

# houston VOICE

## Comical

Gay comic book artist offers insight into his work.  
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ISSUE 1132

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JULY 5, 2002

### INSIDE



Gay entertainment guide **This Week In Texas** falls short of an in-print comeback.

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A new study from the University of Arkansas says that homophobia is not a phobia.

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Women's football — both professional and amateur — is just one of the sports options this month for gay Houstonians.

Page 16

## Schools protect gay youth

Houston trustees vote to include sexual orientation as a protected status in student code of conduct

By PENNY WEAVER

Gay students in Houston Independent School District facilities may rest easier this year thanks to new language in the student code of conduct.

HISD board trustees last Thursday approved a non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation as a protected status.

According to school district officials' written report after the meeting, "To promote a climate of respect for all, the Code of Student Conduct requires students to respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and district staff members. After considerable discussion by the board, the Code now prohibits 'any verbal abuse or bullying of others, including, but not limited to, slurs, name-calling or derogatory statements, including derogatory comments to another person because of that person's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, physical/personal appearance or sexual orientation.'"

Please see SCHOOLS, on Page 6



graphic by Bonnie Naugle

## Pride makes history again

Rainbow colors were the theme of the evening on Saturday as gay Houstonians took to the streets for the 24th annual Houston Pride Parade. (Photos by Dalton Dehart)



Thousands gather as rain stops for nighttime parade that organizers call largest, most diverse yet

By PENNY WEAVER

All-day rainfall on Saturday stopped just in time for the clouds to part and revelers to take to the streets for the 24th annual Houston Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Pride Parade.

Organizers said this year's event was the largest and most diverse so far, with more than 130,000 spectators lining the streets in Montrose to view the parade.

"The consensus among the committee was that this was definitely our largest parade ever," said Nick Brines, fund-raising director for the Pride Committee of Houston, which coordinated the parade and most Pride Week events. "The energy was excellent out there. There was really, really positive, fun energy."

"It's amazing when you're out there and you see there's

Please see PRIDE, on Page 2

local news

# Parade awards doled out

PRIDE, continued from Page 1

so many types of us in every shape and color, and it's really great to see everybody come together that night," he added.

Even with so many people packing the Montrose area, Houston Police Department officers on hand had few problems.

"We're only aware of two arrests for public intoxication, which, based upon the size of the crowd, is not bad at all. It went very peacefully," said HPD spokesperson John Cannon. "Everyone was well-behaved. There were no major disturbances."

More than 130 entries made up the nighttime parade, including entries sponsored by gay organizations and businesses, government leaders, national corporations and major media outlets.

Houston Mayor Lee Brown rode in the parade for the third consecutive year. Other officials taking part in the event included Houston City Council members Ada Edwards, Gordon Quan and Annise Parker, who is the only openly gay member of the council; state Rep. Garnet Coleman and state Rep. Debra Danburg; and U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee.

The Houston Fire Department had its first entry in the parade, with Chief Chris Connealy riding atop the department's Tower 6 truck.

Two founders of the parade, Ray Hill and Larry Bagneris, also participated in this year's event.

Prizes awarded for parade entries were:

- "Ruby Slipper" award for best walking

unit: Houston Pride Band.

- "Gypsy Rose" award for best out-of-town unit: Rainbow Ranch.

- "Edison" award for best lighting on a non-professionally built float: Montrose Counseling Center.

- "Houston" award for the best-non-professionally built motorized unit: PFLAG.

- "Rainbow Lights" award for the best lighting on a professionally built unit: JPMorgan Chase Bank P.R.I.D.E. Team.

- "Texas" award for the best professionally built motorized unit: Club Inergy.

- "Stonewall" award for the unit best commemorating Pride: Bering Memorial United Methodist Church.

- "Pride Worldwide" award for the unit best interpreting the 2002 Pride theme: Krewe of Olympus.

- "Spirit of Montrose" award for the best unit overall: Houston Fire Department.

Judges this year were Rich Arenschioldt of the Center for AIDS; Kay Dayus of the Houston Voice; Jone Devlin of the Texas Triangle; Heather Raynor of Red Bull; and Fred Walters Jr., executive director of the Houston Buyers' Club.

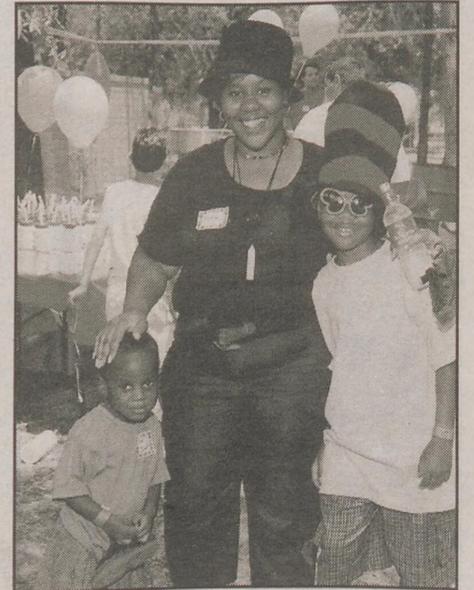
## PRIDE INFO

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 Houston, TX 77266-6071  
 713-529-6979  
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 E-mail: info@pridehouston.org

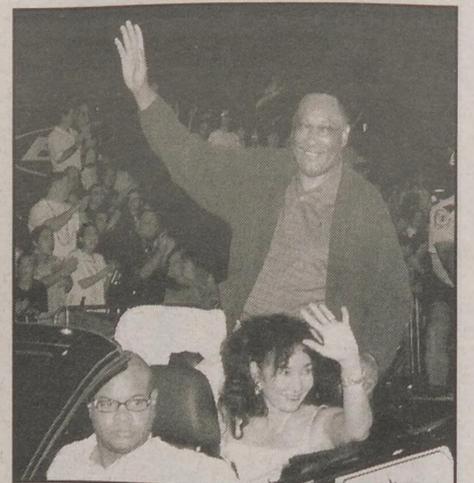
Several local entertainers offered their talents on stage (right) at the Pride cabaret. Houston Police Department officers (below) stopped by the family picnic at Hermann Park on June 23 for Family & Youth Day.



Several local artists (left) contributed their work to a Pride Week art sale that benefited the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Motorcycle riders (below left) joined Pride Parade entries of pickup trucks, convertibles, vans and more. Adults and youth alike (below) enjoyed the family picnic at Hermann Park on June 23 as part of Pride Week.



Choices of attire (above) were as diverse as everything else for folks who participated in the parade. Houston Mayor Lee Brown (right) made his third appearance in the annual parade. (All photos by Dalton Dehart)



HOUSTON PRIDE  
 2002

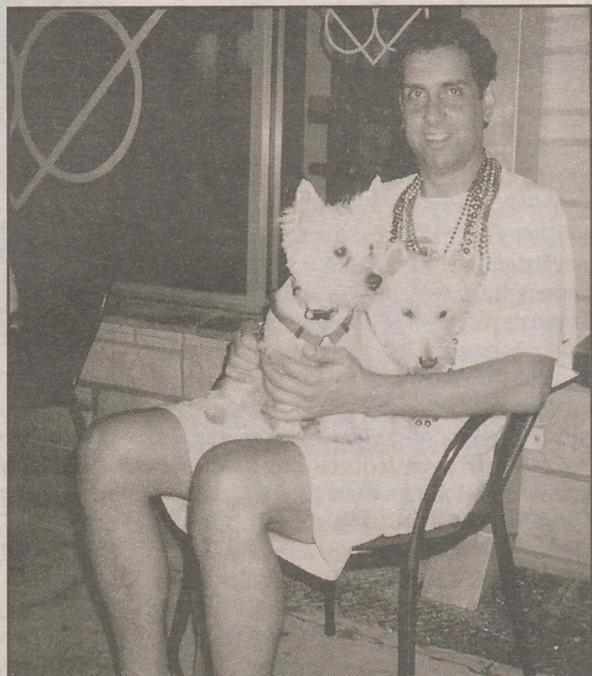


Walking entries in the Saturday evening parade included a large group with Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) of Houston.

local news



Protesters lined up on a portion of Westheimer (above) as the Pride Parade got under way. Pride Parade watchers included those of the four-legged variety, escorted by their human counterparts (above right). (Photos by Penny Weaver) Mary's...Naturally (right) was surrounded by Pride Parade spectators. (Photo by Dalton Dehart)

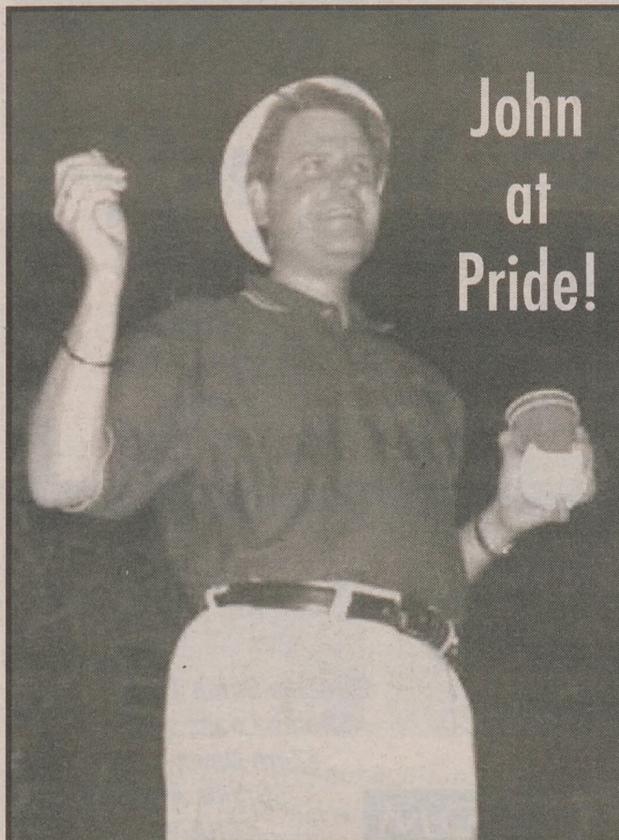
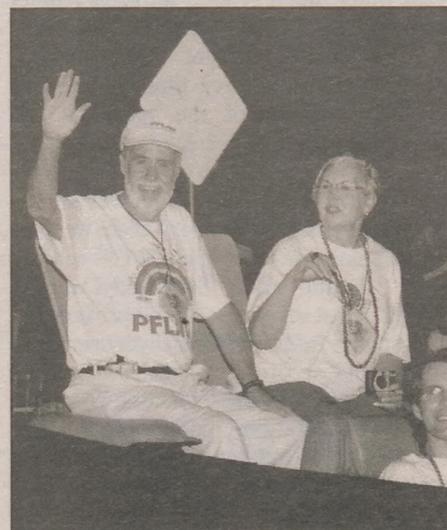


Pride Parade judges (top) enjoyed prime locations to watch the event and make their decisions to dole out awards. The Houston Fire Department's entry (above) in this year's Pride Parade was its first ever. 2002 Pride Parade grand marshals included Irv and Jane Smith of PFLAG (right). (Photos by Dalton Dehart)



A number of spectators enjoyed the first-ever Pride cabaret on Friday, June 28, at Alley Theater.

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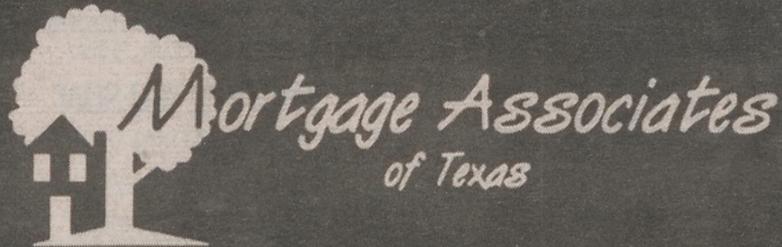
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local news

# Magazine's in-print comeback fizzles

This Week In Texas, once a gay guide for the entire state, lacks financial backing for new print edition

By PENNY WEAVER

Although its current publisher says reader demand exists, This Week In Texas missed its planned comeback edition this month due to a lack of financial support.

TWIT ceased publication in August 2000 after 26 years as a gay guide for all of Texas. At the time, publisher Alan Gellman said the 22,000-circulation magazine was "dead in the water, and it is not coming back in its present form," the Houston Voice reported.

Steve Pardue, current TWIT publisher/editor, said this week that the planned new print version of the magazine has reader support but not enough financial backing. Ovation Publishing is parent company for TWIT, according to its Web site.

"They wanted TWIT. Everywhere we went [people said], 'We're so glad TWIT's coming back,'" Pardue said. "Everybody wanted TWIT; I'm just sorry we couldn't produce it."

Response from potential advertisers was hot and cold, according to Pardue. The most support came from Houston-area businesses and organizations, but in other cities such as Dallas and San Antonio, potential supporters showed no enthusiasm, he said.

"The advertisers said mostly they were

under contract with [other publications], and so they couldn't do both right now," Pardue said. "I also lost my financial backers. Basically, that's what I'm looking for now."

A pair of individuals had provided financial support for the venture, but Pardue said they withdrew that support.

"They started wanting demands that I just couldn't agree with," he said. "That didn't work."

TWIT's online version includes a list of businesses and organizations that were ready to advertise in the new printed version. At this point, September would be the earliest that an in-print TWIT would appear, according to Pardue, and that magazine may narrow its focus.

"We're thinking about doing just a Houston thing. We got so much support from Houston," Pardue said. "It was just too much" to try to cover the entire state, he added.

"We did have something that nobody else had — basically a recipe that no one else had, that no one else chose to capitalize on," he said. "It'll work as soon as we can get the money together. The printing is so expensive it's ridiculous."

The original TWIT closed nearly two years ago in debt and with a dwindling advertising base. It was the only weekly gay statewide entertainment guide, according to Gellman, and known for its racy pictures of male cover models.

At that time, the magazine employed about 13 people full-time, located mostly in

two offices in Dallas and Houston, the Voice reported in 2000. All lost their jobs when TWIT ceased publishing.

TWIT started in 1975 as an eight-page newsletter reproduced on a copy machine. The publication helped to build a sense of a gay community in the late 1970s and early '80s and served as a symbol of the domination of gay life by bars and clubs. Ray Hill, a longtime Houston gay civil rights activist, told the Voice.

Pardue worked for TWIT in the 1980s and '90s, left for other employment, and had just returned prior to its closing in 2000. He said he and Gellman were good friends.

"When I heard it was closing, Alan let me have the Web site," Pardue said.

Interested in publishing a similar magazine recently, Pardue discovered that the name This Week In Texas was not registered, so he registered it and is pursuing a copyright, with or without the printed product.

Pardue discounted rumors that advertisers who signed a contract with the new TWIT will not receive refunds now that the magazine is not printing.

"How could they be locked into a contract when there's no product? I sent everybody their money back," Pardue said. "If there's no product, then there's nothing for them to be locked into."

"Maybe it's just a misunderstanding," he added. "I don't know why anybody would think that they would be under contract with a publication that doesn't exist."

Several potential TWIT advertisers, as list-



The Aug. 11, 2000, edition of This Week In Texas was the last one for that publication, and a planned comeback for the printed version of the magazine failed this month, although its Web site is operational.

ed on the TWIT Web site, told the Voice this week that although they had signed contracts, they had not paid for advertising up-front.

Those include Rich's Houston, and Gary Archer, a spokesperson for the club, said he still would like to see the magazine return.

"It's a disappointment that TWIT is not going to be able to [come back yet]," Archer said Wednesday. "Certainly it is welcome. I look at it as more nostalgia than anything. It's kind of a wait-and-see attitude at this point."

Pardue is not giving up on the magazine's in-print comeback.

"All I need now is some more money," Pardue said. "We're ready to go again. We had a lot of good things that we wanted to bring back to the community."

**FOR INFO**

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## national news

## No fear factor in 'homophobia,' study claims

Researchers say anti-gay prejudice rooted in disgust, 'contamination' concerns

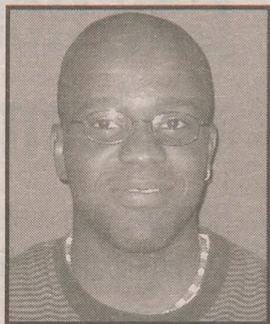
By KEITH TAYLOR

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — Hostility toward gay men and lesbians is not homophobia, University of Arkansas researchers concluded in a new study.

The word "homophobia," commonly used to describe anti-gay prejudice, is technically a misnomer, the researchers reported in early June. Homophobia is not actually a fear, and therefore it should not be "pathologized," or treated as a disease would be treated, said doctoral student Bunmi Olatunji, lead author of the study.

University of Arkansas researchers were able to demonstrate through statistical analysis that the concept usually described as "homophobia" originates from feelings of disgust, Olatunji said in a telephone interview Tuesday. A true phobia is derived from fear or anxiety, he said.

Anti-gay hostility is a prejudicial attitude more closely resembling racism than a phobia, Olatunji said. The researchers offered no substitute for the word "homophobia," although some of the feedback Olatunji received suggested "homonega-



Bunmi Olatunji, lead author of a University of Arkansas study on the word 'homophobia,' says the term is often used inaccurately when describing prejudice.

tivism" might be more accurate, he said.

The study was not intended to quibble with the use of the term "homophobia," but to identify emotional components of the origin and nature of the condition, Olatunji said.

"If you can identify the underlying emotions of certain attitudes and behaviors, you can better understand how those attitudes formed," Olatunji said. "That has implications for treatment, but it also enables you to consider a condition in the proper context."

Jeffrey Lohr, a University of Arkansas psychology professor, spent the past several years attempting to identify emotional factors in variety of phobias. Olatunji and doctoral student Suzanne Meunier conducted the study on homophobia within that program of research. Olatunji presented the findings June 9 at an American Psychological Society convention in New Orleans.

The University of Arkansas study seems to show a "perfectly reasonable set

of findings," but its conclusions are not really a new concept, said Gregory M. Herek, a psychology professor at the University of California at Davis.

Herek credits psychologist George Weinberg with inventing the word homophobia in the late 1960s. It had a double meaning. Weinberg used homophobia to label heterosexuals' dread of being in close quarters with gays. The word also was used to describe "homosexuals' self-loathing."

"The term is catchy, and it was very important at the time Weinberg coined it," said Herek, who is recognized as an authority on prejudice against lesbians and gay men. However, the word "has a number of problems with it," Herek said, particularly because there is no basis for the "phobia" suffix in a clinical sense.

Herek noted that a 1984 study by researchers Stephanie Shields and Robert Harriman, in which people viewed images of homosexual sex and their physiological responses were measured, did not find physical reactions consistent with phobias.

"The problem isn't people who are gay," Herek said. "The problem is people who are prejudiced against people who are gay." For that reason, Herek suggested "sexual prejudice" as a better term than "homophobia."

### 'Homophobia' here for now

Whatever the concern over its descriptive-

ness, the word "homophobia" is not likely to disappear from the lexicon of the gay rights movement anytime soon, activists said.

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation has no intention of dropping the word from its communications, said Connie Ress, a GLAAD regional media manager. Debating "this word versus that word as a label" does not address the real concerns of gay men and lesbians, she said.

"Getting wrapped up in the semantics is not the issue here," Ress said. "The fact is that people have injustices done to them every day. Because homophobia may not be a term by the book doesn't mean gay people aren't discriminated against and that we don't need laws to protect us."

### FOR INFO

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American Psychological Society  
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## local news

## Board decision against gay bias was unanimous

SCHOOLS, continued from Page 1

gion, national origin, disability, physical/personal appearance or sexual orientation.”

The report also states, “The Code defines bullying as ‘any act or speech that subjects persons to indignity, humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse or threat of physical abuse, social or other isolation, shame or disgrace.’”

A violation of that policy would be considered a Level II infraction and be referred to an administrator for disciplinary action.

At the HISD board’s June 27 special meeting, trustee Jeff Shadwick offered an alternative in the policy. He said he did not want to enumerate offenses in the code.

Shadwick suggested that the wording simply prohibit slurs and name-calling that would cause a student shame, humiliation or disgrace.

“I think lists are a bad idea,” he said, the Houston Chronicle reported. “I want to send them broad words. I think principals know bullying when they see it. It identifies a conduct we are trying to address.”

Shadwick’s motion was rejected by a 5-3 vote. A second motion then was passed, listing offenses based on religion, physical appearance, race and sexual orientation.

The change in the code of conduct becomes effective this upcoming school year. Each year, the code of conduct is distributed to every student at the beginning of the school year and lists the rights and responsibilities of students.

Trustee Esther Campos had suggested that a sexual orientation protection clause be added to the code of conduct. She said her idea wasn’t in response to any specific problems but she noted that children can be mean toward others because of their differences.

“It’s to protect all children,” Campos told the Chronicle.

Jim Null, chair of the education committee for Houston’s chapter of Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG), spoke to the board prior to its vote on the new language. He emphasized the importance of an itemized list.

**‘The absolute pride that I feel in our board is reflected in the fact that we’re not struggling whether or not to include sexual orientation...’**

**— Laurie Bricker**

In addition, two HISD teachers spoke in favor of the move. There were no opposing speakers.

Laurie Bricker, HISD school board president, previously emphasized the district’s message of tolerance for all people.

“What our board is working toward is a stronger and more comprehensive code of student conduct that includes [a ban on] discrimination against anyone for any reason,” Bricker told the Voice last week. “I know that we all believe in that.”

“The absolute pride that I feel in our board is reflected in the fact that we’re not struggling whether or not to include sexual orientation” as a protected category, she added. The decision, she said, is simply “the most effective way to send a very clear and concise message” for tolerance.

School district spokeswoman Heather Browne said the proposed change simply would reinforce the district’s stance against discrimination.



PFLAG member Jim Null addressed Houston school trustees last week to encourage them to protect students from anti-gay harassment. After 40 minutes of discussion, the board voted unanimously to do so via the HISD student code of conduct.

According to the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, most gay students routinely hear derogatory comments directed at them because of their sexual orientation.

GLSEN performed the only national survey of gay students’ high school experiences last year; the 2001 National School Climate Survey. The survey found that 84 percent of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning youth regularly hear slurs such as “faggot” and “dyke” at school.

In addition, 82 percent reported that teachers and staff “never” or “only sometimes” intervene when they witness the use of such “hate language,” GLSEN states.

The survey also found that more than eight out of 10 gay high school students eventually experience verbal, physical or sexual harassment at school.

According to GLSEN, parents across the United States are supportive of protection for gay students in school policies. A national survey of parents conducted by Lake, Snell, Perry & Associates last year found that 83 percent of parents support “putting in place/expanding anti-harassment and non-discrimination policies to include lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students,” GLSEN reported.

Also, eight out of 10 parents support “teacher sensitivity trainings on tolerance that include instructions on dealing with LGBT harassment in schools,” according to the survey.

Earlier this spring, HISD conducted a training seminar that was mandatory for principals and addressed issues particular to gay students.

Eric Ervin contributed to this story.

## Gay Houston youth welcome new policy

Students who were subject to harassment in area schools say prohibiting anti-gay comments and acts will help

By ERIC ERVIN

Justin Frazier, a recent graduate of Lamar High School in Houston, said he became accustomed to the name-calling he had to endure daily from other students because of his sexual orientation.

“I pretty much desensitized myself to it,” Frazier said.

The 18-year-old, who has been out since age 14, said he would ignore the rude comments made because he was an openly gay student. But he said if he felt threatened in any way, he would protect himself.

In one incident, a frequent tormentor followed Frazier around at school for an entire day, harassing him. Frazier said he ended up stuffing the student in a locker to get him off his back.

Afterwards, the student never bothered him again, he said.

The Houston Independent School District added language to the student code of conduct last week that prohibits harassment of students based on sexual orientation, among other traits. Supporters said they wanted to list protected statuses because young people often harass those who are different in some way.

Being different is why Frazier thinks he was targeted in school.

“I was pretty flamboyant,” Frazier said.

The 6-foot-tall, 230-pound Frazier crafted a style of his own. He grew his hair long and wore bell-bottomed pants to school. Frazier believes a lot of people disagreed with his look because he didn’t fall into society’s gender norms.

“We’ve been told that boys in school look like boys and girls should look like girls,” Frazier said. “And when you don’t fall into that norm, people have a problem with it.”

Frazier supports the change in the student code of conduct, saying it should help give gay youths in HISD schools a sense of acceptance.

“It will let [gay students] know that there’s someone there for them,” Frazier said. “A lot of them feel that there’s no one there to back them up.”

Many youth are not openly gay at school but still get harassed. Tracy Pettus, a lesbian, said she didn’t formally come out until after high school, but other students at Bellaire High School still called her derogatory names.

“I never told anyone; people just assumed I was [gay] because of the way I looked,” Pettus said.

Pettus said she often wore baggy pants, tennis shoes, and kept her hair simple in high school.

“I just pulled it back in a pony tail and forgot about it,” she said.

Pettus said she kept to herself and let the comments “roll off her back.”

“I became used to it after a while,” she said.

Pettus supports the code change, saying, “it would have made high school a lot easier for me.”

The HISD move has won support from students all over the Houston metro area.

Tara Martinez, 19, who attended Cypress Creek High School, not part of HISD, said other school districts should add the change.

“It would definitely work in my district,” Martinez said. “Having it put in the rules will make it so that students and teachers can’t ignore it.”

Martinez, a lesbian, said she was harassed in high school simply because she associated with students who were openly gay.

“I use to hang around people who were out in high school and stick up for them, so they assumed I was too,” Martinez said.

Martinez said she never felt in fear for her life, but she does know gay students who were not as lucky.

“This one guy I know was ran off the road by this other guy because he was gay,” Martinez said.

Currently, no other school districts in the Houston metro area have included in their student code of conduct language that prohibits harassment based on real or perceived sexual orientation.

 FOR INFO

Houston Independent School District  
Board Services office: 713-892-6121  
www.houstonisd.org

## national news

## Air Force Reserve does ask as recently as June

Nine years later, 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' violation still on military Web site

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

WASHINGTON — As recently as two weeks ago, the Air Force Reserve used an application form that asked recruits to disclose whether they're gay and whether they intend to engage in homosexual acts, questions that are a "blatant violation" of the federal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law, according to a military watchdog group.

The Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, which monitors the military's treatment of gays, said it discovered last month that the Air Force Reserve had been using a recruitment application form that had not been updated since 1987 — six years before Congress passed the so-called "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law.

The law allows gays to serve in the military as long as they keep their sexual orientation a secret and don't engage in gay sex. It also bars military authorities from asking service members or recruits to disclose their sexual orientation.

Maj. Wayne Perry, a spokesperson for the Air Force Reserve, said that in response to a June 21 inquiry by SLDN, Air Force

Reserve officials discovered that the 1987 form had been "inadvertently" placed on the Air Force Reserve's Web site sometime after 1993, when the policy went into effect.

Officials at that time instructed recruitment offices that the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy had been adopted, which prohibited the use of recruitment questions pertaining to sexual orientation, and the SLDN inquiry prompted officials to remove the outdated questions, Perry said.

"We don't ask those questions, and we don't expect people to answer them," Perry said.

But SLDN spokesperson Steve Ralls said SLDN learned from a recruit that the Air Force Reserve was using the outdated form as recently as last month at an Air Force Reserve recruitment office in the Midwest.

Ralls said that an SLDN staff member then called other recruiting offices and was told by recruiters in three additional offices that the form asking about an enlistee's sexual orientation was still being used.

According to Ralls, the Air Force Reserve's publications command at Robins Air Force Base in Georgia confirmed that the 1987 form was the only application form available for use in signing up new recruits.

In a June 17 e-mail message, Mike West, forms manager for the Air Force Reserve Command at Robins Air Force Base, told

SLDN, "I can assure you AFRC Form 102, dated Jan. 87, is the latest version officially released for use."

Form 102 is the application form that includes a question asking recruits to disclose whether they are gay and intend to engage in homosexual acts.

'If they were using the old form in the field, it was a mistake.'

— Maj. Wayne Perry

Houston Voice was unable to reach West by press time.

When asked about SLDN's findings that the forms were being used as recently as last month by recruiting offices throughout the country, Perry said that he had no knowledge of such use and would make further inquiries about the matter with Air Force Reserve officials at Robins Air Force Base.

"If they were using the old form in the field, it was a mistake," Perry said. "They told me that [Air Force Reserve headquarters] sent out the word in the field that the old forms were not to be used after 1993, when the Clinton administration adopted the new policy."

Form 102, the four-page application form that SLDN and West say had been in use up until last month, includes two questions about sexual orientation as part of an 11-question section called "Character and Social Adjustments." Other questions in that section ask recruits about illegal drug use and involvement in anti-government groups.

"Are you a homosexual or bisexual?" one of the two questions pertaining to sexual orientation asked. The form then offered this clarification: "'Homosexual' is defined as: sexual desire or behavior directed at a person(s) of one's own sex. 'Bisexual' is defined as: a person sexually responsive to both sexes."

### i FOR INFO

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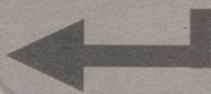


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**around the nation**
**New CDC chief comes with background in AIDS issues**

WASHINGTON (AP) — A scientist who helped pioneer AIDS protection for hospital workers and went on to battle anthrax has been chosen to head the nation's top public health agency, administration officials said Tuesday. Dr. Julie Gerberding will become the first female director of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Gerberding is an infectious-disease specialist who became one of CDC's most quoted investigators during last fall's anthrax attacks. "She's somebody who has been able to withstand the pressure and take the heat and always use good science-based judgment to make decisions," said Dr. James Curran of Emory University, the CDC's former AIDS chief, who has known Gerberding for over a decade. Gerberding, 46, had been the CDC's acting deputy director for science. Dr. Jeffrey Koplan stepped down as CDC director on March 31. Gerberding began her career at the University of California, San Francisco, where she won acclaim for developing one of the first programs to give health workers stuck with HIV-tainted needles medication to prevent infection, said Tom Coates, the university's AIDS research director.



Dr. Julie Gerberding was expected to be named the new head of the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control & Prevention on Wednesday. She comes to the post with experience in AIDS issues. (Photo by Chris T. Anderson/AP)

**Pride celebrations draw thousands in U.S. cities**

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Clad in a long white coat and waving the British flag, actor Sir Ian McKellen leaped from a silver convertible and raced to hug cheering fans during the city's annual Gay Pride parade on June 30. McKellen, who starred in "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," served as one of the celebrity grand marshals in his first San Francisco parade. "For generations the people in San Francisco have set standards for the rest of the world to catch up to," McKellen said. Alice Hoglan marched in support of her son, Mark Bingham, who was gay and was believed to have helped thwart the terrorists on Sept. 11 aboard Flight 93. Organizers estimate 500,000 attended the San Francisco event. Meanwhile "hundreds of thousands" turned out for Chicago's 33rd annual parade. In New York, Mayor Michael Bloomberg was applauded as he marched near the front of that city's parade. Tens of thousands of spectators lined the Fifth Avenue parade route to cheer the marchers.

**Minn. court rejects case against trans school employee**

MINNEAPOLIS — A three-judge panel of the 8th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in St. Louis ruled unanimously June 20 that a transgender school employee should not be blocked from using a women's restroom, according to the ACLU, which filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case. Carla Cruzan, a teacher at Southwest High School, argued that the school's decision to allow library employee Debra Davis to use the women's bathroom violate Cruzan's religious freedom and created a sexually hostile work environment. After Cruzan complained, the school allowed her to use several different bathrooms, including single-stall restrooms and other women's restrooms. Ruling against Cruzan, the federal court noted that she "does not assert Davis engaged in any inappropriate conduct other than merely being present in the women's faculty restroom."

**N.Y. jury awards trans shoppers \$1 in lawsuit against Toys 'R Us**

NEW YORK (AP) — A jury on June 27 found that three transsexuals who sued Toys 'R Us were harassed by workers while shopping at a Brooklyn store but don't deserve \$900,000 in damages. P Tom Shanahan, an attorney for the shoppers, called the verdict in federal court — in which the jury agreed that the Toys 'R Us employees violated city civil rights codes — "a moral victory for the transsexual community." But one of Shanahan's clients, Donna McGrath, said she was disappointed with jurors' decision to award each plaintiff only \$1. "They don't understand us," McGrath said. Attorneys for the company, the country's second-largest seller of toys, had no comment. McGrath, Tanya Jinks and Tara Lopez had each sought \$300,000 in damages. They alleged that during two shopping excursions, employees called them names and menaced them with baseball bats.

**N.J. gay couples file suit for full marriage rights**

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — New Jersey officials violated the rights of same-sex couples by denying them the opportunity to apply for marriage licenses, a national gay rights group claims in a lawsuit filed June 26. Lawyers for Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund say the state violated the equal protection clause of the state constitution. The lawsuit was filed in state Superior Court in Hudson County on behalf of seven same-sex couples. The plaintiffs said they expect the case to end up before the state Supreme Court. They are seeking full marriage, not a separate status like the "civil unions" available only in Vermont rights. "Domestic partnership and civil unions are incredibly meaningful to our families, but not having the choice to marry means they are still second-class citizens," said David S. Buckel, the lead attorney on the case. The New Jersey Catholic Conference and the New Jersey Family Policy Council said they would try to head off the court case by pushing a state law to ban gay marriage.

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Rivendell Marketing Company, Inc.  
212-242-6863

A WindowMedia Publication

Publisher- WINDOW MEDIA LLC  
President- WILLIAM WAYBOURN  
Editorial Director- CHRIS CRAIN  
Art Director- ROB BOEGER  
Marketing Director- ERIC MAY  
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Issue 1132

# Forum

HOUSTON VOICE

JULY 5, 2002

PAGE 10

editorial

## Gay Chicken Littles Wrong on Bush

George W. Bush is no Bill Clinton, but his record so far has been surprisingly neutral and even positive on the gay issues to come before his administration.

By CHRIS CRAIN

"T

HE SKY WILL fall! The sky will fall!" The rhetoric used by many gay activists and Democrats against George W. Bush during the 2000 campaign may

not have sounded so much like the panicked cries of Chicken Little, but they were figuratively close, at least in their volume and drama.

Lesbian and gay Americans were warned, at the Millennium March on Washington and virtually every other opportunity, that a vote for the GOP presidential ticket was a vote to turn back the clock on gay civil rights, undoing much if not all of the gains achieved during the two terms of Democrats Bill Clinton and Al Gore. But the first year and a half of the Bush-Cheney administration has proven those doomsayers wrong, or at least exaggerated in their fears.

In just the last several weeks, we have witnessed the curious spectacle of social conservatives excoriating U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft for the sin of codding homosexuality in his own quarters. This is the same John Ashcroft who was almost "Borked" by a civil rights coalition that included the top gay rights groups. And before you dismiss the right-wing criticism of Ashcroft, consider that when these same groups attacked Clinton, he wasn't risking votes or money; but real political capital is being expended by Bush and Ashcroft, even if neither was particularly spoiling for this fight.

In any event, Ashcroft is standing firm on his decision to permit a Department of Justice gay pride forum and even allowing one of his top deputies to participate in the event.

Even more importantly, in the DOJ and every other federal agency, the Bush-Cheney administration has kept in place the Clinton-era protections for civil employees

against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

The Bush State Department even decided to leave in place a directive quietly put in place in the waning days of the Clinton administration that offers official recognition and some marriage-like benefits for the same-sex domestic partners of foreign-service employees.

On June 24, President Bush signed into law the Mychal Judge Police & Fire Chaplains Public Safety Officer's Benefit Act, a measure named after the gay New York Fire Department chaplain who died in the Sept. 11 attacks. The law extends under certain circumstances a federal death benefit to the same-sex domestic partners of public safety officers killed in the line of duty. And the special master appointed by Attorney General Ashcroft has likewise expressed a willingness to use his discretionary powers to ensure that same-sex domestic partners are treated fairly in the disbursement of the Sept. 11 victims compensation fund.

DOES ALL OF THIS MEAN THAT THE 70 percent of gay voters who pollsters say cast their ballots in the 2000 election for Gore made the wrong call? Of course not. On all the most important gay civil rights issues, Gore was supportive and Bush was mum or in the opposition.

The Bush White House has also had its share of miscues on gay issues, most notably a flirtation with a Salvation Army proposal to exempt faith-based charities from state and local gay civil rights laws. But Bush backed down on that issue, though he has continued to push the general idea, which has its own set of problems for gays. Just this week, he has begun aggressively pushing the idea of vouchers for private schools, many of which are run by religious groups, most of which are anti-gay.

But the most significant danger posed

by the election of George W. Bush is still very real: his likely appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court. During the campaign, Bush offered up as his ideal appointee the arch-conservative Justice Antonin Scalia, who has a record of virulent opposition to anything resembling gay rights.

The Bush administration has offered little assistance to break the logjam on two gay rights measures poised to pass the Senate, but he hasn't signaled a readiness to veto employment protection or hate crimes, either. Remember, however, that Clinton also failed to push through either bill when Democrats controlled both houses of Congress until the November 1994 elections.

REMEMBER, TOO, THAT BY THIS POINT in the Clinton administration, the politician from Arkansas who aggressively courted gay votes and money had already signed two pieces of unprecedented anti-gay legislation: the so-called "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy on gays in the military, and the Defense of Marriage Act, which withholds federal recognition for same-sex marriages.

Bush would have signed both bills, but he hasn't signed any more, even though hard-core conservatives now control the House and lead the GOP near-majority in the Senate. In fact, no anti-gay legislation has even won a hearing before a committee in either body, probably in part out of deference to foisting divisive social issues on a friendly president. It's a weird sort of insurance against the alarmist scenarios painted by gay activists two years ago, but we should be happy to have it.

What's more, as we all get to know George W. Bush better through the daunting challenge imposed on him by Sept. 11, his brand of "compassionate conservatism" at least appears to be generally sunny and benign, looking at sexual orientation through something like the "colorblind" prism that Ronald Reagan viewed race.

Bush has made more openly gay appointments than most expected, staying true to his campaign promise that sexual orientation would not be a bar to service in his White House. Clinton's appointments dwarf Bush's in number, to be sure, and Gore's would have likely surpassed his predecessor's record.

But if the election of George W. Bush remains a missed opportunity for rapid advancement of the gay civil rights movement, and there is some question about the extent of that claim, at least our sky is not falling, and it isn't even cloudy all day.

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



viewpoint ELLA TYLER



Each of us must work so that complacency won't blur historic moments in the gay rights movement

# History is now

AS MY MOTHER AND I WERE discussing George Bush and what advance information he might have had about the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, I said, tritely, "Of course, hindsight is 20/20." "No it isn't," was her immediate response.

Although that may have been her knee-jerk reaction to any comment that suggests any sympathy for Bush, it is true. Our pictures of the past are blurry, at best.

And, in the case of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender history, there are too few pictures to begin with. As I read Eric Marcus' newly revised edition of "Making Gay History," I'm amazed that any early history remains. The book begins in 1950 and ends in early 2001, but includes a postscript about Sept. 11.

The first gay groups — Mattachine Society, the Daughters of Bilitis, and One, Inc. — were founded in California in the early '50s in response to the institutionalized discrimination and police harassment that had begun after World War II. At that time, a discussion of homosexuality meant that the U.S. Post Office could refuse to mail and even seize a group's newsletter on obscenity grounds.

Exposure as a homosexual could, and often did, mean loss of everything — jobs, friends, family, children. With the combi-

nation of fear, shame, illegality and censorship, it is amazing that pictures were taken, lists were kept, speeches were made and protests occurred.

"Making Gay History" is mainly a set of interviews with activists in the gay civil rights movement, connected with bit of narrative. Our own Rev. Carolyn Mobley talks about her pre-Houston activism.

I've enjoyed reading the book, and its interviews with Morty Manford and Ray "Sylvia Lee" Rivera offer the first account of Stonewall, out of the many I have read, that seemed to put it into perspective. Rivera explains that the raid began because the bar owners hadn't paid their pay-off, and the first thing that was thrown at the police was money. Then rocks were thrown. The next day, the organizers went to work.

SO, AS WE RECOVER FROM PRIDE WEEK, remember the brave women and men who made it possible for us to congregate and celebrate freely. Never forget that gay history is still being made, but it is now as likely to be lost to indifference and claims of irrelevance as to censorship.

One of the reasons gay or lesbian or bisexual or transgender history is important is that it can be personally inspiring.



Knowing that others like us have done whatever it is we aspire to do can be very affirming. Even if we don't need inspiration, gay youth do.

We who are old enough to remember when there was no public mention of any kind of sexuality think that today's youth has all the information it needs. That is not just not so. Today's censors are school administrators, not post office officials and customs agents. Kids today don't know any more about famous poets, artists, writers, doctors or athletes than we did.

Children and young adult literature, especially that dealing with homosexuality, is often censored. Last year, students in Los Angeles had to sue to have biographies of famous gay people returned to their school library. In Houston, in the Alief School district, an article about

harassment of gay students was removed from the school paper.

You can keep gay history alive. Collect those documents, tapes and photos, explain what they are if you can, and give them to the Gulf Coast Archives & Museum of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender History. There are other archives, if you don't like this group. If you don't know if the material is useful, let an archivist make the decision.

Just a little effort from each of us can preserve gay history for all future generations.

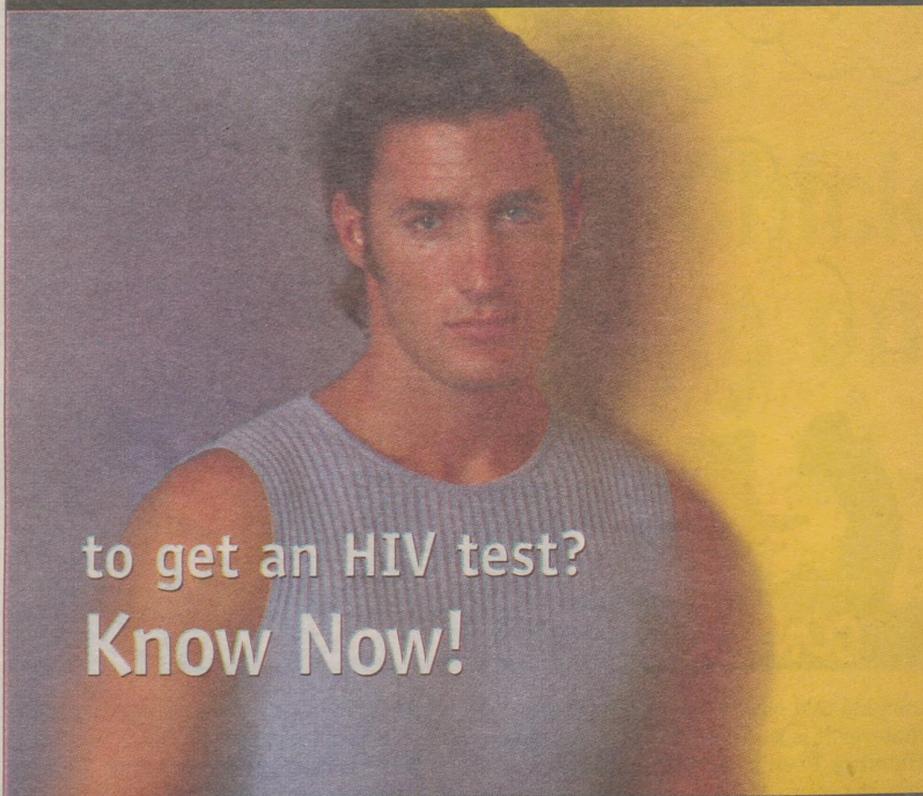
@ Ella Tyler is a freelance writer for Houston Voice and a longtime political activist in Houston. She may be reached via editor@houstonvoice.com.

## The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Green

by Eric Orner



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## on the record



"My character is a lesbian — that just happens to be who she is. Lesbians like women. I'm not saying all women in the WNBA are lesbians. I didn't say that I was the poster child for the WNBA or anything like that. ... If she sees a fine woman, she's going to mack on her. And she likes the ladies."

Actress **Kim Wayans**, who plays **Latisha Jansen**, a lesbian who openly, and in comic fashion, drools over her teammates, in the new movie "**Juwanna Mann**," whose title character is a male basketball player who enters a women's professional league by dressing in drag (*Chicago Tribune*, June 21)

"The concept of 'out of the closet' is brilliant. Since we represent about 50 percent of the households in America, if gun owners would 'come out of the closet,' we would be unbeatable."

**Michael Bane**, a straight gun-rights activist who works with **Pink Pistols**, a gay gun group for gun owners (*New York Post*, June 30)

"'Queer As Folk' thinks it's important, but it's now just a laughable sex cartoon, the worst kind of soap opera. ... When the show isn't being trashy, it's preposterously self-righteous."

Television critic **Matt Roush** on the season finale of "**Queer As Folk**" (*TV Guide*, June 7)

"They compromise what they believe in and what they know God stands for. I simply got tired of it."

**Lon Mabon**, the conservative Christian behind Oregon's many anti-gay ballot measures, on his reason to challenge U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith (R); as a third-party candidate (*The Oregonian*, Portland, Ore., June 19)



"The problem is, how do you identify these students and market to them? At the same time, we hope to send a signal to them that we're gay-friendly."

**Brad J. Blankenship**, an admissions counselor at **American University**, in Washington, D.C., on recruiting gay students (*Education Week*, June 19)

"Probably a good 25 percent of the people here, maybe more, are on drugs. It does worry me. I feel like it's deteriorating our health."

**David Tillette**, a drug counselor and volunteer at the **Cherry 7 circuit fund-raiser**, held in Washington, D.C., on drug usage at the event (*USA Today*, June 20)



"The Republicans in the United States manipulate public opinion and sweep any controversial issues under the table. It's depressing. Decisions in America are based solely on the question of 'how much money will come out of it' and not on the questions of how much health, morals or the environment suffer as a result."

Lesbian tennis great **Martina Navratilova**, on American politics (*Reuters*, June 26)



# Out on the Bayou

By **LAWRENCE FERBER**

P. CRAIG RUSSELL LOVES A challenge.

In fact, the gay comic book artist's entire career has been littered with unlikely and ambitious works — including stunningly beautiful, accessible adaptations of a Wagner opera cycle, Oscar Wilde's fairy tales and fantasy writer Michael Moorcock's fantastical Elric tomes.

Yet the challenges Russell absolutely can't resist are seemingly less highfalutin' — like, say, a straight tits and ass comic.

"I'm the kind of character who'd want to do a T&A book just to prove I could do it," he laughs.

He recounts how Neil Gaiman, writer of the runaway success "Sandman" comic series, once told him that he had Russell in mind when he was writing the script for Sandman's landmark 50th issue before he

PREVIOUSLY, THE PAIR'S LYRICAL 1996 "One Life — Furnished in Early Moorcock," took a page from the life of an awkward 12-year-old boy who balances fantasies of fictional warrior Elric with realities of older bullies, his emerging sexuality, and a pedophile teacher.

In "Murder Mysteries," set mostly in a heaven populated by sexy angels, creation's first murder is investigated by the Angel of Vengeance, who uncovers the first love affair — and heart — in the process.

"There were a couple of different [approaches] I could have taken," Russell says of the project. "Since these angels are technically asexual, I could have made them more androgynous. ... But they were referred to as 'he' in the story, and beautiful, so I decided to make them very specifically one gender, the male gender. It was also more fun to draw — especially with some of the models I had."

Russell says the music of the exhalted,

## Comic deity

Gay comic book artist talks about his career, new offerings, and the Gay League of America

even asked Russell to pen the art. Russell eventually took the gig, and the issue is a valuable collector's item.

2002 sees a generous mix of both highbrow and mainstream-friendly (and those in between) Russell creations hitting the racks.

That includes his super-homoerotic adaptation of a dark Neil Gaiman story about homicidal angels and men, "Murder Mysteries" on the Dark Horse label. Russell will also publish a tale about a cross-dressing vampire hunter in a "Buffy" spin-off anthology, "Tales of the Slayers," and during spring and fall respectively, two books collecting his whopping two-time Eisner-winning adaptation of Wagner's fantastical "Ring of the Nibelung" opera cycle will debut.

In addition, Russell contributed pages and covers to DC's "Spectre" title, Marvel's "Ultimate Team-Up," and another Gaiman story adaptation for fall release, "Endless Night."

"Murder Mysteries" again pairs Russell with Gaiman — whose collaborations on Sandman, prose, and superhero titles like "Miracleman" have elevated them both to comic deities. And "Murder Mysteries" is their queerest outing yet.

four-opera "Ring" epic is what compelled him to do his comic adaptation, which ultimately took two decades to complete.

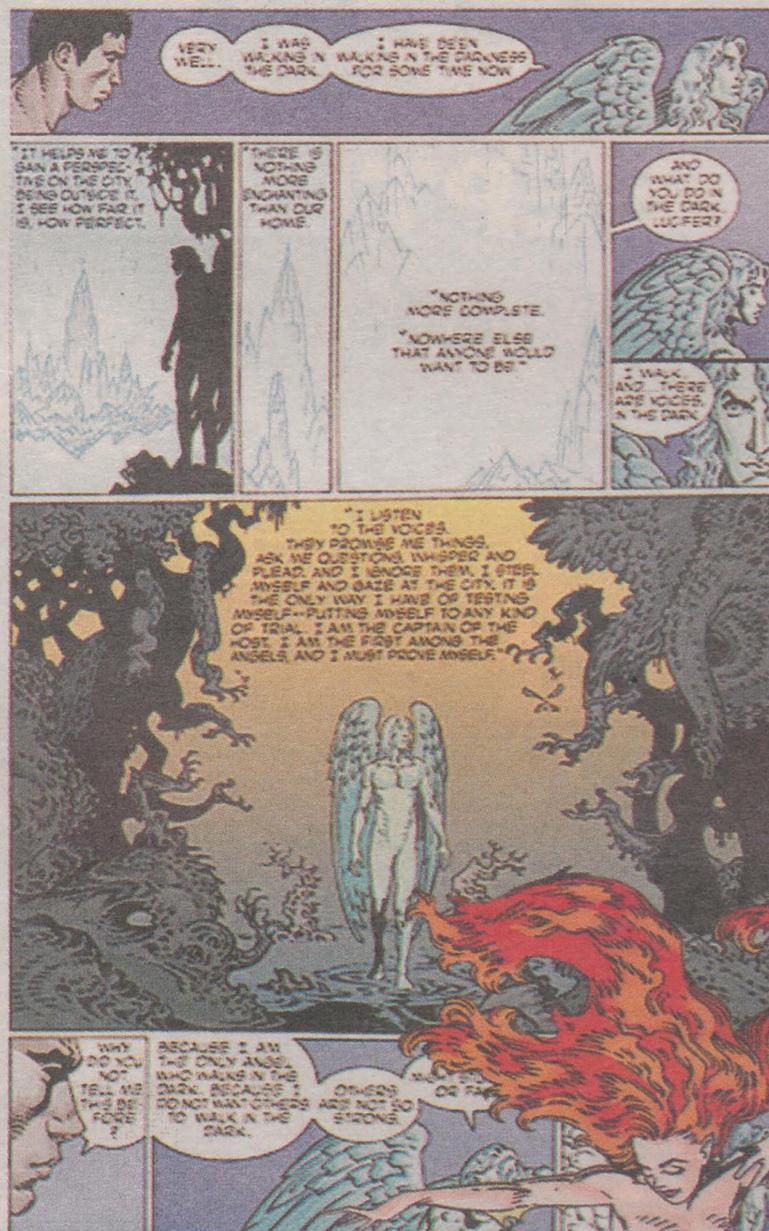
And this isn't the first opera adaptation for Russell. In the 1970s, he brought Wagner's "Parsifal" to the comic book page, and many followed during the next decades, including Wilde/Strauss' "Salome," Debussy's "Pelleas and Melisande," and Leoncavallo's "The Clowns."

So is he an opera queen then?

"I can't quite aspire to that level," he laughs. "But I've veered dangerously close over the years. About 10 or 15 years ago, I was much more into it than I am now. ... I was getting all the magazines and keeping up with people's careers and listening to the Metropolitan's Saturday afternoon broadcasts religiously, that sort of thing. But I really like opera and I'm always looking for good stories."

RUSSELL WAS RAISED IN A SMALL TOWN on the Ohio River, Wellsville to be exact, by a typical "Presbyterian Church-going family."

A comic collector and aspiring architect, he came across something as a child



Thanks to live models, P. Craig Russell's art offers a realistic approach to human — and heavenly — bodies.

Please see **COMICS** on **Page 15**

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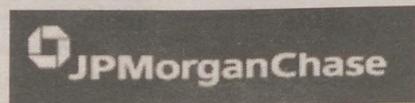
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Combining Commerce with Community

## out on the bayou

# Gay comic artist doesn't shy away from adult material

COMICS, from Page 13

that made him realize just about any interest could be put to paper.

"I remember being in a card shop, [and] in the magazine rack right beside the comics was a little book of drawings by Tom of Finland," he says. "And I remember looking at it and this old lady who ran the store came by and said, 'Little Russell, you shouldn't be looking at that, it's not for you.' I was really embarrassed but I can still see the picture in my head."

Russell's entry into the professional world of comics transpired while he was still in college, working on short horror stories for Marvel and its rather asinine "Antman" title. Gigs on "Dr. Strange" and "Killraven" followed soon thereafter. But working on these mainstream Marvel titles, while professionally beneficial, didn't allow Russell to flex his more ambitious artistic muscles.

Enter California's Eclipse and Star Reach imprints, which were "looking to do alternative books," Russell says.

While at Eclipse, Russell adapted several operas and started a solo anthology comic, "Night Music."

After parting with Eclipse in the 1980s, Russell began pitching his operas elsewhere, often working out situations where he would ink a mainstream project in exchange for being allowed to do his own.

This sort of bargaining is how the "Ring" series came to be at publisher Dark Horse.



Gay comic artist P. Craig Russell gets a helping paw from his feline companion.

"I would work on an act of 'Ring' and then ink a half-dozen issues of 'Star Wars,'" he says.

SETTING RUSSELL'S WORK APART FROM his peers' is an ability to convey the abstract — like spell-casting and moods — with dramatic flourishes recalling the work of ornate Scottish designer/architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Russell also knocks off

eerily accurate depictions of human and humanoid bodies.

In fact, he often utilizes models and posed photographs while realizing bodies, a concept sparked during childhood.

"In the neighborhood," he laughs, "a '50's physique magazine like 'Vim' or 'Vigor' ended up going around from kid to kid. It had these photos of naked muscle men in G-

strings and I thought that was about the most interesting thing I'd ever seen."

Today, Russell is a member of the GLA (Gay League of America), a national organization for queer comics fans, creators and professionals. And the comics industry is, according to Russell, "pretty cool" about queers. He's only heard of one instance of overt homophobia in his entire career.

"Socially it's a great field to be in," he says. "You meet a lot of people, go to conventions, have a lot of fun, set your own hours, and artistically it can be quite rewarding."

"Monetarily, it's a tightrope at times. It's sort of like acting: A lot of people have [Screen Actors Guild] cards, but not that many are working fulltime. But I'm lucky in that I've been able to do, 90 percent of the time, projects I've wanted to do," he says.

Like "tits-and-ass" books?

"You know, I'd love to ink the 'Witchblade' with big hooters if it was well-drawn," he admits with a laugh. "Then, when I get half the artwork back, I can sell it because there's always a bigger market for 'hooters' than 'pecs.'"



### For info

P. Craig Russell  
<http://lurid.com/pcr/index.html>

Gay League of America  
[www.gayleague.com](http://www.gayleague.com)

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## sports LEE DAVIS

Summertime in the Bayou City is filled with  
a variety of options for all levels of athletes



Members of the Houston Energy, the city's professional women's football team, participated in Pride Week activities, meeting fans at the June 23 Family & Youth Fun Day picnic at Hermann Park. For more information on the Energy, go to [www.houstonenergy-football.com](http://www.houstonenergy-football.com). (Photo by Dalton Dehart)

## Sports stay in full swing

### Absolute fault

My apologies to the Houston Tennis Club and thanks for reading my column. The club's schedule previously reported was correct except they do not play on Monday mornings at 9 a.m.

Meet them on Wednesday and Friday evenings from 7:30 to 9 p.m. If weekdays are out for you, join them for matches on Sundays from 9 a.m. until noon. For more information, contact the Houston Tennis Club at 713-692-2701 or log on to [houstontennisclub@aol.com](mailto:houstontennisclub@aol.com).

### Deep sea adventures

Call the Rainbow Fishing Club at 713-523-8381. Excursions on charter boats with everything provided, good fellowship, great fun — and perhaps the catch of the day — await you.

### Side pocket

The Houston area has great opportunities for those who like to play pool. The Independent Billiard League (IBL) can be contacted at <http://www.iblhouston.net>; the Greater Houston Pocket Billiards League at 713-863-8482; and the Houston Metropolitan Billiards League at 713-299-8969.

The main differences between the various leagues are rules, regulations and days/nights of play. Join the fun. Contact one or all of the leagues for membership information.

### Gay Softball World Series

This year's World Series is being held in Portland, Ore., from Aug. 18-25. Teams from all over the nation and Canada will join together for this yearly event. For those who aren't in the know, Houston's own Bill Sanson is NAGAAA commissioner.

Great things are in store for those of you who are able to take off to Portland in August. On Monday that week, the Miss Gay World Series Pageant will be crowning the winner. On Tuesday, Opening Ceremonies are planned. On Wednesday, a river cruise and a casino trip are two of the diversions awaiting you. Play begins on Wednesday with the finals and closing

ceremonies planned for Saturday.

The Montrose Softball League (MSL) is continuing work on a bid for the 2004 NAGAAA Softball World Series. Member cities from all over the U.S. and Canada vie for the opportunity of hosting the yearly event, drawing thousands of softballers from throughout North America. It seems that Houston and Dallas are the two cities making bids this year. The winner will be announced at the August board meetings.

If you would like to help volunteer your expertise, please contact the league at [www.montrosesoftballleague.com](http://www.montrosesoftballleague.com). This is a great chance for Houston to shine — first the Texans, then the Gay Softball World Series, and next, the Olympics! Come on, Houston, let's pull this one together for our community.

Reminder to all MSL members: Last weekend's games postponed because of rainy weather are rescheduled for Sunday, July 7. Same game time and schedule as before. Best of luck to those vying for positions to represent Houston in the Gay Softball World Series.

### Side out

The Lone Star Volleyball Association affords fun for players at all levels. Contact the association at 713-878-4629.

### Oh, horse pucky!

For all of you dudes and dudettes out there, don't forget the great State of Texas is home to one of the nation's greatest representatives in the International Gay Rodeo Association.

If you enjoy bare back, western saddles, cattle rustling, bull riding or any other type of rodeo event, contact the Texas Gay Rodeo Association at 281-873-0641, or write them at P. O. Box 130855, Houston, TX 77219-0585.

### Touchdown

The Houston Women's Flag Football League begins a new season. For more info, call 713-981-6753.

**dining** TRAYCE DISKIN

Authentic Mexican dishes served up in friendly atmosphere with service that pleases

**El Paraiso's tastes excel**

AS SOON AS YOU STEP INTO THE spacious dining room that is El Paraiso, it's a comfort — one glance at customers' plates tells you it's time for unfussy, authentic Mexican food.

For health-conscious eaters, that means the double-edged sword of fresh, flavorful ingredients with plenty of crispy, greasy tortillas, not to mention perhaps invisible but generous heapings of fat calories.

The atmosphere poses a similar dichotomy. Enjoy the casual diner ambience — including the bright crayola blue vinyl upholstery and flickering counter television playing talk shows and telenovelas — but beware the cigarette smoke that wafts in from its not-so-confined section. The subtle but stale air, however, is delightfully forgiven when festive mariachi, latino ballads, or country western hits blare randomly, and suddenly, from the worn-out looking jukebox against the back wall. Try to slip a crisp dollar into the slot and it will be promptly rejected — but the machine has a mind of its own, and soon enough a tune will puncture the silence as if Fonzie himself had slammed the thing with his magically cool fist.

The attentive and personal service also seems reminiscent of a time when dining out was a casual, neighborhood affair. The same relaxed and friendly servers who feed your tortilla chip addiction throughout the meal also quickly refill water glasses and cups of watery but piping-hot coffee.

NO MATTER HOW YOU CHOOSE YOUR meal, you're going to sacrifice the calories. Best to dive right in, then, and order anything with guacamole or avocado. The Guacamole Salad (\$3.95 large/\$2.95 small) features the incredibly fresh, pulpy mixture with a zing of lemon juice and chili, garnished with ripe, juicy tomatoes and strips of crisp, crunchy iceberg lettuce.

Most lunch platters come with a side of the salad or a scoop of the chunky guacamole, but if not, it's worth ordering it as a side. The Enchiladas Tex-Mex (\$5.95) "Texify" this staple dish by, what else, smothering the well-baked tortillas with thick, southern gravy and waxy cheddar cheese. Although Southern food lovers may find it comforting, or even tasty, one Texas-raised friend took a bite and cringed.

Stick with the Enchiladas Mexicanas (\$6.75), though, and be thankful for the customary (and pleasantly non-greasy) white Oaxaca cheese and smoky red sauce that soaks right into the well-seasoned strips of chicken or beef. Vegetarians can order these sin carne, of course, and if an occasional dose of lard doesn't offend your sensibilities, enjoy the accompanying beans and rice.

The Quesadillas (\$6.95) are also a wise

choice for vegetarians. The three soft flour tortillas may be over-stuffed with cheese, but they are toasty and warm, and perfect for spreading a slab of guacamole on. Another veggie alternative is the Entomatadas (\$5.95), enchiladas that use a marinara-like tomato sauce instead of the chile version. While it takes a bit of getting used to, the ripe tomatoes with traces of oregano and parsley make an inspired change.

The Flautas (\$6.95) offer similarly tasty stuffing, but the texture of the tortillas themselves is more burnt than crispy. Tacos Al Carbon (\$6.95) are served with bean soup — a thick, creamy blend of black beans, chili, and something rather citrusy, perhaps a splash of orange juice? The soups themselves (\$5.95) are hearty and fulfill diner expectations in that stick-to-your-ribs tradition.

The Menudo, or beef tripe, is a little salty, and meat lovers may fare better with the Caldo de Res, a beef stock broth steaming with potatoes, peppers, and a slab of trimmed beef. The Caldo de Pollo (\$5.95) rivals any matzoh ball concoction, especially if you spoon in a helping of the accompanying rice.

Along with dinner combination plates of chalupas, tamales, tacos, enchiladas, and you name it (\$5.95), (and a surprisingly bland homemade mole sauce), El Paraiso serves a complete Mexican breakfast, with deceptively small but over-stuffed breakfast tacos for \$1.25 each.

No matter what the meal, however, be sure to take advantage of a juicy tamarindo or horchata (\$1), respectively, the deliciously ripe tamarind juice and nutmeg flavored milk drinks. Across the border, we U.S. residents don't have the stomachs to drink these favorites safely. Thankfully, El Paraiso brings us as close as we can come to the authentic Mexican diner experience.

**El Paraiso Mexican Restaurant**

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## SATURDAY, JULY 6

**Rummage-A-Rama.** Sale hosted first Saturday of each month to benefit AIDS Housing Coalition Houston. 202 Tuam Ave. 713-521-1613.

## EVERY SATURDAY

**All-Spanish Worship Service/Noche Espirtual.** 6 p.m. Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2026 W. 11th. 713-303-3409 or 713-861-9149.**After Hours.** KPFT 90.1 FM. 1 a.m.-4 a.m.**Dignity mass.** 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.**Free HIV Testing.** Montrose Clinic. 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Viviana's. 713-830-3000.**Gay & Lesbian Breakfast Club.** 9:30 a.m. 281-437-0636.**Houston Wrestling Club.** Practice. 1:30 p.m. 713-453-7406.**Q-Patrol.** Volunteers walk the streets to help prevent hate crimes. 9:30 p.m. Convene at community center. 713-528-SAFE. E-mail: qpatrolinc@aol.com**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.** Rosary 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.**Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center.** Drop-in, noon-4 p.m. • Bi-Net Houston monthly party and movie, 7:30 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlgcc.org.

## SUNDAY, JULY 7

**PFLAG-Houston.** General meeting. 2 p.m. Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas. 713-46P-FLAG.

## EVERY SUNDAY

**Bering Memorial United Methodist Church.** Services at 8:30 & 10:50 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 713-526-1017.  
**Community Gospel.** Service at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. Sunday School for children 10 a.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.**Covenant Church, Ecumenical, Liberal Baptist.** Service 9:30 a.m. & education hour 11 a.m. 713-668-8830.**Emerson Unitarian Church.** Adult education, 10 a.m. Service, 11 a.m. Lunch at noon. www.emersonhou.org.**First Congregational Church (Memorial).** Service at 10 a.m. Christian Education, 11:30 a.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston.org.**First Unitarian Universalist Church.** Services at 9:30 & 11:30 a.m. Brunch at 10:30 a.m. 713-526-5200. church@firstuu.org.**Free HIV Testing.** Montrose Clinic. 9 p.m.-midnight at Club Inergy. 713-830-3000.**Gay Catholics of St. Anne's-Houston.** 5 p.m. worship service. Dinner and social. alexcam@wt.net. 713-623-0930.**GLOBAL.** Gay Lesbian Or Bisexual Alliance. University of Houston GLBT student group meeting. 2 p.m. at the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.uh.edu/~global. E-mail: global@bayou.uh.edu.**Grace Lutheran Church.** Sunday school for all ages 9 a.m. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-528-3269.**Houston Tennis Club.** 9 a.m.-noon. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com**Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church.** 10 a.m. service. 3333 Fannin, Suite 106. 713-528-6756.**Resurrection MCC.** Services, 9 and 11 a.m. Children and Youth Sunday School, 10 a.m. Children's service, 11 a.m. 713-861-9149.**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.** Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 7:45 a.m.; Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 8:55 a.m.; Education hour, 10 a.m.; Choral Eucharist, 11 a.m. 713-528-6665.**Sunday Brunch.** For HIV-positive men. 11 a.m. Rivals, 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, 9:45 a.m. Service, 11 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 Gay & Lesbian Community Center.** Drop-in, 2-5 p.m. • STAG (Some Transgenders Are Guys) hosts Post-July 4th Potluck Barbeque, 2 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlgcc.org.

## MONDAY, JULY 8

**Classic Chassis Car Club.** Houston group's board meeting. 713-797-8615. www.ClassicChassisCarClub.org.

## EVERY MONDAY

**Free HIV Testing.** Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m.-midnight. Keys West. 713-830-3000.**Frost Eye Clinic.** Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.**Gay Fathers/Fathers First.** Support group. 8-9:30 p.m. Grace Lutheran Church. Tom, 713-726-8736. www.geocities.com/gaydadshouston/**Grief & Divorce Support Groups.** 7 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, ext. 208.**Kolbe Project.** Eucharist 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.**Queer Voices Radio Show.** 8-10 p.m. KPFT 90.1.**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • HEAT (Houston Employees Affinity Team) meeting, 6:30 p.m. • Human Rights Campaign PAC, 7 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlgcc.org.

## TUESDAY, JULY 9

**PFLAG-Houston.** Meeting. 713-867-9020.

## EVERY TUESDAY

**Bering Support Network.** Lunch Bunch Gang, 11 a.m. 713-526-1017.**Free HIV Testing.** Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m.-midnight. Club Houston. 713-830-3000.**Gay youth.** New program for young gay males, ages 18-29. 7 p.m. 614 Avondale. 713-533-9786.**Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous.** Support group. 7 p.m.**Houston Women's Rugby Team.** No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.**Rainbow Ranglers.** Free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. No partner needed. Beginner 2 Step, Waltz, Shuffle & Swing. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Lesbian Coming Out Group, 7 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlgcc.org.

## WEDNESDAY, JULY 10

**Houston Area Bears.** Dine and meeting at Biba's on West Gray. 713-867-9123. www.HoustonAreaBears.com.

## EVERY WEDNESDAY

**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.** Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas St. OraSure method. Call for appointment. Sharon, 713-873-4157.**Free HIV Testing.** Montrose Clinic. 4-8 p.m. at Mary's; 9 p.m.-midnight at Ripcord; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at EJ's; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at Midtowne Spa. 713-830-3000.**Houston Pride Band.** Open rehearsal. 1307 Yale. 713-528-4379.**Houston Tennis Club.** 7:00-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com**Lesbian Literature Discussion Group.** 7 p.m. Meets every other Wednesday. 713-383-6738.**Spiritual Uplift service.** 7 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Free HIV testing, counseling, 6-9 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlgcc.org.

## THURSDAY, JULY 11

**Lesbian & Gay Immigration Rights Task Force-Houston.** 8 p.m. meeting. Chris, 713-426-3128. E-mail: lgirtf-houston@egroups.com.

## EVERY THURSDAY

**BiNet Houston.** Group for bisexuals; everyone welcome. 7:30 p.m. Hobbit Café, 2240 Portsmouth. www.flash.net/~bihouse. 713-467-4380.**Community Gospel.** Service. 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235. www.communitygospel.org.**Free HIV Testing.** Montrose Clinic. 4-8 p.m. at The Outpost; 8 p.m.-midnight at Brazos River Bottom and Cousins; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at Toyz Disco. 713-830-3000.**Free Art Classes.** By Kermit Eisenhut for HIV+ individuals. 1-4 p.m. Lunch provided. 713-523-9530.**FrontRunners.** Running club. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021. Web site: http://home.swbell.net/larathon/houfr.htm. E-mail: larathon@swbell.net.**GLOBAL.** Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual Alliance at the University of Houston-Central Campus. Weekly meeting, 6 p.m. e-mail: nguyen0023@hotmail.com.**Hep C Recovery.** Support group. 6:30 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.**Houston Women's Rugby Team.** No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.**Lambda Skating Club.** 8 p.m. Tradewinds. Skating Rink. www.lambdaroll.org. 713-410-7215.**Rainbow Ranglers.** Free C&W dance lessons. No partner required. Brazos River Bottom. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.**Spanish Charla Conversation Group.** Café Agora, 7 p.m. E-mail charlahouston@msn.com. 713-416-7203.**Women's Clinic.** Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Mood Disorders Support Group, 6:30 p.m. • Community Center volunteers meeting, 7 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlgcc.org.

## FRIDAY, JULY 12

**Houston Area Bears.** Movie night, "Men in Black II." 713-867-9123. www.HoustonAreaBears.com.**Jump Start.** Group by Bering Support Network for GLBT people living with disabling conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis, Cerebral Palsy, amputations and head trauma. Meets the second and fourth Friday of the month. 11 a.m. Facilitator: Ken McLeod. 713-526-1017, ext. 208.

## EVERY FRIDAY

**Free HIV Testing.** Montrose Clinic. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. at The Meatrack; 10 p.m.-1 a.m. at EJ's and at Midtowne Spa. 713-830-3000.**Free HIV Testing.** Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas St. OraSure method. Call for appointment. Sharon, 713-873-4157.**Freelance Art Classes.** By Kermit Eisenhut for HIV+ individuals. 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Light breakfast provided. 713-523-9530.**Frost Eye Clinic.** Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.**Govinda Yoga Club.** Free yoga classes at 3115 West Loop South, No. 21. 713-439-0455.**Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) Meeting.** 713-942-7002.**Houston Tennis Club.** 7:00-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub.org**Kolbe Project.** Morning prayer, 10 a.m. 713-861-1800.**Mishpachal Alizim.** GLBT Jewish congregation. Sabbath services at 8 p.m. on the second Friday of each month at Baby Barnabys, 602 Fairview. Monthly study groups with Congregation Beth Israel, 5600 North Braeswood. Mishpachal Alizim, P.O. Box 980136, Houston, TX 77098. 866-841-9139, ext. 1834.**Q-Patrol.** Volunteers walk the streets to help prevent hate crimes. 9:30 p.m. Convene at community center. 713-528-SAFE. E-mail: qpatrolinc@aol.com**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Women's Game Night, 7 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818. www.hlgcc.org.

## VOLUNTEER/SELF-HELP

**Gay & Lesbian Help Line.** For gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. Staffed by volunteers of all ages. 6-11 p.m. Monday-Friday, 5-10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. 888-340-GLBT.**Gay & Lesbian Switchboard Houston.** Volunteers offer a friendly ear to callers in need of information, nonjudgmental support, crisis intervention and referral services, emergency shelter and advocacy services to crime survivors who may need someone to accompany them to a hospital for medical attention or assistance in filing a police report. 713-529-3211.**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Volunteers perform a variety of critical tasks which include staffing the information desk during drop-in hours; helping with Center programming and events; working on community outreach efforts, fund-raising and publicity. Card players, writers and artists in particular are needed. 713-524-3818.**Peer Listening Line.** Youth only. Staffed by GLBT youth for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. 5-10 p.m. Monday-Friday. 800-399-PEER.

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

# appts

a weekly guide to arts & entertainment activities for gay Houstonians

## SPECIAL SUNDAY, JULY 7

PFLAG Houston hosts its general meeting for July and features the winners of the scholarship awards granted through the PFLAG/HATCH Youth Scholarship Foundation for 2002. 2-4:30 p.m. Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas at San Jacinto. 713-46P-FLAG. <http://pflaghouston.org/meetings.htm>.

## SUNDAY, JULY 7

STAG (Some Transgenders Are Guys) presents a post-Fourth of July potluck barbeque. Cost: \$5 worth of food or supplies. 2-6 p.m. Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. Troy Ham: [troy-61@webtv.net](mailto:troy-61@webtv.net).

## TUESDAY, JULY 9

"Say It Loud: I'm Black and I'm Proud" is a forum inspired by the recent National Gay & Lesbian Task Force study on gay African Americans. Co-hosted by the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, and co-sponsored by NGLTF and the Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation. 5:30 p.m. Texas Southern University campus. The Center, 713-524-3818. Watkins Memorial Foundation, 713-988-4900.

## FILM FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, JULY 5-6

"The Swamp," is part of the Latin American Film Festival. The L.A. Times calls the movie "a subtle yet acute observation of upper-middle-class decay set at a country estate during a hot and humid February. Indolence, self-absorption, sexual longing, and overlooked youngsters intermingle to create a sense of foreboding." 7 p.m. Tickets: \$6. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Caroline Wiess Law Building, corner of Main Street and Bissonnet/Binz. 713-639-7515. [www.mfah.org](http://www.mfah.org).

## JULY 5-11

"The Night of the Hunter," directed by Charles Laughton, is known as an underrated treasure of murder and greed. The flick features Robert Mitchum as "Preacher" Harry Powell, a psychopathic murderer bent on finding the ill-gained \$10,000 his newly executed cellmate has hidden away. 7:30 p.m. Friday through Thursday, plus 9:30 p.m. Saturday and 5:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets: \$6. Rice Cinema, Rice University Campus, Entrance No. 8, University Boulevard and Stockton Drive. 713-348-4853. [www.ruf.rice.edu/~cinema](http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~cinema).

## GALLERIES ONGOING

Photographer David Lewis will exhibit his collection of photographs at Paulie's Restaurant, 1834 Westheimer, through the end of July. This collection of photographs explores images from China and Europe, as well as close to home in Southern cities like New Orleans and Houston.

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

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

## MUSIC SATURDAY, JULY 6

"Pops Concert" showcases the Houston Symphony with Michael McDonald. Tickets: \$15 and up. 8 p.m. Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, 2005 Lake Robbins Drive. 281-364-3010. <http://pavilion.woodlandscenter.org>.

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**Houston Classifieds deadline is Monday at 11 a.m.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ASTROWORLD SEASON PASS

Looking for GLBT Astroworld Season Pass holders for non-organized fun in the sun. Call Jeff: 832-715-9592.

### RFA "Recovery from Food Addiction"

A Twelve Step Program GLBT/Straight - Open to ALL Thursdays, 12-noon to 1-pm St. Stephen's Episcopal Church 1805 W. Alabama (Woodhead @ W. Alabama) RFA 713-673-2848 www.geocities.com/rfa77235/ E-mail: rfaworldservice@aol.com

REWARD! for Information Leading to the Arrest of the Persons burglarizing the vehicle and/or the return of the Business-Day-Planner with contents intact, of "Terry's Home Services." Pager: 713-200-3125.

### FOOD EMERGENCY

### HOU. HUMANE SOCIETY

The cupboards are bare at HHS. They need puppy and kitten food • Any kind • Any quantity • Drop donations at 14700 Alameda Rd. or send monetary donations to:

Houston Humane Society • PO BOX 450428 • Houston, Texas 77245-0528 • For information, call 713-434-5555.

### DAY SHELTER

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### MR. PRIME CHOICE

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### EMPLOYMENT

### STAGES THEATRE

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### JOIN OUR HOME HEALTHCARE FAMILY

Needed for Field - RN/PT. Case Managers with Home Health Experience. Call Fabian 713-944-0500. Fax resume to: 713-944-0600.

Resurrection MCC Seeks Interim Gospel Ensemble Director. Previous musical direction, will work with pianist/arranger, knowledge of African-American worship music and styling. Part-time position. Contact: Mark Unbehagen - 713-861-9149 ext. 110.

### ARE YOU THAT SPECIAL NURSE?

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14				15				16					
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67						68		69					
70						71				72			
73						74				75			

### "Join the Billie Club"

#### Across

- Margaret Cho's "All-American \_\_\_\_"
- Trees on Wes Craven's street?
- Paul Monette's partner Horwitz
- "Aida" solo
- Site of a leaning erection
- Cara of "Fame"
- With 21-Across, Movie about Holiday
- Possible format for Robert Giard
- Nice buns, e.g.?
- See 17-Across
- What an athletic supporter might do?
- "I Ask the Impossible" poet Castillo
- Part of PMS
- It tops a queen
- Poem of Sappho
- Etheridge's "\_\_\_\_ Little Secret"
- With 47-Across, song sung and written by Holiday
- Day of many Hudson flicks
- Seward or Klumpke
- Vanilla, in the sack
- Double affirmative, to a Salamanca sissy
- Prepare to shoot off again
- See 33-Across
- Showing excitement
- Queer \_\_\_\_ three-dollar bill
- "I can \_\_\_\_ Daniel waving goodbye"

- 3-pointers to Kopay
- Edvard Grieg's land (abbr.)
- Billy Masters' specialty
- Cole Porter song sung by Holiday
- Steinem or Gaynor
- Bryant, but not Bear
- She played Holiday in 17-Across
- Alexander, with "the"
- "Vogue" competitor
- Hit on the head
- Beau chaser
- It comes before 69
- Med. care providers

#### Down

- Human Rights Campaign fund-raiser, e.g.
- Concerns of gfn.com
- Relieves oneself of crabs
- Put one on top of the other
- "Das Boob" and "Ben? Her?" on "Will & Grace"
- Vietnam War Memorial designer Maya
- Rank L. Matlovich never achieved
- Walk like a man in drag
- Author Arthur
- Like phone sex, in a way
- Split from between the sheets
- Penetrate
- Witherspoon of "Legally Blonde"
- Seat at the Stonewall Inn
- Brian who collaborated with Bowie
- HIV exam, e.g.
- It makes gelatin get hard
- Tutti-frutti holder
- First name among lesbian poets
- \_\_\_\_ Hashanah (holiday at Beth Chayim Chadashim)
- Shakespeare, for one
- Posed for Berenice Abbott
- Famous Queens' Park
- Lesbos, for one
- "West \_\_\_\_ Story"
- The Barénaked Ladies' "If \_\_\_\_ a Million Dollars"
- Edith Head, e.g.
- Pickup at an adult bookstore
- Gugino of "Jaded"
- Utterance at a gay rodeo
- Groups in "The Lion King"
- Fannie of "Fried Green Tomatoes"
- Gay men's lifestyle magazine
- Parking places
- Trilogy song type
- RBI to Glenn Burke
- Pinball wizard foul
- Jodie Foster's "Panic \_\_\_\_"
- Dickinson's "There \_\_\_\_ frigate like a book"
- Violates a certain military rule
- Chicken-king link

Answers on Page 21



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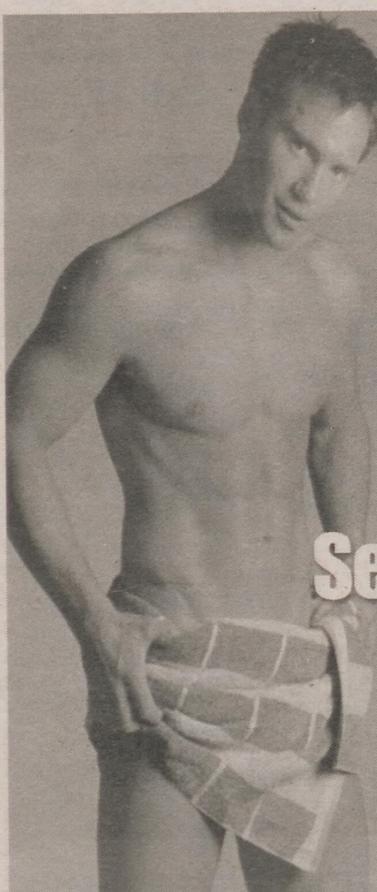


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## astrology JILL DEARMAN



## My Stars!

July 5 - 11

**ARIES (March 21 to April 20)**

This is a good time for you to push yourself emotionally. Deal with old issues and get unstuck, darling. Venus in your house of creativity makes you feel especially artistic and inspired. Another Aries makes beautiful music with you.

**TAURUS (April 21 to May 20)**

You are shooting yourself in the foot every time you seek out an ex-lover who tortured you in the past and will only torture you again. Move out of the past, sweetie. A Gemini will pull you into a new way of life.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 21)**

Mercury in your money sector is working for you, darling. Your wit and ability to translate complex ideas to the common man are priceless. But you can charge high prices for them, nevertheless! A Pisces is lucky for you now.

**CANCER (June 22 to July 22)**

The new moon on July 10 falls in your sign, darling, which means that you can do anything you put your mind to (within reason, sweetie). Motivation is new. Tap into your (very) latent ambition and optimism. A Pisces brings out your soulful side.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)**

The new moon on July 10 falls in your mystical 12th house. Get more involved in a spiritual pursuit that nurtures you, darling. Your shallow, materialistic side has grown dreary. A Capricorn is interested in the inner you as well as the outer you.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)**

Stop acting as if the world is against you, baby. You're going through one of your paranoid phases. It's scary to watch. Transform your bitterness and fears into reasons to work harder and live larger. A Capricorn wants you to stop hiding.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)**

The new moon on July 10 falls at the top of your chart, which means that you need to get your career together, darling. It's time to do your homework and focus on presentation skills. A Cancer can help you to find the key to your success.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)**

Don't get into any catfights this week, sweetie. You're better off channeling that bitchy energy into work or spiritual pursuits. I hate it when you get petty. A Taurus brings out the best in you.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)**

You're getting sexier every day this summer, but you shouldn't be so smug about it! Pluto retrograde is still trying to humble you. And if you don't do some heavy emotional work on yourself, you're going to lose your sex appeal. Now get to it, doll! A Libra wants a transformed and new you.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)**

You are taking a friend's craziness much too personally, sweetie. Worry about your own karma and don't get overly involved in others' plots and dramas. A Virgo can help you to move your life in a more constructive direction.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)**

The new moon on July 10 falls in your house of creativity. It's time to start a new project, darling. Inspiration comes hard and fast and furious — seize the day! You can break new ground in a genre or medium you've never worked in before. A Sag can help you.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)**

Alright already with the whining and complaining. A tough-love attitude towards yourself is called for. Relationships need work right now, but once you apply yourself you'll get great results. You can train a Taurus to do anything for you!

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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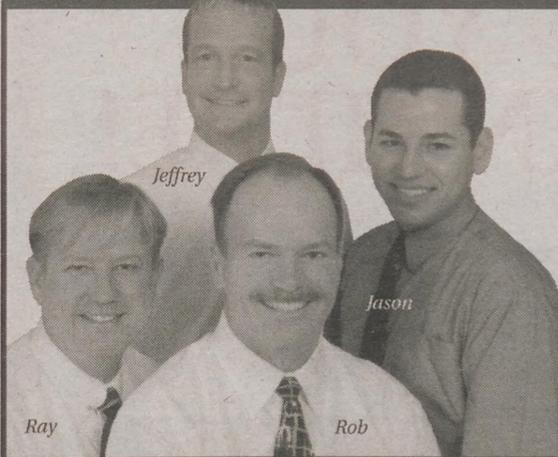
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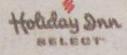
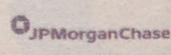
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