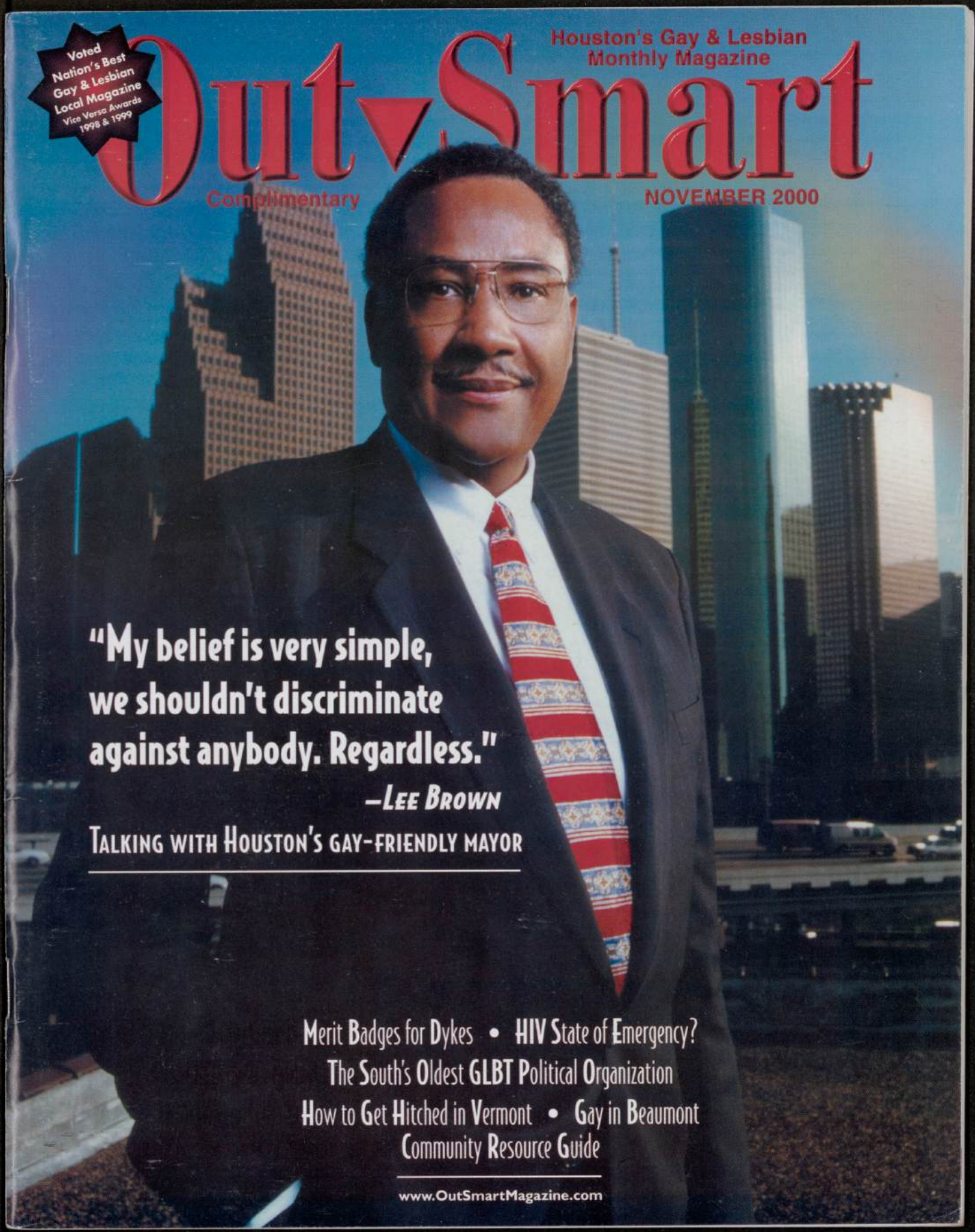

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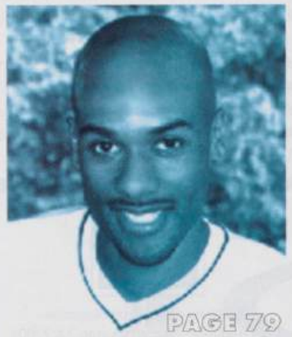


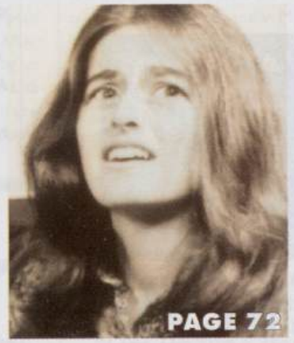
OutSmart
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Design by David Parnell

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COMMUNIST CLOSET CLASSICS

Thank you for your recent coverage of the film *Coming Out* ["Gay Video," September *OutSmart*], the only gay-themed feature film ever to emerge out of communist East Germany. We would like your readers to know that *Coming Out* is but one of dozens of rare films from the former East Germany that are now available on video in North America. Many of these productions—women's films, children's films, "banned" films, science fiction, etc.—are virtually unknown outside the Eastern Block countries, yet are acknowledged classics.

—Keith Stone
IceStorm International
Northampton, Mass.
(via the Internet)

Editor's Note: For more information on these East German videos, contact IceStorm International by mail at 78 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060; by phone at 413/587-9334; or visit www.icestorm-video.com.

NO LICENSE TO BE TRANSGENDER?

Recently, a transgendered friend of mine attempted to go and get her driver's license renewed. After looking at her birth certificate and then looking up at *her*, they informed her that she would *have* to take her makeup off before they could proceed. *If* she were to take off her makeup, she would *still* appear





to be a woman. Well, needless to say, after a bunch of *drama*, she left the DPS with no license and no dignity. I am outraged.

Now, I personally went to the DPS, *hung over*, with tons of my normal MAC glitter and makeup. Now, I was not dressed as a female, but I still had lots of makeup on. I didn't know that they would be taking my picture; I thought that they would just use my old one. Well, they didn't have *any* problem with it and took the picture!

Why me and not her? I think it's rather *obvious*! Now, what am I asking of you? Who can she get in touch with? Debra Danburg? Annise Parker? As you can tell, I take this *personally*! My friends are *not* to be treated this way and I am seeking *revenge*! If you have ANY suggestions, please offer them to me and I will pass it on to *her*.

Jay A. Bomberger
(via the Internet)

YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO QUIT

I just wanted to thank you and Dr. Fan for publishing Dr. Fan's article on the negative health effects of smoking ["You Know You Want to Quit," by Dr. Susan Fan, *OutSmart* Back-to-Health issue, August]. We are just beginning to explore the smoking patterns of the gay and lesbian community, and the statistics are beginning to show that the percentage of smokers in the gay and lesbian community is significantly higher than in the general population. It is becoming quite clear that the healthcare goals of our community need to include smoking cessation programs to improve the quality and length of our lives.

I would like to let the GLBT and HIV community know that we are conducting a smoking cessation study at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center which may be able to help people break their dependence on cigarettes. We are especially proud to have already enrolled a large number of people from the GLBT and HIV community of Houston. If anyone is interested in participating in the study they may e-mail me or call from the information listed below.

—David S. Genac, Ph.D.
M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
dgenac@mdanderson.org or 713/745-2386
(via the Internet) ■

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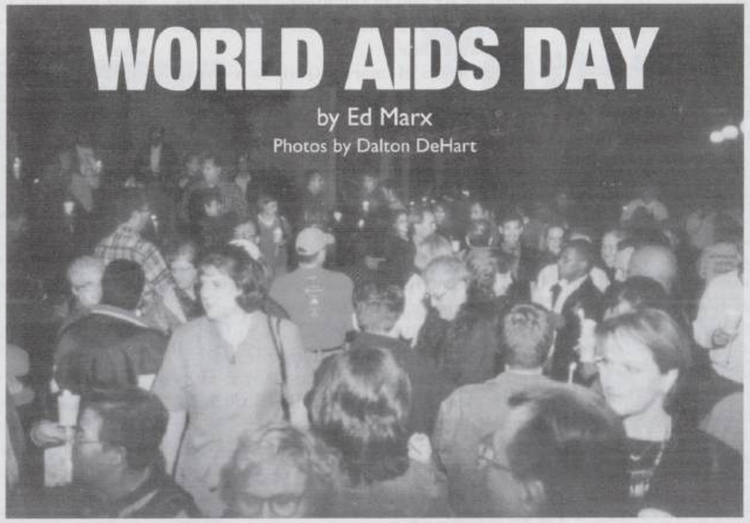
Briefs compiled by Ann Walton Sieber

World AIDS Day has been honored since 1988 on Dec. 1. It is a day of bringing messages of compassion and understanding about AIDS to every person, community, and country in the world. The concept originated in January 1988 with the World Summit of Ministers of Health on Programs for AIDS Prevention. Today, 22 years later, it continues to be supported by many organizations, including the United Nations, World Health Assembly, and many governments and individuals worldwide.

WORLD AIDS DAY

by Ed Marx

Photos by Dalton DeHart



Hundreds of people gathered for last year's candlelight march.

So come and celebrate World AIDS Day to show your care, remembrance, and concern about HIV and AIDS. Please join the NAMES Project Houston in its observance of this most important day by participating in the candlelight march and attending this year's panel dedication ceremony at The Menil Collection on Nov. 30. Then on Dec. 1 join in Houston's own Tree of Remembrance ceremony at Stages Repertory Theatre. Bring your family and friends for their support and commitment to raising awareness of HIV and AIDS.

PETE MARTINEZ AND THE HOUSTON NAMES PROJECT

Panels, panels, panels, everywhere! Pete Martinez is surrounded on all sides by AIDS Memorial Quilt panels at the NAMES Project Workshop at 4617 Montrose Blvd.

You see, Pete has been with The NAMES Project for about 12 years and has served as a board member for the past 10. He is the manager of the local NAMES Project Workshop. It is his job to coordinate the activities as they relate to making these memorial panels to be entrusted to the NAMES Project Foundation's AIDS Memorial Quilt. For all these years, Pete has devoted his life to ensuring that his friends and all of our friends are not forgotten, that each year they are remembered by this community of which they were a part. His commitment today is as strong as it was in the beginning. He not only is a pillar of the organization but also is a reminder that the commitment and dedication of even one person can make a difference. Over all these years Pete has befriended and consoled families and friends by assisting them in making their panels.

Pedro Martinez Jr., better known as "Pete," is a gentle, quiet-spoken man, of "uncertain" age, of Mexican/Spanish background, born and raised in Houston's West End, and just a half inch shy of five feet. Pete is a happy-go-lucky kind of person who lives day-by-day and lives by the philosophic credo, as he says, "Whatever happens, happens." For the past 14 years, Pete has run his own housekeeping and catering service, as well as being involved with interior decorating and upholstery endeavors.



Pete Martinez

When Pete is not working, he spends most of his spare time with his volunteer work at the NAMES Workshop, and then, he says, he goes home and crashes. Before he became involved with the NAMES Project, Pete had been active as one of the first volunteers at the AIDS Foundation where he was part of the fundraising committee setting up card tables or standing in bars asking for donations for the foundation for friends dying of AIDS. Then in 1988 he became involved with the NAMES Project.

The Workshop is open to the public for viewing of the AIDS Memorial Quilt and for individuals interested in making a panel for the quilt. They may do so at the workshop or at home. They can obtain fabric, sewing materials, and supplies, including use of the four sewing machines at the workshop. In addition, they can obtain assistance in designing and sewing their panels. Once eight panels are complete, they are sewn together into a 12-by-12-foot square by the workshop staff (usually Pete). The workshop is open every weekend from 1 to 5 p.m. It is also available on weeknights by appointment for special sewing needs. It is estimated that over the years, more than 1,000 panels have been made in the Houston workshop, including some 36 panels during the past year alone. →

WORLD AIDS DAY EVENTS IN HOUSTON

The NAMES Project will hold a **candlelight march** starting at 6:30 p.m. from the NAMES Project Workshop to the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross (at Mandell), on Thursday, Nov. 30. At the Menil, there will be a **dedication ceremony** at 7 p.m. for all the new panels to be incorporated into the AIDS Memorial Quilt, followed by a concert featuring a performance of mezzo-soprano Katherine Ciesinski, of Da Camera.

The NAMES Project will be commemorating the 13th annual World AIDS Day with their annual **Tree of Remembrance** at Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway, in which anyone who has lost someone to AIDS may place an ornament on the tree. This ceremony is unique to Houston and was first introduced in 1989 by Larry Ropogol and Pete Martinez. Since then, over 4,000 ornaments have been placed. Starting at 6 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 1, this somber event is marked by contemplation and the reading of the names of those lost to this epidemic. Everyone is invited to bring an ornament to remember loved ones.

This year's events are chaired by Jerome Godinich who serves on the board of the NAMES Project Houston. Committee members include Claire Ellington, Teresa Ford, Pete Martinez, and Alec Soto. For more information, call 713/526-2637.

The workshop has been at the Chelsea Market on Montrose Boulevard for the past three years. Before that, it was at the corner of Woodhead and Fairview for five years until it outgrew that facility. It is now more centrally located and occupies a roomy ground-floor space. Pete has a dedicated core of five or six steady volunteers; when there is a special event, hundreds of people turn up to participate.

The AIDS Memorial Quilt is a living tribute to those who have died of AIDS. The making of the quilt is a worldwide activity coordinated by the NAMES Project Foundation of San Francisco. Each panel of the quilt has been made by lovers, family, friends, caregivers, and colleagues to commemorate the lives of loved ones who have died of this illness. These panels are made by various techniques, including appliqué, paint, stencil, collage, and photo. Since the quilt is folded and unfolded many times in its travels, durability is crucial. Each panel measures 3 by 6 feet. Eight panels are sewn together into a 12-foot-by-12-foot patchwork square.

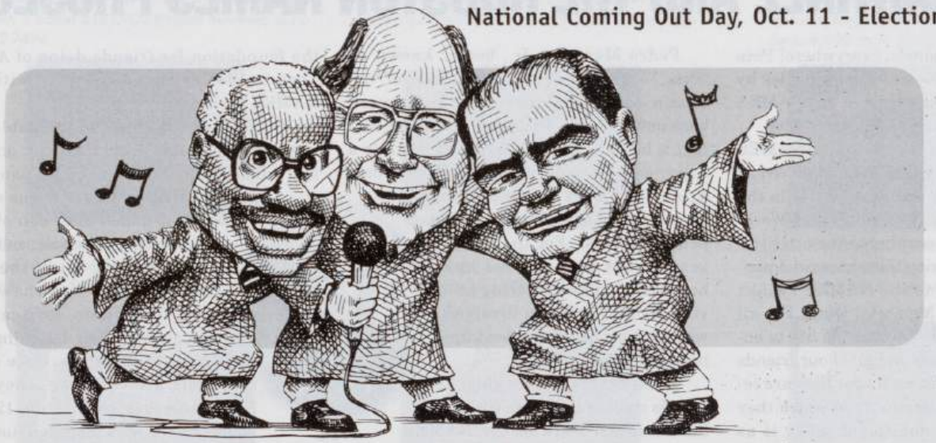
Actually, there is one quilt in the United States and there are 35 quilts in other countries around the world where they are made and shown locally. As of January 2000, the U.S. portion of the quilt was composed of 42,960 panels (weighing over 50 tons!), and representing 83,279 names. These names represent approximately 20 percent of all HIV/AIDS deaths in this country. The U.S. quilt has been displayed in its entirety in Washington, D.C., on five different occasions, the last time in 1996. Sections of the quilt are displayed over 1,600 times each year in various parts of the country. Those who submit a panel to the NAMES Project can request that it be displayed when the quilt travels to their community.

The quilt was started in San Francisco in 1987 by gay rights activist Cleve Jones and a group of volunteers to express their grief over the deaths of loved ones and to make the public aware of the devastating effect of this disease. Their initiatives led to the formation of the NAMES Project Foundation.

The NAMES Project Houston extends an invitation to all interested individuals who wish to volunteer to make a quilt panel or participate in the World AIDS Day events. Please contact the workshop at 713/526-2637 for more information. ■

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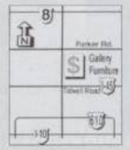


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PINK TRIANGLES IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE

by Angie Alvarado

Editor's Note: At Empower, we met several members of the newly formed Lamar University Gay and Lesbian Association (LUGLA) in Beaumont, who came both for the expo on Sunday and for the regional roundtable on Saturday. We're inspired to see the blossoming of gay rights in the small towns of Texas and the strength of those putting themselves out there. We asked Angie Alvarado, president, to tell us about LUGLA and about what the environment is like toward lesbians and gays in the Golden Triangle area.

During the Lamar University Springfest 2000, I met Francis Mijares. He told me that Lamar University Gay and Lesbian Association was founded in 1999 (by him), and he had also served as the organization's president. Francis explained that the organization is a common-interest group that provides social, political, emotional, and spiritual support. Although its membership is small, it is continuing to grow. After talking to Francis, he invited me to the annual Pride Party so I could meet other members of the group and the faculty advisor, Kelly Draper. I was nervous about going, but once I was there I had never felt more at home and as if I belonged. I have always been an activist, but when you stand alone you don't ever get too brave.

The Golden Triangle (Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Orange) is a community that is proud of its reputation as being a "good ole boy" society with advances in technological capabilities. It is a place I love to live in. Lamar University continues that hometown feel while also delivering progressive education.

Being gay is looked at much like the "don't ask, don't tell" policy the military uses. If you are open about being gay, there can be a struggle from some of the religious groups and other old-way thinkers who are very strong in this part of Texas. I am open and might be considered a contradiction to being gay as I have a family (married with two children) who know all about my life. So many people do not believe I'm really a lesbian.

We had to start small to keep from falling apart in an area that is not ready for us yet, though we will soon be changing that.

Our group is open to anyone who is willing to join. This group is not just for Lamar students and faculty—we are here for the whole community. We do not discriminate at all. We have members who are openly gay, "in the closet," or heterosexual who support friends/family who are gay. We had to start small to keep from falling apart in an area that is not ready for us yet, though we will soon be changing that.

Our goal is to educate the community about gay issues and break down the barriers that exist in our community about being gay. We also hope that in education we can achieve acceptance. We are here to support others in their decision to come out or remain in the closet, and to provide a protective environment on campus and in the community. We are here to support our members in any way we can.

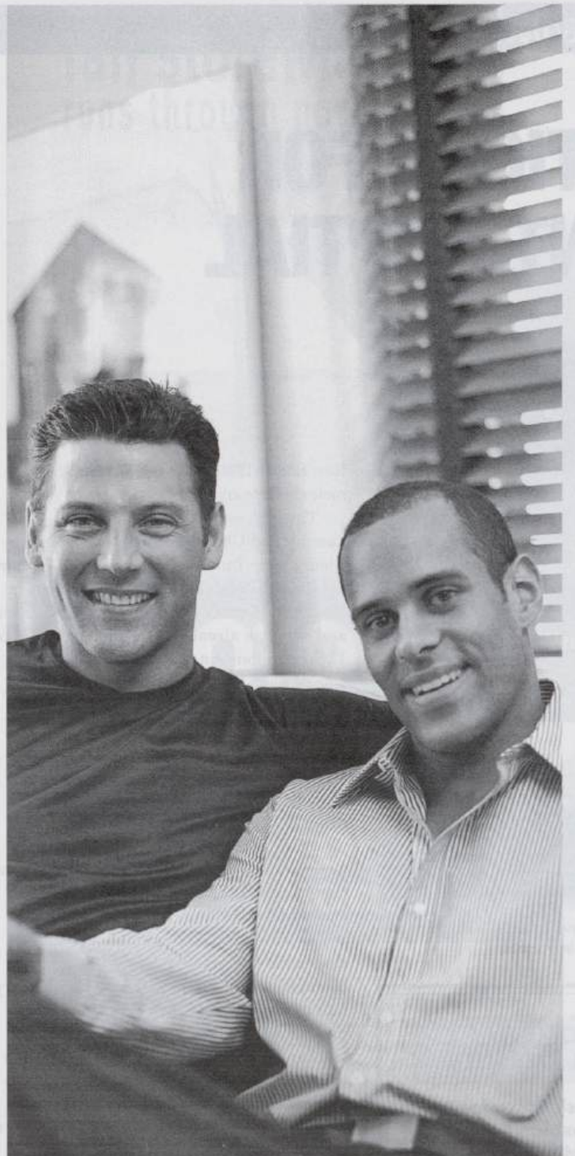
Our accomplishments include the annual beach cleanup that is held at McFaddin State Park, Triangle AIDS Network benefits such as World AIDS Update and Paint the Town Red. Socially we hold a beach retreat for our members once a year, and we sponsor many events at Lamar University as well. We plan to sponsor the World AIDS Day Banner display and perhaps provide a lecture series for the students regarding HIV and other health issues.

Since we are a new group we have not really had any recognition, but I hope to change all that. We are starting to get speakers to address us at our meetings. We have plans to invite political figures to speak on their platforms and how the gay community may be involved.

We have two monthly meetings, the second Wednesday and the fourth Thursday of each month. The later monthly meeting is when we schedule our speakers.

For more information, you can call me at 409/385-6586.

Empower is the first conference we have attended and were so grateful to Coy Tow for the invitation. We learned so much from the conference and we hope to share it with our community. ■



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INSTRUCTIONS FOR A VERMONT NUPTIAL

At Empower, we met a happy Houston couple who had just been officially joined in civil union on Sept. 25 in Vermont—Cheryl Brown and Tammy Arlington.

"In our vows I wanted to hear, 'In the presence of God, and by the state of Vermont,'" Tammy said. "Churches and states have been our blockades and it is great to see them slowly being removed for gay people.

"For Cheryl and me, our marriage ceremony symbolized our vows to each other to remain a permanent union—recognizing how difficult it is to achieve a lifetime commitment, it is what we want for ourselves. Our printed license from the state, to hang on the wall, is a reminder. We were not concerned about joint properties as we have that on paper anyway. We did it for our commitment to each other...and it was very romantic."

Cheryl said it was also odd, because there were so many small details about the ceremony that she'd never thought about. "These are things that straight people think about," she said, "that I've never thought about in my life. What songs, service, music? Do we have a party?"

We were curious how one exactly goes about obtaining a Vermont civil union, so we asked them to share their experience.

First, they told us, you need to decide who you want to marry you—it can either be a minister or a justice of the peace. There are several websites set up to help one find a minister and go through the steps (see references below, or do a web search for "civil unions Vermont"). Cheryl and Tammy used the website of the gay magazine *Out in Vermont* to find two Unitarian ministers in Burlington who both perform civil unions (Rev. Gary Kowalski, 802/862-5630, uuoffice@together.net and Rev. Roddy O'Neil Cleary, 802/862-5630, mcleary@zoo.uvm.edu).



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Cheryl Brown (left) and Tammy Arlington have officially tied the knot in Vermont.

SOME HELPFUL WEBSITES

- **Partners Task Force for Gay and Lesbian Couples:** *e-mail* demian@buddybuddy.com; *website* www.buddybuddy.com.
- **"Getting Married in Vermont":** www.central-vt.com/region weddings/wedlaw.htm.
- **"The Vermont Guide to Civil Unions":** www.sec.state.vt.us/pubs civilunions.htm.
- **"Civil Union Handbook":** www.geocities.com WestHollywood/Heights 3936/Civil Union.html.

Through e-mail communications, Tammy and Cheryl decided to ask Rev. Cleary, who Tammy described as a 75-year-old Robert Fulgham (author of *Everything I Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*), and who has already performed about 10 or 12 civil unions since the new legislation was passed. He already knew something about going against the institution in the name of love, as he had once been a priest and his wife a nun, and they had broken their vows to get married. Rev. Cleary arranged for the church, which was the chapel at the University of Vermont.

Next, the couple flew to Vermont and went to the town clerk to fill out an application to get their blank license. You'll need your birth certificate for this, although there is no blood test. Rumors are about that some town clerks are giving gay couples a hard time, but Tammy and Cheryl had no trouble, and they said the whole process was easy and quick. If you wish, you can contact the town clerk and get her or him to send the certificate in advance, but you must be careful to get it from the clerk in the town where you actually plan to have your civil union performed. The person who performs your civil union ceremony will sign it and mail it in within 90 days. The clerk will then mail you your official civil union certificate in about two weeks.

Certificate in hand, Tammy and Cheryl met with Rev. Cleary, who gave them some couple counseling...and then they were ready for their ceremony. He cried afterward.

Not counting travel expenses (and their honeymoon in Massachusetts), the total cost was $107: $27 for the license, $30 to the minister, and $50 for the church.

"It does feel different after you're done," Cheryl said. ■

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A continuous Feng Shui workshop with interior designer, Sara Kos. This month featuring Feng Shui 101 - the basic fundamentals of Feng Shui.

Wednesday, Nov. 8th, 7:30 pm:
Gay/Lesbian Singles Mixer.
A special Hasbro games mixer for the gay or lesbian single who is looking for a different environment to meet, greet and have fun!

Saturday, Nov. 11th, 3:30 pm:
Martha Stewart Holiday Entertainment.
If you love Martha Stewart...come find out about her new release title and Martha's holiday entertainment ideas!

Sunday, Nov. 12th, 2:30 pm:
Fantasia 2000 Pre-Release Party.
Fun for children and adults alike! Lots of magic, fun, food and video showing of the new release!

Friday, Nov. 17th, 6:30 pm:
Peace, Love and the Beatles.
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HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY INCLUDES GAY TEENS

We were excited to learn that the Houston Public Library has just produced a reading list for teenage readers that includes a section with books dealing for/about gay, lesbian, and bi teens. Produced as part of Teen Read Week, the library's little brochure includes nine different sections of "greatest hits" books for teenage readers. "The Journey Out: gay, lesbian, and bi teen reads" is just one section alongside "Grrrl Power: reads for the new gurl order," "Get a Life: biographies and autobiographies," and "Fanging Around: vampire fiction."

As most Houstonians know, Mayor Lee Brown has initiated a huge push to promote reading and the library to our city's youth with his splashy Power Card (they are no longer mere library cards) project. (See cover story interview with Mayor Brown on page 56.)

"The library is just now really focusing on serving teens," said Patrick Jones, who coordinates youth services for the library. "Since a big part of the teen experience is dealing with issues of identity, it seemed only natural to include a list like 'the journey out.'"

Designed to resemble the liner notes for a music CD, this is the first reading list of its kind done by the Houston Public Library, according to Jones. Jones is the team leader for Teen Read Week, and has written a book, *Connecting Young Adults and Libraries*. Jones says he was inspired to put the list together after attending a conference this summer called "Gay Teens in the 21st Century: Access for the Future."

"The speakers there talked about the need for libraries to provide materials, programs, and services for gay, lesbian, and bi teens," Jones said. "The list is just a start. But then again, the list and the programs for Teen Read Week are just a start in serving teens. I would hope as we expand programs and services to teens generally, we can expand programs about/for gay, lesbian, and bi teens specifically.

"We hope this list will provide access to materials for gay, lesbian, and bi teens. We hope they will find books they like, they need, and they want, and that they will become avid users of the Houston Public Library."

Copies of the teen reading list are available at all library branches. For more info on teen week, look up www.hpl.lib.tx.us/trw/index.html. To learn more about the gay teen library conference, see www.ala.org/olos/gay_teens_preconference.html.

SHELL OIL SHOWS GLBT SUPPORT

Showing what can be done when a corporation makes up its mind to support diversity, Shell Oil recently flew members of its GLBT employee organization to two high-profile GLBT events. In addition, SEA Shell's new board includes a transgendered woman, Sara Rook.

Shell was a gold-level sponsor at the National HRC Dinner held in Washington, D.C., on October 7. As part of that sponsorship, Shell made it possible for many members of SEA Shell, Shell's GLBT employee network, to attend. "One of the most positive experiences was HRC's award to Kweisi Mfume, head of the NAACP, for his support of GLBT rights," said SEA Shell co-chair John Murphy. "It is a recognition that we are all working together toward the same ends."

Later that week, Shell Oil chairman, president, and CEO

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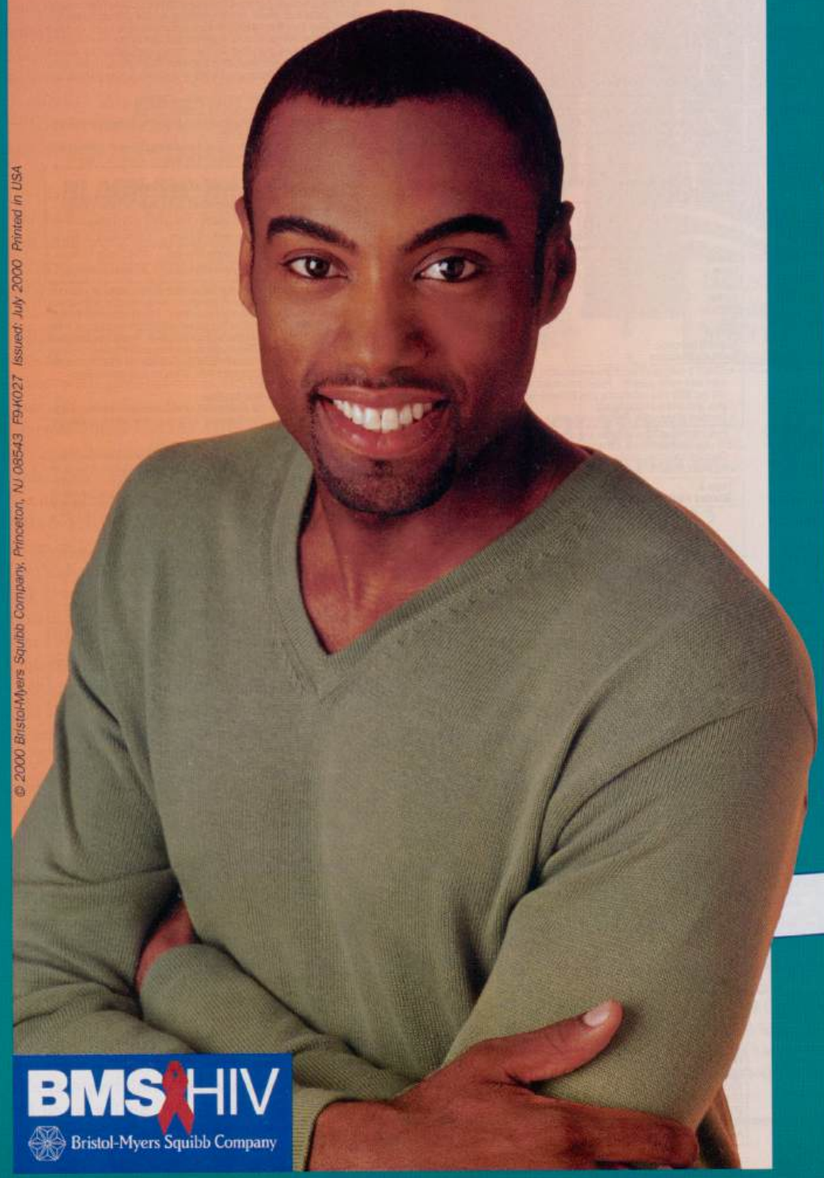
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#1 prescribed HIV brand in combination therapy (1)

One small capsule twice a day with or without food



Powerful enough in combination therapy to keep viral load down (2)

Generally Well Tolerated

SAFETY INFORMATION:

There have been cases of acid buildup in the blood and enlarged liver, including fatal cases. Fatal and non-fatal pancreatitis has occurred when ZERIT was part of a combination regimen that included didanosine, with or without hydroxyurea.

ZERIT may cause numbness, tingling or pain in the hands or feet (neuropathy). This risk is increased in patients with advanced HIV disease or a history of neuropathy. If this occurs, your doctor may suggest lowering the dose or stopping ZERIT to improve symptoms. Patients treated with ZERIT in combination with other medicines that may cause similar side effects may have a higher chance of developing these side effects. The most frequent side effects are nausea, diarrhea, headache, rash and neuropathy. ZERIT does not cure HIV infection or prevent passing HIV to others. ZERIT, in combination with other antiretroviral agents, is indicated for the treatment of HIV-1 infection.

1) IMS NPA Prescription Data 4/99 - 4/00.
2) 83% (49/59) and 49% (49/101) of patients taking ZERIT with lamivudine and indinavir had viral load undetectable at 48 weeks in an as treated and intent to treat analysis respectively. (START 1. Data on file, Bristol-Myers Squibb).

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ZERIT® (stavudine) Capsules

ZERIT® (stavudine) for Oral Solution

Brief Summary of Prescribing Information, 8/99. For complete prescribing information, please consult official package circular.

WARNING

LACTIC ACIDOSIS AND SEVERE HEPATOMEGALY WITH STEATOSIS, INCLUDING FATAL CASES, HAVE BEEN REPORTED WITH THE USE OF NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES ALONE OR IN COMBINATION, INCLUDING STAVUDINE AND OTHER ANTIRETROVIRALS (SEE WARNINGS).

INDICATIONS AND USAGE

ZERIT® (stavudine), in combination with other antiretroviral agents, is indicated for the treatment of HIV-1 infection (see CLINICAL STUDIES).

CLINICAL STUDIES

Combination Therapy: The combination use of ZERIT is based on the results of clinical studies in HIV-infected patients in double- and triple-combination regimens with other antiretroviral agents.

One of these studies (START 1) was a multicenter, randomized, open-label study comparing ZERIT (40 mg BID) plus lamivudine plus indinavir to zidovudine plus lamivudine plus indinavir in 202 treatment-naive patients. Both regimens resulted in a similar magnitude of inhibition of HIV RNA levels and increases in CD4 cell counts through 48 weeks.

Monotherapy: The efficacy of ZERIT was demonstrated in a randomized, double-blind study (AI455-019, conducted 1992-1994) comparing ZERIT with zidovudine in 822 patients with a spectrum of HIV-related symptoms. The outcome in terms of progression of HIV disease and death was similar for both drugs.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

ZERIT is contraindicated in patients with clinically significant hypersensitivity to stavudine or to any of the components contained in the formulation.

WARNINGS

1. Lactic Acidosis/Severe Hepatomegaly with Steatosis: Lactic acidosis and severe hepatomegaly with steatosis, including fatal cases, have been reported with the use of nucleoside analogues alone or in combination, including stavudine and other antiretrovirals. A majority of these cases have been in women. Obesity and prolonged nucleoside exposure may be risk factors. Particular caution should be exercised when administering ZERIT to any patient with known risk factors for liver disease; however, cases have also been reported in patients with no known risk factors. Treatment with ZERIT should be suspended in any patient who develops clinical or laboratory findings suggestive of lactic acidosis or pronounced hepatotoxicity (which may include hepatomegaly and steatosis even in the absence of marked transaminase elevations).

2. Peripheral Neuropathy: Peripheral neuropathy, manifested by numbness, tingling, or pain in the hands or feet, has been reported in patients receiving ZERIT therapy. Peripheral neuropathy has occurred more frequently in patients with advanced HIV disease, a history of neuropathy, or concurrent neurotoxic drug therapy, including didanosine (see **ADVERSE REACTIONS**).

PRECAUTIONS

Information for Patients: Patients should be informed that an important toxicity of ZERIT is peripheral neuropathy. Patients should be aware that peripheral neuropathy is manifested by numbness, tingling, or pain in hands or feet, and that these symptoms should be reported to their physicians. Patients should be counseled that peripheral neuropathy occurs with greatest frequency in patients who have advanced HIV disease or a history of peripheral neuropathy, and that dose modification and/or discontinuation of ZERIT may be required if toxicity develops.

Caregivers of young children receiving ZERIT therapy should be instructed regarding detection and reporting of peripheral neuropathy.

Patients should be informed that when ZERIT is used in combination with other agents with similar toxicities, the incidence of adverse events may be higher than when ZERIT is used alone. These patients should be followed closely.

Patients should be informed that ZERIT is not a cure for HIV infection, and that they may continue to acquire illnesses associated with HIV infection, including opportunistic infections. Patients should be advised to remain under the care of a physician when using ZERIT. They should be advised that ZERIT therapy has not been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Patients should be informed that the long-term effects of ZERIT are unknown at this time.

Patients should be informed that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that HIV-infected mothers not nurse newborn infants to reduce the risk of postnatal transmission of HIV infection.

Drug Interactions: Zidovudine may competitively inhibit the intracellular phosphorylation of stavudine. Therefore, use of zidovudine in combination with ZERIT is not recommended. (See **CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY.**)

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility: In 2-year carcinogenicity studies in mice and rats, stavudine was noncarcinogenic at doses which produced exposures (AUC) 39 and 168 times, respectively, human exposure at the recommended clinical dose. Benign and malignant liver tumors in mice and rats and malignant urinary bladder tumors in male rats occurred at levels of exposure 250 (mice) and 732 (rats) times human exposure at the recommended clinical dose.

Stavudine was not mutagenic in the Ames, *E. coli* reverse mutation, or the CHO/HGPRT mammalian cell forward gene mutation assays, with and without metabolic activation. Stavudine produced positive results in the *in vitro* human lymphocyte clastogenesis and mouse fibroblast assays, and in the *in vivo* mouse micronucleus test. In the *in vitro* assays, stavudine elevated the frequency of chromosome aberrations in human lymphocytes (concentrations of 25 to 250 µg/mL, without metabolic activation) and increased the frequency of transformed foci in mouse fibroblast cells (concentrations of 25 to 2500 µg/mL, with and without metabolic activation). In the *in vivo* micronucleus assay, stavudine was clastogenic in bone marrow cells following oral stavudine administration to mice at dosages of 600 to 2000 mg/kg/day for 3 days.

No evidence of impaired fertility was seen in rats with exposures (based on C_{max}) up to 216 times that observed following a clinical dosage of 1 mg/kg/day.

Pregnancy: Pregnancy "Category C". Reproduction studies have been performed in rats and rabbits with exposures (based on C_{max}) up to 399 and 183 times, respectively, of that seen at a clinical dosage of 1 mg/kg/day and have revealed no evidence of teratogenicity. The incidence in fetuses of a common skeletal variation, unossified or incomplete ossification of sternebra, was increased in rats at 399 times human exposure, while no effect was observed at 216 times human exposure. A slight post-implantation loss was noted at 216 times the human exposure with no effect noted at approximately 135 times the human exposure. An increase in early rat neonatal mortality (birth to 4 days of age) occurred at 399 times the human exposure, while survival of neonates was unaffected at approximately 135 times the human exposure. A study in rats showed that stavudine is transferred to the fetus through the placenta. The concentration in fetal tissue was approximately one-half the concentration in maternal plasma. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Because animal reproduction studies are not always predictive of human response, stavudine should be used during pregnancy only if clearly needed.

Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry: To monitor maternal-fetal outcomes of pregnant women exposed to stavudine and other antiretroviral agents, an Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry has been established. Physicians are encouraged to register patients by calling (800) 258-4263.

Nursing Mothers: Studies in lactating rats demonstrated that stavudine is excreted in milk. Although it is not known whether stavudine is excreted in human milk, there exists the potential for adverse effects from stavudine in nursing infants. Mothers should be instructed to discontinue nursing if they are receiving stavudine. This instruction is consistent with the Centers for Disease Control recommendation that HIV-infected mothers not breast-feed their infants to avoid risking postnatal transmission of HIV infection.

Pediatric Use: Use of stavudine in pediatric patients is supported by evidence from adequate and well-controlled studies of stavudine in adults with additional pharmacokinetic and safety data in pediatric patients.

Adverse events that were reported to occur in 105 pediatric patients receiving ZERIT (stavudine) 2 mg/kg/day for a median of 6.4 months in study ACTG 240 were generally similar to those reported in adults.

Stavudine pharmacokinetics have been evaluated in 25 HIV-infected pediatric patients ranging in age from 5 weeks to 15 years and in weight from 2 to 43 kg after I.V. or oral administration of single doses and BID regimens (see **CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY**, Table 1 in full prescribing information).

ADVERSE REACTIONS

Adults: ZERIT therapy has been associated with peripheral neuropathy, which can be severe, is dose related, and occurs more frequently in patients being treated with neurotoxic drug therapy, including didanosine, in patients with advanced HIV infection, or in patients who have previously experienced peripheral neuropathy.

Patients should be monitored for the development of neuropathy, which is usually manifested by numbness, tingling, or pain in the feet or hands. Stavudine-related peripheral neuropathy may resolve if therapy is withdrawn promptly. In some cases, symptoms may worsen temporarily following discontinuation of therapy. If symptoms resolve completely, patients may tolerate resumption of treatment at one-half the dose (see **DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION**). If neuropathy recurs after resumption of ZERIT, permanent discontinuation of ZERIT should be considered.

When ZERIT is used in combination with other agents with similar toxicities, the incidence of adverse events may be higher than when ZERIT is used alone. Patients treated with ZERIT in combination with didanosine may be at increased risk for adverse events such as pancreatitis, peripheral neuropathy, and liver function abnormalities. (See **WARNINGS** and **PRECAUTIONS**).

Selected clinical events that occurred in adult patients receiving ZERIT in a controlled monotherapy trial (Study AI455-019) are provided in Table 1.

Table 1
Selected Clinical Adverse Events in Study AI455-019[a] (Monotherapy)

Adverse Events	Percent (%) ZERIT (40 mg BID) (n=412)	zidovudine (200 mg TID) (n=402)
Headache	54	49
Diarrhea	50	44
Peripheral Neurologic Symptoms/Neuropathy	52	39
Rash	40	35
Nausea and Vomiting	39	44

[a] Median duration of stavudine therapy = 79 weeks; median duration of zidovudine therapy = 53 weeks.

Pancreatitis was observed in three of the 412 adult patients who received ZERIT in a controlled monotherapy study.

Selected clinical adverse events tht occurred in antiretroviral naive adult patients receiving ZERIT from two controlled combination studies are provided in Table 2.

Table 2
Selected Clinical Adverse Events in START 1 and START 2[a] Studies (Combination Therapy)

Adverse Events	Percent (%) START 1 ZERIT+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=100[b])	START 1 zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=102)	START 2 ZERIT+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102[b])	START 2 zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=103)
Nausea	43	63	53	67
Diarrhea	34	16	45	39
Headache	25	26	46	37
Rash	18	13	30	18
Vomiting	18	33	30	35
Peripheral Neurologic Symptoms/Neuropathy	8	7	21	10

[a] START 2 compared two triple-combination regimens in 205 treatment-naive patients. Patients received either ZERIT (40 mg BID) plus didanosine plus indinavir or zidovudine plus lamivudine plus indinavir.
[b] Duration of stavudine therapy = 48 weeks.

Pancreatitis resulting in death was observed in one patient who received ZERIT plus didanosine plus indinavir in the START 2 study.

Selected laboratory abnormalities reported in a controlled monotherapy study (Study AI455-019) are provided in Table 3.

Table 3
Selected Adult Laboratory Abnormalities in Study AI455-019[a,b]

Parameter	Percent (%) ZERIT (stavudine) (40 mg BID) (n=412)	zidovudine (200 mg TID) (n=402)
AST (SGOT) (>5.0 x ULN)	11	10
ALT (SGPT) (>5.0 x ULN)	13	11
Amylase (≥1.4 x ULN)	14	13

[a] Data presented for patients for whom laboratory evaluations were performed.
[b] Median duration of stavudine therapy = 79 weeks; median duration of zidovudine therapy = 53 weeks.
ULN = upper limit of normal.

Selected laboratory abnormalities reported in two controlled combination studies are provided in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4
Selected Laboratory Abnormalities in START 1 and START 2 Studies (Grades 3-4)

Parameter	Percent of Patients START 1 ZERIT+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=100)	START 1 zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=102)	START 2 ZERIT+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102)	START 2 zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=103)
Bilirubin (>2.6 x ULN)	7	6	16	8
SGOT (AST) (>5 x ULN)	5	2	7	7
SGPT (ALT) (>5 x ULN)	6	2	8	5
GGT (>5 x ULN)	2	2	5	2
Lipase (>2 x ULN)	6	3	5	5
Amylase (>2 x ULN)	4	<1	8	2

ULN = upper limit of normal.

Table 5
Selected Laboratory Abnormalities in START 1 and START 2 Studies (All Grades)

Parameter	Percent (%) START 1 ZERIT+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=100)	START 1 zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=102)	START 2 ZERIT+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102)	START 2 zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=103)
Total Bilirubin	65	60	68	55
SGOT (AST)	42	20	53	20
SGPT (ALT)	40	20	59	18
GGT	15	8	28	12
Lipase	27	12	26	19
Amylase	21	19	31	17

Observed During Clinical Practice: The following events have been identified during post-approval use of ZERIT (stavudine). Because they are reported voluntarily from a population of unknown size, estimates of frequency cannot be made. These events have been chosen for inclusion due to their seriousness, frequency of reporting, causal connection to ZERIT, or a combination of these factors.

Body as a Whole- abdominal pain, allergic reaction, and chills/fever.
Digestive Disorders- anorexia.
Hematologic Disorders- anemia, leukopenia, and thrombocytopenia.
Liver- lactic acidosis and hepatic steatosis (see **WARNINGS**), hepatitis and liver failure.
Musculoskeletal- myalgia.
Nervous- insomnia.
Pediatric Patients: Adverse reactions and serious laboratory abnormalities in pediatric patients were similar in type and frequency to those seen in adult patients.

OVERDOSAGE

Experience with adults treated with 12 to 24 times the recommended daily dosage revealed no acute toxicity. Complications of chronic overdosage include peripheral neuropathy and hepatic toxicity. Stavudine can be removed by hemodialysis; the mean ± SD hemodialysis clearance of stavudine is 120 ± 18 mL/min. Whether stavudine is eliminated by peritoneal dialysis has not been studied.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

The interval between doses of ZERIT should be 12 hours. ZERIT may be taken without regard to meals.

Adults: The recommended dose based on body weight is as follows:
40 mg twice daily for patients ≥60 kg.
30 mg twice daily for patients <60 kg.

Pediatrics: The recommended dose for pediatric patients weighing less than 30 kg is 1 mg/kg/dose, given every 12 hours. Pediatric patients weighing 30 kg or greater should receive the recommended adult dosage.

Dosage Adjustment: Patients should be monitored for the development of peripheral neuropathy, which is usually manifested by numbness, tingling, or pain in the feet or hands. These symptoms may be difficult to detect in young children (see **WARNINGS**). If these symptoms develop during treatment, stavudine therapy should be interrupted. Symptoms may resolve if therapy is withdrawn promptly. In some cases, symptoms may worsen temporarily following discontinuation of therapy. If symptoms resolve completely, patients may tolerate resumption of treatment at one-half the recommended dose.
20 mg twice daily for patients ≥60 kg.
15 mg twice daily for patients <60 kg.

If neuropathy recurs after resumption of ZERIT, permanent discontinuation of ZERIT should be considered.

Renal Impairment- ZERIT may be administered to adult patients with impaired renal function with adjustment in dose as shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Recommended Dosage Adjustment for Renal Impairment

Creatinine Clearance (mL/min)	Recommended ZERIT Dose by Patient Weight ≥60 kg	<60 kg
>50	40 mg every 12 hours	30 mg every 12 hours
26-50	20 mg every 12 hours	15 mg every 12 hours
10-25	20 mg every 24 hours	15 mg every 24 hours

Since urinary excretion is also a major route of elimination of stavudine in pediatric patients, the clearance of stavudine may be altered in children with renal impairment. Although there are insufficient data to recommend a specific dose adjustment of ZERIT in this patient population, a reduction in the dose and/or an increase in the interval between doses should be considered.

Hemodialysis Patients- The recommended dose is 20 mg every 24 hours (≥60 kg) or 15 mg every 24 hours (<60 kg), administered after the completion of hemodialysis and at the same time of day on non-dialysis days.

Method of Preparation:

ZERIT (stavudine) for Oral Solution

Prior to dispensing, the pharmacist must constitute the dry powder with purified water to a concentration of 1 mg stavudine per mL of solution, as follows:

1. Add 202 mL of purified water to the container.
2. Shake container vigorously until the powder dissolves completely. Constitution in this way produces 200 mL (deliverable volume) of 1 mg/mL stavudine solution. The solution may appear slightly hazy.
3. Dispense solution in original container with measuring cup provided. Instruct patient to shake the container vigorously prior to measuring each dose and to store the tightly closed container in a refrigerator, 36° to 46°F (2° to 8°C). Discard any unused portion after 30 days.

HOW SUPPLIED

ZERIT® (stavudine) Capsules are available in the following strengths and configurations of plastic bottles with child-resistant closures:

Table 7

Product Strength	Capsule Shell Color	Markings on Capsule (in Black Ink)		Capsules per Bottle	NDC No.
15 mg	Light yellow & dark red	BMS 1964	15	60	0003-1964-01
20 mg	Light brown	BMS 1965	20	60	0003-1965-01
30 mg	Light orange & dark orange	BMS 1966	30	60	0003-1966-01
40 mg	Dark orange	BMS 1967	40	60	0003-1967-01

ZERIT® (stavudine) for Oral Solution is a dye-free, fruit-flavored powder that provides 1 mg of stavudine per mL of solution upon constitution with water. Directions for solution preparation are included on the product label and in the **DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION** section of this insert. ZERIT for Oral Solution (**NDC** No. 0003-1968-01) is available in child-resistant containers that provide 200 mL of solution after constitution with water.

US Patent No.: 4,978,655

Storage: ZERIT Capsules should be stored in tightly closed containers at controlled room temperature, 59° to 86°F (15° to 30°C).

ZERIT for Oral Solution should be protected from excessive moisture and stored in tightly closed containers at controlled room temperature, 59° to 86°F (15° to 30°C). After constitution, store tightly closed containers of ZERIT for Oral Solution in a refrigerator, 36° to 46°F (2° to 8°C). Discard any unused portion after 30 days.

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In&Out

Steven L. Miller addressed SEA Shell's annual meeting, stressing the important role Shell's GLBT employees have to play in Shell, and reasserting his commitment to Shell's mission of inclusion for all.

Next, Shell flew three SEA Shell leaders—Murphy, Eileen Donaghy, and Rick Schroder—to Seattle to give a workshop at the annual Out and Equal Conference, October 13–15, which was attended by 300 leaders of corporate employee groups from across the country.

"This is indeed an incredible time of opportunity for GLBT employees in many American corporations," Murphy said. "Many major companies in all industries are seeking ways to ensure [that] their GLBT employees [can] bring their full selves to work. It is wonderful to be part of a company that is a true leader in this area."

BLACK TIE DINNER

The Houston Black Tie Dinner 2000 to raise money for a variety of worthy community organizations will be Saturday, November 11, 7 p.m. at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

John Michael Gonzales will be honored with the Humanitarian Award. Gonzales serves with several vital GLBT organizations. He serves as board chair of both the Montrose Clinic and the AIDS Actions Foundation in Washington, D.C. He is active in fundraising and with several PACs, including Planned Parenthood, the Gay and Lesbian Dollars PAC of Houston, and the Working Group on Funding Lesbian and Gay Issues in New York. His longstanding contributions go back to when he served as chair of the City of Houston's Affirmative Action Commission from 1989 to 1993 under both mayors Kathy Whitmire and Bob Lanier.

State Rep. Senfronia Thompson will be presented the Political Award. Thompson is the longest-serving woman in the history of the Texas House of Representatives and the longest-serving African-American in legislative history. She represents a district of about 115,000 people in Northeast Houston and Humble. She was the lead author of the James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Act, which included protection for gays and lesbians.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call 713/523-9611.

TIDBITS

• **Deborah Moncrief Bell** was voted the new president of Texas NOW at their annual convention on the weekend of October 7. In this parttime paid position, Deborah will be traveling around the state to the



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various city chapters, organizing NOW's grassroots infrastructure.

• **Out in Oregon: Alex Morua** is traveling to Oregon with activists from around the country to help organize and campaign against a sweeping antigay ballot measure that would prohibit any positive or neutral mention of homosexuality in the public schools, including community colleges. Alex is the co-founder and executive director of the Progressive Voters in Action, and promises to be one of the shining lights in Houston's activist community.

The national activist blitz on Oregon is organized by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which has partnered with the No On 9 Campaign. The NGLTF's Dave Fleisher is running an advanced training that allows nine up-and-coming campaign managers from eight different states to double the No On 9's field staff and learn from Oregon's experienced campaign team. Morua had already worked with Fleischer as a volunteer on the SAVEDade campaign. "The experience in Florida was a glimpse at what one-on-one interactions with voters could do," Morua said. "I have taken that experience back to Houston and will bring back what I learn in Oregon, which has a much larger infrastructure for this type of work."

• **Christian art:** Resurrection MCC is putting out a call to artists, writers, and performers to submit their work for an art show the church is putting together for Pride Week in June 2001. "Whosoever..." is an art show "affirming being gay and Christian." All art forms are welcome—from visual, literary, sculpture, photography, poetry, video, dance, comedy, theater, music, etc.—and artists may be any sexual orientation or at any level of professional or amateur accomplishment. Deadline is April 15, 2001. If you are interested in submitting artwork or helping with the show, call Resurrection MCC 713/861-9149.

• **Screensaver is a life saver:** Now even your computer can help search for a cure to HIV/AIDS. When your computer is turned on yet not doing anything other than creating psychedelic screen savers, a new program can make use of its idle power to help AIDS researchers. Created as a philanthropic project by Entropia, just go to the website www.fightaidsathome.org and download the software. So far, however, only PCs can help, not Macs.

• **Hepatitis A&B:** Gay and bisexual men contract hepatitis A and B at rates several times higher than heterosexual men. Both hepatitis A and B have vaccines readily available. Although this knowledge has been widespread for decades, far too many queer men polled say they haven't gotten the vaccinations, and one quarter of them weren't even aware of it. In a survey conducted by the Gay & Lesbian Medical Association in 10 different cities of 2,566 gay men, more men reported getting the vaccination, but still only 35 percent had gotten the two shots necessary to fully protect against hepatitis A infection, and only 39 percent had gotten the three shots against hepatitis B.

National & International Briefs

SCOUT LEADER COMES OUT, PLEADS FOR COUNTY TO SUPPORT YOUTH GROUP

SANTA BARBARA, Calif.—Leonard Lanzi, head of the Los Padres Council of the Boy Scouts of America, caught residents of this Southern California coastal city off guard when he announced he is gay—a violation of the Scouts' policy barring gays from serving in the youth agency.

Lanzi made the revelation of his orientation during a meeting of the city's governing board of supervisors, which has been debating a recommendation by the local human rights commission to break its ties with the Scouts over the antigay policy.

Ironically, Lanzi made his revelation in support of the Scouts and the city keeping its relationship with the group. "I am a private person and I am gay. I uphold the Boy Scouts' policies. I would not work for the Boy Scouts if I did not know that they save lives," he told the board.

Lanzi, 38, has been a scouting leader for the past 14 years and has been involved with the youth group for decades in a variety of ways.

His statements were met with enthusiastic applause in the board chambers, and several speakers who addressed the board following him voiced their support for his position and his work with the Scouts.

Santa Barbara gives a Scout troop the free use of a park building and also helps the United Way gather funds which it directs to a number of groups, including the Boy Scouts. Both are under consideration in the board's current discussions.

The local council he heads says it has been flooded with phone calls and messages since Lanzi's revelation, most of them supportive of him but many also critical.

Scout officials declined to comment on his future with the youth group, and the Boy Scouts national spokesman, Greg Shields, refused to comment. "That is a personnel matter that I cannot comment on," Shields said from the group's headquarters in Texas. "We're not going to talk about it while it is being dealt with."

MINNEAPOLIS SCHOOLS BOOT BOY SCOUTS

MINNEAPOLIS—The Minneapolis school board has unanimously voted to drop all support of the Boy Scouts of America until the youth group ends its ban against gays.

The move means the Scouts can no longer hand out recruitment material at the city's public schools and that schools can't sponsor Boy Scout troops. But Scout troops will still be able to use school buildings for after-class meetings and other events because of public use court rulings.

Carol Johnson, the city's superintendent of public schools, said, "Just as the Boy Scouts have worked in the past to overcome their ethnic and religious barriers, we are challenged once again to pitch the tent larger. Our focus must be on helping kids—not finding ways to exclude."

BOY SCOUT COUNCIL DEFIES GAY BAN

SAN FRANCISCO—The Piedmont, Calif., Boy Scout Council has openly challenged the youth group's national policy of barring gays, the first in the nation to do so. Josephine Pegrum-Hazelett, the council's leader, has formally notified scouts and their parents that it opposes the ban and will not recognize it. BSA officials say their only alternative may be to revoke the council charter.

Piedmont's is the smallest chartered council in the nation and covers an area in San Francisco's East Bay region.

LESBIAN COUPLE COMPLAINS OF CONTINENTAL AIRLINE HASSLE

NEWARK, N.J.—The Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund has written to Continental Airlines insisting that the carrier take steps to correct an incident at the Newark International Airport when Continental employees nearly barred a lesbian couple from going on their vacation to Mexico with their two children because they didn't have written permission of a nonexistent father.

According to Lambda, when the two women—Regina Quattrochi and Priscilla Lenes—and their children showed up at Continental's check-in at Newark for their

flight to Mexico, airline employees insisted that they had to have written permission of the children's father to travel outside the U.S.

When the women explained there was no father, airline employees apparently didn't believe them and demanded an explanation. The two women had to explain several times that they were a same-sex family and that the children were conceived through artificial insemination.

The family was eventually allowed to board the plane, but only after filling out a form explaining the children had no father, but Lambda said in its letter to the airline that it should develop policies "to help all families cope with [any real travel] restrictions well in advance of travel," and to train its personnel to treat same-sex couples with respect. Lambda also requested that Continental apologize to the family and compensate them for the incident.

HIV AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICAN GAY MEN

ATLANTA—Speaking at the U.S. Conference on AIDS, Surgeon General David Satcher said that young gay men, especially African Americans, could be the most vulnerable and difficult to reach in the AIDS epidemic in this country.

"This is a group that we're very concerned about, who continue to see themselves on the fringes of society," Satcher said.

He said that 7 percent of young gay men are infected with HIV, but 20 percent of African-American gay men are HIV-positive. Even more worrisome, he said, is that some 80 percent of these men are not aware of their infection.

MASS. JUDGE SAYS TRANS STUDENT'S CLOTHES OK

BOSTON—A Massachusetts superior court has ruled that a 15-year-old male student, known in court records as "Pat Doe," can wear girls' clothing to school. Doe had been barred from attending a suburban school because of the clothing which school officials said upset parents and other students.

But Judge Linda Giles, a lesbian, ruled that Doe can wear any clothing, jewelry, or accessories that any other student—male or female—would be allowed to wear at the school.

Judge Giles said the clothing ban would amount to "the stifling of a person's selfhood merely because it causes some members of the community discomfort."

The school district is expected to appeal the ruling.

CANADIANS DUMP *DR. LAURA SHOW*

TORONTO—CanWest Global, which operates CFCF, RDTV, and BCTV television stations, has canceled further orders for the *Dr. Laura Show* in Canada, effectively ending the short-lived TV program's broadcast in the country.

"Our audience has voted and unfortunately they've cast a nay ballot for Dr. Laura on television," said Roy Gardner of CanWest. He said the show "just isn't delivering the viewers" and called the program "downright dull."

As in the U.S., the Canadian broadcast of the antigay talk host's television show has been met with protests, advertisers pulling out, and terrible ratings.

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SALT LAKE CITY OKS GAY-STRAIGHT STUDENT CLUBS

SALT LAKE CITY—A years-long battle that led to at least two lawsuits in Utah looks like it's winding down more or less where it began. News sources report that the city's school district has approved a gay-straight alliance as an extracurricular club.

Two lawsuits filed against the district by students will also be dropped.

At least two court ruling had already been handed down against the school district and state officials said they would not pay legal costs to continue the court battle.

COUPLE GIVES $2 MILLION TO U OF PENN GAY CENTER

PHILADELPHIA—David Goodhand and Vincent Griski, a gay couple who met at the University of Pennsylvania, have donated $2 million to the school to help restore a building that will house a gay and lesbian campus center.

The donation will be part of some $5 million needed to renovate the building and endow programs at the school's Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center.

The two men both made substantial fortunes working at Microsoft Corp. and are now retired and rearing a 2-year-old adopted son.

Griski said they hope their gift would encourage other Penn graduates to get more involved with the university. "We wanted to be generous," he said. "We're young, and we wanted to find ways to make a difference in things we're passionate about."

TV'S XENA HANGS UP HER BREASTPLATE

LOS ANGELES—Xena, an icon among lesbians around the world, is hanging up her shapely breastplate and animal skins after six years on the hit television series, *Xena: Warrior Princess*. Episodes of the TV show already in production will continue to air through summer 2001, but after then it will be reruns only for the famed Amazonian.

The show, featuring Lucy Lawless as Xena and her busty side-kick Gabrielle (played by Rene O'Conner), quickly became a lesbian fave as the two women traveled through mythological lands, fighting demons and getting about as close as possible to becoming on-air lovers as imaginable.

SYDNEY OLYMPICS DRAG EXTRAVAGANZA

SYDNEY—The drag extravaganza was a big hit with Australians as part of the closing ceremonies at the Sydney Olympic Games, but NBC, which had exclusive broadcast rights in the U.S., apparently felt it was all too much for TV and didn't show one drag performer in its wrapup program.

Whenever the drag queens came on, the NBC cameras were off interviewing athletes. The network has refused to comment on its selective closing broadcast.

Rumors have been widespread that NBC was worried it would have a PR flap on its hands if it aired the Sydney drag queens during prime time when kids in America might be watching.

The only way for U.S. viewers to catch the full show, in fact, was to view it through the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's programming, which didn't duck a single queen in the tribute to Australia's growing prominence in the motion picture and entertainment industry. The drag performers—some 250 of Australia's most flamboyant—was a tip of the Aussie hat to the wildly successful film *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. ■

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GETTING TO KNOW YOU: ELIZABETH TOLEDO

OutSmart *chats with the new executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force*

by Clarence Burton Bagby

This past June, Elizabeth Toledo took office as the new executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, replacing Kerry Lobel. A veteran organizer in the feminist movement, Toledo comes to the NGLTF from NOW, where she was vice president over field organizing, coordinating everything from clinic defenses to marches of 100,000+. She is the first Latina to lead NGLTF and also—with two kids, Mia, 4, and Tomas, 3—the first working mother to lead NGLTF.

Along with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the NGLTF is one of the two top GLBT political organizations in the country—the progressive NGLTF emphasizes state and local grassroots organizing, whereas the HRC is more of a centralized lobbying organization. Conducting the interview, Clarence Bagby is our regional representative on the national board of the NGLTF; Clarence is quite active with the organization, and was part of the decision to hire Toledo.

As part of this NGLTF emphasis on local organizing, Toledo is coming to Houston to recognize the 25th anniversary of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus (see article on page 72), and to be the keynote speaker at their 25th Anniversary Awards Gala on Sunday, November 19, 6:30 p.m., at the Sheraton Brookhollow, 3000 North Loop West. Tickets are $90, $75 if purchased before November 13. For information or tickets, call the caucus office at 713/521-1000.



***OutSmart*: Tell us a little about life as a mother of two small children and how you make that work as executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.**

Elizabeth Toledo: Well, as working mothers, we've adopted the "It takes a village" concept of extended family. My partner Cindy Jordan and I both work, but carve out our schedules. We both travel a lot and we really work to maximize our family time. A dear friend lives with us—she's like an aunt to us. I keep a calendar that's clear [of everything but] family and job.... They still have their father in their lives—he sees them every other weekend. There are two things with the kids—if they're not with us, they're with someone that's considered "family"—with a very nontraditional definition. I use every gadget imaginable to make myself efficient. We have two cats and two Chihuahuas. Things work in a different way for us—when I'm working in the West, I often take the kids with me and arrange a layover with their grandparents.

Where did you grow up? Tell us a little about your childhood.

I grew up in Tucson—most of my family is still there and in southern California. I left the desert after high school. Grew up with a large family: four brothers and four sisters. And [I had] young parents—they started when they were 17. It was a time of great change and they were very politically active; they believed family was first and community was second. My mother was escorted to the edge of the Catholic high school campus when it was discovered that she was pregnant. We were brought up Catholic and our family is Mexican-American. I remember growing up thinking everyone was Catholic—as a cultural [reality] as much as a spiritual reality.

It sounds like it wasn't a great experience for you to grow up Catholic?

I was brought up in Catholic schools and grew to be very resentful. It was very difficult for me to leave the church because of my family—but I was so unwelcome, I can't bring myself to raise my children there. Cindy and I have been trying to identify a "home" church. We want the children to be exposed to spiritual traditions and hope they feel welcome to explore whatever experience they want to—synagogues, churches, or whatever path they choose. I just won't accept being treated as anything less than equal or without human dignity...in *any* institution or company, for that matter. I mean, Cindy's doctor wouldn't give her birth control!

Tell us about Cindy.

She grew up on the East Coast. She used to be a police officer in Montgomery County, Maryland, where we now live. We see people all the time and she says, "I've arrested that person ten times!" She was formerly NOW's lesbian rights director. We both work in GLBT political organizing—she now works at HRC.

Why did you want to be the executive director of the task force?

Well, one, I love politics. Two, I'm committed to the idea that a comprehensive grassroots mobilization strategy is what our movement, the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered community, needs. Three, NGLTF is unique—it is the only group with a grassroots strategy and a true progressive philosophy at its very core. Four, the task force values strategic thinking, research, and planning. Five, no one else is doing this work—the foundation of the organization is brilliant. Six, having worked in the feminist community as a leader for more than a decade, I'm very inter-

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HEAD SHOTS



DEBORA NEBLETT

Happy Days: Tamarie Cooper buries herself in her work.

Who else but Infernal Bridegroom Productions? This Beckett-enamored troupe of the hip, bleak, and obscure is now producing *Happy Days*, which features the tragic character of Winnie, who is buried in earth, first to her waist and later to her head. The encumbered character will be portrayed by *OutSmart* fave Tamarie Cooper. Maybe Tamarie felt in need of something completely different from her recent singin', dancin' *Tamalalia* revue at Stages.

"There is no experience in art or life more profound and gratifying to me than working on a Beckett play," says IBP artistic director Jason Nodler. "More than any other writer, Samuel Beckett is why I work in theater and his words inform every play I direct or write.... His quote *Try again...fail better* hangs above my bed and is with me as I prepare to direct this play."

Samuel Beckett's *Happy Days* opens Friday, Nov. 17, and runs Friday & Saturday nights, 8 p.m. at Atomic Cafe, 1320 Nance, 713/522-8443. Tickets $10.



Toledo *continued from page 22*

ested in turning my focus and the movement's focus in a time when we are able to achieve things that weren't even dreams a decade ago. [There's a] potential with today's combination of legal and cultural influences to bring about fundamental change in the way we live our lives—and to achieve those goals in big steps and strides as never before was possible. I just want to be a part of shaping that. Seven, the hardest thing I've ever done was to leave NOW. I was a viable candidate for NOW president. NGLTF is one of the few, if not the only, organization I would have left for. It's the nation's premiere progressive GLBT organization and the oldest national group.

What are your goals for your first year at the task force?

We must see an explosive growth in our movement, and I believe the NGLTF mantra that the real power is in the states and local communities. We have to create a bigger and better political infrastructure in each and every state. Most states have an infrastructure due in large part to NGLTF and our training institute that Dave Fleisher heads; our field organizers; and most importantly, the Federation of Statewide LGBT Advocacy Organizations that we created and staff; and the annual Creating Change Conference. Our think tank, the NGLTF Policy Institute, produces fantastic papers and materials and leads the movement on research and policy analysis.

But we must do more. We must develop multiple strategies—many state organizations simply don't have resources, so we must facilitate productive sharing of resources. We are identifying cutting-edge ways to find people to become part of the movement—the Internet is a crucial part of that strategy, of course. I don't want NGLTF to have a corporate philosophy, but I do want to use some corporate tactics that work—cutting-edge technology for organizing and communication. And we must recognize the power of the media and be able to convey our message to huge numbers of people who otherwise don't feel invited to participate in our movement.

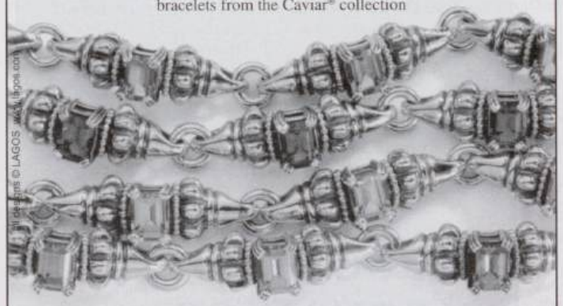
That's an awfully long list!

Yes, it is! And that's part of our message—the urgency—conveying that the time is now. The message of freedom, justice, and equality—that we deserve basic human rights and that by coming into the movement, we can achieve that with those numbers as our strength. With people living lives in this cloud of discrimination, many have lost sight of the fact that we all deserve to live free of discrimination. So many people are not invited to play a role.

How do you bring those people into the movement?

Specific ways—capture people on the Internet. Be present with visibility in GLBT and other progressive gatherings—campuses, Prides, social justice gatherings. And through the media, advertising, and generally greater exposure. We are a part of a broader social justice movement: It is our job to convey why that strategy is important. People understand best what they experience every day. The origins of hate and discrimination are not isolated. Homophobic people are usually racist as well. There's a definite relationship between sexism, racism, and ageism. There's the progressive thing—that all of those things are all connected. When we make that connection for people, that's when we'll see huge increases in the number of people involved in our movement. ■

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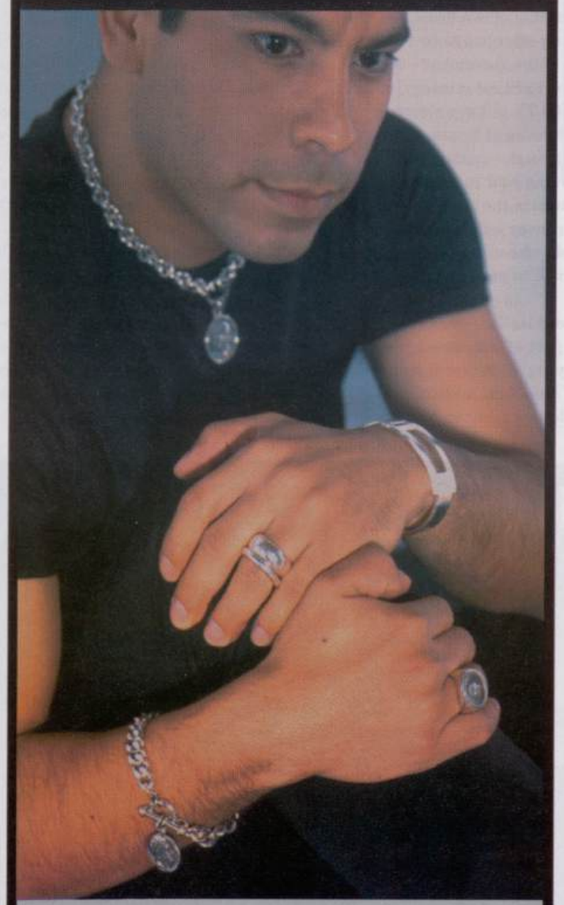


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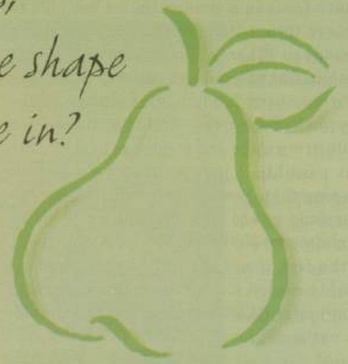
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Business News

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The "local"-style banking is the handiwork of the bank's management team, headed by **Randy Christopher**. With 18 years of financial experience, Randy grew up in New Mexico and brought those community banking roots with him to Montrose.

Randy is assisted by **Gary Verdine**, operations supervisor, who has more than eight years of financial sector work. Gary has immersed himself in the community as a volunteer working with the Pride Committee, as well as other community organizations. Capital Bank is a member of the Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

According to Randy, "Although we offer big-bank capabilities, we have made sure we stand out in the Montrose area by becoming involved in community organizations and activities, as well as stressing person-to-person banking relationships. That's why we always keep the coffee on."

Gary pointed out that "besides my financial background, the bank felt that my living in the area—only five minutes from the bank—complemented the bank's desire to become integrated into the local community...."

The bank is located at 3007 S. Shepherd at West Alabama, 713/529-0001.

Karen Derr & Associates Realty presents an "Autumn Gathering," Tuesday evening, November 14, from 6:30–8:30 p.m. In what has become a much-anticipated event in the Heights, Karen Derr opens her office at 1034 Heights Boulevard several times a year for a seasonally themed party and viewing of artwork by a prominent local artist. The featured artist this time is **Kermit Eisenhut**.

A portion of the proceeds from the art sales on this evening will go to benefit Kid-Care, a local charity providing meals for needy children. Eisenhut's work will remain on display through the holidays for viewing and purchase.

For more information, contact Paula at Karen Derr & Associates Realty, 713/862-1600.

Fun, food, and fitness all rolled into one! **Muscle Mechanics**' newest way to keep you fit, fed, and having a good time doing both is the "New Challenge," a Pilates-based routine that can give you a firmer, flatter stomach, improve your posture, and provide you with an added boost of energy.

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Spaces are limited, so make your reservations soon. Muscle Mechanics is located at 617 Richmond Ave., 713/523-5330.

For the third year in a row, the Houston Small-Business Administration (SBA) district office has named **Chase Texas** both its top SBA Volume Lender and New Markets Lender in making loans to minority and women-owned businesses. As the number-one producer of SBA loans, Chase's Small-Business Solutions team in Houston reported 148 loans totaling more than $12.6 million for 2000. ■



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by Daryl Moore

GLOATING AND WHINING ALLOWED

But only *if you voted*

By the time this article runs (which was written in the midst of the October election deadheat), George W. Bush will have vindicated his father's loss to a philandering president who was impeached by Congress but avoided conviction by the Senate. Al Gore will have inherited the presidency from a man who lied about having sex with a thong-wearing intern who kissed "it" and then told us about "it." Or, Ralph Nader will have won in a landslide after Bush and Gore were caught in compromising positions with some other species.

Whatever the outcome, some of us will have elected a new president. Others of us will have voted for the losers. And an embarrassingly large percentage of us will not have voted at all.

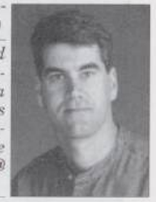
For those who did not vote, sit back for the next four years and watch the results of your indifference. But do not complain about what is or what might have been had you voted.

Your inability to complain is best summed up by a small sign my parents hung above our back door in 1967. It stated simply, "The Man Who Does Not Vote Is A Slave To The Man Who Does." This missive may not be gender neutral or politically correct. But it succinctly recognizes that those of us who did not vote have handed our destinies over to those who did.

If Bush is president, non-voting gays and lesbians who are fired from their jobs solely because of their orientation should remember that their president opposes nondiscrimination laws which include sexual orientation because he believes they give "special rights" to gays and lesbians. Non-voting women who find themselves pregnant as the result of consensual sex with someone other than their father or brother should remember that their president believes that a woman only has the right to choose should she be a victim of rape or incest. And non-voting blacks who find themselves in the back of police cars solely because of the color of their skin should recall that their president believes that racial profiling is not a problem that requires the attention of the federal government.

If Gore is president, non-voting parents who want to send their children to private schools with government vouchers should recall that their president believes that the government should fund only public education. Non-voting workers who want to opt out of Social Security and open private retirement accounts instead should recall that their president believes they should be forced to participate in Social Security, irrespective of whether it will be around when they retire. And non-voting individuals who run their own businesses and cannot afford to hire additional workers should re-

continued on p. 30



Writing from the liberal end of the spectrum, Houston attorney Daryl Moore has a general practice and is board-certified in civil appellate law. He can be reached at DarylMoore@outsmartmagazine.com.

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by Dale Carpenter

IF GORE WINS

Here's what to watch for should Al get elected

On November 8, the country will wake up to a new president-elect and a new Congress. If Gore wins, as national gay groups urge, he will either be accompanied by a Democratic Congress (Scenario #1) or a Congress still at least partly controlled by Republicans (Scenario #2). What do these Gore-as-president scenarios offer gays?

Scenario #1: Under this potential outcome, Al Gore is elected president and Democrats take control of both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. Gay advocates will dance in the streets. There will be high hopes that Gore and the Democrats will keep their many promises to gays.

The two items on which a Democrat-controlled government is most likely to deliver are, in order of likelihood, federal hate crimes legislation and federal employment discrimination protection (ENDA). Gore mentioned both of these in his speech accepting the Democratic nomination. The Democratic platform was similarly explicit.

Yet these items are also the most controversial among gays. And they are probably the least consequential in that their effect will be largely symbolic. There is no evidence that hate crimes legislation actually deters hate crimes. It is likely unconstitutional. And antidiscrimination laws protecting gays, while defensible, are rarely used. The hostility still confronting gay America is simply deeper than these hortatory laws can reach.

Under Scenario #1, watch for action on two other issues that would have much greater substantive impact on the lives of gay Americans. With Democrats in charge of the government, there should be no excuse for inaction (or half-hearted action) on them.

First, will Gore keep his promise to get Congress to lift the ban on gays in the military?

Second, will the Democrats fulfill their platform pledge to offer gay couples benefits through a domestic partners law covering federal employees? Last week on *Larry King Live* Gore averred that a gay couple is "a family." Does he mean it?

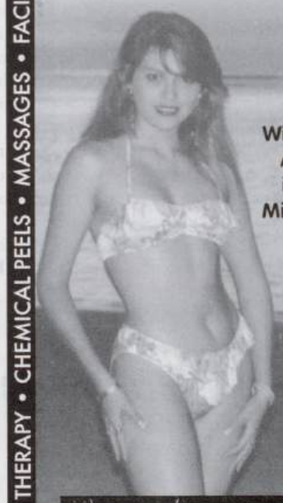
Despite what Gore's gay supporters say, don't get your hopes up. We've been down the road whereon a Democratic presidential candidate promises lots and delivers little. With Democrats in control of the presidency and both houses of Congress from 1993 to 1995 we got...Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Gore didn't mention either the military ban or federal domestic partners legislation in his acceptance speech. The Democratic platform was, at best, vague on both.

My hunch is, once Gore passes hate crimes and employment protection, national gay groups will effectively let him off the hook on the military ban and domestic part-



Writing from the conservative end of the spectrum, Dale Carpenter was president of Texas Log Cabin Republicans from 1995–98. A law professor and former Houston resident, Dale has won three Vice Versa awards for excellence in gay writing. Now living in Minneapolis, he can be reached at OutRight@aol.com.

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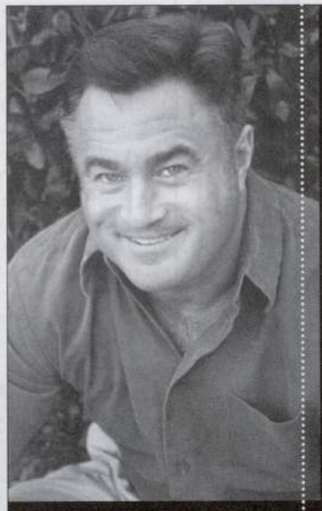
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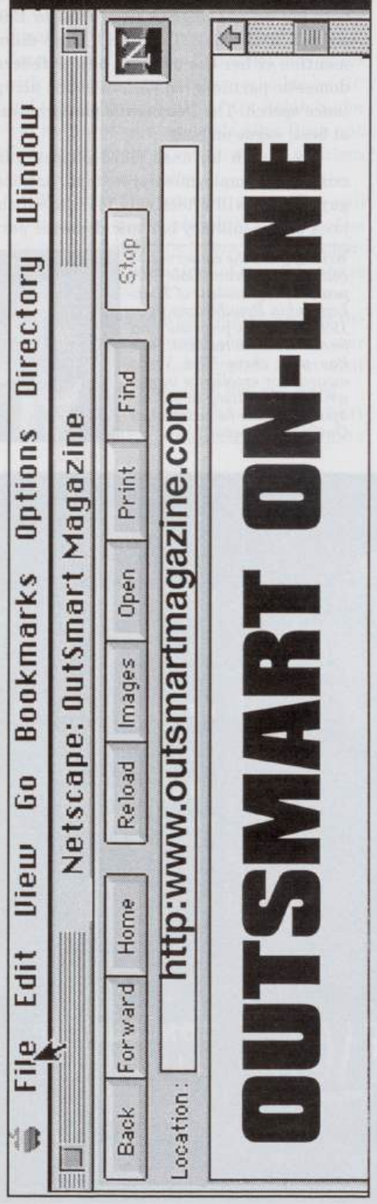
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LeftOut *continued from page 28*

call that their president supports an increase in the minimum wage.

If Nader is president, then corporations, insurance companies, the oil industry, polluters, and trial lawyers will wish they could retrieve all the greenbacks they had poured into the Bush and Gore campaigns. The Green Party is not amused at their attempts to buy 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Nonetheless, if you voted, whether it was for Bush, Gore, or Nader, you have reserved the right to pontificate about the State of the Union for the next four years. If you voted for the winner and are happy with his performance, you may gloat—no matter how unattractive gloating is. If you voted for the loser and are unhappy with the winner's performance, you may whine—no matter how unappealing whining is.

But if you did not vote, you should step to the back of the bus and endure the four-year ride. Because those of you who failed to vote are slaves to the gloaters and whiners who did. ■

OutRight *continued from previous page*

ners benefits. They will blame the GOP, or the Joint Chiefs, or the alignment of Saturn and Pluto, but not the Democrats. If Scenario #1 transpires, look out for a Clinton redux.

The upshot: Under this most optimistic configuration, hate crimes legislation and ENDA will pass, but there will be no repeal of the antigay military ban and no meaningful federal domestic partners law.

Scenario #2: Under this potential outcome, Al Gore is elected president, yet Republicans retain control of the House or the Senate or both. This is essentially the balance of power in the government since 1994—a Democratic president and the GOP running Congress.

Scenario #2 is the most likely outcome of the election. Gore has to be considered a slight favorite because of the good economy. If he wins, it seems probable Democrats will take the House. The Senate seems less likely to fall to the Democrats.

Under Scenario #2, a federal hate crimes law is still a good bet to pass. Since it is the only gay-related item Gore routinely mentions in his campaign, he is more likely to fight for it than anything else on the wish list of national gay organizations. Alone among items on their agendas, hate crimes legislation has significant bipartisan support. Combine that with the fact that Gore will enjoy immense popularity and deference as a new president, and I think GOP leaders will have to cave on the issue of hate crimes.

ENDA is less likely to pass under this scenario. Gore almost never mentions it, which suggests it's not much of a priority for him. He has never explained the need for it in his speeches to mainstream audiences, most of whom have no idea what the acronym "ENDA" stands for. Democrats didn't even hold a hearing on a similar bill when they controlled the White House and Congress as recently as six years ago.

Gore will blame GOP opposition in Congress for the failure of ENDA, even though he will devote no political resources or time in the bully pulpit to it.

Under this scenario, you can forget about repealing the ban on gays in the military or passing domestic partners legislation. Democrats will introduce pro forma bills to achieve these goals, but they will go nowhere. Gore will do nothing to advance them, huffing that Congress is the culprit.

Gay political groups, drunk on the passage of "historic" hate crimes legislation, will give Gore and the Democrats a do-nothing pass for the rest of his term. We will be told, once again, that it's necessary to elect more Democrats if we want anything done.

The upshot: Under the most likely configuration, we will get a hate crimes law, but no ENDA, no repeal of the military ban, and no domestic partners legislation.

Under either Scenario #1 or #2, we're in for four more years of Democratic excuse-making. ■



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Calendar of Events

Deadline for *OutSmart*'s December issue is 5 p.m., Sunday, November 12.

NOVEMBER

1, 8, 15, 22, 29 (Weds.)
HIV Testing. The Montrose Clinic offers free confidential HIV testing and counseling every Wednesday, 6-9 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. Center: 713/524-3818. Clinic: 713/830-3000. *PLEASE NOTE: Free & confidential HIV/AIDS testing is also available from 2–4 pm on the 8th & 22nd in Conroe at Northwoods AIDS Coalition, 1414 South Frazier, Ste. 106. More info: 936/441-1614.*



See Nov. 10 & 11.

5 (Sun.)
PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays). Carol Petrucci, program director for H.A.T.C.H. (Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals), presents "H.A.T.C.H.: The Past, Present, and Future," accompanied by a panel of youths. Gay & lesbian youths are at a high risk for depression, substance abuse, & suicide due to exposure to daily hazards such as gay bashing, harassment in school, & even disownment by their parents. 2 pm @ Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas. PFLAG Helpline: 713/867-9020.

8 (Wed.)
Gay/Lesbian Singles Mixer. A special Hasbro games mixer for the gay or lesbian single who is looking for a different environment to meet, greet, and have fun! 7:30 pm @ Borders Books, 3025 Kirby Dr., 713/524-0200.

9 & 16 (Thu.)
Bi Now. Bi-Net Bisexual Network of Houston now holds topic discussion meetings on three Thursdays of every month. A topic discussion group for women meets on the second Thursday of the month. A mixed-gender group meets on the third Thursday. A men's group normally meets on the 4th Thursday but will not meet in November because of Thanksgiving. 7:30 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. More info: 713/524-3818 (the center) or 713/467-4380 (Bi-Net).

10 (Fri.)
Balé Folclórico da Bahia. It gets decidedly hot when this Afro-American carnival sambas into town. Pulsing rhythms, raucous singing, frenzied dancing, & high-flying martial arts—all so electrifying, they defy you to sit still! Presented by the Society for the Performing Arts at 8 pm @ Jones Hall. Tickets: 713/227-4SPA (772) or Ticketmaster. More info: www.spahouston.com.

10 (Fri.)
Let the Games Begin. Beginning in November, a game night for women with a friendly competitive streak will take place on the second Friday of the month. The evening promises card games, board games, & pleasant conversation. Women with games to donate to the cause should bring them. 7 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. Info: 713/524-3818.

10 & 11 (Fri. & Sat.)
Memory's Caretaker. An exposé on the family, *Memory's Caretaker* is a funny, powerful, & poignant tale of one American family, spanning three generations, and their efforts to blend into the American melting pot by hiding key complex ingredients of their identities. Paul Bonin-Rodriguez is an accomplished writer & performer who has performed at numerous venues including the Joseph Papp Public Theater, the Actor's Theater of Louisville, & Dallas Theater Center. 8 pm @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. Tickets $20 ($10 students/seniors, $15 members). For more info: 713/335-3445.

INFO NEEDED FOR YOUR EVENT LISTING: a few lines of info about your event; date/time; cost; location/address; organization name; AND two phone numbers—one for *OutSmart* to reach you for questions and one for *OutSmart* readers to get more info on your event. ***Mail info to:*** OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston 77006. ***Fax info to:*** 713/522-3275. ***E-mail info to:*** letters@outsmartmagazine.com. NO LISTINGS CAN BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—SUN., NOV. 12.

10–12 (Fri.–Sun.)
Blowin' Up a Spot! Film Festival highlights the art of independent women filmmakers and poets. Blowin' Up a Spot is a national coalition of women multimedia makers. The organization strives to be a resource for women in the film/television and literary industries by providing their unique voices with exposure to a wider audience. Part media literacy conference, part film/television and literary marketplace, this event will showcase 15 short works of women in independent film. The event will also spotlight five spoken-word artists. The purpose of the event is to increase the awareness of women's films by showcasing women of various ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds who produce visual and literary images relevant to their communities and themselves as members of this society. The hope is to create and sustain a vital marketplace for women as media makers. There will be three days of fabulous short films at the Glassell School Of Art. Friday at 7 pm, tickets go on sale 6:30 pm. Saturday and Sunday: two showings 2 & 7 pm, tickets go on sale at 1:30 & 6:30 pm. More info: call 713/220-9395 or visit www.freeversepublishing.com.

11 (Sat.)
Footloose. In 1984, a movie called *Footloose* captured the heart & soul of America. As a musical, it is raising the roof on Broadway, and now it hits Galveston. With its irresistible score & dynamic plot, this musical will set your heart afire & your toes a tappin'. Tickets range from $16.50–$65. Two performances: 3 & 8 pm @ Galveston's Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice, 409/765-1894.


Openly gay
Tom Hulce plays it straight (depending on your definition of straight) in *Amadeus*: See Nov. 17–19.

11 & 12 (Sat. & Sun.)
Texas Renaissance Festival. This is the last weekend to take in the sights, sounds, tastes, & beauty of the 16th century. 9 am–8 pm. On FM 1774, between Magnolia & Plantersville, Texas (45 miles northwest of Houston). Adults $19.95; children (5-12) $8.95; children (4 & under) free. More info: 800/458-3435 or www.texrenfest.com.

13 (Mon.)
Prime Time Men. Noted gay psychotherapist Harold Kooden, Ph.D., will speak about his new book *Golden Men: The Power of Gay Midlife*. Dr. Kooden is a clinical psychologist in private practice and a founder of the National Gay and Lesbian Health Foundation. His five principles for gay aging: 1) By virtue of our coming out, gay men already possess the power to age well. 2) Midlife is our true adulthood. 3) The mind and the body are one. 4) Ageism causes death. 5) We cannot only survive, but thrive. Dr. Kooden's talk followed by discussion is free and open to the public. 7 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818. *(See article page 82.)*

14 (Tue.)
Da Camera celebrates the great gay American composer Aaron Copland on his 100th birthday by surrounding him with friends. Expect songs by Marc Blitzstein, Paul Bowles, Charles Ives, & Virgil Thomson, and chamber music by Copland, Roger Sessions, César Chavez, Roy Harris, & Walter Piston. Copland biographer & U of H professor of music, Howard Pollack, hosts this musical tribute. Pre-concert talk by Pollack at 7 pm, concert at 7:30 pm @ The Menil Collection (University of St. Thomas), Alabama @ Mandell. Tickets ($25; students/seniors half-price): Da Camera Music Center, 1427 Branard, 713/524-5050.

17 (Fri.)
ComedySportz & Gilda Radner. The improvisational comedy show hosts a special performance to benefit Gilda's Club, a free, emotional, & social support community for people with cancer & their family & friends. Gilda's Club is named after comedian Gilda Radner, who had cancer, and was founded by Gene Wilder (her husband) and Joanna Bull. ComedySportz has long believed in the tremendous healing power of humor; it was this common bond & the inspiration of Radner's comedic work that brought ComedySportz to Gilda's Club. The improvisational comedy is played just like a sport: Two teams go head-to-head on artificial turf, with a referee overseeing the action. Because the comedy is improvised, fans never see the same match twice. 7:30 pm @ Lambert Hall, 1703 Heights Blvd. (at 17th St.). Tickets $10. All ticket, refreshment, & silent auction proceeds will benefit Gilda's Club. More info/reservations: 713/868-1444.

17 (Fri.)
Wreath Collection 2000. Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS (DIFFA) presents a stellar collection of one-of-a-kind wreaths created by the exceptional talent from Houston's art, floral, & interior design communities paired with enticing gift items to be offered at a silent auction. 7 pm @ the Warwick Hotel. Tickets $50 in advance. More info: 713/528-0505.

17 (Fri.)
Author, Author. Houston poets Simone Cunningham, Donna Garrett, & Michael Locke will read new work during "Passion, Poetry, and Politics 2," a sequel to the standing-room-only poetry night in August. An open-mike session will follow the reading. 7:30 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

17 (Fri.)
Fran Harris, former first-year Comet player and now a WNBA Lifetime television analyst, will be speaking at tonight's LiB meeting. 6:30–9:30 pm @ Holiday Inn Select, 2712 Southwest Freeway. LiB info line: 713/529-0077.

17–19 (Fri.–Sun.)
Amadeus. Peter Shaffer adapted his own play for this entertaining film about the intense rivalry between 18th-century composers Antonio Salieri (F. Murray Abraham) & Wolfgang Amadeus

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SINGLE WHITE GIRL LOOKING TO SWING...

...sing, and rock!

AFTER 10 YEARS in the Texas music scene, Christy Claxton is striking out on her own. She is a veteran of two Texas folk/rock bands, Dream Horse and the Watsons. Her solo turn with her *Out of Nowhere* CD also represents her new focus on Adult Album Alternative music. Her Texas folk roots are still present, but she sends the music to a new level of energy and appeal. Claxton certainly draws on country, folk, and roots influences, but she also positions herself in a genre that gives her music a broad appeal. She delivers smart songs with engaging stories and unforgettable characters. From "Funky Little House": "...But my funky little house is too big for me/I need a good time lover to set my heart free./Impersonal personal do your thing/Single white girl looking to swing/Impersonal personal let me lie/I'll be tall and thin with big blue eyes...." •

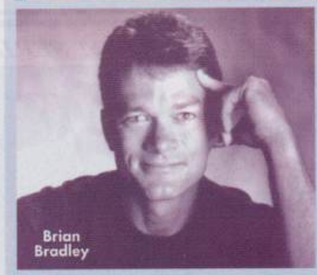
Lavender Lounge is bringing Claxton to these Texas venues: **Nov. 9**, 8 p.m. at Houston's Anderson Fair, 2007 Grant St.; **Nov. 10**, 9 p.m. at Gabby and Mo's, 1809 Manor Rd., in Austin; **Nov. 17**, 9:30 p.m. at Galveston's Old Quarter Acoustic Cafe, 413 20th St.; **Nov. 18** at noon at Messina Hoff Winery Festival in Bryan; and **Nov. 25**, 7 p.m. at the Plateau Restaurant in Fredrickburg. For more info, visit www.christyclaxton.com or call 512/423-1770.

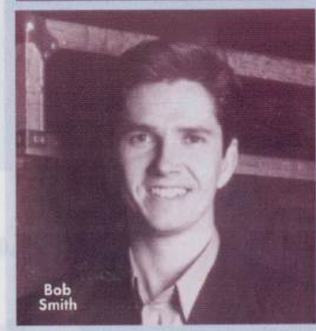


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FUNNY GAY MEN STARRING JUDY TENUTA


Judy Tenuta


Brian Bradley


Bob Smith


Jason Stuart

STARRING JUDY TENUTA?! She doesn't look much like a gay man to me, but as the press release reads, "This live extravaganza stars the totally outrageous and always unpredictable Queen of Queens...Judy Tenuta!" OK, now that I see the word *queen*, it begins to make sense. The totally politically incorrect Tenuta is the Mistress of Ceremonies for what promises to be a wild night with three funny gay men (to be politically correct, the trio is listed alphabetically): Brian Bradley, Bob Smith, and Jason Stuart. Oh, and I dare not forget the Love Slave Dancers, a beefcake foursome who prance around the stage in black leather hot pants and halter tops.

JUDY TENUTA was nominated twice for Grammy awards for *Attention Butt-Pirates and Lesbetarians* and *In the Goddess We Trust*, and has starred in her own HBO, Showtime, and Lifetime spccials.

BRIAN BRADLEY is featured in the infamous *Sorority Girls From Hell* video seen in almost every gay bar for years.

BOB SMITH was the first openly gay comedian to appear on *The Tonight Show*, and has authored *Openly Bob* and *Way to Go, Smith*.

JASON STUART came out on *Geraldo* in 1993 and is now busy with films and TV. He can be seen on Nov. 9 on *Will & Grace* (he's pictured below with Sean Hayes) and on *Norm* on Nov. 10.

FUNNY GAY MEN starts at 8 p.m. on Saturday, **Nov. 18** at the Aerial Theater, 520 Texas Ave. Tickets are $27.25–$40.75 and are available at sfx.com, the Aerial Theater box office and all Ticketmaster outlets, or charge by phone at 713/629-3700.

—Blase DiStefano



Stuart (right) with Sean Hayes

Funny Gay Men
starring Judy Tenuta
an evening of outrageous music and comedy!



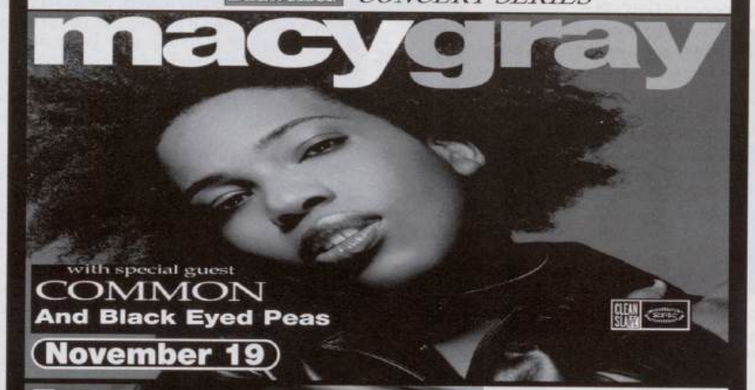

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Bob Smith


Jason Stuart

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Mozart (Tom Hulce). Salieri is doomed to mediocrity while Mozart delights in his own genius and irritates those around him. Along with numerous other Oscars, the 1984 film won for Best Picture, Abraham won for Best Actor, and Hulce was nominated for Best Actor. Tonight's showing is accented with a special appearance by Academy Award-winner Mark Berger, re-recording sound mixer; besides his win for *Amadeus*, Berger has won Oscars for *The Right Stuff*, *Apocalypse Now*, & *The English Patient*. *Amadeus* plays at 7:30 pm. • Playing Saturday the 18th at 7 pm is *Tom Verlaine: Music for Film*, with a special appearance by Tom Verlaine & Jimmy Ripp. • Playing Sunday the 19th at 6 pm is *The Iron Giant*, with a special appearance by Texas-based screenwriter Tim McCanlies. • For this weekend only, film prices are: Friday only, $25; Saturday only, $50; Sunday only, $25; for all three nights or any combination of nights, $50. Films screened in the Brown Auditorium of The Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet. More info: 713/639-7531.

18 (Sat.)

Funny Gay Men. *(See sidebar previous page.)*

18 (Sat.)

Mighty Texas Dog Walk 2000. Texas dogs & their owners have the opportunity to break the Guinness World Record for the "Most Dogs Walked." Thousands are expected to take part in this three-mile course, which will take walkers & their pooches along Memorial Dr. and end up near Houston's bustling downtown. The goal is to break the record set by the Brits, who walked 2,439 dogs in July 1999. The previous record was set in Austin, Texas, on Feb. 20, 1999, with 2,114 dogs. Proceeds raised from the Mighty Texas Dog Walk will benefit the Texas Hearing & Service Dogs. 10 am–1 pm (on-site registration & packet pickup begins at 8 am; starting line activities begin at 9:30 am, and awards ceremonies will commence at 12:30 pm). 110 Sabine at Memorial Dr., adjacent to Tinsley Park. $15 pre-registration, $20 day of. Registration forms are available at all Sprint PCS stores and Katz's Deli, 616 Montrose, and online at www.servicedogs.com. For more info: 713/840-0555.

19 (Sun.)

Gala. The Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus is celebrating a 25th Anniversary Awards Gala. The speaker for this special evening is Elizabeth Toledo, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force. The event will include a silent auction. Tickets are $75 if purchased before Nov. 13 ($90 thereafter). 6:30 pm @ Sheraton Brookhollow, 3000 North Loop West. More info: 713521-1000.

20+ (Mon.)

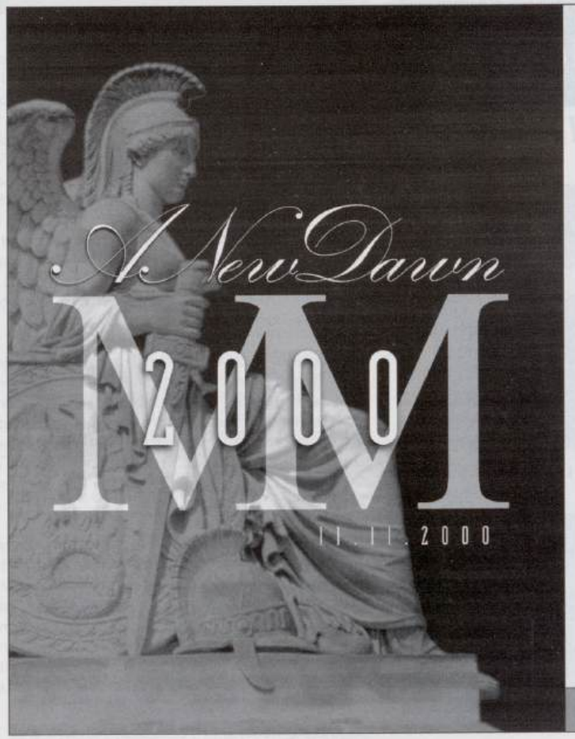
Outdoor Ice-Skating Rink. The Dynegy IcePlaza is preparing for another holiday season with Houston's only outdoor ice-skating rink. Located in the heart of the Theater District, the Dynegy IcePlaza will transform the area in front of the Wortham Theater into a winter wonderland. As of Nov. 20, the rink will be open seven days a week through Jan. 3, 2001. Admission is $7 (skate rental is an additional $2, and skating sessions last two hours). The rink is located in the 500 block of Texas Ave., adjacent to the Wortham Center and Sesquicentennial Park, and across from Bayou Place. For more info: 1-800-4-HOUSTON.

21 (Tue.)

K.d. lang. is on her invincible summer tour. Spend an evening with the lesbian lady of song. 8 pm @ Aerial Theater, 520 Texas Ave. Tickets ($21–$35.50) available at sfx.com, Ticketmaster (713/629-3700) & all Ticketmaster outlets, or the Aerial Theater box office (713/230-1600).

23 (Thu.)

Give Thanks. Celebrate Thanksgiving with your fam-



THE HOUSTON BLACK TIE DINNER
unites the men and women of our community. As a consolidated force, we are fighting AIDS, prejudice, discrimination, and taking a firm stand on men's and women's health issues. We are aspiring to enrich the perception others have of our community through active involvement, interest and dedication.

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ily of choice. All the grand tradition of the holiday—turkey, the trimmings, & football—will make the meal festive. Everyone is welcome to enjoy the dinner. The center requests a $2 donation to help offset the cost of the meal. People who plan to attend are asked to leave word at the center in advance, so that the cooks know how much of a feast to prepare. *Lunch served at 2 pm.* Noon-6 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

25 (Sat.)

Girls With Guitars. It's a live performance by the local acoustic duo. 9 pm–midnight @ The Vintage Bar, a relaxed wine bar, 4356 Westheimer at Mid Lane. If the night is pretty, they'll be on the porch under the big oak trees. Enjoy.

24 & 25 (Fri. & Sat.)

Phantom. "Rush to *Phantom*. The other one," urges *The Boston Globe*. Maury Yeston & Arthur Kopit bring you an intoxicating spin on Leroux's bewitching story. In this *Phantom*, Yeston's score combines with Kopit's script to produce an evening of dazzling musical theater. Tickets $16.50–$65. Friday at 8 pm, Saturday at 2 & 8 pm @ Galveston's Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice, 409/765-1894.

27 (Mon.)

Race Relations. The community discussion of racism in the glbt community continues with the forum "The Dynamics of Interracial Couples in a Racist Culture." The first event confronting racism attracted an enthusiastic, capacity crowd, and the critical work continues. The Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center and the Black Lesbian and Gay Coalition co-sponsor with forum with the help of other groups in the city. 7 pm @ the center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

28 (Tue.)

Debra Duncan. Each year the Women's Business Support Network (WBSN) Foundation chooses a professional woman of Houston who is dedicated to the pursuit of women achieving their goals in education & business. Debra Duncan has proved herself a leader in addressing women's issues with her successful four-year run of the Debra Duncan show. This popular local KTRK Channel 13 program deals with the issues that concern all Houstonians as we strive to make Houston a better place to live & work. The luncheon to honor Duncan will be held in the Junior League Ballroom. Tickets available through WBSN at 713/783-3735.

30 & Dec. 1 (Thu. & Fri.)

2000 World AIDS Day Remembrance. The 2000 observation of World AIDS Day promises to be a very exciting one for the Houston chapter of the NAMES Project. The evening of Nov. 30 will kick off a week of events beginning with a candlelight march from the NAMES Workshop (4617 Montrose, Chelsea Market, Suite C140) to the Menil Collection (1515 Sul Ross) at 6:30 pm. The evening will culminate in a special collaborative program and quilt dedication ceremony with the Menil Collection. • The evening of Dec. 1 will feature the annual Tree of Remembrance commemoration, this year to be held at Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway, at 6 pm. • The NAMES Project Houston is requesting quilt panels for the ceremony. If you would like to make a quilt panel, or if you have made one but have not brought it to them, they will be accepting panels through November for inclusion in the Nov. 30 ceremony, at which time panels are formally given to the NAMES Project. Panelmakers are not required to attend the ceremony, but it helps some people express their grief and allows those who have been affected by the AIDS virus to come together and share their awareness, love, & hope. For more info: 713/526-2637.

PLANNING AHEAD

DECEMBER

1 (Fri.)

World AIDS Day Observance. The Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center plans a day-long observance, which will include photographs taken by adults with HIV/AIDS who participate in the Positive Art Workshops at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. All day @ the center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

1 (Fri.)

World AIDS Day Memorial Service. Houston's Bering Memorial United Methodist Church joins with other churches and the Montrose Clergy Association in sponsoring the service to remember people who died from AIDS and bring solace to the families & friends they've left behind. 7 pm in Bering's main sanctuary at 1440 Harold St. More info: 713/526-1017.

2 & 3 (Sat. & Sun.)

It's a Wonderful Life starts off the 22nd season for the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. The program will feature holiday music from the movies, including lots of standards such as *We Need a Little Christmas*. A newer holiday gem, a *Nightmare Before Christmas* medley from the Tim Burton movie of the same name, promises to be special. Songs of the Hanukkah tradition will round out the show. 8 pm on Saturday, 3 pm on Sunday @ the new Resurrection MCC, 2025 West 11th St. at T.C. Jester. More info: 713/521-SING (7464).

3 (Sun.)

Christmas Gone Hollywood is A Christmas Songfest's traditional holiday celebration/singalong/silent auction/food & beverage party. This year's beneficiary is the Body Positive Wellness Program. 6–9 pm @ the Edwin Hornberger Conference Center in the Texas Medical Center, 2152 W. Holcombe Blvd. Table tickets ($400–$800) sold in advance; individual tickets ($50) sold at the door. More info: 713/417-5345 or www.christmassongfest.org.

4 (Mon.)

Jingle Jam is the second annual 104 KRBE concert event at the Astrodome, this time featuring five national recording artists including Pink, 98°, & South Park Mexican. Tickets ($12.50–$40) available through Ticketmaster. Info: KRBE at 713/266-1000 or online at www.104krbe.com.

6 (Wed.)

Da Camera of Houston's free lunchtime performance series, "A Little Day Music," continues with a performance by Noe Marmolejo and the Moores School of Music Jazz Orchestra. Concert-goers are encouraged to bring & enjoy their lunches while listening to music. Noon in the Grand Foyer of the Wortham Center, Texas at Smith. For more info: 713/524-7601, ext. 15.

6 (Wed.)

Tour of World Gymnastics Champions. Anchored by the U.S. men's & women's Olympic team, the tour will include Elise Ray, Kristin Maloney, Jamie Dantzscher, & Blaine Wilson, along with Shannon Miller & Dominique Moceanu. The tour will also include the international medalists from the Sydney Olympic Games, trampolinists, & rhythmic gymnasts. 7:30 pm @ the Compaq Center. Tickets ($20.75–$46.25) on sale at the Compaq Center box office, all Ticketmaster locations, by phone at 713/629-3700, or online at www.ticketmaster.com.

10 (Sun.)

Jingle Bell Run & Walk. Register now for the 18th annual Memorial Hermann Jingle Bell Run & Walk. Participants may register at the following locations. • *Down-*

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You do have to give up being afraid to take care of yourself.

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Calendar

town YMCA, 1600 Louisiana, Nov. 6–Dec. 9 (M–F, 5 am–10 pm; Sat. & Sun., 10 am–6 pm). • *Post Oak YMCA*, 1331 Augusta Dr., Nov. 18 (9 am–4 pm). • *B.J. and Margaret Bradshaw Wellness Center, Memorial Hermann/HBU Wellness Center*, 7731 Southwest Freeway, Nov. 17 (9 am–4 pm). • *Memorial Park*, stretching area, Nov. 4 (6 am–4 pm). • *Luke's Locker*, 1953 W. Gray, Nov. 11 (9 am–6 pm). • Pick up a registration brochure at Houston-area YMCA locations or register online at www.jinglebellrun.org. To find the YMCA location nearest you, call 713/659-8501 or visit www.ymcahouston.org. Postmark deadline for early registration ($18 for adults, $8 for children) is Sat., Nov. 25; entries postmarked beginning Nov. 26 require a $20 registration fee for adults and $10 for children.

PERFORMING ARTS

♦ **1940s Radio Hour.** In a small seedy radio station on Dec. 21, 1942, a group of radio personalities prepare for their show. In the half hour before the broadcast and during the show itself, the audience is treated to such old favorite tunes as "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy From Company B" and "That Ol' Black Magic," to name a few. Fridays & Saturdays at 8 pm, Nov. 17–Jan. 6 (no performances Nov. 24 & 25; Dec. 22 & 23) @ The Company Onstage, 536 Westbury Square, 713/726-1219. Tickets $12 (reservations recommended).

♦ **And the World Goes 'Round** is a review of the works of Kander and Ebb, who wrote the music & lyrics for such shows as *Cabaret*, *Chicago*, *The Rink*, *70 Girls 70*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, & many other classic American musicals. The show features songs & musical numbers from these shows, as well as many others, and includes songs they wrote prior to joining the world of musical theater. Fridays, Saturdays, & Sundays, Nov. 17–Dec. 16, @ the Country Playhouse, 12802 Queensbury, 713/467-4497.

♦ **A Bad Night's Sleep** is all about the agony of suffering through a bad night's sleep. It's loaded with original music, bogus commercials, & several of Radio Music Theatre's most hilarious pieces from their nationally syndicated radio comedy...plus a one-act featuring "The Singing Fertle Family." $15 admission & reservations required; food & drink are available throughout the show. Thursdays–Saturdays @ Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt, 713/522-7722.

♦ **Black Nativity.** Langston Hughes conceived two stories in *Black Nativity*—a gospel play to celebrate the Nativity in Bethlehem, and a contemporary story fueled by the powerful testimony of believers generations later. Marsha Jackson-Randolph's adaptation is consistent with Hughes's concept. The first act recreates the splendor of the Nativity and the birth of Christ; the second act is set in a contemporary urban setting, where the congregation has gathered for a heart-filling Christmas Eve service at the Harlem River Drive Full-Gospel Church. Nov. 17–Dec. 30 @ The Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main St., 713/520-0055.

♦ **Buber Malone.** A special holiday offering, this touching drama explores the memories of an elderly widow & the mysterious "gentleman caller" she receives on dark Christmas Eve. Nov. 3–Dec. 9 @ The Little Room Downstairs Studio, 2326 Bissonnet, 713/522-LRDS (5737).

♦ **Closer.** Hailed as one of the best new plays of the 1990s, Patrick Marber's *Closer* is a bitingly funny & severe tale of four strangers who become caught in a matrix of love, sex, & betrayal. Highly contemporary and written with brutal honesty, the play explores the four's entangled relationships & their common desire

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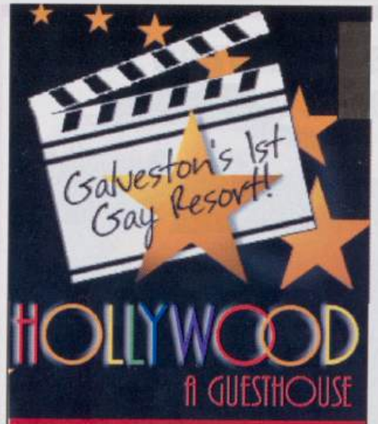
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to be closer. Through Nov. 19 @ the Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. Tickets to preview performances (Oct. 20–24) are $23; tickets to performances on or after the Oct. 25 opening range from $37–$42. Tickets can be purchased at the Alley Theatre box office or by calling 713/228-8421.

♦ **Company.** Stephen Sondheim, considered one of Broadway's greatest composers, examines life, love, & relationships in this groundbreaking musical about a bachelor named Robert and his friends, all of whom are in various stages of coupledom. Nov. 24–Dec. 31 @ Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway, 713/52-STAGE.

♦ **Forever Tango 2000** is presented by Society for the Performing Arts. Feel the heat in this steamy Broadway romp that traces origins of the tango from the brothels of turn-of-the-century Buenos Aires to the elegant drawing rooms of the Parisian society. The fine orchestra with top-notch string section plus bandoneon quartet is as compelling as the dancers. Nov. 7–12 @ Wortham Center Cullen Theater. Matinee & evening performances. Tickets available at 713/227-4SPA or through Ticketmaster at ticketmaster.com.

♦ **Grandpa Hangs the Holly** is a warm holiday comedy that explores family relationships. Adults $9; students/seniors $8; matinees $7 (all seats). Nov. 3–Dec. 2 (matinees Nov. 19 & 26) @ Theatre Suburbia, 1410 W. 43rd, 713/682-3525.

♦ **Hard Time** is a dark & sexy prison comedy which takes you into the depths of prison life to witness the animalistic behavior of men behind bars. Jeff Stryker plays the lead role. The play contains full nudity & sexual situations (no one under 18 will be admitted) and has played to packed audiences in West Hollywood, San Francisco, San Diego, & New York. Tickets are $35 ($45 for the front row). Through Nov. 12 @ Ashland St. Theatre Co., 2610 Ashland, 713/426-3019.

♦ **Houston Ballet** rings in the holiday season with 36 performances of Ben Stevenson's staging of *The Nutcracker*. In the ballet, a little girl named Clara receives a magical nutcracker on Christmas Eve, and sets out on a wondrous journey to the Land of the Snow and the Kingdom of the Sweets. Nov. 24–Dec. 30 @ the Wortham Center. Tickets $11.50–$67.50 can be purchased by calling 713/227-ARTS (2787). (*The "Nutty" Nutcracker*, a spoof of *The Nutcracker*, caps the run with a 7:30 pm performance on Dec. 30; for this performance, tickets are $11.50–$76.50.)

♦ **Houston Grand Opera** opens its 46th season with a new production of Bizet's popular masterpiece *Carmen*. Through Nov. 11. • Also in November: *Katya Kabanova*. Trapped in the claustrophobic household of her tyrannical mother-in-law, Katya is torn between her marital & social duty and her need to love & be loved. Through Nov. 12. • Both operas @ Wortham Center's Brown Theater, Texas Ave. at Smith St. Tickets ($22–$200) are available by calling 713/227-ARTS; at the Wortham Ticket Center in the lobby of the Wortham; or at www.houstongrandopera.com.

♦ **The Kathy & Mo Show–Parallel Lives** by Kathy Najimy & Mo Gaffney. This hilarious & biting comedy explores the plight of women & men and the pandmonium that ensues when the two sexes try to get together for more than a drink. Fridays, Saturdays, & Sundays, Nov. 10–Dec. 10 @ Theater LaB Houston, 1706 Alamo, 713/868-7516.

♦ **Misery.** This new adaptation of the Stephen King novel takes a darkly comic look at the story of a best-selling romantic fiction writer and his "number-one fan." Through Nov. 18 @ The Little Room Downstairs Studio, 2328 Bissonnet, 713/522-LRDS (5737).

♦ **Release Yearning** delves deeply into the issue of separation, both personal & institutional. Setting the scene are characters Emma, visiting a man on death row as a political statement, and Cam, the inmate. Emma falls in love with Cam which leads her through a series of actions including smuggling contraband to her imprisoned lover and providing Cam with the means to end his life before the state does it for him. 8 pm, Nov. 12–Dec. 17 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/355-3445.

♦ **Sin.** From the writer of *The House of Yes* comes a devilishly funny contemporary morality play set in San Francisco on the eve of the 1989 earthquake. The story centers on helicopter traffic reporter "Avery Bly on High" who is trying to keep herself above life's messiness. Her soon-to-be-ex-husband is an alcoholic, her roommate is a glutton, she's trapped in a helicopter with an envious co-worker, and her blind dates are disasters. It takes the death of her brother to teach her that pride is the deadliest of all sins, and it takes an act of God to bring her down to earth. Tickets $14 (students/seniors $10). Fridays & Saturdays at 8 pm, Sundays at 2 pm, Nov. 17–Dec. 31 @ Actors Theatre of Houston, 2506 South Boulevard, 713/529-6606.

PERFORMING ARTS

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

♦ **Frosty the Snowman.** The children of Glenville have a unique, new friend. His name is Frosty, and he is a snowman who can walk, talk, dance, & even sing! Saturdays at 11 am & 1:30 pm, Nov. 11–Dec. 30 @ The Company Onstage, 536 Westbury Square, 713/726-1219. Tickets $6 (reservations recommended).

♦ **Shakespeare, Rattle & Role.** Doth Shakespeare giveth you the willies? Hath poetry become a plague unto thee? Then this one's for you! InterActive Theater Company continues the 2000-2001 season with a brand-spankin'-new look at some really old plays. So for everyone whoever thought Shakespeare was difficult or outdated, here's an hour-long revue of his best comedies, tragedies, & histories presented especially for children. Tuesdays–Fridays at 9 & 11 am, Saturdays at 11 am, through Dec. 16 (no performances Nov. 21–25) @ Lambert Hall Performing Arts Center, 1703 Heights Blvd. at W. 17th St. Tickets $5 for children & adults. Info/reservations: 713/862-7112.

♦ **The Toys Take Over Christmas.** Pre-K through 4th graders can experience the power of loyalty, love, & compassion in this story of a very special rag doll; entertaining & educational. Tickets are $8; $6 a ticket for groups of 10 or more. Nov. 25–Dec. 23 @ Stages Repertory Theatre, Allen Parkway at Waugh, 713/52-STAGE.

RADIO

♦ **After Hours** Saturdays, midnight to 3 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. KPFT 90.1 FM.

♦ **Lesbian & Gay Voices** Mondays, 8-10 pm. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

♦ **Art Classes for People With HIV: *The Art League of Houston*** is offering free art classes for people with HIV. The ongoing course meets every Thursday & Friday from 1-4 pm at the Art League, 1953 Montrose. Mixed media projects for the artist and non-artist. Constructive art-making in a relaxed atmosphere. Focus is on the healing power of art. More info: 713/523-9530. ***The Museum of Fine Arts Houston*** is offering free art classes for those with HIV/AIDS. Patrick Palmer begins his 9th year offering art instruction. Abstract painting, linoleum-cut greeting cards, & ceramics are some of the media offerings for the fall semester. Class is limited to 16. Everything is free, even lunch! The classes meet at the Glassell School of Art every Friday, 1–4 pm, 5101 Montrose Blvd., room 202. For more info: 713/639-7500 or 713/526-1118.

♦ **Art-o-mat.** DiverseWorks joins a network of sites throughout the U.S. serving as hosts for a national project known as *Art-o-mat*. Artists T. Clark Whittington and George Doles III, residents of the tobacco town of Winston-Salem, founded the Art-o-mat project in 1997. Their mission was to create an outlet where artists can expose their names & works to people who would otherwise not see it. They worked under the premise that art should be progressive, yet personal & approachable. What better way to do this than with a heavy cold steel machine? Whittington has refurbished an old cigarette vending machine specifically for DiverseWorks. The group Artists In Cellophane, as well as Houston-based artists, have filled the machine with original works of art that can be yours to keep for a mere $3–$5. The machine will be refilled with new art monthly. DiverseWorks will keep it filled to meet your demand. Through June 2001 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/223-8346.

♦ **Deborah Kass: The Warhol Project.** In 1992 Kass began the Warhol Project, appropriating the style & images of pop culture icon Andy Warhol. Thirty years after Warhol completed his first silkscreened image, Kass substitued her own likeness for Warhol's. And by replacing Warhol's treasured celebrities with her own cultural & personal heroes, Kass goes to the very heart of questions about originality, celebrity, & representation. The exhibition features 28 large-scale silkscreen images and is accompanied by a 100-page catalog. Through Dec. 17 @ Blaffer Gallery, which is located on the University of Houston's main campus, entrance # 16 off Cullen Blvd. Info: 713/743-9528.

♦ **From Above.** Twenty-five views of the city of Houston, taken from the perspective of Alex MacLean's single-engine Cessna. From the Ship Channel to the suburban prairie, his photos reveal landscapes as abstract compositions, providing a vital perspective on the relationship between natural & manmade environments. Through Jan. 7, 2001 @ the Menil Collection, 1511 Branard, 713/525-9400.

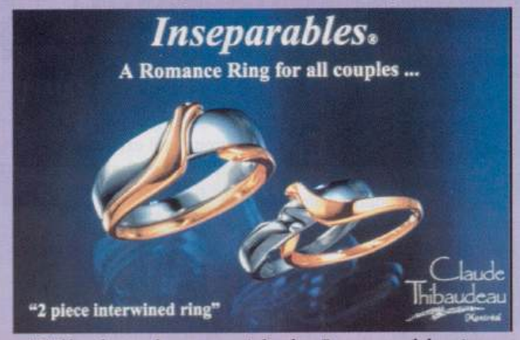
♦ **The Holocaust Woodcuts.** A suite of six monumental woodcuts on the theme of the Holocaust, presented with the original woodblocks, is on view through Nov. 27 @ Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline, 713/942-8000.

♦ **Palace** marks the U.S. premiere of new work by three Swedish artists. The exhibition features a parallel & partially intertwined presentation of works about the passage of time & the impermanent nature of life. Nov. 3–Dec. 16 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/223-8346.

♦ **To the Rescue: Eight Artists in an Archive.** The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has accumulated an archive of more than 50,000 photographs, films, videotapes, oral histories, & documents pertaining to its relief efforts. Artists were invited to create works in response to the archive. These paintings, sculptures, photographs, & multi-media installations are presented alongside those pieces from the archives. Through Dec. 1 @ Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd., 713/284-8250.

CALENDAR DEADLINE
for *OutSmart*'s December issue:
Sunday, November 12, 5 p.m.

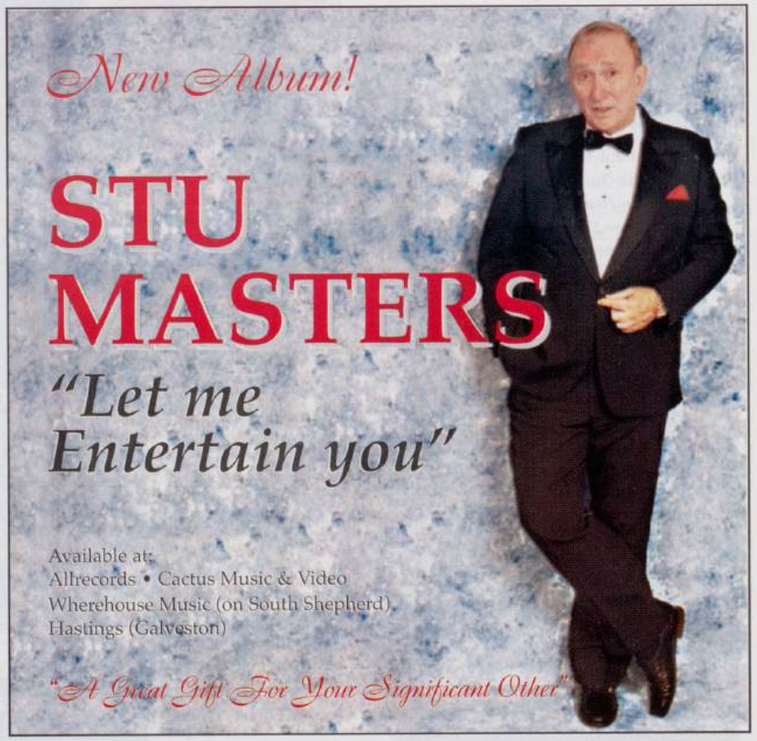
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THREE TALES OF QUEER CINEMA

The Broken Hearts Club

Written and directed by *Dawson's Creek* producer Greg Berlanti, *The Broken Hearts Club* was a hit at Sundance before it was temporarily retitled *The Broken Hearts League*, as Sony Pictures' heavy hand scrounged around for a potential target audience. (The guys meet regularly for softball, hence Sony's attempt to play up the sports angle.) Looking for *The Big Chill* and *Diner* associations, Sony attempted to position *The Broken Hearts Club* as a "slice-of-life comedy with a twist—the guys are gay." Kudos to Sony for restoring the original title prior to release.

Dennis (Timothy Olyphant from *Go* and *A Life Less Ordinary*) is a 28-year-old West Hollywood photographer wondering what life might be like outside his family. His family is—Benji (Zach Braff), Cole (*Superman's* Dean Cain), Howie (Matt McGrath), Kevin (Andrew Keegan of *Party of Five*), Anne (Mary McCormack), Leslie (Nia Long of *If These Walls Could Talk II*), and Jack (John Mahoney of *Frasier*).

In concert with Berlanti's attempt to tell a story about universal values—love, family, relationships—the producers landed a cast of gay as well as straight actors. Dean Cain confessed to having to explain his kissing scenes to his mom before he let her see the movie. Olyphant loved the script and jumped at the chance to play Dennis.

The Broken Hearts Club explores the lines and issues that change friendship to family and takes a look (through Dennis's eyes) at the individual as a member of a group and explores what it takes to exist apart from that group. And it does it all with humor and fun.

The Broken Hearts Club is scheduled to open in November at Angelika and Greenway theaters. —*John Stiles*



Dean Cain as Cole in *The Broken Hearts Club*. Inset: John Mahoney (*Frasier*) as surrogate "mother," Jack.

What's Cooking?

An English woman, born in Africa of Indian descent, writes and directs a story of four families (African-American, Jewish, Latino, and Vietnamese) celebrating Thanksgiving in Los Angeles. Could we get any busier? How about we throw in some space aliens to liven things up? Alfre Woodard plays the African-American mother, Mercedes Ruehl is the Latina mother, and Joan Chen is the Vietnamese. The Jewish family consists of mom (Lainie Kazan), daughter Rachel (Kyra Sedgwick), and Rachel's lover Carla (Julianna Margulies).



L-r: Julianna Margulies stars as Carla (Rachel's lover), Lainie Kazan stars as Ruth (Rachel's mom), and Kyra Sedgwick stars as Rachel in *What's Cooking?*

If writer-director's Gurnder Chadha's award-winning race-sex comedy *Bhaji on the Beach* is any guide, *What's Cooking?* should be funny and frantic.

Following on such recent hits as *Like Water for Chocolate*, *Big Night*, and *Woman on Top*, *What's Cooking?* features food preparation and consumption as well as some interesting twists on the traditional-but-tired Thanksgiving turkey.

What's Cooking? is scheduled to start November 17 at Greenway Theatre. —*JS*



Steve Wood (left) and Alexis Arquette star in *Close To*, released as part of *Love Reinvented* by Jour De Fête Films.

Love Reinvented

In the early 1990s, the French government commissioned a screenwriting competition to promote AIDS awareness. Of the several thousand scripts submitted, approximately 30 were made; however, hardly any involved gay characters.

In response, the Association of Lesbian and Gay Pride Films, an activist organization, organized its own competition, also financed by the French government.The resulting 10 films were released as a compilation entitled *L'amour est à réinventer* (*Love Reinvented*). Hugely popular upon its release, the compilation has played theatrically for over a year.

In observance of Day Without Art, the Rice Media Center and the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center are presenting the Houston premiere of *Love Reinvented*. Additionally, the Media Center will also present the premiere of Didier le Pêcheur's provocative *Don't Let Me Die* on a Sunday. An official selection at the Toronto International Film Festival, le Pêcheur's riveting second feature portrays a world where the aftermath of AIDS has destroyed intimacy and commitment.

Love Reinvented and *Don't Let Me Die* on a Sunday run Friday, December 1 through Sunday, December 3. For more information, call the film information line at 713/348-4853, or visit www.rice.edu/~cinema. —*Kristian Salinas*

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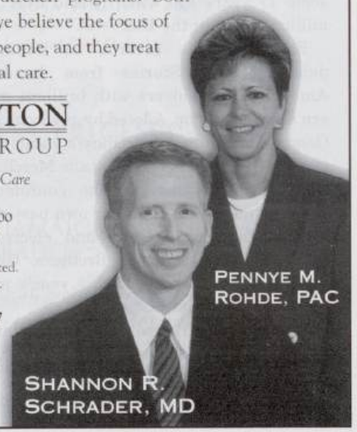
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Groove Out

by Chris Sill

FROM SADE TO CHER, FROM BETTE TO BASSEY, A ROUNDUP OF PRE-HOLIDAY RELEASES

Like the leaves falling from trees, so are the CDs flying off store shelves. No, it's not a new daytime soap, but rather the hope of music retailers as they greedily anticipate the oncoming holiday season. And one thing's for sure, they're betting on a piece of the gay dollar. So just what music is the gay consumer going to spend their disposable income on this season? Below is a savvy list of current and yet-to-be-released material by new and old, queer and not-so-queer musicians and vocalists.

By far the most anticipated release this autumn is from the voice that breaks your heart into a thousand pieces, yet manages to put it back together with the slightest of breath. Sade. It's been eight long years since her last studio album, but the silky smooth chanteuse returns with Lovers' Rock due out Nov. 14 on Epic Records. "By My Side," the first single, is already heating up certain Houston airwaves.

Also due out Nov. 14 on Epic Records is the re-release (with three additional live cuts) of She's So Unusual, from the girl who just wants to have fun. Cyndi Lauper's Grammy-winning album sounds as vibrant and vital as it did some 17 years ago when it sold over five million copies in the U.S.

From glorious returns to haunting debuts. Ghost Stories from London's Amanda Ghost shivers with brilliant modern alternative pop. Adored by gay icons Boy George and Elton John, Ghost's vocals hint of early Stevie Nicks and Natalie Merchant, but prove stronger as she confidently recounts dark tales from her own past with an eclectic mix of beats and electronic effects. Now on Warner Brothers, Ghost Stories shows off one of this year's most promising new artists.

Also out on WB—call it uncanny timing (puh-leeze), or a slick marketing tool (that's more like it), but whatever you call it, it's undeniably Bette. The Divine Miss M is back with a new CD just in time to help promote her first television sitcom. Fortunately Bette delivers the goods the way only she can serving up classics like the Temptations' "Just My Imagination."



Speaking of divas, the legendary voice of disco Loleatta Holloway ("Love Sensation") steps back onto the dance floor this winter with Queen of the Night, a collection of her greatest hits remixed for the new millennium. Another legend receiving the remix treatment is original James Bond diva Shirley Bassey, whose Diamond Remix Collection is full of classic jewels. Jellybean Recordings also gives us Divine Divas: With cuts from Veronica, Sandy B, and Jennifer Holliday to name a few, this set screams of energy and will kick any party into high gear. For deeper dance-floor grooves, search out gay superstar DJ Danny Tenaglia on Global Underground 017/London, a double disc beatmixed with his trademark hard-and-soul sound.

From the dance-floor circuit to the dinner-party circuit: Gorgeous solo piano pieces provide romantic moods on Welcome Home from gay musician Esteban Ramirez. Perfect for quiet evenings at home or for entertaining, out now on Descanso Music. While you're loading your disc changer, consider adding the import-only Loveboat from Erasure. The boys return in a mellow mood this time, so keep this one for home use. The incomparable Bjork supplies her vocal talents and more on Selmasongs. She co-produced this eerie soundtrack to the film Dancer in the Dark, in which she also stars. Queer filmgoers should also check into The Broken Hearts Club soundtrack, a feisty assembly of club cuts that should ease the pain of any jilted suitor. Out now on Engine Recordings.

For some fierce bump and grind, get reacquainted with '80s pop idols Tom Tom Club. Reappearing this winter with The Good, The Bad, and The Funky, the band is sure to keep temperatures toasty with their steamy remake of Donna Summer's "Love to Love You Baby." British female breakthrough artist Dido hands the musical reigns over to her brother Rollo (Faithless), and his band Dusted. Their mesmerizing release, "When We Were Young," is similar in feel to fellow countrymen Massive Attack, and available only on import. Last but certainly not least, on November 8 Cher releases Not Commercial, available only online. The new CD is a collection of emotional poetry set to music. Cher penned the material herself, and it marks the first time the diva has written and recorded her own material. In another first, Cher is putting a warning label on the CD because the subject matter and language are darker and more graphic than her previous work. Not Commercial is available exclusively at http://www.cher.com and http://www.cherdirect.com.



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Marilyn Manson & George W. Bush

(*Entertainment Weekly*, 10/20/2000, Erin Podolsky)

...The aggressively controversial makeup-clad rocker [Marilyn Manson] told November's *Talk* magazine that he supports the Bush ticket over Al Gore's (he says he loathes Gore's No. 2, avowed Manson-hater Sen. Joe Lieberman). The Republican response? "A hearty but firm thanks-but-no-thanks," snaps Bush campaign spokesman Tucker Eskew. "Governor Bush is a different kind of Republican—but not *that* different." And Marilyn's friends can stay away too: "We do not plan a coalition of Cross-Dressing Glam Rockers for Bush anytime soon."

Dean Cain & Timothy Olyphant

(The two straight stars of the gay film *The Broken Hearts Club*)
(*The Advocate*, 6/6/2000, Dennis Hensley)

Dennis Hensley: Were there any gay references in the script [of *The Broken Hearts Club*] you had to ask about?
Cain: I didn't know what "bottom boy" meant [*laughs*]. One of the characters calls me a bottom boy, and I get offended. They had quite a lot of fun explaining it to me. They said, "You are ye who receive." I said, "OK."
Did you keep any of the clothes you wore?
Olyphant: Yeah. My wife was like, "Oh, honey, you look good in that. Keep that."
They weren't too shiny and stretchy, as I recall.
Olyphant: Just remove one or two things, and it becomes a heterosexual outfit. If I take the necklace off and don't tuck the shirt in, I'm straight.
Cain: [*Laughs*] Gay is in the details.

Greg Berlanti

(Director of *The Broken Hearts Club*)
(*Entertainment Weekly*, 10/00, Lisa Schwarzbaum)

"We're here, we're queer, we're funnier, with better haircuts. Get used to it."


CINDY KELLEHER/SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

Miscellaneous

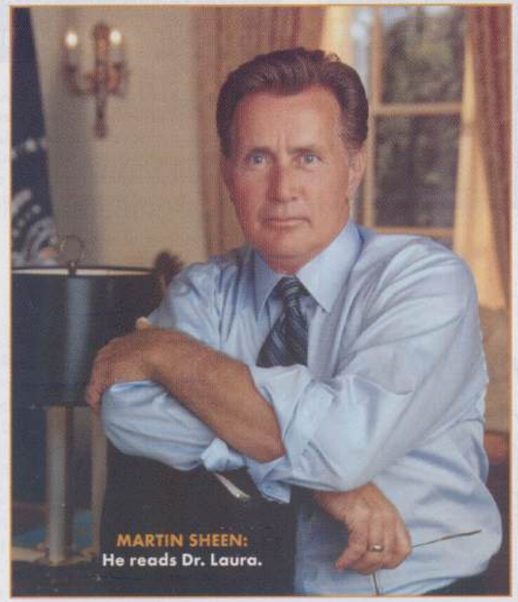
(*Movieline*, 11/2000)

From Movieline *magazine's "Third Annual Hollywood 100 Most":*

#3: Most likely to be having sex with a man as you read this **—Anne Heche**
#12: Most horrifying possible future actor**—Eminem**
#20: Most likely to be cryogenically frozen when she dies **—Cher**
#89: Most more-than-ready for a big-screen role **—Debra Messing** [Grace of *Will & Grace*]
#90: Most hilarious person on television **—Megan Mullally** [as Karen on *Will & Grace*]
#100: Most amazing actor with one testicle**—Tom Green**

The President & Dr. Laura?

On this episode of The West Wing *that aired Oct. 18 on NBC, President Josiah Bartlet (Martin Sheen) encounters Dr. Jenna Jacobs. When the president walks into the room, everyone stands...except Dr. Jacobs. Notice any similarities between Dr. Jenna Jacobs and Dr. Laura Schlessinger in the following exchange?*


MARTIN SHEEN: He reads Dr. Laura.

President Bartlet: You're Dr. Jenna Jacobs, right?
Dr. Jacobs: Yes, sir.
It's good to have you here.
Thank you.
...Forgive me, Dr. Jacobs, are you an M.D.?
A Ph.D.
A Ph.D.?
Yes, sir.
Psychology?
No, sir.
Theology?
No.
Social work?
I have a Ph.D. in English literature.
I'm asking, 'cause on your show, people call in for advice, and you go by the name Dr. Jacobs on your show, and I didn't know if maybe your listeners were confused by that and assumed you had advanced training in psychology, theology, or healthcare.
I don't believe they are confused; no, sir.
Good. I like your show. [Pause] I like how you call homosexuality an abomination.
I don't say homosexuality is an abomination, Mr. President, the Bible does.
Yes, it does. Leviticus...
18:22.
Chapter and verse. I wanted to ask you a couple of questions while I had you here. I'm interested in selling my youngest daughter into slavery as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. She's a Georgetown sophomore, speaks fluent Italian, always cleared the table when it was her turn. What would a good price for her be?
While thinking about that, can I ask another? My chief of staff...insists on working on the Sabbath. Exodus 35:2 clearly says he should be put to death.

Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano

Am I morally obligated to kill him myself, or is it OK to call the police?
Here's one that's really important, 'cause we've got a lot of sports fans in this town: Touching the skin of a dead pig makes one unclean, Leviticus 11:7. If they promise to wear gloves, can the Washington Redskins still play football? Can Notre Damë? Can West Point?
Does the whole town really have to be together to stone my brother John for planting different crops side by side?
Can I burn my mother in a small family gathering for wearing garments made from two different threads?
Think about these questions, would you?
One last thing—while you may be mistaking this for your monthly meeting of the Ignorant Tight-ass Club, in this building, when the president stands, nobody sits. [*He glares at her.*]
[*She looks like she might actually consider* not *standing.*]
[*He glares even more intently.*]
[*She stands.*]


DEBRA MESSING: She reads letters.

Debra Messing (Grace of *Will & Grace*)

(*Us Weekly*, 10/16/2000, Simon Dumenco)

[O]nce in a while the entire cast is shocked out of complacency by the viewer mail. In the end, after all, *Will & Grace* isn't just a funny factory—it's a landmark show, the sitcom that each week charmingly presents gay characters for the masses in an era in which people are still harassed, assaulted, and sometimes killed for being gay.
"I just got a letter from this 14-year-old boy," says Messing, "and he had said he's come out and that his mother was slowly but surely coming to terms with it but that his best friend has not spoken to him since, and that this has been a very difficult time for him. He said that every week he and his mother watch *Will & Grace*, and that every week they laugh together, and every week that goes by it brings them closer together. It silently broaches and heals something that couldn't really be addressed directly between them. And he ended the letter by saying, 'I only wish I had a Grace in my life.'"

BOTH PHOTOS: NBC

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A Taste of Houston

Tapas-style reviews
OutSmart Restaurant Guide

A note about our "tapas" dining reviews: You may have noticed that our advertisers are listed in our tapas section. Biased? You bet! By advertising in *OutSmart*, our advertisers are indicating that the business of the gay & lesbian community is important to them—and that's important to us at *OutSmart*. Of course, there are many other excellant and supportive restaurants out there, and we rotate mention of them into our tapas section.

A tapas-style taste of Houston

Baich's Bar and Grille
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713/650-8830
Baich's (pronounced *bay*-chess) Bar and Grill is housed on the ground floor of the 2016 Main Condo. Serving uptown Southwest quisine in a downtown atmosphere, this classy spot is the perfect location for a quiet romantic dinner. For starters try the corn crab chowder, a Baich's specialty made with sweet yellow corn and fresh lump crabmeat. There are pizzas, pasta, and a variety of sumptuous entrees: my favorite being the Southwestern Pasta consisting of chicken breast grilled to perfection, black beans, and pico de gallo with a tomato-cilantro cream sauce over fettucini. The art covering the walls is by superstar artist and 2016 Main resident Kermit Eisenhut. Live jazz on Friday nights. Entrance on Main with valet parking. $$

Barnaby's Café
604 Fairview (Hopkins)
713/522-0106
Downhome and healthy, what a combination. Our favorites are their meatloaf (and those garlic mashed potatoes!), their burgers (the big, cooked-to-order kind), hickory-smoked "pink" chicken, and spinach and cheese lasagna. Except for the burger, all of these are big enough to split. And they serve up the biggest glass of wine in Houston. The original location is near and dear to our heart, although you have to like funky, intimate, clattery atmosphere. If you like a sleeker aura, maybe you'd prefer the new River Oaks location. $

Boulevard Bistrot
4319 Montrose (just past Richmond)
713/524-6922
Houston's culinary queen Monica Pope delves into culinary wanderlust every time she mixes a drink with her signature fruit-infused alcohol. Her eclectic New American menu includes a Mediterranean sampler plate and salad Nicoise that you'll dream about until your next visit. Come for Sunday brunch, where funk meets haute couture, and taste scones the size of Mars, fluffy frittatas, and a dreamy cherry chocolate bread pudding. $$

Chapultepec
813 Richmond Ave. (@ Montrose)
713/522-2365
A sentimental favorite, and *the* place where the bold and beautiful can nurse their hangovers 24 hours a day. Get a bite of Tex-Mex at its best—no lard, only the freshest meats and vegetables, and the nicest owners you'll ever meet. Francisco Valle and his wife Thelma came across the Mexican border with four quarters and created a Richmond haven that's stood in its original spot for more than 25 years. Olé. $

Chianti
1515 South Post Oak Lane
713/840-0303
Sequestered in a little pocket of Tanglewood, this Italian sleeper exudes quaint—from the streamlined rustic Italian food to its sunken greenhouse of a dining room. Befitting its setting, the menu offers classic garden-variety Italian, except for the extraordinary stuffed artichoke, Insalata Caprese, and a spinach- and ricotta-stuffed ravioli lounging in a butter-sage pool with a simplicity that's almost startling. It's available for private parties in arguably the most picturesque setting in Houston (picturesque save for the ultra-hip martini bar tacked on to its western hip). $$

continued on page 51

by E. J. Arnell

Ghostbusters

With all respects to the dearly departed Toopees, divino Italian Restaurant & Wine Bar makes a statement in its own right



divino's authentic tastes of Italy: here, the shrimp with rosemary, atop grilled herbed polenta.

Reputations are difficult to escape from, especially for buildings. I once worked in a funky Southwestern-style restaurant in Vancouver that attracted a lot of movie stars. I rubbed shoulders with Corbin Bersen, Sam Elliott, and David Duchovny. Little did they know—the place was haunted. In the late 1800s, it had been a brothel and the head madam, Maxine, had been murdered in the basement. She was stabbed 17 times and then set on fire. Many people believe the ghost of Maxine haunts the restaurant, and there are countless stories to support her presence. Furthermore, Maxine's ghost probably has a lot of company, as the building was also a crematorium. But the ghosts notwithstanding, it's still a great restaurant serving the best chimichangas north of both borders—even if the candles do blow out on their own. The quirky reputation only adds to the allure.

I hope that the ghosts at 1830 West Alabama, now the home of divino Italian Restaurant & Wine Bar, will be friendly to the new tenants, Jim and Patrick McCray...because they deserve it. (The D in "divino" is lowercase, Jim says, so as to not confuse it with a divinity. The name comes from di vino, or "about wine" in Italian.) Many of you remember this spot as Toopees, and this seems to be the biggest threat to the new owners: living up to the reputation that all of you helped to make. Toopees's creator, Caroline Burum, was a friendly lady who shared her positive energy with the people she loved to feed. But divino is nothing like Toopees—if someone led you into the spot blindfolded, you probably wouldn't even realize you were in the same space. The new ambiance is muted and serene, the food quietly upscale. The location of the women's and men's restrooms has even been switched! About all the two eateries share in common is a street address and a friendly hands-on approach. Like anyone, Jim and Patrick McCray are going to have to fight the battle to create their own reputation in this space, but fortunately they are well equipped to do so.

There is a lot of passion in this father-son team; both are self-taught experts in the two separate themes at divino: Italian Restaurant and Wine Bar. Papa (Jim) rules the wine bar with an ever-changing, exciting list of international selections available by the bottle, and many by the glass or two-ounce taste. You can sit at the beautiful wood bar sipping samples and admiring the bottles that are displayed on brilliant copper pipes, or you can relax with company at one of the less than 20 tables. Jim's hospitable approach and constantly changing list are sure to create a strong following of wine connoisseurs.

The son (Patrick) was in Italy for the 1990 World Cup—as a spectator—and it was during this visit that he first remembers tasting real Italian food. He was so inspired that he later returned to learn firsthand the art of Italian cooking at the Merlino restaurant of Castel d'Aiano, a little town outside Bologna. Influenced by the traditional recipes and the use of fresh ingredients, he developed an authentic Italian menu to complement his father's wine bar. Co-commandeering the kitchen with Patrick is Mike Cimino, who comes to divino with such a Houston Italian chef pedigree as La Strada and La Fiamma.

Emily's goat cheese ravioli are delicate little pasta pillows made fresh daily by Patrick with goat cheese, chives, and parmigiano, then tossed in sage butter and served with toasted pine nuts. They are dreamy.

Despite the young vintages, most of the wines are worth trying. We began with a sampling of their medium-bodied reds to sip alongside two appetizers, the bruschetta trio

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Frank Arrieta



D. PARNELL

I've a feeling we're not in Toopees anymore: divino's atmosphere is sleek and serene, intimate and restful.

and rosemary shrimp skewers. This build-your-own bruschetta is a hit. Picture grilled rustic bread served with three small bowls of toppings: tomatoes and basil—sweet and flavorful even without the garlic; olive tapenade—zingy with diced kalamata olives; and Tuscan canellini bean puree—the sweeter Italian version of humus. This dish is a great sharing plate to get your appetite going. I'm not too fond of the pairing of shrimp with rosemary, but the grilled herbed polenta that accompanies them was terrific.

With any of the pasta dishes, I would recommend that you try a glass of the Clos du Lac Cabernet Franc. The intensely strong flavors of this wine cut through the rich food and leave you with a fine balance. Emily's goat cheese ravioli are delicate little pasta pillows made fresh daily by Patrick with goat cheese, chives, and parmigiano, then tossed in sage butter and served with toasted pine nuts. They are dreamy. If you're feeling like something more substantial, then try the hearty Bologna-style spinach tagliatelle. The al dente spinach noodles are topped with a generous amount of an incredibly rich, melt-in-your-mouth meat sauce. Merlin's pappardelle is a simple standby. The extra-wide egg noodles are fun to coerce onto your fork, and the porcini mushroom cream sauce will have you reaching for your wine with a smile.

The pasta dishes come in two sizes and the larger portion is definitely a meal's worth, but feel free to order a half pasta as an appetizer before moving on to a main course—the Italians do. For entrees there are chicken, pork, beef, and fish, which come with a variety of vegetable and grain accompaniments. If you're on a date or with several friends, this is the time to ask for a bottle of Windwalker's Barbera, a smoky wine from the Sierra foothills. The pork tenderloin medallions come with a pistachio, shallot, and cream sauce that works well with the accompanying steamed asparagus and roasted rosemary potatoes. The Sicilian seared tuna comes surrounded by an absolutely delicious lemon basil risotto topped with cherry tomatoes, black olives, and capers. The mixture of these Mediterranean prizes on the tangy risotto is enough reason for me to order this dish again, even though I was unhappy with the tuna—it just wasn't seared, it was soft and needed a hotter fire. I am willing to assume that the kitchen can work out little kinks like this. What is important is that the menu is simple and good.

Happily, in lieu of dessert we had a refreshing glass of Moscato d'Asti—a crisp, cool cleansing way to end a rich, filling dinner. It helps with digestion and prepares you to sever the roots that you might have established over the evening. The atmosphere of divino looks fresh and new when you first enter, but once you sit down, a strong comfortable vibe takes over. It leaks out of the mahogany, oozes into the room with the easy music, arrives in a server's smile, and gets absorbed with every bite of food and sip of wine. This is a family-run business, and the heart of this family is in every aspect of this restaurant: Jim and Patrick McCray are there each night giving anyone who comes through the door the opportunity to feel the vibe. Stop by divino and become part of its new reputation. ■

In lieu of dessert we had a refreshing glass of Moscato d'Asti—a crisp, cool cleansing way to end a rich, filling dinner.

divino Italian Restaurant & Wine Bar, 1830 West Alabama, 713/807-1123. Hours: Mon.-Sat., 4:30 p.m.-midnight. (Light menu only, 10:30-11:30 p.m.)

A Taste of Houston

Tapas-style reviews

(continued from page 48)

Dessert Gallery
3200 Kirby Drive (behind Café Express)
713/522-9999
A charming haven for dessert addicts, where Sugarbusters devotees and the calorie-challenged enter at their own risk. Convince your dentist to go public, buy up as many shares as you can afford, and inform the public of this after-dinner sweet fest. Put more clearly, their chocolate-dipped cookies make Mrs. Fields taste store-bought. $

Dish
2300 Westheimer
713/528-2050
Sleek and stylish, Dish offers a refined American menu at fabulous prices. Sister restaurant of Benjy's in the Village, Dish continues in chef/owner Aaron Guest's commitment to a singular dinning experience at affordable prices. For starters, try the arugula salad, or the fried goat cheese and wild mushrooms turnovers. Our pork chop and salmon entrees had the entire table vying for first dibs on our plate. More than just the flavor of the month, this is the place to see and be seen.

Eatzi's Market & Bakery
1702 Post Oak Blvd. (@ San Felipe)
713/629-6003
Its Alice in Wonderland myriad of choices (approximately 1,500) is a tad overzealous, but the presentation of this gourmand deli take-out is so stunning you'll be drooling within minutes. Everything baked is gorgeous and crusty, and the glass-enclosed salads, sides, and entrees span the globe. Take home an array of prepared dishes—asparagus, couscous, stuffed filet mignon wraps, a half-dozen or more chicken salads, several dozen pasta salads, just to give you a taste—and your guests will think you slaved for hours. Of course, all this comes with a price tag, so bring your Amex and prepare yourself for a food-filled obstacle course. $

Estancia Grill
414 West Gray
713/807-1111
An open grill is the focal point of the kitchen at this casual upscale eatery. Already known for its Argentinian dishes, the new menu features cuisine from all of the Americas including Mexico and other Latin American countries. The bar menu serves up mouth-watering tapas. Also served are pastas, steaks and seafood entrees along with a variety of soups, salads and sandwiches all of which reflect the bold flavors of South America. Best of all, chef Greg Webb promises to dish up some of his favorite items, most notably the Opal Duckling. The atmosphere sparkles with simple elegance and the service is attentive. $$

Gugenheim's Delicatessen
1708 Post Oak Blvd. (@ San Felipe)
713/622-2773
Open wide and you still won't be able to close your mouth around one of these famous triple stackers. Where else but this New York clone can you order a beef brisket "jawbreaker" and have enough left over for the next two nights? Giant matzo balls, crispy potato pancakes served with dollops of sour cream and apple sauce, cheese-filled blintzes, and the flakiest knishes to rival either of those other coasts. Knishes, blintzes, you ask? Don't ask. Just eat! $

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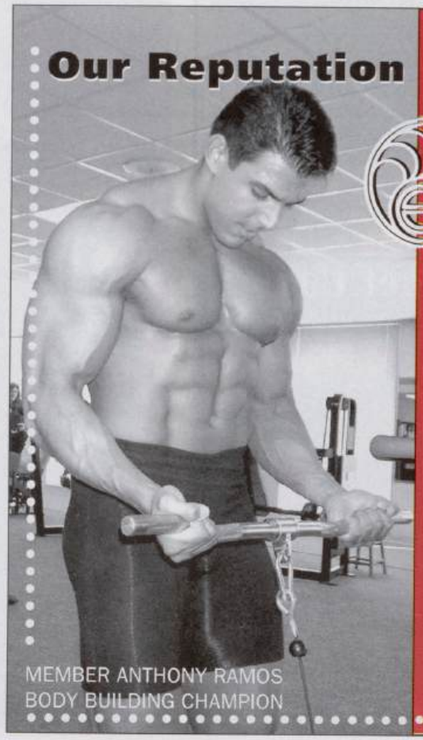




Fabulous Tower Loft, corner unit with high ceilings, wood floors, great colors; master has two patios and a city view. Yard with a deck and quick access to the pool. Downstairs is all set for computers and internet....$279,900.

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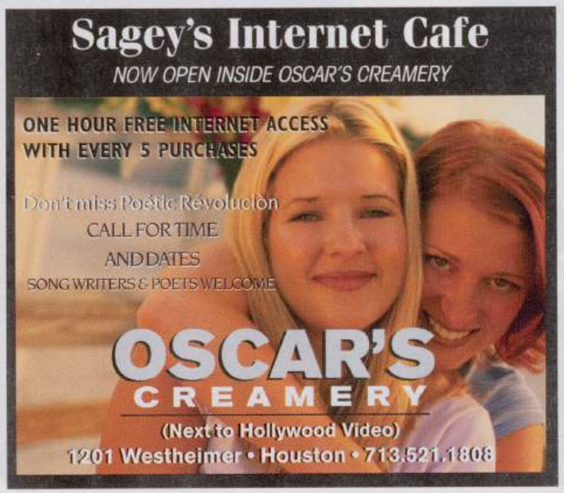
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A Taste of Houston

Tapas-style reviews

(continued from page 51)

Last Concert Cafe
1403 Nance St.
713/226-8563
Dishing up classic Tex-Mex in the warehouse district since 1952, the Last Concert is the original "insiders'" joint: Oftentimes you have to knock on their red curtained door for entry, and in Larry McMurtrey's *Terms of Endearment*, Aurora (the Shirley MacLaine character) takes a date here for a late-night flirtation. (Although a rat is mentioned nibbling a tortilla in the corner of the patio in the book, I think Larry was exaggerating for effect.) Dive aficionados will appreciate the funky atmosphere with red leatherette booths. The food's good hearty fare. We're especially fans of the potato-with-green-chili soup. $

Lobo Bookshop & Café
3939 Montrose
713/522-5156
A tasty little neighborhood sandwich shop/bookstore for the adult in everyone. The pristine sandwich menu (lunch only) features tasty turkey, chicken, and roast beef sandwiches–simple, fresh, and filling. Add chips, a drink, and a touch of voyeurism and you've got a sensual meal. Bring a friend or a good book, or peruse the store for some interesting reading. If anything, it will whet your appetite. $

Mings
2703 Montrose
713/529-7888
The friendly fast-food Chinese eatery in the heart of the Montrose. Serving up stir-fries, crispy green beans, and killer egg rolls, Ming's has taken on landmark status in only four years as a late-night chopstick feast on their patio under the stars has become an essential part of the Montrose repertoire. Their staff always cheerful and welcoming, Ming's has endeared itself to the community–and many a GLBT organization has benefited from their donations.

Niko Niko's
2520 Montrose
713/528-1308
Dishes up authentic Greek food with Kalamata olives as salty as they get. Caters as much to vegetarians as meat lovers. Grab a chicken and spinach pita on the go or chat outdoors over a plate of humus. Bring your own ambiance–everything's plastic except the food. $

Oscar's Creamery
1201 Westheimer
713/521-1808
Cyber-space and dairy. Who knew what a wonderful combination it would make? The folks at Oscar's Creamery, that's who. Priding themselves on the best damn vanilla ice cream (even calling it "vanilla" seems a shame) this side of Brenham, Oscar's also boasts a wide and ever-changing variety of specialty flavors to tease, tantalize, and thrill your palate. After recently adding a internet bar, you can order up a double waffle cone of mocha fudge coffee ripple and go online to see where, exactly, they find the mocha fudge coffee cows it comes from.

Pot Pie Pizzeria
2207 Richmond, 713/526-1702
Who needs eggs when you can eat their baked potato pizza for breakfast, lunch and dinner? This gay-owned and operated neighborhood joint will feed you till you bust. Even better, the nightly all-you-can-eat spaghetti and outdoor patio makes your gorge-fest cheap and picturesque. Perfectly boring normal folks are welcomed with open arms despite its student and bohemian clientele. $

Ragin' Cajun
4302 Richmond
713/623-6321
9600 Westheimer (at Gessner)
832/251-7171
Houston's authentic source of crawfish, red beans and rice, and anything you'd eat with tabasco. We love their fried oysters. This family business (Frank Messina and Luke Mandola) is busy just about anytime they're open. And now, after more than 20 years as a Houston institution at their atmospheric Richmond location, they opened a new restaurant in earlier this year. $

continued on page 54









Theresa DiMenno

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A Taste of Houston

Tapas-style reviews

(continued from page 52)

Riva's
1117 Missouri St. (Montrose)
713-529-3450
In one of the most verdant and restful eatery atmospheres we know of, the brothers Silboyeh bring you Italian cuisine so unusually well seasoned you'll notice the pasta as well as the sauce. The simple dinner salad is alive with fresh vegetables and a tangy vinaigrette and a pleasant forecast of things to come. These men know herbs, and their fish dishes will make seafood converts out of diehard carnivores. And pastry chef Pierre kneads up some tasty little numbers. $$

River Café
3615 Montrose
713/529-0088
Intimate weekend hangout with great patio dining. You'll spot every car down Montrose. Broad menu serving nouveau American dishes. Accessible and friendly. If you're not hungry, try the bar. $$

Sonoma
1415 California St.
713/522-7066
Wildly eclectic menu features steak pasta, Osso Bucco, and crispy crab cakes (heavy crab with minimal cake), bursting with fun and flavor. Very reasonable, and a great party atmosphere. For their Sunday brunch and afternoon T-Dance (on their patio, with its exhilerating wide-open view of downtown), owner Jay Allen makes the ultimate host. $$

Stone Mill Bakers (lunch only)
3191 W. Holcombe Blvd.
713/349-0077
2518 Kirby Dr.
713/524-6600
Yeah, they feature exquisite breads and giant cinnamon rolls, but don't get hung up on the name or you'll miss some amazing sandwiches. How about turkey on cranberry pecan bread, or curried chicken on thick, chewy Dakota bread, or vegetarian on jalapeño cheese bread? Call ahead for snappy lunch boxes filled with the gourmet sandwich of your choice, chips or fruit, and a cookie the size of a Frisbee (the chocolate chocolate chips are heavenly). $

La Strada
322 Westheimer (@ Taft)
713/523-1014
5161 San Felipe (@ Sage)
713-850-9999
Yes, they do more than Sunday brunch. It's called award-winning cuisine and matching wine list available to the entire population seven days a week. Two hip locations differ in style and mood, but not in the yummy, unconventional pastas or reliable bellinis. $$

This Is It
207 W. Gray (@ Bagby)
713/659.1608
No other place dishes up soul food like this hearty Fourth Ward spot. Just one foot in the door, and you'll smell pork chops and collard greens like mama still makes. The cornbread is the sweetest, moistest that Houston has to offer. For the uninitiated, display just a hint of down home naiveté to the gals behind the steam table and they'll give you the skinny on each dish. $

Two Rows Restaurant & Brewery
2400 University (in the Village Arcade, second floor)
713/529-2739
Any brewery is bound to get a bad rap, but this one deserves kudos for its interesting and varied menu (it even offers health-conscious selections, so phooey on the brew pub non-believer). Refreshingly, there's barely a fried potato in the house. Instead, you'll find balsamic-marinated veggies, tasty pizzas, bountiful salads and beer-infused muffins accompanied by yummy honey spiked butter. Non-beer drinkers should at least try the homemade root beer or, better yet, in a float. $

Urbana
3407 Montrose (@ Hawthorne)
713/521-1086
Stark minimalist decor, and a classy menu that offers everything Texan and beyond, with barbecue-grilled shrimp, Comal-seared tuna, richly marinated steaks, light pastas, ingenious salads, and interesting deviations on popular '90s sides like mashed potatoes and portobello mushrooms. $$

Van Loc
3010 Milam (@ Elgin)
713/528-6441
Down-to-earth Vietnamese food (with down-to-earth decor to match) draws natives, families, and downtown yuppies alike. The extensive menu offers fresh, reasonably priced traditional dishes such as vermicelli and bun, and you can even roll your own spring rolls (but unless you've honed that skill, let them do it for you). Their classically strong Vietnamese coffee will put hair on your chest. $

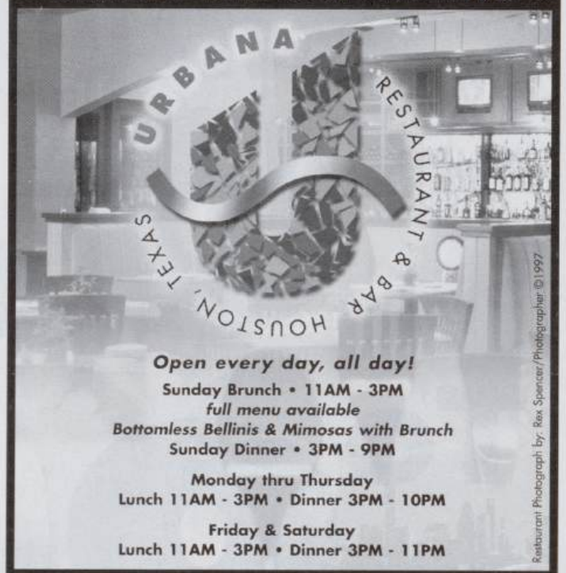
Vincent's
2701 W. Dallas
713/528-4313
Rotisserie me a chicken, baby. Next door to its brother restaurant, Nino's, Vincent's gets you great Italian/American food and wine so reasonable you'll want to shout (and you'll have to if you want to be heard). Cozier in decor than Nino's, and the green beans are like Café Chino Italian style. $$

Ziggy's Healthy Grill
2320 W. Alabama
713/527-8588
Ziggy's was always healthy and wholesome, but now that the three new owners are doctors, you know you're in for a guiltless gourmet experience. Although the decor is still a bit on the utilitarian side, we seek out Ziggy's when we don't feel like being embarrassed about our urge to eat healthy–you can even ask to see their binders with the nutritional contents of all their dishes. Both healthy and yummy, they offer comfort food like lean meatloaf, sweet yam fries, and pecan acorn squash; we especially love Ziggy's baked veggie sandwich and buffalo burger. They've all sorts of wild game burgers (known for being way lower in fat than regular cow beef)–even such exotica as ostrich, antelope, caribou, or kangaroo! Their latest offering is the Tuesday happy hour, with fresh blueberry margaritas and discounted appetizers. $

The cost guide reflects the average cost of dinner with one drink and tip. Deduct about 25 percent for average lunch prices.

$	$15 and below (inexpensive)
$$	$16 to $30 (moderate)
$$$	$31 to $50 (expensive)
$$$$	$51 or more (very expensive)

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Restaurant Photograph by: Rex Spencer/Photographer © 1997

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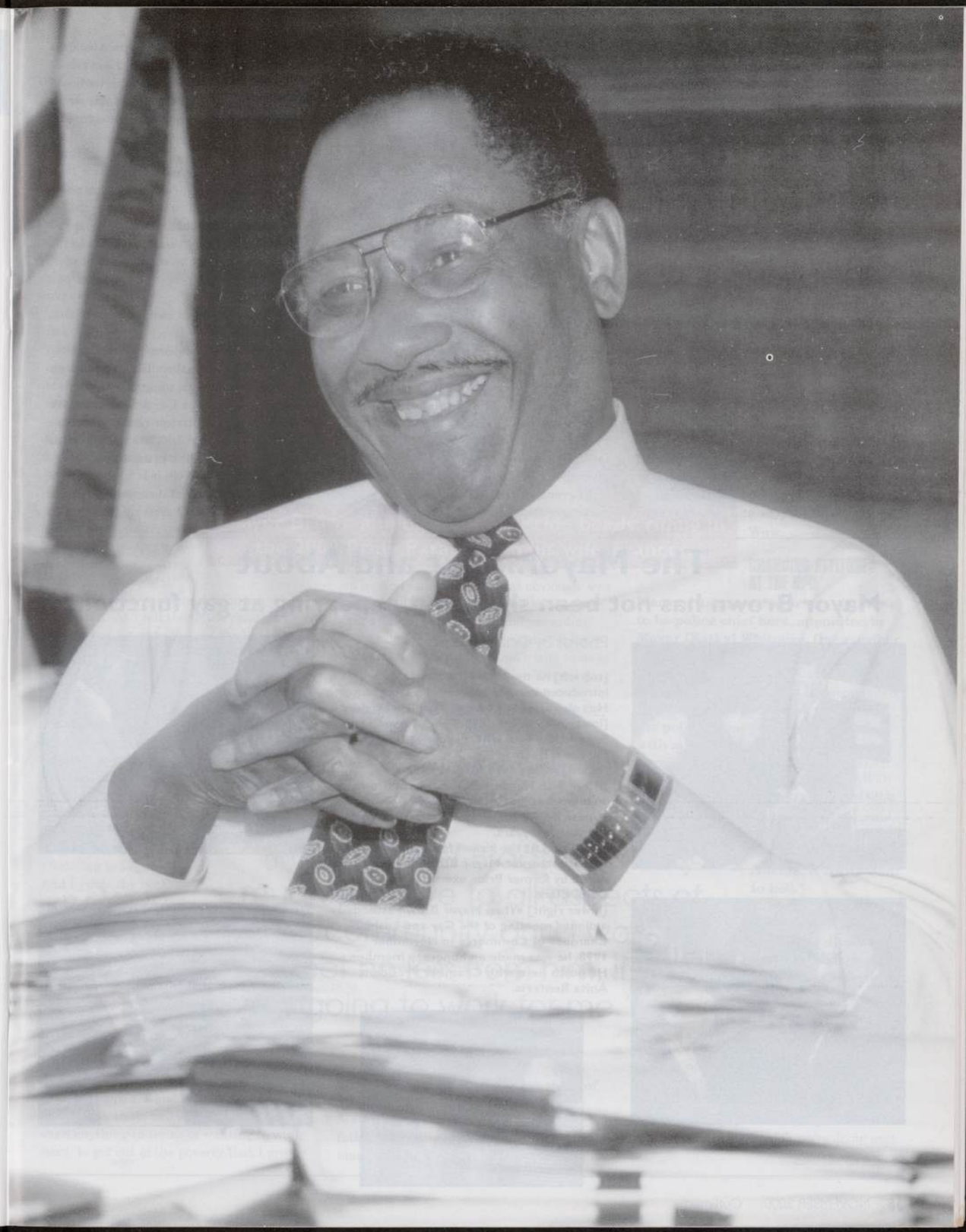
Mayor Lee Brown
& Pokey Anderson

"I ran on the platform of being a mayor for all of Houston. That's to exclude no one and include everyone." –*OutSmart* talks to Houston's gay-friendly mayor

Interview by Pokey Anderson
Photo opposite by Theresa DiMenno

I was intrigued when OutSmart *called and asked me if I'd like to interview Mayor Lee Brown. He has always seemed a bit of an enigma to me. After the interview, he still does. People who know him well describe him as very private, intelligent, and deliberate in his decision-making. In person, he is a large man who is cordial but seems almost shy. His press secretary tells the story of how he wore glasses as a child, and was an avid reader. The other kids called him a nerd. He laughs and says, "Maybe I was a nerd then. But now I'm the mayor. I wonder where they are."* OutSmart *spoke to Mayor Brown on September 12. –Pokey Anderson*

Pokey Anderson: When I first moved here in 1973, there was no meaningful communication between our community and City Hall. City Council Members would hang up the phone on us, they told us we needed psychiatrists, not rights and, in one memorable case, they called us "oddwads." In those early days, only Councilman Judson Robinson would even talk with us. Later, a mayoral candidate by the name of Louie Welch suggested, when he thought the microphones were off, that the solution to AIDS was to "shoot the queers." So, Mayor Brown, it is a great pleasure to be sitting here in your office.
Mayor Lee Brown: Well, welcome, we're happy that you are here.



You are the first Houston mayor to ride in the Gay Pride Parade while in office. It's fitting that we started the new millennium that way. How did you decide to ride in the Pride Parade?
Mayor Lee Brown: Well, it was very simple—I was asked. There are a number of parades I am asked to ride in; sometimes I can, sometimes I can't. This time there was nothing on my schedule that conflicted. So I accepted the invitation. I ran on the platform of being a mayor for all of Houston. That's to exclude no one and include everyone. So if I ride in one parade, I can ride in other parades.

And did you have fun?
Mayor Lee Brown: Oh, I had a good time! It was one of the most enthusiastic crowds that I've ever seen in a parade, maybe because it was nighttime, I don't know. People were having a good time. Equally important, many came up to me during and after the parade and thanked me for doing it. I never thought about it in the history-making context, until I was told I was the first mayor to ever ride in the parade. To me, it's the normal thing to do. I don't intend to discriminate on parades for any reason or anything else in my administration. So, I enjoyed it, and I'll do it again, if I'm asked.

And what did your wife think?
Mayor Lee Brown: Oh, she enjoyed it as well. She had a good time waving at the people. Both of us had a real good time at the parade. The only thing I regret was I didn't have a chance to watch the rest of the parade. [laughs]

"My belief is very simple, we shouldn't discriminate against anybody. Regardless."

READING ONE'S WAY OUT OF POVERTY

Your initiative, combined with the hard work of countless library employees, accomplished a near miracle, which is the Power Card. You brought the number of Houston children with library cards from 100,000 to 200,000 in about one year. That is amazing.
Mayor Lee Brown: Well, it is well over 200,000 right now. And there was a reason for doing that. When I grew up, we were very poor, and so we did not have the opportunity to travel and meet people. But I was able to travel and meet people by going to the library and reading. That was my way of doing things that you can't do with a lack of resources. And so when I got to be mayor, I pledged my administration to the children of our city, and at the same time, promised to put a library card in the hand of every school-aged child. The library staff accepted my challenge and we implemented the Power Card—we no longer have library cards, we have Power Cards. I want to expose children to the world of ideas, expose them to the computers. Many—particularly poor people—are victims of the digital divide. So we have computers in our libraries.... As I tell them [the children], knowledge is power. But it's the kind of power no one can ever take away from them. So I want to encourage kids to read, to learn, and to reach their full potential.


PHOTO BY DALTON DEHART

Mayor Brown and his rainbow Pride beads: riding in the 2000 Pride Parade with his wife, Frances.

That actually goes into my next question. When you were growing up, was there a particular book that you read that inspired you? How did you get from being the son of farm workers to a fellow with a Ph.D., for starters?
Mayor Lee Brown: I'm a Christian to begin with, and I guess the book that influenced me more was the Bible. That's where I learned right from wrong, the values that help me even today. Then another book that I read in my early life was *The Soul of Black Folks* by W. E. B. DuBois, which talked about the struggle of African-Americans in this country. And there are many other books I read. But I think those two influenced me more than anything in terms of wanting to work hard, to get out of the poverty that I grew up in. And one way to do that obviously was through education. And understanding the principles of Christianity, understanding the struggle of African-Americans all kind of came together for me. That's why some of my heroes are Jesus, because of his teachings, Gandhi, because of his nonviolent teaching, and then Martin Luther King Jr., who brought all of them together. So I do a lot of reading now...biographies, autobiographies, about the lives of other people—I find that I can learn by reading about the experiences of other people.

"(Police) Chief Bradford is very much sensitive to all aspects of our community and I would expect no less from him, if he's going to work for me."

Were your parents able to see some of your successes?
Mayor Lee Brown: My mother, yes. My father died quite a while ago. I was a policeman when he died. My mother was alive until I was campaigning for mayor. She died before I got elected, but during the campaign, she saw me go to the White House, so that was a big thrill for her.

I'll bet she was proud.
Mayor Lee Brown: Yeah.

You started out as a patrolman in San Jose, California. Did you have any worries about making the physical test?
No, no. I went to college on a football scholarship, so I was very much in shape. In fact, I broke all the records in the physical agility tests—I ran faster, did all the things—I almost got a perfect score. So I was in good shape.
Wow.

CHANGING ATTITUDES AT THE HPD

Many of us remember when you came to be police chief here, appointed by Mayor [Kathy] Whitmire. One member of our community wrote to me, "I can remember when Lee Brown came to Houston as police chief. He proceeded to completely reverse the attitude in the police department in his dealings with minorities (gay, black, transgendered, Hispanic, Asian, and so on). However, when he left, Elizabeth Watson took over and it began to backslide a little because of a lack of respect for her. Under Sam Nuchia, it really went to hell."
During Chief Watson's watch, Annise Parker was doing diversity training. And then there was that decoy operation, with some of the officers going out pretending to be gay and making arrests of those who would attack gay people, which was pretty creative. How do you think we're doing now in sensitivity to the gay community?
Mayor Lee Brown: I think we're doing well.

continued on page 62

The Mayor...Out and About

Mayor Brown has not been shy about appearing at gay functions

Photos By Dalton DeHart











[top left] At the 2000 HRC dinner, Brown introduced keynote speaker Maya Angelou. He's also attended several Black Tie Dinners.
[lower left] At the 1998 dinner, Mayor Brown talks with HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch.
[below] At the 1998 AIDS Walk: Mayor Brown with Matthew Eastus, whom Brown appointed as his liaison to the GLBT community. Brown has attended the AIDS Walk the past two years.
[top right] At the kickoff for Pride 1998 at Riva's restaurant, Mayor Brown is introduced by former Pride executive director Carol Clark.
[lower right] When Mayor Brown attended a dinner meeting of the Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce in November 1998, he was made an honorary member. He poses here with Chamber President Anita Renteria.

What's Wrong with the "State of Emergency"?

An insider talks about who took action– and who didn't–to address the current crisis

by Steven L. Walker

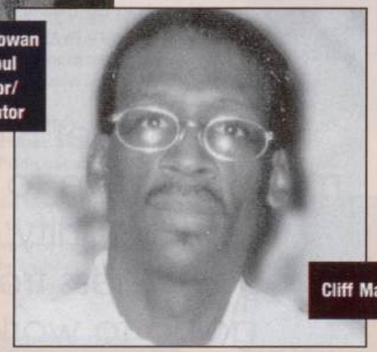
HIV +



CeeCee McGowan
Project Soul Coordinator/ Peer Educator



Shirley Johnson
HIV educator



Cliff Macklin

These photos are of African-American men and women who are HIV-positive. In declaring a State of Emergency, these are the people that the mayor and the city wished to serve. If the State of Emergency is not acted on, these are just a few of the people who are left out in the cold. These photos were gathered by Dena Gray for the installation State of Emergency at Project Row Houses.

For nearly a year now, Houston's African-American community has been under a State of Emergency, as declared by Mayor Lee Brown and County Judge Eckels last December. The declaration was made as current HIV-infection data indicated that nearly 61 percent of the newly reported HIV infections were among African-Americans. Also released with the declaration was a State of Emergency Plan that outlined the epidemic and offered some immediate HIV-prevention strategies, including community mobilization, public information, and one-on-one education to raise levels of awareness to the disease.

At the time the declaration was made, I was manager of the city's HIV Prevention Program. Almost immediately after the mayor completed his address, I began answering the question, "Where's the state of emergency?" as many community members, HIV service organizations, and others expected more. Many persons seemed to expect a greater intensity, notwithstanding the increased radio, television, and billboard advertising and community awareness meetings that began in the months following the declaration. I said then and still say today that addressing HIV/AIDS involves a complex and comprehensive approach; Houston's HIV epidemic is entering its 20th year, and it's unrealistic to expect that substantial decreases in the infection rate will occur after just a few short months.

So what's wrong with the State of Emergency? In my opinion there are three critical issues. First, the lack of resources dedicated to HIV prevention. It's unfortunate that as the Declaration and State of Emergency Plan were being developed, the city was soon to announce a financial crisis and subsequent spending reduction across several city departments. This meant, in short, that we saw no increased allocation of funds specifically for HIV-prevention efforts. Aside from new grants received, the city's allocation to HIV prevention has remained relatively flat for nearly 10 years.

Aside from new grants received, the city's allocation to HIV prevention has remained relatively flat for nearly 10 years.

continued on page 63

A Call to Action

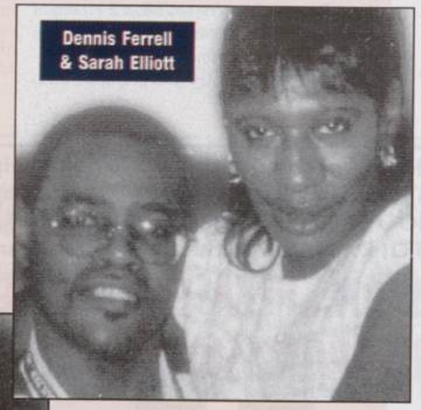
Houston is hosting a nationwide HIV leadership summit in March –isn't it time we started showing some leadership?

by Dena Gray

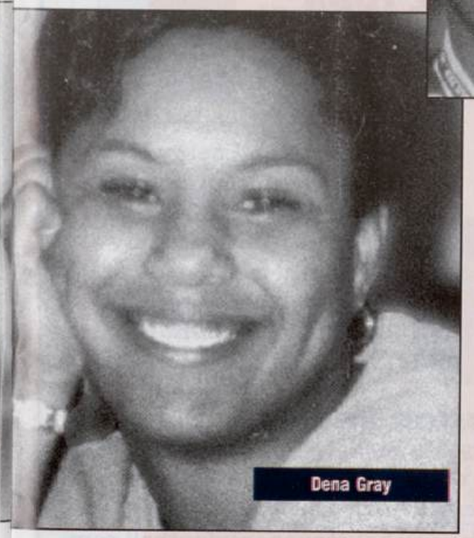
STATE OF EMERGENCY

We at OutSmart think that Mayor Lee Brown needs to be recognized as a leader who has taken an unblinking stance in support of gay issues and the gay community. At the same time, we also want to urge the mayor to assume a leadership position in regards to HIV/AIDS, and especially to act on the State of Emergency which he himself declared a year ago about the growth of AIDS in Houston's African-American community. If this is a state of emergency, where are the flashing lights, the urgent and direct measures? What happened?

To address the issue of the state of emergency, we asked two leaders in the HIV/AIDS community to write about the state of emergency from their informed vantage points. Steven Walker, who recently resigned as manager of the Public Health Department's HIV Prevention Program, addresses what's caused the stagnation. Dena Gray—director of volunteer services at Bering Omega House—issues a call to action to the city and the health department to act before a national HIV leadership conference comes to Houston in March of next year.



Dennis Ferrell & Sarah Elliott



Dena Gray

The time to address HIV is now. In Houston, we are not doing this. We HIV advocates throw down the glove and challenge the city and the health department to start truly working to stop HIV from spreading—and the deadline is four months away.

The eyes of the HIV-prevention and -care community will be on Houston in March 2001, as our city hosts the Annual Community Planning Leadership Summit. Sponsored by the National Minority AIDS Council, the conference focuses on how we can work within our communities to stop the spread of HIV infection.

This is our chance to show either that we are serious about addressing this epidemic...or that we are going to continue to ignore it. Which one will it be? Only the City Council, Mayor Lee P. Brown, and Dr. Mary des Vignes-Kendricks, director of Health and Human Services, can address that.

Yes, a state of emergency was declared by the mayor, but where are we one year later? Community leaders have asked the question time and again, that in a "state" such as we are in, where are we? Yes, we have encouraged more churches to get involved in this war. But have we put out the money to give their congregations somewhere to go? No. Yes, we have broadcast PSAs on HIV and ways to stop transmission—but how often has our City Council and mayor addressed this issue publicly to show their support not only for the cause but for the people? Never. Have we looked at ways of increasing our HIV/AIDS service organizations' resources so that they can do more than provide "adequate" prevention methods? No. A Call to Action was published after the mayor's declaration—where are we on those objectives to date? I believe it is time for the mayor, City Council, and the director of Health and Human Services to give the community an update on our accomplishments as

This is our chance to show either that we are serious about addressing this epidemic...or that we are going to continue to ignore it.

continued on page 64

continued from page 59

Chief Bradford is very much sensitive to all aspects of our community and I would expect no less from him, if he's going to work for me. So I think we're doing OK now. I'm not hearing any complaints anyway.

How about openly gay/lesbian officers in HPD—do you think they have a difficult time? Do you know that there are some?

Mayor Lee Brown: I think that things have evolved so that they should be able to perform their duties like anyone else. I think, when I was police chief, we started the diversity training. That helped tremendously and that's continued since I left. So I think that it's a whole different attitude today—much more open, more understanding, more accepting. I know there are openly gay police officers and I don't hear of them having any problems.

Hate crimes is certainly an issue that affects many people in our community.

> "I have certainly been a victim of bigotry and prejudice and discrimination–that's been part of my life and growing up. I understand all that and that's one of the reasons why I got elected mayor. I said I'd do something about it."

The sad deaths of James Byrd and Matthew Shepard shocked the nation. I understand you went to the funeral of Mr. Byrd.

Mayor Lee Brown: Yes, I did.

And some of us remember there was a murder of a banker, Paul Broussard, and before that, Fred Paez, and of course many, many others, some of whom we don't even know their names. Have you yourself been a victim of a hate crime, or have you witnessed it?

Mayor Lee Brown: You know, when you are the police chief, you're not often a victim of crimes. [chuckles] I can't say that I've been a victim of a hate crime. I have certainly been a victim of bigotry and prejudice and discrimination—that's been part of my life and growing up. But I understand all that, and that's one of the reasons why I got elected mayor. I said I'd do something about it. So we created a hate crime office with a police officer in charge of it, and elevated a hate crime to the same level of any other major felony. And in addition to that, we started training programs for prevention purposes. So we did a lot and a lot is still being done—the hate crime hotline.

So I wanted to do at least two things. Number one, to prevent hate crimes. And do that through education and other activities. And, number two, if one occurred, to make sure it is treated for what it is, a very, very serious crime—and that the people who would be responsible for committing a hate crime would be apprehended and punished rapidly.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN RIGHTS VS. GAY RIGHTS?

There have been some scuffles in the

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State of Emergency

continued from page 60

This year, in fact, the city will spend more non-grant funds on office supplies than it will on HIV-prevention efforts. At this critical juncture in the health of Houston, we have Council members who still don't get it, and would risk further reduction in public health programs by proposing and approving a tax rollback at a time when the city can least afford it. Money is not the cure to HIV, but it can help spread the message via the media, and allow more organizations and individuals to provide the greatly needed services.

> **At this critical juncture in the health of Houston, we have council members who still don't get it, and would risk further reduction in public health programs by proposing and approving a tax rollback at a time when the city can least afford it.**

Second, there remains a void in leadership in the area of public health. In my view, the mayor, as he has done on other issues, deferred to the responsible city department for leadership—in this case, the Department of Health and Human Services. This is as it should be. By all accounts, our public health department should play a leading role in this struggle, as it is responsible for properly managing the community-planning process and disbursing millions of dollars in grant funds for HIV prevention. It is the duty of the public health department to set the standard, influence public policy, and unify providers.

In this regard, however, the public health department has fallen short of my expectations, and those of many in the community. I wish I could say that during my tenure at Health and Human Services, every decision made was done with the public's best interest and health in mind. Whether it is making staffing plans, setting performance standards for all providers, or developing messages for the community, the proverbial too-many-cooks-in-the-kitchen readily applies. This would not be a problem if all the cooks agreed on the meal being prepared; it's disastrous, however, if one person, who lacks program knowledge and experience, declares herself the head chef and changes the menu, without consultation or advisement of the others. If I was not already bald, the amount of time I spent dealing with personalities and egos within the department would have truly caused me to pull out any remaining follicles.

Third, in my opinion, also unrealistic is the expectation that the mayor alone bears the burden of addressing HIV/AIDS. As I mentioned earlier, the Health and Human Services Department is responsible for maintaining the health of Houston. Yes, the mayor indicated in his State of Emergency address that he would attempt to incorporate HIV/AIDS-awareness messages in all major speeches. I have witnessed the mayor doing this at several key gatherings of African-Americans. He has also spoken rather clearly about the HIV/AIDS problem on several African-American radio programs. I have been equally impressed with HIV-prevention lectures delivered by Council Member Jew Don Boney; at a concert in May, he delivered one of the best synopses of the problem and strategies of prevention (including condom use and early HIV testing) that I have ever heard from a non-health official.

This is where I personally drew the line.

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Call to Action

continued from page 61

well as shortcomings. What better time than during the 2001 summit?

If the mayor and City Council are pleased with the actions that they have taken to date to address the severe need for increased HIV-prevention resources—and by that I mean dollars—then everyone should know about it. If we have met our Call to Action goals and have made a significant impact on HIV infection in the city, we should be talking about it. But we are not. So that raises the question, Why not?

The Community Planning Leadership Summit provides Houston with the opportunity to prove its dedication on the war to HIV/AIDS. It gives the chance to encourage continued collaboration with community-based organizations and allows for a more aggressive and action-oriented approach as we enter this second year of "emergency." Let us treat it like an emergency. What will our response be? ■

Dena Gray is the director of volunteer services at Bering-Omega.

Emergency in the Third Ward

Dena Gray—along with Kevin Ballew (coordinator of the NAACP's youth program), Harry Livesay (a social worker in HIV/AIDS services since 1988), Michael Peranteau (co-founder of The Center for AIDS), and graphic artist Theresa Southall—put together an installation called *State of Emergency* at Project Row Houses in the Third Ward.

State of Emergency looks specifically at the HIV/AIDS situation in Houston's African-American communities, and includes a mini-information center about prevention, transmission, and treatment of HIV/ AIDS.

As part of the project, they will be issuing a call to prominent African-American leaders to get tested for HIV at Project Row Houses community street festival on November 12, including Mayor Lee Brown, U.S. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, United Way executive director Jackie Martin, NAACP executive director Yolanda Norman-Smith, State Representatives Rodney Ellis and Garnet Coleman, and Director of Health and Human Services Department Dr. Mary des Vignes-Kendricks.

For those of you unfamiliar with Project Row Houses, you need to know that this is one of the most vital and exciting places in Houston. Founded in 1992 by Rick Lowe, PRH has turned 22 row houses that were about to be demolished into an incubator of community and dreams. Located in the Third Ward, PRH sponsors artists' projects, community education, children's programs, street festivals, even a weekend jazz lounge. Hours: Wed.-Fri., noon–6; Sat. & Sun., noon–5. 2501 Holman, 713/526-7662 (Directions from Montrose: take Westheimer into town, it turns into Elgin, go right on Dowling, left on Holman, and Project Row Houses is just a few blocks on your left.)

State of Emergency

continued from page 63

Neither the mayor nor any member of City Council is a public health or medical professional. I prefer that people specifically trained in this regard conduct HIV testing, education, counseling, and support groups. On several occasions, I challenged myself and staff to really understand our roles in addressing the epidemic. If the HIV infection rate continued to increase, we had to think seriously about restructuring our approach. The same is true of any community-based organizations that conduct HIV/AIDS programs.

If Houston is to be successful in eradicating HIV/AIDS from the landscape, it will be necessary to continue progress on a common goal: survival of the community. This requires collaborations and cooperation at a new level. There needs to be involvement of citizens in prevention-planning processes, and HIV-prevention efforts must be made a true budget priority by Council Members, public health officials, and community representatives alike. ■

The former administration manager for the HIV Prevention Program of the Public Health Department, Steve Walker is now executive director of the Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation. His opinions and views do not necessarily reflect those of the foundation.

African-American community, particularly in some of the churches, to the effect if we pay attention to gay and lesbian issues, that might water down some of the issues for people of color. How do you approach that argument?
Mayor Lee Brown: Hmmm, in fact, I haven't heard that argument before. I don't see where it holds any credence. I think certainly if you are a religious person, you should hold the same beliefs that I hold and that is to treat everyone with decency and respect, do not hold discriminatory values against anyone. That's what the Christian teaching is all about. So I've not heard that, and I'm kind of surprised that that would be any attitude that's projected within the African-American religious community. At least in my church, that's not the attitude. And the Bible I read, that's not something that's talked about by the teachings of Christianity.

OutSmart: "There have been some scuffles in the African-American community, particularly in some of the churches, to the effect if we pay attention to gay and lesbian issues, that might water down some of the issues for people of color."

Lee Brown: "Hmmm, in fact, I haven't heard that argument before. I don't see where it holds any credence."

MAKING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GAYS AND LESBIANS ILLEGAL

Soon after you took office you signed an executive order prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in city government. The order has been tied up in court ever since.
Where are we now?
Mayor Lee Brown: Still tied up in court. Council Member [Rob] Todd along with another fellow [Richard Hotze], I forget his name, filed a lawsuit challenging my authority to issue an executive order on that subject. My belief is very simple—we shouldn't discriminate against anybody. Regardless. So I wanted to add the element of sexual orientation in the executive order. Clearly the mayor has the authority to issue executive orders. They've issued them ever since there's been a mayor, as far as I can tell. I understand the appellate court is going to hear the appeal. And the issue is whether or not Councilman Todd and the other person have a standing in this case. The reason I say that is because the executive order does not affect Councilman Todd as an elected official, only city employees that are hired. My belief is that they don't have standing to bring the litigation against me, so I hope to prevail.

Even [while the suit is] pending, I am not going to allow discrimination. Even at this point, without the executive order, we shouldn't discriminate. That I won't tolerate.

AIDS STATE OF EMERGENCY

We recently had a declaration of a State of Emergency on AIDS. We've

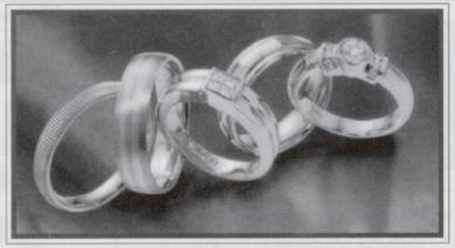
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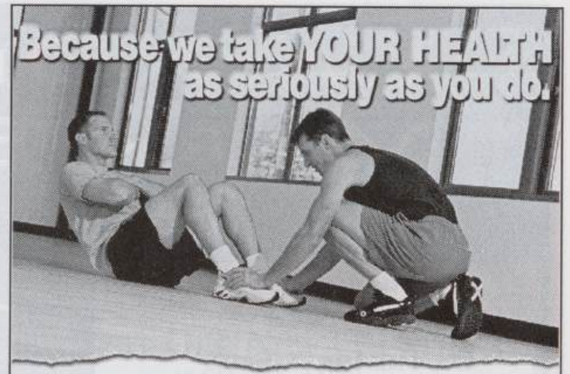
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seen the ravaging of not only the gay community, but communities of color, women, children. Africa is under tremendous economic stress because of AIDS now. We recently lost Gary van Ooteghem here who was quite a wonderful advocate for AIDS. How are we doing after two decades of fighting AIDS?

Mayor Lee Brown: I think we're making progress in the gay and lesbian community, after years and years of struggle and all too many deaths. What we see now in Harris County is still a real problem with HIV/AIDS. It's changed to some extent. Going back to 1999, the largest number of new AIDS cases was in the African-American community. And mainly females. And based upon that, I did declare an emergency within the African-American community. Tried to get the message out that AIDS really represents a preventable disease.

I think the African-American community can take a page out of the history of the gay and lesbian community in terms of what was done there to reduce the amount of new AIDS cases. And so I appointed Council Member Jew Don Boney to head a task force and involve a representative segment of the community to mount an extensive educational program, to deal with getting the message out and encouraging people to be tested. In the black community, your religious leaders have quite a following, so to get them involved in it as well. So the effort is going on the radios in the black community, as well in the newspapers. So there is an all-out effort to try to curb this problem because it is of epidemic proportion.

"I think the African-American community can take a page out of the history of the gay and lesbian community in terms of what was done there to reduce the amount of new AIDS cases."

DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS FOR CITY EMPLOYEES?

Domestic partnership benefits—I believe about 3,000 corporations have done this. Many of the large Fortune 500s, many governments have done it. Annise Parker is determined to have it done. Do you think it would be a good thing for the city and would you support it?

Mayor Lee Brown: We're looking at that. I think the best way to approach it is to make sure there is a consensus. As you know, some time ago, the city put an initiative on the ballot and got beat rather soundly. *[Editor's note: An antidiscrimination ordinance proposed in Houston in 1984 provoked much hateful opposition, and was virulently defeated.]* I don't want that to happen. So we're looking at the environment to see when we can develop enough consensus. Once that's done, then we'll pursue it.

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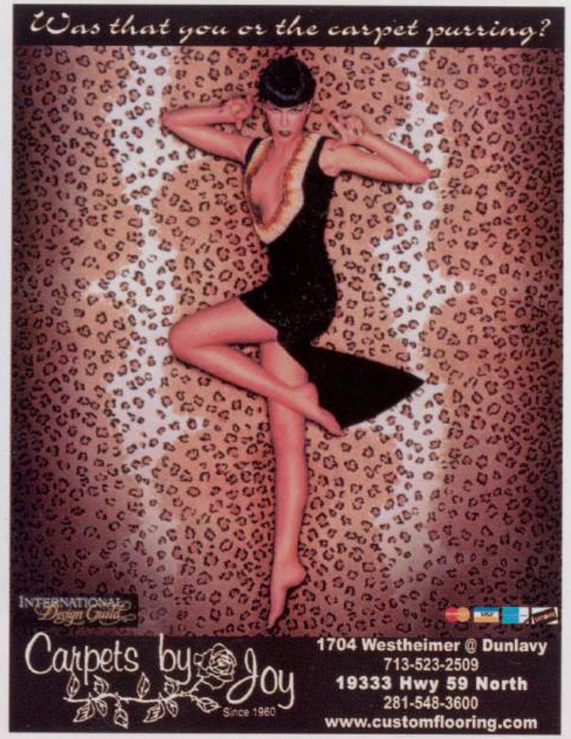


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employees, politics and all. What's the hardest part about being mayor? And do you wish the term limits were for four years sometimes?
Mayor Lee Brown: [Hesitates, laughs.] You know, one of the problems that I spend a lot of time on is the political arena, dealing with Council relationships. Because for me to get anything done, I have to have eight votes on Council. And you have different personalities, different attitudes, different aspirations on our City Council. So, it's something we have to constantly work on to make sure we have good Council relationships.... So those kind of things take a lot of my time, but it is necessary to do so.

About prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation for city employees:

"Even (while the suit is) pending, I am not going to allow discrimination. Even at this point, without the executive order, we shouldn't discriminate. That I won't tolerate."

I've seen you at the Comets' games. Is that a fun part of the job?
Mayor Lee Brown: Oh, that is the fun part of the job. I enjoy sports. Like I said, I went to college on a football scholarship. I certainly enjoy the Comets' games, the Rockets' games, and the Astros' games. I'll be looking forward to enjoying the Texans' games as well.

And when are we going to get you out there when Team NRG wants you to dance with the fans?
Mayor Lee Brown: [Laughs] I'm not a dancer.

If Vice President Gore becomes president, would you consider an appointment in his administration?
Mayor Lee Brown: You know, I've been to Washington and I served in the Cabinet. My objective at this point in life is to serve out my term, hopefully my three terms as mayor, because I think I have the best job right now as mayor of this city. And then go back to Rice University and teach, that's my ambition.

Thank you very much. I really appreciate your time.
Mayor Lee Brown: Feel free to call anytime you want. It's a pleasure.

Pokey Anderson has been a lesbian activist in Houston for over 25 years. She co-founded the Gay/Lesbian Political Caucus in 1975, and was in the first delegation invited to discuss gay/lesbian rights at the White House in 1977. After managing Inklings Bookshop for nearly a decade, Pokey went back to school and is now an independent financial planner.

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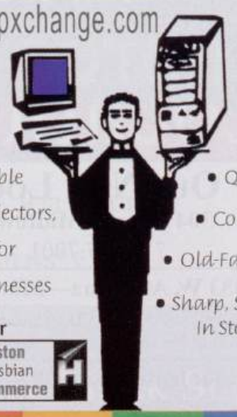
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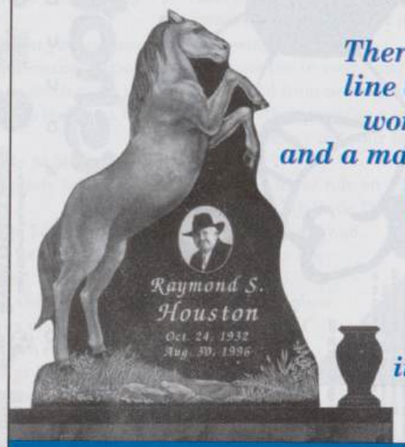
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MERIT BADGES FOR DYKES

by D. L. Murphy and Deb Chwalek

Artwork by Susan Wingfield

Editor's Note: Now that the Boy Scouts have presented us with a living picture of a homophobic Scouts organization, we started thinking about what an inclusive Scouts might look like.

For you few GLBT folks out there who aren't former Scouts, the Scouting program is largely built around earning merit badges for activities as diverse as from cooking to community organizing; in addition, each merit badge has several levels of difficulty. Every area of accomplishment and personal growth seems to be covered—except one. So D. L. Murphy and Deb Chwalek decided there needed to be a special adjunct guide with merit badges for dykes. Lesbian Scouts can work their way up through the levels of accomplishment, eventually working to earn the highest rank, the High Femme or Diesel Dyke Awards, the equivalent of the Eagle Scout or Gold Award.

Still a work in progress, this is eventually planned as a book (although the San Jacinto Girl Scouts have not yet reviewed it for possible adoption). We humbly submit for your consideration the first installment, the "Coming Out" merit badge.

MAIDEN LEVEL



To earn the Maiden Level Coming Out badge, the candidate must complete four of the following activities:

1. Be sure in her own heart she is lesbian. This requirement is considered complete once the Mentor is convinced of the assertion. The Mentor is discouraged from sleeping with the Maiden to prove the assertion.
2. Come out to another member of the queer community. Hedging of any sort, as in "maybe I'm really just bisexual," is not allowed.
3. Present the Mentor with a list of three community resources available to the newly out. This list cannot include bars.
4. Prepare three smart-ass answers for when someone calls you a dyke.
5. Memorize the following mantra: Just because I go out with her doesn't mean I have to kiss her. Just because I kiss her doesn't mean I have to sleep with her. Just because I sleep with her doesn't mean I have to marry her.
6. Prepare a convincing argument, pro or con, to the following assertions: "All lesbians hate men" and "Lesbians are made and not born."

MOTHER LEVEL



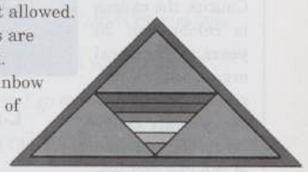
To earn the Mother Level Coming Out badge, the candidate must possess the Maiden Level Badge and complete six of the following activities, including the two starred ones.

1. Have sex with another woman. Your Mentor will help you decide if what occurred between the two of you actually constituted sex.*
2. Tell a heterosexual person you are lesbian. This must be a heterosexual person you actually know prior to coming out to them, not the support group leader at the PFLAG meeting.
3. Demonstrate the ability to discern between femme, butch, femmy butch, and butchy femme.
4. Participate in one of the following sports, either as a participant or as a rabid fan: softball, rugby, flag football.
5. Know the name of and the location of at least one gay bar. Actually visit the bar. You must be sober when you enter the bar. You must stay in the bar at least an hour in order to complete this requirement. And no hiding in the bathroom!*
6. Have a favorite WNBA team. Demonstrate your knowledge of the team by discussing the relative merits of its starting lineup versus the starting lineup of the current WNBA championship team.
7. Be familiar with the love lives of Melissa Etheridge, Ellen DeGeneres, and Madonna.
8. Attend a women's music festival.
9. Watch the movies *Personal Best*, *Desert Hearts*, *Better Than Chocolate*. Explain to the Mentor why you "loved her, hated her" in each film.
10. Buy a copy of *The Well of Loneliness*. Reading the book is optional.

CRONE LEVEL

To earn the Crone Level Badge, the candidate must possess both the Maiden Level and Mother Level Coming Out badges and must also complete four of the following activities.

1. Come out to your parents. You may be exempted from coming out to your father if your mother provides a signed affidavit stating, "don't tell your father, it will kill him."
2. March in, or ride on a float in, your community's Gay Pride Parade. Wearing a mask is not allowed. Funny hats are encouraged.
3. Put a rainbow flag sticker of some sort on your car or bicycle.



4. Come out to everyone you care about.
5. Go to the Michigan Women's Music Festival. Put an "I saw you naked in Michigan" bumper sticker on your car.
6. Put a picture of you and your life partner enjoying one another's company on your desk at work. ■

Happy Birthday and Thank You

25 years of political activism at the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus

by Clarence Burton Bagby

In June of 1975, four people came together to found what would become the oldest gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender civil rights organization in the South. They called it the Gay Political Caucus. It's difficult to fathom that there were only those four: Pokey Anderson, Bill Buie, Hugh Crell, and Keith McGee. Even in 1975, few activists in Houston would speak out publicly for fear of losing their jobs and their apartments. People were still being fired for being gay and lesbian, and it was still illegal in Houston for people to dress in the clothing of the opposite sex. The law even banned women from wearing fly-front pants.

Now called the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, the caucus is celebrating 25 years of political organizing, a birthday on which it can proudly claim credit for the rise of the gay and lesbian community in Houston as an effective political block.

Just like the caucus itself, the founding four were not just flashes in the pan by any means. Anderson went on to serve on the national board of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force a few years later, and McGee was to play a leadership role with the Human Rights Campaign Fund. Crell stayed involved with the caucus until his death, and Buie is still a member.

Ray Hill was also an early prime mover in the caucus. When the GPC was founded, Hill had already been out of the closet for almost a decade and was actively campaigning for gay civil rights in Houston and against the prevailing public concept of homosexuality as an illness. Only two years earlier, in 1973, the newly founded National Gay Task Force (later to become NGLTF) had successfully worked to change the American Psychiatric Association classification of homosexuality as a mental illness. Two-thirds of Americans in 1975 still said they believed that sexual relations between two adults of the same sex was always wrong, although a little over half of Americans believed homosexuals should have equal rights in terms of job opportunities, according to the NGLTF Policy Institute. Only 27 percent of Americans favored hiring homosexuals as elementary school teachers.



We've come a long way, baby:
L-r: Rev. Robert Falls (MCCR), Ray Hill, Jerry Miller, Pokey Anderson

"By 1975 we had come a long way, but still had a long way to go," said the late Gary Van Ooteghem in an interview a few years ago. Van Ooteghem was the first president of the caucus and later served as co-chair of the NGLTF national board. At the urging of NGLTF, United States Rep. Bella Abzug had just introduced the first gay rights bill in the U.S. Congress.

Back in Texas, state Rep. Craig Washington was being ridiculed on the floor of the Texas House of Representatives for his efforts to eliminate the homosexual sodomy law, Section 21.06 of the Texas Penal Code. After hearing of the raucous anti-homosexual debate, Anderson met with a group of friends in her Montrose apartment and laid plans for the creation of the GPC.

So on a bright summer day in June 1975, media representatives gathered for a press conference. Four of Houston's leading homosexuals, Anderson and Hill, along with Jerry Miller and Rev. Robert Falls, announced the formation of the GPC under the blazing light

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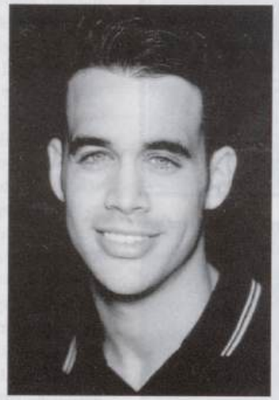
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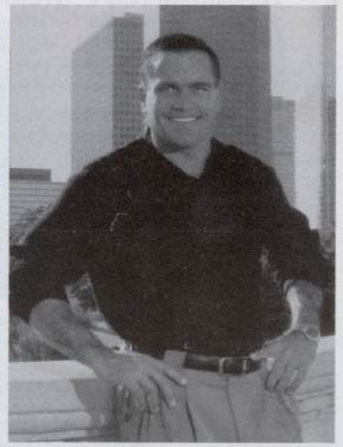
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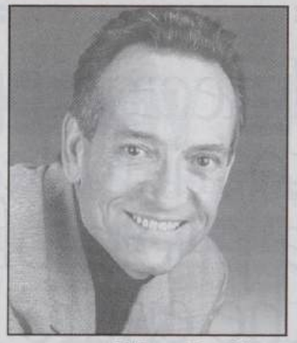
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of public scrutiny. Miller represented Integrity, Houston's most effective homosexual organization to date. Rev. Falls represented the alternative religious community as pastor of the newly formed Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection (now Resurrection MCC). Anderson represented Houston lesbians.

Hill, recently out of prison on a burglary conviction, represented no one in particular, but helped by lending his name recognition to the event. In his usual blunt manner, Hill said at the time, "Up until now, I was the only faggot with a face and name in town." This was indeed true, as for years Hill had been the only person willing to speak on record to the media and to advocate publicly for equal treatment of gays.

Miller quietly pointed out the changing times by stating, "In the '60s, if you were gay, you were a political radical. The community is more broad-based now."

The GPC's first candidate questionnaire included questions about the introduction of state legislation to outlaw employment discrimination against gays and lesbians, repeal Section 21.06, and give gay and lesbian couples the right to file joint income tax returns.

After hearing of the raucous anti-homosexual debate around the sodomy law, Pokey Anderson met with a group of friends in her Montrose apartment and laid plans for the creation of the Gay Political Caucus.

Van Ooteghem didn't know the folks who had called the press conference and was in Washington, D.C., meeting with Leonard Matlovich at the time. Matlovich, an Air Force sergeant and Vietnam veteran who had received the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart, had voluntarily declared his homosexuality to his supervising officer and resisted discharge under an exclusion clause that allowed "outstanding" homosexuals to remain in the Air Force.

Van Ooteghem, then the Harris County Comptroller of the Currency, admired Matlovich's courage and later said, "Leonard Matlovich was my role model, and I hope I can be someone else's."

So, upon returning to Houston, Van Ooteghem told his boss Harsell Gray, Harris County treasurer, that he was planning to appear before Commissioners' Court to urge them to pass regulations protecting the civil rights of gays and lesbians. Gray told him that appointed personnel were not allowed to engage in political activities during business hours and asked him to sign a letter acknowledging these instructions. When Van Ooteghem refused, Gray fired him. "GVO," as he became known in the community, later said that Gray's stated reason for his firing was simply a cover for the real reason: Gray was afraid Commissioners' Court would cut his budget for having a highly paid homosexual on his staff.

So the next day, August 1, 1975, Van Ooteghem addressed Commissioners' Court, professing his own homosexuality and proposing a civil rights resolution. Less than a month later, he filed suit against the county for unfair dismissal. His suit was eventually successful and he received back pay.

"Gary has this great, high-paying job and was willing to sacrifice it to advance the cause," Hill said. "Because of his celebrity, we recruited Gary to be the first president of the caucus."

In the following years, the caucus started to mature organizationally and to gain political clout as well. Mickey Leland, who as a state representative had supported Washington's 1975 effort to repeal Section 21.06, thanked the caucus for helping him win election to Barbara Jordan's congressional seat in 1978. Leland included the names of Hill, Steve Shiflett (caucus president), and Van Ooteghem in his newspaper advertisements. Mayor Jim McConn said at the time, "I think it [the gay and lesbian community] is becoming a viable political force."

The caucus became and remains the community's chief advocate with the police department. In 1978, Shiflett appeared before Houston City Council to protest that no one from the gay community had been appointed to serve on the newly created Houston Police Advisory Board. Later that year the committee was increased in size from 15 to 21, and Mayor McConn telephoned Shiflett for a recommendation. McConn agreed to Shiflett's recommendation of Patricia O'Kane and, as alternate, Rev. Chuck Larsen, pastor of MCCR.

When the group was reconstituted in 1986, Annise Parker (caucus president), working with then Police Chief Lee Brown and Mayor Kathy Whitmire, succeeded in gaining the caucus a permanent seat on the Houston Police Advisory Committee, a seat that the caucus retains to this day.

According to Hill, in 1984, Jerry Mays, Jack Jackson, and Shiflett offered a resolution at a caucus meeting to support City Council passage of an ordinance banning city employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. "The resolution never came to a vote because it was clear that we [the opponents] probably had the votes to defeat it," Hill said. "So in those reconciliatory times of the caucus, the resolution was tabled indefinitely." HGLPC had initially discussed at great length the idea of asking City Council for an ordinance. "I, among others, was really concerned, with AIDS over the horizon, that it would result in a referendum and that they would beat us to death with the 'gay plague' offense," said Hill. Mays, Marion Coleman (later a caucus trustee) and others had organized Community Political Action Committee (C-PAC) because of dissatisfaction with the caucus. As part of the payback for C-PAC's support, City Council member Anthony Hall (the caucus had endorsed his opponent) sponsored the ordinance banning city employment discrimination. "The caucus was in a political box canyon," explains Hill. "Unable to oppose the ordinance, we dispatched Sue Lovell, caucus president, to City Hall to work on getting the votes, because Mayor Whitmire would not move forward without caucus support as well as assurance of a significant majority of the votes on Council.

"Members of the Klu Klux Klan and Black Ministers Association were outside City Hall arm-in-arm singing 'We Shall Overcome,'" said Hill. "It was quite a sight." Conservative Republican Steven Hotze made his political debut in Houston working for a referendum to repeal the ordinance. Holtze's group obtained the required signatures a month before the deadline.

Jerry Smith, then Houston city attorney, now a Reagan appointee to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, wrote wording that was intentionally confusing, according to several people involved at the time. It was easy to be confused: If you were for gay rights, were you supposed to be *for* the referendum or *against* it? Caucus-endorsed Democratic candidates were major contributors to the pro-referendum forces. "When the caucus appointed a Baptist minister from Beaumont to run the anti-referendum campaign, I was told to shut up and stay out of sight," said Hill. The only other item on the ballot was a Spring Branch school district vote, and so a large portion of the vote came from Spring Branch. Although the anti-gay referendum

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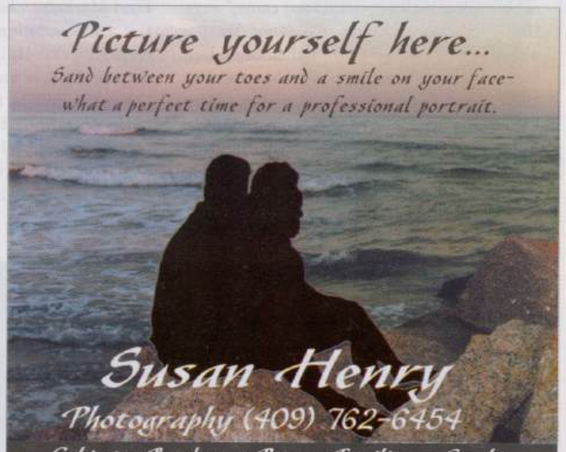
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was defeated in all Montrose precincts and in several Third Ward precincts, still passed overwhelmingly. "It buried any illusion that the caucus had any discipline or strength to get out the vote at that time," said Hill.

Hill says he and Annise Parker opposed Lovell's re-election; Hill campaigned for president on the platform of a major activist initiative, Parker campaigned for a "lay-low and blend in" strategy, and Lovell ran to continue the status quo and give her a chance to redeem herself. "That was the election where nobody [no political candidates] came," says Hill. City Council member Eleanor Tinsley was the only opposed City Council candidate to screen for endorsement with the caucus in 1985. The caucus endorsed Council members Ernest McGowen Sr. and Judson Robinson Jr. over their own objections. The Straight Slate—headed by Hotze and Ed Young, Second Baptist Church pastor—did not elect anybody to office. "So it was tit for tat, with the queers losing early in 1985 and the anti-queers losing later in the November 1985 city election," says Hill.

Parker was victorious in her 1986 bid for the caucus presidency and served two terms; she remains the only caucus president to have completed two consecutive terms as president.

In 1978, Mayor Jim McConn said, "I think it [the gay and lesbian community] is becoming a viable political force."

Hill ran successfully for caucus president in 1989 on the platform that the caucus needed a revival. "We boycotted Randall's Food Markets, who finally agreed to a written nondiscrimination policy in company employment," Hill says. "Caucus membership doubled; it was a very busy year."

For the caucus, the 1990s were filled with AIDS education efforts, while scores of members were lost to the disease.

After acrimonious battles over bisexual and transgender inclusion, the first transgender board member was appointed by the president in 1998, and a process was begun to change the mission statement so that it would be inclusive of the entire gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community. Two transgenders and one bisexual currently serve on the caucus board of trustees.

The Caucus Political Action Committee has endorsed 32 candidates for the upcoming November 7 election, a far cry from 1985's handful. Mayors and congresspeople now come to the Caucus PAC to interview for consideration for endorsement by the organization.

Twenty-five years later, the caucus remains a strong force working for freedom, justice, and equality as part of a broader social justice movement. For information, call 713/521-1000 or see www.hglpc.org.

Clarence Burton Bagby is a native Houstonian active in civic and political affairs, locally as well as nationally. He serves on the national executive board of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus board of trustees. He was president of the caucus in 1998 after serving as a caucus trustee for two years. He is the executive director of the Old West End Association.

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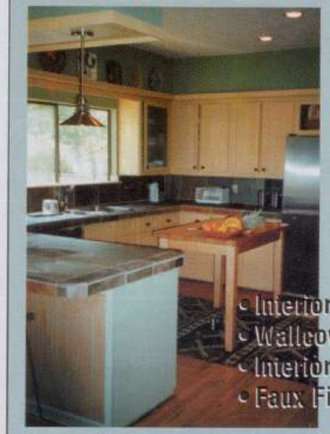
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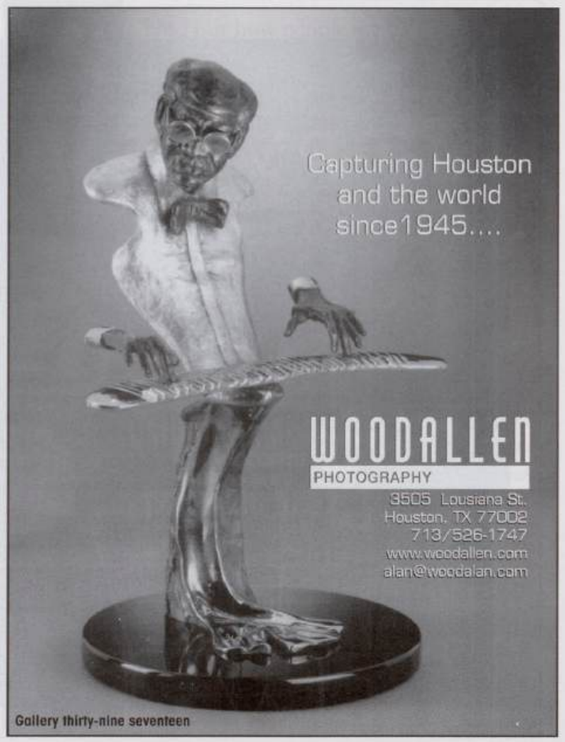
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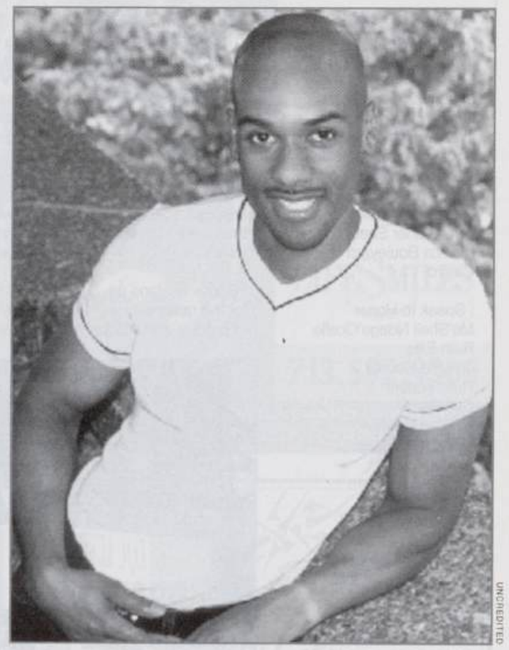
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When *OutSmart* went to the Millennium March on Washington in April, on a day full of tear-invoking speeches, we were all especially blown away by Keith Boykin's speech-poem, a stirring declaration from "One Black Gay Man" ("because not all blacks are straight, and not all gays are white"). Since Keith delivered his poem, it has assumed a grass-roots life of its own, being used in school curriculums and reiterated in countless smaller forums.

The former executive director of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum, Keith writes a column for Gay.com, makes frequent appearances in print and on television, and has written two books on the experience of being black and gay in America. He served as special assistant to President Clinton in 1993, when he helped to organize and participated in the nation's first meeting between gay and lesbian leaders and a U.S. president. He teaches at American University, and publishes *Blare*, an online magazine of black LGBT literature, film, music, and art. We're proud to print here Keith's Millennium poem.



UNCREDITED

A Poem for the Millennium March

By Keith Boykin

I Speak Today
As One Black Gay Man

I Speak Because
Barbara Jordan,
Langston Hughes,
and The Reverend
James Cleveland
could not speak

I Speak for myself,
but I also speak for
my uncle,
a black gay man
who could not be here
because he was murdered in
his own bedroom

I Speak to stop the violence
from Wyoming to Alabama
and all points in between,
and yes, in Texas and New
York as well

I Speak to tell
George W. Bush
and Rudy Giuliani
not to pack your bags
for Washington
because you will not be living
here next year

I Speak knowing that
the right-wing may vilify me,
closeted gay men may
deny me
and religious demagogues
may decry me

I Speak to tell Jesse Helms,
and Trent Lott,
and Strom Thurmond,
your days of division are
numbered

I Speak Because
two homosexuals who share
their lives together
deserve at least
the same rights
as two heterosexual
strangers who met last night
on prime time TV

I Speak Because
James Baldwin
Lorraine Hansberry
Bayard Rustin
Audre Lorde
Glen Burke
Simon Nkoli, and
Bessie Smith
could not be here

I Speak as a member of
the family
because there are problems
in the family
that cannot be healed
by sweeping them under the
sterilized, sanitized rug
of homogenized
homosexuality

I Speak Because
Martin Luther King
and Huey Newton
would support my cause

I Speak to Resist
the commercialization
and commodification
of a mainstream
"gay lifestyle"
that enriches a privileged few
and impoverishes the
masses with a bankrupt
culture of uniformity

I Speak Because
Alain Locke
Joe Beam
Essex Hemphill
Mickey Fleming
Greg Hutchings
Assoto Saint
Craig Harris,
and Alvin Ailey
could not be here

I Speak Because
two people sitting in
a hotel room should not be
able to dictate the entire
lesbigaytrans agenda

I Speak Because
Sojourner Truth
Harriet Tubman
Malcolm X, and
Frederick Douglass
have taught me the
value of struggle

I Speak Because
our community has a
right to know
how decisions are made,
and a responsibility
to hold our leaders
accountable

I Speak Because
Patrick Kelly
Willi Smith
Joan Fountain
Countee Cullen
Josephine Baker
Mel Boozer, and Marlon
Riggs could not be here

I Speak so that
my silence will not be
interpreted as complicity,
my concerns not discarded
dismissively, and my
thoughts not represented
simplistically

I Speak Because
Coretta Scott King
Cornel West
Jesse Jackson,
and Nelson Mandela
have uplifted me

I Speak Because
my sheroes and heroes
and other good
people of conscience
have chosen not to speak

I Speak to give voice
to their concerns

I Speak Because,
like Fannie Lou Hamer,

I'm sick and tired
of being sick and tired

I Speak to remind you,
and myself, that I can
hold my lover's hand
in Anacostia or Harlem or
South Central or Oakland
if I choose to,
and I am not always found
in Dupont Circle or
Christopher Street or Santa
Monica Boulevard or the
Castro

I Speak to Honor
Me'Shell Ndege'Ocello
Ruth Ellis
Jewelle Gomez
Ruth Waters
Carl Bean
E. Lynn Harris
George Bellinger
Marjorie Hill
Carlene Cheatam
Maurice Franklin
Kofi Adoma, and
Peter Gomes
For Blazing A Path
In which I could follow

I Speak Because
not all blacks are straight,
and not all gays are white

I Speak to Honor
Mandy Carter
Nadine Smith
Cleo Manago
Barbara Smith
James Earl Hardy
Phill Wilson
Ron Simmons
Alvin Quamina, and
Kevin McGruder

I Speak so that you will ask
why these people are
not on this stage

I Speak to Honor
RuPaul
Sapphire
Bill T. Jones
Ken Reeves
George C. Wolfe
Alice Walker
June Jordan,
and Phill Reed

I Speak so that
the presence of
people of color
will not be tokenized
and the absence of
people of color
will not be trivialized

I Speak to Honor
Sabrina Sojourner
Samuel Delany
Angela Davis
Jaye Davidson
Cheryl Clarke,
and Nona Hendryx

I Speak to Enter
These Names
indelibly in the record books
of this gathering

I Speak Because
Audre Lorde warns that
my silence will not
protect me
any more from the
antigay forces
than it will from the antiblack
forces

I Speak to stand up
for the millions
of brothas and sistahs



MARC HERNANDEZ

Boykin at the Millennium March on Washington this past April.

whose area codes
do not begin
with 202, 212, 213, or 415

I Speak Because
AIDS is not over,
in America or Africa,
despite what the privileged
elite may write,
that people of color are at
greater risk than ever,
and that now is not the time
to turn our backs
on this disease

I Speak so that
black gays and lesbians
can create our
own organizations
to support our own needs
without having to answer the
tired old question
why are we
"separating ourselves"?

I Speak Because
your priorities
are not always our priorities,
but all of our
priorities are important
and should not be
casually dismissed

I Speak Because
affirmative action
and racial profiling
are part of my agenda

I Speak so that
a black family can get
a home loan
and a black man can
simply get home,
alone, without
getting arrested

I Speak Because
I cannot stand the
word "queer"
and feel excluded from the
word "gay"

I Speak so that black leaders
will not forget us
and gay leaders

will finally learn to
work with us

I Speak so that
white gays
and straight blacks
will no longer make decisions
that affect us
without including us

I Speak in a culture
that devalues our love
to say that the act of self-love
is an act of revolution in itself

I Speak to declare
that black men
loving black men
is no longer
a revolutionary act
but an everyday thing

I Speak to tell you
that I refuse to be
the only black person
in any meeting,
at any time,
at any point
ever again

I Speak so I can
get a taxicab
not just when I
leave this stage,
but when I leave
the White House
or leave your house,

after a fabulous affair,
or any house on any street,
that I will not be judged by
the color of my skin

I Speak Because
Alice Walker reminds me
that no person is your friend
who demands your silence
or denies your right to grow

I Speak Because
nobody else can speak for
me but me

I Speak to help
repair the breach
that has divided us
black from white
straight from gay
male from female

I Speak to help
repair the breach
that has excluded the voices
of youth and seniors,
the poor and middle class,
bisexuals, and transgen-
dered people,
people with disabilities,
and all people of color

I Speak with hope
because Dr. King
reminds me
that only when it is
dark enough
can you see the stars

I Speak so that
Dennis Rodman can wear
a wedding dress,
that Carl Lewis can pose in
track shorts and high heels,
and that Little Richard can
simply be himself

I Speak so that
the famous rappers and
runners and writers
and Hip Hop heroes
on the DL
may one day decide
to speak as well

I Speak so that
all black lesbian, gay,
bisexual, and
transgendered teenagers
will one day be allowed
to live peaceably in their own
family homes

I Speak Because
we must broaden
the movement
to see the intersection of
race, gender, class, religion,
sexuality, and ethnicity

I Speak not to get
my place at the table
but to demand a whole new
table arrangement
that welcomes all those who
have been excluded

I Speak not to gain privilege
but to challenge
the whole concept
of privilege itself

I Speak to Invoke the
Lessons of
Rodney King,
Abner Louima,
Amadou Diallo
James Byrd, and
Patrick Dorismond
lest they be forgotten
or thought to pertain strictly
to some other march

I Speak Because
we cannot prevail
against the Prop 22s
if we do not also fight
the Prop 187s
and Prop 209s

I Speak Because
June Jordan tells me
that freedom is indivisible
or it is nothing at all
besides sloganeer-ing
and temporary,
short-sighted,
and short-lived
advancement for a few

I Speak to Say,
unequivocally, once and for
all, that blacks and gays are
not the same,
that racism is not the same
as homophobia,
and that the civil rights
struggles are not identical

I Speak Because
it matters not
which group is most
oppressed,
or which was
first oppressed,
or whether they are
identically oppressed.
What matters is that no
group or class of people
should be oppressed

I Speak to remind you
that this march will
soon be forgotten
if we do not take action
in our own lives
in our own communities

I Speak in the hope
that this gathering
will not become
just another circuit party
and that real people
may learn real lessons here

I Speak to shine the light
in Internet chat rooms,
online clubs,
glbpoc listserves,
and lgbt e-mail chains

I Speak Because
the personal is political
every time we are not
ashamed
to go beyond our boundaries,
to express our love,
to come out,
to volunteer,
to make a donation,
to write a letter,
to forward an e-mail,
to register to vote,
or simply to speak

Finally, I Speak to
offer a choice
between fear
and love

I Speak Because
fear is negativity,
scarcity,
and
falsity

I Speak Because
love is positivity,
abundance,
and
truth

I Speak Because
fear is unnatural and
learned and love is
natural and innate

I Speak so that
my faith may be used as a
tool for love, and not a
weapon of hate

I Speak Because
I refuse to worship
at the altar
of religious bigotry
and self-righteous piety

I Speak to Pray
for Pat Robertson
and Jerry Falwell

that they may learn
the true meaning of
unconditional love

I Speak so that
one more black gay man or
woman may find the courage
to rise up in church today and
challenge a minister
who spews out the vicious bile
of religious-based
homophobia

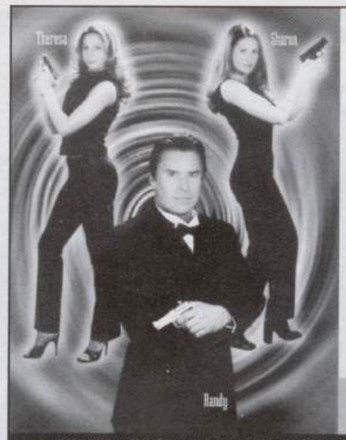
I Speak so that
Angie and Debbie
and Alveda and Reggie
may one day understand
that God is love
and love is for everyone

I Speak Because
I have no power to make
these dreams happen
unless someone, somewhere
hears these words as her own
and decides to act

I Speak
as a proud African-American
same-gender-loving
Christian-identified man
unashamed of who I am
unwilling to be divided into
identity camps, and
unbowed by the demons of
hatred that would incite me
to fear instead of love.

I speak Because
Audre Lorde tells me,
"When I dare to be powerful,
to use my strength in the
service of my vision,
then it becomes less and less
important whether
I am afraid."

I Speak Today
As One Proud
Black Gay Man■



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DONNA ACETO

LONELY OLD QUEEN? I THINK NOT!

Some tools to help in the journey of gay aging

from *Golden Men: The Power of Gay Midlife*

Dr. Harold (Hal) Kooden has written a compelling book about the challenges gay men face at midlife—Golden Men: The Power of Gay Midlife. *At the behest of John Kellett, Dr. Kooden is coming to Houston and will speak about his book, Monday, November 13, 7 p.m., at the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, followed by questions and discussion, which are expected to be lively.*

Dr. Harold Kooden (left) with co-author Charles Flowers

Since aging is a state of the body, mind, and soul, the changes we face as we grow older are behavioral, mental, and emotional. Aging well is work, a process that takes doing and that takes time. While recognizing a gay man is vulnerable to early social forces as well as the influence of family and peers, I make a central assumption that a gay man is the central agent in developing his identity, and he continues his self-creation over the course of his lifetime.

These tasks overlap and do not adhere to any strict timeline: Some of them may happen in a sequence or all at once. Life is never clean and tidy, and midlife can be an especially messy time. I begin by focusing on the body because our sexuality is at the core of our identity, as well as the source of much gay male anxiety around aging. From issues of physical well-being, I move into behaviors of the mind and heart: how we define our work and our play, what is the nature of our relationships. Careers and relationships are two areas most affected by changes at midlife, and abrupt transitions in these areas are the hallmarks of the so-called "midlife crisis," which will be discussed in depth. The final leg of the journey concerns issues of the spirit: our values, the principles by which we live, our sense of mortality, and our growing desire for spirituality. The journey begins in the root of the body and ends with the full flowering of our soul.

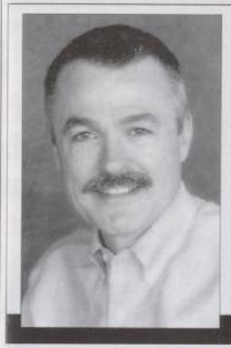
I begin by focusing on the body because our sexuality is at the core of our identity, as well as the source of much gay male anxiety around aging.

Exercises are woven throughout each chapter, and will focus and direct you through the shifts in perception and attitude that will bring about your successful aging. Ideally, you will want to keep a journal to write down your thoughts and whatever feelings come up during this process. It is also my hope that these exercises will encourage you to seek out your peers and begin a dialogue about aging. Perhaps you can advertise on a local bulletin board or online service to start a discussion group about gay aging. The more that groups of gay men can talk about these issues, the more successfully our community will age as a whole.

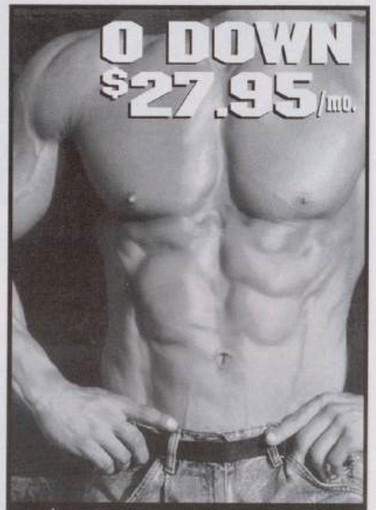
1. ***When did you start considering yourself a middle-aged gay man and how did you feel about it?*** Maybe you don't feel middle-aged, but everybody says that you are since you turned 40 or 50. How does that label feel? Try to describe your true feelings, rather than what you think you "should" feel. Keep it about feelings, not about rationalizations or complicated arguments. What are you feeling? What is in your gut? What is in your heart?

2. ***What are the positive and negative issues about your aging?*** Make a list—quick as a reflex—of the positive and negative associations you have around aging, both your own and

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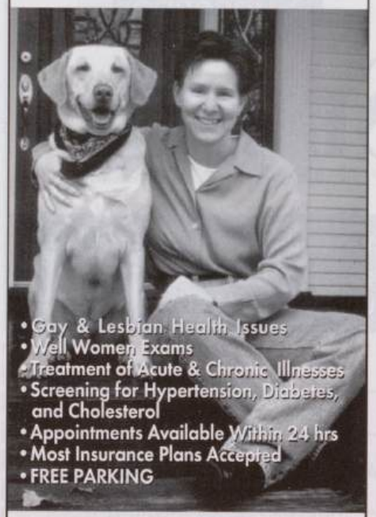
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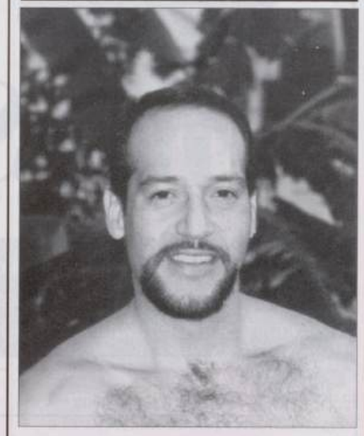
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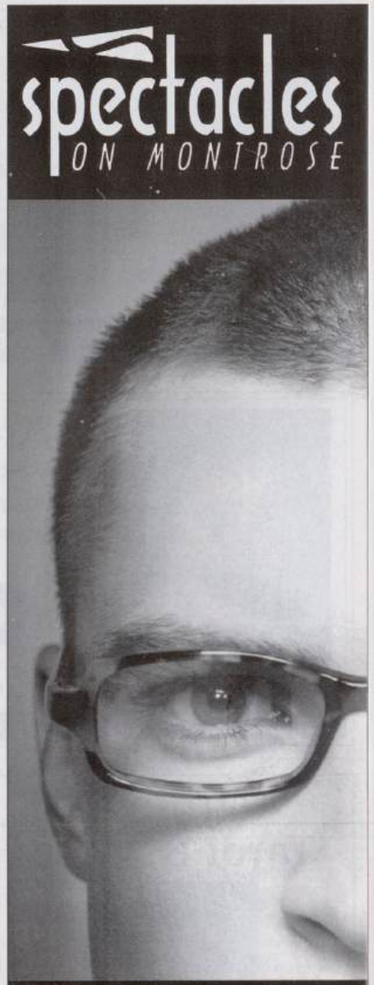
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generally. For example: not as much energy; financial stability; not as much sex; a lover; not enough fun; retirement. And so on. Put down as many items as you can, and don't hold back on the negativity—naming the negatives is the first step in putting them into perspective. Making this list will give you a base-line from which to assess your progress toward successful aging.

Working through these exercises, listening to your fears as well as your fantasies, talking about these concepts, absorbing new information, sharing experiences with your friends—are all parts of this journey. This process will work if undertaken alone, but doing this work in a group could deepen friendships or develop new ones from a gathering of gay men. The more we discuss these issues, the less our fears will persist around aging. There is no right or wrong way to approach these exercises or the larger tasks at hand; there is only the failure of passivity.

Ageism devalues us the same way that homophobia does, and many gay men are fed up with it.

Golden Men: A New Generation

Ageism devalues us the same way that homophobia does, and many gay men are fed up with it. Unless we begin to tap into the power we have to age well, the antagonism, defensiveness, and cruelty between the different generations in our community will destroy us.

As with any revolution, change begins with one person refusing to participate in the status quo. The basis of my faith in gay men comes from the fact that we have already refused to protect the status quo once—when we came out as gay men—and I know we can do it again. By targeting ageism the way we did homophobia, we can dismantle the stereotype of the "lonely old queen" and begin the new millennium with a new generation of gay men: Golden Men. It's as if we were alchemists transforming the leaden dross of our fears and stereotypes into the gold of a good life.

The transformation is possible. Aging is inevitable. But thriving is a choice. ■



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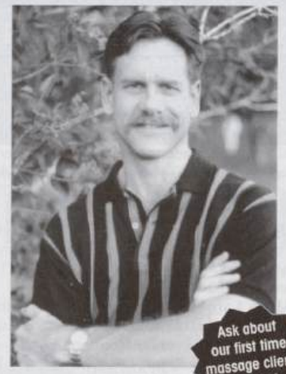


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Community Resource

OutSmart has plans to publish a separate directory of community resources. If the information for your GLBT community group is not listed below, or if you need to make a change, please call Ann Sieber at 713/520-7237, or e-mail ann@outsmartmagazine.com. We will run community listings in the magazine once every few months until we publish the directory. Divisions are listed alphabetically: Community, Counseling/Support, Health, Professional, Religious/Spiritual, Social, Sports, Youth/Parents.

COMMUNITY

• **Adoption.** Family to Family Adoption Services is an adoption networking agency in partnership with several nonprofit adoption agencies who are dedicated to finding loving homes for thousands of orphans. They sponsor a free workshop for prospective adoptive parents seeking more info about adopting children from China, Russia, Ukraine, India, Romania, & Guatemala, as well as domestic adoptions. Single men & women and couples from 25-60 years old are eligible. Info and/or next workshop date: 713/219-1472 or 713/294-5941 or Fam2fam@aol.com.

• **"After Hours"** is a late-night radio show in which a different host and crew present interviews, music, and mayhem. Saturdays, midnight–3 am, KPFT 90.1 FM, 419 Lovett. 713/526-5738.

• **Alpha Lambda Organization** serves the social, cultural, and political needs of the gay and lesbian students at the University of Houston Downtown. Meets Tuesdays 2:30–4:30 pm, UH Downtown, 1 Main St., Ste. 1016-S, 713/221-8921, wrightc@zeuz.dt.uh.edu.

• **The Amazon Society** is an intergenerational feminist nonprofit organization dedicated to cultivating an empowerment lifestyle among women and girls. Emphasis is placed on organizing, implementing, and sustaining practical programs as our platform to initiate real-life changes. Come participate in a real-life collective for women working together. Make new friends & work on crucial issues affecting women. Info: Bernadine @ 713/731-0251 or e-mail: xociety@hotmail.com.

• **AVES** (Amigos Volunteers in Education & Services) provides social & healthcare services to HIV-positive individuals. Free HIV, STD testing & counseling in English & Spanish, from 10 am–5 pm. Volunteer wish list: 1) fluent, or at least functional, in English & Spanish; 2) comfortable discussing sexual matters with total strangers; 3) comfortable with various ethnic & sexual cultures; 4) able & willing to commit at least 2 hours a week; 5) able to staff the hotline during office hours; & 6) willing to make at least a 6-month commitment. 4126 Southwest Frwy, Ste. 1310, 713/626-2837 or 1-800-981-2837.

• **BiNet** is a support/social/educational group open to all women & men exploring their sexuality or identifying as bisexual. Confidentiality is maintained within the group, & the use of assumed names is respected. BiNet is an active part of the queer community & is accepting of diverse lifestyles. Meets every Wednesday, 7:30–9 pm @ Hobbit Cafe, 2234 Richmond Ave. For more info: 713/467-4380.

• **Black Lesbian And Gay Coalition** (BLAGC), an organization dedicated to providing visible leadership in the African-American GLBT community, meets every Monday, 7 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. Info: 713/801-7386.

• **Colt 45's** is an all-volunteer charity. Despite the name, you don't have to have an overwhelming love of western attire, lore, or guns—all you need is a big heart & a willingness to help others when they need it most. As a 501(c)(3) charity, the Colt 45's created the AIDS TroubleFund, Stone Soup Fund, & Till Thacker III Memorial City Charity Fund. If interested in becoming a member, leave a message at 713/526-6077 or join us the 2nd Monday of each month, 8 pm at the BRB.

• **Community Awareness for Transgender Support** (CATS) is a transgendered peer-led resource and information support group in the Brazona/Galveston county area. Meetings first Fridays, 6 pm. 409/762-2243, tghelp@yahoo.com, www.geocities.com/tghelp.

• **"The Dyke Show" with Comedian Nancy Ford** is back for a limited engagement; open mic available for musicians, poets, and comics. Thursdays, 9–11 pm, The Inbetween (between Chances and the New Barn), 1102 Westheimer, 713/521-5822.

• **The Feminist Online Network** (FEMNET) is a free e-mail list with announcements, info, & resources of interest to feminists & lesbians in the Houston/Galveston area. Postings include health info, political activism, resources, calendar of events, more. Subscribe at http://www.onelist.com/subscribe/FEMNET.

• **Gay & Lesbian Switchboard Houston** (GLSH) is a nonprofit all-volunteer organization offering the community information & referrals to businesses, legal, and medical professionals, and a variety of organizations, as well as info on HIV/AIDS, coming out, etc. Call 713/529-3211. GLSH also operates the Hate Crimes Hotline, 713/529-9615. www.gayswitchboard.org.

• **GLOBAL** (Gay, Lesbian, & Bisexual Alliance) is a support, social, educational, & political group for University of Houston's LGBT community and its allies. It strives to educate & be a resource to the UH community on gay issues & to provide a welcoming atmosphere for all UH students. It is diverse in its ethnic, racial, religious, political, & gender makeup. Students from other area colleges & junior colleges are welcome. Whether you are struggling to come out, a hard-core gay rights activist, or just looking for some fellow queers to hang out with, GLOBAL is the place for you. Meetings Wednesdays 4 pm, UH University Center. 713-743-7539 or 713/743-5180; global@bayou.uh.edu; www.uh.edu/~global.

• **Gulf Coast Archives and Museum** is seeking to create a more permanent repository of Houston's GLBT memory & memorabilia. Call to make a special viewing appointment or to donate your own precious items. 2507 Capital, 713/227-5973, gcam@mail.com, www.houstongayweb.com/gulfcoastarchive.

• **Gulf Coast Transgender Community** is an open group for the support of all transgendered people. Meets 2nd Saturday of each month (crossdressing required) at 7 pm. Call for location. Open discussion 1st Thursday of each month (crossdressing not required) at 7 pm at Chances. 713/780-4282.

• **The Hollyfield Conference Center** provides meeting & conference facilities to the general public & offers the facilities to gay and lesbian community-based organizations at a reduced rate. 2700 Albany, Ste. 100, @ Tuam. More info or to schedule an event, write or phone: P.O. Box 66722, Houston, TX 77266, HollyFdtn@aol.com, 713/523-6900.

• **The Homeless Pet Placement League** is a nonprofit animal welfare organization that rescues & rehabilitates stray & abandoned cats & dogs. Volunteering, foster care, or adopting: 713/862-PETS. (713/862-7387)

• **Houston Faerie Circle** is an unstructured group of queer men and their friends who gather to explore spirituality from a distinctly queer and nontraditional point of view; Guests welcome. Saturdays 2–5 pm, 713/500-5401, www.gayguides.com/houstonfaeries. Free.

• **Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus.** 1st Wednesday of each month, 7:30 pm, Lovett Inn, 501 Lovett Blvd. 713/521-1000.

• **Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Located in the heart of Montrose, serves as the central resource for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgendered communities. It offers community publications as well as extensive information on organizations & activities. Rental space is available for meetings & social events. Programming includes separate men's & women's coming-out groups, HIV testing & counseling, Lesbian Movie Night; Montrose Writers Project; "What Lesbians Do" discussion series; and Write On, Women writing group; as well as intermittent community forums. Nine organizations office at the center: The Diversity Alliance/Black Lesbian and Gay Coalition, Gay and Lesbian Switchboard Houston, Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, H.A.T.C.H. (Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals), Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, Pride Committee of Houston, Q-Patrol, and Texas Human Rights Foundation. Volunteer meetings: 2nd Thurs., 7 pm and 2nd Saturday, noon. 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

• **"Lesbian and Gay Voices"** radio show is a magazine format produced by community activists; includes interviews with community & national leaders, music, reviews of gay and lesbian cultural events. Mondays, 8–10 pm, KPFT 90.1 FM; 713/526-4000; e-mail: LGVoices@aol.com.

• **Log Cabin Republicans.** 4th Monday of each month, 6:30 pm (social), 7 pm (meeting) at Renata's, 2006 Lexington. 713/529-9100.

• **National Organization for Women** (NOW) is a volunteer organization (not a service agency, nor a research facility, nor set up to provide legal assistance on individual cases). 713/861-2553, HoustonNOW-owner@egroups.com, National: www.now.org. Join Houston NOW by sending $35 annual dues (sliding scale $15 and up as you can afford) to P.O. Box 667522, Houston, TX 77266-2522.

• **Outrage, Inc.** is a nonprofit social group raising funds for Houston area HIV/AIDS charities by producing special events including the annual Halloween Party & the Pride Party. Meets 2nd Tuesday. Other events include beach parties, Austin splash & other socials. 713/706-2508, outrage.org/~outrage.

• **Pride Committee of Houston** is an energetic group of people who meet year-round to develop/organize Gay & Lesbian Pride activities in June for our community. Meets 7 pm, the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month @ the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. For more info or to get involved: 713/529-6979, info@pridehouston.org.

• **Q-Patrol, Inc.** is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation dedicated to the protection from and reduction of hate crimes based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Q-Patrol, Inc. operates a Citizen's On Patrol program (affiliated with the HPD) in the Montrose area on Friday & Saturday nights. No special skills or abilities necessary, only a desire to help other people. 713/528-SAFE (7233), qpatrolinc@aol.com

• **Second Chance Pets** is a nonprofit organization that helps stray, abandoned, & unwanted animals find permanent homes, providing medical care & an adoption site for the animals. Foster homes are needed (especially for dogs & cats, as are volunteers for adoption days, publicity/fund-raising, & adoptive homes. 281/286-3535, www.secondchancepets.org.

• **Sisters** is a support group for African-American lesbians & friends. Meets 2nd Sundays, 5–8 pm. Call 713/801-0027 for meeting location, or e-mail at SISTERSOFHOUSTON@yahoo.com.

• **The Stonewall Democrats of Houston** work to educate voters & elected officials about GLBT issues and offer opportunities to volunteer in political campaigns. At monthly meetings & events, you can talk to city & state politicians one-on-one. There are over two dozen Stonewall chapters across the country. Meet at Bibas One's a Meal Restaurant on W. Gray, upstairs in the Greek room, last Monday of each month. Social 6:30 pm, meeting 7 pm. Info: Mark at 713/854-8773.

• **Texas Association for Transsexual Support** (TATS) is a group devoted to dealing with the issues that affect those that identify as transsexual. Usually at least two meetings per month, a business meeting and a discussion meeting. Transgender Community Center, 239 Westheimer 713/780-4282.

• **Texas Human Rights Foundation** a statewide, not-for-profit legal agency, which advocates on behalf of the lesbian, gay, bi, transgendered, & HIV community and publishes the booklet *AIDS and the Law: Know Your Rights*. If you feel you have been discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation or HIV status and need legal advice or attorney referral, call 713/522-0636, or outside Houston call tollfree 1-800/828-6417.

• **Tri-Ess** is a support group for heterosexual crossdressers, their wives, partners & families. Meetings once a month, screening required. 713/349-8969.

• **An Uncommon Legacy Foundation** is a nonprofit lesbian foundation dedicated to enhancing the visibility, strength & vitality of the lesbian community. Legacy invests in our future by awarding scholarships to out students with leadership potential, and by awarding grants to fund projects & organizations that contribute to our community's health, education, & culture. It promotes philanthropy among women and demonstrates the growing power of lesbian giving. More info: 713/520-1142.

• **The Unity Committee** is a committee of all the representatives from the local transgender groups. 281/585-0586, tghelp@yahoo.com.

• **What Women Do** is a popular series on lesbian sexuality and controversial issues in the lesbian community. Among recent "spicy" topics have been "Own Your Desire," "The Whole Shebang," and "First Comes Lust." Sessions are facilitated by psychologist Maria Minicucci (Center for Creativity, Knowledge and Change), and lesbian health educator and activist Deborah Bell (Fem-Net online community). A $3 donation is welcomed, but not required. 7 pm the first Thursday of most months (call to confirm), the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

• **The Women's Group** is a feminist group for all women (each woman defines her own feminism) that meets every Sunday at 10:45 am in the Sojourner Truth Room, 3rd floor of the First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin @ Southmore (elevator accessible). For more information, call Iris Greer Sizemore at 713/529-8571 or Laura Reich at 713/529-1886, or e-mail HouWmnsGrp@aol.com.

COUNSELING/SUPPORT

• **AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc.** (AFH) relies on volunteers to help meet the needs of its 2,000+ clients. Choose from over 22 direct and indirect client volunteer programs. You'll join a pool of more than 400 talented volunteers in Hotline, Information, & Referral, Buddy, Helper, Art Therapy, Stone Soup & many other programs. Whether you can commit to 4 hours a month or 40 hours a week, AFH needs your time and talent. Volunteer department: 713/623-6796. Website: http://www.aidshelp.org.

• **Astro Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf** meets the 2nd Friday of the month, 7 pm, at Montrose Clinic, 215 Westheimer, 713/830-3072 via Texas Relay 1-800-735-2988.

• **The Bering Lunch Bunch Gang** is a walk-in support group for retired persons living with HIV/AIDS, followed by fellowship and lunch at a local restaurant. Tuesdays, 11 am @ Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold. Info: Russ Robinett, 713/526-1017, ext. 206 or e-mail rbmumc@clearsail.net.

• **The Bering Spiritual Support Group** is a nurturing space in which we whose lives have been touched by HIV/AIDS unite in spirit for the celebration of life through sharing our mutual support, strength, acceptance, & love. This walk-in group meets Wednesdays, 6:30 pm @ Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold, for potluck dinner, speaker, & small groups for newcomers: Positive/Negative together, HIV+ only, Caregivers, & Family. Call Christine Coberly at 713/526-1017, ext. 211 or Rev. Stacy Pever, ext. 202.

• **Bering Support Network** includes counseling, support groups, visitation, and retreats. Call Christine Coberly at 713/526-1017, ext. 211 or e-mail chbmumc@clearsail.net.

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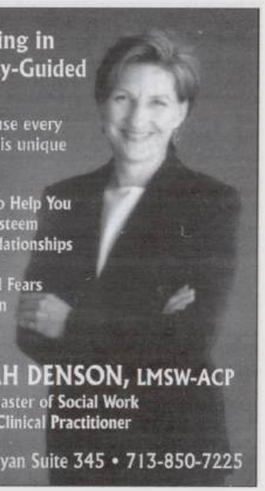
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• **Crisis Intervention of Houston** needs volunteers for 24-hour crisis-intervention & suicide-prevention hotline that requires 53 hours of training & a commitment of 4 hours a week; cash contributions for hotline & counseling programs. P.O. Box 130866, Houston 77219, 713/527-9864.

• **For Mature Audiences Only** is an inclusive multi-issue health & wellness community for persons over age 35 to celebrate the successes and share the challenges of midlife changes. Topics include ageing & ageism, mentoring, promoting health & wellness, job loss & career changes, retirement, burnout, living single or coupled, maturing relationships, mortality, and more. Tuesdays, 7 pm, Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold, Room 218. Call Russ Robinett at 713/526-1017, ext 206 or e-mail rbmumc@clearsail.net

• **Gay & Lesbian Helpline**'s phone counselors can help you clarify & prioritize your issues & sort through options. The helpline is an anonymous & confidential safe space for you to voice your thoughts. Whether concerned about coming out, locating resources, or just finding something to do on a Friday night, let us be the ear you need. Our counselors are friendly & supportive and have your best interest at heart. Operates out of the Fenway Community Health Center in Boston, MA. Gay & Lesbian Helpline's hours: M–F, 6-11 pm, Sat 5-7:30 pm, and Sun 5-10 pm. 1-888-340-4528.

• **Gay & Lesbian National Hotline** (GLNH) is a nonprofit organization, providing information, referrals and peer-counseling to the gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgendered communities. Information is also available for those concerned with gay-related issues. The services are free and anonymous. The hours are M–F, 5–9 pm, and Sat, 11 am–4 pm. 1-888-THE-GLNH (1-888-843-4564). E-mail: glnh@glnh.org.

• **Gay & Lesbian Switchboard Houston** (GLSH) is a nonprofit all-volunteer organization offering the community information & referrals to businesses, legal and medical professionals, and a variety of organizations. It also provides information on HIV/AIDS, coming out, etc. P.O. Box 66469, Houston, TX 77266-6469, 713/529-3211. GLSH also operates the Hate Crimes Hotline, 713/529-9615.

• **gayDAR** (Dream-Affirm-Restore): a wellness community for those who are interested in personal growth and making healthy connections. Mon 7–8:15 pm, Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold, Room 218. Call Russ Robinett at 713/526-1017, ext. 206 or e-mail rbmumc@clearsail.net

• **Gay Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse.** Montrose Counseling Center is offering a therapy group designed to provide a safe environment for men who share this type of experience to work together to resolve the impacts of the trauma on everyday life. Services are provided on a sliding scale basis, and insurance is accepted. Certain restrictions apply. For further info: 713/529-0037.

• **Gay Men's Process Group** is a general process group dealing with life issues that affect gay men (coming out, career, family, relationships/dating, etc.). Meets Tues., 7–8:30 pm. Info: Daniel Garces, 713/526-8390. E-mail: daniel_garces@yahoo.com, www.dansmnd.net.

• **Gay Men Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse Group** provides a safe space for reclaiming our lives through the sharing of our stories with respect, understanding and acceptance in our journey toward healing. An intensive therapy group limited to 4–5 participants. Assessment required. Call Christine Coberly at Bering Memorial UMC, 713/526-1017, ext. 211 or e-mail chbmumc@clearsail.net.

• **GriefTherapy & Support Groups.** Ongoing support group for grieving a death. 2nd & 4th Mondays of each month. Six-week grief therapy groups are scheduled as needed Mon, 7–8:30 pm. Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold, Room 224. Call Christine Coberly, 713/526-1017 ext. 211 or e-mail chbmumc@clearsail.net.

• **Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous** (HCDA) is a twelve-step support group for transgendered people dedicated to helping those who are having difficulty accepting themselves or for those involved with a transgendered individual who is having trouble adjusting. HCDA's philosophy is that the wearing of clothing opposite to one's birth sex is but an outward manifestation of an inner feeling. HCDA is run by a licensed counselor and has been meeting since Jan. 1991. All are welcome. Meets Tues., 7–9 pm, Transgender Community Center, 239 Westheimer, http://brendat.com/hcda.htm.

• **Houston Area Women's Center** provides shelter, support, & advocacy services for ALL survivors of domestic violence & sexual assault, both male & female. HAWC operates two hotlines, one for domestic violence (713/528-2121, TTY 713/528-3625) and one for sexual assault (713/528-RAPE, TTY 713/528-3691). Nonresidential services are provided including individual & group counseling, legal advocacy, housing advocacy, children's services, & job training. HAWC also manages the Second-to-None Resale Shop on Westheimer. All services FREE of charge. Volunteers always needed. Call 713/528-6798, ext. 272; 1010 Waugh Dr. @ Dallas.

• **Jewish Family Service** offers individual, couple & family counseling to individuals of all ages regardless of sexual orientation or religious affiliation. Our professional counseling staff have received training in working with GLBT issues and can help individuals deal with interpersonal problems, relationship conflicts, dealing with families, HIV/AIDS-related concerns & other issues frequently facing sexual minorities. Sliding-fee-scale. To make an appointment/more info: 713/667-9336.

• **Lambda Center A.A.** is the meeting center for AA and Al-Anon groups throughout the day (and night). 1201 W. Clay. For meeting times, call 713/521-1243.

• **Lesbian Coming-Out Group** is open to all women regardless of age & length of time of living out of the closet. $3 donation welcomed but not required. 7 pm, Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

• **Living in Process Group** is an ongoing gay men's group. 713/622-7250.

• **Men's Coming-Out Group** is open to all gay, bisexual and questioning men regardless of age. Each meeting includes discussion and support. $3 donation is welcomed but not required. 7 pm the third Friday of the month @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

• **The Men's Network** is for gay & bisexual men to come together in a safe & supportive environment to learn & share about issues that affect them. A donation of $3-$5 is requested; however, all men are welcome, regardless of their ability to pay. The 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of every month, 7:15–9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 713/529-0037.

• **Montrose Counseling Center** offers numerous counseling groups, including groups for men & women living with HIV, people in recovery, survivors of sexual abuse, lesbian survivors of domestic violence & more. The center needs office furniture, equipment & interested citizens to serve on boards. 701 Richmond. For more info *(24 hrs.)*: 713/529-0037.

• **Out Together** is a support group where individuals & couples can share thoughts, experiences, & knowledge about mixed orientation marriages—where one spouse considers him/herself gay, lesbian, or bisexual. 1st Sun. & 3rd Thu. of each month. Confidentiality ensured. Straight spouses meet Tuesdays, 7:30 pm. Questions: Bob 713/667-1535 (Bobtx54@aol.com), or Jackie 281/558-3159 (jackie_mag@msn.com), or Sarah 832/428-7463 or e-mail spousesppt@aol.com.

• **Overeaters Anonymous** (OA). For information about OA's 50 regular weekly meetings, call 713/973-6633 or visit www.oahouston.org.

• **Professional & Volunteer Caregivers Groups.** Focus on grief/burnout issues and self-care for those who work with persons who have HIV/AIDS. 1st & 3rd Mondays, Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold, Room 211. Call Christine Coberly at 713/526-1017, ext. 211 or e-mail chbmumc@clearsail.net.

• **The Women's Network** is a support group established to serve the lesbian & bisexual women's community of Houston; any woman who is sensitive to & comfortable with lesbians is welcome. It provides an opportunity to discuss women's issues in a safe environment, network with other women, and socialize with old & new friends. Donation of $3–$5 requested; however, any woman is welcome regardless of ability to pay. 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 7–9 pm, Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, 713/529-0037.

HEALTH

• **AIDS Clinical Trials Unit, UTMB Galveston** is seeking HIV-positive individuals who wish to participate in clinical trials as a treatment option. Participants in a trial are followed closely by a medical team, plus all labs and physical exam findings are shared with a patient's primary care provider. Study visits, labs, and medications are provided at no cost to participants; provisions for travel and child care expenses available. Houstonians and other non-Galveston residents welcome. To find out more, or if you're interested in participating 409/747-0214 or 877/324-ACTU, actu@utmb.edu, http://129.109.146.226/actu/.

• **AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc.** (AFH) is committed to improving the quality of life in the greater Houston community through HIV/AIDS education, healthcare, social services, & volunteerism. AFH is a direct provider of resources for HIV/AIDS services & information and works in collaboration with other community-based groups to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS infection and to support people infected & affected with HIV/AIDS. Services include: Stone Soup Food Assistance & Nutrition Program; housing; employment resources; hotline; Red Ribbon Toy Drive; camps Hope & H.U.G.; prevention & secondary education; and Project CAESAR, a gay men's health initiative. Info: 713/524-AIDS (2437) or visit www.aidshelp.org.

• **AIDS Housing Coalition Houston** (AHCH) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit agency that provides housing crisis intervention by phone and short-term, low-income, apartments for people with HIV/AIDS in transition. A gay-positive, all-volunteer, neighborhood-based agency which seeks public donations. To join: 713/521-1613.

• **AssistHers** helps lesbians with chronic or debilitating illnesses to live as normally a possible. Teams of volunteers provide assistance with daily living activities such as grocery shopping, laundry, transportation & light housekeeping, etc. PO Box 541095, Houston, TX 77254 or call 713/521-4628.

• **Bering Omega Community Services** provides seven programs free of charge for persons living with HIV/AIDS: 1. *Advocacy Program* helps us keep current with HIV/AIDS issues and congress (713/524-9304); 2. *Bering Care Center* is a licensed adult day-care center (713/520-7070 ext. 3); 3. *Dental Clinic* provides comprehensive dental care (713/524-7933 ext 120); 4. *Financial Assistance* provides comprehensive budget planning, financial counseling and assistance (713/520-5327); 5. *Omega House* provides residential hospice care (713/523-7110); 6. *Sentry Program* provides in-home care visits (713/523-7110 ext 119); and 7. *The Bering Support Network* provides counseling & support groups (713/526-1017 ext 117). To volunteer or make an in-kind contribution to any of the Bering Omega Community Services programs: Dena Gray (713/523-7110). To sponsor a benefit or give a financial contribution: the development office (713/524-9304, ext 101).

• **Body Positive Wellness Center** (BPWC) provides a venue where qualified clients with HIV/AIDS can obtain HIV-specific nutritional assessment/counseling, supervised resistance exercise, massage therapy, chiropractic adjustments, community forums, peer counseling groups, & at-cost nutritional supplements. The 3-month core program enables clients to take important measures in restoring their health & quality of life as they augment the positive effects of advanced drug treatments. (Chiropractic therapy services held every other Thursday 9 am–12 pm.) 3400 Montrose, 713/524-2374.

• **The Center for AIDS: Hope and Remembrance Project** provides the most current HIV/AIDS treatment information to healthcare professionals, HIV-positive individuals and their caregivers, while advocating Houston as a clinical trial site, bringing innovative HIV/AIDS research to local clinics. It holds monthly "treatment mixers" for HIV-positive people to discuss openly their successes and failures concerning treatment. More info: Stop by the center, 1407 Hawthorne, M–F, 9–6, or call 281/HIV-INFO (281/448-4636).

• **FIRM** (Foundation for Interfaith Research & Ministry) is a nonprofit organization working with local congregations to sponsor care teams. Volunteers are trained to meet many of the social, physical, and emotional needs of people touched by HIV/AIDS, Alzheimer's, and dementia-related disorders; frail seniors; and other life-threatening conditions. Care team volunteers view themselves as friends and extended family who can offer nonjudgmental, caring, and supportive services. All services are provided free of charge. For more info, contact the Care Team coordinator at 713/682-5995, or e-mail: firm-hou@neosoft.com, www.careteams.org

• **Frost Eye Clinic.** Free eye exams for HIV-positive persons, Mon, Wed, Fri, 9 am–5 pm, 713/520-2000.

• **HIV/AIDS Treatment Mixer** is an open forum for sharing HIV treatment info. Meets 2nd Tues., 7– 9 pm, Center for AIDS, 1407 Hawthorne, 713/527-8219, refreshments provided.

• **HIV Testing and Counseling** provided at no charge by Montrose Clinic staff from 7–9 pm, Wednesdays @ the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. More info: 713/524-3818.

• **Houston Buyers Club** provides vital nutritional supplements & info at wholesale cost to people living with chronic illness. We welcome business from people who are not living with chronic illness; it financially supports our mission. Phone 713/520-5288; fax 713/521-7419, 3400 Montrose Blvd., Ste. 605, houstonbuyersclub.com, hbc@neosoftcom.

• **Lesbian Health Initiative** (LHI) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to identify, address, educate, serve, & empower the Houston lesbian community in all its diversity, on issues of health & well-being. Meetings first Tuesdays, 7 pm, Hollyfield Conference Center. Volunteers needed with health fairs & other events/activities. 713/603-0023; POB 130158, Houston 77219.

• **Lesbian Health Outreach Project** is a united effort of Montrose Counseling Center & Montrose Clinic to educate lesbians about risk factors for breast cancer, breast self-exam techniques, & other health concerns and to provide low-cost (sliding scale) well-woman exams that include pelvic exams, pap smears, breast exams, lab work, & referral for mammograms when needed. Services available by appointment only at Montrose Clinic, 713/830-3000. To schedule educational presentations through Montrose Counseling Center, call 713/529-0037.

• **Methodist Visiting Nurse Association of Houston** (VNA) is a nonprofit, United Way agency

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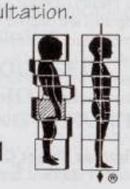


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that provides home care to patients in the eight-county area of southeast Texas which includes Brazoria, Chambers, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller Counties. VNA is licensed by the Texas Department of Health, accredited by the Joint Commission of Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO), and endorsed by the Harris County Medical Society. For more info: 713/520-8115.

• **Milam House.** Volunteers needed! Reach out, make a difference, show someone you care. Walk the talk at Milam House, a residential center for people living with HIV/AIDS. Volunteers work directly with the residents, providing companionship & emotional support in a one-on-one setting. More info: 713/520-9248, bmyers@pwach.org, www.neosoft.com/MilamInfo@pwach.org.

• **Montrose Clinic/Houston Clinical Research Network** is a community-based, nonprofit agency. It provides low- or no-cost health, social, educational, & research services; specializes in treatment of sexually transmitted diseases & HIV/AIDS care. Needed: cash gifts for indigent-patient care; volunteer time from general & specialty physicians/lay persons interested in HIV counseling/office support. 215 Westheimer, 713/830-3000 for current outreach HIV-testing sites.

• **Next Step** is a confidential educational workshop for those who are HIV-positive. Topics include treatments for HIV, nutrition, safer sex, and stress management. Free T-cell count and viral load tests. For more info or to sign up for the next workshop, call the Montrose Clinic at 713/830-3000.

• **People With AIDS Coalition-Houston** is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization of, by, and for people with HIV/AIDS that promotes independence & self-reliance so that PWAs may live with dignity, self-esteem, & acceptance. This is achieved by providing short-term crisis intervention & long-term referrals; creating opportunities for active participation as a member of the PWA community; & providing public advocacy for the needs of PWAs. While committed to ending the epidemic, PWAC endeavors to respond with love, care, & compassion to the unmet & changing needs that arise with PWAs. 3400 Montrose Blvd., Ste. 207., 713/522-5428, fax 713/522-2674.

• **Project CAESAR** is the Gay Men's Health Initiative at AIDS Foundation Houston. By providing the latest information and education to the gay community, Project CAESAR intends to slow HIV infection rates among gay and bisexual men in Houston. Through self-esteem, motivational, and relationships topics, the program helps uncover healthy paths buried under the pressure of everyday life. It also reaches over 20,000 men a year in the Houston area through its outreach team, the Legion. To attend a workshop, volunteer, or info: 713/623-6796 or projectcaesar@hotmail.com.

• **Steven's House** provides intermediate care in a homelike environment for men & women living with HIV/AIDS. Needed: soft drinks, laundry detergent, bed pillows (new), towels, twin-size comforters, twin-size sheets (extra long, fitted or flat), basic cleaning supplies, office supplies, new bicycle, chest of drawers, lamps (table & floor), VCR, cable-ready TV for resident room, bedside tables, apartment in Montrose area for office/resident's family lodging; volunteers for tasks/services. Nonprofit. 713/522-5757.

• **Substance Abuse Research Treatment** is offered free of charge by the University of Texas Houston Health Science Center. Free research treatment programs are offered for cocaine use, and cocaine use complicated by either depression, opiate/heroin use or alcohol use; and for cigarette smoking, and cigarette smoking with alcohol use. Programs may involve individual therapy led by trained clinicians and investigational medications. 713/500-2800, http://trc.uth.tmc.edu.

• **Thomas Street Clinic** (TSC) is part of the Harris County Hospital District (HCHD) providing medical, social, & educational care to the HIV/AIDS-infected person. As an outpatient clinic for the past 10 years, the clinic provides educational workshops, social assistance, up-to-date research studies, & state-of-the-art medical care. 2015 Thomas St. @ Paschall, between I45 & N. Main. Info: 713/793-4000. For understanding of HIV education programs: 713/793-4026. For bilingual assistance: 713/793-4051. TSC's Patient Advisory Board is an elected board that advises the Harris County Hospital District on matters concerning TSC. Meetings open to the public, 2nd Wednesdays, 11 am, 3rd floor conference room at the clinic.

• **VistaCare Family Hospice** is dedicated to serving people experiencing the final phases of life & those who care for them. We provide comprehensive services through our commitment to the highest standards of care. Volunteers can assist in a variety of tasks: patient care, nursing home volunteer, respite or relief visit for the caregiver, bereavement phone calls/visits, office work, assist during training seminars, delivery person, crafts volunteer or other activities. To inquire about volunteering, call 713/290-1746.

• **Women's Clinic.** Montrose Clinic offers a women's health clinic. Visits include complete well-woman examination, lab work, medication, & referral if needed. A nominal fee is requested but no one will be turned away. By appointment only, 713/830-3000.

• **Yoga.** As a special outreach to the GLBT community, Devanand will offer their classes for free if you mention you saw this in *OutSmart* magazine. Yoga benefits individuals by providing stress relief, better health & a clear mind, achieved by a combination of physical postures, mental exercises, breathing techniques, improved diet. Mon., Wed., Fri., 6:30 pm.; Sat., 9:30 am. Free meditation class on Tue, 6:30 pm. Devanand Yoga Center, 3115 West Loop South, Ste. 21. 713/965-9642.

PROFESSIONAL

• **Chase Bank P.R.I.D.E. Team**, a chapter of the Chase Manhattan Bank Pride Networking Group, welcomes you to be a part of equality. P.R.I.D.E. stands for People Recognizing Individual Differences Equally and is the bank's networking group for GLBT & supportive employees. Our mission is to support the inclusion of all Chase bankers regardless of sexual orientation & gender identification as valued employees of the bank & to encourage an environment of equality that celebrates the individuality & diversity of everyone. The Team typically meets 4th Tuesday of every month at 6 pm. Info: Richard Bielec at 713/655-5423, Elizabeth Goza at 713/216-5574, or Roy Mendiola at 713/216-8889.

• **Executive & Professional Association of Houston** (EPAH) is established to provide a nonpolitical forum for discussion of business & community affairs, to encourage & foster social & business relationships among the membership, and to support educational and/or charitable causes. More info: 281/587-6066.

• **EXXON Gay & Lesbian Employees** meets monthly to discuss workplace issues, empowerment, social events, etc. For time/location call 713/522-6212.

• **Gay & Lesbian Health Professionals** meets monthly, providing socials, speakers, networking, & practitioner referral line. Info/referral, call 713/523-4700.

• **Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce** (GHGLCC) fosters & promotes the economic development & vitality of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, & supportive heterosexual businesses & professional organizations in the greater Houston area. Meets first Tuesday. Info: 713/523-7576.

• **LiB** (Lesbians in Business) is a lesbian empowerment group, promotes lesbians, jobs, networking, & businesses. LiB's hotline: 713/529-0077.

• **Prism** is an employee network for employees of Equilon Enterprises LLC, Motiva Enterprises LLC, Equiva Services LLC, & Equiva Trading Company. The network is open to any employee of these companies and includes gay, lesbian, & bisexual employees & their friends. The mission of Prism is to provide support for members & coworkers, promote equality for employees regardless of sexual orientation or gender identification, and create awareness in management of issues & concerns affecting people in a diverse workplace inclusive of sexual orientation & gender identification. More info: Jim at 281/544-8138, Robert at 713/241-1238, or Dick at 281/544-8730.

• **SEA Change** (Support, Educate, and Advocate for Change) is open to social workers & social work students who are interested in gay, lesbian, bisexual, & transgendered issues. For info: John at 281/544-6949.

• **SPECTRUM** is an employees' group of Southwestern Bell Communications which is open to both management & nonmanagement LGBT personnel, & those who share their concerns. The group's goals include establishing domestic partner benefits, making the workplace more aware of diversity, & helping direct the company's involvement in the community. Partners are encouraged to attend & participate. 713/567-7733. SBC Intranet Site: Intranet.sbc.com./SBCWIN/corporate/aware/index.html or Internet Web Site: www.webcom.com/benny/spectrum/spectrum.html.

• **The Stonewall Lawyers Association** is a Houston-area organization for those interested in legal issues affecting gay, lesbian, bisexual, & transgendered people and those living with HIV. Legal professionals, law students, & others interested in these issues are welcome. For more info: Alex Wathen at 713/222-0880.

• **Support, Equality, and Awareness at Shell** (SEAShell) is a gay & lesbian employees group whose mission is to provide support for members and coworkers, promote equality for employees regardless of sexual orientation, and create awareness in management of issues and concerns affecting people in a diverse workplace. For more information, call Becky at 713/245-1960 or John at 281/544-6949.

RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL

• **Community Gospel Church** holds a high-spirited gathering for a charismatic, Pentecostal worship service. Sunday, 11 am & 7 pm, Thursday, 7:30 pm. 4305 Lillian, 713/880-9235, www. communitygospel.org.

• **Dignity Houston** is dedicated to the welfare of gay/lesbian Catholics & their friends. Meets Saturdays, 7:30 pm, 1307 Yale, Suite H, 713/880-2872.

• **Houston Mission Church**. Worship the Lord in a supportive atmosphere. Sundays, 10:30 am–noon, 1505 Nevada @ Commonwealth, 713/529-8225.

• **Houston Reconstructionist Havurah** (HRH) is an inclusive Jewish community. Core tenets of Reconstructionism are maintaining a supportive community & taking social action to repair an imperfect world. Newcomers describe the remarkable level of acceptance & warmth they encounter; regardless of background or initial level of Jewish education or observance. For more info: 713/728-5050.

• **Integrity/Houston** is the advocacy organization for gays & lesbians in the Episcopal Church. Meets 2nd Mondays for Eucharist & potluck dinner, 7 pm @ Autrey House, 6265 Main St. Info: 713/528-6771.

• **Kolbe Project** is an ecumenical outreach to gays, lesbians, & other sexual minorities modeled after the ministry of St. Francis of Assisi. Potluck & community-concern programs: first Thursdays, 7 pm. Healing service: 4th Wednesdays, 8 pm. Spiritual direction by appointment; HIV/AIDS hospital chaplaincy. For more info, call 713/861-1800, or visit info@kolbeproject.org, www.kolbeproject.org.

• **Lesbian/Gay Unitarian Universalist Potluck.** The lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders, friends, and families of the First Unitarian Universalists Church cordially invite you to bring a dish & join them on every 4th Friday, 7 pm, First UU Church, Crane Fireside Room, 5200 Fannin, 713/526-5200. Schedule may change at Thanksgiving or Christmas.

• **Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church—Recovery Support Group** is a cell group church with an emphasis on small groups that meet weekly in the homes of members; we believe that the Holy Spirit has given spiritual gifts to every believer which are to be exercised in the life of the church; our church is evangelical & charismatic in its style of worship; we have a primary outreach to gay, lesbian, bisexual, & transgendered people—all are welcome. Sundays, 5:30–6:30 pm, Central Congregational Church, 1311 Holman. Call: 713/528-6756; FAX: 713/528-6447; e-mail: maranatha@ev1.net; web: www.maranatha.com.

• **Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection** is an inclusive Christian Church with a primary outreach to Houston's LGBT community since 1972. Worship services: Sun. 9 am & 11 am; Wed. 7 pm. Sunday school for children & youth 11:15 am. adult Sunday School 10 am. 2025 West 11th St @ TC Jester. 713-861-9149, mccr@neosoft.com, www.mccr-hou.com.

• **More Light Presbyterians of Greater Houston** is one of approximately 40 local chapters of the national MLP organization, which is dedicated to full participation of all persons in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) community without regard for sexual orientation. Meets 1st Mondays, 7:30 pm @ the Presbyterian Center: 1110 Lovett Blvd., 281/440-0353.

• **New Hope Christian Center** holds weekly worship services open to all people. Bonita Kirk, founder of the Black Gay and Lesbian Coalition, started this nondenominational group. "Our vision is to be a place where hope is restored, faith is released, and lives are changed," Kirk says. 11 am Sunday @ The Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. 713/524-3818 (center) or 713/801-7386 (BLAGC).

SOCIAL

• **The Art League of Houston** offers free art classes to all HIV-positive individuals. Complimentary lunch provided. Instructor: Kermit Eisenhut. Classes are ongoing every Thursday, 1–4 pm @ the Art League, 1953 Montrose, 713/523-9530.

• **Asians & Friends Houston** is a social organization for gay Asians & their friends, made up of couples & singles. Events include potluck dinners, movie nights at members' homes or movie theaters, and large parties celebrating Asian holidays. Recognizing that many people are not out of the closet, membership is kept confidential. It's an easygoing & fun-loving group, and all are welcome. 713/626-6300; PO Box 667100, Houston, 77266; http://members.aol.com/texasians.

• **Classic Chassis Car Club of Houston** is open to everyone (car not necessary) who enjoys cars, trucks, models, automobilia, or hanging out with those who do! Meetings are the 1st Wednesdays at the Blue Agave Restaurant, 1340 W. Gray, 7 pm. The club hosts driving tours, workshops, & events at members' homes. 713/797-8615, P.O. Box 920888, Houston 77292-0888.

• **Garden and Yard Society** (G.A.Y.S.) is a gay gardening club for women & men. Bring your gardening friends and supporting partners. Meets 2nd Fridays, 7 pm at various locations. 713/661-6378, 713/520-1066.

• **Gay Men's Chorus of Houston** rehearses Thursdays, 7-10 pm @ Grace Lutheran Church, 2515 Waugh Dr. Singing & non-singing members are welcome. For info, leave message @ 713/521-SING (713/521-7464), www.gmch.org.

• **Houston Area Bears** is a social organization for "bears" (hirsute men) of all sizes & their admirers. Monthly social held on 3rd of each month at Mary's, 10 pm. For more info: The Grower Line, 713/867-9123.

• **Houston Area Motorcycle Society** (HAMS), a gay/lesbian motorcycle club, has a social at a different coffee shop in the Montrose area and an organized ride once a month, for those who own a motorcycle or are involved with someone who does. 713/862-8477, http:\\users.ev1.net\~tgarrison\hamsonline\index.html

• **Houston Outdoor Group** (HOG) is a social group for gay men & lesbians who enjoy the outdoors. Activities include camping, hiking, horseback riding, canoeing, etc. Day trips & weekend trips (typically a 2- to 4-hour drive from Houston) are usually to state parks or private campgrounds. Local social events include Saturday morning breakfasts & once-a-month potluck dinners. Call 713/KAMPOUT (526-7688) for info or your complimentary newsletter, or write to P.O. Box 980893, Houston, TX 77098.

• **Houston Pride Band** provides musical entertainment for the lesbian and gay community. They are seeking musicians of all skill levels and instrumentation. Rehearsals held at Dignity Houston, 1307 Yale, Wednesdays, 7–9 pm.; www.houstonprideband.org.

• **Lambda Rollerskating Club** has fabulous door prizes, skate-till-you-drop music, & several skate games. Tuesdays, 8–10 pm, Tradewinds, 5006 W 34th (off 290), 713/410-7215, lrsc@neosoft.com, www.neosoft.com/~lrsc. $5.

• **Lesbian Film Night** takes place on 4th Fridays and features a flick with a lesbian theme. A potluck precedes the movie, and discussion follows. $3–$5 donation welcomed, but not required. 7 pm, the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. 713/524-3818.

• **Lesbian Island Association**, a group for women in their 20s, is based at the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center. Members either meet on Saturdays at the center or enjoy social activities on the town. $3 donation welcomed, but not required. Call the center at 713/524-3118 for details.

• **Lesbian Literary Discussion Group** meets to discuss all types of literature including Dosteoyevski, Conrad, Atwood, Potok, Nin, Joyce, Wilde, Chekov, Marx, etc. Wednesdays, time TBA. At the Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/523-3037, jsharon@msi.uth.tmc.edu. .

• **LOAF** is a social, networking, & support group for lesbians 50 years of age and older. 713/869-1482.

• **Lone Star Nudist Group** is for gay or bisexual men who wish to share nude experiences. Singles/lovers welcome. Monthly meetings. Nude social events, massage group, out-of-town gatherings. 713/866-8847.

• **Montrose Writers Project** meets every week for writers at varying skill levels to read their work, trade ideas, discuss issues. Lead by Blas Falconer, the writers project is one of the center's longest-running groups. Falconer teaches literature at UH & works in the Writing Center at HCC. He plans to lead a series of workshops in different genres—such as poetry, fiction, memoir & drama—accompanied by writing exercises. $3 donation welcomed, but not required. 3–4:30 pm Saturdays @ the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. 713/524-3818.

• **Out Skate Rollerskating Club.** Skate every Wednesday night, 8-10 pm at the biggest/best rink in Houston—Zenith Roller Rink, 8075 Cook Rd. @ Beechnut. $5 plus $1.50 skate rental. Everyone welcome. 281/933-5818, www.flash.net/~lauper1/.

• **Prime Timers Houston** promotes social activities for the older gay and bisexual male, including theater, dining out, movies, potluck dinners, card games, and weekend daytrips. 713/867-3903.

• **Rainbow Fishing Club.** Monthly 12-hour deep-sea fishing trips from Galveston during Red Snapper season. January to August. To get on free mailing list for this gay & lesbian fishing club: John @ 713/523-6381.

• **Rainbow Ranglers** is a nonprofit social/educational/service group founded in 1994 to provide country western dance education to the community of Houston while raising funds for local organizations that provide services to our community. Novice lessons Tuesdays, 9–11 pm; Intermediate classes Thursdays, 8–

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NOVEMBER At the Center

November 10 Women's Game Night debuts, 7 p.m.
November 13 Harold Kooden, Ph.D., speaks on his book Golden Men: The Power of Gay Midlife, 7 p.m.
November 17 "Passion, Poetry, Politics 2" plus open-mike session, 7:30 p.m.
November 23 Thanksgiving Dinner at the Center, 2 p.m.-6 p.m. (please call in advance to reserve a space)
November 27 "The Dynamics of Interracial Couples in a Racist Culture" workshop, 7 p.m.

DECEMBER Looking Ahead...

December 1 World AIDS Day exhibition of paintings by artists with HIV/AIDS.
Love Reinvented, a co-presentation with Rice Media Center, 7:30 p.m.

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10 pm, Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos, 713/523-1807. Classes are free and open to the public.
• **Texas Gay Rodeo Association** is a nonprofit organization, with chapters in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston, that promotes and stages an annual rodeo event as well as engaging in fund-raising activities throughout the year. 713/777-0410, P.O. Box 710999, Houston 77271-0999.

SPORTS

• **Bowling.** Join Houston's gay & lesbian bowling community for fall/winter league fun & sport. Mixed leagues meet at Palace Lanes, Sundays, 7 pm & Wednesdays, 6:30 pm. Men's league meets Mondays, 9 pm. Women's league meets at Dynamic Lanes, Mondays, 6:45 pm and the I Luv Luci Duo league meets Mondays, 9 pm. There is a nine-pin doubles tournament every 3rd Saturday at Palace for all bowlers, league or not. 713/522-9612, Wiccado@aol.com, www.Texasinvite.com.
• **Good Sports.** College football and basketball fans. 713/523-6000.
• **Houston Chain Gang Bicycle Club.** Different rides every week and different levels, Easy Riders (Montrose area rides), Chainsmokers (faster/longer rides) and Rough Riders (off-road). Free. 713-863-1860.
• **Houston Montrose Athletic Association** organizes the Houston Gay and Lesbian Pride 5K Fun Run/Walk during Pride Week. 713-874-1686.
• **Houston Tennis Club**, an affiliate member of the Gay and Lesbian Tennis Association, welcomes men & women of all ages & skill levels. Meets Wednesdays & Fridays 7:30–9 pm & Sundays 9 am–noon at Memorial Park Tennis Center. 713/692-2703.
• **Houston Women's Flag Football League** (HWFFL) is a nonprofit organization open to all women, 18 & over. Competitive & recreational. Can join individually or bring in your own team. 713/981-6753, www.hwffl.org.
• **Independent Billiard League** is a recreational BCA-sanctioned billiard league that welcomes everyone of all skill levels, either on a team or as substitute players. We have 3-player teams that compete at various bars & clubs in Houston on Thursday nights. IBL promotes sportsmanship & friendly competition and is an excellent way to make new friends. More info: 713/522-7062, or P.O. Box 542345, Houston 77254-2345; iblhouston@iblhouston.com, www.iblhouston.net.
• **Lone Star Volleyball Association** is encouraging interested volleyball players to join in the fun of playing indoor volleyball. The LSVA leagues play at the Univ. of St. Thomas-Jarabeck Center, 4000 Mt. Vernon (between Richmond & Alabama) on Sundays: 4:30–7 pm, recreational & advanced players; 7–9 pm, intermediate players. We are looking to begin a women's league and encourage all women to come out. Those who have never played with LSVA before play for free on first visit. 281/878-4629, http://www.neosoft.com/~lsva/.
• **The Montrose Softball League** is a nonprofit adult softball league serving the greater Houston gay community since 1980. Open to both men and women of all skill levels. Voicemail 713/867-3913; write to MSL, P.O. Box 541954, Houston 77254-1954; MSL@QMAIL.com; www.montrosesoftballleague.com.
• **Rainbow Golf—Ladies Playing Golf.** Weekend playdays, private lessons. After-work playdays: Wednesdays at 5:30 pm (Sharpstown) and 6:00 pm (Jersey Meadows). For more info: 281/589-7380, or visit www.LPGL@aol.com.
• **Rainbow Riders** is a bicycling club for womyn of all abilities and experience every Sunday morning. For more info, call Cookie Davenport, 713/869-1686, guusje@aol.com .
• **The Texas Women's Racquetball Club** is open to women racquetball players of all skill levels. Meet monthly to play racquetball for about an hour. Kiki Hummel 281/556-0703, khummel@houston.rr.com.

YOUTH & PARENTS

• **Camp Hope.** A project of AIDS Foundation Houston provides a week-long camp experience for children living with HIV/AIDS. Camp enables children who are HIV+ to meet children just like them. Camp teaches them how to adhere to their medication protocols and allows them to share themselves without the constraints society places on them. They can experience the outdoors and the joys of childhood in a safe and supportive environment, increasing self-esteem and learning camaraderie. For info about donations needed for camp or to volunteer contact Bob Lawson or Marc Cohen at 713/623-6796 or tohelp@aidshelp.org.
• **Casa de Esperanza** needs new/gently used children's clothes, sizes birth to 14; new children's socks/underwear; medium, large, & extra-large diapers and pull-ups; baby wipes; paper towels & toilet paper; and food for homes that serve abused, neglected, & HIV-positive children. For more info write P.O. Box 66581, Houston 77266-6581, or call 713/529-0639.
• **Gay Fathers/Fathers First** is a weekly support meeting for fathers and their partners. Mondays, 8–9:30 pm, Grace Lutheran Church, 2515 Waugh, 281-505-1788, www.gayfathershouston.org.
• **Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals** (H.A.T.C.H.) is open to anyone gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered &/or questioning, ages 13–20. Fri, 7:30–10 pm, & Sun, 6:30–9 pm. Location/info: 713/942-7002.
• **Houston Gay & Lesbian Parents** (HGLP) support group meets to discuss issues pertaining to today's gay families. If you have children or plan to have children, this support group can help with issues like coming out, ex-spouse problems, step relationships, etc. Child-care provided. Newsletter mailout last Wednesday of the month, monthly family activity, the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7–9 pm. Bering Memorial UMC, 1400 Harold. More info: 713/284-4939.
• **Just For Us** (JFU) is a social and support group for youth in the 6th–12th grades who have gay or lesbian parents. Sponsored by Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents. 713/284-4939.
• **Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians And Gays**
PFLAG Houston: General meeting with small group discussions, 1st Sunday (except holidays, goes to the 2nd Sunday), 2–4:30 pm, Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas Ave. Mid-month discussion group 3rd Tuesday, 7:30–9 pm, Church of the Epiphany, 9600 S. Gessner @ Bissonnet. PFLAG Houston Helpline: 713/867-9020, www.PFLAG.org.
PFLAG Galveston County: 3rd Sundays, 2 pm, AIDS Coalition of Coastal Texas, 1405 39th St., 409/744-3200 or janettexas@aol.com.
PFLAG Woodlands: 3rd Sunday of each month, 2 pm, Northwood Unitarian Church, 1370 N. Mill Bend Dr., 713/867-9020.
• **StreetWise Houston** is a drop-in/educational & support center for homeless, street, & lesbigay youth, ages 13-24, located @ 1828 Arbor St. We provide HIV support groups, drug intervention, housing case management, & GED classes. We are seeking donations of hygiene products (deodorant, tampons, toothpaste, etc.), canned foods, furniture (beds, sofa, dining table), new socks & underwear, dishes, linens, & bus tokens. Also seeking volunteers who would like to teach life skills and/or be mentors to our young clients during afternoon or evening operating hours. For more info: Terry Mims @ 713/524-5757.

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If your information needs updating or if your organization is not included, please e-mail Ann Sieber at ann@outsmartmagazine.com, call 713/520-7237, or fax 713/522-3275.

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SignOut

by Lilly Roddy

The good news for this month is that Mercury, ruler of communication, decision-making, and initiating new projects is going direct on Nov. 7. You will need to wait until the 10th before you start any new projects or ventures. The bad news is Thanksgiving week might be a bit more stressful than usual this year. Keep those visits home short and the conversation about the weather. The full moon this month is on the 11th in the sign of Taurus; this full moon is about money, personal values, and material things. Taurus is also about sensuality and tactile sensations. You may want to spend that Saturday involved in physical sensations. Have your lover give you a massage and feed you chocolate at the same time. And then let your creative juices flow. The new moon is on the 25th in the sign of Sagittarius. This is a time to begin expanding your knowledge base and broadening your cultural perspective. So, plan a trip to your favorite place for the holidays. Some of the stressful days ahead are Nov. 1, 7–8, 14–15, 18–19, 22, and 25. Keep your schedule flexible and build in plenty of exits on these days. Fun days are Nov. 2, 9–10, 16, 24, and 26–27. Plan to do festive things on these days.

Scorpio (Oct. 24–Nov. 21) The beginning of the month is a stronger than normal time of introspection. Decisions will be harder than usual to make. But the lack of external actions is no indication of what is cooking below the surface. Your thoughts bubble to the surface after the 9th. Relationships are highlighted on the weekend of Nov. 10–12. Try to keep busy because home is a rather unsettled place for you. And make your Thanksgiving visit to the old home place short and sweet.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22–Dec. 21) This month, part of you wants to be social and part of you wants to be on a mountaintop. Try to do some of both so you won't feel drained and overextended. You have the urge to engage in deep conversations as the relationship and social arenas continue to open up for you—going from very good as you get closer to the holidays, to even better as December begins. Make sure that you take advantage of this time for business or personal promotion.

Capricorn (Dec. 22–Jan. 19) Lucky for you that your career is extra energized this month. After Mercury goes forward on the 10th, you are ready to take charge of your life. Watch that your enthusiasm doesn't have you driving the car over someone's foot who was getting in too slowly. Friendships and groups are powerful forces for you this month. Seek out people that you haven't seen for a while. The holidays find you restless and easily bored. Make sure you have plenty to do. The nuanced description of your aunt's hernia operation over the turkey and cranberries can push you over the edge. But don't worry, crimes committed during the holidays come with a built-in pardon.

Aquarius (Jan. 20– Feb. 18) You will not want to rest on your laurels this month even if they are very attractive. You want special recognition for your leadership qualities, and *particular* acknowledgment of how smart you are. So, here it is. Gosh, you have such a big brain. You will not be easy to deal with if you are passed over or ignored. Remember, in your heart lurks the Leo that wants attention and adoration from all who meet you. Relationships are still a roller coaster. You might as well get some cotton candy and enjoy the ride.

Pisces (Feb. 19–March 20) And don't *you* need a rest from last month! You didn't know if you were going to be able to escape the planet or not. And darn, you missed the bus to Heaven and you are still here. Time for a trip during the holidays. You will probably even enjoy being with your family during the holidays. You are especially open-minded this month. Get ready because big things are happening where you live at the end of the month. You may move or get some new furnishings. You may even find your workplace changing locales. But you are ready for some excitement.

Aries (March 21–April 19) Shared resources are up for you this month. Just how much money do you and your lover have together? And are y'all working on the same agenda for your future security? And since thinking about the future is not an activity you practice very often, you may not know all the questions to ask. But that won't stop you. You need some excitement in your relationship this month. You can get that through an experimental sexual adventure or an argument over who's in charge of what. The holidays are more peaceful and calm for you than the rest of the signs. You could sit back and watch the fireworks in other people's backyards while you have yourself an extra slice of pumpkin pie.

Taurus (April 20–May 20) OK, so we know you are confused about your career direction. And you don't really know what you want to be when you grow up. So avoid any conversations about your future security with your partner. This will only add to your insanity and make you feel even more inadequate. You are still finishing up your review of the past and what you did on your summer vacation. Tell them that you will know after the end of January because you read it in your astrology column. That should make them feel more comfortable with you and your situation.

Gemini (May 21–June 21) Can you say "busy," "active," "industrious," "overextended"? Because you know you are there. You don't even have time to read this. You had better be getting some handle on your schedule or ill heath will be paying you a visit during this month. You are trying to carry too much of the load. And just because you can juggle everything, so what? Start paring down what you are doing or you will be Melba toast by the end of the month. Don't worry, your active and good luck phase will continue well into next year so you don't have to do it all now.

Cancer (June 22–July 22) This is a playful, fun, creative month. You may not want to work too hard, but you will be successful even without too much effort. You are going to put a lot of energy into your home this month. You may be entertaining there more, redecorating the kitchen, or simply making energetic expressions of your libidinous proclivities. Relationships are more fun this month, too. You and your lover just get along better. You can feel the love. Business can be good this month, but it will have to not seem like work. Promotion and parties for the holiday season will be perfect for you.

Leo (July 23–Aug. 22) With all the activity in your home this month, you may get lost in the shuffle. You should be careful that you don't overload yourself during this holiday period. You are going to want to have everyone at your house for the holidays...and when they get there, you are going to want them to leave. Be sure you have plenty of fire escapes so when you start getting hot under the collar you won't feel trapped. It doesn't help that you also don't know what you want to do with your life at this time. Just make sure that it involves having a good time and you're getting plenty of acknowledgment. After the holidays, you are ready to get back on track. You will be more creative and the solutions will be at your fingertips.

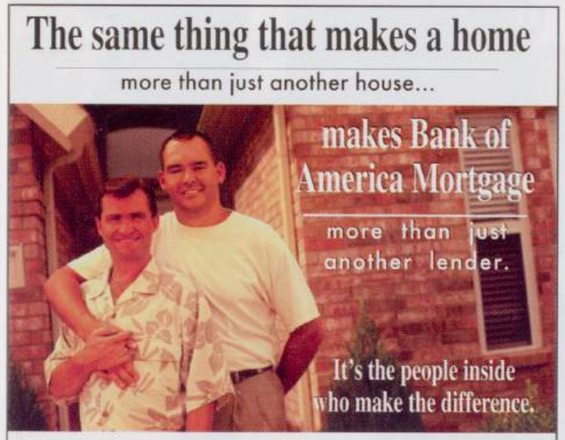
Virgo (Aug. 23–Sept. 22) Normally, with Mercury, your ruling planet, retrograde, you get your life organized. But that has not been the case this time around. You seem to see what needs to be done, but are not able to put your energy in a focused direction. After the 10th, your organizing skills come back and you feel like your old self. You are going to be busy at work through the end of this year and well into next year. You will need to build upon the opportunities that you are encountering. But as for the best directions to go in, you are still not sure yet...and don't have to be. Keep your holiday encounters with the family temporary and amiable.

Libra (Sept. 23–Oct. 23) Mars, the ruler of Aries, your opposite sign, moves into your sign on the evening of the 3rd. Mars is active, aggressive, confrontational, impatient, inspirational, and self-motivated. These are not the things that you lovely Libras are usually known for. So, don't hold this energy inside of you this month. Find some mirthful outlets for this dynamic verve. An exercise or health program might be a good way to express this, but don't do it alone—make sure you have someone to share in the adventure. And for the holidays, have them send you the agenda ahead of time so you can decide if it fits into what you think is best for everyone.



Lilly Roddy is a Houston-based astrologer. She can be reached at lillycath@aol.com or www.cybersim.com/hermes.







OUT IN HOUSTON































Resurrection MCC's dedication ceremony for its new building took place on October 1:
1. **Shelia Jackson Lee** and **Rev. J. Dwayne Johnson**.
2. **Rev. Ralph Lasher**.
3. **Rev. Troy Perry**.

The H.A.T.C.H. Awards Banquet was held October 13:
4. Keynote speaker **Jerry Miller** demonstrates a (real) astronaut's glove.
5. H.A.T.C.H. president **Kevin Davidson** gives award to **Kathy Hubbard**.
6. Honorees **Jim Vilven** and his daughter **Liz**, who designed the H.A.T.C.H. logo.

7. **Smokin' Hair Day** played at the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center's Unity Party on October 13.

8. The Misfits Ball was held September 24.

9. **Bernadette** (center) was crowned Miss Camp America at the video viewing of the pageant at Pacific Street on October 14.

10. A group of celebrants at the annual Gray Party was held at Hyperia on October 14.

11. The happy union of Club Rainbow owners **Alexis Wasifuddin** (left) and **Lynn Allen** on October 9.

12. Another happy union: **Sean Carter** (left) and **Jerel McNeil** on September 17.

13. **Kristine W** at KRBE's Atom Smasher at Rich's on October 14.

14. **Patrick Palmer** (left) and **Kirk Baxter** at the grand opening of Patrick's studio on Oct. 13, with an art exhibit of some of Patrick's work.

Empower, the gay expo, was held Sunday, October 8, at the George R. Brown convention center:
15. State Rep. **Debra Danburg** (right) cuddles with **Anita Renteria**, chamber prez.

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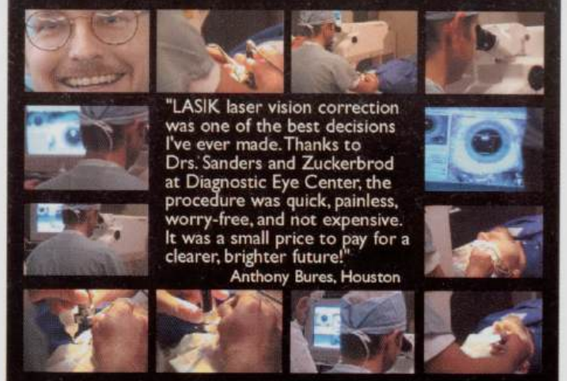
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