

OutSmart

AUGUST 2007



BALLOT INSIDE

ALSO INSIDE

- Men's fall fashion
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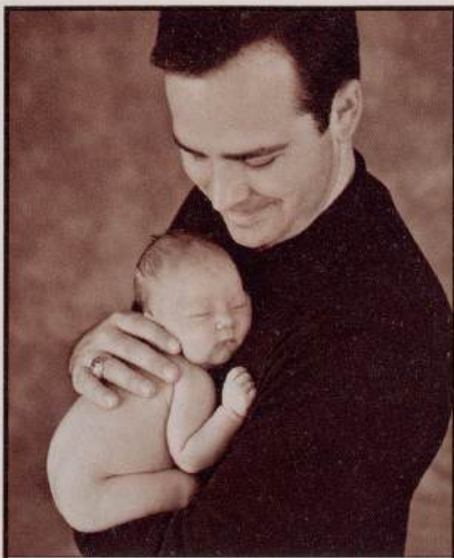


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- Vote by August 24!



About the cover:

We pair two big features this month: our annual music coverage (page 32) and men's fall fashion preview (page 58)

MAIN PHOTO: John Conroy. **Inset photos:** John Conroy, Yvonne Feece, and Gary Laird
DESIGN: Blase DiStefano

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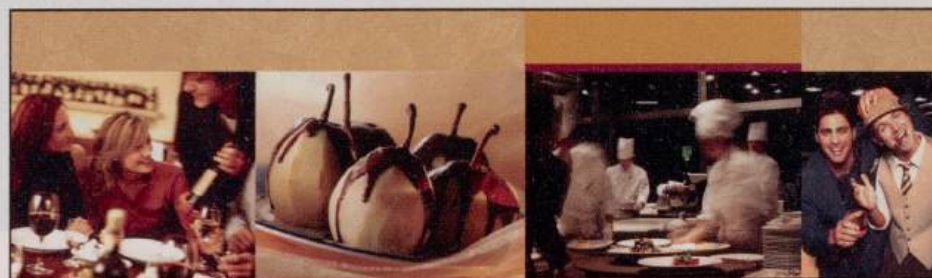
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Letters

ISLE BE SURE

Thank you for printing the article written by Jan Johnson featuring Dwayne Jones, new chief of the Galveston Historic Foundation ["History's Guardian," July 2007 *OutSmart*]. Her article, as her other writings, was full of information we enjoy gathering about Galveston and its history. We love to vacation in Galveston when possible. We have taken several of Ms. Johnson's Galveston guided tours...[she is] an "over the top" guide!! I'm glad to know she has a book on Galveston soon to be published.

Eileen Kleuckling
Haslett, Michigan

EDITOR'S NOTE: Contributor Jan Johnson conducts tours through her firm, Galveston Island Gal (www.galveston.com/guidedtours).

A NEIGHBOR WRITES

I want to say how much I like your current issue [June *OutSmart*]. You have balanced information/education well with entertainment.

I think it is interesting to see that Rosie will be at Cyndi Lauper's event ["True Friend"]. I liked the coverage of the Rice University students doing research on the history makers in your Houston area ["Do You Know Houston's GLBT History Makers?"]. Mark Segal had done an article in the *Philadelphia Gay News* of students from the University of Wisconsin gay studies class that did a bus tour of the East Coast historical places, where pioneers picketed, etc. And I liked the article/story by the college professor ["Feeding Pigeons" by Jerald Walker] about how papers his students did made him remember how he got his attitude toward homosexuals....

Thanks for these good issues. And I sure thought in May the article on the book on President Kennedy and his close homosexual friend ["Best Friends Forever"] is important.

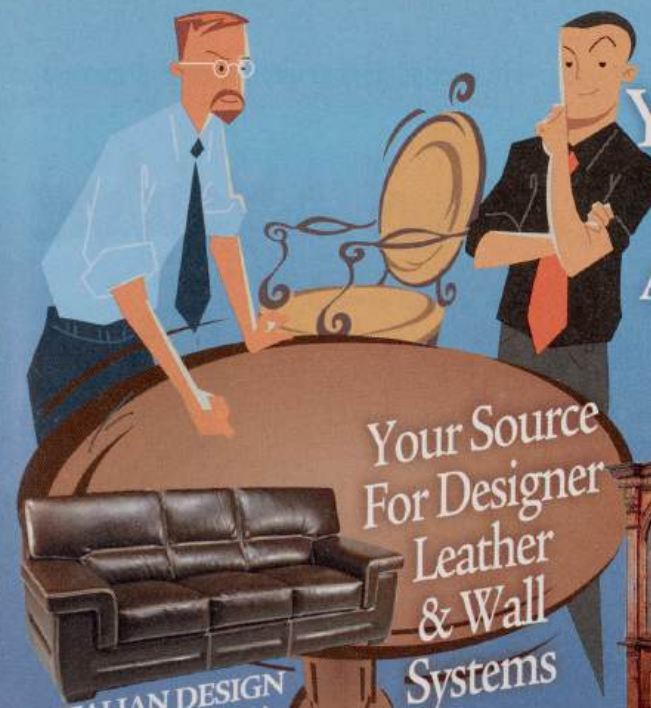
Billy Glover
Bossier City, Louisiana

CORRECTIONS

In the July issue, we misspelled the name of Galveston real-estate agent Robert Zahn ["A Piece of the Island"]. Zahn is an agent with Karen Derr & Associates Realty.

In the June issue, we incorrectly stated in "Scene Out" that the Debris Debate fundraiser benefited Camp Hope, the AIDS Foundation Houston summer program. The event benefited the PWA-Holiday Charities LVL Campout.

Due to a production error in the June issue, the photograph of the late activist Sandy O'Daniel, who died on April 27, accompanied the item on artist Robin Utterback, who died on March 29, in the "Milestones" section. The photo of O'Daniel, who served for years as director of the group STAG (Some Transgenders Are Guys), appears here. ■



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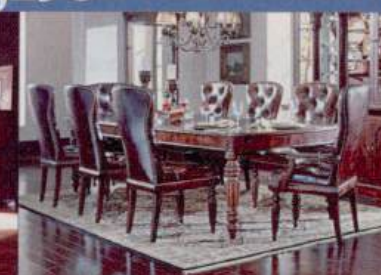
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1. Move fruits and vegetables out of the crisper to the top shelf. Americans waste millions of dollars every week on food that spoils before it can be eaten. Produce should be the first thing you see, not shoved in a drawer that rarely gets opened.

TIP: Put produce in plastic bags where they can stay slightly moist (not wet). Don't wash them until just before you eat because wet produce grows mold more easily.

2. Keep your eggs in a carton, not in the refrigerator door. Eggs kept in the door will go bad faster from the changing temperature every time you open and close the door.

TIP: To buy the freshest eggs, don't look at the expiration or "sell-by" date. Every carton has a number from 1 to 365 printed on the side. That number is the day of the year in which the eggs were packed. If one carton has the number 225 and the next has number 240, the eggs with the number 240 are 15 days FRESHER.

3. Put healthy, single-serving snacks (like a sugar-free protein pudding or low-fat cottage cheese) at eye level. When you're hungry for a quick bite, these should be the easiest things to reach for.

4. Put lunch meat in airtight containers, not the bags provided by the deli counter. Also, if you buy cold cuts freshly sliced, you can choose brands that have less sodium than the prepackaged brands.

TIP: Lunch meat has gone bad if it smells sweet or has a slippery coating.

5. Keep plenty of milk on hand, but not whole milk. Milk is loaded with vitamin D and calcium. Skim has the fewest calories, but 1% is also good because it contains CLA, a good fat that can help your body burn calories more efficiently.

6. Make sugar-free drinks (like Crystal Light or Wyler's) and keep them easily accessible.

7. Store fresh meats on the lowest shelf of the refrigerator where there is no chance of them dripping onto other foods. Wrap them tightly in plastic wrap to keep air out and juices in. If you haven't eaten fresh meats within 24 hours, put them in the freezer so they won't go bad.

8. Candy, soda, beer, and other cheat foods should be kept in the crisper. If they're out

of sight, you're less likely to think about or reach for them when you have a craving.

9. Go check out the inside front door of your refrigerator. Replace the full-fat foods with healthier alternatives. Choose fat-free cream cheese, sugar-free syrup and, if you must have butter, choose a brand that doesn't have any trans fats. Throw away anything that has passed its expiration date.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Put leftovers in clear, single-serving, plastic containers. Never use foil, because it doesn't seal as well and you might forget what food you wrapped up. Don't put anything in your fridge that isn't covered because the smell can circulate and taint things like the ice in your freezer.
- Keep healthier foods up front and less healthy options in the back.
- Make healthy food more appealing. Store mixed nuts with low-fat yogurt or chocolate milk mix beside the skim milk. An indulgent topping (when used sparingly) can make healthier eating easier.
- Freeze foods in individual portions to make thawing and preparing them easier. The recommended serving of cooked meat is 3 ounces (about the size of a deck of playing cards). A standard serving of pasta is one cup and a standard serving of vegetables is half a cup.
- Freeze fruit for a treat. Frozen bananas, grapes, and orange slices are great alternatives to ice cream.
- Make sure your refrigerator is set at 34 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit (1 to 4 degrees Celsius) and your freezer is set at 0 degrees Fahrenheit (-18 degrees Celsius) or less. These temperatures help prevent the growth of microorganisms that can cause food to spoil.
- Keep a running list of what you need on the front of the refrigerator door, and take it with you when you go to the grocery store so you know exactly what to buy.
- Buy pre-cut fruits and vegetables. Yes, they're more expensive, but if they're already cut up you're more likely to eat them before they spoil, and that's certainly cheaper than throwing away rotten food every week.

Dan Reynen's Health and Fitness column is brought to you by Gilead Sciences

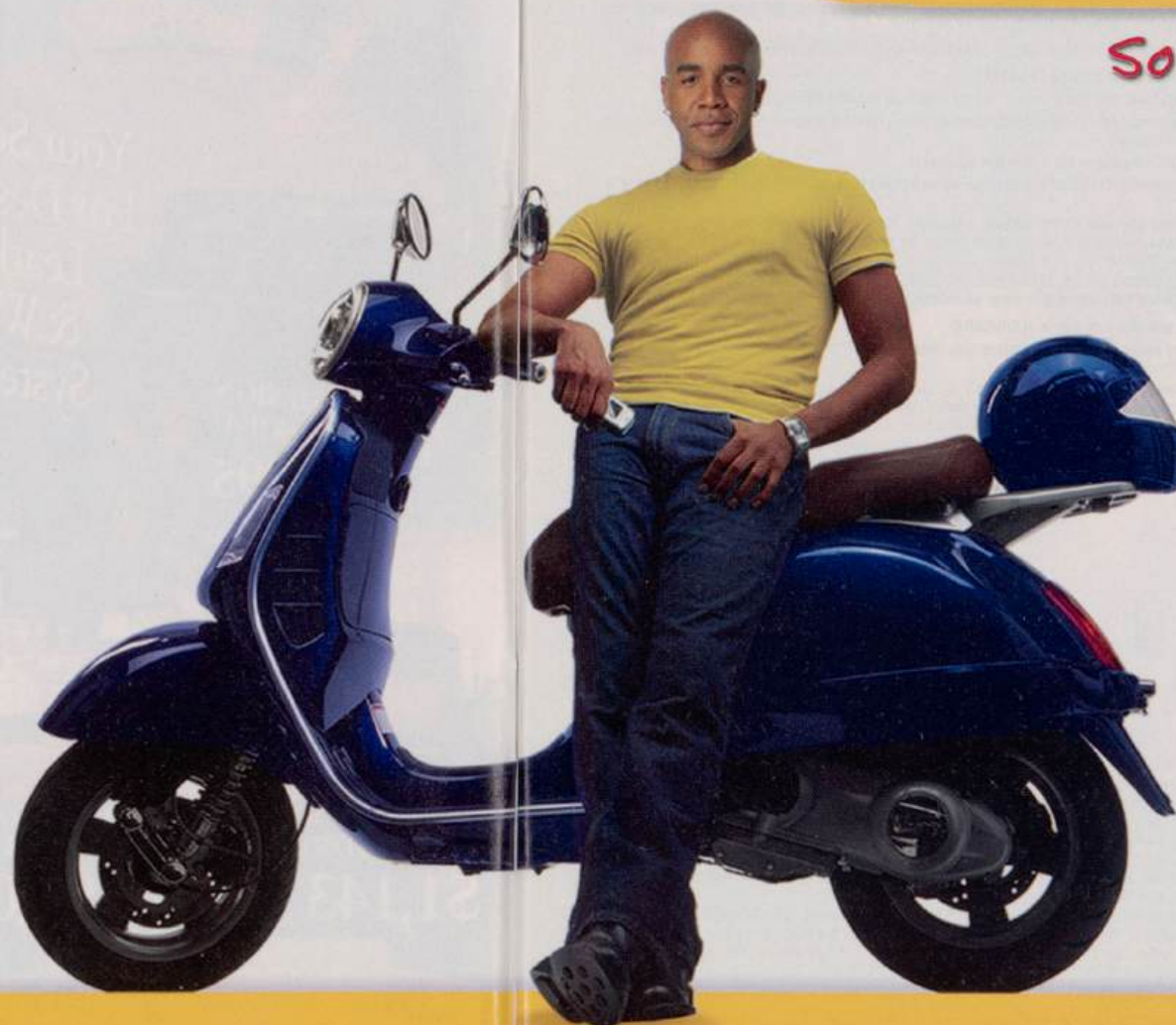
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IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

- **Lactic acidosis** (a buildup of acid in the blood) can be a medical emergency and may need to be treated in the hospital. **Call your healthcare provider right away** if you have nausea, vomiting, unusual muscle pain, and/or weakness
- **Serious liver problems** (hepatotoxicity), with liver enlargement (hepatomegaly) and fat in the liver (steatosis), may occur. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have light colored stools, dark colored urine, and/or if your skin or the whites of your eyes turn yellow
- **Flare-ups of hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection:** If you have HIV and HBV, your liver disease may suddenly get worse if you stop taking TRUVADA. Do

not stop taking TRUVADA unless directed by your healthcare provider

- **Kidney problems:** If you have had kidney problems or take other medicines that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider should do regular blood tests to check your kidneys
- **Bone changes:** It is not known whether long-term use of TRUVADA causes damage to your bones. If you have had bone problems in the past, talk to your healthcare provider before taking TRUVADA

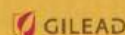
Changes in body fat have been seen in some people taking anti-HIV medicines. The most common side effects of TRUVADA when taken with other anti-HIV medicines are dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, headache, abdominal pain, depression, rash, and gas.

Skin discoloration (spots and freckles) may also occur.

Discuss all medicines you take with your healthcare provider and be aware:

- Your healthcare provider may need to follow you more closely or adjust your therapy if you are taking Videx®, Videx® EC, Reyataz®, or Kaletra® with TRUVADA

For more information, please visit www.TRUVADA.com or call 1-800-GILEAD-5 (1-800-445-3235) and select option 2. Please see Patient Information on the next page.



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Generic name: emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate
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Read the Patient Information that comes with TRUVADA before you start taking it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment. You should stay under a healthcare provider's care when taking TRUVADA. **Do not change or stop your medicine without first talking with your healthcare provider.** Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you have any questions about TRUVADA.

What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?

- **Some people who have taken medicine like TRUVADA (nucleoside analogs) have developed a serious condition called lactic acidosis** (build up of an acid in the blood). Lactic acidosis can be a medical emergency and may need to be treated in the hospital. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get the following signs or symptoms of lactic acidosis.**
 - You feel very weak or tired.
 - You have unusual (not normal) muscle pain.
 - You have trouble breathing.
 - You have stomach pain with nausea and vomiting.
 - You feel cold, especially in your arms and legs.
 - You feel dizzy or lightheaded.
 - You have a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Some people who have taken medicines like TRUVADA have developed serious liver problems called hepatotoxicity**, with liver enlargement (hepatomegaly) and fat in the liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get the following signs or symptoms of liver problems.**
 - Your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice).
 - Your urine turns dark.
 - Your bowel movements (stools) turn light in color.
 - You don't feel like eating food for several days or longer.
 - You feel sick to your stomach (nausea).
 - You have lower stomach area (abdominal) pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking nucleoside analog medicines, like TRUVADA, for a long time.
- **TRUVADA is not for the treatment of Hepatitis B Virus infection (HBV).** Patients infected with both HBV and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) who take TRUVADA need close medical follow-up for several months after stopping treatment with TRUVADA. Follow-up includes medical exams and blood tests to check for HBV that could be getting worse. **Patients with Hepatitis B Virus infection, who take TRUVADA and then stop it, may get "flare-ups" of their hepatitis. A "flare-up" is when the disease suddenly returns in a worse way than before.**

What is TRUVADA?

TRUVADA is a type of medicine called an HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) nucleoside analog reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTI). TRUVADA contains 2 medicines, EMTRIVA® (emtricitabine) and VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate, or tenofovir DF) combined in one pill. TRUVADA is always used with other anti-HIV medicines to treat people with HIV infection. TRUVADA is for adults age 18 and older. TRUVADA has not been studied in children under age 18 or adults over age 65.

HIV infection destroys CD4 (T) cells, which are important to the immune system. The immune system helps fight infection. After a large number of T cells are destroyed, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) develops.

TRUVADA helps block HIV reverse transcriptase, a chemical in your body (enzyme) that is needed for HIV to multiply. TRUVADA lowers the amount of HIV in the blood (viral load). TRUVADA may also help to increase the number of T cells (CD4 cells). Lowering the amount of HIV in the blood lowers the chance of death or infections that happen when your immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

TRUVADA does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of TRUVADA are not known at this time. People taking TRUVADA may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV infection. Opportunistic infections are infections that develop because the immune system is weak. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and *Mycobacterium avium complex* (MAC) infection. **It is very important that you see your healthcare provider regularly while taking TRUVADA.**

TRUVADA does not lower your chance of passing HIV to other people through sexual contact, sharing needles, or being exposed to your blood. For your health and the health of others, it is important to always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood. Never use or share dirty needles.

Who should not take TRUVADA?

- Do not take TRUVADA if you are allergic to TRUVADA or any of its ingredients. The active ingredients of TRUVADA are emtricitabine and tenofovir DF. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.
- Do not take TRUVADA if you are already taking COMBIVIR®, EMTRIVA, EPIVIR®, EPIVIR-HBV®, EPZICOM™, TRIZIVIR®, or VIREAD because these medicines contain the same or similar active ingredients.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking TRUVADA?**Tell your healthcare provider if you:**

- **are pregnant or planning to become pregnant.** We do not know if TRUVADA can harm your unborn child. You and your healthcare provider will need to decide if TRUVADA is right for you. If you use TRUVADA while you are pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider about how you can be on the TRUVADA Antiviral Pregnancy Registry.
- **are breast-feeding.** You should not breast feed if you are HIV-positive because of the chance of passing the HIV virus to your baby. Also, it is not known if TRUVADA can pass into your breast milk and if it can harm your baby. If you are a woman who has or will have a baby, talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.
- **have kidney problems or are undergoing kidney dialysis treatment.**
- **have bone problems.**
- **have liver problems including Hepatitis B Virus infection.**

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take:

- Drugs that contain didanosine (VIDEX®, VIDEX EC®). Tenofovir DF (a component of TRUVADA) may increase the amount of VIDEX in your blood. **You may need to be followed more carefully if you are taking TRUVADA and VIDEX together.**
- REYATAZ™ (atazanavir sulfate) or KALETRA® (lopinavir/ritonavir). These medicines may increase the amount of tenofovir DF (a component of TRUVADA) in your blood, which could result in more side effects. You may need to be followed more carefully if you are taking TRUVADA and REYATAZ or KALETRA together.

Keep a complete list of all the medicines that you take. Make a new list when medicines are added or stopped. Give copies of this list to all of your healthcare providers and pharmacist **every** time you visit your healthcare provider or fill a prescription.

How should I take TRUVADA?

- Take TRUVADA exactly as your healthcare provider prescribed it. Follow the directions from your healthcare provider, exactly as written on the label.
- The usual dose of TRUVADA is 1 tablet once a day. TRUVADA is always used with other anti-HIV medicines. If you have kidney problems, you may need to take TRUVADA less often.
- TRUVADA may be taken with or without a meal. Food does not affect how TRUVADA works. Take TRUVADA at the same time each day.
- If you forget to take TRUVADA, take it as soon as you remember that day. **Do not** take more than 1 dose of TRUVADA in a day. **Do not** take 2 doses at the same time. Call your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you are not sure what to do. **It is important that you do not miss any doses of TRUVADA or your anti-HIV medicines.**
- When your TRUVADA supply starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to TRUVADA and become harder to treat.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking TRUVADA without first talking with your healthcare provider. Stay under a healthcare provider's care when taking TRUVADA.
- If you take too much TRUVADA, call your local poison control center or emergency room right away.

What should I avoid while taking TRUVADA?

- **Do not breast-feed.** See "What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking TRUVADA?"
- **Avoid doing things that can spread HIV infection** since TRUVADA does not stop you from passing the HIV infection to others.
 - **Do not share needles or other injection equipment.**
 - **Do not share personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them, like toothbrushes or razor blades.**
 - **Do not have any kind of sex without protection.** Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to reduce the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.
- COMBIVIR, EMTRIVA, EPIVIR, EPIVIR-HBV, EPZICOM, TRIZIVIR, or VIREAD. **TRUVADA should not be used with these medicines.**

What are the possible side effects of TRUVADA?

TRUVADA may cause the following serious side effects (see "What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?"):

- **Lactic acidosis** (buildup of an acid in the blood). Lactic acidosis can be a medical emergency and may need to be treated in the hospital. **Call your doctor right away if you get signs of lactic acidosis.** (See "What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?")
- **Serious liver problems (hepatotoxicity)**, with liver enlargement (hepatomegaly) and fat in the liver (steatosis). Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any signs of liver problems. (See "What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?")
- **"Flare-ups" of Hepatitis B Virus infection**, in which the disease suddenly returns in a worse way than before, can occur if you stop taking TRUVADA. Your healthcare provider will monitor your condition for several months after stopping TRUVADA if you have both HIV and HBV infection. TRUVADA is not for the treatment of Hepatitis B Virus infection.
- **Kidney problems** If you have had kidney problems in the past or take other medicines that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider should do regular blood tests to check your kidneys.
- **Changes in bone mineral density (thinning bones)** It is not known whether long-term use of TRUVADA will cause damage to your bones. If you have had bone problems in the past, your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bone mineral density or may prescribe medicines to help your bone mineral density.

Other side effects with TRUVADA when used with other anti-HIV medicines include:

- Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking TRUVADA and other anti-HIV medicines. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effect of these conditions are not known at this time.

The most common side effects of EMTRIVA or VIREAD when used with other anti-HIV medicines are: dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, headache, rash, and gas. Skin discoloration (small spots or freckles) may also happen with TRUVADA.

These are not all the side effects of TRUVADA. This list of side effects with TRUVADA is **not complete** at this time because TRUVADA is still being studied. If you have questions about side effects, ask your healthcare provider. Report any new or continuing symptoms to your healthcare provider right away. Your healthcare provider may be able to help you manage these side effects.

How do I store TRUVADA?

- **Keep TRUVADA and all other medicines out of reach of children.**
- Store TRUVADA at room temperature 77 °F (25 °C).
- Keep TRUVADA in its original container and keep the container tightly closed.
- Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. If you throw away medicines away make sure that children will not find them.

General information about TRUVADA:

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Do not use TRUVADA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give TRUVADA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about TRUVADA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about TRUVADA that is written for health professionals. For more information, you may also call 1-800-GILEAD-5 or access the TRUVADA website at www.TRUVADA.com.

Do not use TRUVADA if seal over bottle opening is broken or missing.

What are the ingredients of TRUVADA?

Active Ingredients: emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate

Inactive Ingredients: Croscarmellose sodium, lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, and pregelatinized starch (gluten free). The tablets are coated with Opadry II Blue Y-30-10701 containing FD&C Blue #2 aluminum lake, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose 2910, lactose monohydrate, titanium dioxide, and triacetin.

Rx Only

March 2006

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CLUB CLUB. Exercise, fresh air, working on the tan—what more can one ask from a round of golf? • Pictured here in Dinah Shore mode are Tracy Price, left, and Melanie Killian, her partner on the links and in life. Earlier this summer the couple did indeed ask more from one of their favorite recreational activities: an organized golf group for like-minded members of the local GLBT community. Soon, with the help of Team Houston president Keith Wright, the Out Scramblin' Golf Association was born. • "We're looking for people to help us get this off the ground," Killian says. The group hosts its first social get-together on August 28, 7 p.m., at the West Gray Café Express to plan future golf dates and events. Details: 832/245-2647, <http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/OSGA/>.

Photographed by Mark Hiebert



A CLOSET WE ALL CAN LIVE WITH.

Clothes make the man *and* the mannequin, as it turns out. The late Tony Wadford knew this adage well, having performed in drag for community fundraisers as Queen Kong and Eartha Quake before walking that great runway to the sky in 2006. • As a living memorial, the Gulf Coast Archive and Museum of GLBT History (GCAM), which received treasures from Wadford's estate, is offering some of his frocks as part of a new drag lend/lease program, dubbed the Eartha Quake-Tony Wadford-Queen Kong Perpetual Closet for Desperate Drag

Queens. Through the Closet, local performers may borrow clothing, wigs, jewelry, shoes, and purses at little or no cost for charitable, single use purposes, GCAM curator Judy Reeves explains. • "Currently the Closet contains approximately 26 outfits, 184 pieces of jewelry, 16 wigs, 18 pairs of shoes, and 18 purses," Reeves says. To supplement the collection of Wadford gowns (one is modeled here by the fetching Tim Bratcher), the museum is soliciting additional frocks from local performers. Details: www.gcam.org. • GCAM will open the Closet's doors at a September 22, 6-8 p.m., fundraiser at Mary's...Naturally. The Colt 45's, Imperial Court of Houston, and the Houston Big Men's Club are also participating in the event. On that evening, a portrait of Tony/Eartha by Amelia Reiff Hill will be auctioned to benefit the Closet, which is fitting. Even the grave can't keep Eartha from collecting those dollar bills.

Photographed by John Conroy



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THE LONG, VIOLENT SUMMER

Gay-based assaults on the rise in Houston

A series of crimes ranging from assault to murder has plagued local gay men—and men perceived to be gay—in recent weeks.

On June 23, the night of the GLBT Pride Parade, Mark R. Rasch, 37, of Katy was dining with friends downtown at Vin restaurant. According to the Houston Police Department, a group of approximately 20 males assaulted Rasch after he left the restaurant. Reports from the scene indicate that the group of males taunted Rasch and his friends with gay slurs.

Rasch, who is not gay, sustained major injuries and was transported to St. Joseph's Hospital by ambulance.

Jerry Watson, area manager for Vin and the nightclub Roc, both located in Bayou Place, the popular dining and entertainment center in the downtown theater district, said a surveillance tape showed the assailants entering Roc and partying there for much of the evening.

Watson indicated that he was outraged by the attack. "No one—gay or straight—deserves that kind of treatment," he said in an interview with *OutSmart*.

Police are investigating the downtown attack as a Class A assault, with hate-crime enhancement.

In the early morning hours of July 14, three men were victimized near the corner of Taft and Pacific in Montrose by a man attempting to rob them.

The three men, who requested anonymity, were walking together from the Pacific Street-area bars when a car drove up behind them.

While a heavyset Hispanic man and a woman, both in their mid-20s, waited in the car, a third man exited the vehicle, indicated he had a gun, and demanded money from the trio.

When the assailant was told by the men that they had no money, he attacked two of the men, who sustained minor injuries. The men gave police officers the license plate number and a description of car.

One of the victims said he was later told by police that officers had been alerted to a similar assault that had happened in the same Montrose vicinity shortly afterward.

Perhaps the most chilling incident in this series of recent assaults resulted in death. A man who claimed, following his arrest, to be the

Old Testament prophet Elijah, sent to carry out God's judgment against homosexuality, murdered Kenneth Cummings Jr. on June 4.

Terry Mark Mangum, 26, of Cypress was indicted on June 12 for the murder of Cummings, a Pearland man.

The men met at a Montrose bar and later proceeded to Cummings' home in Pearland. After stabbing Cummings in the head, Mangum transported the body to a family ranch in Poteet. Cummings' body was later positively identified by the Bexar County Medical Examiner's office.

At press time, Mangum was being held in Bexar County Jail on \$500,000 bond.

Federal legislation titled The Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act/ Matthew Shepard Act is currently being evaluated by Washington lawmakers. Its passage would add sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and disability to existing federal law, ensuring a federal backstop to assist local law enforcement in adequately investigating and prosecuting such crimes.

Fiona Dawson, who co-chairs the local Federal Club donor group of the Human Rights Campaign, says the recent attacks against the gay community makes support of this hate-crime legislation all the more critical.

"These crimes hit home," Dawson says. "Currently in Texas, gender identity is not included in our state hate-crimes law, and because it is not a federal offense, it is very hard to get funding to investigate

and prosecute such a crime. Adding this language to the federal law would change that."

Passage of the Matthew Shepard Act would make a strong statement on how offensive crimes of this nature are, Dawson adds.

"All violent attacks are hateful. However, when a hate crime is committed, it affects more than the individual victim and their family," Dawson says. "When someone is attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, the message is sent to the whole community that anyone like them is equally despised."

"When you are a part of the GLBT community, an attack against someone else who is gay is also an attack against you. It's a reminder that not everyone accepts you for who you are."

IF HATE CRIME HITS

- First call 911.
- Montrose Counseling Center offers individual and group programs addressing hate crimes, domestic violence, sexual assault, and childhood sexual abuse. Details: 713/529-0037, www.montrosecounselingcenter.org.
- Gay & Lesbian Switchboard Houston, a counseling center program, provides crisis information intervention. Details: 713/529-311, www.gayswitchboardhouston.org.

PARKER, LOVELL APPOINTED TO CLINTON STEERING COMMITTEE

Sen. Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign chose the eve of the 38th anniversary of the New York Stonewall Rebellion to announce the formation of LGBT Americans for Hillary. The national steering committee of more than 65 leaders in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community includes two Houstonians, city controller Annise D. Parker and City Council member Sue Lovell.

Other members of the steering committee are activists from national LGBT and Democratic Party political groups, as well as leaders in business, entertainment, and sports. The list also includes three retired members of the military who have worked to overturn the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy and the attorney who argued and won the landmark Supreme Court case *Lawrence vs. Texas*.

"I am proud to have the support of such distinguished leaders in the LGBT community," Clinton said in a statement. "Together, we can move our nation closer to the promise of fairness and equality that all Americans deserve."

The campaigns of Democratic presidential candidates John Edwards and Barack Obama have also formed GLBT outreach groups. (Read more about the presidential candidates on page 42.)

COHEN RECEIVES AWARD FOR LEGISLATION

Texas representative Ellen Cohen received the "Best Freshman Performance as a Bill Sponsor" from the online political publication Capitol Inside for her work on House Bill 1751, which imposes a \$5 fee on certain sexually oriented businesses to fund \$25 million worth of sexual assault and prevention programs.

"Serving as the president and CEO of the Houston Area Women's Center, I have led an organization for 17 years whose mission is to end domestic and sexual violence," Cohen, the freshman legislator indicated in a statement read at the Give Back a Smile dental program fundraiser hosted by dentist Randy Mitchmore in May. "We eagerly work for the day when violence against women is part of history rather than a part of our daily lives."

Cohen recently moved her District 134 office to 3355 West Alabama, Suite 1250 (713/627-0134).

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HATE CRIME STATS

Hate crimes based on sexual orientation constituted the third highest category of hate crimes reported, according to 2004 FBI statistics, and made up 15.5 percent of all reported hate crimes. Only race-based and religion-based prejudice crimes were more prevalent than hate crimes based on sexual orientation.

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News Briefs continued from page 16

HOUSTON HATE-CRIME VICTIM COMMITS SUICIDE

David Ritcheson, a victim of a 2006 Houston hate crime in which his attackers beat, kicked, and sodomized him, jumped to his death off a Carnival cruise ship en route to Mexico on July 1.

Ritcheson, 18, testified in April before the Crime Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee to urge lawmakers to pass the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007 (H.R. 1592).

"I appear before you as a survivor," Ritcheson told members of a House Judiciary subcommittee. "I am here before you today asking that our

government take the lead in deterring individuals like those who attacked me from committing unthinkable and violent crimes against others because of where they are from, the color of their skin, the God they worship, the person they love, or the way they look, talk, or act."

Joe Solmonese, president of the Human Rights Campaign, said that by sharing his testimony before Congress, Ritcheson's story encouraged the House to pass a hate crimes bill. "Our condolences go out to his family and loved ones," Solmonese said. We will work to pass a hate crimes bill in the Senate that will help honor David's life."

MONTROSE COUNSELING CENTER AND FITNESS EXCHANGE FIND NEW HOMES

Following a purchase made by its permanent endowment fund, the Montrose Counseling Center has moved into its new home at 401 Branard (formerly known as 4040 Milam). The site has long been known as the home of Fitness Exchange, the gym popular in the community.

Fitness Exchange's lease with the previous owner expired on May 31, but the counseling center officials agreed to extend its lease through August 31.

In a statement to its clients and the community, center executive director Ann Robison said that after that date, the center must engage its

property tax exemption, which cannot be done with Fitness Exchange, a commercial business, in the building.

"As long as there is a for-profit tenant in the building, MCC must pay property taxes and a higher loan interest rate on the whole property," Robison said in the statement. "It would be unfair to MCC's clients, donors, and stakeholders for the nonprofit organization to, in effect, subsidize a for-profit entity."

The popular neighbor fitness center plans to move to a new facility at 4810 Washington Avenue on August 31.

HOLLYFIELD FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES GRANT RECIPIENTS

At a July reception, Hollyfield Foundation directors Mary Ann McBee, Coy Tow, and Mark Wood announced that 16 local, state, and national organizations received grants for 2007.

Organizations receiving grants are AIDS Services of Austin, Bering Omega Community Services, Capital City Men's Chorus, Center for AIDS, Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute, Houston Black Tie Dinner, Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund, Lazarus House,

Legacy Community Health Services, Lesbian Health Initiative, PFLAG/HATCH Youth Scholarship Foundation, PFLAG Houston, Texas Civil Rights Project, Texas Freedom Network Education Fund, Unhinged Productions, and Waterloo Counseling Center.

Tow said that funds are set aside for interim grants if needed. Instructions for applying for the interim grant funds are available at the Foundation's website at www.hollyfield.org.

FORMER LOG CABIN REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT FOUND GUILTY OF MURDER, CHILD PORN

In early June, Kenneth Wilk was found guilty of first-degree murder in the killing of Broward County Sheriff's Deputy Todd Fatta during a search for child pornography at Wilk's home in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, in 2004. A jury then sentenced Wilk to life in prison.

President of the Houston chapter of Log

Cabin Republicans in 1994, Wilk, 45, was also found guilty of attempted murder in the wounding of a second deputy and of child pornography possession and obstruction of justice charges.

Wilk's attorney, Bill Matthewman, maintains his client was suffering from AIDS-related dementia at the time of the killing.

ON THE WEB: Read more news briefs at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The Vatican's new road rules explained

Fasten your seatbelts and grab your rosaries, friends. The Catholic Church has swerved the Popemobile off the Highway to Heaven and onto The Road Less Traveled.

Released earlier this summer by the Vatican's Office for Migrant and Itinerant People (not kidding), Cardinal Renato Martino's "Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of the Road" is a handy dandy, interdenominational moral compass for drivers who are concerned with both their spiritual and physical destinations.

In related news, AAA has begun conducting midnight mass.

Honk if you love Jesus!

But seriously, folks...

"We know that as a consequence of transgressions and negligence, 1.2 million people die each year on the roads," the Cardinal said, explaining the inspiration for the new rules. "That's a sad reality, and at the same time, a great challenge for society and the church."

Apparently the original Ten Commandments, as specified on stone tablets by the Big Guy himself, weren't specific enough for this gas-guzzling, iPod-connected, contraflow world.

Odd, considering those "don't"-heavy, Old Testament Top Ten were edited down to a mere pair of New Testament "do's" by an economically spoken Christ: Humans must love God and each other. Period.

Seems those two simple rules should be enough to govern behavior for drivers of any era, regardless of whether they're behind the reigns of a chariot or the wheel of a car. Do we really need to be told, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's Aston Martin"?

But what do I know from religion and commandments and chariots? My personal Sunday morning worship service consists of a pot of strong coffee and TV Land's two-hour block of *I Love Lucy*. And the people said, "Ay yi yi yi yi yi!"

Nonetheless, below is a list of the new godly guidelines, complete with secular expansion. Clip and attach to supplement your local Judge Roy Wood granite Decalogue.

1. You shall not kill. This one's pretty self-explanatory. It even made the original set of commandments. But perhaps this live-and-let-live concept may refer to more than just hit-and-run offenses. Could it also be a condemnation of big, bloated SUVs killing the planet?

2. The road shall be for you a means of communion between people and not of mortal harm. Clara Harris, we're looking at you.

Apparently the original Ten Commandments, as specified on stone tablets by the Big Guy himself, weren't specific enough for this gas-guzzling, iPod-connected, contraflow world.

3. Courtesy, uprightness, and prudence will help you deal with unforeseen events. Punchline 1: That *boopboopboop* back-up alarm helps, too. Punchline 2: Courtesy, Uprightness, and Prudence. Didn't they tour in the '60s as the back-up group for The Singing Nun?

4. Be charitable and help your neighbor in need, especially victims of accidents. Remember, that accident victim may take the form of someone with a squeegee limping toward your car at a stoplight. So go ahead and give him or her that spare change in your cup holder, even if your windshield is already clean. After all, it could be Jesus in disguise. You know how religious icons love to play dress up. Pope Benedict XVI, we're looking at you.

5. Cars shall not be for you an expression of power and domination, and an occasion of sin. Finally, the Cardinal and I come to a point of agreement: Hummer drivers are going to hell (see #1). Or maybe the Cardinal is referring to the "expression of power and domination" in a more carnal nature. Translation: no auto erotica.

6. Charitably convince the young and not so young not to drive when they are not in a fitting condition to do so. In others words, friends don't let friends drive after too much communion wine, although, this commandment could refer to fashion as well. Those gigantic, phallic, bejeweled hats could blow off convertible-driving priests, creating a major obstruction on the freeway. Pope Benedict XVI, we're looking at you again.

7. Support the families of accident victims. Not so much, though, the families of victims of sexual abuse at the hands of Catholic clergy?

8. Bring guilty motorists and their victims together, at the appropriate time, so that they can undergo the liberating experience of forgiveness. Because

everyone knows there's nothing better than after-road-rage makeup sex.

9. On the road, protect the vulnerable party. Not so much, though, when the vulnerable party is a political party that supports reproductive choice, GLBT equality, and women in the priesthood?

10. Feel responsible toward others. Make a joyful noise, but turn down the volume, for God's sake. The 40 cars surrounding your own might not share your musical taste.

While we're at it, let's add one more very basic, yet very timely, commandment to the Cardinal's street talk: **Stop and smell the Texas wildflowers.**

Lady Bird, we're looking at you. Rest in peace. ■

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THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION

One inconvenient truth after another

No one would accuse Dubya of being well read, but he must have read a little Mark Twain. It was Twain who said, "Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please."

Dubya and his administration can sure distort a fact when it pleases them. And it often pleases them.

With 18 months to go in his presidency, Dubya is suddenly faced with a lot of bad facts: Almost 3,700 American troops have died in Iraq and almost 30,000 American troops have been wounded.

Financially, the war in Iraq is costing Americans approximately \$10 billion a month. Iraqi civilians are blown up daily. And more American troops have died in the months since the surge began than in the months leading up to the surge. There seems to be no end in sight to the violence, and no successful result seems likely.

The facts in Iraq would daunt most politicians and administrations, but not Dubya

and not this administration. Rather than deal in and portray reality, the Bush administration simply issues another report that floats somewhere between exaggeration and hallucination. Of the 18 benchmarks set to measure whether the surge is working, the administration's self-professed scorecard is: eight successes, eight failures, and two draws.

Eight of 18. Only this administration could grade its own paper and then call its 44 percent success rate "a success."

Add to the 3,700 lost American lives one more casualty: the truth. This isn't the first time the administration has sacrificed the truth for political purposes. A brief overview of the last six years of the Bush Administration reflects its repeated willingness to manipulate, ignore, or simply rewrite the facts when they do not support the administration's political position.

For example, in 2001, Bush appointed Philip Cooney as chief of staff for the White House Council on Environmental Quality,

the office that devises and promotes administration policy on environmental issues. Before joining the White House Council, Mr. Cooney was the head lobbyist at the American Petroleum Institute, which represented the oil industry's interest.

Cooney, a lawyer with a bachelor's degree in economics and no scientific training, took it upon himself to edit scientific reports regarding global warming. Just by adding an adverb here and an adjective there, Cooney realized he could change the entire meaning of the reports. For example, he would insert the word "extremely" before the word "difficult." He would change the word "is" to "may." Words are powerful, and a few minor alterations by Cooney to scientific reports resulted in major changes in what information they conveyed.

Then, in October 2002, the Centers for Disease Control replaced an online fact sheet about condom use to appease social conservatives who opposed birth control and

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THE MEANING OF MASSACHUSETTS

When Bay Staters legalized same-sex marriage, they meant it

By an overwhelming vote of 151-45, on June 14 the Massachusetts legislature rejected a proposed state constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. The vote is significant in two ways. First, it means that a reform that began as a narrowly decided court mandate now has some democratic backing. Second, it means that a fledgling experiment will be allowed to continue and that we can learn from it.

The amendment needed 50 votes to get on the ballot for a November 2008 referendum. Though it's still possible for antigay marriage activists to press for an amendment in the next session of the state legislature, they would have to begin the long, multi-year process all over again. That means they could not even get an amendment on the ballot until 2012 at the earliest. By then, gay marriage will have been in place for eight years in the state. And the political fortunes of gay-marriage opponents have been moving steadily in the wrong direction for three years now.

What's so striking about the vote was how dramatically support for gay marriage has grown over time in the legislature since the state supreme court ordered the recognition of gay marriages to begin in 2004. Back then, before the state had any experience with such marriages, there was overwhelming opposition to the idea. Only about a third of the state's 200 legislators fully supported gay marriage.

The only real disagreement back then was whether the state should constitutionally ban both civil unions and gay marriages or just ban gay marriages. Opponents of gay marriage gambled in 2004 that they could hold out for a broad ban. It was a strategic decision that cost them.

The delay allowed gay-marriage supporters time to mobilize politically and to let the initial anxiety subside. More than 8,500 same-sex couples have gotten married in the state with no obvious or immediate effect on Massachusetts families or existing marriages.

Gay-marriage opponents attempted to come up with credible examples showing that it had caused harm. They pointed, for example, to Catholic Charities of Boston's exit from the adoption business. But most people understand that, however regrettable, that was a consequence of pre-existing state anti-discrimination law and of Catholic Charities' own decision to reverse its previous practice of serving gay couples. It was not caused by gay marriage.

Antigay marriage legislators were defeated in state elections. Others, like the Republican senate minority leader, actually became gay-marriage supporters. "Gay marriage has begun and life has not changed for the citizens of the commonwealth, with the exception of those who can now marry who could not before," he told the *New York Times* in 2005, a year after he'd been a lead sponsor of the amendment.

While gay-marriage opponents gathered 170,000 signatures for a petition to have the

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GREENWOOD KING

LeftOut

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safe-sex education. The original fact sheet included information about proper condom use and cited evidence that reflected that sex education did not promote increased sexual activity among young people. The revised sheet deleted instructions on condom use and focused instead on sexual abstinence and the frequency of condom failure, rather than the 98 percent effectiveness rate.

Next, the administration suggested that having an abortion could be a risk factor for breast cancer. Under the administration, federally funded crisis-pregnancy counselors consistently told those who inquired that, if they underwent an abortion, they would be at an increased risk for breast cancer. No matter that the National Cancer Institute has repeatedly found that there is no correlation between an increased risk of breast cancer and abortion.

While all presidential administrations spin the truth, this administration's willingness to ignore or change specific scientific facts has been so pronounced that, in February 2004, more than 60 leading scientists issued a joint statement that the Bush administration had suppressed and distorted scientific analysis from federal agencies, and had taken actions repeatedly that undermined the quality of scientific advisory panels.

Those concerns were reiterated in June 2004, when 48 Nobel laureates signed an open letter to the administration, charging that "the Bush administration has ignored unbiased scientific evidence in the policy-making that is so important to our collective welfare."

Now, former U.S. Surgeon General Richard Carmona, M.D., who recently ended his four-year tenure under Bush as America's top doctor, comes forward and describes the administration's quest to squelch the truth to advance its political agenda. During an interview on PBS's *NewsHour*, Dr. Carmona explained how the administration politicized the facts on subjects from stem-cell science to sex education. He gave specific examples, recalling that he couldn't get his report on second-hand smoke out timely because of "political vetting," and that global health reports were "stymied because people wanted it to be a political document and not a scientific document."

He also revealed that he was instructed to use Bush's name at least three times every time he gave a speech.

And now the administration releases its benchmark report on Iraq. In the report, the administration claims the surge is "working." In support of its claims, the administration reports that "unemployment has eased slightly and inflation is currently abating."

Really? On June 1, the Pentagon issued

a report estimating an annual inflation rate in Iraq of 33 percent and the Iraqi government estimated an unemployment rate of 17 percent.

Only this administration could call an annual inflation rate of 33 percent one that is "abating." Only this Administration could call a 17 percent unemployment rate "easing."

But then again, only Dubya could land on an aircraft carrier in May 2003 and proclaim the Iraq War, "Mission Accomplished." Tell that to the families of the 3472 soldiers who have died since Dubya accomplished his mission, whatever that was.

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

OutRight

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issue placed on the ballot, the state's amendment process requires that at least 50 state legislators, one-fourth of the 200 legislators in the state house and senate, vote to send such a citizen initiative to the ballot and to do so in two consecutive sessions. Legislators correctly understood that in such a process, by design, they are not merely a "pass-through" for a ballot fight. Under state law, they were entitled to, and did, exercise their own judgment about the issue.

Now, even the watered-down ban on gay marriages has only anemic and collapsing legislative support. As recently as January, the amendment was approved by 62 legislators. By mid-May, through good old-fashioned politicking, support had dwindled to the low 50s. By the day of the all-important vote, to the surprise of everyone, it had sunk to only 45.

An even bigger win for gay marriage, in my view, would have been a successful referendum vote in November 2008. But it's clear there's now a secure beachhead for gay marriage. And thanks to this decisive legislative support, it now has a democratic imprimatur it would not have had absent a strong political challenge.

The political consequences of allowing gay marriages to continue in Massachusetts are enormous. Much opposition to gay marriage has been based on hypothetical and not completely unreasonable fears about an important and untried reform. As time passes, it is growing more and more difficult to make these arguments. Doomsday scenarios are no longer believable, if they ever really were. In one state, at least, gay marriage is here to stay.

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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by Annise D. Parker

ADDRESSING ATROCITIES

What do Darfur, historic preservation, and electrical devices have in common?

The City of Houston is doing its part to make sure it cuts any economic ties to Sudan, target of world condemnation for genocide in Darfur. I intend to ensure that this remains the case as long as the killing continues in Darfur.

The City Controller's Office has reviewed the city's \$2.3 billion in investments and found none in foreign firms doing business with Sudan. But the city's portfolio, governed by state law and city ordinance, is fairly limited in scope. I recently sent memos to the city's three pension fund directors requesting that they, too, not invest in firms that conduct business in Sudan.

Many public and private entities across the country, including the president and the state of Texas, have taken similar steps. The difficulty lies in determining the "degrees of separation" (to quote a current parlor game) required for divestment. While U.S. companies cannot directly do business with Sudan,

some invest heavily in foreign firms, particularly Chinese oil companies, that do.

Memos were sent to the Houston Municipal Employees Pension system, the Houston Police Officers' Pension System, and the Houston Firefighters' Retirement and Relief Fund asking them to review their portfolios and divest of anything with ties to Sudan. I cannot compel these independent entities to act, but I hope they will join this effort.

I have also begun to research my personal investment portfolio and encourage you to do the same.

Lest we forget, City Council took an official stand in 1986 against apartheid in South Africa. As was the case in 1986, we have a responsibility to do what we can to end atrocities in Darfur.

Disappearing History

As I write this, another sad chapter opens in the city's multi-volume edition of "De-

molished Historic Buildings." A developer has started removing beautiful oaks on the west side of the historic River Oaks Shopping Center near Shepherd and West Gray.

A shiny, brand-new architecturally "compatible" structure will replace one of the city's few remaining beautiful Art Deco structures. The work begins despite public outcry, 25,000 names on a petition, and city efforts to declare both the Rivers Oaks and Alabama Theater sites (which Bookstop occupies) historic landmarks and provide tax incentives for historic preservation. The developer's plans for the theater sites themselves have not been officially announced, but preservationists know they have challenging work ahead. I confess a personal interest. When I was a girl my mother worked in a second-floor office in that center.

Allow me to belabor the obvious. Great cities preserve and honor their history, their

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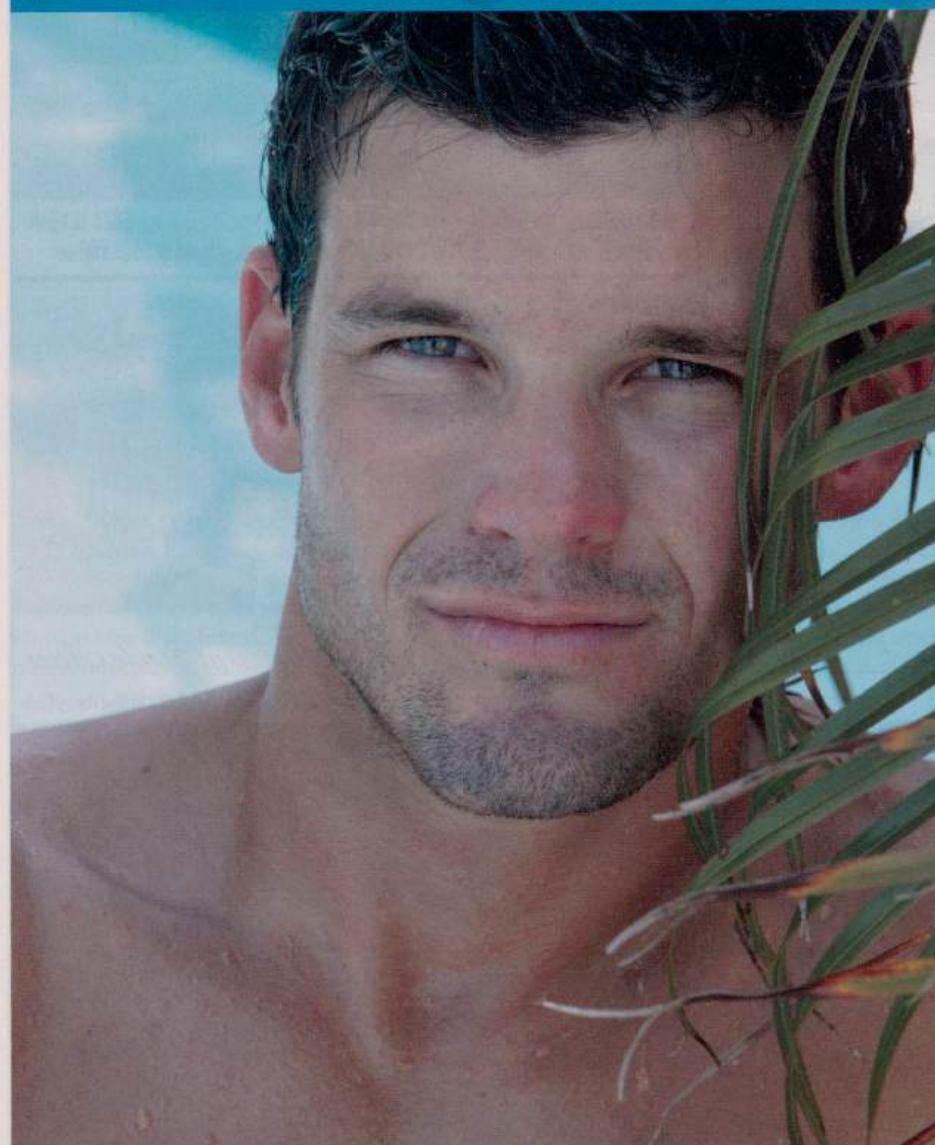
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InsideOut

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buildings and homes, beauty, and diversity. Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston. What would they be without an abundance of historic buildings and homes?

Unlike those cities, Houston is relatively new, experiencing most of its growth since WWII. We celebrate change and the new. But shouldn't we value even more those few remnants of our past? Houston has lost hundreds of beautiful old homes and historic structures since the city was founded in 1836. We cannot afford to lose one more.

Tasers

City Controller's Office auditors are currently studying the Houston Police Department's use of tasers. We are working with experts at the University of Houston and Sam Houston State University to review every use of tasers since the department began widespread use in 2004.

The comprehensive performance audit will include both a statistical analysis of the composite data and a review of individual incidents, from initial dispatch through final departmental review. Results of the audit will be available for public review when completed.

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. Parker's television program, *Money Matters*, airs Monday on the Municipal Channel (Comcast) at 2 and 8 a.m. and 2 and 8 p.m. The City Controller's webpage is www.houston.tx.gov/controller/index.html. To receive the controller's newsletter, send an email to cicely.wynne@cityofhouston.net.

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NOTHING TO CLAP ABOUT

Hard facts about syphilis and HIV

Let's play a little word association game. I'll say a word and you say the first thing that comes to mind.

Ready? Syphilis. What did you think of?

Maybe your first thought was Al Capone and his syphilis-related mental illness and death. Maybe you thought of the Tuskegee Experiment and all those black men who were unknowingly the subjects of a medical study gone horribly wrong. Or, maybe, you thought of the painless sore or "chancre" that is the telltale symptom of primary syphilis. All good answers, but my hope is that you will soon come to associate syphilis with HIV, especially if you are a gay man.

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted disease caused by light-colored, spirally shaped, worm-looking bacteria—*Treponema pallidum*—which is Greek and Latin for pale, twisted thread. The bacteria wiggle vigorously when viewed under a microscope. It's mildly disturbing to think about such wriggling go-

ing on inside one's body. But I digress....

Syphilis is transmitted during vaginal, anal, or oral sex when the chancre or syphilis sore of the infected person comes in direct contact with the mucous membrane of the sexual partner.

About three weeks following infection, symptoms occur. The primary stage of syphilis is characterized by one or more small, round, and painless sores that appear where syphilis entered the body. These chancres last about three to six weeks, and then disappear without treatment.

However, that doesn't mean syphilis has completely gone away. Rather, it then progresses to the secondary stage.

Symptoms of secondary syphilis may appear a few weeks after the chancre heals and include a faint, reddish-brown rash on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. Other possible symptoms of secondary syphilis are patchy hair loss, sore throat,

fever, and swollen lymph glands. The symptoms of secondary syphilis resolve with or without treatment, but without treatment, the infection progresses to the latent and late stages of the disease.

Late stage or tertiary syphilis can be present without symptoms for many years, but the infection is still there working to damage internal organs, such as the brain and nervous system, eyes, and heart. As a result, late-stage syphilis can cause dementia, blindness, and even death.

Since syphilis is such a serious condition, it is important to know if you are infected. Syphilis can be diagnosed by examining material from the chancre under the microscope, so if you have a painless sore, get to the doctor before it goes away. Syphilis can also be diagnosed by a safe and inexpensive blood test which can be administered by your private physician or health care staff at numerous community health providers in our area.

If you discover you've got syphilis, don't despair. It is easy to cure in the early stages. Since it is caused by a bacterial organism, antibiotics can eradicate the infection. For persons infected less than one year, a single shot of penicillin will do the trick. For longer-term infections, additional doses may be required. But the bottom line is this: Effective treatment for syphilis is available.

Now for the bad news. Just seven short years ago, the number of syphilis infections in the United States dropped to the lowest level on record. However, since that time, syphilis rates have risen sharply in our country. What is especially disturbing is that the majority of the new cases are occurring in gay and bisexual men.

Get this: Gay and bisexual men accounted for seven percent of the syphilis cases in 2000, but more than 60 percent just five years later!

Our own city's Department of Health and Human Services reports that Houston currently ranks second in the nation for the greatest number of primary and secondary syphilis cases. Men who have sex with men have accounted for 45 percent of primary and secondary syphilis cases diagnosed in Houston between January and May 2007.

Please be careful, my brothers. Having syphilis could set you up for other serious infections, like HIV.

It's a fact. Researchers have found that persons infected with syphilis have an increased chance of contracting HIV. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, syphilis increases one's chance of contracting HIV by an estimated two to five times!

That's because the sores or chancres caused by syphilis make it easier for HIV to enter the body. On the other hand, if you already have HIV and then become infected with syphilis, the chancre also makes it more likely you will transmit HIV to your partner. Such double-trouble was eloquently summarized by Dr. Khalil Ghanem of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine when he stated, "Syphilis and HIV have a close, deadly symbiotic relationship."

So what can a gay man about town do to avoid such symbiosis? For starters, leave the lights on! Seriously, get a look at your partner's parts. If you see a sore on the genitals, anus, or mouth, you might tell him you've developed a headache and politely excuse yourself.

Visible chancre or not, if you decide to engage in sexual activity with another person, you should always utilize barrier methods, such as condoms and dental dams. They will help prevent syphilis, HIV, and a whole host of other sexually transmitted infections.

To learn more about syphilis and its relationship to HIV, visit www.cdc.gov/std.

Kelly McCann is the chief executive officer of AIDS Foundation Houston. Details: www.aidshep.org.

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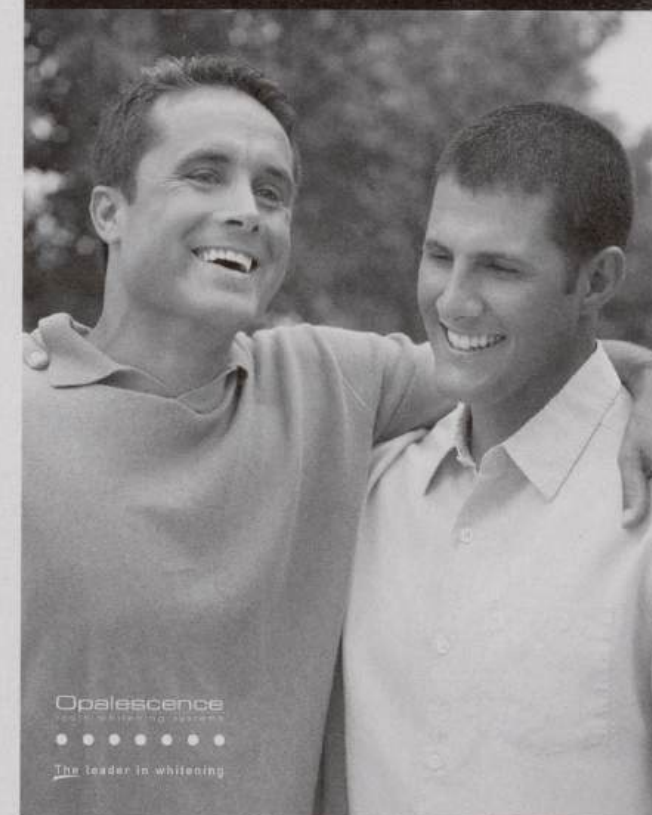
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NOW HEAR THIS

Four local talents make their own kind of music

by Eric A.T. Dieckman and Marene Gustin

Believe it or not, Houston has become something of a music town. OK, our city is no New York, L.A., or Nashville, but the scene has developed. Local gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender performers are part of that tuneful mix. This month, we profile four talents from our community who are putting their musical stamp on Houston.

This hot Latin babe's latest single "I Can't Like It"—created with publisher/producer Jeff P—is about as sexy as he is, and that's saying a lot. Recorded last month, the track is already making the club rounds, and Ramirez has already received over 1,000 plays on his MySpace page. His Spanish language "Carcel de Oro" and "Nadie" were indie dance hits last year.

"I never thought being a singer was possible," Ramirez says. "It was like the star that could never be reached. I begged to go to the High School for Performing Arts in L.A., but because of my family's religious beliefs, I couldn't."

Eric Alan Ramirez

Photo by Yvonne Feece

But at least Ramirez grew up listening to his dad's favored bossanova sounds mixed with his mom's penchant for pop (Donna Summers, Bread, and the Bee Gees). "Music was always on in the house. I thought some of my dad's music was boring, but now I love it. That sound inspires a lot of what I do."

Corporate travel agent by day, Ramirez worked as DJ by night, parlaying that into a stint as a backup dancer for Houston-based singer Miss Lupita ("Musica Lupita," February 2005 *OutSmart*). Ramirez now pursues his own singing career, which he describes as a "hybrid of Moenia/Alejandra Guzman/Lenny Kravitz/Miguel Bose."

Ramirez just celebrated his 31st birthday on July 21 with a blow-out performance at Chrome, a local nightclub. Next up: a full-length all-English album with Jeff P. "Music is pretty much my life right now," says this single guy, although he says he does try to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity and immigrant outreach programs. "I really believe in Karma." And Ramirez's fans really believe in him. —M.G. →

LISTEN

www.ericalan.com
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IN CONCERT

Eric Alan Ramirez plans to perform in Houston in August but did not have details at press time. Check his MySpace page for updates. In early September, he performs at the Taste the Jam music showcase in New York.

Now Hear This

continued from previous page

SoulFiXx

Photo by Yvonne Feece

It's approximately midnight at Chances on a Saturday. Funny car racing plays on ESPN on a wide-screen TV. Drinks are poured. Drinks are imbibed. Four women take the stage for their next set: Lisa Herrington (drums, djembe, bongos, daumbek), Jodie Gonzales (back-up vocals/harmony, shaker, tambourine), Alsha Villagomez (joining them to fill in on keyboards), and Shanti Lopez (rhythm guitar, lead vocals). The band: Soul FiXx.

The group kicks off with a simplified cover of "Love Song" by The Cure. Lopez and Gonzales' harmony on the song is stoic, earnest, but sweet. A couple dances playfully on the floor in front of the stage. The song concludes with applause. A few songs later, Soul FiXx wants people dancing. Lopez and Gonzales call out to some of the regulars by name. They have that kind of relationship with the Chances crowd. Soul FiXx knows the people in the club. The audience knows Soul FiXx. It's like a family gathering.

Lopez and Herrington met in May 2004 at the open mic at Chances. When Lopez and a friend took the mic, Lopez invited Herrington to join in on bongos. Herrington played impressively. "She knew every beat and every pause," says Lopez. The two became girlfriends that July and have been playing together ever since. Gonzales joined them last year. Last month, the band met up with Villagomez, who has a solo project in the works, and invited her to fill in some sonic gaps here and there.

Their music is acoustic rock, mostly originals, many with lyrics inspired by the love Lopez and Herrington share. Covers include Mazzy Star and Beth Orton, among others. Orton and Joplin are among founding member Lopez' inspiration, that and her musical family. Gonzales also draws inspiration from her mother and father (the latter of whom is a drummer). Perhaps that lends to the feeling that a Soul FiXx can seem like a family affair. —M.G.

LISTEN

www.myspace.com/soulfixx

IN CONCERT

Soul FiXx performs on August 24, 9-11:30 p.m., at the Electronics Museum (1110 Winburn). \$5 cover. On November 4, the group performs at 6 p.m. at The Last Concert, opening an evening of local music.

Diva House Rules

Christy Claxton, one of our favorite Texans, leaves her beautiful home base in LaGrange for a concert this month in Houston. This one-night performance on August 18 at a private residence in the Heights is part of the ongoing Diva House Concert series launched by Deborah Bell, the activist and KPFT Queer Voices co-host.

"I rarely do it anymore, but I promised my friends who host Diva Concerts that I'd play a show for them," Claxton wrote. "I guess I better figure out what the heck I'm going to play and start practicing like more than the lazy armchair player I've become."

Claxton warns that seating for the 7:30 p.m. concert, (\$10 each) is limited. Reservations: christy@christyclaxton.com. Details: www.christyclaxton.com.



Next month, Claxton's popular outdoor Bear Creek Concerts return with a September 15 performance at Bear Creek Camp in LaGrange (about 100 miles west of Houston) On the bill: Garrison Starr and Alice Peacock. \$10. Details: 979/249-2519, www.bearcreekconcerts.com, www.myspace.com/bearcreekconcerts.

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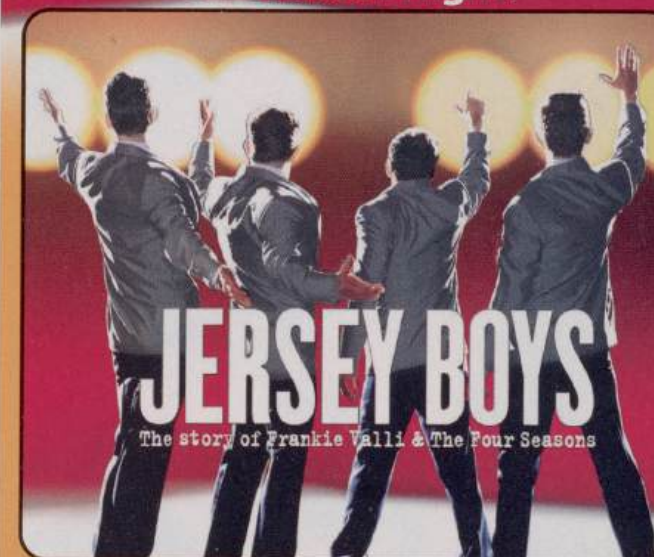
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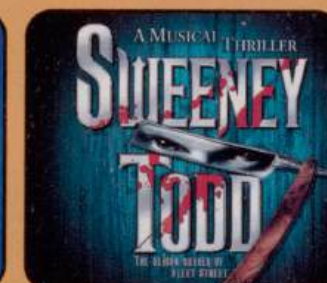
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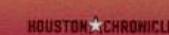
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Now Hear This

continued from page 34



Allen Hanks

Photo by John Conroy

I believe that the gifts God has given me are to be used for God," Allen Hanks explains. The singer/songwriter, who has previously focused on Christian and gospel music, is moving away from faith-inspired music, but not entirely. Though his religious background has exerted a profound effect on his music, Hanks says he finds reaching an audience solely through a Christian message to be a challenge, and now favors more of a pop and rock style.

On top of that, being gay in the contemporary Christian music world, which is known for its intolerance of the GLBT community, led to problems early on. Hanks once sang with a professional Christian recording group, but "when they found out about me...of course, it was done," he laughs in retrospect. "All of those ties and networking groups had been severed. It was one of the hardest things I ever had to face. To see your possible future disappear right before your very eyes is something that can change and scar a person for life."

Still, life goes on. As the religious adage goes, God shuts one door, and opens another. Hanks believes the church is gradually becoming more accepting of GLBT people. He recently sang and shared his life story with the second largest Methodist church in Alabama—needless to say, a straight congregation. No tomatoes were thrown. No words of condemnation were whispered. For Hanks, it "had to be one of the most awesome feelings ever. They accepted me, and many said the day would come that I could share my story in any church."

For now, Hanks is performing music from his most recent recording, *Not Like Mine*, and writing new songs, mostly rock and pop, for his next album. How does he draw his crowds, how has he built his following? "I have a following?" he laughs. "My mom doesn't count. MySpace has been the tool to getting my last four gigs lined up." —ED.

LISTEN

www.allenhanks.com
www.myspace.com/allenhanks

IN CONCERT

Allen Hanks was working to finalize some gigs at press time, including a possible performance at a local church this month. Check his MySpace page for details. →

Trans Radio

JD Doyle, our own GLBT music historian, expert, and fan, concludes his epic four-part series on transgender performers with his *Queer Music Heritage* program on August 27, 9 p.m., which airs during the weekly *Queer Voices* show on KPFT-FM. On the show: jazz musician Jennifer Leitham and nightclub performer Veronica Klaus. The series, which began with the May show, has included interviews with San Francisco-based rock band Lipstick Conspiracy, cabaret singer Alexandra Billings, Lucas Silveira (the transman leader of The Clinks), and the legendary Christine Jorgensen (1926–1989). Listen to all four *Queer Music Heritage* episodes at www.queermusicheritage.org.

Come to the cabaret: Nightclub singer Alexandra Billings was featured in JD Doyle's radio series on transgender performers.



DAVID MULLEN

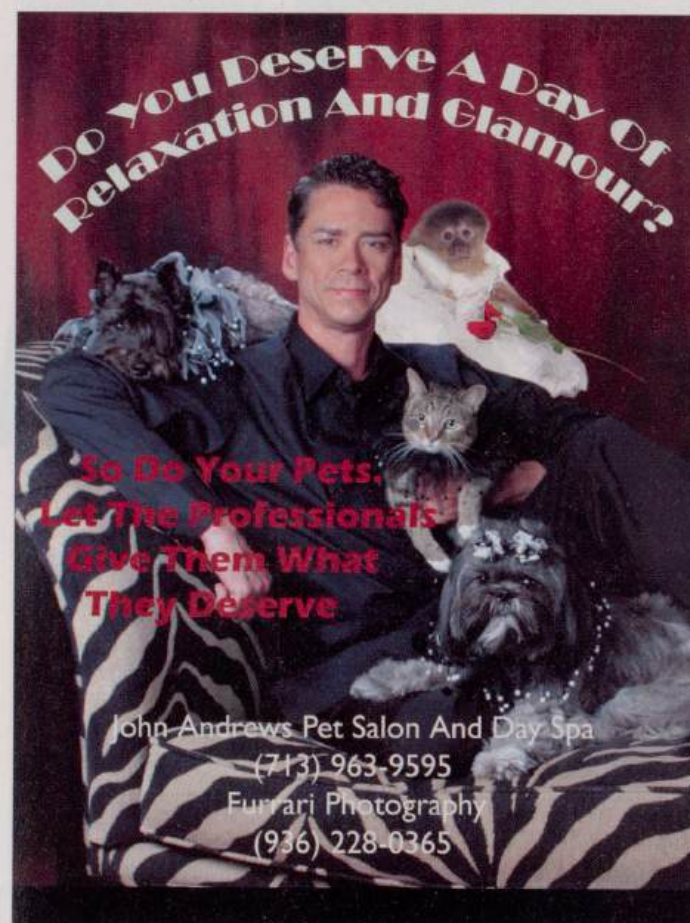
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Now Hear This

continued from page 36

Josh Duffy

Photo by
Gary Laird

This blond babe is a triple threat: singer, songwriter, and flute player. The barely 23-year-old hunk's debut release, "Artificial," which was released earlier this year, received international radio play on Sirius satellite radio, and the dance remix peaked at number four on the top-20 charts. But there's nothing artificial about him.

"It's a pop, rock, dance sound, but it's very personal," Duffy says. "The title song is inspired by someone I met as a summer camp counselor who was a drag queen and a good friend, and by the words 'artificially flavored' on the back of a soda can. I wrote it in five to 10 minutes.

"I'm so pleased with the feedback with the whole album. Three singles have been picked up by Sirius, so I am very lucky with my first album."

Duffy says that lesbians, "in particular," seem to like "Safe" (on which Duffy plays the flute). "They tell me they cry. I didn't mean to make them cry, but I love that they love it!" Another song that became a Duffy hit was inspired by his background. "'Call Back' is a song about common courtesy, about calling back. I'm a Southern boy. I moved here from Baton Rouge, so I was raised that you call someone back!" Audiences yell out "Call back!" in live performances, and it became Duffy's first number-one song.

Duffy is partnered with a man outside the music business. "I've been happily married for three years to the love of my life, Joseph. He's in construction, so he's been teaching me to paint and lay tile. We have three babies, cats named Dolce, Bella, and Cotton."

Duffy, who performed at the 2007 Pride Festival in June, launches an East Coast tour next month and is working on a new album. His ultimate goal is to win a Grammy ("and world peace!" he adds), but he says he is happy with the success he has achieved so far. —M.G.

LISTEN

www.joshduffyonline.com
www.myspace.com/joshduffyonline

IN CONCERT

Josh Duffy performs on September 20, 11 p.m., at the club Splash in Baton Rouge. ■

Choice Music

Three frankly queerly artists are included on the 20-track women's rights benefit compilation *Songs for Choice*, produced by Houston resident Darrin Brindle. Joyelle of the Canadian electronic group Sonicjoy is bisexual. The duo The World According to Brent Hunter vs. Nina Ramsby consists of the bi Hunter and Ramsby, a lesbian. Other artists who contributed tracks to the digital release include James Harland Right and Amanda Ghost, who wrote the Grammy-nominated James Blunt hit "You're Beautiful." *Songs for Choice* (dPulse) is available for \$9.99 through online distributors including iTunes, Yahoo, and Rhapsody. Sales proceeds directly benefit Planned Parenthood, NARAL Pro-Choice America, and Emily's List. Details: www.songsforchoice.com.



Brindle, who we previously featured with partner Mark Eggleston because of their activism with the annual Freedom To Marry Week ("The Marrying Men," February 2007 OutSmart), is preparing a new GLBT rights compilation, *Songs for Equality*, which will be released in early 2008.

—Tim Brookover



Li Zhanyang, *The Tiger and the Beauty*, 2003, painted fiberglass, collection of Robert, Jereann, and Holland Chaney.
© Li Zhanyang and Galerie Urs Meile, Beijing-Lucerne

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Cher-ly there: Lana Blake appears as the '80s dollified diva.
PHOTO: JOHN CONROY



This month, Mattel will turn back time when it releases three brand-new Cher dolls. These latest mini-Chers represent the gay icon from three different eras of her career, decked out in costumes designed by—who else?—Bob Mackie: 1970s Cher in “Half Breed” headdress, 1980s Cher in the notorious cut-up-to-there rig from the “If I Could Turn Back Time” video, and 2000s Cher in “Ring Master” costume from her farewell tour. In honor of the new Cher line, we asked local diva and noted Cher illusionist Lana Blake to pose as Jack McFarland’s favorite star. By day, Blake is a stylist at Figaro Salon and Spa. By night, when she turns into a “Dark Lady” (you knew we had to go there), she hosts the weekly strip-night contest on Sunday, 11 p.m., at JR’s Bar & Grill and is available for Cher turns at private events (contact lanablake2000@yahoo.com). In August, Blake and other Cher fans and fanatics—not to mention gypsies, tramps, and thieves—will want to hit their favorite kid-goody emporium to snatch up the new dolls. Toys R Us may never be the same. —*Tim Brookover*

The Contenders

Looking ahead to the 2008 presidential election, the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force releases an analysis of the Democratic and Republican candidates and their positions on GLBT issues

by Tim Brookover

Dennis Kucinich is the only contender among the leading 19 presidential candidates to register a perfect score in the analysis of hopefuls from both major political parties released by the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force. The Democratic congressman from Ohio has publicly supported the equal rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Americans across eight categories: a trans-

gender-inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act; HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment; lifting the military ban against gay and lesbian people; trans-inclusive hate crimes laws; civil unions/domestic partnerships; same-sex marriage; same-sex adoption; and opposition to the Federal Marriage Amendment. Republican Mitt Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, is the only candidate who has publicly opposed all eight issues identified by the task force, which compiled the information in its 35-page report from the candidates'

websites and campaign materials, candidate voting records, and news reports.

All of the Democratic candidates support most of the eight issues, including transgender-inclusive nondiscrimination and hate crimes laws. Only two Democratic candidates support full marriage equality for same-sex couples (Kucinich and Mike Gravel, the former senator from Alaska). All Democratic candidates support other types of partnership recognition rights, such as civil unions. "Across the board, Republican candidates were in



The candidates most likely to...: Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and John Edwards, the leading candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination, are among the 19 White House contenders included in the report released by the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force.

opposition to the majority of LGBT issues, with most publicly opposing lifting the military's ban on openly lesbian, gay and bisexual service members," the task force stated in releasing the analysis on June 27.

"The differences between the Democratic and Republican fields of candidates on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues are shockingly stark and profoundly depressing," task force executive director Matt Foreman said in the statement. "Over time, the majority of Americans have moved to support basic fairness for LGBT Americans, including nondiscrimination and hate crimes laws, repeal of 'Don't Ask Don't Tell,' and protections for our families. Sadly, the Republican field has gone in the opposite direction, still clearly pandering to the venom of the so-called religious right. This only means that they will continue to use our lives as cultural wedge fodder whenever it's deemed politically expedient."

In spite of the Democratic candidates' overall superior support of the GLBT community, Foreman had stern words for the blue party. "The public statements and voting records of the Democratic candidates show that they are clearly light years ahead of the Republicans on almost every issue important to the LGBT community. Nevertheless, the lack of courage on marriage equality is disturbing on both political and moral grounds. Politically, being for civil unions but against marriage doesn't bring a single voter over from the other side. Morally, it's hard to understand how a Democratic candidate can say to people they know individually and to one of the most loyal and generous voting blocs the party has, 'Sorry, I just can't go there—you understand, right?' Actually, we don't."

The task force plans to update the analysis in the fall, according to communications director Roberta Sklar. Read the full report at www.thetaskforce.org. ■



Full Support

Dennis Kucinich (l) and Mike Gravel are the only presidential candidates who support full marriage equality for same-sex couples.



On the Air

Seven Democratic presidential candidates have signed on to participate in an August 9 televised forum co-presented by the Logo network and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation. The 8 p.m. event will be presented live before a Los Angeles studio audience and broadcast without commercial interruption on Logo, the GLBT-content channel, and via live stream at www.logoonline.com.

The forum marks the first time major presidential candidates have addressed a live GLBT television audience. The candidates who had accepted at press time (updates: www.hrc.org), will make brief speeches, then converse with panelists **Melissa Etheridge**, the activist and entertainer, and HRC president **Joe Solmonese**. Logo and HRC invited leading Democratic and Republican candidates to participate. At press time, no Republican candidates had accepted.

Keep Up

As the presidential campaign heats up, GLBT voters can keep track of the candidates' stands on our interests through these national organizations:

Democratic National Committee Gay & Lesbian Leadership Council
202/863-8000 • www.democrats.org/a/communities/lgbt_community
Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund
202-VICTORY • www.victoryfund.org
Human Rights Campaign
800/777-4723 • www.hrc.org
Log Cabin Republicans
202/347-5306 • www.logcabin.org

National Center for Transgender Equality
202/903-0112 • www.nctequality.org
National Gay & Lesbian Task Force
202/393-5177 • www.thetaskforce.org
National Stonewall Democrats
202/625-1382 • www.nationalstonewalldemocrats.org
National Transgender Advocacy Coalition
978/373-8898 • www.ntac.org

KEY: ✓ Yes ✗ No ? Unclear/ Unknown	DEMOCRATS								REPUBLICANS										
	Joe Biden	Hillary Clinton	Chris Dodd	John Edwards	Mike Gravel	Dennis Kucinich	Barack Obama	Bill Richardson	Sam Brownback	Jim Gilmore	Rudy Giuliani	Mike Huckabee	Duncan Hunter	John McCain	Ron Paul	Mitt Romney	Tom Tancredo	Fred Thompson	Tommy Thompson
Supports transgender-inclusive ENDA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?	?	✗	✗	?	✗	?	✗	?
Supports HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✗	?	✗	✗	?	✗	✗	?	?
Supports lifting military ban	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	?	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	?	✗
Supports transgender-inclusive hate crimes laws	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✗	?	?	✗	✗	✗	?	✗	?	✗	?
Supports civil unions/DP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	?	✗	?	✗	?	?	?
Supports same-sex marriage	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	?	✗
Supports same-sex adoption	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?	?	✗	?	✗	✗	✗	?	?
Opposes Federal Marriage Amendment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	?	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	?

*Supports sexual orientation inclusion, unclear about gender identity/transgender inclusion

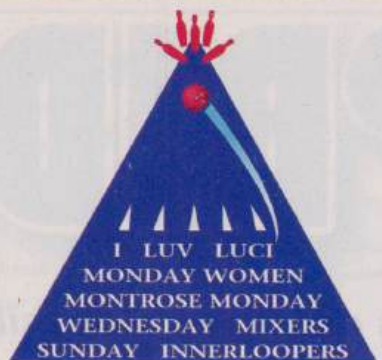
PROUD OUT LOUD

On parade night, the Westheimer corridor rocked with the cheers of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgenders, the questioning, the curious, our allies, and little kids just there for the beads

Photographs by Dalton DeHart and Yvonne Feece

Perhaps deterred by rainstorms during the day on June 23, the crowd was noticeably smaller than usual for the nighttime GLBT Pride Parade this year. But there was a powerful burst of enthusiasm from the crowds that lined Westheimer, as always. Here are some of our favorite glimpses from our favorite summertime tradition.





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Decision: PRIDE

As Pride Houston considers a vote this month on a possible move of the annual parade, we offer a recap of the controversy over the fate of local Pride festivities along with an update

by Mariana Bekker

Photo by Yvonne Feece

August may prove to be an important month for a controversy that has been churning for months through the local GLBT community. At a meeting on August 25, the board of directors of Pride Houston is scheduled to vote whether to move the Pride parade and festival to a different date and location.

Pride Houston, the nonprofit organization that produces the annual festivities, last year presented the idea of moving the annual parade and festival from its traditional Montrose site to downtown Houston as well as possibly changing the date from late June to September. Pride Houston, through an initial task force it created last year to consider the notions, originally suggested that the proposed changes might take place as early as 2008 (later changed to 2009, according to some Pride Houston sources).

This prospect created much debate with Houston's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community and even prompted an opposing editorial in the *Houston Chronicle*. This dissention derives principally from the belief by many in the community that Montrose is its heart and soul.

A brief history lesson is in order: Historically, Montrose became the gay epicenter circa the early 1960s, says Ray Hill, the prominent figure in the local and national GLBT community and former member of a second Pride Houston task force, which concluded its work last month.

"There was nothing about Montrose that made it inherently a place for gays," says Hill, who is also one of the community's unofficial historians. Hill explains that gay men started migrating to bars in the Montrose district because they were being poorly treated in the downtown area at the time. Bars like Mary's...Naturally and Encore opened in Montrose and soon became popular, attracting gay and lesbian people who then wished to reside near their social hangouts.

But, according to Hill, the era that most impacted Montrose, cementing its reputation as the center of the community, arrived in the early 1980s when the rapid and sudden spread of HIV/AIDS killed a large number of gay men in a short amount of time.

"There were four to six funerals a week for people I knew," Hill says. "Everybody had somebody's ashes in their home."

Hill adds that these ashes are located all over Montrose—some are even buried in the backyard of Mary's—eternally uniting the gay community and Montrose.



Last signpost? This month the Pride Houston board may determine whether the Hollywood Video marquee promotes future Pride celebrations in Montrose.

"To move Pride week celebration out of Montrose is challenging to all of those ashes scattered over Montrose," Hill says. "Those ashes give us claim to that truth...it would be as if we were abandoning those memories and that history."

And while Montrose is a significant location for the local GLBT community, Hill also points out the importance of the date of Pride events. June marks the anniversary of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion in New York City, considered the official beginning of the same-sex equal rights movement.

Hill is not alone in his sentiments for keeping Pride events at their longstanding place and date. At the beginning of 2007, a new community organization called People Opposed to Moving Our Parade Out of Montrose (POMPOM) formed in opposition to Pride Houston's proposed changes. The group altered its name to People Opposed to Moving Pride Out of Montrose in May.

According to POMPOM chairman John Nechman, a group of local activists created the organization in response to the protests of people in the community who did not want to see the parade moved. (Throughout the controversy, feelings about the festival have remained less intense on both sides of the issue.)

"Every time the issue has been brought up, the reaction from the community has been harsh, it's been immediate, it's been passionate," Nechman says. Describing downtown Houston as "soulless," Nechman asserts that there are no advantages to moving the parade outside of Montrose.

"No reason could overcome moving this parade out of the heart of the GLBT community," he says.

Others, who include some Pride Houston volunteers, disagree. Pride Houston outreach co-chair Rob Camp thinks moving the parade and festival is a good idea for the GLBT community. He says most of the opposition comes from people that he refers to as "old timers" who are resistant to change.

"There's a fear that if we relocate to a downtown venue that Montrose will no longer be the heart of the community," Camp said. "Demographically, most of the community lives outside of [Loop] 610 anyway."

According to Camp, cities that have moved their Pride parades and festivals to downtown venues have been successful (read →

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www.myspace.com/sobehouston

Decision: Pride continued from page 46

"Seattle Scene" for a summary of a differing result in that city at www.OutSmartMagazine.com). A larger downtown event will attract more people from surrounding states, thus bringing in more tourism dollars for Houston, Camp says. The assertion about increased local tourism has been a prominent point in the Pride Houston argument for the downtown move.

"As time has gone on, there are more and more reasons for people to be proud," Camp says. "We think we can grow from that by making it an even better event."

Camp says that by taking events downtown, Houston will fix many of the problems the parade and festival consistently have faced in Montrose, including lack of public toilets and parking and the presence of crime. Supporters for the change also stress that moving the parade and festival from June to a proposed September date will address the heat problem. Those opposed to the changes, including Hill and Nechman, state that September can be just as hot and humid as June.

Pride Houston originally selected September as a good alternate month, says organization president Carol Wyatt, because of logistics. "I think it might be an easier sale if we were to say we were going to move it to mid October or March," she says. "Those are beautiful months in our town, but there's just no room on the city calendar to do that if we move downtown."

Unfortunately for those who want to move the Pride parade and festival, the majority of the community seems to be siding against any changes.

After the work of the initial task force was met by considerable and vocal skepticism, notably at a public meeting in January, Pride Houston assembled a second 15-member task force to solicit feedback from the community on the proposed changes. The task force consisted of former Pride grand marshals, members of the first task force, individuals connected with POMPOM, and concerned members of the community identified by Pride Houston. Not all members remained involved with the task force throughout its work. Hill was one of the members who resigned before the task force completed its report. "By the end of the process there were five active members who still represented differing points of view," the task force report to the board indicated.

According to task force member Deborah Murphy, the group was asked to determine the community's stance regarding the location and date of Pride events through an online and in-person vote process. "We were charged with developing pros and cons and getting them out there, then getting a poll of community preferences," she says. Murphy,

who indicates that she represented POMPOM interests on the task force, praises the structure of the task force and the process, which included leadership by an outside facilitator.

The results of the poll, conducted online from June 18 to June 24 through the Pride Houston website and on June 23 by task force volunteers at the festival and parade sites, indicated that an overwhelming majority of people who voted (73.7 percent) want to keep the events in Montrose during the month of June. Only 15.6 percent of voters expressed a wish to move the parade and festival to a downtown location in September. A total of 649 votes were cast in person, and there were 223 online votes, according to the task force report (published at www.pridehouston.org).

These results stand in stark contrast to those of an online survey conducted last year by Pride Houston in which a majority of respondents indicated a preference for the proposed changes. Some community observers, however, questioned the validity of that survey, claiming a bias for the downtown move in the content of the questions and structure of the survey.

The Pride Houston board of directors retains the decision-making authority when it votes later this month (like many community groups, Pride Houston is a private, nonprofit organization governed by a board that does not directly answer to the community). At press time, reports from the board seemed to indicate a likely "no" vote on any move, at least for 2008, at the August 25 meeting—in part because of the task force report and other community feedback and in part because Pride Houston faces a debt after the 2007 events.

Wyatt says the results determined by the second task force may indeed influence how the Pride Houston board votes. "We've always been very interested in the community's feedback and position on this issue," she says. "It's a huge part of what our evaluation process will be."

Wyatt adds that several factors will contribute to a board decision on where and when future Pride celebrations will be held.

"Part of it is 'How does the community feel about it' and part of it is 'Are we as an organization capable and ready to tackle the challenges that the move will take,'" she says.

"There's a lot that goes into this."

ON THE WEB

At www.OutSmartMagazine.com, find links to past *OutSmart* articles on this issue.

Marianna Bekker recently moved to Houston from Boise, Idaho, where she graduated with honors from Boise State University. She served as a reporter and arts and entertainment editor for the campus newspaper, *The Arbiter*. This is her first contribution to *OutSmart*. Tim Brookover also contributed to this article.

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Gold (and Williams) Standard

The gay men who founded the home-furnishings brand Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams bring their contemporary style to Houston with a new store

by Tim Brookover

Eighteen years ago, Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams founded the home-furnishings firm that now bears both of their names (Williams' name was pegged to original Mitchell Gold brand in 2005). Sometime this fall, their much-delayed Kirby Drive store will open on Kirby Drive, providing a freestanding home for their line of contemporary, urban furniture and accessories. The 11,500-square-foot space—one of the MG + BW Signature Stores in the United States and Mexico—is the second store in Texas. The first opened earlier this year in Austin (the company expansion into Texas is fitting—Williams is a Dallas native). →



Two men and a pooch: Bob Williams (l) and Mitchell Gold, founders of Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, pose with their bulldog, Lulu. Their new Houston store debuts this fall. PHOTOS: Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams.

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From the Gold vault: Inspired by Parisian sofas of the 1920s, the Baxter sofa, above, is available in 82- and 90-inch lengths. From about \$1,995. Red lacquer-painted drawer and cabinet interiors accent the alder-and-cherry Mao Now buffet, below. From about \$1,795. This collection also includes a chest, side table, and armoire. The site of the much-anticipated Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams store on Kirby Drive, right, will receive some exterior upgrades before the doors open. More info: www.mitchellgold.com.



Gold (and Williams) Standard continued from page 50

Besides purveying some sharp furniture seen in queer-popular entertainments like *Will & Grace* and *Sex and the City*, Gold and Williams (once partners in life and business, now just in commerce) also share their convictions with their consumers. On the MG + BW website, they prominently present information on nonprofit service organizations they support, including the GLBT groups Empire State Pride Agenda (New York), GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network), Human Rights Campaign, Matthew Shepard Foundation, and Soulforce. In 2005, Gold and religious activist Rev. Jimmy Creech founded Faith in America, a Raleigh, North Carolina-based organization devoted to ending bigotry in the church against GLBT people. Faith in America recently made national news with its series of provocative advertisements that commemorated the 40th anniversary of the *Loving vs. Virginia* Supreme Court decision, which struck down laws prohibiting the marriage of people of different ethnicities. The ads featured prominent interracial couples, including former Florida governor Jeb Bush and

his wife, Colomba Bush. (View the entire campaign at www.faithinamerica.info).

In an interview in June with the website About.com, Gold explained the mission of Faith in America: "We simply must band together and stop history from repeating itself. Some, not all, Christians have marginalized minorities in America in the past based on their interpretations of the Bible. They are doing the same thing today to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community. The gay community has been afraid to link the history of discrimination to today's discrimination for fear it would be disrespectful to people of color. It is not. The common link is religion-based bigotry."

In the same interview (part of a GLBT Pride series with well-known individuals from the community), Gold responded to a question about the one gay person he would like to meet. He responded, "The gay or lesbian high school student feeling alone and isolated and contemplating suicide. To tell them they are not alone, and that it gets better—much better." Obviously, Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams is about more than just stylish furniture. ■



By the Book

Here are five tips from Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams' new home-design book, *Let's Get Comfortable* (Meredith Books):

Furnish for comfort first. In the living room, start with the sofa—and don't agonize. For the dining room, upholstered chairs can't be beat. They'll make guests want to linger at the table for hours.

To lower stress, think "collecting" rather than "decorating." Make your goal to find furnishings you'll want to live with in five to 10 years so that updating will mean only rearranging a few pieces or changing pillows.

Love your imperfections. Little things can have a big impact. That's why we like wood furniture with some distressing—no worries about making the first mark.

Incorporate everyday luxuries. What are yours? Upholstery in crisp white slipcovers, made easy-care by being washable white denim? The privacy of a master bedroom with a small sitting area for morning coffee and a bed with padded headboard for late-night retreats?

Surround yourself with things you love. We believe photos of family and friends make a home welcoming, as do collections of your favorite things. Make collecting part of your life, finding pieces in your travels. Do it for pleasure rather than investment.

OFFICIAL GAYEST & GREATEST BALLOT

11th Annual OutSmart Readers' Choice Awards 2007

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1. Join us at one of OutSmart's G&G ballot parties.

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Friday, August 10, 10 p.m.

3rd Coast Beach Bar/Galveston
Host: one of the Island's leading divas

Saturday, August 11, 10:30 p.m.

Undercurrent/Galveston
Hosts: Gulf Coast Drag Mafia

Wednesday, August 15, 10:30 p.m.

JR's Bar & Grill • Host: Kofi

Wednesday, August 22, 10 p.m.

Guava Lamp • Host: Toddicus
Guests: Texas Renaissance Festival Players

Thursday, August 23, 9 p.m.

Chances • Host: Fluff the Kat



OFFICIAL RULES: One ballot per person. All ballots must have a name and verifiable email address. Only OSM official ballots may be used. No reproductions. OSM reserves the right to disqualify ballots that appear to be reproduced and/or mass produced.

2. Mail or Drop your completed ballot to OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston, TX 77006. Or drop your ballot at one of these spots:

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- Baba Yega—2607 Grant
- Chances—1100 Westheimer
- Guava Lamp—570 Waugh
- Houston GLBT Community Center—3400 Montrose, Suite 207
- JR's—808 Pacific
- OutSmart—3406 Audubon

IN GALVESTON

- 3rd Coast Beach Bar—31st and Seawall
- The Pink Dolphin—9th and Seawall
- Robert's Lafitte—2501 Ave Q
- Undercurrent—2409 Market

3. Vote online at www.OutSmartMagazine.com

The 11th annual Gayest & Greatest results will appear in the October issue of OutSmart.

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enter a drawing for prizes.

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_____ HOUSTON _____ GALVESTON

★ ★ ★ PEOPLE ★ ★ ★

1. Community Hero

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

2. Most Prominent GLBT Activist

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

3. Most Valuable Volunteer

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

4. Leading Fundraiser

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

5. Favorite Local Politician

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

6. Best GLBT Business Person

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

7. Best Attorney

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

8. Best Eye Doctor

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

9. Best Physician

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

10. Best Dentist

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

11. Best Chiropractor

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

12. Best Mental Health Therapist

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

13. Best Massage Therapist

- a. Male (Where does he work?) _____
b. Female (Where does she work?) _____

14. Best Personal Trainer

- a. Male (Where does he work?) _____
b. Female (Where does she work?) _____

15. Best Veterinarian

- a. Male (Where does he work?) _____
b. Female (Where does she work?) _____

16. Best Astrologer

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

17. Best Interior Decorator

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

18. Best Insurance Agent

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

19. Best Real Estate Agent

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

20. Best Hairdresser

- a. Male (Where does he work?) _____
b. Female (Where does she work?) _____

21. Favorite Community Photographer

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

22. Favorite Radio Personality

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

23. Best TV Personality

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

24. Favorite Pro Athlete

- a. Male _____
b. Female _____

★ ★ ★ COMMUNITY ★ ★ ★

1. Favorite Social Organization

2. Fav. Philanthropic Organization

3. Fav. Community Organization

4. Fav. Benefit Event of the Year

5. Fav. National GLBT Organization

6. Favorite Place to Worship

★ ★ ★ BUSINESS/SERVICES ★ ★ ★

1. Most Supportive Business of the GLBT Community

- a. (Local) _____
b. (National) _____

INTERNET

2. Best GLBT Website

- a. (Local) _____
b. (National) _____

3. Best Internet Provider

4. Best GLBT TV/Cable Channel

FINANCES & THE HOME

5. Best Bank/Credit Union

6. Best (Local) Financial Advisor

7. Best Mortgage Company

8. Best Title Company

9. Best Home Builder

10. Best Home Remodeling Contractor

11. Best Furniture Store

12. Best Furniture Store on a Budget

13. Best Landscaping Company

14. Best Garden/Nursery Supply

STUFF WE BUY

15. Best Grocery Store

16. Best Specialty Food Store

17. Best Liquor Store

18. Best Place to Buy Nutritional Products

19. Best Auto Dealership

20. Best Place to Buy Music

21. Best Place to Buy Books

22. Best Place to Buy Cellular Phones

23. Best Women's Clothing Store

24. Best Men's Clothing Store

25. Best Jewelry Store

26. Best Place to Buy Eyewear

27. Best Place to Buy Pet Supplies

28. Best Antiques Store

29. Best Resale Shop

30. Best Place to Buy Erotic Playthings

31. Best Place to Buy Drag Essentials

SERVICES

32. Best Catering Firm

33. Best Florist

34. Best Tattoo Parlor

35. Best Dry Cleaners

36. Best Day Spa

37. Best Cosmetic Skin Care Center

38. Best Tanning Salon

39. Best Gym/Place to Work Out

TRAVEL

40. Best Local B&B

41. Best Local Hotel

42. Best Airline

43. Best Local Travel Agency

44. Best Travel Website

45. Best GLBT Cruise or Tour Company

46. Best Car Rental Agency

★ ★ ★ DINING ★ ★ ★

1. Best New Restaurant

2. Best Restaurant for People Watching

3. Best 24-Hour Restaurant

4. Best Restaurant for Elegant Dining

5. Best Restaurant for Cheap Eats

6. Best Restaurant for Outdoor Dining

7. Best Breakfast

8. Best Brunch

9. Best Lunch Spot _____
10. Best Dessert _____
11. Best Barbecue _____
12. Best British _____
13. Best Cajun _____
14. Best Chinese _____
15. Best Cuban _____
16. Best Greek _____
17. Best Hamburger _____
18. Best Indian _____
19. Best Italian _____
20. Best Japanese _____
21. Best Mexican _____
22. Best Mediterranean _____
23. Best Pizza _____
24. Best Sushi _____
25. Best Thai _____
27. Best Vegetarian _____
28. Best Vietnamese _____
29. Best Dining Category We Forgot (and Restaurant)
 - a. Category _____
 - b. Restaurant _____

★ ★ ★ DRINKS & SPIRITS ★ ★ ★

1. Best Coffee House _____
2. Favorite Wine Bar _____
3. Best Happy Hour _____
4. Best Margarita _____
5. Best Martini _____
6. Favorite Brand of Beer _____
7. Favorite Brand of Liquor _____
8. Favorite Brand of Energy Drink _____



THANK YOU for voting.

Results will appear in the
October issue of *OutSmart*.

★ ★ ★ ENTERTAINMENT/NIGHTLIFE ★ ★ ★

1. Favorite Gay Bar _____
2. Best Piano Bar _____
3. Best Women's Bar _____
4. Best Club for Dancing _____
5. Best Drag Show Bar _____
6. Best Bar to Two Step _____
7. Best Place to Shoot Pool _____
8. Best Place to Watch Male Dancers _____
9. Best Place to Show Off Your Leather _____
10. Best Club If You're Under 21 _____
11. Best Club After 2 a.m. _____
12. Best Bartender
 - a. Male (Where does he tend bar?) _____
 - b. Female (Where does she tend bar?) _____
13. Best DJ
 - a. Male (Where does he tend spin?) _____
 - b. Female (Where does she spin?) _____
14. Most Divine Drag Queen _____
15. Best Local (Non Drag) Entertainer
 - a. Male _____
 - b. Female _____
16. Best Local Band _____

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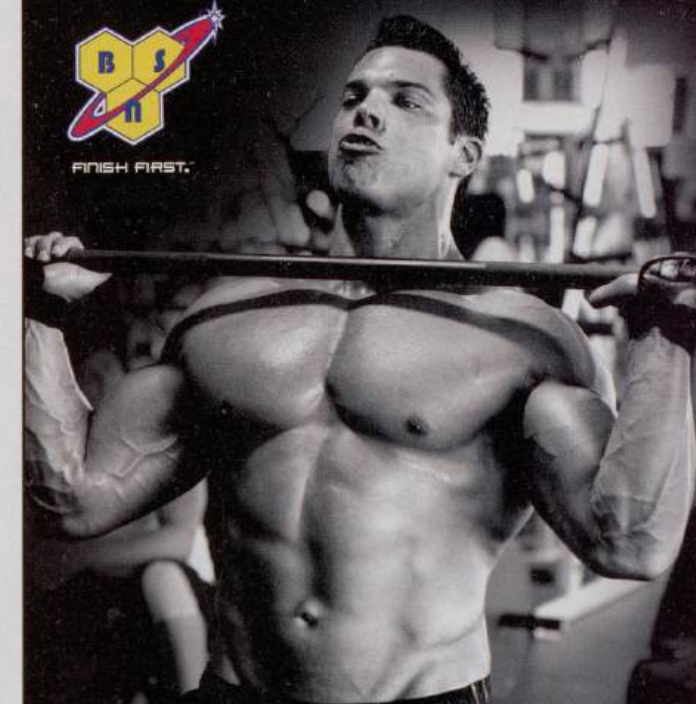
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The Fall Guy

With the temperature spiking in the 90s, you may prefer to hang out in shorts, T-shirts, and sandals right now. But it isn't too early to consider the clothes you will be wearing in the fall. Just imagine: the plush, heavy fabrics, the subdued color palette, jackets as warm as an embrace. On these pages, our man tries on some of the best of the clothes you will see this autumn. It's almost enough to make you forget about the long, hot summer. We said almost.

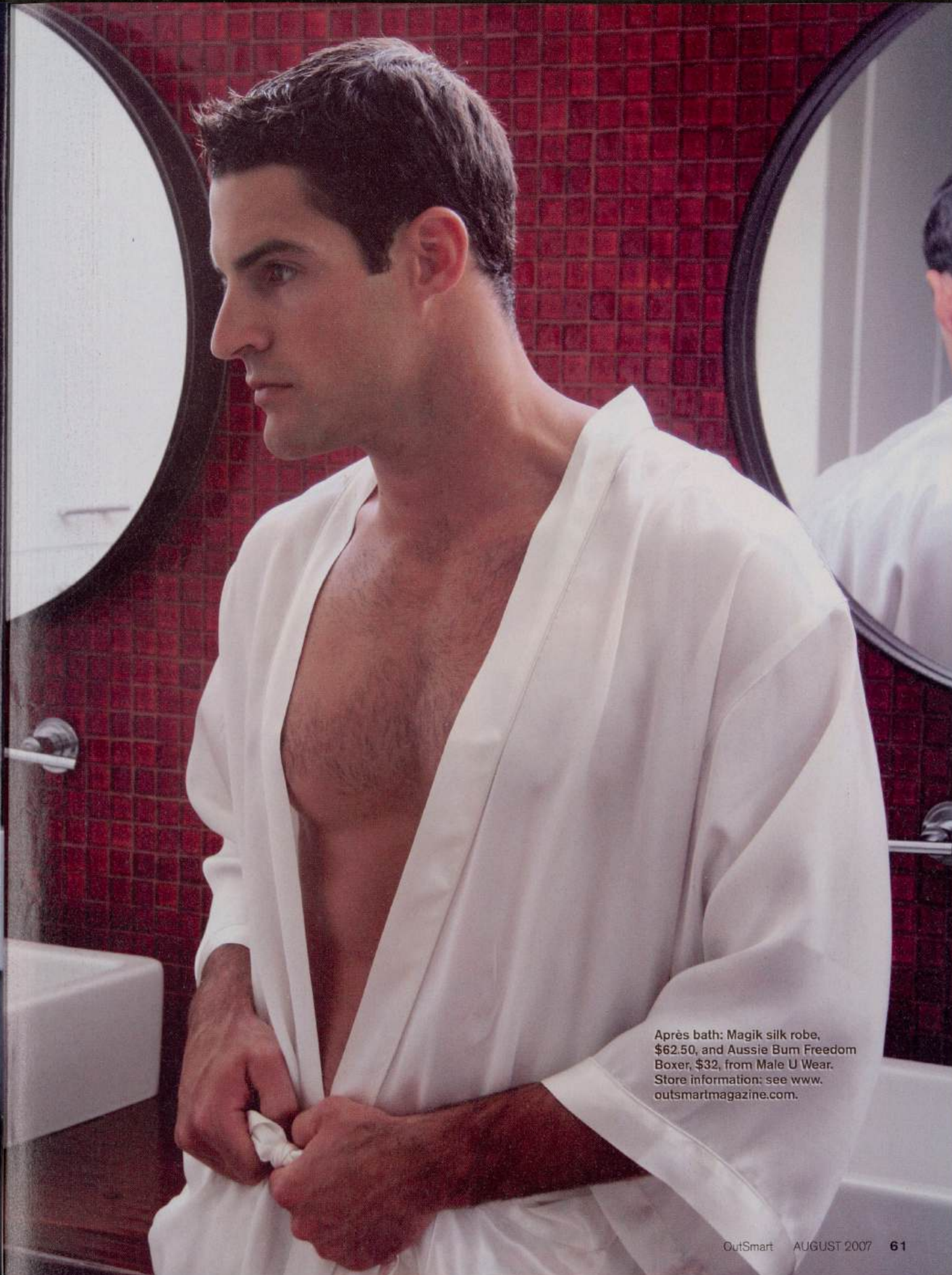
Photographed by John Conroy

On fire (place): Black couture shirt, \$87, and Versace jeans, \$227, from Style Lounge. Belt by Brave, \$144, from M2M. Steve Madden shoes, \$110, from Macy's. Model: Ryan Mackey, Kim Dawson Agency. Styling: John Conroy, VarsityProductions.com.

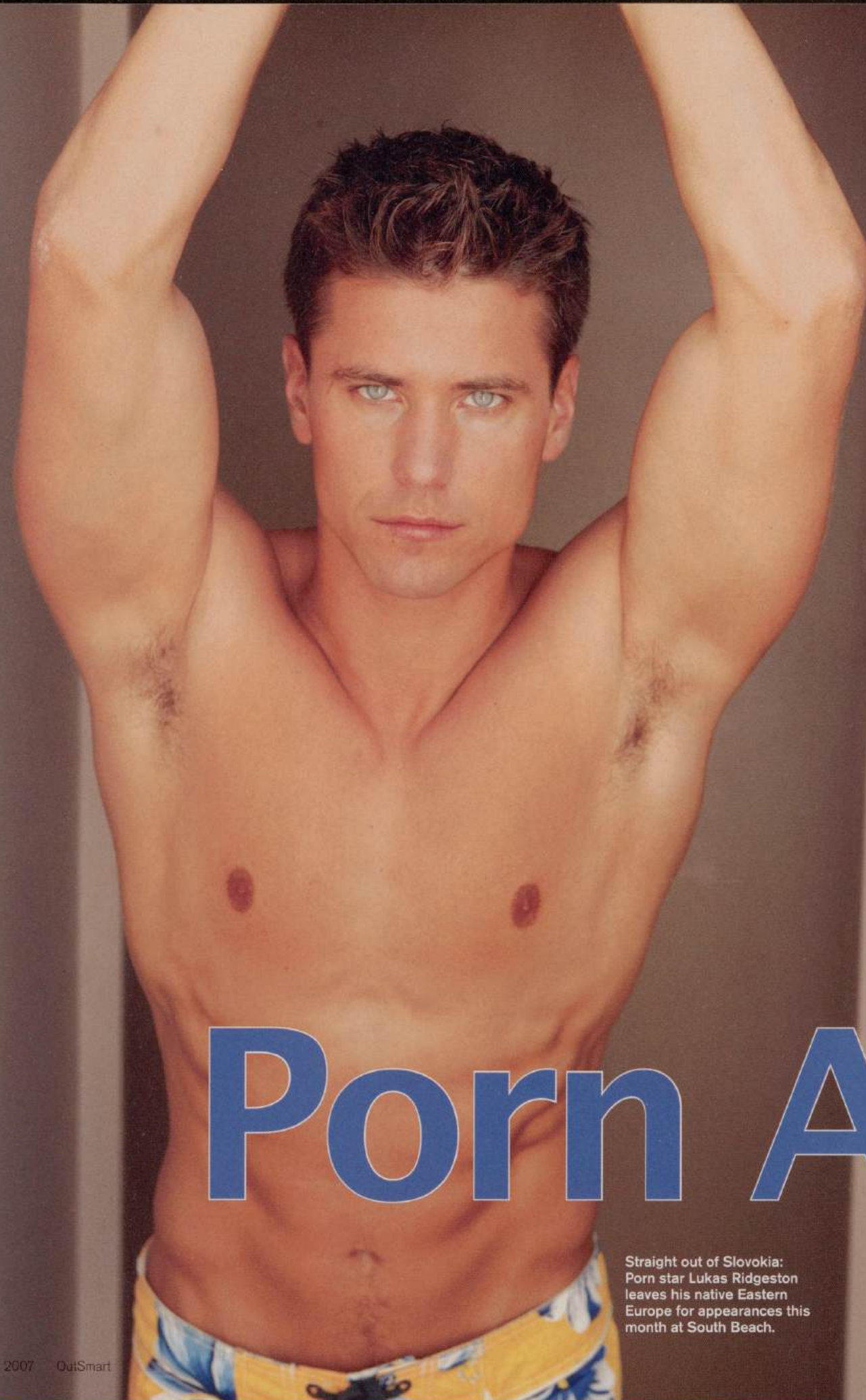
Sweater weather: Cranberry V-neck sweater, \$75, from Banana Republic. Andrea Palombini brown shirt, \$171, and Garden of Earthly Desires jeans, \$245, from Style Lounge. Stefano Ricci necktie, \$80, from Saks Fifth Avenue. Belt by Brave, \$93, from M2M.



Sunglasses at night: Troy Kingdom long-sleeve T-shirt, \$78, and Billy Flare jeans, \$267, from Style Lounge. Hipsterr bag, \$322, Prada glasses, \$244, and Asa necklace, \$111, also from Style Lounge. Chz bracelet, \$56, from M2M.



Après bath: Magik silk robe, \$62.50, and Aussie Bum Freedom Boxer, \$32, from Male U Wear. Store information: see www.outsmartmagazine.com.



Porn Again

Straight out of Slovakia: Porn star Lukas Ridgeston leaves his native Eastern Europe for appearances this month at South Beach.

Lukas Ridgeston (no, not the given name for this Slovakian morsel) burst on the gay-erotica scene in 1993 with a video called *Tender Strangers* produced by Bel Ami, a studio that specializes in fresh-faced Eastern European lads. In an adult version of Lana Turner being picked out at the drugstore, Ridgeston had been discovered by a porn scout while lounging on the beach in his native country (which at the time was Czechoslovakia, for those geography sticklers). Blessed with attributes that include a sweet face and impressive stamina, the then-19-year-old quickly became a star, particularly in a series of self-titled flicks: *Lukas' Story*, *Lukas' Story II: When Boy Meets Boy*, *Lucky Lukas*, and *Lukas In Love*.

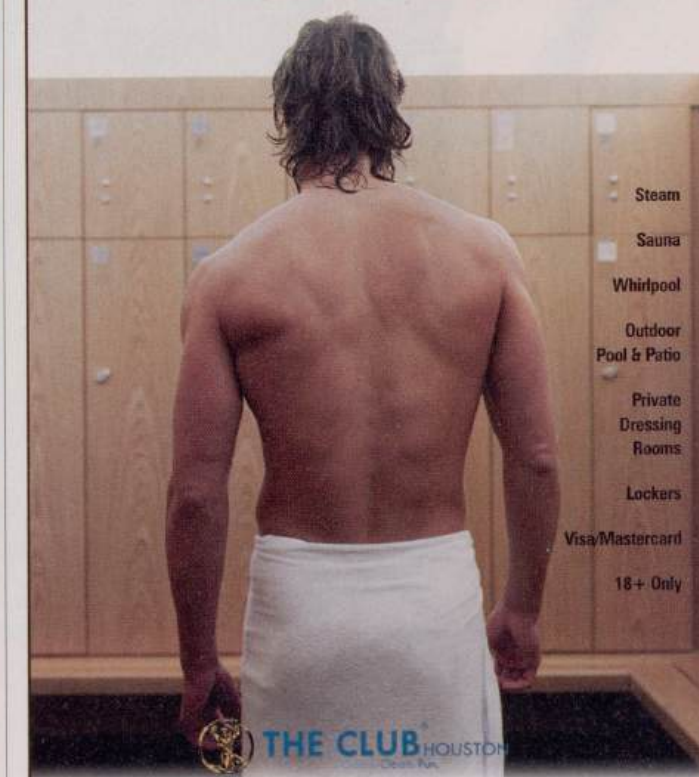
Ridgeston made his most recent movie in 2005. One of the few porn stars to make the leap into more mainstream pop culture, he was one of the adult performers photographed by fashion lensman Timothy Greenfield-Sanders for his 2004 picture book *XXX: 30 Porn-Star Portraits* and the accompanying HBO documentary *Thinking XXX*. Ridgeston even appeared nude on the back cover of the book (see "ReadOut," November 2004 *OutSmart*).

As *XXX* revealed even to those who don't consume porn, the dewy Euro twink bloomed into a sturdy, handsome man. This month, he makes his first public appearance in Houston with reveals on three nights at South Beach. Ridgeston will participate in autograph sessions and photo shoots on August 17, 18, and 19 followed by live appearances at midnight. The diva Kofi may even pull him on stage during her new Sunday-night drag show. Fans who fork over \$100 can attend a VIP party each night (a limited number of tickets go on sale at South Beach on August 1). Details: 713/521-0107, www.south-beachthenightclub.com.

Prior to a Florida stop on his current U.S. tour, Ridgeston gave an interview to the Fort Lauderdale website Mark's List (www.jumponmarkslist.com). The now 33-year-old star, who earned a college degree in architecture, disclosed that he now works behind the camera for Bel Ami (somehow, it's heart-warming to know that life goes on after porn). He declined to identify as gay, straight, or bi. "I always say I am sexual," he feigned. And he left fans with this adage: "Be good to people, make love, smile, and enjoy sex." Who among us would disagree with such wholesome sentiments? —Tim Brookover

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Brad Pitt & Archbishop Desmond Tutu

(Vanity Fair, 7/07)

Brad Pitt: [D]iscrimination has no place in Christianity. There's a big argument going on in America right now, on gay rights and equality.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu: ... I come from a situation where for a very long time people were discriminated against, made to suffer for something about which they could do nothing—their ethnicity. We were made to suffer because we were not white. Then, ... we didn't ordain women, and we were penalizing a huge section of humanity for something about which they could do nothing—their gender.... I could not for any part of me be able to keep quiet, because people were being penalized, ostracized, treated as if they were less than human, because of something they could do nothing to change—their sexual orientation. For me, I can't imagine the Lord that I worship, this Jesus Christ, actually concurring with the persecution of a minority that is already being persecuted. The Jesus who I worship is a Jesus who was forever on the side of those who were being clobbered, and he got into trouble precisely because of that. Our church, the Anglican Church, is experiencing a very, very serious crisis. It is all to do with human sexuality. I think God is weeping. He is weeping that we should be spending so much energy, time, resources on this subject at a time when the world is aching.

BP: I couldn't agree with you more. Thank you for saying that.

Henry Rollins

(host of IFC's *The Henry Rollins Show*)

(Instinct, 6/07)

I don't understand it. If Bill and Tom want to get married, why does anyone have a problem with it? Get a life and leave them alone....

If I were raised by two women or two men, I don't see what the problem would be. As it is, I had two people [of the opposite sex] who hated each other's guts, and it definitely did a number on me—I'm still working it out.

Condoleezza Rice

(United States Secretary of State)

(The Advocate, 7/17/07, Matthew Link)

Matthew Link interviewed Marcus Mabry, author of *Twice as Good: Condoleezza Rice and Her Path to Power*. Link asked about the lesbian rumors that surround Rice.

Marcus Mabry: ... In my reporting of this book for two years, at every turn I encountered someone telling me, "You know she's a lesbian, right?"... That she told so-and-so she was gay, or she went out with this woman or that woman. And I would trace each of the rumors back and report them out, and they would never go anywhere. I never even came close to finding a female lover. People had assumed that women that were close to her were her lovers. People had assumed that her best friend, who is a gay man, was her boyfriend.... People have no idea who the private Condoleezza is, so they fill that vacuum. In private, she's incredibly warm and gracious—it's shocking. Oftentimes people think a single, strong, powerful woman must be a lesbian. There's a certain homophobia implicit in that assumption.



Michael Moore

(filmmaker, *Sicko*)

Michael Moore (seen here in his latest doc, *Sicko*): What about "don't ask, don't tell" and same-sex marriage?

(The Advocate, 7/17/07, Corey Scholibo)

Corey Scholibo: ...Would you ever make a film about "don't ask, don't tell" or same-sex marriage?

Michael Moore: I think it's a very ripe subject for someone like me to make a movie about it, simply because we are not there yet and it remains one of the last open wounds on our soul that we are not willing to fix yet. And so I have often thought as a straight person that I should continue to tackle this issue even in a long-form documentary. It's also something that doesn't affect me directly. But those are exactly the kind of films that I often think about making. I mean, I have probably one of the best health care plans in the country because I belong to the Directors Guild. I have ridiculously good health insurance.



Cary Brothers: Does he know what it's like to be gay?

Cary Brothers

(singer/songwriter)

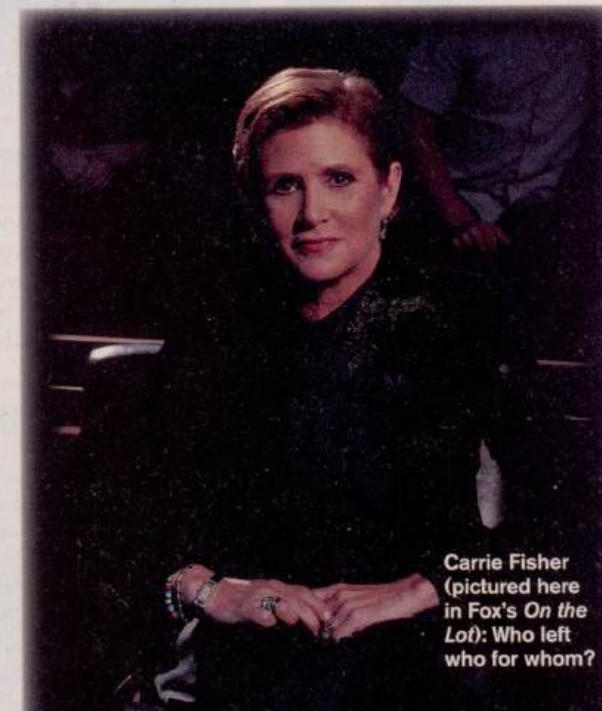
(6/07, Peter Galvin)

When I was growing up, everyone around me was Christian and straight. To me there was something wrong with that. There was something else in the world that I needed to see. One of my best friends from college is gay, but he was closeted through school. During his coming-out process, I really got to see him grow and become who he is in a really beautiful way. He took his time to come out at his own pace. As his friend, I did my best to wait for him to develop that pride in who he was. When he did, I was overjoyed. It was as close as I could come to knowing what it's like to be gay.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Cary Brothers' tour takes him to Dallas on August 17 and Austin on the 18th. More info: www.carybrothers.com.

Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano



Carrie Fisher (pictured here in Fox's *On the Lot*): Who left who for whom?

Carrie Fisher

(actress, *Star Wars*; author, *Postcards from the Edge*)

(via *Entertainment Weekly*, 7/13/07)

After viewing a contestant's egregiously bad film on Fox's reality show *On the Lot*, Fisher (acting as one of the judges) said, "That was my least favorite thing next to adolescence and being left by a man for a man."

ESTEEM YOURSELF

Cho scores with 'Bam Bam & Celeste'

I'm beautiful, he's beautiful, she's beautiful—we're all exactly how we're supposed to be!"

Such is the closing anthem, not to mention the pervasive theme, of *Bam Bam & Celeste*, a hag-on-the-road-with-her-fag flick written by Margaret Cho. Cho also stars as Celeste with comedian Bruce Daniels, who frequently opens for Cho's stand-up shows, playing Bam Bam.

Tired of the relentless bashing by the resident pretty people in DeKalb, the two are bound for the Big Apple where they hope to find, if not fame and fortune, at least a spot on a personal make-over television show. Who could predict that their competition on that show would be their same nemesis from high school days? Madness!

The film costars queer luminaries Alan Cumming, Sabrina Matthews, Wilson Cruz, and Kathy Najimy. But the standout supporting performance comes from Jane Lynch (*The L Word*, *Best in Show*), playing a "lesbian Lone Ranger" BB and C meet on their journey. Hi ho, dildo!

Fans of Cho's stand-up performances who squeal when she swoops into a verbal impersonation of her mother will squeal even louder as they realize Cho herself plays "Mommy."

Other top gags to watch out for: the eyelash curler elevated to Holy Grail and a too-funny tip of the wig to *Angels in America*.

The recent True Colors tour concert, which



In the pink: Margaret Cho (r) and Bruce Daniels take the road for New York in *Bam Bam & Celeste*, written by and starring Cho.

Cho emceed, screened a quick trailer for *BB&C* between musical acts. If the ovation it received from the Pride-pumped Cynthia Woods Mitchell crowd is any indication, expect copies of this DVD to fly off the shelves and into the media collections of fans far and wide, beautiful and even more beautiful.

Available August 14 from Wolfe (www.wolfevideo.com or 1-800-GET-WOLFE).

DVD/VHS Shorts

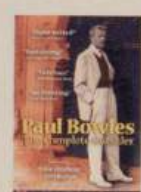
The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg



Jerry Aronson's *The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg* is now available in a two-disc special edition featuring a director's cut with updated and unseen footage. Ginsberg, of course, was a gay visionary poet, a Buddhist peacemaker, and a political revolutionary long before the words "hippie" and "yippie" entered the American consciousness. And he was very close friends with beat legend (and legendary hunk) Jack Kerouac. Aronson's film is an excellent guide through the golden days of American bohemia. If one isn't interested in Ginsberg, the film can be appreciated for the contributions of Paul McCartney, Bono, Johnny Depp, Philip Glass, Joan Baez, William Burroughs, and Norman Mailer, among many others. • 1994. • From New Yorker Video (www.newyorkerfilms.com). —Review: Jack Varsi

Paul Bowles: The Complete Outsider

The life of the recondite author of *The Sheltering Sky* is examined in exclusive interviews with Allen Gins-



berg and Bowles himself. An icon to the Beat Generation, the mysterious man from Morocco intimately discusses his friends (among them Gertrude Stein and Tennessee Williams), drug use, his marriage to writer Jane Bowles, and his ambiguous sexuality. The DVD includes a new interview with Ned Rorem and the filmmakers. • 1994. Directed by Catherine Warnow and Regina Weinrich. • From First Run Features (www.firstrunfeatures.com). —Preview: Eric A.T. Dieckman

Inside the Actors Studio: Barbra Streisand



"I have four concerts to do and then I'm going to stay home and cook and have babies." That's how Barbra Streisand described her future in a 1966 interview aired on the BBC. Guaranteed, her compelling 2004 interview with Bravo's *Inside the Actors Studio* with James Lipton provides a far more up-to-date version of what really happened in the following 40 years. Available August 7 from Shout! Factory (www.shoutfactory.com). —Preview: N.F.

Maple Palm



Why do so many propaganda films make easy choices in their narratives? The protagonist is so easy to love; the antagonist is grossly hateful if not altogether diabolical. True, the message here is valid: Bi-national GLBT couples, wherein one member lives in the U.S. illegally, have been known to be treated unfairly. But the delivery, suggesting that straight couples in the same position have absolutely nothing to fear, is almost insulting. • 2006. Co-written and directed by Ralph Torjan. • From FATfilms (www.fatfilms.net). —Review: E.D.

Keillers Park



Peter is an engaged straight. Or is he? When he meets the openly gay free spirit, Nassim, his life changes dramatically. And when Nassim disappears after a lovers' tiff, the police come barging in soon thereafter, investigating Nassim's murder. Sex →

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DVD/VHS Shorts continued from page 66

kills. But not without an erotic flashback montage.
• 2006. Directed by Susanna Edwards. Swedish
with English subtitles. • From TLA Releasing (www.
tlareleasing.com). —Preview: E.D.

Out of Hand



Sebastian and Paul are trouble. The two criminal teens abduct 30-year-old Sonja and haul her to their abandoned factory hangout, but what to do with her? Submissive Paul develops feelings for their victim and becomes distant. Domineering Sebastian becomes increasingly irked by this as he attempts to ignore his own growing feelings...for Paul. • 2005. Written and directed by Eva Urthaler. German with English, Spanish, and French subtitles. • From Picture This! Home Video (www.picturethisentertainment.com). —Preview: E.D.

Lesbian Sex & Sexuality



Katherine Linton (*AIDS: A Pop Culture*) directs six episodes of the here! Television series produced "for women, by women," exploring three of our favorite subjects: lesbian sex, lust, and the representation of both. Here, here! • Available August 14 from Genius Products and Liberation Entertainment. Details: www.heretv.com/lesbiansex/. —Preview: N.F.

Factory Girl



Edie Sedgwick (Sienna Miller) was the original "It" girl. Her rise from art student Andy Warhol's (Guy Pearce) muse glorified counter-culture, drugs, and the madness of gaining contact fame by surrounding oneself with the famous and fabulous. The unrated director's cut promises to be "extra steamy." Look for appearances by Hayden Christensen (*Star Wars* prequels) and Jimmy Fallon (*Saturday Night Live*). • 2006. Directed by George Hickenlooper. • From The Weinstein Company (www.weinsteinco.com). —Preview: E.D.

Music DVD

Pet Shop Boys: Cubism in Concert



Featuring tracks from their 25-year career, this 27-track live-performance DVD also includes behind-the-scenes extra footage filmed in Mexico, picture gallery, audio commentary, and a 12-page book written by the Pet Shop Boys. A true celebration of pop, this concert was filmed in High Definition on November 14, 2006, in Mexico City at the Auditorio Nacional. The DVD includes a slipcase cover, half of which will feature openly gay Neil Tennant, half Chris Lowe. • From Rhino (www.rhino.com). —Preview: Suzie Lynde ■

GOLDEN CELLULOID ON DVD

Upcoming DVD releases include more vintage
musicals from the MGM vaults, some very noir
double features and a couple of elegant swells.



... *Classic Musicals from the Dream Factory Volume 2* features the DVD debuts of two 1948 classics, *The Pirate* and *Words and Music*, plus the 1985 dance compilation *That's Dancing!*, hosted by Gene Kelly. If, like me, you're a big fan of

Gene Kelly, particularly from the waist down, you need to start with *The Pirate*—because that butt and those legs easily steal this Technicolored piffle from poor Judy Garland. The new collection also includes a couple of double features: *That Midnight Kiss* (1949) with *The Toast of New Orleans* (1950), and *Royal Wedding* (1951) with *The Belle of New York* (1952). *Royal Wedding* is best remembered as the film where Fred Astaire dances on the ceiling. ...



Most of the selections in the new *Film Noir Classic Collection Volume 4* are somewhat less famous than the standouts of past volumes, but this set compensates by offering twice as many films for about the same price. The 10 new-to-DVD titles

here are arranged as double features on five discs: *Act of Violence* (1948) with *Mystery Street* (1950); *Crime Wave* (1954) with *Decoy* (1946); *Illegal* (1955) with *The Big Steal* (1949); *Where Danger Lives* with *Tension* (both 1950); and *They Live by Night* (1948) with *Side Street* (1950). Probably the one bona fide classic of the bunch is *They Live by Night*, featuring Farley Granger and Cathy O'Donnell as fugitives and doomed lovers. Elsewhere in the collection you'll find such essential stars as Robert Mitchum, Jane Greer, Sterling Hayden, Robert Ryan, Claude Rains, and the incomparable Faith Domergue.



... Considering the enormous success of 2005's *The Thin Man* Collection, it was only a matter of time before the stars of that popular film series were showcased in a collection of their work apart from the characters of Nick and Nora Charles. Thus, the new TCM Spotlight: *Myrna Loy/William Powell Collection* presents these five new-to-DVD titles: *Manhattan Melodrama*, *Evelyn Prentice* (both 1934), *Double Wedding* (1937), *I Love You Again* (1940), and *Love Crazy* (1941). There's an interesting historical significance to *Manhattan Melodrama*, which teamed Loy and Powell for the first time. This is the film legendary gangster John Dillinger was exiting when he was gunned down in Chicago. Just how legendary was Dillinger? Some sources claim 22 inches. • Available from Warner Home Video (www.warnerhomevideo.com). —Reviews: Jack Varsi ■

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Out in the Arts

by Victor Zorn

ANDY'S WOMEN

The Menil spotlights Warhol portraits
of three women who defined art in Houston



Three women: Warhol portraits of Houston arts leaders (clockwise from top) Caroline Wiess Law, Dominique de Menil, and Jermaine MacAgy comprise an exhibition at The Menil Collection through August 26.



Anytime an Andy Warhol exhibition is in town, it's worth a visit. Even 20 years after his death, the great gay artist still incites passionate feelings from admirers and detractors. The former camp asserts that Warhol changed the way we look at art through his use of pop-culture references and his own persona. The latter camp disdains Warhol as a marketer. We fall in the first group and have driven across Texas for Warhol exhibitions.

This summer, Warholians don't need to travel. Here in Houston, The Menil Collection presents the small but significant show *Andy Warhol: Three Houston Women* through August 26. Each of the women portrayed by Warhol in serial silkscreen portraits at The Menil had an impressive impact on the arts in Houston: Jermaine MacAgy (1914-1964), the first director of the Contemporary Arts Association, who

presented groundbreaking exhibitions at that Contemporary Arts Museum forerunner and later at the University of St. Thomas; Dominique de Menil (1908-1997), the internationally renowned arts patron and Menil Collection founder; and Caroline Wiess Law (1918-2004), the collector and longtime Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, patron and Menil Collection founding benefactor. The original Museum of Fine Arts building carries her name.

The Menil, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, has impressive holdings of Warhol work and a history of presenting major Warhol exhibitions. *Three Houston Women* may not count as a major show, but for Houstonians it is both impressive and historic.

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by Nancy Ford

THEY DID IT THEIR WAY

IFC explores the ins and outs of sexy independent filmmaking

In its day, *Splendor in the Grass* (1961) set censors and other various Puritans frothing at the mouth simply by virtue of its steamy imagery-conjuring title. But 45 short years later, the thought of its young stars Natalie Wood and Warren Beatty struggling with their teenage hormones seems, if not downright innocent, at least quaint.

A far cry from the nearly brutal sexual rankness of *Kids* (1995), or *thirteen* (2003), *Splendor* and films of its ilk have done a lot of growing up in the last 40+ years, as have their audiences. Addressing that maturation and its consequences is *Indie Sex*, a four-part documentary series presented by the Independent Film Channel (IFC).

Individual segments, titled *Censored*, *Extremes*, *Taboos*, and *Teens* provide clips from celebrated and controversial films, many of which highlight gay content.



Heather Matarazzo and John Cameron Mitchell are only two of the openly gay indie faves to be interviewed in Independent Film Channel's *Indie Sex*.

Queer film icons Guinevere Turner, Heather Matarazzo, John Cameron Mitchell, and John Waters are just four of the industry experts providing commentary, with Waters appropriately lending his expertise to the *Taboos* segment. The work of David Lynch (*Eraserhead*, *Twin Peaks*) and Atom Egoyan (*Where the Truth Lies*, *Exotica*) are among the unique and outrage-invoking films addressed in this episode.

Providing additional background narration are provocative indie faves Rosanna Arquette, Ari Gold, Miranda July, Tatum O'Neal, Piper Perabo, Billy Porter, Peter Sarsgaard, Ally Sheedy, and Dita Von Teese, among others.

Filmmakers Lisa Ades and Lesli Klainberg know their subject well, having produced 2006's award-winning *Fabulous! The Story of Queer Cinema*.

Airs July 31 through August 4, 11 p.m., with repeats throughout the month. Details: www.ifc.com.

persuading her beloved to make love to her when he thinks she's a boy. Branagh's created a likable new *As You Like It*, both lively and intelligent. Includes Alfred Molina as the fool Touchstone, with some really tall hair. Premieres August 21 at 8 p.m. on HBO (www.hbo.com).

—Review: Ann Walton Sieber

Bill Maher: The Decider



The outspoken host of *Real Time with Bill Maher* heats up an already plenty hot summer in a live concert from Boston's Berklee Performance Hall. Likely replete with stinging references to Scooter "Less Time Served Than Paris Hilton" Libby, the show premiered July 21, but repeats throughout August on HBO (www.hbo.com). —Preview: N.F.

ON SHOWTIME

Weeds



Her boyfriend just got snuffed, one son is about to be busted for having a trunkload of pot, and her other son is on the lam with her eight-toed brother-in-law's ex-girlfriend, all while she's being held at gunpoint by gang-bangers. Sounds like someone needs to roll Ms. Nancy (Mary-Louise Parker) a big fatty. Returns to Showtime (www.sho.com) on August 13 at 9 p.m. —Preview: N.F.

Californication



We're not sure how those Red Hot Chili Peppers boys feel about the obvious rip-off of their similarly titled 1999 album. But star David Duchovny (*The X-Files*) says this *Californication* is "funny and kind of dark," unlike his quirky turn with Brad Pitt in the dark and kind of funny *Kalifornia* (1993). Premieres August 13 at 9:30 p.m. on Showtime (www.sho.com). —Preview: N.F. ■



Bryce Dallas Howard

ON HBO

As You Like It

For his fifth Shakespearean screen outing, Kenneth Branagh adapts that most sweetly loony and breezily beguiling of the bard's comedies, *As You Like It*. He makes it the more winsome by setting it in 1800s Japan, so the Duke's merry men do thai chi in the Arden woods and sad Jacques (played by Kevin Kline no less) is serenaded in a raked sand garden. The fair Rosalind (Bryce Dallas Howard) and her enamored cuz Cecilia ("whose loves are dearer than the natural bond of sisters") go in drag as a couple, and Rosalind sets up a gender merry-go-round in her cross-dressing disguise, even



Neil Napier



Patrick Bristow

ALSO ON IFC

The Business follows the team at Vic's Flicks—an unlikely indie film company—as they navigate the industry and manage their unexpected success. In the second episode of the season, a couple of characters (including Wendell, the character played by Neil Napier, pictured) are found out to be gay.

The Minor Accomplishments of Jackie Woodman follows two 30-something women (Laura Kightlinger and Nicholle Tom), whose willful ignorance, fleeting confidence, poor judgment, and self-loathing constantly get in the way of their success. In the first episode, they pretend to be lesbians and, needless to say, it doesn't end well. Openly gay Patrick Bristow (remember him as a friend of Ellen on *Ellen*?) co-stars as Kightlinger's gay assistant.

Both *Business* and *Minor* premiere on IFC (www.ifc.com) on August 5 (at 10 and 10:30 p.m. respectively), with repeats throughout the month.

—Previews: Suzie Lynde

Ask for Alan, BJ or Kim

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GIORGIO ARMANI

BANDS AID

Our Pride music shot list concludes with queer bands

As a queer writer on a personal mission to dispel the myth that gay men only groove to disco and show tunes and that lesbians only listen to angry folk singers, I am thrilled to be able inform readers about GLBT bands making their own kind of music.

More coy than necessary, the four female members of **Lez Zeppelin** have what can be described as a "don't ask, don't tell" policy in terms of revealing any information about into which sexual classification they fit. So be it. With a band name like Lez Zeppelin, they get a generous pass and they get some ink for their eponymous debut disc (Emanation). What a concept, huh? Four women covering classic Led Zep tunes, including "Whole Lotta Love," "Rock and Roll," and "Communication Breakdown," complete with blistering guitars, bashing drums and a lead vocalist, Sarah McLellan, who does a spot-on Robert Plant. Let's be real, Plant's vocals often reached a pitch one might describe as feminine in quality, so Lez Zeppelin's respectful tribute to Led Zeppelin is far more logical than say, Mary



Lezzies?: The four women in this band may or may not be, but with a name like Lez Zeppelin, who cares!

Cheney having a baby.

Over the course of three intoxicating albums, Thomas M. Lauderdale, the openly gay **Pink Martini** mastermind has single-handedly given the lounge-music revival a

reason to exist in the first place. The third, and latest, *Hey Eugene!* (Heinz), is an unswervingly tasty and exotic affair, combining Pink Martini's world music fascination with its knack for crafting original contemporary standards. Lead vocalist China Forbes has never sounded better, whether she is singing in Arabic ("Bukra wba'do"), Japanese ("Taya Tan"), French ("Ojalá"), or Russian, Italian, and English ("Dosvedanya Mio Bambino") as well as on a duet with the legendary Jimmy Scott on "Tea for Two." Ultimately, it's the title track, a Forbes original, that deserves to be the single of the summer, with its party atmosphere and tale of possible love and unbridled enthusiasm. All in all, Pink Martini will leave you both shaken and stirred.

Queer acoustic and harmonically inclined trio **Girlyman** returns with the fittingly titled *Joyful Sign* (girlyman.com). As with Pink Martini's latest, this disc is Girlyman's third full-length album, and the third time sounds like the charm for this group as well. Solid and sweet harmonies, clean musicianship, →



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Coles Whalen

Nothing Is too Much



This L.A. folk-rock girl played Chances before the Pride Parade, to the great appreciation of her new Houston fans. This disc's quick six cuts span a number of emotions, from the plaintiff "Call on Me" to the hard-driving "Honeyed Out." Most enjoyable. Iconic Records (www.iconicrocks.com). —Review: Nancy Ford

Marc Almond
Stardom Road



This flowery new collection is mostly covers from the gay artist responsible for the cult hit, "Tainted Love." Each tune is an independent creation, but somehow Almond has woven them into a tapestry where one complements the next. Melodic and intriguing. Sanctuary Records Group (www.marcalmond.co.uk). —Review: N.F.

Nebulai

Wear My Hands Out



Folk/funk/soul queer artist busts out nicely with this busy set of tunes influenced by his global musical studies. The scratchy LP-reproduction on a couple of the tracks is quirkily nostalgic, as are the lilting back harmonies. Worth a listen. Re-Perkussionz of Sovereign Art (www.nebulai.com). —Review: N.F.

The Dead Betties
Nightmare Sequence



Discordant anger is the hallmark of true alt artistry, and this offering doesn't veer from that course. Its "Destination I Do" with its taunting "Do your little dance of the wedding bells" lyrics is likely to be played at every gay Goth wedding reception for years to come. Now available digitally online; national release is September 4. Cordless Recordings (www.cordless.com). —Review: N.F.

Junior Senior

Hey Hey My My Yo Yo



You've probably heard this Danish duo's "Itch U Can't Scratch" on a Logo promo. And that's probably enough. The B-52's Cindy Wilson and Kate Pierson guest; otherwise, way too light and fluffy. *Rolling Stone* loves them, though. Available Aug. 14 from Rykodisc (www.myspace.com/juniorsenior). —Review: N.F.

Enrique Iglesias
Insomniac



This new disc from Julio's boy is likely to receive plenty of gay attention following Enrique's recent romantic serenade to a male fan at a London club. All are invitingly listenable cuts with the exception of the annoying "The Ping Pong Song." Interscope Records (www.enriqueiglesias.com). —Review: N.F. →

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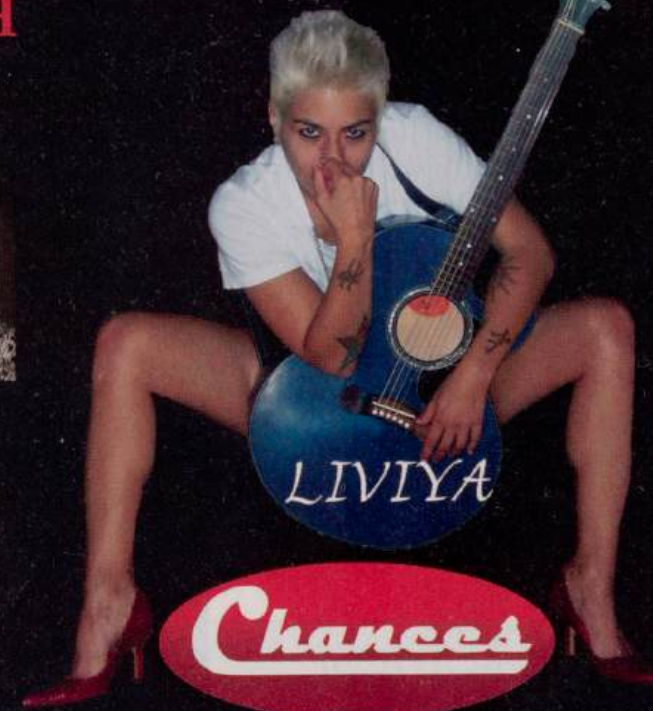
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GrooveOut continued from page 74



and a set of 14 songs that stick to your ribs makes *Joyful Sign* a high-flying achievement. Highlights include "Hold It All at Bay," "Sunday Morning Bird," "Good Enough," "Through to Sunrise," "Serve It Up," and the title track.



Cheap Date (actorslashmodel.com) by gender-queer duo **Actor Slash Model** is one of the most impressive album debuts in recent memory. Think the Ditty Bops with chromosome corruption. Performed mainly on ukulele and upright bass by Simon Strikeback and Madsen Minax, respectively, the songs are toe tappers in the truest sense. Actor Slash Model raises trans awareness and sensitivity in their own unique (and occasionally humorous) way, as you can hear on "Dealings & Such" and the album's centerpiece, "TN Tranny Two-Step." Strikeback and Minax also get in their licks on S&M-themed tracks such as "Don't Break My Heart," "Mommies and Daddies," and "SM Cowboy." **Coyote Grace**, a duo led by trans frontman Joe Stevens that occupies some of the same territory as Actor Slash Model, has just released its debut disc, *Boxes & Bags* (Mile After Mile).



The queer front men of the bands **Placebo** and **The Feeling** also do their part when it comes to giving listeners something exciting to listen to. Originally released in 2006, *Meds* (Astralwerks) by Placebo features standout tracks such as the title track, "Drag," "Follow the Cops Home," "Because I Want You," and "Broken Promise" (featuring another out front man, Michael Stipe of R.E.M.). The album has been reissued to include two bonus tracks, the original "Unneedmemorethanineedu" and a reverent cover of Kate Bush's "Running Up That Hill." The Feeling, a UK quintet, revives the spirit of shiny but substantial Brit pop of the last couple of decades on the wondrous tapestry of its debut disc, *Twelve Stops and Home* (Cherry Tree/Interscope). The first stitch can be heard on the gorgeous "Sewn," which is followed by the stunning stutter of "Never Be Lonely" (recalling both Gerry Rafferty and Supertramp), "Love It When You Call" (which has a flash of Queen guitar), the

rhythmic "I Want You Now," and the power ballad "Rosé."

On her first few albums, Sean Wiggins surrounded herself with talented musicians, but it was always her name that appeared on the CD cover, either solo or as the Sean Wiggins Band. With *The Kitchen Sink* (seanwiggins.com), she has expanded her moniker to **Sean Wiggins & Lone Goat**, giving the band its own identity. That was a wise move on her part, because the assembled musicians really add something to numbers such as "I'm Not Your Maid," "Crazy," "The Catchiest Song," and "Whole Enchilada."

As part of his annual *Pride music series*, Gregg Shapiro recommended new releases from gay men in our June issue and lesbians in our July issue. Read his suggestions at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

GrooveOut Shorts continued from page 74

Rhianna *Good Girl Gone Bad*



The exquisitely beautiful *CoverGirl* model is as pleasing to the ear as she is to the eye. The refreshingly acoustic title track is a fresh approach to the genre; Jay-Z guests on a more traditional hip-hop take.

Def Jam Records (www.defjam.com). —Review: N.F.

Bon Jovi *Lost Highway*



Jon calls their 10th studio album "a Bon Jovi record influenced by Nashville," and the cozy coupling with LeAnn Rimes on "Till We Ain't Strangers Anymore" proves it. Oddly, several tunes outscore the designated first single, "Make a Memory." Island Records (www.islandrecords.com). —Review: N.F.

Original Cast Recording *The Pirate Queen*



No, this is not Johnny Depp's greatest hits. With tunes titled "Woman," "Boys'll Be Boys," and "Woman to Woman," this lilting musical tale of legendary Irish Chieftain Grace O'Malley is obsessed with gender. But who isn't. Masterworks Broadway (www.thepiratequeen.com). —Review: Tim Brookover

ZibraZibra 777



Assuming the guise of quantum-leaping kraut-poppers and singing in Finnish, German, and English, the band combines pop, techno, metal, and hip-hop. They have a loyal gay fanbase and played 2006's Pride Fest in Minneapolis. See them in Houston, Aug. 17, at Super Happy Fun Land. From Royal, Etc. Records (www.royaletc.com). —Preview: Suzie Lynde ■



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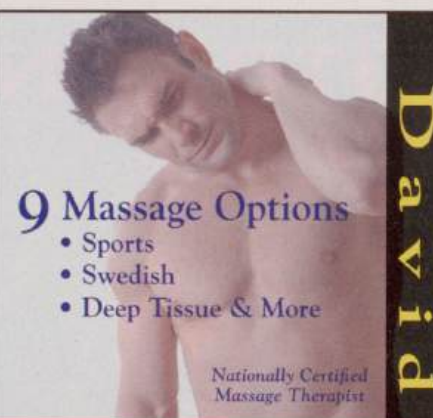
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THE FIRE THIS TIME

A new book cooks up the culinary legacy of Fire Island

So your chums with the fabulous timeshare in Cherry Grove on Fire Island didn't invite you to fly up and join them this year? You can relive past summers on America's gayest island by whipping up a meal from the new *Into the*

Pines Kitchen: Fire Island Pines Art Project Cookbook. Published by the Fire Island Pines Arts Project, the book includes 200 recipes—some featuring whimsical personal commentary—by 100 Fire Island denizens, including Houston's own gift to Broadway,

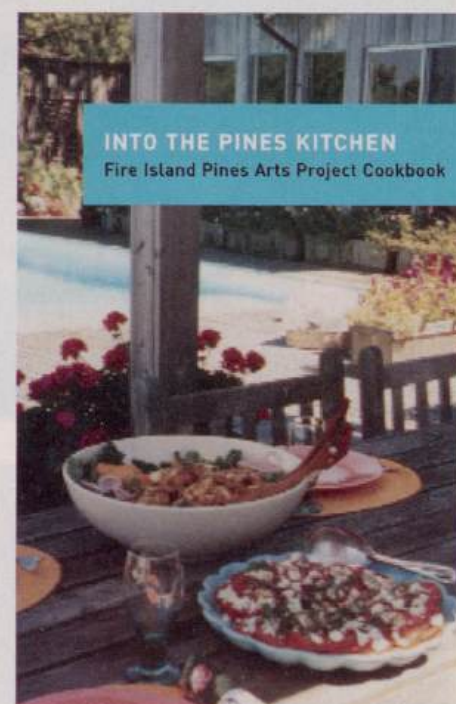
Tommy Tune. Proceeds from sales of the 150-page cookbook (\$20, available at www.fipap.org) benefit programs of the Fire Island Pines Arts Project and its support of Whyte Hall, the recently upgraded community center on the island.

Ron Blum's Iteration of Tommy Tune's Baked Beans

10 cups canned black beans, drained
1 cup Southern Comfort
1 cup dark brown sugar
1 cup cooked and chopped bacon
1 cup chopped celery
1 cup chopped onion

Drain the beans and put in 4-quart covered cooking pan. Add the Southern Comfort and brown sugar and heat slowly over low heat. Cook the bacon until crisp and drain, retaining the drippings. Chop bacon coarsely. Add bacon to the beans.

Sauté the celery and onion in bacon drippings until they are translucent. Add to the other ingredients, mix and heat through. Transfer to an ovenproof casserole and bake at 375 degrees until the beans firm up (3 to 4 hours depending on island humidity). Be sure to leave adequate room for expansion as the mixture will overflow the container and make a mess if too full. A foil underlay is advised. Serve hot.



On fire: Proceeds from sales of the new *Into the Pines Kitchen* cookbook support the Fire Island Pines Arts Project and the Whyte Hall, the community center in that historic vacation destination. Recipes were provided Fire Island regulars, among them gay luminaries.

Fire Island Fish Stew

From Barbara Sahlman

1/3 cup olive oil
2 onions, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 bunch Italian parsley, chopped
1 tablespoon crushed thread saffron
1 32-ounce can chopped tomatoes
1 small can tomato puree
3 bottles clam juice
Salt
Fresh pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons dried mint
1 1/2 teaspoons dried basil
Cayenne pepper, to taste
1 pound sea scallops
16 raw shrimp, shelled
2 pounds cod, cut into 2-inch pieces
16 littleneck clams
1 1/2 pounds mussels, cleaned
2 tablespoons Pernod

Heat oil in large, heavy kettle. Add onions, garlic, and parsley. Cook briefly, without browning. Add the remainder of the ingredients, except cod, scallops, shrimp, clams, mussels, and Pernod. Simmer 20 minutes. Add clams, →

ReadOut Shorts

Girls Who Like Boys Who Like Boys
Edited by Melissa de la Cruz and Tom Dolby
Dutton Books (us.penguinroup.com)

Subtitled *True Tales of Love, Lust, and Friendship Between Straight Women and Gay Men*, this book is a fabulous celebration of true sisterhood—gay men and the straight women who love them. Numerous essays cover everything from buying the perfect purse to complete heartbreak. Here is the final proof that true love isn't about sex or gender, it's about people who care for one another. This one is going in my permanent collection. —Review: Angel Curtis

When You Were Me
Robert Rodi

Kensington Publishing (www.kensingtonbooks.com)
Jack is middle-aged, wealthy, and thinks he missed out on youth. Corey is young and without any life prospects. Jack finds a "fusion witch," a deal is struck, and the two trade lives. Then, Jack's ex-lover wants him back, leading to a strange competition between the "physical" Jack and the "real" Jack. *When You Were Me* is a wry and wonderful look at identity, aging, and what is really important. —Review: A.C.

The View from Here: Conversations with Gay and Lesbian Filmmakers
Matthew Hays

Arsenal Pulp Press (www.arsenalpulp.com)
Queer directors and screenwriters—some mainstream, others who work defiantly from the margins—speak passionately about the medium, in particular their personal experiences navigating through the often-cynical and cruel film industry. All of them offer fascinating anecdotes and opinions about cinema, and speak candidly about their attempts to combat studio apathy and demands of "the →

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ReadOut

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cooking for 5 minutes. Add the cod and remaining shellfish. Simmer 15 minutes. Sprinkle with Pernod and serve with toasted French bread. Serves 8.

Teal Blue Booty
From Larry Willoughby

Ice

3 jiggers premium vodka
1 jigger Cointreau
1 jigger white cranberry juice
1/2 oz. Blue Curacao
Juice of 1/4 lime
Grenadine

Fill a cocktail shaker half full of ice. Combine in the shaker vodka, Cointreau, white cranberry juice, Blue Curacao, and lime juice. Cap shaker and face away from guests. Shake drink (as well as your booty) for guests. Pour drink into chilled martini glasses. Top each with 1/2 teaspoon of grenadine. Serve with panache.

Drink was originated 4th of July week, 2005, during construction of a gatehouse. With construction crew and refrigerator both nearly exhausted, houseguest Larry Willoughby improvised this tasty treat from available resources. Head carpenter Chris aptly named the teal-colored drink, as it was served by Larry in his matching swimsuit. (Drink becomes a Purple Peter if accidentally stirred after addition of grenadine.)

Recipes adapted from Into the Pines Kitchen: Fire Island Pines Art Project Cookbook. © Fire Island Pines Arts Project.

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ReadOut Shorts

continued from page 78

market" and still create films that are entertaining, engaging, and truthful. Filmmakers profiled include John Waters and Gregg Araki, among many others. —Preview: Suzie Lynde

Beyond Reach

Karin Slaughter

Delacorte Press (www.randomhouse.com)



Medical examiner Sara Linton finds her life coming apart at the seams. Now, she must add to her list saving her police chief husband's subordinate from untrue charges of murder. Filled with gruesome forensic details, numerous plot threads, and great writing, Slaughter ties up everything neatly with one hell of a twist of an ending. Once again Karin Slaughter out-Cornwell's all the other crime writers. Why are all the great forensic crime writers lesbian? I shudder to consider.... —Review: A.C.

Editor's Note: Karin Slaughter is scheduled to sign books at Murder by the Book (2342 Bissonnet, 713/524-8597) on Monday, August 6. More info: www.murderbythebook.com.

A Secret Edge

Robin Reardon

Kensington Publishing

(www.kensingtonbooks.com)



Robin Reardon's protagonist, 16-year-old Jason, is a runner on his high school track team and is no different than the other guys in his senior class, with one glaring exception—he's gay. Struggling to come to grips with being different, he is also dealing with his growing attraction to the 17-year-old Indian immigrant Raj (also on the track team). There are rumors that Raj is gay, but is he really? As their relationship develops, Raj challenges the way Jason sees life, including everything from late-night viewings of La Cage Aux Folles to reading the teachings of Gandhi. —Preview: Troy Carrington

**Seminal: The Anthology of
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Edited by John Barton and Billeh Nickerson
Arsenal Pulp Press (www.arsenalpulp.com)



Seminal is a comprehensive anthology of Canadian gay male poetry, the first of its kind, that reveals a national queer poetics, both dandy-esque and eloquent. The material ranges from the 1890s to the present day and includes poets from every region of the country, including Quebec, translated into English for the first time. —Preview: T.C. ■

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ARE YOU GAY FRIENDLY?

As the next election cycle looms, Sally administers a quiz

Oregon's new laws to protect gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Oregonians from discrimination and recognize domestic partnerships were signed by our governor and set to take effect January 1, 2008. But even before the ink dried—and with a ballpoint pen, that's pretty quick—the opposition launched a drive to put it to a vote. Now Oregon's new civil rights protections will sit on ice until the 2008 general election.

Across the country, our rights are up for grabs. Along with voting in a new president, the nation's electorate will decide on a transgender-inclusive antidiscrimination law, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, lifting the antigay military ban, transgender-inclusive hate-crimes laws, civil unions, domestic partnerships, marriage equality, adoption, and the Federal Marriage Amendment.

Gauging from past antigay initiatives, the lead-up to the elections won't be pretty. Prepare for queer-hating rhetoric getting more airtime under the guise of political debate. Stand back when all the old nasty myths and stereotypes are unleashed. It

I believe LGBTQ people are:

- a. Morally degenerate.
- b. Abnormal, but they can't help it.
- c. Earthlings.

will be tough, especially for queer kids who you know are going to hear a lot worse than "that's so gay."

During the political frenzy between now and the Election Day 2008 elections, we fair-minded folks will need to know who is with us. We'll be checking over our shoulder to see who has got our backs. Can your

friends and loved ones be counted among the lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer-friendly? Give them the quiz!

1. When I meet a lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer (LGBTQ) person, I usually:

- a. Tell them they're an abomination against God.
- b. Try to act cool, but I can't help wondering why they're *that way*.
- c. Shake their hand.

2. I believe LGBTQ people are:

- a. Morally degenerate.
- b. Abnormal, but they can't help it.
- c. Earthlings.

3. Some of my best friends are:

- a. Grieving for Jerry Falwell.
- b. Gay-acting.
- c. Not allowed to get married under U.S. law (except in Massachusetts). →



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OutLoud

continued from page 82

4. Homosexuals are:

- Sick.
- Sick, but they're talented.
- Sick and tired of harassment and discrimination.

5. Most LGBTQ people want:

- To take over our schools and teach immoral behavior to our children.
- To dress like the opposite sex.
- Equality.

6. When someone tells a fag joke I usually:

- Get an adrenaline rush and the urge to smear a queer.
- Laugh real loud so nobody thinks I'm gay.
- Explain why the joke perpetuates harmful stereotypes and that most people who tell those jokes tend to be insecure about their own sexuality.

7. My opinion about the ban on gays in the military is:

- Keep the ban.
- Don't ask, don't tell.
- Ban the military.

8. Oregon's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people should:

- Repent.
- Keep it in the privacy of their own bedrooms.
- Be protected against discrimination, so I'm telling everyone not to sign any antigay petitions and to support the candidates who support equality.

How did you do?

- Add one point for every "c" answer.
- Add zero points for every "b" answer.
- Subtract three points for every "a" answer and do 10 hours of community service.

KEY:

- 7-8 points =**
Congratulations and thank you—you are LGBTQ-friendly!
- 5-6 points =**
Nice try, but I wouldn't let you marry my sister.
- < 5 points =**
Your eyelids are getting heavy. You will forget to vote in 2008.

Sally Sheklow, who agitates for her rights in Eugene, Oregon, received both first- and second-place honors in the magazine column category in the 2005 Houston Press Club Lone Star Awards.

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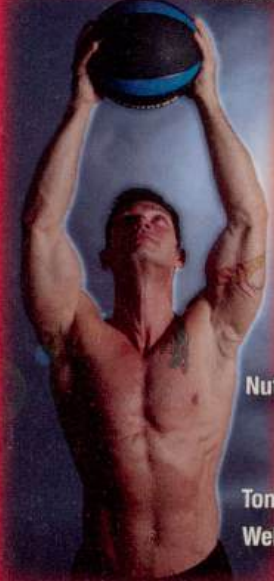
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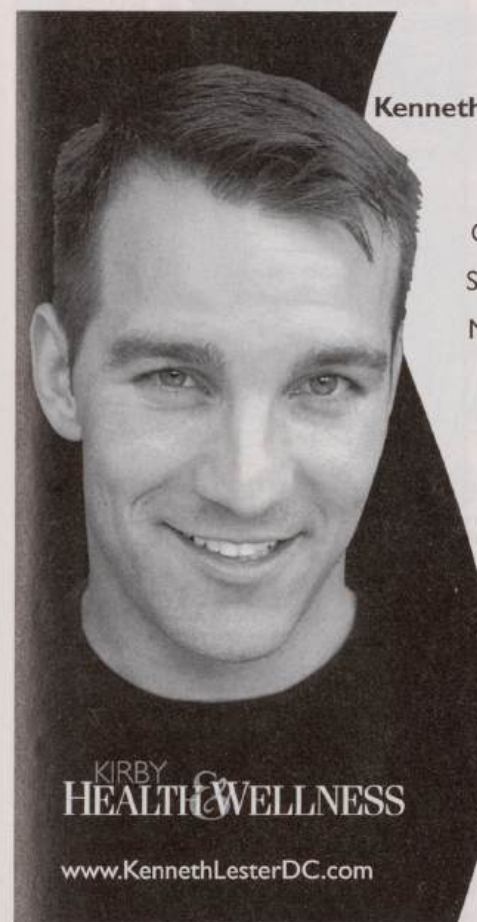
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Jerry Fenske and friends Jim Duke and Jeff Reid toted OutSMART to New York City. "My daughter Sara got married in Ardenia, New York, on May 27, and we stayed in the city a few days afterward," Fenske wrote us.



Jim Duke (l-r), Jeff Reid, and Jerry Fenske posed with OutSMART in Stuyvesant Square in Manhattan, New York.

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. Send high-resolution images to Editor@OutSmartMagazine.com or mail photos to 3406 Audubon/Houston, TX 77006.



WE'RE PROUD, TOO

OutSMART staff and friends posed for the camera prior to the June 23 Pride parade. Planet Ford provided the official OutSMART truck again this year.

YOUR GREATEST HITS

With the Gayest & Greatest readers' choice poll this year, we begin our second decade of asking the community about its favorite people, places, and businesses. Cast your ballot by August 24, 5 p.m., in one of the following ways:



• Vote online at www.OutSmartMagazine.com.

• Join us at one of our Gayest & Greatest ballot parties to win fabulous door prizes:

3rd Coast Beach Bar/Galveston
Friday, August 10, 10 p.m.
Host: one of the Island's leading divas

Undercurrent/Galveston
Saturday, August 11, 10:30 p.m.
Hosts: Gulf Coast Drag Mafia

JR's Bar & Grill
Wednesday, August 15, 10:30 p.m.
Host: Kofi

Guava Lamp
Wednesday, August 22, 10 p.m.
Host: Toddicus
Special guests:
Texas Renaissance Festival players

Chances
Thursday, August 23, 9 p.m.
Host: Fluff the Kat



1019 Worthshire-Timbergrove Manor-
Fabulous ranch style home in deed restricted neighborhood. Original hardwoods just refinished. Home was completely remodeled in 2005. New kitchen with granite. \$239,900. More pictures at www.MrTimbergrove.com

1110 Worthshire-Timbergrove Manor-
Great ranch style home in deed restricted community with new hardwoods, den and half bath added to the original home adding additional living space. An affordable way to get into Timbergrove! \$229,900. More pictures at www.MrTimbergrove.com



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Calendar of Events

by Eric A.T. Dieckman

AUGUST

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. Legacy Community Health Services offers free confidential rapid HIV testing using the OraQuick-Advance collection method with results available within 20 minutes at the following community-based locations: 611 Hyde Park Pub, 611 Hyde Park, Tues. 4-8pm; All Star News and Video Emporium, 3415 Katy Freeway & Studewood, Thurs. 4-8pm; Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos, Thurs. 8pm-12am; Club 1415, 1415 California, Thurs. 9pm-12am; Club Houston, 2205 Fannin, Tues. 8pm-12am; Crystal Nite Club, 6680 Southwest Fwy, Fri. 10pm-1am; Cousin's, 817 Fairview, Thurs. 8pm-12am; Decades, 1205 Richmond, Mon. 6-10pm; El's, 2517 Ralph, Wed. & Fri. 10pm-1am; George Sports Bar, 617 Fairview, Mon. 6-10pm; Mary's, Naturally, 1022 Westheimer, Wed. 4-8pm; Michael's Outpost, 1419 Richmond, Tues. 4-8pm; Midtown Spa, 3100 Fannin, Tues. 4-8pm, Wed. & Fri. 10pm-1am; Ripcord, 715 Fairview, Wed. 9pm-12am. • A complete listing of locations is also available by calling 713/830-3070. Free confidential syphilis testing is also offered. HIV & syphilis testing is offered at the main clinic located at 215 Westheimer, Mon.-Thurs. 11am-7pm and Fri. 11am-5pm.

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 (Mondays)

Grab Yer Partner, Doh-Si-Doh. The rhythmically awkward are welcome here. Have some fun gittin' fit with non-strenuous aerobic square dancing. No partner required. Casual dress. \$5.

Deadline for OutSmart's September issue is 5 p.m., Thursday, August 9.

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—THURSDAY, AUGUST 9.

Weekly (Thursdays)

Depression & Bipolar Support Group. Don't let depression or bipolar disorder dig its bleak claws into what little hope you've managed to hide from the shadows. Bering Support Network helps those in need to connect with others who are learning to cope. You are not alone and can benefit from the experience of others. Take a step away from the dark. GLBT friendly. Free. Groups meet at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold, Room 232, 7:15-8:30 pm. Info: 713/526-1018.

Semi-monthly (Wednesdays)

The D Word (Dinner). Come for a meal, stay for the camaraderie. The Lesbian Dinner Group welcomes womyn to build new friendships, enjoy conversation, network, and have a few laughs over an appetizing repast. Singles and couples welcome. The 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month, 7:30 pm, at Café Express, 1422 West Gray. More information: Lesbian Dinner Group@gmail.com.

Monthly (Saturdays)

Second Saturdays at Winter St. Studios. It's open-door policy at Winter St. Studios every second Saturday of the month (this month July 14). This is a great way to meet and hang with the varied artists working in many different media and styles in their studios. Participating artists have a large red dot on or near the door of their studio. All are welcome between 1 and 6 pm. At Winter St. Studios, 2101 Winter St. More information: 713/862-0082 or www.winterstreetstudios.net.

Monthly (Tuesdays)

The Houston SPCA Pet Loss Support Group provides a professionally facilitated, supportive, and safe environment 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.

1, 3, 9, & 11 (Wed., Fri., Thurs., & Sat.)

Mosquito Repellent, Wherefore Art Thou? Houston Shakespeare Festival stages the classic tale of forbidden love, *Romeo and Juliet*. This is the perfect opportunity to pull the

wee ones away from the blockbusters of the movie theater and introduce them to the cultural nuance of the stage. Free. 8:30 pm at Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park, 100 Concert Drive in Hermann Park. The Aug. 3 performance is captioned for the hearing impaired. Free tix for covered seating available day of event at Miller's box office. Info: www.MillerOutdoorTheatre.com.

August 9, 16, & 23 (Thursdays)

Heart and Soul. Warhol and his Factory would be jealous. Soul Sessions transforms the CAM into a chi-chi, hipster art-lounge. DJ Sun collaborates with artist Xavier Simmons for the performance component of Electric Relaxation: Digital Good Time (How to Break Your Own Heart). Guest DJs spin grooves inspired by the classic soul, funk, and jazz album sleeves adorning the gallery. A cash bar is available to complete the vibe. Free. 7-9 pm at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. More information: 713/284-8250, www.camh.org, or www.soulargrooves.com.

17 (Fri.)

Lady Sings the Jazz. The Community Music Center's Jazz Cross Roads program presents "Women in Jazz: Sara Vaughn." Vaughn's performance features song stylists Gloria Edwards and Mickie Moseley. Free. 7:30 pm at Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park, 100 Concert Drive in Hermann Park. More information: www.MillerOutdoorTheatre.com.

23-28 (Thur.-Tues.)

How Does a City Blow Out 171 Candles? "Happy Birthday, Houston! Honoring Our Past, Inspiring Our Future" is a weeklong series of events at participating venues throughout the city →

DATEBOOK

Montrose Counseling Center offers a **Sexual Assault Survivor Support Group** for GLBT and questioning youth, ages 13-20, on Fridays, 5-6:30 p.m., at the counseling center. Register: Allison Vogt, LBSW, 713/529-0037, ext. 339.

Houston GLBT Political Caucus PAC votes on endorsements for the November elections at its Aug. 1, 7 p.m., meeting at the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Havens Center. Details: 713/521-1000, www.hglbtcp.org.

This month, **Coffee Camp**, the social group for HIV-positive gay men, moves to Inversion House in the Art League Houston building on Aug. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Details: Kevin White, kevinw@houstonn.com.

Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce holds a networking breakfast on the second and fourth Wednesday (Aug. 8 and Aug. 22), 7:15-8:30 a.m. at Harry's, led by chamber vice president Danny Kallen, account executive with the Perfect Wedding Guide. RSVP: dannykr@sbcbglobal.net.

Ryan White Planning Council, the volunteer planning group that determines local usage of federal funds disbursed through the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act, meets on Aug. 9, 11:30 a.m., at 2225 West Loop South, Room 416. Details: 713/572-3724, www.rwpc.org.

Scorpio's Rainbow Poetry Reading Club, a group started by poet Lesa Jackson ("Out Front," July 2007 OutSmart), meets on Aug. 11, 1 p.m., at the Houston GLBT Community Center. Details: Jackson, LJScorpio5@yahoo.com

Continuing the conversation around resolutions presented at the 2005 Conference on Houston's LGBT Future (read "The Gay Agenda," January 2006 OutSmart), **Houston GLBT Community Center** hosts the quarterly meeting of the working group on Aug. 11, 1-4 p.m., at the center. Details: 713/524-3818, www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

A new weekly support group dealing with relationships launches on Aug. 15, 7 p.m., at 1712 Fairview. Facilitators are psychotherapist Bebe Cooper, LMSW; hypnotherapist and life coach Devan Tindall, CH; and Marilyn Woodard and Brenda Thompson, 15-year life partners and certified teachers in the spiritual teachings of don Miguel Ruiz inspired by the wisdom of the Toltec civilization of Mexico. Ruiz's book *The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom (A Toltec Wisdom Book)* has been featured on Oprah Winfrey's television program and in her O magazine in an interview with Ellen DeGeneres, a Ruiz follower. \$10/week. Details: Marilyn Woodard, 713/256-6586, marilynwoodard@earthlink.net.

Houston Museum District hosts **Museum District Day** on Aug. 18, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., with free admission at 14 cultural institutions including Holocaust Museum Houston, the Menil Collection, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Details: www.houstonmuseumdistrict.org.

On Aug. 18, **Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce** presents the Amazing Race scavenger hunt and progressive dinner, beginning at 6 p.m. at Salud! Winery. Details: www.thechamberhouston.org.

Houston Theater District Association presents its annual **Theater Open House** on Aug. 26, noon-5 p.m., at five downtown venues, including the Angelika Film Center, Alley Theatre, and the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts. Buffalo Bayou Partnership offers 30-minute boat tours on the Bayou Breeze pontoon boat. Details: www.houstontheaterdistrict.org.

More: www.outsmartmagazine.com

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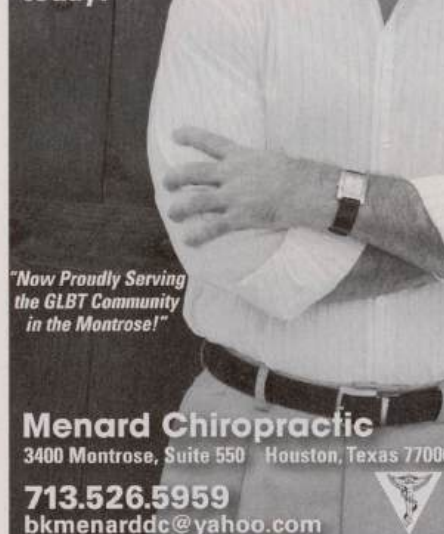


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- 1415 Bonnie Brae - Montrose TH w/private yard - \$350k's
- 3118 Morrison - Woodland Heights - 3+study/2.5/2 - \$550k's
- 1704 Dennis - Midtown TH, 2+study/2ba/2car - \$210k
- Heights/Timbergrove - Modern patio homes - From \$340k's
- Pearland/Silverlake - 5/3.5/2, study, gmm, lg yard - \$280k's

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THE METROPOLITAN

info deemed reliable but subject to change without notice.

WORLD DANCE FEVER

Sisters of Avalon doing it for themselves

The dance show is called *In the Garden of Gaia*, but don't expect the kind of dancers you might see on your favorite gay-with-a-Y stage. On August 11, Sisters of Avalon premieres its theatrical dance production, *In the Garden of Gaia*, a "fascinating dance event merging the worlds of tribal belly dance, flamenco, and gypsy dance into a dramatic creation celebrating the progression of life." Angela Flores directs the troupe, a Houston-based collective of dancers from a wide array of cultural and artistic backgrounds. Part of the \$12-\$15 admission from the 8 p.m. performance at the University of St. Thomas Jones Hall benefits AssistHers, the volunteer group that provides in-home support for lesbians with debilitating illnesses. Details: www.sistersofavalon.com. —Nancy Ford



Belly up to the bar: "Creativity, community, and sisterhood" are the hallmarks of Sisters of Avalon dance troupe. They premiere *In the Garden of Gaia* on August 11.

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celebrating the founding of Houston. New York brothers Augustus Chapman and John Kirby Allen started it all on the banks of Buffalo Bayou, Aug. 30, 1836. It all begins with a screening at the River Oaks Theatre Aug. 23 and closes with a city fundraiser at the George R. Brown Center Aug. 28. More information: www.happybirthdayhouston.com or www.saveourlandmarks.com.

30 (Thur.)

The Spy Who Lawned Me. "Nobody does it better" than Michael Krajewski as he conducts the Houston Symphony in "James Bond: License to Thrill." This shaken, yet stirring, evening of music visits memorable moments from the Bond soundtracks. \$15 for reserved seating, \$10 for uncovered reserved seats, free to plop down on the lawn. 7:30 pm (gates open at 6:30 pm) at Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, 2005 Lake Robbins Dr. More information: 281/363-3300 or www.woodlandscenter.org.

PLANNING AHEAD

SEPTEMBER

September 1 (Sat.)

Baroque & Roll. Mercury Baroque presents this family-friendly Labor Day weekend concert performance of the Baroque era's most rousing and memorable hits. Feel the heat of *Summer* by Vivaldi, bask in Bach's passionate *Violin Double Concerto*, and blast off to Pachelbel's *Canon*. Free. 8 pm at the Miller Outdoor Theatre, 100 Concert Drive in Hermann Park. Information and reservations: 713/533-0080 or www.MercuryBaroque.org.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ARTISTS

It's months before the **Houston Women's Festival** takes to the stage, but organizers are already gearing up. In preparation for the downtown, daylong October 20 celebration of women's art and music, organizers have announced a competition for the 2007 festival T-shirt and poster art. The talented winner will be awarded all sorts of HWF bling and adulation. August 31 is the deadline. Details: www.hwfestival.org. —N.F.

September 6-9 (Thur.-Sun.)

The Secret Garden. Based on the classic novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett, the orphaned Mary Lennox is sent to live with her uncle. She stumbles across a closely guarded mystery in the dusty corridors of the mansion. With the help of her newfound friends, she discovers a new world around her and within. The production features a 24-piece orchestra conducted by Dominique Royem. \$25 and \$35. Showtimes vary at the Heinen Theatre in Midtown, 3517 Austin at Holman, located on the Houston Community College Central Campus. Info/reservations: 713/465-6484 or www.bayoucityconcertmusicals.org.

September 8 & 9 (Sat. & Sun.)

The MS Walk. Take a step in the fight against multiple sclerosis (MS). Choose your location: Katy, Kemah, The Woodlands, or downtown Houston. The walks benefit the National MS Society, Lone Star Chapter. More than just mile and 5K walks, myriad family-friendly festivities are in store for strutters and supporters alike. Saturday, September 8 MS Walks: Katy at Katy Mills Mall, Kemah at the Kemah Boardwalk, and the Woodlands at the Panther Creek Shopping Center. Sunday, September 9 MS Walk in downtown Houston at Sam Houston Park. Registration at 7 am, walk at 8 am. Registration and information: 1-800-FIGHT MS or www.mswalklonestar.org.

PLANNING AHEAD

OCTOBER

October 6 (Sat.)

The One-and-Only Lily Tomlin. Society for the Performing Arts (SPA) presents "An Evening of Classic Lily," an evening in which Lily Tomlin journeys back in time re-creating more than a dozen of her famous characters including Ernestine the irascible telephone operator and the devilish 6-year-old Edith Ann. 8 pm at Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. Tickets (\$20-\$100) will be available August 24 and can be purchased online at www.spahouston.org.

by phone at 713/227-45PA, or at the courtyard level ticket office at Jones Hall. Look for an interview with the out funny lady in next month's issue of *OutSmart* magazine.

RADIO

◆ **After Hours.** Sunday mornings, 1-4 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queen 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).

PERFORMING ARTS

◆ **Doubt.** It is 1964 at a Catholic school. A strong-willed woman finds herself confused about the actions of the liberal Father Flynn. Is she sure of what has happened or is it partly her imagination. Uncertainty, ambiguity, and church politics complicate her decision as to whether or not she should speak up. (Adult content, sexual situations.) Aug. 31-Sept. 23 at The Alley Theatre's Hubbard Stage, 615 Texas Ave. Info/reservations: 713/228-8421 or www.alleytheatre.org.

◆ **Forever Hold Your Peace.** It's a Fertle family wedding. The sacrament of matrimony doesn't know what's about to hit it. \$20. Through Sept. 1, Thursdays and Fridays at 8:30 pm, Saturdays at 8 and 10:30 pm, at Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt. Info/reservations: 713/522-7722 or www.radiomusictheatre.com.

◆ **Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.** One of the wackiest Biblical musicals you'll ever see. Aug. 8-19, 7:30 pm Tuesday through Saturday evenings, matinees at 2:30 pm Thursday through Sundays, at the Galveston Island Convention Center at The San Luis Resort, 5600 Seawall Blvd. Info/reservations: 409/316-0346 or 800/547-4697.

◆ **Late Nite Catechism.** This one-woman show is part interactive catechism class, part stand-up comedy. Catholics and "heathens" alike learn and laugh as the incorrigible nun leads and misleads her class—the audience—rewarding good students with glow-in-the-dark rosaries and assorted kitschy prizes while giving naughty students a taste of "what-for." \$30. Through Sept. 30 at Stages, 3201 Allen Pkwy. Info/reservations: 713/527-0123 or www.stagestheatre.com.

◆ **Love Letters.** A.R. Gurney's snuggly play returns for two performances only. \$10. Fri. & Sat., Aug. 17 and 18, 8pm, at The Country Playhouse, 12802 Queensbury (Town & Country Village). Info/reservations: 713/467-4497 or www.countryplayhouse.org.

GOT GAME

Fans of both the **Houston Women's Festival** and the **Houston Comets** have two opportunities to co-mingle this month. Comets players will attend the Club 1415 monthly happy hour on August 1, 6 p.m. (1415 California) in preparation for HWF game day when the Comets face the Chicago Sky on August 16 at the Toyota Center, the closing game of the regular home season. Details: www.hwfestival.org. —N.F.

◆ **Madame Butterfly.** Houston Ebony Opera Guild presents Puccini's beloved opera, a tragic tale of love set to poignant music. Willie Anthony Waters conducts this English-language production. Free. Aug. 24 and 25, 8 pm, at Miller Outdoor Theatre, 100 Concert Drive in Hermann Park. The Aug. 24 performance is captioned for the hearing impaired. Free tix for covered seating available day of event at Miller's box office. More information: www.MillerOutdoorTheatre.com.

◆ **Patsy Cline—The Early Years.** Crazy, [you'd be] crazy for missing the world premiere of this new musical, Aug. 21-26, 7:30 pm Tuesday through Saturday evenings, matinees at 2:30 pm Thursday through Sundays, at the Galveston Island Convention

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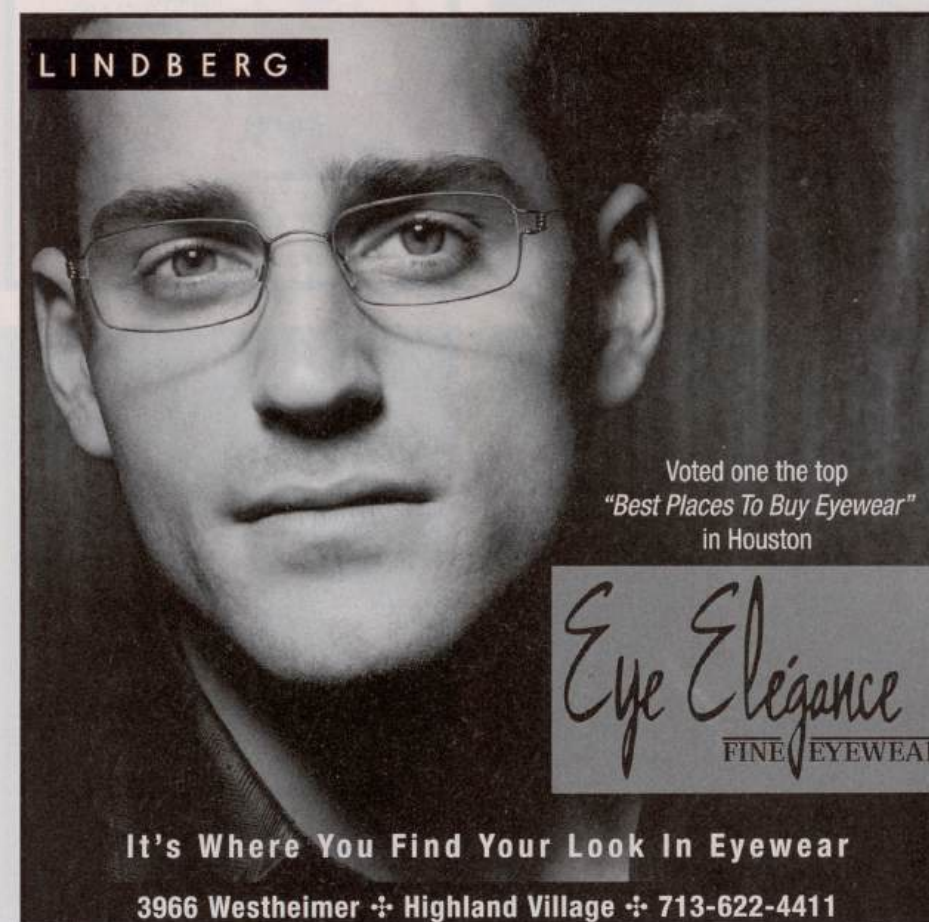
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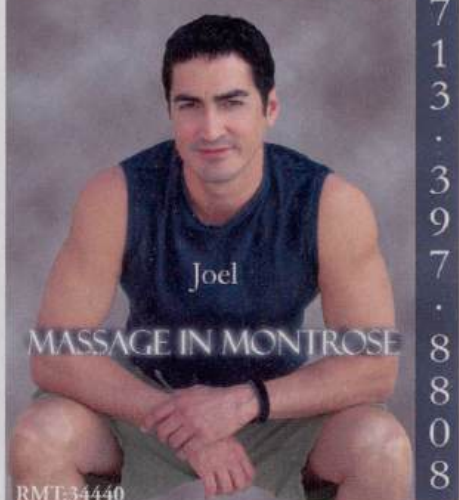
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♦ **Romeo & Juliet.** The Houston Shakespeare Festival presents the most well-known love story ever told. Two hostile families, one undying love. Free. Through Aug. 11, 8:30 pm, at Miller Outdoor Theatre, 100 Concert Drive in Hermann Park. More info: www.milleroutdoortheatre.com.

♦ **The Subject Was Roses.** Pulitzer Prize-winner Frank Gilroy's story of a pampered son returned from war vastly changed. The engrossing drama explores the problems of the inability to express love. \$10. Fridays and Saturdays, 8 pm, Aug. 24-Sept. 8, at The Country Playhouse, 12802 Queensbury (Town & Country Village). Info/reservations: 713/467-4497 or www.countryplayhouse.org.

PERFORMING ARTS

For Young People

Main Street Theater Kids on Stage Open House. The fall Kids On Stage teaching staff leads kids of all ages in mask-making, arts and crafts, theater games, and dance. Free. Sat., Aug. 25, 11 am-1 pm, at Main Street Theater-Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. Info: 713/524-9196 or www.mainstreettheater.com.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

♦ **Adaptation.** Art League Houston presents Houston-based artist Katherine Veneman's first solo exhibition, a new series of paintings and drawings. Veneman's complex, abstract paintings metaphorically chart the processes of change—and growth—associated with experiences that affect us all. Through August 24 at Art League Houston, 1953 Montrose Blvd. More information: 713/523-9530, alh@artleaguehouston.org, or www.artleaguehouston.org.

♦ **Forgers, Frauds and Pirates: Faking the Book.** Exposing the dark side of the literary world, this exhibit gathers some infamous examples of published deception over the past 400 years. Look for copies of the Texas Declaration of Independence, a newspaper account of the death of George Washington, "personal" diaries and autobiographies of Adolf Hitler, Howard Hughes, and Charles I of England, allegedly written on the eve of his execution in 1649. (If you missed the headline, they're all fakes.) Learn the stories behind them. Free. Through Sept. 30 at the Museum of Printing History, 1324 West Clay St. More info: 713/522-4652 or www.printingmuseum.org.

BUSY BOIS

August is a big month for Houston **Gendermyn**. First, our town's premiere drag king troupe hosts a Drag King Karaoke kegger party on August 12, 6 p.m., at Last Concert Café (1403 Nance). Five bucks gets you a commemorative Gendermyn cup and two beers, benefiting the troupe's community education initiatives. Later, the boys' second independent production, their "raucously political and stupefyingly entertaining" *The Labor Show*, hits the stage on August 25, 9 p.m., at The Engine Room (1515 Pease). Details: www.gendermyn.com. —N.F.

♦ **Frogs.** We're all familiar with movie sequels, but a museum sequel? The NatSci museum has created this fun follow-up to *Frogs! A Chorus of Colors*. In addition to pre-existing colorful live amphibians like the poison dart frogs, meet fascinating new additions. Also, look for the Matamata, a bizarre aquatic turtle (a natural predator to some frogs) that looks like something from a Godzilla movie. \$15 for adults; \$12 for children (3-11), seniors, and college students. Through Sept. 3 at the Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. More info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

♦ **The Great Wall of China: Photographs by Chen Changfen.** The first U.S. exhibition of work by this Chinese photographer who devoted 30 years of his life to exploring and photographing the Great Wall is reminiscent of the long-term projects undertaken by Ansel Adams in Yosemite and Alfred Stieglitz at Lake George. \$7, \$3.50 for kids 6-18. Through Aug.

12 at the Museum of Fine Arts, 5601 Main St. Info: 713/639-7300 or www.mfah.org (en Español: 713/639-7379, TDD/TTY for the hearing impaired: call 713/639-7390).

♦ **Holocaust Museum, Houston Museum District Day.** Join the museum for guided tours, special workshops and changing exhibitions. Saturday, August 18, 10 am-5 pm, in the Morgan Family Center of Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. Info: 713-942-8000, events@hnh.org, or www.hnh.org.

♦ **Hurricane on the Bayou.** Narrated by Meryl Streep and driven by a rousing jazz, blues, and gospel-fueled soundtrack, this IMAX doc is both a disconcerting record of Katrina's human effects and a call to restore Louisiana's wetlands, rebuild New Orleans, and honor the place where America's most vibrant homegrown culture was born. After seeing *Hurricane on the Bayou*, check out *Vanishing Wetlands: Two Views*. This exhibition displays the scientific and social impact of this environmental loss. \$9 for adults; \$7 for children (3-11), seniors, and college students. Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. Info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

PLAY TIME

One of 10 scribes, **Eric James** is tapped to present his work at 10 x 10, the 17th annual showcase production of 10-minute plays by local playwrights. In James' *Commit for Life*, directed by John Kaiser, a gay man suffers sexual discrimination at a hospital blood bank. Lambert Hall in the Heights (1703 Heights Blvd.) presents 10 x 10 on August 17 and 18, 8 p.m., and August 19, 5 p.m. \$10-\$15. Details: 713/866-4050. —N.F.

♦ **Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia.** Meet Lucy, or at least what's left of her. The original fossilized remains of this 3.2 million-year-old hominid visit Houston. With 40 percent of her skeleton intact, Lucy's remains remain the oldest and most complete adult human ancestor fully retrieved from African soil. Over 100 artifacts illuminate the rich heritage of Lucy's homeland, including fossils, historical manuscripts, musical instruments, and implements of daily use to name a few. \$20 adults; \$12 kids (3-11)/seniors (62+)/college students. Aug. 31-April 20, 2008, at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. More information: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

♦ **Mike Stilkey: When the Animals Rebel.** Los Angeles artist Stilkey created the fifth installation as part of Rice Gallery's Summer Window series. (The work can be viewed through the gallery's front glass wall while the gallery is closed for the summer.) Stilkey's installation involves a cityscape constructed of books, and features people and animals involved in the day-to-day mundane activities of city life. Free. Through Aug. 31 at the Rice Gallery, Sewall Hall, ground floor, off Campus Entrance 1 at Main and Sunset. Info: 713/348-6169 or www.ricegallery.org.

♦ **Of Gold and Grass: Nomads of Kazakhstan.** Don't believe Borat's hype. Kazakhstan is an enormous country with a sophisticated ancient culture. The exhibit's tour is the first time these artifacts have been seen in the U.S. The Scytho-Sakian culture of Kazakhstan developed a synthesis of foreign and indigenous design, now known as the "Wild Animal Style." Sounds kinda sexy and hip-hop for a country Sacha Cohen claims can only boast of its potassium export. \$14 adults, \$12 kids 3-11/seniors/college students, free for museum members. Through Sept. 9 at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. More info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

♦ **Perspectives 157: Xaviera Simmons.** The first Texas exhibition for the Brooklyn-based artist marks the debut of the installation, *Electric Relaxation: Digital Good Time (How to Break Your Own Heart)*, which also doubles as a performance space. The installation is comprised of hundreds of vintage record album sleeves covering the walls of the gallery. The evolving aspect of the installation is music, supplied throughout the run of the exhibition by archival footage of jazz, rhythm and blues, and hip hop concerts, as well as soundscapes created by the artist, and performances on select nights by guest DJs from the Houston area (see Monthly). Free. Through Sept. 16, at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. More info: 713/284-8250, www.camh.org, or www.soulargrooves.com.

♦ **RED HOT: Asian Art Today.** Drawn from the extraordinary holdings of Asian contemporary art of Houston collectors Robert,

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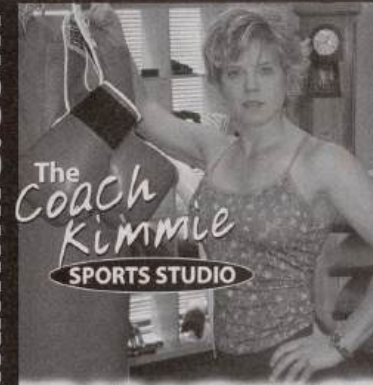
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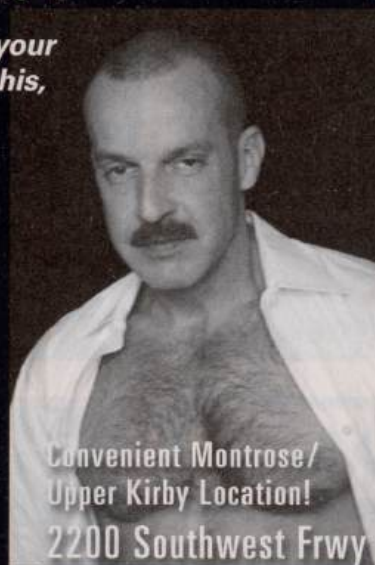
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Jereann, and Holland Chaney, many of these works have not been seen outside of their home countries. The exhibit is augmented by a variety of award-winning, Asian-related films and three anime classics. Through Oct. 21 (films screen through August) at the Museum of Fine Arts' Beck Building (as well as public spaces around the museum campus), 5601 Main St. More info: 713/639-7300 or www.mfah.org (en Español: 713/639-7379).

♦ **Red Velvet.** A direct reference to the 1986 film *Blue Velvet* by David Lynch, the artists in this exhibition explore the peculiarities of contemporary domestic life in an ironic and lighthearted manner. Artists include Matthew Bourbon, Donna Huanca, and Kelly Klaasmeyer. Through Aug. 18 at Vine Street Studios, 1113 Vine St. More information: 713/224-6262.

♦ **Things in Which We Believe: Menil Gifts to European and American Museums.** The title says it all. The Menils have donated works to some very important collections, including the MOMA and the Centre Georges Pompidou. This exhibit is part of the Menil Collection's 20th anniversary. Through Sept. 16 at the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. Information: 713/525-9400 or www.menil.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 the 1st Saturday 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. ■



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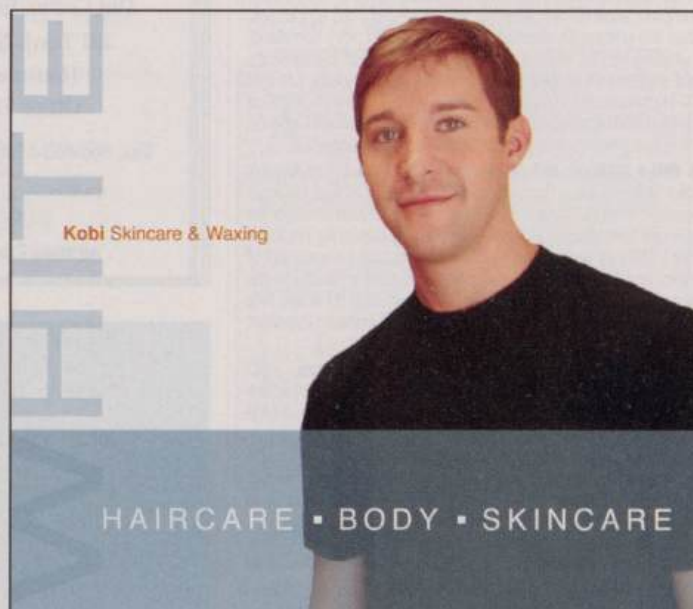
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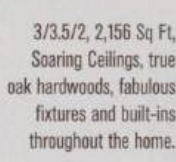


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Business News

AUTHOR, AUTHOR *Body Brilliance: Mastering Your Five Vital Intelligences*, penned by Alan Davidson, the owner of Essential Touch Massage & Spa, received a bronze medal in the Body/Mind/Spirit category at the Independent Publisher Book Awards in June. (See "Read Out," March 2007 *OutSmart*.)



Authors Alan Davidson and Dawson Church met at the Independent Publishers Awards in New York City.

Davidson (right) is pictured here at the awards in New York City with *The Genie in Your Genes* author Dawson Church. Davidson had contributed to Church's previous compilation, *Healing the Heart of the World* (Elite Books), which was honored as best inspirational book at the 2006 Independent Publisher Book Awards. Details: www.throughyourbody.com. To watch Davidson's *Body Brilliance* movie, visit www.bodybrilliancebook.com/bbb_movie.

LUCKY 13 Its six-figure, post-fire makeover complete, Chances Bar is celebrating its baker's dozen anniversary on August 18. That night, Livya Compean ("In Tune In Houston," August 2005 *OutSmart*) performs in what owner Nick Vastakis bills as the largest lesbian bar in the country. Log on to the club's website to request a cover tune you would like to hear Compean sing that night.

With the adjacent Barn and G Spot bars, Chances (1100 Westheimer, 713/523-7217) hosts a weekly Women's Night each Wednesday with a twist: Men are welcomed to enjoy the night, featuring \$3 call drinks, but must be accompanied by female escort. Details: www.chancesbar.com.

THREAD COUNTS What's cooler in steamy August than white linen? Just about nothing, believe the organizers of the second annual White Linen Night in the Heights.



At the inaugural White Linen event in 2006, about 13,000 visitors participated in the one-night shopping and entertainment event. "Last year's crowds took us by pleasant surprise,"

organizer Karen Mann says. "This year there's a lot of excitement about what's in the works and we'll be ready for more."

The celebration of art, culture, and community takes place on August 4, 6-10 p.m., throughout the Heights along 19th Street, Studewood, White Oak, Washington, Yale, and Heights Boulevard.

Participating sponsors/businesses include St. Arnold's Brewery, Glass Wall Restaurant, Koelsch Gallery, G Gallery, M2 Gallery, Redbud Gallery, Texas Collaborative Arts, Spanish Flowers Mexican Restaurant, The Boom Boom Room, Sterling Bank, The Homestretch, Buchanan's Native Plants, Oolala, The Artful Gallery, Karen Derr Realtors, Harold's in the Heights, Eclectic Home, Jubilee, Venus Hair, Wear it Again Sam, Bliss on 19th, Yale Street Arts Market, Lovejoy's

Antiques, The Backyard Gardener, 6th Street Bar & Grill, Yale Street Arts Market, Jimmy's Ice House, and Bacardi.

Recommended attire? Take a guess.

Details: www.WhiteLinenNightHeights.com.

RAINBOW CONNECTION Its weekly Tuesday evening Rainbow Night is evolving into what *Gay & Lesbian Rainbow Pages* publisher Cristina Martinez intended: a business networking evening that also promotes nonprofits and other social, political, and fundraising organizations.

Human Rights Campaign-Houston joins the *Rainbow Pages* as a sponsor of Rainbow Night on the last Tuesday of each month. The events are held at La Strada (322 Westheimer, 713/523-1014). Martinez invites members of community nonprofit groups interested in becoming Rainbow Night partners to contact her. "We have three other Tuesday nights for other organizations," she says. Details: 281/997-9778.



Brian Green (left), president and chief executive officer of Houston Food Bank, mayor Bill White, and Houston Food Bank board president Michael Marx of Kroger celebrate the 25th anniversary of the food bank at City Hall.

HELPING THE HUNGRY On June 5, Kroger, Wal-Mart, and Fiesta helped Houston Food Bank and the End Hunger Network celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Houston Food Bank. The June 5 date is designated Hunger Awareness Day by America's Second Harvest-The Nation's Food Bank Network, the Chicago-based nonprofit organization.

At the celebration, Kroger presented a check for \$100,000 to the food bank.

"Twenty-five years ago, when the Houston Food Bank was just beginning, the founders shared a vision of gathering food in a central location and distributing that nourishment to all who were hungry," said food bank president Brian Greene. "In the first year of operation, the food bank distributed one million pounds of food. Today, we distribute 38 times that amount annually." Details: www.houstonfoodbank.org.

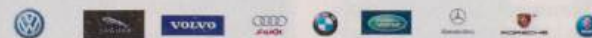
MERRILL CHRISTMAS Merrill Lynch, the financial management and advisory firm with several offices in the greater Houston area, has presented a \$100,000 gift to Lambda Legal.

"We have been working closely with Merrill Lynch since 2003 on our planned giving program, including financial education seminars for Lambda Legal members throughout the country, and they have underwritten numerous events for us over the years," said Kevin Cathcart, Lambda Legal executive director. "We value our relationship with Merrill Lynch, and their generous contribution will help us work toward equality for LGBT people and people with HIV."

Other long-term national corporate sponsors of Lambda Legal include American Airlines, Deloitte, IBM, and Stoli.

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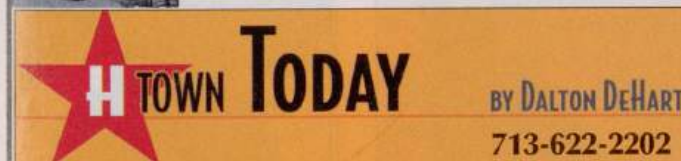
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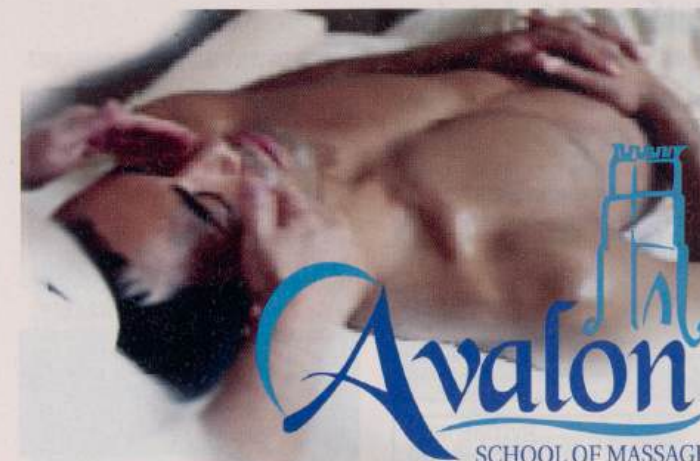
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BAR & CLUB GUIDE

HOUSTON

LA ACADEMIA

One of this southwest salsa club's biggest draws (other than welcoming patrons 18 and up) is Throb Fridays, helmed by DJ Rocky B. It attracts some of the coolest women in town. 5829 S. Gessner • 713/334-5422 • www.myspace.com/laacademiadanceclub.

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.

BELLA AIDA GARDENS

Lady Barbara and MC Zip (of Barini fame) host True Unity parties in this southwest Houston club every Saturday night for "everyone in the community," the women say. "We welcome lesbians, gays, transgenders, and bisexuals of all ethnic backgrounds." 9371 Richmond • 832/230-3739.

BLUR

This multi-level dance club features an upstairs lounge, balconies, expansive patio, and happy hour daily, 8-10 p.m. Sundays pack the dance floor with Trash Disco and drink specials. Wednesdays are ladies' night. 710 Pacific • www.blurbar.com.

BOCADOS

Each Wednesday, women pack this Mexican restaurant for dancing and socializing preceded by open mic sessions on last Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. Sunday brunch starts at 11 a.m. and lasts 'til 3 p.m. 1312 W. Alabama • 713/523-6230.

BOOM BOOM ROOM

Manager/chef Kat Mims says business at this new Heights-area lounge is going great (even booming?), but "something was missing." So they introduced "Gay Night" on Tuesdays, with drink specials and tasty munchies. 2518 Yale • 713/868-3740.

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

Houston lesbians and those who love them enjoy three separate clubs under one roof, satisfying their C&W, urban dance, and live club-music needs. Last year's fire resulted in hot upgrades including expanded and renovated bars, multiple video screens, banquet seating, and more. 1100 Westheimer • 713/523-7217 • www.chancesbar.com.

CLUB 1415

Professional women gather for happy hour in the second-floor club space the first Wednesday of each month. Boys & Girls Club follows, each Wednesday night. Papi Chulo night on Thursdays features an amateur strip contest. Fridays through Sundays are special events nights. 1415 California • 713/522-7066.

CLUB CRYSTAL

If you miss the now-closed Inergy, you'll find many of its former staff, management and décor at this two-room Latin/hip-hop club. Sunday evening drag shows rule the roost. 6680 Southwest Fwy. next to Colorado. www.crystaltheclub.com • 713-278-2582.

GUAVA LAMP

The club left Shepherd Plaza and 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 Waugh • 713/524-3359.

GEORGE

Regulars rule at this neighborhood country-western sports bar. Entertainment is provided via televised games, a jukebox, pool tables, and an occasional weekend drag show. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

MANGO VIDEO LOUNGE

Located next to Club Inergy, this Wednesday-Saturday spot has a 15-ft. video screen, dance floor, and pool tables. DJ Kenny Jammz hosts karaoke night on Wednesday. 5742 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7472.

MARY'S, NATURALLY

The oldest gay club in Houston, this is a legendary nightspot, 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

Following its lamented 2006 closure, this popular Charles Armstrong Investments nightclub frequented by the cosmo crowd will reopen this fall. At least, that's what it said on CAI's float in June's Pride Parade. 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 Lauri Gage, performs nightly, Tuesday-Saturday. 1419 Richmond • 713/520-8446.

MO MONG

Every Wednesday night, the guys and gals pack this Vietnamese restaurant to enjoy the martini specials. 1201 Westheimer #B • 713/524-5864.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Study 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.

ORBIT 1

Sunday night is "family night" for "mature" gays and lesbians at this southeast neighborhood bar off Scott Street, offering a free buffet, door prizes, and drink set-ups for your own bottle. 3901 Lockhart St.

PRIVE

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 at this north Houston club. DJ Kenny supplies music on Friday and Saturday. The club has begun presenting live music. 527 Barren Springs • 281/872-0215 • www.therainbowroombar.com.

RICH'S HOUSTON

Here we have one of the most mixed clubs in town, in terms of welcoming gay and straight, male and

female clientele. If you liked Brian Kinney's Club Babylon in the much-loved, now defunct cable TV series, *Queer as Folk*, you'll love Rich's. 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. Another big draw is the Houston Big Men's Club's bi-weekly hamburger BBQ fundraiser. 715 Fairview • 713/521-2792 • www.theripcord.com.

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.

SOCIAL ROOM

The trendy new club is open for business Wednesdays and Sundays only, featuring R&B, hip-hop, soul, and pop music. DJs on Wednesdays with happy hour pricing from 5-7 p.m.; women get in free 'til 9 p.m. Live music with no cover, Sundays. 1417 Westheimer

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 Cubanita on Wednesday. 810 Pacific • 713/529-SOBE (7623) • www.SouthBeachTheNightclub.com.

TONY'S CORNER POCKET

Located in the space that was formerly Keys West, new owner Tony Vacarro says the makeover of the near-downtown bar includes "Booze & Cruise Night" on Thursday, when "shirtless, in-shape guys" enjoy \$1 well drinks. Sunday Brunch starts at 11 a.m. 817 W. Dallas • www.tonyscornerpocket.com.

VIVIANA'S

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

Spring

RANCH HILL SALOON

It's not just bar! This Woodlands-area mixed club is also available for private parties, holy unions and receptions, and features the Wall of Fame and the famous saddle from its previous location. • 24704 I-45 North, Suite 103 • 281/298-9035 • www.ranchhill.com • http://myspace.com/ranchhillsaloon.

Galveston

3RD COAST BEACH BAR

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. • 409/765-6911 • www.3rdcoastbeachbar.com.

THE PINK DOLPHIN

Opened by Eldridge Longinois, 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.

ROBERT'S LAFITTE

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 Lofitte show takes the stage. 2501 Avenue Q (at 25th) • 409/765-9092.

THE TREMONT HOUSE

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.

UNDERCURRENT

This expansive, multi-level multi-bar is now under new management. Expect to see subtle changes to enhance the overall clubbing experience, but the entertainment component that Undercurrent has become famous for remains intact, including the Friday and Saturday night Gulf Coast Drag Mafia shows. 2409 Market • 409/750-8571 • www.undercurrentgalveston.com.

Beaumont

THE COPA

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.

Bryan/College Station

HALO VIDEO BAR

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.halobcs.com. ■

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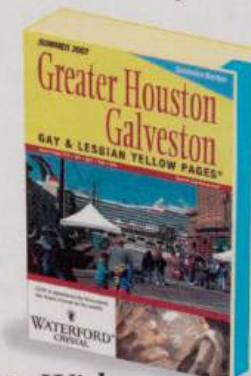
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—John Nagy, Sand Dollar Autoplex

SignOut

by Lilly Roddy



As our month opens, Venus, planet of love, beauty, romance, and financial matters, is retrograde. She is not due back in her direct course until September 12. Her influence over Virgos and Leos is especially strong. Overall, this is a good month to handle legal problems, money matters, and old relationships that need the boot. If there are problems in your relationships, they will certainly show up at this time. • The Sun is in the sign of Leo and enters work-oriented Virgo on the 23rd. Mercury is zipping along in Cancer as we start the month, enters Leo on the 4th, and slides into Virgo on the 19th. Venus begins the month in Virgo and slips back into Virgo on the 8th. Mars trudges through Taurus and enters the quick sign of Gemini on the 7th. Jupiter remains king in his own sign of Sagittarius, Saturn is in Leo, Uranus is in Pisces, Neptune is in Aquarius, and Pluto is in the last part of Sagittarius. • Good days this month: August 2, 3, 6, 9, 15, 17, 19, and 23. Days to duck and cover: August 7, 13, 14, 18, 21, 25, and 28.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). You are in a rather playful period. Your creative juices are flowing. This could be a great time to renew an old relationship or visit some old clients you haven't seen in a while. They will be very glad to see you, and you can make some real points with people. You loosen up a lot after the 7th and can become a real Chatty Cathy if you don't watch it. This month you have a lot of activities, so be sure that you don't overload your schedule. By the latter part of the month, you are ready to get back to your routines, but you are still looking for fun things to do on the weekends.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). Home and family issues are on your agenda as this month begins. Some of you are looking for new places to move, others are doing remodeling, and still others are redecorating. On the deeper levels, issues with parents, their health, and what really is your job in the family is brought to the surface. You have lost much of your innocence about your family over the last three months. You are now in control of recreating a family environment that suits your needs. As we get closer to the end of the month, get ready to take a break. Be ready to make a real break from your routines on the 27th, 28th, and 29th.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). Your month is all pumped up with Mars, planet of action and confrontation, entering your sign on the 7th. Some of you will be more talkative. Others will not sleep so well. Some of you will be barking out orders and telling us exactly what you think. Your brain may be racing ahead of your body, so be careful that you don't have any accidents. Your creativity will be focused on business and family matters toward the end of the month.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). This month you

LEO (July 23–August 22). Happy Birthday to the Leos. This is a very introspective month for you, since Venus is retrograding through your sign. You will be thinking about all your old lovers and the "woulda," "shoulda," "coulda" times. There will be a strong tendency to spend money to make yourself feel better, but watch that inclination or you will regret it next month. You will be ready to move forward in your career in September as you will be feeling much lighter. Be sure to have fun and don't take this month too seriously.

spend your time focused on your financial picture. This is the perfect time to take care of any old money problems that you have been avoiding. Keep in touch with your health, because you still have a tendency to overeat. This will eventually shift but not until the end of the year. Work is very creative, and new ideas may just drop out of the sky. You are in a very good time for finding creative solutions to other people's problems. Take some time off at the end of the month. Your energy levels are spiking.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). Typically, this month is always a good time for some rest and retreat before you enter your birthday time. Relationships have been up and down for you this year, and you don't seem to have the same tolerance from partners as you have had in the past. Tensions in relationships can be very high at the end of the month. A better place to put all that intensity is work. You are ready to start some new projects as long as you are in charge. Otherwise, you may take your blocks and go home. Flare-ups with the boss can be normal at this time.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). This is a great month to combine work and social life. You can make points on both ends. Friends and group associations are especially beneficial. You may connect with some old friends that you haven't seen in quite a while. Keep an eye on your schedule, because it can be easily overloaded. This can cause you to ignore your health, which you are supposed to be paying attention to.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). Reviewing your career and career choices are the main items up for bid this month. You have been working hard on trying to figure out just what you were thinking when you made the

current choices. Now this is your final time to reconsider where you are and if you are going to change. After September, you will not be so apt to change. But real problems will come to the surface if you are not sure. Old friends will also enter your social life. Take some time to enjoy their company.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). Busy. Did someone say busy? All they have to do is look in the dictionary, and there is your picture under the word. With Mars activating your sign, you could easily go over the edge this month. Try to keep a reasonable schedule and be sure to include some time off. Partnerships, both business and personal, need to be renewed. Sex could be extra special if you invest some time to make that happen.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). Well, someone had to have a serious month, and you are it. Money, trust, and deeper levels of commitment are all on the agenda. This is a very important time to have a chat with your partners, both business and personal, about the direction that you both are headed in. Consider this a time to get back on track or find separate tracks to follow. For romantic relationships, therapy could be an excellent choice. Put some of your energy into exercise and health regimens. That will make you feel more productive and better about yourself and will help to overcome some of the depression you are dealing with.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). Relationships are in the spotlight this month. With Venus, planet of commitments, retrograding in your partnership sector, you will be rethinking all your commitments. If you are involved, this is a time of review and renew. If you are single, give those old flames a call and see who is ready to respond. You are very serious about relationships at this time, and you need some sense of common ground so that you can move forward. You are also very creative this month. Take advantage of that fact.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). Your theme song for the month is "I've Gotta Be Me." You will not be bound by limitations in any part of your life. You are more rebellious than usual and can take some risks into any new career ventures. I would avoid taking risky choices in relationships, as those may come back to haunt you. Pay extra attention to your health, your work environment, and whom you surround yourself with. You are more sensitive than usual, and you could absorb negative energy around more easily than usual. If you can travel for work, this can be a real benefit for you.

Read Lilly Roddy's annual forecast for 2007, which appeared in our January issue ("Heavens to Lilly!"), at www.outsmartmagazine.com. Roddy recently launched a new podcast, "City of Ladies," at www.lillyrodgy.com.

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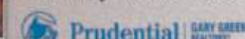


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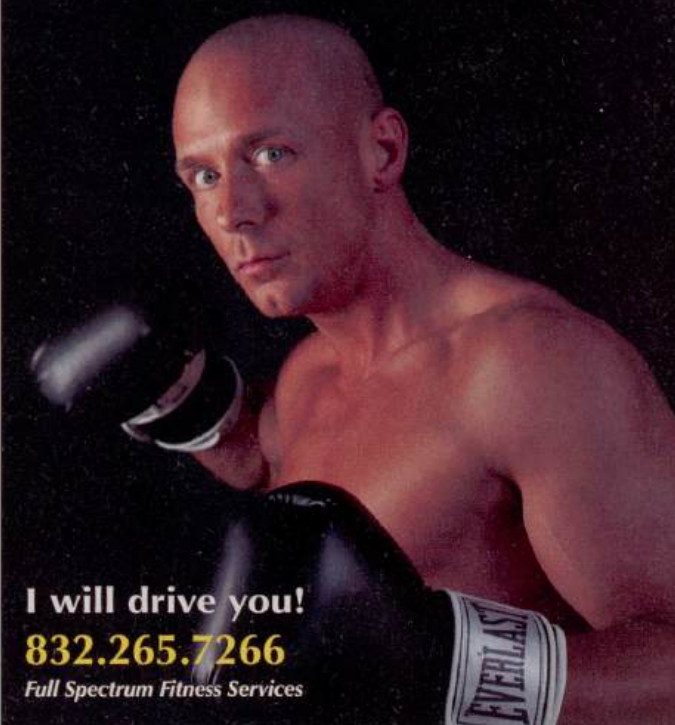
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OUT IN HOUSTON



1 Legacy Community Health Services' **Katy Caldwell** (l-r), **Joe Zoellers**, and **Chree Boydston** attended the June 13 grand opening of the Legacy resale shop.



2 **Brian Riedel** (l-r), **Josephine Tittsworth**, and **Melany Morrison** participated in the Summer Leadership Reading Circle based on the book *Leading at the Edge: Leadership Lessons from the Extraordinary Saga of Shackleton's Antarctic Expedition*. Led by Tittsworth, the eight-session series at the Houston GLBT Community Center began on June 5.



3 A good time was had by all at the GALLO Noche de Gala black-tie dance held on June 22 at the Arabia Shriner's Center.



4 Imperial Court of Houston royalty **Orlin Cullever** (l) and **Ginger Vitis** (c) accepted a check from Eastman Gallery owner **Richard Eastman** raised by the gallery during the June 15 ICDH Summer Soiree at the Historic Magnolia Ballroom.

5 The Bayou City Boys Club Jungle weekend in April raised a total of \$54,000, distributed to representatives of Legacy Community Health Services, Casa de Esperanza de los Ninos, AIDS Foundation Houston, Bering Omega Community Services, Montrose Counseling Center, and Brentwood Community Services at a June 3 reception at the Lovett Inn.

6 On June 21, attorney **John Nechman** (l) accepted a Texas State Bar Association award from attorney **Jerry Simoneaux**.

7 **Jenifer Rene Pool** (l-r), **Allison Herwitt**, Rep. **Garnet Coleman**, **Matthew Burrus**, and **Tammi Wallace** attended the June 16 luncheon co-sponsored by Human Rights Campaign, Houston Equal Rights Alliance, and the Houston GLBT Political Caucus at the Omni Houston.

8 **Rick Dickson** (l-r), **Audrey Odom**, **Charles Odom**, **Danny Kallen**, **Brad Odom**, and **Victor Cordova** cut the grand-opening ribbon at Salud! Winery on June 21.

9 **Lane Lewis** (l-r), **Saher Arar**, **Phyllis Randolph Frye**, **Zach Staats**, **Charlotte Norman**, and **David Lulloff** attended the May Theatre Under The Stars Out @ TUTS *Spamalot* evening.

10 Former Houston police chief **Clarence Bradford** (l-r), City controller **Annisie Parker**, and **James Robison** chatted during a June 8 fundraising reception for the BlackDems group at the home of Parker and her partner, Kathy Hubbard.



PHOTOS: DALTON DEHART



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