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austinchronicle.com/best-of-austin

The 30th Annual “Best of Austin” Awards

A note from the editor

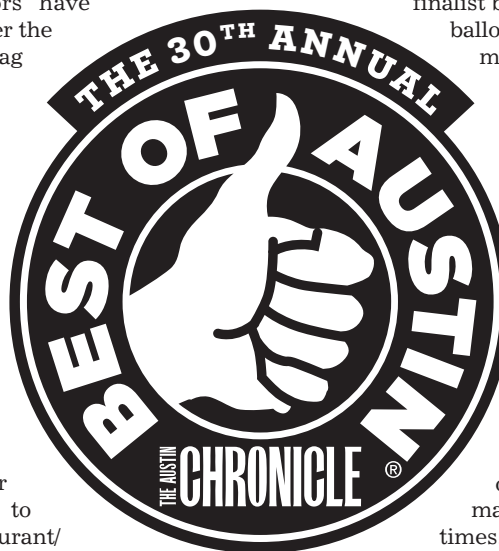
BY KIMBERLEY JONES

Thirty years ago, when my *Chronicle* forebears first sprouted the idea of an annual compendium of the best restaurants, stores, public places and personalities, et al. in Austin, they didn’t get cute with the name. They called it the “Best of Austin.” A little on the nose, but effective branding nevertheless; given how many of our competitors have launched their own versions over the years, I’m glad we planted our flag there first.

And 30 years later, we’re more or less doing the same thing we’ve always done – celebrating the very best the city has to offer in one blowout issue. But our “Best of Austin” Awards have definitely *evolved* over the years, so much so that it can be a little hard to explain their Swiss Army knife-like applications.

The “Best of Austin” Awards are democratic, but also idiosyncratic. They’re your coolest friend tipping you off to that next great [insert bar/restaurant/CBD shop/queer party]. They’re also your mom, sensibly schooling you to eat your greens and find a good plumber. They’re the welcoming committee, giving out-of-towners and new residents the lay of the land. And they’re the town scribe, putting down for posterity an annual picture of how Austinites feel about their city.

That’s sort of the gist of it.



Getting down to the nitty-gritty: *The Austin Chronicle* “Best of Austin” Awards are broken into Readers Poll winners and Critics Picks. The Readers Poll is conducted in two parts. There’s a write-in ballot in late summer.

The highest vote-getters then move on to the finalist ballot in early fall. On the finalist ballot, we invite readers to leave comments about who they’re voting for; we choose our favorites and run them in this issue.

More than 20,000 people cast a ballot in our finalist round. That’s a whole lot of people passionate about their city and wanting to tell us about it.

If the Readers Poll is a reflection of the will of the people, then our Critics Picks are where *Chronicle* staff and a few trusted freelancers elbow in to say, “Also this!” Sometimes it’s to cheer on a killer new place or an artist making leaps and bounds. Other times, it’s to applaud an establishment that’s been around for so long, we worry we’ve taken it for granted. There’s no rhyme or reason, and there’s no pay-to-play; our sales staff sells ads *around* the issue, but you can’t buy an award – not now, not ever.

We just like what we like, and we want to tell you about it, too.

So we’ve got that in common.

READERS POLL AT A GLANCE

Number of Readers Poll Awards: **195**

Number of ballots cast in first round: **11,634**

Number of ballots cast in finalist round: **22,924**

Number of comments submitted: **2,170**

Age casting the most votes: **30**

Number of voters who claim their age is “666”: **1**

Austin ZIP code casting the most votes: **78704**

Runners-up: **78745, 78660, 78748, 78741**

Percentage of voters who have lived in Austin 10+ years: **57.81%**

Votes were cast from **49 states** (where’s the love, South Dakota?), the **District of Columbia** and the **Commonwealth of Puerto Rico**, and international cities including **Ottawa, Ontario; Budapest, Hungary; San Vicente del Raspeig, Spain; and Barendrecht, Netherlands.**

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30 YEARS OF "BEST OF AUSTIN"

RUNNING THE NUMBERS by Nick Barbaro

THERE HAVE BEEN:

- 10,484** total "Best of Austin" Awards over 30 years (an average of 349 per year)
- 6,530** different winners
- 5,315** Critics Picks Awards (4,763 different winners)
- 5,169** Readers Poll Awards (2,126 different winners)
- 1,230** different Readers Poll categories (on average these last 4.2 years)
- 497** ties (396 of those were from the Readers Poll)
- 16** different awards for different aspects of Zilker Park
- 18** awards for bathrooms, evenly split between readers and critics (the Driskill Hotel leads the way with three)
- 37** dog-related awards (not counting Dog & Duck Pub or Lloyd Doggett)
- 52** consumer video categories, mostly video stores, game rental, and DVD selection



MOST AWARDS OVERALL

With number of awards won

*indicates a winner in the inaugural poll in 1990

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Barton Springs Pool (66) * | KGSR 107.1FM (32) |
| KUT 90.5FM (63) * | Texas State Capitol (32) * |
| Zilker Park (57) * | Alamo Drafthouse (30) |
| BookPeople (52) | KOOP 91.7FM (30) |
| Austin American-Statesman (47) | Channel Austin (29) |
| KVUE (47) | Kerbey Lane Cafe (29) |
| University of Texas at Austin (45) * | Zilker Botanical Garden (27) |
| The Austin Chronicle (41) * | Barton Creek Greenbelt (26) |
| Central Market North (41) | Breed & Co. (26) * |
| Vulcan Video (38) * | Wheatsville Food Co-op (26) * |
| Waterloo Records (37) * | Bicycle Sport Shop (25) |
| Casino el Camino (34) | Austin Books & Comics (24) * |
| Austin Motel (33) | Hotel San José (24) |
| KXAN (33) | Paramount Theatre (24) * |
| Mount Bonnell at Covert Park (33) * | Continental Club (23) * |
| The Driskill Hotel (32) | |
| Enchanted Rock (32) * | |

For the full list, see austinchronicle.com/bestofarchive.

STILL STANDING AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

There were 158 "BOA" Awards in the first year, 1990; not counting duplicates, there were 140 winners. Of those, 95 – over two-thirds – are still here 30 years later. These include 25 permanent features of the city – Zilker Park, Mount Bonnell, the state Capitol, Barton Springs, soccer – but also 69 businesses and people who are still operating today. Most surprising, perhaps, is the Food category, where 10 of the 17 award-winners are still in business, and Shopping, with 18 of the 27 places still around. Among others still doing business three decades later: Best Psychic Sylvia Murray.

1990 Food winners still operating: Dirty Martin's Place, Forbidden Fruit, Mrs. Johnson's Bakery, Chick-fil-A, Texas French Bread, the Oasis, the Salt Lick, Thundercloud Subs, Travis County Farmers' Market, Wheatsville Food Co-op

1990 Shopping winners still operating: Allens Boots, Anderson's Coffee Co., Austin Books & Comics, Barton Creek Square, Breed & Co., Dan's Liquor Stores, Flashback Vintage, Goodwill, Half Price Books, Lucy in Disguise, Oat Willie's, Planet K, Precision Camera & Video, Strait Music Co., Terra Toys, Toy Joy, University Co-op, Waterloo Records

Waterloo Records is the only business that's won an award in all 29 Readers Polls.

READERS AND CRITICS: THE EARLY YEARS

The "Best of Austin" Awards started strictly as the Readers Poll. There were only four Critics Picks in the first year and nine in the second year. These were unannotated, but represented, essentially, our staff's dissent regarding a few of the readers' choices (sparked, as I recall, by Blockbuster beating Vulcan Video for Best Video Store and Mr. Gatti's winning Best Pizza).

Then, in 1992, we turned that around, as explained in that year's introduction: "We actively solicited nominations from our readers," but had no readers poll, and the "issue was developed and authored by our staff and contributors," including annotations of all the picks. (They were led in that effort by Managing Editor Jennifer Scoville, who later left us to raise a family and start a family business, Home Slice Pizza, which has gone on to win eight BOA Awards in the past 13 years, including Best Pizza in the Readers Poll for six of the past seven years.)

The Readers Poll returned the very next year, and the Critics Picks shifted over to being the quirkier, one-off categories that they've been ever since. The intro to that year's section read: "Finally, the *Chronicle* may have gotten the 'Best of Austin' issue right" – with "some 214 categories voted on by our readers" and presented in list form, while "*Chronicle* staff, editors, and writers created and annotated another 221 categories, operating very independently of the ballot. ... Don't think of it as a disagreement, think of it as two separate recommendations."

READERS POLL CATEGORIES

These have changed over the years, but there are 21 categories that have appeared in all 29 Readers Polls (there was no poll in 1992; see "Readers and Critics").

Only three categories have stayed completely unchanged since the very first poll; 18 others have been in every poll, but with some changes in name or focus:

Best Sportscaster	Best Garden Store/ Nursery	Best Radio Station
Best Weatherperson	Best Salon	Best Record Store
Best Jukebox	Best Hotel/Motel	Best Social Ride
Best Art Gallery	Best Laundromat	Best Toy Store
Best Bike Shop/Repair	Best Movie Theatre	Best TV Anchorperson/ Reporter
Best Bookstore	Best Performance Space/Theatre	Best Vintage/Consign- ment Clothing
Best Comics/Fandom	Best Photographer	
Best Dancer/ Choreographer		

Longest Critics Picks Award Title: "Best Place to Just Set and Meditate and Watch the Crosspaths of Ducks, Heart Patients, Food Connoisseurs and State Hospital Patients" (Central Market, 2002)

Sections: We started with nine; we now have eight. We added Kids in 1993, then restructured some categories and renamed others starting in 2016. Services and Shopping are the only categories that have remained unchanged throughout the 30 years of BOAs.



All-Timers and Legends:

In 2009, we declared seven Best All-Time Winners: Paramount Theatre, Emo's, Central Market, Alan Pogue, Ann Richards, Save Our Springs Alliance, and Bicycle Sport Shop. Still a good list.

One category we only did in the first three polls was Best Austin Legend, won by Willie Nelson in the inaugural poll, Stevie Ray Vaughan in the next two, then discontinued.

Similarly, we had only four Best Austin Icon Awards (2010-2013), and Leslie Cochran won three of them; Willie Nelson won the fourth.

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READERS POLL

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



THEATRE DIRECTOR

Lisa Scheps

FINALISTS: Rudy Ramirez, Dave Steakley

"Lisa is all about access and pushing boundaries. She is a great asset to Austin theatre."

— SIMI DENSON

GROUND FLOOR THEATRE, 979 SPRINGDALE #122,
WWW.GROUND FLOOR THEATRE.ORG

ACTRESS

Amber Quick

FINALISTS: Lee Eddy, Stephanie Thoreson

"Amber is able to find the heart, the mind, and the body in every character she creates. Every one of them is whole and human."

— RUDY RAMIREZ

ACTOR

Jesús I. Valles

FINALISTS: Kareem Badr, Judd Farris, Carlo Lorenzo Garcia, Marc Pouhé

"Wonderful teacher. Phenomenal actor. Beautiful spirit."

— ROSA AMBRIZ

CLASSICAL MUSICIAN

Michelle Schumann

FINALISTS: Anton Nel, Graham Reynolds, Ammon Taylor

"Michelle puts together the most amazing programs and is truly a gifted and charismatic pianist. You feel the emotion as she plays."

— LINDA MASTERS

AUSTIN CHAMBER MUSIC CENTER, 4930 BURNET RD.,
WWW.AUSTINCHAMBERMUSIC.ORG

DANCER/CHOREOGRAPHER

Stephen Mills

FINALISTS: Allison Orr & Krissie Marty, Stephanie Patrick

"Stephen is making the most interesting ballets in the country."

— CHRIS TOMLINSON
BALLET AUSTIN STUDIO, 3002 GUADALUPE, WWW.BALLETAUSTIN.ORG

MURALIST

Creative Action Color Squad

FINALISTS: Federico Archuleta, Eleanor Niz, Chris Rogers

"The most talented young people making culturally and socially relevant public art in Austin! Nothing inspires me more."

— CORINNA ARCHER KINSMAN

WWW.CREATIVEACTION.ORG/PROGRAMS/
TEEN-PROGRAMS/COLOR-SQUAD

GRAPHIC ARTIST

Lauren Dickens

FINALISTS: Dan Grissom, Craig Kotfas, Keith Davis Young

"Lauren's aesthetic is incredibly clean, and the way she arranges text makes my mind happy."

— KAIT RHONE

WWW.LAURENDICKENS.COOL

VISUAL ARTIST

Kengo Hioki (Peelander-Yellow)

FINALISTS: Cindy Elizabeth, Chris Rogers, Mila Sketch

"His artwork makes me smile. Very happy art!"

— KANAKO ISHIHARA



JOHN ANDERSON

MUSEUM

The Blanton Museum of Art

FINALISTS: Bullock Texas State History Museum, Thinkery

"B Scene, Jeffrey Gibson, SoundSpaces ... What's not to love?"

— MEERA CHANDY

200 E. MLK, WWW.BLANTONMUSEUM.ORG

ART GALLERY

Women & Their Work

FINALISTS: Ao5 Gallery, grayDUCK Gallery, Mondo Gallery, Wally Workman Gallery

"Carefully and thoughtfully curated contemporary art by an organization dedicated to uplifting women artists."

— KAY MARLEY-DIWORTH

1710 LAVACA, WWW.WOMENANDTHEIRWORK.ORG

PERFORMANCE SPACE/THEATRE

Paramount Theatre

FINALISTS: The Vortex, Zach Theatre

"Visiting the Paramount is like walking into a time machine. It has so much history. Ask about the Houdini hole."

— LEO SOPICKI

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COMIC CREATOR/GRAPHIC NOVELIST

Lilah Sturges

FINALISTS: Donny Gates, Becky Cloonan, Drew Edwards, David Tarafa

“Her graphic novels are a sheer joy to read, and her prose absolutely sings.” — PAUL BENJAMIN

WWW.FB.COM/WRITERLILAHSTURGES

COMEDY TROUPE

Esther's Follies

FINALISTS: Fuck This Week, Girls Girls Girls, Master Pancake, Y'all We Asian

“Classic yet contemporary humor. So creative!” — YOLANDA TORRES

525 E. SIXTH, WWW.ESTHERSFOLLIES.COM

STAND-UP COMIC

Matt Bearden

FINALISTS: Jasmine Ellis, Ky Krebs, Carina Magyar, Avery Moore

“Has truly kept comedy vibrant in this city. Never gets enough credit. And has made radio funny again, too.” — DALE DUDLEY

WWW.MATTBEARDEN.COM

COMEDY CLUB/VENUE

Cap City Comedy Club

FINALISTS: ColdTowne Theater, Fallout Theater

“Best of both worlds: Completely supportive of local comics while bringing in some of the finest national acts you could hope for – all while keeping tickets reasonable. Thank you, Cap City!”

— STEPHANIE MOLNAR

8120 RESEARCH #100, WWW.CAPCITYCOMEDY.COM

COMEDY/STORYTELLING SHOWCASE

Moontower Comedy Festival

FINALISTS: BedPost Confessions, Greetings, From Queer Mountain, Punch, Testify ATX

“Moontower is the obvious choice here. They win the gold, silver, bronze, and tin medal in this category.” — TRAVIS SUMMERS

WWW.AUSTINTHEATRE.ORG/MOONTOWER-COMEDY

FICTION WRITER

Sarah Bird

FINALISTS: Ernest Cline, Owen Egerton

“Sarah is an Austin treasure.”

— PEGGY LITTLE

WWW.SARAHBIRDBOOKS.COM

NONFICTION WRITER

Spike Gillespie

FINALISTS: Stephen Harrigan, Lawrence Wright

“What a trip she is!” — PAM ARTHUR

WWW.SPIKEGILLESPIE.COM

NEW BOOK BY AN AUSTIN WRITER

Last Woman Standing by Amy Gentry

FINALISTS: Tears of the Trufflepig by Fernando A. Flores, The Weil Conjectures by Karen Olsson, Whisper Network by Chandler Baker, Why So Much? by Lance Myers

“Want to get good and mad? This electric, disquieting novel about giving male abusers a taste of their own medicine is just what the doctor ordered.” — ROSALIND FAIRES

WWW.AMYGENTRYAUTHOR.COM

BURLESQUE PERFORMER

Ginger Snaps

FINALISTS: Roxy Castillo, Chola Magnolia

“There’s a reason Ginger Snaps keeps winning year after year. Her burlesque acts are original, funny, and sexy.” — LAURA OZUNA

WWW.FB.COM/GINGERSNAPSBURLESQUE

DRAG PERFORMER

Louisiana Purchase

FINALISTS: Hentaii, Noodles, Rhonda Jewels

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Poo Poo Platter

FINALISTS: Boiz of Austin, Die Felicia

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— ALBERT MORALES

WWW.FB.COM/POOPOOATX

FILM FESTIVAL/SERIES

SXSW Film Festival

FINALISTS: Austin Film Festival, Fantastic Fest

"SXSW Film has become my favorite part of SXSW; I love that we get world premieres and some really interesting activations for new shows and movies."

— SHARON TRESSA DESIMONE

WWW.SXSW.COM

LOCAL VIDEO GAME DEVELOPER

Rooster Teeth

FINALISTS: Bluepoint Games, Stoic Studio

"This is ironic because they just laid off their entire video game staff."

— ZANE GHOLSON

WWW.ROOSTERTEETH.COM

OUTDOOR FESTIVAL

Austin City Limits Music Festival

FINALISTS: Old Settler's Music Festival, Pecan Street Festival, UtopiaFest

"ACL is a lifestyle, not just a festival."

— KENNEDY ENGLEMAN

WWW.ACLFESTIVAL.COM

MOVIE THEATRE

Alamo Drafthouse

FINALISTS: AFS Cinema, Moviehouse & Eatery, Violet Crown Cinema

"I'm so so so glad that so many options exist for film, but Alamo runs this bitch."

— ARON TAYLOR

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.DRAFTHOUSE.COM

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Classic Game Fest

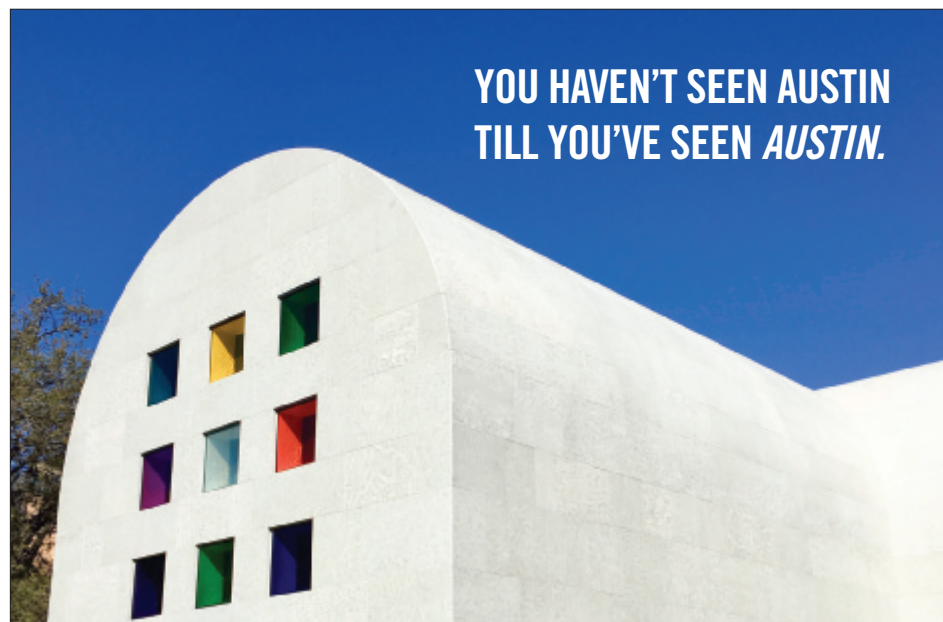
FINALISTS: Givens Swims, IVKPOPI, Me-Mer-Mo Monday, Team Goodtimes

"Seeing this festival grow over the years is really cool. Where else am I going to find a slightly used copy of *Battle Arena Toshinden*."

— JOSEPH POENISCH

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SHELLEY HAM

BEST CROSS-DISCIPLINARY ACTIVISM **Ben Aqua**

Who would have guessed that a dinosaur-masked metal guitarist nearly two decades ago would end up as an internationally recognized powerhouse of interdisciplinary art and music? Or that said powerhouse's exploration of what it means to be a digital citizen would challenge audiences to expand their minds and see the world through unfamiliar lenses? From the intersections and boundaries of identity (queerness, race, gender), Ben Aqua has become a bold voice that embraces inclusion and diversity while calling out artistic and cultural appropriation. Aqua's collaborations with the city's Asian American Resource Center might at first glance seem odd given Aqua's stature in the "online underground," but Aqua's articulate validations of individual expression and identity and their ability to draw out the unspoken in others make it clear that even city government needs them. #NeverLogOff.

WWW.BENAQUA.ORG

BEST QUEER POP PRINCESSES

p!nkstar and Y2K

With early-Aughties aesthetics that evoke otherworldly dimensions, p!nkstar and Y2K are the pop princesses queer-kid you yearned for and queer-adult you still need. Each their own act, but who often collaborate and perform together, p!nkstar and Y2K are nightlife fixtures – queer or otherwise – performing hybrid music-conceptual shows, as well as campastic musicals like *p!nky and the Kwane: Another Soup Opera!*. Plus, the duo are fixtures at weekly queer dance party Cut Up!, regularly organize performance art showcases, and have even lent themselves to sexual health clinic ASHwell's ads. Kiss kiss, bbs.

WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/P1NKSTAR_, WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/Y2KMUSIC

BEST BIENNIAL BAZAAR

Austin Archives Bazaar

Neither quiet, dusty, nor dry, these Central Texas archivists and librarians collaborate to curate a bigger and better gathering every even-numbered year. The Austin Archives Bazaar is a noisy and well-lubricated social affair, with speaker presentations punctuating the browsing of more than 25 booths. History starts with yesterday, and thus you'll find zine archives and podcast hosts alongside genealogy resources and the LBJ Library's booth. Unusually specific collections are

featured (did you know Texas A&M's libraries include LGBTQ and George R.R. Martin archives?), but the bazaar also provides ways to capture oral histories, do a deep dive on *ranchero* family claims on Spanish land grants, and preserve family archives. This outreach effort moves well past any "stern librarian" clichés by broadening the definitions and inclusivity of what it means to be Texan.

WWW.AUSTINARCHIVESBAZAAR.ORG



BEST CAMPY RASSLIN' CLASHES

Party World Rasslin'

Hail Mother Worm, amirite? If you're confused by this phrase, you obviously haven't been to the best vision of camp and wrestling lore in Austin: Party World Rasslin'! PWR is a masterpiece of free Saturday night party violence and is set in a lore-filled multiverse unlike any other, where forest nymphs, ruthless Dallas magnates, sentient spaghetti men, and many others do battle in far-out dimensions both near and far from our own. Anyone who worships at the altar of magic, friendship, and well-choreographed smackdowns is obligated to support such a "Grand Ritual" of physical combat.

WWW.PWR.WEBSITE

BEST FANTASTICAL FILM FESTIVITIES

Lifted Traces

At the immersive film screenings of Lifted Traces, fandom oozes from every detail. There's cinematically aligned food, on-theme vendors, and a wonderland of art installations to enjoy around the show. Most centrally, the movies are presented with a new musical score, performed live by local synth-lovers. Hyperreal Film Club founder Jenni Kaye and composer Joey Postiglione launched the project with a 2018 celebration of *Akira*. Listen to more energetic re-scores of *Fantastic Planet* and *Deep Red* at liftedtraces.bandcamp.com.

BEST GAY GIGGLE GENERATOR

The Gay Agenda

There are few greater portals into another person's psyche than what they find absolutely hilarious. And there are few better platforms for raunchy, unfiltered, overtly honest retellings than the stand-up comedy stage. At roving monthly showcases every third Thursday, The Gay Agenda rounds up all shades of gay storytelling. Launched in March 2019 by magnetic host Emmet Hunker, the collective aims to playfully promote comedy, queerness, and sex positivity.

WWW.THEGAYAGENDA.COM

BEST INCUBATOR OF MUSICAL SISTERHOOD

Femme Rock

Wanna start a band and stick it to the patriarchy at the same time? Femme Rock has you covered, with affordable six-week classes in a variety of musical styles (posted online every other month) and a mission to empower adult women (cis, trans, and nonbinary) through musical collaboration. Self-taught drummer and Femme Rock founder Reece Herrera describes the group as "sort of like a support group for female musicians," but its best sell might lie in the bold font on its homepage: "Girls can do whatever the fuck they want." Come on and join the revolution, sister.

WWW.FEMMEROCKATX.COM

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BEST MOVES TO THE EDGE

Frank Wo/Men Collective

In dance, there's physical and there's *physical*. There's rigorously pushing the body to its limits in service of grace and beauty, and there's ... whatever Frank Wo/Men Collective does. Racing. Whirling. Squirming. Twitching. Hurling themselves to the ground. Rolling over one another. Sliding on wet plastic. Enduring blasts of water from a pressure hose. At times, Frank's shows – such as *Rick Said So* and *Rub a Duck* – play like physical endurance tests designed by Dr. Strangelove and Pina Bausch. But their absurdist sensibilities, kinetic energy, and inventiveness make them weirdly compelling and fun. Thanks to co-directors Kelsey Oliver and Roberto Di Donato and a bold ensemble, Frank carries you to the boundaries of what you *think* you want to watch and tips you over it.

WWW.FRANKWOMENCOLLECTIVE.COM

BEST SPACE FOR DIVERSE VOICES

Ground Floor Theatre

There's a certain cachet, perhaps, to being referred to as "bold" or "daring." But even those tiredly used adjectives wane when discussing the sheer breadth and ambition of the Ground Floor Theatre. A performance space dedicated to highlighting marginalized voices, be it last year's run of Iranian playwright Nassim Soleimanpour's experimental grenade *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*, or this year's wonderfully knotted *TRANSom*, the people behind the scenes curating this space have a deep understanding and knowledge of the kaleidoscope of human existence that might go unnoticed, but here it is rightly illuminated. Bold and daring don't even begin to describe it.

979 SPRINGDALE #122, WWW.GROUNDLOORTHEATRE.ORG

BEST UNAMPLIFIED MUSIC INSTALLATIONS

Team Goodtimes

No microphones. No amplifiers. Absolutely no talking. You'll be hard pressed to find a more astoundingly intimate musical performance on planet Earth than those assembled by Team Goodtimes, in which bands play acoustically outside to large audiences in rapt silence – typically between the hours of one and four in the morning. Ringleader Cody Johnson and his fellow Goodtimes volunteers have been staging these torch-lit late-night performances since 2005. They inhabit Old Settler's Music Fest (as Camp Shhhtimes), UtopiaFest (Goodtimes Grove), and Sweet Party! (Tank Goodtimes) with favored acts including the Deer, Wood & Wire, and Possessed by Paul James. In doing so, they've established a unique musical experience that's heavy in its quietude.

WWW.TEAMGOODTIMES.ORG



JANA BIRCHUM

BEST RISING STARS OF IMPROV Y'all We Asian

When Austin's first Asian American improv troupe opened a new show at ColdTowne Theater this year, the title *Starring Y'all We Asian* was a riff on the show's theme that Asians are done with Hollywood whitewashing and sidekick roles; they're ready for their close-up, Mr. DeMille. But the truth is that the troupe *is* star material and rising fast. In just two years, YWA has played regularly at ColdTowne; hit the Out of Bounds Comedy Festival locally and the Del Close Marathon in NYC; snagged a B. Iden Payne Award for best new improv troupe; and been a finalist in the "Best of Austin" Readers Poll. Their references are equally smart whether it's Asian culture or pop culture, and Y'all We Asian always leaves audiences wanting more.

WWW.FB.COM/YWAIMPROVATX

BEST CHOREOGRAPHIC CARRIER OF REMEMBRANCE

Charles O. Anderson

By its nature, movement happens in the now. But it can spring from the then – cultural traditions, histories, memories. That's what powers the work of Charles O. Anderson, head of the UT Department of Theatre & Dance dance program and founder of dance theatre X. He may derive steps and gestures from African American experiences and culture – lynchings and civil rights marches, expressions of faith and resistance – as in his masterwork *(Re)Current Unrest*, or employ ceremonial movements of grief and honor, as in the profoundly moving *Idobâlè*, a memorial tribute to Haruka Weiser, the dance major slain on campus in 2016. In whatever he does, Anderson shows himself a keeper of what mattered, releasing it kinetically so we remember it and see it matters still.

WWW.CHARLESOANDERSON.ME

MOST FOOT-STOMPIN' CLASSICAL

invoke

To look at these four musicians and their instruments, you might assume they're another garden-variety string quartet, about to guide you on a tasteful tour of Europe via its classical compositions. Which they can certainly do, and do as virtuosically as the next ensemble, but these guys will invariably take a detour through Appalachia. The special thing about invoke is the group's love of bluegrass and how its lively spirit and playfulness are essential to the way they approach every piece of music. They infuse their performances with such a down-home joyfulness that they can be playing Beethoven at the Blanton, and you'll feel like you're on a porch in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

WWW.INVOKESOUND.COM

MOST DESERVING TO BE MADE AUSTIN MUSIC MONUMENTS

Roky Erickson and Daniel Johnston

Roky Erickson lived in Barton Hills – where his mother Evelyn also resided. Lupine howler out front of the 13th Floor Elevators, 1965-1969 – very possibly the first psychedelic act – he ate at Threadgill's, Hut's, Amy's. Throughout the Sixties, Seventies, Eighties, Nineties, and Aughts, he performed in Austin's halls of fame: Vulcan Gas Company, Soap Creek Saloon, Ritz Theatre, Armadillo World Headquarters, Austin Music Hall, Paramount Theatre. In that same span, he collaborated with Austin music greats of every generation: Doug Sahm, Jerry Jeff Walker, the Butthole Surfers, Meat Puppets, Black Angels, Okkervil River. And when he died on May 31 here in Austin, any local who ever had a strand of Erickson's otherworldly audio vision twist up to their DNA thought the same thing: statue.

On Wednesday, Sept. 11, the *Chronicle* broke the news of Daniel Johnston's death at 58. Tolling the bell for any fallen member of a community remains the least favorite aspect of watchdog media – and especially in this



case, since we had as much to do with breaking DJ to the world outside these city limits as MTV, Kurt Cobain, or Kathy McCarty. A back slap for astuteness, right? Hardly. He showed up on the paper's back stoop with a cassette for us. We'd have had to be stoops not to recognize his talent. He was us, after all – all of us: lonely, insecure, childlike. Daniel Johnston represented Austin to the world and mankind to Austin. The least he deserves is a likeness outside of his favorite local haunt, Austin Comics, to which he contributed no small amount of superhero-obsessed DIY art.

WWW.ROKYERICKSON.NET, WWW.HIHOWAREYOU.COM



BRET BROOKSHIRE

BEST CARDBOARD RECYCLING Landry McMeans

Since moving back to Austin from Arizona, Landry McMeans has set up an art studio in the Mosaic Sound Collective and expanded her palette into ever-bigger pieces. Her cardboard reliefs exhume the brilliant details of natural landscapes and animals, with her new 3D triptychs striking vivid from afar and stunning up-close. Although technically not recycled (she sources her special heavy-duty cardboard from a factory in California), McMeans' masterful textures are currently on display at South Congress' musician-focused Yard Dog Art Gallery.

WWW.LANDRYMCMEANS.COM

A group of performers from Esther's Follies on stage. One woman is performing a high kick. The background features a sign for 'Cougartown' and a logo for 'Esther's FOLLIES'. The text 'Austin's #1 Comedy Troupe' is overlaid on the image.

Esther's FOLLIES
Austin's #1 Comedy Troupe

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A yellow and red advertisement for Cap City Comedy Club. It features a stylized white dome with yellow accents. The text 'CAP CITY COMEDY CLUB' is in large, bold, white letters on a red background. Below it, 'THANK YOU, AUSTIN! IN 2020, COME AND CELEBRATE...' is written in black. A starburst graphic says '35 YEARS!'. A list of upcoming shows is on the right, and the address and website are at the bottom.

UPCOMING SHOWS:

- Ali Siddiq**
NOV. 6 - 9
- Sklar Brothers**
NOV. 13 - 16
- Doug Mellard**
NOV. 17 - 20 (ALBUM RECORDING)
- Gary Owen**
NOV. 21 - 23
- Martha Kelly**
NOV. 27 - 30

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FOOD & DRINK



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NEW RESTAURANT **DipDipDip Tatsu-ya**

FINALISTS: Comedor, Nervous Charlie's, Oseyo, Vixen's Wedding

"The foie gras roll? OMFG. Tatsu Aikawa and Takuya Matsumoto are killing it with the atmosphere, food, and amazing cocktails."

— JOHN HOOD

7301 BURNET RD. #101, WWW.DIPDIPDIP-TATSUYA.COM



ESTABLISHED RESTAURANT

Odd Duck

FINALISTS: Eldorado Cafe, Suerte

"Bryce Gilmore is still slinging the best-tasting and best-looking food in town."

— DANIEL DIFFEN

1201 S. LAMAR, WWW.ODDDUCKAUSTIN.COM

CHEF

Tyson Cole (Loro, Uchi, Uchiko)

FINALISTS: Todd Duplechan (Lenoir), Bryce Gilmore (Barley Swine, Odd Duck, Sour Duck Market), Fiore Tedesco (L'Oca d'Oro)

"Dude's got a creative vision and the energy and talent to back it up."

— ROSE HAWKINS

WWW.HAIHOSPITALITY.COM/FAMILY/TYSON-COLE

PASTRY CHEF

Laura Sawicki (Lauderette)

FINALISTS: Melissa Carroll (Le Politique), Amanda Rockman (New Waterloo)

"I've never had dessert on this level before. I cried."

— JAKE GALGON

LAUDERETTE, 2115 HOLLY, WWW.LAUDERETTEAUSTIN.COM

LATE-NIGHT DINING

Kerbey Lane Cafe

FINALISTS: Magnolia Cafe, 24 Diner

"Kerbey queso is my drug of choice every time."

— CHRISTIAN FLORES

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.KERBEYLANECAFE.COM

DELIVERY

Tiff's Treats

FINALISTS: East Side Pies, Tso Chinese Delivery

"Ahh ... that smell making its way through the cubicles at work!"

— LIZ CANALES

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.COOKIEDELIVERY.COM

DRIVE-THROUGH

P. Terry's Burger Stand

FINALISTS: El Tacorrido, Fresca's Chicken al Carbon, Flyrite Chicken

"Honestly, I moved to Austin for work, but I stayed for P. Terry's."

— MARISSA KOBE

VARIOUS LOCATIONS

BREWERY

Austin Beerworks

FINALISTS: The Austin Beer Garden Brewing Co., Jester King Craft Brewery, St. Elmo Brewing Co.

"Not only does Austin Beerworks make delicious, badass beer, their leadership team led the charge for the new beer-to-go law. Where did the Texas governor go to sign the new law? Austin Beerworks, with a Pearl-Snap Pils in his hand."

— JONATHAN CONNORS

3001 INDUSTRIAL TERRACE, WWW.AUSTINBEERWORKS.COM

WINERY

Infinite Monkey Theorem

FINALISTS: The Austin Winery, Duchman Family Winery

"Cool space with funky furniture that works with wine on tap."

— SYLVIA BUTANDA

702 SHADY, WWW.THEINFINITEMONKEYTHEOREM.COM

DISTILLERY

Deep Eddy Vodka

FINALISTS: Still Austin Whiskey Co., Treaty Oak Distilling

"Love Deep Eddy's. The grapefruit flavor makes the best greyhounds."

— TAYLOR FORD

2250 HWY. 290 E., DRIPPING SPRINGS, WWW.DEEPEDDYVODKA.COM

FOOD TRUCK

Veracruz All Natural

FINALISTS: Arlo's, Garbo's Fresh Maine Lobster

"Migas on corn at Veracruz is the best meal in Austin don't @ me"

— DAVID SWARTZ

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.VERACRUZALLNATURAL.COM

COFFEE SHOP

Radio Coffee & Beer

FINALISTS: Cosmic Coffee + Beer Garden, Epoch Coffee

"Their cold brew will have you tweaking, but that's exactly what we need!"

— PEDRO BERLANGA

4204 MANCHACA RD., WWW.RADIOCOFFEEANDBEER.COM

BREAKFAST

Kerbey Lane Cafe

FINALISTS: Bouldin Creek Cafe, Counter Cafe, Magnolia Cafe, Tacodeli

"Those lemon and poppy seed pancakes are the best. Eggs Benedict? Yes, please. You literally can't go wrong with anything you order off the menu."

— CHANEL INGRAM

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.KERBEYLANECAFE.COM

WEEKEND BRUNCH

Jack Allen's Kitchen

FINALISTS: Bouldin Creek Cafe, Counter Culture

"Unlimited. Mini. Pancakes."

— KHEIRAJAY ARDJANI

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.JACKALLENSKITCHEN.COM

FINE DINING

Uchi

FINALISTS: Barley Swine, Jeffrey's, Otoko

"My dream is to live above Uchi so that I can just walk downstairs to find my ultimate happiness."

— LINDSEY WALTHER

801 S. LAMAR, WWW.UCHIAUSTIN.COM



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PIZZA

Home Slice Pizza

FINALISTS: Bufalina, East Side Pies, Pinthouse Pizza, Via 313

“Home Slice is the truth.”

— ERIC CRAPNELL

1415 S. CONGRESS; 1421 S. CONGRESS; 501 E. 53RD, WWW.HOMESLICEPIZZA.COM

STEAK

Austin Land & Cattle

FINALISTS: Bartlett's, Jeffrey's, Red Ash Italia, Vince Young Steakhouse

“Top-notch food with a fine-dining vibe but with old Austin feels.”

— KARA FOSTER

1205 N. LAMAR, WWW.ALCSTEAKS.COM

VEGAN/VEGETARIAN

Bouldin Creek Cafe

FINALISTS: The Beer Plant, Counter Culture, Mother's Cafe & Garden

“I am awaiting cauliflower bites while I write this ...”

— AUSTIN KAPLAN

1900 S. FIRST, WWW.BOULDINCREEK.COM

JUICE/SMOOTHIE

JuiceLand

FINALISTS: Daily Juice, The Soup Peddler

“The wundershnozen (how ever you spell it oh my lawd)”

— CASEY HARROD

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.JUICELAND.COM

MARGARITA

Chuy's

FINALISTS: Matt's El Rancho, Trudy's

“Just the right amount of sweet and tart.”

— JULIE GRAHAM

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.CHUYS.COM

BURGER

Hopdoddy Burger Bar

FINALISTS: Arlo's, P. Terry's Burger Stand

“The Magic Shroom is a perfect burger.”

— DANIELLE BUTLER

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.HOPDODDY.COM

TACOS

Torchy's Tacos

FINALISTS: Tacodeli, Vegan Nom, Veracruz All Natural

“Hillbilly Style Trailer Park is the crown jewel of tacos.”

— ZACH MARTIN

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.TORCHYSTACOS.COM

SUSHI

Uchi

FINALISTS: Komé, Musashino Sushi Dokoro, Otoko, Uchiko

“Fresh ingredients prepared with expert precision and a happy hour that cannot be topped.”

— DANIEL DIFFEN

801 S. LAMAR, WWW.UCHIAUSTIN.COM

BARBECUE

Franklin Barbecue

FINALISTS: la Barbecue, Stiles Switch BBQ & Brew, Terry Black's Barbecue, Valentina's Tex Mex BBQ

“Any place that Barack Obama will personally make time for is *frankly* worth your time.”

— JEANINE CHRISTENSEN

900 E. 11TH, WWW.FRANKLINBBQ.COM

NOODLES/RAMEN

Ramen Tatsu-ya

FINALISTS: Daruma Ramen, Michi Ramen, Xlan

“They're the reason I can't keep kosher.”

— STEVEN YAFFE

8557 RESEARCH #126; 1234 S. LAMAR; 1600 E. SIXTH, RAMEN-TATSUYA.COM

ITALIAN

Mandola's Italian Kitchen

FINALISTS: Il Brutto, Patrizi's, Red Ash Italia, Vespaio

“Holy crap, these paisanos know how to make Italian food like a grandma, only better.”

— ALAN WEISS

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.MANDOLAS.COM

ICE CREAM/FROZEN TREATS

Amy's Ice Creams

FINALISTS: Lick Honest Ice Creams, NadaMoo! Scoop Shop, Sweet Ritual

“Hello, the Mexican Vanilla is life-changing.”

— MARGARET ELKINS

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.AMYSICECREAMS.COM

DESSERTS

Sugar Mama's Bakeshop

FINALISTS: Chez Zee, Quack's 43rd Street Bakery, Sweet Ritual

“I will spoil my whole meal and diet for an Elvis cupcake. Like seriously I will eat a whole box of these cupcakes and not feel bad about it.”

— JUAN WENCES

1905-A S. FIRST; 2406-B MANOR RD., WWW.SUGARMAMASBAKESHOP.COM

SERVICE

Odd Duck

FINALISTS: Uchi, Uchiko

“I simultaneously feel like family and a VIP every time I walk in the door.”

— TARYN RUSSELL

1201 S. LAMAR, WWW.ODDDUCKAUSTIN.COM

CHEAP DATE

Peter Pan Mini-Golf

FINALISTS: Home Slice Pizza, Little Deli & Pizzeria, Nickel City, Torchy's Tacos

“BYOB & a great icebreaker.”

— STEPHANIE CLAYTON

1207 BARTON SPRINGS RD., WWW.PETERPANMINIGOLF.COM

WILD CARD

The Little Darlin'

FINALISTS: Enchiladas y Mas, Peace Bakery & Deli, Utopian Shift, Vigilante Gastropub & Games

“Dive bar heaven.”

— LIZ GRAY

6507 CIRCLE S RD., WWW.THELITTLEDARLIN.COM





BAKERY

Easy Tiger

FINALISTS: Quack's 43rd Street Bakery, Upper Crust Bakery

"Their sourdough is 🍞"

— RYAN QUIGLEY

709 E. SIXTH; 6406 N. I-35 #1100,
WWW.EASYTIGERUSA.COM

PATIO

Easy Tiger

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— REBEKAH OMAHEN

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CRITICS PICKS

FOOD & DRINK



BEST "I'LL DRINK TO THAT!" COLLABORATION

Circle Brewing Co. x Equality Texas Fanny Pack PRIDE Can

With the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots this June, it seemed like every business and their guncle jumped onto the rainbow (capitalism) bandwagon for Pride Month and just as soon sashayed away. But here in Austin, Circle Brewing Co. teamed up with Equality Texas for a pro-equality collab that was hard not to cheers to – or *with*, at least. For every pack of Circle's rainbow-wrapped Pride edition of its Fanny Pack kölsch sold, Circle donated \$1 to EQTX – which also celebrated its 30th anniversary this year – all summer long. Cheers, queers!

2340-B W. BRAKER,
WWW.CIRCLEBREWING.COM



BEST AUTHENTIC JAPANESE CURRY EXPERIENCE

Domo Alley-Gato

The Tatsu-ya brand is king around Austin, so it's no surprise that their bar, Domo Alley-Gato, has some of the most authentic and unique Japanese curry this side of the Pacific. From traditional options like their katsu curry with a perfectly fried pork cutlet, to their fusion option called Texas Mud, which comes with a heaping portion of Texas sausage, it's the quintessential bar eat to complement an ice-cold Kirin. Japanese curry isn't as big of a fad in the States as ramen, but after a trip to Domo Alley-Gato, you'll begin to wonder why.

1600-B E. SIXTH, WWW.DOMO-TATSUYA.COM



PHOTOS BY TODD V. WOLFSON

BEST PURVEYORS OF CITYWIDE "IRASSHAIMASE!"

Takehiro & Kayo Asazu

For Japanese-born Kayo and Takehiro Asazu, Japanese comfort food not only means home but also an experience best served shared, which is why the couple – who also started the (since-closed) Sushi-a-Go-Go trailer – opened their izakaya-style aka family-style restaurant, Komé, in 2011. But the Asazus didn't stop there. They've since opened Daruma Ramen; teamed up with East Side King's Motoyasu Utsunomiya for Sa-Tén Coffee & Eats; launched Ni-Komé Sushi & Ramen at Fareground; and partnered with former Uchi chef Masazumi Saio for their most recent restaurant, Uroko. The offerings might not always be the most traditional Japanese restaurant food, but with their emphasis on tasty accessible homestyle cooking, sitting down for a meal at an Asazu restaurant just feels like, well, home.

WWW.KOME-AUSTIN.COM/MISO/HOME/OUR-STORY

BEST BITE OUT OF THE EAST COAST

Nervous Charlie's

Bagels might not be the most contentious debate here in the capital city, but don't tell that to an East Coast expat. Be it the minerals in the water, the method of cooking (briefly boiled then baked), or what items should top the most famous of breads in Jewish heritage, the cognoscenti know a fake when they bite into one. Long Island transplant Chris Cunningham and partner Ali White are quite serious about bringing authentic bagels to the Austin masses. Using dough from the Big Apple, the duo (and crew) serve up an array of breakfast (try the wonderful Alexa) and lunch sandwiches (go for the Empire). You'll hear no Bronx cheers at this comfortable cafe.

5501 N. LAMAR, WWW.NERVOUSCHARLIES.COM





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BEST NEXUS OF FOOD AND BEER

The Brewer's Table

For too long the modus of the typical American brewpub was to make a passable amber ale and yet blithely underachieve with their food program as well. We don't know if those days are necessarily over for America, but in Austin, the Brewer's Table has obliterated those themes of beer and food mediocrity into a fine art installation of dishes like gochujang-glazed chicken wings and beer-glazed smoked pork ribs paired with a beautiful beer program highlighted by one of the city's beer exemplars, Vor Ort – a German-style lager brewed with pilsner malt, flaked maize, and a rotation of hops.

4715 E. FIFTH, WWW.THEBREWERSTABLE.COM

BEST NON-PSYCHOTROPIC SMOKED MUSHROOMS

Rosewood

It's a good sign of things to come when, upon entrance, the scent of in-house smoked anything swirls with the familiar musk of the old Haynes-DeLashwah House. Perched atop the hill at 11th and, you guessed it, Rosewood, the restaurant boasts a lovely view of Downtown. And while chef Jesse DeLeon's menu changes daily, one regular staple is the smoked mushroom small plate. A fungi variety – including oysters – is smoked and cooked "til just," and paired with a breaded egg and chile pequin pesto. Gone are the days of only appreciating smoked mushrooms for their hallucinogenic value.

1209 ROSEWOOD AVE., WWW.ROSEWOODATX.COM



JOHN ANDERSON

BEST ONIGIRI OUTSIDE OF JAPAN

Sugar Pine

Sugar Pine offers a plethora of traditional Japanese options from chilled soba noodles to piping hot karaage chicken, but the shining star here is the onigiri, a Japanese standard where the rice is formed into a triangle around a salty or sour ingredient and wrapped in seaweed. Sugar Pine has an extensive selection of freshly made onigiri, from spicy salmon to ume shiso to even decadent options like steak, and each one is served with a hot pickle as a complimentary palate cleanser. And don't forget to order a nut cookie on your way out – you won't regret it.

8578 RESEARCH, WWW.SUGARPINEATX.COM

BEST THING TO EVER HAPPEN TO AN ASIAN PEAR

She's Not Here

You'd think, with all the great sushi and tropical fare the joint serves up, that what's mostly used as a garnish – dark amber slices of pickled Asian pear – would go unnoticed at Downtown's She's Not Here. But whatever miracles of fermentation chef Ben Schwartz and his crew visit upon that fruit has turned it into morsels of exquisitely sweet and tangy godflesh via which we seek foodie apotheosis again and again. And again.

440 W. SECOND, WWW.SNHAUSTIN.COM

TINIEST BAR(BECUE) IN TEXAS

Fukumoto Sushi & Yakitori Izakaya

Osaka meets Austin at this outstanding Eastside izakaya joint. Enjoy teeny skewers of grilled meat and generous drapes of fresh fish (fear not, they even have vegan options) while sipping on sake or an obscure Japanese beer. A hearty "Trasshaimase!" from the chef kicks off this J-pop pumping party as soon as you walk through the door. Sashimi shrinkage might be a thing at other sushi spots, but this place keeps their cuts of fish large and loud. And, yes: Grilled pork belly, slapped on a stick, pairs well with everything.

514 MEDINA, WWW.FUKUMOTOAUSTIN.COM



DAVID BRENDAN HALL

BEST REASON TO SHOVEL CHEESE INTO YOUR MOUTH WITH YOUR HANDS

Queso Fundido at ATX Cocina

Around these parts, Tex-Mex queso is life, and whether straight-up, vegan, or Velveeta, everybody has their go-to style. Then there's queso fundido, repping the upper echelon of flambéed cheese, and this Downtown modern Mexican restaurant has perfected their version. Made with bubbled queso Oaxaca and queso Chihuahua, chef Kevin Taylor (whose parents owned Mexican restaurants) adds bonus rajas and smoked tomatoes, and changes the proteins regularly – maybe a venison picadillo or chorizo rojo – to take this dish up approximately 47 notches. Even better, the cheese delivery vehicles are fresh heirloom corn tortillas made from in-house nixtamalized masa. If you're really bold, add a fruity Paloma and consider it a full meal.

110 SAN ANTONIO ST. #170, WWW.ATXCOCINA.COM



JOHN ANDERSON

BEST BREAD YOU'LL NEVER GUESS IS GLUTEN-FREE

GFY Kitchen

Doughy, moist, and flavorful are not typically words used to describe gluten-free bread, but Tim Elias is raising the bar on gluten-free products to rival their glutinous counterparts. GFY Kitchen (aka Gluten Free Yourself Kitchen) has been producing exceptional baguettes, sliced sandwich bread, hamburger buns, and pizza crust, along with pretzels and bagels (the real deal because he's a New Yorker). Elias is proving that "gluten-free" doesn't equate to inferior, and that allergy-friendly foods can be enjoyed by all. Give it a try at their farmers' market locations or order online through Farmhouse Delivery.

WWW.GFYKITCHEN.COM

BEST DISPENSER OF CAFFEINE AND COMFORT

Genuine Joe Coffeehouse

Arms open to the entire rainbow of Austin, Genuine Joe Coffeehouse has always maintained an atmosphere as delightful as the delicious coffee and treats they serve. Whether you're writing your masterpiece, reading a favorite novel, or holding a club

meeting in Joe's cozy cellar space, this coffeehouse welcomes anyone and everyone and remains an institution because of their warm atmosphere. Leave hang-ups at the door and let the caffeinated camaraderie settle your heart.

2001 W. ANDERSON, WWW.GENUINEJOECOFFEE.COM

BEST FOODIE PROOF THAT PRINT MEDIA IS STILL COOKIN'

The Front Page

Swiping its name from the classic Hecht/MacArthur comedy about tabloid journalists, this new Springdale General spot focuses on what's best about the lunch hour, all day. From cheeky cocktails ("The Blue Stuff Barbers Put Their Combs In") to killer sandwiches (Smokey Turkey Sandwich with barbecued turkey, Swiss, spinach, mustard, and tomatillo chutney!), Shafer, Andrew, and Dick bridge the gap between modern cafe and old-school pub. Don't sleep on that hard kombucha or the pickle platter complete with slices of pickled egg. And if you chew with your mouth closed, you might even hear a neighborhood scoop.

1023 SPRINGDALE, BLDG. 1, STE. F, WWW.THEFRONTPAGE.PUB



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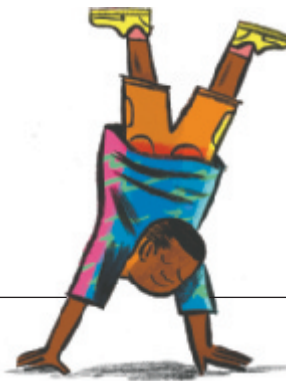
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READERS POLL

KIDS & FAMILY



FAMILY FESTIVAL

Trail of Lights

FINALISTS: ABC KiteFest, Old Settler's Music Festival

"This was always the highlight of my childhood growing up here. Spinning under the giant tree, smelling the fresh-made kettle corn, and walking the trail in awe every year. It's why I love this city."

— LEAH PRADO

ZILKER PARK, 2100 BARTON SPRINGS RD., WWW.AUSTINTRILOFLIGHTS.ORG



JANA BIRCHUM

YOUTH ARTS PROGRAM

ZACH Theatre Youth Programs

FINALISTS: Creative Action, KidsActing, Mother Falcon Music Lab, Paramount Theatre Summer Camps

"Such a lively community within these theatre walls. I found who I was at ZACH, and I am confident in who I am because of the amazing people here. Love you guys!"

— KAELE DOUGLASS

202 S. LAMAR, WWW.ZACHTHEATRE.ORG/EDUCATION/PERFORMING-ARTS-SCHOOL

YOUTH STEM PROGRAM

Girlstart STEM Center

FINALISTS: Hello World, Latinitas, Neuron Garage

"Girlstart has a great variety of events exposing girls to STEM careers and highlighting the fun of science and exploration."

— SAMANTHA MARCELLUS

1400 W. ANDERSON, WWW.GIRLSTART.ORG

BIRTHDAY CAKES

Sugar Mama's Bakeshop

FINALISTS: Capital City Bakery, HayleyCakes and Cookies, Quack's 43rd Street Bakery

"Yummy!"

— ASHLEY PARKER

1905-A S. FIRST; 2406-B MANOR RD., WWW.SUGARMAMASBAKESHOP.COM

FAMILY RESTAURANT

Chuy's

FINALISTS: Hat Creek Burger Co., Home Slice Pizza, Kerbey Lane Cafe, Phil's Icehouse

"Pictures of dogs everywhere and jalapeño ranch dip? Yes please."

— ALI TABRIZI

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.CHUYS.COM

PLAYGROUND

Zilker Park

FINALISTS: Central Market North, Play for All Park

"The Central Park of Austin."

— CAMILLE ABBOTT

2100 BARTON SPRINGS RD., WWW.AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/DEPARTMENT/ZILKER-METROPOLITAN-PARK

PARTY PLACE

Pinballz Arcade

FINALISTS: Epic Fun, High 5

"Ring ring ring ... my childhood is calling."

— EVA RODRIGUEZ

8940 RESEARCH #100;
15201 S. I-35, BUDA;
13729 RESEARCH, WWW.PINBALLZARCADE.COM

ALL-AGES VENUE

Pinballz Arcade

FINALISTS: High 5, Mohawk, Thinkery

"My kids love this place! What am I saying, I love this place."

— BRANDI NG

8940 RESEARCH #100;
15201 S. I-35, BUDA;
13729 RESEARCH, WWW.PINBALLZARCADE.COM

TOY STORE

Terra Toys

FINALISTS: Toy Dojo, Toy Joy

"I have a robot on my desk that reminds me that whimsy and mystery and weird are still available in abundance in Austin. I bought him at Terra Toys and it is the place I visit when I want to believe in humanity again."

— CHRISTIAN FLORES

2438 W. ANDERSON STE. 1-C, WWW.TERRATOYS.COM

KIDS' CLOTHING

Once Upon a Child

FINALISTS: Kid to Kid, SparkleKids

"I love to buy and sell here. I'm getting sad that my kids are about to be too old for this awesome store."

— BARBARA GOUTELON

13945 U.S. HWY. 183; 1601 S. I-35 #325, ROUND ROCK,
WWW.ONCEUPONACHILD.COM

SUMMER CAMP

YMCA

FINALISTS: Camp Paramount, Creative Action, Jump! Gymnastics, Neuron Garage

"I love what the Y represents."

— ANNE FLETCHER

WWW.AUSTINYMCA.ORG

YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAM

Soccer Shots

FINALISTS: Life Ki-do Martial Arts, the Mat Martial Arts & Fitness

"The coaches are amazing, and my shy little bird has really started loving the sport because of this program."

— AMBER DODSON

8820 BUSINESS PARK DR. #400,
WWW.SOCCERSHOTS.ORG/AUSTIN

WILD CARD

High 5

FINALISTS: Austin Allies, tuneBugz!

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— JAMES EMLEY

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CRITICS PICKS

KIDS & FAMILY



JOHN ANDERSON

BEST GIFTS FOR A FOSTER CHILD

Pop-Up Birthday

Too many kids never know the simple joy of screaming around their birthday party, covered in cake and unwrapping presents from people who care, and that's especially true for foster kids. Registered nonprofit Pop-Up Birthday is doing its best to make sure that children who are already dealing with enough enjoy a day dedicated to making them feel special. Founder Laila Scott and her team of helpers have already put their birthday boxes – a complete party in kit form – in the hands of over 2,000 foster kids in Austin and seven surrounding counties. Now that's something to celebrate.

WWW.POPUPBIRTHDAY.ORG



BEST CLUBBING FOR KIDS

Lonestar Soccer Club

Needless to say, if any of you are reading this in Austin, you failed to make it to the big time in world football. The good news is that Lonestar S.C. will at least give your li'l Lavelle or Pulisic Jr. a kicking chance to one day be a part of the beautiful game at its highest level. That's because Lonestar is one of the premier developmental programs in the entire country right here in Central Texas, developing girls and boys of various skill ranges from ages U-5 and up with various programs including recreational, junior academy, select, elite, developmental academy, and a women's professional side. Go on and get that flat in Barcelona booked!

WWW.LONESTAR-SC.COM

BEST MUSIC SPOT FOR GREEN THUMBS

Thicket Food Park

What better incentive do you need to visit a food park than a free gardening class and songwriter session while you nosh on vegan bites, tamales, and poke nachos? Host to the South Austin Family Fall Festival, this burgeoning Southside sprawl offers a family-friendly spot with a half-dozen food trucks, a community garden, outdoor yoga, and even a tiny barbershop in which to get that coiffure touched up. Where to begin!

7800 S. FIRST, WWW.THICKETAUSTIN.COM

BEST RULEMAKERS

Steve Jackson Games

We don't need to roll the dice or pull a card to work out who is Austin's winningest gaming company. Since 1980, Steve Jackson Games has won our hearts in every form of play, from their OG board games like autoslaughter fun *Car Wars*, online strategy in *Ultracorps*, a universe of role-playing in *GURPS*, and of course the joyous carnage of the infinitely mutable *Munchkin* card system. They even beat the Secret Service one time (true story!) and now we're calling them the ultimate winner.

WWW.SIGAMES.COM

BEST STRING THEORY

UT String Project at the Butler School of Music

One could spout an entire verbal essay on how spectacular the UT String Project is, and plenty has already been said by experts like the National String Project Consortium and the American String Teachers Association, which named this Butler School of Music youth string instrument developmental program as the national String Project of the Year. We agree! Classes range from early childhood to expert level, and the program serves as a sterling example for the training of teachers and young string players who upon graduation have founded, developed, or expanded string programs in public schools, taught in universities, established private studios, or played in symphony orchestras.

STRINGPROJECT.MUSIC.UTEXAS.EDU

MOST FAMILY RESOURCES IN ONE PLACE

HopeFest

Over 150 exhibitors, all providing public resources of one sort or another for kids and families: free food, clothing, glasses, and trees; health and vision screenings; rock climbing; housing, utility, and transportation assistance; immunizations and prenatal support; plus pony rides last year, vintage cars this year, and so, so much more. HopeFest is a very cool event – a collaboration of AISD, Austin Voices for Education and Youth, and dozens of nonprofits, church groups, businesses, and 150-plus volunteers – that's been going on each October for the past 14 years at Northeast (formerly Reagan) High. So you get to see their marching band and mariachi ensemble as well.

WWW.AUSTINVOICES.ORG/EVENT/HOPEFEST-19

BEST VITAMIN D BOOST

Austin Sunshine Camps

Established in 1928 as a response to the community's then-significant threat of tuberculosis, Austin Sunshine Camps in Zilker Park was intended to help local, economically disadvantaged youth spend time outdoors. After all, exposure to sunshine – and all its vitamin D glory – was believed to promote healing from the disease. The camp is still enriching Austin by offering a safe and inclusive spot for kids to breathe fresh air and catch a glimpse of nature's beauty and their big healthy futures. The nonprofit serves families without the means to attend increasingly pricey summer camps, while also offering structure and fun, from kayaking to campfires, all bundled inside the Zilker Lodge.

WWW.SUNSHINECAMPS.ORG

**BEST WAY TO PARTY
LIKE IT'S 1899**

Letterpress PLAY

In a world fixated on all things fast, disposable, and mass-produced, Letterpress PLAY wants you to take it slow. Opened in May, Kyle Hawley's South Austin studio and shop is home to a collection of vintage printing presses. But these beautiful behemoths are no museum curios. They get a regular workout producing elegant, zero-waste cards, posters, and even hankies(!). Want to get more hands-on? Kids will dig the just-cut-and-fold kits for making thaumatropes. These paper toys were first popularized in the Victorian era, but artful and economic design like this? That never goes out of style.

2300 S. LAMAR #108, WWW.LETTERPRESSPLAY.COM



KIMBERLEY JONES



WILDFLOWER.ORG

BEST INSPIRATION FOR IRL FORT BUILDING Fortlandia

Couch cushion forts were doomed once kids could construct mansions from an iPad in *Minecraft* instead of scrounging together every blanket and pillow in the house to make a constantly collapsing box. However, the Fortlandia outdoor exhibit at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center may be just the thing to revive the lost art of backyard fort building. The \$10,000 forts – custom-built by 10 local designers with sustainability in mind and bearing names like Fairy Pavilion, Fortmosa, and Color Keep – will inspire kids to start drawing up blueprints for their own backyard hideouts.

WWW.WILDFLOWER.ORG/FORTLANDIA

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READERS POLL



NIGHTLIFE



SHELLEY HIAM

LGBTQ CLUB

Cheer Up Charlies

FINALISTS: **Oilcan's, Rain on 4th**

"This place is just welcoming, period. You have all walks of life on that dance floor moving and grooving together like Gaga intended."

— JUAN WENCES

900 RED RIVER, WWW.CHEERUPCHARLIES.COM

BAR FOR SINGLES

Cheer Up Charlies

FINALISTS: **Nickel City, Rain on 4th, Shangri-La, South Austin Beer Garden**

"Great bar to hang. The service is great and lots of locations to mingle there."

— JULIA LISS

900 RED RIVER, WWW.CHEERUPCHARLIES.COM

BARTENDER

Kathee Lozano (Cheer Up Charlies)

FINALISTS: **Pat Dean (Velvet Room), Kelsey Caudebec (The Tigress Pub), Whitney Hazelmeyer (Watertrade)**

"Kathee is amazing! So welcoming and accepting to everyone she encounters and such a good time. I always look forward to seeing her awesome smile."

— NICK BEILER

HAPPY HOUR

Easy Tiger

FINALISTS: **Péché, Salty Sow**

"Best snack and drink prices for happy hour. Sign me up for an Old Fashioned and pretzel with beer cheese."

— DAVID VALENZUELA

709 E. SIXTH; 6406 N. I-35 #1100, WWW.EASYTIGERUSA.COM

PLACE FOR SOBER SOCIALIZING

Central Library

FINALISTS: **Cosmic Coffee + Beer Garden, Sans Bar**

"The Central Library is the city's crown jewel. Workspaces, event spaces, social spaces, books, art, coffee, food ... it represents all the new best that Austin has to offer. You can even get a workout on those twisting Harry Potter staircases."

— DANIEL DIFFEN

710 W. CESAR CHAVEZ, LIBRARY.AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/CENTRAL-LIBRARY

KARAOKE

The HighBall

FINALISTS: **Common Interest, Ego's**

"The HighBall has the best themed rooms and puts on some of the best events in all of Austin."

— HADDIE COOKE

1120 S. LAMAR, WWW.THEHIGHBALL.COM

DANCE CLUB

Barbarella

FINALISTS: **Elysium, Highland Lounge, Rain on 4th**

"If I die on the dance floor at Barbz, I will have died doing what I love the most."

— ALANA RIDDLE

615 RED RIVER, WWW.FB.COM/BARBARELLA.AUSTIN.9

INTIMATE LIVE MUSIC VENUE

Continental Club

FINALISTS: **Cactus Cafe, Saxon Pub**

"A classic Austin venue made even better with the presence of Dianne Scott."

— DEBBY BURSLEM

1315 S. CONGRESS, WWW.CONTINENTALCLUB.COM

LARGE LIVE MUSIC VENUE

ACL Live at the Moody Theater

FINALISTS: **Mohawk, Stubb's**

"Incredible artists, friendly and caring staff, great acoustics."

— JM COX

310 W. WILLIE NELSON BLVD., WWW.ACL-LIVE.COM

OUTDOOR VENUE

Stubb's

FINALISTS: **Cheer Up Charlies, Mohawk**

"Bigger space and better sound. That simple."

— ERIC QUITUGUA

801 RED RIVER, WWW.STUBBSAUSTIN.COM

DJ

DJ GirlFriend

FINALISTS: **DJ Choro Funk, DJ Mel, DJ 2DQ**

"Does life get better than Neon Rainbows Nineties country night at Cheer Up Charlies with DJ GirlFriend?"

— MANDY GAULD

WWW.GIRLFRIENDATX.COM

COCKTAIL BAR

Roosevelt Room

FINALISTS: **Garage Cocktail Bar, Small Victory, the Tigress Pub, Whisler's**

"Try the Cigar Box to find out why."

— ALISHA SNYDER

307-B W. FIFTH, WWW.THEROOSEVELTROOMATX.COM

DIVE BAR

Deep Eddy Cabaret

FINALISTS: **Lala's, Nickel City**

"Legit dive bar. Ice cold beer mugs, nice and dark inside."

— LAUREN BISHOP

2315 LAKE AUSTIN BLVD., WWW.DEEPEDDYCABARET.COM

SPORTS BAR

Haymaker

FINALISTS: **Cover 3, Lavaca Street Bar**

"Those HABANERO pickled eggz doe!!!! Slim Jim in yo BLOODY MARY?! COME ON NOW! The ONLY choice."

— ELIZABETH LIDDELL

2310 MANOR RD., WWW.HAYMAKERAUSTIN.COM

JUKEBOX

Casino el Camino

FINALISTS: **Deep Eddy Cabaret, Lala's, MugShots**

"This is a pretty epic jukebox."

— VICTORIA KLINE

517 E. SIXTH, WWW.CASINOELCAMINO.NET



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TRIVIA NIGHT

Geeks Who Drink at the HighBall

FINALISTS: Get It Gals, Pluckers Wing Bar, Trivia 512 at Radio Coffee & Beer

“The hosts at the HighBall really go the extra mile to bring something special.”

— *SHAUN HADFIELD*

WWW.GEEKSWHODRINK.COM/VENUE/16729898/TRIVIA-AT-THE-HIGHBALL

QUEER PARTY

QueerBomb

FINALISTS: Cut Up! at Elysium, Lesbutante & the Boss monthly ladies' night, Lez B In Touch: Dykes You Should Know

“Anticapitalism? Yes, please, I'll take four.”

— *NAKIA WINFIELD*

WWW.FB.COM/QBATX

POOL HALL

Buffalo Billiards

FINALISTS: The Grand, Warehouse Billiard Bar

“Legendary pool hall that gives you a chilled atmosphere in the midst of a hectic Sixth Street.”

— *EDWARD CROWDER III*

201 E. SIXTH, WWW.BUFFALOBILLIARDSAUSTIN.COM

ESCAPE ROOM

Austin Panic Room

FINALISTS: The Escape Game Austin, Lockout Austin

“Best in Austin.”

— *APRIL STRUB*

1205 RIO GRANDE, WWW.TEXASPANICROOM.COM/AUSTIN; 4403 GUADALUPE, WWW.TEXASPANICROOM.COM/PROJECT-PANIC

ADULT CLUB

The Yellow Rose

FINALISTS: The Friends Club, Perfect 10

“Classic and classy.”

— *ZACH MARTIN*

6528 N. LAMAR, WWW.YELLOWROSE.COM

WILD CARD

Sahara Lounge Africa Night ▶

FINALISTS: Austin Dungeon, Butt Stuff Bingo, wILD 2.0

“Sahara Lounge is a special place and one of the last of its kind in the city of Austin.”

— *KATHERINE VAUGHN*

1413 WEBBERVILLE RD., WWW.SAHARALOUNGE.COM



DAVID BRENDAN HALL

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CRITICS PICKS

NIGHTLIFE



BEST NEW REASON TO EXIT SLAUGHTER LANE

The Far Out

In February, the team behind campus eatery Hopfields debuted cocktail bar Nicolaza's at 8504 S. Congress. With help from veteran booker Lawrence Boone, they've since rebranded as the Far Out, a dive bar with on-point local music four nights a week. The redo evolved the 100-year-old structure's former lives as the Red Shed Tavern, Beverly's, and historic watering hole the Last Chance. Willie Nelson and Merle Haggard filmed the "Pancho & Lefty" video on-site, and according to legend, the Newton Boys stopped by after robbing banks decades prior. Soak up South Austin's history on the patio alongside tunes beyond the Downtown bustle.

8504 S. CONGRESS, WWW.FB.COM/THEFAROUTLOUNGE

BEST PARTY FOR LOVERS OF STEERS 'N' QUEERS

Neon Rainbows

If you're a country-loving queer who frequently (and not-so-secretly) wants to hang with your friends in welcoming

places, you best take yourself to the Red River road and dance 'til you can't no more at Neon Rainbows. DJ Girlfriend's semiregular hoedown at Cheer Up Charlies has two-stepped into many a queer's heart with both DJ sets and live bands playing the very best of Nineties country classics. Blame it all on its inclusive roots, but at Neon Rainbows, you can show up in fabulous boots and (figuratively) ruin a heteronormative affair. Giddyup, cowboys!



POSTER BY LAUREN DICKENS



DAVID BRENDAN HALL



BEST VIOLET CROWN SERENADE

Eberly's Sunset Sessions

What good is a swanky rooftop bar in Austin if it's not hosting live music?

Production company White Light Exposure teamed with Eberly this year to launch their intimate new music series on top of the South Lamar restaurant, with proceeds going to benefit the SIMS Foundation. So far, the sessions have wrangled special sets from local standouts like A Giant Dog, White Denim, and Tameca Jones, as well as Will Sheff from Okkervil River.

615 S. LAMAR, WWW.EBERLYAUSTIN.COM

BEST HOUND-INSPIRED HANG

Frazier's Long & Low

Whether from the retro beer signs, wood paneling behind the bar, or low-key Seventies vibe, Frazier's feels like the kind of place your mother used to send you to pick up your dad. Michael Frazier took inspiration for the name from his two hound dogs ("long life, low stress") and, along with partner Nathan Hill (White Horse), created a neighborhood hang that inspires that laid-back mantra. Pool tables, shuffleboard, and the eclectically stellar jukebox all add to the flavor of their signature chopped cheeseburger.

2538 ELMONT, WWW.FRAZIERBAR.COM

BEST LISTENING PARTY

The Long Play Lounge

In a world of streaming singles, the Long Play Lounge drops the needle on deeper grooves. The latest joint from Mike Therieau and Will Tanner (Hole in the Wall, Stay Gold), with input from punk icon John Doe (X), caters to vinylphiles, but without any pretension. The extensive record collection on call for the house turntable, excellent sound system, and intimate, chill atmosphere have made the bar a favorite for local artists debuting their latest platters.

704 W. ST. JOHNS AVE., WWW.THELONGPLAYLOUNGE.COM

BEST WEEKLY QUEER CLUBHOUSE

Cut Up!

In April, a group of leading creatives from Austin's queer nightlife teamed up to provide an essential component: consistency. Every single dang Tuesday, this multifaceted dance party takes over the storied counterculture locale of Red River's Elysium. Cut Up! has free entry before 11pm, rounding up DJ sets, drag-adjacent performers, and local vendors. Their stated goal: "To open up the pit and platform freak flag artists in Austin, Texas."

705 RED RIVER, WWW.ELYSIUMONLINE.NET

THE AUSTIN

CHRONICLE

READERS SURVEY

1981
2019

As we look forward to our fifth decade publishing this paper, and to a print redesign scheduled for late January, we thought we'd take this occasion to ask our readers some questions about how you use the print edition - what parts you find useful, and what parts we could improve. Along with the big things, we want to know how useful the little things are: the listings and regular features that take up a large part of our time and the space in the paper every week, but that don't generate a lot of feedback in the normal run of things. A lot of this is work we've been doing the same way for a long time because it seems to work. But if you've been thinking, "Why do they have all this verbiage about X, when what I really need to know is Y?" or "I wish this info were easier to find," this is a great time to let us know that.

Check out the survey, then pull out this center sheet and send it to us at PO Box 4189, Austin, TX 78765, or fill it out online at austinchronicle.com/survey.

- Nick Barbaro,
Publisher of *The Austin Chronicle*

Austin Chronicle

How many years have you lived in Austin (if at all)?

- 1 year or less
- 2-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-19 years
- 20+ years

How long have you been reading *The Austin Chronicle*?

- 1 year or less
- 2-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-19 years
- 20+ years

Do you read *The Austin Chronicle* in print, online, or both?

- Print
- Online
- Both
- Neither

If neither, why?

How often do you read *The Austin Chronicle* in print?

- Weekly
- Twice a month
- Monthly
- Never

How often do you visit austinchronicle.com?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Twice a month
- Monthly
- Never

How long do you keep a typical issue of the *Chronicle*?

- One day
- Several days
- One week
- Several weeks
- A month or longer

Which special issues of the *Chronicle* do you look forward to most? Choose up to 5.

- Best of Austin
- First Plates
- Austin Music Awards
- Austin City Limits Music Festival
- South by Southwest
- Drinks
- Top 10s
- Gift Guide
- Summer Fun
- None of the above
- Other:

Which recurring columns do you read the most?

- Austin at Large (politics column by Mike Clark-Madison)
- Day Trips (travel column by Gerald McLeod)
- Faster Than Sound (music column by Rachel Rascoe)
- The Luv Doc (humor/advice column by Dan Hardick)
- Point Austin (politics column by Michael King)
- Public Notice (politics column by Nick Barbaro)
- Qmmunity (LGBTQ+ column by Sarah Marloff)
- Soccer Watch (soccer column by Nick Barbaro)
- Common Law (law column by Luke Ellis)
- Mr. Smarty Pants Knows (trivia by R.U. Steinberg)

Rank these sections of the paper in order of most-read (1) to least-read (7).

- ___ News
- ___ Food
- ___ Music
- ___ Screens
- ___ Arts & Culture
- ___ Events
- ___ LGBTQ+

What are your favorite parts of the print issue?

What are your least favorite parts of the print issue?

What subjects or topics would you like to see us cover more?

What subjects or topics would you like to see us cover less?

Select each part of the print issue you find useful.

- Movie Times
- Theatre/Dance Reviews
- Free Will Astrology
- Music Listings
- Book Reviews
- Calendar (Recommended Events)
- Advertisements
- Headlines (News Briefs)
- Yoga Listings
- Club Venue Guide
- LGBTQ+ Listings
- Election Endorsements
- Comedy/Improv Reviews
- Movie Reviews
- Civics Listings
- Kids Listings
- Sports/Fitness Listings
- Table of Contents
- Crossword Puzzle
- Out of Town Listings
- Letters to the Editor
- Record Reviews
- Arts Listings
- Food Events
- Restaurant Reviews
- Visual Arts Reviews

Do you prefer to read event listings by section or by date?

- By section
- By date
- No preference

Which option best describes how you use our event listings?

- I'm looking for the widest variety of things to do in Austin.
- I'm looking for *Chronicle* recommended events.
- Other:

Which three cover images are you most drawn to? (Circle 3.)



What types of cover stories do you respond to most? Choose all that apply.

- Screens (movies, TV, gaming, internet culture)
- Food
- Arts & Culture
- News
- LGBTQ+
- Music
- Festival Previews
- Other:

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I believe the *Chronicle* is a relevant source of news and information.

- Agree
- Disagree

I trust the *Chronicle's* reporting.

- Agree
- Disagree

I care about independent journalism and free press.

- Agree
- Disagree

I wish the *Chronicle* was more available/accessible.

- Agree
- Disagree

I enjoy picking up a physical newspaper.

- Agree
- Disagree

List any content in the paper that is difficult for you to find, if any.

Which of the following *Chronicle* events have you attended in the past?

- Best of Austin
- Austin Music Awards
- SXSW Day Party
- First Plates Awards
- Hot Sauce Festival
- Other:

Which of the following best describes how you engage with *The Austin Chronicle*? (Select all that apply.)

- I follow the *Chronicle* on social media.
- I subscribe to email newsletters.
- I am a donor.
- I am an advertiser.
- I have a paid print subscription.
- Other:

When you think about the *Chronicle*, what three words come to mind first?

How interested are you in the following types of stories?

	1	2	3	4	5
Long-Form Investigative Pieces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Short News Briefs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Photo Galleries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opinion Columns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Short Reviews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long Reviews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal Essays	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Artist Profiles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q&A's	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reader Comments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listicles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quizzes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Games	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comedic Essays	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Notable Obituaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Think Pieces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In particular, how interested are you in the following?

	1	2	3	4	5
Technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fashion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National Politics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comedy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Science & Environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Television	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Anything we missed? Let us know any additional thoughts you may have about *The Austin Chronicle*.

AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	INCOME
<input type="radio"/> 21 & under	<input type="radio"/> Male	<input type="radio"/> High School	<input type="radio"/> Under 25K
<input type="radio"/> 22-34	<input type="radio"/> Female	<input type="radio"/> Some College	<input type="radio"/> 26-50K
<input type="radio"/> 35-44	<input type="radio"/> Other:	<input type="radio"/> College Degree	<input type="radio"/> 51-75K
<input type="radio"/> 45-54		<input type="radio"/> Advanced Degree	<input type="radio"/> 76-100K
<input type="radio"/> 55-64			<input type="radio"/> 100K+
<input type="radio"/> 65+	ZIP CODE _____		



Save a stamp. Take this survey online at:
austinchronicle.com/survey

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INTENTIONALLY BLANK



THE AUSTIN CHRONICLE

austinchronicle.com



JANA BIRCHUM

BEST LADIES' NIGHT FOR LADY KNIGHTS

Tribe Comics & Games

Let's face it: Meeting people is hard. Especially in a big city like Austin, and especially for those of us in that cross-section demographic where "adult nerd" meets "women-identified." Thankfully, Tribe Comics & Games has the hook-up you need with "by women, for women," ladies-only *Dungeons & Dragons* nights every Wednesday at 7pm. Open to all skill levels, the evening not only features a beginners' table, where an experienced Dungeon Mistress will teach you how to play, but also has pre-generated playable characters available for you to choose from. You'll be spell-slinging and orc-slaying with your new squad in no time.

3005 S. LAMAR STE. D-113, WWW.TRIBECAG.COM

MOST AGGRESSIVELY HIP COCKTAIL BAR

Garage

With its unassuming exterior, secreted away inside a former valet ticketing office, Garage remains one of the better-kept secrets of Austin's bar scene. The transition from the bare cement of the parking lot to the carefully designed, art deco-adjacent space of the bar feels gleefully clandestine, like sneaking off to a rave in an abandoned amusement park or partying in a nightclub tucked beneath a bridge. Plus, the cocktails are outstanding, as Instagrammable as they are delicious.

503 COLORADO, WWW.GARAGETX.COM

MOST SOUTHERN CHARM

South Austin Beer Garden

As Manchaca starts to widen and the green space between strip malls expands, the vibe trends distinctly more chill. At South Austin Beer Garden, that vibe turns positively beachy. Geographically landlocked but spiritually lake-adjacent, this welcoming new watering hole operates out of a converted old house still bearing its original shiplap. Whether you're hunkered down at the bar, taking in the game and the decor's license-plate kitsch with one of 60 beers on tap, or settling in outside on the 3,000-square-foot wooded deck, best dog at your feet and belly full from on-site food truck Cluck-n-Burger – the living is extremely easy in the 78748.

10700 MANCHACA RD., WWW.SOUTHASTINBEERGARDEN.COM

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READERS POLL

POLITICS & MEDIA



BRET BROOKSHIRE

LOCAL PODCAST *The Night Owl*

FINALISTS: *Gender Fluids*, *The Rabble*

"Tales that will capture your imagination, and make you question just what it was that went bump in the night."

— KAY MARLEY-DILWORTH

WWW.THENIGHTOWLPODCAST.COM



JOURNALIST

Sarah Marloff (*The Austin Chronicle*)

FINALISTS: Gus Bova (*The Texas Observer*), Evan Smith (*The Texas Tribune*)

"Sarah is so proactive and in touch, and consistently features the wide diversity of our queer community. This is so important as we grow and change as a city."

— STAN WILSON

WWW.TWITTER.COM/SARAHMARLOFF

FILM CRITIC

Richard Whittaker (*The Austin Chronicle*)

FINALISTS: Sean Chandler (*Sean Chandler Talks About Movies*), Robert Sims (*Lights Camera Austin*)

"Love his reviews – informative and sparky!"

— PAMELA ELLEN FERGUSON

WWW.TWITTER.COM/YORKSHIRETX

FOOD WRITER

Nadia Chaudhry (*Eater Austin*)

FINALISTS: Addie Broyles (*Austin American-Statesman*), Jessi Cape (*The Austin Chronicle*), Matthew Odam (*Austin American-Statesman*), Brandon Watson (*CultureMap*)

"The most dedicated and evenhanded food writer in Austin."

— RYAN MCELROY

WWW.AUSTIN.EATER.COM

PHOTOGRAPHER

Annie Ray

FINALISTS: Casey Chapman Ross, David Brendan Hall

"She is a delight to work with."

— DAVIS COVIN

WWW.ANNIERAY.NET

PUBLICATION

The Austin Chronicle

FINALISTS: *Austin American-Statesman*, *The Texas Tribune*

"Thank God for a free weekly crossword."

— HOLLY PHILLIPS

WWW.AUSTINCHRONICLE.COM

RADIO STATION

KUT 90.5FM

FINALISTS: KOOP 91.7FM, KUTX 98.9FM, Sun Radio

"KUT is my go-to, all-day news station."

— CLAUDIA CORUM

WWW.KUT.ORG

RADIO PROGRAM

Texas Standard (KUT)

FINALISTS: Dudley & Bob + Matt (KLBJ), Jason and Deb in the Morning (101X)

"Hands down the most consistent, well produced, informative radio program in Austin."

— BENJAMIN BURDICK

WWW.KUT.ORG

SPANISH-LANGUAGE RADIO STATION

Latino 102.7

FINALISTS: 107.1 La Z, Tú 103.1

"Pedro is so much fun to listen to. Has so much charisma and you can feel his energy through the radio."

— LIZ GUERRERO

WWW.LATINO1027.COM

LOCAL NEWS

KXAN

FINALISTS: KUT, KVUE

"The anchors and meteorologists are very professional and keep me informed about important information regarding Austin."

— ANITA MATEJKA

WWW.KXAN.COM

TV ANCHOR/REPORTER

Quita Culpepper (KVUE)

FINALISTS: Robert Hadlock (KXAN), Sally Hernandez (KXAN), Jenni Lee (KVUE)

"Who doesn't love Quita?!"

— JACK CRUZ

WWW.KVUE.COM

SPORTSCASTER

Mike Barnes (formerly KVUE)

FINALISTS: Bob Ballou (KEYE), Dennis de la Peña (FOX 7), Roger Wallace (KXAN)

"I miss Mike Barnes. His sportscasting was about more than sports, it was about the people."

— BETSY KIRKSEY

WWW.KVUE.COM

WEATHERPERSON

Jim Spencer (KXAN)

FINALISTS: James Greenhaw ("Pflugerville Weatherguy"), David Yeomans (KXAN)

"Feels like Dad is telling you to take a sweater."

— LAUREN BERNICK

WWW.KXAN.COM



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FINALISTS: Austin Democratic Socialists of America, Austin Recovery

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— MARY MALTBIE

1156 W. CESAR CHAVEZ,
WWW.AUSTINPETSALIVE.ORG



DAVID BRENDAN HALL

LOCAL STARTUP

Music Firsthand

FINALISTS: Civitech, inLieu

“Music Firsthand is like having that one friend who knows all the best bands in town on speed dial.”

— MASON PFEIFFER

WWW.MUSICFIRSTHAND.LIVE

LOCAL BLOGGER

Jane Ko (A Taste of Koko)

FINALISTS: Ashley Rollins (Swift Wellness), Jason Stanford (The Stanford Newsletter Experiment)

“She’s my go-to girl for anything Austin-related!”

— CHELSEA GOODSON

WWW.ATASTEOFKOKO.COM

LOCAL YOUTUBER

Adriene Mishler (Yoga With Adriene)

FINALISTS: Sam Contreras and Rico Perez-Grant (Tea Time With T Boys), Negeen Dargahi

“Adriene inspires her viewers one breath, one giggle, and one sentence at a time. She reminds you to forgive yourself and keep trying to do whatever thing it is you’re trying to do. She is kindness embodied.”

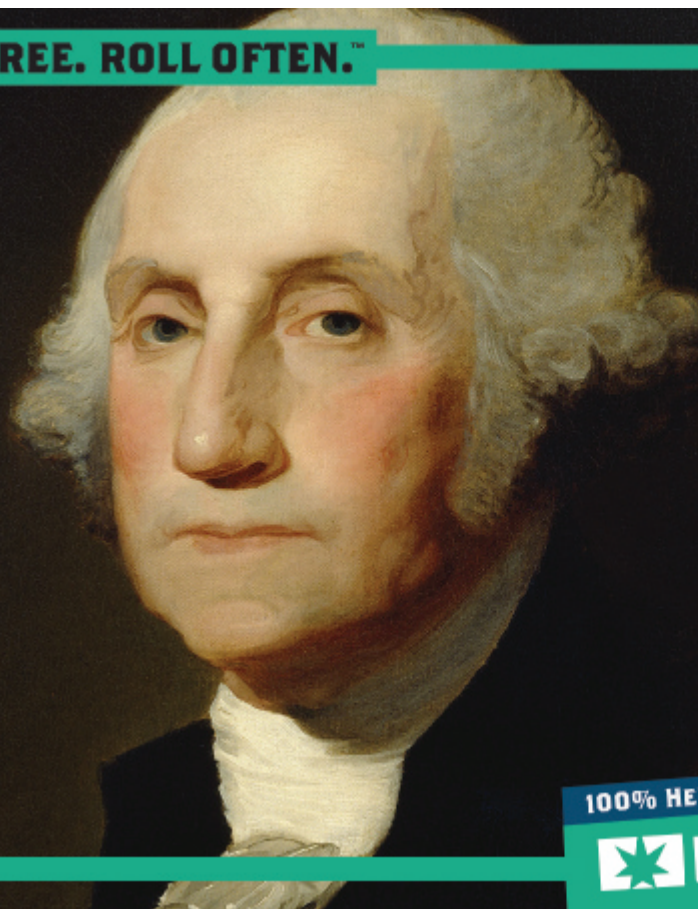
— ANGELA MIRACLE

WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/YOGAWITHADRIENE,
WWW.YOGAWITHADRIENE.COM

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— George Washington, 1st US president



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LOCAL INSTAGRAMMER

Alex Hopes (Zilker Bark)

FINALISTS: Clarissa Cardenas (ATX Concert Queen), Jane Ko (A Taste of Koko), John Kulow (ATX FoodGuy)

"Just to be clear, my vote is for dogs! But also Alex is pretty great."

— ARON TAYLOR

WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/ZILKERBARK, WWW.ZILKERBARK.COM

CITY OFFICIAL

Steve Adler

FINALISTS: Greg Casar, Jimmy Flannigan

"He's willing to tackle hard issues and to be honest with the community."

— ANN JINKINS

WWW.MAYORADLER.COM, WWW.TWITTER.COM/MAYORADLER

STATE OFFICIAL

Lloyd Doggett

FINALISTS: Gina Hinojosa, Donna Howard, Kirk Watson

"Lloyd Doggett is a man of integrity. Longtime public servant. Thank you, Lloyd!"

— CAROL AUSTIN

WWW.DOGGETT.HOUSE.GOV

ACTIVIST

Emily LeBlanc (CASA of Travis County)

FINALISTS: Chas Moore (Austin Justice Coalition), Marci Purcell (Support Texas Adoptee Rights), Heidi Sloan (Genesis Gardens)

"Emily is fierce and relentless as a voice for victims of DV/SA in our community."

— LAURA SOVINE

WWW.CASATRAVIS.ORG

LOCAL CONTROVERSY

Decriminalization of homelessness

FINALISTS: Boil water notice, Convention Center expansion, D.A.'s Office accused of lack of support for sexual assault survivors

"This isn't a controversy; it's a win for a more humane Austin."

— TANDERA LOUIE

WILD CARD

Beer-to-Go legislation passes

FINALISTS: #Bonnenghazi drama, Campaign against the Texas Voter Purge

"Texas finally caught up with the rest of the nation to become the last state to allow beer-to-go sales. This is a huge step in supporting local businesses across the state."

— DAVID WIECHMANN



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   @SmallBizAustin



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CRITICS PICKS

POLITICS & MEDIA



BEST IG REPORTER ON MOM-AND-POP PAN-ASIAN RESTAURANTS

@eats_n_noods

One of the best parts of Austin's food scene is without a doubt the teeny-tiny family-owned restaurants that largely fly under the radar. Thanks to the genius – known simply as Lenny – over at @eats_n_noods, followers (us included!) are privy to a wide span of specifically Asian fare from spots across the greater metro area. From pho to sushi, from restaurants and food trucks to her very own kitchen, @eats_n_noods is #blessing us with mouthwatering photos of her #austinnoods adventures. As the bio reads, “A bowl of noods a day keeps the doctors away.”

WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/EATS_N_NOODS

BEST MEDIA POWER MOVES

Debbie Hiott and Andrea Valdez

In a shifting media landscape where a lot of stories don't end well, these two women taking the reins at two of Austin's most important media institutions – KUT-FM and the *Texas Observer* – is worthy of celebration. After a career laboring at and then leading the *Statesman*, Hiott jumped into broadcasting at just the right time, as a shaken-up KUT looked to heal from internal turmoil. Meanwhile, Valdez, a former rising star at *Texas Monthly*, returned home from a stint at *Wired* to become the first Latina to lead a statewide news publication. We value them both as colleagues and as competitors.

WWW.TWITTER.COM/DHIOTT; WWW.TWITTER.COM/ANDREAMVALDEZ

BEST MOVE TO THE LEFT AT THE LEGE

Texas House of Representatives LGBTQ Caucus

After the 2018 elections managed to flip 12 noteworthy seats in the Texas House of Representatives, the 86th legislative session saw a little blue wave of power pulsing through the state Capitol. But the biggest slap back to the Republicans' anti-LGBTQ agenda from the last two sessions came from the House's newly formed LGBTQ Caucus, led by seasoned reps Mary González, D-El Paso, and Celia Israel, D-Austin, alongside freshman legislators Jessica González, D-Dallas; Julie Johnson, D-Carrollton; and Erin Zwiener, D-Driftwood. As a united front, they squashed some bad bills, neutered others, and sent a message to queer youth across the state: *You matter.*

WWW.FB.COM/TXLGBTQCAUCUS



TODD V. WOLFSON

BEST ATX AURAL HISTORY *How Did I Get Here?* Podcast

Johnny Goudie is the Marc Maron of Austin music. The veteran singer/guitarist – best known for fronting early Nineties pop band Mr. Rocket Baby and, later, his major-label rock act, Goudie – stepped up to the microphone with a new intention in 2011 and launched the *How Did I Get Here?* podcast. Now 840-some episodes in, the hourlong, twice-weekly interview show gives the host a platform to really connect with his Austin music guests, not just on what's happening in their careers, but also in the shared experience of music appreciation – and that's where he truly shines.

WWW.HOWDIDIGETHERE.PODBEAN.COM

BEST DECODERS OF “CAN TRUMP BUY GREENLAND?” AND OTHER NATIONAL SECURITY TOPICS

The National Security Law Podcast



BRET BROOKSHIRE

Steve Vladeck (l) and Bobby Chesney

From forays into Trumplandia to weighing in on the military prison at Guantánamo Bay, University of Texas Law professors Bobby Chesney and Steve Vladeck dissect the latest legal controversies associated with the U.S. government's national security activities on their weekly *The National Security Law Podcast*. Sure, the subject material might be niche to some (okay, a lot) of us, but the pair unpacks legal parlance in such a way that both lawyers and non-lawyers alike can understand WTH is actually going on with the legal issues behind the headlines. The duo's added dose of frivolity doesn't hurt either. We hereby order you to listen to this podcast.

WWW.NATIONALSECURITYLAWPODCAST.COM

BEST PROGRESSIVE TAG TEAM

Greg Casar and Delia Garza

The entire City Council calls itself progressive, and each member has had chances to vote their values and lead their colleagues toward making Austin more just and equitable. Casar and Garza have made that *progression* easier for everyone with their consistent, coordinated, energetic, and thoughtful advocacy: for workers' rights and reproductive rights, for decriminalizing homelessness and (maybe!) ending possession-of-marijuana arrests, for a new modern land use code but also (on Riverside) for preserving existing working-class housing. It's an agenda that might give Greg Abbott hives, but Casar and Garza have shown that it's what many, many Austinites actually believe and want.

WWW.AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/DISTRICT-2; WWW.AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/DISTRICT-4



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BEST RECLAIMING OF SPACE

The 2019 Dyke March

Some would say you can't have Pride without a Dyke March. It's the political, take-back-the-streets, in-your-face-and-fiery sister to the Pride Parade. One, at least in its modern-day iteration, is about celebrating how far we've come; the other, about fighting for more and greater queer rights. A Dyke March is also about creating space for the other, often less visible letters of the LGBTQIAphabet and lauding those faces and spaces, too. All this is to say: The return of Austin's Dyke March this August was a joyous reclamation of queer space and a heartfelt gathering to remember our history while also charting a path to an inclusive and radical future.



JANA BIRCHUM

BEST REPURPOSING OF A RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE QUOTE

Jimmy Flannigan

When a group of Houston-based bigots descended on City Council during Austin Pride Week to decry Drag Queen Storytime events at local libraries, City Council Member Jimmy Flannigan – the first openly gay man to sit on the dais – shut that ish down. Chastising the speakers for both their anti-LGBTQ hate speech and their rudeness for interrupting him, Flannigan said, “I’m not going to stand for it. My community doesn’t stand for it. My district doesn’t stand for it.” He thanked the queers and allies in attendance, promised a celebratory Pride weekend, and then – taking up one fabulous paper fan – channeled his inner RuPaul to send those haters home: “To those who have come here to spread their hate, I only have two words: Sashay away.” Flannigan – shantay, you stay, honey.

WWW.AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/DISTRICT-6

BEST PROLETARIAT UPRISING

Beerland Strike

Austin's biggest music outrage of 2019 hit the fan May 28 when employees of Red River venue Beerland announced a strike, citing unpaid wages since March.

Owner Richard Lynn attempted to outrun the drama with a pretty press release on Beerland's sale to an unknown buyer. The successive social media firestorm offered ample use of “scabs” and “solidarity,” and the club has not been open since. In weeks to follow, the scene united to raise

some \$18,000 for Beerland workers, as well as owed employees of Lynn's Super Secret Records label group. After a summer of ownership rumors, Stubb's General Manager Ryan Garrett confirmed in October that he'd signed a lease on the property.

BEST TOOL IN THE CIVIC TOOLBOX

Austin's Homelessness Advisory Committee

Our city leaders aren't flying blind as Austin makes its dramatic, systematic efforts to flat-out end homelessness. Among their most valuable guides are the members of AHAC, a group of people with diverse life stories to tell, all of which include lived experience with homelessness. These volunteers came together in 2017 to inform the city Innovation Office's iTeam effort to “solve for homelessness,” with help from \$1.25 million in grant funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies; their stories and skills have gone into the design of the programs and services, both large and small, now being deployed to make Austin a different, better place for all, no matter where or how they live.

WWW.AUSTININNOVATION.WIXSITE.COM/SOLVEFORHOMELESSNESS

BEST PHOTOGRAPHER TO KEEP YOU STARRY-EYED

Rob Pettengill

Look into the night sky when you're way out in the country and there's no artificial light for miles: What you'll see will astound you. Now imagine you had a telescope and a good camera for capturing all that stellar glory. Even then, the images might not do justice to reality – unless you had the skills of Rob Pettengill. The local astrophotographer got his first telescope when he was 8 years old; now, he's among this year's NASA JPL Solar System Ambassadors and continues to use his professional experiences in computation, electronics, and imaging to bring the starry heavens a little closer to earth.

PHOTO BY ROB PETTENGILL

ASTRONOMY.ROBPETTENGILL.ORG



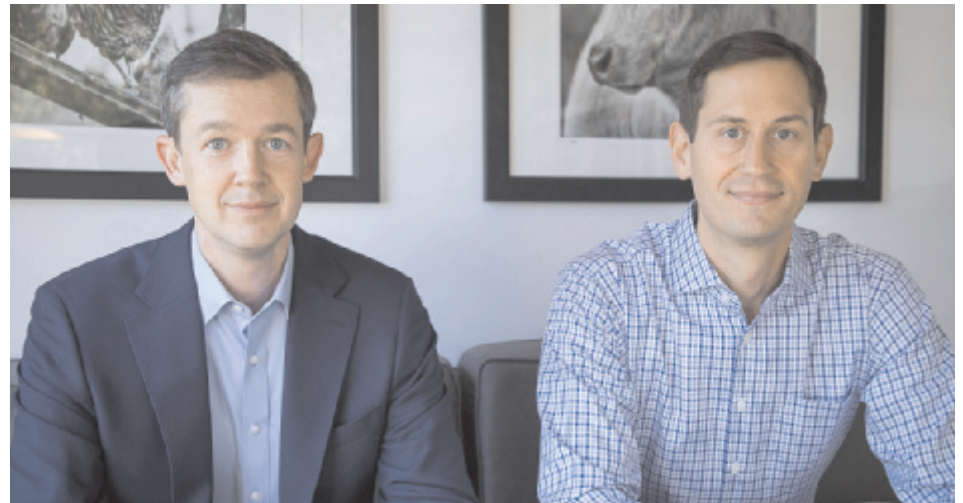


DAVID BRENDAN HALL

**BEST UTILITY
PLAYER
(ACTIVIST
LEAGUE)**

Chris Harris

“Utility player” sounds like a dis – like something other than a *star* player – but in sports as well as in civics, it really means someone who’s multitalented and incredibly useful. And Chris Harris is certainly that: an impassioned and also pragmatically effective advocate for criminal justice reform, for the rights and dignity of survivors and the marginalized, and for strategic and tactical efforts to make this a city where everyone thrives. He brings to his work not only the skills of an advocate and organizer but the analytic chops honed over his years in the tech world – all to help you win the game of Austin life.



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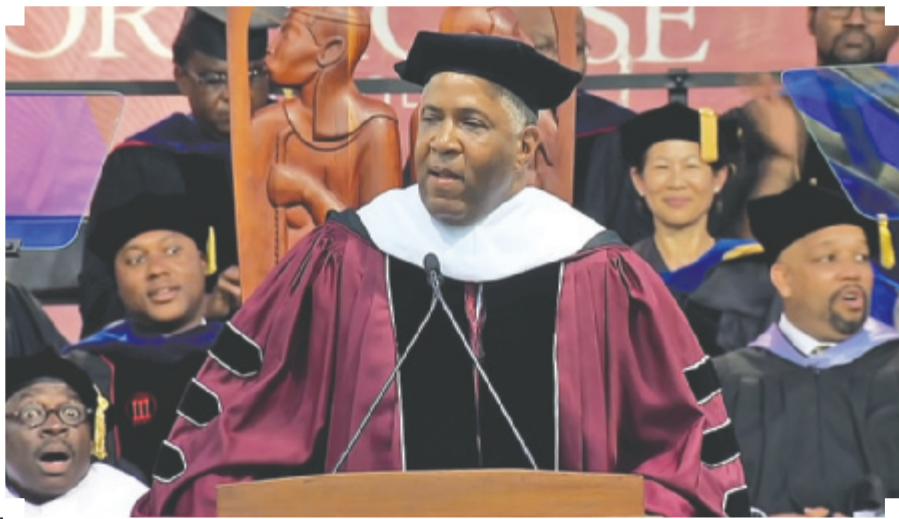


BETTER THAN “YOU GET A CAR!”

Robert F. Smith

As the commencement speaker at Morehouse College’s class of 2019 graduation ceremony, Robert F. Smith (the principal founder, chairman, and CEO of Austin-based Vista Equity Partners and ranked by *Forbes* as the richest black man in America) stunned those assembled by announcing his intention to pay off the student loans of all 396 graduates. Wildly understating his gift – “We’re going to put a little fuel in your bus,” the philanthropist put it – Smith later sweetened the deal further: His \$34 million donation to the new Morehouse College Student Success Program will pay off parent loans, too.

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FINALISTS: Clean Critters, Pamper Ur Pet

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— LISA LEARY

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.DIRTY-DOG.COM

BARBERSHOP

Birds Barbershop

FINALISTS: Barbon's Barbershop, Finley's Barber Shop, SHED Barbershop and Supply

"Sip some beer and get a sweet blowout." — VIVIAN SILVA

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.BIRDSBARBERSHOP.COM

SALON

VINYL Beauty Bar

FINALISTS: Method Hair, Raven Row Salon, Vibe Collective

"You'd be hard pressed to find anywhere that captures that 'Austin hospitality' like VINYL does. Incredible stylists, wonderful location, and awesome vibes all around." — MICHAEL HANRAHAN

2823 E. MLK #150, WWW.VINYLBEAUTYBAR.COM

SPA

Milk + Honey

FINALISTS: Dream Spa, Viva Day Spa

"Milk + Honey is magic. This spa strikes the balance of being super clean and nontoxic while remaining 10/10 luxurious."

— ANDREA M.

100-A GUADALUPE; 12901 HILL COUNTRY BLVD. STE. D1-110, WWW.MILKANDBONEYSPA.COM

MASSAGE

Viva Day Spa

FINALISTS: Austin Massage Company, Mantis Massage

"Absolutely heavenly massages here."

— NELLIE SUMMERS

215 S. LAMAR; 1811 W. 35TH; 11601 ROCK ROSE AVE., WWW.VIVADAYSPA.COM

MANI/PEDI

Cute Nail Studio

FINALISTS: Embellish Nails & Boutique, Queen Spa

"A nail studio with a mission? Hell yeah!"

— JENELLE DRONKERS

1211 E. SEVENTH, WWW.CUTENAILSTUDIO.COM

WAX/SKINCARE

Wax That!

FINALISTS: Cute Nail Studio, Blush by Angie Chase

"Waxing is not the most pleasant experience, but the specialists at Wax That! are so professional that you're in and out in a breeze!"

— MAGGIE PACE

2406-C MANOR RD., WWW.WAXTHAT.COM

LASHES/BROWS

Lash Lounge

FINALISTS: Haute House Lash & Beauty Bar, Kara Sánchez Beauty

"Beautiful upscale salon, friendly staff, and best service ever."

— ANDRES MANON

1911 ALDRICH #140; 3300 BEE CAVES RD. #630, WWW.THELASHLOUNGE.COM

HOTEL/MOTEL

Hotel San José

FINALISTS: Austin Motel, South Congress Hotel

"Hotel San José all the way with their epic frosé."

— CHRIS NELSON

1316 S. CONGRESS, WWW.SANJOSEHOTEL.COM

BIKE SHOP/REPAIR

Bicycle Sport Shop

FINALISTS: City Limit Cycles, Clown Dog Bikes, the Peddler Bike Shop

"They take better care of my bike than I do!"

— DEAN PHILLIPS

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.BICYCLESPORTSHOP.COM

PSYCHIC/TAROT

Sister Temperance Tarot

FINALISTS: Austin Mediums, ChosenEyes, Sound Sight Tarot

"Sister Temperance's bimonthly live Instagram videos on the new and full moons are always so spot on."

— JULIET MORGAN

CONTACT FOR ADDRESS, WWW.SISTERTEMPERANCE.COM

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BEST OF AUSTIN READERS POLL SERVICES CONTINUED

TATTOO

Atomic Tattoo

FINALISTS: Golden Age Tattoos, True Blue Tattoo
“They do really good work, personable work, and I love how they made me feel so at home. We will be back.” – *JATHAN DESIR*
VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.ATOMIC-TATTOO.COM

MUSIC SERVICES/EQUIPMENT

Strait Music Co.

FINALISTS: Rock N Roll Rentals, Switched On
“Strait Music built Austin’s music scene 50 years ago. Best products and outstanding service.” – *RICK INGRAHAM*
2428 W. BEN WHITE; 13945 HWY. 183 N., WWW.STRAITMUSIC.COM

AUTO REPAIR/SERVICE

TIE: Flamingo Automotive; Gene Johnson Automotive

FINALISTS: Juke Auto, Yost Automotive
“When you ask other mechanics where to take your car in Austin, they say Flamingo.” – *STEPHANIE POTTER*
FLAMINGO AUTOMOTIVE, 3512 GUADALUPE, WWW.FLAMINGOAUTOMOTIVE.COM
“I have gone to Gene Johnson for 30 years. They shoot straight; I trust them.” – *AUBREY MCINTOSH*
GENE JOHNSON AUTOMOTIVE, 2300 MANOR RD., WWW.GENEJOHNSONAUTOMOTIVE.COM

RECORDING STUDIO

Arlyn Studios

FINALISTS: Permanent RCRD Studios, Space Rehearsal & Recording Studio
“I’ve spent months there this past year and know firsthand the quality of the staff, the facility, and the ever-elusive but essential vibe.” – *MATT HUBBARD*
200 ACADEMY DR. #140, WWW.ARLYNSTUDIOS.COM

HOME MAINTENANCE/SERVICES

ABC Home & Commercial Services

FINALISTS: K&M Steam Cleaning, PreFix, WOW Total Cleaning & Restoration
“Amazing owners who treat their employees right and want to improve our community, too.” – *SHELLEY SZUCS*
VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.ABCHOMEANDCOMMERCIAL.COM

COMPUTER REPAIR

Discount Electronics

FINALISTS: Austin MacWorks, Happy Mac
“Great service, great prices.” – *DINA PERIDI*
1011 W. ANDERSON; 9711 MANCHACA RD.; 1001 S. I-35, ROUND ROCK, WWW.DISCOUNTELECTRONICS.COM



TODD V. WOLFSON

LOCKSMITH Cothron's

FINALISTS: Chastity Lock and Key, Sharp Brothers Locksmith
“It is third-generation family-owned and -operated, and you can expect to be treated as one of their own when in their care.” – *KELLY WALKER*
VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.COTHRONS.COM



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LAWN CARE/LANDSCAPING

Real Green Pest and Lawn

FINALISTS: Fertile Ground Organic Gardens, Seedlings Gardening, Urban Landscape Group

“Been using them for years. Reasonably priced, effective, and safe for the good critters.”

— BRANDI BENNU

WWW.REALGREENLAWNS.COM

A/C REPAIR/INSTALLATION

Radiant Plumbing & Air Conditioning

FINALISTS: Service Wizard Heating & Air Conditioning, Stan's Heating and Cooling

“Super commitment to community service as well as customer service.”

— KIM USEY

901 REINLI, WWW.RADIANTPLUMBING.COM

ELECTRICIAN

Bryant AC & Electric

FINALISTS: Colvin Electric, Klock's Electric

“Bryant Electric Service is the best-run and easiest-to-work-with service company I've ever worked with. Great folks.”

— BRYAN HAYNES

4825 WEIDEMAR #600, WWW.BRYANTELECTRICSERVICE.COM

PLUMBER

Radiant Plumbing & Air Conditioning

FINALISTS: Ruben's Plumbing Service, Wilson Plumbing

“Very responsive and run a professional and ethical business.”

— LAURIE FLOOD

901 REINLI, WWW.RADIANTPLUMBING.COM

MAID SERVICE

MoreHands

FINALISTS: Let Kelly, Purple Fig

“Great people who run the show over there. They care about having good service and welcome client feedback.”

— ERICA VISSER

706 N. LAMAR, WWW.MOREHANDS.COM

DRY CLEANER

Rick's Cleaners

FINALISTS: EcoClean, Jack Brown Cleaners

“Always friendly, on time, and cost-efficient.”

— HEIDI BRAY

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.RICKSCLEANERS.COM

TAILOR/ALTERATION

Ace Custom Tailors

FINALISTS: Gassane Tailors, Nelda's Tailors

“Reliable and reasonable.”

— AMY CREED

724-A N. LAMAR; 11909 DOMAIN DR. #154; 2707 WALSH TARLTON, WWW.ACETAILORS.COM



Shelly Austin (l) and Natalie Young

TODD V. WOLFSON

APARTMENT LOCATOR A+ Apartment Locators

FINALISTS: Apartments Now!, Smart City Apartment Locating

“Super helpful. I was able to find a great apartment in one day.”

— ASHLEY ZAPP

11150 RESEARCH #208, WWW.APLUSAPARTMENTS.COM

LAUNDROMAT

EcoClean

FINALISTS: SpinZone, Washatopia

“Love EcoClean's wash & fold service. When I'm too busy with work to deal with laundry, I can take them all my stuff and they handle it with care and everything comes back smelling clean (and NOT chemically) and nicely folded.”

— LESLIE THETFORD

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.ECOCLEANAUSTIN.COM

MOVERS

Einstein Moving Company

FINALISTS: Army Ant Moving, Square Cow Movers

“The little things at the end of a brutal move are huge: connecting washer/dryer, furniture re-positioning. Customer satisfaction is top priority until the very end.”

— JON COTTLE

9200-A BROWN; 3904-B WAREHOUSE ROW, WWW.EINSTEINMOVING.COM

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Lilly Rockwell

FINALISTS: Samantha Soletti Adler, Laurie Flood

“Lilly went above and beyond to help us prepare our house for the market, taking it upon herself to vet make-ready firms, consult with stagers, coordinate professional photography, and even haul off trash in the middle of the night.”

— BECCA FRASIER

WWW.LILLYROCKWELL.COM

LAWYER

Becky Beaver (Law Office of Becky Beaver)

FINALISTS: VVF Law Firm, Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch (Lincoln-Goldfinch Law), Adam Reposa (Law Office of Adam Reposa)

“She has the family law reputation that all you have to whisper is that she's repping you and the settlement notebooks come out.”

— ERIN MCARTHUR

WWW.BECKYBEAVERLAW.COM

VETERINARIAN

Brodie Animal Hospital

FINALISTS: AM/PM Animal Hospital, PAZ Veterinary

“Vets are excellent – very competent and caring, and they listen. And the cat waiting room with pheromones greatly relaxes our pets!”

— DAVID BOERNER

3421 W. WILLIAM CANNON #110, WWW.BRODIEANIMALHOSPITAL.COM

DOGGIE DAY CARE

Taurus Academy

FINALISTS: Austin Dogtown Boarding & Daycare, Jumping Jack Dog Ranch, Mud Puppies, Remington Pet Ranch

“They make my crazy dog not seem so crazy. Anyone who can do that is a winner in my book.”

— SARA DAVILA

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.TAURUSACADEMY.COM

WEDDING VENUE

Mercury Hall

FINALISTS: Camp Lucy, Chapel Dulcinea

“I had my wedding here. Photos were magical.”

— REIKO ROGERS

615 CARDINAL, WWW.MERCURYHALL.COM

WILD CARD

Kind Clinic

FINALISTS: Geek Powered Studios, Si Shou Acupuncture and Wellness, Torrid Boudoir

“Free health services for marginalized communities with a friendly and knowledgeable staff that feels like a second family to patients – how does it get any better than that?”

— JESS O'REAR

1101 W. 40TH #102, WWW.KINDCLINIC.ORG

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No Good Tattoo

Emily Ng opened No Good Tattoo in Springdale General earlier this year, and thanks to her and a growing community of stick-and-poke tattoo artists, we've got a whole new option to add to our permanent ink collection. Even better, Austin's first parlor of its kind not only boasts both resident and guest artists, it's also female-driven and takes pride in providing a safe, comfortable space for everyone, with special attention to the needs of people of color and the LGBTQ+ community. No Good proves there's no good reason at all not to, at least every now and again, eschew machines in favor of this intimate experience.

1023 SPRINGDALE, BLDG. 1, STE. E, WWW.NOGOODTATTOO.COM

BEST BLAST FROM THE PAST

Austin History Center

There's history in all Austinites' lives, and the Austin History Center has dedicated itself to preserving it for the past 60-plus years. The city's historical archive houses thousands of manuscripts, maps, periodicals, photos, and more, documenting Austin's history from before its founding in 1839 to the present – almost all of which are available to browse on-site. Discover 100-year-old *Austin American-Statesman* issues via microfilm reader-printers, witness the historic 1989 March on Austin for Lesbian/Gay Equal Rights on VHS, or visit one of the center's rotating special curated exhibits. And because the AHC is a division of the Austin Public Library, perusing our city's storied past is totally free.

810 GUADALUPE, LIBRARY.AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/AHC/ABOUT-US

BEST PLACE TO BUFF UP YOUR BUMPER

Discount Body Shop

Owner David Bosada staffs this body shop – nestled in Southeast Austin, en route to the airport – with a crew who make it a habit of going that extra mile. Since opening his family-run shop in 2007, Bosada has taken a customer-first approach to auto paint and body repair work, striving to ensure that every client is satisfied with their ride ... even if they may be less than thrilled with their insurance provider.

3600 CHAPMAN, WWW.DISCOUNTBODYSHOPAUSTIN.COM

BEST BORROWED NAUTICAL ADVENTURE

Skipper My Boat

Making a splash is this nautical startup, co-founded by Austinite Matt Woods with his twin brother Adam, which democratizes the yacht charter industry by making it easy to track down the perfect vessel for your next on-the-water excursion using a peer-to-peer digital window-shopping service. Essentially an Airbnb platform for boats, Skipper My Boat prides the privilege away from the one percent and puts everything from small sailboats to luxury megayachts and catamarans in the hands of the masses. With nearly 30,000 yachts across 50+ countries to choose from, it's dangerously easy to book your customized dream vacation with just a few clicks of a button.

WWW.SKIPPERMYBOAT.COM



SHELLEY HAHN

BEST BLACK LINES IN TEXAS Annie Mess

Austin has its share of talented tattooers, but when it comes to fine black line work, it doesn't get better than Annie Mess, owner and artist at Golden Age Tattoos. From her tiny, skin-adorning pet portraits to her detailed, dotted, and well-shaded floral designs – oh, and don't forget the magical ladies, Patronuses, and outer space spectacles – Mess isn't just offering Austinites a tattoo, but a piece of permanent art you can take with you wherever you may roam.

2008 FORTVIEW, WWW.GOLDENAGETATTOOS.COM





SHELLEY HAHM

BEST RADICAL FREE PIZZA

Lilah Sturges' #TransPizza

What is #TransPizza, you ask? And how can pizza be radical? Silly mortal. Twitter followers of the local (and award-winning) graphic novelist Lilah Sturges know how, cuz every week she gives out \$20 to a lucky winner (or two) who responds to her call for free and queer food! Cuz not all superheroes wear capes, Sturges finds folks to donate in an effort to directly support trans folks across the Twitterverse.

WWW.TWITTER.COM/LILAH_STURGES

BEST WAY TO TRACK YOUR EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

Footprint

Yes, just 100 corporations are responsible for over 70% of carbon emissions in the world today, but that doesn't mean we as individuals shouldn't do our part to cut down on the other 30%. An app created by a team of UT grads helps you do just that by tracking your progress through challenges. Go without eating meat for a week, use public transit for 20 days, or use less electricity in a day - any of the many small ways we can help reduce our carbon footprints.

WWW.FOOTPRINTAPP.ORG

BEST DEFENSE AGAINST GOTHIC HEATSTROKE

KOOP's "Black Clothing Comfortability Index"

The heat index. Humidity. Barometric pressure. Weather forecasts give you all that data, but can they tell you whether you can still wear your black jeans and Combichrist long sleeve without breaking a sweat, or will you need to pack your best lace parasol? DJV and DJ AsuraSunil, hosts of KOOP Radio's goth and industrial show *Darkest Before Dawn*, may not be qualified meteorologists, but when they break down the latest heat wave in the weekly "Black Clothing Comfortability Index," it's the weather news you can really use.

WWW.KOOP.ORG/PROGRAMS/DARKEST-DAWN



TODD V. WOLFSON

BEST NORTHSIDE BARBERSHOP Original Walker's Barbershop

Every neighborhood needs a good barbershop, and Original Walker's provides the quality cuts and lively atmosphere that make for a truly great shop. All of the barbers are excellent at their craft, and they all help make Ray Walker's shop a place that could become an institution. Specializing in cuts, fades, razor shaves, and more, the service offered at Original Walker's is unparalleled in North Austin.

12412 LIMERICK #400, WWW.FB.COM/ORIGINALWALKERSBARBERSHOP

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RICKSCLEANERS.COM

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MaryJae

FINALISTS: Restart CBD, Joy Organics

“High end & super modern. The staff is always insanely knowledgeable about all their products. We love coming here.”

— JOEY EDWARDS

2110-E S. LAMAR, WWW.SHOPMARYJAE.COM



SHELLEY HIAM



USED FURNITURE/ANTIQUES

Uncommon Objects

FINALISTS: Design It With Consignment, Far Out Home Fittings, Room Service Vintage, Uptown Modern

“Great place to find just the right unique thing for a gift or your home/office. In fact, if you need a gift for a friend and can’t find something here, you might need more interesting friends.”

— LAURA GRABLE

1602 FORTVIEW, WWW.UNCOMMONOBJECTS.COM

GARDEN STORE/NURSERY

The Natural Gardener

FINALISTS: The Great Outdoors, Shoal Creek Nursery, Tillery Street Plant Co.

“They know their stuff. They have steered me clear of huge mistakes and tipped me off to really good gardening practices, saving me money, time, and agony.”

— JEANINE CHRISTENSEN

8648 OLD BEE CAVE RD., WWW.TNGAUSTIN.COM

FLORIST

Freytag's Florist

FINALISTS: Ben White Florists, King Florist, Mercedes Flowers

“Something for every budget, and they come through in an emergency. Their flowers always last a long time, too.”

— ELIZABETH MCLELLAN

2211 W. ANDERSON, WWW.FREYTAGSFLOLIST.COM

NEIGHBORHOOD GROCERY

Wheatsville Food Co-op

FINALISTS: Fresh Plus, Royal Blue Grocery

“Wheatsville feels like home.” — KATHY WALSH

3101 GUADALUPE; 4001 S. LAMAR, WWW.WHEATSVILLE.COOP

FARMERS' MARKET/FARMSTAND

Texas Farmers' Market at Mueller

FINALISTS: SFC Farmers' Market at Sunset Valley, Texas Farmers' Market at Lakeline

“The market at Mueller is ... well, perfect. I travel a lot so I never tire of this Sunday ritual whilst I am at home.” — ADRIENE MISHLER

4209 AIRPORT, WWW.TEXASFARMERSMARKET.ORG/MUELLER

MEN'S CLOTHING

Stag

FINALISTS: Capra & Cavelli, Service Menswear

“Great selections.” — TAMARA HOOVER

1423 S. CONGRESS; 11700 DOMAIN BLVD. #120, WWW.STAGPROVISIONS.COM

WOMEN'S CLOTHING

Uptown Cheapskate

FINALISTS: Adelante, Beehive, By George, Spring Frost

“The best for our budgets and the environment.” — ALISSA BOBEK

3005 S. LAMAR STE. 110-A, WWW.UPTOWNCHEAPSKATE.COM

VINTAGE/CONSIGNMENT CLOTHING

Buffalo Exchange

FINALISTS: Blue Velvet, Charm School Vintage, Room Service Vintage, Uptown Cheapskate

“My go-to for recycled digs.”

— HOLLEY GONZALEZ

2904 GUADALUPE, WWW.BUFFALOEXCHANGE.COM

BRIDAL SHOP

Unbridaled

FINALISTS: Blue Bridal Boutique, Blush Bridal Lounge

“Got my wedding dress here for \$99 and it was perfect.”

— MILA LITCHFIELD

701 S. LAMAR, WWW.UNBRIDALED.COM

JEWELRY

Kendra Scott

FINALISTS: Eliza Page, Limbo Jewelry

“Simple, beautiful jewelry with great customer service.”

— BRIANNE TROTTIER

1701 S. CONGRESS, WWW.KENDRASCOTT.COM

FURNITURE/ACCESSORIES

Room Service Vintage

FINALISTS: Austin's Couch Potatoes Furniture, Four Hands

“My apartment is pretty much decorated from this store.”

— NATALI LYTCH

117 E. NORTH LOOP, WWW.ROOMSERVICEVINTAGE.COM

LIQUOR STORE

Spec's

FINALISTS: The Austin Shaker, Twin Liquors

“Variety and value.”

— ALEX CERBUR

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.SPECSONLINE.COM

ADULT STORE

Forbidden Fruit

FINALISTS: Dreamers, Q Toys

“Where customer service is more important than free shipping.”

— DAPHNE GATES

108 E. NORTH LOOP, WWW.FORBIDDENFRUIT.COM

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11/17: Strap Ons For Everyone Workshop w/Megan Church
 11/21: Tristan Taormino's #OPEN App Speed Dating Social
 Info/Enroll @ forbiddenfruit.com



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AUSTIN GIFTS/SOUVENIRS

Atown

FINALISTS: Austin Gift Company, Parts and Labour

“Always have cool, unique items and goods from local artisans.”

— LEAH WERNER
5502 BURNET RD.,
WWW.ILOVEATOWN.COM



SMOKE SHOP

Planet K

FINALISTS: Oat Willie's, MaryJae

“One of the local chains that keeps ATX weird and chill.”
— SYLVIA BUTANDA

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.PLANETKTexas.COM

PET STORE

Tomlinson's Feed & Pets

FINALISTS: Healthy Pet, Paws on Chicon

“I literally take my dog here for her birthdays.”
— DANIEL ROMERS

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.TOMLINSONS.COM

ARTS & CRAFTS STORE

Jerry's Artarama

FINALISTS: Austin Creative Reuse, Bead It

“This place is *Candy Land* for artists.”
— CAPRI JENTSCH

6010 N. I-35, WWW.JERRYSARTARAMA.COM

SPORTING GOODS

Academy

FINALISTS: PW23 Fitness, Whole Earth Provision Co.

“Good value for a great price.”
— VICTORIA WINBURNE

VARIOUS LOCATIONS, WWW.ACADEMY.COM

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BOOKSTORE

BookPeople

FINALISTS: BookWoman, Half Price Books

"A unionized independent bookstore?! THIS is what Austin's about."

— KIM VARELA-BROXSON
603 N. LAMAR, WWW.BOOKPEOPLE.COM

ELECTRONICS STORE

Precision Camera & Video

FINALISTS: Discount Electronics, Switched On, Sound Gallery

"Honest with high integrity. I always take my equipment to them for servicing."

— KAREN WELSH
2438 W. ANDERSON STE. B-4, WWW.PRECISION-CAMERA.COM

COMICS/FANDOM

Dragon's Lair Comics & Fantasy

FINALISTS: Austin Books & Comics, Tribe Comics & Games

"I think my family would move in here, if they could."

— STEPHANIE CLAYTON
2438 W. ANDERSON STE. 1-B, WWW.DLAIR.NET

GAME/GAMING

Dragon's Lair Comics & Fantasy

FINALISTS: Emerald Tavern Games & Cafe, Game Over Videogames

"We visit this place as much as possible! It's an Austin staple for gamers and collectors alike."

— LINDSAY GARRETT
2438 W. ANDERSON STE. 1-B, WWW.DLAIR.NET

RECORD STORE

Waterloo Records

FINALISTS: Breakaway Records, End of an Ear

"Still the best and always will be as long as John Kunz is the man with his sidekick, Martin!"

— TED BRANSON
600-A N. LAMAR, WWW.WATERLOORECORDS.COM

WILD CARD

Yarrow & Sage Apothecary & Arts Co-op

FINALISTS: Card Traders of Austin, Melanated Marketplace, State Surplus Property Store

"Arcane forever. Keep Austin Witching."

— VIRGINIA FRANCE
701-B E. 53RD, WWW.YARROWANDSAGEATX.COM

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JOHN ANDERSON



BEST "LET'S GET SWEATY" GEAR

Outdoor Voices

#DoingThings – especially outdoorsy things – is a motto most Austinites can get behind, which might explain our (and the world's) obsession with Outdoor Voices. But Tyler Haney's activewear brand is a lot more than a motto. The fabric-first, sustainably made fitness apparel goes beyond your regular athleisure because it's actually designed for you to get sweaty while wearing it. From form-sculpting leggings to crop top sports bras, shorts, fleeces, and a few swim-suits, OV – headquartered right here in Austin – suits you up to get outside and get active without feeling too underdressed or overstuffed. Plus, their Blanco Street store embodies much of the line's understated, elegance-meets-comfort vibe.

606 BLANCO, WWW.OUTDOORVOICES.COM

BEST COLLECTION OF CREEPY AND OCCULT OFFERINGS

The Glass Coffin: Vampire Parlour

On the hunt for the freakish and far-out? Searching for a dark shop filled with occult objects and kitschy merch from your favorite spooky figures – Elvira, Nosferatu, even that ghost with the most, Beetlejuice? When pondering where in jolly ol' weird Austin one might find a two-headed skeleton a room away from candles displaying a well-hung devil of the bathhouse, listen to the wind as it whispers the name of this vampiric cove of creep right off First Street.

1006 S. FIRST, WWW.THEGLASSCOFFIN.RIP



SHELLEY HIAM

BEST HOME DECOR HEAVEN

Open Invite

Decorating the 2019 home is a tricky business. You want the sleekness of West Elm without the yawn factor, and the funk of your favorite vintage store without the dust. Naturally, you also want candles. And plants. As the welcoming name would suggest, Clarksville home goods stop Open Invite checks all the above boxes with a colorful blend of independent brands and vintage wares. Austin native Mary Rose Wiley opened up shop in June, pinpointing playful gifts, chic ceramics, and the best emerging designers on Instagram.

1114 W. FIFTH, WWW.OPENINVITESHOP.COM



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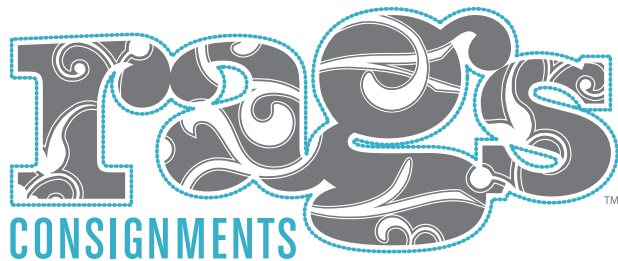
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BEST BUDDHIST COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

Palri Pema Öd Ling

This meditation center's periodic garage sale is like a traveling market drifting across the Saharan desert: You never know when it will appear or how long it will last, scheduling and linear time being two constructs the adherents of the center are presumably hoping to renounce. When it does pop up, though, you can always count on remarkable finds. Think vintage cast-iron cookware, silk scarves, somebody's collection of opera records – fabulous material things to practice not being attached to.

605 E. 45TH, WWW.PALRI.ORG

BEST NEW SPOT FOR A BOOK AND A BEER

Lark & Owl Booksellers

We love independent bookstores, and even more so when we can enjoy a pint with our paperback. Lark & Owl was opened by a group of women in downtown Georgetown in April of this year, and in August, they debuted a bistro inside of the store, serving sandwiches, salads, and breakfast, plus beer, cocktails, and coffee. The seriously charming space has fast become a community hub, hosting children's storytime, trivia nights, and author signings, and including a diversity of voices on the shelves and for in-store events has been a focus for the team since the start.

205 W. SIXTH #101, GEORGETOWN, WWW.LARKANDOWLBOOKSELLERS.COM

BEST NIGHTMARE IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS

Horror for the Holidays

For some of us, *The Nightmare Before Christmas* isn't just a movie: It's a way of life. So for anyone in your life who likes their tinsel black, their wreaths ready for the tomb or the front door, and their centerpieces with a carnivorous plant, Horror for the Holidays is the ideal place to pick up a gift. Organized by Austin's terror connoisseurs at Blood Over Texas (and most especially by the queen of satanic shopping, Bunny Voodoo), the annual two-day fair of fright is your perfect opportunity to sit on Krampus' lap.

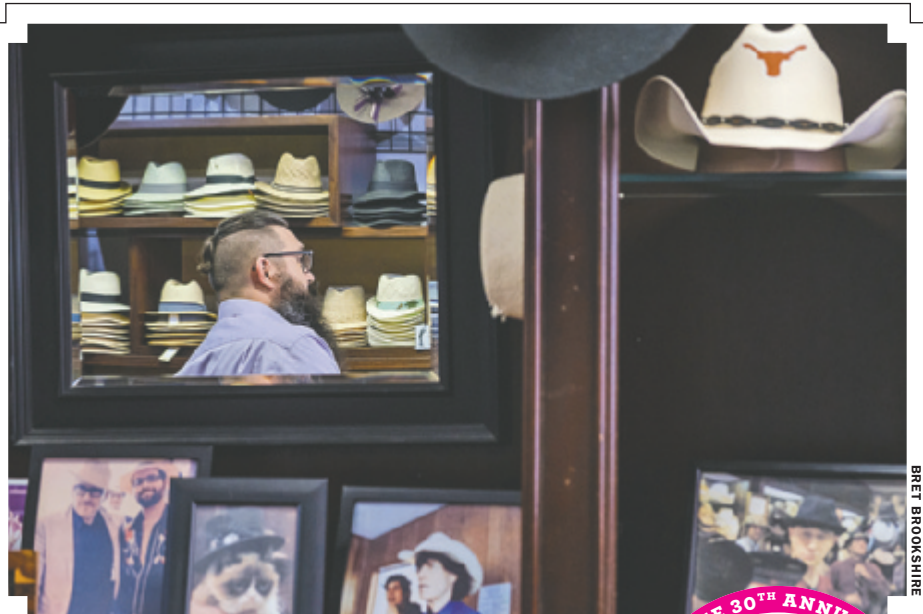
WWW.BLOODOVERTEXAS.COM

BEST PLACE TO BUY PRADA FOR NEXT TO NADA

United Apparel Liquidators

Fifth Avenue has found its way to the 2nd Street District with this high-end clothing and accessory Southern chain store, which boasts 70-90% off retail every day. Brands like good hYOUuman, Gold Hawk, and Billy Reid (for the fellas) fill the racks for under 50 big ones. Even the pricier picks are a fraction of their usual lip-biting cost: affordable Italian leather shoes, Helmut Lang for under a hundred, a pink Prada flare dress reduced from \$2400 to \$250. As close to *nada* as top designer gets.

249 W. SECOND, STORE.SHOPUAL.COM



BRET BROOKSHIRE

BEST STYLES FOR YOUR HEAD

Hatbox: A Modern Haberdashery

The human head is a fine contraption, but even the most resplendent locks or shiniest dome can do with a little high-quality augmentation – and the Hatbox is exactly the place to find it. Can't tell a fedora from a Dirted Hank? Fascinated by fascinators? Can't decide between a pillbox and a headband? After 45 years of millinery magic, the Hatbox will find your perfect headgear and have you stepping out in style.

704 CONGRESS; 11401 CENTURY OAKS TERRACE, WWW.HATBOX.COM



BEST PLACE TO DON YOUR A(TX) APPAREL

Parts & Labour

Lizelle Villapando's stalwart and dog-friendly SoCo shop of locally produced clothing (and artwork and gifts) is deeply Austin-centric and Texas-forward, offering a sweet variety of graphic T-shirts among their wares: the sort of comfortable cotton torso-sheaths that let everyone know you're from *these* here parts, by damn. Perfect shirt for the relentlessly unemployed: "Grackle Got No Boss," with that trashy corvid looking all smug.

1704 S. CONGRESS, WWW.PARTSANDLABOURSTORE.MYSHOPIFY.COM

BEST APPLIANCES ON THE CHEAP

Alberto's Appliances

Did you just get the news that your washer isn't worth repairing? Can't afford to replace it with one of those fancy washers that connects to your wi-fi and tweets the status of your unmentionables? Just south of Highway 71 sits an unsuspecting warehouse with a wide selection of refurbished appliances priced to sell. What's more, the staff will install it and promptly fix it (while still under warranty) for no charge. You'll come out looking cleaner, and your bank account will still be in the black.

4118 TODD, ALBERTOS-APPLIANCES.BUSINESS.SITE



BRET BROOKSHIRE

BEST NON-TRADITIONAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS **Delptronics**

If you're a synth-head and want to spice up your sound, Mickey Delp has been wiring up something just for you. Think of a Wiimote that turns your movement and buttons into bent notes; or the ThunderBell Analog Cowbell, which is as badass as it sounds. Let Delptronics transform your usual knob twiddles and button presses into something more physical, and set your live performances free without sacrificing your sound.

WWW.DELPTRONICS.COM

BEST SATELLITE VINYL EMPORIUMS

Astro Record Store & Bluebonnet Records

Vinyl road trip, anyone? With the artistic revival of Texas small towns comes two new stand-out record stores beyond city limits. In Lockhart, pink storefront Bluebonnet Records presents new and used vinyl, CDs, and cassettes, with a spirited emphasis on Texas and local acts. Co-owning power couple/punk players Kana Harris (Xetas) and Cody Kimbell (Super Thief) aim to make analog audio accessible for all. Meanwhile, in Bastrop, Astro Record Store finds a home for veteran Austin Record Convention seller Kevin Mawby's vintage collection. Offering a treasure trove of yellow crates in the historic Downtown, this shop focuses on used-vinyl matchmaking.

ASTRO RECORD STORE, 705 PINE ST., BASTROP, WWW.FB.COM/ASTRORECORDSTORE; BLUEBONNET RECORDS, 112 E. MARKET ST., LOCKHART, WWW.FB.COM/BLUEBONNETRECORDS

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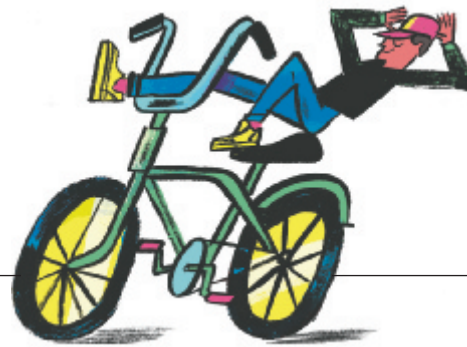
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SPORTS & RECREATION



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GOLF COURSE **Butler Park Pitch & Putt**

FINALISTS: Fazio Foothills at Omni Barton Creek Resort, Hancock Golf Course, Lions Municipal Golf Course

“Accessible, BYOB, no dress code, a staple of my childhood.”

— ANDREW BROCK

201 LEE BARTON DR., WWW.BUTLERPARKPITCHANDPUTT.COM

PLACE TO HANG WITH YOUR PET

Zilker Park

FINALISTS: Auditorium Shores, Red Bud Isle, Walnut Creek Park

“I don’t have a dog, but I hang out at Zilker to watch dogs run around on the reg.”

— ALANA RIDDLE

2100 BARTON SPRINGS RD., WWW.AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/DEPARTMENT/ZILKER-METROPOLITAN-PARK

SWIMMING POOL

Barton Springs Pool

FINALISTS: Bartholomew Pool, Deep Eddy Pool

“Can’t beat a public natural swimming pool right in the heart of the city.”

— ANANDHI MANI

2201 BARTON SPRINGS RD., WWW.AUSTINTEXAS.GOV/DEPARTMENT/BARTON-SPRINGS-POOL

SWIMMING HOLE/LAKE

Hamilton Pool Nature Preserve

FINALISTS: Blue Hole Regional Park, Krause Springs, Lake Travis

“Make the reservation. Not only is it the best, but because of the limited capacity, it’s the least crowded.”

— ANGELA YOCUM

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SPORTS VENUE

Darrell K. Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium

FINALISTS: Circuit of the Americas, Dell Diamond

“Nothing is better than some Longhorn Football at DKR.”

— TALIA MILAN

2100 SAN JACINTO, WWW.TEXASSPORTS.COM

BOWLING ALLEY

Dart Bowl

FINALISTS: Highland Lanes, Westgate Lanes

“Dart Bowl for the win!”

— DON WILLIAMS

5700 GROVER, WWW.DARTBOWL.COM

GYM

YMCA

FINALISTS: Castle Hill Fitness, Fit and Fearless

“No other gym is so welcoming for my entire family.”

— KIMBERLIE QUONG-CHARLES

WWW.AUSTINYMCA.ORG

YOGA

Black Swan Yoga

FINALISTS: Practice Yoga Austin, Wanderlust YOGA

“What’s dark, sweaty, and full of love? Black Swan Yoga.”

— LAUREN BERNICK

4534 WEST GATE BLVD.; 1417 W. ANDERSON; 403 ORCHARD, WWW.BLACKSWANYOGA.COM



SOCIAL RIDE

Full Moon Ride

FINALISTS: Thursday Night Social Ride, Queer Ride, Saturday Morning Caffeine Cruise

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PLACE TO TUBE

Don’s Fish Camp

FINALISTS: Lions Club Tube Rental, Texas State Tubes

“Nobody compares to Don’s for floating the river.”

— JILLIAN DE LA ROSA

105 NELLE LN., SAN MARCOS, WWW.DONSFISHCAMP.COM

PLACE TO CAMP

McKinney Falls State Park

FINALISTS: Inks Lake State Park, Pace Bend Park

“Y’all, it’s literally *right* here in Austin. You don’t have to go far for a great experience.”

— RACHEL MORGAN

5808 MCKINNEY FALLS PKWY., WWW.TPWD.STATE.TX.US/PARK/MCKINNEY



JANA BIRCHUM

PERSONAL TRAINER JJ Pepper (Black Swan Yoga)

FINALISTS: Erica Nix (Workout! with Erica Nix), Brandon Phillips (Fit and Fearless), Brett Smith (Krav Maga)

"JJ Pepper is part comic part Zen mobility master. His classes embody the exuberance, humor, authenticity, and unabashed weirdness that make our city great." – JILLIAN FINLEY

WWW.BLACKSWANYOGA.COM/TEACHER/JJ-P

EXERCISE CLASS

Camp Gladiator

FINALISTS: Jazzercise at Austin Recreation Center, November Project, ToddPilates & Barre

"Fantastic community that keeps me coming back."

– MORGAN NUNCIO

WWW.CAMPGLADIATOR.COM

SELF-DEFENSE CLASS

Lions Krav Maga

FINALISTS: Fit and Fearless, Master Yi Academy, Tukon Martial Arts

"They teach how to really fight."

– MARY ELLEN ROZMUS

3300 W. ANDERSON, WWW.LIONSKRAVMAGA.COM

CITY TRAIL

Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail at Lady Bird Lake

FINALISTS: Violet Crown 290 Trailhead, Southern Walnut Creek Trail

"Long name. Great walk." – OWEN EGERTON

WWW.THETRAILFOUNDATION.ORG

WILD CARD

Austin Trail of Lights Fun Run

FINALISTS: Austin Coolers Dragon Boat Team, Austin Padel Tennis, Lone Star Curling Club, Rogue Running

"Fun times."

– JANET EVANS

WWW.AUSTINTRAILOFLIGHTS.ORG

OUT-OF-TOWN HIKE

Enchanted Rock

FINALISTS: Big Bend National Park, Pedernales Falls State Park

"Views for days and the climb is definitely worth it."

– KIMBERLY WATSON

16710 RR 965, FREDERICKSBURG, WWW.TPWD.STATE.TX.US/STATE-PARKS/ENCHANTED-ROCK

ALTERNATIVE SPORTS

Sky Candy

FINALISTS: Austin Historical Weapons Guild, Central Texas Archery

"Circus is not just a sport, it's a way of life. And at Sky Candy everyone is family."

– JADE ADAIR

1023 SPRINGDALE, BLDG. 8, WWW.SKYCANDYAUSTIN.COM

PRO/SEMI-PRO SPORTS TEAM

Round Rock Express

FINALISTS: Austin Spurs, Texas Stars

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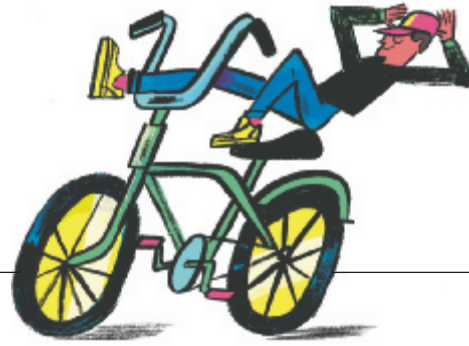
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BEST BOUT MACHINE

ACH

In the squared circle, they don't come better than Albert Christian Hardie Jr., aka professional wrestler ACH. The globe-trotting, high-flying, hard-hitting, broad-smiling Austin hero has put the hurt on his opponents in every major promotion, from New Japan Pro-Wrestling to Ring of Honor. Now, wrestling as Jordan Myles for the WWE's NXT brand, the man they call the King of Texas is bringing his skills to a national audience. But it's as the man behind wrestling stable Team Super Academia, and as a mentor to many, that we celebrate his impact.

WWW.WWE.COM/SUPERSTARS/JORDAN-MYLES

BEST COLLEGE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

The NIT

Open to the big boys, unlike Dr. James Naismith's NAIA, and with a richer history than the newcomer NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament, the National Invitation Tournament dates back to 1938, with the final four played every year in storied Madison Square Garden. And no, of course we're not just saying this because the UT Longhorns won the NIT this year. Of course not. Hook 'em.

BEST HOTEL POOL VIEW

The Line Austin

While it's only open to guests on weekends, Monday through Friday, pool-hungry members of the general public can snag all-day access to this stunning saltwater infinity pool for a mere 25 bucks. Paddle up to the edge and survey their matchless view of the lake with a cocktail from the poolside bar in hand. It's the kind of grownup sick day that's well worth playing hooky for.

111 E. CESAR CHAVEZ, WWW.THELINEHOTEL.COM/AUSTIN

BEST SOCCER REFEREE

Ismail Elfath

No contest, really. The Moroccan-born Elfath has moved up from Austin rec leagues to his first pro experience doing Austin Aztex games at House Park, to become one of the top refs in Major League Soccer and one of only six FIFA-accredited refs in the U.S. This may have been his best year, working at both the CONCACAF Gold Cup and the FIFA U-20 World Cup, where he was in charge for the Championship Final, earning the Austin Soccer Foundation's Lifetime Achievement Award, and ending the year with two MLS playoff games in the last couple of weeks.

WWW.PRREFEREES.COM/ROSTER/REFEREES/ISMAIL-ELFATH



DAVID BRENDAN HALL

BEST BODY-POSITIVE BLACKLIGHT WORKOUT **Knockout**

It's tough to find a boxing gym that doesn't feel intimidating, but Knockout somehow manages to not only feel inclusive to all levels (from beginner to pro), but also to kick your butt in the 45-minute class time. With its black walls and forgiving red and blue lights, even in a classroom with 23 other students it gives the illusion that you have your own personal space. And just when you're on the brink of giving up, the black lights turn on and fire you up again.

1211 W. SIXTH #100, WWW.KNOCKOUTAUSTIN.COM





BRET BROOKSHIRE

BEST WORKOUT WITH WINE **Vino Vinyasa**

Ever drifted into savasana dreaming a glass of wine would appear on your mat to extend your state of relaxation? Vino Vinyasa has brought this concept to fruition by pairing an all-levels yoga class with an educational wine tasting. While the vino is only consumed after the vinyasa, you'll whet your palate with wine facts and wine-inspired poses throughout. These mindful tastings are held as pop-up events in hotels, wineries, event spaces, or as a private class in your home.

WWW.VINOVINYASAYOGA.COM

BEST DOG WALKING (OR WATCHING) **Commons Ford Ranch Metropolitan Park**

Tucked away against the Colorado River, the open field at Commons Ford Ranch offers dog owners and lovers a comfortable spot to lie down, spread out, and release the hounds. Although technically not one of the city's designated off-leash areas, the combination of location – secluded from busy roadways, ringed by trees, and bordered by the river – and an unspoken agreement between park visitors to blissfully ignore leash laws have turned it into a paradise for happy-go-lucky dogs to swim, run, bark, and beg for picnic scraps from strangers. The park also provides an abundance of tree-shaded hiking trails and bird-watching in its restored prairie land, but the real treat here is the reminder of a simple truth: At the end of the day, there's nothing quite as soul-reviving as a dog at play.

614 N. COMMONS FORD RD., WWW.AUSTINPARKS.ORG/COMMONS-FORD

BEST TRAINING FOR THE INEVITABLE APOCALYPSE **Buzz Mill's Lumber Society**

You may not think you need to know how to build survival tools or navigate by nature, but Buzz Mill's Lumber Society is determined to save you despite yourself. Consider it non-paranoid prepper training, or Scouts with beer. Hosted by the local coffeehouse, Lumber Society camp master Chris Hyde leads workshops on everything from archery to shelter building, and group camping trips and community service efforts provide social opportunities while society lasts.

1505 TOWN CREEK; 5012 E. SEVENTH.
WWW.BUZZMILLCOFFEE.COM

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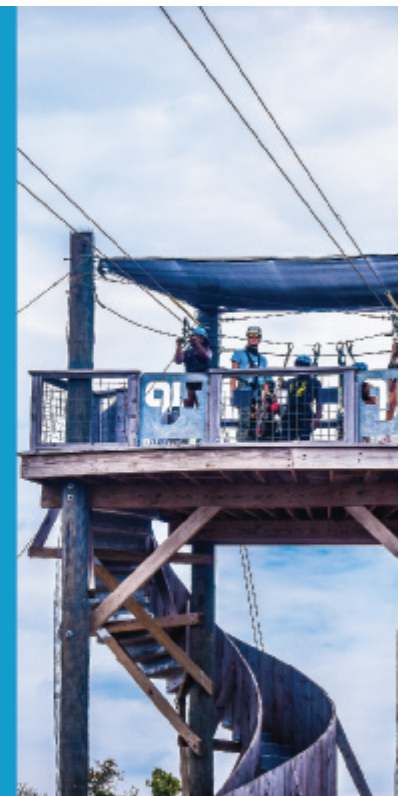


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MetroRail Returns Downtown

**Saturday service remains
suspended until early 2020.**

Check schedules at capmetro.org/MetroRail

CapMetro's temporary Downtown station opened on November 4 and is located on 4th street between Red River & Sabine.



***New extended evening
service and additional
midday trips***

We've added a final trip leaving downtown at 7:18 p.m.

