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Let's Gab About Dallas

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JOE AND CALVIN

Embracing The Joys of Family Love

IN LGBTQ-ACCEPTING COLLIN COUNTY

INTRODUCTION

Family love is a powerful force that transcends boundaries, and in Collin County, Texas, this love finds a welcoming and accepting home within the LGBTQ community. The rewards of family life are abundant, bringing added excitement during the holidays and infusing routine experiences with new meaning. For couples, regardless of their sexual orientation, the decision to start a family is a monumental one. However, for same-sex couples, the journey to parenthood often involves unique challenges and diverse paths. In this article, we explore the experiences of a family in Collin County, shedding light on the complexities and joys of forming a family through different avenues.

THE JOURNEY OF SAME SEX PARENTHOOD

Unlike opposite-sex couples for whom starting a family might be straightforward, same-sex couples navigate a more intricate landscape. Various options exist, each with its own set of advantages and disadvantages. The story of this family begins with their attempt at In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) with a surrogate—a path that offers the opportunity to have a biological child but comes with challenges. Collin County, Texas, with its LGBTQ-friendly environment, stands out as a supportive community, yet the process itself poses hurdles such as high costs and the need to find trustworthy services.



Kaylee & Emmy

Unfortunately, the IVF journey, did not result in the desired outcome for this family. Despite several pregnancies, the dream of welcoming a child into their lives remained unfulfilled. This setback led them to explore alternative paths, one of which was adoption through the foster care system — a process that was filled with both hope and heartbreak.

ADOPTION THROUGH THE FOSTER SYSTEM

The foster care system, which is designed with the best interests of the child in mind, aims to keep children with their biological families whenever possible. This often means that foster parents build deep connections

with children, only to face the heartbreak of reunification with less-than-ideal biological family situations. Collin County, known for its open-mindedness, still sees the challenges inherent in the foster care system, where last-minute changes can shatter the dreams of prospective adoptive parents.

Despite these challenges, Joe and Calvin's experience with fostering led to the positive adoption of a beautiful little girl named Emmy. Her infectious energy and joy brought immeasurable happiness to her adoptive family. The resilience and commitment of the family, coupled with the support of their community, made their journey a success.

SIMPLE ADOPTION

Recognizing the complexities of the foster care system, Joe and Calvin also explored a more direct path to adoption — simple adoption. Though the term may suggest ease, the process is anything but simple. In the case of Kaylee, the biological mother willingly signed off on the adoption, streamlining the process. State-by-state restrictions and assumptions on birth certificates are among the many challenges faced, but with mutual agreement, this method offers a more direct route to expanding a family.

CONCLUSION

In Collin County, Texas, a community that embraces diversity and openness, the journey to familyhood for same-sex couples may involve some unique trials. Yet, the rewards of family love, the joys of parenting, and the support of an inclusive community make the journey worthwhile. Through IVF attempts, foster care experiences, and simple adoptions, this family's story reflects the strength of love in the face of challenges, ultimately fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance in their hearts and within the Collin County community. 🌈





REALTOR TERIA GUTHRIE

and Frisco Living

INTRODUCTION

In the vibrant landscape of Collin County, individuals like Realtor Teria Guthrie play a crucial role in showcasing the appeal of the area. Teria Guthrie, who is associated with Coldwell Banker Realty located at 5950 Sherry Lane in Dallas, stands out as a real estate professional who has expressed her love for the Collin County region, particularly Frisco.

LIFE IN FRISCO

Living in Frisco offers a unique blend of suburban charm and a diverse range of amenities. Teria Guthrie may emphasize the allure of Frisco by pointing out local attractions such as Frisco Square, where residents can explore community events. Additionally, sports enthusiasts can relish in the experience of attending events at The Star, which serves as the training grounds for the Dallas Cowboys. For those with a palate for diverse culinary experiences, a journey downtown reveals a spectrum of cuisines to enjoy.


Frisco's family-friendly atmosphere is often highlighted, owing to its top-tier-rated school district and numerous scenic parks. The city's reputation is further enhanced by being home to the exclusive PGA golf course and hosting several corporate giants. Teria Guthrie may emphasize that Frisco is not just a place to live; it's a community that off-



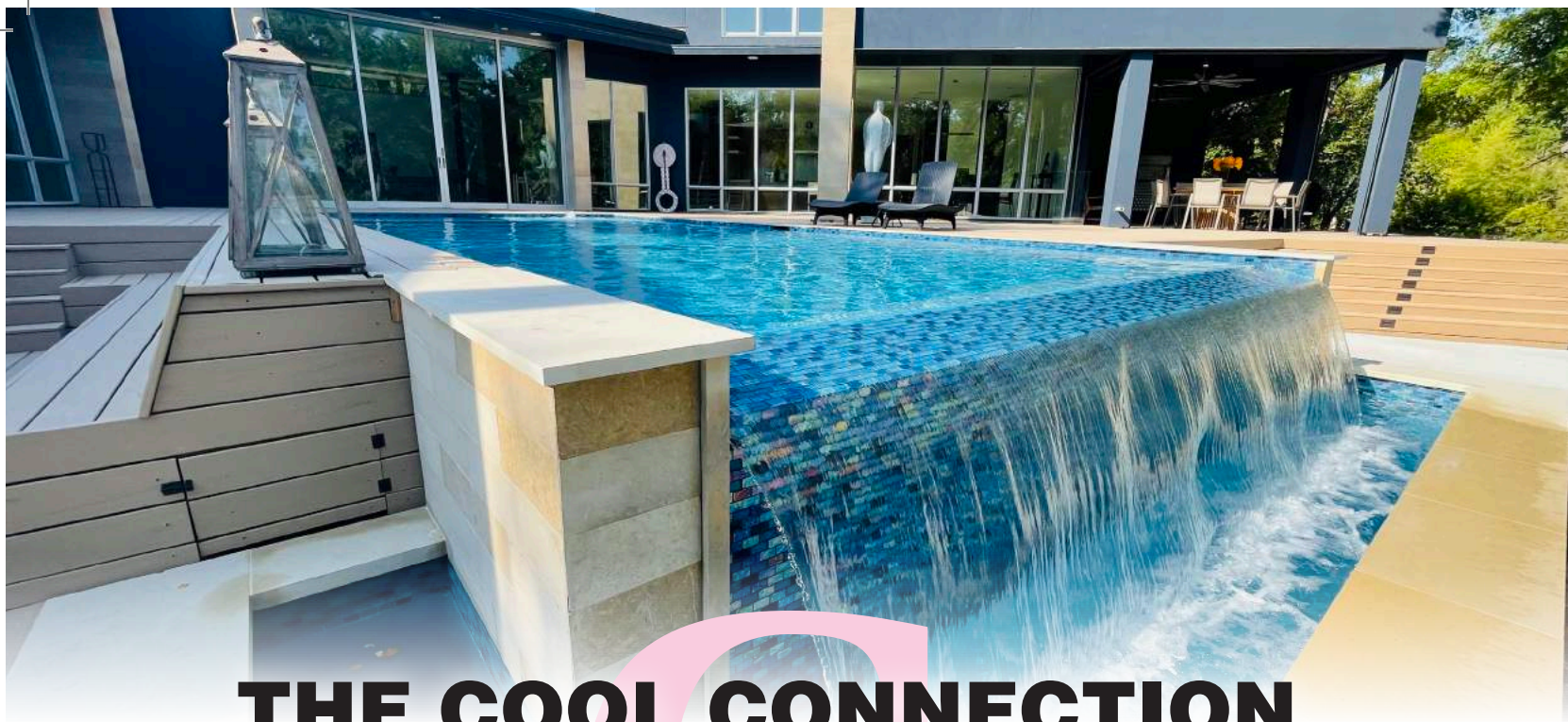
ers a high quality of life with a plethora of amenities for residents.

GREG DOLLGENER FOUNDATION & COLLIN COUNTY'S LGBTQ ACCEPTANCE

In the tapestry of Collin County's inclusive community, the Greg Dollgener Foundation adds another layer of support for the LGBTQ population. The foundation, through its various initiatives, contributes to creating an environment where diversity is not only acknowledged but celebrated.

As the article concludes, it's worth noting that Collin County, with its diverse cities such as Plano and Frisco, has become a beacon of LGBTQ acceptance. The Greg Dollgener Foundation, in collaboration with other organizations and community groups, fosters an inclusive atmosphere that transcends boundaries. 





THE COOL CONNECTION

Why Dallas LGBTQ Homeowners PRIORITIZE POOLS IN 2023

INTRODUCTION

In July 2023, Dallas saw record-breaking temperatures, with scorching 100-degree days becoming the norm. Against this backdrop, a research group conducted a survey among 3,000 homeowners, predominantly from the LGBTQ community. The survey aimed to understand the top ten desires of these homeowners, and surprisingly, 2,380 respondents chose pools as their most coveted item. This article delves into the multifaceted reasons behind the strong preference for pools among LGBTQ homeowners in Dallas during this particular year.

POOLS AS A SANCTUARY

The desire for pools among LGBTQ homeowners can be understood as a quest for sanctuary amidst the relentless heat. Pools offer a unique space where individuals and families can escape the sweltering heat and enjoy a refreshing, private oasis. In a year when vacations might have been limited or canceled due to various factors, having a pool at home becomes an attractive alternative for relaxation and recreation.



A GATHERING PLACE FOR OUT OF TOWN GUESTS

Beyond serving as a personal retreat, pools play a pivotal role in bringing people together. LGBTQ homeowners often prioritize creating spaces that foster a sense of community and inclusivity. In this context, pools become more than just a way to cool down; they transform into gathering places for friends and family, especially out-of-town guests.

A SYMBOL OF RESILIENCE POST-COVID

The impact of COVID-19 on the availability of pools cannot be understated. Supply chain shortages, delayed permits, and concerns about public health made obtaining a pool a challenging task during the pandemic. As we move beyond the pandemic era, owning a pool represents a symbol of resilience — a testament to overcoming obstacles and reclaiming a sense of normalcy.

LGBTQ homeowners, like many others, may view pool ownership as a way of embracing a newfound sense of freedom and an opportunity to live life to the



fullest. The pandemic heightened an appreciation for personal spaces and outdoor amenities, making the desire for a pool even stronger in 2023.


A SMART INVESTMENT IN REAL ESTATE

In addition to its recreational and social benefits, a pool can also be a valuable investment. The real estate market in Dallas has been steadily growing, and homes with

pools tend to have higher resale values. LGBTQ home-owners who prioritize pools may see them as a sound financial decision, one that not only enhances their quality of life but also adds value to their property.

CONCLUSION

In July 2023, when Dallas experienced sweltering temperatures and a renewed sense of optimism post-pandemic, LGBTQ homeowners' preference for pools became comprehensible. Pools represent more than just a means to escape the heat; they symbolize personal sanctuaries, community hubs, and a return to normalcy. They serve as a reminder of resilience and a smart investment in real estate. As Dallas continues to grow and evolve, the allure of pools for LGBTQ homeowners remains strong. In a city known for its warmth, both in climate and in the hearts of its residents, the cool connection between LGBTQ homeowners and pools is a testament to the enduring desire for comfort, community, and opportunity in the face of adversity.

Building a swimming pool during the winter months is a great idea for many reasons. Starting construction in the winter ensures that your pool will be completed by the beginning of the spring swim season. Waiting until spring to start can cause the customer to miss out on some great pool days while the pool is being finished. The pool industry typically sees price increases during the first three months of the year, so the earlier you start, the more possible savings you can see. During the cold weather months, customers typically do not use their backyard which is an ideal time to complete a construction project in the space. Finally, finishing the pool during winter allows new landscaping that is typically installed around a pool to adjust and grow during the spring to complete your outdoor transformation. Blue Lagoons Pools & Spas offers a free planning guide titled "What to Expect when Building a Pool" at their website (www.bluelagoonspool.com) which gives a good overview of the pool construction process from start to finish. 



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Hello Neighbors!
 My name is Teria Guthrie and I am a local TX Realtor in the Frisco area, however I cover all of DFW area. In addition I am part of a global network through Coldwell Banker Realty Global Luxury office. Therefore, if you are relocating locally, out of state or even globally I can assist with all your real estate needs.
 I represent both buyers and sellers specializing in residential real estate as well as land. Of course, as most are aware the market has shifted and I would love to be an asset to determine your real estate needs and complete a complimentary market analysis on your property to determine the value in our current market. If you are looking for your forever home that checks off all the wants and needs of your family including beloved fur babies, I would love to learn about your home goals. I am very passionate about what I do in helping people find and protect their biggest asset, their home!

Teria Guthrie
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CHRISTMAS

A Celebration of Diversity and Inclusivity FOR LGBTQ+ FAMILIES

INTRODUCTION

I never thought my dad would write a Christmas letter. He always had this tradition of reading out about ten Christmas letters during our Christmas Eve gatherings and would jokingly accuse everyone of bragging. With his deep voice and New York accent, he'd say, "They're all a bunch of braggers, I tell you!" He'd read those beautifully crafted letters and playfully make smart remarks about them. The only letters he enjoyed were from my cousin Debbie who always wrote loving stories about my grandmother and the letters from family friends with a talented and accomplished concert pianist for a son. When he read a letter about a family tragedy they experienced, he paused. They wrote about their struggles with sincerity. Dad pointed at it. "Y'know, they're not braggers. I think I'll write a Christmas letter this year."

A CELEBRATION OF FAMILY

He started by expressing his love for his wife, his partner of over forty years. He talked about the deep bond they shared and the journey they had taken together. Then, he spoke about the successes of his eldest daughter, of whom he was incredibly proud.



He also felt the need to acknowledge that she was competitive and materialistic. He moved on to his eldest son, praising him as an amazing athlete and a strong-willed individual. He also mentioned he had gained some weight. Dad wrote about his youngest daughter with great

admiration, highlighting her perseverance in overcoming learning disabilities. She was spared the snark his other children could not avoid. More importantly, my dad openly expressed his love and pride for his gay son, without a hint of bragging. He even humorously mentioned how his son embraced materialism; similar to his oldest daughter, but Dad made it clear that he was proud without reservations. His bold conclusion to the letter was as follows: "And yes, he's still gay! Does anyone have an issue with that? Because I certainly do not."

In the end, my dad's Christmas letter that year became a beautiful testament to love, acceptance, and a celebration of each family member. He cherished and embraced each one of us, flaws and all, without ever boasting about his own parenting. It was a letter that brought warmth and joy to our hearts during the holiday season, creating a tradition of love and acceptance in our family. 🌟





NAVIGATING DISCRIMINATION

The Struggles faced by Gay and Lesbian Couples in RELIGIOUS-BASED INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the LGBTQ+ community has made significant strides towards equality and acceptance, yet challenges persist in various aspects of life. One such area is the experience of gay and lesbian couples in independent living centers, particularly those with religious affiliations. This article explores the stories of individuals like Tom and James, shedding light on the discrimination they faced when seeking a peaceful and inclusive environment for their retirement.

THE ALLURE OF INDEPENDENT LIVING

Independent living centers are designed to offer seniors a comfortable and supportive environment where they can maintain their autonomy while enjoying the benefits of community living. However, the reality for some gay and lesbian couples is quite different, as religious-based centers may harbor prejudices that create an unwelcoming atmosphere.



religious-based independent living center. Excited about a new chapter in their lives, Tom and James sold their condo with high hopes of finding a welcoming community in an independent living center. Little did they know that their dreams would be shattered by the discrimination they encountered.

THE DIVIDE OF INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS

TOM AND JAMES' STORY IN DALLAS

Tom and James, a gay couple in Dallas, decided to explore independent living options as they approached retirement. They had lived in a condo for many years and felt that an independent living center would provide them with a more secure and social environment. Unfortunately, their journey was fraught with challenges from the moment they set foot in a

Many independent living centers across the United States have religious affiliations, and while some are inclusive and accepting, others maintain conservative views that lead to discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals. This creates a clear divide, with some centers openly embracing diversity, while others perpetuate an environment that excludes certain groups based on sexual orientation.

AN UNWELCOME ATMOSPHERE AND FEELING THE NEED TO RETREAT

Upon moving into an independent living center in Dallas, Tom and James quickly realized that they were not fully accepted. Subtle, yet persistent, signs of discrimination began to surface, making them feel isolated and uncomfortable. They encountered disapproving glances, overheard hushed conversations, and experienced a lack of engagement from fellow residents and staff. Unable to ignore the growing discomfort, Tom and James made the difficult decision to leave the independent living center and return to condo living. The dream of a supportive community had been shattered, leaving them feeling rejected and unwelcome. Their experience highlights the struggle that many LGBTQ+ seniors face in finding safe and accepting spaces in which to spend their golden years.

CHOOSING CONDO LIVING OVER DISCRIMINATION

Back in their condo, Tom and James reflected on their experience and realized that the discrimination they faced was not unique. Many LGBTQ+ seniors find themselves caught between the desire for communal living and the fear of discrimination in religious-based independent living centers. Tom and James decided to purchase another condo, opting for a familiar environment where they felt accepted and respected. The experiences of couples like Tom and James underscore the need for change within independent living centers. It is crucial for these facilities to adopt inclusive policies that actively promote diversity and prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation.

ADDRESSING DISCRIMINATION IN INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS

Policy Reform: Independent living centers must review and update their policies to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

This includes fostering an inclusive environment that respects the rights and dignity of all residents.

Training and Education: Staff at independent living centers should undergo training on LGBTQ+ inclusivity and sensitivity. This education should cover the unique needs and challenges faced by gay and lesbian seniors to create a more empathetic and understanding atmosphere.

Community Outreach: Centers should actively engage in community outreach efforts to promote inclusivity. Establishing partnerships with LGBTQ+ organizations and participating in events that celebrate diversity can help create a more welcoming environment for everyone.

Creating Support Networks: Independent living centers can foster a sense of community by creating support networks for LGBTQ+ residents. This can include social events, discussion groups, and other initiatives that encourage residents to connect and build relationships.

Transparent Communication: To build trust and transparency, independent living centers should communicate their commitment to inclusivity clearly. This can be done through informational materials, website statements, and open discussions with residents regarding the importance of creating a discrimination-free environment.



CONCLUSION

The experiences of Tom and James in a religious-based independent living center in Dallas

highlights the urgent need for change within these communities. Discrimination against LGBTQ+ seniors should have no place in facilities designed to offer comfort and support in their retirement years. It is time for independent living centers to embrace inclusivity, educate their staff, and actively work towards creating environments where every resident feels welcomed and respected, regardless of their sexual orientation. Only then can these centers truly fulfill their mission of providing a safe and supportive home for all. ⚙️

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T'JUANNA WINTERS

Our Gal Pal of the Month

CONTINUING THE LEGACY OF LIZZIE LU TREATS

INTRODUCTION

In the heart of Irving, Texas, the sweet aroma of confectionery delights wafts through the air, drawing locals to the beloved Lizzie Lux Treats. Owned by the charismatic and community-driven T'Juanna Winters, this candy shop has become a symbol of community spirit and delectable treats. As we celebrate her as the Gal Pal of the Month in the prestigious Gab Magazine, it's essential to delve into the remarkable backstory that shaped Lizzie Lux Treats into the thriving community hub it is today..

A SWEET BEGINNING ROOTED IN FAMILY TRADITION

Lizzie Lux Treats didn't just spring into existence; it has deep roots in the legacy of Elizabeth Jones, affectionately known as Lizzie to her family and friends. Legendary for her baking skills, Lizzie found immense joy in seeing the happiness her creations brought to those who enjoyed them. Her granddaughters, T'Juanna (fondly nicknamed Lil' Lizzie) and her sister (known as Lulu), were fortunate to learn the art of baking at their grandmother's feet.



In December of 2019, T'Juanna decided to pay homage to her grandmother's legacy by launching Lizzie Lu Luxury Treats. This endeavor was not merely a business venture; it was a heartfelt

tribute to a woman whose passion for baking transcended the kitchen and left a lasting impact on everyone who tasted her creations.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DOING GOOD

T'Juanna's grandmother instilled in her the belief that if you do good, you'll do well. This philosophy became the cornerstone of Lizzie Lu Luxury Treats, a candy shop that goes beyond the realm of creating delicious confections. It is a place where the spirit of giving back is as rich as the flavors on display.

THE LAUNCH OF LIZZIE LU LUXURY TREATS

In December of 2019, Lizzie Lu Luxury Treats opened its doors to the Irving community, bringing with it the

legacy of Lizzie's baking prowess and a commitment to making a positive impact. T'Juanna, affectionately called Lil' Lizzie, poured her heart and soul into the venture, ensuring that every treat that left the shop was a testament to the joy and love that baking could bring.

CONTINUING THE LEGACY OF GIVING BACK

The spirit of giving back has always been an integral part of T'Juanna's family philosophy, and it seamlessly translated into the mission of Lizzie Lu Luxury Treats. The candy shop quickly became a hub for community engagement and philanthropy, echoing the values instilled by T'Juanna's grandmother.

THE HUMAN CONNECTION: A DRIVING FORCE


What motivated Lizzie Lux Treats' founder 35 years ago remains the driving force inspiring T'Juanna today – the power of creating human connections. It's not just about crafting mouth-watering treats; it's about building a sense of community, fostering connections, and bringing people together through the shared love of sweet treats.

BEYOND THE CANDY COUNTER


Lizzie Lux Treats is not merely a candy shop; it's a conduit for community bonding. T'Juanna actively engages in local events, supporting schools, sponsoring sports teams, and contributing to initiatives aimed at addressing food insecurity. Her commitment to providing job opportunities for underprivileged youth is not just a business strategy, but a genuine effort to empower the younger generation, mirroring the values passed down through succeeding generations.

CONCLUSION

As we celebrate T'Juanna Winters as the Gal Pal of the Month, it's evident that Lizzie Lux Treats is more than a business; it's a legacy, a tribute to family traditions, and a testament to the enduring power of doing good. In honoring her grandmother's memory,

T'Juanna has created a candy shop that not only tantalizes taste buds, but also touches hearts. Lizzie Lux Treats stands as a beacon of community spirit, reminding us that the sweetest success comes from the heart, and the joy of giving back is a recipe for a fulfilling life. 





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This is dedicated to every young woman who dared to write her own story and create her own path. I also dedicate this to everyone in my life who has thrown confetti on my name, whether I was looking or not.

Thank you to my family, friends, clients, and neighbors who have been here every step of the way.

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