

## Savage left

Syndicated sex columnist and avowed liberal Dan Savage takes a swing at the right with his new book 'Skipping Towards Gomorrah.'  
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## INSIDE



State lawmaker Robert Talton, R-Houston, has pre-filed a bill to prevent gay Texans from becoming foster parents.

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Despite strong rumors to the contrary, popular gay bar Mary's...Naturally remains open for the immediate future.

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Popular gay writer/actor Rob Nash returns to the Houston stage for a one-night performance next week at Stages Repertory Theatre.

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# Texas AIDS activists warn of new public health crisis

Proposed cuts in AIDS program mean trouble for many HIV-positive gay men, may endanger all Texans

*Editor's Note: One of the HIV/AIDS patients interviewed for this article uses the pseudonym "John Smith" to protect his anonymity.*

By PENNY WEAVER

Gays have only one more week to voice their opinions on Texas Department of Health proposals that would withdraw AIDS medication funding from thousands of Texans.

The potential changes are open for public comment through Nov. 30. Many gay

Please see HEALTH CRISIS, on Page 6

HIV/AIDS activist and patient Tracy Wilson is among a number of gay Texans who may lose funding help to afford their medications if new proposed guidelines are approved by the state. HIV/AIDS patients routinely take drugs that would cost \$1,000 or more each month if purchased at retail price. (Photo by Penny Weaver)



# Tafel to step down as Log Cabin head

Former Massachusetts legislator on 'short list' as replacement

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

After nine years on the job, Rich Tafel, the gay rights leader credited with transforming the gay GOP group Log Cabin Republicans into a heavy hitter within the Republican Party, will step down as the group's executive director at the end of the year.

Leaders of Log Cabin chapters in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and Orange County, Calif. said the LCR national board is interviewing candidates and that gay Republican activist Patrick Guerriero, a former state representative and mayor of Melrose, Mass., was on LCR's "short list" for the executive director's job.

Guerriero was the running mate chosen by Acting Gov. Jane Swift in her bid for re-election, but he abandoned his candidacy for lieutenant governor when Swift backed out of the race in favor of Salt Lake

Olympic organizer Mitt Romney, who ultimately won the post.

Last week, Romney named Guerriero to his transition team, a post that some of those familiar with the Log Cabin selection process say could lead to a full-time job in the Romney administration.

Guerriero acknowledged in an interview that he was in D.C. in the past several weeks talking to LCR officials. But he declined comment on reports that the LCR board offered him the executive director's post, saying he would have something to say on the matter "very soon."

Tafel talked about the possibility of leaving his Log Cabin post at the time of the Republican National Convention in July 2000, saying he was considering a move to other political endeavors. Several Log Cabin sources said that when Bush won the November 2000 election, LCR leaders persuaded Tafel to remain through the early stages of the Bush administration.

Tafel confirmed for this story on Nov. 20 that he would leave his post at the end of the year. An official statement on his



In nine turbulent years on the job, Log Cabin Executive Director Rich Tafel transformed the organization into a visible force within the national Republican Party.

departure is expected Nov. 25.

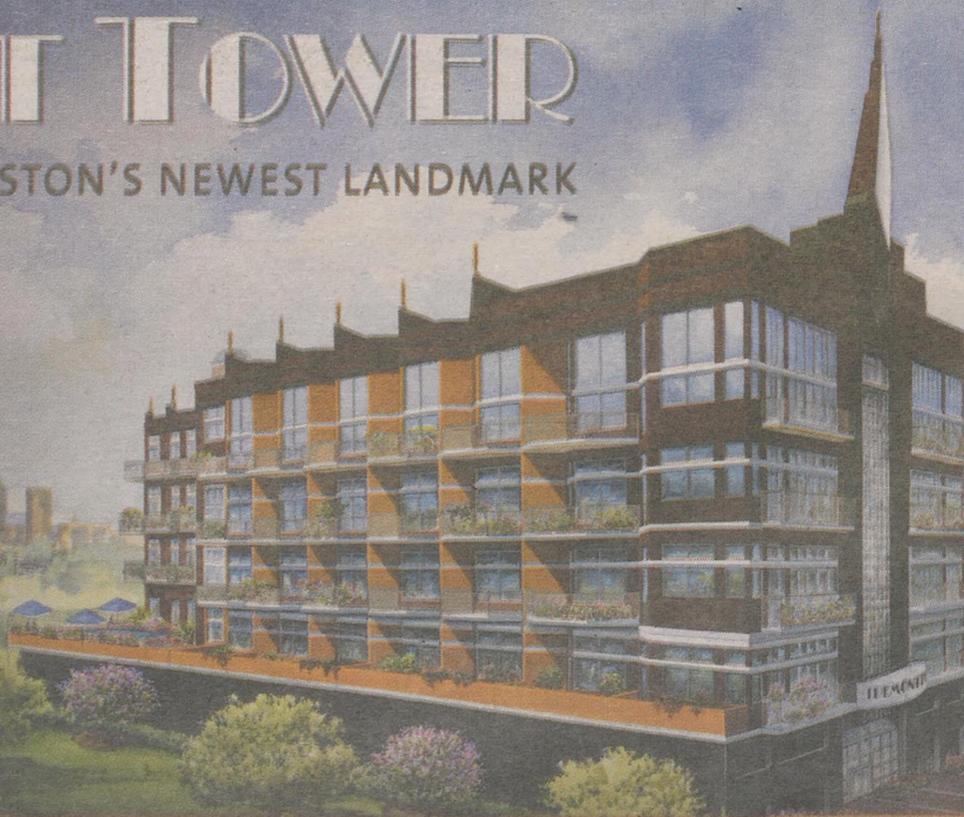
"This is clearly a changing of the guard," said Frank Ricchiazzi, a veteran Log Cabin leader and former president of the LCR chapter in Orange County, Calif.

"Whenever you think of Log Cabin, Rich's name comes up," Ricchiazzi said. "But now its time for new blood and new people and new thoughts as the organization

Please see LOG CABIN, on Page 11

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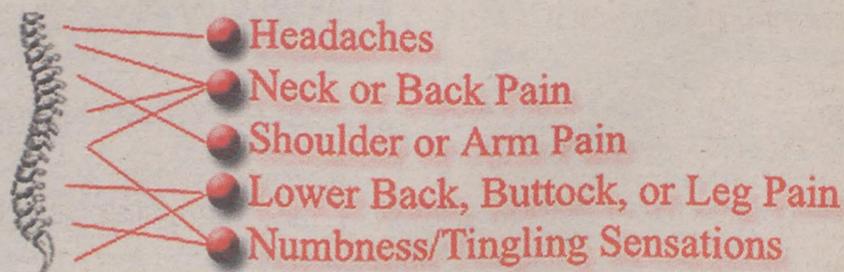
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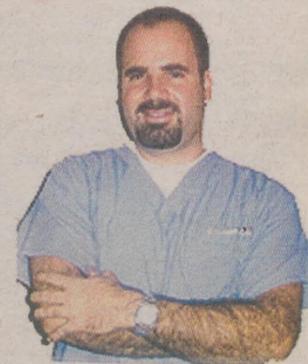
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## local news

# GOP targets gay Texans with second bill

Houston lawmaker's proposal would prevent gay men, lesbians and bisexuals from being foster parents

By PENNY WEAVER

AUSTIN — Gay rights activists vow to fight a new Republican-powered measure that would prevent gay Texans from serving as foster parents.

The proposal is the second anti-gay bill pre-filed for the state legislature's new January session. Rep. Robert Talton (R-Houston) filed the bill on Nov. 15. It would prohibit gay men, lesbians and bisexuals from taking in foster children.

House Bill 194 is the second anti-gay bill filed by conservative lawmakers during the first week of pre-filing for the 78th session of the Texas Legislature, said Randall Ellis, executive director of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas.

"This is a hateful and unnecessary bill. This law would disqualify perfectly competent caring citizens from taking distressed children into their homes," Ellis said. "The state of Texas cannot afford to do this. We cannot do this to the children of Texas."

According to the LGRL, foster families

are in short supply. Despite the fact that thousands of Texas children are in need of stable supportive families until their own families are ready to care for them or until permanent homes can be found, conservative lawmakers have decided to make anti-gay legislation a top priority, the group said in a press release.

Talton's HB 194 would require state workers to conduct investigations into the sexual orientation of prospective foster parents. The law would direct the Department of Protective & Regulatory Services to deny foster care placements in the homes of gay men, lesbians and bisexuals.

In addition, under Talton's bill, the agency would be forced to take away children already settled in homes if it determines foster parents are gay.

Talton's bill reads, in part: "The department shall inquire of an applicant who is applying to serve as a foster parent or of a foster parent whose performance is being evaluated whether the applicant or foster parent is homosexual or bisexual. If the answer to the inquiry ... is affirmative, the department is prohibited from: allowing the applicant to serve as a foster parent; or placing a child or allowing a child to



Texas Rep. Robert Talton (R-Houston) filed a bill late last week that would prevent gays from becoming foster parents. It is the second anti-gay measure to be pre-filed by Republicans for the new legislative session in Austin, which begins in January.

remain in foster care with the foster parent whose performance is being evaluated.

"Notwithstanding a negative answer to the inquiry ... if the department determines after a reasonable investigation that an applicant who is applying to serve as a foster parent or a foster parent whose performance is being evaluated is homosexual or bisexual, the department is prohibited from: allowing the applicant to serve as a foster parent; or placing a child or allowing a child to remain in foster care with the foster parent whose performance is being evaluated."

The act would take effect Sept. 1, 2003, if passed by Texas lawmakers.

Talton filed the same piece of legislation in 1999.

The bill faced enormous opposition from LGRL and failed to make it out of the State Affairs committee, gay lobbyists said.

"The GLBT community is under attack," Ellis said. "It is clear that the far right is willing to sacrifice the welfare of Texas children in order to push their agenda of hate."

"This is a very scary time for our community," he added. "We cannot and will not let the far right force their agenda of hate on the

state of Texas. The time to mobilize is now. The battles have already begun in Austin. We need the support of the entire GLBT community in order to fend off these vicious attacks."

A 1995 study by the American Psychological Association showed that gay parents provide good loving homes for children, Ellis pointed out. No study has ever found children living with gays to be disadvantaged in any respect relative to heterosexual parents, he noted.

Talton's bill is the latest in what gay rights activists see as a generalized attack on gay Texans by Republicans. Since the Nov. 5 elections, in which the GOP claimed overwhelming victories, conservative politicians in Texas have "jumped at every opportunity to attack the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community," LGRL said in a press release.

The day after the elections, Susan Weddington, the chair of the Texas Republican Party, announced that a top priority of her party is the passage of a defense of marriage act in the state of Texas.

## MORE INFO

Rep. Robert Talton

Capitol Address: Room E2418, Capitol Extension  
Austin, TX • 512-463-0460

District Address: 3622 Fairmont Parkway, Ste. B  
Pasadena, TX 77504 • 281-487-8818

Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas

P.O. Box 2340 • Austin, TX 78768

512-474-5475 • www.lgrrl.org

# Community center barely gets by

Leaders at the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center say more support from gay Houstonians is vital

By ELLA TYLER

Last month's Bewitched Ball, Hillary Woest's remission celebration and community fund-raiser, proved to be green magic for the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, this year's beneficiary.

And magic is what the center needs.

"We've gained at least \$1,400 so far, and that's a fortune to us," said Tim Brookover, president of the center. "The party was fun — really a blast — and Hillary did all the work, which I truly appreciated."

But even with such fund-raisers, the center continues to struggle to find enough money to operate.

"The immediate, 'Will we be out on the street?' financial crisis has passed, but we are making it financially only by the skin of our teeth," Brookover said. "It's not a day-by-day thing, but still a month-to-month problem."

"Last year was a rough year, and we did-

n't get any grants from groups like Hollyfield or Bunnies, but we are determined to keep the doors open," he added.

The community center, located in a large two-story house at 803 Hawthorne, costs about \$5,000 each month to run, according to Brookover.

More than 35 community organizations — ranging from Community Awareness for Transgender Support (CATS) and the Houston Bisexual Network to American Veterans for Equal Rights — meet at the center every month. Many groups pay only a small fee for use of the facilities.

"A lot of the groups that use the center have fewer financial resources than the center does, but we will be asking them to take a more active role in fund-raising next year," Brookover said.

Some of those groups have stepped up to aid the center's financial crunch. The Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus Board of Trustees voted unanimously in August to voluntarily increase the rent for the caucus office in the center.

The board decided to increase its own rent by 50 percent and to challenge other center tenants to do the same.

"The community center is very important to Houston's GLBT community and we want to do our part to support the center," said caucus President Ken Jones. "We're sure the other tenants will want to do the same."

The caucus was the first tenant of the center, moving into the building in the spring of 1998.

"The center is a 'hub' of Houston's GLBT community," said caucus trustee and center advisory board member Clarence Burton Bagby. "As we move forward to begin a capital campaign for a permanent home for the center, we need to also ensure the short-term financial stability of this essential community asset."

"We really appreciate this generous and very public show of support by the caucus for the community center," Brookover said.

A large part of the center's budget comes from rent paid by the seven organizations that maintain offices at the facility. The center also makes space available for rent for commitment ceremonies, other social events, and meetings.

The center continues to accommodate new groups, such as the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Network (GLSN), and now has a Sunday morning church service, Brookover noted.

The center's board and volunteers offer a regular schedule of activities including a new poetry series, movie nights, a monthly potluck supper, a seminar for writers, and the Positive Art Workshop for adults living with HIV/AIDS. Q-Patrol, the gay neighborhood watch organization, uses the center as its headquarters for weekend surveillance patrols.

Once a week, Montrose Clinic offers free HIV testing and counseling at the center. The center also provides space for satellite exhibitions from the Gulf Coast Archives & Museum of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender History.

"One tradition that we have established is a potluck Thanksgiving day meal,"



Group fund-raisers — such as the STAG (Some Transgenders Are Guys) barbecue this fall — help keep the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center going. Still, the center faces a continuing financial struggle. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

Brookover noted. The center is also continuing a tradition begun by the NAMES project. Judy Reeves of the Gulf Coast Archives said GCAM and the center are jointly sponsoring the lighting of the NAMES Project-Houston Christmas Tree of Remembrance on Dec. 1, the 15th Annual World AIDS Day. The center will also be open on Christmas Day.

Brookover said the center is talking a new approach to the fund-raising issue.

"What we've been doing isn't working, and we need to start looking at what works best for Houston," he said. "We've applied for grants from the typical funding groups and that's not working."

Brookover's plans include holding more special events in the near future to serve both as fund-raisers and image builders. He is working to recruit new board members and people to take on leadership roles with the Center.

## MORE INFO

Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center  
803 Hawthorne • 713-524-3818  
www.hlgcc.org

## around houston

### DIFFA event benefits AIDS service organizations

The Decorative Center Houston is the site for the Seventh Annual Wreath Collection hosted by DIFFA (Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS) this weekend. The highlight of the event is the chance for attendees to purchase one-of-a-kind wreaths created by well-known talents from the art, architecture, floral and interior design industries. Also, gift items will be offered at silent auction. Charles S. Cohen, DCH owner, is a presenting sponsor of the event and honorary co-chair of the evening, a duty he shares with KPRC news anchor Dominique Sachse. According to organizers, the collection this year includes traditional, whimsical and off-the-wall designs from national and local artists and celebrities. Wreath designers include Judish Leiber, legendary handbag designer; Maya Romanoff, nationally renowned furniture designer out of Chicago; and local artists and supporters such as Ann McBride, Brandon Guzman and Rudy Hernandez. DIFFA is the oldest and one of the largest funders of HIV/AIDS service and educational programs in the country. Since it was founded in 1984, the group has raised more than \$30 million for hundreds of AIDS service groups nationwide. DIFFA/Houston is one of the largest sources of private dollars for HIV/AIDS care in the area, according to organizers, and has given more than \$2.6 million to local non-profit agencies since it began in 1987.

PENNY WEAVER

### **i** MORE INFO

**Seventh Annual Wreath Collection**  
7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 23 • Tickets: \$100-\$125  
Decorative Center Houston  
5120 Woodway • 713-528-0505

### Non-profit groups offer pet photo sittings for the holidays

Gay Houstonians can have their pet's picture taken with Santa on several occasions at numerous locations this season. Both the Houston Humane Society and PAWS Houston (Pets Are Wonderful Support) sponsor pet portraits. On Sunday, Nov. 24, at Three Dog Bakery, 1961 West Gray, PAWS offers pet photo sessions as a benefit for the group. Following in the footsteps of Pet Patrol, PAWS is a non-profit organization that helps low-income pet owners who are living with a terminal illness continue to keep their pets. The group offers an animal food bank, subsidized veterinary care, volunteer pet care, grooming, foster care and adoption when necessary. Rover Oaks Pet Resort is hosting a pet food drive from Nov. 22-27 for the group. PAWS Houston also works to educate the medical and veterinary communities about the benefits and risks of animal companionship for people with medical hardships. The group welcomes volunteers. Houston Humane Society offers pet portraits Nov. 26 from 5-9 p.m. at Baybrook Mall in Clear Lake. Also, HHS plans pet portraits on Dec. 11 and 12, from 7-9 p.m. both days, at First Colony Mall in Sugar Land. HHS also welcomes volunteers and is continually in need of donations to assist the homeless animals it saves.

ELLA TYLER

### **i** MORE INFO

**PAWS Houston**  
281-443-3360 • www.pawshouston.org  
**Houston Humane Society**  
713-443-6421 • www.houstonhumane.org

### New location means more space for Montrose Clinic programs

Montrose Clinic, which provides health care to under-served communities including gay Houstonians, has opened a new satellite location at 3311 Richmond, Suite 100. According to clinic leaders, Body Positive Wellness Center, Frost Eye Clinic and Montrose Clinic Research will be housed in approximately 10,000 square feet of newly remodeled office space. This doubles the space for Body Positive and will allow the eye clinic to add a second examination room early in 2003. Clinic officials note that overall health and

wellness is a key component in treating HIV/AIDS and other serious diseases. The new facility will assist health care workers at Montrose Clinic to better serve their patients, according to Katy Caldwell, executive director. "Body Positive's previous location at 3400 Montrose was cramped, and the layout was less than ideal for our clients' cardiovascular exercise needs," Caldwell said. "The new space more than doubles the size of our work-out facility. The addition of a second full eye examination room is also a real need for our clients, as more and more people living with HIV need specialized vision care services."

PENNY WEAVER

### **i** MORE INFO

**Montrose Clinic** • 215 Westheimer  
713-830-3000 • www.montroseclinic.org

### Transgender victims of violence remembered

The Transgender Day of Remembrance, a day to memorialize transgender victims of murder and violence, was held in cities across the nation, including Houston, on Wednesday, Nov. 20. "This year has more names on the list than any other year previous — 27 trans people have been murdered at the hands of bias," said Vanessa Edwards Foster, a Houston resident and board chair for the non-profit National Transgender Advocacy Coalition. The observance extended around the world, with vigils in Canada, Britain, France, Italy, Chile and more. In Texas, ceremonies also were held in Austin and Dallas. In Houston, a candlelight procession was held and concluded at city hall. The name of each victim was read, a candle was snuffed for each, and the traditional bell was rung for each. Several speakers stepped up to the podium to say a few words during the remembrance. "Too often people want to make our dead into forgotten people," said event founder Gwendolyn Ann Smith. "Now, more than ever, we need to stand together and say that taking life from anyone is not acceptable."

PENNY WEAVER

### **i** MORE INFO

**National Transgender Advocacy Coalition**  
www.ntac.org

## GAY MEN'S CHORUS of HOUSTON

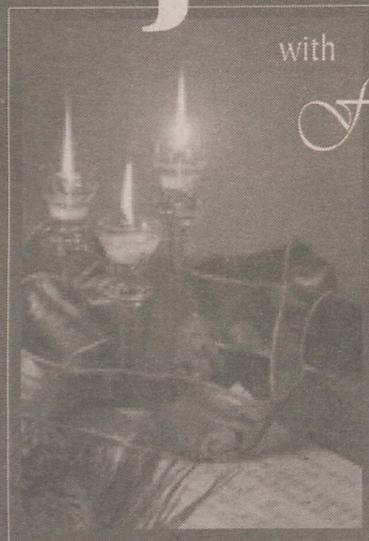
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## local news

# Despite rumors, Mary's...Naturally remains open

Owners offer little comment on supposed 'last night,' what future holds for Montrose club

By PENNY WEAVER

Owners and staff at Mary's...Naturally, the oldest gay bar in Houston and the entire state as well, expressed surprise this week that many patrons had thought the club's last call was Sunday, Nov. 17.

"I have no idea why they thought Sunday was the last night. It is just a flat-out lie or a rumor that got started," said John Benavides, a longtime Mary's employee. "We don't know how that got started. I don't know where it came from."

"As of right now, everybody here is still trying to do everything we can to keep the bar open," he said Wednesday.

Rumors had circulated that the establishment owed the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission several thousand dollars and thus would be forced to close. Gaye Yancey, co-owner of Mary's along with Cliff Owen, would not comment on that speculation.

"Right now we're open and we're working on some things," Yancey said this week. "We will be open until you see a closed sign on the front door."

As for the rumored last call Sunday, "It was definitely a lie," Yancey said, adding she does not know how the word got out that Sunday allegedly was Mary's last night of business.

In fact, the establishment remains open and serving, and Benavides hinted this week at renewed life for Mary's in the future.

"By Monday...any questions that anybody has will be answered," he said Wednesday. "It's just too early right now [to talk about it]."



The drinks are still being poured at popular gay bar Mary's...Naturally this week — by employees such as Al Kreger — despite rumors that the club would close and a 'farewell' stage performance held last Sunday. (Photo by Penny Weaver)

Yancey declined to comment on the latest rumors that two people have stepped up to purchase the bar.

A number of people gathered for an impromptu stage show at Mary's on Sunday when rumors circulated that the state would close the business on Monday.

For many gay Houstonians, the repeated rumors falsely signaling the close of Mary's hits too close to the reality of struggles for most businesses in the city that cater to gays and/or are gay-owned and operated.

This summer, gay-popular Crossroads Market & Bookstore closed after its business slowed considerably, according to owners. The store was located across from Mary's on Westheimer Road, and its former home remains empty.

Montrose, the neighborhood widely known as the heart of gay Houston,

includes most of the city's gay bars and a number of other businesses that are both gay-owned and cater to gay clientele. The closing of Crossroads is just one indicator of economic tough times for gay businesses in particular.

Many gays believe the struggles reflect the changing face of Montrose. But some disagree on whether or not Montrose is "less gay" than it once was.

"I don't know that Montrose was every hugely gay in terms of population," said Annise Parker, the first and — so far — only openly gay member of the Houston City Council. "I don't think we were ever maybe more than 20 percent. I still think there are lots...of gay folks in Montrose. It's the other folks who have changed."

Don Gill, longtime gay activist, businessman and charity fund-raiser, has been a Montrose resident for almost 30 years.

"[The neighborhood is] becoming very diverse," Gill said. "A lot of our gay friends have moved up to Meyerland, Garden Oaks, the Heights. [Montrose is] turning more heterosexual."

Some Houstonians believe that changes in the make-up of Montrose have accompanied changes in attitudes of gays. Struggles largely have shifted from in-the-streets demands for civil rights to more quiet but persistent woes such as a lack of funding for groups including the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center and the CATS (Community Awareness for Transgender Support) homeless shelter.

"I have been coming out in the Montrose area since I was 13 years old. The first time I walked into a gay bar was 1981," said Benavides. "I've seen the entire neighborhood go through a lot of changes. I remember when the streets used to be packed, in stop-and-go traffic."

"Back in Mary's heyday, and a lot of the earlier gay bars, those bars did a lot to start the gay movement in Houston," Benavides said. "The gay community is a lot younger [now], and most of them don't remember those days and what so many people went through."

"They're more interested in their party and what is going on in their decade and their time. Back then...we had to fight to even have a parade at that point. Now people take it for granted."

Benavides wonders if young gay men and lesbians are as concerned as previous generations were about issues such as gay civil rights and political causes.

"We've lost a little bit of momentum that we had at one time," he told the Voice this summer. "I'm not sure how interested the younger gay people are in changing that. That for the most part has been the biggest change I've seen. There's a little more complacency about people's [individual] situations and not the community as a whole."

## obituary

## Jim Vilven, 60, gay activist and businessman

Jim (James Edward) Vilven died Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2002, of cancer. He was 60.

Vilven and his late partner Bill Whiting were Houston's first visible gay fathers, appearing in a feature story with their four daughters in the Houston Post during the first Pride week in the late 1970s.

Vilven and his daughter Liz, with friend Rob Tomlinson, worked at the Vilven Design Group. He and Liz continued to advocate for gay parents.

State Rep. Debra Danburg remembers Liz and Jim working as a father/daughter lobbying team.

"Liz testified before the state affairs committee against a bill forbidding gays to adopt

children," Danburg said. "All the bubbas on the committee were absolutely smitten with Liz. She was so endearing and Jim was there just beaming like the proud poppa he was."

"My father was a very loving and spiritual man," Liz said.

Brandon Wolf, who worked with Jim on "Upfront" in 1977, said, "Liz told me recently that one of her proudest accomplishments was being booed down at the '96 state Republican convention, when she used her time at the mike to explain that Republicans just weren't getting it right about gay people, and she knew because she had gay fathers."

Wolf continued, "Jim was a very accomplished graphic artist. Really ahead

of his time, and a very popular guy. He was very generous and did enormous amounts of stuff for the community either gratis or at cost. Plus, he was one of the original nice guys of the world."

Fred Walters Jr. of the Houston Buyers Club remembers that one of the Vilven Group creations was a series of billboards designed five years ago for the Ryan White Planning Council. The billboard's message was "The Face of AIDS" and it featured a group of photographs of people who had AIDS or had friends or loved ones with AIDS, including Walters, Vilven, his daughter Kim and her son.

Walters said, "When I first moved here,

it wasn't easy to make friends, but before Thanksgiving and Easter, Jim would call the office and say, 'Hey Babe, we're doing turkey. Come on over.' He always made sure the stranger was welcome and showed true hospitality."

Vilven is survived by his father, Merle Vilven; brother Murray Vilven; daughters, Liz and Kim Vilven and Laura and Leana Colmanares; his sons-in-law; grandchildren; and close friends, Rob Tomlinson, Jack Sanders and Kevin Davidson.

There will be a memorial service at Stages Repertory Theatre on Saturday, Nov. 30, at 3 p.m.

ELLA TYLER

## local news

# Budget shortfall sparked proposed changes

HEALTH CRISIS, continued from Page 1

men feel a renewed sense of despair at the thought that the proposals could come into practice.

John Smith is a gay man who has been HIV positive for a little more than two years. He is a patient at Montrose Clinic in Houston, where he gets help to maintain his health on everything from medications to dentistry and how to apply for state assistance.

"I'm very fortunate — I am undetectable at this time," said the father of two teen-agers, who do not know he has HIV.

Although Smith works — earning about \$30,000 per year — he said his family lives paycheck to paycheck, and he has no medical insurance program or similar benefits through his job.

Under proposed cuts to the Texas HIV Medication Program (THMP), Smith would lose the assistance he now gets to pay for the medicine to help control his HIV. Those medications cost at least \$1,000 per month, and up to \$3,000 per month, in Smith's case.

"That's just unreal," said Smith, pointing out that if he paid that amount out-of-pocket, he and his children then would have \$18,000 or less per year on which to live. The Smiths are about to lose their home, and he said he cannot imagine a way to pay for his medicine without the state program.

"I'd probably have to do without. I just don't see any way that I could [get by]," Smith said. "I just don't know. I don't have another penny to my name.

"It's an embarrassing situation," he said. "There's really not another penny. We don't go out to eat. We don't get to go to the movies. We don't do anything anymore.

"We just don't have any money for anything extra," Smith added. "Where do I go from here? What do I do from here?"

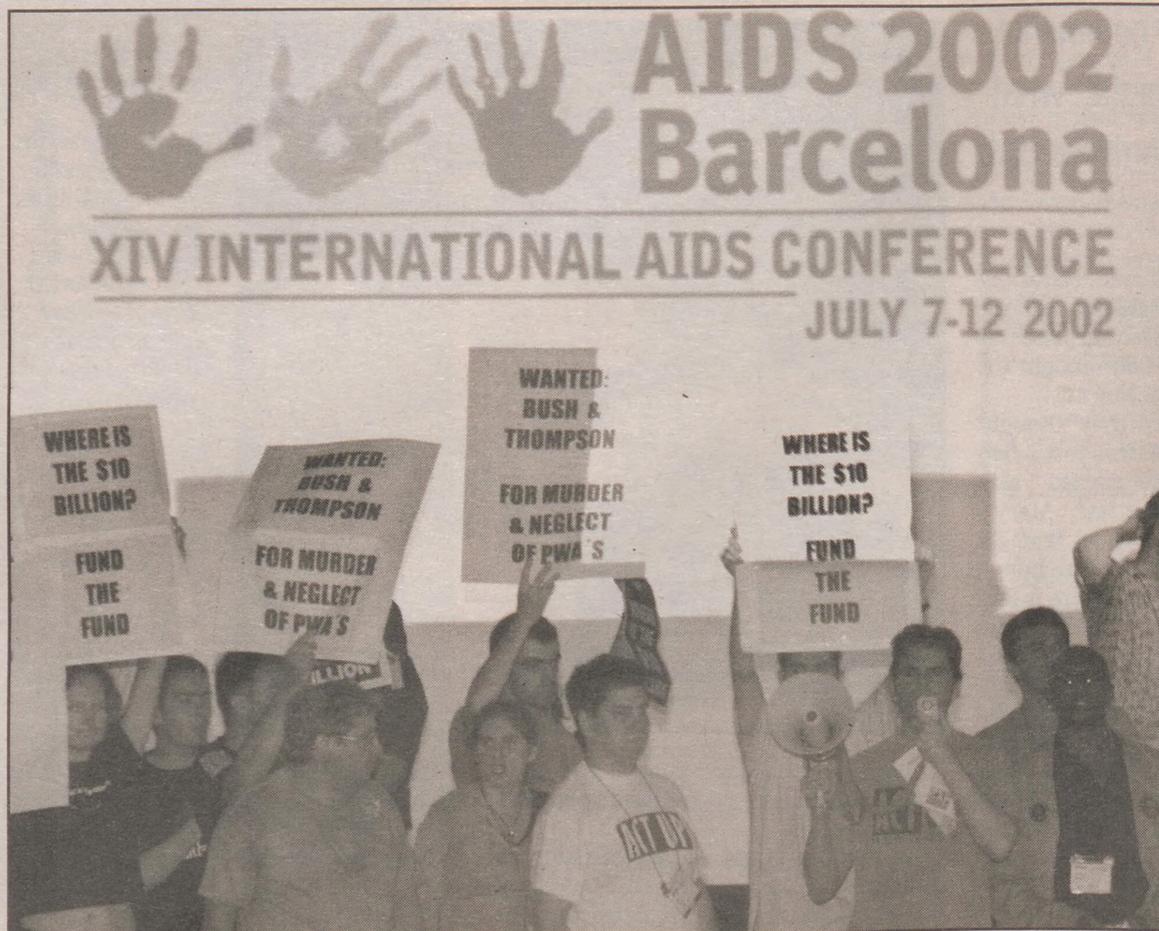
## Proposal further limits income

The Texas HIV Medication Program (THMP) is the primary source for HIV medications for thousands of HIV-positive Texans, a large percentage of whom are gay men. The Texas Department of Health has projected a budget shortfall for the program of \$7 million in the state fiscal year 2003, which began Sept. 1.

TDH officials have proposed changes to cut costs in the program in response to the anticipated budget crunch. The department wants to reduce financial eligibility criterion down from 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines to 140 percent.

Tracy Wilson is a Houston AIDS activist and also is HIV positive. He serves on the Ryan White Planning Council, Thomas Street Clinic Advisory Council, Houston AIDS Advocacy Team and is an HIV prevention educator. Wilson said the federal poverty level is a yearly income of \$8,860 for an individual.

Under current criteria, patients who apply for THMP funds can have an income of up to 200 percent, or two times, the poverty level to qualify for assistance. That adds up to an income of \$17,720. Also under the current rules, patients can



Members of the AIDS activist group ACT UP jeered U.S. Secretary of Health & Human Services Tommy Thompson during his July 9 address to delegates of the XIV International AIDS conference in Barcelona. Texas AIDS activists have formed a new coalition, ACT Now, to push state health leaders to improve AIDS program funding. (Photo by Denis Doyle/AP)

deduct the yearly retail costs of their drugs from that income, called a "spend down" measure. That results in the adjusted gross income that is used to determine if a person can receive state assistance.

For example, in Smith's case, his yearly income is \$30,000. His estimated cost for medication each year is at least \$12,000. With the "spend down," Smith's adjusted gross income is \$18,000 or less, making him within 200 percent of the poverty level. Therefore, he is currently eligible for THMP.

But with the proposed changes, 140 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines is \$12,404, and there would be no "spend down," Wilson explained. So Smith and thousands of other HIV/AIDS patients like him would be ineligible for state funds.

"They are horrified at the prospect," Wilson said.

## Patients face tough choices

Smith knows that if the new health department guidelines are put into place and he is ineligible for state funds to help buy his medications, he will either have to try to find a way to pay for them or just do without.

"I'm hoping it doesn't come to that," he said.

But Smith is ready to do whatever he can to keep his health.

"I'm participating in everything I can because I have too much to live for," he said. "My kids are everything to me."

Rich Arenschioldt, director of education and outreach for the Center for AIDS in Houston, said Texas HIV/AIDS patients face several tough choices if the new income guidelines are approved. For exam-

ple, new medications are enabling many patients to feel well enough to return to work. But if they do so, they may then make too much money to qualify for THMP and, therefore, lose their meds.

"That's a choice a lot of people are faced with," Arenschioldt said. "Where is the incentive to go back to work?"

"The HIV-positive person is about to get screwed," he added.

More Texans than those with HIV/AIDS will be affected by cuts in the state's AIDS medication program, activists warn.

"This is also a larger public health issue," Arenschioldt said.

If more HIV-positive patients cannot afford their medications, their viral load will increase, which means the likelihood of them transmitting the disease to others is higher. Arenschioldt pointed out that that scenario would lead to an increased number of infections.

Patients who do not take the drugs they need to fight HIV/AIDS also are more likely to get sick and need further care, Arenschioldt noted. Those combined factors will cost the government more in treating the disease than the medications would cost, he said.

"We think this is kind of short-sighted. The government pays anyway," Arenschioldt said. "It's bad public health policy."

## AIDS funding at 'critical mass'

A number of factors have combined to force public health officials to seek ways to trim the AIDS medication program budget, according to activists.

Funding for the program comes from two primary sources: Ryan White Title II funds at

the federal level, and funds from the state of Texas. Health leaders expect both to remain stagnant or even be cut in the next year.

At the same time, program expenses are on the rise. For example, HIV medications are getting more and more expensive.

"The price of HIV drugs and other prescription medications just keeps going up," said Wilson, who, as an HIV patient, takes about two dozen pills each day to help him combat the disease.

As infection rates are going up, so are costs, and more HIV/AIDS patients are living longer and, therefore, requiring more medication for a longer period of time.

"Numbers of cases of HIV are going up, so more people need medications," said Eric Roland, director of education at Montrose Clinic and a member of the East Texas HIV Prevention Community Planning Group.

Simultaneously, Wilson and Arenschioldt noted, political support for AIDS funding is going down, and the economy is lagging.

"It's reached a critical mass point," Arenschioldt said. "The writing is on the wall."

Based only on funding remaining the same, the state expects a \$37 million budget shortfall for the AIDS medication program over the next few years. So even if the U.S. Congress and the Texas Legislature do not trim AIDS program funding, there will be less money to assist HIV/AIDS patients.

By law, THMP must balance its budget or face elimination of the entire program, activists noted.

"If they run out of money, they could be summarily shut down," Wilson said.

In 2001, the Texas program served 11,138

Please see HEALTH CRISIS, on Page 7

## local news

## Some fear program cuts will lead to spread of AIDS

HEALTH CRISIS, continued from Page 6

people with a total cost of \$51 million. In the 2003 fiscal year, which began in September and ends next summer, officials expect to serve 10,311 people at a cost of \$62 million. More than 215 new clients are joining the program's rolls each month, Wilson noted.

Another part of the state's proposed program changes would cut the drug formulary, or the list of medications approved for funding. If new AIDS medications become available, the financial eligibility of patients would have to be revamped again to find the money to expand the formulary, Wilson explained.

THMP spends \$6 million a month on HIV medications — or \$200,000 per day — for Texans.

## Activists mobilize

If the new income restrictions are put into place, more than 1,000 Houstonians would lose their assistance for AIDS medications. That prospect has activists calling for action.

"The Texas Department of Health said this would be the last option — the last resort," Wilson said of the proposed income eligibility changes. "Instead, it's become the action of first resort."

"We have to have more funds," he said. "We have to stay in the fight to keep these programs. The complacency has got to go."

On Oct. 18, TDH officials received the language that includes the proposed changes from its Bureau for HIV and STD Prevention. The measures were posted to the Texas Register on Nov. 1, and now are open for public comment through Nov. 30.

Wilson noted that the state must reply to each public comment it receives, so if AIDS activists swamp officials with letters, it may delay action on the matter.

On Jan. 9, the state board of health meets to make a final decision on the potential changes, and Wilson and other activists plan to be present to argue against the moves. Wilson was among dozens of people who attended the advisory committee meeting where the proposals

originally were drafted in August.

"I think it really helped put a face on the issue for the advisory committee," Wilson said of the summertime rally. "If we can sway them with this, we can delay implementation. We feel it's too soon to implement these guidelines."

AIDS activists want health officials to wait and see what federal and state funding is allotted by lawmakers before cutting back the number of HIV/AIDS patients who are eligible for assistance.

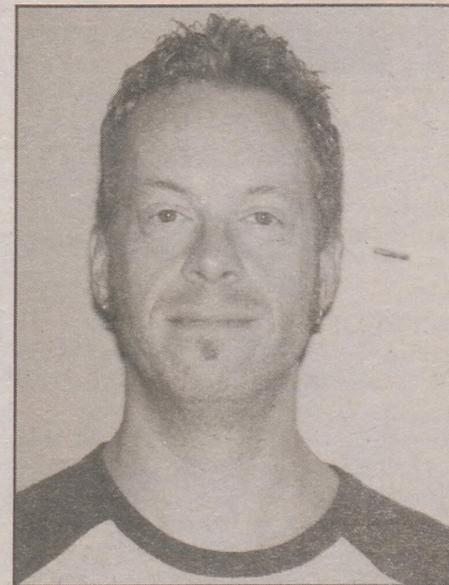
"The next step is to get the legislature to appropriate the funds so that this doesn't have to happen," Arenschioldt said.

If the state board of health approved the new eligibility requirements, they would be implemented for new THMP clients in 30 days. Current clients would have six months to re-apply or find other sources to help buy the medicine they need.

Wilson is among activists who have started an advocacy group, ACT (AIDS Coalition Texas) Now to fight the program changes. That group will sponsor a busload of people to go to Austin for the Jan. 9 board session.

"I think it's important that the board of health see the faces ... of people who are going to be affected by this," he said.

Activists hope that gay Texans will rally for this debate when they realize the



Eric Roland is director of education at Montrose Clinic and a member of the East Texas HIV Prevention Community Planning Group. He and other gay activists said HIV/AIDS patients who rely on the Texas HIV Medication Program will be hit hard by both budget cuts and proposed income eligibility changes.

potentially devastating effects not only for people with HIV/AIDS, but for the public health in general.

"This seems to be waking our communities out of their complacency," Wilson said.

## i MORE INFO

To comment on the proposed THMP changes, write to:

I. Celine Hanson, MD  
Chief, Bureau for HIV and STD Prevention  
Texas Department of Health  
1100 W. 49th St.  
Austin, TX 78756-3199  
e-mail: celine.hanson@tdh.state.tx.us

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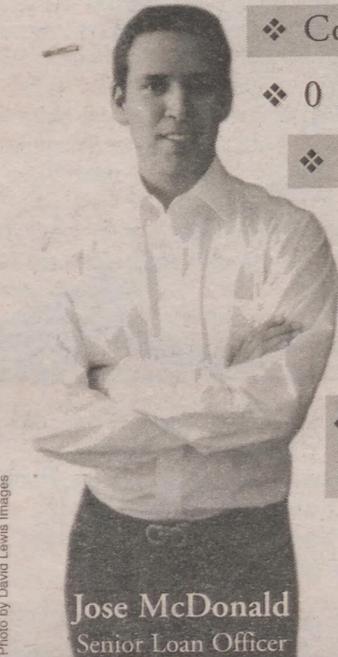
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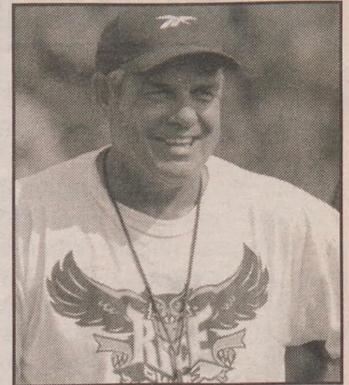


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## around texas

### Rice students continue protest over football coach's comments

HOUSTON — The fallout over Rice University football coach Ken Hatfield's comments that he would "think hard" about allowing a gay athlete on his team continued to draw protests, according to the Houston Chronicle. Scores of students showed up at the school's homecoming game Nov. 16 wearing yellow T-shirts emblazoned with slogan "I am not homophobic." "We wanted to show Rice University supports a nondiscrimination policy and also supports gay athletes," said Christel Miller, a sophomore who is vice president of the campus gay group. Many Rice students, faculty and alumni were angered by statements attributed to Hatfield in the Nov. 1 issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education, a weekly journal of academia, in which Hatfield was reported as saying he "probably would think hard" about kicking gay athletes off his team. Miller said Rice University President Malcolm Gillis paid \$600 of his own money for the students to make the T-shirts. Hatfield published an apology in the weekly journal and has said he was incorrectly paraphrased.



Some Rice University students continued their protest Nov. 16 over the comments of football coach Ken Hatfield, who said in a published report that he have to 'think hard' about accepting gay players on the team. (Photo by AP/Tim Johnson)

### Books to remain on library shelves in Conroe despite complaints

CONROE — Two children's sex education books removed from Montgomery County libraries after some residents and a politically conservative group complained about their subject matter will be back on the shelves after getting approval by a review committee, according to the Associated Press. A 10-member panel that reviews children's and young adult books decided Tuesday that "It's Perfectly Normal," a widely distributed juvenile work about human sexuality, and "It's so Amazing," both by Robie H. Harris, should remain available. "We feel that [the committee has] reconfirmed that the library should have a wide range of information," Montgomery County Library Director Jerilynn Williams told the Conroe Courier. In August, commissioners in Montgomery County agreed to temporarily remove the books after complaints, particularly from the conservative Republican Leadership Council. The group objected to what it described as the books' gay-friendly stance and explicit illustrations.

### Gay students weigh lawsuit against Lubbock school

LUBBOCK — A request by a gay student group at a Lubbock high school to post fliers on campus bulletin boards could be headed to court, the Associated Press reported. "That's one of the options we've discussed with our legal adviser," said Ricky Waite, vice president of Gay & Proud Youth. "We hope it doesn't go to such extremes, but we're not willing to give up." A request to post fliers on school bulletin boards announcing GAP Youth meetings was denied by school officials. During a presentation at the Lubbock's school board meeting last week, Waite asked trustees to overturn the district's decision. Board members did not discuss the request, ask questions or announce a decision at the meeting. Board president Mark Griffin said the trustees may respond within two weeks. The Lubbock chapter of the ACLU is working with GAP Youth in its effort to gain the same access as other non-curricular groups.

### Fight over controversial general stalls command change in San Antonio

SAN ANTONIO — A command change at the 5th U.S. Army at Fort Sam Houston has been delayed, with the nomination of a San Antonio general mired in controversy in the Senate, according to the San Antonio Express-News. The promotion of Maj. Gen. Robert T. Clark, 54, has been stalled over criticism of his handling of the death of Pfc. Barry Winchell, a gay soldier murdered three years ago at Fort Campbell, Ky, when Clark was commander at the base. The Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a group that supports gays in the military, has urged the Senate Armed Services Committee to reject Clark's nomination for what it calls "poor leadership" as Fort Campbell's commander. Clark has said the accusations are baseless. "Dignity and respect for our soldiers has always been a very high priority in my leadership style," he said. The fight over the nomination has stalled a command change ceremony here that would have seen Clark replace Lt. Gen. Freddy McFarren at Fort Sam Houston.

### Dallas gay bars support proposed smoking ban

DALLAS — Some hospitality organizations are working together to oppose an ordinance that would ban smoking in restaurants and possibly bars, though a group of gay bar owners has broken ranks and sided with Mayor Laura Miller in supporting the ban, according to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. The Dallas Tavern Guild, which represents 18 nightclubs and bars that cater to gays, polled its patrons and found that two-thirds favor a smoking ban, said Executive Director Michael Doughman. The organization favors allowing patrons to smoke on outdoor and enclosed patios. A City Council vote is expected by the end of the year. But the proposal has created opposition. Miller has been the strongest proponent for such a ban, a substantial change from the existing 1986 ordinance, which only requires restaurants to have four feet of space between smoking and nonsmoking areas.

From staff and wire reports



## police beat

### Fourth suspect arrested in Calif. trans slaying

SAN FRANCISCO — A fourth suspect was arrested Nov. 16 in the death of transgendered teen Eddie "Gwen" Araujo, 17, who was killed at an event last month after partygoers discovered she was biologically male, according to the Associated Press. Jason Cazares, 22, was arrested on suspicion of murder. "The trail seems to be hot, and we're continuing forward," said Newark Police Lt. Tom Milner. He declined comment on the role that Cazares allegedly played in the slaying, but said other arrests could be forthcoming. Last month, another suspect led authorities to Araujo's body two weeks after the Oct. 3 party from which she disappeared. Witnesses told police Araujo was beaten and strangled before her body was buried in a shallow grave, according to court documents. Three other men are already charged with murder in the case. Jaron Nabors, 19, pleaded innocent, while Jose Antonio Merel and Michael William Magidson, both 22, are expected to enter pleas Dec. 13. Cazares is being held without bail pending preliminary hearings.



Jason Cazares, 22, is the fourth person charged in the slaying of transgendered teen Eddie 'Gwen' Araujo, who was killed Oct. 3 in a San Francisco suburb. (Photos by AP)

### Trans prisoner in Va. gains early release for sex-change operation

ROANOKE, Va. — A transgendered prisoner was granted early release from prison Nov. 15 to undergo final surgery to become a woman, according to the Associated Press. A judge ruled that Michelona Sierra De'Lonta, 27, can be released one month shy of completing a 6-month sentence for forgery. De'Lonta, formerly Jay McCulley, petitioned the court for early release to keep a long-standing appointment to complete the surgery. If De'Lonta misses the appointment, it could take more than a year to get another one, said Chris Clemens, her lawyer. Clemens said De'Lonta was rewarded for good behavior. De'Lonta must remain on supervised probation for two years following release.

### Fla. brothers plead guilty to murder in father's death

PENSACOLA, Fla. — Nearly a year after Terry King's body was found bludgeoned inside his burning home, his two teenage sons pleaded guilty Nov. 14 to his murder, according to the Associated Press. Derek King, 14, and Alex King, 13, pleaded guilty to third-degree murder and arson as part of a plea agreement following weeks of court-ordered mediation after a judge overturned their second-degree murder convictions. Derek was sentenced to eight years in prison, and his brother received seven years. "Alex suggested that I kill dad," Derek said in a sworn statement. "I murdered my dad with an aluminum baseball bat. I set the house on fire from my dad's bedroom." Alex wrote out his statement, saying the boys planned the killing so they could live with the family friend, Rick Chavis, a convicted child molester who was found innocent of the same killing in a jury trial. "Rik told me he loved me," Alex wrote. "Rik told me I was gay and only he understood me." The boys' mother, Kelly Marino, said she would challenge the plea deals. Assistant State Attorney David Rimmer said he was confident the settlement would be upheld. Mediator Bill Eddins said the boys will be housed with prisoners in their age group and will receive schooling and counseling while imprisoned.

### San Fran jailer accused of sexually assaulting transgendered prisoner

SAN FRANCISCO — A male-to-female transgendered former prisoner filed a civil lawsuit Nov. 11 accusing a sheriff's deputy of sexual assault during her incarceration, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. Tumeka Godwin alleges that the male deputy assaulted her over a period of several months last fall. Godwin's attorney, Jana Carter, said legal counsel for the sheriff's department told her that the deputy was dismissed. Sheriff Michael Hennessey declined comment on the employee. The city dismissed Godwin's criminal complaint on the matter in October 2001, prompting the civil suit, Carter said. Godwin alleges that the deputy regularly ordered her to "strip naked, masturbate ... and dance for his arousal," Carter said. Godwin has undergone hormone treatment, but has not completed male-to-female transition. The suit seeks unspecified damages and a court order requiring employee training on transgender issues. The training already exists, and transgender inmates are provided separate, protected housing, Hennessey said.

### Police call beating death of gay Ariz. man a hate crime

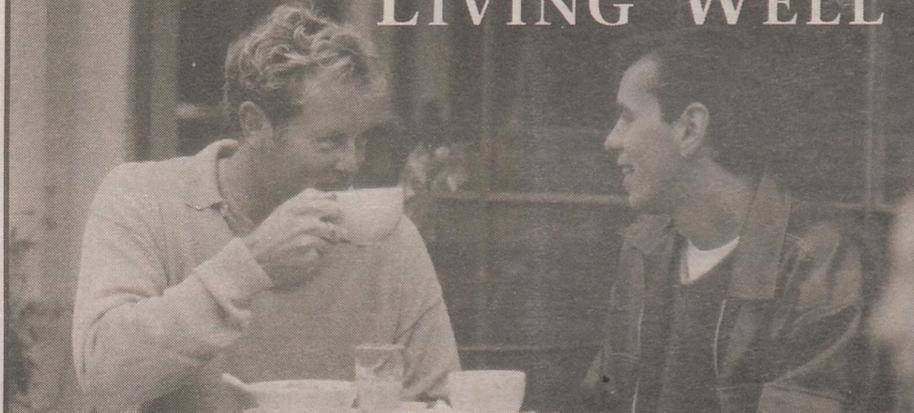
TUCSON, Ariz. — Police now consider the June beating death of a gay man a hate crime, according to the Associated Press. Philip A. Walsted, a 24-year-old airline reservations worker, was beaten with a baseball bat June 12. "We're pleased that the police took the time to do a thorough investigation," said Kent Burbank, executive director of Wingspan, the city's gay community center. Police arrested David Higdon, 20, on charges of first-degree murder and armed robbery in Walsted's death. He is jailed in lieu of \$1 million bail. Initially, authorities said they were looking at the possibility of a hate crime but didn't have enough evidence. Statements from subsequent interviews supported their initial conclusion, police said.

From staff and wire reports

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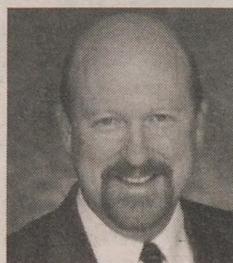
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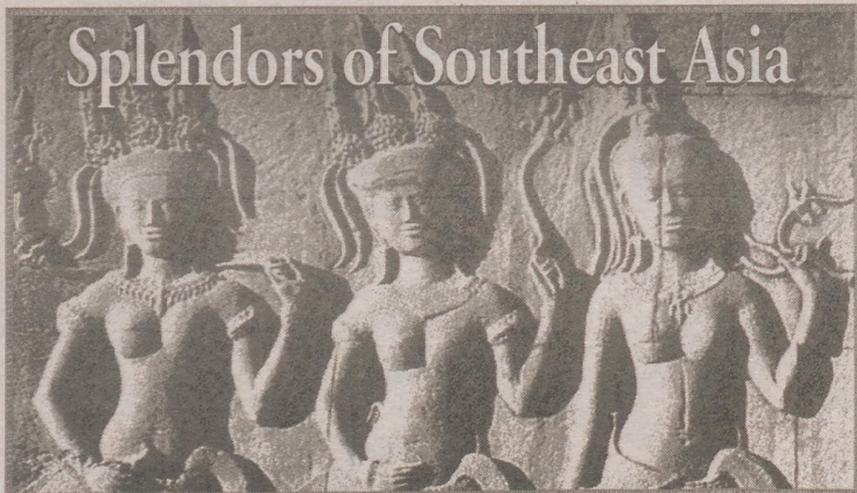
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## international news

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### Zambian minister wants people with HIV in 'isolation camps'

LUSAKA, Zambia — AIDS activists criticized a Zambian official last week for his proposal to round up people with HIV and force them into isolation camps, the Associated Press reported. Alex Chama, deputy minister for Luapula province, made his comments during a parliamentary debate Nov. 13 over a bill to form a National AIDS Council secretariat to coordinate Zambia's response to the pandemic. "[Those infected] are busy spreading the problem. It is not fair," Chama said. "They should be isolated to a specific camp until such a time that they become negative." Leaving aside Chama's statement that people with HIV can be cured, which they can't, AIDS activists said it was sad to see a government minister express such attitudes in a country where an estimated 20 percent of people are HIV-positive. People Living with HIV/AIDS Chairman Augustine Chola said people like Chama do not deserve to represent Zambians in government.

### Gay police commander in U.K. cleared of wrong-doing — again

LONDON — An eight-month investigation into controversial Metropolitan police commander that was sparked by allegations of drug taking ended last week with the officer being reprimanded for a minor flouting of police rules, the Guardian reported.



Brian Paddick, a gay police commander in Britain, has been cleared for a third time of wrongdoing over drug use allegations lodged by his former boyfriend.

The announcement from the Metropolitan police authority means that Brian Paddick, 44, was cleared of any serious wrongdoing by three different bodies — the MPA, the crown prosecution service and the police complaints authority. Paddick, whose supporters argued he was the victim of a homophobic witchhunt, said he was needlessly put "through eight months of hell." The MPA announcement came after it decided against convening a disciplinary panel to consider claims made in a tabloid newspaper that Paddick smoked 100 cannabis joints. It ruled there was no evidence to substantiate the allegations, which were made by his former partner James Renolleau, who sold his story of their life together to a British tabloid.

### Hundreds march in Thai parade to end gay festival

BANGKOK, Thailand — Hundreds of gay men and transvestites marched down a Bangkok shopping street Sunday in an annual parade climaxing a 10-day gay festival, the Associated Press reported. Some participants wore costumes inspired by the Bruce Willis science fiction movie "The Fifth Element," with flowing tassels, tiny blouses, tight skirts and knee length boots. Others wore ball gowns, ostrich feathers and brightly colored wigs. Despite being a conservative Buddhist society, Thailand is one of the most tolerant countries in Asia when it comes to gay men and lesbians. "This is awesome. We love it not only because it shows Thailand is more open-minded about the issue, but also these people look cute and beautiful in those dresses," said Kwanchanok Wannabhum, an 11-year-old girl who watched the parade with her parents.

### Korean dictionaries to change anti-gay definitions

SEOUL, South Korea — Discriminatory and disparaging definitions of homosexuality will disappear from the dictionaries of Korea, JoongAng Ilbo reported. The National Human Rights Commission last week announced that it succeeded in settling the demands of a petition by gay rights organizations asking for dictionaries to define homosexuality and related terms using nondiscriminatory language. In March, the Lesbian & Gay Human Rights Federation petitioned the National Academy of the Korean Language, publisher of the standard Korean dictionary, along with nine other publishers, asking for the end to the use of disparaging definitions for gays. According to the commission's probe, most Korean dictionaries and English-Korean dictionaries published in Korea defined homosexuality as "sexual perversion." Five publishers recently told the commission that they would correct the definitions when they publish revised editions. The remaining four publishers said they would consult language institutes and take necessary measures.

### British city to offer gay union register

BIRMINGHAM, England — The Birmingham Register Office is set to stage wedding ceremonies for gay men and lesbians, the Birmingham Post reported last week. Although same-sex "marriages" will not have any legal status, the City Council said the idea will help promote its caring approach. The public protection committee planned to ask Chief Superintendent Registrar David Rees to develop proposals for handling civil commitments, allowing both same-sex and heterosexual couples to take vows, sign a register and receive a certificate. The idea was severely criticized by committee member Peter Hollingworth, Birmingham's longest serving City Council member. "Things have gone too far. This is all part of the slide in our morals, but that's the world we live in now," he said. "Standards have fallen away and we are getting sleazier and sleazier. We seem to be obsessed with so-called equality. You can't even smack a dog now because it's got equal rights." Birmingham will follow 15 other local jurisdictions in England and Wales by offering civil commitment ceremonies.

From staff and wire reports

## national news

# Black colleges lag in gay student support

Recent incidents at Morehouse, Howard raise concern for climate

By RHONDA SMITH

As officials at historically black colleges in Atlanta and Washington, D.C., scramble to respond to reports of anti-gay attacks on students, administrators at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, N.C., are working on a sweeping plan to include gay and lesbian students in all aspects of campus life.

"The challenge was creating a conscious initiative," said Patrick Day, an assistant vice president and dean of students at Smith, an historically black four-year college with 1,600 students in southwestern North Carolina.

"We've had people in Residence Life and in other critical areas on campus dealing with these issues for some time. It wasn't an issue where no one was doing anything," he said. "The real challenge for us was to deal with these issues in a more comprehensive fashion."

Some predominantly white colleges and universities have begun advertising that they offer a supportive atmosphere for gay students, ranging from gay student centers to academic programs in gay and lesbian studies.

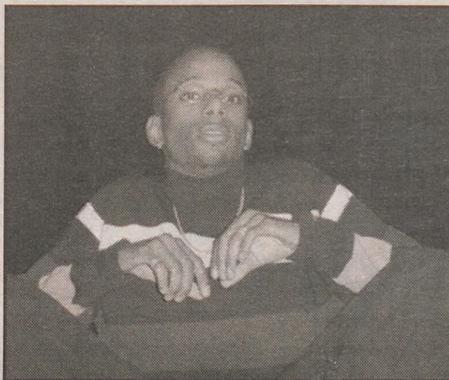
This is not the case, however, at the majority of the more than 100 historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) nationwide.

"Very few HBCUs have formed gay student groups on their campuses," said Brandon Braud, who is working on a pilot project at the Human Rights Campaign that involves offering to help historically black colleges develop initiatives to assist gay students. "One of the biggest challenges we're facing today is that there is very little sensitivity or awareness about dealing with this particular issue."

Earlier this year, Donna Payne, HRC's constituent field organizer, suggested that the nation's largest gay political organization launch the HBCU Outreach Pilot Project "so black gay students understand they are not alone."

She said administrators at many historically black colleges and universities appear reluctant to address this issue in part because they are not approached often about this matter.

"There's been a silence — and it's a silence on both sides," Payne said. "Students have not



"Tonight is the last night I will put up with threats on my life because I am gay," wrote Jonathan Perry in an e-mail to administrators at Johnson C. Smith University, after he was verbally threatened.

said who they are, and they have not wanted to address being gay on campus. And administrators have not wanted to deal with it."

Day, at Johnson C. Smith University, echoed Payne.

"In some ways, these conversations — as comprehensive conversations — are relatively new in black communities and on historically black college campuses," he said. "Generally, they are not so new on predominantly white campuses."

HRC's pilot project involves Payne and Braud traveling nationwide to historically black college campuses to co-sponsor gay-related forums for students, school administrators, and gay civil rights organizers in local communities.

## Howard students meet with president

"We do not really have an open dialogue," said Sterling Washington, president of the Bisexual, Lesbian & Gay Organization of Students at Howard (BLAGOSAH). "[University officials] are doing things, but they're not in contact with us."

J.J. Pryor, a spokesperson at Howard, disagreed.

"My observation is that school officials are working with the students," she said, noting that Howard's campus security force recently took part in training sessions related to addressing the needs of gay students.

"Howard is making a concerted effort to work with the gay and lesbian population on campus," she said.

Washington and BLAGOSAH member Lynval Gray met in September with Pryor,

H. Patrick Swygert, Howard's president, and Raymond Archer, the school's vice provost, to discuss issues of concern to gay students there. The meeting included a conversation about allegations that members of the school's marching band assaulted a gay student, Darryl Payton, and one of his instructors, Luqman Selim, on Sept. 3 while shouting anti-gay names at the two in the basement of the school's Fine Arts building.

"To categorize that as a gay issue may not necessarily be true," Pryor said Wednesday. She also said this matter has been resolved but that she could not provide specific details.

## Morehouse admin. announce task force

At Morehouse College, a Nov. 3 attack that began with a glance in a dormitory shower sent one student to the hospital with a fractured skull and another to jail and prompted charges of widespread homophobia at the historically black school in Atlanta.

The student, Gregory Love, who was assaulted with a baseball bat, has denied he is gay and told police he did not have glasses on when he went to take a shower and looked at another person in the shower, thinking it was his roommate.

Morehouse sophomore Aaron Price was arrested the next day and charged with aggravated assault.

Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard, a Morehouse graduate, said Nov. 19 there was "a strong indication" that Price would be charged with a hate crime in connection with the beating.

Morehouse officials expelled Price for the attack, but this did not quell criticism about how the school handled the matter.

Massey announced Nov. 20 the formation of a "Blue Ribbon Panel" to advise Morehouse on strategies to promote a campus environment free of harassment and homophobia. Morehouse officials also unveiled an internal "Task Force on Diversity and Tolerance," and said it would coordinate new campus initiatives addressing tolerance, harassment, anger management and diversity.

## A different approach in N.C.

Johnson C. Smith University's decision to implement a comprehensive plan to address the needs of its gay student population resulted from anti-gay incidents there earlier this year on the 100-acre cam-

pus in Mecklenburg County, N.C.

Jonathan Perry, a gay liberal arts major at Smith, sent Day, the dean of students, and Dorothy Cowser Yancy, the university's president, an e-mail message in May about threats and harassment he said gay students on the campus faced.

Perry described "gross and unwarranted epithets" someone in a vehicle made against him and his partner the night before and said one of the men who approached them told a friend to get his gun because he was about to shoot "that faggot."

"Tonight is the last night I will put up with threats on my life because I am gay," Perry told school officials in the e-mail message. "To date, nothing has been done about the threats and harassment against the GLBT community on our campus."

"I am tired of not feeling safe at the school I pay close to \$18,000 every year to attend," he said. "I am not leaving, so something has to be done."

Day said this and other anti-gay incidents at Smith spurred officials there to take action.

"They wake you up and make you aware that something is going on," he said.

The comprehensive solution that Smith administrators, students, and gay civil rights organizers in North Carolina came up with includes multicultural competency training for campus security workers and staff in the Student Affairs division.

The university's Judicial Board, which includes faculty, staff members and students, also will be trained to address multicultural issues and specifically, Day said, those affecting gay students.

Officials at Smith also plan to create a task force comprised of school administrators at various levels, staff members, students and local community members to address two issues. One matter pertains to assembling a "campus allies program," which will involve using trained faculty and staff members from various departments as volunteer counselors and mentors for gay students.

Rev. Tonyia Rawls, a black lesbian minister at Unity Fellowship Church, in Charlotte, N.C., also is working with Carter, Perry and others at Smith to launch the gay-related initiatives.

"I'm very proud of the work the university is doing, but we have a long way to go," she said this week.

Jennifer Smith and Lou Chibbaro Jr. contributed to this report.

# Log Cabin leader Tafel in spotlight during career

LOG CABIN, continued from Page 1

enters a new phase."

Mike Ferens, president of Log Cabin Republicans of the District of Columbia, agreed.

"I am very happy with what Rich has accomplished over the past ten years," Ferens said. "I can speak for our members in saying we're looking forward for a new direction and fresh leadership."

Tafel, an ordained minister in the American Baptist Church, began his full-time political career in 1991, when

Republican Gov. William Weld of Massachusetts hired him to help the administration overhaul the state's Medicaid and public health programs. In 1993, Tafel moved to Washington to help open an LCR national office as the executive director.

Tafel arrived on the Washington scene one year after he became the subject of national attention at the 1992 Republican National Convention in Houston, Tex., where Tafel criticized the convention's anti-gay rhetoric, including the infamous "culture war" speech by anti-gay GOP leader Patrick Buchanan.

Tafel found himself in the media spotlight four years later when Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole returned a \$1,000 contribution from LCR.

A short time later, after Tafel talked about gay Republicans on most of the nation's TV news talk shows, Dole reversed his position and accepted the LCR contribution, then actively sought and received LCR's endorsement.

Tafel took a strategic risk during the 2000 presidential campaign when the LCR national office appeared to back Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) over favorite

George W. Bush during the early primaries. Log Cabin officials noted at the time that Bush had spurned overtures to meet with LCR leaders, while McCain agreed to a meeting, even though his positions on gay issues were similar to Bush's.

LCR ended up endorsing Bush following the 2000 Republican convention, and Tafel and other LCR leaders campaigned hard for his election. In the two years since Bush entered the White House, Tafel and the LCR have emerged as one of Bush's most ardent supporters in the Washington political scene.

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Issue 1152

# Forum

HOUSTON VOICE

NOVEMBER 22, 2002

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## editorial

# Hello, Houston, are you there?

### Attacks from all fronts ought to be enough to make gay Texans get a spine

By PENNY WEAVER

**U** WAS WARNED ABOUT IT EVEN before I set foot in Texas, but I admit I was skeptical. Now I'm afraid it's true. But I'm in denial. Does the Houston gay community really have no spine? No guts? No glory?

I grew up in rural Illinois, where there was no "gay community." As far as anyone knew, there were no gay men, lesbians, bisexual or transgender people, for that matter. Of course there were, but they certainly were not "out" in any way, shape or form.

I was amazed by the relative cohesiveness of the gay community in Atlanta when I first moved there a few years ago. To be honest, I was impressed that there was a gay community at all — it wasn't something to which I was accustomed. So from my experience, gay Atlanta was quite organized and powerful.

Before I came to Houston, some former residents of this great city warned me that the gay community here is much different than that of the ATL. They described it as less cohesive, less organized and — dare I say it? — even weak. They spoke of frustration in more than one defeat of efforts to achieve basic civil rights for gays.

Like any journalist would, I withheld judgment until I could see for myself. What could Atlanta gays have that gay Texans couldn't? It's still the South, and I didn't have to live here to know how tough Texans are.

But it seems this community does lack cohesiveness, despite all the things we lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgenders have in common. Even when it comes to the most important aspects of our lives — equal rights, politics, business and health — we just can't get our act together.

I'm left wondering if gay Houston may even survive.

TAKE AS AN EXAMPLE THE FIGHT FOR basic rights in Houston for gays. Last year did bring a victory: The Houston City Council approved a non-discrimination policy that included sexual orientation as a protected status. It was a February 2001 high point that might have signaled a good year for gay Houstonians.

But bad news followed. Conservatives proposed City Prop. 2, an anti-gay measure that prevents the city from offering domestic partner benefits — such as health insurance — to the partners of city employees. Response against the proposition was spotty. Some segments of the city and gay community rose up to fight the measure; others remained silent, seemingly complacent.

Where was the generalized outrage from gays? None came. Conservatives succeeded in getting a measure on the fall ballot that would repeal the non-discrimination ordinance, and voters narrowly went along.

Many gay Houstonians and several allies worked hard to try to prevent City Prop. 2 from becoming the law of the land. But just as notable are the many who did nothing.

Defeated gays tried to see the close vote as something of a positive — after all, Houstonians overwhelmingly defeated a pro-gay non-discrimination law in the 1980s. At least this time, conservatives only won by a narrow margin.

But they still won.

CONSERVATIVES AND REPUBLICANS WON again this month on local, statewide and federal levels. The Nov. 5 election ejected a number of gay-friendly Texas representatives from the state legislature.

Most notable to Houstonians is the defeat of Debra Danburg, who for more than two decades helped fight on the side of gay rights in Austin. Political activists warned before Election Day that the loss of Danburg would be a devastating blow for gay Texans. Many tried, with varying success, to mobilize voters to defend gay-friendly Danburg and others from challenges by conservative Republicans.

Now the GOP controls the Texas House of Representatives for the first time in decades, in addition to the Texas Senate. The governor's mansion also stayed in the hands of conservative Republicans, the likes of anti-gay Sen. Phil Gramm and countless others who see no need for "special" rights for gays.

Part of the result is more than one anti-gay bill already pre-filed and set to go before the legislature in its new January session. The GOP wants to pass a Texas Defense of Marriage Act to remind gays that we can't get married or have civil unions recognized in this state — even though gays already cannot marry or obtain civil unions here.

Another bill would have the state investigating the sexual orientation of potential foster parents, to be sure that gays cannot be part of foster families.

Republicans have expressed confidence that they can get these kinds of bills passed, and have even put a priority on the initiative to prevent recognition of civil unions (which, it's worth noting again, already are not recognized in Texas). With the GOP majority in the legislature, it is hard to argue that they cannot win with such measures.

Surely gay Houstonians are organizing opposition. Surely an outcry against such insulting, unwarranted attacks has begun among gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders. Gay Texans must already be lining up to march on the Capitol and demand that legislators stop singling us out.

Nope. Not yet.

IT SEEMS AS THOUGH WE GAY HOUSTONIANS can't even keep hold of our supporters in arenas outside politics. Sure, it's a tough economy, but our gay businesses are suffering and, in some cases, disappearing at an alarming rate.

Ask any gay business owner. The current economic climate is tough for everyone, but gays who own and operate businesses — particularly in Houston — struggle more than most. Crossroads Market & Bookstore is a perfect example.

This gay Houston landmark closed over the summer due to declining business. It appeared that the store was busy. Dozens of people routinely met there for coffee, purchased books and cards, supported Crossroads. It was in the heart of Montrose. It appeared to be a popular gay gathering spot. But now Crossroads is no more.

Just across the street, Mary's... Naturally continues to fight for its own existence. The oldest gay bar in the city and even the state, Mary's boasts a rich history near the center of Houston's gay community, from political activism to social gatherings, fund-raisers and other efforts. Most of us have lost track of the rumored dates that would mean last call at Mary's.

Bookstores, bars and other gay establishments in Houston almost all are struggling. The Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center and other non-profit groups that serve gays limp along from month to month, on the edge of closure.

Dozens of people showed up at Mary's for the supposed last hurrah on Sunday, said farewell, and many left with tears in their eyes. But now that the club is attempting to stay open, there apparently are few if any gays putting that nostalgic energy into support for Mary's. Sure, it's a business, but it's also a Houston institution, a safe haven in the heart of the safe haven of Montrose itself.

Then again, when gays don't get together to defend their own civil rights and political voices, it is hard to imagine they would organize just to preserve a social nesting place.

IF CIVIL RIGHTS, POLITICS AND SOCIAL activities aren't enough to get many gay Houstonians motivated, surely one would think that health care would be.

The state of Texas is considering trimming income guidelines for its AIDS medication program, resulting in fewer HIV/AIDS patients able to get monetary assistance for their life-sustaining drugs.

A domino effect would result: Those who cannot get meds are more likely to get sick; treatment of the resulting illnesses costs even more than drugs; and the rising cost of health care affects everyone. Never mind that more HIV/AIDS patients likely would die as a result.

These proposed policy changes affect gay men the most, since more HIV/AIDS patients identify as gay or bisexual than those who are heterosexual, female or fall into other categories. Thousands of gay men will end up with no way to pay for the medications that are vital to their battle against this disease.

But gays in this city and across the state have yet to truly mobilize against this assault. Many AIDS activists are rounding up troops, but a mass effort is lacking. As with other issues, gay Houstonians have not stepped up to the plate.

I really don't think that gay Atlanta or gay Dallas or any other place has anything over gay Houston. Perhaps it is only in appearance that other cities' gay communities are more organized.

But complacency creeps in as soon as activity wanes. Complacency needs no invitation; it overtakes us the second we let our guard down.

We are being provoked. The time for action is now — and we've got what it takes.

 Penny Weaver is editor of the *Houston Voice* and can be reached at editor@houstonvoice.com.



**viewpoint** JENNIFER VANASCO



Face it, Hootie is right. There's something delicious about same-sex associations like the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival.

# Leave the Masters boys' club alone

AUGUSTA NATIONAL GOLF CLUB CHAIR Hootie Johnson is firm: No woman will be permitted to join his private club before the Masters in April. Perhaps no woman will become a member, ever.

I'm not sure this is a bad thing. Of course it's not good. It's not ideal. It's just not important. Absolutely, it would be better if one of the major powwow opportunities for political leaders and CEOs included top American women like Hewlett Packard CEO Carly Fiorina or newly-elected House minority leader Nancy Pelosi.

But that's not going to happen — at least not any time soon.

"We haven't felt the need to invite one or that we wanted to," a huffy Hootie told the Associated Press. "Do you think girls have anything to offer the Boy Scouts? Do men have anything to offer the Junior League? No. We're a private club. We have a right to choose and associate with whom we please."

Hootie's argument is imbued with the whiff of sexism. Is Hootie really comparing Augusta National to the Junior League? Is the Junior League something he would want to join?

I get the feeling that Augusta National members picture women as socialites swat-

ting ineffectively at golf balls. Or maybe, if they're, uh, progressive, they picture the tough, scary lesbians on the LPGA tour.

BUT MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, HOOTIE has a point. There is something delicious about private same-sex associations. I myself was a Girl Scout. Went to Wellesley. Attend the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival annually. Where would lesbians be if it weren't for women-only and girl-only groups?

There are probably hundreds of male-only private golf clubs in the country. My father, in fact, belongs to one in New York. There are also hundreds of private and public golf clubs that happily admit both men and women. The only reason Augusta National has attracted so much attention is because it is the home to the crown jewel of golf tournaments — the Masters.

But the recent debate has made it seem as if women can't play golf at Augusta, and that's just not the case. If that were true, then I would be advocating for every woman golfer in America to show up at Augusta in protest.

In fact, women can play golf on the famous Augusta course, and thousands have. That's what makes the difference here. What women cannot do is sit in the clubhouse with



a Scotch as an invited member of the club.

AN INVITATION TO JOIN AUGUSTA National is a signal of arrival to a certain set of people. As far as Hootie is concerned, a woman will never get that ego boost.

And that's all it is — an ego boost. Because the debate over Augusta National has nothing to do with most women. My mom wouldn't make the cut. I wouldn't.

An invitation to Augusta is reserved for the cream of American business and political leaders. But does Carly Fiorina really need Augusta to get a deal done? Does Nancy Pelosi?

We are not talking about a club that is open to all — even all men. Augusta is exclusive by nature, open only to a very wealthy and powerful few. It does not pretend to be democratic or populist.

The Masters tournament is sponsored by the club itself, not the PGA, because the club refused to follow the PGA's diversity rules. Augusta National even jettisoned commercial sponsors, after threats from activists to put pressure on sponsors associat-

ed with the male-only club. The club is content to be a bastion of same-sex association.

Well, more power to Augusta, then. There is a theory being batted around that if the U.S. had a female president, then Augusta National would let her in. The problem is that we can't test this theory, because we've never had a female president. That's something we do need to work on. More women leading the Fortune 500 is something we should work on.

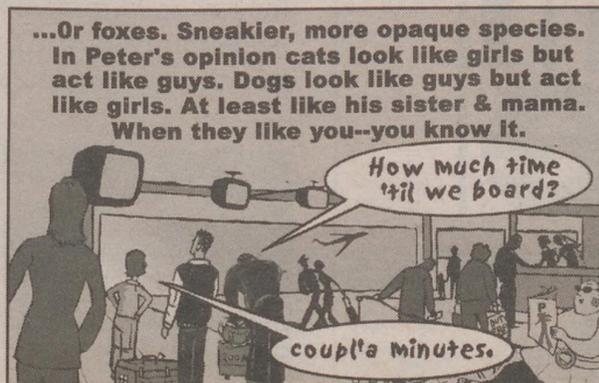
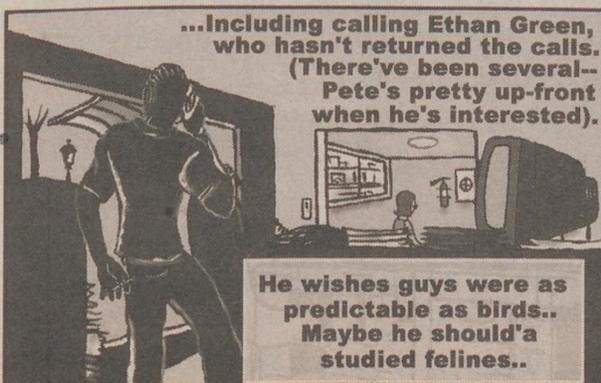
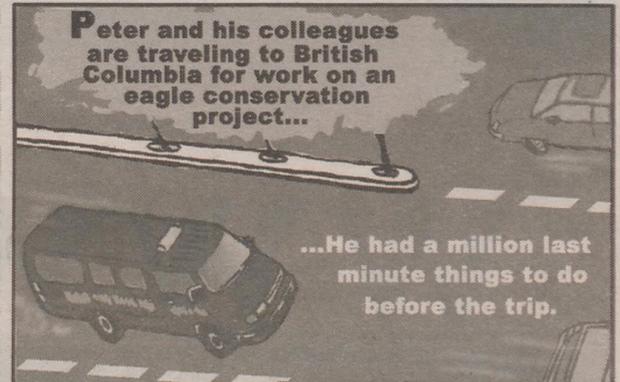
The trouble is not that Hootie won't let a woman in the door of the boys' clubhouse. The trouble is that there are not enough women in positions of power to make it obvious that they should be included.

Let's work for gender parity among religious, political and business leaders. Once we get those things sorted out, little muddles like Augusta will take care of themselves.

@ Jennifer Vanasco is Chicago-based syndicated columnist and can be reached at [vanasco@chicagofreepress.com](mailto:vanasco@chicagofreepress.com).

## The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of ETHAN GREEN

by Eric Orner



Thank You Harry Hay.

Continued next week, swear to God. #40

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## on the record

"When people say 'San Francisco liberal,' are they talking about protecting the environment, educating the American children, building economic success? No, they are talking about gay people. Well, I was brought up to believe that all people are God's children. And the last time I checked, that included gay people."



*U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat who was elected last week as House Minority Leader despite criticism that her voting record representing the city of San Francisco made her too liberal to be a national party leader (Washington Post, Nov. 11)*

"Congressman Pitts doesn't believe in stoning anybody."

*Gabe Neville, spokesman for Rep. Joseph Pitts (R-Pa.), on the congressman's decision to cancel his scheduled appearance at a religious conference in Washington, D.C., for the Immanuel Free Reformed Church and the National Reform Association. The groups advocate executing gays and stoning disobedient children. (Associated Press, Nov. 14)*

"My position is very clear. I have historically believed that we should recognize all elements in our society as long as they obey whatever the law may be. As far as I'm concerned, I welcome gays, lesbians and all others into the ranks of the Republican Party as long as they have the ideological views of the party as a whole."



*Former President Gerald R. Ford, asked why he agreed to serve on the advisory board of the Republican Unity Coalition, a gay-straight GOP group (Yale Politic, Oct. 15)*

"I go to the mosque as a human being who wants to thank my creator — not as a gay or a straight man. Islam places great stress on love and care, and I think the love and care I give to my partner is very Islamic too."

*Adnan Ali, a gay Pakistani-born set designer now living in London (Friday Times, Lahore, Pakistan, Nov. 15)*

"We can say that homosexuals are not good Muslims because they are practicing an unacceptable sin, but we cannot completely write them out of Islam. ... One opinion [on the punishment for homosexuality] is stoning to death, although this can only be implemented in an Islamic state. In Britain, where gays are more powerful than Muslims, there is little we can do except preach to them and pray for forgiveness on their behalf."

*Dr. Zaki Badawi, an Islamic scholar at Muslim College in London (Friday Times, Lahore, Pakistan, Nov. 15)*

"Homophobia continues to hamper [HIV] prevention efforts at all levels: from the individual at risk or infected, who may deny his risk because of internal conflicts, to the broader culture, which delivers anti-gay messages, institutionalizes homophobia through structural mechanisms, such as laws that regulate intimate sexual behavior, and lags in its support of sensitive and honest prevention for gay and bisexual youth, young adults and older men. ... Political leadership and will are necessary to address these underlying issues, so critical to prevention's success."

*Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's strategic plan for HIV prevention (www.cdc.gov, Nov. 12)*



"VH1 has canceled 'Liza & David.' I think I speak for all of American when I say, 'Thank you.'"

*Jay Leno, in his "Tonight Show" monologue (TV Guide, Nov. 23)*

**THEATER:** Popular actor Rob Nash plans a one-night performance this month at Stages Repertory Theatre. **Page 17.**

**SPORTS:** Houston's own female pro footballers win the championship for the third year in a row. **Page 19.**



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# Out on the Bayou

## Right-left combo

In his fight against the right wing, gay sex advice columnist, author and confirmed liberal Dan Savage pulls no punches

By BRIAN MOYLAN

**I**T SEEMS THESE DAYS THAT EVERY time you watch one of the several all-news networks or pick up a newspaper or read a political magazine, there is some conservative political commentator telling you that you are a horrible sinner and are going to hell and, by doing so, you are dragging the American family into the gutter.

Remember when Jerry Falwell tried to blame the Sept. 11 attacks on gays, pro-choice advocates, and the ACLU? Well, it's the same thing, but it's all the time.

"The media has a conservative bias," says Dan Savage, an openly gay author who writes "Savage Love," a syndicated weekly sex and relationship advice column aimed at a predominantly straight audience. But isn't Savage wrong? Aren't those same conservatives always telling us that the media has a liberal bias?

"They are saying that, but they're lying," Savage says. "I think most people in the media lean left, so the conservatives scream and yell, and, to compensate, the media hands them the microphone to prove that they don't have a liberal bias. Why should they stop making the charge when it gets them the microphone? It's become so pervasive that now the media has a conservative bias."

Savage's answer to those conservatives is his new book, "Skipping Towards Gomorrah," a delightfully comic explosion of sin that will make the rightwing squirm in its starched underwear. The idea behind the book is that Savage will travel throughout the country committing and finding people to help him commit the traditional Christian "Seven Deadly Sins."

(For those of you who failed Sunday school or haven't watched Brad Pitt in "Seven" in a few years, those sins are greed, lust, sloth, gluttony, envy, pride and anger.)

The book is not only a comment on how conservatives view the rest of America, but also a celebration of the things that make us happy — like gay sex, drugs, gambling, and way too much food — that conservatives want to take away from us.

Savage sees this quest to rid us of our right to happiness, no matter how we acquire it, as a violation of our fundamental Constitutional rights.

"If we aren't free to pursue our own version of happiness, then the first two items on Jefferson's wish list are without meaning," he writes in the book. "Life and liberty do us no good if we can't employ them — or waste them — in the pursuit of those things that make us happy."

Please see **DAN SAVAGE** on **Page 16**



(Photo by Mark Van-S.)

## out on the bayou

# The Savage truth, according to Dan

DAN SAVAGE, continued from Page 15

THIS IS NOT A GUIDE BOOK ON HOW to break laws, cause anarchy or burn crosses, but rather a look at those things that we already do that are both legal (overeating) and illegal (smoking a little pot once in awhile) that really don't cause society any harm but still make life worth living.

"I'm not telling people how to live," says Savage. "[Conservative author] Bill Bennett can live however he wants to live. Sinners don't try to impose their sins on the virtuous, but the virtuous are always trying to impose their virtues on me. I'm not telling them how to live by saying that they need to leave me alone."

Just as it's Savage's right to champion the causes on the left, he feels that the right has the right to its opinion, but should stop interfering in politics.

"They have the right to try to persuade us the way they want to. If they kept it just to that, I wouldn't be offended at all. They wouldn't be more offensive than my mother, who I listen to patiently and ignore," Savage says. "The problem is that they want to amend constitutions and pass laws to make us live how they want us to."

Savage isn't opposed to any laws or rules governing how we live our lives, but he isn't happy with the status quo.

"Somebody needs to make the rules, I guess our elected officials need to make

"There's a little gay parallel universe, like the gay special Olympics for gays who can't compete in the real world. I don't think there's a gay culture. There are contributions to the culture that gay people make..."

the rules, but we need to elect different ones who can make better rules," he says.

SAVAGE SAYS THAT HIS DISLIKE OF the right isn't a result of being gay, but it certainly adds to his dissatisfaction with a group of people who haven't been very tolerant of gays in the past.

"[Liberal filmmaker] Michael Moore isn't a cock-smoker, so you can hate the right without hopping into a sling," he says. "I think it's like my being an ex-Catholic. I'm not the only ex-Catholic out there, but the reason I am one is because I'm gay. Homosexuality pried me out of the Catholic Church. After hearing all their anti-gay rhetoric, I said, 'Maybe there's something wrong with the church, not with me.' That's what happened with me and the right."

Even the gay community doesn't escape Savage's critical eye in "Gomorrah." For the chapter dedicated to the sin of pride, Savage travels to Los Angeles to attend the L.A. Pride festival and parade with a wealthy and beautiful gay male couple and their friends.

Though Savage is against the idea of gay pride events, he still has fun with the boys, enjoying all the shirtless men around him and even dropping a tab of ecstasy.

"I have no patience for the 'gay is good' rhetoric; it's as harmful as 'gay is bad,'" he claims. "I don't think Pride parades are a monumental waste of time, but I think that gay pride needs to be retired in the same way 'black power' was retired. You don't see congressmen on the floor raising their fists and saying 'black power,' anymore. We don't need Barney Frank screaming, 'gay pride!' Thankfully, for the most part he doesn't."

Savage's argument is that traditional Pride celebrations are fine, but, if the gay community just wants to throw themselves a big ol' party (something that we're very good at, by the way), then they should just call it a big party, instead of hiding behind the traditional stump speeches about acceptance and how great it is to be gay. After all, Savage isn't a big fan of "gay culture" as a whole.

"There's a little gay parallel universe,

like the gay special Olympics for gays who can't compete in the real world. I don't think there's a gay culture. There are contributions to the culture that gay people make," he says, adding that there were some garish examples of "gay culture" in his chapter about pride. "The green thong and the rainbow anklet — that's gay culture."

Many gays, and even the couple Savage attends the festival with, claim that Pride events are for gay youth or people who are just coming out of the closet. It gives them a space where they can be comfortable and see other people like them.

But as Savage points out, seeing overweight men in green thongs and dancing shirtless on drugs to thumping house music isn't doing much to really further that cause. And how many gay youth are even at the gay pride events?

Savage and his partner adopted a son of their own (a journey documented in Savage's last book "The Kid"), and he thinks that it is best that his son learn lessons about pride, sin, and how to pursue happiness from him and his partner.

"I will tell my son that there will be things that he will enjoy but he should be sparing in indulging in them, as his parents are," he says. "We'll be open about them about our pot use as well as our sling, even though it's still in its box in the basement."

Leaving a sling in its box in the basement? Sounds pretty conservative.

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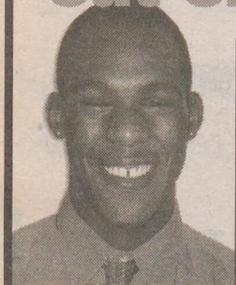
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**out on the aisle** STEVEN EWING ALFORD



Variety of plays takes the spotlight this month across the Bayou City

# Stages get busy

**'Top Gun! The Musical'**

Theatre LaB Houston presents the U.S. premiere of the satirical musical comedy that took earned rave reviews at the 2002 Toronto Fringe Theatre Festival. In the play, writer Billy Palmer adapts the film "Top Gun" into a musical. After several disappointing projects, he's hoping for a hit with "Top Gun" but in the tradition of theater, everything that can go wrong, does go wrong. "Top Gun" promises to be highly entertaining and original. (But don't expect to see Tom Cruise dancing around in his tighty whites.)

**on stage 'Top Gun! The Musical'**

8 p.m. Fridays & Saturdays • 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 5 • Through Dec. 14  
 Tickets: \$20 & \$22 • Theatre LaB Houston  
 1706 Alamo • 713-868-7516

**'Whistle Down The Wind'**

Based on the novel by Mary Haley Bell and the film of the same name by Richard Attenborough and Bryan Forbes, "Whistle Down The Wind" is a musical that "soars with human spirit." In this play, three rural children stumble upon a wounded fugitive hiding in their barn, and they believe the man is Jesus Christ. The children decide to hide him and keep his presence a secret from the townsfolk. He is eventually betrayed and the adults "rescue" their children with unhappy results. "Whistle Down The Wind" is a parable about faith, conviction and the fragile optimism of youth, "full of love, laughter and beautiful music."

**on stage 'Whistle Down The Wind'**

8 p.m. Fridays and Sundays  
 2 p.m. & 8 p.m. Saturdays • 2 p.m. Sundays  
 Through Dec. 21 • Tickets: \$25, \$30 at the door  
 Masquerade Theatre • 1537 N. Shepherd Drive  
 713-861-7045 • www.masqueradetheatre.com

**'Over The River And Through The Woods'**

Main Street Theatre of Houston opens the second show of this season with the warm-hearted comedy "Over The River And Through The Woods." This family comedy is about a 29-year-old marketing executive and his complex family relationship. As Nick Cristano dutifully visits his four Italian Immigrant grandparents, he tries to tell them that he's been offered a new job in another city but he's not able to get a single word into the conversation. His dilemma is further complicated by the fact that his parents have retired and moved to Florida and his sister has moved away as well. Nick faces inner turmoil and conflict of self-fulfillment versus family responsibility and dedication. This play explores how each generation has different collective ideas of family and what each person's role is in the family.



Popular writer/actor Rob Nash plans a one-night performance of two original plays on Nov. 30 at Stages Repertory Theatre.

**on stage 'Over The River And Through The Woods'**

8:00 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays  
 Through Dec. 15 • Tickets: \$20 in advance, \$22 at the door • Main Street Theatre  
 2540 Times Boulevard (Rice Village)  
 713-524-6706 • www.mainstreettheatre.com

**'Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol'**

Stages Repertory Theatre explores what happens behind the scenes in the Dickens' classic story. With a unique twist to the well-known tale, this version looks at Scrooge from Marley's point of view. After several years in "celestial limbo," Jacob Marley discovers that he must redeem Ebenezer Scrooge before Christmas morning or he'll face damnation. "This re-telling of Dickens' classic captures the essential nature of the story," says Stages' Managing Director Ken McLaughlin.

**on stage 'Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol'**

7:30 p.m. Wednesdays & Thursdays • 8:00 p.m. Fridays & Saturdays • 3:00 p.m. Sundays  
 Through Dec. 29 • Tickets: \$32-\$42  
 Stages Repertory Theatre  
 3201 Allen Parkway at Waugh Drive  
 713-527-0123 • www.stagestheatre.com

**'Love is God' & 'Anxiety... The New Depression'**

Stages Repertory Theatre presents a one-night only performance of Rob Nash in two original monologues. "Love is God" is the chronicle of Rob's "spiritual identity" from Catholic to 12-stepper to atheist. "Anxiety... The New Depression" follows his personal journey through the world of medications. He covers Zanax, Aadvan, Wellbutrin, Paxil, Zoloft, Clonapin, Buspar, Prozac, Effexor, Trazadone, Risperdal and Remeron, as well as other less orthodox routes he has taken in seeking refuge from clinical depression.

**on stage 'Love is God' & 'Anxiety... The New Depression'**

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 www.stagestheatre.com



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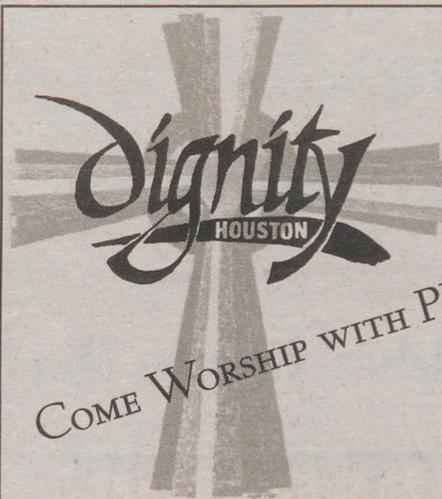
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  3. Provide 50 winter jackets for children in grades 1-5 in G.I.S.D.
  4. Hospital Visits, Funerals, Utility Assistance, Weekly Services, Volunteering at the AIDS Coalition, provide speakers for the Speaker Bureau on AIDS prevention ...
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**dining** TRAYCE DISKIN

Restaurant's accommodating service not enough to salvage disappointing food, atmosphere

**Andretti's uninspired**

WHEN I RUSHED, LATE AND STARVING, into Andretti's to meet a friend last week, I was a bit thrown by the darkened dining room. "They don't open until six," my friend said from a comfy seat in the bar area, "but they let me in anyway and poured me a drink." Within seconds, two welcoming servers seated us at a table, flicked on the lights, and appeared with a wine list and menus.

"Oh yeah," one of them said as he lit the votive candle on our table. "I gotta put on some Italian music." As he sailed across the black and white checkerboard floor, I noted how the bright red and yellow napkins and dining ware seemed almost cartoonish and out of place. The colors were jarring and a little absurd, especially under the wooden beams and bright light fixtures that recalled more of a German beer hall or Tudor pub than a jazzy trattoria.

But soon enough, we were treated to what was to become an incessant onslaught of Sinatra's greatest hits. We ordered some house wine and hoped for the best.

After delivering a promising looking basket of flour-dusted Italian bread, another server asked if we preferred olive oil, or "you know, that other stuff, I think it's vinegar." As she ended the offer with an attempt to pronounce "balsamic," I gently tore into a piece of bread only to find the middle pieces nearly frozen. We tested several slices, and by the time the unseasoned, weak olive oil arrived, our bread plates were filled with nothing but cold, dry hunks of dough.

OUR FIRST APPETIZER, THE CALIMARI Fritti (\$8.95), featured not tender rings of squid, but a clump of stringy tentacles caked together on the center of the plate. The bits we managed to divide by slicing through the unyielding meat with a knife were rubbery, tough, and unappetizing. Although I've certainly had calamari that suffers from too much batter, not enough seasoning, or an overdose of grease, this dish was far worse, as it seemed to be prepared with such little care and skill.

The accompanying marinara was zesty and flavorful, and, in another chef's kitchen, would have made a pleasant dipping sauce for the bread.

Although our Escargot (\$8.95) weren't quite as much of a disaster, they required a bit of effort with little reward. The snails appeared still in shells, which wobbled awkwardly on an escargot dish with the requisite melted butter seasoned with garlic and herbs. Although my friend and I were reasonably adept at digging out the snails with the clunky forceps, the snails themselves were mealy and miniscule.

Fortunately, our entrees turned out better than we had anticipated. At first I was disappointed when, minutes after ordering the Risotto Mare, our server returned to tell us that the Risotto dishes were pulled from the menu last week

because no one was ordering it — hardly a good sign. Both my friend and I opted for versions of the Homemade Gobbetti, which, from what we could tell, was no different than ravioli.

The Gobbetti Ai Funghi (\$13.50) was stuffed with substantial slivers of Portobello mushroom, garlic, saffron, and herbs. The ingredients mingled quite well and the simple but piquant marinara complemented the fresh pasta and lent the dish a deep, rustic heartiness.

My friend thoroughly enjoyed his Gobbetti Di Mare (\$14.50), a similar dish stuffed with shrimp and crab meat. The dish avoided being too gamey, and the shrimp and crab were well-blended and seasoned, perhaps with a bit of Parmesan to lend an extra kick. And it was no coincidence that our entrees were also far superior in presentation than our other dishes. The smooth and delicately shaped gobbetti were arranged simply but carefully on the plate in pool of marinara and sprinkled generously with herbs and pepper. Unfortunately, our server never came by with the requisite grated Parmesan.

FOR DESSERT WE ENJOYED A LIKEABLE Tiramisu (\$6.25), whose richness balanced out the sugar and cocoa dusted topping. The Brulee (\$7.50) was creamy and well blended beneath the glassy coating, but we missed the absent fresh fruit promised on the menu.

As we waited in the desolate restaurant for our bill, my friend and I generously tried to justify the disappointing meal — perhaps it was an off night, or maybe there were other options on the menu we should have tried. A quick look at the rather limited offerings isn't inspiring, with its standard Italian fare such as Parmigianas and five or six varieties of pasta, including Spaghetti Bolognese (\$12.95) and Fettuccine Alfredo (\$10.25).

As Frank crooned about love and marriage, for the seventh cycle that evening, "try, try, try — and you will only come to this conclusion," we certainly came to our own. No matter how kind or accommodating the service at Andretti's may be, we did not leave as enthusiastic fans.



Food: 101101  
Service: 101101101101  
Value: 101101101  
Scene: 101101101

☛ = Stay home and eat cereal  
101101 = Well, if you really must  
101101101 = Fine for all but the finnick  
101101101101 = Worth more than a 20-minute drive  
101101101101101 = As good as you'll find in this city

**sports** LEE DAVIS

Houston's women's football team capture championship for third consecutive year

# Energy nab title

## Champs again!

Kudos to our Women's Professional Football League world champions! The only team to have held the title is once again none other than our Houston Energy! No one seems to compare to our ladies in strength, team camaraderie and enthusiasm. This is the Energy's third straight (pardon use of the "s" word) championship.

The Energy captured the title again by defeating the Wisconsin Riveters 56-7. The win gives Houston its second straight undefeated season with a 12-0 record. The Energy went 10-0 last year. Wisconsin ended its season at 11-1.

The championship game, played at Birdville School District's Sports Stadium near Dallas, featured the Energy's usual hard-hitting defense and touchdowns by a variety of both offensive and defensive players. Fullback Gwendolyn "The Tank" Jackson scored three touchdowns on runs of one, 12 and 15 yards. Wide Receiver Karen Mones hauled in a 13-yard pass from Quarterback Tami Branson for another score.

But it was running back Stacy Agee who ignited the crowd, Energy officials said in a press release. Agee scored on runs on 16 and 60 yards and caught a pass from Branson for a two-point conversion. After the game, Agee was named the WPFL's 2002 Most Valuable Player.

The Energy defense, in addition to holding Wisconsin to only one touchdown, frequently had the Riveters moving backwards with hard hits and quarterback sacks. The defense also scored two touchdowns. Safety Robin Howington, the Energy's owner, returned a fumble 28 yards for a touchdown. Linebacker Stacy Raven, a longtime leader on Houston's defense, scored with another fumble recovery, running the ball in from the 22-yard line.

**Commentary:** Let's see now! The Rockets got a parade, the Comets got a parade, even the Bellaire Little League got a parade. Where is the Energy Parade? Got any ideas? Forward comments to me c/o the Houston Voice (e-mail: editor@houstonvoice.com). Let's see what we can do to rectify this situation!

## Stretch 'n' go

If you like the feel of the cool, autumn breeze in your face, join the Frontrunners running club every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. For information, call 713-522-2081. Come on — don your best running shoes and join the fun.

## Real clean air

Contact the Houston Outdoor Group (HOG) to join members every Saturday for a Memorial Park walk. Meet in front of the Tennis Center.

General meetings are held every Tuesday from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Contact Don and/or Ray at 713-522-7809 for information or log on to [www.absentmind.net/hog](http://www.absentmind.net/hog).



Houston Energy's running back Stacy Agee (23) and fullback Gwendolyn Jackson (42) helped lead the team to its third championship in the Women's Professional Football League on Nov. 9.

## Lead changes

The Lone Star Volleyball Association (LSVA) recently released standings for the fall division. In the Recreational Division, Diego's Team still leads the way with a record of 29-5, followed by Buck's team at 17-17, Alex's Team at 16-16, Desi's Team at 12-20 and Greg's Team with 9-23.

The Competitive Division still shows Perez's People in first at 18-10, The Slayers approaching with a 12-16 record and Ritter's Critters at 12-16.

The Power Division changed leads with Scrubbs now in first at 19-9, Texas Exes at 18-10, Chaos next with a 18-12 record, Assault with 14-12, then Handful at 6-20 and Aerial Attack at 5-21.

Anyone interested in playing volleyball and meeting new friends is welcome to stop by the Jarabeck Center on the University of St. Thomas campus at 3800 Mount Vernon Blvd. from 4:30 to 7 p.m. on Sundays. First-time players and visitors are free so go out and join the fun!

For more information, check the league's Web site at [www.lsva.org](http://www.lsva.org) or call 713-717-LSVA.

## Going down?

Our readers are looking for people who plan to attend the Gay Games in Sydney, Australia. Because of privacy constraints, the organizers of the games are unable to submit a list of registrants.

If you want to hear "Good Day, Mate" from a hunky Australian, contact Tim Martinez via e-mail at [timmyhou@aol.com](mailto:timmyhou@aol.com).

## Olympics calling

Looking for great fun and an opportunity to skate like Tai and Randy, Dorothy Hammill, Rudy? Whoever your skating idol is, join the Lambda Roller Skating club while getting great cardio stimulation. They can be found at <http://www.neosoft.com/~lrsc> e-mail: [lrsc@neosoft.com](mailto:lrsc@neosoft.com).

## Balls a poppin'?

The Houston Tennis Club meets on Wednesday and Friday evenings from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Weekends not good for you? Meet the club on Sundays from 9 a.m. until noon. For more information, contact the Houston Tennis Club at 713-692-2701 or log on to [houstontennisclub@aol.com](mailto:houstontennisclub@aol.com).

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Contact Penny Weaver by e-mail: [editor@houstonvoice.com](mailto:editor@houstonvoice.com)

## music ARJAN TIMMERMANS



Venerable singer soared to '80s New Wave success before going solo, releases latest CD showing distinct voice is still powerful.

# Moyet hits home

ALISON MOYET HAS ONE OF THE most distinguished voices in popular culture. Her deep, soulful timbre has become a unique trademark that is a perfect fit to the jazzy pop sound of her music.

The chanteuse recently released her newest record "Hometime," a marvelous gathering of melodies that will most likely please her steady fans and impress new listeners.

Before she started her solo career, Moyet was the singing half of '80s synth-pop duo Yaz with keyboardist Vince Clarke. Together they recorded two full-length records that delivered the international smash hits "Only You," "Situation," and "Don't Go," among others.

Yaz became a huge success in club land as gay listeners embraced their fresh and funk-up electro-sound. Despite their commercial and artistic success, the group split up and the two went separate ways.

Clarke went on to form the hugely popular gay dance band Erasure with singer Andy Bell, who incidentally sounds like a weaker version of Moyet herself. Erasure created a brand-new gay movement in Brit Pop that still lasts.

Moyet embarked on a solo career that was diverse to say the least. Initially, she continued making pop music on her solo debut "Alf," but she didn't hesitate to create more obscure gems. In 1985, the singer released the Billie Holiday classic "That Old Devil Called Love" on single and even experimented with edgy rock on the album "Hoodoo" in 1991.

AFTER AN EIGHT-YEAR HIATUS, Moyet, 41, is back with "Hometime," which is released on the progressive Sanctuary Records. The label is also home to the new introspective sound of the Pet Shop Boys. Due to an ugly dispute and fierce creative differences with Sony Music, Moyet did not release any new music after "Essex" in 1994.

After years of battle, Sony finally released Moyet from her contract, and she was free to sail her own course. In the meantime, Moyet tried several new artistic directions and even made her acting debut in a Kander and Ebb musical in Chicago's West End, playing Mama Morton.

On "Hometime," Moyet revives her eclectic moody sound with lyrics simultaneously canvassing desperation and optimism. Her sensual vocals are Bowie-esque at times that delivers her songs with a laid-back and stylish sense of storytelling. The U.S. version of "Hometime"



'80s Brit icon Alison Moyet returns from an eight-year hiatus with 'Hometime,' proving she can still belt out jazz, rock and ballads with the best.

counts eleven songs, and unfortunately leaves out two French chansons, which do appear on the U.K. release.

THE ALBUM WAS PRODUCED BY THE Insects, who are well-known for their collaboration with trip-hop godfathers Massive Attack. Their influence is clearly noticeable on songs such as "Say It," "More," "The Train I Ride" and especially "Ski" with its louny groove and deep base lines.

Moyet shines on the climatic closing track "You Don't Have To Go" with pitch-perfect vocals and an impressive mix of orchestral strings and organs accompanying lyrics like "Look at your face, it's like looking at mine. Feeling your hands, almost like mine. This was our room when we used to know how to share ourselves in silence."

Other highlights are the upbeat, anticipatory "Mary, Don't Keep Me Waiting," the guitar-driven "Should I Feel That It's Over," and the sublime "Do You Ever Wonder" with its playful strings and loopy harpsichord introduction.

An eight-year absence is a long time, but "Hometime" has been worth the wait. Moyet has proven that her voice lends itself to a range of different musical styles from dance to jazz and blues to rock.

With the help of the Insects' production wizardry, Moyet comes full circle, combining her vocal talent with songs drenched in a luscious groove that fits her very well. "Hometime" is by far her most-accomplished project to date.

# community calendar

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23 EVERY SATURDAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24

**Integrity/Houston.** Dr. Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, preaches at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1805 W. Alabama. 9 and 11 a.m.

## EVERY SUNDAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25 EVERY MONDAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26

**Houston Outdoor Group.** General meeting and newsletter mailout. Don and Ray's. 713-522-7809. 713-KAMP-OUT.

**EVERY TUESDAY**

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

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

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

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

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

**Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous.** Support group. 7 p.m.

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

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

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

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

## WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27

**Center for AIDS.** Women's mixer, 7 p.m. 1407 Hawthorne. 713-527-8210.

**EVERY WEDNESDAY**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28 EVERY THURSDAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

**GLOBAL.** Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual Alliance at the University of Houston-Central Campus. Weekly meeting, 6 p.m. e-mail: nguyenn0023@hotmail.com.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29 EVERY FRIDAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## VOLUNTEER/SELF-HELP

**Gay & Lesbian Help Line.** For gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. Staffed by volunteers of all ages. 6-11 p.m. Monday-Friday, 5-10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. 888-340-GLBT.

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

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

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

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

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

# appts

a weekly guide to arts & entertainment activities for gay Houstonians

## SPECIAL SATURDAY, NOV. 23

**Blind Friends of Lesbians & Gays & Bisexuals & Transgendereds** will meet at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Vision-related problems secondary, friends primary. For information, call 713-526-6526, or e-mail wordgarden@houston.rr.com. Please tell your friends who can't easily see to read.

## SUNDAY, NOV. 24

**Alternative Healing Expo** is free and lets participants try acupuncture, chiropractic, reflexology, Reiki healing and massage. 2-5 p.m. CenterPoint, 1920 Hollister. 713-932-7224.

## FILM SATURDAY, NOV. 23

**"The Sinner"** is the tale of a young woman who survives as a prostitute after World War II and later falls in love with a terminally ill painter. Upon its 1950 release, the film drew vigorous protests from conservatives and religious authorities, who condemned the film's "glorification" of prostitution and use of nudity. 7 p.m. Tickets: \$6. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Caroline Wiess Law Building, corner of Main Street and Bissonnet/Binz. 713-639-7515. www.mfah.org.

## GALLERIES THROUGH DEC. 14

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

## ONGOING

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

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

## MUSIC FRIDAY, NOV. 22

**"Mozart and more: Mozart and Salieri"** is a combination of music and drama presented in a concert by Houston Symphony. The event highlights the legendary conflict between Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri made famous in the movie, "Amadeus." Tickets: \$20-\$40. 8 p.m. Moores Opera House. 713-224-7575. www.houstonsymphony.org. Encore performance at 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 23, at Centrum, 6823 Cypresswood Drive. 281-440-4850.

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

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# houston classifieds

Houston Classifieds deadline is Monday at 11 a.m.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

RFA

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### FOOD EMERGENCY HOU. HUMANE SOCIETY

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

### NIGHT IN BLACK LEATHER 2003

Saturday, March 22, 2003, 7 p.m. at Rich's. Benefiting Houston Buyers Club. For more info, contact Don Gill at 713-521-0911. Silent auction item donations welcomed.

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- Mapplethorpe's "Man in Polyester \_\_\_"
- Author of "Stone Butch Blues"
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- Mr. Williams, as Doubtfire
- What squirrels do with their nuts
- It tops a waffle
- Elton John Broadway musical
- South Beach souvenir
- Cruising locale
- Org. that likes to shoot off
- Richard of "Spin City"
- Thriller in which Sharon Stone played a bisexual novelist
- Debussy's dusk
- "\_\_\_ Hear a Waltz?" (Sondheim/Laurents collaboration)
- Castro to Mission District dir.
- Scar, in "The Lion King," for example

- Harold's problem in "The Boys in the Band"
- \_\_\_ Phugly (Lea DeLaria's voice role on "The Oblongs")
- Coming out, for a pansy
- "The Laramie Project" st.
- Land of A. Hitler's gay youth
- Game Show on which Paula Poundstone was a panelist
- Billy Masters' specialty
- Author Fricke of "Reflections of a Rock Lobster"
- "\_\_\_ take arms against a sea of troubles" (Shakespeare)
- Director Norman of "Longtime Companion"
- Martin of "Father of the Bride"
- Not even once, to Dickinson
- It flows out of France
- Vibrating sound
- Opening noted at the office

- Like Niles Crane and some of his patients
- James Baldwin, in France
- Karen Walker, perhaps
- Philip Johnson contemporary
- Org. whose members vow to be "morally straight"
- It was sometimes split, for Kopay
- Where to find a Russian river
- Singer of "Tomorrow"
- R.E.M.'s former record label
- Mr. Right-now
- Current band of the past?
- \_\_\_-hairs (drag queen's hosiery)
- Rewards for manhunters
- Like Earhart doing her thing
- It's tiny but attractive
- \_\_\_ water (imperiled at the bathhouse?)
- \_\_\_-fi (Samuel Delany's field)
- Fruity drink
- Joey \_\_\_ Adams of "Chasing Amy"
- Where to find a dirty miad
- Toward Dinah?
- All-out
- Fingerprint feature
- Streisand's cross-dressing movie
- Whitman's "When Lilacs \_\_\_ in the Dooryard Bloom'd"
- "If I Were King of the Forest" singer
- "Star Trek" counselor
- Rice-A-\_\_\_ (the San Francisco treat)
- Like Kate Clinton's humor

#### Down

- Major and minor concerns of Barber
- Queen of mysteries
- Rent collector
- Eagle or chicken hawk
- More queer
- Sits on one's bottom
- Nickname of homophobic comic Clay
- K-12, educationally
- Phillippe of "Gosford Park"
- Where to start out

Answers on Page 25



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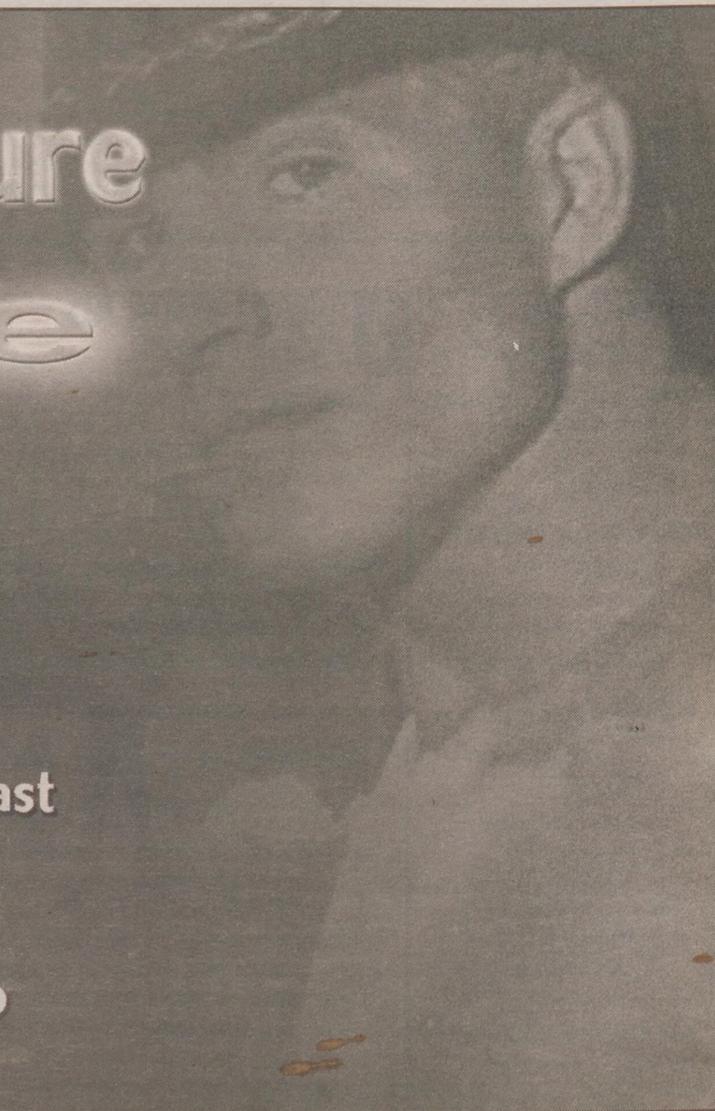
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## astrology JILL DEARMAN



### My Stars!

November 22 — 29



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

Venus is transiting your house of serious partnerships, Aries. It's time to commit to working through the issues you and your honey have been repressing. A Capricorn wants to go the distance with you. Is the feeling mutual?



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

The moon conjunct lucky Jupiter in your house of home on Nov. 26 puts you in the holiday spirit early. Forgive all and give with your whole heart. This is truly that rare time in your life when you can let go and stop holding on to the past, dear Taurus. A fellow Taurus wants to hold on to you.



#### GEMINI (May 21 to June 21)

Let go of a relationship that brings you down. Another one will take its place and make you feel much better about yourself. This is a major time of transition in your love life. A Cancer can help you through the rocky nights.



#### CANCER (June 22 to July 22)

Saturn and Uranus are making a nice aspect to each other and encouraging you to explore a meditative practice that will improve your body and your mind. Break some of your self-destructive habits, you whore! Use the name of an Aries as your mantra.



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

The moon and Mars heat up your social life at the end of November. You may finally connect with a Taurus who's been keeping you at bay. Put pride aside and call a few more people who you've been missing. This is your time to take the first step.



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

This is a great time for you to make home improvements, Virgo. Your environment simply can't be chaotic anymore. You need peace on earth — or at least in your living room! An Aquarius wants to spend more time in your private spaces.



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

This week's Mercury-Pluto conjunction could make you feel on fire about a new work project. Put your brainpower down on paper. Don't waste your energy just yacking about it. A Virgo's attention to detail helps you to avoid a money crisis.



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

The Sun's transit through your money house makes late November a lucrative time for you. Get in touch with your entrepreneurial spirit. You can make money where others have tried and failed. A Gemini is a great resource for you.



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

This is an intense time for you, Sag. All you need to know is this: be decisive. Waffling only makes your lovers — and also your enemies — more tense. Let everyone know what it's going to be. A Libra will follow you wherever you lead.



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

Pull back and let others fight the battles, Capricorn. You are in a peacemaker mode and shouldn't kick up any dirt during this cycle. A Scorpio will act like a pit bull for you!



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

Friendships need some airing out. Don't be afraid to have "the big talk" with another Aquarian. You'll both feel better after a screaming match! This is the time to release anger, not hold it inside.



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

This is a passionate time for you, Pisces. You may feel a need to explore the world literally or intellectually or both. Challenge yourself and stop waiting for life to happen to you. A Capricorn appreciates your fanaticism.

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

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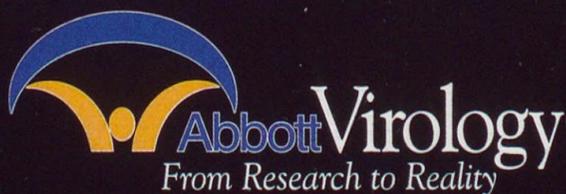
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For as long as it takes.



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