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Gay merger creates Web site giant. Page 3



Diva LaBelle comes to town cooking up a storm. Page 17



ISSUE 964

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

APRIL 16, 1999

Getting back to work



MATTHEW A. HENNIE

Jan Roberts, a senior employment specialist, is one of the staff at Nightingale Adult Day Center's new job placement program, 'Working Your Way Back.' The program is designed to help people living with HIV/AIDS obtain employment. See our story page 2 ▶

Houston Conference On AIDS

Keeping the focus on a deadly virus

▶ Organizer fears public has become complacent about the disease's prevalence

by GIP PLASTER

While the amount of attention the nation pays to AIDS seems to have diminished, experts still work to cure, treat or at least prevent the disease that lives in millions of bodies.

Some of those experts and at least 1,000 other people interested in HIV/AIDS are expected to gather at the George R. Brown Convention Center later this month for the 11th Annual Houston Conference on AIDS in America.

"It has grown now to become, I would like to believe, one of the major AIDS confer-

ences in the country," said Dr. Adan Rios, the founder and organizer of the conference.

The April 30 event, which discusses the disease, its treatment and its impact, is open to the public. Speakers are informed that they will be speaking to an audience that may not be made up entirely of others in their field.

"In the early years, most of these conferences would be for very high-powered scientists," said Rios. Physicians, social workers, caregivers, patients and other associated with HIV also attend, all at no charge unless continuing education credit is needed. The conference, which is co-organized this year by

the Center for AIDS: Hope and Remembrance Project, is expected to draw between 1,000 and 1,200 people.

Experts will speak on a variety of topics related to the dis-

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Rios

American gay rights lags behind most of the world

▶ Canada, Europe and Scandinavian countries ahead of the rights game

by LAURA BROWN

In 1996, the same year that South Africa became the first country to officially enshrine gay rights in its Constitution, the United States Senate voted against a bill making it illegal to fire someone from a job simply for being gay.

On that same day, the U.S. Congress approved the so-called

"Defense of Marriage Act" defining marriage in federal law as a "union of one man and one woman" only a vote that came seven years after Denmark became the first country offering gay citizens legal recognition for same-sex "registered partnerships."

While gay and lesbian advocates in the United States struggle to pass basic protections and defeat anti-gay measures state-by-state and city-by-city, activists in other countries continue to win major victories on the national level.



"Basically, we have a lot of catching up to do," said Sydney Levy, research and advocacy director for the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), the San Francisco-based non-profit that tracks anti-gay human rights abuses and gay-related laws around

the world.

Although Levy quickly pointed out that IGLHRC has documented human rights abuses against gays in virtually every country and laws do not provide a full picture of what gay life is like in every region of any given country, he acknowledged that gay rights may be one area where the United States, the sole remaining superpower, does not lead the world.

A spokesman for the Human Rights Campaign, the largest gay political organization in the United States, agreed with

Levy's assessment.

"There have always been two Americas there's the forward-thinking, progressive nation that leads the world in peace and freedom, and there's the America of suspicion and suppression of people who are different," said Wayne Besen, HRC's associate director of communications.

"Legislatively, we are clearly behind a lot of places, and it is something to be ashamed of."

While the historic firsts in Denmark and South Africa put them in the international spotlight, they are by no means the only countries the United States trails behind when it comes to

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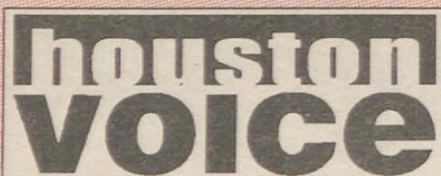
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Back in the groove

► Program helps people living with HIV/AIDS get back into the work force

by ANTHONY CONNOLLY

The transition back into the work force for HIV-positive persons is getting easier thanks to a relatively new program right here in Houston.

Nightingale Adult Day Center's "Working Your Way Back" program has been placing people, who have had extended medical leaves, back into careers or back to school for about seven months.

So far, there have been 37 placements out of 89 clients (37 with AIDS, 52 HIV positive), said Jan Roberts, a senior employment specialist at Nightingale.

Everett Puckett, board member, said the program wants to work with 125 individuals over the year, and is seeking a 75 percent job-placement rate.

"Anyone who is living HIV positive or with AIDS can be referred by case managers, state agencies, and other programs into our program," said Roberts.

There is no cost for the program which consists of an initial five-days of classes that help to reintroduce people back into neglected careers or sends them on to new endeavors.

Roberts and Puckett say there is no cost, because the funding is through Texas Department of Health and its HIV Resource Group. "We also get private donations," said the board member.

The back-to-work program is an offshoot of the adult day center, which has been in operation for 11 years. Puckett said it was founded by a 20-year-old health care company, Nightingale Services.

The program's need comes from HIV's debilitating toll on an individual's physical and mental health.

"A lot of them have been out of work for three to five years. There are gaps in resumes, and there are social issues to consider. Many have esteem issues," said Roberts.

"With improved health and exhausted financial resources, they want to get back into work," Puckett added.

For Roberts, the crux of the program is its ability to let people know they are valuable and their skills are

needed. After all, "it's an esteem-building program. So many come in with little or no self-esteem."

Applicants heading into the program go through an intake interview where HIV status, personal information and a vocational assessment are completed.

"Then there's a series of testing to see what the individual is good at," said Roberts. Puckett added, "we do interest inventories that go along with that."

WHO'S SEEKING HELP?

- 70% out of work for more than 5 years
- 36% professionals
- 22% blue collar/labor
- 15% retail/clerical
- 4% continuing education
- 2% never worked before

Small protest greets Galveston gay inn

by ANTHONY CONNOLLY

A small group of protesters rallied against the opening of Galveston's first gay hotel establishment, April 9 and 10, police confirm.

"Friday, essentially we had 10 people in front of the inn, and these were members of a Baptist church outside of Galveston, said Police Chief Kim O. Schoolcraft.

"They were carrying some signs and picketing. They left about 11 in the morning and went to protest in front of the police department and city hall asking for the resignation of two public officials," said the police chief. She was asked to resign as was city council member, David Bowers, a gay man.

The protest is over the opening of Hollywood at Galveston, an inn on Seawall Boulevard, which caters to a gay clientele. The 21-room inn held opening celebrations last weekend, and will officially open April 24.

Ken Barber headed up the April 9 protest and says the facility promotes sodomy.

Schoolcraft said the protest also took place April 10. "Saturday noon, there was one gentleman in KKK (Klu Klux Klan) robes and about eight guys with shaved heads, some would call them skinheads,

out there in front of the hotel."

When police arrived to video the protest, the KKK fled, said the chief.

Relieved that the weekend action is now over, the 23-year veteran of the Galveston police department said she was impressed by the island's reaction to the dissenters.

"I am very encouraged. I had hoped Galveston would show their attitude by completely ignoring them and that's what they did.

"There were no confrontations at all. We allowed them their constitutional right to assembly, and eventually they went away."

The police chief admits Galveston may not have seen the last of pickets and protesters.

"I think there will be more in the future as the hotel opens, we may have isolated incidents, people will voice their displeasure."

But she stressed, "I don't think Galveston will tolerate any acts that are unlawful. I mean, not just the police department but also the community. We're a very diverse community, and we're like a family. We may argue with one another, but we stick together. We don't let outsiders tell us what to do."

Following that, new "students" begin classes.

The five-day course includes:

- introduction to the Americans With Disability Act and how it pertains to HIV
- health maintenance
- application training
- resume development
- interview skills training,
- and job search skills.

The program is currently working with 121 employers. "And every day we get new postings," said Roberts.

She recalls one student in particular, a man who had been out of work for nine years and living with AIDS for the past eight.

While in Huntsville prison, the man certified in heavy equipment operation and as an electrical technician. With the help of the program, Roberts and staff were able to assist him in starting his own business.

"He's been working for 30 days now. To help turn this guy's life around, it's so wonderful," she said.

There are four direct staff and a part time, clerical-support staff at the program, which works cooperatively with others like The AIDS Foundation and Montrose Counseling Center to help more HIV positive people ease their way back.

It has received state funding again this year, but Puckett said the program could always use more community support.

INFO Nightingale Adult Day Center
 "Working Your Way Back..."
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KKK member and Skinheads show their displeasure at Galveston's latest addition—Hollywood at Galveston, an inn for gay clientele.

Bob Wilkens, who owns and operates the inn with Sherman Houck, said the protest was exactly what he expected.

"It was no big deal."

He said, the community reacted well. "They drove by circled around the fountain in front of us and told the protesters to 'go home' and gave us the thumbs up and yelled out, 'Welcome to Galveston.'"

Houck agrees the worst is over.

"They wanted to get some attention—they got it and left."

Rival gay on-line companies merge into giant

► Gay.com Network anticipates millions of web-surfers

by JAMESON CURRIER

The biggest news in the gay on-line world occurred off-line when two rival Internet companies, Gay.com and Gay.Net, announced they would merge.

The new venture is known as the Gay.com Network.

The new network unites the community forums and chat rooms of Gay.com with the news and match-making services of Gay.Net. The new parent company of the venture, Online Partners Inc., also bought a minority interest in onQ, the largest gay tenant on America Online.

The new network, which will be reached at www.gay.com, is poised to become the largest and most comprehensive gay destination on the Web. The new company anticipates more than five million visitors in its first month.

Online Partners and onQ will also share editorial, advertising, and marketing efforts to increase onQ's prominence on AOL. Online Partners Inc. will be headed by Andy Cramer, the founder of Gay.net, as chairperson and chief executive officer and Mark Elderkin, the founder of Gay.com as president and chief operating officer.

The new site will continue to offer chat rooms and news, as well as on-line shopping through links with TLA Video, Virtual Vineyards, and

CDWorld, as well as a travel reservation system provided in partnership with Sabre's Travelocity.

Among the new features will be a customizable "MyGay.com" home page that gives access to free e-mail accounts and other perks. Access to the web-site is free, but Cramer said that premium services, which the company will announce shortly, will be available for \$9.95 a month. Prior to the merger, Gay.Net provided its 10,000 members with premium services for \$9.95 a month.

"It's like adding one plus one plus one and getting six," Cramer said. "This unites our community in a way that has never been done before."

The new web-site will be in direct competition with PlanetOut

(www.planetout.com) for members and advertisers. PlanetOut, which began in 1996 as one of America Online's "greenhouse" projects before branching out into the Web, offers many similar services and is the largest on-line gay community, according to Media Metrix, an Internet firm that ranks web properties according to the number of visitors to a site.

"I have a great respect for PlanetOut," Cramer said. "But it's a big world. There's a reason why we have a

Newsweek and *Time*."

Tom Rielly, PlanetOut's founder and chairperson, said the merger is a good idea for Gay.com Network.

"We are happy to have a serious competitor, and competition keeps you on your toes," said Rielly.

"They were three companies that had business models that weren't working for them, and together they're adopting our business model."

Both web companies will offer gay surfers news and entertainment outlets. The Gay.com Network will continue to be the hub for more than 65 on-line versions of gay newspapers, including on-line editions of

Houston Voice and its sister papers the *Southern Voice*, in Atlanta, Ga., and *Impact News* in New Orleans.

Rielly points out that PlanetOut's news and entertainment content is original, not compiled from other sources. Both web companies will

also have similar sized staffs. PlanetOut employs a full-time staff of 25. The merger will find the Gay.com Network staff growing from 22 to 30 people.

PlanetOut has also recently launched new features on its web-site, including daily polling and redesigned chat rooms and message boards.

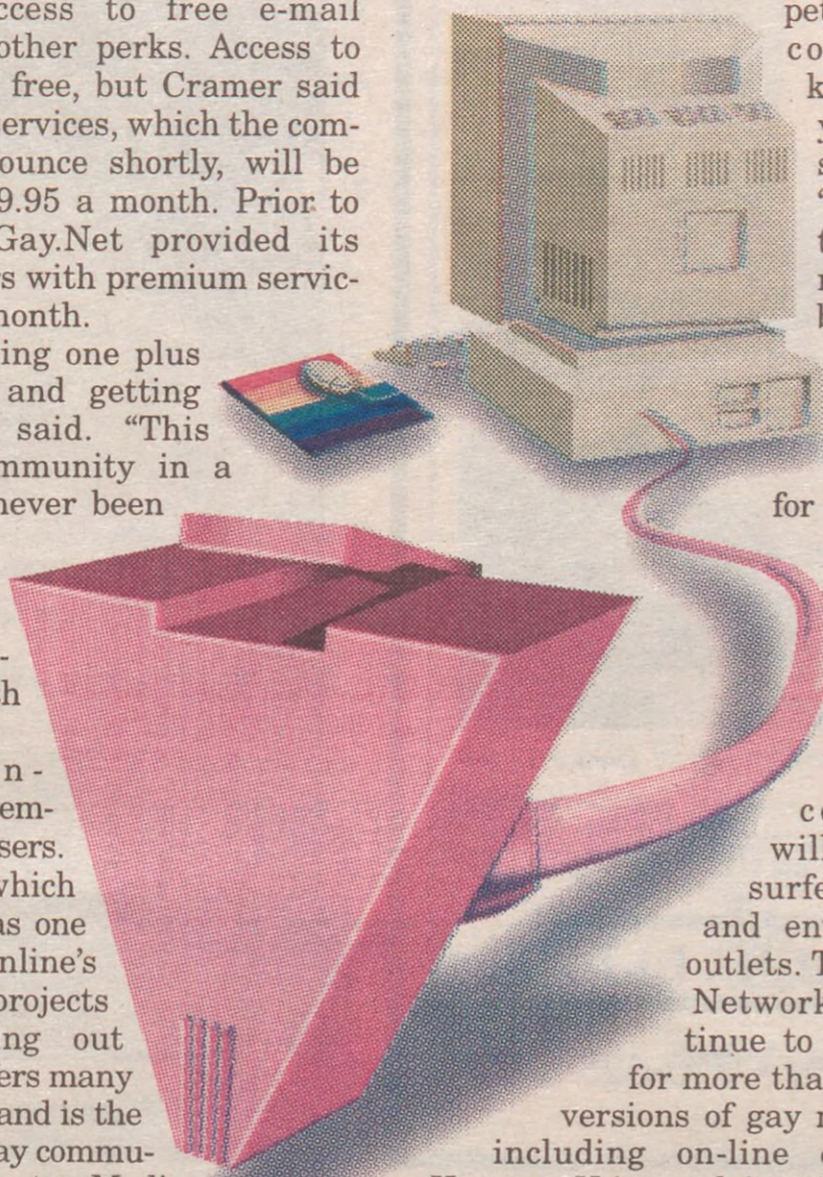
Rielly said that PlanetOut will also soon launch a section for personal ads, offer home pages and e-mail services to members.

Rielly expresses some skepticism over the new Gay.com network's projected number of five million "visitors." PlanetOut, which has a membership of more than 200,000, attracts about 500,000 visitors a month.

"Is there any gay institution that has ever got five million people to do anything?" he said. "There may be five million visits, but not five million visitors."

In a move not mentioned in the press releases, Louis M. Fabrizio, the publisher of *Out* magazine for the last two and a half years, has stepped down from the magazine to become Online Partners' vice president of advertising. *Out* has not announced a successor for Fabrizio.

"I was intrigued by the new challenge," Fabrizio says. "I think I did an excellent job of making *Out* into a mainstream, top-drawer, blue-chip magazine, and I left on good footing. This new venture is an incredible way to reach the gay community. It's like being at the start of TV in the 1950s with the ability to reach a lot of people. Only this time, we're a little bit ahead of TV."



Canada, Europe and Scandinavian countries ahead of the rights game

from page 1

legally protecting gay citizens.

After Denmark's legislation passed in 1989, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, the Netherlands and Hungary have passed similar "registered partnership" laws, and the concept appears to be spreading.

After South Africa approved its constitutional provision banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, both Ecuador and tiny Fiji have adopted similar measures. While the policies still generate vocal criticism from opponents who would like to see them repealed, they provide a level of federal protection currently unavailable in the United States.

HRC's Besen cited cultural differences and simply time as reasons why the United States lags behind these countries on specific legislative protections.

Many countries that have enshrined gay rights protection in law do not have organized opposition that can compare to the political power wielded by the "religious right" in the United States, he said.

In addition, he said, "a lot of countries started earlier than we did, and we are

where they were 20 years ago."

A survey of gay rights around the world must also acknowledge countries that have much more restrictive governmental bans on same-sex sexual behavior than America, Besen stressed.

In Afghanistan, for example, men who have sex with men are punished by having a 15-foot concrete wall toppled on them by a tank; those who survive after 20 minutes are set free.

"I think we only have to look to the rough savagery of Afghanistan and Iran the brutal death sentences that are routinely handed down to gay people to be very alarmed and very thankful that we do have the freedoms we now enjoy," Besen said.

While the United States trails its international peers in several areas of gay rights legislation including anti-discrimination laws, military service and sodomy laws, gay rights advocates point to marriage rights as a case in point for evaluating where America stands, and what activists in other countries can learn from each other.

No country in the world has approved "gay marriage" for its citizens, but "reg-

istered partnership" laws in the Scandinavian countries provide virtually the same benefits, according to Darren Spedale, a scholar who recently completed a two-year Fulbright Fellowship studying same-sex partnership in Denmark. Spedale's book on the subject, tentatively titled "Nordic Bliss: Denmark's Experiment with Same-Sex Marriage," will be published by the end of the year.

According to Spedale, the Danish law provides the same benefits to same-sex couples as heterosexual marriage, but with two exceptions the ability to get married in the state church, and the right to adopt children as a couple. Danish activists continue to advocate for both, and have made progress toward attaining them, he said.

Based on his research, Spedale said he believes activists around the world can secure legal recognition for gay couples more quickly by first asking for something other than "marriage."

Once gay couples' immediate need for similar rights and benefits to straight couples have been met,

activists can move on to call for marriage per se with less resistance, Spedale said, citing the Netherlands as an example. The "partner registration act" passed in the Netherlands in 1998, and Spedale predicted civil marriage rights will be approved "within the next two years."

"There is no question that the Scandinavian countries are far ahead of where we are in the United States in terms of recognition and support of gay relationships, but on the other hand we're fighting for full equality in the courts," said Evan Wolfson, director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund's marriage project. "In the Scandinavian countries, they have for now created something that is not marriage... and that is separate and not fully equal."

While he agreed with Spedale that gay couples abroad face much less organized opposition to getting their relationships recognized, Wolfson nevertheless predicted that the United States and not one of the Scandinavian countries will be the first in the world to extend full marriage rights to same-sex partners.

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Around Houston

New AVES clinic



ROSE GUTTIEREZ

Dr. Shannon Schrader cuts the ribbon, April 14, at the new primary health and reproductive care AVES United Clinic. Amigos Volunteers in Education and Services is the only Latino organization in Houston dedicated 100 percent to providing HIV/STD prevention education and social services. The clinic is located at 4126 Southwest Freeway, Suite 1320.

Organizations receive gay rights grants from foundation

Several Houston organizations have been awarded grants from The John Steven Kellett Foundation in the area of gay rights: AssistHers; DiverseWorks Artspace; Gay Men's Chorus of Houston; the Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce; Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents and the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center.

HIV testing going mobile in the next few months

Montrose Clinic's HIV testing program now has got itself a new pair of wheels. The City of Houston has agreed to allow the testing program to use its mobile laboratory for the next few months, said Mark Daughtery with the clinic. "We intend on parking along the street at Pacific Street and accessing the crowd that comes to that constellation of clubs," he said, April 12. City administrators are loaning the mobile laboratory to the clinic twice each month from now until the beginning of July. The following dates the mobile testing program will be in effected: April 21 and 22; May 5 and 6; June 2 and 3; June 16 and 17 and June 30 and July 1.

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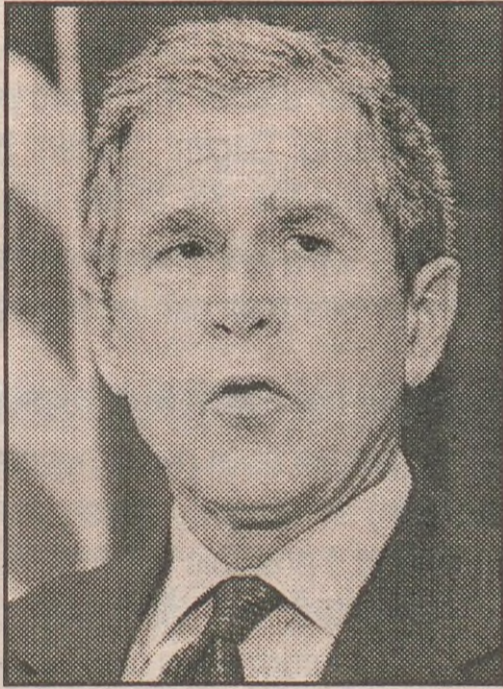
Around the State

Texas city hate crime epicenter says Lamda report

EL PASO—The rate of harassment and crimes against gays in El Paso is the third highest per capita among the cities monitored by a gay rights group, its officials said April 13. The *Express-News* reports, "El Paso ranks third from the worst, only bested by number one, San Francisco, and number two, Columbus, Ohio," quoting Paul Moore, a spokesman for Lambda, a gay and lesbian activist group. And the harassment and violence are expanding on school campuses, Moore said at a news conference held outside an El Paso high school. In 1998 San Francisco had 54 incidents of harassment or assault of gays or lesbians per 100,000 population, Columbus had 31 and El Paso had 24, Moore said. The group cited 161 reports of violence or harassment in El Paso in 1998, up from 145 the year before. However, not all victims were willing to report the violence or harassment to the police, Moore continued. He went on to say the group does not track whether those charged with violence or harassment were convicted. About 30 percent of the reports in El Paso involved assault, and there was one murder. The number of reports of serious injury doubled to 14, the group said, and the other complaints alleged harassment. Nationally, incidents of harassment and violence against gays were down four percent, the report said, from 2,665 in 1997 to 2,552 last year. However, the number of murders nationwide more than doubled from 14 in 1997 to 33 in 1998. The figures were compiled from police reports and reports made directly to Lambda from 16 cities, regions and states throughout the country.

Bush outlines his view of gay rights for presidential bid

AUSTIN—Gov. George W. Bush, in the *New York Times*, said no one should be disqualified from an ambassadorship or other presidential appointment because he or she is a homosexual. But, he also appealed to opponents of gay rights, saying that homosexuals should not be foster parents, and that there should not be a specific reference to them in hate crime legislation, writer Richard L. Berke reported in the April 12 edition. Bush's comments on gay rights issues offer a prime example of how he is trying to be acceptable to the broad Republican electorate. The drive to block President Clinton's nomination of James C. Hormel, a philanthropist, as Ambassador to Luxembourg, has been a major issue among conservatives, many of whom cited Hormel's "homosexuality." Bush would not comment on Hormel specifically, saying, "I don't know the background." But when asked whether an ambassador should be disqualified on the basis of sexual orientation, Bush said, "As a general statement, if someone can do a job, and a job that he's qualified for, that person, that person ought to be allowed to do his job." The governor said he would not exclude homosexuals from other posts, "as long as they can do a good job, as long as their political agenda was the same as mine." Still, many gay voters may be put off by his other positions, including his opposition to their being foster parents or adopting children. "I look at each person based upon their heart and soul," Bush said. "I think it's much different than gay adoption. I strongly believe that what's best for children is a married man or a married woman as their parents. That has nothing to do with whether or not I don't respect somebody."



Gov. George W. Bush

Group tries to educate schools about discrimination

EL PASO—Lambda staff members will meet local school administrators this year to discuss the findings of a national study that reports El Paso is third in the nation for hate crimes. Children often are inculcated with social biases "through the climate in our nation's school system" Paul Moore of LAMBDA said, in the *El Paso Times*. "Every day, students are punched, kicked and spat upon for being gay," he said. "For many of these students, going to school can be a daily hell filled with name-calling, being slammed against lockers and threatened."

Texas students march in Austin against hate crime

AUSTIN—Hundreds of students and teachers marched to the Texas Capitol April 10. The march was in memory of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King as well as five girls murdered in an Austin yogurt shop in December of 1991, the *Houston Chronicle* reported April 11. "This year, we face a most vivid reminder of violence in the murders of James Byrd Jr., because he was black, and Matthew Shepard, because he was gay," U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Austin, told the crowds. For the past five years, local high schools have observed the "National Day Without Violence" which usually takes place around April 4, the day King was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn., 31 years ago. Legislation that would increase the criminal penalties for crimes committed out of prejudice of a particular race, religion or sexual orientation has been approved by a House committee and awaits a vote in the full House.

—From staff and wire reports

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In order to take Ziagen safely, you should read all of the information in this Medication Guide each time you fill your prescription for Ziagen.

What is the most important information I should know about Ziagen?

About 5% of patients (5 in 100) who take Ziagen have a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) **that may result in death.** If you have **skin rash** or two or more of the following sets of symptoms, you may be having this kind of reaction:

- fever
- nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain
- severe tiredness, achiness, or generally ill feeling

A written list of these symptoms is on the Warning Card provided by your pharmacist. You should carry this Warning Card with you.

IF YOU NOTICE THESE SYMPTOMS WHILE TAKING ZIAGEN, STOP TAKING ZIAGEN AND CALL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.

If you must stop treatment with Ziagen because you have had this serious reaction, **NEVER TAKE ZIAGEN AGAIN.** If you take Ziagen again after you have had this serious reaction, **WITHIN HOURS** you may experience **LIFE-THREATENING** symptoms that may include **LOWERING OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE OR DEATH.**

Ziagen can have other serious side effects. Be sure to read "What are the possible side effects of Ziagen?" in the section to the right.

What is Ziagen?

Ziagen is a medication used to treat HIV infection. Ziagen is taken by mouth as a tablet or a strawberry-banana flavored liquid. It belongs to a class of anti-HIV medicines called nucleoside analogue reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs). Ziagen is only proven to work when taken in combination with other anti-HIV medications. When used in combination with these other medications, Ziagen helps lower the amount of HIV found in your blood and keep your immune system as healthy as possible so that it can help fight infection. However, Ziagen does not have these effects in all patients.

Ziagen does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. At this time, there is no evidence that Ziagen will help you live longer or have fewer of the medical problems that are associated with HIV infection or AIDS. Because of this, you must be sure to be seen regularly by your health care provider.

Who should not take Ziagen?

Do not take Ziagen if you have ever had a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) to Ziagen. In such cases, you should return all of your unused Ziagen to your doctor or pharmacist for proper disposal.

How should I take Ziagen?

Take Ziagen exactly as your doctor prescribes it.

The usual dosage for adults (at least 16 years of age) is one 300-mg tablet twice a day.

Adolescents and children from 3 months to 16 years of age can also take Ziagen™ (abacavir sulfate) Tablets and Oral Solution. Your doctor will tell you if the oral solution or tablet is best for your child.

Also, your child's doctor will decide the right dose based on your child's weight and age. Ziagen has not been studied in children under 3 months of age.

Ziagen can be taken with food or on an empty stomach.

To help make sure that your anti-HIV therapy is as effective as it can be, be very careful to take all of your medication exactly as your doctor prescribed it and do not skip any doses.

If you miss a dose of Ziagen, take the missed dose immediately. Then, take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.

When your supply of Ziagen and other anti-HIV drugs starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. It is very important that you take anti-HIV drugs as prescribed by your doctor because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if one or more of the drugs is stopped, even for a short time.

What should I avoid while taking Ziagen?

Ziagen has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Continue to practice safe sex while using Ziagen. Do not use or share dirty needles.

Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or if you become pregnant while taking Ziagen. Ziagen has not been studied in pregnant women and the risk to the unborn child is not known.

Mothers with HIV should not breastfeed their infants because HIV in the breast milk can be passed to the infant.

What are the possible or reasonably likely side effects of Ziagen?

Some people have had a hypersensitivity reaction (a serious allergic reaction) to Ziagen, which can be fatal. Instructions on how to recognize a possible reaction, as well as what to do if such a reaction is suspected, are discussed in the section "What is the most important information I should know about Ziagen?"

The class of medicines to which Ziagen belongs (NRTIs) can cause a condition called lactic acidosis, together with an enlarged liver. In some cases, this condition can be fatal. Women are more likely than men to experience this rare but serious side effect.

Ziagen can cause other side effects. In studies, the most common side effects with Ziagen were nausea, vomiting, malaise or fatigue, headache, diarrhea, and loss of appetite. Most of these side effects did not cause people to stop taking Ziagen. This listing of side effects is not complete. Your doctor or pharmacist can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects with Ziagen. Talk to your doctor promptly about any side effects you have.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide. Ask a health care professional about any concerns about Ziagen. Professional labeling is available to your doctor and other health care professionals. If you want more information ask your doctor or pharmacist to let you read the professional labeling.

GlaxoWellcome

Glaxo Wellcome Inc.
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

December 1998

MG - 001

This Medication Guide has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration.

Around the Nation

Man who spread AIDS virus receives prison term

MAYVILLE, NY (AP)—A man accused of knowingly exposing more than a dozen young women to the AIDS virus through unprotected sex was sentenced April 5 to 4-to-12 years in prison. Nushawn Williams, 22, struck a plea bargain after authorities were able to convince only two of his five acknowledged victims to cooperate with the investigation. Williams traded drugs for sex with some of the young women and teens he approached in schools and parks, investigators said, and infected at least 13 of his partners with the AIDS virus. Williams, who is already serving a prison sentence for selling crack, pleaded guilty to statutory rape for having sex with a 13-year-old girl, and to reckless endangerment for having unprotected sex with another teen-ager. The charges relate to the only victims who were willing to testify at trial, prosecutors said. "If (other) people do come forward, we can prosecute. The door is still open," said Assistant District William Coughlin. Williams claimed he didn't believe the public health nurse who told him he was HIV-positive, so he continued having unprotected sex.

Illinois man sues drug store chain for revealing AIDS status

CHICAGO (AP)—A thank-you letter to a Chicago-based drug store chain has led to a lawsuit from a man who claims the company's publication of his letter exposed him to harassment as an AIDS patient. The man, named Joe Doe to protect his privacy, says he wrote Osco Drugs to thank its pharmacists for finding a hard-to-get AIDS drug for him. But his lawsuit claims they violated his privacy by publishing his health status in a company newsletter distributed nationwide in November 1996. "One would assume that a drug store chain would have the highest level of ethics and not be so cavalier," said Paul Levy, the man's attorney. As a result of the publicity, his client received threatening telephone calls and his house was vandalized. The stress resulting from the disclosure caused his health to deteriorate drastically, barring him from taking immediate legal action, Levy added. The lawyer says his client is living in Florida and "doing reasonably well."

Oregon may list names of HIV-positive residents

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Oregon may join 29 other states that report the names of its citizens infected with HIV. In September 1997, the CDC asked all states to conduct HIV tracking as an extension of their AIDS surveillance programs. After more than a year of preparation, the Oregon Health Division is asking for public comment on a plan to do the same. While trying to bring the state in line with CDC recommendations, Oregon health officials and AIDS advocates have wrestled with questions of confidentiality and discrimination. "Basically, we want to know what the values are of the people of Oregon before we make a proposal, because the proposal should incorporate those values and support public health reporting that is what we are trying to balance," said Tom Eversole, program manager for the Health Division. Along with a person's name, the proposed HIV-registration would list the person's age, gender, race, risk behavior for acquiring HIV and area of residence. The state currently has similar tracking programs for people with syphilis, tuberculosis and people who have progressed to full-blown AIDS. In January, Texas health officials implemented a similar program to track people with HIV.

Death sentence being sought for Aaron McKinney



McKinney

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP)—Only one of the four people initially charged in the vicious beating death of gay college student Matthew Shepard remains standing as a major prosecution target—Aaron McKinney.

Now prosecutors, armed with damaging statements from McKinney's girlfriend and his former co-defendant, are preparing for a summer trial that aims to sentence to death the man they say was Shepard's chief tormentor. "We've certainly gone over the facts, the law in the case," prosecutor Cal Rerucha said about McKinney. "That will definitely be a death penalty case."

Brownie Mary known for her pot-laced goodies passes away

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—"Brownie Mary" Rathbun, the grandmotherly activist whose arrests for distributing pot brownies to AIDS patients built momentum for the medicinal marijuana movement, has died at 77. Mary Jane Rathbun died at a hospital Saturday of undisclosed causes. She had been hospitalized and in considerable pain ever since she injured her spine in a fall last August, said her friend Larry Bittner. She had no survivors. Ms. Rathbun had a daughter who died in a car accident in the 1970s. "She was the mother of every gay kid in San Francisco," an associate said.

—From staff and wire reports

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VIEWPOINT

Did somebody say McDonald's?



by MUBARAK
S. DAHIR

I never thought I'd have such pleasant thoughts about a greasy Big Mac or Quarter Pounder.

I haven't eaten one of these signature dishes of the hamburger palace

for probably a decade. Now, don't get me wrong. It's not that I'm a food snob. It's just that I remember McDonald's from the other side of the customer counter.

Like many teenagers, McDonald's was one of my first places of employment. I remember vividly the stiff uniforms that got encrusted with grease on a daily basis, the vats of popping grease that always stung when you went to lift out the drenched french fries, the burning grills where I made Quarter Pounders and Big Macs and cheeseburgers day after day one summer, saving my minimum-wage paycheck for college money.

I hated the job, frankly, and on my last day, I swore never again to return to an establishment graced with those damned Golden Arches.

But now there is reason to look upon the fried food franchise with a happier eye (if not a happier stomach). In early April, McDonald's added its name to the growing list of international employers that offers protection to its workers against employment discrimination and harassment on the job based on sexual orientation. Already, more than half of the nation's Fortune 500 companies offer protection against job discrimination based on sexual orientation. The McDonald's policy change was important for several reasons.

First, the McDonald's policy change is a direct result of a new form of gay and lesbian activism. Rather than demonstrat-



ing in the streets or organizing boycotts of businesses that discriminate against gays and lesbians, the new activism takes the action straight to the board room. Shareholders are learning to use their financial clout to force social issues that affect employees. And the new activism proves an age-old adage: Money talks.

In the case of McDonald's, an organization called The Pride Foundation, a Seattle-based philanthropy group formed by gays and lesbians, joined with Trillium Asset Management, a Boston-based, socially responsible investment firm. Back in October 1998, the two co-introduced a shareholder resolution seeking to expand the company's nondiscrimination and nonharassment policy to include sexual orientation.

A group or individual has to hold at

least \$2,000 of stock in a company, and hold it for a time period of at least one year, before being allowed to introduce a shareholder's motion. The Pride Foundation owns \$55,000 worth of stock in McDonald's.

Now that McDonald's has agreed to expand its policy, it is printing up new employee handbooks and says it will hang new anti-discrimination posters in its restaurants. It will also add sexual orientation to its diversity training classes.

It's easy to pooh-poo a change like this at a place like McDonald's. But before you do, consider a few things. Like the fact that with 280,000 employees, McDonald's is one of the biggest employers in the country. Also, consider that, like myself, McDonald's is a place of first employment for scores of high school kids. All of these kids will be told that discriminating against gay men and lesbians is not allowed. That's a powerful social message to send to teen-agers, especially when just about every other message they get about gays and lesbians is a negative one. And think of the posters in stores around the country. They will be seen by more than just McDonald's management and employees. They will be seen by millions of customers at every store. Subtle as it might seem, those posters will be one more way to get out the message to the general public that discriminating against gays and lesbians is wrong.

The McDonald's victory will also be important in nudging other companies to follow suit. Sure, dozens of other big-name companies have, for one reason or another, learned the wisdom of extending protection against discrimination to gay and lesbian employees. But McDonald's is probably the biggest prize so far in obtaining this victory through shareholder activism. You can bet your Big Mac that other companies notice when shareholder activism makes a difference.

LETTERS

Crucified 'Tinky' does not represent gay community

Editor:

Accolades to Michael C. Ruggerio for his letter to the editor (April 9, p.10, *Houston Voice*). I "ditto" his feelings expressed in his letter. In my opinion there are so many ways that we can show our approval and displeasure about hate towards our community and/or gays and lesbians as a whole.

Using the cross in the manner that it was used atop Mary's was offensive to many of us in the community. The cross is a sacred symbol to us. We need to be considerate of one another in our community. What we do in the confines of our businesses and our homes should remain private but, we should be very careful about how we display ourselves to the city as a community.

In order to be loved, respected and accepted we must first feel that for ourselves. The flags and ribbons on the esplanade at Westheimer and Montrose honoring the Kosovo captives; the flowers and tributes at Princess Diana's death at that same location are things that make me proud of this community. May we continue to display a positive image of our community. Let's continue to love and respect one another...that's how and when we will be accepted by others.



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VIEWPOINT

The day hate came to Galveston Island

by JANET COHEN

Life on the island is usually calm. But last weekend, members of the KKK, some Skinheads, and Baptists of varying sorts came to Galveston to protest the opening of a new gay inn.

The weekend actions struck me on several levels. I was appalled by the visible hatred but at the same time inspired and awed by the response of the Galveston Police Department. I felt frightened by the possibility of what might occur and furious at the appearance of the Nazi flag. I was disgusted by the slogans on the signs, yet respectful of the First Amendment. I felt surprised at being shocked by the surgical masks and rubber gloves, and proud to be in the presence of so many local allies of various colors, ages, races and sexual orientations. When I arrived at the unexpected protest April 10 by the Klan and Skinheads, I immediately noticed the grand dragon/wizard in his robe, his cone-head hat and his mask. His followers wore rubber gloves, surgical masks, held a Bible, a Nazi flag and toted hateful signs. Between 20-25 white men lined the north and south sides of Seawall Boulevard, holding signs and flags.

Some protesters gave the "Heil Hitler" salute to pedestrians, rollerbladers, bicycle and surrey-riders. Some shouted "homosexuals in there" and "Sodomite Hotel" to tourists.

A group of BOIs (people "Born on the Island") stood in disbelief, watching the protesters. One man told me, "I've lived

here all my life and I never seen this sh**. Leave these people alone. I respect them. They're not hurting anybody." It was clearly illustrated how people across the spectrum see that civil rights issues affect all of us, and that we have more in common than we think.

The best lesson of the day was an old black man in a gold suit. He was walking on the same side of the street as most of the Klan, holding his cane to help him along. As he neared the protesters, I noticed his hand subtly slide down from the hook on the cane to the shaft, in case he needed to pick it up quickly in self-defense. This was a man who knew.

I grew up with stories of how the Holocaust killed six million of the people from my own roots. This kind of wisdom is cellular, and it comes from being reared in a family that teaches you to remember your roots. I know what that old man knew.

The grand wizard/dragon of the Ku Klux Klan stole the show. Tell me why that closet drag queen even bothered. When he took off his dress, OOPS, I mean robe, I saw his true colors. He took care of that robe better than I took care of my prom dress 25 years ago. When the grand Poobah wasn't man enough to take the heat, he disrobed in front of all of us. He stood by his car, subtly covering his license plate so it couldn't be recorded by police without effort. Slowly and methodically he straightened out every sweaty wrinkle and smoothed it over his hanger.

Under his white polyester Klan robe was a pair of black jeans and a black T-

shirt touting white supremacy. Does this guy even realize that it's an abomination to mix fabrics?

For weeks leading up to the event, Galveston Police prepared for protests from the Grace Baptist Church, Fred Phelps' Westboro Baptist Church, the Ku Klux Klan and Skinheads. Phelps chickened out. Lots of flame in his press release that incensed Galvestonians with such hatred, but no fire in Galveston, April 9-10. Let Phelps fry in Kansas. At least the Wicked Witch of the West can get him there.

Phelps and Ken Barber (Grace Baptist Church) did more good for Galveston that they realize. Members of the clergy came together to discuss religious hatred being projected onto groups of people; several wrote guest columns in the Galveston County *Daily News*, and many scorned Barber.

News reports inflamed many people to speak out in our favor, showing the real Galveston spirit. Most of the dozens of letters to the editor that spoke in our favor were from our straight allies. Offers of support from the Anti Defamation League and others poured in, and I could barely go anywhere in town without supportive statements from non-gay Galvestonians talking about the injustice.

Following the protests, life seemed to get back to normal on the island. Galvestonians were grateful to see the visiting protesters leave. The climate here is more about getting back to life on life's terms, rather than reacting to some hateful outsiders. People are still talking about how grateful they are that

the demonstration was small.

While protests are over, there's a lingering fear. It will pass. It feels like the reaction I have to seeing movies about the Holocaust. Even with the humor in the award-winning "Life is Beautiful," there was a sadness struck in my Jewish roots that lingered with me.

Galveston is my home. It's a safe place for gays and lesbians, with a responsive police department. People often ask me, "How do I find the gay community in Galveston?" That question always stumps me because it's clear to me that we're everywhere. Sure, there are a few bars. Now, there is a hotel.

A few years ago we started PFLAG, and we have an AIDS Coalition. But if you really want to see Gay Galveston, look where you don't expect to see us. We're well integrated and welcomed into the norm in this community.

I pray for the day when more communities will have the intermingling of gay and non-gay alike, with a healthy respect for each.

It's been three days since the last protest at the time of this writing, and something strikes me. Usually the Oleanders bloom in May, but as I drove home from Houston April 13, I noticed the flowers blooming along the causeway.

Perhaps last weekend's demonstration was what prompted them to come out early.

Cohen is co-president of PFLAG Galveston. You can reach her through this newspaper.

Dykes To Watch Out For by Alison Bechdel



ASK THE PASTOR:

Q: It is my understanding that God is the only omnipresent Being. If that is true, then why do we, in the middle of our prayers to God, switch to speaking (praying?) to Satan to "come against" difficulties, trials, and troubles we feel Satan may be causing us? We see this done so often. Rather, wouldn't it make more sense to concentrate our prayers on God to protect us and relieve us of the circumstance and allow God to deal with Satan? A: In the book of Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 10, we begin reading about what our earthly battle is against. First, it is NOT against flesh and blood (people). Secondly, it IS against rulers and authorities and the powers of this world's darkness, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly world. The prince of this world is Satan. Satan has one-third of the heavenly hosts working on the earth. There are assignments made against us by Satan to undermine the work of God. These assignments can be made against people, places and things. God, through the Holy Spirit, has given all believers spiritual gifts to do the work of God. One of these gifts is the gift of discernment. This is the supernatural ability to differentiate between something that is of human origin, satanic origin, or from God. For instance, in praying over the city of Houston, many people have discerned a spirit of greed that has been assigned to this city. While praying for Houston, a person in prayer might discern specifically where this spirit of greed is attacking. In your prayer time you would address this and speak to it. Praying specifically over what is discerned is prayer and it is positive prayer. Prayer is not just about "looking for demons in every bush," but it is about listening to God and hearing what God is saying. When a spirit of evil is discerned, we speak to Satan only because God's Word tells us to do so. Prayer is about using the Name of Jesus with authority to address and counteract the works of Satan. We are to pray for God's protection, but we are also to put on the whole armor of God each day for that protection. We are to pray for God to be with us in the circumstances of life and to deliver us through them. We are not always supposed to be exempt from situations. Scripture tells us, "When you pass through the waters I will be with and through the rivers, they will not overflow you; when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned. . ." Prayer is not about getting our way, but about finding a way to get through! We can get too "demon" focused if we are not careful. Prayer is to focus on what God can do, is able to do, and is doing. But if in the midst of prayer God leads you to take authority over something that Satan is doing, then do it. This, too, is prayer, and it is effective!

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Organizer fears public has become complacent about the disease's prevalence

from page 1

ease, including drug interactions among medicines used to treat HIV/AIDS, issues involving the disease in children and immune-based therapies. Immune reconstitution and vaccines for the prevention of the disease will also be the topic of presentations. An ethicist from New York's Treatment Action Group will discuss advertising, access and research into issues involving HIV.

Dr. Robert Siliciano of Johns Hopkins Hospital will deliver the keynote address about dormant reservoirs of the HIV virus that remain in the bodies of patients undergoing treatment.

"I will be discussing the ability of HIV to persist in a latent reservoir in resting CD4+ T-cells," Siliciano said. "In 1995, our lab showed that HIV could persist in a latent state in a small number of resting memory CD4+ T-cells. These are the same cells that are responsible for the ability of the immune system to respond to previously encountered infections, and so they last a long time."

He said, "In 1997, our group and two other groups found that the virus persisted in these cells even in patients on advanced treatments. I will present our latest work which is an effort to find out how long HIV can persist in these cells and whether eradication is possible."

Rios, a physician who considers himself an "AIDS doctor," started the conference in 1989. He said that in 1982, when the first cases of AIDS were discovered in Houston, the city quickly became one of the epicenters of the virus and had many patients with symptoms that needed to be treated. AIDS resources developed on both coasts, but Houston was left out of the loop.

"The net result was that we needed to have more communication with mainstream research and treatment," he said.

Needing the information to which doctors on the coasts already had access, Rios started the conference from scratch.

"In those days when we started, we were in such a tough situation here in Texas, I just started it," he said.

Rios said he is not pleased that

media and public attention has shifted off HIV.

"That is a terrible mistake. It's very tragic. We cannot fail to recognize the advances in treatment, which is wonderful, but we still need to emphasize prevention and education," he said. "And the key to prevention and education is to keep talking about it."

The attitude in the United States sets the standard for the world, and that is a phenomenon unlike any in history, Rios said. The U.S. should be setting a better example.

"I don't think humanity has ever seen anything like (the way the rest of the world looks to the U.S. for leadership)," he said. "Whatever is important to the country will be important to the world."

We cannot fail to recognize the advances in treatment, which is wonderful, but we still need to emphasize prevention and education

—Dr. Rios

He said he considered canceling the conference last year, but members of the community persuaded him to continue it. He expects there will eventually be a time when the conference is no longer necessary.

"There is no doubt in my mind that there will be a vaccine that will prevent the spread of this disease. We have really come to understand this virus now," he said. "It will never be too soon for it to be over."

INFO

The 11th Annual Houston Conference on AIDS in America

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A GUIDE TO BETTER HEALTH

Losing your weight room fear

by JOHN AARON

From my own experience I can remember the feeling of excitement and extreme anxiety the first time I ever walked into a gym. Adrenaline pumped through my body so hard, I thought I might pass out from the rush. After all, it's enough to make your brain scramble and your head ache, especially for those of us that were never very adept at sports or physical coordination. But, like all experiences that cause us to grow and better ourselves, it doesn't take very long to overcome our fears and begin embracing the positive results that enhance our lives.

Typically, for many "non-athletic" individuals facing the reality of fading youth, there are two paths an individual can follow. One is to do something about it, the other is to ignore it completely. Let's review these two options as they apply to the experience of one person in particular. We'll call her Rachel.

With her 40th birthday fast approaching, Rachel had two premonitions of her future, and neither of them looked very attractive to her. First, she could see herself as a frumpy old woman—not unlike Aunt Bea in "The Andy Griffith Show." She would be fat, and when she'd stoop over her arms would droop and jiggle like gelatin gone mad, and she would shuffle herself through her daily chores with her hair done up in a frazzled bun. The other nightmare would have her walking into a weight room at her local health club. Here, she would accidentally whack someone in the head while struggling to lift a three-pound dumbbell. She'd also nearly get crushed by a weight machine that appeared to be more of a contraption meant for torture during the inquisition than something intended to "tone and strengthen" her legs. And, to top it all off, her desperate attempt to find someone to lend her a helping hand would only be met by the callused, patronizing glare of a bodybuilder—cum—gym-Nazi with arms that could open doors from the hinged side.

From this view, you can see that Rachel's options looked pretty bleak. However, what it doesn't show is that she has the power to change both of these scenarios for the best. So, at the risk of humiliation, she put her pride aside and entered the doors of a fitness facility for the first time. An incredible success it was not. But, so what? As a child, had she given up on her first

try, she would have never learned how to ride a bike or eventually drive a car. Right?

Walking into a room filled with monstrous machines, several of which resemble the morphing of a dentist's chair or something straight out of "Robo Cop," can be pretty intimidating. You stare at each one and wonder to yourself: What is that? Where do I sit? Do I sit? What does it do? Do I push or do I pull? And, most importantly, has anyone ever been killed on this thing?

In this new surrounding everything seems alien to you. Or, because everyone else seems to know what they are doing and they are all performing elaborate exercises, perhaps it is you that feels like the alien, and secretly you think that everyone is staring at those creatures you call your thighs. All of this can be scary, but don't give up. Rachel didn't. Instead, she took a deep breath and moved on to her next exercise. After all, she was doing this for herself and no one else.

However, there is another alternative you might want to try if you aren't as bold as Rachel but are still serious about beginning a weight training program but don't know where to start. This is where hiring a personal trainer could be a tremendous help to you. With a personal trainer, you will not only have a guided tour of what all those hideous machines are for, but you will also learn about using correct exercise techniques, and will also learn how to set realistic goals for yourself. Additionally, when you make an appointment with a trainer, you'll be less likely to "chicken-out," make excuses, and miss your workouts. Besides that, with a personal trainer you won't feel like you have to face that bizarre world of Spandex all by yourself.

In any case, take heart. You need only a few trips to the gym to banish your fears about exercise, and surprisingly, not many more to start seeing fairly stunning results for your efforts. Before you know it, those obstacles that prevented you from reaching your body's full potential will be removed. Once that has happened, you will realize that there is virtually nothing that can prevent you from enjoying the benefits of exercise.

John Aaron is a nationally certified personal trainer, member of the International Assoc. of Fitness Professionals and owner of Muscle Mechanics.

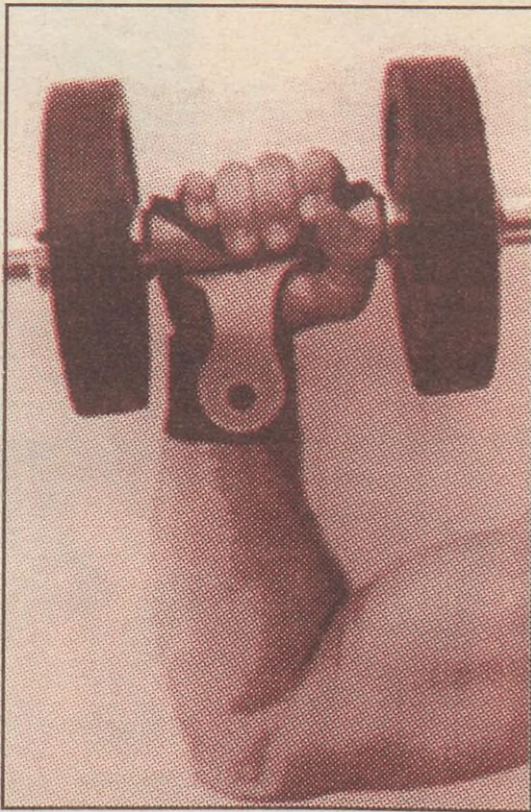


photo by Gary Laird

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Patricia Salvato, MD-Medical Director

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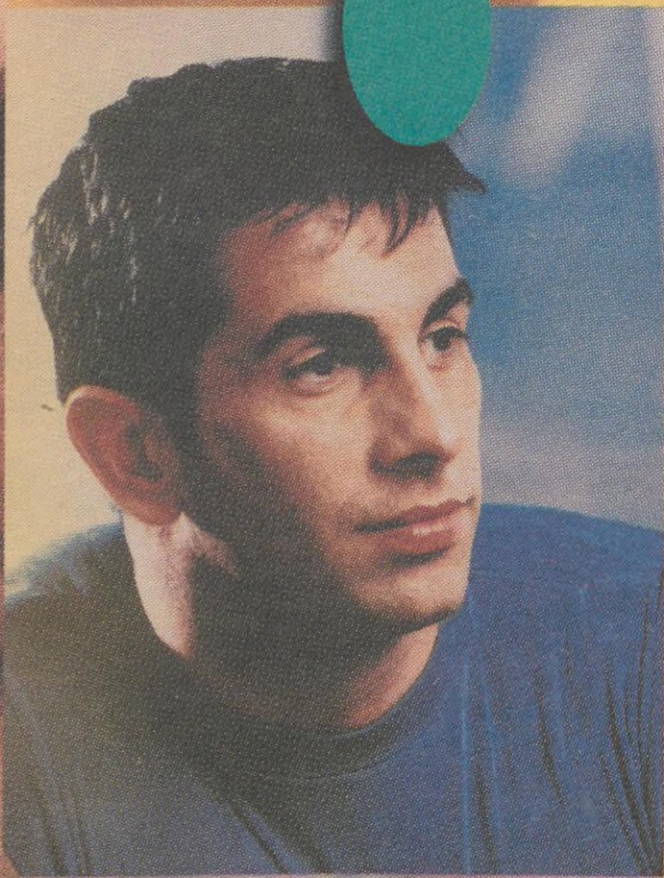
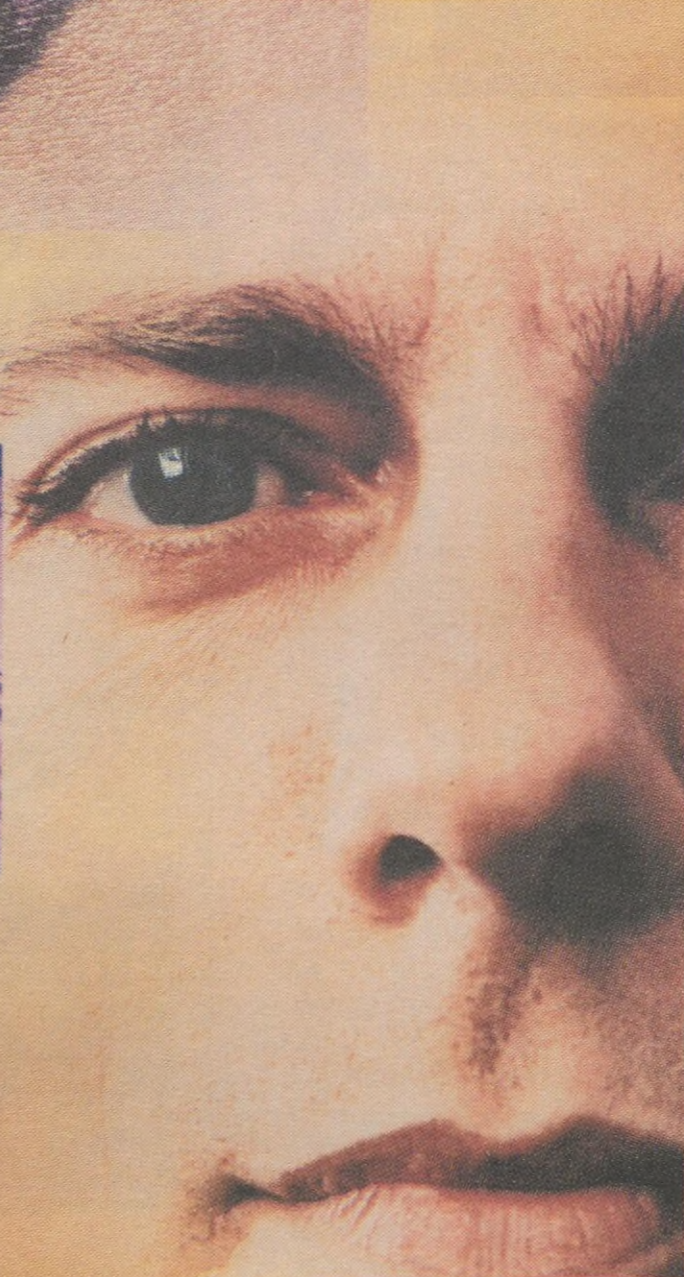
drug cocktail / work / side effects

why

Can't someone make

HIV THERAPY

less complicated?



food interactions / balance

someone just did!

Once Daily
SUSTIVATM
 efavirenz



SUSTIVATM is the first HIV drug approved to be taken once-a-day as part of your combination therapy. Just take three 200 mg capsules together once daily, with or without food; high fat meals should be avoided. Your doctor may suggest taking SUSTIVA at bedtime to reduce any side effects you may experience.

SUSTIVA, an NNRTI*, must be used in combination with other HIV drugs.

SUSTIVA is tough on HIV. It reduces the amount of virus in your blood and increases the number of CD4 cells. SUSTIVA can even be used in young children, 3 years of age or older. This is based on results from controlled clinical trials at 24 weeks. Presently, there are no results from controlled clinical trials showing the long-term effects of SUSTIVA.

SUSTIVA has manageable side effects.

Most side effects are mild to moderate and can be managed. The most significant side effects associated with SUSTIVA therapy have been nervous system symptoms (dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating and/or abnormal dreams) and rash. These usually subside within the first two to four weeks of treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. Taking SUSTIVA at bedtime may help make nervous system symptoms less noticeable.

**Now listed
 among preferred
 anti-HIV drugs
 in government
 guidelines.¹**

Pregnancy should be avoided in women receiving SUSTIVA because birth defects have been seen in primates dosed with SUSTIVA. Barrier contraception should always be used in combination with other methods of contraception.

Talk to your doctor when you start taking SUSTIVA.

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Always tell your doctor if you are taking, starting or changing any prescription or non-prescription medicine when taking SUSTIVA. Your doctor may change your medicines or change their dose. You should discuss your prior medical conditions (such as mental illness, substance abuse, hepatitis, etc.) with your doctor before taking SUSTIVA.

We know that coping with HIV is difficult enough. Your treatment doesn't have to be.

Ask your doctor about SUSTIVA. For more important information see the next page for Patient Information about SUSTIVA.

FOR HIV

**Finally, a once daily medication to treat HIV.
 SUSTIVA. It's about time.
 www.sustiva.com**

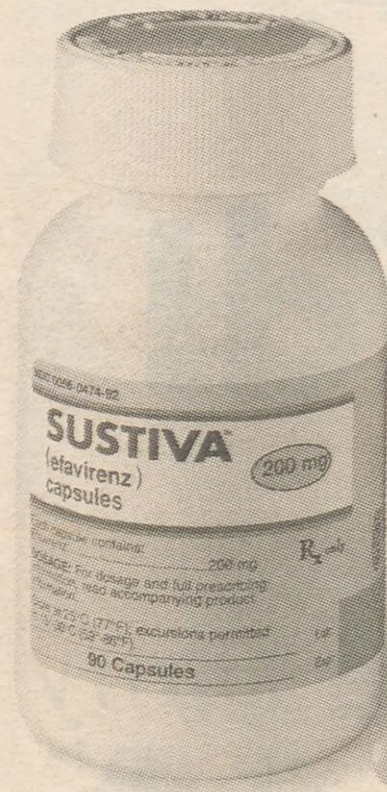
*NNRTI - non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor.

For more information on SUSTIVA, call 1-800-4PHARMA or visit our website at <http://www.sustiva.com>
 For more information on the updated DHHS Guidelines, a PDF file of the guidelines is available at <http://www.hivatis.org>

1. Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in HIV-Infected Adults and Adolescents. Panel on Clinical Practices for Treatment of HIV infection, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), December 1998.

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DuPont Pharmaceuticals



Once Daily
SUSTIVA[™]
 efavirenz

SUSTIVA[™] (efavirenz) capsules
 Patient Information about SUSTIVA*

(sus-TEE-vah)

for HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Infection

Generic name: efavirenz (eh-FAH-vih-rehnz)

Please read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA. Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. Don't treat this leaflet as your only source of information about SUSTIVA. Always discuss SUSTIVA with your doctor when you start taking your medicine and at every visit. You should remain under a doctor's care when using SUSTIVA. You should not change or stop treatment without first talking to your doctor.

What is SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is a medicine used to help treat HIV, the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

How does SUSTIVA work?

SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (called "viral load"). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells (a type of immune cell in blood). SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

Does SUSTIVA cure HIV or AIDS?

SUSTIVA is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important that you remain under the care of your doctor.

Does SUSTIVA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

How should I take SUSTIVA?

- The dose of SUSTIVA for adults is 600 mg (three 200 mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).
- Take SUSTIVA at the same time each day. You should take SUSTIVA at bedtime during the first few weeks or if you have side effects, such as dizziness or trouble concentrating (see **What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?**).
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water, juice, milk or soda. You may take SUSTIVA with or without meals; however, SUSTIVA should not be taken with a high fat meal.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away. If you do miss a dose, do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.

Can children take SUSTIVA?

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

Who should not take SUSTIVA?

Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to SUSTIVA or any of its ingredients.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor right away if you:

- Are pregnant or want to become pregnant
- Are breast-feeding
- Have problems with your liver, or have had hepatitis
- Start or change any medicine
- Have side effects while taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz)
- Have a history of mental illness, substance or alcohol abuse

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams a few hours after starting treatment with SUSTIVA. These feelings may be less noticeable if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime. They also tend to go away after you've taken the medicine for a few weeks. Rarely, patients have more serious side effects that may affect mood or ability to think clearly. These side effects occur more often in patients with a history of mental illness or substance abuse. Tell your doctor promptly if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. There is the possibility that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs. You should avoid driving or operating machinery if you are having these side effects.

One of the most common side effects is rash. These rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor promptly.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea. However, this is not a complete list of side effects reported with SUSTIVA when taken with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss a more complete list of side effects with you.

Please contact your doctor immediately before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects. Tell your doctor or other healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

What about birth control, pregnancy, or breast-feeding?

Women should not become pregnant while taking SUSTIVA. Birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. You should use a condom or diaphragm in addition to other methods of birth control while taking SUSTIVA. Inform your doctor immediately if you are pregnant. If you want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor. Do not take SUSTIVA if you are breast-feeding. Talk to your doctor if you are breast-feeding your baby.

Can I take other medicines with SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines (including ones for HIV). Your doctor may change your medicines or change their doses. For this reason, it is very important to:

- Let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- Tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your medicines when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA:**

- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

The following medicines may need to be changed or have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA:**

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Fortovase® (saquinavir)
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin)

How should I keep SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is available as 50 mg, 100 mg, and 200 mg capsules.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59°-86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

How can I learn more about SUSTIVA?

Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider if you have questions about either SUSTIVA or HIV. For additional information you can visit the SUSTIVA website at <http://www.sustiva.com>.

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use it for any other condition or give it to anybody else. Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children. If you suspect that more than the prescribed dose of this medicine has been taken, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

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DuPont Pharmaceuticals

Wilmington, DE 19880
 Issued September, 1998

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 16



Lesbians In Business will host Houston Comet star, **Kim Perrot** at 6:30 p.m. at Kim Son Restaurant, 2001 Jefferson. Tickets cost \$40, 713-529-8484.

Registration for "Spring Iniquity VIII" National Leather Association: Houston, at Nighthawks, 9 p.m., 2923 Main. (Late registration at Mary's at 10 a.m. April 17). Tickets cost \$40, 713-524-4759.

April 17

Theater LaB Houston's "Blood Brothers" at 8 p.m. Tickets cost \$20-22, 713-868-7516.



Workout For Hope kickoff party, 6:30 p.m., City Streets, 5078 Richmond. There is no cost, 281-315-1033.

April 18

Auditions for Theatre Suburbia's "Catfish Moon" at 2 p.m., 1410 West 43rd at Oak Forest. The theater is looking for three male and one female actor in the 30-40 age group. 713-682-3525.

April 20

Project CAESAR's five-week forum on gay and bisexual sex issues "CAESAR Sex" at 7 p.m. at AIDS Foundation Houston, 3202 Wesleyan Annex. There is no cost, 713-623-6796.



Daytimer Alert—April 24

A community forum, 12:30—4:30 p.m. at the Double Tree Hotel, 400 Dallas. The Body Positive Wellness Center, the Houston Buyers Club and Program for Wellness Restoration are bringing four speakers from around the nation to speak to issues impacting the HIV+ community. There is no cost, 713-520-6630

Ongoing

The **Houston Activist Network** is conducting a design contest for a logo for the four-month-old e-mail network for the gay and lesbian community. The contest is open to the public and final judging will be done by current members of the network. The design should be capable of easy recognition, whether large or small, in either digital or print form. The logo will be used to publicize the network. Designs are due by April 30; the winner will be announced May 12. For more information: brandon_wolf@email.msn.com or <http://gay-houston.com/han>.

The **Bering Support Group** and **Montrose Clinic** are presenting, "Man-2-Man: The Safe Connection," a four-week series on Tuesdays now to May 4. The series will look at safe sex, HIV and STDs, self-esteem, self-efficacy, dating and other topics. The series is held at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold. For more information call 713-830-3083.

Out on the Bayou

HOUSTON VOICE • APRIL 16, 1999

A GUIDE FOR YOUR LEISURE TIME



LaBelle in Houston to promote her latest culinary creations

by EARL DITTMAN

Patti LaBelle has never been a woman to rest on her laurels.

"From the time I was a little girl, I've never been able to sit still—I've always been on the go, doing the things that people said I couldn't," the 54-year old, multi-Grammy Award-winning chanteuse, and now cookbook author, said. "And, when I do something, let me tell you, honey, I always try to be the best at it. If it is worth doing, it is worth doing right!"

Having long ago conquered the world of pop and "R and B" music—first as a part of The Bluebelles, LaBelle and then, as a solo artist—this self-proclaimed "diva" has been spending the last half of the 1990s focusing her seemingly unlimited energy on several non-musical endeavors. In addition to developing her own line of cosmetics and marketing a popular perfume, "The Patti LaBelle Fragrance," She has become a full-fledged, best-selling author. Her 1996 autobiography "Don't

Block The Blessings: Revelations Of A Lifetime" became an international hit upon publication, spending several weeks on the *New York Times* bestsellers list.

Her recent creation, "LaBelle Cuisine: Recipes To Sing About," is a cookbook of her favorite culinary productions. It is currently riding high on the charts at Crossroads Market Bookstore and Café. Her Houston-based fans will have the rare opportunity to meet the diva, face-to-face, when she travels to the Bayou City, April 18 at 2 p.m. to sign copies of "LaBelle Cuisine" at Crossroads.

It appears as if LaBelle still possess a Midas Touch, turning everything she touches into gold. "I had a real good feeling that people wanted to read about what I had to say concerning my career and my life," LaBelle said, revealing the reason she believed "Don't Block The Blessings" became a success. "And, more importantly, people liked it because it was real, it was really from my heart. If some-

thing is from the soul—whether it's music or writing—people will respond to it in a big way. In this day and age, if you sing or write about the things you really care about, people are going to want it, because there's too much junk out there that's just done to make a buck. I want the things that I do to bring joy and happiness to people's lives."

Her desire to continue to touch the soul (and stomachs) of her fans was the impetus behind LaBelle's decision to publish the cookbook.

"If I'm not recording or touring, you can always find me in the kitchen, cooking my heart out," she said with a laugh. "One of the greatest, simplest pleasures in life, for me, is cooking for other people. I love to see people's faces light up after they've tasted something I've spent my time and patience cooking. It brings me tremendous joy.

"After the last book became such a suc-

➤ Continued on page 20

Out In Print

BOOK REVIEWS

Pulitzer Prize Winner: The Hours

► Depth of Woolf emerges in this accessible homage

by DEBBIE FRAKER

Michael Cunningham proves once again that he is an exceptionally talented writer of literary fiction. While we often categorize books by the gender of the author, Cunningham writes good fiction to be enjoyed by everyone. "The Hours," the author's latest effort, is winning praises from readers and award committees. On April 12 it was awarded the prestigious Pulitzer Prize in fiction.

"The Hours" is a tribute to Virginia Woolf with lots of references to her novel "Mrs. Dalloway" and to Woolf's life. But don't let that intimidate you if you've never read Virginia Woolf or if you don't know anything about her life. Casual readers can enjoy the sheer beauty of this book without any preparation.

It also happens to be a perfect novel for curling up under a blanket on a cold, rainy winter day and

reading when it's too dreary to do anything else.

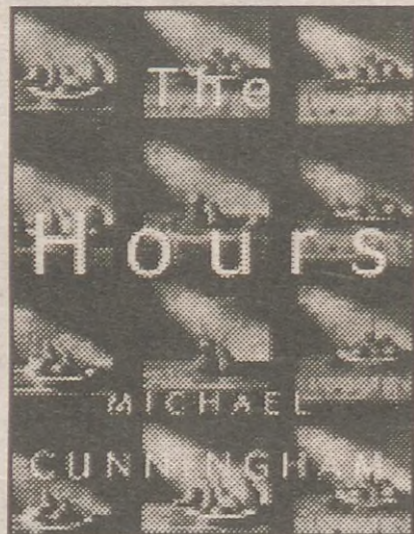
"The Hours" parallels the lives of three women: Mrs. Woolf; Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Brownin. The emphasis on their marital status, his naming each of them "Mrs.," is significant. Each woman sees herself, to a large degree, through her relationships to her family and friends.

In the chapters on Virginia Woolf, Cunningham fictionalizes Woolf's life at the time that she was painstakingly writing "Mrs. Dalloway." With the insight of a writer who's been there, he shows the struggle Woolf has with the nuances of characterization and plot. The novel

vividly dramatizes Woolf's personal battles with sanity and the ways her emotional state may have effected her writing.

The Mrs. Dalloway of Cunningham's novel is given this nickname by a writer friend of hers who thinks she has something in common with the character created by Virginia Woolf. She is really Clarissa Vaughan, who lives in New York City with her lover, Sally.

Clarissa's daily activities are quite similar to the Mrs. Dalloway in Woolf's novel



Woolf

if that Mrs. Dalloway had lived in the later part of the 20th century and had a best friend dying of AIDS.

In this series Cunningham allows the main characters to be gay, something Woolf was never really able to do, though she often made vague, depressing references to lost love. He makes parallels between the AIDS crisis and the wars of Woolf's lifetime, but doesn't hit you over the head with his political and historical subtexts. Rather than pontificating in a self-consciously literary tone, he buries his message neatly in the narrative, as befits his talent.

The third character, Mrs. Brown, is a young woman in the 1940s whose husband and child intimidate her. She wants to be the perfect wife and mother, but she also wishes she didn't have to be either and longs for escape. Her symptoms of depression show some similarities to Woolf's, and she flirts with death as if it were a potential lover.

Tying the three stories neatly together with one theme, Mrs. Brown reads Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway" almost obsessively.

The excerpts quoted from Woolf's novel in these chapters provide the only context the reader needs. Cunningham is obviously a fan of Virginia Woolf. By choosing to work with "Mrs. Dalloway," he pays tribute to one of the strongest feminist statements Woolf made in her fiction. She placed value on the details important to an individual woman: her relationships with friends and family, and even the little things like picking out flowers for a party.

She did this in the kind of respectful language usually reserved for the men's worlds of wars, dynasties and strategies. Cunningham appreciates the details important to these three women. He tackles the inner needs of two mothers (one straight, one lesbian) and one of the world's most powerful female writers without stopping to question his right to do so, and he succeeds brilliantly.

If he leads you back to read Woolf's incredible fiction, then you are doubly blessed.

INFO

The Hours
by Michael Cunningham
230 pages, \$22

What your neighbors are reading . . .

- 1 **Are You Ready?**
by Rik Isensee, \$13.95
- 2 **LaBelle Cuisine**
by Patti LaBelle, \$25
- 3 **The Other Woman**
by Ann O'Leary, \$11.95
- 4 **Abide With Me**
by E. Lynn Harris, \$24.95
- 5 **Short History Of A Prince**
by Jane Hamilton, \$12.95
- 6 **Vittorio The Vampire**
by Anne Rice, \$19.95
- 7 **Respecting The Soul**
by Keith Boykin, \$10
- 8 **The Word Is Out—2nd Ed.**
edited by Chris Glaser, \$14
- 9 **Both Sides**
by Saxon Bennett, \$11.95
- 10 **Love Ellen**
by Betty DeGeneres, \$24

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LaBelle Cuisine

Recipes to Sing About

on

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at 2 PM

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All copies of *LaBelle Cuisine* must be purchased at Crossroads Market in order to be signed.

COMING APRIL 29TH!
E. LYNN HARRIS
will sign copies of his new book
Abide with Me

On Stage

THEATER REVIEWS

Simple, sweet melody of Fugard's 'Valley Song'

by D.L. GROOVER

The time is the present. The place is a fertile valley farm in South Africa. Apartheid is over. Elections have been held; there is a new constitution. Change is everywhere.

Abraam "Buks" Jonkers, a widowed tenant farmer who can cultivate his hard-scrabble plot into a veritable garden, knows enough of the world to realize that change is constant and inevitable. The loving "colored" tenders of these fields are being displaced by the white owners who have returned to claim their land. Worst of all, his sole surviving relative, his beloved granddaughter Veronica, whom he has raised since birth, has a very potent dream of her own: Independence in the big city.

If change is sure, it is also frightening. Abraam's daughter moved out 18 years ago to live in Johannesburg, had an affair with a "rotter," and died in childbirth. Abraam doesn't want that to happen to his beloved Veronica. She must stay here in the Karoo Valley where her roots are planted "as deeply as the walnut tree." She, of course, deriving her strength of character from her God-fearing Oupa, will not hear of it. She sings of traveling "far, far away." She must "wake up and dream properly."

For all his professional career, Athol Fugard, the preeminent South African playwright, has battled racism and apartheid. His voice has been a constant cry for freedom and equality.

"Valley Song," his first work after the demolition of apartheid, is a miniature: beautifully detailed, rich in atmosphere and language, and full of humanity.

Sad to say, though, it is also slightly predictable and a bit thin.

We'd be shocked if Oupa didn't oppose Veronica's choice to leave home, but we'd also get a better play.

If the themes vaporize before the slight play's even half-finished, what lingers long after the conclusion of this 80-minute drama are the polished performances and radiant staging.

Last seen as the fervent social worker in Ensemble Theatre's "Blues for an Alabama Sky," Melita Hawkins brings dreamer, Veronica, to expressive life. On the cusp of adulthood, she is bursting to experience it.

Carrying an apple crate, she plunks it down in the soft soil and uses it for her dream stage as she sings her songs of independence. Her voice may not be unique or strong, but her dreams are large, and we believe in her. In frustration at her Oupa's stubbornness, she kicks over his spade and furiously digs up those dreaded pumpkin seeds of his. She might as well be clawing at his heart. She plays this transfixing moment for all its worth and plays it beautifully.

At the premiere in 1996, the dual role of Author/Abraam Jonkers was played by Athol Fugard himself, but I can't imagine



BRUCE BENNETT

Melita Hawkins in 'Valley Song.'

anyone, not even the august author, being any better than Manning Mpinduzi-Mott.

In his overalls and battered cargo vest, Mpinduzi-Mott completely inhabits this stalwart farmer and invests in him all the traits that have made the South Africans victorious. He might not be able to read, but Abraam, like his Biblical counterpart, is a father of his nation: strong, proud, able to support his family under the most trying times, and smart enough to let go when the younger generation finds its wings.

Whether he's gleeful at the miracle of pumpkin seeds springing to life, or standing a bit bowed at the unique mountain landscape encasing his beloved valley, or soliloquizing to his dead wife over the "world that's gone crooked," his Abraam is testament indeed to man's abiding goodness and strength.

The simple, yet effective, setting by Thom Guthrie—a square plot of rich earth with a hint of tin plate or a few wooden pickets at the corners—is ample playing area enough for this drama. Evocatively lit by Kirk Markley, the production plays seamlessly under the fluid direction of Alex Allen Morris.

Like a tune from Mozart that is so simple it's deceptively haunting, Fugard's latest play, though not very original in itself, has its own distinct timbre and is a worthwhile stop on Houston's International Festival. It just could use some more notes.

INFO Athol Fugard's "Valley Song"
Stages Repertory Theatre
3201 Allen Parkway
Tickets \$18-30
713-527-0220

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of a Nightingale The Frosted Glass Coffin The Glass Menagerie
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the ultimate seduction by Charlotte Chandler & Ray Stricklyn
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Anymore Moony's Kid Don't Cry The Mutilated The Night
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Summer Summer and Smoke Sweet Bird of Youth Talk to Me
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27 Wagons Full of Cotton The Two-Character Play Vieux Carre

LaBelle in Houston to promote her latest culinary creations

continued from page 17

cess, I thought to myself, 'OK, I've feed my fans' minds, I guess now I need to 'really' feed them.' A cookbook was just the next logical step for me. I've already revealed all my personal secrets (in "Don't Block The Blessings"), I figured telling my cooking ones would be easy in comparison."

And what delectable, tasty culinary revelations they are! With recipes for delicacies like "Make-You-Wanna-Holler Maryland Crab Cakes" and "Say-My-Name Smothered Chicken and Gravy," to name just a few, "LaBelle Cuisine" is not just another garden-variety celebrity grub manual. It's soul food with an emphasis on "soul."

"While reminiscing for this book, I realized why cooking has been such a labor of love for me," LaBelle writes in the introduction to the book. "Because it's as much about friendship and fellowship as it is about food. Because, behind the whole process—the shopping, the planning, the preparing, the serving—cooking is really about love. Cooking is a way to show it, share it, serve it. Cooking is as much about nourishment for the soul as it is for the stomach."

While most of the meals contained in the "LaBelle Cuisine" are personally concocted dishes, many of the recipes were garnered from the cupboards of family members—some dating back several generations.

"Some of these dishes have been in the family for ages," LaBelle said. "There's even one from my grandmother ('Flying

Biscuits') who passed away even before I was born. I mean, in my family, cooking was a real communal experience. Everybody pitched in and everybody learned how to make these great dishes."

Since discovering she was a diabetic, however, LaBelle has had to modify the way many of her best-loved dishes were prepared. But don't expect "LaBelle Cuisine" to be completely filled with low-calorie, cholesterol- and fat-free recipes.

"You can't take away all the bad stuff that makes it tastes so good," she said with a grin. "There are some dishes (in the book) that are pretty rich and high in calories. You can still eat them, baby, it's just like everything else in life, you have to practice moderation."

As a spokesman for the African American Diabetes Action Project, LaBelle is contributing some of her recipes from "LaBelle Cuisine" to the organization's nationally-distributed brochure. Additionally, she's recorded several public service announcements and filmed an educational video on how to deal with diabetes in everyday life.

"I give back to the community all that I can," she said of her work with the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health-sponsored project. "As an entertainer, I feel like that is one of my responsibilities. With all the good fortune that I've experienced in my life, it's important that I share it with as many people that I can, especially the folks that helped me get where I am today—my fans."

After she finishes her short, 10-city book tour to promote "LaBelle Cuisine," she plans to head back into the studio to record the follow-up to the Grammy-winning "Patti LaBelle Live! One Night Only."

"I absolutely love working on the books, the cosmetics and perfume, because they are very important to show that I can do other things than just sing," she said. "But, the one thing that I can't do on my road to discovering new things is to neglect what people love me for the most—my singing. It's something that I love to do, too. So, I'll never give it up. As long as the fans want to hear me do my thing, I'll keep giving them all that they want. That's one thing you can always count on from Ms. LaBelle!"

2 1/2 cups water
3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil or 2 teaspoons dried
2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano or 2 teaspoons dried
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
Salt

1 pound spaghetti
Freshly grated Parmesan or Romano cheese

To make the sauce: In a Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the ground turkey and turkey sausage. Cook, breaking the turkey up well with a spoon, until it loses its raw look, about 10 minutes. Add the onion and garlic and cook until the onion softens, about five minutes. Stir in the tomatoes, tomato paste, water, basil, oregano, and red pepper flakes. (If using fresh herbs, stir them in during the last 10 minutes of cooking). Bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened, about 40 minutes. Season with salt to taste.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the spaghetti and cook, stirring occasionally, until barely tender, about nine minutes. Drain well. Transfer the spaghetti to a serving bowl.

Top with half of the sauce and serve immediately, with the cheese passed on the side.

The Spirit's-In-It Spaghetti with Meaty Tomato Sauce

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Sauce

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 pound ground turkey (not ground turkey breast)
1 pound Italian-style turkey sausage, cut into 1-inch chunks
1 large onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
2 6-ounce cans tomato paste



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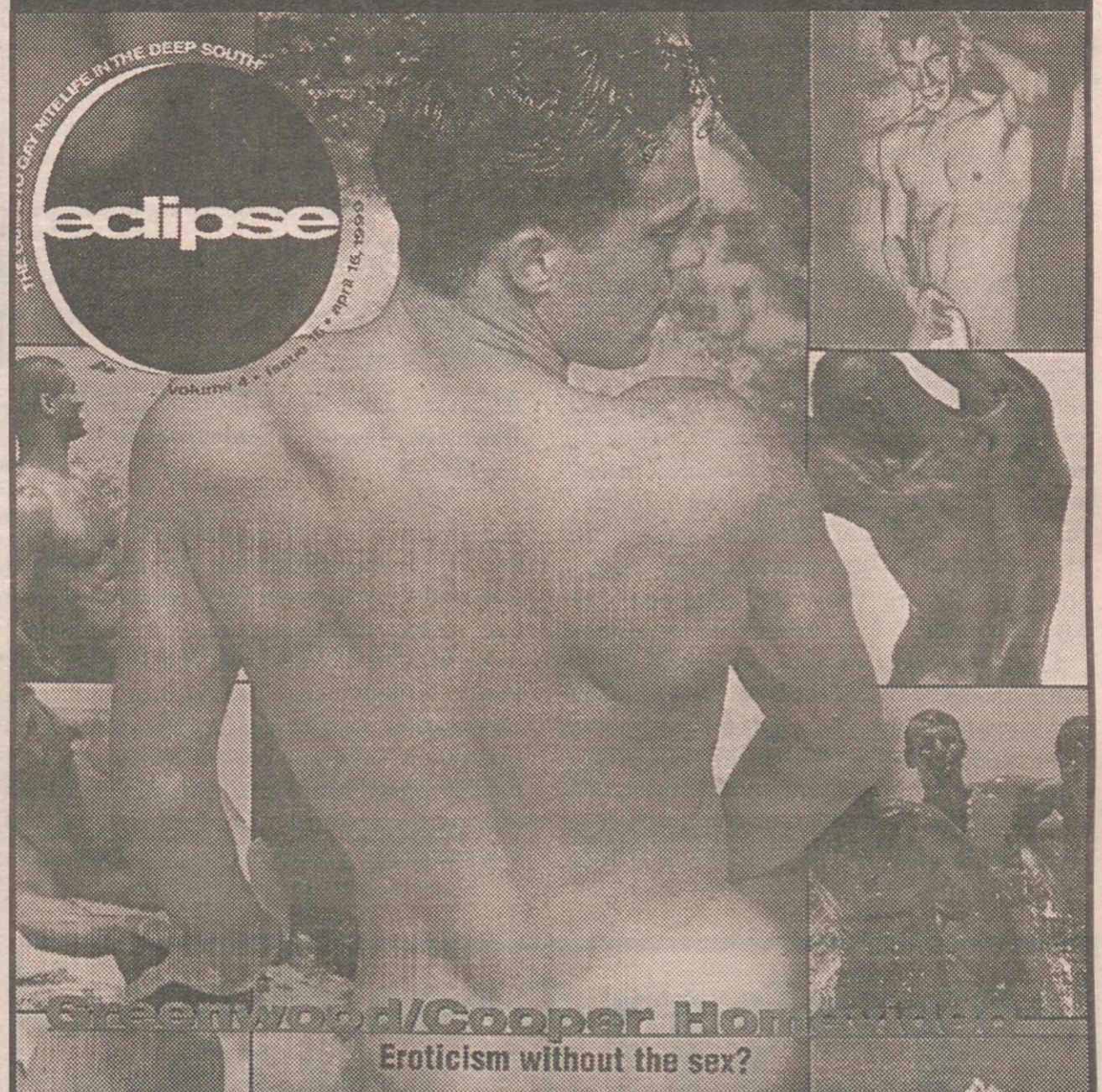
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AVAILABLE AT LOCATIONS ALL OVER HOUSTON

'Confession' passionate primer on Tennessee Williams

by RICH ARENSCHIEDT

Tennessee Williams, that quintessential southern bard, is the latest in a seemingly long line of playwrights to have the stage spotlight turned on them.

In "Confessions of A Nightingale" by Charlotte Chandler and Ray Strickland, Williams is laid bare on the Little Room Downstairs Theater stage now through April 24.

We think we know Williams through his work, and to some extent we do. The vignettes of American life, as in his tour de force "The Glass Menagerie" (1942) and "A Streetcar Named Desire" (1944), both illuminate the darkened Dixie Williams inhabited.

Much has been written about Williams' upbringing and its effect on his work. He was born in Columbus, Mississippi in 1911, the son of a salesman and, by all accounts, a domineering mother well on her way to eccentricity. He was plagued by illnesses as child and sought the comfort of his grandfather, an Episcopal priest with an extensive library. Much to the chagrin of his father, Williams began his love affair with literature in that room, instead of joining the other neighborhood boys at sports.

The playwright's family relocated to St. Louis in 1918, a move from which they never really recovered. After the genteel acceptance (whether real or feigned) of the South, the urban cruelty and industrialization of the Midwest was too much of a shock for his entire family, most of whom



RJ Soule is Tennessee Williams in Little Room Downstairs Theater's 'Confessions Of A Nightingale.'

were already on the cusp of dysfunctionality. While there Williams attended college where he flunked military officer training and discovered that alcohol was the perfect antidote for shyness. He worked in a shoe factory in 1934, due to the Depression, and in 1936 suffered his first nervous breakdown reputedly due to long factory hours coupled with his compulsive late night writing. He again sought the solace of his grandfather and moved to

Memphis to live with him and recuperate.

The year 1940 was the beginning of a good decade for Williams and a time when he began to receive recognition (and money) for his work. He was hired by MGM as a writer. Ironically, they rejected "The Glass Menagerie." The rejection was a source of pride for Williams, given the works subsequent phenomenal success. The work appeared on Broadway for 561 performances closing in 1946 and marking Williams (at age 34) as a guiding force in American Theater.

The following year "Streetcar..." opened lasting 855 performances and winning Williams a Pulitzer Prize. Throughout the 1950s, Williams saw many of his stage works transformed into film by the burgeoning Hollywood film industry. He divided his time between the east and west coasts, New Orleans and his home in Key West, the locale for "Confessions of A Nightingale."

Much of the conversation in "Confessions..." is related to the unique position that Williams maintained amongst American literati in the middle of this century.

Even when fully recognized and in command of his art form, he was regarded as controversial. His works presented post World War II audiences with depictions of violence, homosexuality, alcoholism, and rape that had never before been seen on the American stage.

The dialogue for "Confessions..." is taken from actual conversations that

author Charlotte Chandler had with Williams at his Key West home. The play, adapted by Ray Strickland, borrows heavily from Chandler's book, "The Ultimate Seduction, Confessions of a Nightingale."

Williams discusses his sexuality in "Confessions..." almost as if it were an old hat that he had worn for years. Some of the show's most heartfelt moments occur when Williams (played by actor R.J. Soule) discusses his companion Frank Merlo. Merlo and Williams met in 1947 when they were both in New Orleans. William drew much of his personal and artistic strength from his partner.

In spite of Williams' companions extended bouts with alcohol pills and depression, Merlo maintained a presence in the playwright's life. Merlo contracted lung cancer and after a difficult illness died in 1961. The recollections of this partnership in "Confessions..." provide some of the show's most moving moments.

This show is full of lighthearted quips, touching familial memories and incidents of a life lived with passion, difficulty, and exuberance "Confessions of a Nightingale" is a great opportunity to get to know someone you thought you knew.

INFO

Confessions of a Nightingale

The Little Room Downstairs Theater
2326 Bissonnet
Through April 24
Tickets \$15
713-523-0791

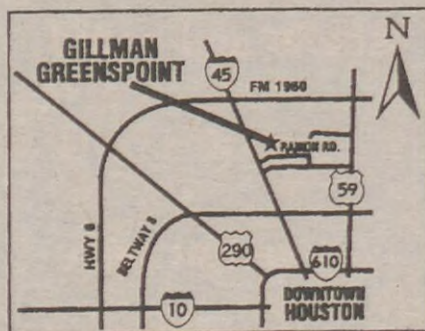
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Community Calendar

► Friday, April 16

Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic at Club Inergy 8 p.m. to midnight, Rich's 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Cousin's 8 p.m. to midnight. 713-520-2000.

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) meets. 713-942-7002.

Houston Tennis Club at 7:30 p.m. 713-864-8468.

Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center at 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.

Lesbian Avengers. Toopee's, 1830 W. Alabama at 7 p.m.

Q-Patrol walks the streets at 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.

Kolbe Project. Park Plaza Hospital visitation. 713-861-1800.

Positive Art Workshop, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer at 713-526-1118.

Lesbian and Gay Voices. KPFT 90.1 FM, 7 p.m. 713-526-5738.

Movie Time at the Kolbe Project. 7:30 p.m. 713-522-8182.

Mishpach Alizim Shabbat Services. 8 p.m. 713-748-7079.

Co-Dependents Anonymous. 7:30 p.m. At MCCR. 713-861-9149.

Healing Eucharist. 7 p.m. Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas Ave. 713-222-2593.

Life Begins at Forty. 6:30 p.m. 1440 Harold St. 713-526-1017.

► Saturday, April 17

HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. Toyz Disco 9 p.m. to midnight. 713-520-2000.

After Hours. KPFT 90.1 FM, 12 a.m. to 3 a.m. 713-526-5738.

Q-Patrol walks the streets at 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.

Visual Arts Alliance. 10 a.m. 281-583-8408.

Rainbow Fishing Club meets. 713-526-7070.

Dignity mass at 7:30 p.m. for gay Catholics. 713-880-2872.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Rosary at 8 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.

► Sunday, April 18

The Women's Group. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) meets. 713-942-7002.

Rainbow Riders, a bicycle club for women. 713-869-1686.

FrontRunners. 9 a.m. 713-522-8021.

Lone Star Volleyball plays. 281-878-4629.

Houston Tennis Club. 10:30 a.m. 713-864-8468.

Church of the XII Apostles Anglican Rite Old Catholic Church. Holy Communion 10:30 a.m. at 239 Westheimer. 713-665-7903.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Holy Rite Eucharist I at 7:45 a.m.; Holy Rite Eucharist II at 8:55 a.m.; Education hour at 10 a.m.; Choral Eucharist at 11 a.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.

Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church. "Preaching the Gospel" at 11 a.m. 713-528-6756.

Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection. Services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. 713-861-9149.

Grace Lutheran Church. Sunday school for all ages at 9:30 a.m. Service at 10:30 a.m. 713-528-3269.

First Unitarian Universalist Church. Services at 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. 713-526-5200.

Community Gospel. Service at 11 a.m.; 7 p.m. Sunday School for children. 4305 Lillian. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.

Houston Mission Church. Service at 10:30 a.m. 713-529-8225.

Covenant Baptist Church. Service at 1:30 p.m.; education hour at 3 p.m. 713-668-8830.

Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. Services at 8:30 a.m., 10:50 a.m. Sunday school at 9:40 a.m. 713-526-1017.

MCCR. Handbell Choir rehearsal at 1:30 p.m. 713-861-9149.

Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County. 402 Church St. in Galveston. Service at 10:30 a.m. 409-765-8330.

Faith and Hope Fellowship. Service at 11 a.m. 713-520-7847.

First Congregational Church (Memorial). Service at 11 a.m. 713-468-9543 or fcc-houston.org.

Church of Kindred Spirits (Beaumont). Service at 7 p.m. 409-835-4765.

Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. Adult forum at 10 a.m. Service at 11 a.m. and noon. 1504 Wirt. 713-686-5876.

► Monday, April 19

TV Montrose. Hosted by Suzanne Anderson and Dan DeLeon. 8 p.m. Warner Cable Channel 74. 713-523-6302.

Gay Fathers/Fathers First support group, 8 p.m. 713-861-6181.

Calendar/Computer workshop for Pride Week, 7 p.m. 713-529-1223.

Outpatient Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center, 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Men Survivors of Sexual Abuse Group. Montrose Counseling Center. 6:15 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Gay Men Survivors of Domestic Violence support group. 713-526-1017.

Bering Support Network. Grief and Divorce Groups at 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.

Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.

AIDS Caregiver's Support Group. 6 p.m. 713-732-4300.

HIV testing. Free from AVES from 1 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. 713-626-2837.

Kolbe Project Park Plaza visitation. 713-861-1800.

AIDS Foundation Houston. Free creative writing class at 3 p.m. 713-623-6796.

FrontRunners. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.

Kolbe Project. Eucharist at 7:30 p.m. 713-861-1800.

Texas Medical Center Lambda. 5 p.m. 713-523-5539.

Integrity Houston. For gay and lesbian Episcopalians. 7:30 p.m. Autry House, 6265 Main.

► Tuesday, April 20

HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. Club Houston 8 p.m. to midnight. 713-520-2000.

Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous. 7 p.m., 239 Westheimer. 713-495-8009.

Gay Men HIV+ Psychotherapy. Montrose Counseling Center at 4:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Youth-Rap. 6:30 p.m. 713-822-8511.

Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center at 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.

AIDS Alliance of the Bay Area. 7 p.m. 713-488-4492.

PROTECT. An HIV-negative support group at 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.

Women Survivors of Childhood Abuse. Montrose Counseling Center at 6:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Kolbe Project. Park Plaza Visitation. 713-861-1800.

Bering Support Network. Lunch Bunch Gang at 11 a.m. 713-526-1017.

Love, Lust and Intimacy. Discussion group at 7 p.m. 713-524-2374.

MCCR. Tuesday night program at 7 p.m. 713-861-9149.

Maranatha Fellowship MCC. Home groups meet for fellowship, sharing God's word and prayer. 713-528-6756.

Men's Network. Discussion group for social, educational development of gay and bisexual men. 7 p.m. The Hollyfield Conference Center, 2700 Albany. 713-529-0037.

HIV support group. For men over 50. 7:30 p.m. Center for AIDS, 1407 Hawthorne.

Love, Lust and Intimacy. Improving communication and intimacy in relationships. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. 713-524-2374.

► Wednesday, April 21

Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams to people with HIV. 713-520-2000.

Houston Pride Band. Practices at Dignity Houston. 713-524-0218.

Houston Tennis Club. 7:30 p.m. 713-864-8468.

Women's Network. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond. 713-529-0037.

Men's Network. 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond. 713-529-0037.

Ongoing Mixed Living in Process. Group for men and women. 713-622-7250.

Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center, 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.

HIV survivor support group. 7 p.m. 713-782-4050.

Free Yoga classes. 7 p.m. 713-965-9642.

Bering Spiritual Support Group. 6:45 p.m. 713-526-1017.

Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. 713-830-3000.

BiNet of Houston. 7 p.m. 713-467-4380.

HIV testing. Free from AVES. 1 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. 713-626-2837.

Kolbe Project. Hospital visitation. 713-861-1800.

Houston Harpies Ice Hockey Team recruits. 713-802-1248.

Rainbow Ranglers. 8 p.m. at the BRB.

Lambda Rollerskating Club. Skating at 8 p.m. 713-933-5818.

Thomas Street Health Center Council. 2 p.m. 713-902-2231.

Healing and Happiness Through Wellness. 7 p.m. 713-623-6796.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Bible study at 12:30 p.m. 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.

MCCR. Bible Study 7:30 p.m.; service at 7 p.m. 713-861-9149.

Faith and Hope Fellowship. Service at 7:30 p.m. 713-520-7847.

Maranatha Fellowship MCC. Home groups meet for fellowship, sharing God's word and prayer. 713-528-6756.

Kolbe Project. Healing Service at 8 p.m. 713-861-1800.

Healing and Happiness Through Wellness. 7 p.m. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. 713-623-6796.

Rainbow Roller Skating. 8 p.m. Skateworld Northwest, 9514 Anderson Mill Road.

HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. Mary's 4 to 8 p.m.; Nighthawks 8 to midnight; Mela's 8 p.m. to midnight; Mobil unit at Pacific & Crocker. 713-520-2000.

► Thursday, April 22

Art Labs. The Art League at 1 p.m. 713-225-9411.

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Open rehearsal at 7 p.m. 713-521-7464.

Living in Process Groups. For gay men. 713-622-7250.

HIV+ Men Psychotherapy. Montrose Counseling Center, 1:15 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Relapse Prevention. Montrose Counseling Center, 2 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Outpatient Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center. 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center. 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Women's Therapy Group. Montrose Counseling Center. 5:30 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Meditation and Chanting Group. 7 p.m. 713-942-0923.

HIV Affected. CASA. 7 p.m. 713-796-2272.

HIV Survivor Support Group. 7 p.m., 2929 Unity Drive. 713-782-4050.

Center for the Healing of Racism. 7:30 p.m. 713-738-RACE.

FrontRunners at 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.

HIV Art Course Program. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer at 713-526-1118.

HIV Prevention Community Planning Group. 9 a.m. 713-794-9251.

Women's Clinic. Montrose Clinic, 713-830-3000.

Montrose Ice Picks. Skating. 8 p.m. 713-629-1432.

Faith and Hope Fellowship. Bible study 7 p.m. 713-520-7847.

Community Gospel. Choir practice. 6:30 p.m.; service at 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.

Kolbe Project. Ecumenical outreach to gays. 7 p.m. 713-522-8182.

Montrose Ice Picks. 8 p.m. Galleria Ice Rink, 5015 Westheimer. 713-629-1432.

BiNet Houston. Discussion group at 7:30 p.m. 713-467-7031.

HIV/AIDS Support Group. 2:30 at Family Service Center. 713-861-4849.

Women's HIV/AIDS Support Group. 7 p.m. Family Service Center. 713-247-3810.

HIV/AIDS Support Group. 7 p.m. Family Service Center in Conroe. 888-247-3810.

HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. Brazos River Bottom 4 to 8 p.m. 713-520-0000.

Gulf Coast Transgender Community. 7 p.m. Chances 1102 Westheimer. 713-780-4248.

► Friday, April 23

Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) meets. 713-942-7002.

Houston Tennis Club at 7:30 p.m. 713-864-8468.

Aftercare Group Treatment. Montrose Counseling Center at 6 p.m. 713-529-0037.

Frost Eye Clinic. Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.

Lesbian Avengers. Toopee's, 1830 W. Alabama at 7 p.m.

Q-Patrol walks the streets at 8:45 p.m. 713-528-SAFE.

Kolbe Project. Park Plaza Hospital visitation. 713-861-1800.

Positive Art Workshop, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Patrick Palmer at 713-526-1118.

Lesbian and Gay Voices. KPFT 90.1 FM, 7 p.m. 713-526-5738.

Movie Time at the Kolbe Project. 7:30 p.m. 713-522-8182.

Mishpach Alizim Shabbat Services. 8 p.m. 713-748-7079.

Co Dependents Anonymous. 7:30 p.m. At MCCR. 713-861-9149.

HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic. Rich's 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Cousin's 8 p.m. to midnight. 613-520-2000.

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

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Classifieds

Announcements

Author needs 5 male and 5 female volunteers to help workshop new farce two consecutive Sunday afternoons in June. Call Paul, 713.869.0708.

Bay Area Gays & Lesbians

BAGLES - New social group forming for those in the Clear Lake area and surrounding communities. For more information call 281.488.0537.

Let's Talk About CAESAR'S

Sex & Relationships

Project CAESAR, the Gay Men's Health Initiative at AIDS Foundation-Houston, announces its brand new forum call CAESAR Sex. This 5 week series forum will give gay/bisexual men in Houston a chance to get together to talk about sex, "bare-back" issues & other pertinent issues. CAESAR Sex is free & Starts Tues., April 20th at 7pm at the AFH located at 3202 Wesleyan Annex. Another 5 week forum, back by popular demand, is CAESAR Relationships. This forum address gay/bisexual men's relationships, their lives, and other personal issues they face daily. Topics include great sex, romance, dating, communication and love. CAESAR Relationships is free & Starts Thurs., April 22nd at 7pm at AFH located at 3202m Wesleyan Annex. Those who are interested & want more info. call Project CAESAR to register at 713.623.6796 or email to: projectcaesar@hotmail.com

Ryan White Planning Council

PUBLIC HEARING

Ryan White Planning Council for Houston Area HIV Services needs your input on service priorities for our HIV/AIDS Community. Let your voice be heard at the Metropolitan Multi-Purpose Center, Thurs., May 27, at 6:00pm. To request child care and/or transportation assistance or to pick up an information packet contact the Ryan White Planning Council Office at 713.572.3724 (There will be a second public hearing regarding allocations in July 99).

Houston Area Community Organizations Encouraged to Apply for Grants

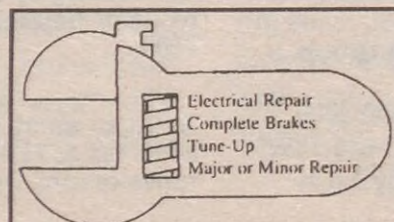
Grant applications currently are being accepted for consideration by the sponsoring organizations of The Human Race, a city-wide event scheduled for October 10. The Human Race, sponsored by Holocaust Museum Houston, Enron and the Linda and Ken Lay Family will raise funds for local organizations whose efforts include promoting better understanding and respect between

diverse communities in Houston. Grant applications will be accepted through May 1. Recipients will be determined by June 1. All non-profit organizations whose programs encourage education of cultural diversity can apply. To receive a grant application, organizations are encouraged to call the museum at 713.942.8000, ext. 112.

PWA Coalition desperately needs the following: Dishes, silverware, pots/pans, sheets, towels, dressers, dinettes, coffee tables, sofas, and small appliances. Available for pick-ups. Call Wilson or Kerry at 713.522.5428.

AHCH is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit and needs volunteers & groups to donate or help raise money to be able to provide safe, low cost housing for PWA's from our community. Please send checks in any amount payable to AHCH to 117 Taum Ave., Houston, TX 77006-3213 or call 713.521.1613.

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Local Non-Profit Private Foundation is now hiring an administrative director. Necessary skills include basic accounting, property management, public relations. Send resumes to Hollyfield Foundation, PO Box 66722, Houston, TX 77266 or phone 713.861.7063.

HIV Positive? Need to work? We can help! Nightingale Employment Services (Division of NADC) is a non-profit organ-

ization that provides job seeking, skills training and placement assistance for your job search. For Houston & surrounding counties call 713.981.1543.

TROPICAL PLANT CARE TECHNICIAN

Always In Season is seeking self motivated individuals who are good time managers for this position. Transportation is a must. This position involves providing top quality maintenance for high value tropical plants in office buildings, hotels, and shopping malls. Hired individuals will have the opportunity to train with the most experienced horticultural staff in Houston. Great pay and benefits. Apply in person at 3574 West TC Jester or call 713-681-1414
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HOUSTON VOICE

Houston Voice is seeking a freelance news and several freelance news photographers. If you have experience writing hard news stories/features or if you have a photography background and want to work in photojournalism, Houston Voice is looking for you. Degree is not necessary. Positions could lead to full-time position. If you can produce to deadline, are self-motivated and work with the highest regard to accuracy, please send your resume and samples of work (send copies not originals) to: Anthony Connolly, Editor; Houston Voice, 500 Lovett Blvd., Suite 200, Houston, TX 77006-3942. Deadline is April 30, 99. Please no phone calls, qualified applicants will be notified for an interview.

BASIC BROTHERS

We are now accepting applications for Full/Part-time retail sales. Prior experience and computer knowledge a plus, but not necessary. Join our team and receive one of the best benefit packages around (health, life and dental). Apply in person Mon.-Fri., 10am-4pm at 1232 Westheimer. No phone calls, please.

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Pets

HPPL's 20,000-PAW Salute & Celebration

The Homeless Pet League will be hosting its annual fund-raiser

Gay and lesbian books singled out

by ELLA TYLER

The finalists for the 11th annual Lambda Literary Awards have been announced.

The awards highlight the best in gay fiction published in 1998.

Alison Bechdel's memoirs, "Indelible Alison Bechdel," published by Firebrand, is a finalist in three categories, Lesbian Biography/Autobiography, Lesbian and Gay Humor, and Lesbian and Gay Small Press, the most nominations of any book. Bechdel's "Split Level Dykes to Watch Out For" is also a finalist for the Humor award.

Here are the finalists in the main categories:

Lesbian Fiction:

- "bull-jean stories" by Sharon Bridgforth
 - "Cavedweller" by Dorothy Allison
 - "Shimmer" by Sarah Schulman
 - "The Dogs" by Rebecca Brown
 - "They Call Me Mad Dog" by Erika Lopez.
- bull-jean stories, published by RedBone, is also a finalist in the small press category.

Gay Men's Fiction:

- "An Arrow's Flight" by Mark Merlis
- "The Hours" by Michael Cunningham
- "Koolaid" by Rabih Alameddine
- "The Long Falling" by Keith Ridgway
- "Where the Rainbow Ends" by Jameson Currier.

Lesbian Poetry:

- "imagine being more afraid of freedom than slavery" by Pamela Sneed
- "In the Open" by Bea Gates
- "Juba" by Letta Neely
- "Marianne Faithful's Cigarette" by Gerry Gomez Pearlberg
- "The Little Butch Book" by Leslea Newman.

Gay Men's Poetry:

- "A Flame for the Touch That Matters" by Michael Lassell
- "A Frieze for a Temple of Love" by Edward Field
- "Say Goodnight" by Timothy Liu
- "Sweet Machine" by Mark Doty
- "Ten Commandments" by J. D. McClatchy

Drama:

- "Mr. Universe and Other Plays" by Jim Grimsley
- "O Solo Homo" by Holly Hughes and David Roman
- "Place For Us" by D. A. Miller
- "Stagestruck" by Sarah Schulman
- "The Vagina Monologues" by Eve Ensler.

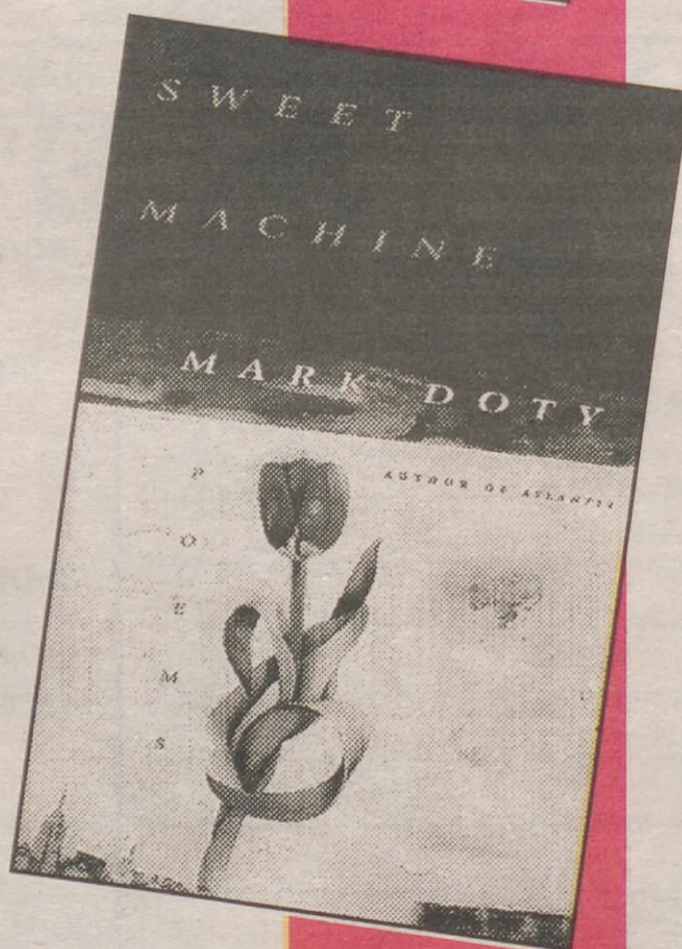
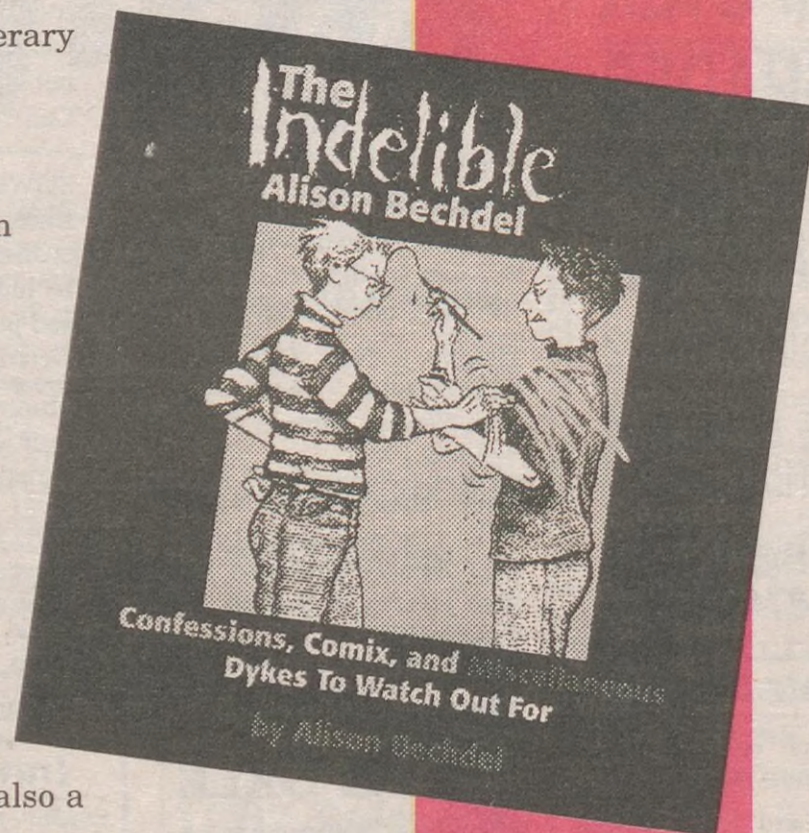
Transgender:

- "Boy-Wives and Female Husbands" by Will Roscoe and Stephen Murray
- "The Empress is a Man" by Michael R. Gorman
- "Female Masculinity" by Judith Halberstam
- "Suits Me" by Diane Wood Middlebrook
- "Trans Liberation" by Leslie Feinberg.

The finalists in the Small Press category who haven't already been mentioned are Queer Japan by Barbara Summerhawk, New Victoria, publisher and The Reluctant Pornographer by Bruce la Bruce, Gutter, publisher.

Alyson, which publishes only gay, lesbian and bi-sexual material, published six of the finalists. St. Martin's Press, the large publishing house which publishes most extensively in the field, published nine of the finalists.

Lambda Literary Foundation, publisher of Lambda Book Reports, solicits nominations from the reading public and then the finalists are chosen by a committee. Winners are selected by a panel of expert judges. Award-recipients will be announced April 29 in Los Angeles. The awards banquet will be held the evening before the opening of the publishing industry's major trade show and convention, Book Expo.



Occasions

Pet of the Week, Schatzie, owned by Mud Bug and Jim Bug.



Holy Union

Ian Leffler and Richard Wiederholt celebrate their love in a holy union on April 24. Good luck to the newlyweds.

Birthdays

Les (aka Bunny) celebrated his hoppin' birthday on April 10.

The wonderful, fabulous associate publisher of the *Houston Voice* and *eclipse*, Mike Fleming celebrates his (21 again?) birthday on April 21.

Douglas, well known as Dog Lipps barks in another year on April 26.

Mary's window artist Scotty paints the town red for his birthday on April 27.

The "Bug Lady" Lorena sprays in another year on April 27.

Tom G. blows out the birthday candles on April 28.

Bobby H. sing another verse on his birthday on April 29.

Chris, the Jeep driving-lesbian, four-wheels another year on April 28.

Jim Roberts searches for the perfect lick line to help him celebrate his birthday on April 26.

Mike has a blockbuster birthday on April 29.

Former *Houston Voice* sales rep Blaine Whitford blows her birthday candles out on April 23.

Anniversaries

Tommie Sue Ellen has been marking his territory at the Brazos River Bottom for 10 years on April 28.

In Memory

David Eckardt
10/08/46—3/30/99

David was an honorary member of the Sundance Cattle Company, Iron Cross M.C. of Montreal/USA and many clubs through out Europe, Australia, the USA and Canada. He is already missed. A celebration of life will be held at Mary's, 1022 Westheimer, on April 18 at 5 p.m.

The *Houston Voice* welcomes your special occasions. Send e-mail to editor@houstonvoice.com. Fax: 713-529-9531. Mail: Occasions, *Houston Voice*, 500 Lovett Blvd., Suite 200, Houston, Texas 77006. Please include a telephone number so occasions can be verified and considered for publication.



Mike



Mike Fleming



'Dog Lipps'



Tommie Sue Ellen



David Eckardt

Galaxy Gayzer

by JOSEPH MOLINA

April 16 - April 22



Aries (MARCH 21 — APRIL 20)

A new moon sobers you up and gives you the strength to let go the past and put your future into perspective. Life may not fit the bill, but it is you that reacts and because of this you, my dear, set the stage for tomorrow. Give into the changes and your life will be rewarded, struggle against them and you will be less than optimistic.



Taurus (APRIL 21 — MAY 20)

Saturn, Neptune, and Mars combine forces to open your eyes and calm your nerves. Although, finding direction and setting up the stage for your future may not be so pleasant. Surrounded by money, security issues will be the focus this week. If money issues are weighting heavy on your mind, try not to be impatient or rush things before it is time.



Gemini (MAY 21 — JUNE 21)

Opportunities, potential, and power is offered to you, my dear Gemini. In the coming week, a new cycle will be initiated. You must be careful in getting side tracked or allowing your arrogant side to come out. You're prone to losing your focus and sabotaging your own productivity.



Cancer (JUNE 22 — JULY 23)

You're going to need to take some time out to consider your life and your career. Maybe it's time to make some changes and now the universe is pushing you towards doing it.



Leo (JULY 24 — AUG. 23)

You may find yourself stomping your feet, slamming doors, and raising your voice more times than not. But why? Actually, what is going on is you're coming to terms with where your life is headed and you can do nothing more than give in. You may have a need to do things to further your career or just get motivated and take control of your life.



Virgo (AUG. 24 — SEPT. 23)

With the Sun about to enter into Taurus, you are in a prime position to push your life forward. Although, you may not at first take advantage of what the universe is offering, you should grab it.



Libra (SEPT. 24 — OCT. 23)

You may need to take some time off and commune with nature. A sense of dissatisfaction with how your universe is manifesting could be at the root of this emotion. This will need some of your attention if you are to do something about it.



Scorpio (OCT. 24 — NOV. 22)

As the Sun moves into Taurus, life will smooth out and a sense of relief will befall you. Expect to experience awakenings and realizations to assist you in finding your own direction. Be leery of putting your faith in lovers or anyone you're dating or you may find that you get disappointed.



Sagittarius (NOV. 23 — DEC. 22)

As Jupiter and Pluto combine forces, walls will break down and you will be given a clear path to your goals. At first, this energy will seem a little stress-filled, but after it has played through a new cycle will be under way and happiness will ensue.



Capricorn (DEC. 23 — JAN. 20)

What a blessing: The Sun moves out of Aries and now Jupiter softens up the cycle. New doorways will open and there will be the potential for business success. But beware, rushing into things will only serve to slow you down.



Aquarius (JAN. 21 — Feb. 19)

Saturn and Neptune combine forces and rock your world to the core. Internalizing can only hint at the experience you will have under this influence. Although, you can expect it to manifest in many forms—worn out friendships can now be discarded; heavy financial burdens can now be shrugged off and you may have a need to relax and have a little fun.



Pisces (FEB. 20 — MARCH 20)

This is the beginning of a bright and potential-filled future. Your routines will now seem old and boring. Keep your focus strong and try not to get sidetracked, there will be distractions and it could be a struggle to move into this new direction.

Joseph Molina, a practicing psychic for over 15 years, can be reached at astralwind@astralwind.com.

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Jason Stuart

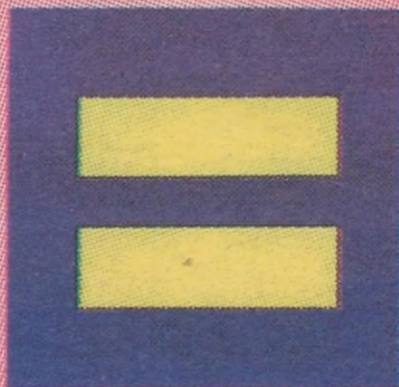
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Tickets also available at the door



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