houston voice

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PRIDE 2005
Pull out the **Pride Guide** for everything there is to know about Pride Houston.
INSIDE

OUT OF THE FRAY: LGRL's Ellis steps down. **Page 3**

MORE APPEALS: Lesbian custody fight continues. **Page 3**

COURT RULES: Partner gets dead woman's son. **Page 5**

Tenn. probes 'ex-gay' camp

By EARTHA MELZER

Gay rights advocates demonstrate outside the Love In Action compound in Memphis after a teenager blogged about his parents forcing him to enroll in the 'ex-gay' camp.

The state of Tennessee has begun an investigation in response to allegations of child abuse at Love in Action, a Memphis facility that advertises homosexual conversion therapy for adolescents, according to a department of health source.

K. Daniele Edwards, a spokesperson for Child Services at the Tennessee Department of Health, confirmed an investigation is underway but declined to comment on the details. She noted that she presumes the Love in Action program would require licensing by the state.

Love in Action is not licensed by the Tennessee Departments of Health, Mental Health, Human Services, Child Services or Education, according to Rachel Lassiter of Gov. Phil Bredesen's communications office.

"Refuge," Love in Action's program for adolescents, became the focus of public concern earlier this month after a Bartlett, Tenn., teen, "Zach," blogged that his parents had responded to his coming out as gay by sending him to a religious institution to be converted to straight.

"Emotional abuse is difficult to prove in the state of Tennessee," said Pamela Dickey, director of the advocacy center for Childhelp USA in Knoxville. "You have to document that the child is undergoing depression or suicidal ideation, that he can't sleep, or can't eat."

Officials from Love in Action appealed for "tolerance" of their program at a June 16 news conference.

"It is our spiritual conviction that sexual behavior outside of heterosexual marriage is considered wrong in the sight of God," said John Smid, the program's director, who describes himself as "ex-gay," according to a partial transcript of the news conference.

Blogger EJ Friedman said that he had been corresponding with Zach via e-mail since March and became alarmed when he saw that Zach had begun to write that his world was coming to an end and that his parents were isolating him.

"When I saw Zach had written in his blog, 'all I can think of is killing my mother and killing myself' I felt that clearly something needed to be said about the program," Friedman said.

No word from teen

Word of Zach's situation quickly spread around the blogosphere. By press time, more than 1,000 messages of support had been posted to Zach's blog and an online petition demanded that he be released from Love in Action. Comedian Margaret Cho contributed a message of support.

But Zach has not posted to his

Please see **LOVE IN ACTION** on **Page 6**

Texas Comptroller **Carole Keeton Strayhorn** announced last week that she will challenge Rick Perry in the March gubernatorial primary.

Strayhorn will run against Gov. Perry

Advocates for equal rights say Strayhorn's stand on the issue remains the great unknown.

By BINNIE FISHER

Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn left few people guessing what she was going to say when she called an outdoor press conference last Saturday within sight of the State Capitol.

Strayhorn, who as comptroller has billed herself as "one tough Grandma," did what most observers thought she would do. She announced her plans to run against Gov. Rick Perry in the March 7 Republican primary.

Please see **STRAYHORN** on **Page 4**

PRIDE HOUSTON

local life
The **symbol of Pride** in Houston is an androgynous figure known as 'Pat.'
PAGE 8

eclipse
Some say 'yes,' and some say 'no' when it comes to **sex on the first date.**
PAGE 15

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local news briefs

Another appeal is expected in lesbian adoption case

The attorney for Kathleen Van Stavern, who was awarded joint custody of her former partner's biological daughter in April, said she has been notified that there will be yet another appeal in the case. Van Stavern and Julie Ann Hobbs were partners in 1998 when Hobbs gave birth to a daughter through artificial insemination. In 2001, Van Stavern adopted the child. The couple split up in March of 2004, and Van Stavern sought joint custody. Hobbs fought the petition on the grounds that the adoption was not legal at the time because only spouses of biological parents were eligible to adopt. Those restrictions have since been eased. Hobbs has appealed the rulings of several different judges. The case finally went to trial in April, and after five days of testimony, a jury awarded joint custody to Van Stavern. Shannon T. Warren, attorney for Van Stavern, said she has only been notified of an appeal and has not yet been informed of specific points of the case.

Kathleen Van Stavern, who won joint custody of her former partner's daughter in April, will be back in court again for another appeal.

A million Web site hits for Houston Pride

As of late Wednesday, the Pride Houston Web site had received 1.2 million hits for the month of June. "It just blows me away," said Pride Houston President Nick Brines. "We're averaging about 110,000 hits a day." He predicts a successful Pride Festival and Parade on Saturday.

Free HIV tests offered for National HIV Testing Day

The African-American State of Emergency Task Force, Houston Department of Health and Human Services and OraSure Technologies, Inc. will offer free HIV tests at several locations in Houston Friday, June 24, to observe National HIV Testing Day. For a list of testing sites, call 713-794-9169.

From staff and wire reports

obituaries

A memorial service is planned Sunday for former Houstonian **Michael Springer**.

Service for Michael Springer set for this Sunday in Houston

A memorial service for Michael Springer, who at one time headed up the Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group, is planned at 4 p.m. Sunday at Covenant Church, 4949 Caroline. Springer, 55, died May 6 in Dallas. A reception will follow the service.

Helen Lois Alexander Cassidy advocated equality for all

Helen Lois Alexander Cassidy, 65, an attorney and activist, died June 11. Cassidy received her law degree from the University of Houston Law Center and became board certified in appellate law. She served as chair of both the Appellate Practice Section and the Criminal Law Section of the Houston Bar Association as well as chair of the Appellate Section of the Start Bar of Texas. She worked as staff counsel for inmates at the Texas Department of Corrections, as a hearing examiner for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and was named Chief Staff Attorney for the Fourteenth Court of Appeals. After 15 years at the Court of Appeals, she entered private practice. Cassidy was a Democratic precinct chair, the first chair of the Texas Women's Political Caucus and a national board member for the National Organization for Women. She marched for civil rights in the 1960s, for women's rights in the '70s and gay rights in the '80s. A memorial service is planned at 2:30 p.m. Sunday at the Magnolia Ballroom, 715 Franklin St.

A balloon release will mark The passing of Margie Armstrong

Margery Stewart Armstrong, 54, who managed several successful flower shops and worked for Randall's in Houston and Galveston, died June 16. A native of Lancaster, England, Armstrong was also a poet and a dancer. A balloon release is planned in her memory at 6 p.m. Sunday at Mary's, 1022 Westheimer. In lieu of flowers, her survivors ask that those who knew her undertake an act of kindness toward a stranger.

regional news

Ellis resigns as head of state's gay lobby group

Political figures and gay activists say Ellis made a significant contribution

By BINNIE FISHER

Randall Ellis has stepped down as executive director of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas.

Randall Ellis has resigned as executive director of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (LGRL), just as a special legislative session begins in Austin.

Ellis announced his resignation on June 17, two and a half years into what turned out to be a productive period for LGRL.

In a press release, LGRL said, "The organization has seen substantial growth and maturation under Ellis' leadership."

Ellis told the Voice this week that he needs a break and is planning to take time off before accepting another position.

"I am going to take a few weeks break," he said. "The first thing I plan to do is plant and keep my lawn alive this summer. Next, I am going to finish working on my thesis for my master's in public health as I contemplate my next move."

Ellis said there are a couple of possibilities on the horizon that may be of interest.

"I already have a few projects lined up to make sure we continue to elect progressive candidates at the local, state, and federal levels," he said. "My time at LGRL has been an incredible experience."

LGRL Board Co-Chair Jill Ireland acknowledged that Ellis' contributions have been many.

"Over the last two and a half years Randall has accomplished many things for LGRL, both legislatively and operationally," Ireland said. "He and his staff have taken our organization to a new level, and we are extremely grateful for his hard work and dedication. We wish Randall the best and we look forward to watching his continued success."

Ellis came to his job at LGRL after having served as an aide to Rep. Garnett Coleman (D-Houston). Coleman was among a contingent of legislators who say they will miss Ellis.

"Randall has an incredible work ethic," Coleman said. "Whether working on issues of public health, social justice, or LGBT equality, he has risen to all the challenges put before him. I look forward to continuing to work with Randall in his future endeavors."

Rep. Jessica Farrar (D-Houston) praised the work Ellis did on the proposed constitutional amendment banning gay marriage and civil unions.

"Randall demonstrated outstanding leadership on the marriage amendment," she said. "The strategy that he developed helped us change the hearts and minds of lawmakers."

The amendment garnered the required two-thirds majority it needed in the House and Senate and will be on the statewide ballot Nov. 8.

"Although the amendment passed, we were able to educate many of my colleagues in the Texas Legislature, and we took a giant leap forward on marriage equality for LGBT Texans." Farrar said. "His work has laid the foundation for a strong campaign."

Rep. Mike Villarreal (D-San Antonio) said although Ellis never seemed to give up when lobbying for equal rights, he spread a calming influence over the legislators with whom he worked.

"The past two sessions have been extremely difficult for LGBT Texans," Villarreal said. "I could always turn to Randall to develop a calm and thoughtful response to the relentless attacks from the far-right. He will be missed."

Activists in Houston expressed similar sentiments. Sue Lovell, who is a candidate for Houston City Council, agrees that Ellis' leaving creates a void in leadership at the state level.

"Every GLBT person in the state of Texas owes a debt of gratitude to Randall Ellis," she said. "It's a big loss in leadership. I personally want to thank him and wish him the best in the future."

Tammi Wallace, president of the newly formed Houston Equal Rights Alliance (HERA), worked closely with Ellis on Houston's Equality Knocks voter identification drive.

"It's amazing what LGRL and Randall were able to do in this last legislative session," she said. "We wish him the best of luck on his next step."

local news

Strayhorn announces candidacy by taking jabs at Perry

STRAYHORN, continued from Page 1

The move has left many Democratic gay activists unsure whether they should cheer, voice concern or cross lines and cast a ballot for her in the Republican primary.

Strayhorn is still an unknown on the subjects of same-sex marriage, civil unions and equal rights for gays. A call to her campaign headquarters in Austin was not returned by press time.

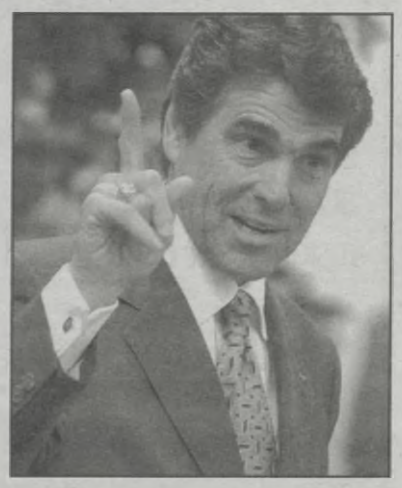
Many gays see Strayhorn as a moderate, since she was a Democrat when she served as mayor of Austin. In 1984, she was Travis County co-chair of Democrat Walter Mondale's unsuccessful challenge to President Ronald Reagan.

But, her connections to President George W. Bush are significant. Her eldest son, Dr. Mark McClellan, is the administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Her youngest son, Scott McClellan, is press secretary to the president.

Randall Ellis, who recently resigned at executive director of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (LGRL), pointed out that, "Every Texas politician who is successful is connected to Bush."

Ellis said many Texans, gay and straight, have found themselves fascinated by the antics of the state comptroller.

"I've loved watching her stand up and call people on stuff," he said. "She calls it like it is."



Gov. **Rick Perry** drew negative comments in newspapers nationwide when he suggested that gay veterans returning from Iraq should find another place to live if they don't like the laws in Texas.

In announcing her candidacy, Strayhorn did not shy away from criticizing the current governor.

"You know that Texans cannot afford another four years of a governor who promises tax relief and delivers nothing," she said. "Now is time to replace this do-nothing drugstore cowboy with one tough grandma."

Just before Strayhorn made her announcement, Perry called a press conference to announce that he was calling a special session—his fifth since he took office—to settle the issue of school finance.

Legislators passed a proposed amendment to the Texas constitution banning gay marriage and civil unions and a law to force pregnant teens under 18 to get parental approval before seeking an abortion but didn't deal with funding for schools before clearing out of the capitol the end of May.

Strayhorn criticized Perry for not pressing for a solution to school finance during the regular session.

"A leader does not call a fifth special session – costing taxpayers another $1.5 million – when he does not have a plan," she said. "A leader does not hold our children's education hostage and certainly would never even allow a discussion about schools not opening on time."

Officials of some school districts have said that without a school finance plan, their schools may not open on time.

Gay rights activists nationwide have criticized Perry for his recent signing of not only the abortion legislation but also the proposed marriage amendment at an evangelical Christian school in Fort Worth. The amendment, which goes to voters Nov. 8, did not require the governor's signature.

At the same time, Perry suggested that gay veterans of the Iraq war find another place to live if they don't like the laws in Texas.

Tammi Wallace, who is among the founders of the Houston Equal Rights Alliance (HERA), said Strayhorn would likely prove to be a formidable opponent for Perry.

"I think a lot of people might want to discount her, but she strikes me as someone you never want to come out against," Wallace said.

Texas Rep. Garnett Coleman (D-Houston) expressed admiration for Strayhorn as a politician.

"I think Carole Keeton Strayhorn has shown herself to be an adept and aggressive campaigner," he said.

Garnett said moderate Republicans who want good government and don't believe they have it with Perry are likely to jump on Strayhorn's bandwagon.

"She has friends across the board," he said. "Perry has played to the political extreme. Rick Perry is not a friend to the gay and lesbian community."

Where Strayhorn will lean on that issue, Coleman said, "The jury's still out."

At a time when a special session had to be called to deal with the problem of funding Texas schools, Coleman said, "She understands that being fiscally smart is important."

Besides that, he said, "She's extremely entertaining."

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national news briefs

W.Va. court gives custody of boy to lesbian's partner

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — The state's highest court last week gave custody of a 5-year-old boy to his dead mother's lesbian partner, despite the protests of the woman's blood relatives. Tina Burch had appealed to the West Virginia Supreme Court for custody of the son of her partner, Christina Smarr, who died in a 2002 car accident. Within hours of her death, Smarr's relatives had given the child to his grandparents. A family court gave custody to Burch, but a circuit court ruled that she didn't have the legal rights to her former partner's child. Jim Douglas, Burch's attorney, argued that the boy's biological father, who was not involved in the child's life, supported Burch having custody. "Both of the child's biological parents not only acquiesced in, but actively fostered, the relationship," Justice Robin Davis wrote in the majority opinion. The opinion said a "psychological parent" could be a biological, adoptive, foster or stepparent, as long as the parental relationship began with the consent of the legal parent or guardian.

West Virginia Supreme Court Justice **Robin Davis** wrote the opinion that granted Tina Burch custody of the 5-year-old son of her partner, Christina Smarr, who died in a 2002 car accident. (Photo by Bob Bird/AP)

Iowa high court won't tamper with termination of civil union

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The Iowa Supreme Court last week refused to tamper with a lower court decision granting two women a dissolution of their civil union. In a unanimous ruling, the court said a conservative group that had sued to overturn the ruling had no standing in the case. In the case, Kimberly Jean Brown had filed for divorce from Jennifer Sue Perez. Their divorce petition said the two were married in March 2002 in Bolton, Vt. Judge Jeffrey Neary granted the divorce, later altering the ruling to reflect that it was a termination of the couple's civil union. The legal arm of the Des Moines-based Iowa Family Policy Center and a handful of state legislators had challenged the decision, saying Neary had overstepped his authority. By dissolving the civil union, they said, Neary was recognizing gay marriage. The Supreme Court said the group was not harmed by Neary's decision.

Federal judge in California upholds gay marriage ban

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Deciding one of the few federal lawsuits arguing the case for gay marriage, a U.S. District Court judge ruled last week that a law passed by Congress in 1996 validating only unions between a man and a woman does not violate the Constitution. But Judge Gary Taylor of the Central District of California also declined to rule on whether state's ban on same-sex marriage violates the civil rights of a gay Orange County couple while a separate legal challenge to California's laws works its way through the state courts. "The question of the constitutionality of California's statutory prohibition on same-sex marriage is novel and of sufficient importance that the California courts ought to address it first," wrote Taylor, who presides in Central District of California. Taylor's ruling came in a case brought by Christopher Hammer and Arthur Smelt, a Mission Viejo couple, who filed it last year as an alternative to the case advanced in the state courts by the city of San Francisco and a dozen same-sex couples.

New gay marriage ballot initiative may change dynamics of Mass. debate

BOSTON (AP) — Debate over gay marriage in Massachusetts has taken a noisy turn after a coalition of Catholics and conservative organizations, with the blessing of Gov. Mitt Romney, vowed to block future same-sex unions with a new and uncompromising grassroots appeal to voters. The new campaign announced last week, backed by deep-pocketed national organizations, seeks to scuttle an existing ballot initiative that lawmakers passed last year that would ban same-sex marriage while legalizing Vermont-style civil unions. Instead, the coalition will try to undo lawmakers' work last year by urging them to vote against the proposed ballot question this fall, while gathering petitions to replace it with another, streamlined question that makes no provisions for civil unions. While prospects of the new effort are unclear, supporters and opponents agree on one thing: that the new effort represents a change in tactics that is sure to alter the political landscape for gay marriage in the nation's only state that allows it.

Ariz. governor avoids gay marriage topic at rights banquet

MESA, Ariz. (AP) — Members of a gay and lesbian activist group were disappointed when Gov. Janet Napolitano didn't use a fund-raiser for the organization to criticize an effort to enact a state constitutional ban on same-sex marriages. Napolitano carefully avoided any mention of the potential constitutional amendment when she spoke Saturday at a banquet for the Arizona Human Rights Fund and affiliated groups. Opposition to the proposed initiative was a constant theme of the event. The governor announced the creation of the Governor's Award for Excellence in Human Rights Advocacy, given to Phoenix lawyer Bill Hardin, a founder of the Arizona Human Rights Fund. Despite Napolitano's public opposition to same-sex marriage, the governor received a warm welcome.

From staff and wire reports

national news

Experts question non-licensed counselors at 'ex-gay' camp

LOVE IN ACTION, continued from Page 1

blog since the first week in June and sources contacted by the Voice would not confirm Zach's full name. His parents also could not be identified. Morgan Fox, 25, who said he was a friend of Zach's, said he believed Zach was in a two-week program.

Meanwhile, concerned citizens formed a group called the Queer Action Coalition. QAC began daily demonstrations in front of Love in Action offices to raise awareness of the dangers of "ex-gay" therapy.

Homosexuality is not considered an illness by the medical community and no major counseling or psychological organization supports therapy that aims to change a person's sexual orientation.

The American Psychological Association has said that it is unethical to subject an adolescent to reparative therapy.

According to Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays, "Several major professional organizations, including the American Psychological Association, the National Association of Social Workers, and the American Academy of Pediatrics, have all made statements against reparative therapy because of concerns for the harm caused to patients. The American Psychiatric Association has already taken clear stands against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation."

Peterson Toscano is a gay man who spent two years in the Love in Action program as the last stop in a 17-year struggle to suppress his sexual orientation.

He said that the program, which cost $950 per month, was highly restrictive. While he was in the program he was forbidden to go to most parts of Memphis, could not touch other men and had to submit to lengthy meetings where participants criticized each other over the ways that they appeared to be gay. Clients at Love in Action had to describe their sexual fantasies and deviant behaviors in front of groups so that they would be shamed, Toscano said.

Toscano, who gave up his efforts in 1999, has written a play about his time at Love in Action called "Doing Time in the Homo No Mo' Half Way House."

Toscano has been in contact with QAC and the Memphis media and said he plans to travel to Memphis to perform his play for free this weekend.

Though his experience of Love in Action was as a consenting adult, Toscano expressed serious concern for adolescents who are forced to participate in what he characterized as an extremely damaging and misguided program.

Although the program is live-in for adults, teenagers are driven to the facility each day by their parents who are required to stay in a nearby hotel that is approved by Love in Action.

Toscano said that Smid has taken the 12-step program designed for drug addiction and is trying to apply it to homosexuality.

The "ex-gay" operators of the camp are themselves victims of a system that has convinced them that the only way that they can serve Jesus is to run an "ex-gay" facility, Toscano said.

"If they really understood that what they were doing was causing harm they would be horrified."

Psychotherapist Joe Kort echoed those sentiments.

"My own judgment about reparative therapy is that it is a covert form of sexual abuse and assaultive to the sexuality of those who participate," he said.

Kort is an adjunct professor teaching gay and lesbian studies at Wayne State University's School of Social Work.

Jeffry Ford is a licensed psychologist who served as a leader in the "ex-gay" movement for years but left and is now in private practice in Minnesota.

Ford said that Love in Action resembles a cult in that officials there monitor their clients' behavior and clients are not allowed to be alone with just one man or woman.

Obligation to 'mold a child'

According to Julie Neils, spokesperson for Exodus International, an umbrella group for "ex-gay" projects, Love in Action's Refuge program is the only project they are affiliated with that focuses on gay teens.

Love in Action has only offered services to adolescents for two years. Administrator Tommy Corman said that the program has treated 23 adolescents and that there are currently two teenage boys in the program, both signed up for six-week programs.

Corman confirmed that teens are sometimes forced to participate in the programs, but dismissed the idea that this is wrong.

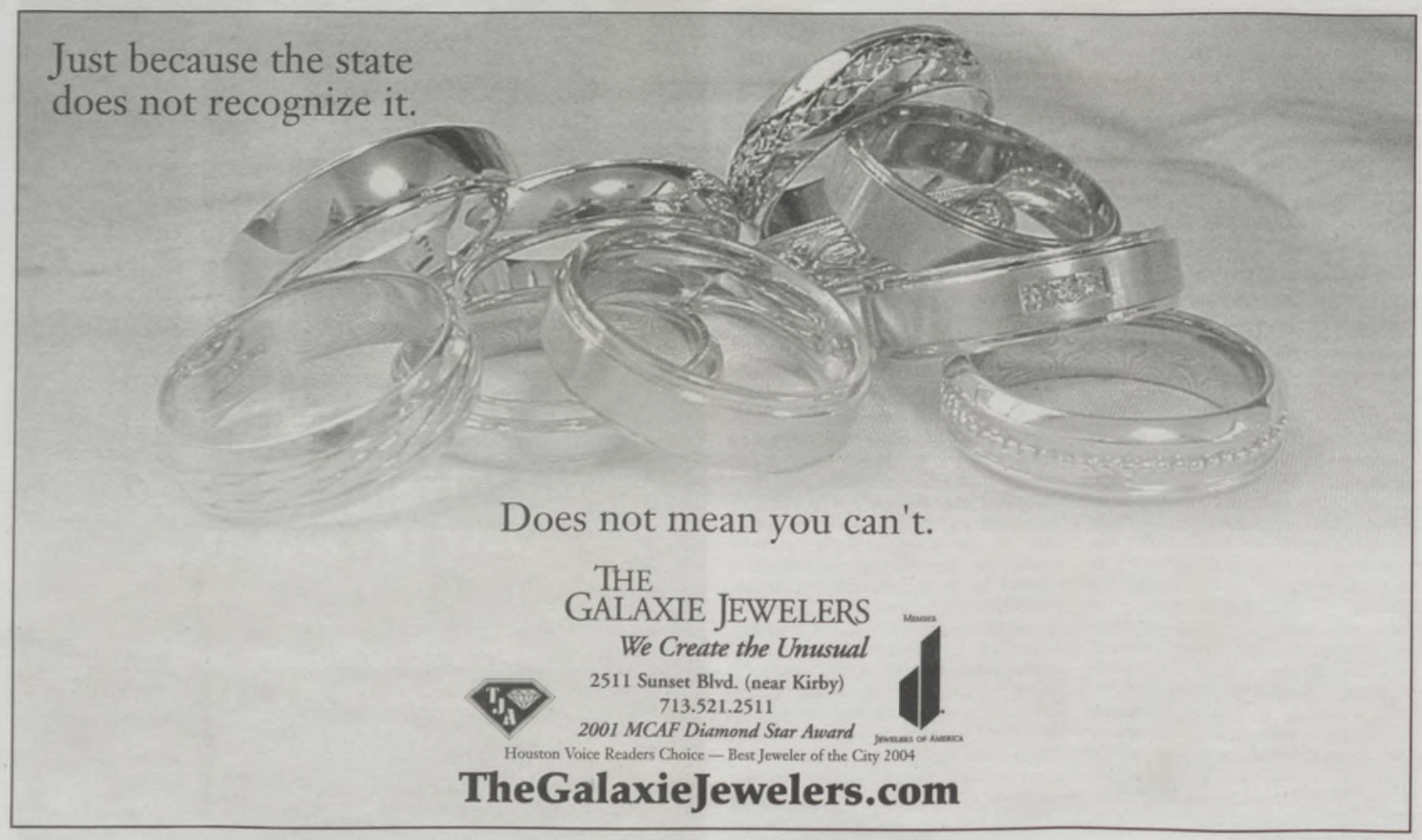
"Youth camps, vacation bible school, Sunday school, how many places do parents put their children against their will," Corman said.

Corman has worked at Love in Action for about a year and a half. He said that though the program advertises treatment for problems associated with drugs, alcohol and pornography, it is homosexuality, which the organization sees as a "deviant sexual behavior," that is the main focus.

Danny Cobsy is the only staff member listed on the Love in Action Web site who is licensed by the state of Tennessee as a counselor.

Cosby is an alcohol and drug treatment counselor and works directly with the clients at Love in Action.

A source in the State Board of Certification of Health Related Boards said that the ethical requirements for drug and alcohol counselors licensed in Tennessee forbid counselors to discriminate based on sexual orientation. The National Association for Addiction Professionals also requires that members not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.



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When June rolls around, it's all about Pat

The central figure in the logo of Pride Houston is described as definitely omnipresent and omni-sexual and so 'Pat.'

By BINNIE FISHER

Ask anyone who's associated with Pride Houston to talk about Pat, and they suddenly become animated as they gush with glowing adjectives that paint a radiant portrait of the city's most visible symbol of Pride.

A single human could scarcely possess all the luminous qualities attributed to Pat, but the androgynous figure that is the centerpiece for the city's Pride logo handles the compliments in stride.

"It's all about Pat right now," says Pride Parade Chair Lynn Sixkiller. "Pat loves the limelight."

The figure that is neither distinctly male nor female reaches to the stars with one hand, symbolizing Houston's nighttime Pride Parade, and to squiggly lines with the other hand that represent the Texas heat in late June.

In the middle of Pat's chest beats a big, red heart.

"I see Pat as just a fun-loving gal," says Yvonne Feece, who with her partner, Rebecca Mahaffey, and a committee of volunteers created the 2005 Pride logo incorporating two figures of Pat. "Everyone loves Pat."

Although Pat is definitely androgynous, most of those who know her say that the pronoun, "her," is the one to use. Among gays and lesbians, "her" and "she" are used to describe just about everyone.

The figure that has come to symbolize Pride Houston was created in 1997 by Leana Columenares to capture that year's theme of "Glowing with Pride." It was the first year of Houston's now famous nighttime Pride Parade.

Columenares said at the time that she created the figure in memory of her father, Bill Whiting, who died of AIDS in 1996.

"Pride is a strong emotion that each of us can find within our hearts, and I wanted to emphasize this in the logo," she said.

Joel Lutringer later incorporated the figure into what has become the official corporate logo of Pride Houston. The figure stands in a circle reaching toward the night sky and the Texas heat.

As for the name Pat, that's strictly unofficial. For the first few years of the figure's existence, it was referred to as, "Pride person."

Pride committee members wanted to personalize their mascot, so the call went out among them for a name. Committee member and Houston Voice Sales Manager Jason Wilson uttered the name that stuck, "Pat."

When he began searching for a name, he says, he thought of the androgynous character created on "Saturday Night Live" and later in a movie by actress Julia Sweeney.

The jingle that accompanied Pat went like:

A lot of people say, "What's that?" It's Pat!
A lot of people ask, "Who's he? Or she?"
A ma'am or a sir, accept him or her
or whatever it might be.
It's time for androgyny.
Here comes Pat!

He said it in a Pride meeting, "Pat," and the approval was unanimous.

"Nobody had ever thought about naming her before," says Sixkiller. "It was perfect."

So, Pat it was.

Since 1997, an androgynous figure known as 'Pat' has become the symbol of Pride Houston.

PAT

Born: 1997
Birthplace: Houston
Residence: Montrose
Sex: Omni-sexual
Occupation: Symbol of Pride Houston
Relationship status: Free to be
Kids: Adoption is an option
Pets: Maybe next year

Montrose is home

Where Julia Sweeney's character moved to L.A., took a bungalow and lived among straight people who are probably still trying to pinpoint Pat's sexuality, Pride Executive Director Jack Valinski says, Houston doesn't have to worry about that. Houston's Pat calls Montrose home.

"Pat is just a person who looks like either a he or a she and is all about having a good time," he says.

Pride Houston President Nick Brines says now that Pat is in her eighth year in Houston, she has effectively branded the city's Pride celebration.

"Whether she's standing 10 feet tall on a float or on a one-inch-wide lapel pin, she's everywhere," he says. "Pat's omnipresent, omni-sexual, omni-everything."

Whenever Houstonians see Pat, Brines says, "People know it's an official Pride event."

Feece says when she and the committee were creating the logo that would highlight the 2005 Pride slogan, "Equal rights! No more! No less!" Pat had to be there in a big way.

The two Pats depicted on the logo are definitely celebrating.

"We put two together," she says, "it could be two guys or two girls."

Sixkiller says the thing that makes Pat such a perfect representation of Pride is, "Pat's very diverse. She's been in many colors. She just kind of covers it all."

Feece says Pat epitomizes what Pride is all about. "She eats, sleeps and breathes Pride. She's all-inclusive. She's always trying to outreach to other groups and to everybody."

Brines says in addition to Pat's big heart, he likes the fact that, "Pat's crazy."

MORE INFO

Pride Houston
Pride Festival
2-8 p.m.
Yoakum and Westheimer

Pride Parade
8:45 p.m.
Westheimer between Woodhead and Whitney
713-529-6979
www.pridehouston.org

out in houston

(Photos by Dalton DeHart)

Houston City Controller **Annise Parker** (left) talked with Christopher Bown and Eva Thibadeau at the launch of Houston Equal Rights Alliance.

The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston performed Rodgers and Hammerstein in the group's summer concert last weekend.

Winners of the Pride 5K Run are (from left) **Tim Martinez**, **Marlon Borque**, **Carlo Deason**, **Karen Jones**, **Charley Sellers** and **Richard Peoples**.

U.S. Rep. **Sheila Jackson Lee** (D-Houston) stopped by Empower last weekend and chatted with lesbian Blockbuster executive **Eileen Terry**, the keynote speaker at the Empower Equality 101 Conference.

Clowning around at the Empower kickoff at Berryhill Baja Grill are (from left) **Rick Dickson**, Berryhill owner **Philip Wattell**, **Renault Ross** and **Patrick Cunnanan**.

Steve Day (left) and Honorary Grand Marshals **Evelyn** and **Dennis Schave** talked during the Pride Kickoff party at J.P. Morgan Chase.

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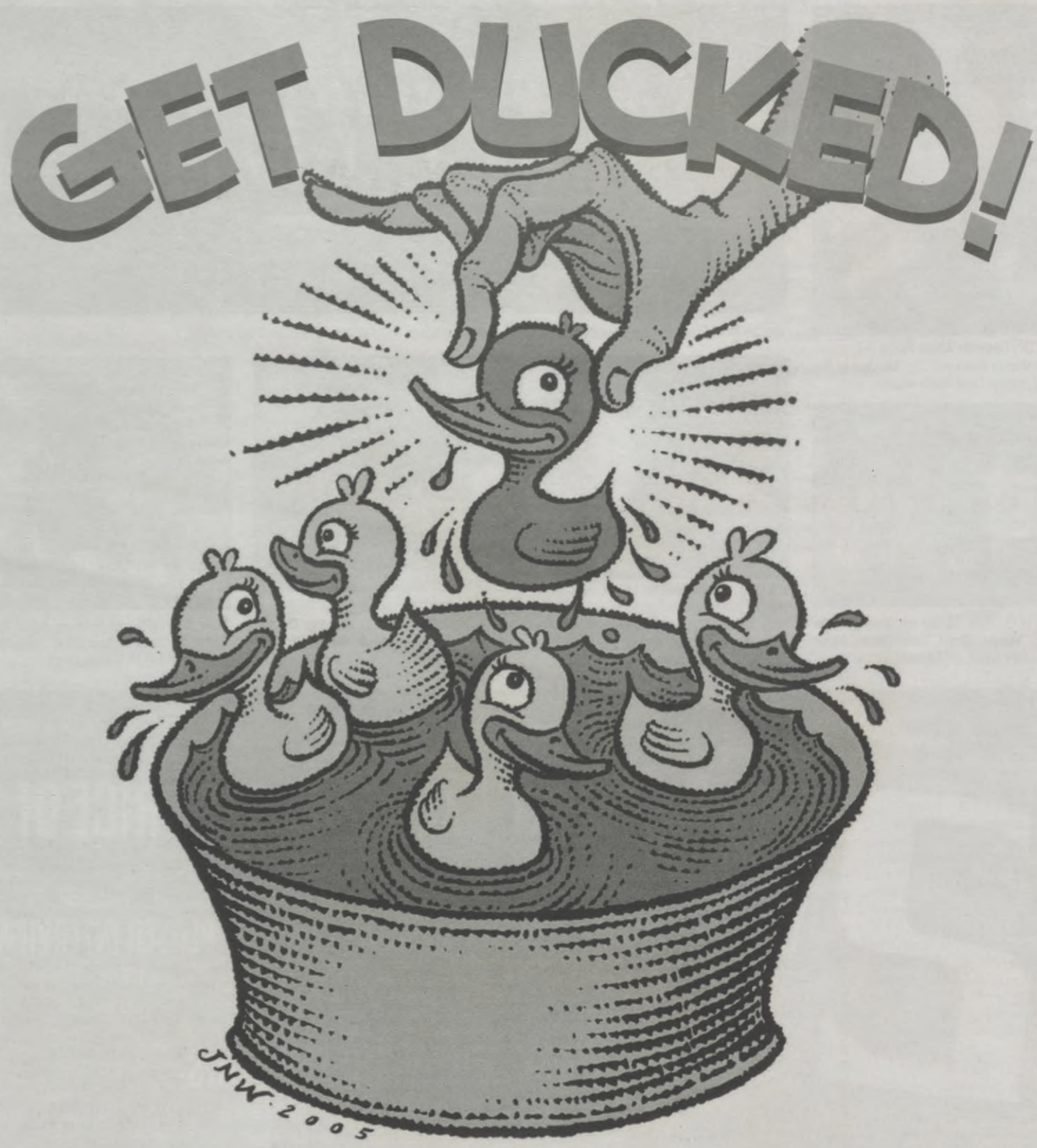

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Forum

editorial

Lock up the 'ex-gays'

Reparative rhetoric is **dangerous and flawed** and repudiated by mental health organizations, but that's not stopping the 'ex-gay' crusade.

By KEVIN NAFF

GAY ADULTS LEARN from an early age to develop a thick skin. From playground taunts to inappropriate jokes in the boardroom, many of us have endured the hurtful anti-gay prejudice of our peers for a long time and, as a result, acquired the armor and perspective necessary to protect ourselves.

I can endure hours of evangelical Christian diatribes about the evils of the "gay agenda." Or quietly suffer the barbs of pandering politicians looking to win elections on our backs. Or turn the other cheek when a gaggle of ministers calls a news conference to announce their support for a ban on gay marriage.

Even the Washington Times' practice of putting the words gay marriage in quotation marks has ceased to send my blood pressure soaring.

There remains just one assault on the dignity of gay men and lesbians that still drives me into fits of rage: the "ex-gay" movement. The quotation marks are deliberate — and appropriate, because there is no such thing as "ex-gay." There is "repress-my-inate-immutable-characteristics-and-deny-their-existence," but no such condition as "ex-gay."

The "ex-gays" usually make headlines only when their leaders are caught emerging from a gay bar at 2 a.m. But they are everywhere these days.

LAST WEEK, THE TALE OF ZACH, a 16-year-old gay Tennessee high school student who was sent to a reparative therapy camp by his impossibly naïve parents, made its way into the blogosphere. Zach's story serves as a reminder that the zany, funny film "But I'm a Cheerleader" was not entirely a work of fiction.

Last month, the "ex-gay" crowd made headlines in Maryland, where they joined a lawsuit to block implementation of an updated sex education curriculum that included discussion of homosexuality and a condom demonstration. The "ex-gays" are actually demanding that their views be included in health classes, which are ordinarily based on that quaint concept known as science.

The "ex-gays" also caused a stir in Florida this month, after commissioning billboards in Orlando that read, "Gay? Unhappy?" and included a Web site address, www.exodus.to. The site for Exodus International offers various services to those seeking escape from the "homosexual lifestyle" and testimonials from self-described "ex-gays."

In his testimonial, someone identified as Alan Chambers writes, "Disillusioned and desperate, I remember going into my parent's room nightly to see if they had been raptured, taken to heaven, without me." He recounts his addiction to anonymous gay sex and how he turned to the Bible to be saved.

The Exodus site even offers a prayer request page, complete with a drop-down box of prayer options: "for me to overcome homosexuality," "for my child," "for my spouse," "for a family member."

The "ex-gays" got some ink in last Sunday's New York Times Magazine. The cover story, about a group of Christian activists in Maryland desperate to protect the sacred institution of marriage from gays, references the "ex-gay" movement as the antidote to gay marriage.

And the "ex-gay" debate comes to the Seattle area this weekend, with two competing conferences. The first conference, sponsored by Focus on the Family, is titled "Love Won Out," and bills itself as "promoting the truth that homosexuality is preventable and treatable."

The second conference, "Love Welcomes All," is intended to counter the "ex-gay" confab and is sponsored by PFLAG and other pro-gay groups.

AT A TIME WHEN CONSERVATIVE Christians are resurrecting the debate over evolution, pesky details like science matter little to the "ex-gays."

Every reputable medical institution, including the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association and the American Medical Association, has repudiated reparative therapies as dangerous. As the Times story points out, the American Psychiatric Association actually endorsed gay marriage in the interest of promoting mental health.

In light of all the evidence that these reparative techniques are ineffective and, in fact, dangerous to the mental health of young gays, it's time for these camps to be shut down.

An enterprising gay lawyer ought to step forward and, as at least one blogger following Zach's story put it, find grounds to sue these bastards out of existence.

In an ironic twist, the ex-gay ministry at the center of Zach's story is now asking for "tolerance." The request from Love in Action, which sponsors the camp called Refuge, came during a June 16 news conference.

"This program is operated on the will of the guardian or parent. We will work with the minor children as long as they are not overtly distracting to their own program or the program of others," said John Smid, the "ex-gay" executive director of Love in Action. "If it is shown that the client is overtly treatment resistant, we will work with the parent towards alternative options for their care and overall relational health."

What "alternative options" does Smid have in mind? Electro-shock therapy? Solitary confinement?

THE DAMAGE CAUSED TO YOUNG GAYS by the views of "ex-gays" should not be underestimated. The two greatest weapons that opponents of gay rights wield against us are charges that gay men are pedophiles and that homosexuality is a choice. Overcoming those two obstacles would mean instant victory for the movement.

And the "ex-gays" are doing their best to reinforce the refuted canard that being gay is a choice; that I could just as easily choose a different pair of shoes as I could choose a different sexual orientation.

Right-handed people can't choose to be lefties, those with brown skin can't choose white and gays can't choose to be straight. Yes, it really is that simple.

Someday, science will discover the biological or genetic root of homosexuality and finally put to rest the absurd notion that sexual orientation is a choice. Until then, we must counter the damaging rhetoric of the "ex-gays" and ensure that young gays like Zach understand that they are perfectly normal as they are.

It's the "ex-gays" that belong in a reparative camp.

@ Kevin Naff is managing editor of the Washington Blade, a publication affiliated with this one and can be reached at knaff@washblade.com.

READER FEEDBACK: Send letters, comments and suggestions to **forum@houstonvoice.com**.

viewpoint RICH ARENSCHIELDT

What to do when it's time for a new ride and you've never been good with bikes, trikes and automobiles.

Before the Parade passes by

I'VE ALWAYS HAD TROUBLE WITH wheeled objects. I was a scrawny kid with ADHD before it was trendy (sometimes in math class I'd say, "Oh look...a chicken!"). My body and brain only rarely operated in synchronicity. During my prepubescent dork-dom I had a childhood hero, an amazing high school guy named Reese, the only person on the planet able to successfully teach me how to ride a bike.

In an effort to accustom me to locomotion, Dad unwisely purchased a "mini-bike" for us. My lesbian sis shares Evil Knievel's genetic code – she loved it. But I was a victim of circumstance. The helmet slipped over my eyes and I plowed into our 15-year-old-German Shepherd whose severe hip dysplasia was not substantially improved as a result.

Eventually I learned to drive, only to incinerate our Chevy Vega while traveling through a very ritzy neighborhood. As the car flamed, a Zsa Zsa Gabor clone appeared curbside and asked, "Do you think you could have this moved? I'm having a cocktail party at five."

I called my father. "Dad, the car's smoldering like Chernobyl. Can you come get me?" He asked, "Well, SON, how the hell did that happen?" Snottily I replied, "Well DAD, I purposely lit a match and threw it in the gas tank."

In the background I heard Mom screaming, "Oh my God, is he hurt? Is he burned? What? You didn't ask him if he was hurt?" Oh goodie, Dad is about to get hammered by his insurance agent and his wife. Bark, bark, I'm in the doghouse.

AUTOMOTIVE GAY LIBERATION arrived in the form of a 1980 Datsun—a crappy car that matched my first Montrose apartment perfectly. My gang of slutty, funny friends lived at the bars at a time when gays used to actually speak to each other (before the Internet). At the club we would snag guys with pinpoint accuracy "Wanna go outside?"

Upon seeing my decrepit car in the parking lot I would then witness my future ex-husbands "cute guy/crappy car" mental debate. What would he do? Usually we just sat in the car and "listened to music." This was a euphemism for "I'd like to mess around, do you think we can do this without getting arrested?"

Invariably he would light a cigarette. I hated smoke but my genitals didn't possess any taste buds, so what did I care? We would sometimes exchange numbers, but mostly it was just fluid. I've learned not to be embarrassed by this — I have a friend who let somebody "listen to music," and the guy slept in his car for three days.

The clunker's days were numbered. Driving down Pacific Street (having lost my muffler three blocks earlier) these queens yell, "Get a new car!" at me (in unison). Two weeks passed and I decided to purchase a baby grand piano instead. Seventy-two hours later the Datsun car suffered an aneurysm of imperial proportions.

Grousing to my Mom, she acidly said, "Maybe you can park your piano in the driveway and drive IT to work." This was typical — one minute she was petrified that I've been automotivlely cremated and in the next breath she said, "Your lack of forethought is entirely your own fault."

Desperate, I slunk into a Hyundai dealership and bought a car from a guy with one wandering eyeball. Willfully ignoring his peculiar ophthalmologic condition exhausted me – I wanted to leave but couldn't. I figured even a guy with a peripatetic pupil needed to earn a living.

The "Can From Korea" turned out to be worthy despite the fact that the window handle fell off every time I made a left hand turn. This was only problematic once: I was stopped by a policeman and reached under the seat to retrieve the handle. I arose looking down his revolver barrel. Who knew that when you pee yourself, the cops let you off with a warning?

EVENTUALLY I GRADUATED TO MY dream car, something that bespeaks gay respectability, safety and utter boredom — a clunky and unreliable Volvo. It's a great car but Swedish designers know nothing about air-conditioning. She had to go to the gynecologist last week as the result of a lack of blowing power (a first). When my mechanic called with that "thanks for paying for my wife's latest boob job" tone in his voice, he said, "you need a new (insert most expensive replacement part here) and it will cost you (insert MasterCard limit here)." I knew it was time for new ride.

Since some people define gay middle age as the point when you start reminiscing more about your past than anticipating events in your future, I've decided to buck the trend. Now that I know all the pitfalls of "coming out" automotively, I'm going to do it again focusing this time only on the fun parts.

Look for me, I'll be driving one of those hilarious little square cars –the ones that you expect to see a dozen clowns pop out of at any moment, a "Scion" of my former self.

@ Rich Arenschieldt is a frequent contributor to the Voice and can be reached through this publication.

THE Q

How do you continue to maintain a sense of Pride amid all the anti-gay rhetoric being voiced and the anti-gay legislation that has been passed?

You can't possibly lose your sense of Pride when you are chairing the Pride Parade — it is very empowering! But there is always work outside of Pride to be done.

LYNN SIXKILLER, 48
Houston
Accountant

Stay proud! It's my party, and if they want to join they can. Otherwise, they need to stay on their side of the line. They had just better not cross it!

JIMMY PHILLIPS, 50
Houston
Teacher/actor/director

Because I am who I am!

SHY ANNE, 38
Houston
Montrose Clinic
development associate

Change is not an option for me. I believe those with an opposite opinion are wrong and truly are in need of change. Put yourself out there, believe in yourself, and great things always happen. Happy Pride!

NICK BRINES, 34
Montrose
Fundraiser/President,
Pride Houston

We're going to have a hell of a Pride Parade.

JACK VALINSKI, 51
Houston
Minister of propaganda

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No flashbacks

Janet Jackson experienced no wardrobe malfunctions when she accepted an award from the HRC. Page 22

sex on the first or second date?

FOR MANY GAY MEN — AND *LESBIANS* — THE QUESTION IS: WHAT 2ND DATE?

By MIKE FLEMING

According to men and women in a wide range of occupations and age groups, there's decidedly more nuance to gay sex lives than television — or anti-gay pundits — would have us believe. And old stereotypes of gay men who are just out for sex and lesbians who only mate for life simply no longer apply.

In a still-evolving era of gay activism, gay men and lesbians have more freedom than ever to define their own sexual mores, but the interpretations of that freedom are as widely varied as the people who make the decisions.

"The way traditional sources of values like church and religion often devalue gay relationships and gay sexuality makes them of little use," says John Ballew, a counselor. "Instead, we tend to explore for ourselves and go with what works."

Isaac, a 30-year-old New Yorker, says traditional notions about the connections between sex, dating and morality are limiting. "Do gays ever wait to have sex? My sexual decisions have virtually nothing to do with my moral value system in terms of religion," he says. "I think straight people do themselves a disservice by attaching old-school notions of romantic love to sex. … If a long-lasting relationship develops out of the fling, so be it. If not, well, there's plenty more men to choose from."

But Ballew warns that sexual freedom comes with added responsibility, and a lack of boundaries may lead to unnecessary heartache. When people view sex as "a race to the finish line," the fun of flirting, getting to know someone and cultivating passion are often ignored, he says.

Greg Sterchi, a gay psychotherapist, agrees. "Many people assume that, if you can ensure that there is a sexual connection, you can manage other connections more easily," Sterchi says. "However, if these other connections are not built or do not naturally develop and the sexual interest fades, it's much like building your house on the sand."

First-date sex can set up misplaced expectations or blow the chance at a longer relationship, according to Ballew. It's risky because "it can lead to separating people into two camps: those you date, and those you have sex with," he says, adding that the dichotomy can lead to relationships that are committed but sexless or sexual encounters that hold less emotional satisfaction.

"If you're really interested in dating someone rather than just hooking up, there are often many important things to find out about someone beyond exploring sex with them," Ballew advises. "For most men, once they've put a guy in the category of 'trick,' he's going to have a hell of a time moving from there to the 'boyfriend' box."

(Illustration by Joey Carolino)

People cite influences on their sexual behavior from race and age to level of comfort with being gay, level of intoxication during a date, the number and type of relationship experiences and health status. Sterchi cites a fear of rejection as primal.

Some people are so invested in not being perceived as promiscuous, that they "play hard to get" in order to retain the other person's interest and bolster a fragile sense of self-acceptance. Others use their insecurities to make premature sexual commitments in an attempt to keep a person's interest, he says.

Rather than falling into black-and-white categories, no one interviewed says they follow a strictly "cautious" or overtly "cavalier" pattern of sexual conduct. For Foland, sex is not about values in the traditional moral sense, but she does "respect others' boundaries" and does not "date people in relationships."

Although waiting to have sex is "of course the ideal romantic scenario," says Hal Garstein, a 42-year-old New Yorker, "I can't think of a single relationship where this has happened."

Chris, 37, in Houston, says sex and dating are not necessarily intertwined. "If [a guy] is attractive, but not what I'm looking for to date, then I'll have sex with him if it comes to that," Chris says. "It takes me an hour or so with someone to tell if we are dating material, but like I said, you can always sleep together."

AT FIRST GLANCE, IT MAY APPEAR THAT A popular stereotype is true: approaches to sex are based on gender. But Bootsie, a lesbian in Houston, admits she "rarely waits" to have sex. "Emotional attachment is nice," she says. "When you find that person, step on the gas. Otherwise, if there is a sexual attraction and they are a nice gal, I am ready to roll."

Sterchi says just as many lesbians rush the process as gay men because being gay still isn't fully accepted in society, and they seek a connection through relationships.

Much more than gender, age appears to be one of the biggest determining factors for people who wait to have sex. Several women say that they leaned more toward sex for its own sake when they were younger, and just as many men say they become choosier as the years go by.

"I think as I get older, the wisdom kicks in," says Chris from Houston. "I would say I am more selective, have more self worth, and I am not jumping from bed to bed like in the past."

Garstein reached "a point where I felt that I could make my own decisions about who I had sex with and when, as opposed to trying to validate myself through others."

But Isaac became "more open" about sex with age. "I'm no longer one to beat myself up if too much happens too early in the game," he says. "I also don't take it as personally when a potential partner turns out to be a loser."

Life experiences also affect decisions about sex. Bootsie in Houston was diagnosed with Stage Four cancer four years ago, and now she gives more consideration to how potential partners might react to that knowledge, she says.

Similarly, men with HIV face special challenges, according to mental health professionals. "I never used to give sex a second thought," says David, 37, in Atlanta. "Now that I have HIV, I only have sex after really getting to know someone and feel comfortable talking to him about it. I admit, I sometimes completely avoid dating just so the subject doesn't come up."

People also differ on how far they let intimacy progress, differentiating between various sex acts based on the level of each relationship. "I don't like to go 'all the way' — to the point of penetration — until a few dates in," says Isaac from New York. "I'm not saying it's wrong to do that on the first date, but personally it feels too intimate too fast."

Sexual freedom with no rules ultimately leaves gay people with the right to choose a sex life that makes them feel comfortable, and men as well as women say it's an important extension of their personalities.

'TO WONG FU': Houston's Jill Jordan plays in her own real-life version of the classic drag queen movie. **Page 17**

BIRDS OF A FEATHER: A new book chronicles the true story of two gay penguins in New York City. **Page 19**

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cabaret BINNIE FISHER

Houston's Jill Jordan is paraphrasing the title of a famous drag movie: 'To Wong Fu, Thanks for everything, Jill Jordan.'

Luck, be a lady

HOUSTON FEMALE IMPERSONATOR Jill Jordan says she's tired of lamenting the demise of drag in the city where she has resided for 32 years. She's going where the art of drag is alive, appreciated and where donning women's clothes and singing your heart out pays.

"I'm moving to Vegas," says Jordan, 56.

Not only that, she's taking her hairdresser and make-up artist, Leon Schwartz, with her.

"Leon's got a Chevy Trailblazer with a tow package," Jordan says. "We're renting a trailer. Honey, it's gonna to be just like "To Wong Fu," only we're not going in drag."

In the movie, "To Wong Fu, Thanks for everything, Julie Newmar," three drag queens head out from New York to Hollywood in a convertible to participate in a female impersonator contest overseen by Julie Newmar.

Jordan credits Vegas drag diva Roxie Starr, the former Jimmy Emerson of Beaumont, with casting out the lure.

"Roxie and I have been good friends for probably 25 years," Jordan says.

Starr tells Jordan that jobs abound in Las Vegas, from the casinos to the drag stage.

"Roxie said if I was there for two days without a job that she'd be stunned," says Jordan. "She's already got six heads of hair lined up for Leon to do."

Jordan said she already has two job possibilities, one performing in an established drag show, the other in a new club that is opening about the time she and Schwartz arrive.

"They're looking for an older drag queen who does nothing but the classic drag numbers and who can run the dancers," she says, adding that the description sounds an awful lot like Jill Jordan.

Over the last three decades, Jordan says, it's been difficult to watch the decline of drag in Houston. It's how she once made her living, but in recent years, it's turned into a meager subsistence.

"I've been trying to piece together a life from a little bit of dancers and a little bit of drag and a little bit of home health care," Jordan says. "It's hard to do. Nowadays, you don't get paid a fourth of what you should (for drag)."

In Vegas, if she lands the job as resident drag queen at the new club, Jordan says, "I'd sort of be a big fish in a small pond. The money, I know, is fabulous."

Houston drag queen **Jill Jordan** will try her luck in Las Vegas.

If she doesn't land a permanent drag gig, Jordan says, there are always casino jobs in the city that rarely sleeps.

"It's such a pretty place and with so much going on," she says. "You're never going to get bored."

Roxie Starr has thrown out an incentive. She's offered Jordan and Schwartz her rental apartment for free for a month. She giving them a sweet deal thereafter.

"Everything seems to be just falling into place," Jordan said. "It seems like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. My friends tell me that if I don't take it, I'll kick myself one day."

Houston gets one last opportunity to see Jill Jordan perform at 9 p.m. Wednesday at E.J.'s, 2517 Ralph.

"We're pulling out on July 1," says Jordan. "We'll be in Vegas in time for the Fourth of July."

Television commercials for Las Vegas promise, "What happens here stays here," but Jordan says that promise was made before Vegas knew she was coming.

"I may just get on the phone and tell everybody," she says.

MORE INFO

Jill Jordan Farewell Show
9 p.m. Wednesday
E.J.'s
2517 Ralph

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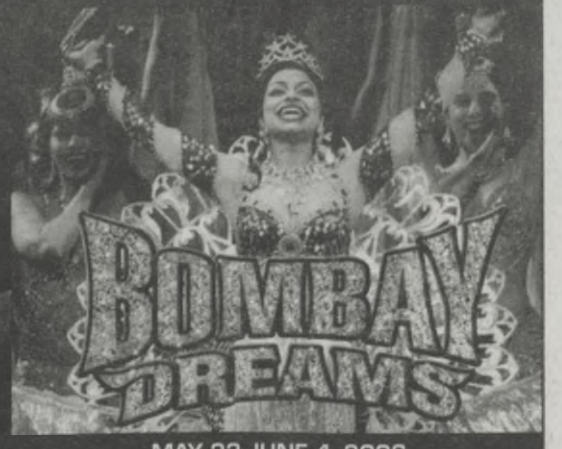

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books JOHNNY HOOKS

A new book follows the true story of a pair of gay penguins and their daughter at the New York Zoo.

'Tango makes three'

WHO DOESN'T LIKE PENGUINS? THE dapper flightless birds are revered by young and old. Flipping on Entertainment Tonight recently, you may have caught an entire segment on the Warner Independent documentary called "March of the Penguins," complete with waddling Emperor Penguins walking the red carpet.

Wide-eyed children proclaim to the camera lenses "We love them, everybody does right?" and "I just love their suits!" and "I wanna be a penguin!"

The scene changes to an average day on AM radio in Houston. Up and down the dial commentators proclaim the truth as they see it. Gays and lesbians are often vilified, attacked and eventually taunted with the question "If homosexuality is so normal, why don't we see it in the animal kingdom?"

The simple answer is we do. Look at Roy and Silo, two real penguins who live in the Central Park Zoo. The story of Roy and Silo is now available in a charming book called "And Tango makes Three."

Illustrated by Henry Cole, and written by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell, the tale of Roy and Silo should bring a tear to the most jaded eye..

Their story became public when The New York Times outed the penguin pair in a February 2004 article called, "Love That Dare Not Squawk Its Name."

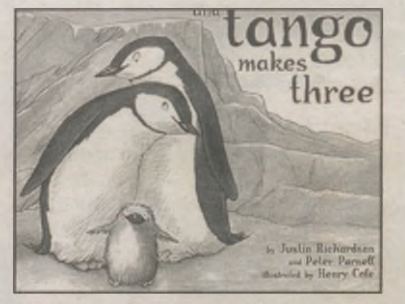
In the article, Dinitia Smith recounted how for more than six years, Roy and Silo have exhibited what in penguin parlance is called "ecstatic behavior." They entwine their necks, they vocalize to each other, they have sex.

WHEN OFFERED FEMALE companionship, both adamantly refused. And female penguins showed little interest in them as well. They are "to anthropomorphize a bit" gay penguins.

Roy and Silo were so committed to each other that they attempted to incubate egg shaped rocks on several occasions in their flawless nest.

Central park Zoo's Rob Gramzay took note of their attempts and in 2000 finally gave the pair a fertilized egg from a female "donor."

That egg was cared for and eventually produced the baby, Tango, who was raised like any other penguin.



'And Tango Makes Three' chronicles the love life of gay penguins and their adopted daughter.

Following along with Roy and Silo, readers can't help but cheer the two on.

On a recent jaunt to the Aquarium of the America's in New Orleans, this reviewer brought along a copy of the book, "And Tango Makes Three."

After the zoologists had finished feeding the in-house penguins, he was asked about the tale of Roy and Silo. While he had no direct knowledge of the duo, he said "Well, there have been over 450 different documented examples of same-sex coupling in the wild.

Have you heard about those lesbian seagulls? Talk about commitment! Most people would be surprised to find committed same-sex animal couples."

The open discussion of homosexual behavior in animals is relatively new. Frans de Waal, whose 1997 book, "Bonobo: The Forgotten Ape" saw an onslaught of differing opinions on animal sexuality. Bonobos apes closely related to humans, are wildly energetic sexually. Nearly all are bisexual and nearly half engage in same-sex activity.

However Paul L. Vasey, a professor of psychology and neuroscience at University of Lethbridge in Canada, warns about drawing such conclusions. "For some people, what animals do is a yardstick of what is and isn't natural. They make a leap from saying if it's natural, it's morally and ethically desirable."

According to the authors note at the end, "If you go to the Central Park Zoo, you can see Tango and her parents splashing about in the penguin house along with their friends...There are forty-two chinstrap penguins in the Central Park Zoo, and over ten million chinstraps in the world. But there is only one Tango."

Maurice Sendak of "Where the Wild Things Are" said this of "Tango": "A touching and delightful variation on a major theme." Harvey Fierstein said, "This wonderful story of devotion is heartwarming proof that Mother Nature knows best!"

MORE INFO

'And Tango Makes Three'
Simon & Schuster Books for Young readers 4 - 8
Simon & Schuster New York
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www.SimonSaysKids.com

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nitelife JOHNNY HOOKS

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Happy Pride, Houston

WELL DEAR ONES IT IS FINALLY HERE. **Pride 2005!** This weekend is full of events so get up, get out and show your pride.

FIRST UP SOME INFO ON THAT amazing chandelier that hangs at the corner of Montrose and Westheimer during the parade. **Gary Archer**, former longtime Rich's light wizard, sent me this tidbit so a big thanks to him.

THIS YEAR THE PEOPLE AT **Fashionable Events** were inspired to decorate the chandelier with something we all have in common regardless our age or generation: the mirror ball. You'll see sixteen, 20-inch globes with beaded curtains dripping down each of the 16 arms and some Mylar firecrackers to give it even more pizzazz. The weight of the piece is 1,000 pounds and was originally designed for and hung in the State Capital of Texas for the Sesquicentennial.

TO KICK OFF YOUR WEEKEND **Resurrection MCC** presents **Casino Night** celebrating **Rev. Carolyn Mobley's** 15 Years in Ministry!

Friday, **Brookhollow Sheraton**, 3000 North Loop West.

Tickets are $50 per person and admission includes hors d'oeuvres, dessert & $500 in casino chips redeemable for prizes! There will also be a cash bar and silent auction. For tickets call 713-861-9149.

FOR A GOOD CAUSE. **BAILE Internacional** will be held on Friday from 8 p.m. till 1 a.m. at the Communication Workers of America Hall #62222, 1730 Jefferson. Music by Houston's Mixx Master, The Awesome DJ and the event benefits **AVES, GLBT Chamber Development Fund** and **GLOBO Education Scholarships**. $25 general admission, $30 at the door. Contact Joe Reyes at 832-754-5569 for tickets and info.

NOT TO BE OUTDONE, **TWISTED Mister Promotions** presents "**Latin Pride Hot & Free**" with **Jade Esteban Estrada** Friday at **Club 1415**, 1415 California St. with **D.J. Scot Free**. Doors open at 9 p.m. Tickets are $18 advance or $22 at the door and are now on sale at **Montrose Diner**, **Buyers Club**, through the **www.PrideHouston.org website** or on the day of the event at 1415. Ages 18+.

ONE MORE FRIDAY EVENT FOR YOU to consider. "**Club Papi: the Pride Edition**" is the **official** pre-parade party at **Rich's Houston**, 2401 San Jacinto from 9 p.m. til 4 a.m. Tickets are $10 advance or $15 door

See the **Latinboyz.com/Papi dancers** and groove to the energetic Latin sounds of **DJs Mike** (LA) and **Alex T.** (Houston). www.Richs-Houston.com or 713-759-9606

OF COURSE SATURDAY SEES THE **Pride Fest** at Yoakum and Westheimer starting at 2 p.m. The Festival features two stages of fabulous entertainment all day. The **Pride Parade** is at **8:45 p.m.** on Westheimer between Woodhead and Whitney.

AFTER THE PARADE YOUR OPTIONS are wide open. Stay with the masses and head over to **Pacific Street** where all the bars will be celebrating. The **Montrose Mining Company** will be turning 27, so if you can make it inside, give a birthday yell. **SOBE** presents DJ/Producer **DeMarko**, with resident **DJ Jimmy Skinner** opening. www.southbeachthenightclub.com for all the details.

THE OFFICIAL POST PARADE PARTY starring **Kim English** (making her Houston debut) is at **Rich's Houston**, 2401 San Jacinto from 9 p.m. until 4 a.m. XM Satellite **DJ Mark D** provides the tunes to groove you through the night. Tickets are $15 advance or $20 at the door., www.Richs-Houston.com or 713-759-9606. 21 and up only please.

THEN STAY UP FOR "**HONEYMOON: The Official Pride After Party**"presented by the **Spoiled Boyz**. Sunday, June 26, 3:30 until 10 a.m. at **Opus, 412 Main**. Dance to the sounds of **DJ Mark MacEwan** (Atlanta) and a performance by dance music icon **G'licious G**! See the Spoiled Boyz website www.spoiledboyz.net. for more.

FINALLY AS SUNDAY DAWNS, GET some food in you so you will make it through the night! **The After-After Hours Brunch** begins Sunday at 5 a.m. at **Berryhill Montrose**, 3407 Montrose at Hawthorne.

AFTER AN AFTERNOON NAP, MAKE sure you head back over to Rich's for "**A Night in Oz**" Tea Dance, the **Official Closing Party of Pride!**

Sunday at 5:30 p.m. $10 gets you in the Wizard of Oz themed event presented by **Houston Stonewall Democrats**. Not feeling like Dorothy? Bring your swimsuit and towel for the debut of Rich's new pool!

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

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Awards & monuments

Janet's new trophy, Toronto sports Wood, and porn gets 'Dangerous'

Janet Jackson didn't suffer any malfunctions when accepting an award for her AIDS fund-raising efforts from the Human Rights Campaign last week. (Photo by Mark J. Terrill/AP)

Less than a week after **MICHAEL JACKSON** was acquitted on child molestation charges in a California court, his sister, gay icon **JANET JACKSON**, was accepting a much less dubious honor in the same state.

The Human Rights Campaign gave Miss Jackson-If-You're-Nasty its Humanitarian Award for her fund-raising efforts and large contributions to HIV/AIDS organizations over the past several years.

"My family and I have just gone through the least humorous chapter of our lives," she said after being introduced by gay actor **ALAN CUMMING** at Los Angeles' Beverly Hilton Hotel. "I'm going to leave the jokes to the late-night [comics], if that's OK."

Jackson was as sincere in her attitude as she was fierce in her black-and-white attire.

"Thank you so much," she said. "I'm so grateful for this honor. I couldn't be happier standing before each and every one of you. I feel a deep and abiding kinship with your cause. It feels absolutely wonderful to be recognized by people who aim to spread love."

She also had a message for making this a better (rhythm) nation.

"Acceptance is right. Kindness is right. Love is right," she said. "I pray, right now, that we're moving into a kinder time when prejudice is overcome by understanding; when narrow-mindedness, and narrow-minded bigotry is overwhelmed by open-hearted empathy; when the pain of judgementailsm is replaced by the purity of love."

Toronto's wood-y

The latest erection in Toronto's gay neighborhood is drawing ire from conservative critics.

At the end of May, the city of Toronto and the Church-Wellesley Village Business Improvement Area unveiled a $160,000, 13-foot granite and bronze statue of Alexander Wood, a 19th century gay hero who had originally owned the land where the city's gay neighborhood now stands.

Alexander Wood

According to history, Wood, a local magistrate, was called in 1810 when a woman accused a man of rape. The victim said she scratched the perpetrator's genitals. So, like any good private dick, Wood lined up all the suspects, told them to drop their pants, and inspected their parts to find the scratch.

After doing so, the locals branded him a "molly," a derogative term for gay men, and drove him out of town. They later called the area of land he owned "Molly Wood's Bush."

The statue, by sculptor Del Newbigging, shows a dapper-looking Wood, but the statue's base includes a bronze bas-relief of Wood kneeling in front of a bare-assed man "investigating" him. According to Reuters, some critics think the image is inappropriate.

Many have defended the statue and have even made the offensive part more noticeable. The perpetrator's behind in the bas-relief is now shiny, since many in the gay-borhood have taken to rubbing the bum's bum for good luck.

First knight

Dish has a new crush, but, as usual, it's on someone unattainable.

This time it's porn hottie **WILFRIED KNIGHT**, one of the stars of porn impresario "**MICHAEL LUCAS**' Dangerous Liaisons."

Wilfried Knight

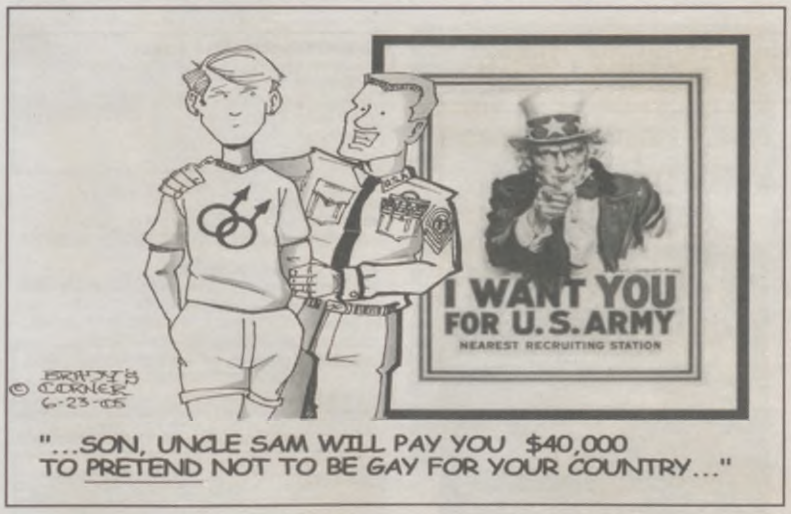
Released last week, the huge-budget, 160-minute film is a retelling of the 1782 novel "Les Liaisons Dangereauses" (which became the 1988 movie "Dangerous Liaisons") set in the modern New York fashion world.

If it wasn't enough to have stars like Knight, Lucas, **GUS MATTOX**, **KENT LARSON** and former D.C. resident **OWEN HAWK**, the film also sports cameos by drag queens **RuPAUL**, **AMANDA LEPORE** and **LADY BUNNY**.

If you shell out the $59.95 to buy the film in a video store near you, you'll only get the movie. However, you can save $10 and get the special two-disc DVD set at www.lucasentertainment.com.

Send comments, suggestions to Dish@houstonvoice.com

brady's corner



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GROUPS

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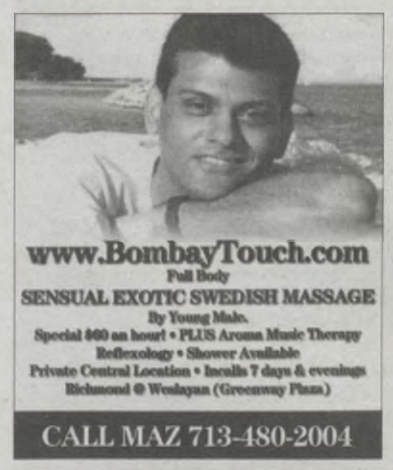

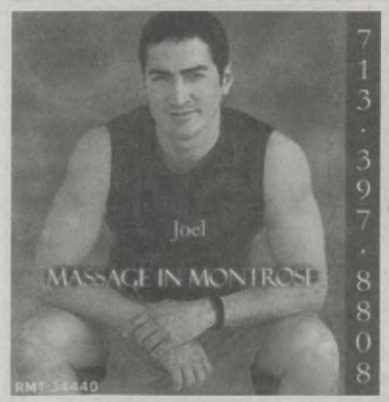

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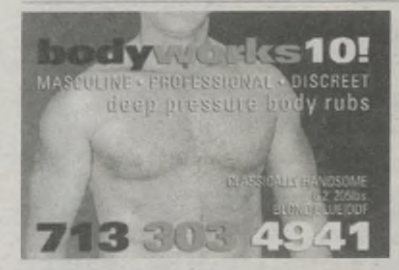

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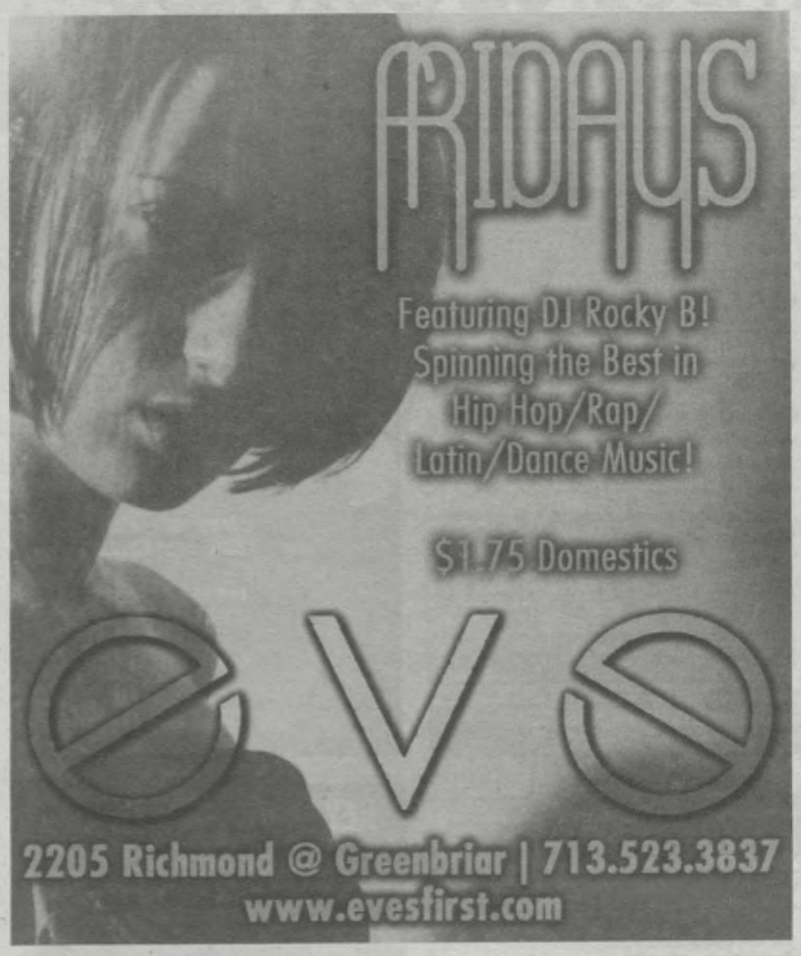

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Why aren't more gay couples holding hands while walking in public?

FAT IS RELATIVE. BUT A FLAT BONEY ass is a flat boney ass, no matter what size you are.

ANY HETERO WHO WORKS AT A GAY joint but goes around saying being gay is wrong has a screw loose. So it's wrong to be gay but not wrong for you to make a living off of it?

YOU SAID, "LIGHTS OUT." I SAID, "Hot damn!" Next time, make sure you grab the lube and not the self-tanning products. Try covering that mess up!

PERSONAL AD SPACE IS LIMITED, but when I see "drug/disease free" slapped together, I feel like I'm being pegged as a meth disease-spreader just because I'm poz. In reality, I have a more health-conscious lifestyle than most of you negative guys.

WHAT KIND OF FRIENDS ARE YOU WHO watched and whispered as I dated a man you knew was psychotic and dangerous? Why did I have to find out several months later when he had a psychotic episode? A true friend would have warned me.

WHAT IS THE WORLD COMING TO, children? Sometimes I feel like an elephant tap dancing in a rainforest. Hey, let's have an "Anti-Bitch-Session" column. We'll call it "Good Snaps"!
BITCH BOY RESPONDS:
Congratulations, you're the runner-up for this week's Kumbayah award!

TO THE HETERO FEMALE wondering what's happened to all the straight men: Honey, it's not what the gay men are doing, it's what the straight women aren't.

HOW COME PEOPLE WITH AIDS GET first chance at all the housing? What happened to be healthy, be wise, keep your legs closed and stay safe?

WE WANT MARRIAGE AND EQUAL rights and yet we dump our partners when the next good thing comes along. What's wrong with that picture?

TO THOSE WHO SAY "PRETTY BOYS" need to look at personalities first: The truth is all guys are primarily driven by testosterone. Don't be bitter. Start trolling in your own league so your feelings don't get hurt!

WHO SAYS "ETHNIC MEN" CAN'T BE white? Ethnicity is not about a specific race. Check the dictionary.

HOW CAN A NICE NORMAL GIRL MEET another nice normal girl when lesbians never approach other lesbians in bars. Isn't that supposed to be part of why we go to these places?

I LOVE GOTH BOYS AND BLACK MEN. As a 43-year-old white man, does that make me weird?
BITCH BOY RESPONDS: Yes.

TO ALL GAY PEOPLE EVERYWHERE: I love all of you and everything you are! Thanks for loving and living and giving and taking and bitching and many other "ings."
BITCH BOY RESPONDS:
Congratulations, you are the winner of this week's Kumbayah award! Call this publication to collect your prize: a year-long subscription to Oprah's magazine!

WHY AM I SUPPOSED TO RESPECT Islam? Could you imagine a religion completely dominated by gay men who keep straight men in beekeeper suits? And if you get caught having hetero sex, they'd push a brick wall on you.

CAN I WATCH ONE MOVIE WITH A gay couple without at least one straight bitch in the audience going, "Eeeeewwww!"? Gay couples in the movies typically aren't even touching each other and yet they still find our mere existence disgusting.

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE PROBLEMS in your bars, come to Louisville, Kentucky, where all you see is mullets, no teeth and tats. And that's just the dykes!

I NEED TO STOP COMPLAINING THAT I don't have gay friends. I play Dungeons & Dragons, watch Anime, and enjoy Magic: The Gathering. How many gay friends would you have if you had those interests?

LET ME GET THIS CLEAR: IF MY dildo is the same color as my skin, I'm a racist and if my dildo is another color, I'm self-hating?

THEY NEED TO PASS A LAW OUTLAWING Speedos for obese men. They don't allow dogs on the beach to keep it clean, so why do they allow it to be polluted visually with such obscenity?

IF CATHOLICS ARE SO AGAINST Satan, why did they elect him as pope?

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?
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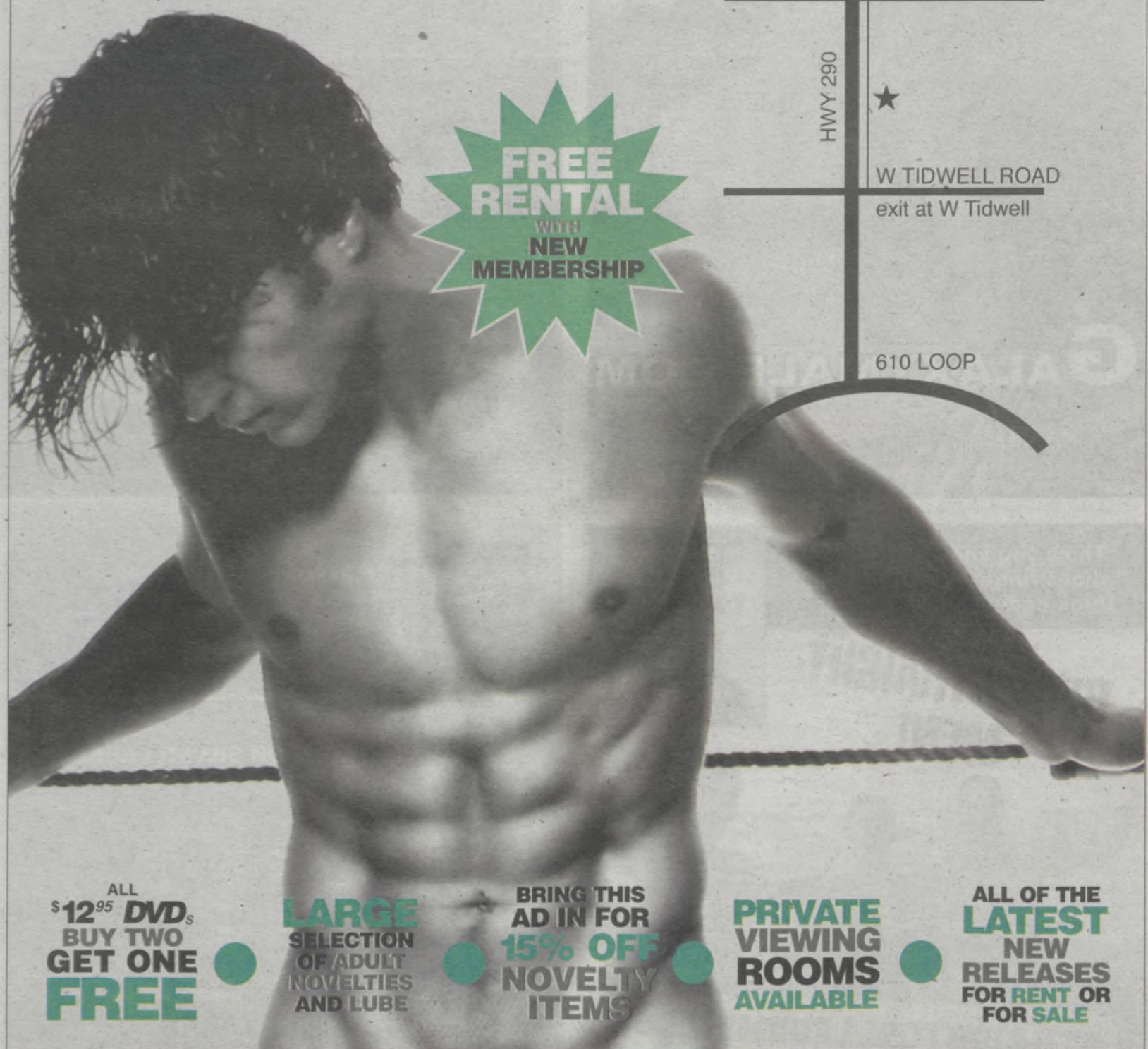

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Festival's back, with **Sophie B. Hawkins**, **Pansy Division**, **Jade Esteban Estrada** and **Rachel Sage** . **Page 3**

Grand Marshals reign Saturday night as the Parade rolls along Westheimer. **Page 5**

Which bar is for you? It depends on the car you drive, your cell tone and your favorite diva. **Page 9**

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Festival entertainers wax philosophical on Pride

By JOHNNY HOOKS

The Houston Pride Parade garnered national attention several years ago when it became the first nighttime gay pride parade in the United States.

In keeping with the searing political climate in Texas, the 2005 Pride Festival is making a bold statement by bringing in headliners Sophie B. Hawkins, queer punk pioneers Pansy Division, Latin pop star Jade Esteban Estrada and cupie doll crooner Rachael Sage among others.

"We searched the GLBT music universe for artists who are known for their energetic live performances," Festival Co-Chair Matthew Stone said.

The Houston Voice spoke with the headliners about what pride means to them and what to expect from their shows.

Sophie B. Hawkins

Sophie B. Hawkins

Sophie B. Hawkins is a familiar name to gay and straight music fans. In 1992, she burst onto the scene with her mega-hit, "Damn! I Wish I Was Your Lover," a song where she openly sang, "I lay by the ocean making love to her with visions clear."

Interestingly, nothing was made of the line and Hawkins went on to have several top-five singles on the Billboard charts.

After a falling out with Sony, her record label, Hawkins founded her own record company, Trumpet Swan, so named because "I was on a photo shoot at a lake and heard this incredible sound. It was a trumpet swan singing, and I knew I had my label name right there." Her latest CD "Wilderness" is out now.

Recently Hawkins appeared on the hit NBC summer series "Hit Me Baby One More Time" singing "Damn" and glamming it up for the her second song, a re-imagination of the song "100 Days" by Shades Apart.

Hawkins describes herself as part of the gay and lesbian family, but uses the word "omnisexual." Asked to define it, Hawkins said, "I was the first person to use that phrase, I invented it for lack of a better word. It just means that when I am attracted to someone it is more about them as a person, about their soul and their inner beauty, not what physical equipment they have."

Hawkins, still the pioneer, loves playing Pride festivals across the country and is excited about Houston. "The Houston market really broke the single "Damn," so I will always have a special place in my heart for Houston."

She's philosophical about Pride. "So many people sacrificed so much so that we can go out and have Pride fests and parades, and I love honoring those people. And when someone comes up to me and says 'Thank you Sophie, because of your song, or because of you I was able to be the person I am today,' I consider that the ultimate compliment."

Pansy Divison

Pansy Division released the group's first two singles, "Bill & Ted's Homosexual Adventure," in 1993 and "Fem In A Black Leather Jacket/Homo Christmas/Smells Like Queer Spirit," in 1992. The band has always been out and proud.

Founding member Jon Ginoli recalled, "You sing about what you know, about the experiences that happen day to day. If you attempt to write a song that you think is going to be a hit, that's when you lose perspective."

Asked if he is disappointed that Pansy Division never achieved the kind of runaway success that other bands from the 1990's "grunge scene" had, he laughed and said, "Well, we're still waiting. No, actually the band and I couldn't be happier with the success we have achieved."

Ginoli said success is measured in many ways. "We have done it our way and have a tremendously loyal fan base to show for it," he said. "We've talked about it and really think that our last album "Total Entertainment" will probably be our last studio album."

The group will decide whether or not to do occasional live performances here and there, "Depending on who asks, but as all of our lives have changed, like the world, we think now is the time to let others carry on what we started."

Ginoli said Pansy Division has always enjoyed playing in Houston, usually to packed houses in the Heights at Fitzgeralds.

"We love Houston," he said. "Your city has always been there for us, and with the way your Governor Perry has been acting, not to mention that fine former Governor Bush you sent the country, its important we come and take a stand with you at your Pride Festival."

Jade Esteban Estrada

Jade Esteban Estrada

Jade Esteban Estrada is a true renaissance performer. In his one-man show, "ICONS: The Lesbian and Gay History of the World, Vol. 1," he performs as the characters of Sappho, Michelangelo, Oscar Wilde, Gertrude Stein, Sylvia Rivera and Ellen DeGeneres among others.

He is also a talented singer and comedian. "Well back in the day, a performer had to be able to act, sing dance and tell a few jokes between sets."

Asked what he'd pick if he had to choose only one medium for his artistic talents he purses his lips together and thinks aloud, "Hmmm. I hate this question. People that are creative have no choice. It's like breathing to us. I guess I would say I would choose singing, as I can't imagine not being able to tell my stories through song. But if you had asked me a few years ago I would have said dance, so if you ask me again at another time, expect another answer maybe!"

The Estrella award-winning singer was born and raised in San Antonio. The son of a U.S. Army officer and a stage actress, Estrada won a scholarship to the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York. Estrada studied dance (alongside Jennifer Lopez) with Slam, the lead dancer from Madonna's Blonde Ambition Tour among other notable teachers.

Genre Magazine calls him "the most exciting Latin pop artist ever to emerge onto the music scene." He has performed in seven languages and in 33 countries, and his music can be heard on the Golden Globe and Emmy award-winning police drama "The Shield" on FX. He has also been seen on the "Graham Norton Effect" on Comedy Central.

Estrada is currently working on the third and final installment of his "Icons" trilogy that will premiere at the Columbus National Gay and Lesbian Theatre Festival in 2006. Estrada said, "Many people think gays and lesbians only came about in the 1960s or '70s and that is so not true.

It's important to know where we came from so we can see where we are going."

Rachel Sage

Rachael Sage may not be a household name yet, but with six albums under her belt, she is certainly working on it.

While growing up, the former Lilith Fair Talent Search winner attended The School of American Ballet, performing in such classics as "The Nutcracker" and "Coppélia."

But it was the music she heard in class that held her attention more than the steps, and by the age of five she had taught herself to play piano. She remembered pounding out the tunes of a renegade accompanist who played Beatles songs with classical arrangements,"Until they kicked me out of the building."

Her early admiration for classical composers shifted toward confessional lyricists with her discovery of Laura Nyro, Elvis Costello and Patti Smith.

Sage has a wonderful memory of meeting artist and activist Keith Haring when she was about 13.

"Keith came backstage after and brought posters of his version of the American flag, and signed them for us," she said. "We didn't really know who he was then. And it just struck me that he was starting with these kids, a new generation that was trying to come into their own, and make their own opinions and not just what the parents had instilled in them."

Rachel Sage

It was an early lesson in what Pride really means. "It means celebrating freedom, the existing ones we have and the projected future ones we are going to achieve."

MORE INFO

Bud Light Stage
Pride Day Lineup

2:15 Gurlfriendz

presented by Montrose Diner

3:10 Rachael Sage

4:05 Jade Esteban Estrada

presented by Twisted Mister

4:55 Sarah Pinsker

& The Stalking Horses

5:55 Pansy Division

7:00 Sophie B. Hawkins, introduced by special guests, Roula & Ryan of Mix 96.5

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Grand Marshals are doers of good deeds

By DAWN RORIE

Each year, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Houstonians come together to choose Grand Marshals for the city's annual Pride Parade. Among the nominees are individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions.

From dressing up and going all out for charity fundraising, to healing the emotional wounds of sexual minority teenagers and the spiritual wounds of those turned away from their churches, the 2005 Pride Parade Grand Marshals have devoted their lives to assisting those in need.

Deb Murphy and **Weldon Hickey** are the 2005 female and male Pride Grand Marshals.

Members of the Bayou City Boys Club posed for a photo after the group was named organizational Grand Marshal for the 2005 Pride Parade.

FEMALE GRAND MARSHAL

Deb Murphy of H.A.T.C.H.

For thirteen years, Deb Murphy has been actively working with various gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender groups. Her reason for getting involved is direct and no nonsense. "You can bitch or you can change it—you pick," she says.

Opting to be part of the change, Murphy has volunteered with Gay and Lesbian Switchboard Houston and the Houston GLBT Community Center, where she also served on the Board of Directors.

Murphy is currently the Youth Service Worker with H.A.T.C.H., a project of the Montrose Counseling Center. Through H.A.T.C.H., Murphy works to "end the isolation" of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youths, as well as those who are questioning their sexuality and "help them find their authentic selves."

Taking her message of acceptance where it is most needed, Murphy has started a "H.A.T.C.H. in the Schools" program. Murphy is also supervising the Methamphetamine Addiction Prevention Project (MAPP), a street outreach program seeking to educate young adults about the dangers of methamphetamines.

Murphy says she is honored to be chosen as this year's Female Grand Marshal. "I really didn't think I was going to be elected, considering some of the other people on the ballot," she says. "I was just thrilled to be nominated."

MALE GRAND MARSHAL

Weldon Hickey of Miss Camp and Krewe of Olympus

Weldon Hickey claims that he works behind the scenes of most of the organizations with which he is involved, but anyone who saw him strutting his stuff as Sally Jesse Helms Leiberman Gore (Miss Hawaii) in the 2004 Miss Camp America Show would argue otherwise.

He became involved with Miss Camp America after he and his partner of twenty-eight years moved to Houston in 1991. The foundation, which started out as a spoof of the Miss America Pageant, is now a major production which raises money for a variety of non-profit organizations serving gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons.

Hickey is a volunteer and former president of the Krewe of Olympus, a group that presents Mardi Gras-themed theatrical events to raise money for community organizations. To Hickey, the Krewe feels more like a family than an organization.

"A lot of the younger ones there call me 'Mom,' because I am the mother hen," he says. Because of his partner's love of cars, the two are involved with the Classic Chassis Car Club, a predominantly gay and lesbian group of classic car enthusiasts.

"It was a very big honor to be nominated (as Grand Marshal) to start with. To actually win the title—I was floored. I was up against some very stiff competition," Hickey says.

HONORARY GRAND MARSHAL

Dennis and Evelyn Schave

For fifteen years, Dennis and Evelyn Schave have been providing spiritual support to gays, lesbians, bisexual and transgender persons. The Shaves' support of sexual minorities has been steadfast, even when they faced rejection from their own friends and family members.

"We feel that our heart is really with (gays and lesbians)," says Evelyn.

As licensed counselors at Community Gospel Life Counseling Center, the Schaves have spent the past two years providing Christian counseling to individuals and same-sex couples who may have been turned away from other churches.

"Many gays are asked to leave churches that they have been involved with for years," explains Evelyn. "We just feel the need to bring healing to them and let them know that God loves them for who they are and what they are."

The Shaves are pleased at having been chosen as Honorary Grand Marshal for this year's Pride Parade. "We just really feel honored that they would choose us," Evelyn says.

ORGANIZATION GRAND MARSHAL

The Bayou City Boys Club

According to spokesperson Michael Collins, the Bayou City Boys Club, which puts on a variety of events to raise money for HIV/AIDS charities, is "a small part of the effort to make the lives of HIV/AIDS-afflicted people easier."

From a jungle-themed dance party to its annual Gospel Brunch, BCBC appeals to a broad cross-section of gay Houston in order to raise funds for providers of HIV/AIDS public education, patient care, and research.

The group has raised more than $605,000 for local HIV/AIDS charities in the past dozen years, including Bering Omega Community Services and AIDS Foundation Houston.

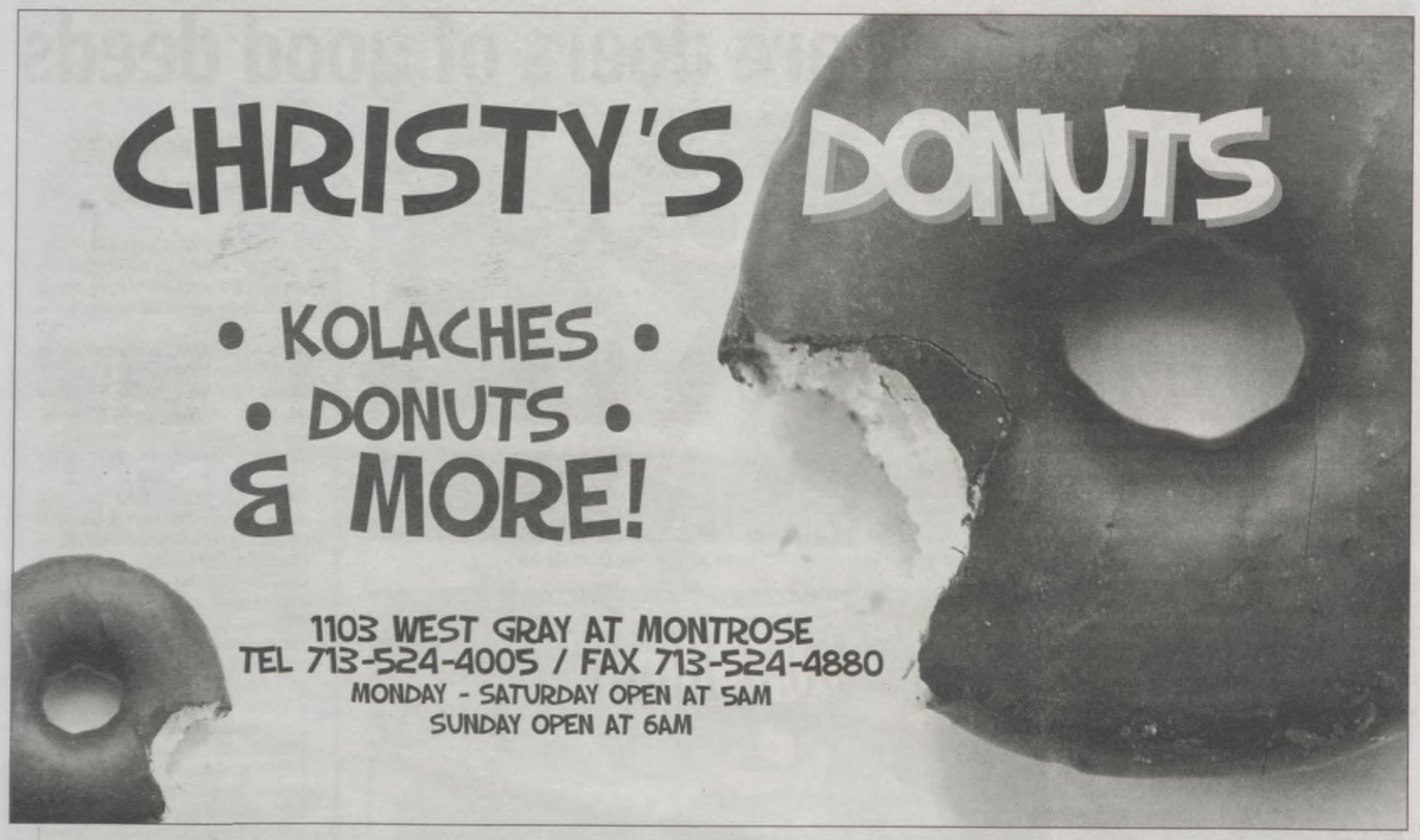
According to Collins, BCBC is thrilled to be selected as Organization Grand Marshal. "We consider it a great honor to be chosen by the community," he says. "We felt like we were being chosen for all the hard work that the volunteers have done for the past twelve years."

Twenty seven years of Houston Pride

Past Grand Marshals of the Houston Pride Parade have included bar owners, drag queens, political activists and heterosexuals who supported the gay and lesbian community.

Grand Marshals from years past reigned over the 2003 Pride Parade. In 2004, Pride Houston began a new tradition of naming not only a male and female Grand Marshal, but also honorary and organizational Grand Marshals.

2004 Jerry W. Simoneaux and Sonna Alton, male and female Grand Marshals; Jim and Sue Null, honorary Grand Marshals; and the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, organizational Grand Marshal.
2003 All past Grand Marshals
2002 Rusty Mueller & Mela Conteras
2001 Dalia Stokes & Mitchell Katine
2000 Richard Weiderholt & Tori Williams
1999 Nancy Ford & Sean Carter
1998 Bob Bouton & Jackie Doval
1997 Deborah Bell & Jimmy Carper
1996 Bill Havard & Jeanette Vaughn
1995 Suzanne Anderson & Don Gill
1994 Jay Allen & Cicely Wynne
1993 Carolyn Mobley & Brian Bradley
1992 Brian Keever & Sheri Cohen Darbonne
1991 Linda Morales & Jack Jackson & Gene Harrington
1990 Walter Carter & Annise Parker
1989 Bettie Naylor & Charles Armstrong
1988 Bruce Cook & Eleanor Munger
1987 Persons Living With AIDS
1986 Tony Bicocchi & Dee Lamb
1985 Freda Jerrell & Terry Clark
1984 Rick Grossman & Pokey Anderson
1983 Marion Pantzer & Walter Stricklar
1982 Andy Mills & Marion Coleman
1981 Rita Wanstrom & Ray Hill
1980 Jim Farmer & Ruth Ravas
1979 Thelma Hansel
1978 No Parade that year.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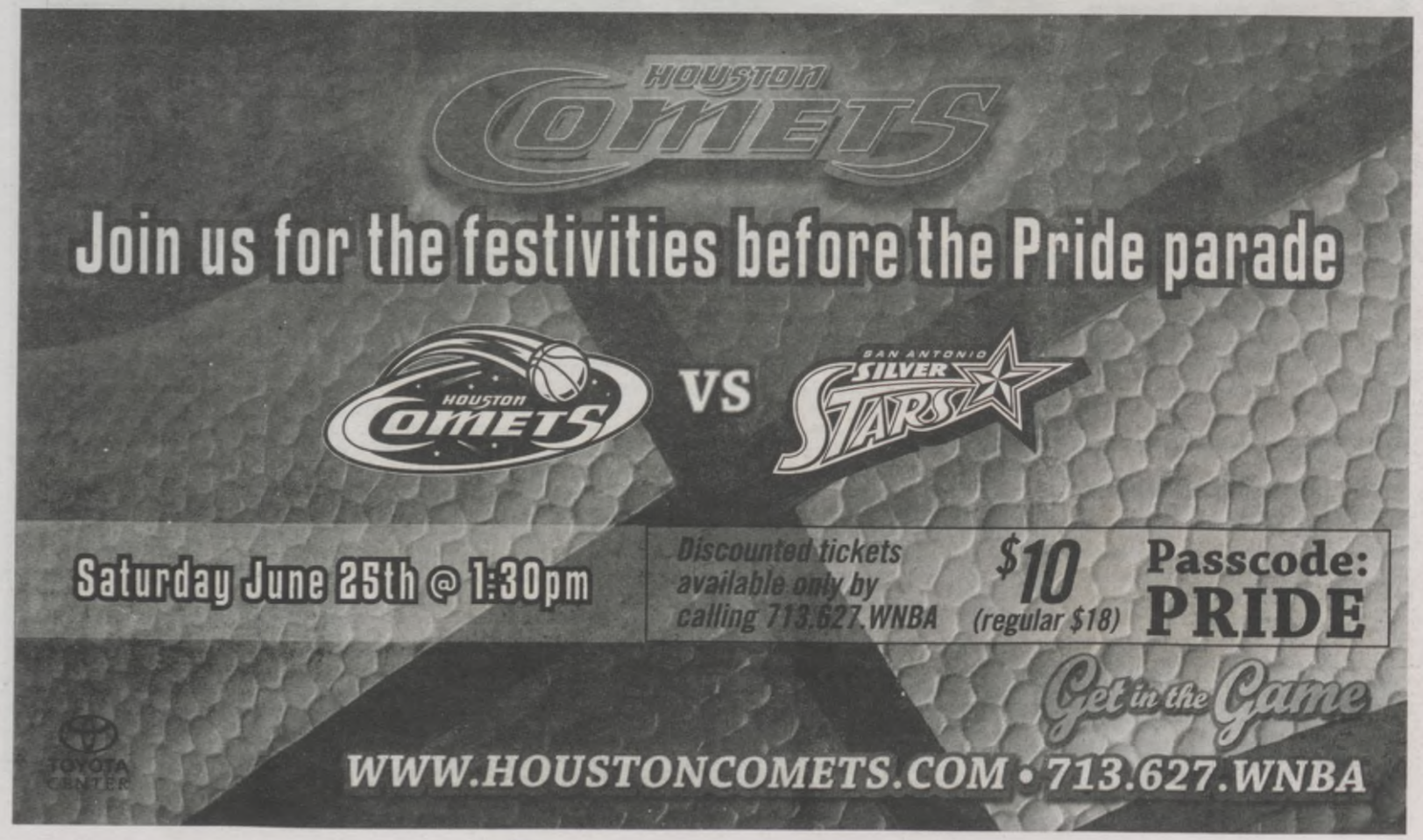
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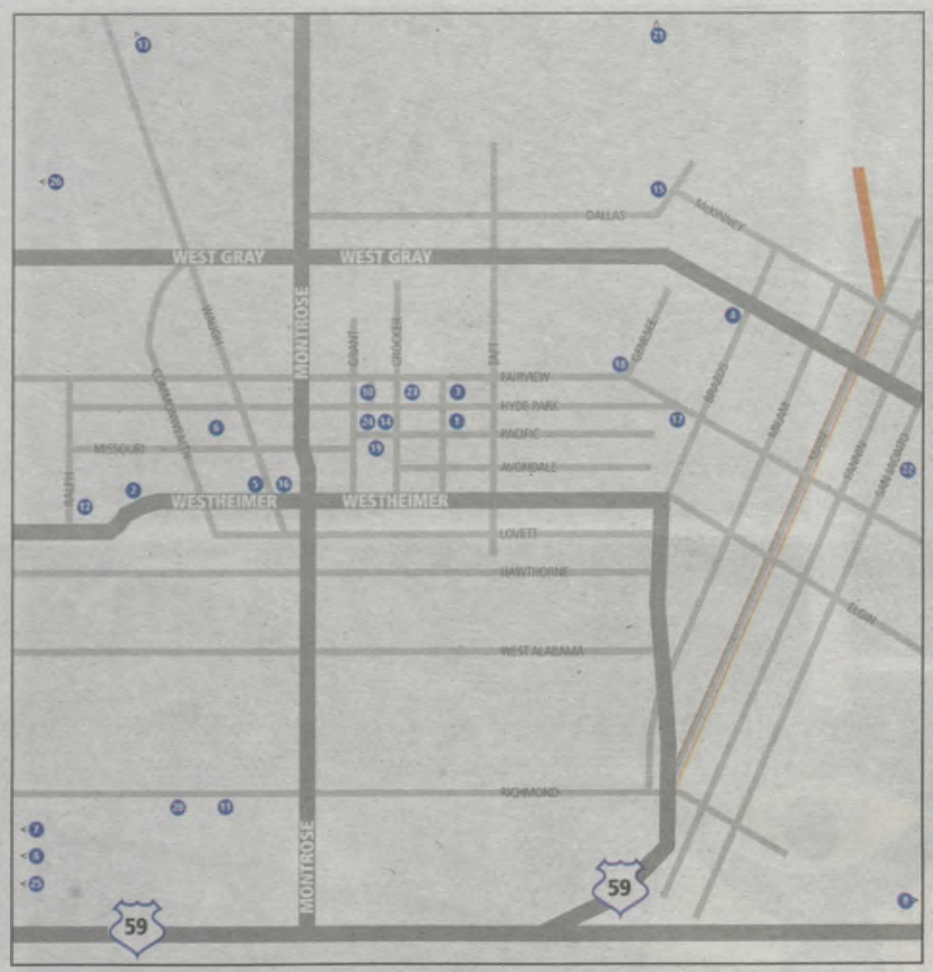

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15. **KEYS WEST** | 817 DALLAS | 713.571.7870 | keyswest.com
16. **MARY's** | 1022 WESTHEIMER | 713.527.9669
17. **MELA's** | 302 TUAM | 713.523.0747
18. **METEOR** | 2306 GENESEE | 713.521.0123 | meteorhouston.com
19. **MONTROSE MINING CO** | 805 PACIFIC | 713.529.7488
20. **MICHAEL'S OUTPOST** | 1419 RICHMOND | 713.520.8446
21. **RAINBOW ROOM** | 527 BARREN SPRGS | 281.872.0215 | therainbowroombar.com
22. **RICH's** | 2401 SAN JACINTO | 713.759.9606 | richs-houston.com
23. **RIPCORD** | 715 FAIRVIEW | 713.521.2792 | theripcord.com
24. **SOUTH BEACH** | 810 PACIFIC | 713.529.7623 | southbeachthenightclub.com
25. **TOYZ** | 5322 GLENMONT | 713.668.4892
26. **VIVIANA's** | 5219 WASHINGTON | 713.864.0203

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pride GUIDE

bar	INERGY	RICH'S	EVE	RIPCORD	DECADES	JR'S	BRB
zipcode	77501	77056	77042	77006	77096	77005	77578
drink		grey goose & cranberry				vodka punch	lone star longnecks
restaurant	la michoacana	farrago	bocados	bibas		katz	hickory hollow
diva		kristine w				kofi	
car						honda accord ls	
job			non profit			sales	
position							
magazine				daddy weekly			
cell tone			girls just want to have fun		'vibrate'		
tv show	christina			fear factor			
scent			glo-jlo	sweat			
bedtime	2:30AM	6:00AM	MIDNIGHT	5:00AM	10:00PM	12:30AM	3:00AM
desperate housewife							
pick-up line	¿quieres?	meet me by the pool	what else is pierced?	meet me on the patio	i have viagra	what's your screen name?	forget the horse ride me.

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We value and adhere to the Christian spiritual virtues of faith, hope, and love; with charity, we also assert the importance of the virtues of modesty, humility, patience, and integrity.

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Sunday School 9:00 AM
Sunday Worship 10:30 AM
Wednesday Worship 6:00 PM

Pride weekend goes nonstop with a host of events

JUNE 24 FRIDAY

LAMBDA AT THE ICON

As Houston celebrates the second anniversary of Lawrence v. Texas, Lambda Legal hosts its second annual Civil Rights Breakfast. It's an opportunity to remember the importance of June 26, 2003, to gays and lesbians and Lambda Legal's role in civil rights history. Lambda Legal's Legal Director, Jon Davidson, will be special guest. RSVP to Gloria Gamino at ggamino@lambdalegal.org.

8 a.m.
Hotel Icon
220 Main
attire: business/business-casual
www.lambdalegal.org

RESURRECTION MCC'S CASINO NIGHT

A night of poker, blackjack, craps and roulette. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and parking. Cash bar and special overnight room rate. Celebrating Rev. Carolyn Mobley's 15 years of service and ministry to Houston. Benefiting Resurrection MCC General Conference Delegates and Rev. Mobley.

7 p.m-midnight
Sheraton Houston Brookhollow
3000 North Loop West
$50; tickets can be purchased at Resurrection MCC, 2025 W. 11th
attire: semi-casual
713-861-9149
www.resurrectionmcc.org

BAILE INTERNATIONAL 2005

GLOBO celebrates Pride with the sounds of "The Awesome D.J." He spins country, R&B, old skool, 70s and Latin rhythms such as Tejano, Salsa, Merengue, Reggeton and more. Proceeds benefit AVES and the Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Fund.

8-1 p.m.
Communication Workers of America (CWA) Building
1730 Jefferson
$25/$30
attire: business
713-710-0268
www.globohouston.org

LATIN PRIDE, HOT & FREE

Latin-style dance music with Latin singer/performer Jade Esteban Estrada. 9 p.m. - 3 a.m.

1415 California
$18 advance/$22 door
Twisted Mister Promotions
713-320-9747
www.twistedmister.biz

CLUB PAPI - PRIDE EDITION, THE OFFICIAL PRE-PARADE PARTY

Club Papi Productions returns to Texas with a massive Houston Pride party at the newly remodeled Rich's Nightclub. A portion of the proceeds benefits Pride Houston.

9 p.m. - 4 a.m.
Rich's Houston
2401 San Jacinto
$10 advance/$15 door
attire: stylish club attire
713-759-9606
www.richs-houston.com

JUNE 25 SATURDAY

HOUSTON PRIDE FESTIVAL 2005

A full day of entertainment includes performances by Grammy nominee Sophie B. Hawkins, gay punk band Pansy Divison and Rachel Sage. Booths feature a variety of gay and gay-friendly organizations and businesses. A Houston Pride version of the dunking booth, "Dunk'd," will allow takers to dunk certain activists and community leaders for a fee.

2-8 p.m.
Westheimer & Yoakum
$10/$5
713-529-6979
www.pridehouston.org

PRE-PARADE PARTY

Victory Fund national board members David Arpin, Janine Brunjes and Bill Colburn, and Houston Events Director Alex Martinez host a pre-Parade party a half-block from the Parade route to benefit local, state and national Victory Fund candidates.

6-8:30 p.m.
1323 Hawthorne
713-528-6676
www.victoryfund.org

HOUSTON PRIDE PARADE 2005

America's original nighttime Pride Parade and the Southwest's largest Pride event gets underway at 8:45 p.m. at the corner of Woodhead and Westheimer. The parade continues down Westheimer to Whitney. This year's theme is "Equal Rights! No More! No Less!"

8:45 p.m.
Westheimer, between Woodhead & Whitney
713-529-6979
www.pridehouston.org

THE OFFICIAL POST-PARADE PARTY, STARRING KIM ENGLISH

High energy are key words for the officially sanctioned after party in all its colors. XM Satellite Radio DJ Mark D will be behind the turntables and special musical guest Kim English, making her Houston debut, will be performing all of her Number 1 Billboard hits. A portion of the proceeds benefits Pride Houston.

9 p.m. - 4 a.m.
Rich's Houston
2401 San Jacinto
$15 advance/$20 door
stylish club attire
713-759-9606
www.richs-houston.com

JUNE 26 SUNDAY

HONEYMOON - THE OFFICIAL PRIDE AFTER PARTY

Spoiled Boyz presents the return of DJ Mark MacEwan (Atlanta) spinning the beatz and a performance by dance music icon G'licious G. A portion of the proceeds benefits Pride Houston.

3:30-10 a.m.
Opus, 412 Main
Downtown Houston
$20/25 advance
attire: just married
713-521-2910
www.spoiledboyz.net

JASON & DEMARCO CONCERT

A spiritual follow to Pride Houston with inspirational singers Jason & deMarco. Seating is limited to the first 100.

10-11:30 a.m.
3333 Fannin, Suite 106
donations for Jason & deMarco accepted
713-528-6756
www.houseofglory.org

HOUSTON PRIDE 2005 PARADE AWARDS CEREMONY

The award ceremony commemorates the best entries in the 2005 Houston Pride Parade.

4 p.m.
Guava Lamp
570 Waugh
713-529-6979
www.pridehouston.org

'NIGHT IN OZ' TEA DANCE, THE OFFICIAL CLOSING PARTY OF PRIDE

Stonewall Democrats sponsors the closing party for Pride weekend, a nightclub party with a "Wizard of Oz" theme. Special guests include Houston City Controller Annise Parker and Sue Lovell, Democratic National Committee member and candidate for Houston City Council. Food by Baba Yega, Niko Niko's Catering, Peppinos Italian Dining and Kam's Chinese Cuisine. There will also be a contest for the best "Wizard of Oz"-inspired costume and door prizes, including gym memberships and gift certificates from sponsors.

5:30 p.m.
Rich's Houston
2401 San Jacinto
$10
713-621-5751

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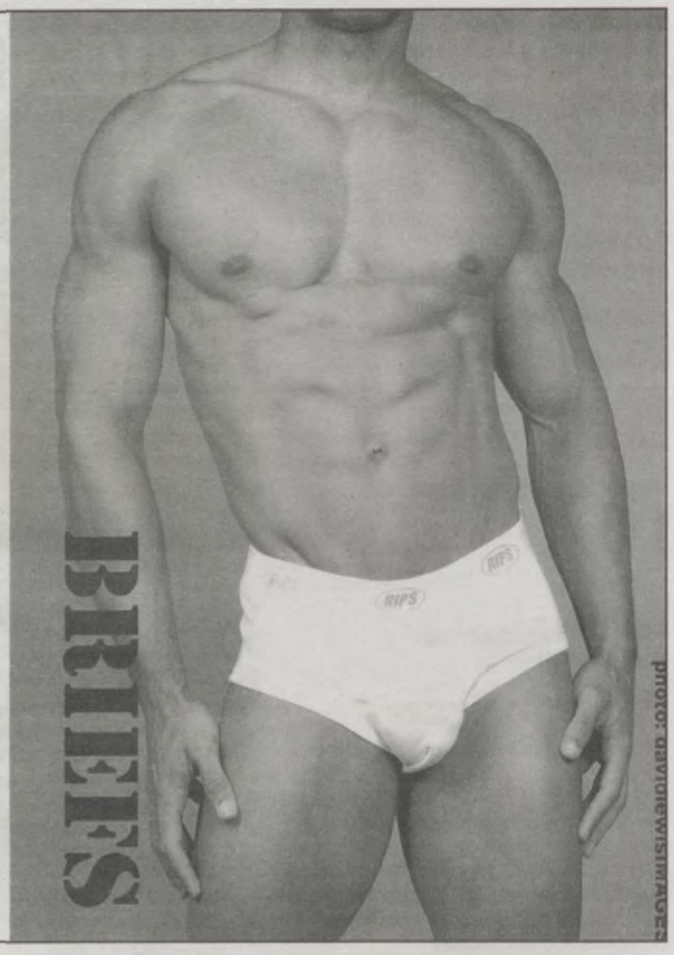

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Pride is a year-long job for Pride Houston volunteers

Planning for the Houston Pride Parade and Festival begins in August each year, not too long after the last float rounds the corner of Westheimer and Whitney at the end of the parade. Pride Houston's board of directors and a committee of volunteers work from August until Pride day to plan the events.

On parade day, volunteers gather early for a security briefing from representatives of the Houston Police Department and for last-minute details regarding the events of the day.

After the parade, volunteers stay up and on the job until the last paper cup is picked up along Westheimer and pitched into a dumpster. The Pride Committee is responsible for hanging of the Pride flags along Westheimer in late May and taking them down after the parade.

PRIDE HOUSTON 2005 OFFICERS

Nicolas J. Brines is in his third year as president of Pride Houston after spending more than 10 years as a volunteer in charge of corporate relations, fund raising and sponsorships. He works full-time as senior corporate market director for the American Heart Association.

Rusty Martin was named treasurer of Pride Houston this year after previously serving as assistant treasurer. Martin has a degree in civil engineering from the University of Missouri. For the past 20 years, he has worked as a consultant for the energy industry.

Dick Dickerson, secretary of Pride Houston, has been involved with the organization for four years. He began helping with parade production in 2002. He is the archivist at the University of Houston.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Roberto Caballero is an attorney with the law firm of Quan, Burdette & Perez, P.C.

Merlin Cavallin is an accountant with his own accounting and financial services firm.

Jerry W. Simoneaux, Jr. is a partner in the law firm of Nechman, Simoneaux, and Frye, PLLC, in which he practices same-sex relationship planning and protection law.

Carol Wyatt authors Social Notes, the weekly newsletter for the Houston lesbian community and serves as coordinator for the bi-monthly professional women's happy hours at Meteor. She sells software for the call center industry.

Ed Barnes, assistant treasurer for Pride Houston, is a retired assistant director for railroad labor relations.

Jack Valinski, executive director, was among the founders of Pride Houston.

PRIDE COMMITTEE

Lynn Sixkiller. Parade Chair

Rebecca Mahaffey & Yvonne Feece, Magazine Co-Chairs

Sandy Warman, Volunteer Co-Chair

Jim Halloran, Events Co-Chair

Donna Junker, Events Co-Chair

Todd Amdor & Matthew Stone, Festival Co-Chairs

Troy Christensen, Web Chair

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Conrad Mones, Public Relations Chair

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Houston Pride Parade gets broadcast nationally

among the 2005 Houston Pride Parade entries this year are two entities that are participating in the parade for the first time, The Houston Chronicle and KHOU-TV, Channel 11.

Another first, Q-TV will broadcast the parade live for its program, "On Q Live." QTN cameras will be broadcasting the Parade from the sidelines from 8:30-11 p.m. as part of the network's two-day coverage of Pride festivals and parades around the country. QTN is currently available in the Boston, New York City and San Francisco markets. More information is available at www.qtelevision.com/main/pridemonth/.

The parade gets underway at 8:45 p.m. Saturday at Woodhead and Westheimer and rolls down Westheimer to Whitney.

All three of this year's emcees have announced the Pride Parade previously, but never all together. Announcing from the Grand Stand at Westheimer and Yoakum will be local drag diva Kofi; Ernie Manouse, host of "InnerVIEWS" and "The After Party" on KUHT, Channel 8; and Maria Todd of 104 KRBE's Morning Show.

Drag diva **Kofi** will be among the announcers for the 2005 Houston Pride Parade. (Photo by Dalton DeHart)

000 Pride Houston Opening Banner
001 Girls on Wheels
003 Grand Marshal Float
004 Bayou City Boys Club - Honorary Grand Marshal - Organization
005 Bud Light/Silver Eagle Distributors
006 Special Celebrity Guest Jade Esteban Estrada Presented by Twisted Mister
007 Houston Mayor Bill White
008 City Controller Annise Parker
009 US Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee
010 Texas Representative Garnett Coleman
011 Texas Representative Hubert Vo
012 Texas Representative Alma Allen
013 Houston City Councilmember Ada Edwards
014 Houston City Councilmember Gordon Quan
015 Houston City Councilmember Ronald Green
016 Houston City Councilmember Adrian Garcia
017 Judge Steven Kirkland & Judge John Paul Barnick
018 Houston Fire Department/Community Outreach
020 Houston Police Department
021 Rich's Houston
022 Krewe of Olympus-Texas Inc.
023 Houston Gay & Lesbian Parents
024 Montrose Counseling Center
025 MCC/H.A.T.C.H.
026 Americans United for Separation of Church & State
027 Parent's Reconciling Network
028 Houston Pride Band
029 AssistHers
030 Pride EMS
031 Community Gospel Church
032 here! Networks
033 Asians & Friends Houston
034 Judge David M. Patronella
035 The Colt 45's
036 Montrose Clinic
037 Spoiled Boyz (Beyond Entertainment)
038 Montrose Softball League
039 PFLAG Houston
040 OutSmart Magazine
041 HEB
042 Harris County Democratic Party
043 Q Television Network
044 Integrity/Houston
045 Chances
046 Bering Memorial United Methodist Church
047 Lesbian Health Initiative (LHI)
048 Neartown Super Neighborhood Association (ABC Events)
049 Harris County Libertarian Party
050 Houston Chronicle
051 Bering Omega Community Services sponsored by Starbucks
052 Covenant Church
053 Planned Parenthood of Houston & Southeast Texas
054 A Common Bond of Texas
055 Texas Gay Rodeo Association-Houston (T.G.R.A.)
056 GLBT Pagan Pride
057 Houston Gay & Lesbian Film Festival
058 KHOU-TV Channel 11
059 Halloween Magic
060 Human Rights Campaign
061 Unitarian Universalist Churches of Houston
062 Ryan White Planning Council Office Support
063 Theatre Under the Stars (TUTS)
064 ACLU Houston Chapter
065 Houston Department of Health and Human Services
066 Maranatha Fellowship House of Glory
067 The Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce
068 Bunnies on the Bayou
069 Diageo/Smirnoff
070 The Strangerettes of the Turtle Creek Chorale
071 Charles Armstrong Investments
072 Sue Lovell for City Council
073 Groove Girlz Productions
074 Houston GLBT Community Center
075 Dignity/Houston
076 Clear Channel Communications (KHMX Mix 96.5)
077 Houston Area Bears (HAB)
078 Club Inergy (Do Re Mi)
079 Houston Transgender Unity Committee
080 Grace Lutheran Chruch/Lutherans Concerned - Houston
081 Garden Party
082 The Empire of the Royal Sovereign & Imperial Court of the Single Star
083 Houston Women's Festival
084 Chipotle Mexican Grill
085 Guava Lamp
086 104 KRBE
087 More Light Presbyterians & TAMFS
088 Miss Camp America Foundation
089 Southern Country Houston
090 Planet Ford
091 Continental Airlines
092 Wells Fargo Bank
093 ACTS Mechanical
094 LOAF (Lesbians Over Age Fifty)
095 M. D. Anderson GLBT Employee Network
096 Montrose Veterinary Clinic
097 Houston Comets
098 AIDS Foundation Houston
099 United Cab Company
100 Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church (UCC)
101 First Congregational Church of Houston
102 Shell Oil - SeaShell
103 KPFT 90.1 FM Pacifica Radio Houston
104 StatScript Pharmacy
105 Jay Aiyer for City Council
106 Soka Gakkai International
107 Peter Brown for City Council
108 BP Employee Group
109 Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas
110 AIDS Housing Coalition Houston (AHCH) DBA Nsomnia Furniture & Gifts
111 Center for Clinical Studies
112 Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church
113 All Star News & Video
114 Gamma Mu Phi
115 Houston Energy Football
116 Montrose Diner
117 E.J.'s (Palmer Moninger Entertainment)
118 Mega 101
119 SuperCuts
120 Texas Queer Collegiate Alliance
121 Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
122 Houston Humane Society
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Saturday, June 25, 2005

Pride Festival:

2:00 PM — Until Parade

At Yoakum & Westheimer
$10 At the Gate
Discount Tickets at PrideHouston.org

FEATURING:
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