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Hate crimes see slight increase

'A little girl's dream'

Camp offers hope for HIV-positive children in area

by MARIANA M. ACOSTA

For a 10-year-old girl battling HIV, geography didn't matter much.

Two years ago, she posed a simple question to her grandmother: If one state could host a camp for children like her, why couldn't Texas? Her grandmother asked the same question of Mike Miswa, education director for AIDS Foundation Houston.

So in 1996, the foundation organized Camp Hope, which has grown from a weekend retreat to a week-long camp that included 58 HIV-positive children that gathered in Brenham, Texas last month. From horse back riding, swimming, and ROPES courses to fishing and canoeing, they spent a week building skills in the new facilities of Camp For All, a facility fully equipped to serve chronically ill and/or disabled children and adults.

"Camp Hope started as a little girl's dream," said Ken Kelly, communications director for AIDS Foundation Houston.

The program has grown into the only one of its type in the region, said Robert Lawson, volunteer director for the foundation.

"It's noteworthy that this is the only program of this type in Texas, and the Southwest, as far as we know, and there has

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Finding hope: Nearly 60 HIV-positive children, including this unidentified girl who was learning about cooking, attended the week-long Camp Hope last month in Brenham, Texas. —Photo courtesy AIDS Foundation Houston

Overall crime drops in Houston

by MATTHEW A. HENNIE

Hate crimes increased slightly during the first six months of 1998, despite an eight percent drop in overall violent crime in Houston, authorities said Thursday.

Police reported 20 crimes motivated by race, religion, disability, ethnicity or sexual orientation during the first half of 1998, compared to 16 during the same period last year, said Lt.



Bradford: Crime drop due to community, better policing

Mark Eisenman, hate crimes coordinator for the Houston Police Department.

Four of the 20 hate crimes targeted gays and lesbians, compared to five last year, he said.

The slight increase in hate crimes comes on the heels of reports by Police Chief C.O. Bradford that overall crime in Houston fell 6 percent from the same period in 1997.

The largest drops came in murders, down 16 percent, sexual assaults 22 percent, and auto theft 14 percent, according to police statistics released Wednesday.

But even with a slim four reports of crimes against gays and lesbians in the first half of 1998, activists and counselors said most attacks go unreported to authorities and



Parker: Victims of hate crimes must report attacks

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Batter Up!

Three Houston teams swing south for Gay Softball World Series

by MATTHEW A. HENNIE

Each summer, Bill Sansom caps a season of softball by packing his bags and traveling to cities across the country.

San Diego? He's been there. Atlanta? There, too. Pittsburgh? Yes. And also Seattle.

Next week he — along with Pacific Street, LOBO and Basic Brothers from Houston's Montrose Softball League — travel to Atlanta for the Gay Softball World Series, which runs Aug. 11-15. While the teams fight for a trophy, Sansom put his equipment away for this trip and instead will hand-schedule the 72 teams that make up the men's open division for the annual competition.

"This is a hectic time of year for me," said Sansom, a longtime player and coach who is also an assistant commissioner for the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance (NAGAAA), the non-profit umbrella organization for nearly 50 gay softball leagues in 30 cities across the country.

"It is all a challenge," he said. "It is easy to play, but I like coaching the best."

Sansom, along with LOBO coach Jerry DeSalle, one of the founding members of the Montrose Softball League, will also be among 13 gay athletes inducted into the NAGAAA Hall of Fame during the week-long competition.

For Sansom, 40, induction into the Hall of Fame caps what has been a rewarding 16 years participating in gay softball leagues in Houston and Atlanta. In 1981, he spotted a poster for the Briar Patch team. Hungry to meet other gays outside of bars and nightclubs, he attended try outs. But the former college athlete wasn't selected.

A year later, he joined the team. Three

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Sansom

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Mayor Talks Economics
Houston CEO makes first appearance at gay chamber.
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Queer Teens
Houston-area gay teenagers receive grants.
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Conservatives Defeated
DeLay's support of anti-gay bill doesn't help.
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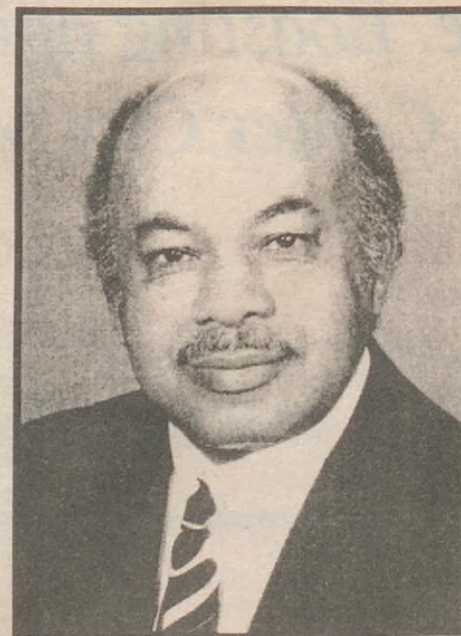
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Under fire, Brown speaks to gay business group

by MATTHEW A. HENNIE

Mayor Lee Brown pitched his vision of neighborhood oriented governing during a first-ever speech to a group of local gay and lesbian business leaders earlier this month.

Brown's nearly 20-minute address on Aug. 3 marked the first time the city's chief executive has appeared at the monthly meeting of the Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.



Brown: 'Neighborhood oriented governing' empowers residents. —Photo by Matthew A. Hennie

"My priorities are quite clear," Brown said. "I believe in neighborhoods."

But seven months into his administration, Brown is already routinely criticized for having an incoherent vision by some members of city council and leadership of the county GOP.

Councilman Rob Todd and conservative businessman Richard Hotze also took another legal shot at Brown recently.

Todd and Hotze earlier this year sued Brown over his executive order banning discrimination against gays in city government. Recently, the two amended the lawsuit to challenge a second executive order on car allowances, signed in June.

In keeping a mayoral campaign pledge, Brown signed the order banning gay discrimination on Feb. 16. Soon after, Todd and Hotze filed suit, claiming Brown overstepped his authority under the city charter. A judge agreed and blocked the city from enforcing the order. The case is currently on appeal.

Todd has said that his legal case against the mayor should demonstrate that his objective is to protect the authority of the city council from mayoral circumvention. Todd's critics accuse him of cloaking an anti-gay agenda in the legal action.

Hotze helped lead a 1985 vote that overwhelmingly repealed a measure to protect gays and lesbians from discrimination in city government.

Through breaking Houston into nearly 90 "super neighborhoods," residents will be closer to city government and empowered to utilize resources to solve their problems, Brown said during his address to the gay business group. His administration will also deliver services efficiently and courteously, he said.

Brown also pledged to improve the city's school district, pursue a light rail system for downtown and drive eco-

nomie development by addressing infrastructure problems, air pollution and public safety.

"All of that will help us develop a climate that is conducive to economic development," he said.

The speech fell short of mentioning other issues important to gays and lesbians, despite Brown's strong track

record in the community, including the executive order, naming a liaison to the gay and lesbian community and pushing to improve the Houston Police Department's response to hate crimes.

The mayor has also attended several community events, including the annual AIDS Walk and the kickoff to pride events in June.

A Prideful Thanks



Houston's Pride Committee took time to recognize the dozens of volunteers who pitched in to help organize and operate the 60 Gay Pride events in June, including John-Michael Albert (left) who was named Male Volunteer of the Year. Cindy Archer, the committee's volunteer coordinator, presented the award. Joai Devlin was named female Volunteer of the Year during the July 30 event at The Hollyfield Foundation on Albany. —Photo by Dalton DeHart

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many are growing more violent.

"I have seen more violent crimes presented from clients than when I started in this position (two years ago)," said Gary Norman, a hate crimes specialist with the Montrose Counseling Center. "The numbers may stay about the same, but the intensity and the degree and brutality of the crimes are increasing."

In the last six months, victims of hate crimes have suffered cracked ribs, concussions and broken arms, Norman said.

The police department is improving its response to gays and lesbians, but it's time for victims of hate crimes to call police and report the incidents, said City Councilwoman Annise Parker.

Better reporting will lead to more accurate statistics and improved response by authorities, she said. Up to three-fourths of hate crimes go unreported, Norman estimates.

"The city is doing all it should be doing," Parker said. "It is up to the community to try to plug the gap. The department is ready to receive, we just have to make sure we are ready to give them the information."

In April, Mayor Lee Brown opened a 24-hour Hate Crimes Hotline (713-308-8737), appointed a hate crimes coordinator in the police department and pledged more training for the city's 5,300 officers to increase awareness about hate crimes.

Often, police or victims don't realize a crime should be classified as a hate crime or victims are afraid to reveal their sexual orientation to authorities, Parker said.

Police attribute the slight increase in reported hate crimes in 1998 to better reporting and improved community outreach to gays and lesbians and other minority communities, Eisenman said.

"We are getting increased reporting and that symbolizes that some of those barriers are coming down. We are getting more of the pieces of the puzzle that we wanted," he said.

Calls to the hotline are increasing, which arms police with more information in their investigations, he said.

Teen Scholarships



Seven Houston-area gay teenagers received partial scholarships to attend college from the Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) and PFLAG on Aug. 2 as part of a growing effort by both groups to help gay students further their education, officials said. Students who received the grants included Nathan Herrington (left), Jesus Perez, Tye Blue, Joy Villarreal, Jose Rivera III and Adrian Saldana. Not pictured is Alicia Tryon. The awards ranged from \$1,000 to \$10,000. H.A.T.C.H. is also raising a \$1 million endowment to award future scholarships.

—Photo by Matthew A. Hennie

"We are attacking it locally and taking a proactive stance," Eisenman said.

Bradford said new strategies of deploying police officers in a wider variety of ways — such as a storefront on Westheimer in Montrose and foot, bicycle and mounted patrols — have resulted in officers working side by side with residents.

"The decrease in crime during this period is a result of the community and the Houston Police Department working together," Bradford said.

The slight increase in hate crimes comes as local activists and politicians are attempting to jump-start grassroots support for the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, legislation stalled in Congress that would expand federal hate crimes statute to offenses based on sexual orientation and disability.

Parker and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee called for passage of the measure during a July 25 town hall meeting.

Current federal law applies only to crimes motivated by race, color, religion or national origin and instances in which the victim is taking part in one of six federally-protected activities, such as voting.

That sometimes ties the hands of federal prosecutors and keeps them fighting some of the most brutal hate crimes, he said. Proving the additional circumstances beyond motivation limits jurisdiction, which can hinge on whether a victim was on a sidewalk or not, or inside a convenience store that houses a video game, said Bill Lann Lee, acting assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, who joined the panel discussion.

In a July 9 hearing, Houston City Councilman Jew Don Boney and state Sen. Rodney Ellis called on Texas legislators to strengthen state law to include protection for gays and tougher penalties for hate crimes when they return to session in January.

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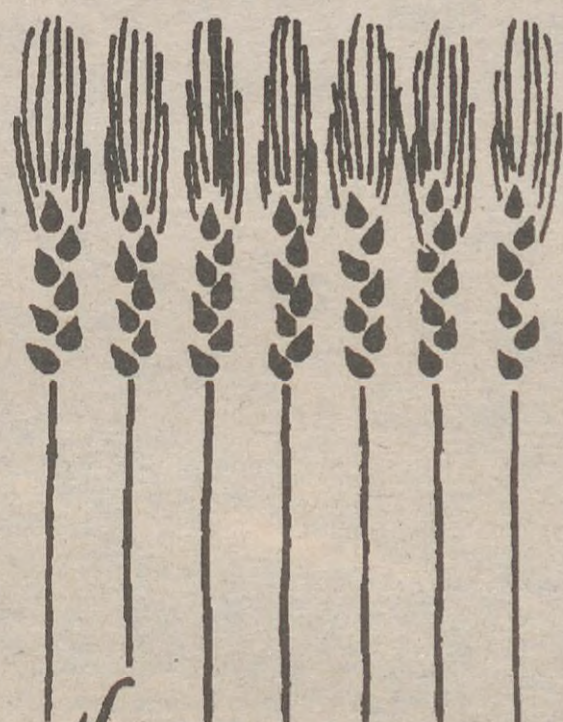
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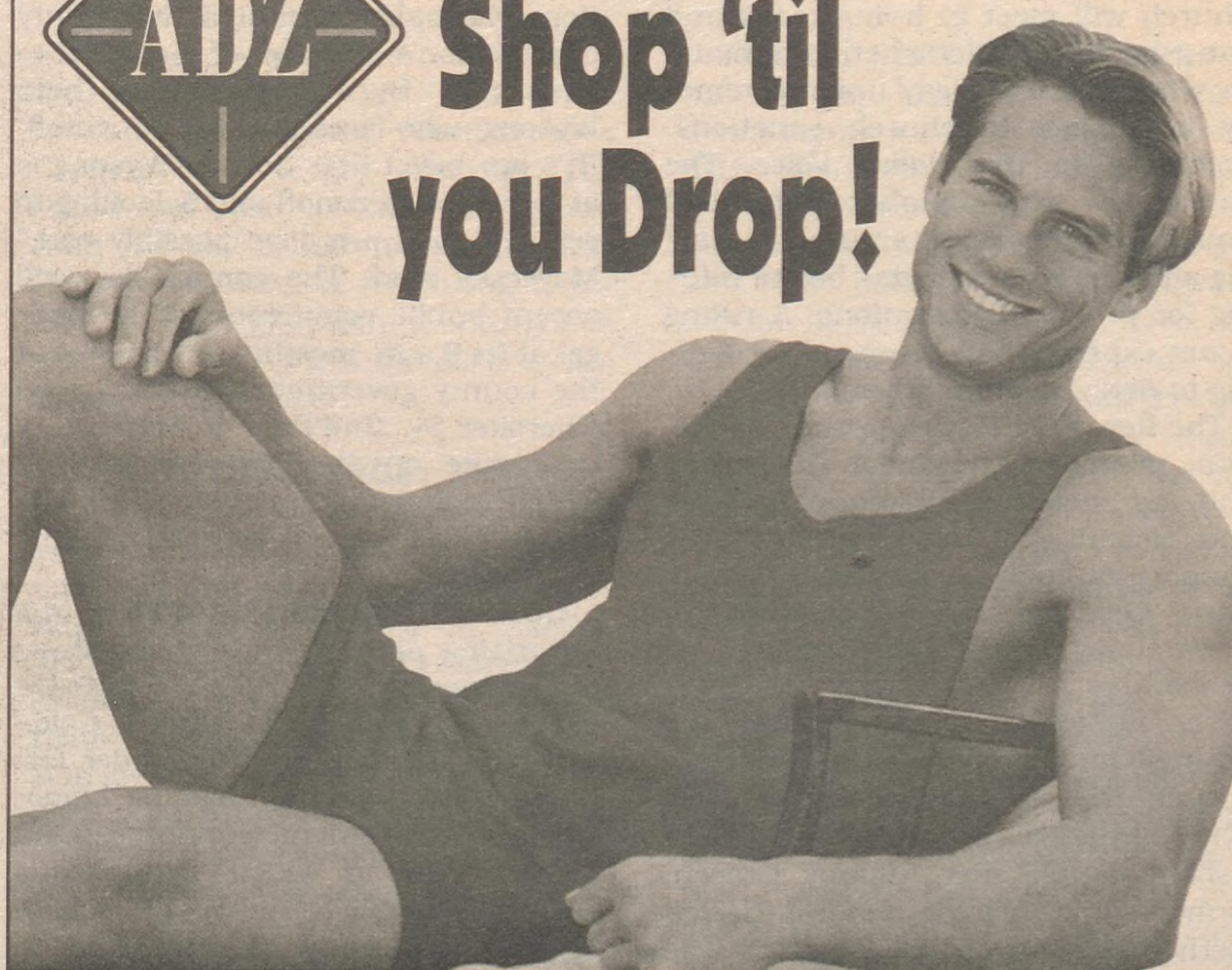


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METHODIST DEBATE: The highest judicial body of the United Methodist Church will meet in Irving today and Saturday to consider whether a minister who conducts a gay union ceremony is subject to church sanctions, according to the *Dallas Voice*. The church's nine-member Judicial Council will hear oral arguments during a public session today before retiring for private deliberations. A ruling is not expected this weekend, according to denomination officials.

The Rev. Fred Phelps — the Topeka, Kan. preacher known for his strong anti-gay rhetoric, inflammatory faxes and picketing of the funerals of gay supporters such as former U.S. Sen. Barry Goldwater — is scheduled to arrive today to picket the Council as it deliberates.

The matter was placed before the Council in response to last March's church trial of a Nebraska minister who conducted a union ceremony for a lesbian couple. Rev. Jimmy Creech, former senior pastor of First United Methodist Church of Omaha, was acquitted of charges that he violated church law by performing the ceremony. Creech argued successfully that a church code forbidding ministers from conducting "homosexual unions" was advisory, not compulsory. In 1996, the General Conference, the ruling body of United Methodism, added a provision to the church's Social Principles stating that "ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches." The specific question before the Judicial Council is whether a minister who violates that provision is guilty of "disobeying the order and discipline" of the church, a sanctionable offense which could result in a range of disciplinary procedures, including loss of ministerial credentials.

ARTS FUNDING: For the first time since 1993 when it eliminated arts funding and passed a resolution condemning the "homosexual lifestyle," the Cobb County (Ga.) Commission is considering a budget that includes money for the arts. Budget Manager Patti Lee confirmed that Chairman Bill Byrne's proposed budget, presented on July 28, includes a \$100,000, two-year grant for the county's arts commission. Prior to cutting funding in 1993, the county commission had allocated \$110,000 for the arts, of which \$40,000 went to the Cobb Arts Commission.



David Mayersky played down the grant as a ruse to support Gordon Wysong's re-election to the Commission. Theatre in the Square, according to David Mayersky, co-chair of the Cobb Citizens Coalition. An uproar over that theater's production of gay playwright Terrence McNally's "Lips Together, Teeth Apart" set off the confrontation, which made headlines around the nation.

"I'll be delighted if it turns out to affect arts organizations in general," said Palmer Wells, the theater's co-founder and producing director. But Mayersky declined to call the proposed allocation a victory and said the amount of money was "not significant." The \$100,000 arts grant will be administered by the Cobb Arts Commission if approved, according to a report in the *Marietta Daily Journal*. The Arts Commission chair, Elva Dornbusch, is also an assistant to

Commissioner Gordon Wysong, who introduced the 1993 anti-gay resolution. Mayersky attributed the county commission's change of position to Chairman Byrne's desire to help Wysong, who faces an Aug. 11 runoff. "It's our belief that Gordon Wysong is in a real tough runoff and is looking to get any good press he possibly can," Mayersky said. The commission will accept public comments on the budget at its 9 a.m. meeting on Tuesday at the county government building, 100 Cherokee St., 2nd floor, in Marietta. A final vote on the two-year budget, which includes more than \$740 million in allocations, is set for Aug. 25.

CONSERVATIVES REBUFFED: In a surprising setback for conservatives on Wednesday, the House rejected a proposal by Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colo., to void a Clinton executive order forbidding discrimination against homosexuals in the federal workforce. In an election-year in which Republicans have repeatedly taken on the homosexual community in word and in votes, the 252-176 roll call saw Democrats joined by about 40

Republicans who said the proposal went too far.

The issue arose as the House moved toward passage of a \$34 billion measure for fiscal 1999, beginning Oct. 1, for the departments of Commerce, Justice and State plus the federal courts. The Hefley amendment was aimed at a May 28 Clinton executive order adding sexual orientation to the categories of federal workers against whom discrimination is illegal. The others are race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicaps and age. Hefley had planned to offer his amendment to another bill last month, but postponed his plans because the author of that earlier measure, Rep. Jim Kolbe, R-Ariz., is gay.



DeLay

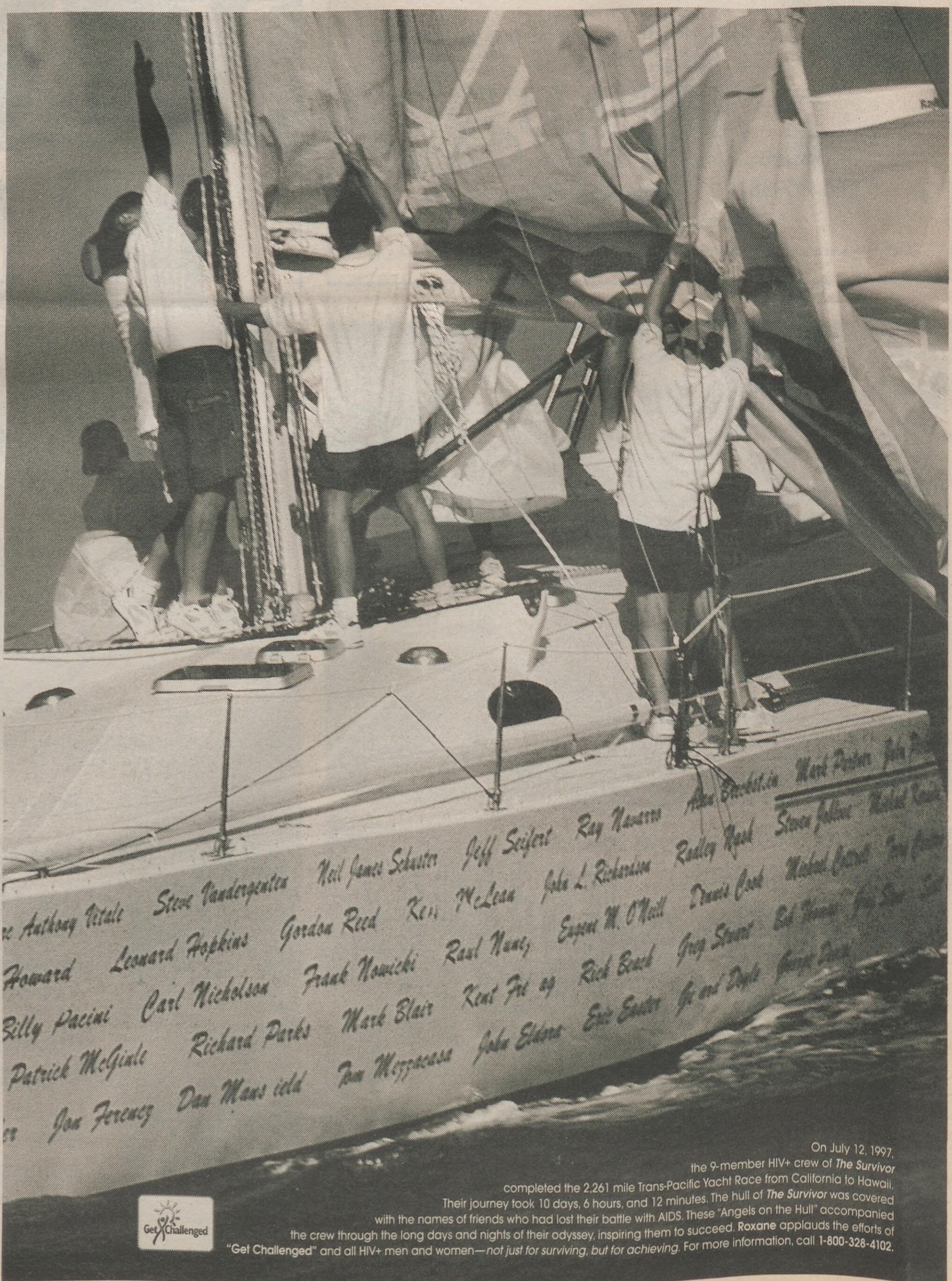
While some Republicans said the order would lead to quotas for hiring homosexuals, Hefley and House Majority Whip Tom DeLay, R-Sugar

Land, said the amendment was aimed at the president's abuse of executive orders to circumvent Congress. "This is not an issue over sexual orientation ... It's about checks and balances," said DeLay, who added that Clinton was trying to "legislate by executive order."

SEX TOYS: A group of women have filed a federal lawsuit to block a new Alabama law that bans the sale of sex toys, arguing the law violates their right to privacy. The law, which took effect July 1, makes it a misdemeanor in Alabama to distribute "any device designed or marketed as useful primarily for the stimulation of human genital organs."

"No one wants the government in their bedroom," Sherri Williams, one of six plaintiffs, said July 31. Williams owns two Alabama stores that sell sex devices. Another plaintiff, B.J. Bailey, sells similar items at in-home gatherings. The other four women challenging the law are described in the lawsuit as needing sexual aids to have orgasms.

—From staff and wire reports



On July 12, 1997, the 9-member HIV+ crew of *The Survivor* completed the 2,261 mile Trans-Pacific Yacht Race from California to Hawaii. Their journey took 10 days, 6 hours, and 12 minutes. The hull of *The Survivor* was covered with the names of friends who had lost their battle with AIDS. These "Angels on the Hull" accompanied the crew through the long days and nights of their odyssey, inspiring them to succeed. Roxane applauds the efforts of "Get Challenged" and all HIV+ men and women—not just for surviving, but for achieving. For more information, call 1-800-328-4102.

ANGLICANS CONDEMN: Declaring homosexual relations "incompatible with Scripture," Anglican bishops on Wednesday expressed overwhelming opposition to the ordination of practicing homosexuals and affirmed traditional teachings that sex is permissible only within marriage. The anti-gay resolution, which passed 526-70, was supported by Bishop Claude Payne of the Houston-based Episcopal Diocese of Texas, who called it "a strong positive statement in line with my own personal beliefs."

After a 2 1/2-hour debate, participants in the once-a-decade conference being held in Canterbury, England took a stronger line than their leader, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey, who wanted the issue referred for further study. It was a defeat for liberal bishops, most notably those in Europe and the United States.

The Lambeth Conference - which drew more than 700 bishops, including 11 women - has no authority to regulate doctrine among 22 national churches, though it is the main con-

sultative body for the world's 70 million Anglicans.

WARY POLITICS: Gay rights and abortion are emerging as battleground issues in the race for governor of Illinois, and it is Democrat Glenn Poshard's conservative views that have gained a foothold among traditionally Republican voters, infuriated gay-rights activists and sewn concern among other Democrats that some of the party's base may be slipping away. Poshard said he would not sign the gay-rights bill under consideration in the state's legislature that would ban discrimination in housing, banking, restaurants and hiring.

George H. Ryan, the Secretary of State and Poshard's Republican opponent, says he would wait to see the specific provisions before deciding whether to sign the legislation.



Poshard

Poshard's 1995-96 voting record in Congress drew a zero rating from the Human Rights Campaign.

Meanwhile, Ryan has quietly courted the gay community, entering a float in the annual Gay Pride Parade in June and sending running mate Corinne Wood to gay meetings. The result has been criticism of Poshard from the gay community, with state Rep. Larry McKeon (D-Chicago), the only openly gay Illinois lawmaker, saying he won't back the party's candidate for governor.

BALLOT CHALLENGE: The Alaska Civil Liberties Union on July 30 filed a challenge to a November ballot question that asks if same-sex marriage should be barred in Alaska. Jennifer Ruddinger, ACLU director in Anchorage, said Measure 2 should be removed because it amounts to a revision of the constitution that can be done only at a constitutional convention. "Our (state) constitution is based on the underlying notion that all people are supposed to be treated equally under the law," Ruddinger said. "Measure 2 so fundamentally alters

that philosophy of government that it requires a revision of the constitution."

HEALTH CARE: The landscape for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered health care is changing, one of many conclusions reached recently at the 20th Anniversary of the National Lesbian and Gay Health Conference and the 16th National AIDS/HIV Forum in San Francisco. "Over the last 20 years, our health care has changed on a variety of different levels," said Beverly Saunders Biddle, executive director of the National Lesbian and Gay Health Association. "Medical issues have evolved to include HIV/AIDS and breast cancer most notably, but STDs and addictions are also becoming more present. We're beginning to understand more of the complexities involved in psycho-social issues, such as high rates of LGBT youth suicide, gender-identity disorder, and the horrific impact that homophobia places on both access to and quality of medical care." At the same time, one "radical" track at the conference deal with HIV education among men who engage in risky, even unsafe sex, including a session on "safer barebacking techniques."

HIV SUIT: A lawsuit has been filed on behalf of an HIV-positive teenager who says she was forced to disclose that status in class at a Catholic school in Miami. The lawsuit filed May 16 alleges that the girl was ordered to go to her classroom at St. Francis Xavier school and, in the presence of her principal and the school pastor, reveal her HIV status. The despondent 15-year-old, identified as "Jane Doe," wrote a note threatening suicide to a friend in early May. It passed through the hands of two students before reaching a teacher, who gave it to principal Michelle Dolyk. *The Miami Herald* reported July 28. The classmate who passed the note to the teacher said the pastor, Father Jack Lau, "kind of" encouraged the girl as she made the revelation.

GAY GAMES: The 1998 Gay Games in Amsterdam were supposed to be a carefree celebration of homosexuality, but even before the hoopla of the opening ceremony could fade, the director was fired for mismanagement. Then the city of Amsterdam rushed to the rescue with a \$2.5 million loan to ensure the games go on.

Now games organizers have had to tap a government-funded agency to help pay athletes from developing countries the cash they were promised for food and other necessities. "Gay Games Committee Gets More Surprises Every Day," said a headline in Wednesday's *De Volkskrant* daily, summing up the confusion swirling around the quadrennial Olympics-style sports festival.

Fifteen thousand athletes and about 200,000 spectators have flocked to Amsterdam, Europe's self-styled homosexual capital, for the events. But the Aug. 2 firing of managing director Marc Janssens and the discovery of a trail of unauthorized overspending behind him have overshadowed the \$7 million event, which began Aug. 1 and ran for a week. The games were about \$1 million short, despite more than \$3 million in government subsidies and sponsorship money.

Although about 30 sports competitions and cultural events were offered at the games, they have been largely eclipsed by the financial troubles.

—From staff and wire reports

"WHEN THINGS GOT ROUGH
VIRAMUNE® DIDN'T
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Mike Schmidt,
HIV+ crew member of *The Survivor*,
on the dosing convenience of VIRAMUNE®

"Sailing the Pacific was both a mental and physical challenge, 24 hours a day. The ocean controlled when I ate and slept. Fortunately, I had to take only one VIRAMUNE® tablet twice a day* as part of my antiretroviral combination.

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Ask your doctor whether VIRAMUNE® could fit into your treatment strategy. VIRAMUNE® is indicated for use in combination with nucleoside analogues for the treatment of HIV-1 infected adults who have experienced clinical and/or immunologic deterioration. However, there is no cure for HIV infection. Currently, it is not known whether taking VIRAMUNE® in combination will help you live longer or reduce the number of infections or other illnesses that can occur with HIV. You should also be aware that all antiretrovirals can cause side effects. VIRAMUNE® is associated with severe rash, which in some cases has been life-threatening. It should be discontinued when severe rash occurs. Other side effects reported include fever, nausea, and headache. VIRAMUNE® is, however, generally well tolerated by most patients.

* Recommended dose: one 200 mg tablet once a day for first 14 days; then one 200 mg tablet twice a day.

Just two tablets a day
with or without food

Viramune®
(nevirapine) 

200 mg Tablets

Please see important information about VIRAMUNE® on adjacent page.

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HOPE/ from page 1

been a good percentage of return kids to the camp, something we all like to see," Lawson said.

"Projects like Camp Hope, that are driven based on our passion to do something good for these kids, seem to fall together easily. I am not saying that it is not a lot of work, but we said we were going to have a camp. We were going to raise the money, and we did it," he added.

The program allows HIV-positive children to learn that they aren't the only ones with health concerns, officials said.

"This kind of program is important because it provides an inherent support system for these kids," Kelly said. "It lets them know that they aren't alone, that there are others out there dealing with the same health issues, and it lets them know that there are people out there that care and are willing to help."

Camp organizers with AIDS Foundation Houston brought 58 children with them this year, 25 more than last year, during the session which ran from July 26 to 31. Many of the campers came from Florida, a few from Austin, several from Dallas, and the remaining from Houston. They ranged in age from 7 to 17.

"A barrier-free facility was needed because many of the kids are multiple acuity cases, including blindness and Cerebral Palsy. We needed a place with no stairs or barriers of any kind to allow these kids the ability to relax and have a good time," Lawson said.

An early morning

Camp Hope starts the day bright and early for each camper with morning modules for independent learning. The children choose from nature studies, drama, swimming, cooking, softball and archery.

"Campers learn skills they can take home with them and actually use," Lawson said.

The children learn cooking skills by helping prepare food for camper's meals. At the same time, the older campers are going through training to return as counselors the following year, part of a leadership program for older camp attendees.

Counselors are chosen through a rigorous interviewing process in which they fill out a detailed application, interview with AIDS Foundation Houston staff and a social work counselor, and go through a criminal background check.

"We had 10 repeat counselors this year, half male and half female. Male counselors are in high demand," Lawson said. Some 41 counselors and support staff and 12 medical personnel were on hand this year.

Campers attend through fund-raising by the foundation. It costs an estimated \$750 per camper to cover expenses, such as transportation and medical expenses. The staff of Texas Children's Hospital also supports the camp, an important component of the intricate planning that takes place before camp doors open, Kelly said.

"We coordinate bus and airplane schedules to get kids there, everything down to planning meals and scheduling medications must be taken into account. We plan the daily activities, arranging the cabins so that kids with similar acuity issues, as well as ages can house together," he said.

Preparation for the camp is critical, organizers said, because it may be the only opportunity for the children to enjoy it. Many of the children are prenatally infected, and by the time they arrive, they may be in the last stages of the disease.

"The hardest part about this is that we lose these kids. This may be their first and last camp. But seeing the smiles on their faces, and the tears of joy keeps you going," Lawson said.

Many of the campers are inner-city children that have never traveled outside of their hometowns.

"Camp Hope is not about changing the world, it's about helping kids and getting them away from their clinical environments, so they can be kids, and still learn some skills for independent living," Kelly said.

'Awesome buzz'

After the camp, the spirits of organizers are often lifted, Lawson said.

"Awesome, that's the buzz word. It was great.

There was a little girl that was petrified of the water on Monday, but by Thursday she was doing the backstroke. There was a blind girl that was climbing a wall on the ROPES course and in the middle she got frightened and wanted to give up. Her whole cabin came out and started singing 'Lean On Me', and she made it," he said.

"The medical staff from Texas Children's hospital did a great job with how they handled medications.

CAMP HOPE

A PROJECT OF AIDS FOUNDATION HOUSTON, INC.

It was good for the kids to see other kids going through these rituals, to see that they weren't the only ones. There were kids that came into camp unable to swallow pills, and with the help of their camp mates they felt comfortable trying and succeeding in this area," Lawson said.

Theresa Aldape, a social worker with the Allergy and Immunology Department of Texas Children's Hospital said the combined effort of the hospital and the foundation helped make this year's camp a success with for the children.

"We have been able to provide safe and much-needed recreational camp activities for children with HIV and AIDS," Aldape said. "Camp is over, but in the last week we have had three of the campers come in and they still have smiles on their faces. It's nice

to see a huge institution like Texas Children's Hospital working closely with a neighborhood agency to make this work. These children take lots of medication, they can hardly spend the night at a friend's house, much less spend a week at camp."

The event also provides a respite for parents or other caregivers, she said.

"(The children's) caregivers, parents, grandparents and family get a short respite as well, while knowing that their children are being cared for and their medication schedules are strictly followed. It's a great thing all the way around," Aldape said.

Building success

According to Lawson, the three most important successes that came out of this camp were team skills building for the kids, peer support issues, and the kids learning some skills relative to adherence.

"It was just such a wonderful experience," said Janet Johnson, Camp Director for Camp For All. "The neatest thing was that it was equally as rewarding for the adults as it was the children. It was so amazing to work with the kids in this environment, it's such a pastoral setting. Everyone slowed down and relaxed and had a great time."

Donations — including ones from local radio stations, businesses and corporations — helped fund Camp Hope, organizers said. Some 75 children are expected for next year's camp, scheduled to start July 24.

Interested volunteers can call AIDS Foundation Houston at 713-623-6796.

Viramune[®]
(nevirapine)Simple maintenance dose:
one 200 mg tablet twice daily

BRIEF SUMMARY

WARNING:

VIRAMUNE[®] (NEVIRAPINE) IS INDICATED FOR USE IN COMBINATION WITH NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES FOR THE TREATMENT OF HIV-1 INFECTED ADULTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED CLINICAL AND/OR IMMUNOLOGIC DETERIORATION. THIS INDICATION IS BASED ON ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN SURROGATE ENDPOINTS IN STUDIES OF UP TO 48 WEEKS DURATION. AT PRESENT, THERE ARE NO RESULTS FROM CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIALS EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF VIRAMUNE[®] WITH NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES ON THE CLINICAL PROGRESSION OF HIV-1 INFECTION, SUCH AS THE INCIDENCE OF OPPORTUNISTIC INFECTIONS OR SURVIVAL.

THE DURATION OF BENEFIT FROM ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY MAY BE LIMITED. ALTERATION OF ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPIES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IF DISEASE PROGRESSION OCCURS WHILE PATIENTS ARE RECEIVING VIRAMUNE[®].

RESISTANT VIRUS EMERGES RAPIDLY AND UNIFORMLY WHEN VIRAMUNE[®] IS ADMINISTERED AS MONOTHERAPY. THEREFORE, VIRAMUNE[®] SHOULD ALWAYS BE ADMINISTERED IN COMBINATION WITH AT LEAST ONE ADDITIONAL ANTIRETROVIRAL AGENT.

VIRAMUNE[®] HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH SEVERE RASH, WHICH IN SOME CASES HAVE BEEN LIFE-THREATENING. WHEN SEVERE RASH OCCURS, VIRAMUNE[®] MUST BE DISCONTINUED.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: VIRAMUNE[®] is contraindicated in patients with clinically significant hypersensitivity to any of the components contained in the tablet.

WARNINGS: Severe and life-threatening skin reactions have occurred in patients treated with VIRAMUNE[®], including Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS). VIRAMUNE[®] must be discontinued in patients developing a severe rash or a rash accompanied by constitutional symptoms such as fever, blistering, oral lesions, conjunctivitis, swelling, muscle or joint aches, or general malaise. (see PRECAUTIONS, information for Patients; ADVERSE REACTIONS)

VIRAMUNE[®] therapy must be initiated with a 14-day lead-in period of 200 mg/day, which has been shown to reduce the frequency of rash. Dose escalation should not occur if rash is observed during this lead-in period until the rash has resolved. (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION)

PRECAUTIONS: General: When administering VIRAMUNE[®] as part of an antiretroviral treatment regimen, the complete product information for each therapeutic component should be consulted before initiation of treatment.

While nevirapine is extensively metabolized by the liver and nevirapine metabolites are extensively eliminated by the kidney, the pharmacokinetics of nevirapine have not been evaluated in patients with either hepatic or renal dysfunction. Therefore, VIRAMUNE[®] should be used with caution in these patient populations.

Abnormal liver function tests have been reported with VIRAMUNE[®], some in the first few weeks of therapy, including cases of hepatitis. VIRAMUNE[®] administration should be interrupted in patients experiencing moderate or severe liver function test abnormalities until liver function tests return to baseline values. VIRAMUNE[®] treatment should be permanently discontinued if liver function abnormalities recur on readministration.

Drug Interactions: Although clinical studies have not been conducted, induction of CYP3A by nevirapine may result in lower plasma concentrations of other concomitantly administered drugs that are extensively metabolized by CYP3A. (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY) Thus, if a patient has been stabilized on a dosage regimen for a drug metabolized by CYP3A, and begins treatment with VIRAMUNE[®], dose adjustments may be necessary.

Rifampin/Rifabutin: There are insufficient data to assess whether dose adjustments are necessary when nevirapine and rifampin or rifabutin are coadministered. Therefore, these drugs should only be used in combination if clearly indicated and with careful monitoring.

Protease Inhibitors: Nevirapine may decrease plasma concentrations of protease inhibitors. Therefore, until clinical data are available that evaluate the need for dose adjustments, these drugs should not be administered concomitantly with VIRAMUNE[®].

Oral Contraceptives: There are no clinical data on the effects of nevirapine on the pharmacokinetics of oral contraceptives; therefore, these drugs should not be administered concomitantly with VIRAMUNE[®].

Information for Patients: Patients should be informed that VIRAMUNE[®] is not a cure for HIV-1 infection, and that they may continue to experience illnesses associated with advanced HIV-1 infection, including opportunistic infections. Treatment with VIRAMUNE[®] has not been shown to reduce the incidence or frequency of such illnesses, and patients should be advised to remain under the care of a physician when using VIRAMUNE[®]. Patients should be informed that the long-term effects of VIRAMUNE[®] are unknown at this time. They should also be informed that VIRAMUNE[®] therapy has not been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV-1 to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Patients should be instructed that the major toxicity of VIRAMUNE[®] is rash and should be advised to promptly notify their physician of any rash. The majority of rashes associated with VIRAMUNE[®] occur within the first 6 weeks of initiation of therapy. Therefore, patients should be monitored carefully for the appearance of rash during this period. Patients should be instructed that dose escalation is not to occur if any rash occurs during the two-week lead-in dosing period, until the rash resolves. Any patient experiencing severe rash or a rash accompanied by constitutional symptoms such as fever, blistering, oral lesions, conjunctivitis, swelling, muscle or joint aches, or general malaise should discontinue medication and consult a physician.

Patients should be informed to take VIRAMUNE[®] every day as prescribed. Patients should not alter the dose without consulting their doctor. If a dose is missed, patients should take the next dose as soon as possible. However, if a dose is skipped, the patient should not double the next dose.

VIRAMUNE[®] may interact with some drugs; therefore, patients should be advised to report to their doctor the use of any other medications.

Patients should be instructed that oral contraceptives and other hormonal methods of birth control should not be used as a method of contraception in women taking VIRAMUNE[®].

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility: Long-term carcinogenicity studies of nevirapine in animals are currently in progress. In genetic toxicology assays, nevirapine showed no evidence of mutagenic or clastogenic activity in a battery of *in vitro* and *in vivo* assays including microbial assays for gene mutation (Ames; Salmonella strains and *E. coli*), mammalian cell gene mutation assays (CHO/HGPRT), cytogenetic assays using a Chinese hamster ovary cell line and a mouse bone marrow micronucleus assay following oral administration. In reproductive toxicology studies, evidence of impaired fertility was seen in female rats at doses providing systemic exposure, based on AUC, approximately equivalent to that provided with the recommended clinical dose of VIRAMUNE[®].

Pregnancy: Pregnancy Category C: No observable teratogenicity was detected in reproductive studies performed in pregnant rats and rabbits. In rats, a significant decrease in fetal body weight occurred at doses providing systemic exposure approximately 50% higher, based on AUC, than that seen at the recommended human clinical dose. The maternal and developmental no-observable-effect level dosages in rats and rabbits produced systemic exposures approximately equivalent to or approximately 50% higher, respectively, than those seen at the recommended daily human dose, based on AUC. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. VIRAMUNE[®] should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

Nursing Mothers: Preliminary results from an ongoing pharmacokinetic study (ACTG 250) of 10 HIV-1-infected pregnant women who were administered a single oral dose of 100 or 200 mg VIRAMUNE[®] at a median of 5.8 hours before delivery, indicate that nevirapine readily crosses the placenta and is found in breast milk. Consistent with the recommendation by the U.S. Public Health Service Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that HIV-infected mothers not breast-feed their infants to avoid risking postnatal transmission of HIV, mothers should discontinue nursing if they are receiving VIRAMUNE[®].

Pediatric Use: Safety and effectiveness of VIRAMUNE[®] in pediatric patients have not been established. VIRAMUNE[®] has been studied in two open-label, uncontrolled trials (BI 882, BI 892) in 37 HIV-1-infected pediatric patients with a median age of 0.9 years (range: 0.1 to 15 years) who were treated for a median duration of 20.7 months. Seven patients developed rashes while receiving VIRAMUNE[®]. In an ongoing, controlled trial of VIRAMUNE[®] combination therapy in HIV-1-infected pediatric patients (ACTG 245), one of approximately 288 patients treated with VIRAMUNE[®] experienced Stevens-Johnson syndrome.

Because there are no data on multi-dose pharmacokinetics in children, no recommendation on dosing can be made. Based on single-dose pharmacokinetics in 9 HIV-1-infected pediatric patients (age 9 mos. to 14 years) who were administered nevirapine in a suspension formulation, it appears that oral clearance is approximately 2-fold greater in children when compared to adults.

ADVERSE REACTIONS: The most frequently reported adverse events related to VIRAMUNE[®] therapy were rash, fever, nausea, headache, and abnormal liver function tests.

The major clinical toxicity of VIRAMUNE[®] is rash, with VIRAMUNE[®]-attributable rash occurring in 17% of patients in combination regimens in Phase I/II controlled studies. Thirty-seven percent of patients treated with VIRAMUNE[®] experienced rash compared with 20% of patients treated in control groups of either ZDV+ddi or ZDV alone (Table 1). Severe or life-threatening rash occurred in 7.6% of VIRAMUNE[®]-treated patients compared with 1.2% of patients treated in the control groups.

Rashes are usually mild to moderate, maculopapular erythematous cutaneous eruptions, with or without pruritus, located on the trunk, face and extremities. The majority of severe rashes occurred within the first 28 days of treatment; 25% of the patients with severe rashes required hospitalization, and one patient required surgical intervention. All patients recovered. Overall, 7% of patients discontinued VIRAMUNE[®] due to rash.

Table 1: Percentage of patients with rashes in controlled trials^a

	ACTG 241 ^b		BI 1037		BI 1011		COMBINED DATA	
	NVP+ZDV+ddi	ZDV+ddi	NVP+ZDV	ZDV	NVP+ZDV	ZDV	NVP	CONTROL
n	197	201	30	30	25	24	252	255
Rash events of all Grades and all causality	39.6%	23.9%	26.7%	6.7%	32.0%	4.2%	37.3%	20.0%
Grade 3 or 4 rash events, all causality	8.1%	1.5%	3.3%	0%	8.0%	0%	7.6%	1.2%

^a At recommended dose of one 200 mg tablet daily for the first 14 days followed by one 200 mg tablet twice daily.

^b Trial ACTG 241 was designed to report Grade 3/4 (severe or life-threatening) events; except for several pre-specified events including rash for which all grades are reported.

Table 2 lists treatment-related clinical adverse events that occurred in patients receiving VIRAMUNE[®] in ACTG 241 and in Trials BI 1037 and BI 1011.

Table 2: Comparative Incidence of Selected Drug-Related Events in Controlled Trials

	ACTG 241		Trial BI 1037 and BI 1011	
	Grade 3/4 events		All severities	
	NVP+ZDV+ddi	ZDV+ddi	NVP+ZDV	ZDV alone
Number of patients	197	201	55	30
Overall incidence of related adverse events	31%	23%	42%	33%
Rash	8	2	20	3
Fever	3	3	11	3
Nausea	5	4	9	3
Headache	3	3	11	0
Diarrhea	2	2	0	0
Abdominal pain	1	2	2	0
Ulcerative stomatitis	0	0	4	0
Peripheral Neuropathy	0	2	0	0
Parosmia	1	0	2	0
Myalgia	1	0	2	7
Hepatitis	1	0	4	0

Laboratory Abnormalities: Table 3 summarizes marked laboratory abnormalities occurring in three controlled studies.

Table 3: Percentage of patients with marked laboratory abnormalities

	Data combined for controlled trials ACTG 241, BI 1037 & BI 1011	
	VIRAMUNE [®] n=252	Control n=255
Hematology		
Decreased Hg (<8.0 g/dL)	1.2%	2.0%
Decreased platelets (<50,000/mm ³)	0.8	0.8
Decreased neutrophils (<750/mm ³)	11.1	10.2
Blood chemistry		
Increased ALT (>250 U/L)	3.4	3.5
Increased AST (>250 U/L)	2.0	2.4
Increased GGT (>450 U/L)	2.4	1.2
Increased total bilirubin (>2.5 mg/dL)	0.4	1.2

Asymptomatic elevations in GGT levels are more frequent in VIRAMUNE[®] recipients than in controls. Because hepatitis has occasionally been reported in VIRAMUNE[®]-treated patients, monitoring of liver function tests should be considered.

OVERDOSAGE: There is no known antidote for VIRAMUNE[®] overdosage. No acute toxicities or sequelae were reported for one patient who ingested 800 mg of VIRAMUNE[®] for one day.

CAUTION FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITS DISPENSING WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION

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RX-2140B/W (5/98)

SOFTBALL/ from page 1A

season later, the team went from last place in the local league to capturing the World Series trophy.

Along the way, Sansom has made life-long friends, he said.

"(Softball) has made an incredible difference in my life," he said. "My best friends now are the ones I met when I started playing in 1982. I met a lot of people and got exposed to the gay community."

DeSale, hoping to return to the Bayou City with a trophy, has attended 12 World Series with several teams in Houston. He has been a player and coach in the Montrose Softball League since 1980. Twice, his teams have captured second place in the Series.

"I am not a bar person and that (gay softball) was what I was looking for," DeSale said. "We were looking for something athletic to do — both for competition and camaraderie."

Another inductee, Atlantan David Francis, moved to Atlanta in 1980. He found no existing gay softball, so he set out to organize it himself. From one sports contact to another, he found his way to the top rung of gay athletics. Francis submitted an application to the NAGAAA for Atlanta to form a league and to be considered for World Series play, and the proposal was unanimously approved.

Big-city Atlanta may have started out with a meager five teams, but unyielding enthusiasm for gay softball turned out to be longer lasting than the grass and clay stains that come with it. In 19 years, the Hotlanta Softball League has grown to 41 teams.

"I am amazed at the recurring number of skilled players on all levels," said Francis. "When we first started, we were grateful for two full teams and an umpire. Now, we look over nine fields at the Softball Country Club and they are all full."

Much like the Olympics, Atlanta had to go through a bidding process in order to become the host for the series. According to Gregg Daugherty, public relations director for Series '98, the Hotlanta League performance at last year's series helped give Atlanta the lead. "For the first time in World Series history, a particular league took home a trophy in every division."

The competition

The women's defending World Series Champions (competitive division), Atlanta's Heretic Heat, are shooting for a repeat on their home field. After nine years as top Series contenders, the Heat beat out Chicago and L.A. during last year's Series in San Diego.

"If we play the way I know we can, we will be up there at the top," said Heat captain Nine Cole. Coolly confident, Cole looks for Long Beach's Yes I Am to be the team's toughest challenge.

On the men's side, the Atlanta Power put up a big fight last year and are expected to do the same this time around. Their competition comes from the west coast in the form of Los Angeles' Stray Cats, the current defenders and four-time World Series champs.

Series basics

Atlanta first hosted the Series in 1989, but the tournament itself is 22 years old, originating in San Francisco. Much like Major League Baseball, there are leagues, divisions and teams that make up this international alliance.

It begins with the leagues. In Atlanta, there is the Hotlanta Softball league with its 41 teams; Houston has 13. There are three divisions for men's play — A, B, and C, A being the highest skill level — and two divisions in women's play, Competitive and Recreational.

And there's more to the Series than the action on the field.

The big kick-off event for the week is the Miss Gay Softball World Series pageant Monday night at The Armory, a local gay bar. In this competition, the contestants are men in dresses — same as usual — but they also have to be ball players. With any luck, since play doesn't begin until Tuesday, there won't be too much ugly road rash on those knees and thighs.

Opening ceremonies, Tuesday at 8 p.m., will have all of the pomp and circumstance of other international sporting events, organizers said.

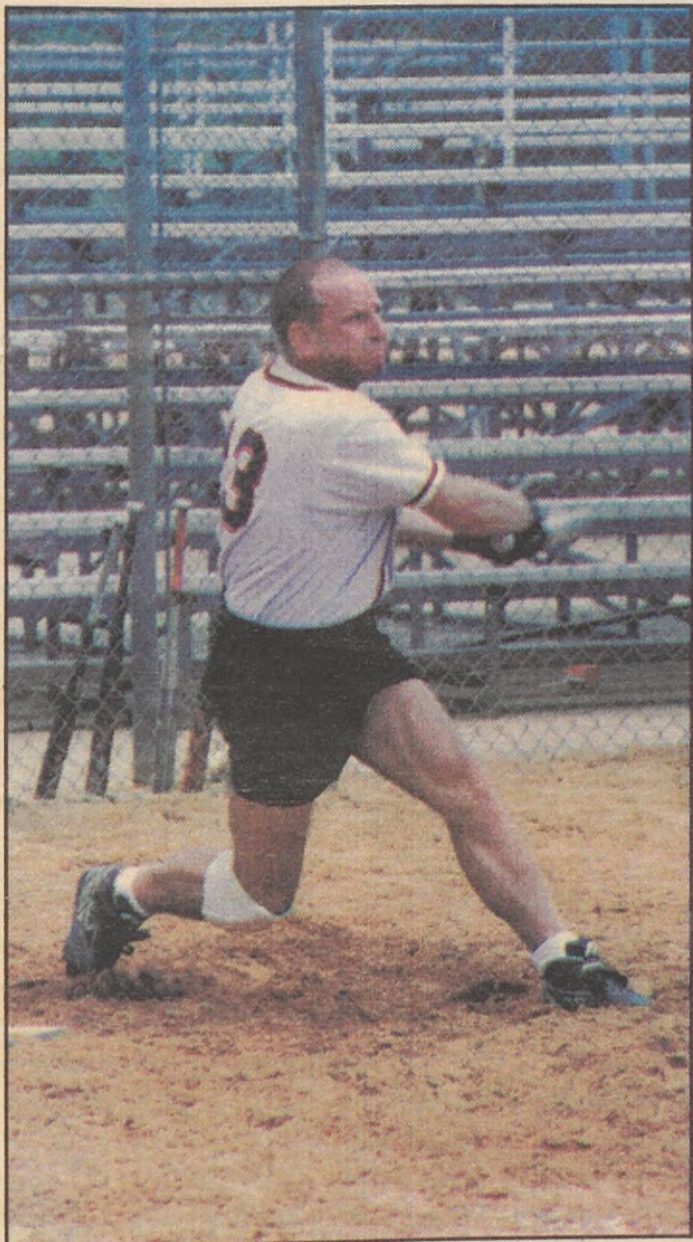
"Much in the tradition of the Olympics, we will have a Presentation of Cities, fireworks, a choir and the Star Spangled Banner," Daugherty said. Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell will welcome the series to the city, and the Star Spangled Banner and Canadian National Anthem will be sung by hometown favorite Libby Whittemore.

The women get their chance to take the stage too, on Thursday night during a talent show. After the championships, events wrap up with the closing ceremonies at Colony Square, in which the Series MVP, the 1998 All-Star team and Hall of Fame inductees will be announced.

The Gay Softball World Series is a non-profit event. All proceeds after costs will be donated to The Armory Homecoming Fund, which distributes money for several local AIDS service organizations, and the Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative.

"I try to really encourage people to come out and take part," Sansom said. "It is a healthy way to interact and it introduces people to a sense of community that is unique to team sports. It is an easy way to get involved."

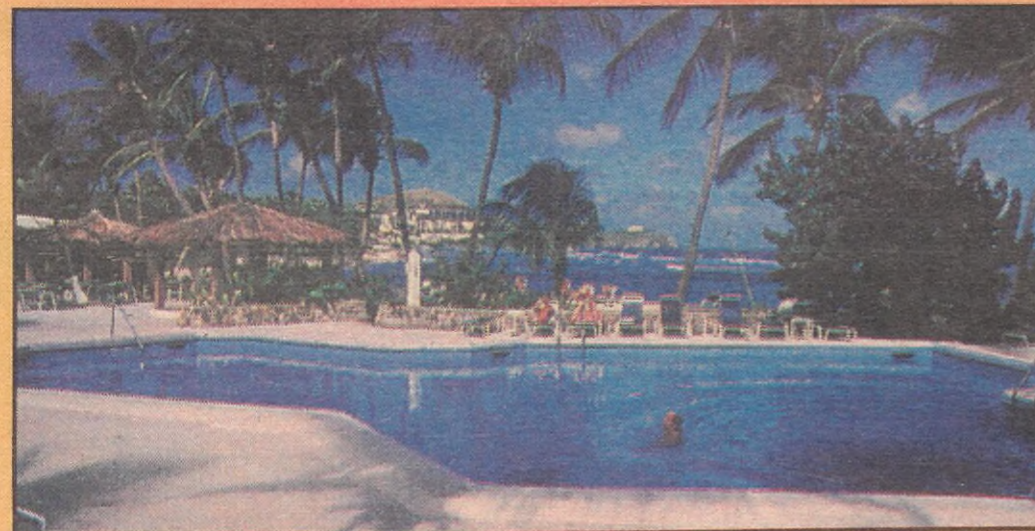
Emily Almond contributed to this report.



Gay softball: Roy Green of Pacific Street heads to Atlanta as part of three teams from Houston vying for the Gay Softball World Series Championship. — Photo by Dalton DeHart



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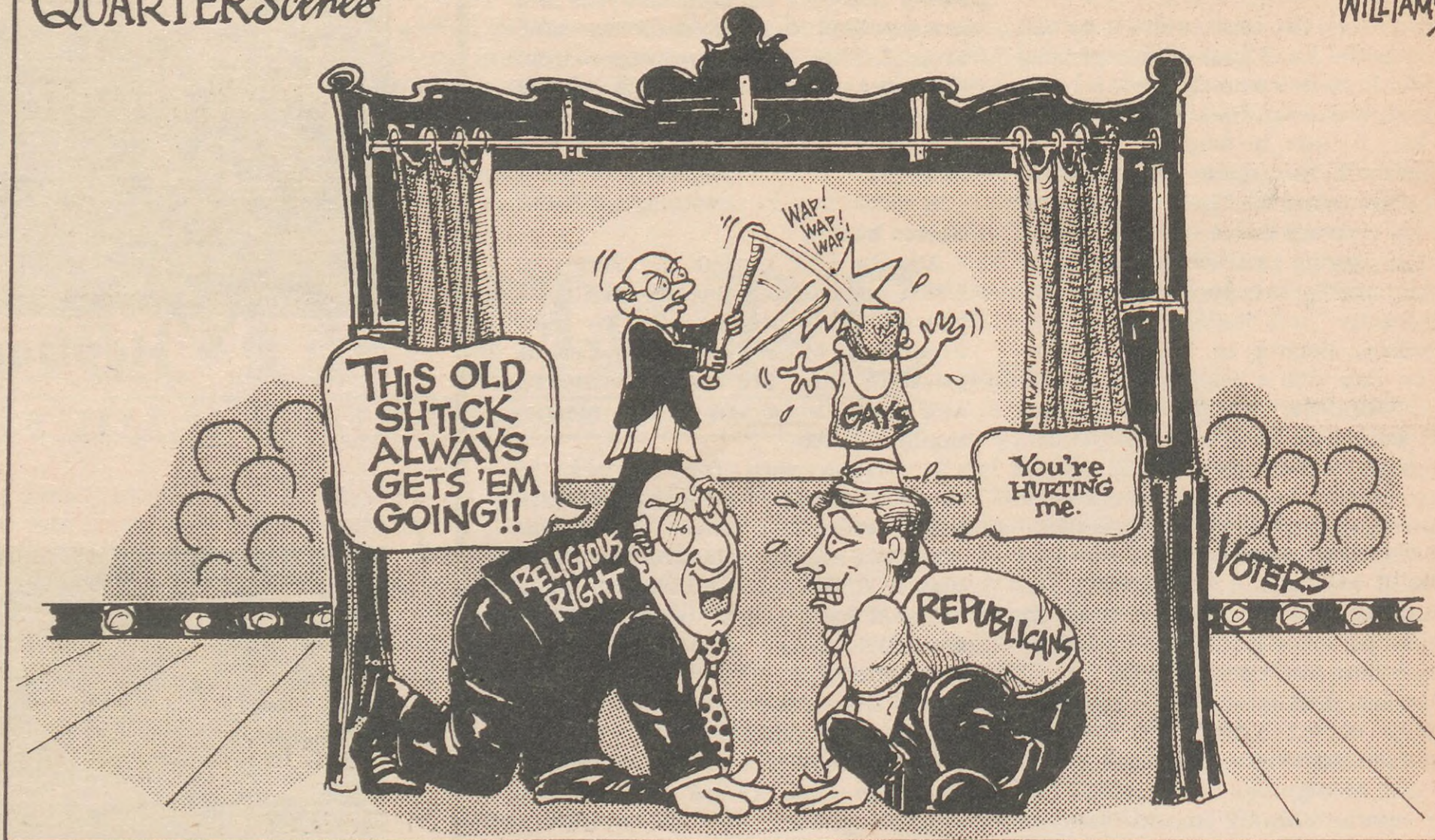
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QUARTERScenes



Religious Bias

Too many gay Christians unnecessarily reject their faith



by CINDY L. ABEL

The Culture War over equal treatment of lesbians and gays is being fought between gays and Christians.

I've grown weary of watching my sisters

and brothers sleepwalk through the haze of no man's land, forced to choose between real and full identity as gays and societal acceptance among Christians.

I'm exhausted from counting the many dead and many more wounded, who have sacrificed either integral part of their true selves seeking shelter for another part.

The hollow look in their eyes reveals a space into which inordinate amounts of alcohol, drugs and addictive activism are poured — all in futile attempts at filling a permanently empty void. That well of loneliness.

Too many Christians unnecessarily reject gays, and too many gays raised in a Christian tradition unnecessarily reject Christianity.

I speak of those who were "raised on the promises" and are constantly told — by Christians and by gays — that you must choose. Choose between the "faith of (y)our fathers" that brought your soul hope, and the sexual orientation that makes your heart quiver.

Well, I've had enough of Baptist-bashing, Christian-crucifying, and other blood sports in the supposed name of Queer Freedom.

I made my peace with God some time ago, only to find myself ducking to avoid the supposedly friendly fire. The barbs are no less destructive when hurled by Sister Lesbian than by Sister Christian. And they sound terribly similar.

Reconciling Christianity and homosexuality are important on another front as well.

Many Americans happen to care about what they think the Bible says about homosexuality. Sure, some don't. And others abandon their long-held beliefs, while still others live in conflict between their heart-felt convictions and their genuine love for their

I've had enough of Baptist-bashing, Christian-crucifying, and other blood sports in the supposed name of Queer Freedom. The barbs are no less destructive when hurled by Sister Lesbian than by Sister Christian.

child, parent or friend. A few turn their back on both "the sin and the sinner."

But what if they didn't have to? What if the Bible didn't actually condemn homosexuality? Wouldn't that take away the opportunistic preacher's fire, the estranged parent's conflict and the tortured homosexual's dichotomy?

I'm not talking about adopting a "less literal" or "more liberal" interpretation of Scripture. I'm referring to the same scrutiny through which others passages are reviewed.

There's precious little peace of mind in abandoning a standard to "justify" orientation or behavior — the texts must pass muster to be accepted as Truth.

One of the best kept secrets is that scholars have interpreted the Bible literally and find no condemnation of homosexuality or homosexual behavior in and of itself. (Prostitution, pedophilia, and promiscuity were another matter, whether hetero or homosexual. For an in-depth discussion of key passages, take a look at Daniel Helminiak's book, "What the Bible Really Says About Homosexuality.")

Why don't we hear more about this? Why, instead of hurling verbal grenades like "bigotry" and "intolerance" at conservative Christians, aren't we doing everything we can to communicate the good news of this possible peace treaty?

Hey, it doesn't have to be about God anymore. If you've got a bias against queers, let's talk about them, but without the mask of Biblical justification.

Even if you think Christianity in any incarnation is a bunch of hogwash, the strategy makes good marketing

sense.

Imagine our movement's current approach to Christians being applied in the marketplace, with its condescending, name-calling approach. Imagine a commercial peddling detergent that adopts our approach:

"A lot of uneducated consumers haven't learned how well our detergent cleans clothes, but don't let them intimidate you."

Or, even worse: "That narrow-minded minority wants you to believe their detergent is the only good product. Those bigots. Buy ours."

Please.

After all, how many of us started believing in a literal Hell just because placards on the fringes of an AIDS march told us that's where we were going to end up?

The battle between gays and Christians is a battle of world views. Does it really matter who started this war, if we're all dead or wounded? Why are so many on both "sides" so committed to silencing the small voice that could bring a much needed healing?

For one, I am weary of the wounds inflicted upon our community by members of the "gotta choose" society.

It really doesn't matter who's throwing the stones — we still end up bloodied. And drunk and dying and addicted.

I believe that a society built upon true spirituality is broad enough, and inclusive enough, to include all of us — even gays and Christians. How firm a foundation.

Cindy L. Abel is a Georgia-based political consultant and the former executive director of the Georgia Equality Project. She can be reached through this publication.

Trumpeting A Cure

Want to be heterosexual? Head to the local shopping mall



by KAREN SHOFFNER

We gay folk now seem such a formidable threat to society and ourselves that organizations dedicated to turning us into heterosexuals (almost always from a Christian angle) now have advertising budgets. Billboards and newspaper ads trumpeting a cure are now accompanied by testi-

monials. The most infamous testimonial is by a former lesbian who now claims to be a happy wife and mother. Of course she's happy. She's gained society's approval.

I suppose television ads are next. Infomercials? Why not? If insanely gleeful people with toothy grins can sell knives, spray-on hair, the keys to instant wealth and exercise machines at 2 o'clock in the morning, why can't they sell a cure for homosexuality, too?

Emily, a straight friend of mine, observed that if gay people don't want to be gay anymore, they needn't join an organization or go for therapy. Heterosexuality is general in the land, she reasoned, and is reinforced at every level of society. You're rewarded for being straight, after all. Her point being why sell your soul to an ex-gay ministry when you can just go to a shopping mall and see heterosexuality acted out every day?

But going to a shopping mall wouldn't necessarily achieve the desired result of conversion to heterosexuality. Conversion or a cure is virtually impossible. *New Republic* senior editor Andrew Sullivan wrote in a recent *New York Times* piece that reparative therapists themselves believe it is "extremely difficult in most cases" to bring about a cure. Treatment requires therapy five times a week, often for years. Those who go the ex-gay ministry way might do some hard praying and heavy scripture reading in addition to therapy.

I dislike the word cure when used in the same sen-

tence as homosexuality because it implies that homosexuality is a disease or a pathological condition. But I guess it is a disease to those who would seek to cure it.

Sullivan went on to write that reparative therapists claim a "success" rate of about 30 percent. As he points out, though, those who undergo treatment are probably those who are most willing and desperate to do so.

If gay people don't want to be gay anymore, they needn't join an organization or go for therapy. Heterosexuality is general in the land and is reinforced at every level of society. You're rewarded for being straight.

With evidence that homosexuality might be biologically determined — the most recent finding I know of is that a lesbian's auditory sense is closer to a man's than that of a straight woman — it could follow that homosexuality is genetic, thus making a cure a somewhat fanciful notion. Scientists are working to map the some 80,000 genes that make us who we are. A recent National Public Radio broadcast said some 6,000 have been identified so far. I hear there's a gene that determines whether a person will have ear or nose hair, so why not a gay gene? The implications of mapping our genes are interesting, to say the least.

For example, once they are mapped, a way to manipulate them must surely follow. People who can afford it will be able to order custom-made children — beautiful, healthy, strong, intelligent and, more likely than not, heterosexual. We all know that lesbians and gays invariably lead despairing and tortured lives, so why burden people with homosexuality if there's a choice? Let's not kid ourselves. Knowing their own prejudices and those of society, parents wouldn't choose homosexuality for their children, if given the choice. I know mine wouldn't, as much as they love me. It's far easier to get a child made to order than to eradicate prejudice.

Right-wingers, who seem more pre-occupied with homosexuality than anyone else (except queer theorists, perhaps), are convinced that we do have a choice, which is why they're waging their inquisition — convert or else. But since a cure isn't realistic, the gay man or lesbian who wants to lift the burden of being a gay man or lesbian must settle for living like a heterosexual, rather than actually becoming one. This is where watching lots of TV and going to shopping malls comes in handy, for there the mores and mannerisms of heterosexuality are writ large.

I should think right-wingers would be satisfied with the appearance of heterosexuality. After all, late 20th century America is all about appearance over substance. Since this is an election year, some conservatives are trying to give the appearance of being kinder and gentler by softening their rhetoric. The more of us that appear to conform the better, I suppose.

If there should be a cure for anything, there should be one for the ignorance, self-righteousness and contempt on the part of some straight people that makes gays and lesbians unhappy, which leads them to seek a cure for what they believe ails them.

Wouldn't that be something? An infomercial with an outlandishly perky host hawking a cure for ignorance. I'd stay up late to watch that one. I might even buy it.

Karen Shoffner is a freelance writer in Northampton, Mass.

Workplace Diversity

How to make money and influence people — the gay way



by MICHAEL ALVEAR

She swaggered throughout her corporate presentation, like a sheriff laying down the law. She talked tough and walked rougher.

A male co-worker leaned over to me and whispered, "When did she grow a penis?"

I didn't know which would win the tug-of-war — my

sense of outrage or my sense of humor. So I laughed angrily.

Later that day, I wondered what would've happened if I had been up at the podium. Would the same guy have leaned over to someone else and asked, "When did he grow a vagina?"

It's boom days for straight, white males prone to insulting their co-workers, now that diversity has a real toe-hold in the corporate world. Like newborn flies in an Indian restaurant, hope springs eternal in the mouths of the old boy network.

The good news is that insults fly because there is diversity in the workplace. So as out, gay men take more visible management roles, we're sure to take our share of pot shots. We may have to duck the produce being thrown at our stage, but there's no doubt that we'll leave a legacy on business, much as women did when they entered the industry.

It's accepted fact that women manage differently than men. But do gay men manage in a different way altogether? I've been fascinated by the idea of a gay style of management, especially in the world of Big Conservative Business.

Other than conducting shirtless staff meetings, said one friend, he can't imagine what a gay style of management would be.

But I disagree. And I say this having managed a

staff of 12 in a company so white, male and Southern that they make bankers look like pierced circuit boys.

The out, gay male style of management tends to borrow from the worst in straight male managers and the best in their female counterparts. Like most men, we tend toward "command and control" (only with a "step-shuffle-kick"). And like most women, we're very sensitive to the feelings of our peers and employees (most of us developed an exquisite radar as a survival mechanism. We can hear a feeling drop from across the hall.)

Of course, no analysis of gay management can go

Other than conducting shirtless staff meetings, said one friend, he can't imagine what a gay style of management would be.

far without mentioning the absurd sense of humor that seems to come with the territory. If laughter is the Vaseline that makes ideas penetrate better, then proposals from gay men will glide through more often than most.

Lastly, I think straight managers have a lot to learn from us when it comes to cynicism. Most people cynical about their jobs come in late, leave early and in-between, extend personal calls like phone psychics worried about their take at \$3.99 a minute.

But not us. We'll trash the place, our own activities, the people around us and we'll still come in

early, leave late and produce great work.

This curious kind of enthusiastic cynicism was developed early in our childhood. At school, we joined everything and led most of it. We were 10 percent of the student body but 90 percent of the hands that shot up in the air when the teacher asked the class a question. We got the answers right, but we got thumped after school by the jocks.

This taught us a great lesson we've put to use later on in business life: Do a great job, but act like you hate it.

But lest I wax too rhapsodically about gay men's contributions to Big Business, the awful truth is that most employers don't want gay managers or leaders. They want our traits, just not us.

The attitude I sense from too many of the suits around me reminds me of the Plotnick Diamond story, my grandmother's favorite tale. According to her, the Plotnick Diamond was the most beautiful, expensive diamond in the world. It was available to any woman who would claim it. But none did. Because of "The Curse." The Curse of the Plotnick Diamond was ... Mr. Plotnick came with it.

Most employers would sacrifice diamonds if they knew Plotnicks like us came as a package deal. Still, the good news is that some corporate executives are beginning to understand that human traits can't be picked out in isolation like items on a menu at a Chinese restaurant: one from column A and another from column B.

And for those who aren't afraid of the strings attached to the jewelry, a new and different office will emerge. A shrewder, funnier, more enthusiastically cynical office that will guide their business forward. And make more money for them than a White House intern with a book deal.

Michael Alvear lives in Atlanta and is certain he will be fired for writing this column once his straight boss gets a hold of it.

Friday, August 7

- Free HIV testing by the Montrose Clinic at E/J's 6-10 pm and at the Midtowne Spa 10 pm to 1 am, Inergy at 8:30 pm to midnight.
- HATCH meets. 713-942-7002.
- Houston Tennis Club meets at 7:30 pm. 713-864-8468
- Aftercare Group Treatment at Montrose Counseling Center. 6pm. 713-529-0037.
- Frost Eye Clinic: Free eye exams for HIV+ people. 713-830-3000
- Lesbian Avengers meet at Toohee's, 1830 W. Alabama @ 7pm.
- Q-Patrol Meets to walk the streets at 8:45 pm. 713-528-SAFE.
- Kolbe Projects' Park Plaza Hospital Visitation. 713-861-1800.
- Positive Art Workshop 1-4pm. Patrick Palmer at 713-526-1118.
- Lesbian and Gay Voices on KPFT 7pm 713-526-5738.
- Houston Outdoor Group goes camping. 713-864-0082.
- Houston Professional Men's Association meets for dinner. 713-666-4557.
- Saturday, August 8
- Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic at Brick's II 4 to 8 pm and the 611 Hyde Park Pub 8 pm to midnight, Toyz 8:30 pm to midnight.
- AIDS Housing Coalition Houston: A 90 day gay positive emergency house for PWA's in transition, 10am to 12pm, 117 Tuam Ave. @ Helena, FYI 713-521-1613.
- After Hours on KPFT 12am to 3am. 90.1 FM. 713-526-5738.
- Q-Patrol meets to walk the streets at 8:45pm. 713-528-SAFE.
- Visual Art Alliance meets at 10am. 281-583-8408.
- Rainbow Fishing Club meets. 713-526-7070.
- The Movie Club meets. 281-835-5312.
- Gay Alumni Noon Group meets. 713-665-6446.
- Gulf Coast Transgender Community meets. 713-780-4282.

Sunday, August 9

- The Women's Group meets 10:45am. 713-529-8571.
- HATCH meets. 713-942-7002.
- Houston Chain Gang Bicycle Club meets. 713-802-0165
- Rainbow Riders: A bicycle club for women.

713-869-1686.

- FrontRunners meet at 9:00 am. 713-522-8021.
- Lone Star Volleyball plays. 281-878-4629.
- Houston Tennis Club meets at 10:30 am. 713-864-8468.
- Sisiter meet at 5 p.m. 713-801-4254.

Monday, August 10

- Gay Fathers/Fathers First support group. 8pm. 713-861-6181.
- Calendar/Computer workshop for Pride Week. 7pm. 713-529-1223.
- Outpatient Group Treatment at Montrose Counseling Center. 6pm. 713-529-0037.
- Men Survivors of Sexual Abuse Group at Montrose Counseling Center. 6:15pm. 713-529-0037.
- Gay Men Survivors of Domestic Violence support group meets. 713-526-1017.
- Bering Support Network-Grief and Divorce Groups meets at 7 pm. 713-526-1017.
- Frost Eye Clinic: Free eye exams for HIV+ people. 713-830-3000.
- AIDS Caregiver's Support Group meets at 6pm. 713-732-4300.
- AVES sponsored free HIV testing from 1pm to 6:15 pm 713-626-2837
- Houston Area Women's Center's Volunteer training. 713-535-6363.
- Free Yoga Classes at 7 pm 713-965-9642.
- Free HIV testing by the Montrose Clinic; Mary's 9 am to 1 pm; and Cousin's 8:30 pm to midnight.
- Kolbe Project's Park Plaza Visitation; 713-861-1800.
- AIDS Foundation Houston offers free creative writing class. 3:00 pm. 713-623-6796.
- FrontRunners meets at 6:30 pm. 713-522-8021.
- TV Montrose airs on Warner Cable Channel 54 at 8 pm. 713-523-6302
- Texas Medical Group meets at 7:30 p.m. 713-284-7206.

Tuesday, August 11

- Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous meets at 239 Westheimer. 7pm. 713-495-8009.
- Gay Men HIV+ Psychotherapy at Montrose Counseling Center. 4:30pm. 713-529-0037.
- Youth-Rap at 6:30pm. 713-822-8511.
- Aftercare Group Treatment at Montrose Counseling Center. 6pm. 713-529-0037
- AIDS Alliance of the Bay Area meets at 7pm. 713-488-4492.

- Empowerment for Living meets for pot luck. 713-861-9149.
- PROTECT: an HIV negative support group meets at 7pm. 713-526-1017.
- Free HIV testing by Montrose Clinic Club Body Center and Mela's 8pm to Midnight.
- Women Survivors of Childhood Abuse at Montrose Counseling Center. 6:30pm. 713-529-0037.
- Kolbe Projects' Park Plaza Visitation; 713-861-1800.
- Bering Support Network-Lunch Bunch Gang meets at 11 am. 713-526-1017.
- HIV + Support group for men over 50 meets at 7:30 pm. 713-527-9106.
- Love, Lust, and Intimacy discussion group meets at 7 pm. 713-524-2374.
- TV Montrose airs on Warner Cable Channel 54 at 8 pm. 713-523-6302.
- Houston Gay/Lesbian Pride Week meets. 713-529-6979.
- Lesbian Health Initiative meets. 713-681-1309.
- Outrage meets at 7 p.m. 713-706-2508.

Wednesday, August 12

- Free HIV testing by the Montrose Clinic; Mary's 4-8pm; Chances 6 to 10 pm, Nighthawks 10 pm to midnight and the Ripcord 10 pm to 1 am.
- Frost Eye Clinic: Free eye exams to HIV+ people. 713-520-2000.
- Houston Pride Band practices at Dignity Houston. 713-524-0218.
- Houston Tennis Club meets at 7:30 pm. 713-864-8468.
- GLOBAL (Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Alliance at the U of H) meets at 4:30pm. 713-791-1412.
- Women's Network at Montrose Counseling Center. 7pm. 713-529-0037.
- Ongoing Mixed Living in Process Group for men and women. 713-622-7250.
- Aftercare Group Treatment at Montrose Counseling Center. 6pm. 713-529-0037.
- HIV Survivor Support Group meets at 7pm. 713-782-4050.
- Free Yoga classes at 7 pm. 713-965-9642.
- Bering Spiritual Support Group meets at 6:45 pm. 713-526-1017.
- Women's Clinic at the Montrose Clinic. 5 to 8pm. Call 713-830-3000.
- BiNet of Houston meets at 7pm. 713-861-9149.
- AVES offers free HIV testing from 1 to 6:15 pm. 713-626-2837.
- Kolbe Project's Hospital Visitation: 713-861-

1800.

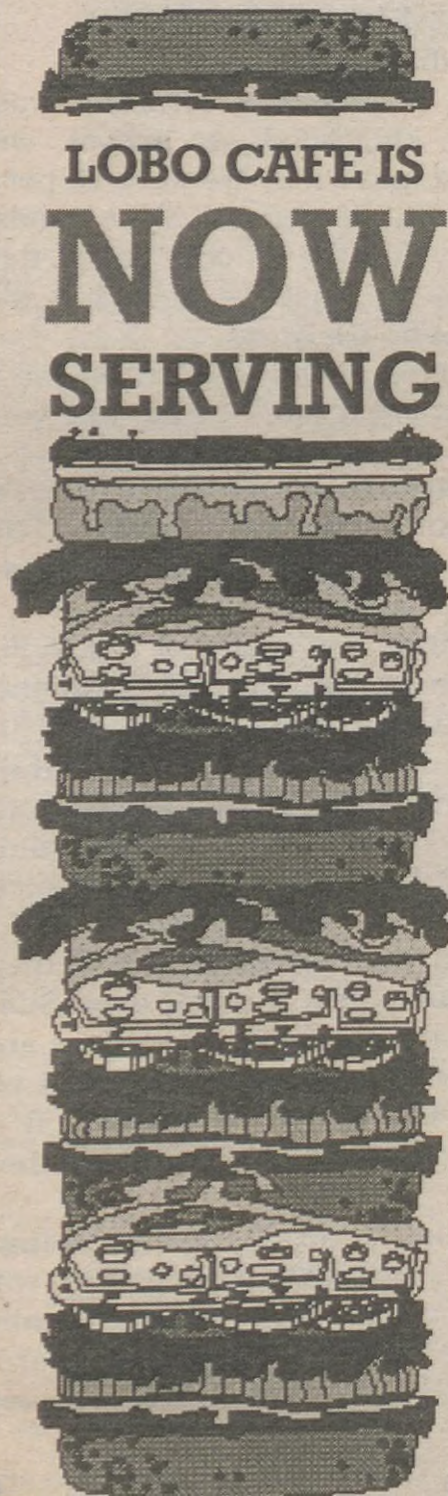
- Houston Harpies Ice Hockey Team recruits. 713-802-1248.
- Rainbow Ranglers at 8 pm at the BRB.
- Lambda Rollerskating Club skates at 8 pm. 281-933-5818.
- Thomas Street Health Center Council meets at 2 pm. 713-902-2231.
- Healing and Happiness Through Wellness at 7 pm. 713-623-6796.
- TV Montrose airs on Warner Cable Channel 54 at 8 pm. 713-523-6302.
- The Mind/Body Connection: Alternative Approaches at 7:00 p.m. 713-524-2374.

Thursday, August 13

- Free HIV Testing by the Montrose Clinic at the BRB from 4 to 8 pm and QT's 8 pm to midnight.
- Art Labs at The Art League at 1pm. 713-225-9411.
- Gay Men's Chorus of Houston open rehearsal at 7pm. 713-521-7464.
- Twentysomething meets at 7:30pm. 713-315-6786.
- Ongoing gay men's Living in Process Groups. 713-622-7250.
- HIV+ Men Psychotherapy at Montrose Counseling Center. 1:15pm. 713-529-0037.
- Relapse Prevention at Montrose Counseling Center. 2pm. 713-529-0037.
- Outpatient Group Treatment at Montrose Counseling Center. 6pm. 713-529-0037.
- Aftercare Group Treatment at Montrose Counseling Center. 6pm. 713-529-0037.
- Women's Therapy Group at Montrose Counseling Center. 5:30pm. 713-529-0037.
- Meditation and Chanting Group meets at 7pm. 713-942-0923.
- HIV Affected at CASA. 7pm. 713-796-2272.
- HIV Survivor Support Group meets at 2929 Unity Drive. 7pm. 713-782-4050.
- Center for the Healing of Racism. 7:30pm. 713-738-RACE.
- FrontRunners run at 6:30 pm. 713-522-8021.
- HIV Art Course Program; 1-4pm. Patrick Palmer at 713-526-1118.
- HIV Prevention Community Planning Group meets at 9 am. 713-794-9251.
- Women's Clinic opens at the Montrose Clinic 713-830-3000.
- HIV Prevention Community Planning Group meets at 8:00 a.m. 713-794-9251.
- Montrose Ice Picks skate at 8 p.m. 713-629-1432.

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CHURCH CALENDAR

Friday, August 7

- Communion and Prayer Service at 10:00 am; at the Kolbe Project. 713-522-8182.
- The Church of Good Life on the Internet; <http://www.syncretist.org/church.htm>.

Saturday, August 8

- The Church of Good Life on the Internet; <http://www.syncretist.org/church.htm>.

Sunday, August 9

- Church of the XII Apostles Anglican Rite Old Catholic Church; Holy Communion 10:30 am at 239 Westheimer. 713/665-7903.
- Holy Rite Eucharist I 8:00 am; Holy Rite Eucharist II 9:00 am; Choral Eucharist 11:00 am at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.
- Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church Service "Preaching the Gospel" at 11 am. 713-528-6756.
- MCCR Worship services 9:00 & 11:00 am 713-861-9149.
- Grace Lutheran Church Sunday school for all ages at 9:30 am Worship Service at 10:30 am 713-528-3269.
- First Unitarian Universalist Church Sunday Services at 9:30 am and 11:30 am 713-526-5200.
- Services at 5:30 pm Dignity Church 713-880-2872.
- Community Gospel Praise and Worship service at 11:00 am Sunday School for children. Evening Service at 7 pm. 4305 Lillian 713-880-9235. Catch them at www.community-gospel.org.
- Houston Mission Church Worship service at 10:30 am 713-529-8225.
- Covenant Baptist Church Worship service 1:30 pm and education hour at 3:00 pm. 713-668-8830.
- Bering Memorial United Methodist Church Worship service 10:50 am. Seekers class 9:15 am 713-526-1017.
- MCCR Handbell Choir Rehearsal at 7:00 pm 713-861-9149.
- Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County, 402 Church St. in Galveston. Sunday Services at 10:30 am weekly. 409-765-8330.
- The Church of Good Life on the Internet; <http://www.syncretist.org/church.htm>.
- Faith and Hope Fellowship Service at 11:00

am. 713-520-7847.

Monday, July August 10

- Catholic Mass and "St. Maximilian Kolbe" video at 7:30 pm at the Kolbe Project. 713-861-1800

Tuesday, August 11

- MCCR: Empowerment for Living support group & pot luck dinner at 6:00 pm. Gloryland Ensemble at 6:00 pm. Orchestra rehearsal at 7:30 pm. 713-861-9149.
- Maranatha Fellowship MCC has groups that meet in each others home for a time of fellowship, sharing God's word, and prayer. Call for the location in your area 713-528-6756.
- The Church of Good Life on the Internet; <http://www.syncretist.org/church.htm>.
- "The Hiding Place" movie and prayer @7 pm. At the Kolbe Project. 713-861-1800.

Wednesday, August 12

- Holy Eucharist Rite II 12 Noon at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1805 W. Alabama. 713-528-6665.
- MCCR Bible Study 7:30 pm 713-861-9149.
- Worship Service 7:30 pm at Faith and Hope Fellowship 713-520-7847
- The Church of Good Life on the Internet; <http://www.syncretist.org/church.htm>.
- "Maximilian, St. of Auschwitz" movie nf Prayer Service at 7 p.m. Healing Service at 8 pm. the Kolbe Project. 713-861-7212.

Thursday, August 13

- Bible Study 7:00 pm at Faith and Hope Fellowship 713-520-7847.
 - Choir Practice at Community Gospel 6:30 pm 713-880-9235 or www.community-gospel.org.
 - Choir Practice at 6:30 pm. Midweek Service at Community Gospel 7:30 pm 713-880-9235 or www.communitygospel.org.
 - The Church of Good Life on the Internet; <http://www.syncretist.org/church.htm>
 - Francis Gajowniczek's life is spared prayer service at 7 p.m.
- If you want an event listed in this section, please call Carolyn Roberts at 713-529-8490 by 12 Noon Mondays.

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Prayer Service

Wednesday, August 12 • 7pm
"Maximilian, Saint of Auschwitz" movie
Prayer Service

Thursday, August 13 • 7pm
Francis Gajowniczek's life is spared
Prayer Service

Friday, August 14 • 7pm
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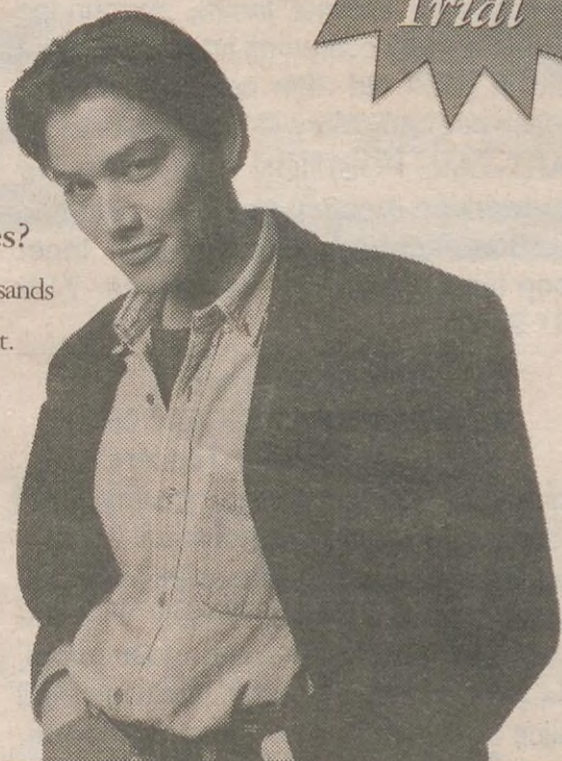
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Announcements

SISTERS & BROTHERS A Benefit for

Breast Cancer Awareness

Benefiting the Montrose Clinic - Well Woman Program. Hosted by: *The Daddy of Montrose*, Jim Sorgini & Kevin Hasson "Ruby Stone".

**Saturday, Aug. 15th, 9pm
at CHANCES**

PWA Coalition needs Volunteers

Volunteers are needed at the Coalition's main offices, serving clients in the Warehouse Program, Ticket Program, and assisting with Administrative functions. The Coalition also needs assistance in its Volunteer Program at Thomas Street Clinic, which serves thousands of clients each month at the Clinic in a variety of departments and functions. To find out more about volunteer opportunities, please call Jackie Wear, Volunteer Coordinator, at 713.938.1533 or Michael Miller, Administrative Manager, at 713.522.5428.

The PWA Coalition

Desperately needs the following:

Dishes, Silverware, Pots/Pans, Sheets, Towels, Dressers, Dinettes, Coffee Tables, Sofas, Love seats, and Small Appliances. We are available for pick-ups. Call Wilson or Kerry at 713.522.5428.

Tanqueray's® Texas AIDS Ride® - seven days from Austin through Houston to Dallas October 5-11 benefiting 44 AIDS service organizations throughout the Lone Star State - is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help spread the word about the Ride. Call 713.521.RIDE for more information.

FREE HIV/AIDS ART WORKSHOP

The Glassell School of Art located at 5101 Montrose Blvd. will be offering FREE Art Courses to those with HIV/AIDS! Classes are offered every Friday until August 1st, from 1:00 to 4:00p.m. All instruction, materials, and even lunch are provided free. Come explore the healing power behind your creativity! Call either 713.639.7500 or 713.526.1118 for information.

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COUNTER HELP

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Advancement is possible to manage other locations. Apply @ 3407 Montrose, #B4. Call George or Marcello at 713.527.0880.

Office Assistant for an insurance agency. Looking for a capable and articulate person to learn customer service. Computer skill, college studies and prior office experience helpful. Modest wages while training, but excellent group health and other benefits. Please call Rob at 713.661.7700.

The Houston/Harris County Title1 Ryan White Council seeks a full-time Support Staff Secretary with excellent phone, writing, organizational and computer skills. Previous experience as a secretary or administrative assistant and minimum of a high school degree required. Other desired skills include experience in creating and distributing a newsletter, recording and writing minutes from meetings and ability to communicate with the public. Spanish language fluency a plus. Salary to high 20's. Please send resumes to: Roy Delasbore, Texas Department of Health, 5425 Polk Ave., Suite J, Houston, Texas 77023-1497 or fax to him at 713.767.3435.

Texas Renaissance Festival Keeping Unemployment Low 1500 Jobs to be filled!!!

(Plantersville, Texas) In what promises to be the largest, most colorful and entertaining hiring event in 1998, the 24th annual Texas Renaissance Festival will match over 1500 hundred open positions with enthusiastic, bi-lingual, festival friendly, job seekers as it gears up for "The Year of the Royal Games" edition of this Lone Star State tradition. The job faire takes place on festival grounds Saturday, August 16, at 9:00 am sharp. Employment dates are Saturdays and Sundays, October 3 - November 15, 1998. The main requirement is a willingness to be customer friendly. If selected, the lucky job hunter will be welcomed into the Texas Renaissance Festival family, surrounded by 16th century costumes and dialects, but paid in good old 20th century currency. Please call Lady Mary @ 1-800-458-3435.

PART-TIME POSITION AVAILABLE for hardworking honest person. Starting \$6.50 per hour/advancing quickly. Inner Loop landscaping & maintenance 713-861-9762.

Job Opportunity DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR Stages Repertory Theatre

Houston's second largest professional theater seeks dynamic individual to manage fundraising programs with \$500,000 annual goal. Working closely with the Managing Director & Board of Directors, this person will research, cultivate and solicit all manner of individual, corporate, foundation and public sources in support of this rapidly-growing, daring and innovative theater. The successful candidate must have highly developed interpersonal abilities, as well as excellent written and verbal communications skills. Strong organizational and computer proficiency is also important. Must be a team player and be able to work in a small professional theater environment. Salary is High \$20's to mid \$30's based on experience, with health insurance benefits. Please mail cover letter and resume to: Donald Hightower, Managing Director, Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway, Suite 101, Houston, Texas 77019 or fax: 713.527.8669.

Position available, Gay Men's Chorus of Houston has opening for an accompanist. GMCH, now in its 20th Year, is one of the oldest gay chorus in the US and is committed to excellence in men's music. Responsibilities of the accompanist include but are not limited to accompany rehearsals and concerts, coordinating rehearsals with other instrumentalist as

necessary, and carry out other duties as assigned by the Artistic Director or as defined within the job description. For a complete job description and or more information, send cover letter and resume by July 17th, 1998 to: Accompanist Search Committee, GMCH, P.O. Box 541004, Houston, Texas 77254-1004 or telephone 713.521.SING.

The Houston Pride Band, a volunteer, non-profit organization is looking for a conductor/artistic director. Duties will include: providing artistic direction, conducting at weekly rehearsals, and participating at bi-weekly board meetings. For more information, please contact Russell Williams at 713.524.0218, or send email to HousTxBand@aol.com

General Labor: 713.942.8600

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The Homeless Pet Placement League will be holding pet adoptions at the following locations: • PETSMART, located @ 12914 Willow Chase Drive off FM 1960, every Saturday from 11am to 5pm. • Petco, located @ 2110 S. Shepherd at Avalon, second and fourth Saturday of every month from 11am to 5pm. • Petco, located @ 6883 Hwy. 6 at FM 529, second and fourth Saturday of every month 11am to 5pm. • Cats Pajamas, located @ 12572 Westheimer at Dairy Ashford in the Moore Shopping Center, first and third Saturday of every month from 11am to 5pm. •

Adoption costs are \$65 and all animals are spayed/neutered and have received their first set of shots. For additional adoption sites or for more information please call 713.862.7387(PETS) or look for us on our web site at www.HPPL.org.

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Real Estate For Rent "Wanted"

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Home to share in the Heights Area. Must be mature-semi retired type male. \$300.00 Month 713.862.3989.

Additional services on
page 12, in section B. Help Wanted
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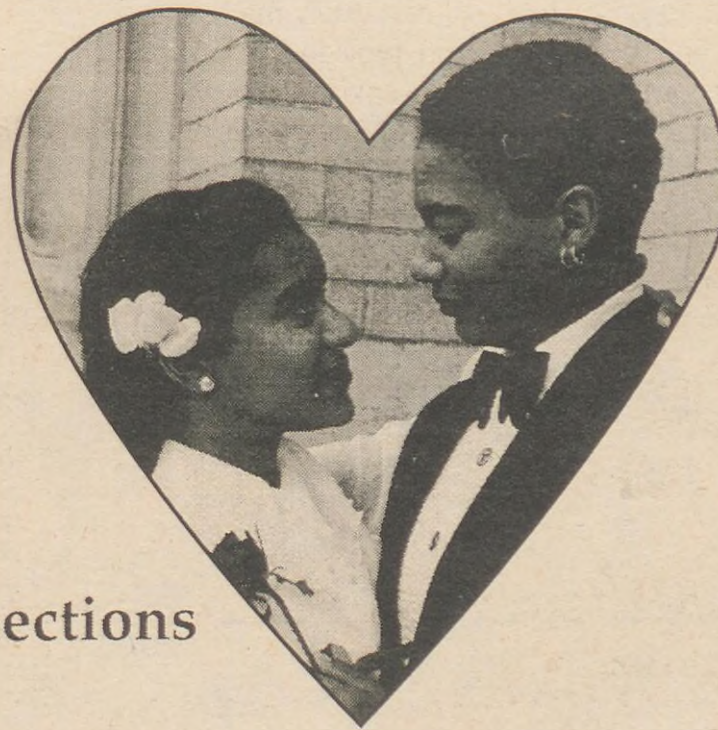
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Through Aug. 8

INNOVATIVE DANCE: "NuDance," a showcase of original choreographic dance performances, will be performed at The Duplex, an intimate space in Montrose in its fourth year of salon-style evening dance programs. The works include both established and emerging Houston dance artists, including one of Cynthia Cupach that explores the play between light, fabric and computer-generated images. The Duplex, 1924 Brun. Tickets are \$8 to \$10, call 713-523-0679.

Through Aug. 9

'LADY O': A one-woman, tour-de-force portrait of Vivien Leigh opens in "Vivien Leigh, The Last Press Conference" as Leigh sweeps onto the stage for her last press conference and attempts to define herself one last time. With three defining roles — Scarlett O'Hara in "Gone With the Wind," Blanche DuBois in Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire," and "Lady O," the wife of Sir Lawrence Olivier — her story is the what dreams are made of. The production opens Aug. 5 at 8 p.m. Theater LaB Houston, 1706 Alamo. Tickets are \$18-\$20, call 713-868-7516.

Aug. 12

MORE RAY: "Ray Hill, The Prison Years," the story of the native Houstonian turned activist, talk show host and general rabble rouser, has changed venues. The play features Hill reminiscing about his prison life, the "system," being gay and his run-ins with city police. Performances are on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. Actors Workshop of Houston, 1009 Chartres, on July 22 and July 29 at 8 p.m. The Little Room Downstairs, 2326 Bissonnet. Tickets are \$8 to \$10. Call 713-236-1844.

Through Aug. 16

BROADWAY REVIVAL: The red-hot remake of John Kander and Fred Ebb's "Chicago" marks another in the new generation of Broadway hits. Choreographer Ann Reinking won a 1997 Tony for her work in the production that opened here on Aug. 4 with a cast that includes gay Katy, Texas native Mark Price. Alan Thicke stars as fast-talking and singing attorney Billy Flynn. Belle Calaway plays his charge, murderess-turned-vaudevilian Roxie Hart. The score includes "All That Jazz," "Mr. Cellophane" and "Razzle Dazzle." Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. Tickets are \$43.50 to \$49.50, call Ticketmaster at 629-3700.

BERING BENEFIT: Screwball comedy combined with song and dance marks "Drop Anchor — I Want to Get Off!," a musical revue for Bering Support Network, which offers counseling and resources for people with HIV/AIDS. The production is a high seas romp set on a Caribbean cruise ship and follows the adventures of passengers from all walks of life. Main Street Theater/Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. Tickets are \$15 to \$20, call 713-285-0007. A Gala Musical Premier is set for Aug. 8 at Rockefeller's, 3620 Washington Ave. Tickets are \$75.

Aug. 14

SMALL TOWN TEXAS: "Sordid Lives," the fourth comedy of small-town Texas life by Del Shores, opens at The Group (Theatre Workshop) on Aug. 14. The theme of unconditional love, acceptance and coming out, along with wicked comedy, struck a nerve with mainstream and gay audiences in Los Angeles. Paradox Theatre, 3722 Washington Ave. Tickets are \$17, call 713-522-2204.

OUT ON THE BAYOU



HOUSTON VOICE • AUGUST 7, 1998
A GUIDE FOR YOUR LEISURE TIME



INTERVIEW: MARK PRICE

Katy native tells Houston Voice determination delivered him to 'Chicago'

by RICH ARENSCHILDT

What a wonderful luxury to know what your destiny is — just ask Katy, Texas native Mark Price.

He is appearing in the national touring company revival of John Kander and Fred Ebb's "Chicago" — which opened in Houston on Aug. 4 — meeting his longtime goal of making it in musical theater.

It hasn't been easy, especially when you grow up queer in Katy and have a penchant for musical theater. The baby-faced Price seems an unlikely candidate to be a Stonewall-type gay pioneer, but reflecting on his life experiences, Price realizes that what he unwittingly became.

"I always wanted to be in the theater — it probably saved my life at one

point," recounted Price, 25, in a recent interview. "I knew that I was gay from a very early age, by the time I was in junior high. Living far away from Houston as one of the only openly gay kids in my school was a challenge."

Fortunately, Price had an understanding family and a strong mentor throughout his teen years. After transferring from Katy to avoid "certain death," Price said, he was noticed by Tim Driscoll, a drama teacher at Houston's Stratford High School. A close and profound student/teacher relationship ensued, which lasted until Driscoll's untimely death.

The events leading to Price's relocation stick in his memory.



Texas native: Mark Price, an openly gay 25-year-old from Katy, joins the production of "Chicago," which started its Houston run at Jones Hall earlier this month.

"There was actually a huge, juicy scandal associated with my leaving the Katy Independent School District. My parents had to rent an apartment in order for me to qualify to attend Stratford. My folks knew it was something that they just had to do," Price said.

See CHICAGO/ page 4B

INSIDE:

Gays And
Religion
'Pilgrim' traces
ordination
of gays.
Page 2B



A Kiss Is
Just A Kiss
'South Park'
creators straight
despite rumors,
lip lock.
Page 3B

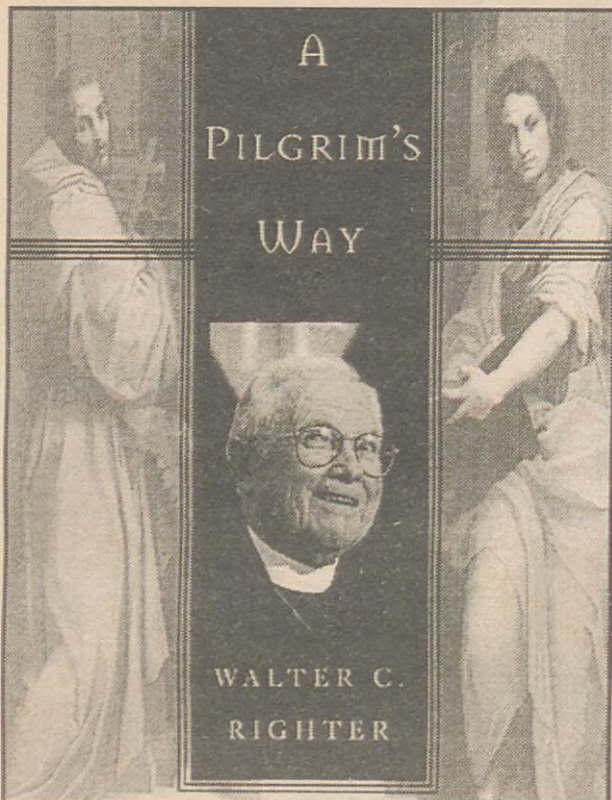


Are Gay Films
Too White?
Minorities don't
get equal
exposure in
gay flicks.
Page 8B



BOOK REVIEWS

Ordination of gays shines spotlight on Episcopal bishop



"A Pilgrim's Way," by Warren C. Righter; Knopf, 168 pages, \$22.

by ELLA TYLER

Warren C. Righter does not look like a man who needs a defense fund. With his thinning white hair and happy countenance, he looks like what he is — a retired Episcopal bishop.

But in 1995 he was accused of heresy and put on trial for his role in ordaining Barry Stopfel, a gay man in a committed, long-term relationship. Fifteen months later, the Court for the Trial of a Bishop held that there is no core doctrine or discipline of the Episcopal Church "prohibiting ordination of a non-celibate homosexual living in a faithful and committed relationship with a person of the same sex," thereby short-circuiting a full trial of Righter, but not ending the debate surrounding this issue.

"A Pilgrim's Way" is Righter's detailed account of the events leading to and surrounding the trial, his feelings about it and the reactions of others. If you are interested in religion, Righter's account of the proceedings is a "who's who" of gay sexuality in the Episcopal Church and a brief synopsis about the progress in other denominations. If not, skip the names and affiliations and read the book as a fascinating political study. Students of the

religious right will find the book particularly revealing.

The background to the story is that Righter, the retired Bishop of Iowa and assisting Bishop of the Diocese of Newark, ordained Stopfel to the diaconate in 1990, the first step to the priesthood. There was a fear that if controversial Bishop Jack Spong conducted the ceremony, it would become a media event. Righter had worked with Stopfel and knew his lover, Will Leckie, and supported the ordination.

Stopfel's ordination to the priesthood was delayed until the upcoming General Convention. At that meeting, the House of Bishops rejected a resolution prohibiting ordination of non-celibate gays and one censuring Righter. Several other bishops, including the Bishop of Hawaii, claimed they, too, should be censured.

Bishop Spong made Stopfel a priest in 1991. He became a popular and successful parish priest. The Episcopal Church continued to debate the issue of ordaining gay men and lesbians and some bishops continued to ordain them. Then, in 1995, 10 bishops made a 'presentment' that Righter's ordination of Stopfel constituted heresy, and asked that other bishops vote to set the issue for trial.

They also announced that if the case against Righter were successful, they intended to make presentments against every other bishop who had ordained gays or lesbians within the five year statute of limitations. At least four other bishops, all active, were targets. Righter modestly says that he thinks he was chosen rather than Spong because Spong is articulate and convincing. Righter notes that four of the bishops who signed the presentment refuse to ordain women.

During meetings held before the vote on whether to set the matter for trial, it became clear that the charges would be withdrawn if all the bishops would agree not to ordain non-celibate gays and lesbians until the church

reversed its position. Righter and his supporters declined further negotiations and ballots were sent. Some 76 bishops, meeting the required 25 percent, voted to hold trial for Righter, making him only the second bishop in the 20th century to be tried for heresy.

In "A Pilgrim's Way," Righter is refreshingly candid about his feelings of disappointment and anger during the ordeal and generously apprecia-

tive of the support he received. He is also candid in his opinion that those who opposed his actions were frightened bullies afraid of the future.

"Courage to Love" — by Will Leckie and the Rev. Barry Stopfel — dealt with Stopfel's fight to become a priest was one of my favorite books of 1997. It was more autobiographical and didn't contain a great deal of detail about Righter's trail.

What your neighbors are reading ...

- 1 California Screaming**
by Doug Guinan (Simon & Schuster, \$24)
- 2 Endless Love**
by JLisa Shapiro (Naiad, \$11.95)
- 3 Now and Then**
by William Corlett (Consortium, \$10.95)
- 4 Naked**
by David Sedaris (Little Brown, \$21.95)
- 5 The River Quay**
by Janet McClellan (Naiad, \$11.95)
- 6 Point of Origin**
by Patricia Cornwell (Putnam, \$25.95)
- 7 Awakening the Virgin**
by Nicole Foster (Alyson, \$12.95)
- 8 Wicked Games**
by Ellen Hart (St. Martin's, \$24.95)
- 9 The Extra Man**
by Jonatha Ames (Simon & Schuster, \$23)
- 10 Straight?**
by Jack Hart (Alyson, \$11.95)

- 1 Tom of Finland: The Art of Pleasure**
edited by Burkhard Riemschneider (Taschen, \$69.69)
- 2 Don't Get Me Started**
by Kate Clinton (Ballantine, \$22)
- 3 Husband Hunting Made Easy**
by Patrick Price (St. Martin's, \$12.95)
- 4 Idols**
by Jonathan Black (Bruno Gmunder, \$29.95)
- 5 Generation Queer**
by Bob Paris (Warner, \$23)
- 6 Gonna Take A Homicidal Journey**
by Sandra Scoppettone (Little Brown, \$23)
- 7 Desmond**
by Ulysses G. Dietz (Alyson, \$13.95)
- 8 Men From the Boys**
by William J. Mann (Plume/NAL, \$12.95)
- 9 California Screaming**
by Doug Guinan (Simon & Schuster, \$24)
- 10 You Are Nuts**
by Mark Richard Zubro (St. Martin's, \$21.95)

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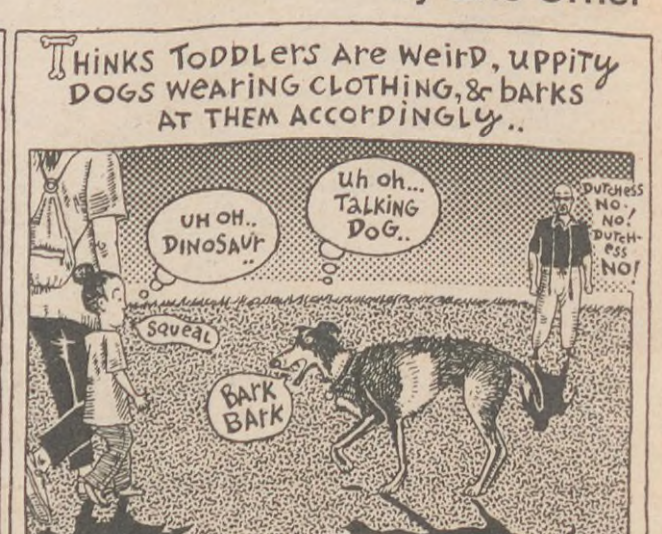
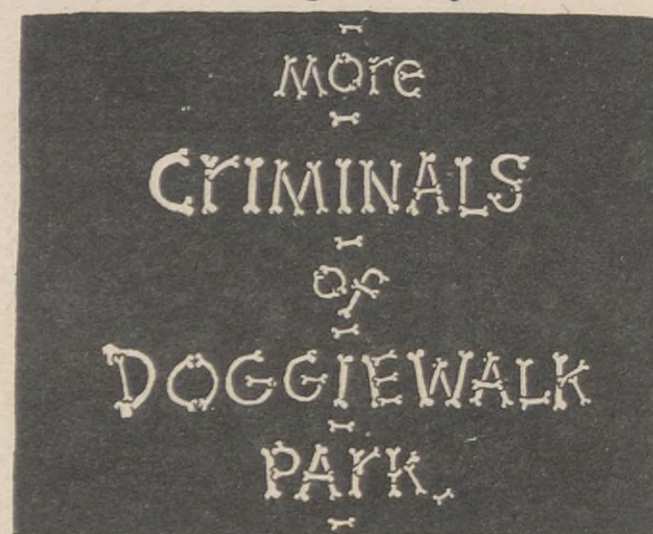
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INTERVIEW: TREY PARKER & MATT STONE

Think they're gay?

'South Park' creators snub noses at detractors with kiss in new movie

by EARL DITTMAN

According to Trey Parker and Matt Stone, creators of the weekly cable animated series "South Park," and stars of the recently-released big screen laugh-fest "BASEketball," political correctness doesn't hold a rightful place in their warped world of humor. Regardless of your religion, political affiliation, ethnic background or sexual orientation, you're a potential target for their unique, no-holds-barred brand of humor.

But the new dynamic duo of comedy proclaim there's a sane reason why no subject or no one person is safe from their irreverence.

"You can't draw a line at anything, because as soon as you do, you make it all offensive," the bleached-blond Parker said recently. "I mean, if we were to suddenly say, 'OK, we are going to do this, but we're not going to do a black joke.' Then, all of a sudden, it's like, 'Why is this Hispanic joke okay or this gay one?'"

"In regards to 'South Park,' that's something that we've talked a lot about with Comedy Central (the show's cable home)," Parker continued. "They are always coming to us with a 'I don't think we should do this' kind of thing. We're like, 'Well, that offends us that you think that's offensive. Why can we make fun of a little kid for being fat — that's okay with you — but not because they're a certain color.' It's either all got to be okay or none of it. That's sort of the way that

you have to go into it. In America, people have this idea that if you make a joke about something, it means you don't care about it or you're saying, 'That's stupid.' If I make a joke about a gay person it doesn't mean I think gay people are stupid. That's ridiculous. To us, comedy should just be another way to bring up sensitive issues and talk about them."

"I think that's why people are always asking us, 'Where's your backlash from 'South Park,' it never came?'" the curly-haired, bespectacled Stone added. "I think that's why we've gone so long without anybody ever really getting mad at us. Because when one of the Christian groups would go, 'Hey, you have Jesus on your show and that's not cool,' we'd go, 'Look what we are doing to every other religion and what we are doing to everybody else.'"

And the duo isn't above poking fun at themselves. In one of the funniest and most outrageous scenes ever committed to celluloid, Parker and Stone exchange a gut-busting, French kiss in "BASEketball."

It's a moment in the movie (directed by the godfather of political incorrectness, David Zucker) that Parker is especially proud of. "Our kiss kicks ass," he said. "David originally had me kissing (co-star) Yasmine Bleeth, but I told him that Matt and I needed to be the ones that lip-locked."

Parker and Stone saw doing the scene as a chance to send their Hollywood detractors a cinematic middle-finger message.

"We especially wanted to do it," Stone said, "because people in town think we are gay already, and we're like, 'Who cares?'"

While the two confess to being heterosexual, they are more amused than insulted by the speculation concerning their sexual preferences. "When we hear those kind of things, we are like 'Whatever.' People act like the worst sin in the world is to be gay," Stone said.

"We came to Hollywood as these simple dudes from the outside making fun of everybody," Parker continued. "So now, all of a sudden, we are kind of 'Hollywood guys,' and people are making fun of us. That's where all those rumors originate. That's why doing the kiss was so important to us — even though we used about five gallons of mouthwash after it was over. We were like, 'We have to totally make fun of ourselves by taking this macho step down from it all.' We were basically saying, 'OK, you think we're gay, then here, take this!'"

They're both keenly aware that in Hollywood, success quite often breeds contempt. "We know that if you get high enough, you are going to get knocked down," Stone admitted. "We know that, and it'll come, and everyone has been through it. We just have to focus on the



Warped humor: Coop and Remer (Trey Parker and Matt Stone) throw out political correctness in the screwball comedy "BASEketball" as they create a new sport in their driveway and turn it into a major corporate and popular professional league. —Photo by Sam Emerson

work. We can't focus on the press, the publicity, the fame and all that, because it'll be gone in a heartbeat. Regardless, we just have to do what we like to do and hope that we can keep doing it."

"Even if something like 'BASEketball' never happened," Parker interjected, "and we just had 'South Park,' this little bitty show on this little bitty cable channel, we'd be stoked. We've never really aspired that high. We just wanted to be able to make dumb little things that we thought were funny, and get paid enough to do it."

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CHICAGO/ from page 1

"I was so lucky to find Tim Driscoll. Before high school my life was hellacious. Schools in Texas are so sports oriented, I was fortunate to find someone to take me under his wing. There was an immediate connection between us. This relationship was always that of student and teacher, it was never inappropriate. Drama class was a wonderful escape from the rigors of everyday life. It was the place where I could communicate with others freely."

After graduation, Price attended Ithaca College, one of the few institutions that offer a degree in musical theater. Following college, he made the necessary move to New York.

"While in the city I was able to participate in the six-month workshop of 'Capeman' (the ill-fated collaboration between Paul Simon and iconoclastic choreographer Mark Morris). Working with these two visionaries, one in music, one in dance, was a great experience for me. Simon and Morris were so new to musical theater — Paul had never composed music for the stage and Mark was making his debut as a director. The cast thought that this would be tremendous. There was much speculation about what these two mavericks were trying to accomplish. They were very keen to try new and inventive things."

Despite controversy that surrounded the show, including artistic clashed and intense media coverage — Morris inspired Price with new ideas. "He is such an interesting artistic force, his movement is always representational, almost never literal; and of course he

is just off the wall to work with — a lot of fun in addition to being a genius."

After the workshop, Price received a call from Ann Reinking, protégé of "Chicago" choreographer and Broadway legend Bob Fosse. Price had worked with Reinking years earlier as a student. "I had studied with Ann during a few summers and when I came to New York, we reestablished contact. When they cast the national tour of 'Chicago,' I made the cut, which gave me my first really big break."

Fosse's dance style fits this young actor like a glove. Instead of the expected splash typical of Broadway shows, Fosse's style is 'turned in' as opposed to 'balletic.' Fosse is known for his efficient use of movement — actors are characteristically clumped together in an immediately recognizable dance vocabulary, radical for its time.

"Working on 'Chicago' is like working for the person you admire the most," Price said. "Fosse's steps always seem to fit me. It was always tough for me to get the straight angled 'turn out' that so many dance captains and directors look for. This show has a kind of slump-shouldered sexuality to it. It's a lot more like the way that real people move."

Sex is not in short supply in this show. One of the show's design concepts is that costumes are individually designed for the actors.

"Most costume designers create clothes and then just plop them on any actor that comes along. 'Chicago' is different," Price said. "There are

people in this cast that have phenomenal legs — guess what? They're all in shorts. Likewise for actors who possess other attributes, each of which is accentuated, making the whole company look their best on stage."

According to designer William Long, this sexy compilation of style in the clothing reflects the catwalk, as much as the Broadway stage. "Less is definitely more in this show," he said. "I take the style of 'Chicago' right to the limit of decorum."

Even though scantily clad, this troupe of actors can still manage to convey dramatic impact. But Price jokes that "you won't see me in a

'sausage casing' — I'm fully clothed in baggy pants and shirt."

"The most important thing that I learned from (mentor) Tim Driscoll is that my sexuality does not have to determine my lifestyle. I've always had a clear vision of what I wanted to accomplish in the theater and I've never let homosexuality interfere with that," Price said.

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Below, Elmer Shehane (also known as Stella Link Seville) presented the Organization of the Year Award to the Colt 45's, represented by Sean Carter. —Photos by Dalton DeHart



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GALAXY GAYZER

by JOSEPH MOLINA

Aug. 7 — 13

On Aug. 8, a lunar eclipse in the sign of Leo/Aquarius will occur. Coupled with the influence of the Mercury retrograde motion in the sign of Leo, telephone circuits will be busy, computers are going to be moody and delays will be encountered in trips.



Leo (JULY 24 — AUGUST 23)

Happy birthday Leo. The universe now offers you your homosexual wishes and dreams. The coming year that stands before you will be like no other. With the influence of the lunar eclipse, like a newborn babe, you're given a chance to start over again. Watch the manifestations that occur over the course of this week. Your subconscious mind will manifest all sorts of circumstances to alert you to an awakening call, to a life filled with fulfillment and meaning.



Virgo (AUGUST 24 — SEPTEMBER 23)

This week, the combined efforts of Mars and Venus give you an opportunity to do some personal evaluation, to think about your home, money and worth. Bored with your homosexual life you could have a need to do some practical organization, such as rearranging your closets, office and home. Stifled, you will look for new avenues to move your life into. Mercury's influence will send you into heavy contemplation and deep thought. Pay attention to everything or positive opportunities might be lost.



Libra (SEPTEMBER 24 — OCTOBER 23)

The lunar eclipse stimulates Venus and Mars combined with Uranus and Neptune. It will take courage to deal with what is affected by retrograde Mercury. You will have a drive toward achievement. Utilize assertive action to handle what is to come. Steer whenever possible away from stressful social gatherings or emotional confrontations. You are prone to have misunderstandings and words put in your homosexual mouth.



Scorpio (OCTOBER 24 — NOVEMBER 23)

The effects of Mercury's retrograde will be felt in the area of relationships. Partnerships will undergo a scrutiny, particularly those with women and feminine figures. Ideas will flow through your gay mind about career, the value of inspiration in work and what the future means to you. Fourteen years down the road as opposed to one, who can you see yourself being and what will you be doing?



Sagittarius (NOVEMBER 23 — DECEMBER 22)

A creative jolt is sent down from the heavens. In business you are extra sharp and find yourself constantly achieving. Confident, you will find yourself in lively debates. Discussions of other lands and cultures will stimulate a desire to get away. Jump in your sport utility and spend time in the woods, play sports and get into the gym. Do it constructively or you could waste it being unproductive.



Capricorn (DECEMBER 23 — JANUARY 20)

Venus and Mars combine efforts in confronting your homosexual ego. Your best bet is to build an effective barrier and to keep out all unwanted influences. Mars and Venus could trigger the spontaneous ripping off of people's heads. If testy, rent movies, get some reading done and work on the house. Think about all the things that you have planned to do with your life. Think about the next five months and the responsibilities you have to yourself.



Aquarius (JANUARY 21 — FEBRUARY 19)

The full moon in all her radiance will shine forth in the sign of Aquarius. Dancing her way through the beam of the Earth and sun, she will shine into the world an eclipse. In a heavy mood, realizations about this time last year, this year, and next year will cause you to seclude into a thinking state. The eclipse will stimulate crises-oriented experiences. Some unexpected events could occur that deal with money not yet available, health and the security of your living situation.



Pisces (FEBRUARY 20 — MARCH 20)

Venus and Mars send down the intoxicating lull of indulgence. Mood swings set off by the stimulation of Pluto will bring out your gay escapist side; your emotional nature could herald you into slightly obsessive behavior. Put away your money, hide all the chocolate, and stay away from people who would manipulate you. Matters dealing with you natural or adopted family could arise and you could find yourself wearing emotions on your homosexual sleeves.



Aries (MARCH 21 — APRIL 20)

The great simulation that is occurring in your homosexual sign is designed to promote change and assist at the piecing together of your life. You must begin from within. You would most likely come up against opposition if you try to force change on an outward level. You must reformulate how you generally think about things. Mercury's retrograde is stimulating inner growth. If you are successful, you will sleep easier, walk through your day with a smile and uncontrollable circumstances will fall in your favor.



Taurus (APRIL 21 — MAY 20)

With so much emphasis placed on a sign that challenges Taurus's authority, have you been able to handle all the pressure? The movement of Saturn has only begun to effect what the sun and moon are now setting off. You will ask the question who am I? What do I see for my self in the future? Am I happy with my life? If you have not had a purpose to your gayness, now is the time to find it. This implies a new way to act and go about your ways. Either motivate and go with this cycle or have a hair-raising crises.



Gemini (MAY 21 — JUNE 21)

Mercury's retrograde causes all sorts of havoc in the life of gay Geminis. Your best bet is to complete the projects that you have begun, cut ties with lingering relationships and set your plan for the future. By all means do not force things or let the influx of the lunar eclipse make you go wild. Your built up energy is going to require some sensual outlets and opportunities to let down your hair. Try getting some things accomplished and channeling this into your work.



Cancer (JUNE 22 — JULY 23)

Mars and Venus continue to combine their efforts in breaking down walls and barriers. Take heed as you could be your own worst enemy or you will uncover manipulation occurring by others. Either way, you must evaluate your current circumstances and reformulate your strategies or your protective wall could come tumbling down. On a lighter note, you should notice that you are in a higher state of sensitivity, and your sensual side will require some attention. Purring like a cat, I see you making biscuits and shaking your gay tail.

Joseph Molina, a practicing psychic for over 15 years, can be reached at 713-524-4411. Check out his web site at Astralwind.com or e-mail him at joemo@swbell.net.



"This is an area where we again need to mobilize. I'm talking to you about you."

— U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher (left) in a July 28 speech about HIV and AIDS, to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, meeting in Washington, D.C. Satcher cited statistics showing that while blacks make up 13 percent of the U.S. population, they account for 57 percent of the new infections.

"The only way is abstinence. Sex should not be something that we just casually engage in and take lightly."

— The Southern Christian Leadership Conference's new president, Martin Luther King III, after Satcher's speech. King said AIDS should promote the restoration of fundamental values, not condom use, and he added that while AIDS is an important issue, it is not among his top priorities.

"Now, on all fronts, I believe our party is on the right side of history on the edge of this new millennium."

— President Clinton, quoted by Associated Press at an Aug. 1 fund-raiser in East Hampton, Conn., organized by supporters in the gay community.

"This is not an issue over sexual orientation ... It's about checks and balances."

— House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (right), R-Sugar Land, on an amendment by Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colo., to void a Clinton executive order forbidding discrimination against homosexuals in the federal workforce. The measure was defeated in the House on Wednesday by a 252-176 roll vote.



"I've never seen a community as friendly as this one. Everybody knows everybody, and everybody waves to everybody and talks, and everybody is friendly with everybody. This tour has taught me a lot. I've led a very sheltered life."

— Toronto's new mayor, Mel Lastman, during a recent stroll through the city's main gay neighborhood.

"If you're asked if you're gay, you have to say yes. And if you're not asked, don't mention it. People are always asking me if they should tell their mothers. Never tell your mother anything! Your parents are not your friends."

— Gay author-actor Quentin Crisp to *Seattle Gay News*, June 12.

"We told Michael that we could never stop loving him. But I also told him we would never accept his homosexuality. ... We never hesitated to warn him of the heartache he would face. We were right. Twelve years later, he left homosexuality and recommitted his life to Christ... the same day he told us he was HIV positive."

— Frances Johnston, about her son, Michael, now the Director of Kerusso Ministries, a "conversion" ministry, in an ad, "From Innocence to AIDS, one mother's plea to the parents of homosexuals," published in the July 29 issue of the *Miami Herald*.



"Gary Bauer (left), the head of the Family Research Council, complains repeatedly that 'as the homosexual movement has come out of the closet, there seems to be an expectation that everybody else is supposed to go into the closet.' ... We are told that calling an opponent of equal rights for homosexuals a 'bigot' is a form of bigotry itself. It's as if we were expected, in the name of fairness and the

American way, to give equal respect to those who teach the biblical inferiority of women or the mark of Cain on blacks. ...

"Gary Bauer can whine about how 'closeted' he feels on all 100 of my cable channels. ... But eventually the argument comes down to public policy. ... It's an argument between those who see homosexuals as sick sinners and those who see them as citizens."

— Boston-based syndicated columnist Ellen Goodman, in her July 23 column.

"As mayor of Boston, I'm making the choice to do the right thing."

— Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino after signing an executive order that grants domestic partners and dependents of gay, lesbian and unmarried city workers health benefits from the city. Acting Gov. Paul Cellucci has promised to challenge the action.

"Being Jewish, would I have to go through a 24-step program instead of a 12-step program?"

— Gay U.S. Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), on the full-page ads that ran in national daily newspapers featuring "ex-gays" who claim to have turned straight with Jesus' help, to the *San Francisco Examiner*, July 17.

"They have to convert our agenda into something aggressive. Two guys wanting to be happy together are invading their marriages. Helping a kid who's getting beaten up in school is promoting homosexuality. If you gave me a million dollars, I wouldn't know how to promote homosexuality. Do I hire Don King?"

— Rep. Frank (right) to the *San Francisco Examiner*, July 17.



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**WEDNES
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Photo by Bill Emrich



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Color Blind: The unbearable whiteness of gay film

by MARK J. HUISMAN

At the close of Tommy O'Haver's gay romantic comedy "Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss," a middle-aged white photographer on a beach is putting the moves on a young (also white) protégé. After the young man rejects his mentor's advances, the older guy suddenly spots a black man nearby and says, "I'd gladly give up a one night stand with Catalina's sole homosexual if you want to be with someone right now," then promptly trots after him.

A quick but telling example of minorities being used as narrative garnish, this scene points up the lack of compelling minority characters in gay and lesbian films. All too often, black, Latino and Asian actors are used simply as "local color" or comic relief, much as gay characters have functioned in recent film and television.

"Screen Kiss" also features a Latin sex object whose ethnicity does nothing more than facilitate a running name joke: Is it Fernando or Federico? If only it mattered.

Victor Mignatti's otherwise charming "Broadway Damage" falls into the same trap while tracking the romance between David and Marc, who is also being pursued by his best friend Robert. Marc's black co-worker, Jerry, is the film's only minority character and serves solely to console Marc about his romantic tribulations. As so often is the case, the romantic leads are white and the audience gets no hint that the minority character has a love life, too. Actor Wilson Cruz has

been used this way in both "Johns," in which he played a hustler sidekick to David Arquette and Lukas Haas and as a neighborhood sidekick to Alison Folland and Tara Subkoff in "All Over Me."

Desi Del Valle, a lesbian actress who helps run Frameline, San Francisco's gay and lesbian film festival and distribution company, thinks white filmmakers use non-traditional casting as a cop-out.

"I would like to think my being Latina is a quality some director would want," she said. "But it's easier to say 'Race doesn't matter' and seem to transcend it than to actually deal with it. Race does matter. People of color have been used to decorate a lot of films."

So-called color-blind casting grinds good characters development to a halt, said Rajendra Roy, executive director of the MIX Festival, which aggressively supports minority filmmakers and films with racial subjects. "There's no attempt to make minority actors leads or to make the characters, large or small, unique individuals," Roy says. "This is lazy filmmaking. Period." He says writers and directors need to work harder on crafting these parts. "These characters are being whitewashed."

When they're not whitewashed, however, minority characters get little play. Frameline has struggled to release the huge festival hit "Chocolate Babies," Steven Winters' sassy film about a gang of black activists who kidnap a white politician. "The problem exhibitors have



Minority sidekick: Wilson Cruz (left) has played the part of minority sidekick to lead characters in "Johns" and "All Over Me" (above). —Photo by B. Foley/FINE LINE

with these characters is that they're not heroes," said Del Valle. "You can get away with 'Frisk,' 'The Living End' and 'No Skin Off My Ass' because at least there are hunky white boys to watch."

Marcus Hu, founder and co-president of Strand Releasing, distributor of gay and lesbian titles including "Frisk" and "The Living End," agreed.

"That's part of it, definitely," he said. "But those films would have worked without the bodies." Hu says there's nothing wrong with marketing a little nudity.

But Roy said filmmakers often add minority characters solely for sexual titillation. "There's a documentary

See **COLOR/** page 12B

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Baba Yega's Restaurant & Saloon
(Grant St.)

Wear it Again, Sam
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Westheimer & Waughcrest
(Bus stop)

Houston Voice Office Building
(811 Westheimer)



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INTERVIEW: TOMMY O'HAYER

A KISS IS JUST A KISS

'Screen Kiss' director says love story won't meet gay sex quota

by EARL DITTMAN

"I've had more than one gay reporter ask me, 'Why isn't there more sex in 'Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss?'" Tommy O'Haver, the film's openly-gay director, revealed in a recent telephone interview from his home in Los Angeles. "I just told them I didn't think it was necessary. Afterwards, though, I thought to myself, 'Why would they ask such a silly question like that?' It was like they were saying there was no validity to my movie because their quota of penises and asses wasn't filled?"

"I mean, what is it about gay culture that mandates that sex be the overriding theme of everything related to it?" O'Haver asked. "My main objective behind 'Billy' was to make a love story — period. I wasn't out to make some hot-and-heavy gay sex romp, full of deep, underlying messages. Therefore, for a gay film, I guess you could say 'Billy' has become political by virtue of the fact that it's not political."

As a result, 'Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss,' a film virtually free of nudity, AIDS issues or gay self-loathing, hasn't been sitting well with many elder statesmen of the gay press. And even while "Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss" (which stars newcomers Sean P. Hayes and Brad Rowe) has been garnering rave reviews from usually staunch mainstream outlets like *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times*, a handful of agenda-driven gay critics have been less complimentary, calling the delightfully entertaining film a "light-weight fairy fantasy."

It's a criticism O'Haver finds perplexing, but not completely unexpected.

"Most of them admire it for its aesthetic, but a lot of those gay critics say that it really does nothing for them, because it's just the same old stuff," O'Haver said. "I don't think that's accurate at all. When I wrote it, I was just trying to be true to myself and my feelings. I hope that comes across, because that's really the theme of the film. Look, I am a human being first and a homosexual second. And that train of thought seems to bother a lot of them."

"But, I really try to not let it get to me," he continued, "because the one thing I'm most proud of — with the help of Sean — is that we've created this gay 'Everyman' in Billy. Billy is a gay man, but he is someone that anyone — straight or gay — can identify with. I'm very happy he's up there on the screen, because he's a good role model."

Almost in the same breath, though, O'Haver admitted his artistic feathers had been ruffled a bit by *Village Voice* writer Mark J. Huisman (story, page 8B). In the article, Huisman singles out 'Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss' as one of several gay films that ignore minorities and simply focus on white, male homosexuals. O'Haver said it struck a nerve.

"I got really upset about that piece, so I wrote him back. And since then, we've gone back and forth on the Internet. I told him, 'I did what I could do, but that's Billy's world.' To be truthful, I guess it bothered me because the one thing that I do regret about the film is that it is not as ethnically diverse as it could be," O'Haver said.

"It is a minor regret, though," he stressed.

"But you know, there was a point where I thought about making the character of Gabriel (the role played by Rowe) a black man," O'Haver continued. "I had seen this African-American actor in a short film who had a real power to him. When I met him, I thought that he was a little too cocky, but I thought he might work."

"However, after a while, I thought, 'If I cast him, that's going to change the whole perspective of the movie.' I felt like it would have been a dangerous move, because it would've become more about race than anything else. I would have gotten a helluva lot more shit than I have already."



Rave reviews: Openly-gay director Tommy O'Haver's newest flick, "Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss," has opened to positive reviews, though some critics said the film lacks enough sex and diversity among its cast.

At the end of the day, O'Haver said taking Huisman's story so much to heart was probably a mistake. "I really shouldn't have, because the ironic thing is the writer really likes the film when it comes down to it," he explained. "And the other irony is that he is stone cold white, and here he is coming down on me for this stuff. Plus, I'm not really worried about it now that I've talked to him. I've sort of explained my case, and he has stated his case, and he definitely has some points. But I have forgiven him, because he says it's one of the best gay films he's seen in a long time."

Unlike many African-American directors who have come to resent the labeling of their works as "black films," O'Haver isn't bothered by



they do. It's about being human, then about being straight or gay. I think, though, that it is a small step in the direction towards — what might be called — 'non-separatist cinema.' But that's a whole 'nother criticism. It goes back to people saying it's not political enough. But I do think that it is a step in the right direction."

Like Rowe and Hayes, "Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss" has brought O'Haver's talents to the attention of the powers-that-be in Hollywood: Hayes has already scored a major role in this fall's NBC sitcom "Will and Grace"; Rowe is up for approximately seven different movie roles; and O'Haver is in the midst of preparing a big screen version of everyone's childhood comic book hero, Archie.

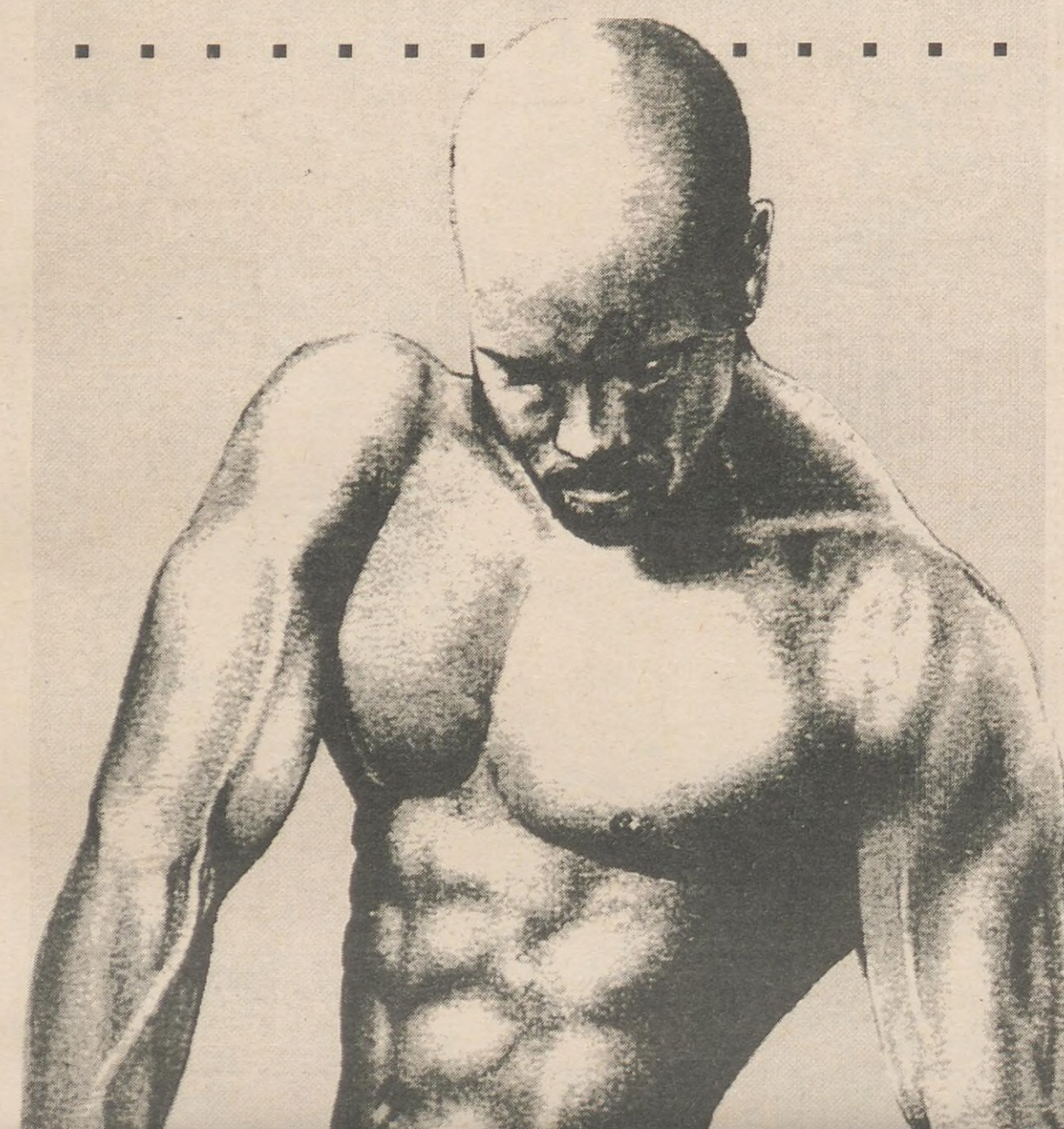
"'Billy' has proven to be a great stepping-stone for all of us," O'Haver said. "Almost from the moment it appeared at the Sundance Film Festival (earlier this year) it has generated incredible interest in everybody involved with the film. Doing a 'gay film' certainly hasn't hurt my career any. After it was screened, I was offered a lot of projects, but I thought Archie was a perfect fit for me, because Archie and Billy are so much alike."

Archie and Billy alike?

"They're all about innocence and romantic idealism," O'Haver said. "Look, they are just two guys looking for love. How more basic can their stories be?"

MARYS

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SUNDAYS
Happy Hour \$1.75 Beer
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OUT IN HOUSTON

Saturday, August 8

- * Brazos River Bottom: \$1.75 beer & well, \$1.25 regular schnapps 7 a.m.-9 p.m.
- * BriarPatch: Wayne Gray tickles the ivories; Randy deals Blackjack @ 9:30 p.m.
- * Bricks II: Happy hour 7 a.m.-9 p.m. \$1.75 well & domestic beer.
- * Chances: Power hours with \$1.75 domestic beer & well 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; Happy hour 3-8 p.m. with \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well; \$2 Cuervo
- * Decades: Open 11 a.m. \$1.75 well, beer, & wine till 8:00 p.m.
- * E/J's: \$1.50 well 4-7 p.m.; Mug club 7 a.m.-10 p.m.; \$1.50 vodka 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Super Show @ 11 p.m.
- * J.R's: Texas pride happy hour 4-7 p.m. \$2.25 well, \$1.75 domestic longnecks, \$3.50 Absolut Martinis & \$4.50 doubles; \$2.75 premium frozen drinks & premium draft beer, \$3.25 super premium draft beer.
- * Lazy J: Drag show @ 10:30 p.m.
- * Mary's: Happy hour 7 a.m.-7 p.m.: \$1.75 domestic beer open-close.
- * Mela's: DJ spins C&W, Disco and Tejano. Siper show at 11:30 p.m.
- * Montrose Mining Company: Male dancers 9 p.m.; \$1.50 well, \$2.50 well til 10 p.m. After hours til 4 a.m.
- * Nighthawks: \$2 well, beer, and wine until 7 p.m.
- * Pacific Street: Leather & Flesh Fantasy Night Doors @ 9pm; no cover in erotic leather.
- * 611 Hyde Park Pub: Male dancers @ 10 p.m.
- * Paradise: Doors @ 11 a.m. Happy house 11 a.m.-8 p.m. \$1.50 well & beer.
- * Rich's: Doors @ 9 p.m. 21+ no cover 9-10 p.m.; \$1.25 well 9-11 p.m. DJ J.D. Arnold.
- * Ripcord: Happy hour 1-8 p.m. After hours until 4 a.m.
- * The New Barn: Power Hours \$1.75 beer & well 12-3 p.m.; Happy hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer, & \$2.75 well.

Sunday, August 9

- * Brazos River Bottom: \$1.75 beer & well, \$1.25 regular schnapps Noon-7 p.m.; 50¢ draft.
- * BriarPatch: Happy hour 2-8 p.m. \$2 beer & \$2.25 well.
- * Bricks II: Happy hour Noon-9 p.m.; \$1.75 well; \$1.75 beer.
- * Chances: Power hours \$1.75 beer & well noon-3 p.m.; Happy hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well; \$2 Cuervo.
- * Decades: Open noon. \$1.75 well, beer & wine till 8:00 p.m.
- * E/J's: \$1 Bud & Bud Light open-close.
- * J.R's: 99¢ well vodka juice drinks noon-11 p.m., \$2.75 Shiner Bock: SRO Karaoke @ 6 p.m.; Male Swim wear strip contest @ 11 p.m.
- * Mary's: \$1.75 Well & beer 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 50¢ draft @ 2 p.m. \$1.50 beer 7-11 p.m.
- * Mela's: Happy hour with \$1.75 beer, BYO- BBQ
- * Montrose Mining Company: \$2 beer: \$1.75 well drinks, \$1 vodka well drinks; Beer Bust \$2 (optional) with 25¢ refills; male dancers @ 9 p.m.
- * Nighthawks: \$2 well, beer, & wine. noon to 7 pm. \$2.50 Cuervo!
- * Pacific Street: Doors @ 7 p.m. \$1.25 well, \$1.75 beer, \$3 call, \$3.50 premium, \$1.25 schnapps. No cover 7-9 p.m.
- * Paradise: Doors @ noon; Happy hours noon-8 p.m. \$1.50 well drinks & beer; \$1.75 Bloody Mary open-close.
- * Rich's: Doors @ 7 p.m.
- * Ripcord: \$1.50 well & beer open-close.
- * 611 Hyde Park Pub: Brunch @ noon.
- * The New Barn: Power hours \$1.75 beer & well noon-3 p.m.; Happy hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well; \$2.50 Cuervo;

Monday, August 10

- * Brazos River Bottom: \$1.75 well & beer, \$1.25 regular schnapps open-close.
- * BriarPatch: Happy hour 2-8 p.m. Open Pool Table.
- * Bricks II: \$1.25 well & beer 7 a.m.-noon, \$1.75 well & beer noon-2 a.m.
- * Chances: Power hours \$1.75 beer & well 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; Happy hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well; \$2 Cuervo.
- * Club Houston: Half price lockers noon to midnight.
- * Decades: Open 11 a.m. \$1.75 well, beer, & wine till 8:00 p.m.
- * E/J's: Happy hour 7 a.m.-9 p.m.; \$1.50 well 4-7 p.m.; \$1.50 vodka 7 a.m.-6 p.m.; Mug Club 7 a.m.-10 p.m.; Male Strip @ 11 p.m.
- * J.R's: Texas Pride Happy Hour 4 to 7 p.m. \$2.25 well, \$1.75 beer, \$3.50 Absolut Martinis & \$4.50 doubles; Martinis & Muscles! \$3.75 top shelf Martinis, \$2.25 beer, frozen Ritas \$1.75; "Pump" male dance contest @ 11 p.m.
- * Mary's: \$1 beer 8-11 p.m. \$1.75 well & beer 7 a.m.-9 p.m.; \$1.50 well vodka drinks 7 a.m.-2 p.m.
- * Montrose Mining Company: \$3.50 double well drinks, \$1.75 well, \$2 domestic longnecks; Pool tournament @ 8:30 p.m. male dancers @ 9 p.m. Happy hour until 10 p.m.
- * Nighthawks: \$2 well, beer, & wine noon until 7 p.m. \$2.50 Cuervo!
- * Pacific Street: Doors @ 9 p.m. No cover with pass. Lowest regular drink prices in town.
- * Paradise: Doors @ 3 p.m. Happy hours 3 p.m.-8 p.m.
- * Ripcord: Happy hour 1-8 p.m.; Boxer Shorts Night :Boxer Shots \$1.25.
- * 611 Hyde Park Pub: Free Pool after 6 p.m.

Tuesday, August 11

- * Brazos River Bottom: \$1 well 7 a.m.-11 p.m., \$1.25 schnapps til 11pm; \$1 beer open-close.

Variety Show at 8 p.m.

- * BriarPatch: Marcie as Sweet MAMA Cotton.
- * Bricks II: \$1.25 well & beer 7 a.m.-noon; \$1.75 well & beer noon-9:00 p.m.
- * Chances: Power hour \$1.75 well & beer 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; Happy hour 3 p.m.-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well; \$2 Cuervo.
- * Club Houston: Half-price lockers, rooms, & video rooms noon until midnight.
- * Decades: Open 11 a.m. \$1.75 well, beer & wine till 8:00 p.m.
- * E/J's: Happy Hour 7 a.m.-9 p.m.; \$1.50 well 4-7 p.m.; \$1.50 Vodka 7 a.m.-6 p.m.; Mug Club 7 a.m.-10 p.m.; Burger night. Amateur/Talent Night a @ 11 p.m.
- * J.R's: 2(x)ist Tuesdays! \$2 domestic longnecks, well drinks, wine, and frozen margaritas. Male strip @ 11 p.m.
- * Mary's: \$1.75 well & beer 7 a.m.-9 p.m. \$1.50 well vodka drinks 7 a.m.-2 p.m.; \$2 Cuervo.
- * Mela's: Bucket night \$7.50 & \$2 well drinks
- * Midtowne Spa: 1/2 price lockers Noon to Midnight. 18-22 year olds get free locker!
- * Montrose Mining Company: \$1.75 beer, \$2.50 well drinks, \$3 any other drink in the house! Happy hour until 10 p.m. Male dancers 9 p.m.-2 a.m.
- * Nighthawks: \$2 well, beer, & wine noon until 7 p.m. \$2.50 Cuervo!
- * Pacific Street: Executive Night. No cover with your personalized business card. \$1.25 well, \$1.75 beer, \$3 call, \$3.50 premium, \$1.25 schnapps. Doors @ 9 p.m.
- * Paradise: Doors @ 11 a.m. Happy hour 11 a.m.-8 p.m. \$1.50 well and beer
- * Ripcord: Happy Hour 1-8 p.m. 8 p.m.-2 a.m. Martini specials. Classic Rock night
- * The New Barn: Happy hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well \$2 Cuervo.

Wednesday, August 12

- * 611 Hyde Park Pub (upstairs): Open Bridge Game 7-11 p.m.
- * Brazos River Bottom: \$1 well 7 a.m.-11 p.m. & \$1 beer 7-2 a.m.
- * BriarPatch: Wayne & Beverly play together.
- * Bricks II: \$1.25 well & beer 7 a.m.-to noon; \$1.75 well & beer noon-9 p.m.
- * Chances: Power hours \$1.75 beer & well 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; Happy hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well; \$2 Cuervo; Shiela Lennon's Karaoke night @ 9 p.m.
- * Decades: Open 11 a.m. \$1.75 well, beer & wine till 8:00 p.m.
- * E/J's: Happy Hour 7 a.m.-9 p.m.; \$1.50 well 4-7 p.m.; \$1.50 Vodka 7 a.m.-6 p.m.; Mug club 7 a.m.-10 p.m. Male Strip contest @ 11 p.m. Burger night.
- * J.R's: Texas Pride Happy hour 4-7 p.m. \$2.25 well, \$1.75 beer, \$2.75 premium frozen drinks, \$2 beer all day and all night. Joe Boxer dance contest @ 11 p.m.
- * Mary's: \$1.75 well & beer, \$1.50 well vodka drinks 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- * Mela's: \$1.75 beer & \$2 Margaritas.
- * Montrose Mining Company: \$2 beer & well drinks, \$4 doubles; Male dancers @ 9 p.m.; Happy hour til 10 p.m.
- * Nighthawks: \$2 well, beer, & wine noon until 7 p.m. \$2.50 Cuervo
- * Pacific Street: Ecstasy! Best in Dance & Videos. Doors @ 9 p.m. No cover with a "Pleasure You" pass.
- * Paradise: Doors @ 11 a.m. Happy hours open-close \$1.50 well and beer. Fajita night \$5 per plate & 1.50 Ritas.
- * Ripcord: \$2 well & beer open-close Star Trek @ 8 p.m.
- * The New Barn: Happy hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well; \$2 Cuervo.

Thursday, August 13

- * Brazos River Bottom: \$1.75 beer, \$1.75 well, \$1.25 schnapps until 11 p.m.; Free dance lessons.
- * BriarPatch: Doors @ 2 p.m.
- * Bricks II: \$1.25 well & beer 7 a.m.-noon; \$1.75 well & beer noon-9 p.m.
- * Chances: Power hours \$1.75 beer & well 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; Happy hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well. \$2 Cuervo.
- * Club Houston: Half-price lockers, rooms, & video rooms noon-midnight.
- * Decades: Open 11 a.m. \$1.75 well, beer & wine ill 8:00 p.m.
- * Cousin's: Show @ 11 p.m.
- * E/J's: Happy hour 7 a.m.-9 p.m. \$1.50 well 4 p.m.-7 p.m.; \$1.50 vodka 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Mug club 7 a.m.-10 p.m.; Burger night; Amateur Talent contest @ 11 p.m.
- * J.R's: Texas pride happy hour 4-7 p.m. \$2.25 well, \$1.75 beer \$3.75 all top shelf liquor. \$2.25 Imports and Micro Brews. Star Search Gold Karaoke @ 9 p.m.
- * Mary's: \$1.75 well & beer 7 a.m.-9 p.m.; \$1.50 well vodka drinks 7 a.m.-2 p.m.; 75¢ schnapps.
- * Mela's: \$1.75 beer, \$2.50 Cuervo & \$2 well.
- * Montrose Mining Company: \$2.25 beer, well, & wine; Male dancers at 9 p.m.; Happy hour until 10 p.m.
- * Nighthawks: \$2 well, beer, & wine noon until 7pm. \$2.50 Cuervo
- * Pacific Street: Sexx Thursdays: \$1.25 well, \$1.75 beer, \$3 call, \$3.50 premium, \$1.25 Schnapps. No cover with current gym card.
- * Paradise: Doors @ 11 a.m. \$3 anything in the house.
- * Rich's Club Hedo. 18+ college crowd with \$1.75 well.
- * Ripcord: Happy hour 1 to 8 p.m.
- * 611 Hyde Park Pub: Free Burger Night 6-9 p.m.
- * The New Barn: Happy Hour 3-8 p.m. \$2.25 beer & \$2.75 well; \$2 Cuervo.

Important Stuff

Welcome Decades. Their grand opening party is on Saturday, Aug. 8 starting at 8 p.m. There will be a scrumptious BBQ buffet and drink specials all night long. Stop in and wish Darlene and the staff good luck.

Have you been to E/J's lately? Well, the construction crew has been very busy. There are now windows that face Ralph Street as well as the back "area" with lots and lots of windows. Keep up the good work Ed and Jeff.



Jim of Steven's House never looked more lovely.

The Daddy of Montrose Jim Sorgini is hosting "Brothers & Sisters," a fundraiser for the Well-Women awareness program at the Montrose Clinic. The heart stopping show will feature many of our local "celebrities." Be at Chances on Saturday, Aug. 15 at 9 pm. Bring money.

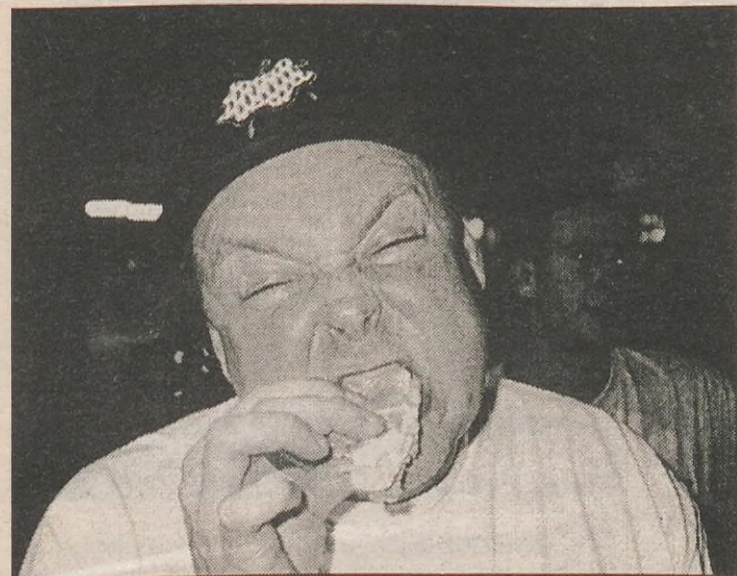
Most of you know that the Houston Voice and TWT offices are at 811 Westheimer. This building has been sold (to the Houston Area Women's Center) and all of us have to move. The Houston Voice (as well as TWT) will be moving to 500 Lovett

Blvd. We will be relocating sometime soon.

There is a kick-off party for "Strikes Against AIDS" at JR's on Sunday, Aug. 9 at 4 p.m. Congrats to the new Mr. Gay Texas, CJ Brooks.

Casting call. The annual Mary's Dog Show is on Sept. 13. This benefits Pet Patrol. Start making your pet's costumes now.

Milestones



Yolanda! Hungry Girl?

Happy (I love to play in the sewer) birthday to LaMarr. Happy (Please stroke my mustache) birthday to Daddy Dan. Happy (Give me a Hot Damn NOW!) Birthday to Vera. Happy (I love to spin music) birthday to Chris Ballard. Happy birthday to Miss Molly. Happy (Big ol' bear hug) birthday to Robert of HAB. Happy (Bite me) birthday to Nancy Ford.

Rodent Droppings

The usual disclaimer is in force. Lies, gossip, and trash. No real news here. No facts, just fiction.

This past Monday, LW had let Rascal out of her cage for her afternoon frolic. After several hours, LW noticed he had not seen or heard Rascal in quite a while. In a panic, he starts searching the room. Ferrets love to find a dark place to hid in. After an extensive search, LW found the little angel had crawled back into her cage and into her hammock. This was quite a shock. Usually, we have to catch her (or Harvey) when play time is over.

Dickie (just moved here from New Orleans): Welcome to Houston.
Nancy (Bite Me) Ford: Have you dreamed about killing any super heroes lately?
Terry (Nighthawks): I hear you were "moon" lighting at the 611 last weekend.
Brian Keever (NLA:H): Why do you even have your own apartment? You always seem to be "house-sitting" for someone.
Jeff (Decades): I need photos of your babies.



At Gentry... Au Revoir.

Tom (Bubba): Why were you hiding in the nursery?

Meg (Mary's): You certainly looked lovely at the Garden party

Larry Joe (E/J's): Sorry honey, I changed my nail color again.

Stacy (Rich's): It's time for a new message on your answering machine.

Hendrix (Copy.com): I hear you were "butt dancing" at Energy last weekend.

Ricky (new at the 611 Hyde Park Pub): And I quote "I'll get it!"

Ken McNames (hangs on every barstool): I hear you are slipping. You have not been keeping up on this month's bartender tracking chart.

Rick (Outpost): I hear you are looking for a big enchilada. Will a Spanish all-you-can-eat dinner suffice?

Richard (E/J's): Have you built up Wednesday nights yet?

Lee Davis: And I quote: "I'm a boy...well that is debatable."

Cougar: We are glad to have you living here in Houston.

Kip (formerly of Gentry): What did you mean "that silly little column?" And welcome back to Pacific Street.

Tom Sawyer (formerly of the BRB): Did you really become Henry's houseboy?

Scooter (returning to the Ripcord): Welcome home. We missed you.

Dr. Wayne: Did you really break your arm during kick boxing lessons?

If any of you saw me shopping at Babies R' Us this past weekend, do not jump to the wrong conclusion. I was shopping for Pebbles' (Pacific Street bar fly) baby shower. She is big as a house and due next month.

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'Broadway Damage': The film's only minority character plays a co-worker who consoles one of the leads about his romantic tribulations. —Photo by P. Duquett

COLOR/ from page 8B

making the fest rounds, 'Sex/Life L.A.' in which a black hustler is photographed to look like this big shiny beast," Roy said. "This director really had a five-minute film about (model) Tony Ward jerking off so he added this garbage to make a feature. This regressive filmmaking really irks me."

Director John G. Young, whose film "Parallel Sons" was released recently, said the mix of color and queer in his story made many uncomfortable. The wonderfully nuanced film, which focuses on a romance between a young white teenager and a black man fleeing the law, languished unseen for three years after its Sundance debut.

"It was hard for distributors to put race and sexuality together in something that wasn't a Bennetton ad," he said.

P.J. Castelanneta's distributor-less

film "Relax It's Just Sex," features a scene in which a black artist named Buzz argues that the health care system favors whites over blacks, an argument that polarizes a group of friends along racial lines. But it also leads Buzz to his first date with Javi, an HIV-positive Hispanic man, making "Relax" one of the first gay films in recent memory to feature a minority couple as romantic leads with narrative weight equal to the white folks.

Hu said things will change only if the audience demands it.

"The viewing community needs to make really clear their displeasure about this kind of casting," he said. "These filmmakers are, for the most part, privileged white guys who have a very skewed perception of racial identity. We're not going to get anything deeper until that changes."

This article originally appeared in the Village Voice.

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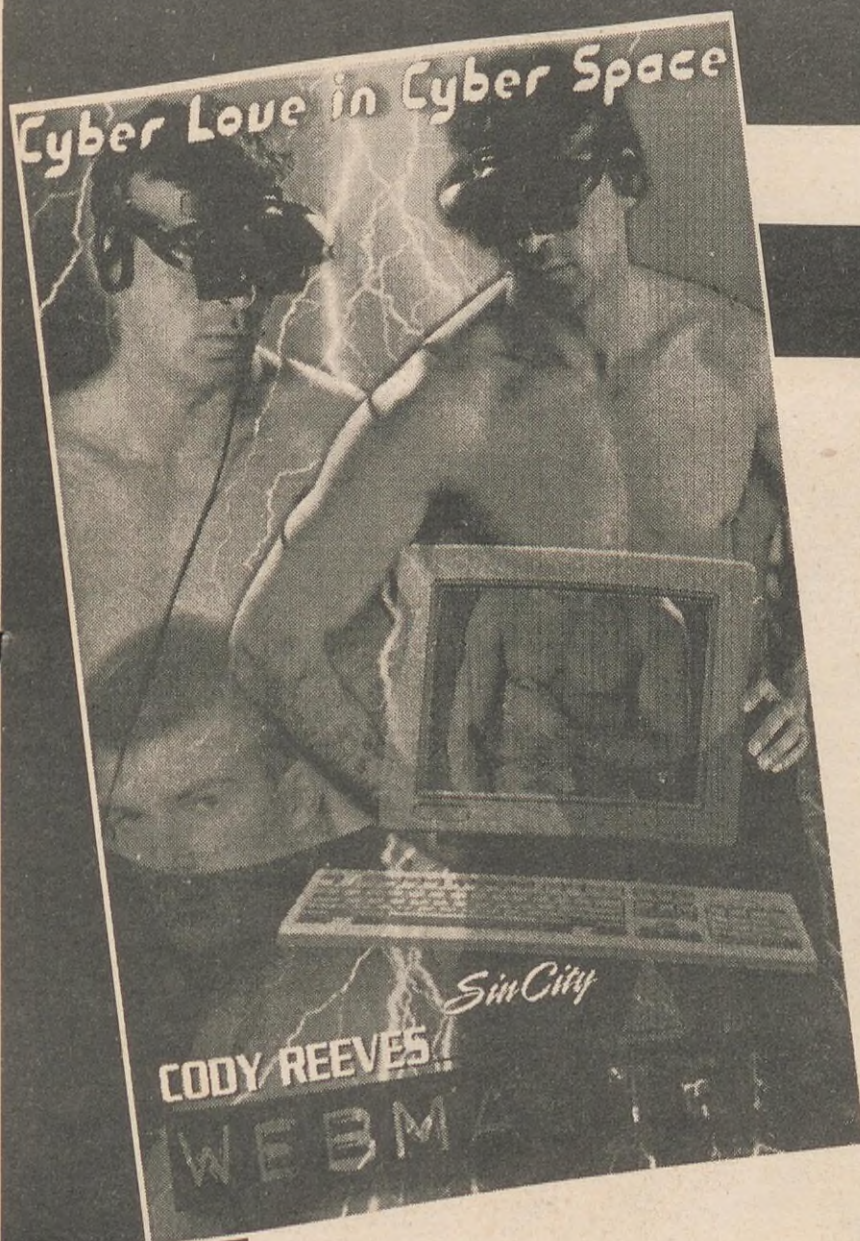
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