

# OutSmart

JULY 2006

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jocks head to  
Chicago and Montreal*

*12 pages of athlete photos*

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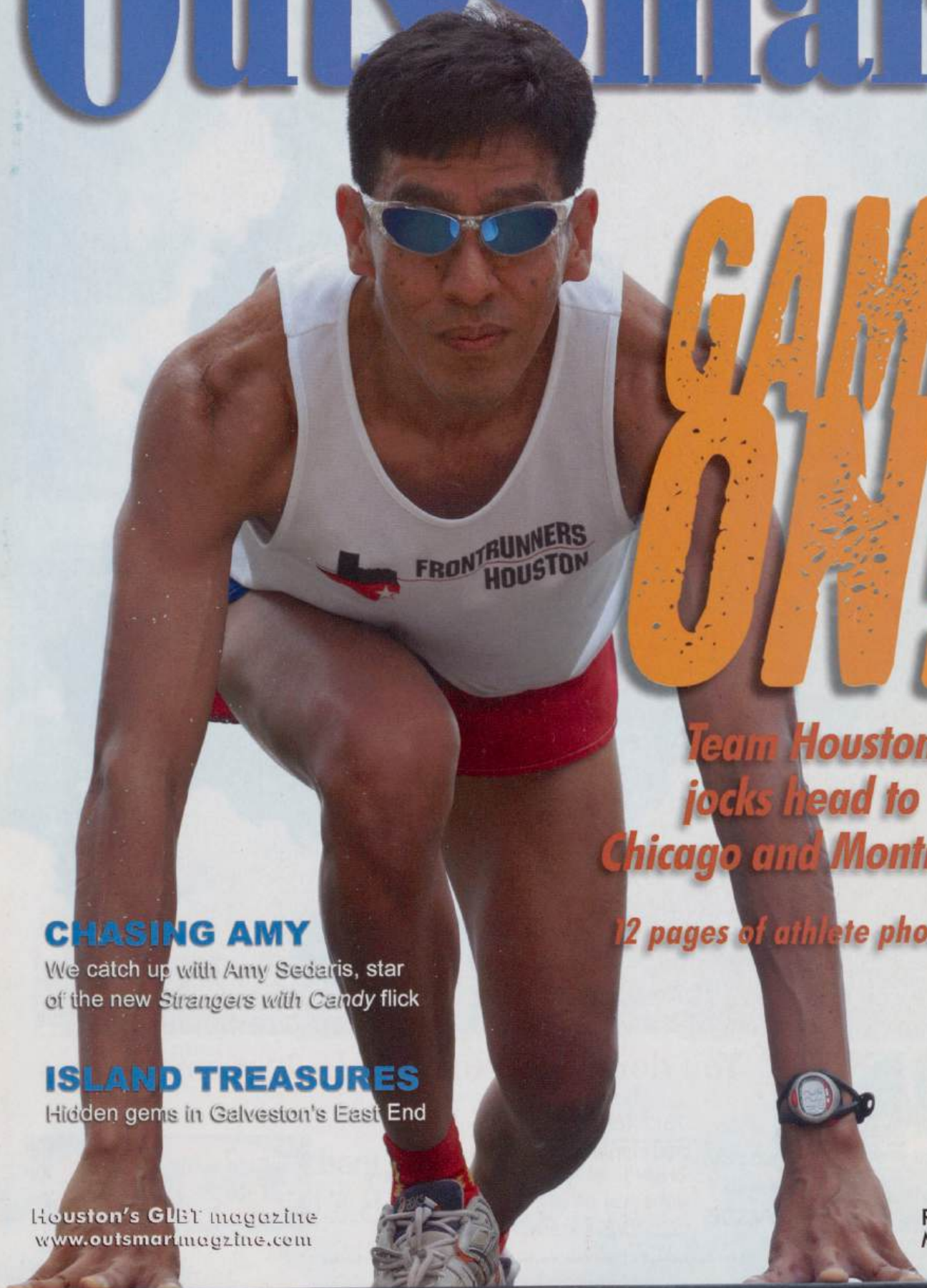
We catch up with Amy Sedaris, star  
of the new *Strangers with Candy* flick

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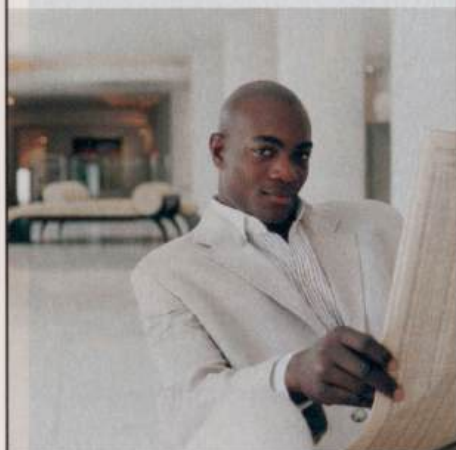
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### About the cover:

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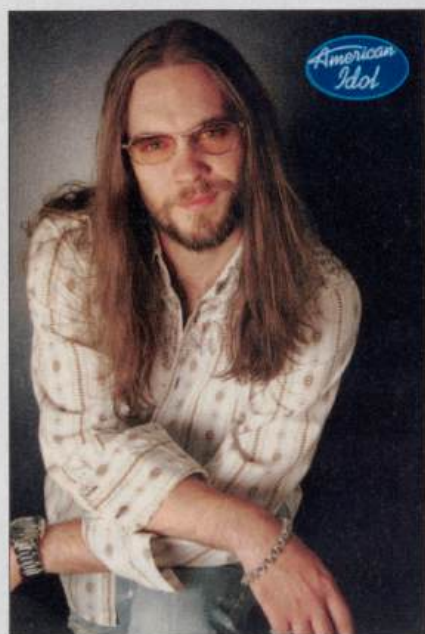
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## Letters

### ARTISTIC SUCCESS

It is with great pleasure to announce that the 3rd Annual Celebration of Diversity and Inclusion Art Show was a tremendous success. This year's sales of the Healing Arts (Art League Houston) students' work experienced a marked increase versus the two prior years. When contemplating the reasons why, my reflection focused upon the differences in event promotion. After discussing this with the key players, we strongly believe *OutSmart's* feature article on Mark Mauboules and this program ["OutFront," June] made a significant impact.

Please accept our heartfelt gratitude for this coverage. You and *OutSmart* magazine prove once again the strength in our numbers.

Last, while I have the readers' attention, I encourage the community to visit the Multi-Service Center located at 1475 W. Gray. There they can observe the classes, continue to enjoy the profound talent of the students and purchase their art throughout the year. Donations are greatly appreciated should you not find art that you resonate with.

**Adrienne E. Brown**

Chairperson, PRIDE-Houston Team Member  
Resource Group, Wells Fargo Bank N.A.  
Houston

### OUR CONTRIBUTORS

D.L. Groover, who frequently writes about the arts for *OutSmart*, received first place in the commentary/criticism category at the Lone Star Awards presented by the Houston Press Club on June 3. He was honored for work done for the *Houston Press*. Groover's most recent contribution to this magazine was "The Da Vinci (Hanky) Code" in the June issue.

Anthony Bures, whose company, Atomar Communications, provides web programming services for *OutSmart*, is a member of the Lone Star Lariats dance team, which won the top award in the team medley category at the May 26-28 New York City Hoedown, the annual International Association of Gay and Lesbian Country Western Dance Clubs competition.

Nancy Ford, the former *Texas Triangle/TXT* Newsmagazine managing editor and *Houston Voice* editor, has joined *OutSmart* as senior editor.

### CORRECTION

In the June issue, we incorrectly indicated in "Proud People" that Carl Han is Korean. Han is Vietnamese.

In the same feature, we misspelled Brad Odom's name in photo captions on pages 36 and 43. His name was correct in the article. On the "SceneOut" page we mistakenly stated that Odom's new winery business, Salud!, will open in June. The opening is scheduled for sometime in the fall.

### LOVE LETTERS? HATE MAIL?

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**POINT AND SHOOT.** When they're not rehearsing with Houston Pride Band for concerts during Gay Games VII this month, partners in business and life Connie Moore (far right) and Debbie Hunt (second from right) "hit the bars as often as we can," Moore confesses with a laugh. Before someone plans an intervention, know that the couple's bar trips are part of a training regimen. The two are one half of Team Galveston, the island-based group that hopes to sweep the darts competition at the Chicago games (see more local competitors beginning on page 29). Pictured here with fellow darts jocks Lin Hlanak, left, and Rodney Seiler, the two women head up Moore & Hunt, the Montrose-based law firm specializing in GLBT legal issues.

Photographed by David Lewis



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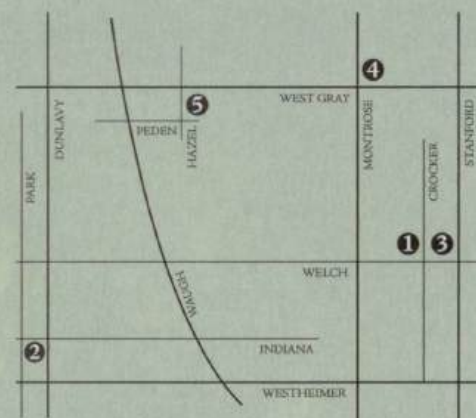
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Photographed by Yvonne Feece

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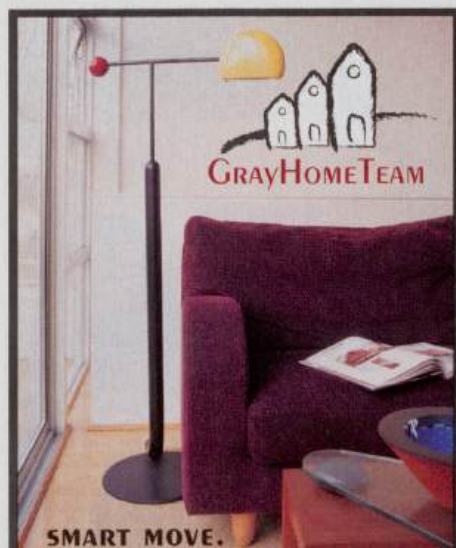
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## News Briefs

DATEBOOK



Private Lives cast at Main Street Theater

Claire Hart-Palumbo directs *Private Lives* by great gay playwright Noël Coward at **Main Street Theater**, July 5-30. \$10-\$35. Tickets: 713/524-6706, [www.mainstreettheater.com](http://www.mainstreettheater.com).

Harrison Guy, formerly of Bartini, brings drag to **Fitzgerald's** beginning July 9, 8 p.m., 10 p.m., and midnight. "The vision is to pattern our show after the LaCage in Vegas or The Baton in Chicago," Guy says. His Black Diamond Revue cast will tackle celebrity illusions and perform their own musical numbers. \$5. Tickets: 713/862-3838, [www.fitzlive.com](http://www.fitzlive.com).

the show has moved to Rich's and features the talents of Shy Anne, Austin Baptist Women, and the reigning Miss Mint Julep, Kay Sedilla. Details: Sonna Alton, 713/830-3015.

Looking ahead: It's time for the 16th presentation of **10 x 10**, a presentation of 10 different 10-minute plays penned by 10 local authors.

More than 500 attendees enjoyed **Tansu in the Houston Heights' Origami Festival** last year. Any way you look at it, that's a lot of folded paper. This year's festival, through July 9, offers more exhibits, free demonstrations, and hands-on workshops taught by noted origami artists who include Kyle Fu, one of the forces behind a planned origami museum set to open soon. Master origami artist Linda Mihara headlines. She is the artist responsible for the effects featured in a new Mitsubishi Endeavor commercial in which a car travels through an animated paper landscape. Details: 713/880-5100, [www.tansustyle.com](http://www.tansustyle.com).



Origami artist Linda Mihara at Tansu

World-famous Cuban illusionist Venezuela Maria Concepcion de los Angeles Valdez Valejo Gonzales (a.k.a. Gilbert Perez) and her sidekick, Ms. Lucy O'Ball (a.k.a. Matthew West), serve as auctioneers at Luck of the Draw 5, the July 13 **DiverseWorks** benefit auction and exhibition of works of art, some by community figures including Patrick Palmer. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., drawing begins at 8 p.m. \$25 admission, \$100-\$125 to purchase art. Details: 713/223-8346, [www.diverseworks.org](http://www.diverseworks.org).

One of the biggest drag fundraisers of the summer, the **Mr. and Miss Mint Julep Pageant**, supports the many programs of Legacy Community Health Services. Set for July 16, 3 p.m.,

Watch for the gay twists in **Who's Afraid of Edward Albee** and **Cookies**, Aug. 18-19, 25-26, 8 p.m., and Aug. 20, 3 p.m., at Houston Community College's Lab One Theatre. Tickets: \$10-\$12. Reservations: 281/785-0487.

**Theatre New West** artistic director Joe Watts plans to open his production of **The Normal Heart** at Bering & James Gallery in mid-August (dates not available at press time). Details: 713/522-2204.

More: [www.outsmartmagazine.com](http://www.outsmartmagazine.com)



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# What a World, What a World . . .

*What a long, strange trip it's been*

This past month, besides rejoining my friends at *OutSmart* following a long, arduous absence, I celebrated another momentous occasion. This past June 20 marked the 29th anniversary of my first same-sex kiss—the first same-sex kiss that mattered, not one that was slathered on my cheek at a family reunion.

Want the gory, *That '70s Show*-like details?

It was 1977. I was spending the evening with my best friend from high school, as we did religiously, at least weekly, while our respective husbands worked the night shift.

Best friend. Mm-hmm.

She had been mowing the lawn, her supple, sweaty upper arms glistening in the waning Ohio summer solstice sun. We had spent the previous couple of years lamenting how boys in our high school were all too yucky to date. But somehow we managed to find a couple to marry.

Yucky boys. Mm-hmm.

But before we graduated, before we married boys, we had vowed to move to New York City together—she pursuing her fashion career, I burning up the Big Apple as a writer and comedian. And we would live happily ever after.

But back to 1977. I can still taste the Riunite on ice (so nice). I can still see the harvest gold shag carpet in her living room as we rolled around in our silly, spontaneous wrestling match. I can still feel the previously unmatched exhilaration as our clumsy, innocent grappling turned into something else. And then *bam!* came the kiss that turned my world around.

Ohhh, I remember thinking. *This is what it is that's made me feel "different" for the previous 21 years!* This was why, when I kissed my husband—who I truly did love, I thought—something always seemed to be missing.

Mm-hmm. I finally got it.

I drove home, dazed. The trip back



up Route 14 to Kent, where I lived, from Lisbon, where Best Friend lived, contained a fork in the road—a real one. As I swerved my 1975 fire-engine red Ford LTD Brougham with the opera windows and vinyl roof through that fork toward my

years. As Best Friend and I lolled around on that shag carpet, gay men, lesbians, and transfolk nationwide were organizing their response to Anita Bryant's legendary antigay "Save Our Children" campaign in Florida. In Houston, thousands of women were crashing on living room floors, shag carpeted or otherwise, of friends they had just met for the National Women's Conference, calling for more lesbian visibility in the feminist movement. And lawmakers in Austin had just introduced \$21.06 of the Texas Penal Code, the sodomy law that would stay on the books until that happy day three years ago when U.S. Supreme Court struck it down with *Lawrence v. Texas*.

Yes, what a long, long strange trip it's been. Today, Best Friend and her husband (a different, better one) are living happily in Magnolia with their beautiful, brilliant daughter. I, having followed her to Texas in 1981, continue my comedy and writing pursuits, burning up hard drive space on my laptop, living happily, gaily, ever after.

And 29 years of uninterrupted service to the GLBT community, one official divorce, 1,500 miles, more than a few lovers and pounds gained and lost (and sometimes gained back again),

five presidents, way too many premature burials, and 25 Pride parades later, I have learned a few things: Follow your instincts. Live and let live. Don't talk to strangers, unless they're buying.

And when this long, strange trip takes you in a big ol' circle, just relax, keep one foot on the floor, and get used to having the spins.

But above all, never, never, never say never.

Nancy Ford is the new senior editor of *OutSmart*. Mark your calendars now for the June 20, 2007, event celebrating the 30th anniversary of her first same-sex kiss.

**But back to 1977. I can still taste the Riunite on ice (so nice). I can still see the harvest gold shag carpet in her living room as we rolled around in our silly, spontaneous wrestling match.**

waiting, soon-to-be-reassigned husband, the fork's metaphoric significance was not lost on me.

At that moment an unmistakable voice in my head told me this night was different from all other nights, *from all other nights*, yet it was nowhere near Passover. This night presented far more than a choice of highways in front of me: It was destiny. Make that *lestiny*. Since that night, except for the occasional glance up to the mirror to see who might be trying to rear-end me, I've never looked back.

Little did I know, a whole movement was brewing that summer that would confirm my choice of fork for the next 29+



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# MARRIAGE ON THE ROCKS

*But same-sex weddings aren't the culprit*

Last month, a proposed constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage failed in the U.S. Senate by a vote of 49-48. The vote was not as close as it sounds, since a two-thirds majority is required to approve a constitutional amendment.

The nearly even vote in the Senate reflects roughly the mood in America regarding amending the constitution to ban gay marriages. A Gallup poll conducted just before the vote showed that half of all Americans support an amendment banning gay marriage. The strongest support comes from evangelical Christians, of whom 83 percent support a constitutional amendment banning gays and lesbians from ever marrying.

Ask most evangelicals why they support a constitutional marriage amendment and they will tell you they are defending marriage, the traditional American family, and family values. It's hard to tell what they're

defending marriage, families, and values from. If it's from gays and lesbians, evangelicals need not worry. Marriage and traditional families and their values are indeed on the rocks in America, but gays and lesbians and their desire to marry have nothing to do with that sad fact.

America's divorce rate is currently closing in on 50 percent. And it's the red states that supported Bush in 2004—the Bible Belt states full of evangelicals—that lead the pack, rushing to end their sacred marriages through divorce. Indeed, data from the U.S. Census Bureau reveals that divorce rates in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas are well above the national average when it comes to divorce. Conversely, Massachusetts—the only state to officially recognize same-sex marriage—has one of the lowest divorce rates in the country.

Of individuals who call themselves "born-again Christians," more than a third of those individuals divorce. Among divorced Christians, nearly a quarter get divorced two or more times. In short, if marriage in America is under attack, then straight couples should simply call a truce with one another instead of speed-dialing their respective divorce lawyers.

If marriages aren't doing well in evangelical households, traditional families are faring worse. For example, in Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina, 42 percent of all children are born out of wedlock. According to an express finding made by Congress when it passed the Welfare Reform Act of 1996, by the year 2015, 50 percent of all children will be born out of wedlock. Suffice it to say, these are not all children born to gays and lesbians who are unable to marry.

I suppose it's easier for evangelical

*continued on page 22*

# WHERE ARE THE WEDDINGS?

*There are reasons we haven't seen a flood of same-sex marriages*

The Institute for Marriage and Public Policy, which opposes gay marriage, recently issued a new report finding that relatively few gay couples are getting married in jurisdictions where gay marriage is permitted. Is this correct? If it is, why are there so few gay marriages so far?

Here's a summary of the findings from the report:

"The highest estimate to date of the proportion of gays and lesbians who have married in any jurisdiction where it is available is 16.7% (Massachusetts). More typically, our survey of marriage statistics from various countries that legally recognize same-sex unions suggests that today between 1% and 5% of gays and lesbians have entered into a same-sex marriage."

The report derives these numbers by comparing the total number of same-sex marriages in a jurisdiction to an estimate of the total number of adult homosexuals in the

jurisdiction (based on survey data). While we could quibble over the estimates of the number of gays in a given jurisdiction, the report uses a range of reasonable assumptions.

Which way do these preliminary findings cut? On the one hand, the report gives some ammunition to opponents of gay marriage, who may argue that marriage will have little practical impact among gays. The legal benefits of marriage will remain unavailable to the many gays who don't marry.

On the other hand, even assuming that marriage rates among gays remain low, there will still be legal, social, and other practical benefits to those gay couples who do choose to marry. To them, marriage will be important regardless of whether others choose to marry.

Low marriage rates among gays make it even harder to see how this tiny fraction of the population will cause any practical harm to marriage as an institution (such as

by the flaunting of non-monogamous behavior by some gay male couples). Of course, if you believe that a "change in the definition of marriage" to include same-sex couples is *itself* harmful to marriage, then marriage will be worse off even if no gay couple actually gets married—but you don't need studies to make this argument. To me, this definitional fear has always seemed far too abstract to count for much.

Assuming it's true that relatively few gay couples are getting married where it is allowed, why is that the case? Many reasons come to mind, especially the fact that even now a gay married couple in Massachusetts is not considered "married" by the federal government and 49 states. This complicates their legal status and precludes them from getting the full benefit of marriage.

Let me address four additional reasons for initially low gay-marriage rates. First, the idea of marriage is still novel to →

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## LeftOut continued from page 20

preachers to stand in their pulpits and talk about queers and gay marriage than it is for them to look out over their respective congregations—which include divorced people, raging and recovering alcoholics, and adulterers—and encourage those same congregants to forget about gay marriage and to focus instead on supporting a constitutional amendment with some teeth in it, one that defines “marriage” as a “lifetime union between one man and one woman,” and one that constitutionally prohibits divorce, adultery, spousal abuse, alcoholism, and all the other offenses that cause traditional marriages to implode.

I understand that marriage is such a sacred concept to some people that they believe they should get two or three shots at it. After all, more than two-thirds of all divorced persons in the United States remarry within 10 years of their divorce. Perhaps that's why at least five U.S. senators who recently supported the failed marriage amendment have been divorced at least once (Allen, Republican of Virginia; Bond, Republican of Missouri; Hutchison, Republican of Texas; and McConnell, Republican of Kentucky), and one is married to a divorcee (Dole, Republican of North Carolina). These twice-married senators represent well their multiple-marriage constituents. So much, though, for the concept of “what God has joined together, let no man put asunder” (Matthew 19:6).

Still, the 83 percent of evangelicals who support a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage and I do agree about one thing: Marriage is on the rocks in America. But, it is the evangelicals, more than anyone else in America, who put it there.

Except for a few gay couples in Massachusetts, the gay and lesbian community hasn't gotten to take a shot at the institution of marriage yet. If and when we finally do, it will take real commitment on our part to treat the sacrament with as much contempt as our “born-again” brothers and sisters have.

*Writing from the liberal side, Houston attorney Daryl Moore has a general practice and is board certified in civil appellate law.*

## OutRight continued from previous page

gay people. As the report suggests, such novelty can produce excitement. But it can also produce fear, specifically fear of the unknown. Britney Spears aside, I doubt many people get married for the novelty of it. Marriage is a huge legal and social commitment. People who have never even imagined it would be a prospect in their lives are understandably hesitant.

Second, gay couples have no gay married role models to follow. Along the same line, there is as yet no peer or familial expectation that one will get married, as there is for straight persons.

Third, without the social encouragement and support that marriage provides for relationship formation, there are probably relatively fewer long-term and stable gay couples to begin with, and thus relatively fewer couples who would immediately demand marriages. As new relationships are formed under a regime of marriage, more gay couples will eventually reach the point where someone pops the question, “Will you marry me?”

Fourth, reinforcing the fear of the unknown is the fact that many gay people have actually constructed an *oppositional identity* for themselves partly based on their exclusion from marriage. Excluded from marriage, they have made a virtue of this necessity.

This oppositional identity takes many forms in the writings of queer theorists and in the things even ordinary gay people can be heard to say when the subject of marriage arises. One hears expressions like “We don't need marriage with all its patriarchal and heterosexist trappings.” Or, “I don't want to mimic straight people.” Or, “Marriage is such a mess. With 50 percent divorce rates, why would we want to join it?” Or, “Just give us the benefits of marriage and you can keep the word.”

Some people will retain this oppositional identity no matter how much time passes. But for others, primarily those younger people whose identities are formed in an environment where marriage is an option, oppositional identity of this sort should fade.

All of this suggests there will be an adjustment period of some duration while more marriage-inclined gay couples form and while marriage becomes a comfortable and normatively appealing option to them.

I doubt that marriage rates among gays will ever equal marriage rates among heterosexuals, primarily because gay couples will be less likely to raise children. Even after marriage culture settles in, straight couples will be most likely to get married, followed by lesbian couples (who are more likely to raise children than gay males), followed by gay male couples. But a disparity in marriage rates among heterosexual and homosexual couples is not an argument in itself against recognizing same-sex marriages.

Whatever our views of gay marriage, we should not be surprised to find gay couples and communities taking things slowly.

*Writing from the conservative side, Dale Carpenter began his column for OutSmart in 1994, when he lived in Houston. Now residing in Minneapolis, Carpenter is a University of Minnesota Law School professor.*

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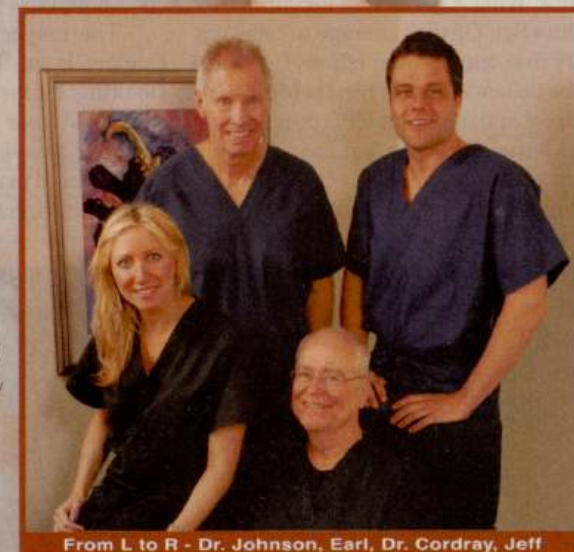
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## InsideOut at City Hall

by Annise D. Parker

# CHANGE IS GOOD

*A transgender cop comes out, and the mayor's city budget restores critical funds*

**W**ow! Last month I wrote about my 50th birthday and some of the tremendous changes in the GLBT movement I've experienced as participant and observer.

On June 10, the *Chronicle* featured a 49-year-old HPD sergeant's announcement of plans to undergo a sex-change operation to become the woman she has always felt she was. Sitting beside Sgt. Julia Oliver at the news conference was Hans Marticiuc, president of the Houston Police Officer's Union, who said the department will support the sergeant's transition and offer any assistance. What a giant step forward!

I salute Sgt. Oliver's courage to come out as HPD's first transgender officer. I also applaud Marticiuc's sensitivity and professionalism. I expect and hope that HPD does not just meet the letter of the law, but that it honors the spirit of the city's 1998 non-discrimination ordinance. The department also needs to

pass along these sentiments to rank-and-file officers. As a City Council member, I fought to pass the ordinance protecting gay and lesbian municipal employees and to include specific wording to protect the transgendered.

### Full Speed Ahead

Like a sailor with a strong wind to his back, Mayor Bill White is taking advantage of the city's robust economic health to restore funding to traditional budget scapegoats like the health, parks, and library departments as well as the Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care (BARC) while continuing to boost police and fire department budgets.

The mayor's \$1.8 billion general fund budget is easily one of the most forward-looking budgets in memory. The budget for fiscal year 2007, which begins July 1, restores funding levels in departments that experienced painful cuts in recent lean years. Parks even got a much-needed boost with

the addition of two major parks—the new downtown park adjacent to the convention center and a 5,000-acre Lake Houston Park. As you may know, Houston ranks near the bottom of major cities in per-capita parkland and has been playing a desperate game of catch-up. Several large properties are considered "parks," but they're mostly undeveloped because of lack of funds.

The mayor wants to boost funding for BARC by at least \$170,000. This is long overdue. He just hired a progressive new BARC director from Dallas to boost adoptions and reduce the city's horrific euthanasia rate. (By the way, BARC is still the area's cheapest animal adoption center—only \$45. Contacts: 713/238-9600, [www.houstontx.gov/health/BARC](http://www.houstontx.gov/health/BARC)).

### HIV/AIDS Funding

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### InsideOut

continued from page 24

\$300,000 for several years and remains one of the lowest—if not the lowest—of any major city. Both At-Large Council Member Sue Lovell and District D Council Member Ada Edwards have submitted budget priorities asking for at least \$500,000.

"Budget surplus." I love the sound of my new favorite phrase. I have to keep kicking myself, though. It won't last. I spent far too many years on City Council cringing at budget time when everyone warned of "budget shortfalls," as in \$50-\$100 million shortfalls. Few things in public life are more painful than cutting essential services, like trimming library hours.

Property values are rising again after a post-9/11 slump. Property taxes account for \$730 million, or 40.5 percent, of the general fund budget. We're paying more at the pump, which is good and bad news in Houston, where the economy is still 50 percent oil- and gas-related. The same goes for electricity rates—bad for consumers, including the city, but good for electric franchise fees, rising dramatically to \$100 million of the city's \$1.8 billion budget. Strong sales tax growth (24 percent of the budget) also helps fuel the new boom, thanks in part to more than 100,000 new residents displaced by the Hurricane Katrina disaster.

Unfortunately, when we opened our doors and hearts to Katrina evacuees, we welcomed everyone, including New Orleans gangs and other criminals. Houston's crime spike couldn't have come at a worse time with so many police officers retiring. Although we can never pay some officers enough for risking their lives, the police contract boosted salaries and pension benefits to the point that many officers opt to retire after 20 years.

The new budget also includes:

- 24-percent increase in books and library materials
- a healthy fund balance (projected to be \$134 million, down from \$152 million)
- \$576 million for the police department
- \$361 million for the fire department
- Funds for more aggressive graffiti removal.

By the time you read this, City Council will have passed the budget and begun what I hope will be a banner fiscal year for the city.

Annise Parker is the second-term city controller and the highest-ranking openly GLBT elected municipal official in any of the 10 largest U.S. cities. Her website is [www.houstoncontroller.org](http://www.houstoncontroller.org). Parker's television program, Money Matters, airs Monday on the Municipal Channel (Time Warner Cable 16) at 2 and 8 a.m. and 2 and 8 p.m.



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The Games

# They Got Game

## Houston jocks aim high for summer competition in Chicago and Montreal

**T**his month, a corps of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender athletes from the Houston area will compete on the international stage at the Gay Games VII Sports and Cultural Festival in Chicago and at the 1st World Outgames in Montreal. (The backstory: The Gay Games were originally set for Montreal, but after a financial spat, the organizers decamped and relocated to Illinois. Meanwhile, back in Quebec, the Canadians decided to hold their games, preceded by the International Conference on LGBT Human Rights.) Thousands of athletes will participate in the two events. At both, they will experience major star power: The Gay Games opening ceremonies feature

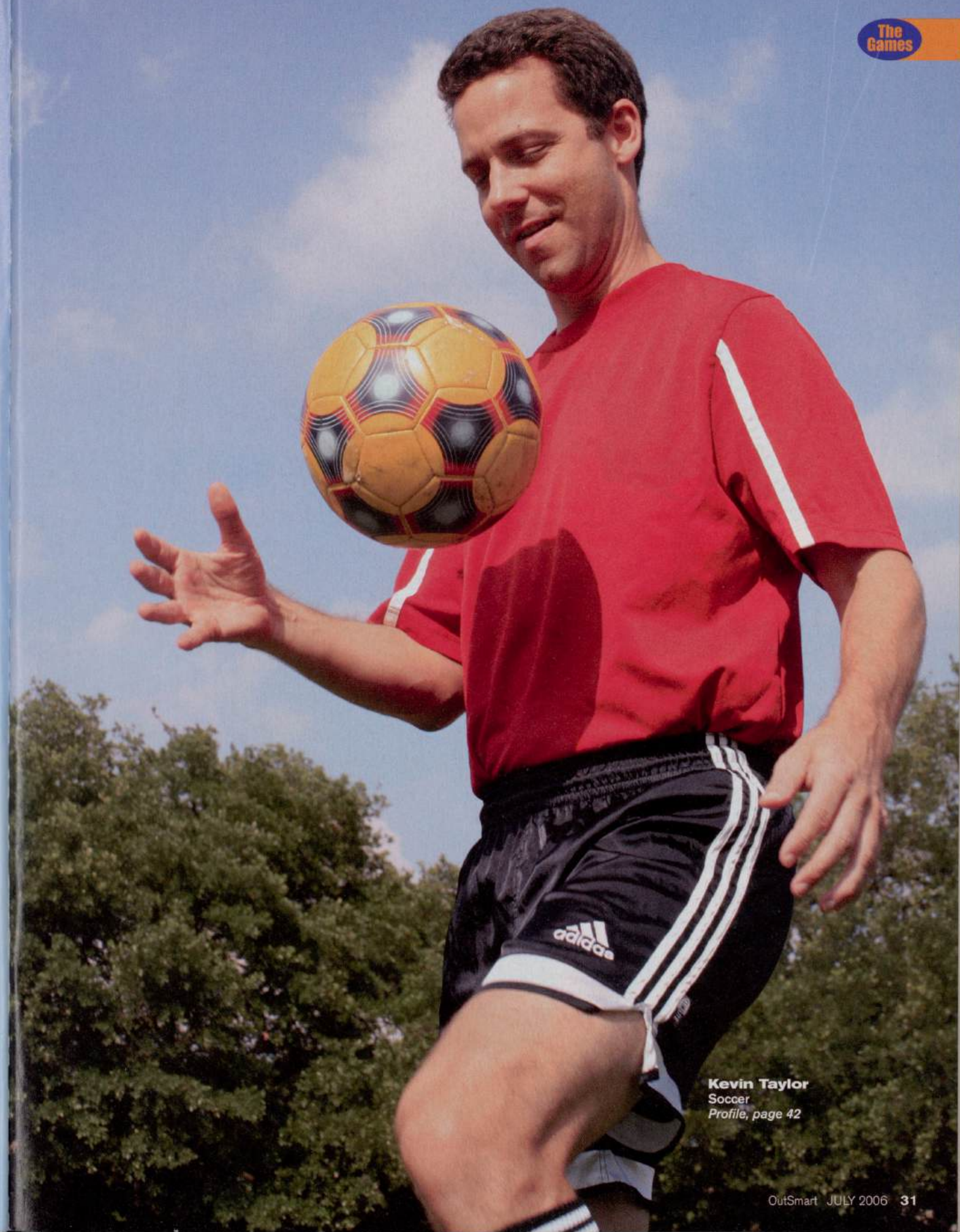
Andy Bell, Margaret Cho, Kate Clinton, Megan Mullally, Holly Near, Suzanne Westenhoefer, and others. In Montreal, k.d. lang and Martha Wash, and Cirque du Soleil kick off the Outgames with sports celebrities Martina Navratilova and Olympic medalist Mark Tewksbury. The headliner for the Outgames closing ceremonies: Liza Minnelli.

Some local competitors will travel to Chicago (July 15-22, [www.gaygameschicago.org](http://www.gaygameschicago.org)), others to Montreal (July 29-August 5, [www.montreal2006.org](http://www.montreal2006.org)). A few hardy athletes will hit both cities. As they prepared for their big games, our photographer **JOHN CONROY** created portraits of several of the jocks from here, which appear on the next 12 pages.





**Tammi Boudreaux**  
Triathlon  
Profile, page 42



**Kevin Taylor**  
Soccer  
Profile, page 42





**Dirk Marshall (r)  
and Dean Putterman**  
Swimming  
Profiles, page 42 & 44

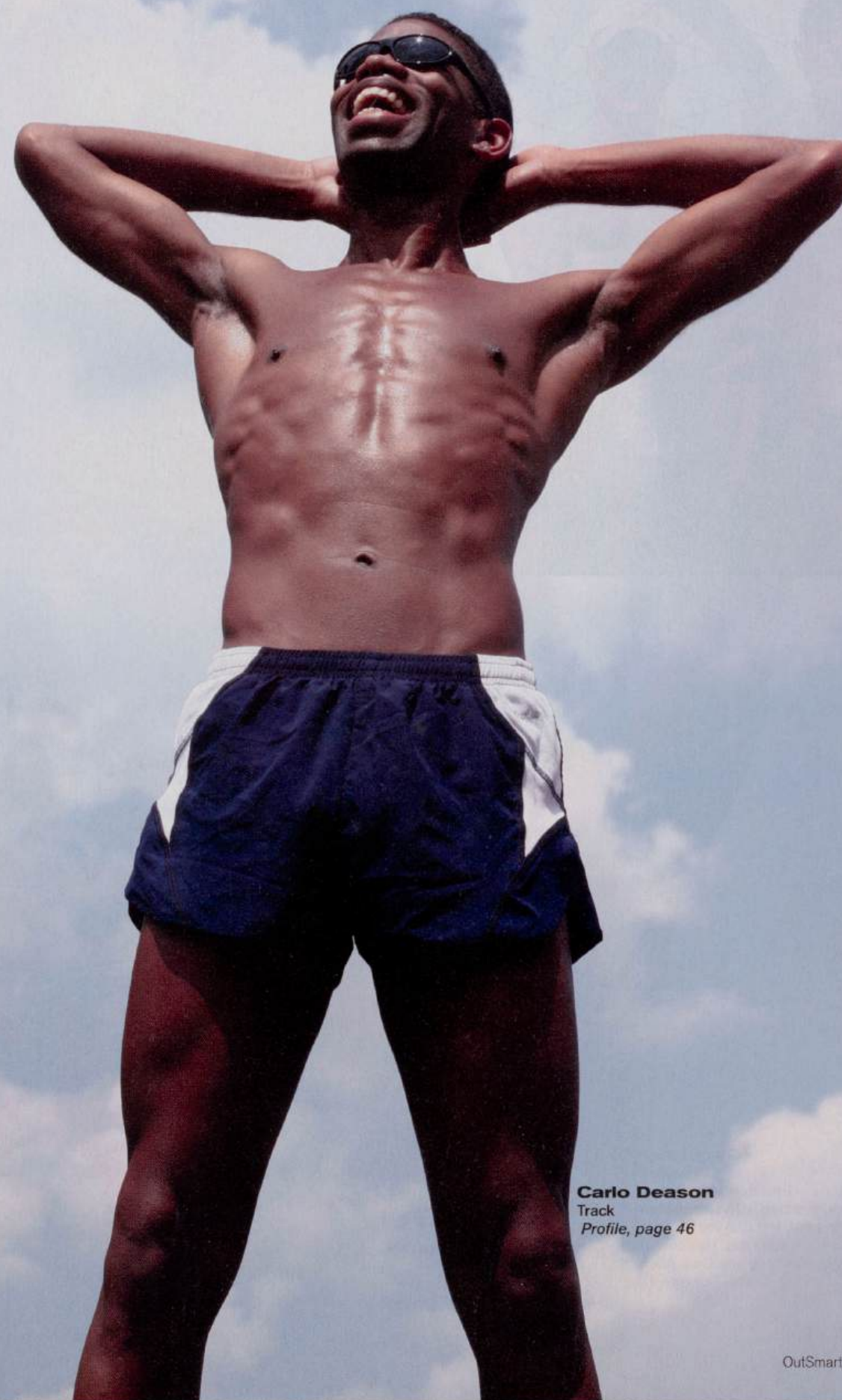


**Scottie Scott**  
Badminton  
Profile, page 44





**Jennifer Buchanan (l)  
and Debbie Stoops**  
Dance  
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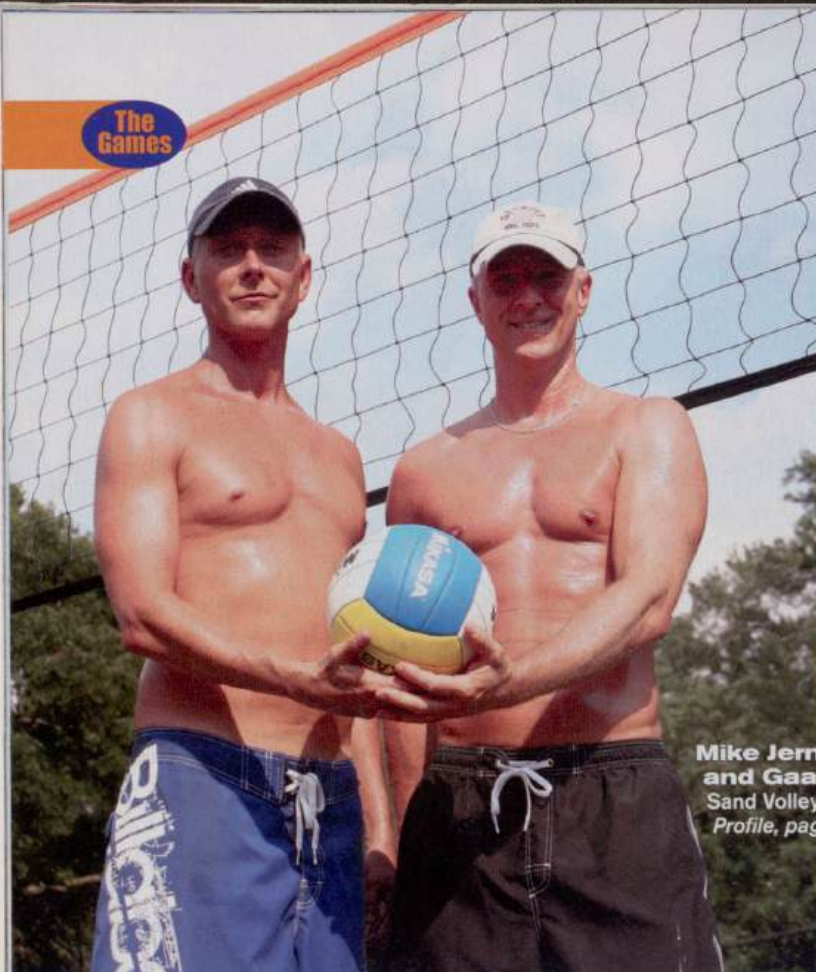


**Carlo Deason**  
Track  
Profile, page 46

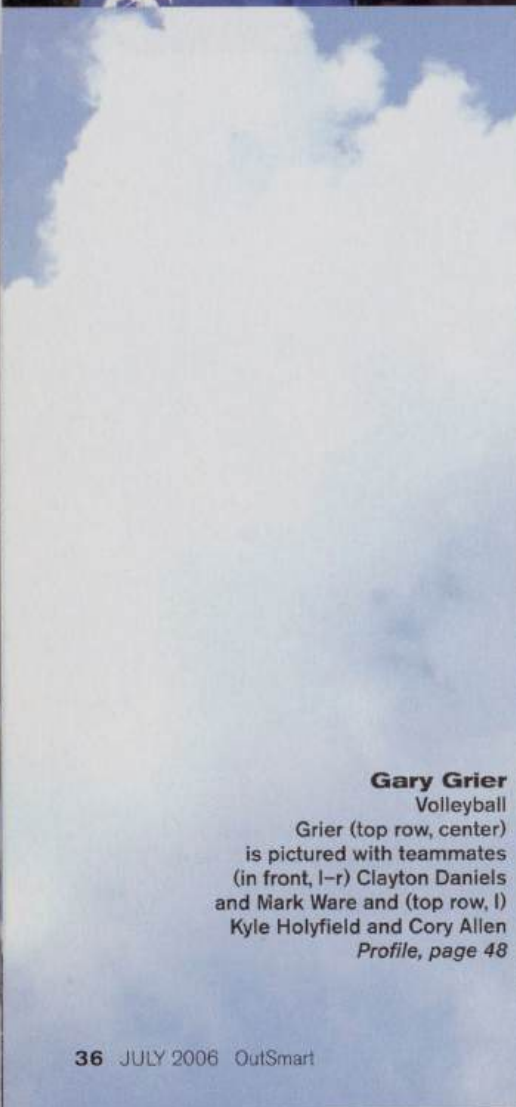


**Sean Theriault (l)  
and Anthony Bristol**  
Tennis  
Profile, page 46





**Mike Jernigan (l)  
and Gaard Egelvad**  
Sand Volleyball  
Profile, page 46



**Gary Grier**  
Volleyball  
Grier (top row, center)  
is pictured with teammates  
(in front, l-r) Clayton Daniels  
and Mark Ware and (top row, l)  
Kyle Holyfield and Cory Allen  
Profile, page 48



**Hana Michelle Pinard**  
Cycling  
Profile, page 48



**David Felton (l)  
and Roy Bantigue**  
Bowling  
Profile, page 48



**Raul Martinez**  
Track  
Profile, page 112



**Keith Peters**  
Rollerblading  
Profile, page 112





**Greg Killips**  
Billiards  
Profile, page 112



**Keith Wright**  
Cycling  
Profile, page 112



## They Got Game The Competitors

### TAMMI BOUDREAUX

Ever since Tammy Boudreaux was young, she dreamed of competing on a big stage. But that dream had remained buried for years after the 35-year-old social worker and MBA student quit competing in group athletics after high school. After years of hibernation and poor eating habits, in 2006 Boudreaux joined the Leukemia & Lymphoma society's Team in Training, a group that trains athletes to compete in triathlons, marathons, or 100-mile cycling events.

"In return, the athletes raise money for cancer patients and research—synergy at its finest!" Boudreaux says.

When she began training, she could not finish one lap around the kiddie track because she was so stiff and out of breath, she says. But after six weeks of training, she was able to complete her first-ever 10K, a feat that gave her a huge boost of confidence. This past Memorial Day she finished her first-ever Olympic-distance triathlon in Austin with a time of three hours and ten minutes.

Boudreaux decided to compete this year in her first Gay Games in the cycling and triathlon events after reading an article about a triathlete in *Out* magazine. "After reading the article, I researched the Gay Games and was surprised to learn that anybody who wants to participate, can. No qualifying times exist," she says. "I thought to myself, This is a fantastic opportunity to realize a dream I thought was long dead and gone."

"An added bonus is that I have always wanted to visit Chicago, so I thought I would check two things off my 'To-Do List of Life' at once."

Her goal in Chicago is pretty realistic, she says. Whether she wins a medal or not, she hopes simply to finish the course and enjoy the experience.

"I will be laughing and smiling as most athletes pass me by," Boudreaux says. "Being a 35-year-old, average person, I realize this is the grandest stage on which I will ever have the opportunity to compete."

Boudreaux says the best thing about training is the weight loss the regimen has afforded her. "And the rush of endorphins keep me confident," she says.

The worst thing? "Cycling into a 30-mph headwind on a rural road in Nowhere, Texas, and the cows are moving faster than I am." —Nancy Ford

### KEVIN TAYLOR



Soccer player Kevin Taylor's start in the Gay Games 20 years ago didn't require fancy footwork: It called for a different kind of technique.

Taylor, 40, played saxophone in the Houston Pride Band at the Gay Games before joining the list of athletes at the event.

His partner, Michael Moore, introduced him to soccer in 1994, and he has been playing since. He splits his time between the sport and his role as a board member of the Gay and Lesbian Bands Association.

Taylor has played soccer at the Gay Games twice before, and been a part of the assembled band four times. He will be joining four people from the team he and his partner formed in Dallas for the event. Taylor's team won the silver medal in Amsterdam, and he enjoys the change

of scenery that comes with different locations.

"The Gay Games is different every time because you're in different places," he says. "It's fun, and I've gotten to know a lot of people over the years from it."

Taylor touts the health and social benefits of soccer, and says sports create bonds that very few group activities do. "A lot of the very close friends I have I've gotten from soccer," he says. "And it's kept me in shape over the years." —Josef Molnar

### DIRK MARSHALL



Dirk Marshall says his love of swimming may have spoiled him to the realities of being a lawyer. After graduating from Harvard, where he won a national title in the 100-yard butterfly in 1989, he went to work.

"I lasted about seven months as a lawyer," he says. "I took the bar [exam], went to work for a firm, and just decided to quit. I didn't like just doing one thing all day long, all week long. I was used to swimming, where you have the ebb and flow of the season to give you a change of pace."

As in 1984 and 1988, Marshall, now 43, qualified for the 1992 Olympics trials, but decided that work was more important, and now works around the Houston area with his partner Nick Peterson's Tumble Tykes preschool gymnastics business, where he says children learn that sports can be fun before they learn about competition.

"I have more fun with kids and the amateur aspect, and getting them to that level and passing them onto somebody else [to train]," he says.

But his love of swimming drew him back to the water. After a brief hiatus, Marshall returned to swimming at the encouragement of his partner and now competes a few

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times a year in various events—including the International Gay and Lesbian Aquatics championships, which are part of the Gay Games this year. He also coaches masters swim classes at the downtown YMCA.

"I walked away from swimming and said I would never compete again, but this is world-class swimming with none of the drawbacks," he says.

He says that, contrary to what many might think, older swimmers in the masters swim classes are not hampered by their age.

"We have people [in their 30s and 40s] who are swimming as well as they did in their 20s," he says. "One of nice things about masters swimming is that people are pushing the boundaries of what they can do." —J.M.

#### DEAN PUTTERMAN



At 32, Dean Putterman decided to swim at his first Gay Games in 1994. Although he wasn't out to anyone outside of his circle of friends and family, he didn't consider it an issue.

"I thought, It's a gay event. Why would they be interested in that?" he says.

Until he broke the world record for his age category: 29.3 seconds in the 50-meter breaststroke. He was one of 10 gay people in swimming to break records that year in the Gay Games, and the newspapers went crazy. He was an openly gay athletic hero, and he was instantly accepted by others.

"It did so much for my self-confidence," he says. "It was in the paper that I'd broken a world record at a

gay type of event."

He broke his own record two years later, and in 2004 another openly gay swimmer, Jeff Cummings, broke the record.

"I held that record for 10 years," he says. "The gay press still talks about it."

Now 44, Putterman will compete in the 50-, 100-, and 200-meter breaststroke, the 50-meter butterfly, and 100-meter individual medley. Will there be another record this year? Maybe. Putterman, who placed number one in the country in four national events last year, says his 34-year competitive streak in the water has not ended yet. He added that competition is different now than when he was younger.

"You have to enjoy it," he says, "because although so many factors influence whether you do it as a kid, that's not the case as an adult."

"You're never too old to be the best you can be. I'm not too far off from what I was 28 years ago." —J.M.

#### SCOTTIE SCOTT



"Don't call me 'young lady,'" insists Scottie Scott. "I am old." A member of OLOC (Old Lesbians Organizing for Change), Scott, who is 71, refuses to sit quietly with a pair of knitting needles. Spry and enviably fit for any age, she is actively involved with more sports than most people 40 years her junior. Her list of activities reads like an exhaustive roster of P.E. electives in a college handbook. Massaging her elbow briefly, she explains, "My arm is a little sore. I was kayaking yesterday."

Kayaking? How many women her age—no, how many people her age, or any age—can make that state-

ment? The Energizer Bunny could take a lesson from this woman. As a matter of fact, the lack of active seniors usually sets Scott apart from the competition. "Often, the closest person to my age in a tournament might be in her 50s."

Among the myriad sports she plays, teaches, or has taught, Scott is a badder (a person who plays badminton), keeping her game sharp at Fondé Recreation Center and Chancellors Raquet Club. Though she has played and competed in the sport for close to half a century, this is Scott's first time to compete in the Gay Games. How does she expect to perform? Though there's not an ounce of braggadocio in her, she admits she has a gold, a silver, and a bronze trophy or medal lying around somewhere at home. Don't be surprised if she brings another home from Chicago. —Eric A.T. Dieckman

#### JENNIFER BUCHANAN AND DEBBIE STOORS



Partners in competitive sport as well as in life, Debbie Stoops and Jennifer Buchanan "started dancing together at the BRB," says Buchanan, "and fell in love." Dancing for nearly a decade, the couple got involved with Team Texas, an exhibition dance group that performed for the "Iggle Wiggle" (the International Association of Gay/Lesbian Country Western Dance Clubs [IAGLCWDC] for which Stoops is secretary) convention last year in July in Dallas. When the opportunity arose to be a part of the first Outgames, the two felt it was impossible to say no. "A chance to make history—it only comes once in a lifetime," Buchanan says.

Competing in country-and-western dance, Stoops →

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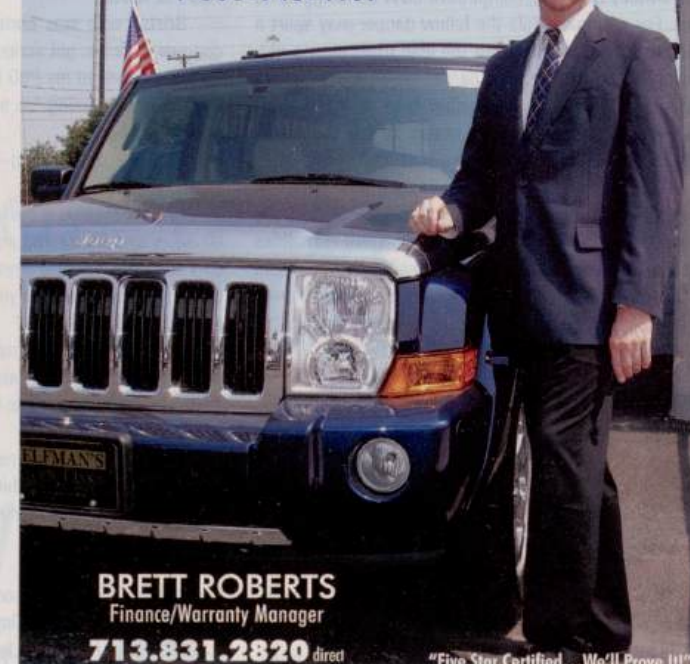
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and Buchanan take inspiration from the films *Shall We Dance?*, *Strictly Ballroom*, and, of course, *Urban Cowboy*. As in *Strictly Ballroom*, competitive C&W dancing has its rules. For example, while the fellow dancer may sport a Stetson, it's not required, but the lead must wear a hat. Similar to the way that some dancers in *Shall We Dance?* perform as their alter egos rather than as themselves, some real-life competitors are known to "feel the music, experience the music," as Stors puts it.

There's more to their trip to Canada than a stab at taking home a medal. In recognition of the Games, the Canadian government is waiving the standard formalities involved with marriages, making it feasible for Stors and Buchanan to marry and have a government document to prove it. That's an opportunity to make history that everyone should be entitled to. —E.D.

#### ANTHONY BRISTOL AND SEAN THERIAULT



Anthony Bristol and Sean Theriault have been happily partnered for more than four years. All bets are off, however, when both men hit Chicago to compete in the Gay Games.

"We don't have time to be a regular couple," Bristol says in all seriousness. "We're competitors at this point."

The duo will participate in a slew of events, including singles, doubles and mixed doubles tennis, and the 5K, 10K, and half-marathon races. Theriault is also "really looking forward to" playing mixed doubles with his

sister's partner. He and Bristol will stay with the couple in Chicago during the Games.

In between swinging rackets and hitting the tracks, Bristol is a Houston-based neurodiagnostician, and Theriault teaches American politics at the University of Texas at Austin.

Bristol, who was born in Vietnam and earned his degrees in Texas, got serious about sports after college. Theriault received his PhD from Stanford University and says he used running "as a great stress reliever" during graduate school.

Both are anticipating—and preparing for—a set of unique challenges.

"What I've done in the last couple of weeks is running 10 miles and then jump on the tennis court and try to play a match," Bristol says of his training. "Unless you train specifically for that, you don't realize how much one sport takes it out of you."

"More and more of my time is spent thinking about the race and about tennis," Theriault adds. "I'm just trying to keep my nose to the grindstone on everything at the same time."

"I'm not particularly nervous or anxious, I'm just really looking forward to Chicago being totally dominated by gay folks." —Joey Guerra

#### CARLO DEASON



Carlo Deason earned two silver medals at the 2002 Gay Games in Sydney, Australia. He hopes to repeat that success at the Outgames in Montreal.

But the Houston native, who will be running in the 400-, 800-, and 1500-meter races, isn't stressing.

"The first time, I think I put a lot of pressure on myself. I was really nervous," Deason, 36, says. "I don't put so much pressure on myself now. I want to do well ... but now I know what I need to do."

Deason's regimen includes morning runs, along with weekly track and ab workouts. He also started the Lone Star Front Runners group in July 2005, a predominantly gay collective that includes members from Houston, Austin, and Grapevine.

"Pretty much everything I do revolves around running," Deason says. "It's always been like that."

"My vacation times are based on running events around the state, country, and internationally. Running keeps me in great shape and gives me peace of mind."

Indeed, Deason says he started competing at eight years old when he was told he "was a fast kid and that I had natural speed."

His passion for the track has even spilled over into his day job as a senior academic advisor at the University of Houston College of Technology, where he's worked for nine years.

"Everybody knows that I'm running. Everybody knows that I'm gay," Deason says. "I have running paraphernalia in my office—medals, trophies. My students always ask about it." —J.G.

#### MIKE JERNIGAN AND GAARD EGELAND



A two-man team competing in the sand volleyball event at the Gay Games, Mike Jernigan, a pharmaceutical sales specialist for Roche, and Gaard Egeland, an insurance broker, are a team off the court as well as on. The couple celebrated →

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nearly 25 years together by tying the official knot in Vancouver last fall.

"Gaard and I are incredibly lucky in so many ways," Jernigan says. "Interacting under pressure on the sand in a competitive environment brings a unique dimension to our relationship as a whole. We love each other deeply and the thought of winning a medal with him in Chicago is about so much more than winning a medal."

Egeland, 47, and Jernigan, 41, have never played in the Gay Games before, or attended one, but say they are anticipating this event like no other tournament they have played in before.

"I think our inspiration stems from pride," Jernigan says. "The chance to compete among our peers in such a large, publicized event is inspiring in itself."

What's the best thing about training for sand volleyball? Being together outside doing what they love, Jernigan says. The worst? "Keeping the sand out of our house." —N.F.

#### GARY GRIER



Gary Grier is a lawyer by training, though professionally he is the program services manager at AIDS Foundation Houston. Grier handles employment training, housing programs, and Stone Soup food pantry for the agency. He will be taking a brief break from those duties to attend the Gay Games, competing in men's indoor volleyball as part of the Houston Hustle team.

The competition marks his first experience with

the Gay Games, though he has been preparing by competing in North American Gay Volleyball Association Tournaments—very successfully so, winning quite a few tournaments.

The experience of competing at the highest level inspired him to compete in the Gay Games, Grier says, as well as the chance of "meeting people from around the world who identify with the gay community."

Grier, 42, says that in addition to the obvious health benefits, Lone Star Volleyball Association has helped him to make great lasting relationships across the country.

"Volleyball is the ultimate team sport," Grier says. "You win by allowing everyone on the team to reach their full potential. Good sportsmanship is extremely important in the process of winning." —N.F.

#### HANA MICHELLE PINARD



Hana Michelle Pinard has always loved sports. The 44-year-old El Paso native started cycling when she was 18 and placed well in competitions in college and shortly afterward, but she says her interest in the sport has not been as a competitor.

"I've never really concentrated or focused on cycling at any length," Pinard says. "I've just used it as a focus to keep healthy."

She will be competing in the individual and team, road race, and criterium events at the Gay Games and Outgames, but she seems surprised to learn that she could be a model for other transgender people.

"I don't know if I'll be a good example or a bad example for other [transgender] people," she says, "but

in a sense you're always an example in your daily life, no matter who you are."

The parent of two (her two boys are 9 and 11) says she is looking forward to the events and meeting as many of the thousands of people there as she can.

"I saw [the Gay Games and Outgames] as a unique opportunity to have an Olympic experience," she says. "I always wanted to go to the Olympics but never had the chance, so I see this as my chance."

She says sports have always been part of her life, and says there are life lessons to be gained from it.

"You learn to accept defeat and to face adversity. So, it teaches you to relish the victories you do have. You're sad in defeat, but you realize it's not an end unto itself, and it teaches you that there are bigger things in life." —J.M.

#### DAVID FELTON AND ROY BANTIGUE



Partners David Felton, 66, and Roy Bantigue, 43, will travel to Chicago this month to hopefully bring home the gold in the league bowling category, their first foray into the world of world-class competition.

Why were they inspired to compete in the Gay Games?

"David felt it was a chance to participate in a world event," Bantigue said, "possibly the only opportunity to do so."

But if no gold is to be had, that's just fine with them.

"We are just two bowlers hoping to enjoy the Gay Games, parties, and sporting events," Felton, an accountant, says. —N.F. continued on page 112

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# Not Just for Sport

Two local men lead cultural aspects of Gay Games VII

Photographs by John Taton

## RUSSELL BEN WILLIAMS

The Gay Games VII Sports and Cultural Festival isn't all about jocks—and Russell Ben Williams wants to make sure people know that.

The Texas native is a member of the Houston Pride Band and team band coordinator for the Gay Games, which includes about 25 musical outfits from across the country. The musicians will converge in Chicago for a series of performances during the opening and closing ceremonies, along with several appearances throughout the mid-July events.

"The Gay Games... pass themselves off as the 'Sports and Cultural Festival,' but it's really about the athletes," Williams says. "Whatever time is left, they worry about culture. I've had to step up and do the work myself."

The culture aspect of the Gay Games also includes cheer teams, choral, and color guard/ROTC.

Williams's duties include providing band members with music, coordinating uniforms and choreography, and arranging travel plans. He also plays the baritone horn in the Houston Pride Band and served as band coordinator for the Games in Amsterdam and Sydney.

Not bad for a boy from Kingsville, Texas, who was encouraged to pursue music, "ever since junior high, when Mommy figured out that I wasn't going to be an athlete. She saw that limp wrist and said, 'Oh, honey, here's an instrument.' They just couldn't see me in cleats."

He moved to the big city in 1990. Two weeks after arriving in Houston, Williams was a Pride Band member.

"The first thing I did when I got to Houston was go to the bars and pick up a *TWT* [the no-longer-published *This Week in Texas*], so I could find out what was going on in the community, because I came from a town with no community," Williams says. "Lucky for me, there was [something] about the Houston Pride Band. I called, and they said, 'Come on in.'"

Within six months, Williams was off to the 1990 Gay Games in Vancouver, an experience that still resonates.

"For a small-town Catholic boy, I can tell you—being in



an arena full of homosexuals in Vancouver is the kind of stuff that you just never forget," he says. "That was really what made me want to do what I do now for the band. I want everybody who is new to the gay and lesbian band world to experience what I did in Vancouver." —Joey Guerra →

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# JAMES KNAPP

James Knapp was already planning to attend the Gay Games VII Sports and Cultural Festival in Chicago. As artistic and managing director for Bayou City Performing Arts (which includes the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston and the recently formed Bayou City Women's Chorus), he was happy to accompany several local members to take part in the weekly choral festivities. Knapp's partner, Jesse Field, was also set to play ice hockey at the Games.

Then, Knapp got the call.

He was asked to direct the Games' combined gay/lesbian chorus of more than 200 members after contractual conflicts arose with the original director. The chorus includes members from all over the world, who will converge for a July 19 concert at J. Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park.

Mass choirs will also perform during the Games' opening and closing ceremonies, and throughout the week (July 15-22) at various venues.

"They polled people nationally . . . and I was very, very honored that my colleagues pointed to Houston. It's an exciting time," says Knapp, who has been with the Houston choral group for five seasons.

"It's been a whirlwind. When you get offered an opportunity like that, [you] make this work. It's a once-in-a-lifetime deal. I flipped out."

Knapp attended the 2002 Gay Games in Sydney and worked as a performance coordinator for bands and cheer groups. Prior to joining Bayou City Performing Arts, Knapp was director of music and fine arts ministry at Sugar Land First United Methodist Church.

The Rochester, New York, native also served as director of choral activities at Aurora University in Illinois and has held positions at the University of Texas at Austin and at Northwest College of Houston.

Music, it seems, has been a lifelong obsession for the talented performer.

"When you're growing up, and you're going to college, I think a lot of people struggle with what to do," Knapp says. "It sounds strange to say this, but I guess I never felt like I really had a choice. I always wanted it to be music."

He welcomes the new responsibilities and professional opportunities that come with his Gay Games directing position. But Knapp also stresses the larger importance of building increased awareness for the local chapters of GALA, the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses, Inc.

"Houston, being the fourth largest city in America, was never really a major player in [GALA]," Knapp says. "They should be, and they should have been—and they are now." —J.G. ■

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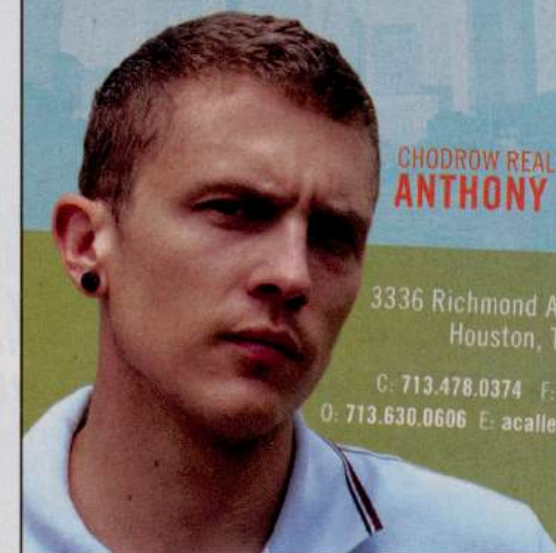
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# East End Story

*The most historic district in Galveston offers hidden treasures—shopping, dining, entertainment, and lodging—for a special Island getaway*

By Jan Johnson  
Photos by Renee Rodriguez



*Life may be a beach, but the Island's East End is so much more. Move off the Seawall to find treasures that are uniquely Galveston. Offering glimpses of the city's decadent past, bed and breakfast inns in grand Victorian-era residences flourish along tree-lined streets, while neighborhood eateries offer pleasant surprises not only for taste, but also for the wallet. →*

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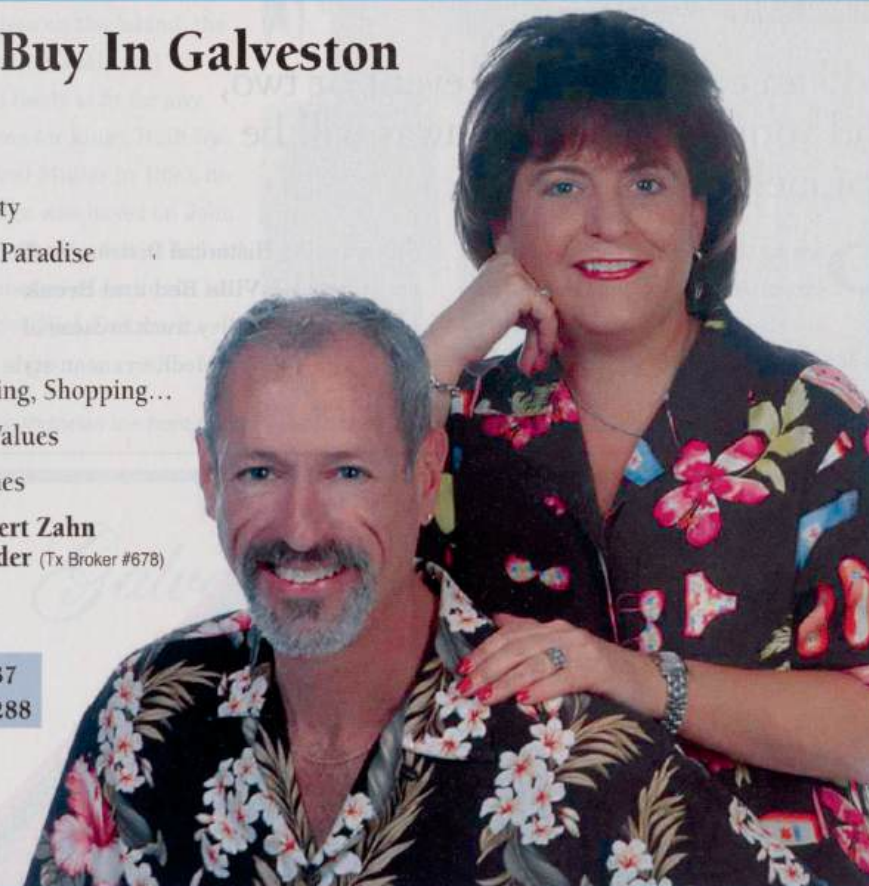


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Grace Manor

Moving on to the East End Historical District, you will find the **Queen Anne Bed & Breakfast**, noted for its indulgent breakfasts served on fine antique china, the **Garden Inn** with its chalet feel, and **The Inn at 1816 Postoffice**. **Grace Manor**, one of the Island's newest B&Bs, hides its elegance behind an unassuming 1905 stucco façade. Within its walls, guests will find original light fixtures that incorporate both

Victorian and Craftsman styles, stained glass windows with unusual designs, and intricate woodwork. Just across Postoffice Street is the **Victorian Inn**, the first of its kind on the Island. This bed and breakfast was built in 1899 completely of concrete covered by a red brick veneer by cement merchant Isaac Heffron. Talk about guardian spirits: It's said that he and his wife still haunt the place!



Victorian Inn

For a larger affair, **Accommodations Victorian** offers seven historic homes in the East End for short-term rental—but no breakfasts. Sleeping from 6 to 14 people, all are richly furnished with opulent antiques, and each reflects a different design of 19th-century houses. Among your choices, and certainly one of the most opulent

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When it comes to meals, forego the traditional fried seafood for a healthier change of taste. Lesser known to non-Islanders are the neighborhood eateries on 14th Street. **The Original Mexican Restaurant** on Market has been open since 1916, and it just keeps getting better. Down the street is a relative newcomer: **Sunflower Bakery**. Recently transplanted to the **Columbus Street Market** at 14th and Postoffice, this critics' favorite now offers lunch, dinner, and a special Sunday brunch. Inside, its décor is soft yellow and blue casual, while its fan-cooled outdoor patio is distinctly modern. Browse the bakery for a late-night sweet to take back to your inn.

While you're at Columbus Street Market, shop Larry Janzen's new **Galveston Wreath Company** with his minimalist



The Original Mexican Restaurant

floral and seashell designs. Note the Island photos by Robert Mihovil along the walls that lead to the whimsical hand-painted furniture at **Ellie's Decorative Painting**. Make an appointment to create your own do-it-yourself pottery for an extra special gift. Further south on 14th, you'll rediscover **Mosquito Café**. Although under new ownership, the restaurant still serves the Island's answer to new American cuisine (and don't overlook the bakery case).

If you prefer upscale dining with an original twist, try a Postoffice progressive dinner. Start at the classy, cosmopolitan **Saltwater Grill** and order Shallow-Fried Asparagus with Lump Crabmeat or one of the signature fresh-from-the-kettle soups at the bar. Cross the street to **Rudy & Paco** at the corner of →



Sunflower Bakery in Columbus Street Market

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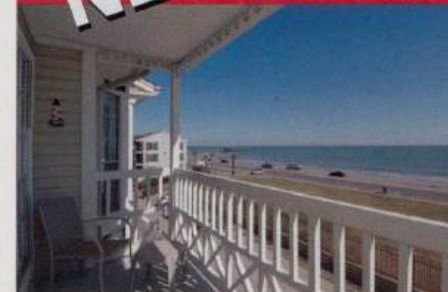
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## East End Story continued from page 58

21st for exquisite Central American entrees served with an impeccable flourish. Or start there with empanadas and finish with sushi at **Sky Bar**. Or try one of the many healthy seafood entrees at Saltwater.

For the downside of upscale, **Stork Club**—also on Postoffice—serves everyday fare for a late-night meal after the theater. If you've resisted the tempting bakeries, end your dinner with dessert at any of the above. Whatever you choose, your progressive dining experience will definitely be a one-of-a-kind affair.

For an artsy summer outing, and a little exercise after all that food, enjoy an Island tradition, **ArtWalk** (next presented on July 15). Start on Postoffice Street and wander to The Strand, where sponsor **Galveston Art Center** will feature *Texas Artists Then and Now*. Other regular participants include **Old Galveston Square**, **Water's Edge Studio & Gallery** at 21st and Ave M, **Nest**, and **The Market** off 25th Street. Explore paintings and wood sculpture, mixed media, antiques, even boat building, as you stroll the streets from gallery to gallery, sipping wine and sampling snacks. The second summer ArtWalk is set for August 19.



Trube Castle



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with Tony Bennett and ends with Bernadette Peters on May 5-6.

Across the street from the Opera House, the **Island East End Theatre Company** presents the patriotic musical *1776* through August 5. Or take your inhibitions out for the evening with *The Sopranos*. Loosely based on the hit HBO series with a similar name, this interactive production (costumes encouraged in the audience) plays the **Balinese Room** every Saturday night during the summer. Badda bing!

Whatever your pleasure—low key or loud, raucous or refined, economical or extravagant—your Galveston getaway in the East End will certainly be memorable and, most important, uniquely Galveston. And that's especially fitting at this time of year, when mainlanders want to get away. To paraphrase a bumper sticker found at Ellie's, "Life is Too Short to STAY in Houston."

**ON THE WEB:** Find addresses, phone numbers, and websites for recommended destinations at [www.outsmartmagazine.com](http://www.outsmartmagazine.com).

*Galveston resident and native Jan Johnson has written for Galveston County Daily News, Twisted Parrot, Simply G Magazine, and other publications. This is her first contribution to OutSmart.*

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Who would think the wholesome, girl-next-door smiling face of Amy Sedaris could so easily be transformed into the using, boozing, and losing mug of *Strangers with Candy*'s Jerri Blank? Sedaris is pictured here at the after party of the *Full Grown Men* premiere at New York City's 5th Annual Tribeca Film Festival. OPPOSITE PAGE: Sedaris as Jerri is surrounded by her *Strangers with Candy* TV co-stars Stephen Colbert (l) and Paul Dinello.



DARY GERSHOFF/WIREIMAGE.COM; OPPOSITE PAGE: COMEDY CENTRAL

# Chasing Amy

*From her Greenwich Village apartment, Amy Sedaris chats about her role in the new *Strangers with Candy* theatrical version, her cupcakes, her brother David Sedaris, gay marriage, and more*

by Blase DiStefano

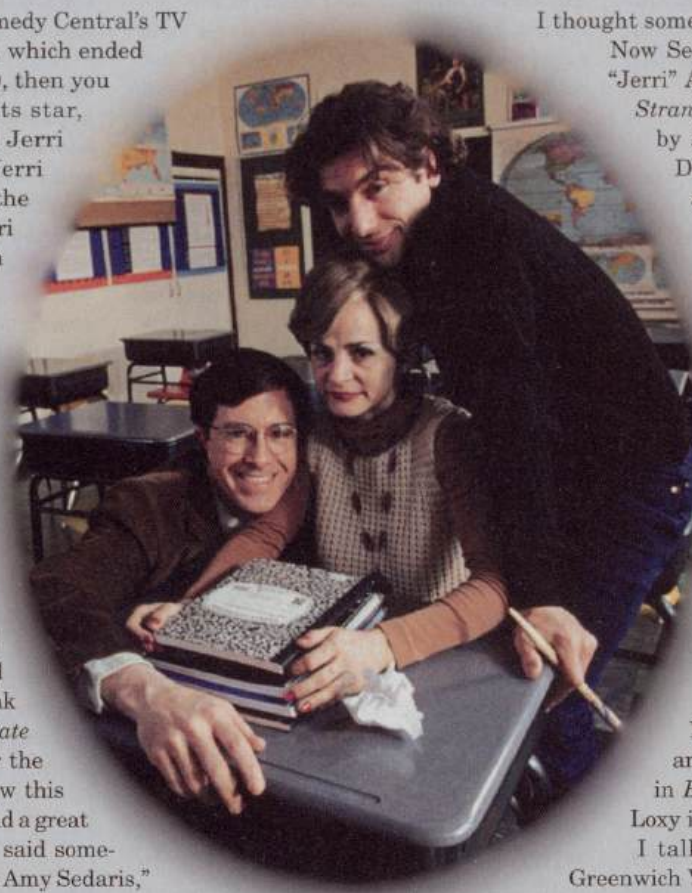
**I**f you're not familiar with Comedy Central's TV show *Strangers with Candy*, which ended its three-season run in 2000, then you may not be familiar with its star, Amy Sedaris, who played Jerri Blank, who is . . . well, let Jerri tell you who Jerri is. In the intro to the show: "Hello, I'm Jerri Blank and I'm a 46-year-old high school freshman. For 32 years I was a teenage runaway. I was a boozier, a user, and a loser. My friends were dealers, cons, and 18-karat pimps. But now I'm out of jail, picking up my life exactly where I left off. I'm back in high school, living at home, and discovering all sorts of things about my body. I'm finding out that though the faces have changed, the hassles are just the same."

When I first saw the show, I had no idea what Amy Sedaris looked like when she wasn't in Jerri Blank drag. Then one night I tuned in to *Late Night With David Letterman* after the show had already begun, and I saw this beautiful woman who apparently had a great sense of humor. When Letterman said something like, "We'll be right back with Amy Sedaris,"

I thought something like, "That's Amy Sedaris?!" Now Sedaris reprises her role as Geraldine "Jerri" Antonia Blank in the film version of *Strangers with Candy*, which was written by Sedaris, Stephen Colbert, and Paul Dinello (who also directed). Colbert and Dinello also reprise their roles as teachers (and lovers) Mr. Charles "Chuck" Noblet and Mr. Geoffrey Jellineck, respectively. The three stars co-wrote the screenplay. Celeb cameos include Matthew Broderick, Sarah Jessica Parker, Allison Janney, and Philip Seymour Hoffman. At press time, *Strangers with Candy* was scheduled to start July 14 at Landmark's River Oaks Theatre, 2009 West Gray ([www.landmarktheatres.com](http://www.landmarktheatres.com)).

Sedaris, who is a former member of Second City, is the sister of openly gay author David Sedaris (*Me Talk Pretty One Day* and *Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim*) and was recently seen as Gladys Kravitz in *Bewitched* and was the voice of Foxy Loxy in *Chicken Little* (both 2005).

I talked to Sedaris by phone from her Greenwich Village apartment. →





## Chasing Amy

continued from previous page

Amy Sedaris: Hello.

**Blaise DiStefano:** Hi, Amy, this is Blaise DiStefano.

For our interview?

Yes.

OK. Hold on just a second.

Sure.

Hello? I am so sorry.

**That's OK.**

I don't think I've ever been this busy, and I pride myself on staying on top of things. I pride myself on *Hey, I don't even have to write it down, I remember it so well.* I got held up at Gourmet Garage. I sell my cheeseballs there, and I was pitching a new product I want to sell there.

**So you're still doing that. Is it more fun than acting?**

It's a job where at least I can say I have a job. You know what I mean? And it's a job I can bitch and complain about, 'cause I can complain about the price of butter. So I'm trying to sell my wine butter there, but I can't think of a clever name for it, so I put my brother David on it. He's *obsessed* with it. He says, "This a *fun* thing to think about." So I tell him, "You have all the fun you want, and when you come up with a name, fork it over."

**[Laughs] Did you say wine butter?**

It's compound butter that you put on steaks. It's a red wine and shallots, and my Mom got the recipe from *Playboy* magazine when we were kids, so we were all obsessed with it since it was in *Playboy* magazine. It's a really good one.

**Are you still selling cupcakes, also?**

Yes.

**Is your business still called Amy's Cupcakes?**

Right now. It used to be Tattletale [the name of her pet rabbit], and she passed away, and I haven't been able to come up with a new name. It's like I don't have the time to think of a clever name for that, so right now it's Amy's Cupcakes, which is boring.

**You need to get David on that, too.**

I need to get David on the whole product line.

**Since you have a new pet rabbit [Dusty], I'm assuming you don't have any recipes**



Sedaris, as Jerri Blank, contemplates her next social faux pas in *Strangers with Candy*.

**for rabbits in your new book [I Like You: Hospitality Under the Influence].**

No, but I've cooked rabbit before. Years ago, I used to date a Greek guy, and I would make him rabbit.

**So, it's not like you can't have rabbit...**

It's not in my book, and I would never make rabbit now. There's not a lot of meat on a rabbit, so there's no point in eating rabbit. It's bony, it's gamey, it's small. It's like lite chicken.

**[Laughs] How's the book coming along?**

Great. I'm working with these two kids, and we call ourselves the Dingbats. That's the name of our team. They're helping me design it. Like I made a mock-up of the book, and now we're taking the mock-up version, and we're transferring it to the computer. I hate computer stuff, so everything in the book was handmade—even the lettering was handmade. And we're right smack in the middle of it. I turn it in July 8 to the copy editor, and then I get it back, and then it goes to print August 8.

**You were raised Greek Orthodox?**

Yeah.

**Do you still practice?**

No. I can appreciate the beauty of the church with all the icons, and I know a lot of Greek words. Growing up, the service was always in Greek, so we never understood what he was saying, which is why we are guilt-free and could make up our own religion. That part of

it I loved, and I pray every single night.

**Rather than like organized religion, is it more of a spiritual thing?**

Yeah, I think so.

**It's sort of like your own idea of what God is.**

Exactly. Like some kind of deity.

**Speaking of religion, sort of, do you think gays should be allowed to legally marry?**

Absolutely. I was talking about this to David and Dad last night. It's so ridiculous to me that it's even an issue. If my sister could get married to somebody and get some kind of tax break, or whatever, why can't two girls or two guys. Who cares? Who the hell would wanna get married? I just think it's queer. I've always thought marriage was queer. But if you're dumb enough to want to get married, get married. It's a big issue now, just so people won't think about the real issue, which is the war and all the horrible things. It's so obvious to me what's it about.

**So you heard that Bush is rehashing the constitutional amendment...**

Yeah. Can you believe we're actually talking about it at a time like this?

**Do you have any views you would care to express about our president?**

Nothing you haven't heard. I saw one lady in a protest that had a shirt that said, "Will someone please give George Bush a blow job so we can impeach him? Thank you." [Both laugh] It just says everything that we haven't

The gay people I hang out with are extremely talented, and I seek out talented people, 'cause I have good ideas, but I can't do anything with my hands, so I latch onto people and can say, "Hey, make a snake out of a bandana," and they'd be able to do it.

done anything about it. I cannot believe he's still in office.

**How did you learn your brother David is gay?**

I think it's something we always knew, and when he said it, it was no big deal. But I do remember telling my little brother—we were in line at Taco Bell in a car drive-thru, and I threw out, "Yeah, when David told me he was gay..." and Paul looked at me and was like "What?!" I was like, "You didn't know?" He was like, "Hold on," and he had to think about it for a minute. He said, "That's as weird as when Gretchen told me she had a girlfriend for a summer." And I said, "What?! Gretchen had a girlfriend for a summer?!" I'm not joking. [Both laugh]. We were both sitting there staring off into space. It couldn't have been more perfect. [Both laugh]

**That's wonderful. I imagine you have a lot of gay people in your life.**

It's not a matter if someone is gay or straight or whatever. The gay people I hang out with are extremely talented, and I seek out talented people, 'cause I have good ideas, but I can't do anything with my hands, so I latch onto people and can say, "Hey, make a snake out of a bandana," and they'd be able to do it.

**Is that how *Strangers with Candy*, the TV show, came about?**

*Strangers with Candy* came about, because I had an idea based on an after-school special. I always made fun of them growing up, and Paul Dinello had the idea of it being an older woman, and Stephen Colbert had the idea of it being the wrong lesson each week, so all three of us brought a major aspect to it. I was

really good at coming up with the episode ideas, like [raises her voice, tabloid-style] "A HIT-AND-RUN," but I was totally high getting my ideas watching Lifetime stoned—"I got the best idea!" But being on set all the time, Paul and Stephen did the bulk of the writing of it. We were all Jerri Blank.

**What about the movie?**

It's funny, but I just don't know what the fans of the TV show will think of the movie, because it's very different.

**It's a prequel, right?**

It starts off with Jerri getting out of jail, going home, realizing her Dad's in a coma and that she has a stepmother and a brother. Then she goes to school, and then it kinda turns into an episode.

People get angry when you change... it's not the same brother, it's not the same Orlando—we had to do a lot of recasting, because people looked a lot older—and Jerri has to look older, and you can't get the same house or the same school or the same crew.

**But you have the same three main characters, and that's the glue. It looks like there are some great cameos, too...**

It was a lot of fun. We shot it in the summer, and it was extremely hot, so I had a really hard time. I had stitches in my mouth, I had the wig and the turtleneck and the fatty suit and the boots, and there were days where it was perfectly black in my head. I couldn't even think of my lines. And we had to shoot Stephen Colbert out for *The Daily Show*, so my Jerri Blank scenes were always at the end of the day when everyone was in a hurry, so I never really felt on as Jerri Blank. Maybe most people won't be able to tell, but, for me, when I watch it, I just wasn't. I had everything working against me. And the movie didn't come out on time—of course it didn't, it was *Strangers with Candy*. Why would it come out on time? But maybe that's perfect for Jerri Blank. →



## The Complete TV Series on DVD

When its producers decided to release *Strangers with Candy: The Complete Series* DVD as a deluxe box set, they didn't choose the word "deluxe" haphazardly.

In addition to the 30 SWC episodes aired on Comedy Central which introduced us to (somewhat) reformed high school drop-out Jerri Blank—our favorite former user, boozier, and loser—the deluxe box set also features an original filmstrip presentation from teachers Mr. Noblet (Stephen Colbert) and Mr. Jellineck (Paul Dinello), a message from Bob Whitely (Will Ferrell), a public service announcement detailing Jerri's "The Trip Back," audio commentary, interviews with SWC cast members, bloopers and deleted scenes, the original never-seen-before pilot episode, and—maybe most tantalizing of all—a dance sequence compilation.

It's all wrapped in a special trapper-keeper folio, designed to fit snugly into your locker before your high school's resident homophobic school bully stuffs you into it. For more information, log on to [www.comedycentral.com](http://www.comedycentral.com). —Nancy Ford



## Chasing Amy

continued from previous page

**Totally perfect. Do you think I could ask Jerri two or three questions?**

[In her Jerri voice] It depends. Are you a cop?

[Laughs]

Seriously, though, if there was an undercover situation, and I asked you if you were an undercover cop, you would have to tell me you were an undercover cop. Did you know that?

**I've heard that before. But couldn't you lie?**

You could lie, but then it wouldn't hold up in court. So now I ask anybody I come across, "Are you a cop?"

"Amy, why are you asking me that? I'm your brother."

[Laughs] Jerri, if it's not too personal, how would you label your sexuality?

Look. I got the pole and the hole. The pole and the hole. It's alive. Girl on girl, boy on boy.

[Laughs] I heard a rumor that two of your teachers, Mr. Noblet and Mr. Jellineck, are lovers.

Gay, gay, gay, gay, gay.

**I know the two of you don't run around in the same circles, but have you ever met Amy Sedaris?**

I've heard of her.

**What do you think of her?**

She sounds beautiful. [Both laugh] A really good cook, got a cookbook coming out.

God, what would Jerri Blank think of Amy? [Both laugh]

But it's always a big issue. People always ask me, "Why do you play unattractive characters?" I'm like, "Look, Jerri Blank has as much style as Carrie Bradshaw [Sarah Jessica Parker's character in *Sex in the City*]." If I had a choice to watch something about Carrie Bradshaw or *That Girl*, Marlo Thomas, or whatever, I'd watch Jerri Blank, because I love it when unattractive people play pretty. Who's to say Carrie Bradshaw's pretty? That's your opinion. There are a lot of people out there who would find Jerri sexy or pretty.

**That's actually shown in the TV show.**

Thank you. A lot of people think Jennifer Aniston is pretty, and I guess she's supposed to be pretty, but Isabella Rosalini is prettier to me than Jennifer Aniston. It all just depends. Same with guys. I just did a photo shoot with . . . do you know who Joseph Sayer is?

No.

He's an Abercrombie & Fitch model. He's a young Chuck Connors. His body is absolutely amazing. He did a lot of nude photos. And he's an incredible model, and he's my height, 5 ft., and I just did an *Entertainment Weekly* shoot with him last week as Jerri Blank at the Oscars, where I wore a Veronica Lake wig. I did a Tara Reid moment, where I just opened my top and I was waving as Jerri

**[Both laugh] Will you be making an appearance on David Letterman?**

The premiere [in New York of *Strangers with Candy*] is the 20th of June, and I'm doing *Letterman* the next night [at press time, the movie's premiere had changed to June 28]. I've never had to promote anything on *Letterman*, and I think that's why he likes having me on the show. But with *Strangers with Candy*, I'm going to be *relentless*. Anytime the conversation changes, "No, no, no. Let's talk about the movie." And then I'm going to ask him to rate me: "On a scale of 1-10, how did I do?"

**[Laughs] And you need to ask him what he thinks of Jerri also.**

Yeah. "What do you think of Jerri on a scale of 1-2?"

It's funny, too, because a lot of people think I wear a prosthetic on my face, but the great thing about Jerri is I carry her wherever I go. It's just a face.

**I've tried to do that with my mouth, and it's not easy.**

All my muscles are in my face, and I've always made faces since I was a kid. I'm always trying to come up with new faces. My face is never sore when I do it.

**Jerri wears wigs, and so do you, right?**

I love wigs. I was going to have one made for myself to wear when I have to go

around and do press. I was going to have one professionally made, but not to fool anybody. I want people to be able to tell, but not be like country kitchen, where it's obviously a wig, but I never got around to it. I sure love them. I want to have an Amy Sedaris Wig Cap. I made one for the book.

**[Laughs] When is the book expected to come out?**

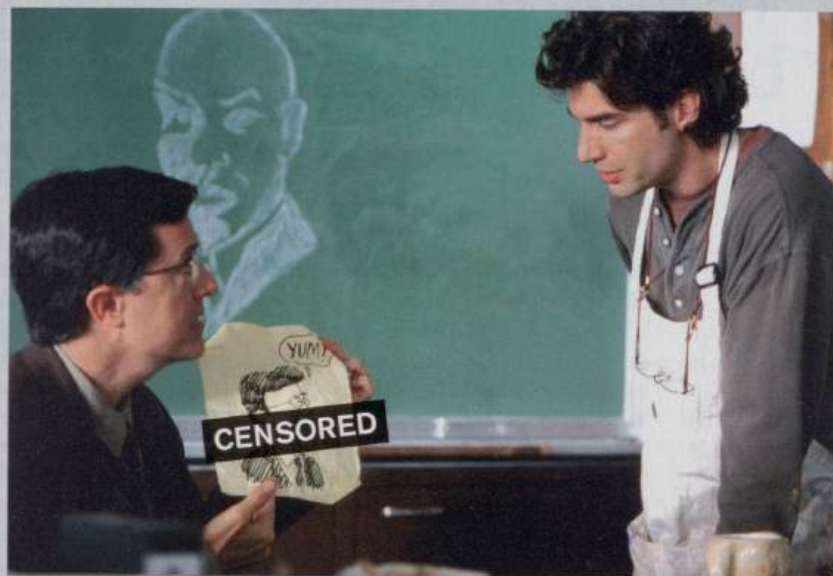
In October. And I have "Amy Sedaris Tampons: So Good You'll Never Want to Take Them Out." Pineapple-scented tampons. Pineapple sounds so painful. Ouch.

**[Laughs] That's so sick, it's wonderful.**

[Laughs] Thank you.

*In next month's issue of OutSmart, Sedaris talks about pets, specifically her pet rabbit, Dusty.*

*Blase DiStefano interviewed Valerie Harper for our April issue.*



*Strangers with Candy's Flatpoint High School faculty members Mr. Noblet (Stephen Colbert, l) and Mr. Jellineck (Paul Dinello) in a teachers' conference regarding Jerri Blank's most recent inappropriate essay.*

Blank with my boob hanging out. He's a good example, 'cause he's a hot model. It's funny what people find attractive.

**It is, isn't it? I remember a long time ago when I was a lot younger, and I had on short shorts, and my then-boss said, "I like your legs," or something like that, and I said, "But I have skinny legs," and he said, "I like skinny legs."**

Exactly. [In Jerri's voice:] "I have a pussy belly and I like it." [Both laugh]

I saw this book called *Knocked Up and Gun Toting*, and it was pregnant women modeling with guns. That's someone's audience, right?

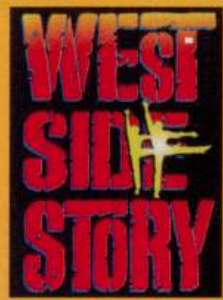
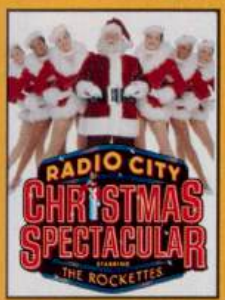
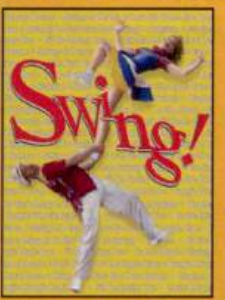
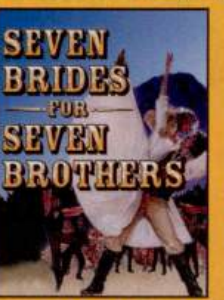
**They wouldn't have it out if it wasn't, right? Nowadays, it's mind-boggling what's out there. There is pretty much something for everybody.**

Yes, there is. "You have skinny legs." I like your legs." That's great.



# Really the BIG season

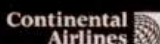
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# All Dressed Up

*A local artist turns paper and other glittery materials into glamorous visions of classic Hollywood*

by Donalevan Maines

Photo of Gregg Nystrom by David Lewis

W

hen Gregg Nystrom's ship comes in, chances are it will be decked in baubles and beads.

Laces, metallic ribbons, and glitter glue add an astounding 3-D effect to the decidedly 21st-century art that the Clear Lake City artist has developed from years of studying works of his favorite masters, renowned paper-doll artists Ralph Hodgdon and Beaumont's Tom Tierney.

This summer, Nystrom might be on the threshold of widespread acclaim, judging from the type of admiration that jump-started Tierney's fame by fans who, likewise, "discovered" him in Houston (he was serving his apprenticeship in men's fashion advertising at Battlestein's in the early 1950s).

"I have been inspired by Tom Tierney's spectacular use of color and life-like renderings that transformed his paper dolls into art," Nystrom says. (Some background: In →

Smaller than they appear: Artist Gregg Nystrom (center) poses with his paper dolls of larger-the-life stars Jean Harlow, Veronica Lake, Mae West, and Josephine Baker. The dolls are actual size. Nystrom, of course, is not.





# Fit for a Queen

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**Two-year scholarship  
to The School for Film  
and Television in New  
York City: \$60,000.**

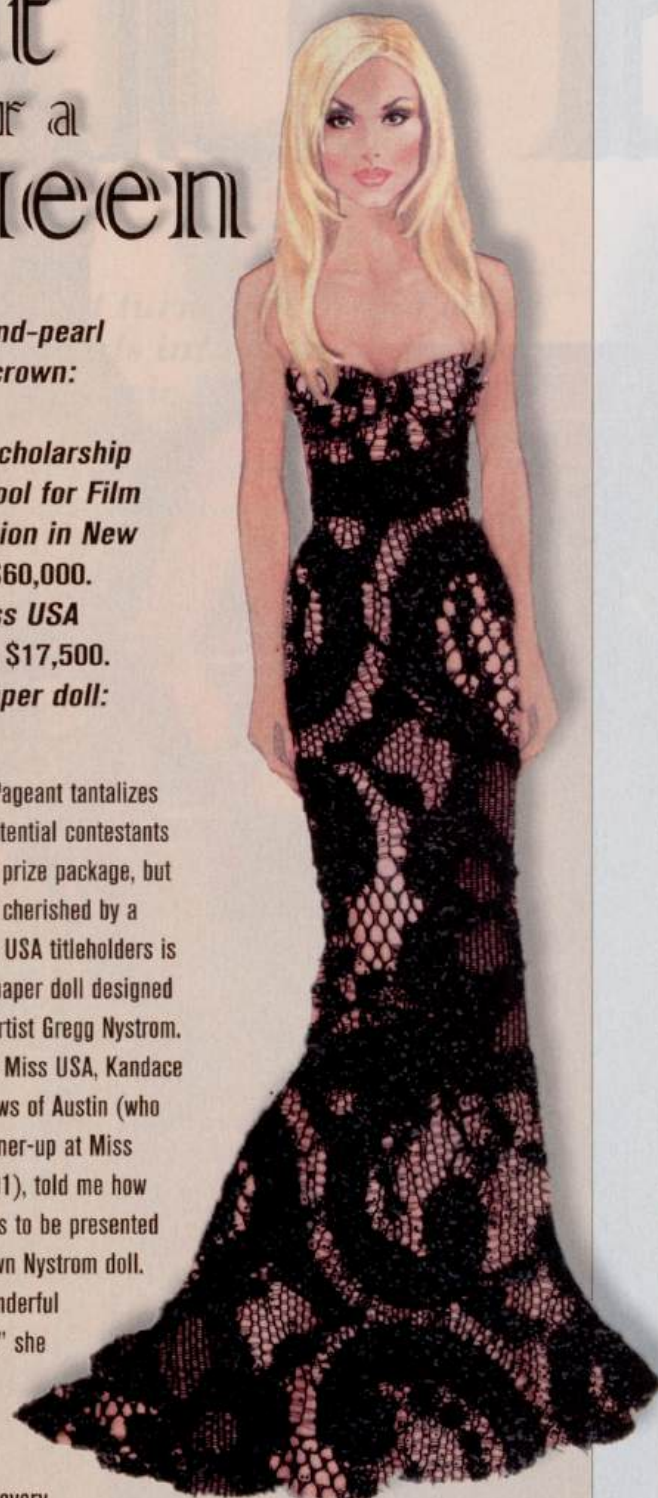
**Official Miss USA  
pearl tiara: \$17,500.  
Her own paper doll:  
Priceless.**

The Miss USA Pageant tantalizes thousands of potential contestants with a tempting prize package, but a special honor cherished by a select few Miss USA titleholders is their very own paper doll designed by Clear Lake artist Gregg Nystrom.

Texas's last Miss USA, Kandace Krueger Matthews of Austin (who was second runner-up at Miss Universe in 2001), told me how honored she was to be presented with her very own Nystrom doll.

"What a wonderful surprise it was!" she said. "It truly looks lifelike, as Gregg was able to capture every detail from head to toe."

"Gregg has a real talent for turning a photo into a tiny, delicate and priceless work of art!" —D.M.



A real doll: This is Gregg Nystrom's tribute to the reigning national Miss USA, Tara Conner of Kentucky, who will represent the United States at the Miss Universe Pageant on July 23 in Los Angeles. Nystrom can be reached online at greggsdolls@yahoo.com.

## All Dolled Up continued from previous page

1975, Tierney was casting about for a unique Christmas present for his mother. Remembering that she had saved her paper-doll collection from when she was a girl, Tierney decided to design for her some paper dolls of 1930s movie stars who had been his mother's favorites. A collection that began with Tierney's renderings of Garbo, Harlow, and Gable grew into the artist's first book, *Thirty from the '30s*, which catapulted Tierney to fame in 1976.)

Nystrom's own love of glamorous Hollywood stars evolved into a passion for drawing celebrities in paper-doll form.

"I guess I was dazzled by all the glamour, glitz, and beautiful girls in fabulous gowns," Nystrom says. "The sheer glamour and beauty of their portraits and films, and the general aura that those gorgeous women and handsome men gave off made me want to capture their likenesses."

"Also, I'd always been drawn to anything miniature, and I think my love of all things little merged into a passion for starting my own paper-doll collection, inspired by both Mr. Tierney and the exquisite, finely detailed drawings of the very talented and extremely prolific artist Ralph Hodgdon."

Through Nystrom's study of color, perspective, and light and shadow, he began drawing subjects running the gamut from silent movie stars such as Theda Bara and Barbara La Marr to the women whom he believes best exemplify today's glamour royalty, the Miss USAs and Miss Universes.

"I first sketch the subject in pencil, then use colored pencils for flesh tones, hair and eye color, and lip color," he explains. "I also use a cotton swab to blend down the color so it has an air-brushed-like finish. For drawing the gowns and other clothes, I've found fantastic paper at art supply stores, some of which are like sumptuous velvet fabric."

By day, Nystrom works in downtown Houston for *The Greensheet*, the advertising newspaper. After hours, retiring to the home he shares in Clear Lake with hair stylist Karry Fuller, his life partner of almost four years, Nystrom freelances as a magazine illustrator and builds a set of clients who commission paper dolls of their glamour favorites.

"It would be great to become a renowned artist, even if it is only locally," Nystrom says. "I dream of devoting my entire career to doing what I love to do: create unique paper dolls, portraits of couples or singles, and artistic expressions that capture the joy and beauty of life."



Donalevan Maines wrote a profile of beauty-pageant experts J.J. Smith and Michael Hannah for our June issue. Gregg Nystrom illustrated that article and provided this illustration of Donalevan Maines.

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# AN EARLY FROST, LATELY

America's first movie about AIDS marks its 20th anniversary with its release on DVD this month.

One of the writers—who went on to create *Queer as Folk*—talks about the making of the film during those grim initial years of the epidemic

by Nancy Ford

W

hen *An Early Frost* first screened on American television in 1985, AIDS had been part of America's conscious for only four years. But by then, just shy of 60,000 AIDS cases had been reported in the United States, and nearly half that number already dead.

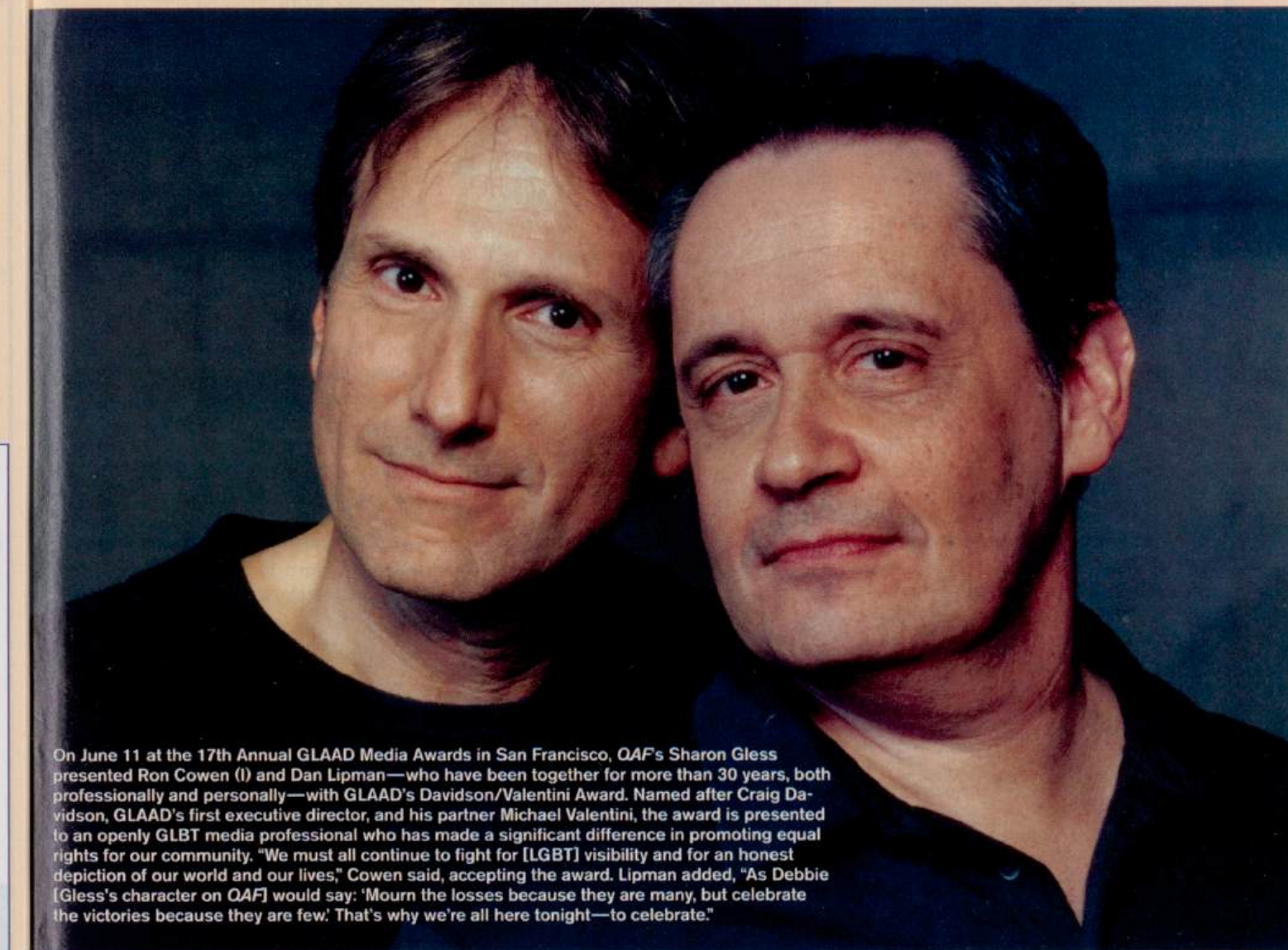
Sounds like a great subject for a made-for-TV movie, right?

This groundbreaking film, written and executive-produced by *Queer as Folk* creators Ron Cowen and Dan Lipman, introduces us to Michael Pierson, a young attorney recently promoted to partner in his firm. Attractive, successful, and totally closeted, Michael discovers via the telltale sign of a coughing fit that his pneumonia is the result of AIDS.

The story winds through Michael's process of not only accepting his diagnosis but also coming out to his family—concepts that, while unremarkable now, were unheard of in network television programming at that time.



Screenwriters and producers Ron Cowen and Daniel Lipman's 1985 collaboration, *An Early Frost*, was the first TV movie to openly deal with issues related to HIV and AIDS. Starring Aidan Quinn (l), Gena Rowlands, Ben Gazzara, and Sylvia Sydney (seated), the film earned Cowen and Lipman an Emmy for Outstanding Writing in a Miniseries or a Special as well as a Peabody Award and a Golden Globe nomination. In 2000, Cowen and Lipman adapted the hit British series *Queer as Folk* for American audiences on Showtime.



On June 11 at the 17th Annual GLAAD Media Awards in San Francisco, *QAF*'s Sharon Gless presented Ron Cowen (l) and Dan Lipman—who have been together for more than 30 years, both professionally and personally—with GLAAD's Davidson/Valentini Award. Named after Craig Davidson, GLAAD's first executive director, and his partner Michael Valentini, the award is presented to an openly GLBT media professional who has made a significant difference in promoting equal rights for our community. "We must all continue to fight for [LGBT] visibility and for an honest depiction of our world and our lives," Cowen said, accepting the award. Lipman added, "As Debbie [Gless's character on *QAF*] would say: 'Mourn the losses because they are many, but celebrate the victories because they are few.' That's why we're all here tonight—to celebrate."

In it, Michael's mother, played by the exquisite Gena Rowlands, is a woman trying to make her son's lot in life as easy for him to bear as possible. Making this considerably harder is Michael's father, portrayed by Ben Gazzara. Though initially reacting with the predictable macho bravura that some men cling to upon learning their gay sons will never live up to their standard of masculinity, by the end of the story he is actively supportive.

The film also introduces us to Victor D'Amato, played by John Glover, representing one of television's first flamboyant

queens, predating Jack McFarland by two decades. "Laugh and the world laughs with you," Victor extols, adding, "Cry and you bore me to tears."

Emaciated yet still screamingly clever, Victor illustrates how far we have indeed come in the battle against HIV. Seeing his hospital mate obviously near death, the recently diagnosed Michael wants to know what his future holds and asks Victor how long he has lived with AIDS. Victor's stunning answer: two years.

The film ends with Michael having reconciled with his family and his partner, but ends

with a twist some may not have noticed when first viewing the film that night in 1985. The viewer sees Michael leaving his family's home in a taxi, his father encouraging him to stay strong, that he can beat this disease. The next shot shows Michael in a still photograph implying, a la the final scene of *Philadelphia*, that he died. But then the shot widens to show us that the picture is one of Michael's whole family, reinforcing the happy ending of them having reconciled their differences. Was this the producers' way of offering viewers—both those infected by and infected with AIDS—a morsel of hope for survival? →



## An Early Frost, Lately

continued from previous page

An *Early Frost* was nominated for 14 Emmys, picking up four, as well as a Golden Globe for Sylvia Sydney's portrayal of Michael's loving and wise grandmother. "It's not a disgrace," she tells Michael. "It's a disease."

The year *An Early Frost* was collecting its awards, 1986, was a big year for the Gs and the Ts of the GLBT community: That same year, Vanessa Redgrave was Emmy-nominated for her portrayal of groundbreaking transgender tennis star, Renee Richards, in *Second Serve*. Marlo Thomas beat out both Redgrave and Rowlands in that category for *Nobody's Child*.

It's strange to see a teleplay with gay characters, in this time of *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, *Six Feet Under*, and *Will & Grace*, in which a same-sex couple doesn't employ displays of affection that have become commonplace on the big and small screen. Even though Michael and his partner have been together for two years, the two barely touch, let alone kiss or embrace.

But the historical significance of *An Early Frost* cannot be underestimated. It reminds us of a time before AZT, before clinical trials, before cocktails, when ambulances and funeral homes—and sometimes, even hospitals—often refused services to people with HIV. It also deals with the preposterous yet then-commonplace fears of Michael's pregnant sister, who initially refuses any close contact with her brother, as well as the father's insistence that Michael no longer kiss his mother. Perhaps most notable—and to the producers' credit—is that though the film predated the concept of safer sex, it contains repeated references to how HIV is transmitted, a public service until then unseen or unheard of in the mainstream media.

Prior to the DVD release set for July 18, screenwriter Dan Lipman discussed the making of *An Early Frost*, how the film impacted their lives, and its ultimate natural progression to *Queer as Folk*.

**Nancy Ford:** During the mid-'80s, gay men here in Houston began dropping like flies, as I'm sure they were in your circle. What was going on in your lives as you were writing the teleplay?

Dan Lipman: I remember the first time I'd seen anything about it [AIDS]. Geraldo Rivera had done a feature on one of their news programs, and it was just horrific. You saw these gay pride parades, and it was very sensational. You saw the swollen, bloated unfortunate people who had this, the lesions. We were just horrified.

Perry Lafferty was an NBC executive who left his post to produce this film because he felt very, very strongly about it. He said the only way to get this script on was [to present it] as a family drama. In fact, at one point, Ron and I were debating about whether we should even mention AIDS in it at all.

**Well, so little was known about AIDS at the time. Do you recall any feedback following the film? Did you get more fan mail than hate mail or backlash from the religious right?**



Actor Aidan Quinn (above) is no stranger to media controversy. Twenty years after he starred in *An Early Frost*, Quinn played an Episcopal minister on NBC's quickly canceled *The Book of Daniel*. Conservative Christian groups objected to the show's content; its promotional tagline was "Sex. Drugs. Stolen Money And Martinis. Family Can Really Test Your Faith."

There wasn't any. Sponsorship was pulled, so basically when it aired that night on Nov. 11, 1985—11/11, that's our lucky number—the network had to sponsor it themselves. So it was all promos. Except—this was unbelievable—there was one commercial for a King James Bible.

**Whaaat?!**

[Laughing] Yes, a King James Bible.

**So God sponsored the show?**

I remember this commercial. It was set in King James's court, and somebody was dancing around with a Bible. It was very, very strange. I guess that was the only response we had from the far right, the religious right. It was very bizarre. It also hailed that night in Los Angeles, which is also very strange. We had a little gathering at a friend's house and

at one of the key moments of the film, someone said, "Oh, look out the window! It's hailing!" And I said, "Look at the screen! What are you looking out there for?" [Laughs]

**That's pretty calm, considering.**

Yes, but at that time, there was no e-mail. You couldn't get that instant response. Mostly it was very, very positive, so to speak. It brought families together. There was one letter in particular—I think it was from the sister of this guy who had AIDS. He was in the hospital, and his father, just like in the film, had not spoken to him. He would come and visit him out of obligation because the mother insisted. She said one night he came to visit—the night of *An Early Frost*. When it began, the father was sitting in a chair across the room and the son was in a hospital bed. She said by the end of it the father was sitting on the bed with his arm around his son.

**And I'm sure there were hundreds of situations just like that that you didn't hear about.**

Absolutely. And there were people who called us or who wrote us and said they had been estranged from their parents. There was one guy, I remember, who said he'd been estranged from his parents and family. The film was on from 9 till 11, and he said that at 11:05 the phone rang. It was his mother saying, "Will you come to dinner tomorrow night so we can talk?" It's always strange to me—the power and the impact of television.

**Sure, it's what happens in our lives, transferred to the little screen.**

Absolutely, absolutely. I suppose the positive stories, the inspiring ones, are the ones we remember the most. The same thing happened with *Queer as Folk*, which is so strange. There was no religious right or right wing outpouring against it. And that's what we were prepared for, but it never happened.

What was going on though, which was very, very uncomfortable about the whole experience of *An Early Frost* was that we had a lot of friends who had AIDS. We had a very dear friend who passed away the night we won the Emmy. So I wish we never had had to write *An Early Frost* or had had anything to do with it. There's a very fine line when all of the sudden people are throwing awards and accolades at you. What is it for? Seeing people around you dying? A lot of that was going on at the time.

Also what was strange is that people would invite us to dinner, people we hardly knew. But they would say, "Oh, please come to dinner." And then they would say, "Ron or Dan, can I talk to you for a second?" →

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## An Early Frost, Lately

continued from page 74

Oh no...

And then they'd take us to the library or to another room and they'd say, "You know, I have a lump here," or "I have this mark here." And we'd have to say to them, "We're sorry, but we're not doctors." Everyone was so paranoid about it.

Oh sure, everyone was so hypersensitive then about every little ache or pain. How did you keep up with all the new discoveries about the disease at that time?

I remember when Rock Hudson died, there was an article that came out that said, "NBC is doing this quickie movie about AIDS. The script was probably written in a weekend." [In actuality, the script took more than two years to write.] It was so timely, Nancy. There is this scene in the show where the mother, the Gena Rowlands character, comes in with a copy of *Time* magazine that has AIDS on the cover. We were about to prepare a mock-up. It didn't exist, a *Time* magazine with "AIDS" on the cover. But that week, *Newsweek* came out with AIDS on its cover and that's what we used in the film.

### Serendipity.

It was shot so that we could insert a shot of Terry O'Quinn, who played the doctor, giving any kind of updated information, up until the very last minute, just so it would be current. Our medical advisor said, "As you're writing this, you're going to see a lot of articles. But the medical community doesn't want to throw everything out there and frighten everybody." When we began, they had just found out the virus was in saliva.

Well, it did predate all the safer sex messages, so thank you for including the education that was in *An Early Frost*, especially when so little was known by the general

public at the time. Who knows how many lives you saved with those messages about how the virus is transmitted.

I really, really hope so.

Did you ever think that 20 years later, we'd still be searching for a cure?

I remember that I thought that the film would be very antiquated, and I thought that by this point in time, 20 years later, we'd say, "Oh, it was certainly very unfortunate, but luckily there's no such thing as AIDS anymore."

I noticed something kind of incidental, or perhaps co-incidental, as I was watching *An Early Frost*, regarding *Queer as Folk*. The AIDS patient who dies is named Victor in both *An Early Frost* and *QAF*. Was that an accident?

I don't remember this. Tell me...

In *Queer as Folk*, Debbie's brother's name was Victor and...

Oh, of course, Uncle Vic! You know something? That was a complete coincidence. There are a lot of coincidences that happened. Sometimes you write things subconsciously that you're not aware of. Someone who's known Ron and me for probably 30 years came out of the first episode of *Queer as Folk* and said to me, "Obviously, Brian is Ron and you're Michael." I said, "Why do you think that?" And he said, "Well, look at them physically. Ron looks like Brian." And he did! [Laughing] We should all be so lucky! And when I was younger, I did look like Hal Sparks. Hal did a film for Showtime called *Bleacher Bums*, and he showed me a picture and I went to my high school yearbook, and that's exactly what I looked like.

That is hysterical.

And Debbie, Sharon Gless's character, had red hair, and my mother had red hair. When somebody pointed this out to me, my mouth

dropped. I said, "You know, you're right. I never even thought of that!"

I'll tell you one link between the two Victors in *An Early Frost* and *Queer as Folk*. People were saying we should do *An Early Frost II*, because the character Uncle Vic says, "Well, I'm going to die, so I'm going to cash out all of my savings and my credit cards, and I'm going to take my last trip and then I'm going to die." But then, they don't die. So now what do they do?

Any possibility of a *QAF* reunion episode, or a movie? So many people loved the show and miss it.

Thank you. Thank you very much. As far as a reunion show, I really don't know. I think everybody was really ready to move on. Gale Harold, of course, is on this new big show called *Vanished*, which will be on in the fall. And people have gone on to other projects. But you never know about the future. Never say never.

But when you do a series, it's such an investment of time. On *QAF*, I spent five years getting four hours of sleep a night, and that includes weekends. So if you're going to commit to something, you have to really, really love it. If you do commit to something, it has to be something you really feel you want to put that amount of time into. But you have to be creatively fallow at times, just to get your energy back and see where you are in the world. Hopefully, if there is another television project, it will be something we love just as much.

What are you and Ron working on now, Dan?

We're working on a musical for the theater. Television has been very, very good to us, and we had a great time working on our shows, but I think we'd like to work our way back to the theater as much as we possibly can.

Can you tell us a little about the musical?

It's based on a film called *A Private Function*, which was a film. Alan Bennett, who won a Tony this year for *The History Boys*, wrote a screenplay. It was released in the late '80s, around the time of *An Early Frost*, actually. It starred Maggie Smith and Michael Palin, and it takes place in post-war Britain where there's very severe food rationing. It's about people who are deprived of food so they get depraved and steal a pig. It's very funny, but it's a very dark look at human nature.

Well, that's Michael Palin.

Exactly, exactly. So we optioned the film. It seems like a lot of fun, and very much a change of pace from *Queer as Folk*. I feel it's always important to pop out of another hole and not do the same thing. ■

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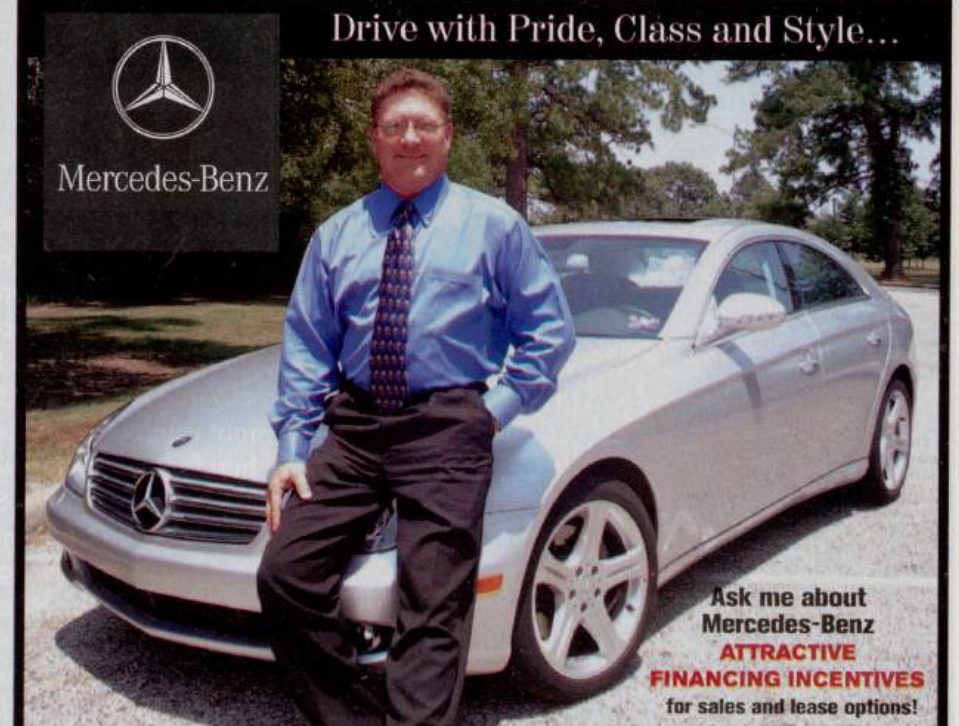


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## FROST ON DVD

The 20th anniversary special collector's edition DVD of *An Early Frost* includes a commentary track by actor Terry Quinn and screenwriters Ron Cowen and Dan Lipman as well as the 1987 Emmy-winning short documentary *Living With AIDS*, by Tina DiFelicianantonio. *An Early Frost* is available from Wolfe Video on July 18 ([www.wolfevideo.com](http://www.wolfevideo.com)).

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Rock 'n' roll a bye, baby: Melissa Etheridge (pictured, above, performing at the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo in March) and her spouse, Tammy Lynn Michaels, are expecting twins. Etheridge performs in The Woodlands on July 16.

# Mama Rocker

**W**hen Melissa Etheridge rocks Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion on July 16, it won't be her first post-breast cancer appearance in Houston. Fans remember her stepping in at the last minute to replace ailing sister rocker Sheryl Crow at a Houston Livestock & Rodeo show in March. But it will be the fully recovered Etheridge's first full-length concert here since her 2004 bout with breast cancer.

But Etheridge better start working on some lullabies in addition to her rock 'n' roll tunes. She and spouse Tammy Lynn Michaels are expecting twins in the fall, adding a couple more mouths to feed to their growing brood. The twins make a total of four children that Ms. E is responsible for, including two children from her first relationship with video director Julie Cypher.

The show is part of a whirlwind 37-city summer tour that includes three Texas stops, including Austin (July 14) and Dallas (July 15), before wrapping up on August 29 in Phoenix. That should get her home before Tammy's water breaks. —Nancy Ford



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## LookOut

by Nancy Ford



**BE AN OUT CLOWN.** It's difficult enough for a person to live in the closet, but when that closet is full of oversized shoes, fake noses, fright wigs, and Hula Hoops pants, staying there is downright impossible. That's why **Alan Ware**, a.k.a. **Grampa Clown**, decided to come out as the gay man that he is.

A student of master mime Marcel Marceau and the Dell Arte International School of Physical Theatre in California, Ware (pictured, in and out of costume) graduated from clown college in 1996. He has been clowning ever since with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, which comes to Reliant Stadium July 14-23.

"Those who cannot laugh at themselves leave that job to others," Ware says, without so much as a honk to his nose. "If you are not a living mockery of your own dreams, you have set your standards too low."

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**FREE SPEECH(MAKING), PAID TUITION.** There is no dearth of things for civic-minded Houstonians to do the afternoon of July 9.

Everybody's got a story, and this month Equality Texas is looking for GLBT-headed families to tell theirs as part of its newly launched Our Stories campaign. Equality Texas (the Austin-based GLBT equal rights group formerly known as Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby of Texas) has partnered with Family Pride to present speakers' bureau training during the month of July.

The program, which aims to educate Texans about GLBT families' lives and to dispel the misinformation of the extreme right, is scheduled for July 9, 1-5 p.m., at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, with lunch at 12:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend the free training. Register: [www.equalitytexas.org](http://www.equalitytexas.org).

On the same day, the PFLAG/HATCH Youth Scholarship Foundation will announce

the 2006 recipients of its yearly scholarships, honoring outstanding achievement by graduating GLBT students. Last year, the foundation awarded a total of \$103,000 to Houston-area students. The ceremony takes place at St. Paul's United Methodist Church.

**ON THE ISLAND.** Freshly moved in to their new home at 1401 39th St. in Galveston, Harbor Metropolitan Community Church will participate in the Island's annual Fourth of July parade, thanks to **Bill Love** and **G.W. Cornelius** and their beautiful, antique Lincoln convertible.

And talk about accommodating: Harbor MCC's Sunday worship hours are conveniently scheduled at 4 p.m. Rev. **Pat Farman** says the church is considering adding a morning service, perhaps as soon as August, for the more traditionally minded worshiper. Send her a note at [harbormccofgalveston@gmail.com](mailto:harbormccofgalveston@gmail.com) or call 409/770-9988 to express your time preference.

**IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.** Back in the Bayou City, Rev. **Todd Williams**, pastor of New Covenant Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), has been named to the board of directors of the Voices for Justice Network, a nonprofit agency that is dedicated to helping persons who are survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

Williams, who holds a Master of Divinity degree from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, was awarded the Todd Bratkovitch Peace Fellowship Award by the Disciples Peace Fellowship of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) last summer for his program, Project R.I.O.T., that works directly with homeless youth on the streets of Houston. A support network for persons who are recovering from working within the sex industry, or those who are considering leaving it, meets each week at the Houston GLBT Community Center. More info: [www.radicalchristians.org](http://www.radicalchristians.org). ■

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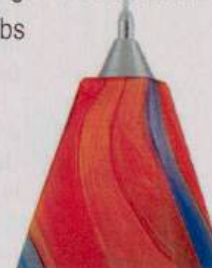
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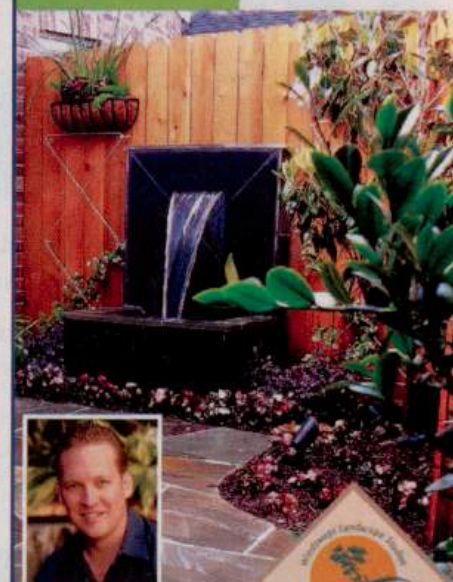
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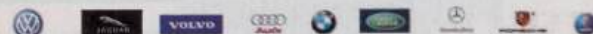
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## Jake Gyllenhaal

(actor, *Brokeback Mountain*)

(MTV Movie Awards, 6/8/06)

His acceptance speech as winner with Heath Ledger in *Brokeback Mountain* for Best Kiss:

This is a real honor, not just for me and Heath but for all of you, that you picked this movie and this kiss over all the other ones. I said to Heath [Ledger] . . . after we finished [the scene], if we don't win the MTV Movie Award for best kiss, then it wasn't worth it. It's worth it now. It's a big deal. Thank you all from all those struggling with love, which is all of us.

## Lou Dobbs

(anchor, CNN's *Lou Dobbs Tonight*)

(cnn.com, 6/7/06)

President Bush . . . urged Congress to pass a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage, at a time when the United States faces some of the greatest challenges in our nation's history.

So, logically, what could possibly better ensure the prosperous and bright future of working men and women and their families than for the Senate to work on a constitutional amendment that is guaranteed to fail? . . .

The president and the Senate's Republican leadership are now claiming that an amendment to our Constitution is necessary to save the American family. No matter how you feel about the issue . . . a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage is utter and complete nonsense. It's an insult to the intelligence of every voter, Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative. . . .

I wonder if the president's political advisers know just how ill-advised and smarmy this wedge issue looks to the millions of us who want solutions to the critical, urgent problems facing this nation. Worse, I wonder if they even care.

## Janice Dickinson

(model/author who has her own reality show, *The Janice Dickinson Modeling Agency*)

(*Out*, 7/06, Jason Lamphier, Jeffrey Epstein, or Bruce Shenitz)

**Out:** In your 2004 book, *Everything About Me Is Fake . . . and I'm Perfect*, you wrote about sexual encounters with other female models.

Janice Dickinson: Yes, that's right. I've had dalliances with other women. I appreciate anyone who follows the nature of the spirit of their soul. I applaud gay men, and I applaud gay women.

**You've also done a lot of work for AIDS.**

It really pisses me off: In this country there is enough money and power to find a cure—but we're not doing enough. I send in anonymous checks to various organizations every week. They don't have to know where it comes from. It just rolls in, babe.

## John Waters

(director, *Serial Mom*, *Pink Flamingos*, *Hairspray* . . .)

(commentary on the recent *Mommie Dearest* DVD)

***Mommie Dearest* is "a female female-impersonator role. It's the first drag queen role played by a woman."**



## Battlesbian?

(*New York Daily News*, 5/31/06, Brittany Karford and Jonathan Lemire)

Re: DC Comics reintroducing Batwoman as a lesbian.

"We want to look at the world around us and strike a more contemporary tone," said Dan DiDio, DC's vice president and executive editor. . . . "We deal with stories about identities and secret identities. And we think that a character who is openly gay, yet keeps it a secret from certain members of her own family, has a lot of strong emotional layers."

(*Amazon Fishbowl* with Bill Maher, 6/1/06, amazon.com)

**Bill Maher:** Here's something that will make the Bush administration's head explode—they are bringing back Batwoman in the comic books, and she's a lesbian now. She wants to battle crime, fight injustice, and she and Wonderman are going to adopt.



Compiled by Blase DiStefano

**Above:** DC Comics' new Batwoman illustration shows us that she's one tough lady/lesbian. **Right:** Ben Price plays bisexual Conrad on BBC America's *Footballers Wive\$*. **Below:** John Waters comments on Faye Dunaway as *Mommie Dearest* (inset).

## Ben Price

(actor, *Footballers Wive\$*)

(*Out*, 7/06, Gareth McLean)

Ben Price, who plays Conrad [on BBC America's *Footballers Wive\$*] . . . says he was determined that Conrad be proud of who he is. "I didn't want him to be apologetic, closeted, or ashamed of who he was," Price says. "Conrad is very confident about himself and his sexuality. He fancies men, he fancies women: I don't think he sees himself as gay or bisexual. He's just sexual, like a lot of people are."





DVD/VHS

by Eric A.T. Dieckman

## NO MORE WIRE HANGERS!

Faye Dunaway channels Joan Crawford in Mommie Dearest



Remember when Christina Crawford's memoir/expose of mother Joan was on the big screen? Like a dark *Rocky Horror*, audience members took to it like an interactive scream-along, shouting Joan's abrasive abuses in harmony with Faye Dunaway, waving wire hangers in the air like so many lighters at a Lynyrd Skynyrd concert, violently shaking axes at imaginary



rose bushes, scrubbing the theater floors (yuuuuck) with ferocious verve.

Revisit those days of camp Queen-of-Hollywood yesteryear with the 25th anniversary edition of the classic film tell-all. Commentary by John Waters practically makes re-viewing this severe drama-cum-melodramatic-comedy cult classic worthwhile. Other bonuses include three new featurettes



Joan Crawford (Faye Dunaway) is dressed up to lounge around. INSET: Joan's got an ax to grind.

(The Revival of Joan, Life with Joan—with behind-the-scenes stories—and Joan Lives On), interviews with the actors and others, and a photo gallery.

1981. Directed by Frank Perry. From Paramount Home Entertainment ([www.paramount.com/homeentertainment](http://www.paramount.com/homeentertainment)).

### MORE DVD/VHS PREVIEWS

#### The Ellen Show: The Complete Series



The follow-up to her landmark series *Ellen*, DeGeneres made television history in 1997 as the first series star to come out of the closet as a lesbian, as a character, and an actress. • When her high-profile Internet company fails, Ellen Richmond (DeGeneres)

returns to her small-town roots. Taking refuge in the home of her eccentric mother (Cloris Leachman), Ellen reunites with her blithering high school teacher, Mr. Munn (Martin Mull), and her senior prom date, Rusty (Jim Gaffigan), who thinks they can pick up where they left off (even though she's a lesbian). Although a world of experience separates them, Ellen slowly readjusts to a way of life she thought she left long ago. • The DVD features 18 episodes and six

never-before-aired shows. • From Sony Pictures Home Entertainment ([www.sonypictures.com](http://www.sonypictures.com)).

#### Julie Johnson

Frustrated with life, Julie (Lili Taylor) decides to take a computer class. The course fosters a sense of confidence, leading her to throw her overbearing husband out of the house. Claire (Courtney Love), Julie's →

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### DVD/VHS PREVIEWS

continued from page 84



best friend, follows Julie's example,  
then moves in with her. There the  
two discover and nurture their love  
for each other. Though their pas-  
sion grows, so does the distance  
between them and their friends  
and neighbors. • 2001. Co-written  
and directed by Bob Gosse. • From Genius Products  
([www.geniusproducts.com](http://www.geniusproducts.com)).

#### April's Shower



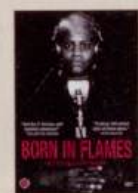
Alex (Trish Doolan), a struggling  
chef, frenetically races to prepare  
food for her close friend April's  
(Maria Cina) wedding shower.  
Though she wants everything to go  
perfectly for her friend, memories  
of her past romantic relationship  
with April will not loosen their persistent grip on Alex's  
heart. Will those memories stay in the past or will April  
change her plans and pick up where they left off? •  
2003. Written and directed by Trish Doolan. • From  
Genius Products ([www.geniusproducts.com](http://www.geniusproducts.com)).

#### An Empty Bed



Bill Frayne (John Wylie), an aging  
gay man, reflects upon his younger  
days, his choices, his life, and the  
empty bed awaiting him at the end  
of the day. Told primarily through  
flashbacks, this gay *Citizen Kane*-  
esque classic tells the touching  
story of one man's life. • 1989. Written and directed  
by Mark Gasper. • From First Run Features ([www.firstrunfeatures.com](http://www.firstrunfeatures.com)).

#### Born in Flames



Set in a future America 10 years af-  
ter the Second American Revolution,  
Adelaide Norris (Jean Satterfield),  
founder of the Women's Army, is  
mysteriously slain. Enraged, a co-  
alition of women rise to overthrow  
the system. Practically every form  
of radical feminism, from militant black lesbians to  
straight white punk musicians, comes together in  
thrilling and comic form in this relevant classic. •  
1983. Directed by Lizzie Borden. • From First Run  
Features ([www.firstrunfeatures.com](http://www.firstrunfeatures.com)).

#### Project Runway: The Complete Second Season



The season's winner, Houstonian  
Chloe Dao, owner of the boutique  
Lucky 8 here in town, can be seen  
in all her deleted-scene glory in this  
fashionista frenzy of a reality series.  
Does Heidi Klum ever lose her grace?  
Will Santino's ego ever deflate? Find  
out in the blooper reel. • From Genius Products ([www.geniusproducts.com](http://www.geniusproducts.com)).



## HAPPY TAILS DOG SPA OFFERS FULL-SERVICE GROOMING

**H**appy Tails Dog Spa, which opened its first dog daycare  
and spa facility in Texas in March, now offers full-service,  
professional grooming with the addition to its staff of  
Paul Savant. A native of Louisiana, Savant brings over 22 years  
of professional dog grooming experience to  
the new Happy Tails facility, located at 1315  
Waugh Drive between W. Gray and W. Dallas.  
Prior to joining Happy Tails, Savant owned and  
operated grooming salons in Friendswood and  
Pearland for the past 17 years. His experience  
in grooming all breeds of dogs includes several  
years of professional show-ring grooming.

Savant is quick to point out his passion  
for his work saying, "Grooming is an art, and  
I enjoy the creativity of completing a cut to  
match each dog's personality." Savant achieves  
this through conversation with each dog's  
owner to understand their expectations and to  
get to know their canine companion.

When asked what drew him to Happy Tails Dog Spa, Savant  
replies, "I knew the moment I walked in the door that it would  
be a good fit.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to develop grooming

clientele for Happy Tails. Also, I knew right away that the people  
behind Happy Tails are the best."

The Happy Tails Dog Spa on Waugh is a gay-owned and  
operated business that caters to the GLBT community. Owner  
Don Puryear adds, "With Paul joining the  
business, we are able to provide full-service,  
show-quality grooming in addition to our dog  
daycare, boarding, and spa services."



In addition to dog grooming, daycare and  
boarding services, Happy Tails offers 6,000  
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safe, supervised environment. Canine clientele  
enjoy high-definition televisions in all play  
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of the facility, after which they are certain that "if you had a tail,  
you'd wag it!"

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## Television

by Nancy Ford

### PRETTY IN PINK

*Lt. Jim Dangle and company return on Comedy Central's Reno 911!*

We love Kerri Kenney-Silver's overactive-yet-undermedicated Officer Trudy Weigel. We love Niecy Nash's ghetto-fabulous Deputy Raineesha Williams. And we love Cedric Yarbrough's strong-but-with-a-heart-of-marshmallow Officer Jonesie.

But it's *Reno 911!*'s Lt. Jim Dangle, played by Thomas Lennon III, who perhaps yanks hardest on our heartstrings. The openly bisexual (with a strong leaning toward the boy side) peace officer rides herd over Comedy Central's heavily improv'd satirical police series, set in Reno (duh) Nevada.

*Reno 911!* begins its fourth season on Comedy Central on July 9 at 10:30 p.m., opening with the revelation that Officer Trudy is with child. (But whose?) Here's a bonus tidbit: Paul Reubens is scheduled for a guest appearance this season.

Fans get a second dose of Dangle when *Reno 911!: The Complete Third Season—Uncensored!* DVD is released on July 11. The DVD includes not only the requisite "audio commentary" from the cast and crew, but action figure promos as well.

Earlier this summer when he wasn't busy Dangling, Lennon began filming *Balls of Fire*, a movie exploring the often-neglected world of high-stakes ping-pong. Otherwise, Lennon can soon be seen on the big screen on *Reno 911!: Miami*, in which those crazy cops respond to a terrorist attack that disrupts a national police convention in Miami Beach during spring break. South Beach, take cover!

For more info or to confirm schedule: [www.comedycentral.com](http://www.comedycentral.com).



The cast of *Reno 911!* (l-r): Niecy Nash, Wendi McLendon-Covey, Thomas Lennon, Cedric Yarbrough, Kerri Kenney-Silver, Mary Birdsong, Robert Ben Garant, and Carlos Alazraqui.

INSET: Lt. Jim Dangle (Lennon) rehearses his law-enforcing moves prior to the July 9 kickoff of *Reno 911!*'s fourth season on Comedy Central.



Divine in *Pink Flamingos*

### PRE-MIDNIGHT MUNCHIES

*Sundance Channel's Midnight Snack with Alan Cumming brings cult films to our living rooms*

Got the munchies for more Alan (what's that smell?) Cumming, now that his stint as the bisexual café manager on Showtime's *The L Word* is a thing of the past? Worry not. The Tony Award-winning actor and perfumer returns to television this month to host a third season of Sundance Channel's Friday night cult movie retrospective, *Midnight Snack*.

The new season begins July 7 at midnight (make that 11 p.m. central, but the name 11 o'clock *Snack* didn't resonate) offering 16 new titles kicking off with the sci-fi classic *Dune*, directed by David Lynch.

Following on subsequent Friday nights are John Waters' *Pink Flamingos* (July 14), David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* (July 21), and Faith Akin's *Head-On* (July 28). Upcoming selections you'll want to Sharpie onto your viewing calendar include Howard Alk's *Janis* (September 1), Greg Araki's *Nowhere* (September 8), Paul Bogart's *Torch Song Trilogy* (September 22), and Jesus Franco's *Vampyras Lesbos* (October 20).

For more info or to confirm schedule: [www.sundancechannel.com](http://www.sundancechannel.com). —N.F.



Divine in *Pink Flamingos*

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"Open You" is our midweek celebration of life, with inspiring ideas for effective, passionate and creative living. Wednesdays, 7:00-8:15pm.

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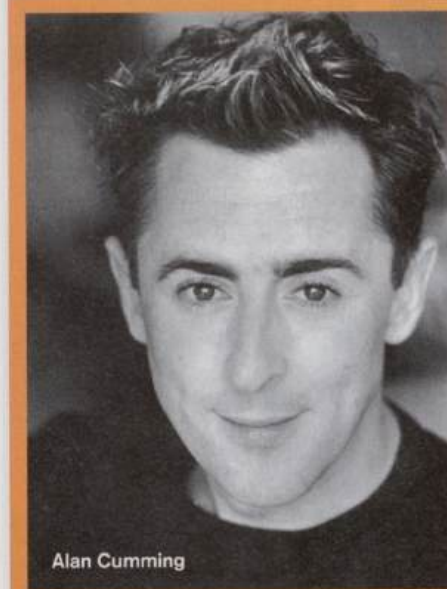
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Alan Cumming



# DANCING WITH YOUR SHIRT OFF

*New queer music will keep you moving this summer*



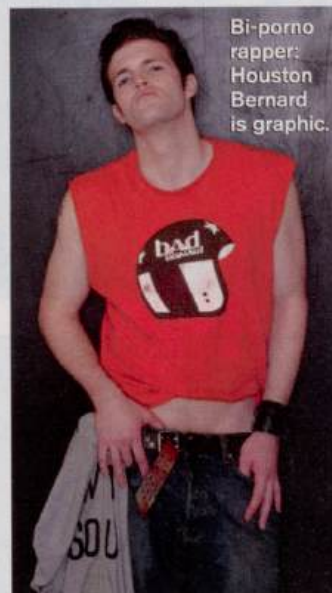
Better than a Krispy Kreme: The band Hey Willpower will make you scream.

Fans of Imperial Teen, featuring out musicians Roddy Bottum (formerly of Faith No More) and Will Schwartz, may recognize Schwartz's voice when they hear the eponymous self-titled EP by **Hey Willpower** (Cochon). On the cover of the disc, a shirtless Schwartz poses in front of a wall with a sign reading "Dance" tacked to it. "Hundredaire" is irresistible. With its "oh baby" mantra, a foot-friendly beat, and Schwartz's emotional delivery, you may be dancing with tears in your eyes, but you'll be moving nevertheless. "Double Fantasy II" has a bit of electro energy and delivers a seductive fantasy complete with electronic squeals of delight. "Magic Window" scratches its way out from behind "frosted glass" with promises

of Schwartz playing you like a "baby grand." And by the time he declares that he can "make you scream" and that he's "better than a Krispy Kreme," you know that resistance is futile. EP closer "Uh-Uh-Uh" has a vintage Prince vibe and makes you long for the days when The Artist Formerly Known as That Sign used to

appear on stage in a black thong and a trench coat. Maybe Schwartz will oblige us with a getup like that.

Self-described "bi-porno electropunk rapper" **Houston Bernard** also appears shirtless on the cover of his thumping and humping EP **Whores Have More Fun** (houstonbernard.com), which manages to be more graphic than Hey Willpower. The disc begins with the "I've never been on a horse before" confession of "Ride It Cowboy," which asks the musical



Bi-porno rapper: Houston Bernard is graphic.

question, "Do you really want the d-k?" and follows it up with very explicit directions on how to get it. Rocking a little harder on the new-wave edge, "Str8 Actin" begins with street cruising and features the chorus "I'm a straight-acting, huge-d-ked faggot/I'll f-k you in the mouth." Openly bisexual, Bernard turns his attention to the opposite sex on the tracks "U Smell So Nice" and "Oh Boy Relax." If the preceding tracks don't earn Bernard a parental advisory sticker, then the smutty "Lick, Suck, D-k, F-k" would easily do the trick. Speaking of tricks, Bernard cleans it up in the radio edits of "U Smell So Nice" and "Str8 Actin," but he leaves the dirty beats intact.

Increasingly, I am finding that a question I've been asking for some time now is being answered on a regular basis. The question goes something like this: Since so many gay men and lesbians listen to and dance to dance music, why aren't more LGBT artists making dance music? And no, queer record players don't count. On **Gay, Black and Married** (Rykodisc), a deeply →

the past two decades. These aren't club hits—though some could be—and they aren't contemporary ballads, but they do showcase Tennant's classic voice as much as ever. The only weak point is the fact that the single, "I'm with Stupid," a commentary on the Blair/Bush love affair, just kind of sucks. But maybe that's just due to its subject matter? From Rhino (www.rhino.com).

—Review: Lance Scott Walker

## RuPaul RuPaul.Reworked



You have to appreciate the rampant decadence that enshrouds the career of RuPaul Charles. I mean it's virtually impossible to hear about him and not think of the year 1991, when he broke out and stormed the world in an arsenal of drag. But for those of you who didn't grow up in the '80s and '90s, RuPaul must seem like one of those unexplained misnomers of years past—sort of like the Phyllis Diller or Joan Rivers of his time, where everyone

who comes afterward is sort of wondering... just what the hell does he do? Well, 15 years after the release of *Supermodel of the World*, a sort of career retrospective has been put together via remixes from Junior Vasquez and a whole load of DJs from all over the world. From RuCo Inc. (www.rupaul.com). —Review: L.S.W.

## Jason & deMarco Till the End of Time



Breaking somewhat away from their previous gay-gospel-pop influence, Houston's own Jason Warner and deMarco DeCiccio are now into "romantic rock pop," they say. They wrote seven of this CD's 12 tracks exploring "the depths and plateaus of relationships." Produced by Alan Lett for Centaur (www.centaurmusic.com), with the help of folks who have produced for Barbra Streisand, Ricky Martin, and Josh Groban. More: www.jasonanddemarco.com.

—Preview: Nancy Ford →

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## GrooveOut continued from page 90

discofied affair that is finally seeing the light of day, **My Life With The Thrill Kill Kult** takes the disco ball for a spin with dizzying effects. Openly gay lead singer Groovie Mann and the other members of the Kult kick things off with a faithful rendition of Peter Brown's 1978 disco classic "Do You Wanna Get Funky With Me," infusing it with their trademark spookiness. "Euro-Freak Hustle" maintains the vintage vibe with a disco beat that reeks of Jovan Musk Oil, and the play on "You're a freak" and "Euro-Freak" is almost as much fun as a bottle of poppers. "Freaky Fever" doesn't whip up enough body heat, but that is remedied by the electro-energy burst of the Giorgio Moroder-influenced "One Nite Stand," which oozes sexy synths and bodacious beats. "Magic Boy, Magic Girl" casts a seductive spell, and "Paradise Motel" checks in with the retro disco call "wooh wooh." "Fhaptasi Luv'r" recalls early Moroder/Donna Summer collaboration, and "Sci-Fi Affair" is a satisfying experiment.

If Macy Gray were a lesbian from Australia and not a straight girl from Ohio, she might sound something like Mishka, the lead singer of **Glovebox**. On their eponymous Baria Records self-titled disc, Mishka, Grainger, and the rest of Glovebox whip up a queer-ear-friendly selection, beginning with the big strutting beat of "Superstar." "In the End" is a funky

Queer-ear-friendly: GloveboxX packs heat.



number perfect for dancing or walking on the beach "in the summer sand" to "feel the surf" between your toes. "Serendipity" is a sweaty, underground, house-style track that is the kind of discovery that lives up to its name. "Warmin' Up" packs its own heat, and "\$10 Whore" encourages you to do whatever turns you on, regardless of the cost.

Legendary producer **Mike Thorne** ('Til Tuesday, Nina Hagen, Carmel) may not identify as an official member of the LGBT community, but his contributions, via production work with Soft Cell, The Communards, and Human Sexual Response, have earned him honorary status. In recent years he's worked with BETTY, who can also be heard on Thorne's **The Contessa's Party** (The Stereo Society). These eight non-traditional dance tracks have an organic feel, often missing from much of the genre. Take BETTY's "Can Catch," a Thorne collaboration, for instance. It boasts many of BETTY's signature touches, including wordplay and a generally playful spirit, but the Uptown Horns and the non-maniac beat ground it in human warmth. The cover of Arthur Brown's "Fire," also by BETTY, does manage to turn up the heat (and beats) considerably. "Grandma's Goodbye," with vocals

by Sarah Jane Morris, who once performed with Jimmy Somerville's Communard, has a Latin influence that increases its dance appeal.

Tahitian artist **Heiarii** (rhymes with "Ferrari") keeps his shirt on, but prefers to wear it open. Heiarii calls his album **Dance!** (Allure), and with the titular opening track, actually gives listeners something to dance to. The same can be said for Heiarii's interpretation of the classic Kiss tune "I Was Made for Loving You" (co-penned by gay songwriter

Desmond Child) and, my personal favorite, the bouncy beat-driven "Gimme Your Love." However, if you are going to call an album **Dance!** and throw in an exclamation point, people are going to expect to move, and the numerous ballads, which might have been better served on a disc called *Slow Dance*, tend to bog things down.

The new-wave influence, which is so prevalent in a lot of mainstream music inside and outside of dance clubs, can also be heard making an impact in music by queer artists. That makes sense, considering that some of the biggest names from the early days of new wave, including Soft Cell and The Bronski Beat, identified as gay. One-man-band, **Naked Highway**, personifies what I'm talking about. His album **Novocaine Smile** (nakedhighway.com) opens with the percolating video game energy of "We Can F-k," which is ideal for dancing vertically or horizontally. "Used to Be Friends" continues the trend, recalling the aforementioned Soft Cell, but minus Marc Almond's near-perfect vocals. "Driving at Night" would sound great →



One-man-band: Naked Highway is new-wave.

## GrooveOut Shorts continued from page 90

### Various Artists *Falling in Love Is Wonderful*



Ethel Merman, Charles Nelson Reilly, Eileen Brennan. *West Side Story*, *Oklahoma!*, *Guys and Dolls*. Irving Berlin, Rogers and Hammerstein, and Stephen Sondheim. What else do you need to know about this collection of love duets from the golden age of Broadway? A bonus is "Sailing," from *A New Brain* by gay couple Norm Lewis and Malcolm Gets. Mandatory gay listening. From Sony BMG Masterworks (www.sonybmg.com). —Preview: N.F.

### Harry Connick Jr. *Harry on Broadway, Act 1*

Written in 1955, *The Pajama Game* is a wonderful crossover: more contemporary than the original Broadway warhorse musicals like *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel*, but still far from what was to come with *Cabaret* and



beyond. Simultaneously red-blooded American, yet with tinctures of titillation, how '50s to be set in a pajama factory and have the racy topicality of a romance between a brassy union organizer, Babe, and her softie boss, Sid. What puts the steam heat in the rambunctious revival that opened in February on Broadway is the presence of Harry Connick Jr. (Debra Messing's beau on *Will & Grace*), who brings his sexy soulful self to the role of the dewy-eyed Sid. The glowing *New York Times* review gushes: "If sexual chemistry was illegal, then Mr. Connick and Ms. [Kelli] O'Hara would be looking at long jail terms." Reportedly, for every performance, Connick leaps into a jam improvisation—different every show—on "Hernando's Hideaway." The triple-CD set includes songs from Connick's *Thou Shalt Not* (which do not benefit from the proximity to the PJ Game's exuberant book) and some additional takes where Connick and O'Hara get playful with "Steam Heat" and "There Once Was a Man." From Columbia Records (www.columbiarecords.com). More: www.harryconnickjr.com. —Review: Ann Walton Sieber

### Various Artists

#### *The Essential Hollywood*



Sony Classical's excellent two-disc collection *The Essential Hollywood* is a near-perfect sampler of some of the best symphonic film music ever written. For new students and fans of film music, and even for the jaded film buff, this set provides an ideal opportunity to enjoy iconic music from such classics as *Gone With the Wind*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Citizen Kane*, *Ben-Hur*, *Psycho*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and even the original *King Kong*, among several others. In fact, *The Essential Hollywood* is sort of like one of those variety packs you find in the cereal aisle at the grocery store, except you get Max Steiner, Bernard Herrmann, and Elmer Bernstein instead of Alpha-Bits, Corn Flakes, and Cocoa Puffs. Well, maybe that's not the best comparison, but I guess you could say that Ennio Morricone's score for *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* is sort of the Rice Krispies of film music. My only real complaint about the collection is that they neglected to include Albert →

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**GrooveOut** continued from page 92

blasting out of a car's speakers, especially after sundown, and the pumping "Better Off Naked" and "Peepshow" are reminders of the opening track's suggestiveness. As you might expect, "Ctrl+Alt+Del" tries for a Kraftwerk-like current, while album closer "TV Tonight" lets the listener down easy, as the feeling returns to any and all numb spots.

**Shitting Glitter** also takes its new-wave influences seriously. The evidence is all over their album **Free Alongside Ship** (Decadrisco). Whether they are singing about "a daisy

**GrooveOut Shorts** continued from page 92

Glasser's truly inspired music artistry from the 1957 Roger Corman masterpiece *The Saga of the Viking Women and Their Voyage to the Waters of the Great Sea Serpent*, which, incidentally, is newly released on DVD as a double-feature with Corman's *Teenage Caveman*, which also has a score by Glasser. Maybe next time. From Sony Classical (www.sonyclassical.com).

—Review: Jack Varsi

**Soundtrack & Concert**  
**Dead Man Walking: Legacy Edition**



This expanded edition CD includes a new title track by Eddie Vedder and a bonus DVD premiering the 1998 all-star benefit concert. With an unprecedented gathering of champion musicians such as Bruce Springsteen, Susan Vega, Mary Chapin Carpenter, and Lyle Lovett, the CD honors the 10th anniversary of the controversial film concerning capital punishment. The composition of the film score is a mix of the South and world music with two duets by Vedder and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. The beats of the tabla along with Vedder's spiritual renditions beautifully augment the emotions in the movie. From Columbia/Legacy/Active-Music (www.legacyrecordings.com, www.sonybmg.com, www.activemusic.org) —Review: Andrea Rodricks

**Banco de Gaia**  
**Farewell Ferengistan**



Toby Marks, a.k.a. Banco de Gaia, doesn't make dance music. He also doesn't really make atmospheric music, either. It's kind of somewhere in between—a heavy layering of what sounds like dozens of instruments at times, visiting world music themes and anchored on ideas that deal with world issues. There are vocals, but they're spoken more than sung, always in a foreign language and kept in the background. Listen to this on headphones. All day. From Six Degrees (www.sixdegreesrecords.com). —Review: L.S.W.

**Various/Mixed by Simon Dunmore**  
**Defected in the House: Elvissa 2006**

Summertime! I could go all out discussing the merits of these remixes versus both contemporary house and the house of years past, but my most accurate analysis of this three-disc collection is "summertime." This is the

chain of Jesus freaks" (on "Mondo di Corpo"), facing danger head on ("The Corpse"), or lashing out at a registered sex offender ("R So"), they do it with a combination of detachment and irresistible beats, a longstanding new-wave tradition. Not only is "Slut Buffet" an infectious dance confection, it also calls it like it is in this phase of the ongoing queer sexual revolution.

Gregg Shapiro is a past recipient of the annual OutMusic award that recognizes contributions by non-musicians in furthering the work of GLBT performers.



kind of record you put on the stereo on a Saturday afternoon when the sun is still shining bright, haul the speakers out onto your back patio and wait for your invited guests to turn up and drink down all of your alcohol. Standouts: Joi Caldwell and the already brilliant Moloko are given new life through remixes by Defected's Simon Dunmore. From Defected (www.defected.com).

—Review: L.S.W.

**Family Artist Series**  
**Marlo Thomas and Friends • Johnny Cash**



Amid its outstanding collections for the kids, Arista's Legacy's Family Artist Series has tapped a couple of classics for re-release. *Free to Be . . . You and Me*, by Marlo Thomas and Friends, won all kinds of awards when it was released in 1972, and at that time was considered a bit seditious by the old school Romper Room set. Alan Alda, Diana Ross, Mel Brooks, Tom Smothers, and other subversives are part of its stellar lineup. • Next, the Man in Black not only walks the line but also crosses it with his 1975 collection of kids' songs and sing-alongs (*The Johnny Cash Children's Album*). With the exception of a track or two (including "Old Shep," the tune a young Elvis Presley chose as his debut public performance), Cash wrote all the songs for his own offspring. From Legacy (www.legacyrecordings.com). —Review: N.F.

**India Arie**  
**Testimony: Vol. 1, Life & Relationships**



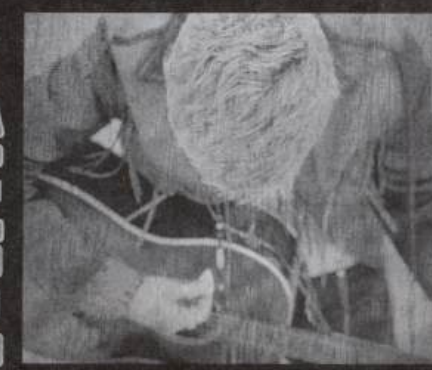
Grammy-nominated folksy soul singer/songwriter India Arie uses hypnotic rhythms to sing about love, faith, music, life, and inner strength. India's resonant voice and soulful pursuit has led to an album of personal and intimate expression. The first single "I Am Not My Hair" is a remix of her work by other artists. This single includes collaborations with Akon, Swizz Beats, and Jazze Pha. Her songs tell stories that aim to make us think and react. From Universal Music Group (www.universalmusicgroup.com) More: (www.indiaarie.com). —Review: A.R.

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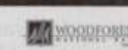


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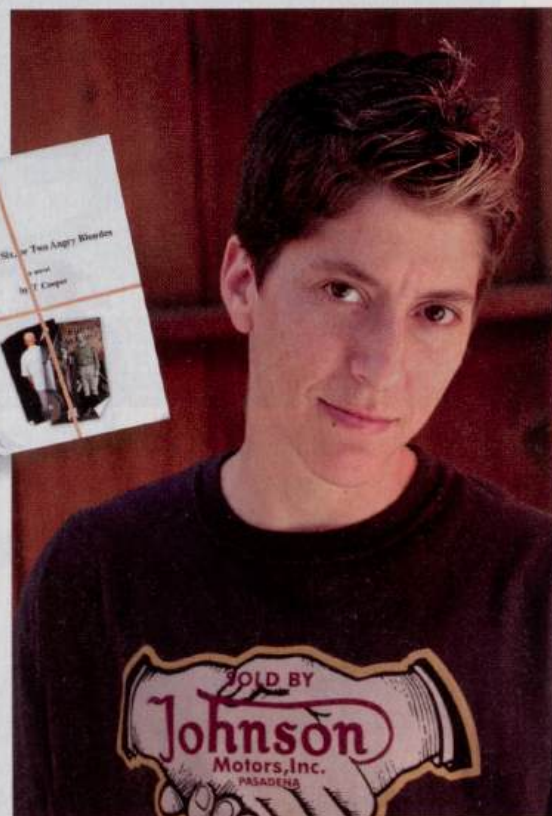
# TO A T

Queer writer T Cooper publishes an extraordinary new family saga

You've probably never met a family like the Lipshitz clan. After surviving one of the most brutal pogroms imaginable in Russia, they embark on a new life in America. While at Ellis Island, on a stopover before their final destination in Texas, the family's youngest son, the remarkably blond-haired and blue-eyed Reuven, disappears in all the tumult. What follows is a family portrait so extraordinary and moving that it is bound to leave readers changed. It is to author T Cooper's credit that the characters in *Lipshitz Six, or Two Angry Blondes* (Dutton), including mother Esther, father Hersh, and homosexual son Ben, come to such vivid and memorable life. I spoke to the author shortly before the publication of this book, which is her second novel.

**Gregg Shapiro:** *Lipshitz* has an epic quality in terms of its scope. It's got a family tree, it spans nearly a hundred years, it has a variety of well-developed characters. What was it like approaching a project of this expanse?

**T Cooper:** It was exhausting in a way. It was one of these things where once it got going you'd think you were going the right way in one direction, and, all of a sudden, a whole other world would open up, and it was like "Oh my God, I have all that work to do now, too." It took a lot of years of research for me to just do some of the basic historical research



valued the inclusion of Ben, the gay brother. The scenes with him as a young man in New York were just incredible. What was it like writing about a character such as Ben during the time in which he lived, which was long before you or I was born?

I have to admit that the George Chauncey book, *Gay New York*, definitely helped. Even from the '60s until now, we have no idea what it was like to be remotely different from the norm. I felt like that book was a nice jumping off point to be able to feel what it was like on the level of the streets, how people were able to get connections and get off. It was such a different process from today. It was another one of those things where I did a little bit of research but didn't limit myself to the research—just used it as a starting point and thought about it, let it sit.

Ben was originally a bigger character and there were a bunch of study scenes I wrote for him. Some of them didn't end up in the book while others did, but those really helped. Like sailors were a huge part of gay culture back then, and there were a lot of times where he met a sailor, and there was a lot of danger involved, because the people who were identified as fairies were obviously quite in danger all the time, and there were a couple of scenes where the fleet would come in and you'd go down to the Battery in New York to meet a sailor hoping you wouldn't get the shit beaten out of you or robbed.

I did a lot of little things like that where even if they didn't end up in the book, I think they helped enrich the character. I knew those things happened for him, but I felt like the Lindbergh stuff during the Lindbergh parade and also the childhood erotic play with the children of his age... I felt like that stuff was imbued by the things I knew about him but didn't necessarily put in the book.

**That's interesting, because the stuff that happened when he was a boy with the other boy he had a crush on, that felt more universal.**

I wanted it to feel universal. So often literature is ghettoized. It's like "I can't write →

you need to do to feel comfortable writing about these worlds that are so different from ours. It was pretty exhausting, but it was also really fun because, as I said, I feel like I learned so much.

**One of the characters I loved—and maybe it's because I'm a gay man—but I really**

## ReadOut Shorts

### The Testosterone Files

Max Wolf Valerio

Seal Press (www.sealpress.com)



*The Testosterone Files: My Hormonal & Social Transformation* documents the journey from Anita to Max, detailing all of the physical, emotional, and life changes that occur when the author begins regular testosterone injections. Proving that anatomy may not be destiny, but physiology most certainly is, this highly personal account is a great read for anyone trying to understand what gender really means. —Review: Angel Curtis

### The Passion of Mary Magdalen

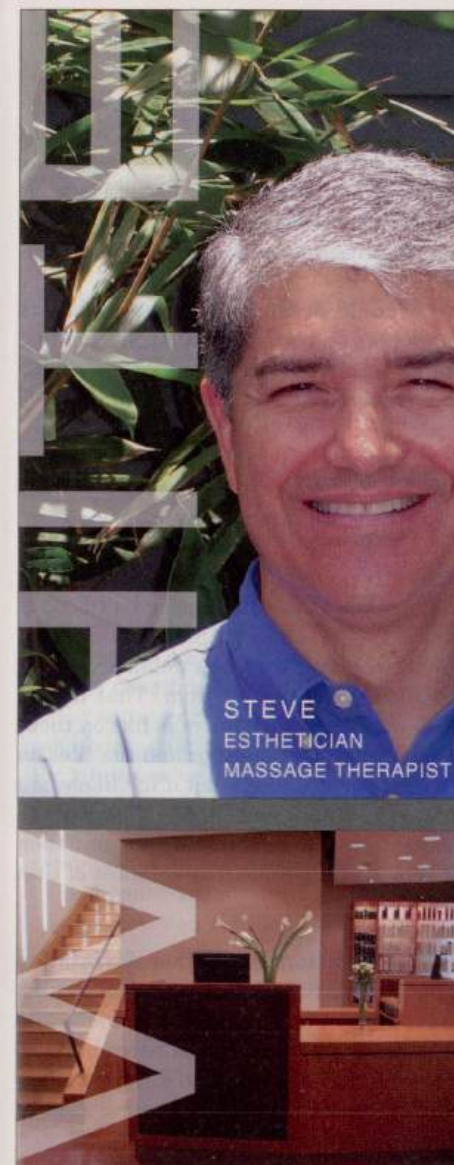
Elizabeth Cunningham

Monkfish Book Publishing Company

(www.monkfishpublishing.com)



Sure to offend those with a conventional view of Mary Magdalen and Jesus, sure to enrage those who want the gospel to be entirely heterosexual, and sure to please those who want another view of the very human people involved in that most familiar drama, this powerful, wonderful, being-told-just-to-you story is really an unsanitized fifth gospel. Don't miss this one. —Review: A.C. ■



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## ReadOut

continued from page 96

about this unless I am this." That's a dangerous place to go with art. For me, I like that universal feeling of confused sexuality or fighting or that play that's obviously a little bit erotically charged as well, especially for boys that are physically beating each other up.

**The graphic detail of the pogroms was compelling and heartbreaking. Were those stories from your own family's history or from research or was it a combination?**

It was kind of a combination. In my family, it was this quiet thing that was passed down but never talked about, yet you knew it was there, this kind of unspoken violence. But some of the things I did have to go back and research, like the city of Kishinev. That pogrom really did happen on the days around Easter, and I got a lot of that from a scholarly book that was published about the anatomy of that pogrom. That helped me to really know what it was like on those streets, what the buildings and the tiles on the roofs smelled like, what it felt like when all the Christians were heading toward the central square to celebrate Easter, and then for this to erupt—that's where most of that came from.

**It's just devastating. Another devastating aspect of the book was the loss of a child, Reuven—that feeling of helplessness and hopelessness. There are different parts of the book that will speak to different readers, but I think that that's again a kind of universal thing.**

That is the number-one autobiographical seed in the book. My grandmother's brother, when they came through Ellis Island, was just lost. No one in the family has even talked about what happened to him. Even my grandmother's kids, my mother and her generation, you ask them "What happened?" and they're like "I don't know." And you say, "But they landed and he was there, and then he was gone. What happened? Did he die? Was he stolen?" [And they respond] "I don't know."

It's so crazy that that can happen, but with all the hysteria, all the policing and prejudice that was going on at Ellis Island, it wasn't taken the same way as being at Disneyland and losing a child as it is these days. For me that was such a compelling thing, though, just in my family alone that nobody knows to this day. It's not that they don't care. It's just this kind of unspoken pain of "Well, maybe that's just what happens. Maybe you lose a kid. Maybe the rest of us live, but we lost that one and he was sacrificed." For me that was the jumping

off point that made me want to write the entire book in the first place because, to me, what *would* happen to that kid? If he was a blond-haired, blue-eyed non-Jewish-looking kid, what would have happened to him? What would the mom's psychotic dream for him be? And that's why the Lindbergh stuff comes in.

**The development seems natural because she's struggling with so much because, of course, she can't imagine him dead, so she imagines him in another life.**

That would be her dream come true. It's like "If he had to become Charles Lindbergh, then it's not so bad that I had to sacrifice him."

**The book shifts gears three quarters of the way through. Was this how you envisioned it all along? Or is the experience of the T Cooper in the book, writing the family story, actually your own story and how the book actually developed?**

I knew setting out that I had a very specific idea about what book I wanted to write. I didn't know what it was going to be, but I knew the *kind* of book, I knew the feeling. For me I knew there had to be some more immediate, vital, and current connection to this history. I don't think this book could have just existed for me as either just the first part or just the second part. Like if the second part went on and was a novel about that one character alone, for me that's all enriched and that exists because of the history that comes before it. Similarly, if I had just stopped the story at the beginning of the war there about the actual Lipshitzes in Texas, I felt like I wanted the extra arc of "Why does this matter?" and literally tracing the bloodline and the idea of that lost child like "Why? Wherefore? Where does it end up? What was it all for?" I knew that while I didn't know at the start what form it would take, I knew there needed to be that full arc into the present.

**Another present aspect of the story is that T is a hip-hop artist, a musical form that hasn't entirely been welcoming to Jews or queer people, although there are exceptions. There's the Beastie Boys, the members of Northern State, there's a guy named Soce, the Elemental Wizard, who is both Jewish and gay and a hip-hop artist. Can you say something about that chosen field?**

I didn't want anything to be perfectly easy or perfectly fitting, so the way that Lindbergh kind of sours, like he is this American ideal of whiteness, but he sours because of all the isolationist speaking and all of his public anti-Semitism. I felt like this objectionable blond icon in Eminem was also dirtied →

## IN MEMORIAM

### Mary Gilbert Sieber

1931-2006



Mary Gilbert Sieber was born January 16, 1931, in Chicago, to Martha and Riley Gilbert, and passed away June 19, 2006, in Houston.

Growing up primarily in New Orleans, Mary graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Newcomb College of Tulane in 1952 with a degree in English literature. She spent a year as a Fulbright scholar in England where she continued her study of literature and organ music.

Mary later moved to New York City to enter publishing, working at Harper & Brothers and McGraw-Hill, and singing in the Church of the Ascension choir.

There she met and married John Sieber. Together they moved to Houston in 1957, where she joined the choir at Christ Church Cathedral, a joyous alliance she continued to the end of her life.

Mary worked as an editor and research librarian at Exxon from 1979 to 1994, one of her many editing jobs. Editing was her obsession, inspiring Mary to lend her talents to the League of Women Voters newsletter, Exxon technical reports, *The Women's Journal* at Brigid's Place, *OutSmart*, numerous novels, poems, and dissertations, as well as books on human sexuality.



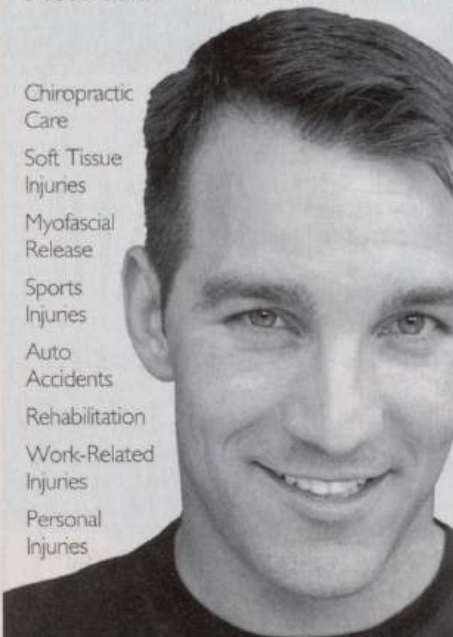
"Words and church music have been the leitmotifs of my life," Mary wrote. Her other passions included women's issues, dark chocolate, language, weather, her grandchildren, reference books, beachcombing, snow, *The New Yorker*, blue, llamas, *La Traviata*, murder mysteries, and angels.

Mary is survived by John Sieber, her husband of 50 years; daughter, Ann Walton Sieber, former *OutSmart* editor and web content manager; son, Jack, of Boston; and grandchildren, Sarah and Henry. She was preceded in death by her twin, Esther Walton Gilbert Duncan.

A celebration of Mary Gilbert Sieber's life was held at Christ Church Cathedral in Houston on June 24, 2006. Memorials may be made in her name to Brigid's Place, Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas Ave., Houston, TX 77002.

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## ReadOut

continued from page 99

or complicated in that way, too. I like that parallel that it's not just a simple thing to cling onto. That obsession the mother has with Lindbergh is, again, "What happened 50 years later with this last living Lipshitz? How is that person doing his own obsession? How is he dealing with all these years of violence and turmoil?" It's ended up literally in him and with him, so his acting out of that violence and pop-culture obsession through Eminem was parallel to the mother's doing it with Lindbergh.

I was instantly caught up in the book and when I would tell people about it, after having only read a few chapters, I would say that the book had a feel to it similar to Jeffrey Eugenides's *Middlesex*, particularly in regards to the immigrant story. But it wasn't until almost the very end where the gender issues came into clearer focus that it made sense. Have you read *Middlesex*, and do you think it's a fair comparison?

I've definitely heard that before. I've read *Middlesex*, and I liked it a lot. I think that because this book has that epic sweep of just under a hundred years and four generations of a family, I think that it's going to be similar in sweep to a lot of books like that. *Middlesex* is one in recent memory. I didn't consciously shape it in the image of *Middlesex*, but I'd definitely say that yeah, there are certain books that I think can enrich each other when read side by side, and I think that book could be one in a way. I didn't want gender to be the story in my book the way it was the story in *Middlesex*.

It's definitely not. It comes so close to the end that it isn't really an issue.

That's the point. I mean, it's one little extra level of performance and layer that deepens this character. In a way, for me in this book, while gender is front-and-center in *Middlesex*, this is more about the violence and dealing with what happens after fleeing something like that and how it inoculates you for the future and how that inoculation gets passed down through generations as well. That position of the angry blond, I mean, these guys are icons and yet there's something else there that's just possibly objectionable, and maybe brilliant.

ON THE WEB: Read more of this interview at [www.outsmartmagazine.com](http://www.outsmartmagazine.com).

Gregg Shapiro also wrote "Groove Out" in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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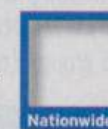
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# BIG TOUGH WOMAN

*Sally remembers her first lesbian mentor*

Momma cow glowered at me. Her new calf lay on his side, spindly legs pedaling for traction. While Trudy held the rope taut, I was to climb onto the little bull's belly and stretch a rubber ring over his scrotum. My tool was a pliers-like contraption aptly called the Elastrator. I had seen Trudy perform the chore many times and was eager to prove myself up to the task. The cow, having consented to none of this and impatient with my novice fumbling, heaved back her wrecking ball of a head and sent me flying.

Trudy laughed, dropped the lasso, and helped me up. She untied the calf and patted his rump. Momma took over, nosing her still-intact son out of harm's way.

Trudy was my first lesbian mentor. Tough and independent, she could rope cattle like a real rancher, which she was. A young college

kid 30 years her junior, I was newly out and eager to learn the lesbian ropes, so to speak. I had recently moved into a small cabin on Trudy's 200-acre Oregon property where I would earn my keep as a ranch hand and

**She and a few like-minded women piled in and drove to the countryside where they strolled off two by two—their intentions understood.**

boost my budding dyke credentials.

I brushed myself off, glad not to have landed in anything worse than dust, a lucky break on a free-range cattle ranch. Trudy leaned against the side of the barn, reached into her jacket pocket and pulled out her briar pipe. She tipped back the brim of her

cowboy hat—the only restraint on her wispy, gray-blond hair—and dipped the pipe into her tobacco pouch.

I untangled the rope and studied Trudy's gentle green eyes and weather-lined face.

She had to be disappointed in me. She flicked her lighter open and held the flame to the bowl. Trudy smoked when she was sizing things up. She never made a decision without a few tokes on that pipe. She sucked at the stem with soft, kissing sips, and rested a booted foot on a hay bale. I coiled the rope the way she had showed

me, wondering if my ambitions would ever pan out. "You'll get the hang of it," she said. "Takes a few tries."

Trudy was in the life years before the Stonewall riots birthed gay liberation. She served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, aware of her attraction to women and

the need to keep it concealed. Nylon was rationed in those days, so to comply with the dress code, military women used eye liner to simulate stocking seams. The way Trudy tells it, gals came from all over the base for the sheer pleasure of her steady hand drawing the thin line up the backs of their bare legs.

To get away from the barracks, Trudy arranged access to a Jeep. She and a few like-minded women piled in and drove to the countryside where they strolled off two by two—their intentions understood. After the designated time, the couples met at the Jeep and drove back to the base. Trudy says those outings were common practice, but the women never talked about it. When the war was over, they all returned to civilian life and married men.

Thirty years and four husbands later, Trudy came out for good. Our paths crossed when I was only 25 and still shaking off my heterosexual upbringing. The other young dykes I knew joined a women's softball team, so I signed up too. Trudy was the coach and the epitome of everything I wanted to be—bold, secure, self-reliant.

"Ode to a Gym Teacher" was big on the women's music scene at the time, and I biked to softball practice singing *She was a big tough woman, the first to come along, to show me being female meant you still could be strong*. I pumped those pedals and glowed with hot love for my sure-talking, cowboy-booted, pipe-smoking Trudy.

Still tender from a recent breakup, Trudy had no interest in romance, especially with an overly eager youngster like me. But I was persistent and she needed a ranch hand.

During the two years I lived with Trudy, she taught me how to use a chain saw, drive a tractor, and string barbed wire. I learned to face challenges.

Eventually, my attempts at calf castration succeeded. Trudy roped him, I hustled to straddle his underside, slipped the band into place and set the little guy loose before Momma cow noticed the commotion.

I slid the Elastrator into the back pocket of my overalls. Trudy leaned against the barn and tipped back her hat. She pulled out her pouch, packed and lit her pipe. Puffs of gray smoke floated skyward and disappeared over the hayfield.

I coiled the rope and slung it over my shoulder. Trudy flashed me a smile and click-closed her lighter. "You done real good."

I certainly did.

*Sally Sheklow received both first- and second-place honors in the magazine column category in the 2005 Houston Press Club Lone Star Awards. She contributes a regular segment, "That Time of the Month," to the Air America radio affiliate in Eugene, Oregon.*



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# Calendar of Events

Deadline for OutSmart's August issue is 5 p.m., Monday, July 10.

## JULY

**Daily (Mon.-Fri.)**

**HIV Testing.** HCHD Thomas Street Clinic is offering HIV testing free to the public, 9 am-1 pm. There is no need to establish eligibility ("gold-card"), no donation will be asked of the person seeking testing, and the test is free. Thomas Street Clinic, 2015 Thomas, 713/873-4157 or 713/873-4026.

**Daily (Sun.-Fri.)**

**HIV Testing.** The Montrose Clinic offers free confidential HIV testing at these locations: **Decades**, 1205 Richmond, 713/521-2224, Mon. 6-10pm (Dennis); **EJ's**, 2517 Ralph, 713/527-9071, Wed. & Fri. 10pm-1am (Rhonda & Lourdes); **Mary's, Naturally**, 1022 Westheimer, 713/527-9669, Wed. 4-8pm (Jack); **Midtown Spa**, 3100 Fannin, 713/522-2379, Tues. 9pm-1am (Carlos), Wed. 10pm-1am (Juan), Fri. 10pm-1am (Quincy); **Ripcord**, 715 Fairview, 713/521-2792, Wed. 9pm-12am (Matthew); **Inergy/Mango Lounge**, 5750 Chimney Rock, 713/660-7310, Mon. 9pm-12am (Carlos); **1415 Bar & Grill**, 1415 California,

713/522-7066, Thurs. 9pm-12am (Carlos); **611 Hyde Park Pub**, 611 Hyde Park, 713/526-7070, Tues. 3-7pm & Sun. 2-6pm (Matthew); **All Star News and Video Emporium**, 3415 Katy Freeway & Studewood, 713/869-7878, Mon. & Thurs. 4-8pm (Jack); **Brazos River Bottom**, 2400 Brazos, 713/528-9192, Thurs. 8pm-12am (Matthew); **Cousin's**, 817 Fairview, 713/528-9204, Thurs. 8pm-12am (Jack); **Club Houston**, 2205 Fannin, 713/659-4998, Tues. 8pm-12am (Dennis). For more info: 713/830-3000.

**Daily (Sun.-Fri.)**

**HIV Testing.** Planned Parenthood offers free anonymous or confidential testing at clinic locations throughout the area. To speak with an HIV counselor: 1-800-230-PLAN, Dickinson: 281/337-7725, Fannin: 713/831-6543, FM1960: 281/587-8081, Greenspoint: 281/445-4553, Huntsville: 936/295-6396, Lufkin: 936/634-8446 x223, Rosenberg: 281/342-3950, Stafford: 281/494-9848.

**Weekly (Fridays)**

**Talk Nerdy to Me Tonight.** Houston's so cool, our museums double as nightclubs. With "Mixers, Elixirs, and

IMAX," you can dance and drink under the majesty of dinosaurs. Dinner and a movie? Try hors d'oeuvres and IMAX instead. Every week brings a live DJ from Club Opus and a different style of live music, from Latin to R&B to '80s and Beatles tribute bands. Through Aug. 25, 6-10 pm, in the Grand Hall of the Museum of Natural Science. Cash bar. Tickets for the event are \$10 for museum members, \$12 per person, and include a cash bar and an IMAX ticket. Identification is required. Info and schedule of bands: www.hmns.org or 713/639-4629. Spanish: 713/ 639-4603.

**Weekly (Saturdays)**

**Saving Animals** partners with the City of Houston to save loving, adoptable animals from the pound and find them permanent homes. Adoptions take place at Northwest Mall every Saturday from 10:30-4:30 near entrance B. Information or to volunteer: 713/527-4490 or www.savinganimals.org.

**Monthly (Tuesdays)**

**The Houston SPCA Pet Loss Support Group** provides a professionally facilitated, supportive, and safe environ-

**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:** calendar@outsmartmagazine.com. **NO LISTINGS CAN BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—MON., JULY 10.**

ment for people to grieve the loss of a beloved companion. Free. First Tuesday of the month, 7 pm, at the Houston SPCA, 900 Portway Dr. Info: 713/869-7722, ext. 127, or www.houstonspca.org.

**Monthly (Wednesdays)**

**HIV Empowerment Social Group.** Nelson Vergel of salvagetherapies.org discusses new HIV treatments, methods of avoiding viral monotherapy, maximizing virus control, new research studies in Houston, and how to participate in them. RSVP to be included in the free dinner: michaeljemigan@roche.com, July 12 and Sept. 13 at Lovett Inn.

## OUT, OUT, AND AWAY!

Not a Superhero Cartoon, The Underdogs brings Jen Foster to Houston

Raised in Texas, Jen Foster first turned on to music through her two older brothers who played guitar in bands of their own. They indoctrinated her to the art, playing and listening to the music of bands that predated her: The Beatles, the Stones, Zepp. Like any younger sibling, she wanted to emulate her brothers. School talent shows and competitions were her first testing ground, building her thirst for more of that rush that accompanies any strong live set. Goaded by the attention and level of cool those initial gigs afforded her, Foster continued her hands-on education in music and its business while attending Whittier College in L.A. while playing clubs and coffee houses. • Her debut album, *Everybody's Girl*, included the track, "She," a same-sex love song that landed her awards both straight and LGBT, garnered Foster adoration from the community and respect from the industry as a singer/songwriter who bares her heart without abandon. —Eric A.T. Dieckman



Out lesbian singer/songwriter Jen Foster plays Chances one night only

**The Who:** Jen Foster

**The What:** One helluva live show in support of Foster's sophomore release, *The Underdogs*

**The Where:** Chances, 1100 Westheimer **The When:** Saturday, July 8, 10 p.m.

**The Wherewithal:** Price TBD, 713/523-7217, www.chancesbar.com, www.afterellen.com (look for her blog there), www.jenfoster.com

COURTESY JEN FOSTER

**4 (Tues.)**

**Fireworks 'n' Skeeter Spray.** The Houston Symphony presents Summer Symphony Nights, an outdoor Independence Day salute ending with a fireworks display. Free. 8:30 pm at Miller Outdoor Theatre, Hermann Park. Info/covered seating reservations: 713/284-8350 or www.milleroutdoortheatre.com.

**7 (Fri.)**

**Sippora's Last Stand.** Sippora Gallery closes its doors forever as of August 1. But first, one final exhibition and party, entitled Kaleidoscope, complete with nude body-painted models. 6-9 pm at Sippora, 234 West Gray. Information: 713/520-1085 or www.sipporacom.

**8 (Sat.)**

**Aye Matey!** The Pirates Pillage & Plunder Party is all about seizing and giving up booty. Arr! At Undercurrent Bar & Dance Club, 2409 Market St. (at 25th), Galveston. Info: 409/750-8571, www.undercurrentgalveston.com.

**8 (Sat.)**

**Mix and Mingle at the MFA.** The live band Chromeo headlines this mad mixer, with their unique disco party funk sound. Get yer groove on while touring the Gee's Bend exhibition. Have at the cash bar and complimentary Starbucks bevs. All that art and drinking giving you the munchies? Café Express stays open during (p)arty time. Free for members, \$10 donation for non-members, or \$5 for seniors/students. Shows are second Saturdays from through August from 8 pm-midnight. At the Museum of Fine Arts, Audrey Jones Beck Building, 5601 Main Street. Info: www.mfah.org/mixedmedia.

**8 (Sat.)**

**The German State Railway System During the Holocaust.** In this public lecture, Alfred Gottwaldt, senior curator for railways at the German Museum of Technology and Transportation in Berlin, discusses the deportations to the East from 1941 to 1945. 7 pm at Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. Information: www.hmh.org or 713/942-8000.

**13 (Thurs.)**

**A Drag of an Auction.** This year, the annual summer D-Werx auction is officiated by world-famous Cuban drag queen Venezuela Maria Concepcion, de los Angeles Valdez Valejo Gonzales and her trusty sidekick Ms. Lucy O'Ball. \$100 in advance, \$125 the night of the event. Cocktails from 6-7 pm; auction from 7-9 pm, at Diverse-Works, 1117 East Fwy off Main at Naylor. Information: 713/223-8346 or www.diverseworks.org.

**14-15 (Fri.-Sat.)**

**Scepters and Celebs.** Friday is the Miss Gay Galveston America Pageant. Who will win the crown? Saturday brings on the Evening with the Stars Party. Dress as your fave celebrity to win cash prizes. At Undercurrent Bar & Dance Club, 2409 Market Street (at 25th), Galveston. Info: 409/750-8571 or www.undercurrentgalveston.com. Also: www.missgaytexasamerica.com.

**14-23 (Fri.-Sun.)**

**Ya Can't Top the Big Top.** The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus presents the 135th edition of The Greatest Show on Earth. \$12-\$125. Tickets and info: 713/629-3700, 832/667-1400, www.Ringling.com, or www.ticketmaster.com.

**15 (Sat.)**

**Ante Up!** The Krewe of Olympus hosts a casino night, "L'Hotel de Monte Carlo." Legal gaming (blackjack, craps, and roulette) doubles down with hors d'oeuvres, cash bar, silent auction, raffle, and a surprise or two. Proceeds benefit AIDS Foundation Houston-Camp Hope, The Lesbian Health Initiative, and PWA Holiday Charities. \$20 admission includes funny money for gambling, food, and first drink. 7-10:30 pm at L'Alliance Francaise, The French Alliance, 427 Lovett. Info: www.mardigrastexas.com.

**15 (Sat.)**

**School of Hard Yucks.** The Memorial ComedySportz High School League team participates in a professional



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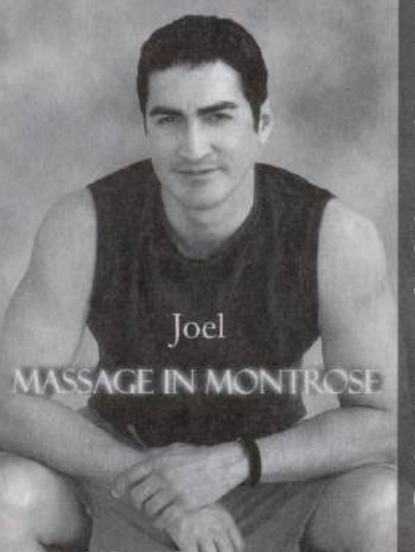
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ComedySportz match as part of their reward for being named Champion of the League this year. \$14. 8 pm at the ComedySportz Arena, 901 Town & Country Blvd. (at I-10 West and the Beltway). Reservations and info: 713-868-1444.

**20 (Thurs.)**

**The Role of Jewish Partisans and the Resistance During the Holocaust.** Dr. Michael Berenbaum discusses how Jewish escapees became partisans, responsible for blowing up thousands of armored convoys and thwarting the Nazi war machine in countless ways. 7 pm at Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. Information: www.hmh.org or 713/942-8000.

**21 (Fri.)**

**Double Down!** Practice your game face. The Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce hosts Poker Night with EPAH. Information and location: 713/523-7576 or www.TheChamberHouston.org.

**22 (Sat.)**

**Are They Swollen, Too?** The Black & Blue Ball(s) Party—a leather/Levi party—invites leather lads to don their full attire, and go balls to the walls in denim, leather, and latex. At Undercurrent Bar & Dance Club, 2409 Market Street (at 25th), Galveston. Info: 409/750-8571 or www.undercurrentgalveston.com.

**25 (Tues.)**

**I'm Dreaming of a Sultry Christmas?** What could possibly be more Yuletide than a Christmas in July Party at a balmy beach? At Undercurrent Bar & Dance Club, 2409 Market Street (at 25th), Galveston. Info: 409/750-8571 or www.undercurrentgalveston.com.

**28 & 29 (Fri. & Sat.)**

**Guys Gone Wild.** All that heat and humidity getting to ya? Maybe some wet T-shirt contests and amateur strip-offs will cool you off. Nah, that'll only make things hotter, but why complain? At Undercurrent Bar & Dance Club, 2409 Market Street (at 25th), Galveston. Info: 409/750-8571 or www.undercurrentgalveston.com.

## PLANNING AHEAD

**AUGUST**

**August 11 & 12 (Fri. & Sat.)**

**Bering & Friends**, a musical theater troupe, moves to the Alley for their lucky 13th presentation, *Once Upon a Time: Fairy Tales with a Grown-up Twist!* The troupe assists Bering Support Network (BSN), a network of support groups and mental health services serving the GLBT community. 8 pm at the Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. Info/tickets/listings for silent auction: 713/526-1018; www.beringandfriends.org; or www.beringsupportnetwork.org.

## PERFORMING ARTS

◆ **1776.** In history books, the members of the First Continental Congress are usually depicted as farsighted, loyal, and selfless statesmen. In this patriotic musical, they are revealed as human beings, with their bumbungs, timidities, quirks, and spiky arguments. \$25, \$20 for students/seniors. Through Aug. 5 at east end theatre company, 2001 Post Office St., Galveston. Info/reservations/showtimes: 409/762-3556, 877/762-3556, or visit www.islandetc.org.

◆ **Black Comedy.** Cleverly utilizing a reversal of light and dark as plot devices, Peter Schaffer's comedy forces its characters to feel their way around a pitch-black room. To avoid audience confusion (or to further it for some), the stage is actually lit so the audience can see. Hmm, that's a little reminiscent of a certain German restaurant run in total darkness, with blind wait staff. (You have to guess what they're feeding you.) Tickets start at \$19. July 21–Aug. 6 at the Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. Reservations: 713/228-8421 or www.alleytheatre.org.

## BROOKLYN THE MUSICAL

The music producer/director/  
composer from *The Rosie  
O'Donnell Show* lends a hand  
to a Houston premiere



Rosie's John McDaniel

Grammy and Emmy Award-winning John McDaniel, who is openly gay, provides music supervision, arrangements, and orchestrations for this whimsical story with a spectacular cast. With a mix of pop and soul, a band of street-corner singers (including Tony Award-winner Cleavant Derricks) tell a fanciful sidewalk fairy tale about a young girl named Brooklyn (*American Idol*'s Diana DeGarmo) who searches for fame and the father she never knew. Directed by openly gay, Tony Award-nominee Jeff Calhoun and co-starring Melba Moore as Paradise.

—Eric A.T. Dieckman

**The Who: Brooklyn The Musical**  
**The When:** July 18–23, 8:15 p.m.  
**The Where:** Miller Outdoor Theatre,  
100 Concert Drive  
**The Wherewithal:** Free.  
713/558-TUTS (8887) or www.tuts.com

◆ **The Great American Trailer Park Musical.** Finally! A musical you can enjoy while washing down a micro-wavable pot pie with a Pabst Blue Ribbon. July 12–Sept. 3 at Stages Theatre, 3201 Allen Pkwy. Reservations: 713/527-0220 or www.stagetheatre.com.

◆ **Hotter Than Houston.** In this kooky comedy romp, Stan, a Californian who has lived life to excess, dies in a car wreck in 1977. When he arrives at the pearly gates, St. Peter can't decide whether to send him to heaven or hell—so he sends him to Houston.

It's a nostalgic trip for Houstonians, and indoctrination for newcomers. \$20. Through Sept. 2 at Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt. Reservations: 713/522-7722 or www.radiomusictheatre.com.

◆ **Incorruptible.** The theft of a saint's relics leaves the Brothers of the Abbey of Saint Foy at their wits' end. The monastery loses hope until a shifty one-eyed minstrel teaches them an outrageous new way to pay old debts. Through Aug. 5 at the Company OnStage, 536 Westbury Square. Tickets: 713/726-1219 or www.companyonstage.org.

◆ **KBBJ: All Access, All the Time.** Unable to find jobs within their degrees, six individuals seek satisfaction working for a public radio station. \$10, \$8 for students and seniors. Through July 8, 8 pm, at Midtown Arts Center, 1423 Holman @ LaBranch. Info: www.fanfactory.org.

◆ **Wait Until Dark.** In Frederick Knott's (*Dial M for Murder*) mystery thriller, Sam Henderson agrees to deliver a doll to a sick child, unaware of the secret contents of the toy. When some shady men come a-knockin' for the doll, they are met at the door by Sam's wife, Suzy, a blind woman who cannot see nor be shaken by their menacing demeanor. Tickets start at \$19. Through July 16 at the Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. Reservations: 713/228-8421 or www.alleytheatre.org.

## PERFORMING ARTS

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◆ **Cinderella.** Everyone knows the story. See it live. \$7. July 1–Aug. 5 at the Company OnStage, 536 Westbury Square. Tickets and info: 713/726-1219 or www.companyonstage.org.

◆ **The Lion King.** Disney's story of the circle of life, as told through noble Simba, sings and dances its way to the big stage. \$25.25–\$127.25. July 6–Aug. 13 at the Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. Show times/reservations: 713/629-3700, www.BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com.

## RADIO

◆ **After Hours.** Sunday mornings, 1–4 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-5738.

◆ **Queer Voices.** Mondays, 8–10 pm. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-4000.

◆ **Reach Out in the Darkness.** Houston's only transgender radio host and her partner present selected music from the '60s, played like it was in the '60s, exclusively from vinyl pressings. Every Wednesday morning, 3–6 am, KPFT Pacifica radio (90.1 FM).

## ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

◆ **Annual Spring Exhibition.** Works by students attending the Glassell Junior School of Art are presented at this annual exhibition. Over 200 works created by students age 4 to 18 include painting, sculpture, fashion design, and ceramics. Also on view will be art from the school's extensive outreach programs that serve hospitalized children and children with special needs. Through July 31 in the Norma R. Ory Gallery at the Junior School, 5100 Montrose Blvd. Information: 713/639-7700.

◆ **Body Worlds 3: The Anatomical Exhibition of Real Human Bodies.** You've seen the curious, creepy billboards and wondered, "What the Hell?" Now's your chance to find out and marvel at the wonder of Dr. Gunther von Hagens' works of plastination, wherein bodies are perfectly preserved after death. According to Doctor Death, this particular exhibit takes this amalgam of art, science, anatomy, and the macabre to its greatest heights yet. \$13–\$22. Through Sept. 4 at the



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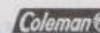


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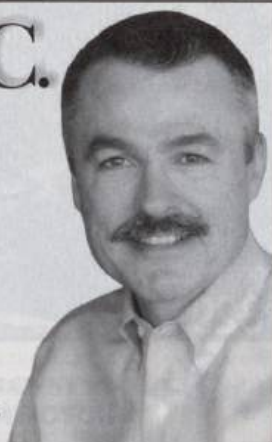
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Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. Info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org. Información en español: 713/469-4603.

◆ **Burke Baker Planetarium.** So much is going on this summer there. Here's an overview. Force 5 explores the forces that make hurricanes and other storms so powerful. Come early to see a mini-movie of last year's 27 named storms in action across the Planetarium's dome and take home a CD of hurricane facts. Through Nov. 2. *Secret of the Cardboard Rocket* invites kids to go on an exhilarating adventure through the solar system. Through Dec. 31. *Pink Floyd: Dark Side of the Moon* is for older kids, possibly stricken with an inexplicable case of the munchies. More than a laser show, this is a full-dome computer animation, dude. Through Sept. 4. *Rock Hall of Fame* includes hits from Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, U2, AC/DC, Pink Floyd, and many more set lights and action covering the whole sky. Through Sept. 4. \$6 for adults; \$4 for children (3-11), students, and seniors. Tickets/Information: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org. Información en Español: 713/639-4603.

◆ **Chance Encounters: The Formation of the de Menils' African Collection.** Since the Menil Collection's opening in '87, only a small component of the de Menil family's important collection of African art has been on display. Until now. Through Sept. 10 at the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. Info: 713/525-9400 or www.menil.org.

◆ **Courbet and the Modern Landscape.** The landscape paintings of 19th-century French artist Gustave Courbet are intense, dramatic, and radically innovative. The MFA takes a look at the controversial artist's contribution to landscape painting and its important place in the history of modern painting. Through Sept. 10 at the Museum of Fine Arts' Audrey Jones Beck Building, 5601 Main St. Info: 713/639-7300 or www.mfah.org. en Español: 713/639-7379, TDD/TTY for the hearing impaired: 713/639-7390.

◆ **Frank Stella 1958** tracks Stella's growth by presenting together for the first time 18 previously neglected paintings, a majority of the work he made during the year 1958. During this critical year of rapid growth, Stella moved from exuberant experimentation with monumental size, vivid color, and bold stripes and brushwork to the taut, monochromatic "black paintings" at the year's end, which pioneered works of Minimalism, thereby influencing the course of American art. Through Aug. 20 at the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. Info: 713/525-9400 or www.menil.org.

◆ **The Friedrich Kellner Diaries.** During the 1930s, Friedrich Kellner was an activist in the Social Democratic Party and a vocal opponent of the rising Nazi regime. When the Nazis took power, Kellner began a diary entitled "My Resistance," filling 10 notebooks which he kept in a secret chamber in the back of his dining room cabinet. Shortly before his death in 1968, Kellner gave his notebooks to his American grandson, Scott Kellner, with the hope that his eyewitness account would give coming generations "a weapon against any resurgence of such evil." Through Aug. 13 at the Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. Info: 713/942-8000 or www.hmh.org.

◆ **From the Heart of Texas: Prints by Charles Criner.** An important exhibition of Criner's master prints demonstrate his realist narrations of the African-American existence in East Texas and on the Gulf Coast. Intensely biographical, Criner's images are pulled from childhood memories and his immediate environment. Through October at the Museum of Printing History, 1324 West Clay. Info: 713/522-4652 or www.printing-museum.org.

◆ **Gee's Bend: The Architecture of the Quilt.** Following the great success of *The Quilts of Gee's Bend*, an exhibition of stunningly original works by the women of

Gee's Bend, Alabama, that premiered at the Museum of Fine Arts in 2002, this exhibit examines the resurgence of interest in quilting in the Gee's Bend community and documents the development of key traditional quilt patterns—housetop, courthouse steps, flying geese, and strip quilting—through the presentation of outstanding examples created from the 1930s into the 21st century. Through Sept. 4 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1001 Bissonnet. Info: 713/639-7300 or www.mfah.org (en Español: 713/639-7379).

◆ **George Lorio: Recent Work.** Metaphorical wood sculptures of this Brownsville artist are exhibited. July 15–Aug. 20 at The Galveston Arts Center. Info/directions: 409/763-2403 or www.galvestonartscenter.org.

◆ **Kiki Smith.** This is the first full-scale major museum exhibition of Smith's work over the past 25 years. FYI: The feminist artist once had a print (*Fawn*) featured in an episode of *The L Word* ("Lobsters"), July 15–Sept. 24 at Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. Information: 713/284-8250 or www.camh.org.

◆ **Light My Fire.** New York artist Lisa Hoke makes Rice Gallery's fourth Summer Window installation, on view through the gallery's front glass wall while the gallery remains closed for the summer. Hoke describes the piece as an "intoxication of color." Information: 713/348-6169 or www.ricegallery.org.

◆ **Mary Poppins and Psychonaut.** These two exhibits will occupy the UH gallery during the summer months. The first, named after the children's story, is the work of Swiss artist Urs Fischer, an exploration of the intersection of fantasy and reality. The second is Tam Van Tran's contribution to Blaffer's Special Project Series, a retrospective of Tran's work from 2000–2006. Through Aug. 5 at Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston. Info: 713/743-9528 or www.blaffergallery.org.

◆ **Perspectives 152: Four Artists Four Stories** features recent work by Houston-based artists Michael Bise, Darryl Lauster, Janaki Lennie, and Soody Shanifi, all in their first museum exhibition. Through Sept. 10 at Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. Information: 713/284-8250 or www.camh.org.

◆ **Remembering Ala.** "My life, like my art, has been strongly influenced by my childhood experiences in the Nazi Holocaust," says Miriam Brysk. Her artwork on exhibit was actually inspired by a 2002 trip when she returned for the first time to the ghettos and camps of her childhood. Her photographs are manipulated through a series of processes and strengthened by the addition of other elements of Holocaust history. Free. Through Sunday, Sept. 3, in the Central Gallery at Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. Information: www.hmh.org or 713/942-8000.

◆ **The Royal Tombs of Ur: Ancient Treasures from Modern Iraq.** Jewels, weapons, and objects of grandeur created by this ancient and advanced Mesopotamian civilization are presented alongside compelling evidence of human sacrifice. \$9, \$8 for children 3–11. Through Aug. 13 at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. Info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org. Información en español: 713/469-4603.

◆ **Singular Multiples: The Peter Blum Edition Archive, 1980–1994, Installation III.** The final and largest contribution to this trilogy of graphic arts exhibits closes the largest museum exhibit ever devoted to the graphic arts of the 20th century. July 15–Oct. 15 at the Upper Brown Pavilion of the Museum of Fine Arts' Caroline Weiss Law Building, 1001 Bissonnet. Info: 713/639-7300 or www.mfah.org (en Español: 713/639-7379).

◆ **Shared Vision: Texas Artists Then and Now.** This traveling exhibition pairs early Texas artists to their influence on contemporary Texas artists. July 15–Aug. 20 at The Galveston Arts Center. Information and directions: 409/763-2403 or www.galvestonartscenter.org.

◆ **The Spirit of Ancient Colombian Gold.** From the

collection of the Museo del Oro in Bogotá, Colombia, this exhibit focuses on the objects created in gold by the Pre-Columbian cultures of Colombia from around 500 B.C.–1600 A.D. Among the works are intricately fashioned nose and ear ornaments in the form of birds, felines, caimans, crocodiles, and serpents. Free for MFAH members, \$7 adults, \$3.50 seniors/students/children (6–18); free on Thursdays. Through Sept. 10 at the Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet. Info: 713/639-7300 or www.mfah.org (en Español: 713/639-7379).

◆ **Survivors' Journeys.** As part of the Holocaust Museum's 10th-anniversary celebration, this exhibit explores the successes of survivors who moved to Houston shortly after liberation through artifacts and photographs on loan from the survivors and their families. Free. Through Sept. 17 at the Minberg Gallery of the Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. Info: 713/942-8000 or visit www.hmh.org.

◆ **Yale Street Arts Market** is an exciting Heights market created for local artists to display and sell original works of art. Local musicians entertain all day. It's a mini art festival in the Heights! Every month on 1st Saturday. Now at 548 West 19th at Wind Water Gallery's parking lot. Info: www.YaleStreetMarket.com. Be sure to visit The Artful Corner at 3423 White Oak Blvd., 713/426-4ART. ■

## CALENDAR DEADLINE

for the August issue:  
Monday, July 10, 5 p.m.

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**J. Roy Hall of Galveston** toted OUTSMART to the Great Wall of China. "Here I am with my little OUTSMART on the Great Wall—and it was SNOWING!" he wrote us. "Our guide said she'd been doing these trips for over four years and had never seen it snow!"

**Going out of town?** Take OUTSMART along. Snap a picture of yourself at your destination and send it to us. We will publish our favorites. Readers who submit photos that we print will be entered into a drawing for prizes. Send high-resolution images to [editor@OutSmartMagazine.com](mailto:editor@OutSmartMagazine.com) or mail photos to 3406 Audubon, Houston, TX 77006.

## NANCY'S BACK— AND OUTSMART'S GOT HER

With this issue, Nancy Ford brings her experience as community journalist to OUTSMART. Ford, the former *Houston Voice* editor and *Texas Triangle/TXT Newsmagazine* managing editor, has joined the staff as senior editor. Ford, who is also a well-known comedian entertainer, is returning to OUTSMART. She was on staff when the magazine was launched in 1994.



## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

**Check out this event** sponsored by OUTSMART: July 17. Queer Bingo, the monthly fundraiser hosted by the Houston GLBT Community Center. July theme: "Hawaiian Bingo." Info: [www.houstonglbtcommunity.org](http://www.houstonglbtcommunity.org).

Time Out

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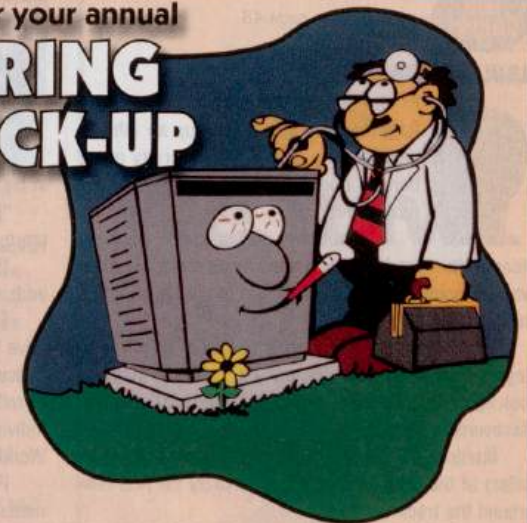
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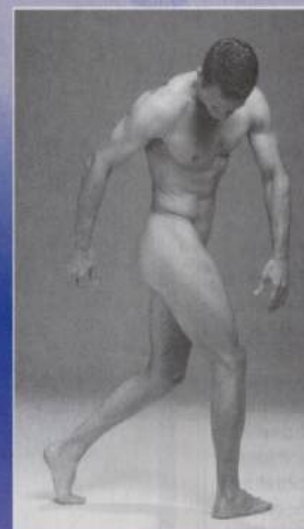


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## RAUL MARTINEZ



As the second youngest of six children, Raul Martinez didn't grow up an athlete, because "my older brothers pretty much burnt a bridge after they crossed it," he remembers.

"I wanted to play soccer ... but my older brother used to have a mess in his room. My mom was not going to allow me to come in muddy and be a mess and be a pig."

Years later, after earning a chemical engineering degree from Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Martinez took up cycling. He eventually segued into triathlons and discovered a passion for long-distance running.

Martinez, 42, will compete in the half-marathon (13.1 miles) at the Outgames. But this is hardly his first time around the track.

He earned a bronze medal for the half-marathon at the 2002 Gay Games in Sydney and has also competed in his native Mexico, along with several other races. Martinez says he runs "about 700-800 miles" annually.

During the day, Martinez is a computer programmer at a local chemical plant. He also belongs to the local chapter of the International Front Runners. The running groups, which total more than 100 nationally, were inspired by author Patricia Nell Warren's 1974 novel of that name about the relationship between an ex-Marine track coach and an athlete on his way to the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

"Several of the Front Runners that I know want to go to Montreal over the Gay Games [in Chicago]," Martinez says. "It's just ... being able to experience the same stadium that was part of a fiction story."

If and when he earns his second medal, Martinez says he is "going to keep partying to a bare minimum." It's all a part of his discipline by design.

"That's where goals come in," he adds. "Basically, I don't watch TV, either. It was a big change in life when I actually started doing all that. My sitting down and watching [TV] one hour a day—I can use it for training." —J.G.

## KEITH PETERS



Keith Peters is no stranger to mind over body. He spent three months over the summer of 1998 in a coma, battling a severe case of pneumonia. When he came out of the coma, he had dropped down to 120 pounds and had to overcome paralysis in his left side to learn to walk again.

"It does change your life," he says. "I appreciate it more, and I take better care of myself now."

"I'm almost normal—or as much as I ever was," he adds with a laugh.

The 50-year-old Tennessee native has owned Creative Development Gymnastics for 25 years, and keeps himself in shape with gymnastics, swimming, and lots of rollerblading, a sport in which he will compete in the individual 10k and individual marathon events at the World Outgames.

Peters is no stranger to awards. He won a bronze medal in the 1994 Gay Games, and took second place in the Rollerblade America tour a couple of years ago—although he says the second prize was more interesting.

"The first prize was a set of rollerblade wheels, and those were OK," Peters says. "But the second prize was a really cool bag, and I told myself, I have to get that bag!"

Peters encourages people of all ages to look at rollerblading for its many benefits.

"It's like a lifetime sport," he says. "It's like jogging and swimming—it's great exercise, but there's no strain on your joints." —J.M.

## GREG KILLIPS



Greg Killips doesn't have much going on these days, but it's not because he is nearly 60 and semi-retired. In addition to managing his part-time computer support business, Unicorn Technologies, the rest of his time is taken up with billiards.

"I don't have much else but billiards going on these days," he says.

He keeps his fingers and people skills nimble as the secretary for the Independent Billiards League of Houston, and the public relations officer for the Houston

Metropolitan Billiards League. He also runs several billiards tournaments each week.

Killips, a native of Edmonton, Canada, will be competing in the 8- and 9-ball billiards competitions at the Gay Games. Although he hadn't played for 40 years, he started playing in 2001 at the request of a friend.

"[He] talked me into filling in for him at a tournament, and I took to it," Killips says.

"It helped me meet people I've never met and helps me to focus on angles and put my math skills to work. It's very recreational, and very relaxing."

It never hurts to help people while you're at it. Killips also organized the Houston Billiards League annual fundraiser in June and served as the chairman for that event, which raised \$3,000 for the Thomas Street Health Center. —J.M.

## KEITH WRIGHT



Twelve years ago, Keith Wright was out of shape. The 6-foot, 3-inch computer professional weighed 240 pounds, and he said his future didn't look good.

"I was 30 and headed for a heart attack at age 40," he says.

So he decided to do something about it, and after following a co-worker's recommendation, he found that cycling was his favorite form of exercise. Since then, he has ridden in fundraisers and trained others for events, and he is now the president of Team Houston, a sports networking organization that helps athletes of all ages and experience to connect with others.

But after hearing about the experience at the Gay Games and the World Outgames, Wright decided to give it a try. He will compete as a cyclist at the Gay Games and a rollerblader at the Outgames.

"I've been very active and motivated for three years now," he says. "This will be my first games."

Even though he expects to enjoy his experience, Wright says he wants to bring back the energy of the games to help others enjoy the benefits of sports through Team Houston. "I think if we have more successful games, and the more people see how well we do it, they will say, 'Oh, how can I get involved,'" he says. "That's what we want." —J.M. ■

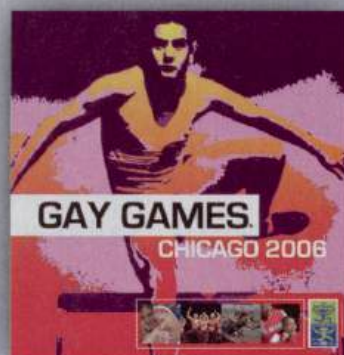
# Music of the Games

When vocalist Matt Alber (below, left) sings "Beotia" at the opening ceremony of Gay Games VII, he will have more in mind than the athletes who are about to compete. The song is appropriately named for the region in ancient Greece where the Sacred Band of Thebes, a band of 300 soldiers comprised entirely of gay couples, were slain in battle in 317 B.C. "Beotia" appears on Alber's soon-to-be-released Silver Label CD, *Nonchalant*. More: [www.myspace.com/mattalber](http://www.myspace.com/mattalber). •



Houston got a taste of XM

Radio's DJ Joe Bermudez's talents when he spun for Rich's in May. This latest offering from Bermudez is the first of two music CDs he's mixed for the Chicago Gay Games VII. Produced by Centaur, the official music sponsor of the competitions occurring this month, this high energy, continuous dance mix spotlights seven international #1 artists, including Janice Robinson with her delicious "Dreamer." It may not have you jumping hurdles, but we dare you not to bob your head to these medal-winning beats. More: [www.gaygameschicago.org](http://www.gaygameschicago.org). —N.F.



ALBER PHOTO: ALEX HOEHNER

## Business News



Well-dressed and -pressed *OutSmart* readers have chosen **Image Cleaners** as their favorite dry cleaner for five consecutive years in the annual Gayest & Greatest poll. This year owner **George Froming** celebrates a full decade serving the Montrose community and beyond with its sartorial needs.

Image Cleaners started with one location at 3407 Montrose Blvd. and has added two additional outlets—one at 304 Gray and the other at 920 Studemont. The phone number is 713/527-0880.



Attorney **Phillip N. Slaughter** is now practicing law in his new location at 820 Richmond Ave. in Montrose, focusing on probate, wills, consumer litigation, and protecting same-sex families. With office hours conveniently set at 9 a.m. until 6 p.m., prospective clients may reach him at 713/533-0009 or 866/590-7445.



**Sona MedSpa** franchise owners **Noel and Desiree Halgreen** (far r, with scissors) were joined by staff and members of the Galleria Chamber of Commerce at the official ribbon cutting of their newest spa located at 3 Riverway, Suite 200. The Galleria-area location joins Sona MedSpa of Houston—The Woodlands to offer laser hair removal and skin rejuvenation. The phone number is 713/621-7662.



This rare antique dive helmet (left) is just one of the many objects of interest to be found on Galveston Island with a little help from the **Galveston Antique Dealers Association**. In 1999, a group of like-minded antique shops and bed-and-breakfast owners banded together to promote

Galveston as an antiquing destination.

Many GADA members—18 shops and 4 bed-and-breakfasts—are located within a few blocks of each other. Adrienne Culpepper of Nautical Antiques & Décor is president. More info: [www.AntiqueGalveston.com](http://www.AntiqueGalveston.com).



After opening its first dog daycare and spa facility in Texas in March, **Happy Tails Dog Spa** now offers full-service, professional grooming for your precious pups.

Referring to dog grooming as "an art," groomer Paul Savant (above) says he enjoys "the creativity of completing a cut to match each dog's personality."

Happy Tails Dog Spa is located 1315 Waugh Dr. The phone number is 713/522-8144.



"The body is very complicated, and studies have shown that stress from our lives affects us physically and prevents us from healing in a timely manner," says chiropractor **Dr. Reyna Moore** (above).

Moore should know. She has been helping patients with various skeletal ailments and pain management for the last 17 years at **West U Rehab** on Kirby Dr. Moore recently moved her practice to its new location at 1842 Richmond Ave.

"Our goal is to find the root of the problem and help you work through it to find relief, and heal," she says. More info: 713/522-3344.

Send your business news to *OutSmart*, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston, TX 77006, or e-mail to [tim@outsmartmagazine.com](mailto:tim@outsmartmagazine.com).

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## BAR & CLUB GUIDE

### HOUSTON

#### BARTINI

This club near the Westheimer curve now features a second ladies' nights, Passionate Sundays, on the second and fourth Sunday, in addition to the Exquisite Wednesday ladies' night. 1318 Westheimer • 713/526-2271.

#### BLUR

Opened late last year as Jeffries, a nonsmoking establishment, the club has been renamed Blur and now welcomes smokers. Weekly events include a T-Dance on Sunday afternoon and a ladies' night on Wednesday. 700 Pacific • www.blurbar.com.

#### BACADOS

On Wednesday nights, women pack this Mexican restaurant for dancing and socializing. Sunday brunch starts at 11 a.m. and lasts till 3 in the afternoon. 1312 West Alabama • 713/523-5230.

#### BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM

The BRB, Houston's leading gay country-western bar, is located in Midtown, just outside Montrose. Expect to see some fast and fancy two-stepping. Southern Country dance club offers lessons on Thursday night. 2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192.

#### CHANCES/THE NEW BARN/G-SPOT

This three-in-one women's bar provides a place to two-step, rock, or chat. Check out the 9 p.m.-1 a.m. open mic night on Thursdays. Women-fronted bands perform every Saturday night. 1100 Westheimer • 713/523-7217 • www.chancesbar.com.

#### CLUB 1415

On Wednesday, Boys & Girls Club takes over the second-floor club space. Papi Chulo night on Thursday features an amateur strip contest. Fridays-Sundays are special-event nights. 1415 California • 713/522-7066.

#### CLUB BIG YO

Woman-owned and -operated, the Southwest Houston nightclub operates Thursday-Sunday. Big Yo also presents monthly concerts. 6305 Skyline • 713/953-0268 • www.bigyosplash.com.

#### CLUB INERGY

A nightlife institution for 12 years, this Southwest club offers an eclectic mix of Latin rhythms, mainstream dance, and hip hop. Sunday is the special show night. 5750 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7310 • www.clubinergy.com.

#### COUSINS

Drag fans frequent this club in the heart of Montrose for its campy shows on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. 817 Fairview • 713/528-9204.

#### LA CUEVA TEQUILA LOUNGE

Arturo Cahuiche recently opened this club in the former Briar Patch location, featuring 86 top brands of tequila in the full bar. Though La Cueva is not specifically a gay bar, Cahuiche welcomes all tequila fans. 2312 Crocker • 832/203-8574.

#### DEAN'S CREDIT CLOTHING

DJ and promoter Gracie Chavez presents Les Femmes de la Nuit, the monthly women's DJ and music night, at this downtown nightclub. Chavez reports that the crowd includes a growing contingent of queer folk. 316 Main • 713/227-3326 (Dean's), 713/858-6227 (Chavez) • www.myspace.com/lesfemmesdelanuit.

### BEHIND THE BAR

**WHO:**  
Joel Hickman

**WHERE:**  
Robert's LaFille  
(2501 Avenue Q  
at 25th,  
409/765-9092)



**WHAT'S UP:**  
To celebrate the pre-Fourth of July holiday, the club presents Robert's Puppet Show on Saturday, July 1, at 10:30 p.m. and on Sunday, July 2, at 9:30 p.m. On Tuesday, Independence Day, patrons help themselves to free hot dogs around the pool.

#### DECADES

This casual neighborhood bar attracts a devoted crowd of regulars. It hosts a Monday pool tournament and Wednesday dart tournament and offers free pool on Friday. 1205 Richmond • 713/521-2224.

#### EJ's

Located on the western front of Montrose, EJ's retains the charm of a colorful, local hangout. Frequent shows, including community benefits, pack the stage. The upstairs martini bar offers a quiet retreat. 2517 Ralph • 713/527-9071 • www.ejsbar.com.

#### GUAVA LAMP

The club left Shepherd Plaza and recently reopened with a larger space near Allen Parkway. Guava Lamp presents karaoke nights on Sunday and Wednesday and offers a free happy hour buffet on Friday. 570 Wough • 713/524-3359.

#### GEORGE

Long known as Bricks, the club recently took a new name and retooled as a country-and-western sports bar. This neighborhood joint still boasts a jukebox with country music and active pool tables. Regulars rule at this low-key spot. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

#### HOUSE OF FINESSE

Deidre Sam is taking a break from hosting monthly men's and women's socials. She continues to offer her facility near the Texas Southern University campus for special events. 2912 Wentworth • 713/522-6074 • www.houseoffinesse.com.

#### MARY'S, NATURALLY

The oldest gay club in Houston, this is a legendary nightclub, though not as notorious as in days past. Mary's hosts many community fundraisers, including the Imperial Court of Houston's Jukebox Wednesdays event. 1022 Westheimer • 713/527-9669.

#### METEOR

Weekly evenings at this Montrose video bar include Musical Theatre Night on Monday, Drag Queen Bingo on Tuesday, and Professional Women's Happy Hour on the first and third Wednesdays. 2306 Genesee • 713/521-0123 • www.meteorhouston.com.

#### MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

This neighborhood hangout has become a sing-along piano bar. A regular roster of keyboardists, including Phil Hooper and Loui Gage, performs nightly. Tuesday-Saturday. 1419 Richmond • 713/520-8446.

#### MO MONG

Every Wednesday night, the guys and gals show up at this Vietnamese restaurant in droves to enjoy the martini specials. 1201 Westheimer #B • 713/524-5684.

#### MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Studly male dancers bump and grind every night at this leather/denim spot. The two-tier back patio bar provides a perch for viewing the Pacific Street scenery. 805 Pacific • 713/529-7488.

#### PRIVÉ

The patio at this second-floor spot overlooks the lively Westheimer/Montrose intersection. The mixed crowd includes smartly dressed gays as well as nongays. 910 Westheimer • 713/522-2542.

#### RAINBOW ROOM

Every Thursday, Heather Moon hosts Karaoke Night at this north Houston club. DJ Kenny supplies music on Friday and Saturday. The club has begun presenting live music. 527 Borren Springs • 281/872-0215 • www.therainbowroombar.com.

#### RICH'S HOUSTON

After a hiatus as a nongay music venue, Rich's has returned as the dance club you knew. The club now features Griz, a night of diva music (from Beyoncé to Whitney) with DJ Joe Ross, on Friday. 2401 San Jacinto • 713/759-9606 • www.richs-houston.com.

#### RIPCORD

OutSmart readers named this spot the best place to show off your leather in the 2005 Gayest & Greatest poll. The Black Hawk Leather shop is located inside the club. 715 Fairview • 713/521-2792 • www.theripcord.com.

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#### The 611

This neighborhood club is a popular spot with pool sharks. On Friday and Saturday, the 611 dishes up buffet dinners. Features include a garden-style patio. 611 Hyde Park • 713/526-7070.

#### SOUTH BEACH

In the 2005 Gayest & Greatest poll, readers named this spot the best club for dancing and JD Arnold favorite DJ. Besides shirtless boys, special attractions include Café Con Leche with DJ Cubanito on Wednesday. 810 Pacific • 713/529-SOBE (7623) • www.SouthBeachTheNightclub.com.

#### VIVIANA'S

This club, in a new location, appeals to fans of Latino music and drag alike. 4624 Dacoma • 713/681-4104.

*Note: Swoopes 22 Sports Bar & Nightclub did not open in May, as the owners had announced (and as we reported in "News Briefs, April 2006"). In June, the owners of Jeffries renamed their club Blur. Bricks II has been renamed George. Xscape has closed.*

| Spring                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>RANCH HILL SALOON</b><br>The Conroe club has packed up and moved south to a new home near The Woodlands. The Spring location still features the Wall of Fame and the famous saddle from the old watering hole. • 24704 I-45 North, Suite 103 • 281/298-9035 • www.ranchhill.com.                  |
| Galveston                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>GARZA'S KON TIKI</b><br>This Strand spot features male dancers Friday-Sunday as well as Wednesday karaoke and Saturday and Sunday shows hosted by CC Ryder. 315 Tremont • 409/765-5805 • www.thekontiki.com.                                                                                      |
| <b>THE PINK DOLPHIN</b><br>Opened by Eldridge Longlins, formerly the Paradise Guest House proprietor, this club in the former 3rd Coast Beach Bar location offers an expansive Gulf view. 9th and Seawall Boulevard • 409/621-1808.                                                                  |
| <b>ROBERT'S LAFITTE</b><br>A neighborhood bar, the island institution attracts a colorful crowd of regulars and travelers. The private patio includes a swimming pool. On Saturday and Sunday nights, the Ladies of Lafitte show takes the stage. 2501 Avenue Q (at 25th) • 409/765-9092.            |
| <b>3RD COAST BEACH BAR</b><br>OutSmart readers voted this Seawall spot the island bar with the best happy hour in the 2005 Gayest & Greatest poll. Thursday is karaoke night, with cabaret/variety shows on Friday and Saturday nights. 31st and Seawall Blvd. • 409/766-6911 • www.3rdcoastbar.com. |
| <b>THE TREMONT HOUSE</b><br>Smart island visitors stop by the atrium bar in the Strand district hotel to enjoy cabaret music at the grand piano 2300 Ship's Mechanic Row • 409/763-0300.                                                                                                             |
| <b>UNDERCURRENT</b><br>Marvin Grenier and Keith Curry have moved their club to downtown. The multi-level, 15,000-square-foot space includes two bars with dance floors, a nonsmoking lounge, a game room, and Curry's art studio. 2409 Market • 409/750-8571 • www.undercurrentgalveston.com.        |

*Note: Jesse Garza, owner of Garza's Kon Tiki, died on April 19. Though the club is under new ownership, Garza's name remains part of the name. Dina Galloway, the longtime pianist at The Tremont House, died on May 22 at age 74. From our July 2003 issue: "Galloway doesn't merely tickle the ivories. He performs." A Tremont House spokesman reports that a pianist will continue to perform in the hotel atrium.*

| Beaumont                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>THE COPA</b><br>The hangout for Lamar University students, this two-story dance club has pool tables, a spacious stage, and a staircase that would make Norma Desmond green with envy. 304 Orleans • 409/832-4206.                                                        |
| <b>CHRIS' CROCKETT STREET PUB</b><br>Located in the downtown entertainment district, this club received extensive damage during Hurricane Rita and is currently closed. Local sources have informed OutSmart that the owners plan to reopen. 497 Crockett • 409/835-4243.    |
| Bryan/College Station                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>HALO VIDEO BAR</b><br>The only GLBT dance club in Bryan/College station, this sleek spot is open Thursday-Saturday. Smack in the middle of Aggieland, "our venue is always packed with the hotties," the owners promise. 121 North Main • 979/823-6174 • www.haloabc.com. |

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## SignOut

by Lilly Roddy

As the month opens, our good friend Mercury is about to go retrograde. If you haven't started your new projects, you will need to wait until August 1. Retrograde Mercury is always good for finishing up existing projects, contacting old clients, or general cleanup and reorganization. Things best to avoid during Mercury retrograde: buying anything that is automotive or electrical, signing documents, or traveling to someplace new.

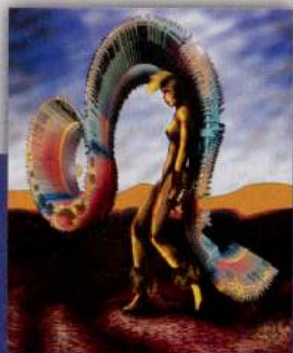
- Jupiter, planet of growth and expansion, begins its direct or forward motion in Scorpio on June 6. This should make it very busy, almost too busy, for the Scorpions and Tauruses. Still, you should wait for August to really begin those new plans.
- The Sun enters the sign of Leo on the 22nd. Mercury begins the month in Leo but returns to Cancer on the 10th. Venus is sailing through Gemini and wades into Cancer on the 18th. Mars continues his journey through Leo and eventually gets his act together as he enters Virgo. Jupiter remains in Scorpio, Saturn in Leo, Uranus in Pisces, Neptune in Aquarius, and Pluto in Sagittarius.

**ARIES** (March 21–April 19). Home and family is your focus for this month. This could be a great time for family reunions or inviting old friends for July 4th holiday celebrations. You will certainly be motivated to get things in your house in order and cleaned up. You are feeling good about using your creative energies and can be especially productive at work or with your children and their projects. Make sure that you take time for yourself.

**TAURUS** (April 20–May 20). Reconnecting with people with whom you communicated in the past is going to be a part of your July. Your sign will be doing most of the reorganizing this month. Relationships take a very positive turn at the start of the month, and you may find that many of the problems that you were having will start to just disappear. You should avoid starting a new relationship until August. Work can be very frustrating by the end of the month. You should try to keep a clear head, because others around you will be losing theirs.

**GEMINI** (May 21–June 21). Your ruling planet, Mercury, goes retrograde as the month starts. This is the time to review your financial status. You may want to examine your salary or the fees you charge your clients. But you should wait to put any new plans into action until August 1. You may have some car problems this month, but wait until August to address those problems if you can. This is an excellent month to be in touch with romantic partners from your past. Some of the old magic is still there.

**CANCER** (June 22–July 22). This is your birthday month, and with Mercury retrograde, this is going to be a nostalgic time. If you haven't seen old friends or family for a while, you will want to hear from them. With Mercury retro in your sign, you will be ready for a massive reorganization and



**LEO** (July 23–August 22). Typically, this is the time of the year you should rest and relax and stay away from too much work and drama. This year that doesn't seem possible. Mars, planet of action and energy, continues his journey through your sign this month, making you want to address everything that comes your way right now. You will feel that people around you aren't moving fast enough. You are so focused on getting your life in order that if you decide people aren't being responsible enough, you may eliminate them from your life. Get a plan and keep on it.

cleanup campaign around work and home. You continue to focus on your financial picture and getting that in order. Others may find you a bit driven in career and money areas. You may feel that you need some time to yourself even though you don't think you can afford to take it. If you can get away for a weekend, it will do your mind and body so much good.

**VIRGO** (August 23–September 22). Since you are a Mercury-ruled sign, Mercury retrograde for July will have an impact on you as well as the Gemini. Mercury will be affecting the area of your horoscope that rules friends, social groups, and business associations. You will go through a review period to determine if you are really interested in participating and maintaining your connections with these groups. By the end of the month, Mars, planet of action, moves into your sign for the next 45 days. This should be a great time to get some new enterprises put into action. Take a risk and invest in yourself.

**LIBRA** (September 23–October 23). This month, Mercury is retrograding the career area of your horoscope. You will really be rethinking your current career choice. There may be problems that come up over issues that took place several months ago. Mercury retrograde has a way of bringing hidden problems to the surface so that you can confront them. You are reviewing your work and business associations as well, and you may eliminate some of them from your schedule this month.

**SCORPIO** (October 24–November 21). You are ready for a break from your routines. You have really had your shoulder to the wheel, nose to the grindstone, etc., over these past months. A short trip to a familiar getaway would do you some good. Your activity level will increase as the month proceeds. Existing relationships and

potential new relationships improve after the 8th, but wait until August 1 before you consummate any new relationships or they may not last. At the end of the month, you will become very focused on your work and career. Enjoy your break in the earlier part of the month.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22–December 21). This is a bit of a reclusive time for you. Normally, you are a much more socially interactive person. You are reviewing your talents and skills and how they interrelate to your relationships, partners, and very close friends. You are also reviewing how and where you invest your money and your time. This can be a bit of a problem time for romantic relationships as both you and your companion try to make sure that you are operating from the same page. You will discover that you are not, but you have the chance to get back on track after some discussion. By the end of the month, you are ready to get back to work and get back to your task at hand.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22–January 19). With Mercury retrograding in the relationship arena of your horoscope, you are in for a month review of your existing relationship and relationship patterns. This could be a very good time for you and your partner to visit a counselor or to take some time to look at the direction your partnership is heading. You should be able to find some resolution to any problems that come up after the 19th. Your work arena should go well for the month. You shouldn't have any real problems there.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20–February 18). Your center of attention this month will be on your work environment, workplace, co-workers, and existing health conditions. You will really want to get things cleaned up and reorganized. Some conditions with your co-workers could come to a head. During this time frame, you will have to find a solution. Things cannot go on as before. Personal relationships are in a period of renewal as well. You need to know where you and your partner are going. This can also be a time of endings for relationships, if you are not able to come to some sort of agreement.

**PISCES** (February 19–March 20). This month, you are in a playful and creative mood, especially compared to the rest of the other signs. This would be a great month to be with your children or to engage in childlike activities. You have recently focused so much on getting your workplace organized and your health in better shape. This is a month of welcome relief from those concerns. Try to break away from your habits and do something very different. You are also interested in improving the appearance of your home. You may do some painting or consider some new furniture or home improvements.

Read Lilly Roddy's 2006 forecast, which appeared in our January issue ("Word from Above"), at [www.outsmartmagazine.com](http://www.outsmartmagazine.com).

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# OUT IN HOUSTON



**1** Ray Hill (r) greeted Carl Han at the May 13 screening of Han's documentaries *Secrets of Love* and *Amazing Life at Meteor*.



**2** Undercurrent's Keith Curry (l) and Marvin Grenier (r) celebrated their 6th anniversary together at their Galveston club on May 27 with bartender Chase Barnes.



**3** Mike Howell and Bruns Watts hosted Kentucky Derby Party in Galveston on May 5.



**4** Brad Thien (l) and Kenn McLaughlin, Stages managing director, at Searching for Eden: The Gala, the group's spring fundraiser held at The Corinthian downtown.



**5** Bayou City Boys Club donated \$42,000 in net proceeds from this year's Jungle 14 event to HIV/AIDS service providers. Attending the May 21 check presentation at The Lovett Inn: (in front, l-r) BCBC's Alain Lambert; Fiona Dawson, Bering Omega Community Services; Naomi Madrid, People With AIDS Coalition of Houston; Julie Eberly, AIDS Foundation Houston; Willy Silvester and Glenda Hopkins, Brentwood Community Foundation; Katy Caldwell, Legacy Community Health Services; Brendan Mikeska, Monrose Counseling Center; (second row, l-r) Roger Woest, Bering Omega; Rodney Waters, AIDS Foundation; and BCBC's Mike Collins, Parker Langley, and Aaron Masterson.



**6** Former president Bill Clinton (second from right) dined at Hugo's on May 20. Pictured with President Clinton are (l-r) Hugo's general manager Isidro Neri, owner Tracy Vaught, and executive chef Hugo Ortega.



**7** Stratford High School won Best Ensemble/Chorus for their production of *42nd Street* at Theatre Under The Stars's fourth annual Tommy Tune Awards, held May 1 at the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts.



**8** Miguel Almazan (l), Christopher Ankney (c), and Mario Gomez represented Houston in the April 29 Hill Country Ride for AIDS. The ride raised \$486,905.01 for nonprofit AIDS service organizations located in central Texas.



**9** Jeff Shell (l), Juan DeLeon, Ally Shell, Meisha Krylov, Irena Shyshkina, Christine Tabrizi, and Yuan Yuan Zhang attended the Neal Hamil Agency's Summer Like It's Haute clothing-raiser on May 17. At the event held at Gravitass, the agency collected hundreds of garments from guests for the Houston Area Women's Center.



**10** Players in the June 2-3 Houston Billiards Open included Greg Killips (l), Wen Ju, Leo Gonzalez, and Corey Collins. Proceeds from the Independent Billiard League of Houston event at Slick Willie's benefited Thomas Street Health Center.

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