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Still laughing
Mario Cantone is hot off the success of his Tony nominated one-man show.
Page 13

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JANUARY 20, 2006

ARREST: Outspoken rights opponent allegedly propositioned policeman. Page 4



MAKING HISTORY: First female out Speaker of NY City Council. Page 6



GAY SUPPORT: Boycott of companies opposing discrimination. Page 8



Felicity Hoffman, best known for her role on television's 'Desperate Housewives,' received a Golden Globe Award on Jan. 16 for her portrayal of Bree, a transgender woman, in the film 'Transamerica.' for her work. (Photo courtesy of NBC Entertainment/Chris Haston)

And the winner is...

Gay and transgender-themed movies were big winners at the Golden Globes, including 'Transamerica,' 'Capote' and 'Brokeback Mountain,' which was nominated for seven awards and took home four.

Felicity Huffman, who scored the best actress award in a dramatic film for her performance in "Transamerica," called attention to discrimination against transgender people in her acceptance speech.

"I know as actors our job is usually to shed our skin," she said. "But I think as people our job is to become who we really are, and so I would like to salute the men and women who brave ostracism, alienation and a life lived on the margins to become who they really are."

See story, Page 19



Paul Scott, who has been director of the Resource Center of Dallas, will take over March 6 as new executive director of Equality Texas.

Paul Scott named Equality Texas executive director

By ERIC ERVIN

Paul E. Scott, who has headed the Resource Center of Dallas for almost six years, was named the new executive director of Equality Texas by the organization's board of directors Tuesday.

"We are thrilled that Paul has decided to join our organization and we believe we have found in Paul someone with the skills and experience to take our organization to the next level," Jill Ireland, co-chair of the board of directors, said in a press release.

The board selected Scott last week to serve as executive director for Equality Texas, formerly the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, and the Equality Texas Foundation, which used to be

Please see SCOTT, on Page 7



news
Vote on Supreme Court nominee Alito nears and gay rights groups say he would be an ally.
PAGE 5

dish
Star Jones Reynolds once again has to go publicly to denounce rumors that her husband is gay.
PAGE 18



i am ready.



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get the latest breaking news and opinion, as well as gay-related politics, entertainment and trends.



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local news briefs

Musical duo to hold another concert to benefit Bering Omega

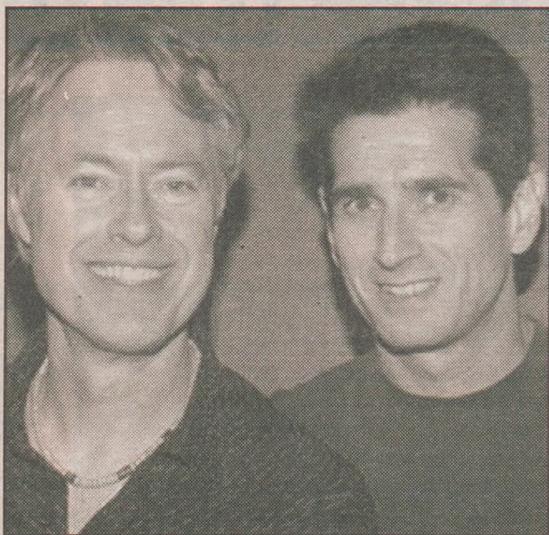
The musical duo of Atwood and Comeaux, famous on the Houston nightclub scene in the late 1980s and early 1990s, will hold another concert to benefit Bering Omega Community Services. The show is scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 29, at Bunch & Shoemaker, 7026 Old Katy Road, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

After a 10-year hiatus, the musical group, which consists of Jerry Atwood and Ricky Comeaux, reunited last year for a performance at the Diana Awards Show in May and held two more official reunion concerts in June. Proceeds from the events last year were donated to the local nonprofit organization.

"We're so excited that Atwood and Comeaux and friends are back to help Bering Omega again," said Fiona Dawson, director of resource development for the organization.

During the event, Bunch & Shoemaker will offer special discounts of 40 percent off regular price for every item in the furniture store. Ten percent of the proceeds raised for the event will be donated to Bering Omega.

Tickets for the event are \$50 each and include hors d'oeuvres and refreshments. For more information, contact Dawson at 713-524-9304, extension 101, or fdawson@beringomega.org.



Jerry Atwood (left) and Ricky Comeaux are once again lending their musical talent to help raise money for Bering Omega Community Services.

Montrose Softball League seeks artists to design event logo

Officials with the Montrose Softball League are looking for artists to create a logo for the group's 2006 Lone Star Classic, which takes place May 27-28.

A committee is holding a contest for members and non-members to create the new logo, which will be displayed on all advertising, marketing materials and apparel for the event over the Memorial Day weekend.

Contestants should send their designs in JPG or TIFF format to D. Metz, tournament director, at lsc@montrosesoftballleague.com. All entries must be received no later than Feb. 6.

The winner will be selected later in the week following the deadline, and will be awarded a \$100 gift card to Sports Authority (formally Oshman's Sports & Outdoors) and be recognized at the tournament awards ceremony.

For more information, visit www.montrosesoftballleague.com.

Applications now being accepted for PFLAG scholarships

The Houston chapter of Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays is accepting applications for the organization's 2006 National Scholarships Program.

The national PFLAG scholarships are restricted to graduating high schools seniors with a minimum GPA of 3.0 who will be attending two- or four-year colleges for the first time in the fall of 2006. They may self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, or as allies and supporters of these individuals.

While parental consent to the sub-

The Houston Montrose Softball League

mission of an application to the PFLAG National Scholarships Program is desirable, it is not a requirement of the program. Special consideration is given to students in need, and to students who are living independently of their parents.

Dependent upon the laws in their state of residency or the location of the college they will be attending, students that are ineligible for federal funding may apply to the program for support. Seniors who graduated in 2005 and took a year off before entering higher education are also eligible to apply.

The 2006 program is not open to returning students or graduate students.

Details of the program are available on the scholarships page on the organization's website, www.pflag.org. All scholarships materials can be downloaded as a PDF file. Hard copies of the scholarships packet will be mailed out to all chapters.

Chapters may copy the forms and instructional materials for distribution to local high schools' college aid officers from the materials enclosed in the packets or download them from the website. Alternatively, students may obtain an application packet by sending a request to the "2006 National Scholarships Program" at the national office.

The closing date for applications is Feb. 14. Awards will be announced by April 15, just in time for high school awards ceremonies.

For more information, visit pflaghouston.org or call 713-467-3524.



local news

Church disaffiliated from Baptist Convention for welcoming gays

Board chair said church can't affirm those 'caught in sin'

By ERIC ERVIN

Pastor Randy Haney of Faith Harbour Church in nearby Baytown said he allowed an upstart group that welcomes gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals to use his church's facility as a personal favor to a friend.

Haney's congregation welcomes everyone, and did not object to his decision, he said.

"This didn't involve the church in any way," Haney said. "This is me, Randy Haney, not Faith Harbour."

But as a result of Haney's friendly deed, Faith Harbour was disaffiliated this week from the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention by the religious organization's executive board. Haney said Thursday that officials with the convention have not yet told him about their decision to remove his church.

"I found out about it from a friend and read the article [on the Baptist Press website]," Haney said.

An official with the convention's public relations department did not return a call seeking comment by press time.

According to the Baptist Press, the convention's executive board voted unanimously Tuesday to disaffiliate the church in Baytown, which is located east of Houston about 30 minutes from downtown. Haney, who is a full-time geography teacher, said he allowed his friend's group Eklektos to use the church's storefront facility to meet.

"We both have a passion of bringing Christ to people who don't know [about him]," said Wendy Bailey, Eklektos founder.

Safe place to learn about God

Bailey, who is an ordained Presbyterian minister, said she is not sure if the group will evolve into a full-fledged church, or become a traveling ministry. She said her goal is to offer a safe place for gay people to learn about God.

"This community of Christians is especially called to welcome and affirm people who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgendered," Eklektos' website states.

"We are a diverse group of disciples — diverse in age, race, gender, ideology and sexual orientation. We are united in Christ and in the affirmation that all people are loved and called by Christ to be His disciples and to be a part of His healing/reconciling work in the world."

Haney said he doesn't agree with homosexuality, but welcomes everyone into his church. He said the small church

has a congregation of around 50, with an average of about 30 attending services each week.

"I make no bones, I think homosexuality is wrong," he said. "But I'm not going to cast someone out just because I don't believe in it. If we as churches are not open to welcome everyone, then who will?"

On Dec. 20, Haney met with the convention's credentials committee and two staff members for almost two hours. In a summary of the meeting, church officials tried to get Haney to stop allowing the group to use his facility, citing church bylaws, according to the Baptist Press report.

"One cannot be presenting the life-changing Gospel to homosexuals and at the same time affirm the lifestyle," Joe Stewart, board chair and pastor of First Baptist Church of Littlefield, told the convention news service. "When we sign an agreement to be part of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, we have those theological parameters that we live and abide through and that is part of what makes us unique and distinct."

Church guidelines

Stewart said the board followed church and biblical guidelines, referring to Matthew 18 in the Bible. Article III of the church's constitution states that "among churches not in cooperation with the Convention are churches which act to affirm, approve, or endorse homosexual behavior."

"The door is still open for them to reconcile if they will just agree to abide by the theological parameters of the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention," Stewart told the Baptist Press. "Although we want to reach out to people caught in sin, at the same time we can't affirm the lifestyle."

Haney, who is founding pastor of Faith Harbour, said that the nearly four-year-old church is still affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. He said he doesn't expect that group to disaffiliate itself from his church.

The pastor believes the series of events unfolded due to a vendetta.

"It's all based on a woman who says she wants to harm Faith Harbour," Haney said.

"It always amazes me how much people hate those who try to get out of the box and take the message of Jesus Christ to those who are considered unclean," he wrote on the church's internet blog. "Now that I think about it, that was part of what the Jews hated about Jesus."

"How dare we defile the sanctuary by inviting sinners to come and be a part of hearing the message of Christ. Doesn't the Bible make it plain and clear that we are all sinners? Isn't our righteousness only found in Christ and him alone?"

The Southern Baptist of Texas Convention includes more than 1,700 churches across the state.

national news

Anti-gay pastor resigns posts after arrest

Southern Baptist leader accused of soliciting male police officer

By DYANA BAGBY

An Oklahoma preacher who vehemently opposed gay rights stepped down from his congregation and the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Convention after being arrested this month for allegedly asking an undercover male police officer for oral sex.

Lonnie Latham, 60, served as senior pastor of South Tulsa Baptist Church until he left the post following his arrest. He is an outspoken critic of same-sex marriage who urged gays to turn away from their "sinful, destructive lifestyle."

But Latham was arrested Jan. 3 outside of a gay hotel and charged by the Oklahoma City district attorney with one act of offering to engage in an act of lewdness, a misdemeanor.

Latham faces up to one year in jail and a \$2,500 fine if convicted. He was released on \$500 bail on Jan. 4. After being released, Latham told reporters he was set up and was in the area "pastoring to police," the Associated Press reported.

This week, Latham's attorney, Mack Martin of Oklahoma City, told Southern Voice he doesn't believe what Latham is accused of is actually a crime.

"It's like saying you're arrested for crossing the street — so what?" Martin said. "This is a major First Amendment issue."

Martin added he believes media atten-

tion to the case pressured the district attorney into charging Latham, who is scheduled to be arraigned in early February.

But Oklahoma City District Attorney Wes Lane stands by the charge against Latham.

"The law in Oklahoma prohibits an individual from soliciting another to engage in what is considered a lewd act regardless of whether money is sought for or exchanged," Lane said in a statement.

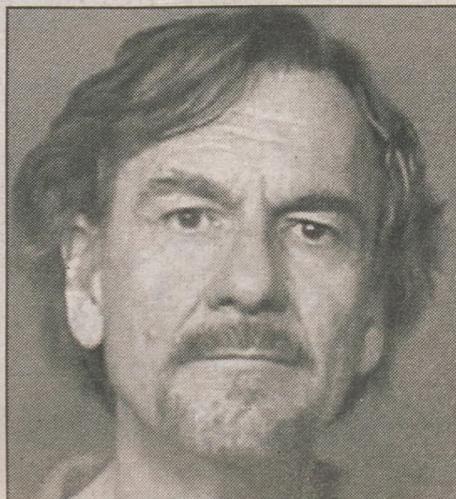
Looking to 'have some fun'

On Jan. 3 at about 10 p.m., an undercover police officer said he was followed in his car by Latham, who pulled up alongside him in a parking lot, said he was looking to "have some fun" and asked him to go to his room at the Holiday Inn Express for oral sex, according to the police report filed by the Oklahoma City Police Department.

"Police were working undercover in the area in response to citizen complaints of people flagging down cars and making proposals for sex," said Capt. Jeffrey Becker, a spokesperson for the department.

Latham was arrested in the parking lot of the Habana Inn, which touts itself as the "Southwest's Largest Gay Resort Hotel" on its website.

Oklahoma law defines lewdness as "any lascivious, lustful or licentious conduct; the giving or receiving of the body for indiscriminate sexual intercourse, fellatio, cunnilingus, masturbation, anal intercourse, or lascivious, lustful or licentious conduct with any person not his or her spouse; or any act in furtherance of such conduct or any appointment or engagement for prostitution."



Baptist preacher Lonnie Latham was arrested Jan. 3 for allegedly asking an undercover male Oklahoma City police officer for oral sex. (Photo by AP)

'Hypocrisy of a messenger'

The Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's second largest Christian denomination, is well-known for its stands against gay rights, including an eight-year boycott against the Walt Disney Co. for offering domestic partner benefits.

Latham had served as the Oklahoma representative on the SBC's executive committee since 2004. He also served as a board member and recording secretary for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

In a Jan. 5 resignation letter to the BGC, posted on the group's website, Latham cited "personal reasons" for stepping down from his position.

Latham also voluntarily resigned from his leadership position in the Southern Baptist Convention days after his arrest,

according to Kenyn Cureton, SBC vice president for convention relations.

Cureton initially told reporters that the SBC would not ask Latham to resign and instead said voluntary resignations are typical when "moral failures" occur.

The SBC holds national meetings in September and February. Had Latham not resigned voluntarily, he likely would have been asked to quit after the upcoming February meeting, Cureton told Southern Voice this week.

"His resignation was entirely voluntarily so it would not have to come to that," Cureton said. "It's a tragic set of circumstances and our heart goes out to Lonnie and his family."

In a prepared statement, Morris Chapman, president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention, denounced Latham's alleged action.

"The hypocrisy of a messenger does not compromise the integrity of the message," Chapman said. "The Bible is no less true than it was a week ago or years ago. It continues to offer hope to all who will believe, including Lonnie and the rest of us."

Don Satterthwaite, spokesperson for the Oklahoma Freedom & Equality Coalition, a gay-rights group in the state, expressed sadness rather than anger over Latham's arrest.

"A lot of people are trapped and can't be open — that's the tragedy," Satterthwaite said.

"I imagine there are a lot of people [like Latham] in the closet in his church and unfortunately his church is so anti-gay, his life is essentially destroyed. He has to be so closeted. A lot of people are in similar situations and I worry that's why so many young people commit suicide," he said.

Glass houses

Remember the adage that "people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones"? Lonnie Latham is only the latest to throw stones at openly gay men and women while possibly dwelling in a glass house himself. Some other prominent examples:

ROY COHN

As a tough young lawyer who assisted red-baiting Sen. Joseph McCarthy, Cohn was merciless in rooting out and ruining suspected Communists and gay men in Washington and Hollywood.



But Cohn himself was a gay man who craved pornography and frequently used the services of rent boys. He never acknowledged being gay, despite frequenting gay bars in the 1970s, according to GLBTQ, an online encyclopedia of gay culture. In his later years he spoke out against New York

City's first gay rights law.

Three times tried and acquitted of conspiracy, bribery and fraud, Cohn was disbarred two months before his 1986 death from AIDS, which he insisted was liver cancer.

JOHN PAULK

Paulk appeared in ex-gay ads in national media in 1998 and on the cover of Newsweek with his "lesbian" wife Anne Paulk. But he was spotted in a popular gay bar in Washington, D.C., in September 2000.



When Paulk was seen in the gay bar, he initially claimed he only entered Mr. P's to use the restroom. But Paulk later said he was seeking the "easy camaraderie" of his former stomping grounds because of the "great deal" of stress in his life.

After Paulk's gay bar visit, Exodus International, a leading ex-gay organization where Paulk served as board chair, placed him on probation and removed his voting rights. Six months later, Exodus restored Paulk to the board, although not as chair.

MATTHEW GLAVIN

Glavin led the Atlanta-based Southeastern Legal Foundation from 1994 until he resigned under scandal in October 2000. The conservative public interest law firm battled Atlanta's domestic partner ordinance and filed a "friend of the court" brief before the U.S. Supreme Court supporting the Boy Scouts of America's efforts to bar gay Scoutmasters.



In 2000, Glavin pleaded guilty to public indecency for fondling a male undercover U.S. park ranger in a metro Atlanta park. His attorney said at the time that he entered the plea to spare his family and the legal group from embarrassment.

The ranger who cited Glavin at the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area reported: "Mr. Glavin was masturbating his erect penis through his shorts. Mr. Glavin reached out and fondled my groin in a very sexual and lewd manner."

MICHAEL JOHNSTON

Johnston appeared with his mother, Frances Johnston, in a controversial print ad under the headline "From innocence to AIDS." A similar television commercial also appeared in 1998, dubbed "Mom."



"My son Michael found out the truth — he could walk away from homosexuality. But he found out too late — he has AIDS," Frances Johnston said in the television commercial. In the ad, Michael Johnston praised his mother for telling him "the truth that set me free."

Johnston founded Kerusso Ministries and promoted National Coming Out of Homosexuality Day. But in 2003, Johnston shut down Kerusso and the conservative groups he worked with confirmed he had a "moral fall." A Virginia man alleged he had a sexual relationship with Johnston.

Laura Douglas-Brown

national news

Gay groups say Alito hearings confirm fears

Log Cabin takes no position on nomination

By ELIZABETH WEILL-GREENBERG

WASHINGTON — As a vote nears in the Senate Judiciary Committee on Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito, most gay rights groups say the hearings only confirmed that Alito will be no friend to gay rights if he serves on the country's highest court.

Alito's nomination is scheduled for a Senate Judiciary Committee vote on Jan. 24.

The Human Rights Campaign and Lambda Legal joined a number of other gay rights groups opposing Alito, saying his judicial record indicates he would likely rule against gay rights.

"There was nothing in the hearings that allayed the serious concerns we had," said Michael Adams, director of education and public policy for Lambda Legal. "They confirmed our suspicions and concerns."

Most notably, he said, was Alito's "continued refusal to recognize Roe vs. Wade as settled law." The Roe decision, though on abortion rights, is fundamental to upholding the right of privacy and gay rights, he said.

"We are as concerned as we were prior to the hearing."

HRC said Alito was "the right-wing choice they had been waiting for."

Conservative groups, who pressured White House Counsel Harriet Miers into withdrawing her nomination, applauded Alito.

One Family Research Council ad calls Alito "one of us." The conservative, anti-gay group also awarded Alito its "Golden Gavel Award" in 2001.

Lara Schwartz, HRC's chief legislative counsel, took issue with Alito's candor during questioning from senators.

"The answers in the hearing were by and large non-answers," Schwartz said. "Nothing happened in the hearing to refute his troubling record."

When Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) asked Alito about the Defense of Marriage Act, Schwartz recalled, Alito answered that scholars hold different opinions.

"Thank you for stating the obvious," she said, laughing.

According to Chris Labonte, HRC's legislative director, votes on the Alito nomination will be counted on the group's congressional scorecard. HRC announced its opposition to both Alito and John Roberts, now chief justice, before their confirmation hearings. But the Washington-based gay rights group would not say before the Roberts vote whether supporting his nomination would count against senators.

Log Cabin takes no position

Despite the opposition of some gay rights groups, the Log Cabin Republicans decided



Supreme Court nominee **Samuel Alito**, fresh off a week of questioning from the Senate Judiciary Committee, faces a vote on his nomination on Jan. 24. After the committee vote, the nomination goes to the full Senate.

not to take a position on Alito's nomination.

"It remains unclear to us how both individuals [Roberts and Alito] will rule on matters impacting gay and lesbian Americans — a fundamental right to privacy and precedents in Lawrence," said Patrick Guerriero, president of Log Cabin Republicans.

In 2003, the Supreme Court ruled sodomy laws unconstitutional in Lawrence vs. Texas. The justices ruled 6-3 that people have a constitutional right of privacy in the area of "private sexual conduct."

"Without that clarity, we did not feel we could make a formal endorsement," Guerriero said. He added he was disturbed that on privacy issues he was "unsure of

where [Alito] would fall."

But other organizations were not so cautious in their assessments of Alito.

While Alito hasn't ruled extensively on gay rights issues, he has an "extremely negative general civil rights record," according to Elliot Mincberg, vice president and legal director for People for the American Way.

Alito's record on privacy rights and his membership in the controversial Concerned Alumni of Princeton group are just some indicators that Alito will be disastrous, said Mincberg.

Mincberg said that all 10 Republicans on the Senate committee will likely vote for Alito. He is hopeful that the eight Democratic committee members will oppose Alito.

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national news

'Most powerful' gay politician in the country**New NYC council speaker lauded for her activism**

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

One of the nation's most powerful openly gay elected officials is a lesbian who earlier this month became the first woman elected speaker of the New York City Council.

Christine Quinn, a member of the Council since 1999, was chosen speaker by her colleagues in a near-unanimous vote.

Although Quinn was elected by a vote of 50-0, with one councilmember abstaining, the battle for the job took place behind the scenes in the weeks prior to the vote.

City Hall observers say Quinn showed extraordinary political and interpersonal skills by fending off at least six challengers before the race narrowed to a battle between Quinn and Councilmember Bill de Blasio of Brooklyn.

In a political move that astonished many New York political activists, Quinn lined up support from powerful Democratic Party leaders in the boroughs of Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx after securing backing from her Council colleagues in Manhattan.

The leaders in Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx, often referred to as party bosses, persuaded most of the councilmembers from their respective boroughs to pledge their votes to Quinn over de Blasio.

"Let me say that I am incredibly proud that in the most diverse city in the world, diversity is seen as a strength and not an impediment," Quinn said Jan. 5 during an emotional acceptance speech at City Hall.

A New York Times editorial acknowledged that any candidate for speaker must participate in "backroom politics" to win election. But the Jan. 8 Times editorial called on Quinn to "establish priorities independent of the county party bosses and other forces who helped elevate her to speaker."

Working together

In a telephone interview with the Blade, Quinn said the support she received from party leaders and councilmembers who have opposed gay rights in the past was based on their ability to work together on issues they agree on, such as housing, health care and improved schools.

"The vote says a couple of things," Quinn said. "It says women and the LGBT community are making progress. It also says people should be judged by the totality of their record on a broad range of issues."

Will she be beholden to the party bosses who helped her win the speaker's post?

"I am gratified and grateful to everyone who supported me," Quinn said. "But I have always been an independent person. The only promises I've made is to have an



New York City Councilmember **Christine C. Quinn** is congratulated by Councilmember Joel Rivera this month after Quinn was elected speaker of the City Council. She is the first woman and the first openly gay person to head the City Council. (Photo by Shiho Fukada/AP)

open door policy and to consider the proposals by everybody."

With her domestic partner, Kim Catullo, and her 79-year-old father, Lawrence Quinn, seated in the audience, Quinn pledged to work closely with Mayor Michael Bloomberg and fellow councilmembers to address the needs of all New Yorkers, regardless of ethnic, economic or political background.

Quinn is considered one of the Council's most progressive and liberal members and has been a leading advocate of gay rights.

Quinn's supporters, including lesbian activist Lorna Gottesman, vice president of the Gay & Lesbian Independent Democrats of Manhattan, insisted that the new speaker would not be indebted to anyone other than the people of New York City.

"Christine Quinn is an independent person," Gottesman said. "She works through the party system. But she has her own vision, and she is her own person."

Matt Foreman, a longtime New York gay rights leader who is executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, said Quinn will play a lead role in shaping and approving the city's \$50.2 billion budget.

He said that, as speaker, Quinn has authority to release or block legislation before the Council and decides on councilmembers' committee assignments.

"The speaker has enormous powers," he said. "In terms of political influence,

she becomes the most powerful openly lesbian or gay elected official in the country."

Quinn, 39, represents a district in Manhattan that includes the heavily gay neighborhood of Chelsea. She replaced gay Councilmember Tom Duane, who was elected to the New York State Assembly.

A history of service

For five years, Quinn was Duane's chief of staff on the City Council. She also served as executive director of the New York City Anti-Violence Project, which monitors anti-gay violence.

Quinn was born and raised on Long Island and is a product of what she describes as a proud Irish-American family. She graduated from Trinity College in Connecticut with a degree in urban studies and education. After moving to New York City, she became involved in gay rights and AIDS causes, joining a number of activist groups, including the AIDS protest group Act Up.

Foreman said Quinn was arrested at least twice in demonstrations against an Irish-American group that banned a gay Irish contingent from marching in New York's famed St. Patrick's Day Parade.

She also is credited with helping push through the City Council a controversial "equal benefits" bill that would require companies receiving city contracts of \$100,000 or more to provide employee domestic partnership benefits if the companies provide similar benefits to married employees.

Strange bedfellows

Among those who agreed to back Quinn was Councilmember Simcha Felder, an Orthodox Jewish leader who has opposed gay rights legislation. Felder represents a district in Brooklyn that includes the city's largest population of Orthodox and Hassidic Jews, many of whom have opposed gay rights legislation in the city since the 1970s.

Quinn said she made no promises to Felder or other party leaders other than to listen to and consider their requests and concerns in her role as speaker.

"Do he and I agree on LGBT rights? No," Quinn said. "But when there was a shortage of funds for school nurses, and he asked for more funds, I supported him," she said, referring to a school system funding proposal by Felder.

"I'm amazed," said New York City gay activist Ray Gast. "She received support from people who have been very anti-gay."

Alan Fleishman, an official with the Gay & Lesbian Independent Democrats of Brooklyn and a member of the Brooklyn Democratic Party's executive committee, said Quinn's ability to build working relationships with both allies and adversaries in each of the city's five boroughs played a key role in her election.

But Fleishman said Quinn also benefited by a split among Brooklyn's Democratic Party leaders, including the Brooklyn councilmembers, who make up the largest block on the City Council.

"This speaks very much to Christine's ability as a leader, as a negotiator and as an advocate," Foreman said. "I think Christine is less beholden than any speaker in memory. Her support was so broad based."

Credit the calendar

Other political activists, including New York gay rights attorney Bill Dobbs, said constituent-driven legislation in the 1990s that imposed an eight-year term limit on City Council members made it possible for Quinn to win the speaker's position.

The term-limit law forced longtime councilmember and speaker Peter Vallone, who blocked gay rights legislation, to retire from the Council. Vallone's departure made it possible for liberal activist and gay rights supporter Gifford Miller to win election as speaker four years ago with the backing of Quinn.

"Miller's election as speaker was the real sea change," Dobbs said.

He said Quinn's support from party leaders and councilmembers who have been hostile to gays and progressive causes raises concerns, even though her record on gay and progressive issues has been unblemished.

"Who is on the inside doesn't mean much unless there is pressure from the outside," said Dobbs. "You see how people move to the middle when they get power. You have to light a fire under them to make sure they do something."

cover story

Scott brings Dallas experience to statewide role

SCOTT, continued from Page 1

called the Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby of Texas Calkin Fund. He assumes his new role March 6.

"I am thrilled with the opportunity to work with Equality Texas and to become part of its rich history," Scott said. "I look forward to working closely with our many stakeholders and supporters to advance an agenda that will protect the rights of our LGBT communities and secure basic civil rights still denied to LGBT Texans."

Last June, the state organization was left without an executive director when Randall Ellis resigned his post after two and a half years on the job. Ellis said he needed a break and planned to take time off before accepting another position.

"I am going to take a few weeks break," Ellis said at the time. "The first thing I plan to do is plant and keep my lawn alive this summer. Next, I am going to finish working on my thesis for my master's in public health as I contemplate my next move."

Officials with Equality Texas and statewide politicians praised Ellis for his contributions, and said that although the state's marriage amendment made it on the ballot and eventually passed by more than 76 percent of voters who went to the polls last year, the former executive director helped change the opinions of many



Paul Scott, new executive director of Equality Texas, will replace Randall Ellis, who resigned the post last year.

lawmakers on gay rights issues.

"Although the amendment passed, we were able to educate many of my colleagues in the Texas Legislature, and we took a giant leap forward on marriage equality for LGBT Texans," said state Rep. Jessica Farrar (D-Houston). "His

work has laid the foundation for a strong campaign."

'In good hands'

Since February 2003, Smith has been the executive director of the Dallas Resource Center, overseeing an annual operating budget of \$3.9 million. The center consists of the AIDS Resource Center, Nelson-Tebedo Health Resource Center and John Thomas Gay & Lesbian Community Center.

It's mission is to serve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals in north Texas, and provide medical care for HIV/AIDS patients, social activities, education and advocacy; and support. Officials said under Smith's leadership, the center has experienced significant growth in funding while decreasing its debt, expanded programs and established itself as a national leader among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community centers across the country.

"The Resource Center has not only been in good hands under Paul's direction...it has thrived," said Linda Moore, president of the center. "We have no doubt Paul will do great things for Equality Texas."

John Hintz, board co-chair with Equality Texas, agreed. "Paul Scott's ability to grow the Resource Center during a time when HIV/AIDS funding was extremely constrained is remarkable," he

said. "Paul's coalition-building expertise, strong management and administrative skills, and his experience successfully working with local, state and federal elected officials are just a few of the many reasons we selected him."

"We are thrilled that we will have someone with his talent and experience to lead the new Equality Texas," Hintz said.

A native of Jackson, Miss., Scott earned a bachelor of arts degree from Emory University and a law degree from the University of Georgia. He started his legal career as a civil litigation attorney in Chattanooga, Tenn.

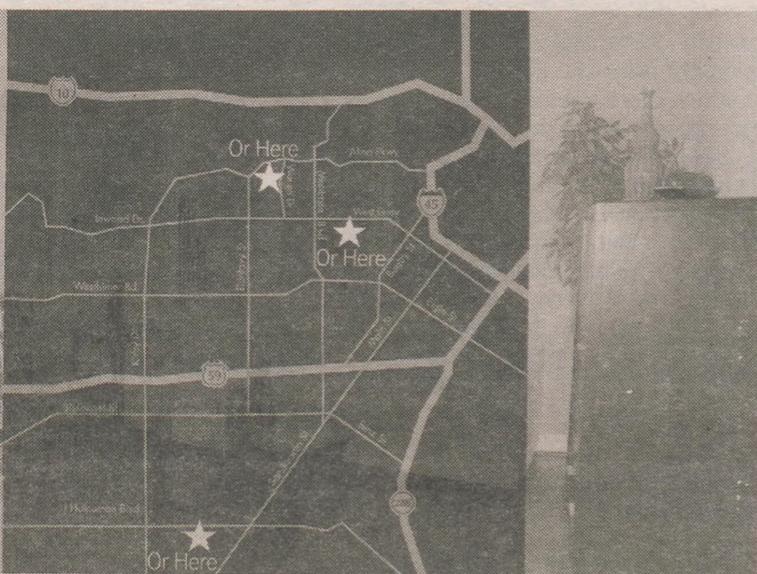
After nine years as a lawyer, Scott entered the nonprofit sector to work as board member and eventually executive director of the Chattanooga CARES HIV/AIDS Resource Center.

According to the organization's website, Equality Texas' mission is to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression by lobbying the Texas Legislature and other government agencies. The Equality Texas Foundation conducts research and educates Texans about issues of equality, and helps coordinate efforts of gay and gay-friendly organizations in Texas.

The Equality Texas Political Action Committee works to help gay and gay-friendly politicians elected to the Legislature.

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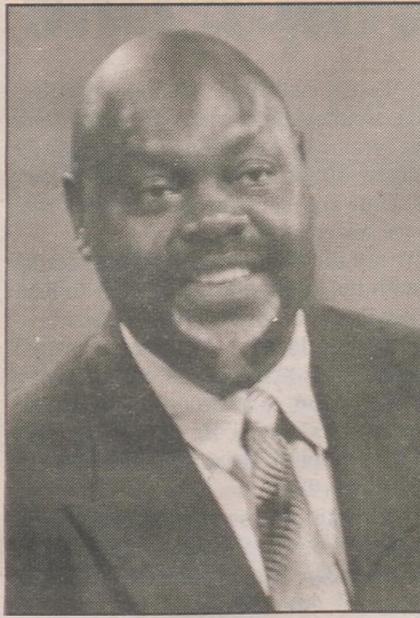
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national news

Pastor plans boycott of Wash. gay rights bill supporters



Rev. Ken Hutcherson, pastor of Antioch Bible Church in Redmond, Wash., says he plans a national boycott of major companies that support a state bill that protects gays from workplace discrimination. (Photo by Jim Veneman/Baptist Press News)

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — A pastor this week called for a national boycott of Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard and other companies that support a Washington state gay rights bill, saying the corporations underestimated the power of religious consumers. Rev. Ken Hutcherson, pastor of Antioch Bible Church in the Seattle suburb of Redmond, planned to formally call for the boycott Jan. 13. "We're tired of sitting around thinking that morals can be ignored in our country," he said. Last week, several companies, including Boeing Co., Hewlett Packard Co., Microsoft Corp. and Nike Inc. signed a letter urging passage of the measure, which would add sexual orientation to a state law that already bans discrimination in housing, employment and insurance based on race, gender and other factors. Microsoft restored its support for the proposal a year after the company was denounced for quietly dropping its endorsement; the measure then failed by one vote. Hutcherson said he pressured Microsoft into dropping its support for the bill last year by threatening a boycott. The bill is expected to pass the state House within two weeks and be sent to the Senate, the Seattle Times reported.

Republicans put money into Fla. gay marriage ban

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — The Florida GOP is by far the biggest financial backer of a proposed ballot initiative that would amend the state constitution to prohibit gay marriage. The party gave \$150,000 to Florida4Marriage.org in November, which accounts for more than three-quarters of what the group raised during the entire year, according to a finance report submitted by the group this week. "Their support both financially and through endorsements is very significant," said John Stemberger, chair of the petition effort. Florida law already defining marriage as the union between one man and one woman. So far about 172,000 signatures have been certified. To get the initiative on the ballot would require 611,000 signatures total by Feb. 1. Both Republican gubernatorial candidates — Chief Financial Officer Tom Gallagher and Attorney General Charlie Crist — have endorsed the effort. It has not been endorsed by either of the Democrats running for governor, Congressman Jim Davis and state Sen. Rod Smith.

Sony launches gay record label

LOS ANGELES — Sony Music announced last week that it will launch the first major music label designed to nurture gay artists, Reuters reported. Music With a Twist is a joint venture with Wilderness Media & Entertainment, a firm led by Matt Farber, who also founded Viacom's MTV Networks' new gay channel Logo. Wilderness Media also launched a national syndicated gay radio show called Twist. "It's an idea whose time has come," Farber told Reuters. Music With a Twist's roster will focus on gay artists who have mass appeal across all types of music. It will work with Sony Music's other U.S. labels and divisions, including Epic and Columbia.

Wash. school attorney: Gay alliance must be allowed

BATTLE GROUND, Wash. — A gay-straight alliance club cannot be barred from Battle Ground High School if it is requested by students, an attorney told the Battle Ground School board this week, the Columbian reported. The board cannot refuse a club based on content it doesn't like, attorney Bill Coats told board members in a recent workshop. "If you start treating groups differently based on what they say, you run afoul of the First Amendment," Coats said, according to the Columbian. The school's Associated Student Body now is accepting input from students and plans to vote on the club this week. School board members decided to wait for that vote before taking any action on the issue or discussing it further.

Jewish politician ducks vote on gay speaker

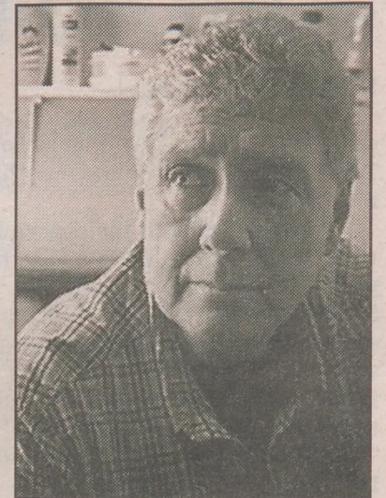
NEW YORK — When the vote to install the City Council's first openly gay speaker came up, one Orthodox Jewish member of the panel was faced with a dilemma, the New York Post reported. Councilman Simcha Felder supported Christine Quinn over her rival, Bill de Blasio of Brooklyn. But homosexuality is abhorrent to Felder's religion, Orthodox Judaism, so he consulted various rabbis on the issue, Jewish Week reported. Felder could not get a united opinion on whether he was allowed to vote for Quinn, so instead he avoided the issue by taking a bathroom break as the vote came up, the Post reported. Quinn received 50 votes with only one official abstention. "I'm very happy that Chris Quinn became speaker," Felder said, according to the Post.

From staff and wire reports

police beat

Gay former appellate judge gets inside view of prison

GOLDEN VALLEY, Minn. — After three-and-a-half years in prison, former Minnesota Court of Appeals Judge Roland Amundson stands poised for early release, and he now wants to help other inmates when they return to society, the New York Times reported. Amundson, 56, who is gay, spent 15 years as a judge before he was caught stealing \$400,000 from a trust fund in 2001. He oversaw the fund for a woman who has the mental capacity of a 3-year-old. Now a convicted felon, Amundson resides in a halfway house. He may be released as early as April for good behavior. His struggles after his fall from the bench include a battle with his former partner over their four adopted sons from Russia, the Times reported. Amundson bitterly denounced prison restrictions on communicating with his children. He said family support determines an inmate's success or failure in re-entering society. "You're dealing with men who need fathers and yet you're decimating their relationships with their children," Amundson told the Times.



Former Minnesota appellate Judge Roland Amundson, who is gay, said he learned after serving time in prison that family support is key to an inmate's rehabilitation.

Fla. police look at bullying as motive in school slashing

SUNRISE, Fla. — A student who cut a schoolmate with a razor blade last week may have done it in retaliation for being bullied about his sexual orientation, the Miami Herald reported. "We are considering that as a motive, in addition to other possibilities," Lt. Robert Voss told the newspaper. At least 20 students witnessed the attack outside Bair Middle School, Voss said. Keith Bromery, Broward County Schools spokesperson, said he was unsure whether seventh graders at the school were at odds because one harassed the other about allegedly being gay. One student slashed the forehead and leg of his classmate. He was charged with aggravated battery and possession of a weapon on school grounds, both felonies, according to Voss. The boy who was cut received 14 stitches; he was charged with simple battery because he punched the other youth.

Ark. man accused of stabbing another man at drag queen show

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — A verbal altercation allegedly led a Fayetteville man to stab another man while the pair were at a drag queen show, the Northwest Arkansas Times reported. Joshua Anthony Odom was arrested and charged with second degree domestic battery, theft of property and terroristic threatening, all felonies. Odom, a performer in the "Club Xanadu" drag queen shows held Sunday nights at the Dickson Theater, allegedly stabbed the victim in the back while giving him a hug, then fled the scene with the victim's belongings. "The victim and Odom were involved in a verbal fight at the club that at some point apparently turned physical," Sgt. Shannon Gabbard of the Fayetteville Police Department told the Times. Gabbard said the incident may have been the result of problems in a past relationship between Odom and the alleged victim, the Times reported.

N.Y. teen accused in gay killing commits suicide

NEW YORK — A teenager charged with killing a gay masseur last month hanged himself in a courtroom holding cell last week, the New York Daily News reported. Jose Tavares, 17, of Washington Heights was returned to his cell after appearing before a Manhattan Criminal Court judge. He tied one end of his shirt around his neck and the other around the cell's bars, then leaned forward on a bench to strangle himself, the Daily News reported. He was pronounced dead at the scene. Tavares was a junior at Manhattan Bridges High School. He was arrested Jan. 9 and charged with second-degree murder in the Dec. 27 killing of Schlomy Rejwan, 45, at the victim's apartment in Chelsea. Tavares' family earlier had alleged that Tavares met a 47-year-old unidentified man who, according to the teen, sexually abused him and later strangled Rejwan as Tavares watched.

Police force dubbed Britain's most gay-friendly employer

STAFFORDSHIRE, Britain — The local police force, which welcomes gay officers and supports their participation in gay pride marches, is the nation's most gay-friendly employer, according to a new index, the Sunday Times of Britain reported. Stonewall, the gay rights group that compiles the Workplace Equality Index, was to name the Staffordshire police as the award winner this week. The news is a far cry from less than a decade ago, when the force was ridiculed for mounting an operation to use peepholes to spy on men "cottaging" in public restrooms. Now, the department encourages gay officers to take parenting leave and organizes parties with local gay groups. The force recruits in the gay press, and one in 10 of the 2,309-member department is gay. The department also has a record of promoting gay and lesbian officers to a high level, according to Stonewall.

From staff and wire reports

out in houston

(Photos by Dalton DeHart)



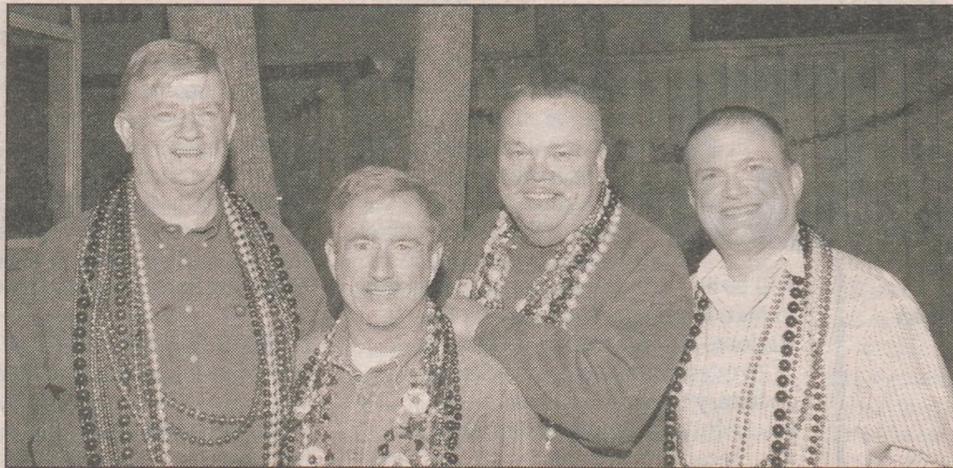
The 'Act Out at the Alley Theater' was a pre-show fund-raiser event to benefit AIDS Foundation Houston. The event was followed by a performance of "Culture Clash in AmeriCCa. Pictured is Mark Anderson, Ric Salinas, Herbert Siquenza, Julie Eberly, Richard Montoya, Phillip Mayard and David Solis.



Alex Martinez (left) and Richard Peoples (top) go the extra mile in last weekends Chevron Houston Marathon.



The 2006 Faces of Houston Calendar Contest winner Marie Gill (left) and runner-up Candi St. James.



Ben Jones, Ken Council, Steve Evans and Bill Walters at the Krewe of Olympus King Cake event.

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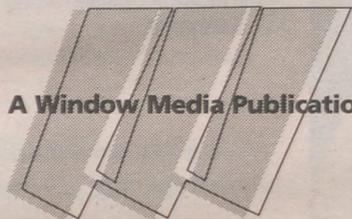
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Forum

HOUSTON VOICE

JANUARY 20, 2006

PAGE 10

editorial

The driest powder in Washington

Samuel Alito is cruising to confirmation now that Democrats have decided a fight isn't good politics.

At what point will gay groups finally say 'enough'?

By CHRIS CRAIN

HIS IS THE MOST "ANTI-GAY nominee in memory," according to long-time Lambda Legal Executive Director Kevin Cathcart.

His lengthy record demonstrates that on the bench he will be an "extreme ideologue," according to Matt Foreman, who heads up the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force.

In questioning before the Senate Judiciary Committee, he admitted rescheduling a family trip to Orlando, Fla., because it coincided with Gay Days at Disney World.

"My wife and I have two daughters who at the time were 6 and 4 years old," he said. "We made a value judgment."

As a lawyer, he warned the U.S. Supreme Court in an official filing that overturning sodomy laws would inevitably lead to constitutional protection for incest, necrophilia, pedophilia, prostitution and adultery.

He even stood by his previous assertion that *Roe vs. Wade*, which affirmed the right to privacy includes a woman's right to an abortion, was "the worst abomination in the history of constitutional law."

"He is one of the most dangerous judicial nominees ... that we've seen yet," said Ralph Neas, veteran leader of People for the American Way.

As a federal appeals court judge, he cast the deciding vote upholding a particularly notorious law that prohibits gays from adopting children.

His name is William Pryor, and he now sits on the nation's second highest court, just one notch below the U.S. Supreme Court. The reason he has that lifetime appointment, we were told by some gay rights leaders, was to keep nominees like Samuel Alito off of the nation's highest court.

Pryor's nomination had been blocked for years by a Democratic filibuster in the Senate. President Bush had granted Pryor a "recess appointment," but that only installed him on the bench until the current session of Congress ends next January.

But in May of last year, 14 moderate senators from both parties agreed to a deal that allowed a vote on Pryor and two other blocked nominees, while preserving the filibuster for "extreme circumstances."

Joe Solmonese, the Human Rights

Campaign leader, praised the compromise, even though he and his organization strongly opposed Pryor's nomination.

"This compromise preserves the ability to block extremist nominees," he said last May. "This will be particularly important when a nominee for the Supreme Court is named."

It was a trade-off, Solmonese argued, that was critical to keep our powder dry for the big Supreme Court battle to come.

THREE SUPREME COURT NOMINEES have come and gone since then, of course, with nary a filibuster in sight.

John Roberts, whose nomination HRC and most every other national gay group opposed, is now chief justice for life. Harriet Miers, whose record suggested she was surprisingly supportive of gay rights, was scuttled by conservatives before she even got a hearing, while Democrats and civil rights groups were thrilled to cast the debacle as a black eye for Bush.

Now Samuel Alito, whose poor civil rights record has elicited expressions of concern from several Republican senators and almost unanimous opposition from Democrats, stands poised to be confirmed by a divided U.S. Senate.

Now is it finally time to use our powder, Joe? Apparently not.

For much of the critical week after Alito's Senate hearings, the HRC regular homepage was replaced in its entirety by a membership drive, presumably to raise more money for some future fight the group may actually choose to wage.

The "600,000" members of HRC haven't been called on to press Senate Democrats into a filibuster. There've been no protests in Washington, no focused pressure by gay constituents on wavering Democrats and moderate Republicans.

One such Democrat, Dianne Feinstein of California, said on CBS' "Face the Nation" that she sees nothing "egregious" about Alito that calls for a filibuster. Will she hear from HRC's California members?

Richard Durbin of Illinois, who as Democratic whip would be charged with rounding up the votes for a filibuster, told the *New York Times* only that it would "not be easy" to do.

The reason Senate Democrats have backed off of a filibuster is all about politics, of course. As the *Washington Post* reported on Monday, the party's strategists have decided that mounting corrup-

tion scandals involving congressional Republicans are a more useful fall campaign issue than the Alito nomination.

That's why on the final day of Alito's Senate hearings last week, Harry Reid, the Senate's Democratic leader, decided instead to emphasize a "Republican culture of corruption." As this paper went to press, five days later, Reid has still not even said how he'll vote on Alito.

AT WHAT POINT WILL WE ACTUALLY use this dry powder, held in reserve for years now by gay groups like HRC that have done the Democrats' bidding, offering them political cover even when they oppose our civil rights?

In response to questions from this newspaper, HRC allowed that the vote on Alito will at least count on the organization's congressional "scorecard" — something HRC refused even to say about Roberts until after his vote was already history.

Samuel Alito is no William Pryor, to be sure. In testimony before senators, Alito acknowledged the right to privacy, although he refused to describe it (or anything else) with any specificity.

Roberts was grilled by Charles Schumer, the New York Democrat, about the landmark sodomy ruling in *Lawrence vs. Texas*, but the subject wasn't broached with Alito.

In fact, Alito was asked precious few questions about gay issues, even by our supposed friendly Democrats. Where was the pressure on Feinstein and others to ask the questions that matter most to us?

Some abortion rights groups have said publicly that they haven't given up on a filibuster and are putting the screws to Senate Democrats. So far, no gay rights group has publicly joined that call.

The ascension of the judge nicknamed "Scalito," for his ideological similarity to anti-gay ideologue Antonin Scalia, will almost undoubtedly tilt the Supreme Court to the right. Sandra Day O'Connor, who Alito would replace, had a mixed gay rights record and was already on record hinting that the Constitution allows states to limit marriage to heterosexuals.

But she did cast a number of key votes in favor of gay rights, and there's little to suggest Alito would do the same. With Roberts as chief justice and guaranteed hostility from Scalia and Clarence Thomas, Alito makes four solid conservatives on a court of nine. Only Anthony Kennedy, a Reagan appointee, gives gays much hope.

So William Pryor, the most anti-gay judicial nominee in memory, enjoys a lifetime appointment to the nation's second highest court. Samuel Alito, who most gay groups rightfully oppose, is poised for a similar post on the nation's highest tribunal.

Is it time, finally, to use our powder?

@ Chris Crain is executive editor of *Houston Voice* and can be reached at crcrain@sovo.com.



viewpoint GWEN SMITH



The S.F. police video causing so much controversy could just be jackass fun, but the climate that created it isn't.

To protect and make fun?

IN SAN FRANCISCO, A SCANDAL HAS been brewing. A video created by Police Officer Andrew Cohen — and featuring his co-workers in the San Francisco Police Department — ended up being viewed outside of the confines of the station house.

The films themselves have been branded as racist, misogynistic, homophobic and transphobic. Those who have defended the police have inferred this is much ado about nothing.

They are probably both right.

The issue of transphobia — at least in the released part of these tapes — is based around an officer who appears in a black dress, wig and make-up within the film. Total screen time is 10 to 15 seconds at best, and comes off as no worse than watching a few brief moments of fraternity antics. The moment itself seems largely benign.

Of course, this is but one moment in a much longer tape that arguably treats women at traffic stops as sex objects, shows an Asian officer who has trouble riding a bicycle, and plays into a number of stereotypical caricatures and situations.

The film itself was made to be shown at a station party. The brass deemed it inappropriate before it was even shown,

and it only became common knowledge because Officer Cohen put it on a website.

As critics have said, this only existed as a gag, an example of "cop humor," and was nothing more than blowing off some steam from the stressful job of keeping a large city safe.

BUT THE TAPE ITSELF IS NOT THE ISSUE — or, more correctly, is not the whole issue. It is only a minor part of the story, a glance into what one officer (and 20 or so of his co-workers, who may not have known exactly what the finished product would look like) in one station in one police department thought would be funny.

No, the issue is that for such a tape to have been made — whether it's highly offensive or just jackass fun — you need to have an environment that makes the creation of such a film seem appropriate.

In 1993, for example, after the rape and murder of Brandon Teena, a young trans man whose life story was dramatized in the film "Boys Don't Cry," local sheriff Charles Laux was quoted as saying about Brandon, "You can call it 'it,' as far as I'm concerned."

Questions still remain, too, in the death of Roberta Nizah Morris, a trans



woman who died subsequent to a "courtesy ride" by one of Philadelphia's finest. Since the death there's been surprisingly little action on the case.

In Vermont last year, the town of Hardwick settled with Tony Baretto-Neto, a police officer in Hardwick who was terminated from his job once the local police learned he is transgender.

Philecia Barnes, another police officer — this time in Cincinnati — was demoted for being transgender, but has also fought her battle in court. The U.S. Supreme Court let stand an appellate ruling in her favor.

THE SAN FRANCISCO police have had their share of trans-related scandals, most recently when Robert Haaland received a \$107,500 settlement for being groped by police while in custody.

The Cohen video issue comes out of the same station that handled the Toni "Delicious" Green murder case in 2004 — a case that the San Francisco D.A. couldn't prosecute because of poor police work. I'm not surprised the videotape sur-

posed, and that it included material that can be construed as transphobic. It was more a matter of "when" versus "if."

This is bigger than one cop and his 20-plus co-workers. It seems to be part of the overall culture of being a police officer.

The problem won't change overnight. Whatever fallout there is in San Francisco will likely lead to better treatment, but that is only one city out of many.

While cities like Washington, D.C., and Atlanta have strong LGBT liaisons, departments like these are very few and far between.

So what must we do to change things? We must push for a police force that represents all people fairly and equally and treats the needs of transgender people on par with the rest of society.

It's the least we can expect from those who are sworn to protect and serve.

@Gwen Smith is a San Francisco-based transgender activist and can be reached at gwen@gwensmith.com.

THE

Q This week the nation remembered the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Do you agree or disagree that the gay rights movement cannot be compared to the civil rights movement?



The two movements can be compared because both are about the struggle of a group of people and the oppression that brings that movement about.

OPRAL WISHAM
Houston
Programmer



I disagree. I think the two movements are comparable on the basis that we are all human beings striving for equality in the same country. The argument that many people make regarding homosexuality as "unnatural" and as a result cannot be compared to the civil rights movement is absurd.

JONATHAN HARRIS, 29
Houston
Cooperate accounts manager



The two are absolutely similar. The problems are caused by ignorance from a larger population based on fear of the unknown and differences of a subculture. Unfortunately, I do not believe I will ever see equality in my lifetime, but we can take steps now in hopes for a better future.

ANNISSA HILL, 30
Houston
Communications coordinator



Growing up gay has molded me into seeing both sides of every situation, whether or not I agree with them. In this case I can see both sides, and I would have to say that I both agree and disagree with the obvious. Luckily, I think gay rights are advancing everyday and that soon we will have all the rights as we are entitled to by the Declaration of Independence originally "that all men are created equal."

JASON GARCIA, 26
Houston
Insurance agent



I think the battle is very much the same. It is all about wanting the equality that is denied to us because we are not the majority.

DONNA SHANDS, 37
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College recruiter

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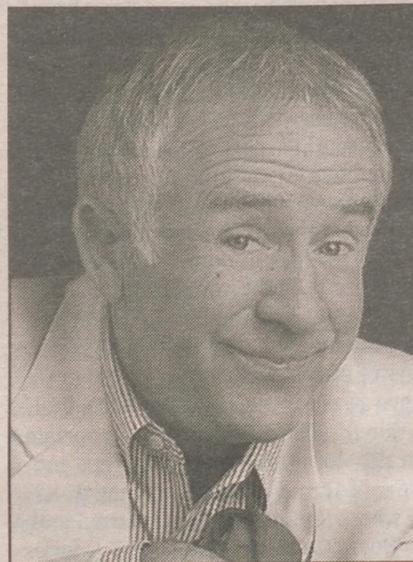
on the record

"I know as actors our job is usually to shed our skin, but I think as people our job is to become who we really are, and so I would like to salute the men and women who brave ostracism, alienation and a life lived on the margins to become who they really are."

Felicity Huffman, recognizing trans people in her acceptance speech after winning the Golden Globe award for best actress for her role as a male-to-female transgender person in "Transamerica" (Jan. 16)

"A lot of the closeted men who'll dare see the movie in a theater, who in the office of their Topeka law firm can already mouth along to the trailer as it streams over their computer screens, will be unable to suppress what 'Brokeback' shakes loose. Ostensible business trips to the coast will be scheduled, where men like me lie in wait."

Gay escort Rod Hagen, writing that he expects increased business due to "Brokeback Mountain" (San Francisco Chronicle, Jan. 15)



"Bathhouses are an easy target. Our customers tend to be people ... who are closeted and they're not going to stand up and protest."

Scott Campbell, president of Midtowne Spa, which runs three Los Angeles gay bathhouses, complaining about strict new city regulations requiring on-site testing for HIV and other STDs, along with free condoms, lube and safe sex info (Los Angeles Times, Jan. 11)

"Needless to say, I don't own a Versace shirt. Do you know how many lap dances I could buy at Swinging Richards for \$300?!"

Actor Leslie Jordan, on why he chose not to buy at half price a \$600 specially-fitted Versace shirt he wore playing Beverley Leslie on last week's live episode of "Will & Grace"; Swinging Richards is an Atlanta gay strip club (Atlanta Journal Constitution, Jan. 14)

"[Samuel] Alito spoke movingly of being shaped by awareness of discrimination faced by ethnic and religious groups, women and the disabled. He failed to mention those of us who're gay. Once the fog clears, that frightening omission may stand out as an early omen of how narrowly Alito will read the Constitution's grand promises."

Lesbian Deb Price, in her syndicated column (Detroit News, Jan. 16)

"Homosexuals have started an attack against the normal families and common values and encourage people to accept something that should not be accepted."

Martin Helme, leader of the Conservatives Club in Estonia, on why laws should be passed criminalizing the public display of homosexuality including holding hands and kissing, as well as anal sodomy between men (Jan. 16)

"You'll have a better chance at tenure if you're a homosexual professional than if you're a professional homosexual."

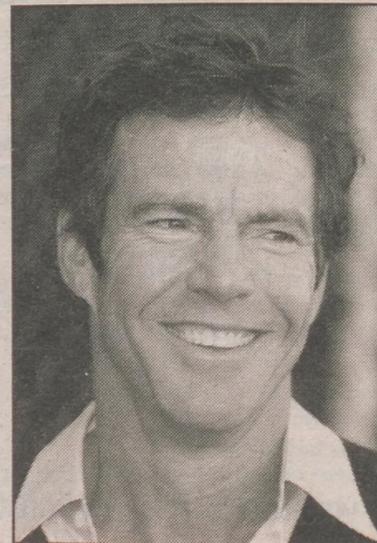
Yale law professor Kenji Yoshino, relating advice he received when he began teaching at the school in 1998, on why he should avoid "mesearch" — research based on an academic's minority status (New York Times Magazine, Jan. 15)

"At my supermarket in Baltimore, there are three checkout women — all who have non-ironic Farrah Fawcett hairdos — and who only know me by saying, 'I've seen you on 'Danielle Steel's Family Album!'"

Gay director John Waters, on why he hoped to reach new audiences by hosting Court TV's first scripted series, "Till Death Do Us Part," which will portray the real-life stories of one spouse killing another (New York Daily News, Jan. 13)

"It rhymes with chick flick."

Actor Dennis Quaid introducing "Brokeback Mountain" at the Golden Globes ceremony (Jan. 16)



eclipse



Take that

Singer-songwriter Duncan Sheik hoops in a 'White Limousine,' gets some things off his mind.

Page 17

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JANUARY 20, 2006

Laughing on

Mario Cantone is hot off the success of Tony nominated one-man show

By ANDY ZEFFER

MARIO CANTONE SAYS THERE IS NO DENYING that playing the role of Anthony Marentino — Charlotte's wedding planner and gay confidante — on "Sex and the City" boosted his visibility.

Cantone was already known for his guest appearances on "The View" and long-time success as a stand-up comedian. But "Sex and the City" catapulted him into greater fame.

Cantone admits he would have been more than happy for the TV series to continue, but is proud to have been part of the show's run and cultural success.

There have long been rumors about a movie version of the popular show, but Cantone says he has no knowledge that they are anything more concrete.

"I don't know," Cantone says. "It would have been nice, but I guess that just wasn't supposed to happen."

BUT CANTONE IS NOT LIVING IN THE shadow of "Sex and the City," or in the past.

The gay funny man has moved on to other projects, such as last year's one-man show, "Laugh Whore," on Broadway, which earned him a Tony Award nomination.

He is now taking a scaled-down version of the show on the road, including to next week's South Beach Comedy Festival.

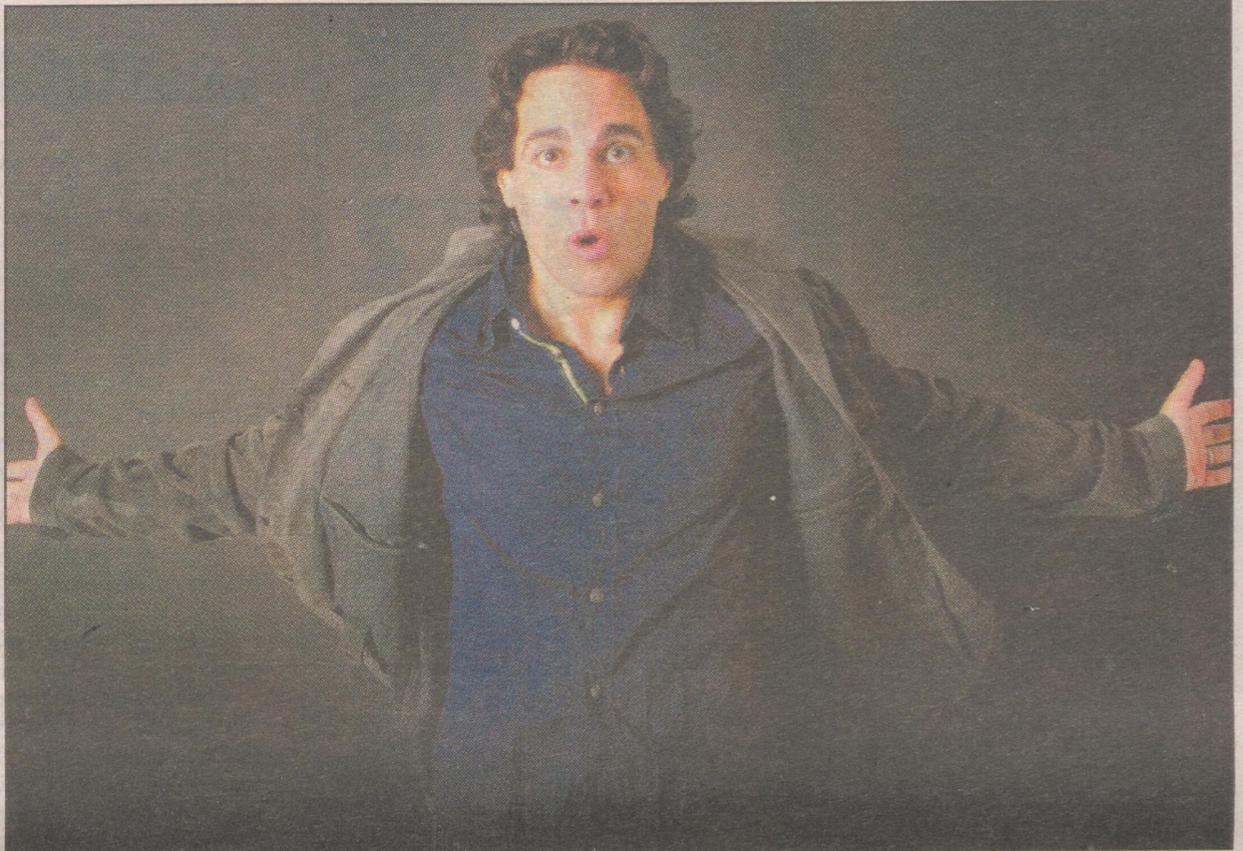
Cantone doesn't hit the road often, so South Florida residents are in for a treat. Even during his early years in comedy, it was rare for Cantone to play dates outside New York.

"I started in '83," Cantone says. "That was a scary time. I was playing mainstream comedy rooms. Though I didn't talk about my sexuality, I never lied or joked about dating women. So it forced me to find original material."

The stand up circuit can be brutal. Cantone says he bombed his fair share of times. If the audience was heckling, you could hear "faggot" yelled at the stage.

And though he simultaneously pursued theater, it was the stand-up that took off for him first.

"It's funny," Cantone observes. "In the mid '80s and early '90s, I thought to myself that the golden years of



Mario Cantone delivers his unique brand of humor in South Beach this week. (Photo by Bill Streicher, streicherphoto.com)

stand-up were the '60s and '70s. But now people look back at the '80s like those were the glory years."

Cantone says he was always obsessed with comedians like Richard Pryor, Steve Martin and Lily Tomlin. He was always listening to comedy albums and performed stand-up in school talent shows.

And though over the years he gradually referred to his sexuality more in his act, he has never wanted it to become a gimmick. Being gay is incidental, more of a sidebar, he says.

"After I performed 'Love! Valour! Compassion!' I really started talking about sexuality," Cantone reflects. "The first time I was asked by a gay paper, I said it right away."

Cantone is just as up front about his relationship with Jerry Dixon, a talented actor in his own right who has starred in such Broadway musicals as "Once on this Island" and "Five Guys Named Moe."

It was Dixon who arranged the music for "Laugh Whore," in addition to serving as the assistant director.

IN ADDITION TO HIS COMEDIC TALENTS, Cantone is also an accomplished singer, and will be sharing his pipes for the audience in Miami.

Cantone also sang in the 2004 revival of "Assassins," but the role of Samuel Byck wasn't exactly the best showcase for his voice.

"That part I could have played with no voice at all," Cantone says. "The character was real gruff and sings in low tones."

His voice is certainly a trademark. Cantone's comedy has always had more of an aggressive side to it, and he says there is a rage underneath it, though he tries to mix things up on stage.

But he also says he is careful not to have his act be about passive quips, in the style of Charles Nelson Reilly or Paul Lynde. Perhaps that is why he has always attracted such mixed audiences, he thinks.

In terms of yelling, Cantone can match the late Sam Kinison.

THEN, OF COURSE, THERE ARE THE impersonations.

Cantone recalls being in a car with "Sex and the City" writer and producer Michael Patrick King in the '80s when both were doing stand-up and driving back from a gig in New Jersey.

"We hear on the radio that Joan River's husband has just died," Cantone remembers. "Michael turns to me and says, 'OK. You are Joan Rivers and you are on a cruise with Melissa Rivers and friends, trying to get over the death of your husband.' And boom, I would do 10 minutes in the car."

Cantone will next be lending his expressive voice to some high-profile animated films. First up is Sony's "Surf's Up," in which he will play a sidekick to a villain voiced by James Woods. The film is set to be released in 2007.

In 2008, Cantone's voice will be featured in "American Dog," alongside John Travolta.

Cantone declined to offer any jokes about that.

TV: An interview with Ben Hogestyn, who plays gay character Lucas Jones on 'General Hospital.' Page 16

THEATER: The popular play 'Culture Clash in AmeriCCa' returns to Houston. Page 14

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Play that raises consciousness about different cultures in America and the way they interact returns for a Houston run.

Lessons in American culture

"CULTURE CLASH IN AMERICCA", A play featuring a preoperative transsexual and lesbian characters, has returned to Houston, raising questions on the interactions of relations among the different cultures in this country.

The play is the brainchild of Los Angeles-based performers Culture Clash, which consists of Richard Montoya, Ric Salinas and Herbert Sigüenza. The three quick witted actors perform all the roles in this stream of consciousness and performance art play about what it means to be an American.

In fact the one recurring spoken line that weaves in and out of "Culture Clash in AmeriCCa" is "That's America to me." The trio returned to the Alley last week after their uproarious Houston debut last fall.

The current production promised "about 25 percent" new material, though that number seemed a bit high at the preview seen last week. However, the play does riff on material drawn from in-depth interviews with Houston-area Hurricane Katrina evacuees and volunteers. It also throws in references to embattled former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-Texas), Golden Globe winning film "Brokeback Mountain", Samuel Alito Supreme Court nomination hearings and of course FEMA.

The play is based on characters and dialogue taken from interviews with real people from all across the United States over the last 20 years. Culture Clash developed this piece from their previous shows, each depicting a city or region of America.

The performers transformed their observations into an unwieldy political weapon that challenges the audience to look below the surface of the way things seem, and in their opinion, reality.

Some of their previous shows the current play takes from are "The Mission" where we meet the comical preoperative transsexual Adela, and in which three out-of-work performers living in San Francisco's Mission District kidnap Julio Iglesias in a desperate attempt to gain national recognition; "A Bowl of Beings", which features the tale of the world's first Chicano, Christopher Columbus's illegitimate son; "The Return of Che", the story of a Berkeley radical who brings back Che Guevara for a hilarious political makeover; and "Radio Mambo", where the trio invades Miami, uncovering a pot of ethnicity ready to boil over into chaos.

Other topics range from the opening vignette of a Muslim call to prayer, with a huge American flag backdrop that has an Islamic image screened over it, a husband and wife demolition team (he's a redneck and she's a sassy latina) to men-



The brainchild of Richard Montoya, Ric Salinas and Herbert Sigüenza, "Culture Clash in AmeriCCa", features a preoperative transsexual character.

tions of sexual misconduct in Catholic churches in the Northeast.

This tapestry of sketches presents a hilarious voice to the diverse cultures of modern day America. Their gender-bending roles are not just your average actor in a wig; they inhabit the female characters like a well worn second skin.

FROM ITS FOUNDING IN SAN FRANCISCO'S Mission District on Cinco de Mayo in 1984, Culture Clash has surveyed contemporary Latino and Chicano culture in America from its own multicultural and unique perspective. Inspired by the clashing cultures, hence their name, of society in transition, Culture Clash embodies comedy and satire, bringing to mind the work of Margaret Cho, Lenny Bruce, Edie Izzard and Cantinflas, the well known Mexican comic. Their performance and characters also draw happy comparisons to Joe Sears and Jaston Williams of Greater Tuna fame.

The play also incorporates elements of dance and poetry all with their signature offbeat humor to create a hybrid of send-up, slapstick and sociology. Described as "A collision of the hysterical and the historical," the play is an equal opportunity offender that gives audiences quite the wild ride while ultimately being entertaining without being preachy.

It informs without shouting and leaves the patrons with a few questions that resonate long after the house lights come up.

i MORE INFO

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Asian fusion restaurant is a stylish, upscale addition to the city's Uptown shopping and entertainment district.

Living up to its name

NAMING A RESTAURANT AFTER ITS street address is all the rage these days. So it's no surprise to find that Sage 400 takes its name from the suite it occupies.

Located in a smart new retail center next to the Galleria, Sage 400 is a sleek entry into the burgeoning Asian fusion and sushi restaurant market. Black lacquer tables, sea green seats, and wavy grey walls create an upscale but relaxed ambience. A cool granite bar and a comfortable lounge offer plenty of space to unwind with a drink. The sushi bar overlooking the main dining area provides additional seating.

The menu leans towards Asian fare, but with Western influences. Start off with Nasu Den (\$4)—Japanese eggplant in a honey-miso sauce. Chunky slices of Japanese eggplant are roasted and served vertically, looking like little silos topped with bows of red pepper. They're a melt-in-your-mouth delight.

For a heartier start, try the beef tataki (\$10), paper thin seared beef served with a lemony ponzu sauce. The tart sauce complements the lean beef, and a generous topping of cracked pepper adds zip.

The quality of the sushi is a deciding factor when choosing an Asian fusion restaurant. At Sage 400 the sushi is good, but not outstanding. The yellowtail (\$2) is a winner—very fresh and firm. The red snapper (\$1.75) and the tuna (\$1.95) are good, but tuna aficionados should go for one of the higher quality tuna choices, offered at market price. The salmon (\$1.75) lacks the robustness of the best wild salmon.

The sushi portions are generous, but they're too large to eat easily. It makes the sushi a very good value, but the focus is definitely on quantity not quality.

The sushi bar also offers a variety of interesting rolls, from classics like the California roll (\$5 roll/\$4 hand roll) to the inventive Dynamite roll (\$6/\$4.25) made with baked escolar (a mackerel-like fish) and a spicy mayonnaise. It's warm and rich, with a hint of heat.

Entrees are a mix of east and west. Grilled shellfish is served on a bed of pumpkin puree in the sansei scallops and shrimp (\$17). It's a smart mix of flavors, enhanced by the lightly sautéed mixed vegetables on the side, although it would benefit from the pumpkin puree being served warm, not chilled as on one recent visit.

Fans of unagi, the sweet smoked eel commonly served as sushi, will be overjoyed to find it for \$15 on the menu. A bento box of rice is topped with a generous serving of unagi and its sweet, smoky sauce. And no worries about quality here—it's as good as any unagi, anywhere.

All entrees are served with a choice of



Sage 400 offers a menu of Asian fare, but with Western influences.

miso soup or house salad, both good choices. The miso soup is robust and loaded with tofu. The salad is topped with crispy wonton strips and a lively sweet chili lime vinaigrette.

One unfortunate misstep is the classic Japanese comfort food, tempura.

Available a la carte (\$3-\$7) or in the shrimp tempura bento box (\$10) at lunch, it's weighed down by a coating that's too thick, making it far too heavy and greasy.

The bento boxes are a good deal at lunch, offering a wide choice of entrees, plus a selection of other Asian favorites. The fried pork dumplings are crisp and tasty, and the fresh fruit makes a nice finish to the meal.

Ice cream in various guises makes up the bulk of the desserts. Skip the tempura ice cream (\$6), which suffers from the same overly heavy coating as the rest of the tempura dishes, and stick with a classic like the green tea ice cream (\$3.50).

Sage 400 is a stylish new addition to the rapidly expanding Galleria area. Offering an upscale feel with moderate prices and generous portions, it's an idea spot to recharge after a hard day's shopping.



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Daytime favorite 'General Hospital' moves
its gay storyline to the forefront and joins
GLAAD in campaign to educate viewers.

Rush to the 'Hospital'

YOUNG ACTOR BEN HOGESTYN HAD a hard time in a recent interview when asked how he identified in terms of sexual orientation.

"I just thought about it for 10 minutes," Hogestyn, 24, says, adding that he wasn't trying to figure out his preferences on the spot. "I just didn't understand the question. I was like, 'Do they want to know if I'm aggressive? If I'm actively dating someone or what?'"

The straight actor has had a quick introduction to gay life playing Lucas Jones, who came out to his cousin Georgie (Lindze Letherman) a few months ago on ABC's daytime staple "General Hospital." Earlier this week, his storyline moved to the front burner as the rest of his family, including show mainstays Bobbie (Jackie Zeman) and Luke (Anthony Geary), find out about his orientation after he is the victim of a gay bashing.

In conjunction with the storyline, ABC has teamed up with the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation to create a public service campaign. A public service announcement featuring Hogestyn and Letherman first aired on Wednesday, Jan. 18, during the show (weekdays at 3 p.m.) and will air again on Tuesday, Jan. 24.

"Whenever possible, we bring our viewers information on resources available that deal with the topics addressed in our programming, as we realize they may be facing similar events in their own lives," Brian Fonz, president of ABC Daytime says in a statement.

Damon Romine, GLAAD's entertainment media director, says that the ads will be available on the group's website (www.glaad.org) along with more information on the "Be a Friend and Ally" program.

"The campaign itself is really to reach the straight audience of 'General Hospital' who are watching the show and seeing Lucas' relationship with his friends and family and it gives them a place to find out more information," says Romine.

Hogestyn is also glad to be part of the PSA. "That is an important thing to show. It's important to have someone to talk to and counsel you can help with a certain aspect of coming out," he says.



Ben Hogestyn, who plays gay teen Lucas on 'General Hospital,' stands with Jackie Zeman, his television mother, while discussing coming out. (Photo by Adam Larkey/ABC)

ABC HAS A HISTORY OF INCLUDING gay characters on its daytime programming. In 1992, future heartthrob and movie star Ryan Phillippe played Billy, a gay teen, on "One Life to Live." In 2000, Bianca Montgomery (Eden Riegel), daughter of daytime's most famous diva, Erica Kane (Susan Lucci), came out on "All My Children," which then aired daytime's first girl-on-girl kiss in 2003.

Riegel left the show last February and the character was written off, rather than killed or recast as is often the case on the soaps. Bianca (and Riegel) returned in December for a short stint before leaving town again.

Like Bianca, Lucas is also part of one of "GH's" central families: the Spencers. His uncle Luke is one half of the "Luke and Laura" duo whose popular wedding in the '70s made daytime history as the most-watched event ever. His adopted mother, Bobbie, is a hooker-turned-nurse who has been a staple of the show for decades and will have some difficulty with her son's coming out.

"ABC has been at the forefront of portraying gays and lesbians on daytime," Romine says.

And while Lucas is still struggling with his family's acceptance, the next step, perhaps, will be to find him a boyfriend. When asked, Hogestyn said he has some ideas for Lucas' ideal man.

"I think someone who is more secure and confident with their own sexuality," he says.

As for added attention from his gay male fans, the cute Hogestyn is ready for that too. "Anytime you're affecting the audience, I'm happy with that," he says. "Whether it makes them feel happy or turned on or mad, any emotion that you're affecting the audience with, then you're doing your job."

MORE INFO

'General Hospital'
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music BUCK C. COOKE



With a new look and a CD that allows fans to create their own remixes, Duncan Sheik shows that he is still on the cutting edge.

He is one chic Sheik

SINGER-SONGWRITER DUNCAN SHEIK is definitely embracing the "songwriter" part of that hyphenate with his latest album, "White Limousine." The disc, which comes out Jan. 24, is full of indictments on war, the media and consumer culture.

"Shopping" is a biting satire of our culture's obsession with buying, spending and having. And the title track also packs a message:

"I guess they think it's what we want," he sings. "A smooth and easy ride. Constellations of ceiling lights. Hennessey and Naugahyde. America, America, this is our reward. Everything is boring, and everyone is bored."

Sheik explores the sense of loss on the album as well. "Hey Casanova" is a twisted take on the death of a ladies' man, and Sheik is haunted by a former love in "I Don't Believe in Ghosts."

He reminisces on a perfect day in "I Wouldn't Mind," barters for forgiveness in "The Dawn's Request," and seeks refuge in "Land," a song that blends the CD's themes of love and war.

SHEIK ALREADY ADDRESSED THE likely controversial content of "Star-field on Red Lines" on his blog. At issue is the line "strong armed Christians oiled up and fed."

"The Christians I'm referring to here are the Tom Delay or Tim LaHaye style of Christians who have, in my humble opinion, twisted the teachings of Jesus around into some scary version of 'if you don't believe what I believe you will (and should) burn in hell forever, and, by the way, capitalism in it's most extreme form is really great and it doesn't matter if you're a corrupt hypocrite as long as you make lots of money,'" the blog says.

Sheik goes on to explain that he feels there are "good Christians" and "bad Christians," just as he feels there are "good Muslims" and "bad Muslims," and that the "bad" label should be applied whenever anyone twists their religion to serve their own selfish motives.

SHEIK DEFINITELY TOOK THE DO-IT-YOURSELF approach with this project, writing all of the songs himself and produc-



Duncan Sheik sports a new beard for his new CD 'White Limousine', which drops on Jan. 24.

ing the album. In addition to his Grammy-nominated hit "Barely Breathing" from 1996's "Duncan Sheik," he has created a solid body of work, garnering him a devoted fan-base.

"White Limousine" is a unique release because the CD comes with a DVD that contains all of the audio elements and allows listeners to craft their own remixes of the songs.

Sheik explains that he originally wanted a "minimalist, electronica, singer-songwriter record," but that the creative process took a different turn. The technology on the DVD gives listeners the ability to create their own versions of the album.

"Maybe someone will actually make the minimalist electronica version of 'White Limousine' that I was afraid to realize," Sheik says.

He plans to launch a website where listeners can post the remixes.

Sheik can certainly be admired for the strength of his convictions. Anything that pisses off the religious right is definitely a step in the right direction, but the singer does not create work solely for controversy's sake.

With a new look marked by a bushy beard, the fresh-scrubbed cutie we know and love isn't completely gone. "White Limousine" is a beautiful album with Sheik's touching, trademark ballad sound, albeit focused in a very different direction this time around.

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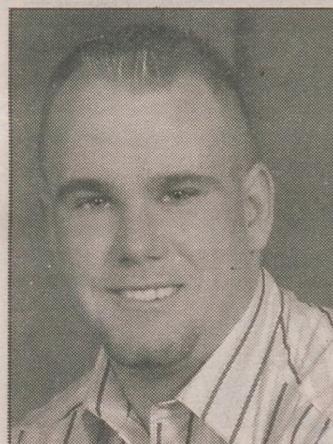
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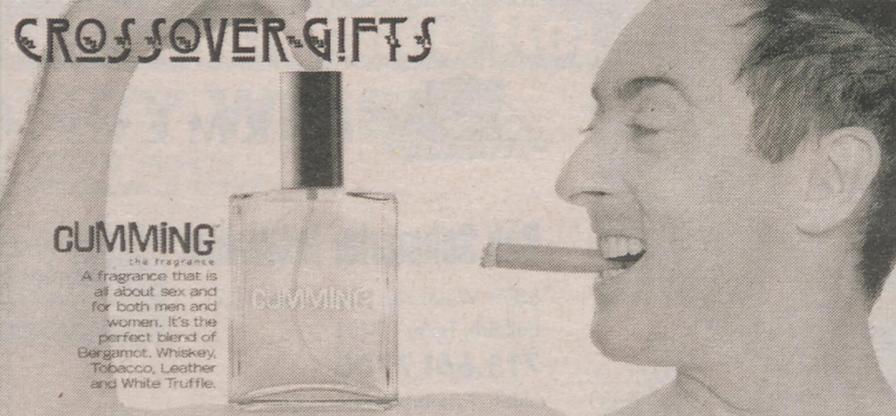


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Will he survive?

Richard Hatch in court, George Michael trashes Beckham and Star Jones' de Nile fantasy

The first winner of CBS' reality hit "Survivor" was gay contestant **RICHARD HATCH** and his victory was a great "screw you" to all the jocks in high school that tormented us and are now sad messes. Unfortunately, at the moment, Hatch has fallen off the role-model bandwagon.

Hatch is charged with tax evasion, accused of failing to claim the \$1 million he won from "Survivor." His trial started in Providence, R.I., on Friday, Jan. 13. That's not a very provident omen, Mr. Hatch.

He's also accused of omitting rent money he collected from one of his properties in Newport, R.I., and let's not forget the \$327,000 he was paid to co-host a Boston radio show. If that wasn't enough, he allegedly used \$36,500 earmarked for his charity, Horizon Bound, to cover "personal expenses."

The "sole survivor" has pleaded innocent to all the charges, and according to the Associated Press, his defense team has come up with the lame excuse that he's just "the world's worst bookkeeper." The prosecutor, on the other hand, said that not only did Hatch fail to report the \$1 million winnings, but he also sought a refund from the IRS for \$4,500.

He made it through the jungles of Borneo, but it remains to be seen whether he can make it through the jungles of the U.S. legal system with equal aplomb.

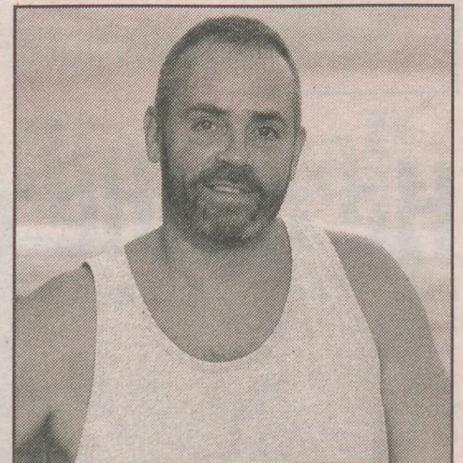
Projected insecurity

Dish knows that pop star **GEORGE MICHAEL** has a certain scruffy, washed-up, down-and-out sexiness to him, and she wouldn't mind having an intimate affair with him in, say, a public toilet. The real question is what right does Michael have to criticize the appearance of total hottie and gay icon **DAVID BECKHAM**?

Michael calls soccer stud Beckham insecure, because he changes looks so much, reports ContactMusic.com, a barely reputable online entertainment news source.

"It's okay for a woman to try new styles, but for a man?" says Michael, being both misogynistic and mind-numbingly dull, all in one breath.

"If I look at David Beckham — he looks fantastic, but permanently changes his look," Michael says.



Gay 'Survivor' winner **Richard Hatch** is on trial for tax evasion after allegedly failing to report his million dollar winnings.

This coming from the man who is still sporting that tired five o'clock shadow and the "CHiPs" sunglasses.

"No matter how great he looks, he is still insecure," says Michael. "Things like that should stop if you reach a certain age."

Maybe he is insecure. But what does it mean when a person sports the same style they did in the 1980s?

Star's river cruise

"The lady doth protest too much, methinks," might have been spoken by one queen about another, but this queen says it to **STAR JONES REYNOLDS**.



Al Reynolds & Star Jones

On weekly news show "20/20," Jones, the co-host of ABC's "The View" and author of the ridiculously titled, "Shine: A Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Journey to Finding Love" once again publicly went to the mat over her

husband's assured heterosexuality.

"I had extremely candid and loving and wonderful conversations with my husband," Jones said on the show. "And I have no doubts in my mind who he is, what he wants and who he's with."

Well, that's lovely for her, but some of the evidence is a little disconcerting. The New York Post reported that Jones' husband, **AL REYNOLDS**, a banker by trade, went to a predominantly gay Halloween party dressed as a stripper, wearing only a thong and a bathrobe. And let's not forget his "Roman Baths" themed bachelor party he threw for some of his closest friends right before his nuptials.

On "20/20," Jones also said she would like to float down the Nile river like Cleopatra. Do you actually think she doesn't know the old joke about it being more than a river in Egypt?



George Michael

@ Send comments, suggestions to Dish@houstonvoice.com

film GREG MARZULLO



'Brokeback Mountain' gallops to glory, taking home four Golden Globes as gay films dominate the awards ceremony.

A Golden evening

GAY FILM FANS CHEERED AND POPPED the Champagne after the Hollywood Foreign Press Association handed out its Golden Globe awards on Jan. 16, with gay-themed films dominating the night.

"Brokeback Mountain" was nominated for seven Golden Globes — more than any other film — including best director, best actor in a drama for Heath Ledger, best supporting actress for Michelle Williams, best screenplay, best original song, best original score and best film.

Jake Gyllenhaal, who plays Ledger's lover in the movie, wasn't nominated and did not attend the ceremony.

The movie took home four awards, including best picture drama and best director for Ang Lee. Larry

McMurtry and Diana Ossana won for best screenplay and musician Gustavo Santaolalla and lyricist Bernie Taupin (long time songwriting collaborator with Sir Elton John) won Best Original Song for "A Love That Will Never Grow Old."

Other films nominated in the best dramatic film category were "The Constant Gardner," "Good Night and Good Luck," "Match Point" and "A History of Violence."

Despite distribution concerns, "Brokeback" has gone into a much wider release than first anticipated. The Los Angeles Times reported the film opened on two screens in the rural Texas town of Plano and pre-sales beat out the sales for the mainstream "King Kong."

"It has proven you can never categorize a region or place or stereotype them," Lee told reporters.

Felicity Huffman scored the best actress award in a dramatic film for her portrayal of Bree, a transgender woman about to undergo gender reassignment surgery. Before completing the transition, Bree has to find and develop a relationship with her long-lost son. Huffman honored transgender

people in her acceptance speech.

"I know as actors our job is usually to shed our skin," she said. "But I think as people our job is to become who we really are, and so I would like to salute the men



Felicity Huffman accepts a Golden Globe for her portrayal of Bree, a transgender woman, in 'Transamerica.' (Courtesy of NBC Entertainment/Chris Haston)

and women who brave ostracism, alienation and a life lived on the margins to become who they really are."

The award for best actor in a dramatic film went to Philip Seymour Hoffman for his performance as Truman Capote in the film "Capote." The film follows the story of the gay writer's life during the creation of his best-selling crime novel "In Cold Blood." Hoffman's performance has long been the subject of Oscar buzz.

Although four of the stars of ABC's "Desperate Housewives" were nominated for best actress for musical or comedy, none of them (Huffman, Terri Hatcher, Marcia Cross or Eva Longoria) won. The award went to Mary Louise Parker for her performance on Showtimes' "Weeds."

Marc Cherry, the gay creator of "Housewives", shouldn't count the night as a total loss. His show did take home the award for television's best musical or comedy series.

There were a few gay losers at the Globes. Gay actor Nathan Lane was nominated for best actor in a musical or comedy for his role as Max Bialystock in "The Producers." Cillian Murphy was nominated in the same category for playing cross-dressing cabaret singer Patrick "Kitten" Brady in "Breakfast on Pluto." But Joaquin Phoenix won the category for his portrayal of Johnny Cash in "Walk the Line."

"Brokeback's" screenplay beat out another gay-related contender. Pulitzer Prize-winning gay author Tony Kushner co-wrote the screenplay for Steven Spielberg's "Munich" along with Eric Roth.

The Golden Globes are widely viewed as a preview of what to expect when Academy Award nominations are announced on Jan. 31. The Oscars will be awarded March 5.



Ang Lee



Philip Seymour Hoffman

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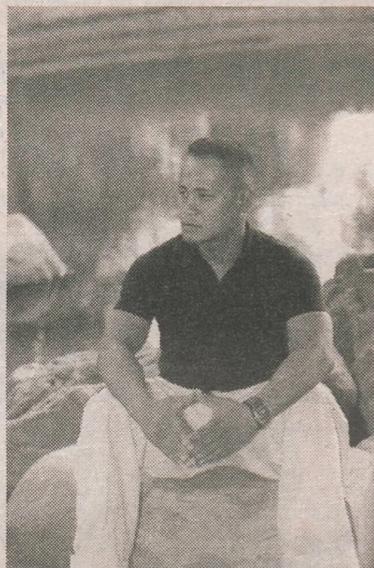


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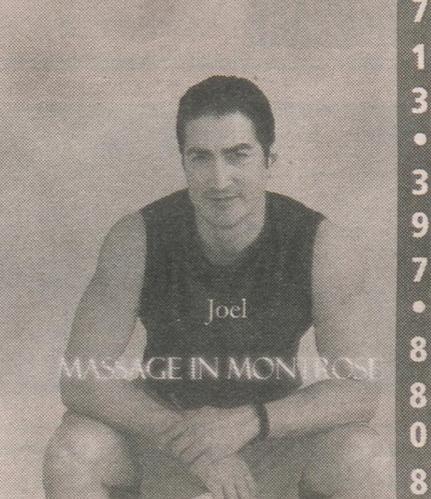
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THANKS, GRANOLA -- ME, NEITHER. CHEERS!

CLINK!

I JUST WISH I FELT MORE SECURE ABOUT MY FUTURE, EH? IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S SOME COMPANY OUT THERE WAITING TO HIRE ME AS A SCULPTOR... IT WOULD BE GREAT IF I DIDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MONEY -- IF I COULD JUST CREATE...

UH, YEAH. WELL...

REMEMBER A MONTH AGO WHEN YOU WERE CRYIN' OVER YOUR TOFU ABOUT HOW MOST ARTISTS TOIL IN OBSCURITY, AND NEVER FIND AN AUDIENCE TILL THEY'RE DEAD-- IF AT ALL-- AND HOW ALL YOU WANTED WAS JUST TO CHANGE THE WORLD WITH YOUR ART, BLAH, BLAH, BLAH...

YEAH?

WELL, I FIGURED OUT A SOLUTION... YA DID? HOW?

REMEMBER THAT DOCUMENTARY I HADDA MAKE FOR FILM CLASS ABOUT SOMEONE I KNEW, AND YOU LET ME FOLLOW YOU AROUND FOR A WEEK WITH A VIDEO CAMERA?

YEAH...?

I SUBMITTED THE TAPE TO A REALITY TV SHOW AND THE PRODUCERS LIKE YOU SO MUCH THEY WANT YOU TO COME IN AND MEET WITH THEM!

WHAT?! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THAT!

ANNIE, THAT'S SUCH A BETRAYAL OF MY TRUST... NO ONE WAS SUPPOSED TO SEE THAT TAPE EXCEPT YOUR FILM CLASS. I GAVE YOU TOTAL ACCESS TO MY LIFE -- EATING... SLEEPING... SHOWERING...

YAH. THAT WAS THE SCENE THEY LIKED BEST.

BESIDES, YOU KNOW I HATE REALITY SHOWS! THEY APPEAL TO PEOPLE'S LOWEST, MOST VOYEURISTIC INSTINCTS AND THERE'S NOTHING REMOTELY CREATIVE ABOUT THEM! I'D RATHER DIE THAN BE ON ONE OF THOSE!!

OKAY, WHATEVER, MR. IDEALISM. MAYBE YOU'LL MAKE IT AS AN ARTIST YOUR WAY OR MAYBE NOT. ALL I KNOW IS, THE FINALISTS ON THESE SHOWS END UP WITH AGENTS, PRESS COVERAGE AND MONEY.

DON'T YA SEE? THIS SHIT ISN'T AN END IN ITSELF -- IT'S JUST A SPRINGBOARD. THAT PRIZE MONEY WOULD GIVE YOU FREEDOM TO CREATE, AND THE SHOW COULD GIVE YOU A FORUM TO SAY WHATEVER YOU WANT.

UH, HUH. SO, WHAT WILL I HAVE TO DO? LIVE IN A HOUSE WITH 14 STRANGERS? EAT A BUCKET OF RAW HORSE TESTICLES?

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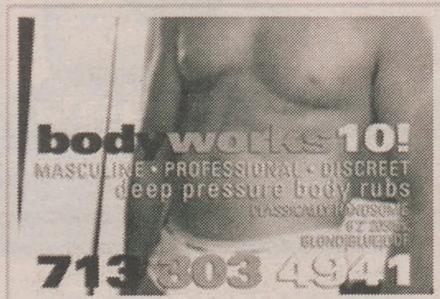
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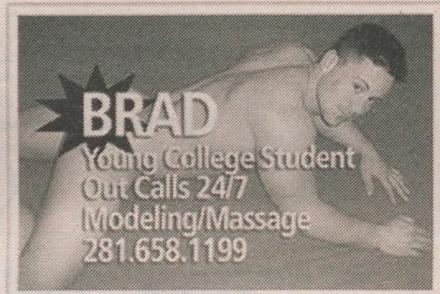
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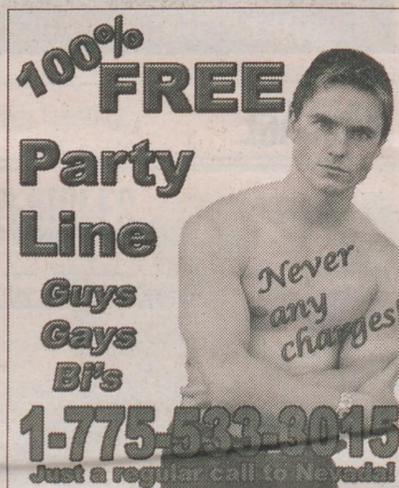
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5:30pm Tuesday for all other submissions.



bitch SESSION

Please don't poke fun at the tired drag queens who always host gay charity events. After all, they were re-born that way!

AT FIRST I WAS UPSET WHEN I STARTED having "leather flashes." Now I'm resigned that, as a gay man, I will inevitably go through "leather-pause," when nothing else does it for me in the bedroom.

I DON'T CARE WHAT THE LEATHER daddies say, fat will never be fashionable!

TO THE GUY WHO SAID A BIG HEART is more important than a big penis: Just how big are we talking about?

WHY IS IT SO HARD TO FIND A decent, God-fearing attractive woman who is not into drinking and drugs?

Bitch Boy responds: In general, or just for you? Because I have some ideas about the latter.

IF YOU HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO put an ad up on a sex site and posted nude pics, why state in your profile that you aren't looking to hook up?

WHY IS IT THAT YOU FIND SO MANY men proclaiming, "partnered but play separate or together"? Doesn't that just make you roommates? Or just hedging your bets?

TO THE 35-YEAR-OLD WHO SAID HE isn't an old troll: Give me a 35 to 45 year-old any day versus a twink. There's more

maturity, more conversation, more stability, and did I mention maturity?

I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE ASK MY AGE and I tell them I'm 23, and they say, "You look good — for your age." That is not a compliment! That's like saying you don't sweat much for a fat girl!

Bitch Boy responds: Dear child, if you're already obsessing about this at 23, well, good luck to you.

TO THE CLOSETED WANNABES ARROGANT enough to call at 3 a.m., thinking it'll be a booty call: We have our own men and our own lives. We don't have time for straight guys who act gay until right after they climax.

WHEN YOUR CARPET IS DIRTIER than the bottom of my shoes, don't ask me to take them off when I enter your apartment.

WHY SHOULDN'T I BE GAY? WOMEN only try to get their hands on my hard-earned money. I found a guy who loves to have sex all the time, and I didn't even have to dance with him or pay him anything!

SURE, CARSON KRESSLEY GOT famous by being who he is, and who he is, is a shallow, pretentious fashion queen who would not hesitate to cut a person to shreds simply because they do not wear the right things.

HAS ANYONE ELSE NOTICED THAT Carson Kressley has the worst fashion sense of any of the "Queer Eye" guys? It's like the age-old phenomenon of hairdressers whose hair looks completely freakish.

I HOPE "BITCH SESSION" IS AROUND 20 years from now, so all the twinks repelled at the sight of middle-aged gay men who dare to show their faces in public will find themselves on the receiving end of bitches from twinks who haven't even been born yet!

YOU KNOW YOUR BITCHES ARE SUBPAR when Bitch Boy wastes precious bitch space responding to almost all of them. Or is it just his inflated ego? Get over your god-like complex, bitch!

MAYBE SOME OF US DON'T KNOW what amoebas are because we all aren't sluts like you.

TO THE BITCH WHO CAN'T STAND "sissy liberals": Those "sissy" liberals made it possible for your right-wing ass to openly enjoy life as a gay man in America!

BEING 18, BROKE AND BI IN THE SUBURBS stinks!

Bitch Boy responds: Because being 18, broke and in the ghetto smells like roses.

I WISH MORE WOMEN WOULD WEAR glasses instead of contacts.

I LOVE YOU BUT NOT YOUR VEGAN baloney, my darling girl.

Bitch Boy responds: Vegan baloney? Blech! That sounds even worse than, um, the other stuff you girls eat!

IF YOU'RE SO HOT, WHY DO YOU NEED two retail jobs to support your career as a stripper?

WAIT, I THOUGHT A "BOI" WAS A young, boyishly playful, butch lesbian. But now you're telling me there are butch gay boys? WTF?

WE NEED TO STOP MAKING BOTTOMS feel ashamed and self-conscious. Many of us are, so why put each other down for it? And you tops need to get over your air of superiority because without bottoms, you'd be masturbating.

I WAS THERE AS YOUR FRIEND WHEN you caught your boyfriend cheating on you. The gratitude I get as your roommate is for you and your boyfriend to invite a third over to have make-up sex on my bed!

I HAD A CRUSH ON YOU FOR FIVE years, and you wouldn't give me the time of day. Now that I have a boyfriend, you act as if it bothers you. I wish I could figure that one out.

MY PRIVATES ARE TUCKED AWAY IN clean underwear; that's why I wash my hands before I pee.

REGARDING BITCH BOY'S RESPONSE to the lesbian concerned about other lesbians not practicing safer sex: Have you forgotten, BB, that HIV is not so old? What about viruses that haven't raised their heads yet?

Bitch Boy responds: What about the

anti-psychotic drugs you should be taking for your paranoia?

THE CORRECT ANSWER TO, "IS IT IN yet?" is: "It must be. I just got pulled over for entering the carpool lane."

"BITCH SESSION" IS THE BEST PART of this rag. Your words make me rethink and change my points of view. And nowadays, finding someone able to do that is almost impossible.

TO THE PERSON WHO COMPLAINED that it's really lesbians who want to marry: Lesbians not interested in equal marriage rights have complained that same-sex marriage is a gay male obsession. It just goes to show you that being a gay man means always having to say you're sorry.

TO THE GUY WHO WISHES THERE were more gay surfers: I surf! Yes, the ocean variety!

TO THE CHAP WHO WANTS TO KNOW why more gay men do not surf: They will as soon as Calvin Klein introduces surfing wear — not to mention the complimentary cologne.

I DON'T CARE THAT YOU ARE A "GAY surfer." You want us to believe that you are somehow special because you hang with the straight guys. Not so much!

TO THE GUY WHO ASKED WHY GAYS constantly seek validation of our relationships from heterosexual culture: Because it's their world, not ours. They outnumber us, they run the government, and they're deciding our political future.

I HATE YOU FOR NOT HAVING THE strength to love me.

YOU NATURALLY SKINNY GUYS should stop bashing bigger guys. Understand that not all of us can eat whatever we want, not work out and still stay skinny! Some of us have to work very hard to either

Editors' note: These are real bitches, sent in by real readers, about gay life's little annoyances, and the big ones, too. Got a bitch? Call 1-800-858-8088 or e-mail: bitch@houstonvoice.com



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