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June 2009

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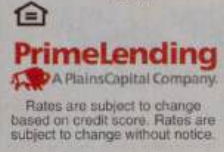


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CONTENTS

Vol. 16 • No. 5 • June 2009

News & Comment

- 10 Publisher's Letter**
- 12 Letters**
- 14 News Briefs**
- 20 What a World** There's much to be proud of in Montrose.
- 22 LeftOut** Forty years of Democratic support.
- 23 OutRight** A final farewell.
- 28 InsideOut** It pays to be prepared.
- 30 AIDS Watch** A matter of principles.
- 34 PastOut** Pride from previous years.
- 36 TimeOut** Our readers and recommendations.

Features

- 38 The Time Is Now** Annise Parker's run for Houston mayor.
- 48 Where We've Been** GCAM houses just some of Houston's mammoth LGBT history.
- 58 The Drama of Everett Evans** We always wondered. Now we know.
- 63 The Official 2009 OutSmart Pride Guide for Houston**
- 67 What's Happening** Pride Guide contents.
- 75 Role Models** A complete listing of Pride Houston's past grand marshals.
- 79 Marshaling the Parade** We don't call them "grand" for nothing.
- 95 Singing with Pride** What's more American than Pride Idol?
- 96 Big Tent** Must-see's of the Pride Festival.
- 98 Pride Tips** Everything you need to know about the big day.
- 99 Get There** A map to Pride.
- 105 Curtain Call** A look at this season's Tony Awards.
- 110 An Archive in Transition** It's all about change at the Houston Transgender Archive.
- 116 Not a Cure** The facts about living with HIV/AIDS.
- 120 Lifesavers** Lesbian Health Initiative Houston's Rainbow Health Fair.
- 124 Beyond Madonna** Dancing in the park with Salim Gauwloos.

Arts & Entertainment

- 126 Queer Quotes** Marie Osmond, ANT, Simon Cowell, Joan Rivers, and others.
- 128 DVDs** Soulforce on foot, plus *Pedro*, a slew of shorts, and more.
- 130 Television** Gay on Sundance Channel, Kathy Griffin, *Weeds*, much more.
- 134 GrooveOut** Dancing with the gays, plus new releases from Tori Amos, The Cliks, Depeche Mode, and others.
- 138 ReadOut** Second thoughts about Jamaica, plus new titles from Tom Edwards, Lesléa Newman, others.

Out & About

- 142 Calendar**
- 148 Out There**
- 158 Bar/Club Guide**
- 160 SignOut**
- 162 SceneOut**

Advertisers Index

- 152 Business News**
- 154 Classified**
- 156 OutSmart Advertisers**

ON THE WEB: An interview with Tom Edwards, author of *Blue Jesus*.



About the cover:
 Houston Pride (see page 63)
 COVER DESIGN Caleb Smith

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Publishers of OutSmart Magazine
3406 Audubon Place • Houston, TX 77006
713/520-7237 • 713/522-3275 Fax

Subscriptions: \$27/12 Issues, \$48/24 Issues

E-mail address: letters@outsmartmagazine.com

Website address: www.outsmartmagazine.com

OutSmart is published monthly. Estimated readership in Houston and surrounding areas is 60,000. Up&Out Communications is not responsible for claims and practices of advertisers. The opinions and views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the staff or management of OutSmart. Inclusion in OutSmart does not imply sexual orientation. ©2009 by Up&Out Communications. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without permission of the publisher is strictly prohibited. Unsolicited material is accepted. No manuscript returned without SASE.



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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

I have to be honest. This issue is very special to me, as it is to all of us here at *OutSmart*. We've always had a unique connection to Pride, as most members of the LGBT community, but this year is something special. To be entrusted as the Official Pride Guide of Houston by the Pride Committee of Houston is quite an honor for us.

Looking over the various Pride events, fundraisers, and celebrations, it's undeniably a very exciting time—an entire month devoted to parties and festivities. But there is something more substantial, more important than just colorful rainbow flags and the sparkling mirror ball suspended over the corner of Montrose and Westheimer.

Pride means that no longer are we forced to meet only in dark bars, where every drink comes with an in-

visible shot of fear—fear that the police could swoop down and raid the place, throw us into the paddy wagon, and take us all to jail.

Pride means that out LGBT people can be serious contenders for elected offices in the fourth largest city in the country, and that the first thing most people talk about is their stellar qualifications, not the fact that he or she is gay.

Pride means that transgendered men and women, while probably still the most disenfranchised members of our family, have made tremendous inroads into acceptance and understanding in our community, and the nation as a whole.

I'm not saying that we don't have a long way to go. We do. As California's recent verdict against gay marriage at-tests, we still have a fight ahead of us.

Houston Pride 2009's theme, Out 4 Justice, with its superhero feel, couldn't

be more appropriate. Full equality requires superhero-level courage, and not just the courage demonstrated by the grand marshals, role models, and straight allies found in these pages. It comes with the strength of every individual who is out and proud, not only on Westheimer on the last Saturday of June, but the next day, and the next, and the next, in our homes, our schools, our workplaces, our places of worship, and our voting booths.

I am exceptionally proud that already in the first decade of the 21st century, gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders are safer, freer, and more liberated than we've ever been. And that makes every Pride activity resonate a little deeper. I hope you feel that as well.

Happy Pride Month.

Greg Jeu and the staff of OutSmart

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Letters

MOTHER KNOWS

I loved *OutSmart's* May issue and wish to commend Leigh Bell for the excellent job she did in piecing together bits and pieces (plus important slivers) of information I gave her ["Perfecting Parenthood," *ReadOut*]. Not only was she accurate with the facts, but she also caught the spirit of my words. Interviewing someone who rattles on about topics relating only remotely to the original question is no easy task, and Ms. Bell did a terrific job!

Recently, as I was readying to present to an H.I.S.D. school on self-acceptance (which is the theme of my book, *The Knock-Kneed Cowboy*), I overheard fifth-graders accusing each other of being "gay." I suddenly felt the pain for GLBTQ youngsters, the pain that many *OutSmart* readers felt during their own youth.

I would like to extend my encouragement to *OutSmart* readers to commit to affecting youngsters' attitudes toward both themselves and others. While GLBT adults are pushing for equality with other citizens, I hope they (you) will remember your own struggles as a youngster who felt "different." While kids may know about "safe sex," most today remain unprotected emotionally.

We cannot depend upon stopping ridicule to protect GLBTQ (and other) youngsters' emotional health. Children must be taught that they have a choice about internalizing others' comments. That's where age-appropriate emotional instruction comes in. Show your concern; get involved; ask a children's librarian for appropriate materials. Donate such materials to libraries or schools. Help protect youngsters from others' cruel comments, just as you wish someone had done for you years ago.

Billie Willmon Jenkin
Houston, Texas

AN ECONOMIC QUESTION

Kudos to Wayne Besen in his call for a boycott on traveling to or buying from Jamaica ["Jamaica Is a Killer," May]. A real downturn in its tourist economy may make a change in their policy. However, why did *OutSmart* publish a Carnival cruise "Gayibbean" advertisement that includes a stop in Montego Bay only three pages past Besen's column?

Hello! Montego Bay is the second-largest city in Jamaica. Shouldn't the editorial section and the advertising department be working together, or does the need for ad revenue outweigh the importance of making a "homophobic hellhole" feel the pressure caused by its own hatefulness?

Richard O. Williams
Houston, Texas

A COMMUNITY TREASURE

I just have to say that the Women's Group [founded by Iris Sizemore] is a lifeline to women here in Houston. Every week there is a different speaker [who discusses] women's issues, and then everyone meets somewhere for lunch. All women would gain enlightenment from this wonderful group!

Thank you, Iris, for your hard work.

Shirley Heller
Houston, Texas ■



SPF
69

MANHUNT

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT SAYS 'YES AND NO' TO MARRIAGE EQUALITY

On May 26, the California Supreme Court issued its ruling in our Proposition 8 legal challenge. The court's ruling validated same-sex marriages that took place between June 16 and November 4, 2008, assuring those marriages remain legally valid and recognized by the state of California.

However, the court upheld the ban on future same-sex marriages approved by voters in November, arguing that the proposition was an amendment to the state constitution and not a revision. A revision of the constitution requires two-thirds approval of lawmakers to pass before it goes to the voters, according to a statement released by the California-based organization, Yes on Gay Marriage.



"This is not the end of the journey," said Kelley Moran, national director for Yes on Gay Marriage. "The Court's ruling only helps us refocus on the issues of changing state laws to allow gay marriage, of equal protection under the law, and of repealing the federal Defense of Marriage Act. Until DOMA is repealed, gay couples who marry in any state that allows it are still denied federal rights, responsibilities, and obligations that heterosexual couples already enjoy."

"DOMA violates the 14th Amendment's guarantee of equal protection under the law," Moran continued. "According to General Accounting Office reports, DOMA denies 1,138

benefits to gays who marry. The United States Congress has an obligation, I believe, to repeal DOMA so that all U.S. citizens enjoy equal protection under the law."

Paul Scott, executive director of Equality Texas, extended his organization's support to Californians who continue to oppose Proposition 8. "We will support our friends in California when they go back to the ballot to overturn Proposition 8," Scott said. "We know they will ultimately be successful because more people now understand how harmful it is to take away equal rights from families," Scott added.

Locally, Houston GLBT Political Caucus president Kris Banks expressed sadness at the ruling. "First of all, we are sad for our friends in California, where the state supreme court reaffirmed Proposition 8, which took away the right to marry from same-sex couples," he said in a statement to the press.

continued on page 16

IT'S A GAY GUT BUSTER

Do you want to shed those winter pounds and get in shape? Sure, you can apply to *The Biggest Loser* and have a national TV audience watch as you get voted off the show, or you can sign up for a free, 12-week community weight-loss program in Montrose. And nobody gets voted off the island.

The Montrose Community Meltdown is the brainchild of Josh Price, a guy who knows a little something about weight loss and reality TV.

Houston native Price headed to Hollywood in 2004, working as a production assistant on TV shows and as the casting director on Ryan Seacrest's 2008 *Mamma's Boys*, a sort of *Bachelor*-with-mom's-approval reality show. Price returned to Houston to work on two national court shows that film here at Fox 26: *Cristina's Court* and *Judge Alex*.

"I finally got out of the business," Price says. "I retired at 28! Too many long nights and broken cell phones." Now, he runs a personal concierge service, and he's recently gotten engaged to Anthony Seals, his partner of three years. But both of them fight the battle of the bulge, and that's why Price got the idea for a community meltdown.

"I've battled obesity my whole life," says Price. "I've been up and down. I'm up now, and I think the only way for me to combat this problem is to be responsible and motivate others in the community." That, and inspiration from his mom who works in the

fitness industry—coupled with an insider's knowledge of reality TV—has lead to the Montrose Community Meltdown. Those who sign up for the free program will find themselves experiencing something akin to *The Biggest Loser*, working with trainers at area gyms that are sponsors and attending motivational meetings at the Montrose Counseling Center. And yes, Price will use his Hollywood connections to bring in some big-name speakers. But the bottom line is about the community helping each other lose weight.

"We're hoping for more than 300 people," Price says. "And everyone is welcome—gay, straight, whatever! Obesity is such a problem in this country today, we really need to address the problem and do something about it."

As for Price himself, he's hoping to lose 60 pounds during the 12-week challenge. And Seals will be right there with him.

"Anthony's very excited about it. He's participating in it, too," Price says. "He's very excited and he wants this for both of us." —Marene Gustin

Montrose Community Meltdown is a free, 12-week course which starts in July. You can sign up now at montrosecommunitymeltdown.blogspot.com and follow the fun on FaceBook, MySpace, and Twitter. Price is hoping participants will blog, post, and upload photos to share their inspirational weight-loss stories.

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News Briefs

continued from page 14

"But even the supposed 'good news,' that same-sex marriages performed before the proposition passed will remain valid, serves as nothing but a cruel mockery for Houstonians and Texans. Those marriages may remain valid in California, but the moment those same-sex couples pass the Texas state line, they have no rights. That's because a Texas constitutional amendment, passed in 2005, took those rights away.

"But we want to make sure our community and those who support us are aware that there is action they can take to advance equality right here in Houston," continued Banks. "Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people must stand behind the members of our community who are ready to lead, including openly gay and lesbian candidates like Annise Parker, who is running for mayor, and Maverick Welsh, who is in a runoff in just three weeks for Houston City Council.

"We ask that our community turn its anger into action and get involved in these local races."

NEW HAMPSHIRE LEGISLATURE APPROVES MARRIAGE EQUALITY

ON MAY 6, NEW HAMPSHIRE'S STATE legislature passed a bill extending the freedom to marry to same-sex couples.

"We salute the courage and commitment of the New Hampshire legislature for doing the right thing by passing this legislation," said Rea Carey, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force executive director. "The legislature's action also affirms the national momentum building for marriage equality. It is clear that as people have discussed and considered this issue, they are increasingly recognizing that the protections provided through civil marriage are a vital part of full equality."

The measure now advances to New Hampshire governor John Lynch for signing.

BARBARA ANN RADNOFSKY ANNOUNCES CANDIDACY FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL

HOUSTON ATTORNEY BARBARA ANN Radnofsky has announced her candidacy for Texas Attorney General in the 2010 election.

"The attorney general is the people's lawyer. But what happens when the people's lawyer gives bad legal advice, abuses the office for political gain?" Radnofsky queried in a statement to the press. "The AG needs the real-world anchors of life lessons and good

judgment. After 30 years of law practice, I understand that when you are fighting for people you should never give up; no government should deprive its citizens of their rights, nor tilt the playing field."

In the span of her 30-year legal career, Radnofsky was honored as the Outstanding Young Lawyer of Texas in 1988 and has been listed in the past 16 years in "Best Lawyers in America."

LONNIE ALLSBROOK ANNOUNCES RUN FOR CITY COUNCIL, POSITION 1

SMALL-BUSINESS OWNER and openly gay man, Lonnie Allsbrook, has announced his intention to run for Houston City Council, Position 1. Peter Brown, a candidate for Houston mayor, currently occupies the Position 1 council seat.

A 38-year resident of Houston, Allsbrook says he has "come to value and appreciate this community," but has realized there is potential for growth and change.

"The reason I am running for this position is to give the people of Houston a representative that is fair, honest, and genuinely willing to take the time to listen to the needs of the citizens of this community. I am that person." Allsbrook is owner of Beer Island in the Heights.

MAVERICK WELCH EYES DISTRICT H COUNCIL SEAT IN RUNOFF ELECTION

THE SPECIAL ELECTION ON MAY 9 for the Houston City Council District H seat found openly gay candidate Maverick Welch headed for a runoff election with Houston police officer Ed Gonzalez. Gonzalez garnered 31 percent of the May vote; Welch received almost 27 percent of the vote.

"The groundswell of support for Maverick on election day is proof positive that he has the institutional and grassroots following needed to defeat Gonzalez in the runoff," said Houston Stonewall Young Democrats president, Brandon Webb. "The Houston Stonewall Young Democrats are proud to be included in Welch's vital volunteer base."

The election is being held to fill the seat of former city councilman Adrian Garcia, who was elected Harris County sheriff in November 2008. The runoff election is set for June 13.

BAYOU CITY PERFORMING ARTS GETS NEW LEADER

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News Briefs continued from page 16

Bayou City Chorale, and Bayou Rhythms. "I'm very excited. I love Houston," Lerner told the *Arizona Daily Star*. "I worked with this chorus and it's good."

Currently the music director and conductor of the Southern Arizona Symphony Orchestra Tucson, Lerner said he will commute from Houston to Tucson to continue to lead the orchestra there.

Lerner's appointment to BCPA becomes effective in August.

KINDRED SPIRITS CELEBRATION MOVES TO RUSSIAN COMMUNITY CENTER

MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZING committee of the 2009 Kindred Spirits Celebration say the group's annual dance is set for August 15, beginning at 7 p.m.

Previously held at the now-demolished Edwin R. Hornberger Conference Center, the dance takes place at Demers Russian Community Center, 8225 Cantrell Street, in southwest Houston.

Now in its eighth year, the celebration commemorates the 1980s-era nightclub for women and their friends, and benefits Assist-Hers, Bering Omega Community Services, Houston Buyers Club, and Lesbian Health Initiative-Houston. For more information, log on to kindredspirits-houston.org. ■

Milestones

DIED Gerald (Jerry) Miller Brady, founder of Liberty Cab Company, died on April 29 due to complications from cardiac surgery. He was 63. In addition to founding the taxi company in 1981, Brady was an early leader in the civil rights movement. Actively opposing the Vietnam War, he later sought out disenfranchised veterans for whom he provided assistance and opportunities. He consistently supported gay equality, the National Rifle Association, and many industry organizations and local business enhancement groups. Additionally, he was a board member and former president of the Greater Northside Management District and a multiple-term president of HATCO, the Houston Alliance of Taxi Cab Owners. Surviving family members encourage bereaved friends to honor Brady with contributions to charities of individual choice.



RESIGNED Longtime Houston GLBT Political Caucus leaders, board member Beth Tudor, vice president/screening chair Maria Gonzalez, and former board member and president (and most recently, data chair) Jack Valinski have resigned from their caucus duties. Replacing them in the organization are Christina Gorchynski and Neal Falgoust. Additionally, Victor Castillo has resigned from his position as secretary of Houston Stonewall Young Democrats. ■

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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

In Montrose, there's much to be proud about

Despite its promising rhyme as it began that everything would be just fine, 2009 has had its disappointments.

First, *The L Word*, considered by some of us lesbians as our small-cinematographic home away from home, ended its six-year run with what was arguably the most ill-advised finale since *The Sopranos* flat-lined in 2007. Bring on the movie.

Next, we cringe to remember how Barack Obama said he would have the gay community's back in the White House if we would have his on his way there. But President Chill (and I call him that with the friendliest of intentions) said last month, that lifting Don't Ask, Don't Tell, that notorious, injurious gay ban on the military, would have to wait.

Then, slightly more locally, Texas governor Rick Perry disappointed some, yet inspired others, by conjuring the possibility of Texas seceding from the remaining 49 states.

"There's absolutely no reason to dissolve it. But," Perry hinted on April 15, referring the "great union" that is these United States, "if Washington continues to thumb their nose at the American people, you know, who knows what might come out of that."

But the disappointments of this year are dwarfed by positive occurrences that, especially this month, give us queer folk here in Houston—specifically, here in Montrose—reason to be proud:

For one, you may have heard that our own Annise Parker, who has risen from the ranks of Houston City Council and the controller's office of the largest city in Texas, is leading a pack of candidates for Houston's next mayor. Leading handsomely, we might add.

Next, there is also the very real possibility that in November, Houston may boast not only an out mayor, but also four out city council members in addition to already seated out council member, Sue Lovell. How's that for a comeback, Straight Slate (that ill-fated roster of antigay candidates that ran for city office in 1985)?

And finally, Pride season, the highest of high holy days for the LGBT community, is here.

Forty years after the first glittering high heels and smelly trash cans were thrown at Stonewall, we still celebrate the bravery of those theretofore immaculately groomed, closeted, gay men who looked like a casting call for *Mad Men* auditions. Shoulder-to-shoulder beside them were the butch dykes with their stereotypical butch haircuts and pack of Lucky Strikes rolled up in the sleeve of their white T-shirts, and the transgenders and crossdressers who didn't run when their mascara ran.

Christopher Street, the place where the Stonewall rebellion occurred in 1969, was

Montrose is a state of mind as much as a geographic location.

a microcosm of New York City's artists, Bohemians, forward-thinkers, and, of course, the queers.

Much like Montrose.

And just like Christopher Street, Montrose, the 31-year home of the southwest's biggest Pride celebration held every June in commemoration of Stonewall, has its own history to be proud of.

Montrose looked much different in 1978 when Houston's first official Pride parade rolled down Westheimer than it does now. There were no five-story townhomes. Mom and pop restaurants, resale shops, bars, and other small businesses dominated the neighborhood otherwise occupied by Houston's artists, Bohemians, forward-thinkers, and, of course, queers.

Prior to that, in the 1900s, before the Bohemians et al settled there in the heady '60s era, Montrose was a barren prairie land.

Doing its part to ensure that today's flavorless fast-food franchises and towering townhomes don't return Montrose to that indistinguishable esthetically barren state is a new locally produced television show—a must-see for anyone who has emotional or financial investment in Montrose.

Montrose, Texas: The Transformation of a Neighborhood from Sunset Productions with assistance by Sally Huffer and the Montrose Counseling Center is scheduled to air during Pride month, on June 3, 9 p.m., on PBS. That's Channel 8 for most local viewers.

PBS Houston's ubiquitous Ernie Manouse narrates the 30-minute program focusing on the rich heritage that is the land and the people of Montrose. We also are treated to personal recollections of the area as told by some of the key people who helped Montrose (which originally got its name from a town in Scotland) become the gem that it is today.

Neighborhood matri- and patriarchs, Suzanne Anderson, Jimmy Carper, Marion Coleman, John Coulter, John Danielson, Ray Hill, John Kellett, Dan Martin, Sharon Montgomery, Carol Adatto Nelson, Brandon Wolf, and others affix their own individual pieces of memory into the story, contributing to the rich jigsaw puzzle of diversity that is Montrose.

They refer to Montrose as Houston's Disneyland, Mecca, Castro, Greenwich Village, and even Cape Cod, proving that Montrose is a state of mind as much as a geographic location.

But on June 27, Montrose is known to the rest of Houston as, simply, the place to be.

Gathering like they were responding to a biological clock that sounds its big gay alarm every last Saturday night of every June, every year, hoards of homosexuals and heterosexuals and families and singles and young people and people who wish after the parade as they adjust their spines that that were still young all converge on Montrose for the festivities in astounding, ever-increasing numbers.

Lord, they love those beads.

If only those same thousands and thousands of people—the gay and the straight and all the rest—who come to Montrose to revel each June responded with equal enthusiasm when it's time to vote to support what Montrose stands for, everything equality-minded people ever dreamed of may someday be attainable.

Who knows—maybe someday, Montrose could even secede from Texas. ■

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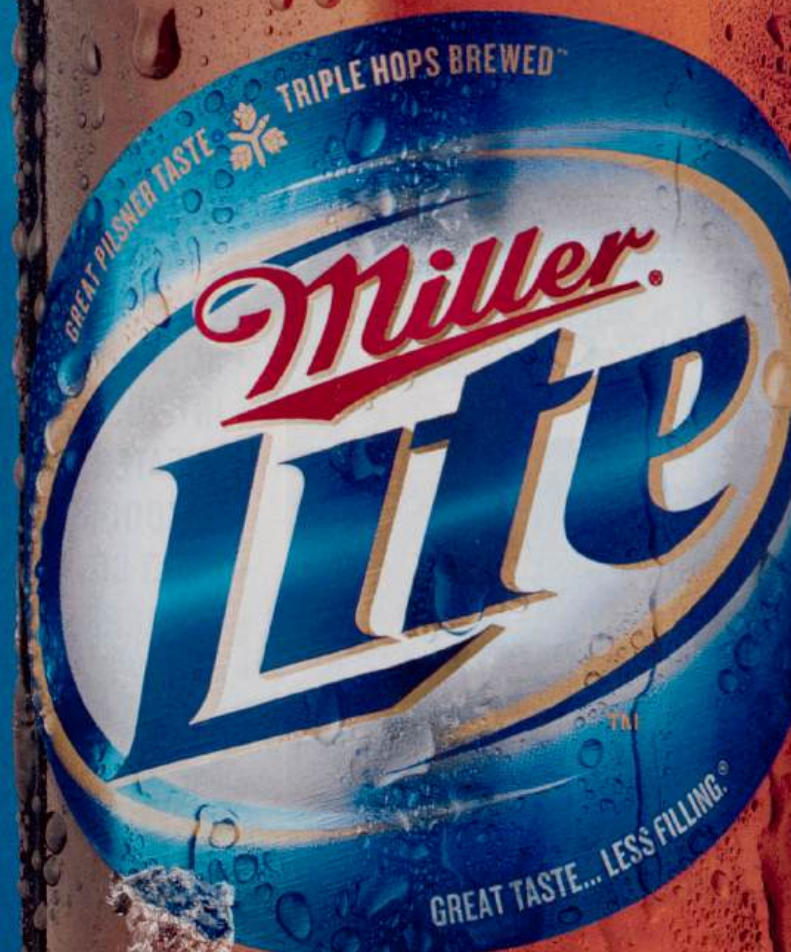
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MY RUBY ANNIVERSARY

In love with the left for 40 years

On Sunday, June 28, 2009, the LGBT community celebrates the 40th anniversary of the bar riot in New York City that ignited our movement toward full equality. I came out the year following Stonewall, so I've always equated my life as a gay man with the whole sweep of the gay movement. Cognizant of the upcoming 40th anniversary, my mind drifted back in time.

In 1968, my oldest brother came out to me. He was sure I was gay, too, but I denied it. That, however, didn't stop me from buying a theater ticket for every gay film that was being released at the time; for some reason, Hollywood had suddenly got interested in gays. I saw *The Fox*, *The Killing of Sister George*, *The Sergeant*, and *Reflections in a Golden Eye*. When *The Boys in the Band* was released, I slipped in to see it again and again, weekend after weekend. Somehow, though, I still wasn't convinced I was gay.

In June 1969, the Stonewall riot occurred. But it would be a year later, in the fall of 1970, when my defining moment would arrive. Dick Cavett invited a young gay activist to appear on his evening talk show. After the introduction of the guest, the audience became breathlessly silent. Cavett shifted uncomfortably in his chair. When he said the word "homosexual," it pierced the air.

Cavett's guest, Marty Robinson, was visibly nervous, but determined to get on with the business of speaking the unspeakable. Robinson was dark, handsome, muscular, and articulate—a construction worker by day and a Gay Activist Alliance member by night. He was lean and trim, wearing a dark navy-blue sweatshirt with a big orange lambda. I was mesmerized. A month later I walked into a gay bar for the first time.

I soon realized that being gay was more than "living a gay lifestyle." It was now a

political and legal battle to change American attitudes. Immersing myself in the politics of gay rights, I quickly learned that many politicians in the Democratic Party were our friends. And that we had many foes in the Republican Party.

Long-time community activist Ray Hill once told me about the day he came out to his mother, Frankie. He warned her that he had something to tell her about himself that she didn't know. "I'm gay," he said. And she responded, "Oh, thank God. I thought you were going to say you'd become a Republican!"

Over the past 40 years, I've supported every Democratic candidate for the presidency. What I didn't originally anticipate was a movement inside the gay community undermining our ability to fight for gay rights—one of the greatest political mysteries of all time: the Log Cabin Republicans (LCR). How can any LGBT person look the

continued on page 24

LAST CALL

After 15 years, it's time to move on

In the span of a human life, 15 years is a long time. I've decided it's more than long enough to write a regular column for a magazine. This one, number 182, will be the last one I write for *OutSmart*.

Fifteen years ago, I was 27. I had recently moved to Houston after graduating from law school, had clerked for a conservative federal appellate court judge, and had begun working for a big law firm.

I was also just getting started in gay-rights activism. I had been to my first March on Washington and had attended my first couple of Pride parades. I had joined the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus, as it was known then, and was elected to its board. I had recently learned of a group called the Log Cabin Republicans, which combined a belief in equality for gay people with conservative political ideals. I was full of ideas, energy, and enthusiasm.

President Clinton and Congress had just given us "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." About 20

states, including Texas, criminalized gay sex. The state Republican Party was bad and getting worse (it's still terrible). I had already lost a couple of friends to AIDS. There was no gay marriage anywhere in the world.

There were also few gay conservative writers. There was Andrew Sullivan. Bruce Bawer had written *A Place at the Table*. That was about it. It was assumed that to be gay was to be politically liberal on everything from abortion to taxes to national security. My friends and I knew better, but these were the days before the Internet, and it was simply harder to connect with like-minded people.

OutSmart was getting started. One could see from its first issue in February 1994 that this was not to be just another bar rag. It seemed a possible outlet for a burst of new thinking about gay politics, culture, and life.

So I wrote a piece and sent it in to Greg

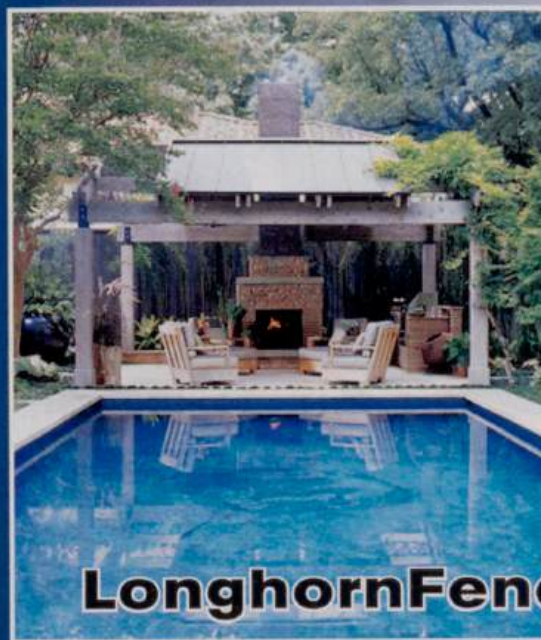
Jeu, the magazine's visionary and tireless publisher, for the March 1994 issue. Entitled "Why Out Is Right," it basically argued that coming out of the closet was an important step in changing the world. Not exactly an original idea, even then. The magazine put a big picture of me in the middle of the page, which was a fine idea back in 1994. Not so good now.

I was hooked and started sending in columns every month. For some reason, the magazine kept publishing them.

It was only a few months later, after sharp criticisms of President Clinton and a series of columns on gay conservatism, that the viewpoint of the column became clear. Within a couple of years, *OutSmart* added "LeftOut" (a column title I suggested) as a balance to *OutRight*. *LeftOut* always seemed superfluous to me, even though I respected the writer and enjoyed the columns. Everything written for gay magazines back then was *LeftOut*.

continued on page 25

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LeftOut

continued from page 22

other way and help put into office a party which has worked against our community's interests for so long?

Shortly before the 2008 election, I received an e-mail from LCR, asking me to vote for their endorsed candidate, John McCain. The organization's president, Patrick Sammon, included a recent McCain interview with *The Washington Blade*. Sammon gushed over the fact that the senator had spoken with a gay newspaper. What he seemed oblivious to was the fact that his candidate had consistently rejected every LGBT issue he was asked about. Politics makes for strange bedfellows—and bad sex.

I know all the LCR stuff about “changing the party from within.” But when I think about them, I always get the same eerie feeling I had while watching that first Muppet movie when the frog-leg restaurant chain attempted to hire Kermit as their spokesman.

The Republicans went down in defeat this past November. And the LCR band played on as their mother ship sank beneath the waves. One might think this would be a harbinger of demise for gay Republicans. Instead, they are now arguing with each other about who is “too liberal,” and a new group called GOProud has emerged. Let's hope that the Specter Flu spreads.

The Democratic Party isn't perfect. It has disappointed our community many times over the years. But on the whole, their hearts have been in the right place, and they've been there for us more often than not. The current White House website features a list of goals that the Obama administration hopes to achieve for LGBTs.

We have a president who listens, an administration with a desire for dialogue, a growing international reputation of good will, the hottest First Lady on the planet, and an adorable First Dog named Bo. That's enough for me to stay content for the near future, while our government works to repair our economy and renew our spirits.

I have sometimes questioned how I would perceive life if I hadn't been born gay. Would I have ever experienced the wonder of societal evolution or understood the depth of the human spirit to resist injustice? Or would life have just become an endless blur of days on the calendar and dollars in the bank account?

Recently I was talking to my lesbian activist friend, Arden Eversmeyer. She's that lady from LOAF (Lesbians Over Age Fifty).

Eversmeyer loves to delight Houston Pride Parade crowds as she leads cheers such as “Two, four, six, eight—how do you know your grandma's straight?”

I asked Eversmeyer what she would answer if there was a way that she could travel back through time, stand before God, and be allowed to choose whether or not she would be gay. Without a moment of hesitation, she looked at me and said, “Oh Brandon, that's a no-brainer.”

Indeed. Have a happy 40th!

Brandon Wolf, a regular contributor to OutSmart magazine, founded the online group, Houston Activist Network (Han-Net), which is now LoneStarActivists.

OutRight

continued from page 23

I was pretty provocative, opposing trans inclusion in the gay movement, using “gay women” to refer to lesbians, whacking the Democrats and suggesting the Republican Congress would not pass much antigay legislation, chronicling the fights we were having within the state GOP, and so on.

Liberal readers, seemingly the only ones, started sending in highly critical letters. But only once in 15 years has OutSmart refused to publish OutRight based on its content—a column in which I suggested that the annual Pride parades should be discontinued.

I liked the reader feedback, especially the critical kind. But the moments that stick with me are the private notes and words of encouragement I occasionally got from closeted people who said some column I had written helped them come to terms with being gay.

My life's changed a lot in 15 years, in ways predictable (gray in the temples) and not so predictable (teaching law school in Minneapolis). I left Houston 10 years ago, though I still visit often and love the city. I'm not in grassroots politics anymore, either as a Republican or in gay-rights groups. The Republican Party of Joe the Plumber doesn't do much for me. And I haven't quite gotten the hang of GLBTQQTSIA.

The country has changed a lot, too, and for the better. Sodomy laws are history, thanks in large part to some brave people in Houston. We have gay marriage in several states and more are coming.

But we still have a long way to go. Barring Supreme Court intervention, we are decades away from nationwide gay marriage. Shamefully, gay soldiers are still being fired from military service. It's still not possible for gay couples to walk down the →

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OutRight

continued from previous page

street hand-in-hand in most places without derogatory comments, ugly stares, and much worse. Gay kids still grow up ashamed, lonely, and afraid.

In many ways I've grown up as a gay man writing this column. It both reflected and shaped the way I thought of myself and the way I looked at the world. I'll miss it.

But I've moved on. I remain dedicated to equality for gays and lesbians and will continue to press for it in other ways. I'm now devoting a lot of time to my academic writing and to writing for blogs (indogayforum.com and volokh.com.)

There are many gay conservatives out there now. No single perspective speaks for gay people now. That's healthy.

Finally, I want to thank Greg and all of the OutSmart editors over the years for publishing this column. They took a lot of heat. But they stuck by it, a testament to their maturity and dedication to debate within the community. I hope this column has served that community in some small way.

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



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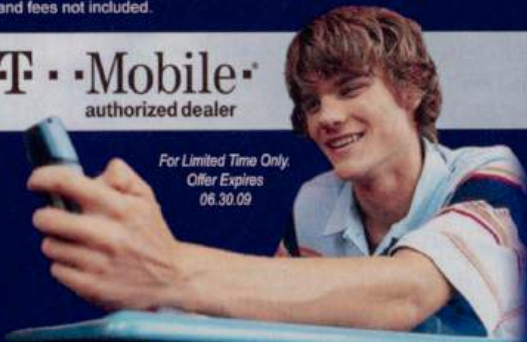
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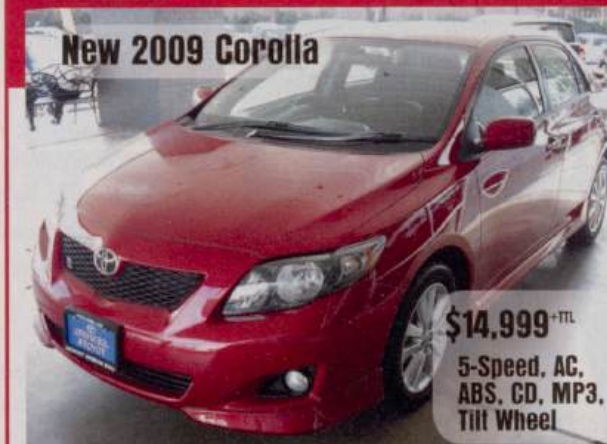
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InsideOut at City Hall

by Annise D. Parker

BOUNCING BACK

Preemptive program aims to quicken city's response to weather disasters

With all the recent flooding, Houston is certainly polishing its emergency preparedness skills. If a big hurricane hits again this summer, the city should be ready.

Long before Hurricane Ike plunged Houston into eerie darkness September 13, 2008, the city was ready. We had created a \$20 million Rainy Day Fund, contracted for post-storm debris pickup, improved the evacuation plan after Hurricane Rita gridlock, and made sure city response was coordinated with county, state, and federal responders as well as utility companies. One of the smartest projects the city ever helped launch is TranStar, the regional traffic and emergency management center, considered one of the world's best.

Still, each storm is a new experience. Hurricane Ike taught us painful lessons about restoring the electrical grid and backing up the city water system. We are working on correcting those problems before the next

hurricane season. But there is a deeper level of response that we must achieve.

During Hurricane Rita, I volunteered to help handle calls at the Houston Emergency Center, where the city's emergency management staff was operating. I fielded non-emergency calls from the disabled, those reliant on electricity for life-saving medical equipment, and those without transportation. I could do little more than comfort them over the telephone and promise to send help after the storm.

Yes, the city had seen the big picture and prepared fairly well. But tragedy was striking in individual homes. So many desperate people should not have to call 311 for help during a disaster. We should know in advance who and where the most vulnerable live. We did little better during Hurricane Ike, although a more honed media message and a general feeling that the storm would be less severe helped.

The city and electricity providers do re-

quest that the most vulnerable call before a storm to get on assistance lists. Obviously, this can't reach everyone. While governments try to do their part before, during, and after a storm, individuals and groups also play a critical role in saving lives.

The city has just launched a pilot program to coordinate those efforts and fill in critical gaps in storm response. Acres Homes, a predominantly African-American community in northwest Houston, has been asked to serve as a model for the rest of the city. Participating churches and civic groups will create registries of vulnerable people in their area. When the next disaster strikes, response will be two-pronged. Groups will have already given the list to the fire department so that electricity can be restored to critical locations, and either the city or the community group can check on those in need.

Hopefully, the Acres Home pilot will provide a workable model so the city can be

divided into grids, neighborhood by neighborhood, and within them, by church and civic group. Yes, this sounds like a tremendous challenge in a city of 2 million. Think of it as building a house from the ground up. Houston is composed of so many wonderful neighborhoods, many with Neighborhood Watch programs. This is just a logical extension of those successful programs that will serve this city well in case of disaster.

Individuals must also do their part in a disaster. Stock up on batteries and battery-run items, like flashlights, fans, and TVs, before hurricane season. Pay close attention to hurricane alerts. Then stockpile water and eat down the food in your freezer. Know how to secure your home from high winds. Most importantly, know your evacuation routes if you live in a storm-surge zone, and reach out to neighbors for help if you need it. All this sounds like common sense, but we all wonder why so many people ignore warnings until the last minute. We can do better, and after the hard lessons of Hurricane Ike, I'm extremely hopeful that we will.

A candidate for Houston's mayor in the November 3 election, Annise D. Parker is Houston's third-term city controller and one of the highest-ranking openly GLBT-elected municipal officials in the U.S. Her webpage is AnniseParker.com. To receive the controller's newsletter, send an e-mail to cicely.wynne@cityofhouston.net.

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH STANDARDS

Revisiting 'The Denver Principles' for people with AIDS

In 1983, I was 22 years old and just graduating from college. I was focused on getting into graduate school, getting to the gay bar for nightly drink specials, and getting to know lots of women, but not necessarily in that order. HIV and AIDS was in the news but not yet a part of my world (or at least I didn't know it was already impacting my life).

At that time, we knew very little about AIDS other than it was a scary, deadly disease with no treatment. We hadn't yet identified HIV as the causative agent, so various theories about AIDS were being examined. Was it due to a virus or some other germ? Was it from use of poppers? Dancing to disco music? Having gay sex?

To make matters worse, those with AIDS faced serious discrimination in employment, housing, dental care, and even medical treatment. Many people with AIDS experienced social isolation as their friends,

colleagues, and family members refused to touch them, share eating utensils, or go to the toilet after them. And still others with AIDS faced threats to their physical safety and personal liberties.

In order to address those issues, a group of people with AIDS got together in Denver that year to discuss the rights and expectations of those living with the disease. They created a manifesto on self-empowerment known as the Denver Principles, which asserted that those living with AIDS had human rights and responsibilities, and they should participate in the decision-making process that would so decidedly impact their lives.

Since 1983, this invaluable document has served to guide the development of the HIV system of care, as well as its funding and allocation bodies and procedures. Now, in 2009, despite the significant progress we have made over the last two and a half

decades in the fight against AIDS, we must acknowledge there is still much to do, especially in the areas of access to care, AIDS stigma and discrimination, and the eradication of HIV.

Therefore, the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) and *Poz* magazine have created a new initiative wherein individuals and agencies within the HIV community are being asked to recommit themselves to the Denver Principles.

THE DENVER PRINCIPLES

Statement from the Advisory Committee of People with AIDS (1983):

We condemn attempts to label us as "victims," a term which implies defeat, and we are only occasionally "patients," a term which implies passivity, helplessness, and dependence upon the care of others. We are "People with AIDS." →

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AIDS Watch

continued from page 30

Recommendations for Health-Care Professionals

1. Come out, especially to their patients who have AIDS.
2. Always clearly identify and discuss the theory they favor as to the cause of AIDS, since this bias affects the treatments and advice they give.
3. Get in touch with their feelings (e.g., fears, anxieties, hopes, etc.) about AIDS and not simply deal with AIDS intellectually.
4. Take a thorough personal inventory and identify and examine their own agendas around AIDS.
5. Treat people with AIDS as a whole people, and address psychological issues as well as biophysical ones.
6. Address the question of sexuality in people with AIDS specifically, sensitively, and with information about gay male sexuality in general, and the sexuality of people with AIDS in particular.

Recommendations for All People

1. Support and membership in our struggle against those who would fire us from our jobs, evict us from our homes, refuse to touch us, or separate us from our

loved ones, our community, or our peers, since available evidence does not support the view that AIDS can be spread by casual, social contact.

2. Not scapegoat people with AIDS, blame us for the epidemic, or generalize about our lifestyles.

Recommendations for People with AIDS

1. Form caucuses to choose their own representatives, to deal with the media, to choose their own agenda, and to plan their own strategies.
2. Be involved at every level of decision-making and specifically serve on the board of directors of provider organizations.
3. Be included in all AIDS forums with equal credibility as other participants, to share their own experiences and knowledge.
4. Substitute low-risk sexual behaviors for those that could endanger themselves or their partners; we feel that people with AIDS have an ethical responsibility to inform their potential partners of their health status.

Rights of People with AIDS

1. To live as full and satisfying sexual and emotional lives as anyone else.

2. To receive quality medical treatment and quality social-service provision without discrimination of any form, including sexual orientation, gender, diagnosis, economic status, or race.

3. To obtain full explanations of all medical procedures and risks, to choose or refuse their treatment modalities, to refuse to participate in research without jeopardizing their treatment, and to make informed decisions about their lives.

4. To ensure privacy and confidentiality of medical records, to receive human respect, and the right to choose who their significant others are.

5. To die—and to live—in dignity.

Kelly A. McCann is the chief executive officer of AIDS Foundation Houston. To learn more about the Denver Principles or to pledge your support, please visit napwa.org/denverprinciplesproject.

Do you know your HIV status?

June 27 is National HIV Testing Day. Call AIDS Foundation Houston at 713/623-6796 for more information and testing locations.



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PastOut

by Donalevan Maines

12 YEARS AGO IN 'OUTSMART'

JUNE 1997

Ready, set, glow!" More than 100 entries lit up Westheimer from Ridgewood to Stanford as Houston celebrated the country's first nighttime Gay Pride parade!

As grand marshal, **Deborah Bell** was also belle of the ball, after rising to prominence as national organizer of the 1993 March on Washington.

Left Out columnist **Daryl Moore** encouraged readers to attend the parade in what "we normally wear," as a way to transcend gay stereotypes on the evening news of near-naked boys, drag queens, and men in leather.

"Dittoheads" tuning into conservative talk-radio shows began hearing progressive points of view when Dayna Steele featured lesbian parents **Denay Hudson** and **Norri Collier** on a program discussing gay families. Other guests on her show included members of the Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, gay comics **Kevin Maye** and **Scott Kennedy**, and organizers of Houston's first gay and lesbian film festival, which featured *Late Bloomers*, shot entirely in Dallas with an all-Big D cast.

"Simple Pleasures" was the theme of Pride Week concerts performed by the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston at First Unitarian Universalist Church. Main Street Theater



The country's first nighttime Gay Pride parade was featured on the cover of the June 1997 edition of *OutSmart*.



Deborah Bell



Gene Harrington

at Chelsea Market celebrated Pride with a production of *Falsettoland*, the final installment of the Tony Award-winning musical trilogy that reunited Martin with his lover on the eve of his son's bar mitzvah, just as AIDS was beginning to spread.

Horton Foote's Broadway debut *The Young Man from Atlanta*, set in 1950s Houston, lost the best-play Tony Award to *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*, set in the upper-class German-Jewish society of Atlanta in December 1939. **Rosie O'Donnell** hosted the Tony telecast.

Montrose clothing store Basic Brothers announced, "We're glowing with 15 years of Pride," while its manager **Ken Claude** shone brightly as winner of the Mr. Gulf Coast Drummer '97 contest.

Thumper Knightly was crowned Miss Mary's 1997.

And activist **Gene Harrington** won not one, not two, but three accolades at Texas Southern University: professor of the year by the Barbara Jordan Chapter of the Black Law Students Association; distinguished professor of the year by Phi Deltas Phi legal fraternity; and law school teacher of the year for 1997.

Donalevan Maines also writes about the Tony Awards and critic Everett Evans in this issue of OutSmart magazine.



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Concierge Travel Agency hosted travelers aboard a recent RSVP Vacation Cruise. OUTSMART floated among them. Front: Chris Meterko, Alan Moehle, Keith Hebert; back: Brent Leafgreen, Steve Oprea, and Joe Ahern.



The Houston Venom softball team went to Birmingham for a tournament in April and took along their OUTSMART.

Contests at OUTSMART



Win two free tickets to Broadway Across America's production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's **The Phantom of the Opera** directed by Harold Prince. July 8-August 2 at the Hobby Center

Win two tickets to the opening night performance of *Phantom*. Find the phantom mask logo (on left) on 5 ads located throughout the June issue of *OutSmart*. Go to OutSmartMagazine.com, click on the phantom link, and tell us on what page the ads are located. We will notify five lucky winners by phone. Good luck!

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FOR YOUR CALENDAR



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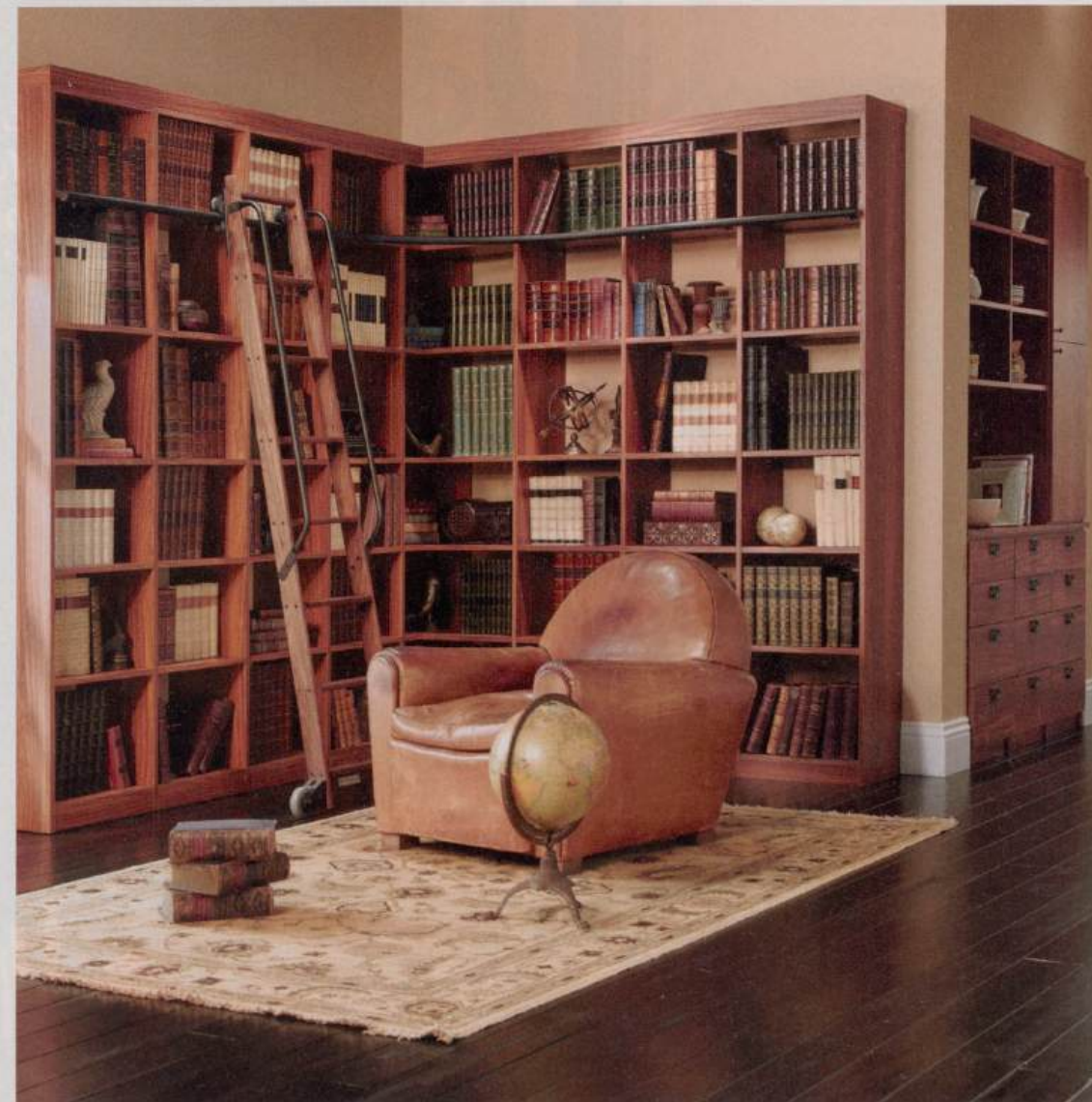
June 13: Gay Men's Chorus of Houston presents *La Perla!* A retrospective of the sounds and flavors of Latin America and Spain. INFO: BayouCityPerformingArts.org.

June 18: Out@TUTS Night with Cabaret. After the performance, mingle with the cast and listen to fabulous cabaret music with your LGBT friends at Artista. INFO: TUTS.com.

June 19: Houston Pride Band presents *Music Without Borders*. Benefits The Houston Food Bank. 8 p.m. The Hobby Center. INFO: HoustonPrideBand.org.

June 25: GLBT Chamber of Commerce monthly dinner "Honoring Our Allies." Magnolia Hotel. INFO: TheChamberHouston.org.

June 27: The GLBT PRIDE Festival and PRIDE Parade. The festival begins at 11 a.m. and the parade starts at 8:30 p.m. INFO: PrideHouston.com.



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*An experienced leader
with a passion for local
government sets her eyes
on the mayor's office*

Annise Parker Aims High

by Brandon Wolf • Photo by Pam Francis

As a teenager, Annise Parker says she felt powerless. Now in her 12th year of elective office, currently as the Houston City Controller, she is the most politically powerful woman in the city's government—and an announced candidate in the 2009 mayoral race.

"My mother still can't believe I'm in politics," says 53-year-old Parker. "I was so painfully shy as a child, I could barely say my name."

A childhood and adolescent introvert, Parker always knew she felt "different." In the sixth grade, reading a dictionary entry, she finally understood there was a name for her feelings. She realized she was more than just a tomboy with a passion for baseball. She was gay.

From the beginning of her political life, Parker has maintained unapologetic openness. "I've always been honest with Houston voters," she says. "Voters appreciate that honesty, and they have responded to it." Their responses have given her a Houston City Council seat three times and also entrusted her with the duties of Houston City Controller three times. In November of this year, she will ask voters to respond once again and name her Houston's 61st mayor.

A Texas Girl to the Core

Roots in Texas run deep in Parker's family. Her maternal great-grandparents lived in Nacogdoches. Both her maternal and paternal grandparents settled in Houston during the 1930s. Her mother, Kay, grew up in Spring Branch, and her father, Les, was raised in the Lindale area. They married after meeting each other at the University of Houston.

Parker herself was born in St. Joseph's Hospital in downtown Houston on May 17, 1956. Her sister, Alison, followed 15 months later. Les and Kay Parker called Spring Branch their home, and began raising their two daughters there.

Parker's maternal grandfather was a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) for several decades, with an office in downtown Houston. "But he also owned a 100-acre farm in Spring Branch, back in the days when the Katy Freeway was a little bitty road," she says. "Both of my parents were career people, who needed a babysitter, and so they moved near to the farm. My sister and I spent large amounts of time on that farm, and I learned how to milk cows and ride horses. It was an organic farm, and they didn't use pesticides. So I would walk among the crops and pick bugs off the plants."

Parker's maternal grandmother was a retired English teacher, and she began to home school her two granddaughters by the time they were three. Both of the girls were ahead of their peers when they entered school at Spring Branch Elementary.

"I enjoyed learning," Parker says. "But I was so shy, I was miserable. I was already ahead of my classmates and was the class brain. And that was very isolating. School was a scary place for me."

Parker says that she adored her father and grandfather. "I followed them around like a little puppy," she remembers. "I helped them fix their cars and tractors and learned all about plumbing. My father was an umpire for nearly any sport. I learned how to judge boxing; I helped my dad move the flags at high school football games."

Parker's mother was a bookkeeper, and her father pursued a variety of careers. At one time he was a letter carrier, at another he was a stockbroker. "He often worked three jobs to make ends meet," Parker remembers. "He usually had a paper route. I used to ride with him on Saturday and Sunday mornings, tossing newspapers in the dark on to lawns in the Memorial area. That's where I got my throwing arm."

Parker notes that she and her sister were complete opposites. "We have a good adult relationship," she says, "but as kids, there was enormous rivalry. I was the studious and quiet one, always where I was supposed to be, doing what I was supposed to be doing. My sister was the popular party girl. We didn't look alike and we didn't behave alike, and people expected →



1961: Parker, age 5, in kindergarten at Spring Branch Elementary School.

Next stop, mayor?
Whether overcoming crippling childhood shyness or mastering the art of judo, Houston city controller Annise Parker has consistently set—and met—lofty goals for herself.

Annise Parker continued from previous page

her to be an exceptional student just because I was."

With an introvert's personality, Parker struggled socially. Then in 1968, at age 12, her life became even more of a struggle. Her father, wanting to become his own boss, bought a fishing camp located on the back bay of Biloxi, Mississippi. Whatever fragile stability she had at that point quickly vanished.

Adversity Begets Determination

The move to Biloxi was emotionally difficult for Parker. "But it forced me to learn how to make new friends and adapt to new situations," she says. "We used to take a motorboat across the lake from the peninsula to where the school bus stopped. And it was freezing cold in the mornings."

Her father's fishing camp rented boats and sold bait, tackle, and gasoline. The business thrived for over a year. Then a runaway barge knocked down the only bridge to the peninsula, and her father's business was left with no customers. "Through no fault of his own, his business went bankrupt," Parker recalls. "At Thanksgiving time, we sat around our radio and tried unsuccessfully to win a turkey from a call-in show."

Parker's father found a night watchman job at the nearby Air Force base and became interested in the Red Cross installation there. Soon he was working for the installation, providing social services for soldiers in need. He also studied to be an emergency medical technician (EMT). "But he didn't like blood," Parker laughs, "so he became an EMT instructor. I often volunteered to be a training dummy. I would be covered with fake blood and lie all crumpled up inside an automobile. I spent one Saturday climbing to the bottom of a 20-foot pit, lying down, being



1978 (from left): Parker's niece April, sister Alison, mother Kay, Parker at age 21, nephew Eric, and father Les.

tethered to a stretcher and hauled back up."

Les Parker worked with Red Cross installations for another 20 years, and his career required frequent moves. Parker went to three different junior high schools and three different high schools. In 1970, she began classes at Springs Woods High School, but in 1971 her father was transferred to Mannheim, Germany. For the next two years, she attended a local high school there. Parker was 14 at that point in her life and cratered emotionally. "I was constantly in a state of stress," she says. "My stomach cramped up all the time and I experienced severe anxiety attacks."

Amidst the anxiety, Parker fell hopelessly in love for the first time at age 15. "I used to go out at night and stare up longingly at my girlfriend's window," she remembers. "Her parents realized the nature of our relationship, and they did everything they could to keep the two of us separated, which only made us work

harder to be with each other.

"I knew I was smart and I knew I was loved," Parker remembers. "But I had to determine what was important to me. I knew that I was living in a shell. I felt extremely isolated and could see that I was missing out on a lot of wonderful and exciting things in life."

So Parker enrolled in a martial arts class.

1992 (from left): Parker, maternal grandmother Kittie, mother Kay, and sister Alison.

"I had always been athletic," she says, "but this was a

different kind of body control." She worked hard and earned three judo belts. She also volunteered to set up a Candy Striper program at the base hospital. She organized other student volunteers and oversaw the whole program.

Parker made up her mind to start making more friends. "It's all about showing interest in other people," she

says. "I forced myself to go up to others and introduce myself and ask them about themselves. Some people just ignored me. But in other situations, I realized I had taken the first step towards building some sort of a relationship."

Looking back on those days, Parker says that it is important for young girls to realize that they can recover from similar problems such as social fears. "I'm here to tell them that there is a way out. It isn't easy, but it can be done. You have to set small goals and achieve them—being very careful not to overwhelm yourself—and then slowly set higher and higher goals."

In 1973, Parker's father was transferred again, this time to Charleston, South Carolina. The family moved with him, and at age 17 she entered Stall High School for her senior year. She joined the campus Ecology Club, the Girls' Athletic Association, and the Christian Youth Fellowship. Knowing few other students, she didn't campaign for a student government office.

Parker also joined the track team. "I participated in the high jump and the long jump," she recalls. "My technique was perfect, but I was only 5 feet 4 inches, and the 6-foot-tall women could always do better. So third place in the high jump was the best I ever did."

In 1974 Parker received her high school diploma. "I had attended so many schools and the curricula were all different, so I ended up the third highest in my class," she says. Still, she was a member of the National Honor Society, and she received a four-year National Merit Scholarship.

College Days

"I could have gone to any college I wanted to," Parker says, "but I only applied to Rice University. When I was young, my parents would drive us through the grounds. I loved the big oak trees and the beautiful ivy-covered buildings. My mother and father would tell me that if I worked hard and was smart, I could go to school there someday."

Parker was now 18 years old, living in a big city, and totally out of the closet. →



Happy Pride 2009!

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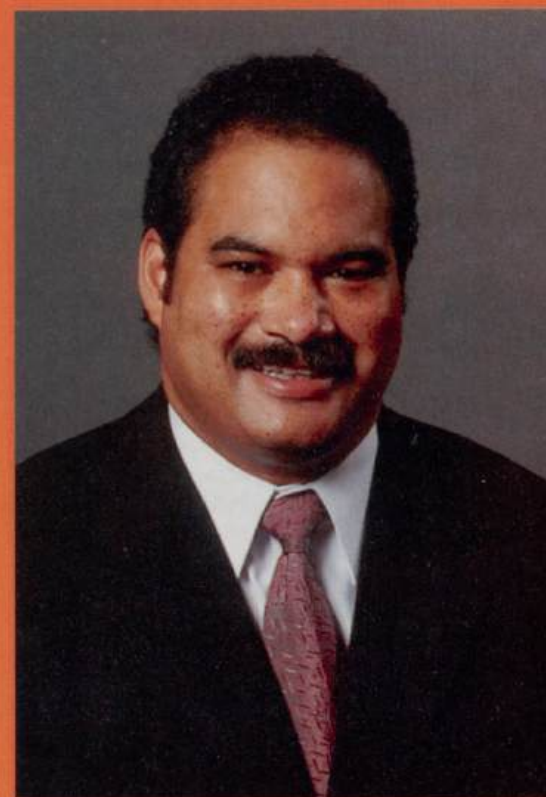


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Political advertisement paid for by the Garnet Coleman Campaign. Gloria Coleman, Treasurer.

Thinking that her greatest social challenges were in the past, she lived openly as a lesbian. "But in 1974, it just didn't work," she says. "I tried to learn how to integrate my sexual orientation into the larger social picture, but I never did feel accepted in the women's dorm. I would walk into a room, and everyone would stop talking. It was discouraging after I had spent so many years trying to be comfortable in my own skin."

So Parker turned to her studies and immersed herself in a triple major of sociology, psychology, and anthropology. "I wanted to add a physical education major," she says, "but I don't swim well, and I couldn't pass the water safety instruction test."

Still troubled by what she perceived as a lack of social confidence, Parker spurned a summer job in a library after her freshman year. "I could have hid in the stacks," she says. "Instead I got a job selling toys and luggage at Cox's Department Store in Ft. Worth. I knew this would force me to go up to people and talk. I didn't sell much merchandise that summer, but I did learn how to say hello to people I didn't know."

Life in the women's dorm became more of a challenge. During her sophomore year, she and her current girlfriend chose each other as roommates, but no other student would become the third occupant in a three-person room. In her junior year, she found herself the only female student in the dorm living alone in a room intended for two.

By her senior year, the 21-year-old Parker found an off-campus job as a nanny working for a young couple with a home on North Boulevard. "They provided me



2003 (from left): daughter Daniela, life partner Kathy, Parker, and daughter Marquitta.

with free room and board and I took care of their three boys. I drove the carpool and babysat whenever the parents were out of the house or out of town."

Parker intended to become a teacher and spend her life in academia, so she didn't involve herself in campus politics. "But I did play softball," she says, "and I helped found the Rice gay student group. After 30 years, it's still there. It's sort of sad that it's still needed, but things have changed so much for our community since those days."

In 1978, Parker completed her coursework and graduated from Rice. "I still had student loans to pay off," she remembers. "I had lived on a shoestring for so long; I didn't even have a car. So I thought I would take a job in the private sector, make some money, and then return to college life and teach."

Learning How to Make a Difference

Parker found a job at Texasgulf Oil and Gas, working under their first female manager. "Her name was Toby Turner and she was an angel at the right time," she says. Turner took Parker under her wing and helped her develop professionally. The com-

puter age was just starting to dawn, and Parker became fascinated with software that did economic modeling.

In 1980, at age 24, Parker went to work for Mosbacher Energy, owned by Robert Mosbacher Sr., who later became George H. W. Bush's Secretary of Commerce. She worked in the reservoir engineering

department, becoming their specialist with the economic modeling software she had learned to use. She stayed with the firm for the next 18 years.

"My being openly gay was never a problem," she says. "Mr. Mosbacher's daughter, Dee Mosbacher, was also openly gay. He was a first-class gentleman, very respectful and understanding. And it was a wonderful company to work for."

The first 10 years after college, from age 22 to 32, are years that Parker describes as a time of enormous personal growth. While at Rice, she had met a number of older women who were involved in the feminist and LGBT movements, and she became increasingly interested in the political process. Still determined to overcome her social reticence, she accepted board positions with such organizations as the Lesbian and Gay Rights Lobby, the Lesbian and Gay Democrats of Texas, and the Montrose Activity Center.

"Most people don't remember me from back then," she says. "I was very quiet, but I was involved. I sat in the audience at the 1978 Town Meeting I in the Astorhall, and I rode in Houston's first Pride Parade in 1979. I was a good friend of the late Mort Schwab, who founded the Texas Human Rights Foundation. I used to join a group of his close friends every week to watch *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* on his television."

Finally, at age 30, Parker took her first shot at elected office and ran for the presidency of the Houston Gay Political Caucus in 1986. She won and served as president for two years. She became involved in the local campaigns of Eleanor Tinsley, Nicki Van Hightower, Anne Wheeler, George Grenias, and Kathy Whitmire.

Parker's political role models include Ann Richards and Eleanor Roosevelt. Eleanor →



2003 (from left): Parker with daughter Daniela, life partner Kathy, and daughter Marquitta at her victory party.



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Annise Parker continued from page 42

Tinsley holds a special place in her heart. "She was polite, genteel, unflappable, and could not be intimidated," she says.

After 10 years of local LGBT activism, Parker says she found herself burned out. She gravitated to neighborhood activism and became involved in civic associations, serving as president of the Neartown Civic Association from 1995 to 1997. But the more involved she became, the more she felt that city government was not listening well to what neighborhoods needed. Eventually it occurred to her that she should give the idea of public office a try.

In 1991, Parker was 34 years old and ran for the District C seat on the Houston City Council. Although she lost, she felt that she had raised a lot of important issues during her campaign and that she had learned a lot about how to campaign. As a result of her political involvement over the years, she was chosen to teach special human relations sessions at the Houston Police Academy, orienting the cadets to the realities of Houston's LGBT community.

In 1995, aged 39, she entered a special election to replace Sheila Jackson Lee on the Council after Lee was elected to the U.S. Congress. Out of 19 candidates, Parker placed third for the At-Large

Position 4 seat. "It was a very respectable showing. I rose out of that pack," she says.

But the defeat was difficult and Parker vowed never to run again. "Then I turned 40 and realized I had to decide what to do with the rest of my life," she says. In 1997, she mounted her third campaign, this time for the At Large Position 1 Council seat. She made the runoff, ran a hard campaign, and when the votes were counted, she was declared the winner.

Parker remembers the victory party that night at Riva's. "It finally sunk in when I walked into the restaurant and the place erupted," she remembers. "The feeling was nearly indescribable. I thought I was going to explode with happiness." Parker retained her Council seat for six years, winning two more elections. Term-limited, she ran for the position of Houston City Controller in 2003 at age 47. She won that election and ran unopposed in 2005 and 2007. Once again term-limited, she has tossed her hat into the 2009 Houston mayoral race.

The Personal Side of the Politician

Parker recently celebrated her 19th anniversary with life partner Kathy Hubbard. "We have different versions of what was our first date," she laughs, "but Kathy will tell you it's April 20, 1990." On that day,

Hubbard hand-carried Parker's personal tax returns to her and then invited her to lunch. Hubbard had recently begun her own tax return service. She stopped into Inklings Bookstore, which Parker at the time co-owned with local activist Pokey Anderson, asking for their tax business. The bookstore already had someone preparing their returns, but Parker asked Hubbard to prepare her personal returns.

"I like to kid Kathy that she already had a crush on me, from my days as president of the caucus," Parker says with a smile. "I told her I thought she was really sweet, but I wasn't interested in a relationship. Kathy took it well and asked if we could just be friends. She invited me to a Mensa meeting, because we were both members. I said yes, but then changed my mind later in the day and invited her to a party instead. All night long, people kept coming up and asking if Kathy was my new girlfriend, and I kept saying that we weren't dating."

Parker kept telling Hubbard and herself that they weren't dating. "But after eight months, I realized she was indispensable," she says. "Now I've been with her for 19 years. I have to admit I still haven't figured out how her mind works, and I never know what is going to come out of her mouth next." →

Iceland Can

by Stephen Cox

In December the Quaker Lesbian and Gay Fellowship asked, tongue-in-cheek, how long it would be before an openly gay head of government was elected anywhere in the world. The answer turned out to be three weeks. In the middle of an unprecedented economic collapse, the Icelandic parties turned to the longstanding social affairs minister Johanna Siguroardottir to head an interim government until there are fresh elections in May.

Johanna Siguroardottir, 66, will become the first openly gay or lesbian person to become a head of government. She has been an MP since 1978 and was recently voted the most popular politician in Iceland. Her appointment appears to have been uncontroversial in Iceland itself.

Does it matter? No one can believe that her orientation will help Iceland with its economic troubles. She will not adopt a specifically lesbian attitude to international debt, fisheries policy, or possible entry to the European Union. There are those, of course, who believe Iceland will bring down God's wrath and the next volcanic eruption or outbreak of sheep mange will be blamed on her long-term relationship with another woman. But I am sure she will want to

be judged on what she can do for the country.

I am slightly skeptical about the idea that single high-profile successes change the nature of politics.

It was an article of faith among 19th-century feminists that giving women the vote would "civilize" society. However, the first few female prime ministers—Indira Gandhi, Golda Meir, and Margaret Thatcher spring to mind—were not notably less bellicose than the men. Indeed, Hillary Clinton, by a whisker the runnerup for the Democratic nomination, carefully positioned herself as one of the more hawkish Democrats. Change is more subtle.

There are two reasons why it does matter. The first is that whatever one's system of government, one wishes to draw on all the talent available. If she is the best woman for the job, why exclude her?

The second is the inconvenient truth about role models. When I grew up, the gay role models were camp actors and entertainers, usually not openly gay, and drugtaking rock stars. There were no lesbian role models. The books in my house were "liberal" in that gay people were to be pitied for their inevitable loneliness rather than hated. One child-rearing book, having confused homosexuality, transvestitism, transgenderism, and just plain

"sensitive and bookish," cheerfully told parents not to worry because "such children often make good livings in theater, design, or fashion." The encyclopedia tersely mentioned the gay people in the U.S. had begun to assert their civil rights. Its disapproval was obvious. But it certainly felt that being loved would be "even if" I were gay. (I must stress that there are many such stories to tell, and lesbian and gay people can't and don't claim that theirs are uniquely bad.)

A child who is gay today will soon learn that cabinet ministers and cabinet makers, airline chief executives as well as airline stewards, people who run operating theaters as well as theatrical ones—can be gay or lesbian or bi, just as the constant racist undercurrents about African Americans have been challenged by Barack Obama. He cannot end racism, but he can let countless struggling children all over the world know that might be possible. It's for that reason we need to cheer Johanna Siguroardottir and her unenviable task. Yes we can.

Originally published in the April 3, 2009, edition of The Friend, the only Quaker weekly journal. Reprinted with permission from www.qlgf.org.uk.



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The People Who Know Her Well

"Annise gets really excited about solving neighborhood problems. Like the neighborhood with the new noisy bar, the church with the high weeds in the fenced utility easement in back, or the Heights neighbor who built a garden in 'his' alley behind his house. All these problems add up to life in Houston and what people expect of their elected representatives. She's delighted and honored to help, and that's why I consider her a real public servant, not a politician."

—Cicely Wynne, aide to Annise Parker since 1998

"Annise is tenacious! Annise and I were building an arbor one afternoon. We were on the last board to put up. There we were, up on ladders trying to fasten a ten-foot-long 2 x 6 to its post. One of us got shaky (depends on who is telling the story) and then the other got wobbly, and we came crashing down to the ground, board and ladders with us. Bruised and sore, I picked myself up, hustled over to where she was and lifted the board off her. She got up, dusted herself off, looked at me and said 'Get the ladder, this arbor won't build itself.'"

—Steve Kirkland, Harris County Civil Court Judge and former Parker campaign manager

"During the first campaign I worked on for Annise, in 1997, lightning struck a large tree in the parking lot of Hubbard Financial Services, where our office was. A limb crashed down, along with a nest of baby squirrels. Annise was able to rescue two of them, and raised them until they were ready to be set free. The campaign staff nicknamed them Thunder and Lightning. Annise has a tender heart."

—Grant Martin, Parker campaign consultant

"I can remember Annise's victory party on Election Night in 2003. We were all at a sports bar across from the ballpark. Annise finally went to the stage. She was standing in front of the podium with Kathy, Daniela, and Marquitta, and as many supporters that could fit on the tiny stage. I looked at the stage and looked across the room, and everything I love about Houston was there, every kind of person—old, young, gay, straight, black, white, Latino, Asian, powerbrokers along with grassroots volunteers. This is what I love about Annise Parker—she has a special way of bringing all kinds of people together to make things better for Houston!"

—Terence O'Neil, executive assistant to Controller Parker

Annise Parker continued from page 44

At her 1998 inauguration as a Council member, Parker was introduced with her partner, and they held hands as they walked across the stage for the swearing-in. "It was very affirming," she remembers. "After I won the election, I got a call from the protocol office for City Hall, and they asked how they should refer to Kathy at the ceremony. I didn't feel that 'wife' or 'spouse' sounded right, but I finally decided on 'life partner.' At the next couple of public events, they used that title. Then they stopped using titles and just introduced Council members and said the names of their partners."

When Parker's maternal grandparents needed assisted living, she invited them to live in her home. Her grandfather died about a year later. Her grandmother stayed for several years before her death.

In June of 1993, Parker and her partner became caretakers for a 16-year-old street kid, LuJack Tyler. He lived with them until he was 18, and is still a part of the family.

Parker says she always wanted to have children, but it took her 12 years to work it out with her partner. Because they were both career women, they decided to adopt older girls. In 2003, they adopted 7-year-old Marquitta. Six months later they adopted her 12-year-old sister, Daniela. "They have already gotten a lot of public scrutiny," says Parker. "But I have taken them places with me and given them my expectations of their behavior. They have always been a credit to Kathy and me."

The children have many other friends with same-sex parents and spend time in

each other's homes. "They have male and female influences," Parker says. Daniela, now 18, lives on her own.

Thinking ahead to the possibility of being the mayor's children, Parker says she and her children accept the reality that they can't be anonymous. "They know there is a downside," she admits, "but there are also benefits that most other children don't have. They get to meet interesting people and have unique life experiences."

Parker has several cats and a dog. She enjoys raising orchids and has a number of them in her City Controller's office. She has been a member of the Houston Cactus and Succulent Society (HCSS) for over 20 years, grows an impressive collection of plants at home, and guest lectures at HCSS meetings. "I have one really tall cactus," she says. "It's a record of our moves, because it always gets broken, but you can see where it's grown back four different times."

Poetry is one of Parker's creative outlets, and she is a past winner of the Houston Poetry Fest. She is also a member of the Houston Women's Softball League. *The African Queen* is her favorite movie. In her early years, she read all the stories of Captain Horatio Hornblower. "He was all about righting wrongs," she says. Still a voracious reader, she now finds it hard to set aside time to read. But when she does, she likes science fiction books and paperback romance novels.

Past Influences

Parker was influenced deeply by her father and grandfathers. "They were hard-working, decent men who always supported their

continued on page 153

2009: City Controller Parker, an accomplished horsewoman, waves from the Houston Rodeo Parade.



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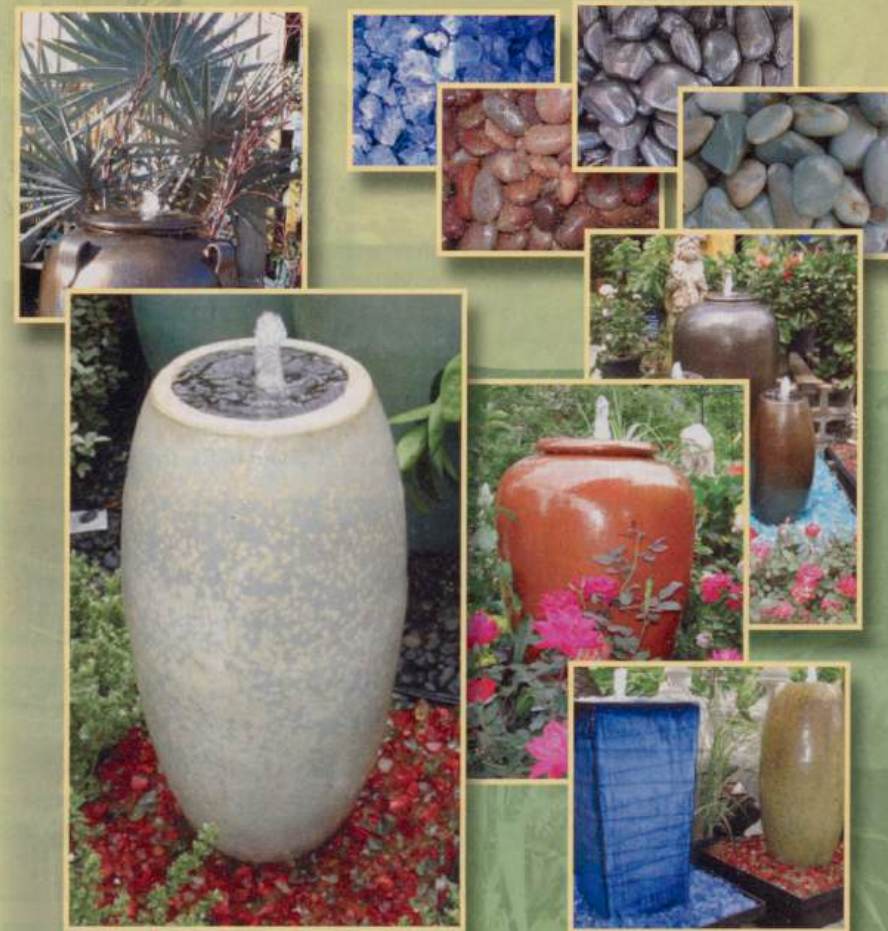
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Preserving Houston's LGBT History

How can we know where we're going if we don't know where we've been?

Feature and photos by Brandon Wolf

The history of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people must not disappear like a gentle breeze that leaves no mark. Our history gives us meaning, identity, and inspiration. Sometimes it makes us happy, and sometimes it makes us sad. It offers us markers that

show where we've been, and it gives us guideposts to tomorrow's goals.

As a minority community, our history is sparse, and this makes its preservation even more important. Like a large tapestry, our community's story reflects who we are and the nature of our collective character. Undoubtedly, the more threads

we weave into our design, the more distinctive the tapestry becomes.

Preservationists don't create history, but they do ensure that history survives. They know that memorial programs, hospital ID bands, test results, and empty pill bottles help us to never forget what AIDS has done to those we have loved—and →



Paper trail: photographer Dalton DeHart stands before just one of the shelves housing the myriad photographs he has captured of the Houston LGBT community.

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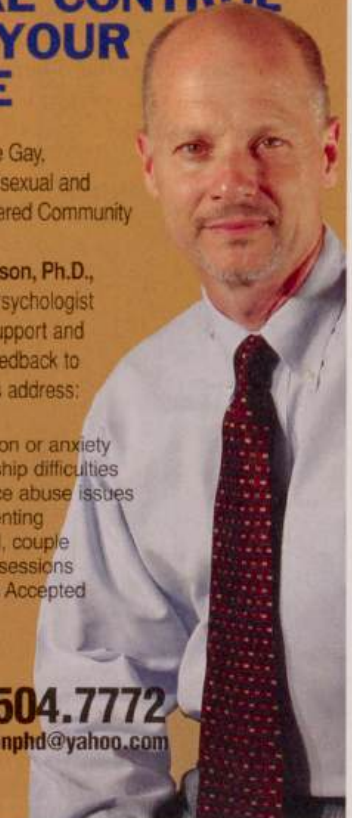
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Preserving Houston's LGBT History continued from page 48

that parade float designs, dinner party pictures, old choir robes, softballs, drag tiaras, and run pins reflect the vibrancy of our community's interests and the energy with which we pursue them.

What is Our History and Where Is It?

With each passing day, pieces of our community history disappear, without fanfare or concern. And yet, despite this constant loss, remnants endure because preservation-minded individuals refuse to surrender them to the ravages of circumstance and attempt to ensure that they survive. There are three major LGBT archives in Houston: The Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History, Inc. (GCAM), the Charles Botts Collection, and the Houston Transgender Archive. *OutSmart* unearthed more than a dozen other collections, both private and public, and no doubt there are others.

The Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History, Inc., is the Grand Lady of our community's preservation efforts—for both its size and the broad spectrum of its holdings. GCAM has aggressively worked to acquire its current collection over the past 10 years. The holdings now dwarf any other local effort, filling seven large storage units, wall to wall. The organization is both an archive for documents and a museum for artifacts. Longtime curator Judy Reeves says, "If it's GLBT-related, we want to preserve it. That includes pornography. We don't make moral judgments. We save history as it occurred."

GCAM has complete sets of *This Week in Texas*, the *Montrose Voice*, the *Texas*

Triangle, and *OutSmart*; over 5,000 books ranging from lesbian fiction to AIDS research; and a complete set of the *Sojourner Newsletter*. They have a collection of Pride Parade T-shirts, an impressive collection of drag outfits, and numerous other garments with historical significance.

Currently, the organization has a small administrative office at the GLBT Cultural Center in the Montrose Counseling Center Building, where they maintain an ever-changing historical display on the walls. GCAM regularly takes part in community events and hosts a website with a searchable database of documents and photographs.

The Charles Botts Collection was begun in the 1980s. Charles Botts, its creator, had a LGBT book and document collection that outgrew his residence and found a permanent home at the Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection, where he worshipped. Botts died in the early 1990s and provided funding for the collection in his estate.

Today the collection houses approximately 20,000 books and row upon row of archive boxes filled with organizational files and publications. Volunteers regularly show up to catalog the holdings into a database. The organization focuses chiefly on documents and does not have storage space for historical artifacts.

The Houston Transgender Archive is in its first year of operation, housed in the



Judy Reeves, curator for the Gulf Coast Archive & Museum (GCAM), shows a poster from the 1982 Houston Gay Pride Week. In the background is a large GCAM wall exhibit at the GLBT Cultural Center.

Houston Transgender Center. The collection is small but highly focused, and has many rare acquisitions and an impressive presentation of their holdings. (They are the subject of a feature article elsewhere in this issue of *OutSmart*.)

Some impressive collections are in private hands. In his home in The Woodlands, J. D. Doyle houses the largest known collection of LGBT music in the nation, with more than 6,000 LPs and CDs, as well as a large collection of digital MP3 music.

Since 1986 Dalton DeHart has been known as the LGBT event photographer. DeHart has taken more than 700,000 photographs of community activities, of which 485,000 are archived as 35mm negatives. The remaining 215,000 are digital photographs. DeHart has already donated numerous albums and boxes of loose prints to GCAM.

From 1998 to 1999, Steve Baker and Russ Byrd aired *TV Montrose*, a weekly commercial television program, which featured nearly 200 separate news segments about the Houston-area LGBT community. The two store the broadcast master tapes in their Spring Branch home. Among the news segments are the candlelight vigil at Rothko Chapel for Matthew Shepard and the opening of the Hollywood Motel in Galveston, which attracted considerable attention from conservative demonstrators.

OutSmart associate editor Blase DiStefano has a private collection in his home of *OutSmart* covers autographed by celebrities he has interviewed. He also has shelves of binders full of LGBT-related entertainment articles and memorabilia. →



L-r: Deb Smith, PFLAG president, member Sara Fernandez, and Ron Dupre, vice president, hold just a few samples of historical items that are saved in the archive at the PFLAG office at the GLBT Cultural Center in the Montrose Counseling Center building.



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Preserving Houston's LGBT History

continued from page 50

Bringing Preservation into the 21st Century

Despite the incredible efforts of dedicated activists, preserving our history is an overwhelming task. Since last summer, concerned individuals have begun conversations about what might be done to help organizations already in existence and to make their efforts cutting-edge state of the art. The group hopes to bring together grant writers and persons with information technology, communications and legal experience. To express both the goals and the collective nature of that work, the group has adopted the name Houston ARCH (Houston Area Rainbow Collective History).

One of those working in the group is Dr. Brian Riedel, an instructor of GLBT Studies at Rice University. He emphasizes that this group has no intention of replacing existing organizations, but rather aims to offer help where it is most needed: "The role Houston ARCH intends to play in Houston's GLBT community is horizontal—connecting and reinforcing the great work that existing preservation efforts are already doing."

In discussing current collections, GCAM chair Craig Farrell notes, "GCAM struggles to pay the monthly rent on our seven storage units. About 20 percent



In the reading room at the Houston Transgender Archive, visitors can look through magazines, newsletters, rare books, and various other historical documents.



Botts Collection director Larry Criscione holds a box of organizational files, amid rows of archive boxes behind him.

of our collection is cataloged." Riedel explains that Houston ARCH hopes to assist GCAM by searching for grant money to help the cataloging effort and to establish a permanent home for GCAM.

Botts Collection director Larry Criscione notes that, despite Herculean volunteer efforts to catalog documents, the task of digitizing the collection is enormous. Riedel hopes that Houston ARCH will find money and human resources to assist in accomplishing such an undertaking.

Houston ARCH works to strengthen collaboration between all community historical groups. Riedel is pleased that meetings to date have included representatives from GCAM, the Botts Collection, the Transgender Archive, and numerous other preservation efforts. "People are discovering many things they didn't know about each other, and they are eagerly sharing thoughts during networking periods," he says.

Houston ARCH and Digitization

Recently Houston ARCH launched a website to provide a focal point for the diverse stakeholders in Houston's LGBT history preservation. The website explains the mission and goals of the group and provides a hub of links to all the currently identified preservation efforts within the community. →

Public LGBT Archives in Houston

The Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History, Inc. (GCAM). 501(c)(3) non-profit. Established 1999. Curator: Judy Reeves. Website: gcam.org. By appointment only. Contact Judy at curator@gcam.org or 832/722-5785 to view exhibits or schedule a talk for your club or community organization. Membership dues \$25/year. Meetings held first Monday of each month at Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard, 1st floor, in room 117 at 7 p.m. Visitors welcome. The largest of Houston's LGBT archives, GCAM's holdings include both documents and artifacts.

The Charles Botts Collection. Supported by private bequest. Established 1980s. Director: Larry Criscione. By appointment only. Contact Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church at mccr@airmail.net or 713/861-9149. Housed at Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2025 West 11th Street. Charles Botts died in the early 1990s, leaving a bequest for the maintenance of his extensive personal collection of gay and lesbian literature dating back to the 19th century, as well as a large collection of letters, brochures, clippings, books, periodicals and newspapers.

The Houston Transgender Archive. 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Established 2008. Website: tgctr.org/archive.shtml. Open weekdays 1-4 p.m. Transgender Foundation of

America Center, 713 Fargo, Houston. Call 713/520-8586 to schedule a guided tour. Entrance free, donations appreciated. Holdings include documents and artifacts, including rare and unusual items, such as transgender statues from diverse cultures, transgender magazines back to 1750, original newspapers reporting transgender history back to 1825, transgender books back to the 1600s, original transgender photos back to the pre-Civil War era, and other artifacts back as far as the Roman Empire.

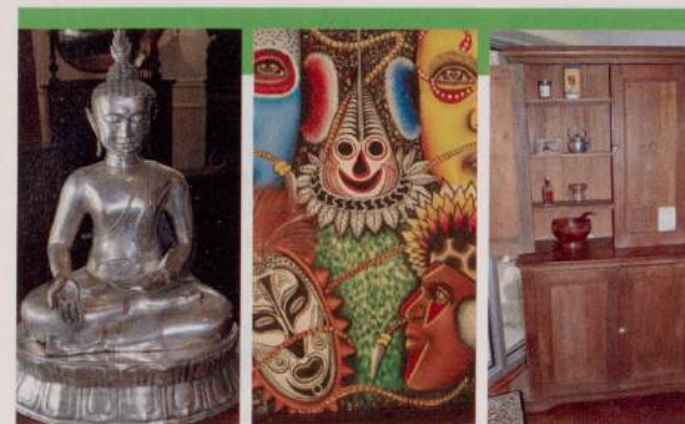
Phyllis Frye's Online Archives. Phyllis Frye, the "grandmother of the national transgender legal and political movement," has archived the proceedings from the 1992 through 1996 International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy. The documents contain information about early trans pioneers, shapers of policy, and how the grassroots movement began. For more information: liberatinglaw.com.

The Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project. Researcher and Archivist: Arden Eversmeyer, founder of Houston LOAF (Lesbians Over Age Fifty). Eversmeyer conducted more than 150 oral histories of senior lesbians and filled notebooks with supporting documents about the lives of those interviewed. She also maintains the LOAF lending library of books and films. Contact: loafers_inc@yahoo-groups.com.

The OutSmart Archives. Owner: Up and Out Communications. Website: outsmartmagazine.com. By appointment. Call 713/520-7237. Up and Out Communications, publisher of *OutSmart*, maintains an archive of back issues of all their publications, as well as many supporting documents from published articles, in their offices at 3406 Audubon Place, Houston. All *OutSmart* issues from 1996 to the present are also available online at outsmartmagazine.com/cms-home/archives.html.

Houston Public Library. Holdings include the activist papers of Mort Schwab, early organizational files from Texas Log Cabin Republicans, a thesis by Bruce Remington titled "12 Fighting Years: Homosexuals in Houston, 1969-1981," and numerous newspaper clippings in the vertical files.

University of Houston Library. Holdings include two private book collections donated to the library—a 700-book gay male collection and a 500-book lesbian collection. Also housed at the library is a thesis titled "Strength in Numbers: Houston's Gay Community and the AIDS Crisis" and the audio interviews used to write "12 Fighting Years," featuring activists Pokey Anderson, Lee Harrington, Steve Shifflett, Larry Bagnieris, Don Sanders, Dennis Milam, Mort Schwab, and Dee Lamb. City Controller Annise Parker has donated her campaign papers to the Library's Women's Archive. Downtown location: 500 McKinney, 832/393-1313. →



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Preserving Houston's LGBT History

continued from page 52

The website was originally developed by local archivist Jo Collier and named *Queerstorical Houston*. That first website included sections on Houston's gay bars, the Pride parades, a chronological history timeline, and information on past and present community publications. On the new Houston ARCH website, additional features have been added—committee work areas, discussion threads, and information on preparing oral histories.

The organizations and individuals involved plan a major focus on harnessing the power of computers, the Internet, and digitization (scanning collections into electronic format). The information technology committee is studying various possible options for storing digital media, such as photos, audio files, and video files.

Riedel points out that GCAM already has a web presence, but the Botts Collections does not. "Houston ARCH wants to help GCAM digitize its collection so that it can expand its website offerings," he says. "There are multiple possibilities for offering a digitized Botts Collection to the greater community, depending on how the Botts Collection wishes to proceed."

Houston ARCH and the collections are working to identify web standards for digital archiving, which will facilitate easy searching for items from diverse collections. In some cases, links will connect to existing web collections. In other



J.D. Doyle's LGBT music collection of CDs is the largest in the country. Another section of his collection houses LPs.



Arden Eversmeyer holds open a binder of documents that tell the life of one of the subjects of the Lesbian Oral Herstory Project. Eversmeyer is shown in the lending library of LOAF (Lesbians Over Age Fifty).

cases, Houston ARCH will offer space on a collective web archive. Houston ARCH plans to take ownership responsibility for the hardware and software necessary for such a collective archive. They also hope to provide technical advice to any group or person who is not familiar with the methods of converting historical items into digital formats.

Riedel says, "When requested, we want to offer assistance with prioritizing the digitization tasks within collections and with finding the human resources for these tasks." Houston ARCH will promote and encourage proper planning for the effects of heat, humidity, mold, insects, hurricanes, and flooding. They also plan to provide a means for oral histories to be collected and preserved.

It's a daunting list of goals, and Houston ARCH is only in its infancy, but many talented members of the community have already come forward to offer their services. The group is in the process of gaining 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

The Advantages and the Perils of Electronic Preservation

With the advent of the computer age, more and more of our lives are becoming electronic. Everything from photography to rock music is now in virtual format. These new formats allow information to be easily and rapidly exchanged throughout the world. The Internet now functions as a gigantic archive and museum—without →

Public LGBT Archives in Houston

hpl.lib.tx.us. Freed-Montrose branch: 4100 Montrose Blvd., houstonlibrary.org/branches/mon_home.html, 832/393-1800.

The Robert J. Terry Library at Texas Southern University. Open 7 days a week. See website for hours: <http://www.tsu.edu/about/library>. Holdings include the papers of lesbian politician Barbara Jordan, who broke barriers as the first black woman state senator in Texas and was later elected to the United States Congress. Also at this library are the papers of longtime professor and local activist Dr. Gene Harrington.

Rice University GLBT Studies Student Interviews. Each semester, Dr. Brian Riedel's Rice University Introduction to GLBT Studies class works in groups of four and conducts interviews with GLBT community activists. After class presentations, the interviews are stored on DVDs. Course contact: 713/348-2162.

Houston PFLAG Archive. A dozen PFLAG filing cabinets are located in their office at the Montrose Counseling Center Building. They house 30 years of information about events and meetings, historical items, and a collection of coming-out stories. PFLAG location addresses: St. Paul's United Methodist Church's Jones Building, 5501 S. Main, and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's Chatham Room, 1805 W. Alabama. Contact: 713/46P-FLAG (467-3524), pflaghouston.org.

Houston ARCH. Houston Area Rainbow Collective History seeks to digitally preserve, collect, and communicate the culture and history of LGBTQ communities in the Houston area, with the bulk of the collections dating from the 1970s to the present. 713/348-2162, houstonarch.pbworks.com.

Han-Net Online Archive. Online postings to the Houston Activist Network discussion listserv are still available online through Yahoo Groups. The postings, from 1998 to 2003, are now owned by GCAM.

Mary's Bar. Open to the public during business hours. 1022 Westheimer. Open 7 days, 7 a.m.–2 a.m. In the Patio Out Back behind Mary's Bar is a small garden where the ashes of original owner Fanny Farmer were scattered. Countless other victims of AIDS asked to have their ashes similarly disposed of. The actual bar tops at Mary's display hundreds of photos of the past beneath them, protected by an acrylic coating.

Chase Bank Trophy Case. Open to the public during business hours. 712 Main. The trophy case in Chase Bank's historic art deco lobby in downtown Houston includes numerous trophies and awards won by the firm's PRIDE Team.

Bar Trophy Cases. Several local bars—EJ's at 2517 Ralph, 611 at 611 Hyde Park, the Brazos River Bot-

tom (BRB) at 2400 Brazos, the Ripcord at 715 Fairview, and Mary's at 1022 Westheimer—host trophy cases. A door-sized cowboy painting that hung in the entrance to the Exile bar for decades will soon be on permanent loan from GCAM to the BRB. The painting was identified and rescued by GCAM from a private home. Mr. BRB, Steven Bunch, is working to raise funds to mount it safely and securely behind Plexiglas on a wall at the BRB.

Local Cemeteries. Washington Cemetery features an historic marker noting the grave of transgender Civil War soldier Emma Seelye. Glenwood Cemetery is the resting place of many community figures, including florist Leonard Tharp, hairdresser Lyndon Johnson, and long-time Diana Foundation president, Charles Hebert. Partners Jim Shelton and David Bales share a bronze headstone there with the inscription: "I say if it's love, the Lord won't mind." The Mission Mausoleum at Forest Park Westheimer houses numerous glass-front niches wherein the ashes of same-sex partners rest. Forest Park Lawndale has a gigantic granite book upon which the names of local AIDS victims are engraved.

Community Organization Online Archives. Numerous local organizations host websites. Many of these websites include an online archive of the group's history. ■

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Preserving Houston's LGBT History

continued from page 54

the limitations of geographical location or display space. The storage area needed for virtual formats is minimal compared to the storage rooms of the past. Virtual formats allow for lightning-quick searches of large amounts of data.

Nearly everything that preserves our history can now be inexpensively transferred to digital format—home movies, 35mm slides, film negatives, photographs, records, reel-to-reel tapes, audio cassettes, video tapes, books, and correspondence. Items that can't be digitized can be photographed and their images stored digitally. Documents scanned into digitized form become immune to the ordinary problems of preservation. They don't fade, they don't deteriorate, and they don't suffer threats from mold, insects, or the weather.

But electronic storage also requires careful thought. A hard drive with data should be regularly backed up to an external storage device in case of a crash. Backups should be safely stored at an independent storage site, such as a safe deposit box. When DVDs are used for storage, "gold" DVDs should be used, not plastic. These conscientious efforts take extra care, but they ensure that information is recoverable if a disaster strikes the original computer files.

Our new virtual world also requires a new attitude toward preservation of our history. Physical boxes of paper documents force us to think what is going to be done with those papers years from now, but electronic documents don't take up much space, so it's going to be increasingly easy to forget about them. It will require a whole new paradigm of thought—planning for the transfer of electronic documents to preservation groups. Basically, backup drives now replace storage boxes.

Each of Us Can Help Preserve Our History

History truly starts at home. With a minimum of focused effort and the simplest of actions, we can each play an important role in the larger picture of our community history. We can sort through those boxes of things we've saved for years and clearly mark them for donation to a historical group. We can take care to store them in locations that are protected from the problems of climate and weather. We can add addendums to our wills specifying where the historic donation boxes and electronic backup drives are located and where they should be taken after our deaths. We can support preservation with sustaining

financial assistance and leave funding in our wills. We can offer our free time as volunteers—cataloging documents, digitizing documents, writing grants, serving as organization officers, or training to become docents for exhibitions and open houses.

Business owners, professionals, and heads of nonprofits can sort through storage areas and give preservation groups non-confidential files that are no longer active. Professional services and other commercial gifts can be donated for silent auctions to benefit preservation groups. Exhibits of historical items can be hosted on commercial premises.

Organization officers can assure that prior records are kept intact during officer changes. Preservation groups can be invited to speak at member meetings, and fundraisers can be held to benefit these groups. If an organization decides to close down, an archive group can be approached to take over the custody of the group's historic records and website content.

Perhaps the most precious and endangered history is in our individual memories. Our minds hold vast amounts of information about our pasts. At highest risk are memories from the pre-Stonewall days—before 1969, when people felt "less than." Unless recollections are captured in written or verbal form, we take them with us when we die. Diaries and oral histories are the most priceless gifts we can offer—completely unique and one-of-a-kind.

When in Doubt, Don't Discard It

If you've been saving things and wonder if they might have meaning to anyone beyond yourself, contact a local preservation group and ask for advice. Historic groups are willing and eager to review a few file folders or dozens of boxes.

For each piece of our history that is preserved, our collective story becomes fuller and more accurate. As members of the LGBT community, we each share a special challenge to leave behind a history that truly reflects who we are, rather than how our detractors wish to characterize us. As an old African proverb points out: "Until lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunters."

Website links to organizations mentioned in this article are available online in a special section of the Houston ARCH website: houstonarch.pbworks.com.

Brandon Wolf also writes about Annise Parker and the Houston Transgender Archive for this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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The Everett Chronicles

Theater critic Everett Evans is Houston's link to Broadway

by Donalevan Maines

Photos by Mark Hiebert

Every year I look forward to theater critic Everett Evans going to New York to review the latest Broadway shows in the *Houston Chronicle*. It's usually right before the Tony Awards (airing at 7–10 p.m., Sunday, June 7, on CBS), the one night of the year that national media are focused on live theater.

Around this time, articles about Broadway begin popping up everywhere, but I'm more interested in what Evans has to say, mainly because he earns my respect covering Houston theater all year long, and his reports put new favorites such as *Billy Elliot* and *God of Carnage* in historical context of prior competitions and shows that have played in Houston.

What's playing in New York, and especially the shows that get national exposure on the Tonys, predict what plays, musicals, and revivals we'll be seeing here, says Evans.

"You can't really overestimate the power of the Tonys," he explains, "not only on what musicals will be in the Broadway Series on [national] tour, but also on what you will see at midsize theater companies throughout the country."

"No matter what quibbles and complaints one might have about who wins, the Tonys make it possible for theater buffs, whether in Houston or Peoria, to familiarize themselves with smaller shows on Broadway, too," Evans explains. "For example, *The Light in the Piazza* and *Grey Gardens* [now playing at Stages Repertory Theatre in Houston] didn't win best

musical, but they got very strong play on the Tonys."

This year, Evans is delaying his annual trek to New York until after the Tonys, but his coverage of Broadway's biggest night should be just as fetching, informed by keeping his ear to the ground regarding which shows have enjoyed critical and popular reception in New York.

"I simply haven't been able to fit it in around my schedule of things I need to be here to cover," he says, explaining that opera and reviewing the Houston Symphony have been added to his beat as arts writer at the *Chronicle*. "The Houston scene of course is a higher priority. And it's

"The first Tony broadcast I saw was the very first time the Tonys were broadcast on network TV. I can tell you what the nominees were for best musical and what number they performed on the Tonys."

a matter of being able to be in New York long enough—nine to 10 days—to attend as many shows as I'd want to see to make the trip worthwhile."

Regarding this year's Broadway season, he says, "I keep track of the content and I keep pretty close tabs on what has been a very mixed reception to this season's slate of nominees."

"Half of them are revivals, so a show like August Wilson's *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* that I've seen before, is to be expected, especially with Bartlett Sher directing. So even from a distance, I have a pretty clear idea of who I will be most likely to be rooting for."

Evans has also noticed "a huge surge

of limited-run" productions, including the late Horton Foote's *Dividing the Estate*, which was directed by former Alley Theatre associate director Michael Wilson, with another former Houstonian, painter Jeff Cowie, making his Broadway debut as a set designer.

Evans is thrilled that *Dividing the Estate* is up for best play, but fears that its former frontrunner status faces strong competition from momentum of the still-running hit comedy *God of Carnage*, starring best-actor nominees Jeff Daniels and James Gandolfini (*The Sopranos*) and best-actress contenders Marcia Gay Harden and Hope Davis.

"The Tonys are very practical, and they are less likely to vote for a play that won't benefit at the box office by winning," Evans explains.

However, he allows, "I have to admit I am rooting for *Dividing the Estate* to win for best play. It would be nice to see a

superb writer like Horton Foote, who's had such a long and distinguished career and given us so many wonderful works—but who really has not been much produced on Broadway—finally get a well-deserved Tony Award to go along with the Pulitzer and two Oscars he's already earned."

A consolation prize might come in the form of a best featured-actress win by Hallie Foote, the playwright's daughter, who won rave reviews as Mary Jo in *Dividing the Estate*. Evans says, "I'd like to see Hallie win also, and she has a good chance, I think, representing the entire [13-member] cast."

"I was hoping that Michael Wilson would be up for best director," he adds. →



Critical nonchalance: longtime *Houston Chronicle* arts writer Everett Evans knows his way around the boards in Houston, New York, and beyond.

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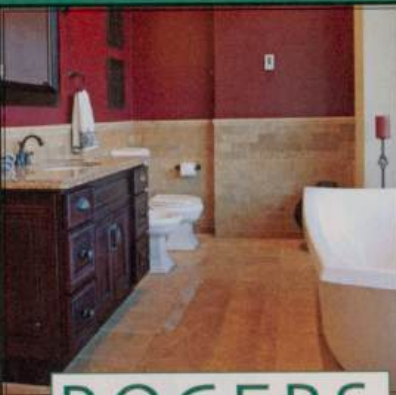
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'Yep, I'm . . . Everett Evans'

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All work and no play? Not a chance. When OutSmart interviewed Everett Evans about his long-standing post as Houston's top theater critic, we couldn't resist asking a few Love Connection questions, too, the kind you would ask on a first date with a prominent (and handsome) man of letters. To our surprise, the native Houstonian replied with this tantalizing peek into his life outside the newsroom at the Houston Chronicle. (Second date, anyone?) —D.M.

ON THE PERSONAL FRONT

Sometimes there doesn't seem to be very much of that. Beyond all the time I spend covering shows and arts events for the *Chronicle*, in my own spare time my interests still often lead to that area. A great recreational night at home for me often involves listening to several cast albums of shows or several symphonic recordings (I especially love Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Brahms and Mozart). I used to read a lot more literature—I especially love 19th-century English novels by Dickens, Austen, and Thackeray. Among my all-time favorite reading experiences, many are Dickens—*David Copperfield* in high school, but as an adult I got around to two of my favorites of his, *Dombey and Son* and *Little Dorrit*. Both fantastic. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and George Gissing's *New Grub Street* are two more all-time favorite novels.

I like to exercise and to walk/run (alternating a couple of blocks at a time) when I can fit the latter into my daily workout regimen.

HOW ABOUT TRAVEL?

Trips are often to New York or London or Chicago to see theater, even when it's just on my own and I'm not covering it for the paper (sometimes such limited runs, or seeing things just as they close, it would not be practical to run stuff on them).

But when not, some of my favorite vacations are going to national or state parks and hiking. The Grand Canyon is probably my favorite spot in the United States, next to Broadway. In Texas, Lost Maples and Peder-nales Falls State Park are favorite places to spend an afternoon hiking.

HOME LIFE?

I had been in the same apartment in Montrose since college, but last year was persuaded it was time to buy my first house [in Oak Forest]. As you may have guessed, figures, paperwork, mortgages and money stuff, and dealing with all that, are not my bag, so I had kept putting it off. Well, I finally bought one. As of last year I went from a monthly rent in the \$600-700 range to a house note in the \$1,400-1,500 range (and it just went up almost another hundred because of an increase in insurance). So I have to economize and don't eat out as much as I used to. And with my first house, it's tough to keep up with all the new responsibilities, so I'm kept pretty busy. I mow my own lawn, too! (Once every month or so. It gets so tall it almost kills the mower, I have to kind of leverage it up at some points to get through it!)

Oh, and no one else lives there currently. No pets or plants. Can't handle the responsibility. (Laughs)

GROWING UP GAY

Growing up, I always knew I was gay, and so many of my heroes were gay creative and theater people, so I had no problem with it. However, I was very sheltered and lived kind of isolated in terms of location. Grew up in southwest Houston, within the city limits, but really in the middle of nowhere, since it was a few acres of undeveloped property. I really didn't get any sense of adult independence till I was in college. I worked my way through college while still living at home, but was just beginning to find myself then, beginning to date, etc. Believe it or not, since I know other kids were active in their late teens, I was a virgin till 22—had my first experience at 22 in my last year of college. But no complaints! As I said, I don't know if I'm officially out, since I've never like made an announcement about it. (Was I supposed to? I didn't think anyone cared.) (Laughs) But I've never hid anything about my lifestyle. And especially being a theater critic, who in my field is going to make an issue of one's orientation?

My mother and father are both deceased (Dad when I was in college; Mother died 13 years ago). I never confronted them on my personal life, but feel they must have been aware. I have four siblings, including one who still lives in Houston, two live far away, but my youngest sister Elizabeth lives with her husband and son and daughter in Piermont, N.Y., and we get together when I'm in the area and sometimes see a Broadway show together or take a road trip. I guess of all, even though she lives away and we don't see each other often, Elizabeth is the sibling I feel close to.

ANYTHING ELSE?

I'm working on the first volume of my memoirs—*Prelude to Greatness: The Early Years*. (Laughs) Not really! Obviously, I get pretty silly sometimes—maybe that's my main hobby. Oh, other recreational things. See, I go to other things. I like to hang out the museums, especially the Menil, and to meditate at the Rothko Chapel. And I have tons of DVDs and videos of the great old classic films of yesteryear. My other big passion. Any '30s or early '40s screwball comedies or Hitchcock suspense I adore. Also musicals, of course. Nothing like sitting down with a bottle of wine and the wide screen DVD of *Flower Drum Song* . . .

RELATIONSHIPS

Well, first of all, that might involve talking about someone who may not be as eager to have his personal life disclosed.

But more crucially: let's leave some "mystique" for now, just to be theatrical!

The Everett Chronicles

continued from page 58

"There are eight slots for plays and revivals, but they only nominate four directors, so not all of them could get in. The same thing with set design."

Evans says, "The first Tony broadcast I saw was the very first time the Tonys were broadcast on network TV, on ABC, I guess." It was Sunday, March 26, 1967. Evans was in elementary school, and Barbra Streisand was Broadway's brightest new star.

"I can tell you what the nominees were for best musical and what number they performed on the Tonys," says Evans. They were *Cabaret*, which won, with Joel Grey leading the company in "Wilkommen"; *The Apple Tree* ("Movie Star" and "Gorgeous" performed by Barbara Harris and future Tony winner Larry Blyden, a lawyer's son from Houston); *I Do! I Do!* with the Tony show's hosts, Mary Martin and Robert Preston, who won for best actor in a musical, singing "Nobody's Perfect"; and *Walking Happy*, featuring Norman Wisdom and company performing their show's title tune.

A native Houstonian, Evans attended Strake Jesuit College Preparatory School before going to Blyden's alma mater, the University of Houston, where he excelled in drama, art, and music appreciation classes, and he wrote for the *Daily Cougar* school newspaper, on his way to earning a degree in journalism.

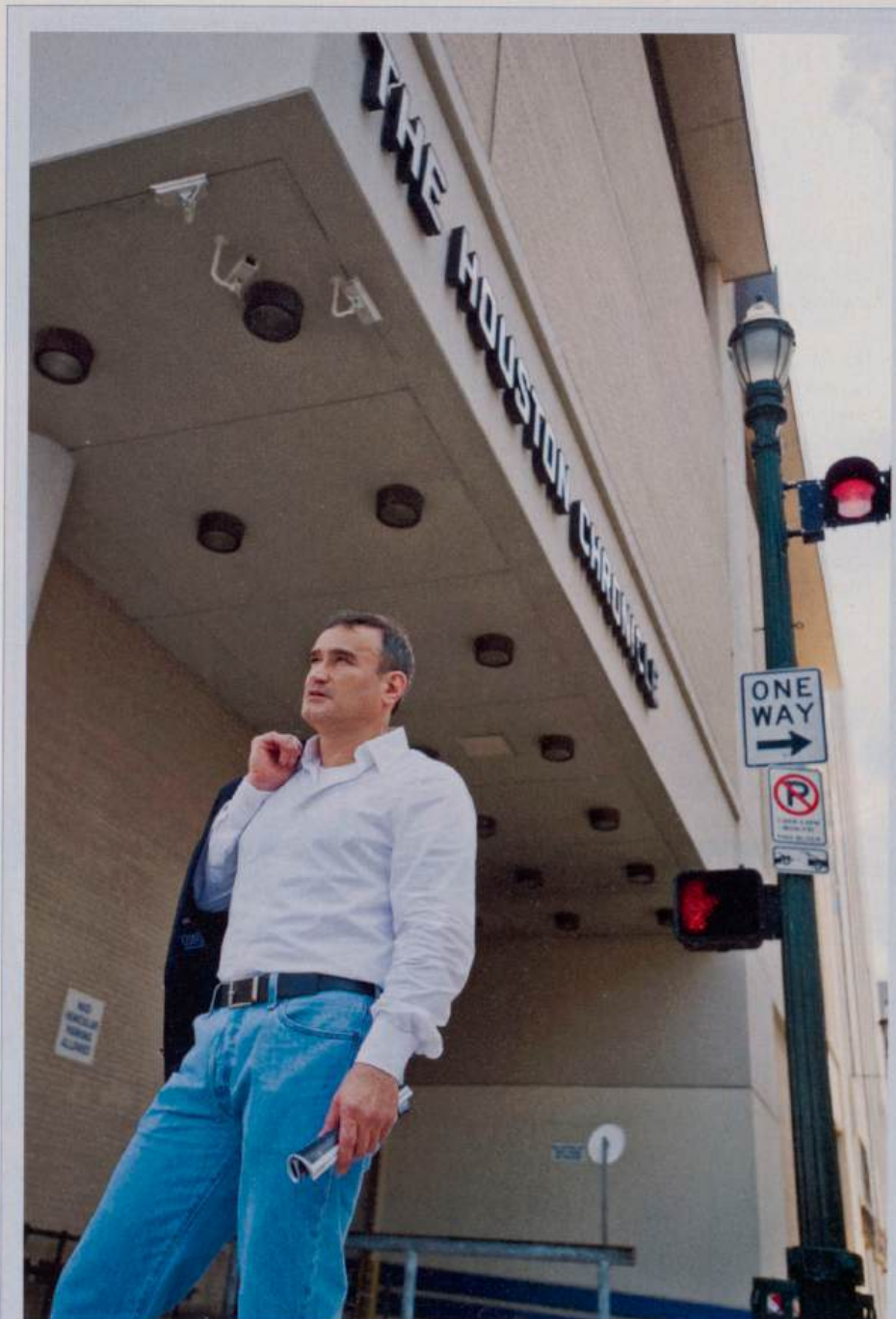
In November 1978, Evans started at the *Chronicle* on the fine arts staff led by legendary editor Ann Holmes, who was impressed with Evans' well-rounded cultural interests. Evans also showed her his *Daily Cougar* reviews of Broadway shows he'd seen on a two-week jaunt to New York, among them *A Chorus Line*, *Chicago*, and *Pacific Overtures*.

"She was my mentor," Evans says.

And what a mentor to have! When Holmes died on March 6, Evans was assigned her obituary. He wrote that "as fine arts editor and chief arts critic of the *Houston Chronicle* for 40 years [she] helped shape the taste of the city's audiences and nurtured key cultural institutions through their formative years."

Evans adds, "She knew the city and she knew the players. She felt that new groups might need a little more nourishing as they took their first steps, but 10 or 12 years down the line you have to be more demanding."

"Her legacy is the Houston arts scene that we see today," agrees Rebecca Greene Udden, executive artistic director at Main Street Theater. She also finds that Evans is "indispensable" in taking up Holmes'



Snark not: George Bernard Shaw once quipped, "A drama critic is a man who leaves no turn unstoned." But Everett Evans is that rarest of theatrical reviewers—his critiques are balanced, insightful, and seldom snarky.

mantle: "Everett loves the theater, and he understands what he can do to strengthen the theater community. He got that from Ann Holmes. When something is good, everybody knows about it, because Everett uses the power of the *Chronicle* to bring the arts to the attention of Houston in a good way.

"He has seen so much theater, and he reads about it, and he makes so many wonderful connections to other productions, here and on Broadway."

Evans is a treasure whether he's nurturing a young company, pointing out

how a production could be better, or boldly challenging the biggest player in town to astonish him.

"His reviews are not about him. They're always about the arts," explains Udden. "He's not of the John Simon school of criticism where you think of something witty, and write that at the expense of the artist."

"Everett is positive," she says. "He's really a smart guy, and Houston is lucky to have him, period."

Donalevan Maines also writes about the Tony Awards and James Knapp, 2009 male grand marshal, for this issue of OutSmart magazine.

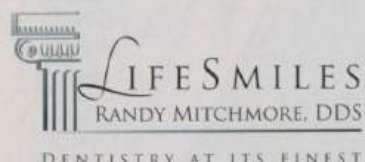
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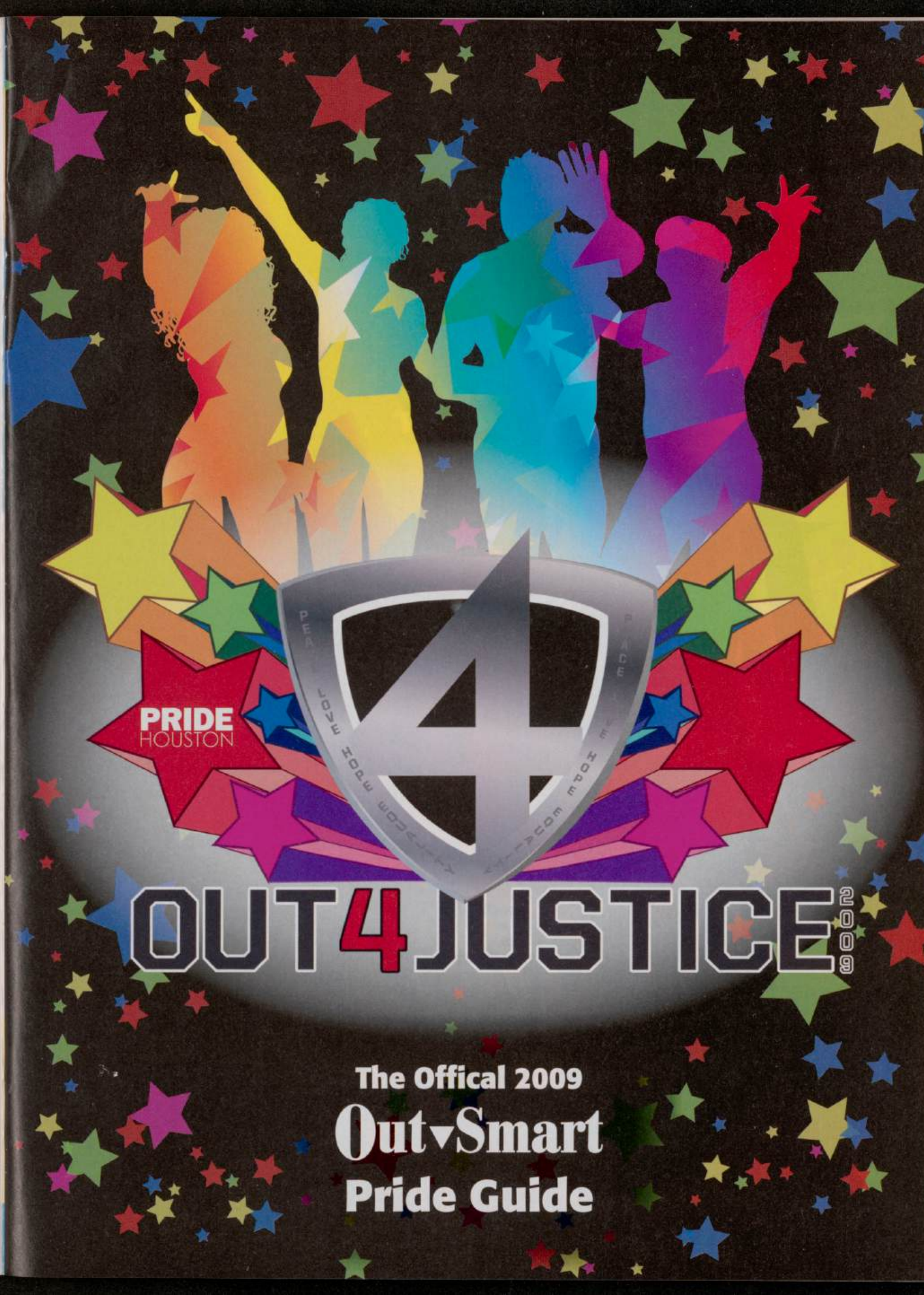
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Contents

65	79	85	89	91
WELCOME	Male Grand Marshal	Female Grand Marshal	Honorary Grand Marshal	Grand Marshal Organization
The 31st Annual Houston Pride Parade	James Knapp	Fiona Dawson	Linda & Mike Bratsen	Legacy Community Health Services

WELCOME TO PRIDE

Celebrating 40 years since the famed Stonewall Rebellion in New York City when queers fiercely resisted harassment by New York City police, Pride Houston has adopted as its 2009 theme, Out 4 Justice. The snappy, superhero-looking logo, designed by Michael Hobley, David Wuensch, and TracyLynn Tessmer, reminds us of the courage it took—and takes—to be an out and open gay man, lesbian, or bisexual or transgendered person.

Here in the official OutSmart and Pride Houston 2009 Pride Guide, you'll find stories of just a few of those courageous people, as well as tips to get the most out of your Pride experience, and dozens of very cool Pride-sanctioned and other out-and-proud events.



Events Calendar

67



History of Pride

71



Pride Idol

95



Parade Festival

96



Map of Festival

99

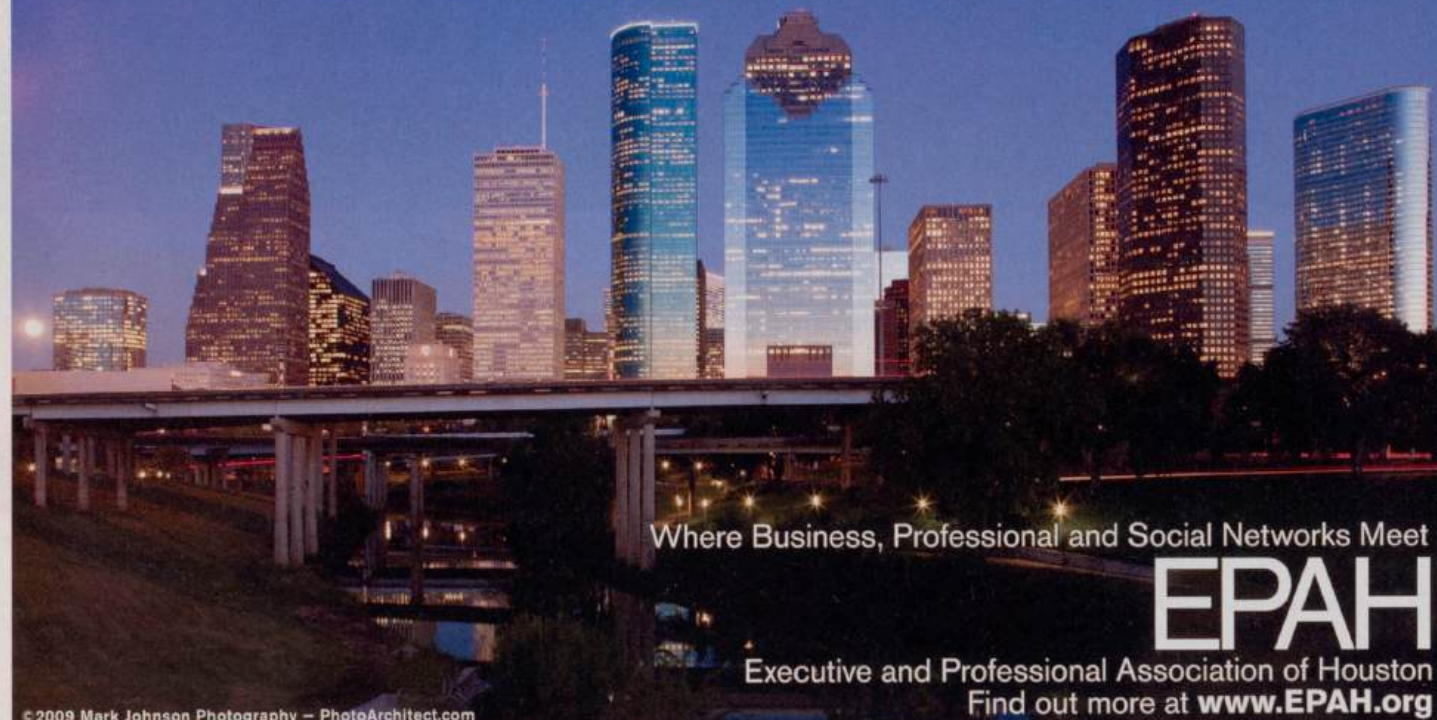


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Pride Calendar

What's in a name?
(Mostly) queer rockers,
Girl in a Coma pays a
visit to Fitzgerald's main
stage (see listing for
June 9).

On the national front, the opposition to gay marriage is crumbling, state by state. We've got the most gay-friendly president at the helm in decades. Locally, we have our first real out candidate for mayor who, if she wins, would become the first openly gay mayor of a top-five American city, truly living up to the song's claim, "this land is your land/this land is our land." Which, come to think of it, could then be belted out by one of our very own Pride Idols (PrIdols, for those of you who need a shorthand for tweeting).

Well, there's no better way to celebrate all this good gay fortune than with the 2009 Pride Month.

For the 31st year in a row, Houston is putting on a stellar Pride parade, and its 12th anniversary as the nation's premiere nocturnal one. There are a myriad of very cool Pride-sanctioned (and other out-loud-and-proud) events to let your rainbow freak flag fly. We've compiled this list of places to go and things to do just for you, so keep this commemorative issue of *OutSmart* handy, as this is the *Official 2009 Pride Guide*. We should all be proud of ourselves. Happy Pride Month. —compiled by Nancy Ford and Steven Foster

JUNE 3

Dine with Pride, Dinner 1

Why is the LGBT festival free while all city-sponsored fests shake you down with a wallet-wilting cover charge? Because the Pride Committee hosts fundraisers to keep it that way. This year, Pride is working with local Montrose restaurants for a series of fundraising fetes. Four generous eateries will donate a portion of their night to Pride Houston. For information on the restaurant location, go to PrideHouston.org.

June 3

7 PM, ANGELIKA FILM CENTER

Big-Screen Cabaret

Theatre Under The Stars celebrates its production of the musical masterpiece, *Cabaret*, with a screening of the Oscar-winning film starring Liza Minnelli and Joel Grey. 510 Texas Ave. Tickets: \$6.75–\$9.50. Angelikafilmcenter.com • 713/225-1470

June 4

10 PM, GUAVA LAMP

Houston Pride Idols, Week 3

We're down to the last finalists standing—make that singing—in this local *American Idol* knock-off. Could one be the next Kelly

Clarkson? Or will the winner become the future Ruben Whatshisname? With a contest like this, it really could go either way. But if there's a Susan Boyle in the bunch, it would be well worth your time to head over to Guava Lamp and check out the Pride Idols competition. FYI, the original 5-girl/5-guy contestants, coming in a rainbow of colors, were picked for their talent, not their gender, sexuality, or ethnicity. Kinda crazy how things come together during Pride, ain't it? 570 Waugh Dr. Guava Lamphouston.com. • 713/524-3359.

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legacycommunityhealth.org

Pride Calendar

continued from page 67

June 6

6-9 PM, RICH'S

Jocks in Dresses

Hide the bats. The studs of the Montrose Softball League don frocks for Jocks in Dresses, the league's annual amateur drag fundraiser. Benefits AIDS Foundation Houston. 2401 San Jacinto. Montrosoftballleague.com.

June 7

5:30 PM, OVATIONS

Caring Cabaret

A different Cabaret. Pianist Roger Woest presents his annual *Caring Cabaret*, featuring vocalists Gary Bankston, Patti Barnes, Deborah Boily, Laura Finger Duggan, Terry Jones, Mark and Marla Stonebarger, and Charles Swan. Benefits Covenant House of Houston. 2536 Times Blvd. Tickets: \$50. Ovationnightclub.com • 713/522-9801.

June 7

7 PM, BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM

Colt 45's Anniversary

Pride in performance. Colt 45's celebrates 33 years of supporting people with HIV/AIDS and breast cancer with an anniversary show and awards ceremony. 2400 Brazos St. BrbHouston.com • 713/528-9192.

June 9

8 PM, FITZGERALD'S

Girl in a Coma

Saving the best for last. Girl in a Coma—that raucous, rocking Texas trio, two-thirds of which are out lesbians—is currently on a national summer tour in support of their new CD, *Trio B.C.* They wrap up visits to seven Lone Star cities with a show in Houston, sharing the stage with Miss Deringer. 2706 White Oak Dr. Fitzlive.com • 713/862-7469.

June 10

Dine with Pride, Dinner 2

TBA

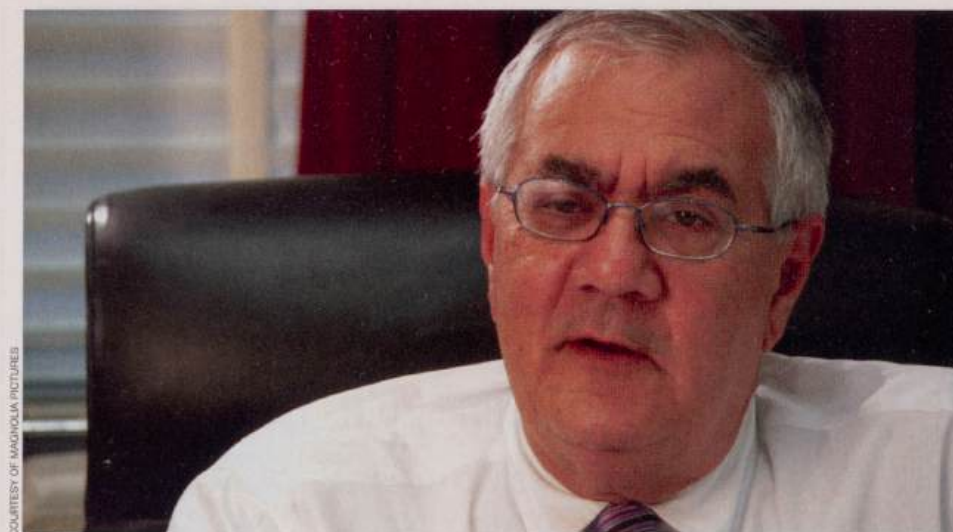
For restaurant location, go to PrideHouston.org

June 11

10 PM, GUAVA LAMP

Houston Pride Idols, Week 4

If you've been to any of the Pride Idol weeks, you know that omnipresent Ernie Manouse is playing the Simon Cowell role, *Houston Chronicle* music writer and AI blogger Joey Guerra is the nice guy, and *Project Runway* Brit brat fashionista Vanessa Riley provides the estrogen. And after sucking down Guava's powerfully potent



Congressman Barney Frank is interviewed in (though obviously not one of the subjects of) acclaimed filmmaker Kirby Dick's new movie shedding light on the hypocrisy of closeted gay, antigay legislators. *Outrage* opens June 12 at Angelika Film Center.

cocktails, patrons are performing their own Paula Abdul slur and head bob. Now *that's* entertainment.

legislators, opens today. 510 Texas Ave. Angelikafilmcenter.com • 713/225-1470.

June 12

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER

Outrage

Stall talk. *Outrage*, acclaimed filmmaker Kirby Dick's new movie shedding light on the hypocrisy of closeted gay, antigay

June 12

7 PM, MONTROSE COUNSELING CENTER

HATCH Prom

Prom and circumstance. *OutSmart's* Nancy Ford emcees "Flashback to the '80s," HATCH's Alternative Prom for youth and

continued on next page



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SUNDAY, June 21st, 6pm



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Photos by Brett Chisholm Photography

Pride Calendar

continued from previous page

adults. (See page 142.) Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. Hatchyouth.org.

June 12

9 PM, CROCKER BAR AND GEORGE

Which Will Prevail

Simul-shows. ERSICSS celebrates Pride with *Which Will Prevail*, a pair of simultaneous, dueling shows benefiting Legacy Community Health Services. The men perform at Crocker Bar (2312 Crocker), and the women perform at George (617 Fairview). Susan Hayes and Natasha Nikole host. Ersicss.org.

June 13

10 AM, WILLIS, TEXAS

3rd Annual Tranny Q

Pride parade float assembly will begin at 10 a.m. Bring screw guns, staple guns, air compressors, water, and sunscreen. A potluck BBQ dinner will be served at noon. This event is open to the entire LGBT community in honor of Pride Month. Go to Tq.transhouston.com for maps, carpool details, and information on overnight camping and fishing.

June 13

7:30 PM, JONES HALL

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston

Muy caliente! Bayou City Performing Arts artistic director James Knapp says farewell to Houston, conducting Gay Men's Chorus of Houston's 30th anniversary season finale, *La Perla!*, a commissioned show focusing on Latino and Hispanic music. 615 Louisiana St. Tickets: \$22-\$65. Gmch.org.

June 14

7:30 PM, EJ'S

Gospel Revival

The glory of pride. ERSICSS board of directors host *Gospel Revival*. Benefits Legacy Community Health Services. 2517 Ralph St. Ersicss.org.

June 17

Dine with Pride, Dinner 3

TBA

For restaurant location, go to Pridehouston.org

June 18

10 PM, GUAVA LAMP

Houston Pride Idols, Week 5

Rumor has it Paula Abdul's supposed to show up because someone called and told her Pfizer was giving out free samples of (insert pharmaceutical here). Okay, you know we're kidding, right? 570 Waugh Dr. GuavaLampHouston.com • 713/524-3359.

June 18

6 PM, ALLEY THEATRE

ActOUT

Television on stage. LGBT and supportive theater mavens enjoy a mixer with music, socializing, and complimentary cocktails followed by a performance of *The Farnsworth Invention*. Reception, 6 p.m.; curtain, 7:30 p.m. Alley Theatre's 4th Floor Terrace Room, 615 Texas Ave. AlleyTheatre.org • 713/220-5700.

June 18

8 PM, HOBBY CENTER

OUT@TUTS

Come hear the music play. OUT@TUTS explores the decadent world of 1930s Berlin in *Cabaret* with a post-show sing-along reception with cast and crew downstairs at Artista Restaurant. Theatre Under The Stars. Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. TUTS.com.

June 19

8 PM, HOBBY CENTER

Houston Pride Band

Band of brothers and sisters. Conducted by artistic director Jason Stephens, the Houston Pride Band concludes the season with the continuing theme, *Beyond Fences: Music without Borders*, featuring music from England, Japan, Chile, and, of course, the USA. Hobby Center for the Performing Arts' Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby St. Houstonprideband.org.

June 20

6 PM, LA MAISON ON REVERE

GLBT Wine Tasting

Exclusive to Friends of Pride, this wine soiree takes place at the swanky new La Maison in River Oaks. Members snack on designer hors d'oeuvres and move from tabletop to tabletop sampling prime vintages. If you're not a FOP, why should you care? For Pride next year. Grab a few friends and pool your cash and buy the \$750 champagne package which includes—get this—two on-site festival parking passes, six VIP bleacher seats for the parade that includes your own personal waiter, six tickets to an exclusive pre-Parade reception, four invites to the wine party, and more. PrideHouston.org

June 20

7:30-10:30 PM, BISTRO CALAIS

Jerry Atwood and Rick Comeaux

Greenway cabaret. Legendary piano bar darlings Jerry Atwood and Rick Comeaux perform favorite show tunes, ballads, and more in the musical dining room the third Saturday of each month (this month, June 20). Check the website for appearances by Sharon Montgomery, Tommie Lee Bradley, and other local favorites. 2811 Bammel Ln. Reservations: BistroCalais.com • 713/529-1314.

June 20

1 PM, COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHURCH

The Bible and Modern Humanity

Holy man. The Reverend Samuel Kader, renowned author and international leader



Taste the rainbow. The Houston Flyboys flag troupe shows its colors in Pride Houston's 1997 GLBT Pride Parade, the first to be held after dark.

in the Community Gospel Church denomination, conducts *Everything you were afraid to ask*, but really need to know*, a four-hour seminar addressing what the Bible really says about homosexuality and how it relates to modern humanity. Free. 608 Aurora St. CommunityGospel.org • 713/880-2245.

June 21

11 AM, COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHURCH

Reverend Samuel Kader

From the pulpit. The Reverend Samuel Kader addresses the congregation following his June 20 workshop (see previous entry). 608 Aurora St. CommunityGospel.org • 713/880-2245.

June 20-21

10 AM, SLICK WILLIE'S FAMILY POOL HALL

13th Annual Houston Billiard Open

Don't scratch. Experienced pool players and amateurs alike are welcomed at the

Independent Billiard League of Houston's 13th Annual Houston Billiard Open. The event is the final stop of the prestigious ACS/J. Pechauer Cues All American Tour. "The \$500 added money purse provides us nationwide promotion with regional focus, and this alliance promises to increase player participation," says IBL representative Greg Killips. Registration, 10 a.m.; play, 11 a.m. 1200 Westheimer. Tickets: \$30-\$35. IBLHouston.com.

June 21

8:30 AM-10:50 AM,

BERING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Interfaith Service

One of Pride's most endearing characteristics is its inherent inclusiveness. The colors of the rainbow, while separate, form one unifying image. Why not celebrate that spiritual diversity and unity by joining others in worship? If you haven't been to church in awhile, do yourself, your spirit, and your psyche a favor and join Bering's interfaith service. God loves you. And in whatever form you envision God, He/She would love to see you. BeringUMC.org

June 21

6 PM, COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHURCH

Entertaining Angels

Hospitality (sweet). Community Gospel

Church presents its annual Pride celebration, *Entertaining Angels*, a musical drama revealing the real story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Free. 608 Aurora St. CommunityGospel.org • 713/880-2245.

June 24

Dine with Pride, Dinner 4

TBA

For restaurant location, go to PrideHouston.org

June 25

10 PM, GUAVA LAMP

Houston Pride Idols, Week 6

Someone's going to have their PrIdol dream come true. Will there be a Kris Allen-style upset? Or will the contestant with the most buzz actually win the top prize? Find out tonight at this, the big Pride Idol finale. 570 Waugh Dr. GuavaLampHouston.com • 713/524-3359.

continued on next page



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Pride Calendar

continued from previous page

June 25

5:30 PM, BAYOU CITY BAR & GRILL
Author Book Signing
Author, author. Local author B. Alan Bourgeois signs copies of *GAPH 2: The Readers*, a sequel to his successful *God's Army to Purge Homosexuality*. 2409-A Grant St. Bayoucitybar.com • 713/522-2867.

June 26

10 PM, METEOR
Pride Fashion
Sponsored by Male UWear, this runway extravaganza gives you the chance to gawk at, and plan, your perfect outfit for the Pride Parade—skivvies. We all know it's about a thousand degrees in Houston, so less in this case really is more. More comfortable, that is. Swimsuits are also on display, so if it rains (a definite possibility), you won't mind getting your new fashion statement a little soaked. But don't worry. Even if you don't have the perfect gym body to pull off something skimpy, there are plenty of other hot fashions to peruse. Meteor, 2306 Genesee. Meteorlounge.com • 713/521-0123.

June 26

8 PM, TONY'S CORNER POCKET
Stonewall 40
Without the brick throwing. PWA Holiday Charities presents Stonewall 40, celebrating 40 years of LGBT Pride, with all community entertainers invited to perform. Benefits PAW Holiday Charities and Legacy Community Health Services' medication and insurance assistance programs. PWAHC.org. Tony's Corner Pocket 817 W. Dallas St. Tonyscornerpocketbar.com.

June 27

11 AM-7 PM, WESTHEIMER & YOAKUM
Houston Pride Festival
A now-standard Pride accompaniment, the Pride Festival is basically a drink and food recharge zone for those who aim to make Pride an all-day affair. However, this year, there are a couple of events worth special mention. The Walgreen's Health & Wellness Pavilion hosts HIV/STD testing, along with cancer screening information, nutrition information, and Men's & Women's Wellness education. The Stonewall Legal Advice Tent allows you the chance to speak privately with probate and family law experts, and various legal eagles on LGBT rights. Community Street offers pro-LGBT exhibitors, food courts, pet adoptions, and the Pride Oasis "cool zone" (thank you, Bud Lite!). For the little ones, the Family Space & Kid's Zone boasts inflatable games, a rock wall, Wii station, face painting, and specifically family-friendly exhibitors.

June 27

6 PM, BERING OMEGA FLOAT
Tailgate Party
Pride party. Bering Omega Community Services hosts a tailgate party before the Pride parade begins. Check location of their float on the official parade lineup. Beringume.org • 713/526-1017.

June 27

8-11 PM
Houston Pride Parade
It's hot. It's sweaty. It's fun and it's funky. And thank God it's at night. It's the 31st annual Pride parade. Expect the usual eye-popping floats from the big brand names, although in this economy, even that's up in the air. Although safe betters can reasonably bank on Charles Armstrong providing some glitz, they can also expect plenty of walking contingents. But the PFLAG group gets the loudest hoots and hollers, with or without the added pizzazz of bead-tossing. And while we have your attention, please, please, everyone, put your trash in the provided bins. It's inexcusable that we throw a party and afterwards it looks like we trashed the place. And to you parade organizers: take a note from the Art Car Parade and get those floats moving. We love our funky parade, but to have a 10-minute lagtime between motorcades is a real buzz-kill. Get those floats rolling and crack that whip! (We're supposed to be good at that, remember?) Pridehouston.org

June 27

HIV Testing
Get tested. June 27 is National HIV Testing Day. Call AIDS Foundation Houston for a list of testing locations. AIDSFoundation-Houston.org • 713/623-6796.

June 27

4 PM-4 AM, CLUB ADAM AND EDEN
Daylong Pride Party
All-Day Pride. Club Adam and Eden present a daylong Pride Party for those who prefer to parade their stuff closer to the Gulf. 522 NASA parkway in Webster. Clubadam.net • 281/554-3336.

June 28

9 & 11 AM, RESURRECTION MCC
Day-After Services
Worshiping with pride. Resurrection MCC conducts its annual "day after the parade" Pride services. ResurrectionMCC.org • 713/861-9149. ■



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History of Pride

Pride Houston has been an active organization since 1978, lending an active hand in the fight for equality in a time when basic rights were virtually unheard of. Since the first Pride parade in 1979 with the brazen theme "United We Stand," Pride Houston has been at the core of the LGBT movement for united equality.

Over the past decades, the local LGBT community has ultimately thrived as the parades get larger and more colorful, and more and more events are added to the list of annual activities. But let us not forget our roots and the history that has brought us to where we are today.

The following is a list of each year's theme and its grand marshals.

1979 United We Stand
Thelma Hansel

1980 Proud to Be
Jim Farmer, Ruth Ravas

1981 We the People
Ray Hill, Rita Wanstrom

1982 A Part Of, Not Apart From
Marion Coleman, Andy Mills

1983 Unity Through Diversity
Marion Pantzer, Walter Strickler

1984 Unity and More in '84
Pokey Anderson, Rick Grossman

1985 Alive with Pride
Terry Clark, Freda Jerrell

1986 Liberty Is in Our Grasp
Tony Bicocchi, Dee Lamb

1987 Come Out & Celebrate Pride
Persons Living With AIDS

1988 Rightfully Proud
Bruce Cook, Eleanor Munger
Sharon Kowalski, Harvey Milk (Hon.)

1989 Stonewall 20
Charles Armstrong, Bettie Naylor

1990 Look to the Future
GM: Walter Carter, Annise Parker
Debra Danburg, Craig Washington (Hon.)

1991 Take Pride
Gene Harrington, Jack Jackson, Linda
Morales, Katy Caldwell, Marvin Davis
(Hon.)

1992 Pride = Power
Sheri Cohen Darbonne, Brian Keever, Gay &
Lesbian Switchboard Houston (Hon.)

continued on page 77



PFLAG Houston in the 2005 Pride Parade

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Pride History

continued from page 75

1993 Out & Proud

Brian Bradley, Carolyn Mobley,
Adan Rios (Hon.), PFLAG
Houston (Org.)

1994 HouStonewall 25

Jay Allen, Cicely Wynne, Claire
Koepsel (Hon.), Q-Patrol (Org.)

1995 Silence to Celebration

Suzanne Anderson, Don Gill,
Annella Harrison (Hon.),
H.A.T.C.H. (Org.)

1996 Pride Knows

No Borders

Bill Havard, Jeanette Vaughn, Jack
Abercia (Hon.), The Royal, Sovereign, and
Imperial Court of the Single Star (Org.)

1997 Glowing with Pride

Deborah Bell, Jimmy Carper, Krewe of
Olympus (Org.)

1998 Unified, Diversified, Electrified

Bob Bouton, Jackie Doval, Barbara Winston
(Hon.), Texas Gay Rodeo Association (Org.)

1999 Pride, Power, & Pizzazz

Sean Carter, Nancy Ford, Colt 45's (Org.)



The age of innocence? In 1980, just prior to the introduction of HIV/AIDS, Houston's gay community proudly took to the streets for its second official Pride parade, led by grand marshals Jim Farmer and Ruth Ravas.

2000 Take Pride, Take Joy, Take Action

Richard Weiderholt, Tori Williams,
Don Sinclair (Hon.), People With AIDS
Coalition Houston (Org.)

2001 Embrace Diversity

Mitchell Katine, Dalia Stokes, Blake and
Gordon Weisser (Hon.), PFLAG Houston
(Org.)

2002 Pride Worldwide

Mela Contreras, Rusty Mueller, Irv & Jane
Smith (Hon.), Gay & Lesbian Switchboard
Houston (Org.)

2003 Silver Celebration

All former grand
marshals honored

2004 Pride as Big as Texas

Sonna Alton, Jerry
Simoneaux, Sue and
Jim Null (Hon.),
Lesbian Gay Right
Lobby of Texas (Org.)

2005 Equal Rights! No More! No Less!

Weldon Hickey, Deb
Murphy, Dennis and
Evelyn Schave (Hon.),
Bayou City Boys
Club (Org.)

2006 Say It Out Loud!

Phyllis Randolph Frye, Ray Ramirez,
Rev. Marilyn Meeker-Williams (Hon.),
Bunnies on the Bayou (Org.)

2007 Lone Star Pride

Jack Valinski, Maria Gonzalez, Garnet
Coleman (Hon.), Imperial Court of
Houston (Org.)

2008 30 Year Celebration: We Are Family

Kelly McCann, Dalton DeHart, Julie
Eberly (Hon.), AIDS Foundation
Houston (Org.)

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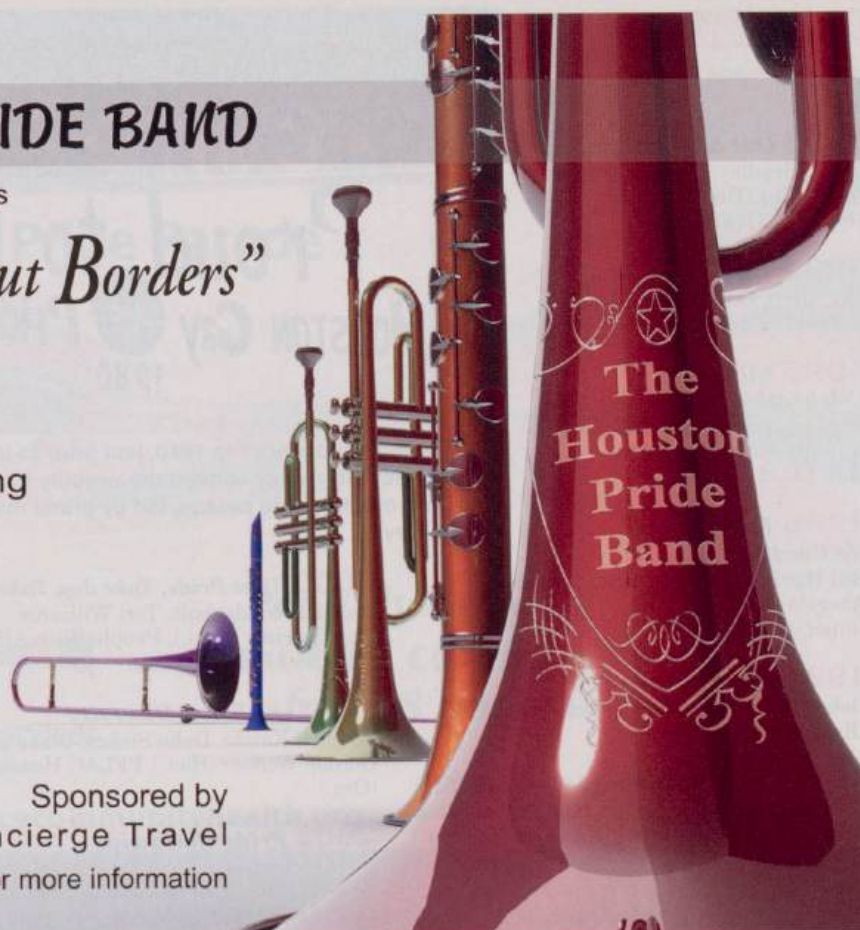
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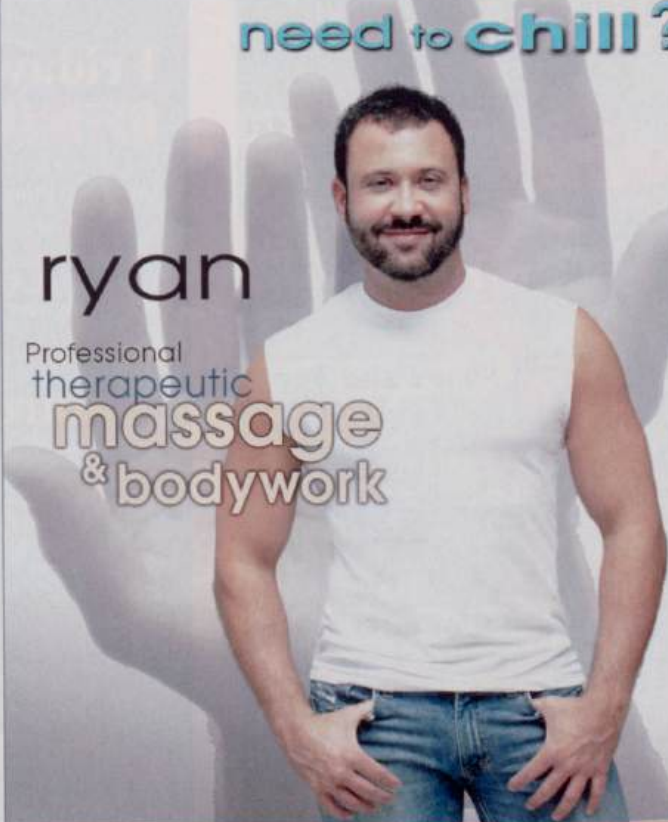


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James Knapp

2009 Pride Grand Marshal

by Donalevan Maines

Photo by Dalton DeHart

James Knapp had just finished unpacking at his new apartment in Boston when he got word that Houston's LGBT community had selected him as the male grand marshal for this year's Pride parade.

Fortunately, Knapp and his partner Jesse ("Jesse, James—we didn't plan it that way," he says) still have their house in Houston, where Knapp will continue as artistic and managing director of the Bayou City Performing Arts (BCPA) until around the time of Pride festivities. On Monday after the parade, Knapp will leave Texas, where he's lived for 23 years, and return to his native New England.

His eyes well with tears as he says, "It's going to be an important night for me, a big night, my last hurrah. I'm having a parade!"

Knapp's legacy at BCPA will remain here: how the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston blossomed under his leadership since 2001 to more than 100 singers; how its concert audiences grew from less than 300 at local churches to about 1,200 in its new residence the past three years at Jones Hall for the Performing Arts in downtown Houston; how Knapp launched the Bayou City Women's Chorus in 2005, and nurtured it from a dozen singers at its first rehearsal to a choir of more than 50 singers, including lesbians, bisexuals, and heterosexuals; how Knapp combined the voices of both men and women in the LGBT community and its supporters in founding the Bayou City Chorale, premiered at Jones Hall in 2007 with a benefit performance of "Sing for the Cure" for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

Knapp's selection as male grand marshal is LGBT Houston's way of tipping its hat to both the success of BCPA choruses and its longtime leader, whose childhood began as Jamie Knapp in a tough Irish-Catholic/Italian-Catholic neighborhood in Rochester, N.Y.

His family went to the American Baptist Church, which Knapp is quick to point out is more liberal, more progressive than Southern Baptists.

"Still, I was always instructed in a faith community, where the subtext was that you



Leaving on a high note: former artistic director of the Bayou City Performing Arts, James Knapp, serves as male grand marshal of Pride Houston's 2009 GLBT Pride Parade before moving to Boston.

can't be a Christian and be gay," he says. "There was the feeling that I had to choose between family and faith and being gay."

"I always knew I was gay," adds Knapp, who is now 50, "but I was too terrified to do anything about it. People didn't even talk about sex. I didn't know there was gay sex. I thought it was fooling around."

Looking back, he recalls what a great role model he had in a proud gay man named Martin May, who was Knapp's high school drama teacher. "Mr. May was not married, so you can imagine the play on words, 'You have a class with Mr. Gay.' But he always stood tall. He wore big pump heels like in *Saturday Night Fever*, he did great work, and his classroom was a haven for all the outcasts and misfits.

"My real eye-opener was going to college" (at Fredonia State University),

he explains. "That's the first time I was confronted with a lot of gay people, being overtly gay, talking about gay sex, and having same-sex relationships."

"It kinda freaks you out," he remembers. "What freaks you out about it, is that's who you are. And away from home, you have the time, place, and opportunity to embrace your personhood."

"Then the pivotal moment for me was going to Europe," he says, to study at the Conservatory of Music in Salzburg, Austria. "When I got off the plane, not knowing one person on that continent, I changed my name to James, and I said, 'I'm going to do things differently,'" meaning that he was now officially out.

"They just didn't care over there!" he laughs. "They were light years ahead of the United States." →

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James Knapp

continued from previous page

Two years later, a professor encouraged him to pursue his master's degree at the University of Texas at Austin. "Moving from Austria to Texas was like moving from Earth to Mars," he says. "You would think it would cause me to go running back into the closet. But I found Austin to be an oasis of enlightenment, and after living with integrity, I said 'I'm not going back.'"

From Austin, Knapp moved to Chicago for five years, then returned to Texas and spent eight years as minister of music at First United Methodist Church in Sugar Land, a former company town built around the Imperial Sugar plant.

"It was wild. It was just a bunch of pastures," he explains. "The congregation where I worked was 100 years old, and I saw the whole [U.S. 59] corridor go from fields" to its current status as one of the fastest-growing cities in the nation.

Knapp settled into a home in Northfield Subdivision near Braeswood and Fondren for "practical purposes," he says. "It was 15 minutes from work and 20 minutes to downtown."

Living outside of the Montrose gayborhood, he says, "We are pioneers. I think that has a big impact on people. It's a really good experience for [heterosexuals]."

In particular, he says that his next-door neighbors, who are orthodox Jews, "didn't know what to think at first, but now we have dinner together, we have keys to each others' houses, we've been a positive influence."

Likewise, he says, there are a number of fellow "pioneers" in BCPA choirs, LGBT singers who live outside the Houston city limits, in areas that include Pearland, Katy, and the Woodlands.

"Two guys come from Bellville, and because of their courage in living openly as they do out in the country, we have about 15 Bellville groupies," Knapp laughs. "They come to every performance and always join us afterwards when we go out to dinner."

With BCPA members dressed as mermaids and "mer-men" in the Pride parade, chances are that Bellville groupies of the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston will be diving for pearls as the float passes by them.

Knapp says he hopes the male grand marshal convertible he's riding in will be positioned near BCPA's float. Meanwhile, he admits, "I'm absolutely obsessing with what I'm going to wear." ■

Donalevan Maines also writes about theater critic Everett Evans and the Tony Awards in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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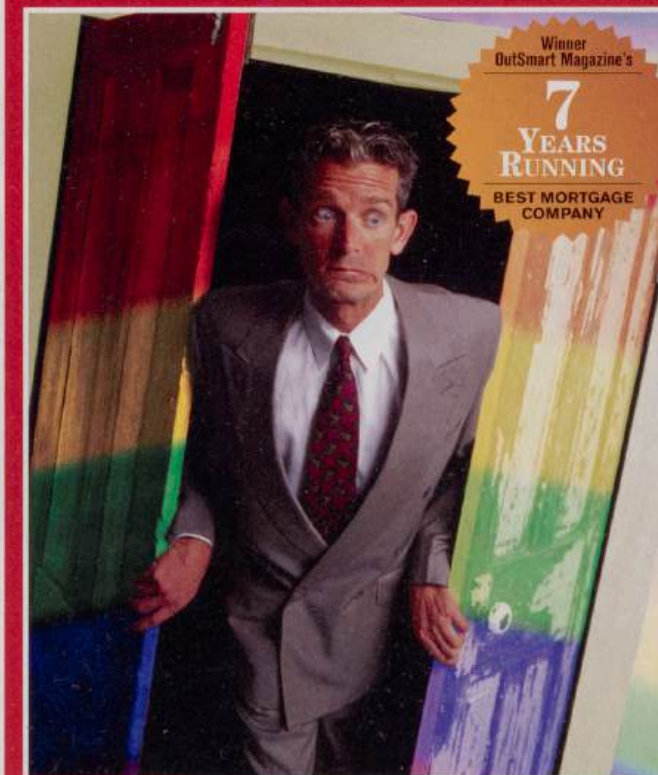
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Fiona Dawson

2009 Pride Grand Marshal

by Joyce Gabiola

Photo by Dalton DeHart

It is a huge honor. In true absolute honesty, I feel very humbled and shy, and I actually feel like I want to hide under a rock." Fiona Dawson, known as one of the leading volunteers in our community, is reacting to having been voted as one of the grand marshals for Pride 2009.

Dawson wonders what her classified ad might read if one was to be published. She starts, "Overly committed," and with careful thought, continues, "commitment phobe. . . ." Yes, readers, Ms. Dawson is single; so suit up, strut to the nearest Human Rights Campaign event and smile. However, it is her single status that she believes has a large part to do with her heavy community involvement.

Between her job at BBVA Compass in Corporate Responsibility and Reputation, commitments to the Human Rights Campaign on a national and local level, spending quality time with friends and volunteering for a myriad of other causes, when does Dawson find the time to nurture the world? "I think when you are determined to do something and you set a goal, it's more a case of making the time to make it happen, rather than finding the time."

Before landing in Houston in 2000, Dawson volunteered and worked in Bangladesh and Portugal. The spirit of volunteerism, of giving back to the community, was inspired by her mother, who passed away of pancreatic cancer in 2006. She remembers one of her earliest moments of charity. Along with her mother and siblings, she shoveled snow out of the path of the elderly people who lived behind her family's house. "There were like 11 houses, and we knocked on their doors and asked if they needed milk or bread. We went down to the local shop to buy their milk and bread and walked back with it. Mum just encouraged us to do all of those things."

At the mention of a *Houston Voice* article published in 2005 where she was quoted as saying she wanted to save the world, Dawson replies, "I want to apply myself to the best of my ability to make positive change in the world, and I think if you can try and live every day as though you're seizing every opportunity there is to do something good, then maybe you're,



Hi, Fi: female grand marshal of Pride Houston's 2009 GLBT Pride Parade, Fiona Dawson, believes even Texas will eventually become more inclusive in its legislation, and works with the Human Rights Campaign to achieve that goal.

quote-unquote, saving the world."

Her reason for remaining in Houston? "It's hot and cheap," she laughs. "Houston has been so good to me. The people here are incredibly embracing, and there are so many great causes to really apply yourself and get involved in. Houston is a great place of opportunity. I think people come and create themselves here."

Dawson, who became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 2008, appears to have a lot of faith in the strength of our community to ultimately influence LGBT legislation on a national level. "I think that the more networking we do collectively as a GLBT community and the more people we get involved, we can create a stronger force here in Texas. I'm sure a lot of the nation looks at Texas and thinks there's no way that we can push for LGBT legislation. But here in Houston, we're very powerful and

we can make a difference. We can make a difference on the local level—we've seen that—we can make a difference on the state level, and we can make a difference on the federal level."

In addition to her faith in our community, she expresses faith in President Barack Obama and a "fair-minded house and senate." However, fair-mindedness has come at a time when the nation's crucial concern is the economy. "We're at this juncture where we've put all this time and effort into getting the representation that we need, yet on the other hand, people are so scared about their daily lives and how they're going to make the bills and whether they're going to lose their jobs, that maybe they're too scared to keep on investing and pushing. So what we've seen in the last eight years is more of a defense—defending ourselves →



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Fiona Dawson

continued from previous page

and trying to make sure that nothing passes that takes our rights or limits us. Now we're in a situation where we're in offense and we can go for it, and we can see hate crimes legislation pass. And now with this wonderful movement of marriage equality across the states, we're beginning to see great strides. Yet we're not in a sound financial situation to fully back it up and kick it out in the field. . . . We've got to keep inspired and we've got to keep looking forward. Let's not sit back and watch everything happen, because to do that would be dangerous, and we would lose this opportunity."

Speaking of good causes, Dawson visited the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama, on business and learned of their program called Teaching Tolerance, which, according to their website, is dedicated to reducing prejudice, improving intergroup relations, and supporting equitable school experiences for children. "They empower the teachers with tools to talk about bullying at all levels, all dimensions of diversity," Dawson says. The program created an event called Mix It Up at Lunch Day, in which more than 10,000 schools participate. It's a call to action where students simply cross the lines of division by sitting with a group of students with whom they would not normally interact, therefore allowing the opportunity to make new friends and learn about and respect each other's differences. "They did some diversity exercises and training," she says, "and I was so thrilled to see that they included sexual orientation and touched on gender identity."

Implementing tolerance education in schools is absolutely critical, according to Dawson. "As adults, whether we have children or not, it's our responsibility to be role models for younger kids, so that they can learn that diversity is a part of life and it's a value in life. I'm hoping to do some more work with them to see how we can increase the knowledge about that program and its presence and see if it's something that can help teach tolerance in schools."

"I am so, so lucky to have family that loves me and accepts me for who I am. . . . I was very close to my mum all the way up to her death. She's very much a part of me always, every single day, every single moment. There's never a time when I'm not with her or she's with me." Just as Dawson's commitment to nurturing the well-being of the community, and thus the world, is lasting, so exists the giving spirit of her mother within. ■

Joyce Gabiola also writes about Legacy Community Health Services in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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From PFLAG Heroes to Pride Parade Marshals

Mike and Linda Bratsen

2009 Pride Honorary Grand Marshal

by Marene Gustin

Photo by Dalton DeHart

Santa Fe, in Galveston County, isn't historically the kinda place you'd want to be out and loud.

The rural town of under 10,000 has a pretty conservative history. From the days when it was known as a sundown town (as in "people of color need to leave town before sundown") to the '80s shrimpers protest against the influx of Vietnamese that spawned the film *Alamo Bay* to the Supreme Court case based on prayer in school, Santa Fe is about as white-bread, redneck as it gets in Texas.

Add to living there parents who own a well-digging company, and it's no wonder Steven Bratsen had a hard time coming out to his parents. Finally, someone else did it for him.

"One of our employees got tired of hearing Steven say he couldn't tell us, so he took me aside one day and told me my son was gay," remembers Linda Bratsen of that day in 2001. "I had absolutely no idea. I was shocked."

She and her husband Mike were also in unknown territory. They didn't know any gays, barely knew what gays were. At first they took their teenage son to a Methodist preacher for counseling. Linda says Steven was miserable, and she was pretty "torn up" over it all, too.

"I was worried about him," she says, "that some nut was going to hurt him, while he was driving around Santa Fe with a rainbow flag on his truck. And I was worried that he wouldn't be happy, never get married or have a family. And I felt guilty that he felt he couldn't talk to us for so long. I just felt isolated."

Then, the Bratsens found PFLAG. "It was like a light going on," Linda says.

Sue and Jim Null had asked Steven to bring his folks, and they remember Linda crying through that first meeting. But after that, Mike and Linda became standard-bearers for the cause. Linda marched with Steven in the Pride parade, became PFLAG's librarian (a volunteer post she's



Family affair: for Mike and Linda Bratsen, honorary grand marshals of Pride Houston's 2009 GLBT Pride Parade, involvement with PFLAG is a labor of love.

...the Bratsens found PFLAG.
"It was like a light going on."

held for seven years) and served on the board. As a family the Bratsens helped establish the first Gay-Straight Alliance in Santa Fe High School, represented PFLAG at the Texas Counselors Association convention, volunteered for Bunnies on the Bayou, and made some award-winning PFLAG Pride floats.

"Mike knows construction, so one year they asked if he could build the frame," Linda says. "And he said he'd try. It came out so good he does it every year, and then we all help decorate it."

And the woman who remembers getting goose bumps the first time she saw a march is about to get the thrill of her life.

Linda and Jim are going to be this year's honorary pride marshals.

"It's a fantastic honor!" says Linda. "This is an experience Mike and I will never forget!"

And as for Steven, the 27-year-old hotel project manager was ecstatic, says his proud mom.

"Although what Mike and I do isn't just about Steven anymore, it's about the community and making the world a better place. We just want to do as much as we can." ■

Marene Gustin is a freelance writer and a frequent contributor to OutSmart magazine.

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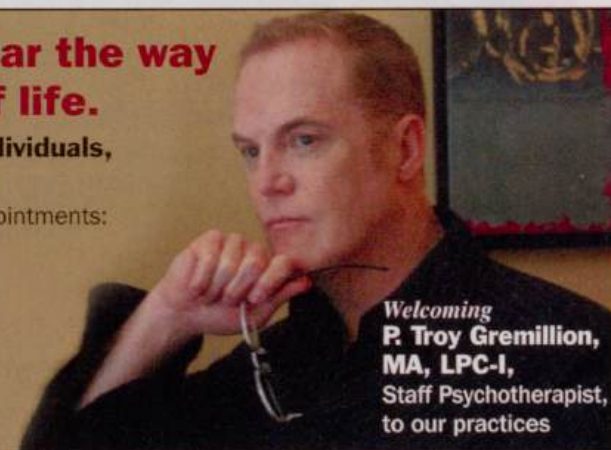
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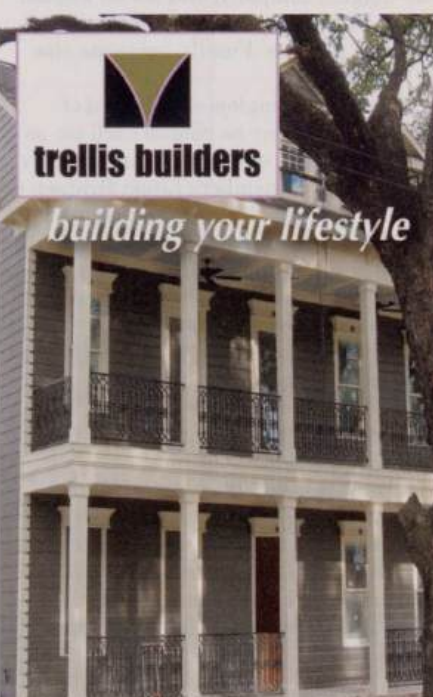
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Legacy Community Health Services

2009 Pride Grand Marshal (Organization)

by Joyce Gabiola

Photo by Dalton DeHart

Legacy Community Health Services—we practice medicine, but we've perfected care. Perfection takes time, and with the agency having started in the late 1970s, time has certainly passed. The men and women who have worked nonstop to bring comprehensive health services to our community over the past three decades have left an important legacy, not just in the LGBT community, but in the city as a whole.

Eric Roland, senior director of marketing for Legacy, has himself been a patient since 1996. Roland was diagnosed HIV positive at one of Legacy's locations in 1995, and in 1998, he came to work at Legacy. "I'm one of those people from the hair club—I'm not only a spokesman, I'm also a graduate." Roland is currently a patient of Legacy physician Dr. James Carroll. "It's cool that I not only work here, but I'm also a patient here. I can see it from both sides. It's great care here."

And it is this great care and their impact on the community that has led to Legacy being named the organization grand marshal for Pride 2009. "Being nominated as the grand marshal for the Gay Pride Parade for the first time ever is incredible. It's a great honor for us to have that and to be represented in the Pride parade."

Legacy is a federally qualified health center (FQHC) that is recognized nationwide for its comprehensive program for the treatment of people with HIV. Although the agency started as a STD clinic, today it offers healthcare for men, women, and children, including family planning, eye-care services, psychiatry, dermatology, health promotion and community outreach, wellness services—physical therapy, personal training, and nutrition—as well as specialty healthcare for HIV/AIDS. They provide a compassionate, culturally sensitive and judgment-free environment for a diverse clientele.

Legacy's progression has been dramatic and impressive. It was incorporated in 1981 as the Montrose Clinic, founded by two gay doctors who, in the late '70s, saw their gay brothers walking around with gonorrhea, syphilis, or chlamydia, because they didn't want to go to their doctor. For fear of judgment, the alternative was to go untreated. According to Roland, the two doctors started operating a clinic out of their office one night a week, and the legacy grew from there.

HIV hit Houston in about 1982. So according to Roland, it was a natural progression to go from a STD clinic to one treating HIV. "At the time it wasn't called HIV; it was AIDS. Most of the people would come in sick and die." There was no test for it, but the agency created educational programs. One of their first programs was aimed at helping parents, families, and friends deal with someone in their family who had AIDS. Shortly after, the Next Step program was created for people who were newly diagnosed with HIV, who were scared, didn't know what to do, and didn't know what was going to happen. Roland reveals that the program curriculum offered information on how to plan for your funeral, how to budget yourself, and what was going to happen in the hospital. Eventually these issues were no longer part of the program, because most people with HIV were catching it early enough, and Legacy was active in educating them about the disease to keep them healthy.

Roland explains, "Through the years we've expanded, always in response to a need." In the late 1980s a lot of people with HIV/AIDS were getting Cytomegalovirus (CMV) retinitis. It is a virus that is related to the herpes family and causes blindness. Eye doctors didn't understand AIDS or CMV retinitis, or were afraid of people with AIDS, so the agency created their own eye clinic, specifically with the task of conducting CMV screenings. They worked with the University of Houston's eye clinic and school to bring in optometry students to perform the screenings.

It was a natural thing for them to start a primary healthcare clinic for people with HIV, says Roland, which happened



Bigger and better: Legacy Community Health Services, voted grand marshal of Pride Houston's 2009 GLBT Pride Parade representing community organizations, has expanded in response to the changing needs of the community, says Eric Roland, Legacy's senior director of marketing.

Legacy

shortly after they moved into the building at 215 Westheimer in 1994. They keep expanding their programs as they continue to identify needs in the community. They began to offer psychiatric services for HIV-positive clients when they recognized that need; they merged with Body Positive when they saw the need for fitness. "We've created a model of care for someone who is HIV positive and doesn't have health insurance," Roland says. "They come in and they can see a doctor. They can get nutrition, wellness, eye care, psychiatry, dermatology. It is a model that has been talked about around the country as one of the best ways to treat people with HIV."

Legacy continued to listen to the community. In response to the medical →

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Legacy Community Health

continued from previous page

needs of the uninsured, the organization researched other agencies around the country, such as Howard Brown Health Center in Chicago and Fenway Community Health Center in Boston. They found that these clinics were becoming federally qualified health centers, which allowed them to provide primary healthcare services not only to HIV patients, but to everyone. In 2004 Legacy started applying to become a FQHC with support from Fenway Clinic, who helped them tremendously during the application process.

In 2005, Walgreens was implemented in Legacy's Westheimer location. Also, while becoming a FQHC, the Montrose Clinic merged with The Assistance Fund to help with overhead costs and to help diversify. "It made sense to bring the two organizations together," states Roland. The boards of The Assistance Fund and Montrose Clinic convened and decided that the new name was going to be "Legacy." "We wanted to honor all those people who built this place and left their legacy to us."

In 2006 Legacy opened a satellite clinic in Houston's Fifth Ward, which was offered to them by the city of Houston. "Oftentimes, I get, 'You're not serving the gay community anymore' or 'You've abandoned the gay community.' Considering when we were Montrose Clinic, really the only people who got services were gay men who had HIV. Now we can see people who absolutely have no ability to pay. That's anyone in the community. So actually, we offer more services than we did before."

Personally, Roland is proud that a clinic, which was started in the gay community, can now go out and serve other communities who have healthcare needs. According to Roland, other organizations have approached Legacy to open a clinic in their organization. "It's incredibly meaningful for other organizations that have been around forever—one of them is a hospital system."

"I am so excited for the future, what this agency is going to do," he says. Legacy is determined to provide dental services within the next couple of years, providing small-scale services at first, which will grow over time. In addition, Legacy hopes to take the same comprehensive model that they created and developed for HIV care and apply it to other diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease.

"We've gone through a lot of growth, but we're still there for the community," assures Roland. ■

Joyce Gabiola also writes about Fiona Dawson in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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by Steven Foster
Photos by Dalton DeHart

Idolatry

Get to Know Your Pride Idol Contestants!

Those of you who have been following the Pride Idol competition, you know who's still in the running. But here were the first ten songbirds to make the cut.



Ernesto Rodriguez

Cowboy Mouth

While his first purchased musical choice was Matchbox Twenty, handsome Hispanic Rodriguez is the contest's country crooner. Musical influences track the arena C&W pop of Garth Brooks, George Strait, and fellow Houstonian Clint Black. He's not lacking in confidence, either. His confessed dream is, "Me, on a big stage, backed up by a great band and supported by loads of fans," adding that his vision is "both clear and achievable." Well, he does look pretty nice in a cowboy shirt.



Christopher Plata

Pop Tart

The first album he ever purchased was a Mariah Carey greatest-hits compilation, so you pretty much know where this guy stands or, rather, kneels. Plata swoons about Mimi, "She is THE diva." And just in case you took his pop roots in question, note his other obvious references in his song psyche: Josh Groban, Michael Buble, and national Idols David Archuleta and Carrie Underwood. You can tell this guy was raised on this stuff.



Ben Montes

Kid Bop

Seriously, Montes looks like he's about 12. But don't let that fool you about the kid's vocal styling. Sure, his first CD might have been *Heavenly Place* by Jaci Velasquez, but his latest influence? Ella Fitzgerald. Says Montes: "She really used her voice as an instrument, and it was chock-full of emotion. When I listen to her sing anything, it really, really inspires me as a vocalist." Who says the kids of today don't respect their (musical) parents?



Hoja Lopez

The Wild Card

Though she might have once had a pension for Spice Girls, this bubbly alt-chick made up for that questionable choice by immersing herself in decidedly more edgy musical territory. Lopez digs Radiohead, the Smiths, Massive Attack, Björk, Amy Winehouse, and bands even Kurt Loder never heard of. The Idol winner gets a plane ticket. Where's Lopez going? NYC. Why? "I hear they have dirty snow, pickpockets, and Tracy Morgan," she admitted on the Idol Myspace page.



Racquel Refuerzo

The Chanteuse

This multicultural—and openly lesbian—beauty is another one of the Idol wannabes who enjoys a diverse playlist of musical influences. The earlier Disney-fied Refuerzo (she was raised on the *Lion King*, *Beauty & The Beast*, and *Little Mermaid* musicals), complemented her showtune stylings with the likes of alt-fave KT Tunstall, Sara Bareilles, and even a little Billie Holiday thrown in for good measure. That's a nice playlist for any human jukebox.



JeanNicole Rivers

Hallelujah

Chorus Girl

Rivers is beautiful, no doubt about that. And since she was raised in the church, she's been touched by an angel in the vocal department. She gives her Creator props for her gift, and claims that singing is, for her, "the deepest form of meditation." That's a very Grammy-winning speech and all, but it's her penchant for Ella Fitzgerald that gives her the big band balladeering that these competitions are made of.



Linda Lambert

Classic Rocker

She may not be the teenybopper of the group, and her musical influences are definitely not the pop ear candy of Lady Gaga or Britney which, actually, is pretty refreshing. No, Lambert's been raised on a steady diet of Linda Rondstadt, Ann Wilson, Stevie Nicks, and Sheryl Crow. Born in New York, this rock-n-roll belter should make the crowd flick their lighters in salute.



AJ Cabrera

The Mainstreamer

Cabrera was big for Britney's first LP. So much so he learned all the dance routines from the videos and performed them with his sister. So we know what crowd this guy's playing to. In case there was any doubt, Cabrera (like fellow pop worshipper Plata) confesses a dying devotion to all things Underwood.



Anthony Magee

The Crooner

Dark and handsome, Magee is bringing the cool to the competition. While his favorite artist and influence is the Purple One himself, Magee's musical mojo is juiced more by the likes of Earth Wind and Fire, Marvin Gaye, and Patti LaBelle than Prince. His church background gives him the raise-the-roof pipes needed for the sing-off, but if Magee works those come-hither bedroom eyes, the crowd will be his. ■

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Walgreens Health & Wellness Pavilion

Pride Houston is teaming up with Walgreens to present the GLBT Health and Wellness Pavilion at the Pride Festival on June 27, 2009, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., located on Yoakum Street, just south of Westheimer.

Admission to the festival is free, and the pavilion is planned to be the largest health event in Houston for the LGBT community, offering personal consultations, an open forum discussing many issues facing the community today, health screenings, and other health-related topics such as nutritional and mental health. In partnership with Legacy Community Health Services, participants get information on funding for preventative care, and can schedule appointments for more in-depth attention.

Other healthcare providers exhibiting in the Walgreens Health & Wellness Pavilion are the Montrose Counseling Center, the City of Houston Department of Health, and the Houston Buyer's Club.

**Stonewall Law Association
Legal Advice Tent**

In partnership with the Stonewall Law Association of Greater Houston, Pride Houston features the Stonewall Law Association Legal Advice Tent during the GLBT Festival on June 27, 2009, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., located just south of Westheimer on Yoakum Street.

Admission is free, and this tent is intended to give legal advice to members of the LGBT community featuring private, one-on-one consultations with top attorneys and judges from the Greater Houston area on specific topics, including probate law, rights in the workforce, and family law.

Festival Facts

The following list includes a quick answer to the most common questions people have regarding the Pride Festival.

- Admission is FREE, courtesy of our generous sponsors (sponsors page on 101).
- Easy access parking available throughout nearby neighborhood streets. Please avoid parking in private lots, such as the Hollywood Video and Radio Shack parking lots, as your vehicle may be towed.

- ATMs available onsite.
- Bicycle racks available at entrance located at Westheimer and Commonwealth.
- Music schedules available at participating bars, the Pride office, or at information booths throughout the festival.
- Festival food and beverage exhibitors accept cash only.
- Lost Children and the Festival Lost and Found is located along Mt. Vernon, next to Copy.com.

Festival Date & Hours

The 2009 Houston Pride Festival will be held on Saturday, June 27, 2009. Festivities begin at 11 a.m. and end at 7 p.m. in preparation for the night parade.

Location & Directions

The Pride Houston Festival is located in the Montrose neighborhood south of Westheimer along the streets of Commonwealth and Yoakum.

Directions:

From: Northeast: Highway 59 South. Take the exit onto Interstate 10 West. Take the left lane exit onto Interstate 45 South. Take the left lane exit onto Allen Parkway. Take the Waugh exit, turning left onto Waugh. Waugh becomes Commonwealth. Continue on Commonwealth until you reach Westheimer.

From North/Northwest: Interstate 45 South. Take the left lane exit onto Allen Parkway. Take the Waugh exit, turning left onto Waugh. Waugh becomes Commonwealth. Continue on Commonwealth until you reach Westheimer.

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From Southwest: Highway 59 North. Take the left lane exit TX 527 Spur. Turn left onto Elgin. Elgin becomes Westheimer. From West: Interstate 10 East. Take the Studemont exit. Turn right onto Studemont. Studemont becomes Montrose Blvd. Take Montrose Blvd. to Westheimer.

From East: Interstate 10 West. Take the Heights Blvd./Yale St. exit. Turn left at Heights Blvd. Heights Blvd. becomes Waugh. Waugh becomes Commonwealth. Continue on Commonwealth to Westheimer.

Street Closures

The following streets are closed from Friday, June 26, at 7 p.m., until Sunday, June 28, at 3 a.m. Yoakum Blvd., between Westheimer and Hawthorne Lovett Blvd.,

continued on next page

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About the Pride Festival

continued from previous page

between Graustark and Montrose; Commonwealth Blvd., between Westheimer and Lovett; Mt. Vernon, between Westheimer and Lovett; California between Waughcrest and Commonwealth.

Entertainment

Pride Houston is honored to spotlight LGBT and straight supporting performers for the 2009 Pride Festival. We are celebrating diversity in music and feature hundreds of local, regional, and national performers in genres including everything from alternative, country, R&B, and reggae to blues, zydeco, rock, pop, Latin, and others. Past performers included Neimisis, Josh Duffy, Kimberly Caldwell, and Taylor Dayne.

The schedule and selection of performers will be presented at a later date as the Festival draws closer.

The 2009 festivities provide exciting and affordable entertainment for all ages and musical tastes, plus a variety of food and market space.

The festival grounds are divided into cultural areas with a variety of events happening in each area:

Family Retreat: The Family Retreat is the only alcohol-free space, and is situated along the parade route and reaching into the festival. LGBT family oriented exhibitors and family friendly music from local musicians. Food and beverage stands provided.

Festival Latino: Festival Latino, located in the heart of the festival, features performances by local Latin music talent and promotes LGBT Latin exhibitors. Latin rock, salsa, pop, and traditional music are just a few of the diverse sounds featured on the Latin Stage. Traditional Latin cuisine is showcased to satisfy any appetite.

Gender Block: Aimed at serving the transgender community of Houston, the Gender Block displays prominent information on transgender issues. In addition, this section features transgender friendly and sponsored exhibitors, as well as performances by those of the community on the Transgender Stage.

Community Street: Everyone is welcome on Community Street. Home of the Main Stage and Houston's most LGBT supportive exhibitors, Community Street houses the Oasis, an expansive food court, crafts, and more.

Kids' Zone: The Kids' Zone allows kids to be kids, featuring a giant rock wall, inflatable bouncers, face painting, food and beverages geared toward children of all ages. Special activities, games, balloons, and fun!

artSpace: LGBT and supportive artists display their works of art to the commu-

nity at the LGBT artSpace. Exhibitors showcase handmade crafts, artwork, and sculptures.

Rules & Guidelines

In the interest of public safety, please refrain from bringing the following items into the festival grounds:

- Alcohol and other beverages
- Food
- Coolers
- In-line skates
- Laser pointers
- Radios
- Skateboards
- Fireworks
- Weapons
- Audio recording devices for recording of any live performance
- Professional camera equipment
- Video recording equipment
- Pets (we love animals, but please respect the general public in keeping the festival animal free)

Transportation

Pride recommends taking Metro to get to and from the festival. Bus stops are conveniently located along Westheimer for quick access. Please call 713/635-4000 or visit Ridemetro.org for information on routes, schedules, and all of Metro services.

PARADE VIEWING TIPS AND ADVICE

1. Make sure you arrive early, especially if you want a good view of the parade. The crowd starts to form as early as 10 a.m., and becomes more crowded as parade time nears. Visit the Pride Festival throughout the day for snacks and beverages.

2. Pride Houston advises people to leave folding chairs at home. They become cumbersome when the crowds start filling up the sidewalk.

3. We all love animals, but it's always a good idea to leave these loved ones at home.

4. Children love beads (well, some grown-ups do, too), so please be cautious of children throughout the day as exhibitors pass these out. When parade time comes, make sure they stay off the street and away from floats. Try the Family Retreat area, it's great for kids (and free from all alcohol).

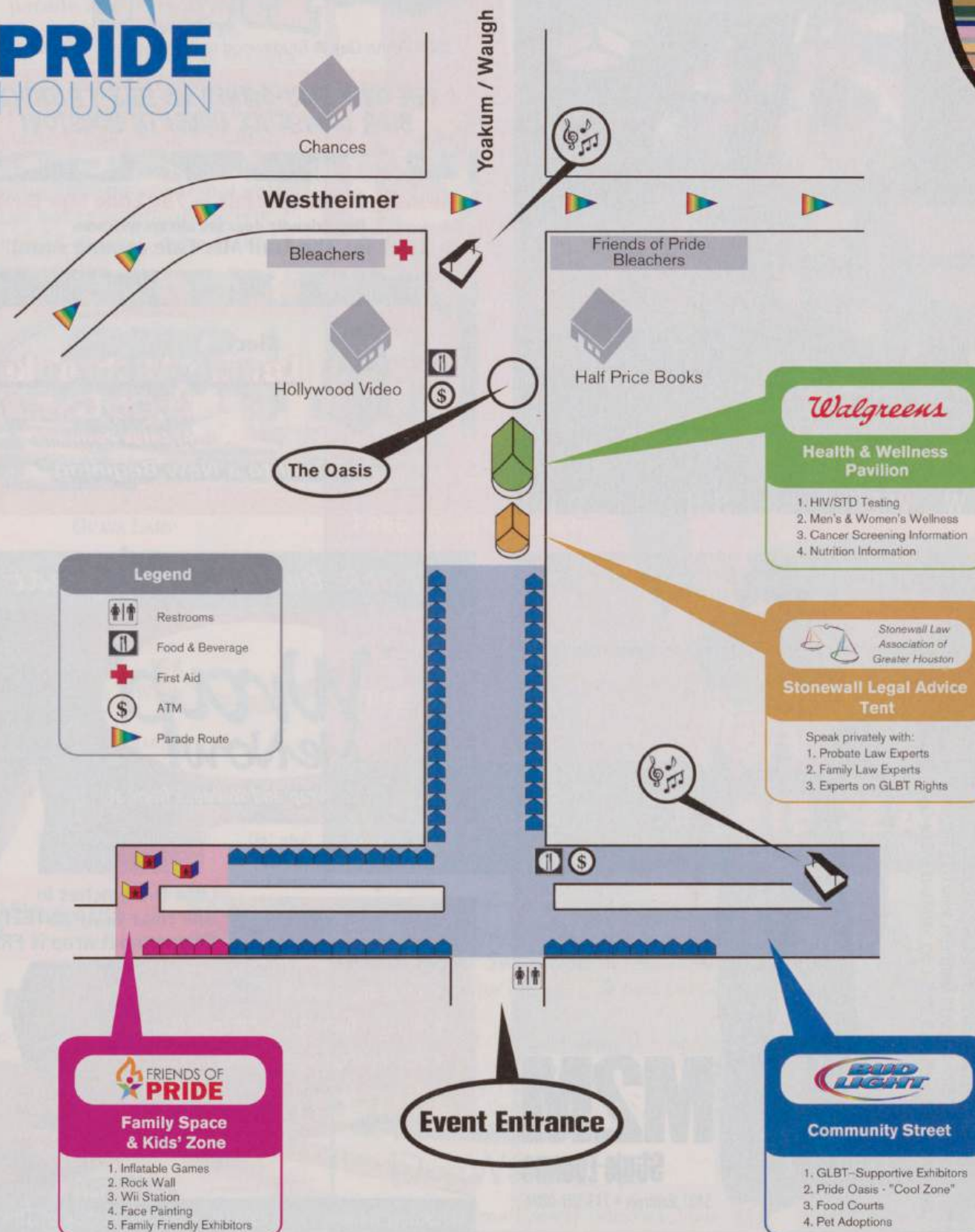
5. Don't forget to dress for the warm weather, and wear plenty of sunscreen. It can become pretty warm after a couple of hours outside in June (okay, after a couple of seconds).

6. June in Houston means two things: heat and rain. The Pride Oasis, as well as food vendors serving beverages, will keep you cool and hydrated. Don't forget to bring an umbrella. ■



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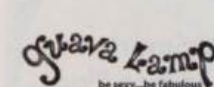
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Tonys' Pick of the Glitter

Every June, local fans give gay regards to Broadway

by Donalevan Maines



It's a gay thing: Neil Patrick Harris hosts the 2009 Tony Awards.

Ilive for the Tonys!" admits Theatre New West director Joe Watts.

"They're the gay Super Bowl!" exclaims New York native James Knapp, leader of the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston.

"I do watch them," says popular local actor Joel Sandel, "but like most theater professionals, I don't put a lot of stock in them."

"Them" is the annual Tony Awards telecast, Broadway's biggest night, which CBS broadcasts 7-10 p.m. on Sunday, June 7. Even if Tony voters choose with their eyes on the box office, the show itself is usually a humdinger. Best of all are production numbers from the best-musical nominees.

Sandel sighs, "I vividly remember Hugh Jackman performing a number from his show *The Boy from Oz*. It was insane. The power! He owned that character. He really made your jaw drop and made you say, 'I would love to see that show!'"

Jackman won two television Emmy Awards for hosting the Tony Awards, but this year the honors go to gay heartthrob Neil Patrick Harris.

"I think he'll be great," says Sandel. "He can sing, he has great personality, and he's done a lot of stage work."

Houston Chronicle theater critic Everett Evans agrees, describing Harris as "a fresh choice."

"I hope he does well. I saw him in the fantastic *Assassins* revival [on Broadway] and he was excellent," says Evans. "Anyone who can carry off Sondheim has the cred to host the Tonys."

Evans explains that for many years after he started working on the arts staff at the Chronicle, its Tony coverage was in the form of articles from the *New York Times* and Associated Press wires. However, in the 1980s, he began writing related features.

The '80s also kicked off some of the most memorable moments for gay Tony fans.

"My favorite gay moments, I guess,

the box of Kleenex!"

On that same evening, Fort Worth's Betty Buckley won best featured actress in a musical for *Cats* and performed the haunting "Memory."

In 1984, Fierstein repeated, this time as writer of the book for the best musical, *La Cage aux Folles*, which won over *Sunday in the Park with George*. Chita Rivera won her first Tony, for *The Rink*, co-starring Liza Minnelli. And in the Chronicle, Evans plugged the Tony-nominated scores with reviews of the cast albums for *La Cage*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *The Rink*, and *Baby*.

The next year, *As Is*, the first major drama about AIDS, was nominated for best play.

In 1986, Lily Tomlin triumphed as best actress in a play for *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*. Her win—even her nomination—served to validate that the one-woman show which her partner, Jane Wagner, structured as a two-

act play was, indeed, a play.

David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* won best play in 1988, and its "leading lady," B.D. Wong in his Broadway debut as Song Liling, was crowned as best featured actor in a play over Delroy Lindo in *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, which managed three nominations in the featured-actress category. Derek Jacobi was a best-actor nominee as Alan Turing, the famous gay British mathematician/security risk during World War II. The best musical of the year was *Phantom of the Opera*, which inspired a last hurrah for pageant legends Richard Guy and Rex Holt, who ended their reign as producers of the Miss Texas-USA pageant with the most elaborate evening gown competition of all time: contestants riding on gondolas, accompanied by haunting organ music and masked oarsmen.

In 1989, Wendy Wasserstein's *The* →

were years when excellent gay-themed shows with broad appeal for all audiences won as best play or best musical," Evans says. "And when winning playwrights such as Harvey Fierstein, Terrence McNally, Tony Kushner, etc., made their acceptance speeches and acknowledged their partners in the process."

"And in the world of theater, no one was shocked or upset about it, which is another one of the great things about the theater!"

Watts says he still feels chills when he recalls the 1983 Tony telecast, when producer John Glines accepted a Tony for producing the year's best play, *Torch Song Trilogy*, starring best-actor-in-a-play Fierstein as a Jewish drag queen. "I had seen *Torch Song Trilogy* on Broadway with my ex-Jewish boyfriend. John Glines had lived on my same street in Montrose. I had done a play by John Glines at Kindred Spirits. So connection, connection, connection. When John Glines thanked his lover—pass

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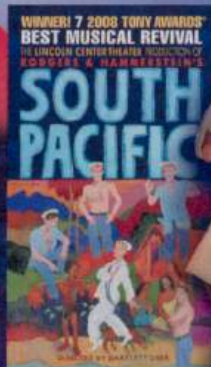
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Tony's Pick of the Glitter

continued from previous page

Heidi Chronicles won best play.

Have I mentioned Tommy Tune? In 1990, the Lamar High School graduate won best director and best choreographer for *Grand Hotel*, which also won best featured actor in a musical for Michael Jeter, but lost best musical to *City of Angels*. Robert Morse won best actor as fey author Truman Capote in the one-man show *Tru*.

From New York, Evans reported on *Miss Saigon* in the buildup to the 1991 Tony Awards. But back in Houston, *Chronicle* gossip columnist Maxine Mesinger crowed, "How about our hometown boy, Tommy Tune? His *Will Rogers Follies* garnered six Tony awards, two of them for Tommy's direction and choreography. The Tony for best musical surprised a lot of people, including, I'm sure, *New York Times* critic Frank Rich, who panned the show. Most thought *Miss Saigon* would get the best-musical Tony."

The *Chronicle's* TV columnist, Ann Hodges, informed readers, "Many performers on the Tony telecast Sunday wore red ribbons on their costumes as a tribute to AIDS victims in the industry. Joseph Cates, the producer of the CBS telecast, had explained this to the audience in the Minskoff Theater before the broadcast began, but it never was clarified to viewers at home."

Evans revealed to readers that *Falsettos*, 1992's winner of best book of a musical and best score, was about "a husband who

leaves his wife and son for a male lover."

Then came 1993, a watershed season for what Evans termed the "second generation of AIDS plays." Evans predicted all of the winners in his "pick of the glitter" report from New York on how gay talent and themes were "playing a more prominent role in the American theater than ever before."

In the must-read essay published in *Zest* magazine on June 6, 1993, Evans added, "The best new musical on Broadway (*Kiss of the Spider Woman*), the best new play on Broadway (*Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*) and the best new play off-Broadway (Paul Rudnick's *Jeffrey*) all deal sympathetically with gay protagonists and issues. More important, each work discovers the universal appeal in its subject. While tackling difficult themes, each offers exciting and entertaining theater for playgoers of all persuasions."

Evans also advised readers who couldn't see *Angels in America* on Broadway that the script was available in paperback at Lobo, a gay boutique and adult bookstore in Montrose.

In 1995, Terrence McNally, who grew up gay in Corpus Christi, won best play for *Love! Valour! Compassion!* as a prelude to taking the best-play Tony for *Master Class* in 1996, when *Rent* won best musical, and the Alley Theatre picked up the special regional theater award. Host Nathan Lane appeared dressed in a glamorous gown from the musical *Victor, Victoria*, starring Julie Andrews as a woman playing a man playing a woman. →

'Billy,' Lansbury Houston Faves

Joe Watts: With *The New York Times'* Arts & Leisure section as his entertainment "bible" (delivered daily to his Montrose apartment), Watts predicts a veritable sweep by Elton John's Billy Elliot on the musical front. "Next to *Normal* will get something," he forecasts, but Dolly Parton's *9 to 5* will go home empty-handed.

James Knapp: The first Broadway musical that Knapp saw was a performance by the original cast of *A Chorus Line*. He played Horace Vandergelder in his high school's production of *Hello, Dolly!* while the show was still running on Broadway. Although he skipped *Billy Elliot* during his annual sojourn to Broadway because it was experiencing technical problems in previews, he expects it will win the lion's share of this year's Tonys. His favorite show from last season? The Latin-flavored *In the Heights*, which won best musical.

Joel Sandel: Every morning Joel Sandel checks nytimes.com for updates on the theater scene in the Big Apple. He's also discovered that one can usually predict the winners based on the amount of applause they get when nominations are announced before a group of New Yorkers who are in-the-know. Accordingly, he says to bet the farm on Angela Lansbury, "a slam dunk," he says, as best featured actress in a play for a revival of Noël Coward's *Blithe Spirit*. (Playing the same role in the 1987 revival of *Blithe Spirit*, Geraldine Page was nominated as lead actress, but lost to Linda Lavin in *Broadway Bound*.)

Nancy Ford: *OutSmart's* senior editor notes, "Lesbians love show tunes almost as much as gay men, but watching the Tony Awards probably isn't as much of an event in our women's community as, say, watching the Super Bowl." She adds, "Now, when Rosie O'Donnell hosts, that may be another matter." ■

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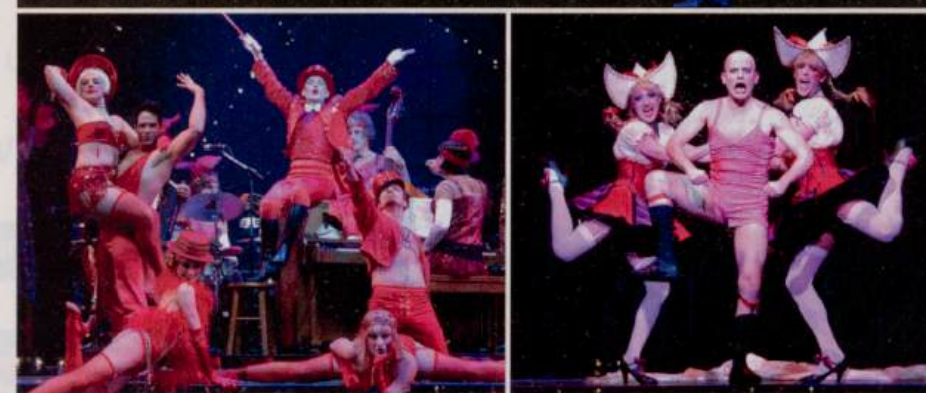


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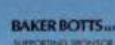


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Tony's Pick of the Glitter

continued from
page 107

For several years around the turn of the century, the first 10 Tony Awards were shunted to an hour-long special on PBS, which nevertheless treated theater buffs to terrific backstage features on some nominees. In 2001, the year that *The Producers* set a record with 12 Tony wins, local PBS affiliate Channel 8 ticked off Houston-area theater fans by pre-empting the pre-show with a travelogue!

A few years later, however, Evans helped put a quietus on what surely would have enraged viewers. He discovered that Channel 8 was not planning to air a "Live from Lincoln Center" program of the musical *The Light in the Piazza*, a tale of young love in Old Europe, that won six Tony awards in 2005.

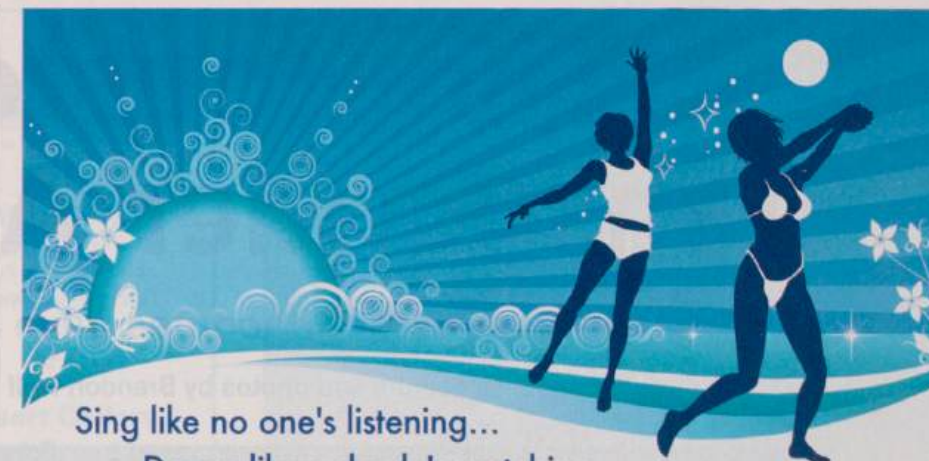
"I wrote an e-mail to one of the Channel 8 programming people noting how disturbing it was that they would bypass the opportunity to air such a magnificent production," says Evans. "And they changed their minds and aired it. So there are times one can have an influence for good!"

Channel 8 also obliged by airing the acclaimed production of *Company*, which won best revival of a musical in 2007. That same night, *Grey Gardens* won best actress in a musical for Christine Ebersole and best featured actress in a musical for Mary-Louise Wilson in roles being played by Nancy Johnston and Susan O. Koozin, respectively, in the show's current production at Stages Repertory Theatre in Houston.

Last year's show, featuring the theme "There's a Little Bit of Broadway in Everybody," was hosted by Whoopi Goldberg. Major prizes went to *August: Osage County*, *In the Heights*, *Boeing-Boeing*, and *South Pacific*.

This year, Evans plans to watch the Tony telecast from his desk at the *Chronicle*, as he did last year, when Houston's theater scene was also a higher priority than Broadway. That meant, among other things, he was busy interviewing Judy Kaye, who won best featured actress in a musical as tempestuous diva Carlotta in *Phantom of the Opera* in 1988. Kaye was appearing as Mrs. Lovett in a tour of *Sweeney Todd* at Hobby Center, in a performance that Evans found to be "smashing—a magnificent performance."

Donalevan Maines also writes about theater critic Everett Evans and James Knapp, 2009 male grand marshal, in this issue of OutSmart magazine. Maines is master of ceremonies for this month's Reader's Theater at George Memorial Library in Richmond. The performance at 7 p.m. on June 7 will feature readings of excerpts from Horton Foote's *Dividing the Estate*, a nominee for this year's best play Tony Award, and last year's winner, *August: Osage County*.



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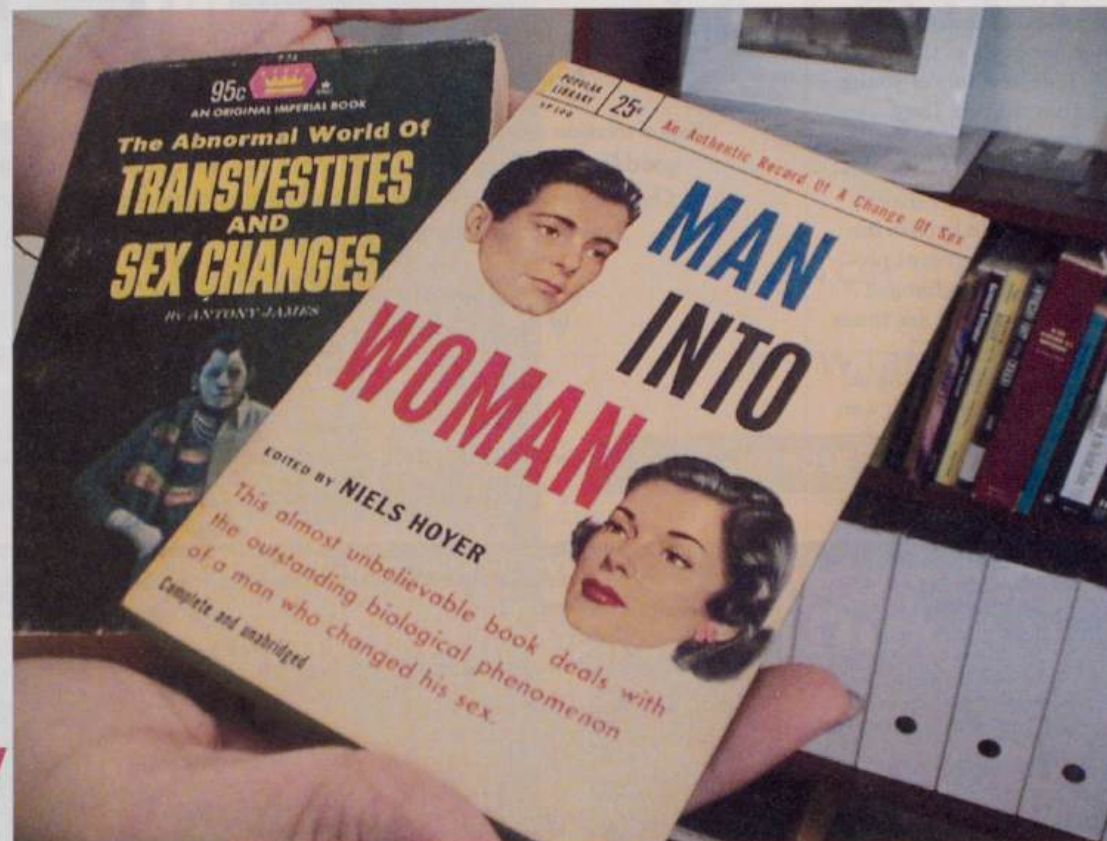
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The Houston Transgender Archive

Transgender history becomes alive and personal

Feature and photos by Brandon Wolf



Back to normal: visitors to the Houston Transgender Archive can thumb through two of the many books in the archive's collection.

Visitors can pick up 150-year-old newspapers, thumb through rare books, and hold priceless memorabilia in their hands.

"We have a hands-on policy here at the new Houston Transgender Archive," says docent Christian Williams. "We want people who are transgenders to be able to walk into a place that's about them and be able to immediately connect with thousands of years of rich history. We have focused on people who violated cultural norms, stepped outside the box, and dared to create something new."

"The point in history that we are at today is because of those who challenged the notions of gender," states Williams. "We're not just interested in transsexual history. Our goal is to tell the story of

gender in our society and the conflict that gender can inspire for people who exhibit atypical gender expression."

Because transgenders have lived without a sense of history as a people for so long, the Houston Transgender Archive actively searches out and acquires transgender historical items. A History Committee continues to establish contacts with rare book and document dealers, antique dealers, eBay and other online auctions, and specialty stores throughout the world. "We've told them to contact us if they acquire something they think is even remotely of interest to us," Williams explains.

Currently, the archive holdings include transgender statues from diverse cultures such as China, Africa, and

Europe; transgender magazines back to 1750; original newspapers reporting transgender history back to 1825; rare transgender books back to the 1600s; original transgender photos back to the pre-Civil War era; and other transgender artifacts back as far as the Roman Empire.

No other collection of transgender history similar to the Houston Transgender Archive is known to exist anywhere. Sponsored by the Transgender Foundation of America, this archive creates an educational experience that is absolutely unique. The collection offers students, community members, and supporters an up-close-and-personal opportunity to access centuries of information about the transgender community. →

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The Houston Transgender Archive

continued from page 110

18 Random Things You Probably Never Knew About Transgenders

When Williams talked with *OutSmart* about the Houston Transgender Archive and gave us a tour of the impressive collection, she pointed out numerous exhibits of interest and explained the exciting and little known history behind them.

• **Emperor Elagabalus.** A large picture of a Roman coin shows the Roman Emperor Elagabalus, also known as Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. He ruled from 218–222 A.D. and often dressed in female attire. He offered a reward to anyone who could perform surgery to change him into a woman. He died a transgender martyr at the age of 18, when he and his mother were beheaded. Their bodies were dragged through the streets and then thrown into a river.

• **Mary Walker.** A wall display honors Mary Walker, a Civil War soldier and surgeon. There are first-day-of-issue postage stamps honoring Walker, photos of her dressed as a male, and a letter written to her. She received the Presidential Medal of Honor and other distinctions, but they were all reversed after she was arrested and imprisoned several times for cross dressing. She refused to send back the medal. President Jimmy Carter reinstated her Medal of Honor; now she is commemorated by a postage stamp, and an aircraft carrier bears her name.

• **Quan Yin.** High on a display case rests the head of a statue of the Hindu/Buddhist male saint, Avalokite vara, who was associated with justice and wrath. Over time, he became more associated with compassion and was feminized. He transitioned into a female saint named Quan Yin. The statue from which the head was taken is several hundred years old and is from India. It is from a period halfway through the male-to-female transition.

• **Bacchus.** A tiny statue of Bacchus rests on a shelf. Bacchus is often represented as a burly bearded man, but in Roman mythology it's very much an androgynous figure. In this version of Bacchus, the statuette is clearly female. She dances, beating cymbals decked with ribbons.

• **Gay Marriage.** An 1842 newspaper is pulled from a stack. It contains a story about two Millerite (Seventh-Day Adventist) women who entered into what they called domestic partnership. They took each other for better or for worse. They explained how they were in love and discussed their dowries. They planned to



Houston Transgender Archive docent Christan Williams shows the boots of Sandy O'Daniel, "the spiritual father of Houston's FTM [female to male] community."



Civil War hero Mary Walker was asked to return her Medal of Honor but refused. Decades later an aircraft carrier was named after her.



A rare book chronicles Hannah Snell, a transgender Revolutionary War hero.



L-r: a feminine Bacchus, transgender Roman emperor Elagabalus, Christine Jorgensen with the man she had hoped to marry.

continue to live with each other.

• **Civil War-Era Newspaper.** Newspapers from the Civil War period are removed from the stack. Several articles discuss women who enlisted and served as soldiers. The stories relate their battlefield experiences and the effects on their lives after their gender became known.

• **Nazi Book Burnings.** On the walls are framed front pages of *The New York Times* with particular articles emphasized. The stories are about the sacking of Dr. Magnus Hirschfield's gender-studies clinic by the Nazis. They stripped the clinic and burned his scholarly books. They seized client rosters of Hirschfield's transsexual patients, arrested them, and sent them to death camps.

• **Pre-Stonewall Riot.** In a display case are two ashtrays from Gene Compton's Cafeteria, where the first queer uprising took place in 1966. Policemen in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco regularly arrested cross dressers, who were hauled to jail to be raped or forced to sexually service an officer in the cafeteria bathroom. One night, policemen came into the cafeteria to make arrests, but the cross dressers threw coffee, ashtrays, chairs, and anything else they could find at the officers. The riot lasted for 24 hours, and the cafeteria was nearly destroyed. Today a historical plaque marks the site.

• **Christine Jorgensen.** Several items of memorabilia celebrate Christine Jorgensen, the first American transsexual to use mass media to create a national conversation about gender and sexuality. On one wall is a framed newspaper advertisement for Jorgensen's nightclub act at the Latin Quarter. On another wall is a framed Sunday newspaper supplement in which she tells her story to American readers. The supplement is accompanied by a personal letter from Jorgensen in which she expresses her appreciation: "I am glad to be able to share my story, because I now understand that thousands of other people suffer from the same problem I do. I want to reach out to them and let them know there is someone else, and that someone else was able to do something about it." There are also several autographed pictures of Jorgensen, the proofs from Jorgensen newspaper articles, and copies of the vinyl record album, *Christine Jorgensen Reveals*. One picture of Jorgensen shows her with the man she hoped to marry, but they were denied a marriage license.

• **Transgenders in the Media.** Vertical filing boxes contain photographs, media articles, newsletters, and medical digests. Law reports describe transgender legal →



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From the Source

"Houston is very fortunate to have its own Transgender Archive and Transgender Community Center. Although there has been an active transgender community for almost 30 years, the preservation of what went before can encourage and help those who are just now (and in the future) coming to grips with their gender identity."

—**Jackie Thorne**, Houston transgender since 1965, activist since 1982

"The transgender community has a bad habit of trying to ignore or bury our own history. We tend to overwrite it with our own current activities and avoid looking back—whether for shame or for other reasons. Having archives to our past exposes everything, good and bad. Best of all it allows us our roots and gives us history, gives us a standard to see what we were and measure progress from it, and also gives transgender people a sense of permanence and legitimacy. . . ."

—**Vanessa Edwards Foster**, president & co-founder of the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition, and local activist since 1996

"The Transgender Archive is an amazing resource. It's rare to have so much unique material available to the public on a regular schedule. Also, the presence of such an archive here in Houston says a lot about the crucial role our local communities have played on the national and international levels of transgender activism and awareness, a role that is too often overlooked."

—**Dr. Brian Riedel**, instructor, "Introduction to LGBT Studies," Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, Rice University

"Houston's Transgender Archive is like no other in the entire world. . . . Whenever well-known transgender community members travel to Houston to see the Transgender Center, they are always impressed by the collection of books, magazines, pictures, pamphlets, etc., that the archive has compiled. I am proud to be part of a community that is making a huge effort to preserve its history and remember where we came from."

—**Stacey "Colt" Meier**, coordinator of Houston's STAG (Some Transgenders Are Guys), member of the Houston Transgender Unity Committee, and FTM transgender activist since 2006

"The Transgender Center is an idea whose time has come. I am proud to be able to call the Houston transgender community 'my community.' I am glad a most-needed Transgender Center is open and functioning with a 'full house.' . . ."

—**Brandi Williams**, charter member of the Houston Transgender Unity Committee (HTUC) in 1999, and transgender activist since 1995

The Houston Transgender Archive

continued from previous page

issues, such as name and sex marker changes. Publications from Galveston's gender-treatment clinic explain to families how to deal with gender variant behavior. A medical journal from France discusses gender and chromosomes. A magazine from 1750 profiles Hannah Snell, a female-to-male transgender.

• **Freak Shows.** A decades-old handbill, advertising a traveling freak show, hangs on a wall. It features a half man/half woman described in Jerry Springer-style sexualized and sensationalized language.

• **Rare Books.** A collection of rare books includes an original Magnus Hirschfeld book that somehow survived the Nazi destruction. Another book is autographed by the first transgender politician in Japan, who heard about the Houston collection and donated it. An original copy of Dr. Harry Benjamin's *The Transsexual Phenomenon* rests on a shelf.

• **Queen Christina.** A 100-year-old, stylized print of Sweden's Queen Christina hangs on a wall, displayed with a coin bearing her likeness. In the print, Christina is shown being presented to the pope, asking for permission to live in Rome. When the request was granted, Christina abdicated her throne in order to live openly as a man in the Italian city.

• **Deborah Sampson.** An 1827 regional newspaper article is framed and mounted on a wall. It features an article about Deborah Sampson, a female who dressed as a male, fought battles, and became a hero. Because she was not a biological male, she was denied a military pension.

• **Renée Richards.** An autographed picture of transsexual tennis player Renée Richards is also mounted and framed. Richards often was subjected to the ire of other female competitors, who complained that playing against Richards was tantamount to playing against a male.

• **Sandy O'Daniel.** A pair of boots worn by Sandy O'Daniel honors "the spiritual father of Houston female-to-male transsexuals."

• **Coccinelle.** Upstairs at the center, a huge mounted movie poster advertises a 1962 Italian film, *I, Don Giovanni della Costa Azzura*. The cast includes European male-to-female transsexual Coccinelle. The actress was the first transsexual in Europe to successfully gain a marriage license. She also founded several social service organizations for transgenders.

• **Myra Breckenridge.** Another mounted movie poster advertises the controversial 1970 film *Myra Breckenridge*. It is ac-



An 1846 newspaper contains an article about transgenders of the times.



Two ashtrays from Gene Compton's Cafeteria are on display. Compton's was the site of a 24-hour uprising by transgenders in 1966, three years before the Stonewall riot.

companied by autographs from the book's author, Gore Vidal, and the film's screenwriter, Rex Reed. A publicity photo groups together the stars—John Huston, Raquel Welch, Mae West, and Rex Reed.

A Houston Transgender Pioneer

Josephine Tittsworth has been involved in local transgender organizing for nearly three decades. She has witnessed transgender history first-hand and helped to create it. Tittsworth recalls: "The history of the transgender community in Houston is rich and full of diversity. In 1981, I collaborated with Melanie Rudd and Peggy Rudd to organize the first Tri-Ess support group in Houston [Tri-Delta Chapter] for heterosexual cross dressers. Later it split into the Gulf Coast Transgender Club [GCTC] and Tau Chi [the Tri-Ess group]. TATS [Texas Association for Transsexual Support] formed after GCTC."

"Peggy Rudd and Rene Fenner founded the Houston Transgender Unity Banquet back when the groups were arguing and competing for members. I served a total of five years as the co-chair of the Houston Transgender Unity Committee. We took the banquet from the small banquet hall to the large ballroom and started the concept of corporate sponsorships. Today, the Houston Transgender Unity Banquet is the largest single night event in the world for the transgender community. Houston

is the only metro area in the United States today where all the transgender groups cooperate together yet independently."

The Link Between Misogyny and Queerphobia

Jo Collier, a research assistant at a local library, heads up the History Committee for the Houston Transgender Archive. She reflected on why she has volunteered for this role: "It's important to me that we are collecting information, not simply about transgender individuals, but about people who stepped outside the boundaries of what their culture considered acceptable for their gender. It is important to recognize that a great deal of the trouble that the queer community deals with has its origins in misogyny [hatred of women], which is why LGBT Studies are linked to the Women's Studies programs at academic institutions. This isn't a new idea, linking misogyny and queerphobia, but you would think it was. I remember talking to one man and hearing him say, with a sneer, something about Intro to LGBT Studies being a part of Women's Studies, like it was something beneath him. I didn't say it, because I was sober, but I was thinking—and if I'd had a couple in me I'd have said it—"You're a part of the problem, dude!"

Collier notes that the Archive Committee has begun the cataloging process and has begun work on a collection development policy. The committee is also drafting plans for an online searchable transgender archive. A sampling of the digitized items that will be available in this online archive can currently be viewed at <http://tgctr.org/archive.shtml>. Individuals interested in joining this committee can sign up at the center; Collier invites members of the community to "journey with us."

Visiting the Houston Transgender Archive

The Houston Transgender Archive is small in size, but focused in nature. Its holdings are world class, and their presentation is superb. The archive is housed at the beautiful Transgender Foundation of America Center located at 713 Fargo here in Houston. The center opens on weekdays at 1 p.m. and closes at 4 p.m. To schedule a personalized guided tour with an archive docent, please contact the center at 713/520-8586. Entrance to the center is free of charge, but donations are always appreciated.

Brandon Wolf also writes about Annise Parker and preserving Houston's LGBT history in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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Sex, Lies, Pills

Setting the record straight on living with AIDS

by Brandon Wolf

Yes, it's easy to take HIV medications. You just pop a few pills," says Jereme Scott, a 25-year survivor of AIDS. "But these medications come with huge side effects. It's not a manageable disease—it's a disease to be managed."

"Pick up any gay magazine and look at the drug ads," says Scott. "What kind of people do you see? You see real pretty people surfing, riding bikes, doing all the wonderful things that young people do. But that's a lie. Sure it's a white lie, but it's done on purpose."

Scott is a member of the HIV social group at Bering United Methodist Church. "I have been going there for several years," he says. "I see a lot of

shows the reality of living with AIDS."

Recently Scott talked with *OutSmart* about his dream, joined by his friend David Rogers, another 25-year survivor of AIDS. Together they shared thoughts about producing a documentary which will be titled *Sex, Lies and Pills*.

Why This Film Needs to be Made

"I want kids to see what can result if they don't wear condoms," says Rogers. To transform their dream into a reality, Scott

Physical attractiveness is one of the things that gay men use to pull other people into their lives. **AIDS drugs can waste your body, destroy muscle tone, and leave your face sunken and gaunt.**

young people, 18 to 24, coming in. I get really angry and want to give them a slap up alongside the head, and then give them a hug. These kids are coming into HIV with no knowledge of what it was like in the 1980s, when we saw most of our friends die. So now we are seeing a third generation of people diagnosed with HIV.

"It was out of anger that I decided to do something as a long-term survivor, to create a new and dynamic type of education/prevention tool, a tool which will benefit the young people coming up. I'm 56 years old and on the down stroke. But these kids are on the up stroke, and they need to be making better choices. About two years ago, I began to think about making a documentary which

and Rogers have conducted three focus group meetings with interested individuals. "We invited people we knew who have been infected or affected by HIV," Scott explains.

Sex, Lies and Pills is also the title the focus group selected. "We all know what sex is," says Scott. "We know what lies are, too. In the context of AIDS, there are lies that go in two directions. It can be a drug company that tells white lies by making an AIDS diagnosis appear to be much less serious than it really is. Or it can be a partner who lies to their partner about their HIV status. And it all leads to pills."

"We're not anti-medication," Scott emphasizes. "Drugs have saved our lives, so we can't be anti-medication. But we want to tell the truth about what day-to-day life with pills is really like."

"An AIDS diagnosis is going to break and shatter a kid's dreams. It will steal his beauty," says Rogers. "I care about kids because they can be easily influenced. It's important to talk to them in a manner that they will quickly understand. Physical attractiveness is one of the things that gay men use to pull other people into their lives. AIDS drugs can waste your body, destroy muscle tone, and leave your face sunken and gaunt."

Rogers knows of these effects from first-hand experience. "I once weighed 60 pounds less than I do now, and I'm quite lean as it is. There was a period of time when I looked like an African famine victim. I want kids to see before and after pictures of me."

"AIDS drugs affect one's ability to focus and concentrate," Rogers points out. "It affects how you're able to conjugate verbs and articulate your thoughts. It changes the whole way you live. And there is pain one has to live with. I once had to undergo radiation for tumors in my throat. My mouth looked like red cottage cheese. Every breath I took felt like a stab. I was unable to eat or swallow any food."

Rogers says that although he nearly died several times, he has been spared. "But it's opened up other autoimmune problems. I have really severe osteoporosis and advanced rheumatoid arthritis. I have a neurological disease that's located in my nerve bundles. These conditions will never go away. I can only utilize therapies to make them more manageable. But sometimes I wake up in the morning and literally can't walk because of the arthritis. I have to stay in bed for a couple hours →



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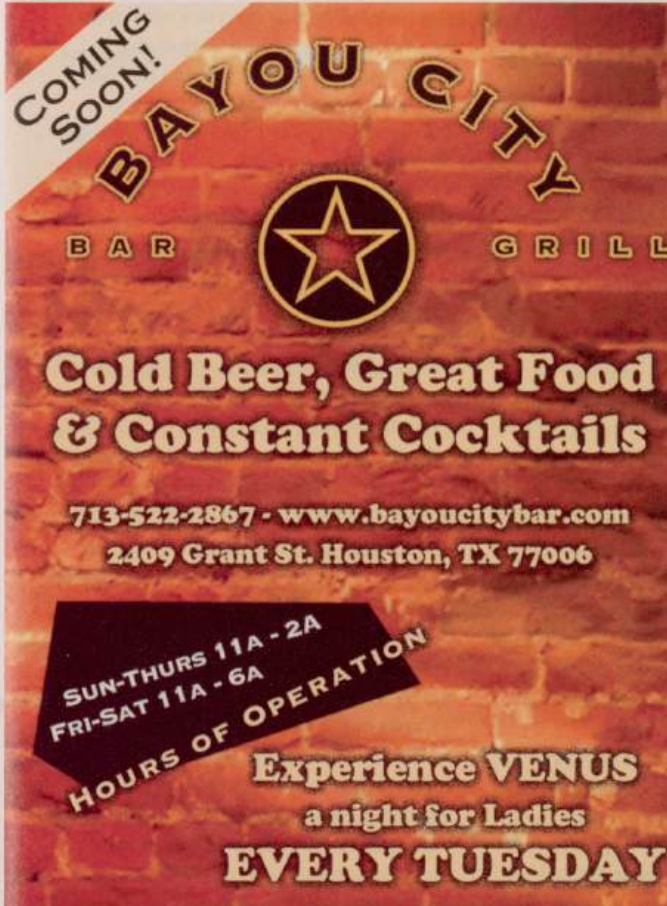
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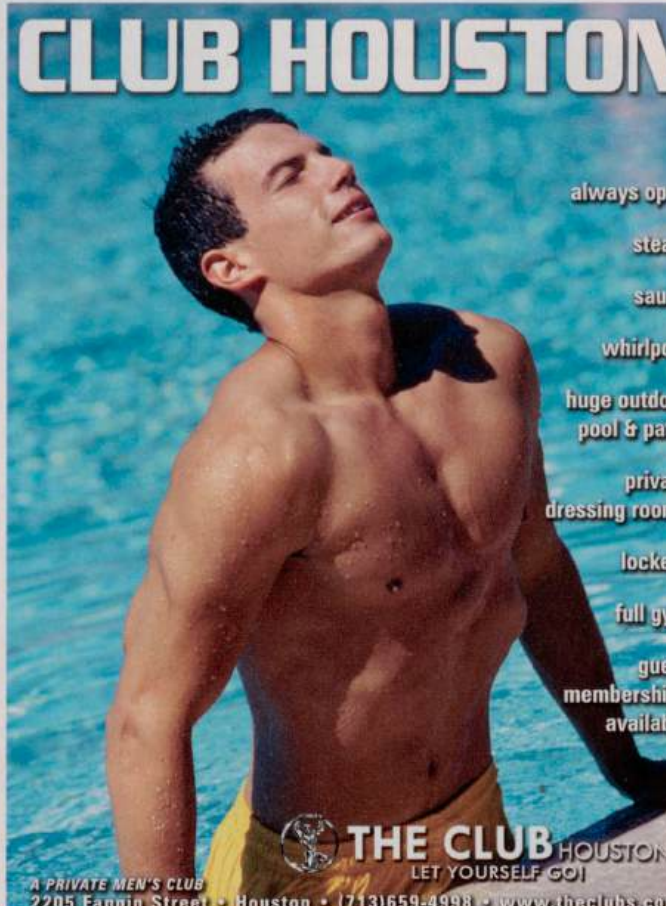
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Sex, Lies, & Pills

continued from page 117

and sleep it off and hope that, when I wake again, I will feel good enough to function.

"Then there is the uncontrollable diarrhea," Rogers continues. "It's not just a matter of slightly soiling my underwear. I might be at a friend's house and end up having to go home to change all my clothes. It's dehumanizing to leave a trail on the floor all the way to the bathroom that someone has to clean up. This isn't manageable, this is horrific. Is it really worth it, to go through all this, just because sex is more pleasurable without a condom?"

The Miracle Man:

David Rogers' Story

David Rogers is my inspiration and always will be," says Jerome Scott. "We have both lived with the psychosocial effects of HIV, but I have not lived with the physical effects of HIV as intensely as he has. He is my hero."

Rogers, 47 years old, was born in Flint, Michigan. His family then moved to Colorado for several years and finally settled in San Diego, California, where he grew up.

"My father is a Baptist pastor," says Rogers. "He always pastored very large churches of several thousand people, so I grew up in a fishbowl. Tim LaHaye, the man who wrote the popular *Left Behind* books that later became movies, was one of my father's friends. My parents met at Bob Jones University, the extremely conservative and fundamentalist Bible college.

"I came out to my parents between the sixth and seventh grades," Rogers remembers. "I thought gay people were evil deviants, and I didn't want to be one of them. My parents immediately jumped in and wanted to help. I dated every girl in school, and thought that when I found the right girl God would change me.

"I went to several different colleges on music scholarships and traveled a lot," Rogers recalls. "I majored in Bible and minored in counseling. I became a youth pastor and worked with several big youth organizations. I was engaged to a girl, but

Scott says the focus groups also felt that a woman's viewpoint was important, because heterosexual men with AIDS sometimes conceal their HIV status from their girlfriends or wives. "The director of the film plans to use three to six people to tell this story," he explains. "Currently we have David Rogers and a woman who has been HIV positive for two years, and a gay male 'papa bear' who has been HIV positive for 20 years. We intend to mix and match to make sure it's a truthful picture. We would like to include members of the black and Hispanic communities. I hope that people reading this article will contact me if they are willing to be a part of the story.

"This film is a mixture of inspiration

and caution," Scott notes. "Anytime a person overcomes great odds, it's inspirational. But we also want people watching this film to be inspired not to end up like us. It's really about just being human."

"The Radical Right has spread a lie that, if we talk to people about condoms, it will encourage them to have sex. But there's no basis for that conclusion. Under the Bush administration we couldn't talk about anything but abstinence. Sure, abstinence is the only true form of safe sex," Rogers says, "but if people are going to have sex, they should understand the importance of using condoms. I grew up in an abstinence-only home, and I never knew anything about condoms."

he says. "At one point I had 16 cancer tumors all over my body. On more than one occasion, my physicians told my partner that I would not live through the night."

It's been a long journey for Rogers' parents too, but they have evolved along with their times. "When I first took my partner to their home to visit, they showed us to our bedrooms. Then one visit, they showed us to our bedroom. That was their way of recognizing our relationship. My mother even admitted that she tried not to fall in love with my partner, but she gave up. Today my father is a voice of moderation among evangelical Christians."

Besides effective medical care, an intense will to live, and a loving partner have seen Rogers through the darkest of days. "My partner is the best thing that's ever happened to me, and he's been taking care of me for a long time," he says. "But my T-cell and viral load counts have changed dramatically, and now I've started to hear him talking about his dreams again. He recently enrolled in school. Finally, it's my turn to be supportive."

Rogers says that living with AIDS has been "a strange sort of blessing. I've learned how to live in a way I never would have, had I been healthy," he says. "I don't think the same way, I don't speak the same way, and I have different priorities. I would never want anyone else to have to go down this path, but for me it's been a very positive thing. I sit out in my garden a lot and think about all the things I am thankful for. I love my life more than anyone else I know."



*A Truer Portrait of AIDS
David Rogers, seen above before and
during his 20-year bout with HIV.*

I finally realized it wasn't going to work."

At that point Rogers moved to Colorado, hoping to make a new start. "I met my current partner, fell in love, and we've been together for over 20 years now," he says. "But no evangelical church was going to hire a gay youth pastor, so I found a job with an airline company. I now had a new life—a partner, new friends, and a new career."

Eventually the airline company closed its hub in Colorado, leaving Rogers without a job. "So we moved to Houston, and I started working as a counselor at Bering Memorial Church. I've now been there 14 years, and they've been wonderful."

Rogers was diagnosed with AIDS in 1989, but believes he was probably infected in 1985. The years since the diagnosis have been difficult ones for Rogers. "I've had six bouts with cancer because of AIDS,"

I DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING...

TO CREATE A NEW AND DYNAMIC TYPE OF
EDUCATION/PREVENTION TOOL, A TOOL WHICH
WILL BENEFIT THE YOUNG PEOPLE COMING UP.

Rogers says that this film will probably be able to reach kids in a way that wasn't possible under the last administration. "Under President Obama, I believe things will change for the better."

Supporters Line Up to Help

After focus groups determined the message of the film, they turned to the issue of money. "We came up with a budget," Scott says, "and then people started donating their talents. These in-kind donations brought the budget down to 35 percent of what we had first estimated. We don't have to pay for a writer or boom boys or a whole number of other essentials. We basically were left with just the production costs."

pledge is received, the funding will probably be sufficient to begin production, parallel with a final appeal to potential donors. He welcomes donations from anyone reading this article, and he can be reached through the film's website at sexliesandpills.com.

The film will be 60 minutes in length. Scott has a friend who teaches a film production class at Houston Community College, who will help with the editing. People from New York to California will assist with such activities as the soundtrack music and the narration.

The film will be targeted to anyone 16 years of age and older who will listen, Scott says. He hopes to interest HBO

Various pledges of financial support then began to come in. One of those pledges came from Houston's Bunnies on the Bayou, which sponsors an annual Easter-afternoon mega-dance fundraiser. Scott says that once the Bunnies'

or LOGO cable channels. "I want to take it on the road if we can find a sponsor for a bus tour. I want to take it on Oprah Winfrey's show. If we are able to win awards and people talk about it and want to screen it, I'd like to provide it to them free. They would just have to pay the cost of shipping the DVD."

As Scott reflects on his role as a long-term AIDS survivor, he says, "I thought I'd be dead at 41 like Elvis Presley, and now I realize I will probably have to deal with retirement issues at age 65. Before the first focus group met, I realized God was telling me that producing this film is why I'm still here, and I needed to get this done."

Brandon Wolf also writes about Annise Parker, Preserving LGBT History, and the Transgender Archive for this issue of OutSmart magazine.

The Air Force, AIDS, & AVES:

Jerome Scott's Story

Jerome Scott was born in Seattle, Washington, and raised in Portland, Oregon. He spent most of his growing up years in Los Angeles. Then he joined the United States Air Force. "I came out when I was 16," he says, "but I struggled with it until I was about 25."

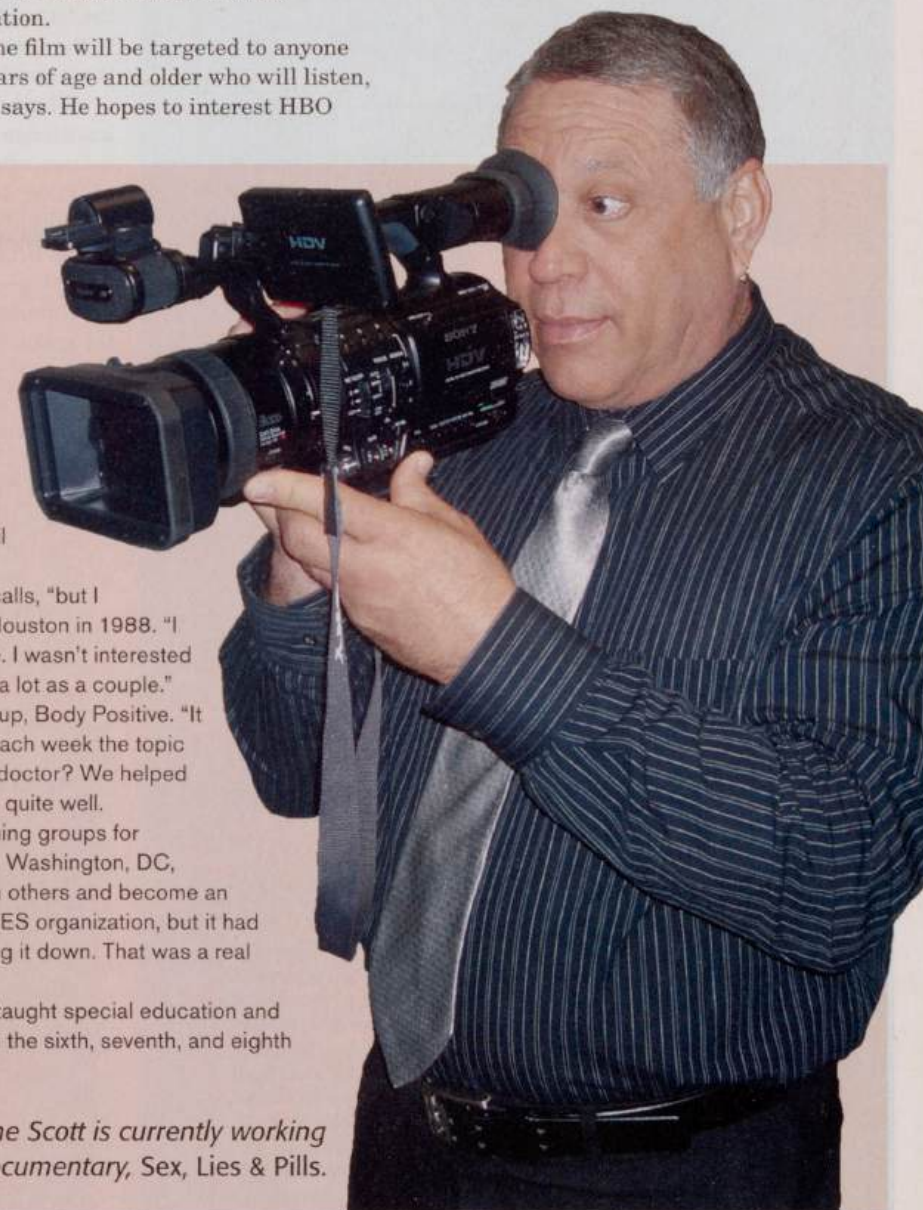
"I was diagnosed at age 33 with HIV," Scott recalls, "but I think I was infected around age 28." He moved to Houston in 1988. "I had a partner and I wanted to live a quiet Jewish life. I wasn't interested in going out to bars. We wanted to travel the world a lot as a couple."

Scott became involved in the AIDS support group, Body Positive. "It was set up as a 10-week group," he remembers. "Each week the topic would be different—for example, how do you pick a doctor? We helped people work through the process and it succeeded quite well."

"I became involved in different community planning groups for the city of Houston," Scott says. "I was educated in Washington, DC, about preventive education. Then I was able to train others and become an HIV advocate in the city. I took over the troubled AVES organization, but it had too many problems to save it, and I ended up closing it down. That was a real growing experience for me."

"I've also been a schoolteacher," says Scott. "I taught special education and learning-disabled children. I worked with children in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades."

Videographer Jerome Scott is currently working on the upcoming documentary, Sex, Lies & Pills.



Twice a Year, Whether We Need It or Not

Prevention is key at Lesbian Health Initiative's Rainbow Health Fairs

by Nancy Ford

Photo by
Blase DiStefano

Despite years of nagging from the American Cancer Society and various other health institutes about the importance of early detection in the treatment of cancer and other illnesses, the fact of the matter is, most people are more attentive to the maintenance of their automobiles than they are to their own health.

Whether restricted by lack of insurance or lack of knowledge about services available, people, especially women, often ignore their own health until it's too late.

Enter Lesbian Health Initiative-Houston.

With its mission to promote women's health in the Bayou City, LHI provides two essential tools of early detection—mammograms and Pap smears—to lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered women twice each year, via the group's Rainbow Health Fairs.

As a registered nurse, LHI board member Cathy McMillan recognizes the importance of preventative maintenance in healthcare. "It's not just about checking people at the time [they're sick], it's about prevention," she says. "We also do things like blood sugar and glucose testing, and blood pressure, cholesterol readings."

Best of all, the health fairs provide these services to women, free of charge.

"Some women just don't have the resources," McMillan says. "Some insurance will pay for some things, but not for others. Mammograms and the Pap smears are major expenses, and people who don't have insurance sometimes just can't afford them. But someone in that position still needs to have those done."

McMillan says she would like to see the Rainbow Health Fairs expand beyond "basically medical stuff" to offer women services like advice on living wills and power of attorney, and from social workers. "There are a lot of people with no resources who don't really know what's available to them in the community, who get connected," she says.

McMillan would also like to add to the fairs' rosters a dentist "that would check for oral cancer." Personal trainers are also on her wish list. "They could teach people how they can keep themselves fit and healthy within their own home if they can't afford to go to a gym. And dieticians could explain how to prepare low-cost nutritional meals, and how to maintain your health."

McMillan recognizes that these expanded services →

Spreading her wings: breast cancer survivor, Kiki Neumann, credits Lesbian Health Initiative with saving her life. To say thank you, she participates in LHI's Rainbow Health Fairs as a vendor selling artwork like "yard angels" (this one in pink for breast cancer) she crafts from materials left in Hurricane Ike's wake.



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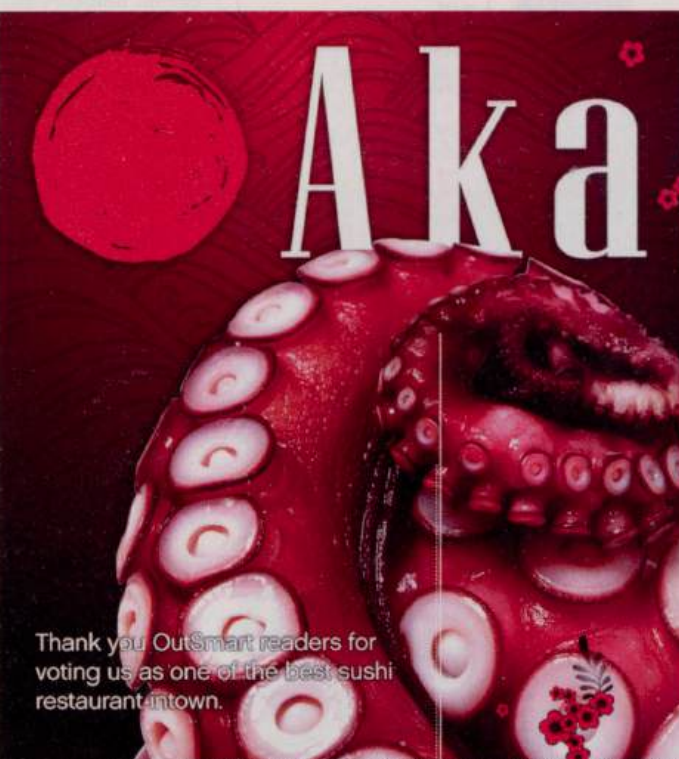
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Twice a Year ... continued from page 120

require an expanded team of volunteers and board members. Eight women currently sit on LHI's board; McMillan would like to see that number doubled.

"You know, a lot of the other organizations demand a great deal of time, whereas with LHI, people can volunteer however they want," she says. "They don't have to commit for a lot of time. If people just want to help with the health fair, they can just do that. If people want to help with the gala, they can do that. People can help with the newsletter. They don't have to give up a lot of time."

LHI's POSTER CHILD

As many as 30 women make appointments for mammograms provided at LHI's health fairs by MD Anderson's mobile radiography/mammogram unit. Since their inception in 1992, the fairs have provided more than 750 mammograms to women.

One woman who had been taking advantage of the mammograms and other services regularly received a clean bill of breast health—until one year when her mammogram detected a very small nodule that turned out to be cancer.

"The woman got treatment," McMillan says, the relief in her voice impossible to ignore. "If it had not been for detection, we might not have that woman with us today."

That woman is Kiki Neumann.

"It's true," Neumann says. "It's because of LHI that I'm still here, being my smart-ass, witty self!"

Neumann was a long-time regular at the biennial health fairs, in part as a vendor, selling pieces of folk art she constructs for her business, Mother's Old Fencepost. "I would 'sell and schmoosh,'" she quipped, describing the compressive nature of a mammogram. "I'd run out and get a mammogram, and then run back in and sell some arts and crafts."

As a small-business owner, Neumann recognized the economic advantage provided by the health fairs.

"The word 'f-r-e-e' caught my eye," she spells out, laughing. "Also, because it was gay-identified, it felt like a safe environment to go and have a yearly mammogram."

It was following Neumann's 2002 "schmoosh" that a lump was detected in her right breast.

"It was diagnosed due to the diligence

of the reading of the mammogram, because [the lump] was very far back in the chest wall," Neumann recalls. "It could not be detected by a self-exam. It was so hard to find that they had to do a biopsy to determine it was indeed cancer."

By August she was in the hospital, having surgery. She had lost her paternal grandmother to breast cancer, so as a preventative measure, Neumann made the difficult decision of having both breasts removed.

It was not a decision she came to without heavy consideration. "I had a meeting with six [cancer] survivors that I knew,



Women helping women: Lesbian Health Initiative Houston's Celebration of Love dinner dance, held on or near Valentine's Day, draws 300 to 400 women each year and features entertainment by a nationally acclaimed comedienne. Olivia Cruise favorite Michele Balan headlines the 2010 event.

some of whom were also active in LHI and in being out in our community. I asked them all how they treated their cancer, and based on learning from our community, I then made my choice of what I would do."

Following a couple years of hormonal treatment, Neumann is well and enjoying a clean bill of health. She continues to attend the health fairs, being one of the group's most vocal advocates.

"It's just wonderful to go with all of your friends to one of the fairs, enjoy seeing each other, and go in for your 'little unveiling,'" Neumann says. "I also enjoy the fact that this is women doing this for other women instead of having to sit in a waiting room with people you don't know."

McMillan agrees about the comfortable, welcoming environment at the fairs. "Women from our community can feel more comfortable coming to an all-woman organization," she says. "They don't have to worry about explaining their lifestyle, which is another issue."

Women of all ages come to health fairs to take advantage of the services, but at 56, Neumann especially appreciates the services LHI provides to older lesbians.

"Let's face it, we do have an aging population," she says. "We partied our way through the '80s and '90s, and we did a wonderful job of it, but we are not necessarily needing to party anymore."

"So now it's about a different way of supporting each other. This is about a physical and a mental and an emotional support. And LHI is offering that." ■

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No Posseur

Salim Gauwloos creates new moves for the Houston Met

by Neil Ellis Orts

Photo by Facundo Gabba

You may recognize him from Madonna's "Vogue" video, back when he went by the name "Slam," but striking a pose is far from all there is to choreographer Salim Gauwloos (pronounced "harlos," rhymes with "Carlos"). Since leaving behind his days of touring with the Material Girl, he is wowing dance audiences with his choreography for such companies as the Orlando Ballet and the Houston Metropolitan Dance Company. Three years ago, he made a piece for the Met called *11:11*, and was back here in May to set a new piece on the company (still untitled at press time) to be performed at their *Summer Sampler of Dance* on June 12 at the Miller Outdoor Theater.

Using a style that he describes as very contemporary while borrowing from classical and jazz movement vocabularies, he is exploring metaphysical ideas for this world premiere choreography. In contrast to "so much chaos going on in the world," Gauwloos wanted to make a piece about a place where we might all go when we die, which he describes as "a place where there's perfect harmony, perfect energy, perfect balance."

He continues, "I'm always kind of attracted to the dark. I mean people call it dark, but there's so much lightness in dark, too, you know. I want people to see my work and I want them to feel something. I don't want them to say like, 'Oh it's nice dancing.' So I always have a tendency to go a little bit deeper in my pieces. But it's very enjoyable, not like you want to go out and cry. It's always very uplifting."

Gauwloos has a long history with the Met. Besides creating *11:11* for them, he also danced with executive director Michelle Smith in the Delia Stewart Dance Company, a former Houston company, in the late 1980s. "I love working with this company," he says. "They have passion for dance... it's indescribable. It's a small company, but there's so much energy and passion."

Originally from Antwerp, Belgium, where he studied classical ballet, Gauwloos moved to New York City in 1987 after winning a scholarship to the Steps School of Dance. Given that background, it's understandable that his current work is moving away from the world of music videos. He speaks of those days with fondness, saying he found dancing with Madonna to have more substance



than most music videos—which should come as no surprise to those who remember she had a history in modern dance before conquering the music charts—but he's now making dance that has more of a personal vision.

"I moved a little bit away from the commercial world because, I don't know, I can't relate to all the butt shaking. I'm an artist, I want to create something," he says. "I had a good time, I'm happy for the experience and everything, but I've kind of put myself away from that. It's just not so me anymore." He also is quick to say of Madonna, "Whatever people say about the whole thing, I still always say I've never seen anyone work that hard."

When asked if a dancer on a Madonna tour actually gets to know the star, he says, "You get to know her to a certain degree. We stay in the same hotel and we went to parties with her and everything." He's also clear on the business aspect of dancing in the pop music world. "You dance with her and then the whole thing is over, and then you never hear from her again." He laughs. "When you're that young—we were all kind of upset, but now we're a little older, so you understand it's just part of the game."

Gauwloos will be spending this summer touring Europe, giving dance workshops with companies in places like Vienna and Amsterdam, but dance isn't the only thing on his mind. When, at the end of the interview, I ask him if he has anything else he wants to say, he adds, "I just want them to legalize marriage, that's what I want to say. I've been in a relationship with my partner for nine years now, and I'm like, C'mon, it's such a violation of human rights, it's terrible." Still, like his dances, he ends on an uplifting, hopeful note. "At least it's always in the limelight. I don't think it's going to be that long anymore."

Summer Sampler of Dance is presented free by Houston Metropolitan Dance Company on Friday, June 12, at 8:30 p.m. at Miller Outdoor Theatre. Details: houstonmetdance.org or 713/522-6375.

Neil Ellis Orts wrote about the work of four gay comics creators in the May issue of OutSmart magazine.

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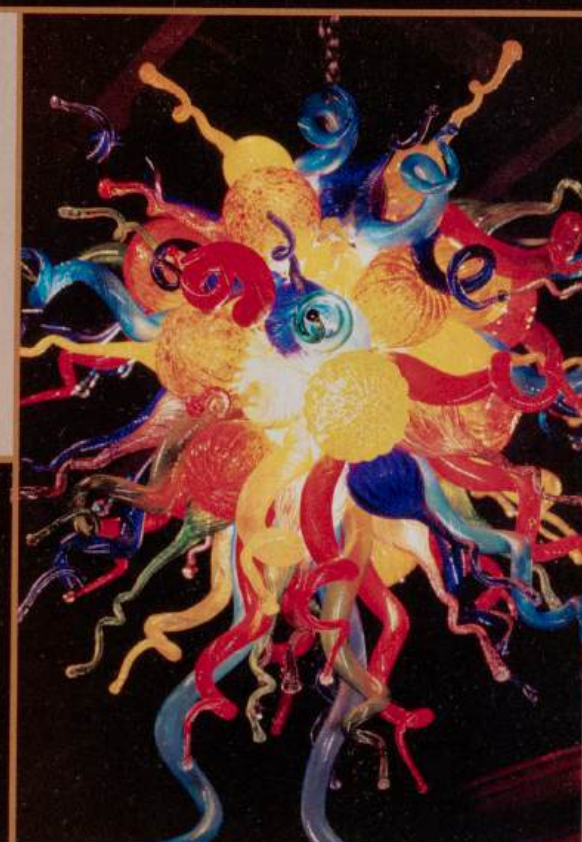
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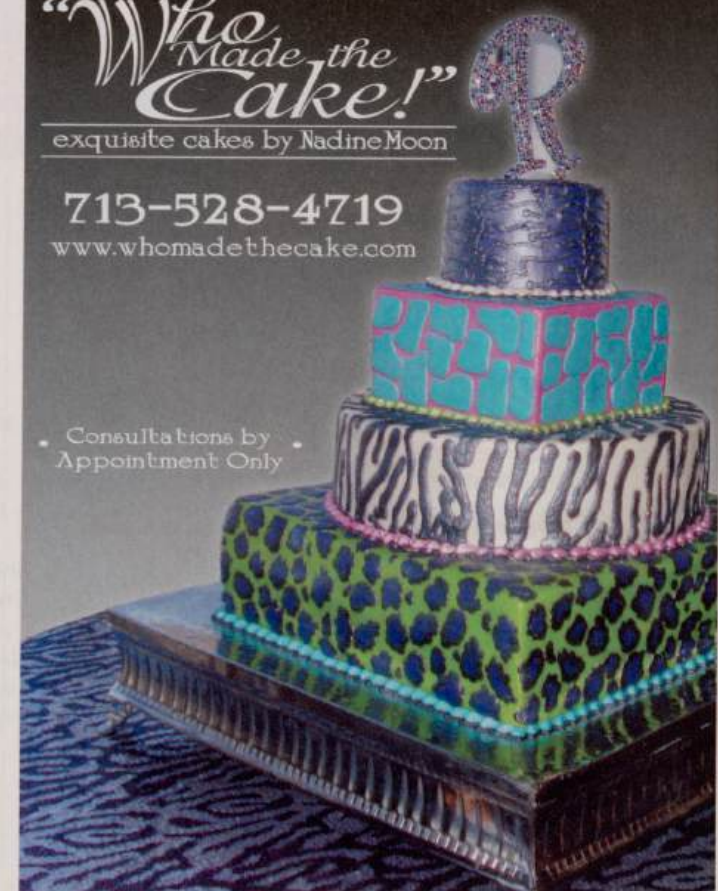
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Joan Rivers (comedian)

(CNN Larry King Live, 5/11/09)

Gay marriage—I am so against it because all my gay friends are out. And if they get married, it will cost me a fortune in gifts.

'Bruno' (film starring Sacha Baron Cohen, scheduled for release in July)

(Entertainment Weekly, 4/17/09)

The *Bruno* trailer makes *I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry* look like *Milk*. We'd be offended if we weren't laughing so hard.

J.W. Lown (former mayor of San Angelo, Texas)

(gosanangelo.com, 5/20/09)

Re: explaining his decision to leave office prior to being sworn in for his fourth term as mayor of San Angelo, Texas, to pursue a relationship with a man who is an immigrant from Mexico.

I love the people of San Angelo. I know the timing wasn't good, but the timing couldn't be helped.

Jennifer Hudson (singer/actress)

(Entertainment Weekly, 4/10/09, Sean Smith)

Walter Williams III, Jennifer Hudson's childhood friend and longtime assistant, says, "I would take her to the gay clubs and they would have these talent competitions, mainly for drag queens, and I would put Jennifer in them as the only real female. And she would win all the time and take all those drag queens' money. They were so mad!"

ANT (gay comedian)

(GLNN Gay News Distribution, 5/5/09)

Re: godhatesfags.com and Fred Phelps' Westboro Baptist Church threatening to protest comedian ANT in Wichita, Kansas.

Fred Phelps and his minion/sister (singular tense intentional) are more than welcome to come and protest my show. As there will be a large group of gay and very fashionable straight people at the event, I will be enforcing the following: the wearing of polyester will be strictly prohibited. If your name is Gater, Skeeter, Goober, Goner, Donner, or Blitzzen, spittoons will be confiscated on sight. If your home is registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles, you may protest me, but you must park your house on the yellow brick road... we are in Kansas, after all. And finally, Fred Phelps was once overheard saying, "I'll leave the little queers alone when Iowa lets a homo marry and pigs fly."

Well, Iowa allows gay marriage and swine flu.

Augusten Burroughs (gay author)

1 YEAR AGO

(The Advocate, 5/6/09, Charlotte Abbott)

When I was growing up, I worried a lot—Am I going to be broken because I don't have a father? What I've learned is that you can repair yourself later. You can get the things you need. That's what I would say to younger people living in a situation similar to mine. It's profoundly terrifying when a parent is mentally ill, or an alcoholic, or missing something that makes you human, but it's possible for you to be okay anyway.

Simon Cowell on Adam Lambert

(TV Guide, 4/19/09, Debra Birnbaum)

Debra Birnbaum: Adam also seems completely unfazed by the stories circulating about his sexuality. Do you think America's finally gotten beyond that?

Simon Cowell (*American Idol* judge): I think people only get bothered really when they know somebody's hiding something. [Laughs] We've had that in the past! We've obviously never had an issue with it, and nor should anybody else. It's a huge step forward for the show.

... Adam's in control of what he does, down to the nail polish. Imagine what the competition would look like without him. He's shaken everything up, this boy.

Marie Osmond

(Entertainment Tonight, 5/20/09, NBC)



Re: reconciling her Mormonism with her daughter's lesbianism.

I love my daughter. She's my baby girl, come on. So what if she's gay? She's my daughter and she's an amazing woman, she's a good kid. I raised her, she better be good.

I think it's sad when we have to separate something from society. Whether it's, "Oh, you're Jewish," ... "Oh, you're a Mormon," or "Oh, you're gay." There are a lot of women out there who have gay children. Who cares? ...

The thing I want is love. I'm a Christian, and Christ was that way—he loved everybody.

Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano



Mod Elvis?: Adam Lambert (seen here on *American Idol*) had the vote of Simon Cowell, but apparently not the American public.

Clementine Ford (actress)

(TVGuideMagazine.com, 3/23/09, Michael Logan)

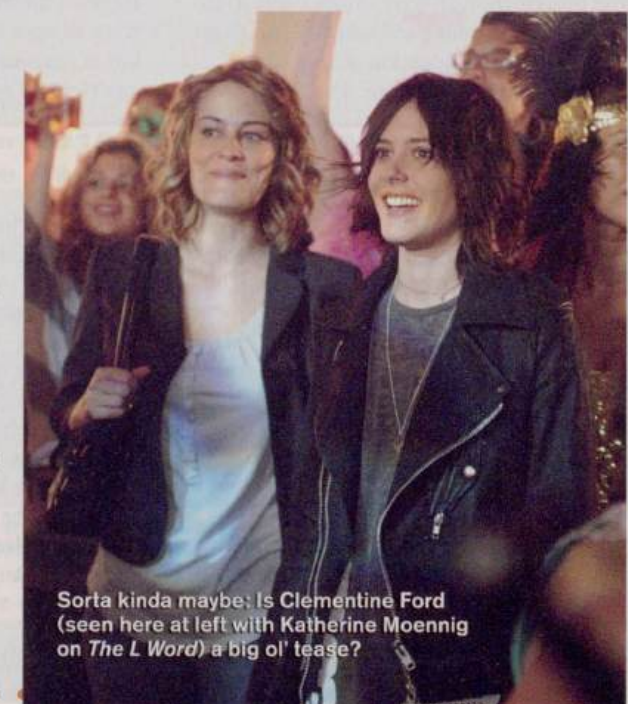
Michael Logan: Let's discuss this *Diva* magazine cover story. You sorta kinda maybe came out as a lesbian. Um, right?

Clementine Ford: [Groaning] I'm sooo glad you asked. The first thing that really upset me was that the cover line said, "Clementine Ford Comes Out," which, clearly if you read the article, I did *not* come out. ... But I *did* read the article, and you do say, "The truth is that I'm not technically out yet." You go on to admit that ... you've also dated women. And you perpetuated the rumors that you and Kate Moennig had a thing while shooting *The L Word*. Are you just a big ol' tease? [Ignoring the question] That *Diva* article also picked up quotes from a podcast interview I did with AfterEllen.com where the interviewer asked me if the sex on *The L Word* was real and I very jokingly said "Yes, we actually had sex. ... " And the *Diva* writer printed it as fact that Kate and I had real sex on camera! ...

So you and Kate did or did not have an affair off-camera?

I would never say anything about someone else's sexuality. Ever.

Well, I'm glad we sorta kinda maybe got *that* settled.



Sorta kinda maybe: Is Clementine Ford (seen here at left with Katherine Moennig on *The L Word*) a big ol' tease?

SOULFUL SOLES

New documentary re-focuses on our families



has listened to any rhetoric about GLBT equality, these will not give much new information. At the same time, the passion exhibited by people like straight ally Dani Newsum does stir this viewer. As a black woman married to a white man, she is clear about the differences between the history of the 1960s civil rights

Foxworth, the older of the two being 80 years old and already the victim of a "mini-stroke" at the time of the march, give a younger generation a sense of how important involvement is, even if hiking in 100-degree heat—in a mountainous region—might pose as a serious health risk. Both couples convey serious information and convictions with charm and a sense of humor.

Throw in some archival footage of Dr. King calmly outlying his objectives (this is not the rally speech of Dr. King with

History, inspiration, motivation—it's all right here.

Soulforce was founded in 1999 as a religious organization combating GLBT intolerance within religious communities. Mel White, former ghost writer for such Evangelical luminaries as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, co-founded the organization (with his partner Gary Nixon) upon the principles of nonviolent conflict resolution put forth by Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

Sole Journey, a documentary by Kate Burns and Sheila E. Schroeder, records a handful of Soulforce actions targeting Evangelical giant Dr. James Dobson and his organization, Focus on the Family. A six-day, 65-mile march from Denver (state capitol) to Colorado Springs (home of Focus on the Family) is the culminating action of this film.

The speeches are familiar. For anyone who



movement and the modern gay

rights movement, but she is masterful at drawing together the similarities.

Perhaps the most inspiring segments were the interviews with older couples. Barbara Kinsman and Linda Royster, interviewed with their grandsons, bring a sense, not only of history, but of personal growth to the story of gay rights. Lewis Thompson and Laurin

A long day's journey into light: Judy Shepard (far left) and actor Chad Allen, in a very emotional moment from the film, present a family photo album filled with pictures from the march to a Focus on the Family employee. Above: hundreds of participants surround the Focus on the Family campus in Colorado Springs.

which we are more familiar), and you have an hour's worth of viewing well spent. Churches and other organizations should be interested in this DVD for their library.

From First Run Features (firstrunfeatures.com). For more information, visit klondykepictures.com.

Neil Ellis Orts writes about choreographer Salim Gauwloos in this issue of OutSmart.

DVD/VHS Shorts Previews by Nancy Ford

Were the World Mine



Think *High School Musical*, were the school Harvey Milk High and Zach Efron's character gay. Well, gayer. Judy McLane, of Broadway's *Mamma Mia!*, costars, with the adorable Tanner Cohen playing the gay student. Based on director Tom Gustafson's award-winning short film, *Fairies*. Wolfe (wolfevideo.com).

Pedro



Oscar winner Dustin Lance Black (*Milk*) wrote the script for this fine bio of Pedro Zamora who stunned the world on the first season on MTV's *Real World* in 1994 when he came out not only as gay, but also as a person with AIDS. Bonus

features include a tribute from President Bill Clinton. Wolfe (wolfevideo.com).

Lavender Limelight: Lesbians in Film



Come for the clips, but stay for the conversations with seven definitive lesbian directors. Cheryl Dunye, Su Friedrich, Jenny Livingston, Heather MacDonald, Maria Maggenti, Monika Treut, and Rose Troche discuss their work, and what inspires it. Marc Mauceri directs. First Run Features (firstrunfeatures.com).

Lesbian Nation

Five lesbian-friendly films make up this largely comedic collection. Includes Marc Mauceri's aforementioned



Lavender Limelight, Ela Troyano's *Carmelita Tropicana* (a Berlin International film festival winner), Jane Schneider's *Jumping the Gun*, Barbara Heller's *Women in Transit*, and Mitch McCabe's *Playing the Part*. First Run Features (firstrunfeatures.com).

FirstOUT International



This compilation of five award-winning shorts includes Spanish director Pelayo Muniz' *Sístole/Diástole* (*Systolic/Diastolic*), a recent Houston Worldfest Film Festival Gold Remi Award winner about a gay couple coping with death. In English, and Korean, Spanish, and French with English subtitles. Alluvial (villagelighthouse.com). ■

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by Steven Foster

MUST SEE (?) TV

Cable's rolling out the rainbow carpet for Pride month. 'OutSmart' offers this guide to what's miss-able and what's TIVO-worthy

THE DOC IS IN!

DOCDAY, SUNDANCE CHANNEL

Every Monday in June at 8 p.m., Sundance Channel airs the U.S. television premiere of a hip new gay documentary. Redford's netlet is famous for pulling out the stops during Pride Month, and this year is no different. Check out the feverishly hot exclusives they're airing just for us.



Isaac Julien (l) and Tilda Swinton in the doc, *Derek*.

MONDAY, JUNE 1

Derek

Influential Brit filmmaker and artist Derek Jarman is profiled by three of his most creative friends and collaborators—artist Isaac Julien (who directed), producer and film historian Colin MacCabe, and Oscar-winning actress Tilda Swinton. Jarman's influential films famously rebelled against standard linear narrative, opting for dreamlike, challenging explorations of sexuality, love, art, religion, politics, and history. The doc has made the rounds at the festivals and is generally considered to be a staggering portrait of a groundbreaking artist. Highlights include Swinton, who starred in eight of Jarman's films, reading "Letter to an Angel," a heart-breaking message she wrote to Jarman eight years after his death from AIDS.

MONDAY, JUNE 8

Suddenly Last Winter

When Italy's left-leaning government proposed extending legal rights to domestic partners, including same-sex couples, the Vatican and conservative politicians acted with a hateful furor usually reserved for "DaVinci Code" novels. Young journalists and lovers Gustav Hofer and Luca Ragazzi took their camera to the Roman streets, exploring and challenging the views of their countrymen who were angered and threatened by the law and the filmmakers' own homosexuality. Honest and surprisingly humorous, the film smashdances a society in tumult with a couple in love.

MONDAY, JUNE 15

Chris and Don: A Love Story

Santa Monica beach boy-turned-artist Don Bachardy met famed novelist Christopher Isherwood when Bachardy was just 17 and Isherwood was 39.

That's not nearly as shocking as the fact that the two were together for three decades and, in 1953, were one of L.A.'s few openly gay couples. This absorbing doc explores their glittering social circle that included the likes of iconic actress Leslie Caron and firebrand filmmaker John Boorman, the brazen openness of their sexual relationship, and their tender and tragic final years when Isherwood slowly succumbed to the ravages of cancer and Bachardy exhaustively chronicled his decline with unflinching portraiture. If you're

Christopher Isherwood (l) and Don Bachardy (in the late '70s) in *Chris and Don: A Love Story*.



going to see one gay documentary this year, this is probably your best bet.

MONDAY, JUNE 22

Rise Up and Shout!

Three years ago, gay activists Don Kelhefner and Mark Thompson had an idea—bring older generations of gays and lesbians directly to the their younger LGBT tribe members who were enrolled in Los Angeles schools. That mentoring program resulted in an exuberant theatrical showcase for young gay artists. Featuring interviews, auditions, and intimate conversations, *Rise Up* provides a fascinating glimpse of a community comprised of young and old, black and white, shy and bold. *High School Musical* should be so cool.

MONDAY, JUNE 29

Wild Combination: A Portrait of Arthur Russell

Matt Wolf directed this look at the life and music of little-known composer, producer, cellist, and singer-songwriter Arthur Russell. The film follows Russell from his native Iowa to Haight-Ashbury San Francisco and finally to New York's bohemian East Village of the '70s and '80s where his personal eccentricities and experimental orchestrations made him somewhat of a gay raconteur, collaborating with Allen Ginsberg, Phillip Glass, and underground disco queen Lola Love. It's a wild, rambling, somewhat ramshackle tribute to a lesser-known mind who was taken by AIDS far too early. →

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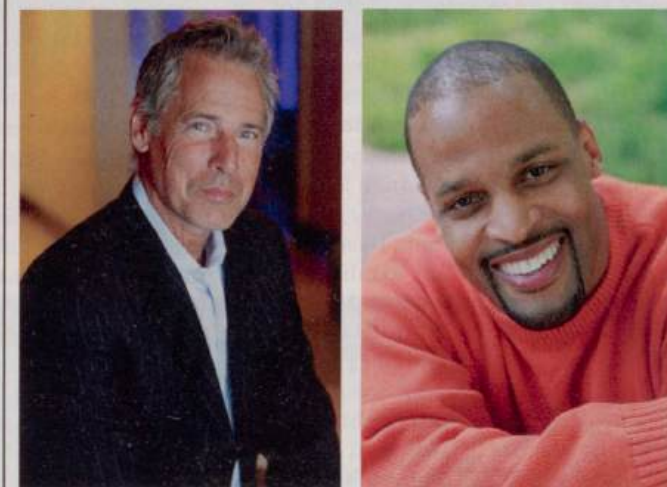
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Gay TV during Pride Month (l-r): Kathy Griffin on Bravo; RuPaul on Logo; gay activists on PBS; Mary-Louise Parker on Showtime; Martina Navratilova on the Tennis Channel; and Sandy Young on TV Land.

Television

continued from page 130

D-List? HARDLY

Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List, Bravo

Someone's gonna have to change the name of her show. After two Emmys, a string of successful sold-out concerts, and being both Larry King and Anderson Cooper's go-to broadcast buddy/bitch, Griffin's D-List status is the most modest statement to come from any celebrity ever. And her fifth season ups the ante considerably, including an eclectic mix from idiocy (Paris Hilton) to Hollywood hierarchy (Bette Midler). Griffin also jets to Miami to samba with Gloria Estefan and Rosie O'Donnell, swings by Savannah to cook up some Southern sass with everyone's favorite butter-pusher Paula Deen, hits the casino circuit with Lily Tomlin, and hangs with fellow media whore Al Sharpton in Harlem. Expect the usual wine-fueled hijinks from mother Maggie—and another slew of Emmy nods. She might have pissed off the religious right with her "Jesus can suck it" comment, but she must have made Him laugh. He's blessing her all over the place.

LOGO, AT LAST

New Now Next Awards, Logo

LGBT stepchild Logo continually runs ugly sibling to the gayer-than-gay Bravo. But while Bravo pats its own back with the abysmal A-List Awards, Logo goes for cool with their own tripped-out awards show. Last year, NNN featured the first TV performance of it-girl Lady Gaga, for example. This year, they kick things up several notches. The night's hosted by RuPaul (Logo's own nod to self-service). But the presenters are a fabulously frenzied fray of crazy cool including Vanessa Williams, Lance Bass, Robert Verdi, Lisa Lampinelli, and Cheyenne Jackson. Musical performances will be by Morningwood, The Fire and Reason, Ru herself, and Britney, who will be there to receive the NNN version of a lifetime achievement award, which is pretty funny if you think about it. Categories include

Brink of Fame, OMG Internet Award, Best Show You're Not Watching, Most Guiltiest Pleasure, Best Lesbian Kiss, Best Gay Couple, and the hysterically titled Feel This Bitch Award. Saturday, June 13, at 8 p.m.

SPEAKING OF RUPAUL... RuPaul's Drag Race

The drag show now has its own dedicated casting site to find stars for its next season. RuPaulCasting.com. So hit the site and take your own shot at drag fame and fortune. Well, maybe not fortune. Seriously, the first season gave away, what? A PediEgg and a \$50 gift certificate to Ross or something? Maybe now that *Drag Race* is a cult hit, the show can find a sponsor to pony up a prize that's more than something your grandma might get you for your birthday. Which brings us to...

YOU GO, (OLDER) GIRL! She's Got the Look, TV Land

Can't stand those anorexic idiots on Tyra's freakfest? Then check out TV Land's first original reality competition that sets out to discover a beautiful woman who is—gasp—35 or older! And the prizes, a contract with Wilhelmina Models, a photo spread in *SELF* magazine, and—gasp—\$100,000! really put the old drag queen contest to shame. Reason to care? One of the finalists is a mother, lesbian, and Brooklyn rocker Sandy Young. Thursday, June 11, at 8 p.m.

LOVE, MARTINA Signature Series: Martina Navratilova, The Tennis Channel

There's a Tennis Channel? Seriously? Yeah, yeah. Who knew? At any rate, the sport net that, for your information, is the "only 24-hour, television-based multimedia destination dedicated to both the professional sport and passionate lifestyle of tennis"—gotta love press releases—airs a comprehensive bio on tennis icon Martina Navratilova. While occasionally dipping into the *E! True Hollywood Story* territory with synth-heavy drama moments (Her father committed suicide! A crush on her

tennis instructor drove her to greatness!), the show nevertheless covers the amazing story of a woman who witnessed Soviet tanks and soldiers suddenly appearing in her country, causing her to defect at 18, and becoming one of the most recognizable athletes and activists in the world. And unlike previous portraits on Agassi, Lacoste, and Sampras, this one features Navratilova herself as the sole narrator. Catch it on, yes, The Tennis Channel, Monday, June 8, at 6 p.m.

OUT WITH 'EM ALREADY! Ask Not, PBS' Independent Lens

Acclaimed filmmaker Johnny Symons examines the military's failed "don't ask, don't tell" policy, focusing on the gay activists, inside and outside the military, who are working to overturn it. Got that sketchy drug conviction still on your record? The U.S. Army'll look the other way. Did that high-falutin' C blow your all-D average in high school? Buck up, soldier, you're in! Did you say you were gay? Well... in that case... ah... you're not fit to serve. Can we please get rid of this? Please? Somehow it's hard to imagine the brave soldiers of Thermopylae or The Battle of the Bulge taking a poll on who was a fag before dying for their country and cause. Tuesday, June 16, at 10 p.m., with repeats on the 18th at 9 p.m. and the 24th at 10 p.m.

HIGHER & HIGHER Weeds, Showtime

The 5th season of the Showtime smash takes a big bong hit of cool by casting gay faves Alanis Morissette and Jennifer Jason Leigh for multi-episode arcs. We'll show up to watch Leigh in anything. And after Morissette's played everyone from God herself in Kevin Smith's *Dogma* to Carrie's spin-the-bottle partner in *Sex and the City*, ditto. Will she play gay here? Don't know yet. But she is playing the obstetrician of the now-pregnant pot-dealing mom Nancy, played by yet another gay-friendly girlfriend of ours, Mary-Louise Parker. Premieres Monday, June 8, at 8 p.m. ■

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GIMME A BEAT

Dance music is so gay

Beginning in the mid-1980s, pop duos Erasure and Pet Shop Boys were at the forefront of electronic dance music, gay or straight. Teamed up with hetero Vince Clarke (of Depeche Mode and Yaz renown) as Erasure, the flaming and fabulous Andy Bell, with a set of pipes to rival Clarke's former musical partner Alison Moyet, leaped into our lives, and we simply couldn't imagine a world without him.

The **Erasure** story is celebrated vividly on the four-disc set (three CDs and one DVD) *Total Pop! Deluxe Box: The First 40 Hits* (Mute/Sire/Rhino). Spanning a period of more than 20 years, this thorough compilation demonstrates that Bell and Clarke have a knack for creating exhilarating dance music. A majority of the 41 tracks on the first two discs of studio recordings speak well for Erasure's considerable contributions to the genre. Early hits such as "Oh, L'Amour," "Sometimes," "It Doesn't Have to Be," "Chains of Love," and "A Little Respect" went a long way in establishing Erasure's credibility. The tradition continued with such fierce numbers as "Stop!," "Drama!,"



Diversified boys (clockwise from top left): Jason Antone, Larry Tee, Pet Shop Boys, Aspic Tines, and Erasure.

and "Love to Hate You," not to mention Erasure's ABBA activities, represented

here by "Take a Chance on Me."

Of course, Erasure is much more than a dance duo and could play the drama card as well on ballads, including "Stay With Me" and "Ship of Fools." Because the complete Erasure experience includes concert performance and a visual component, a live CD spanning 20 years and a DVD of BBC TV appearances round out the package.

You can dance to the **Pet Shop Boys'** new album *Yes* (Astralwerks), but you might have

to work at it. Bouncy opener "Love Etc.," in which Neil Tennant declares that you "don't have to be beautiful, but it helps," might set you in motion, but "All Over the World," which incorporates "The Nutcracker Suite," is harder to pin down. The "beauty" theme continues on "Beautiful

People," which has a retro beat more akin to Duffy or Adele. "Did You See Me Coming?" is reminiscent of *Very*-era PSB, while "More Than a Dream" dabbles in futuristic electro. "King of Rome" and "Legacy" are two more low-key, albeit dramatic, numbers. "Pandemonium" almost lives up to its name, and the equally rhythmic "The Way It Used to Be" left me longing for the Pet Shop Boys of old.

Larry Tee is probably grateful to Erasure and Pet Shop Boys for paving the way for him to indulge in his dance-music diversions. The proud papa of electro, Tee unleashes a torrent of blistering beats on his latest album *Club*



Badd (Ultra). Far smuttier than anything ever let loose by Erasure or PSB, songs such as "Let's Make Nasty," "Licky (Work It Out)," "Get Your Grind On," "Clap That Ass," "My Penis," and its companion, "My Pussy," will make your ears burn and ring →

GrooveOut Shorts Reviews/previews by Nancy Ford

Tori Amos *Abnormally Attracted to Sin*



The preacher's kid taps into her own rich spiritual subtext once again, the very first tones of the very first cut dripping with atmosphere. Each song from this, her 10th release, is accompanied by documentary-style "visualettes"; "Fire to Your Plain" is our favorite. Universal Republic Records (universalrepublic.com).

The Clicks *Dirty King*



The Logo Click List favorites return with their second release just in time for your alt rock Pride listening pleasure. Gender performers may dash to adopt the stuttery "Dirty King" as an anthem, but "Red and

Blue" is remarkably layered and lovely. June 23. Tommy Boy (thecliks.com).

Girl in a Coma *Trio B.C.*



Like their mentor and producer Joan Jett, the San Antonio-based hard punk rocking female trio is uncompromisingly intense on this, their sophomore album. They play Houston's Fitzgerald's on June 9, but probably won't go to Chances for an after-show drink this time around. June 2. Blackheart Records (blackheart.com). (See more on page 67.)

Diane Birch *Bible Belt*

Another preacher's kid aims to leave her mark via musical aspirations, and thank God for that. Birch's



debut album is a fine introduction to this talented pianist, composer, and vocalist, giving Norah Jones a run for her money. "Fire Escape" and "Rewind" stand out. S-Curve Records (s-curve.com).

Depeche Mode *Sounds of the Universe*



Thirty years later, Depeche Mode still provides the best background music for your neighborhood S&M play party. From the subversive opener "In Chains," all the way through to the whip-cracking "Corrupt" closer, these boys still know how to lay down a pleasingly sinister synth pop track. Mute/Capitol/Virgin (depechemode.com). (Depeche Mode plays Woodlands Pavilion on August 30.) →

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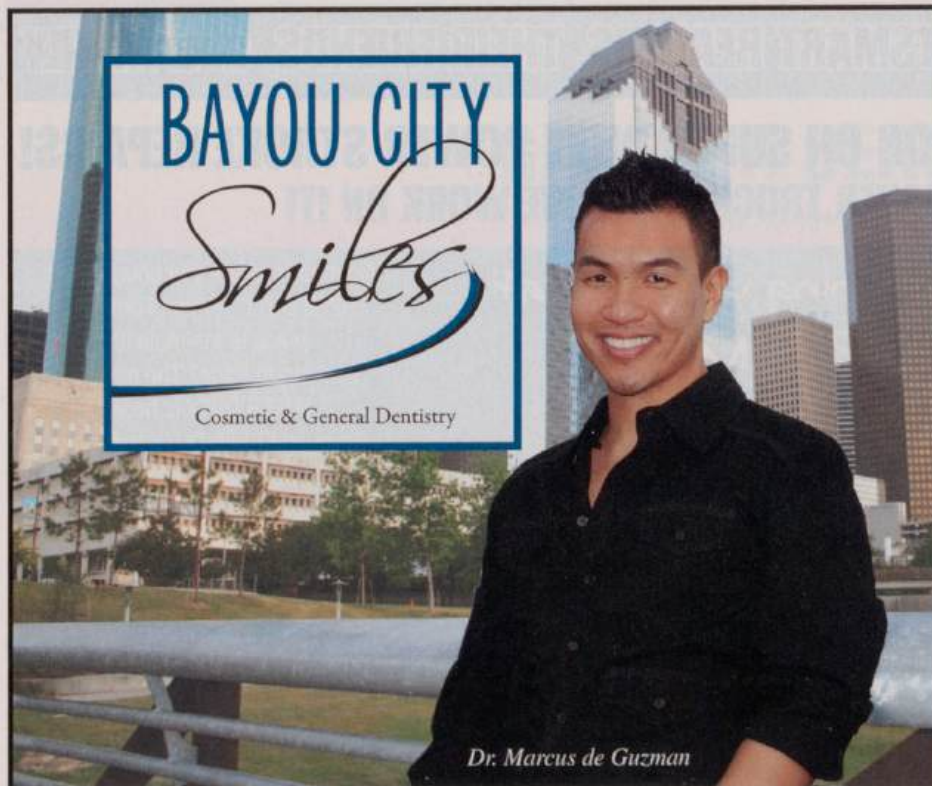
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GrooveOut continued from page 134

simultaneously. As it turns out, Tee is just as conscious of fashion as he is passion, as you can hear on "Louis Vuitton," "Agyess Deyn," and his remix of Kelly's "Shoes."

Mixed gender duo **Mynx** also dips its paws into the cookie jar of '80s retro electro beats for its five-track *Out of Sight, Out of Mind* (wearemynx.com) EP. You can satisfy all of your dancing needs with the cuts "Kissie Show," "Wolfgang Bang," and the judgmental bravado of the bonus track "I'm So L.A."

Hats off to **Jason Antone** who deserves to be crowned the new gay disco god. The guy can sing, which works in his favor, and he sings his heart out from start to finish on his new album *Start to Move* (Chickie). He's at his most compelling on straightforward dance-floor sensations ranging from his admirable reimagining of Tears For Fears' "Everybody Wants to Rule the World" through moving originals including the title tune, "Ooh Ooh Ooh," "Function," "Feelin' You," and "How's Anybody Gonna Love You Like That." Beware of "More Than Friends" on which Antone sounds like he's doing a Barry Manilow impersonation.

After establishing himself in our collective awareness with his 2007 debut full-length *Allnighter*, foxy Frenchman **Naommon** is back with *Love Is Struggling* (naommon.com). Apparently unable to part with four tracks from that disc—"Allnighter," "This Quirk Is Love," "You Go to My Head," and "Make It Right"—all make reappearances on the new album. As far as the new songs are concerned, Naommon is at his exotic best on the title tune, "Shake to the Earthquake," and the bonus cut "You Don't Realize (RMX)."

On *Crypto-Superzeit! International* (Johann's Face), **Aspic Tines** (a musical alias) pay homage to the late, great Klaus Nomi with a dazzling set of otherworldly German new wave-inspired tunes. This is first and foremost a dance record of near-epic proportions, and songs such as "Music of the Spheres," "Magic Life," "Der Punk Gesagt," "Rocket Lover," and a cover of the Dead Kennedys' "Holiday in Cambodia" will have you donning a black turtleneck and doing your best to emulate Dieter from *Sprockets*. "Right-On! Galaxies," and to a lesser extent "Atmosphere," even dabbles in Nomi's fondness for the operatic.

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

GrooveOut Shorts continued from page 134

Melody Gardot
My One and Only Thrill

This vocalist's tender age is immaterial in this sophisticated sophomore collection of tunes largely infused with Latin rhythms. Her overall style is delightfully Winehouse without all the wine, especially on "Your Heart Is Black as Night." But skip her version of "Over the Rainbow." Universal Music (vervemusicgroup.com).

The Gary Chub

This indie trio based in Austin is gaining ground sharing stages with Husker Du's Grant Hart, The Medications, and other alt artists. Standouts on this seven-tune EP are "Damn Machines" and the instrumental "Freaks Go Forward." Cedar Fever Records (fanaticpromotion.com).

LaKisha Jones
So Glad I'm Me

Formerly a Houston resident, this *American Idol* semi-finalist shared the role of Sophia in *The Color Purple* on Broadway with Chaka Khan, so we'd expect her to have some pipes. Here she proves it with this solid collection of R&B tunes, especially with the lush title song. Elite Music, LLC (elitemusicllc.com).

Swing Out Sister
Beautiful Mess

Shake up a martini and relax with this venerated Brit duo's trademark easy-going pop jazz. There's something cheerily '70s about some cuts here, including both mixes of "Butterfly" and the title tune, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. Shanachie Entertainment (swingoutsister.net).

Utada
This Is The One

Asian themes provide a gentle undercurrent for this Japanese pop superstar, where her last five albums all rose to number one; expect this strong set to follow suit. If Rhianna and Tori Amos had a baby, she could provide vocals for "Apple and Cinnamon." Island Def Jam (islandrecords.com).

Margo Reymundo
My Heart's Desire

This Dallas singer/songwriter presents jazzy easy listening in English and Spanish packaged in, as the label's name implies, 100 percent recycled bio-friendly materials. We especially enjoyed the cute little studio snippets interspersed among the original songs and handful of covers. Organica Records (organicatunes.com).



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JAMAICA'S NO PARADISE

A new memoir set on the island promises much

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Have fun. Just don't look too hard behind any façade because, as you'll see in *The Other Side of Paradise* by Staceyann Chin (Simon & Schuster: Scribner), some people don't just get handed The Good Life. They have to fight for it.

Performer and author Staceyann Chin made her debut two months early. Her mother, Hazel, who hid the fact that she was with child, gave birth on the floor of a rented house in Lottery, Jamaica, in her seventh month of pregnancy. The baby's deaf, elderly grandmother refused to believe the tiny child would die.

"Me just tell everybody fi keep them mouth shut because this little girl here going to live and live and live," she said.

Shortly after giving birth, Hazel left the infant and her three-year-old brother with Grandma, and disappeared. Everyone said she had gone to Canada.

When Staceyann was barely four years old and Grandma could no longer pay the rent, the trio moved in with relatives.



Rhymes and reasons: internationally acclaimed out poet, political activist, and author Staceyann Chin is well known to poetry aficionados, bringing her commanding presence to off-Broadway stages in New York, poetry workshops in Denmark, and Russell Simmons' *Def Poetry Jam*.

Uncle Harold was a policeman. Aunt June was abusive, especially to Staceyann, whom June thought was too willful. Beatings were a common occurrence for infractions, even as Harold and June's own children got away with much of the same behavior. When Staceyann was 11, Aunt June had enough and shipped her to yet another relative, this one in Paradise, Jamaica.

But paradise was lacking there. The house was filthy and cramped. Staceyann

learned to sleep wrapped in a sheet to avoid being raped. School was her only respite, though she had to hide her life from classmates. Yet the willfulness never left her.

It turned to strength.

I struggled with this memoir, because I enjoyed it and I was disappointed in it.

The first part of *The Other Side of Paradise* is so beautiful and peaceful. I absolutely loved the way the dialogue is written, giving it a perfect island lilt, lush; so vivid, you can almost hear it.

The middle of this book is painful but triumphant. Readers will cheer because we know that author Staceyann Chin is going to persevere, and her spunkiness is exactly what we want to see.

But the ending of this book disappointed me. Chin's anger appeared so quickly that it caught me off-guard. I expected her revelation of lesbianism, but it felt like she was daring me to oppose. Everything up to this point was filled with empowered strength and triumph, so the venom, though justifiable, was a surprise in its too-quick, without-warning harshness.

Still, because of the beauty and emotion in this book, I can't not recommend it. Just beware that *The Other Side of Paradise* is probably not a good choice for a vacation read.

Terri Schlichenmeyer has been reading since she was three years old, and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill in Wisconsin with two dogs and 11,000 books.

ReadOut Shorts

Daddy, Papa, and Me
Lesléa Newman

Tricycle Press (tricyclepress.com)



Lesléa Newman (*Heather Has Two Mommies*) follows up last month's *Mommy, Mama, and Me* with a book showing the joy of two-dad families. Beautifully illustrated by Carol Thompson, this book is sure to be a favorite of children and the fathers who love them. A great gift or addition to the collection of those who love children's books, this one will be a classic. It's wonderful to finally see a book that celebrates gay dads in their everyday lives. —Review: Angel Curtis

Blue Jesus
Tom Edwards

Academy Chicago Publishers (academychicago.com)



In Appalachian Mountains, circa 1960, a self-described sissy boy, Buddy, becomes best friends with a blue boy, Early, who can sometimes perform miracles. To Buddy's alarm, Early's dad begins to market his son as the "Blue Jesus." Told in Buddy's defiant and very funny voice, this novel explores issues around friendship, race, faith, and Nancy Drew. Smart, heartfelt, and laugh-out-loud funny, it is a new Southern classic. Highly recommended. —Review: A.C.

How to Live: A Search for Wisdom from Old People (While They Are Still on This Earth)

Henry Alford

Twelve (hachettebookgroup.com)



"Thank God you're gay," advises one of the over-70 characters whom humorist Henry Alford interviews for this witty guide to navigating through life. "What do you mean?" Alford asks, taken aback. Then Alford tells us what he thinks it means, along with lots of clever quotes on aging and wisdom from the famous and not-so-famous, and riffs on conversations with his elders, from his mother and stepfather to gay playwright Edward Albee and the fabulous →

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ReadOut Shorts

continued from page 138

Sylvia Miles, whose two Oscar nominations (for *Midnight Cowboy* and *Farewell, My Lovely*) honored a combined nine minutes of screen time. (Miles quips, "Oh, look at her, she's outrageous," they say of me. Well, better than that I should be in-rage-eous.") —Review: Donalevan Maines

Victor Fleming: An American Movie Master Michael Sragow

Pantheon Books (pantheonbooks.com)

Victor Fleming, the legendary director of *The Wizard of Oz*, wasn't gay, but his first big star was, according to biographer Michael Sragow. On the set of Fleming's silent-screen "horse opera," he writes, there was "raw kidding" between screen idol Jack Kerrigan (described as "quite a lady himself") and "the ultra-heterosexual cowboy extras and crew," but there was also "enough hard-nosed tolerance" for everyone to do their jobs. Known in Hollywood as "the real Rhett Butler," Fleming won his Oscar for salvaging *Gone with the Wind* after gay director George Cukor was fired, perhaps in part because of tensions that stemmed from Clark Gable's brief sexual encounter with Cukor's friend, openly gay star William Haines. —Review: D.M.

Death Stalks the Night Cynthia Wakefield

AuthorHouse (authorhouse.com)

Sergeant Erin Brody and a squad of troopers seek a killer creature stalking their all-female military base. Accompanied on the quest by her cat, Psycho, she finds love with the secretive Dr. Belinda Duncan. Threats then compound, including one on Brody's own life, in this adventure filled with humor and suspense. —Review: A.C.

Sprout Dale Peck

Bloomsbury (bloomsburyusa.com)

DALE PECK Dale Peck explores the complexities of being gay in small-town America with his latest novel, *Sprout*. Based on his own experiences growing up and coming out in Long Island and Kansas, *Sprout* is a heartbreaking and humorous coming-of-age story. This is not an "issue" book, but an exploration of discovering your identity amid the confusion of high school. —Review: Troy Carrington

Kuta Bubbles Alan Brayne

Illumina Press (illumina.com)

To make a long story short, the drag queen who narrates this haunting murder mystery involving Bali "rent boys" and a closeted customer nearly ruins the story with extraneous ramblings about his own life. With help from a good editor, this self-published author could accomplish his goal of exploring explosive results when East meets West, and poor native boy meets rich white man. —Review: D.M. ■

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Calendar of Events

Compiled by Nancy Ford

A Flashdance of Our Own

HATCH welcomes young and not-so-young to annual prom



Dancing with the HATCH stars: previously held at the historic Magnolia Ballroom (pictured here) in downtown Houston, the HATCH Prom is now presented at Montrose Counseling Center's GLBT Cultural Center. There, HATCH members, staff, and volunteers transform the meeting room into a festive party spot.

In 1980, Aaron Fricke successfully sued his Rhode Island high school to take his male date to his high school prom, paving the way for other same-sex teen couples to enjoy that spring teen ritual just as much as their opposite-sex peers.

But just because it's legal doesn't necessarily make it comfortable. Or safe. That's the job of HATCH's annual prom.

"The HATCH Prom is a safe space for GLBT youth to have fun with their peers without worrying about how others will view them," says HATCH youth services associate, Jascelyn Tatum. "Youth can bring a date of their choice, wear clothes of their choice, and feel free to simply have a good time."

With its theme "Flashback to the '80s," the 17th annual HATCH Prom, HATCH's biggest fundraiser of the year, not only invites teen members of the highly respected group for LGBT youth and their peers, but welcomes adults as well. Whether those adults attending the prom are doing so to give closure to an unpleasant, exclusionary experience from their adolescence, or are simply there to have fun and support "the kids," the outcome is likely to be a positive one.

June 12, 7 p.m. 'til midnight. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Bra-nard St. Tickets: \$25 for adults; free for ages 13-20. Details: 713/529-3590 • hatchyouth.org. —Nancy Ford

JUNE

FILM

Hooray for Bollywood! The film program honors the late B. R. Chopra, a leading figure in Indian cinema, with a restored version of his 1957 classic, *Naya Daur*. Also featured are three recent releases: *Billu*, *Om Shanti Om*, and *Rang de Basanti*. Through June 7. Museum of Fine Arts' Brown Auditorium Theater, 1001 Bissonnet St. mfa.org • 713/639-7300.

FlickerLounge is an eclectic lineup of rotating full-length films, shorts, and video presentations coinciding with *New Art in Austin: 20 to Watch* in partnership with Aurora Picture Show. Through June 13. DiverseWorksProject Gallery, 1117 East Freeway. 713/335-3445.

Menil Movies: Cinematic Works from the Menil Archives. Aurora Picture Show founder Andrea Grover hosts a 90-minute outdoor screening of rare surrealist, avant-garde, and documentary films. June 13, 8:30pm. Menil Park, 1515 Sul Ross. Free. aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.

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. **E-mail info to:** calendar@outsmartmagazine.com. **Mail info to:** OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston, TX 77006. **Fax info to:** 713/522-3275. **NO LISTINGS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—5 P.M., TUESDAY, JUNE 9.**

Extremely Shorts 12: Works in Three Minutes and Under. Contemporary Arts Museum Houston director Bill Arning curates the 12th installment of juried short shorts submitted from around the globe. Molly Gochman's Studio, 2437 North Blvd. A picnic follows Sunday's screening. June 27, 7pm; June 28, 5pm. Tickets: \$6-\$12. aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.

PERFORMING ARTS

Awake and Sing! Bessie Berger and her Bronx family struggle through the Great Depression. Through June 7. Main Street Theater—Rice Village, 2540 Times Blvd. Tickets: \$20-\$36. mainstreettheater.com • 713/524-6706.

Fiddler on the Roof. Broadway Across America provides a last chance to see Topol in the role of Tevye the milkman. Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Sarofim Hall, 800 Bagby. Through June 7, with June 4 and 6 performances benefiting Holocaust Museum Houston. broadwayacrossamerica.com • 713/315-2500.

Spring Repertory Program features Christopher Wheeldon's *Carousel: A Dance*, Nacho Duato's *Jardi Tancat*, and Stanton Welch's *Nosotros*. Through June 7. Houston Ballet. Wortham Center's Brown Theater, 501 Texas Ave. Tickets: \$17-\$125. houstonballet.org • 713/227-2787.

Grey Gardens. The Tony Award-winning musical about Jackie O's eccentric cousin and aunt, Edith and Edie Beale. Through June 14. Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway. stagesrepertory.com.

The Beauty Queen of Leenane. A lonely Irish spinster seeks love while caring for her elderly, cantankerous mother. Through June 20, 8pm. Theatre Southwest, 8944-A Clarkcrest. Tickets: \$13-\$15. theatresouthwest.org • 713/661-9505.

The Story of Burford, Category 5. When a hurricane hits

Houston, the Spy Eye News team hits the water. Through Aug. 29. Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt. Tickets: \$22. radio musictheatre.com • 713/522-7722.

Dance USA. Dance of Asian America, Dominic Walsh Dance Theater, Hope Stone Dance Company, Houston Ballet, Houston Metropolitan Dance Company, Psophonia Dance Company, Revolve Dance Company, Sandra Organ Dance Company, Suchu Dance, Travesty Dance Group, and Urban Souls Dance Company perform in this one night-only spectacular held in conjunction with Dance USA's annual conference. June 5, 8pm. Wortham Theater Center's Brown Auditorium, 501 Texas Ave. Tickets: \$17+. danceusa.org • 713/227-2787.

The Farnsworth Invention. Creator of *The West Wing*, Aaron Sorkin's new play about the race between two men to invent television. June 5-28. Alley Theatre's Hubbard Stage, 615 Texas Ave. alleytheatre.org • 713/220-5700.

Natural Disasters. Jack Heifner's *Tropical Depression* and *Twister*, two weather-based one-act comedies. June 5-July 4. Theatre Suburbia, 4106 Way Out West Dr. theatresuburbia.com • 713/682-3525.

Swan Lake. Houston Ballet's revival of Stanton Welch's 2006 staging of Tchaikovsky's classic score about a beautiful maiden transformed into a swan. June 11-21. Wortham Center's Brown Theater, 501 Texas Ave. houstonballet.org • 713/227-2787.

Houston Symphony 20th Season Celebration features Robert Franz conducting. June 12, 8pm. The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, 2005 Lake Robbins Drive in The Woodlands. Tickets: \$15. woodlandscenter.org • 713/629-3700.

Cabaret. The decadent world of 1930s Berlin comes to life in this Tony Award-winning musical masterpiece. June 16-28. Theatre Under the Stars. Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. tuts.com.

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Rudy Munguia died on April 26, 2009, in the city of Lincoln, United Kingdom. A funeral was held in Lincoln on May 1. In addition, a memorial service was held in Houston.

Rudy was born on May 3, 1962, in Raymondville, Texas. He graduated from Raymondville High School and attended Texas A&I University in Kingsville from '83-'86, where he was a member of Delta Sigma Pi fraternity. Rudy moved from Kingsville to San Antonio where he was employed by Marshall Fields. He then moved to Houston where he continued with Marshall Fields. Rudy received a degree from San Jacinto College in 2001 in Interior Design. He held various design positions for Houston employers including Calico Corners, Memorial Galleries, and Lowe's Home Improvement. He moved to Lincoln, United Kingdom, in October 2007.

Rudy enjoyed hands-on activities involving household improvements and design. He also enjoyed collecting and refinishing antique fans and riding his mountain bike.

Rudy is survived by his partner in life, Tom Burley, and his many family and friends across Texas.

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ages. June 18, 20, 26-27, 8pm. Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park, 100 Concert Drive. Free. milleroutdoortheatre.com • 281/373-3386.

Kid Rock and Lynyrd Skynyrd share the stage for some down-home southern rock. The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, 2005 Lake Robbins Drive in The Woodlands. June 20, 6:30pm. Tickets: \$36-\$126. woodlandscenter.org • 713/629-3700.

Memories of Spain. Dancepath theatre artistic director Sara Draper choreographs and performs in a repertory concert featuring her signature work, *El Cerrojo (The Door Latch)*. June 20, 8pm. Hobby Center for the Performing Arts' Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby St. Tickets: \$11-\$60. dancepath.com • 713/315-2525.

Guitar Shorty. Both Jimi Hendrix and Buddy Guy said they were musically influenced by this master bluesman and former Houstonian touring in support of his 2007 Blues Music Award-winning album, *We the People*. June 20, 10:30pm. Dan Electro's Guitar Bar, 1031 E. 24th St. Tickets: \$10. 713/862-8707.

The Wiz. Paldro Harris directs the funkier, musical version of *The Wizard of Oz*. June 20-July 1. Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main St. Tickets: \$15-\$45. ensemblehouston.com • 713/520-0055.

PERFORMING ARTS

For Young People

Sounds Like Fun! Houston Symphony presents family-focused concerts featuring the "Instrument Petting Zoo." June 1, 7:30pm: Kingwood Park High School, 4015 Woodland Hills Drive, Kingwood. June 9, 7:30pm: The Centrum, 6823 Cypresswood Drive, Spring. June 10, 7:30pm: First United Methodist Church, 4308 West Davis Street, Conroe. June 11, 10:30am: Christ Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 8300 Katy Freeway. June 13, 7:30pm: St. Bernadette Catholic Church, 15500 El Camino Real. June 23, 11am: Miller Outdoor Theatre, 100 Concert Dr. houston.symphonysymphony.org • 713/238-1477.

Winnie-the-Pooh. Daria James directs A.A. Milne's classic story of a bear and his honey, this time told in musical form. June 6, 13, 20, July 11 and 18, 1 and 4pm; July 13-16, 9:45 and 11:30am. Main Street Theater-Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. Tickets: \$8. mainstreettheater.com • 713/524-6706.

Summer Arts Workshops. Docented by professional artist and educator Patrick Renner, Lost and Found provides children ages 6 to 12 an opportunity to create 3-D artworks inspired by the gallery's Leonardo Drew exhibition. Tuesdays and Thursdays and/or Wednesdays and Fridays, June 16-26. Blaffer Gallery, U of H's Fine Arts Building, entrance 16 off Cullen Blvd. Registration: \$40 per session. blaffergallery.org • 713/743-9971.

Family Fun Films with Pop Stars. Northwest Film Forum's Liz Shepherd curates shorts from The Best of Children's Film Festival Seattle 2009, preceded by a live performance from the group formerly known as Dads Who Rock. June 20, 7pm. Discover Green Park, 1500 McKinney Ave. Free. aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.

RADIO

After Hours: Queer Radio with Attitude features the QM2 (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. Sunday mornings, 1-4am. KPFT 90.1 FM. kpft.org • 713/526-5738.

Queer Voices. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. Monday nights, 9-11pm. KPFT 90.1 FM. kpft.org • 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

New Art in Austin: 20 to Watch. Organized by Austin Museum of Art, the third in a triennial exhibition showcasing emerging Central Texas artists whose work stretches the boundaries of contemporary art. Through June 13. DiverseWorks Main Gallery, 1117 East Freeway. 713/335-3445.

Conceal/Disce. Paintings by Israel's Hagit Barkai and photographs by Iran's Tala Vahabzadeh. Through June 19. Art League Houston's front gallery, 1953 Montrose. artleaguehouston.org • 713/523-9530.

Vulnerable Ecologies. British sculptor Susan Stockwell recycles computers into delicate architecture. Through June 19. Art League Houston's main gallery, 1953 Montrose. artleaguehouston.org • 713/523-9530.

Project Row Houses: Home. Space. Place. Seven featured artists explore ideas regarding identity, culture, struggles, and perseverance in the Third Ward neighborhood. Through June 21. 2505-2517 Holman St. projectrowhouses.org • 713/526-7662.

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Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main. craftshouston.org
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The Retablos: Art for the Masses. An insight into the art of
the retablo, small oil paintings on tin, zinc, wood, or copper. Free.
Through July 12. The Heritage Society Museum. Sam Houston
Park, 1100 Bagby St. heritagesociety.org • 713/655-1912.

Perspectives 166: Torsten Slama. The post-apocalyptic
worlds imagined by Berlin-based artist Torsten Slama features
drawings, paintings, and works in airbrush depicting architectural
and landscape scenes. Through July 26. Contemporary Arts
Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose. camh.org • 713/284-8250.

Pioneers of Contemporary Glass displays 300 pieces
of exemplary glass works. Through July 26. Museum of Fine
Arts, 1001 Bissonnet. mfah.org • 713/639-7300, 713/639-7379
(Spanish).

Existed: Leonardo Drew. Fourteen major sculptures and 12
works on paper created between 1991 and 2008 represent the
artist's abstract works. Through Aug. 1. Blaffer Gallery, University
of Houston's Fine Arts Building, entrance 16 off Cullen Boulevard.
blaffergallery.org • 713/743-9971.

The Nature of Diamonds. Exhibit includes the Elton John
Cartier shoulder brooch and the 2,000-diamond corsage
ornament made in 1855 for the niece of Napoleon Bonaparte.
Through Sept. 7. Houston Museum of Natural Science, One
Hermann Circle Dr. hmns.org • 713/639-4629.

Amy Blakemore: Photographs 1988-2008. Thirty-six
intriguing works from Houston-based Blakemore's collection
includes black and white street settings to lush colorful
landscapes. Through Sept. 13. Museum of Fine Arts' Audrey
Jones Beck Building, 5601 Main St. mfah.org • 713/639-7300,
713/639-7379 (Spanish).

Ways of Seeing: Photography of Ishimoto Yasuhiro
300 photographs reveal why Yasuhiro was considered the
most influential Japanese photographer of his generation in the
development of postwar Japanese photography. Through Sept.
13. Museum of Fine Arts' Caroline Wiess Law Building, 1001 Bis-
sonnet. mfah.org • 713/639-7300, 713/639-7379 (Spanish).

**Terra Cotta Warriors: Guardians of China's First
Emperor** features life-size clay figures and artifacts excavated
in 1974. Through Oct. 18. Houston Museum of Natural Science,
One Hermann Circle Drive. hmns.org • 713/639-4629.

Par Avion. Kemah resident Gordon Phillipson's watercolors.
Artist's reception June 5 with exhibit on view through June 30.
Canal Street Gallery, 2219 Canal St. canalstreetgallery.com •
713/223-2219.

**North Looks South: Building a Latin American Art
Collection.** More than 80 works celebrate MFAH's major Latin
American art acquisitions ranging in date from the 1920s to
the present. June 7-Sept. 27. Museum of Fine Arts' Caroline
Wiess Law Building, 1001 Bissonnet. mfah.org • 713/639-7300,
713/639-7379 (Spanish).

Perspectives Talk: Gus Kopriva. The author of *Broken
Brushes: German Art from the Kaiser to Hitler* and director of

Redbud Gallery in Houston discusses German expressionist art.
June 18, 6:30pm. Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216
Montrose Blvd. camh.org • 713/284-8250.

DAILY

Daily (Mon.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. Free HIV testing, with no gold card or donation
required or requested. 9am-1pm. HCHD Thomas Street Clinic,
2015 Thomas St. 713/873-4157 • 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 locations. • **MONDAYS:** ALL STAR NEWS AND VIDEO
EMPORIUM, 3415 Katy Frwy & Studewood, 4-8pm; GEORGE SPORTS
BAR, 617 Fairview, 6-10pm. • **TUESDAYS:** 611 HYDE PARK PUB,
611 Hyde Park, 4-8pm; MIDTOWN SPA, 3100 Fannin, 4-8pm. •
WEDNESDAYS: CLUB HOUSTON, 2205 Fannin, 8pm-12am; EJ's,
2517 Ralph, 10pm-1am. • **FRIDAYS:** MIDTOWN SPA, 3100 Fannin,
5-9pm; EJ's, 2517 Ralph, Fri. 10pm-1am. • Free, confidential
syphilis testing is also offered. HIV and syphilis testing is offered
at 215 Westheimer, Monday-Thursday, 11am-7pm, and Friday,
11am-5pm. 713/830-3070.

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 (Sundays)

The Women's Group. A feminist group for all women
(where each woman defines her own feminism) hosts a new
speaker each week. 10:45am. First Unitarian Universalist
Church's Sojourner Truth Room, 5200 Fannin. Iris Sizemore,
713/529-8571.

Weekly (Mondays)

TG Support Group. Helping TransGenders Anonymous is
a facilitated support group for all transgenders, supporters,
family, and significant others. 7-9pm. TG Center, 713 Fargo.
transhouston.com • 713/520-8586.

Meditation Mondays. Shift into wisdom, self-realization, and
actualization with Big Mind led by Alan Davidson, author of *Body
Brilliance: Mastering Your Five Vital Intelligences*. 7:30-9:30pm.
1712 Fairview Ave. throughyourbody.com • 713/942-0923.

Weekly (Tuesdays)

Houston Roller Derby Rec League. Skate to train or just
recreationally with the women of the Houston Roller Derby.
7:30-9:30pm. Dairy Ashford Roller Rink, 1820 S. Dairy Ashford
St. houstonrollerderby.com.

Weekly (Thursdays)

GLBT-Friendly Depression & Bipolar Support Group.
7:15-8:30pm. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440
Harold, room 232. Free. 713/526-1018.

You Are Not Alone. GLBTQ Coming Out Support Group meets

weekly featuring an educational presentation on a specific topic,
followed by an open, confidential discussion of that topic. June
18-Aug. 6, 6pm. Donations accepted. Montrose Counseling
Center, 401 Branard. Registration: 713/529-0037, ext. 394.

Weekly (Sun., Wed., Sat.)

Love and Rackets. Houston Tennis Club welcomes players and
enthusiasts of all skill levels. Sundays, 9am-noon; Wednesdays,
7:30-9pm; clinics, every Saturday 9-10:30am. Memorial Park
Tennis Center, 1500 Memorial Loop. Annual membership, \$30;
court fees, \$3 per session. houstontennisclub.org.

Biweekly (2nd & 4th Wed.)

City of Houston TransGender Task Force helps Houston-
area transgenders access medical and social services to reduce
the incidence of HIV. 7-9pm. TG Center, 713 Fargo. transhouston.com • 713/520-8586.

Biweekly (2nd & 4th Fri.)

Transgender Buddhist Meditation Group offers a tradi-
tional Theravada Buddhist vipassana 30-minute meditation
for transgenders. 7-9 pm at the TG Center, 713 Fargo. transhouston.com • 713/520-8586.

Semimonthly (2nd Tues. & 4th Sat.)

Some Transgenders Are Guys (STAG) is a facilitated group
for female-to-male identified individuals, supporters, family, and
significant others. 2nd Tuesday, 7-9pm and 4th Saturday, 5-6pm.
TG Center, 713 Fargo. transhouston.com • 713/520-8586.

Monthly (1st Sun.)

Finding Your Voice. PFLAG Houston's speakers bureau panel
discusses experiences speaking to various groups, organizations,
and corporations. Small groups break off after the program for
discussion in a safe, confidential environment. 2pm. St. Paul's
United Methodist Church, Jones Building, 5501 S. Main St.
pflaghouston.org.

Monthly (3rd Sun.)

LOAF Meet and Greet. Lesbians Over Age Fifty meet for munch-
ies/fellowship; bring some of both. 2pm. 1034 West 17th.

Monthly (2nd Tues.)

Free Legal Consultations for PWAs. AIDS Foundation
Houston and Katine & Nechman L.L.P. offer 30 minutes of free
legal consultation on any legal issue to persons with HIV and
AIDS, by appointment. Katine & Nechman, 1111 North Loop
West, Suite 180. lawkn.com • 713/808-1000.

Monthly (3rd Thurd.)

Share with PFLAG Houston in a safe, confidential setting. 7:30pm.
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's Chatham Room, 1805 Alabama.
pflaghouston.org.

Monthly (1st Fri.)

Transgender Social. Dinner and a movie and/or games and a
speaker of interest to the trans community. 7-10pm. TG Center,
713 Fargo. Tickets: \$5. transhouston.com • 713/520-8586.

Monthly (1st Sat.)

First Saturday Arts Market. Local artists display and sell
original works of art, local musicians entertain. 11am-6pm. Wind
Water Gallery, 548 West 19th. Free. yalestreetmarket.com.

Monthly (2nd Sat.)

Second Saturdays at Winter St. Studios. Meet and hang
with artists in the studios marked by a large red dot on or near
the door. 1-6pm. Winter St. Studios, 2101 Winter St. winterstreetstudios.net • 713/862-0082.

Monthly (4th Sat.)

TG Support Group. Texas Association for Transsexual Support
(TATS) is a professionally facilitated support group for those
identifying as being a transsexual. 4-5pm. TG Center, 713 Fargo.
transhouston.com • 713/520-8586.

Significant Others. TG Support Group provides support to
the wives, husbands, girlfriends, and boyfriends of individuals
whose partners are considering transition. 3-4pm. TG Center,
713 Fargo. transhouston.com • 713/520-8586.

6 (Sat.)

Heights Fun Run. Houston Heights Association presents the
24th running of one of Houston's most popular shorter jaunts of-
fering a 5K walk, a 5K run, and a 1K for children. 7:30am. Marmion
Park, 18th @ Heights Blvd. \$15-\$20 to participate; free to watch.
Benefits HHA. houstonheights.org • 713/861-4002, ext. 4.

7 (Sun.)

Reflexology Talk. Debora of Wellness Bodyworks defines
and discusses reflexology. bodyworks09@yahoo.com •
832/325-8895.

13 (Sat.)

**Safe Schools 'Cultivating Respect' Certification Pro-
gram.** PFLAG Houston trains and certifies its members to go
directly into schools with community resources to confront
bullying in a comprehensive and effective manner. 10am-5pm.
Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. #103. Free; box
lunch provided. pflaghouston.org.

24 (Wed.)

Lesbian Dinner Group. Single and coupled women come for
a meal, but stay for the camaraderie. 7:30pm. Cafe Express, 1422
West Gray. Lesbian.Dinner.Group@gmail.com.

26-28 (Fri.-Sun.)

DockDogs. Dogs of all breeds are welcome to compete in
distance and aerial events, as seen on ESPN and the Outdoor
Channel. Free. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney Ave. discoverygreen.com.

27 (Sat.)

Weather Pioneer Day. Learn about Harris and Galveston
counties' rich and varied weather history and weather pioneers
and meteorologists. 10am-4pm. John C. Freeman Weather
Museum, 5104 Caroline. Free. wxresearch.org • 713/529-3076.

PLANNING AHEAD

Aug. 4-Sept. 17
(Applications due June 15)

Stop Hate. Holocaust Museum Houston needs volunteer
docents to help teach the dangers of prejudice, hatred, and
apathy. Tuesdays and Thursdays, Aug. 4-Sept. 17, 10am-noon.
Applications due June 15. Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401
Caroline St. hmh.org • 713/942-8000, ext. 102.

CALENDAR DEADLINE

for the July issue:
Tuesday, June 9, 5 p.m.

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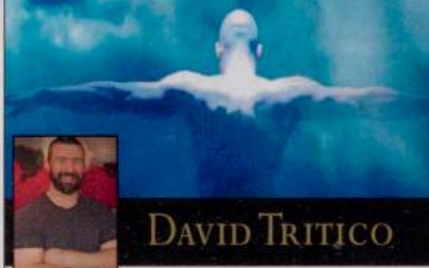
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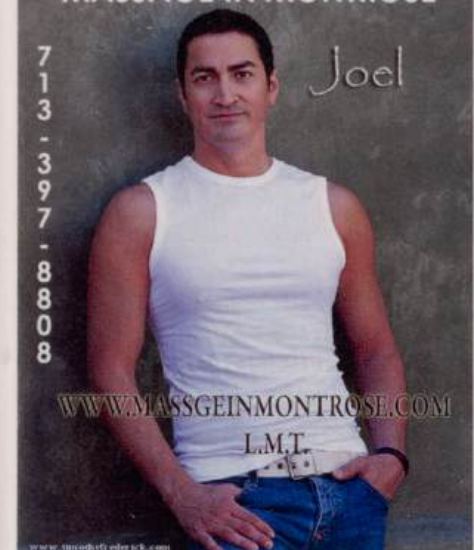
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OutThere

Photos by Dalton DeHart

Bayou City Women's Chorus
AFRICA - A Night of
Celebration on May 19.



Bunnies on the Bayou - Funds Distribution Party
on May 9.



HRC 2009 Gala "Imagine, Believe, Achieve" on May 16.



Lane Lewis for City Council (District A) Campaign Kick-Off on May 7.



Montrose Softball League Fundraiser at JR's on April 25.

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Legal Notice

If You Are A Consumer Who Purchased Norvir, A Proposed Class Action Settlement May Affect Your Rights.

There is a proposed class action Settlement with Abbott Laboratories ("Abbott") involving the drug Norvir. The lawsuit is called *In re Abbott Laboratories Norvir Antitrust Litigation*, Docket No. 04-CV-1511-CW, pending in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. This notice summarizes your rights and options. More information is available in a detailed notice described below.

What is Norvir?

Norvir is the brand name for ritonavir, a drug manufactured by Abbott. It is routinely used as a booster to drugs called protease inhibitors, used to treat infection by the HIV virus.

What is the Case About?

The lawsuit claims that Abbott unlawfully raised the wholesale price of Norvir by 400% in an attempt to restrict competition in the market for protease inhibitors. The lawsuit asked the Court to award money damages and injunctive relief. Abbott claims that a) the price increase reflected Norvir's changed use from a high-dose protease inhibitor to a low-dose booster; b) most patients saw no change in their out-of-pocket costs; and c) the current price of Norvir is reasonable. Abbott also denies that the price increase had any negative impact on competition. However, both parties have agreed to settle the lawsuit.

Am I Included in the Class Action?

You are a member of the Individual Class (consumers) if you:

- Purchased or paid for Norvir for use as a booster to other protease inhibitors;
- The Norvir was intended for consumption by yourself or your family; and
- You paid all or part of the cost of Norvir between December 3, 2003 to July 30, 2008.

The proposed Settlement also includes a Third-Party Payor Class of entities such as insurance companies and employee benefit funds ("TPPs") that reimbursed people for purchases of Norvir.

What Does the Proposed Settlement Provide?

To settle the lawsuit, Abbott has agreed to pay \$10 million, \$14.375 million, or \$27.5 million. The amount Abbott will pay depends upon the outcome of an appeal pending before the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. If Abbott pays \$10 million, then this

amount, net of allowed attorneys' fees and costs, will be distributed to charities involved in the treatment and prevention of HIV and AIDS, and no separate fund will be made available to Class Members.

If Abbott pays \$14.375 million or \$27.5 million, then either amount, net of attorneys' fees and costs, will be distributed as follows: (1) thirty percent (30%) will be paid to (a) Individual Class Members (consumers) residing in California, and (b) Institutional Class Members (TPPs) who have reimbursed or paid in whole or in part for the cost of Norvir for individuals residing in California during the Settlement Class Period; and (2) seventy percent (70%) will be distributed to charities involved in the treatment and prevention of HIV and AIDS. Attorneys fees and expenses will be deducted before any of the above distributions.

What Are My Legal Rights?

- If you wish to remain a member of the Class, you do not have to do anything. You will be bound by all the Court's decisions in the case and cannot sue Abbott for any of the claims in this lawsuit in the future. However, if you are an Individual Class Member who is a California resident or an Institutional Class Member who purchased Norvir on behalf of a California resident, and wish to be eligible for a settlement distribution should funds become available, you must complete a confidential registration statement available by calling the number below or by visiting www.NorvirClassAction.com. This form must be postmarked no later than July 24, 2009.
- If you do not wish to be a member of the Class, you must send a letter requesting to be excluded. Your letter must be postmarked on or before July 24, 2009. If you exclude yourself, you may be able to sue Abbott on your own. However, you will not be able to file a claim for money that is made available as the result of this lawsuit.
- If you wish to object or comment on the lawsuit or appear in the lawsuit, your request must be in writing and postmarked no later than July 24, 2009.

The Court has appointed Counsel to represent all Class Members, but you may hire your own attorney at your own cost, if you wish.

For a Detailed Notice or More Information

Call toll-free: 1-877-625-9425 (Se Habla Español)

or Visit: www.NorvirClassAction.com

Or Write: Norvir Settlement Claims Administrator
c/o Rust Consulting Inc., P.O. Box 24784, West Palm Beach, FL 33416

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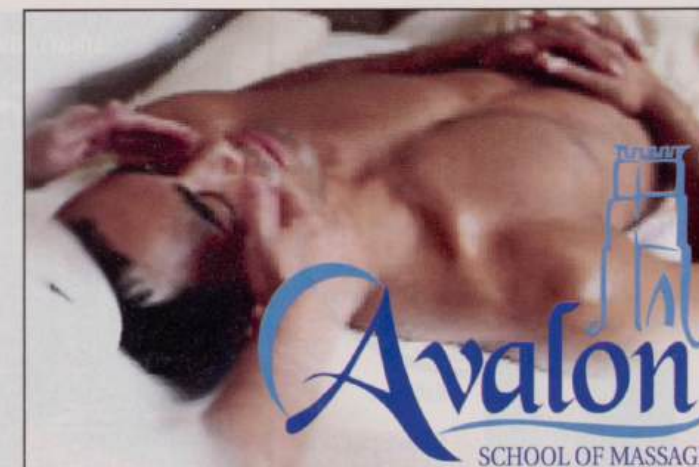
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Photos by Dalton DeHart

Lady Bunny at
Guava Lamp's
10th Anniversary
Party on May 9.



Unity Banquet 2009 on May 2.



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—ERNEST HOLMES, *The Science of Mind*

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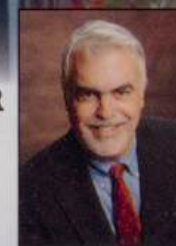
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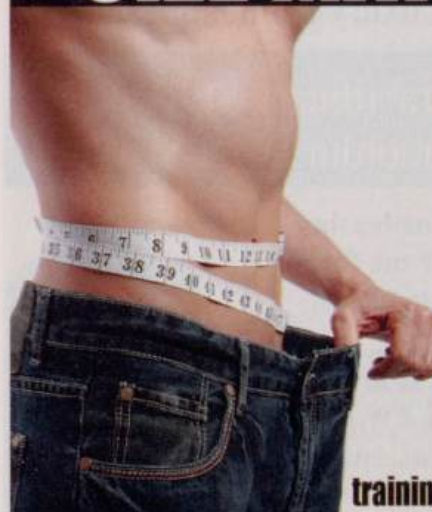
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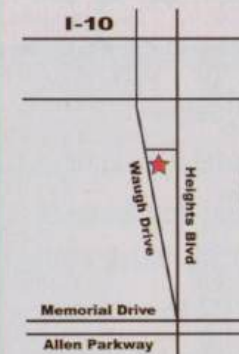
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Business News

by Nancy Ford

HOPE THROUGH DENIM Representatives from top jeans manufacturer Levi's Brand have announced the launch of the clothing giant's "Give Them Hope Now" campaign supporting the Hetrick-Martin Institute, home of the Harvey Milk school in New York City. The online campaign, which runs through November, aims to raise \$500,000 to fund HMI's work with LGBT and questioning youth. Details: givethemhopenow.org.

SPEAKING OF LEVI'S Wells Fargo, along with Levi's Brand, were both honored by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation for their commitment to gay-inclusive advertising. The two companies were honored at a May 18 reception in New York City at which time GLAAD announced the launch of its Advertising Media Program. GLAAD representatives say the new program aims to "monitor all forms of advertising and work to ensure fair and accurate representations of the LGBT community or demand action when defamation occurs." Details: glaad.org.

LEGAL AIDS Mitchell Katine and John Nechman, partners at Katine & Nechman L.L.P., have announced the law firm is partnering with AIDS Foundation Houston to provide 30 minutes of free legal consultation by appointment to any HIV-positive client on the second Tuesday of every month. The

service is open to any HIV-positive individual from the Houston area seeking free counsel. If any action is recommended during a consultation, Katine & Nechman L.L.P. says it will take steps when applicable or make referrals to appropriate legal aid offices, including the Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program and South East Texas Legal Clinic. Details: lawkn.com • 713/808-1000.

ON THE MOVE Metaphysical Matrix has moved to its new location at 2360 W. Alabama, offering even more incense, candles, statues, books, singing bowls, minerals, salt lamps, Feng Shui items, and unique jewelry. Psychic fairs are held each second and fourth Saturdays. Details: 713/780-9995.

SWEET CHARITY AND MORE Dessert Gallery Bakery & Café has moved its flagship store from its former tucked-away location to a more accessible space at 3600 Kirby Drive, suite D. Owner Sara Brook says gift items and original artwork created by pediatric patients from the Children's Cancer Hospital at M.D. Anderson are also available at the café, with proceeds benefiting the hospital's programs for young patients. Details: dessertgallery.com • 713/522-9999.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME Despite the economic downturn, things are looking up for those seeking

to invest in real estate. "Rates are extremely low, and now is the best time to buy your new home or refinance your existing one," Cody Grizzoffi says. Grizzoffi is a senior mortgage loan officer with Bank of America Home Loans, formerly known as Countrywide Home Loans. Details: codygrizzoffi.com • 832/541-1103.

MORE GEMS IW Marks Jewelers has consolidated inventory following the closing of its Sugar Land store, offering a bigger selection of diamonds, jewelry, and Swiss watches at its original location (3841 Bellaire Blvd.). Details: iwmarks.com • 713/668-5000.

TAMU AWARDS On April 29, Texas A&M University's Department of Multicultural Services announced the recipients of its 2009 Diversity Awards. The first winner of the Phyllis R. Frye Award was Dr. James Rosenheim for nurturing relationships with TAMU's LGBT community for over two decades, both on and off campus. Vanessa Delgado won 2009 Aggie Allies Rainbow Award for leadership as president of the student organization, GLBTA, as well as her work at the GLBT Resource Center and on the Student Diversity Alliance. The GLBTA student organization was also recognized with the Diversity Service Organizational Award from the Department of Multicultural Services. ■

Annis Parker continued from page 46

families," she says. "They taught me to be straightforward and to always tell the truth." She was particularly impressed that her father paid off all his debts and restored his full credit after losing his fishing camp.

"My grandmothers and my mother were all strong, working women with their own careers, and they were wonderful role models," Parker adds. But she feels that unreasonable expectations are often placed on women, and the role of women in society is an issue close to her heart.

Parker saw many bright, upper-middle-class female students at Rice suffer with bulimia and anorexia. She herself experienced violence from an abusive girlfriend. When a professional colleague was accused of sexual harassment by another female employee, Parker stood up for her—explaining to their boss that the two women had once been lesbian partners—and the charges were dropped. Now she reaches out to help young girls and women understand that they can overcome social fears and neurotic behavior and escape abusive relationships.

Current Involvements

Active in the Houston community, Parker currently serves on the board of directors of the Holocaust Museum Houston and Girls Inc. She is also a member of the advisory boards of the Houston Zoo, the Montrose Counseling Center, Bering Omega Community Services, and Trees for Houston. She is a past recipient of the Good Brick Award from the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance for her restoration of historic properties in the Old Sixth Ward. In 1990, Parker was named female grand marshal of Houston's annual Pride Parade.

Recently Parker gave many of her personal papers to the Women's Archive at the University of Houston. The same archive houses papers from the late Eleanor Tinsley and former Houston Mayor Kathy Whitmire.

Parker's opposition is unlikely to dig up anything from her past that she has not already publicly revealed. She admits that she sometimes stresses her campaign staff by her willingness to share details

of her life. "But I want people to be able to get to know me," she says, "and all my experiences make me what I am. I come as a complete package."

In keeping with that sense of candor, Parker reveals that her father, Les Parker, is her adoptive father. "My parents were

change. "When I was in the private sector and we wanted to do something, it was done instantly," she says. "But a city is a big bureaucracy, with a lot of stakeholders, and it can take a long time to get things done."

"The number one issue for this city now is the economy," Parker says. "We need a mayor who can manage the city in the current economy. We need someone who doesn't have to undergo a learning curve, someone who can maintain our forward movement, someone who can manage to the bottom line. No one else in this race has the depth of experience that I have. I have experience in the private sector; I owned a small business; I served on civic associations; and I've worked for 12 years in city government."

Parker is known for her advocacy of such issues as jobs creation, light rail transit, alternative energy, the Houston Police Academy, historic preservation, city parks, after-school programs, libraries, low-rent apartment ordinances, crime prevention, and pollution control. "Houston is an open, vibrant, global city," she says. "We are a big cosmopolitan place where people from all kinds of cultures and backgrounds can mix and be successful."

"I have enjoyed being the City Controller for the past six years," Parker reflects, "but it's an administrative job. I have missed being able to have a direct impact on my constituents. I look forward to the possibility of being Houston's next mayor and being able to meet the needs of the citizens of Houston, rather than the City of Houston."

"I've always given 100 percent of myself to my jobs as a Council member and as City Controller," she says, "and I've always made myself available to explain why I've made the decisions I've made and to be accountable for those decisions."

From the days when she was a shy little girl in Spring Branch up to her current role as City Controller, Annise Parker has consistently proven the power of human determination and perseverance. If elected mayor of Houston this coming November, she would become the highest ranking openly LGBT-elected municipal officeholder in the United States.

Brandon Wolf also writes about Preserving Houston's LGBT History and the Houston Transgender Archives in this issue of OutSmart magazine.



2009: the 21st-century candidate used online technology to announce her candidacy in the Houston mayor's race.

high school classmates who married, but they divorced when I was one and a half years old," she says. "My mother remarried when I was three years old, and my stepfather adopted me when I was 12, and my name was legally changed. He was a wonderful father to me and my sister." Parker says that her birth father is still alive and lives in Central Texas. "I'm the spitting image of him," she says. Except for that information, she retains a strong sense of personal privacy on the subject.

The Important Role of Local Government

"I love local government," Parker says. "Local government has to work. It has to produce every day. The water has to flow; the trash has to be picked up; the traffic signals have to function. A city is like a living organism. All the parts have to mesh. And when they do, it's a great feeling."

Parker says she loves to identify a problem, find an answer, and implement the solution. She is especially proud of creating the city's \$20 million Rainy Day Fund. "Austin and Washington are about keeping the other guys from doing things," she says, "but city government is about fixing things. As a Council member, I worked on a whole range of quality-of-life issues. As City Controller, I've strongly endorsed the use of technology." She recently implemented a paperless payroll system.

The most frustrating thing for Parker about local government is the pace of

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BAR & CLUB GUIDE

Houston

LA ACADEMIA

Hot salsa and Latin flavor rule at this dance bar on the southwest side of Houston. Weekends often offer high-production drag shows, drink specials. 5829 S. Gessner • 713/534-5422 • myspace.com/laacademiadub

AZTECA'S VIP LOUNGE

The talented DJ Rocky B holds court and spins for "the best girl-4-girl night in Houston," held each Friday atop this Greenway-area Mexican restaurant. 2207 Richmond Ave. Details: throbparties.info.

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 Wednesdays ladies' night. 1318 Westheimer • 713/526-2271.

BAYOU CITY BAR & GRILL

Experience a new attitude and new menu at this trendy Montrose spot. Open Tuesday through Sunday (7-11 a.m. on Friday and Saturday) for lunch, dinner, and after-the-bars-close dining. 2409 Grant St. • 713/522-2867 • bayoucitybar.com.

BEER ISLAND

Tropical touches combine with Texas roadhouse chic at this comfortable Heights hangout. Beer is king, but the Island is also becoming famous for their sake shots. 2631 White Oak Dr. • 713/862-4670.

BLUR

This multi-level dance club features an expansive patio upstairs lounge, and balconies that overlook the busy Pacific St. traffic. The ladies enjoy Wet and Wild Wednesdays, 18-year-olds are welcome on Thurs., resident DJ Lorenzo spins Wed.-Sat. nights, DJ Pollo spins Karumba Latin night on Sun. Happy hour, 8-10 p.m.; free cover before 11 p.m. 710 Pacific St. • blurbar.com.

BOCADOS

Patrons enjoy dining on the deck at this cozy Meni-area Mexican restaurant that also accommodates special events, like charitable dinners for AIDS Foundation Houston and American Cancer Society. 1312 W. Alabama • 713/523-5230.

BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM

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

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 chick-music needs. Expanded and renovated bars include multiple video screens, banquet seating, and more. 1100 Westheimer • 713/523-7217 • chancesbar.com.

CLUB 2020

Located downtown near the Toyota Center, this urban club features Clubbers Friday with male and female dancers. Its 6,400 square feet also offers theater-sized viewing screens and VIP rooms. 2020 Leeland • 713/227-9667 • club2020houston.com.

CLUB ADAM AND EDEN

Serving the collective party needs of the Clear Lake area's gay men and lesbians, the adjacent clubs are open seven days a week, offering a large video lounge, a martini bar, pool tables, a private VIP area, and a 1,200-sq. foot dance floor. 522 W. Nasa Parkway. Details: 281/557-0434 • clubadam.net.

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 Frwy, next to Colorado. crystaltheclub.com • 713-278-2582.

CROCKER

New ownership has taken over this durable Montrose nightspot that boasts "the longest happy hour in Montrose." Miss Jenny hosts Wii tournaments, with gay boxing on Wed. and gay bowling on Sun. 2312 Crocker • 713/529-3355.

COUSINS

Drag fans frequent this club in the heart of Montrose for its campy shows. Thurs.-Sun. 817 Fairview • 713/528-9204.

DECADES

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

EJ'S

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

GEORGE

Regulars rule at this comfortable neighborhood sports bar, just like most other neighborhood sports bars in town. But George's occasional benefit drag show makes it a wonderful, campy alternative. Sports Saturdays start at 3 p.m. with dart and pool tournaments; Steak Night is Sun., 3-7 p.m. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

BEHIND THE BAR

WHO: Chris Caram (l) and Wes Herren

WHERE: Tony's Corner Pocket
817 W. Dallas • 713/571-7870
tonyscornerpocketbar.com

WHAT'S UP: Outside, Tony's patio bar provides a breathtaking skyline view. Inside, the bar celebrates Pride all month on its expansive stage.



GUAVA LAMP

The club left Shepherd Plaza and reopened with a larger space near Allen Parkway. Guava Lamp presents karaoke nights on Sun. and Wed. and offers a free happy hour buffet on Fri. 570 Waugh • 713/524-3359.

IN-N-OUT

Heights residents appreciate this nearby alternative to Montrose haunts with state-of-the-art large digital displays, Internet jukebox, comfy seating, and daily drink specials. 1537 N. Shepherd Dr. • 713/589-9780.

JR'S BAR & GRILL

With house emcee Kofi, OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest reigning drag champion, this Montrose standard offers shows Sun.-Wed., as well as pool tables, go-go boys, and karaoke. 808 Pacific St. • 713/521-2519.

LADY BARBARA'S CLUB TRUE COLORS

Lady Barbara and MC Zip, who previously held court at Bella Aida Gardens and Bartini, have opened this new southwest club for "everyone in the community" featuring "Free For All" open mic on Sundays. 2727 Crossview Dr. • 713/266-6505.

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 Lukebox Wednesdays event. 1022 Westheimer • 713/527-9669.

METEOR

Check out the classy baby-grand piano at this posh but comfy lounge on the downtown edge of Montrose. The spacious double-room bar offers multiple giant plasma video screens; the updated patio accommodates smokers in style. 2306 Genesee • 713/521-0123 • meteorlounge.com.

MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

This comfortable neighborhood club doubles as a piano bar with a regular roster of evening pianists including Wayne Gray and Roger Woest. 1419 Richmond Ave. • 713/520-8446.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

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

RAINBOW ROOM

Every Thursday, Heather Moon hosts karaoke at this north Houston club. DJ Kenny supplies music on Fri. and Sat. 527 Barren Springs • 281/872-0215 • therainbroombar.com.

RIPCORD

Named best place to show off your leather in the 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 • theripcord.com.

THE 611

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

SOUTH BEACH

This expansive, ultra-chic dance club is a frequent winner of OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest awards, with Billboard Magazine favorite DJ Jimmy Skinner and frequent high-producing-value drag shows on Sunday. DJ Franky Boy spins Thursdays for Noche Latina Latin Night. 810 Pacific St. • 713/529-SOBE • southbeachthenightclub.com.

TONY'S CORNER POCKET

This comfortable club located close to downtown has one of the friendliest bar staffs in town, both inside and outside at its patio bar. The raised stage where local charities perform also features an amateur dance contest each Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 11 p.m. Opens daily at noon. 817 W. Dallas. 713/571-7870 • tonyscornerpocketbar.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

With its two pool tables, 52-inch plasma televisions, and large dance floor, the gayest spot on the north-side also accommodates private parties, holy unions, and receptions. Enjoy Wii tournaments Fridays, 7-9 p.m., and Sundays, 5-8 p.m. 247041-45N, Suite 103. 281/298-9035 • www.ranchhill.com • myspace.com/theranchhillsaloon.

Humble

WHISPERS

Northerly GLBTs meet at this comfy neighborhood bar that offers pool, darts, video games, karaoke Thursday, and dancing. 226 First St. • 281/359-2900 • whispersbar.com.

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. Thurs. is karaoke night, with cabaret/variety shows on Fri. and Sat. nights. 31st and Seawall Blvd. • 409/765-6911 • 3rdcoastbeachbar.com.

CLUB GROOVE

This spacious second-story club where gay and straight patrons mix comfortably boasts 5,000 square feet of dance and lounge space. Drag and live performers entertain on two stages. 2409 Market • 409/789-9134 • myspace.com/groovegalveston.

THE PINK DOLPHIN

Opened by Eldridge Langlinas, 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 Sat. and Sun. nights, the Ladies of Lafitte show takes the stage. 2501 Avenue Q (at 25th) • 409/765-9092.

Beaumont

THE COPA

This popular two-story club provides a friendly place for Lamar University and east Texas GLBTs to shoot pool, dance, enjoy karaoke, and take in the occasional drag show. Open Wednesday through Sunday. 304 Orleans • 409/832-4206 • myspace.com/officialcopanightclub.

ORLEANS STREET PUB AND PATIO

The place to hang for food, fun, and booze in a newly renovated pub, in good weather or bad. Open every night from 7 pm-2 am. 650 Orleans • 409/835-4243.

Bryan/College Station

HALO VIDEO BAR

The only GLBT dance club in Bryan/College station, this sleek spot is open Thurs.-Sat. Smack in the middle of AggieLand, "our venue is always packed with the hotties," the owners promise. 121 North Main • 979/823-6174 • halobics.com.

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(SPAP)**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2009
3:00 P.M.**

Guest Speaker:
Dwayne R. Haught, MSN, RN
Manager, Texas HIV Medication Program
Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

LOCATION:
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1407 Hawthorne, Houston, TX 77006

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SignOut

by Lilly Roddy

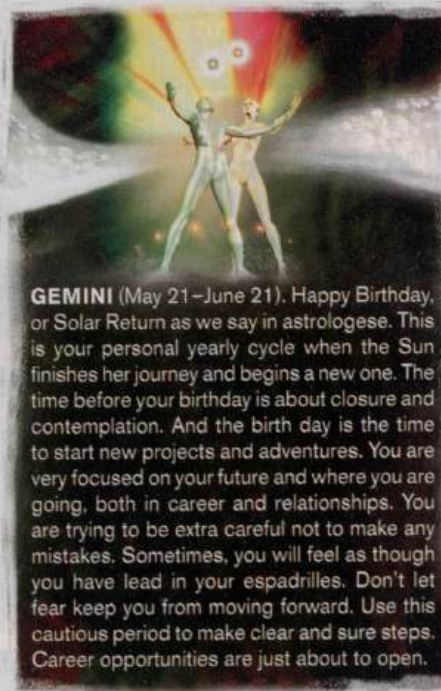
June begins with no inner planets retrograde for the first time since the end of February. We should have smoother sailing for the next three months. And by this time, some of the decisions in the government should have been reached. We are approaching the summer solstice on Father's Day, June 21, 12:46 a.m. Solstice means "sun standing still." The Sun appears to rise and set in the same places on the horizon for four days. Normally the Sun moves north or south as it rises and sets on the horizon as we move from season to season. Both solstice points—Summer, the first day of Cancer, and Winter, the first day of Capricorn—are formed by the intersections of the ecliptic, the apparent path around the Sun and the Celestial Equator, the equator of the Earth, projected into space. More science next month. • The Sun begins her journey in Gemini and enters Cancer on the 21st. Mercury finished her trip through Taurus and goes home to Gemini on the 13th. Venus rushes from Aries into her home, Taurus, on the 6th. Mars is grinding his way through Taurus, slowly but surely. Jupiter and Neptune remain in Aquarius, Saturn in Virgo, Uranus in Pisces, and Pluto in Capricorn.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). Getting your word and message out to people is very important to you this month. There could be so many details that some lose interest in your conversations. Money is way too easy to spend this month. Keep your purse closed or the money will fly out. This is a good time to seek new partners or to renew your existing relationship. The last third of the month can be a time when there are some upsets at work. Keep your eyes and ears open. There are some management changes being made and you want to keep your options open.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). It is an active month for you with both Mars, planet of action and confrontation, and Venus, planet of love and possession, moving through your sign at the same time. This is a time when your desire nature and your action nature will both be strong. You will not appear to be the same patient person as we normally know. If there is a position you want at work, or a person you want to date, or some problem that you are having with someone, romantic or otherwise, you will not waste any time telling him or her what you think. You may be the most surprised person by your actions.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). You are in your spiritual cocoon this month. And you are only coming out if you can be coaxed by your friends. You will prefer to remain in a contemplative or creative state. You are hatching all sorts of new ideas for your new business projects. Try to take some time developing these ideas. Some of you will be starting your own business under this yearly cycle. Relationships can be a bit tense around the 20th and 21st. You may feel that you are being controlled or pushed by others unfairly. Watch what you say as words could have an unrecoverable impact on people or situations. And finally, at the end of the month, make sure that you spend time with friends because that can really help you with perspective.

LEO (July 23–August 22). You are especially



GEMINI (May 21–June 21). Happy Birthday, or Solar Return as we say in astrology. This is your personal yearly cycle when the Sun finishes her journey and begins a new one. The time before your birthday is about closure and contemplation. And the birth day is the time to start new projects and adventures. You are very focused on your future and where you are going, both in career and relationships. You are trying to be extra careful not to make any mistakes. Sometimes, you will feel as though you have lead in your espadrilles. Don't let fear keep you from moving forward. Use this cautious period to make clear and sure steps. Career opportunities are just about to open.

career-motivated this month. This can be a time where you will want to take on greater leadership roles or start something on your own. If you don't step forward and address this energy, your presence could draw anger or confrontation from others, unknowingly on your part. Watch for misplaced loyalty on your part. All people will want to put themselves first. This continues to be a very good time for relationships, both business and personal. If you are single, this is a very good month to market yourself. If you are partnered, then you are feeling more optimistic about your relationship than you have in a while. Otherwise, you have already left and are looking for greener pastures.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). There is a lot of focus on you learning and/or teaching this month. Some of this may come through travel, change of locales, or having great contact with people from different places. Your mind is open to all sorts of new ideas. You are able to comprehend what is going on quickly and turn that back into usable information for others. You are in the mood to take on a great leadership role at work, but only reluctantly. Career still has you by the back of the neck, and every choice you make is based on that. Don't let Jacquelyn be a dull girl because all she is doing is working.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). Relationships take on a much deeper tone. You are wanting more closeness and emotional communications. Normally, you like to keep your relating on the intellectual level, but you are looking for some depth. Sexual passions are certainly stirred if you and your partner can get on the same vibration. If there are problems nagging away at you both, they have to be addressed first. Career aspects can be tense around the 20th and 21st. But just be your diplomatic self and you will skate through.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). This entire month is all about relationships. Are you happy? Are they happy? What do they taste like? What do they smell like? If you are single, the shopkeepers

may have to lock up their single, unmarried, legal-aged progeny. If you are partnered, this is the time to play some seek-and-capture games. If not, this can be a time of arguing and fighting so that you are forced to be together somehow. This can be a make-or-break time for relationships for some.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). You have an abundant amount of energy this month. You will be motivational, inspirational, and somewhat driven. You can direct this energy toward exercise, diet, dancing, swimming, marketing a new product, or correcting any problems with your relationships. At work, this is a great time to initiate any new projects. You can be both the cheerleader and coach. In your relationships, you are ready to plan for the future and take your relationship to the next level. Career motivation is exceptionally robust. If you don't see a future where you are, you are wasting time and need to be looking elsewhere. Get those résumés updated.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). This is a very playful month for you. You will not be as career or practically driven as you usually are. Take some time to spend with your children or with your inner child; I'm sure you haven't given her a day off in quite a while. There is plenty to organize at work, and your creative juices can be used there. Your marketing and sales skills are especially on this month. You could direct this toward exercise and health, but there had better be a big element of fun included in this. Relationship issues raise their ugly heads around the 20th, 21st, and 22nd. Duck and cover.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). Your primary focus for this month will be on home and family related activities. It is a good time for redecorating, remodeling, or even moving. On the family front, you are ready to deal with problems that are out there, and with a generous spirit. You are only too happy to help. This could also be a great time to have friends and family over for a barbecue. Personally, you are in a very contemplative mood. And you are not sure of a clear direction for your career and work life. Be sure to follow your heart this month and put logic in a supportive role.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). You are in a serious tone for this month. You may really feel that you have to get your act together this month. And that may have to start with you and where you live. Your overall concentration is aimed at making some long-term plans for both your career and your future. And next year is going to be super busy, so you have to make sure that all your decisions are made by November. And this month is a strong preliminary time to November. Some of you are considering going to school, changing your current career path, or even opening something on your own. But you are not going to be standing in the same place by this time next year. Keep your vision clear, but work on the things in the present.

Read Lilly Roddy's forecast for all of 2009, which appeared in OutSmart's January issue. For more astro-insight, log on to www.lillyroddy.com.

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2008 OutSmart Reader's Choice, Best Male Attorney, runner up

Photos by Dalton DeHart

OUT IN HOUSTON



Gala Chairs—**Jani Lopez, Meghan Stabler, Blake Beyer, and Michael Pearce** at the HRC 2009 Gala on May 16.



Noel Freeman, friends and supporters at the Noel Freeman for City Council (At-Large Position 4) Reception to launch his campaign on April 30.



D."Woodja" Flanigan is crowned Mr. Prime Choice 2009 on April 25.



(from left) **Dwayne Johnson, Terri Walker, Sylvia Stewart, Scott Turner Schofield, Melanie Rudd, Cristan Williams, Elaine Decanio, and (kneeling) Darin Quintero, and Lou Weaver** at the Unity Banquet 2009 on May 2.



Dr. Kenneth Lester, Dr. Rod Frazier, and Bobby Lowe at Equality Texas, 81st Legislative Session on May 7.



Members of **Impact Houston** at the May 13 Mixer at The Chocolate Bar.



Tammy Tadlock, Cindy Cuellar, and Jerry Hill at the EPAH - Progressive Dinner 2009 on April 25.



Leon Johnson and Paul Guillory at the "Brothers Speaking Out" Pre-Splash Houston Event on March 29.



Associate Municipal Judge **Sidney Braquet**, Associate Municipal Judge **Tracie Jackson**, Municipal Judge **Barbara Hartle, Sue Zoll, Phyllis Frye,** and State District Judge **Steven Kirkland** at the "Our Place at the Table" Reception for LGBT Lawyers, Allies and Law Students on May 4.



Beneficiaries plus Bunnies **Sean Carter, Christian Rogers, and Vince Flickinger** at the Bunnies on the Bayou Funds Distribution Party on May 9.



Chris Prada, Joey Guerra, Anthony Magee, [Front] Oscar Esparza, and Racquel Refuerzo at 2009 Pride Idol VIP Reception at House of Blues on May 16.



GLBT Chamber members with Male Uwear Staff at the Chamber's mixer at Male Uwear on May 12.



Shaun Nelson, Lane Lewis, Brandon Webb, and Jordan P. Smith at the Houston Young Stonewall Democrats Meeting on May 11.



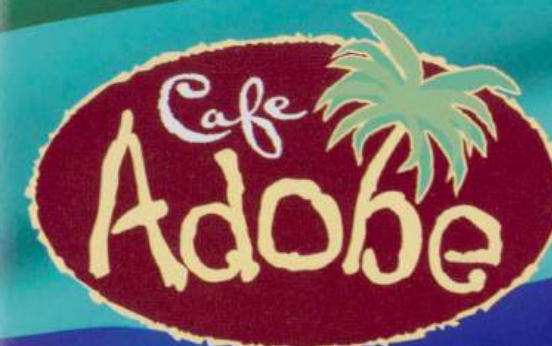
Houston Hellcats Team at the Montrose Softball League 2009 Lone Star Classic on May 25.



Annis Parker, Jim Kovack and Ben Montalbano with 72 fans on May 9.



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