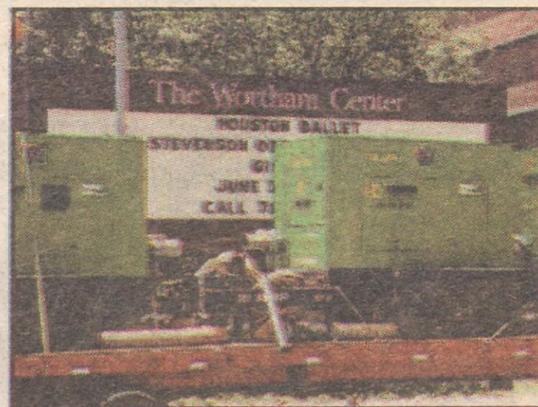


The show must go on

Theater District recovers from downtown flooding, changes some venues

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INSIDE



Horton Foote's 'The Carpetbagger's Children,' featuring Jean Stapleton, fails to live up to ancestors in writers repertoire.

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Once on the brink of suicide, Troy Ham now is forming a support group in his hometown of Alvin for fellow female-to-male transgenders.

Page 3



Protestors staged a mock jazz funeral at the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans Wednesday. Though not on the original agenda, several anti-gay resolutions were brought up during the convention.

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Houston's gay community hit hard by flooding

From churches to AIDS agencies, many organizations sustained millions in damages from Tropical Storm Allison

by KAY Y. DAYUS

The lesbian and gay community was hit hard by Tropical Storm Allison last weekend when many places were inundated with floodwater for the first time in possibly the worst flooding ever to hit Houston.

The Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church incurred an estimated \$1 million-plus damage in the flooding. Located at the corner of 11th and TC Jester on the banks of White Oak Bayou, the church has never flooded since it was built in 1953, said Rev. Dwayne Johnson.

"We were really not concerned about flooding. We researched it and found the church had never flooded. This is the first time," said Johnson.

There was about 3 feet of water in the main sanctuary and the basement was flooded "Somebody who saw it said the main sanctuary looked like a lake with pews sticking out," said Johnson.

Services and other church activities will continue as usual, but in the adjoining gym, said Johnson. "Optimistically, I'd estimate about six months before we're back to normal," he added.

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Interstate 10 at TC Jester (top photo) was still blocked by floodwaters, stranded cars and 18-wheelers Saturday in the wake of Tropical Storm Allison, which deluged Houston Friday evening and early Saturday, making many roadways, including Allen Parkway (bottom photo) completely impassable.

HRC calls for national boycott of ExxonMobil

Group protests company's refusal to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation

by RHONDA SMITH

The Human Rights Campaign called for a nationwide boycott of Exxon Mobil Corp. Wednesday because of the oil company's ongoing refusal to include explicit language in its Equal Employment Opportunity policy that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.

This is the first time that HRC has called for a boycott but officials there said the political organization has supported similar actions by other gay civil rights advocates in the past.

Elizabeth Birch, HRC's executive director, said that organization's executive committee recently approved calling for the boycott. A former lawyer in corporate America, she described this strategy as "a last possible



At a press conference calling for a boycott, Human Rights Campaign employees cut up their ExxonMobil cards in protest.

> Continued on Page 10

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From computer pioneer to transgender activist



Lynn Conway, inventor of groundbreaking computer and Internet processes, recently spoke to Compaq's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender group about her transition, coming out and return to the male-dominated computer field that once shunned her.

Lynn Conway visits Houston, tells of coming out in male-dominated field of computer science

by ELLA TYLER

Lynn Conway, a featured speaker at CompaqPLUS's Out At Compaq event June 8, is a pioneer on both professional and personal fronts.

Conway, while working at IBM in the 1960s, conceived a process known as Dynamic Instruction Scheduling. In the late '70s, while at Xerox, she co-invented VLSI Chip design. These processes are central to today's computers and the Internet. The work Conway did at IBM was when she was, as she refers to herself, "a boy." Her work at Xerox was done after she underwent sexual reassignment surgery, and became, "a girl."

Conway, now in her early sixties (she is coy about her age, claiming, "I'm over 55. Ladies don't tell have to tell their ages") spent the time from her transition in 1968 to 1998 in what she calls "deep stealth," totally disconnected from her male past, both professional and personal.

There was good reason for Conway's secrecy about her past. IBM fired her, even though Conway thought she had the support of her supervisors. Today, she believes, "The decision to fire me was made at the highest levels of management."

After she was fired, she lost contact with her wife and children, though she has since established contact with her daughters. Whenever she disclosed her gender change, job offers were withdrawn.

Conway began working at the "bottom of the ladder," she says, as a contract computer programmer for Memorex in 1971.

"It was lucky timing. It was the first wave of women who had been teachers and secretaries going into the field. Memorex was a start up company and they needed people." A little more than two

> Continued on Page 11

Female-to-male support group forms in Alvin

Troy Ham wants to help men like himself by founding Some Transgenders Are Guys

by D.L. GROOVER

Troy Ham remembers the date and time exactly. November 15, 1999, 11:30 p.m. He's not likely to ever forget it. At midnight, he planned to kill himself. He'd lay in bed with the gun to his head and covered it with a pillow to muffle the sound of the gunshot. His marriage was a disaster, his parents were unforgiving, and he was alone. Distraught, he thought he was the only person with this problem. For years it haunted him. He was trapped without an escape.

When he got home from work, he went online to tell his other family in his favorite chat room support group what his plans were. Fortunately, his cyber friends talked him out of suicide. But his late night messages were forwarded to his ex-husband, who contacted Troy's father, who called the police.

"The police kicked in my door. To this day I'm scared of how easily they got in. They asked if I had a weapon. I told them yes. 'Where is it?' they asked. 'In the wardrobe.' Then they asked if I intended to hurt myself. I said yes, and they told dad to take me to UTMB (University of Texas Medical Branch). I was in the hospital for four days. I told them I was a man in a woman's body."

This confusion, this emotional cul-de-sac, this gender dysphoria hell is what Troy wants no one to ever go through. He knows now that he's not alone anymore, and so he's starting a support group in his hometown of Alvin for female-to-male transsexuals. He calls it S.T.A.G. (Some Transgenders Are Guys). The initial meeting is set for July 21, 7 p.m., at his home in Alvin.

"For as long as I've been conscious of it," Troy said, "which is since I was a little kid, I wanted to be male. I always thought I was male. It's not that I want to be, it's what I am."

"But my body says, no, you're not. It's really irritating, but the only thing I can

> Continued on Page 11



Though Troy Ham, founder of the new support group Some Transgenders Are Guys, has had a hysterectomy, he had to postpone the follow-up mastectomy for lack of funds. He hopes to be transitioned in 5 years.

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around the nation

CA Assembly passes measure which grants benefits to domestic partners

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—Despite strong opposition, a bill that would grant marriage benefits to domestic partners passed the California State Assembly June 7 by a vote of 42-31, the *Los Angeles Times* reported. The bill, known as AB 25, would grant domestic partners more than a dozen health and legal benefits, including power of attorney and the right to adopt the children of a partner. The opposition came from the Campaign for California Families, which ran full-page newspaper ads against "the homosexual marriage agenda." Campaign members also gathered outside the Glendale office of Democratic Assembly member Dario Frommer in May to dissuade him from supporting the measure, and said it would undermine Proposition 22, which defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman. "They say that it violates Prop. 22, which it does not. And they want you to think it's only for same-sex partnerships. It's not. It applies broadly," Frommer said. The bill moves to the California Senate.

Cruise continues fight against gay rumors with second \$100 million suit

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tom Cruise filed a \$100 million defamation lawsuit against a second man who alleged to have proof that the actor is gay. The Superior Court suit filed June 4 accuses Michael Davis of spreading a fictitious rumor by e-mail to a dozen media outlets claiming that he engaged in an affair with Cruise and that he had a videotape to prove it. The suit accused Davis of spreading the statements "in order to hurt the plaintiff and to gain widespread publicity for himself." Meanwhile, Cruise is planning to drop his \$100 million



ANAT GIVON/AP

suit filed against Chad Slater, who made gay wrestling videos under the name Kyle Bradford, MSNBC reported. Bradford announced that he is dropping out of public life and is auctioning off his Web addresses—KyleBradford.com, UsedJockstrap.com and KyleLivecam.com—on e-Bay. On Bradford's Web site, he thanks his supporters. An upcoming book will chronicle his life in wrestling and porn.

Tom Cruise continues to battle speculation that he is gay and filed a second \$100 million lawsuit, this one against a man who said he videotaped an affair with the actor.

Ohio university creates 30 unisex restrooms for trans students

ATHENS, Ohio (AP)—Ohio University has designated about 30 restrooms across campus as unisex in order to make them safer for transgendered people to use. The decision resulted from a campaign by transgendered student Collin Lovell, who graduated June 9 with an economics degree. "They [unisex bathrooms] are safe for transgender people who might shock the general public walking into a men's restroom or a women's restroom," Lovell said. The university doesn't track how many students identify themselves as transgendered. Terry Hogan, the university's dean of students, said unisex restrooms are a matter of common sense. "We're trying to make the climate on campus welcoming to all students," he said.

Bush judge pick draws concern over past defense of anti-gay measure

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush nominated a Colorado attorney who defended that state's anti-gay ballot initiative before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1995 to the 10th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. Timothy M. Tymkovich, who served as Colorado's solicitor general from 1991 to 1996, has since claimed he was merely doing his job in defending Amendment 2 and that he has no personal animosity toward gays, according to openly gay attorney Julie Tolleson, who worked with Tymkovich. But other activists familiar with him said that while Tymkovich doesn't appear to be an outspoken supporter for the religious conservatives, he is known as a hard-line conservative who would lean toward legal opinions that could be detrimental to gay civil rights laws. "He could emerge as someone against government regulations, possibly even civil rights laws. But there is not a real stridency and meanness that you see in [U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin] Scalia," Tolleson said.

HI canoe racing club drops DNA testing requirements for trans paddlers

HONOLULU—A canoe racing group has ended its requirement that transgendered competitors must submit to DNA tests to determine their sex, the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* reported. The decision comes after two transgendered women filed complaints with the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission over the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association's decision that they would have to submit to DNA testing before being allowed to compete on women's paddling teams. The association's board now says it will allow a birth certificate, driver's license and any publicly recognized document to verify gender and age of canoe paddlers. The board was worried that it could not fight off lawsuits if it continued to insist on DNA tests. "The bottom line is we don't have insurance to cover for a civil suit. We're just a nonprofit organization, and we have a shoestring budget," said HCRA President Michael Tongg. Tammy Wronski, one of the two transsexuals who filed a grievance, said she hoped the change will "fix the situation." "My only dream left is to paddle the Molokai Channel. It's something to keep me alive," said Wronski.

—From staff and wire reports



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around the world

Retired Italian general calls for recruiting gays, but not women

ROME—Italy should recruit gay men and foreigners, but not women, to fill the thinning ranks of its military, a retired Italian brigadier-general told Reuters last week. "The lack of professionals could easily be resolved by recruiting immigrants and gays. We should recruit gays as long as they promise to conduct themselves properly in the barracks," said General Luigi Caligaris, a leading commentator on defense and military issues. When asked if women had a role to play in the Italian military, Caligaris said he didn't think so. "Not even in England have they managed to recruit as many [women] as they would have liked, or integrate them," he said. Caligaris suggested that Italy reward the soldiers with citizenship after five years' service. "The ancient Romans rewarded foreigners who served in their ranks with citizenship... Why can't we follow the example of ancient Rome?" he asked. Italy is fazing out the draft and expects its ranks to thin from 270,000 soldiers to 190,000 by 2007.

Conservative U.K. politician with gay past in running for top post

LONDON—Conservative parliament member Michael Portillo, who confessed to a gay past in 1999, is in the running to replace outgoing Conservative leader William Hague, the *Independent* reported. Portillo was thought likely to become the Tory leader in 1997, but lost his seat in Parliament in the election that brought Tony Blair to power. He returned to Parliament in 1999. Portillo comes from the more conservative wing of the Tory party, and fears a smear campaign if he pursues the post. Those fears may have been reinforced when former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher threw her support behind another candidate, Iain Duncan Smith. "Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll—these social dimensions matter much more in influencing voting intentions," said Alan Duncan, a Portillo supporter. Portillo, who is married, once voted against lowering the gay age of consent to 16 and created a tabloid sensation when he said he had gay experiences as a young man.

Michael Portillo, a Conservative member of the U.K. Parliament, said his past gay relationships may prompt a smear campaign to ruin his chances of the becoming party leader.



MATTHEW FEARN/AP

U.S. grants coalition of gay groups \$500,000 for Holocaust victims

NEW YORK—A coalition of gay groups working to preserve the history of gay Holocaust victims has received more than \$500,000 in U.S. government funds. The Pink Triangle Coalition, which consists of the San Francisco-based International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission and seven other European and Israeli groups, received a letter from the U.S. government in January announcing the award. "There is no monetary amount that can erase what happened. ... No matter what the amount was, it would be symbolic," said IGLHRC founder Julie Dorf, but added that the coalition was excited by the award. The money will be used to create an outreach program featuring the movie "Paragraph 175," to fund two German museums, and to help publish a book with the names of gay Holocaust survivors. The coalition waited until they had the money in hand to announce the grant. "We still have enemies in Congress. We didn't want to mess this up by getting any publicity before the fact," Dorf said.

United Nations delays accreditation for anti-gay conservative group

NEW YORK—The Family Research Council, a conservative anti-gay organization, is facing opposition in its effort for United Nations accreditation and is using the U.N.'s previous accreditation of a gay group to criticize the process. In 1993, the U.N. granted observer status to the International Lesbian & Gay Association, a status which was revoked in 1994 when the U.S. objected to ILGA's ties to a German pedophile group. "If the ILGA's views were to prevail in the United Nations, any country without laws establishing and protecting counterfeit 'gay marriage' could be charged with 'human rights' violations," the FRC said in response to the deferral of its accreditation. Robert Maginnis, FRC vice president for policy, called the deferral "inappropriate," and pointed out that his agency is "a pro-life, pro-faith, pro-family organization that has shown a commitment to human rights."

Australian AIDS activists damage famous clock to rally attention

MELBOURNE—AIDS activists vandalized the city's famous floral clock to bring attention to the global AIDS epidemic, the *Age* reported. Lord Mayor Peter Costigan said the clock, located in the Queen Victoria Gardens, was vandalized by Queens United to Eradicate Economic Rationalism. The incident caused an estimated \$10,000 in damage to the clock by damaging its arms, trampling on its seedlings and planting white crosses on it. Costigan said the city of Melbourne supported the cause of the group, but their actions "in inflicting so much damage to this beautiful and popular feature are to be condemned." "No matter how worthy the cause, that sort of senseless vandalism does nothing to advance the cause," he said. QUEER spokesperson Liz Humphrys said the protest came 10 years after AIDS activists first desecrated the clock. "Another group of activists have done similarly," she said.

—From staff and wire reports

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police beat

OK prosecutor criticizes board for clemency vote on killer of gay man

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—The district attorney in Grady County is criticizing the state Pardon & Parole Board's clemency vote for death row inmate Gerardo Valdez. "All victims and prosecutors and citizens of this state should be very concerned about this decision," prosecutor Gene Christian said. Valdez is scheduled to be executed June 19 for the 1985 killing of Juan Barron. Valdez shot and beat Barron, then slit his throat and burned his body in a barbecue pit. The parole board voted 3-1 on June 6 that Valdez be spared and sentenced to life in prison without parole over new evidence about Valdez's past, his lack of criminal behavior before or after the crime and his history of head injuries. Valdez killed Barron because Barron made gay advances toward him. Valdez took Barron to his home, forced him to take off his clothes, then preached to him that the Bible condemned gays. When Barron rejected the preaching, Valdez attacked and killed him. Christian said he will lobby Gov. Frank Keating to reject the state parole board's recommendation.

'Gay panic' defense doesn't sway MD jury in convicting priest killer

GERMANTOWN, Md.—A drifter who said he murdered a Roman Catholic priest last June after the priest made sexual advances was found guilty June 5 of second-degree murder. Robert Lucas, 26, faces a maximum sentence of 30 years for the June 2000 stabbing of Monsignor Thomas Wells, 56. Lucas was also convicted of robbery with a dangerous weapon and first-degree burglary, both of which carry 20-year maximum sentences. "We're very pleased with the result," State's Attorney Robert Gansler said. Lucas testified in Montgomery County Circuit Court that he killed Wells in a fit of rage provoked by an unwanted sexual advance. "Nothing in Monsignor Wells's 29 years as a priest suggests the defense's allegations could be even remotely plausible," the Archdiocese of Washington told the *Washington Post*. Gansler said that he will seek the maximum sentence of 70 years at an Aug. 13 sentencing.



ROB REIDER/AP

A jury convicted Robert Lucas last week of murdering a priest, despite his 'gay panic' defense.

TX man pleads guilty, gets five-year sentence in death of AIDS activist

FORT WORTH—A Dallas man who said he was trying to return a gift to a gay man pleaded guilty to criminally negligent homicide in the hit-and-run killing of the man's partner, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* reported. Robert Kays, 39, received five years' probation in the Jan. 2 death of Ken Richardson, 32, an AIDS activist who had educated thousands of high school students about the disease. "Based on the evidence of the case, it was the best we felt we could get," said Assistant District Attorney Mitch Poe. As part of probation, Kays must enter a substance abuse program and stay away from Richardson's family and his partner. Kays claimed he was in Fort Worth to return a present to Blaise Parker. Richardson and Parker saw someone trying to break into their home on an outside surveillance monitor. Richardson chased the man, who got into his Jeep. When Richardson stood in front of the Jeep the man ran over him. Authorities said they did not have enough evidence to prove that Kays was at Richardson's home the night of the death. Richardson's friends have said that Kays had been harassing the couple.

Police arrest Turkish man for allegedly blackmailing pop star with pics

ISTANBUL, Turkey (AP)—Turkish police detained a man accused of stealing nude photographs of pop star Tarkan and attempting to blackmail him for being gay. One of the photographs, shown on television and published in most Turkish newspapers June 9, shows Tarkan and an unidentified man sunbathing naked. Another shows Tarkan and a different man, both wearing swimming briefs, in an embrace. Police detained Suleyman Sahin after Tarkan's lawyer accused him of attempting to blackmail the singer, who has always insisted that he is not gay. Tarkan said earlier this year that he would sue Mehmet Gul, a far-right lawmaker who told a newspaper that, "If Tarkan were not gay, we'd like him more."

Man who killed two in NY bar shooting wants release to treatment program

NEW YORK (AP)—A man convicted of fatally shooting two people and wounding six others outside a gay bar in 1980 is seeking to be released from a psychiatric hospital. A jury in 1994 had determined that Ronald Crumpley should no longer be held against his will, but prosecutors successfully appealed that decision. On June 7, Crumpley appeared before another jury to again argue for a transfer to a minimum security treatment program. "Right now I'm here because I'm stable and I feel like I'm fit to be in the community," said Crumpley, 59. He also testified that although he now sees homosexuality more objectively, he still views it as a "deviation from normal sexual behavior." A six-person jury must decide whether he is mentally ill, and the judge must determine whether he is still dangerous.

—From staff and wire reports



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religion news

HI church removes large cross to avoid signs backing gays, Satan

MAKAKILO, Hawaii—An effort to erect large signs supporting gays and Satanism have led a Hawaiian church to temporarily bring its cross inside, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* reported. The Hawaii Citizens for the Separation of State & Church sought removal of the cross on the grounds that its height violated city sign ordinances. City officials had cleared the cross under an old interpretation that considered it to be a symbol and not a sign. That prompted Andrew Crothier to apply for a building permit to erect a 20-foot symbol of Satanism on his residential property and Michael Golojuch Jr. to apply for a 20-foot symbol representing gays on his lot. Planning & Permitting Director Randall Fujiki said the city is considering an amendment that would allow symbols only on properties designated as "meeting facilities." Fujiki acknowledged that the request for new symbols played a role in the city's decision. "What's important is that the city adopts a fair policy," said Brent White, legal director for the ACLU, which is assisting the citizens group.

Catholic bishop in U.K. delivers sermon at ceremony for gay couple

MIDDLESBROUGH, England—The Roman Catholic Bishop of Middlesbrough officiated at a service of "thanksgiving" for a 25-year gay partnership between two prominent local Catholics, the *Electronic Telegraph* reported. Right Rev. John Crowley delivered the sermon June 9 at a service in Kensington. The couple—Julian Filochowski, director of the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development, and Martin Pendegast, leader of the Catholic Caucus of the Lesbian & Gay Christian Movement—sent out invitations to the service "to celebrate 25 years of friendship and commitment to the pursuit of justice." Non-celibate gay relationships are forbidden by the Catholic Church and the Pope declared in a 1986 encyclical that gay sex acts are "intrinsically disordered." Crowley became involved in the celebration because of his role as the bishop for Filochowski's agency. A Catholic source said that Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor "will flip when he finds out."

CT high school principal bucks ministers' criticism of gay newspaper

NEW HAVEN, Conn.—A high school student newspaper that published a special issue focusing on gay topics has angered local Latino ministers, the *New Haven Register* reported. Rev. Abraham Marsach asked for a meeting with Superintendent Reginald Mayo to discuss the paper. Mayo said he will meet with Marsach and about 10 other church leaders and has asked the City Corporation Counsel's office to review the matter. Mayo and Principal Judith Falaro, who approved the publication from Wilbur Cross High School's Gay-Straight Alliance before it was published, said she respects the churches' right to disagree but would not infringe on students' rights to freedom of expression. "We can't on the one hand say that we're going to have safe schools and we're going to teach diversity and tolerance and then be intolerant to a particular group," Falaro said. Cross senior Caitlin Dunklee, the paper's editor, said issue was supposed to foster tolerance and spark dialogue among students and teachers about homophobia. "We want to get conversations moving so people's eyes will be open and people who are worried about these issues can talk about it openly," Dunklee said.

Australian archbishop bans gay-friendly Episcopalian from speaking

BRISBANE, Australia—Australia's next Governor-General, Archbishop Peter Hollingworth, has banned retired pro-gay Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong from preaching in Anglican churches in Brisbane, the *Melbourne Herald* reported. Spong, 68, is visiting Australia on a book tour, and has been welcomed to speak in the Perth and Adelaide dioceses. In Brisbane, he will speak at functions sponsored by the local Sea of Faith network, including a public address at Albert St. Uniting Church. Sea of Faith spokesperson Deborah Price said she was disappointed by Hollingworth's decision. "It never bothers me when I run into that response," Spong said of the ban.

John Shelby Spong, a gay-friendly author and retired Episcopal bishop, was banned from delivering speeches in Anglican churches by an Australian archbishop.



Catholic University cites 'misrepresentation' in dropping ex-gay event

WASHINGTON—Catholic University canceled plans to host an ex-gay conference this weekend, and said the organizer misrepresented the nature of the gathering, the *Washington Post* reported. The conference, titled "Healing for the Homosexual & Their Families," was moved to Trinity College, a Catholic school for women in Northeast Washington, and drew about five-dozen people. Trinity officials also said that Anthony A. Falzarano, national director of the Parents & Friends Ministries, misrepresented the conference's purpose. Falzarano, who calls himself a former homosexual, leads a faith-based movement to "cure" gays of their homosexuality, which he has called "a neurosis" brought on by child sexual abuse. "We don't rent space to people who come in under false pretenses. And we informed them of that," said Victor Nakas, a spokesperson for Catholic University. Speakers at the event included Rev. Paul Scalia, son of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Falzarano said that campus officials were looking for an excuse to bar his group.

—From staff and wire reports

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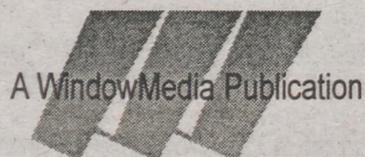
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212-242-6863



A WindowMedia Publication

Publisher- Window Media LLC
President- William Waybourn
Editorial Director- Chris Crain
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Office hours: 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. weekdays

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EDITORIAL

Opening the door on some complicated closets

by CHRIS CRAIN

In the bad old days before Ellen and Elton, back when most Americans thought homosexuality was a perversion, most of us were either in the closet or out.

In that black-and-white world, the closeted gays were the ones having sex on the sly, eschewing real relationships, rarely frequenting gay-identified establishments, and rejecting any notion that the "G" word applied to them. Gay communities were small and informal networks, and the vast majority of homosexuals had little or nothing to do with them.

Of course that's mostly changed for the better. Last month, 52 percent of Gallup respondents agreed homosexuality was "an acceptable alternative lifestyle," up from 38 percent just a decade ago. And, for the first time in the quarter century since Gallup has been asking the question, as many Americans believe homosexuality is genetic as don't. Back in 1977, nurture topped nature by a four-to-one margin.

In that improved climate, you would expect that our closets are looking a lot different, even if they are not entirely unoccupied. The Census Bureau released figures on Wednesday, for example, that hint at a dramatic increase in the number of households willing to report to the federal government that they're headed by a same-sex couple.

But an anti-gay stigma is alive and well, in one form or another, in most parts of the country, and under that environment, we respond differently as individuals to the challenge of coming out in all aspects of our lives. As a result, a lot of our closets have gotten awfully complicated.

Anthony Romero made headlines last month when the ACLU tapped him as its first openly-gay executive director. Press reports at the time indicated that he lived in New York with his longtime partner, but Romero declined to identify him. In an interview with *Southern Voice*, sister paper to the *Houston Voice*, Romero said he respected his partner's decision "to not bring any aspect of his personal life into his professional life."

As a practical matter, it's hard to believe that Romero's other half will be able to conceal from his coworkers that his totally out boyfriend sits at the helm of the American Civil Liberties Union, but it's even more fascinating that he intends to try.

Brendan Lemon, the editor of *Out* magazine, also has a boyfriend he keeps in the closet, but because he's a Major League Baseball player. Lemon was willing, however, to write a column about his relationship, dropping tantalizing hints—including that the player was a star, but not the biggest, on a team somewhere on the East Coast—that spurred rampant speculation on sports radio talk shows.

(One such radio program, syndicated throughout the South, is so convinced that Baltimore Oriole Brady Anderson is the closeted player in question that every time his name is mentioned, the hosts play the "Brady Bunch" jingle, cuing up the line, "Here's a story, 'bout a man named Brady, who was busy with three boys of his own.")

Lemon succeeded brilliantly in starting a national conversation about homosexuality in sports, all while maintaining a rather precarious closet for someone who is the editor, after all, of *Out* magazine. He has been in the relationship for 18 months and never even introduced his boyfriend to his friends and family (and, presumably, the converse is also true). With the release of the column, maintaining that complicated closet will become even more difficult.

Just ask Rosie O'Donnell, the Queen of Nice, who blew kisses to her girlfriend from the stage of the Emmy Awards show last month but who still won't confirm she's a lesbian. O'Donnell's dance with disclosure may finally explain that popular T-shirt slogan, "I'm not a lesbian but my girlfriend is."

O'Donnell has toyed with the subject for years. Before Ellen DeGeneres came out,

place, often master the art of using the gender-neutral pronoun around the office, or cultivate a reputation as a very private person.

Even "professional queers," including many of us in the gay press, sometimes make strangers play 20 questions before explaining exactly what type of work we do—especially if we just want to ride an airplane in peace or avoid an awkward moment at a cocktail party.

Usually, the damage done from maintaining a complicated closet is largely personal. The more difficult it is to maintain our carefully drawn lines, the more we suffer the closet's familiar emotional baggage, albeit less severely than if we completely concealed the gay part of who we are.

But there is collateral damage, too. When public figures make little effort to hide their same-sex love interest and yet

Heterosexuals take their cue from us; so if we act uncomfortable
draw weird lines around what part of our lives are fit for conversation,
then we can only expect more of the same back from them.

the two even joked on national television about both being "Lebanese."

Even still, the non-tabloid media respect O'Donnell's complicated closet, dutifully reporting that she shows up for NBA games with a "blonde companion," leaving the reader to draw gender-appropriate conclusions. Even when *New York* magazine took the plunge and officially outed O'Donnell recently, her publicist was characteristically obtuse in responding.

"Rosie's sexuality has never been important to her and it's not going to be now," the spokesperson said in a statement. "I don't think it's important to her public."

The statement is almost Orwellian. Clearly O'Donnell's sexual orientation is an immensely important issue for her, otherwise she would not work so hard keeping one foot in the closet, while letting the other dangle out. After all, this is a woman who prattles daily on her talk show—and in her brand-new, Oprah-esque magazine—about every other aspect of her personal life.

Likewise "her public": If O'Donnell truly believed it wasn't "important" to her adoring fans which sex she favors, she would have long ago gone on Barbara Walters and put us out of our speculative misery.

Public figures aren't the only ones drawing some mighty fine lines in their personal closets. Sociologist Charlotte Patterson from the University of Virginia is the unquestioned pioneer in research about the effect on children of being raised by lesbian moms. She is out about being a lesbian, but considered it a gross violation of her privacy when a gay newspaper reported last year that she is a mother—no matter the relevance to her research.

All the more complicated are the closets that many of us slip into in conversation, even if we pride ourselves on being as out as out can be. Those of us who include our family and friends in our personal lives, but who toil in a predominantly straight work-

dodge the subject of their sexual orientation, or when they are open about being gay but try to hide some other part of their lives that no straight person would consider private, then they perpetuate the very stigma they resist.

The bigger the public figure, the broader the impact on observers, who absorb the message that homosexuality carries some form of shame or embarrassment, or is at least very different from being straight. Heterosexuals take their cue from us; and if we act uncomfortable or draw weird lines around what part of our lives are fit for conversation, then we can only expect the same back from them.

Tragically, among African-Americans and other people of color, the complicated closet even carries a body count. Every time new statistics are released about the spread of HIV in this country, the most striking increase is among black men who have sex with men, but who do not identify as gay.

Their reasons are as complicated as the closet they inhabit, from the continued stigma around homosexuality in the black community, to racism and segregation within the gay community. But the result is a population that has been largely immune to the safer sex message, but not to HIV.

And because many of these "men who have sex with men" also engage in unprotected heterosexual sex, often to reassure themselves of their heterosexuality, the rate of HIV infection among black women is also disturbingly high.

Identifying complicated closets and marveling (or even snickering) at their intricacy is a good deal easier than resolving how to empty them out. But with a public health emergency to add some urgency to the matter, the time has come for a good spring cleaning.

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



VIEWPOINT

HIV prevention missing black 'men who have sex with men'

by PHILL WILSON

There was hardly time this month to contemplate the 20th anniversary of AIDS before being hit with a bombshell from the present: news from the CDC that young black gay and bisexual men were being infected each year at rates five times higher than white gay men.

The news from the CDC came after earlier studies showed that 30 percent of young black gay men are infected by age 30 and that young gay men of color face an infection rate nearly three times higher than other gays. Somehow, it seems appropriate that, even as we honor those who have died over two decades, we also focus on HIV prevention for the living.

The answer, though the organizers of coming out days and Pride contingents may not like to hear it, may be to dispense with comfortable assumptions that gay equals white, and that men who are out are the only ones worth our attention.

Gay identity has been, and remains, a powerful force in HIV prevention. Many leading organizations looked to as a model for AIDS services—GHMC, APLA, Whitman-Walker, and San Francisco AIDS Foundation—were begun by white gay men taking care of their own.

In the African-American community, too, the power of black gay men speaking out and working together has led to the formation of important organizations, including my own. Still, inaction toward the HIV crisis

But when gay and AIDS organizations throw up their hands about how to reach men who may not be spending Sunday morning at gay restaurants, clubs, or community forums, then we have to ask: Are these men the prob-

very little investigation of what kinds of decisions African-American men who have sex with men are making, what kinds of conversation we're having about HIV disclosure, or what kinds of discussions or support might prove helpful to us.

We do know—at least those of us who are black and gay—that the predominantly white AIDS prevention organizations need to offer African-American men more than another lecture. We also know that we need more resources for more and better research into why rates of HIV infection are staying so high among African-American men who have sex with men.

Now that African-American gay men are at greatest risk for HIV, we must be careful not to shift all gay community attention to AIDS in Africa, or to the marriage question.

Twenty years into the epidemic, prevention interventions need to help all men who are having sex with men think through decision-making and risk-taking—including those marching in Pride parades, and those who never will.

Phill Wilson is the founder of the African-American AIDS Policy & Training Institute in Los Angeles and can be reached at Phillw@aaaainstitute.org.

Black men can be gay in one part of our lives and play other roles within families, friendship networks and churches, and it's about time AIDS groups figured out how to reach us with prevention efforts.

among black men who have sex with men is showing the limits of AIDS and gay community thinking, particularly concerning men who do not identify as gay. As alarming as the terrible rate of HIV infection is, I am mortified by the complete failure of the gay and AIDS communities to mobilize around these bleak trends.

It's not surprising that a mainstream newspaper in Texas would react to the epidemic among black men by describing how men go out, have "freaky" sex and go home to their wives. I don't expect the general public to know that African-American men may function as out or gay in one part of our lives and play other roles within families, friendship networks and churches.

lem, or is it our one-size-fits-all approach to HIV prevention?

The real question that should have AIDS prevention workers scratching their heads is the fact that some studies show that black men—including those who identify as gay—are not reporting any more unsafe sex than their white counterparts. Why, then, are our infection rates so much higher?

AIDS organizations have been too busy labeling African-American men who have sex with men as "unreachable" to know.

There's been very little examination of how or whether men who do identify as gay find men who don't identify as gay for sex—and how we might reach both for HIV prevention. There's

Dykes To Watch Out For by Alison Bechdel



RMCC, GCAM among local organizations flooded by Allison

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The RMCC was not the only church affected by Allison. The heavy rainfall created havoc for the folks at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church at 1440 Harold when their huge basement was flooded with about 7 inches of water, said Rev. Troy Plummer.

But this was water of a different kind; it was raw sewage and it created quite a stink, said Plummer.

"The city's sewage lines blocked and they backed up in our basement. We tore out the carpet and sprayed with Lysol so it won't stink so much while it dries out."

Plummer said not only were worship robes soiled and pictures destroyed, but also the kitchen and banquet hall, which are located in the basement, are rendered out of bounds until the insurance adjusters arrive to assess the damage.

He said it could be a couple of weeks or more before they are up and running again. "It will be a while, but we'll make do. The community can be reborn when people work together to get more meaning out of it."

The Montrose Counseling Center also was a victim of the incessant rain when the first floor of the building at 701 Richmond was flooded with about 4 inches of water, said Sally Huffer, the center's director of development and marketing.

Huffer said that they managed to pull out carpet and generally clean up "by human power," referring to their staff. They lost 14 computers, carpet and other odds and ends to around the tune of \$20,000.

"As our executive director said, it's not pretty, but we're here for the people who need us. Our first priority to be able to serve our clients; to continue to get them in to get treatments," said Huffer.



Dozens of publications, including back issues of the *Houston Voice*, were among the items drenched by floodwaters last weekend at the warehouse used by the Gulf Coast Archive and Museum of GLBT History near downtown. Volunteers have been collecting boxes of the magazines and newspapers and taking them home to dry.

She said that their loss is less than the loss some of their clients suffered. Many had their homes flooded. "Some don't have a lot to begin with and now they have less," she said.

The Counseling Center is accepting donations to help clients and Huffer stressed that any donations will go directly to clients. For information, call 713-529-0037. The center is also accepting donations to help replace carpeting in the center and to defray cleanup costs.

AIDS Foundation Houston and its Stone Soup Kitchen got a double whammy from the rainstorm, said Communications Coordinator, Laura Gammell Ruppert.

"Our Stone Soup project on Westheimer got flooded and we had no flood insurance. It's a big loss to us. We lost over 3,000 toiletry and food items," said Gammell Ruppert.

Donations to Stone Soup can be dropped off at 608 Westheimer or telephone 713-524-5863. Donations to AFH can be delivered to 3202 Wesleyan or telephone 713-623-6796.

The lesbian and gay community was in danger of losing a little history when back issues of the *Houston Voice*, *OutSmart*, *Eclipse*

and the now defunct *This Week In Texas* were drenched by around a foot of floodwater. Issues of the *Voice* dated back to the first issue about 20 years ago and issues of *TWIT* to about 25 years ago.

Destined for the Gulf Coast Archive and Museum of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender History, the pieces of history were being stored in the warehouse home of Judy and Bruce Reeves in downtown Houston. Once catalogued, they were to be moved to GCAM's new home at 1609 West Main.

Judy Reeves said that all copies of *Eclipse* got wet when the bottom box collapsed and all the others fell into the water. The damage was less to issues of the *Voice* and *TWIT*. The entire collection of *OutSmart* was saved.

But all was not lost, said Judy Reeves. Volunteers took wet issues to try to salvage what they could. "My goal is to save about four of everything—each issue. We want to save as many as possible."

"The total loss is minimal to what it could have been. Our entire paper archives was there," she said.

GCAM on West Main also took in water

and sustained a ruined floor said Bruce Reeves. He added that the problems would not delay the museum's opening this week. GCAM is still looking for volunteers to help with the salvage effort. Call 713-227-5973 for information.

Tim Brookover, chairman of the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center on Hawthorn, said the center took a hit from the storm when the cellar flooded.

"The cellar doesn't go under the entire house so we didn't have too much to pump out, but it was pretty high; at least 4 feet of water," said Brookover.

The biggest problem, he said, was that the electrical box is in the cellar and it was under water, so the building had no power. The center had to close until everything was safe and electricity restored, but managed to reopen last Tuesday, thanks to dedicated volunteers, said Brookover.

The Pride Committee of Houston was also a victim of Allison's wrath. According to the Committee's Executive Director, Jack Valinski, rising waters destroyed 6,000 Pride Books housed temporarily in a storage facility at Montrose and Allen Parkway.

Valinski said the publisher has arranged for the committee to get 5,000 copies of a four-city national Pride Book that contains Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.

Although it was a big loss, the national book will suffice said Valinski. "Considering what everyone else went through, our loss is small potatoes."

The new books will be delivered Saturday and Valinski said they are looking for volunteers to help distribute them. Anyone who is interested should e-mail him at www.pridehouston.org.

HRC's Birch on ExxonMobil boycott: 'We have no other choice'

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resort" done with great reluctance.

"We have determined that after making every overture to ExxonMobil management and after three shareholder resolutions aimed at convincing the company to change its non-discrimination policy," she said, "we have no other choice."

Birch accused ExxonMobil of "marginalizing" its gay male and lesbian employees and "stonewalling" gay consumers and shareholders when approached about updating the company's EEO policy to state explicitly that it prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.

When Exxon Corp. bought Mobil in late 1999, it revoked Mobil policies that included offering domestic partner benefits to all its employees and prohibiting employee discrimination based on sexual orientation.

ExxonMobil officials said the company endorses protecting gay workers against employment discrimination by stating on its Web site (www.exxonmobil.com) and in recent proxy statements provided to shareholders that it does not endorse any form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual orientation.

HRC officials said ExxonMobil's Web site is not the company's employee handbook and does not constitute its official human resources policies.

"Such a random reference is of questionable value when an employee goes to enforce the policy," HRC stated

in a written statement issued Wednesday. "If ExxonMobil intends to specifically protect its employees against discrimination based on sexual orientation, the policy needs to be stated explicitly and clearly in its official human resources documents."

A spokesperson at ExxonMobil, based in Irving, Texas, said the company has two EEO policies. The EEO policy required by the U.S. government states that ExxonMobil provides equal employment opportunity for its employees regardless of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, citizenship status, age, physical or mental disability, veteran or other legally protected status.

The other policy, which ExxonMobil created, does not specifically list the protected categories outlined in the U.S. EEO policy. It states that ExxonMobil's policy is to provide equal employment opportunity "in conformance with all applicable laws and regulations to individuals who are qualified to perform job requirements."

"What HRC fails to tell their membership is the fact that the policy for ExxonMobil doesn't break out any group by race, color, age, sex, etc., for special treatment," said Tom Cirigliano, the oil company's spokesperson.

"We do have a policy we have to write for the U.S. government and that does break out the [categories] they require us to break out," he added. "However, the policy we follow and have in writing breaks out no groups because we feel that's discriminatory."

Five steps to ExxonMobil boycott

Elizabeth Birch, Human Rights Campaign executive director, outlined five steps this week that HRC is urging its supporters to take as part of the boycott effort. They include not patronizing Exxon or Mobil gas stations or affiliated "On the Run" convenience stores. Other actions include:

- Cutting up ExxonMobil gasoline credit cards and Mobil "Speedpasses" and sending half to the oil company and half to HRC;
- Writing or e-mailing ExxonMobil to express displeasure with the company's treatment of gay male and lesbian employees, customers and shareholders;
- Sending HRC one month's worth of receipts for gasoline purchased from companies with policies designed to treat gay workers more equally with heterosexual employees;
- And retaining ExxonMobil shares to influence the company through the shareholder resolution process to press for changes that support gay employees.

HRC also launched a Web site this week to publicize plans for the boycott at www.equalityatexxon.org.

Computer pioneer says she's more outgoing since coming out as trans

> Continued from Page 3

years later, she was recruited to work at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center, where pioneering work on personal computers was done.

In the late 1978 she cowrote a textbook about VLSI Chip design. "People usually write textbooks after ideas are well established, so even though this wasn't, it looked like it." Conway taught a course at MIT and soon several schools were teaching the method. This work established her reputation and Conway later worked at the Department of Defense and then began teaching at University of Michigan. She is now retired.

Why did she go back to work in such a male-dominated field? "I needed to make lots of money. I had bills from the surgery and child support. If I had some other line of that I could make money in, I would have," she said.

Conway believes that she was more effective in her work after her gender reassignment. "I was shy and uptight before and after I was very outgoing and extroverted," she said. "I had more people capabilities and could create environments where people could be wild, innovative, and adventurous."

All the while, Conway kept her past silent, although she eventually told the man she has been living with for past 13 years. However, Conway had always been meticulous about revealing her "medical condi-

Women, even straight women, who want to work for a company, should look at how it treats its gay and lesbian employees. The more tolerant the company is, the higher the glass ceiling is.

tion" to her employers.

"I would wait until I had an offer, and when they knew I was going to accept, I would say 'However, there is one confidential medical condition I need to discuss with you'" Conway said one potential employer sent her to a psychiatrist, who found her mentally healthy. When the company didn't hire her despite the letter, she somehow obtained a copy, which she would later present to potential employers.

There were leaks and rumors, Conway said, and when she was nominated to the National Academy of Science, anonymous letters were sent, but for the most part, the past was a secret. However, in 1998, a professor at Clemson University began researching the IBM project that Conway worked on, which had been canceled just before she was fired.

Conway's exit from IBM had been so unceremonious that they had never asked her to return papers that she had kept at home, so she had key documents about the research. After months of correspondence by e-mail, she and the professor met, and Conway revealed her identities. "So I came out," she said, "and it has worked out just

fine. I don't know why I waited so long."

One of the pleasures of "coming out" for Conway has been the ability to take credit for her early work. "It used to make me so mad when I'd read about someone saying they invented it."

A constant theme through Conway's writing and speaking is that multi-cultural environments are necessary for innovation and change. "Women, even straight women, who want to work for a company, should look at how it treats its gay and lesbian employees. The more tolerant the company is, the higher the glass ceiling is."

Since she has been out, Conway has done a lot of speaking about sexual identity issues and developed an ever expanding Web site, <http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/conway.html>. It contains her story, both professional and personal; information about sexual identity; and "success" stories. "If someone's gender change is successful, no one knows about it."

Conway is very concerned about young transgenders. "Their family throws them out, and I see them on the streets, and they're just girls. And I don't mean that as age alone, I mean that they are in no part boys."



Lynn Conway, from the December 2000 Scientific American

FTM starting transgender support group in hometown of Alvin

> Continued from Page 3

do about it is change it. I've known that all my life, really, but in November of 1999, it came to a head."

Raised a Southern Baptist, Troy could never tell his conservative fundamentalist family his secret. Although a tomboy, he was a perfect little girl, and that's all they knew. His fantasies of becoming a boy saved him during his school years.

"I wasn't a nerd or a geek. I was a non-existent entity. I was invisible most of the time."

Troy married in September 1999. He confided his innermost secrets to his fiancé, who didn't understand, or didn't want to. Troy thought that by getting married he could prove to himself that he could change, that his internal upheavals didn't matter, that he was really okay. But, of course, he wasn't okay, and his deep feelings were much stronger than he realized. The marriage didn't even last a month.

"I had no idea anybody existed that felt the way I felt. Whenever you're isolated like that, everything's gonna just explode."

When his male best friend found out about his confessions of being gay and wanting to be male, he, too, walked out on Troy. His parents couldn't help him. Troy hit bottom and that's when he contemplat-

I think the FTMs like to hide. I know they're out there, I just don't know how many.

—Troy Ham,

founder of Some Transgenders Are Guys support group

ed killing himself.

But in December Troy became acquainted with the two Texas support groups for transgenders: Community Awareness For Transgender Support and Texas Association for Transsexual Support. Their help proved invaluable, and Troy realized just how many people shared his dream.

"There were much more people than I expected. It was much more common than I thought."

But these two peer groups had one drawback. Their members were all MTF (male to female).

"I like the people from CATS and TATS, but they're always talking about girl stuff. Here I am the only guy in the group, and they're driving me nuts. That's one reason why I want to start a group."

"I think there are as many FTMs as there are MTFs. That's my opinion, I don't have any statistics to prove it. But I think the FTMs like to hide. I know they're out there,

I just don't know how many. They find it easier to hide. They get a mastectomy, start growing a beard, and you can't tell."

So far, Troy's had a hysterectomy, but had to postpone the follow-up mastectomy for lack of funds. He's currently having hormone treatments, and soon plans to start the "real life test" where he'll live completely as a male, the gender with which he identifies. He hopes to be transitioned in 5 years. He works as a private security officer, but his co-workers know him as a female.

"They still call me by that woman's name," he said sadly. "It's hard to deal with, but I have to right now. Some of my friends accepted me completely. Some of them, well, they're not friends anymore. Let me think how my Dad worded it: 'God is not the God of confusion; He would not make someone like that. He doesn't support me in this.'"

"I do know that I can't change. I've been this way all my life, and nothing I have

done or tried has made any difference. I am a man, and I'm gay. I am a FTM transsexual, and I prefer men.

"I know of no other way that would be effective in dealing with this problem. I've already tried to deal with it, including trying to conform to society's ideal for a person in a woman's body. Nothing worked. Changing my body is the only option left to me."

"My ex-husband sent me another sermon and told me again that he disapproves of my 'choice.' He still believes that a demon has taken over my life. I want to tell him, 'There is no demon. There is only me.'"

"I want S.T.A.G. to be a support group. We might get a little bit into politics, but not very much. I just want to stop somebody else from committing suicide. That's the main reason for the group. If I can help anyone else."

S.T.A.G.

e-mail: Troy-61@webtv.net

Community Awareness for Transgender Support

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INFO

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health news

AIDS czar balks at needle exchange, medical marijuana in clinic visit

WASHINGTON—Scott Evertz, a gay Republican activist tapped by President Bush earlier this year to be federal AIDS czar, wouldn't say where he stood on needle exchange programs and said the "door is closed" on the use of medical marijuana during a visit last week to the city's Whitman-Walker Clinic, Washington's primary nonprofit HIV/AIDS service provider. Some 150 people attended the session, which took place during the facility's monthly staff meeting. Evertz confirmed that his position as a gay Republican interacting with many groups involved with HIV/AIDS that lean to the political left is going to be challenging. Despite that, Evertz said, "We're going to let sound public policy guide us." Evertz also vowed to reach out to gays and offered a pledge that he will be accessible. On needle exchange programs, which reduce HIV infection but, some feel, also encourage drug use, Evertz said the issue needed to be "looked at nationally." "We need to use sound public policy," he added. But the issue of medical marijuana has been settled by the a U.S. Supreme Court ruling last month, he said. "The door is, I'm pretty sure, is closed on that," Evertz said.



Federal AIDS czar Scott Evertz said a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling on medical marijuana has 'closed the door' on the issue.

Some 25 percent of Australian gay men report casual, unprotected sex

SYDNEY—A survey has found that a quarter of Australian gay men are having unprotected sex with casual partners, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported. The 2000 Male Out Survey by University of New South Wales researchers found that 26 percent of men surveyed said they had some unprotected sex with casual partners, up from 12 percent in 1992. The survey found that about 80 percent of respondents said they would always avoid (62 percent) or sometimes avoid (19 percent) having sex with people they thought were HIV-positive. Researcher Dr. Paul Van de Ven said gay men living in capital cities were more likely to practice safe sex than those living in regional or remote areas. "The regional differences show that gay men living in areas with greater HIV prevalence are most likely to practice safe sex," he said.

Editors of scientific journal call for 'billions' in new AIDS funding

BOSTON—The editors of the *New England Journal of Medicine* called for a multibillion-dollar campaign to stem the spread of the AIDS in developing countries as the epidemic reached its 20th anniversary last week, Reuters reported. "Soon the number of deaths from AIDS is likely to exceed the estimated 25 million caused by the Black Death in the 14th century," Journal editor Dr. Jeffrey Drazen and deputy editor Dr. Robert Steinbrook said. The AIDS epidemic in the U.S. was brought to the world's attention by Dr. Michael Gottlieb's report on June 5, 1981 in the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's weekly "Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report," which detailed the cases of five young gay men with the then-rare infection, pneumocystis pneumonia. The *Journal* editorial said "the paltry international effort against AIDS so far has been disgraceful." Drazen and Steinbrook said less than \$5 is being spent each year on every person infected in sub-Saharan Africa, where most of the 36 million infected people live. "The United States and other rich nations must contribute the billions of dollars needed for treatment and prevention in poor countries," the authors said.

FDA launches probe into three fake drugs, one aimed at people with AIDS

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Food & Drug Administration is investigating three counterfeit drugs that have appeared on the market. The drugs include Serostim, which combats body deterioration in people with AIDS, and Neupogen and Nutropin, costly hormone replacements for children of short stature which are also known to have been used illegally for bodybuilding. The agency and the manufacturers of the real drugs that are being counterfeited have sent warning notices to pharmacists, state health departments and other medical professionals. FDA spokesperson Lenore Gelb said the agency is treating the counterfeits as "potentially a national problem." The fake version of Serono became known in January when the drugmaker warned people with AIDS to immediately check whether they were sold a counterfeit version of the drug. The FDA has launched a criminal investigation to track down the seller of the fake drugs, which have been found in seven states.

AIDS infections jump in U.K., though straight sex accounts for most

LONDON—New AIDS infections hit an all-time high in the United Kingdom in 2000, with a 14 percent increase over the previous year, the BBC reported. The Public Health Laboratory Service reported 3,435 new HIV cases, the highest number recorded since testing first became widely available in 1985. For the second consecutive year, heterosexual sex accounted for more new infections than gay sex, 48 percent to 37 percent in 2000. Programs encouraging heterosexuals to be tested for HIV may account for the increase in reporting, officials said.

—From staff and wire reports

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Southern Baptists take aim at gays

Gay spiritual group protests convention meeting in New Orleans as anti-gay resolutions are passed

by MIKE FLEMING

NEW ORLEANS—The annual Southern Baptist Convention at the Louisiana Superdome this week touched regularly on "the homosexual lifestyle," despite an original agenda void of direct actions or discussions about gay issues.

And as Southern Baptists met inside, some 30 gay activists were arrested outside as they tried to enter the meeting hall.

"I'm here to hold the Southern Baptists accountable for the pain and suffering caused by their teachings to me personally. I was a Southern Baptist for 35 years and suffered the pain of self-denial that whole time," said Mike Herrington of Fort Worth, Texas.

Most statements supporting the long-standing Southern Baptist position—that homosexuality is a sin—came as the convention hit full stride Tuesday.

Of eight resolutions that were proposed Tuesday, six were aimed at gays.

Members of the gay spiritual group Soulforce, led by Rev. Mel White, were present at the Superdome every day to silently protest the teachings of Southern Baptists against homosexuality.

The organization conducts similar vigils at denominational meetings across the globe.

"But the Southern Baptists are the only denomination that will not even enter a dialogue with us on our issues," White said.

Anti-gay resolutions

Southern Baptists approved a resolution to congratulate President Bush on his refusal to designate June as "Gay Pride Month" and to ask him to recognize the month instead as "Heterosexual Family Pride Month."

Motions to reject membership to Southern Baptist churches who accept gays and to equip missionaries with literature designed to preach to gays were referred to the convention's executive committee.

Members also moved to "fight the strong homosexual presence in our culture" with a task force to educate gay men and lesbians.

Southern Baptists also sent to committee a movement to help ex-gay ministries and people who want to challenge their homosexual feelings and come over to God's way.

Another motion to allow ex-gays to speak at the 2002 convention failed. A motion to "designate people 'living the homosexual lifestyle' instead of 'homosexuals' as if they are born that way" also failed to pass muster.

All the resolutions that survive committee will become part of the official report of the SBC, published later this week.

Resolutions that were old business and already passed by the executive committee



A traditional mime and Dixieland Jazz Band led an estimated 100 protestors in a mock jazz funeral during the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans on Wednesday.

included those against same-sex civil unions and in favor of both a Marriage Covenant Day and the removal of hate crime language in educational literature of American schools.

The 2000 convention revamped the Baptists' official "Statement of Faith & Message" to more tightly conform to the "exact word of scripture" as opposed to a more loosely interpreted message held since 1963, SBC President James Merritt said.

That published report included homosexuality among pornography and prostitution as "absolute sins."

The theme of this year's convention was "Reclaiming the American Family," to "restore and renew the Christ-centered American family of 50 years ago," said Merritt, pastor at First Baptist Church of Snellville near Atlanta.

The convention appointed a Family Renewal Council, whose spokesman cited the increasing divorce rate, youth drug use and violence, pre-marital sex and homosexuality as "proof we are losing the culture war in America over the last 50 years."

"We need to decide as a whole to put the family back where God wants it in America," Merritt said.

Gays come marching in

On Wednesday, gay Soulforce activists carried a traditional jazz funeral procession through downtown New Orleans to the entrance of the Louisiana Superdome. A jazz band that mostly played "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and a traditional crying mime in black coattails led the march.

A coffin draped in a rainbow flag and containing the names of gay Southern Baptists followed the band.

The funeral officially celebrated the lives of gay children of Southern Baptist upbringing who were killed or committed suicide based on church teachings that condemned their existence, White said.

About 100 protestors joined in the proces-

sion, wearing Soulforce shirts and rainbow hats, shorts and sashes. Traditional black umbrellas joined rainbow and multi-colored umbrellas carried by those in the crowd.

"Southern Baptist teachings are killing

our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered children," proclaimed a 20-foot banner in the procession.

As the convention broke for lunch Wednesday, protesters held a rally with more than 500 Baptist delegates watching.

"They're not Baptist if they're gay," said JoAnne Snipes, a delegate from South Carolina who was watched the proceedings. "I feel really sorry for them because they will spend an eternity in hell."

After the rally, several protesters attempted to bring the coffin into the Superdome. Police blocked their entrance and arrested about 30 protesters without incident and charged with trespassing.

The jazz band played "When the Saints Come Marching In" and supporters cheered as some of the protesters were led away in handcuffs. About 30 protesters were arrested without incident and charged with trespassing.

The country's largest Protestant group, with almost 16 million members, was to conclude its two-day annual meeting Wednesday by sending the nearly 9,100 churchgoers home to heal broken marriages within their own congregations.

Presbyterian ban on gay ministers under fire

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—A church committee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) renounced the denomination's ban on ordaining gay ministers Tuesday, just three days after a pastor who supports gay ordination was elected the group's leader.

On Saturday, the 213th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) tapped Rev. Jack Rogers as its moderator with 55 percent of the vote.

In his campaign speech, Rogers vowed to fight for "inclusion of God's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered children," said Molly Douthett, a member of the Committee on Ordination Standards.

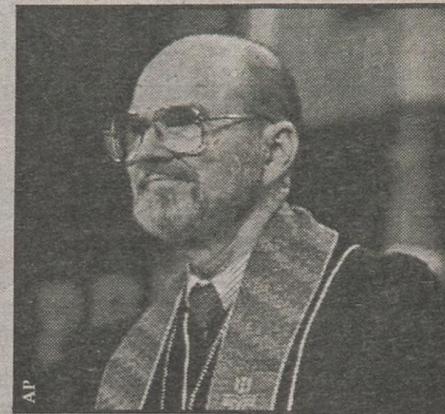
Rogers, a former professor at the conservative Fuller Theological Seminary and at the liberal San Francisco Theological Seminary, has alienated former conservative colleagues with his support for gay ordination.

The election of Rogers came as the denomination holds its annual meeting in Louisville. The session ends Saturday.

On Tuesday, the Committee on Ordination Standards voted 31-25 to approve a resolution that would repeal the ban on ordination of gay ministers. The issue now moves to the national assembly for a vote.

"I do believe this is the will of God," said Douthett, a leading supporter of the measure.

Rev. Robert Thornton, an outspoken opponent of lifting the ban, predicted the



Rev. Jack Rogers, who has supported the ordination of gay ministers, was tapped to head the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

measure would pass the General Assembly but lose when sent to the regional presbyteries for ratification.

"It is wrong to accept people who may or may not continue to live in what is sin," Thornton said.

The Presbyterian church, the nation's sixth-largest Protestant denomination with as many as 3.6 million members, has struggled with the issue of gay clergy and same-sex unions in recent years.

The church already accepts gay members and allows pastors to decide whether they will officiate at same-sex unions, officials said.

—From staff and wire reports

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AHCH is putting out the call to the Houston Voice readership to drop off donated household and kitchen items that are new or gently used. Wish List: Furniture, furnishings, blankets, TVs, radios and alarm clocks are needed for each new resident. The office is seeking tax deductible donations for operations costs; or gift certificates to grocery or drug stores for resident needs. Donate your old car, truck or RV today!

Items may be dropped off on Tue or Fri 12 Noon to 5PM; please call for an appointment. Our offices are @ 202 Tuam Ave (Club Nsonmia). Please call Matt Locklin @713 521-1613 for info.

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Richard W. Rancier, Chairperson AHCH, Inc.

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Matt Locklin is currently the executive director and co-founder of the AIDS Housing Coalition Houston/AHCH. The co-founder and CEO of Club Nsonmia Montrose. Matt has served elected positions in the hospital district as 2 term chair of the Thomas St Health Center AIDS Clinic Citizen Council; and on the Harris County Hospital District Council-At-Large. An award winning producer and host of educational programming - AIDS Talk Houston TV and Montrose 77006 TV. Former (D) Pct Judge, founding participant in Project LEAP. He has made Montrose and Texas a better place for all of us. Please attend & bring a housewarming gift for the homeless residents of the Montrose Cottages AIDS Transitional Housing program.

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"quote/unquote"

compiled by REX WOCKNER



"Warren Beatty [has] had sex with 40,000 women. If that's not a role model for lesbians I don't know what is."

—Singer/actress/comedian Lea DeLaria (left) to *Genre* magazine, June issue

"The president believes every person should be treated with dignity and respect but he does not believe in politicizing people's sexual orientation."

—Scott McClellan, spokesman for George W. Bush, explaining the president's refusal to proclaim June Gay and Lesbian Pride Month, June 2

"Larry Kramer is dying. ... He suffers from end-stage liver disease. Whether this is inflamed by his HIV medications, as Kramer believes, or caused solely by his chronic hepatitis [B], as his medical team says, the result is the same: His liver no longer processes toxins from his blood. Instead they collect in his abdomen by the quart, distending his belly to make him look, as his best friend and health-care consultant Rodger McFarlane says, 'pregnant with triplets.'"

—A June 11 report in *Newsweek*. Kramer is the author of 'Faggots' and 'The Normal Heart,' and a cofounder of Gay Men's Health Crisis and ACT UP

"We're here, we're queer, we're used to it."

—Cartoon in the June issue of *New Yorker* magazine, showing two middle-aged men relaxing in their living room, with the caption, "We're not doing anything for Gay Pride this year"

"When you first get there, you're bowled over. You say things like, 'Where has this been all my life?' Two months in, you know what's behind any door, and it's emptiness. It's like a set."

—Gay singer/songwriter Rufus Wainwright (right) on Los Angeles, to the *Philadelphia Daily News*, June 5



"I made my own decisions about who I had sex with. I made those decisions before it was legal for me to do so. I don't feel damaged by any of the relationships I had with older men. I feel really empowered."

—Syndicated gay columnist Kirk Read, author of the new book 'How I Learned to Snap,' to *Genre* magazine, June issue

"I gave up a yacht club opening to come to this. We are as straight as a ruler. We just came out to see how the other half lives. And it's marvelous! They're all so friendly!"

—Claire Pauley, 72, watching Boston's Gay Pride parade with her friend Phyllis Kolostow, June 9, to the *Boston Globe*

"I know [the guy who infected me with HIV], but I never confronted him although I was very angry. I suppose I'd tell him how very disappointed I am in him for being so dishonest."

—Skating champ Rudy Galindo to the AIDS magazine *A&U*, June issue

"A lot of ad executives happen to be gay, and they can use their imaginations to make people think differently about homosexuality itself. I mean, this [Minute Maid orange juice TV commercial] is right out of the gay playbook. The interaction between Bluto and Popeye is clearly romantic."

—Robert Knight of the Culture & Family Institute on Comedy Central's "The Daily Show," June 11



"I figure I'm doing the early mid-life crisis, dating a 26-year-old and buying a Camaro."

—Lesbian rocker Melissa Etheridge (left) on her new relationship with Tammy Lynn Michaels, who stars on the WB TV series 'Popular,' as quoted by Fox News, June 7

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Saturday, June 23 • Art Exhibition 9am-3pm

Sunday, June 24 • Art Exhibition 9am-5pm

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The celebration continues on Sunday, June 24th, at 1:00 pm with the return of Pride Festival at Garden in the Heights, 3926 Feagan. Come experience the local GLBT culture first-hand. Shop the vendor bazaar, speak with club representatives, enjoy the artists and entertainers, and be energized by motivational speeches on a lazy Sunday afternoon. Tickets are available at Basic Brothers, 1232 Westheimer, and by mail from the Pride Committee of Houston, P.O. BOX 66071, Houston TX, 77266-6071. Call the PrideLine at 713-529-6979 for more information.



Out on the Bayou

A guide for your leisure time

HOUSTON VOICE • JUNE 15, 2001



D.L. GROOVER

The show must go on, got an oar?

Houston Theater District cleans up mess left by Allison, moves productions to drier venues

by D.L. GROOVER

The downtown streets around the Houston Theater District are flooded, but it's not raining.

The brown muck that slows traffic on this absolutely gorgeous summer day is what's being pumped out of the basements below Jones Hall, the Alley, Bayou Place and Wortham Center. The noise is deafening, but it's not thunder. It's the grinding sound of electrical generators and vacuum pumps as the grueling cleanup continues round-the-clock.

Tropical Storm Allison wrecked havoc everywhere, an equal opportunity destroyer; and Houston's cultural landmarks located within blocks of each other suffered grievous harm. But as Irving Berlin cele-

brated in song, there's no business like show business and no people like show people, so the Theatre District is honoring that great big sappy heart that is life upon the wicked stage with a resilience and buoyed spirits in the face of unprecedented disaster.

By Wednesday afternoon, the city, who owns and maintains the Wortham (home to two theaters, the mammoth Brown and the intimate Cullen) deemed the theater complex worthy and sound so the ballerinas can be on their toes this weekend in the Brown, and the "Vagina Monologues" can outrage and shock in the Cullen, June 19-24.

At the Ballet's home on West Gray, tutus and toe shoes were spread around the parking lot, drying. Everyone's eager to get back

> Continued on Page 18

Drag kings rule

Subculture of female-to-male performers not so 'sub' anymore

by D.L. GROOVER

At first, the world seems to be divided into men and women. Simple, neat categories, but not entirely accurate. Simultaneously, who appears but gay men and lesbians. This complicates the picture, enriching the mix, adding color and spark, as does the emergence of the transgendered, the transsexual, the bi.

Things start to get dizzy, for subcultures are discovered contained within these groups, and the infinite gender variety makes heads spin. For all our community's complexity, a rainbow image with its paltry six colors seems woefully inadequate.

New colors keep forming. The latest hue is the drag king phenomenon. Although this growing urban lesbian movement comes with historical precedents, it's only been on the scene for six years. It's hot, sexy, cutting edge. It's entertainment but also a societal bridge between gender transitions of all kinds. It's a tool for imagining.

So says Judith Halberstam, professor of literature and cultural studies at the University of California at San Diego and one of the leading scholars and documentarians of the lesbian subculture. Prior to judging London's first drag king contest in the mid '90s, she wrote the classic study of dykedom, "Female Masculinity," and then wrote the definitive work on the world of gender illusionists, "The

> Continued on Page 18



Mo B. Dick, the alter ego of Mo Fischer, is a performance artist who originated Club Casanova, NYC's premier drag king nightclub. Fischer recently performed in Houston at Diverse Works' Transgender Fest 2.0.

DALTON DEHART

Stages offers space for Alley's 'Carpetbaggers' production

> Continued from Page 17

on stage, even if they have to fudge costumes for "Giselle" by appropriating them from similar-looking period ballets from extensive collections in their off-site warehouse, which survived the hungry flood waters.

When Richard Reeves, Houston Ballet orchestra manager, entered the dark smelly rat's nest maze of corridors beneath the Wortham with only a flashlight, he was greeted by a scene out of "Titanic." Ghostly toe shoes and headless wigs floated by his knees. A centuries-old violin bobbed next to a newly arrived shipping crate that held luxurious, but now waterlogged, "Cleopatra" costumes.

Bolts of cloth just purchased for next year's world premiere "Peter Pan" undulated like seaweed through the brown water. A sewing machine listed through the surface, pushed there by the force of the currents. With only cursory damage reports, the Ballet has lost costumes for "Giselle," "Swan Lake," and "Cleopatra." Estimated cost so far is a very conservative \$1 million.

What damage the Houston Grand Opera suffered is unattainable, but it shares basement storehouse space with the Ballet, so whatever the Opera had downstairs is most likely unsalvageable.

The Houston Symphony and the Society for the Performing Arts, whose offices are located beneath Jones Hall, were totally decimated. The weight of the rising water

smashed every floor-to-ceiling window circling the sunken atrium on Louisiana, flooding the space under 9 feet of murky water.

Both organizations lost everything: photo archives and library, orchestral scores, contracts, irreplaceable musical instruments, desks, computers, potted palms. It's all trash on the sidewalk now, bundled in garbage bags by workers wearing gloves, galoshes and face masks. Some retrieved documents will be freeze-dried by NASA to stop the mildew and shorten decay. The two organizations will be homeless for approximately six months.

"Best Little Whorehouse," which was to open June 19 at Jones Hall, is on hold until a suitable venue is found, as is Friday's heavenly show by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. The Symphony, though, plans to keep all its upcoming summer season dates, which include Thursday's Woodlands concert and next weekend's performances at Miller Outdoor Theatre in Herrmann Park.

The Alley's subterranean theater, the Neuhaus Arena Stage where last week Horton Foote's "The Carpetbagger's Children" had its world premiere, was totally submerged. The company's costume and scene shops are also down below, and the rich brocades and wool for Shaw's "Devil's Disciple" soaked up smelly water like a wick.

In a grand gesture worthy of Broadway's best, Stages Repertory Theatre (3201 Allen

Parkway, Waugh @ D'Amico) will be the Alley's temporary home for this three-character, in-the-round production of the Foote play. Go to Stages at the prescribed date on your ticket, but check the theater for the correct time.

The remaining performances of Shaw's "Devil's Disciple" have been cancelled. Ticket holders can (1) obtain a ticket credit to a future Alley Theatre production, or (2) donate the value of their ticket to the Alley Theatre's relief effort by not requesting a credit and mailing their unused tickets to the Alley Theatre.

The arts organizations still aren't certain of the extent of structural damage to their buildings. The pedestrian passageway between the Wortham and its parking garage collapsed; Jones Hall has what may be a dangerous bulge in a supporting exterior wall; the smell of sewage permeates rugs and the very air itself inside most of the downtown buildings. In the immortal words of Bette Davis in "Beyond the Forest," What a dump.

Other artistic venues around town fared better. Even though Little Room Downstairs had a partially collapsed roof due to the weight of the storm water, it was back in business for Monday night's performance of "Twigs." Main Street ("Night and Day"), the Ensemble ("Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery"), Actors Theatre ("Mr. Bundy"), and dos chicas ("Oedipus Rex") will be up

and running for this weekend's schedule. And nothing, come hell or high water, will stop those "Party" boys at Bienvenue from talking off their clothes.

Angelika Film Center remains temporarily closed for lack of electrical power, as does the Brown Auditorium at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Rice Media Center. The River Oaks and Greenway movie theaters, though damp, are still buttering the popcorn. Pop cultural comedian Dennis Miller has been rescheduled at the Arena Theater for June 28.

Periodically check the Web sites below for official updates and reopenings, and please, don't pray for any more rain.

INFO

www.alleytheatre.org
 www.angelikafilmcenter.com
 http://members.aol.com/encoretheatre/encoretheatre.html
 www.houstonballet.org www.houston-symphony.com
 www.littleroomdownstairs.cc
 www.mainstreettheater.com
 www.masqueradetheatre.com
 www.mfah.org
 www.ruf.rice.edu/~cinema
 www.spahouston.org
 www.stagestheatre.com

Drag king performer Mo B. Dick breaks down, parodies gender roles

> Continued from Page 17

Drag King Book," an exegesis on the eye-popping photographs of Del La Grace Volcano. She's also donned suit and tie and answered to the name of "Jack."

As the finale for DiverseWorks' Transgender Fest 2.0, Professor Halberstam spoke on transgender identity and the drag king scene, augmenting her intriguing lecture with a slide show sampler of Volcano's provocative photographs.

Halberstam draws a definite correlation among drag king performances, the visible rise of transgender activity in the 1990s, and the changing face of feminism.

"Things loosened up in the mid-90s. A new brand of feminism was on its way that had a very different set of understandings of what it meant to be a woman. We see drag kings and transgenders emerge in the mid-90s partly in response to the waning of a particular kind of feminism. It's paradoxical, because it was a moment when feminism was under such attack all over the place, but it did mean that there were opportunities for rethinking feminism in the lesbian community.

"Transgender is not equivalent to the term transsexual, though it is related. Basically in the 1980s and 1990s in North America and Europe, female-to-male transsexuals in particular became very visible within larger transsexual communities and within urban gay and lesbian communities. People suddenly realized that there was a

wide variety of gender spectrums within the transsexual community."

Very few drag kings are post-op. They're women. Some consider themselves transgender off stage and perform as drag kings; some are transsexuals, who may use a drag king persona for a time until they transition. A few drag kings are ultra feminine women who like the "transformative" aspect; and then some are lesbians who are fascinated by gay male erotica. They dress as gay men.

Prior to 1995, you might've seen individuals in drag or male impersonators, but the first wave of drag kings in lesbian bars happened only in 1995. But it took off.

One of the most successful drag kings is NYC's Mo B. Dick, a machismo-laced Brooklyn-tinged lounge lizard with pompadour, sideburns and sleazy mustache. Wearing leisure suit, orange spread-collar shirt, and zebra platform sneakers, Mo B. sits on a bar stool with legs splayed as he does his standup comedy.

For a finish, he hides behind a sheet held up by two audience members. When they drop the sheet, Mo B., wearing a green surgical gown, sits on a chair. He looks dazed. Music starts, and he slowly strips off this layer to reveal black bra, short slip, and fishnet stockings. The tits are real. He's a she.

Mo B. lip syncs "Are You a Boy or a Girl?" Seductively she lifts the hem of the skirt. An obscenely large dildo runs down her leg. At the same time, she caresses both her breast and the dildo. She shrugs and dances off.



Mo B. Dick (the B. stands for "bodacious") is the alter ego of Mo Fischer, a performance artist who originated Club Casanova, NYC's premier drag king nightclub. The club's been shuttered under Mayor Rudy Giuliani's community standards program, ("Harrassment," Mo says) but Mo's since formed a successful touring act of drag kings from his club that plays to packed houses across the U.S.

He's also a friend of John Waters, who cast Mo as the sleazy stripper in his aptly titled movie, "Pecker." Mo's also been seen, as Mo B., in "Sex and the City," as well as in a separate chapter in Halberstam and Volcano's "Drag King Book"

"This is a complete transformation for me," says Mo. "It's an opportunity to express myself. I was always an aggressive

young girl, so I can put on a suit and mustache and say whatever the fuck I like and people laugh their heads off. Instead of being an angry woman, I can be an angry man. I can't stand some of the behavior that comes out of this character, so I make fun of it. I take the piss out of it."

Before Mo B., Maureen was living in India setting up two low-cost housing projects for Habitat for Humanity. She returned to her native NYC to finish college at the progressive New School for Social Research in Greenwich Village, then moved to Provincetown where she met some performers who lured her into show business. Between drag jobs, Maureen is a caterer for film shoots. Mo B. Dick arose in November 1995.

"If I had to label myself, I'd say I'm moody: whoever I'm in the mood for. It's fun that way. I'm a sexual terrorist. I get hit on by gay men, women, lesbians, bisexual men. I dated a bisexual man and he'd pick me up after work at Club Casanova and we'd walk down the street hand in hand, me still in drag. I'm like, 'Oh, my god, we're fags.'

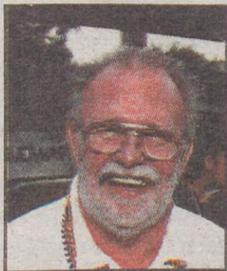
"Lesbians are accepting sexuality in a whole new way, more open experimentation, more willing to talk about it, more dildo shops."

Then, pompadour, mustache, and all, Mo B., not Maureen, was off to Chances. He laughed. "Oh, yeah, have to. To fuck 'em up."

Bayou Calendar

EDITOR'S NOTE: Due to flooding caused by Tropical Storm Allison, the dates, times and venues of some productions and events may change. Please call ahead to confirm.

"A Stroll Through GLBT History With Ray Hill"



Houston's own gay Foghorn Leghorn has a new monologue for Pride celebration, somewhat on the order of Eve Ensler's, only the gay male version, and much more raunchy. Hill's been around the block so many times, there's a

rut in the sidewalk. He's exasperating, obstreperous, megalomaniacal, and soft and cuddly as the StayPuff marshmallow man when it comes to the vicissitudes of love. He's earned the right to tell his stories—true or not—anyway he likes. We're glad to have him as a citizen of Montrose. This one-time performance benefits the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center. June 17, 7:30 p.m.

Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne
713-524-3818

"The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas"

When Dame Edna was told that Ann-Margret was coming to Houston, she said—and this is true—"Lovely, possum, what's she doing, 'On Golden Pond?'" No, Dame, she's playing a madam, Mona Stangley, proprietor of the infamous Chicken Ranch brothel near La Grange, and this role is her theater debut after a fine career in motion pictures and television. Gary Sandy (wearer of the ultra-tight jeans from "WKRP In Cincinnati") co-stars as Sheriff Ed Earl Dodd.

June 19-24
Wortham Theater Center, 500 Texas
713-629-3700

GCAM/PFLAG presentation

Judy Reeves of the Gulf Coast Archives and Museum of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender History and Sue and Jim Null of the Houston chapter of P-FLAG will be at the Barnes and Noble at 3003 W. Holcombe Saturday, June 16 at 7 p.m. Reeves will talk about GCAM's time capsule project and how preserving history starts by saving today's newspaper. The Null's topic is "The top ten things you may not know about sexual minorities." The public is invited.

That's EntertainMENT

Gay Men's Chorus wraps up season with visit from Austin singers

by D.L. GROOVER

It just wouldn't be any celebration of Pride at all without our voices raised in song, and who better to lift our community's spirits, and sound better doing it, than our own Gay Men's Chorus of Houston?

Their 22nd season, titled "Movie, Music, and More!" comes to an apt conclusion this weekend with their joyous concert, "That's EntertainMENT," featuring songs from the movies and a special joint appearance from the Capital City Men's Chorus from Austin.

With remarkable longevity and resilience, our GMCH can justly celebrate itself, too, as well as Pride, for its unbreakable run of continuous music making since its 1979 founding by Andy Mills as the Montrose Singers. The oldest spot is held though by San Francisco, that mother-of-all gay choruses. When the singing boys from the Bay toured the U.S. back in 1979, they were like a little gay Johnny Appleseed. Every where they went a little chorus popped up.

The group has recorded a best-selling CD, "To Friends and To Life," performed at the Wortham Center; gave benefit concerts for HATCH and P-FLAG; became the first "gay" arts group to perform in Austin's capitol rotun-

da; received a grant from GALA (the international association of Gay and Lesbian Choruses); commissioned several new works; and capped it all when their booming voices added their titanic sound to Schoenberg's mighty "Gurrelieder," conducted by Christoph Eschenbach at the Houston Symphony.

Rehearsals take place every Thursday at 7 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, Waugh and Missouri.

As with concerts from seasons past, this one plans to be tuneful, surprising, moving and full of laughs. And it won't surprise any of GMCH's stalwart concertgoers to guess that Gilbert & Sullivan's "Three Little Maids" from the film "Topsy-Turvy" just might be sporting mustaches.

Other highlights include the rousing "Trashing the Camp" from Disney's "Tarzan;" the ballad "When I Fall In Love" from "Sleepless in Seattle;" the classically inspired "Non Nobis Domine" from Kenneth Branagh's "Henry V," and a spicy rendition of "Day-O" from "Beetlejuice."

Tickets may be purchased at the door before any performance, or in advance through Box Office Tickets, Inc, 1-800-494-8497, or through their Web site www.boxofficetickets.com.

INFO

"That's EntertainMENT"

June 16, 8 p.m., June 17 at 3 p.m.

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Lambda Literary Awards bestowed

'Valencia,' The World of Normal Boys' among winners

by ELLA TYLER

The winners of the Lambda Literary Awards were announced in Chicago on May 31 at a dinner featuring comic Bob Smith and slam poet Alix Olson as hosts. This is the thirteenth set of awards, sponsored by the Lambda Literary Foundation, which publishes the Lambda Book Report and the James White Review.

The winner for Lesbian Fiction was "Valencia" by Michelle Tea, published by Seal Press. The Gay Men's Fiction winner was "The World of Normal Boys" by K. M. Soehnlein, published by Kensington. "The World of Normal Boys" is Soehnlein's first published book.

Competition in both these categories was substantial. Other finalists for the Lesbian Fiction award were "Affinity" by Sarah Waters, "Tea" by Stacey D'Erasmus, "The Powerbook" by Jeannette Winterson, and "Black Girl in Paris" by Shay Youngblood.

In Gay Men's Fiction, the competition may have been even tougher. Finalists were the "Notorious Dr. August" by Christopher Bram, "The Married Man" by Edmund White, "Guess Again" by Bernard Cooper, and "Between Dances" by Erasmo Guerra.

The genre fiction awards went to "The Limits of Justice" by John Morgan Wilson; "Mommy Dearest" by Jean Marcy, both mysteries; and "Kirith Kirin" by Jim Grimsley, winner in the Horror/Science Fiction/Fantasy category. The fiction anthology winner was "Men on Men 2000" edited by David Bergman and Karl Woelz.

The non-fiction anthology award went to "Out of the Ordinary" edited by Noelle Hawley and Ellen Samuels. This collection of works by children of gay and lesbian parents also won the award for Children/Young Adult title and was a finalist for the Transgender award.

The biography/autobiography winners were "Lifesaving" by Judith Barrington and "Bosie" by Douglas Murray. Murray is a 21-year-old student at Cambridge University and began working on the book when he was 14.

"Lesbian Art in America" by Harmony Hammond and "The Isherwood Century" by James Berg and Chris Freeman won the awards for Lesbian Studies and Gay Men's Studies.

The award for Lesbian Poetry went to "Mercy Mercy Me" by Elena Georgiou. The Gay Men's Poetry winner was "Pastoral" by Carl Phillips.

David Sedaris' "Me Talk Pretty One Day" won the Humor award and "Faeries" by Keri Pickett, won the Visual Arts award. "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" by John Cameron won the Drama award.

The Transgender award went to "The Danish Girl" by David Ebershoff, published by Viking. In contrast to years past, when books with transgender themes were from small presses and not widely publicized,

two other finalists in the category, "As Nature Made Him" by John Colapinto and "Trans-Sister Radio" by Chris Bohjalian, also were from large houses and received publicity boosts from their publishers.

Dual awards were presented in two categories. "Gay Spirituality" by Toby Johnson and "It's Never About What's It About" by Krandall Kraus and Paul Borja won the Spirituality/Religion awards. The winners in the Small Press category were "Kamikaze Lust" by Lauren Sanders, published by Akashic and "Between Dances" by Guerra, published by Painted Leaf.

Nominations for the awards are solicited from the reading public through the Foundation Web site, the Lambda Book Report and nomination forms at various book stores. Then, a committee of writers and reviewers select five finalists in each category. After that, each book in a category is sent to at least three judges who vote independently on the winner. This year, more than 60 writers, booksellers and freelance reviewers, including Houston writer Paul Lisky served as judges.

THE WORLD OF NORMAL BOYS



A NOVEL

K.M. SOEHNLEIN

K.M. Soehnlein's "The World of Normal Boys" garnered the Lambda Literary Award for gay men's fiction at the May 31 ceremony in Chicago.

Other Lambda Literary Foundation awards were announced at the dinner, also. The Editor's Choice Award went to "Coming Out of Cancer" edited by Victoria Brownworth, chosen by Greg Herren, the Lambda Book Report's editor. The Pioneer Award went to David Rosen and Retha Powers, of Insightoutbooks.com, a book club featuring gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender books. Bill Cohen of Haworth Press was presented the Publisher's Service Award.

The Monette/Horwitz Trust and the Arch and Bruce Brown Foundation also announce their awards at this event. The Monette/Horwitz trust makes grants to scholars who are working to counter homophobia. A grant of \$7,500 went to Allan Berube, author of "Coming Out Under Fire." Karen Franklin, Anthony R. D'Augelli, Letitia Anne Peplau and Jeff McMahon each received smaller grants.

The Arch and Bruce Brown Foundation makes awards for gay-positive arts projects based on, or inspired by, history. Maida Tilchin received the award for her book, "Land without Maps."

**Lambda Literary
Foundation**
P.O. Box 73910, Washington, D.C.
20056-13910
202-682-0952
www.lambdalit.org

INFO

Eating Out

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Voluminous variety

Shanghai River offers 96 entrée choices

by KATHREEN LEE

When you don't want to cook, you don't want to be adventurous, you don't want anything fancy and all you want to do is eat and stick with what you know, you do Chinese, the lazy eater's default choice. However, that default selection comes with even more options, as Citysearch lists 329 different Chinese restaurants in the Houston area.

Non-mutually exclusive categories of Chinese restaurant cuisine include: greasy, spicy, MSG-induced spicy, deliverable, swift and a rare breed of elegant and expensive, which is the same as any other but just served with smaller portions on garnished platters.

SHANGHAI RIVER, a small windowless enclave within a strip mall on Westheimer, provides a diverse fare that includes ubiquitous staples like Chicken Fried Rice (\$6.25) and unique house creations like Hunan Triple Delight Jim Masucci (\$13.95), which is a mixture of sautéed shrimp, scallops and beef served in a mini hot wok and drowned in a "subtle brown sauce" named after the local TV's Channel 13 news chief.

The Beef with Orange Peel featured an amazing combination of sauces, texture and flavor.

Shanghai River menu selections places its cuisine somewhere in between the myriad staples of Kim Son and the elegance and distinctiveness of Scott Chen's, an upscale Chinese restaurant in the Galleria area.

Like Kim Son's extensive selections, Shanghai River offers 96 different entrees. But unlike Kim Son's, Shanghai River also offers numerous exceptional items, such as the Lobster with Black Bean Sauce (\$23.95) which entices wealthier patrons with more expensive palates.

Appetizers include typical fares such as egg rolls (\$1.35), fried and steamed dumplings (\$4.75) and the Pu Pu Platter (\$5.95), which offers a mixture of six different appetizers. The skewered beef was tender and well-seasoned with spicy peppers. The Shrimp Toast had an odd mixture of consistencies with a crispy breaded exterior and a soggy fusion of mushy shrimp and a salty mayonnaise like sauce.

My dinner companion praised the Steamed Vegetable Dumplings (\$4.75) for the fresh spinach, carrots, Shitake mushrooms and cabbage stuffing. She commented that unlike the usual defrosted flavor of other restaurant dumplings, Shanghai River's tasted as if they had just prepared it.

The Beef with Orange Peel (\$11.95) featured an amazing combination of sauces,

FOOD FILE

SHANGHAI RIVER

2407 Westheimer
713.528.5528

Food:

Service:

Value:

Scene:

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Fine for most

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texture and flavor. The lean and tender meat was thinly sliced, battered in bread crumbs, lightly fried and immersed in a sweet and tangy sauce which only had the slightest hint of orange. The sauce was not overly sweet, but had just the right sweet essence to perfectly complement the more somber flavors of the breaded beef. While the dish could have used more vegetables like broccoli and bell peppers, the dish is a definite must for anyone.

We were not as impressed with the Happy Family Marvin Zindler (\$12.95), a dish of chicken, beef, shrimp and scallops served with a mix of vegetables in a flavored brown sauce. One defining characteristic of Chinese food is the all-consuming sauce in which the mixed ingredients are drowned. If the sauce is good, the dish is good. Unlike the unique and flavorful orange sauce in the beef dish, the "flavored brown sauce" served in the Happy Family entrée was no more distinctive than the same ubiquitous sauce that's used for the chicken with mixed vegetables, pork with mixed vegetables, chicken with cashew nuts. Considering that the dish is named after the famed Channel 13 personality, I expected a more specialized dish a unique flavor.

I am used to always having to take leftovers home after doing Chinese, but the rather small portions of the entrees and appetizers left both my friend and I wanting more. The Honey Crispy Banana dessert (\$5.25) consists of eight one-inch banana slices dipped in hot honey and then instantly dropped into iced water. The result is a warm mushy banana surrounded by a brittle and crunchy shell of honey. While the strings of hardened honey may cling to the roof of your mouth, the unique dessert offers a delicious finish to your meal.

Compared to most typical Chinese restaurants, Shanghai River offers its patrons a greater selection between traditional Chinese cuisine staples and their own distinctive entrees. However, finding those dishes which truly achieve a unique flare is haphazard. If you decide Chinese again when you next dine out, Shanghai River may surprise you on your ho-hum default night out.



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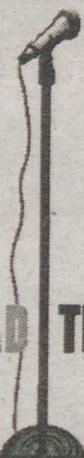
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On Stage

THEATER REVIEW + PREVIEW

Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag...

'Carpetbagger's Children,' doesn't live up to renown writer Horton Foote's reputation

by D.L. GROOVER

Throughout his long, illustrious career, writer Horton Foote has won numerous accolades: two Academy awards (for "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "Tender Mercies"), a Pulitzer Prize (for "The Young Man From Atlanta"), a Writers Guild award, a National Medal of Arts, a Texas Medal of the Arts, among many others.

His latest piece for theater is the play **THE CARPETBAGGER'S CHILDREN**, which received its world premiere June 6 at the Alley Theatre. Mr. Foote will win no awards for this one.

This is a memory play, told by three sisters who are the last siblings of Papa's family. A union soldier during the Civil War, Papa passed through the small town of Harrison, Texas. He liked what he saw so much that, after the war, he returned there to live and raise his family. Buying disenfranchised plantations, he became the richest man in town, the county tax assessor and collector, and known thereafter to the partisan townfolk as a "carpetbagger."

His daughters' reminiscences chart the family and the town's life and times. Their chronicles, however, are told in unwieldy blocks of monologue, thick numbing short stories that have the power to trip up even the intrepid pros inhabiting the characters. For all their evocative power and poetic ease, the stories have no reverberation, no real depth. And no drama.

One by one, the sisters rise from their personality-matched chairs at the corners of the stage and proceed to talk. And talk. They regale us with family stories. They inundate us. Cornelia (Roberta Maxwell), the smart one with business savvy yet emotionally repressed, becomes the matriarch when Papa dies and Momma tumbles into senility.

Grace Anne (Jean Stapleton) is the rebellious elder one, who defies Papa's edict, elopes with a ne'er-do-well, and suffers both financial and familial consequences. Sissie (Hallie Foote) is the sweet dumb one, who admits to not having a thought in her head. When she's not crying (which we're told about many times, but never see), she's singing (which we hear many times).

"Carpetbagger" is replete with an autumnal tone and a fragrance of old lace and dusty roses. It's genteel and proper, like a Sunday school class or a visit to half-forgotten relatives you never knew or wanted to know. It's as comfy as a porch swing on a lazy summer day. But as wistful as it is with its swirls of memory and overlapping tales, the play is, alas, insubstantial,



Jean Stapleton portrays Grace Anne, one of 'The Carpetbagger's Children' who tell his tale in long, unwieldy monologues.

tame and fairly static.

The three pro actors and the crack production team serve Foote better than he serves them. Director Michael Wilson smoothly moves the limited action, set designer Jeff Cowie lovingly recreates the interior space with minimal paint, and costumer David Woolard characterizes each sister with a distinctive look.

Maxwell in sensible shoes, rolled hairdo, and prim elegant gray dress makes an intelligent, formidable Cornelia. Living her life according to Papa's will (what an ogre he must have been, although all three sisters have an inexplicable fondness for him), she's left with a lonely big house, lots of land that the heirs have no emotional attachment to, and her memories. She's controlled and tight.

If ever offered a chance to have lemonade with Grace Anne as portrayed by Stapleton, take it. She's the most fun of the sisters: feisty, secure, a survivor. When she tells of her elopement that estranged her from her parents, she wiggles a little dance of triumph before she walks back to her threadbare armchair. She's a little doughy, but not dotty; naughty but nice.

The character of youngest sister Sissie is venerated with fresh tenderness in the capable hands of Hallie Foote, the author's daughter, but the problem is not in her fine portrayal but in the question, why is this character here at all? She's the least interesting of the sororal trio. Having told us that she keeps things inside, likes to take orders and not think too much, why should we care about this wimp? She's so inconsequential to the family, to the play, that when she dies, no one takes any notice.

Horton Foote has drawn a loving monochrome sketch of a vanishing way of life in a small southern town. Throughout whirl vestiges of "Magnificent Ambersons" and even "Three Sisters." But bring out your true theatrical oils, Mr. Foote, and give your painting dramatic color and life.

INFO "The Carpetbagger's Children"

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Girl talk

'Vagina Monologues' comes to Houston with all-Texan cast

by RICH ARENSCHIEDT

Never before have so many famous feminine parties been so anxious to talk about their private parts. Notables such as Glenn Close, Whoopi Goldberg, Winona Ryder, Lily Tomlin, Annie Potts, Kirstie Alley and Rita Moreno, have all shared the stage in giving life to the giver of life in lesbian playwright Eve Ensler's groundbreaking **VAGINA MONOLOGUES**. This show, presented at Houston's Wortham Center opens Tuesday, June 19 and runs through June 24.

As with many one-person works, "Monologues" has had an interesting creative history. Drawn from a book of the same title, it was originally produced in an 1996 OBIE Award-winning run by HOME for Contemporary Theatre and Art in New York. It has appeared in several different incarnations since then.

In a benefit to fight domestic violence, the show was performed in New York on Valentine's Day, 1998, as "V-Day 1998," starring the many of the aforementioned thespian icons, and raising a significant amount of money for various women's causes. Subsequent charity benefits in 1999 and 2000 culled more stars and funding to combat abuse against women, making "Monologues" one of the most successful philanthropic events of the year.

Since then, the show has toured the United States and internationally, with performances in Jerusalem, Berlin, Athens, Zagreb as well as a very successful run in London.

The production opened Off-Broadway in New York at the Westside Theatre on Oct. 3, 1999 to great acclaim. Ensler starred in her work through January 2000 and has earned glowing accolades for her performances. She has been described as "a brilliant comedian" (*The New York Times*), "spell-binding, funny and almost unbearably moving" (*Variety*) and "a sophisticated storyteller" (London's *The Sunday Times*), praise is universal for her interpretation of the stage version of "Monologues."

As Ensler eventually relinquished her role in the one-woman show, it was decided that a different format should be utilized. As it's Off-Broadway success continued with standing-room-only engagements the single actress was to be replaced by three women. In this adaptation "Monologues" could be presented with different sets of three amazing women sharing the stage for a succession of two-week engagements. The production has been one of the most critically-acclaimed endeavors



Eve Ensler, wrote and starred in several productions of 'Vagina Monologues' across the country and abroad. The Houston showing of the popular three-woman play will feature Texans Linda Ellerbee, Starla Benford and Sherri Parker Lee.

of this season and has played to sold-out for nearly every performance.

The Houston run will feature former Houstonian Linda Ellerbee, outspoken journalist, award-winning television producer and best selling-author. Additionally, native Texan Starla Benford and Alley Theatre audience favorite, Sherri Parker Lee will comprise the trio for the Texas version of "Monologues."

Though the subject might seem a bit foreign to some, playwright Ensler thinks it's just what the doctor ordered. She explained the concept of her off-Broadway play by saying "I was worried about vaginas. I was worried about what we think about vaginas, and even more worried that we don't think about them... so I decided to talk to women about their vaginas, to do vagina interviews, which became vagina monologues."

Subjects in the discussion of women's genitalia range from silly to deadly serious. In the work, a young girl tackles the subject by musing "If your vagina got dressed what would it wear?" Humor abounds as one vignette features a Jewish woman talking about "down there," saying: "I haven't been down there since 1953. No, it had nothing to do with Eisenhower."

In spite of its rather specific title, "Monologues" is much more than a self-aggrandizing "no men permitted" look at part of the female anatomy. In this show, some of the biggest laughs flow from the more estrogen-challenged audience members. "Monologues" is a study in self-discovery for both sexes about what part of the female sex is.

INFO The Vagina Monologues

Wortham Center's Cullen Theater, 500 Prairie at Texas

June 19-24

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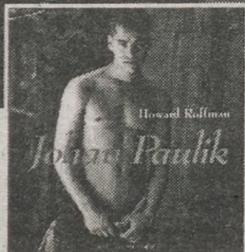
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Get your home ready for Pride celebrations

by ELLA TYLER

Here are a few simple ideas about how to get your home all spiffy and shining and ready for Pride celebrations. Invite friends over before the parade to show it off!

If you generally go in via the back door, enter from the front, as if you were a guest. When I did this, I found all kinds of details that needed tending to.

The house numbers that had been taken down when the house was painted were still sitting beside the wall because I couldn't decide if I wanted new ones. There is a dead bush by the front door that is almost, but not quite, hidden by its live comrades. The table on the porch where plants sit is getting very rickety.

None of these will take long to fix, but they are a classic case of out of sight, out of mind. At least my Christmas wreath has been taken down and the light worked.

While you're walking around outside, be sure that anything that holds water is empty. If not, you're breeding your own mosquitoes. If your plants look puny, a foliar feeding will perk them up in just a few days.

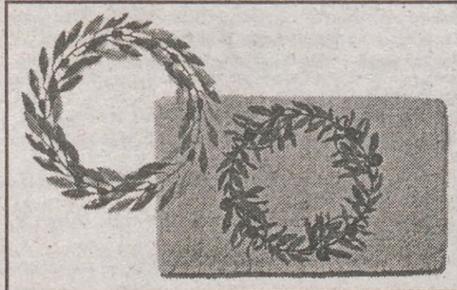
This would be a good time to do a stem to stern house cleaning. Some people enjoy cleaning. I do not, but it is not difficult if you follow this simple rule: Read the label on your cleaner and follow the directions. Some of these cleaners are very toxic. Use the cleaning product that fits the task and let it sit long enough to work.

My other cleaning rule is, "If you are hiring someone to clean, be very explicit about what you want done." This rule is derived from a number of unfortunate experiences. A cleaner once tried to polish one of my mother's antique copper pieces. She removed years of patina and never got it to shine.

If you need more cleaning hints, call your mother or grandmother, although the recent popularity of books about cleaning (really) might mean that they don't know either.

After the house is clean and the nagging little projects done, you can go shopping.

Make your entry welcoming with a new door mat. A wreath would be a festive decoration for your front door, but you might have to make one. I haven't seen any gay pride wreathes, but maybe I haven't been shopping in the right places. Sit down with a Styrofoam ring or a twig wreath, and some spray paint, glitter and rainbow ribbon and see if you can create



Adding a new front door wreath or welcome mat can freshen the look of your home and create a more inviting entry for guests.

something that fits your style.

Welcome your guests inside with fresh flowers in the entry. It doesn't have to be a big arrangement—a few flowers in a bud vase will convey the idea that this is a special occasion. The bathroom and bedside tables are two other places where small flower arrangements look festive and in scale.

Pots of blooming plants can be used in place of cut-flower arrangements. There are a variety of containers that will cover the pot much more attractively than the plastic or foil sleeves they are sold in. Be sure the container you pick is watertight.

If you are tired of the way your place looks, try moving the furniture around. It can make a real difference.

The two fastest and cheapest places to get a completely different look are the bathroom and the bedroom.

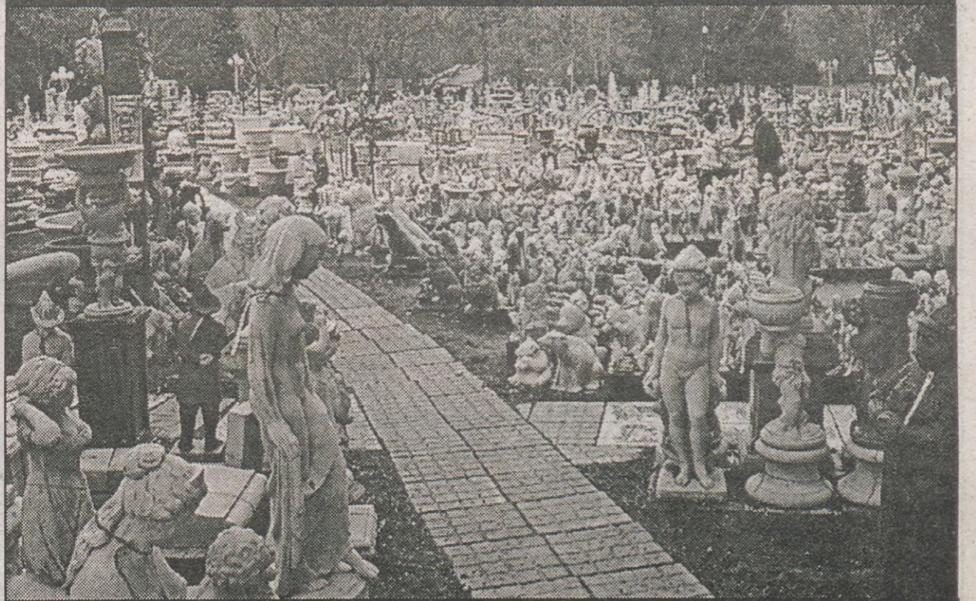
A new shower curtain and bathroom rug can completely change the style of most bathrooms. If you chose something that goes with the towels you have, you don't even need to buy new ones. For the party, drag out the embroidered hand towels or get some pretty paper ones. One friend thwarts nosy guests by putting marbles in her medicine cabinet. When the door is open, out they come.

In the bedroom, a new bedspread and pillow shams can make the room look dramatically different.

I used to work in the furniture rental business, and often decorated model apartments. I still remember one apartment with carpet in brown, black and white splotches with random tufts of yellow. Instead of trying to work with it, I ignored it, and used, I think, (it was the disco era) the green vinyl love seat. To my surprise, the place looked great and the carpet was barely noticeable. The moral of the story is that downright ugly features in a room can be overlooked if there is something more eye-catching in the room.

As you're shopping, get whatever else feels festive to you—candles, streamers, potpourri, flags. Add lots of food, be sure you have something non-alcoholic for your non-drinking friends, and celebrate.

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saturday, june 16

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Dignity mass. 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.
Houston Chain Gang Bicycle Club. Call for ride locations. 713-863-1860.
Gay & Lesbian Breakfast Club. 9:30 a.m. 281-437-0636.
Houston Wrestling Club. Practice. 1:30 p.m. 713-453-7406.
Rainbow Fishing Club. Meeting. 713-526-7070. 713-880-9235.
Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center Drop-in hours noon to 4 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
Classic Chassis Car Club. Summer Swim Party #1. 713-688-2841.
Houston Outdoor Group. Pot Luck dinner & Baby Shower. 713-864-0082.
Day of Dance. Rainbow Ranglers Annual Dance. Brazos River Bottom. 713-528-9192.
That's EntertainMENT. Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Concert at 8 p.m. 1-800-494-849 or GMCH.org.
Houston Area Bears. Social at Mary's. 713-867-9123

sunday, june 17

Rainbow Riders. A bicycle club for women. 713-869-1686.
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Holy Rite Eucharist I 7:45 a.m.; Holy Rite Eucharist II 8:55 a.m.; Education hour 10 a.m.; Choral Eucharist 11 a.m. 713-528-6665.
Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church. Service. 6:30 p.m. 713-528-6756.
Resurrection MCC. Services. 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10 a.m. Youth Sunday School 11:15 a.m. Handbell Choir rehearsal 1:30 p.m. 713-861-9149.
Grace Lutheran Church. Sunday school for all ages 9 a.m. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-528-3269.
Community Gospel. Service at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. Sunday School for children 10 a.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.
Houston Mission Church. Service 10:30 a.m. 713-529-8225.
Covenant Church, Ecumenical, Liberal Baptist. Service 9:30 a.m. & education hour 11 a.m. 713-668-8830.
Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Services at 8:30 a.m. & 10:50 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 713-526-1017.
The Women's Group. Meeting & Discussion. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.
Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County. 502 Church St. Service 10:30 a.m. 409-765-8330.
First Congregational Church (Memorial). Service at 10 a.m. Christian Education. 11:30 p.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston.org.

Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. Adult forum 10 a.m. Service 11 a.m. 713-686-5876.
Gay Catholics of St. Anne's-Houston. 5 p.m. worship service. Dinner and social. alexcam@wt.net. 713-623-0930
Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation: Adult discussion 9:45 a.m. Service 11 a.m. 281-277-8882. www.tuuc.org.
First Unitarian Universalist Church. Services at 9:30 & 11:30 a.m. Brunch available 10:30 a.m. Panel Discussion: Bisexuality. 1:30 p.m. 713-526-5200. church@firstuu.org.
Anarchist Black Cross Federation/Anarchist Reading Group. 1 p.m. www.houstonabc.org. 713-595-2103
Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.
Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition. • Sunday Pot Luck Supper. 6 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
That's EntertainMENT. Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Concert at 8 p.m. 1-800-494-849 or GMCH.org. Center for AIDS. Men's Mixer. 713-527-8210.
PFLAG-Galveston. 713-867-9020.

monday, june 18

Gay Fathers/Fathers First. Support group. 8 p.m. www.GayFathers-Houston.org or 281-505-1788.
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.
HIV testing. STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 1 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. 713-626-2837.
Kolbe Project. Eucharist 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.
Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry Open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 936-441-1614.
Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.
Lesbian & Gay Voices Radio Show. 8 to 10 p.m. KPFT 90.1. 713-529-1223.
AIDS Mastery. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.
Grief & Divorce Support Groups. 7 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, Ext. 208.
gayDAR. Wellness Community. Support Group. 7 p.m. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours from 6 to 9 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition • "A Stroll Through GLBT History with Ray Hill." 7:30 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

tuesday, june 19

For Mature Audiences Only. Support group. 7 p.m. Bering Memorial UMC. 713-526-1017.
HTGA Support Group. 7 p.m. 713-520-0439.

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calendar

Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m. to midnight. Club Houston. 713-830-3000.
 Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous. Support Group. 7 p.m. 713-524-0439.
 Bering Support Network. Lunch Bunch Gang 11 a.m. 713-526-1017.
 Gay Men's Process Group. 7 p.m. 3316 Mt. Vernon. 713-526-8390.
 Women's Network. Discussion group for social, educational development of gay and bisexual men. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.
 Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry Open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 281-633-2555.
 Rainbow Ranglers free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. 2 hour free dance workshops. No partner needed. Beginner. 2 Step, Waltz, Shuffle & Swing Drop in anytime. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.
 CPR Classes. 3 p.m. 713-607-7700.
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. • Lesbian Coming Group. 6 to 9 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

wednesday, june 20

Free HIV Testing. Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2015 Thomas Street 713-793-4026.
 STD Exams & treatment. HIV Testing. Free. AVES. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.
 Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Mary's, Venture-N & E's. 713-830-3000.
 BiNet Houston. 7:30 p.m. Women's Social. 713-467-4380
 Women's Network. Montrose Counseling Center Discussion group for social, educational development of gay and bisexual women. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.
 Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 936-441-1614.
 Subject: Caesar. Workshops. AFH. 3203 Wesleyan. 713-623-6796.
 Skate Rollerskating Club. 8 to 10 p.m. 8075 Cook Road. 281-933-5818.
 Bible Study. Noon & 6:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal. 713-526-6665.
 Spiritual Uplift service. 7 p.m. Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.
 Freelance Art Classes by Kermit Eisenhut for HIV+ individuals. 1 to 4 p.m. Lunch provided. 713-523-9530.
 Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.
 Lesbian Literature Discussion Group. 7 p.m. 713-523-3037.
 Houston Pride Band. Open rehearsal. 1307 Yale. 713-527-0931. www.houstonprideband.org.
 Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Various Support Groups 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition •

Houston Committee for People's Radio. 6:30 P.M. • 803 Hawthorne • 713-524-3818.
 "Understanding Headaches." A question & Answer session. National Headache Foundation. 713-660-9140.

thursday, june 21

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Open rehearsal. 7 p.m. 4807 San Felipe. 713-521-7464.
 Rainbow Ranglers free C&W dance lessons. 2 hours free Line Dance instruction. No partner required. Drop in anytime. Brazos River Bottom. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.
 Hep C Recovery. Support Group. 6:30 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.
 STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.
 Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m. to midnight. Toyz Disco. 713-830-3000.
 Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 281-633-2555.
 Lambda Skating Club skates. 8 p.m. Tradewinds. Skating Rink. www.lambdaroll.org. 713-410-7215.
 FrontRunners. Running Club. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.
 HIV Art Therapy Program. 1 to 4 p.m. Kermit Eisenhut. 713-523-9530.
 Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.
 Community Gospel. Service. 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition 6:30 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
 Bi-Net of Houston. Mixed Gender Social. 713-467-4380.

friday, June 22

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) Meeting. 713-942-7002.
 Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Rich's. 713-830-3000.
 STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.
 Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.
 Q-Patrol walks the streets. 9 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.
 Kolbe Project. Morning Prayer. 10 a.m. 713-861-1800.
 Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.
 Positive Art Workshop. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer. 713-526-1118.
 Lesbian and Gay Voices. KPFT 90.1 FM. 7 p.m. 713-526-5738.
 Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition. • PARADE EVE RECEPTION with Stonewall Veteran Roy McCarthy and a screening of the film "Stonewall." to 9 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. • 713-524-3818.

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

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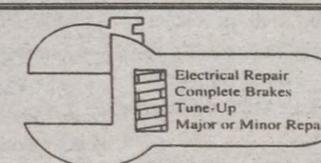


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Occasions

Birthdays

Asians & Friends members Emmanuel M. (6/18), Leo L. (6/19), Doug T. (6.20) and Phil T. (6.20) will be celebrating their birthdays this week.

Maranatha Fellowship MCC members Julie L. and Ernest T. count their blessings and birthday candles on June 19.

Classic Chassis Car Club members Ed McC. (6/21) and Bernard S. (6/22) will turn over the birthday odometer this week.

Beverage mixer extraordinaire Richard sips a birthday shot on June 16.

Debbie P. checks her modem speed on her June 17 birthday.

Houston Voice fabulous freelance writer and Caramel Cream candy lover Deb Murphy adds another birthday chapter in her book of life on June 17.

Blaffer Gallery's Davis Northcutt will blow out his birthday candles with the help of his child/dog Bean for his June 19 birthday.



This is Tux, an 18 month old domestic short-hair. He is great for tagging along to Black Tie Events. (713) 433-6421 ext.5555 pr@houstonhumane.org

1st Priority: The Houston Humane Society needs monetary donations to repair its livestock-area that was damaged by the hard rain and floodwaters. Send donations to: P.O. Box 450528, Houston, TX 77245.

2nd Priority: In addition, people may donate supplies (dog/cat/puppy/kitten food, brushes, shampoo) to the shelter at 14700 Almeda Rd.

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Friday 7 pm	Summer Sizzle Fashion Show @ Chances
9 pm	"Sheila" Live @ Chances
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YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

June 15 - 21



ARIES (MARCH 21—APRIL 20)

Neptune's smooth aspect to Saturn could give you all the incentive you need to work to make your number one artistic dream come true, baby. It may be time for you to sing "Come Live with Me" from "Valley of the Dolls" to a luscious, spouse-worthy Leo. If you're already settled down... tie the knot!



TAURUS (APRIL 21—MAY 20)

You are ready to make a significant career move, so please don't play Hamlet and hem and haw about whether you should or shouldn't. It wouldn't be surprising if you decided to flirt up a storm with another Taurus who used to really intimidate you. You have nothing to fear when it comes to your powers of attraction and charm.



GEMINI (MAY 21—JUNE 21)

It's time to enact a fantasy that's haunted you and deliciously tormented your dreams for years. The Sun shifts into your money and material things sector, and you've got to get with the program. Spend time and money on things that have permanence. And that goes for lovers, too. An Aquarius is good to rent—not to buy!



CANCER (JUNE 22—JULY 22)

Your solar new year begins on June 20, darling, so live it up. If you've been putting off taking action, now is your time to get moving. It's time to be selfish in the best sense of the word, sweetie. Let a Pisces inspire you to be true to yourself.



LEO (JULY 23—AUG. 22)

As gay pride month kicks into high gear, you may have to deal with peppy exes who feel compelled to rehash old business with you. Venus at the top of your chart could bring you the attention of people who like to mix art and commerce. It's a great time to take advantage. Let a sneaky Sag in on your plans.



VIRGO (AUG. 23—SEPT. 22)

This is a great time for you to push a nasty competitor out of the way and climb up a rung or two at your present place of work. Subtlety won't work now, sweetie. While the eclipse (on June 21) highlights your house of friends, turn to a Libra for insight.



LIBRA (SEPT. 23—OCT. 22)

Dreams can come true... they can happen to you... if you are willing to expand your consciousness, darling Libra. Stop thinking inside the box; open up Pandora's box, instead. Mercury and Jupiter are making you extra exotic, especially to a Cancer, but even to yourself!



SCORPIO (OCT. 23—NOV. 21)

You are way ahead of your time and need to put some of your brilliant concepts into motion. Mars and Pluto in your money sector could cause a brainstorm about how to earn enough to have a most delicious winter. Plan ahead, little Scorpio. A Capricorn likes your wallet as well as your body.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22—DEC. 21)

The solar eclipse on June 21 may inspire you to completely change the way you behave in intimate relationships. It's time to move on from a love that has died. Purge yourself of dreams that can't come true and focus on something potentially wonderful and life affirming with a Gemini.



CAPRICORN (DEC. 22—JAN. 19)

The eclipse on June 21 falls in your house of love and sets a dreamy (but intense) tone for you for the next six months. It's a romantic time, and you can afford to coast a week or two at work to explore your passions. Let your mind and body lead you to an Aquarius.



AQUARIUS (JAN. 20—FEB. 18)

You may not be able to accomplish all the goals you set for yourself during late June and that's okay! You need to chill out a bit. You may have to redo your environment as a first step before you can take steps two through 10: really changing your life. Consult a Sag.



PISCES (FEB. 19—MARCH 20)

You will have the ability to psychically tune in to your lover's—or potential lover's—deepest desires in late June. This is a glorious time for you pursue the creative dream that's eluded you over the past two to three years. A Scorpio will help inspire you.

Jill Dearman is the author of "Queer Astrology for Men" and "Queer Astrology for Women." For information on charts and consultations, call 212-841-0177 or e-mail QScopes@aol.com.

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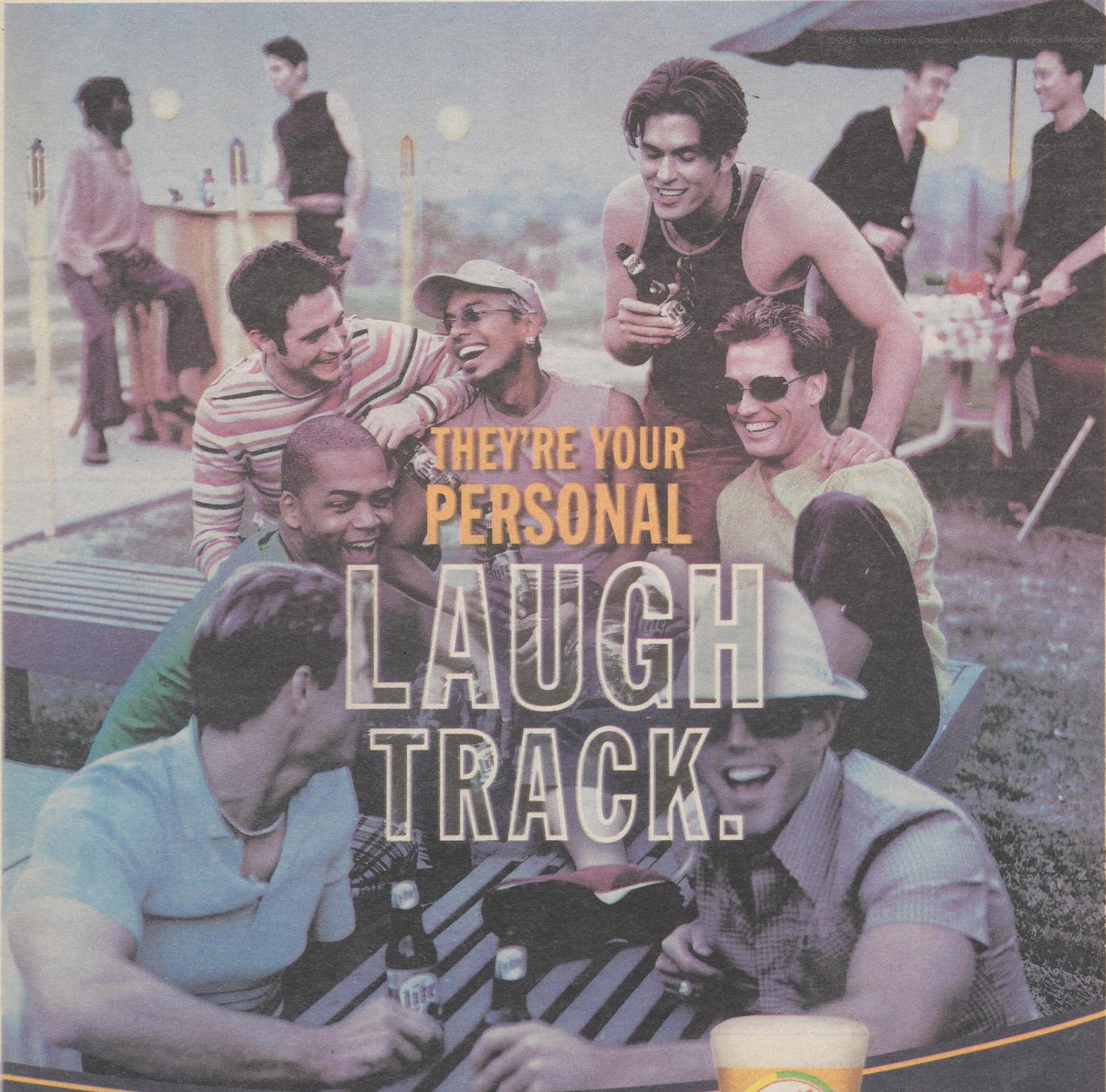
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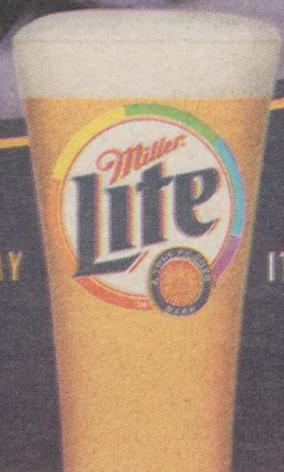
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