ.

Gwen, 19 (Pronouns They, Them, Theirs)

Gwen Lambert was the first child that Anderson realized was LGBTQ. The two had never discussed it, but Anderson "just sort of figured it out" by the time Gwen was in the sixth grade. "Gwen asked questions about what I'd think if they dated a girl." Anderson replied that she would be fine with it—as soon as Gwen was old enough to date.

Anderson says that Gwen had a boyfriend for a while, but then she discovered that Gwen was going steady with a middle-school girl. She correctly assumed that Gwen was bisexual.

By the eighth grade, Gwen told their mother that they didn't feel like a girl or a boy. "They wore their hair short and self-identified as androgynous." Gwen loved the gender-bending film *Victor/Victoria*, in which Julie Andrews plays a woman impersonating a male entertainer who impersonates women.

When the term "gender non-binary" became widely accepted, Gwen embraced that

gender-identity description. "They said they finally didn't feel so nebulous," Anderson recalls. Gwen is now studying to be a pastry chef at Houston Community College and works at an ice-cream store in the Memorial area. They were pleased when Pride Houston introduced a new gender non-binary grand-marshal category in 2019.

Dean, 17 (Pronouns He, Him, His)

Trans son Dean Lambert, who identifies as a gay man, was the second child to come out. In 2016, he and his mother were talking about the North Carolina "bathroom bill" that made it illegal to use a bathroom not in synch with the gender assigned at birth.

As they discussed the headline story, Anderson told Dean that when he was younger, she had thought he might be a transgender male since he wore his hair short and wanted a unisex name. Dean became very quiet, and then started to cry. "He had heard horror stories about parents throwing out their transgender children, and he was afraid to tell me. He was so relieved that I was okay with it," Anderson says.

When Dean was seven, he underwent radiation treatment to kill a cancerous tumor on his hip. "I was so worried about the cancer, I took my eye off the gender-identity ball," →



GONZALEZ OLIVIERI LLC

IMMIGRATION LAW FIRM, HOUSTON, TEXAS

SERVING THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY WITH SAME SEX VISA PETITIONS, RESIDENCY, NATURALIZATION, BUSINESS VISAS, INVESTOR VISAS, TEMPORARY WORKER VISAS, REPRESENTATION BEFORE THE IMMIGRATION COURTS, APPEALS TO THE BOARD OF IMMIGRATION APPEALS CIRCUIT AND SUPREME COURT OF THE U.S.



GONZALEZOLIVIERILLC.COM
EVITALADEPORTACION.COM

713 481 3040

2200 SOUTHWEST FREEWAY SUITE 550
HOUSTON, TX 77098



RAED GONZALEZ, JD LLM



COVERAGE TO LIVE THE LIFE YOU WANT



Voted the BEST Male Insurance Agent



- Automobile insurance
- Business or Commercial
- Call to see if you can save

Lane Lewis

Your Local Agent
2200 North Loop W Ste 136
Houston, TX 77018
LLewis@FarmersAgent.com

Call 713.688.8669 today!
For Home, Auto, Life and Business.



Restrictions apply. Discounts may vary. Not available in all states. See your agent for details. Insurance is underwritten by Farmers Insurance Exchange and other affiliated insurance companies. Visit farmers.com for a complete listing of companies. Not all insurers are authorized to provide insurance in all states. Coverage is not available in all states.



Stay In-The-Loop With

ANDY WEBER

Resident of Montrose since 1983

Consistent TOP Producer,
John Daugherty, Realtors

If you wish to be In-The-Loop,
whether selling, buying, or just
looking around,

Voted One of the Best Realtors
in Houston 7 years in a row
- OutSmart Readers' Choice 2012-2018



CALL ANDY NOW!

713.724.4306

CELL

713.561.6653

DIRECT

andyw@johndaugherty.com

JOHNDAUGHERTY.COM

520 Post Oak Blvd., Houston, TX 77027 713.626.3930

LEADING REAL ESTATE COMPANIES

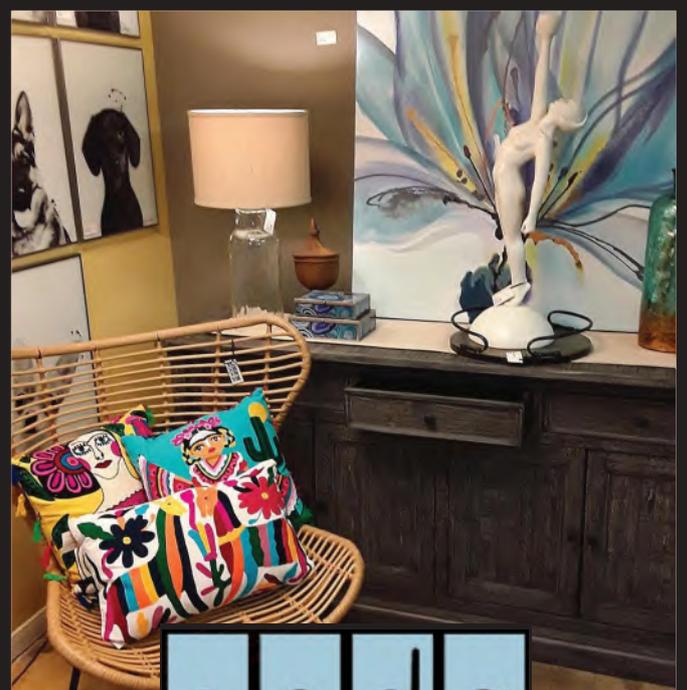
REALTOR

LUXURY REAL ESTATE.COM

LUXURY REAL ESTATE

REGENTS

MAYFAIR OFFICE CO. US



coda

in the heights

Gifts & Home Décor

355 W. 19th St • Houston, TX, 77008 • 713.864.4411

Tues – Sat: 10am-6pm | Sun: 1-5pm | Closed Mondays

Anderson recalls. After the cancer treatment, Dean started wearing jumpers and skirts because they didn't rub against his hip. Dean was also a member of a girls' dance team up until the seventh grade, so Anderson had assumed he was identifying as female.

Prior to beginning high school, Dean legally changed his name, taking on the name of his late uncle Dean, a gay man who died in 2014. The move to high school was a fresh start, and a good opportunity to begin presenting as male.

In 2017, Dean had his gender marker legally changed, just in time to get his Texas driver's license. He will be a high-school senior this fall, and is interested in pursuing a degree in engineering at Cameron University.

Lynndon, 22 (Pronouns They, Them, Theirs)

Lynndon Lambert is Anderson's oldest child, but was the last one to come out. Two years ago, Gwen noticed that Lynndon had changed their gender marker on Facebook from female to male. Lynndon now identifies as gender non-binary, as well as "pan-romantic but asexual."

Lynndon is a junior at Cameron University, studying art and planning to be an art teacher after college. "They are really good at print-making," Anderson says. Lynndon is currently dating a trans man.

Hatch Youth Provides a Refuge

All three children attended the Montrose Center's Hatch Youth program for LGBTQ+ teens. Anderson says she hadn't been aware of the Montrose Center's program, but she was happy to discover that there was a place where her children would be accepted just as they are. "They really liked being around kids who were just like them, and they made a lot of friends there," Anderson says. Her three children are all very supportive of each other as they make their individual journeys into adulthood.

Turning to PFLAG

Anderson started attending PFLAG Houston in 2016. Although she felt prepared when Gwen came out as bisexual, she quickly called the PFLAG help line to get more information when Dean came out as a transgender male. "I needed to catch up, both for myself and for my children," she says.

After attending PFLAG for two years, Anderson was elected secretary. This past January, she was elected president. "I've had experience as the head of parent-teacher organizations," she says, so the job seemed right.

One of her duties is to preside over the

PFLAG board, which is made up of the organization's committee chairs. She also helps organize the help line.

Anderson especially enjoys working the PFLAG information table at various events. One of her favorite venues is the Houston Children's Museum. When she talks with parents who call the PFLAG help line, she likes to arrange a time to have coffee and talk face-to-face.

Looking to the future, Anderson says she has a great sense of hope. Recalling her days as the faculty sponsor of the Gay-Straight Alliance at Paul Revere Middle School, she says "there were 1,200 kids in the school, and 53 belonged to the GSA. They were all there to be supportive of LGBTQ+ youth." Attendance went from 27 the first year to 53 in 2019.

Anderson was pleased that the school's principal encouraged her to bring more LGBTQ students into the club. "There were some LGBTQ students who knew me, came to one meeting, but then didn't return," Anderson recalls. "I'd see them around campus, though, being themselves—holding hands and attending dances with their steadies. I believe that just knowing there was a place for them on campus made them more comfortable." ▼

Lawyers You Know, A Firm You Can Trust



JOHN NECHMAN
LGBT Pride Grand Marshal, 2013

MITCHELL KATINE
LGBT Pride Grand Marshal, 2001

IMMIGRATION
Same-Sex Marriage Green Cards to Asylum
17 years of helping LGBTQ couples and individuals find solutions for all immigration needs

Real Estate Disputes • Homeowner Association Law • Immigration
Criminal Law • Family Law • Adoptions • Insurance and Disability Claims
HIV/LGBTQ Law • Estate Documents • Employment Law

Katine & Nechman | 1834 Southmore Blvd. | Houston, TX 77004
713-808-1000 | info@lawkn.com | www.lawkn.com



OCTAVIO BARRIOS, M.D.
ADULT PRIMARY CARE
www.doctorbarrios.com



OCTAVIO BARRIOS, MD

BOARD CERTIFIED
AMERICAN BOARD
OF FAMILY MEDICINE

BY APPOINTMENT
SAME DAY AVAILABLE
FOR ACUTE ILLNESS

**Ask us about
PrEP Today!**
HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis

**MOST INSURANCES
ACCEPTED**



LUCIA MANGLE ARNOLD,
MPAS, PA-C



BEST PHYSICIAN
2013-2018
FINALIST

Renaissance Family Clinic
517 West Gray St. • 713.942.7546

SHELLEY KENNEDY

CANDIDATE FOR CITY COUNCIL

FIGHTING
FOR ALL
OF US
For Decades



KennedyForHouston.com



SHELLEY
KENNEDY
FOR THE PEOPLE
HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT C

Paid for by Shelley Kennedy for City Council. Shaun Mcdade Nelson Treasurer.

PLAN WISELY. YOU WON'T GET A DO-OVER.

A successful retirement in the future can often depend on having a solid plan now. If your money isn't working as hard as you are, it may be time to act—there are no do-overs in retirement planning. Now is the time to consider developing a strategy that can help you work toward your financial goals. I specialize in providing comprehensive, objective financial guidance with the goal of maximizing every remaining moment of the retirement countdown.

Call today to learn more or to schedule a consultation.



Galene Financial
Richard Dickson, CFP®, MBA
1700 West Loop S Ste 255
Houston, TX. 77027-3029
(713) 489-4322 Office
(713) 489-3679 Fax
rdickson@galenefinancial.com
www.galenefinancial.com

GALENE
FINANCIAL

Securities and Advisory Services offered through LPL Financial, Member FINRA/SIPC.



New Construction, Renovations,
Weekly Maintenance & Repairs



WHETHER YOU WANT
SOMETHING SIMPLE OR EXOTIC

We have the talent and experience
to achieve your design and budget!



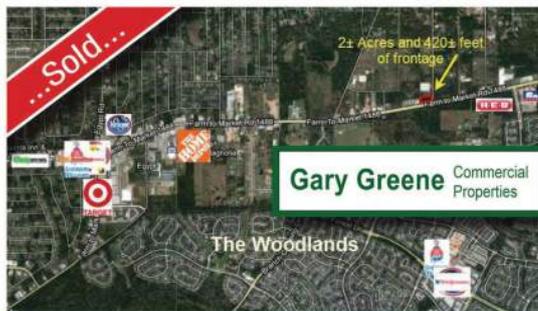
VENTURE
POOL COMPANY

Family Owned & Operated since 1999

713.462.0762 | venturepoolco.com

Buying, Selling and Investments

Available for all your Commercial and Residential Real Estate Needs



Lynette Lew • 713.582.2202

Residential and Commercial Realtor
Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate Gary Greene
Gary Greene Commercial Properties

Lynette@LynetteLew.com | www.LynetteLew.com

A Community Warrior and Ally

Rep. Garnet Coleman reflects on his three decades in the Texas Legislature.

By RYAN M. LEACH

State Representative Garnet Coleman has served House District 147 since 1991. He is as much a fixture at the Capitol in Austin as the iconic pink dome itself. His next election, if successful, will take him over the 30-year mark as an ardent warrior and ally for Houston and its LGBTQ community.

“I come from a family that has always been politically active, primarily to move the black community closer to getting a seat at the table at all levels of government. I started thinking about those things a long time ago, before I was ever elected,” says Coleman of his early days in Houston.

Born in Washington D.C. in 1961, Coleman’s family soon moved to Houston’s Third Ward, where his father’s side of the family had resided for over 100 years—an astonishingly deep history, considering Houston itself only goes back to 1837.

Coleman attended Yates High School and then went on to the University of St. Thomas, located in the heart of Montrose (a neighborhood that was in full bloom at the time as one of the most famous queer communities in the country).

“I knew the gay clubs better than most people of my generation. Everyone I hung around was going to the gay clubs in the neighborhood. I had so many friends half-out and half-in [the closet] in high school and college,” recalls Coleman. “I also found a community that, from a political perspective, I agreed with and became friends with. I knew we could advocate together on the fights that needed to occur.”

Indeed, Coleman’s early alliance with Houston’s LGBTQ activist community led to the GLBT Political Caucus endorsement he

received on his first campaign—a special election to replace Larry Evans, his predecessor in Austin. The organization has enthusiastically endorsed Coleman in every election since.

“That was an extremely gratifying moment, and I will never forget it,” says Coleman of that first endorsement.

The Proof Is in the Progress

There is a reason why Houston’s LGBTQ community has always supported the legislator. Early in his legislative career, Coleman was introducing positive legislation on its behalf. In 1999, he introduced a bill that would prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation—a bill that he has tried to pass in every subsequent legislative session.

In 2013, he passed legislation to address the public-health threat posed by youth suicides, which led to sweeping changes in school policies across Texas relating to bullying and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Many of his legislative accomplishments pertain to legislation concerning HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. In 1995, Coleman successfully passed a bill that allowed for the manufacturing and marketing of at-home HIV testing kits, a tremendous accomplishment in those early days of widespread HIV screening. At-home kits provided an incentive for more people to test and seek treatment for complications related to the disease.

In 2011 he passed legislation that created the Texas HIV Medication Advisory Committee. In 2017, he passed legislation relating to the development of quality-based goals for the Texas Children’s Health Plan (CHIP) program, as well as HIV-care reforms in the Medicaid program.

Coleman admits he has built success through creating partnerships and alliances with others. He regularly aligned with legislators like openly gay former representative Glenn Maxey to draft legislation that supported the LGBTQ community. Today, Coleman looks to the Legislature’s LGBTQ Caucus, of which he is a member, and the five out representatives that advocate for relevant LGBTQ issues.

“Fast-forward to the last [statewide] election and the creation of the LGBTQ Caucus, which is a large number of representatives who are openly gay or bisexual. That’s a super change. When I started, there were those of us that did the work because it needed to be done in the absence of those voices. My son is gay, and we believed people like him should have access to the same rights that every Texan has. But now, people who actually are LGBTQ-identifying are doing the work. People who can advocate the best for a community do so from a real-life perspective,” says Coleman.

From Blue to Red to Trump

Over the course of 28 years of legislating, Coleman has had a front-row seat as Texas changed from blue (under Governor Ann Richards) to red (under George W. Bush and Rick Perry). In recent years, Governor Greg Abbott and Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick have taken the Republican Party even further to the right. Gone are the bipartisan days of the ’90s and early 2000s, when solutions were regularly reached by Coleman and his Republican colleagues. Current Texas leadership is dominated by the party of Trump. But even in these reddest of times for the Texas State Legislature, Coleman still sees hope for progress. →

A man with a goatee, wearing a light green blazer, a maroon polo shirt, khaki pants, and black loafers, is sitting in a wooden chair with a black leather seat. He is wearing bright pink socks with a colorful pattern. The background is a dark grey brick wall with some greenery on the right side. The ground is a light-colored concrete or stone surface.

"IT'S NOT WHAT PEOPLE SAY, IT'S WHAT THEY DO. WE AS AN OVERALL COMMUNITY NEED TO DO THINGS THAT MAKE THE WORLD WORK FOR US ALL. AND IN THE LEGISLATURE, THAT'S WHAT I HOPE I'VE DONE.

—Rep. Garnet Coleman

“Even though the LGBTQ community is under attack with things like the ‘bathroom bill,’ [those attacks are] not working. One of the best days recently was when every anti-LGBTQ bill got killed in the House. *All* of them died. If things were as bad as they appear, then all of those bills would pass. The corporate community respects their LGBTQ employees, and that has shut down any thought of doing a bathroom bill ever again. People won’t [move here to Texas] if these laws persist. The defensive support on LGBTQ issues is widespread,” says Coleman.

This lurch further to the right is starting to wear on Texas voters, according to Coleman. “Trump has really created a silent majority that doesn’t tolerate that hate. He created an election backlash in 2018, and I think you’ll see a continuation of that in 2020 with Trump on the ballot. We only need nine seats to take back the House, but *any* new seats we win will give us greater leverage than we had before,” predicts Coleman.

Working through Health Challenges

The 2019 session was challenging for Coleman as he battled some serious health issues relat-

ing to a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes, which led to severe liver disease. “I had stage 2 liver disease, and I was not sure whether my health would allow me to stay. I spent a great part of the session on a scooter and a wheelchair,” says Coleman.

Because of Coleman’s long tenure in the House, his colleagues helped him by conducting meetings in his office and over the phone. You get the sense that even though many elected officials may have ideological differences, they still have a great deal of respect and compassion for each other—especially Coleman.

Coleman has also been open about his bipolar diagnosis, but he does not blame that for the health complications he worked through during this session. “Even though I have bipolar disorder, I’ve worked through that. It has created some challenges in the past. Sometimes I am not as nice as I should be, but I’ve learned how to work with it,” he admits.

Rumors about Coleman stepping away from politics have always circulated, perhaps because of his openness about these health challenges. Session after session, rumors are proven false. Coleman sees the 2021 legislative

session as one of the most important ones ever in Texas, as the state looks at redistricting. His expertise will be particularly valuable to legislators, especially if his party takes back the House.

“I serve a district that was created by the Voting Rights Act, so if my health is good, as I expect it to be, then I am going to run again to do the work that I am meant to do. I am leaning in that direction. You heard it here first,” says Coleman.

All Politics Are Local

There is still some time until Coleman’s next race for District 147. Before then, Houstonians will elect a new mayor and several members of City Council. Although Coleman’s name will not appear on that ballot, he has a lot of opinions about who voters should choose to run the city. When you have thirty years of experience as an elected official, you also have a lot of influence on voters. Coleman’s opinions may be just the thing to sway voters in what is expected to be a tight race.

“Let’s be really clear. In the past, I supported and helped get elected some of the [City Council] candidates that are now running for mayor [and who] have no chance of winning. The only thing they are going to do in this race is to get Tony Buzbee elected,” warns Coleman.

“The proudest I was of this city was when we elected Annise Parker mayor, so I am surprised [at the candidates who] would use the trust of the progressive community to take votes away from [Mayor Turner], who cares for the LGBTQ community,” he says.

Coleman advises voters to follow the GLBT Political Caucus endorsements when they consider who to vote for.

Looking to statewide races, Coleman also weighed in on Houston City Council member Amanda Edwards’ bid to unseat Republican Senator John Cornyn in 2020.

“One of the reasons why Amanda should [be running against Senator Cornyn] is because people with her same credentials are getting elected right now to the Congress and Senate. People forget that Turner has a Harvard law degree, and so does Amanda. She would regret it if she didn’t run,” says Coleman.

In the meantime, Coleman will keep doing the work his constituents have trusted him to do for almost thirty years. Through blue and red times, in sickness and in health, Coleman has always shown up for his constituents and fought hard for communities who need a strong voice like his in their corner.

“It’s not what people say, it’s what they do. We as an overall community need to do things that make the world work for all of us. And in the Legislature, that’s what I hope I’ve done.” says Coleman. ▼

LOVE KNOWS NO BREED!



Natural Pawz sells only the most organic and Holistic brands out there. Stop into our newest Houston location with full services and training at 208 Westheimer.

Natural Pawz

208 Westheimer • Houston, TX 77006 • NaturalPawz.com

T.E.A.M.

Together Everyone Achieves More

- Create a culture of **inclusion**
- Promote **diversity** and belonging
- Display your inner **pride**, prosperity, competence & personal **confidence**
- **Own your actions**
- Empower **positive** conversations
- Allow for **win/win** situations
- Use impartial, practical **knowledge** to make decisions
- Be a team player and team **leader**
- Develop **compassion** for others
- Create an atmosphere of **gratitude**

Are you interested in learning how to implement these points of culture into **YOUR BUSINESS?** Learn more at:

bit.ly/n3outsmart

OUR VISION

“World
Abundance
through Business
Re-Education”

ActionCOACH
BUSINESS COACHING
BusinessAsATool.com
713-936-3814

Love Your Heels Again



Houston's Premier Destination for the most innovative in advanced biologic technology for the foot and ankle

Dr. Vanessa T. Barrow, DPM

Specializing in Aesthetic and Regenerative Medicine for the Foot and Ankle

SOLE AESTHETIC

5959 W. Loop South,
Suite 130
Bellaire, TX 77401
713.666.9934
soleaesthetictx.com

CONNECT WITH US!

[soleaesthetictx/](https://www.facebook.com/soleaesthetictx/)
 [@Sole_Aesthetic](https://twitter.com/Sole_Aesthetic)
 [@soleaesthetictx](https://www.instagram.com/soleaesthetictx)



PHOTOGRAPHER **Justin O'Keith**
MODEL **Jake Mills**
FRAME **Beausoleil**

Flex/HSA Accounts
Accepted

Follow us on
Instagram
[@spectacles_on_montrose](https://www.instagram.com/spectacles_on_montrose)

DISTINCTIVE EYEWEAR • CONTACT LENSES • EYE EXAMS

spectacles.
ON MONTROSE ●●●●

4317 montrose blvd • 713.529.3937
www.WearUsOut.com
Evan Mapes OD
Optometric Glaucoma Specialist



You Don't Know Jack

Longtime LGBTQ activist and radio star leads KPFT into a new era.

By KIM HOGSTROM

Last month, a popular activist from Houston's LGBTQ community assumed a new professional media position in the heart of Montrose. Affable gay advocate Jack Valinski was named KPFT 90.1 FM radio's interim general manager.

The appointment is great news for Houstonians of many stripes. Gregarious, intelligent, and exceedingly good-natured, there may be no one on Earth better suited for the challenge.

And a challenge it is sure to be, with listener-sponsored community radio stations dropping like flies in the U.S. This form of radio usually has no corporate sponsors, so individual patrons must donate money, talent,

and time to keep a station alive. While paying the bills is a constant concern, community radio results in content that is not beholden to anyone. Historically, KPFT has fostered free thought, free speech, full-frontal creativity, and sometimes chaos.

Valinski knows what he's getting into; he was the founding producer of KPFT's *Queer Voices*, the weekly program whose goal was to provide Houston's LGBTQ community with information unavailable from other local media outlets. Most will agree that the station exceeds its objectives to this day.

"Jack's *Queer Voices* has kept our LGBTQ community well-informed. It has helped new organizations gain visibility, and has

showcased LGBTQ newsmakers. It has been there during natural and political hurricanes. It shared our grief when Matt Shepard was killed, celebrated when Annise Parker was elected Houston's first openly lesbian mayor, and marveled when the U.S. Supreme Court established marriage equality as the law," states Brandon Wolf, Houston's highly regarded historian, author, and LGBTQ activist.

"As we head into the incredibly important 2020 election, the radio program will be there, keeping us motivated and inspired. *Queer Voices* is a vital thread in our community's fabric," Wolf concludes.

Producing quality radio content is not Valinski's only gift. He offers KPFT more than

40 years of experience in professional radio operations, having worked for ABC and Metro Traffic. For the latter, he managed more than 1,000 stations as Metro's national operations director.

Still, KPFT is a different animal—a non-profit agency, and largely a volunteer effort. Here again, Valinski is a standout who has done it all—volunteer recruiting, fundraising, community organizing, FCC compliance oversight, and technical project management.

Valinski's ability to organize came into sharp focus when, in 1982, he acted as one of the original founders of Pride Houston. Thanks in large part to this generous gentleman, the month of June now blazes with rainbow color, awareness, and appreciation throughout the city.

Humble to a fault, Valinski laughs off his deep well of talent and his devotion to Houston, dismissing his contributions and cringing at any mention of credit.

"I have always known that I didn't know it all. In truth, I have been very fortunate to find and surround myself with people who *did* know what they were doing," Valinski states, laughing.

"I've known Jack for almost twenty years, and consider him one of my mentors," says

"JACK'S QUEER VOICES HAS KEPT OUR LGBTQ COMMUNITY WELL-INFORMED. IT HAS HELPED NEW ORGANIZATIONS GAIN VISIBILITY, AND HAS SHOWCASED LGBTQ NEWSMAKERS."

— Brandon Wolf

JD Doyle, the city's leading LGBTQ-history archivist.

"In 1999, Jack invited me to host a radio segment, which would be called *Queer Music Heritage*, on KPFT. I had no experience, but he helped me get it going and trusted me to develop it into what would become a fifteen-year run," Doyle continues.

"I seriously doubt that I would have gone on

to my other history work and websites without that initial push. Jack will do well as station manager, as I have long marveled at how well he works with people, and his understanding of politics and the city," the historian concludes.

For the last seven years, Valinski has been working in the Mayor's Citizens Assistance Office. His unenviable task was to handle complaints lodged with the City by Houstonians who were not satisfied with a service-request resolution. As one might suspect, there was a lot of yelling involved. Valinski's good temper served him well through it all, and he excelled at the job.

"I never took offense at the yelling," he remembers. "Often, the citizens were frustrated and needed to be heard and understood. They had asked for help, but often did not receive it. I would listen, then I would say, 'Let me see how I can help.'" Then Valinski would solve the problem.

Now you know Jack. ▼

What: KPFT 90.1-FM's *Queer Voices* radio talk show hosted by Jack Valinski

When: Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays at 8 p.m.

Info and program archive: kpft.org/programming/newstalk/queer-voices



örthotex[®]
smile specialists
Dr. Zane K Haider DMD MS

Braces or Invisalign

\$ 2999

Free Consultation

In-House, No Interest Payment Plans
\$124 Down / \$125 Month For Braces
All Insurances Welcome



2540 FM 2920, Spring TX 77388

11942 Barker Cypress Road, Cypress TX 77433

info@orthotexsmiles.com - 24 HRS: (281) 937-2540

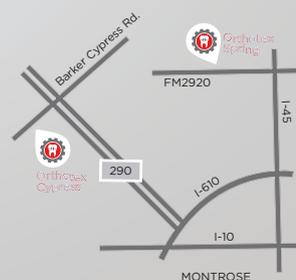
WWW.ORTHOTEXSMILES.COM



Dr. Zane K Haider DMD MS
Owner/Orthodontist

Dr. Zane is the only out LGBTQ orthodontist in Greater Houston that we know.

**Two locations:
Spring and Cypress**



KINGS OF HOUSTON

Drag-king group proves to be local fan favorite.

By **LOURDES ZAVALETA**
Photos by **ASHKAN ROAYEE**

Drag isn't just for

queens anymore. At least that's what the H-Town Kings say.

In just shy of two years, this drag-king col-

lective has taken Space City by storm. At the city's annual Drag Awards in July, fans voted the H-Town Kings' weekly program at Pearl Bar the Best Drag Show in Houston. In August, the Wednesday-night Pearl Bar show got so popular that the Kings expanded to another recurring show on Sundays at Barcode.

Ian Syder-Blake, cofounder of the H-Town Kings, believes the group owes its success to creating a platform for folks who don't often see themselves represented in drag. "When you stop forcing drag artists to fit into a box, you start to see some amazing artistic expression," Syder-Blake says. "The H-Town Kings don't limit any of our performers. This appeals to many people who have never found any reason to care about drag."

Despite the show's popularity, establishing a recurring drag-king show in Houston was a challenge. For six years straight, Syder-Blake approached nearly every queer bar in town with the idea of starting a drag-king show and was met with rejection. "Bar owners would say, 'Our audience doesn't like drag kings,'" he recalls. "How did they know if they had never experienced us?"

In January 2018, Syder-Blake, who has been a drag king for almost seven years, finally

got his wish when Pearl Bar agreed to host a weekly show by the H-Town Kings. The group, created and led by Syder-Blake and Richard Long, includes a dedicated cast of drag kings and male entertainers, along with an opportunity for up-and-coming kings to get their start.

So, what is a drag king? Traditionally, drag kings are people who were assigned female at birth that dress up and perform as a masculine character on stage. However, the H-Town Kings is open to performers of all genders.

"Drag in itself is the over-extension of one's gender," says Long, who has done drag since 2016. "In old-school terms, a drag queen is a hyper-feminine character, while a drag king is a hyper-masculine one. Those definitions have evolved to include an array of alternative performers. If you're ever unsure of a drag performer's pronouns, you can always ask them politely like you would anyone else."

While Syder-Blake and Long both identify as male in and out of drag, other performers choose to take on characters with gender non-conforming identities. Ryder Moore, a "baby king" who has done drag for one year, is non-binary and uses the pronouns they/them/their onstage.

"I'm a very tomboy-esque girl out of drag," Moore says. "My character is an extension of me, so when I'm in drag, using they/them pronouns feel most comfortable."

Moore discovered drag kings two years ago at Comicpalooza when Syder-Blake was one of the convention's scheduled entertainers. While Moore wasn't sure about becoming a performer, they worked with Syder-Blake to

begin experimenting with the art. Moore is now a recurring performer in H-Town Kings shows, and calls Syder-Blake a drag father.

"Never in a million years did I think I'd ever become a drag king," Moore admits. "Then I performed in one show and haven't been able to stop. My favorite part about it all is that I've never stepped on stage and felt judged. That excitement extends to the audience. When you're performing and clearly doing what you love, they see it. I say 'you can do this too, fam.'"

Syder-Blake and Long say they have been approached by dozens of other baby kings who need guidance in becoming polished performers. The two collaborated to create Drag King Bootcamp, an in-person and online training course that teaches folks to become bookable drag kings in Houston.

"There are hundreds of drag queens in the community, so beginner queens have tons of resources to guide them through the process," Syder-Blake says. "Since we started the H-Town Kings show, we've had an influx of kings who needed help and didn't have any, so we developed Drag King Bootcamp to teach as many as we could at once."

The boot camp is currently in its third session. The first occurred at the Montrose Center, the second in online videos, and now it is being taught at Pearl Bar on Wednesdays at 6 p.m., just before the H-Town Kings take the stage at 9:30 p.m.

"This boot camp is eight weeks long and super-extensive," Long says. "We teach everything from makeup tutorials, to dressing room etiquette, to how to host a show." →



RUNS IN THE FAMILY

Ian Syder-Blake (center), co-founder of the H-Town Kings, is photographed with his drag sons Richard Long (l) and Ryder Moore.



DRAG FOR ALL

There are seven official H-Town Kings cast members—both kings and queens—who perform weekly and monthly. These entertainers are (clockwise, l-r) Nyx Laraye, Jermani Oz Jackson, Hugh Dandy, Adriana Larue, La'Darius Jackson, Richard Long, and Ian Syder-Blake.

Photographs of the group were taken at Pearl Bar Houston prior to the H-Town Kings' weekly drag show.

According to Syder-Blake, there are nearly 50 Houston drag kings and aspirants in a group chat that he manages. In order to become an H-Town King, one must show up at an audition night where baby kings compete for a spot in an upcoming H-Town Kings show.

There are seven official H-Town Kings cast members who perform weekly and monthly. In addition to being able to showcase various types of drag to audience members, the H-Town Kings have included two drag queens as cast members to show their commitment to uplifting all types of performers.

"Many drag queens see drag kings as equal, but quite a few still don't," Syder-Blake says. "We can't expect these queens to book us at their shows if we leave them out of ours. Also, drag queens are just fun. I want them to come party with us, too."

Shows like *RuPaul's Drag Race* have made

it even harder for drag kings to receive community support, according to Long. "While drag TV shows have brought positive aspects of the LGBTQ community to light, many local performers feel like [these shows] cheapen drag because you only see a polished, overproduced version of what it actually is," he says. "I'd say it's 10 times harder for drag kings, because we're not mainstream. Some people even assume that we're not as talented as our queen counterparts."

Syder-Blake says drag kings face many misconceptions, including the belief that they are not as entertaining as drag queens because drag kings don't put as much effort into costuming. "On the contrary, drag kings also wear makeup, and it typically takes over three hours to get ready for one performance," he notes. "Where drag queens tuck, we pack. They wear high heels, and we wear dress shoes with risers

in them to make ourselves look taller. For everything that they do, we have an equivalent."

But the fans of H-Town Kings love the group nonetheless, and Long believes that's because of their mutual respect. To begin each of their shows, the Kings promote consent between audience members and entertainers alike. "If anyone ever feels uncomfortable, we are approachable, we are the guys you come and tell," he says. "We literally love our supporters, and they love us. They're not just audience members to us. They're family."

The H-Town Kings perform at Pearl Bar every Wednesday night at 9:30 p.m., and at Barcode every Sunday night at 8 p.m.



For more information about the H-Town Kings or Drag King Bootcamp at [facebook.com/KingsofHouston](https://www.facebook.com/KingsofHouston)

W
MILLER
OUTDOOR
THEATRE
IN HERMANN PARK

WHAT'S ON AT MILLER?

The best music, dance, theater and more. AND, ALWAYS FREE.

milleroutdoorthatre.com

f t i

WHITE OAK
MUSIC HALL

2915 N. MAIN ST.
HOUSTON, TEXAS
77009

BOX OFFICE HOURS:
5PM - CLOSE ON THE NIGHT OF ANY TICKETED EVENT

	PHANTOGRAM 09/12		CHARLI XCX 09/23		KING PRINCESS 10/08
	DEAN LEWIS 10/14		SOFI TUKKER 10/17		BASTILLE 10/18

FOR MORE INFO VISIT:
www.PEGSTAR.net
www.WHITEOAKMUSICMALL.com

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

THY HOMELESS NEIGHBOR
THY JEWISH NEIGHBOR
THY BLACK NEIGHBOR

THY GAY NEIGHBOR
THY UNDOCUMENTED NEIGHBOR
THY WHITE NEIGHBOR

THY TRANSGENDER NEIGHBOR
THY CHRISTIAN NEIGHBOR
THY HIV+ NEIGHBOR

THY RACIST NEIGHBOR
THY ADDICTED NEIGHBOR
THY ATHEIST NEIGHBOR

THY IMPRISONED NEIGHBOR
THY DISABLED NEIGHBOR
THY MUSLIM NEIGHBOR

Resurrection
Metropolitan Community Church

SUNDAY WORSHIP 9 & 11 AM
NURSERY AVAILABLE | HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE
11 AM - CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAM
11 AM - SPANISH & DEAF INTERPRETATION
2025 W. 11TH @ TC JESTER, HOUSTON 77008
713.861.9149 | WWW.RESURRECTIONMCC.ORG

Since 1978

LIFE

COUNSELING

DEPRESSION • ANXIETY • SEXUALITY • GENDER IDENTITY • ADDICTION
GRIEF & LOSS • COUPLES & MARRIAGE • PARENTING • CAREER GOALS
COMING OUT • CHRONIC ILLNESS • DIVORCE • STRESS • SELF-ESTEEM
SUICIDE • SOCIAL
INTERNALIZED HOMOPHOBIA • SEXUAL ASSAULT • RELIGIOUS ABUSE
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE • EATING DISORDER • BIPOLAR DISORDER
PERSONALITY DISORDER • FAMILY

Because **life** happens.

FAVORITE LGBT PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATION
THANK YOU HOUSTON!

the Montrose Center

GAYEST & GREATEST 2017
OutSmart

401 BRANARD STREET | HOUSTON, TEXAS 77006 | MONTROSECENTER.ORG 713.529.0037

AFFORDABLE SLIDING SCALE. INSURANCE ACCEPTED, INCLUDING MEDICARE & MEDICAID

Condoms

Consistent and correct use of latex condoms is highly effective in preventing STI's.

Viral Hepatitis

A, B, C

Symptoms are similar.

#POL!

PREVENTION OUTLOUD

STAY NOTIFIED.

"DID YOU GET MY TEXT?"



PrEP

Prevents New HIV Infection.

HIV

U=U
Undetectable = Untransmittable

Gonorrhea

Can cause serious complications
when untreated

HIV / STI

Having an STI
puts you at Greater Risk of
getting HIV.

Chlamydia

Can make it difficult
for women to get pregnant.

Syphilis

Recognize the Symptoms
Protect Your Unborn Baby.

Song for Dad

Musical fundraiser
David James Barron is
Daddy of Montrose 2019.

By DON MAINES
Photo by DALTON DEHART



Community fundraiser David James Barron could have let his father's death last spring derail his 20th year of singing at benefit shows in local bars.

Instead, it inspired him.

"I feel his spirit," says Barron.

"He was always very supportive; now there is no physical realm holding him back. I went through a grieving period; now I am going through a rebirth. I'm growing again."

On August 18, Barron notched his 200th benefit performance when he sang "The Lord's Prayer" in a "religious-type show" at Tony's Corner Pocket. No way could he stop and savor that milestone, however, because he's committed to a year of duties as the 2019 Daddy of Montrose.

"The song that nails how I'm feeling right now is "Smile" by Charlie Chaplin," he says. Silent cinema's iconic "Little Tramp" composed the song as an instrumental for the finale of his 1936 comedy *Modern Times*. Lyricists Josh Turner and Geoffrey Parsons added words that include "Smile, what's the use of crying? You'll find that life is still worthwhile if you'll just smile."

Barron began performing at benefits after his first partner contracted AIDS and passed away in the 1990s.

"I vowed that I would do anything and everything possible to raise HIV awareness, and also raise money," he says. "I met a producer who encouraged me to use my talent in these

shows where people would tip me and I would donate the money. That is what got me started."

The Houston native excelled in drama, choir, and band at Westbury High School, where he graduated in 1980. He went to broadcasting school and became a radio disc jockey in Pampa, Texas, gaining a loyal following when he created a countdown show "like Casey Kasem." Also, he remembers getting a demo from a new act called The Judds, and playing their song "Mama He's Crazy" on the small-town AM station. "I said, 'Call in if you like it,' and the board lit up," he recalls.

Next, Barron worked at an easy-listening FM station in Lake Charles, Louisiana, before returning to Houston, where he's been the office manager for a small family-owned air-conditioning company for the past nine years.

Barron is active as an actor on local stages—including five shows that were directed by the late Joe Watts, who was widely considered "the father of gay theater in Houston."

Barron's father was in the hospital for 14 days before he passed away on March 24. "Our family is very close. The entire family was by his side [that weekend]. Each of [his sons]—there are four of us—has a special place in Dad's heart, and we all have our nicknames, too. Dad called me Jimbo, and I called him Pal. I sang Laura Story's "Blessings" at Dad's funeral."

When Barron decided to enter the Daddy of Montrose contest on Father's Day at Michael's

Outpost, one of the first people he told was his friend Heather Gabriel, whom he calls "the singing seamstress."

"She is very talented at making costumes, and she made me a shirt of pleather (a leather-looking type of material) with a shiny collar and armbands made into the shirt" for the presentation category of the competition. "I wore black pants, which she made pizazz-y by putting jazzy stripes down both sides to give it a tuxedo-ish look."

He returned to the stage for a speech in which he wore his father's Baylor University T-shirt. "I cried backstage," he says. "Tears of joy; I felt God's presence."

A month earlier, on Mother's Day, Viola Degradable Dion-Debris was crowned the 2019 Mother of Montrose. Subsequent contests were scheduled to pick the Boy, Girl, and Pup to complete the Houston gayborhood's "First Family" for 2019.

At 4 p.m. on Sunday, October 13, they will appear as the "altogether ooky" stars of a PWA Holiday Charities benefit called "An Early First (Addams) Family Halloween Show" at Michael's Outpost.

As the Daddy of Montrose, there is no slowing down in sight for Barron's fundraising performances. "I am in this for the full year. I'm stepping up my game, taking a risk and doing songs that are out of my league from what I thought I could do. I want every performance to be better than my last performance," he says. ▼

Real Estate Fueled by Technology



**#1 Luxury
Real Estate Agent**

by average sales price, HBJ 2019
Residential Real Estate Awards



Clayton Katz

Top Producing Agent
832.512.2180

clayton.katz@compass.com

**2018
Most Expensive
Home Sold**

in Houston



6008 Memorial Drive
Memorial Park • \$2,800,000



3717 Willowick Road
River Oaks • \$8,200,000



COMPASS COMING SOON

2514 Avalon Place
Avalon Place • \$3,795,000



5104 Caroline Street
Museum District • \$1,610,000



602 Birdsall Street
Memorial Park Area • \$1,699,500



2002 S Piney Point Road
Memorial Villages • \$8,500,000



810 Atwell Street
Bellaire • \$2,699,991



5003-5007 Chenevert Street
Museum District • Starting at \$725,000

All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is subject to errors, omissions, changes in price, condition, sale, or withdrawal without notice. All measurements and square footages are approximate, but not guaranteed and should be independently verified. This is not intended to solicit property already listed. Nothing herein shall be construed as legal, accounting or other professional advice outside the realm of real estate brokerage. Compass is a licensed real estate broker. Equal Housing Opportunity.

Peru and the City

Gay actor and writer Peru Flores discovers Houston's vibrant theater scene.

By MARTIN GONZALEZ
Photos by NGHIA TRAN



When Peru Flores agreed to fly to Houston from New York City for his sister's wedding, he had only planned on staying for a few weeks. "My friend Maya helped me buy a two-way ticket," Flores recalls, adding that Maya is still waiting for him to return and pay her back for the ticket. "It's been two years, baby!"

Flores, a 28-year-old gay actor and writer, began his career in entertainment not in New York City, but in his country of birth and name-sake. Growing up in Cusco, Peru, for the first 14 years of his life gave him a special appreciation for the empowerment that actors feel onstage.

"Whenever I performed, people just really liked me," Flores says. "I found performance

to be very therapeutic because it was the one place where I felt safe."

Although Flores was admired as an actor, his sexuality was met with less enthusiasm. Though he was not publicly out while living in Peru, Flores faced anti-gay bullying and abuse from both classmates and teachers. The discrimination came to a head in an incident Flores later realized was an attempt at conversion therapy, spearheaded by the school without his parents' knowledge or consent.

Years later, Flores came across some articles on conversion therapy that got his attention. "I thought, 'Wait a second, I went through that!'" he recalls. The incident ultimately marked his mother's decision to move to the U.S.—an opportunity that would allow Flores' dreams of acting, writing, and performing to flourish.

Humble Beginnings

Flores and his mother moved from Peru to his sister's two-bedroom apartment in Odessa, Texas. The 14-year-old found himself sleeping on the floor while his mother and sister shared a twin-size bed for several months. During this time, he took comfort in reading and writing. "The beauty of Texas summers is that the light just lasts forever," Flores recalls, noting that he was able to read and write despite not having electricity at times. "I would go to the door of the apartment complex because the sun would come in and I could read, write, and do my homework by natural light. When it got dark, I would go inside, light a candle, and do the rest in there."

Despite not having the most privileged start in the U.S., Flores remembers taking his surroundings in stride. "In one of my old notebooks I wrote about this store in the mall that sold popcorn with *different flavors*. That, to me, was the American dream."

To continue his pursuit of an acting career, Flores decided to move to New York City. He fondly recalls his memories of an earlier visit to the Big Apple during his junior year of high school. "I remember seeing a rainbow flag for the first time in person. I knew it meant gay pride, and it made me so happy. It was such a validation, and I instantly fell in love with New York."

In true New York fashion, life escalated quickly for Flores. Within one month, he enrolled at NYU, found an agent, unenrolled from NYU, and began studying with The Barrow Group Theatre Company and School (home to alumni such as Anne Hathaway, Vera Farmiga, and Mike Birbiglia). Although he accomplished much during his seven years in New York—including landing a role in *The Kite Runner* and working with the Upright Citizens Brigade—Flores' relationship with the city was not without problems.

"I had been working as an actor steadily for a couple of years, and then I kind of fell off," Flores admits. "My lease ended, my job ended, I had no job prospects—and then my sister called to tell me she was getting married. She said, 'Just come to Houston, give yourself a break.'" That break has become a journey of nearly three years for Flores.

Since his arrival here, he has learned to better understand both the entertainment industry and his mental health. "I struggle with anxiety and depression, and it wasn't until I came to Houston that it became a real thing," Flores says, adding that Houston's calm yet progressive pace has allowed him to focus on his mental health.

While in Houston, Flores is refusing to put his acting and writing career on hold, taking

the city up on what it has to offer aspiring actors. After discovering Station Theater, Flores quickly established a local stage presence by starring in and producing several of his own successful comedy shows such as *GREASE(D)! A Live Parody*, *Unpopular Opinions: Live*, and his most recent production, *Peru and the City*.

“[These experiences] taught me that there are other [places] in the United States besides Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago where there is a demand and need for entertainment,” Flores notes, “as well as queerness and people of color being represented in media and entertainment.”

Gay, Brown, and Latino

Throughout his career, Flores has encountered numerous barriers stemming from his sexuality and the perceptions about his gender expression. In New York, he recalls casting directors questioning the authenticity of his auditions

for traditionally masculine roles, paralleling his own discomfort with sacrificing his sexual identity for the sake of an acting role.

“Casting directors would ask, ‘Oh, you’re reading for *this* part? But this is a football guy,’” Flores says. “That’s when I realized, not only was this weird for them, but it was also weird for me. I didn’t want to play those parts.”

Intersecting with his queerness was also his brownness—and in this case, Flores was wanted by some casting directors for the wrong reasons. Flores says that the roles commonly available to him were the stereotyped Mexican drug dealer or troubled teen. Those roles made him feel like he would compromise himself.

Difficulties navigating his identity within the entertainment industry led Flores to take on comedy, and specifically improv, as a new form of artistic expression. “I don’t have to compromise who I am onstage with improv,” Flores says. “I can just be a hot blonde cheerleader for a scene,

and everyone has to believe it. That’s the beauty of improv—whatever I say, goes.”

Through his exploration of improv, Flores was able to marry his love of comedy with his queer identity, culminating in his June 2019 production of *Peru and the City*, a fresh take on *Sex and the City* starring an all-LGBTQ cast. “It was the first time I produced a show that was for Pride—a gay show, meant for gay people, and I really cherish it,” says Flores, adding that the production marked the beginning of upcoming projects that will continue to merge his identity with his work.

Hey Peru and Future Endeavors

Flores’ time in Space City has inspired him to create an episodic web series based in Houston. He says *Hey Peru*, the show’s working title, is a blend of *Broad City* and *30 Rock* with a K-pop soundtrack and “a gay cherry on top.” Though the show was originally set in New York, Flores rewrote the show to reflect what his time in Houston has taught him about creating the opportunities and representation he has always wanted to see.

“There are more queer things to do, beyond the already established ones,” Flores says, hoping others will become leaders within their own communities to push for more diverse sources of entertainment. Flores cites his success in booking two atypical venues for a comedy show—Rich’s and White Oak Music Hall. “It’s all about asking and presenting your case. Some people will say no, but a lot more will say yes.”

Flores also cites K-pop music, and its artists’ reputation for constant conceptual changes, as a major source of inspiration for his own branding and artistic endeavors. “I really want to give myself the opportunity to express myself to my fullest artistic abilities,” Flores says. “I’m not a one-trick pony. Parodies, drama, comedy, grungy performance art—I want to do it all.”

In addition to *Hey Peru*, Flores has produced a short film entitled *The Morning After*, a semi-autobiographical story about the dark side of a relationship gone awry, which he just began submitting to film festivals. In the future, the actor and writer envisions hosting a production similar to the NYC performance art *Sleep No More* at a local indie venue such as Barbarella Houston.

You can keep up with Flores’ projects and artistic journey through his social media. ▼



PILLOW TALK

Peru Flores was photographed at Playhaus HTX, a Space City pop-up art gallery. His images were shot by photographer Nghia Tran of NT Photography, with the assistance of Nina Herzog and Elizabeth Tran. Flores is wearing select designs by Nicholas Nguyen, creator of the clothing line Mysterious by NPN.

For more information about Peru Flores’ work, visit [instagram.com/heyperu/](https://www.instagram.com/heyperu/) or [HeyPeruTV on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HeyPeruTV). As Flores explains it, “If you want to see someone be a cute idiot, here’s the page for you.”



LEGACY
COMMUNITY HEALTH
ENDOWMENT, INC.

Society
Circle of Caring

LCH Endowment Board Chair on LCH and Planned Gifts

When Tripp Carter was asked to serve on the Legacy Community Health (LCH) Endowment Board, he did not hesitate to say yes. He believes Legacy is an amazing organization, one that provides the highest standard of care, in a compassionate, efficient, and effective manner. Carter now serves as Chairman of the LCH Endowment Board, the group charged with planning Legacy's long-term financial future, and is very proud of his association with this award-winning, forward-thinking organization. He says, "Legacy provides services that communities across Southeast Texas need to stay healthy, and the caring, dedicated staff treats everyone with empathy, respect, and understanding. Everyone is welcome at Legacy."



Before becoming a successful partner at Bradshaw-Carter, Tripp previously spent more than 25 years in the world of philanthropy where he raised funds for well-known organizations such as the University of Texas Health Science Center and the renowned Menil Collection. Carter still enjoys using his fundraising skills for organizations he believes in, and Legacy's leaderships feels fortunate that he has partnered with us. He knows what questions to ask before he commits his philanthropic resources, and instinctively understands what the hallmarks of a strong nonprofit need to be.

Legacy's strong reputation fueled significant growth in the mid to late 2000s, and today LCH boasts 15 clinics across Houston and parts of Southeast Texas. According to Carter, this stellar reputation made it easy for him and his two Co-Chairs, Martha Turner and Trini Mendenhall, to raise \$10 million to build Legacy's newest clinic in the Gulfton area.

Carter feels the LCH Endowment Board's newest initiative, securing planned gifts, is the most efficient way to build a pipeline of future funding that will support LCH's much-needed programs and services. A simple bequest today will provide the future support needed to overcome economic downturns, cuts in health care funding, and natural disasters.

Carter invites anyone who is thinking about leaving a legacy, to consider taking a tour of any one of Legacy's 34 locations. Doing so will allow you to witness firsthand how Legacy is driving healthy change in the communities it serves across Southeast Texas.

To take a tour of Legacy Community Health or for more information on how you can help, please contact Chree Boydston, Chief Development Officer at 832.548.5054.

ADVERTORIAL

Legacy Community Health's ENDOWMENT BOARD

invites you to

Cocktails & Conversation

Endowing Your Future and Ours: **CREATING YOUR LEGACY**

October 15, 2019

6:00PM - 7:30PM

la griglia

2002 W. Gray Street • Houston, TX 77019

RSVP by October 8, 2019

giving@legacycommunityhealth.org

832.548.5123

 **LEGACY**
COMMUNITY HEALTH
ENDOWMENT, INC.

 **LEGACY**
COMMUNITY HEALTH
ENDOWMENT, INC.

Society
Circle of Caring

The Legacy Society honors all planned giving donors for the support of Legacy's mission of driving healthy change in our communities. The group recognizes the future gifts that ensure we receive funds necessary to both navigate the increasingly complicated health care landscape and continue providing compassionate, high-quality care our patients rely on to keep their families healthy.

We would be pleased to include you in the Legacy Society if you have:

- Provided for Legacy Community Health or the Legacy Community Health Endowment in your will or trust.
- Designated us as a beneficiary of a qualified retirement plan, life estate, savings bond or stock, bank account, life insurance policy, IRA, or real estate.

We welcome the opportunity to have a confidential, no-obligation discussion about these options with you and your advisor. We encourage you to visit the Gift Options section of our planned giving site to learn more about these options and download a free Estate Planning Guide.

If you would like to join the Legacy Society, or if you would like more information, please contact us at giving@legacycommunityhealth.org or lchplannedgiving.org



Creativity in Motion

Meet Matt Johns, the man behind the experiential art.

By SAM BYRD | Photos by MARK S. MCCRAY

What's that up in the sky? Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's a new art installation from Matt Johns. The Houston-raised artist recently installed his "experiential" art project at River Oaks District titled SkyWaves. A collaboration between the upscale shopping district and the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston resulted in this site-specific installation that celebrates the 50th anniversary of NASA's Apollo 11 moon landing.

"River Oaks District wanted to find an activation during the summer months to fill the space and provide shade. They sent us images of things that have been done—different iterations that provide shade and are also beautiful.

They wanted to do the same thing," Johns says. "Then with the Apollo 11 anniversary, I wanted to do something with mylar. It's the same material NASA used to make space blankets."

Such was the genesis of Johns' latest installation. Each of the four 50-foot SkyWaves quadrants is constructed with more than 1,000 hand-cut flags, referencing the first U.S. flag planted on the moon by astronauts Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong. Fifteen people spent six weeks making and hanging the outdoor art—and Houston's notorious summer weather provided them with a challenge.

"If we're not dealing with a tropical storm, we're dealing with oppressive heat. We had to do our research to make sure things would last in 100-degree weather, and to make sure it

wouldn't reflect back more heat," he says. Barring any tropical storms hitting Houston, the piece is scheduled to stay up through October.

This isn't the first time the artist has worked with River Oaks District. He was commissioned by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, to create store-window decorations to mimic its Icons of Style exhibit. Those decorations will remain in River Oaks District store windows through late September. Johns says he is in talks to continue working with River Oaks District to create an art project each spring.

While SkyWaves is the most recent project that Johns' studio, Matter, has taken on, the upcoming Texas Contemporary Art Fair, as well as FotoFest, are also employing his services. Many smaller projects will inevitably pop up on his radar, as well.

Seeing Johns' art around the city (and his studio's tony client list) may make it appear that this was always his calling. However, Johns says his path in life was filled with detours. Despite growing up in a family that took him to museums and regularly got him involved in art events, Johns found himself wanting to aim for law school. At Trinity University in San Antonio, he studied political science and Spanish—before one particular class changed everything.

"I took constitutional law my junior year, because I wanted to go to law school for environmental law. I hated it—I just couldn't live my life like that, so I studied abroad in Spain for a year, and I realized I wanted to go back to the art world," he recalls.

After discovering that art was the right match for him, Johns hasn't looked back. Upon graduation, he worked as an artist-in-residence for Artpace San Antonio, where he realized he had indeed made the right career choice.

"It was all about people having a good time, connecting, and creating a space where people can smile and forget about what is going on," he says. Five years into his venture with Artpace, he felt the calling to return to Houston. Luckily for him, Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston was looking for someone with his talents, and he answered the call.

"I got hired to rebrand and reopen Blaffer Art Museum at UH, which was at the time (and still is) a dream job. It's so fun to reimagine a new brand and tell a new story. At the time, they needed a brand that showed how important an institution with an academic tie is in Houston," he says. "I worked there for about three years designing events, helping with programming, and helping audiences connect to the museum."

But the itch to strike out on his own proved too tempting to ignore. That leads us to Johns' current venture with Matter, a creative studio specializing in experiential design and image management.

"I wanted to do projects on my own, so I stepped out and started on my own after three years at Blaffer Art Museum. I've been doing Matter ever since," he says. "I still work for Blaffer. I've also done tons of pop-ups and galas, and I've worked with designers staging photo shoots and window designs."

Owning his own studio has given him the opportunity to explore his creative interests and work with high-profile clientele. One of those clients is Houston's own Solange Knowles.



"We had one week to prepare for Solange, which is insane—we ran on adrenaline and made it happen. The main music video I worked on was "Dreams," which was filmed in the Third Ward. We had to create a moss effect that grew on the house. It's not CGI—you must make it look like it's actually growing. We filmed the whole thing in a day," he says.

For Johns, the work keeps coming, which leaves him with very little free time. But on those rare occasions when he can take a break, he does manage to fill his time with interesting hobbies. He deejays at nights for private events—something he's always wanted to do. He learned how to turn the tables by attending Jam Master Jay's DJ academy in New York.

"I basically figured out a way where if I'm going to be at a party, I'm going to get paid to be there. I play a lot of disco—new disco, gay stuff. I could play Whitney all day. I love Beyoncé and Kim Petras. I play all the new alternative-pop princesses of the gay world," he says. "I play a lot of Ariana Grande, because that's my boyfriend's favorite. I had to teach him a little more about Mariah Carey, though, because that's where that started."

Even then, Johns is learning to slow down and enjoy moments of solitude. "As I've gotten older, I've realized how fast everything is right now. My new hobby is being outside, being quiet, and going slow. I've dialed things back."

 SkyWaves is on display at River Oaks District, 4444 Westheimer Road. For more information about Matter, visit experientialmatter.com.

WE BELIEVE THAT FAMILIES, LIKE BABIES, COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.



Everybody deserves to have their dream of starting a family come true. We're proud to help.

Contact us to learn more:
713.512.7900
aspirefertility.com

Today you, tomorrow a family.

Medical Center
7515 S. Main Street
Suite 500
Houston, TX, 77030

Medical Center
7900 Fannin Street
Suite 4400
Houston, TX 77054

Webster
450 Medical Center
Boulevard
Suite 410
Webster, TX 77598

Katy
23960 Katy Freeway
Suite 280
Katy, TX 77494

Sugar Land
7616 Branford Place
Suite 310
Sugar Land, TX 77479

Willowbrook
13215 Dotson Road
Suite 180
Houston, TX 77070

aspire
FERTILITY
The Prelude Network



Voted Best Fertility Clinic

DENISE O'DOHERTY

LPC, LMFT, LCDC, RN

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

- Addiction
- Relationship
- Personal Development

Counseling to individuals, couples, and families of varying age, gender, race and sexual orientations.



BEST MENTAL HEALTH THERAPIST
OutSmart Reader's Choice Awards 2004-2018

RelationshipTherapistRN.com

3131 Eastside St., Ste 435 • 713-524-9525

2019 FALL

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

Martha Graham
Dance Company
(Oct. 18)



Why is Houston's theater scene so prolific and so good? It can't be the weather. Must be the talent. Once here, whether they are transplants or natives, artists don't leave—and that's a good

thing. New York is the center of the world, Chicago has plentiful theaters, San Francisco is . . . well, San Francisco, and Louisville has the Humana Festival. But our Bayou City takes hold like a mudbug and doesn't let go. Every year, our theater scene only gets better. We may drop a theater or two along the way, but the others take up the slack as if carrying a banner onto the ramparts. The following is but a partial listing of what's in store this fall. There's much gold to be mined. There's no place like home.

By D.L. GROOVER



White Guy on the Bus

August 23 – September 7
Dirt Dogs Theatre Company
MATCH, 3400 Main St.

Bruce Graham's piercing dissection of race and class in 21st-century America (2015 Chicago premiere; 2017 Off-Broadway production) is cinematic in its telling. Rich white guy meets struggling single black mom on a Philadelphia bus. Their lives and disparate backgrounds collide in shocking ways. It delivers two gut punches that any playwright would savor. As the *Philadelphia Enquirer* critic described the pre-Broadway show, "Whatever beliefs you sit down with, prepare to have them assaulted. Whatever courage you possess, muster it to see this production." Enough said.

Giselle

September 6 – 15
Houston Ballet
Wortham Theater Center,
501 Texas Ave.

The epitome of Romantic ballet, this ghost story with a dramatic mad scene for the title character has been a staple of companies around the world since its Paris premiere in 1841. The choreography tests the male lead (he must dance himself to death, in one of ballet's most difficult scenes) and

the corps (they must appear to be ghostly and provocative, in order to lure the unsuspecting males into their deathly grip). It's wonderfully diaphanous and spooky, as Adolphe Adam's leitmotif melodies waft through the spectral show. Houston Ballet artistic director Stanton Welch bases his intricate steps on those of 19th-century master choreographer Marius Petipa, whose 1886 production for the legendary Mariinsky Theatre changed *Giselle* for the ages.

These Shining Lives

September 6 – 28
Theater Southwest,
8944-A Clarkcrest St.
Ottawa, Illinois, is known for two historic events: the first Lincoln-

Douglas debate in 1858 and the radium poisoning of factory girls who worked at the Radium Dial Company for Westclox. The young women, painting watch dials with toxic iridescent radium and repeatedly told everything was harmless, were taught to sharpen their brushes in their mouths. "Lip, dip, paint" was the deadly instruction. While scientists shielded themselves behind lead walls, the girls ingested the garish glowing paint (for a penny-and-a-half per dial), painting themselves to a grisly death by cancer of the jaw. Many died. And then they sued. Based on this true story, author Melanie Marnich, known for her TV work on *Big Love* and *The Affair*, uses real-life worker Catherine Donahue as narrator in this story of social injustice.

Keep It Brassy 3

September 7 – October 19
Music Box Theater,
2623 Colquitt St.

In their latest cabaret revue, five irrepressible singers/actors/dancers (Rebekah Dahl, Brad Scarborough, Cay Taylor, Luke Wrobel, and Kristina Sullivan) pit their innate Broadway brass against the real thing—a horn section added to Glenn Sharp's hot-to-trot jazz quartet. Look to hear incomparable renditions of the finest from *Blood, Sweat & Tears*, *The Temptations*, and *Chicago*. Blow, Gabriel, blow. By the way, TripAdvisor has rated MBT #1 for "Top Things to Do in Houston" and #1 for "Theaters, Concerts and Shows." Let's keep those ratings—go see a Music Box show!

A Chorus Line

September 10 – 22
Theatre Under The Stars (TUTS)
Hobby Center, 800 Bagby St.

Which Broadway musical is a singular sensation? OK, that's too easy for anyone who's a real show-tune baby. Premiering on Broadway in 1975, Michael Bennett's paean to the showbiz gypsy is a classic. It blew away the competition at the Tonys (nine awards, including Best Musical, Book, Music, Choreography) and also won the 1976 Pulitzer



Prize for Drama. (Sadly, the 1985 film version was a wreck in every way.) Full of dance, passion, drama, comedy, and those radiant Marvin Hamlisch/Eddie Kleban songs, the musical blows away the competition, even today. See the show live, as it was intended to be seen, and enter Broadway heaven.

The Hiding Place

September 13 – October 12

A.D. Players, 5420 Westheimer Rd.

The indefatigable Corrie ten Boom, the first female professional watchmaker in the Netherlands, was a saving angel during the Nazi conquest. She used her home and workshop in Haarlem as a “hiding place” for Jews and a meeting place for the Dutch Resistance. It is estimated that Boom rescued and resettled nearly 800 refugees. The house is now the Ten Boom Museum. Betrayed in 1944, the Nazis sent the Boom family to Ravensbruck concentration camp, where her father, brother, and sister were murdered. Corrie survived and was later honored by the Dutch and the Jews for her indomitable courage and rock-ribbed Christian faith. A.D. Players has an abiding interest in this story, as its founder, Jeanette Clift George (who died in 2017) played Corrie in the 1975 film version that also starred Julie Harris as sister Betsie. Ms. George was nominated for a Golden Globe for her performance. This world premiere, adapted from Ten Boom’s autobiography, was written by A.S. Peterson. It will be in warm, familial hands.

The Winter’s Tale

September 13 – October 13

Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave.

Shakespeare’s great late play is The Immortal One’s ode to forgiveness. One of his richest works, *Tale* abounds with dark sexual overtones and jealousy run amok during the wintry court scenes in Sicily, then completely sails into pastoral romance for Acts III and IV (set in sunny Bohemia sixteen years later) where Shakespeare beguiles with some of his most inspired love lyrics. All is set right in Act V when the Bohemians and Sicilians intermingle, putting an end to the cold by ushering in springtime’s redemption where lost loves are reunited. There are still clouds, however (this being Shakespeare), for while time might heal all



wounds, scars remain. Shakespeare ends his tale with sly ambiguity. Death and rebirth swirl through the play. Forgiveness and atonement are timeless. Winter’s harshness may yield to spring’s youth, but even so, another winter is not far behind.

Anka Sings Sinatra: His Songs, My Songs, My Way!

September 14

The Grand 1894 Opera House

2020 Postoffice St., Galveston

Holy ’50s pop star, is he still alive?

I guess so, since he’s appearing in the season opener for The Grand’s 125th year! Hear Paul Anka’s tribute concert to his idol, Ol’ Blue Eyes. Anka is the legendary singer and songwriter whose catalog includes “Diana,” “Lonely Boy,” “Put Your Head on My Shoulder,” the theme song to the D-Day movie *The Longest Day*, Michael Jackson’s posthumous hit “This Is It,” Sinatra’s iconic “My Way,” Tom Jones’ “She’s a Lady,” and *The Johnny Carson Show* theme song. He wrote the music of our youth—my youth, anyway—and I apologize for thinking him dead, as he’s been on a grueling U.S. tour for over a year. (Lounge singers don’t die, they just tour.) Glad you’re still with us, Mr. Anka. Keep writing.

The Hard Problem

September 14 – October 6

Main Street Theater,

2540 Times Blvd.

Only playwright Tom Stoppard could create a beguiling play about the “illusion of consciousness.” If you live a good life after a bad decision, can you ever atone? Are you still moral? When that bad decision confronts you, who is right? Anyone? Deep-dish problems are mother’s milk to Stoppard, who is

probably the most intellectual of playwrights. He’s certainly the most playful, the most curious, and the best wordsmith. Main Street knows Stoppard (under its sure hand, his triptych *Coast of Utopia* dazzled), and they are the perfect company to unwind his knotty plot and make it comprehensible and utterly fascinating.

Stravinsky’s Firebird

September 19, 21, 22

Houston Symphony

Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St.

When legendary Ballets Russes impresario Sergei Diaghilev unveiled Michel Fokine’s fairy-tale ballet *Firebird* in Paris (1910), he unleashed a force of nature. The world was introduced to the music of Igor Stravinsky, and it was never the same again. *Firebird* was the composer’s first commissioned score. Diaghilev, no stranger to genius, knew he had found another jewel to add to his amazing coterie: phenom dancers Nijinsky and Karsavina, designers Bakst and Benois, and choreographer Fokine. Rachmaninoff called the score “pure Russia.” Amid the ephemeral chromaticism that recalls Stravinsky’s mentor Rimsky-Korsakov, there’s a lushness that pushes back into Tchaikovsky and Glazanov.

It was a whole new musical world, strange and fabulous. Still to come was Fokine’s *Petroushka* (1911), the revolutionary *Rite of Spring* (1913, choreographed by Nijinsky), and all of the Diaghilev productions for Paris. The Ballets Russes rendered Paris dumbfounded. Stravinsky’s music would soon leave the world dumbfounded.

Locally Grown.

World Renowned.

September 19 – 29

Houston Ballet

Wortham Theater Center,

501 Texas Ave.

Houston Ballet’s mixed-rep programs have always drawn the dance cognoscenti—usually those a bit weary of full-length chestnut classics with happy peasants in red boots. Here come the moderns to whip the fairies, trolls, princesses, and snowflakes off the stage and replace those old tropes with sex, personal relationships, and striking physicality. The centerpiece of this program must be Edward Liang’s startling *Murmuration*, set to Ezio

Bosso’s new-agey *Violin Concerto No. 1*. Kinetic to a fault, it swoops, swirls, and mimics birds in flight, all in tribute to human community. It was a huge hit at its HB world premiere (2013), and its rhapsodic, joyful evocation has not dimmed. Also on the program are James Kudulka’s *Passion* and two world premieres by first soloist Oliver Halkowitch and rising modern choreographer Disha Zhang. Never a dull moment at a mixed-rep by HB.

School Girls: Or, the African Mean Girls Play

September 19 – October 13

Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main St.

The title says it all. Think *Mean Girls* go to Ghana. At an exclusive boarding school, alpha female Paulina (brilliant, beautiful, and tyrannical) seems destined to enter the Miss Ghana Pageant. Until Ericka arrives—from America, no less. She’s equally brilliant, beautiful, and lighter skinned. The groups collide as only young girls can, mashing under the social pressure of needing to be liked and on the A-list. This may sound ripe for sit-com treatment, but author Jocelyn Bioh adds charming divergence to the standard fare.

Tragedy, A Tragedy

September 27 – October 20

Catastrophic Theatre

MATCH, 3400 Main St.

Before playwright Will Eno became Will Eno—before *Thom Paine (based on nothing)*—there was this ironic satire that premiered in London in 2001. The English didn’t get it. We’re in a television studio where stoic veteran news anchor Frank reports on the end of the world. Reporters in the field are hapless, hopeless, or in despair, trying to make sense of the senseless, while Frank stumbles on while ignoring the constant absurdist interruptions from on-high. “People might consider holding hands, or panicking and running!” A Witness, at the end, puts the clueless, TV-obsessed people in their place. Eno’s a master at talk that confuses, while the character vainly attempts to clarify. It’s comedy of the dark.

Salt, Root, and Roe

October 4 – 20

Stages Repertory Theatre,

3201 Allen Pkwy. →

The remote coast of Wales is the place. Eighty-year-old twin sisters Anest and Iola are the protagonists. Alzheimer's and the looming fate of old age are the villains. Daughter Menna is the change. Atmospheric, charmed by folklore, and larded by the surreal moments nestled inside everyday life, Tim Price's *Salt* is a loving prayer to the comfort of family and the abiding strength of two old characters who have seen plenty and don't want to see any more. There's whimsy, dreamy metaphors, and the saline smell of the sea on the coast of north Pembrokeshire, but family is the binding tie. Sisterly love rules, even in death.

Vietgone

October 4 – November 3

Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave.
It's 1970s America, and the Vietnamese war refugees have settled in. They expected a nicer place. "That's what they sorta advertised," says the mother of Tong, our female protagonist. During the fall of Saigon, Tong lost her husband, while our male protagonist, Quang, lost his wife. They and others have been relocated to this fantasyland where the natives say, "Yee-haw! Get 'er done! Cheeseburger, waffle fries, cholesterol!" They've passed through the looking glass, for sure. Author Qui Nguyen tickles us, then knocks us in the ribs in this raucous immigrant remix. No one is spared. Rap is used as a lingua franca, and Shane Rett's original music is full of sass and snap.

Tosca

October 5 – 13

Opera in the Heights, 1703 Heights Blvd.
There's hardly a more visceral opera in all the rep than this 1900 pot-boiler from Puccini. It's all so simple—elemental, really. Love. Betrayal. Murder. Torture. Revenge. Gigantic emotions, gigantic settings, gigantic music. Painter Cavaradossi (the tenor) loves opera singer Tosca (the soprano). He's a revolutionary and under suspicion from police chief Scarpia (the baritone), who lusts after Tosca and will do anything to get her into bed. She, in turn, will do anything to stay out of it. While poor Cavaradossi is being tortured by Scarpia's goons, Tosca is entertained at dinner by Scarpia, where a very sharp knife

is lying on the table. She tries to melt his resolve by singing the haunting, now-world-famous aria "Vissi d'arte" (I lived for love). But Scarpia's not moved, and he forces himself on her. "Here is Tosca's kiss!" she screams, killing him. The rest is opera history, as is her final death plunge from the Castle Saint Angelo, shouting revenge to Scarpia for killing her lover. It's all too much—and yet, for true opera fanatics, not nearly enough.

Spring Awakening

October 8 – 20

Theatre Under The Stars (TUTS) Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St.

Ah, the power of youth, in all its pain and pleasure, secrets and raw truth, innocence and rebellion! It's all here in this powerfully dramatic musical retelling of Frank Wedekind's 1891 sex-pressionistic play that earned eight 2006 Tonys, including Best Musical. Think *Matilda*, without telekinesis and more raunch. These young rebels only want to become adults, but the road can be full of ruts and too many detours. Spring is the time for regeneration, you know, and these kids want to experiment. The parents are there to stop them. Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater's music and lyrics use rock as progenitor, but there's plenty of Broadway pizzazz in it, too. It's a defining show, all around.

The Glass Menagerie

October 11 – November 2

4th Wall Theater Company Studio 101, Spring Street Studios
Tennessee Williams' first success (1944) opened up the doors to the fame he so craved. He did awfully well for a time (his masterpiece, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, followed in 1949, then *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* in 1955, *Sweet Bird of Youth* in 1959, and *Night of the Iguana* in 1961). It was a highly successful run—until it wasn't. Drinking and pills took their toll, and he never seemed totally happy with his personal relationships, although he lived on-and-off with Frank Merlo for 14 years in Manhattan and Key West. He never got his writing groove back, and he was constantly galled by critics and friends comparing his weak later work against his earlier strong successes. But his early work was magical. Filled with longing and regret,



The Glass Menagerie

and aching nostalgia, *Menagerie* speaks with a special heartbreak quality in American theater. It stands alone.

Lysistrata

October 16 – November 3

Classical Theatre Company The DeLuxe Theater, 3303 Lyons Ave.

Having lost its home on Montrose to developers, Classical has now moored at the DeLuxe, the newly renovated Art Deco theater in the Fifth Ward. For its 12th season, it presents the mother of all sex comedies, Aristophanes' deliciously bawdy *Lysistrata* (411 B.C.). Faced with continual warfare between Athens and Sparta, enterprising Lysistrata manages to convince the cities' women to stage a sex strike against their husbands and lovers until they force the men into peace. If it's staged as the ancients would have liked, there will be erect leather phalluses poking through the chitons for laughs. Athenians liked their comedy coarse and lowdown. Subtlety wasn't a concept back then.

Martha Graham Dance Company

October 18

Society for the Performing Arts Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St.
Although she had many forebears, modern dance has proclaimed Martha Graham as its founder. Rigorous, structured, intelligent, the lean and athletic Graham (she couldn't jump, so she stayed close

to the floor) started her company in 1926 and influenced an entire generation. Lauded as both a priestess and goddess, her work usually used original music, startling minimalist sets, and simple costumes. She was an elemental and serious artist who didn't create many comedies. (No, dance is an art and must be treated as such—it's good for you, like spinach.) Her acolytes branched out as soon as they could start their own companies—Pearl Lang, Anna Sokolow, Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor, and Eric Hawkins. Her angular movement, with its bursts of "contraction and release" and symbolic subjects, weren't to everyone's taste, but she stayed active for almost 70 years. It was quite a career. After an absence of 15 years, her company (now run by former Graham dance star Janet Eilber), returns in *The Eve Project*, a potpourri of Graham's works about women (*Herodiade*, *Circe*, *Chronicle*) augmented with dances from choreographers Pam Tamowitz, Maxine Doyle, and Bobbi Jene Smith. Women rule.

Cats

October 22 – 27

Broadway at the Hobby Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St.

What's gayer than Grizabella aloft on her semi tire, ascending into pussy heaven, surrounded by mist and pinspots, wailing "Memory"? I mean, really. Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster musical (and there's no other word to describe the phenomenon) became a cult, like Jonestown. One either loathes it or adores it. There's no middle ground. Basically, it's a revue. There's no true plotline, only a series of sketches as the Jellicle cats do their furry showbiz thing. The score is clever, no doubt about that, as Webber does a bit of English panto, a little Gilbert & Sullivan, a snatch of Puccini, some jazz, and a lot of Broadway belt. It's a good score, just not much of a show. And have you seen the trailer for the Tom Hooper movie, due out this December? Oh dear, this doesn't look good at all (isn't Taylor Swift in a bad cat suit redundant?). The musical has played everywhere in the known world, in revivals upon revivals. It has a trillion lives, and has grossed close to \$4 billion. Who's laughing now?

Silent Film with Rob Landes: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

October 25

*The Grand 1894 Opera House
2020 Postoffice St., Galveston*

In 1920, actor John Barrymore was perhaps the most famous man on earth. Handsome and charismatic, he was already known as “the great profile”—and if you didn’t know that, you’d see it soon enough in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Paramount Pictures’ silent classic based on R.L. Stevenson’s phenomenally successful Victorian novel about man’s dual nature, where every other shot is Barrymore in profile. There hasn’t been a screen star since who looks as good as he does from the side. He looks pretty good from the front, too, and was one of the first Broadway stars to thoroughly embrace Hollywood, making his film debut in 1913. Barrymore’s *Jekyll* is as unfaithful an adaptation as any before or since (the first filmed in prehistoric 1908, with subsequent versions in 1931 (with Fredric March) and 1941 (with Spencer Tracy). But Barrymore added a panoply of stage technique to evil Hyde, and the transformation scene is a marvelous blend of naked ham and Max Factor. Rendered appropriately claustrophobic on the Paramount back lot in Astoria, New York, Victorian London has authentic-looking brick archways, numerous gaslights, and lots of atmospheric fog. In one of silent cinema’s most impressively chilling images, Jekyll, debauched and lying in bed getting weaker, is symbolically overcome by a giant spider. It’s absolutely frightening. Original live musical accompaniment is provided by the multi-talented organist-composer-jazz musician Rob Landes.

Saul

October 25 – November 8

*Houston Grand Opera
Wortham Theater Center,
501 Texas Ave.*

There was a law in England, enforced by the censorious Lord Chamberlain and the Bishop of London, that prohibited biblical subjects on the stage. That wily Saxon George Frideric Handel, being an inveterate impresario and crafty businessman, realized that he could skirt the prohibition by presenting biblical stories as

concert pieces for soloists, chorus, and orchestra. Why bother with an opera house and all of those expensive sets and costumes? He also knew that the days of florid Baroque opera were waning, so all he needed was his glorious music. He coined the novel name “oratorio” for these productions, and the public ate them up. Handel’s gamble paid off handsomely as tales like *Solomon, Israel in Egypt, Esther, Judas Maccabaeus, Samson, Jephtha*, and *Belshazzar* poured out of him. Handel never lost his inventiveness, his deep-dish sense of melody to depict character, or his knack for soaring choral effects. With a libretto from Charles Jennens (who would also pen *Messiah* three years later), *Saul* depicts the old king of Israel and his on/off relationship with young David, who would become the next king. Listen for the famed “Funeral March,” the tenor’s role as the Witch of Endor, and any of those magisterial choral moments. The Bible sings magnificently.

Enchanted April

October 25 – November 16

*Theater Southwest
8944-A Clarkcrest St.*

Based on the 1991 movie and its original 1922 novel by Elizabeth von Arnim, Matthew Barber’s stage version is as comfy and warm as a chenille bedspread. Unhappily married, Mrs. Arbuthnot and Mrs. Wilkins decide to take a holiday and find respite on the shores of the Mediterranean. To share expenses for their rented castle, they invite the feisty, elderly Mrs. Fisher and the very wealthy Lady Caroline to join them. Naturally, the four disparate women find common ground after a series of comic reversals, dramatic reveals, and the arrival of the men at the hen house. They all rediscover love and hope in the sunny Mediterranean clime. Only in Italy.

Bernadette Peters

November 2

*Society for the Performing Arts
Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St.*

Beloved theater diva Ms. Peters has shined onstage and in the movies for, what, fifty years? She never dims, even after three Tony awards, three Drama Desk awards, multiple Emmy and Golden Globe nominations, and four Grammys for her original Broadway cast albums. She

is a legend on Broadway, especially in the work of Stephen Sondheim, having starred in *Sunday in the Park with George, Into the Woods, Gypsy, A Little Night Music*, and *Follies*, as well as Andrew Lloyd Webber’s *Song and Dance*, Irving Berlin’s *Annie Get Your Gun*, Jerry Hermann’s *Mack and Mabel* and, most recently, his *Hello, Dolly!* She’s an original Broadway Baby. But don’t forget her film work: *Silent Movie, The Jerk, Pennies from Heaven*, and a slew of television that includes the *Muppet Show, The Carol Burnett Show, Will & Grace, Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, and *Mozart in the Jungle*. She’s been everywhere. Now she’s in Jones Hall, and we can’t wait.

Miracle on 34th Street: A Live Musical Radio Play

November 6 – December 15

*Stages Repertory Theatre,
3201 Allen Pkwy.*

There was a time, long before you were born, when radio adapted hit films. The best of the lot was Lux Radio Theatre, a CBS broadcast from 1934 through 1955. For most of those years, it was hosted by legendary producer/director Cecil B. DeMille, whose sign-off was just as legendary: “This is Cecil B. DeMille saying good night to you from Hollywood.” It’s no surprise that one of the adaptations from Lux’s 1947 season was one of the most popular films of that year, *Miracle on 34th Street*, written by Lance Arthur Smith and based on the film’s screenplay by George Seaton—which was based on an original story by Valentine Davies, who subsequently won an Academy Award for Best Story. This

Christmas perennial is set in a radio studio, so be prepared for sound effects (Christmas bells, anyone?) and audience participation. With original music and lyrics by Jon Lorenz, Stages sets an early holiday mood.

Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back—In Concert

November 8, 9 & 10

*Houston Symphony
Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St.*

Oh geez, it’s time to project another hit film above the Jones Hall stage while the Houston Symphony plays the film’s orchestra soundtrack live. How they separate the film’s music track from the dialogue and sound effects is magic technology, for sure, but what’s the point? This isn’t the first time the Houston Symphony has tried this gimmick, so it must work. I wouldn’t know, I’d rather watch at home—or wait until they play some really *good* film score, like Korngold’s golden oldie *The Adventures of Robin Hood*.

Dear Evan Hansen

November 12 – 24

*Broadway at the Hobby
Hobby Center for the Performing
Arts, 800 Bagby St.*

This Tony winner for Best Musical (2017) is a true tearjerker of the best kind. In a terribly misguided effort to be liked and accepted, social misfit Evan lies about a friendship with a student who committed suicide after reading Evan’s therapy assignment, thinking it was a letter meant for him. When the letter is discovered, everybody thinks it was the boy’s suicide note. Evan can’t tell his parents, or the boy’s, and his guilt and confusion grow exponentially as he becomes ever more entrenched in the original lie that has turned Evan into a school hero. Being accepted and liked is so universally desired—and not just for the young—that our hearts melt for Evan, who can’t extricate himself from what he started. With its stirring music and lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, and true-to-life book by Steven Levenson, the musical is one of Broadway’s latest gems. It shimmers and throws off light and catches the tears in your eyes. Redemption hasn’t sounded so good in years. →



Bernadette Peters

More Than Christmas

November 14 - December 29

Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main St.
In this world-premiere holiday musical by Celeste Bedford Walker, the Mercy family gathers for Christmas. Walker wrote the Ensemble's past comedy hit *Sassy Mammás*, and its composer, Stephanie Blue, has taught piano for 18 years at Houston's MacGregor elementary. The Ensemble press release says "there's more than merriment behind each smile, and presents aren't the only things that get unwrapped." That sounds promising. The director is Ensemble's artistic director Eileen J. Morris, so the production is in extremely capable hands. As Ms. Blue writes in her MacGregor profile, "Music gives wings to the mind and flight to the imagination." Let's hope so.

A Christmas Carol

November 15 - December 29

Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave.
What more is there to say about this Alley holiday perennial? If you haven't seen it after all these years, you've been living under a rock. Dickens isn't mangled too badly in Michael Wilson's somewhat faithful adaptation. There are too many ghosts right from the get-go, which lessens Scrooge's redemption; the housekeeper is played in drag (don't ask); and the spirits of Christmas Past, Present, and Future aren't at all how Dickens described them in his "ghostly little book." But the spirit is willing, the Victorian flavor is there (but a bit buried), the costumes are lively, and Dickens' timely message is front and center.

Baby Screams Miracle

November 22 - December 15

Catastrophic Theatre MATCH, 3400 Main St.
Mother Nature packs a wallop—and I mean a wallop—in Clare Barron's contemporary look at the American family. The storm that ravages Gabe and Carol's rural home rivals the tempest in *King Lear* or that stunner of a tornado in *The Wizard of Oz*. Except this one never stops, and only lets up enough for the family to grasp what's happening to them as they drive through endless destruction to a motel. Other family members arrive to check on them during a lull, then all hell breaks

loose again. Gabe turns to God, but his Christian charity has boundaries. Prayers don't help much when the windows crack, the roof is blown off, and a tree falls smack on top of their cabin. Where do you find grace or comfort when your world is literally being blown apart? Family? God? Yourself? Wherever it's found, the tech wizards at Catastrophic have their work cut out. Actors too, of course, but at Catastrophic they have that covered.

The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberly

November 23 - December 22

Main Street Theater, 2540 Times Blvd.
Main Street has found a niche for its holiday productions, and her name is Jane Austen. They had great success with their exquisitely mounted *Miss Bennett: Christmas at Pemberly*, and the same authors, Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon, have tweaked their prequel (or sequel, or whatever) into *The Wickhams*. Lydia's wayward husband, hugely in debt and mired in scandal, has stumbled downstairs in the middle of the night. While the original play is about the goings-on upstairs, here we see the servants sorting out romantic entanglements downstairs while keeping the boisterous Wickham away from Lydia. The cook is imperial (as all cooks are in these BBC-inspired comedies), the groom is studious, and the new girl is feisty and intelligent. She reads books, for goodness' sake. Smiling fondly after their first hit, Main Street is ready to serve up more Regency fun, tons of Empire dresses, and witty repartee. Jolly good show, what?

The Nutcracker

November 29 - December 29

*Houston Ballet
Wortham Theater Center,
501 Texas Ave.*



Stanton Welch's production of this Christmas chestnut is opulent, like Ziegfeld goes to the ballet, and as busy as Santa's elves on December 23. It is heavily detailed, solid as an oak, and beautifully crafted in a Broadway style not often seen on the ballet stage. There's stage magic galore, plenty of falling snow, and delights for children of all ages. And what images Welch gives us: a tree that grows through the house's roof, mice rustling down the aisles, a queen of snow who sparkles like someone out of *Frozen*, a candy-colored Land of Sweets (complete with an English bulldog that looks surprisingly like Churchill), an imperious Arabian lion dressed like an emir, a prissy Louis XIV besieged by frogs. The Snow Scene is exquisitely staged, with each successive layer of snowflakes flinging handfuls of snow with each piqué turn. It's all white and glinting, a mirage of ice. If you want holiday cheer, this is the show.

El Milagro del Requerdo (The Miracle of Remembering)

December 5 - 22

*Houston Grand Opera
Wortham Theater Center,
501 Texas Ave.*

In its continuing quest for a holiday opera that will bring in the patrons, HGO returns to a tried-and-true idea: a world-premiere sequel to its first successful mariachi opera, *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna (To Cross the Face of the Moon)*. In that one, family patriarch Laurentino relived his life in Michoacán, home to migrating monarch butterflies. He left his homeland to work in the U.S., leaving behind his wife and son. Mom crosses the desert to be with him, only to die on the journey. All this was set to José 'Pepe' Martínez' snappy mariachi rhythms and ear-pleasing tunes. This new work is composed by José's son Javier, and written by *Cruzar's* Leonard Foglia. It takes us back to the beginning, on Christmas in Michoacán. HGO says the opera (?) "lovingly explores the themes of traditions, familial bonds, while dealing with life-changing decisions and the dream of something more." So did the first one. We'll see. But I know your feet will tap and you'll want to salsa in the aisles.



An Evening with Jay Leno

December 6

Society for the Performing Arts Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St.
TV's beloved late-night host comes to Houston—to do what, exactly? An extended monologue? Fix a vintage Porsche? Whatever this evening augurs, it should be a fun time, pleasantly passed—much like *The Tonight Show*, which Leno hosted for more episodes than Johnny Carson (Leno has more shows under his belt, but Carson had more years). Heeere's Jay!

iChristmas Fiesta!

December 7

*Mercury Baroque
Wortham Theater Center,
501 Texas Ave.*

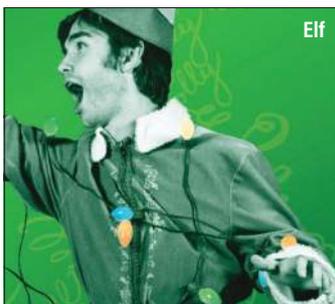
Well, it's not mariachi, but it's a flavorful new-world mix of 17th-century Baroque music written in New Spain (a.k.a. México). Antonio de Salazar, an esteemed conductor and composer in Mexico City, was noted for his beautiful choral motets. Composer Santiago de Murcia, guitar master for Queen Maria Louisa of Savoy, probably never traveled to Mexico, but a few of his compositions were discovered there. He wrote popular dances, transcribed works to guitar, and wrote a treatise on playing the instrument. Acclaimed as the greatest guitarist of his generation, royal patronage didn't do him any favors. He died penniless in Madrid in 1739.

Amahl and the Night Visitors

December 7, 8, 14

*Opera in the Heights,
1703 Heights Blvd.*
Once upon a time, back when television networks actually commissioned opera, Peter Herman Adler was the director of new-opera programming at NBC (can you believe TV once had opera programmers, too?). Adler commissioned Gian Carlo Menotti, renowned for composing *The Consul* (which had just won the Pulitzer Prize for Music) to write a short Christmas

opera for broadcast on Christmas Eve in 1951. It was produced in Toscanini's famed studio 8H in New York City, now the home of *Saturday Night Live*. The beloved opera, full of poignant holiday spirit, features a boy soprano as Amahl, the crippled shepherd boy who meets the Three Kings on their journey to Bethlehem. It has faith, a lush score, and funny Magi, one of them bearing a box of licorice. Instead of cartoon snowmen, or Mr. McGoo's Christmas, *Amahl* is the right musical for this holy time of year.



Elf

December 7 – 22

Theatre Under The Stars (TUTS) Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St.

What's more fun than Buddy the Elf, a human kid who inadvertently falls into Santa's toy bag one Christmas Eve and is magically transported back to the North Pole to grow up? Based on the Will Farrell film, the Broadway musical is an utter delight, thanks to its sprightly score

by Matthew Sklar, lyrics by Chad Beguelin, and the heartwarming (if rote) book by Thomas Meehan (*Annie*, *The Producers*) and Bob Martin (*The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The Prom*). The score is a classic example of Broadway music that has gone out of style. And how we've missed it—Sklar's arrangements swing, like '60s Sinatra or the best of Burt Bacharach. They have clever hooks to them, changing direction and shifting keys in surprisingly adept ways. The lyrics are brassy and sassy, like prime Frank Loesser. When mom and daughter write a letter to Santa, they cleverly decide

to simply list what they *don't* want. A ballad goes bluesy, but not too much. Rock, metal, and grunge have no place here; we're definitely in Old Broadway land. It's so nice to hear. Are there better musicals? Sure. Is there a better Christmas one? Not really. Will *Elf* do? Why not?

Handel's Messiah

December 20, 21, 22

Houston Symphony Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St.

George Frideric Handel wrote so many masterpieces, it's difficult to pick a favorite, but his perennial *Messiah* is truly one of the great works of art—any art. There's nothing else in the rep quite like it. "Inspiring" should be used sparingly, but that's the only description possible for his sublime 1742 oratorio. Although the work is about Christ's life, Charles Jennens' libretto is mainly Old Testament passages set into three sections: Birth, Passion, Aftermath. In his typically speedy style, Handel composed his masterwork in three weeks, even

while dealing with stony censors and prickly prima-donna soloists. One year later, *Messiah* had its premiere in Dublin with Handel conducting from the harpsichord. Hard to believe, but it was only a modest success. It took decades for its triumphant message to work its magic. But once it took hold, this most uplifting score has remained forever with us, as majestic and haunting as the day "the great Saxon" finished it.

D.L. Groover writes on the arts for the Houston Press, OUTSMART magazine, Arts & Culture, and Dance Source Houston. He has received two national awards for his theater criticism from the Association of Alternative News-media (AAN), and has previously won three statewide Lone Star Press awards for the same. He is co-author of the irreverent appreciation Skeletons from the Opera Closet (St. Martin's Press), now in its fourth printing.

YOUR NEW MEDICAL

HOME

PrEP
Men's Wellness
HIV/STI Testing
Women's Health
Family Medicine
Behavioral Health
+ More!

AVENUE 360
HEALTH & WELLNESS

Main Campus
2150 West 18th St. 3rd Fl
Houston, TX 77008
713-426-0027

Humble
9816 Memorial Blvd. #120
Houston, TX 77338
281-570-2525

Spring Cypress
17010 Sugar Pine Dr.
Houston, TX 77090
281-537-8627

South Central
4405 Griggs Rd.
Houston, TX 77021
832-962-4111

Avenue360.org | HealthPromotions@Avenue360.org



Bringing Broadway to the Bayou City

Theater veteran Dan Knechtges scores major achievements as artistic director of TUTS.

By OLIVIA FLORES ALVAREZ

Photo by JENN DUNCAN

Dan Knechtges took on a Texas-sized task when he joined Theatre Under The Stars as its artistic director in 2017: to take a popular theater organization with a 50-year history of success and make it even more popular and successful. Oh, and to do it in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

Knechtges, by all accounts, has done just that.

The openly gay Broadway veteran first worked with TUTS in 2016 when he directed and choreographed a critically acclaimed revival of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. He joined the company a year later, just in time for its 50th-anniversary season. And Hurricane Harvey. (Knechtges missed his first day of work because Houston was in the middle of that catastrophic storm.)

Under his leadership, the local company had some major accomplishments in its 2018–2019 season, including self-producing the entire season rather than relying on touring shows in its annual lineup. The staff also had a major restructuring and a shift in its operating model, moving the company more in line with current Broadway standards.

Big but necessary changes, says Knechtges. While the company has a tremendous track record, he notes that it hasn't quite fulfilled TUTS founder Frank Young's vision of being nationally recognized.

"My personal philosophy, and that of the board and staff, is that you can never be successful enough," the Tony Award-nominated Knechtges tells *OUTSMART*. "I came in saying, 'Actually, we do it like *this* on Broadway, and this is the way the national trends are going.' Shifting the way we're structured [to be in line with other theaters], both in administration

and behind the scenes, has been one of the biggest challenges." And one of the biggest payoffs.

Knechtges explains that moving the focus to the front end of the production process has reduced costs while allowing for greater creativity. For example, there's lots of work to do before the crew starts building sets, so putting more time and thought into the design aspect means that by the time that crews start building the set, all of the kinks have been worked out.

And designers are freer to try new things when all that's at stake is a plan on paper. The cost difference between tearing up a drawing, as opposed to tearing up a half-built set and starting over, is enormous.

The results of Knechtges' efforts were seen onstage during the company's 50th-anniversary season, which was made up entirely of well-loved classics.

"We did a great production of *The Wiz*," he says, pointing to the show's casting of two women in traditionally male roles as a move forward for the company. "We had a female *Wiz*; we had a female lion. That may have made some people uncomfortable, but the show was rated one of the top arts events in the city by the *Houston Chronicle*.

"The chorus was non-gendered. The men and women in the chorus played all women at one point, then they played all men at another. And then they played every part of the spectrum in between."

Obie and Helen Hayes Award-winner Robert O'Hara directed *The Wiz*. African-American and openly gay, O'Hara is also a playwright known for his challenging race and gender roles in his work. "He's very brave," says Knechtges. "He said, 'I want the chorus to do this.' I trusted him, and it paid off. Now he's making his Broadway debut this year."

Part of Houston's attraction for Knechtges

was the city's diverse population. He works to make sure that diversity is reflected onstage at TUTS performances. Taking the company to a higher level of excellence requires importing some talent from New York City, but Knechtges is committed to supporting Texas actors, designers, writers, directors, and choreographers as much as possible.

"I'm very proud of our Houston community that's represented on that stage," he says. "I don't think there's another company that's as devoted to hiring Texans. Theatre Under The Stars hires more locals than any other arts organization in Houston. We're committed to that."

The company's 2019–2020 season features Marvin Hamlisch's *A Chorus Line*, the show Knechtges has called "perhaps the best musical ever written." Director Julie Kramer and choreographer Jessica Hartman lead the production.

Chorus Line is followed by *Spring Awakening*, which has a modern-rock score. Directed by Taibi Magar, with choreography by Marlana Doyle, the show is a departure for the company and is part of Knechtges' desire to expand TUTS' reach with productions of exemplary new theater works as well as traditional classics.

Knechtges directs and choreographs the company's holiday show, *Elf—The Musical*. Then in mid-February, the North American touring production of *Once on This Island* (winner of the 2018 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical) will be directed by Michael Arden and choreographed by Camille A. Brown.

Knechtges again takes on director and choreographer duties with the world-premiere professional production of the Texas-themed *Pure Country*, based on the 1992 film starring George Strait. Finally, *Disney's Newsies*, directed and choreographed by Chris Bailey, closes the TUTS season. →



"I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF AS A GAY MAN LEADING AN ORGANIZATION. I THINK OF MYSELF AS JUST A PERSON. WE HAVE A LOT OF VERY CONSERVATIVE RELIGIOUS FOLKS ON OUR BOARD WHO I CONSIDER MY FRIENDS NOW. THAT NEVER WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IN NEW YORK."

—Dan Knechtges



CIRCA
REAL ESTATE

LOVE HELPS BUILD A HAPPY HOME. CIRCA JUST GETS YOU THERE.

CIRCAHOUSTON.COM, @CIRCAREALESTATE
350 W 19TH STREET, STE D
713.862.1101

This 2019–2020 season lineup accomplishes three things on Knechtges’ agenda: the presentation of musical-theater classics (*A Chorus Line*), the development of new shows (*Pure Country*) and the continuation of TUTS’ relationship with Disney (*Disney’s Newsies*).

As if all of that wasn’t enough to keep Knechtges extremely busy, TUTS also has a far-reaching community-engagement program with two theater schools for children and teens: the Humphreys School of Musical Theatre, and The River Performing and Visual Arts Center, which works with the differently abled. TUTS will also work with Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts this year as part of the school’s musical-theater track. And TUTS will provide art therapy through the Arts and Medicine Program at Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital.

Wait, wait, there’s more: TUTS partners with several community organizations, such as Dress for Success and the YMCA of Greater Houston, for TUTS’ Public Works Houston community-engagement program, providing arts training and exposure to local residents that culminates in a public performance at Miller Outdoor Theatre.

Knechtges acknowledges the crucial support he’s received from TUTS staff and the board of directors, led this year by chairman Randall D. Stilley. (Amy G. Pierce was last year’s chairperson during the company’s 50th-anniversary season.)

“I could not do this without Hilary Hart, our executive director,” Knechtges notes. “She handles all of the administrative stuff and makes it possible for me to focus on the artistic side.

“And we have the best board ever. Those folks on that board support us in a way that’s incredible. They’re always available to talk, always available to have a meal. Even if it doesn’t have to do with Theatre Under The Stars—if it just has to do with life, they’re there for us.”

Knechtges has changed TUTS, no doubt about that. But he says the organization has changed him, as well.

“I don’t think of myself as a gay man leading an organization. I think of myself as just a person,” he says. “We have a lot of very conservative religious folks who are members of our board, and who I consider my friends now. That never would have happened in New York. It just wouldn’t.

“I always considered those New York folks as intolerant, and stayed away from them. I know that’s not the case [here in Houston], and it gives me hope that there’s more room for that kind of understanding to spread. I have to believe change is possible—otherwise, we’d just all have to give up.

“And the theater is the best place to enact a cultural shift.” ▼



**MAPA WIYA
(YOUR MAP'S
NOT NEEDED)**

*Australian Aboriginal
Art from the
Fondation Opale*

The Menil Collection
Opening September 13, 2019
Free admission. Always.

Museum Hours
Open Wednesday–Sunday
11 a.m.–7 p.m.
Closed Monday and Tuesday
1533 Sul Ross Street
713-525-9400
menil.org

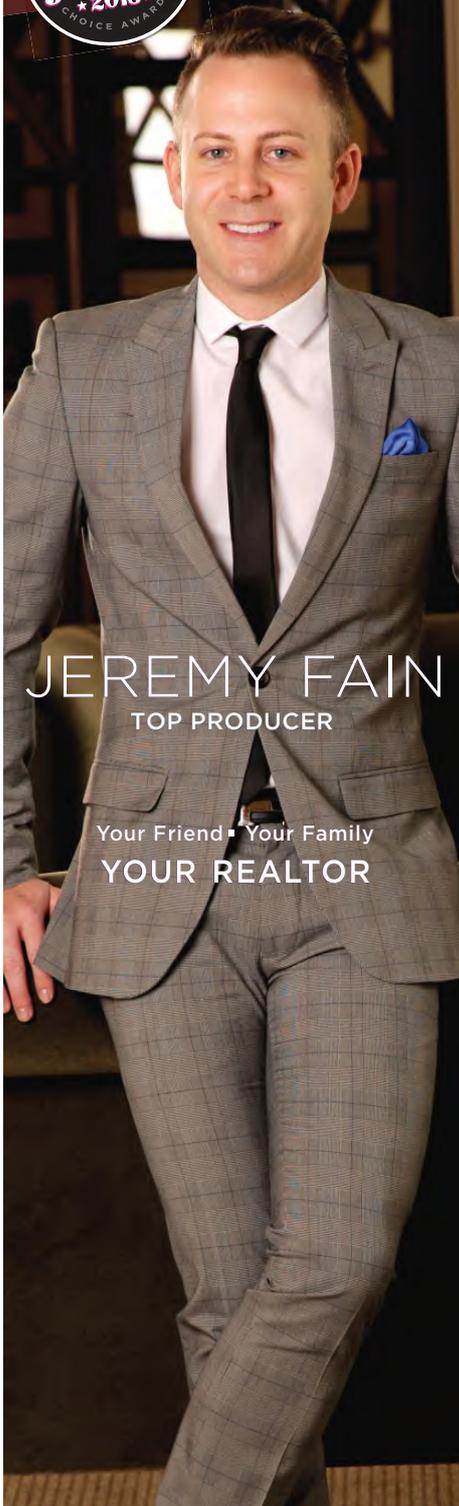
Generous exhibition
support provided by



Kanpi Women's Collaborative: Maringka Baker, Teresa Baker, Kani Tunkin, Pitjantjarra language group. *Minyma Tjutangu Kanpu Kanyini*, 2017. Acrylic on canvas, 59 1/16 x 118 1/8 in. (150 x 300 cm). © Kanpi Women's Collaborative / Copyright Agency. Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, 2019. Image courtesy of Fondation Opale, Lens, Switzerland.



Voted Best Realtor
2014-2018
OutSmart Readers'
Choice Awards 2013-2018



JEREMY FAIN
TOP PRODUCER

Your Friend • Your Family
YOUR REALTOR



GREENWOOD KING
PROPERTIES

LUXURY
PORTFOLIO
INTERNATIONAL

jfain@greenwoodking.com
713.677.4337

Create Your Dream Life ...with Vision and Purpose.

- Business & Personal Consulting
- Strategy Through Implementation
- Career Re-Invention Guidance
- Leadership and Culture Development



SeEQmore
CONSULTING

Train | Accelerate | Solve



Miriam G. Lopez
Consultant

Tel. 832.495.1441 • Miriam@seEQmore.com

www.seEQmore.com



2019 Annual HOUSTON TRANSGENDER Unity Banquet

Saturday, Sept. 21, 2019
Doors Open at 6:30pm

Sheraton North Houston
15700 John F Kennedy Blvd
Houston, Texas 77032

For Tickets or Additional Information

UnityBanquet.com

Contact us:

banquet@unitybanquet.com



Shaped by the South

Unabashedly gay Texas-born and -bred Eugene Lee Yang uses online stardom to advocate for underrepresented communities.

By DAVID GOLDBERG

Photo by JD RENES PHOTOGRAPHY

As part of the viral video collective The Try Guys, Eugene Lee Yang has had to throw himself into an escalating gamut of experiences: he's tested new roller coasters, simulated labor pains, and devoured a whole lot of fast food to keep his fan base engaged. But in June, the 33-year-old filmmaker took his most dangerous risk yet when he wrote, directed, and choreographed a coming-out music video titled "I'm Gay." Though he had previously alluded to his queer identity online, Yang's appearance in "I'm Gay" is a clear declaration to his family, community, and fans.

In the lush video, set to music by ODESZA, Yang dances his way through the traditions (and judgments) of his Korean-American upbringing, and through the messy, unresolved discourse of contemporary queer life. *OUTSMART* spoke with the Pflugerville, Texas, native about this deeply personal project, and his emergence as an artist.

David Goldberg: "I'm Gay" was distributed through YouTube's donation platform, and has raised over \$112,000 for The Trevor Project since its release. You must be astounded by that number.

Eugene Lee Yang: It's an enormous surprise. I don't necessarily have the means to give as much as large companies do, and to effect a monetary change, but the video was something I was very surprised by. YouTube just rolled out their donation-button option about a year ago; it's sort of been piloting. They told me that my video has been their most successful donation button yet, so I'm very proud.

With making a video like this, you probably had a lot of anxiety that prevented you from anticipating some of the bigger-picture outcomes. What other surprises have come through in the process?

Much of my inspiration was from this notion that as a digital-content creator—where I have

direct access and communication with fans, and particularly young people—I wasn't giving enough of myself in terms of my own honest presentation. I wasn't able to speak about my own experience without some sort of conditions, and I wanted to be able to have those kinds of conversations with young people who are going through similar things. I had seen the tip of the iceberg with kids coming up to me and telling me their queer experiences, based on the content I had previously done online. We have about an hour of meet-and-greets before the show, and then I'll speak with fans after. At least half of them have been young kids who identify as LGBTQ+ or questioning, and a lot of them cite that video as opening a door for them to speak to someone, anyone (or at the very least, me) about what their experience is. I found that to be very humbling, but also extremely important. So much of my story has been about obstacles and struggles that still face our community today, particularly with the coming-out process. Many of these kids are still closeted or discovering who they are. The fact that they are first telling someone like me about it, because they saw my video, is very telling of the times we're in. I don't necessarily believe I should be the first one [that they speak to], because I would hope the communities that they're a part of would be open to hearing about it.

The video explores infighting within the queer and Asian communities. There's still conflict and judgment among us. Are you experiencing judgment from queer fans as you step into the community?

I've been asked why I've chosen to label myself as "gay" when I was already widely accepted as queer-identifying. In regards to (for lack of a better term) living my own truth. [After having to constantly "police" my own identity while growing up], there's something very freeing about being able to be explicit about the experiences I've had and the life I actually lead. That policing has happened in every single scenario

I've been in: growing up in an Asian family, in the church I grew up in, or even the queer families that have adopted me in Los Angeles. There's so many different ways in which we package ourselves, either to be more comfortable or more safe. I'm just at a point in my life where I'm fortunate enough and privileged enough to feel safe and secure, and to unabashedly present my experience without any sort of conditioning.

It's interesting, because I would never want to consider myself a role model or be responsible for any sort of representation in the community. If anyone deems me [to be a role model, it's only] because I am giving 1,000 percent of my honesty now—flaws and all. Before [doing this coming-out video]—both as an Asian-American person who became famous online, and also as a queer person—I felt a pretty huge weight of responsibility to be excellent. We often discuss this with queer theory or minority representation in the media: you have to be an ideal version of yourself in order to transcend stereotypes or negativity, because we're still oppressed communities. I've felt that since the beginning, being an Asian-American male online. In this video, I embraced what I truly, deeply felt about my experience as a queer person of color, which has a lot of dark sides and a lot of pain.

What was it like to come back home to Texas with The Try Guys tour?

It's interesting. We had quite a few shows in Texas. In the tour, we tongue-in-cheek regard ourselves as "legends of the internet" and leaders of "the four pillars" of things that are eternally viral: food, love, fun, and being gay. And I unabashedly chose to be [the gay pillar]. My entire section is just a celebration of the gay identity. I begin it with a monologue, which is sort of my impassioned speech to empower the community. I improvised it in Dallas, because I looked out in the crowd and saw these kids who are coming up to talk to me at the meet-and-greets about their queer experience. Everyone



"I'M NOT SOMEONE WHO SHOULD BE SEEN AS DISTANT OR SEPARATE FROM THE TEXAN IDENTITY. WE'RE ONE OF THE MOST DIVERSE STATES IN THE NATION. AND SPEAKING AS SOMEONE WHO IS QUEER, WE'RE A HUGE, HUGE POPULATION."

—Eugene Lee Yang

has problematic aspects of where they come from and where they're born and the cultures they were brought into. But I want to establish that as a native Texan, I am not antithetical to my upbringing; I am a representative of my upbringing. I had to go through many years of "I hate where I am, I need to get out." But so much of what created and shaped my distinct perspective was my environment—was me being a born-and-bred Texan. If anything,

what is stressed in that show is that I'm a proud representative of Texas. I'm not someone who should be seen as distant or separate from the Texan identity. We're one of the most diverse states in the nation. And speaking as someone who is queer, we're a huge, huge population. People often ask, "Aren't you glad you escaped the South?" And I've come to this point where I've responded with, "I never escaped, but the South shaped me." Sure, I had problems with

my childhood, but when I go back, I'm seeing more and more people who are like me and have similar experiences. What I want to do is reaffirm that I'm just as Texan as the next person who might not be Asian or LGBT.

I think about all of the boycotts that happened in response to the South Carolina bathroom bills, and how a lot of artists cancelled tours. I didn't see the point of taking culture, art, and new ways of thinking away from people who want it.

It's tough, because even though there's a majority, what does a majority mean—like 51 percent? There's really no way. We paint things in red and blue, but you forget that I was a kid in Pflugerville, Texas. I was born in Waco, so I was desperately seeking art and inspiration and diverse experiences. I found it through borrowing my friends' *Rent* soundtrack when I was in high school. Now, the digital reach that the internet has is so profound, because I can make a video and reach anyone who has access to YouTube. It's been very sobering, too, because I did feel for a time that I was going to save this side of my filmmaking for when I could get into the studios with my grander artistic projects. Then I took a step back and realized that I'm in a very rare position where anything that I make and put online would get a lot of people's eyes on it. And for me to bring this heartfelt project that is 1,000 percent me as an artist, but also me as a gay man, was probably the most important thing I've done in my young career.

The video is such a big effort in terms of choreography, costuming, direction, casting, and aesthetics. What do you want to do next?

I'm in development for several larger projects pertaining to film, TV, and books, but I think the tone and the messaging and the representation of identity that people saw with this short music video is the calling-card for what I want to represent as an artist and a filmmaker. Whether it's directing or writing or production or choreography, I want to bring that type of energy and that type of starkly defiant and particular representation to everything I do. Not only as a filmmaker, but as a person in the public spotlight, to be able to be my purest out self is freeing. I hope [people will see that in] the way I walk into every single room to pitch [a new project], or in the way I open up my laptop to write something. It's really going to be the signifier for many very gay, very Asian projects to come. ▼



*Follow Eugene Lee Yang on Twitter and Instagram at @eugeneleeyang. For more information about *The Try Guys*, visit tryguys.com.*

A Chorus Line

Houston native Logan Keslar plays Bobby in the TUTS musical.

By DON MAINES



Bobby tells how he hated sports, but Keslar grew up playing football and basketball in Liberty, Texas, until his freshman year when he tried out for cheerleader. It was something no boy had done before (or since) at Liberty High School, but Keslar says, “All my friends were girls from dance class, and they became cheerleaders in middle school. I thought, ‘I dance better than them, I jump better than them, why the hell not?’ I’ve always had that attitude. Tell me I can’t do something and that’s exactly what I will do.”

When Keslar made the squad, he says, “Kids would yell things at me; they would call me ‘fag,’ but my brother looked out for me. He was the biggest senior on the football team, and it became very clear” there would be no more taunting. Keslar’s brother now has five children, and his sister has four, so Keslar is the cool “guncle,” or gay uncle.

“I’m the guy in the pool who’s throwing the kids,” he says.

Keslar spent his sophomore, junior, and senior years at the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts (HSPVA) in Montrose. “My mom was a saint to drive me back and forth from Liberty. It was tough, and I was always involved in extracurricular musicals and dance recitals, but I knew that I wanted to be on Broadway. I knew that I wanted to work as a performer, and I was not going to get the training I needed in Liberty.”

When Keslar was in the first grade, he was plucked from his dance class to audition for *The Wizard of Oz* at the Geraldine D. Humphreys Cultural Center in Liberty. “*The Wizard of Oz* was my obsession, so I sang the Munchkin City mayor’s song and got cast as a Boy Munchkin. That was my first foray into theater.”

His next obsession became *A Chorus Line*.



Keslar

“It was always my favorite show,” he says. “I listened to the cast recording until I knew every word. I had all the books, so I knew what the costumes were before this and why they changed these colors, and how this character got changed.”

At age 18, Keslar was cast as Mark Anthony, the youngest performer on the line, when

TUTS produced *A Chorus Line* at the Arena Theatre in Sharpstown. Everybody else was brought in from New York, which is where Keslar landed next, eventually dancing on Broadway as a Cagelle in the 2010 Tony Award-winning revival of *La Cage aux Folles*.

In the Big Apple, he met Jeff Cleveland, a marketing whiz who was visiting from Los Angeles, when they got caught in “a crazy snowstorm.” Their first date 13 years ago was on St. Patrick’s Day, but they chose Valentine’s Day in 2017 to get married, about the same time the couple relocated to Houston. “We live in the Highland Village/River Oaks area,” says Keslar. “I tell everybody it’s where the palm trees are and they keep the Christmas lights on year-round.”

Cleveland, who hails from Albuquerque, New Mexico, works from home but travels a lot, while Keslar performed in three shows in TUTS’ 50th-anniversary season, including *Oklahoma!*, *Disney’s Beauty and the Beast*, and *Jerome Robbins’ Broadway*.

Most recently, Keslar was the associate choreographer for a star-studded production of *Into the Woods* at the Hollywood Bowl. “Getting to work with Sutton Foster, Patina Miller, Cheyenne Jackson, and so many others was one of the most special things I’ve ever done,” he says.

What: TUTS presents *A Chorus Line*

When: September 10–22

Where: Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St.

Info: TUTS.com

Broadway hooper Logan Keslar gets to play Bobby, his favorite role in *A Chorus Line*, when the stage classic opens the 2019/20 season of Theatre Under The Stars.

“What I love about Bobby is that he’s very witty, very sarcastic, very dry,” says Keslar, who previously played the role for TUTS at Miller Outdoor Theatre. Of the 17 dancers competing for just eight spots in a Broadway musical, Bobby is the gay guy who jokes, “I was the kind of kid that was always getting slammed into lockers and stuff like that. Not only by the students—by the teachers, too.”

**JM Professional Services LLC
PRIVATE PRACTICE**

Qualified Substance Abuse Professionals



Voted One of the Best Mental Health Therapists

- Personal & Workplace
- SAP Evaluations
- Drug & Alcohol Abuse

JEFFREY MYLES

NCAC I, SAP, LAP-C

713.447.2164 | JMylesSAP@gmail.com



IRIS

THANK YOU OUTSMART READERS FOR VOTING ME

Best Male Mental Health Therapist 2016 & 2018

Robert Snellgrove, lcsw
Counselor | Psychotherapist

4203 Montrose, Suite 240
Houston, Texas 77006

713.257.0972 www.robertsnellgrove.com

♥ Love yourself, don't drug yourself. ♥



The HEARTS@UTHealth program provides outpatient counseling for adults who use drugs and want to stop. Enrollment in this adult substance abuse treatment program provides:

FREE HARM REDUCTION COUNSELING TO HELP YOU SET GOALS TO:

- 1) BE SAFE 2) REDUCE USE 3) QUIT

TREATMENT AT NO COST TO PARTICIPANTS FROM EXPERIENCED AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING AND FREE HIV TESTING

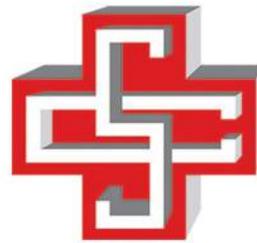
100% CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT AND TESTING



HEARTS@UTHealth
HIV Education, Awareness, Referral and Treatment for Substance Use Disorders

Email HEARTS@uth.tmc.edu / Call 713-486-2736

- Board Certified Physicians
- Accept All Private Insurance
- Open 365 Days A Year
 - 24 Hours A Day
 - 7 Days A Week
- Average Wait Times of Less than 10 Min
- Treatment of adults, children and infants
 - On-Site Testing Laboratory
 - On-Site CT Scan and Ultrasound



SignatureCare
EMERGENCY CENTER

HEIGHTS • BELLAIRE • MONTROSE • MEMORIAL

Visit any of our 9

HOUSTON LOCATIONS

as well as our Greater Texas facilities



BARBER SERVICE AVAILABLE

515 Westheimer
713.524.7858
HairSalonHouston.com

Appointments & Walk-Ins OK!

Mon. - Fri. 10am - 7pm | Sat. 10am - 5pm | Sun. Closed



Comedy with a Cause

Stand-up artist Kari Burt discusses blackness, gender, and sexuality in the era of Trump.

By MARTIN GONZALEZ
Photo by NKECHI CHIBUEZE
at *Happy Black Chick*
Photography

Stand-up artist Kari Burt is making strides to ensure that Houston's comedy scene is as diverse as the city it serves.

The 25-year-old black lesbian comedian produces and hosts two comedy shows every month. At *Too Soon!*, she gives rotating comedians the opportunity to discuss current events, politics, and pop culture. At *JK Fridays*, she provides a spotlight for local and touring comedians from under-represented backgrounds.

"Most people book their friends and tend to hire people who look like them," Burt says. "These shows work against that to show different perspectives. That's one thing I like about the Houston comedy scene—it's very diverse, which is important to showcase."

Burt, who was born and raised in Houston, started doing comedy a year-and-a-half ago after her wife, Michelle Qwist, encouraged her

to focus on what makes her happy. She credits Qwist as a source of inspiration to continue her work in comedy, despite a difficult start.

"[Doing stand-up] was rough at first, but I think everybody has to go through that," Burt says. "After I took some guest spots at the local shows *Goddamnit!* and *Lady Bits*, I started finding my groove and it opened the gateway to more shows."

While Burt does use her marriage in her material, she focuses less on being queer and more on the fact that there are cultural differences between her and her Danish wife. Burt says she prefers her sets to be about her race and gender instead, because it allows her to share experiences that exist beyond the stereotypical stories about black women that the mainstream media often spreads.

"People of color learn to empathize with white people because we're exposed to their stories from an early age," Burt says, "but the

reverse isn't always true." Furthermore, she points out that while representation for people of color has been on the rise, many of their stories are based on epic historic events and characters. Burt asks: "Can black people just [travel to outer] space in a fictional world [without having] it be because of *Hidden Figures*?"

The comedian points to the lack of variety and humanization in stories about people of color—especially black women—in mainstream media as one of the key reasons behind the lack of empathy for communities of color. "If you look at the voting patterns, a lot of white women voted for Trump," Burt says. "We can't hoorah intersectionality if white people (even those within the LGBTQ community) are always going to fall back on their whiteness."

Although *Too Soon!* can be political, Burt doesn't typically include political content in her regular material. "People are tired of hearing Trump jokes, and I prefer to talk about poli-

tics outside of my work in comedy,” she says. “The [most lighthearted] Trump joke I have is saying, ‘Trump didn’t ruin America, Nelly did when he stopped wearing that bandaid.’”

When politics do come into play during a show, Burt is ready. She recalls a performance where an audience member yelled, “F--k yeah, we voted for Trump!” during her set. “I just found a way to keep going without getting combative,” she says. “There are shows you can perform in where all of your audience is conservative. You have to be ready for that as a comedian.”

Rather than pushing a political narrative, Burt uses her own unique life experiences to inspire her material. She views comedy as an avenue to both share her own experiences and dispel the myth that there is one only one form of black storytelling.

“[It’s usually assumed that] black people have this monolithic experience, and that’s not true,” Burt says. “We may all have to deal with racism (in the same sense that women have to

“IF SOMEONE GAVE ME MONEY TO PUT ON A COMEDY SHOW OF ONLY BLACK WOMEN, I COULD DO IT IN A HEARTBEAT—THERE ARE SO MANY OBJECTIVELY FUNNY BLACK WOMEN,”

— Kari Burt

deal with sexism), but beyond that, we all have vastly different stories. [But] it’s all blackness—[although] blackness doesn’t have to be one thing.”

The Houston native says this is why there is a need for more support of black women in comedy. “If someone gave me money to put on a comedy show of only black women, I could do

it in a heartbeat—there are so many objectively funny black women,” she says. “There doesn’t have to be one funny black woman at a time, and that goes for every art form.”

Burt points to Houston rapper Megan Thee Stallion as a perfect example of how artists—and specifically black women—can thrive simultaneously, noting that the support between Megan and her peers is something she hopes to replicate with local comedians and performers.

In addition to doing stand-up, Burt is busy writing scripts in preparation for her move to New York, where she plans to represent Houston and put the city on the map for improv and comedy. ▼



Following each Too Soon! show, Burt also hosts Speedball, an open-mic night at The Secret Group. Keep up with Burt and find her event listings online at facebook.com/hellokariburt, or follow her on Instagram and Twitter at @hellokariburt.

Cosmetic

Reconstructive

TMJ/TMD Treatment

Implant Placement & Restoration

Preventive Dentistry



T.D. Tran, DDS
J.T. Haney, DDS

1302 Waugh Dr., Suite 200
Houston, TX 77019
info.AllstarsDental@gmail.com
AllstarsDental.com

SCHEDULE YOUR VISIT SOON!
713.526.2424

Lic# TACLA55198E

NEWPORT
AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

INDOOR AIR QUALITY + SERVICE + INSTALLATION
281.808.8630 + NEWPORTAC.COM

0% Financing Available

IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

The Dog House PS
Est. 2009

TWO GREAT LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU:
Memorial Park 6434 Washington Ave
Galleria Area 5917 Richmond Ave
713/820-6140

SERVICES BOARDING Daycare is included • GROOMING All breeds and sizes • TRAINING Programs for all dogs
DOGGY DAY CARE 6 days a week

TheDogHousePS.com FIND US ON f i y



Texas-Sized Talent

Montrose-raised Lovie Olivia explores being a black queer woman through visual art.

By BILL ARNING

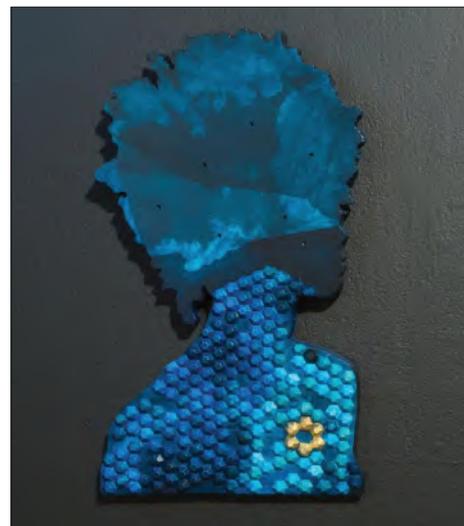
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

There is no possible way to describe Lovie Olivia's art practice in a thirty-second elevator pitch. Performances, cooking, painting, printmaking, community building, and activism are all intertwined within her compelling art practice. As a black queer woman raised in the Montrose area, she happily serves as a terrific point of interconnection among different subsets of both the queer and art communities of Houston. With her memorable *Gilligan's Island* name and larger-than-life personality, it seems Lovie is the one member of the Houston art world loved and respected by everyone. I am not alone in finding this artist's public persona and art objects inseparable.

Her most recent project in Houston was a collaboration with her life partner of three years, Preetika Rajgariah, at Jonathan Hopson's elegant eponymous bungalow gallery in Montrose. Rajgariah had her enchanting sculptures on view at Lawndale Arts Center while she was simultaneously staging an intimate one-night performance event, *Two Dykes*

and a Knife. Described as a sensory journey of both food and conversation, the artist and her partner's Southern, African, and Indian cooking cultures were interwoven with curated topics of conversation. The discussions they led were intended to invite vulnerability and closeness among strangers. The handmade place-settings were visually and tactilely lovely, and remained on view for the run of the gallery's annual Pride show. (Despite being run by a straight couple, this art space takes the queer history of Montrose as a serious point of neighborhood celebration. Their annual June Pride show is something that all Montrose art lovers look forward to.)

While Olivia's home and studio have vacated Montrose to join the culture-workers' large eastward migration to the other side of town, she is the ultimate Montrosite, having attended the world-famous High School for Performing and Visual Arts in its classic neighborhood location. At a recent Station Museum panel discussion on the discomfiting topic of the relationship between gay men and lesbians, Olivia said she went to the same clubs



as the white gay men she befriended. When her other black and lesbian friends would ask why, she told them that she liked the party and the music. It is that spirit of togetherness and collective identity that runs through all of her

work. Each stage of her evolving cultural identification drove new types of art-making.

Olivia's practice frequently involves mechanical printmaking and casting techniques, and her surfaces will become thickly sculptural, with bumps evoking ritual scarification. She freely uses gold leaf to conjure the Italian Primitive painters from the early Renaissance. Frequently using the workmanlike material of plaster, she created a memorable series of small women's heads in silhouette. The figure's subtle head movements are posed like a classical ballet dancer's poses, and the artist's ability to convey meaning with a subtle change of angle is highly choreographic. For a show at The Horseshed, an LGBTQ alternative space in the United Kingdom, she cast dozens of small gold nipples or clits and ran them around the space like a spell to conjure a lesbian sex party, enlivening a show of wild, queer Texas-based artists.

Yet for Lovie Olivia, traditional figure-painting is always at the heart of how to make visible and comprehensible the queer black and brown women's bodies she inhabits and loves. When she depicts such beings, she already sees their flesh as a sculptural medium figured



RONALD L. JONES

Open Carry, 2018
Plaster, pigment and acrylic
on birch plywood

through many cultural forces, as well as her artistic and sexual viewpoint.

A large multi-figure painting on a saturat-

ed-yellow ground depicts a women-centered space with a plethora of hip women of color creating a personal utopia. A foregrounded figure wearing a shirt, dedicated to Audre Lorde (among other sources of inspiration for queer black women) locates the type of gathering we are witnessing.

But perhaps her most memorable single painting is *Open Carry*, in which a shirtless black woman gestures toward us with a harness-like leather strap around her hand. I asked Olivia if, as a native Texan, our state's pathological love of guns was the topic of the work. She laughs and says, "Honey, you don't know much about lesbian sex toys, do you?" After explaining the obvious purpose of the device to me (as if I were an innocent), I thanked her.

I am always happy when art teaches me something new, and I can count on Lovie Olivia to further my sexual (as well as cultural) enlightenment. ▼



For more information about Lovie Olivia's work, visit lovieolivia.com

Bill Arning is a curator, critic, and founder of Bill Arning Contemporary Art Consultants.

Daniel R. Garza, MD

Medication Management Psychotherapy

Specializing in:
Depression • Bipolar
Anxiety • ADHD Disorders



**BEST
PSYCHIATRIST**
OutSmart Readers'
Choice 2008–2018

281.610.8190
3131 Eastside St. • Suite 415

Limited Evening Appointments Available
Ψ Se Habla Español Ψ

DRGarzaMD.com



1819 GENESEE ST.
\$273,000

- Vibrant and Convenient Mid-Town Location
- 2BD/1.5BA/1GAR
- 1,240 sq. ft.



2111 BEALL ST.
\$465,000

- Desirable Shady Acres/ Heights Location
- 3BD+Bonus Room/3.5BA/2GAR Home
- 2,350 sq. ft.



27244 ALEXANDRA SPRINGS LN.
\$349,000

- Spring Trails Gated Enclave near Woodlands
- 3BD/3.5BA/2GAR+Covered Outdoor Living
- 3,205 sq. ft.

TINA BURGOS, PRINCIPAL BROKER
INVERNESS REALTY GROUP - HOUSTON
CALL/TEXT: 713.562.3149

TinaSellsHouston.com &
TinaSellsHawaii.com





ARTS

From Bad to Beautiful

Queer sculptor Damon Thomas creates art in the face of adversity.

By KIM HOGSTROM

LGBTQ themes are abundant in a Museum District art exhibit opening Saturday, September 7, from 5 to 8 p.m. at The Jung Center.

Continuing through September 29, the exhibit, entitled *Ancestors*, will feature mixed-media sculptures by Houston's enormously talented LGBTQ artist Damon Thomas.

Kissing Clowns, a duo of identical busts leaning toward one another with their lips nearly touching, was inspired by a homophobic remark Thomas overheard in a theater while watching *Bohemian Rhapsody* earlier this year.

During the scene where Freddie Mercury receives his first kiss from a man, an older woman sitting behind Thomas shouted, "Yuck!" However, later in the movie, as Mercury was clowning around onstage, the woman put her homophobia on hold and laughed along with everyone else.

"I had decided that if the woman made another homophobic comment, I was going to suggest that she not attend movies with gay characters in the future," the normally soft-spoken Thomas explains. "She remained quiet, but the episode made me think about how some [people think] it's OK for LGBTQ characters to be clowns, as long as we don't display our full humanity—especially our sexuality."

Thomas decided to turn that negative into something positive by creating *Kissing Clowns*. Because the clowns are identical, the art can also be seen as a statement about self-love—something he believes the LGBTQ community needs to embrace.

Another of Thomas' sculptures on display is *Dreaming* (above). Here, 3-D images hover above a sleeping figure, with kite strings anchoring the images to the individual. Viewers will find the piece both soothing and haunting at the same time.

"Some of the works in this show are a direct result of my years in Jungian analysis," Thomas explains, "analysis that helped transform my life and lead me to art. Dreams are important in Jungian therapy. A dream is a meaningful symbol if you honor and listen to it, and spend some time thinking about what it means.

"This sculpture is one of my ways of interpreting the images and ideas that 'float' above our heads and our consciousness as we sleep," Thomas concludes.

While not all of Thomas' sculptures involve LGBTQ issues, they all explore the emotional and psychological range of the human condition—a theme present in Thomas' work for more than a decade.



All the pieces displayed at The Jung Center will be available for purchase.

 To see more of Thomas' work, go to damonthomasart.com.

What: Art exhibition by LGBTQ artist Damon Thomas

When: Sept. 7 through 27, with opening reception Sept. 7, 5–8 p.m.

Where: The Jung Center, 5200 Montrose Blvd.



**ANDY'S ALL-STAR
PEST CONTROL**
713-732-7742

Complete Pest Control Service
6 Month Warranty - on Standard Pest Control
*This is Termite Swarming Season
Call us to Protect your Investment*

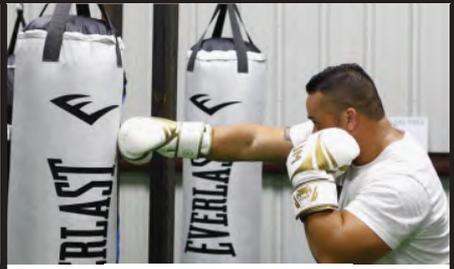


**Call
Andy**
for a free quote




Andy Sassie - Owner
TPCL# 13558

HTX FightCamp is a Boxing Fitness Center located in the Houston Heights/Garden Oaks area. We have all the Boxing and fitness equipment you will need for your workouts.



HTX FIGHTCAMP
★ HOUSTON, TX ★

827 W. 34th St. Houston TX 77018
HTXFIGHTCAMP.COM
713.518.4834

NCSF 2713901 | Certified Massage Therapist
CPR & AED Certified
Insured Certified personal trainer National Council on Strength & Fitness

GLBT CRUISES & TOUR EVENTS

aquafest
a division of CruiseCenter



...family at sea!

(800) 592-9058
www.AquafestCruises.com



EMPOWERING,
MOTIVATING, AND
ADVOCATING FOR
OUR CLIENTS
TO UNLOCK
THEIR PHYSICAL
POTENTIALS

Dr. Roy Rivera, Jr.
PT, PhD, DPT, MCHES

946 N. Shepherd Dr.
Suite A
Houston, TX 77008
713.868.2766



Crom  Rehabilitation

Orthopedic & Sports Medicine
Physical Therapy

cromrehab.com

We accept most major health insurances

Voted Best Physical Therapist



HELPMAN

DODGE Jeep



7720 Katy Freeway
next to  IKEA
Houston, TX 77024
T: 713.574.5058
helfmanJEEP.com



Bryon Crombie
Cell: 713.213.6941
bcrombie@helfman.com

Bring this ad and I will give you \$500 off your purchase!

VACAYA

Riviera Maya Resort	Oct 27 - Nov 2, 2019
Christmas Markets of Europe - Emerald Star	
Amsterdam to Nuremberg	Dec 5 - 12, 2019
Nuremberg to Budapest	Dec 12 - 19, 2019
NEW Enchanted Iceland Cruise - <i>Panopt Le Jacques Cartier</i>	Aug 30 - Sep 6, 2020

BRAND G VACATIONS

Splendors of India & Ganges River - <i>Riviera Maya</i>	Sep 30 - Oct 12, 2019
2019 Magic of the Advent - <i>Christmas Market Cruise</i>	Dec 2 - 10, 2019
Antarctica Luxury Expedition Group Cruise - <i>World Explorer</i>	Feb 9 - 16, 2020
Amazon Cruise and Machu Picchu Discovery - <i>Delfin III</i>	Apr 5 - 17, 2020
Amazon Cruise and Machu Picchu Expedition - <i>Delfin III</i>	Apr 19 - May 1, 2020
Amsterdam and Rhine River Cruise - <i>AMADEUS Silver III</i>	Jun 15 - 24, 2020
Prague and Danube River - <i>AMADEUS Queen</i>	Aug 14 - 23, 2020
Burgundy & Provence River Cruise - <i>MS Amadeus Provence</i>	Sep 15 - 24, 2020
Royal Clipper Mediterranean Sailing - <i>Royal Clipper</i>	Sep 26 - Oct 3, 2020

ATLANTIS EVENTS

Oasis Mediterranean Cruise - <i>Oasis of the Seas</i>	Aug 25 - Sep 1, 2019
Eclipse Mexico Cruise - <i>Celebrity Eclipse</i>	Oct 20 - 27, 2019
NEW Oasis Caribbean Cruise - <i>Oasis of the Seas</i>	Jan 19 - 26, 2020
NEW Southern Caribbean Cruise - <i>Celebrity Summit</i>	Mar 21 - 28, 2020

RSVP VACATIONS

RSVP Caribbean Cruise - <i>Holland America Nieuw Statendam</i>	Feb 9 - 16, 2020
--	------------------

PUERTO VALLARTA

BEACH CLUB & VILLA VERANO

FEB 16 - 23
2020

starting at \$2,600 pp.

SOUTH AFRICA

SAFARI TOUR

NOV 19 - 28
2019

starting at \$8,999 pp.

THANK YOU

OutSmart readers for voting us

- ★ BEST LGBT Cruise or Tour Company
- ★ BEST Local Travel Agency



www.conciergetravel.cc

Contact us toll free: 877.775.9616



The Council on Recovery invites you to join us as we stand together in choosing recovery. Reserve your table now for the opportunity to hear Doria and Craig T. Nelson share their family's journey of addiction and path to recovery.

THE WAGGONERS FOUNDATION SPEAKER SERIES

in Memory of Jay Waggoner

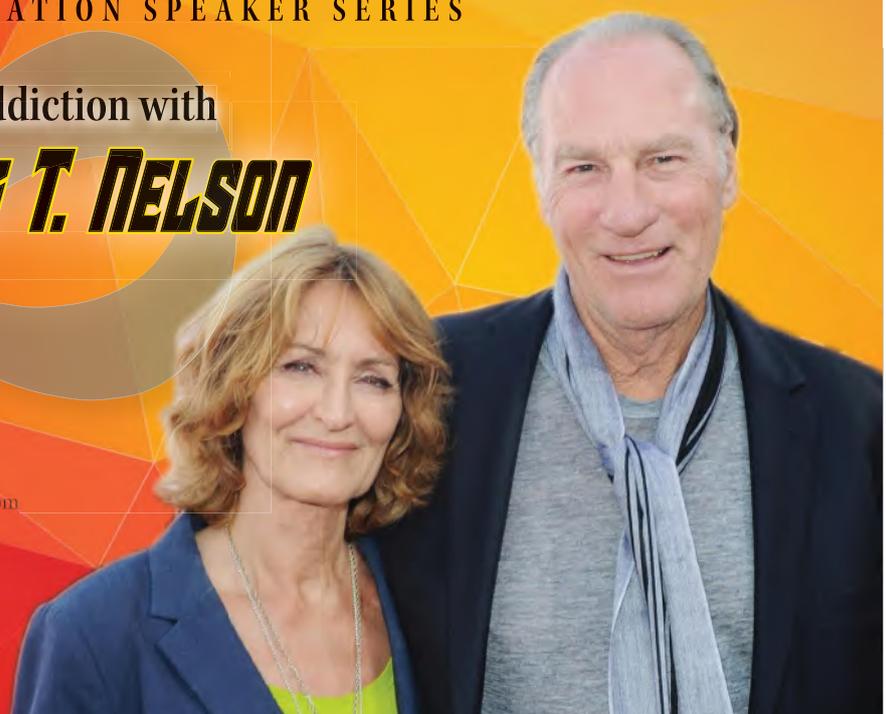
Unmasking the stigma of addiction with

DORIA AND CRAIG T. NELSON

2019 Fall Luncheon Presented by
THE WAYNE DUDDLESTEN FOUNDATION

Friday, October 25, 2019

Hilton Americas - Houston
1600 Lamar - Houston, TX 77010
Check-in 11:15 am - Lunch & Program 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm



Register today at www.councilonrecovery.org

COMMUNITY

Photos by
DALTON DEHART and EDGARDO AGUILAR



On July 20, EPAH held its Scholarship Fund Kickoff Party at John Palmer Art, benefiting the University of Houston LGBT Alumni Association. Pictured are John Palmer with Ken Council, Steve Bretthauer, Dan Maxwell, Bob Burrell, Kennedy Loftin, Tom Seymour, Alan Dettlaff, Glenn Dickson, David Alcorta, Justin Dickson, Rand Key, Larry Wood, John Palmer, Doug Smith, and Brooks Ballard.



On August 11, The Houston Bears hosted a mud-wrestling contest at La Granja Disco y Cantina. Pictured are Houston Bears friends.



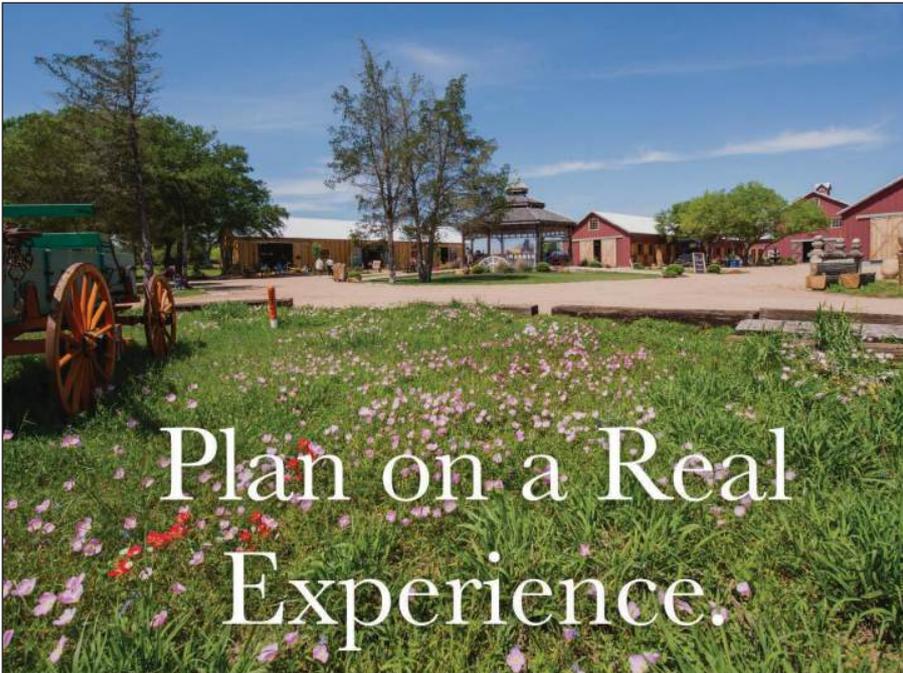
SERVING THE GREATER
HOUSTON AREA WITH
**DIVERSITY, INCLUSION,
RESPECT & PRIDE.**

3506 FM 528 Rd. | Alvin, TX 77511. | 281.968.2266
ToyotaOfAlvin.com

Only 10 minutes from League City, Dickinson, Webster and, Pearland.
Mention this ad for exclusive Concierge Delivery!



TOYOTA of
ALVIN



Plan on a Real Experience.



The COMPOUND

ANTIQUESHOW

SEP 21 - OCT 5

ROUND TOP, TX

From Shopping to Entertainment, Food Service and the beautiful barns and grounds... The Compound has it all

Premier Dealers in 5 Big Barns showing exquisite French and European antiques to Mid-Century Modern. Furniture, fixtures, lighting, decor, repurposed and revitalized. Antique silver, weapons, estate jewelry, automotive art and fine art both vintage, antique and new. And, more!
HOURS 9:30 to 6:00

Great dining by **Simply D'Lish** & espresso & snacks by **Picnic on the Green**. It's all yum!
Select wines and beer by **Vin 114** • Cocktails by **Mini Bar Brigade**
Live Music Daily in "The Grove"

2550 S. State Highway 237
roundtopcompound.com

Follow us on Instagram
[#thecompound_roundtop](https://www.instagram.com/thecompound_roundtop)



A scene from *UnMASKulinity*, a documentary that explores new perspectives on masculinity.

Unmasking Masculinity

Filmmaker Brian Ellison gets men talking about the pain of “toxic masculinity.”

By **BRANDON WOLF**

Houston educator and filmmaker Brian Ellison decided he wanted to do more than just talk about toxic masculinity. The result is a trailblazing film entitled *UnMASKulinity*.

Ellison says his purpose was to introduce a new understanding of masculinity as a way to help men heal their emotional wounds. Originally intended for other African-American men, the film has proven to be a tool that anyone can utilize.

“It all started with my own personal insecurity,” Ellison says. “I grew up in an era when black masculinity was so fragile. Anything

could challenge it. One misstep could take you out of the male pool permanently.”

As Ellison grew older and began to feel more secure in himself, he started having conversations about masculinity with friends. One day it struck him that what he had learned about being a man while growing up wasn’t logical. He began to question why black men are often forced to live in a restrictive box that limits their emotional range.

Getting Support for an Idea

Ellison, a heterosexual ally of the LGBTQ community, wanted more for his twins—a boy and a girl. He wondered what he could do to help

children grow up free, and for men his age and older to recognize that limiting their emotions can make them sick.

Taking a big step, Ellison applied for an Ideas Fund grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation to produce a film. Winning that grant made Ellison feel validated that someone else believed in his idea enough to provide production funding for a film.

Looking back, Ellison laughs: “Now I *had* to do this thing!” He pulled together a creative team from his circle of friends and started interviewing African-American men. The men were asked to talk about their upbringing, and to recall what made them who they are. “The men began to realize their limited perspectives on masculinity and where they came from. There were a lot of ‘Aha’ moments,” Ellison says.

Although time and budget were limited, Ellison’s crew did what they could in five months. They determined that at least 28 interviews would have to be conducted in order to make it impactful. Ellison made sure the interviews were as diverse as possible. “Everyone’s story was important—young, old, queer, straight. We didn’t want anyone to feel [that the film didn’t speak to them].”

By late December of last year, a rough cut had been edited for a preview screening by 400 people at the Midtown Arts and Theater Center Houston (MATCH).

Masculinity from a New Angle

Ellison’s completed 50-minute film has its own sort of magic. Carefully edited, it moves at an even pace as its message unfolds. Ellison wants viewers to realize that all men can be strong *and* sensitive. The film has a gentle touch, with men talking calmly but confidently about their journey toward a new understanding of masculinity.

The film opens with a shot of Harrison Guy, Pride Houston’s 2019 Male Grand Marshal, against a warehouse background. Rose petals fall on him as music plays. Every ten minutes, a musical dream sequence occurs. In one, Guy is floating freely underwater. In another, a tap dancer performs a routine in a boxing ring. Ellison shows how masculinity can be a mixture of both brute strength and gentle creativity.

The cinematography is professionally done, but it’s also obvious that the film was made on a tight budget. This actually works in the film’s favor by allowing the interviews to come across as heartfelt and without pretense. The work is a labor of love.

The crew wanted the film to have a healing message. Ellison says, “We want people to walk away challenging old ideas and thinking of new ways to start processing. Viewers will come away with some, but not all, answers. What we give them is a platform to begin conversations

that have never been there before.”

Ellison wants to take the film to schools, colleges, community centers, film festivals, and other venues where people are open to exploring the issue of toxic masculinity. The intent is to use the film to spark serious discussions after the screenings.

“Black men need a space to go to heal,” Ellison says. “Women have done a better job of healing and release. Men don’t always have to talk about sports—they need to talk about the stuff they think about [when they] can’t sleep—unresolved issues from fifteen years ago. They need to address the little boy inside them, who has never had a voice.”

While each interviewee has his own story to tell, there are also common threads that run through all of the interviews: vulnerability, self-love, and tears. “I never saw my father cry” is a refrain often heard during the interviews.

In one particularly moving segment, artist Michael Stevenson is asked to talk to himself as a 14-year-old boy. Brushing back tears, Stevenson delivers a poignant response.

The men also talk about black versus white masculinity. In the black environment, boys are taught to be hard because the world is go-

ing to be a tougher place for them than it is for white boys. Creative pursuits such as dance and art are looked down upon, with judgmental labels quick to follow. Therapy is looked on as the sign of a shameful mental illness, and not easily embraced. Boys are told to “man up,” which is code for ignoring their feelings and acting like everything is okay.

Even though Ellison played college football, he still had to come to terms with his nurturing nature. The film’s message is very personal to him, and led to some “Aha” moments of his own. Harrison Guy told him that it’s one thing to be gay, and another to be black and gay. When Ellison was growing up, the black barbershop was his refuge. But Guy never felt safe there, and it wasn’t a place he wanted to go. “I’d never thought about that,” Ellison admits.

The Impact of the Film

Guy explains why he decided to be a major part of the film: “Toxic masculinity in the wrong hands can be deadly to feminine men like me. This same toxicity in our own hands can cause us to be equally detrimental and deadly to ourselves. This film tackles a topic that is difficult for men to discuss, and it allows us [to be in a]

space of vulnerability that is rare. I knew that my presence was necessary in order to serve as a reminder that conversations about men should include all spectrums of manhood.”

Another participant, Anthony Suber, says, “The path to self-discovery is paved by self-reflection. As an artist working in cultural- and societal-based themes, I believe in and directly connect to this film. The concept for this work is poignant and necessary during this period of cultural shift that we find ourselves party to. It was humbling being a part of something that has the potential to rewire culture and reframe how we think about manhood, masculinity, and how that applies to African-Americans.”

Anya Doula adds her words of praise for the film: “I went to the premiere with the intention to be open. The film [has a message of] raw truth told by the black men [who were interviewed]. The safe space that Ellison and his team created allowed a freedom of thought and a [vulnerability] that we rarely see from black men on film. We do not see or hear these conversations from black men anywhere in the mainstream.”

Josie Pickens adds her thoughts: “Brian Ellison’s gorgeous and timely film reminds us to be gentler with black men, who are constantly fighting a battle to find their place and value in a system of unhealthy masculinity that leaves many of them trapped inside a performance they would like to escape. *UnMASKulinity* left me with more questions than answers, which is why it’s such a radical and valuable piece of work.”

Expanding the Film’s Reach

Earlier this year, Ellison received a John S. Kellett Foundation grant to expand the film’s reach with additional interviews. There are also plans to create a study guide to accompany the film that will help audiences process their thoughts. “This grant opens up opportunities to take this outside of Houston,” Ellison says.

The film still needs additional financing, and a GoFundMe page is available for people who would like to help. Ellison also welcomes the opportunity to screen his film in local venues.

Ellison was heavily influenced by filmmaker Spike Lee while growing up. Years ago, the two finally met at a film festival, and Ellison came away from that meeting with renewed motivation. “If you have something inside of you and you are coming from a good place, you can do great things.” ▼



BREAKING SOCIAL NORMS

Filmmaker Brian Ellison, an LGBTQ ally, says he created *UnMASKulinity* to help men distance themselves from the grip of toxic masculinity.

For information about film screenings, contact Brian Ellison at unmaskulinity@gmail.com or 281-914-1941. To donate, visit the GoFundMe page at gofundme.com/fsqeq-the-unmaskulinity-project



The story of the late Texas journalist Molly Ivins (pictured) is told in *Raise Hell: The Life and Times of Molly Ivins*, produced by Janice Engel, James Egan, and Carlisle Vandervoort.

RAISING HELL

Houston film producer helps bring Lone Star legend Molly Ivins to the big screen.

By **ANDREW EDMONSON**
Photo courtesy of
SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL



“There are no second acts in American lives,” F. Scott Fitzgerald famously observed in his notes for *The Last Tycoon*.

But twelve years after her death in 2007, the firebrand progressive Texas journalist Molly Ivins is enjoying a spectacular renaissance.

Her feisty humor, fearless bravado, and trenchant political insights spring vividly to life in the new documentary *RAISE HELL: The Life and Times of Molly Ivins*. The film debuted

in Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and Dallas on August 30. It opens nationally in October.

Carlisle Vandervoort, a lesbian and resident of the Houston Heights, has worked for the last seven years to help bring the film to fruition. She served as a producer on the film, along with two gay collaborators: Janice Engel, who wrote, directed, and produced the film; and James Egan, who also served as a producer.

RAISE HELL premiered to glowing reviews at the Sundance Film Festival in January. It won the Audience Award at South

by Southwest in Austin in March, and went on to earn acclaim at film festivals across the country. This past summer, the film was picked up by Magnolia Pictures for national release.

“It’s a rare documentary indeed that so expertly captures the singular essence of its subject. Ivins is restored to vivid and vital life—if not in the flesh, then in the mind and spirit,” wrote Marc Savlov of the film in the *Austin Chronicle*.

When Engel and Egan pitched Vandervoort on joining the team as a producer, they had a very specific need. “They didn’t speak Texan,” remembers Vandervoort, a native Houstonian who brings an innate understanding of Ivins’s world from her decades of living in the Lone Star State. “James is from Baltimore, and Janice is from Long Island.”

They gave Vandervoort 48 hours to decide if she wanted to participate.

“I called them the next day and said I’m in. My Texas pride suddenly welled up. I want to do a project about Molly Ivins. She was a Texan, she was progressive, and she was liberal. Yes, I want to be involved in this!”

Vandervoort, who is 62, and Ivins shared many similar life experiences. They were both born children of privilege in Texas, grew up in River Oaks, and attended Houston’s elite St. John’s School. Both of their families were active in the oil and gas business. And they both diverged dramatically from the more traditional paths envisioned for them by their parents.

But Vandervoort came by her independent streak honestly. Her grandmother, Mary Porter Vandervoort, was a co-founder of the Junior League. “She was on the Houston ISD school board,” says Vandervoort. “She was what you called a ‘limousine liberal.’” Her grandmother helped to lead efforts to integrate Houston’s schools in the 1960s, and as thanks for her efforts, she received hate mail and had a cross burned on her yard.

In the film, Ivins observes wryly that at St. John’s, she felt like “a Clydesdale among thoroughbreds.” Vandervoort, who attended St. John’s for twelve years, also felt like an outsider there.

“I never felt that I was cool enough,” she comments. “When I was nine, I knew there was something different about me. I knew that I was probably like my gay godfather, even though I didn’t understand what that meant.

“When I was 12, I heard a schoolmate use the term ‘lesbo’ in the locker room. In the context when she said it, I knew that I was that. I turned bright red. And I took off to a corner of a dressing room, and I knew that was not good.”

After graduating from St. John’s, she enrolled in Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

“The first girl I ever made out with was a Tri Delta at Vanderbilt. We went through sorority rush together,” she recalls. “She flirted

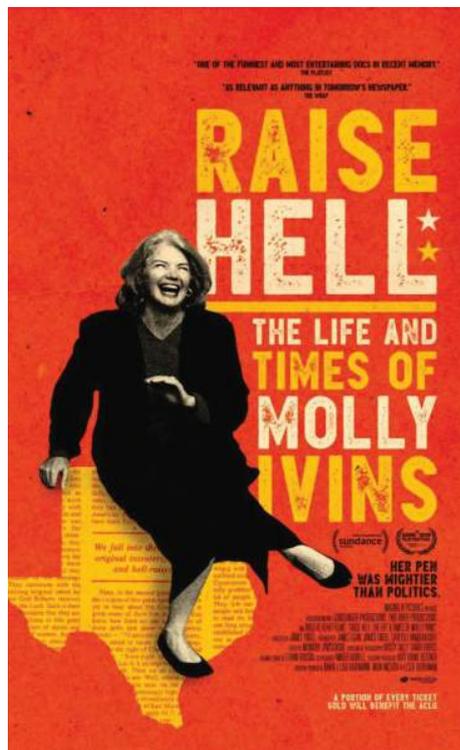
with me, and I recognized what was happening. That was the first time I was ever kissed by a girl.

“We saw each other for a while. She dropped me for my roommate, and broke my heart.”

Coming Out as a Debutante—and a Lesbian

Vandervoort went on to join the Pi Beta Phi sorority. In 1976, she came out as a debutante at the Houston Country Club to please her paternal grandmother. “I was uncomfortable all the way through it,” she said of the experience. “I knew that this was not my deal because I knew that I was gay.”

She finished her undergraduate studies at the University of Texas, majoring in radio, film, and TV.



“My first semester at UT, these women came from the gay and lesbian center to speak to my sociology class,” she recalls. “I thought that everyone could read ‘I’m a big queer’ stamped on my forehead. But I was so excited that these women were there.

“I made an appointment to go and meet them. I made sure that no one saw me go into the center. It was a step to come out to myself. The women sat down and explained to me, ‘Here’s what’s going on, and you’re going to be OK.’ Thank God for the gay and lesbian center!”

“During my final year at UT, I saw this

woman walk by me on the street, and I thought, ‘I need to know her.’ Then she ended up working on my film crew for our student film, and we were together for six years. We moved to New York together in the fall of 1981.

“We lived in Tribeca when you could walk down the middle of Broadway at three in the morning and no one was there,” Vandervoort recalls. “I saw Madonna open for Run DMC at the Palladium.”

She began to build a career producing TV commercials for Macy’s.

Vandervoort had been close to her mother, Camille Haynes. “At age 25, my mother asked me, ‘Just what is your relationship with Lynn?’ I told her, ‘It’s more than a friendship.’ She asked me again, ‘What is your relationship?’ So then I told her.” Her mother struggled with the news of her daughter’s sexual orientation, but eventually went to PFLAG. Over the years, the two did therapy together and worked to forge a deeply loving relationship built on mutual acceptance.

Touring the Country, Reading Feminist Erotica

In 1985, Vandervoort relocated to Los Angeles, where she lived for twelve years. She worked as a public-relations professional, and began exploring her passion for art by staging artistic outdoor “earthworks” installations. She eventually completed an MFA degree in sculpture from Claremont Graduate University.

In 1997, she relocated back to Houston, settling in the Heights and serving on the board of DiverseWorks, Houston’s alternative arts space. She began to socialize with artists, and became deeply engaged in the city’s artistic community.

“In 2002, I did a writing course for feminist porn taught by a woman named Liz Belile. I wrote three pieces, and Liz chose two of them to be featured in a collection called *Gynomite*,” Vandervoort recalls. “We went around the country, and I was reading my erotica. We were doing readings in small towns. It was very apparent then that we were being of service because sexual liberation had not come to a lot of these people—even straight people.

“They were hearing things out of our mouths that they had thought about, but never heard spoken. I had a woman in her sixties who came up to me and said that she had never heard anything like what I had read, but that it was part of her interior life. And it was liberating for her.”

Vandervoort also discovered a passion for beekeeping, which has evolved into a deeply spiritual process for her. Over the years, she began to manage the beehives of a dozen friends. “For me, keeping bees is an active prayer; it’s a lot like meditation,” she observes. “You have to get really quiet and really focused. When I open up a beehive, I see God in the hive.” →

Reaching People through Humor

In 2012, she began to work in earnest on *RAISE HELL*, which paints a complex portrait of Ivins, her contentious relationship with her conservative father, her professional triumphs and controversies, and her long struggle with alcoholism.

“From the get-go, we knew that a hagiography of Molly Ivins would be incredibly boring,” Vandervoort notes.

The film encountered some hurdles at several points in its production. Engel, Egan, and Vandervoort had known each other for over two decades, and this bond of trust enabled them to persevere through the challenges.

A milestone came in 2015 when a Kickstarter campaign was launched.

“Our goal was \$75,000, and we blew past that in our first ten days,” says Vandervoort. Several of Ivins’ friends, including the writer Anne Lamott and the actress Morgan Fairchild, promoted the campaign to their followers on social media, resulting in a surge of donations. “We grossed \$120,000 from the campaign.”

That same year, another breakthrough came when the filmmakers finally secured a candid, emotional interview with Ivins’

brother Andy, with whom they had long sought to speak. The filmmakers were also able to interview Rachel Maddow, *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman, Cecile Richards, and Dan Rather.

Following the 2016 presidential election, Molly Ivins’ story became even more relevant in the eyes of Vandervoort and Engel as the resistance movement took flight. “Molly Ivins’ voice is needed now more than ever to stir us to action,” says Vandervoort. “She knew that humor was the way to reach people so they could truly listen.”

The documentary captures Ivins’ prescience on several key problems plaguing American democracy. A decade before the rise of Bernie Sanders as a national figure, she identified the emerging crisis of income inequality. She also called out the corrupting influence of money in the American political system in the early 2000s. “My take is that American politics at this point is corrupt,” she told one television interviewer. “What we have at this point is a system of legalized bribery.”

She also aptly observed, “Polarizing people is a good way to win elections and to wreck the country.”

Returning to Her Alma Mater as an Out, Gay Woman

This past summer, Vandervoort was invited to screen *RAISE HELL* for the students at her alma mater who were members of the St. John’s Film Club. “It was glorious,” she recalls of the experience. “Having graduated in 1975 and having not been comfortable in coloring outside the lines, it was outrageously fantastic to come back there as an out gay woman.

“The film showed those students that you don’t have to be a conformist to have a rich, fantastic life and contribute to other people’s lives,” Vandervoort notes. “The kids loved the film, and their parents were there, asking lots of questions.”

She also spent time with a straight, biracial, Muslim female student who served on the school’s Unity Council.

Vandervoort’s voice broke with emotion as she recalled how deeply that meeting touched her. “The sixteen-year-old gay girl inside of me was able to thank the straight sixteen-year-old girl currently on the Unity Council for having the back of gay women like me,” she recalled, “because no one was there for me when I was a teenager at St. John’s.” ▼

MIDTOWN VETERINARY HOSPITAL
Your Neighborhood Pet Care Solution



“Our Mission is to deepen the bonds between people and their pets by providing personalized, compassionate care. We are a full-service veterinary hospital offering high-quality services for your pet.”

Midtown Veterinary Hospital
1434 W. Alabama St. • Houston, TX 77006
(713)528-4900 main • (888)504-9006 fax
www.MidtownVetHospital.com

OutSmart Magazine's Readers' Choice Awards: Gayest & Greatest 2018



MARRIOTT

Beautiful 10 Story Atrium Hotel
290 Recently Renovated Spacious Guestrooms
24 Hour State of the Art Fitness Facility
Over 21,000 square feet of meeting space
Complimentary Airport Transportation
Full Service Restaurant and Lobby Bar
Starbucks Coffee Bar

Houston Marriott
South at Hobby Airport
9100 Gulf Freeway, Houston TX, 77017
Contact: Jill Maxwell - 713.943.4026

WEDDING GUIDE

By HENRY V. THIEL



John Ramirez (l) and Jeff Benavides



FIT COUPLE

Healthcare professionals
Jeff Benavides and John Ramirez
married 12 years after first meeting.

It was the Saturday night the weekend before Halloween of 2006 when Jeff Benavides joined friends at Teotihuaca, the gay-friendly Mexican restaurant on Airline near North Main. He arrived late. “Casually late, which is my norm, so I can make an entrance,” he clarified while flashing his dazzling smile.

When Jeff entered the dining room, he noticed that his group of friends had grown from four to six, including some guys he had seen out and about but had never actually met. Jeff recognized one of them from the Lone Star Volleyball League and the gym. His dark hair and muscular build caught Jeff’s eye, so after greeting his hosts, Bob and Mark, Jeff introduced himself to John Ramirez as he sat down in the empty seat next to him.

It was John’s friend Andy who asked Jeff all of the first-date questions. Are you from Houston? Where do you work?” Since John was listening →

closely, Jeff shared that he worked with Harris Health System's Thomas Street Health Center, providing health education and counseling to patients who are HIV-positive. Originally from the Dallas area, graduate school at the University of St. Thomas brought him to Houston.

John, a graduate of Texas State University in San Marcos, shared that he managed the health and wellness facility at Memorial Hermann Southwest. As an exercise physiologist, John trains elderly clients and assists with the development of exercise programs.

Over dinner, John and Jeff shared more personal details, including that John had ended an eight-year relationship the previous year. Jeff was single, and had just bought his first home in Oak Forest. They both like working out and playing sports.

After dinner, due to it being close to Halloween, they decided to scout out the gay bars in Montrose. When they walked into South Beach and learned the cover charge was \$20 each, they both gasped in shock, then laughed that frugality was another trait they had in common. Nevertheless, they went in and had a great time dancing, enjoying a few more adult beverages, and sharing their first kiss. Before saying goodnight, they decided to get together the next day for the Sunday evening Mass at St. Anne's Catholic Church, where Jeff was scheduled to participate as a reader.

"I did not think John would show up," Jeff confesses. "But when I looked out into the congregation while reading my part in the service, I saw John's handsome, bright face. I was wowed and impressed that he followed through."

After the service, they met up at the back of the church and Jeff asked him to dinner across the street at Café Adobe, where their conversation was effortless. They talked about their jobs, families, and hopes for the future, and what they liked and didn't like about dating. It was also when Jeff confessed to never having been in a long-term relationship, and John confessed to wanting another relationship. That evening became their official first date.

In January 2007 John moved in to Jeff's house in the Oak Forest area, and in 2008 they bought a bit bigger home in Westbury (because they believed the secret to a happy marriage is separate bathrooms!).

To keep the romance alive in their relationship, they shower each other with flowers, cards, or great desserts for no reason. Jeff notes that John whips up the greatest batch of brownies on the spur of the moment.

"And I adore the fact that Jeff leaves me



love notes every day on the kitchen bar—which also include a Honey-Do list!"

Many times during their 12-year relationship, they talked about getting married. When Harris Health System offered healthcare benefits for same-sex couples, Jeff sat John down and said, "I love you enough to say we are not getting any younger, and having good healthcare is important and beneficial for living a healthy life. So, John, will you marry me?"

"I know this may seem practical, but I felt it was real," adds Jeff. "At that point in our lives, John had his own business, Vintage Fitness, and it was doing well, but he had not been able to afford insurance for himself. So what kind of partner would I be if I did not extend myself, my benefits, to him?"

They were married at the Harris County Courthouse on July 20, 2018, by judge Steven Kirkland, with just a few friends and family members in attendance. Then on October 27, 2018, their marriage would be blessed at a

ceremony for 110 family members and close friends at a The Villagio, on the southwest side of town. Minister Sean Spruell, an old high-school friend of Jeff's from Grand Prairie, Texas, performed the ceremony.

The two moments they cherish the most from the ceremony were their vows, spoken from their hearts, telling their friends and family how they felt about one another, how they loved one another, and how relationships only grow stronger with the union and blessing of family and friends. The second was the blessing of their rings, which included every guest saying a silent blessing over their rings, with their two best men, Dave Seymour and John Huckaby, providing the final blessing of the rings before the grooms slipped them on.

The newlyweds honeymooned at a Hilton resort in Cozumel, Mexico.

Henry V. Thiel is a frequent contributor to OUTSMART Magazine. He loves weddings.

▶ WANT TO TELL YOUR STORY? Email us at letters@outsmartmagazine.com

Best Wedding Event Live Music



HARMONY STRINGS

PROFESSIONAL STRING QUARTET
CONTEMPORARY & CLASSICAL MUSIC



www.harmonystrings.com



Capturing your engagements,
weddings, and anniversaries.



832.876.1053

YvonneFeece.com



*WE'LL BRING THE
COMPLETE BAR, YOU JUST
INVITE THE GUESTS!*

Holiday Parties | Weddings
Corporate Events | Private Parties

Capitol Beverage Caterers
832.788.1586



CATERING
CAKES
EVENTS

832.439.0224



Chef David Alcorta



BEST
CATERING FIRM



davidalcorta.net
david@davidalcorta.net



START YOUR STORY HERE

Panoramic views of downtown Houston and 9,000 square feet of elegant reception space offer you the perfect setting for an unforgettable day.

To learn more, call 346 330 3453 or email weddings@lemeridienhoustondowntown.com.

Le MERIDIEN
HOUSTON DOWNTOWN

©2018 Marriott International, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



**WANT TO TAP INTO THE \$200 MILLION+
LGBTQ WEDDING MARKET IN TEXAS?**

Advertise in OUTSMART's monthly
WEDDING GUIDE

to let our readers know that
you welcome their business!

713.520.7237 or email
marketing@outsmartmagazine.com



1135 Heights Blvd - Houston TX 77008
(713) 875-7050 • (512) 720-8290

@GraciousHomesandLiving • KarenDerrRealtors.com



11430 Valley Spring Dr - 4 bed, 3 bath - \$279,000

This home is ready for renovation! We only added virtual furniture to show you how stylish this midcentury mod in Sherwood Oaks (Spring Branch) could be. Great bones but needs a total redo. 2568 sqft. two-story Mediterranean with courtyard. Only \$279,000. Homes this size selling for mid-400's.

2019 READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

OutSmart
Houston's LGBTQ Magazine

**GAYEST AND
GREATEST**

OUR BIGGEST ISSUE
OF THE YEAR!
OCTOBER ISSUE
Don't miss it!

Ad deadline
SEPTEMBER 18
For advertising and sponsorship
information, contact your ad rep
at 713.520.7237 or email
marketing@outsmartmagazine.com



houston+pride+band

2019/2020 CONCERT SEASON

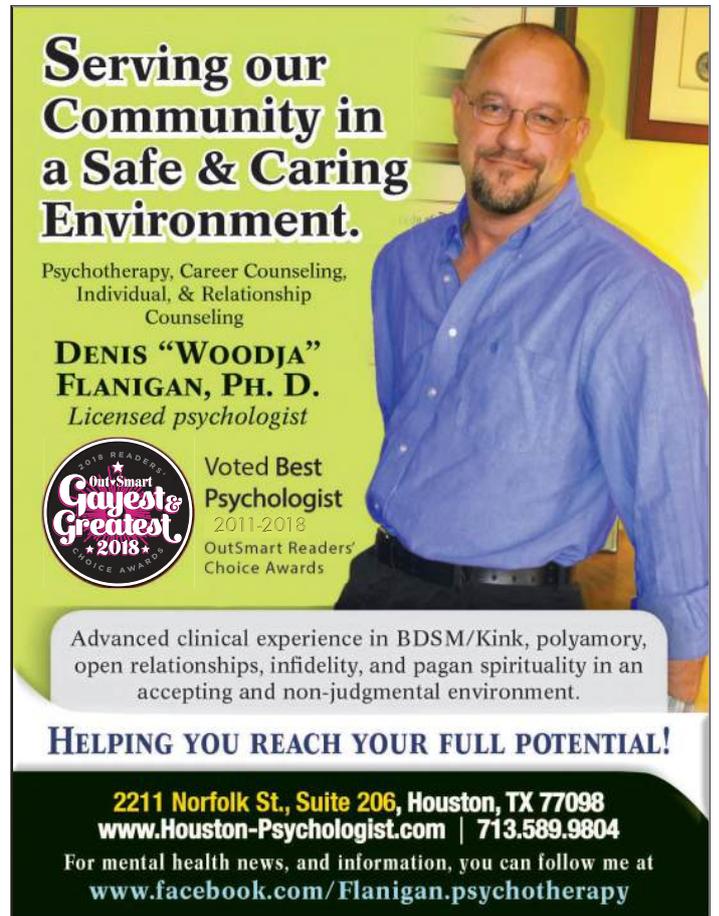
GAME OF CROWNS FRIDAY OCT 4 8PM

SUGAR PLUM FANTASY FRIDAY DEC 13 8PM

STARRY NIGHT CELEBRATIONS SATURDAY APR 4 8PM
SATURDAY JUNE 20 8PM

WWW.HOUSTONPRIDEBAND.ORG
SEASONTICKETS.HOUSTONPRIDEBAND.ORG

ALL CONCERTS AT MATCH
3400 MAIN ST, HOUSTON TX 77002



Serving our Community in a Safe & Caring Environment.

Psychotherapy, Career Counseling, Individual, & Relationship Counseling

DENIS "WOODJA" FLANIGAN, PH. D.
Licensed psychologist

Voted Best Psychologist 2011-2018
OutSmart Readers' Choice Awards

Advanced clinical experience in BDSM/Kink, polyamory, open relationships, infidelity, and pagan spirituality in an accepting and non-judgmental environment.

HELPING YOU REACH YOUR FULL POTENTIAL!

2211 Norfolk St., Suite 206, Houston, TX 77098
www.Houston-Psychologist.com | 713.589.9804

For mental health news, and information, you can follow me at
www.facebook.com/Flanigan.psychotherapy



Annual Conference

GENDER Infinity

Friday, October 25-26th
UH Clear Lake
2700 Bay Area Blvd, Houston, TX 77058

Costs start at \$50 for adults and \$15 for youth. For more information on professional continuing education credits, visit www.genderinfinity.org

The Gender Infinity Conference is an affirming space for service providers, families, and community members to advance relationships, knowledge, and resources that empower gender diverse individuals. Gender Infinity actively seeks to promote justice, equity, and hope in the celebration of infinite gender possibilities. Register now for two days of discussions and workshops addressing the latest in gender affirming care and support. Spanish and American Sign Language interpreting are available. For more information, visit the Gender Infinity website: genderinfinityconference.org

AC² DEEPER TALK & MORE SHALLOW TALES

New

AN INTIMATE EVENING WITH
ANDERSON COOPER AND ANDY COHEN

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25 **smart financial centre** at Sugar Land
800-745-3000 • TICKETMASTER.COM
AC2LIVE.COM

COMMUNITY

Photos by
DALTON DEHART and EDGARDO AGUILAR



On August 2, John Palmer Art held an unveiling for the solo show *Who's That Boy?* by artist Matthew Conway, known for his dynamic nudes. Pictured are Tom Lindsay, Matthew Conway, John Ross Palmer, and Ryan Lindsay.



On August 3, the LGBT Political Caucus held its municipal candidates endorsement meeting at Plumbers Local 68 Union Hall. Pictured are Mark Bailes, Stephen Miranda, Austin Ruiz, JD Doyle, and James Spear.



On August 3, Boulevard Realty hosted a White Linen Night in The Heights event at 927 Studewood. Pictured are Bill Baldwin, Mayor Sylvester Turner, and Marilyn Burgess.



On August 10, Texas United Charities held its Casino Party and check presentation at Neon Boots. Pictured are Margaret Thibodeaux, Arden Eversmeyer, Judy Woods, Roxanne Chericco, Lavita Marks, and Deborah Bradford.

Make your **statement.**

Eyewear is often the first thing people notice about you.

Eye Contact stocks an extensive collection of designer frames for every occasion.

Let us help you find your perfect look.



EYE CONTACT

2018 READERS' **OutSmart Gayest & Greatest** CHOICE AWARDS ★ 2018 ★

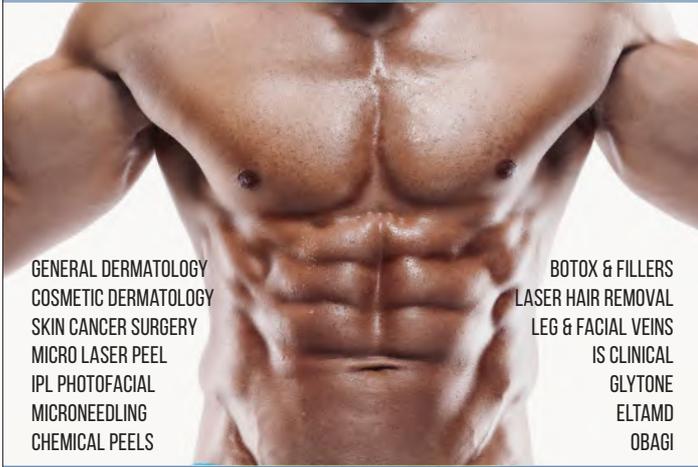
Dr. Christine Tyler
Best Eye Doctor

One of the Best Places to Buy Eyewear

2055 Westheimer @ Shepherd
713-520-6600

HEIGHTS DERMATOLOGY & AESTHETIC CENTER

COME IN FOR A FREE
COSMETIC CONSULTATION!



GENERAL DERMATOLOGY
COSMETIC DERMATOLOGY
SKIN CANCER SURGERY
MICRO LASER PEEL
IPL PHOTOFACIAL
MICRONEEDLING
CHEMICAL PEELS

BOTOX & FILLERS
LASER HAIR REMOVAL
LEG & FACIAL VEINS
IS CLINICAL
GLYTONE
ELTAMD
OBAGI

Dr. Alpesh Desai
Dr. Tejas Desai

BOARD CERTIFIED
DERMATOLOGISTS



2120 Ashland St.
Houston, TX 77008
713.864.2659

HEIGHTSSKIN.COM

QUALITY DENTISTRY

ONE PATIENT AT A TIME!



ONE OF THE BEST DENTISTS
OutSmart Readers' Choice
Awards 2006 – 2018

VOTED AS ONE OF HOUSTON'S
TOP DENTISTS
2004 – 2018
— *H Texas Magazine*



Cory Logan, D.D.S.

General & Cosmetic Dentistry

713.942.8598

www.CoryLoganDDS.com

530 Waugh Dr. | Houston TX 77019

GAINSWave®

**A Breakthrough Solution for Men
Seeking Better Erections &
Optimal Sexual Performance**

The GAINSWave® is a drug and surgery free non-invasive procedure that uses pulse waves to improve sexual performance.

Free Consultations.

Benefits include:

- ☑ Enhances Erections
- ☑ Improves Sexual Performance
- ☑ Increases Sensation
- ☑ Treats ED & Peyronie's Disease



Steven A. Fein, M.D.

<https://practice.gainswave.com/stevenfein>

(281) 487-0812

COOLER in the SUMMER • WARMER in the WINTER

LIVE in GALVESTON

NEAR
by the
BEACH!

CLOSE to
HOUSTON

HISTORIC
HOMES



1 Cedar Lawn Drive South, Galveston, Texas \$449,500

Circa 1927 two story brick Italianate-style with a living room with 5 sets of French doors. Fireplace, pool and majestic oak tree. There is also a large "Juliet" balcony!



David Bowers, Realtor®



The House Company

409/763-2800

David@DavidBowers.com

Sally B. Wallace Preservation Award
for Green Revival (solar panels
on my 1899 Victorian home)

Thank you for voting me **Best Realtor® in Galveston** -OutSmart Readers' Choice 2013-15

GIVING EVERYONE A VOICE



LISTEN ON

95.7 HD2 AND RADIO.COM

Get the Radio.com app for iOS and Android

QUEER QUOTES

Compiled by BLASE DISTEFANO

Rammstein

(Advocate.com, 8/2/19, Jacob Ogles)



Metal Smooch
Two husbands!
Of women! Kiss!
On stage!
In Russia!

Metal band Rammstein pushed back against Russia's gay propaganda laws when two members shared a kiss on stage during a Moscow concert.

The band later shared a photo of the kiss [between guitarists Paul Landers and Richard Kruspe] on its Instagram page, along with the message "Russia, we love you!"

Landers and Kruspe have both been married to women, and seemed to kiss in explicit protest of Russia's notorious propaganda laws, which have been deemed discriminatory in European courts but continue on appeal. Russian authorities, who have threatened visiting tourists with fines and jail time over outward displays of LGBTQ affection, do not appear to have taken any action against the rockers.

The act of defiance comes as Eastern Europe sees public friction over the advancement of tolerance. As Rammstein has toured the region, [they have received numerous] expressions of support.

THE EYE GALLERY

THE SEMI-ANNUAL
SAMPLE SALE IS HERE!
FROM 8/29-9/29

UP TO 60% OFF ALL IN-STOCK FRAMES



EYEGALLERYHOUSTON.COM

1806 WESTHEIMER RD - RIVER OAKS
1700 POST OAK BLVD - POST OAK (NEXT TO WHOLE FOODS)
POST OAK LOCATION NOW OPEN SUNDAYS!

713.523.1279
713.622.7470



Deputy Mayor
Chen Arieli:
a woman's position
in Israel is great
compared to what?

Joshua Rush

(TheHuffingtonPost.com, 8/6/19, Curtis M. Wong)

Re: Andi Mack actor Joshua Rush comes out as bisexual. The 17-year-old Disney Channel star made the announcement just weeks after his TV character hinted at a same-sex relationship.

Joshua Rush opened up about his sexuality for the first time publicly, telling fans that he identifies as a “proud bisexual man.”

Best known for playing Cyrus Goodman on the Disney Channel series *Andi Mack*, the actor joked that the first person to reply to one of his tweets was bisexual.

The 17-year-old Texas native suggested that his initial reluctance to come out was “ironic” given his *Andi Mack* role.

As Cyrus Goodman, Rush portrayed the Disney Channel’s first openly gay character. Cyrus first addressed his sexuality in the show’s Season 2 premiere episode, in which he revealed that he’d developed a crush on his best male friend.

Later installments saw Cyrus coming to terms with his feelings for other boys, albeit in a suitably adolescent way.

The series finale of *Andi Mack*, which aired July 26, went a step further by hinting at a relationship developing between Cyrus and a classmate.

But playing Cyrus wasn’t the sole impetus in Rush’s decision to come out. Rather, he said, it was the support of fans—many of whom felt “emboldened by Cyrus”—that gave him the courage to live as his authentic self.

Rush Crush

Joshua Rush starred as the Disney Channel’s first openly gay character. Now he’s addressing his own sexuality.



Kathy Griffin

(The New York Times, 7/31/19, Jennifer Finney Boylan)

Re: why Kathy Griffin won’t step down. Two years after the comedian’s infamous Trump photo, she’s back.

At one point, she says, the Secret Service was attempting to get her to come in for an interrogation wearing an orange jump suit, in handcuffs.

Would you have done it, if you were Kathy Griffin? Of course you wouldn’t. You’d have feared the effect of that image upon your supporters, many of whom belong to some of the country’s most marginalized groups.

“Over my dead body am I letting anyone see me doing a perp walk in a jump suit for my First Amendment rights, which I did not violate,” she said. “I’m not letting a woman see it. I’m not letting a person of color see it. I’m not letting a gay person see it. I don’t care how much it costs—over my dead body, a perp walk like a common criminal.”



Chen Arieli

(Advocate.com, 8/15/19, Jeffrey Masters)

Before becoming the deputy mayor of Tel Aviv, Israel—the first openly gay person to hold the post and one of only a few women—Chen Arieli was an activist, one of the most visible and influential in the country.

Jeffrey Masters: I think it’s a big deal for such a big city in the Middle East to have a lesbian in this role. Does it feel that way to you?

Chen Arieli: Yes and no. It’s the first time that we’ve had a deputy mayor that is openly lesbian. It’s a wow, of course, but I think more because I’m a woman, and women in the LGBT community are, most of the time, an aside.

In Israel, a woman’s position isn’t good, because we’ve had a backlash and we are going backward. When you compare it to Iraq and Iran and Jordan, women’s status here is great. But we still don’t have gender equality in general.



Kathy Griffin
Would she swap this outfit for an orange jump suit?

OUT THERE

Photos by DALTON DEHART & EDGARDO AGUILAR



Wednesday, July 24
Houston's International LGBTQ film festival was bigger than ever. The 23rd annual **QFest** ran through July 23 and took place all over Space City, with screenings at Aurora Picture Show, Brasil, Holocaust Museum Houston, the Museum of Fine Arts, Rice Cinema, and the Station Museum of Contemporary Art.





Tuesday, August 6

The Montrose Center held a groundbreaking ceremony for the **Law Harrington Senior Living Center** at 2222 Cleburne Street. Over 175 attended the event, which celebrated Texas' first LGBTQ-affirming housing facility for low-income seniors. Speakers at the ceremony included Mayor Sylvester Turner, former Mayor Annise Parker, and Rep. Garnet F. Coleman.



Thursday, August 8

Prior to a performance of Agatha Christie's plot-twist masterpiece *Murder on the Orient Express* at Alley Theatre, OUTSMART magazine co-sponsored ActOUT. Guests at the monthly LGBTQ pre-curtain event enjoyed music, socializing, and complimentary cocktails and lite bites.



SUNDAY FUNDAY

\$2.50 Well Vodka
\$3.00 Shiner Longnecks
\$8.75 Bellini & Mimosa Pitchers

Excludes Some Special Events, Holidays, And Holiday Weekends
804 & 808 Pacific Street
JRSHOUSTON.COM

713-521-2519

Houston's most iconic and largest LGBTQ dance club

2401 San Jacinto • Houston, TX • RichsNightclub.com

A Poppycock Production

OPRAH
Poppy Champlin

Vickie Shaw

September 21st
6:00 PM

Some proceeds going to The Montrose Center

Sandra Valls

SHOWTIME

11141 Hempstead RD
Houston TX. 77092
713-677-0828
www.Neonbootsclub.com
Gen \$30 VIP \$45

www.QueerQueensofQomedy.com

Where Everyone is Welcome!

Helpline: 713-46P-FLAG
www.pflaghouston.org

BAR & CLUB GUIDE

HOUSTON

BACCO WINE GARDEN

Enjoy light snacks, a glass of wine or your favorite cocktail in one of their cozy rooms or outdoor patios. 3611 Montrose Blvd. • 346.444.5275 • baccowinebars.com

BARCODE

Houston's newest bar with happy hours from 11am to 8pm daily, this new neighborhood watering hole is a great place to see drag shows and strippers Tuesdays—Saturdays and karaoke Sundays & Mondays. 817 Fairview St. 713.526.2625 • barcodehouston.net

BLUR

Multi-level dance club featuring an upstairs lounge and balconies. Ladies enjoy Wet and Wild Wed., 18-year-olds welcome Thurs., Latin night on Sun. Happy hour 8-10pm; free cover before 11pm. 710 Pacific St. blurbar.com.

CLUB CRYSTAL

Find many of Inergy's former staff and décor at this two-room Latin/hip-hop club. Sunday evening drag shows rule the roost. 6680 Southwest Frwy, next to Colorado 713.278.2582 • crystaltheclub.com.

CROCKER BAR

This comfortably remodeled Montrose nightspot also offers karaoke on Tuesdays and Thursdays and extended happy-hour prices throughout the week. 2312 Crocker • 713.529.3355.

GEORGE

Regulars rule at this comfortable neighborhood sports bar. Sports Saturdays and Sundays start at 3pm with dart and pool tournaments. 617 Fairview • 713.528.8102.

GUAVA LAMP

This trendy and friendly video and cruise bar gets busy during happy hour and stays busy 'til closing. Karaoke on Wed. and Sun. 570 Waugh Dr. • 713.524.3359 • guavalamphouston.com

HAMBURGER MARY'S

Since 1972, Mary has served up amazing food and stellar shows! With the best drag talent in the city, it's been voted "Best Drag Show Bar," "Most Supportive of the LGBTQ Community," "Best Hamburger," "Best Brunch," "Friendliest Staff," and "Best Place to Celebrate" by our readers. Be sure to try the famous Mac & Cheese Balls, or grab a leg glass (as seen on RuPaul's Drag Race)! Reservations recommended for shows. 2409 Grant St. 713.677.0674 • hamburgermarys.com

EAGLE

Part of the Eagle worldwide family, it's the definitive home to the man's man. Leather, Bear or Jock, you'll find them here. Voted "Best Community Bar," "Best Men's Bar," "Best Place to Show Your Leather," "Best Happy Hour," and "Best Place to Buy Erotic Playthings" by our readers. Eagle has multiple

levels and patios, along with DJs and male dancers—and it's the place to watch sports. Noon-2am every day, 611 Hyde Park Blvd., 713.523.BIRD • houstoneagle.com

JR'S BAR & GRILL

This Montrose standard offers drag and strip shows throughout the week, karaoke Thurs. and Sun., plus pool tables and male dancers. 808 Pacific St. • 713.521.2519 jrbarandgrill.com

LA GRANJA DISCO Y CANTINA

Houston's newest gay disco. Great drink prices, house DJs nightly. Open at 3pm until 4am on Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Mondays. 5505 Pinemont • 713.518.6753 lagranjadisco.com

MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

Jerry Atwood, Clay Howell, Neil Massey, Steve Wheaton, and Roger Woest take turns at the keys at this comfortable neighborhood piano bar. 1419 Richmond Ave. • 713.520.8446

NEON BOOTS DANCEHALL & SALOON

Houston's only LGBTQ country dancehall opens Wednesday-Sunday. Wednesday features Steak Night and Bingo. Free dance classes on Thursdays, and karaoke. 11410 Hempstead Hwy 713.677.0828 • neonbootsclub.com

PEARL BAR

This LGBT-friendly lounge in the Washington corridor features daily highlights like open mic night, steak night, and drink specials. 4216 Washington • pearlhouston.com

RICH'S HOUSTON

Houston's most iconic and largest LGBTQ dance club, with multiple levels featuring a video/show bar and a private VIP lounge. No cover before 10:30 p.m. 2401 San Jacinto • 281.846.668 • richsnightclub.com

THE RIPCORD

This multi-roomed leather bar boasts a busy patio, especially on the weekends. The Forge shop located inside the club. Saturday nights with DJ Tad Dvorak. 715 Fairview Ave • 713.521.2792

RUDYARD'S

The eclectic British pub is known for its craft beers as well as for the burgers. Most weekends you'll find up-and-coming local bands rocking the house. 2010 Waugh Dr. • 713.521.0521 • rudyardspub.com

TONY'S CORNER POCKET

This comfortable club has one of the friendliest bar staffs in town. Amateur dance contest each Thurs., Fri., & Sat. at 11pm. Opens daily at noon. 817 W. Dallas • 713.571.7870 • tonyscornerpocketbar.com

VIVIANA'S

Happening weekend-only gay dance club with Latin DJs, singers, talent shows & Sunday strippers. 4624 Dacoma • 713.681.4104

BEHIND THE BAR



DEDE DAVIS
HAMBURGER MARY'S
 Shift: Sunday Brunch

What is the best and worst holiday to work? Why?

Best: Halloween, because it's part of my birthday weekend!
 Worst: Valentine's Day. No explanation needed, and there are rose petals everywhere to clean up.

Biggest tip from one customer?

\$200 on a \$30 tab. My customer was having a bad day, and the conversation helped. I was surprised!

Who are the hardest customers to please?

The ones who don't have any idea what they want to drink!

If you weren't a bartender, what career would you choose?

I'm an event planner. I love doing special events, birthday parties, weddings, and other big events.

What is the best part about working at this bar?

Getting to see the transformation of the drag talent—they are amazing. Every week there is a different surprise from them. They are so good!

What is your favorite shot to make? To drink?

Favorite to make: The Slutty Princess—Don Julio Tequila, watermelon schnapps, Sprite, and lime. Favorite to drink: Sweet Tea—half Deep Eddy Sweet Tea Vodka and half Deep Eddy Peach Vodka.

Where is your favorite place to drink when not on duty?

Right here at Hamburger Mary's.

What is a current bar drink trend you'd like to see end?

Lemon Drops. Let's end this—we can find something better!

What are you best known for?

My Purple Rain cocktail—Patrón Tequila, Stoli Raspberry Vodka, and grenadine. Can you tell I'm a tequila girl?

BEAUMONT

RUMORS BEAUMONT

Now open in the old Orleans Street Pub location. Drag shows with Dessie Love-Blake, Lady Shamu, Kara Dion and more. 650 Orleans • 713.539.5183 rumorsbeaumont.com

BRYAN/COLLEGE STATION

HALO VIDEO BAR

The only LGBT dance club in Bryan/College station, this sleek spot is open Thurs.-Sat. smack in the middle of Aggieland. 121 North Main • 979.823.6174 • halobcs.com

GALVESTON

23RD ST. STATION

The bar features daily drink specials and the weekend is filled with pulsing music, hot dancers, drag shows, and a Sunday Tea Dance. 1706 23rd St. • 409.621.1808

ROBERT'S LAFITTE

The Island institution features a private patio with swimming pool. On Sat. and Sun. nights, the Ladies of Lafitte show takes the stage. 2501 Avenue Q (at 25th) • 409.765.9092

RUMORS BEACH BAR

Drink specials every night and daily day-drinking specials starting at noon. Great drag shows Fri. - Sun. and karaoke Sun. - Thurs. at 8pm. Sun. Drag Bingo. 3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409.497.4617 • rumorsbeachbar.com

SPRING

RANCH HILL SALOON

With its two pool tables, 52-inch plasma televisions, and large dance floor, this popular northside spot also offers DJs Thurs.-Sat. 24704 I-45N Suite 103 • 281.298.9035 • ranchhill.com.

THE ROOM BAR AND LOUNGE

This bar and video lounge has a laid-back atmosphere. DJs several nights a week. 4915 FM 2920 • 281.907.6866 • roombarspring.com

Best Steak Night at a Bar Winner

Pop-up Cooking Events, Catering & Private Chef

GEORGESPORTS BAR
 Thursday Nights

FREE GRILLIN

CHEF MICHELE 832.419.0165 | freegrillin/ | /chefmichelefree

GEORGE
 ★
SPORTS BAR

All **SVEDKA**
 Vodka Drinks
\$5.50

617 Fairview • Houston, Texas • 713.528.8102
 HOURS: Mon-Sat 7am-2am • Sunday 12pm-2am

There's always something going on at **TONY'S CORNER POCKET!**

Houston's Hottest **Male Amateur Strip Contest** Headquarters!

817 W. Dallas
 713.571.7870

Voted the Best Place to Watch Male Dancers Tues. and Thurs. - Sunday Nights

Nightly Specials - Call for Details
 Cold Beverages & Hot Guys!

EAGLE HOUSTON

2018 READERS' **OutSmart Gayest & Greatest** CHOICE AWARDS

- ★ FAVORITE MEN'S BAR
- ★ BEST HAPPY HOUR
- ★ FAVORITE COMMUNITY BAR
- ★ FAVORITE PLACE TO SHOW OFF YOUR LEATHER
- ★ BEST PLACE TO BUY EROTIC PLAYTHINGS

HOUSTONEAGLE.COM | 611 HYDE PARK | NOON-2A EVERYDAY | 21 & UP

If you want to drink, that's your business.
 If you want to stop, that's ours.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Hundreds of meetings a week in your area.
 Call (713) 686-6300 or visit www.aahouston.org
 For general information visit: www.aa.org

ACCOMMODATIONS/HOTELS

Elan Heights
825 Usener..... 832/906-8728

Elan Memorial Park
920 Westcott..... 713/861-6900

Le Méridien Houston Downtown
1121 Walker..... 346/330-3453

L'Emerson Corporate Lodging
.....Lemerson.net

Sunflower Retreat
713 & 715 17th, Galveston..... 832/867-2518

ACCOUNTANTS/BOOKKEEPERS/ CPAS

Gary Gritz, CPA
230 Westcott, Ste 210 713/784-3030

ADVERTISING/MARKETING

Ashkan Media
.....Ashkanmedia.com

Mat Hat Maven Creative
madhatmaven.com 832/460-6263

OutSmart Magazine
3406 Audubon 713/520-7237

AIR CONDITIONING/HEATING

Newport Air
newportair.net 281/808-8630

ART GALLERIES & MUSEUMS

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
5216 Montrose camh.org

Foto Relevance
616 Hawthorne fotorelevance.com

Museum of Fine Arts
www.mfah.org Mfah.org/royals

The Menil Collection
1533 Sul Ross St menil.org

ASTROLOGER

Lilly Roddy Astrology
..... 713/529-5842

ATTORNEYS/LEGAL SERVICES

Charles Hunter/Hayes Hunter PC
..... 281/768-4731

Gonzalez Olivieri LLC
gonzalezolivieriilc.com 713/481-3040

Guide To Good Divorce
GuidetoGoodDivorce.com 713/932-7177

Katine & Nechman LLP
1834 Southmore 713/808-1001

The Perdue Law Firm
3730 Kirby Dr Ste 777 832/303-3410

Dwane Todd Law Firm
405 Main St., Ste 602 713/965-0658

Parker Waichman Lawfirm
.....YourLawyer.com

AUTOMOTIVE REPAIRS

Ryan Automotive
716 Fairview 713/522-3602

Fred Haas Toyota World
20400 I-45 North, Spring TX..... 832-764-8913

Tech Auto Maintenance
37 Waugh Dr..... 713/863-8244

AUTOMOTIVE SALES

Alfa Romeo of Clear Lake
15695 Gulf Freeway 281/310-8300

Central Houston Cadillac
2520 Main St..... 832/981-7590

Helfman Jeep
7720 Katy Fwy 713/213-6941

Planet Lincoln
20403 I-45 North Spring, TX..... 888/242-5059

Toyota of Alvin
3506 FM 528 Alvin, Tx.77511 281/968-2266

BAKERIES/CUSTOM CAKES

Acadian Bakers
604 W. Alabama..... 713/520-1484

David Alcorta Catering
davidalcorta.net 832/439-0224

Dessert Gallery
DessertGallery.com..... 713-522-9999

CAMPGROUNDS

Rainbow Ranch
Rainbowranch.net 888/875-7596

CARPET/FLOORING

Carpet World
2840 E. Sam Houston Pkwy S..... 281/998-3200

CATERING SERVICES

Capitol Beverage
2305 Dunlavy 832/788-1586

David Alcorta Catering
davidalcorta.net 832/439-0224

Jim Benton of Houston Catering
2811 Eastman 713/802-2860

CHURCHES/SPIRITUAL CENTERS

Bering United Methodist
1440 Harold beringumc.org

First Christian Church
1601 Sunset..... 713/526-8125

Living Mosaic Church
401 Branard St..... 832/971-0364

Resurrection MCC
2025 W 11th..... 713/861-9149

St Paul's United Methodist Church
5501 Main 713/528-0527

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
1805 W. Alabama ststephenshouston.org

CLEANING SERVICES

Dexter's Five Star Service/Bob Samora
..... 832/252-1961

COMMUNITY/NONPROFIT

AARP
..... aarp.org/pride

AIDS Healthcare Foundation/Out of the Closet
1435 Westheimer outofthecloset.org

Bering Connect
..... 713-526-1017, ext.20

Diana Foundation
..... TheDianaFoundation.org

EPAH
..... EPAH.org

Greater Houston LGBT Chamber of Commerce
HoustonLGBTChamber.com 832-510-3002

Harris County Sheriff's Office
..... hcsojobs.com

Houston GLBT Political Caucus
..... thecaucus.org

KPFT Radio
kpft.org 713-526-4000

Lesbian Health Initiative (LHI)
401 Branard lhihouston.org

Lesbians Over Age Fifty (L.O.A.F.)
lesbiansoverage50.org 713/907-5378

MyGayHouston.com
..... MyGayHouston.com/discover

Pet Patrol
..... ThePetPatrol.org

Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast
ppgulfcoast.org/lgbtq

Ryan White Planning Council
rwpchouston.org 713-572-3724

COMPUTERS/INTERNET/IT SERVICES

Copy.com
1201-F Westheimer 713/528-120

CORPORATE/LIFECOACHES

Action Coach
BusinessAsATool.com 713/936-3814

ENTERTAINMENT/NIGHT LIFE

Alley Theatre
615 Texas Ave alleytheatre.org

Anderson Cooper & Andy Cohen Live
Ticketmaster.com 800/745-3000

Bacco Wine Garden & Spirits
3611 Montrose Blvd 346/444-5275

Galveston Island Convention
..... galveston.com

George Country Sports Bar
617 Fairview 713/528-8102

Houston Eagle
611 Hyde Park..... HoustonEagle.com

JR's/Santa Fe
808 Pacific 713/521-2519

La Granja Disco Y Cantina
5505 Pinemont Dr 713/518-6753

Lake Charles
Visitlakecharles.org/greattimes... 800/456-7592

Midtown Houston
..... Midtownhouston.com

Miller Outdoor Theatre
MillerOutdoorTheatre.com 281/373-3386

Pearl Bar
4216 Washington PearlHouston.com

Rich's Houston
2401 San Jacinto RichsNightClub.com

Rainbow on the Green
..... discovergreen.com/rainbow

Round Top Festival Institute
248 Jaster Rd 979/249-3129

Society For The Performing Arts
SPAHouston.org 713/227-4772

Stages Theatre
StagesTheatre.com 713-527-0123

Theatre Southwest
Theatresouthwest.org 713/661-9505

Theatre Under The Stars
800 Bagby, Suite 200 tuts.com/ouT

The Compound Antique Show
2550 S. State Hwy 237...Roundtopcompound.com

Tony's Corner Pocket
817 W. Dallas 832/722-7658

EMPLOYMENT/STAFF RECRUITING

The Z Firm / Poppi Melera
www.zfirm-us.cm 713-877-8583

ESTATE SALES

Stuart Estate Sales
StuartEstates.com 832/652-4805

FERTILITY/GYNECOLOGY

Aspire Fertility
AspireFertility.com 713/425-3003

The Cooper Institute
Houstonfertilitysolutions.com 713/771-9771

FINANCIAL PLANNING/BANKS

Bryan Cotton/Mass Mutual
Three Greenway Plaza 281/960-0447

Richard Dickson/Galene Financial
1700 W Loop S, Ste 255 713/489-4322

Grace Yung/Midtown Financial
3355 Alabama, Ste 180 713/355-9833

FITNESS CLUBS/PERSONAL TRAINERS

Club Houston
2205 Fannin 713/659-4998

FIT
Fithouston.com 713/529-1515

FOOD/SPECIALTY & SPIRITS

DASH Handmaid Vodka
..... dashvodka.com

Deep Eddy Vodka
..... deepeddyvodka.com

Dripping Springs
..... dripping Springsvodka.com

HAIR/NAIL/MAKE-UP SALONS

East End Barber
1318 Telephone Rd..... EastEndBarber.net

Green Apple Salon
719 W. Gray St 713/5212-0500

NU-Cuts Hair Salon
515 Westheimer 713/524-7858

HEALTH - AGE MANAGEMENT

Share Wellness & MediSpa/Dr. John Share
4011 Richmond Ave 713/621-8200

HEALTH CARE-COUNSELING/THERAPY

D. "Woodja" Flanigan, MS, LPA
2600 SW Fwy, Ste 409 713/589-9804

Champion Counseling/ Yvonne Champion, LCSW, CGP
ChampionCounseling.com 832/6543-5168

Denise O'Doherty, LPC, LMFT, LCDC, RN
3131 Eastside St., Ste. 435 713/524-9525

Dr. Barry F. Gritz, MD
230 Westcott, Ste 210 713/869-7400

Dr. Daniel Garza, MD
3131 Eastside St, Ste 4 15281/610-8190

Jeffrey Myles/JM Professional Services
..... 713/447-2164

The Montrose Center
401 Branard 713/529-0037

Psynergy Psychological Associates
Dr. Catherine Boswell, Psychologist
Victoria Jones, MEd, MA, LPC-S
Psynergypsych.com 713/724-7050

Robert Snellgrove, LMSW-ACP
4617 Montrose, Ste C206 713/522-7014

Christine Wysong
230 Westcott, Ste 210 713/869-7400

HEALTH CARE-DENTISTS

Bayou City Smiles/Marcus de Guzman, DDS
2313 Edwards St., Ste. 150 713/518-1411

Bayou City Smiles/ Cynthia Corral, DDS
2313 Edwards St., Ste 150 713/518-1411

BRSB Dental/Melicia K Tjoa, DDS
2800 Kirby Dr., Ste.A 226 713/660-0966

Cory Logan, DDS
530 Waugh Dr 713/942-8598

LifeSmiles by Randy Mitchmore, DDS
1722 W. Alabama 713/592-9300

Orthotex/Dr. Zane Haider, DMD MS
Orthotexsmiles.com 281/937-2540

Montrose Dental Group/Samuel A. Carrell, DDS
620 W Alabama 713/529-4364

Montrose Dental Group/Austin T. Faulk, DDS
620 W Alabama 713/529-4364

Montrose Dental Group/Bruce W. Smith, DDS
620 W Alabama 713/529-4364

HEALTH CARE/COLON/RECTAL CARE

Texas Oncology Surgical Specialists
7400 Fannin St., Set 1295 832/932-1720

HEALTH CARE-ORTHODONTISTS

Orthotex/Dr. Zane Haider, DMD, MS
Orthotexsmiles.com 281/937-2540

2540 FM 2920, Spring 281/937-2540

11942 Barker Cypress, Cypress 281/937-2540

HEALTH CARE-EMERGENCY CENTERS

SignatureCare Emergency Centers
1007 Westheimer 281/709-2897

1925 TC Jester 832/850-4338

1014 Wirt Rd 832/924-0312

Additional locations ercare24.com

HEALTH CARE-FOOT/ ANKLE SPECIALISTS

Sole Aesthetic/Dr. Vanessa T. Barrow
Soleaestheticix.com 713/666-9934

HEALTH CARE-HIV/STD TESTING

Avenue 360
Avenue360.org 713/426-0027

Legacy Community Health
..... LegacyCommunityHealth.org

HEALTH CARE-OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

Houston Eye Associates/Stewart Zuckerbrod, MD
5420 Dashwood, Ste 101 713/668-9118

HEALTH CARE-OPTOMETRISTS

Boutique Eye Care
2502 Woodhead 713/528-2010

Eye Contact
2055 Westheimer 713/520-6600

Eye Gallery
1806B Westheimer 713/523-1279

1700 Post Oak Blvd, Ste 110 713/622-7470

Eye To Eye
432 W. 19th 713/864-8822

Montrose Eye Care/ Dr. Paul Lovero
520 Waugh Dr 713/352-0974

Spectacles on Montrose
4317 Montrose, Ste. 2 713/529-3937

HEALTH CARE/PHARMACIES

Avita Pharmacy
AvitaPharmacy.com 713/489-4362

ADVERTISERS INDEX

Legacy Pharmacy
LegacyCommunityHealth.org/services/pharmacy/

HEALTH-PHYSICAL THERAPY

Crom Rehabilitation/Dr. Roy Rivera
Cromrehab.com.....713/868-2766

HEALTH CARE-PHYSICIANS

Octavio Barrios, MD
507 West Gray.....713/942-7546
7106 Spencer Highway.....281/542-9400

Gordon Crofoot, MD/Crofoot MD
3701 Kirby, Ste.1230.....713/526-0005

Abel Flores, MD/Crofoot MD
3701 Kirby, Ste.1230.....713/526-0005

M. Sandra Scurria, MD
6565 West Loop South, Ste 300...281/661-5901

Derek Smith, AGPCNP-BC/Crofoot MD
3701 Kirby, Ste.1230.....713/526-0005

Maggie White, MPH FNP-BC AAHIVS/ Gordon Crofoot
3701 Kirby Dr., Ste.1230.....713/526-0005

HEALTH CARE-PRODUCTS

Avicenna's Ultra-Premium CBD Tinctures
.....avicenna-labs.com

HEALTH CARE/PLASTIC SURGEONS

West Ave Plastic Surgery/Forrest Roth, MD
westaveplasticsurgery.com.....713/559-9300

HEALTH CARE-SERVICES

Avenue 360
Avenue360.org.....713/426-0027

GAINSWave Treatment for ED
practice.gainswave.com/stevenfein...281/487-0812

Harris County Public Health
PublicHealth.harriscountytexas.gov.713/439-6293

Houston Health Department
.....PensHouston.org

Legacy Community Health
LegacyCommunityHealth.org....832/548 5000

Ryan White Planning Council
RWPHouston.org.....713/572-3784

St. Hope Foundation
offeringhope.org.....713/778-1300

UT Hearts
.....713/486-2736

HEALTH CARE-SKIN CARE

Heights Dermatology/Alpesh Desai, MD
2120 Ashland.....713/864-2650

Share Wellness & MediSpa/Dr. John Share
4011 Richmond Ave.....713/621-8200

Sienna Dermatology
7435 Highway 6., Ste. B.....832/324-9700

Skin Renaissance Laser/Octavio Barrios, MD
507 West Gray.....713/942-7546

HEALTH CARE/VEIN CENTERS

Vein Center Houston
5585 Wesleyan St.....713/349-8346

HEALTH CARE-WEIGHT LOSS CLINICS

Dr. B-Fit/ Octavio Barrios, MD
517 West Gray.....713/942-7546

HOME BUILDERS

Colina Homes
Colinahomes.com.....281/463-0355

Sandcastle Homes/Mike Taylor
SandcastleHouston.com.....281/543-6360

HOME FURNISHINGS/ACCESSORIES

Cantoni
9889 Westheimer.....cantoni.com

coda
355 W 19th.....713/864-4411

Fountains and Statuary
11804 Hempstead Rd.....713/957-3672

Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams
4091 Westheimer.....832/397-5130

HOME REMODELING/RENOVATIONS

Luria Construction
LuriaConstruction.com.....713/828-2155

INTERIOR DESIGN CENTERS

Dream by MJS Interiors
5120 Woodway Dr., Ste. 4020.....713/999-1222

INSURANCE AGENCIES/AGENTS

Lane Lewis/Farmers Insurance
2200 North Loop W, Ste 136.....713/688-8669

Patrick Torma/Goosehead Insurance
3420 Rusk, Ste. 22.....281/723-1294

JEWELERS

Silverlust
1338-C Westheimer.....713/520-5440

Tenenbaum Jewelers
4310 Westheimer.....713/629-7444

LANDSCAPING/GARDENING

Joshua's Native Plants & Antiques
502 W. 18th St.....713/862-7444

LIFE COACHING

seEQmore
seEQmore.com.....832/495-1441

MASSAGE THERAPISTS

Ryan Fugate, RMT
RyanMassageWorks.com.....713/269-7926

PEST CONTROL SERVICES

Andy's All Star Pest Control
.....713/732-7742

PET SERVICES & SUPPLIES

The Dog House Pet Salon
6434 Washington.....713/820-6140

5917 Richmond.....TheDogHousePS.com

NULO Pet Food
.....nulo.com/love

Midtown Veterinary Hospital
MidtownVetHospital.com.....713-528-4900

Natural Pawz
208 Westheimer.....naturalpawz.com

Pet Patrol
.....ThePetPatrol.org

Spay-Neuter Assistance Program
Snapus.org.....713/862-3863

West Alabama Animal Clinic
2030 W. Alabama.....713/528-0818

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Dalton DeHart Photography
DaltonDehart.com.....713/622-2202

Yvonne Feece Photography
yvonnefeece.com.....832/876-1053

PHOTOGRAPHY

Houston Camera Exchange
5900 Richmond Ave.....713/789-6901

PLUMBING

U-Plumb-It Plumbing Supply
1424 Montrose.....713-942-2277

Village Plumbing & Appliance
5403 Kirby.....713/224-DRIP(3747)

POOLS & POOL SERVICES

Venture Pools
.....713/447-9201

POLITICIANS

Shelley Kennedy for City Council District C
.....KennedyForHouston.com

PRINTING/COPY CENTERS

Copy.com
1201-F Westheimer.....713/528-1201

PSYCHIC READERS

Readings by LA
readingbyLA.com.....832/856-2188

RADIO STATIONS

Channel Q/95.7 HD2
.....Radio.com

REAL ESTATE-COMMERCIAL

Presidium/Westpark Houston Investors LP
presidiumRE.com.....713/955-3773

REAL ESTATE-MORTGAGE/TITLE

Chicago Title -Inner Loop
3700 Buffalo Speedway.....713/418-7000

Keith Russell/Republic State Mortgage
2121 Sage Road, Ste 140.....713/299-4981

REAL ESTATE-REALTORS

Jared Anthony Cox/Pogi Realty
pogirealty.com.....832/570-5726

Tim Anthony/Anthony Upton Properties
AnthonyUptonProperties.com...713/528-0050

Brooks Ballard/Engel & Volkers
309 Gray.....713/522-7474

David Bowers/The House Company/Galveston
David@DavidBowers.com.....409/763-2800

Tina Burgos/Inverness Realty Group
TinaSellsHouston.com.....713/562-3149

Circa Real Estate
350 W. 19th St., Ste. D.....713/862-1101

Jeremy Fain/Greenwood King Properties
.....713/677-4337

Karen Derr/Karen Derr Realty
karenderr.com.....713/875-7050

Clayton Katz/Compass
Compass.com.....832/512-2180

Ellen Kranz/Compass
Compass.com.....832/331-5218

Ed Melchor/Sotheby's
edmelchor.com.....713/851-0912

Martha Turner Properties
Marthaturner.com.....713/520-1981

Thomas Phillips/KW Memorial
t.phillips@kw.com.....832/305-7848

Wade Knight / Martha Turner
Wadeknight.com.....713/582-0264

Alexander Webb/Coldwell Banker
2 Greenway Plaza, Ste 150.....832/306-7078

Debbie Levine/Greenwood King Properties
.....713/942-6857

Lynette Lew/Better Homes and Gardens
LynetteLew.com.....713/582-2202

Danny Pleason/Martha Turner
Dannypleason.com.....832/661-1502

Tom Schwenk/Tom's Galveston Real Estate
Tomsgalvestonrealestate.com....713-857-2309

VJ Tramonte/Joe Tramonte Realty
1802 Broadway/Galveston.....409/765-9837

B. Kent Turner/Coldwell Banker
.....479/363-6586

Calvin Upton/Anthony Upton Properties
AnthonyUptonProperties.com...713/528-0050

Andy Weber/John Daugherty Realtors
520 Post Oak.....713/724-4306

RELOCATIONS SPECIALISTS

M E Relocation
MERelocation.com.....713/344-0035

RESTAURANTS/COFFEE/WINE BARS

Acadian Bakers
604 W. Alabama.....713/520-1484

Bacco Wine Garden & Spirits
3611 Montrose Blvd.....346/444-5275

Bollo Houston Wood Fired Pizza
2202 W Alabama St.....713/677-0391

Dessert Gallery
DessertGallery.com.....713-522-9999

Free Grillin'/Chef Michele
.....832/419-0165

Giacomo's Cibo e Vino
3215 Westheimer.....713/522-1934

Gloria's Latin Cuisine
2616 Louisiana.....832/360-1710

Hamburger Mary's
2409 Grant.....713/677-0674

Jenni's Noodle House
3111 S. Shepherd.....713/523-7600

602 E. 20th St.....713/862-3344

2027 Post Oak Blvd.....713/621-4200

3773 Richmond.....713/714-8258

Melange Restaurant
311 West Gray, Ste. B.....832/491-0455

Niko Niko's
2520 Montrose.....713/528-4976

Niko Niko's
1040 W. Sam Houston Prkwy. N.832/981-4976

Pizza Birra Vino
544 Waugh Dr.....832/581-3664

P. King Authentic Chinese
37001 S. Shepherd.....832/491-0266

Raising Cane's
1902 Westheimer.....713/528-9020

Riva's Italian Restaurant
1117 Missouri St.....713/529-3450

Urban Eats
3414 Washington Ave.....feasturbaneats.com

TELEPHONES/CELL/WIRELESS

Premier Wireless
12220 Murphy.....281/575-8500

SCHOOLS

First Christian School
1601 Sunset.....713/526-8125

TRAVEL/TRAVEL AGENCIES

Aquafest
Aquafestcruises.com.....800/592-9058

Concierge Travel, Inc
4920 Mimosa.....713/661-2117

Lake Charles
Visitlakecharles.org/greattimes.800/456-7952

Vist San Marcus
vistSMTX.com.....512/393-5930

WEDDING SERVICES/BAKERS

Acadian Bakers
604 W. Alabama.....713/520-1484

David Alcorta Catering
davidalcorta.net.....832/439-0224

Dessert Gallery
DessertGallery.com.....713-522-9999

WEDDING SERVICES/CATERERS

David Alcorta Catering
davidalcorta.net.....832/439-0224

Jim Benton of Houston Catering
2811 Eastman.....713/802-2860

WEDDING SERVICES/OFFICIANTS

Judge Kelli Johnson - Officiant
.....832/771-8030

WEDDING SERVICES/PHOTO/VIDEO

Dalton DeHart Photography
DaltonDehart.com.....713/622-2202

J&D Productions
janddproductions.com.....409/457-9935

Yvonne Feece-Tran Photography
yvonnefeece.com.....832/876-1053

WEDDING SERVICES/SERVICES

Bradley David Entertainment
204 Marshall St. #5.....713/487-6076

Darker Side DJs
darkersidedjs.com.....281/542-3555

Event Smith Wedding Planning
eventsmithco.com.....281/736-3636

Harmony Strings String Quartet
.....www.harmonystings.com

NURTURE
your LOCAL
BUSINESSES
WHO believe IN
EQUALITY.

THANK YOU
FOR SUPPORTING
OUR ADVERTISERS!

Get listed on this page.
Call 713/520-7237 for details.

OutSmart
Houston's LGBTQ Magazine

MARKETPLACE CLASSIFIEDS

ACCOMMODATIONS

Fully Furnished Corporate Apartments

www.LEmerson.net

CHURCHES

Living MOSAIC CHURCH

YOU ARE LOVED

SUN. 10:00 AM: Worship Service
WED. 7:00 PM: Bible Study

Living Mosaic Church
401 Branard : Houston, 77006

COMPUTER SERVICES

Plain Talk

Real help. Gary Joseph Owner

PC HomeTech
In-Home Computer Services

832.496.9246
www.pchometech.com

EMPLOYMENT

OutSmart
Houston's LGBTQ Magazine

Advertising Sales Executives

Successful candidates must be organized, self-motivated, energetic, outgoing, creative and goal-oriented. Previous experience in advertising and marketing sales preferred. Salary+Commission, health benefits program included.

Email resume to: Employment @ OutSmartMagazine.com
Attn: Greg Jeu, Publisher.

Let OutSmart help you find your next best employee!

Place your ad today.
713/520-7237 ext. 710

EMPLOYMENT

BACCO
Wine Garden & Spirits

Now hiring bartenders, cooks and cocktail servers

Bacco is an indoor/outdoor wine and spirits bar featuring 2 large outdoor patios and cozy rooms inside to enjoy your favorite wine, cheese plates, pizzas, sandwiches and more.

We are looking to hire friendly faces. Bartenders should have some knowledge of wine. Cocktail and food servers deliver food and beverages in main building as well as Carriage House and outdoor patios.

Cooks should be able to make food such as pizza, salad, sandwiches as well as cook specialty items on certain nights and days such as lobster, steak or work our Sunday Brunch.

Bacco Wine Garden & Spirits
3611 Montrose Blvd.

Apply in person Monday through Friday 4pm -7pm

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Biofield Tuning
with Randy Becker

Using sound to relieve stress and help you reach your highest potential.

Learn more at:
BiofieldTuningHouston.com

MASSAGE AND BODYWORK

DMT
DYNAMIC MUSCLE THERAPY

SWEDISH MASSAGE
DEEP TISSUE
THAI
FACIALS

JOSH BRISENO
214.883.0299 In & Outcalls

MASSAGE AND BODYWORK

Readers' Choice Winner Best Massage Therapist

Now in Richmond, TX

Tom Zeppelin, LMT

713.542.0426
ZeppelinMassage.com

ADAM SKIDMORE
L.M.T.

PAIN RELIEF & RELAXATION CERTIFIED IN:

Medical Massage, Structural Integration, Deep Tissue, Myofascial Release

936.443.1976 | ADAMSKIDMORE108@YAHOO.COM

Idle hands are the devil's workshop. Find new clients for your massage business in OutSmart!

Call 713/520-7237 for ad rates

SALE OR LEASE

GALVESTON

1111 45th Street • 192,000
2/2 Built 2015, 2 Story, 1176 sq. ft. Double Pane Windows, very low flood insurance.

7000 Seawall, #1113 • \$195,000
The Dawn 2 bedroom, 2 bath. First floor condominium

1 Cedar Lawn Dr. South • \$449,500
Two Story Brick with Pool Circa 1927

1923 Ave M • \$649,500
Circa 1886 High Victorian 4/2.5/1 plus pool & apt.

THE HOUSE COMPANY
REAL ESTATE BROKERS

David Bowers
david@davidbowers.com
409-763-2800

SERVICES-CLEANING

HOME CLEANING
EVERY TWO WEEKS
ACCEPTING 2 NEW CLIENTS

CALL LOYAL
713-705-6125

SERVICES

Kahn's Oriental Rug Washing

Family Owned Since 1954
Pet Odor & Stain Specialist
Hand Washing & Restoration

Haroon Khan, Director
713.960.8200

Pet Walks & House Sitting

Call Loyal & Bill
713-705-6125

BONDED & INSURED BY SCOTTSDALE INSURANCE

Your Pet's Favorite Uncles

HARDLINE

ALL MALE LIVE CHAT

ALL ACCESS FREE TRIAL!

713.590.9090
OTHER CITIES 1.877.510.3344

HARDLINECHAT.COM

MARKETPLACE ADVERTISING RATES

Sept. 15 for the Oct. Issue.

For rates/information call 713/520-7237 ext. 710.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

As September begins, you are in a more relaxed and reflective time. This is a good month for a vacation, a change of routine, or just doing something different. You are open to new ideas and are more creative than usual. You are also more interested in spirituality and the deeper meaning of life. After midmonth, your career drive reasserts itself. This long-term focus on security gets more intense as we get into October, and will continue to build until February. This will be a turning point for many of you—a time of starting a new career, initiating your own business, or taking on a leadership role at work. For those who are older, this can be a time of retirement or adjusting your schedule to work less! You will feel more confident about your choices as we get into October.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

You are looking for greater intimacy with your partner, new ways to express and share your creative urges, and making better use of your available resources. This can be a great month to focus on getting rid of debt and getting your finances in order. This can also be a time to look at investing in companies that produce products that don't harm the environment. In your business partnerships, this is a great time to make sure everyone is on the same page.

In personal relationships, you will need more conversation and reassurance from your romantic partner about what's going on with them. You are sensing things, but you are not sure what it's all about. Toward the end of the month, you are ready for a break. As we get into October, your career drive enters the picture and it will be time to improve that area of your life.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20)

Relationships are the main focus as the month begins. If you are involved, this is a good month to renew those vows. If single, this is a great time to be out meeting new potential partners. However, if you are in a difficult relationship, meeting new people will bring relationship issues to the surface so you can either resolve them or let your partner go. You are not going to be very patient, and this will be obvious from the 6th through the 10th. Career opportunities continue to be good for promotion, changing companies, or starting something on your own. By the end of the month, you are more reflective and less action-oriented. Your friendships appear to be going through a "cleaning out" process. You want to be treated as an equal, and not just someone who helps out when friends need support. You have a low tolerance for those who avoid responsibility and won't grow up.

For more astro-insight, log on to lillyrodody.com.

IDEAL FOR SUMMER INTERNS

When business or pleasure brings you to Houston for a month or more, why not make L'Emerson your address?



- All the amenities of home.
- Ideally situated in the Montrose-Midtown area.
- Much more affordable than a downtown hotel room.

Tom Fricke, Proprietor

210 Emerson Street • Houston, Texas 77006
www.LEmerson.net

Right now is the perfect opportunity

- * TO BE PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE
- * TO BE COMPASSIONATE TO YOURSELF AND OTHERS
- * TO SHOW GRATITUDE TO THOSE YOU LOVE AND TRULY APPRECIATE

Thank you again to my OutSmart readers for voting me **Best Astrologer** for all of these years!

Voted **BEST ASTROLOGER** by OutSmart Readers

LILLY RODDY

ASTROLOGER

- * Personal astrological sessions
- * Relationship readings - personal / business
- * Presentations & lectures to organizations

CONSULTATIONS BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

GIFT CERTIFICATES • CREDIT CARDS

713.529.5842

lilycath@aol.com • www.lillyrodody.com

ryan
r.m.t., n.m.t., II reiki t.

professional
**Therapeutic
massage**

2018 READERS' CHOICE AWARDS
**OutSmart
Gayest & Greatest
2018**

Voted Houstons best massage therapist, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 & 2018!
-outsmart magazine

713 269 7926
ryanmassageworks.com

By LILLY RODDY

Illustration by JANIEWHATEVA



Our Pace Picks Up

September is a busy month from the start . . .

September gets more active by the end of the month. We will be clearer about our decisions after midmonth. Career and long-term security choices become more important as we move forward into the fall. • September will see a lot of planets in Virgo, the organizer and detailer. People born in the mutable signs (Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, and Pisces) are going to be impacted by this alignment. • The sun, Mercury, Venus, and Mars are all in Virgo as the month begins. Mercury and Venus both enter Libra on the 14th. The sun enters Libra on the 23rd, the first day of the autumnal equinox. Mars remains in Virgo, Jupiter in Sagittarius, Saturn in Capricorn, Neptune in Pisces, and Pluto in Capricorn.

ARIES (Mar. 21-Apr. 19)

You are focused on getting your life organized this month. You will be cleaning up both at work and at home, and paying more attention to your diet and exercise routines. You are more sensitive to your environment, and may need more "personal" space than usual. Career activity is renewed this month. You will be reviewing your current career path, especially after the 16th. You may be looking at a promotion, or even a new job. Toward the end of the month, relationships take more of your time. If you are involved, this is an important month to make sure that your partner's needs are being addressed. This applies to business as well as personal relationships. It can be easy to overload your schedule this month. Watch your boundaries!

TAURUS (Apr. 20-May 20)

You are in an accelerated time of growth. You have been pushing at your boundaries and limitations, hoping to break out of them. This month you will find less resistance to making changes. You are in a more creative and playful time, and you have the opportunity to gain more perspective about what you are trying to accomplish. This is also a great time for a vacation, changing your routines, and waking up that "kid" inside of you! You are looking for an adventure and some mental stimulation. This can

be a good month for writing, taking classes, or just getting out with your kids. Toward the end of the month you are back to work and your routines. Career activities are also more active as you look to improve your position or possibly start your own business. The activity in your career arena continues to build through the end of the year.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

The planets are lining up in your home and family arena. This can be a good month for a family reunion, home makeover, relocating, or dealing with long-term family issues. You are ready to take a leading role with these things. You will also be questioning your career path, especially from the 7th through the 10th. Friendships and relationships can be very helpful, because they can give you a perspective that you don't have. Relationships remain positive as long as they aren't too taxing. Toward the end of the month, you are ready to take a break from your demanding schedule. Make sure you create some time for yourself! You will feel more social and will want to get out and have some fun. If you are single, this is a better time to meet someone new!

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

The Moon Kids have a lot to say this month, and they aren't waiting for an invitation to speak! This can be a great month for teaching, taking classes, finishing up old projects, promoting your services on social media, publishing, and renewing your focus on a health and diet regimen. You will also be reviewing your long-term objectives with all of your relationships. In both romance and business, you just want to make sure that you and your partners are headed in the same direction. If not, this is a good month to get those intentions realigned. If your partnerships aren't getting better, this can also be a time to consider bringing them to an end—especially by the end of the month. Home and family become your primary interest in late September. This can be a good time for home repairs, connecting with family, or just making your nest a more comfortable place to live.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Finances, investments, and being appreciated are very important for you this month. You are looking at new investments, and

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

This is an especially busy birthday month as you review the past year and propose new objectives for your path during the next year. With Mars (planet of action and survival) visiting your sign, you have more energy and less patience this month. You are looking for a challenge! This is an excellent time for exercise, improving eating habits, and facing those issues you have been avoiding. You will be more confident in all of your interactions, and you will be taking life *waaaay* more personally! Your sleep patterns may be messed up, and you may find it easier just to get up and get your day going. Relationships can be testy and demanding, especially from the 4th through the 10th. Getting some time to yourself may help you get clear about what's best for you. By the end of the month, you are a bit less intense but still ready for action!

making your money work for you. This could also be the time to put yourself on a budget, seek a raise, or increase your fees. With work, you are looking for something that really sparks your interest. You might be considering starting your own business or retiring from something you have been doing for a long time. After midmonth, you are back into your health routines, working to make permanent changes rather than just stop-gap measures. By the end of the month, you are needing more interactive time with your partner or close friends. You are ready to be more social!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

For the most part, this is a rest-and-retreat month for you. The latter part of the month will be demanding of your time, and you'll be ready for a vacation, a spiritual getaway, or just taking some quiet time for yourself. You are much more psychically sensitive, and you may need to avoid crowds, sports events, shopping at the mall, and overly demanding or dramatic friends. Your family may need your support and leadership after the 16th. You may be reluctant to get involved, but that becomes easier as we get to the end of the month. There can be some big changes in your career, where you live, and possibly issues with older family members. For the older Librans, this can be a time of retirement, cutting back on your hours, or even starting your own home-based business. You are clearer about these choices toward the end of the month.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

September is a good month for social

activity. You are feeling comfortable about taking a leadership role, either at work or with your community organizations. You are feeling confident about your abilities, and are all too willing to share your points of view on many topics. You have been working on freeing yourself from the obligations you have had in the past. A part of you wants to find a new "spark" or direction that stimulates you. Limitations and restrictions can make you feel restless and bored. Your partner or close friends can help you with ideas and suggestions about what you might do. You are in an experimental time, and not yet ready to commit. You want to keep all your options on the table. You will need a break from the action as we get to the end of the month. A short vacation could do wonders for you!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Your activity level picks up again this month. Watch your boundaries and scheduling. As the month begins, the focus is on your career arena. You are feeling confident about your leadership qualities, and you are looking for a project to test your mettle. You will not be very patient, and your point of view can rub others the wrong way if you don't present it in a palatable form. Find a way to get people to follow your lead, instead of insisting they do things your way. This is a good time for social activity, dating, connecting with community groups, and being supportive of your friends. From the 7th through the 10th, you may have to balance your need for private time with the demands of work and family. Keep your schedule flexible as the month begins.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 111



MEET ME AT THE CLUB

THE CLUB HOUSTON

Good. Clean. Fun.

S sunday Free Buffet 1pm	T tuesday Half priced ROOMS 4pm-11:45pm	W wednesday Half priced LOCKERS 4pm-11:45pm	<i>Happy Hour</i> F friday Half priced ROOMS 4pm-7:45pm
--	--	--	---

always open • steam • sauna • whirlpool • huge outdoor pool & patio • private dressing rooms • lockers • full gym • guest membership available • 18+ only

DAILY SPECIALS
Social Media ONLY #clubhouston
A PRIVATE MENS CLUB
2205 Fannin Street • Houston • (713)659-4998 • theclubs.com

Tech Auto

MAINTENANCE & REPAIR



- 20+ Years Experience in Houston
- State-of-the-Art Auto Repair Facility
- Mechanics Specializing in Both Domestic & Import Vehicles
- Quality Reliable & Professional Service at Competitive Rates
- Guarantee on All Parts & Service
- Hours: Monday-Friday 7am-6pm



VOTED BEST AUTO MECHANICS
by OutSmart Readers 2013-2018



National Instituted for **AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE EXCELLENCE**



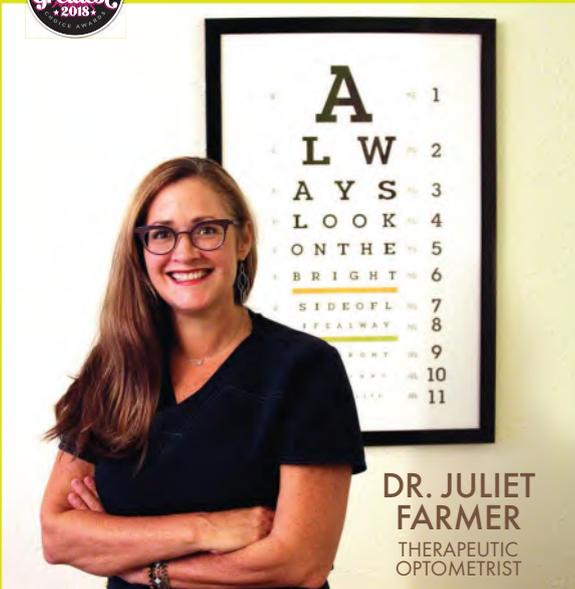
BOBBY HARTING, OWNER

37 WAUGH DR. HOUSTON, TX 77007
713-863-8244

FOR 24/7 DIRECT TOWING TO TECH AUTO CALL 281/859-0994



Voted one of the **Best Female Eye Doctor**
Outsmart Readers' Choice Awards 2018



DR. JULIET FARMER
THERAPEUTIC OPTOMETRIST

Boutique
EYE CARE

COME SEE US AT OUR NEW LOCATION!

1806 A. Westheimer Rd.
Houston, TX 77098
713.528.2610

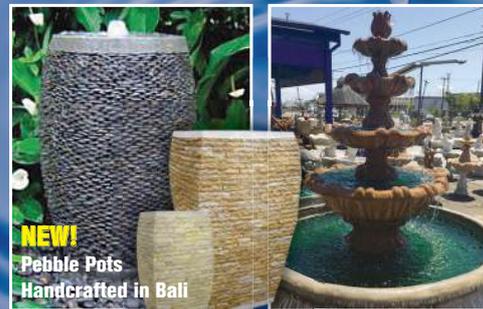
Schedule online at
BOUTIQUEEYECARE.COM



FOUNTAINS & STATUARY



Finalist BEST GARDENING/NURSERY SUPPLY



NEW!
Pebble Pots
Handcrafted in Bali

OPEN 7 DAYS

- Disappearing Fountains
- Glazed Urns
- Fountains
- Birdbaths
- Decorative Precast Rock Waterfalls
- Fiberglass Garden Ponds
- Bowls
- Tables & Benches
- Pumps & Tubing
- Planters
- Pedestals
- Flower Pots
- Fountain Tops
- Religious Statues
- Concrete Animals, Fish, Birds & Reptiles
- Talavera Style Mexican Pottery
- Various Sized Stepping Stones

713.957.3672

Just Outside the 610 Loop in Houston!
11804 Hempstead Rd., Houston, TX 77092
fountainsandstatuary@yahoo.com
www.FountainsAndStatuary.com

ASK ABOUT
Metal Carports
Gazebos & Yard Buildings



SCENE OUT

Photos by
DALTON DEHART & EDGARDO AGUILAR



On July 23, Warehouse 72 held its Mural Unveiling Media Preview with food and drink samples. Pictured are Marie Helena, Aisha Kahn, Sebastien "Mr. D 1987" Boileau, Natalia Victoria, Dalton DeHart, and Krista Davenport.



On August 1, the Pride Forum held its 2019 mayoral candidates forum at Texas Southern University. Pictured are Dalton DeHart, James Spear, Brad Pritchett, Emmett Schelling, Mike Webb, Andrea Segovia, Kelsey Gledhill, Megan Smith, Barrett White, Kirby Squires, Lakeia Ferreira-Spady, Tammi Wallace, and Roberto Regas.



On July 25, EPAH & Lambda NextGen 2019 sponsored a Happy Hour at the Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams store. Pictured are Jack Berger, Ken Ng, Rob Bessent, Mark Bailes, and James Spear.



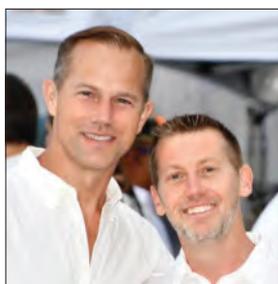
On August 1, the Walk for Mental Health Awareness luncheon was held at Metro Houston. Pictured are members of the host committee.



On August 6, the Montrose Center held its groundbreaking ceremony for the Law Harrington Senior Living Center. Pictured are Center Director Ann Robison, Nancy Kinder, Rep. Garnet Coleman, former mayor Annise Parker, Larry Freeman (from Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee's office), Tom McCasland, Gretchen Myers, Mayor Sylvester Turner, Kwentoria Williams (from Congressman Al Green's office), Abe Goren, and J. Reynaldo Ocañas.



On August 3, the Krewe Of Olympus 2019 held its Trash Disco event at Rich's. Pictured are Lea Valerio and John Broussard.



On August 3, White Linen Night in The Heights was presented by Memorial Hermann Greater Heights. Pictured are Weston Anderson and Dr. Billy Miller.



On August 12, U.S. Senate candidate Amanda Edwards held a meet-and-greet event at the Texas Justice Center. Pictured are Dr. Christina Burrows, Art Pronin, and Amanda Edwards.



The Alley Theatre's ActOUT night was held prior to the August 8 performance of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*. Pictured are Rachel Applegate, A.J. Mistretta, Erik Asuncion, Jason Fithian, Steven Carrell, (seated) Lauren Pelletier, and Tina Berry.



On August 7, the Greater Houston LGBT Chamber's 2019 "Brewing Up Business" and Ribbon Cutting was held at The Cannon co-working space. Pictured are Corey Allen, Deborah Lawson, Lawson Gow, Tammi Wallace, Caroline Stewart, Brad True, Roy Alvarez Jr., and Tiffany Tosh.



On August 11, La Granja Disco y Cantina held a mud-wrestling contest. Pictured are Benny Jimenez, George Mora, Oscar Portillo, and Jonny Cruz.



On August 9, City Council candidate Bill Baldwin held a meet-and-greet event at Boulevard Realty. Pictured are Bill Baldwin and State Senator John Whitmire.

The Legacy Pharmacy Difference



Your Wellness.
Your Needs.
Our Care.



Now introducing
Curbside Pickup at
Legacy Pharmacy - Montrose!

Experience the Legacy Pharmacy Difference.



Legacy Pharmacy - Montrose
1415 California Street
Houston, TX 77006
(713) 665 8800

Legacy Pharmacy - Fifth Ward
3811 Lyons Avenue
Houston, TX 77020
(713) 366 7400

Caring and supportive Pharmacists | Personalized health coaching | PrEP Assistance | Shorter wait times
One-on-one medication counseling | Health screenings | Vaccinations | Easy prescription refills

www.legacycommunityhealth.org/pharmacy

NOW OPEN!

NEW LOCATION, SAME GREAT CARE



SAMUEL A.
CARRELL, DDS



AUSTIN T.
FAULK, DDS



BRUCE W.
SMITH, DDS



GENERAL & COSMETIC DENTISTRY

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES!
MONTROSEDDS.COM

620 W. ALABAMA STREET HOUSTON, TX 77006 713.529.4364

