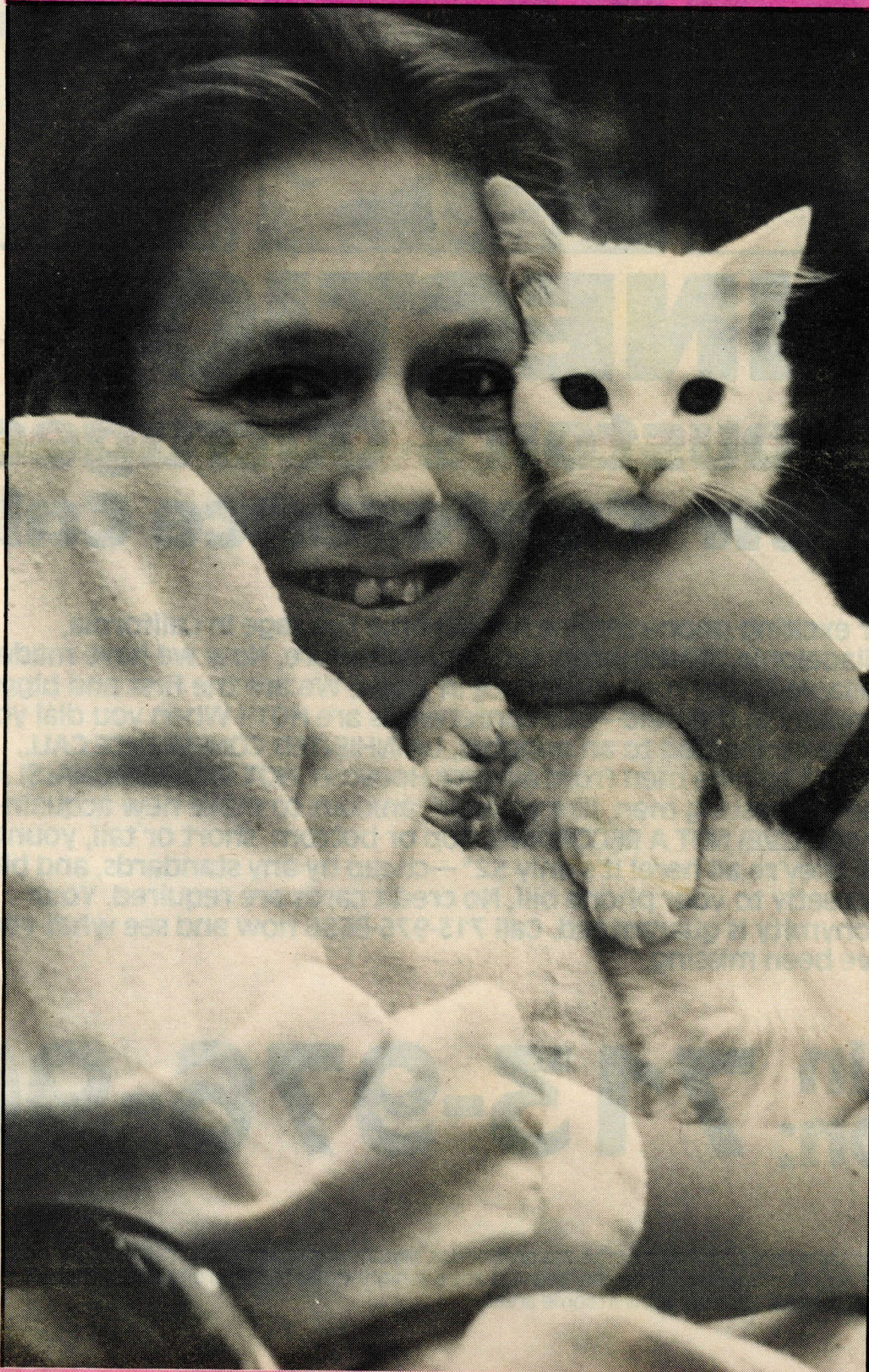


Volume 3, Number 15

HOUSTON FORUM

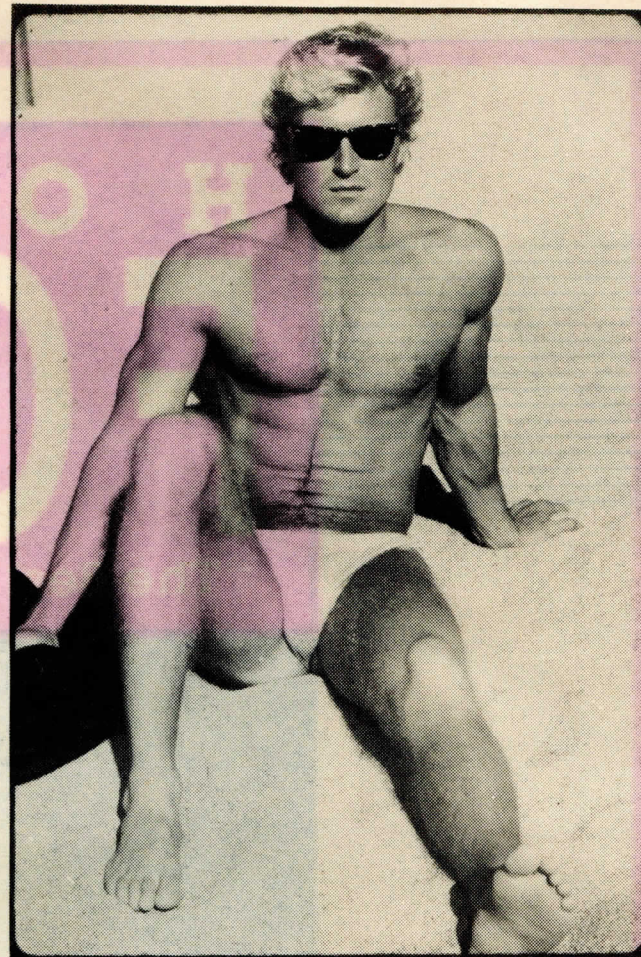
"The Best Revenge Is A Great Lifestyle"

JENNIFER HENDLEY



April 10, 1987

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HOUSTON FORUM

Published each Friday; 1110 Bayland, Houston, Texas 77009, (713) 869-0011. Telephone business hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Monday through Saturday); (713) 869-0011. Mailing address: 1110 Bayland, Houston, Texas 77009.

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Subscription rates: \$46/ year; \$26 for six months. Delivered through the U.S.
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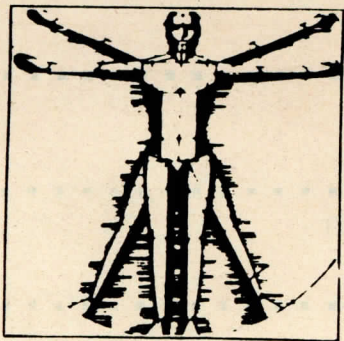
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BEHIND THE FRONT COVER JENNIFER HENDLEY



Occupation: Secretarial work.
Born: 2/27/66.
Lived in Houston: Native.
Hair: Blonde. **Eyes:** Hazel.
Favorite thing about Houston: The city and skyline.
Hobbies: Going out a lot, lip sync contests, reading.
Favorite bar: Michael's.
Current projects: Going to be in the fi-

nals at the lip sync contest at Michael's next week and keeping an eye on her roommate.
Favorite activity: Going out to the bars.
Future projects: To get a good job and buy a black Mercedes.
Favorite color: Pink.
Sun sign: Pisces.
Message to readers: Live life to its fullest and don't let anything get in your way.



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LET'S GET REAL

"Meeting the Challenge the Hard Way"

By Randy Brown

Being the publisher of a small newspaper is not an easy job. I wind up doing more running around, taking phone calls, working up the ideas, delivering papers and selling ads than I do collecting great financial rewards, believe me. And, since I do so much running around, finding a parking space that is convenient can sometimes be the most aggravating part of my workday. So many times, I have felt that aggravation of starting to pull into the one decent spot left, only to find that it's the space reserved for the handicapped.

I'll admit that at times I have thought of just parking in those spaces anyway and limping into wherever I'm going. After all, those spaces are hardly ever filled, have you noticed?

Well, I was in one of those kinds of moods the other day, when I was out, going from place to place, trying to work up some new advertising customers. One of the places I went was Crystal's.

I walked into the bar, and I met the most incredible woman. She was obviously having the best time of anyone in the bar. She was smiling, going from person to person, table-hopping with joyful abandon—really having a good time. She charmed and captivated me with her sense of freedom and her spirit.

She was also in a wheelchair.

Well, to make a long story short, I didn't get the account, but I did get a cover. The smiling face on the front of the **FORUM** this week is that of Jennifer Hendley, known to her friends as Little Bit.

Besides a great cover, I also got a great memory. I know I will never forget standing there at the bar with my drink, watching this free-wheeling, life-loving, enthusiastic woman bring her sense of spirit to everyone around. Here she was in a dance bar,

in a wheelchair. I just loved her for it.

You know, so many handicapped people are the most lively, spirited people I've ever met. Isn't it amazing that sometimes something devastating has to happen in order to expand the life of an individual?

She was smiling, going from person to person . . . she charmed and captivated me with her sense of freedom and her spirit. She was also in a wheelchair.

Look at the what the gay community is learning from those who have AIDS. There are so many instances of incredible courage. They seem at times to be more sensitive and understanding to other people's needs. They are the ones facing the ultimate challenge, and so many times, they are reaching out to us, comforting us, being sensitive to what we need.

We need to take time when we look around ourselves, and not turn away from someone who has a scarred face, not shy away from someone who is in a wheelchair, not shrink from a person who is dying. These people know something that most of us don't know but are fully capable of learning. It's what life is all about.

I know it's a beer commercial, but you only go around once in life and you have to grab all the gusto you can get. You don't have to go out and volunteer your services, but it would do us all good to start thinking about what some of these people

face. Understand how difficult it is for these people to get up stairs, to go shopping, to maneuver in a restroom. It would be terrible if it took a tragedy for us personally in order for us to wake up and smell the coffee! Let's look at these people. Let's learn from them.

I've always hated the phrase, "things could be worse," but I see some application here. No matter how many problems we think we face, there are greater problems being faced by someone else.

And sometimes the problems that a person goes through is like the torture that steel goes through to become strengthened. They have a grasp on life, and perhaps that handicap gave them that grasp on life. We should all learn from these people, we should also try to help them.

The main word here is "access." These people need access to jobs. They need to have access to every public facility there is. These people need to be brought into the mainstream of life. We need to accommodate themselves to a world built to our specifications. And once we do that, we can stop talking about "these people" and "us." We will all just be "us."

Especially in the gay community, we should be aware of prejudice. We should be sensitive to being thought of as outcasts. We should reach out to those who need us but will not beg for our understanding.

If we fail to at least become more aware of what faces our brothers and sisters who are physically challenged by any number of obstacles, then we're the ones who are losing out.

Can you imagine if the world was totally accessible to them, what they'd be able to give back to us because of what they've learned the hard way?

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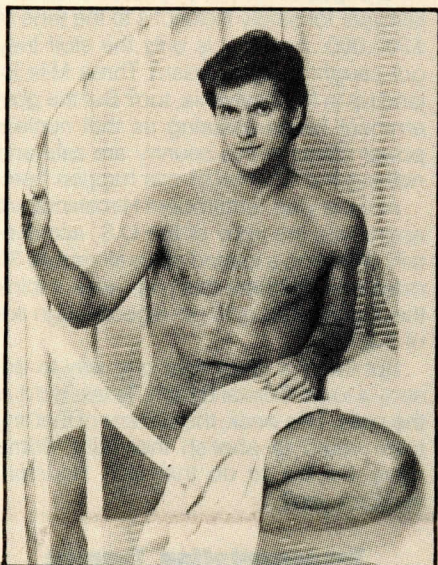
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by Bar Wilson

Hi Kiddies!
Did you see the men from DUDE? Your loss, honeys. Moi traveled all over town with Troy, Josh and Ray in a big ol' Lincoln and my head is still in a spin over Troy (he's the man in the fantasy picture on the DUDE ads). I really was surprised that he was so sweet and bright. It really was a pleasure that "someone was home" in such a pretty man. I found out that Troy is still in school in California and plans on making a career in acting. He has just a delicious, deep, sexy voice and I can tell you it was not the simplest thing I have ever done to escort such ones about without taking the advise of Randy Smith and making them an offer that they couldn't refuse.

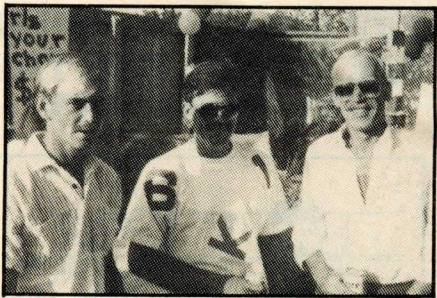


Troy of DUDE.

Saturday morning came too early and found us down at Mary's for the Miss Vacant Lot Carnival at the crack of noon. (You know there really are people in Montrose that get up at that uncivilized hour.)

I saw just too many friends to mention all their names but everyone seemed to have a wonderful time.

Terry Flood and some of the crew of the 611 were there in a booth that I still haven't figured completely out, and were questioning me about my sources of information on his goings on. Well just let it be said a pure gossip monger would rather have her Lee Press On's torn off than reveal a source or a spy! But if rumors are true the names that I mentioned last week have now been added to. (Something about Jay and Leonard?) Some of us have it and some don't—Terry Flood seems to have it in abundance.

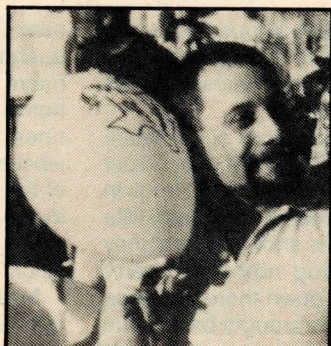


Terry, Keith and Studly.

Ted Lenze of Chutes and the rest of the crew were all there filling up a tank of water that they honestly believed that I was going to let people dunk me in. Please, have you ever seen this much flesh looking like your hands when they have been in dish water for too long? I do understand that Mrs. Wonnacott (my dearest girlfriend) did make a big splash and helped raise some money for GIT.



Ted and tank.



Which is sweeter—cotton candy or Chola?



Always a party—Elroy Forbes.



Cassandra and Babs Monroe.

The entire afternoon and early evening were just a joy. A celebration of gayness and life and when the call came for judges to get upstairs to get ready for the contest to begin, well . . . the excitement was on.

I was joined by Marion Coleman, Becky from the Ranch, Rose Malone, Ken Claude, Billie Duncan, and Maya, as respectable a gaggle of judges as have ever sat to deliberate on the fate of Miss Vacant Lot. (It was the first annual event.)



The one and only Marion Coleman.



Red hair or blue—I'm scared of you!

The fun was infectious and the costumes of the contestants were well thought out and for the most part no doubt came from a dumpster or thrift store. The winner of the contest—who has the responsibility of visitng and blessing every single lot in the Montrose—was Gonna-crazy, first runner-up was Rambutt, and the second runner up was SP.

Thanks to Mary's for a wonderful time from everyone in Montrose.

NEWS FLASH! NEWS FLASH!

Vanna White and Brucella Duval have challenged the Whorehouse girls to a drag queen tag team match at Chutes' lube wrestling this Sunday. This event has long been a dream of mine and will no doubt go down in history as one of the nastiest, craziest, and dubious endeavors in history. It

will certainly be an event not to be missed.

Ted tells me that at 6:00 p.m. the Mr. Almost Butch contest will be judged following the lube wrestling contest. (Why do I get the feeling that this entire afternoon will see a lot of the same folks who were at Miss Vacant Lot?)

Big (daddy) Jim of the Venture-N tells me that "We want you" for the Uniform Party on April 12 at 1700 hours. All you boys who love a man in uniform or who want to be a sailor or a general or whatever had best be there. (The Venture-N's Uniform Party has always been a huge party and this year's will be no exception.)

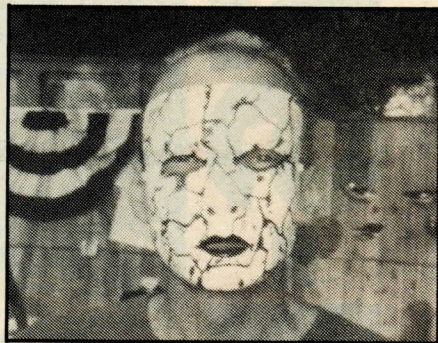
The Glamour Girls were at the BRB and were a huge hit with the seemingly endless line of cowboys there.



(I thought that one had been left behind on Sunday but it was really just Miss Beau.)

Contrary to rumor, the Marine Hymn will not be changed to "From the Halls of Montazuma to the Beds of Moscow," even if it does sign better.

Maria Fingermore informs me that she and Ted Lenze are now divorced and that she is going to marry me—okay, fine.



Jason lives!

Heard about Randy Smith of the Galleon lately? Well, she's been busy planning a reunion of all her tricks from over the years at the Galleon this Saturday night. (Scares me!) There will be more Davids, Marks, Marcs, Michaels, Bobs, and sundry other men there that it might be difficult to get a drink at the bar. But if you have ever "known" Randy this night is for you!

Till next week.

10 IN. HANGING BASKETS

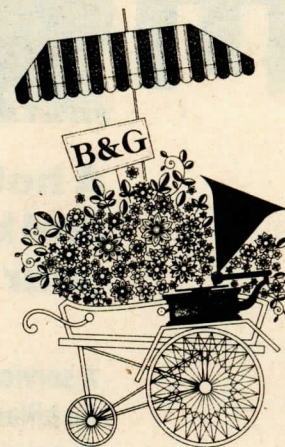
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FAST COPY: SOME OF THE NEWS THAT MIGHT BE FIT TO PRINT

Drugs and Sex Lead the News

Have you ever noticed how often the news is filled with stories involving drugs and/or sex? What is the matter with us, fellow Americans, are we obsessed with sex and drugs? Well, I know I am, but I thought the rest of you had more sense.

Best of category in Drug Stories for the Week has to be the one about the Houston Police Department's losing hundreds of pounds of pot in a failed attempt to nab a suspected drug dealer. The best part was that the number of pounds of grass that was lost quickly was reduced from 640 pounds to about 320 pounds once the story hit. Also, it was first reported that the dope came from the evidence cache, but

that has been nervously jumped on by the powers-that-be. Suffice to say, the word "dope" has taken on new meaning for the Houston drug detectives.

Runner-up for Drug Story of the Week was the report on CBS's *West 57th Street* that charged the CIA with selling drugs in the U.S. in order to finance their nasty little war in Nicaragua. The show said that they (CIA) would hire drug runners to carry plane loads of guns down there and then fill up with drugs to be brought back to the good old U.S. of A. to be sold to buy more guns, etc. Sounds like the government is talking out of both sides of its mouth on both its faces, hmmm?

Sex Story of the Week was also close with the Moscow Marine Muffers tying with the Bakker Revelations (not to be confused with a book in the Bible of the same

name.) All 28 of the Marines who were guarding the U.S. Embassy in Moscow (more or less, it seems) have been called home after stories surfaced of certain Marines trading U.S. secrets for Russian what-every-woman-knowses. At least one of the Marines claims that he was just trying to get the confidence of the Soviets in order to trick them. Maybe his idea of "trick" got confused along the way.

Meanwhile, the Jim and Tammy Story gets juicier by the minute. Now, we have Jessica revealing that she was a virgin, her drink was drugged, Bakker forced himself on her, he had oral sex with her and then he turned her over for use by another evangelist. Well, wasn't it special of him to share his good fortune? Of course, he was just upset because Tammy was in love with Gary Paxton, with whom she spent many a

late hour while working on her gospel music. Paxton, of course, did not have to drug Tammy's drink; she was drugged up enough at the time as it was.

And even though this does not have to do with drugs or sex, it might be a good time to mention that Oral Roberts now says that God wants him to have \$8 million a year until the Second Coming. He said that God told him that and, "There's no way out." This alleged god that Oral's been talking with sounds a bit spooky to me. Next thing you know, he'll be having Oral sell drugs in order to keep the ministry going. I wouldn't put it past him.

There's Power and There's Power

Pennsylvania's Peach Bottom nuclear plant has been shut down because so many of its high-level employees were sleeping on the job—literally. Inspectors found them snoozing over the knobs in all sorts of positions. The plant was also fined last year for safety violations to the tune of \$200,000. And this is only the stuff they got caught at. Hey, wasn't Three Mile Island up in Pennsylvania, too? But the government keeps assuring us that nuclear power plants in this country are safe and nothing like Chernobyl can happen here.

Anyone who remembers Hiroshima will appreciate the irony of the U.S. accidentally dropping a loaded air-to-air missile 30 miles north of there this past week. I think the Japanese should get a good laugh out of that one.

But there is more than one way to destroy a town. Crystal Beach, Texas, did it at the polls. This week, the citizens of that tiny town voted to abolish their city. Some days, I'd like to do that with Houston, wouldn't you?

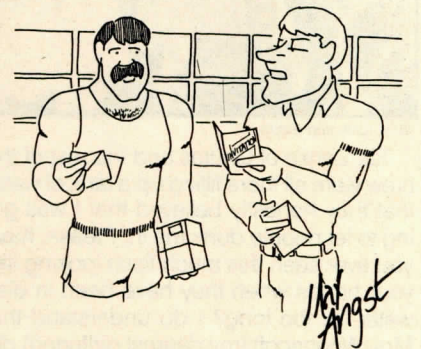
Transportation Tangles

Reagan is really slipping, as evidenced by the Senate overriding his veto of the highway bill despite Ronnie's embarrassing begging of Republicans to join him in solidarity. So, now Ronnie can drive 65 as he leaves the office to the cheer of many former supporters.

At least he has the opportunity to go somewhere. Joseph Anderson of Houston had his leg cut off when the dumpster he was sleeping in got emptied with him in it. He might try to sue the company, but I don't really think he has a leg to stand on.

Another dangerous job these days is that of a highway construction worker in Houston, because of a recent rash of workers being hit with darts from blowguns fired from passing cars. Blowguns? In a modern city? Well, I guess it just goes to show that it really is a jungle out there.

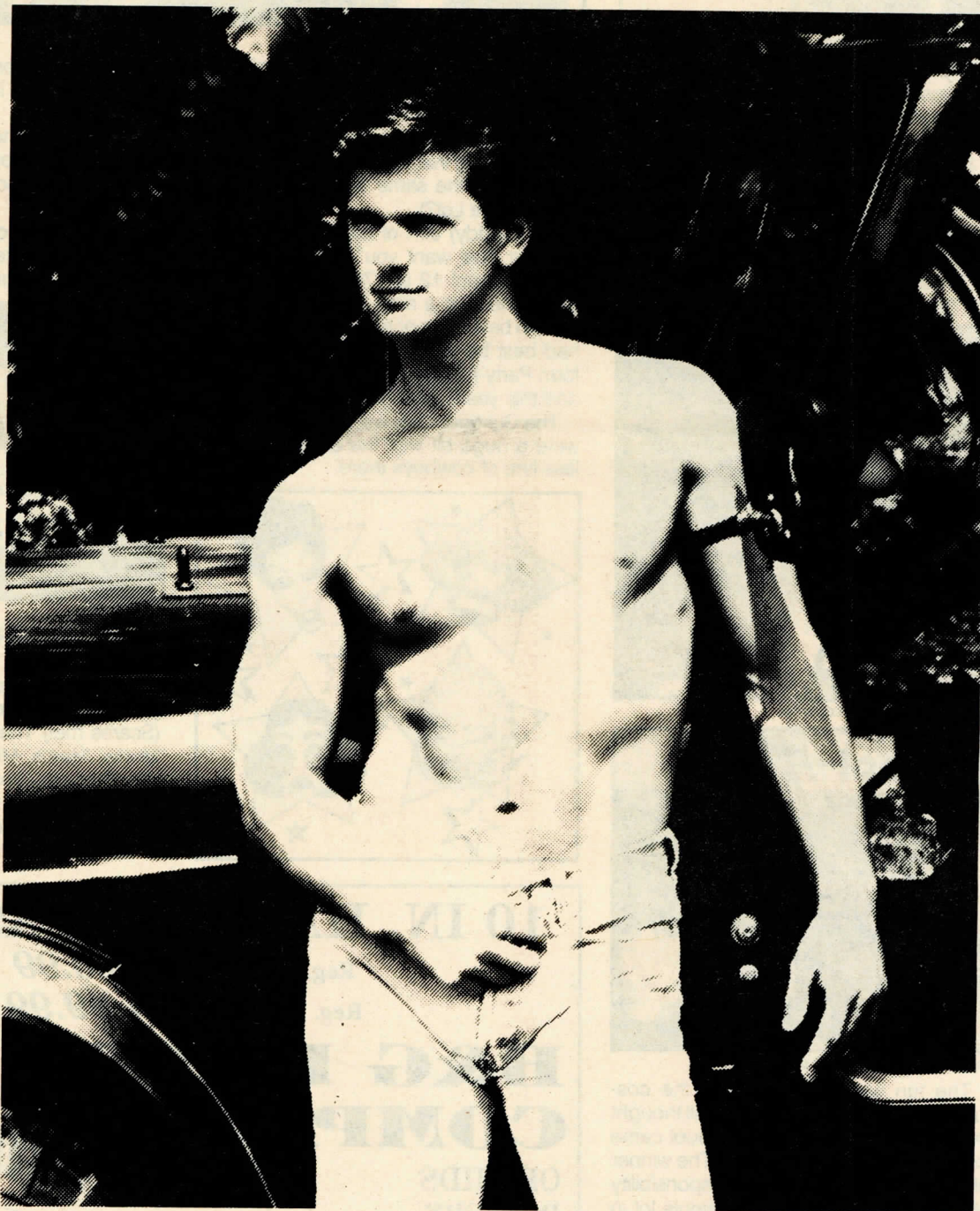
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MONA: Advice & Beads Read

Dear Mona:

My parents were visiting last week, and some friends were going to have us over for dinner one night. At the last minute, they told me that there would be another guest—someone I don't really know, and haven't spoken to for years. In fact, this someone has been a subject of debate ever since he left town and never wrote or called or visited—and suddenly, I was confronted with him in the presence of my parents, who had never met any of my friends here in Houston. Under these embarrassing circumstances, I coped through the dinner quite well, but the whole evening was ruined for me, and I can't help feeling that my friends all got a big kick out of my discomfort! What do you think?

Signed: Dumbfounded at Dinner

Dear Dumbfounded:

If you are not merely being paranoid, I think you have reason to be quite angry. It sounds like you need to evaluate your friends, and whether they are truly friends, and not just practical jokers who enjoy playing tricks and seeing you sweat.

Dear Mona:

At a recent family reunion, everyone was discussing what we should do with my grandmother. One aunt wants to take her in, and another aunt thinks she should go into an apartment for the elderly. I listened to the conversation for awhile, and finally got so mad, I told them they should ask grandma and let her decide for herself. They all told me that it wasn't any of my business, and they were pretty quiet around me for the rest of the day. Did I step out of bounds or what?

Signed: Gutsy Grandson



Dear Guts:

Sounds like you had the best advice of all, dear. Funny how people forget that elderly people have minds of their own. Hopefully, your relatives will think about your advice. If not, at least you can say you tried.

Dear Mona:

I feel like I'm going crazy. Everything is happening at once. I've lost my job, and my unemployment is running out, and I can't find another job. My car needs fixing, and I don't know where the money will be coming from for rent and utilities pretty soon. If I don't get a job quick, I don't know what I'm going to do. I'm having trouble sleeping—real wierd dreams. And more than anything, I feel worse because my friends all have lovers who take care of them, and I'm on my own. It's just not fair! I'm miserable!

Signed: Down and Out in Montrose

Dear Down and Out:

You have a serious problem, but I'm afraid the unemployment is only second-

ary. Your real problem seems to be your attitude toward your self! It's just not fair to yourself to keep knocking yourself on the head for being alone and not having anyone to "take care of you." You have to make yourself feel proud of your independence, and stop envying those around you. After all, the grass is always greener on the other side, as they say. I'll bet if you stopped worrying so much, and stopped feeling so put upon, something would come up. Don't struggle so hard against the current. Everything happens for a reason.

Need advice? Having a particularly hard time of it all? Write **Mona**, care of the **HOUSTON FORUM**, 1110 Bayland, Houston, Texas 77009.



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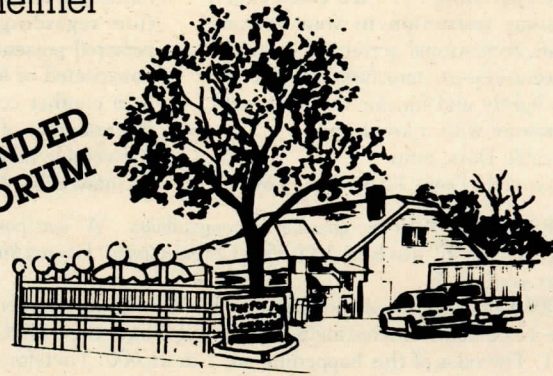
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NEWS BITS

Britt Loses in San Francisco

Harry Britt, the first openly-gay man to run for the U.S. Congress was knocked out of the race on Tuesday by fundraiser Nancy Pelosi.

Britt had been criticized by other gay leaders in San Francisco of not doing enough during the AIDS crisis. He is currently a city supervisor.

Leaders Propose Putting AIDS Info in Bills

George Greanias was joined by other Houston city leaders in recommending that information to the public should be put in the city's water bills as an effort to launch a city-wide educational campaign.

City Health Department head Dr. James Haughton said he had a brochure ready to be printed, and Councilman Larry McKaskle suggested that the information should go out in other bills, such as from the other utilities and even department stores.

New AIDS Vaccine Approach Taken

Researchers at the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research in San Antonio announced that they are taking a very different tactic in searching for the AIDS vaccine. Rather than basing the vaccine on AIDS virus fragments, they are investigating a complex process that uses antibodies to keep the AIDS virus from attaching to the immune system cells.

Dutch AIDS Patients Allowed Euthanasia

Although it is technically against the law in the Netherlands for a doctor to perform euthanasia, Dr. Sven Danner, head of the AIDS unit at Amsterdam's Academic Medical Center, admitted this past week that over 12% of the patients who had died of AIDS in the hospital had opted for active euthanasia.

Reagan Spouts Party Line on Gay Education

In two different speeches this past week, Ronald Reagan hailed sexual abstinence as the best way to avoid AIDS, and insisted that education on the disease should include moral teachings as well.

Reagan has consistently backed away from any action to foster research and education in light of the AIDS crisis until recently, and his statements were the first major addresses that he has made on the subject.

U.S. and France Reach AIDS Screening Agreement

Ending a legal dispute between the U.S. and France, Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Jacques Chirac of France announced that the two countries would split the patent rights for the AIDS screening test and that 80% of the profits for the testing would go to establish an international AIDS research foundation.



H O R O S C O P E S

by Jack Marvin, AMAFA

Can you believe that the Full MOON is again upon us? It just does not seem possible that another month has gone by so quickly. This is the first Full MOON of the Solar year and is the topic of this week's column. Remember, during the two weeks following the Full MOON, you should relax and begin no new projects. Let things proceed at their own pace. Try not to force any actions.

Chatter should increase for the next several weeks as MERCURY enters ARIES, the sign of

ARIES (March 21-April 20): You will open up to other people ending a year-long period of introversion. Be careful and keep your mind open, however, as you may be unwilling to accept other people's points of view. This could lead to some flare-ups and arguments with those you associate with. This could lead to some problems in communications with your lover. If you are currently not married, you could experience some delays in getting your loved one to the altar (or bedroom for that matter...).

* Favorable Days: none

* Unfavorable Days: 12th, 13th

TAURUS (April 21-May 20): MERCURY is entering your twelfth house or inner self. This indicates this is a very favorable time for you to seek out a good therapist if you have been experiencing some difficulties that you have been unable to solve on your own. A co-worker may try to spread gossip and rumors about you in order to discredit your work. Also be on the alert for secret enemies at your place of employment. Keep your personal business to yourself and have no clandestine affairs with those you work with.

* Favorable Days: none

* Unfavorable Days: 11th, 14th, 15th

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Get together with friends and have a party. This next week is an excellent time for you to have a party—or go to several. Catch up on all the latest gossip. If you hear something juicy, make sure you add just a little for color and spread it on—keeps the community interesting... You could experience some restriction in your personal freedom, recreational activities, or romantic adventures—so remember to just take things lightly and fun for the next week. Compromise with a loved one.

* Favorable Days: none

* Unfavorable Days: 10th, 12th, 16th

QUESTION: "A simple question of compatibility. 'A' was born 10/18/61 at 6:00 p.m. in Tampa, Florida. 'B' was born 8/31/55 in Corpus Christi. I do not know 'B's' birthtime. What do the stars say?" C.E.

ANSWER: Since you do not give me 'B's' birthtime, in order to calculate his birthchart, I chose 12:00 noon. Interestingly, both A and B have their MOONS at exactly 18 AQUARIUS 31. The odds of this happening are 1 in 21,600. Therefore, both A and B would cer-

CANCER (June 21-July 20): Communications will become increasingly important in your pursuit for advancement in your job. This will begin a very important month. Think exactly what you want to say and do before you proceed. Try to sidestep family outbursts that may occur during the next several weeks. Try to seek a balance between duties at home and with those at work. You could experience some difficulties with parents or uncongenial individuals with whom you share your home or apartment.

* Favorable Days: 10th, 14th, 15th, 16th

* Unfavorable Days: 11th

LEO (July 21-August 21): This is an excellent time to pursue additional education in your chosen career. Do not sit idly by or your career will pass you by. This is not a good time to travel so try to postpone any travel until at least two weeks. Be very careful what you do, say, or write during this period. If you're not careful, repercussions could develop at a later time. Your in-laws or people who do not know you may not approve of your actions or activities. All matters pertaining to legal affairs, distant connections, and relatives will require careful handling. Do not permit others to upset you.

* Favorable Days: 11th, 16th

* Unfavorable Days: 13th

VIRGO (August 22-September 21): You could be quite active in the bars during this next several weeks. With MERCURY entering your house of sex, you could be quite convincing when it comes to enticing others to your boudoir... It may be all fun and games in the bars and bedrooms this week, but exercise care and caution regarding monetary matters and personal possessions. You will also receive unexpected or forgotten bills. There could be a conflict concerning your money and the resources of others.

* Favorable Days: 10th, 11th, 16th

* Unfavorable Days: 12th

activity. I guess this indicates that this would be an excellent time to throw a cocktail party as lots of endless babble usually occurs at those "events."

Notes: AQUARIANS will be subject to misunderstandings on Friday and CAPRICORNS will have difficulty with a love interest on Tuesday. Saturday will be stressful for CANCERS. LEOS will get their act together on Sunday and meet someone interesting on Thursday.

LIBRA (September 22-October 22): If you have been having difficulty communicating with your lover or partner, now is the time to work out your differences. The only way you can have a worthwhile relationship is to communicate with each other. Avoid any confrontation with your lover, however, or a temporary separation could result. Your work is very important to you, and as long as you are happy with your work, you will remain in good health. If you dislike your job, your health will suffer.

* Favorable Days: 12th, 13th, 15th

* Unfavorable Days: 11th, 14th

SCORPIO (October 23-November 22): These next several weeks will be excellent for you health and your job while MERCURY enters this area of your life. During this next month, the Full MOON will bring light and, perhaps to an emotional climax, hidden matters pertaining to your work, health, pets, or the problems of others. Someone, who has tried to undermine your personal interests may come out in the open and reveal themselves. Take things slowly and don't overdo anything—especially with your job. Be cautious if you work around chemicals, gasses, or dangerous liquids.

* Favorable Days: 10th, 14th, 15th

* Unfavorable Days: none

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 20): For the next several weeks, friends or social acquaintances may try to place a heavy load on your shoulders or expect favors of you that are more demanding than you had anticipated. Don't invest your money or any of your assets in speculative ventures. Listen to the radio, watch your TV, and read the newspapers carefully—they could hold surprising and unexpected news that may bring you sudden gain. Join a group or become a member of a group that can help you gain insight into Astrology or the occult.

* Favorable Days: 16th

* Unfavorable Days: 12th

tainly have a very strong emotional attachment, but there are no other sensitive connecting points that indicate a binding between both these two. With B's SUN in A's Fifth house, this indicates a romantic fling rather than a long-term relationship. A's chart indicates that he likes unusual, out-of-the-ordinary people and his relationships usually end in destructive fights. A will aggressively seek out a partner, but will tend to fool himself and get involved with those he shouldn't. A will not feel complete unless he has a lover. J.M., AMAFA

CAPRICORN (December 21-January 17): Even though communication should be favored around your home, an undesirable or forced change in your profession can have a devastating effect upon your home life. You could have some business and career undertakings that could tend to conflict with your home life. Don't expect cooperation from others during the coming weeks. Handle all work loads yourself if you expect them to get done. Expect a reduction in income. Home and family responsibilities could weigh you down needlessly.

* Favorable Days: 13th

* Unfavorable Days: 11th, 14th

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18): Get out and about in your neighborhood and meet people. This is a favorable time to meet the new people that have moved around you that you have been avoiding. You could be faced with a decision concerning news received from afar. You could also be misinterpreted. During this Full MOON period, do not make promises that you cannot keep. You should seek the advice of experts to solve legal difficulties. Be careful what you say, do, or write to avoid legal complications.

* Favorable Days: 14th, 16th

* Unfavorable Days: 10th, 11th

PISCES (February 19-March 20): You may have to draw on your cash savings to take care of unexpected bills that have been forgotten. Your car, house insurance or real estate taxes coming due may cause you to be short of funds. You may have to settle a claim with an insurance company or the IRS. Sexual matters may preoccupy you much of the time. You will tend to work the bars in search of happiness, but, you of all people should know that happiness comes from within, not from without.

* Favorable Days: 10th, 14th,

* Unfavorable Days: 12th

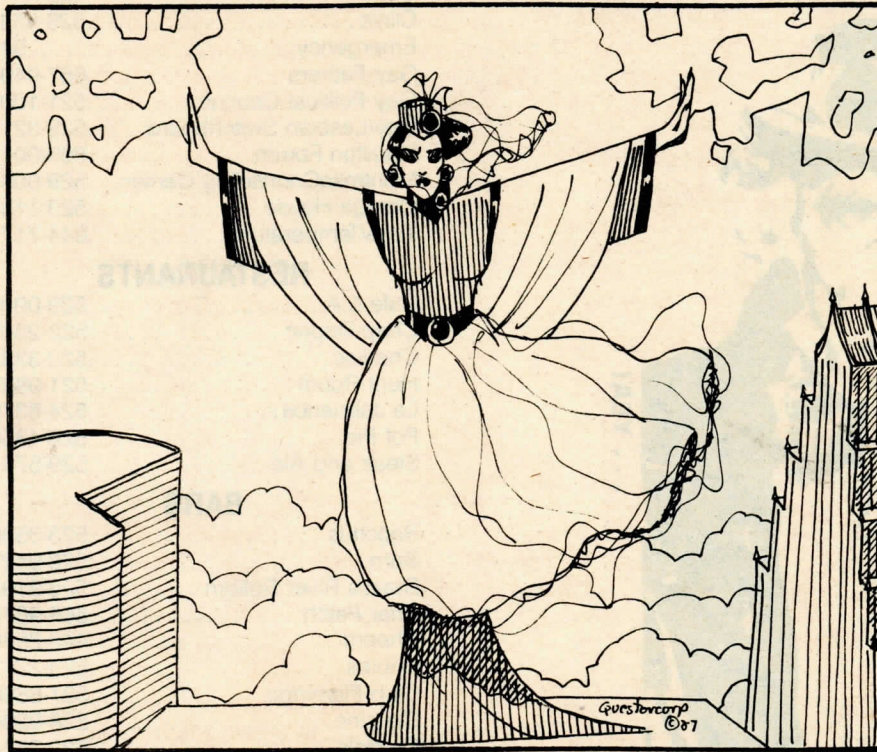
If you have any questions, address them to JACK MARVIN, AMAFA, 1238 West Bell, Houston, TX 77019. Phone number: (713)520-5206. Please include your birth date, birth time, and birth place, if known. If you are asking a compatibility question, please include the above information for the other person, if known. Your questions will be answered as time and space permits. JM

Well, Dear Fans, we have finally done the almost impossible! We have entertained our family in Houston and survived! Believe us, this is no easy task to accomplish! You must realize that our family comes from the barren wastelands of South Dakota, where the wind blows unabated, and the general prospects are quite bleak for personal craziness and wild fashion!

Anyway, we met them at the airport, wearing our most somber Spring Fling Print dress with mega-fluff nylon underskirts. To dazzle our mother, we put on our most striking diamond earrings with the tiny Saturn Pattern splashes and Um-booga Lobe Weights that make the whole head swing while walking. We brought Sebastian with us for kicks, since mother has heard so much about him, and he brought his newest lover, who likes to wear his jeans so tight that they look more like ballet tights than 501's. Of course, that is one reason why Amanda likes this friend so much, and we hope that dear Sebastian has finally found the love of his life!

The folks looked just fine, waving excitedly as they got off the jet, and looking very plump and corn fed. We remember looking that way once. That was long before we moved to Houston and got caught up in our nationally syndicated diet—"Nacho Cheese Flavored Tostido Chips and You." Now, our lithe form makes mother sigh with worry that we're not getting enough to eat, but all those layers she wears under clothing serve a purpose not needed here in Houston. Like the hearty Eskimo, mother needs her layers to help keep her warm in those harsh South Dakota winters!

We whisked them away from the airport and into the city, where they were simply



We suddenly found ourself looking around us and re-evaluating our familiar surroundings through the eyes of our parents—and those are very important eyes indeed . . .

astounded at the size and complexity of the city around them. At one point, dad actually joked that a tower was the size of Mt. Rushmore, and we laughed, as we worriedly looked around us to make sure nobody overheard.

We have to admit, Dear Fans, that things are very strange when parents visit. We suddenly found ourself looking around us and re-evaluating our familiar surroundings through the eyes of our parents—and those are very important eyes indeed, no

matter how hard you try to pretend!

We went to Galveston, where we crawled all over the Elissa and the Strand. We walked along the beach, kicking Spring Break litter away from us as we went. We went to the Galleria, where mom and dad simply gasped in astonishment at all the shops and boutiques that we take so much for granted. We drove through River Oaks and Memorial, West University and Montrose, and they were so impressed that things were as beautiful and put together as they are. We went downtown, where are dear friend, David, let us stand and gaze out from his balcony in the Republic Bank Center. We waded neck deep in money at First City, thanks to our friend, Craig. We ate like pigs at Ed's and Bill's near the museum. We barbecued at R. Appleby's and Dr. Jack's in the Heights (which reminded them most of home.) In fact, as they boarded the jet to leave, they said they had had a wonderful time, and they would be down again soon. But as they left, mother said something very strange.

We asked her how she liked Houston, and she shrugged.

"It's like a garden," she said. "It's very pretty. But it seems so artificial. Like its not permanent. Maybe it's because all the buildings are made of glass. There's something kind of weird about looking at a building and only seeing a reflection of yourself!"

Of course, we laughed, but after the jet was gone and we were riding in the Rolls to our Montrose home, we stared at those glass towers and thought about what she said. As usual, mother was right, and she changed our perception of things around us. As most of you know, that's pretty much what mothers are meant to do.

NETWORK

"The Pope's Visit to the United States"

By Jeff Bray

My uncle is all excited. He handles the publicity for the Catholic Diocese here in Texas, and his latest and most challenging project is to coordinate and prepare for the coming of the Pope to San Antonio this spring. Naturally, he is very honored to take on this task, but it does propose some pretty scary problems. Security for this Pope is very tight, since he's already been shot by some crazy in Rome. One can only wonder at how many crazies are hidden among a crowd of a million people in a place like Texas! After all, everyone carries a gun here, you know.

I don't carry a gun, however, and I really don't plan on going to see the Pope. For some reason, my Catholic background didn't give me that blind faith to look upon some mere earthly man as a messenger from God. After all, John Paul used to live in Poland, like millions of other people. He didn't labor away in purely selfless tasks like Mother Theresa. Instead, he worked himself through the Vatican beurocracy to finally reach the top—probably much like any executive in any major worldwide firm. It seems almost comical that people like my uncle could actually see this man as being more holy than others, but he is just one of the millions of people who see him this way.

It has always boggled my mind that the Pope commands such respect. For the non-Catholic, the mystique that surrounds this man must seem almost magical—if not downright threatening. After all, this man speaks and millions and millions of people follow his words. You see, if they don't obey the Pope, they risk eternal damnation, and that's a pretty hard chance to take!

For those who have read history, there is a rather jaded side to this whole holy spec-

tacle. There have been many Popes who have gone down in history as great warmongers, drinkers and warmongers. Popes used to be actual rulers, who defended their realms at the head of armies whose spears and arrows pierced flesh just as painfully and grotesquely as any other army's. The Vatican has immense wealth, built on the spoils of many crusades and

It has always boggled my mind that the Pope commands such respect. For the non-Catholic, the mystique that surrounds this man must seem almost magical . . .

the obliteration of countless innocent tribes and civilizations. And it's all supposedly based upon the doctrines of Christ. For some reason, it seems hard to believe that Christ would have condoned the burning of heretics and the slaughter of the Incas for difference of belief!

So, now it's the latter part of the 20th century, and after 2,000 years, we still have a Pope—only now he travels the earth in a special jet, and glides through massive crowds in a specially built bullet and bomb proof car. He tells people in Central America to revolt against their governments, and that leads to civil unrest and killing. He causes huge security problems, since any country where the Pope is assassinated would certainly suffer terrible

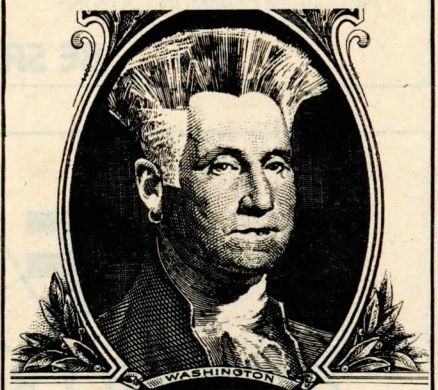
loss of prestige. With a wave of his ruby-ringed fingers, he tells millions of people that they cannot use birth control; that they cannot have abortions even for medical reasons; that they cannot divorce, even for safety, that they cannot express their sexual identity truthfully. And millions of people actually believe him. They continue to give birth in total ignorance of their bodies, and the world continues to grow more crowded and more unhappy.

I sometimes wonder if he (the Pope) doesn't feel rather intimidated by coming to the United States. After all, there are many fans here, but they are more like the fans of movie stars and other prominent international figures. They are like groupies. Sure, there are plenty of truly pious people who believe that a blessing from the Pope is a sure ticket to heaven, but the general American public may be far out of reach to John Paul. We may listen to what he has to say, but we continue to use birth control methods to keep the population down, and we continue to give women freedom over their own bodies. More than anything, we continue to realize that this is no messenger from God. This is a real flesh and blood man who is a figurehead of one of the world's largest corporations—the Catholic Church.

Of course, I don't say any of this to my uncle. He's profiting too much from it himself.

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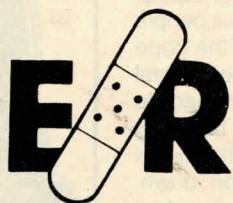
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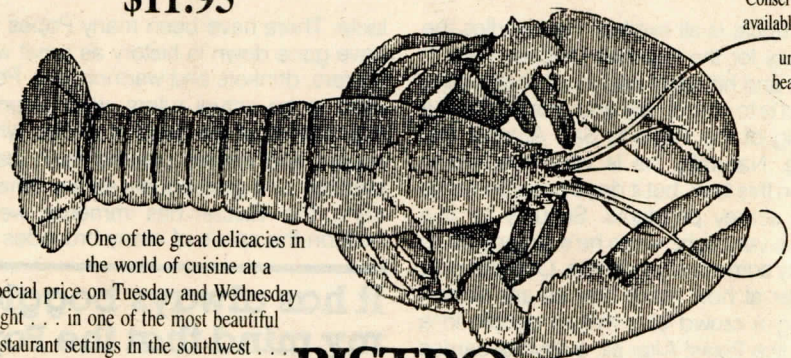


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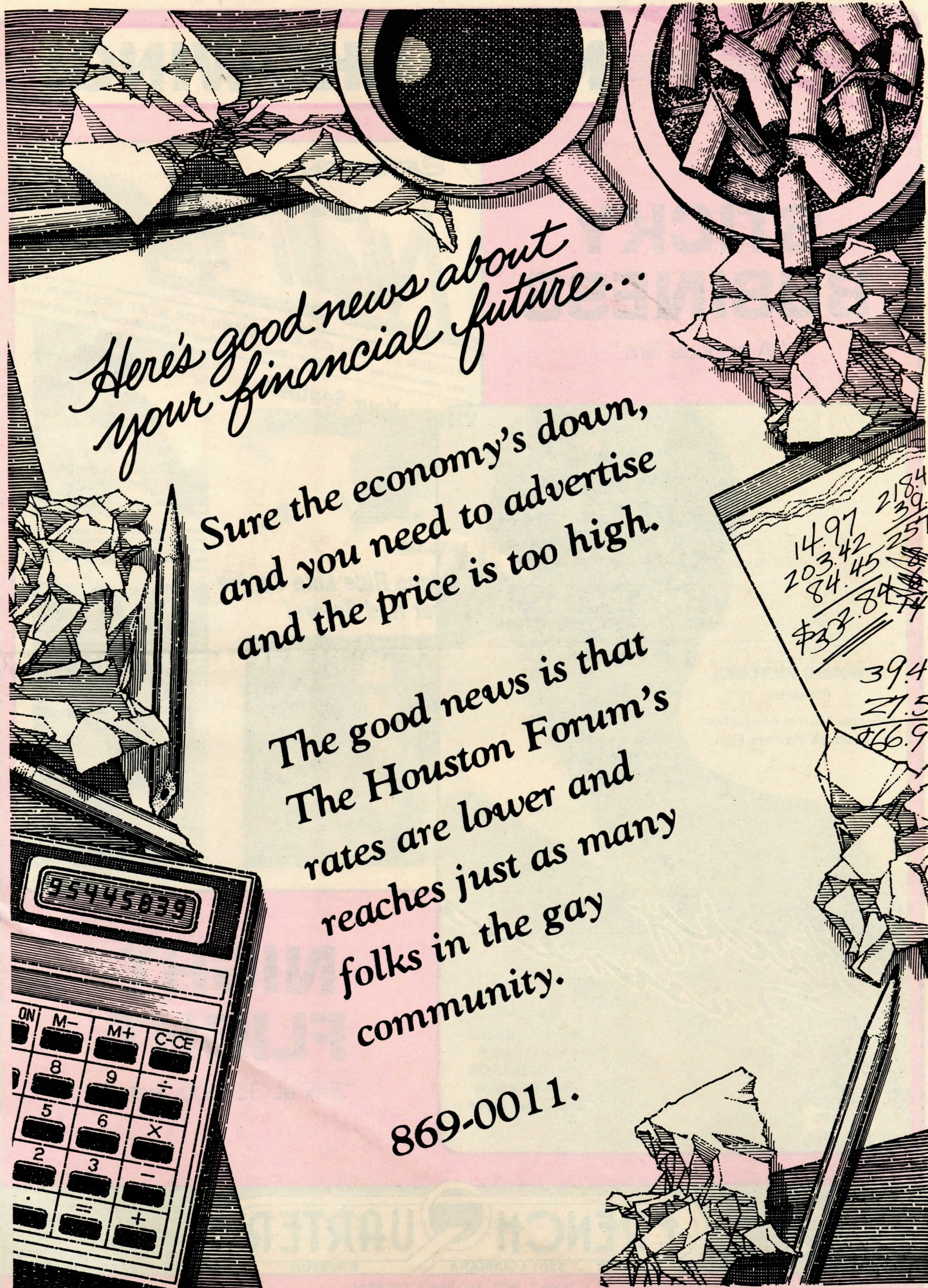
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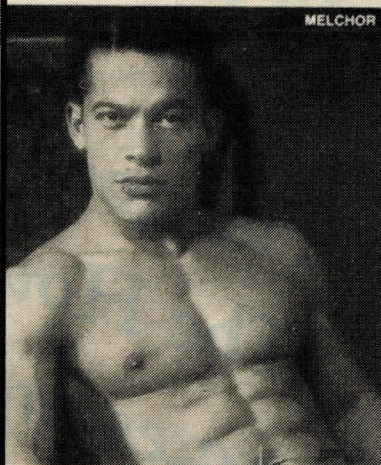


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