

free!

GAY AUSTIN

summer 1979

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Verdict against Driskill

Gay victory in court

EDITOR'S NOTE: As this issue of Gay Austin was going to press, the Cabaret disco was found guilty of violating the city's ordinance and fined \$200. The municipal court jury composed of three women and three men took less than half an hour to reach its verdict that the disco's house rule against same-sex dancing violates the "public accommodations" ordinance.

Mathew Coles, the gay rights activist from San Francisco on hand in Austin for the trial, called the case the first of its kind in the country where the issue of discrimination concerned a person's sexual preference.

Driskill attorney Mark Levgarg said he would seek an appeal on the grounds that the ordinance is "too vague to enforce."

The complaint against the Cabaret bar at the Driskill Hotel for discriminating against patrons on the basis of sexual orientation is expected to be heard in municipal court July 10.

"The specific setting of the trial is still pending," explained Woody Egger, who has closely monitored the complaint's progress. "In any case, it is expected to go before a jury trial."

The management of the Cabaret is charged with expelling two couples for engaging in same-sex dancing on the club floor in February 1978. An ordinance passed by the city council before that time prohibits discrimination against gays in public places. If found in violation of the ordinance, the club faces a maximum fine of \$200.

The club had challenged the validity of the ordinance and the case was scheduled to be heard in district court last month. However, at the beginning of June, the Cabaret dropped its injunction against the city and opened the way for a trial on the facts of the case in municipal court.

Matthew Coles, a San Francisco attorney who has worked with Gay Rights Advocates in helping draft similar ordi-

nances in other cities, was scheduled to come to Austin in June for the trial. Coles is primarily concerned with defending the ordinance from any constitutional challenges, such as the Cabaret's injunction.

"This is one of the first test cases of such an ordinance anywhere," Egger said. "It's certainly the first of its kind in Texas." Neither Houston nor Dallas have similar laws to protect the rights of gays. Austin is the only city with ordinances to guarantee gays their civil rights in the areas of employment and public accommodations.

"At the time (the alleged offense was committed), the Cabaret officials were told that there was an ordinance and there would be a complaint filed," Egger added. Three of the four complainants plan to be present when the case is heard in court.

The Cabaret's defense, Egger explained, is that sexual orientation, as defined in the ordinance, is "ambiguous." "They claim that they are not discriminating against gays, since heterosexuals cannot engage in same-sex dancing either."

More photos inside . . .



Celebrants on Town Lake for all-day festivities May 26.

Marchers convene

NEW YORK — Organizers for the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights are convening in Houston July 6-8 for a national conference to finalize plans for the October 14 event.

Delegates from all regions of the country, representing the ethnic composition of their areas, will attend the conference, said Ray Hill, co-chair of the national logistics committee. "Such a nationally representative body can guarantee the March on Washington speaks from the heart of the American lesbian and gay population," Hill said.

A national transportation network has already been announced by march organizers. A press release from the New York office outlines plans for a 24-hour toll-free information line, as well as

posters and other informative materials to be distributed nationally. A logistics office will soon be set up in Washington to manage the publicity effort.

A support staff will monitor march transportation arrangements for some 50 locales. A computer system will keep the office up to date in arranging rides and carpools. The office will also assist in arranging transportation by air, bus and rail, but warns that from many locales commercial services are already booked solid.

Persons interested in helping organize the transportation effort should contact the New York office, which is coordinating the effort until the office in Washington is set up. The New York office phone number is (212) 924-2970.

Delegates to gather here in August



Pat Bond in one of her stage roles

Organizers for the sixth annual statewide gay conference are expecting a larger turnout than ever before and are scheduling an ambitious program for the 400 delegates expected here next month.

Texas Gay Conference VI, sponsored by the Texas Gay Task Force, is slated for the weekend of August 17-19 at the Sheraton Crest Hotel in downtown Austin. A wide variety of workshops have been scheduled and two nationally recognized gays spokespersons plan to attend. The featured speakers for this year's conference include Leonard Matlovich, who has worked to reverse discrimination against gays in the armed forces and is presently a candidate for city supervisor from San Francisco's

predominantly gay district; and Pat Bond, a Bay Area actress and comedian who is best known nationally among the gay community for her appearance in the film, "Word Is Out." Recently, Bond has gained recognition for her one-woman interpretations of Gertrude Stein and Colette.

"We're organizing our workshops into three periods with five to six workshops per period," Woody Egger, coordinator for the conference, said. The workshops will cover diverse topics, ranging from legal questions and child custody to physical health care and a report on the lobbying effort at the state legislature. Other subjects include sessions on "lifestyles," fund raising, problems of adolescent gays, history and roots of gays in Texas, and "transpeople."

Two additional workshops will deal with how gays have been depicted in public life and on stage, screen and tele-

vision, and how gay organizations and individuals can develop effective working relationships with the mass media and ensure the most favorable treatment possible.

In addition to the workshop sessions, Egger hopes to schedule a caucus period which will not conflict with the workshops. "It will be a sort of coalition building session," Egger explained. Bond and Matlovich will address conference delegates at Saturday night's banquet. A short business meeting for the conference is also planned for Sunday morning. The pre-registration fee for delegates is \$20, which includes the cost of the banquet and a get-acquainted party at the Sheraton Friday evening. Registrations at the door will be \$25.

Inquiries may be addressed to the Texas Gay Task Force, P.O. Box 91, Austin, TX 78767, or interested persons can call Gay Community Services at 477-6699.

Reports — Statewide

TV evangelist back

DALLAS — An area evangelist whose television program was cancelled February 25 when he aired a program critical of gay "lifestyles" may be back on the air within a week.

James Robinson's program was cancelled by WFAA-TV in Dallas after the station had received numerous protests about the February 25 telecast. The station cited the Fairness Doctrine as grounds for the cancellation.

"We never objected to his being on the air," said Louise Young, president of the Dallas Gay Political Caucus. "We objected to his derogatory use of homosexuality in a political context." For his part, Robinson said he would be sensitive to any broadcaster's position in the "hotseat of public skepticism." WFAA-TV General Manager Dave Lane said that an agreement had been reached, but that the date of Robinson's return to the airwaves was not yet finalized. The agreement allows the station to preview Robinson's shows prior to airing.

Robinson said that he doubted the February 25 program would be broadcast again. "I would never be so unkind as to try to make a request like that," he said.

Perry visits Austin

AUSTIN — The Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry addressed a crowd of 80 people at the Metropolitan Community Church of Austin June 1. Perry is the founder and moderator of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches and recently received the Humanitarian Award of the Gay Rights Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

"Rev. Perry's message was centered on 'For Such a Time As This' and combined the history of gays with their need to unite in Christ and Christian efforts," said Candance Naisbitt, pastor of the local MCC. "Rev. Perry called people not only out of the closets of sexuality, but also out of their closets of Christian beliefs and backgrounds to fight the battle to victory as whole human beings and as mature Christians."



Steve Shiflett and Larry Bagneris testifying before the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. Photo courtesy Houston Post.

Houston GPC before Civil rights hearing

HOUSTON — Gay Political Caucus President Steve Shiflett told a U.S. Civil Rights Commission June 12 that he had proof of at least 100 harassments of gays by police.

Shiflett submitted a list of the alleged violations during the hearings on the University of Houston campus. The cases, all occurring within the past eight months, involve excessive police force, verbal harassment, perjured testimony and one alleged murder cover-up. The commission's June meeting is a prelude to full-scaled public hearings September 10-12 in response to charges of alleged police misconduct.

Shiflett said few of the cases had ever been referred to the police department's Internal Affairs Division because files have had a habit of disappearing or officers have changed their reports.

Police Chief Harry Caldwell and other officers also presented evidence before the commission, involving officers as far back as 1970. Representatives of the Mexican-American community also appeared at the hearings.

Assault bill killed In House committee

AUSTIN — A controversial bill to change the definition of rape in the Texas Penal Code died in House committee in May when the state legislature adjourned.

The bill would have allowed charges to be filed in case of homosexual assault, which is not covered by the present law. The bill had already won approval of the Senate in April, passing with a vote of 19-7 on its second reading and finally adopted with a voice vote.

"The real thrust of the bill is that it would make it easier for jurors to convict," said Kathy Bonner of the Texas Women's Political Caucus. The bill would have eliminated the word "rape" from the state penal code and substituted the word "assault," but would have retained the same penalties for the offense.

Controversy has centered on a provision allowing spouses and co-habitants to be charged under the

proposed law. In the Senate, the sponsor of the measure, Gene Jones of Houston, agreed to amendments which eliminated the special provision. The present law also precludes spouses and live-in mates from filing rape charges against one another.

"Everybody has lost their enthusiasm since the special provision has been taken out," Bonner explained. Several states, among them Pennsylvania and Michigan, have already changed their definitions to "sexual assault," but none to "assault," as the proposed bill would have done.

"The reasoning behind the bill was that by changing the name to 'assault' more women would have reported it," Betty Naylor, lobbyist for the Texas Gay Task Force, explained. She added that the Task Force did not take a stand on the bill.

"One of the oldest arguments we've heard since the movement was begun to revise the rape laws is that women are willing until they change their minds, and then they'll holler rape," Naylor said. "They (the legislators) wanted to separate the stranger who rapes or assaults."

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Legislative overview

Compiled from Texas Gay Task Force lobby reports

As the 66th session of the Texas Legislature adjourned, Texas gays felt success and pride that for the first time we maintained an advocate in the Capitol during one of the worst sessions in legislature history. Our advocate, Bettie Naylor, found a willingness on the part of lawmakers to talk openly and honestly about matters of concern to gays in Texas. Lawmakers are giving us an ear as they come to know more about us. Having an active and ever-present lobby in the recent session clearly establishes our growing strength and ability to raise the funds that will ensure us a voice in the future.

Our goal during the 66th session was to ward off anti-gay legislation and to lay groundwork for protective legislation in future sessions. We were well aware that lawmakers and Capitol observers had many questions and our intent was always to put forth a professional effort that would cause them to question their ill-conceived myths about us. For instance, the right-wingers have suggested we would amend the Equal Rights Amendment to include sexual preference.

During this session, bills were introduced to ban poppers, raise the state's drinking age from 18 to 19 years, and put an outright ban on bars which permit "sexually oriented conduct." The bill to ban poppers, sponsored by Rep. Polumbo of Houston, failed, in part because Naylor picked up on the legislation when first introduced. The Human Rights Advocates alerted manufacturers, distributors and retailers, who in turn contacted members of the subcommittee on drug-related legislation. Naylor talked with Polumbo and found he lacked knowledge about the actual effects of poppers. The bill finally died in subcommittee and never reached the House floor.

The bill to raise the state's drinking age, sponsored by Senator Mengden of Houston, passed the Senate easily, but died in the House Liquor Regulation subcommittee. Since gay bars and clubs are often the first spot for younger gays and lesbians to socialize, the Human Rights Advocates monitored the legislation closely. There seems to be a movement afoot nationally to raise the age in other states. Although the bill to ban "sexually oriented conduct" was aimed at all bars selling alcoholic beverages, gay establishments would have had the responsibility of prohibiting drag attire and same-sex dancing. The bill was also inclusive enough to have affected dinner theaters, theater groups, and non-gay discos. The efforts of the state's club owners and the Advocates helped ensure that the bill never had a hearing.

The Advocates successfully worked with coalition supporters to get the Family and Domestic Violence bill on the House floor. The twelve state centers already in existence accept gay and lesbian victims of family violence. Attention was not drawn to this fact, since an amendment would surely have been added restricting acceptance of these victims.

MEDIA WATCH initiated

By Jim Olinger

In response to the recent upswing in media use of terms such as "homosexual torture ring" and "homosexual murderer," Gay Community Services is starting a MEDIA WATCH campaign.

Although Elmer Wayne Henley has been convicted in his second "Houston 'homosexual' torture-death plot" trial, his lawyers are already promising a third. "Chicago 'gay' mass murderer" John Wayne Gacy's trial will be coming up soon, too. Unless we fight it now, we can look forward to a nearly unending stream of "murderous homosexual child molester" images from the media.

We have the power to prevent this. Thanks to the efforts of the National Gay Task Force, the national media are now being scrupulously careful to report the news in ways that don't feed prejudice against gays. However, local news coverage, which does much more to shape a community's attitudes, is rife with anti-gay references.

We are calling on you to help encourage responsible reporting towards gays in the Austin area. There are two things you can do when



TGTF Lobbyist Bettie Naylor.

Our greatest victory came April 23 when the Speaker of the House sustained a point of order against further consideration of a section of the budget which denied gay organizations on college campuses use of meeting facilities and other campus services. Rep. Lalor of Houston and Sen. Schwartz of Galveston carried the points of order and helped us remove the discriminatory and unconstitutional addition to the state's General Appropriations Bill.

Adding initiative and referendum powers to the state's Constitution was opposed by the Human Rights Advocates and failed final passage. Since the Governor supports this legislation, it will probably be included in his special session call.

Early in the session, our Legislative Committee determined to seek active sponsorship and introduction of a bill to repeal Section 21.06 of the Texas Penal Code, the "sodomy" statute. Lobbyist Naylor searched for a sponsor, but found much unwillingness among friendly lawmakers to do so. Rep. Sam Hudson of Dallas would have introduced the measure and worked with us in any way. However, Rep. Washington of Houston, who had introduced similar legislation in the last two sessions, thought it futile. Rep. Ron Waters of Houston agreed and advised us to hold off until we as a community and as a lobby lay the necessary groundwork to secure enough votes to pass such a measure. The Legislative Committee met again March 3 and decided unanimously not to seek repeal in any form during the last session. Ultimately our goal is to repeal 21.06 and eventually to pass protective legislation that guarantees equal opportunities and rights under the law for gays and lesbians. However, we must realize that preparation must come before our big push to repeal. Rural lawmakers still have a lot to say about what is done in the legislature. Through interim work and subsequent political campaigns, we can substantially increase our chances for success in the future. Education is the key, among lawmakers and our community. The test will come when we must show our numbers and overwhelmingly convince legislators that it is time to protect the rights of all Texas citizens.

We urge you to join the Texas Gay Task Force and support the lobbying effort during this important interim period. Basic memberships are \$10 yearly, contributing memberships \$25. Business memberships are available upon request. Address all inquiries to: P. O. Box 2036, Universal City, TX 78148.

you encounter anti-gay programming. First, call the station and protest. If a radio or television or a newspaper receives several calls or letters about offensive programming, they will usually try to stop it. A phone call is a great method of curing an ignorant or careless announcer. A letter takes more work and is less immediate, but eventually reaches more people. Both are important.

After contacting the media, call us. The Gay Community Services MEDIA WATCH program is now collecting evidence of anti-gay reporting. If you see or hear any "homosexual killer" references, or any other material prejudicial to gays, such as the routine denunciations on some of the religious broadcasts, tell us. We would like to know the date, time, station or newspaper, program, announcer or reporter, what the offensive material was, and any response to complaints. Stations showing a pattern of consistent anti-homosexual broadcasting will be monitored for Fairness Doctrine and public service violations. If such violations are found, MEDIA WATCH will request equal time to counter these distortions. We may also register complaints against specific stations at FCC license renewal hearings.

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Reports — National

Marchers turned down By White House aide

WASHINGTON — A request that President Carter endorse the October March on Washington was turned down by the White House June 5.

Thirteen gays, including blacks, Asian-Americans, and Indians, met with Jane Wales, a public liaison officer for the White House, for more than an hour. "I told them I would not recommend the president endorse the march," Wells said. "That would certainly indicate a break from precedent — to recommend or not recommend a march."

Wells said that the time was spent mostly "with civil rights and human rights concerns." "Their feeling was that minority, low-income women have not been made aware of the benefits ERA would bring to them," she said.

Although Wells stated that the meeting "doesn't imply support or non-support" of gay demands, a New York-based alliance of fundamental clergymen urged the president to cancel the meeting. The Rev. Roger Fulton of the Neighborhood Church in Greenwich Village accused the government of encouraging immorality and homosexuality — specifically through a federal grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for a display of homosexual art in New York City "with definite Sodomite qualities."

Senator Gordon Humphrey (R-N.H.) said he had sent Carter a telegram "expressing my indignation that the president is lending respectability to the breakdown of moral values."

Wells said, "We try to be able to meet with any organized interest group. (The clergymen) would be given the same opportunity."

Media subpoenaed

Authorities have subpoenaed fifteen news organizations in the San Francisco Bay area to produce material they believe may assist in prosecuting participants in the riot on May 21.

Charles Breyer, chief assistant district attorney, said the materials included photographs, videotapes and tape recordings made during the riot when twelve police cars were set on fire. The subpoenas were issued with the approval of a San Francisco grand jury on May 23, Breyer added.

News organizations which have had their materials subpoenaed include the *Bay Area Reporter* and the *San Francisco Sentinel* (both gay newspapers), area daily newspapers, seven television stations, and the news wire services.

Mayor Diane Feinstein indicated on May 29 that she would appoint an independent committee to study the riot which caused an estimated \$1 million in damages and injured 160 people. The demonstrators were protesting the verdict of involuntary man-

slaughter against former Supervisor Dan White, charged in the killings of Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk. White admitted he had killed Moscone and Milk on November 27.

A plea to investigate the conduct of the jury during the trial was rejected by State Attorney General George Deukmejian. District Attorney Joseph Freitas made the request. He said he could not probe the case himself because he has already sharply criticized the jury's verdict.

'Pride Day' in Ohio Political hot potato

CINCINNATI — "Lesbian-Gay Pride Day" will be drug through the political mud of this city's mayoral race, a political foe of Mayor Bobbie Sterne promised.

James J. Condit, Jr., a candidate for the city council on the slate of a new anti-abortion party, said he will make the mayor's decision to proclaim June 30 "Lesbian-Gay Pride Day" an issue in the November election.

"I have been sympathetic to homosexuals and lesbians," Ms. Sterne said in her defense. "I think they have a very difficult time in this world and that people should be sympathetic to their plight."

Gay leader 'tested'

NEW JERSEY — The president of the New Jersey Gay Activist Alliance has agreed to undergo psychiatric testing to determine his fitness as a teacher after seven years of legal appeals.

"I am still firm in my beliefs on the right of human differences, and approach this examination accordingly," John Gish said. The 41-year-old alliance leader said he will consult with his attorney before he is examined by a school board-appointed psychiatrist on June 25. Gish was removed from the classroom and appointed assistant director of curriculum in 1972 when he was elected president of the gay alliance in New Jersey.

Gish had fought the school board's decision to examine his mental competency all the way to the Supreme Court, which refused to hear his appeal in October 1977. He subsequently agreed to testing, but insisted on choosing his own psychiatrist. Although his doctor concluded that there was no indication of pathology, the school board has insisted on having Gish examined by their own psychiatrist.

Gish has never publicly proclaimed himself gay and said he considers the charges a violation of his First Amendment rights.

'Sexless' gays okay

MINNEAPOLIS — The American Lutheran Church plans to circulate a policy statement that gays are not in violation of church teachings so long as they abstain from all sexual behavior.

The statement will be submitted to the church's 4,850 congregations for comment and will be revised on the basis of those evaluations. The final draft will be offered to the 1980 church convention.

The proposed statement, as drafted by the church's Standing Committee for the Office of Research and Analysis, says in part, "Homosexually oriented persons who do not practice their erotic preference in no way violate our understanding of Christian sexual behavior . . . (But, the church) regards homosexually erotic behavior as contrary to God's intent for his children."

One has to wonder what "Christian sexual behavior" must entail. So, everything would be peachy keen if we all became practicing eunuchs overnight?

Amnesty results in Discharge upgrade

LOS ANGELES — Gay men and women with less than honorable discharges may have them upgraded to honorable as part of the amnesty accorded Vietnam war resisters.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California — Gay Rights Chapter is distributing a brochure to thousands of organizations nationally in an effort to reach all gays affected by the amnesty. The chapter estimates that between three and four thousand gays may be involved.

The provision will last only until the end of 1979. After that time, it will be extremely difficult to upgrade one's discharge.

Copies of the brochure which describes the procedure may be obtained through the American Friends Service Committee, Inc., 600 West 26th St., Austin, TX 78705, phone — (512) 474-2399; or, by calling Gay Community Services, 477-6699.

Anita on TV?!

MIAMI — Wonder what Anita Bryant has been doing lately? Why, working on her television special — what else!

Gay Austin has been unable to discover if the program is syndicated or going to be aired on a national network. A notice in the "Personal Mention" section of the *Houston Chronicle*, May 23, quotes Bryant as saying the special will be aired sometime this fall and is being financed by contributors sympathetic to her views.

Now, what would that mean . . . ?

continued from page 4

After making your complaint, call the Austin Gay Community Services help line at 477-6699, and give the phone counselor the information for MEDIA WATCH. Please send copies of any letters you send or receive to GCS Media Watch, 2330 Guadalupe #7, Austin, TX 78705.

This effort depends on you. We must have those complaints of false reporting before we can act on them. We also need you to contact the offending station or newspaper immediately when you encounter objectionable coverage. This immediate feedback is very important in stopping prejudicial reporting. We also need volunteers to monitor stations and prepare complaints. For further information, contact Jim Olinger or Troy Stokes through GCS.

If we all work together, we can eliminate anti-gay prejudice from the media.

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New bar in town . . .

For those around town who haven't caught on yet, the management of the *Private Cellar* has opened an upstairs bar and dance floor — *The Waller Creek Saloon*. The Saloon plans to be Austin's first gay establishment with a genuine Western atmosphere, which shouldn't be hard considering the surroundings. The building itself used to be a cotton storage firm during the '30s. The dance floor still has the original wood planks. It and the brick walls in the "new" facilities are at least 100 years old. The 18-foot-high exposed beam ceilings and rusty sheet metal signs advertising Pearl beer and other brews add to the rustic atmosphere.



The game room accommodates two pool tables and the Saloon is hosting tournaments every Tuesday evening at 10 p.m. Other weekly highlights are free draft beer for anyone wearing a Western hat on Mondays and Happy Hour well drinks on Tuesdays for everyone bearing their chests. (That *was* bad, wasn't it?)

And the records in the jukebox on the dance floor? You guessed it — nothing but the West!

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City survey reveals Anti-gay attitudes

A survey of housing patterns in Austin has revealed prevalent attitudes among gays that they have been discriminated against and denied housing on the basis of their sexual preference.

The city's Human Relations Department conducted the survey, which was primarily focused on racial and ethnic discriminations. Two questionnaires were mailed out — one to lesbians and gay men, another to the general public. The lesbian and gay survey used mailing lists from local gay organizations.

Of the 242 questionnaires mailed out, a significant number were returned (62%), although surveyors do not consider it a representative sample of the gay community in Austin. Because of the difficulties involved in identifying members of the gay community, they concede that a truly representative sample cannot be determined now or in the near future.

However, although the results have not yet been publicized, the newsletter of the Austin Lesbian/Gay Political Caucus has summarized them. One third of the respondents felt they had been denied the same choice as straights in

choosing housing because of their sexual preference, and slightly over half felt they had been discriminated against because of their marital status. In addition, 28% felt they had *not* suffered discrimination because they have remained successfully closeted.

A poll was also conducted among 1,432 voters as to whether they favored a city ordinance to protect people from discrimination in housing on the basis of sexual preference. Sixty-three percent favored such a law, those with annual incomes below \$30,000 tending to favor it and those with incomes above tending to oppose it. Significantly, blacks who were surveyed favored such a law as much as the lesbian and gay sample!

These results should answer the argument of Mayor Carole McClellan and Council members Himmelblau, Cooke, and Mullen, who struck the "sexual orientation" provision from the city's Fair Housing Ordinance two years ago. "Of course," the newsletter points out, "the reasons they had for opposing it were different and unstated, but the study will give us good ammunition in future battles with homophobic public officials."

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AUSTIN BOTANICAL NOTES

As early summer comes to Austin, a large number of flowers will start to bloom. People who want to develop their botanical eye should look carefully at the various flowers and make comparisons of how they are different and what intuitively seemed related to what.

Botanists take similarity in floral structure to be the basis for saying plants are related. Thus, a particular shrub and a particular vine which have similar flowers may be more closely related than two shrubs with unlike flowers. The next few columns will describe some of the plant families commonly found in Central Texas. However, for learning the plants of our area, there is no substitute for getting outdoors and carefully looking at and making sketches of plants as they flower.

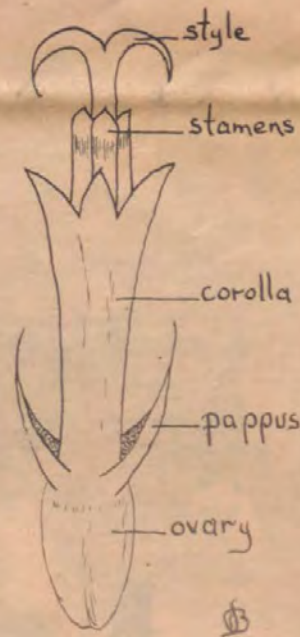
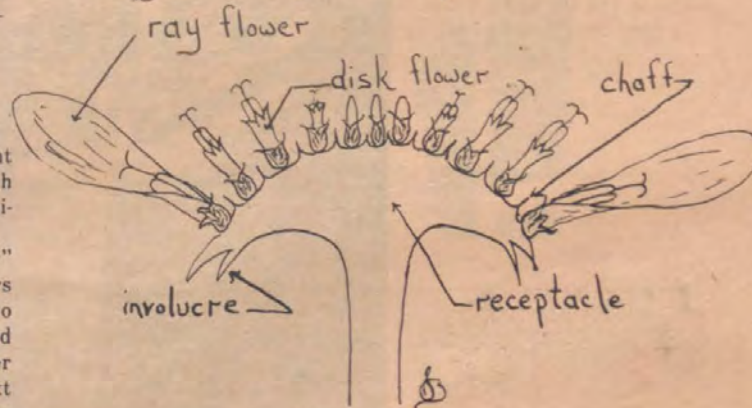
THE ASTERACEAE

This family, also called the *Compositae*, is one of the largest plant families and is among the easiest to recognize. It is the family to which daisies, sunflowers and chrysanthemums belong and is quite prominent in Austin in the early summer.

In the *Asteraceae*, what superficially looks like a single "daisy" flower is not a single flower at all, but rather many small flowers packed tightly together into a head. The heads usually consist of two kinds of flowers: those at the periphery which have large corollas and superficially make the "petals" of the "daisy"; and those at the center which usually have greatly reduced corollas. Look carefully at the next "daisy" you encounter and this will be perfectly clear. A magnifying glass might be helpful, but is probably not necessary.

Stan Bear

Diagram of typical Asteraceae head



typical disk flower

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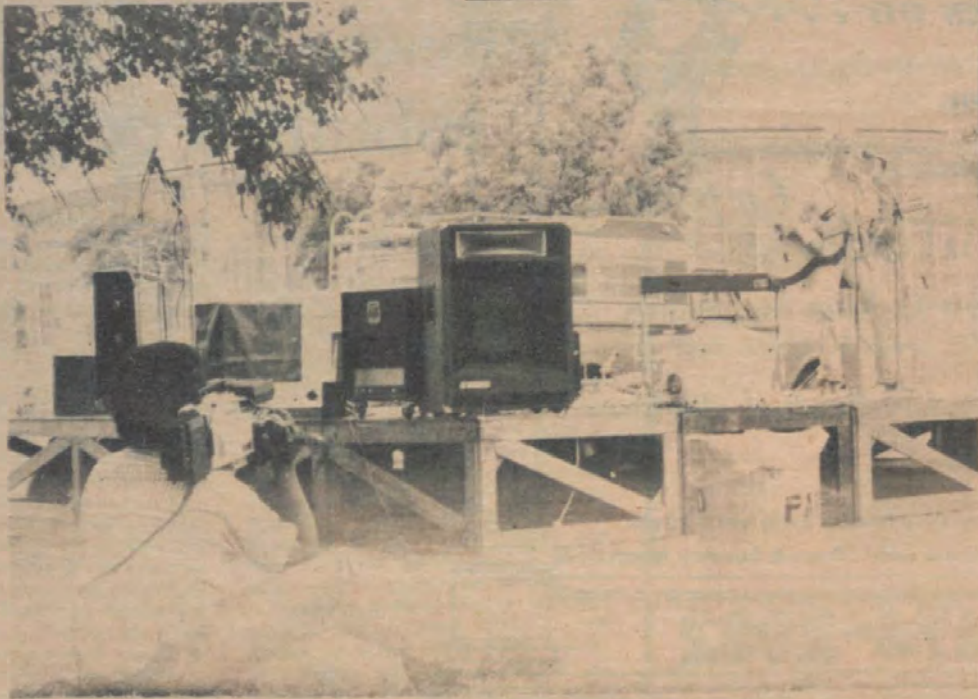
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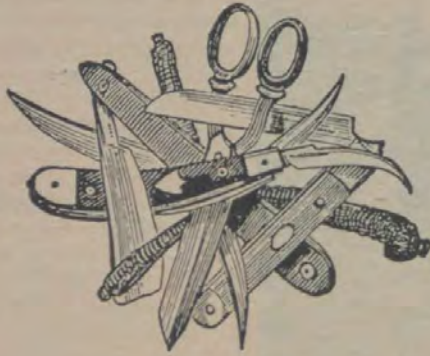




Fourth of July festivities at Austin's Metropolitan Park.



Mass murders backdrop of drama



By Ronald M. Sawey

Wolfman Faries by Michael Wertin is a sincere and largely successful attempt to examine homophobia, fear of the unknown, and small town family dynamics through the lens of the Houston mass murders. "Little Doug" is the 18-year-old artist who has just fallen in love for the first time and who fears that his being gay must also mean that he is inclined to butcher his lover. Bert is Doug's older brother, head of the household, and manager of the family-owned drilling company. Deborah is Bert's wife. John (not a blood relative) works for the drilling company, has been Deborah's lover, and is now Doug's lover. A reader (designated in the program as the chorus) reads accounts of the mass murders adapted from the *Houston Post*.

The play is most compelling in those instances in which it shows us how a shocking event such as the murders can change our lives and cause us to grow. After being arrested in a bar brawl, Bert is drafted by the Houston police to help exhume the bodies of the murder victims. This experience, in combination with a verbal encounter with a man who likes to be fist fucked, causes Bert to begin to consider the erotic in a broader light than before. Seen as alternatives to stultifying small town mores, these experiences liberate Bert's thinking. By their extreme nature, they give Bert permission to think and dream beyond the narrow confines of conventional sexuality and sex-roles.

Douglas must come to terms with the murders, too. His first step in doing this is simply to be afraid and to imagine that homosexuality and violence are somehow necessarily connected. The next step is to represent his feelings on canvas. He paints a huge portrait of John, his lover, gashed and cut, but standing and clearly alive. Deborah is shocked. John is protective and loving. Doug is embarrassed and Bert is impressed, realizing that Doug has pictured the intersection of eroticism and violence. The audience tends to side with Bert — largely out of relief that the latest work is not yet another dull, vapid picture of a pink horse. What begins as fear and self-hate ends as insight, artistic expression and recognition from others for those accomplishments.

These are related, but secondary elements to the story. Both Bert and Douglas grow emotionally as their overbearing and autocratic father recedes (offstage) into coma and finally death. Deborah remains the most static character. She never seems to be phobic or resentful of the new relationship between Doug and John even though it necessarily displaces her. When she learns that the two are planning to move to Houston, she objects principally by repeatedly stating her opinion of Houston as a decadent and corrupt city. Her actions can be best understood as manipulative attempts to keep the boys at home.

The play has two central defects. It is overly complex — it is easy to imagine that Wertin will write another play which attempts to cover less territory. Second, the author indulges in wishful thinking, weakening the play as a consequence. For example, thought frightened at first, both Bert and Doug come to positive resolutions of the anxiety caused by their reactions to the mass murders. Also, Doug is never hassled or ridiculed by his family for being different, artistic or later a homosexual. This kind of enlightenment is mighty hard to find in a "small oil town seventy miles from Houston". These weaknesses, however, are weaknesses born of ambitious goals. Why shouldn't someone write about how human beings grow from encounters with dreadful events? Why shouldn't someone write about how a family should love and support one of its members who is gay? Also, except for the readings by the "chorus" (which may, after all, be intended to mirror popular sentiment) the play is remarkably lacking in sensationalism.

The author deserves credit for working with a subject that most gay liberationists try to run away from. It is also fortunate that the premiere was held at Southwest Texas State University, an institution hardly saturated by liberationist thinking. Criminal Justice is a popular major at SWT. Maybe the future police officers have had a look at something other than conventional perspectives. I must confess that it is difficult for me to review this play because of personal reactions of mine. I grew up in a small South Texas town, and am intimately familiar with matriarchs and patriarchs who are successful in cramping and constraining the lives of their children. Also, I teach these children every day in my classes at Southwest Texas State University.

Ronald Sawey has been a member of Gay Community Services since 1976.

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Reform in the Methodist church

By Troy Stokes

The week of Memorial Day was my ninth time to attend the yearly session of the Southwest Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The first time I attended was in May 1971. That year we went to lend moral support to Gene Leggett, a former associate pastor of University United Methodist Church, who had made public the fact that he was gay. The response of the annual Conference was to take away his ministerial orders. Dismal as that detestable show of homophobia was, I learned two valuable lessons: (1) Participation in historic events is a good way to make friends, and (2) Gay people frighten straight institutions. Assertive gays are even more potent. Just because we were willing to interrupt and label heterosexist humbug for what it was, we became *the* subject of the conference — both in the mind of the delegates as well as in the coverage by press and broadcast journalists. I was delighted to see proper and decorous Methodists having to read about themselves in the San Antonio press as they "struggled" with the issue of the church and homosexuality. (Struggle is a favorite Methodist buzz word. The struggle, or course, is a headlong rush to be first in line to avoid courage, commitment, or Christian Witness.)

Out of some personal bias which probably has its roots in some murky neurosis, I have usually, even in 1971, tended to shy away from confrontation tactics — favoring instead the conventional approaches of urging delegates to read the report, vote in committee, sign the petition. This approach has not been overly successful. Lesbians and gay men are still unwelcome in most positions of public trust in the United Methodist Church. As late as April of this year, Joan Clark, an executive with the Women's Division of the Board of Global Ministries was fired from her post because she came out as a lesbian. Worth noting is the fact that she came out on purpose by writing a paper on homophobia and the church in which she related personal experiences.

The unfair and arbitrary treatment of Ms. Clark was one item on our agenda as the United Methodist Gay Caucus made plans for the 1979 session of the Southwest Texas Annual Conference. The other main item was to approach delegates and asked them to join us in a drive to petition the General Conference, a quadrennial meeting which sets policy on a national level, to change some of the official statements on homosexuality at the next meeting which will be held in April 1980 in Indianapolis. Two separate paragraphs of the Book of Discipline (!) were at issue. Paragraph 71-D makes some generally positive statements about gays and then ends with the disclaimer that the practice of homosexuality is regarded as "incompatible with Christian teaching". Paragraph 906.13 forbids funding on a national level for any gay caucus or any project which "might promote the acceptance of homosexuality." Our petitions call for the deletion of the negative language in 71-D and of all of 906.13.

We were forced into a posture of confrontation by the Resident Bishop, J. Chess Lovern, who is widely regarded by pastors in this conference as a bigot and a fool. A routine request to have display space in which to exhibit the petitions as well as educational material about homosexuality was routinely approved only to be later withdrawn by the bishop. The justification for this was that displays were to be germane to the business of the conference. When the Caucus discovered that outside groups having nothing at all to do with the official agenda had been given display space, we decided to simply disregard the instructions of the Bishop and let him defend his unreason and falsehood to the press if he chose to. He, in turn, decided to not have us arrested, but to ignore us. He was not able to successfully pretend that we were not there. At the first press conference of the session, all of the questions dealt with homosexuality or the Gay Caucus. Most news coverage concentrated on the gay issue, giving only superficial treatment of other conference business.

The summary dismissal of Joan Clark was the focus of a demonstration at the ceremony of Ordination of Deacons and Elders. As delegates left the service on their way to a reception for the ordinands, they had to walk past a Methodist passion play which likened the treatment of Clark to the crucifixion of Christ.

The results of all this activity are somewhat hard to measure. Clearly, lesbians and gay men are not available as role models in the church. We are there, of course, but we are seen as straight. This ripoff

of the reputation of homosexual church members has to stop before the Methodist church can be said to be a friend of the gay community. On the other hand, there is some evidence of social change. Paul Abels is an openly gay Methodist minister serving the admittedly liberal Washington Square United Methodist Church in New York. The Board of Discipleship has put out a resource packet designed to aid the parents and families of gay people. The Affirmation Class, established to provide Christian fellowship and nurture, is an ongoing program of University United Methodist Church here in Austin.

Also, the United Methodist Gay Caucus is in good shape. There is a growing realization that radical and moderate, open and closeted gay people can work together to change things for the better. "Burn it down" radicals like Ron Martinez and Pat Brown were able to work in concert with moderates like Gay Austin's Stan Bear and me. We have come to the conclusion that rage and reconciliation in fact augment each other. Before the deadline in March 1980, the Gay Caucus will be circulating our petitions to Methodists in the gay community. In the meantime, the United Methodist Gay Caucus can be reached by calling Gay Community Services from 6 to 10 every evening.

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Tom Robinson Band in town

By Jim Olinger

Gay militancy was alive and well at the Armadillo Thursday night, May 10, despite an almost total lack of publicity. The Tom Robinson Band, active in gay politics since 1977, played to a predominately gay crowd of over 400.

Although the audience wasn't large by Armadillo standards, it was astronomical compared to the 44 they played to in Tulsa the night before. But as Tom said, "There are great nights, and then there are FANTASTIC nights." This three-month tour, covering the entire United States, is intended to build an American following. The only reason they received a recording contract in Britain was the hoard of loyal fans packing their gigs. On this tour the band have been playing mostly medium-sized clubs such as Toronto's El Mocambo.

The Austin publicity consisted mainly of a set of standard Armadillo radio spots, which hailed the TRB as "one of the most important bands for human rights in the U.K." The audience would have been much larger if more gays had ever heard of the band. Larger turnouts are expected in cities with large, well-organized gay groups. Two nights each have been scheduled in Boston and Washington.

TRB

The TRB are frequently associated with punk rock, due to their rebellious stance, but their roots are closer to the English music hall tradition of showmanship, catchy melodies, and clever lyrics which bitingly satirize the events of the day. The actual music is straightforward English rock and roll. The message is human, and gay, rights.

Tom Robinson's dedication to individual rights and freedom is easy to understand. He spent most of his youth, until age 23, committed to a succession of institutions, as his parents tried to cure him of being gay. Somehow, he survived. Maybe it was the music he began playing that saved him. Possibly it was the friendship of Danny Kustown, his companion of "the reform school days," and now his guitarist, who he introduced as "my own Martin," after a song about growing up with a friend and lover. Maybe it was simply his own strength and determination. Anyway, he survived.

It's not surprising that his songs are full of violence and rage. But the rage is justified and the violence is against oppression. His music is nothing less than the declaration of a revolution against tyranny, bigotry, prejudice, fear, and ignorance. The majority of the violence isn't on his side, either. Nor are his concerns merely English. It's not a long jump from a handcuffed drunk kicked to death in an English jail to a handcuffed Chicano "swimming" in a Houston bayou. Queer bashers aren't confined to London streets. Mary Whitehouse and Anita Bryant are spiritual sisters, and our newly-founded anti-gay lobby, Christian Voice, is likely to get just as scary as the fascist National Front.

When your back's against the wall, you fight or die. Tom Robinson is fighting with every weapon he can find — fists, clubs, rocks, politics, economics, songs, gay pride, and solidarity. And he isn't just fighting for gays; no one is free until all are free.

The amazing thing about Tom Robinson isn't his righteous indignation and rage, his dedication, his shrewd sense of political realities, or even his considerable talents. It is his joy in the struggle. He projects an energy and intensity that galvanized the audience even before he started playing.

In a world grown bored with the campy antics of aging heterosexual drag queens like Rod Stewart, it's almost shocking to see an openly gay singer performing without posing and affectation. Just standing on stage he can make an audience feel a song in a way no dozen stage-strutters could ever manage. Sincerity is a big part of this, but it is also musical and acting talent, with an unfaltering sense of drama.

Tom appeared in a mask of an old, reactionary, country gentleman during "Power in the Darkness" to give a rousing defense of the STNP and nuclear power in general before calling for a return to the traditional American values of discipline, obedience, morality and freedom. "Freedom from the Reds, blacks, criminals, prostitutes, pansies, punks, football hooligans, juvenile delinquents, lesbians, and left-wing scum. Freedom from the niggers, Pakkies, unions, gypsies

and the Jews. Freedom from the longhaired layabouts on scooters. Freedom from the likes of YOU!" (And me," he says as he removes the mask and begins singing to it.)

The most powerful song of the evening was "(Sing if You're) Glad to be Gay," a celebration of surviving the oppression of police, press, anti-obscenity crusaders, gangs of queer bashers, and the homophobic queens who think "Gay Lib's ridiculous" and continue to cower in their closets. In spite of all this and more, "Sing if you're glad to be gay/Sing if you're happy that way."

Sing and fight back.

The Tom Robinson Band is the polar opposite of teasy/closety groups like the Village People. You can dance to it, but John Travolta probably couldn't. You sure can't get up and mindlessly Boogie-Oogie-Oogie to it. In fact, you'll probably get mad. But if you don't, you probably don't mind watching your friends get their teeth kicked in or having your lifestyle, and even your own humanity, squashed.

The TRB isn't any strobelighted dancefloor fantasy. They are as real as the plain white stage lights they play under. As real as the people and events in their songs. And their affirmation of the gay lifestyle is real, too. There are no "Macho Man/I'm a Cruiser" posturings. There are songs of oppression, pain and rage, violence and rebellion. But there is also pride and courage and hope and love. We finally have a gay band that's really concerned with gay people. It's about time.

This was intended to be a concert review. It isn't one. Tom Robinson will be back and you can go write your own. So go. You owe it to yourself. Find out why I was one of four hundred queens shouting "Sing if you're glad to be gay. Sing if you're happy this way."

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music

'Village People' should stay home

By Dan Carcrash

We got a music scene of our own and it's really neat and flash and it goes by the name of disco! Look at the Village People; they're gay and they get hit singles and it's all liberated as hell, right?

Wrong. "Gay" disco music is a shuck and I hope you like getting fucked because that's what those charming Village People are doing to you right now.

I've never liked disco but I remember when the V. People got started; they put out a record and got on Saturday Night Live. Boy, it was campy and I even liked it. We all knew what "village" the People were from, we all had seen the outfits at leather bars and the guys were hunky and the lyrics were semi-explicitly gay. No one needed an interpreter for "Macho Man" and the only reason they didn't get more explicit was that they'd never get on the radio. We knew what the Village People were all about.

We thought we did. Jacques Morali, the creep behind the band, wanted us to think we did because, at the time, the discos that broke big records were mainly gay discos. He saw that the gay disco market was big and influential, so he took a walk in Greenwich Village and saw the way to big hits and bucks. So he assembled a crew of good-looking men, put some vocals (not necessarily their own) in front of a disco band and made the boys dance on stage in costume.

Mr. Morali was not satisfied; the greedy never are. So he thought to himself, "If a band with gay overtones can sell X million albums, why couldn't the same band minus these pervy overtones sell even more?"

This year the band started doing interviews everywhere: Rolling Stone, Creem, New Musical Express, Melody Maker. Read them — they've all been published in the last few months and they're very revealing.

My favorite is New Musical Express of England's February 17th issue of this year. Randy Jones (The Cowboy): "Look, this band has never claimed to be a gay band . . . Village People is a disco band . . . What possible gay overtones does a cowboy have? . . . We just want to

reach as many people as possible and that is the key concept of this group." (Carcrash note — In the music business, "reaching as many people as possible" is a euphemism for "selling as many units and concert tickets as possible" & THAT is the key concept behind Village People.) David Hodo (The Construction Worker): "No, I don't think we're a gay band." Glen Hughes (The Leather Man): "If you're talking of Village People as a gay group, no we are not."

From Creem, July 1979: Glenn Hughes, on "In the Navy": "It's real, it's basic, it's clean-cut, it's All-American."

All this from a band which two years ago was trying very hard to maintain an image that was anything but "clean-cut" or "All-American."

No, the song isn't a campy put-down of the Navy as a place for lots of maritime sex. No, we never meant any of those things you queers read into "YMCA." No, say the People, we're not gay and if we came on that way when we started out, well, forget it and bug off. We don't need you homosexuals.

That's what gay disco is today — a launching-ground for people who will deny that they ever catered to us in a few years. Whenever they've reached success, all we can expect is a not-so-fond farewell.

Listen to the new Village People album, GO WEST. How much homo innuendo do you hear there? How many songs that could be read as gay anthems, like some of the earlier stuff (including all of the first album — remember what those songs were about)? I didn't hear any gay references, and don't expect to hear any more in the future. The Navy dropped its plans to use "In the Navy" for a recruiting commercial when they heard of the band's reputation. You can be sure that Jacques Morali doesn't want that kind of thing to happen again. I bet the Village People clean themselves up even further this year and next.

Yeah, we've been screwed again, so what?

Meanwhile, Tom Robinson and Tubeway Army, among others, are making honest gay music, but they don't play that kind of music at the Country, so let's go back inside and dance and get exploited some more. Yum yum, sure do like getting fucked, especially by the old tired music establishment . . .

(Editor's note: Discophiles will have their chance to respond in the next issue.)

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- July 18 General Meeting, Gay Community Services, 2330 Guadalupe, 8 p.m.
- July 19 Capitol City Development Meeting, 7:30 p.m. For info: call 454-7187
- July 20 Bowling for gays, Capitol Lanes, 5700 Grover. For info: call 454-7187
GCA rap group, Gay Community Services, 8 p.m.
- July 22 Metropolitan Community Church, 12 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
- July 23 Lambda A.A., 209 W. 27th
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- July 30 Lambda A.A., 209 W. 27th
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