



**New 'Heights'**  
A young film director strikes solid gold with his first release  
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JULY 15, 2005

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**TWO FOR BUSH:** Two justices instead of one? Page 5



## Montreal, Chicago battling for gay sports fans

Upstart Out Games event has early edge in registering athletes

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

A breakaway organization promoting an international gay and lesbian sports competition in Montreal in July 2006 called Out Games has registered more athletes and teams than its rival Gay Games event, which is set to take place in Chicago two weeks earlier.

But supporters of both events say it's too soon to determine which one will draw the most participants and spectators as both sides wage an aggressive campaign to sign up paid registrants.

The two sides are pushing their campaigns through upscale Web sites accessible in several languages. Elected officials and business leaders in both cities have joined the gay organizers to help promote the two events in an unprecedented effort to lure millions of gay tourist dollars to their hometowns.

At first, many gay sports enthusiasts predicted the two competing events would lead to a financial disaster for both and would dilute and split apart what had become a unified quadrennial gay event. Now, some are wondering whether the competition has triggered an

unprecedented professionalism and such an overwhelming desire to come out ahead of the other that both events might turn out better than past Gay Games — both in attendance and the financial bottom line.

As of this week, officials with Out Games announced that 5,600 participants had registered and paid in full or in part to compete in the Montreal games, including at least 1,500 Americans. Gay Games officials said about 3,000 participants who paid their registration fees in full have signed up to participate in the Chicago events. Both sides said the participants who signed up come from more than 20 countries, with most expected to come from North America.

Each side predicts at least 12,000 participants will attend their respective events.

### Competing for more than athletes

The two sides are also competing to line up gay choruses and bands from Europe and North America. In recent years, the Gay Games evolved into a cultural festival as well as an athletic event, with



Olympic diving superstar Greg Louganis participated in his first Gay Games in 1994. There are two competing international gay sporting events scheduled for next summer, forcing gay athletes to choose between Chicago and Montreal. (Photo by Chrystyna Czajkowsky/AP)

extravaganza performances by choruses, bands and top-name entertainers taking place at stadiums

Please see SUPREME COURT on Page 6



Former state representative Glen Maxey of Austin has been designated to lead the fight against a proposed constitutional amendment that would ban both same-sex marriage and civil unions.

## Glen Maxey will lead marriage fight

Former state representative Glen Maxey said the legislature enacted HJR 6 as a diversion from work left not done

By BINNIE FISHER

Former State Representative Glen Maxey of Austin has been named Campaign Director in the effort to thwart a proposed constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage and civil unions.

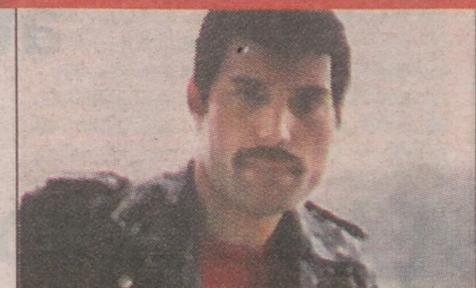
Jill Ireland and John Hintz, co chairs of the Board of Directors of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (LGRL), announced Maxey's appointment earlier in the week.

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**Local life**  
A Santa Fe family found PFLAG just in the nick of time  
PAGE 8

**dish**  
In death, Freddy Mercury is still winning praise for his band, Queen.  
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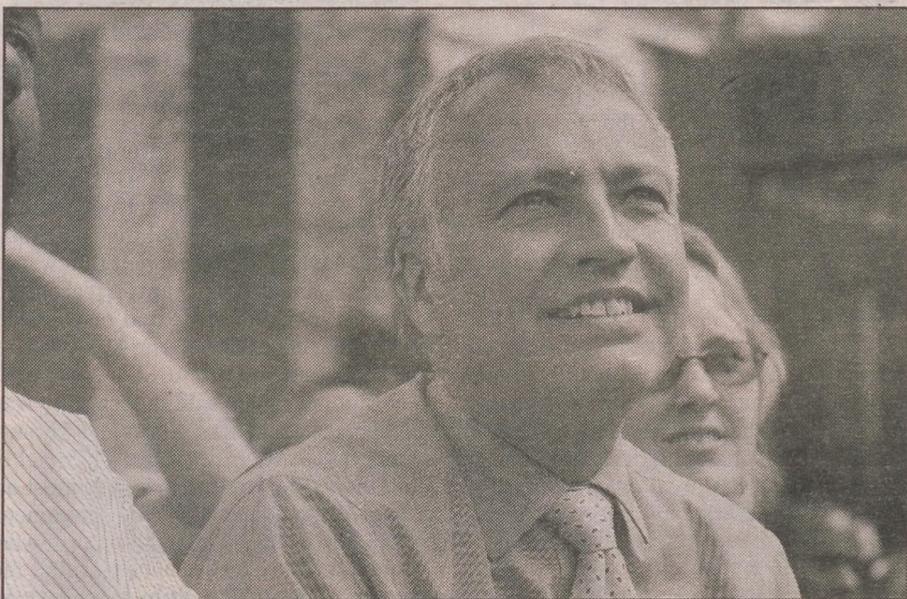
## local news briefs

### The man accused of murdering Helen Orman goes on trial

A jury began hearing testimony this week in the murder trial of the man accused of killing Houston Community College professor Helen Orman, 65, and wounding Julie Graves, 31, in the Rice Village area in March of 2004. Beau John Maloney, 35, could face life in prison if convicted of murder and aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon. Investigators contend that Maloney fatally wounded Orman in the head as she vacuumed her car at a gas station near Rice Village March 20, 2004. Orman, who also was a well-known artist, was pronounced dead at the scene. Maloney was arrested April 6, 2004 by a state trooper at a rest area near Kerrville. Police in Houston also charged Maloney with robbing and wounding Graves at a Rice Village parking garage March 3, 2004. Graves survived a gunshot wound to the chest and was expected to testify at Maloney's trial.



The man who police say shot and killed Houston Community College professor Helen Orman went on trial for her murder this week.



Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, will be among the speakers at a town hall meeting regarding the proposed marriage amendment in Texas.

### HERA and HGLPC stage meeting to educate voters on amendment

The Houston Equal Rights Alliance (HERA) and the Houston GLBT Political Caucus (PAC) are joining forces to host a town hall meeting to educate Houstonians about a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would not only ban same-sex marriage but also prohibit civil unions. Speakers include Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) and Glen Maxey, recently named campaign director for the marriage fight. "This amendment denies a class of people and their families basic human rights and protections afforded everyone else," said Tammi Wallace, president of HERA. "No matter how one feels about same-sex marriage, writing this kind of discrimination into the Texas Constitution goes against everything this country stands for. We are encouraging everyone to attend and learn more about the impacts of this discriminatory amendment as well as how to get involved locally to fight this nonsense legislation." Other speakers include transgender activist and

attorney Phyllis Randolph Frye, attorney Connie Moore, Rev. Marilyn Meeker-Williams of Bering Memorial United Methodist Church and immigration law attorney John Nechman. The meeting is planned for 10 a.m., Saturday, July 23, at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St. www.houston-era.org.

### Bering Omega hosts a service for clients who have died

Bering Omega Community Services will host a memorial service for its clients who died during the last 18 months. Volunteers from the organizations as well as friends and family of those who will be remembered are invited to the service at 2 p.m. Sunday, July 31, at Covenant Church, 4949 Caroline St. For more information on the event, contact Susan Haarman at susanh@beringomega.org. Bering Omega is a non-profit organization that provides services for people with HIV/AIDS such as hospice care, day care and a dental clinic.

From staff and wire reports

## national news

# Maxey leads effort

MAXEY, continued from Page 1

"We are excited and pleased to announce that the search for a campaign director to lead the coalition of Texans opposed to HJR 6 has been concluded, and that one of the premier political organizers in Texas will be at the helm. Glen Maxey will bring his thirty-five years of experience to this critical civil rights battle to stop the enshrinement in our state Constitution of this unnecessary and discriminatory ballot measure," the two said in a statement.

Maxey will lead the effort to defeat the constitutional amendment prohibiting recognition of civil marriage or civil unions between persons of the same gender which the Legislature has placed on the November, 2005 statewide ballot.

"I'm eager to use my experience to bring a broad coalition of fair-minded Texans together to say 'No' to this nonsense in November," Maxey said. "With public education, health care access, and rational and fair tax policy languishing, the Legislature spent their time and our tax dollars enacting this divisive, unnecessary amendment."

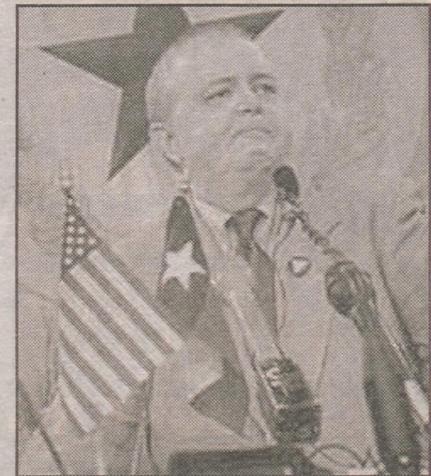
He added, "They now are asking Texans to rubber stamp their efforts to deny many Texans the basic civil rights to protect their relationships and their family's property and inheritance rights, hospital visitation, and the hundreds of other rights and responsibilities brought by a civil marriage or civil union."

He described the proposed amendment, House Joint Resolution 6 that was authored by State Rep. Warren Chisum (R-Pampa), as a wedge issue to divert attention from the work that legislators failed to accomplish in the 79th Session. Gov. Rick Perry called a special session this summer to address matters that remain untended.

"Texans understand that same-sex marriages are already illegal in Texas and that it is nonsense to, for the first time in history, use the most sacred document of the State of Texas, our Constitution, as a vehicle to deny rights, instead of protect people's rights," Maxey said.

"Most Texans are embarrassed that they are being asked to ratify this kind of bigotry. We will mobilize them to act this November and vote to stop this nonsense."

Maxey, 53, is a native of Baytown, and has a Masters Degree in Education and a Bachelor of Science in Social Rehabilitation and Social Services from Sam Houston State University.



Glen Maxey, who will lead the fight against a proposed constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, was the first openly gay elected official in Texas.

His 35-year career in political activism includes campaign management and public policy. He has participated in hundreds of electoral campaigns ranging from municipal, county and school elections to Presidential campaigns and issue referendums.

Maxey was involved in the grass roots effort that helped elect Governor Ann Richards in 1990 and was the Texas statewide coordinator for Gov. Howard Dean's campaign in 2004.

Maxey served as a legislative aide to two state senators from 1981 to 1986, followed by four years as the Executive Director and lead lobbyist for LGRL.

During his tenure at LGRL, he led the efforts to enact HIV/AIDS policy during a legislative environment that was hostile to persons diagnosed with the disease.

### First openly gay elected official in Texas

He was elected to the Texas House in 1991 as the first openly gay elected official in Texas. He served six terms in the Legislature before retiring in 2003.

During his legislative stint, he served on the Public Health, Human Services, and Appropriations Committees. He earned Legislator of the Year awards from dozens of organizations ranging from Common Cause and the Gray Panthers to the Sierra Club and the Texas Nurses Association. He was recognized as the House leader in the efforts to create the Children's Health Insurance Program, which brought health insurance coverage to 500,000 kids, and for his work on disability issues.

Maxey was a founder of AIDS Services of Austin and the Texas AIDS Network in the 1980's. Most recently, he has served as political director of Democracy for Texas and has worked as a lobbyist in the Texas Capitol for health care, environmental and municipal clients.

Maxey's appointment comes shortly after the resignation of Randall Ellis as LGRL's executive director.

### MORE INFO

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Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (LGRL)  
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## national news briefs

### Government seeks dismissal of 'Don't Ask' challenge

BOSTON (AP) — Only Congress can undo the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy on gay service members, a prosecutor argued last week in urging a federal judge to dismiss a challenge to the rule. A dozen former soldiers dismissed from the military for being gay sued in December, saying the 12-year-old policy is discriminatory. A judge heard arguments last week in the government's bid to dismiss the lawsuit. Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Quinlivan said any changes must come from Congress, not the courts. He said the rule, passed in a bipartisan vote in 1993, was debated extensively before being approved by Congress and signed by President Clinton. "To say the case should be dismissed is not to say the debate on congressional policy ends," Quinlivan said, noting there is pending legislation to repeal the law. "It is only to say it should be returned to the branch of government where it should be appropriately decided." But a lawyer for the 12 former service members said the deference courts traditionally give lawmakers on military matters isn't required when constitutional rights are being violated. "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" denies gay service members their rights to privacy, free speech and equal protection under the law, attorney Stuart Delery said.



U.S. Attorney Mark Quinlivan argued in court last week that the military's 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy on gay service members can only be changed by Congress. (Photo by AP)

### Calif. Senate keeps hope of gay marriage alive

SACRAMENTO (AP) — The quest to legalize gay marriage was revived by a Senate committee that approved the measure that was slipped into a fisheries research bill after it failed in the state Assembly. The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 4-1 Tuesday in favor of the bill that mirrors one that fell four votes shy last month in the Assembly. The measure by Assemblyman Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, one of six openly gay members of the Legislature, would make California's marriage laws gender-neutral as the issue is headed for the state's highest court. Sen. Sheila Kuehl, D-Santa Monica, who said she was speaking in support of the bill as a lesbian and not as a senator, said the bill reflects the civil rights issue of the day. "Our community's in the middle of the griddle and I'm proud of it," Kuehl said. Opponent Randy Thomasson, who has proposed a constitutional amendment for next year's ballot that would outlaw gay marriage and remove most of the benefits of domestic partnerships, said the bill smacked of an abuse of process. "This is really a no-brainer," Thomasson testified. "It's sad when it was defeated in one house it was reincarnated here."

### Gay activists ask Calif. high court to rule on same-sex marriage case

SAN FRANCISCO — Instead of letting the case wind its way through an appeals court, 12 gay and lesbian couples who want to marry asked the California Supreme Court last week to take up the issue, the San Mateo County Times reported. The petition is similar to a request filed by state Attorney General Bill Lockyer the previous week. The couples want the court to affirm a March decision by San Francisco Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer that said same-sex couples in the state have a constitutional right to marry. Lockyer, on the other hand, wants the court to overturn Kramer's decision, contending that California's domestic partner laws offer gay couples adequate rights, the Times reported.

### ACLU files motion to reopen Ky. case against high school

ASHLAND, Ky. (AP) — The American Civil Liberties Union filed a motion last week asking a judge to reopen a lawsuit brought on behalf of several students who wanted to form a Gay-Straight Alliance at Boyd County High School. The ACLU said the school district failed to meet part of the agreement that would provide mandatory anti-harassment training, focusing on sexual orientation and gender identity. Sharon McGowan, a staff attorney for the ACLU's Lesbian & Gay Rights Project, said the training was part of a settlement of a previous lawsuit by the Gay-Straight Alliance, a gay rights club that had sought the right to meet on school grounds. Part of the agreement called for the school district to authorize mandatory anti-harassment training for all staff and students in high school and middle school. McGowan said the school has "fallen short of the mark," as many students opted out of the mandatory training sessions.

### Prosecutor drops charges against New Paltz mayor

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — A prosecutor dropped all charges this week against a small town mayor who could have faced up to a year in jail for marrying gay couples on the steps of the village hall. New Paltz Mayor Jason West, then 26, was among the first public officials in the nation to marry same-sex couples, following San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom in February 2004. He had been charged with 24 misdemeanor counts of violating the state's domestic relations law after marrying about two dozen gay couples in ceremonies that drew national attention to the village of about 13,000 residents 75 miles north of New York City. Ulster County District Attorney Donald Williams said Tuesday he dropped the charges because he believed a trial would be unnecessary and divisive.

From staff and wire reports

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## national news

# Advocates fear rollback of rights under new Supreme Court

By EARTHA JANE MELZER

As the nation focuses on who will fill the Supreme Court vacancy created by the retirement of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor — and the potential retirement of Chief Justice William Rehnquist — some court observers and gay rights advocates say that future Supreme Court justices' views on reproductive choice and church/state separation are important to the future of gay civil rights.

Rehnquist was hospitalized on Wednesday, fueling rumors that the ailing justice will soon retire. He has battled thyroid cancer for most of the past year.

In the last few years, gay and lesbian rights have made great advances under the law, court observers said, but if the Supreme Court gains one or two new justices who don't subscribe to the judicial philosophy underpinning those advances, the recent gains could be reversed.

In the Lawrence vs. Texas decision that decriminalized sodomy, five justices held that criminalizing private consensual adult sex violated the Constitution's 14th Amendment guarantee of liberty.

"The issues that affect the gay community are not separated off from all the other legal issues that come before the court," said Jon Davidson, legal director for Lambda Legal. "In Lawrence, the court relied on previous decisions on reproductive freedom. O'Connor has been one of

the key votes for retaining Roe vs. Wade ... if we lose choice we lose some of the underpinnings for some of the liberty rights we have gained."

The liberty that the court talked about in Lawrence was the liberty to make your own personal decisions, like who you have sex with and who would become your family, said Lara Schwartz, senior legislative counsel for the Human Rights Campaign.

"The court made it clear that this was in the tradition of Roe vs. Wade and Griswold — the 1965 case which overturned a law that made it criminal for doctors to provide birth control, even to married people. It is the anchor for our understanding of liberty," Schwarz said. "That there is a line beyond which the government is not allowed to cross, it was born in Griswold, expanded in Roe and finally reaches gay people in Lawrence."

The parameters for privacy in personal sexual matters will be taken up by the Supreme Court this fall when justices consider the case of Ayotte vs. Planned Parenthood. The case involves a New Hampshire law that restricts access to abortion by requiring parental notification for minors seeking abortions.

"Whenever you are challenging an abortion law and the court has the opportunity to use the power of the state to interfere with a person's personal choice ... Roe can be narrowed," Schwartz said. "And erosions of Roe do matter because the basic principle is that

people have certain liberties, such as what you do with your body, that is going to have big implications for the GLBT community."

### Church & state issues

O'Connor was also key in cases dealing with the separation of church and state and was part of the majority that recently held that government neutrality toward religion forbids allowing the Ten Commandments to be displayed in court houses.

If the balance of thought on the separation of church and state shifts, Davidson said, we will see further blurring of the lines between church and state, which is frequently not good for the gay community given the way that religion has been used to discriminate against gay men and lesbians.

The Alliance Defense Fund is involved in several cases in which Christian student groups are arguing that they should be exempt from non-discrimination policies and should not be excluded from financial support from their schools.

"We have around 10 cases at federal district court level, and we have cases all through the country," Jeremy Tedesco, litigation staff counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund said. Tedesco said that if the federal circuit courts decide the cases differently, he believes it is "absolutely likely" that the Supreme Court will take on this issue.

If people are allowed to use religion to get around anti-discrimination policies, Schwartz said, we could see a dismantling

of such policies, which are key protections for gay men and lesbians.

President Bush has said that he will nominate a Supreme Court justice who strictly interprets the Constitution.

This is code language for taking away liberties already recognized by the courts, Schwartz said.

Strict constitutionalists argue that people only have the rights explicitly mentioned in the constitution.

The Constitution doesn't contain the words "privacy" or "gay" or "birth control," Schwartz said, and the Ninth Amendment to the Constitution says that just because a right is not specifically named does not mean we don't have it.

"Liberty is not just the few things listed like bearing arms and speech, it means the government can't break into your bedroom like it did in Garner [which led to the Lawrence vs. Texas case overturning sodomy laws]."

People should understand what "originalist" or "strict constitutionalist" means, said Neil Siegel, Duke University professor of law. "It would mean there are no constitutional protections against executing 7-year-olds."

"When you start taking seriously the rhetoric on the right, it is, as Scalia used to say 'Too bitter a pill to swallow,'" Siegel said. "You are talking about living in an America that would be unrecognizable to most of us."

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## national news

## Out Games claims early lead over rival Gay Games

GAMES, continued from Page 1

where the opening and closing ceremonies are held.

"We still don't know where most of our teams will go," said Brent Minor, president of Team D.C., an umbrella group that represents more than two-dozen D.C. area gay and lesbian sports teams and groups, ranging from soccer and golf to swimming and volleyball.

"Team D.C. voted to support our participants, whichever event they choose to attend," Minor said.

Minor said members of some of the D.C. teams, as well as teams in other cities, are taking a wait-and-see posture to determine which city will capture the top competition in a category of sporting event — such as soccer or swimming.

The San Francisco-based Federation of Gay Games, which was formed by the late gay Olympic athlete Tom Waddell in the 1980s, is credited with starting what has become known as an international gay and lesbian sports "movement." Waddell almost single-handedly put together the first Gay Games competition in San Francisco in 1982 following a legal ruling initiated by the International Olympics Committee that forced him to drop the name "Gay Olympics."

The gay international sporting competition continued every four years since that time under the Gay Games title, growing each year in numbers. The founding event in 1982 drew 1,350 gay and lesbian athletes mostly from North America and Europe, according to Roger Brigham, communications director for the Federation of Gay Games.

The number of participants jumped to 12,500 in New York City in 1994, climbed to a record 13,000 in Amsterdam in 1998 and dropped back to 11,000 in Sidney, Australia in 2002, Brigham said.

Shortly before the Sidney games were held, the FGG named Montreal the winner in a competition among gay sporting associations to sponsor the 2006 Gay Games. A short time later, the Montreal organizing committee, Montreal 2006, says it lined up generous sponsors from some of Canada's largest corporations and persuaded the governments of Montreal, Quebec, and the national Canadian government to sign on

as "partners" to the event and to kick in \$1 million each to help finance the games.

The committee called those developments historic, saying Canada's entire governmental establishment had endorsed and agreed to help subsidize an international gay sporting event.

What happened next takes on an entirely different perspective and interpretation among the Gay Games and Out Games leaders.

The Gay Games in Sydney, while hailed as a highly successful sports event, turned into a financial disaster, with millions of dollars in debt and gay and gay-friendly vendors left holding the bag with unpaid bills. Coming on the heels of similar financial problems with the previous two Gay Games in Amsterdam and New York, the FGG pushed through a series of rules changes that required the Montreal committee to turn over financial control of the event to the FGG. Up until that time, the committees for the host cities had full financial control over the events.

Among other things, the FGG wanted Montreal to scale back its initial budget from 24,000 participants to 12,000, saying a 24,000 turnout appeared unrealistic and could lead to financial problems similar to Sydney's. FGG officials also requested that Montreal not link its sporting events to a planned international gay rights conference and to Montreal's annual Gay Pride event known as Diversité. In addition, the FGG objected to the Montreal committee's plans to link the Game Games to various circuit parties that have been associated with Diversité.

"This just came out of the blue after we put together a detailed and what we thought was a highly successful business plan," said Mark Tewksbury, an Olympic athlete and one of the Canadians organizing the Montreal Games.

Tewksbury and other leaders of Montreal 2006 called the FGG rule changes unfair. They point out that nearly all of Montreal's plans for the 2006 Gay Games — the projected 24,000 participants, the link to the Diversité Gay Pride festivities, and the international gay conference — were submitted to the FGG as part of Montreal's bid for the games. No one raised objections to any of these proposals at that time, Tewksbury said.

Brigham, the communications director for FGG, said the organization's international governing body, which includes representatives from nations in Europe and North America, approved the rules changes after assessing the financial problems encountered by Gay Games committees in New York, Amsterdam and Sydney.

"The income projections have always been overblown," he said. "We are concerned about hurting local gay businesses," he said, noting that gay-owned businesses that have provided services to help put on the games often have been stiffed when the committees run out of money.

Brigham said FGG officials also decided — based on what he said was consultation with gay sporting teams in North America and abroad — that the Gay Games should stick to its original role as a sports event, with some performing arts and cultural activities like gay chorus and band performances. Linking the games with other events such as circuit parties, political conferences, and Pride events — as proposed by Montreal — would not be consistent with the Gay Games and its "mission" to promote the gay sports movement, Brigham said.

According to Brigham, the FGG would have approved a larger budget to accommodate more than 12,000 participants later in the process, if Montreal succeeded in signing on more participants.

## Negotiations break down

Nearly two years of negotiations followed. Each side has disputed claims by the other over the reasons the negotiations ultimately broke down. In November 2003, Montreal 2006 stunned the gay sports establishment by saying it would hold its own international gay sports competition in Montreal on the dates initially designated for the Gay Games: July 29–Aug. 5, 2006.

The group announced later that it had formed a new entity — the Gay & Lesbian International Sports Association — and would take bids for Out Games II in 2010.

In March 2004, the FGG named Chicago as the host city for the "official" 2006 Gay Games. A newly formed Chicago organizing committee, Chicago Games, Inc., has since formed and hired gay corporate executive and past Gay Games athlete Brian McGuinness as CEO of the new organization.

McGuinness is a Chicago native who learned to speak French while serving for three years as finance director for an international media company based in Paris, the Chicago Games Web site says.

With Montreal working hard to attract European participation, Chicago Games has been touting McGuinness's international background and finance skills in what is shaping up as a heated public relations campaign between the two cities.

The Chicago mayor and the Illinois governor has each endorsed the Gay Games, and Chicago's business establishment and Chamber of Commerce are pulling out all the stops to promote the event, said Kevin Beyer, chair of the Chicago Games Marketing Committee.

Last year, Montreal 2006 hired Rachel Corbet as executive director of Montreal 2006. Corbet has extensive experience working with international sports events in Canada and Europe.

Corbet said she is hopeful that both events will be successful but predicted the Out Games would surpass the Gay Games in future years to become the main international gay sporting competition. She dismissed calls by some Gay Games supporters that Out Games should become a North American gay sports competition similar to the yearly Euro Games, which are held each year except during the year of the Gay Games.

She predicts the opposite might happen — that the Gay Games will shrink in participation and be forced to limit its role to North American teams.

"It is hard for a lot of GLBT people to come to the U.S.," she said, pointing to U.S. immigration policies that ban people with HIV from entering the country unless they get a special waiver. She also points to hostility toward the U.S. war in Iraq and to President Bush in general by many Europeans. With Canada's decision this year to legalize same-sex marriage and with Montreal's reputation for being North America's most gay-friendly city, Corbet said, Montreal is likely to attract far more participants from countries outside of North America.

Boyer and Brigham strongly dispute this assessment. The two note that the U.S. routinely waives its immigration restrictions for people with HIV for special events like the Gay Games. 's reputation as a gay-



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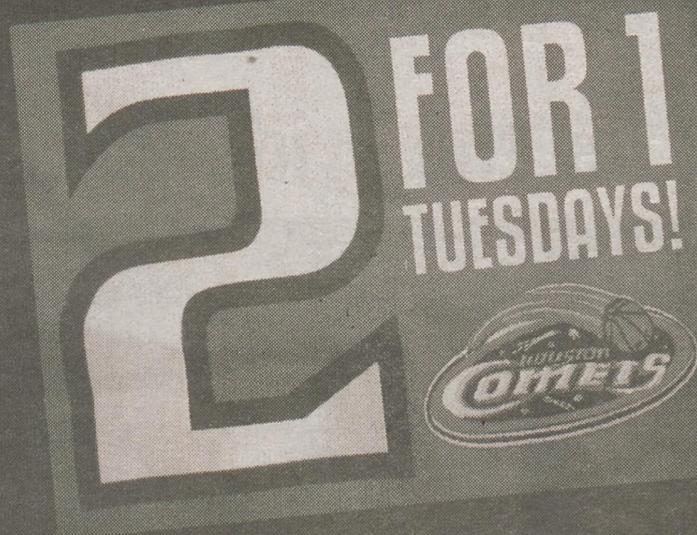
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## A 'GLBT sandwich' and a float for the Pride Parade

Jim and Linda Bratsen have gone from trying to change their gay son to becoming PFLAG activists

By DAWN RORIE

Before coming out to his parents, 19-year-old Steven Bratsen began making careful preparations in the event the horror stories that he had heard became reality in his own life.

After graduating high school, he left his job at his parents' company in Brazoria County's staunchly conservative Santa Fe and got another job and his own apartment in order to be completely self-dependent, in case his parents disowned him.

As it turned out, though, he never came out to his parents. He was outed by a long-time employee of their family-owned well-drilling company. His mother, Linda, was first to get the news.

She immediately called her son and said that she needed to talk with him face-to-face. It was the heart-to-heart talk that Steven had been working up to.

"He admitted that he was gay and started crying. The first thing I did was to hug him and to tell him, 'I love you so much,'" Linda says.

Her initial concern was her son's health and welfare. She was worried about AIDS and saddened at the thought of the burden that he had been carrying for so long. "I thought that this must be a tremendous relief for him to finally tell us," she says.

She admits she was dismayed to discover that Steven had been preparing for the worst-case scenario. "I asked myself, 'Did he not trust us?' This hurt me horribly," she says.

When Steven's father, Mike, arrived home from work, Linda pulled him aside to speak with him privately before asking Steven to join them.

Mike was stunned. "The minute I heard, I was afraid for his life. I was afraid that somebody would kill him." The timing of Steven's outing, right after Matthew Shepard's brutal beating death in Wyoming, only heightened his parents' fears.

After the discussion Linda, an avid reader, wanted to educate herself about



Linda and Jim Bratsen have gone from trying to change their gay son, Steven (center), to offering their overwhelming support to him and others as PFLAG parents. (Photo by Dalton De Hart)

what her son was experiencing. She turned to the Internet and found Web sites that suggested homosexuality was something that could be changed.

Hoping to put Steven back on the "straight and narrow," the family attended counseling sessions with a minister who promoted the teachings of Exodus International, a group that promises "freedom from homosexuality through the power of Jesus Christ."

None of the factors that Exodus insists are "causes" of homosexuality were present in the Bratsen family. Exodus teaches that homosexuals are created by domineering mothers and distant fathers, or by childhood emotional and sexual abuse.

The Bratsens were a tight-knit, loving family with traditional values, who attended church every Sunday. And Steven just didn't fit the "gay" stereotype. He grew up playing with Legos, was fascinated by hydraulics and electricity and was operating heavy machinery by the time he was 15 years old.

Still, out of desperation and concern for their son, the family kept attending sessions with the minister who promised them a cure.

Fate intervened when Steven attended a hate crimes march in Austin and was introduced to Jim and Sue Null, active members in the Houston chapter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

He talked with them about his situation. They told him about the Houston chapter and invited him and his parents to attend a meeting.

Although Linda and Mike were skeptical, they attended their first PFLAG meeting with their son. After all, Steven was the same person he was before he came out to them, and his parents wanted to support him.

Steven may have been out and proud,

but Mike was nervous. He admits, "To this day, I can remember walking across that street, wondering, 'Is somebody going to see me?'"

Unsure of what to expect, he was relieved to find a room of everyday people just like him—doctors, electricians, mechanics, and lawyers—parents who wanted the best for their gay children.

Linda was the first to soften. By her second meeting, she had agreed to march in the next Pride Parade. The turning point for Mike was hearing a presentation on homosexuality and genetics and realizing that his son's homosexuality was not a choice. The couple hasn't missed a meeting since.

In the years since their first experience with PFLAG, Mike and Linda have come full-circle in their knowledge and support of the issues that affect gays and lesbians.

Linda serves on the PFLAG board as Education Chair and head of the PFLAG Library. She is currently working to educate members of the Santa Fe school board about issues related to sexual minorities in today's schools.

Mike attends board meetings along with his wife and is in charge of building PFLAG's float for the Pride Parade every year. Construction of the float, which takes place next to their company's shop in the rural town of Santa Fe, has raised a few eyebrows. Although some people have been close-minded, the Bratsens have been surprised at finding acceptance in places where they least expected it.

Steven smiles as he tells about one of his father's mechanics, who became curious about the ever-growing structure that he noticed being built beside the shop. Other employees told the mechanic, who was unaware that Steven was gay, that the structure was a float for a parade.

Finally, the mechanic cornered Steven, pressing to find out more about this parade

in which the Bratsens were taking part.

Steven told him that the float was for the GLBT Pride Parade in Houston and waited nervously for his response. The man was a down-home, "good-old-boy" type of guy, and Steven wasn't sure what his reaction would be.

"He looked at me and asked, 'How the hell did y'all get set up with that?'" Steven chuckles. "I told him that we really didn't have a choice, and when he asked why, I told him, well, because when I came out to my parents, they really didn't have a choice."

The man was stunned at first, but when he returned to work the next day, approached Steven and told him that everything was OK.

"He even jumped in and started helping with the float," says Mike.

"Yeah, he started working on the disco ball," laughs Steven.

Outside of PFLAG, the Bratsens' support of their son is very apparent in their everyday lives. In their company, Mike has implemented a no tolerance policy for discrimination against minorities. It goes much deeper than support for his son, he says. For him, it's about all gay people who face discrimination.

As for Linda, she recently realized just how ingrained her support of her son and others has become. She tells of going out to lunch with her family and a few of Steven's friends after the Pride awards ceremony in which the PFLAG float took home the Ruby Slipper Award.

Seeing a BLT sandwich on the menu, she broke off chatting with her son long enough to ask the waiter for a "GLBT sandwich," and went right back to talking, having no idea what she'd just said.

"I couldn't figure out why everyone at the table was laughing at me," she says.

For a PFLAG parent, after all, it really is second nature.

### MORE INFO

PFLAG  
713-46P-FLAG (713-467-3524)  
[www.pflaghouston.org](http://www.pflaghouston.org)

# out in houston

(Photos by Dalton DeHart)



Members of the Montrose Softball League will travel to San Diego for the World Series of neighborhood softball.



Christmas in July was its usual rousing success.



Scholarship winners posed after this year's H.A.T.C.H./PFLAG Scholarship Banquet.



At a Town Hall Meeting regarding homeless youth in Montrose, (from left) Houston City Council Member **Ada Edwards**, Police Chief **Harold Hurtt** and Mayor **Bill White** spoke and listened to comments from the audience.



**Mark Woods**, president of Stonewall Democrats, recently presented an award to **Janine Brunjes** for her activism on the part of gays and lesbians.



Houston City Controller **Annise Parker** (right) spoke during a recent meeting of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus (PAC), and she is pictured with (from left) District D city council candidate **Herman Litt** and caucus president **Maria Gonzalez**.



At the Montrose Softball League's 25th Annual Awards Banquet, (from left) **Ray Olachia** accepted an award from **Bill Sansom**.



A group of Houston residents recently organized the **Pink Lotus Asians and Friends Out Group**.



**John Painter** and **Tracy Silverberg** recently tied the knot in matching vests.

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# Forum

HOUSTON VOICE

JULY 15, 2005

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## editorial

# Put up or shut up

Gay men and lesbians have a dismal record  
of contributing cash to our causes.

Religious conservatives do a great job.

By MUBARAK DAHIR

# a

RECENT STUDY BY THE New York-based organization Funders for Lesbian & Gay Issues unveiled an unfortunate problem with gay and lesbian groups across the country, whether they were

local or national institutions: Our organizations are woefully under-funded.

The study, released in April of this year, looked at the charitable giving patterns of the country's top 1,000 corporate and private foundations through fiscal year 2002.

It found that only one-tenth of one percent of all the money given to charitable causes went to organizations working for gay and lesbian causes. Furthermore, the overall percentage of money going to gay and lesbian causes from such foundations remained flat for 13 years, from 1989 to 2002, the last year that was included in the study.

On the bright side, corporate and private philanthropies are giving about \$30 million annually to support gay and lesbian-related concerns. The study's authors say that reflects how much mainstream philanthropic organizations have opened up in the past decade or so to giving grants to gay-related organizations.

This becomes more troublesome when viewed against the backdrop of just how much money anti-gay fundamentalist groups are successful in raising to promote their anti-gay agendas. The organized religious right raises an estimated \$400 million annually to push their agenda, of which defeating gay rights is a cornerstone. In 2004 alone, conservative forces raised an estimated \$125 million to fight same-sex marriage at the ballot box in numerous states.

In contrast, the combined budget of all the national gay and lesbian organizations working on gay and lesbian rights issues was only about \$40 million, excluding groups that primarily do AIDS work.

While fund-raising isn't a glamorous or fun topic, the hard truth is that in our current political and social system, it takes money to get out your message.

It takes money to run political campaigns aimed at protecting gay rights, it takes money to buy media spots (especially on TV). It takes money to produce educational kits to get out to the public. It takes money to pay for lobbyists to try to sway the opinion of politicians, whether it's in Washington D.C., or a state capital.

As it turns out, we as a gay and lesbian movement are not awash in cash. There are three major funding sources for gay groups: public or government funding, private or corporate foundations, and individual donations.

With the current political atmosphere and the strength of the mostly anti-gay Republican Party, both at the national and local levels, it seems unlikely to hope for any significant increase in public or government money for groups that support gay and lesbian organizations.

Corporate giving may be a more hopeful avenue. Few major corporations want to be perceived as anti-gay anymore. Non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation are standard fare among most big companies, and are even pretty common among smaller ones.

The business world has come to see nondiscrimination as a bottom-line, dollars-and-cents issue: In an economy where businesses are hustling for all the best possible workers, it just doesn't make good economic sense to discriminate against gays.

However, the move to better business practices and job policies doesn't necessarily translate into more money from corporations or foundations for gay and lesbian-related groups or causes.

In the business world, giving away money to non-profits is still an exercise in public relations, and it is still much safer and more heartwarming to cultivate your public image by giving money to open a hospital wing to treat children with cancer than it is to help fund a gay and lesbian community center.

Gay groups and gay organizations should still ask for and push for more money from corporate and foundation sponsors. But realistically, it doesn't appear as if a huge increase in cash flow is going to be forthcoming overnight.

THAT LEAVES PRIVATE, INDIVIDUAL donations. Fund-raisers for gay and lesbian groups say, on the whole, we as gays and lesbians lag in our private donations, particularly considering what an affluent segment of the population we are often portrayed to be.

No doubt there are some historical influences at work, including the huge financial, emotional and volunteer strain the AIDS crisis has taken on gay men and lesbians. But another factor, experts say, is that our movement is so young, it hasn't yet done a good job of getting members used to the notion of regularly giving money.

Instead, we tend to often operate simply under "crisis" mode — for example, when an anti-gay initiative hits close to home, gay people will pound the pavement and open their wallets. But even in a place like San Francisco, with one of the most organized, motivated and politically astute gay communities, charitable giving to organizations is woeful.

A study by the San Francisco-based Horizons Foundation found that only one in 300 people give \$1,000 or more per year to gay and lesbian causes. The study also showed that gay and lesbian groups themselves often do a poor job of organizing long-term fund-raising campaigns.

As a result of the study, in late 2005 the group intends to launch a public awareness campaign called "Out Your Pocketbook," about the importance of gay philanthropy. It also plans to launch the Legacy Fund, a sustainable financial endowment.

In these political times, more than ever, gay and lesbian groups need to be mustering the forces — and the money — to combat the next inevitable wave of anti-gay referendums and ballot measures.

Just because a group says it works for gay rights, or has a national office in Washington, D.C., doesn't mean it's worth writing a check to. Before you give out your money, check on the group's accomplishments and history. Ask them for a copy of their annual report. Find out what projects they have recently undertaken, or what their most recent successes have been.

And don't be shy about asking how much of their money goes into specific, hard programs that work for gay rights, versus how much of their money goes into overhead and salaries. Whatever your personal preferences, there is an untold number of gay organizations on the local, state and national level that are doing admirable work, and that need and welcome your money.

Find out who they are, and be as generous as you can. Put your money where your rights are.

@ Mubarak Dahir is editor of the Express Gay News and can be reached at mdahir@express-gaynews.com



**viewpoint** BRIAN LANG



Men like Rob Whittle are scattered throughout gay Houston, points of light who illuminate the lives of those with whom they come in contact

## Losing a friend is one thing, losing a mentor is another

THERE'S NOTHING MORE LIFE changing than the unexpected death of a good friend. I found this to be quite true during the recent passing of an exceptional man. By his own reckoning my friend and "gay mentor," Rob Whittle, was no more extraordinary than the rest of us. But to me and to many others in the gay community, his practice as a human being and as a gay man was more evolutionary than revolutionary. Men like Rob are scattered though out our community and can be seen as "points of light," quietly illuminating and changing lives like mine.

Mentors like Rob are not often visible in the community as fierce gay rights activists. Instead they are quietly at home, at the clubs, or even in right-minded churches building friendships and sharing war stories of what it meant to come of age as a gay man in a time that has already passed. For Rob, his stories were often set in the '70s and '80s.

Before "Don't ask, don't tell," he was a distinguished member of the Navy. His world travel stores often included a boy in every port (and some ports even had twins). Years ago in reliving those memories together we toured the Lex Battleship in his hometown of Corpus Christi.

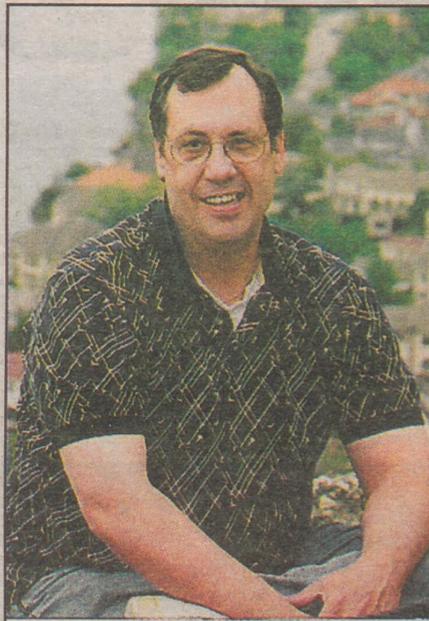
His tour included points of interest that were introduced with mischievous giggles and glee in his eyes as he showed us secluded places on board ship where enlisted men had clandestine hook-ups with one another (or even with officers).

It was Rob's opinion that a gay man in good conscious could never be a Republican. In George W. Bush's first run as a Presidential candidate, I challenged him to change his mind as the junior Bush was campaigning as a uniter under "the big tent," and who even had a vice-presidential candidate who was proud of his lesbian daughter.

His scorn towards my comments at that time proved valid many years later as that same president won his second term in office based on discrimination against gays and lesbians, and by his support of a constitutional ban on gay marriage.

ROB BECAME MY FRIEND NOT LONG after the death of his first love and partner of many years. Known as Big Rob and Little Rob because they both shared the same first name. After a decade together, Rob Bullard died from complications caused by HIV. Their life together managed to find Big Rob producing theater shows and included Little Rob as one of the actors.

Several years ago a theatre endowment in Little Rob's name matured and several of us who were mentored by the elder Rob had the privilege of attending the first scholarship award ceremony. It was a small gathering of great importance - playwright Edward Albee attended to introduce the award. He had long been a supporter and friend to both Robs. Both Robs are now buried together.



Rob Whittle, mentor to many gay men in Houston, died earlier this month.

RECENTLY THE PEOPLE WHO brought us MTV started a new channel for gays and lesbians. They trumpeted their debut with the slogan, "The Evolution will be Televised" and have aired a documentary by the same name that chronicles the struggles of gays and lesbians over the past several decades. Rob was our introduction to this evolution, inviting gay men struggling with coming out issues into his home.

We had fabulous parties and shared bonds of fun and support together. While sitting in Rob's living room after hearing of his death, a dear friend of mine who works at a local gay publication said to me "long before I felt comfortable in Montrose, it was here in this house that I first felt comfortable as a gay man."

When he thought I was ready, Rob tricked me into going out to the gay bars for the first time. He wanted me to "meet the tribe" so he offered to buy me a birthday dinner at Baba Yegas. While we ate (and while he plied me with drinks) he told me about the drag queen that worked the bar many years earlier when Little

Rob worked as a Baba Yega waiter. After I was sufficiently loosened-up, he took me to JR's and then to Pacific Street where I first saw caged go-go boys and where I first had the pleasure of pinching the rear of a cute boy wearing leather chaps. Being part of the tribe of gay men in Houston has never felt as good as that first night out in Montrose.

For many years, Rob shared his house with my first boyfriend. Those years are very special and contain many private memories for me, but they were years of wonder. Our group of friends would inevitably end up at Rob's house on the weekends, watching movies like "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert" or "The Birdcage."

THOSE WERE THE EARLY YEARS OF the Internet as well, and his house was full of computers as we all enjoyed the forbidden fruits of cyberspace. Much of our community of friends was born from this time. In the years since, "friends of Rob" have worked as barbacks at the gay clubs, cashiers at Crossroads and Lobo, or as consultants to local gay businesses. All have become proud members of Houston's gay community.

While in Canada last month I married a man that was introduced to me as a result of being a friend of Rob's. When my first significant gay relationship ended, it was Rob who took me to Rich's to dance away my grief. While there, he called a mutual friend who had a crush on me. I vividly remember the characteristic giggle in his voice and glee in his eyes when he handed me the phone and said with a lowered voice, "someone wants to speak with you." That man with whom I spoke is now my spouse.

In Rob's last few years his health declined. He was not HIV positive, but it is my suspicion his great heart couldn't recover from the world's pains and hurts. He died at the young age of 51, several years after the death of a mother with whom he shared his home. He was blessed by God in those last years with the love of Ryan, a lovely, quiet young man whom he met online. All of us share your grief Ryan - thank you for loving and supporting such a great man.

## THE Q

How do you feel about the retirement of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor?



This is a devastating blow for all moderates and liberals, especially since Justice Rehnquist probably won't be around much longer. Bush now has the opportunity to stack the court even deeper with conservative judges.

CARLOS A. REYES, JR., 44  
Houston  
Event coordinator/caterer



Justice O'Connor actually was not as right-winged as I feared she would be. My concern is that she and other justices are retiring at a time when they may be replaced by ultra right-wing judges.

TOM RODRIGUEZ, 39  
Houston  
Assistant professor of nursing/nurse practitioner



Concerned, considering President Bush's views on the topics which affect us most, namely gay marriage rights. I think we all should be worried about his choice.

JENNIFER EBERHARDT, 24  
Houston  
Bartender, Berryhill Montrose



Sad. I hope that President Bush will nominate another moderate judge with good constitutional qualifications to replace her. We need her voice.

HANA MICHELLE PINARD, 43  
Houston  
Owner, Pinard Financial Group



Very worried. I do not expect Bush to nominate a successor as independent and pragmatic as O'Connor. She voted the wrong way in Bowers and was not afraid to say so in overturning it a decade later.

RON ENNIS, 47  
Houston  
Attorney

# eclipse

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**Bitchy and Wilde**  
With more bitchy one-liners than 'Mommie Dearest,' Oscar Wilde's 'Dorian Gray' gets a remake  
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JULY 15, 2005

## reaching new heights

YOUNG FILM DIRECTOR STRIKES GOLD WITH HIS FIRST RELEASE

By BRIAN MOYLAN

C

HRIS TERRIO ISN'T WHAT YOU'D expect in a movie director. Small of stature and youthful in appearance, the 28-year-old is one of the few young directors

carving a niche in the mainstream movie market at a young age, thanks in part to James Ivory and the late Ismail Merchant, the longtime gay couple best known for their costume dramas and Victorian literary adaptations ("Howard's End" and "A Room With a View").

Merchant Ivory Productions is responsible for Terrio's directing debut, "Heights," a compelling gay-themed film.

"Heights" highlights a single day in the life of five New Yorkers: Diana (Glenn Close), a famous Broadway actor; Isabel (Elizabeth Banks), her photographer daughter; Jonathan (James Marsden), Isabel's attorney fiancé; Alec (Jesse Bradford), a struggling actor; and Peter (John Light), a gay journalist looking to interview several gay men for an article he's writing about photographer Benjamin Stone, who is notorious for seducing his male models for his work.

There's also a cast of incidental characters played by the likes of gay singer Rufus Wainwright (in his first film role), Isabella Rossellini and Eric Bagosian.

A native of Staten Island, N.Y., Terrio attended Harvard before pursuing a doctorate degree in literature at Cambridge University, which he did not finish. He eventually earned a master's degree in filmmaking at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Along the way, he met Merchant and Ivory, who needed a literary adviser on their 2000 Henry James adaptation "The Golden Bowl."

That's how, at 25, Terrio ended up behind the camera of a major release that stars a few major movie stars.

As for Terrio, he won't say whether he's gay.



In 'Heights,' director Chris Terrio (right) first met Glenn Close (center) when working on the Merchant Ivory film 'Le Divorce.' She stars with Eric Bogosian in this gay-themed film that which opens on July 8. (Photos courtesy of Sony Pictures Classic)

"Everyone's past is full of all kinds of relationships, some of which are represented in the film, but I don't really answer [if I'm gay]," he said.

**THE HOUSTON VOICE:** For someone so young, how did this picture come about?

**Chris Terrio:** I first worked with them on "The Golden Bowl." James Ivory needed someone who could go find an Edith Wharton short story that would give Uma Thurman insight into her character and things like that. It was a great job at that time.

I got out of film school and I was broke and I needed a job and they hired me to do the behind-the-scenes documentary of "Le Divorce." That's when I met Glenn Close. Being the only English speakers on set, we were thrown together. I got on well with her and we had these long conversations about random things like cubism and whatnot. Finally, when this project began taking shape for the character of Diana I couldn't think of anyone better and started gearing the character toward her.

**Voice:** How much of an influence did Merchant and Ivory have on the production?

**Terrio:** Having worked under James Ivory, I learned tons from him, like how to deal with actors and how to pay excruciating attention to each detail of a film, because I would just notice the way he would be so careful about everything that's in the frame.

And Ismail Merchant had a lot of ideas about the characters.

**Voice:** Were you scared to start shooting your first major movie?

**Terrio:** Of course there were all kinds of scary moments when you arrive for the first day and you see all the trucks parked and you're like, 'Oh my God, these are all for me.' But the great thing was that the cast was so into it that it was just like hanging with your friends.

**Voice:** What was it like telling a legend like Glenn Close what to do?

**Terrio:** I was lucky because we got rehearsals. If we hadn't then I would have just been terrified. But Glenn isn't a diva. She comes from the theater so she's used to working hard and trying different things and really getting messy with the script.

**Voice:** How much were you involved in writing the script?

**Terrio:** It's based on a one-scene play that was developed by Amy [Fox, the screenwriter] into a full day. I came aboard and said, 'What if we added this character and subtracted this character?'

**Voice:** When Alec is at an audition in the movie he asks if the character is gay. At the end of the movie, the audience is asking the same thing about Jonathan.

**Terrio:** James Marsden [who portrays Jonathan] has a certain take on it, which is that everyone has an individual sexuality and he thinks that Jonathan has been denying a big part of his own.

**Voice:** The film's villain, the unseen Benjamin Stone, is portrayed as this very predatory gay man. Did you think that was problematic?

**Terrio:** If Benjamin were the only gay man represented, I would think, 'Oh, this is just what we needed another Uncle Scar from "The Lion King" to come and ruin everyone's lives.' But there is Peter, for example, who is the most conservative and normal guy, who thought he was having a normal relationship. Then there's Jeremy, who is played by Rufus Wainwright, who is a gay character who is down-to-earth and isn't a scheming, conniving character.

**Voice:** You mentioned Rufus Wainwright. What was it like working with him?

**Terrio:** I think he was great. I love his music and when the character of Jeremy was evolving, I thought that we really needed someone who had been through it all.

**Voice:** How much did your past relationships color those in the film?

**Terrio:** I have been dishonest many times in a relationship.

### **i** MORE INFO

'Heights'  
Landmark Greenway 3  
713-866-8881  
Angelika Houston  
713-333-FILM  
Sony Pictures Classics  
www.sonyclassics.com/heights

**CLASSIC LA BELLE:** Patti's new CD proves that at 60, this diva still has staying power. Page 15

**ON THE TOWN:** Sing along with the music, check in with Swamp and have a cool Ming Julep. Page 18

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Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any side effects or conditions, including the following:

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- **Diabetes and high blood sugar** may occur in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like Reyataz.
- **Yellowing of the skin and/or eyes** may occur due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver).
- **Rash** (redness and itching) sometimes occurs in patients taking Reyataz, most often in the first few weeks after the medicine is started, and usually goes away within two weeks with no change in treatment.
- **If you have liver disease**, including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like Reyataz.
- **Some patients with hemophilia** have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitor medicines like Reyataz.

**Changes in body fat** have been seen in some patients taking anti-HIV medicines. The cause and long-term effects are not known at this time.

**Common side effects** of Reyataz taken with other anti-HIV medicines include: nausea, headache, stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, depression, fever, dizziness, trouble sleeping, numbness, and tingling or burning of hands or feet.

You should take Reyataz once daily with food (a meal or snack). You should take Reyataz and your other anti-HIV medicines exactly as instructed by your healthcare provider.

Please see important information about REYATAZ on the next page.

**Once Daily REYATAZ** is a protease inhibitor (PI) that is taken in HIV combination therapy.

- ◆ Can help raise your T-cells
- ◆ Can help lower your viral load to undetectable\*
- ◆ Low chance of diarrhea (shown in clinical trials)†
- ◆ Two pills taken once-a-day (with a snack or meal)‡

\*Undetectable is defined as a viral load of less than 400 or 50 copies/mL (depending on the test used).

†REYATAZ in combination therapy had a 1-3% rate of moderate-to-severe diarrhea.

‡People who have taken anti-HIV medicines before usually take REYATAZ with ritonavir once daily as part of their HIV combination therapy.

You and your doctor can **fight HIV your way.**

**REYATAZ**<sup>®</sup>  
(atazanavir sulfate) 150 mg/200 mg capsules

## PATIENT INFORMATION

Rx ONLY

# REYATAZ® (RAY-ah-taz)

(generic name = atazanavir sulfate) Capsules

**ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with REYATAZ.** Read the section "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?"

Read the Patient Information that comes with REYATAZ before you start using it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This leaflet provides a summary about REYATAZ and does not include everything there is to know about your medicine. This information does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

### What is REYATAZ?

REYATAZ is a prescription medicine used with other anti-HIV medicines to treat people who are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). HIV is the virus that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). REYATAZ is a type of anti-HIV medicine called a protease inhibitor. HIV infection destroys CD4+ (T) cells, which are important to the immune system. The immune system helps fight infection. After a large number of T cells are destroyed, AIDS develops. REYATAZ helps to block HIV protease, an enzyme that is needed for the HIV virus to multiply. REYATAZ may lower the amount of HIV in your blood, help your body keep its supply of CD4+ (T) cells, and reduce the risk of death and illness associated with HIV.

### Does REYATAZ cure HIV or AIDS?

REYATAZ does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. At present there is no cure for HIV infection. People taking REYATAZ may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV infection. Opportunistic infections are infections that develop because the immune system is weak. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections. **It is very important that you see your healthcare provider regularly while taking REYATAZ.**

REYATAZ does not lower your chance of passing HIV to other people through sexual contact, sharing needles, or being exposed to your blood. For your health and the health of others, it is important to always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood. Never use or share dirty needles.

### Who should not take REYATAZ?

#### Do not take REYATAZ if you:

- are taking certain medicines. (See "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?") Serious life-threatening side effects or death may happen. Before you take REYATAZ, tell your healthcare provider about all medicines you are taking or planning to take. These include other prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- are allergic to REYATAZ or to any of its ingredients. The active ingredient is atazanavir sulfate. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients in REYATAZ. Tell your healthcare provider if you think you have had an allergic reaction to any of these ingredients.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before I take REYATAZ?

#### Tell your healthcare provider:

- If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if REYATAZ can harm your unborn baby. Pregnant women have experienced serious side effects when taking REYATAZ with other HIV medicines called nucleoside analogues. You and your healthcare provider will need to decide if REYATAZ is right for you. If you use REYATAZ while you are pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider about the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry.
- If you are breast-feeding. You should not breast-feed if you are HIV-positive because of the chance of passing HIV to your baby. Also, it is not known if REYATAZ can pass into your breast milk and if it can harm your baby. If you are a woman who has or will have a baby, talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.
- If you have liver problems or are infected with the hepatitis B or C virus. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- If you have diabetes. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- If you have hemophilia. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- About all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Keep a list of your medicines with you to show your healthcare provider. For more information, see "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?" and "Who should not take REYATAZ?" Some medicines can cause serious side effects if taken with REYATAZ.

### How should I take REYATAZ?

- Take REYATAZ once every day exactly as instructed by your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will prescribe the amount of REYATAZ that is right for you.
  - For adults who have never taken anti-HIV medicines before, the usual dose is 400 mg (two 200-mg capsules) once daily taken with food.
  - For adults who have taken anti-HIV medicines in the past, the usual dose is 300 mg (two 150-mg capsules) plus 100 mg of NORVIR® (ritonavir) once daily taken with food.

Your dose will depend on your liver function and on the other anti-HIV medicines that you are taking. REYATAZ is always used with other anti-HIV medicines. If you are taking REYATAZ with SUSTIVA® (efavirenz) or with VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate), you should also be taking NORVIR® (ritonavir).

- Always take REYATAZ with food (a meal or snack) to help it work better. Swallow the capsules whole. Do not open the capsules. Take REYATAZ at the same time each day.
- If you are taking antacids or VIDEX® (didanosine) Chewable/Dispersible Buffered Tablets, take REYATAZ 2 hours before or 1 hour after these medicines.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking REYATAZ without first talking with your healthcare provider. It is important to stay under a healthcare provider's care while taking REYATAZ.
- When your supply of REYATAZ starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. It is important not to run out of REYATAZ. The amount of HIV in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time.
- If you miss a dose of REYATAZ, take it as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose at its regular time. If, however, it is within 6 hours of your next dose, do not take the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose at the regular time. Do not double the next dose. **It is important that you do not miss any doses of REYATAZ or your other anti-HIV medicines.**
- If you take more than the prescribed dose of REYATAZ, call your healthcare provider or poison control center right away.

### Can children take REYATAZ?

REYATAZ has not been fully studied in children under 16 years of age. REYATAZ should not be used in babies under the age of 3 months.

### What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?

The following list of side effects is not complete. Report any new or continuing symptoms to your healthcare provider. If you have questions about side effects, ask your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider may be able to help you manage these side effects.

#### The following side effects have been reported with REYATAZ:

- rash (redness and itching) sometimes occurs in patients taking REYATAZ, most often in the first few weeks after the medicine is started. Rashes usually go away within 2 weeks with no change in treatment. Tell your healthcare provider if rash occurs.
- yellowing of the skin or eyes. These effects may be due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver). Call your healthcare provider if your skin or the white part of your eyes turn yellow. Although these effects may not be damaging to your liver, skin, or eyes, it is important to tell your healthcare provider promptly if they occur.
- a change in the way your heart beats (heart rhythm change). Call your healthcare provider right away if you get dizzy or lightheaded. These could be symptoms of a heart problem.
- diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) sometimes happen in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like REYATAZ. Some patients had diabetes before taking protease inhibitors while others did not. Some patients may need changes in their diabetes medicine.
- If you have liver disease including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like REYATAZ.

- some patients with hemophilia have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitors like REYATAZ.
- changes in body fat. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

Other common side effects of REYATAZ taken with other anti-HIV medicines include nausea; headache; stomach pain; vomiting; diarrhea; depression; fever; dizziness; trouble sleeping; numbness, tingling, or burning of hands or feet; and muscle pain.

### What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?

Do not take REYATAZ if you take the following medicines (not all brands may be listed; tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take). REYATAZ may cause serious, life-threatening side effects or death when used with these medicines.

- Ergot medicines: dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine, and methylergonovine such as CAFERGOT®, MIGRANAL®, D.H.E. 45®, ergotrate maleate, METHERGINE®, and others (used for migraine headaches).
- HALCION® (triazolam, used for insomnia).
- VERSED® (midazolam, used for sedation).
- ORAP® (pimozide, used for Tourette's disorder).
- PROPULSID® (cisapride, used for certain stomach problems).

### Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ because of possible serious side effects:

- CAMPTOSAR® (irinotecan, used for cancer).
- CRIVIVAN® (indinavir, used for HIV infection). Both REYATAZ and CRIVIVAN sometimes cause increased levels of bilirubin in the blood.
- Cholesterol-lowering medicines MEVACOR® (lovastatin) or ZOCOR® (simvastatin).

Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ because they may lower the amount of REYATAZ in your blood. This may lead to an increased HIV viral load. Resistance to REYATAZ or cross-resistance to other HIV medicines may develop:

- Rifampin (also known as RIMACTANE®, RIFADIN®, RIFATER®, or RIFAMATE®, used for tuberculosis).
- St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort.
- "Proton-pump inhibitors" used for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as AcipHex® (rabeprazole), NEXIUM® (esomeprazole), PREVACID® (lansoprazole), PRILOSEC® (omeprazole), or PROTONIX® (pantoprazole).

### Do not take the following medicines if you are taking REYATAZ and NORVIR® together:

- VFEND® (voriconazole).

### The following medicines may require your healthcare provider to monitor your therapy more closely:

- CIALIS® (tadalafil), LEVITRA® (vardenafil), or VIAGRA® (sildenafil). REYATAZ may increase the chances of serious side effects that can happen with CIALIS, LEVITRA, or VIAGRA. Do not use CIALIS, LEVITRA, or VIAGRA while you are taking REYATAZ unless your healthcare provider tells you it is okay.
- LIPITOR® (atorvastatin). There is an increased chance of serious side effects if you take REYATAZ with this cholesterol-lowering medicine.
- Medicines for abnormal heart rhythm: CORDARONE® (amiodarone), lidocaine, quinidine (also known as CARDIOQUIN®, QUINIDEX®, and others).
- VASCOR® (bedridil, used for chest pain).
- COUMADIN® (warfarin).
- Tricyclic antidepressants such as ELAVIL® (amitriptyline), NORPRAMIN® (desipramine), SINEQUAN® (doxepin), SURMONTIL® (trimipramine), TOFRANIL® (imipramine), or VIVACTIL® (protriptyline).
- Medicines to prevent organ transplant rejection: SANDIMMUNE® or NEORAL® (cyclosporine), RAPAMUNE® (sirolimus), or PROGRAF® (tacrolimus).

### The following medicines may require a change in the dose or dose schedule of either REYATAZ or the other medicine:

- FORTOVASE®, INVIRASE® (saquinavir).
- NORVIR® (ritonavir).
- SUSTIVA® (efavirenz).
- VIDEX® (didanosine) or antacids.
- VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate).
- MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin).
- Calcium channel blockers such as CARDIZEM® or TIAZAC® (diltiazem), COVERA-HS® or ISOPTIN SR® (verapamil) and others.
- BIAxin® (clarithromycin).
- Medicines for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as AXID® (nizatidine), PEPICID AC® (famotidine), TAGAMET® (cimetidine), or ZANTAC® (ranitidine).

Women who use birth control pills or "the patch" should choose a different kind of contraception. REYATAZ may affect the safety and effectiveness of birth control pills or the patch. Talk to your healthcare provider about choosing an effective contraceptive.

### Remember:

1. Know all the medicines you take.
2. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take.
3. Do not start a new medicine without talking to your healthcare provider.

### How should I store REYATAZ?

- Store REYATAZ (atazanavir sulfate) Capsules at room temperature, 59° to 86° F (15° to 30° C). Do not store this medicine in a damp place such as a bathroom medicine cabinet or near the kitchen sink.
- Keep your medicine in a tightly closed container.
- Throw away REYATAZ when it is outdated or no longer needed by flushing it down the toilet or pouring it down the sink.

### General information about REYATAZ

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use REYATAZ for another condition. Do not give REYATAZ to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them. **Keep REYATAZ and all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.**

This summary does not include everything there is to know about REYATAZ. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Remember, no written summary can replace careful discussion with your healthcare provider. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider or you can call 1-800-426-7644.

### What are the ingredients in REYATAZ?

**Active Ingredient:** atazanavir sulfate

**Inactive Ingredients:** Crospovidone, lactose monohydrate (milk sugar), magnesium stearate, gelatin, FD&C Blue #2, and titanium dioxide.

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This Patient Information Leaflet has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

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Revised July 2004

## music RHONDA SMITH



Patti LaBelle's latest CD, 'Classic Moments,' offers a soulful nod to old-school R&B, country and pop songs with help from a few friends.

## Sweet 'Lady Marmalade'

R&B DIVA PATTI LABELLE IS AT HER sultry best singing hopeful love songs, as well as more raucous numbers inspired by her faith.

Among her hits are "On My Own," a duet with Michael McDonald, "If Only You Knew," and "You are My Friend." Lesser known musical morsels include "Don't Block the Blessings," "You Saved My Life" and "If By Chance," all ballads on her 1997 album, "Flame."

On her latest CD, "Classic Moments," which primarily is comprised of R&B covers, the Philadelphia native and long-time performer capably demonstrates that, at 60, she still can effortlessly tap into the power within as well as raise the roof on a dance floor, regardless of the age of its occupants.

The CD includes a thunderous remake of the Jones Girls' "You Gonna Make Me Love Somebody Else" as well as a soulful rendition with gay-friendly dance club stylist Kristine W. of her hit "Land of the Living." These two final songs on "Classic Moments" mark a fitting end to an album that, for the most part, soars with soulful remakes like the Pretenders' "I'll Stand by You" as well as Earth, Wind & Fire's "I'll Write a Song For You."

LaBelle, of course, is no Phillip Bailey, who was Earth, Wind & Fire's lead singer (including on "I'll Write a Song"), and she, more than anybody, seems to know this. As a result, she plays to her own strengths on "Classic Moments," which helps make this disc special.

She performs most of the covers by fiercely embracing her own style while offering gracious nods to counterparts who first made the songs hits. LaBelle demonstrates her musical versatility in part by including on the CD a noteworthy remake of the Delfonics' "Didn't I (Blow Your Mind This Time)" as well as a palatable rendition of Bonnie Raitt's "I Can't Make You Love Me."

(LaBelle is next scheduled to appear here on Aug. 6, at the Show Place Arena, in Upper Marlboro, Md.)

UNFORTUNATELY, MISS PATTI'S efforts on "Classic Moments" sometimes fall short. Listening to her take on Rose Royce's "Love Don't Live Here Anymore" and Michael McDonald's "I Keep Forgetting," is nowhere near as pleasurable



At 60, R&B diva Patti LaBelle proves her staying power is still intact. (Photo by the Associated Press)

as when she and Mary J. Blige (the Queen of Hip-Hop) join forces on "Ain't No Way," an early hit by the Queen of Soul. Other notable contributions include "He's Out of My Life," a ballad by Michael Jackson that originally was titled "She's Out of My Life."

LaBelle's remake with gay music legend Elton John of "Your Song," which they recorded live on stage at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, also falls a bit short. What redeems it, however, is an African-inspired chorus and chant near the end by backup singers Lori Perry, Terry Dexter, Taura Jackson, Lamont Van Hook and Dorian Holly.

This vocal artist, whose career spans more than 40 years, remains popular primarily because of her songs and legendary stage performances. She also continues to solidify her place in the entertainment industry based in part on her work to help eradicate HIV/AIDS, breast cancer and diabetes. In addition, LaBelle is on the National Advisory Council for the Alzheimer's Association.

The diva responsible for the original "Lady Marmalade" also has written four books, developed her own clothing line and regularly appears on TV One's lifestyle program "Living It Up With Patti LaBelle."

"Classic Moments" is just the latest jewel in her tiara.

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### **i** MORE INFO

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**nitelife** JOHNNY HOOKS



The passing of bandleader Tim McGlashen, SOBE's fourth, SWAMP, Miss MintJulep and there's trouble in River City again

**Sleep well, sweet prince**

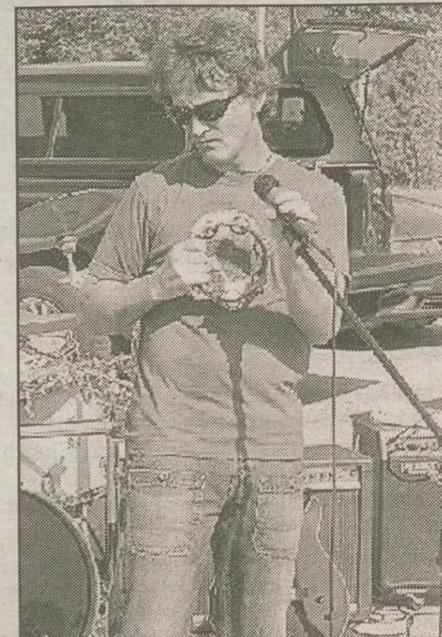
HELLO HOUSTON HOTTIES! OF course this weather of ours' rules the news again for the Bayou City this week. So before that nasty storm Emily makes it's way here next week let's check out what to do.

ON A SAD NOTE, HOTGG AND Houston lost a wonderful friend this week. **Tim McGlashen**, lead singer for the legendary **Zealots** died on Tuesday, July 12. While not queer himself, Tim was one of the very first people a baby HotGG met on our first night out in the Montrose back in 1983. Even though HotGG was wearing Adam Ant make-up and a bad bow tie, McGlashen cared not and wound up becoming a longtime friend. Tim will be missed by all who knew him. His most recent band, **The Buddhacrush**, is on hold until further notice. On the wings of angels Tim.

WELL THERE IS TROUBLE IN RIVER City this weekend at **Miller Outdoor Theater**. At least it's free! **Theater Under The Stars** presents **The Music Man** from July 18 through 23. Turning River City, Iowa on its head is out-performer **David Rossetti**. David also portrayed "Goody" in the national tour of "Fame: The Musical", which took him to 35 states in 10 months. The show begins at 8:15 each evening in Hermann Park. Bring blankets, a nice bottle of vino and your Off Deep Woods skeeter spray!

LOOK WHO'S GEARING UP FOR THEIR birthday. Why it's **South Beach!** SOBE turns four next weekend, but to begin the celebration SOBE is having the **Black Party**, One of the true kings of the decks, **Manny Lehman**, will be there to spin you into a frenzy. Resident DJ, **Jimmy Skinner** opens. This will be a sell-out event so get your tickets fast. Stop by 810 Pacific to get yours or log onto [www.southbeachthenightclub.com](http://www.southbeachthenightclub.com) for more info.

THE SOUTHWEST ALTERNATE MEDIA Project, (SWAMP to those near and dear) is hosting a slew of workshops over the summer. Saturday, from 9 a.m. till 2 p.m., SWAMP is bringing award-winning documentary filmmaker and New Yorker **Andrew Kolker** to Houston for "For Love of the Doc: Telling a Story Through Documentary" at the Rice University Media Center. All participants in this workshop will get a free ticket to see Mr. Kolker's documentary about Little League, "Small Ball," screening the next day, Sunday, 2 p.m. at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. To enroll, call 713-522-8592 or email



Band leader Tim McGlashen died on July 12.

[swamp@swamp.org](mailto:swamp@swamp.org).

IT'S MINT JULEP TIME. THAT'S MISS **Mint Julep** to you! This hilarious show is Sunday at 3 p.m. at 1415 California. The show starts promptly at 3, no cover, savory munchies and great entertainment from Houston, Austin, and Galveston. In addition, there will be an auction of table waiter/waitresses for those of you who would like you own personal waiter for this event, with the bidding starting at \$50. The event benefits the **Montrose Clinic** and is underwritten by Houston hotty **Matt Soileau**! Call 713-880-3015 for details.

FINALLY DEAR READERS, NEED A new mattress? A new bedroom set? How about a rocking chair for your room? Then **Nsomnia Furniture** is the place to be. **Matt Locklin** invites you to stop by and check out all the amazing deals he has for you and yours.

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

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## Going 'Gray'

A hot new remake of Wilde's 'Dorian Gray,' Queen tops the charts and HBO gets a Woody

Filled with more bitchy one-liners than a "Mommie Dearest" marathon, OSCAR WILDE's "The Picture of Dorian Gray" has long been a gay favorite. Thanks to out British director DUNCAN ROY the movie is getting a steamy new remake, which was just completed with the story set in New York City instead of Wilde's London.

"The film is sexually graphic. It's not rampant ... but there is one very hot same-sex scene," Roy told New York Post's gossip column Page Six. "We just put the 'gay' back into Dorian Gray."

Though there was no explicit boy-on-boy action in Wilde's novel or in the 1945 film version, it seemed to always bubble just beneath the surface.

The new "Dorian" will feature teen heartthrob DAVID GALLAGHER, best known for his role on the WB's "7th Heaven."

Apparently sexy actor and Mr. REECE WITHERSPOON, RYAN PHILLIPPE, was planning on producing, directing and starring in a remake of the same story, but that idea has been scrapped.

"I've won the battle of the Dorian Grays!" Roy told Page Six. "Who was going to believe that [Phillippe] is 18 years old?"

If he's this bitchy in person, just imagine what he does with Wilde.

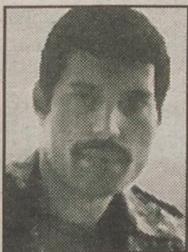
In other movie news, Variety reports that producers pushed back the start date for production on the movie version of "Hairspray" the musical, which is based on the film by gay director JOHN WATERS (gosh, Dish is exhausted just describing it). As a result, directors Jerry Mitchell and Jack O'Brien, who directed the Broadway version, had to step out.

Gay producers CRAIG ZADAN and NEIL MERON hoped to get ROB MARSHALL, the gay director who won them an Oscar for "Chicago," to direct since he just finished making "Memoirs of a Geisha." Mitchell and O'Brien were filling in for Marshall when he bowed out of the stage version of "Hairspray."

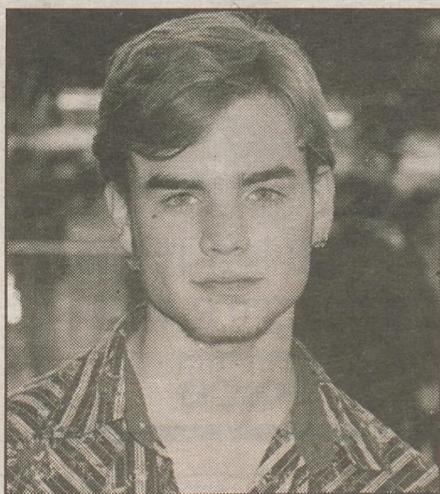
The film is scheduled to be released in 2007.

### Long live the Queen

The rock band Queen, which was fronted by bisexual singer FREDDIE MERCURY until his death in 1991, was recently named the United



Freddie Mercury



Teen heartthrob David Gallagher reportedly has a steamy gay sex scene in an upcoming adaptation of 'The Picture of Dorian Gray.'

Kingdom's favorite band of all time.

The people who make the Guinness Book of British Hit Singles and Albums say the band has spent 1,322 weeks on the album charts, besting the Beatles (at 1,293 weeks) and ELVIS PRESLEY (at 1,280). It's an especially good accomplishment considering that Queen's first charted album came out in 1974. The Beatles' first album dropped in 1963 and Pressley's in 1956.

### On the air

There's a MORRISSEY song that proclaims "We hate it when our friends become successful," and boy is that what Dish is feeling today.

She got e-mail from MICHAEL ALVEAR who, under the pen name Woody Miller, writes the "Need Wood?" gay sex advice column that appears in the Washington Blade and other fine gay publications.

Alvear recently announced that HBO bought his Channel 4 series "Sex Inspectors," which airs in the UK. The show, where Alvear and co-host Tracy Cox watch straight couples have sex and then critique their performance, has been a hit across the pond and HBO, apparently, is hoping for the same here.

The program begins airing on Thursday, September 1, at 11 p.m.

Speaking of television deals, former Human Rights Campaign Executive Director (and D.C. area resident) ELIZABETH BIRCH now has her own TV show on gay channel Here! TV. The half-hour "Birch & Company," which will feature Birch interviewing different prominent figures in the gay world, kicks off on Aug. 12 with guest ROSIE O'DONNELL.



Elizabeth Birch



Send comments, suggestions to Dish@houstonvoice.com

## Meet Joe Ross

*An EJ's Remarkable Transformation Story!*



We first came across Joe at a Basket Pageant in a bad part of town on Pacific Street. It had been awhile since Joe's glory days and he was desperate for a new life. He had entered this contest with his longtime "special friend & roommate" Faberge! Knutzak, himself another has been Texas file holder. You could tell that Joe used to be cute. He just needed a little TLC, the kind that EJ's is famous for.

We asked Joe to come by.

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Joe went to work for EJ's. He's making over \$3 an hour, and was recently awarded the title of "Mr. Main Bar 2 of Monday Night" We're so proud that we've announced that he is also "Mr. Teacher's Pet". Joe's now involved in helping others. He has started a DJ music ministry, taking his extensive collection of over 23 cassette tapes to places on the weekends where hustlers, other sinners & n'er-do-wells gather.

Joe is also an accomplished artist and will soon be showing his new collection, "Faberge, a homoerotic journey through me" or "My Towel of Many Colors"



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## bitch session

# bitch session

Why are we so hot to claim a whack job like Tom Cruise as one of our own?

I WISH HUSBANDS WOULD COME with "sexpiration" dates on them. Who knew I'd be tricking behind his back just a year into it?

WHY DO SO MANY HOMOS THINK that if you talk to them, you want their counseling on some flaw they find in you? If I want counseling, I'll get it from somebody with decent credentials. Not some tired bar fag.

WEARING COLORFUL T-SHIRTS THAT offset, if not complement, my outer shirt is fashionable, not stupid. Telling me it's stupid only means you have no taste. Same goes for my underwear. I'm not dressing to please the world, just myself.

WHY DO LESBIANS TREAT OTHER lesbians who are full-figured as unfit to be in a relationship? It doesn't mean we cannot be loved. I am so sick of reading personals that label us full-figured women as "excessive baggage."

JUST BECAUSE I AM YOUNG AND hung does not give you the right to treat me like a whore. I am well educated, and I am not a whore. I am a slut.

THERE SHOULD BE A PLACE IN THE queer community for those of us who neither do crystal nor worship crystals.

IN CERTAIN CIRCLES, THE PHRASE "boi" indicates submission, not youth obsession.

YOU MIGHT BE A DRAG QUEEN IF ... you sing karaoke and choose to perform a ballad.

WHY DO YOU COME INTO A chatroom referring to yourself as "bi-closeted"? That's the oldest gay oxymoron in the book!

MUSIC FROM THE 90S IS NOT "RETRO." If you're gong to hire a DJ for "retro" night, make sure he was out of diapers by at least 1980.

TO YOU DITZY-DISCO-LOVING GAY men

who think Junior Vasquez is a musician: Bob Mould is a guitarist, singer and songwriter, formerly with Husker Du, who was a major influence on a whole generation of "alternative" rock musicians. I'm sure you would have heard of him if he'd been in an Abercrombie & Fitch ad.

TO THE QUEEN WHO SAID REAL MEN use bars of soap: Real men actually don't give a damn what they use. Only image-obsessed gay boys are concerned about whether what they consume gives off the image they want to project.

TO THE BITCH WHO REFUSES TO GO into any bar that charges a cover: Bars are businesses, and their expenses and pay-rolls do not magically fund themselves.

JUST BECAUSE I'M A HANDSOME, late 20s Brazilian who likes men over 65 doesn't make me a hustler. I have a real job, make lots of my own money and have my own \$650,000 condo. It's my fetish, so quit spreading rumors!

MAYBE SOME OF US WEAR THOSE "tired yellow rubber Armstrong cancer bands" because we have lost loved ones to this horrible illness. Have some compassion.

WHY DO GUYS ALWAYS STOP IN FRONT of me and block everyone else's view of me? And it's almost always a guy who should be hiding in the dark corner of the room.

I DON'T HAVE TO STAY MY "STUCK-UP ass" at home to avoid stalkers at the bars. What I need is to have the losers leave me the hell alone. I don't owe anyone my body just because they want it for the night.

YOU LESS-THAN-HOT MEN NEED TO get over your insecurity about hot guys and their so-called attitude. Just because I may not show interest in you doesn't mean I think I'm better. You're just not my type. We get rejected for the same reason by other hot-looking guys.

YOU HAVE AN EDUCATION, CAREER and a vehicle? We could be so proud of our little Johnny if only he weren't a twink!

YOU GET EXCITED WHEN A "GAY movie" hits the video shelf for the same reason you have trouble staying awake for 15 minutes: You are tired!

INSTEAD OF PERFORMANCE appraisals at work, why can't we all get a spanking from a hot guy if we do bad like they used to do in school?

GUYS SHOULD TAKE A LOOK AT HOW a new boyfriend treats his mother. After a while, that is how he will treat you.

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

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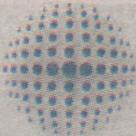
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