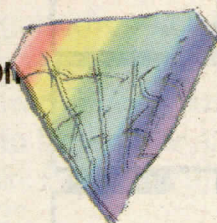


Montrose GEM

c. Gulf Features Issue # **89**, September 5, 2008 281-650-3489 Montrose GEM @ Yahoo.com

WE HAVE MAPS TO HOUSTON & GALVESTON GAY BARS



**INSIDE:
News,
Reviews,
Photos,
Rants!**



**Texas
Renaissance
Festival
Coming
to
Montrose**



**Madame
Returning
to
Montrose**

**Chef
Polo's
Signature
Restaurant**



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Afternoons
Tuesday-Friday

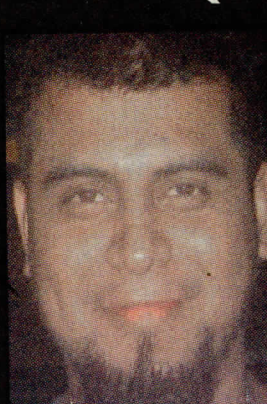
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GILBERT



SEAN



Montrose

611 Hyde Park Pub 611 Hyde Park, 713-526-7070. Customers are a wide mix of all types. Open 7am (noon Sun.). One of the more popular bars for happy hour and into the night

Bartini 1318 Westheimer, 713-526-2271. Lots of soul. Shows on Thursdays & Sundays. Dancing nightly. Open 10pm

Blur 710 Pacific. 713-713-529-3447. Nightly dance bar, Sunday Tea Dance, closed Mon. & Tues.

Brazos River Bottom (BRB) 2400 Brazos, 713-528-9192. Cowboys are here. Open every day noon-2am. Dancing at night. Various Sunday shows. \$2.50 drinks all day, all night Fridays

Bocados 1312 W. Alabama, 713-523-5230. Ladies nights on Wednesdays

Chances/G--

Spot/New Barn 1100 Westheimer, 713-523-7217. Mega women's club

Club 1415 1415 California, 713-522-

7066. Open for theme parties some nights.

Cousins 817 Fairview, 713-528-9204.

All types of customers, from the retired to the young. Drag shows Thurs.-Sun. Open 11am (noon Sun.)

Crocker 2312 Crocker, 713-523-0026.

Wii game, newest neighborhood bar

Decades 1205 Richmond Ave., 713-521-2224. A neighborhood bar. Open 11am (noon Sun.). Pool tables, darts, a great jukebox

E/J's 2517 Ralph, 713-527-9071. Open 7am (10am Sun. with breakfast). Male strippers most nights. Frequent shows and benefits

George 617 Fairview, 713-528-8102. Your "Neighborhood Sports Bar." Open 7am (10am Sun. with breakfast) Large morning crowd

Guava Lamp 570 Waugh Dr., 713-524-3359. Open daily 4pm. Happy hour 4-8pm, piano playing sometimes, DJ other times

J.R.'s/Santa Fe 808 Pacific, 713-521-2519. Always a crowd. All types of people but generally younger. Open mid-day to 2am

Mary's 1022 Westheimer, 713-527-9669. The oldest gay bar in Texas, open 7am (10am Sun.) Good happy hour crowd. Frequent shows and community events on the patio, especially Sundays

Meteor 2.0 2306 Genesee at Fairview. Upscale crowd, open 1pm

Michael's Outpost 1419 Richmond Ave., 713-520-8446. Piano players some nights plus during Friday happy hour. Open 3pm (11am Sat., noon Sun.)

Montrose Mining Co. 805 Pacific, 713-529-7488. A butch bar. Lots of cruising. Crowd, mostly men, is of all ages. Draft beer on the patio

Ripcord 715 Fairview, 713-521-2792. Houston's leather bar, open 1pm daily. Man-hunting crowds at night. After hours weekends

South Beach 810 Pacific, 713-521-9123. Major dance club. Get there early to get ahead of the line. Open Wed.-Sun. with after-hours weekends

Tony's Corner Pocket 817 W. Dallas, 713-571-7870. Pool and other games, open noon daily. "How ya doin'?"

Montrose GEM #89, Sep. 5, 2008

3

Skyline, 713-953-0268. Women's club open Thurs.-Sun.

Crystal U.S. 59 at Hillcroft, 713-278-2582. Drag shows Wed. & Thurs., dancing Fri. & Sat.

MonaLisa 6101 Wilcrest at Harwin. Diamond Cut Sisters Thursdays

Toyz 5322 Glenmont, 713-632-2544, 281-451-2094. Open Tuesdays (shows and dancing) and Fridays ("girls night")

North Houston & Spring

Beaumont

Copa 304 Orleans, (409) 832-4206. Dancing and shows

Chris' Crockett St.

Pub 407 Crockett at Park, (409) 835-4243.

Beaumont's general neighborhood, city-wide gay watering hole

Bryan/College Station

Halo Video Bar 121 N. Main, Bryan, (979) 260-2437

Revolution Cafe & Bar 211B. S. Main. Bryan, (979) 823-4044, "gay-

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3rd Coast Beach Bar 3102 Seawall Blvd., (409) 765-6911. Overlooking the Gulf. Frequent shows

Groove 2416 Post Office Blvd., (409) 766-7771. Karaoke and poker Tuesday & Thursday. Dancing nightly.

Pink Dolphin 904 Ave. M at Stewart Beach, (409) 621-1808. Patio overlooks the Gulf. Open 10am to 2am

Robert's Lafitte 2501 Ave. Q, (409) 765-9092. A down-to-earth bar open 7am (10am Sun.). All ages of people. Drag shows Sat. & Sun. nights. Swimming pool

Other Areas

Southwest Houston

La Academia 5829 S. Gessner, 713-334-5422, dance club

Club 69 6121 Hillcroft, 832-891-2241, Latino.

Club Big Yo 6305

Amazonia 11449 I-45 at Aldine Bender, N. Houston, 281-260-9885, 832-244-4354. Latin-flavored dance club with male strippers, impersonators

Northeast Houston

Viviana's 4624 Dacoma, 713-681-4104. Frequent impersonation shows

Whispers 226 First St. E., Humble, 281-359-2900. DJ on Fri. & Sat., Burgers Sun.

Other Inner Loop

In-N-Out 1537 N. Shepherd, 713-589-9780. "MetroSocial" open daily 4pm

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Midtowne Spa 3100 Fannin, 713-522-2379. Open 24 hours. Gym, pool, whirlpool, sauna. Private rooms and lockers

DVD Close Out Sale

MONDAY-SUNDAY

711 FAIRVIEW

713-LEATHER

BLACK HAWK LEATHER

montrose GEM

ISSUE # 89

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OUR 4TH YEAR
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The National Bar of Texas 1022 Westheimer 713-527-9669

Community Center News

Edited from Press Release

The Houston GLBT Community Center is home base for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and allies in the metropolitan area and southeast Texas. The Community Center, an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization founded in 1996, is located at 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207. The phone number is 713-524-3818. The website is www.houstonglbtcommunity-center.org.

People at the Center

Our condolences to Jerry Simoneaux, spouse of Community Center president Christopher Bown, on the death of his father, Jerry Simoneaux, Sr., on August 14. ... Don Hauboldt, long-time Community Center stalwart, has been elected vice-president of the board of directors. ... Don replaced Nelvin Adriatico, who has opened N'EA, a salon and spa in the 3400 Montrose building. ... Dot Nelson-Turnier, founder of the website Out Houston (www.outhouston.org) has joined the Community Center board of directors. Dot, a candidate for the Texas Legislature in 2006, founded the National Coming Out Day nonprofit program called Out in Houston, which debuted last year. ... Tim Brookover, Community Center board member and a past president, has joined the staff of City Council member Sue Lovell. ... The Community Center seeks additional dedicated individuals interested in joining the board of directors. Contact president Christopher Bown, cbown@simonbown.com.

Looking Ahead

The Gulf Coast Archive and Museum of GLBT History, which displays part of its collection at the Community Center, is conducting a contest for a new logo. The GCAM board of governors will hold a preliminary vote of the entries at a meeting in September, and the final vote will be conducted at a special membership meeting in September. More info: www.gcam.org, GCAM chair Judy Reeves, trop@rainbowprod.com.

The next quarterly meeting of the Community Leaders Network Group is Saturday, Nov. 8, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Bulletproof Faith

The Community Center and Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church co-host a workshop on November 8, 2:00-5:30 p.m., with the Rev. Candace Chellew-Hodge, the author of the book "Bulletproof Faith: A Survival Guide for Gay and Lesbian Christians."

The two-day event will take place at Grace, 2515 Waugh, the open and affirming Lutheran congregation in Montrose that recently ordained and installed Rev. Lura Groen, the openly gay pastor profiled in the August 30 Houston Chronicle religion section and in the July OutSmart. Rev. Chellew-Hodge is a United Church of Christ minister and the founder of Whosoever, the online magazine for gay and lesbian Christians (www.whosoever.org).

Meet Equality's New Field Organizer

PRESS RELEASE from Equality Texas

Equality Texas is pleased to announce the hiring of Lindsay Marsh as our Field Organizer. Lindsay brings to Equality Texas a solid background in field work having worked as an organizer with the



Lindsay Marsh

Hillary Clinton for President Campaign in New Hampshire, Alabama, Texas, Pennsylvania, Indiana and South Dakota.

"Lindsay's skills are a perfect

match for Equality Texas," said Paul Scott, Equality Texas executive director. "Her experience with managing, organizing and training volunteers, coupled with hands-on phone banking, canvassing, and GOTV operations will enable Lindsay to hit the ground running."

Marsh will initially have three programmatic areas of focus. The first will be in support of Equality Texas' coalition efforts as a partner in Houston Votes, a coalition of progressive organizations working in Harris County to register 80,000 voters for the upcoming election cycle. Marsh will be managing volunteer recruitment for the voter registration efforts in Texas House District 133.

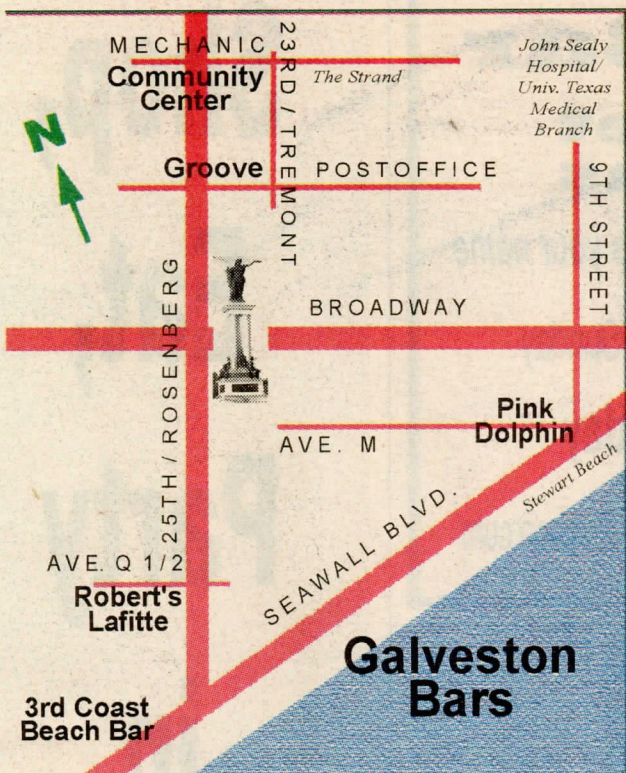
Secondly, Lindsay will be organizing community forums across the state as part of Equality Texas Foundation's Safe Schools Initiative. The Initiative is a multi-year program aimed at the prevention, intervention and elimination of harassment and bullying in Texas schools.

Additionally, Marsh will work on Equality Texas' efforts to recruit and deliver volunteers to the electoral campaigns of pro-equality candidates for, and incumbents in, the Texas House of Representatives.

"I am very excited to join the team at Equality Texas and to be a part of the movement for equality in this state," Marsh said. "We are on the cusp of a leadership change in the Texas House of Representatives that will have a dramatic effect on issues affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Texans. I am looking forward to making that positive change happen."

Lindsay Marsh was born and raised in Missouri, but has called Austin home for the past 13 years. She was graduated magna cum laude from St. Edward's University with a B.A. degree in political science. Lindsay loves the live music scene in Austin and considers trivia to be a competitive sport. Lindsay is a foster mom for a Basset Hound rescue group and she currently shares her sofa with Molly, a seven-year-old Basset Hound.

Equality Texas works toward the elimination of social, legal, and economic discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression through lobbying, education, and research directed toward the Texas Legislature and other state governmental agencies. More information about our work is available at www.EqualityTexas.org.



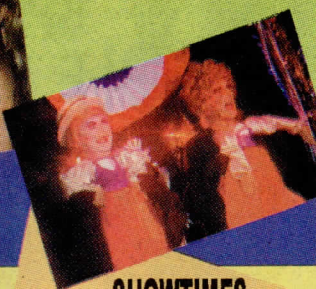
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John Hurt to Revive Role as Quentin Crisp

A post by Tom Jackson on Gaynewsblog.net

WITH a spring in his step, a



John Hurt as Quentin Crisp

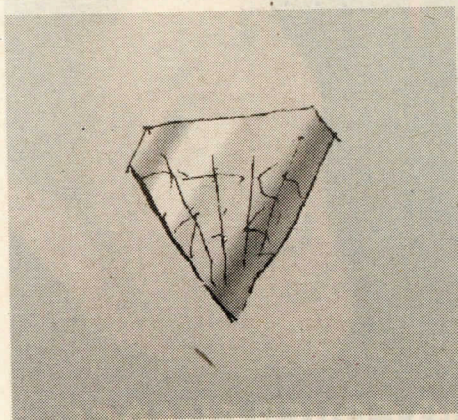
defiant smile and a fabulous fedora worn at a "jaunty" angle, John Hurt is instantly recognizable as he reprises one of his most famous roles.

Three decades after he embraced his inner dandy playing gay raconteur Quentin Crisp in *The Naked Civil Servant*, he has taken on the role again for a sequel, "An Englishman in New York."

As he filmed in Manhattan in August, dressed in velvet suit and flamboyant flowing scarf, it was clear he has slipped back into character as if it was yesterday.

The *Naked Civil Servant*, still regularly cited as one of the best TV dramas ever filmed, made international stars of Crisp and Hurt.

The former once referred to himself as the Stately Homo of England and the phrase was later used as the title of a book of interviews, "Restoration of a Stately Homo."



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D.J. Friday & Saturday --- Karaoke Thursday & Sunday

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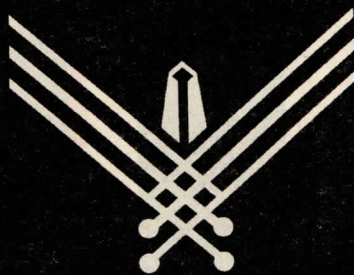
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8:30 PM



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THIS IS MONTROSE

News, Nonsense, Rants
By Henry McClurg

This is Montrose GEM #89. Welcome. EJ's New Parking

Ed is so happy. He has a new, improved parking lot. "We even have fresh lines painted so our customers can park neatly and orderly." And speaking of one the best gay clubs in Houston, I'd like to mention a couple of birthday parties: Reigning Mr. EJ's Ronnie will be 44 and Empress 21 Jackie Thorne will be 69. So there will be a big party on Saturday, Sept. 6. Snacks at 7:00 and a show at 8:00 p.m.

History On the Internet

Jonathan Ned Katz, noted longtime gay historian and author, emails, "I am excited to announce that a test run of OutHistory.org is now online.

"We are especially interested in feedback from historians and other historically-oriented researchers. Please use the 'Discuss' function on the Main Page top bar to post your comments.

"And we hope that lots of teachers will use OutHistory in their classrooms and have their students produce content for the site."

I Plead Guilty

Defending his choice and the team that helped pick her, G.O.P. candidate McCain said in early September that "the vetting process was completely thorough." Campaign advisers at the convention said Sarah Palin filled out a survey with 70 tough questions, including: 1) Have you ever paid for sex? 2) Have you been faithful in your marriage? 3) Have you ever used or purchased drugs? 4) Have you ever downloaded pornography?

Well, I'd like to answer those questions myself, right here and now.

1) Have you ever paid for sex?

Yes, yes and yes. Over and over. In one way or another.

2) Have you been faithful in your marriage?

Which marriage? I'd had so many. But generally speaking, I try to be a slut

whenever I can.

3) Have you ever used or purchased drugs?

Yes, Every night. I drink a lot.

4) Have you ever downloaded pornography?

Yes. I have tons of it. Tons!

Hurricane Gus

Something told me Gustav would make landfall near where I was. Galveston. I'm writing this paragraph very early Wednesday morning, Aug. 28. Later, at 10:00 a.m., I plan to be on the beach. Well, actually I'll probably be sitting on a barstool at Robert's Lafitte reading the Galveston County Daily News.

Well, turns out, Galveston was spared. So was the Crescent City. Good!

The Dems

Hillary's speech (seems like now it was a long time ago) was perfect. Of course, the right-wing pundits (David Brooks, i.e.) had to admit it was good but they had to add that she didn't apologize for her aggressive campaign against Obama.

David Brooks needs to apologize for the orange cream he uses to make himself look tanned. (Normally we "progressives" don't do personal insults like the right wing does. But I couldn't help myself on that one.)

I had a nice conversation with an ex-Air Force guy after the Dems' convention coverage was over at The 611. We talked about James Meredith, Medgar Evers and Charles Evers. Did you know that Medgar Evers lived down Watkins Drive from me in Jackson in the black neighborhood next door to my white neighborhood in segregated Mississippi.

Did you know that in 1970 I voiced the radio commercials that Charles Evers made when he ran for governor of Mississippi? No, you didn't know that. Well I did. And I wrote them too. I decided that in Mississippi at that time we needed to hit the nail on the head and the commercials all started out with "Don't vote for the black man for governor. (Pause.) Vote for the man."

Then we listed reasons (such as education, jobs, etc.).

We didn't win, as you know. But we were proud. He campaigned honestly.

Farmers' Market in Montrose

La Strada, a Houston contemporary Italian restaurant, has announced that they will host the Montrose Farmers Market in the La Strada parking lot beginning this Saturday, Sept. 6.

This new local event will reoccur every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Confirmed vendors for opening weekend include (according to their press release) a local produce farmer, homemade bread and pastas from La Strada, specialty desserts, Sage Salads, fresh soups, an award-winning vegan chili and home treats such as bath salts, body lotions, candles and handmade soaps.

"Hosting the Farmers Market is our little contribution to the Montrose community," said Aldo Catania, owner, La Strada. "We hope that neighbors and visitors will take advantage of having locally grown and made goods available for purchase direct from the artisans who make them."

La Strada is located in the 300 block of Westheimer and has been there for more than 20 years.

Olde English at Mary's

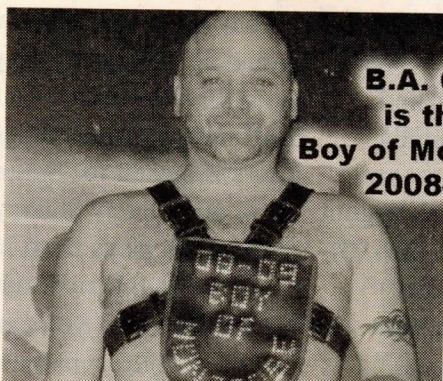
The Texas Renaissance Festival comes to Montrose for happy hour on Friday, Sept. 12, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Mary's patio. (Rain or shine.) Sundance Cattle Company will serve sausages and ale and various maidens and fairys will stage contests and give away prizes, including lots of free tickets to the real thing in Plantersville.

I've been told that some lucky person may win the opportunity to join the king (that's the King of England!) for a little quality time.

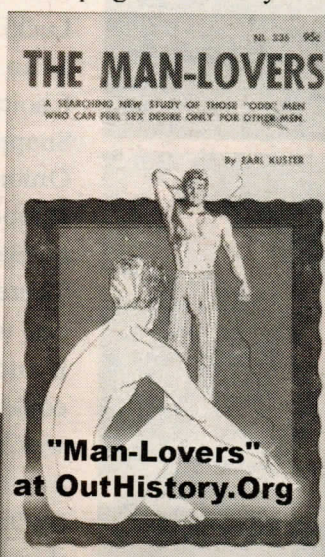
Madame and Me

"Madame and Me" with the famous puppet and Joe Kovacs will in the spotlight at Meteor Sat., Sept. 20. There will be no cover but if you would like special seating for your group, call Meteor and reserve it. (See their ad here in the world-famous Montrose GEM.)

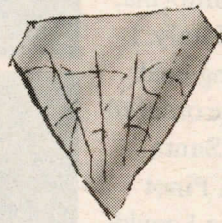
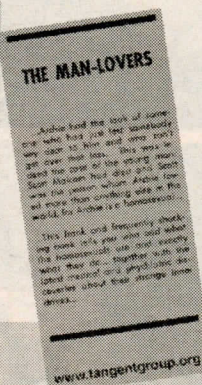
And here's a history note that only someone as old as me could remember: Madame was of course created by the late Wayland Flowers, who once performed at Gene Howle's Farmhouse two blocks from where Meteor is today.



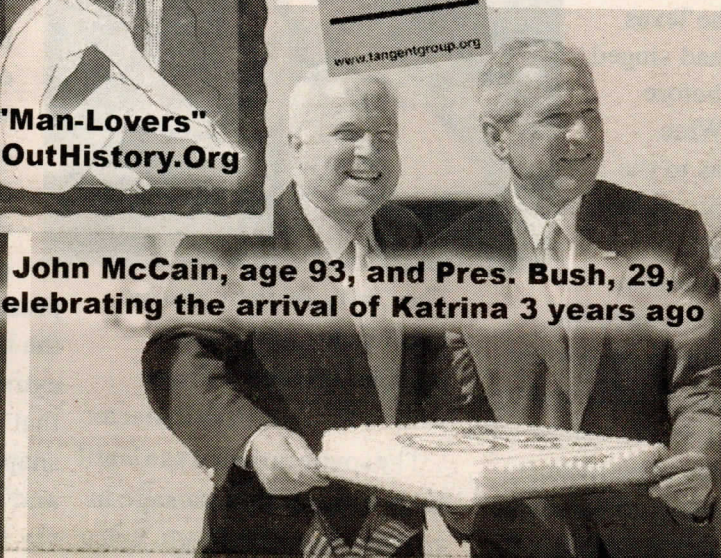
B.A. Gill
is the
Boy of Montrose
2008-09



"Man-Lovers"
at OutHistory.Org



Show Girls at Robert's Lafitte



John McCain, age 93, and Pres. Bush, 29,
celebrating the arrival of Katrina 3 years ago

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SPOONING

Restaurant Review
With Damien Dane
 damiendane@gmail.com

Chef Polo's Signature is Sensational

Hey there fellow Montrosians. Hopefully Labor Day was good to everyone as it was to me. With all this storm activity happening I have a great suggestion for what to do with that in-between storm time. Have a sensational dining experience at Polo's Signature on Timmons and Southwest Freeway.

Polo's Signature is the vision of a man whose dream was to one day own his own restaurant. Eighteen years ago, Leopoldo "Polo" Becerra started working at The Post Oak Grill as a busboy. He slept under the tables at night because he didn't have anything but a passion for fine food and a dream. Eventually he became the sous chef and moved his way up to executive chef and finally owner. Since then, Chef Polo has ventured to open his freshest concept of fine dining in New American Cuisine: Polo's Signature. The result was a sheer success in spectacular cuisine, elegant ambience and perfection in service.

The website will tell you, "With over 20 years of culinary experience, Polo has mastered the art of hospitality by providing "old school" customer service while defying the trends by creating his one-a-kind signature dishes. To bring his dishes alive, his cuisine blends New American contemporary

flavors with Latin and Asian influences. His commitment to excellence in luxury and

exemplary service is what sets Polo's apart from all other restaurants in Houston."

I arrived with my dining companion at about 7:30 even though our reservation was for 8:00, and yes reservations are usually necessary. We were seated promptly by a beautiful hostess, two waiters and Polo himself greeted us at our table, pulling out our chairs and placing our napkins in our laps. The attention to detail is such that they brought me a black napkin instead of the white one at the table to avoid having white lint on my black slacks. It's the little things that matter.

Our waiter then began to inform us about the wine list. Polo's boasts an extensive international wine list from California, France and Italy. I love freezing cold whites so we ordered a bottle of Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio since I could still feel the Texas heat that had singed my body before entering. Wine service was to the "T" and our waiter then brought our menus and began explaining the specials.

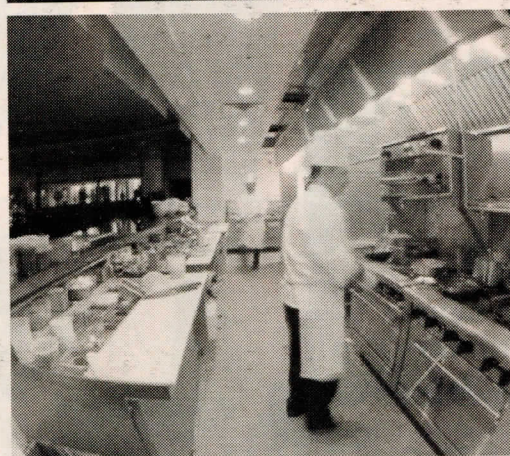
One of them caught my ear although I didn't end up ordering it. It was a salad with mixed greens Gorgonzola, red and yellow tomatoes in a pomegranate vinaigrette

topped with seared medium rare tenderloin and crowned with tempura battered asparagus. I saw it go by me though and I know I'm going to order it at some point.

We started with the appetizer that looked best to me. It was seared diver scallops atop a cool roasted shitake mushroom salad with barbequed onions, yellow tomatoes, pistachios and basil oil (\$11.95). The scallops were huge and perfectly prepared. They weren't chewy at all and had the most excellent density.



Chef Polo, on the far right, with some obviously important guests



The flavor of the pistachio, mushrooms and onions together created a divine canvas for this artistic starter.

The soupe du jour was a lentil soup with roasted sausage in a spicy vegetable broth. Spicy

was the word! The sausage had a definite kick that I wasn't expecting but was well rounded by the accompanying bacon and cheddar biscuits that are served with sourdough rolls and a multigrain roll too for those crazy health nuts.

As a salad I had the very interesting sounding Nantucket baby spinach salad tossed with blueberries vinaigrette, gorgonzola, and caramelized pecans (\$7.95). I couldn't believe that blueberries and the pungent cheese complimented each other so well and it was perfect with our fruitful wine selection. My guest had an Iceberg wedge (\$7.95) which they do here with a wonderful creamy Roquefort, tomatoes, and jalapeno applewood bacon: A classic that shines brightly as it ever has on this dominating menu.

I was having such a great experience that I really wanted it to continue without any unforeseen drama. Luckily it did. I ordered as an entre "Chef Polo's Choice." The Grilled Snapper with Vidalia Onions, Tomatoes, and Jumbo Lump Crab Ragout on Basmati rice. (\$26.95) There is really only one word to describe it and it is "success." I couldn't believe what was happening in my mouth. I could even feel my taste buds doing a dance of praise because of how handsome the

presentation was along with the boldness of the sauce and extreme culinary triumph that was my fish. I've had snapper all over the country and abroad and can definitely say that this is the best I've

ever had.

My guest had the Field & Stream. This is perfect for those bi-polar diners out there that can't decide between beef and seafood. It was a petite filet of tenderloin with jumbo lump crabmeat and jumbo shrimp in a Port Wine reduction (\$27.95). I tried the beef, my tongue thanked me. I tasted the shrimp, my tongue sent me a dozen roses. I was seriously in awe and was still scared that something would ruin the experience. You can rest assured that you don't have to worry about a well rounded experience in this establishment.

Our waiter cleared the table for dessert service and presented a simple yet effective dessert tray. I ordered the Key Lime pie with pistachio crusting and my guest had the cookie monster, a chocolate brownie and a vanilla brownie topped with vanilla gelato infused with chocolate chips and Oreos! Decadent. I thought I couldn't eat another bite but managed somehow to down the sweet, sinful delight.

Polo's is priced right as it should be. You have to pay a bit more for the finest in service, food and atmosphere together. Polo's is closed for Saturday lunch and all day Sunday. The pianist Che plays from 7:00 til close Tuesday thru Saturday.

I promise you, you can trust me. Polo's will leave you wanting more and more and more! They can accommodate large parties and meetings as well.

After eating there I applied for a job. Hopefully I get it. I'll let you know. Ciao for now. **EDITOR'S**

DISCLAIMER. Our reviewer, Damien, has worked at every restaurant in Harris County. It seems.

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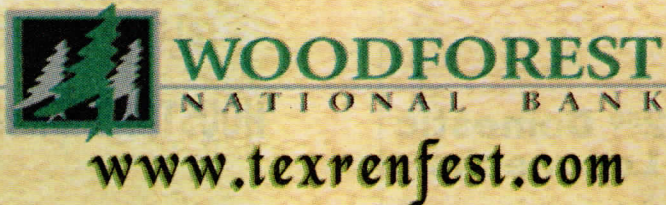
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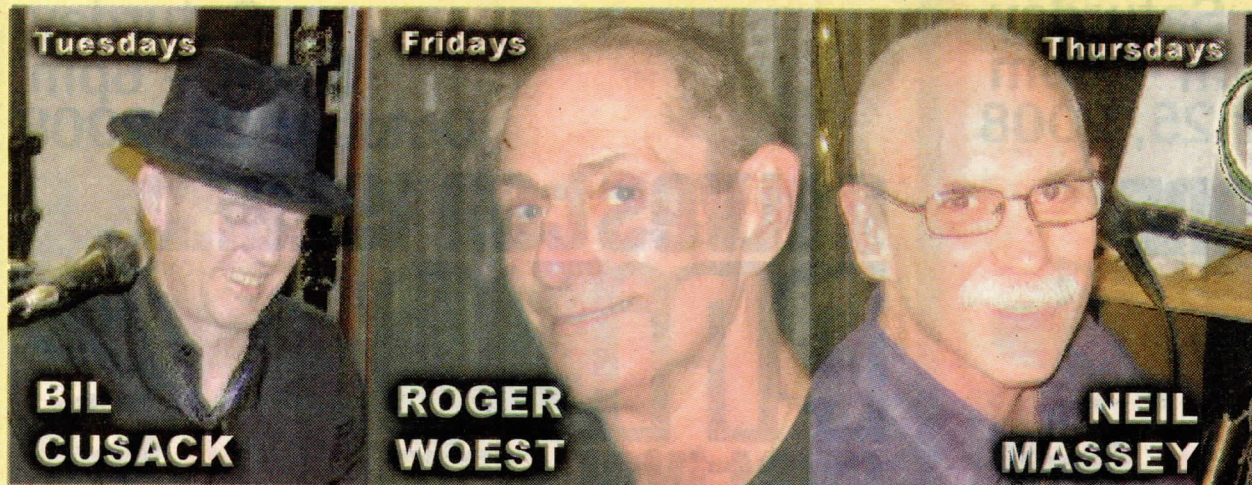
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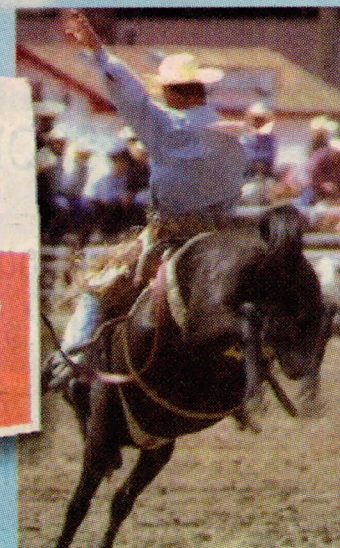
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RANGER

Thoughts

By Jere "Ranger" Douglas

Queernomics?

"The Rise of the Creative Class," a book by Richard Florida, has again posed the question of how much "Gay" economics and creativity are somewhat responsible for the growth and stability of the United States.

Various marketing/demographic studies have been done, in the past, and are continuing to be done around the world, not only of the spending power of our sub-culture, but also of our contributions to society as a whole. We are not alone in this.

I have been reading about Baltimore, Maryland, where there has been a massive influx of capital into the "Gay" areas of the city, including buildings for GLBT organizations, charities and various other "necessities" of our lives. There are even pride colors predominantly displayed, in various ways, throughout the areas themselves and in the city. Perhaps Baltimore, being a now progressive city, has realized the financial and growth aspects of our community and is acknowledging the power that exists in this.

On the complete opposite end of the spectrum:

In Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the governor is not renewing the anti-discrimination laws that have been in existence for previous two administrations.

Since Houston's economy is seemingly built on "dinosaurs" (fossil fuels, get it Blanche?), perhaps it would be an idea for all of us here to come out of the pre-historic age and into the new millennia. (What a queer idea. Unique, different. Oh well, I'm thinking again.)

There is a lot of talk about Reaganomics, and its lasting effects on the U.S. Now, the headline in the Sunday New York Times Magazine, Obamanomics! Wow, a Democratic Republic, and now a Democrat, concerned about Economy. (There seems to be a continuum here, of some nature).

I wonder, exactly, which economics they are looking at, and who will be affected by the latest in this enormous campaign. (I believe it might just parallel the money China spent on the Olympics or at least run a close second.)

As a community, nationwide, we took a stand, in 1969, beginning with the Stonewall Riots, when we, as a community stood up, took the blows, but let the world know that we are here, and we are different, Queer, and

will be accepted with our influence to be known.

That led to major changes in the United States as we knew it then. (Yes, I was alive.)

There are still issues that affect all of us, no matter what the social or societal norms are. Among them, in my eyes are income tax and support issues.

We, as a community, pay a per capita rate far above the general community. We, by and large, through our taxes, are providing funds for their children's education. I know, many of us have children, and I am not negating that at all. However, children are born into a situation, supposedly of love and respect, and the parents have certain responsibilities to adhere to. I don't see a child as a tax write off, rather, a lifetime commitment by the parents and by the community of the United States. I would like the same tax breaks, or others that are given for these issues, and have the right to support education, as well as other things, as I and my partner seem fit.

While I'm on my soapbox, let me further venture into the realm of controversy by adding, "Why don't we, as Americans, bring back all the outsourced jobs to our country and put America Back To Work? That might solve some economic issues, as well as societal issues that are currently vividly present. This seems to be a very simple situation, with a very simple solution.

There are keywords that have been a standard in our community for decades (yes Blanche, I've been around a while.) Honor, Respect, and Loyalty. Perhaps it's time we push for these standards to be prevalent in our elected officials as well as in the country.

As we conclude the season of Party Conventions, and the selection of candidates for president and vice president, I'm asking everyone to stand tall, ask questions, demand that these officials and candidates, come to us, and let us ask questions. Hopefully, this could open other avenues of communication that could lead to even greater solutions/answers, to the many situations we face on a daily basis. It's time to end discrimination, hate, lack of acceptance, and other issues.

There is strength in diversity, a certain power in being different, and acknowledging, accepting and understanding those differences, even within our own Community.

Queernomics? Well, we are who we are, and we're not going anywhere. We seem to have been around for Millennia! And we're here to stay. Reaganomics, obamanomics, queernomics.

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E/J's, 2517 Ralph, 713-527-9071,
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Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos, 713-
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Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 713-522-
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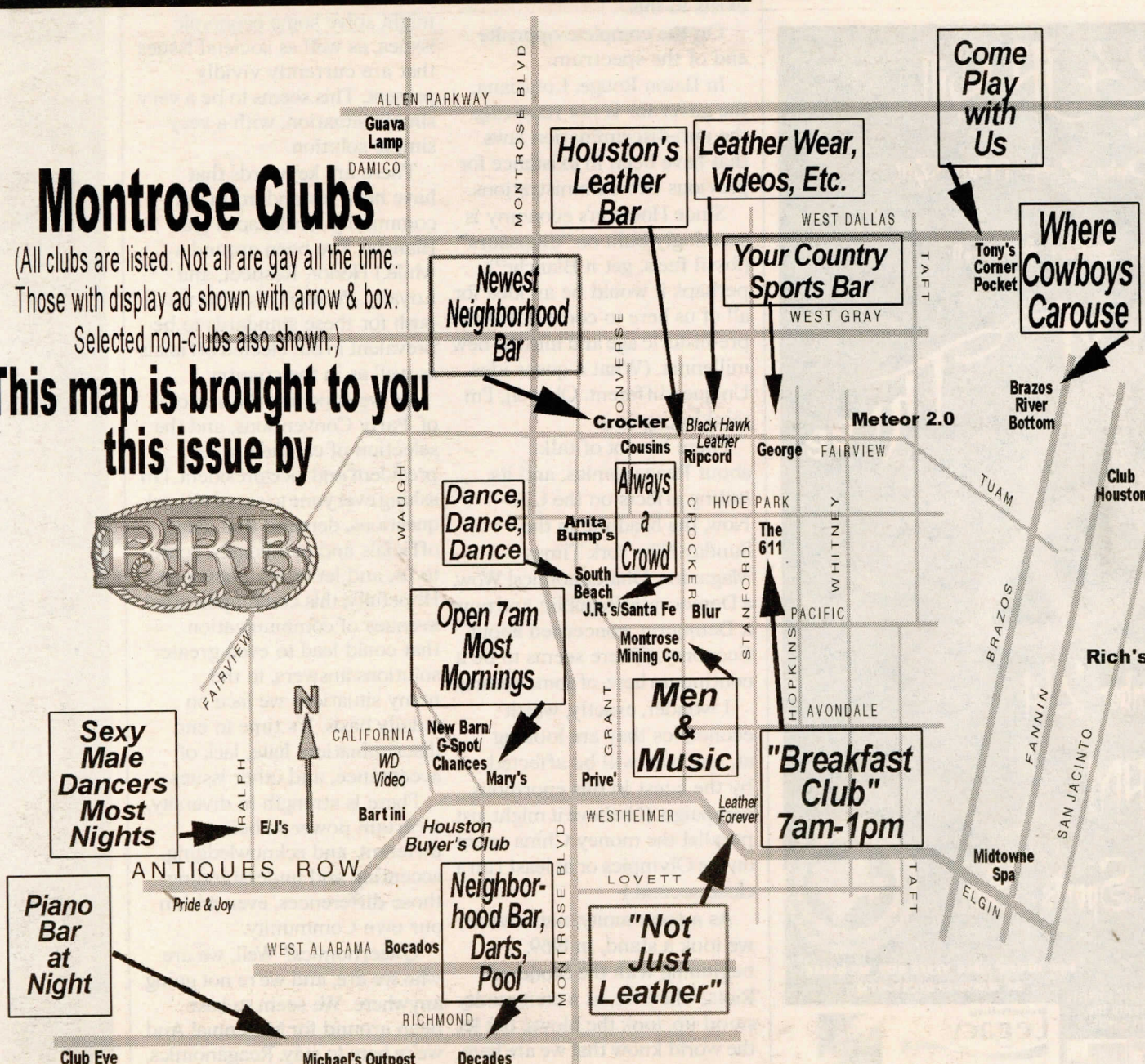
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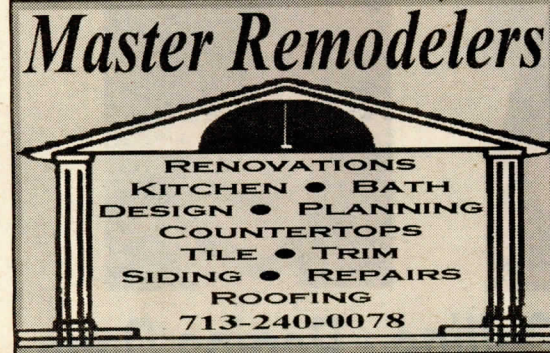
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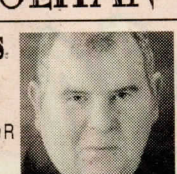
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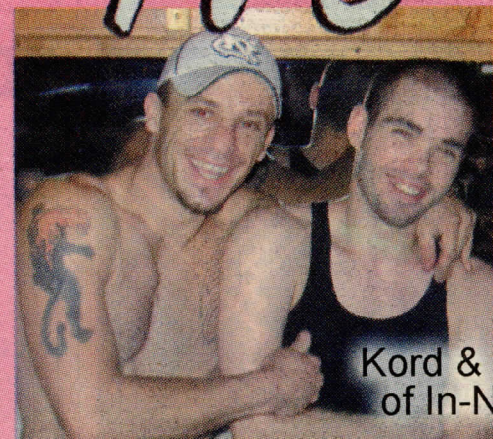


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Democrats Reaching Out to Gay Voters

Updated from article furnished by
National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of
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As gay Democrats came together in Denver, it was with the knowledge that they have the ear of their presidential candidate and the full support of the Democratic Party.

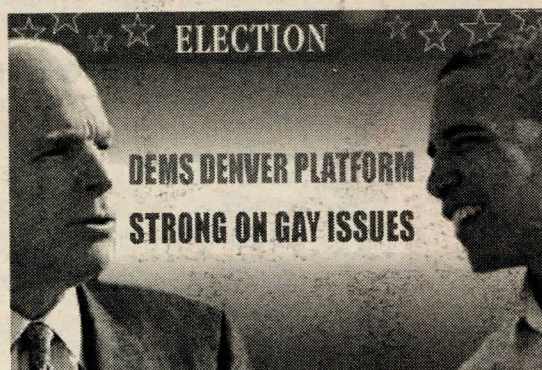
In fact, things are so good that many activists believe 2009 holds real promise for making inroads on gay politics and policies, policies that have been relegated to the back burner for the last eight years in Washington.

The central reason for this hope is the candidacy of U.S. Sen. Barack Obama. The Illinois Democrat's presidential bid has enlivened the discussion of equality and spurred a drive to address inequities in government and society.

"I think that he has gone beyond any presidential candidate in history in

reaching out to our community," says John Marble, director of communications for the Stonewall Democrats, the national LGBT Democratic organization. "Our community was involved at the very beginning. His deputy campaign manager, Steve Elmendorf (an out gay man), was one of the handfuls of people who lobbied to get Obama into the race. The Obama campaign embraced our community and has gone beyond what past presidential candidates have done in speaking to our concerns."

The numbers would seem to bear that out. A recent poll from Harris Interactive



shows that 68 percent of gay (The GEM uses the term "gay" to refer to all genders) registered voters favor Obama. Ten

percent favored GOP contender Sen. John McCain of Arizona. The remaining respondents favored Ralph Nader of the Green Party (three percent) and Bob Barr running as a Libertarian (one percent). Fifteen percent were undecided.

It isn't the Obama campaign alone that's winning over gay voters. The Democratic National Committee has worked diligently to open its doors to the gay community, advocate for pro-gay policies and include gay activists in the decision-making process.

Nowhere is that more obvious than the Democratic platform, a policy document that is ratified by the convention delegates. The platform is a wish list for gay Americans, striking the right note on numerous sexual orientation and gender identity issues and policies. Most importantly, it amends the party's description of family to include same-sex couples.

The platform also calls for:

- 1) A strategy on ENDA that includes both sexual orientation and gender identity;
- 2) An end to the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy;
- 3) Security in adoption rights for gay parents;
- 4) Passage of hate crimes legislation;

5) More inclusive reporting of LGBT individuals and families by the U.S. Census Bureau;

6) A national HIV/AIDS strategy;

7) Opposition to the "Defense of Marriage Act" and similar initiatives; and

8) Opposition to voter identification laws that target or discriminate against transgender individuals.

"The platform has become increasingly much more important in Democratic politics," says Marble. "It gives us a strong position to advocate from, since everyone knows that this is where the party stands on these key issues. It is going to give us a little bit more authority to actually lobby Democrats in Congress and the White House next year."

Republicans say Obama is an unproven commodity, having been on the national stage for so short a time.

"Sen. Obama has been in the Senate for a very short time," says Jimmy LaSalvia, director of programs and policy for the Log Cabin Republicans, the gay GOP group. "He doesn't have much of a record of accomplishment."

But Marble and others believe that Obama may be the best hope for the gay community, since he supports leveling the playing field for gay Americans and embraces the platform's progressive approach to gay issues.

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