

Delights on stage

A pair of Houston productions just might be the best in Texas right now.

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INSIDE



Annise Parker, the only openly gay Houston City Council member, and another gay political activist have been accused by conservative David Wilson of writing an anti-gay letter that bears his allegedly forged signature.

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Garden professionals come in out of the heat to check out a variety of enhancements for the outdoors-inclined.

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One downtown restaurant offers a different type of scene, plus delicious dishes well worth the price.

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Census shows gay couples in all of TX

Activists say reported numbers of same-sex couples still fall below actual figures

by ELLA TYLER

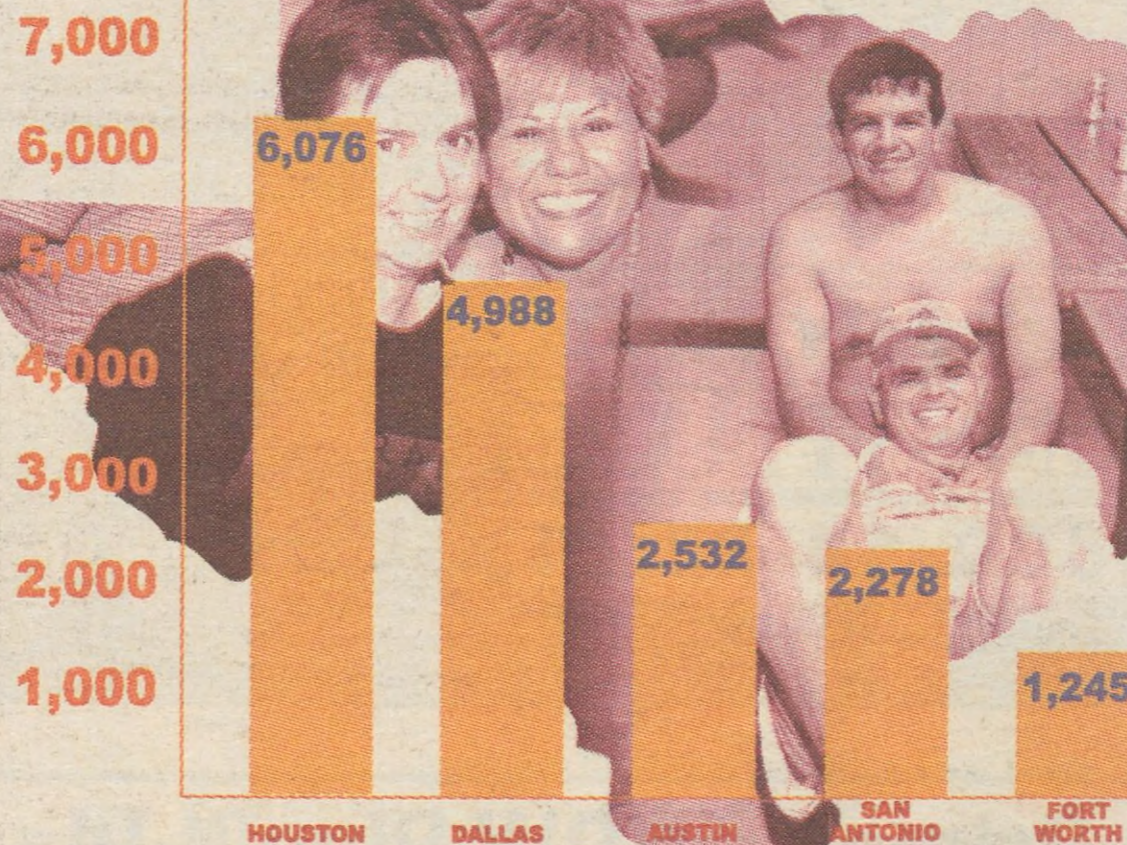
With Wednesday's release of Census 2000 data from Texas, it became official: Gays live in almost every county in America.

The results from Texas, Mississippi and Arkansas, the last states for which figures were released, show that the national count of households reportedly headed by same-sex couples rose to 600,000. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 99.3 percent of all counties in the country have at least one lesbian or gay male couple.

And Texas ranks third—behind only California and New York—in the percentage of same-sex households found in the state. Of the nearly 600,000 same-sex households reported in the census figures, 15.50 percent are in California, 7.82 percent in New York and 7.22 percent in Texas.

Houston has 6,076 reported gay households, Dallas comes in with 4,988, San Antonio has 2,278, Austin is at 2,532 and Fort Worth hosts 1,245.

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Census figures show several thousand same-sex couples in most Texas metropolitan areas.



During almost 30 years in Congress, U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) built a reputation for gay-baiting opponents and tacking anti-gay amendments onto otherwise positive legislation.

Helms to retire from Senate

Activists welcome end of 'anti-gay era' in Congress

by LOU CHIBBARO JR.

WASHINGTON—Gay activists hailed the announcement Wednesday by U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) that he will not seek re-election next year and will retire from the Senate at the end of his current term in January 2003.

Helms, who first won election to the Senate in 1972, earned a reputation as Congress's most anti-gay member. Beginning in the early 1980s, Helms began introducing anti-gay amendments to popular bills, forcing both Republican and Democratic senators to take a position on the subject of gay civil rights and homosexuality, something they clearly preferred not to do.

"It is our sincere hope that the retirement of Sen. Jesse Helms marks the end of an era of anti-gay activism in the Senate," said Winnie Stachelberg, political director of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest gay political group.

Although many of Helms' anti-gay measures died in House-Senate conference committees and others were defeated on the Senate floor, a number of them won approval. Gay activists lamented the fact that Helms' actions brought to light a troubling outcome: a sizable number of senators and House members believed it was safer, politically, for them to vote against, rather than for, the rights of gay people.

Helms' anti-gay rhetoric in speeches and interviews with the press infuriated gay activists and liberal critics while delighting a cadre of right-wing supporters in North Carolina and throughout the country.

On several occasions, he referred to homosexuality in general and gay sex in particular as "disgusting." He referred to former San Francisco Supervisor Roberta Achtenberg, whom President Clinton nominated in 1993 as one of his first high-level gay appointments,

>Continued on Page 13

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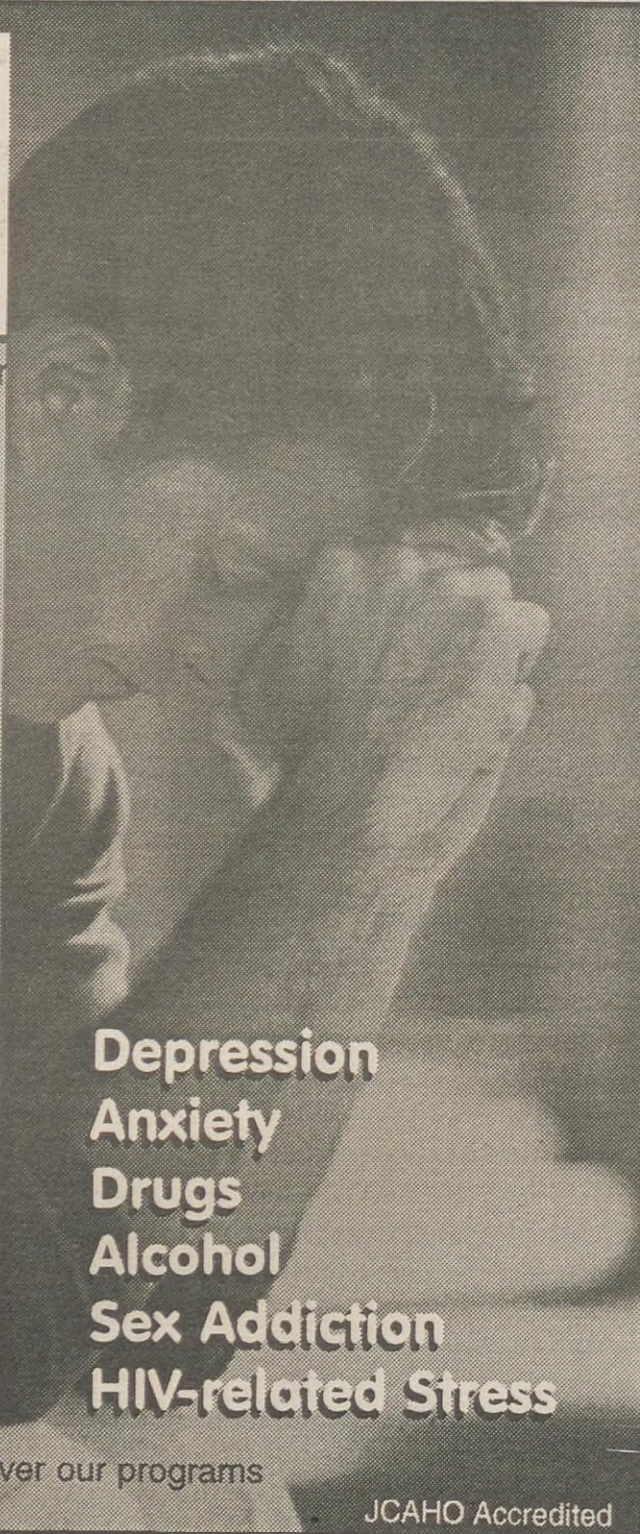
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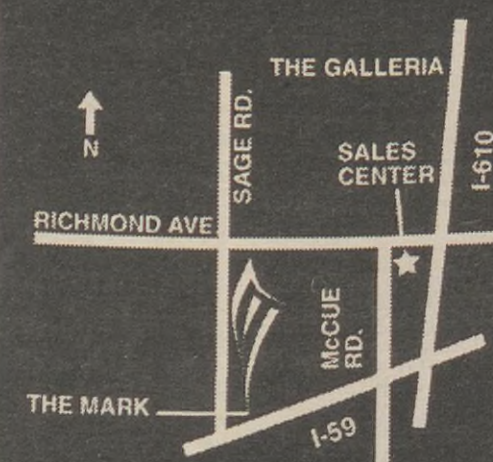
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Houston gays mobilize against referendum

Leader of Houstonians For Family Values accuses two gay activists of writing inflammatory letter

by PENNY WEAVER

HOUSTON—The leader of the conservative Houstonians For Family Values this week accused two prominent gay political activists of writing an anti-gay letter he says was falsely attributed to him.

At the same time, gay leaders are mobilizing to combat HFFV's movement to put a referendum on the November ballot asking Houston voters to prohibit the city from offering domestic partner benefits to the partners of gay city employees.

David Wilson, founder of HFFV, said he filed a complaint Wednesday with the Harris County District Attorney's Office and will offer a \$5,000 reward to find out who wrote a letter that he says uses his forged signature.

He alleges that Annise Parker, the only openly gay member of the Houston City Council, and gay political consultant Grant Martin, who served as Parker's campaign manager, wrote or know who wrote a letter containing racist and anti-gay comments.

The letter bears Wilson's signature, which he said is forged. "I know for sure they were behind the distribution of it," Wilson said of Parker and Martin. "If they did not personally write it, they know who did and they were in on it."

But both Parker and Martin said they were not involved in drafting the document.

"Categorically, I will deny writing the letter," said Martin, who is helping lead opposition to HFFV's referendum quest. "I did not write the letter. It's not the kind of politics that I would do or would even know how to do. Anybody that knows me knows that."

Parker also refuted Wilson's charges. "Like Mr. Wilson, I would like to know who wrote the letter. It was offensive and inflammatory," she told the Houston Chronicle.

Still, Martin said Wilson deserves some responsibility for the rhetoric of the letter, which, among other things, says that AIDS victims are "dying as a result of their own abnormal lifestyles."

"Dave Wilson is denying writing this letter... to me that's irrelevant," Martin said. "He's the person that has provided the climate for this kind of thing to happen."

"What Dave Wilson has done is to give a voice and a platform for every bigot and kook in the city of Houston to spew out their



Conservative activist David Wilson (right) has accused lesbian City Council member Annise Parker (left) and gay political activist Grant Martin of drafting an anti-gay letter that has been attributed to him, a charge Martin and Parker deny.

hateful rhetoric. Whether he wrote the letter or not, I hold him 100 percent responsible for it," Martin added.

Wilson's HFFV has led a petition drive to put on the November ballot a referendum that would keep the City of Houston from offering benefits including health insurance to the domestic partners of gay employees.

The city already offers health insurance to unmarried spouses of heterosexual couples who declare themselves married under the Texas common law marriage statute. But advocates of offering such benefits to same-sex couples face a city with a history of defeating policies that ban bias against gays.

In March 1998, Houston Mayor Lee Brown signed an executive order which banned discrimination in city government on the basis of sexual orientation. City Council member Rob Todd and conservative businessman Richard Hotze filed an injunction against the order, alleging that it contradicted the public vote of 1985 that rejected a similar anti-bias measure.

Hotze was dropped from the suit by State District Judge Patrick W. Mizell, who said Hotze lacked standing to make a claim, but Todd carried on as the lone plaintiff. A ruling from the Texas Supreme Court is expected this fall.

On Monday, Wilson delivered to city officials what he said were nearly 30,000 signatures on petitions from voters in favor of putting the

> Continued on Page 7

Local group hosts international gay Asian fest

Asians and Friends of Houston expects hundreds to attend annual Friendship Weekend

by KAY DAYUS

HOUSTON—Some 200 people from around the globe are expected at the 12th annual International Friendship Weekend hosted by Asians and Friends of Houston at the Galleria area Westin Oaks Hotel from Aug. 31 through Sept. 3.

Albert Carpio, chairman for the event, said registrants come from England, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Switzerland and, of course, the U.S., guaranteeing that the Friendship Festival is truly international.

Touted as the "Houston Odyssey," organizers plan fun activities and some workshops as well, according to Noel Boado, president of Houston's chapter of Asians and Friends, which strives further understanding of the

gay and lesbian culture of Asia.

Since Boado became president of the local group, he has reached out into the community to publicize the organization and make members more visible.

"We've really pushed hard for the past year to bring the Friendship Weekend to Houston. It was not easy; everyone thought that Houston was still full of tumbleweeds," Boado said with a laugh.

Then, he added, there is the humidity and heat of Houston to deal with. "We couldn't expect people to walk places in this heat so we are making the event hotel-driven. We'll have shuttles running from the hotel to events and to the bars in Montrose."

The weekend unofficially begins Aug. 30 with drinks at the Guava Lamp, according to Boado. Friday is registration and dinner, then a trip to the bars in Montrose. The emphasis is definitely on having fun, according to organizers.

The event does get serious with workshops scheduled for Saturday morning. Topics range from racial differences and attraction, relationships and S&M to Feng

Shui and fitness and finances.

After the workshops, everyone is invited to cool off with a pool party. "It's traditionally a wonderful time," Boado said.

Most attendees are expected to be Asian and Caucasian, with a sprinkling of African Americans and Hispanics, and most likely will be men, according to Boado. "It's not that we dissuade women. We welcome them, but they don't usually come," he said.

According to Boado, Asian lesbians are where gay Asian men were 20 years ago: deep in the closet. There are some Asian lesbian groups, but mainly in the eastern and western United States.

"There are probably enough Asian lesbians here in Houston to support a group, but they are not very vocal right now. I don't know why. They are isolated," he said.

There is still a major stigma in the Asian community toward Asian lesbians, according to Boado. And even though Asian lesbians are taking tentative steps to get stronger as a group, they are still not there, he added.

"They need to see there is power in num-

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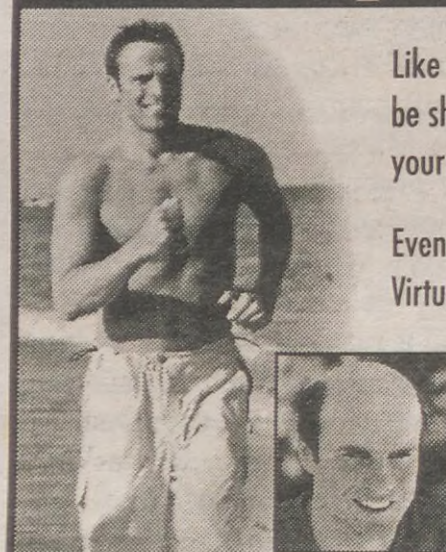
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Suspect in FL gay killings arrested on eve of NV pride event

RENO, Nev. (AP)—A teenager wanted by the FBI in the killings of two gay men in Florida and the bludgeoning of a San Francisco man was captured here Aug. 17 on the eve of the city's Gay Pride celebration. Adam Ezerski, 19, of Atlantic Beach, Fla., was found with another man, Troy Young, after driving a rented truck from San Francisco, where a red Mustang belonging to one of the Florida victims was found, police said. The FBI took Ezerski into custody, and Young was arrested on a parole violation. Ezerski allegedly attacked a 43-year-old San Francisco man Aug. 14 after befriending him while staying at his apartment for two days. Ezerski also is accused of strangling Anthony Martilotto, 39, a dual resident of Brooklyn, N.Y., and Florida, at a Fort Lauderdale hotel on July 26. The FBI also connects Ezerski to the death of Irving Sicherer, 76, who was found bludgeoned to death a day earlier in Aventura, Fla. Ezerski allegedly told police he killed Martilotto in self-defense.

MA gov to extend benefits after flak from gay stepson

BOSTON (AP)—Acting Mass. Gov. Jane M. Swift, a Republican who was criticized by her gay stepson for opposing gay marriage, said she is extending some domestic partnership benefits to gay state workers. Swift said that her administration had already extended benefits for same-sex couples to state social workers, and other workers would get benefits when their contracts are negotiated over the next two years. The benefits will be extended to the state's 70,000 employees and include leave to care for an ill partner, bereavement leave and paid time off for court appearances or counseling for victims of domestic violence. The benefits do not include health insurance, which would require an appropriation from the state legislature. In an interview with the *Boston Globe* last week, Swift's gay stepson, Brian Hunt, accused her of hypocrisy. "She wants to get the votes of the gay community, but when it comes down to it, she doesn't want to lose other votes over it," Hunt said.



ANGELA ROWLINGS/AP
Massachusetts Gov. Jane Swift recently extended domestic partnership benefits after being criticized for her stance on same-sex marriage.

SD will put up gay group's highway sign, gov says

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP)—Seeking to defuse a lawsuit, Gov. Bill Janklow said Aug. 17 that the state will put up a sign requested by a gay group as part of the state's Adopt-A-Highway Program. But Janklow also said all signs in the program would be taken down by the end of the year. They will be replaced with generic signs noting that concerned citizens who care about keeping the roads clean are responsible for the work. "I do not think government should be used to offend people," Janklow said. He said the state Web site will list all groups involved in the program to clean up roads and highways. State Department of Transportation officials had said the Sioux Empire Gay & Lesbian Coalition did not qualify for the sign because it is an advocacy group. The group responded this week with a federal lawsuit against the state, seeking to have the sign erected and monetary damages.

St. Pat's parade leader forced out in NY over gays

NEW YORK—The president of New York's St. Patrick's Day Parade resigned from his position last week before he could be ousted for his support of letting gay men and lesbians march under their own banner, officials and parade documents reveal, according to the *New York Post*. William Flynn battled for eight months to improve the famed parade's inclusiveness and accountability. But Jim Barker, the parade's executive secretary, said that "inclusiveness" was a buzzword for making gays an integral part of the event. "I make no judgments on any human, but gays and lesbians can march happily with us, but as a separate entity under a banner, no," Barker said. A draft resolution accused Flynn of trying to appease the Irish gays. The final resolution omitted that paragraph. Flynn resigned before the board met to approve a resolution to oust him.

Davis vetoes CA birth certificate bill for sex changes

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—California Gov. Gray Davis vetoed a bill that would have expanded the pool of people who can legally obtain a new birth certificate after a sex change operation, the *Sacramento Bee* reported. "I find no compelling reason to expand existing law and therefore cannot sign this measure," Davis said. Under current law, a Californian who has undergone a sex change operation may obtain a new birth certificate by filing a petition for a new certificate with the court in his or her county of residence. The new certificates reflect gender and name changes. The legislation would have allowed anyone born in California, regardless of whether they live there now, to file a petition for a new certificate with the court in his or her county of birth. "[It] is more burdensome than just being able to hire a lawyer to do it from where they are," Eric Astacaan, a lobbyist for the California Alliance for Pride and Equality, told the *Bee*.

—From staff and wire reports



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around the nation

Study shows 'very low' HIV risk from oral sex

New report puts possibility of HIV infection from oral sex somewhere between zero and 2 percent

by ERIC ERICKSON

ATLANTA—In contrast to a report by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, a new study shows receptive oral sex carries a very small risk of HIV transmission.

The study is being conducted by researchers at the University of California San Francisco and was presented at the second National HIV Prevention Conference last week in Atlanta.

While the findings from the study are preliminary, they have sparked controversy among AIDS activists across the country.

"It's been acknowledged for a long time that people can acquire HIV through oral sex—I don't think anyone is disputing that. What people are at odds about is what is the risk," said Dr. Kimberly Page Shafer, who is conducting the study.

"If you talk to HIV counselors, they will tell you that the one question that all of their clients ask them, irrespective of their sex, their gender, their orientation, the one question that is universally asked is 'Can I get HIV from oral sex?'"

Shafer and her colleagues interviewed 198 people for the study. The subjects were all seeking anonymous HIV testing and had only engaged in oral sex during the last six months prior to being involved in the study.

Researchers tested the study subjects for HIV using advanced blood tests that can distinguish between a new and an old infection. Only one person in the study tested positive for HIV and researchers determined it was an old infection. Shafer said

many of the people in the study performed oral sex on a partner they knew to be HIV positive.

With no one in the study testing positive for a recent HIV infection, preliminary numbers from Shafer's study put the statistical chance of getting HIV from oral sex as low as zero percent and as high as 2 percent.

CDC study shows higher risk

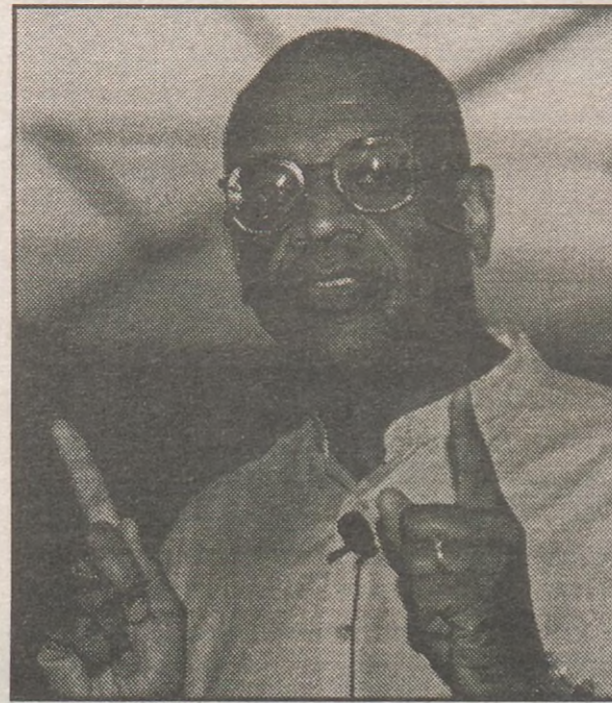
In February 2000, the CDC released findings from a study that on the surface appears to contrast the findings from Shafer's study. The CDC study said oral sex "contributes significantly" to the spread of HIV. Eight percent of the subjects in the CDC study appeared to have been infected through oral sex.

"We actually don't see them as contrasting one another," said Dr. Ronald Valdiserri, deputy director of the CDC's National Center for HIV, STD & TB Prevention, of the two studies.

"Even in her press release, [Shafer] made the statement that while rare, it is possible to acquire HIV infection orally," he said.

Both Valdiserri and Shafer pointed out distinct differences in the methodologies used in the two studies. All subjects in the CDC study were HIV-positive going into the study and then were asked about their sexual behavior to determine how they were infected. In the UCSF study, subjects were only engaging in oral sex prior to being involved in the study.

"If you're looking at behavior that has a relatively low risk of transmission," said Valdiserri, "it's not surprising that if you



AIDS expert Dr. Robert Scott said if a person does not have any open mouth sores, transmitting HIV through oral sex is 'virtually impossible.'

pick 198 people at one particular site ... none of them are infected. That contrasts to the other study where you start out by looking at people who are recently infected and then you go and interview them about their sexual practices."

Shafer agreed and said both studies are being misinterpreted by many people.

"That other study should not be interpreted to suggest that 8 percent of people get HIV from oral sex," said Shafer. "My study, similarly, shouldn't be interpreted as no one gets HIV from oral sex."

Shafer wants to find out why some people may have been infected with HIV through oral sex and why other people escape infection despite the same sexual practices.

Shafer said her study will continue for

about two years while she looks at co-factors that could play a role in HIV transmission through oral sex. She said she wants to determine whether it makes a difference if the person performing oral sex swallows the ejaculate of an HIV infected person.

The study will also examine if HIV has a higher risk of transmission if the person giving oral sex has trauma or open sores in their mouth.

According to one of the country's most respected AIDS experts, these factors do make a difference. Dr. Robert Scott has been treating people living with AIDS since the epidemic broke in the early '80s. He said if a person does not have any open sores in their mouth, transmitting HIV through oral sex is "virtually impossible."

"I have over 400 patients who have HIV disease," said Scott. "We carefully looked with those patients at their risk and their transmission has almost always been through either vaginal or rectal intercourse."

Scott said swallowing ejaculate will not increase risk, as long as the mucus membrane is intact, because "the acids in the stomach will kill the virus, period."

INFO

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HIV prevention confab sparks controversy

Activists criticize CDC for 'scare-mongering'

by ERIC ERICKSON

ATLANTA—Information presented at the second National HIV Prevention Conference raised as many questions as it answered. Doctors, counselors and AIDS activists gathered in Atlanta last week to discuss HIV prevention methods and the current state of the epidemic, prompting some critics to accuse the CDC of "scare-mongering."

"This is not the time for us to declare any kind of victory in terms of HIV prevention," said Dr. Ronald Valdiserri, deputy director of the Centers for Disease Control &

Prevention's National Center for HIV, STD & TB Prevention. "We obviously made some really significant successes. We're really at a critical juncture in terms of continuing forward with these successes."

Discussed during the conference were the leveling off of new HIV and AIDS cases and an increase of risky sexual behavior among men who have sex with other men, as well as an increase of sexually transmitted diseases other than HIV.

Another startling statistic showed almost half of people infected with HIV don't know their status until just before developing full-blown AIDS, causing them to miss out on almost a decade of important treatment.

Many of the speakers at the conference pointed to these studies as possible proof that the United States is on the verge of a dramatic increase in the number of people infected with HIV.

"When you begin to connect all the dots, it is not unreasonable to believe the CDC's analysis of this data," said Cornelius Baker, conference speaker and executive director of Washington's Whitman Walker Clinic, a com-

munity-based clinic for gay men and lesbians.

But while the CDC is crunching the numbers and looking ahead to an upswing in the epidemic, some AIDS activists accused the government of being "alarmist" with the predictions.

"The CDC is grasping at straws," said gay author and activist Andrew Sullivan. Valdiserri said one reason the CDC presents statistics that show a new tide of HIV infections is because prevention methods are often overshadowed by news of new medications to fight the disease.

"When we talk about prevention being lost in the mix, what we're referring to is the American public and perhaps even policy makers in American society who have really become very focused on the improvement in treatment advances," said Valdiserri. "We also want to remind people the best way to cure HIV is never get it in the first place."

While the CDC said statistics suggest a resurgence of infections, another AIDS activist argued the numbers are not solid enough to predict trends in the epidemic.

"[The CDC] doesn't have a lot of hard



AIDS activist Michael Petrelis charged that the CDC 'doesn't have a lot of hard verifiable statistics' to support predictions made at the recent HIV Prevention Conference.

verifiable statistics at this point," said activist Michael Petrelis. "At the same time, they keep getting these hysterical stories planted. If you come along and ask the question, 'Can you prove your data?' They'll say 'No, it's preliminary, we've got to keep studying the problem.'"

INFO

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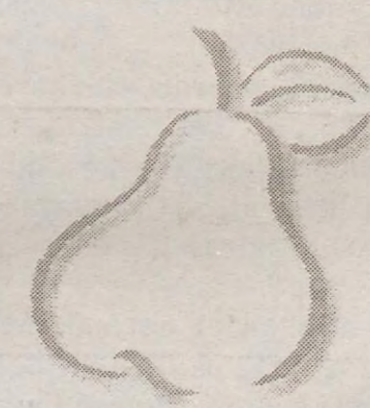
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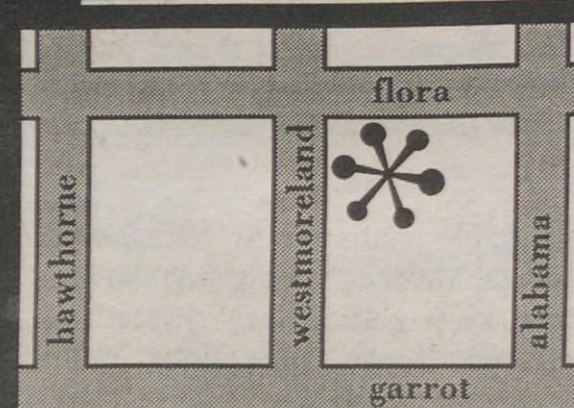
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Mexican lesbians first gay couple to win asylum

TORONTO—Two Mexican lesbians are believed to be the first same-sex couple to gain refugee status in Canada, the *Toronto Sun* reported. The Immigration & Refugee Board made the decision earlier this month, finding that the couple were members of a particular social group and faced persecution. The two women, whose names were not released, have been living in Toronto since 1999. Dian Forsey, a member of the IRB, told the *Sun* that one of the women testified that the couple had been attacked by two men, and that her ex-husband had taken her child away after learning of her relationship. The women further testified the ex-husband paid Mexican police to beat, confine and sexually assault them.

Hong Kong gay group protests police S/M party raid

HONG KONG—A protest by a small group of about 10 gay activists calling themselves "Rainbow Action" resulted in the arrest of five of them Aug. 19, according to Reuters. The protest was a response to an Aug. 6 police raid on an S/M party in which 26 people were arrested. The Rainbow Action protesters marched through Hong Kong's central district to a police station in bondage regalia. At the station, one of the protesters was tied to the station's gates. The protesters accused the police of using a double standard against those at the Aug. 6 party, arguing that some content on local television was equally "indecent." The five arrested protesters have been released on bail equivalent to about \$130 each. According to the International Lesbian & Gay Association, sex between men in Hong Kong was decriminalized in 1991; sex between women was ignored in the penal code.

BBC defends homophobic reggae lyrics on Radio 1

LONDON—The BBC is defending the decision by a subsidiary radio station, Radio 1, to play a popular reggae song that critics say promotes violence against gays. Radio 1 has insisted on playing the song "Chi Chi Man" by the Jamaican band TOK after naming it the top reggae dancehall song in Britain, London's *Independent* newspaper reported. In Jamaica, the phrase "chi chi man" is slang for gay. The TOK song describes a scene of building a fire to burn chi chi men. "It has almost become an unofficial national anthem for some people in Jamaica, and for a specialist reggae show not to play it I think would be a distortion," said Radio 1's Ian Parkinson, as quoted by the *Independent*. Coincidentally, while BBC's Radio 1 has been playing the TOK song, BBC's Radio 4 has aired a program, "The Roots of Homophobia," that has examined, among other things, homophobia in TOK's lyrics.



The BBC has defended airplay of the Jamaican band TOK's homophobic 'Chi Chi Man' on its Radio 1 station.

Demonstrators support jailed Indian HIV workers

NEW DELHI, India—Protesters representing about 40 different groups demonstrated Aug. 13 in support of four HIV/AIDS educators who were arrested July 7 and remain detained, Reuters reported. The four are associated with Naz Foundation International and a subsidiary organization, Bharosa Trust. Police in the city of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, first arrested a Bharosa HIV/AIDS outreach educator in a park frequented by gay men. Afterward, police raided the offices of both organizations and accused Bharosa of hosting sex parties. In the raids, police arrested others and confiscated educational materials, such as dildos used for condom demonstrations. Activists explained the police actions as backlash against "promoting homosexuality, which is inimical to Indian cultural values," according to Reuters. "In my program, our outreach workers are constantly harassed by the police on the pretext that we are promoting homosexuality," said Shaleen Rakesh of Naz Foundation (India) Trust. "How are we expected to prevent the spread of AIDS, which is transmitted primarily through sexual relations, without talking about sex?"

Ontario teachers union votes in favor of gay books

TORONTO—To cheers, the bulk of delegates at the annual meeting of the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario passed a motion advocating gay literature for primary school students, the *Toronto Star* reported. Among the 500-plus delegates present for the Aug. 15 vote, roughly 20 opposed the measure. The new policy puts the union in a position to, upon request, lobby school boards to establish funding for "materials for student use which reflect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender realities." Liona Laird, a lesbian, parent and teacher, introduced the motion. "It is my duty as a teacher to make sure that I provide the best education that I can for all of the children," Laird said, according to the *Star*. "There are many children who feel invisible because they see single-parent families and they see mom-and-dad families, but they're not exposed to same-sex parent families," she added.

—From staff and wire reports



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around the world

Morue: Only 11 weeks left to fight anti-gay measure

> Continued from Page 3

measure against same-sex health benefits on the fall ballot. The group must provide at least 10,000 signatures from registered voters in order to place the referendum before all Houston voters.

City Secretary Anna Russell said workers are in the midst of counting the signatures, collected on petitions that fill seven boxes.

"It will take several weeks," she said.

Wilson is confident the measure will be on the ballot.

"There's no doubt in my mind. We got over 30,000 signatures," he said. "Every signature we took down there was double-checked and triple-checked."

Gays mobilize opposition

Martin is among those leading the drive to combat HFFV's ballot referendum. He is a co-founder of Progressive Voters in Action, a group that organizes voters to support progressive issues, including gay rights.

Alejandro Morua, executive director and co-founder of PVA, said the group is working to raise awareness among gays. The Nov. 6 election is just 11 weeks away, he noted.

"If the community's really serious about defeating this measure, then we've got to get... people out," Morua said.

PVA plans phone banks staffed by volunteers who can call registered voters and gather

support against the referendum, if HFFV is successful in placing the measure before voters.

In addition, PVA plans a blockwalk Tuesday from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. to canvass and identify supporters in the Montrose and Heights neighborhoods, Morua said. So far, 105 volunteers have signed up to help with that walk, he added.

"Part of this is just to make sure that our supporters know about this measure and [to see] if we can get them to commit to vote against it in November," he said.

"The broader issue is that this is an up or down vote on gay people in the city. This is basically saying whether gay people deserve equal access to benefits like any other person.

Progressive Voters in Action

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INFO

Fest unites Asians

> Continued from Page 3

bers and once they start banding together, they will be stronger. They need to solidify," Boado said.

Asians and Friends of Houston participated in this year's Gay Pride parade, but no women joined them, Boado said. He noted it also was difficult to get some of the gay Asian men in the parade.

"It's a problem I face all the time. If they have to be in public, they don't want to do it. They say, 'But what if my mom sees me?' They don't want to show themselves in public," Boado said.

But, he added, if a private party is thrown, Asian gay men and lesbians attend in great numbers because they don't feel threatened.

"We had a pool party in July at someone's home and over 70 showed up," he said.

Similarly, organizers expect a good crowd for Freedom Weekend.

"The hardliners are coming, people like myself. And you have to remember there are groups like ours all over the country and if just a few come, you soon get close to 200," Boado said.

The weekend also promises a tour of NASA-Space Center, a photo shoot at the Galleria water wall, talent show and dancing. And, said Boado, an event not to be missed is his impersonation of Imelda Marcos.

Houston's chapter of Asians and Friends meets regularly for socials, fundraising and other community activities and strives to further understanding of the gay and lesbian culture of Asia.

Asians and Friends of Houston

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PLANT LIFE

How I shouldn't have spent my summer vacation

by DREW PLANT

As we reflect on the summer and on vacations taken and untaken, I wanted to share wisdom from my own summer outings. Whether you are headed to Branson, Mo., or the beach, I hope to help make your next trip the best it can be.

Start by trying not to complain about the child talking incessantly two rows back on the airplane; he will soon start whining, crying and screaming. You'll end up praying that it was just talking going on back there.

Ditto: Don't complain about the grown woman talking incessantly two rows back on the airplane; she will continue to do so for the rest of the flight, no matter what.

Feel free to not suffer in silence when the passenger seated next to you begins to pick his nose athletically. (And this was *before* takeoff.) Same for the passenger two rows forward who seems suddenly intent on combing out her cornrows. Just sing it out: *Foul call on the Public Beauty Moment!*

Never book a convertible with the rental car agency without asking what kind of car it will be. You will end up with something that will make Chitty Chitty Bang Bang seem like a super-charged musclecar. Saving grace: Pop in a Christina Aguilera CD or the "Throw Down" CD from Whitney's "The Greatest Hits" double pack and the car will instantly be cooler. (And you will look *so* good singing along!)

Do your best not to arrive in Fort Lauderdale during the Air & Sea Show. Straight people will be demonstrating their ability to get a lot of themselves into various small, loud automobiles. They will be, for the most part, loud, unwashed, unattractive, fat and annoying. I've even heard they recruit children and try to instigate the downfall of the modern gay family.

If you arrive at your guesthouse or at that can't-be-believed B&B and a porn movie is being filmed there, leave. Now. No questions. No illusions of the production company letting you act as a fluffer. Just go. You can rent "Tall Dark and Have Some" later if you just have to know what it was all about.

Remember not to put your jewelry in a toiletry bag on the back of the commode in your *faaa*-bu-lous mini suite: You will drop *something* in the john; then, you'll have to wear a ring from a less favorite husband.

Don't drink the entire jug of complimentary wine at the guesthouse. It is cheap and it is in a jug, and it's no way to win friends and be pretty. Make your own trip to the liquor store or send a trick. If all else fails, turn to

that third must-have that you always pack: pharmaceuticals. (The other two are cosmetics and condoms.)

Take a vacation from political correctness rather than challenging the all-boy establishment's Twinkie employee on why girlz can't even visit

obviously encouraging environment.

Further, even if it seems like a good idea at the time, don't tell gay guesthouse guests that your 4-year-old nephew constantly asks, "Are we on *bay*-cation yet?" while traveling. Soon, inebriated 40-year-old men

Don't befriend the photographer visiting from Europe. He will not actually give you the film from the camera afterwards.

this little slice of paradise. Hey, if the womyn he was escorting out wanted to see us naked, they wouldn't be lesbians and we manly things wouldn't have been traipsing around in front of one another half clad if we weren't all about being exclusive.

It's not a good idea to befriend the photographer from Europe. He will not actually give you the film from the camera afterwards. Nuf said.

The arbor overhead in the outdoor cocktail lounge will *not* support your weight. It looks like it will, but it won't. Besides, this is not junior high school gymnastics class; you haven't been that limber since the '80s and this isn't the best reason to hang upside down anyway.

Hint: If you do proceed and there is an inevitable crash and embarrassing moment, immediately proclaim the structure unsound, and loudly and publicly question the liability of such an

will be repeating the question to you endlessly—for days—and thinking they're cute. Somehow, it's just not the same.

No matter how clever or cute you may seem in that moment, "just say no" instead of daring a humpy Latin muscleman stranger to spin you around over his shoulders. (Okay, the spinning part was his idea and he *was* bragging about how much he could lift!) Proof: There is one sissy Kenneth Cole sandal somewhere in the waters off Key West. Surprise reputation enhancer, if you do proceed: Everyone at the tea dance will think you know Mr. Humpy better than you do.

Bon voyage!

Drew Plant is an Atlanta-based writer who would like to know where you have been thrown out of or asked to leave. He can be reached at drewbob@mindspring.com.

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VIEWPOINT

Aren't we all tired of the Cute Gay Guy?

by MARY I. WOODELL

Am I the only one out here who's offended? Maybe my neutral demographics (straight, white, married, female) allow me the luxury of vicarious touchiness—but really, isn't the Cute Gay Guy getting on anyone else's nerves?

The Cute Gay Guy in question, of course, is the one on every sitcom, in every movie—the stock character for the new millennium. He's just cute as a bug, with a fabulous wardrobe, a wicked wit—and no serious love interest in sight. Oh, he pines a little wistfully at times (when it suits the story line), but usually in commiseration with his best pal—who's, guess what, a girl! (Sigh! What a pity that he's, well, you know...)

What I notice about the Cute Gay Guy, other than the fact that he's everywhere, is that he's such a *mensch*—what a sweet guy! I also notice that the Cute Gay Guy comes in a couple of varieties, best exemplified by Will and Jack of "Will & Grace." Will, of course, is every mother's son; Just-Jack is every father's nightmare.

And taken together, they represent the full range of alternatives available to gay characters on network TV: the Dinner Queen and the Flamer. Each seems to have been cloned onto at least half a dozen primetime sitcoms.

In the good old days when men were men and took their bigotry straight, urban people of fashion used to have Dinner Jews; that is, persons of the Hebraic persuasion whom they could reasonably expect not to fart or slurp their soup at a social gathering. Dinner Jews were a handy thing to have, because they enabled their hosts to say blithely, "Of course, some of my best

He's on every sitcom, in every movie—he's cute as a bug, with a fabulous wardrobe and a wicked wit.

What a pity he's, well, you know...

friends..." ("And yes, they are a bit clan-ish, but they have such a *marvelous* sense of humor.")

I suppose the gay equivalent of the Dinner Jew would be a presentable man who can be relied on not to show up in a dress, make a pass at the hostess' husband, or talk about his recent breakup in mixed company.

Who would you rather be: the Flamer or the Dinner Queen? Or, more to the point, which is more offensive?

Hard to say; the Flamer is as overtly stereotypical as a modern day minstrel show. He does for gay men what Amos 'n' Andy did for African Americans, and what, in very recent memory, "The Nanny" did for Jewish women.

Why doesn't this piss people off? Sure, Sean Hayes is a talented actor and the writing is funny—but really, take a look at this guy! If I were a gay man, I'd be writing the networks.

The Dinner Queen is a sleeper. He's the Cute Gay Guy who nervous straight people want gay folks to be. Because he's utterly harmless—a euphemism, and a proxy, for sexless—and that's the way we like 'em.

It's okay if you're gay, so long as you're not, well, you know, *really* gay. And so long as you make up for it by being entertaining. Which, when you think about it, is a lot more insidious than slapstick.

Don't get me wrong: On balance I'm

glad to see gay men and lesbians incorporated into TV's McCulture, the lowest common denominator of popular culture. That's progress, and it's real, and it's important. And I know that as someone outside the tribe, I see progress differently. Maybe the Flamer really is progress—he may be a cartoon, but at least he's there.

It's the Dinner Queen I worry about. Would the Cute Gay Guy be TV's fixture of the year if he weren't so white and cute and funny and sensitive? Or if he had a boyfriend? Or a son? I'm betting he wouldn't, any more than I'd expect a sitcom about lesbian social

workers, or an ensemble drama set at Whitman-Walker, to be a major hit.

As someone who can remember Lucy and Ricky in their twin beds, I understand the concept of incremental progress. But I'd like to think that somewhere on the network's drawing board are plans for Will to find Mr. Right (or at least Mr. Oh All Right—this is, after all, a sitcom).

And wouldn't it be refreshing if he were just a little less, well, cute? How liberating this would be for all the other Cute Gay Guys struggling weekly to make their characters acceptable to the mainstream TV viewer.

More to the point: think what a relief it would be.

Mary I. Woodell is a Washington, DC-based consultant specializing in controversy management and risk communications; she can be reached through this publication.

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NYC jury hands AmFAR founding director fraud conviction

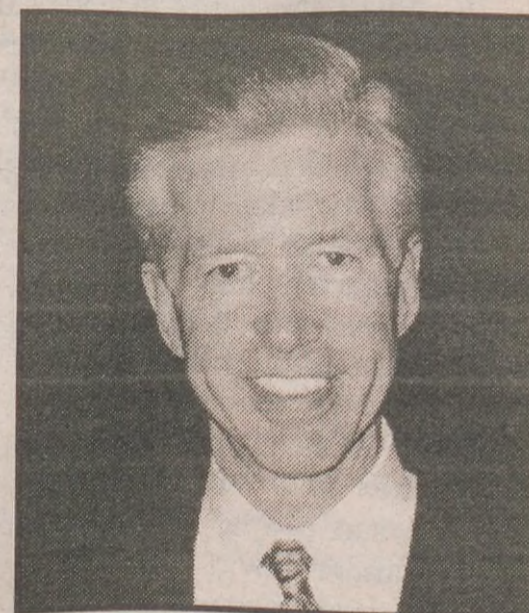
NEW YORK (AP)—A jury convicted Manhattan socialite Elizabeth Kummerfeld and three other defendants Aug. 17 of swindling investors out of millions of dollars. Kummerfeld, 69, is the founding director of the American Foundation for AIDS Research, known as AmFAR. She was convicted of conspiracy to commit fraud and faces up to five years in prison when she is sentenced. No date has been set. Assistant U.S. Attorney Marc Weinstein told jurors that Kummerfeld pocketed nearly \$300,000 in 1998 and 1999 from victims she lured into a get-rich-quick venture. The investors were told they would reap huge profits by investing in notes secretly traded by "top European banks." On one wiretap, Kummerfeld was heard assuring a potential investor that she was contributing her referral fees to a foundation supporting the United Nations, Weinstein said. The money instead went into Kummerfeld's bank account, he said. Kummerfeld once flew to Japan and persuaded a businessman to donate \$1 million to AIDS research for a kiss from Elizabeth Taylor.

Murder trial opens for IN male gay bar stripper

FRANKLIN, Ind. (AP)—The trial of a male stripper prosecutors contend betrayed the trust of a retired teacher by allegedly robbing him and his wife at knifepoint and then killing them began Aug. 15. Fernando Griffith, 24, is charged with murder, arson and burglary in the May 2000 slayings of 60-year-old Lloyd Georges and his 58-year-old wife, Judy. Both were retired schoolteachers. Johnson County Chief Deputy Prosecutor Brad Cooper told jurors that Griffith, who had worked for the Georges as a landscaper, killed the couple after a knifepoint robbery went bad. When he was arrested, two days after the murders, Griffith was allegedly carrying one of Lloyd Georges' rings, Cooper said. He also said drops of blood found at the Georges's home matched Griffith's DNA. But Griffith's attorney said that Lloyd Georges often bought jewelry for Griffith, an exotic dancer he had met in a gay bar, and Griffith frequently visited Georges' home.

CA judge denies bail for Rosenkrantz during appeal

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Superior Court judge denied bail earlier this month for convicted killer Robert Rosenkrantz, although the same judge had granted Rosenkrantz parole in June, arguing that Gov. Gray Davis has an unlawful policy of denying parole to murderers. Judge Paul Gutman, whose June 21 order to free Rosenkrantz is pending before a state appellate court, ruled there is no legal basis to support Rosenkrantz's motion to be released on bail or freed on his own recognizance while awaiting that ruling. Rosenkrantz, 34, is serving 17 years to life for the 1985 murder of a boyhood friend who revealed Rosenkrantz's homosexuality to Rosenkrantz's father. Rosenkrantz has been described as a model prisoner and has become an expert with computers during his 16 years in prison. Several lawmakers, and even the judge who sentenced him, have lobbied for his release. "The judge's decision wasn't unreasonable in light of the circumstances, but we would have liked him to grant bail so Mr. Rosenkrantz can be free while appeal is pending," said Donald Specter, Rosenkrantz's attorney.



Gov. Gray Davis blocked parole for Robert Rosenkrantz, a gay man and convicted killer. A Superior Court judge has ruled that Rosenkrantz will remain in jail while he appeals Davis's decision.

Brazilian neo-Nazi sentenced for anti-gay attack

SAO PAULO, Brazil (AP)—A judge has sentenced a neo-Nazi skinhead to more than three years in jail on attempted murder charges stemming from his part in a gang attack on a gay couple that left one man dead. Jorge da Conceicao Soler, 20, was sentenced to three years and four months for attempting to kill Dario Pereira in February 2000, as Pereira walked arm-in-arm with another man, Edson Neris da Silva, in a downtown Sao Paulo square. A gang of about 30 skinheads attacked them, and although Pereira got away, Neris was caught and beaten to death with brass knuckles and chains. Soler was acquitted of murder charges in Neris's death. Sao Paulo skinheads, who flaunt swastikas and greet each other with stiff-armed fascist salutes, frequently target gays, Jews, blacks and migrants from Brazil's impoverished northeast.

police beat

Gay CA man gets 50 years to life for killing partner

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Hollywood man must spend at least 50 years in prison for killing his male lover, a former deputy public defender. Michael Edward Shaw, 50, was sentenced Aug. 17 to 50 years to life in prison for the October 1999 shooting death of Albert Sanchez at the home they shared. The judge denied defense requests to reduce the conviction to second-degree murder or order a new trial. The defense maintained that Shaw fired in self-defense because he thought that Sanchez had retrieved a gun after ordering him out of the house. But Judge Craig Veals said the killing was "absolutely incomprehensible," adding that the victim had been "very generous to you, generous to a fault." Shaw has no previous criminal record.

—From staff and wire reports



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Women who sleep with women are susceptible to STDs



A study led by Dr. Seth L. Welles found that women who sleep with women face a 'small but not negligible' risk for STDs.

MINNEAPOLIS—Researchers reported in the August issue of the *American Journal of Public Health* that sexually transmitted diseases among women who have sex with women often go undiagnosed because many believe they are not susceptible to STDs, according to Reuters. "Frequently women who have female partners, as well as their physicians, have considered that these women are at low risk for STDs, but while the risk may be small it is not negligible," said Greta R. Bauer, a researcher from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health in Minneapolis. Bauer and Dr. Seth L. Welles collected data on 286 women attending the Twin Cities Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Pride Festival in 1997 and found that 21 percent reported having been previously diagnosed with an STD. Of those, 13 percent reported only having sex with women. "This study underscores the importance of routine diagnostic procedures such as Pap smears and STD testing even in women who have only had female partners," Bauer said.

New HIV vaccine developed in Atlanta shows promise

ATLANTA—A new HIV vaccine that has been tested in monkeys is currently on a development fast track for human clinical trials, the *AIDS Reader* reported. Scientists from Emory University and the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases combined two vaccines in a strategy that kept an HIV-like virus from developing in monkeys, even when the animals were exposed to very high doses of the virus months after immunization. Both vaccines were designed against SHIV, a virus containing components of HIV and the related monkey virus, simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV). SHIV infection mimics HIV infection, causing serious illness in macaque monkeys, according to the *Reader*. The report showed that 23 of the 24 vaccinated monkeys suppressed the virus to nearly undetectable levels during the 20-week follow-up. Virus levels in the remaining animal were intermittently higher but still more than 100 times lower than those in the four control animals that did not receive the vaccine. Although all 28 monkeys were infected, the vaccinated monkeys showed lower SHIV levels and quickly began to suppress the virus further.

U.S. Surgeon General says he won't seek reappointment

ANNISTON, Ala. (AP)—U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher will not seek reappointment to the nation's top medical post when his term expires in February, he said. "I would like to serve the remainder of my term in its entirety," Satcher told the staff of the *Anniston Star* during a visit to his home town last week. Satcher was sworn in as surgeon general Feb. 13, 1998, in an Oval Office ceremony with former President Clinton. Some conservatives wanted Satcher to resign in June after he released a report saying there's no evidence that teaching abstinence from sex works or that gays can become straight. Satcher said he would consider "how I can best serve the nation" after his four-year term ends. Satcher's most prominent work involved disease prevention, mental health and AIDS campaigns.

Green tea linked with reduced breast cancer risk

BOSTON—Drinking green tea on a regular basis may help protect women against breast cancer, according to a report in the July *Journal of Cellular Biochemistry*. Investigators stated in the preliminary report that rats that drank water containing green tea had reductions in the size of heart tumors compared with rats that drank only water. Additionally, tumors of tea-drinking rats developed later and were less invasive. The findings "suggest that green tea can be protective against breast cancer induced by environmental carcinogens," Dr. Gail Sonenshein, a professor of biochemistry at Boston University School of Medicine & Public Health, told Reuters. The findings, coupled with observations of lower rates of breast cancer in countries where green tea is consumed daily, suggest that green tea may benefit women as part of an overall healthy diet, according to Reuters. But patients who are undergoing radiation or chemotherapy for breast cancer should consult with their doctors before drinking large amounts of green tea, Sonenshein said.

Some AIDS patients suffer from depression, anxiety

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—Nearly half of the nation's adult AIDS patients suffer from symptoms of mental disorders, including depression and anxiety, according to a report in the recent edition of *Archives of General Psychiatry*. The report, issued by the HIV Cost & Services Utilization Study and led by the Rand research organization, showed that the estimates of mental disorders range from four to eight times higher than comparable estimates for the general population. The Santa Monica think tank based its report on interviews with nearly 2,900 adults being treated for HIV. "HIV symptoms are likely to have a negative impact on a person's functioning and well-being and thereby increases his or her psychological distress and anxiety," said Dr. Eric Bing, of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science in Los Angeles, and the study's lead author.

—From staff and wire reports



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GILEAD
SCIENCES

Activists disagree on pluses, minuses of concentrated gay voting blocs

➤Continued from Page 1

The Texas zip code with the highest number of same-sex unmarried partners, 8.6 percent of the area's homes, was in Austin. But there are gay and lesbian couples spread across Texas.

The count reports a lesbian couple in Crawford where Republican President George W. Bush vacations, and 80 lesbian and 55 gay male couples in Wichita Falls.

The Wichita Falls library was the center of a landmark book banning case over an attempt to restrict access to "Heather Has Two Mommies" and "Daddy's Roommate."

Queen City has a lesbian couple, but no male couples. There is no 'Gay' Texas, but three of Happy's 267 couples are gay or lesbian. But Jolly, Texas reports none—one of only 22 counties in the nation that doesn't report a gay couple.

In all, 42,912 of the state's 7 million households are headed by gay or lesbian couples. Nationally, about one half of a percent of all households are headed by same-sex couples; in Texas, the figure is higher at .58 percent.

Diane Hardy Garcia, executive director of the Lesbian & Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, said the Census 200 figures do not truly reflect the number of gay and lesbian households in the state.

"It's way under," she said. "In Austin alone, gays and lesbians represent 8 to 10 percent of the voting bloc."

"I have been all over the state and do know that there are gays and lesbians living everywhere," Hardy Garcia added. "The last session, there was someone from every legislative district in the state who was willing to identify him or herself as gay."

Hardy Garcia questioned that the only Texas counties that reported no gay or lesbian couples were Loving, Kenedy and Roberts.

"I know I had someone from the Davis Mountains at one of my events. Aren't they in one of those counties?" she asked.

If they are, they are not reflected in the Census.

Loving County, in far West Texas next to New Mexico, might not have any couples. It is the least populated Texas county, with 67 people spread over 673 square miles.

Kenedy County, south of Corpus Christi, and Roberts County, in the North High Plains, each have populations of less than 1,000.

Hardy Garcia said that about a third of the names on the LGRL mailing list are from rural areas.

"Those people have to come to some kind of event or do something to get on the list, so they're at least on the road to being out," she said.

Alejandro Moura, executive director of Progressive Voters in Action, the lead orga-

"I have been all over the state and do know that there are gays and lesbians living everywhere..."

Diane Hardy Garcia, Executive Director,
Lesbian & Gay Rights Lobby of Texas

nization fighting the proposed amendment to the Houston Charter to ban domestic partner benefits for same-sex couples, said he is pleased with the Census figures.

"It puts a face on the hurtful consequences of this proposal. The numbers show that it affects real people," he said. "As these numbers show, Houston has different types of families. [Houstonians For Family Values founder David] Wilson measures only one kind of family, but Houston is a diverse and cosmopolitan city which we should celebrate."

Gay couples across metro Houston

Census 2000 figures show gay couples living in every part of Harris County.

West University had 42 reported gay households, Southside had two, and Bellaire had 55. In these relatively affluent areas, there are more gay male households.

Shattering the myth that gay and lesbian couples are economically advantaged or are all white collar workers, Baytown has 140 same-sex couples, Deer Park has 37 and Pasadena has 223. In these less affluent, more blue-collar areas, lesbian couples outnumber the gay male couples.

Deborah Rogers, president of the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus, said the figures may mean more political power for gays.

"One of the things we've been talking about as we do candidate screening for the city elections is how much we need to make inroads into county government, since so much of our population lives in the county," said Rogers, who lives in far west Harris County.

"I'm glad to see the numbers about lesbian couples living in suburbia and reports that it is both about economics and 'lifestyle' issues," she added. "You have the [Dave] Wilsons and the like in the suburbs, but for the most part if you treat your kids well and keep your lawn up, your neighbors don't care what your partner is."

Rogers said the political implications of a dispersed gay vote are far reaching.

"The decentralization of a 'gay ghetto' works to our benefit in a number of ways," she said. "If all of our votes are in one or two districts, it is much easier to weaken our voice by splitting us into much weaker, gerrymandered districts. Also, we make small but tangible inroads with the political process when our community is on the 'front lines' of participation throughout the county, even in districts not considered

GLTB friendly."

But Hardy Garcia disagreed.

The plan for Texas legislative districts adopted by the Legislative Redistricting Board in July "deliberately broke up the districts of gay-friendly legislators," she said. "It hurts in major cities the most. We had built voting blocs in there. We have a lot more organizing to do in other communities. We're still at the level of building visibility in those communities."

The redistricting plan is now in the courts, but as it stands state Rep. Harryette Ehrhardt (D-Dallas) now lives three houses outside her former district and its concentration of gay voters.

State Rep. Glenn Maxey (D-Austin), the

state's only openly gay legislator, shares a district with two of his liberal colleagues, and locally, gay-friendly state Rep. Debra Danburg (D-Houston) saw her district split into four parts.

The 2000 Census did not specifically count the gay population but it did, for the first time, allow residents to describe their cohabitant as an "unmarried partner." The Census figures are the result of merging the number of people who checked off "unmarried partner" on their form with those who also said they lived with someone of the same sex.

The Census is not a tally of gays because the form does not ask about sexuality, but studies show about one third of gay men and lesbians are a part of a cohabiting couple, according to the New York Times.

About 328,000 households, more than 4 percent of the total households in the state, reported as unmarried partners living together. About one in 13 of Texas unmarried couples were homosexual, the U.S. Census Bureau reported.

Same-sex households by metro area

The 2000 Census found 60.5 million homes led by a couple. Of those, the top 25 metropolitan statistical areas ranked by the percentage of gay or lesbian homes:

CITY, STATE	% OF COUPLES WHO ARE GAY
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA	2.04
Santa Fe, NM	1.95
Portland, ME	1.60
Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL	1.56
Bloomington, IN	1.55
Austin-San Marcos, TX	1.53
Madison, WI	1.49
Burlington, VT	1.48
Springfield, MA	1.47
Seattle-Tacoma, WA	1.47
Albuquerque, NM	1.44
Gainesville, FL	1.44
Iowa City, IA	1.42
Atlanta, GA	1.40
New Orleans, LA	1.38
Asheville, NC	1.37
San Diego, CA	1.36
Eugene, OR	1.31
Los Angeles, CA	1.29
Portland, OR	1.28
New York-Long Island, NY	1.28
Sacramento-Yolo, CA	1.28
Lawrence, KS	1.28
Denver-Boulder-Greenley, CO	1.28
Athens, GA	1.27

Helms considered Congress's most outspoken opponent on gay issues

➤Continued from Page 1

as a "damn lesbian."

Helms told former Sen. Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.) that the only way to end the AIDS epidemic is to "stop the disgusting and immoral activities that continue to spread the disease."

Long conservative career

Like many politicians from the South, Helms began his career in politics as a conservative Democrat or "Dixiecrat," embracing the principles of racial segregation. After working as a Raleigh, N.C., newspaper editor in the late 1940s, Helms worked from 1951 to 1953 on the staff of two of North Carolina's Democratic senators.

After a stint as executive director of the North Carolina Bankers Association, Helms began work in 1960 as executive vice president and on-air commentator for North Carolina's WRAL-TV and the Tobacco Radio Network.

For the next 12 years, Helms became a highly recognized television personality in North Carolina, known for his strong conservative views on domestic issues and his fierce anti-Communist rhetoric when discussing foreign policy issues. But according to gay activists familiar with Helms' career, Helms did not talk about gay-relat-

ed issues at that time.

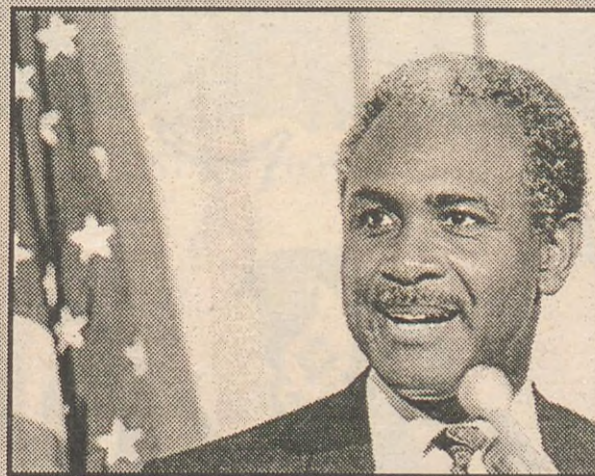
Helms became a Republican shortly before winning election to the U.S. Senate in 1972. He expressed support for an anti-gay amendment introduced in the House in 1977 by Rep. Larry McDonald (D-Ga.) and co-sponsored the Family Protection Act in 1979, which included several anti-gay clauses.

But Helms did not begin to initiate anti-gay amendments until after he won election to his third Senate term in 1984.

"That's when things really started to happen," said lesbian activist Mandy Carter of North Carolina.

Carter noted that Helms actually began his well-known practice of gay-baiting during his election campaign against popular North Carolina Gov. James Hunt, who was not known for taking strong positions on gay issues. Helms, pointing to gay support for the Hunt campaign, accused Hunt of being a captive of "special interests," including "militant homosexuals."

Between 1985 and 1993, Helms introduced a series of anti-gay amendments that earned him the reputation as Congress's most outspoken opponent on gay issues. He sought to attach most of his anti-gay measures to appropriations bills, including appropriations bills providing



Charlotte, N.C., Mayor Harvey Gantt lost a campaign in 1990 against Helms, who denounced Gantt for accepting support from the gay community.

funding for AIDS-related programs.

Helms angered gay activists and arts advocates when he sought to cut off funding for the National Endowment of the Arts after news surfaced that the endowment had funded a museum exhibit that featured the works of controversial gay photographer Robert Mapplethorpe.

Helms, among other things, objected to Mapplethorpe's photos that depicted gay men in sexually explicit poses.

In his re-election campaigns of 1990 and 1996, Helms waged a fierce campaign of both gay-baiting and race-baiting tactics against Democrat Harvey Gantt, who ran

against Helms in both those years.

'Not your garden-variety lesbian'

Helms' anti-gay actions made national headlines once again in 1993 when he unleashed a fierce campaign to block President Bill Clinton's nomination of lesbian Roberta Achtenberg to the post of U.S. assistant secretary of housing.

Helms startled his Senate colleagues when he stated in a press interview that his main reason for opposing Achtenberg was because she was "damn lesbian."

He stated in another interview that Achtenberg is "not your garden-variety lesbian — she's a militant activist-mean lesbian, working her whole career to advance the homosexual agenda."

The Senate voted 58-31 to approve Achtenberg's nomination, a development viewed as a strong rebuke to Helms by his fellow senators, including many GOP senators.

Helms resumed his anti-gay endeavors less than a month after the Democrats won back control of the Senate in June of this year, forcing him to give up his post as committee chair. On June 14, Helms pushed through the Senate an amendment calling for withholding federal education funds for public schools that deny meeting space for local Boy Scout troops.

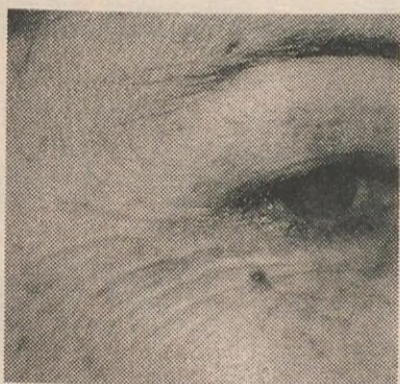
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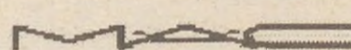
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Out on the Bayou

A guide for your leisure time

HOUSTON VOICE • AUGUST 24, 2001

Theaters of sheer delights

by D. L. Groover

Houston hosts two top-notch musicals

Whatever you're doing, stop!

I mean it: Stop right now—and order tickets for "Ruthless," the best musical now playing in southwest Texas. Hell, it's the best thing playing anywhere in Texas.

If there's a soft spot in your jaded little heart for the Broadway musical, "Ruthless" is for you. If you think Ethel Merman could walk on water, or Stephen Sondheim might possibly be the second coming, or singing and dancing a show tune is better than a Shakespeare sonnet, then you'd better not miss this fabulous little show at Masquerade Theatre.

It's sheer pleasure from fade in through blackout: a wacky combo of "Gypsy," "The Bad Seed" and "Forbidden Broadway" with a smattering of "All About Eve" around its wickedly tattered edges. Throw in a trans parody of

Rosalind Russell for good measure, add eight delightfully talented performers under a smashing directorial debut by Gary Lyons, with screamingly funny costumes by Stephanie Bradow, and "Ruthless" is the goofy result. It's the gayest musical of the season with a sky-high entertainment quotient.

Here's what happens: Little Tina Denmark (Katharine Randolph) is one of those precocious showbiz brats who do five minutes when they open the refrigerator door and the light goes on.

She tap dances on the coffee table to show off her skills. She's got talent, and she'll entertain you until one of you drops from exhaustion—I guarantee it won't be her.

She wants the glamorous life of a star so bad she can taste it, even though her mom Judy (Deanna Julian), with Donna Reed flipped hair and pearls over hostess dress, worries where all that talent has come from. Ah, but Sylvia St. Croix (Clint Biggerstaff) knows. In her tailored Technicolor pantsuit and capped by a perfect peacock turban, Miss St. Croix becomes Tina's agent, mentor, Svengali.

If Tina was born to entertain, then Sylvia's mission is to see that talent spread like a virus. Whatever it takes, Tina will be a star, even if it's over somebody's dead body. And we know it will be. Soon.

The story continues with shocking ridiculousness, each new revelation funnier than the last: past lives unmasked, reconciliations swooned over. This is the type of show where Judy quickly sprays the coffee table with Pledge after Tina's showstopping enfilade. When Sylvia asks, "Can I be frank?", Judy politely covers her own ears.

Tina, of course, serves time for her murderous pursuit of fame and fortune, and when she emerges from the Daisy Clover School



One Mo' Time



Ruthless

➤ Continued on Page 17

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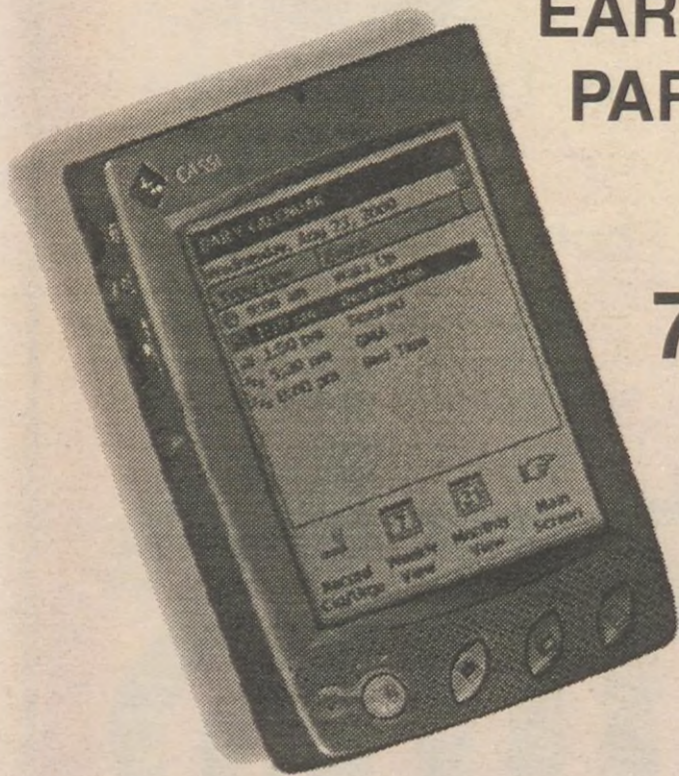
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Baptist church in TX leaves group over anti-gay policies

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Members of the University Baptist Church in Austin have withdrawn from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship because the national organization enforces anti-gay policies. Church members voted Aug. 15 to withdraw from the fellowship, which prohibits the hiring of non-celibate gay men and lesbians, bars them from missionary work and prohibits the organization from giving money to gay groups or causes. "Because it is God's call for our congregation to minister with gay and lesbian Baptist Christians and their families, we cannot in good conscience support an organization which discriminates against our brothers and sisters in Christ," wrote the Rev. Larry Bethune in a letter from the Austin church to the national group. The Cooperate Baptist Fellowship represents 1,800 churches and is one of several alternative fellowships formed recently because of disagreements between conservatives and moderates in the Southern Baptist Convention.

NC minister receives warmer welcome 22 years later

CHARLOTTE, N.C.—Rev. Carter Heyward learned Sunday you can go home again when she preached for the first time in 22 years at Myers Park Baptist Church. The *Charlotte Observer* reported that Heyward's invitation to speak at the Charlotte church in 1979—several months after coming out as a lesbian—resulted in lay leaders calling on the pastor to rescind the offer and a few families quitting to protest her appearance. "I could not stay closeted and preach as a priest or theologian with much integrity," said Heyward, a Charlotte native and a nationally known Episcopal priest. During a discussion following her sermon, she advised people with different biblical views on homosexuality to talk to each other. "We need to be able to listen to one another—ideally to one another's stories as well as to one another's opinions about what is right and wrong," said Heyward, who teaches at Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass.



Rev. Carter Heyward, an openly lesbian pastor, returned to a Charlotte, N.C., church on Sunday, some 22 years after being rebuffed by lay leaders.

Gay priest resigns from Church of England after 18 years

LONDON—Rev. Martin Kelly recently became the first Anglican priest to publicly discuss why he is leaving the Church of England after 18 years of service. "I have stayed as long as I have because I feel called to be a priest," he wrote. "I did not ask to be gay. I did not ask to be Christian. It is what I am." London's *Daily Telegraph* reported that Kelly, priest-in-charge of St. Andrew's Church, Limsfield Chart, Kent, explained his decision in a letter to Rt. Rev. Tom Butler, bishop of Southwark. "There is a rule of celibacy for homosexuals but not for heterosexuals, and I cannot live with the double standards any more," Kelly said. At the Lambeth Conference in Canterbury several years ago, the majority of the 800 bishops of the Anglican Communion reiterated their stance against allowing non-celibate gay clergy to practice or be ordained in the denomination. Four Church of England priests have resigned in the past year to protest the denomination's ban on non-celibate gay clergy.

England's Anglican clergy quietly support gay unions

WEST MIDLANDS, England—Anglican clergy who support gay couples are privately presiding over unofficial marriage-style services at churches across the West Midlands, the British Broadcasting Corporation recently reported. "It is bold, prophetic and courageous clergy who believe that it is their duty who are prepared to offer services to us," Richard Kirker, general secretary of the Lesbian & Gay Christian Movement, told BBC Radio WM. The Lesbian & Gay Christian Movement receives at least 40 requests each year for marriage blessings, and there are about 500 requests a year for such services from across the country, BBC Online News reported. Kirker said the church hierarchy officially "turns a blind eye" to such ceremonies but in some cases they try to discourage clergy from participating in them. Very Rev. Gordon Mursell, provost of St. Philip Cathedral in Birmingham, said, "If a couple wanted to commit themselves to each other, I would not have a problem with that, although I would not call it a marriage."

CA gay Catholic priest set to quit post with ministry

LOS ANGELES—After serving 11 years, Father Peter Liuzzi, who is gay and celibate, was set to resign this week as director of the Los Angeles Roman Catholic Archdiocese's Ministry with Gay & Lesbian Catholics. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that Liuzzi's encounter with a dying man his cousin asked him to administer the last rites to 18 years ago helped spur the priest's commitment to HIV/AIDS and gay civil rights causes. The man, who died of AIDS-related complications, was his cousin Gary Rini's partner, Kevin. A conservative Catholic newspaper outed Liuzzi after he acknowledged his sexual orientation during a parish meeting. "What does it mean to be a priest? I think it means to be one who bears. Jesus is the priest. He bears the ambiguity. He bears the contradictions," said Liuzzi, a Carmelite priest under solemn vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

—From staff and wire reports

religion report



For more news, visit
www.houstonvoice.com

'One Mo' Time' a perfect fit in Great Caruso

➤ Continued from Page 15

for Psychopathic Ingenues, her mother Judy has become a star on Broadway.

There seems to be a lineage, some star gene, that runs through all the characters in "Ruthless," which accounts for half the fun and many of the disclosures.

The cast is scrumptious and couldn't be better, anchored by the above-mentioned comic trio with their bulls-eye performances, and augmented by the antic timings from Allison Sumrall's harried third-grade teacher, Melissa Moores, satisfying little

Louise, Holly Vee's chopped liver Lita Encore, Libby Evans, taxi-checked modern thespian, and the scheming desperate Eve of Amy Krivohlavek.

With its bitchy backstage showbiz barbs, witticisms, and all-round tom-foolery, this 1992 musical has been a big hit off-Broadway ever since its premiere. Its many charms and effervescent zaniness are intact in Masquerade's polished loving production, and ready to be savored.

To see it, all you have to do is drop what you're doing. And you should.



The cast of Ruthless

"One Mo' Time"

Whoever would've thought that a strip mall near Gessner and Westheimer would house the most distinctive theater in all Houston? Tucked into a corner away from the ordinary tack and glitz sits the Great Caruso Dinner Theater, terribly unprepossessing on the exterior but wild, wild, wild once inside.

It's an Edwardian riverboat overflowing with grand architectural excess: stained glass skylight, Venetian marble staircase, tiers of tables laid out for dining, pressed tin ceiling, wrought iron grillwork and ornately carved bargework, tassels and crystal drops, faux gaslight lamps, caryatids holding up the balcony, theater lithographs of performers plastering the walls. It's a great stage set of a theater, like something off the Titanic.

Where else can a reviewer comment on the show and the Cajun blackened salmon? (Perfectly moist with just enough spice, by the way.) I can also say that the current show is a perfect fit in this gem of a space: Welcome to Vernel Bagneris' "One Mo' Time," a black vaudeville revue set in the '20s.

The slight book, which details the mostly comic backstage squabbles between the quintet of performers, is there mostly to give them breathing time between the "onstage" numbers. Sometimes the songs comment on what just happened in the dressing room, but it's fairly thin stuff and mercifully doesn't get in the way of the high

voltage struttin' and singin' that these pros do so beautifully.

The songs are a Reader's Digest compilation of standards from vaudeville fare above 125th Street: "Kiss Me Sweet," "Cake Walkin' Babies," "Black Bottom," "Kitchen Man," "After You've Gone," etc., all given an erotic sheen so genuine and performed so effortlessly that we wish they'd cut the book and add more numbers.

If the above "Ruthless" is Houston's best musical right now, then "One Mo' Time" with its toe-tapping choreography by Aaron Callies and theatrical flair supplied by director Anthony Boggess-Glover—who doubles as one of the performers—is Houston's best revue.

INFO

"Ruthless"

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Wham, bam, to the moon, Alice! The sixth annual open house, free to all who boldly go where no one has gone before—OK, 130,000 went there last year—is held in conjunction with the Ballunar Liff-off Festival, a three-day event also held at the Johnson Space Center that features more hot-air balloons than you ever thought existed. There's also a midway with carnival games, skydiving exhibitions if you look up, and balloon flights for the adventurous in the early mornings. More than 150 exhibits and displays are available at 20 of the center's buildings, including the rarely seen 6.2 million gallon pool of the Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory where astronauts train for space walks. Employees will explain what they do and why the space program costs so much. Be kind to them.
Aug. 25, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Johnson Space Center
Nasa Road 1

281-244-5312

"Theater District Open House"

Ha, even tropical storm Allison can't dampen our Theater District for long! Witness their Open House, a greatest show on earth for the Alley Theatre, Broadway in Houston, Da Camera, Houston Ballet, Houston Grand Opera, Houston Symphony, Society for the Performing Arts and Theatre Under the Stars. Eat, tour backstage, order tickets, view the performers up close and personal in this day-long celebration to culture. Come downtown and see what you're missing.
Aug. 26, Noon until 6 p.m.
Downtown near the Wortham, the Alley, and Arial theaters
500 Texas

"Red, Hot and Blue: A Salute to American Musicals"

Did you know that W.C. Fields was one of the greatest jugglers who ever lived? If you have to ask who W.C. Fields was, then you'd better get to the Central Library Jesse H. Jones Building in downtown Houston for this dazzling multimedia exhibition sponsored and organized by the National Portrait Gallery, the National Museum of American History, the Smithsonian Institution, and one of Jane Fonda's former husband's former corporations, Turner Classic Movies. These big four don't put on just any old show, and this extravaganza is nothing less than the history of the Broadway and Hollywood musical as seen through the work of performers, producers, composers, lyricists, choreographers, set and costume designers, and directors from 1866 to the present: from

Bowery beer gardens to Hammersmith's Roof Garden, from Ziegfeld to Merrick, from Marilyn Miller to Marilyn Monroe.
Through Aug. 26
Houston Public Library, Central Library Branch
500 McKinney

"The Glass Menagerie"

Tennessee Williams' first success was written while the struggling gay writer held a fruitless job at MGM, spending his days at the beach at Santa Monica. The movie studio didn't want his depressing, lyrical screenplay about a Southern belle who lives through her illusions and destroys her family in the process, but his agent Audrey Wood knew a good thing when she read it. Two years later, in 1945, his play with one of his most enduring characters, Amanda Wingfield, opened in Chicago and his career was off and running. Elizabeth Ashley brings her fire and distinctive alto to bear on this classic of the American stage.
Aug. 24 through Sept. 22
Alley Theatre
615 Texas Avenue
713-228-8421

"Bernardo Bellotto and the Capitals of Europe"

Trained by his uncle, the extraordinary cityscape artist Antonio Canaletto, Signore Bellotto soon moved from his conventional but exquisite views of Venice to long shot paintings of the great cities of Europe, hence the title of this exhibit, which contains many works not previously seen in the U.S. By age 16, he was a member of the guild of Venetian painters, but he left Venice at age 25 and

never returned, staying and immortalizing on canvas views of 18th century Warsaw, Vienna, Munich, Dresden, Rome and Florence. His work is detailed to a fare-thee-well with an unrivaled luminosity. If you stare too long you will lose yourself in the daily life so lovingly conjured. This is a lost painter who justly deserves his now-found fame.
Through Oct. 21
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Audrey Jones Beck Building
5601 Main
713-699-7300

"Falsettos"

William Finn and James Lapine's two-musical musical ("March of the Falsettos," 1981; and "Falsettoland," 1990) is a seminal work in the history of gay theater and the history of AIDS. Marvin, the gay Jewish protagonist—mostly Jewish—has left his wife and settled into domestic dysfunction with his lover Whizzer and Marvin's son Jason. The end of Part I sees Whizzer and everyone else in his life walk out on Marvin. In Part II, the lesbian couple next door will cater Jason's Bar Mitzvah and the ex-wife will embrace Whizzer as part of her extended family. The ending will leave not a dry eye in the house. This production, produced and directed by the Alley's Paul Hope, responsible for the triumphant "Follies" of last season, is a benefit for the Center for AIDS. If you miss this, you are a Philistine, a moron, and NO Broadway baby.
Aug. 28-30
Ovations
2536-B Times Boulevard
713-522-9801

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- Rising rates of infection in Houston and the United States
- Prevention and Safe Sex Awareness

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This program is free and open to the community

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- D. L. Groover, Houston Voice

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Homefront

Variety abounds at convention

● Garden professionals get close look at new products, ideas to enhance any type of outside space

by ELLA TYLER

What are the pro gardeners doing now? Hiding out from the heat. Nursery and landscape professionals and a few garden writers spent last weekend in air-conditioned comfort at their convention and trade show in Dallas. They'll spend the next few weeks inside, studying the catalogues to decide what to order for spring.

The message for you: Give your plants enough water to survive, treat serious disease or insect problems, and cut back any plant that is overtaking the backyard. Wait for cooler weather to do anything else, including planting what you've bought at the sales. October is soon enough to winterize the lawn, plant your fall color and spring bulbs, and put those sale plants in the ground. Do put out a hummingbird feeder and remember to keep those bird-baths full. If you have roses, a light pruning and careful fertilizing will ensure a pretty show in about six weeks.

As you drive around, notice what plants look good and which are just not holding up to the heat. Check out the Galleria area plantings. These are the ones you want next summer. Make notes. Plan what's next for your garden. Where would a shade tree be nice? Do you want a fountain? What spring bulbs you want?

So what's new?

The crowd stopper was a fish-styled Adirondack chair. They're made of white cedar and retail for about \$250. Check lola-woodcreations.com for a local source.

I stopped and said "Well, la de da," to myself when I spotted a display of stainless steel tools with black handles. The shovel is just the thing for a ceremonial groundbreaking, and the hand tools could be a gift for a River Oaks Garden Club member. One sales person demonstrated the comfortable (ergonomic, even) grip and the other showed the stainless steel going all the way up the handle. If your favorite high-end garden supply place doesn't have these, check ragarden.com.

I was truly intrigued by the mist makers that were shown with a lot of the small indoor fountains. They produce a fog that looks like the smoke produced by dry ice. The mist is so fine that it doesn't feel wet. They come with some fountains, but also can be bought separately.

The table fountain business is booming, and the selection now ranges from the truly wonderful to the truly tacky. The virtue of the diversity is that you can, if you look long enough, find one that you love. One of



A fish-styled Adirondack chair made of white cedar stopped the crowd at last weekend's garden professionals' convention in Dallas.

my favorites is an icy green glass bowl with a fountain, fogger and light, on a wrought iron stand. It's from Alpine, at alpine4u.com.

Indoor fountains are important to your Feng Shui, and so is Lucky Bamboo. These are stalks of bamboo, sometimes arranged in intricate patterns or grown in spirals, grown in water. If you want some, they should be easy to find at a nursery or florist, at least by spring.

I am a big fan of soil polymers, those water retaining crystals you mix with your soil. They act like sponges to hold and release water to your plant when it needs it. These now come in a spike that you push into the dirt so you don't have to repot.

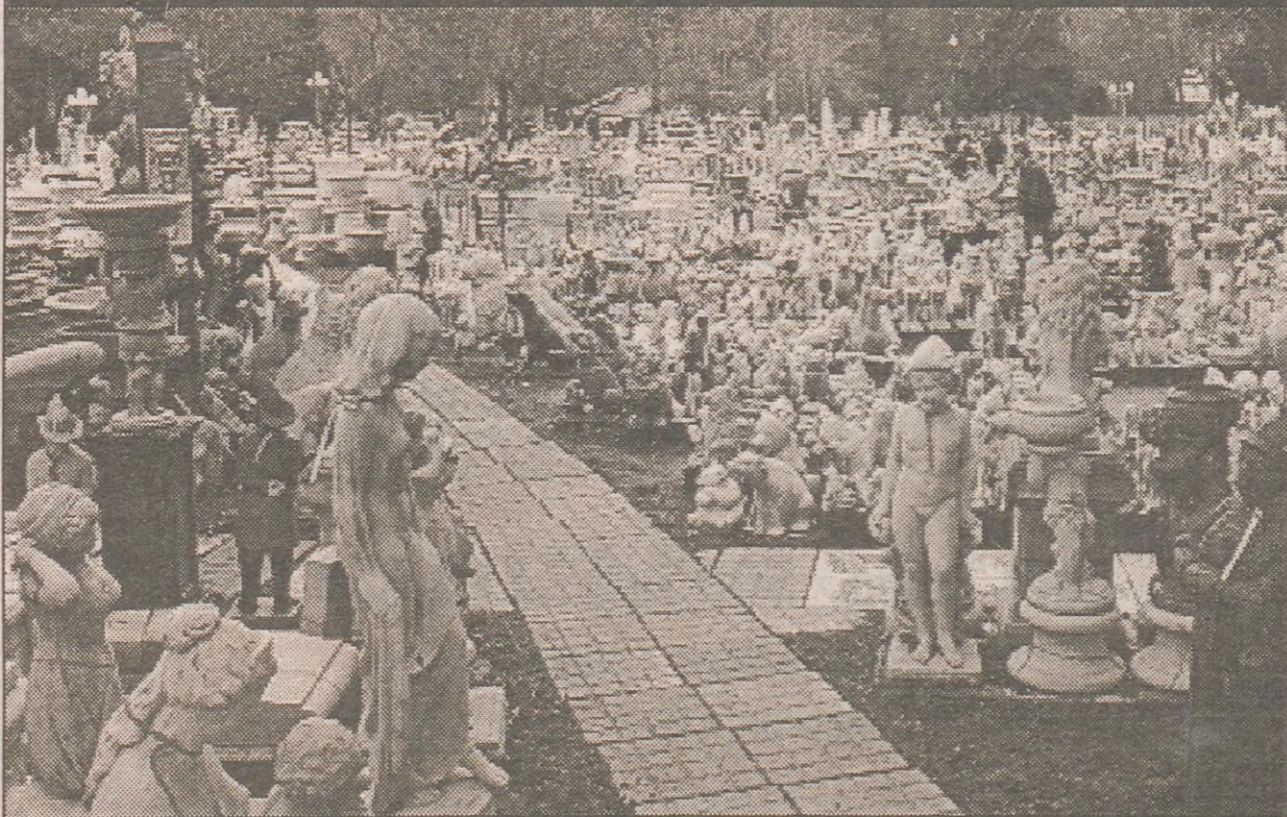
One of the virtues of shows like this is that you get to see products in use that you've only read about. I have heard good things about a product called Anti-stress from Polymer Ag, but had never seen it at work. You spray it on and it makes a skin that protects plants from drying out, gives a few degrees of frost protection, and reduces transplant shock. You really cannot tell that it is on the plant.

In the six years that I've been going to this show, one of the biggest changes is the increase in decorative items for the garden. There are now pots, fountains, statues, lanterns and more, all of which are art for your garden. They help make even a tiny area special.

The other big change has been the proliferation of environmentally friendly products for the retail consumer. Pressure from the EPA in the form of increasing regulation and restriction of pesticides and combined with consumer pressure means that you truly can keep your plants off drugs.

This is always a pretty show—but this was the prettiest. A friend had talked me into test driving a tractor at the outdoor equipment demonstration, but it was, fortunately, rained out.

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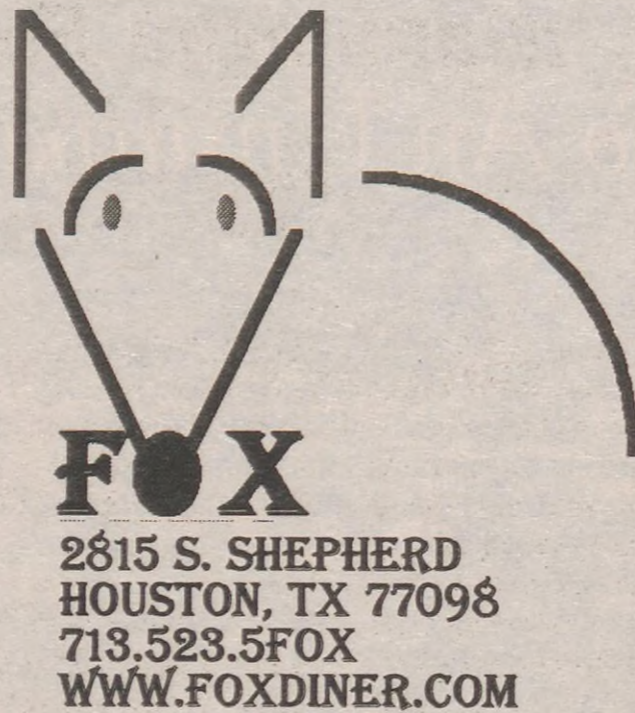
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Eating Out

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Pricey but delicious cuisine

Downtown restaurant provides unpretentious atmosphere for Italian-influenced dishes

by KATHREEN LEE

Zula's. The name just flows out of your mouth like an exotic African river.

Actually, according to an employee, the name originates from the owners' fondness for the letter 'z' and after a little brainstorming, they just came up with Zula. Upon my first reading of the name and conjectures on its origin, I fancied African tribal decor and cuisine, something distinct from the mainstream. However, located in the heart of downtown amidst other chic restaurants, I wondered how different Zula's would be from the other characteristic downtown establishments.

Zula's offers the sleek decor and service typical of many urban restaurants. High back upholstered seats and surround-sound plush booths shimmer in the sheeny but dark cast of plum, silver, maroon and gold. Sixteen feet torchiere lamps—which bloom like daisy petals at the top and feature alternating flashes of green light along their lengthy mesh stems—are reminiscent of futuristic lounge decorations one might witness on an episode of Star Trek.


The two-tiered restaurant has an upstairs mezzanine which wraps around the border of the walls and overlooks the central dining room floor below. While Zula's does not moonlight as a dance club, once chairs and tables from the main floor are removed, the eccentric lamps efflorescing with alternating lights and the eclectic mix of music could easily metamorphasize the restaurant into a hip dance lounge.

The owners intended Zula's to offer an exciting ambiance that combines "the comfort of fine dining with the thrill of Las Vegas." However, Zula's atmosphere is more refined and unobtrusive rather than flashy or gaudy like Las Vegas. And, unlike so many other downtown restaurants in Houston, Zula's subdued music volume allows patrons to actually hold conversations without shouting over the din of pretentious club beats.

As for its fine dining, Zula's claims to offer New American Cuisine, which is basically just an ornate term for fusion. Attempting to mimic the U.S.'s cultural salad bowl, chef Lance Fegen created his menu as "an approachable journey across the globe that epitomizes a refined fare that is not over the top and never blasé."


Despite this testimony to cultivate and blend global flavors, a quick perusal of the menu—which includes dishes like Beef Carpaccio (\$10), Portabello Risotto (\$10), Veal Rib-Eye (\$26), and Pork Tenderloin (\$18)—reveals offerings more heavily influenced by Italian, and maybe a dash of Spanish and Southern cuisines.


Many of Zula's "Small Plates" could eas-





Zula's
1000 Capital Street
713-227-7052






FOOD FILE

Food: 

Service: 

Value: 

Scene: 

-  Opt for bread, water at home
-  OK, if you really must
-  Fine for most
-  Worth the drive, so live a little
-  As good as it gets

ily serve as regular entrees. For instance, the Mussels (\$10) which are roasted in a garlic, white wine, and tomato based sauce are small by normal standards. However, Zula's makes up in numbers what each mussel might lack in size and piles your plate with shells. Furthermore, the small surface area to volume ratio allows the seasoned dressing to fully saturate the meat and each bite, albeit small, is a delectable treat.

In another small plate, the Portabello Risotto, the smooth texture of the creamy rice perfectly complements the soft y pithy peas and portabello. The truffle butter and thyme added a rich and savory flavor to the already deep texture.

Zula's offers a wide variety of meats for their entrees ranging from Wild Striped Bass (\$27) to Quail Cacciatore (\$23), and strict vegetarians might have a difficult time finding any suitable entrees. The Tuna Filet "Mignon" (\$24) is best when ordered medium rare, and the fresh meat along with the tangy flavor of the black grape vinaigrette seasoning provides a refreshing and seemingly light dinner choice.

While its delicious but customary cuisine and its slightly more subdued atmosphere may distinguish itself from other downtown establishment, Zula's conforms with other downtown restaurants when it comes to price. Zula's promotes itself as a "white tablecloth" restaurant where it is "the" place to be seen when dining out in Houston, which directly translates to "expensive."

According to their own advertisement, Zula's is "a place where the fantastically wealthy, and the simply fantastic, wine, dine and get notice." So if you have the luxury to break the bank and you want to splurge in a chic but unpretentious atmosphere, then I would recommend Zula's for your next downtown venture.

"quote/unquote"

compiled by REX WOCKNER

"Most of my dates were on the gay side."

—Actress Debbie Reynolds on the rising young actors the studio arranged for her to be seen with following her success in "Singing In The Rain," to the Associated Press, Aug. 1



Debbie Reynolds

"GLAAD is steadfast in its belief that this film is dangerous, and Kevin is steadfast in believing it's a satire. The audience is not going to be separating satire from acceptable behavior when they're bombarded with constant 'fag jokes.'"

—Scott Seomin of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation on director Kevin Smith's new movie "Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back," to E! Online, Aug. 2

"Being gay or lesbian—a 'chi-chi' man/gal or a 'battyman'—is the ultimate sin in Jamaica, an island paradise so steeped in religion that it holds the Guinness Book of World Records title of having the most churches per square mile and where it is still legal to arrest two men caught having sex."

—The Miami Herald, Aug. 6

"I'm not going to charge people criminally for what they thought was a consensual act between adults. We do not send female officers into sports bars to come on to guys to see which ones respond and then arrest them. We should not be sending undercover decoys into homosexual-act areas to do exactly the same thing."

—Wayne County, Mich., Public Prosecutor Michael Duggan, Aug. 6



Howard Dean

"The institution of marriage has not collapsed. None of the dire predictions have come true. There was a big rhubarb, a lot of fear-mongering, and now people realize there was nothing to be afraid of."

—Vermont Gov. Howard Dean on the one-year anniversary of Vermont's civil unions "gay marriage" law, to the New York Times, July 31. Vermont officials have conducted 2,479 civil-union ceremonies, 502 among Vermonters and 1,977 among out-of-staters. Twice as many women as men have tied the knot.

"Gay men—not because they're gay but because they are men in an all-male subculture—are almost certainly more sexually active with more partners than most straight men. (Straight men would be far more promiscuous, I think, if they could get away with it the way gay guys can.) Many gay men value this sexual freedom more than the stresses and strains of monogamous marriage (and I don't blame them)."

—Andrew Sullivan writing in the New Republic, Aug. 13

"Ellen [DeGeneres] and I are very good friends, and yes, we definitely commiserated."

—Rocker Melissa Etheridge to Atlanta's Etcetera magazine, Aug. 3. Both women's lesbian lovers left them after deciding they preferred men.

"A lot of male readers are looking for specific sexual content that's hard for me to understand, so I overcompensate for being female by running more gay male content than may be necessary."

—Eleanor Brown, editor of the Toronto gay newspaper Xtra!, to the gay press newsletter Press Pass Q, Aug. 13

"I've gotten a gazillion emails [since coming out publicly July 28] and it has blown me away. There has not been one punitive remark. It renders me almost speechless. But I wanted to make this statement. It was something I felt compelled to do, and everybody in the band has been so supportive. Now I can walk shoulder to shoulder in Boys Town in Chicago and say 'I'm openly gay like everyone else.' I feel like I've finally come home."

—Styx bass player Chuck Panozzo to Montreal's Hour, Aug. 9



Chuck Panozzo

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Rev. Janet Parker

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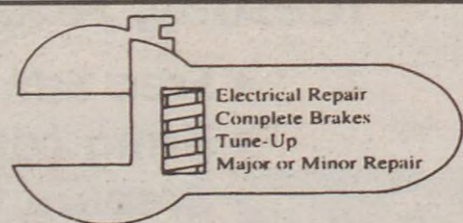



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community calendar

saturday, sept 1

After Hours. KPFT 90.1 FM. 12 a.m. to 3 a.m. 713-526-5738.
Q-Patrol walks the streets 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.
Dignity mass. 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.
Houston Chain Gang Bicycle Club. Call for ride locations. 713-863-1860.
Gay & Lesbian Breakfast Club. 9:30 a.m. 281-437-0636.
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.
Asians and Friends. International Friendship Weekend 2001 continues. 713-626-6300.

sunday, sept 2

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. 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. to noon. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com
Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center. Drop in Hours 2-5 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
Asians and Friends. International Friendship Weekend 2001 continues. 713-626-6300.
PFLAG. Monthly meeting. 2 p.m. 713-467-4105.

monday, sept 3

**Some events may be canceled due to the Labor Day holiday.
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 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.
"Homosexuality and the Bible." Workshop. Maranatha MCC. 713-528-6756.
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 • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

tuesday, sept 4

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

Free HIV Testing 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.
Men's Network. Discussion group for social, educational development of gay and bisexual men. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.
Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry Open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 281-633-2555.
Rainbow Ringers free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. Two-hour free dance workshops. No partner needed. Beginner. 2 Step, Waltz, Shuffle & Swing Drop in anytime. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.
CPR Classes. 3 p.m. 713-607-7700.
Bi-Net Houston. Men's Social. 7 p.m. 713-467-4380.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
Lesbian Health Initiative. 7 p.m.. 713-603-0023

wednesday, sept 5

Free HIV Testing. Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2015 Thomas Street 713-793-4026.
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.
Project: Caesar. Workshops. AFH. 3203 Wesleyan. 713-623-6796.
Bible Study. Noon & 6:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal. 713-526-6665.
Spiritual Uplift service. 7 p.m. Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.
Freelance Art Classes by Kermit Eisenhut for HIV+ individuals. 1 to 4 p.m. Lunch provided. 713-523-9530.
Houston Tennis Club. 7:30 -9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com
Lesbian Literature Discussion Group. 7 p.m. 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.
Center for AIDS. Women's mixer. 7 p.m. 713-527-8210.

Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition • Free HIV testing and counseling 6-9 p.m. • Houston Committee for People's Radio. 6:30 p.m. • 713-524-3818.

thursday, sept 6

Rainbow Ringers 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.
Gay Houston. New social group for all ages. 7 p.m. 713-526-9318.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Generation Sex. 7 p.m. • Positive Art Workshop Photography exhibition 6:30 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
GCTG. Monthly meeting. 713-780-4282.

friday, sept 7

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) Meeting. 713-942-7002.
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.
Q-Patrol walks the streets. 9 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.
Kolbe Project. Morning Prayer. 10 a.m. Movie Night. "The Truman Show." 7 p.m. 713-861-1800.
Houston Tennis Club. Houston Tennis Club. 7:30 -9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com
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. • 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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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Benefiting Houston Buyers Club & PWA Coalition • Sunday, Sept 23 • 5 to 10pm • Club Rehab @709 Franklin • 713-880-4014 • HoustonMisfits@aol.com

BAY AREA GAYS

There is a social group for gays & lesbians in the Clear Lake area • 281-488-0537

EROTIC MASSAGE WORKSHOP

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Houston Humane Society

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THE TANGO BRUNCH

Benefit for Steven's House • \$30 donation • Argentinean Food & Tango lessons • Featuring the Latin singers No Duo • Sunday, August 26 • 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. • Tango Cafe • 224 Westheimer • 281-597-1199 • 713-522-5757.

CITIZENS FOR ANIMAL PROTECTION

CAP offers a Pet Yearbook. Your \$25 donation will place your critter's name & photo in the "Class of 2001" pet yearbook • Tickets for the Celebrity PAWS Gala 2001 are available • For more information, call Lyn Robertson • 713-729-9316.

L.U.E.Y ART CONTEST

Let Us Entertain You is looking for artwork submissions for the Pin & Poster design for LUEY 2002 • For information call 713-880-2628.

COMPUTER PRO VOLUNTEER

Advisor needed to help set up Quick Books 2001 • AIDS Housing Coalition of Houston • 713-521-1613 •

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Outreach center for homeless youths is seeking donations: Clothing hygiene supplies towels books videos & backpacks. Call Andrea @ 713-523-9324

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Provides HIV & substance abuse risk reduction to high risk population in Galveston County • Full-time • Salary + benefits • For more info call 281-488-2839.

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House help wanted • Yard • House • Pool • maintenance work • 713-529-5993

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MONTROSE COTTAGES

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Seeking male roommate, non-smoker, to share 3/2 house near Oak Forest in NW Houston • Private fenced-in back yard with pool • Maid service • Cable • Private Bath • microwave • Unfurnished room • All bills paid \$440/mo.+ deposit • Available Sept. 3 • 713-290-0353.

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GM to share new townhouse • Montrose/Downtown • Nonsmoker • No pets • \$550 + 1/2 utilities + deposit • 281-989-4635

24 yo masseur/student looking for someone to share 4b/3b townhome in Memorial Park • Jason • 713-863-8888.

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Occasions

Birthdays

Classic Chassis Car Club members William F. (8/22), David S. (8/26), and Marc O. will ride the birthday caravan this week.

Asians and Friends member Matthew K. celebrates his birthday on Aug. 25. Also ready to celebrate birthdays are Larree McW. (9/1) Robert C. (9/3) Joseph H. (9/4) and John R. (9/5).

Former *Houston Voice* and sales guru Ken Burd will need more wrinkle cream after his Aug. 26 birthday.

Earl Dutton adds another birthday candle to his cake on Aug. 26.

Mary Todd, a.k.a. Bob Meyer, celebrates his Aug. 29 birthday in style.

The one and only Tamin joins in the birthday festivities on Aug. 30.

Misfit David G. will sneak in a birthday on Aug. 31.



Pet of the Week

This is Clarita. She is a 3-year-old female who loves to be in charge. She enjoys long naps and a tuna dinner every night. To find out more about adopting Clarita, call the Houston Humane Society at 713-433-6421, ext. 5555.



FIRE + iCE, Houston's hottest new restaurant featuring an interactive 35 square foot grill, has recently added Sunday brunch with unlimited trips to the marketplace.

Sunday brunch at **FIRE + iCE** includes a create-your-own omelet station featuring traditional ingredients such as ham, shrimp and scallions as well as more out of the ordinary ingredients such as crawfish, tofu, and sun-dried tomatoes. In addition to the omelet station, guests can also visit the create-your-own-pancake station where guests can add a variety of berries and delectable chocolate chips to their pancakes. The set-

price \$18.95 brunch also includes bottomless Mimosas and Peach Belinis as well as an assortment of muffins, bagels, bacon, sausage, hash browns, and fruit.

Brunch will also feature the traditional **FIRE + iCE** marketplace which offers 18 choices of meats and seafood including sirloin, crawfish, and turkey tenderloin and more than 40 traditional and exotic vegetables, fruits, and pastas. Guests then choose from more than 10 signature sauces to spice up their meal before it goes on the grill where they can watch their creation cook to perfection right before their eyes.

FIRE + iCE, located at Kirby on the corner of Westheimer, is open Monday through Saturday 11am-11pm and Sunday 11am-10pm. The set price for lunch is \$6.95 for a single trip to the grill and \$9.95 for unlimited trips. Dinner is \$15.95 for unlimited trips to the grill. Sunday brunch featuring create-your-own omelets and pancakes is \$18.95 and includes unlimited trips and bottomless Mimosas and Peach Belinis. For more information or to book a reservation, please call 713-522-4500.

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My Stars!

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YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

Aug. 24 - 30

ARIES (MARCH 21—APRIL 20)

This is an excellent time for you to pursue a dream, job or pet passion that is somewhat craft-oriented, my darling. There's no reason to wait on an ex-lover who was ambivalent before and is ambivalent now. Bank on a fresh new Cancer, instead.



TAURUS (APRIL 21—MAY 20)

Things are confusing with friends as the full moon hits your house of buddies on Sept. 2. Don't try and control the moods of these wacky folks. You might learn something from their neuroses about your own! Try getting spiritual. Meditate with a Libra and you could discover the meaning of it all, at least for a night.



GEMINI (MAY 21—JUNE 21)

It would behoove you to get your artistic juices flowing; do something outrageous and original and parade it out there for all the world to see. Don't push too hard in your career. You are being groomed for better things, so you needn't worry about your present job. A Libra likes the way you look when you're in charge.



CANCER (JUNE 22—JULY 22)

You are at a real turning point, Cancer, as you sit between eclipses and wonder which road to take. Instead of doing what your parents told you to do, do what your nature tells you to do. Sex and money are strangely linked now (and I don't mean in the prostitutional sense, you slut). A Virgo's stock is on the rise.



LEO (JULY 23—AUG. 22)

Take one step at a time when dealing with a new job situation. You don't have to prove anything to anyone except yourself. You are sure to impress someone in power during late August as you traipse around from cocktail party to cockfight. An Aquarius is thrilled to explore your many moods with you.



VIRGO (AUG. 23—SEPT. 22)

There's nothing to be nervous about as the full moon (on Sept. 2) approaches. Tensions may rise in a romantic situation, but that's because they are about to peak. You are the true romantic of the zodiac during late summer, but you hide it awfully well. A Capricorn can see through your stoic facade.



LIBRA (SEPT. 23—OCT. 22)

You sure are a paradox, aren't you, Libra? You want to move ahead and squash your enemies, and you want someone to take care of you as you sit at home and bake cakes. Do you really want to pin yourself down so soon? Many more options can come your way before fall officially arrives. Play it cool and play with a Gemini every chance you get.



SCORPIO (OCT. 23—NOV. 21)

Your reputation as harsh and sarcastic is quite overrated this week. With the Sun transiting your friendship house, you have the ability to charm and understand everyone. You really should allow yourself to act out in a theatrical fashion, particularly if a Taurus is watching.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22—DEC. 21)

Your brains are even more impressive than your sexy ways this week, as the Sun transits the top of your chart. Use your mind well; people will be testing you on the job. This a great time to collaborate on a writing project or something else witty and smart. A Leo wants a tattoo with your name on it.



CAPRICORN (DEC. 22—JAN. 19)

You are stronger than you realize and need to assert your power. Other people are taking advantage of you; it's up to you to stand up to them. With the full moon in your third house, chances are good that you could meet someone new and thrilling. An Aries plays a key role in your love life.



AQUARIUS (JAN. 20—FEB. 18)

You could fall in love with a friend (again!) as Mars and Pluto transit your house of pals. You need to decide if it's worth risking the friendship for. You should use your powers as an orchestrator and all around impresario to move ahead in an organization that means a lot to you.



PISCES (FEB. 19—MARCH 20)

The full moon in your sign (on Sept. 2) could make this quite the loaded week for you, dear. Your intuition is telling you about the creative things you could be doing. But you do need to deal with the day-to-day business of life, too. Try to find a balance, babe. Another Pisces wants to escape reality with 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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