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NOVEMBER 29, 2002

Other victims

Although more Jews were victims of the Nazi Holocaust than any other people, many gays also were targeted, and museum exhibits now report their plight.
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State Rep. Debra Danburg, defeated at the polls Nov. 5, is among four lawmakers who have filed a lawsuit in connection with the election.

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Several Houstonians gathered recently for the Transgender Day of Remembrance.

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Patrenella's
RISTORANTE ITALIANO

Patrenella's serves up good Italian food in a cozy atmosphere that's almost like home.

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Houston marks World AIDS Day

A number of vigils, commemorations slated both on date of the remembrance and in the days following

By PENNY WEAVER

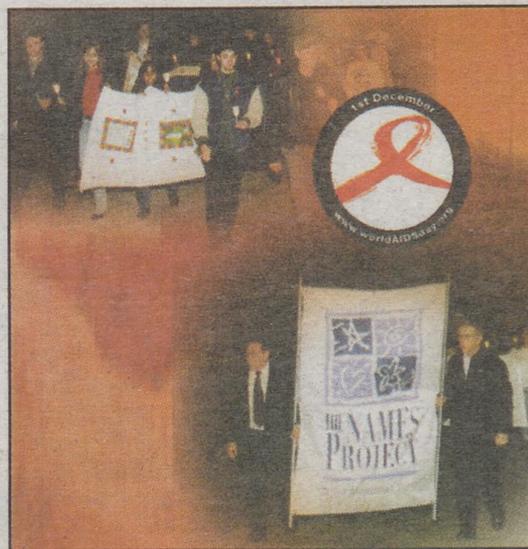
The 15th Annual World AIDS Day comes at a time when the fight against the deadly disease has taken a turn toward a mixture of both success and failure.

Deaths from the disease may be fewer, and more medications to treat it may be available, but cases of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, are increasing, highlighting the continued need for the battle against this epidemic.

Gay Houstonians and their allies will mark the event with a number of observances over several days.

World AIDS Day is organized annually to raise public awareness of the impact that AIDS has in society and to help prevent the spread of HIV. The red ribbon is the international symbol for AIDS awareness.

Many HIV-positive people are gay men, and gay organizations plan a num-



Houstonians will join people across the globe in marking World AIDS Day, which is Dec. 1, with events both on that day and in the days to follow. (Photo illustration by Bonnie Naugle)

ber of observances of World AIDS Day, as is tradition.

With the support of the United Nations General Assembly, the World Health Organization declared Dec. 1 as World AIDS Day in 1988. With the creation of UNAIDS in

1996, the day was retooled as a campaign to build on momentum created by the international day, and to encourage more concerted and sustained responses to the epidemic.

This year's World AIDS Campaign has the theme of "live and let live" and is aimed at helping prevent, reduce or eliminate stigma and discrimination by supporting effective strategies to fight AIDS.

Local observances of World AIDS Day include the following.

SUNDAY, DEC. 1

6 p.m. Worship service
Resurrection Metropolitan
Community Church
2025 West 11th St. • 713-861-9149

Resurrection MCC will host a World AIDS Day inter-faith worship service and observance co-sponsored by religious organizations and HIV service providers. It will be held in the Activities Building at 2025 West 11th Street at West T.C. Jester. Participants are invited to bring personal mementos of friends who

Please see **WORLD AIDS DAY**, on Page 8

Senate approves gay Bush appointee to national security advisory panel

Gay consultant returns to Pentagon post

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

The U.S. Senate on Nov. 19 approved President Bush's nomination of an openly gay Republican to the National Security Education Board, which advises the government on how to train future leaders on global issues related to national security, including ways to better study "less commonly taught languages and cultures."

The Senate approval by unanimous voice vote of Arthur James

Collingsworth, 58, a former national treasurer of the gay Log Cabin Republicans, came less than a month after news surfaced that the Army discharged 10 gay soldiers who had been studying to be linguists, including Arabic linguists. The soldiers were charged with violating the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy on homosexuality.

The discharges prompted members of Congress and the media to complain that the Army was expelling qualified linguists at a time when it faces a severe shortage, especially of Arabic linguists, as the nation prepares for possible military action in the Middle East.

Congress created the 13-member National Security Education Board in 1991 as part of the National Security

Education Act. The board's Web site says its mission includes developing "a cadre of professionals with more than the traditional knowledge of language and culture who can use this ability to help the U.S. make sound decisions on and deal effectively with global issues related to U.S. national security."

Conservatives upset over Herbits return to Pentagon

In a separate development, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld earlier this year retained for the second time in two years gay former corporate executive

Please see **GAY APPOINTEES**, on Page 9

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November 2002

Printed in U.S.A.

local news

Danburg, others file suit after election

Defeated candidates allege business group spent almost \$2 million in state races

AUSTIN — Gay-friendly Houston state Rep. Debra Danburg is among four defeated state House candidates who filed lawsuits against a business group in connection with the Nov. 5 election, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

The suit was filed on Nov. 22. It alleges that the Texas Association of Business "illegally solicited and spent \$2 million in direct corporate funds in arrogant dismissal of the ethical limits imposed by the people of Texas," according to the newspaper.

The business group spent almost \$2 million in corporate money in 24 legislative races this year.

Defeated Democratic Reps. Debra Danburg of Houston and Ann Kitchen of Austin and defeated Democratic candidate Danny Duncan of Commerce are seeking damages from the Texas Association of Business and Bill Hammond, its president. Duncan lost to Republican Dan Flynn.

Danburg was ousted by Republican Martha Wong. The Houston race was highly watched by gays, since Danburg long has been known as a friend to her gay constituents, while Wong has anti-gay hints in



Longtime state Rep. Debra Danburg, who was defeated in the Nov. 5 elections by opponent Republican Martha Wong, is among candidates who have filed a lawsuit regarding the fall ballot battles.

her past and support.

Former Houston City Council member Wong earned victory over Danburg in a district redrawn by Republicans after Census 2000 numbers required redistricting throughout the state. Danburg's district, formerly strongly Democratic, suddenly was largely made up of GOP voters, and the representative said early in the election process that it would be a tough race for her.

Danburg is known for supporting pro-gay

efforts such as hate crimes legislation. Prior to the election, Wong expressed willingness to represent gay voters as well as any other constituents. But some gay activists were concerned about support for Wong among conservatives, including notoriously anti-gay former Houston Mayor Louis Welch.

In addition, as part of a long questionnaire during primary election competition, Wong's campaign answered "Yes" when asked, "Is homosexuality a sin against God?"

According to the suit filed by the defeated candidates: "In a world of corporate fraud run amuck in our financial system, we ask this court to protect our political system from such corruption and to preserve the public's basic right to know," the American-Statesman reported. The lawsuit was filed in state district court.

A fourth defeated candidate, Democrat James Sylvester of Austin, filed a separate, similar suit last week. He was defeated by Republican Jack Stick.

Hammond has defended the expenditures as legal and declined to comment to the American-Statesman on the lawsuit because he had not seen it.

The group used so-called issue ads, which did not specifically urge voters to cast ballots for or against a candidate, to influence the outcome of 22 state House races and two state Senate contests.

Kitchen, who was defeated by Republican Todd Baxter, told the Austin

newspaper that her goal is to shut down future attempts to spend money the way the group did this year.

"TAB has ignored two very fundamental principles: Corporate contributions are illegal, and the public has a right to know where money is coming from in campaigns," she said.

Lawyer David Richards, representing the three plaintiffs, said state law allows damages up to twice the amount of any illegal expenditure. He told the Austin newspaper that additional losing candidates might be added as plaintiffs, and companies that gave money to the group for the effort could also be held liable.

The group has not identified the member companies that contributed for the ads. Under state law, corporate money cannot be used for campaign contributions or expenditures.

The association said the advertisements passed the "magic words test" by not using words such as "support" or "oppose." After the elections, the association's newsletter said "TAB's Aggressive Election Effort Wins Seats for Pro-Business Candidates."

Hammond said recently that the effort was unprecedented in Texas legislative races, the Austin publication reported. Government watchdog groups criticized it as a pretense to get around the ban on corporate spending in political races.

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Solemn day focuses on violence against transgenders



Several Houstonians gathered on Wednesday, Nov. 20, to observe the Transgender Day of Remembrance, a day to memorialize transgender victims of murder and violence. In Houston, a candlelight procession was held and concluded at city hall. The name of each victim was read, a candle was snuffed for each, and the traditional bell was rung for each. Several speakers offered a few words during the remembrance. The event was marked in cities across the nation. There were more than two dozen names read at the ceremony. (Photos by Dalton DeHart)



around houston

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Upcoming entertainment helps people with AIDS

The annual PWA Holiday Charities Christmas Show is set for next weekend at the Brazos River Bottom. Chairman Don Gill said a number of local entertainers will be on hand to sing and entertain for the audience. All proceeds from the show go to PWA Holiday Charities, and all donations, regardless of size, will be announced, Gill noted. Bob Bouton is co-director of the show. He and Gill will emcee the event, as is tradition.

i MORE INFO

PWA Christmas Show • 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8
Brazos River Bottom • 2400 Brazos St.

PWA Holiday Charities • P.O. Box 66849
Houston, TX 77266 • 713-526-4641

Christmas Songfest benefits HIV/AIDS groups

A Christmas Songfest, one of the biggest and brightest Christmas galas in town, is set for next weekend. Guests sign up to sing Christmas songs on stage, in groups or singles, to compete for a prize at the end of the evening. Songs range from the reverent to the zany, according to organizers. All proceeds each year benefit local agencies providing direct care and services to those affected by health-related issues, focusing primarily on HIV/AIDS. Bering Omega Community Services and the Center for AIDS are this year's beneficiaries. Multi-talented entertainers Sharon Montgomery, Terry Pierce, Bubba McNeely and Kim Yvette will keep spirits high and will be standing by to assist the timid. A Christmas Songfest features an open bar, a bountiful dinner buffet and a silent auction. Individual tickets are \$50 and available only at the door. Tables for 10, which must be reserved ahead of time, are \$500, \$650 or \$800. For table reservations or information, call John Walt at 713-868-9585. A Christmas Songfest is an all-volunteer, non-profit charitable organization that has disbursed more than \$400,000 to past beneficiaries.

i MORE INFO

A Christmas Songfest
5:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8
Tickets: \$50 per person at the door
Edwin Hornberger Conference Center

Counseling center plans holiday support group for gays

Facilitated by therapist Frances Gerdes, MA, LPC, LCDC, a new holiday support group, "Gay for the Holidays," addresses how gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender Houstonians can make it through the holiday season "in a self-caring manner," according to organizers. Montrose Counseling Center hosts the one-time support group. "Having expectations that are too high is one reason many people fall into the holiday blues, but it also can be a stressful time for people both financially and with time management ... along with the stress of dealing with family matters, especially if family isn't accepting of one's sexual orientation."

i MORE INFO

Gay for the Holidays Support group
6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9
Montrose Counseling Center
701 Richmond • 713-529-0037
www.montrosecounselingcenter.org

Gerdes said. "We are bombarded by images of being with loved ones during the holidays, and that may contribute to many feeling even more isolated and lonely — even for those who do have a support network of family and friends, because their experiences do not measure up to the expectations." Registration for the group is recommended but not required. There is a \$5 fee for the two-hour session.

Theatre New West extends run of gay-themed 'Coming Out Party'

Houston's Theatre New West has extended its production of "The Coming Out Party" by John Michael Caffey to run through Dec. 14. Originally scheduled to close on Nov. 23, the production will be dark Thanksgiving weekend and then run the first two weekends in December, according to Joe Watts of Theatre New West. This is the Southwest premiere and the first regional production of the piece outside of New York and Los Angeles.

i MORE INFO

"The Coming Out Party"
8 p.m. Dec. 6, 7, 13, 14 • Tickets: \$20
Theatre New West • 1415 California St.
713-394-0464

Grey Party raises more than \$18,000



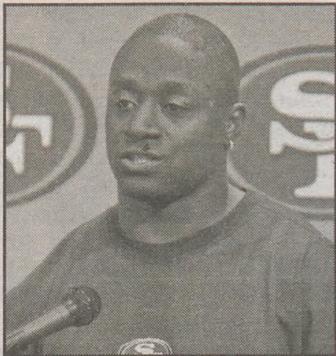
The hosts of Grey Party XX gathered Sunday, Nov. 24, to present a sum totaling \$18,300 to this year's three beneficiaries of the HIV/AIDS fund-raiser. Bering Omega Community Services, Casa de Esperanza, and The Assistance Fund all received an equal amount of \$6,100. On hand to accept the checks for their respective organizations from Grey Party XX Treasurer David Gamel and President Bruce Chambers were Bering Omega board members Peg and George Nevers, and Assistance Fund Treasurer Alan Eyer, and board member Derric Driver. Started in 1982 by a group of friends who decided to throw a party to raise the spirits of gay Houstonians in the face of the turmoil caused by AIDS, Grey Party evolved into an annual celebration of men, music, and dance that annually supported local PWA service providers. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

From staff reports

around the nation

NFL player apologizes for anti-gay comment

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — San Francisco 49ers running back Garrison Hearst apologized at a Nov. 22 press conference for anti-gay comments he made three weeks earlier, the San Francisco Chronicle reported. "First of all, I want to apologize to the gay community for the comments that I made. I didn't realize they would be so harmful," Hearst said during a 40-second speech broadcast live on local television. "Me being African American, I know that discrimination is wrong. I know that I was wrong saying what I said about anybody." Last month, former NFL player Esera Tuaolo acknowledged that he is gay, setting off a national debate about gays in professional sports. In an interview with the Fresno Bee three weeks ago, Hearst used an anti-gay slur when asked how he felt about gay players. "I don't want any faggots on my team," he said. The 49ers' executives, mindful of their home city's large, vocal gay population, distanced themselves from Hearst's remarks, according to the Associated Press.



San Francisco 49ers running back **Garrison Hearst** apologized during a news conference Nov. 22 for his anti-gay comments made to a reporter three weeks earlier. (Photo by Paul Sakuma/AP)

Gay-friendly ACLU hires two anti-gay former politicians

WASHINGTON — Former U.S. Rep. Bob Barr (R-Ga.), a conservative known for his opposition to gay rights who lost his re-election bid earlier this year, will become a consultant for the American Civil Liberties Union, which has a history of gay rights work. "We are delighted to have Congressman Barr join us in advocating for individual privacy," ACLU Executive Director Anthony Romero told the New York Times on Nov. 22. "It indicates that the ACLU has no permanent friends and no permanent allies, just permanent values," said Romero, who is gay. Barr, who spoke out against potential infringements on civil liberties in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, will serve as a consultant on national security and privacy issues, according to the ACLU. Barr lost to Rep. John Linder (R-Ga.) in the Republican primary last July. The ACLU has also tapped departing House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-Texas) to serve in a similar consulting role. Barr sponsored the successful Defense of Marriage Act, which banned federal recognition of gay marriages. Armey, who has said he believes homosexuality is a sin, famously referred to gay Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.) as "Barney Fag."

Chicago high school chooses gay 'cutest couple'

CHICAGO — Students at Crete-Monee High School are sticking by their choice of two female students as the "cutest couple" in their class, the Chicago Tribune reported. About 60 students walked out of class Nov. 19 to protest what they perceive as "foot-dragging" by the school administration. "Because sex preference is such a private issue, prior to making it a permanent printed record — such as in the yearbook — parental permission was required," said Sue Rossi, spokesperson for the school district. Critics said the school is using a double standard for the two young women. "I doubt if this couple were a boy and girl they'd see a need to run it by the parents," said Patricia Logue, an attorney with the Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund.

La. sodomy law upheld by federal appeals court

NEW ORLEANS — Louisiana's 197-year-old law against oral and anal sex was upheld by a state appeals panel, the Associated Press reported. A three-judge panel of the 4th Circuit Court of Appeal ruled 2-1 on Nov. 20 against the challenge by the Louisiana Electorate of Gays & Lesbians, leaving Louisiana's sodomy law intact. The majority of judges said the plaintiffs brought no evidence that the "crime against nature" law discriminates against gays. John D. Rawls, an attorney for the plaintiffs, disagreed. "That statute obviously expresses Louisiana's overarching public policy to treat its gay citizens like scum," he said. The 4th Circuit ruling was the latest action in a complicated case. The state Supreme Court already ruled that the law does not violate the right to privacy, while last week's ruling dealt with the issue of discrimination. "I'm considering my options and consulting with my fellow petitioners," Rawls said.

Penn. town weighs naming school for gay civil rights leader

WESTTOWN, Penn. — Supporters outnumbered opponents 3-to-1 last week at a meeting debating whether the new high school in Westtown Township should be named after Bayard Rustin, a leader of the black civil rights movement who was gay, according to the Philadelphia Inquirer. "In America, we don't expect our heroes to be perfect," Stephen Sander, 56, of Westtown, told the Nov. 20 public meeting of the High School Name Committee. The school board decided in May to name the school after Rustin, but voted Oct. 28 to reopen discussion after opponents objected to Rustin's sexual orientation, the fact that he went to prison rather than fight in World War II, and his alleged ties to the Communist Party. School board member June Cardosi said she objected to Rustin's "un-American activities" and "some of his more personal traits." The naming committee must decide on a name for the school by Jan. 28.

From staff and wire reports

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Eucharist 7:30pm

Thursday • Dec. 5
Christmas Potluck 7pm

Friday • Dec. 6
Morning Prayer 10am

Monday • Dec. 9
Advent Series 6:30pm
Eucharist 7:30pm

Friday • Dec. 13
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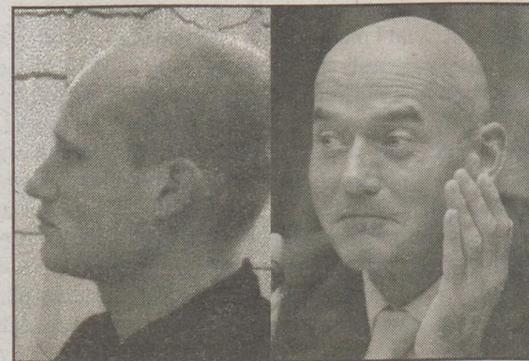
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police beat

Suspect confesses to slaying gay Dutch politician, police say

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands — The man charged in the killing of gay Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn confessed to the crime, prosecutors said last week, according to the Associated Press. In his first statement since his arrest minutes after the May 6 shooting, Volkert van der Graaf, 33, said he was concerned Fortuyn, an outspoken columnist, posed a threat to "vulnerable members of society" and worried about Fortuyn's "prejudiced political ideas," according to a statement from prosecutors. Van der Graaf said he acted alone to kill Fortuyn, who was then a leading candidate in national elections. Under Dutch law, prosecutors have to prove their case in court even with a confession, and hearings are scheduled for early next year. Van der Graaf was captured with the suspected murder weapon in his pocket, gunpowder on his gloves and cell tissue on his trousers.



Volkert van der Graaf (left) last week reportedly confessed to killing gay Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn over his perceived threat to 'vulnerable members of society.' (Photos by AP)

Gay Ill. man charged with killing woman who challenged sexual orientation

CHICAGO — A gay man is charged with first-degree murder and related charges in the Nov. 13 slaying of a woman who tried to persuade him to change his sexual orientation, police and prosecutors told the Chicago Tribune. Nicholas Gutierrez, 19, who lives in the apartment where the body of Mary Stachowicz, 51, was found in a crawl space, was also charged with attempting to conceal a homicide and burglary for allegedly stealing money from Stachowicz's purse. Assistant State's Attorney Nancy Galassini said Gutierrez confessed. "The defendant punched and kicked and stabbed the victim until he was tired," Galassini said. "He then placed a plastic garbage bag over her head and strangled her." Gutierrez first told police that the day Stachowicz disappeared, he had a run-in with a man who might have killed Stachowicz, police said. When Gutierrez's story didn't check out, police questioned him again, and he confessed, police said. During Gutierrez's Nov. 17 hearing, prosecutors asked for no bail and said that they may seek the death penalty. Bond was set at \$3 million.

Mo. man put to death over 1986 murder of gay man

POTOSI, Mo. — William Jones Jr. was put to death Nov. 20 for the 1986 killing of a gay man, according to the Associated Press. Jones, 37, died by lethal injection. His appeals exhausted and a clemency petition denied by Gov. Bob Holden, Jones wrote a final statement read aloud after his execution. He said he regretted the murder of Stanley Albert, 49, who he met at a Kansas City park frequented by gay men, but that he did not deserve to be executed. "Maybe it will cause someone to think twice before causing the same kind of pain we have endured," said Chris Albert, the victim's son. Jones' attorneys said he had a confused sexual identity and that he panicked when Albert propositioned him. But prosecutors called it a cold-blooded execution-style killing over a car after Jones met and dated Albert.

Fourth suspect in Calif. trans killing delays plea

FREMONT, Calif. — Jason Cazares, one of four men charged with murder in the Oct. 3 killing of transgender teen Gwen Araujo, delayed entering a plea last week until Dec. 13, the same day that two of the other three suspects in the case are expected to enter pleas, the Oakland Tribune reported. Another suspect pleaded innocent in October and led police to Araujo's body. Cazares is in jail without bail after investigators found a pickaxe, spade and hoe believed to dig the shallow grave where Araujo's body was found, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. Cazares initially was thought to be a witness at the party where Araujo was discovered as a biological male before being beaten and strangled, but police later charged him as a key suspect. "We're looking at Cazares as a co-principal in the death of Araujo," said Lt. Tom Milner. Police confiscated Cazares' Chevy pickup along with the tools.

Calif. man found guilty of murdering gay couple

PALM SPRINGS, Calif. — A man whose 1997 murder conviction was overturned for inadequate counsel was found guilty for a second time Nov. 18 in the 1995 killings of a gay couple, according to the Palm Springs Desert Sun. A sentence is expected Dec. 19 for Johnny Baca, 32. Baca's attorney, James Silva, said the defense plans to appeal. Baca lived and worked at the home of John Adair, 57, and his partner, John Mix, 39. The Fourth District Court of Appeal reversed the original conviction in 1999 when it ruled Baca's defense made crucial errors. In early case testimony this round, prosecutors alleged the killing was part of a plan by Adair's adopted son, Tom, so he and Baca could collect insurance money. Baca denied being part of a conspiracy during his testimony.

From staff and wire reports



medical report

Founder of AIDS Quilt decries lack of political focus on disease

CONCORD, N.H. — Angry at the Bush administration's response to the worldwide AIDS epidemic, the founder of the AIDS Quilt plans to bring it back to Washington in 2004 to call new attention to the disease, according to the Associated Press. The quilt, currently stored in Atlanta, was last in the nation's capital in 1996. But activist Cleve Jones is hoping to bring it back on Columbus Day weekend in 2004. "I'm frightened and I'm angry, and I'm going to do everything in my power to get the president and Congress to focus on this issue and take action," said Jones, a gay man who developed symptoms of AIDS in 1992. "2004 is going to be a crucial year. We want AIDS and health care to be on the agenda that year." The quilt first was displayed in Washington with 1,920 panels, each commemorating the life of someone who had died of the disease. By 1989, there were 16,000, and now there are more than 80,000 panels, Jones said.



Cleve Jones, who founded the now 80,000-panel AIDS Quilt, wants to bring it to Washington, D.C., to boost political 'focus' on the disease during a presidential election year.

Distribution of sex kits to gay men curtailed in Ariz. park

CENTRAL PHOENIX, Ariz. — Men seeking sex at Papago Park will no longer get free condoms and lubricants from Maricopa County health workers, according to the Arizona Republic. A county administrator ordered a halt to the distribution of "survival kits" at the public park in the wake of media reports about the program. Public officials said the effort facilitates public sex. The employees frequented the park as part of MenPower, a federally funded program aimed at reducing HIV/AIDS. "Their primary purpose is to go out there and try to convince [men] not to have sex in public and get them into a counseling program," health department spokesperson Douglas Hauth said. The kits contain condoms, lubricants and cards that include public sex laws. They are handed out at parks, bathhouses, bars and other places gay men may meet for sex, Hauth said.

Fla. blood bank studies new methods to remove HIV from donations

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — A regional blood bank is planning to test a system that would remove HIV, bacteria and other viruses from donated blood as soon as April, according to the Associated Press. "What everybody expects is zero risk. Nobody wants to accept anything but zero risk," said Dr. German Leparc, medical director of Florida Blood Services. "I don't think there's anything in life that's zero-risk ... but (we're) trying to get there." The announcement comes four months after two people contracted HIV during transfusions of tainted blood provided by Florida Blood Services. Scientists are experimenting with two different methods of cleansing blood — using ultraviolet light to kill viruses and bacteria, or by killing them with chemicals. Leparc said two studies he wants to launch in local hospitals would attempt to determine if the treated blood works in the same manner as untreated blood. The Food & Drug Administration bans blood donations from any man who has had sex, even once, with another man since 1977.

AIDS programs helping poor deplete funds in Wyo.

CHEYENNE, Wyo. — State programs that help people with HIV and AIDS pay for medication and other health care will run out of funds in less than six weeks and cannot accept any more participants, according to the Associated Press. Kurt Galbraith, the state Department of Health's care coordinator, said the state has nearly depleted this year's \$340,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services that funds the AIDS Drug Assistance Program and the HIV/AIDS Care Program. No new money will be available until April, when the funding renews. A major factor in the lack of funds is the increasing cost of medication, which last year took up about 73 percent of the funds, Galbraith said. Some 77 people in the state currently receive funding for their medicine and health care under the federal Ryan White CARE Act. Mary Speraw, an AIDS activist in the state, said she is not surprised the state ran out of money, since the federal government has not increased funding to match rising drug costs. "We need money for bombs and warheads, not for AIDS," she said.

Conservative Singapore to give out HIV-prevention packs to men

SINGAPORE — Singapore plans to distribute HIV-prevention packs containing condoms to male travelers heading to what it deems high-risk destinations, the Straits Times reported, according to the Associated Press. The packs, which will also contain information on the dangers of casual sex, will be given out by the Health Promotion Board through local travel agents. The plan was announced at the third annual Singapore AIDS Conference, which this year aims to improve AIDS awareness in this conservative city-state where many people still believe the disease is limited to gay men. Homosexual acts are illegal in Singapore, a country of four million people, and AIDS is seldom openly discussed.

From staff and wire reports

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national news

NIH researchers recruiting volunteers to test HIV vaccine

By RHONDA SMITH

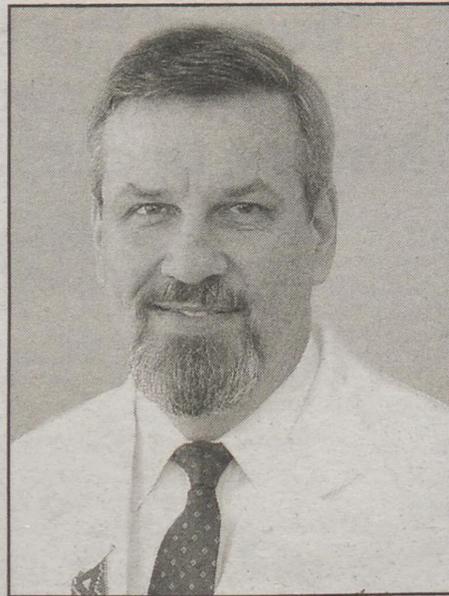
WASHINGTON — Travis Worl received his first inoculation this week with a new HIV vaccine that researchers hope one day will prevent humans worldwide from contracting the virus that causes AIDS.

"It's very much a personal choice, but I think it's a little thing that we can do to possibly help in a big way," the 27-year-old said of his decision to take part in the study. "I have friends who are HIV-positive, and I've seen the complications and the stress it's caused in their lives."

Worl is one of 50 HIV-negative men and women between the ages of 18 and 40 that researchers at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md., plan to use in the study's first phase. Six of the 50 volunteers are selected so far.

Researchers at the Dale & Betty Bumpers Vaccine Research Center began clinical tests of the HIV vaccine Nov. 13. The research center is an arm of the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases, an NIH division.

Anthony Fauci, director of NIAID, said this is the first "multigene and multiclade HIV vaccine" to enter human trials. It marks an important milestone in the search for a single vaccine that targets U.S. subtypes of



Barney S. Graham, chief of the Vaccine Research Center's clinical trial and lead investigator in a new vaccine trial, said it is not possible to be infected with the vaccine used in the trial.

HIV as well as HIV strains more prevalent in other parts of the world, he said.

Johns Hopkins University officials are on the Phase III clinical trial of a vaccine known as AIDSVAX. Phase III is the final stage of clinical testing before drug com-

panies can apply for licensing from the U.S. Food & Drug Administration.

The FDA granted VaxGen Inc., the biotechnology company that developed AIDSVAX, permission to start clinical trials on that vaccine in 1998. Results of the study are expected to be unveiled in early 2003.

During Phase I of the Vaccine Research Center's study, which is scheduled to last 12 months, scientists will monitor the vaccine's safety and document whether it induces the desired response in volunteers.

Barney Graham, chief of the Vaccine Research Center's Clinical Trial's Core and lead investigator in the vaccine trial, said if the vaccine elicits an HIV antibody reaction from a volunteer, he or she could test positive for HIV by standard tests that detect HIV antibodies as opposed to HIV itself. This does not mean the participant actually is HIV-infected, he said.

"One certainty is that it is not possible to be infected by the vaccine, which is synthetically produced to mimic shapes and structures of the virus," Graham said.

But the Vaccine Research Center's Web site (www.niaid.nih.gov/vrc) notes that there is the theoretical possibility of serious side effects or reactions that are unknown at this time. NIAID officials

said they monitor volunteers in the study very closely for adverse reactions to the vaccine.

Researchers will monitor Worl and other Phase I participants in the study for arm redness and soreness as well as muscle aches and other mild flu-like symptoms. Participants will receive three injections during the first three months of the study, and then will be monitored monthly.

If the vaccine works as well as it has in animal studies, it would advance into larger clinical trials in 2003, during which it would be tested on hundreds of other volunteers, Graham said. If Phase II of the study succeeds, researchers would begin Phase III trials in 2004, which would involve testing thousands of volunteers with the vaccine.

NIAID officials could know by 2007 whether the vaccine works, Graham said.

MORE INFO

NIH vaccine trial
866-833-5433
866-411-1010
vrcforlife@mail.nih.gov
www.niaid.nih.gov/vrc
www.clinicaltrials.gov

'Live and let live' the theme of this year's events

WORLD AIDS DAY, continued from Page 1

have died of HIV/AIDS, and those items will be displayed during the service. There will be a reception following the service.

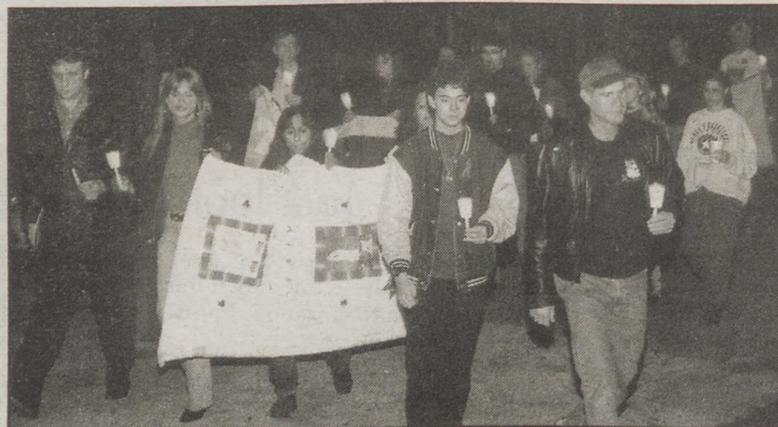
7 p.m. Community Tree Lighting
Requested donation: \$5
Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center
803 Hawthorne • 713-524-3818
www.hlgcc.org

Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History, in conjunction with the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, plan a joint project for World AIDS Day. The groups will lead the lighting of the NAMES Project-Houston Christmas Tree of Remembrance. Many of the ornaments which have adorned the tree at its lighting ceremonies in years past will be used again. The tree was first introduced in the late 1980s, and since then, more than 4,000 ornaments have been placed on the tree over the years.

Participants are invited to bring an ornament to add to the tree. Special guest for the lighting ceremony will be Alec Soto of the NAMES Project Houston.

GCAM will offer a large exhibit of framed photos and posters on display at the lighting.

7:30 and 9:30 p.m.
The Illumination Project
Admission: \$25 • Memory candles: \$25
DiverseWorks Artspace • 1117 East Freeway
713-223-8346 • www.diverseworks.org



For World AIDS Day last year, several gay Houstonians held a candlelight vigil and march in remembrance of people who have died of AIDS. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

DiverseWorks, Dominic Walsh Dance Theater and Hope Stone Inc. present The Illumination Project as a benefit performance for HIV/AIDS. Organizations that will receive funds from the event are the Pediatric AIDS Initiative of Baylor College of Medicine and A Caring Safe Place Inc. Performers will include Dorrell Martin of the Houston Metropolitan Dance Co., Ben Stevenson of the Houston Ballet, the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston and Stages Repertory Theatre.

MONDAY, DEC. 2

10 a.m. "Tree of Remembrance"
10:45 a.m. Memorial Service
11:30 a.m. Lecture and luncheon for clients

Thomas Street Clinic
Harris County Hospital District
713-873-4026

The Tree of Remembrance is a tradition adapted at Thomast Street Clinic last year. A 12-foot Christmas tree is placed in the backside of the clinic, near the main entryway to the facility. Clients, clinic staff and the general public are asked to bring a Christmas ornament in honor of personal loved ones or friends who have died of AIDS. The ornaments are then placed on the tree and names are read of individuals who have died. The tree remains standing throughout the month of December.

The lecture and luncheon at Thomas Street Clinic is sponsored and arranged by the PWA Coalition.

TUESDAY, DEC. 3

5-7 p.m. vigil
Jones Plaza
600 Louisiana

The Houston Department of Health and Human Services (HDHHS) and numerous HIV/AIDS related organizations will observe World AIDS Day on Dec. 3 with an evening program featuring a candlelight vigil, a large red poinsettias AIDS ribbon and speakers sharing thoughts on living with HIV or AIDS. The free event will be held downtown at Jones Plaza, 600 Louisiana, from 5 to 7 p.m.

Four local citizens living with HIV or AIDS, Mayor Lee P. Brown and M. DesVignes-Kendrick, director of HDHHS, will address event participants before the vigil. Barbara Johnson Tucker and Tameka Hardison-Santa Cruz will sing in remembrance of people who have died of AIDS and those who are infected or affected by HIV or AIDS.

Community-based organizations sponsoring the event include the Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans, Baylor Teen Health Clinic, Bread of Life, ByHis-Love Ministry, Harris County Hospital District, Houston Area Community Services, Montrose Clinic, NAACP, WAM Foundation and YWCA.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 4

11:30 a.m.
World AIDS Day Luncheon
The Houstonian Hotel
111 North Post Oak Lane • 713-623-6796

The World AIDS Day Luncheon benefiting AIDS Foundation Houston also honors Jacqueline S. Martin, president of United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast. Co-chairs of the event are Deborah A. Fiorito and Barry Mandel.

national news

Conservatives target Bush gay DOD consultant

GAY APPOINTEES, continued from Page 1

Stephen Herbits as a high level consultant on Defense Department personnel matters. Herbits is a former executive vice president of the Seagram Liquor & Beverage Corporation. He served as a Pentagon consultant during the administrations of President Reagan and President George H.W. Bush in the 1980s.

Rumsfeld retained him as a consultant from January to May 2001. A Pentagon spokesperson said Herbits' latest DOD stint began in February of this year and could last as long as February 2003.

Collingsworth, a resident of San Francisco, has spent most of his professional career dedicated to international education and philanthropy, with a sideline in real estate investment, according to a one-page biographical document the White House submitted to the Senate Armed Services Committee, which approved his nomination.

The document states that he received a master's degree in international relations from Georgetown University in 1971, where he was a fellow at Georgetown's Center for Strategic & International Studies. He served as a senior advisor to the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London from 1989 to 1994 and as director of the United



Stephen Herbits, a gay former executive, has again been retained as a consultant by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Nations University Office for Europe from 1984 to 1988, the document states.

It says Collingsworth is a member of a wide range of international foundations, including the American Friends of the Czech Republic, the American Scandinavian Foundation of New York,

the Japan Society of Washington, and the San Francisco Committee on Foreign Relations. The biographical document also states that Collingsworth has been a member of the California Republican State Central Committee and served for three years as national treasurer of Log Cabin Republicans. The document says he divides his time between his homes in San Francisco and Prague, Czech Republic.

The National Security Education Board is comprised of seven high-level federal officials, most of whom are members of the president's cabinet. The remaining six members are senior non-federal officials appointed by the president. Of the five current non-government members, three are top officials at U.S. universities, one is a former congressman and the other is a former governor.

Collingsworth becomes Bush's sixth openly gay appointee since taking office in January 2001. The others include Joe O'Neill, the current head of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy; Scott Evertz, the previous head of that same office; Michael Guest, U.S. ambassador to Romania; Donald Capoccia, a member of the National Fine Arts Commission; and Herbits, the DOD consultant. Guest accompanied Bush during the president's visit on Nov. 23 to Romania.

Anti-gay groups have criticized the Bush administration for making these appointments, saying they go against the wishes of "pro-family" Americans who supported Bush in the 2000 election. The Family Research Council expressed sharp objections to Herbits' appointment, pointing to statements Herbits made in the past called for allowing gays to serve openly in the military.

The Pentagon issued a statement earlier this year praising Herbits for his DOD consulting work, saying he was a highly qualified expert in personnel management issues.

Collingsworth was out of the country this week and could not be reached for comment.

Rich Tafel, Log Cabin's executive director, said Collingsworth has been active in LCR functions since the early 1990s and has been an openly gay Republican since the time he worked as a young man on President Richard Nixon's 1968 election campaign.

Tafel profiled Collingsworth in Tafel's 1999 book, "Party Crasher," which discusses the role gay Republicans have played in U.S. politics.

Lou Chibbaro Jr. can be reached at Ichibbaro@washblade.com.



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national news

Guerriero to replace Tafel at helm of Log Cabin Republicans

Former Mass. mayor and lieutenant governor candidate named to head gay GOP group

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

Patrick Guerriero, a former mayor and state representative in Massachusetts, will replace Rich Tafel as executive director of the national gay group Log Cabin Republicans on Jan. 1, the group announced Monday.

Guerriero, 34, will also replace Tafel as president of the Liberty Education Forum, LCR's non-partisan research and education arm.

"Replacing Rich Tafel was a daunting task, but we believe with Patrick's outstanding credentials we have succeeded in finding the right leader," said Bob Stears, chair of the LCR board.

Tafel, who has been the LCR executive director since 1993, said he is not sure what he will do after he leaves the post on the first of the year. He said he would consider writing and theological endeavors in connection with his background as an ordained minister in the American Baptist Church.

"I'm looking into a lot of different possibilities," he said.

Tafel has been credited with transforming LCR from a fledgling group with a few chapters on the West Coast to a nationally recog-

nized force within the Republican Party. LCR board members and officials with the group's chapters, which have multiplied since Tafel became executive director, have been talking about a possible replacement for Tafel since the 2000 Republican Convention.

In a statement issued Monday, Nov. 25, LCR said Mark Mead, who was named earlier this year as the group's communications director, would remain in that position under Guerriero's tenure.

An early GOP riser

Guerriero became the subject of news media attention earlier this year when acting Massachusetts Gov. Jane Swift chose him as her endorsed candidate for lieutenant governor during her short-lived campaign for re-election. Swift dropped out of the race a short time later, throwing her support to Salt Lake City Olympic organizer Mitt Romney, who won on Nov. 5.

Guerriero also joined the Romney campaign. Two weeks ago, Romney named him to his transition team, raising speculation that the governor-elect might appoint Guerriero to a high level position in his administration.

"That was a possibility," Guerriero said Monday. "But I believe I can do more, in light of the November election, to help Log Cabin Republicans be a national voice for the centrist wing of the Republican Party."

He will arrive on the Washington scene at a time when Republicans control both houses of Congress and the White House, and

when GOP leaders in the House and Senate represent the party's conservative wing.

With the Democrats' control of the Senate ending in January, President Bush has indicated he will join Republican congressional leaders and conservative groups to advance social policy initiatives such as abortion restrictions and abstinence-only programs for HIV prevention. Bush has said he will also push hard for his so-called "faith-based" programs, which call for allowing religious organizations to administer federally funded social welfare programs.

Guerriero, a longtime advocate for gay civil rights legislation, including same-sex marriage, could find himself at odds with the increasingly conservative tone of his party. Although President Bush has said gays are welcome in the party's "big tent," language placed in the Republican Party platform at the 2000 GOP national convention opposing gay civil rights legislation remains in place.

"During my 10 years in public service, I have always believed the Republican Party must move away from issues that divide people and move toward its core issues that unite people," Guerriero said in a statement also released on Monday. "The Republican Party stands for a free market, a strong national defense, and—as the party of Lincoln—for individual liberty and equal rights for all citizens."

Guerriero praised President Bush as a "compassionate leader" and said LCR would also lead within the gay community "with compassion, integrity and purpose." "One of my first priorities will be to reach



Patrick Guerriero, who will take over as executive director of the national Log Cabin Republicans on Jan. 1, said his first priority will be to reach out to other gay groups and 'put our shared priorities ahead of partisan bickering.' (Photo by Robert E. Klein/AP)

out immediately to all gay and lesbian groups to work together to achieve our shared, common goals," he said. "Rather than fighting among ourselves, we can better serve our community by putting our shared priorities ahead of partisan bickering."

"We are thrilled that Patrick Guerriero will lead our organization," said Stears, the LCR board chair. "This is a fantastic time to be a Log Cabin Republican, and Patrick Guerriero is the visionary leader we need for the future. His track record as an elected official demonstrates that he can build coalitions, lead people, and manage an organization."

Race for first U.S. gay network continues

Viacom memo holds clues to spring launch; PrideVision retreats from expansion

By MIKE FLEMING

Plans for the U.S. launch of an all-gay television network continue, despite delays by one company and few details from the other.

Canada's PrideVision and entertainment heavyweight Viacom are competing to bring to market a gay cable channel, though PrideVision's expansion into the U.S., planned for this year, has been delayed.

The Viacom effort, a collaboration between properties MTV and Showtime, may hit TV screens sometime next year, though company officials are being tight-lipped about details, despite the recent leak of an apparent internal document outlining their plans.

"It's safe to say the channel is still in the works," said Bob Witeck, partner in the Washington, D.C.-based Witeck-Combs Communications, which is handling public relations for Viacom. "As soon as we are able to share more of the specifics, we'll be in touch."

Last January, Showtime MTV Networks announced an effort to research the viabil-

ity of a gay-oriented network. Potential programming could include Showtime's "Queer as Folk" and "Queer Duck" as well as original programs produced specifically for the gay network.

In May, members of an informal advisory panel in Atlanta met with Gene Falk, the gay senior vice president for Showtime's Digital Media Group, and Matt Farber, MTV's gay consultant on the project. Similar meetings were held across the country.

The panel included a cross-section of high-profile local gay activists. Panel members said that Viacom showed commitment to capture diverse facets of gay life and that they were asked to keep details of the meeting confidential.

Witeck said the forums were "information seeking" efforts, but he and Viacom officials have remained essentially mum since then.

The working name for the channel at that time was OutLook, according to panel members. But a Viacom internal memo leaked Nov. 13 to the Internet site internalmemos.com—ostensibly from Showtime Chairman and CEO Matthew Blank to Viacom staff members—shows that the name has been tweaked.

"The name Outlet represents the overall mission of the new channel, which is to serve as the premiere media 'outlet' for entertainment and information to the more than 14 million gay and lesbian adults in the United States," the memo



Viacom's proposed Outlet network may be available next year, but it won't include erotica like 'XXXtreme' on Canada's PrideVision.

states. "Outlet will offer a variety of programming that represents the broad diversity of this community, including films, documentaries, news and popular series."

Showtime and MTV officials referred questions to Witeck, who declined to confirm the validity or contents of the 2,000-word document.

MTV will provide expertise in original programming, on-air promotions and sponsorships, and Showtime will be responsible for operations of Outlet, the memo states.

In a question-and-answer format, the memo addresses some 50 issues pertaining to the channel. It confirms a launch date in the second quarter of 2003, the name Outlet and a corporate Web site of OutletTV.com. That domain name is registered to Showtime Networks, and the registration

lists Viacom as its administrative contact.

The memo also cites headway in closing deals with advertisers and cable carriers for the channel without naming any takers. It promises an announcement of signed advertisers "early next year."

The memo cites a subscriber-only distribution model that allows only viewers requesting the channel to receive it. That plan should pre-empt anti-gay protests, according to the memo.

Viacom is also working to safeguard the confidentiality of subscribers, he document states.

The memo also highlights differences between the Viacom project and PrideVision, which is currently promoting a subscriber drive to "save" the channel. The effort seeks to add 50,000 subscribers to the existing 20,000 "before cuts are considered."

PrideVision originally had plans to enter the U.S. market last fall, but company officials retreated to "secure Canadian support for our existing network first," said Mark Lieber, senior vice president of programming for the channel's U.S. market.

"We are still confident that we will expand into the American market," he said, declining to elaborate on a potential launch date.

A difference between the two networks is that Viacom will not air erotica, according to members of the market research panels. PrideVision shows adult material late-nights three times a week.

national news

Bush to drop Clinton appointees from AIDS advisory panel

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

All but one of the eight remaining Clinton appointees on the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS are expected to be notified by the Bush administration that they will not be re-appointed when their terms expire in January, sources familiar with the administration said.

AIDS activists said they are not surprised that the Bush administration chose to name its own people for the panel, known as PACHA, but they expressed concern that the administration might replace the Clinton appointees with conservative ideologues who favor "abstinence only" HIV prevention programs.

Nearly all of the Clinton holdovers on the panel are gay and have pushed for a variety of HIV prevention strategies that include condom use and other safer sex techniques in addition to sexual abstinence.

Some activists said they were pleased to learn this week that one of the Clinton replacements would be gay Republican activist David Greer. Greer is the former president of the Log Cabin Republican group in Philadelphia and is a current member of the board of governors of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest gay political group.

"No one should take offense or be sur-



Gay and AIDS activist Brent Minor was expected to be the only Clinton appointee to be re-appointed by Bush to a second term on the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS. Most of the Clinton appointees to PACHA now facing removal are gay.

prised about this," said Bill Pierce, spokesperson for U.S. Secretary of Health & Human Services Tommy Thompson. "It's standard practice for any new administration to bring in its own people for positions like this."

In January, Bush named 26 new members to PACHA, including conservative Republican Tom Colburn, a former congressman from Oklahoma, as its co-chair. The president named Louis Sullivan, the HHS secretary under the previous Bush administration, as the other co-chair.

Bush also named four gay Republicans to the panel: Charles Francis, Abner Mason, James Driscoll and Joe Hastings.

Francis, a longtime friend of the Bush family, since resigned from the panel after his public relations firm took on a foreign government as a client. Federal conflict of interest rules prevent individuals working for foreign governments from serving on U.S. government panels.

One knowledgeable source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said gay and AIDS activist Brent Minor is expected to be the only Clinton appointee to be re-appointed by Bush to a second PACHA term. Earlier this year, Colburn named Minor as chair of one of three PACHA committees. Minor, who has HIV, serves as an informal PACHA representative to the HIV/AIDS community.

Another source that also spoke on condition of anonymity said several PACHA members were unsure when their terms would expire and that PACHA's executive director, Patricia Ware, was unable to find documents specifying when the terms were scheduled to end.

"There's a lot of confusion over this," the source said. "No one seems to know."

Ware, a conservative activist with ties to conservative religious groups, has become a controversial figure, emerging as an outspoken advocate for abstinence-only programs and other conservative causes. During the Clinton administration, PACHA Executive Director Daniel Montoya limited his activities to internal administrative duties, such as record keeping and coordination of meetings.

Administration insiders say some of the Bush-appointed PACHA members are beginning to express their own concerns about Ware, saying she neglects her administrative duties by appearing at too many out-of-town speaking engagements. It was unclear whether administrative snafus were responsible for Colburn and Sullivan's decision to cancel a PACHA meeting scheduled for September.

Ware did not return a call seeking comment by press time.

MORE INFO

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Issue 1153

Forum

HOUSTON VOICE

NOVEMBER 29, 2002

PAGE 12

editorial

It's not our AIDS fight

So long as we're the only ones still paying attention to gay victims of this epidemic, global AIDS activists will have to forgive us for a little international myopia.

By CHRIS CRAIN

"a

NY SUGGESTIONS of what we might do to challenge this complacency?"

That was the clarion call sent out in an e-mail blast

last week by Lori Heise, who heads up the Global Campaign for Microbicides, one of a number of AIDS lobby groups focused on fighting the epidemic in non-industrialized nations around the world.

The "breath-taking" complacency toward AIDS, according to Heise, isn't on Capital Hill, or in the Bush White House, or in the halls of the United Nations. The complacency is right here at Houston Voice, where I expressed pessimism about publishing an opinion column submitted by her that calls for more U.S. funding in the fight against AIDS in other parts of the world.

In a short response to her submission, I acknowledged the tremendous interest our readers take in the HIV/AIDS epidemic, but I also pointed out that, as gay newspapers, we have a particular focus, and additional U.S. funding for the fight against AIDS abroad was not a coverage priority.

Heise never responded to me, but instead sent out an Internet alert, accusing me of "distancing" the gay community from the global scourge of AIDS.

On Dec. 1, we mark World AIDS Day for the 21st time, a depressing sign of adulthood for the fight against a disease that our science cannot seem to cure and an epidemic we cannot seem to slow.

And it's about time, after 21 years, that AIDS activists like Heise finally "grow up," and stop asking what the gay community can do for her, but what she and activists like her can do for us.

LESBIANS AND GAY MEN HAVE LONG labored in the fight against AIDS in numbers far beyond our proportion of the populace. We cared when nobody else did — when the media and the government turned a blind eye — because we saw our own dying.

Even today, two decades later, as more new HIV transmissions in this country

involve heterosexuals, most HIV/AIDS organizations are still run and staffed largely by gays, and we disproportionately donate funds and volunteer time to AIDS Walks and AIDS Rides, to hospices and delivering meals to shut-ins.

We gave at the office, and at our homes, at our churches, and of our lives. And we're still giving, though in depressingly smaller numbers.

But ever since the advent of protease inhibitors and a drug "cocktail" that has dramatically cut down the numbers of Americans — especially gay Americans — who are dying from AIDS, the gay angle isn't sexy anymore. Instead, the focus of media and government policymakers has shifted to the epidemic's deadly swath through other parts of the world, particularly sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

On the one hand, this new attention is justified and long overdue. Entire societies are at risk, and the potential loss in human life in these undeveloped countries is staggering.

But does that mean, on the other hand, that the gay community should take this on as our battle, too, splitting our own focus overseas?

Although cultural sensitivities — meaning homophobia — prevent the gathering of precise statistics, heterosexual sex is the means of transmission for about 70 percent of new HIV infections worldwide, according to Neff Walker, senior epidemiologist at UNAIDS; only 5 percent is being transmitted through men having sex with men.

Probably also due to anti-gay prejudices at home and abroad, the U.N. does not even track how the means of transmission varies by region of the world. But taking into account the much larger percentage of new infections from gay sex in the United States and other portions of the industrialized world, that means that HIV and AIDS have a much smaller impact on gays outside of Europe and the U.S.

And yet these global AIDS organizations would have us direct a portion of our limited resources, already overcom-

mitted to the fight against AIDS at home, to lobby for greater funding for the fight against AIDS abroad.

Complicating matters politically, the increased commitment of funds by the U.S. government in the global fight against AIDS has been used, by conservatives in Congress like Jesse Helms and their allies in the Bush administration, to justify "flat funding" for Ryan White and domestic AIDS spending.

LET'S COMPARE RESPONSIBILITIES here. Does the gay community really owe further support and lobbying for the worthy goal of increased U.S. funding for the fight against the spread of AIDS among heterosexuals abroad?

Or do these global AIDS activists owe greater attention to the welfare of gays affected by the epidemic, whether in industrialized nations or elsewhere?

After all, much of this "global AIDS funding" goes to repressive governments that make no effort to educate or prevent transmission of the virus through gay sex, which oftentimes is violently prosecuted. Homosexuality is considered a taboo, and in many cases, a distinctly Western phenomenon.

U.N. efforts to even acknowledge — much less address — gay victims of HIV and AIDS have been hamstrung by an evil alliance of oppressive Islamic governments abroad and conservative Christian activists here in the U.S., with some help from their friends in the Bush administration.

So where is the outcry from the Global Campaign for Microbicides, and like-minded groups, against the "breath-taking complacency" of the United Nations and other international bodies, who allow religious bigots to veto basic public health measures in the global fight against AIDS?

When is the last time that the Global Campaign for Microbicides and its ilk actually lifted a finger toward using AIDS-related dollars as tools to pressure these governments to include basic safe sex information relating to homosexual sex?

A review of the strategy documents on the Global Campaign's Web site (www.global-campaign.org) is instructive. The word "gay" appears frequently, usually in reference to allies that should be called upon to assist in their fight — hence the op-ed submission to *Southern Voice* and other gay papers.

To paraphrase Janet Jackson, "What have they done for us lately?"

So long as those of us in the gay community are the only ones still paying attention to the present and future gay victims of this epidemic, the good folks at the Global Campaign for Microbicides will have to forgive us for a little international myopia.

@ Chris Crain is executive editor of Houston Voice and can be reached at ccrain@window-media.com.

viewpoint STEPHEN FALON



Another World AIDS Day brings another round of 'alarming' safe sex messages that no one is paying attention to.

Safe sex message drones on and on

ISN'T WORLD AIDS DAY GETTING A little irrelevant? After two decades, who wants to pull the dusty red ribbon out of the sock drawer, and pretend still to be concerned about HIV?

AIDS is in retreat. Less than 9,000 Americans died of AIDS related conditions last year, compared to a peak of 51,000 in 1995. Medicines are working better, extending lives.

Yet this Dec. 1, armies of HIV prevention workers will be out at health fairs, distributing those dull pamphlets again. I mean we get it already, don't we? "HIV bad, condoms good." Duh.

While most of the nation will yawn, this year's ideologically driven audit of all federally funded HIV prevention programs is asking a disturbing question: Do these programs make any difference? Do people even pay attention anymore to bland drone of prevention messages?

IN AMERICA, WE SEEM TO PUT FAITH in hysterical yet monotonous health warnings. Even our fire trucks and ambulances are becoming too insistent. Gone are the quaint single light, mono-siren ambulances. Now emergency vehicles scream for our attention with strobe tail-lights and multiple warbling sirens. The result? The din becomes unimpressive background noise.

Similarly, people tune out when well-intentioned educators beat the same drum of safer sex advice year after year. I thought about all of this while waiting for a flight in Seoul, Korea airport a few weeks ago. The Incheon International airport is as quiet as a cathedral. Courtesy carts don't bleep endlessly. Instead, drivers pass silently, tooting a little horn only when it's needed.

Here in the U.S., the incessant beeps of passing courtesy carts all cancel each other out. Cart drivers then have to shout over the beeps to get people to move. So what's the point of the annoying beeping? Our penchant for warning lights, sirens, and scary health slogans often mistakes volume with urgency. Repetition doesn't equal impact, even on World AIDS Day.

This isn't to say that our concerns are groundless. We're far from finished with AIDS. Despite constant medical innovation, HIV is rapidly mutating to get around our best drugs. In 1996, only one-in-40 newly infected patients had caught a version of HIV that was already resistant to two classes of our medicines. By 2000, this resistance had spread to one-in-seven.

The second wave of HIV in the gay community has turned out to be less a tidal wave than a smart bomb, homing in on the most vulnerable members of our population.

Some depressed gay men become sexual compulsives. New surveys find these men



average 35 sexual partners per month, almost all without using condoms. Gay men who use methamphetamines (a.k.a. "crystal," "Tina") are also much more likely to end up with HIV. Los Angeles and Seattle found over 60 percent are infected.

And younger gay men often lack negotiation skills to stick to safer sex plans. Last year's large surveys found that 3 percent of white gay men, 7 percent of Hispanic, and 14 percent of African American were already HIV infected by age 30.

Other sexually transmitted diseases also amplify the risk of both passing and acquiring HIV. This is bad news because U.S. syphilis cases rebounded last year, for the first time in over a decade. Where are the alarms? A nationwide survey in this month's American Journal of Public Health finds that even doctors with high rosters of STD infected clients screen less than one-fifth of the male patients they see.

WORLD AIDS DAY REMAINS RELEVANT because HIV continues to cut down gay men. HIV prevention workers shouldn't pack up their bags, but instead need to adapt to the changing landscape, finding

new ways to deliver messages highlighting HIV's continued threat.

Monotonous lectures are irritating but silence kills, too. Walking the main streets in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia last month I was aghast to see open holes in the sidewalk where work crews were planning to perform maintenance. Apparently, the city believed that every person would see the holes in time. The next day, I read about grieving parents whose toddler had died when they stumbled into one of these holes. A simple plastic saw horse could have prevented that tragedy.

That was a pointless death. So are our 9,000 AIDS deaths. Even today, we can't risk letting anyone fall into the holes of misinformation about HIV.

This year World AIDS Day will again offer sobering reminders of our lost friends. Hearing those tales, at least a few gay men will then think twice before taking a risk. That's why we commemorate World AIDS Day.

@ Stephen Fallon, Ph.D., is the president of a Florida-based consulting firm and can be reached at sfallon@skills4.org.

Dykes To Watch Out For by Alison Bechdel



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on the record



"Obviously Bob Dylan is gay if he's not interested in me. I mean, look at me! Who would have guessed that Dylan is a fag?"

Jewel, telling the audience during a concert in Newark, N.J., about a dream she had in which Bob Dylan appeared but did not flirt with her (New York Post, Nov. 16)

"They don't like me to air this on television. But I don't care what they like! I am not politically correct! God's given me power to cast out devils and if you are a homosexual, I can deliver you! And I can set you free! Homosexuality is not another lifestyle. It's a demon spirit."

American evangelist R.W. Schambach, whose "Power Today" TV program was sanctioned by the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council for claiming that gays are possessed by the devil (Reuters, Nov. 18)



"You know I'm a little bit different to what most people would consider being an Australian male. That doesn't make me gay. It's the most flattering thing that anyone can ever say because if someone wants to label you or claim you as part of a minority group, it means you must have some strength in your character, or in what you do."

Aussie Olympic swimmer Ian Thorpe, on rumors about his sexual orientation (News.com.au, Nov. 18)

"It's perfectly cool now to be straight and have an interest in Armani fashion or pearl jewelry or Kylie Minogue, and why shouldn't it be?"

Sydney Star Observer editor Marcus O'Donnell, on Ian Thorpe's declaration of heterosexuality (News.com.au, Nov. 18)

"I felt like I had to point out the hypocrisy. If you talk about being gay, even if you're celibate, that gets you in trouble. But if you're actually having sex and covering your bases, you don't have to worry about a thing."

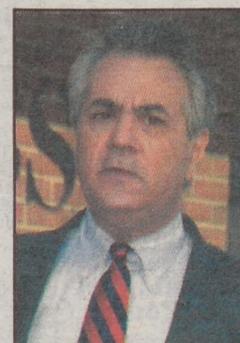
Gavan Meehan, who was dismissed from St. John's Seminary in Brighton, Mass., for being openly gay, and then accused two closeted seminarians of having sex in a department store dressing room (Boston Globe, Nov. 25)

"The U.S. military appears to be engaged in a new form of escalation — going to greater heights of stupidity in administering the anti-gay policy, from the inadequacies of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell', we have progressed to the greater foolishness of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Translate.'"

Gay Congressman Barney Frank (D-Mass.), in response to the Army's discharge of nine gay linguists, including six trained in Arabic (Nov. 14)

"While we down under debate Australian support for any United States-led war on terror, I would be ever so grateful if an American politician would explain why the Taliban's persecution of women is considered barbaric, yet persecution of gay military personnel by your government is deemed quite acceptable."

Mike Leclerc, of Sydney Australia, in a letter to the editor responding to an article about the Army's decision to discharge nine linguists, including six trained in Arabic, under "Don't Ask Don't Tell" (New York Times, Nov. 18)



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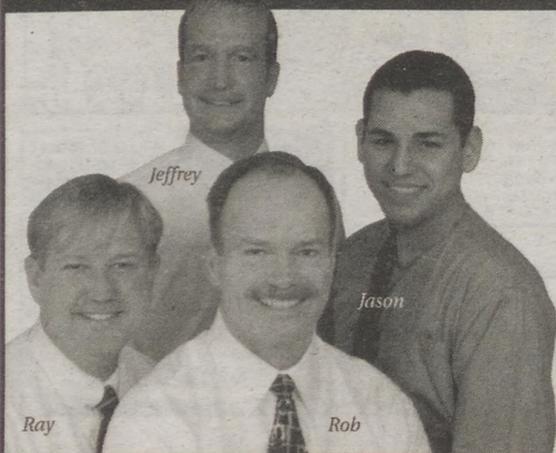
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FILM: Your best bet for gay-themed flicks for the holidays is in the video store, not on the big screen. **Page 18.**

DINING: Patrenella's Ristorante Italiano offers good food in an atmosphere as comfortable as an old friend. **Page 19.**

Patrenella's
RISTORANTE ITALIANO

Out on the Bayou

HOUSTON VOICE
NOVEMBER 29, 2002
PAGE 15

travel

Behind the pink triangles

A new exhibit at the Holocaust Museum focuses on homosexual persecution and what the future may hold for the gay civil rights movement

By BRIAN MOYLAN

m

ANY PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE that homosexuals were persecuted by the Nazi regime in Germany between 1933 and 1945. The German government didn't acknowledge gay men as

among the groups that suffered atrocities in the Nazi concentration camps before and during World War II until 1985.

In fact, 100,000 men were arrested under Paragraph 175, the statute of the German penal code that criminalized male homosexuality — lesbianism was never made illegal — and 50,000 men were sent to prisons for the "crime."

Of those convicted, 5,000 to 15,000 were sent to concentration camps and made to wear pink triangles to distinguish them from the Jewish prisoners, who wore the yellow Star of David. Though it is hard to determine just how many of the men convicted under Paragraph 175 died in the camps, some experts estimate that nearly 60 percent of gay men sent to the camps died.

"[Homosexuals] suffered the worst of the atrocities of the concentration camps. They and the Jews were at the bottom of the social order," says Ted J. Phillips, the deputy director in the division of exhibitions at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the scholar behind "Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals 1933-1945," a new exhibition that opened Nov. 15 and runs through March 16.

"We've been including the story of homosexuals as victims of Nazi persecution since we opened. This is really the telling of the story of one of many other non-Jewish groups," Phillips says. "Several years ago we identified a long-term exhibit plan to focus on the non-Jewish groups, and we chose doing homosexuals first because there is probably more advanced scholarship on homosexuals than any of the other groups."

The exhibit helps explain how a group that was

not even recognized by its persecutors could now be one of the most popular subjects for historians and Holocaust scholars, especially after their plight went unnoticed for so long. A visit to the museum will also help contemporary gay men and lesbians, who enjoy so many freedoms, understand how this persecution happened in the first place.

After World War I, during Germany's democratic Weimar era beginning in 1919, a gay subculture became well-established in German cities, namely Berlin. Estimates point out that there were about 1 million homosexuals living in Germany before the Nazi party came to power.

"It was a spirit of experimentation and social renewal and the search for an identity after the loss of World War I and the collapse of the economy in the 1920s. They were trying to establish individual rights in a new society," Phillips says. The gay subculture in Berlin had gay bars, gay newspapers, and gay social groups — in some ways like gay life in modern American cities — and achieved a relatively high degree of acceptance.

In 1929, there was even a vote by a committee of the German general assembly to abolish Paragraph 175, which was enacted in 1871 under Kaiser Wilhelm, but after the American stock market crash, Germans veered away from social policy and began looking at economic concerns. The fall of the stock market also brought about a conservative backlash that led to the rise of the Nazi party in 1933.

Within weeks of the Nazi rise to power, the government closed down the gay bars — numbering about 350 at the time, about 10 times as many as there are in D.C. today.

Please see **HOLOCAUST MUSEUM** on **Page 17**



Gay artist Richard Grune, who was convicted under Paragraph 175 and survived the concentrations camps, was one of the first artists to present visual images of life and suffering in the camps. This etching, titled 'Solidarity,' was made in 1947. (Photo courtesy of Schwules Museum, Berlin/USHMM)

The Nazi regime believed that homosexuality could be 'cured' through hard work, and, as a result, sent many convicted of homosexuality to endure forced labor in concentration camps. Here is a picture of gay prisoners in the Mauthausen camp. (Photo courtesy of Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie/USHMM)

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out on the bayou

Holocaust parallels

HOLOCAUST MUSEUM, continued from Page 15

Though women had gained the right to vote in Germany during the Weimar era, because of their status as mostly second-class citizens in the society, lesbians were mainly ignored when trying to purge the country of homosexuality, and, under Paragraph 175, female sexual relationships were not illegal. However, the Nazis believe the homosexual men were mostly "seduced" into the practice and thought that it was a social behavior that could be "cured."

Nazis also used it against the Catholic Church when it became too powerful, trying to depict priests as sexual predators, both homosexual and heterosexual, and investigated 25,000 clerics for trespasses against Paragraph 175. Sixty-four priests were convicted because of the investigations and sent to concentration camps.

Eerily familiar

The social events that led up to the persecution of gay men in Nazi Germany may sound strikingly familiar. As the United States populace grows more conservative and the Catholic Church finds itself embroiled in a scandal involving gay priests and pedophilic priests, some eerie parallels can be drawn.

In 1925, the Nazi delegate to the German general assembly said, "These 175 people should be prosecuted with all severity because they lead to the downfall of the German nation." It may sound to some like a speech from Jesse Helms on gay marriage or service in the military.

Germany ultimately repealed Paragraph 175 in 1969, the same year as the Stonewall riots in the United States that is marked by many as the beginning of the gay civil rights movement.

"I think there's incredible lack of knowledge today about the changing nature of sexuality in the past and the roles that sexuality has played in culture. That lack of knowledge in the sexual past interferes with our ability to create a more sexually egalitarian world," says Marc Stein, chair of the Committee on Lesbian & Gay History, an affiliate of the American Historical Association.

"I think we continue to live on an individual level with the violence that was shown toward gays in the Holocaust. While our nation isn't mobilized to the destruction of a group of people, our society does still express extreme hostility toward gays and lesbians and transgendered people."

Wayne Besen, a spokesman for the Human Rights Campaign who has Jewish family members who survived the Holocaust, sees the new exhibit in a political perspective.

"There are never guarantees, and anybody who thinks that we have a preordained path toward equality needs look no further than what happened in Germany in the '20s," Besen says. "If we're not vigilant, then people can get



A cover of the 1931 issue of the *Island*, a gay magazine. During the Weimar era in Germany, there were about 30 periodicals aimed at gay audiences in the major German cities, all of which were shut down by 1933. (Photo courtesy of USHMM)

into power and enact their agenda.

Though the threat of persecution of gay men and lesbians today may look comparably remote, Philips hopes that studying history and viewing the exhibit will bring about some good in the current political climate.

"Our goal here at the museum is to look at questions of bystanders and what is the role of bystanders in a democracy and what becomes of prejudice when it is unleashed. We tell this history to make people ask just what is their duty and responsibility and hope this history makes them think about their role seriously," he says.

"I would say any persecution is something that needs to be looked at, and the numbers [of gay men who died in the Holocaust] are relatively small compared with 6 million Jews, but the persecution of any individual is something that needs to be treated seriously."

Besen is confident that the exhibit will help to galvanize not only gay Americans, but Americans in general.

"I think it will impact individuals, and they will realize that they have a role to play in stopping future horrors and creating a better world that promotes freedom. You can't walk out of this without feeling that you must stand up and you have to make a difference. Not doing anything isn't a viable way to live," Besen says. "With a knowledge of history comes a responsibility to shape the future."

Stein sees the same effect. "I think today many people deny that gay people suffer from discrimination instead of acknowledging the history of oppression. Learning about oppression in the past can help remind us that we have not reached the place that we want to be," he says.

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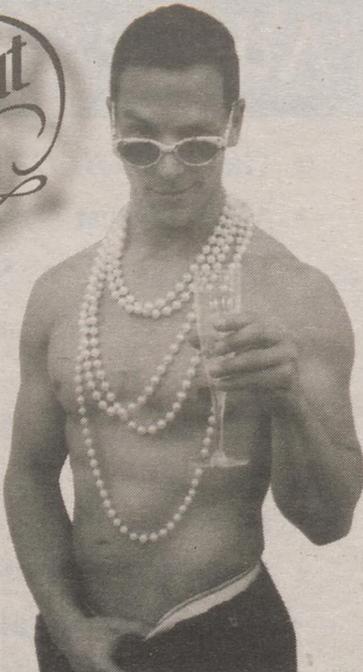
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December hopefuls

THE STUDIOS HAVE TWO RELEASE schedules for December, one for L.A. and New York, where most Academy voters live, and one for the rest of us.

Many anticipated award magnets are deemed too weak to compete with the crowd-pleasers that dominate the holiday box office.

"The Lord of the Rings" proved last year to be formidable in both departments and the second installment should follow suit. Otherwise there aren't many obvious blockbusters.

Gay audiences can look to Pedro Almodovar's new melodrama, but don't expect much from Rob Schneider's gender-bending role in "The Hot Chick."

Here are the films you'll read and hear about but probably not see here until next year: "About Schmidt," "Chicago," "Confessions of a Dangerous Mind," "The Guys," "The Hours," "Intacto," "Love Liza," "Max," "Morvern Callar," "Narc," "Nicholas Nickleby," "The Pianist," "The Quiet American," "Sonny," "Spider," "Tully" and "25th Hour."

They sound more promising, on average, than this list, which all come to town next month:

DEC. 6:

"Analyze That": Gangster Robert De Niro is released from prison in the custody of his shrink (Billy Crystal), who has enough problems already.

"El Crimen del Padre Amaro": Gael Garcia Bernal plays a young Mexican priest who lusts after a female parishioner in a controversial drama.

"Empire": John Leguizamo stars as a gangster who tries to go legit by partnering with a Wall Street investment banker, but ain't nobody legit on Wall Street.

"Equilibrium": Christian Bale bucks the system in a future world where feelings are outlawed in a sci-fi action drama with Emily Watson and Taye Diggs.

"Fidel": Estela Bravo's documentary about Senor Castro's first 40 years of Cuban leadership is said to be neutral about his politics. This I gotta see.

"Personal Velocity": Rebecca Miller wrote and directed portraits of three diverse women (Kyra Sedgwick, Parker Posey, Fairuza Balk).

"Stealing the Fire": John S. Friedman and Eric Nadler document Germany's role in providing nuclear weaponry to Iraq and other enemies of the Free World.

DEC. 13

"The Hot Chick": Rob Schneider gets in touch with his feminine side after



In Pedro Almodovar's "Talk to Her," Javier Camara and Dario Grandinetti are two men who form a bond while the women they wait for are comatose in a clinic. (Photo courtesy Sony Pictures Classics)

a curse on a popular cheerleader sends her into his body.

"Maid in Manhattan": Eligible politician Ralph Fiennes falls for hotel maid Jennifer Lopez thinking she's a guest, in Wayne Wang's romantic comedy.

"Star Trek: Nemesis": Romulans stir up trouble for the Federation and Patrick Stewart's Next Generation in the 10th feature film in the series.

DEC. 18:

"The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers": Sir Ian McKellen makes another Oscar bid as Gandalf in part 2 of Peter Jackson's version of Tolkien.

DEC. 20:

"Adaptation": Nicolas Cage plays screenwriter Charlie Kaufman ("Being John Malkovich") and his twin brother in a bizarre comedy.

"Gangs of New York": Irish and Italian gangs tangle amid political corruption in mid-19th-century New York, in Martin Scorsese's drama with Leonardo DiCaprio, Daniel Day-Lewis and Cameron Diaz.

"Two Weeks Notice": Attorney Sandra Bullock falls in love with problem client Hugh Grant. Baseball's Mike Piazza, who still isn't gay, cameos.

DEC. 25:

"Antwone Fisher": Navy psychiatrist Denzel Washington (who also directed) helps a troubled sailor (Derek Luke) deal with his past in a fact-based drama.

"Catch Me If You Can": Leonardo DiCaprio stars as Frank Abagnale, who is wanted by the FBI (Tom Hanks), in Steven Spielberg's version of a true story.

"Talk to Her": Javier Camara and Dario Grandinetti bond while their women lie comatose in a hospital in gay director Pedro Almodovar's latest melodrama.

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And wait you might on a busy weekend night. Folks from the surrounding Heights, Sixth Ward and West End neighborhoods show up regularly and keep the place hopping. And rightfully so. Patrenella's serves up good food at reasonable prices, and the friendly ambience keeps everyone coming back for more.

THEY START YOU OFF WITH A LITTLE plate of hard, salty Pecorino Romano cheese and black and green olives, plus a basket of fresh bread. The little tidbits are an unexpected treat and just enough to whet your appetite while you peruse the menu.

If you're hungry, don't miss the prosciutto and melone appetizer (\$10). Served on a platter, it's large enough to share between four, with generous slices of prosciutto and fresh cantaloupe. The involtini di melanzane (\$6), rolls of wafer-thin eggplant wrapped around ham and provolone cheese and served with a robust tomato sauce, is another find.

However, the breaded and fried artichoke hearts (\$7), served with ranch dressing, while tasty, are a bit routine.

The main courses come with a house salad. Far from the posh "field greens" so popular in many of today's restaurants, this throwback to a simpler time is made with iceberg and green lettuce, and chock full of good stuff like cucumbers, tomato slices, and olives. The light vinaigrette enhances rather than overpowers.

The seafood pasta (\$14.50) was a treat one evening, with mussels, scallops, shrimp, and clams sautéed in olive oil, garlic and white wine and served over linguine. The seafood was cooked to perfection, with the surprising exception of the shrimp which were disappointingly tough. The melanzane alla parmigiana (\$8.50), or eggplant parmesan, was nicely done with a spicy, homemade tomato sauce and sharp parmesan cheese on top.

Another good choice was the scaloppine di vitella al marsala (\$17), or veal marsala. Two tender veal chops, lightly flowered, arrived on a bed of pasta with a pleasant, but slightly less vibrant than hoped for, marsala sauce.

Patrenella's
RISTORANTE ITALIANO

A word to the wise: Don't miss the daily specials listed on the blackboard by the front door; they're some of the best dishes available. On our first visit, although we noticed the blackboard on our way in, we'd forgotten about it by the time we ordered. Apparently, our waitress did too, since she didn't mention the specials to us. On our next visit, we got a thorough explanation of the numerous specials, and found a whole new world of culinary wonders.

The lamb chop special created a stir when it arrived. A generous serving of eight tender grilled lamb chops, artfully surrounding sautéed vegetables, arrived on a platter. A side of pasta was thrown in for good measure. The crabmeat and pasta special — lump crabmeat, complete with bits of shell, sautéed in white wine, olive oil and garlic, with a touch of red pepper and parsley, served over angel hair pasta — proved a vivid dance of flavors, yet retained its light touch. All specials are priced daily.

BE SURE TO SAVE ROOM FOR DESSERT. A chocolate raspberry cake (\$5) was richly chocolatey with raspberry flavor throughout. Also good were the profiteroles (\$5) stuffed with cream and topped with a chocolate sauce which could have been richer. Most interesting was a lemon tartufo (\$5). A small ball of gelato combined with cream and topped with limoncello, a sweet-tart Italian lemon liqueur, it provided a cool, refreshing end to a sumptuous meal.

Patrenella's feels like the friendly neighborhood joint that it is. Downtown workers crowd in at lunch and nearby residents fill the tables in the cozy dining rooms, named after local high school mascots, for dinner. After your first visit you'll feel like you've been coming here for years and you'll want to come back again and again ... just like visiting an old friend.

Patrenella's
Ristorante Italiano

Patrenella's Ristorante Italiano
813 Jackson Hill
713-863-8223

Food: ●●●●●
Service: ●●●●●
Value: ●●●●●
Scene: ●●●●●

● = Stay home and eat cereal
●● = Well, if you really must
●●● = Fine for all but the finicky
●●●● = Worth more than a 20-minute drive
●●●●● = As good as you'll find in this city

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Christmas gifts can be found
in out-of-the-way places

Shop for the home

I WORKED AT THE NUTCRACKER Market earlier this month, and it was an amazing experience.

For four days, Reliant Center became a flea market/crafts show for soccer moms and their kin. I had no idea there were so many of them. Actually, they're ballet moms — this is a fund-raiser for the Houston Ballet Academy.

This is how these women get all their holiday shopping done. A day at the Nutcracker, and they had arranged for food for a Christmas Eve buffet, gifts for the children's teachers, ordered cute little outfits with the baby's name for grandchildren and bought their Christmas decorations.

They bought themselves clothes and jewelry to wear to seasonal events, too.

I never have my shopping done early, but it's not a big problem. Since I don't do crowds or wait in lines, I'm a big fan of alternative shopping venues.

A NURSERY, GARDEN CENTER OR florist is a great source of gifts for nearly everyone on your list. Many have a great stock of decorations, too.

Nearly anyone would enjoy an indoor plant. Chinese evergreens, Janet Craig Dracaena, and a little tree called China Doll are green plants that are attractive and foolproof, tolerant of a wide variety of conditions and care. Bromeliads are striking and easy to grow, requiring only that the vase formed by the leaves is kept filled with water. The bright-colored bract, which holds the tiny flowers, will hold its color for months. Find a nice basket or pot to put it in. These make new plants, called pups, when the bract dies.

Orchids are a bit more demanding, but will keep flowers for months. There is a great new book called *Orchid Growing For Wimps*, by Ellen Zachos, that is one of the best basic gardening books I've seen. This, plus an orchid, would be a gift for someone who has such a green thumb that there's no room in the garden.

I'm buying myself a Christmas cactus. These are spectacular, but the buds will abort if the temperature exceeds 75. They can go indoors or out, but will freeze.

At this time of year, a flowering plant for the patio would be appreciated. Geraniums and pansies are pretty for sun, cyclamens for shade. Buy a bowl that is already done, or if you have any sense of design, compose one. Winter herbs such as dill and cilantro make a good gift for a cook. They don't require much, just sun and good drainage.

Citrus trees can be grown here, though they might need protection against a freeze. Many kinds can be

grown in pots. They have leaves now, and some have fruit or flowers. Someone with a bare yard might appreciate a tree, a camellia bush or an antique rose. Wrap the pots with foil and add a bow.

My usual advice about "living" Christmas trees is that they don't do well here. However, I recently saw a deodar cedar and it is a beautiful tree. It should do fine here and is so pretty that it is worth trying out. So, my new advice is to find out what the botanical name is and check with a reputable reference.

There aren't many gifts at the garden center that will impress a child, but amaryllis bulbs might do it. These just need to be put in light and supported in an upright position. They will produce a huge flower in just a few weeks. In dirt, they only need a small pot. Keep the neck above the soil. They can also be grown in a glass that is shaped so the bulb is held just above the water, so only the roots are wet.

Skip the mall. There are fresh ideas for holiday gifts and room to breathe and fresh air, too, at your nearest garden shop.

THERE ARE THINGS BESIDES PLANTS to buy too. Other possibilities include bird baths, garden sculpture or a fountain. For yourself, think about a new set of patio furniture.

Gardeners might enjoy having a rain gauge or a thermometer that shows maximum and minimum temperatures. Nice tools are generally appreciated, even if they don't seem like much of a gift to a non-gardener. Hard goods can generally be exchanged, but plants often can not.

If you know someone who is really into a specific kind of plant, give them a gift membership to the corresponding plant society. Or check out the Web sites for Timber Press, www.timber-press.com, and Sterling Publishing, www.sterling-pub.com. They have books for the most intense gardeners, but you might have to order them.

One book that is a beautiful gift for the traveler or the gardener is "Gardens in China" by Peter Valder, from Timber. On a more modest scale, "Touring Texas Gardens," by Jessie Gunn Stephens, is a nice gift for any local gardener. It's on my "To Me" list.

So, skip the mall. There are fresh ideas for holiday gifts and room to breathe and fresh air, too, at your nearest garden shop.

community calendar

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30 EVERY SATURDAY

All-Spanish Worship Service/Noche Espiritual. 6 p.m. Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2026 W. 11th. 713-303-3409 or 713-861-9149.

After Hours. KPFT 90.1 FM. 1-4 a.m.

Dignity mass. 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.

Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Viviana's. 713-830-3000.

Gay & Lesbian Breakfast Club. 9:30 a.m. 281-437-0636.

Houston Wrestling Club. Practice. 1:30 p.m. 713-453-7406.

Q-Patrol. Volunteers walk the streets to help prevent hate crimes. 9:30 p.m. Convene at community center. 713-528-SAFE. E-mail: qpatrolinc@aol.com

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in, noon-5 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlccc.org.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

PFLAG-Houston. Meets first Sunday of the month, 2 p.m. 713-867-9020.

EVERY SUNDAY

Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Services at 8:30 & 10:50 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 713-526-1017.

Center for Spiritual Living. Services at 11 a.m., for children at 10:50 a.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808. The center also has commitment ceremonies, metaphysical bookstore and classes.

Community Gospel. Service at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. Sunday School for children 10 a.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.

Community of Kindred Spirits in Beaumont. Worship at 6 p.m. 1575 Spindletop Ave., Beaumont, Texas. 409-813-2055. E-mail: cksrev3@netzero.net

Covenant Church, Ecumenical, Liberal Baptist. Service 9:30 a.m. & education hour 11 a.m. 713-668-8830.

Emerson Unitarian Church. Adult education, 10 a.m. Service, 11 a.m. Lunch at noon. www.emersonhou.org.

First Congregational Church (Memorial). Service at 10 a.m. Christian Education, 11:30 a.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston.org.

First Unitarian Universalist Church. Services at 9:30 & 11:30 a.m. Brunch at 10:30 a.m. 713-526-5200. church@firstuu.org.

Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 9 p.m.-midnight at Club Inergy. 713-830-3000.

Gay Catholics of St. Anne's-Houston. 5 p.m. worship service. Dinner and social. alexcam@wt.net. 713-623-0930.

GLOBAL. Gay Lesbian Or Bisexual Alliance. University of Houston GLBT student group meeting. 2 p.m. at the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.uh.edu/~global. E-mail: global@bayou.uh.edu.

Grace Lutheran Church. Sunday school for all ages 9 a.m. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-528-3269.

Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m.-noon. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com

Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church. 10 a.m. service. 3333 Fannin, Suite 106. 713-528-6756.

Resurrection MCC. Services, 9 and 11 a.m. Children and Youth Sunday School, 10 a.m. Children's service, 11 a.m. 713-861-9149.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 7:45 a.m.; Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 8:55 a.m.; Education hour, 10 a.m.; Choral Eucharist, 11 a.m. 713-528-6665.

Sunday Brunch. For HIV-positive men. 11 a.m. Riva's, 1117 Missouri St. Paul, 713-880-0690. e-mail: PoznBuff@aol.com.

The Women's Group. Meeting and discussion. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.

Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Adult discussion, 9 a.m. Service, 11:15 a.m. 281-277-8882. www.tuuc.org.

Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County. 502 Church St. Service, 10:30 a.m. 409-765-8330.

Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. Adult forum, 10 a.m. Service, 11 a.m. 713-686-5876.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in, 2-6 p.m. • GLBT Community Church with Rev. Melissa Wood: Bible study, 10-10:45 a.m., worship 11 a.m. www.geocities.com/glbtc • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlccc.org.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2 EVERY MONDAY

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.

Free HIV Testing. Houston Area Community Services. 9 a.m.-noon at Joseph-Hines Clinic, 1710 West 25th St. 713-526-0555, ext. 231, 227 or 226.

Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m.-midnight. Keys West. 713-830-3000.

Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.

Gay Fathers/Fathers First. Support group. 8-9:30 p.m. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Tom, 713-726-8736. www.geocities.com/gaydadshouston/

Grief & Divorce Support Groups. 7 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, ext. 208.

Kolbe Project. Eucharist 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.

Montrose Clinic. Offers weekly peer support groups for gay and bisexual men with HIV. Spanish speaking group meets, 6:30 p.m. 215 Westheimer. 713-830-3050. Grupo de Apoyo para Latinos gay y bisexuales VIH positivos. Lunes 6:30. Para mas informacion llama al 713-830-3025.

Queer Voices Radio Show. 8-10 p.m. KPFT 90.1.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlccc.org.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

Lesbian Health Initiative of Houston, Inc. Nonprofit organization working for lesbian health meets the first Tuesday of each month. 7 p.m., 404 Westheimer. 713-603-0023. www.lhihouston.org.

EVERY TUESDAY

Bering Support Network. Lunch Bunch Gang, 11 a.m. 713-526-1017.

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.

Free HIV Testing. Houston Area Community Services. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Joseph-Hines Clinic, 1710 West 25th St. 713-526-0555, ext. 231, 227 or 226.

Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m.-midnight at Club Houston. Also 4-8 p.m. at 611 Club, 611 Hyde Park. 713-830-3000.

Gay youth. New program for young gay males, ages 18-29. 7 p.m. 614 Avondale. 713-533-9786.

Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous. Support group. 7 p.m. Houston Women's Rugby Team. No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.

Introduction to Buddhism. All welcome at 634 W. Temple in the Heights. 7 p.m. Carlton, 713-862-8129.

Rainbow Ranglers. Free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. No partner needed. Beginner 2 Step, Waltz, Shuffle & Swing. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • Lesbian Coming Out Group, 7 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlccc.org.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4 EVERY WEDNESDAY

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.; SOM Discussion & Exploration, 7 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.

Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Support Network Pot Luck Dinner, 6:30 p.m. Various support groups, 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.

Bible Study. Noon & 6:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal. 713-526-6665.

Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 4-8 p.m. at Mary's; 9 p.m.-midnight at Ripcord; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at EJ's; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at Midtowne Spa. 713-830-3000.

Free HIV Testing. Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas St. OraSure method. Call for appointment. Sharon, 713-873-4157.

Houston Pride Band. Open rehearsal, 7-9 p.m. 1307 Yale. 713-528-4379.

Houston Tennis Club. 7:00-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com

Spiritual Uplift service. 7 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in, 2-9 p.m. • Houston Black Lesbian, Gay, Transgender Coalition office hours 10 a.m.-noon • Free HIV testing, counseling, 6-9 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlccc.org.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

Gulf Coast Transgender Committee. Meeting. 713-780-4282.

EVERY THURSDAY

BiNet Houston. Group for bisexuals; everyone welcome. 7:30 p.m. Hobbit Café, 2240 Portsmouth. www.flash.net/~bihouse. 713-467-4380.

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.

Community Gospel. Service. 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235. www.communitygospel.org.

Free HIV Testing. Houston Area Community Services. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Joseph-Hines Clinic, 1710 West 25th St. Also 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Gallery Medical Clinic, 5900 North Freeway, and Club Toyz from 9 p.m.-midnight. 713-526-0555, ext. 231, 227 or 226.

Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 4-8 p.m. at The Outpost; 8 p.m.-midnight at Brazos River Bottom and Cousins; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at Toyz Disco. 713-830-3000.

FrontRunners. Running club. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021. Web site: http://home.swbell.net/larathon/houfr.htm. E-mail: larathon@swbell.net.

GLOBAL. Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual Alliance at the University of Houston-Central Campus. Weekly meeting, 6 p.m. e-mail: nguyen0023@hotmail.com.

Hep C Recovery. Support group. 6:30 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.

Queer Women's Rugby Team. No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.

Lambda Skating Club. 8 p.m. Tradewinds Skating Rink. www.neosoft.com/~lrsc. 713-523-9620.

Montrose Clinic. Offers weekly peer support groups for gay and bisexual men with HIV. English speaking group meets, 6:30 p.m. 215 Westheimer 713-830-3050.

Rainbow Ranglers. Free C&W dance lessons. No partner required. Brazos River Bottom. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.

Recovery From Food Addiction (RFA). Meeting for 12-step program open to all. Noon-1 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1805 W. Alabama St. RFA: 713-673-2848. www.geocities.com/rfa77235/. E-mail: rfaworldservice@aol.com.

Spanish Charla Conversation Group. Café Agora, 7 p.m. E-mail: charlahouston@msn.com. 713-416-7203.

Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop in 2-9 p.m. • Houston Black Lesbian, Gay, Transgender Coalition office hours 10 a.m.-noon • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlccc.org.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

Service of Healing. For persons living with HIV/AIDS. Christ Church Cathedral Golding Chapel, 1117 Texas Ave. 7 p.m. 281-331-4851.

EVERY FRIDAY

Center for Spiritual Living. Meditation (drop-in), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 6610 Harwin. 713-339-1808.

Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. at The Meatrack; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at EJ's and at Midtowne Spa. 713-830-3000.

Free HIV Testing. Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas St. OraSure method. Call for appointment. Sharon, 713-873-4157.

Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) Meeting, 7-10 p.m. 713-942-7002.

Houston Tennis Club. 7:00-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub.org

Kolbe Project. Morning prayer, 10 a.m. 713-861-1800.

Mishpachah Alizim. GLBT Jewish congregation. Sabbath services at 8 p.m. on the second Friday of each month at Baby Barnabys, 602 Fairview. Monthly study groups with Congregation Beth Israel, 5600 North Braeswood. Mishpachah Alizim, P.O. Box 980136, Houston, TX 77098. 866-841-9139, ext. 1834.

Q-Patrol. Volunteers walk the streets to help prevent hate crimes. 9:30 p.m. Convene at community center. 713-528-SAFE. E-mail: qpatrolinc@aol.com

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlccc.org.

VOLUNTEER/SELF-HELP

Gay & Lesbian Switchboard Houston. Volunteers offer a friendly ear to callers in need of information, nonjudgmental support, crisis intervention and referral services, emergency shelter and advocacy services to crime survivors who may need someone to accompany them to a hospital for medical attention or assistance in filing a police report. 713-529-3211.

HoP-ON. Anyone can join this non-profit moderated e-mail announcement list that helps facilitate advocacy work and organizing efforts for gay Houstonians. Quantity of postings is strictly limited. Postings include press releases and action alerts from national, state and local gay and allied organizations. For info or to join, access www.groups.yahoo.com/group/HoP-ON/.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Volunteers perform a variety of critical tasks which include staffing the information desk during drop-in hours; helping with Center programming and events; working on community outreach efforts, fund-raising and publicity. Card players, writers and artists in particular are needed. 713-524-3818.

Peer Listening Line. Youth only. Staffed by GLBT youth for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. 5-10 p.m. Monday-Friday. 800-399-PEER.

Pride Committee of Houston. Volunteers sought for Pride 2003 preparations. This is the 25th Pride celebration. www.pridehouston.org. E-mail: volunteers@pridehouston.org.

@ To list an event, call 713-529-8490, fax at 713-529-9531, or e-mail editor@houstonvoice.com. Deadline is Monday at 5 p.m.

appts

a weekly guide to arts & entertainment activities for gay Houstonians

SPECIAL SUNDAY, DEC. 1

Psychic and Wellness Expo is hosted by CenterPoint as a free event. Those interested can try magnets, spray vitamins, chiropractor, reflexology and more. CenterPoint, 1920 Hollister. 713-932-7224.

THURSDAY, DEC. 5

"**Twelve Days of Christmas**" is a Houston Area Men's Group "Party with a Purpose." The theme is "A Two Turtle Doves Happy Hour." Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will be served. The event benefits Houston-area families; participants are asked to offer monetary gifts. 7 to 10 p.m. Meteor Urban Video Lounge, 2306 Genesee. www.twelvedaysofchristmasinc.org.

FILM THIS WEEKEND

"**Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars**" features David Bowie as his gender-bending alter ego in the glam-rock classic that inspired 2001's "Hedwig and the Angry Inch." 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 29, and Saturday, Nov. 30. Tickets: \$6. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Caroline Wiess Law Building, corner of Main Street and Bissonnet/Binz. 713-639-7515. www.mfah.org.



Check out glammed-up David Bowie in "Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars" this weekend at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

GALLERIES THROUGH DEC. 14

"**Dyke Action Machine! (DAM!) Oh DAM! 10 Years of Dyke Action Machine!**" is a public art collaboration which critiques mainstream culture by inserting lesbian images into a recognizably commercial context. This retrospective was organized by the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco. Through Dec. 14. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. 713-223-8346. www.diverseworks.org.

ONGOING

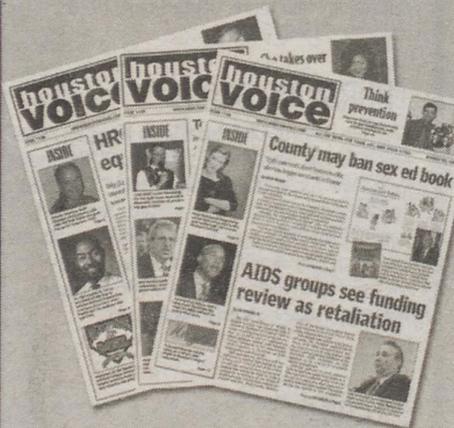
Gulf Coast Archives & Museum of GLBT History Satellite Exhibition. The first exhibition from the GCAM collection presented at the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center honors the NAMES Project Houston. Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

Positive Art Workshop Photography Exhibition. Artists living with HIV/AIDS created these pictures with accompanying text. Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

MUSIC THURSDAY, DEC. 5

"**Gloria**," a performance by Mercury Baroque Ensemble, will be presented. The concert includes Christmas music in classical style from the baroque period. Tickets: \$20 for adults, \$10 for seniors and students. 8 p.m. St. Anne's Catholic Church, 2140 Westheimer. 713-498-4853. www.mercurybaroqueensemble.org.

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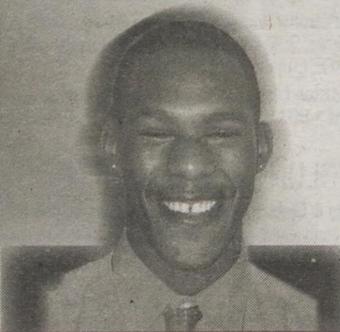
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WRITER LOOKING FOR STORIES of local heroes/people who have made a difference to another individual, their city or their community. Contact Paul Dunn; 3030 McKinney Ave.; Dallas, TX, 75204 or contact me via e-mail: PD200@aol.com

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Q Puzzle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
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70						71				72				
73						74				75				

"Out of This World"

Across

- Cleis _____
- Charles Laughton played this emperor
- Moliere's mommy
- Activity of Isadora Duncan
- Mine, to Foucault
- Britten's beers
- Cicely of "Fried Green Tomatoes"
- What to lean on while singing "Come to My Window"
- "Anything _____"
- Movie about Rimbaud and Verlaine
- Milk village
- Morales of "Resurrection Blvd."
- Shakespeare's dusk
- Devoured Beard's sweetmeats
- 6 in., e.g.
- 69 and others (abbr.)
- Film about drag kings
- Pester, as Albert to Armand
- Gay Chinese film "_____ Palace, West Palace"
- Some escorts want it up front
- Log Cabinite Tafel
- "...a _____ deferred" (Hughes)
- Great Bear constellation
- Dupont Circle of D.C., e.g.
- Refrain syllable
- St. of Ballot Measure 9
- Dettermans of "Antonia's Line"

Down

- SF hours
- Amy of the Indigo Girls
- Madonna's pair
- "In & Out" producer Rudin
- Kahlo and others
- Out-of-this-world org.
- "Dirty Dancing" director Ardolino
- Chuck and Buck
- Tin Man's accessory
- Three guys who went to see Mary
- Become "husband and husband" on the fly
- Witherspoon of "Legally Blonde"
- City where "gay" is "frohlich"
- Site of a Lara Croft raid
- "The _____ in Winter"
- Submitted
- What you shouldn't see in "Boys Don't Cry"
- Gaydar, e.g.
- Bean curd
- "Love Songs" poet Teasdale
- Where many Affirmation members live
- "_____ out!" (cry by Pallone)
- Quality of Feniger's cooking
- Macho doll
- Nut from Oak Lawn
- Number of sides to a gay symbol
- Jane Siberry's "I _____ Aloud"
- Jason went cruising in this
- Leaves behind
- Bates' job in "Gasford Park"
- Like Edmund White's beautiful room
- Singer Nyro
- It goes on top of pancakes
- Samurai writer Saikaku
- Opera guy
- Give a large one to
- Queens rule over them
- High place with a flat top
- "To _____ For" (1994 gay British flick)
- Legis. written by Alice Paul
- D. Kopay did this in 1972

Answers on Page 25

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My Stars!

November 29 — December 5



ARIES (March 21 to April 20)

Venus and your ruler Mars are conjunct in your house of serious relationships, so make true love your focus, sweetie. If you're hedging your bets by flirting with many, perhaps it's time to settle down and commit, you whore! A Virgo wants more of you than you are currently giving.



TAURUS (April 21 to May 20)

This is a great time for you to pursue a romantic dream, darling. Venus and Mars are passing through your house of love, so seize the day and let the one you dig know that you're not going to give up! A Capricorn is connected to your heart.



GEMINI (May 21 to June 21)

The new moon hits your house of love on Dec. 3, which means that you could feel truly inspired about a close relationship. Get out of your head and into your heart and body, dear. A Scorpio wants the real down-and-dirty you.



CANCER (June 22 to July 22)

Several planets are transiting your day-job sector, including Pluto, the planet of self-transformation. You need to ask yourself, "How happy am I in my current work?" If you are decidedly un-thrilled, it's time to look for internal, not external, causes. An Aries can help.



LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)

This is a passionate time for you, Leo. No need to pretend to be more in control than you really are. Let yourself go wild. An Aquarius likes to see you with your hair down.



VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)

This is a homey time of year for you, darling, as the Sun, Mercury, and Pluto all transit your house of home and family. Stop acting like such a workaholic. Lie back with a Pisces for a while.



LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)

The new moon on Dec. 3 falls in the most social sector of your chart. Bring more people into your life. Mix it up and make merry as this holiday month begins. Another Libra wants to party with you.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)

This is a great time for you to put some money into making more money. The new moon along with the Sun, Mercury, and Pluto are all making hay in your second house of dough while the sun shines. Beat out the competition. It doesn't matter at what — just beat 'em! A Sag makes a powerful ally.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)

Don't look to others for guidance during this intense cycle. You really have to go with your gut and forget conventional logic. Throw caution to the wind, Sag! A Cancer would like to throw you on a bed, chop chop!



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)

The new moon on Dec. 3 could bring some idiot exes back into your life. Be careful, darling. You don't want to get enmeshed in old psycho dramas. A Cancer brings you good vibes.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)

This is a great time for you to push through frustrations on the job and think about what you really want in the long run. Don't make any sudden moves, babe. Watch a Leo for clues to a breakthrough in your love life.



PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)

You may want to push yourself a little harder on the job. An opportunity for advancement is within reach, but you can't be subtle about your goals. A Leo needs a green light from you. Why do you keep flashing yellow?

Jill Dearman is the author of the best-selling "Queer Astrology for Men" and "Queer Astrology for Women" (both from St. Martin's Griffin). For information on charts and consultations, call 212-841-0177 or e-mail QScopes@aol.com.

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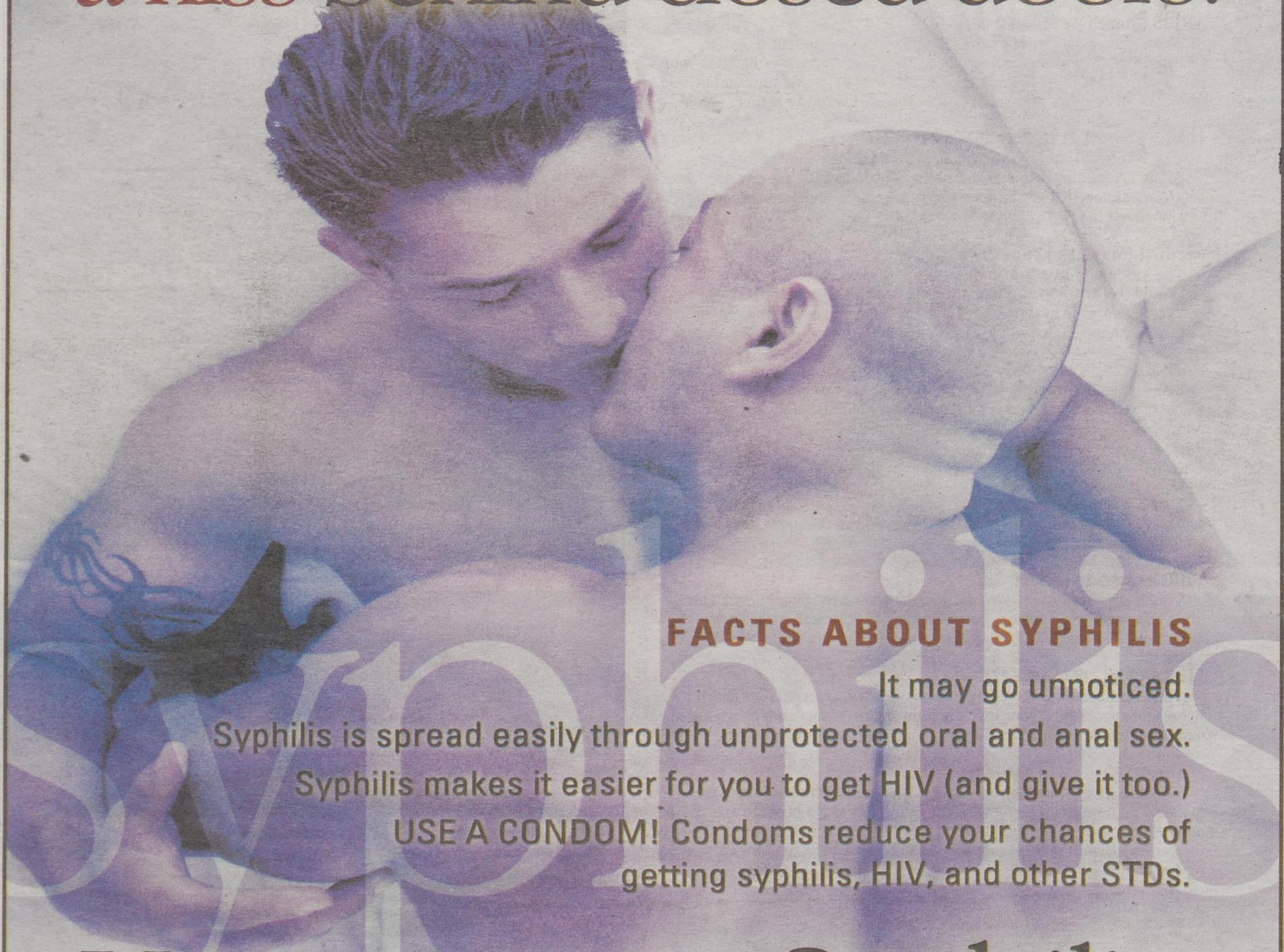


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