



## 'DYKES' TURNS 20

Cartoonist Alison Bechdel celebrates anniversary with new compilation.

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ISSUE 1195

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SEPTEMBER 19, 2003

# Gay issues may surface in top cop search

## New mayor faced with replacing gay-friendly Houston police chief C.O. Bradford

By JOSEF MOLNAR

Gay Houstonians hope the city's new mayor taps a police chief that continues building on the gay-friendly track record of C.O. Bradford, who retires from the post on Sept. 30.

Bradford's relationship with gays was at times rocky, but the veteran law enforcement officer is credited with making progress in the relationship between the police department and the city's gay residents.

"We've seen huge changes in the way the department deals with the gay and lesbian community," said Annise Parker, a

lesbian who worked with the police department on training prior to election to City Council.

"Each police chief had a different relationship with the community, but we've had a big surge since Bradford came in," she said.

Bradford retires on Sept. 30, and city residents head to the polls in November to elect a new mayor. Brown is barred from running for a fourth two-year term. Bradford's successor is likely to be named after a mayor is elected.

Bradford's tenure saw a strengthening relationship between gay residents and the police department. The police chief was pushed to react in 1998 after the murder of Marc Daniel Kajs, who was shot by his ex-boyfriend outside a Montrose restaurant after he filed three separate reports of death threats to the police.

Gay activists reacted angrily that

Please see **TOP COP** on Page 9



Houston's longtime police chief, C.O. Bradford, retires on Sept. 30. A replacement is expected to be named after a new mayor takes office early next year. Bradford joined Annise Parker, a lesbian and City Council member, in June 1998 at a public meeting with gay residents. (Photo by Matthew A. Hennie)

# Democrat candidates oppose marriage amendment



Former Army General Wesley Clark on Wednesday became the 10th Democrat to announce he is seeking the party's nomination for president. The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force called this the most pro-gay group of presidential candidates in U.S. history. (Photo by AP)

## Gay group hails Clark as 'another pro-gay moderate'

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

WASHINGTON — As retired Army General Wesley K. Clark announced his candidacy for president this week as a Democrat, the nine Democrats already in the race said they oppose a constitutional amendment aimed at banning gay marriage.

In response to a question posed by Southern Voice to each of the candidates' campaign offices, spokespersons for the nine candidates said the presidential contenders strongly oppose such a constitutional amendment, even though six of the nine have said they do not support legalizing gay marriage.

Clark's campaign, which was in the process of opening its headquarters in

Little Rock, Ark., did not reply to the question by press time. The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force said Clark indicated that he, too, opposes a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage.

NGLTF issued a release calling Clark "another pro-gay moderate joining the most pro-gay field of presidential candidates in history."

Clark, a former NATO supreme commander who led international forces in the war in Kosovo, has never held elective office and declared himself a Democrat just a few weeks ago.

He stated in press interviews during the past several months that he supports gay civil rights. He has also criticized the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy as flawed and supports a review of the policy. He backed away from an earlier statement that the policy "absolutely" should be changed.

The candidates indicating their opposi-

tion to the anti-gay marriage amendment were Sens. John Kerry (Mass.), Joseph Lieberman (Conn.), John Edwards (N.C.), and Bob Graham (Fla.), Reps. Richard Gephardt (Mo.), and Dennis Kucinich (Ohio), former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, former Sen. Carol Moseley Braun (Ill.), and Rev. Al Sharpton.

Earlier this year, Kucinich, Moseley Braun, and Sharpton told a forum sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest gay political group, that they support legalization of civil marriage for gays.

Kerry, Lieberman, Dean, and Gephardt told the forum they opposed legalization of civil, same-sex marriage, although they declared their support for extending all marriage-related benefits and rights to same-sex couples. Edwards and Graham did not attend the HRC forum but stated they oppose legalizing same-sex marriage.

Please see **CANDIDATES** on Page 9

**POWER SUIT:** Chock full Empower '03 schedule is your guide to weekend event. Page 3

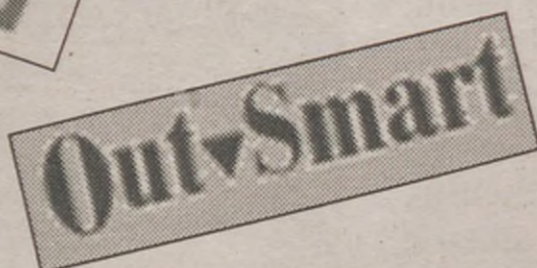
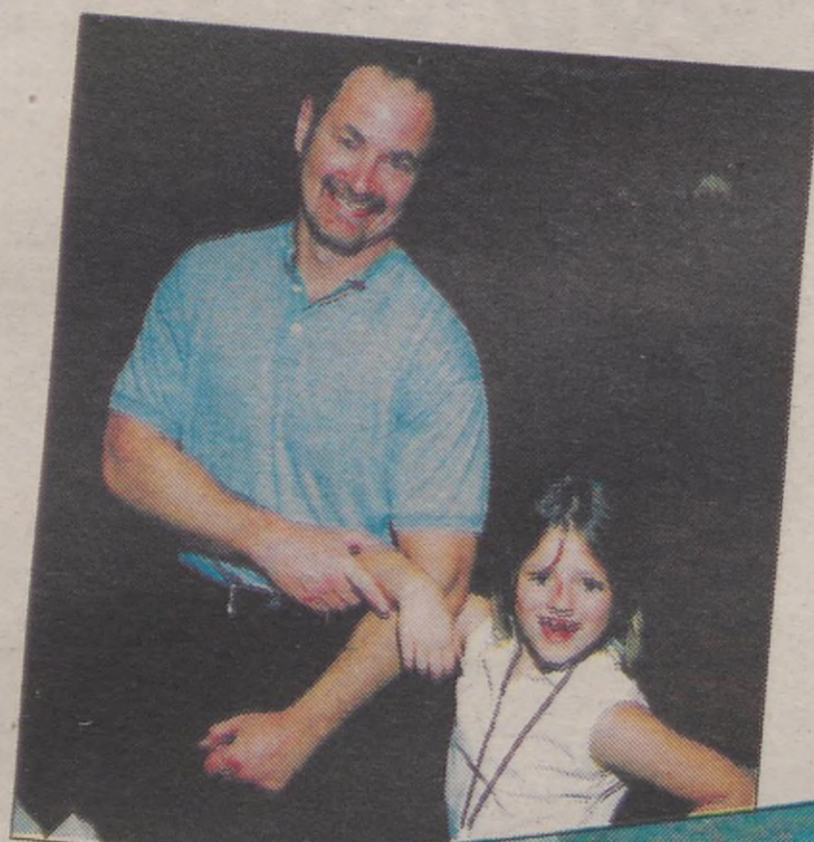
**WELL WOMAN:** Lesbians face health risks, LLEGO director Lisbeth Melendez Rivera agrees with new study. Page 7



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local news

# Suspect in trans death surrenders

Allan David Gibson charged in silicon injection that allegedly led to death last May

A man who Houston police say told them he gave thousands of silicone injections surrendered last week after being accused of injecting silicone into a transgender woman who died after it leaked into surrounding tissues.

Allan David Gibson, 49, turned himself in at the Houston Police Department's downtown headquarters Sept. 11, police said. He was charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon based on the Aug. 17 death of David Harold Reese Jr., 31, who died days after the silicone entered her tissues, blood and lungs.

Police said Gibson could not recall if he provided Reese with injections "because he does so many," the police complaint states, according to the Associated Press. The injections are used by some transgender people to enhance body parts without the side effects or costs involved in hormone therapy.

Gibson gave a statement in which

police say he admitted regularly injecting transgender individuals.

Robert Turner, a lawyer representing Gibson, did not immediately return a message left by The Associated Press.

Two transgender women, besides Reese, died in recent months after receiving illegal silicone injections from people without medical licenses, police have said.

The police department's major offender's division learned of the practice in May after the death of Delfino Gonzalez, 22.

Guadalupe Camarena, 32, who lives as a woman, was charged last month with aggravated assault for injecting silicone into Gonzalez, who died days after receiving the injections. Camarena is free on \$50,000 bond.

The Harris County Medical Examiner's determined that the silicone found in Gonzalez's bloodstream was industrial strength, which is not sterilized like injectible liquid silicone and approved by the Food & Drug Administration in only a handful of controlled clinical trials, spokesperson Rudy Flores told the Associated Press.

Another transgender woman, San

Chiem, 35, died on July 22 and silicone injections are suspected in her death as well.

"The practice of injecting silicone into transgender individuals is not new," John Cannon, a police spokesperson, told the Houston Voice last month. "Many individuals have been injected and are unaware of the dangers associated with the injections."

After Gonzales was injected in April, the silicone traveled into the heart and lungs, blocking organ function and causing acute respiratory distress syndrome, according to the Harris County Medical Examiner's office.

Gonzales died May 7 at Memorial Hermann Hospital Southwest.

The Houston cases come on the heels of a transgendered woman receiving a five-year prison sentence in the "pumping party" death of a Miami woman. Donnie "Viva" Hendrix, 34, was convicted July 30 of practicing medicine without a license after helping perform silicone injections around the country.

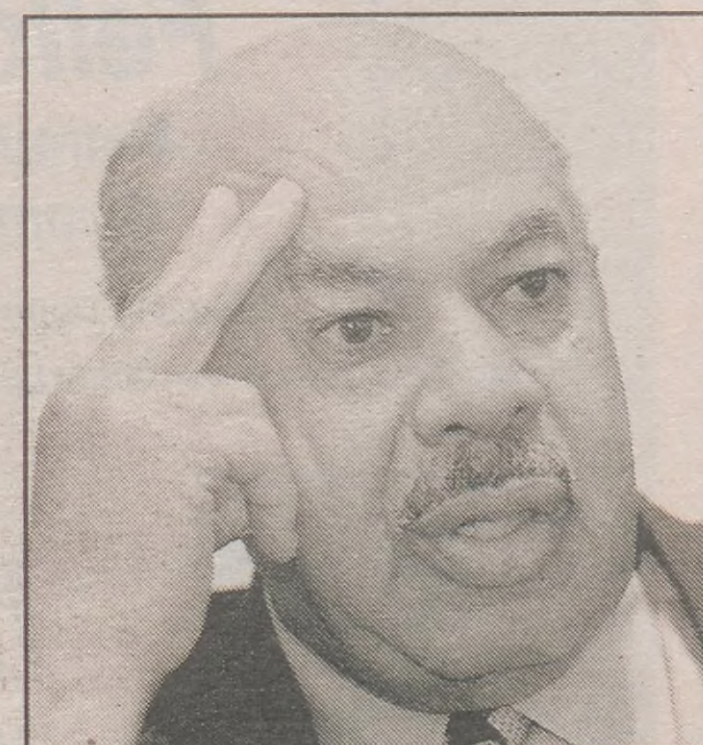
Hendrix's accomplice, Mark Hawkins, was convicted of third-degree murder in the case and faces 15 years in prison at sentencing later this year.

From staff and wire reports

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**MODEST PROPOSAL:** University of California Regent Ward Connerly designed his state's Proposition 54, a measure that a national gay group says lays racist groundwork for discrimination of gays and transgendered people. Page 7



**FOLLOW THE LESBIAN:** If expert predictions hold true, comedian Ellen DeGeneres may follow Rosie O'Donnell into talk show success with her new daytime program. Page 16



**FOR WOMEN ONLY:** New DVD releases include lesbian sex designed specifically for a female audience, though 'Journey to Kafiristan' isn't the best of the batch. Page 18

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Houston Voice, 500 Lovett Blvd., Suite 200, Houston, TX 77006. Houston Voice is published weekly, on Friday, by Window Media LLC. Subscriptions are \$92/year for 52 issues (only \$1.77 per issue).

# Empower chock full of gay-friendly firms, ideas

Gay business expo schedules activities for varied interests

This weekend's annual gay business and entertainment exposition, Empower 2003, is set to give gay consumers the opportunity to shop around, network with various companies and even enjoy live entertainment.

The Empower theme, "Go Straight to the Gay Market," is aimed at giving a variety of gay and gay-friendly businesses and organizations a chance to reach out, and a constant lineup of music and performance entertainment will create a festive atmosphere.

Here's the full line-up of planned activities to supplement visiting the more than 150 vendor booths.

Saturday, Sept. 20

**MAIN STAGE**  
Opening with Marsha Carlton and company  
1 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Les Wood & Rob Seible  
1:30 p.m. - 1:55 p.m.

Christian Andreason  
2 p.m. - 2:25 p.m.

Carolyn Schulman  
2:30 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.

Annie Lin  
3 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Sarah Golden  
3:40 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.

Melinda Mones  
4:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

Smokin Hair Day  
5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

**SEMINAR ROOM**  
Aisle 700, Booth 701  
Political Candidate's Forum  
2 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Human Rights Campaign Program  
3 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Car Buying Seminar  
3 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

**MINI SEMINAR ROOM**  
Aisle 1, Booths 116 and 118  
Skin and face care  
1:30 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

**MINI SEMINAR ROOM**  
Aisle 7, Booths 725 and 727  
Team Building Seminars  
3 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 21

**MAIN STAGE**  
Opening with Marsha Carlton and Company  
11 a.m. - 11:25 a.m.

Toni Sicola  
11:30 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.

Kim Gonzales  
12:15 p.m. - 12:50 p.m.

Gervais Wright  
1 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Charlotte Simmons  
1:15 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Planet Funk  
2 p.m. - 2:25 p.m.

Girls with Guitars  
2:25 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Houston Pride Band  
3:20 p.m. - 3:55 p.m.

Nadiranar Dance Company  
4 p.m. - 4:25 p.m.

Jonathan Arceneaux  
4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

David Barron  
4:45 p.m. - 5 p.m.

**SEMINAR ROOM**  
Aisle 700, Booth 701  
Starting a School  
Gay-Straight Alliance  
1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Car Buying Seminar  
3 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

**MINI SEMINAR ROOM**  
Aisle 1, Booths 116 and 118

Skin and face care  
11:30 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

**MINI SEMINAR ROOM**  
Aisle 7, Booths 725 and 727

Team Building Seminars  
12 p.m., 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.

**MORE INFO**

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**national news**

September 21 •  
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Rev. Janet Parker

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**Calif. lawmakers vote to require DP benefits for state contracts**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Companies that want to do business with the state would have to offer the same benefits to domestic partners as they do to married couples, under legislation approved by the Assembly. Republicans objected, saying the measure tramples on the religious and other rights of employers who may object to gay relationships. Democrats contended the measure is another step in discouraging discrimination by businesses that want the privilege of gaining state contracts. The measure was sent to Gov. Gray Davis with the minimum votes needed, 41-31. "It is fundamentally about equal rights, and it is practically about equal pay," offered in the form of benefits, said the author, Assembly member Christine Kehoe (D-San Diego). By reducing the number of bidders and decreasing competition, the bill is expected to cost the state millions of additional dollars on the more than \$6 billion spent annually on state contracts.



Assembly member Christine Kehoe (D-San Diego), who is a lesbian, helped push through a California law that will require all companies that do business with the state to provide domestic partnership benefits to their employees.

**Wisc. panel OKs bill to limit marriage to heterosexuals**

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A legislative committee unanimously approved a bill that would define marriage in Wisconsin as a contract between a man and a woman, clearing the way for a full Assembly vote. Committee member Rep. David Cullen (D-Milwaukee) sided with the five Republicans on the panel. The other Democratic members of the committee, Reps. Tony Staskunas and Tom Hebl, were absent. Wisconsin law defines marriage as a contract between a husband and wife, but committee chair Rep. Mark Gundrum (R-New Berlin), who wrote the bill, said judges could interpret that language loosely and redefine marriage. "It's really just trying to strengthen our laws so there's no question whatsoever ... that marriage as an institution is between one man and one woman," Gundrum said. Christopher Ott, executive director of Action Wisconsin, a statewide gay rights group, said the current husband-wife language clearly means a man and a woman. Lawmakers just want to antagonize gays, he said. "It's hate legislation," Ott said.

**Court: Focus on Family can sue company over refused anti-gay ads**

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — A federal appeals court has revived a lawsuit by the conservative Christian-group Focus on the Family against a local public bus system that refused an advertisement for an anti-gay conference. In a decision from the U.S. 11th Circuit Court of Appeals made public last week, the court ruled a federal judge in Tampa erred when he threw out the group's 2001 lawsuit against the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority. The appeals court said Focus on the Family can pursue its claim of First Amendment violations. The bus system had refused to allow the group to advertise its "Love Won Out" convention in St. Petersburg. "This is a great victory — we are elated," said Tom Minnery, vice president of public policy for Focus on the Family. Neither the attorney for the bus system, nor its executive director, immediately returned phone calls. While private companies can usually reject advertising they don't want, the question in this case is whether a government entity working through a private company can if it believes some might find the ads offensive.

**'Males dressed as females' under scrutiny when traveling**

WASHINGTON — The U.S. government issued new rules to airport security and law enforcement agencies that will impact transgendered people. The National Transgender Advocacy Coalition stated in a press release that the new security alert specifically mentions "males dressed as females." According to a government press release, officials believe that soft targets, and more clever approaches including use of disguise, are considered the next trend in terrorism. The alert stated, in part, "Male bombers may dress as females in order to discourage scrutiny." According to the NTAC, the new warning means that airport screeners and other law enforcement agencies will be much more vigilant than usual. It also means they may be more likely to commit unwitting abuses, the NTAC stated. Transgendered people should be mindful of the new alerts and prepare accordingly when traveling, the group advises. "This isn't a request for everyone to be 'out and proud' or scare tactics," said Vanessa Edwards Foster, NTAC chair.

**Conn. governor changes mind, signs inclusive pride proclamation**

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — Gov. John G. Rowland last week signed a Gay Pride proclamation that includes transgendered and bisexual people, after refusing to sign the document for years. Rowland agreed to ink the proclamation after meeting with activists, parents and leaders, spokesperson Michele Sullivan told the Hartford Courant. The proclamation lauds the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex community for its "significant contributions towards the enhancement of our quality of life." "I think our office listened to the concerns of the group and had been working closely with them to address their concerns," Sullivan said. "We're not trying to aggravate anybody or ram anything down anyone's throat," said Jerimarie Liesegang of the Connecticut TransAdvocacy Coalition. "All we're saying is that inclusion is important and we wanted our voices heard."

From staff and wire reports



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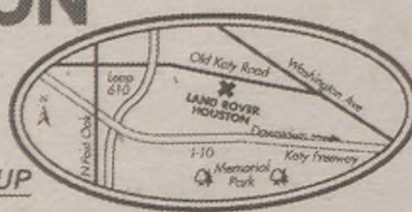
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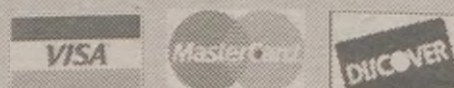
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## international news

### European Parliament backs gay marriage, adoption rights

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Against objections by a main parliamentary group, the European Parliament this month recommended that gays be allowed to marry and adopt children, Agence France-Presse reported. The body governs the European Union. As part of its annual report on human rights, the EU leadership issued its support for gay rights over protests by the conservative European People's Party, the main parliamentary group, the press agency reported. One official said that by improving its own laws regarding gays, it will allow the EU to take a leadership role in improving conditions for gays around the world. "The EU can't denounce what happens outside it without addressing the issues happening within it," French Socialist Adeline Hazan said. The report, which was adopted by a 221-195 vote with 23 abstentions, also urges trans-Atlantic airlines to stop giving personal information on passengers, required by the United States as part of anti-terrorism measures. According to the parliamentary report, the United States does not guarantee privacy on such information, as EU members should expect, the agency reported.



French Socialist Adeline Hazan said the European Union's vote to push for gays to be allowed to marry and adopt children will make it easier for the continent to lead on those issues worldwide.

### South African gay activists want same-sex marriage efforts to increase

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — The Lesbian & Gay Equality Project welcomed the South Africa Law Commission's discussion paper on domestic partnerships, including same-sex marriages, the Cape Times reported. "Though the commission proposes different avenues for resolving the matter, it is explicitly clear in confirming that the absence of formal legal recognition of same-sex marriage is unconstitutional," the LGEP said in a statement. "The Equality Project is, however, of the view that only one of the proposals made by the commission offers a valid solution: that same-sex couples should be admitted into the existing marriage regime." The group supported domestic partnerships and the proposed domestic partnership law, but believed such legislation alone did not cover marriage, the Times noted. Domestic partnerships were designed for people who were in relationships but did not want to enter into marriage. The LGEP called on South African officials "to act with due haste on this matter," the Times reported.

### Korean gay activist testifies against ruling on gay Web site

SEOUL, South Korea — In Seoul High Court, a prominent gay-rights advocate and cultural critic defended the country's first gay Web site over objections to it from the Information Communication Ethics Committee, Joong Ang Daily reported. Seo Dong-jin appeared before the appeals court as part of a bid to overturn a Seoul Administrative Court ruling August last year that upheld the committee's decision to ban minors from entering the Web site, X-Zone. The appeal was brought by X-Zone operator Kim Gwang-soo. "The Web site should be respected as a space for homosexual Internet users' communication," Seo testified. "It is a social forum for homosexual adolescents who are sharing information on their sexuality." Seo said the Web site did not host any obscene materials, making it safe for youngsters to enter, the newspaper reported. But the ethics panel, part of the Ministry of Information & Communication, said young people should not be able to freely enter sexually oriented Web sites.


### Report hints that Indian leaders will ignore homosexuality in private

NEW DELHI — Government officials will turn a blind eye if homosexuality is practiced between two consenting adults in private, a Central Government affidavit suggests, the Sify News of India reported. A Home Ministry affidavit, submitted in Delhi High Court, said the basic thrust of the argument of pro-gay activists was the perceived violation of the fundamental liberties guaranteed in the Constitution, the newspaper reported. But the report said there is no violation of fundamental liberty as long as any gay sex act is practiced between two consenting adults in privacy as in the case of heterosexuality. That statement is contrary to the established law that if an act amounts to a criminal offense, it would be so even if it was done privately, Sify News stated. "In India, Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code has been basically used to punish sexual abuse to children and to compliment lacunae in the rape laws," the affidavit said.

### Amnesty International warns of dangers to gays in Honduras

NEW YORK — The worldwide human rights group Amnesty International has issued an urgent appeal for activists to contact authorities in Honduras as killings of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people in that country continue to rise, according to an Amnesty press release. Transgender rights activist Elkyn Suárez Mejía is a witness in the case of Erick David Yáñez, 19, a transgendered person allegedly killed by two police officers. Amnesty officials said the court of San Pedro Sula recently informed Suárez Mejía, who has received death threats warning her not to appear as a witness in the case against the officers charged with killing Yáñez, that police protection provided to her would be withdrawn. "We are mobilizing our members to contact Honduran authorities and demand the immediate reinstatement of the protective order for Elkyn Suárez Mejía," said Michael Heflin, Director of Amnesty International USA's OUTfront program.

From staff and wire reports


**national news**

# NGLTF joins Calif. gay activists in fighting Prop. 54

Initiative would curtail collecting race classifications by the state

By JOE CREA

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Gay rights groups are concerned that a controversial measure designed to eliminate racial classification in the state of California would have a "devastating effect" on gay men and lesbians of color.

The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force is intensifying its efforts to help defeat the Racial Privacy Initiative, also known as Proposition 54, which would forbid the state and local governments of California from classifying "any individual by race, ethnicity, color or national origin in the operation of public education, public contracting or public employment."

The measure would narrowly allow for some racial classifications by law enforcement and health officials.

NGLTF's involvement in the California battle marks another effort by the group to extend its activism beyond gay-specific causes. Earlier this year, under the leadership of former Executive Director Lorri Jean, the Task Force joined with a number of other gay rights groups in opposing war in Iraq. But that effort primarily involved making public statements; the California fight involves the investment of resources, according to the group.

Sheri Lunn, communications director for

NGLTF, defended the group's involvement and said that funds and resources are not being diverted from other NGLTF programs.

"We are still in Cleveland Heights and Cincinnati," Lunn said. "We decided to come out to California to help build coalitions and also raise awareness to gays and lesbians of color."

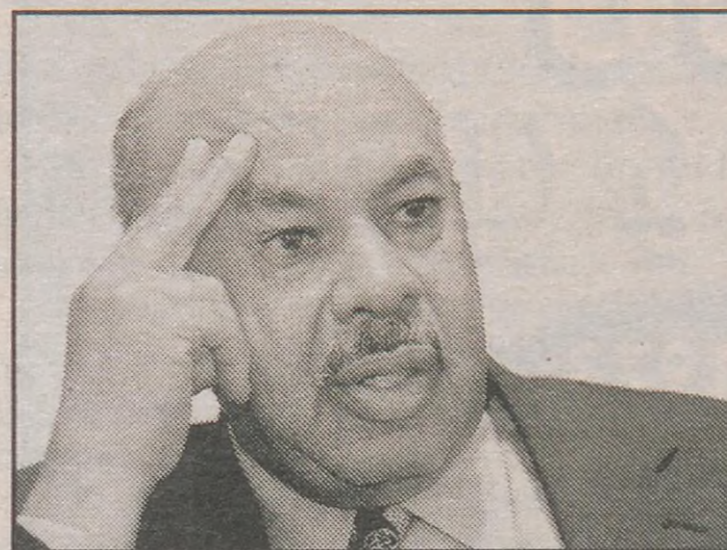
Lunn said that NGLTF recently led five voter identification canvasses in Southern California and has trained volunteers for door-to-door voter education efforts. She said this was important in helping to bridge coalitions and create future gay allies.

## Effect on HIV fight?

Seth Kilbourn, the national field director for the Human Rights Campaign, said that HRC does not have an official statement on Prop. 54 but said that he is "gravely concerned" about the measure's impact on the ability of the state of California to track and monitor diseases, particularly HIV and AIDS in various communities.

Elena Stern, a spokesperson for the Coalition for an Informed California, a group seeking to defeat the initiative, said that the exemptions in the measure for law and health officials are extremely limited and narrow. She added that the medical exemption specifically exempts medical research and patients but not birth and death certificates, cancer registries or university studies.

Stern said that should Prop. 54 pass, the state would no longer be able to identify and understand the occurrence of HIV and AIDS in people of color and that other pre-



University of California Regent **Ward Connerly** is the main architect behind Prop. 54. In 1995, he led the effort to end an affirmative action program in California.

vention programs and outreach efforts for a wide range of diseases would cease to exist.

"It's like throwing out the baby with the bath water," Stern said. "You can pretend race doesn't exist and that diseases don't target individuals and races differently, but the sad truth is that disease does discriminate. We know that certain people get diabetes more than others. Black women die of breast cancer at much higher rates. We know this today because we have had access to the information. We are making progress. Without that information, progress comes to a screeching halt."

Equality California, a gay rights group, has come out strongly against Prop. 54 and is participating in the statewide coalition leading the effort to defeat Prop. 54, said Toni Broadus, the group's program director.

Proponents argue that the measure would save the state \$10 million, end government's preferential treatment based on race and "signal America's first step

towards a color-blind society."

University of California Regent Ward Connerly, who in 1995 chaired the California Civil Rights Initiative (Proposition 209) campaign, which effectively ended an affirmative action program in California, is the main architect behind Prop. 54.

California gubernatorial candidates Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger and Democratic Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante both voiced their opposition to the measure. Bustamante announced that his campaign plans to spend \$3.8 million on ads designed to defeat the initiative.

Dave Fleischer, director of organizing and training for the NGLTF, said in a news release that Prop. 54 is authored "by the same folks who are anti-immigrant, anti-youth, anti-gay and anti-choice, and by organizing against Prop. 54, the Task Force will build a base of progressive, anti-racist voters who will not only stand up against Prop. 54 but against other attacks against other marginalized people in the future, including LGBT people. Whether we win or lose Prop. 54, we've begun building a community of anti-racist, pro-lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender voters needed to eventually end similarly bigoted attacks."

## MORE INFO

National Gay & Lesbian Task Force  
1325 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-393-5177  
www.nglftf.org

# Lesbians may be at greater risk for heart disease

By LAUREL FAUST

Lesbians may have a greater risk of heart disease than other women, preliminary research by Dr. Stephanie Roberts and Suzanne Dibble shows.

The study, published in the July/August issue of the Women's Health Issues journal, surveyed 324 lesbians age 40 and older who live in California and their biological sisters closest in age. The women were asked to take measurements of their waists, chests, hips, height and weight. They also answered questions relating to their age, ethnicity, employment, menopausal status and eating, exercise and smoking habits.

The original focus of the study was supposed to be on lesbians and their risk of breast cancer, but Roberts said a pattern immediately emerged that lesbians have a "significantly higher" body mass index, waist circumference and waist-to-hip ratio than their sisters.

The mean waist circumference of the lesbians was 34.2 inches, which neared but was not above the 35-inch cutoff point that is associated with cardiovascular disease. The mean measurement was 1.8 inches

higher than the mean measurement of the straight sisters.

The mean waist-to-hip measurement of the lesbians, 0.82, exceeded the 0.80 cutoff point recommended for cardiovascular health. The mean waist-to-hip ratio for the sisters was 0.80. The mean BMI, 26.5 for the lesbians and 25.5 for the sisters, was over the recommended cutoff of 25 for both groups. The lesbians also reported a greater incidence of weight cycling, the tendency to repeatedly lose and gain weight.

The findings showed that lesbians may have measurements indicative of "abdominal/visceral adiposity," a body condition in which fat deposits itself on the organs themselves. Given this, the report states, lesbians "may have a metabolic profile placing them at higher risk for cardiovascular disease."

Roberts said that the message is not getting across to lesbians about the risks of being overweight and the connection to heart disease and other illnesses. She said that lesbians may have different attitudes toward body image and weight, and that this needs to be understood before an effective educational message

can be developed.

"I think what we'd find in the lesbian community as a whole is that lesbians would probably respond to a message relating to their health rather than to a message relating to beauty," Roberts said.

Kathleen DeBold, executive director of the Mautner Project, agreed.

"We need to get fit. We need to work out, eat right, and the way to do this is to have programs that are by and for lesbians," DeBold said.

She said that heart disease, though it's the No. 1 killer of women, traditionally is presumed to be a man's disease. She added that research on the illness focuses on men, and that even the recent push to educate women about heart disease targets heterosexual women.

Lisbeth Melendez Rivera, director of community education and training for the National Latina/o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Organization, said prevention messages must be tailored to lesbians and ethnic populations.

"I think that part of the issue is that because the messages are not culturally competent to the populations they're trying to reach, they will not be effective in

prevention," Melendez Rivera said.

She said that risks for heart disease are often higher in women of color because there is less access to health care.

"You're talking about a potential epidemic for which no targeted research has been made," Melendez Rivera said.

Cheryl Pearson-Fields, health & education research director for the Mautner Project, said that lesbian women are more accepting of different body types.

"One of the things that identifies lesbian women is that we love women's bodies — period," Melendez Rivera said. "Our partners are more likely to say, 'Honey, I love you the way you are.'"

Pearson-Fields said that public education campaigns need to move beyond the "straight white culture box."

"If a health care message isn't targeted, it doesn't reach its intended audience. That's just basic public health education," she said.

## MORE INFO

Women's Health Issues  
www.womenshealth-elsevier.com



## medical report

### Court reinstates gay doctor's case against U.S. Air Force

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A federal appeals court ruled that a gay doctor discharged from the U.S. Air Force may not have to pay \$71,500 to the government for his medical education. John Hensala, 38, obtained free medical school funding from the U.S. Air Force in exchange for a promise to serve four years as a military doctor. But when he was ordered to report for duty, he notified the service that he was gay and told authorities he would be living with his boyfriend at Scott Air Force Base in Kansas, where he was to report in 1995. The military discharged him under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy barring service by gays, and demanded he return the \$71,500 the government spent on his education. Hensala sued, saying he shouldn't have to pay. Judge Sidney Thomas and Judge Richard Paez of the Ninth Circuit said it may be discriminatory to require gays to pay back the government for their education if they were forced from the service against their will. The majority ordered the case returned to U.S. District Judge William Alsup, possibly for a trial. In 2001, Alsup dismissed Hensala's suit against the Air Force before trial. Alsup said Hensala should be required to pay back the government because he voluntarily came out as gay and should have known the consequences of violating the military's policy.



Federal judges this week said it may be discriminatory for the U.S. Air Force to demand its money back from gays, like John Hensala, who obtain an education through the military in exchange for service, and then are ejected from the military due to the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy.

### Drug-resistant staph found on USC football team

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Seven USC football players became infected with a painful staph skin infection before their first game of the season last month and four had to be hospitalized, health and school officials reported. Drug-resistant staph infections are not only a growing problem for sports teams but also in jails, among gays and among children. The outbreak, which is believed to be over now, demonstrated what a serious problem drug-resistant Staphylococcus aureus has become in competitive sports, officials at the Los Angeles County Department of Health said. "Any situation where you may have significant skin abrasions and where you have potential breaks in normal hygiene practice — sharing equipment, sharing towels — it is possible to spread infection," said Dr. Fred Fielding, Los Angeles County's public health director. The cases identified at USC, known as methicillin-resistant staph, don't respond to the most frequently used antibiotics, such as penicillin and erythromycin. Instead, such drugs as Bactrim, rifampin, clindamycin, the expensive antibiotic Zyvox, and intravenous vancomycin must be used.

### Ill. man mistakenly told he was HIV-positive sues laboratory

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. (AP) — A hardware salesman is suing a medical laboratory that mistakenly told him he was HIV-positive. Brett Bareford, 45, of Granite City was wrongly informed he was HIV-positive after he submitted blood samples for testing during a physical examination on June 25, 2002, said Rhonda Jenkins, Bareford's attorney. "Of course, he was just a mess," Jenkins said. "He kept thinking there must be a mistake, but he was assured that these tests are accurate." The lawsuit filed in Madison County names Tri-Lab LLC as a defendant. It seeks damages in excess of \$50,000 for extreme emotional distress, anxiety, mental anguish, embarrassment and lost wages. A Tri-Lab employee would not comment on the lawsuit. Jenkins said.

### VaxGen stock up on study linking smallpox vaccine, HIV prevention

NEW YORK (AP) — VaxGen Inc. stock gained value after a university study suggested that a smallpox vaccination may help prevent HIV infection. Researchers at George Mason University's National Center for Biodefense said the preliminary findings were based on laboratory studies conducted on the blood cells of individuals recently vaccinated with Madison, N.J.-based Wyeth Inc.'s smallpox virus. VaxGen spokesperson Lance Ignon declined to speculate on the reason for the stock's move but added that he "wouldn't necessarily link" it to the possible HIV-smallpox connection. VaxGen's smallpox vaccine is based on a different strain than Wyeth's and Acambis' vaccines, Ignon noted. The company would have to see stronger evidence of a benefit before it investigates the link between smallpox and HIV, he said.

### Shorter turn-around time mandated on HIV testing for N.Y. newborns

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — The state health department will soon cut the time limit within which newborns must be tested for the AIDS virus by three quarters to give drug therapies a better chance of preventing transmission of the disease from mother to baby. Under a new requirement on birth centers to take effect Nov. 1, the department is mandating that the results of blood tests on newborns be returned within 12 hours. The current time limit, under a 1999 mandate from the state, is 48 hours — too late, health department officials said, to give drug therapy against mother-child transmission of HIV the best chances of working. Those drugs should be administered within 12 hours of when a woman presents herself for delivery or, if she refuses to consent to the test, within 12 hours of the birth of her child, according to health officials.

From staff and wire reports

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## news

# Mayor, chief on 'same page' over gay issues



Mayor **Lee Brown**, credited for reaching out to gay residents, appointed C.O. Bradford as the city's police chief in 1996. (Photo by Matthew A. Hennie)

**TOP COP**, continued from Page 1

the police department didn't step into the domestic violence case before the shooting.

Bradford, along with Parker, attended a public meeting of the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus to answer questions about how police handled the case. It marked the third time Bradford met with gays.

Kajs' slaying led to several changes. The department hired a domestic violence coordinator and decentralized the domestic violence unit to give victims more support and around-the-clock access.

Patrol officers were provided with information about shelters and counseling centers for domestic violence victims — including ones designed for gays and lesbians — to handout when they respond to calls.

HPD officers also received sensitivity training and education about hate crimes.

In April 1998, Brown named a hate crimes coordinator, opened a 24-hour hot-

line and ordered more training for police to increase awareness of hate crimes.

Parker said Bradford shares Brown's beliefs about fostering a positive relationship with the city's gay residents.

"There were both on the same page about how to interact with the community," Parker said. "They agreed on these issues."

The police department since joined the annual Gay Pride parade and is actively recruiting gays for the department at Empower, a gay business expo, this weekend at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Robert Hurst, a police department spokesperson, said Bradford is not responding to interview requests about his tenure or successor.

Traditionally, one of the four executive assistant police chiefs becomes the new chief. Bradford served on the department for years before being named chief.

Hans Marticiuc, the president of the Houston Police Officer's Union, said the

mayor has the option to consult with concerned groups like the union and the Houston community.

"The only involvement with the mayor, and the only requirement we ask, is that they work with us to find a good chief," Marticiuc said.

The Police Advisory Committee, comprised of Houston residents, includes two gay members — Clarence Burton Bagby and Dr. Clair Koepsel — and the panel could play a role in the selection of new police chief.

Bagby is a member of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus and board president of the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.

Parker said she hopes the new mayor seeks input from gays and other minority communities before selecting someone to lead the police department.

"Because of the historically troubled relationship, I would hope that all minority communities will be consulted in some way," she said. "But it's up to the mayor."

# Proposed amendment threatens to repeal DP laws

**CANDIDATES**, continued from Page 1

## Amendment may kill DP laws

In May, Rep. Marilyn Musgrave (R-Colo.) introduced legislation in the House of Representatives proposing the constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. Critics say Musgrave worded the proposed amendment so that it would most likely repeal existing domestic partnership laws passed by cities and states as well as Vermont's civil unions law. Musgrave's proposed amendment has 86 co-sponsors.

Constitutional amendments require approval by two-thirds of the members of the House and Senate and three-fourths of the nation's state legislatures.

In addition to expressing support for gay marriage, Kucinich, Moseley Braun and Sharpton have said they would sign an Internet petition pledging to oppose the Musgrave constitutional amendment and vote against any elected official who votes for the amendment in Congress or in a state legislature.

Kerry's campaign said he would also sign such a pledge.

Edwards would not sign the pledge, noting that the North Carolina senator "doesn't do any pledges," according to a spokesperson. Campaign spokespersons for the other candidates said they could not determine their candidates' position on such a pledge by press time.

Gay activists Robin Tyler and John Aravosis started the pledge campaign on DontAmend.com. The site claims 11,706 peo-



U.S. Rep. **Dennis Kucinich** is one of three Democrats campaigning for his party's presidential nomination who support same-sex marriage. **Carol Moseley Braun** and Rev. **Al Sharpton** are the other two. All 10 of the Democratic presidential candidates have indicated they do not support a constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage. (Photos by AP)

ple signed the pledge as of earlier this week.

HRC officials say more than 169,000 people signed on to an HRC Web site MillionforCivilMarriage.com, which calls on people to "support the right of every American to marry, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender couples."

Anti-gay groups created their own Internet sites urging their supporters to sign petitions to members of Congress and state legislators to express support for the constitutional amendment ban-

ning gay marriage.

Gay activists said they were hopeful that Musgrave's proposed amendment would die in the House, as it did last year, when a number of prominent Republicans and conservatives announced their opposition to the amendment.

Among the opponents is Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.), chair of the House Judiciary Committee, which must approve the amendment before it can be sent to the House floor for a vote. Former

Rep. Bob Barr (R-Ga.), a strong opponent of gay marriage and the author of the Defense of Marriage Act, which allows states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages approved by other states, said he, too, opposes a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage.

Sensenbrenner and Barr have said such an amendment would violate the nation's longstanding tradition of leaving authority over issues such as marriage to individual states.

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Issue 1195

# Forum

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## editorial

# School vouchers leave gay students behind

If the Republican Congress gets its way, gay students will either have to live in the closet or stay at failing public schools.

By KEN SAIN

**I**T APPEARS CONGRESS is about to downgrade District of Columbia residents from people who don't matter to guinea pigs who don't matter. They intend to force school

vouchers on us even though some congressional supporters admit they would never do that to their own constituents.

The only time District residents were asked if they wanted vouchers, they voted 89 percent against the idea in a 1981 referendum election. But who cares what the people who have to live with this experiment think? Congress doesn't. Once again D.C. pays the price for lacking a vote on Capitol Hill and gay students are the ones who could suffer this time.

President Bush has had a hard time convincing anyone to give his school vouchers program a chance. Bush campaigned on a plan to give federal funds to parents of children who are attending a failing public school and allow them to enroll their children in a private — usually religious — school.

Enter D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams. He gets a seat in the president's box at the State of the Union address, and suddenly he reverses his position on school vouchers. He supports them now. In fact, if it wasn't for Williams changing his mind, this threat would have died months ago.

Williams is one of those New Democrats, you know, the ones who look suspiciously like Old Republicans. Also flip-flopping on the issue is D.C. School Board President Peggy Cooper Cafritz and City Councilmember Kevin Chavous. All three had told the Gay & Lesbian Activist Alliance in pre-election questionnaires they were against school vouchers.

Armed with these three conversions, the Bush administration came up with a five-year trial period for school vouchers in the District. It would give the parents of 1,300-to-2,000 students \$7,500 annually per

child so that they can take their child out of a failing public school, and put them into a private school.

**THIS IS JUST ANOTHER ATTEMPT** BY this administration to force more religion into citizens' lives.

Still, it hasn't been easy convincing Congress. Sen. Diane Feinstein (D-Calif.) supported imposing vouchers on District residents even though she admits she would never do the same to Californians.

The House approved the bill by one vote. To get that approval, House leaders scheduled the vote for the same time as the Democratic presidential candidates' debate last week. Voucher opponents and presidential candidates Rep. Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) were at the debate and missed the vote.

Rep. Elijah E. Cummings (D-Md.), another voucher opponent, also missed the vote because he was acting as host for the debate, which was co-sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus, which he chairs.

And, according to the Washington Post, they still didn't have the votes to pass it. They had to negotiate a deal with Kentucky Republican Ernie Fletcher to get him to switch sides.

It passed 209-208.

GLAA, D.C.'S GAY RIGHTS ORGANIZATION, has come out against vouchers. GLAA points out that school vouchers would complicate the lives of gay students.

Gay students who take the vouchers and attend a religious school would likely have to remain in the closet. A private school does not have to follow the same rules as public schools. In most cases, there will be no gay-straight student alliances. Courts cannot force private schools to add gay-friendly clubs.

There will likely be no openly gay teachers or administrators kids can turn

to for support. Any gay teachers who come out of the closet at a religious school can be fired.

Ask Albert Santora about that. He lost his job at Paul VI Catholic High School in February when some students recognized his photo on a Web site for gay men.

It is very unlikely there will be any safe-sex education. Religious educators prefer to keep our youth ignorant while preaching abstinence.

Not only will they be putting their education at risk, but also their lives.

If a gay student goes to a counselor at a religious school with a problem, they risk being expelled if they don't repent. The parents and student would have no recourse.

Imagine a female student taking her girlfriend to the prom at a religious school. Not an image that comes to mind easily, is it? Forcing students to live a lie is not progress.

And that is what school vouchers will do. Gay students would either have to live in the closet or stay at a failing public school.

**THE SCHOOL VOUCHERS PLAN IS** nothing more than a multi-million dollar gift to religious schools in the District. The \$7,500 grant is not large enough for parents to send their children to the really expensive private schools that charge up to \$22,000 per year, according to a Cato Institute report.

Taking public money out of public schools and giving it to private schools is a bad idea. Not just for gay students, but for everyone.

If only 1,300 of the District's 67,500 students are to benefit from this experiment, what happens to those who remain in public schools? The education bills being debated in Congress include an additional \$27 million in funding for charter and public schools.

Of the \$40 million for set aside for education, a third would go to the vouchers plan.

That's worth repeating. One-third of the federal funds given to D.C. for education would be used to benefit 2 to 3 percent of our students.

That money would be better spent improving the public and charter schools in D.C. for all students.

Congress should not use the citizens of the nation's capitol as guinea pigs for unpopular ideas that they can't get their own constituents to buy into.

Public tax dollars should not go to private religious schools that discriminate against gays. That, above all else, is why there must be a separation of church and state. If they want to discriminate, let them do it with private funds and not the tax dollars of a group of people they discriminate against.

The school vouchers plan is an idea that would leave many children behind.

**@** Ken Sain is news editor of the Washington Blade, a sister publication of the Houston Voice. He can be reached at ksain@washblade.com.

viewpoint LIZ MORRISON



Where's the Sapphic version of 'Queer Eye'?  
Lipstick lezzies could rid soccer moms of their  
Keds, warm up suits and those awful scrunchies.

# Lesbians have queer eyes, too

PINCH ME, I MUST BE DREAMING. HOW did 2003 suddenly become the Year of the Queer?

Sodomy laws have been repealed, Episcopalians have elected an openly gay bishop, Canada is moving toward legal gay marriages and each week a different hetero shlub lets five gay guys turn him into Cinderella.

Yes, Michael Ovitz, there is a Gay Mafia, and they've made straights an offer they can't refuse: No more Smear the Queer.

The Fab Five of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" have created the perception that all gay men have access to an infinite pool of wisdom regarding fashion, food and culture. My gay boy buddies are being stopped on the street by anxious straight men that ask, "Does this belt work with these shoes?"

Heteros won't venture into the gayborhood anymore unless they're wearing Prada and are carrying copies of Gourmet magazine to use as cheat notes before dinner. They're concerned that they'll encounter a gay waiter who may scoff at their wine choices.

WE LESBIANS SHOULD BE GETTING some of the credit for this media frenzy.

After all, six short years ago Ellen DeGeneres made 1997 the Year of Lesbian Chic, once thought to be the oxymoron to end all oxymorons.

On April 30 of that year, DeGeneres made history by having her television character, Ellen, come out as a lesbian. How shocked we all were when she came out in real life.

And suddenly, for a fleeting moment, lesbians were the new media darlings. DeGeneres and then girlfriend Anne "Call Me Crazy" Heche were bigger than life, even bigger than Ben and J. Lo. Their glorious blond faces were splashed across newspapers and magazines. Chat show hosts clamored to get them as guests.

Then, almost as quickly as it materialized, the Anne and Ellen Moment came apart. Heche went straight and then went straight to Fresno, apparently on the way back to her home planet. DeGeneres took off the Gay Icon tiara, and lesbians once again fell off the map and back into Birkenstocks, vegetarian pot lucks and "Xena: Warrior Princess" reruns.

GAY MEN HAVE ALL THE FUN. WE queer girls get saddled with straight

chicks who have no idea how to play lesbians in "Kissing Jessica Stein." The gay boys, however, get the Fab Five on "Queer Eye."

In fact, according to pop culture diva Candace Bushnell, because of this new "metrosexual" phenomenon, straight men are the new gay men. Yep, the hetero everyman has traded in his Dial soap and Pert shampoo for thousands of dollars in products for his mind, body and spirit.

And five previously unknown gay men have become the Pied Pipers of food, fashion and fabulousness.

It's now OK for Joe Sixpack to get facials, manicures, pedicures, body waxes and \$200 haircuts. Straight guys are even going so far as to shave their body hair to show off their muscles.

Oddly enough, gay boys, who once packed into day spas as if they were hot clubs, are shifting in a different direction. Body hair, beer guts and all around manliness have become the new gay male chic. Welcome to the bear culture where plaid is the new black.

In the meantime, we Sapphic sodomites are like the forgotten stepchildren. What about us? Where are our reality shows?

We could have our own Pygmalion makeover program, "Lesbian Chic for the Straight Girl Geek" with the Fabulous Femme Five.

There are lots of lipstick lezzies out there who could show those soccer moms a thing or two about hair, makeup and lingerie. Ladies, if you want to get hot and horizontal with hubby, you need to take off the Keds and the nylon warm up suits. And for God's sake get those scrunchies out of your hair!

But that's not likely to happen anytime soon. After all, lesbians have never been known to be on the cutting edge of fashion. Unless, of course, you count the popularity of the mullet. America will never know the potential of letting Vogue-wielding dyke divas loose on the women of Middle America.

So let the boys of "Queer Eye" bask in their newfound fame. We female-loving fashionistas are ready to take on the faded terrycloth housecoats of America, if only Bravo would give us a chance.

@ Liz Morrison is a San Diego freelance writer and can be reached at [liz@lizwrites.com](mailto:liz@lizwrites.com).

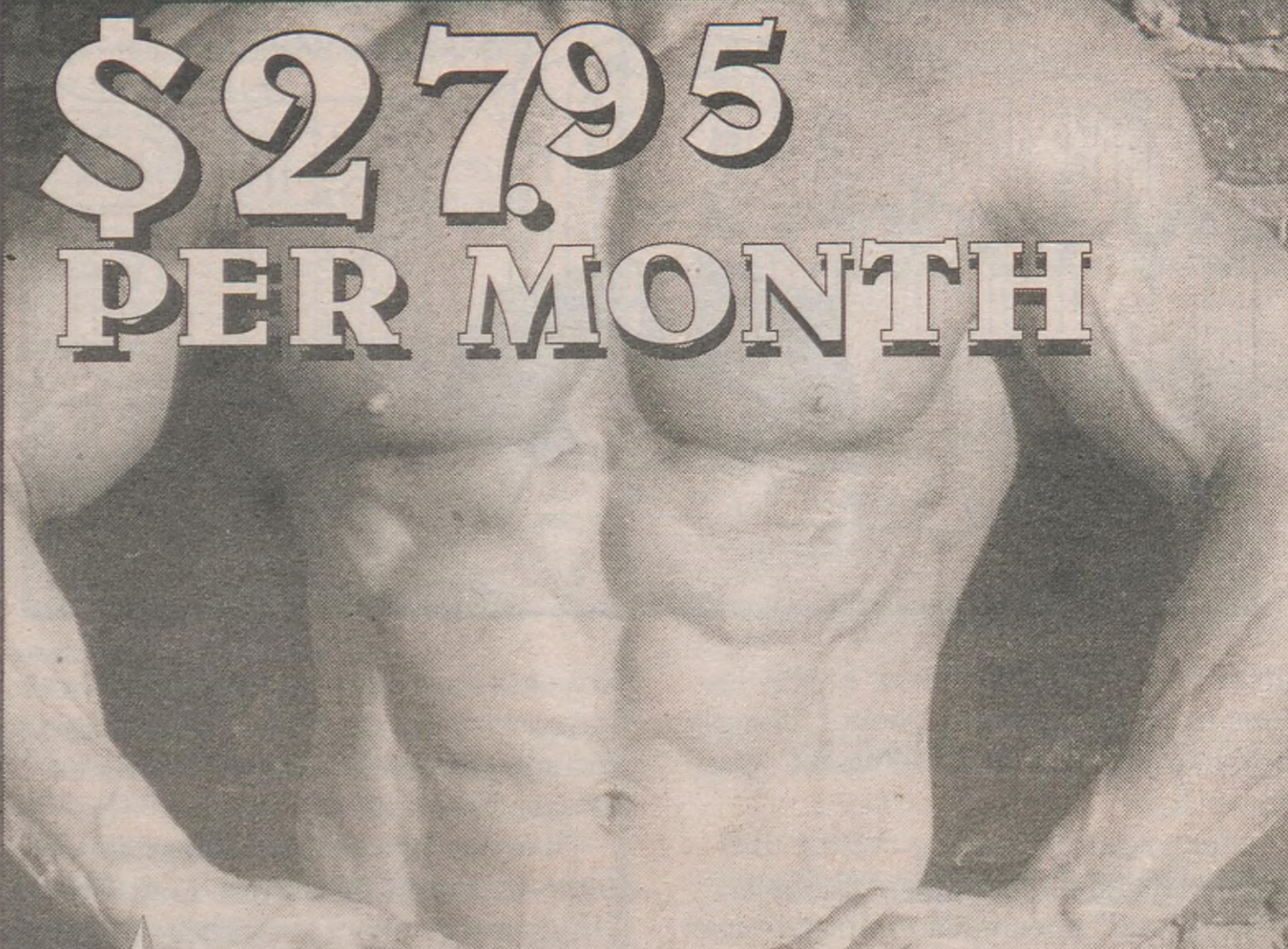


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# Larry King's court

CNN host accused of being too friendly with anti-gay activist

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY and RYAN LEE

GAY MARRIAGE "WILL DESTROY the family, which will destroy the nation, and ... eventually have a major impact on Western Civilization," conservative leader James Dobson recently told CNN talk show host Larry King.

King featured Dobson, founder and board chair of Focus on the Family, on the Sept. 5 episode of "Larry King Live."

"Homosexuals can be, you know, committed to each other," Dobson said. "And they have freedom to behave in the ways that they do, but they cannot be a family."

Dobson's comments prompted a call to action from the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, which characterized Focus on the Family's views as "bigoted intolerance" and asked viewers to contact "Larry King Live" producers and CNN to protest the one-sided nature of the program.

"There wasn't any balance on that program because there wasn't any other voice that advocated for the LGBT community," said Chalee Snorton, southeastern media manager for GLAAD.

The publicist for "Larry King Live" declined interview requests, but did release a statement.

"We take seriously all criticism from all parties on all topics," the statement said. "CNN and 'Larry King Live' have been, and continue to be, committed to airing options on all sides of this important debate."

On Sept. 1, Larry King hosted gay actor Richard Chamberlain who talked about his 26-year relationship with a man and his coming out book, "Shattered Love," which King called a "must-read."

But "Larry King Live" repeatedly invites Dobson to be the sole, hour-long interviewee, according to GLAAD, which follows the usual format of the show.

"Dobson's been on four times in the past two years, which conveys the message that there has to be a greater amount of balance with real people that can rebuke the rhetoric espoused by Dobson and others," Snorton said.

But GLAAD's outrage at Larry King and CNN signals the gay watchdog group's own intolerance, said Glenn T. Stanton, director of social research at Focus on the Family.

"There is a new fundamentalism on the left that doesn't tolerate other voices, and this action by GLAAD is an example of that," Stanton said.



Gay media activists say CNN personality Larry King contributed to the denigration of gays by allowing claims made by James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, to go uncontested on a recent show. (King photo courtesy CNN; Dobson photo by AP)

## Comic goes mainstream

AFTER NEARLY A DECADE OF growing popularity online, a lesbian comic-strip character is preparing to leave the Internet closet and burst onto the pages of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

When "Jane's World" appears in print Sept. 21-27, it will mark the first time a gay or lesbian character has been the primary focus of a comic strip in a mainstream newspaper, said Linda Kuczaj, promotions manager for syndication service United Media.

"It's a female on the comics page who's not all about dieting, not all about buying swimsuits or not all about death-by-chocolate," said Jane's World creator Paige Braddock.

The premiere of "Jane's World" in the AJC marks a homecoming for Braddock, who was a graphics editor at the newspaper from 1991-98. Along with "Jane's World," the AJC is running nine other new comic strips for the week-long test period.

"We're trying to find new readers," said AJC Comics Editor Frank Rizzo. "I deliberately went out of the way to find strips that appeal to younger readers and Atlanta's gay population."

The gay content in "Jane's World" is subtle, but not hidden, Braddock said. Jane is a lesbian living in a straight world, and most of the jokes come from her interactions with other characters.



## ACTION! INFO

'Larry King Live,' CNN  
Wendy Whitwork, Senior Executive Producer  
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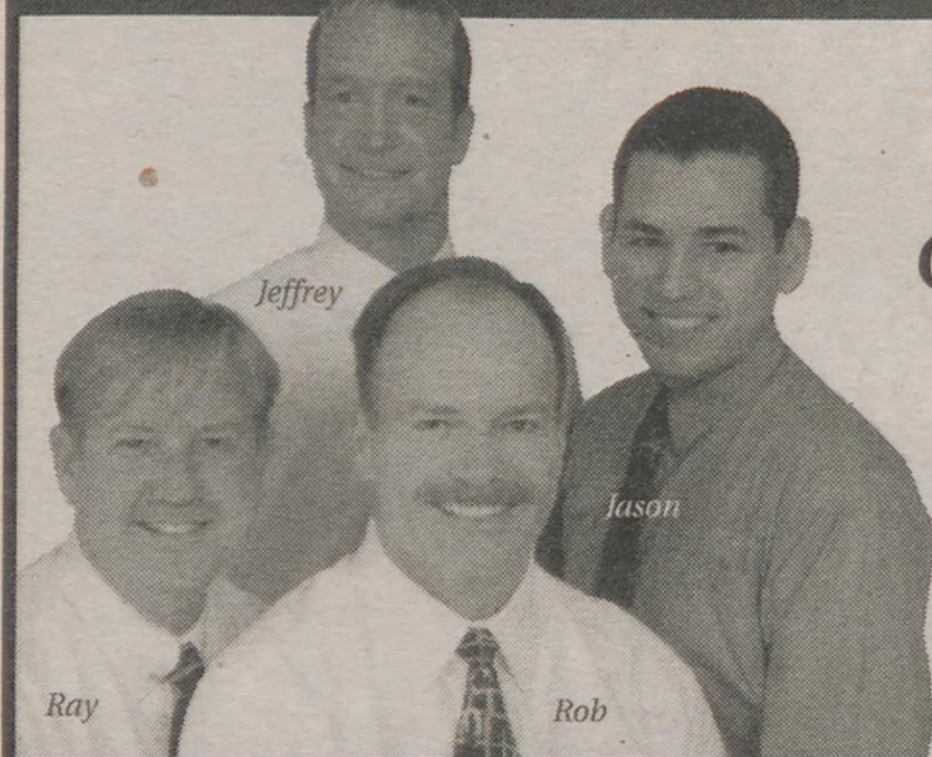
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## on the record

*"I might have to move here. No, don't say that, I'll get killed for that statement."*

Lesbian tennis great **Martina Navratilova**, on progress in Canada toward approving same-sex marriage (Canadian Press, Aug. 14)

*"Homosexuals excel as artists, thespians and other playful, mimetic professions. Being playful is at the heart of being human. It's something that should be celebrated. You could say that homosexuals are at the pinnacle of human evolution."*

Leading zoologist **Clive Bromhall**, speaking at the Edinburgh Book Festival, on evolutionary progress toward "infantilism," in which humans break the primate mold by being playful, creative and childlike (Gay.com UK, Aug. 15)



*"I wanted to do something that would help people in the congregation face their friends in the community."*

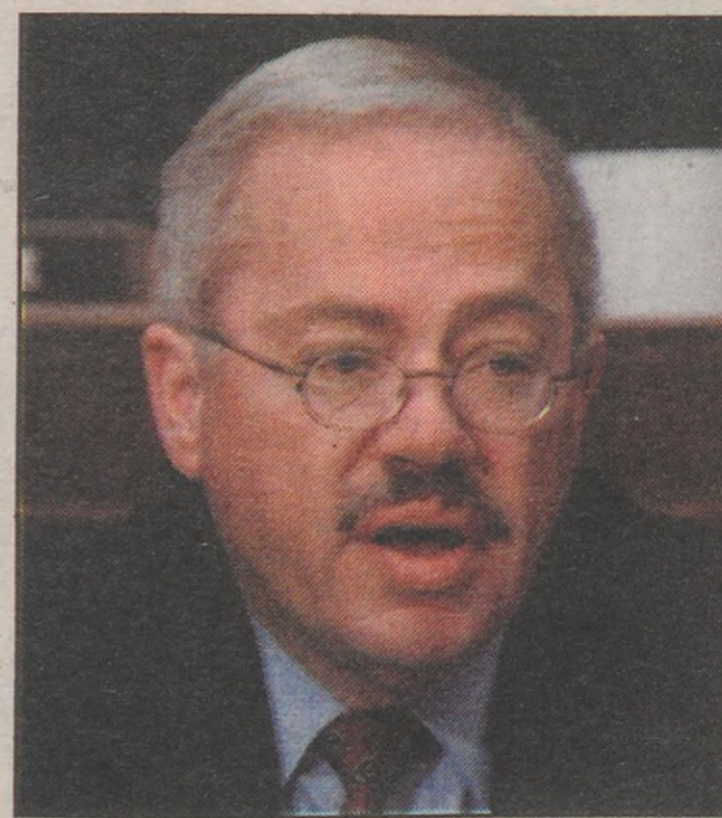
Rev. R. Samuel Williams, 63, of St. Alban's Church in McCook, Neb., on his decision to lower the flag outside his church to half-staff after the Episcopal Church confirmed an openly gay bishop (Washington Post, Sept. 15)

*"[They] are some of the most supportive members of St. Alban's and have been for generations."*

Linda Clark, 54, a high school English teacher, on a gay parishioner and her family whose presence in St. Alban's Church inspired her and others to raise the flag outside the church back to the top of the pole after their priest lowered it in protest over the confirmation of an openly gay bishop by the Episcopal Church (Washington Post, Sept. 15)

*"The gay issue is not the real issue. The real issue is: Does the Bible mean what it says, or can you make it mean whatever you want?"*

Rev. Steven R. Randall, of St. Timothy's Church in Catonsville, Md., who resigned as an Episcopal priest three weeks ago after the confirmation of an openly gay bishop (Washington Post, Sept. 15)



*"Maybe I'm a mellow guy as I age. You'd have to ask my wife. [Laughs] I'm not a supporter of same-sex marriage, not then and not now. But perhaps being concerned about the erosion of the right of privacy and civil liberties has sensitized me. Since 9/11 the threats have become very real. I have seen very bad things happen to individuals when government wields too much power over them."*

Former U.S. Rep. **Bob Barr** (R-Ga.), author of the anti-gay Defense of Marriage Act, on his opposition to a constitutional amendment banning legal recognition of same-sex marriages; he prefers to let the question be decided state by state (Advocate, Sept. 16)

*"My argument is that marriage is a union between men and women as defined through the centuries. End of argument. Period. It's just the way I've seen the issue."*

Mass. Senator **John Kerry**, a Democratic candidate for president, backing away from his earlier explanation of his position based upon procreation as the purpose of marriage; Kerry and his wife are childless (Advocate, Sept. 16)

*"I believe the sign is in front of the committee door saying you need not apply here."*

Michael Long, N.Y. Conservative Party chair, taking to task Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), who is Catholic, for opposing any judicial nominees who support Vatican positions against abortion and homosexuality (Aug. 16)

*"I'm a mad shredder. I get these Bibles sent to me saying 'repent now,' and I shred them."*

Gay singer-songwriter **Elton John**, in an interview with gossip columnist **Cindy Adams** (New York Post, Aug. 20)





# Out on the Bayou

Lesbian creator of 'Dykes to Watch Out For' celebrates 20 years with new compilation

By LAWRENCE FERBER

**I**N THE PAST, PEOPLE apparently had to watch out for dykes.

"When I first started out, [gay] people were really hungry to see themselves represented in a comic strip," reminisces Alison Bechdel, creator of comic strip "Dykes to Watch Out For." "I think that's really changed a lot, with every other show on TV being about gay people."

As a result, Bechdel worries that demand for her work will wane. But with 20 years of strong characters, dramatic situations, sharp dialogue and current political issues that remain hallmarks of the strip, the cartoonist shouldn't worry.

"Dykes and Sundry Other Carbon-Based Life-Forms to Watch Out For" (Alyson Publications) is Bechdel's tenth and latest collection of the popular comic series. By virtue of the time they took place — 2000-2002 — this collection is also one of the most tumultuous: the "non-election" of George W. Bush, the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent war on terrorism.

These national events — plus affairs, interrupted civil unions, naked parents, unexpected pregnancies and professional crises — are echoed and shrewdly skewed in the lives of bookstore proprietor Jezanna, frisky Lois, androgynous Mo, her girlfriend Sydney, frustrated attorney Clarice and girlfriend Toni, as well as gay friend Carlos and neurotic Ginger.

Keeping with the times, Bechdel adds children, transsexuals and non-gay relationships (notably between self-identified lesbian Sparrow and heterosexual Stuart) to watch out for.

BECHDEL, 43, LIVES IN Vermont with her partner of 10 years. She says that she never imagined the strip would last so long.

"It doesn't feel like I've been

# Keeping 'Dykes to Watch Out For'



Cartoonist Alison Bechdel draws herself, but don't look for autobiographical information in her strip 'Dykes to Watch Out For,' which marks its 20th anniversary in a newly released compilation.

doing it for 20 years," Bechdel says. "It kind of goes by like that. I feel like I'm just starting out."

On an artistic level, Bechdel is more cinematic with compositions than when "Dykes" started, she says.

"I'm certainly putting a lot more effort into my drawing, and I work a lot with a digital camera to get these more dramatic camera angles," she says. "I used to get friends for models, but I alienated everyone, they got sick of it. Especially my girlfriend. So now I use a tripod and automatic shutter and do it myself."

But the goal of the strip

remains the same as always, to "reflect what's happening in the culture in the world," Bechdel says.

"As trends and things fall away in real life, they fall away in my comic strip," she says. "For example, the women's bookstore where many of my characters worked for years and years just closed. That whole culture has gone, but something new has come in."

Character Clarice actually becomes paralyzed by the Bush-Gore election, and Bechdel used "Dykes" to partially work through her own feelings about the situa-

tion, she says.

"I feel kind of lucky that I have this outlet of the comic strip, because I just let it flow through me," Bechdel says. "I do get upset and outraged, but I have something to do it in. So I feel it hasn't been that destructive personally."

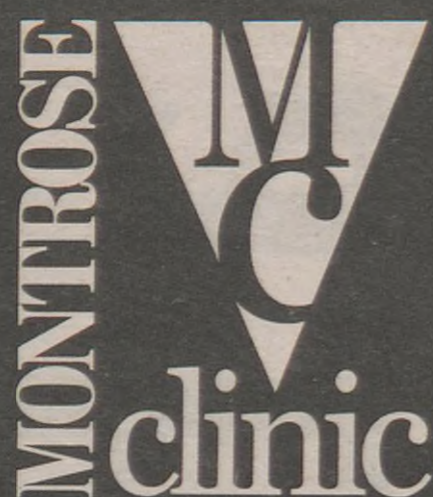
Not that the cartoonist doesn't have her own strong feelings about the president, she says.

"I'm just amazed every day at the stuff that's going down and he's getting away with," Bechdel says.

Please see DYKES COMPILATION on Page 21

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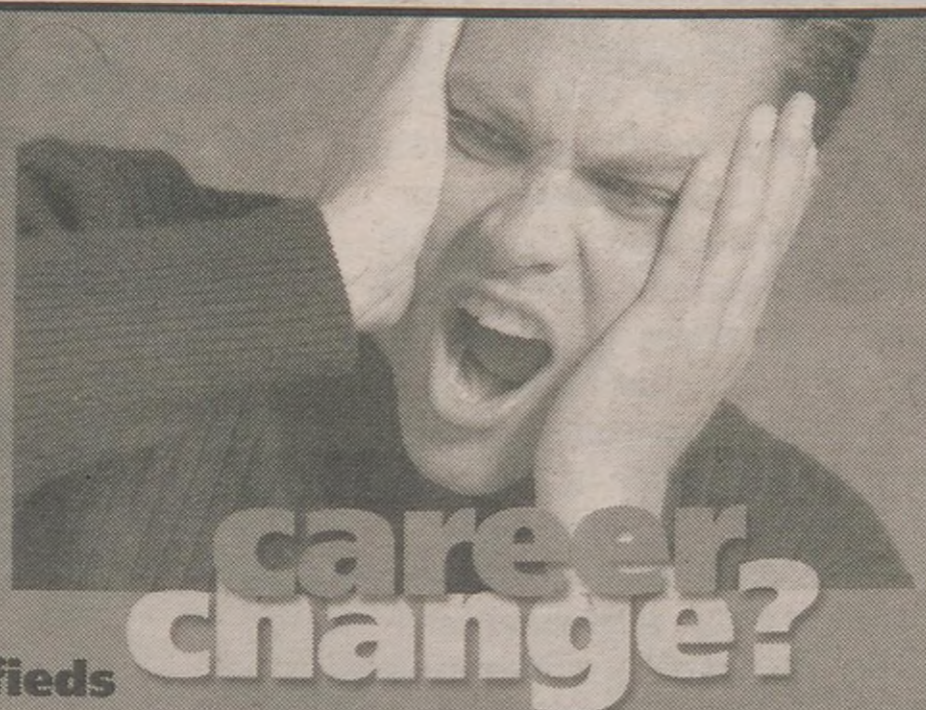
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## television BRIAN MOYLAN



Chances of survival look good for new talk show starring Ellen DeGeneres, thanks to amusing host and good ratings.

## Talk that's more than chatter

MOST GAY TELEVISION VIEWERS were anxious about the arrival of Ellen DeGeneres' new syndicated daytime talk show because many are fans of the ground-breaking comic — and because this may be DeGeneres' last shot at the big time.

After coming out on national television to huge ratings and scads of media attention, DeGeneres faced two failed sitcoms. She turned it around as host of the 2002 Emmy Awards and did a spectacular job. But with her track record, the success of her talk show may determine whether her career can advance or she will be just one more B-list face on "Hollywood Squares."

According to the ratings for the program's Sept. 8 premiere, the show got a 6 percent share, which means 6 percent of the television sets in use were tuned to DeGeneres. The program also showed a 17 percent increase in viewers from the previous show in that time slot and a 5 percent improvement in ratings over the program that aired before the show.

Those numbers mean that people change the channel specifically to watch DeGeneres, which is a very good sign.

THE REAL QUESTION IS WHETHER or not the show is going to survive. As the Magic Eight Ball would say, "All signs point to yes."

"I think the show will be one of those high watermarks of daytime television and a franchise that will continue for years to come," says Jim Perratore, an executive vice president at Telepictures, which produces the DeGeneres show and formerly produced the "Rosie O'Donnell Show."

Being a lesbian with a talk show, viewers may compare DeGeneres' endeavor to the smashing success of O'Donnell, which went off the air in May 2002.

Actually, "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" is more like the love child of O'Donnell and Jay Leno. Ellen pairs the opening monologue and comedy bits of Leno with the cute celebrity chatter of O'Donnell.

"When we started with Rosie, we tried a more joke-driven monologue, and it didn't work," Parratore says. "The show got more traction when she started telling more stories about her life. That plays right to Ellen's strength.

"She's an observationalist and she looks at the mundaneness of everyday life that is funny to us," he adds.

DeGeneres' interview style is a bit



Ellen DeGeneres has a reason to look victorious, with projected success for her talk show and a win in thumb wrestling against Jennifer Aniston on the show's premiere episode. (Photo courtesy of Telepictures)

more befuddled and chummy than O'Donnell's over-the-top fawning, but it is still funny and informative. What the audience doesn't have with DeGeneres — that O'Donnell enjoyed — is a personal connection. We don't yet know who Ellen is or what Ellen likes — well, other than women.

"I think it's understood that people understand that she is a lesbian, but I don't think it's going to enter the picture," says Stephen Tropicano, author of "The Primetime Closet" and an expert on gays on television. "She needs a much bigger audience."

Paratore agrees.

"The show is not about her gayness or her lifestyle," he says. "The audience knows she's gay, and she's not hiding anything, she's just doing her show."

DEGENERES MINED THAT KNOWLEDGE for the funniest bit of her show so far. On the second day of broadcast, she had Justin Timberlake on the show. Talking about his breakup with Britney Spears, DeGeneres said, "I wouldn't know what it's like. It must be horrible to go through such a public breakup."

With a subtle allusion to Anne Heche, DeGeneres tapped her personal life for chuckles, did it spontaneously and it worked.

With good comedy, good interviews, and a personal connection to the audience, Ellen may have her best shot at lesbian superstardom yet.

### **i** MORE INFO

'The Ellen DeGeneres Show'  
Weekdays at 5 p.m.  
KNWS Channel 51

music MIKE FLEMING



As gay fans prepare for yet another farewell appearance by venerable diva Cher, just what makes a gay icon?

# 'Larger than life'

FOR YEARS, POP CULTURE OBSERVERS toss around the word "icon" when assigning status beyond mere "superstar" to everyone from Michael Jackson to Magic Johnson, for lasting and extraordinary contributions in their fields.

And gay pundits are on board.

The phrase "gay icon" may bring to mind the undeniable status of Judy Garland, Madonna, James Dean, Bette Davis, Rock Hudson, Barbra Streisand, Bette Midler and the indestructible Cher, whose "final tour" hits Houston again next week.

"Cher is perhaps the most enigmatic of gay icons," says Eric Braun, author of "Frightening the Horses: The Rise and Rise of Gay Cinema," which includes a chapter devoted to gay icons.

"The Oscar-winning actress with a multifaceted persona, exemplifying in her songs and costumes out, cut almost to the bone, well publicized cosmetic surgery, is maybe a current icon for most people with her 'anything goes' attitude," Braun says.

Cain Williamson, a gay Cher fan who "wouldn't miss" a local Cher show, agrees that icon status is all in the attitude.

"She seems to know herself and genuinely like herself," Williamson says. "She feels no need to make apologies for who she is or the way she lives her life."

That attitude naturally appeals to gay men, he says.

"She has the balls to openly live her life in a way that does not necessarily jive with traditionally accepted social standards and succeed while doing so," Williamson says. "She lives life on her own terms."

Jack Kinley, another gay Cher fan, says that Cher's music "resonates with our culture because it is that of a triumphant outsider."

"She carries with her a refusal to be shamed or quieted by others' disapproval," Kinley says. "For a culture that is taught to be submissive and ashamed, Cher is a natural candidate for icon status."

LOVE HER OR HATE HER, CHER'S status as a gay icon is undeniable. Her revealing Bob Mackie costumes are legendary, her acting credits include Oscar-worthy performances and her musical

repertoire encompasses roles from unapologetic rock maven to disco diva.

With nearly 40 years in the public eye — from the number one hits of 1965 "I Got You Babe" and "Friends with You" with husband Sonny, to the currently popular "Living Proof" and "Farewell" CDs — the singer, actress and high-fashion model meets several of the main gay-icon criteria that author Braun calls "larger than life."



Love her or hate her, Cher is an undeniable gay icon with 40 years worth of acting and singing credits to her name.

BUT WHAT PROPELS celebrities from simply famous to "gay icon?"

Creating a public persona that has triumphed from early tragedy as well as an inherent vulnerability appeals to gays, Braun says. He cites Judy Garland, Marilyn Monroe and Doris Day as examples.

Kinley agrees.

"There are two central qualifications for gay icon status," Kinley says. "A sense of triumph for someone whom the system would generally

oppress ... [and] that person's refusal to be anything less than 100 percent genuine at any cost."

Cher and Judy Garland may be undeniable gay icons, but finding consensus on others may prove more difficult.

"Elton John is now the accepted icon for the establishment — knighted by the Queen," Braun says.

But Williamson disagrees.

"He has not constantly remade himself into something new and different the way Cher has or Madonna has," Williamson says.

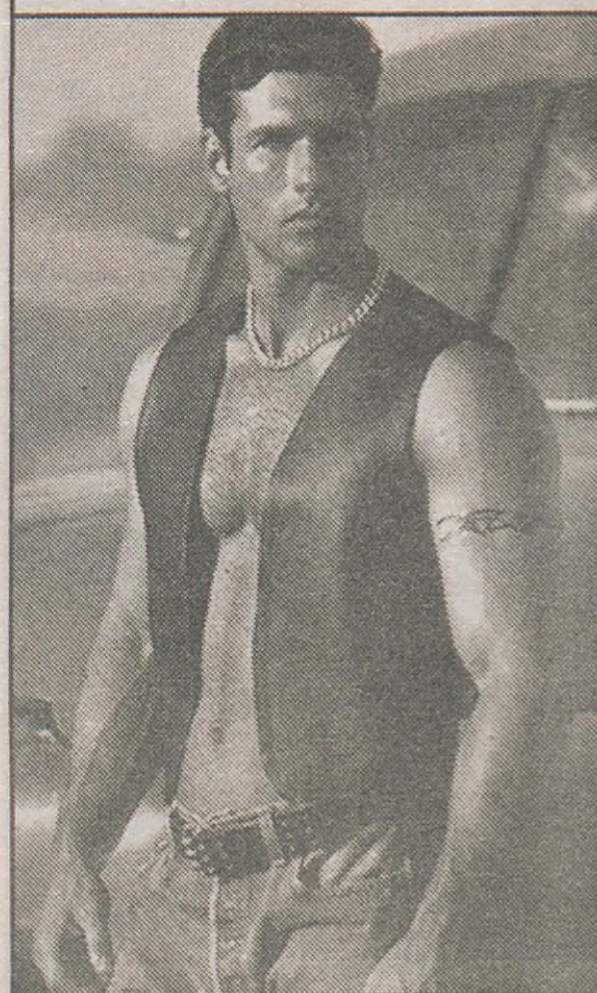
And other stars may be either arguable or still on their way to achieving a lasting niche with gays. Margaret Cho, Britney Spears, Sandra Bernhard, Nathan Lane, Dolly Parton and even Greg Louganis and Rosie O'Donnell could qualify, according to some.

"These people have remained true to themselves and succeeded in spite of mainstream beliefs," he says.

**i MORE INFO**

Cher in concert  
Sept. 26, 7:30 p.m.  
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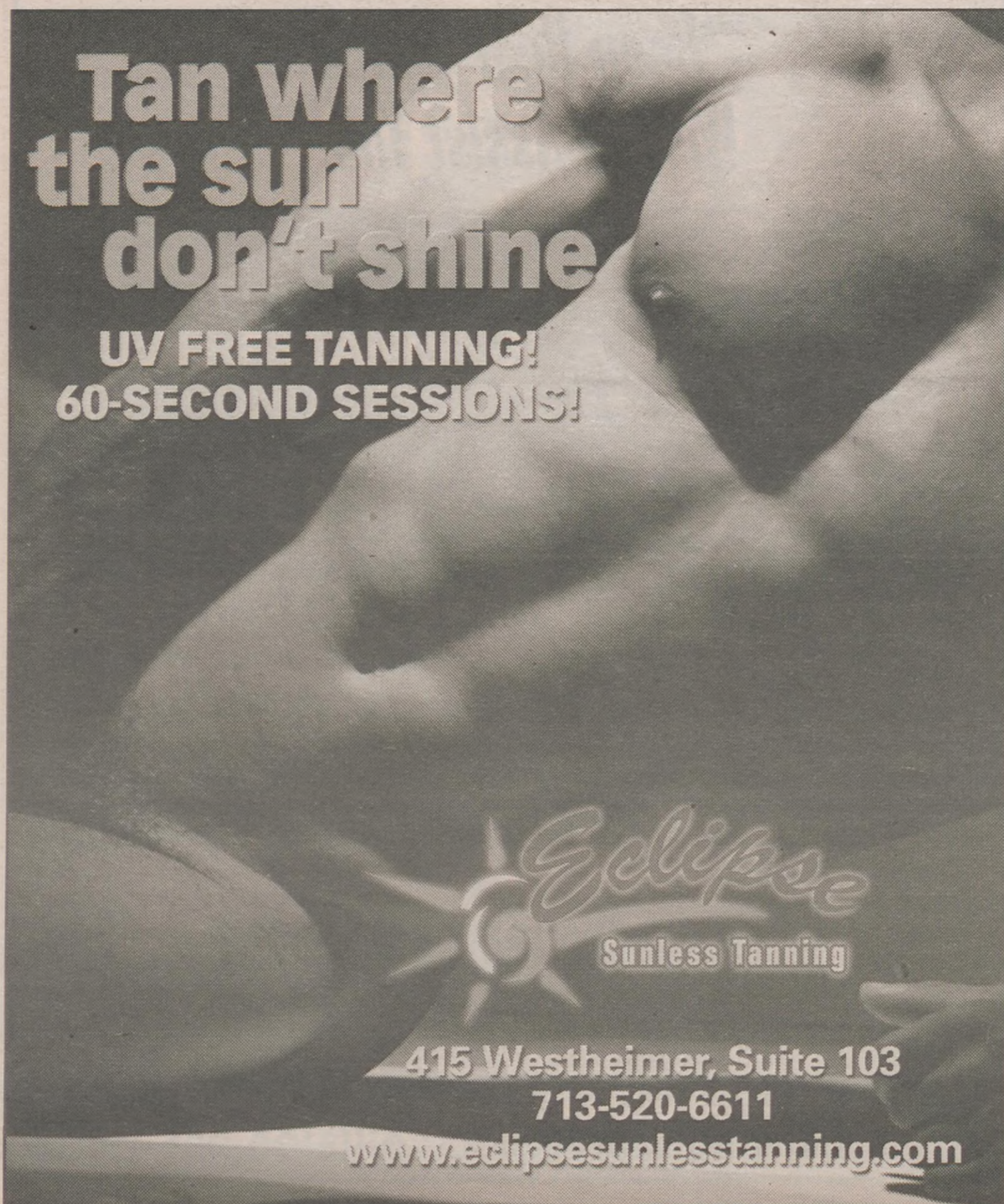
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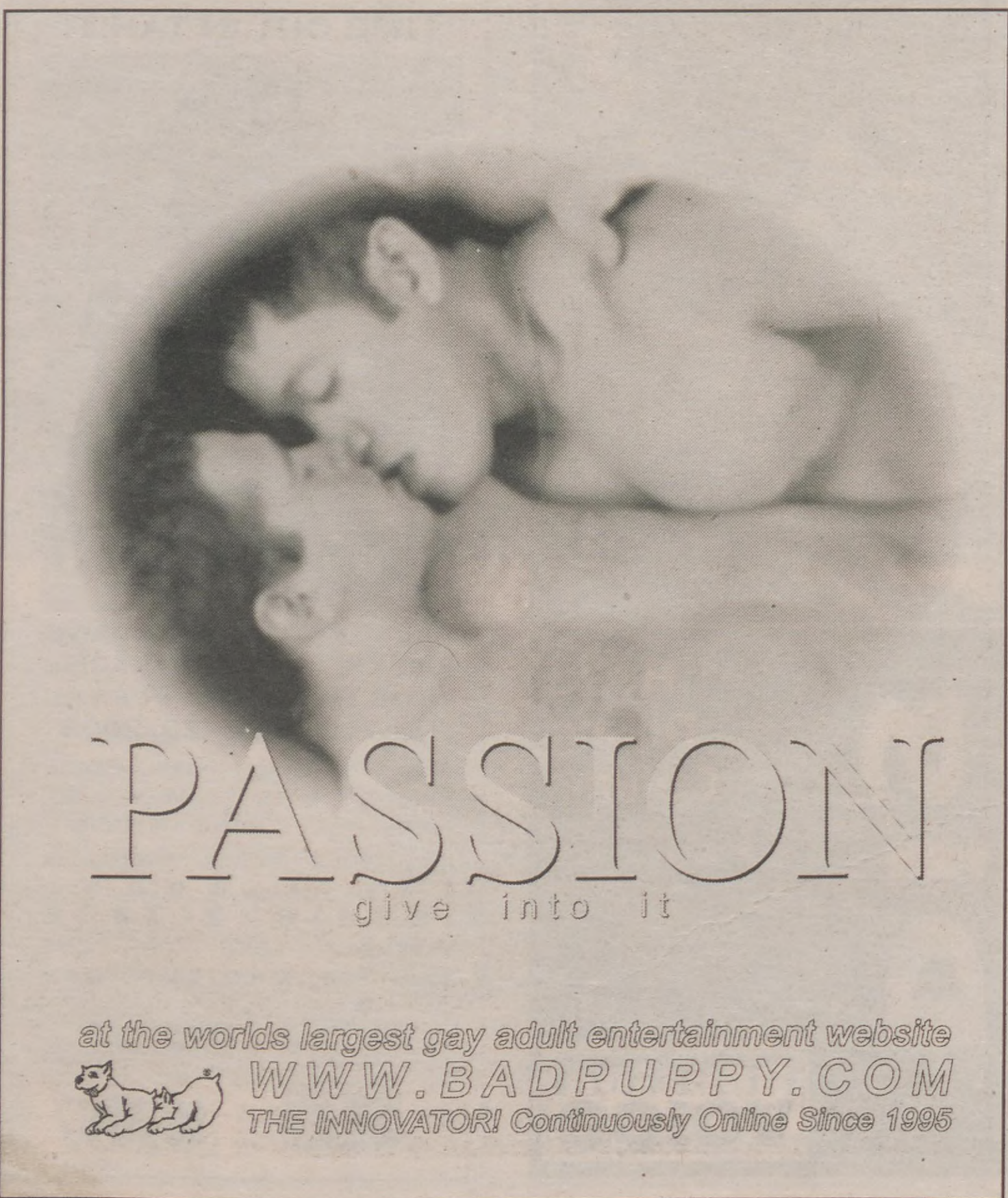


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## film STEVE WARREN



New DVD releases redirects focus of hot cinematic lesbian sex away from straight men to women who love women.

## Lesbian sex for women only

OF THREE NEW LESBIAN DVD/VIDEO releases, the one that's most sex-obsessed also happens to be the most entertaining. And as a gay male, you can bet I'm being objective.

A would-be "Florence of Arabia" has only pretty pictures to recommend it, and a romantic comedy wannabe shows what an actress who directs herself has in common with the proverbial lawyer who defends herself.

"Have you ever thought what porn is for?" asks one of the sleazebag men in "Sugar Sweet," reviewing Naomi's (Saori Kitagawa) video that's supposed to meet their commercial need for "the erotic world of lesbian sex."

"It's for guys to get off on."

On the other hand, Naomi's galpals debate whether she's a traitor for making lesbian sex videos for men and whether there would be a market if she wanted to make them for lesbians.

Then Naomi is hired to do a lesbian episode for reality TV. She hires her best friend, Azusa (Saki), and pairs her with Miki (C. Snatch Z.), a tough marketing manager by day who dances at a lesbian club at night.

Director and co-writer Desiree Lim satirizes the politically correct and politically incorrect alike. She displays an abundance of sex toys and doesn't stint on romance or hot girl-girl action.

It gets a little corny and somewhat less inventive in the second half, but this fast-paced, 67-minute feature is still the hippest, most fun dyke flick since "Go Fish."

GETTING THERE IS NOT MUCH FUN in "Journey to Kafiristan," a fictionalized version of a trip two real women took in 1939 as World War II was getting underway. It's a film I admired for its cinematography and period detail, but it is incredibly boring.

How Annemarie Schwarzenbach (Jeanette Hain) and Ella Maillart (Nina Petri) hooked up in the first place isn't explained. But Annemarie, a drug-addicted writer, is running from "the real danger in Europe," and Ella, an ethnologist, is traveling to Afghanistan to investigate rumors of a remote nomadic tribe with Aryan features.

Annemarie is a predatory lesbian. Ella's sexuality is less clear, but she was actually more of a jock than Petri's performance indicates. Before they travel far, Annemarie makes advances, and Ella lets her know she's not interested.

"Journey to Kafiristan" is about the trip to a destination that will never be reached — besides Ella's G-spot. We feel there's something missing at times when the narration, taken from Annemarie's journals, goes into detail about interest-



Jeanette Hain and Nina Petri 'Journey to Kafiristan' in a World War II piece released on DVD, but the film never gets off the ground. (Photo by Bernd Spauke courtesy Picture This! Entertainment)

ing places that we don't see.

LIKE "MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING" and "Kissing Jessica Stein," an actress who needed a showcase wrote "A Family Affair."

Unlike the other actress/writers, Helen Lesnick failed to start with a frank assessment of her strengths and weaknesses. She also directed herself rather than hire someone who might have corrected some of her misjudgments.

Lesnick is a character actress built for comedy, not romance.

As preparations for a lesbian wedding go on in the background, Rachel Rosen (Lesnick) fills us in on her love story and provides too much exposition, talking down to non-Jews and non-lesbians in the audience.

After four breakups in 13 years with Reggie (Michele Green), Rachel moves from New York to San Diego, where her mother (Arlene Golonka) heads the local PFLAG chapter. Mom fixes Rachel up with Christine (Erica Shaffer), leading to romance and perhaps marriage — if Rachel can overcome her own fear of commitment and Reggie's eleventh-hour attempt to get her back.

Jews, lesbians and especially Jewish lesbians can relate to "A Family Affair." But if Lesnick hoped to appeal to straight gentiles, she should have been more concerned with entertaining them than educating them.

### **i** MORE INFO

'Sugar Sweet'  
Wolfe Video  
☆☆ 1/2

'Journey to Kafiristan'  
Picture This! Home Video  
☆☆

'A Family Affair'  
Wolfe Video  
☆☆☆

**dining** J.A. CHAPMAN

Successful local restaurateur hits pay dirt again with third venture, even amidst awful downtown construction mess.

# Yea for Youssef

YOUSSEF NAFAA IS ON A ROLL. THE man behind Mi Luna and Mia Bella opened a third restaurant with Cava Bistro. And chances are good that if you like the first two, you'll like Cava.

Opening a restaurant downtown during all the construction mess is a gutsy proposition at best. Opening one on Main Street, in the thick of the light rail chaos seems almost foolhardy. But Nafaa wasn't deterred, and Cava Bistro seems to be thriving.

Sturdy stone arches, rustic wood paneling and floor-to-ceiling wine racks give Cava Bistro a cozy wine cellar feel. Snugly placed tables add an intimate bistro touch, and a pleasant outdoor patio offers additional seating.

From the moment the bread basket arrives with the accompanying tomato charmoula dipping sauce, it's clear that this is an inventive restaurant. Charmoula is a traditional Moroccan sauce made with olive oil, lemon and a complex spice mixture. This version, with tomato and harissa — that fiery hot North African condiment — has a spicy kick. Crumbled feta and basil provide a nice contrast, and it's a refreshing change from the usual olive oil and herbs.

For a robust appetizer, try the oxtail pie with potatoes, carrots, peas and a large puff pastry top (\$6.95). Perhaps there could be a few more chunks of meat, but it is satisfyingly rich with flavor.

The delicious house salad (\$4.95) is an excellent choice on a warm evening. A creative mix of greens, dried figs, roasted hazelnuts and snap peas tossed in a delicious raspberry vinaigrette, it's typical of the unexpected delights one can find at Cava Bistro.

**THE DOVER SOLE (\$17.95) IS EXCELLENT.** Poached in sherry, it is perfectly done with just a hint of sweetness and served with sautéed spinach on top. The roasted red pepper risotto with oyster mushrooms is a robust accompaniment, but the helping is so large it almost obscures the sole.

The pan-seared snapper special topped with grilled shrimp and sea scallops was too good to resist. At \$21.95, it was considerably more expensive than anything on the menu and quite a surprise when the bill arrived, as the waiter hadn't mentioned the price. Nonetheless, it was delicious.

Perfectly pan seared, it had a slight crispiness outside and was tender and moist inside. The outstanding grilled scallops were bursting with flavor, and a chunky avocado pico de gallo rounded the

dish off perfectly.

But the accompanying pesto risotto was a letdown. Despite the basil and garlic, it seemed to lack zip and added little to the rest of the dish. Again, the mountain sized serving left us wondering if the kitchen wanted to pad the meal with the less expensive starch.

The dessert menu is fairly standard. The white and dark chocolate mousse crepes (\$5.95) are tasty, but they don't quite live up to expectations. Each crepe has both white and dark chocolate mousse inside, unfortunately obscuring the flavor of the white chocolate, the more delicate of the two.

The crepes themselves are chilled and rubbery. The mixed berry coulis and the smoothly tart lemon crème add a tangy touch, but overall the dessert disappointed.

A FEW FRUSTRATIONS AT CAVO ARE worth mentioning. Butcher paper atop the tablecloth proves to be a nuisance, sliding around the table, leaving soggy rings where glasses stand, and making it difficult for the waiter to sweep away crumbs.

Perhaps the paper is meant to lend a bistro touch, but it seems an unnecessary hassle. Service was generally good, but several times the water glasses needed refilling, and despite a fairly empty dining room, the wait staff stood chatting in a far corner virtually ignoring diners.

Cava Bistro has much to recommend it. Offering a well executed New American menu with French, Italian and Moroccan influences, it feels familiar and innovative at the same time.

Right on the soon to be completed light rail line, there's little doubt that business will boom once the construction mess clears, so give it a try now while you can still get a table.



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SUNDAY SEPT. 21



Gay icon **Judy Garland** stars in one of her most popular musicals, **'Meet Me in St. Louis,'** for one showing only at 2 p.m. in the Museum of Fine Arts Houston's Brown Auditorium Theater, 1001 Bissonnet St., 713-639-7531.

MONDAY SEPT. 22



This month's installment of public television's gay news series **'In The Life'** includes a look at Florida's ban on gay adoptions, featuring an interview with parents **Robin Singer** and **Zibby Giardina**, airing at midnight on KUHT Channel 8. [www.kuht.org](http://www.kuht.org), [www.inthelifetv.org](http://www.inthelifetv.org)

TUESDAY SEPT. 23

The owners of **Cabo Mix-Mex Grill** reach out to gays with an **art opening** at 5:30 p.m. to benefit Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals at the restaurant's new Montrose location, 1111 Westheimer. 713-942-2246

THURSDAY SEPT. 25

The American Cancer Society holds its **34th Annual Reach to Recovery Breast Cancer Forum** from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Adam's Mark Hotel, 2900 Briarpark St. 713-266-2877.

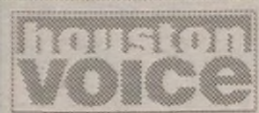
FRIDAY SEPT. 26

**'Madame Sata,'** the story of a legendary gay criminal, cabaret star, lover and killer opens at the Angelika Film Center, 510 Texas Ave. 713-225-5232.

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out on the bayou

# Cartoonist prefers edge to mainstream

DYKES COMPILATION, continued from Page 15

Politics isn't the only part of Bechdel's real life that finds its way to "Dykes," but fans shouldn't assume the strip is autobiographical.

"It's not like it's really autobiographical in terms of what happens to the characters, but I have these conversations with my girlfriend that Mo and Sydney have," Bechdel says. "I didn't have a dildo removed from my suitcase at the airport. I make all of that stuff up."

And none of the characters represents Bechdel's partner.

"They're all me! I'm very selfish that way," Bechdel says. "But I have to say my girlfriend probably wrote half the punchlines in this book. She always gets really mad when I forget to give her credit."

There's a funny episode in the book where Clarice and Toni drive to Vermont to get hitched, something Bechdel sees first hand on a regular basis.

"I get my little annual town report, and there have been a huge number of civil unions," Bechdel says. "I happen to live near a resort, and all these people come from not just all over the country but other countries to have civil unions here."

Another cultural phenomenon that Bechdel seems fascinated with in "Dykes" is something she calls "superstore culture."

"Over the past 12 or 13 years, I've just seen these boxes going up everywhere like fungi and it's horrifying," she says. "I have to go to these big box stores, because they put everybody else out of business. I can't go buy a frickin' envelope anywhere. I have to go to Staples and buy a pallet-ful of them!"

"DYKES" IS NOW SO POPULAR THAT Bechdel is even tossing around the idea of a live-action feature.

"I think it could be interesting, even though I would never want to see it done on TV or any medium other than cartooning," she says.

"Not even animation because it's inherently a comic strip to me. But I think I'm becoming less purist about that."

A national syndicate approached Bechdel a

decade ago to create a strip with a gay character for mainstream daily newspapers, an idea that finally sees fruition this month in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution with another cartoonist's work (See story on page 12).

But Bechdel declined the offer because she likes the edgy subject matter that her regular feature enjoys.

"You look in the funny pages, and everything there is so incredibly banal," Bechdel says. "I think I would lose my mind if I had to write that drivel."

Bechdel holds particular disdain for the nationally syndicated strips "Cathy" and "Buckles," but singles out "For Better Or Worse" as an exception worthy of high honors.

"There's some good stuff in the daily papers, and I love 'For Better,'" she says. "It's one of the few strips that happens in real time. I try to do that in my own work, having the characters aging."

Bechdel jokes that in 20 years, the "Dykes" characters will be just sitting around and bitching about the news.

"That's all they do now," she laughs. "I'm going to have to get some young blood into the strip somehow. I mean, they're all having kids now, so that's something."



Lesbian cartoonist Alison Bechdel celebrates 20 years of her popular comic strip with her latest compilation book, 'Dykes and Sundry Other Carbon-Based Life-Forms to Watch Out For.' (Illustration courtesy Alison Bechdel)

dish There's a Fine Line Between Telling the Truth and Talking Trash

One tabloid prefers that accused killer  
Scott Peterson is gay and living a sex  
crazed, drug fueled life behind bars.

## Wonderful Wizard of 'Oz'

AFTER SO MANY seasons of HBO's hit prison series 'Oz,' the world may be convinced that life behind bars is all about drugs, murder and gay sex.

According to the tabloid **Globe**, that is just the life being lived by **SCOTT PETERSON**, who is behind bars in Modesto, Calif., awaiting trial on charges that he killed his wife **LACI PETERSON** and their unborn son.

The tabloid talked to inmate number 534993, also known as James Soares, who is housed in the cell next to Peterson's. Soares, who is behind bars for the kidnapping and assault of his girlfriend, claims that Peterson never shows remorse for his supposed crimes, regularly takes the drug ecstasy and engages in same-sex fellatio.

"They say it was a big, beefy guy who was threatening Scott since his first day in jail," Soares reportedly told **The Globe**. "They say Scott was on his bed in his jail cell, and the man thrust his crotch up against the open bars and ordered him to perform sex ... Scott panicked and obeyed him out of fear for his life."

After the incident, according to Soares, Peterson complained to prison officials and they tightened security around his cell. "Whenever I asked Scott about it, he'd start to choke up and look like he was going to cry," Soares says.

The **Globe** reported back in June that Peterson picked up a transvestite outside a Modesto gay bar and received oral sex from him. The paper also notes that Peterson was issued a red jumpsuit, "the color accused murders wear."

What is that, some kind of prison hankie code? Does the orange uniform Soares is seen wearing mean "inmates who lie to tabloids for money?"

THE COURT BATTLE BETWEEN comedian **ROSIE O'DONNELL** and Gruner + Jahr, the publisher of her former magazine **Rosie**, is going to get ugly, according to the **National Enquirer**.

The tabloid says it possesses e-mails that are going to be used in G + J's case against O'Donnell. The emails show O'Donnell fighting with Susan Toepfer,



then editor of the magazine, about some shots O'Donnell took of **CHER**.

According to the **Enquirer**, O'Donnell wanted her photos to show up on the magazine's cover, but Toepfer was fighting to use pictures of celebrity couple **MATTHEW BRODERICK** and **SARAH JESSICA PARKER**, who were expecting a baby at that time.

"If I were the boss of this magazine (and I know I am not), that's what I would do for October," O'Donnell writes in the e-mail about the **Cher** photos.

The **Enquirer** also claims that the subsequent trial made O'Donnell paranoid — thinking that she's being followed — and that G + J hired private detectives to dig up dirt on her.

Supposedly, O'Donnell is going to call some of her famous friends like **GLORIA ESTEFAN**, **FRAN DRESCHER** and **CHRISTOPHER REEVE** to the stand to testify on her behalf.

AFTER DISCUSSING HER SEXUAL relationships with women in July with **BARBARA WALTERS**, everyone is trying to guess the identity of **ANGELINA JOLIE**'s undisclosed lesbian lover.

Star thinks it found the answer in lesbian **JENNY SHIMIZU**, a former model.

The pair acted together in the 1996 movie "Foxfire," and the tabloid says that Jolie often references her affair with Shimizu.

"It just didn't mean as much to Jenny as it did to Angelina," one of Shimizu's "friends" told the paper. "Jenny's seven years older than Angelina, and she had women — both gay and straight — falling at her feet wherever she went."

The magazine claims Shimizu had romantic relationships with **MADONNA** and **IONE SKYE** as well.



Jenny Shimizu

@ Send comments, suggestions to Dish@sovo.com.

## community calendar

## SATURDAY SEPT. 20

**Houston Big Men's Club.** This group for gay men of size and their admirers celebrates one year with a party from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

**All-Spanish Worship Service/Noche Espiritual** 7 p.m. Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2026 W. 11th. 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.

**Lambda Center.** Alcoholics Anonymous. 11:30 a.m. Eye Opener Group, 8 p.m. Saturday Night Live, 9:30 p.m. Willing Ones Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.

**Montrose Soccer Club.** 10 a.m. practice. Woodrow Wilson School, Fairview and Yupon. New players welcome, but beginners not currently being admitted. 713-862-9491. http://geocities.com/montrosesoccer. E-mail: montrosesoccer@yahoo.com.

**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 GLBT Community Center.** Drop-in, noon-5 p.m. • CATS (Community Awareness for Transgender Support) board meeting, 2 p.m. • TATS (Texas Association for Transsexual Support) meeting, 6 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

## SUNDAY SEPT. 21

**B.A.B.B.L.E.** Boys And Bois Blending Life Experiences is a group for local leather/levis submissives that meets the third Sunday of each month at the Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

**STAG.** Some Transgenders Are Guys is a support group for female to male transsexuals that meets every third Sunday of the month at 4 p.m. at the Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

**No-HATE.** Planning meeting of educational program at the Houston GLBT Community Center facilitated by local educator Michael DeVoll. 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Center, 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818.

**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 Bowling Leagues.** 7 p.m. Palace Lanes, 4191 Bellaire Blvd. 713-861-1187.

**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, 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.uh.edu/~global. E-mail: global@bayouuh.edu.

**Grace Assembly Church.** Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 11 a.m. service. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttex.net.

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

**H.A.T.C.H.** Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets 6-9 p.m. For meeting information, call 713-529-3590. www.hatchyouth.org.

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

**Lambda Center.** Alcoholics Anonymous. 9:30 a.m. Came to Believe Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.

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

**Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Church.** Services at 9:45 & 11:15 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 281-298-2780.

**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. Patrick's Reformed Catholic Mission.** Sunday Mass at noon. Holy Unions available. Group meets at the Hair Express, 3310 Delaware, Beaumont, Texas 77703. 409-781-8152. E-mail: bwatson1@gtRR.com.

**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 GLBT 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 • GLOBAL meeting, 6 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

## MONDAY SEPT. 22

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

**Free HIV Testing.** 4-8 p.m. at All Star News, 3415 Katy Freeway. Health clinic with free testing for HIV and syphilis. 713-869-7878.

**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. 4-8 p.m. at Bricks, 617 Fairview. 713-830-3000.

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

**Gay Bowling Leagues.** Women's league. 6:45 p.m. Dynamic Lanes, 6121 Tarnef Drive. 713-861-1187.

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

**Grace Assembly Church.** Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttex.net.

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

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

**Lambda Center.** Alcoholics Anonymous. 8 p.m. Beginners' Group. 1201 W. Clay. 713-521-1243 or 713-528-9772. www.lambdahouston.org.

**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 GLBT Community Center.** Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

## TUESDAY SEPT. 23

**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.

**GLBT Pentecostals.** Bible study, prayer, 7 p.m. in the Heights. For info: 936-931-3761; e-mail: www.Wgb1947@cs.com.

**Houston Roughneck Rugby.** Practice from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. For more information, log on to www.roughnecksrugby.org.

**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 GLBT Community Center.** Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • Lesbian Coming Out Group, 7 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

## WEDNESDAY SEPT. 24

**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.

**Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA).** 8:15 p.m. meeting. Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond Ave., Room 15.

**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, 1100 Westheimer, 9 p.m.-midnight at Ripcord, 715 Fairview; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at EJs, 2517 Ralph; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at Midtown Spa, 3100 Fannin. 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.

**Gay Bowling Leagues.** 6:30 p.m. Palace Lanes, 4191 Bellaire Blvd. 713-861-1187.

**Grace Assembly Church.** Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351.

936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttex.net.

**Houston Pride Band.** Open rehearsal, 7:30-9:30 p.m. 1307 Yale. 713-862-1488.

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

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

**Houston GLBT Community Center.** Drop-in, 2-9 p.m. • Free HIV testing, counseling, 7-9 p.m. • Houston Pride Band rehearsal, 7:30 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

## THURSDAY SEPT. 25

**Montrose Writers' Project.** support group for novice and experienced gay writers meets every third Thursday of the month at 10 a.m. at the Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

**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. 8 p.m.-midnight at Brazos River Bottom (BRB), 2400 Brazos, and Cousins, 817 Fairview. 713-830-3000.

**Free HIV Testing.** 4-8 p.m. at All Star News, 3415 Katy Freeway. Health clinic with free testing for HIV and syphilis. 713-869-7878.

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

**Gay Bowling Leagues.** Luci Duos. 9 p.m. Dynamic Lanes, 6121 Tarnef Drive. 713-861-1187.

**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.

**Houston Roughneck Rugby.** Practice from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. For more information, log on to www.roughnecksrugby.org.

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

**Lake Livingston GLBT Support Group.** 7 p.m. dinner and discussion. Grace Assembly Church, 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttex.net.

**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 GLBT Community Center.** Drop in 2-9 p.m. • "Mending and Stitching," 2 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

**Houston GLBT Community Center.** Drop in 2-9 p.m. • "Mending and Stitching," 2 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

## FRIDAY SEPT. 26

**Lesbian Film Night.** Movies of lesbian interest every final Friday of each month show from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207. 713-524-3818. www.houstonglbtcenter.org.

**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, 2915 San Jacinto; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at EJs and at Midtown 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.

**Grace Assembly Church.** Gay/gay-affirming congregation. 7 p.m. aerobics class. 567 Cedar Grove, Livingston, Texas, 77351. 936-646-7214. E-mail: leo1@easttex.net.

**H.A.T.C.H.** Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets 7-10 p.m. For meeting information, call 713-529-3590. www.hatchyouth.org.

**Houston Tennis Club.** 7-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. Houstontennisclub.org

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

**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 GLBT Community Center.** Drop-in 2-9 p.m. • 3400 Montrose, Suite 207. 713-524-3818.



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.



## THIS WEEK IN ECLIPSE

## 'MISUNDAZTOOD'

From dreamy pop to circuit rock, gay fans sure to find something in new releases.

## OUR GUY

Shelby hates to miss 'That 70's Show.'

## INSIDE HOLLYWOOD

Mario Cantone wants to go where other gay actors have tried and failed: a TV sitcom.

## SWITCH-HITTING

Woody provides tips on successfully reversing your roles under the sheets.

**PLUS:** Nightlife photos, news blips that need to be on your Gaydar, Bitch Session and comics 'Troy' and 'Chelsea Boys.'

# CLASSIFIEDS

**STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD** Is your home special? Tell our readers about it. Guarantee they will see it with our new features. **Bold** or box your ad for added attraction. Contact our customer service reps for more details. (877) 863-1885.

## SALE / HOUSTON

**WESTBURY / PRICE REDUCED!** 2 BR, 1.5 BA TH w/ patio. Painted in decorator colors. Located in lushly landscaped courtyard. \$69,900. Call David @ (713) 283-0843. Agent

## SALE / ELSEWHERE

**SARASOTA, TAMPA, ST PETERSBURG FLORIDA AREA** 2 BR + study/office or guest room, 2 BA, 2 car side-entry garage, 200 sqft screened lanai, 1,500 + ft living area, 2,100 + total home area, including front lanai. The nation's first gay/lesbian adult living community (55+). Pond view. See [www.rainbowgulfport.com](http://www.rainbowgulfport.com) for exterior views of house. \$249,900. For more info contact Charlotte (941) 721-8527.

## SALE / COMMERCIAL

**HEIGHTS- OFFICE SPACE-** New construction 2,100sf \$274,900 Perfect for legal, medical, art studio Next to E 20th St. Call: Philip 281-827-5544

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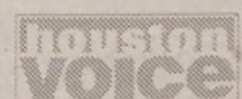
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## astrology JILL DEARMAN



Just as Mercury leaves retrograde, neighbors Uranus and Neptune take the plunge, causing those worrisome insecurities all around.

### Navigate carefully, Pisces

**♈ Aries (March 21 to April 20):**  
Love is in the air for you, but you may have to go on faith where a Sagittarius is concerned. This may not be the time to go from zero to 100 in the romance department. But you can get the wheels in motion before September ends.

**♉ Taurus (April 21 to May 20):** Uranus and Neptune retrograding in your career section could make you insecure about a goal. Have some patience. By early 2004, you'll be primed for success. In the meantime, do your work, and get a Capricorn to work your body after hours.

**♊ Gemini (May 21 to June 21):**  
You can make a concrete change in your home life when the moon meets your ruler Mercury on Sept. 24. If you've been avoiding having "the talk" with someone close to you, avoid no more. A Libra is ready to listen.

**♋ Cancer (June 22 to July 22):** Choose substance over style. You've been hanging out with a dreary crowd lately. Now that Mercury is sitting pretty in your very social and very intellectually hungry third house, seek out like minds. A Virgo is more fascinating than you realize. Go out for a cocktail and a chat.

**♌ Leo (July 23 to Aug. 22):**  
Your life will lighten up this week. You can make new friends — and maybe a sexy enemy — by opening your mouth and letting people know what you really think. Suddenly your opinions are in vogue again. Another Leo wants to spar with you. Verbal foreplay leads to steamy sex.

**♍ Virgo (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):**  
This is a lovely time of year for you. Instead of pushing yourself so hard, lie back and enjoy the fall season and all its natural beauty. Time outdoors is time well spent. You need to reconnect to the earthy you. A Gemini wants to play with you in the woods.

**♎ Libra (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):**  
Pluto in your social house is making you feel intense about certain

friendships. Make a decision around the Sept. 26 new moon in your sign. Who will stay in your life, and who will go? It's a question you've avoided too long. An Aquarius is a keeper.

**♏ Scorpio (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):**  
Mercury conjunct Jupiter in your house of friends could make this a lovely week for you and your platonic pals. Friends are a little fed up with your "all work and no play" attitude. Show them that you still remember how to have a good time. A Taurus close to you wants to dish with you.

**♐ Sagittarius (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):**  
This is a great week to make progress with a financial endeavor. You know just how to talk to people in power. You may suddenly be in a more powerful position yourself. A Cancer wants to submit to your whims.

**♑ Capricorn (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):**  
Don't worry about every last detail of a business project. The deal will go through, but you can't control the timing. But here's a clue: it's going to be a wonderful holiday season. A Gemini is already planning a party on your behalf.

**♒ Aquarius (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):**  
You can finally put a miscommunication behind you now that Mercury is out of retrograde. You and a Sagittarius need to get close again. You have many up-and-down relationships and need to make an effort to be more consistent. Your friends don't know what to make of you.

**♓ Pisces (Feb. 19 to March 20):**  
It's a sexy week for you. You and someone you've had a delicious crush on for years may get to first base or beyond — but it may have to be a secret tryst. An Aries wants you, but do you want that person in return? And in what way? Relationships are tricky now, so navigate carefully.

@ 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](mailto:QScopes@aol.com).



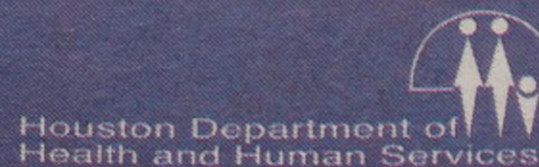
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