



HATCH

HATCH'lings go back to school with \$58,000 in scholarships

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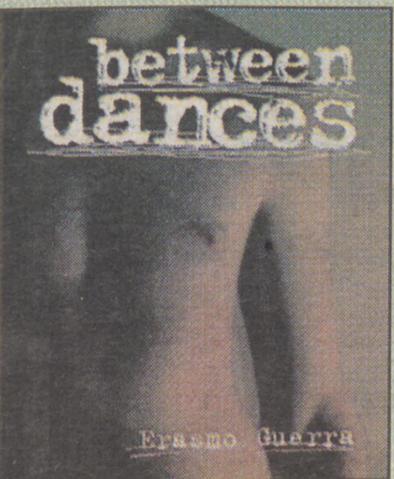
Beautiful fresh flower arrangements can be created simply with a couple of inexpensive bunches from the grocery

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In Travis Ammons' new comedy, 'Manhood Is Dead,' four male friends, four lost boys of dysfunctional manhood, meet each Saturday night for their ritual poker game.

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Erasmio Guerra's first novel, 'Between Dances' follows a Houston hustler's decent into the bleak world of Times Square

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Gay groups applaud Gore VP pick

Meanwhile, national gay GOP group endorses Bush/Cheney

by LAURA BROWN

The race to the Nov. 7 presidential election gathered steam this week, with Democratic candidate Vice President Al Gore picking a running mate who provides a stark contrast to his opponent on gay rights.

Just days earlier, Republican nominee Texas Gov. George W. Bush picked up the endorsement of the Log Cabin Republicans, despite friction between the nation's largest gay GOP group and the candidate in the past.

On Monday, Gore made public his choice of Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) as his vice presidential running mate. The two appeared together at the official announcement Tuesday in Nashville.

Lieberman, the first Jewish candidate on a national ticket from a major political party, drew mostly praise from gay political groups.

"It's a bold choice," said Michael Colby, executive director of the National Stonewall Democratic Federation, an alliance of gay Democrat groups that has endorsed Gore.

"It shows Al Gore's commitment to diversity and his commitment to break new ground in terms of outreach and inclusion.

A senator since 1988, Lieberman has a non-discrimination policy in his office that includes sexual orientation. He co-sponsored the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, a bill to ban job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and has also co-sponsored the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which would add sexual orientation, gender and disability to federal hate crimes laws.

Lieberman "is definitely a friend of our community," Colby said.

The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force called Lieberman's record "generally good" on gay issues, but "decidedly mixed" on "other progressive issues" because he supported welfare reform and school vouchers.

Lieberman scored 100 percent for the 106th Congress, 100 percent for the 105th, and 89 percent for the 104th Congress on a scorecard of gay issues prepared by the Human Rights Campaign, a national group



Gay Democrats say Al Gore's new running mate, Sen. Joseph Lieberman, provides an even sharper contrast on gay issues to the GOP ticket of George W. Bush and Dick Cheney.

that lobbies Congress on gay rights and has already endorsed Gore.

According to HRC, his only negative vote during the last three congresses was in support of the Defense of Marriage Act, the successful 1996 measure that banned federal recognition of gay marriages.

Lieberman's earlier record was less positive on gay issues. In 1994, he voted in favor of an amendment by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) to prohibit federal money from

> Continued on Page 11

By any other name, a queer is a queer is a queer

Labels define, yet at the same time divide gay community

by MARIA MINICUCCI

It is safe to assume that a strong sense of solidarity exists among GLBT communities across the country in the struggle to oppose acts of hatred, exclusion or discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Gay Republicans, Christian feminists, gay activists, leather queers, dykes, faggots, all of them would most likely stand shoulder to shoulder in agreement that any and all assaults against homosexuals are wrong and need to be stopped. Within these same communities, even within these same groups, solidarity is at times discarded for



in fighting, wariness and downright nasty behavior toward one another based on the various definitions, labels and stereotypes associated with sexual/gender orientation.

This is the first of a four-part series exploring the very definitions that seem to have the capacity to both empower and

denigrate gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered persons. The purpose of this part in the series is to lay out some of the definitions and distinctions that serve to shape one identity on one hand, and how these labels, at times, become weapons

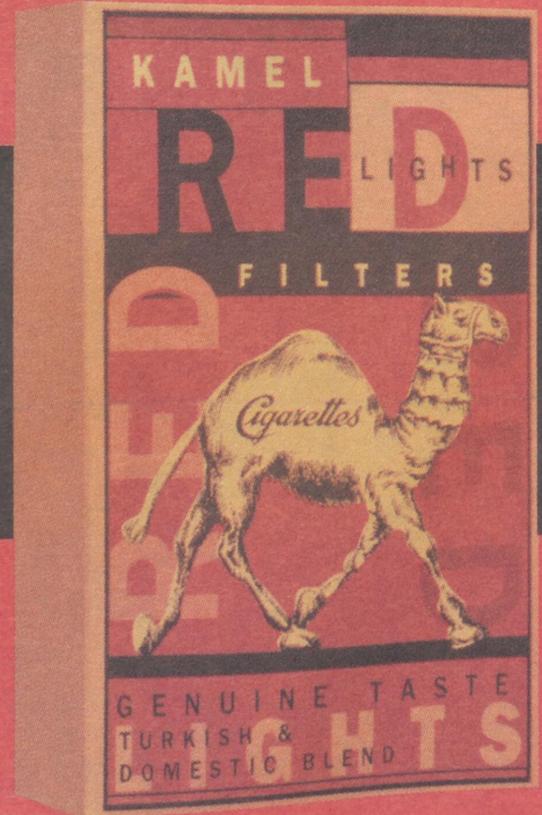
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Fighting for your gay dollar

Gay and gay-friendly online firms offer a large variety of financial services online to attract gay dollars

by JENNIFER SMITH

The color of pink money.

With gay men and lesbians now making up the newest niche market, their business dollars even have their own name. It is precisely this "pink money" that national companies, both gay and straight, are starting to scramble after.

With most large financial service companies still behind the curve in acknowledging the different needs of gays, a few, like the young gfn.com and partners GMAC, Fleet Financial, Conesco and Telebank, are leading the charge to tap into the estimated \$800 billion in assets owned and controlled by America's gay population.

"It's amazing," said Harold Upjohn, a gay private investment broker in Atlanta. "Five years ago there wasn't a single national company that acted like they knew gays and lesbians might have alternative needs from heterosexuals. Today there are sites actually competing to service our specific needs."

And the competition is starting to get fierce.

Recent rhetorical barbs between Gay Financial Network (GFN) founder Walter Shubert and G&L Internet Bank founder Steven Dunlap have some asking, "Why are we competing against each other?"

"There is more than enough money in this community to go around," said Chip Murlock, a gay banking analyst. "Gay owned companies should be concentrating on taking market share away from non-gay-friendly companies, not compete with each other."

Gfn.com, the web-site of Gay Financial Network, a first of its



Steve Dunlap, Keith Cutham and Kay Griffith launched G&L Bank in May 1999, making it the first online bank to target gay men and lesbians.

kind company founded in 1998, offers daily market and community happenings articles, access to online trading, banking, mortgages and more.

The site's online professional directory is used by tens of thousands of people every week looking for gay, lesbian and gay-friendly lawyers, insurance agents, mortgage bankers, financial planners and other service providers. Hundreds of Georgia professionals are listed.

"I've had a great experience being listed on gfn.com's professional directory," said Tony Pruitt, a gay financial advisor in Atlanta. "I've received several clients from them, and GFN sends me email updates about my area of business. You can never have enough information, right?"

Not everyone has been so fortunate. Gay mortgage broker Bret Doman paid his \$100 filing fee to be listed in the directory months ago and despite being one of only two mortgage brokers listed in

> Continued on Page 15

Wedding bells ring at Bering

Musical comedy play being staged at church Aug. 18-19

by ELLA TYLER

Coy Tow is marrying Eileen Buerkert at Bering Church on Thursday Aug. 17, and that's just the start of the unconventional evening.

Tow and Buerkert are starring in "The Wedding," an original musical comedy about a traditional wedding with some untraditional twists. The show is a fundraiser for Bering Support Network and will be presented again Aug. 18 and 19.

The idea for the play came from David Stotlar, who is directing the show.

"Bering doesn't do weddings, so I thought it would be fun to have a play about one and give us an opportunity to laugh about it."

Last August, Bering Church decided not to hold weddings because the Methodist Church does not allow its clergy to bless homosexual unions.

Although Stotlar came up with the outline for the play, he says that Carl Carriera wrote it.

"So I can say that it's packed with hilarious dialogue and entertaining musical numbers," Stotlar said. "Its set up like a very traditional wedding, except that Eileen, the bride, is Catholic, and then Coy, as the groom, is Jewish. Some of the groom's family is unhappy about this wedding taking place under our stained-glass window of the baby Jesus.

"A rabbi, played by Stewart Zuckerbrod, officiates," he adds.

"I've been listening to rehearsals, and there's lots of singing and some really nice voices," said Steve Yocom, chairman of ticket sales for the event. "It's a lot like a real wedding. The first act is in the sanctuary and after the intermission, the second act moves to the banquet hall."

He promises wedding cake and punch to all playgoers.

"We have a Bridal Registry, too," he said. "Christine Coberly, the Support Network's director has written down what different elements of the program cost and people may write a check to sponsor that part of the program."

Yocom said that Saturday's show, a black-tie gala, is already sold out, "but there are plenty of tickets for the other two shows. People can get them at the church or Basic Brothers."

The play is presented by Bering and Friends, a group of church members and local theater activists that formed 10 years ago.

"We've done a play for the past 10 years," Yocom said.

This is the first time for Stotlar, who has been active with Halloween Magic Players, to work with the group.

"I'm really enjoying myself," he said.

Bering Support Network provides a variety of services for men and women in need, Yocom said. Some of the services are grief therapy, a group for caregivers and a Wednesday evening group for HIV and AIDS affected and infected people. It begins with a potluck supper, and is followed by a speaker and small group discussion.

There is also a group for retired people. The group meets on Tuesday mornings at 11 and then chooses a restaurant and goes to lunch.

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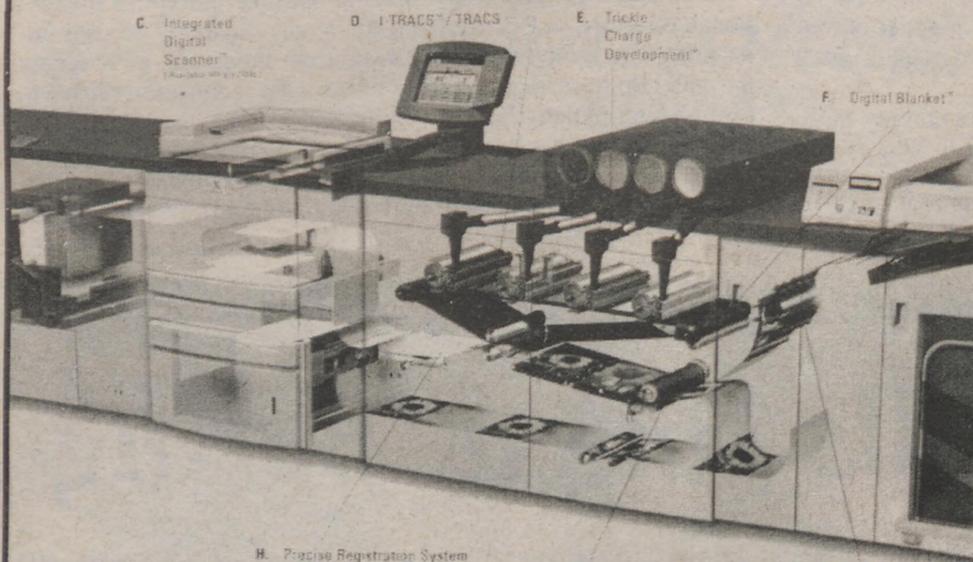
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Monday, Aug 14 Kolbe Feast Day Special Mass & Reception 7:30pm	Friday, Aug 25 Morning Prayer 10am Movie Night 7pm "Amadeus"

around the south

Gay lobby wants probe of Miss.-based Christian group over letter

JACKSON—The Mississippi Gay Lobby wants an investigation of a Tupelo-based Christian group that published a letter calling for the arrest of openly gay U.S. Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.) on sodomy charges, according to the Jackson Clarion-Ledger. The American Family Association had included the letter in an Action Alert on the Internet. Kolbe spoke for less than three minutes at the Republican National Convention on trade issues while some delegates prayed quietly. "We feel that the AFA has ... encouraged violence towards the gay community, not to mention publicly slandered an official of the United States government, calling for his arrest for breaking a sodomy law," said Gay Lobby Chairman Jody Renaldo in an e-mail statement. American Family Association Executive Assistant Buddy Smith, said if he had to do it over, he would not have included the letter in the alert. Smith said he intended the alert to send a message to the Republican National Committee that "if they give the podium to homosexuals, then it'll go to rapists next, then pedophiles next."

Florida judge refuses restraining order for gay man against former partner

BRADENTON (AP)—A Florida judge refused to issue a restraining order that a gay man requested against his former partner, saying domestic violence laws don't apply because the state doesn't recognize gay and lesbian relationships. Bill Owens, 35, had sought the restraining order against Jose Mendez under the state's domestic violence law. Owens said his former partner severely beat him when their relationship ended. Circuit Judge Marc Gilner denied Owens' request, saying the law defines people who can get restraining orders as couples who have resided or "are presently residing together as a family." But the law, which allows a judge to order one family member to stay away from another and out of their former home, does not define the meaning of family. The judge said that because legislators did not specifically include same-sex couples in the law, they are excluded. "And I believe it was the intention of the Legislature [to exclude gays] when they wrote the domestic violence statute," Gilner said. Owens eventually got a restraining order under a different law.

Ala. Trucker gets death sentence for killing three in shooting rampage

COLUMBIANA, Ala.—A truck driver who thought three men were spreading rumors that he is gay was sentenced to die July 31 for killing them, according to Fox News. Alan Eugene Miller, 35, was convicted in June and sentenced in late July for a rampage at two Pelham, Ala., businesses. Miller worked as a truck driver at Ferguson Enterprises, a machinery company where Lee Holdbrooks, 32, and Scott Yancy, 28, were repeatedly shot as they prepared for work last Aug. 5. Terry Jarvis, 39, was killed less than 30 minutes later at nearby Post Airbags, where Miller had previously worked. According to testimony, Miller thought the three had been spreading rumors that he was gay, so he shot them in an explosion of rage. Defense lawyer Mickey Johnson did not dispute the prosecution's description of the killings, but he described the man as a "tortured soul" who believed he had been slighted and felt his actions were justified.

Some Ala. GOP delegates says Bush, convention shouldn't highlight gays

PHILADELPHIA—Some Alabama delegates to the Republican National Convention said Texas Gov. George W. Bush might have tried to be too inclusive when he allowed a prime-time speech on international trade by Rep. Jim Kolbe, the only openly gay GOP member of Congress, the Birmingham News reported. Delegate Larry Sims of Eastaboga said the real message of Kolbe's appearance was that gay men and lesbians are tolerated in the party. "I think it's kind of pathetic that they're letting him speak because he's homosexual—that's the only reason he's at the podium," Sims said. Other members of the Alabama delegation said they were not bothered by Kolbe's appearance. "It's not a lifestyle that a lot of us promote," said U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby, the Alabama delegation's co-chair. "But I don't think just him speaking on something of substance is promoting [homosexuality] per se. But Sims expressed concern that former presidential candidate and pro-lifer Alan Keyes was not in the convention lineup, while Kolbe was included. "They're going overboard with this touchy-feely thing, and the pro-family, conservative agenda—that's being shoved in the corner like it's a crazy aunt in the basement," he said.

Rocker draws more attention after bumping TV cameraman in clubhouse

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Controversial Atlanta Braves player John Rocker, who has made slurs against gays, foreigners, New Yorkers and others, bumped into a television cameraman Aug. 5 about 3 1/2 hours before a game against the St. Louis Cardinals. The cameraman, Tom Stasiak, and reporter Frank Cusumano, who both work for KSDK, said the minor collision was intentional. Rocker then said "excuse me" on his way down the tunnel to the Braves' clubhouse, Cusumano said. The men were waiting to get footage of Rocker because this was the Braves' first trip to St. Louis this year, they said. When the camera light went on, Rocker veered from the center of the hallway. After the game, Rocker told Fox Sport Net it was an accident and that he "wasn't paying attention." Rocker was suspended for the first two weeks of the season because of anti-gay slurs, among others, that he made in a Sports Illustrated interview.



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—From staff and wire reports

around the nation

United Way in Mass. dumps Scouts, funds new group in compromise

BOSTON (AP)—The United Way of Massachusetts Bay has ended its support of the Boy Scouts following a Supreme Court decision allowing Scouts to bar gays from leading troops. Instead, under an agreement signed Aug. 1, the United Way will now provide money to Learning for Life, an educational organization run by the Boy Scouts that will be spun off and turned into a separate entity. "The Boy Scouts themselves will need to fund-raise elsewhere," said Pat Brandes, the chief operating officer of the United Way. "But this will help to make sure services are still going to youth, while honoring our policy of nondiscrimination." And there is bad news elsewhere for the Boy Scouts: Their request to renew a lease at a city park in San Diego has caught the attention of the American Civil Liberties Union, which wants the Scouts' off the land because of the group's anti-gay policy.

Calif. court dumps rental bias, but skirts discrimination question

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—A federal appeals court reversed a decision Aug. 4 that allowed landlords to discriminate against unmarried couples without resolving whether renters who are not wed can be legally turned away. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overrode an earlier decision by one of its own three-judge panels in a 10-1 ruling, having the practical effect of throwing out a lawsuit brought by two Alaskan landlords. The appeals court found that the suit was premature because the landlords had never been accused of violating the state and local laws prohibiting housing discrimination against unmarried couples. The court noted that it is limited by the Constitutional restriction to review only "live cases or controversies." The suit was filed by Kevin Thomas and Joyce Baker, who each own several rental properties in Anchorage and said they had consistently refused to rent to unmarried cohabitants because of their Christian beliefs.

Oregon PTA vows to fight 'no promo homo' measure on November ballot

SALEM, Ore. (AP)—The Oregon Citizens Alliance turned in enough petition signatures to force a vote this fall on a measure to prohibit public schools from encouraging or sanctioning homosexuality, state officials said, but the group will face an unlikely opponent: the Oregon Parent Teacher Association. The OCA's measure drew 70,922 valid signatures, about 4,000 more than needed to qualify the measure for a spot on the Nov. 7 ballot. The proposed measure says "the instruction of behavior relating to homosexuality and bisexuality shall not be presented in a public school in a manner which encourages, promotes or sanctions such behaviors." Defeating the measure will be a top priority for the state's parent-teacher group, according to president Kathryn Firestone. "The mission of the PTA is to protect children," she said. "We don't decide which children to protect. It's all of them."



U.S. Rep. Rick Lazio, locked in a tight New York Senate campaign against Hillary Clinton, is being criticized for his advocacy on behalf of groups that don't believe HIV causes AIDS.

Lazio criticized for letters supporting for AIDS dissenter groups

NEW YORK—Members of a group that says HIV doesn't cause AIDS have shot back at all sides in the current uproar over whether Rick Lazio, a GOP Congressman from Long Island who is in a tight U.S. Senate race with Democrat Hillary Clinton, advocated on the group's behalf, according to the *New York Blade*. And some local elected officials have joined Clinton in blasting Lazio for his efforts on behalf of The Group for the Scientific Reappraisal of the HIV Hypothesis of AIDS. Among letters that Lazio's campaign acknowledges he wrote is one in which Lazio requested \$2.5 million from the Senate's appropriations committee to fund research into whether HIV causes AIDS. "I think it's safe to say from the AIDS services community that to give credibility to an organization that is essentially saying that HIV is harmless is completely irresponsible for an elected official to do," says Marty Algaze, a spokesperson for Gay Men's Health Crisis, a New York City-based AIDS service organization.

Idaho court protects newspaper in account of 'homosexuality scandal'

BOISE, Idaho (AP)—The Idaho Court of Appeals ruled Aug. 2 that the First Amendment shielded the *Idaho Statesman* from any liability for publishing part of a 40-year-old court file saying, perhaps falsely, that a Boise man had a gay affair with his cousin. Citing a 1975 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, the three appellate judges agreed that restricting the right of the media to publish documents contained in a public court file would result in self-censorship that would deny the public information it needs to continually assess the operations of its government agencies. The ruling threw out the invasion of privacy claim filed by Fred Uranga over the newspaper's 1995 publication of a photograph of the handwritten statement by one of the men eventually convicted in a 1955 Boise homosexuality scandal. The picture ran with an article that called the incident one of the nation's "most infamous homosexual witch hunts." The paper focused on the impact the episode had on a man involved who committed suicide within several years of the allegations surfacing. The newspaper published the material in the midst of a debate over a proposed ballot initiative on gay rights, calling the scandal a cautionary tale.

—From staff and wire reports

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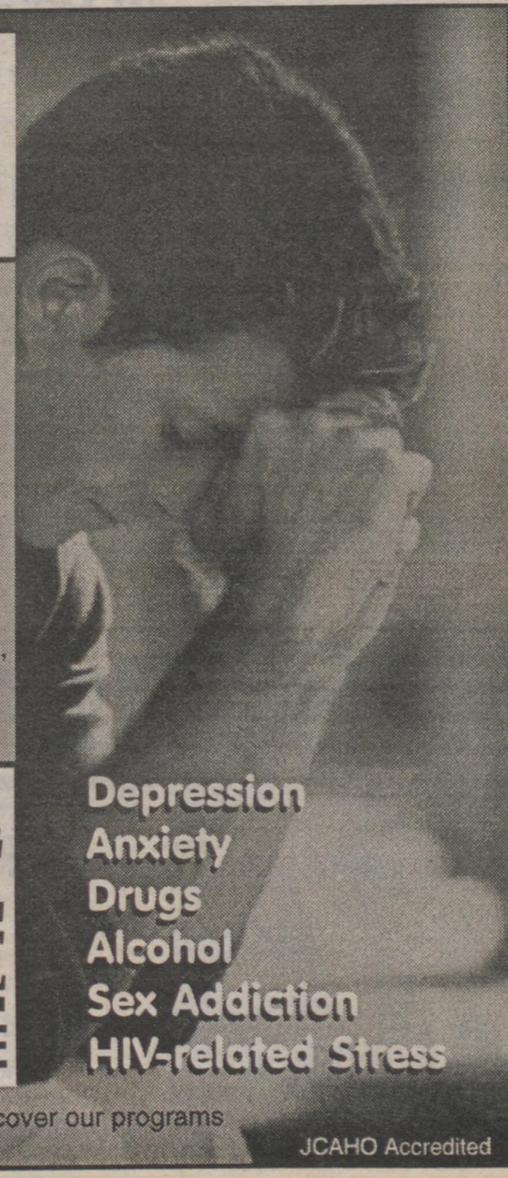
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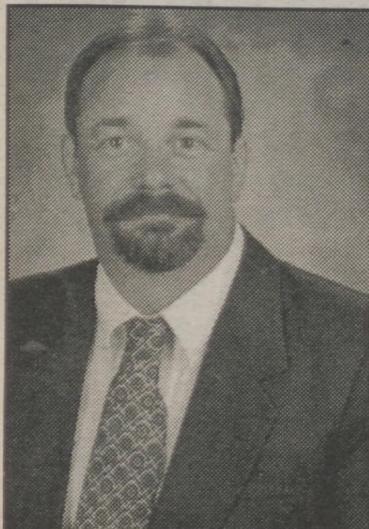
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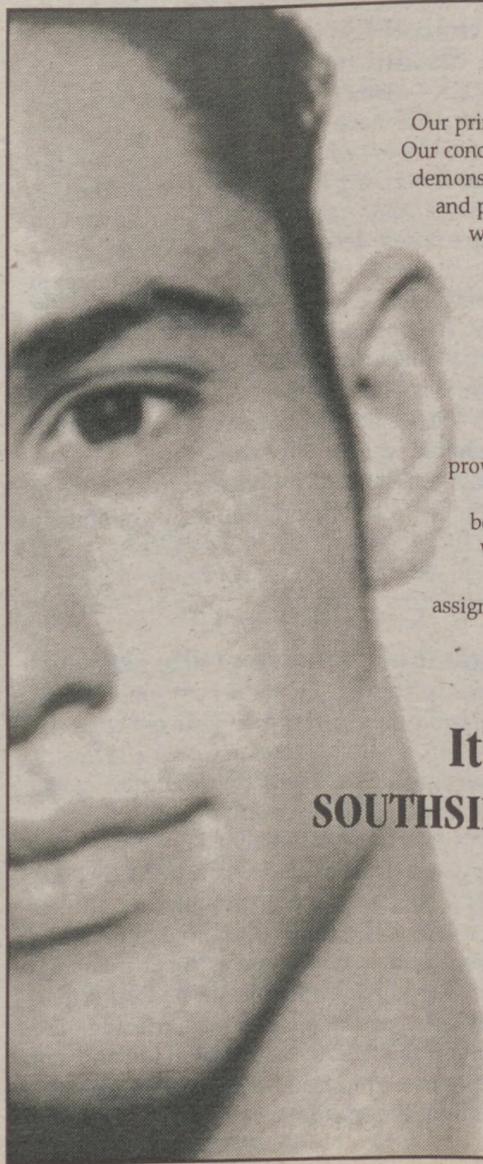
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Suspects sought in strangulation death of trans woman in Houston

HOUSTON—A South Houston transgendered woman was strangled to death and her body dumped nearby in a Webster field, according to police. Augustin Aguilar Carrizales, 25, who used the name Julia, was strangled July 21 at a South Houston residence. The body was found face down dressed in women's clothes in a wooded area behind a business park, police said. Police are still searching for Kelvin Antonio Navarro, 18, also of South Houston, who is charged with the killing. A juvenile in custody allegedly admitted to helping Navarro load the body into a car so it could be moved to the field, authorities said. Other witnesses saw Carrizales being loaded into the car, but the witnesses at the time thought the victim was unconscious or drunk, according to investigators. The death may have been drug-related or it could have been the result of jealousy involving a male friend, according to Webster Police Det. Ron Bellnoski. "The adult that's at large pretty much holds the key to this case," he said.

Australian court throws out sentence, returns confessed killers to jail

MELBOURNE—The sentence of two confessed killers who beat a gay man to death wrongly believing he was a rapist has been overturned and the two men returned to jail, *The Age* reported. The Supreme Court of Appeal quashed the suspended sentences imposed on Kristian Peter Dieber, 24, and John Whiteside, 28, in June, instead sending them to jail with a non-parole period of four years. The two men attacked Keith Hibbins, 45, and his partner, David Campbell, as they walked in a garden. Hibbins died 11 days later. "The viciousness of their assault and its lack of foundation, to my mind, smacks more of a desire to avenge and punish two innocent citizens than it does of misguided chivalry," Justice John Winneke told a packed courtroom. Campbell left the court in tears after the three Court of Appeal judges unanimously upheld an appeal against suspended sentences on the grounds they were inadequate. Supreme Court judge Justice Philip Cummins in June released the two men, saying the case was one in which mercy could be shown.

Telephone hotlines for gay domestic violence in Vt., gay cops in U.K.

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP)—A telephone help line is to be set up here to aid victims of same-sex domestic violence. The line will offer callers information on where to turn if they are facing domestic violence. A \$2,000 grant from the Samara Foundation of Vermont is paying for starting the line, organized by the Chittenden County Domestic Violence Task Force. It will offer help statewide, with a focus on Chittenden County, but there is no indication when the line will begin service. In Britain, police have become the first to set up a help line for gay officers, the *Electronic Telegraph* reported. The North Yorkshire hotline will allow gay officers to call 24 hours a day for support and help in dealing with homophobic colleagues or criminals. The line is advertised on cafeteria bulletin boards and is run by five officers who take turns carrying a mobile telephone.

L.A. gay center launches campaign urging Latinos to report hate crimes



Gay Latinos are often afraid to report gay-bashings because of cultural barriers, which prompted Gwenn Baldwin and the L.A. gay center to launch an awareness campaign.

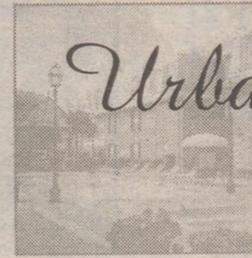
LOS ANGELES—Area Latino gay men and lesbians who are victims of hate crimes will be encouraged to fight back through the courts and through counseling in a campaign started Aug. 3 by the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. The group will use billboards, magazine ads and fliers in English and Spanish to urge Latino gay men and lesbians to report verbal slurs as well as physical abuse to its Anti-Violence Project. Many Latino victims are afraid to report gay-bashing because of cultural pressures, the language barrier and worries about deportation, said Gwenn Baldwin, executive director of the center. By not taking steps to stop the abuse, she said, the victims open themselves to further attacks that typically escalate in danger. The campaign is financed with a three-year, \$112,000 grant from the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations.

Jersey man charged in anti-gay attack on two men during party

MAHWAH, N.J.—A Mahwah, N.J. man who allegedly attacked two men after calling them gay was arrested July 29 and charged with aggravated assault, bias harassment, and bias assault, according to the *Record*. Witnesses told police that William Courain, 26, was at a party at a condo complex when he started making obscene remarks to several of the guests about their sexual orientation. Courain then left the party and confronted two men in the parking lot, calling them gay and making obscene comments, witnesses said. They told police he attacked the two 22-year-olds. "He just started punching away, punching and kicking and that was it," said Lt. Lewis Santonacita. Police were called to the scene at 5:35 a.m. and found one victim bleeding from the right eye and mouth. The other victim complained of pain to his right eye, but refused medical attention. Courain was released from jail on \$10,000 bail.

—From staff and wire reports

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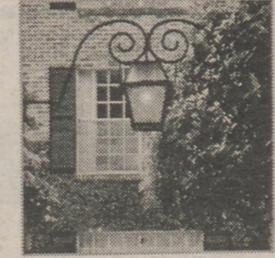


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VIEWPOINT Gay Republicans settle for back of the bus

by MELINDA SHELTON

What a roller-coaster ride politics has taken the last two weeks—at least for the few of us who pay attention to such matters.

Take U.S. Rep. Jim Kolbe. Please. The Grand Old Party paraded its least favorite gay prop onto its convention stage, gave him three minutes to talk about labor issues, and then banished him to the baggage compartment of the "Doubletalk Express."

The ultra-conservative American Family Association called for Arizona Republican's arrest for being a law-breaking sodomite. And as Kolbe spoke, a small number of those compassionate conservatives in the Texas delegation bowed their heads in prayer for the abomination from Arizona.

At least these two groups had the guts to stand up—or sit down—for their beliefs: All gays will burn in hell.

After Kolbe's token appearance, the Log Cabin Republicans fluffed their tail feathers and pranced before the media. By allowing Kolbe to speak, Texas Gov. George W. Bush displayed extraordinary tolerance toward gays, they shouted from the basement of convention headquarters.

Granted, it was a historic moment. Never before had the GOP allowed an openly gay Republican to be seen, much less heard, on stage. (Mary Cheney, the VP nominee's daughter, came later, but that's another story.)

Equally amazing was the cocktail party the GOP threw for gay and lesbian Republicans. Cosmopolitans for everyone.

Was this progress toward acceptance of gays in the party, or was it a bone to satisfy its minuscule—and often wealthy—gay ranks?

The Log Cabin Republicans insist it means there is such a thing as "compassionate conservatism."

Compassionate conservatism. What the heck does it mean—aside from what the Republicans say it means?

For guidance, I turned to a dear friend, who also happens to be a Texan. Bridget is spiritual, intelligent, politically savvy.

"The word 'compassion' literally means to share in others' suffering," Bridget wrote in an e-mail. "'Com' meaning 'with,' and 'pati' meaning 'to suffer.'"

She said while "passion" often is associated with lusty love, Christians use it in referring to Christ's passion, his acts of love.

"The 'compassionate conservatives' probably have little experience in common with those suffering in poverty, on death row, from

prejudice." Bingo, Bridget.

One had only to watch a moment of television coverage to understand that the sea of white faces reflected the true complexion of an unmasked Republican party.

The "big tent" is inclusive if you are anti-gay, anti-abortion, anti-affirmative action, anti-public assistance programs, and pro-tax cuts that most often benefit the wealthy and privileged.

There are a few exceptions, certainly. Very few.

So where does the LCR fit in this picture? Are they primarily a bunch of privileged, gay, white men out to protect their own best interests? How can they justify supporting a party that remains staunchly opposed to their very existence, much less their basic human rights?

How can they not see the so-obvious patronizing "acceptance" (in exchange for their checkbooks) the GOP has toward them?

A friend asked me a question: "What's the definition of a masochist? A gay Republican."

Maybe that explains it. Nothing else makes sense.

Melinda Shelton is the New Orleans/Gulf Coast editor of Southern Voice and formerly the editor of Impact News. She can be reached at editor@impactnews.com.

Feeling the Log Cabin Republicans' pain

by CHRIS CRAIN



When it comes to the insults that get regularly hurled at gay Republicans, I feel their pain. "Traitors." "Nazi Jews." "Masochists." "Oxymorons." "Brown-nosers."

And those are just the chosen barbs from fellow homosexuals.

"Party crashers." "Biological errors." "Deviants."

That's the view from many Republicans, especially the politically active ones who show up as delegates to party conventions. Even mainstream GOP candidates are often unwilling to accept campaign contributions offered by the Log Cabin Republicans, the primary gay GOP group.

With political influence for sale like never before, when the primary gay rights group is a dressed-up political action committee, turning down money is probably the lowest blow of all.

I'm acutely aware of this double-whammy experienced by Log Cabin, though I never joined up during my years as a gay Republican. Rejection from gays, only to be matched by rejection from the GOP.

To be sure, there's certainly no comparison to the real-life prejudice suffered by other double-whammies (white lesbians and African-American women come to mind). But you wouldn't know it from the chip most gay Republicans have on their shoulders.

My experience as a gay Republican was

crystallized for me on a Tuesday night in the bowels of the Astrodome, at the 1992 Republican Convention.

At the time, with one foot out and one foot planted firmly in the closet, I'd joined the legal staff of the Bush/Quayle campaign and made the trip to Houston for the convention. As proud of my all-access pass as Wayne and Garth at a Metallica concert, I flaunted it to go underneath the stage, where I found a payphone I could use to call my first real boyfriend.

He was an ardent Democrat, on the staff of Florida Gov. Lawton Chiles, and he soiled my romantic call with too many reminders that the "family values" crowd was running the show above me.

To make matters worse, in the middle of my call, I heard a huge round of applause from upstairs, where the speaker was former Education Secretary William Bennett, who would later compile books teaching Americans how to be "virtuous."

I paused to listen, and got a chill from what I heard. It wasn't the infamous "Culture War" speech Pat Buchanan would give the next night, but he was excoriating those who would allow our children to be taught that homosexuality was "normal." The stadium rocked.

Still, I believed in the power of working within the system, and since a significant portion of the Bush campaign and Republican National Committee staff was gay, if closeted, I liked our odds.

Even today, I buy into the mission of Log Cabin Republicans. Rich Tafel, their executive director, is right when he says that for every inch the GOP moves, the Democrats are pres-

sured to move two more to maintain their edge.

And the Philadelphia convention last week certainly represented progress over the '92 confab in Houston. No more gay-bashing red meat for the crowds, and Dick Cheney, W's running mate, even has a gay daughter.

But when Log Cabin announced at the end of the week the endorsement of George W. Bush, who is opposed to every form of gay civil rights protection ever attempted in Texas or beyond, I remembered why I never joined.

For all its strategic focus on mission, Log Cabin repeatedly fails in execution, usually from an unwillingness to hold the bar high enough. In the year 2000, LCR should require more than that Bush seek their endorsement.

Private promises, which probably only included not rolling back Clinton's executive orders on non-discrimination within the executive branch, aren't enough. The current occupant of the White House has proven how easily public promises are broken.

If Log Cabin Republicans scrutinized GOP candidates with even one-tenth the vigor with which they deconstruct the pro-gay record of Democrats, the movement would be better for it.

And if Log Cabin members showed their closed-minded gay brethren even one-tenth the tolerance and patience they have for anti-gay Republicans, they might see past the chip on their shoulder that some of the criticism is constructive, and Log Cabin would be better for it.

Chris Crain is editor of Southern Voice and editorial director of Window Media, LLC, which publishes this paper and the Houston Voice.



VIEWPOINT

Damn it, Q-Patrol needs you

by D.L. GROOVER

I am pissed. And disheartened. What is it going to take to get this community motivated to join us? In the last two months, Q-Patrol has spent a great deal of money for newspaper ads; we've had a "rush" reception for those interested in coming into the fold; we sponsored a Hate Crimes conference at the Houston Gay and Lesbian Community Center, part memorial to Paul Broussard, part recruitment drive.

Nothing has worked, and we're out of ideas.

I'm not crying wolf, but if we don't get some new members very soon, Q-Patrol is out of here.

As it now stands, we have six members, down from more than 30 just two years ago. Recently, two have changed jobs and can no longer patrol weekends. Four of us can't possibly do all that's required. We're burned out and fed up.

Lack of interest from you has sapped us. We're still out there, but, as happened last week, only two of us drove around the "kingdom." It wasn't really so long ago, when I remember having more than enough volunteers to patrol Friday and Saturday nights, to have mobile, foot, skate and even bicycle patrols all on the same evening.

At one time, we had enough people to do shifts on Saturday, lasting well past

the 2 a.m. closing hours of the bars, when our vigilance is most sorely needed. Those days are but a memory.

We're not asking for your first born, you know. All we want is one evening a month, and right now that's only three hours worth: Saturday evening from 9 p.m. to midnight. Trust me, you won't miss anything at the bars in those three hours, and you'll still have time to party after you're finished with your good deed.

And it is a good deed that Q-Patrol does. We're not the police, we don't intervene when miscreants misbehave. We're but a "visible deterrence" to hate crimes. Walking in the streets wearing our white t-shirts, or driving a car plastered with our magnetic signs, communicating to each other by walkie-talkie, we are seen by all but the most blotto.

It can't be lack of interest that keeps you away. Since I joined Q-Patrol upon moving here from New York City, there hasn't been one evening when I've been on patrol that someone hasn't yelled out, "Hey, good job, Q-Patrol." That support makes our day.

I know you like seeing us out there on the streets. When we set up our tent to fund-raise near the entrance of Pacific Street, we can usually count on more than \$100 in donations on a good night. Lately, we've received much-needed beneficence from the Krewe of Olympus, Bank of America and a percentage of bar-

tenders' tips from JR's.

Whenever we call out for money, somehow the money appears. You're more than willing to give your cash when asked, how about your time?

In the old days, you couldn't miss our group. Diversity thy name was Q-Patrol: not so long ago our membership proudly represented every letter in GLBT. For me,

fled the Montrose upon spotting us.

Maybe that's it. Has our effectiveness turned everyone complacent? Do you really think it's safe out there? Do you think a horrible crime like that committed against Paul Broussard and his friends couldn't happen again? That's the reason Q-Patrol is necessary: We've got to protect our own.

We're not asking for your first born, you know. All we want is one evening a month, and right now that's only three hours worth: Saturday evening from 9 p.m. to midnight.

the most heartwarming of all were our straight volunteers: the mother who brought her son into Montrose to dance at Numbers while she patrolled with us; the feisty grandma in tennis shoes, one of our best recruiters.

And we have made a difference. The Houston Police have told us our Citizen On Patrol presence has reduced the incidence of bias crime in the neighborhood, especially the small hate crimes like "fagging" (where someone yells an epithet). As the experts say, when you stop the smaller indignities, you put the brakes on the perpetrator's boldness and neutralize the escalation into violence. People know us, they see us, and they know we'll call the police at the first sign of trouble. Many a carload of "suspicious characters" has

Even as burned out as we are these days, we'll probably keep going until the money runs out, which is not too much longer. We need you to join. Is one night a month really such a sacrifice? That still leaves 353 opportunities to search for the white knight.

Please, try us. Come patrol with us. Call us and we'll be in touch. There's not much to learn; our guide book is pithy; it's all common sense. Our offices are located at the Houston Gay and Lesbian Community Center, 803 Hawthorne.

It's amazing what a difference three hours can make. It just might save a life. Q-Patrol 713-528-SAFE.

Groover is a freelance writer for the Houston Voice and volunteer for Q-Patrol.

Dykes To Watch Out For by Alison Bechdel



Labels both define and divide gay community

➤ Continued from Page 1

against one another on the other hand. Beginning at the beginning of the new politically correct GLBT reference, what is the universal definition of the term, 'gay'? Is a universal definition possible? Is it in fact necessary?

Historically, the term homosexual conjured up the image of males being sexual with other males. Females were rarely associated with this term. The medical and legal institutions throughout the first part of the 19th century sanctioned the concept that the female gender did not have the ability for sexual arousal and therefore did not possess a sexuality.

Since the 19th century, consciousness raising and common sense dictated that "homosexual" did not sufficiently acknowledge the scope and complexities of sexuality for males or females.

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning is a modern day attempt to grasp a more accurate comprehension of sexuality and gender. It also serves the purpose of legitimizing the existence of multi-sexual, multi-gender identities.

Nellie or butch?

The term "gay" today, typically refers to men who choose men as their sexual and emotional partners. Gay is also the term of choice for men when asked, "How would you identify yourself?" Subcategories that gay men can and do use affectionately or sarcastically, are "nellie," or "butch."

A gay man who chooses to remain anonymous, had a difficult time describing these types of gay men. He finally decided that "a nellie gay man, also called a "bottom," exhibits very effeminate mannerisms which may or may not have to do with his sexual identity as much as his preference to get f—ed." On the other end of the spectrum, the "butch gay man (also called a "top") is expected to do the f—ing."

Jazz, (just Jazz, like just Cher), is an African-American male who responded enthusiastically, "Yes, I identify as a gay male because I am attracted to and want to connect with only men."

"In spite of the macho image of the black male, I have always been accepted within my family and community."

Does Jazz believe a person is born gay or chooses to be gay? Emphatically, he claims, "it is not a question of being born or a choice, it is not that cut and dry—it varies among people."

Mike Rogers, who also unequivocally identifies as a gay man agrees with Jazz on the born or choose debate. "I think you are born with the ability to express your sexuality with more or less ease depending on how your environment impacts you."

Pertaining to the variation of the gay man—nellie, butch, queen, faggot—Mike was adamant, "I think there is only one kind of gay man today—a survivor of the AIDS crisis. And I feel that as gay men we are all suffering from post traumatic stress disorder as a result of this epidemic."

Lesbian, butch, femme or dyke?

Gay can and does at times refer to women who choose to be involved with women. In fact, there are scores of women who prefer to call themselves gay as opposed to lesbian. The women who agreed to describe their experiences for this article, however, leapt to the word lesbian when asked how they would define and describe their sexual orientation.

Cathy Bentley is a woman in her late 30s and has, in the past year, come out.

"I identify as a lesbian because it describes who I am better. I am a woman who loves, absolutely loves women. Lesbian, for me captures that. It is more descriptive. Gay is too general. Lesbian implies sisterhood, a very special connection with women. That is how I experience and enjoy my lesbianism—it is that connection with other women."

Barbara Janik, 30, and also recently out, says for her, the definition of lesbian is "quite simple—a woman who loves women."

"And that is exactly how I explained it to my 6-year-old son. For me, being a lesbian means actually enjoying my sexual drive. It is very freeing; I don't have to fit into a mold."

Her son shares her enthusiasm when he exclaimed to his playmates, "I'm going to get another Mommy, isn't that wonderful!"

Generational gaps don't seem to make much difference in what term women prefer.

April Palatino, 25 prefers to define herself as lesbian. What does that mean to April? "I am a woman who loves women."

In spite of her convictions, she was also willing to share some of her experiences of loving women.

"I am not real happy about it. I don't think we treat each other very well. However I don't think that men and women are very good to each other either. I guess, my unhappiness is based more on my observation of humanity as a whole. We just don't treat each other well. I thought women would love better."

Kristie Maldonado, 24 and her partner, Kim Ortiz, 22, also prefer to be called lesbians. Kristie and Kim also shared another identity as a butch/femme couple. When asked why they identify themselves as butch/femme, they both laughed and said, in unison, "Look at us!"

Kristie, the butch partner, has close cropped hair, no makeup, and the t-shirt, baggy shorts uniform. Is her outward appearance what makes her butch?

"On the outside I know I look the part. But I am butch on the inside. I can't explain why. It is me, it fits."

Does it have to do with roles, which is often an assumption about the butch/femme identity? "Nope, I do everything from fixing the car to staying home and watching our son, taking care of the house."

Do they have sexual roles? "We have no roles in bed. We do what is pleasurable to both of us."

Does Kristie relate more to the male,

which is another typical concussion made about butch women? Her response, "Absolutely not. I am a female, a lesbian and being butch is what I am comfortable with."

Kim, her partner, has a very "feminine" image: long hair, makeup, softer, more seductive clothing. "I definitely identify as a femme." What makes Kim a femme? "I have more of the typical feminine characteristics." Such as? "I am more talkative, more social, more emotional and more open sexually whereas someone who is butch tends to be more private, quieter."

It is time for all of us—gay, lesbian, trans, bi—to just get over ourselves and learn to see the beauty in each other and to support our common aspirations as queer folk who want to live fully.
—Jessica Wicks

Debra Murphy, on being butch, replies, "straight men are either your best buddies or torment you always, gay men are either mystified or disgusted. We are an anathema to politically correct lesbians, we live for the very few women who get it."

Dyke cannot and should not go unaccounted for in the realm of sexual identity possibilities. The word "dyke" has generally been used to assault, insult and intimidate women. Women's liberation did wondrous for 'cleaning up' the reference. Deborah Bell, a feminist activist proudly calls herself a dyke.

"When I was first coming out I was involved in a NOW feminist consciousness raising group. I immediately liked that definition they had for dyke: 'an autonomous woman separate from role.'

"I embraced the name dyke as the way I self-identify," she said. "Many people think a dyke is a super butch, masculine woman, but that is not at all accurate in my opinion. In a lot of ways, it is an attitude or person we present."

The misunderstood bisexual

The B in the GLBT continuum stands for bisexuality. Even though it would be a political faux pas to exclude bisexuality from the sexual outlaw pot, it remains the most misunderstood and contentious aspect of human sexuality for gay and straight people.

It is not uncommon to hear, "bisexuality really does not exist." Kellie Daniels would definitely not agree. How would Kellie define bisexuality? "Bisexuality is an equal chance of being attracted to both males and females. The capacity to be physically and emotionally attracted—able to fall in love with a man or a woman."

"I identify myself as a bisexual woman. I

can and have been equally attracted to and had full-blown relationships with men and women. I have also experienced equal satisfaction sexually and emotionally."

When she reveals her bisexuality, Kellie, more often than not, gets the standard, "you are just sitting on the fence," or "you haven't made up your mind yet." from the straight and GLBT communities. Kellie admits she has been hurt by these responses but perseveres with what works for her.

"The biggest fear is people think if I am involved with them, I will leave for the opposite gender. For me, if I have a commitment with someone, it is the commitment that is the most important, not what is between a person's legs."

Can Kellie feel welcome and accepted anywhere? "I feel very accepted at the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center and also feel quite at home at Chances."

The oft-forgotten transgendered

Transgendered has only recently been allotted credibility within the "queer" arena. It took some time for gays and lesbians to finally believe that perhaps some people have been ascribed an erroneous gender identity.

Transgendered/transsexual is very different and distinct from transvestite. A transvestite is a male of any sexual orientation who regularly tries to pass in private and/or in public by wearing women's clothing.

Jessica Wicks, who initially identified as a transgendered person and now is firmly ensconced in the identity of a lesbian warns, "One rule that is well to remember for trans people is that there is no rule. They come from a variety of perspectives and orientations."

"I have always know that I really was supposed to be female, but while in a male role, I tried really hard to meet societal expectations. This was problematic because I was also gay. Hiding in two closets can be really confusing. It was for me."

Jessica's biggest criticism is "the tendency to lump us all into a transgender basket. The same way people assume gay men and lesbians automatically know every other gay or lesbian in the state—it happens to us also by our own GLBT community."

"It is time for all of us—gay, lesbian, trans, bi—to just get over ourselves and learn to see the beauty in each other and to support our common aspirations as queer folk who want to live fully. When I took the label lesbian and made it mine, I was told, you will never be accepted as lesbian...they don't like us, they are cliquish."

Jessica's experience defied the assumptions. "Well, I was accepted, not by all, no one is accepted by all, but by a warm, loving, nurturing community of women who understood what it is to be alone or to hurt."

"People are people and most importantly, love is love"

Next week, part two in this four-part series will explore the issues of the transgendered segment of the gay community.

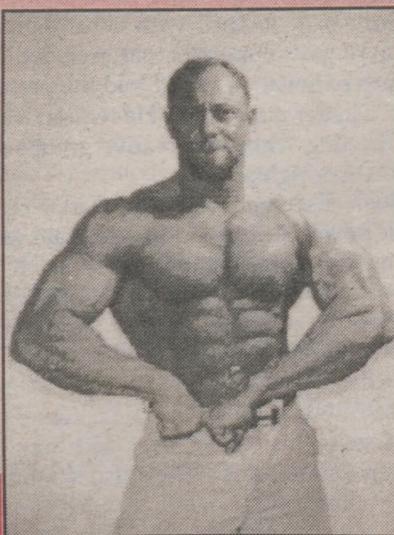


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health news

Cancer treatment shows early promise of stopping HIV from replicating

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP)—A University of Iowa researcher and others are working to show that an experimental cancer treatment can be used to fight HIV. Biochemist David Price and fellow researchers say mutation of the HIV virus that makes traditional drug therapies ineffective could likely be avoided if patients were treated with the drug flavopiridol. Price led a study with colleagues from the University of California, San Francisco, and the National Cancer Institute. Their findings were published in the July 21 online issue of the Journal of Biological Chemistry. Flavopiridol, which is currently being tested on humans as a cancer treatment, blocks the action of an enzyme called P-TEFb in cells. The enzyme is important in the manufacturing of proteins. By inhibiting that manufacturing process, the drug stops HIV from replicating, at least in cell cultures.

Drug czar targets ecstasy use with aggressive radio, web campaign

ARLINGTON, Va.—Federal drug czar Barry McCaffrey announced on Aug. 1 a \$5 million radio and Internet campaign to educate parents and the public about the dangers of the drug MDMA, better known as "Ecstasy," CNN reported. The drug, taken most often by teens and young adults at "rave" parties, can cause brain damage by stopping production of the neurotransmitter responsible for controlling mood, sleep, pain, sexual activity and violent behavior, researchers have reported. The ad campaign, to begin this month, will target young people in 106 radio markets across the country and will also include ads on popular web-sites. McCaffrey said many elements of society—including parents, teachers and some police officers—do not understand the dangers of "club drugs." McCaffrey also said harsher penalties for trafficking and distribution of the drug are called for, but added that Congress is unlikely to pass such a bill this year.

Research unlocks genetic secret of skin cancer in most dangerous tumors

BETHESDA, Md. (AP)—Two research teams have identified genes that appear to make skin cancer spread, raising the prospect of quicker diagnosis and better treatments for the most dangerous tumors. The two groups separately analyzed a type of cancer known as melanoma and each study identified a set of genes that are active in highly invasive growths. Some genes were common to both studies. "For 100 years we've looked at melanomas through the lens of a microscope and wondered how tumors that looked so similar can act so different. Now we've used the lens of genetics," said Jeffrey Trent, a senior researcher at the National Human Genome Research Institute in Bethesda, Md. Trent's team found up to 200 genes associated with highly invasive melanoma cells. The second study group, led by scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, narrowed down their invasive set of genes to just 32. They found that the most benign melanomas became 50 times more invasive with the active gene, MIT cell biologist Richard Hynes said.

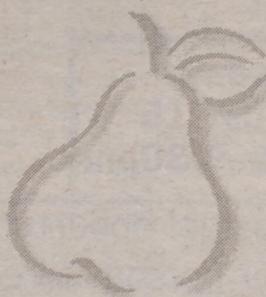
CDC says health clinics should improve screening of TB patients

ATLANTA (AP)—Health clinics should do a better job of checking for the AIDS virus among people who have close contact with tuberculosis patients, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Aug. 3. The CDC studied the screening practices of clinics in 11 urban areas and found that AIDS virus status was unknown for 87 percent of the 6,225 people who had close contact with infectious tuberculosis patients. People whose immune systems are weakened by the AIDS virus are much more likely than healthy people to contract TB, which is transmitted through the air by those with active TB. If someone exposed to tuberculosis is found to have the AIDS virus, they can be treated with a new drug to keep them from getting TB, the CDC said. People with the AIDS virus also must be screened more carefully for TB, the center said.

Tests of protease inhibitor for prostate cancer to be halted

NEW YORK—Pfizer Inc. announced Aug. 4 that it is halting its Phase III clinical trial of prinomastat, a protease inhibitor, in advanced prostate cancer and advanced non-small cell lung cancer because the trials did not prove the drug to be as effective as expected, Reuters reported. "Neither detrimental nor convincing beneficial effect of the combination of prinomastat with standard chemotherapy was observed," the company said in a statement. Pfizer, the world's largest drug maker, said patients having earlier-stage diseases that were recruited into a second ongoing non-small cell lung cancer trial will still be studied. The New York-based company said it would continue to explore prinomastat in other tumor types and earlier-stage diseases, where oncologists believe it can be more effective. Four phase II trials are currently underway and two additional phase II trials will begin shortly.

—From staff and wire reports



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Back to school

P-FLAG/HATCH scholarships help gay youths achieve goals

by ELLA TYLER

As the school year begins, eight of the Houston area's most talented gay students will be paying tuition and buying books with \$58,000 of scholarship money from the P-FLAG/Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals Youth Scholarship Foundation.

"I hear that we are the most generously funded program of its type in the country," said Kevin Davidson, chairman of the award committee. "It was a cause that Gary Van Ooteghem gave a lot of time and energy to, and he was a very good fundraiser."

P-FLAG and HATCH joined forces at the end of 1997 to raise money for scholarships, and have given eight scholarships each year. The dollar amount of scholarships awarded has increased each year.

The foundation is a separate legal entity from either organization. The scholarship winners were announced at a dinner in July. They are: Laney Atherton, a graduate of Laurel High School in Spring, who will attend the University of Colorado in Boulder.

Atherton, who ranks among the top five

percent of the students in the country, has been involved with HATCH and several environmental groups. She is a writer and will study psychology and performing and visual arts. She was awarded \$10,000 over four years.

Romel Walker, a graduate of Houston's High School for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, has been involved with Students Against Drugs and served on his school's prom committee. He will attend Paul Quinn College and study political science. He was awarded \$4,000 over two years.

Liang Wu, from Alief Hastings High School, has received honors for art and math. He is involved with the Houston Chinese Culture Center. He will attend Rice University and study architecture. His grant totals \$10,000 over four years.

Uri McMillan, a sophomore at Rice, who is studying English and Spanish, received \$7,500 to complete his studies. He is the school's Pride president and active with the Names 2000 project. He was a National Merit Commended Scholar.

Jason Brollier will attend Loyola University in Chicago with the help of a \$10,000 scholarship. He will be a pre-med student and hopes to work in pediatric AIDS.

Sarah Moran, from Houston's High School for Law Enforcement and Criminal



P-FLAG/HATCH scholarship winners, from left, Liang Wu, Sarah Moran, Uri McMillan, Eva Thibaudeau-Graczyk and Christian Rios pose with P-FLAG board member Pat Rickey. Winners not pictured include: Laney Atherton, Romel Walker and Jason Brollier.

Justice, is a National Hispanic Recognition semi-finalist and a science fair winner. She will study English Literature and Creative Writing at University of Houston with the help of a \$7,500 grant over three years.

Christian Alberto Rios, from Alief Elsik, will attend University of Houston and major in musical education. He sings with the Gay Men's Chorus. He has received awards for music and for military excellence.

Eva Thibaudeau-Graczyk, is a graduate student in political social work at University of Houston. She volunteers with HATCH and Casa de Esperanza. She received \$2,500

to compete her studies.

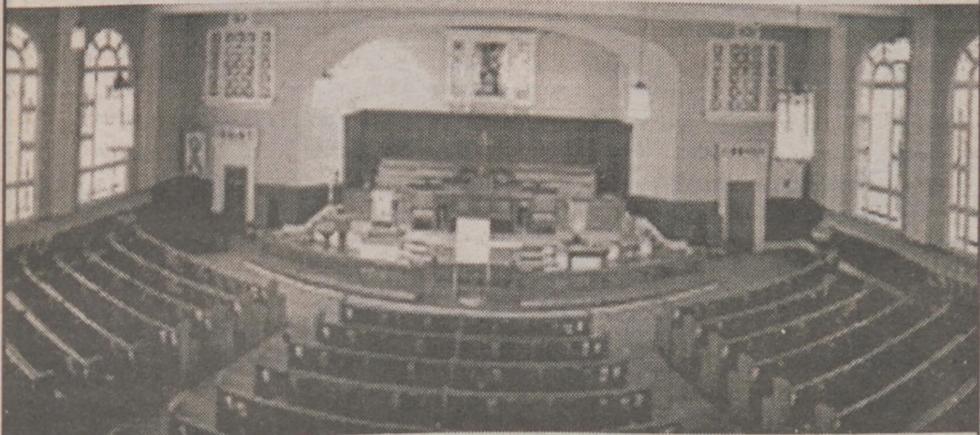
"We are pleased to have such a diverse group of scholarship winners, and they are such a multi-talented group of young people," Davidson said.

"We have a screening committee that asks seven questions, including one about contributions inside and outside of school. We ask about the student's 'out' experience, and where he or she is with it now. We publicize the scholarships as for gay youth, and want to be sure the student understands and is okay with that."

For more information, call Kevin Davidson at 713-661 2195.

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W. Va. court reveals details in gay black man's killing

Gay activists say new information confirms their fears that the motive was hate

by GIP PLASTER

New information from a judge's order outlines the gruesome details of the death of a gay black man in West Virginia, including evidence that the victim was still alive when repeatedly driven over by a car to hide a brutal beating.

The information came in an order calling for one of the defendants to be tried as an adult and provided proof, according to some gay and black activists, that the killing was more about hate than about a simple argument over money, as court papers suggest.

Marion County, W. Va., Circuit Judge Rodney Merrifield ordered Aug. 2 that David Allen Parker, 17, of Grant Town, stand trial as an adult on a first-degree murder charge. Parker is charged with killing Arthur "J.R." Warren, 26, of Fairmont on July 4.

Both Parker, of Grant Town,

and Jared Wilson, 17, of Fairview, were arrested and charged with first-degree murder the day Warren's body was found. Although authorities have not identified the juveniles, family members confirmed the names, according to the Associated Press.

Merrifield has not ruled on whether to try Wilson as an adult.

A source close to the case told AP that a third person, Jason Shoemaker, 15, of Grant Town, has been charged as an accessory after the fact.

Merrifield's order that Parker be tried as an adult gives a graphic account of the circumstances leading to the death.

Parker and Warren had an argument over an undisclosed rumor that had circulated concerning the two, according to the 10-page order. That argument lasted several minutes, but Parker and Warren both calmed down, and Parker ultimately apologized, it said.

Earlier AP reports cited anonymous sources that claimed Warren had been planning to reveal a sexual relationship with Parker. Parker's family has denied the report, which isn't addressed in the court order.

According to the order, later



Brenda Warren speaks at vigil in memory of her son, hate-crime victim Arthur Warren Jr., on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol in Washington in July. At right, Audra, sister of the victim and at left, Rev. Nelson Staples.

that night, while Parker and Warren were in another room, one of the other boys in the house took \$20 from Warren's wallet. Warren eventually discovered the money missing and asked who had taken it. That triggered a second argument in which Parker, who was wearing steel-toed boots, threw Warren to the ground and kicked him repeatedly.

One of the other boys then put on his steel-toed boots and kicked Warren several times in the head.

Parker continued to kick Warren while the other boy stopped and sat on the bed to watch.

Warren was then bleeding heavily and could barely move, but Parker pushed him outside and continued to kick and beat him. Then he and the other boy put Warren into the back of a Camaro.

They and the third teen at the house drove Warren to a gravel pullout along the two-lane road that runs through Grant Town.

"During the drive to the power plant, Mr. Warren climbed from the hatchback area into the back seat and requested to be taken home," the order says. "No one responded to Mr. Warren's request to go home."

Instead, Parker pulled over and dragged Warren out of the car. He and another boy kicked Warren repeatedly for another five minutes, according to the court order.

Parker then got into the car and drove over Warren four times.

Gay and black community leaders question the wording of the judge's order that makes it seem the crime was motivated by an argument over \$20.

"For them to put something out that would leave the impression that this was the result of a dispute over \$20 is outrageous, considering the sheer brutality inflicted on this young person," David Smith, Human Rights Campaign spokesperson, told AP.

Marion County NAACP Chapter President Rudy Jefferson said Aug. 3 that both Prosecutor Richard Bunner and Sheriff Ron Watkins have refused to meet with him or local clergy about the case.

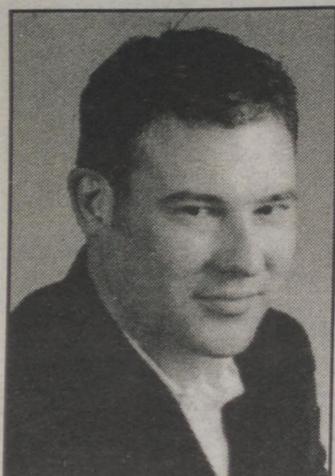
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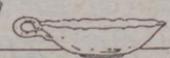
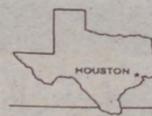
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Companies have pink dollar signs in their eyes

> Continued from Page 3

Georgia, has not received a single call. "I completely forgot my partner and I were listed on it," Doman said. "I thought it was going to be great. Maybe when it catches on."

Ambitious goals for GFN

So far, almost a hundred thousand members have caught on. Starting with 15,000 members for its Oct. 1998 launch, founder Walter Shubert's web-site claimed 80,000 by the end of 1999, and he expects 1 million within two years. His mother was the first member.

Compared to being the first gay man to come out on Wall Street, starting GFN was a snap, Shubert said. Having been raised in a hard working Irish Catholic family, he was expected to head that family when congenital heart disease killed his father in 1979.

But the weight of a closeted life of a New York financial professional and supporting a family of seven eventually took its toll. At 36, the third generation New York Stock Exchange seat holder and 15-year veteran decided he had to be true to himself and came out to co-workers.

"I became 'the gay guy' for awhile," Shubert said. "Before that, I had been 'Shubie.'"

Shubert saw then what others now see. "From a business point of view it just

makes sense," he said.

GFN was also Shubert's attempt to build something that addressed his fears head on.

"Gfn.com is about addressing that economic insecurity, then allowing gay people to live in fully integrated lives, not having their finances separate from who they really are. GFN is the place that shows them there are companies out there that want to do business with them based on who they are, not how much money they have."

Gay wealth a myth?

But gay and lesbian consumers do have financial punch. Gay Internet users have an annual average household income of \$62,000, according to Greenfield Online, a marketing research company. That compares to \$53,000 for the average heterosexual household.

"Gay wealth is not a myth," Shubert said. "It makes sense: more couples are childless, etc. You end up with greater disposable income. Every year the U.S. gay and lesbian population contributes an estimated \$15 billion to \$17 billion in IRA deposits alone."

Yet until recently, gay men and lesbians had been all but ignored by large financial services firms unfamiliar with this niche marketing and the specialized community needs. Simultaneously, many gays are still reluctant to reveal their sexual orientation to financial planners, resulting in faulty and

financial planning advice.

Opening the door to competition

New York-based Christopher Street Financial Inc., a gay-owned and operated brokerage and financial planning firm, manages \$250 million in assets. Since opening in 1997, the company has tripled its staff to 20, 12 of which are brokers.

There is also Meyers Capital Management and its Meyers Pride Value Fund, a no-load fund that invests only in companies with open workplace policies.

Billed as the first gay and lesbian bank on the Internet, well-known G&L Bank was founded by Steven Dunlap in 1999 after seven years of planning. Based in Pensacola, Fla., G&L also offers estate planning and trust.

The same week the company went live online, GFN's Shubert announced a corporate partnership with Telebank, a gay-friendly but predominantly straight bank. The perceived slight raised questions of allegiance within the gay business community.

"We were shocked," Dunlap said. "We always assumed they would come to us for financing."

"GFN is not just about a gay 30-year bond or a 'gay service,' it's more than that, and we decided early on that we would accept gay-friendly companies. But you also had to be very good. Waving around the



GFN's Walter Shubert has ambitious goals for the financial web-site—jumping from 80,000 members this year to one million by next.

word 'gay' was not enough to hold customers," Shubert said. "We had been talking with Telebank for years. Yes, we talked with G&L, but for a matter of weeks, and the talks were not substantial."

Shubert, who is currently recovering from lymphoma, takes the business side of his company as seriously as the activism. As a private company, he still keeps profit reports confidential, but insists the web-site is and will be profitable.

"Even if we only make a small profit, isn't that an amazing statement?" he asked.

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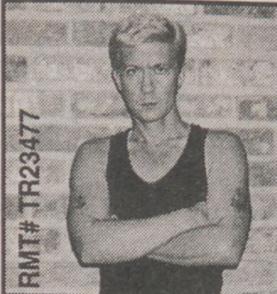
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HOUSTON VOICE • AUGUST 11, 2000

PETER PAN HAS SEX



In Travis Ammons' new comedy, 'Manhood Is Dead,' four male friends meet each Saturday night for their ritual poker game. Pictured from left are Courtney Webb, Travis Ammons, Tim Wrobel, Joshua Gray and Hank Fields.

'Manhood Is Dead' takes comic look at universal needs of men

by D.L. GROOVER

In playwright/actor Travis Ammons' new comedy, **MANHOOD IS DEAD**, the universal wants of man, which revolve around sex, get a fine dizzying dissection. Sometimes a screed, sometimes a jeremiad, sometimes just a bedroom farce, this comedy, for the most part, connects the dots of manhood into an intriguing, entertaining picture, yet one that doesn't quite come into focus.

Four male friends, four lost boys of dysfunctional manhood, meet each Saturday night for their ritual poker game. They bitch and moan, comfort and succor, tell secrets and express hidden desires. Their "male time" is sacred: a shared bonding that wards off and shores up the growing cracks in that façade called masculinity.

Julian (Travis Ammons), a poet, has an obsession for

his childhood sweetheart, Rachel (Courtney Webb), and writes cartoons of soulful verses about her. That he has never told her of the torch he's carrying speaks of his fear of rejection, fear that perfection isn't obtainable, fear of commitment.

Julian, or "Julie" as he's most often addressed by his friends, is the boy who won't grow up. Chasing the girl of his dreams, when he catches her, he doesn't want her. The very heat of their passion scares him away, and the transparent excuses start to pile up.

"She hurts me," he whines, examining the bruises and scratches from their hours of sex, "she's too much."

His friend Grey (Tim Wrobel) has no such fears. Never without a condom, he'd go on the attack: wham, bam, thank you, ma'am. Finding a soul mate among anonymous one-night stands, though, puts a damper on his

> Continued on Page 24

between dances

ErasmO Guerra

Your private dancer

ErasmO Guerra's first novel follows a Houston hustler's decent into the bleak world of Times Square

by DAVID GOLDMAN

It was ErasmO Guerra's very first night as a New Yorker. The Texas native had come to the city determined to make it as a writer, and that evening a friend celebrated his arrival by taking him to a Times Square institution.

Through the doorway, with its tacked-up, hand-lettered sign declaring the names of tonight's dancers. Up the crooked staircase to the lady in the ticket booth. Push through the ancient, heavy dark drapes. Enter the little auditorium. Look—up on the stage...

Guerra will always remember his first time at the Gaiety Theater on the first night of his new life in New York in 1993.

"We went there, and I was in my seat for like two hours. I couldn't move. I was mesmerized. One after the other: I probably remember all their names.

"I was in shock. That kind of thing, you would never experience in south Texas."

> Continued on Page 25

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homefront

Fawning over flora.

Beautiful arrangements can be created simply with fresh flowers from the grocery

by ELLA TYLER

Fresh flowers are beautiful, ephemeral and completely useless. That's why we want them.

Before you succumb to the lure of the bunches of flowers at the grocery store, here's what to do.

Acquire a vase. Bigger is not better. There's a good reason that florists buy cases of 6-inch glass cylinders, 8-inch ginger jars (they have a high 'waist') and bud vases. They're versatile, especially in clear glass.

Find them at garage sales or resale shops or pay retail and buy them where you get flowers. If you have a vase that you want to use, measure it. The tallest flowers should be one-and-a-half times the height of the container for the most pleasing proportions, so if your vase is 6 inches tall, your flowers should range from 12 inches to 15 inches tall.

If your vase is 12 inches tall, you have to have two-foot-tall flowers. Unless you love gladiolus, it's not easy or cheap to fill the vase. In a pinch, a glass will do, but anything that has a top that is wider than the bottom will be frustrating to use. All the flowers will fall to the sides, leaving empty space in the middle.

Now you can select flowers. One of the problems with the ubiquitous mixed bunches at the grocery store is that there are always a few flowers that are the wrong color to go with the rest. I take those out and make a separate arrangement, but it takes at least three similar flowers to make a satisfactory arrangement.

Some of the pricier bunches have a lily

in them, but a single lily is hard to use. Look for flowers that aren't drooping and foliage that isn't yellowing, and be sure the stems are in water. There's always a bunch or two that have gotten pushed up from the water.

If you're shopping at one of the flower shops on Fannin, don't buy flowers that have been sitting outside. Many of these places have flowers in the cooler.

Irises, though beautiful, don't last for more than two or three days, but chrysanthemums, alstroemeria, carnations and glads should last for five or more days. The vase life of roses depends on how well they were kept.

The arrangements photographed for this article were done with two mixed bunches from Kroger, one for \$4.99 and one for \$6.99, and a bunch of roses that cost \$7.99 from a place on Fannin. The greenery in these bunches is rarely adequate, so I snipped a bit of pyracantha, pittosporum and creeping fig from the bushes outside the building where the Houston Voice offices.

The three roses came from the \$6.99 bunch, making it a real bargain. They're gold and bronze (Leonidas) and look wonderful in the blue bud vase.

I stripped most of the leaves off, but left a few at the top. Always remove leaves that will be submerged. I cut the stems again at a steep angle, and if I'd been diligent, I would have cut the stems under water.

The foliage is some pyracantha and some of the grassy stuff that came with the bunch. I put leftover pieces of stem in the neck of the vase to hold the roses upright. The most open flower went at the bottom.

The big arrangement consists of the yellow and white chrysanthemums that were in both bunches. I cut each stem apart, both to have flowers with different stem lengths and to open up the spray. I took the longest

> Continued on Page 25

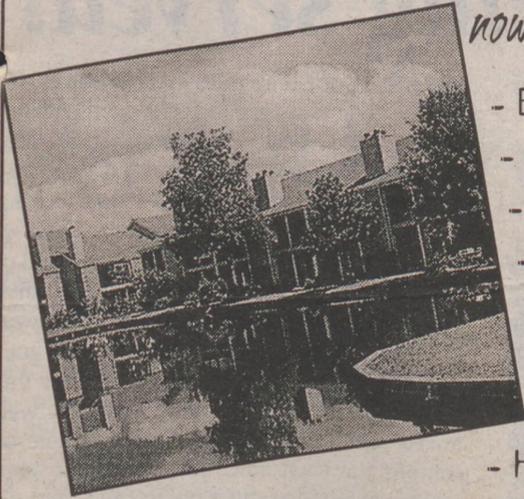


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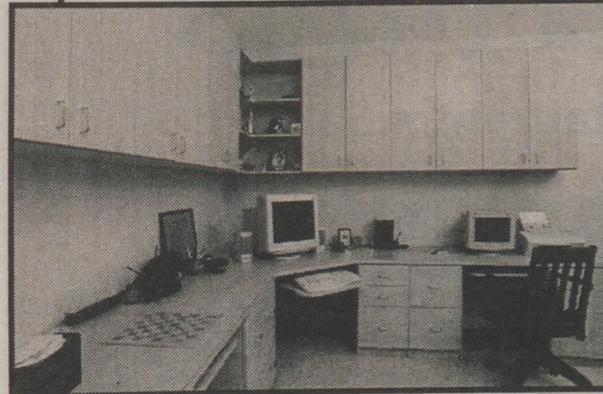
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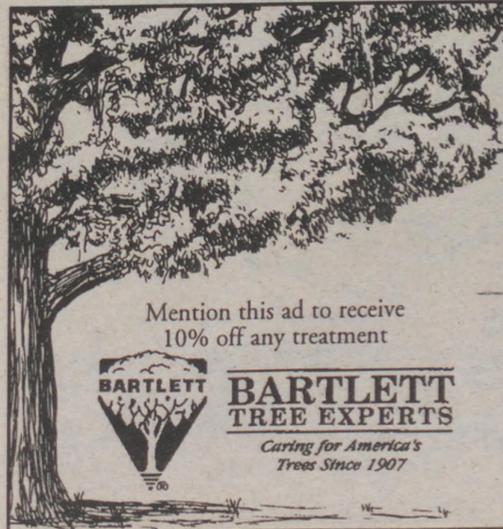
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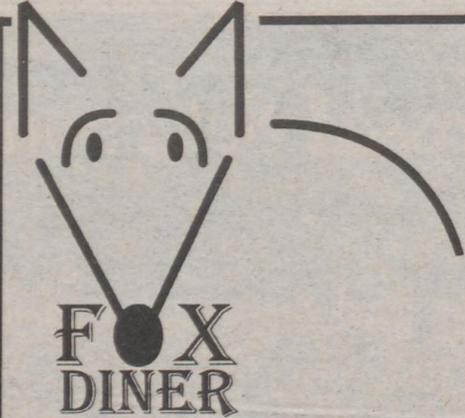
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Eating Out

RESTAURANT REVIEWS

Are you being served?

Good food can't outshine poor service at Basil's

by TRAYCE DISKIN

It was a lazy Sunday morning, and my stomach was craving some serious breakfast food. Although my appetite was thinking Barnaby's eggs and homefries or a Daily Review omelet, I called BASIL'S CAFE and asked if they were still serving brunch. After an affirmative response, a friend and I hopped in the car, followed several erroneous directions (i.e. left = right, north = south), and found the charming, quaint cottage that houses this little-known River Oaks cafe.



Bar & Grill

"Two for brunch, please," I said as our host led us through the stately, oak-paneled pub to the more spacious, airy rooms where light from the floor-to-ceiling windows flooded in from the elegant courtyard. After briefly skimming the menu, I inquired about the missing brunch items.

"No," the server responded curtly, "the only brunch food we serve is Eggs Benedict." Since the menu looked rather promising, we told her we needed just a minute to rethink. She gave us 20. When she finally appeared with a half-filled cup of coffee, she neglected to bring cream, then disappeared for 15 minutes more. When I asked for the cream, and a replenished cup, since mine had gone cold, she disappeared again without even a hint of an apology or casual smile.

I have nothing against a mistake or two when it comes to service, driving directions, or entire menu items. I even allow that often, sheer incompetence can be forgiven with a server's sense of humor or amiable professionalism. Since our server bothered with neither, and because she didn't have the excuse of a busy shift, we let our suspicions wander. "It's almost 12:30," I whispered to my friend, "does the service account for the fact that no one else eats here?"

"No," she suggested, surveying the empty, pristine room, "this is the kind of place people eat after church."

When our appetizers finally arrived, we hoped for the best. The Fried Green Tomatoes (\$6) were tender and greaseless in their breaded cornmeal. The batter was slightly burnt in all the right places, making for a crunchy texture that sopped up the creamy red pepper

sauce that pooled beneath the three slices.

The good news grilling continued with my Blue Corn Crusted Snapper (\$16.50) The pounded blue corn chips gave a delicious, salty bite to the flaky fish. I was most looking forward to the mango avocado salsa topping, and was disappointed when this consisted of large chunks of the above, with a few thick slices of red onion. Although one might want to address this criticism with the "all goes down the same" rule, salsa-lovers know this to be false. Without a finely chopped, well mixed salsa, the flavors couldn't mingle or compliment each other, juices couldn't seep, and the fish had nothing but its own flavor to absorb.

The Fettuccini with Salmon and Asparagus (\$9.95) featured a thick tomato sauce whose texture and flavor was just right for the long and tender noodles. Although salmon is a fatty fish, translucent fat around the skin made this otherwise rich and satisfying choice a little heavy. The asparagus was crunchy and perfectly steamed, but we lamented the lack of any other vegetables in the sauce—a bit of chopped onion or green pepper for instance.

Cafe Basil offers other dishes with a similarly Italian-Continental bent such as Shrimp Scampi with Portabello Mushrooms (\$15.50), Filet of Beef Stuffed with Artichoke (\$19.50) and others including grilled fish, veal and lamb. I regretted we didn't try the appetizer Tequila Lime Salmon Gravlax (\$7) with a peppercorn and dill sauce.

For desert we shared the Frangelico Cheesecake (\$4) which held nary a whiff of liqueur, and a raspberry sauce that was so bland and gelatinous it could have come from a can.

The slow service lingered until we finally received our check, and by then the room began to fill with one or two elderly couples in crisp, formal church attire.

We hoped the festivity of more bodies in the room would somehow make up for the icy mood and inefficient service. That's what it would have taken to make the meals worthwhile.

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FOOD FILE

Food: ☺☺☺
 Service: ☺
 Value: ☺☺☺
 Scene: ☺☺☺☺

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- ☺☺ OK, if you really must
- ☺☺☺ Fine for most
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out in music

by MARGARET COBLE

Mel and Larry's Disco 101

To some, disco was all about "Saturday Night Fever," polyester, roller boogie, and Studio 54.

For others, that era in time meant something much, much more. It was an idealistic time marked by nightly communal celebration, integrated between the races, when dancing was a metaphor for life itself.

Mel Cheren is one of those people, and *Keep On Dancin': My Life and the Paradise "Garage"* is his story—the real story of disco.

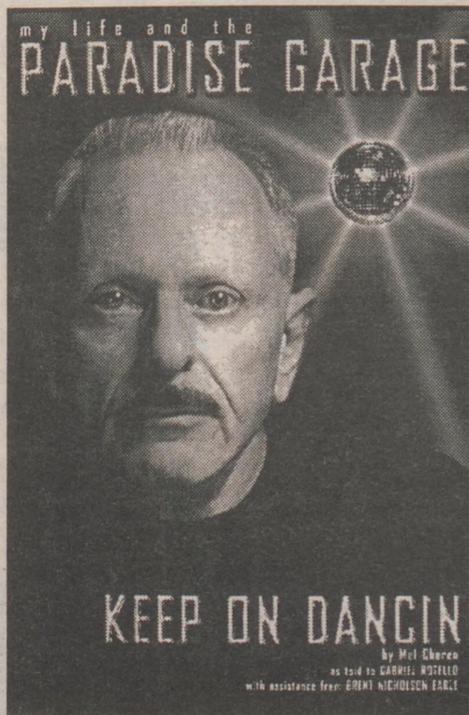
Technically a 462-page autobiography that spans the entire life of the "Godfather of Disco," as Cheren has been dubbed, "Keep On Dancin'" concentrates mostly on Cheren's amazingly accomplished career in the music industry, climaxing at the intersecting heyday of disco; his legendary record label, West End Records; and the infamous nightclub he backed financially, the Paradise Garage.

From his early days working at ABC/Paramount Records and later the independent proto-disco label Sceptor, to the formation of his own disco imprint, West End, "Keep On Dancin'" gives Cheren's unique insider perspectives on the ins and outs of the music business and his behind the scenes account of the rise and fall of disco.

If that much of the story isn't intriguing enough, "Keep On Dancin'" is also a rare history of gay New York from the 1950s to the present. Through Cheren's life story, we get to experience pre-Stonewall bar culture, the glory days of Fire Island, and the pre-AIDS euphoria of dancing the night away at some of Manhattan's most prominent gay discos.

What's more, Cheren draws a compelling connection between disco's gay, black, and Latino origins and its eventual demise, citing homophobia and racism as the major impetus behind the "Disco Sucks" riot at Comiskey Park in 1979 which sparked the genre's subsequent decline from commercial popularity.

Widely acknowledged as the man behind three very important concepts that jump started the disco explosion and DJ culture as we know it now—the 12-inch vinyl single, the instrumental B side mix, and the DJ promo 12 inch—Cheren certainly earned the moniker "Godfather of Disco," and his financial involvement in the legendary Manhattan nightclub the Paradise Garage only further cemented that title. Owned by the love of Cheren's life, Michael Brody, the Paradise Garage opened in 1978 and closed in 1987, traversing the entire lifespan of disco, from its inception to its "death" and then its later mutation to house and garage music, the latter being a style actually named for



the club itself.

DJ Larry Levan was the source of this revolutionary blend of often disparate sounds called garage, and "Keep On Dancin'" is also his story. Levan is often cited as the greatest DJ who ever lived, and is regarded as one of the most creative and influential DJs in the world. He was one of the first to elevate DJ-ing to an artform by his attempts to "mix" records live in the DJ booth and to create "remixes" utilizing instrumental mixes of songs.

And so it is only fitting that in conjunction with the release of Cheren's "Keep On Dancin'," a rare, live double CD set featuring 90 minutes of Levan's genius has also been released on Cheren's recently resuscitated West End label. Digitally remastered from the original reel to reel tapes recorded live in Levan's DJ booth in 1979, "Larry Levan Live At The Paradise Garage" captures the essence of an era in dance music that has long since passed but will never be forgotten.

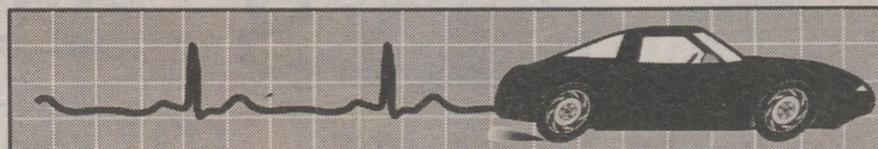
INFO

'Keep On Dancin': My Life and the Paradise Garage'
by Mel Cheren
24 Hours For Life, Inc.
\$24.95, 462 pp.
Rating: A+

'Larry Levan Live at the Paradise Garage'
West End/Garage/Strut UK Records

For more info on both:
www.westendrecords.com

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compiled by REX WOCKNER and from staff reports



"Yes, I am Dick Armey. And if there is a dick army, Barney Frank would want to join up."

—House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-Tex.) (left), after being asked at the GOP convention last week by newspaper columnist Dave Barry, "Are you really Dick Armey?"

"It's apparent to gay people that we're talking about being gay, but straight people don't know what's going on."

—Paul Poux of the advertising agency Poux Co. on the Subaru ad that shows a car carrying two men's bicycles along with the slogan "It's not a choice. It's the way we're built," to the *London Evening Standard*, July 26

"There are very few swear words, there's no nudity at all and I made the film for gay teens. The fact that it received an 'R' [rating] is really offensive to me. I'm tired of being told by these people that my sexuality is a bad thing. It's not. It's wonderful."

—Jamie Babbit, director of the film "But I'm A Cheerleader," to Ohio's *Gay People's Chronicle*, July 21

"I'm not aware of myself as a sex symbol—I wouldn't object if I were. It's one of the functions of actors to let people fantasize."

—Actor Sir Ian McKellen (right), who is openly gay, to Chicago's *Outlines*, July 19



"My personal belief is that we're all bisexual. A lot of that informs what 'Chuck & Buck' is. In terms of myself, there's no shame. I could say I'm gay but that doesn't feel completely true either. ... Instead of saying we're different and should be treated equal, we should be saying sexuality is complicated."

—Mike White, writer and star of the film "Chuck & Buck," to syndicated journalist Steve Warren. White is also the son of Rev. Mel White, the openly gay founder of Soulforce ministries.

"I'm beginning to get creeped out by organizations like [media watchdog] GLAAD that start issuing the official party line on what a positive gay role model is and what isn't. That may have been useful 10 years ago. I'm not so sure it is today. Gay people have nothing to prove [to bigots] in this world about themselves, nor should we be in the position to think we can do that by creating some glossy, rose-tinted version of ourselves."

—"Tales of the City" author Armistead Maupin to Montreal's *Hour*, July 20

"I do love her, but if a reporter were coming to my home, I wouldn't have Judy Garland playing. They'd think maybe upstairs I had a room devoted to her. A gay man loving Judy could almost be like a black person watching a minstrel show."

—Filmmaker John Waters to the *Atlantic Monthly*, August issue

"In her last movie, 'I Could Go On Singing' (1963), she [Judy Garland] even gave homosexuals in the audience a wink. 'I've already drunk enough coffee to float Fire Island,' she says in a throwaway line near the end of the film. To gay men in that closeted time the flicker of recognition must have seemed like a bolt of lightning."

—Michael Joseph Gross writing in the August *Atlantic Monthly*



"No, I don't think so."

—Singer k.d. lang (left), when asked by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "Do you think you're going to make some babies with David Crosby?"

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Hank Fields
Joshua Gray
Courtney Webb
Tim Wrobel

Performance Schedule:
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Sunday Matinee at 5:00pm, August 13

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'Manhood' resurrected in Ashland production

> Continued from Page 17

finding any meaningful relationship.

Collin (Hank Fields), a novelist, might as well have a big scarlet "R" tattooed on his chest, R for romantic. He's the delusional Don Quixote who seeks permanent love after a momentary chance encounter on the subway. That his Dulcinea turns out to be Rachel, is a neat little twist that can only happen on stage.

Terrence (Joshua Gray) is gay, his partner is dying, and his stoicism in the face of such gravity and the fact that he hasn't told any of his best friends that he, too, has AIDS is eating him alive.

Throw these diverse life views together and you get a right lively play. However, it's still a work in progress and needs the sharp knife of a rewrite to focus the structure and pare out the excess. Too many scenes repeat themes we've already heard. As the cabaret singer Dolly Dawn is fond of saying, I got it twice the first time.

Ammons knows how to write for actors, and gives each of his cast some tale to tell that pinpoints their character, placing them in situations that shifts the comedy into high gear.

Grey's stripper adventure with the new-age angel brings into relief his buried animosity toward his father; Julian's rant on the current hipness of the gay movement adds an intriguing roadblock on his path to sexual enlight-

enment; while Collin's graveyard-love-making tale augments his romantic longings with the pleasures in nitty-gritty sex.

Ammons knows how to write for actors, and gives each of his cast some tale to tell that pinpoints their character, placing them in situations that shifts the comedy into high gear.

Ammons, all hopped up with brittle edgy mannerisms before he even takes his first toke, embodies Julian's man/child dichotomy with his head of pre-Raphaelite curls and boyish physique. There's a sense of danger right below his easily-bruised skin, and he charges through his scenes with intensity and laser-like focus.

Although described by Julian as though a she-devil in heat, Courtney Webb's Rachel has the sweet patina of a normal healthy woman who just wants a commitment. Is Julian fabricating this S&M dominatrix so he can get out of the relationship? If so, then Julian has

more troubles than the play lets on; no one would dump Webb's dreamboat.

Tim Wrobel's male chauvinist is full of comic delights, from body language when incoherent from drink, or his wonderfully acted monologue about his dream of having sex with a blow-up doll. By strength of good-guy steadfastness, Hank Fields overcomes the creepy undertones to the ultra-romantic Collin and turns them into positives. Joshua Grey's Terrence, starting shrill, builds in intensity and believability as he pours out the shadowy details of his life story.

Since this play centers around Julian's poker table, why is this most important set placed way upstage in a corner? Even though Ashland St.'s theater is intimate in the extreme, shoe-horning the action against the back wall diffuses the tension and greatly removes us from immediacy. Perhaps, with the rewrite, the set and the themes inherent in "Manhood is Dead" will be squarely set center stage.

INFO

MANHOOD IS DEAD

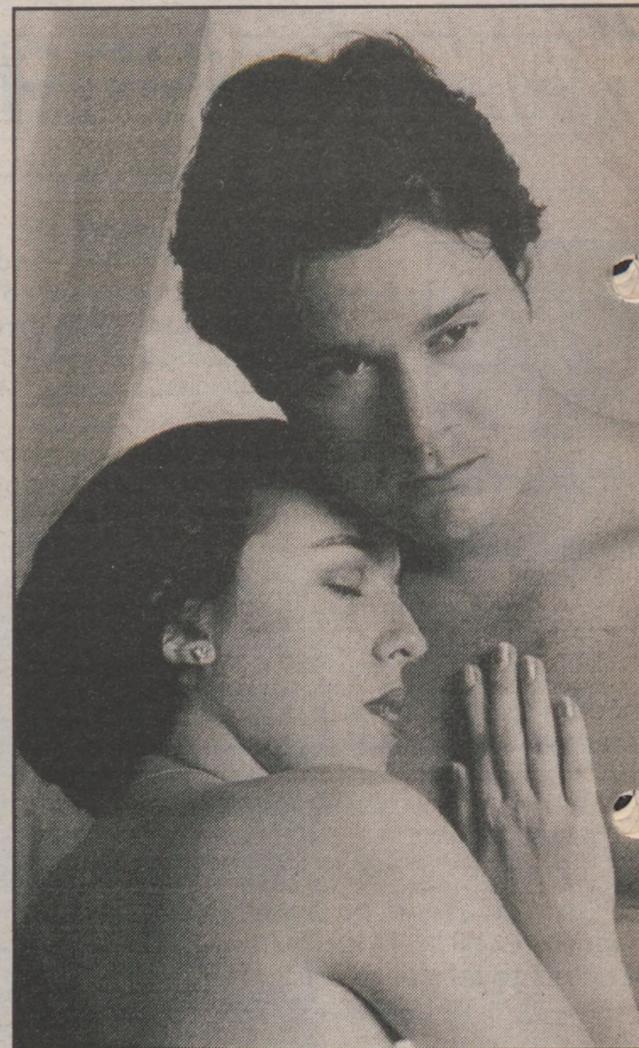
by Travis Ammons

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Hank Fields and Courtney Webb co-star in Travis Ammons' new comedy 'Manhood is Dead,' playing now through Aug. 26 at Ashland St. Theatre.

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'Between Dances' novel follows character from H-town to NYC

> Continued from Page 17

"That kind of thing" is a strip show for men in which the male dancers appear on stage, get naked, disappear briefly and then return, with an erection, to dance again.

And now a fictional version of the Gaiety, only disguised and referred to only as "the theater," is the setting for much of "Between Dances," Guerra's first novel.

"The book is about this character named Marco who finds what stands for love in this underworld of hustlers. He feels it for the first time. That's what the story is about: how he experiences it and survives it. It's about growing up," Guerra, 30, said last week from his apartment in New York's Hell's Kitchen.

The novel follows one year in Marco's life. At its outset, Marco is trying to revive his doomed relationship with Chris, also a dancer and hustler, with whom he moved up from Houston. In Jaime, a new dancer at the theater, Marco sees, briefly, the flickering promise of true love and a life together. Marco is determined to extricate himself from his dark world of dancing and turning tricks—but the life of which he's tired is still new and full of promise for Jaime. The collapse of this relationship leaves Marco more vulnerable than ever—and yet, paradoxically, stronger.

"Between Dances" is distinguished by a writing style that is as lavish and beautiful as the world it describes is bleak and harsh. Guerra discussed how he developed a tone at once highly embellished, yet emotionally spare.

"When I write, I think about a specific person. I would actually think, 'what do they need to

know to make the picture complete?' For this book, it was the character of Jaime. I was writing the book for the person I modeled it after."

It could even be argued that the novel's main character is not Marco or Jaime, but rather the brilliant, mad metropolis of New York. Guerra lingers lovingly over the city in all its beauty and ugliness, and takes special joy in describing its seasons, which divide the book into four distinct sections.

"In Texas, there are no seasons. It's just hot and dry, or not so hot and rainy. In New York, the seasons are incredible. The way things change; that's what drew me into writing it that way—seeing how the characters change and watching the city as it goes through its paces."

Guerra (whose friends call him "Mo") is looking forward to an upcoming visit home. New York's cool summer has left him longing for south Texas' relentless heat. His previous work includes editing the gay anthology "Latin Lovers," and his parents, though proud of his success, are still coming to grips with the world of which he writes.

But concerns about parents and neighbors seem to have been far from Guerra's mind when he probed the dark scene he depicts in "Between Dances."

"I needed to write it this way. I took every opportunity to make it as sexual, as gay, as gritty, and even as depressing as possible, in some ways."

INFO 'BETWEEN DANCES'

by Erasmo Guerra
Painted Leaf Press

Floral arrangements can be created easily, inexpensively at home

> Continued from Page 18

stems off the side, then cut out the middle, leaving one long stem with several flowers, one short stem with several flowers and a few single flowers on medium length stems.

I tried the baby's breath in the rose arrangement, but didn't like it, so it went in the yellow and white arrangement. Again, I cut pieces off the big stems. I left lots of the leaves on and added a few stems of pyracantha, a bit of the fern and some of the creeping fig.

I had one large carnation left and a few carnation buds left over. The big carnation was sort of squished, but I brushed my finger across it to fluff it out. Lots of people are afraid to touch the petals, but florists pull petals off and fluff flowers up all the time.

The arrangement looked a bit sparse, so I added two of the little sweetheart roses.

The best vase for the small roses would have been a glass cylinder, but I didn't have one. I tried a bud vase, but didn't like the way the arrangement

was shaping up, so I used a short glass and added pittosporum and fern.

Now that your flowers are arranged, put them where they can be admired. It's better if they are out of the sun and away from drafts. Change the water every day, and if you cut a bit off the stems, the flowers will last longer.

Use floral preservative if you have it. If not, Listerine or Sprite works. These products contain sugar to feed the flowers and alcohol or citric acid to kill bacteria.



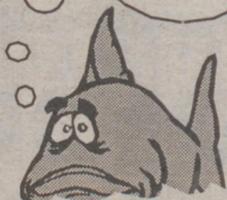
PHOTO BY DALTON DEHART

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Dignity mass. 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama.
713-528-6665.
Houston Chain Gang Bicycle Club. Call for ride locations. 713-863-1860.
Houston Wrestling Club. Practice. 1:30 p.m. 713-453-7406.
Rainbow Fishing Club. Meeting. 713-526-7070.
Houston Faerie Circle. Meeting. 2 p.m. 713-533-0150.
Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry Southwest Center. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 281-633-2555 & Conroe 936-441-1614.
Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center Drop-in hours noon to 4 p.m. • Montrose Writer's Project. 3 to 4:30 p.m. • Lesbian Island Association. 3 p.m. 713-528-3818.
Houston Outdoor Group. Messina Hof's 18th annual Harvest Trip 7:13-KAMPOUT.
Classic Chassis Car Club. Pool party. 713-728-9889.
Houston Area Bears. Social. 10 p.m. 713-867-9123.
Gulf Coast Transgender Community. Meeting. 713-780-4282.
Presentation. Bipolar Disorders. AssistHers. 713-521-4628.

sunday, august 13

New Hope Christian Center Worship Service. 11 a.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals meets. 713-942-7002.
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 :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 11 a.m. Christian Education. 11:30 p.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston@att.net
Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. Adult forum 10 a.m. Service 11 a.m. 713-686-5876.
Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation: Adult discussion 9:45 a.m. Service 11 a.m. 281-277-8882. www.tuuc.org.
Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.
FrontRunners. Running Club. 9 a.m. 713-522-8021.
Houston Gay & Lesbian Parents. Pool party. 713-284-4939.

monday, august 14

Gay Fathers/Fathers First. Support group. 8 p.m. www.GayFathers-Houston.org or 281-505-1788.
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.
HIV testing, STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 1 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. 713-626-2837.
Kolbe Project. Eucharist 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.
Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry open. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 936-441-1614.
Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.
Lesbian & Gay Voices Radio Show. 8 to 10 p.m. KPFT 90.1. 713-529-1223.
AIDS Mastery. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0101.
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. • Black Lesbian & Gay Coalition weekly meeting. 7 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

tuesday, august 15

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. 281-495-8009.
Bering Support Network. Lunch Bunch Gang 11 a.m. 713-526-1017.

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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.
Lambda Skating Club skates. 8 p.m. Tradewinds. Skating Rink. 713-410-7215.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. • Lesbian Coming Out Group. 7 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-528-3818.
Center for AIDS. Women's Mixer. 713-527-8210.

wednesday, august 16

Free HIV Testing. Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2015 Thomas Street 713-793-4026.
STD Exams & treatment. HIV Testing. Free. AVES. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.
Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Mary's, Venture-N & EJ's 713-830-3000.
BiNet Houston. 7:30 p.m. Social meeting. 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.
Out Skate Rollerskating Club. 8 to 10 p.m. 8075 Cook Road. 281-933-5818.
Rainbow Ranglers free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. 713-880-0670.
Bible Study. Noon & 6:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal. 713-526-6665.
Spiritual Uplift service. 7 p.m. Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.
Freelance Art Classes by Kermit Eisenhut for HIV+ individuals. 1 to 4 p.m. Lunch provided. 713-523-9530.
Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.
Lesbian Literature Discussion Group. 7 p.m. 713-523-3037.
Houston Pride Band. Open rehearsal. 1307 Yale. www.houston-prideband.org.
Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Various Support Groups 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. Free HIV testing by the Montrose Clinic 6 to 9 p.m. 713-524-3818.

thursday, august 17

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Open rehearsal. 7 p.m. 713-521-7464.
Rainbow Ranglers free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. 7 p.m. 713-880-0670.
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.
FrontRunners. Running Club. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.
HIV Art Course Program. 1 to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer 713-526-1118.
Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.
Community Gospel. Service. 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.
HIV Testing. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.
Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Alliance at the University of Houston. (GLOBAL) Meeting. 4 p.m. 713-743-7539.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 to 9 p.m. • Volunteers meeting. 7 p.m. 713-524-3818.

friday, august 18

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) Meeting. 713-942-7002.
Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Rich's. 713-830-3000.
STD Exams & treatment. Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.
Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.
Q-Patrol walks the streets. 9 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.
Kolbe Project. Morning Prayer. 10 a.m. 713-861-1800.
Houston Tennis Club. 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.
Positive Art Workshop. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer. 713-526-1118.
Lesbian and Gay Voices. KPFT 90.1 FM. 7 p.m. 713-526-5738.
Mishpachat Alizim Shabbat Services. 8 p.m. 713-748-7079.
Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center drop-in hours 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Men's Coming Out Group. 7 p.m. 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.
Capacity Building Workshop. 8:30 a.m. 713-861-0009.

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

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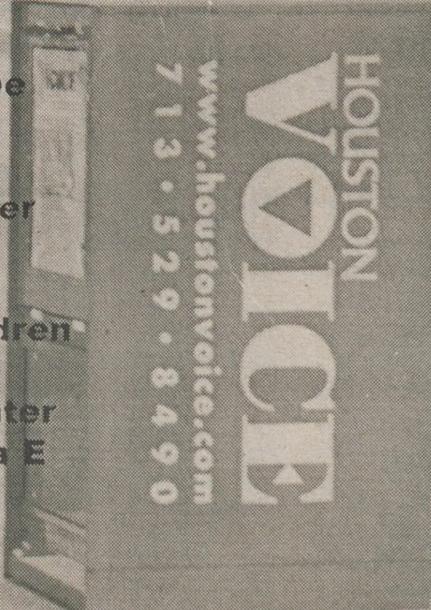
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Occasions

Birthdays

Stop the presses! Alan Josoff, the Queen of Crossroads, celebrated his 29th birthday (for the first time) on Aug. 8.

Aug. 11 is a big day for Chris Ballard, Miss Vera, Miss Molly and Robert of HAB to celebrate their birth...daze!

CCCC member Rob W. rides in another birthday on Aug. 12. His club brother Lindberg V. motors in his birthday on Aug. 14.

Forever the student LaMarr has a birthday on Aug. 12.

Jeff P. will blow out his birthday candles on August 13.

Boot, scoot and boogie on down for BRB's owner John Evans as he tips his birthday hat on Aug. 14.

Merlin will be howling on his birthday on Aug. 15.

Last call for Vicci (formerly of the Ranch) for her birthday on Aug. 16.

Former Houston Voice staffer Leslie Ramsey smiles in her birthday on Aug. 17.

Truly sick and twisted Daddy Dan will be toasting in his birthday on Aug. 17.



Jazz, the walking hairball, is our pet of the week. She's a 1 year old Persian calico owned by Tom Robbins & Allan Nelson in the Heights.



Kevin celebrated his birthday Montrose style on Aug. 3.

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- + Unspayed
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Lost Wednesday, July 26

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Thank You!
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- August 13 "Jesus Led so That Others Could be Followers"
- August 20 "What Style of Greatness do You Seek?"

UPCOMING EVENTS

- August 14 Leadership Team Meeting
- August 28 Board Meeting
- Sept. 9 Prayer Breakfast
- Sept. 16 & 17 Maranatha Fellowship MCC's 8th Anniversary weekend, Rev. Elder Jerri Ann Harvey, Guest Evangelist

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My Stars!

by JILL DEARMAN



YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE

August 11 - 17

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Kids are lucky for you in mid-August, and acting like a teenager is even luckier. It's time you loosened the reins in your life and experienced some true joy. You've been living in the shadow of your opposite sign, Libra, lately and acting a little too compromising. It's time to rediscover the virtues of selfishness. Sneak out at night with a Scorpio.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Jupiter and Saturn in your money house bode well for a freelance project you've been developing. Make a decision about where to focus your career energy during late summer and early fall and stick to it, baby! Get back in touch with your unwavering bullish nature. A Virgo wants you to take charge.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

The full moon on Aug. 15 falls in your travel sector, so if you can get outta town, for goodness sakes, go! You could find yourself revealing the depths of your passion to a Libra. Lead with your heart and follow with your snappy comebacks. In fact, skip the latter altogether, at least while you're having sex!

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

You may feel a little skittish during this full-moon week (it peaks on the 15th). Allow yourself your moods, and be aware that they make you more human and more sensual. Veer away from the temptation to judge someone close to you too harshly. A Capricorn offers you rare insight.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUG. 23)

Pay attention to the changes that occur in a romantic relationship during mid-August. Open up and admit what you've been dreaming about. Your desires need to be articulated before they can be fulfilled. Another Leo speaks your language.

VIRGO (AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23)

You may rediscover your love of SM during mid-August. The full moon brings out the servant in you. Don't fight Mother Nature—or your own instincts. Say goodbye to the old repressed you and hello to the happy whore you knew you could become. A Sag is thrilled but not surprised by this transformation.

LIBRA (SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)

The full moon joins innovative and controversial Uranus in your house of creativity on Aug. 15. If you've been wondering whether to send a bizarre idea out into the world, now's the time. Walk away from someone who reminds you of a sadistic ex. Walk into the arms of an Aquarius who wants to be your friend as well as your lover.

SCORPIO (OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)

It's a passionate time in your life, and it may be hard for you to express all the joy and angst that's arising. The full moon falls in your home sector on Aug. 15, so make sure all is well in su casa. A Gemini can help you to work out an issue that's been plaguing you since childhood. It's about time, slowpoke!

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)

You need to treat yourself better, darling. This cycle is all about forgiving yourself. When you can do that, everybody else will forgive you too! Dealing with old pain helps you to prevent a repetition of said angst. An Aries helps you to find your long lost courage.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)

Saturn (your ruler) and Jupiter are both hanging out in your house of health and body, which means that you can finally work through a sensitive physical issue. The full moon on Aug. 15 could bring you lots more money, honey. Invest it in a business that represents passion and success for you. A Pisces can help you grab the brass ring.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)

When you stop being such a know-it-all, you become more popular, beloved, and a helluva lot more respected for what you do know. Be emotionally generous for once! Stop talking and start hugging. A Cancer needs some loving... from you, you idiot!

PISCES (FEB. 20 - MARCH 20)

Pluto goes direct in your career house on Aug. 20, and with this good news comes an epiphany about how to make your day job into your dream job. Vow to put your unconscious abilities to good use in a more ritualized way. Light some loving candles with an Aries.

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

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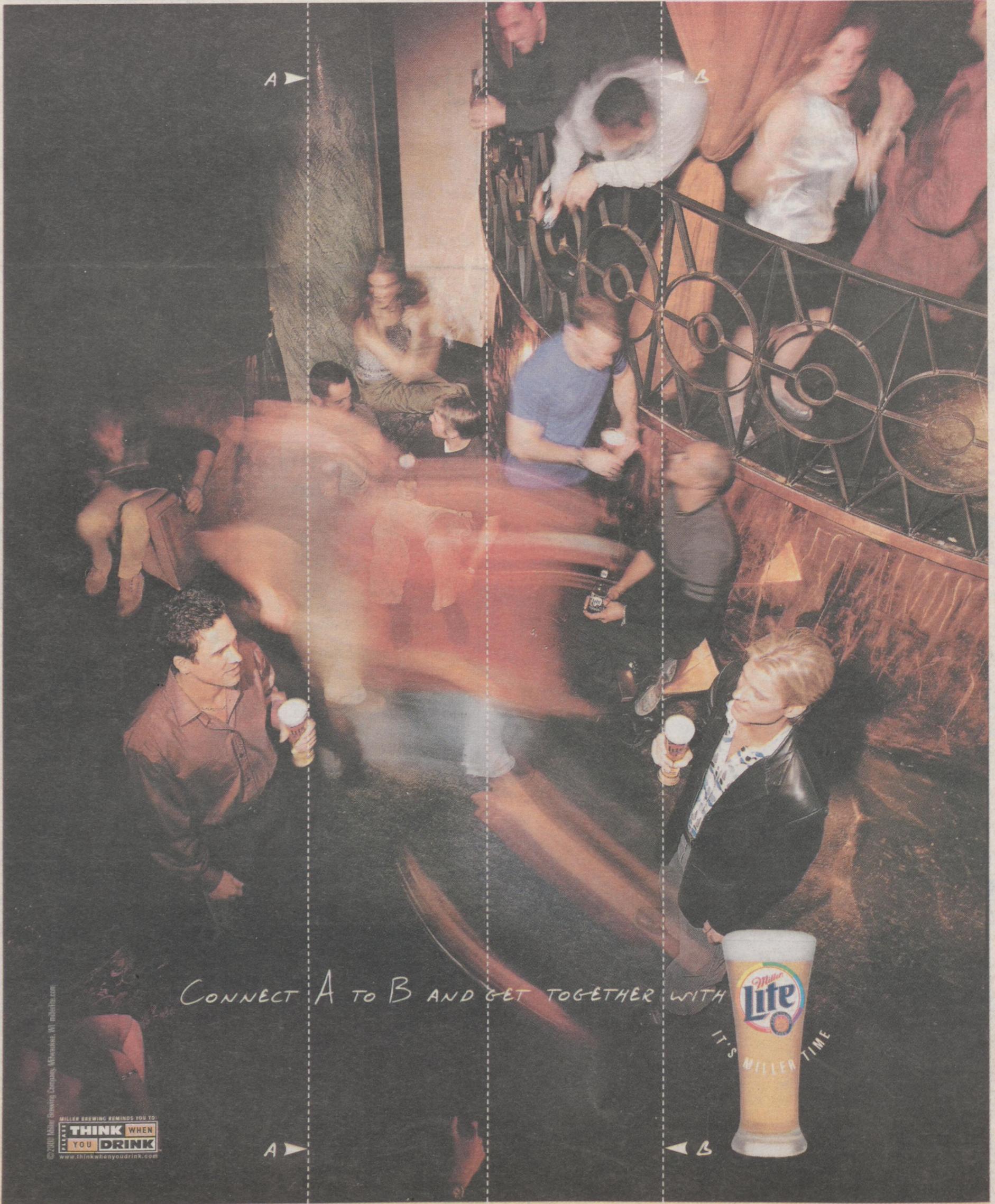
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