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Lesbian DJ Tracy Young
dishes on party drugs, dark
music and being a celebrity
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MAY 27, 2005

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Senate deal advances Pryor nod

HRC supports compromise that allows vote on anti-gay judge

By EARTHA MELZER

A Senate deal that averted a showdown over President Bush's blocked judicial nominees is drawing mixed reactions from gay groups who say it is likely to result in a lifetime appointment for a man who has been called the most anti-gay nominee in history: William H. Pryor Jr.

For months senators have been arguing over the so-called "nuclear option," a proposed move to change the rules of the Senate to keep the Democratic minority from blocking judicial nominees through filibuster. With a Republican president and a GOP-controlled Senate, blocking a vote on judicial nominees through filibuster was the only tactic left to Democrats opposed to the judges Bush nominated to the federal bench.

Democrats said that seven of the stalled nominees — Priscilla Owen, Pryor, Janice Rogers Brown, William G. Meyers, Henry Saad, Richard Griffen and David McKeague — represented unacceptable and extreme choices.

The seven judges were slated for appointment to federal appeals courts, just one step below the U.S. Supreme Court. The Senate has approved all but 10 of Bush's 45 judicial nominees to those courts.

Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, called Owen, Brown and Pryor "extreme ideologues" likely to issue damaging decisions on separation of church and state, abortion rights, and equal rights for gays.

Owen, a Texas Supreme Court Justice, had her nomination blocked by the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2002. She has been criticized by civil rights groups for taking campaign money from Enron and Halliburton and then ruling in their favor. She has also spoken publicly against the separation of church and state.

The Senate voted 56-43 to confirm Owen on Wednesday.



A group of 14 Republican and Democratic senators reached an agreement that will allow votes on three previously blocked federal court nominees, including William Pryor, who is opposed by gay rights groups. (Photo by Dave Martin/AP)

Please see CONFIRMATION on Page 7



Attorney Jerry Simoneaux said if voters approve a ban on same-sex marriage and civil unions in November, he plans to file an injunction against it in federal court. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

Texas marriage war could be destined for the federal courts

Attorney Jerry Simoneaux said he'll file an injunction if voters approve a ban on gay marriage

By BINNIE FISHER

Should voters in Texas approve a Nov. 5 ballot referendum that would ban same-sex marriage as well as civil unions in the state Constitution, attorney Jerry W. Simoneaux said he knows

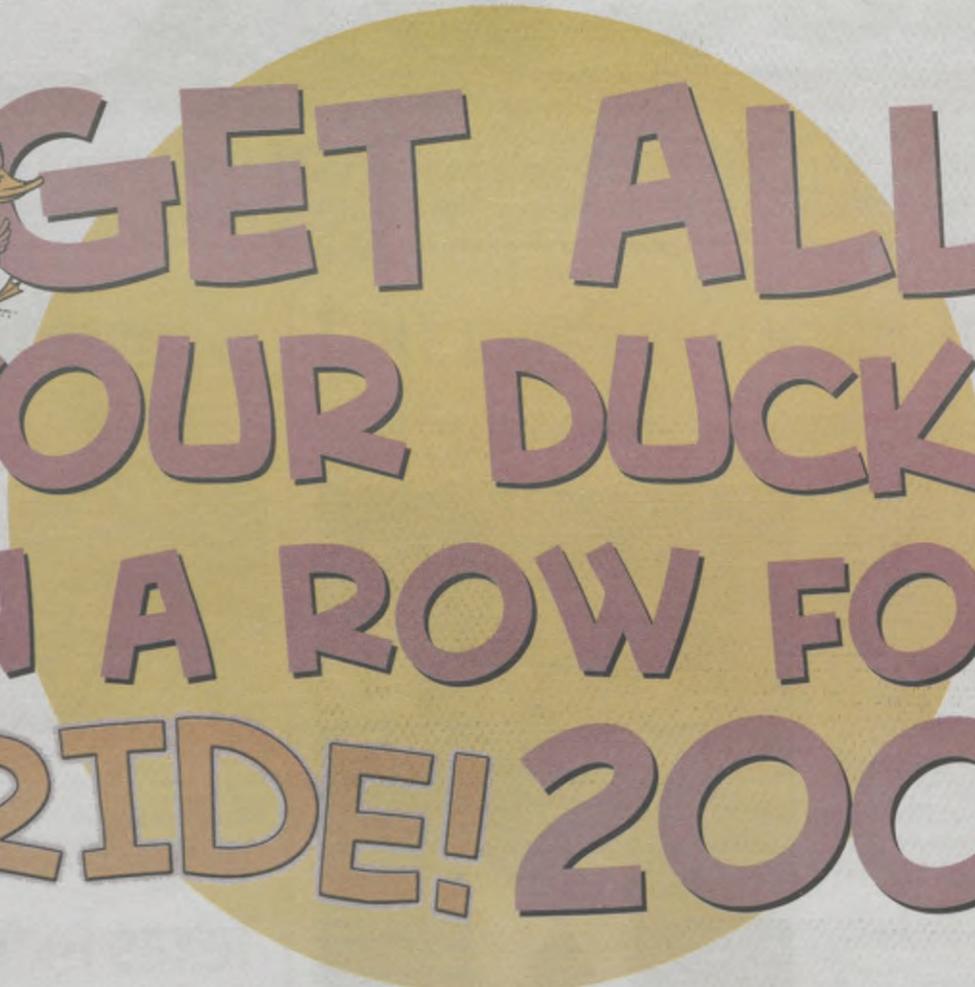
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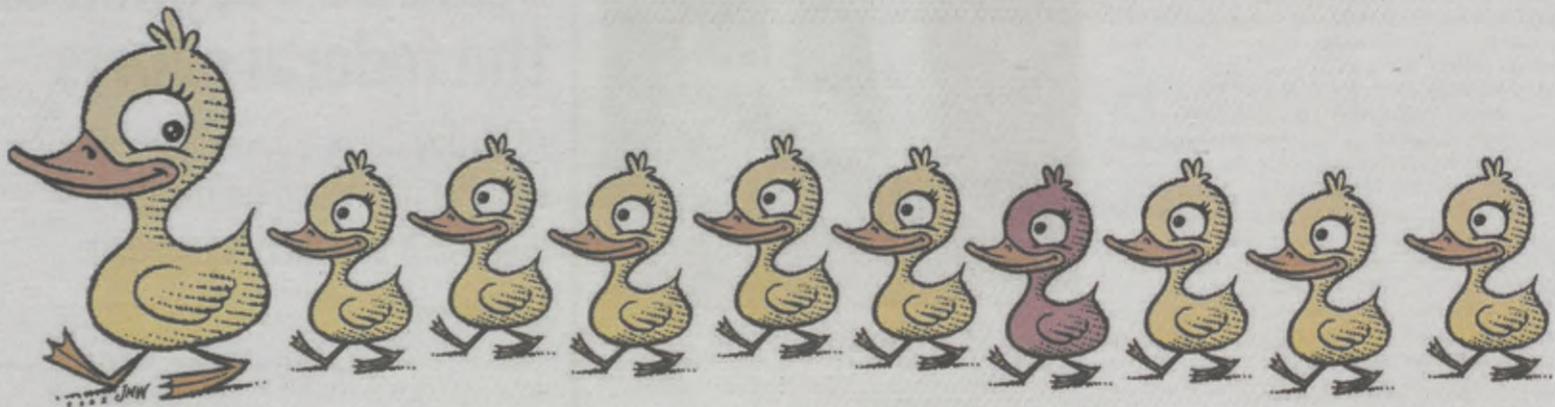
local life
In business and in life,
Todd Partridge and
Dan Luekens are partners
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local news briefs



Magazine co-chairs Rebecca Mahaffey and Yvonne Feece showed off their work at the Pride Magazine unveiling recently at Meteor. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

The Pride Magazine is available at 200 locations in Houston

Houston Pride officially unveiled the 2005 Pride Magazine last Saturday during an event at Meteor. The Magazine, which contains features on people and Pride events, also details the parade route and a map to gay clubs in Houston. Magazine co-chair Yvonne Feece said the 146-page magazine is available at 200 locations in Houston, most of them in Montrose.



Lambda Legal representative Sheba Gipson will speak at a meeting of the Houston GLBT Political Caucus. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

Lambda Legal representative addresses GLBT Political Caucus

Sheba Gipson, outreach associate for Lambda Legal, will speak at 7 p.m. Wednesday during a meeting of the Houston GLBT Political Caucus (PAC) at the Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207. Gipson's talk will center on the areas of youth and schools, workplace equality, family protections and a new Lambda Legal initiative for Latinos. The caucus meets the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. and conducts a Community Work Day on the second Saturday of each month.

Montrose Counseling Center urges passage of psychiatric association statement

The Montrose Counseling Center is urging the American Psychiatric Association's board of trustees to adopt a statement drafted by the organization's advisory group on the subject of recognizing marriage equality for same-sex couples. The statement reads: "Heterosexual relationships have a legal framework for their existence through civil marriage. Same-sex couples therefore experience several kinds of sanctioned discrimination that can adversely affect the stability of their

relationships and mental health." The counseling center's executive director, Ann J. Robison, said she urges the American Psychiatric Association to formally adopt the statement when it meets in July. "Montrose Counseling Center's therapists help clients on a daily basis deal with the mental health impact of being continually marginalized, and all of the political attention focused on banning so-called 'gay marriages' creates an atmosphere where sexual minorities get the message that they are 'less-than' and underserving of equal rights," she said.

Countdown to Pride begins with a slate of events

As June rolls around, events leading up to Pride Houston begin to take place, starting with Girlz Pride 2005 and the Return of Atwood & Comeaux on June 3. Girlz Price 2005 is a party for women who love women sponsored by Groove Girlz from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. at 1415 California. Cost is \$10, and proceeds benefit Pride Houston. More information is available at www.groovegirlz.com. A concert by Jerry Attwood and Ricky Comeaux at 9 p.m. June 3 at Ovations, 2536 Times Blvd. benefits Bering Omega Community Services. Cost is \$50, and more information is available at www.beringomega.org. On June 4 from 8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Lesbian Health Initiative Rainbow Health Fair offers free mammograms, blood screening tests and osteoporosis screening. Through collaboration with the Montrose Clinic, pelvic exams, pap smears and screenings for HIV and sexually transmitted diseases are also offered. The fair takes place at the clinic, 215 Westheimer. More information is available at www.lhouston.org. The Houston Pride Parade 2005 gets underway at 8:45 p.m. June 25 on Westheimer between Woodhead and Whitney. More information on all Pride events can be found at www.pridehouston.org.

From staff and wire reports

local news

Unauthorized press release causes concern for agencies

Officials of two AIDS service agencies fear an unauthorized press release could cause confusion among donors

By BINNIE FISHER

A press release dated May 20, 2005, and widely circulated among Houston gay media and AIDS funding sources announced the 2006 merger of the Montrose Clinic and the Assistance Fund.

There's just one little problem, there is no merger between the two agencies.

"That press release was unauthorized, and we don't know where it came from," said Katy Caldwell, executive director of the Montrose Clinic. "This didn't come from either of our agencies."

As soon as officials at the clinic and the Assistance Fund learned about the press release, a release with the logos of both agencies was issued dispelling the claims.

"This type of false information is damaging because it creates confusion with donors and clients," the official release reads.

While the two entities have signed no formal merger agreements, Caldwell



Ken Malone, executive director of the Assistance Fund, said he wonders about the motivation of whoever sent out an erroneous press release about a merger between his agency and the Montrose Clinic. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

With a Walgreen's Pharmacy onsite at the clinic, clients will experience the convenience of being able to purchase medications at the time of their clinic appointments, rather than having to make a stop on the way home.

The phantom release – on plain paper with no logos and no contact information – contains a number of inaccuracies.

Malone pointed out that the release indicated the two agencies have "signed a memorandum of merger under which the two AIDS service organizations will merge into one agency in 2006."

Malone, who has headed the Assistance Fund for a number of years, said the term "memorandum of merger" is foreign to him. In addition to grammatical errors, he said, the release also contains other false information.

The release indicates that while under the merger agreement, Caldwell would remain as executive director, Malone would leave the agency to become a lobbyist for AIDS causes.

"Ken is not leaving," Caldwell said. "He is not moving to Washington, D.C."

Malone said the origin of the news release is a mystery, but the boards of both agencies will be attempting to determine who may have written it. He said whoever wrote the release was somewhat knowledgeable about both the clinic and the Assistance Fund.

The release was sent out not only to the media but also to funding sources for the clinic and the Assistance Fund, leaving Malone to wonder about motivation.

Both agencies derive their funding from public and private sources, including those provided under the Ryan White Title I Care Act.

The clinic offers HIV testing and healthcare services for people with HIV/AIDS.

The Assistance Fund helps people with AIDS keep their health insurance by helping to pay premiums and assists with medication purchases.



Katy Caldwell, executive director of the Montrose Clinic, said a merger like the one detailed in the unauthorized release is not out of the question in a day when all agencies are seeking better ways to serve their clients. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

said, the idea is not out of the question.

"We look at all kinds of ways to better serve our clients," she said. "It's not something we've ruled out, but it's not something we can formally discuss."

As the official release points out, a recently signed agreement between the Montrose Clinic and Walgreen's is an example of a new innovation that will benefit not only Montrose Clinic patients, but also clients of the Assistance Fund.

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local news

Two votes would have made the difference in the Senate

VOTE, continued from Page 1

where he will be on the morning of Wednesday, Nov. 6.

"On Wednesday morning, the law firm of Nechman, Simoneaux and Frye will be down at the federal courthouse with an injunction," he said.

It's not a threat, Simoneaux said. It's a promise.

House Joint Resolution 6, authored by Texas Rep. Warren Chisum (R-Pampa) cleared the Texas House of Representatives in April by a 101-29 vote. It needed 100 votes to pass.

The Senate approved the measure on May 21 by a vote of 21-8. The measure needed 20 votes to clear the Senate.

Simoneaux said while he has many concerns regarding the proposed amendment, he would have to start with the way it is written.

The resolution states: "Marriage in this state shall consist only of the union of one man and one woman."

An amendment, added during House debate by Chisum stipulates, "This state or a political subdivision of this state may not create or recognize any legal status identical or similar to marriage."

"It's so poorly written," Simoneaux said. "The wording, 'similar to marriage' is undeniably vague. This could apply to all kinds of relationships."

In addition to possibly affecting common law relationships, Simoneaux said, the bill paves the way for someone who was legally married in another state to come to Texas, file for divorce and keep all the property that was acquired by both partners.

"This is a legislative dog, and if you let it out of its cage, it's going to bite us in the ass," Simoneaux said. "It's going to be up to us lawyers to put that dog down."

He noted that in states where voters approved similar amendments, those measures are being struck down by the courts.

While Simoneaux is busy recruiting gay civil rights organizations to join with him if necessary on Nov. 6, others are hoping enough voters can be won over to vote the bill down.

Activist Ray Hill said he views the upcoming election with a degree of optimism.

Houston could be key

"The biggest election in the state this November is within the city of Houston," Hill said. "The legislature has put us in the very best position."

Because Mayor Bill White and Houston City Controller are both up for re-election in November, Hill said, he predicts the largest voter turnout in the state will be in Houston. He believes that's good.

In other cities throughout the state, he said, the voter turnout is likely to be significantly less.

The burden, he said, is clearly on the shoulders of gays and lesbians to turn the tide on the issue.

"We're not closeted and hidden like we



Sen. Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) was expected to vote against House Joint Resolution 6, but he said his Catholic faith led him to vote for the measure.

were early in my political career," he said. "Our job, our responsibility is to talk to our friends, our neighbors, our families, our co-workers and make sure they go to the polls and vote against this. Everybody should be walking around with voter registration cards in their pocket."

Sen. Rodney Ellis (D-Houston) attempted to stall the measure when it arrived at the Senate, but his efforts were not successful. He said he opposed the resolution because, "Texas does not need to enshrine discrimination in the constitution."

He said the action in the House and Senate takes him back to 1999 a proposed Hate Crimes Act was being debated.

"In 1999, poll after poll showed that Texans overwhelmingly wanted the James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Act to become law, yet it did not," Ellis said. "In fact, many of the people crying 'public support' today worked their fingers to the bone against the Byrd Act."

Ellis voted against HJR 6 in the Senate along with Sens. Gonzalo Barrientos, Juan Hinojosa, Eliot Shapleigh, Letitia Van de Putte, Royce West, John Whitmire and Judith Zaffirini. Sens. Mario Gallegos and John Corona were absent.

Two senators who were expected to also vote against the resolution, Eddie Lucio, Jr. of Brownsville and Frank Madla of San Antonio, both Democrats, instead voted in favor of the measure.

Activists with the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (LGRL) said those two votes would have killed the resolution.

Lucio told the Brownsville Herald his Catholic faith led him to vote with the majority Madla has said 63 percent of his constituents indicated they were in favor of the resolution, and that guided his vote.

national news briefs

Anti-gay vandalism leads to multiple school suspensions



Howell High School senior **Katie Prout** reads a statement to fellow students during a sit-down protest May 10 outside the school, in Howell, Mich., where students were suspended for spray-painting an anti-gay message on a rock on campus. (Alan Ward/AP)

HOWELL, Mich. (AP) — Two ninth-grade students who painted an anti-gay message on a rock in their school's courtyard have been suspended for at least 10 days and might face criminal prosecution, the school district said last week. Meanwhile, three seniors who in response painted the word "love" over the message and elsewhere on school grounds were suspended for the rest of the school year. Initially, they had been suspended for 10 days. The three seniors won't be allowed to take part in their graduation ceremony or any other senior activities. On May 8, the three seniors and a sophomore used spray paint to cover the words "God hates fags" scrawled on a rock near the high school entrance. The sophomore also was suspended for 10 days. Although the rock is frequently painted by students, the students also spray-painted the word "love" more than 25 times around the flagpole and more than 25 times on sidewalks on the north side of the building. Howell Public Schools said it had identified the two students who painted the first, anti-gay message but did not identify them. The two students face punishment for violating the school's hate literature and vandalism policies.

Judge won't immediately force publication of gay students' story

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (AP) — A Kern County judge declined to immediately overrule a high school principal's decision to censor student newspaper articles on homosexuality, saying the issue deserved a full review. "This is an important issue that would require an opportunity to have a full and complete hearing," Kern County Superior Court Judge Arthur E. Wallace said Wednesday after denying the plaintiffs' request for an emergency order that would have allowed the articles to be published in the Kernal's May 27 year-end issue. The high school journalists sued the Kern High School District on May 19, after Principal John Gibson decided they couldn't run a series of five articles discussing subjects such as gay student's relationship with their parents, whether homosexuality is biologically determined, and how it felt to come out. School officials said they could not be responsible for violence or harassment by allowing the articles to be published. "If one of these people is heckled or harassed, that's an unlawful act," said John Szewczyk, a school district attorney. "Statements have been made that these students are out, but we have no proof of that."

North Carolina county adds gays to nondiscrimination policy

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Commissioners in North Carolina's most populous county voted to add "sexual orientation" to its nondiscrimination policy despite vehement objections from Republicans. The new policy means Mecklenburg County cannot discriminate in hiring and personnel decisions on the basis of sexual orientation. The change was approved 6-3 last week. Other North Carolina counties and cities have passed similar anti-discrimination policies, and two counties — Durham and Orange — offer domestic partner benefits.

Gay political candidates celebrate wins in 2005

WASHINGTON — Early election victories have made 2005 a strong year so far for out gay political candidates, according to the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, a political action committee based in Washington, D.C. Victory Fund officials said three gay candidates took office last week, while two more advanced to general elections. The group backed Barbara Baier, who became the first openly gay official in Nebraska when she won election to the Lincoln, Neb., school board. In addition, the group supported Elena Guajardo, winner in the primary for an open seat on the San Antonio City Council, and Mary Jo Hudson, who kept her seat on the Columbus, Ohio, City Council. "Gays and lesbians deserve equal access to the American dream, and we will never get from here to there without having a voice and a vote in the halls of government," Chuck Wolfe, Victory Fund's president and CEO, said in a news release.

Log Cabin Republicans air TV ad during N.C. convention

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (AP) — The Log Cabin Republicans ran a television commercial during the state GOP convention urging the state party to be more inclusive. Log Cabin, which was barred by GOP Chair Ferrell Blount from setting up a table at last year's convention, paid to broadcast the ad through last weekend on Asheville's cable television system. "Our commercial has a simple message: The GOP can be an inclusive majority party uniting all North Carolinians or it can be an intolerant party hijacked by the radical right's divisive social agenda," said Chris Barron, the group's political director, at a news conference in Asheville. Barron's group decided against asking for a table at this year's convention. Instead, they spent from about \$5,000 to air the 30-second ad.

From staff and wire reports

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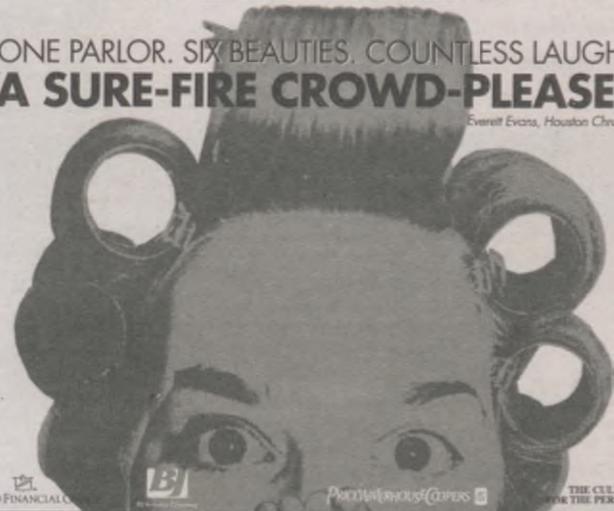
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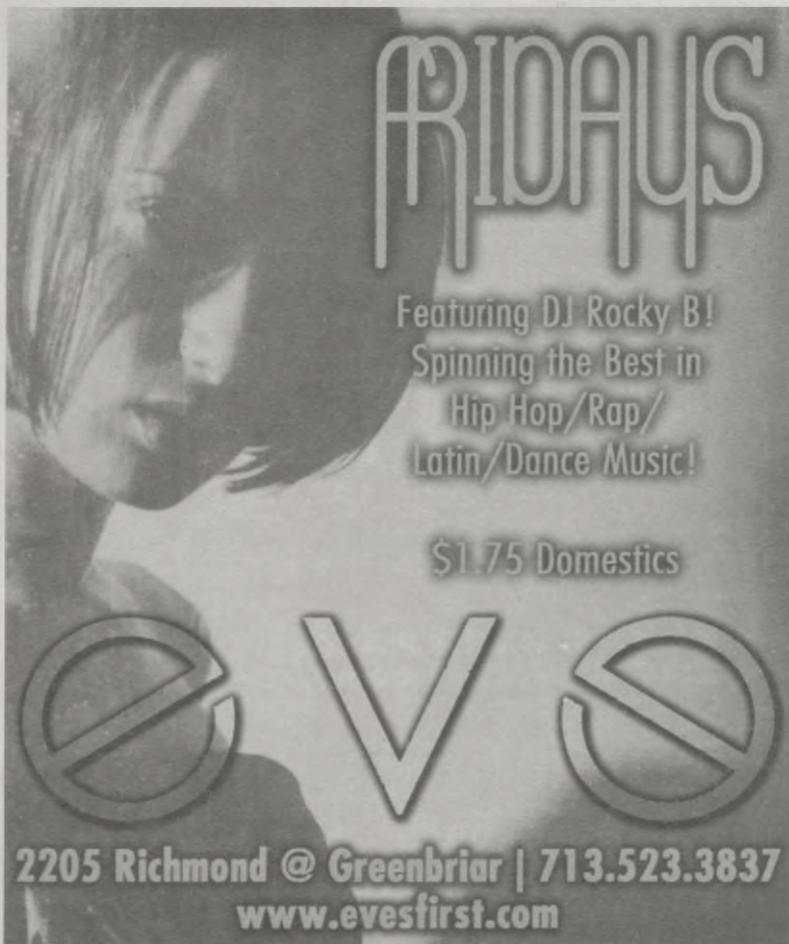
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national news

Some conservatives upset over Pryor's record

CONFIRMATION, continued from Page 1

California Supreme Court Justice Brown was first nominated in 2003. She has argued against affirmative action and against aggressive enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. She issued a minority opinion in 2003 saying a gay person should not be allowed to adopt the biological child of his or her partner, saying providing such an adoption right "trivializes family bonds."

But it is former Alabama Attorney General Pryor, 43, who most troubles gay rights advocates. He has argued against provisions of the Voting Rights Act and against federal anti-discrimination laws and has a record opposing gay and lesbian civil rights. Bush named Pryor to the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in a recess appointment that expires at the end of this year.

Shortly after the appointment, Pryor cast the deciding vote to uphold a Florida law banning gays from adopting children.

Longtime lesbian activist Felicia Fountiane of Hunstville, Ala., said that the amicus brief that Pryor wrote in the Lawrence vs. Texas case that overturned state sodomy laws exposes Pryor's attitudes toward the rights of lesbians and gays.

At that time, Pryor was attorney general in Alabama and in his brief to the court he argued that awarding constitutional protection to consensual sex between gay people would inevitably lead to similar protection for incest, necrophilia, pedophilia, prostitution and adultery.

The day after the announcement of the Senate deal, some gays in Pryor's home state of Alabama said that they were disheartened.

Howard Bayless, board member of Equality Alabama, an all-volunteer statewide gay advocacy group, said that he expected a Pryor appointment would lead to a rollback of progress in gay rights. Bayless said that he expects Pryor to interfere with local laws that offer employment protections for gay men and lesbians.

"I'm obviously very disappointed that Pryor is going to be able to stay on the bench," Fountiane said. "He has virtually no career except for what the Republican Party has handed him in Alabama. He is young, has no experience and is going to be there for a long time."

Lara Schwartz, senior counsel for the HRC, echoed Fountiane's sentiments.

"We have already seen the damage that his presence on the courts can do," Schwartz said. "During the year of this recess appointment, he already voted not to rehear a decision on Florida's ban on gay adoption."

The appointment of conservative judges hostile to gay rights can have a major impact on cases heard by federal appeals courts. According to Schwartz, most cases reach their final decision at that level, with only 2 percent of the cases going on for decision by the Supreme Court.

Road to a deal

In the last week, speculation grew over whether Republicans could muster the majority vote necessary to rewrite the Senate rules, as social conservatives weighed in on the issue insisting that Bush's nominees "be granted an up or down vote."

In an unprecedented effort, conservatives focused on mobilizing churchgoers to their cause. In April, the Family Research Council sponsored "Justice Sunday" featuring Sen. Bill Frist (R-Tenn.).

In a church service that was simulcast on the Web, radio, satellite and on cable, the Democrats' effort to block 10 of Bush's nominees was presented as a "filibuster against people of faith" and churchgoers were pressured to contact their representatives and demand a vote on Bush's nominees.

Special emphasis was given to the plight of Brown and Owen. FRC sponsored demonstrations of women and of pastors of color to rally support for the two nominees.

Frist set a deadline and promised to call for a vote on the nuclear option. Democrats debated responding to the rules change by obstructing Senate business altogether.

On May 23, seven Republican Senators — Mike DeWine (R-Ohio), Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine), Lincoln Chafee (R-R.I.), John McCain (R-Ariz.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), John W. Warner (R-Va.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) — and seven Democratic Senators — Ben Nelson (D-Neb.), Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.), Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.), Mark Pryor (D-Ark.), Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), Ken Salazar (D-Colo.) and Mary Landrieu (D-La.) announced that they had reached a two-part compromise.



Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham, who was one of the 14 senators that brokered a deal to avoid the 'nuclear option' over judicial filibusters, said in a news conference that not all of the nominees would be confirmed by the Senate. (Photo by Charlie Neibergall/AP)

'Nuclear option' avoided

The bipartisan group of senators would allow three of the stalled nominees to come to a vote: Rogers Brown, nominated to the D.C. Circuit Court; Owen, nominated to the 5th Circuit Court based in New Orleans; and Pryor, nominated to 11th Circuit Court in Atlanta, where he is already serving temporarily because of a recess appointment by Bush.

The second part of the compromise announcement declared that nominees would only be filibustered under "extreme circumstances" and that the senators would oppose changes to the Senate rules.

The Human Rights Campaign praised the Senate deal for "preserving the ability to block extremist nominees," while expressing disappointment "that Judge William Pryor, who has a record of attacking equal rights for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, is one of the nominees who will proceed."

Other gay groups had stronger language for the compromise.

Elizabeth Hampton Brown, a Parents & Friends of Lesbian & Gays staffer and civil rights scholar said, "The deal ensures that our courts will be packed with extremist lifetime judicial appointees, who value the politically powerful over ordinary American families."

"We feel a deep sense of foreboding with this compromise. ... The nuclear option is still retained and Dr. Frist and his extremist allies have already threatened to use it," Foreman said. "This time-honored tradition of the filibuster has now been conditioned that it can only be used in 'extraordinary' circumstances and those circumstance are essentially going to be decided by 14 senators."

Nan Aron, president of the Alliance for Justice, a progressive lobby group, did not disguise her feelings about the compromise.

"Is there anybody on our side who is happy?" Aron said in a New York Times interview. "We are very disappointed with the decision to move these extremist nominees one step closer to confirmation."

She told the Times that, "it remains to be seen" if Democrats will pay a price for agreeing to the compromise, which was praised by the party's Senate leadership. "There are a number of angry people who care about the future of the judiciary," Aron told the paper.

Pryor not conservative enough?

In the news conference announcing the Senate deal, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-N.C.) said that though some judges are going to receive a vote who otherwise wouldn't have, "Some of them are going to make it on our up and down vote and some of them won't."

Some conservative political commentators have speculated that Pryor may not make it through the confirmation process. They note that as Alabama attorney general, Pryor did not challenge the Roe vs. Wade abortion decision and backed the removal of Roy Moore, then the chief justice of the state's supreme court, for defying a federal court order to remove a Ten Commandments memorial from the courthouse. Pryor also voted against intervening in the Terri Schiavo case.

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Partners in life and in their life's work

Whether its keeping house, keeping an inn or delving into real estate, Todd Partridge and Dan Lueken are partners in life

By DAWN RORIE

Quietly tucked away in the heart of Montrose, the building that houses Partridge Properties could easily be mistaken for one of the eclectic, older homes in the neighborhood that surrounds it.

For Todd Partridge and Dan Lueken, owners of Partridge Properties and the Lovett Inn, a well-known Montrose bed and breakfast, a friendly, familial atmosphere is the most important aspect of both businesses.

The two men, who have been business partners for four years and life partners for nearly ten, met and fell in love when Partridge was selling steel and Lueken was director of information technology for an energy company.

After Partridge left the steel industry and became involved in real estate, the two began discussing the possibility of starting their own real estate firm.

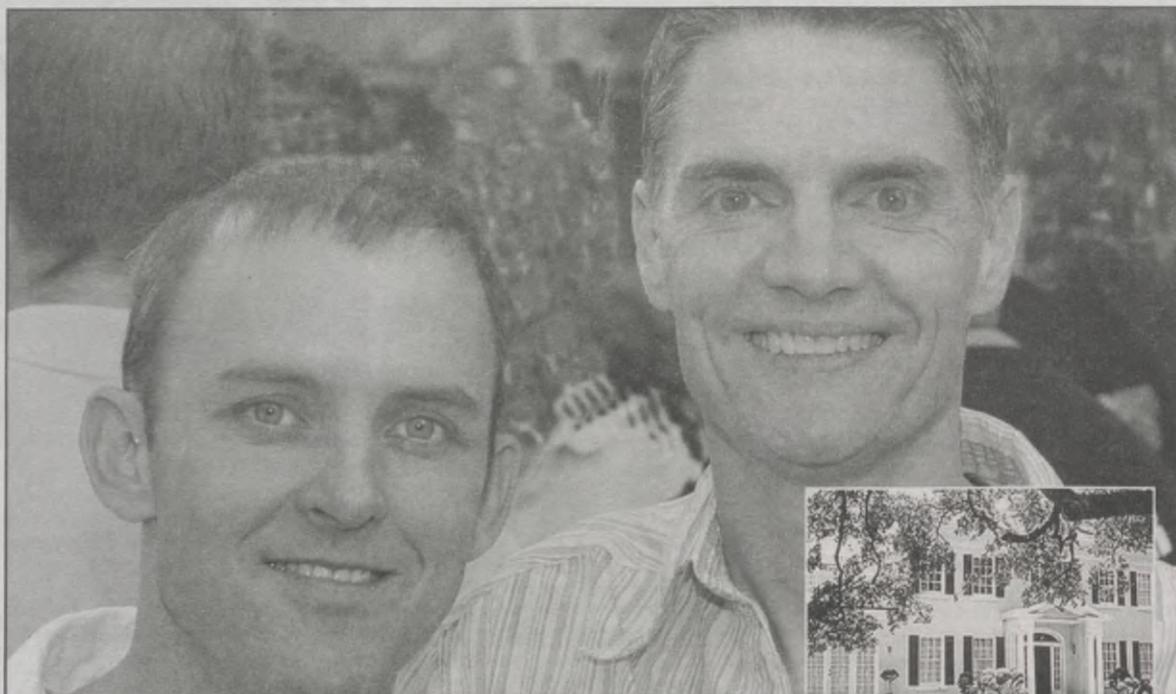
Although Lueken had never worked in real estate, he had plenty of "unofficial" experience in the business, through helping Partridge out on weekends.

"In addition to listening to all of the stories about my experiences with various customers, he helped me put out signs and distribute flyers," Partridge remembers.

While Partridge focused on setting up the new company, Lueken continued full-time at his IT job. Once the company was established, Lueken left the job he had held for nineteen years and took over as head of operations at Partridge Properties.

Partridge describes Lueken as being infinitely supportive. "I am so incredibly lucky to have him," Partridge gushes.

The key element that sets Partridge Properties apart from other real estate firms is the company's motto: "Knowledge. Integrity. Communication." Partridge says that at his firm, focus on the client is the number one priority.



Dan Lueken and Todd Partridge are partners in life, in the real estate business and in the Lovett Inn Bed and Breakfast. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)



"We don't want to grow out of the boutique category," he explains. "We don't want to be the biggest—we just want to do the best that we can do."

That strategy may be a winning one. Last year, Partridge Properties was voted number one in Houston Real Estate by *Outsmart* magazine.

In order to ensure Partridge customers a smooth and seamless buying experience, Partridge teamed up with underwriter Alex Flenner to found Epoch Mortgage Company, which will be fully operational by the beginning of June.

Partridge says that being able to provide a kind of all-in-one service "just makes sense for our customers. It makes it a smooth process all the way around."

A warm and friendly work environment is another key to success for Partridge and Lueken. "Life is too short if you're not enjoying who you're working with and working for," says Partridge.

While Partridge spends the majority of his time at the real estate office, Lueken spends much of his time working at the Lovett Inn, which the two purchased and refurbished in January of 2004.

The charming bed and breakfast, first established in 1989, has been repeatedly honored as a "Favorite B&B or Lodging Inside the Loop."

The house, first built in 1923 by a former mayor of Houston, sits on landscaped grounds that include a gazebo, a pool and an outdoor Jacuzzi. The pictur-

esque house and grounds have been chosen as the site for the filming of quite a few television projects, including an infomercial starring boxing great George Foreman, as well as a PBS documentary.

The warm, familial energy is central at the Lovett Inn. A friendly, tail-wagging black pooch, Cody, greets guests upon their arrival.

Cody, like his owners, splits his time between working at the real estate office and the bed and breakfast.

During their stay, guests can lounge in the sunroom that overlooks the pool, or grab a book from the library and read in front of the fireplace. Every morning, guests are treated to a continental breakfast that includes fresh fruit, yogurt, cereal, bread, pastries, tea and coffee.

A diverse clientele

Guests at the Lovett Inn are diverse. Gay and straight, the clientele range from suburbanites who have come into Houston to get away for the weekend to people from all over the world who are in town for a more extended stay.

Some are celebrating wedding anniversaries and others are in town visiting family members and need a comfortable place to stay.

In addition to overnight guests, Lovett Inn also hosts various events. From weddings to business retreats, the inn accommodates all sorts of gatherings and special occasions. Fifteen weddings have

taken place at the inn so far this year.

During the week, Lueken says, the Lovett Inn is a popular place for off-site business meetings. The inn, which can host up to fifty for meetings, provides wireless internet access and an LCD projector for presentations. Convenient to the downtown and Galleria areas, the Lovett Inn provides space that is "more relaxing than your typical business space," says Lueken.

"People can meet and get away from the distractions of the phone and the office," he says. "They can conduct their meetings during the day, and set up the poker table or use the pool and the hot tub at night."

When the couple isn't busy working at the real estate office or renovating and redecorating the bed and breakfast, they spend their time taking ski trips or cruising around on their Harley Davidson.

Both are active members of the Human Rights Campaign. In April, Partridge went to Austin to testify before the House State Affairs Committee against House Joint Resolution 6, the anti-gay marriage amendment that has since cleared both the House and Senate.

When asked what is in store for the future, the couple agrees that customer satisfaction will continue to be the focal point of both businesses, no matter what the future holds.

Partridge believes he and Lueken have succeeded thus far in that endeavor, both as innkeepers and as real estate executives.

MORE INFO

The Lovett Inn
501 Lovett Blvd.
713-522-5224

out in houston

(Photos by Dalton DeHart)



Houston City Controller **Annise Parker** (right) recently helped City Council Member **Ada Edwards** kick off her re-election campaign at an evening fundraiser.



Diana Foundation President **Frank Staggs** (left) presented an award to Bering Omega Dental Clinic founder **Ed Cordray** (center) as master of ceremonies, Channel 2 Chief Meteorologist **Frank Billingsley** (right), looks on.



The crowd was shoulder to bare shoulder at Rich's grand reopening.



The Wolves were among the hosts recently at a Montrose Softball League party at Guava Lamp.



C.C. Ryder from Galveston belted out a tune recently at the Diana Foundation fundraiser.



Dance music diva **Kristine W** wowed the crowd at Rich's grand reopening party Saturday night.

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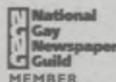
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Forum

HOUSTON VOICE

MAY 27, 2005

PAGE 10

editorial

Culture Wars get personal

Amsterdam's welcome mat to gays won't be restored by using the law to silence Muslim fundamentalists. Gay Americans are all too used to such arm-twisting tactics.

By CHRIS CRAIN

IN THE WEEK FOLLOWING the violent attack in Amsterdam on my boyfriend and me by seven men angry that we were holding hands, the Dutch media have focused a tremendous amount of attention on the assault.

In a 20-minute story on Holland's answer to "60 Minutes," and in radio and newspaper reports in newspapers, and on countless news and blog sites, the gay-friendly Dutch have struggled to place the attack in a broader context.

Was it an isolated incident or the latest in a series that suggests a changing climate in the Netherlands that no longer fits the country's legendary reputation as open and tolerant toward all?

Particularly incendiary has been my description of our attackers as having "Moroccan-like features" and accents. I was generally aware of tension over immigration policies in Holland, but of the more than 700 messages I've received, roughly half have focused almost exclusively on the assumed cultural and religious heritage of our attackers and the dangers many native Dutch feel from their version of the "Culture Wars" we have fought in the U.S. for years.

The other half of the messages dealt instead with the anti-gay motivation of our attackers and urged my boyfriend and me to return to Amsterdam, and to hold hands in the street without fear. We have been touched more than we can say by this show of support, from abroad and at home.

All of the messages were sympathetic and some dealt with the cultural conflict in a thoughtful, careful manner. But many Dutch residents were particularly blunt in their disgust for the changes they see in their country.

"This kind of behavior is exactly why the Dutch would like to see the Moroccans go back home rather sooner than later," wrote one woman in a typical message. "Because they are miles apart from Dutch culture."

"You seem to think that those Moroccans only hate gay people?" wrote a resident of Leiden, near Amsterdam. "Forget it! They hate

everyone who isn't Moroccan. For years our government is telling us to be tolerant, to try to understand 'our new Dutch.' This is where it leads."

Andrew Sullivan kindly helped spread initial word about the attack on his eponymous blog, and like many others couched the Dutch Culture Wars in explicit religious terms.

"Hatred of open and proud homosexuals is intrinsic to Islamist fundamentalism, as it is to Christian fundamentalism," he wrote. "The struggle against both is the same one — at home and abroad."

Scott Long, director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Program at the Human Rights Watch, also blamed the attack in part on "global fundamentalism" — mainly U.S. televangelist Pat Robertson and the new Catholic pope. He went on to claim our assault was the natural response of a Muslim minority routinely discriminated against by native Dutch.

"There's still an extraordinary degree of racism in Dutch society," Long said in an interview with PlanetOut. "Gays often become the victims of this when immigrants retaliate for the inequities that they have to suffer."

MY OWN VIEW IS THAT MANY OF OUR well-intentioned supporters are approaching the underlying cause of hate violence in fundamentally misguided ways. Long, in particular, only fans the flames of hate by blaming our attack on Dutch society, which has enacted the most progressive gay laws in the world, for producing an anti-gay attack.

There was no racist component to our attack, as he implies. Our attackers would have reacted at least as viciously to two men of their own ethnicity who walked the street as lovers.

Long's brand of "blame the society" political correctness is a distraction from the very real cultural clashes happening in Holland and elsewhere. In his role at Human Rights Watch, Long has no business being an apologist for hate, and for the bias-motivated violence it produces.

It's also too easy to point the finger at America's favorite target — fundamentalist Islam. We were walking back to our hotel room

in the wee hours on Saturday morning through a street full of holiday revelers. Our attackers were not on the corner for morning prayers.

I do not mean to discount the influence of religion on culture. I grew up in the American South, where fundamentalist Christianity provided aid and comfort for the racist oppression of blacks and continues to rally opposition to equality for gays.

But the contribution of religion here is more indirect, and I'm not sure much can be accomplished with non-Muslims blaming a faith about which we are mostly ignorant for the culture we think it has produced. Life in a multicultural society means accepting that others will not share our religious beliefs and that no one group should lay claim to representing "normal society," demanding all others succumb.

THE DUTCH CULTURE WARS SHOULD not be fought by shutting down the borders or by using the law to silence those who do not share the country's tradition of tolerance. Those are the arm-twisting tactics of the cultural conservatives who control the majority party here in the U.S.

If we really believe our own rhetoric — about freedom of thought and tolerance of other cultures and values — then the best response is more openness and more speech, not less.

Too often those who advocate for openness and tolerance get dismissed as soft-headed or naive, and they can be. Some Dutch media have purposefully ignored the cultural conflict that played a role in our attack by refusing to report any details about our attackers. Tolerance should not mean burying your head in the sand.

Others, like Long from Human Rights Watch, will view hate violence through a P.C. lens, apologizing for the attackers if their minority status "trumps" that of those who were attacked.

A more vigorous approach to openness would make the case for a society where each group is entitled to its own values, but not to impose them on others — whether through laws or through fists in the streets. This approach would publicly call upon good people from across the ideological spectrum, including those religious and cultural leaders who condemn homosexuality, to also condemn a brutal street beating of those who do not share their views.

I've been asked many times in the last week whether gay tourists should steer clear of Amsterdam until the climate there improves. I certainly hope that isn't what happens.

I am proud that my boyfriend and I stood up for ourselves by walking the streets of Amsterdam hand in hand, and by not running away when we were confronted.

I would urge other gay tourists, as well as gays and our allies living in Holland, to stand up for themselves, too, and not run away figuratively either.

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



THE Q

What do you think is the significance of a gay and lesbian athletic event such as the Lone Star Classic?



The Lone Star Classic is a premier event to show off the wonderful city of Houston and our diverse cultural community. Teams from around the U.S. converge on our city to compete and share experiences with our southern hospitality flair. This is our 16th year to host this event, which is obviously a success.

GERALD ENNIS, 40
Spring
Medical Accounting



It's a great opportunity to meet players and friends from other cities and to promote the Montrose Softball League and the city of Houston. It's a great way to promote our community and have fun at the same time.

GARY GANO, 30-plus
Houston
Senior human resources specialist



It's a great opportunity for gays and lesbians to meet people from other cities in a healthy environment and have a lot of fun while competing in a friendly way. Anytime such groups can get together for these events is a chance to feel a part of something special, and that is always great for promoting a positive self-image.

BILL SANSON, 47
Houston
Customer service representative



The significance will be an opportunity to get together in a healthy environment and meet new friends.

TISH ORTEGON, 37
Houston
Special project coordinator



It provides an alternative way to meet people other than the club scene.

CICI RESENDEZ, 34
Houston
Education

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Interviews and photos by Dalton DeHart

letter to the editor

Rumors that still persist about Lobo Bookshop need to be dispelled

To the Editor:

I would have preferred to remain silent in the seclusion in which I now live. However, despite my withdrawal from the gay community, many stories have come to my attention as to the status of myself in particular.

Contrary to such rumors, Lobo Bookshop & Cafe was not closed as the result of any civil or criminal action against the business or myself. I was not arrested. I was not thrown into jail. I did not die. I did not leave the state with a suitcase full of ill-gotten gains.

While the situation with Lobo was no doubt due to mistakes on my part over the last ten years since my partner in business as in life, Bill White, died, the immediate cause of the action I was forced to take on 10 February 2004 was the direct result of one action.

At the repeated urging of the company's then attorney, Lobo filed for bankruptcy protection under Chapter 11 in October of 2003. The immediate effect of that was two-fold: All our creditors were notified by the U. S. Trustee's Office of this action, and a payout agreement agreed to in April 2003 with the Internal Revenue Service was voided.

However, within a few weeks, we were informed that the company's attorney was not licensed to practice law at the time of the filing and since legal representation is required for business Chapter 11 cases, our bankruptcy was thrown out and we immediately lost the umbrella of protection from creditors.

Several of our principle creditors, thanks to a tip from one gay creditor, were banding together to force the company into involuntary bankruptcy. It was our belief and that of our newly acquired legal counsel, an old and valued friend from our activist days, that it was better for the company to pursue voluntary bankruptcy. And that is what we did.

Granted, there were contributing factors, mainly the theft of company records by a former employee who also happened to be involved in some manner with the aforementioned original attorney.

It also came to my attention that this same employee had falsified company records, apparently at the behest of other parties, to inflate the company's debt at the time of the Chapter 11 filing. This had the effect of depreciating the value of the company by nearly 50 per cent.

I would hope that those who actually have known me were aware that everything went back into the company. For those who assumed that I escaped with a barrel of loot, perhaps the foreclosure of my beloved home on Avondale back in September and the loss of my automobile in December might attest to the falsity of that rumor.

As I approach the beginning of my eighth decade next year (that means I turn 70 then), I have much to regret but most of all is the loss of so many valued customers, many of whom were more than simply cus-

tomers. That was the driving force of the more than 30 years I spent fostering the life of Lobo. Like MacArthur's old soldiers, I too shall now fade away.

Larry Lingle
Houston

NELSON VERGEL - Speaker

Nelson Vergel, a former medical resident with Vanderbilt, is a 20-year HIV positive, seropositive man. He is a frequent speaker at HIV conferences and has been featured in the U.S. News & World Report, "Bad as Science: A Counterproductive Guide to the Medical Use of Antibiotics, Prostaglandins and Estrogen for HIV positive Men and Women." He is the author of the book "Doubt to Disprove: A Counterproductive Guide to the Medical Use of Antibiotics, Prostaglandins and Estrogen for HIV positive Men and Women." He is also a frequent speaker at HIV conferences and has been featured in the U.S. News & World Report, "Bad as Science: A Counterproductive Guide to the Medical Use of Antibiotics, Prostaglandins and Estrogen for HIV positive Men and Women." He is also a frequent speaker at HIV conferences and has been featured in the U.S. News & World Report, "Bad as Science: A Counterproductive Guide to the Medical Use of Antibiotics, Prostaglandins and Estrogen for HIV positive Men and Women."

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In Ellen's hands

Ellen had her hands all over two ladies named Emmy last weekend, and gossips had nothing to dish about.

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MAY 27, 2005

tracy talks

LESBIAN DJ SUPERSTAR TRACY YOUNG DISHES ON PARTY DRUGS, DARK MUSIC AND BEING A CELEBRITY

By ANDY ZEFFER

W

HETHER PLAYING MUSIC AT Madonna's wedding in Scotland, shaking things up for Sean "P.Diddy" Combs on the deck of his yacht, or providing the sounds at an Anna Sui fashion show, DJ Tracy Young plies her trade among the rich and famous.

But the lesbian DJ is also a favorite among gay crowds. This month, the Virginia native and Miami resident will release her album, "Dance Culture," while embarking on a 15-city tour. The Voice took some time out to speak about DJ life with Young.

Houston Voice: You played your sounds in the DC scene for years before coming to Miami. What prompted your decision to go south?

Tracy Young: I was hired by Interscope Records as the southeast promotions manager. I needed a change from D.C. as I wasn't growing in my career or my personal life. I always thought I would end up in Miami. I love it, and the city is growing faster than ever.

Voice: Would you call being a woman in the DJ field an advantage or a disadvantage?

Young: Truthfully, being a female DJ has worked for me in some situations and against me in others. Every situation is different, but overall, I guess it has helped me to stand out.

Voice: You have done work with a lot of greats. And the list of celebrities you have spun for is endless. What moment or event would you call your first big break?

Young: I don't believe I could call one moment or event my big break. It was several little things that led to where I am now. But if you asked others, I'm sure they would say my big break was working with Madonna.

Voice: There are a lot of competing parties and events, almost too many to keep track of. What is your opinion on over-saturation of parties?

Young: The party scene is over-saturated, but I suppose it's because everybody has different tastes. The



Miami club impresario Ingrid Casares caught the sounds of DJ Tracy Young and arranged for her to play at a private party for the band 'Smashing Pumpkins,' propelling Young's career. (Photo by Dale Stine)

good thing about the over-saturation is that we have more choices. The bad thing is that when supply increases, demand decreases and the parties ultimately suffer. Now I'm sounding like an economics professor!

Voice: So many circuit events get a bad rap for the rampant drug use. This year's Winter Party seemed to exemplify that. There were so many tweaked out attendees with their trademark lollipops. What do you think of the drug use, and do you think anything can be done about it?

Young: I think people are realizing the dangers of drug use and how it has affected all aspects of the gay community. I have noticed more people drug-free. But on the other hand, I have watched crystal destroy people's lives and the club scene so quickly. We have to continue to educate others and make people aware of what they are putting in their bodies and doing to their minds, and how drugs affect relationships and daily lives.

Voice: There are often complaints that ticket prices

for events are out of control. Do you agree with that?

Young: They are. People are not so willing to pay \$1000 for a party weekend these days. But it does cost a lot to throw these parties. The venues, sound, lights, security, staff, etc., are all very expensive.

Voice: You've said that dark and heavy post-9/11 beats have dominated the scene for too long. Can you elaborate?

Young: I think the music got to be too heavy. I always like a good strong vocal record. People love that, but with the excessive drug use, the music changed. It became bleaker. I'm happy that it appears we're now heading back to slower tempo music and more vocal records.

Voice: Has the scene changed in terms of in-fighting between DJs and promoters?

Young: I think it has. I certainly don't fight with promoters and other DJs. I think there is plenty of room for all of us and there are certainly plenty of parties.

Voice: What do you think of the phenomenon of the DJ reaching celebrity status, and do you think of yourself in terms of a celebrity?

Young: I don't look at myself as a celebrity, but I'm flattered if other people do. I think it's great that DJ's have reached an amazing amount of success and are being recognized for their talents. In the late 80's and early 90's, the DJ was important but never got respect. I believe music is the most important aspect of a party.

Voice: Tell us about your new CD, "Dance Culture." What is special about it, and what are some of your favorite tracks?

Young: I can't wait to complete it and get it out. This album is very vocal and uplifting. I wanted to make it a "feel-good" type of journey. I have three exclusive remixes that I have done: "Easy Ride" by Madonna, "Walk On By" by Cyndi Lauper, and "I Believe" by Chaka Kahn. I also have completed an original track titled "Dance culture" by Alan T.

Voice: You have a lot of upcoming appearances. Are you looking forward to them?

Young: This is going to be a big summer for me! I have "Dance Culture" coming out, and I'm already booked in a lot of different cities. I'm playing Gay Disney on June 4, with Chaka Kahn performing. I'm also headlining New York's Gay Pride with Junior Vasquez.

Voice: Finally, are you in a relationship right now? And if so, how does that work with your schedule?

Young: I'm sorry, I gotta' keep some things in my life personal. Now I'm sounding like a celebrity!

i MORE INFO

TRACY YOUNG
'Dance Culture'
CD
Ferosh Records
www.djtracyyoung.com

NEW REALITY: Summer's TV lineup features offerings with gay appeal, including new reality shows. **Page 15**

BALLS AND PARTIES: Nightlife this weekend should focus on the White Party and the Military Ball. **Page 17**



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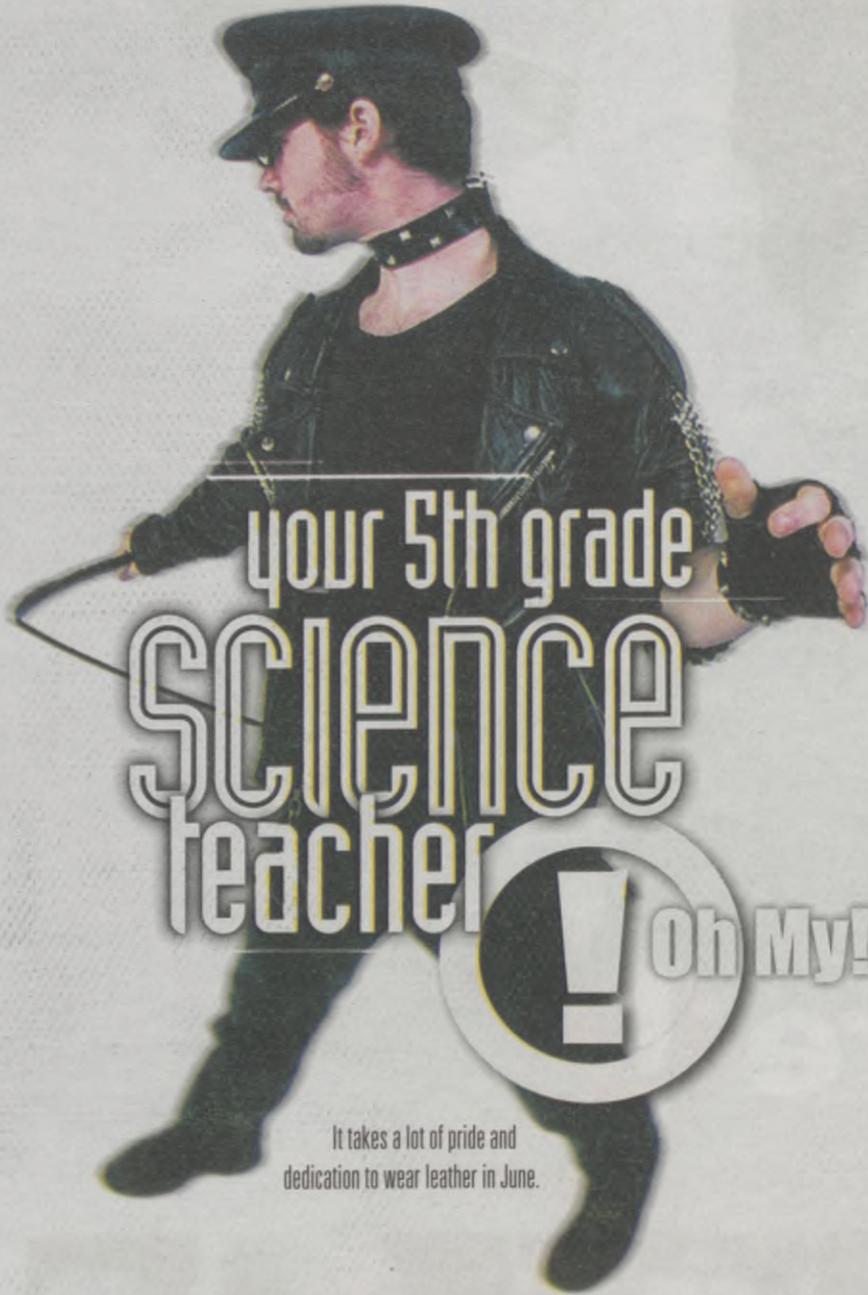
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Thanks to a comedy special, two new reality shows and a great documentary, the tube is heating up just in time for summer.

Summer TV sizzles

TRADITIONALLY, MEMORIAL DAY weekend is the start of the summer season. Not only does this mean we can all break out the white shoes, but also that all the shows that air during the regular television season are reruns or on hiatus until the fall. But this Memorial weekend there is plenty to keep gay TV watchers busy, including a new comedy special, two sexy reality shows and a wonderful documentary.

"Laugh Whore," the new Showtime special from gay comedian Mario Cantone, will delight fans who miss his fast-talking, bombastic alter ego, Anthony, Charlotte's gay wedding planner on "Sex and the City." From the opening number, Cantone dances his way to center stage and commands the audience's attention for the entire 90 minutes. During that time, he morphs into many personalities, including more than a few familiar divas.

Every gay man thinks he can do a good Cher or Liza Minnelli or Judy Garland or Barbra Streisand, but Cantone actually pulls them all off, very well. Not only that, he can do a spot-on Katharine Hepburn, Sammy Davis Jr. and Michael Jackson. The most touching and funny moments come when he talks about his quirky Italian-American family (including a hysterical characterization of his boozy sister). In these moments we see that Cantone isn't just a familiar screaming queen, but a wonderful comic and storyteller.

VH1's two new reality shows, "Kept" and "Strip Search," feature lots of male skin. "Kept" features actress, model and former "Mrs. Mick Jagger" Jerry Hall as she picks from 12 men vying to be her kept man (with a six-figure salary) for a year. "Strip Search" is, as the title suggests, the search for seven men to form a new troupe for "The Thunder From Down Under," an Australian-based, Chippendale's-style male revue with shows in Las Vegas and around the world.

Both shows are similar to Bravo's "Manhunt: The Search for America's Most Gorgeous Male Model," where the men were dull but hot and tossed aside their shirts whenever possible. On "Kept," the first challenge that the 12 sexpots face is to strip off their clothes, put on Speedos and



Model and actress **Jerry Hall** (center) uses her quest for a man to get the contestants to show lots of skin in 'Kept,' a new reality show that debuts on VH1 Sunday at 9 p.m.

swim across the Thames in winter. Ms. Hall tromps through the show as a gay ideal: rich, beautiful and fabulous, with a horde of beautiful boys doing every ridiculous task she can think up.

The off-putting thing about both shows, however, is the participants' insistence on their heterosexuality. On "Kept," Seth, one of the more annoying contestants, says to dashing contest Ricardo, "You have a really nice body. You know, not in a gay way." Yeah, yeah, keep talkin'.

AFTER THE MINDLESS entertainment of this dynamic duo, catch "Tickled Pink," a new documentary on TV Land, a perfect fit. "Pink" looks at both the history of gay people on the boob tube and how the way we watch has changed.

Less worried about the post-"Ellen" world, "Pink" would rather talk about things like "Bewitched" with its evil diva Endora (Agnes Moorehead) and fey Uncle Arthur (Paul Lynde). While many shows would only look at the things gay men love about campy classics, this hour-long special gives equal time to lesbians, with a nod to the butch Jo (Nancy McKeon) on "Facts of Life" alongside finicky Dr. Smith (Jonathan Harris) from "Lost in Space" and gay male favorite "Wonder Woman" next to lesbian love "Xena: The Warrior Princess."

There also are plenty of gay actors and gay favorites on "Tickled Pink" talking about their contributions to television, like Rue McClanahan from "The Golden Girls," Carson Kressley from "Queer Eye," lesbian comedian Judy Gold, comedy writer Bruce Villanch, "Desperate Housewives" creator Marc Cherry, "Roseanne" costar Sandra Bernhard, "Dynasty's" Diahann Carroll and, lo' and behold, Mario Cantone.

Insightful, entertaining and thorough, the show is mostly a primer for straight people about gay culture, but trust me: You'll think it's a hoot — and informative.

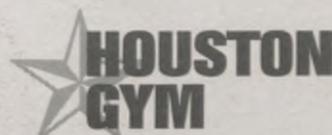


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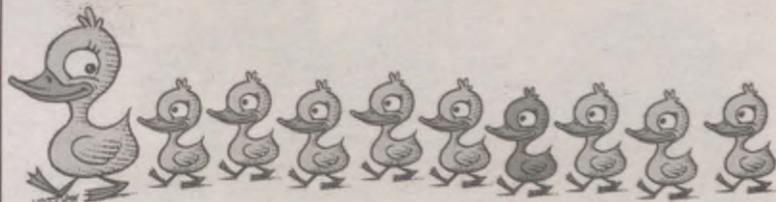
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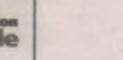
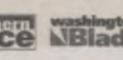
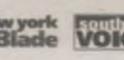
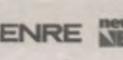
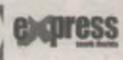
i MORE INFO

'LAUGH WHORE'
Showtime/Saturday, May 28, at 8 p.m.

'KEPT'
VH1/Sunday, May 29, at 8 p.m.

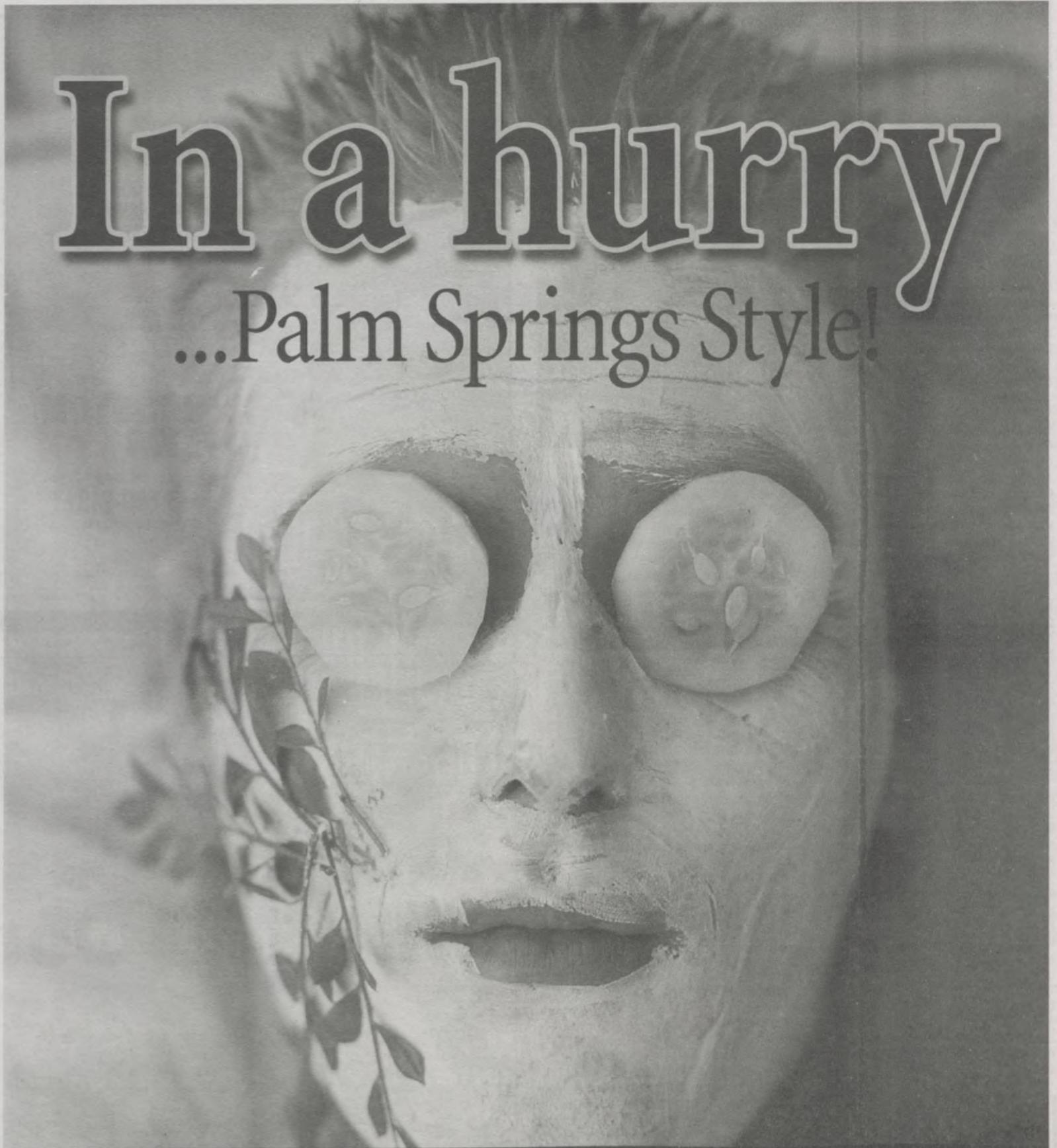
'STRIP SEARCH'
VH1/Sunday, May 29, at 9 p.m.

'TICKLED PINK'
TV Land/Wednesday, June 1, at 10 p.m.



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Melting in H-town

SO IT'S MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND, the start of summer is upon us. The words "I'm melting, melting!" from the "Wizard of Oz" come to mind because it has been hot, hot, hot in the Bayou City. The same can be said of the events happening this weekend and beyond. Let's see what HotGG recommends!

CONGRATULATIONS TO RICH'S! The Grand Opening weekend was a smashing success. Literally thousands of people were there between Thursday and Saturday nights. Saturday night saw a capacity crowd that left some waiting to get in, as it was balls to the walls full. So many men, so little time as they say. Every Friday night Rich's gives you "Anthem." It's all the music you know and love, all those club anthems that have driven you to the dance floor. **Aquafest Cruise Lines' DJ Michael Kessler** will have you twirling. And, how 'bout those hunky male dancers. \$1 vodka till 11 p.m. and \$2 wells all help to start the weekend right. 21 and up only. This Saturday sees the return of a Richs-Houston tradition, **The 2005 Military Ball**. Wear your leather, levis or uniform, or anything that will shock the door staff, and your cover is HALF off. Martinis in the Red Room, Ice in the **Blue Bar** and sweating on the dance floor to **XM DJ Mark D** (who always makes HotGG sweat!) gives you a delicious Saturday night! www.richs-houston.com or call 713-759-9606.

Did you know that Rich's offers free cab rides home for adults 21 and up who feel they have a blood-alcohol level greater than .08 percent or higher every night? Now you do. Thanks again Nassim!

SUNDAY IS GOING TO BE ONE OF those busy bee days, so you better sleep in so you will last. First up, **The Stonewall Democrats** is having a terrific mixer and barbeque at **Meteor** and you are invited. The evening's events will kickoff at 4 p.m. and include a free barbeque on the patio, door prizes, free giveaways, social mixing and lots of great music and video from Houston's number-one video bar. Food provided by **Baba Yega Restaurant**, **Niko Niko Catering and Restaurant**, **Kam's Fine Chinese Cuisine**, **Peppinos Italian Restaurant** and the **Brown Bag Deli**. Enjoy a special welcome and update by Houston City Controller **Annise D. Parker** and Democratic National Committee member **Sue Lovell** (also a candidate for Houston City Council), with a special presentation by **Mark Wood**.

HoVo on the go-go

Anyone wishing to participate in Stonewall's Pride Event and party should contact the devilishly handsome **Michael Medici**, director of events, at 713-621-5751 or via email at houston-stonewalldemocrats@yahoo.com

SUNDAY NIGHT YOU CAN SHOW OFF your tan at The Third Annual **South Beach White Party!** SoBe Resident **DJ Jimmy Skinner** spins early, while direct from Los Angeles, **DJ Roland Belmares**, spins from 10:30 p.m. until 5 a.m. Special effects by **AlienLiteForms**, deco design by **Montrose Design and Floral** and as always, white attire is encouraged. \$15 advance ticket with no line, \$20 day of event. Advance tickets on sale at JR's, Meteor, SoBe, M2M Fashions and Hollywood Superstore.

ON MONDAY ENJOY FREE COVER with a **Memorial Day Pass**. Be sure to grab one from your favorite SoBe, Meteor, JR's and Mining Company bartender some time over the weekend. \$2.25 drink specials all night with more of DJ Jimmy Skinner.

THAT BASTION OF FABULOUSNESS in Midtown, **Farrago**, is having a birthday party. Yep, Farrago will be celebrating its **fifth anniversary** on Wednesday. To entice you to celebrate with them, Farrago will be offering \$5 off all entrees, \$5 call drinks and happy-hour bar specials all day. Stop by and see **Chuck** and the staff. 318 Gray, 713-523-6404.

LADIES, MARK YOUR CALENDARS! Friday June 3, the **Groove Girlz and Pride Houston** are showing the boys how it's done. Join them at **Club 1415** for **Girlz Pride.05**. **DJ Farah Cox** spins until 2 a.m. with doors at 9 p.m., a \$10 cover and 18 and up are welcome.

@ If you have any club announcements or events, email them to jhooks@houstonvoice.com or call 713-529-8490. See you on the Go-Go!

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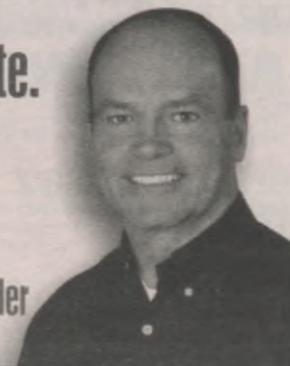
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Winning streak

Ellen grabs two Emmys, Tom Cruise fights rumors, and Kylie gets released

Lesbian talk show host ELLEN DEGENERES had her hands all over two ladies last weekend and, for a change, the gossips had nothing to say about it. That's because the two ladies were both named Emmy and they were both for her hard work on the talk show that bears her name.

At the Daytime Emmy Awards, which took place last Friday at Radio City Music Hall and were aired on CBS, "The Ellen DeGeneres" show won the trophy for best talk show for the second year in a row. DeGeneres won the award for best talk show host. Last year, she lost in that category to WAYNE BRADY, whose show is no longer on the air.

"Oh, man, I love my job," Ellen said from the podium. "It's basically just sitting there and listening to people talking. Like a bartender."

Another big gay win went to D.C.-area native EDEN RIEGEL, who played lesbian Bianca Montgomery on ABC's soap "All My Children." Riegel, 25, won the Emmy for best younger actress in a drama series. It was her first win in four nominations and her last shot at the trophy. Her character was written off the show in February so Riegel could pursue other ventures.



Eden Riegel

Bianca came out in 2000 and made headlines in 2003 when she and co-star Olga Sosnovska engaged in daytime TV's first same-sex kiss.

Gay-friendly actor STOCKARD CHANNING took home her second trophy for playing a mother in a gay-themed TV movie, this time for her role in Showtime's "Jack." She portrayed the mother of a teenage boy dealing with his parent's divorce and his father's homosexuality.

Channing won for best performance in a children's special. Previously, she won an Emmy for best actress in a made-for-television movie for her portrayal of JUDY SHEPARD in NBC's 2002 film "The MATTHEW SHEPARD Story."

Second time's a charm

With 40-something TOM CRUISE telling everyone who will listen that he's smitten with 26-year-old actress KATIE HOLMES, you may have forgotten about CHAD SLATER (nee Kyle Bradford), the gay porn star who claimed in 2001 he had a sexual relationship with Cruise, who subsequently slapped him with a \$100 million lawsuit.

Who you never heard about was "Big Red" (named for his hair color and endowment, not the chewing gum). This



Lesbian host Ellen DeGeneres triumphed for the second year in a row at the Daytime Emmy Awards last week. She appears here with girlfriend Portia de Rossi (Photo by Tina Fineberg/AP)

porn star also claims he had a sexual relationship with Cruise.

According to New York Daily News gossips Rush & Molloy, in 2002 private dick Paul Barresi (himself a former porn star) heard that "Red" was looking to sell his story and told the tale to Cruise's lawyer Bert Fields.



Tom Cruise

"As you well know, this story is an utter fabrication," Fields wrote to "Red."

"[Cruise] has never had a homosexual experience or encounter with you or anyone else."

That was the last anyone heard from "Red."

On the mend

Pop singer and gay icon KYLIE MINOGUE was released from the hospital and is recovering from breast cancer surgery last Friday, May 20, according to Reuters. The media are calling the 36-year-old's surgery a "success" even though her surgeon, Dr. Jenny Senior, won't release any details about it or follow-up treatment.

Minogue was released from a hospital in Melbourne in her native Australia last Saturday.

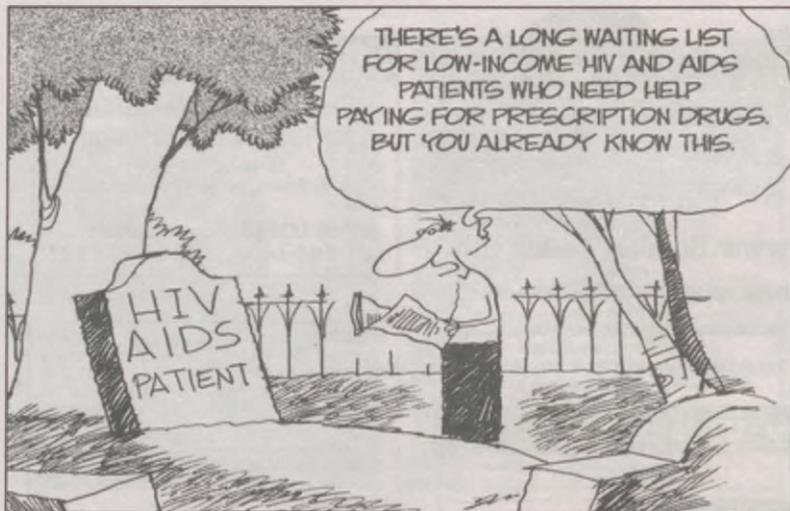
Meanwhile, fans and well-wishers overloaded Minogue's official Web site on May 18 after she announced her diagnosis. The Associated Press reported that the site posted a warning that it was running at "reduced service" due to heavy traffic.

The site, at www.kylie.com, is now back in business.



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by HANSON and NEUWIRTH

SKY AND ADAM SHARE SOME "ALONE" TIME TOGETHER ON THE REALITY SHOW...

LOOKS LIKE IT'S JUST ME AN' YOU, DUDE... UH... YEAH.

Y'KNOW, I'VE BEEN THINKIN' ME AN' YOU WOULD MAKE A REALLY HOT COUPLE. Y'KNOW, IF YOU KISS MY ASS THE RIGHT WAY... HA HA HA!

UH... HEH HEH HEH... YAH.

HURL!!

SO, LIKE, WHAT DO YA DO WHEN YOU'RE NOT BEIN' TOTALLY HOT?

I'M AN ARTIST. I JUST GRADUATED FROM--

COOL. YOU SHOULD DRAW ME. I'D RATHER STICK MY HANDS IN A BLENDER.

SO, TELL ME WHY I SHOULD PICK YOU TO BE MY "STEVE"...

WELL... BECAUSE I'M HONEST AND SENSITIVE... HAVE LOTS OF LOVE TO GIVE... AND I'M LOOKING FOR A PARTNER TO SHARE MY LIFE WITH...

WHAT A JACKASS! OKAY IF I WANNA WIN THIS, I'M GONNA HAVE TO LIE... C'MON, SKY, YOU CAN DO THIS... BE CREATIVE...

UM... HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A LITTLE FILM CALLED "MISSION INCREDIBLE"?

WELL, YEAH, WHO HASN'T?

WHATEVER. YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO DO BETTER THAN THAT, DUDE.

I HAPPEN TO BE IN WAY TIGHT WITH THE PRODUCER, IF YA KNOW WHAT I MEAN. AND HE'S GONNA BE CASTING THE SEQUEL REEAL SOON.

SWEET.

PLUS... IF YOU PICK ME, EVERY NIGHT WE'RE TOGETHER, I'LL...

WHISPER WHISPER WHISPER!

WHOA! THAT'S MORE LIKE IT! I GOTTA SAY, MAN, YOU JUST MOVED T' THE HEAD OF MY LIST!

AWESOME, BRO.

UGH... I FEEL SO DIRTY...

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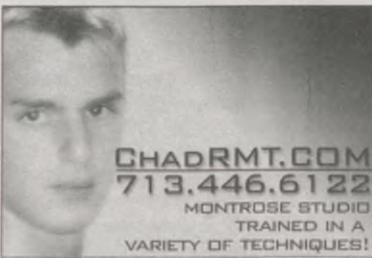
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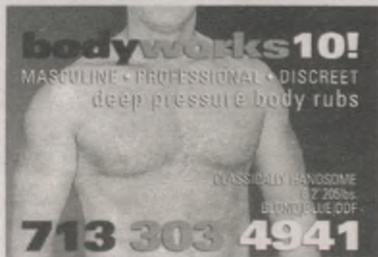


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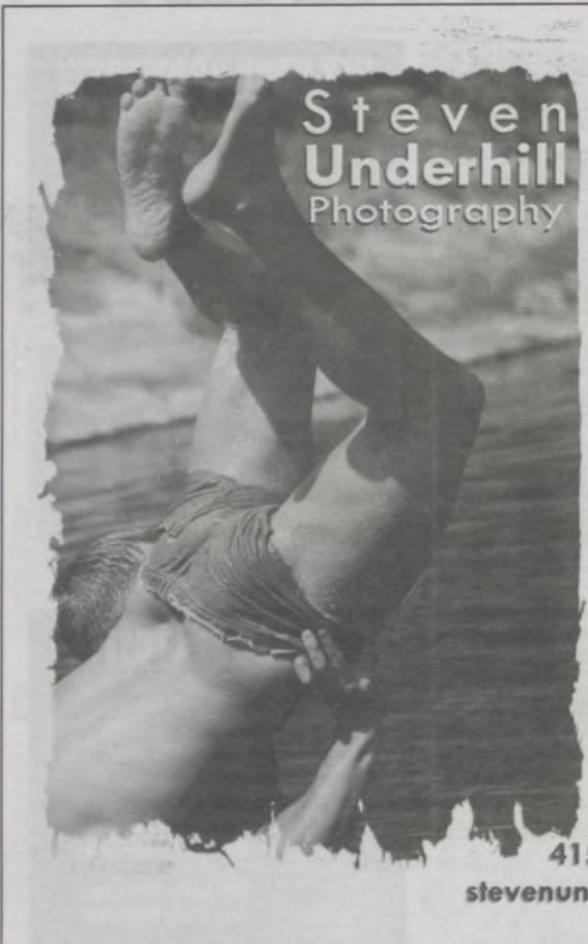
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bitch session



Don't worry
bitches, my
beauty won't
hurt you. But
it will defeat you!

"WHEN DID IT BECOME ACCEPTABLE for straight men to act like bitches?" When they were elected to a state legislature.

I WAS WONDERING IF THERE IS A comprehensive list of "Problems with Gay Society" besides No. 45 that I read in "Bitch Session."

BITCH BOY RESPONDS: Problem with Gay Society No. 46: Gay men who lack a sarcastic sense of humor.

SOMETIMES I LOOK AT THE LONG-term couples I know and wonder how are they able to so thoroughly disguise any indication of their love for one another.

GUYS, PLEASE GET TESTED FOR syphilis, I have had six friends in the last three months test positive for it. They all practice "safe sex," and got it anyway.

WHY IS IT THAT THE GUYS WHO expose their butt cracks always seem to be either fat or nasty looking?

I HAVE NOTHING AGAINST KARAOKE, but why do so many of us benders insist on singing ballads? Ballads in a bar are boring.

I'M SO OVER THE WHOLE TINA AND unsafe sex trend. When are you going to realize that strangers topping you gave you HIV? Wake up bitches, you ain't gettin' any younger!

I STOPPED TALKING TO YOU BECAUSE you let me down when I needed a simple favor and then refused to accept that your head games made me yell at you.

SO YOU ARE A BUTCHY, DYKIE looking lesbian, and I am a very femme dyke with two kids. That doesn't make you any more lesbian than I am?

TO THE PROFESSIONAL CHATTERS 30 or older: You hit your stride more than a decade ago. The word "boy" or "boi" no longer applies to you. And for that matter, neither do club clothes.

TO THE GUY WITH "ONLY" A FIVE-inch member: As a black male, my conversa-

tions usually end with "seven inches." Now that's a bitch
PEOPLE WHO SPY ON OTHER PEOPLE have even bigger skeletons to hide.
BITCH BOY RESPONDS: Sounds like someone got busted!

HE'S GAY OR HE'S STRAIGHT, WHO cares? Can't we just let those of us who enjoy his music and what he stands for just do that? I'm proud of Clay Aiken for standing up in the face of adversity. There is no measuring this man!
BITCH BOY RESPONDS: He sure was keen to know my measurements when we met online.

MUSCULAR GYM RATS THINK THEY'VE earned their superiority trip because they assume less muscular guys just don't try as hard. Truth is, without their "lucky" genes and their steroids, they would be no bigger than most other guys.

WHAT IS THIS "WHAT IF" REGARDING Terri Schiavo being kept alive if she were a lesbian? A life is a life. Get over your obsession with whether people are gay, lesbian or straight.

IF TERRI SCHIAVO WERE A LESBIAN, the feeding tube would not have been taken out? Hello? If she had been a lesbian, those right-to-lifers would probably have never been there fighting to keep her alive, and Congress would have ignored it.

YOU DIDN'T CALL BECAUSE YOU didn't want to become a satellite that revolves around me? If a simple phone call makes you that, then what the hell hyperbole does a date make you? I was right to chalk you up as a loser the first time.

YOU BITCHES MUST BE INSANE! Wear a condom or learn to do the slip 'n' slide. There's nothing wrong with frotage. It can keep you virus free!

IF YOU FONDLE MY BILLIARDS without asking and the ball cracks, don't be shocked.

TO THE LESBIAN WARNING US ABOUT smooth talking "professional" she-devils. Baby, get real. If you are taken by the fact that she is an administrative assistant, then you really don't even know what a professional is.

DEAR CURIOUS STRAIGHT GUYS: Why don't you read Lithuanian history to satisfy your curiosity, instead of spamming our chat rooms?

I WOULD NEVER SPEAK TO, MUCH LESS associate with, someone who is male but comes across feminine.

BITCH BOY RESPONDS: Having listened to your voice mail, I can only wonder how you live with yourself.

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

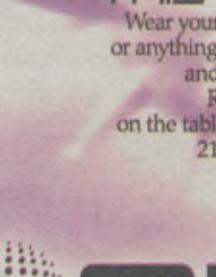
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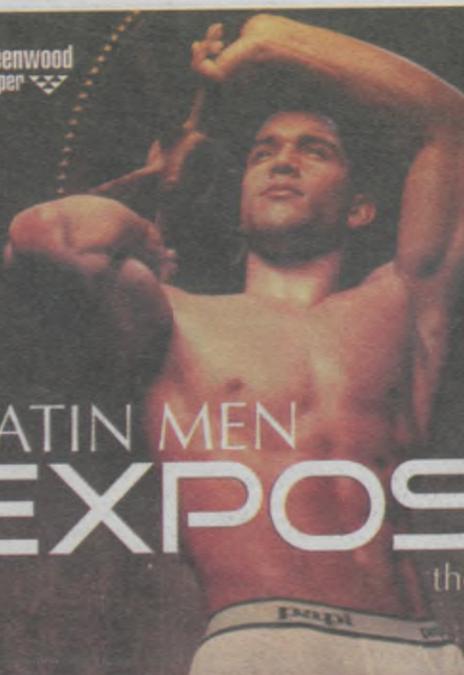
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