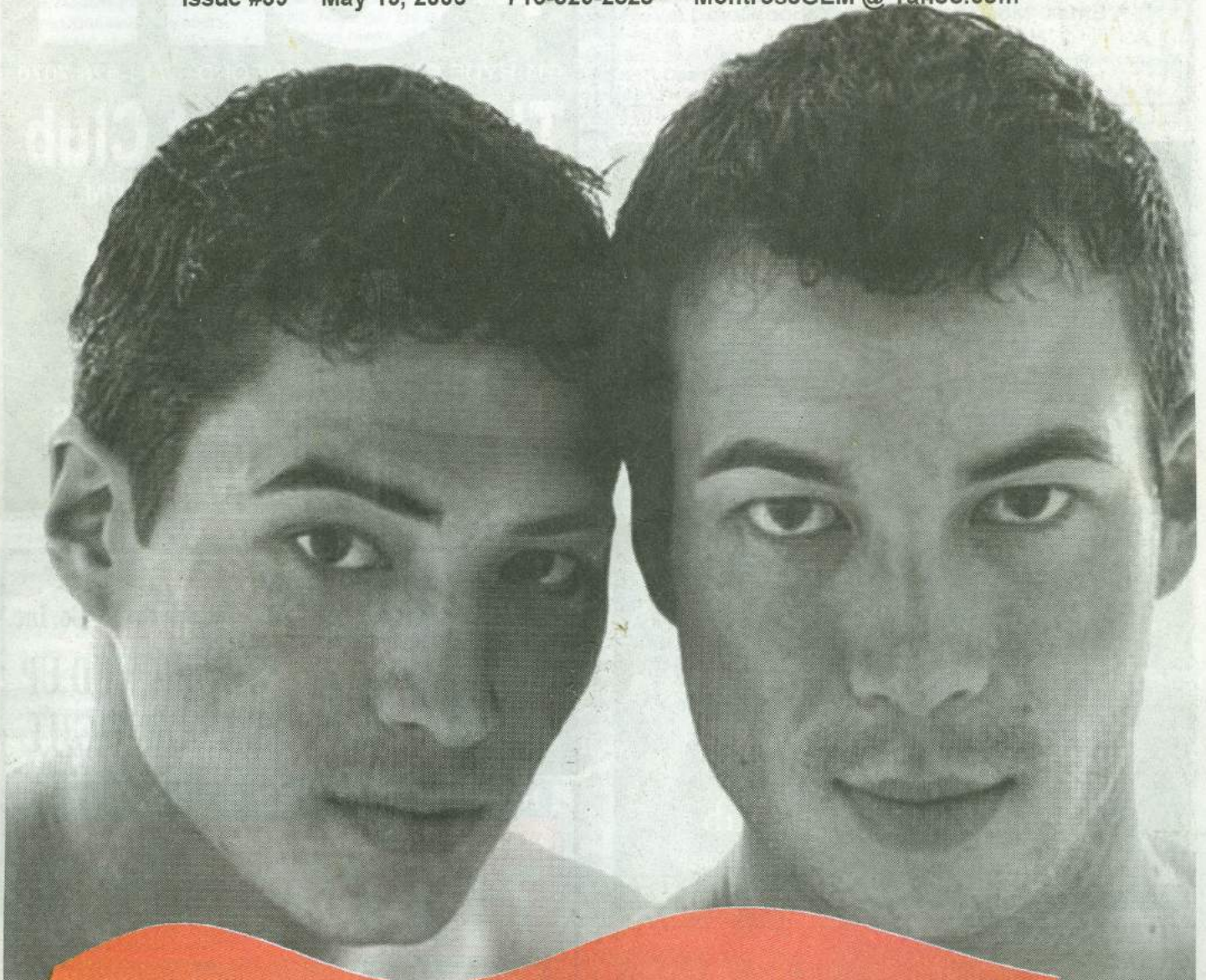


GEM



YOUR FAVORITE GAY NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE

Issue #39 May 19, 2006 713-529-2325 MontroseGEM @ Yahoo.com



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MAPS TO ALL HOUSTON/GALVESTON GAY BARS!



ISSUE # **39**
MAY 19, 2006

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Montrose Clubs

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

Brazos River Bottom 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

Bricks II 617 Fairview, 713-528-8102. Your "Neighborhood Country Bar." Open 7am (noon Sun.) with large morning crowd

Carter & Cooley 375 W. 19th Ave. at Ashland in The Heights, 713-864-3354. Open 9am-3:30pm Mon.-Fri., 9am-5pm Sat. Deli with soups, salads, sandwiches, desserts

Chances/G-Spot/New Barn 1100 Westheimer, 713-523-7217. This is the women's mega-complex. Three big clubs, interconnected. Chances opens 2pm. Women's band Sat. nights. Open mic night Thursdays

Club 1415 1415 California, 713-522-7066. Open for theme parties some nights. Male strippers Thursdays. "The Dyke Show" Saturdays with Nancy Ford

Club Eve 2209 Richmond, 713-545-4574. Women's bar Thurs.-Sat. above Azteca restaurant

Cousins 817 Fairview, 713-528-9204. All types of customers, from the retired people to young men. Drag shows Thurs.-Sun. Open 11am (noon Sun.)

La Cueva Tequila Lounge 2312 Crocker. Hispanic club specializing in tequila, of course

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

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

Griff's 3417 Roseland, 713-528-9912. Not a gay bar. Irish bar and a neighborhood institution

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

Helios Formerly the Mausoleum, 411 Westheimer, 713-526-4648. Eclectic customers. Slightly gay. House was the home of Howard Hughes as a toddler. Open nightly, every night has a different crowd and atmosphere

J.R.'s/Santa Fe 808 Pacific, 713-521-2519. Always a crowd. All types of people but generally younger. Open mid-day on Jeffries 710 Pacific. Open daily 4pm-2am.

Keys West 817 W. Dallas, 713-571-7870. A piano bar on the edge of downtown. Open 3pm. Darts, card games, drinking, singing and carousing with frequent shows. Live piano Wed.-Sat. nights

Lola's 2327 Grant, 713-528-8342. Not a gay bar but a Montrose neighborhood institution

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

Meteor 2306 Genesee, 713-521-0123. An upper-scale bar. Mixed between gals and guys. Open from late afternoons. Fluffy couches to lounge around in and politic with like-minded people

Michael's Outpost 1419 Richmond Ave., 713-520-8446. Piano players nightly Tues.-Sat. plus Friday happy hour. Open 3pm (11am Sat., noon Sun.) Host of many community events

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

Numbers 300 Westheimer, 713-526-6551. (Not a gay bar.) Hosts occasional gay events

Prive 910 Westheimer, 713-522-2542. Slightly gay sometimes. Great music, good viewing of Montrose & Westheimer from the rooftop patio

Resurrection 711 West Gray, 832-816-6315. Slightly gay sometimes. Open only for after-hours.

Rich's 2401 San Jacinto, 713-759-9606. Dance club gay on Fri. & Sat., sometimes other times. After-hours Fri. & Sat.

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

Slider's 1424-B Westheimer, 713-528-2788. Not a gay bar. Great daiquiris

South Beach 810 Pacific, 713-521-9123. Major dance club. Open Wed.-Sun. with after-hours weekends

Galveston Clubs

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

Cocktails 2411 Mechanic, (409) 762-7900. Not really gay. 2 clubs,

one is a piano bar, other features karaoke

Garza's KonTiki 315 Tremont, (409) 765-5805. Open mid-day to 2am. Dance club. Frequent shows

Pink Dolphin 904 Ave. M at Stewart Beach, (409) 621-1808. Patio overlooks the Gulf. Brunch and drag show Sundays 11am. Other shows Sat. nights.

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

Undercurrent 2409 Market, (409) 750-8571. Open 4pm. Good weekend late crowd. Two dance floors, a million pool tables, shows and strippers weekends. This place is big

Outlying Clubs

within 100 miles

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

Club Big Yo 6305 Skyline, S.W. Houston, 713-953-0268. Women's club open Thurs.-Sun.

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

Chris' Crockett St. Pub 407 Crockett at Park, Beaumont, (409) 835-4243. Reopening soon, if not already.

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

House of Finesse 2912 Wentworth, near T.S.U. campus, 713-522-6074. Only open for special events

Inergy/Mango Lounge/Amnesia 5750 Chimney Rock, S.W. Houston, 713-660-7310. Latin-flavored dance club just outside The Loop. Big late crowd, good music. Sunday shows

Ranch Hill Saloon 24704 I-45 N., #103, Spring, (936) 441-6426. Open 4pm Mon.-Thurs., 6pm Fri.-Sat., closed Sun.

Rainbow Room 527 Barren Springs, N. Houston, 281-872-0215. Neighborhood bar opens daily at noon, up past Bush airport

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

Viviana's 4624 Dacoma, 713-681-4104. New location, primarily Hispanic. Female impersonators

Private Clubs

Club Houston 2200 Fannin, 713-659-4998. Open 24 hours. Gym, pool, whirlpool, sauna. Private rooms and lockers

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

Holidays, Benefits & Other Occasions

Some dates are tentative. Email MontroseGem@yahoo.com with additions and corrections.

Sat., May 20 Misfits bartend on Ripcord's patio

Sun., May 21 Houston Billiards Open monthly meeting 2pm, La Cueva

Sun., May 21 NLA bartends Mary's patio, 3-7pm

Thurs.-Mon., May 25-29 International Mr. Leather, Chicago

Fri., May 26 Black Jack Night 9pm, Keys West

Sat., May 27 NLA monthly membership meeting, 7:30pm, then members bartend 9:30pm-1:30am, Ripcord patio

Sun., May 28 GLBT Community Center's movie & game night, 7pm 3400 Montrose #207

Sun., May 28 Houston Pride Royal Pageant 7pm, Keys West

Mon., May 29 Memorial Day

Fri., June 2 Black Jack Night 9pm Keys West

Fri., June 2 Mr. Gay Pride Houston Passing of the Torch, 8pm E/Ts

Sat., June 3 10th annual Houston Billiards Open

Tues., June 6 Sixth day of the sixth month of the year 2006

Tues., June 6 Full Moon

Wed., June 7 Houston GLBT Political Caucus meets 7pm

Fri.-Sun. June 9-11 Colt 45s 30th Anniversary Run

June 10 Houston GLBT Political Caucus community workday

June 13 Houston GLBT Community Center night, Hollywood, 2409 Grant

June 14 Flag Day

June 18 Father's Day

June 19 Juneteenth Day. In 1865, a Union general stepped ashore in Galveston to tell the last slaves in the Confederacy that they were free

June 21 First Day of Summer

June 24 Houston Gay Pride Festival & Parade

July 4 Independence Day

July 4 Chevy's Freedom Over Texas, Eleanor Tinsley Park, 4pm-10pm

July 11 Full Moon

July 15-22 Gay Games VII, Chicago

July Christmas in July, BRB, a "Miss A" production

July 21 Tweedle Dee & Tweedle Dum ERSICSS show, Keys West 7-9pm

July 29-Aug. 5 First World Outgames, Montreal

July 30 23rd annual Denim Party, BRB, 5pm-midnight

August 1 possible date for 23rd annual National Night Out

August Houston International Jazz Festival

August 9 Full Moon

August 18-20 SpankFest

August LoneStar boys of Leather 6th anniversary run

August Sundance Cattle Co 26th anniversary

August Daddy Rose and Colt 45s 3rd annual Bare Bones Benefit for AIDS Troulefund

August Gay Softball World Series

August Don Gill's "Live"

Sept. 16 Fiesta Patria

Sept. 4 Labor Day

Sept. 7 Full Moon

Sept. 10 Grandparents' Day

Sept. 11 Patriot Day

Sept. 23 First day of Autumn; Rosh Hashanah

Sept. or Oct. Lone Star Rally 2006, Galveston

Oct. 2 Yom Kippur

Oct. 7 Full Moon

Oct. 7-8 City Fest Houston, Eleanor Tinsley Park, noon-10pm

Oct. 9 Columbus Day

Oct. 10 National Coming Out Day

Oct. 10 Columbus Day

Oct. 14-15 Bayou City Art Festival, downtown

Oct. 27-29 Halloween weekend

Oct. 29 Daylight Savings Time ends, gain an hour

Oct. 31 Halloween night

Nov. 5 Full Moon

Nov. 7 Texas and U.S. elections

Nov. 11 Veterans' Day

Nov. 23 Thanksgiving Day

Nov. 24 Biggest Shopping Day of the Year

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MEN'S AA GROUP meets 7pm Sundays, 2515 Waugh (rear parking lot entrance)

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SUNDAY BRUNCH & SHOW at Pink Dolphin Galveston with Wes behind the bar noon-2pm

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CAMP OUT Have Fun, Serve Others. Seeking volunteer massage therapist (R.M.T.) for LVL-PWA Campout, May 19-21. Coordinator: Master Steve, 832-474-8845 or mstrstevenlloyd @ yahoo.com

BENJAMIN'S ENTERPRISE Easy-going Latin artist looking for part-time employment doing landscaping, gardening, portrait art on commission & computer trouble-shooting and website development. Leave message 713-520-1548

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PRIDE & JOY Stop and see Don & Dan for a great deal on cool bars & vintage furniture, 1727 Westheimer

HANDYMAN No job too small. List 5 home projects you hate to even think about. Now call Ken & Obama 713-922-5626

M2M FULL BODY massage. Montrose location. Outcalls welcome. Clean, nice studio. 7 days/eve. Roland 713-942-2399. Visa/MC

Libra Will Be Successful

HOROSCOPES by HELGA

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Did you learn something on a recent trip? Yes you did. Think. The memory of it is still there. More pleasures await the next time.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): There is a roadblock ahead. You will just gather your speed and push on through. Now, do you have psychic abilities? Think about it tonight as you fall asleep. Send Helga a psychic message about her next horoscopes in two weeks. See if your thoughts make it into this space. Helga thinks they will.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21): You will be combining future travel with a new business venture. It might involve something very flashy. It will involve a commitment to another. Prepare to leap by looking first.

CANCER (June 22-July 22): A cloud of joy will explode around you in the next few days. People and animals will be involved. You will feel quite benevolent and others will admire you for this.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): City Hall or maybe the county courthouse will play a role shortly in your life. Not that you're going there. You will meet someone who works there. A relationship is possible. New ideas will be presented. You will leap into the opportunity.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Go ahead and be cheap for the next few weeks. You deserve it. Let others buy the cocktails. Oh, reward them for their generosity with flowering praises. But go ahead and pretend you are broke. Just remember, after this is over, you must turn the tables and be extra generous.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): Any attempts in the next few days at self-promotion will succeed. Yes, you can talk your way to success. People do it all the time. Recent games at home and work have inspired you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): This time of the year, mid-spring, brings an interesting combination of looking back and looking ahead. You are learning from the recent past and that will benefit you in the days coming. Important decisions will be made before May is over.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Hang on, it's going to be a tough ride. Your self-doubts may lead to discoveries about what is truly important in your life. Business conversations are highlighted now too.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): A missing piece of information will come from an unlikely but important source. It will involve the seeds of a new beginning. A big decision will precede all of this. Put everything on hold.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Are you a little old-fashioned. Are you a little radical. Both can combine to your advantage over the next few weeks. Helga sees a nearly forgotten relative coming on the scene as part of it all.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You will feel dazed for awhile but it will be a wonderful feeling. But first, get organized. Put the important things all in writing and then arrange the order for the best execution. And a long term creative effort takes a great leap forward.

Helga's lottery results from last issue: Just one number in the Mega Millions. So, no winnings. Cumulative: Down \$59. So you ask, does Helga pay her own numbers? Usually not. But this next weekend she will because we're picking the winners! Really. For May 19 & 20, 2006. Mega Millions Friday: 51, 11, 45, 1, 56. Mega Ball: 8. Megaplier? Yes. And for Lotto Texas Saturday: 29, 10, 44, 6, 43, 19. We're all gonna be filthy rich!

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MONDAY, MAY 29TH, 9PM

News & Bar Talk

Welcome to the 39th edition of your favorite gay publication.

The gay flags are up along Westheimer in preparation for Gay Pride "Month." Yes, it's a whole month.

Something is going on at the old Montrose Diner. The for lease sign is down and I have seen restaurant supply trucks pull up and unload stuff.

Happy Birthday Cocktail

While you were snookered, the cocktail turned 200 years old. At least it was the first time in print for the word, according to research by The New York Times. On May 13, 1806, a newspaper referred to a gin drink

with sugar added as a "cock tail."

Quickies

Remember Liberty Cab wants our business. Still dialing that old "0000" phone number? Try switching to 713-695-6700. You'll be pleased.

Mary's turns 35 years old May 29 and will have a big party.

Michael's Outpost turns 8 May 20 and they too will party.

Those pretty boys on the cover? You wanna know who they are? Obviously they are part of Brian Keever's harem. You didn't believe that? Okay, they're from Brand X Pictures. We bought the rights to use them.

This Saturday it's Briar's Beauties at Keys West.

Amsterdam hunk Brad Patton will be tending bar at J.R.'s Friday, May 26,

11:00 p.m., and at Meteor Saturday, also 11:00 p.m. That will be followed by an autograph party and photo shoot each night. Then on Sunday, he does his show at South Beach at midnight.

Cruise is still gorgeous, but ...

Is it just me, or are you also way over Tom Cruise? I see the commercials for Mission Impossible III and I switch the channel. Ever since his little homophobic "I'm not gay" statement I have become more and more, well, ugh!

Columnist Nora Ephron on the Huffington Post writes that her son now refers to Cruise as the new Michael Jackson: "a weirdo, an all-purpose pinata, the freak celebrity ... a poster boy for career immolation." Sure, he's drop-dead gorgeous. But still, ugh!



Jesse Garza

Jesse B. Garza, Jr., passed into eternal rest and peace on April 19, 2006, at John Sealy Hospital.

Jesse was born on Galveston Island (BOI) Nov. 9, 1954, graduated from Ball High School and attended Galveston College. He was owner of Garza's Liquor & Video Store in Port Bolivar and, later, Garza's Kon Tiki Club in Galveston.

Preceding Jesse in rest are his grandparents Thomas and Maria Rodriguez Guajarda and Tia Aurora Garcia.

He is survived by his beloved Mother (and Father) Estella Esqueda, sister Priscilla (David) Sustita, brothers Daniel Ybarra (Long Beach, Calif.), Henry Ybarra, Genero Ybarra, Tony Esqueda (Long Beach, Calif.) and Christopher Esqueda.

Jesse is also survived by his life partner of 26 years, Floyd Hunter.

Internment was at Calvary Cemetery. Assisting Jesse on his final journey were dear friends John Norton, Johnny Scott, Robin Edwards, Jon Elliot and Paul Lewis.

Love to all of you and thank you for your prayers and thoughts during this trying ordeal.

Floyd

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AUTOGRAPH PARTY AND PHOTO SHOOT MIDNIGHT-2AM

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Your Next Mission

Movie Review by Keith Vyvial

The summer blockbuster movie season started off early this year with the long-awaited release of "Mission: Impossible III." The franchise, having had its highs and lows, lands somewhere in the middle with this entry. But in typical summer movie mode this movie is all about action.

Fireworks certainly start early this year. And in typical M:I mode, high-tech gadgets and realistic face masks are the name of the game.

Starring Tom Cruise once again as Secret Agent Ethan Hunt, and this time co-written and directed by J.J. Abrams of TV's *Lost* and *Alias*, the movie adds more humor and romance than earlier chapters.

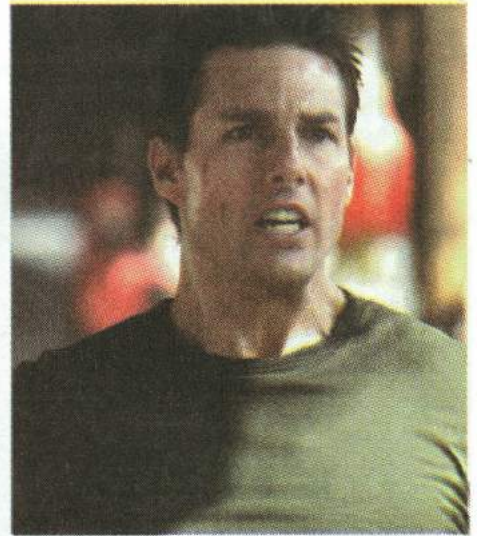
Abrams proves he is quite adept at setting up intense action sequences. In particular, the tension is upped terrifically once the action moves to Singapore in the final quarter, with Cruise swinging from skyscrapers.

This time around we find Hunt semi-retired and living in the suburbs, married to Michelle Monahan. He is soon called back into action for an ill-fated attempt to rescue a young agent who had been trained by Hunt.

This leads to conflict with Owen Davian, a vile international arms dealer played by Academy Award winner Philip Seymour Hoffman. As you would expect, Hunt's wife is unwittingly made a pawn in this lethal battle.

Cruise is, of course, the star front and center here. But luckily, as in the TV series on which the movies are based, we have a full team of agents.

The film works due to its action from the very first scene on to the finish. As a



matter of fact, from the first shot, we see that Hoffman, in a wonderfully scene-chewing role, is a villain to be reckoned with. Whether good or bad, Cruise is exactly as you have seen him in his other movies, no more and no less.

Where the film doesn't work is in the familiarity of it all. We have seen all this before, even in the other M:I movies.

There is the rogue agent who, through red herrings, you are supposed to think could be one of several people, but you will likely figure out very early.

Also, the film runs on some very convenient coincidences. Let's just say it sure is lucky Hunt's wife has the profession she does. Not to mention the fact, that it would have you think missiles blowing up cars and bridges are a common occurrence. If they are, sorry, I'm bad.

Oh, spoiler alert: the biggest plot twist comes at the end when Cruise pulls off a mask and he's really L. Ron Hubbard! Okay, just kidding, but that would make for quite an ending.

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Carlos

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www.legacycommunityhealth.org

More News & Bar Talk

Mary and Dick

"Now It's My Turn: A Daughter's Chronicle of a Political Life" is the title of the Vice President's daughter's book.

As you know, Mary is lesbian. As you might expect, she loves her dad. Mary ran her father's re-election campaign in 2004 while the rest of the members of the Republican party were denouncing us as "selfish hedonists" and appealing to people pre-conceived prejudices in order to win votes.

Now I'm reading more on this. Mary Cheney called Sen. Kerry a "son of a bitch" in her book for outing her. Well, with our new found backbones, Kerry spokesman David Wade said Mary "flacked for the most anti-gay administration in history."

"She'd be more credible if she pushed dad's administration to support hate crime legislation and equal rights for gay Americans," Wade continued.

Mary says she was upset that Kerry was using "me and my sexual orientation for his own political gain."

Excuse me? Your party, the GOP, has gay bashing written into its marching orders (the party platform).

Region of Intolerance

Here's a story from The Independent, a British newspaper. They report that witnesses say that a

14-year old boy was shot to death by Iraqi police for the "apparent crime of being gay."

Ahmed Khalil was shot at point blank range by uniformed police in the Dura area of Baghdad.

The country's most prominent Shia leader, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, recently issued a fatwa against gay people. Now, according to exiled gay Iraqis, bands of religious nuts are running around staging beatings, kidnappings and assassinations of those suspected of being homosexual.

A blogger on Huffington Post commented, "At least one thing in Iraq is going the way (the American right wing) wanted." Of course that's really mean to say that.

Oh, Porter

The former congressman picked to run the CIA, Porter Goss, tossed out a real stinker to the Republican Party May 5 (Cinco de Mayo, no less) when he announced his immediate resignation. No waiting for a replacement. No simply saying he wanted to spend more time with his family. Just, I quit!

What does this mean. It's already been labeled "Hookergate." I write this and the above paragraph just a few hours after the fact. Already though, CNN is tossing around something about cigars, poker and hookers. All at The Watergate. My, my.

Now the bloggers are coming up alternative names to Hookergate. Hospitality Suite. Watergate

II: The Sequel. Tailgate. HIV Workshop

There will be a professional workshop at the Thomas Street Clinic Friday, June 9. Bob Hergenroeder will speak about "HIV/AIDS, Mental Health and Substance Use: An Integrated Approach." The workshop, parking and lunch are free but reserve in advance by calling the clinic and they will send you the form.

\$4 You-Call-Its

That's the price of any cocktail except tequilas on Fridays at Undercurrent on The Island. The bears are in Galveston this weekend with the Bearmazing Race Friday, 9:00 p.m., in Thurst, the upstairs at undercurrent.

Quickies

Tubby McTreason is a cute name given to Karl Rove by a blogger. Also, Turdblossom the Magnificent.

Need a little support? Montrose Counseling Center has a new "coming out support group" starting Thursday, June 1, 6:00 p.m. It will last for eight weeks. Call them for more info.

Bar George

That's Bar George, not Boy George. The sale has been completed and George is now the owner. And the new name of Brick's is simply "George." There are some improvements coming but George says it will be basically the same.

(George denies the rumor that he will install a mud-wrestling pit. And a bowling alley. And a volleyball court.)

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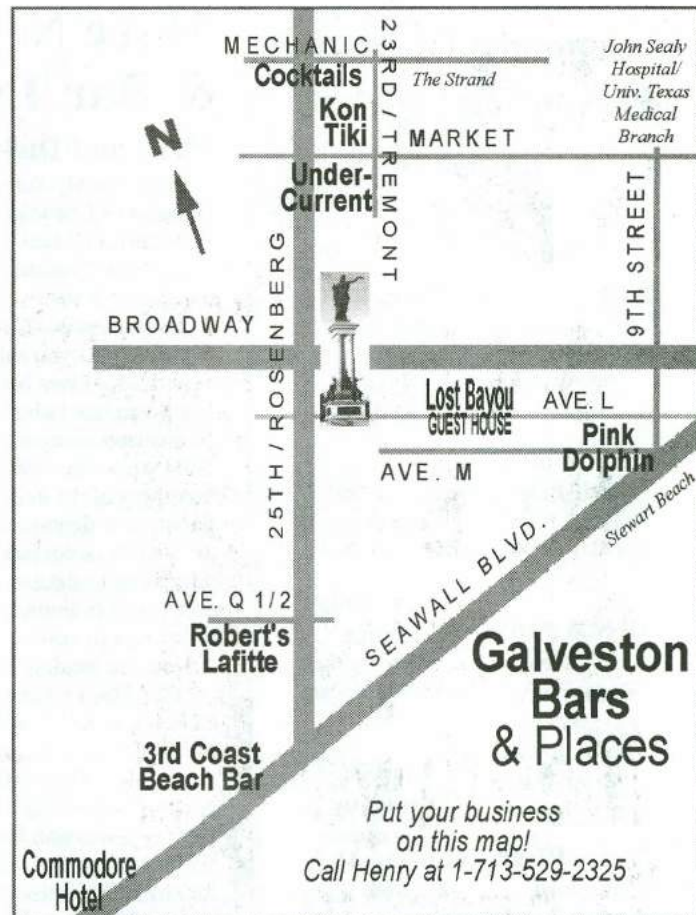
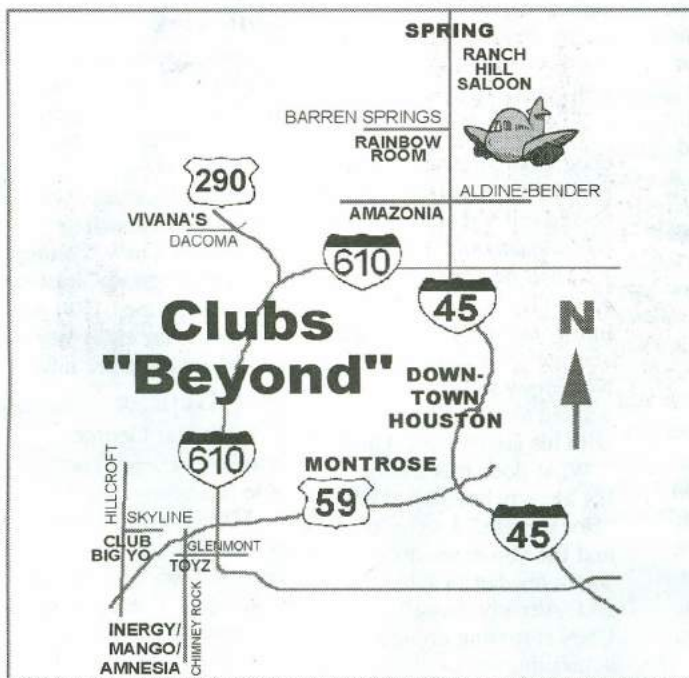
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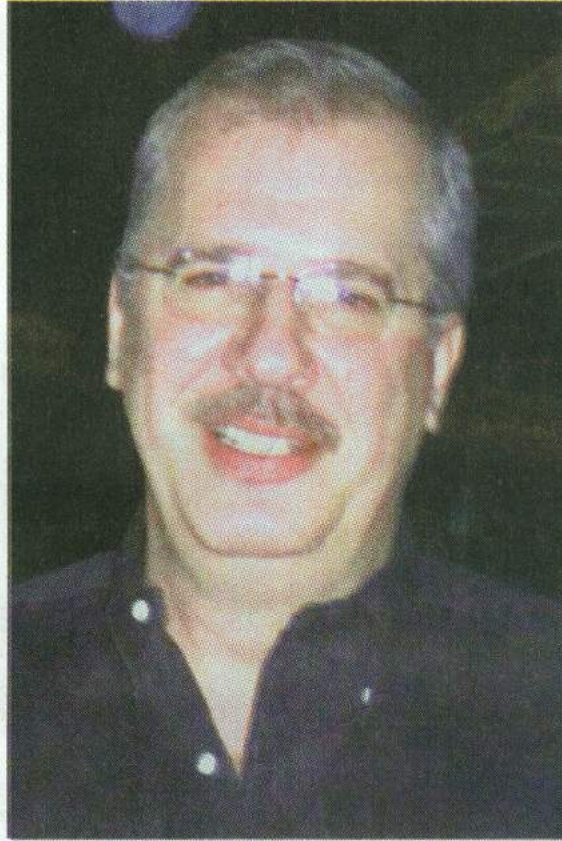
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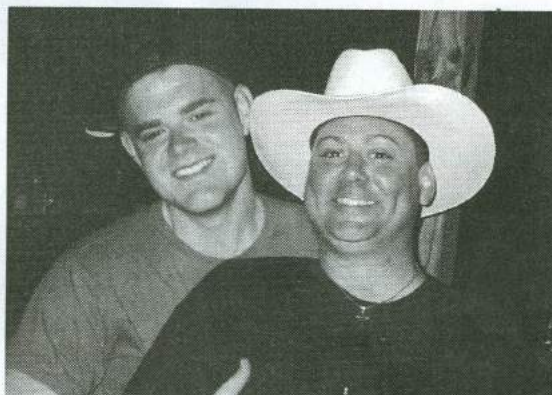
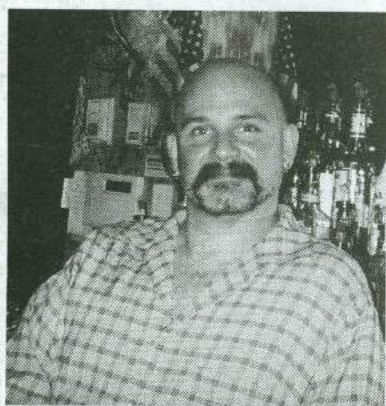
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'How the Other Half Loves'

*A drawing-room farce with a twist
Theater Review by Paul Hager*

Often dubbed "the British Neil Simon," Sir Alan Ayckbourn is the world's most frequently produced playwright, with the exception of William Shakespeare. Of the some 70 plus plays Ayckbourn has penned, "How the Other Half Loves" was one of his earliest West End successes, first produced in London in 1970.

Although the playwright's presentations are wildly popular in the United Kingdom, they have yet to be proven Broadway hits here in the United States and this one is a case in point. An Americanized version of it had its New York debut in 1971 but only ran for 104 performances even though it featured such stars of the day as Phil Silvers, Sandy Dennis and Richard Mulligan.

This, however, has not prevented Sir Alan's works from becoming mainstays for professional, non-professional and educational theaters across the U.S. I personally have appeared in three and directed two of them here in Houston.

Apparently, two versions of Ayckbourn's script are available for production: one British set in London and one American set in New York. The Company Onstage and director Michael Sullivan have opted for the second.

In some ways, this can be a wise decision. It avoids forcing American actors to struggle with British accents which can lead to such widely-varied results as to sound like the opening scene of "Pygmalion." It also side-steps the fact that a large percentage of American audiences just don't "get" the nuance of the humor that results from the British and their "Oh, yes. That's ghastly. Ho-Hum" reaction to highly charged emotional situations.

On the other hand, it can be a drawback as well. Ayckbourn himself felt the version Americanized at the insistence of Broadway director Gene Saks removed a lot of the richness and charm of the original script. I happen to agree; it's that "veddy veddy British" humor that I find so wickedly amusing, but as Mary Poppins once said "It all depends upon your point of view."

Set in 1972 at the height of the Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice age of permissiveness, the story is trademark Ayckbourn: a revolving-door examination of the marital foibles of three couples connected by the workplace of the three men.

Frank and Fiona Foster (James Huggins and Suzanne King) are the wealthy perpetually-befuddled boss and his snobbish spouse. Teresa and Bob Phillips (Erica Smith and L. Robert Westeen) are a constantly-sparring couple several rungs below them on the social ladder who have recently become parents for the first time. William and Mary Detweiler (James Reed and Renata Santoro) are the happily married if dull third side of the triangle unwittingly drawn into the other two couples' intrigue when Mrs. Foster and Mr. Phillips try to cover up the casual affair they are having with one another by informing their respective spouses that the Detweilers are the ones who are having domestic difficulties.

With these farcical elements in place, Ayckbourn adds a cleverly creative twist. The action on stage takes place simultaneously in the living rooms and dining rooms of the Fosters' and Phillips' apartments. The couples occupy the same space, each without knowledge of the other. If this sounds confusing, don't worry. It makes sense when you see it, and leads to a particularly innovative scene where the Detweilers are attending dinner parties at the Fosters' and the Phillips' on different nights with the action (and the Detweilers!) alternating between the two.

While the Company Onstage's production gave us a marginally good rendering of the material, I had a few problems with it. First and foremost is the script itself. Although often trumpeted as a classic modern farce, one can't help but feel its examination of class distinction and extramarital affairs, no doubt considered topical and risqué in 1970, is dated in this day and age even when the production is as true to the period as this one was.

Director Sullivan and his cast can't be faulted for this and are to be commended for getting through the show's unquestionably difficult time and space juggling without any major disasters. Which brings me to the other problem. The majority of the actors seemed to be "just getting through it" with little insight into what these albeit one-dimensional characters were actually thinking or feeling.

Notable exceptions were Suzanne King as Fiona, convincingly portraying both upper-class snootiness and trepidation at being caught in her infidelity, and Renata



Santoro as Mary, whose nervous naivety lit up the stage when she entered and was a constant bright spot.

Hopefully, the others will rise to the occasion as the show continues its run, but the laughter garnered from the opening night audience was perfunctory at best with several occasions where what should have been sure-fire laugh lines were greeted with stony silence.

A couple of technical notes: while Brad Moberg's set was refreshingly different in that it was more of a suggestion of the separate apartments rather than a replication, the raised platform that constituted the floor was sorely in need of carpet or padding; the staging required the actors to move across the length and breadth of it almost constantly and the resultant noise was quite distracting. And is it too much to ask that a little music be played during the scene changes?

All-in-all, to quote an over-heard opening night audience member: "It may not be the best play I've ever seen, but it certainly wasn't the worst."

What: How the Other Half Loves by Alan Ayckbourn

Where: Theatre Southwest 536 Westbury Square (Off the corner of Chimney Rock and Burdine)

When: Now playing through June 10, Friday and Saturday nights, 8:00 p.m.

Tickets: Adults \$14.00, seniors \$12.00, students \$10.00

Reservations: 713-726-1219 or email reservations @ companyonstage.org

Paul Hager is a native Houstonian who has been involved in local and regional theater for over thirty years as an actor, director and playwright.

He is currently the associate producer for Mystery Cafe Dinner Theater.



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Galveston's Newest Queen of the Runway

By Eldrege Langlinais

What woman wouldn't want to wear a petite size nine dress, wear magnificent \$500 sequined gowns, weigh only one hundred and thirty pounds, always look stunning, grand, elegant, and beautiful, and have a good looking man just waiting to honor her wishes? Well, girls, eat your hearts out, because this is a perfect description of Miss Jackie Jay, Galveston's classy and newest queen of the drag runway.

This 76-year-old doll has quickly made an impressive name for herself on The Island, although she admits that she has an unimpressive drag resume. According to Jackie, "I haven't had much experience performing drag, I probably had performed maybe six times in my life."

She recently finally followed her dream and initiated a successful performing career here and the crowds fell in love with her. Her charming, elegant, genuine and warm stage presence has won her the love of Galveston's audiences, both gay and straight. Her heart felt songs and sincere love for her audience made her an instant hit, not to mention her beautiful gowns, stately jewelry, perfect wigs and make up, and movie star figure.

As a perfectionist, Jackie spends the time and financial investment to have gowns custom made and her make-up done each show by a professional make-up artist.

"I like beautiful and quality things and I like for them to fit a certain way. I've been a collector and as I saw impressive jewelry and gowns I purchased them. Regarding my music, if I don't have a real feeling for it, I'm



just unable to do it. My songs are emotional to me, and I identify with each one as a part of my life and personal experiences."

"I feel that if I identify personally with the songs I perform I don't need to jump around to do them. Besides that, I couldn't jump around anyway. I love doing country crooning. Some of my favorites are Anne Murray, Tammy Wynette, Patsy Cline, and Lori Morgan."

Recently, Jackie hosted a memorable, and very irregular, evening as she performed a one-woman show and the crowd couldn't have been more pleased. When Jackie performs everyone watches and everyone listens, and most people

wait their turn to share a tip with her. "She doesn't miss a word," quotes one customer.

The tailored black gloves she wears adorned with impressive jewelry are only a small part of Jackie's ambience. Her elegant stage appearance and unusual song presentations make her an exceptional performer. Jackie is a member in good standing of the fading breed of grand ladies.

According to Carly Hart, Miss Pink Dolphin, "It's a treat to share a dressing room with Jackie Jay. She is a team player and loves sharing. She's even given some of her beautiful jewelry and gowns to some of the girls in our show."

Because of his kind friendly spirit and great sense of humor Jackie is also popular off stage. Although he hasn't had a cocktail in 25 years, he regularly visits Galveston's gay bars to see old friends and he loves making new ones.

Born Jack B. Daugherty, he spent a large part of his youth in an orphanage before entering the Navy. After living 34 years in California he moved to Houston in 1970. His strong retail management background proved advantageous there. In 1979 he purchased a home on the Bolivar Peninsula and lived in it for nine years before moving to The Island. He retired in 1992, yet still works part time for his previous employers.

When asked what he would change about his life Jackie quickly replies, "Probably nothing! I am who I am because I have lived the life that I've lived. I can wish, but I can't change."

Jackie is a regular performer at The Pink Dolphin and can be seen there each weekend. He is also a guest performer at Robert's Lafitte.

So, if you walk into a Galveston bar and receive a smile from a striking, elegant, lady casually smoking a Prince Albert cigar and drinking an O'Doul's, chances are you've just met Galveston's newest queen of the runway, Miss Jackie Jay.

Eldrege Langlinais is co-owner of The Pink Dolphin

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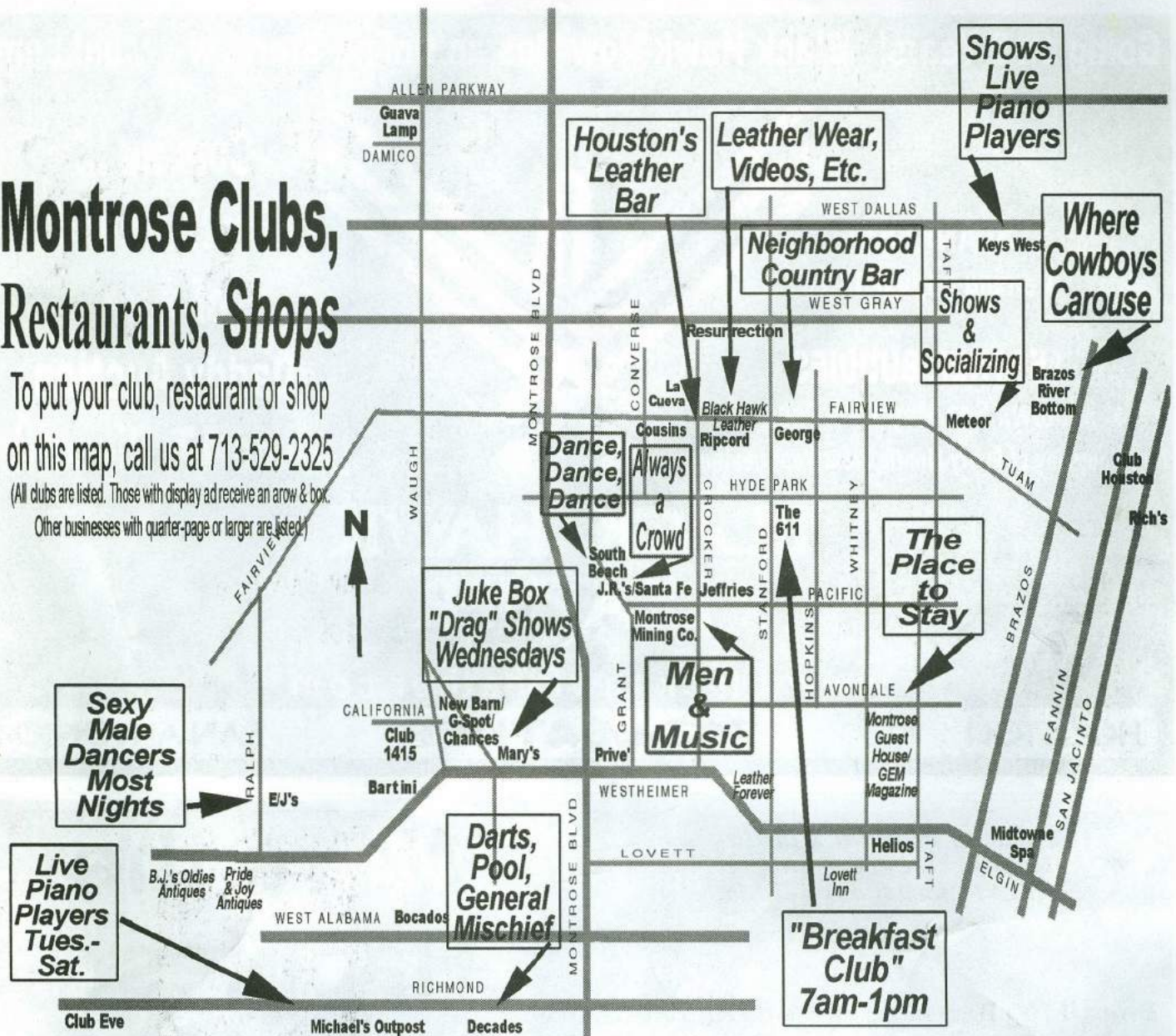
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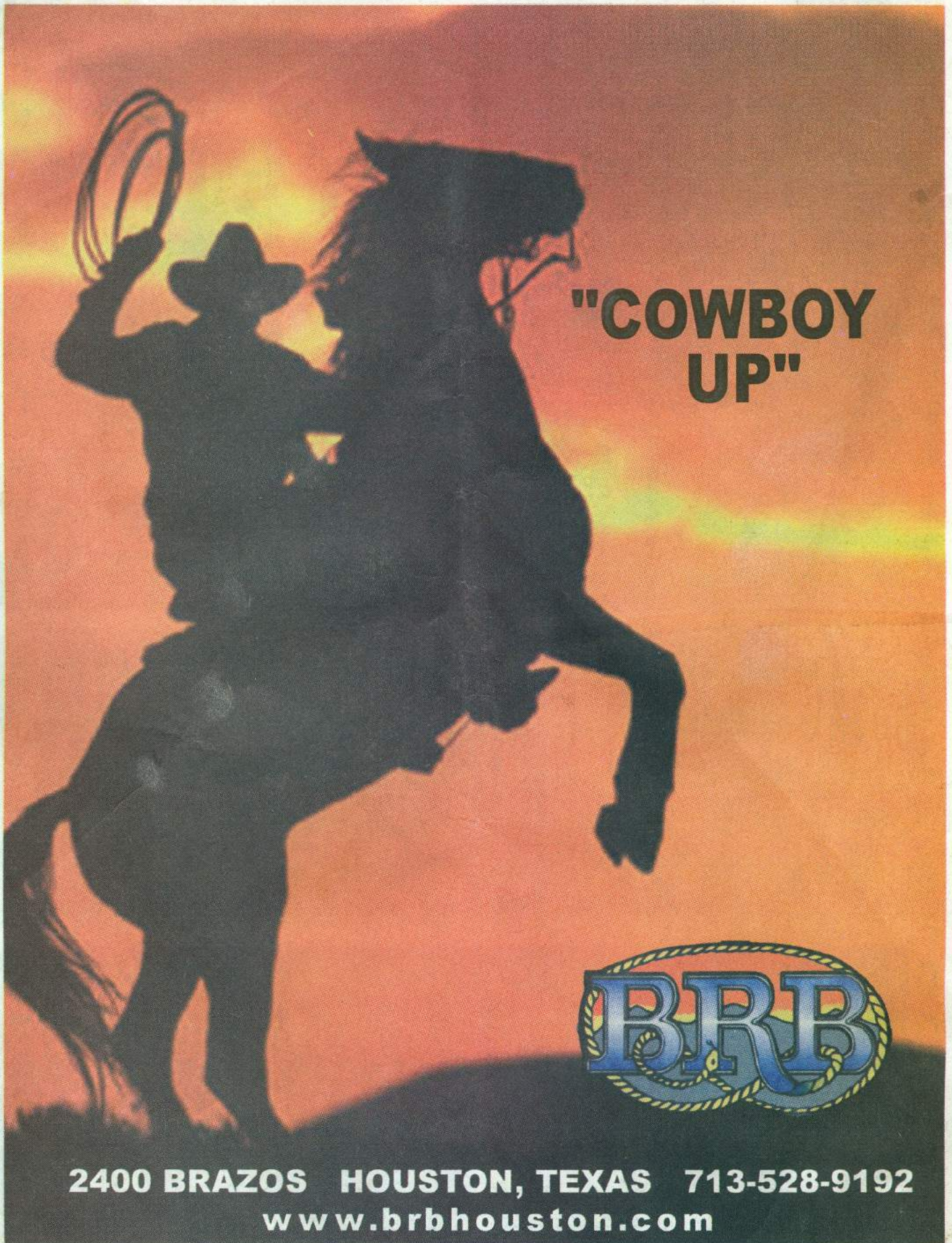
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