

Being young and gay

Gay teens speak out in new
publications about and
for GLBT youth.
Page 15



ISSUE 1097

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NOVEMBER 2, 2001

INSIDE



The annual Houston Black Tie Dinner features actor Alec Mapa as its keynote speaker Nov. 17.

Page 2



A Congressional committee has approved an amendment by Sen. Jesse Helms designed to keep school districts from banning Boy Scout meetings.

Page 9



Houstonian Patti A. Aldredge's lesbian-themed 'Fly Away' hits the stage at Unhinged Theatre next week.

Page 20

Lanier: Vote 'no' on City Prop. 2

Former Houston mayor speaks out as 'No on City Prop. 2' campaign seeks more volunteers for effort

by PENNY WEAVER

HOUSTON — Less than a week before Election Day, one of Houston's most respected political figures has voiced his opposition to the anti-gay City Prop. 2 that voters will consider Tuesday.

In an exclusive interview with the Houston Voice, former Mayor Bob Lanier said he supports efforts to defeat the amendment, which would prevent the city from offering health insurance and other benefits to domestic partners of city employees.

As worded on the Nov. 6 ballot, a vote "against" the measure reflects a stance in favor of domestic partner benefits, while a vote "for" the amendment would deny such benefits to same-sex partners.

"I oppose it. I'm not for a constitutional amendment that would prohibit the city

from considering [DP benefits]," Lanier said Wednesday. "I think the city's coming a long way in capitalizing on and respecting its diversity. Increasingly, it's a city that respects the individual."

Lanier — a well-known local political figure for more than a decade — said Houstonians have changed since 1985, when voters overwhelmingly rejected a measure that would have banned discrimination against gays.

He called City Prop. 2 — proposed and backed by conservative Dave Wilson and his Houstonians For Family Values — "divisive."

"I think it's wrong particularly at this time with the trouble going on with different ethnic groups," Lanier said. "This is a better city than that."

"I think it's divisive," he added. "It

> Continued on Page 8



Former Houston Mayor Bob Lanier this week said he supports efforts to defeat the anti-gay City Proposition 2 that faces city voters on Tuesday's ballot.

Anti-gay measure dominates pre-election furor



More than 100 religious leaders joined Clergy for a Fair Houston last Sunday to denounce the anti-gay City Prop. 2. That measure has overshadowed almost all other issues for gays on Election Day, including Houston City Council races.

Council races secondary for gays concerned about proposal that would prevent city from giving DP benefits

by PENNY WEAVER

HOUSTON — Opposition to the anti-gay amendment facing city voters Tuesday has held the spotlight for gays in local politics over other items on the ballot, including Houston City Council slots.

But when voters go to the polls on Election Day, they will face a full slate of Council races and a list of both state and city proposals.

The top issue on the list for gay city residents for Nov. 6 is City Prop. 2, backed by the conservative Houstonians For Family Values. If approved, the measure would deny health insurance and other benefits for domestic partners of city employees.

> Continued on Page 7

INSIDE

NEWS

Redistricting goes to court	2
Houston Black Tie Dinner set	2
Local news briefs	4
Helms' anti-gay measure passes	9

VOICES & ECHOES

Dahir: Arabs endure undue flak	10
Letter: Too kind to Chronicle?	11
Letter: Unimpressed with Empower	11
Quote/Unquote	12



New publications
allow gay youth to
speak out. See Out
on the Bayou, page
15.

OUT ON THE BAYOU

GLBT teens make their voices heard	15
Eating Out at Freebirds World Burrito	17
Homefront	19
Out on the Aisle	20
Community Calendar	22
My Stars!	27

Issue 1097



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State redistricting battle in court

Gay-friendly local Democrat concerned about largely black district that includes many gays

by PENNY WEAVER

AUSTIN — Gay-friendly U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee of Houston testified this week in federal court as the state redistricting struggle reached a new level.

The area which Lee represents includes a number of gay voters as reported in Census 2000 through the amount of same-sex couples reporting as heads of household.

On Monday, Lee testified that she wants to keep her congressional district and its large black voting age population largely intact.

"I am here, frankly, to preserve the 18th congressional district because I'm troubled that it may be in doubt," she said.

Minority representation is at the heart of the trial before three federal judges, who must ensure that the federal Voting Rights Act and its protection of minority districts is followed.

Some parties to the lawsuit, including the Coalition of Black Democrats, want a third Texas district where black voters could elect their candidate of choice. It would be in Houston.

Texas' population has increased to 20.8 million, and the state is gaining two congressional seats as a result of the 2000 census.

Republicans and Democrats are fighting for control of the state's congressional delegation. It is now held by Democrats, 17-13.

In describing District 18 — which includes Houston and the local heavily gay Montrose neighborhood — Lee said it was drawn



Gay-friendly U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee of Houston was in federal court this week to defend her congressional district, which includes a number of local gay residents.

as a result of the 1970 census and that Barbara Jordan was the first to run for the seat.

It is a district where inner-city struggles against poverty and HIV infection persist, said Lee, who participated in the recent Empower 2001, sponsored by the Greater Houston LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

Other gay-friendly state politicians also have struggled in the redistricting process. The Republican-controlled Texas Legislative Redistricting Board in July adopted boundaries for Texas House and Senate districts designed to secure substantial Republican majorities in both chambers.

The boundaries are to become effective for the elections in 2002. But lawmakers are still wrangling over the state-level district maps as well.

The proposed new lines leave many gay-friendly legislators homeless. Democrats Debra Danburg and Scott Hochberg now reside in the same district as conservative Republican Kyle Janek. The new district is supposedly more than 60 percent Republican.

By the new lines, Glenn Maxey of Austin, the state's only openly gay legislator, would be "paired" with two of his liberal colleagues, Elliot Naishtat and Ann Kitchen.

"They split the gay community up to silence its voice," Danburg has said of the proposed new district lines.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

Fund-raiser key for gay organizations

Smaller crowd expected for annual Houston Black Tie Dinner, set for Nov. 17

by KAY DAYUS

HOUSTON — "And the Beat Goes On" is the theme for this year's eighth annual Houston Black Tie Dinner, one of the biggest and most elegant local fund-raisers for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Houstonians.

The gala will be Nov. 17 at the George R. Brown Convention Center, but with far fewer people expected at this year's event, the beat is not going on quite as usual.

"We're expecting around 900 to 1,000 people this year," said Gail Swinney, president of Houston Black Tie Board.

That's considerably less than last year's 1,300 and a change overall since the numbers have risen each year since the dinner's inception.

Last year, the event doled out more than \$130,000 to local and national LGBT organizations, but that figure will likely be less this year. Swinney and Sandy Clough, co-chair of the dinner, said the lower numbers can be blamed the aftereffects of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington and the ensuing economic downturn.

"People have been laid off; they've lost their jobs. And a lot of activities in the city have been canceled," Swinney said. "We're doing well considering the economy."

Still, a full program is planned. Actor,



Actor Alec Mapa is slated to be the keynote speaker at the annual Houston Black Tie Dinner on Nov. 17.

writer and activist Alec Mapa is the keynote speaker. Mapa most recently appeared in the CBS comedy "Some of My Best Friends." His other television credits include "Friends," "Seinfeld," "Melrose Place" and "Murder One."

The Houston Gay Men's Chorus will open the program with "a tribute to our nation." Local news weatherman Chuck George will emcee for the second year, and the Ricky Diaz Orchestra will provide music. A silent auction also will be held.

Swinney said the "Beat Goes On" theme relates to the gay community and its trials.

"We've been through the AIDS crisis and other things and we keep on going. It's like saying, 'we will survive,'" she said.

Local beneficiaries include An Uncommon Legacy, AssistHers, Bering-Omega Community Services, Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals, Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, Lesbian Health Initiative, Montrose Clinic, People With AIDS Coalition, PFLAG-Houston, Center for AIDS and Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is the sole national beneficiary.

Houston Black Tie Dinner, Inc. is a non-profit volunteer organization whose mission is to fight AIDS and prejudice and discrimination, while serving as a strong advocate for men's and women's health care. The dinner has raised and distributed more than \$1.2 million since 1993.

INFO

Houston Black Tie Dinner

7 p.m. Nov. 17
George R. Brown Convention Center
713-523-9611
www.houstonblacktiedinner.org

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Public invited to Montrose Clinic's anniversary celebration

HOUSTON — Montrose Clinic marks its 20th anniversary with an open house and award ceremony Nov. 8. The facility provides health care services including HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases testing and now is a full-service clinic offering primary and specialized HIV health care. The public is invited to tour the facility and learn more about the programs offered. Refreshments will be serviced. Special awards will be presented to two individuals and one organization that have served the clinic and its patients for many years. Wayne Bockmon, M.D., will receive the Montrose Clinic Lifetime Professional Service Award. He has long been affiliated with the clinic and is a founder of the Body Positive Wellness Program. Sylvia Suhrland will receive the clinic's Lifetime Volunteer Service Award. She worked at the facility for more than a decade, volunteering to process labs and as an HIV counselor. The Lifetime Community Service Award will be given to the Colt 45's, a group that has raised money for the clinic since its inception. Montrose Clinic serves 14,000 men, women and teens each year. In addition to free HIV tests and counseling, the facility offers testing and vaccines for hepatitis, education and outreach.

20th anniversary open house

5:30-7 p.m. Nov. 8
Montrose Clinic
215 Westheimer
713-830-3000
www.montrosecclinic.org

INFO

Annual event raises more than \$20,000

HOUSTON — Leaders of The Grey Party Inc. have announced that this year's event, held in October at South Beach, raised in excess of \$20,000 for three local charities. Monies raised will be distributed among Houston's Bering/Omega Dental Clinic, Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) and Houston Buyers Club, according to Grey Party President Chuck Spinks. This fall's event was the 19th annual fund-raiser.



Houston's popular Grey Party this year raised more than \$20,000 to assist local charities.

Humane society hosts tournament to benefit homeless animals

HOUSTON — The 13th annual Par "FORE" Pets Golf Tournament will be held Nov. 5 at Sugar Creek Country Club in Sugar Land, Texas. The event is sponsored by the Houston Humane Society, a non-profit animal shelter dedicated to eliminating cruelty, abuse and overpopulation of animals.

Proceeds from the tourney support HHS programs including cat and dog adoptions, a spay/neuter clinic, low-cost vaccinations and humane education. Registration begins at 9 a.m. on the day of the event, which wraps up at 4 p.m. with awards, a silent auction and dinner.

Houston Humane Society

Par "FORE" Pets Golf Tournament
Sugar Creek Country Club
420 Sugar Creek Blvd.
Sugar Land, TX 77478
For more information:
713-433-6421

INFO

around houston

Reading cultivates diversity among local artists

HOUSTON — Voices Breaking Boundaries (VBB), a collective forum for artists from diverse perspectives, backgrounds and countries, continues its season with a literary reading and open mike at Nov. 11 at DiverseWorks downtown. The series has become well known around Houston for searching out versatile, local musicians who are usually re-invited based on heavy audience demand. As customary, the music will be followed by young writers. The spoken part of the evening will be followed by featured writers Jane Creighton and Cedric Ary. An open mike session also will be part of the evening. The VBB monthly readings routinely draw more than 80 audience members, according to organizers.

—Penny Weaver

Voices Breaking Boundaries

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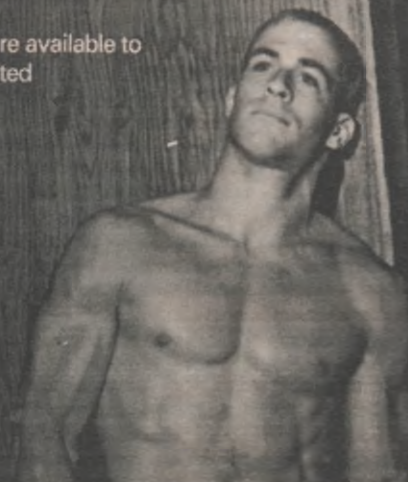


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Mayor Lee Brown Has Done His Part . . .

1982-1990

Police Chief Lee Brown orders an end to bar raids and anti-gay harassment, pioneers gay and lesbian sensitivity training as required education for cadets, and introduces community-based police storefronts, including the Montrose substation.

1997— 2001

Mayor Lee Brown issues an Executive Order to end discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender city employees, creates the office of Special Liaison to the LGBT community, orders the Police Department to track hate crimes against LGBT people, and appoints the first two openly gay Municipal Court judges.

July 2001

Mayor Lee Brown passes an historic Nondiscrimination Ordinance for city employees that includes sexual orientation and gender identity.

October 2001

Mayor Lee Brown delivers on a promise to assemble an unprecedented coalition of business leaders, African American ministers and community leaders to defeat the anti-gay City Prop 2.

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Photo: Houston Chronicle

Re-Elect

Mayor Lee Brown

Paid for by Gay or Lesbian Dollars PAC. Kathy Hubbard, Treasurer.

Parker faces pair of opponents Tuesday

➤ Continued from Page 1

As on the ballot, the question reads: "Shall the charter of the city of Houston be amended to deny health care benefits to same sex domestic partners of city employees and to address other matters of employment and contracting practices based on sexual orientation?"

That means that a vote "against" City Prop. 2 favors same-sex domestic partner benefits, which the city does not currently offer but which officials have discussed.

Mayoral candidates include incumbent Mayor Lee Brown and City Council members Chris Bell and Orlando Sanchez. Both Brown and Bell have expressed opposition to City Prop. 2, and both supported the city's anti-discrimination measure approved in July. Sanchez, on the other hand, supports City Prop. 2 and voted against the anti-bias ordinance.

But a major attention-getter on the ballot for gays is the City Council race for At-Large Position 1, a post now held by Annise Parker, the Council's only openly gay member. Her opponents are James B. Neal and Sylvia Ayres.

In a questionnaire distributed to candidates by the Houston Voice, Parker reiterated her opposition to City Prop. 2 and noted that she co-sponsored — along with Mayor Brown — the city's non-discrimination ordinance.

"I urge all Houstonians to vote against City Prop. 2," Parker said. "It would legalize discrimination in our City Charter by singling out the families of gay and lesbian city employees for discrimination."

"Gay and lesbian city employees deserve access to health insurance for their families just like every other city employee," she added.

Neal could not be reached by the Voice for comment, but he is on record as rating same-sex benefits as his "top priority" on City Council. He is against the city offering such benefits, he stated in the Voters Guide published by the League of Women Voters-Houston.

"Being a city employee, I feel city employees [all] were left out of the mix,"

Neal said. "One group issue for insurance benefits for the same-sex partner was unfair. Position 1 at large should represent all taxpayers and all city employees."

Ayers could not be reached for comment. She apparently supports City Prop. 2, however, as her name is on petitions requesting that the proposal be put before voters, according to document submitted to the city secretary.

Other City Council races

All City Council seats are contested except for that of incumbent Gabriel Vasquez, who represents District H.

That district includes 1,000 or more same-sex couples who reported in Census 2000. Along with District A and District D, that area is home to the highest concentration of gay voters in the city, as shown in the Census.

Although unopposed, Vasquez returned a Houston Voice questionnaire and expressed opposition to City Prop. 2. He voted in favor of the non-discrimination ordinance and said he also supports domestic partner benefits for city employees.

"I support the [GLBT] community with my votes," Vasquez said. "I have hired a qualified gay man and have supported the appointment of gays and lesbians to city boards and commissions."

In District A, incumbent Bruce Tatro is opposed by Toni Bracher Lawrence for that Council seat.

In District D, which includes much of the heavily gay Montrose neighborhood, six candidates are on the ballot: Ada Edwards, Chris Oliver, Gerald Womack, Darryl Carter, Homer L. Clark and Ronald McKinney.

Edwards has been endorsed by the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus. She returned a Houston Voice questionnaire and voiced support for the city's nondiscrimination ordinance and opposition to City Prop. 2. She also said she would support domestic partner benefits for city employees.

"I have long relationships with the gay and lesbian community, and a history of working together on issues that are common to us," Edwards said. "I have a record that will back up my commitment to make the gay and lesbian community a working partner in governing District D."

Despite repeated attempts, the other candidates for District D could not be reached by press time.

Other candidates for office on Houston's Nov. 6 ballot include openly gay Mike Rogers, in competition for District E. His opponents are Bernard Maristany, Bill Jones, Darryl E. Smith, Jan Lang Kish, Addie Wiseman and Carlos Simonson Orelana.

In response to a Houston Voice questionnaire, Rogers said his support for the city's non-discrimination ordinance is ongoing.

"I vehemently object to both the bigotry evident in City Proposal 2 and the rhetoric spewed on its behalf; moreover, I call for the defeat of this measure based upon the com-

mon-sense approach needed in city government," he said.

Another race notable for gay voters is for At Large Position 5, in which incumbent Carroll Robinson faces openly gay candidate James Galvan. In previous campaigns, Galvan has said he is gay.

Both candidates returned Houston Voice questionnaires. Both expressed support for the city's anti-discrimination ordinance and opposition to City Prop. 2. Each also supports domestic partner benefits.

"I support a plan that would allow all city employees to cover another person regardless of sexual orientation," Robinson said.

Galvan said, "I support domestic partner benefits for City of Houston employees because I believe in equal rights."

Robinson pointed to "my record of fairness and inclusion" on the Council as setting him apart from his opponent.

"My willingness to reach out to and involve the gay and lesbian community" also sets him apart, Robinson said.

Galvan said his opponent "sells his votes and is constantly absent from Houston City Council public meetings on Tuesdays while I have an extremely good attendance record having missed only two meetings this year."



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Councilwoman Annise Parker, the only openly gay member of the Houston City Council, faces two opponents on Election Day: James B. Neal and Sylvia Ayres.



Ada Edwards for Houston City Council, District D

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Lanier: Houston has changed since '85 anti-gay vote

> Continued from Page 1

amounts to expression of charter disapproval of one group of our citizens. I don't really see that it accomplishing anything."

Lanier has given his support to gay civil rights activists in defeating City Prop. 2 both with a \$2,500 personal donation and in talking with members of No on City Prop. 2, the group fighting the measure.

"I've met with them on a couple of occasions," Lanier said.

He hopes the amendment is defeated at the polls Tuesday.

"I think it's going to be a close election, but my guess would be it would be turned down," Lanier said. "In general, the city [should reflect] respect for everybody and try and have everybody have equal opportunities and respect diversity."

"I think all those attitudes have improved substantially in the last 20 years and I really would hope I've been able to make some contribution to that," he added.

Lanier has enjoyed continued popularity in the city since his first election as mayor in 1991, according to Dr. Richard Murray, political science professor at the University of Houston. He remains an important figure in city politics, noted Murray, co-author of "Texas Politics: An Introduction" and "Chance and Governance in Houston."



Alex Morua, executive director of Progressive Voters in Action, said more volunteers are needed to help defeat the anti-gay City Prop. 2.

Wilson — who ran unsuccessfully for mayor against Lanier in 1995 — previously told the Voice that he would not expect Lanier to oppose City Prop. 2.

"I thought he was more pro-family than pro-homosexual," Wilson said.

This week, Wilson called Lanier's comments on the ballot amendment "totally

irrelevant."

"I don't think Bob Lanier's endorsement is going to amount to changing the mind of one voter in Houston," Wilson said.

But opponents of the amendment welcome Lanier's support.

"He has a high level of respect in the city. I think people listen when he has to say something," said Alex Morua, executive director of Progressive Voters in Action, one of the groups working to defeat the proposition.

Leaders and volunteers with Progressive Voters in Action and People for a Fair Houston — who jointly have formed the group "No on City Prop. 2" — are working through Election Day to defeat the HFFV amendment.

Morua said this week that hundreds of volunteers continue to power the group's phone banks to reach thousands of city voters — and more volunteers are needed.

"We do feel good. The voters that we've been talking to have by and large been supportive of defeating this measure," Morua said. "The word's out there in the community."

"I think we've got a good shot at defeating this," he added.

Morua noted that assistance still is needed on Election Day and volunteers are wel-

come to sign up to work that day. He said he is encouraged by the amount of response the campaign has seen.

"It is historic for our community to organize at this level," Morua said.

INFO

People for a Fair Houston

P.O. Box 667307
Houston, TX 77266-7307
713-523-1762
www.fairhouston.org

Progressive Voters in Action

2700 Albany, Suite 205
Houston, TX 77006
www.votePVA.org

Houstonians for Family Values

506 Melbourne
Houston, TX 77022
713-699-3399
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713-521-7161

1.

★ **Re-Elect Annise Parker**
City Council At-Large Position 1

PUNCH 146 ON PAGE 6 OF THE CITY BALLOT

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2.

Vote "Against" City Prop #2



Houston City Council Member
ANNISE PARKER

Vote AGAINST Discrimination -

It's a matter of fairness! Gay and lesbian city employees should get the same health care benefits as other city employees.

Vote AGAINST City Prop #2.

Annise

PUNCH 231 ON PAGE 9 OF THE CITY BALLOT

Helms' Boy Scout measure passed by panel

Compromise language added as gay activists express disappointment with 'allies' who supported measure



An amendment by Sen. Jesse Helms designed to keep school districts from banning Boy Scout meetings was recrafted and passed by a Congressional conference committee on Tuesday. Helms said many schools had sought to penalize the Boy Scouts over the group's anti-gay policies.

by LOU CHIBBARO JR.

WASHINGTON — A House-Senate conference committee on Tuesday approved a compromise version of an amendment to an education bill introduced by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) earlier this year that would withhold millions of dollars in federal education funds from public schools that deny "equal access" to meeting space for the Boy Scouts.

"The language agreed to by the conference committee has no place in the education bill," said Winnie Stachelberg, political director of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest gay political group. "We're disappointed that a number of our allies voted for it."

Helms argued that schools throughout the country were seeking to penalize the Boy Scouts over the Boy Scouts' anti-gay admission policies. He said the federal government should step in to "discourage" schools and school districts from taking such action.

The House and Senate each passed the Helms amendment in the spring.

Sens. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) were among the members of the conference committee that backed the compromise.

"It's not okay," said U.S. Rep. Barney Frank

(D-Mass.), who is gay. "I would have preferred not to have it at all. But it's much better than the Helms amendment."

An official with Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund, a gay litigation group, and the head of the D.C. office of the ACLU's gay civil rights project, said the compromise could be harmful to gays because it sets a precedent that singles out the Boy Scouts for "special treatment" solely because of their "discriminatory" policies against gays.

The conference panel approved the compromise language as part of a sweeping education bill proposed by President Bush. The full House and Senate are expected to approve the compromise in separate votes during the next two weeks.

The compromise retains Helms' language that would withhold federal funds from public schools or public school districts that deny "equal access" to meeting space for the Boy Scouts if the schools or school districts routinely offer similar space to other groups.

But the compromise language also states that schools are not required to sponsor Boy Scouts chapters, clarifying a concern by gay education groups that the original Helms amendment would blur the distinction between school sponsorship and access to meeting space.

The conference panel's compromise rejected

a separate amendment offered by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), which the Senate passed on the same day it passed the Helms amendment. The Boxer amendment called for prohibiting public schools from denying equal access to facilities for the Boy Scouts and other groups based on those groups' "favorable or unfavorable position concerning sexual orientation."

Unlike the Helms amendment, the Boxer amendment did not call for withholding federal education funds.

Gay advocacy groups favored the Boxer amendment, saying it was preferable because it didn't single out the Boy Scouts for what the groups say is "special treatment."

Frank said an existing federal law that already bars schools from denying equal access to the Boy Scouts and all other groups, and noted that gay rights advocates never called for deny equaling access from the Boy Scouts.

"From a practical point, it has no effect," Frank said. "It was a victory for us to get the sponsorship issue cleared up."

But Buckel of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund said the compromise language sets a dangerous precedent.

"It is now a special rights bill for the Boy Scouts," he said. "Schools that run afoul of this law will face the prospect of taxpayer funds being used to investigate them."

HGLPC Endorsements:

- ☒ Mayor: Lee Brown
- Houston City Council:**
- ☒ At-Large 1: Annise Parker
- ☒ At-Large 2: Gordon Quan
- ☒ At-Large 3: Marc Whitehead
- ☒ At-Large 4: Claudia Williamson
- ☒ District B: Carol Galloway
- ☒ District D (Includes Montrose): Ada Edwards
- ☒ District H: Gabriel Vasquez
- ☒ District I: Carol Alvarado
- ☒ HISD Board: Ted Weisgal
- ☒ FOR ALL City Bonds
- City Propositions (Charter Amendments):**
- ☒ FOR Charter Amendment -- Proposition 1
Support Light Rail -- Keep Houston Moving
- ☒ AGAINST Charter Amendment -- Proposition 2
Say NO to discrimination against domestic partners of city employees
Vote AGAINST this anti-gay charter amendment
- ☒ AGAINST Charter Amendment -- Proposition 3
Say NO to cutting jobs and wasting taxpayers money

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Re-Elect
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PUNCH #231 ON PAGE 9 OF THE CITY BALLOT

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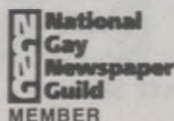
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VIEWPOINT

Gay Arabs find themselves rejected by their own

by MUBARAK DAHIR

I am sitting in a cavernous room on the second floor of the Gay & Lesbian Community Center in New York City. It is the room assigned to the evening's meeting of the Gay & Lesbian Arab Society.

The room is way too big for the unusually small number of members assembled

ment in his neighborhood, even a physical attack.

He's called the police, but the last time an officer showed up, he polished the American flag lapel on his uniform instead of taking notes. Before he left, the policeman said, "You should expect this after what your people did to us."

Another GLAS member, who works in

In these times, even our fellow gay and lesbian citizens see in us the Arab label first. Sometimes, that is all they see.

here tonight. We are only six tonight, up two from the last meeting.

The group is surprisingly small during this difficult time, I think to myself. Our numbers should swell from the standard core of attendees, not dwindle like this to near nothing.

And then someone in the group utters the obvious explanation, the one none of us really wants to admit or say out loud: Some people are too afraid to come to a meeting right now. Too nervous to come even here, to a gay community center, symbolic as it is of the safe harbor for us as gay Arabs.

But in these times, even our fellow gay and lesbian citizens see in us the Arab label first. Sometimes, that is all they see.

The gay bond that I used to think was so strong — the one that can at times give me a sense of connection to a total stranger in a foreign city simply by making eye contact — feels broken in a way I never guessed imaginable.

I used to think of the gay community as a refuge, a place I could go and be at ease no matter what. In college, long before I was out, I used to slink away to a local gay bar as the only place where I could let down my guard. Later, the gay community was where I turned, too, when my father rejected me as his gay son.

But today, as an Arab, even as a gay one, there seems nowhere to turn, no shelter in America.

It is from gay men in my regular local bar that I overhear the most chilling conversation about rounding up Arabs in Brooklyn. It is in some of the gay and lesbian newspapers that I read the most ill-informed pieces on Islam. And it is some of our most prominent gay and lesbian leaders and thinkers who now tell us we should go along with the administration's measures to curb public information and trample civil liberties.

In our oversized room at the community center, GLAS members huddle our folding chairs into a circle and share our personal stories. At one meeting, a member who dresses in Muslim garb tells how he has been the target of constant harass-

ment in his neighborhood, even a physical attack.

run into a lesbian with a cane, her legs bandaged. I open the door for her and ask about her apparent accident.

"Oh it was no accident," she retorts bitterly, unaware of the Arab blood coursing through my veins. "A fucking Arab cab driver ran into me. It was an act of terrorism!"

Dumbfounded, I say nothing as she blathers on about the cops promising her that the man who did this would get a particularly harsh sentence because he is Arab, how none of them can be trusted, how they are all out to "get us." She passes from the stairwell into the hall and disappears around the corner.

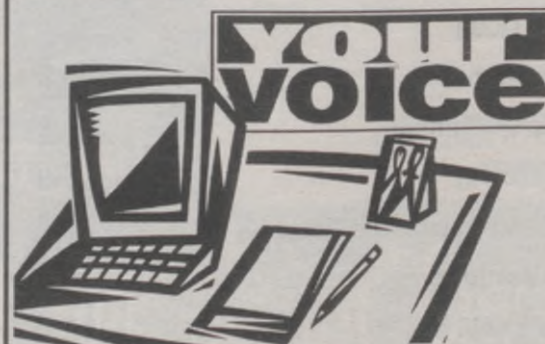
For a moment I stand there motionless, frozen. Still standing on the landing, I let go of the door, and it swings closed in front of me.

Mubarak Dahir is a syndicated columnist living in Astoria, N.Y., and can be reached at MubarakDah@aol.com.

Corrections

In last week's edition, a headline in the *Houston Voice* erroneously stated that current Houston Mayor Lee Brown is running for re-election to achieve his second term. In fact, Brown seeks a third term on the Nov. 6 ballot. Also, a photo of Brown on Page 1 was courtesy of *Houston Chronicle*.

Houston Voice regrets the errors.



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you
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Letters

GLAAD spokesperson may have been too kind to Chronicle after story was cut

To the Editor:

GLAAD spokesperson Hallie Whittaker may have been too kind to the Houston Chronicle after it cut from a story two paragraphs about Mark Bingham, the Sept. 11 hero from San Francisco ("Chronicle edits out gay references in story," news, Oct. 19), paragraphs which reveal that Bingham was openly gay. I remember a Chronicle news article from about a year ago which failed to report that one of its own writers, a sports writer if my memory is right, died from AIDS in a local AIDS hospice.

One needs to review the Chronicle's overall record on such issues, not just one story.

Tim Campbell
Houston

Empower 2001 lacked pizzazz, needs more community support to improve for 2002

To the Editor:

I hate to say this, but Empower 2001 was disappointing. Since Houston is the fourth largest city in America, I would expect a lot more from this event.

The graphics and ads for the event were mundane and unoriginal. The brochures were not something you wanted to take home. It lacks so much originality. We are gay, and many of us are good artists, if not the best. There is a lack of support from sophisticated gay people who do not lend a hand to improve our community in the aspect of design. Empower 2002 should find volunteers to donate artwork for the program cover, ads, etc.

In addition, I found it disappointing that the seats at the eating area near the main stage were empty. Performers and singers were left to sing to a very few and inattentive people. It was sad to see.

The place was just not exciting nor interesting, and last year was just as bad. Empower has not become something to look forward to. I just keep hoping that every year it's going to get better, and it hasn't.

Something is very wrong with Empower. It's not effective, it's not successful, and it's not something I am looking forward to next year.

*Taylor Hackford
Houston*

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compiled by REX WOCKNER and staff reports



Mark Bingham

"He was a very masculine, crazy kid who left his dirty dishes under the bed and dirty clothes behind the door in the bathroom. There was nothing about him that fit into any stereotype of what we perceive of as a gay person, which goes to show you we cannot rely on our stereotypes."

—Alice Hogland, mother of Mark Bingham, the gay rugby player who is believed to have been among the passengers who fought the hijackers of United Airlines flight 93, which crashed in Pennsylvania Sept. 11, to the Associated Press, Oct. 22

"I am a generation that is not patriotic. ... That's how I have been my whole life. Then all of a sudden in Los Angeles, I am standing in line at a flag store for two and a half hours. ... My whole life if you would have ever said to me that was going to happen, I would have said you were fucking nuts."

—Lesbian comic Suzanne Westenhoefer to Kansas City's Midwest Times, Oct. 16

"Until America really addresses the fundamental dignity and integrity that everyone should be able to live with, the fundamental issues of human rights, then we are never going to address the root cause of the resentment that people feel. The rest of the world sees us as a country that has tremendous resources, and we only use those resources when it benefits us."

—Surina Khan, executive director of the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission, to the Boston Phoenix, Oct. 18

"I practiced kissing with my make-up artist Lisa. Every Thursday night we run through the lines and rehearse them at dinner, and she said, 'Show me how you're going to kiss Denise [Richards].' But when it really happened, I have never felt such beautiful soft lips in my life. I fell in love."

—Actress Heather Locklear on her lesbian kiss on the TV show "Spin City," to Hollywood.com, Oct. 19

"Donny Osmond."

—Ellen DeGeneres when asked who her first celebrity crush was, to PlanetOut.com, Oct. 19

"To me, a girl who's into pleasing men her whole life, ... [my first time having sex with Ellen DeGeneres] was a great orgasm, it was beautiful, I felt like I was exploring something new, which was awesome. It was not what I always thought it would be, which was touchy-soft love. It was masculine and feminine. It was *everything*."

—Actress Anne Heche to the Advocate, Nov. 6



Donny Osmond

"I think she [Ellen DeGeneres] was threatened by me meeting men. I felt like I was not trusted. Which was offensive to me. I never, ever gave her reason to believe that she could not trust my love. I brought her to the premiere of 'Volcano'; I went on Oprah; I stood by her side."

—Actress Anne Heche to the Advocate, Nov. 6

"You should see the hate e-mail I get. We have met the enemy, and he can't spell."

—Cathy Renna of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation to the Washington Post, Oct. 27

"I don't want people to think I'm some symbol of the lesbian community, because I'm not a lesbian myself. I don't want people to think that I'm saying I know more than they do about their own lives."

—Actress Michelle Clunie who plays Melanie on Showtime's "Queer As Folk," to Curve magazine, November issue



Michelle Clunie



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Friday • Nov 2 Morning Prayer 10am	Thursday • Nov 8 Understanding the Islamic Faith 7pm (guest speaker)
Monday • Nov 5 Eucharist 7:30pm	Friday • Nov 9 Morning Prayer 10am
Tuesday • Nov 6 <i>Don't forget to vote!</i>	Saturday • Nov 10 Kolbe Breakfast 9:30am

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Out on the Bayou

HOUSTON VOICE • NOVEMBER 2, 2001

When you're young and gay

A new novel by Alex Sanchez and a collection of photos and profiles by Adam Mastoon capture the face of today's gay youth

by JACQUELINE DEAN

"His mind was a whirlwind, while beside him his hand took on a life of its own. Slowly one finger after another fell between Kyle's fingers, until all intertwined. This was surely the climax of his life. Disaster was certain to follow, but he was ready to die happy."

"Rainbow Boys" by Alex Sanchez tells an aching familiar tale of adolescent love with a twist. This is more of a "Romeo and Julius" than

"Romeo and Juliet."

A 1999 Massachusetts study of youth revealed that 5.5 percent of students in junior high and high school acknowledge themselves as gay or lesbian by self-identity or by behavior.

Despite the trend, the world of young adult literature has not kept pace. Only recently has there been an increase in juvenile literature with a gay theme, targeted to gay and lesbian youth. Many early works such as "Ruby Fruit Jungle" by Rita Mae Brown were marketed to adults waxing nostalgic.

Sanchez says that tide is turning. "The first gay-themed young adult books were published in 1969 after Stonewall," he explains. He notes that since that time, there have been few that did not reduce gays to secondary roles.

"There has been little focus on gays as protagonists," he says. The books that have been put out there, Sanchez says, have been aimed more at young lesbians than young gay men.

"Rainbow Boys" is targeted towards a mainstream young adult market, according to Sanchez. The book is doing well in its first weeks and is now listed as a best-seller on insideout-books.com and is one of the top 25 gay books on Amazon.com.

Being different and making independent choices is often the focus of young adult literature. From the mega literary hit Harry Potter books to "Catcher in the Rye" and "To Kill a Mocking Bird," young adult literature has shown the angst and trials of growing up. One element that has been glaringly missing for many youth is a collection of stories or books about what it's like to grow up gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

The Human Rights Watch reported in a 1999 independent poll by CBS that one third of 11th grade respondents knew of incidents of harassment of gay students.

Sanchez believes that reading stories about queer youth creates a much more personal connection than does watching movies or television shows with gay themes.

"A story unfolds inside us, inside our imagination," he offers. "This creates a connection to the characters [and] an empathy among non-gay youth, parents, teachers and counselors."

So far, says Sanchez, there has been a positive response to his book from teachers and librarians. "Librarians are amazing champions of free speech," he offers. "For many GLBT youth, libraries often become sanctuaries."

appts.



Houston Ballet presents the latest work by gay choreographer Dominic Walsh through Nov. 4 at Cullen Theater.

through
sunday,
nov. 4

Houston Ballet offers three performances this weekend of The Cullen Contemporary Series. They include the third work of gay choreographer Dominic Walsh, "Dolcemente." Also on stage will be "Basics" by Damian Schwiethale, "The Long Road Home" by Brian Enos and "Speaking in Strings" by Barbara Bears. Nov. 2-3, 8 p.m. and Nov. 4, 2:30 p.m. Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center, downtown Houston. 713-227-ARTS. www.houstonballet.org.

saturday, nov. 3 and
sunday, nov. 4

Houston Symphony League Bay Area hosts its second annual "A Day by the Bay" home tour. Featured are six waterfront homes in Taylor Lake Estates, Taylor Lake Village and Seabrook. Tickets are \$15 in advance through Nov. 2 and \$20 at the door. Shuttle leaves from Meador Park at North Myer and Hammer. 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Nov. 3 and 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Nov. 4. Houston Symphony, 713-334-5616.

wednesday, nov. 7

The Museum of Health & Medical Science hosts "The Art and Science of AIDS," a health education class offered by the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. 7 p.m. at the museum, 1515 Hermann Drive. 409-747-8192. www.utmb.edu/minimed.

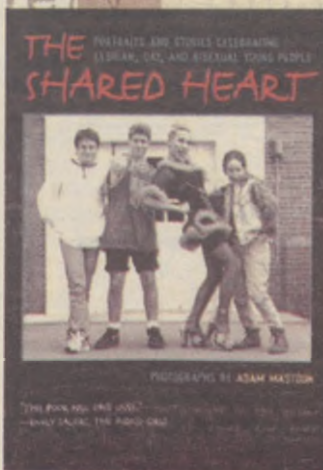
friday, nov. 9 and
sunday, nov. 11

Houston Metropolitan Dance Co. offers its fall performance at the Cullen Theatre at the Wortham Center. Included are works by guest choreographer Liz Imperio, Artistic Director Dorrell Martin and company dancer Kourtney Owens. 8 p.m. Nov. 9 and 2 p.m. Nov. 11. Tickets range from \$18 to \$35. 713-522-6375.

saturday, nov. 10 and
sunday, nov. 11

Galveston's Grand 1894 Opera House hosts Emmy Award-winner Bea Arthur for two performances of "And Then There's Bea," her one-woman show. Known for her career stints on televisions "The Golden Girls" and "Maude," among others, Arthur is joined by composer Billy Goldenberg at the piano for the shows. Performance times are 8 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday. Ticket prices range from \$37 to \$85. 2020 Postoffice, Galveston. 1-800-821-1894. www.thegrand.com.

Emmy Award-winner Bea Arthur presents her one-woman show 'And Then There's Bea' on Nov. 10 and 11 at Galveston.



"I am not going to change for anyone because I am me. Accept me as I am!" writes Shanny, 21, one of the young adults whose essay is included in 'The Shared Heart.'



Continued on Page 16 >



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New books offer words for and from gay teens

Continued from Page 15 >

"Rainbow Boys" is an excellent first novel. Sanchez, a trained counselor who has worked with youth and their families, says the story chose him.

He refers to his characters as being like his children. When asked to reflect on his characters, he notes that people seem to either love or hate Nelson, the so-out-he's-never-been-in, finger-snapping, wild-haired boy torn by unrequited love. He also notes that most people pick up easily on the love story between Jason and Kyle.

He's right. The blossoming romance between the closeted high school jock Jason and the sweet boy next door Kyle does catch the reader up. Gender, age and sexual orientation slip into the background as the reader is treated to a narrative of events from each character's point of view.

But Sanchez, who will be at Outwrite Bookstore & Coffeehouse in Atlanta on Nov. 8, hasn't cornered the market on gay young adult literature. In addition to an increase in fiction for gay youth, Adam Mastoon has recently published the non-fiction paperback version of "The Shared Heart: Portraits and Stories Celebrating Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Young People."

The cover of the book bears a quote from Indigo Girl Emily Saliers: "This book will save lives," she says. She's dead on.

"The Shared Heart" is a poignant compilation of stories and portraits of young people who bear a burden beyond the basic growing pains suffered by all adolescents. These courageous young folk are struggling through this time of identity development, while wading through the minefield of society's prejudices about sexual orientation.

Mastoon's photographs in "The Shared Heart" are brilliant and insightful. They have the candid quality that allows the person behind the image being photographed to peer through. The rich diversity of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender family is reflected beautifully in the young of our community.

In these pages we see the baby butch,

the sweet young femme, the jock, the future circuit boy and the future drag queen.

The expression, "out of the mouths of babes," applies here with stunning clarity. The young people in this book do more than pose for pictures or complain of ill treatment. With all they have to face in the world, it would be easy for them to become mired in anger, resentment and even hatred.

But that is the last message that comes from this book. In the no-holds-barred way of the young, they lay forth their claim on the future. They let the eternal optimism of youth shine through. The older set can learn a lot from these young people.

The ease and comfort most of them have with who they are, and their conviction that they just are, is a lesson we could all learn. Their deceptively simplistic approaches to living out of the closet speak volumes.

Among those profiled in the book is 22 year-old Salua. "I'm just Myself," she says. "Unwilling to hide, though I don't wear 'freedom rings' or pink/black triangles. I just am."


The hope that reading about someone different from ourselves can create an empathy that destroys hate resonates throughout literature for young gay adults. The hope that these books will save lives is echoed in the faces of our young.

Shanny, age 21, says it best. "What's most important for people to know is that I'm Shanny, an Amerasian proud bisexual woman. I'm not going to change for anyone because I'm me. Accept me as I am!"

INFO

'The Shared Heart'

http://world.std.com/~shheart/sh_index2.html



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eating out

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Burritos fill any appetite

College Station eatery excels with menu that concentrates on burritos, quesadillas, tacos

by TRAYCE DISKIN

Mild, Hot, Death, Bad Ass, or Habanero? At Freebirds World Burrito, these are just a few of the many choices customers have in creating the true, corporate burrito experience.

A sacred College Station institution by many accounts, Freebirds World Burrito offers D.I.Y. burritos, quesadillas and tacos. With fresh, trendy ingredients (cayenne and spinach tortillas), and an upbeat, if hopelessly contrived scene, Freebirds will no doubt avoid the ill fate of many of Shepard Plaza's other casualties.

With garage-band funky metal tables and décor, Freebirds encourages a bustling, fast-food atmosphere built around the concept of healthy, fun community food. In theory, that means young, hip counter staff efficiently constructing lard-free burritos for a seamlessly moving line of customers.

In practice, however, that often translates to several staff members standing around by the cash registers chatting while customers wait for the ultimate burrito assembly line to acknowledge customers' presence. And while Freebirds also makes the effort to showcase local artists, more wall space is devoted to restaurant merchandise such as hats and T-shirts.

But for those who don't mind swallowing a little corporate culture and mediocre service with an entree, Freebirds makes a good choice for a quick, fuss-free meal. Burritos feature chicken and steak that's moist, well-cooked and carefully seasoned, but the meat fillings pale in comparison to the slightly jazzier condiments. Rice is fluffy and well seasoned with tomatoes and a generous sprinkling of chili powder. The Pico de Gallo is juicy and bursting with zest. The guacamole, roasted garlic, onions, tomatoes and roasted peppers are all exceedingly fresh and make essential sides to an already overstuffed burrito.

Even the spinach and cayenne tortillas add a little kick. It seems an oversight not to have a fish option. For quasi-vegetarians, this may be a reason to head down the street to the competition at Mission Burrito for the flaky, delicate beer-battered cod. Burritos come in Super Monster (\$11.00), Monster (\$6.50) and the already monstrous Regular (\$5.25). For the intimidated and messy, Freebirds offers Little Mo sized (\$4.50) and the Exposed (\$5.00), or burrito-in-a-bowl.

Quesadillas (\$5.25-\$4.75) are a bit of surprise with the thick bread standing in for



FOOD FILE

Freebirds World Burrito
3745 Greenbriar
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www.freebirds.com

Food: ●●●●●●●●

Service: ●●●●●●

Value: ●●●●●●●●

Scene: ●●●●●●●●

● Opt for bread, water at home

●● OK, if you really must

●●● Fine for most

●●●● Worth the drive, so live a little

●●●●● As good as it gets

the reliable tortilla. The cheese oozes little oil and grease, however, and is well blended with the steak or chicken. Tacos (\$5.50) are especially delicious, either in the grilled variety, where the corn tortillas become deliciously smoky, or in the soft steamed option. The Avo-Taco, with sliced avocado, rice, sour cream and cheese, will keep vegetarians satiated with every calorie.

The sauces are abundant and there's nary a weak one in the bunch. The fresh lime juice is also an added plus. Although it would be nice to see an expanded menu to include a few soups or salads, chips, sides and desserts, clearly Freebirds' mission is to turn its global attention to the might burrito itself.

A liquor license might help out those who crave a cold Corona with their jalapenos. But the array of fresh juices and sodas is reasonable, and the next-door convenience of Amy's Ice Cream is always there to oblige if patrons still have room for more food. While Freebirds' may not usurp world order when it comes to décor or a varied menu, it does give hungry and health-conscious Houstonians a reason to indulge.

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MAIN COURSE

Twin Maine Lobster Tails, Center-Cut Filet Mignon, Japanese Tiger Shrimp, Choice Sirloin Teriyaki, Breast Of Chicken. Accompanied By An Exotic Assortment of Vegetables and Sauces.

DESSERT

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homefront

Get ready for winter

Keep warm and save money, too, with a few simple ideas

by ELLA TYLER

My definition of winter is that it begins when you turn the heat on. So, at my house, it is now winter.

The problem with turning on the heat in October, besides the vague feeling of ecological immorality, is that the heating system hasn't been inspected yet. This should be done immediately, both for safety and energy efficiency.

Our winters are often so mild that we don't pay a lot of attention to how much heat costs, but I suspect that this winter will be long and cold. Unless you want to pay a lot for heat or be chilly all the time, some energy conservation is in order.

Some of these ideas will also reduce the cost of air conditioning. For example, insulation, caulking and weather stripping keep your artificially warmed or cooled air inside. Changing the air filter every month will help both the heating and cooling system run more efficiently.

A programmable thermostat helps conserve energy when it's hot or when it's cold. If you can do simple wiring, you can install one yourself. These automatically turn the heat or air conditioning up or down at specific times, so you can turn the heat down at night but have a warm house when you wake up. Sleeping in a 60 degrees is cozy if you have an electric mattress pad, cotton flannel sheets and a few of your grandmother's quilts (or a hot blooded companion), but it is an unpleasant awakening.

Each degree that you lower the thermostat between 60 and 70 degrees saves between 2 to 5 percent on your heating bill, but 60 degrees is cold unless you're bundled up. However, I object to bundling up almost as much as I object to being cold. Silk thermal underwear and the new polar fleeces add warmth without bulk. Look at a mail order catalogue from someplace further north than Dallas, and look at all the things there are to keep people warm. Up north they wear sweaters inside! They use afghans, throws, warm robes and slippers.

Cold air is also dry air. It is unpleasant to breathe, dries your skin, and causes shocks from static electricity. Warm air holds more moisture, but most heating systems do not add moisture. If the air is very dry, get a

humidifier. House plants help, especially if they sit on trays of pebbles covered with water. Set a pot of water on a gas space heaters. Dry clothes inside, either on a rack or hanging from the shower curtain rod. Leave the shower door ajar to let steam escape and open the dishwasher door before the dry cycle begins.

Don't ignore other sources of heat or humidity. Leave the drapes open if you have a sunny window, but be sure to close them when the sun goes down. After you use the oven, leave the door open if you can until it gets cool. Using ovens as a source of heat is dangerous, but there is no harm in leaving the oven door open when the oven is turned off. Warm air rises, and a ceiling fan set to move air downward can be very helpful.

You might be able to save on electric bills by getting a new electric provider. Businesses have been able to choose their electric company for more than a year, and a pilot program for residential users has been in effect since June. In January 2002, the program will be extended to everyone who gets electricity from an investor owned utility. Like deregulation of long distance and local telephone service, electric deregulation

increases customer choice.

The Public Utility Commission has a web site, www.powertochoose.org, which explains deregulation and lists each Retail Electric Provider (REP) that serves a particular area. Each REP must produce an Electricity Facts Label showing information about the price, source of power generation, emissions and contracts. So if renewable energy is most important to you, choose the REP that gets more of its power from renewable sources. The Web site contains each company's facts label, making it possible to compare companies.

Transmission and distribution will continue to be provided by the existing local utility company, now called a Local Distribution Utility. Each LDU has a retail provider also. Unless you select a provider, you will get power from your LDU's REP.

In addition to coming up with new names for all these components of your electric service, the Public Utility Commission (PUC) is conducting an extensive public education campaign with billboards, brochures and a toll free number, 866-7797-4839. The PUC will handle consumer complaints and maintenance of a "Do Not Call List." If you don't want electric providers calling you, add your name to this list.

Each degree that you lower the thermostat between 60 and 70 degrees saves between 2 to 5 percent on your heating bill, but 60 degrees is cold unless you're bundled up.

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4 Performances only!

Opens Wednesday, November 7th at 8pm
Friday, November 9th & Saturday, November 10th at 8pm
Sunday November 11th at 6:00pm

out on the aisle

THEATER CALENDAR

Pair of plays debut locally

Two writers offer new
one-act productions
through Houston theater

by PENNY WEAVER

"Mud"

Inferral Bridegroom Productions presents "Mud" as part of IBP's Greatest Hits series this fall. First produced by IBP in 1995, Maria Irene Fornes' "Mud" takes place in the heart of backwoods America and follows the simple, good, hard-working Mae as she struggles to make a decent life for herself. Peppered with hilarious scenes, the play nonetheless offers a profoundly tragic storyline, showcased by Fornes' simple, funny, poetic writing. IBP company member Amy Bruce will reprise her performance as Mae. Artistic director Jason Nodler will direct the production. Actors Troy Schulze and Charlie Scott join Bruce on stage. Ticket prices for the opening weekend are \$5.99, and for the remainder of the play's run are \$10 on Thursdays, \$12 on Fridays and \$15 on Saturdays.

Nov. 8-Dec. 1
8 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays
Atomic Cafe
1320 Nance
713-522-8443
www.inferralbridegroom.com

"Shut Up and Love Me"

Nationally known performance artist Karen Finley — whose pieces have sparked both controversy and acclaim — brings her new show to Theater LaB Houston. Finley's work explores the darker elements of sexuality, shocking audiences into examining their own attitudes toward sexual taboos. For adult audiences only.

8 p.m. Nov. 7, 9, 10
6 p.m. Nov. 11
Theater LaB Houston
1706 Alamo St.
713-868-7516

"Fly Away"

"So, I Met This Guy"

Two one-act plays — one that focuses on lesbians, the other on gay men — take to the stage of Unhinged Productions starting Nov. 8. "Fly Away" by Houstonian Patti A. Aldredge tells the story of the surviving East Texas relatives and lesbian friends and lovers of a woman who has just died. The deeply religious and largely rural culture of the two relatives inevitably clashes with the urban sexual landscape in which Belinda Marie lived and died. The result is a free-wheeling, irreverent but touching comedy



The lesbian-themed 'Fly Away' by Houstonian Patti A. Aldredge hits the stage at Unhinged Theatre next week.

of misunderstandings and heavily guarded secrets that threaten to blossom at any moment. The romantic gay comedy by playwright David Alan Morrison, "So, I Met This Guy," looks at gay relationships among men through the lives of two men who meet and begin a romance. What the pair of characters do not know is that they have a best friend in common — a woman who is writing a romance novel. The play examines the intricacies and mysteries of love, the ways in which people in love sabotage that love and also learn to accept it. Performances for both productions begin with a half-price preview Nov. 8.

Nov. 8-Dec. 15
8 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays
Tickets: \$15 adults, \$12 seniors and students
Unhinged Theatre
3304 La Branch
713-524-8707

"The Little Witch of Wichita"

Gay and lesbian parents may be interested in a family outing to see "The Little Witch of Wichita," playing through Nov. 10 at the EarlyStages Children's Theater of Stages Repertory Theatre in Houston. The "bewitching" modern musical follows "Little Witch" (she prefers Katrina) as she longs for the respect of her peers and tries to impress them by accepting the challenge of finding the final ingredients for the Halloween Happening stew. Little Witch's adventures not only bring her new friends including Armando, a Mayorcan mambo mouse, and the shy Peek-a-Boo tree, but also teach her that self-respect starts on the inside.

11:30 a.m. & 2 p.m. Saturdays, through Nov. 10
Tickets: \$8
Stages Repertory Theatre
713-527-0123
www.stages theatre.com

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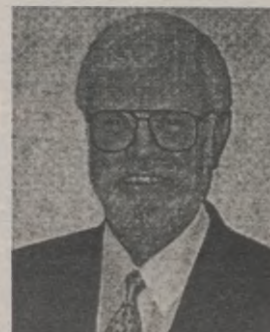
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community calendar

saturday, nov 3

After Hours. KPFT 90.1 FM. 12 a.m. to 3 a.m. 713-526-5738.

Q-Patrol walks the streets 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE. **Dignity mass.** 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.

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

Houston Chain Gang Bicycle Club. Call for ride locations. 713-863-1860.

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

Rainbow Fishing Club. Meeting. 713-526-7070. 713-880-9235.

Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center. Drop-in noon-4 p.m. • Gay & Lesbian **Switchboard Houston** volunteer appreciation reception, 1-4 p.m. • Texas Association for **Transsexual Support**, 1 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

Rummage-A-Rama. AIDS Housing Coalition Houston. Rummage sale with rented booths; rental proceeds benefit local charities. 8 a.m., first Saturday of each month. 202 Tuam Ave., Midtown/Montrose. 713-521-1613.

Houston Outdoor Group. Breakfast at LePeep. David, 713-868-7991.

sunday, nov 4

Rainbow Riders. A bicycle club for women. 713-869-1686.

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

Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church. Service. 6:30 p.m. 713-528-6756.

Resurrection MCC. Services. 9 and 11 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10 a.m. Youth Sunday School 11:15 a.m. Handbell Choir rehearsal 1:30 p.m. 713-861-9149.

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

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

Houston Mission Church. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-529-8225.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Adult discussion 9:45 a.m. Service 11 a.m. 281-277-8882. www.tuuc.org.

First Unitarian Universalist Church. Services at 9:30 & 11:30 a.m. Brunch available 10:30 a.m. Panel Discussion. 1:30 p.m. 713-526-5200. church@firstuu.org.

Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. to noon. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houston-

tennisclub@aol.com

Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center. Drop-in 2-5 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. • 713-524-3818.

Blessed Sacrament Church. Unity Mass. 12:30 p.m. 4606 Mangum Road. 713-476-9776.

PFLAG-Houston. Meeting. 2 p.m. 713-867-9020. www.pflaghouston.org/meetings.htm

monday, nov 5

Gay Fathers/Fathers First. Support group. 8 p.m. www.GayFathers-Houston.org or 713-782-5414.

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

HIV testing. STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 1 to 6:15 p.m. 713-626-2837.

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

Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food

Pantry. Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 936-441-1614.

Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.

Lesbian & Gay Voices Radio Show. 8 to 10 p.m. KPFT 90.1. 713-529-1223.

AIDS Mastery. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.

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

gayDAR. Wellness Community. Support Group. 7 p.m. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Open rehearsals. 7 p.m. 713-521-7464.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in 6-9 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

tuesday, nov 6

For Mature Audiences Only. Support group. 7 p.m. Bering Memorial UMC. 713-526-1017.

HTGA. Support Group. 7 p.m. 713-520-0439.

Free HIV Testing. Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m. to midnight. Club Houston. 713-830-3000.

Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous. Support group. 7 p.m. 713-524-0439.

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

Gay Men's Process Group. 7 p.m. 3316 Mt. Vernon. 713-526-8390.

Men's Network. Discussion group for social, educational development of gay and bisexual men. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.

Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food

Pantry. Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 281-633-2555.

Rainbow Ringers. Free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. Two-hour free dance workshops. No partner needed. Beginner. 2 Step, Waltz, Shuffle & Swing. Drop in anytime. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.

CPR Classes. 3 p.m. 713-607-7700.

BiNet Houston. Men's Social. 7 p.m. 713-467-4380.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Lesbian Coming-Out Group. 7 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

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

wednesday, nov 7

Free HIV Testing. Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas Street 713-793-4026.

Women's Network. Montrose Counseling Center discussion group for social, educational development of gay and bisexual women. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.

Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food

Pantry. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. 936-441-1614.

Project: Caesar. Workshops. AFH. 3203 Wesleyan. 713-623-6796.

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

Spiritual Uplift service. 7 p.m. Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.

Freelance Art Classes. By Kermit Eisenhut for HIV+ individuals. 1-4 p.m. Lunch provided. 713-523-9530.

Houston Tennis Club. 7:30-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com

Lesbian Literature Discussion Group. 7 p.m. Meets every other Wednesday. 713-383-6738.

Houston Pride Band. Open rehearsal. 1307 Yale. 713-527-0931. www.houstonprideband.org.

Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Various Support Groups 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.

Blessed Sacrament Church. Workshop Series for Christian Faith and Ecumenical Old Catholicism. 713-476-9776.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Free HIV testing, counseling, 6-9 p.m. • Houston Committee for People's Radio, 6:30 p.m. • Bi-Net Houston. 7:30 p.m. 713-524-3818.

thursday, nov 8

Rainbow Ringers. Free C&W dance lessons. Two hours free line dance instruction. No partner required. Drop in anytime. Brazos River Bottom. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.

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

STD exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.

Free HIV Testing. By the Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m. to midnight. Toyz Disco. 713-830-3000.

Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food

Pantry. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. 281-633-2555.

Lambda Skating Club. 8 p.m. Tradewinds. Skating Rink. www.lambdaroll.org. 713-410-7215.

FrontRunners. Running club. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.

HIV Art Therapy Program. 1-4 p.m. Kermit Eisenhut. 713-523-9530.

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

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

Gay Houston. New social group for all ages. 7 p.m. 713-526-9318.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in 6-9 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

Bi-Net Houston. Women's group meeting. 7 p.m. 713-467-4380.

Lesbian & Gay Immigration Rights Task Force-Houston. Meeting. 8 p.m. Chris. 713-426-3128. lgirtf-houston@groups.com.

Kolbe Project. Presentation on the Islamic faith. 7 p.m. 1030 Heights Blvd. 713-861-1800.

www.kolbeproject.org.

friday, nov 9

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) Meeting. 713-942-7002.

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

Q-Patrol. Walks the streets. 9 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.

Kolbe Project. Morning prayer. 10 a.m. • Movie night, "Much Ado About Nothing." 7 p.m. 713-861-1800.

Houston Tennis Club. 7:30-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center.

houstontennisclub@aol.com

Lesbian & Gay Voices. KPFT 90.1 FM. 7 p.m. 713-526-5738.

Govinda Yoga Club. Free yoga classes at 3115 West Loop South, No. 21. 713-439-0455.

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Lesbian Film Night, 7 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

Garden and Yard Society. 713-661-6378 or 713-863-1066.

Kolbe Project. Movie night: "Along Came a Spider." 7 p.m. 1030 Heights Blvd. 713-861-1800.

www.kolbeproject.org.

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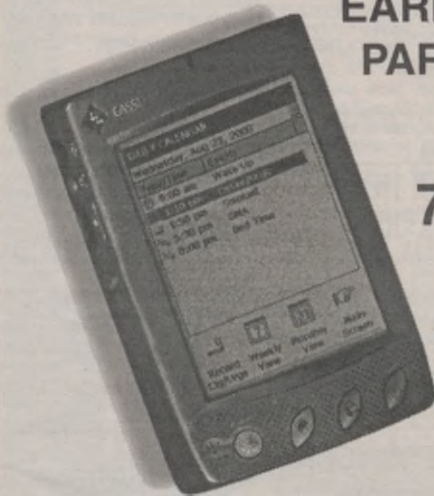
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houston classifieds

Houston Classifieds deadline is Monday at noon

OCCASIONS



Happy belated 25th birthday wishes to Ovin P. (above, 10/06) from his partner John

Handsome cowboy and Outpost owner Michael celebrates his birthday on Nov 1.

Happy birthday to Maranatha MCC member Dale O. Nov 5.

CCCC members Bruce H. (11/05) and Art G. (11/06) drive away another birthday this week.

Misfit Rocky S. wants to sneak in a birthday on Nov 7.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BUTCH-FEM

Starting Butch-Fem group for Lesbians • If interested call 713-917-8987 Press 4 to leave a message for us.

HOUSTON HUMANE SOCIETY

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Offering free employment assistance to HIV+ individuals. Including job preparedness, training, resume development, and job searching assistance. For more info call 713-981-1543

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STEVEN'S HOUSE

Seeking cook • Responsible for preparation of nutritional meals for program participants • Meal planning • Prepare grocery list • Clean kitchen and utensils after use • Call Taylor @ 713-522-5757

Home repair helper needed • Montrose • \$10 per hour • 713-521-3359

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Seeking caregiver for HIV+ adults • Part-time overnight and weekend staff • Minimum requirements include high school diploma and at least 3 years prior work experience in caregiving • Light duties include cooking, cleaning, administration of medications and crisis intervention • Call Taylor @ 713-522-5757

RYAN WHITE PLANNING COUNCIL

seeks a highly organized individual with excellent telephone, writing and computer skills to fill position of Support Staff secretary/receptionist • Must be fluent in English/Spanish • Requirements: Knowledge in Microsoft Office and typing 45wpm • Starting salary \$1900 per month • View job description at www.rwpc.org • Apply at 1310 Prairie, Suite 240 • Reference #7982-C

Resurrection MCC is seeking a maintenance specialist/caretaker • Individual will clean and maintain interior and exterior of church properties • Qualification: High School diploma/equivalent • Salary & benefits • Send cover letter with resume to: Resurrection MCC • 2025 West 11th Street • Houston, Texas 77008 • Attn: Maintenance/Caretaker

FOR SALE/RENT

OFFICE FOR RENT

Second floor office available at Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center • 803 Hawthorne • 14' X 12'6" • Nonprofit GLBT organizations preferred as tenant partners, but all inquiries welcomed. Call Tim Brookover @ 713-524-3818

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PETS



PET OF THE WEEK

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GWM traveling executive to share Midtown 2/2 loft with professional GM • Private bath • W/D • Microwave • Direct TV • Weekly cleaning service • Secure parking • Pool • Full gym • Downtown trolley service • Courtyard view • Excellent location • Utilities shared • Background check required • Leave message at 713-528-0371

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IN PERSON: Bring completed order form with payment to Houston Voice offices (M-F, 9-5:30 pm) 500 Lovett, suite 200. **BY MAIL:** Mail completed order form with payment to Houston Voice Classifieds, 500 Lovett, Suite 200, Houston, TX., 77006. **BY PHONE:** Call in with completed order form to 713-529-8490.

BY FAX: Fax completed order form and credit card information to Classifieds 713-529-9531. **BY E-MAIL:** croberts@houstonvoice.com

AD POLICY: Houston Voice reserves the right to edit, reclassify or reject ads not meeting Houston Voice standards. No refunds for early cancellation. Misprints: Houston Voice is not responsible for misprints appearing after first week. Check ads promptly.

Deadline for ad submission is: MONDAY at 12 NOON

1 PICK YOUR CATEGORY

FREE: Call for guidelines
— HIV Services & Education
— Volunteers
— Non-Profit Organizations
*First 20 words

INDIVIDUAL RATE \$10:
— Announcements
— Auditions
— Employment-Seeking
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— Roommates
— Personal Web sites

BUSINESS RATE \$18:
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— Items For Sale
— Licensed Massage
— Moving Services
— Professional Services
— Real Estate For Rent
— Real Estate For Sale

Call 713-529-8490
for other categories

2 WRITE YOUR AD

Please print clearly

CATEGORY: _____ # OF ISSUES: _____

Giant or Bold Headline - Not to exceed 14 characters and spaces

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

TEXT: _____

3 TOTAL YOUR COST

CALL FOR DIRECTORY AD RATES

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Up to 20 words for \$10.00 per week. Additional words at 50¢ each per week.

Up to 20 words: **\$10.00**

Additional words _____ x 50¢: _____

Bold headline: 5.00 (per week) _____

Subtotal: _____ x _____ # of issues

Total: \$ _____

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Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

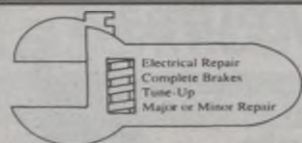
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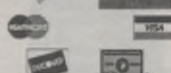
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My Stars!

by JILL DEARMAN

YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE



Nov. 2-8

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

When Mercury moves into your house of other people's money on Nov. 7 you should consider writing a story with a colleague. Collaborations are fruitful. A Cancer is more than just the flavor of the month for you, babe.

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

Work is distracting you from your love life, isn't it? A Libra will wait by the phone for your call, but sadly, sweetie, your boss won't. While Mercury and your ruler Venus are conjunct in your day job house, make the most of your talents, and not just the ones that involve your body, baby.

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

Things are more complicated than they appear on the work front, but you can handle it. In fact, as your ruler Mercury transits your day job sector, you can make hay while the rest of your colleagues are hiding. A Capricorn gives good pillow talk.

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

The moon in your house of money on Nov. 7 brings you a chance to make extra cash for the holidays. Your charm is what sells so turn it on. You have already turned on a Sagittarius beyond belief!

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

Fake friends have taken their toll on you, Leo, so it's time to extricate yourself from their shackles. You hold the key, and a quick-footed Gemini can help you to flee - to a series of new relationships that are much more constructive and positive. Jupiter in your house of endings and new beginnings is demanding that you move on with your life!

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

You know what you have to do to get your career back on track, and you know that it's going to take a lot of fast moves. While the Sun and your ruler Mercury hook up in your house of communication (from Nov. 7-21) you can move at the speed of light, with the help of a Gemini.

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

Don't even bother trying to fool yourself, darling. If you are longing to get in touch with someone you ended "on a bad note" with, then do. The anxiety of not knowing isn't worth the time and energy. Mercury conjunct Venus in your sign are on your side. An Aries will give you extra back up.

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

Outward acts of revenge may be sweet, but living well is sweeter. A Taurus is still mooning over you, and the best way to get him back is to be truly fabulous. The Sun is shining on you, so put your dark fantasies aside - for five minutes!

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

There is a feeling of power and accomplishment you will experience if you stop competing with idiots and start challenging yourself! Jupiter in your house of long-term relationships would rather you cut your losses with moronic rivals, and start something slow and simmering with a worthy Virgo.

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

Your love life is moving slowly, but it is moving, darling. Friends are matchmaking for you behind your back as the Sun and Mercury transit your house of friends. A Libra wants to be more than friends.

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

You may have a hard time reading people during this cycle, so turn your attention inward instead. What is motivating you? Why are you spinning your wheels? A Virgo wants you in the driver's seat.

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

Venus brings you more adventures beginning Nov. 8. Be careful if you're having sex in a public place with a Scorpio - nothing is private or hidden right now! You can have fun but just wear a disguise, doll.

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

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