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JULY 22, 2005

HONORED: Annise
Parker gets nod. Page 3



NEW LAW: Hawaii says
'No' to discrimination. Page 5



OH CANADA: The latest on
same-sex marriage. Page 5



Bush nominee seen as step to the right

Gay groups stop short of
opposing court pick Roberts,
who has no gay record

By EARTHA JANE MELZER

Gay rights advocates expressed "grave concerns" this week following President Bush's nomination of Judge John G. Roberts to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Roberts, 50, has no apparent record as an advocate or judge on gay rights or HIV/AIDS issues, leading gay rights groups to criticize the appointment while stopping short of already announcing their opposition to his appointment.

"[The Roberts nomination] has just about guaranteed that divisiveness will continue to reign in the judicial nomination process," said Kevin Cathcart, executive director of Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund. "Some have suggested that Judge Roberts is well-liked, but with all due respect, we need to know if he will stand up for the rights of all Americans not whether some people think he's a nice guy."

Cathcart said Lambda Legal was studying Roberts' record but already has "serious concerns" about past positions on abortion rights, privacy and federalism, which concerns Congress' power to pass civil rights laws and other statutes.

Roberts has been a judge for two years, generating relatively few legal rulings from which his positions on controversial issues can be evaluated.

He was appointed to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in 2003 with the unanimous approval of the



President Bush nominated John G. Roberts Jr. to replace Sandra Day O'Connor on the United States Supreme Court, a move that has worried some gay rights groups. (Photo by AP)

U.S. Senate. He worked as a clerk for William Rehnquist, when he was an associate justice to the Supreme Court, as associate counsel for President Reagan and as deputy solicitor general during George H.W. Bush.

Roberts' record as deputy solicitor general, in which he represented the positions of George H.W. Bush's administration before the Supreme Court, drew the most fire from gay rights groups.

Please see **ROBERTS** on Page 7



James Matthew Bass ordered to pay Baylor \$77,000 for e-mail harassment.

Baylor wins suit

Bass ordered to pay Baylor University
\$77,000 in e-mail harassment case

By DYANA BAGBY

A Texas judge ruled a gay former Baylor University seminary student must pay the university \$77,000 in damages and fees for allegedly sending more than 1,000 pornographic and racist e-mails to university staff and officials of the private Baptist school.

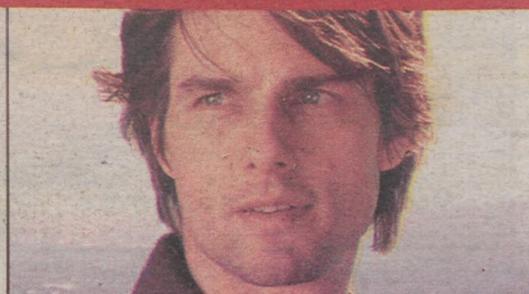
James Matthew Bass, 26, now lives in Atlanta and is a student at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. Bass was ordered July 15 by McLennan County District Court Judge Alan

Please see **BAYLOR** on Page 4



Local life
Fiona Dawson found
her calling and partner
at Bering Omega.
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dish
Rumors about Tom
keep flying faster
than 'Cruise' missiles.
PAGE 18



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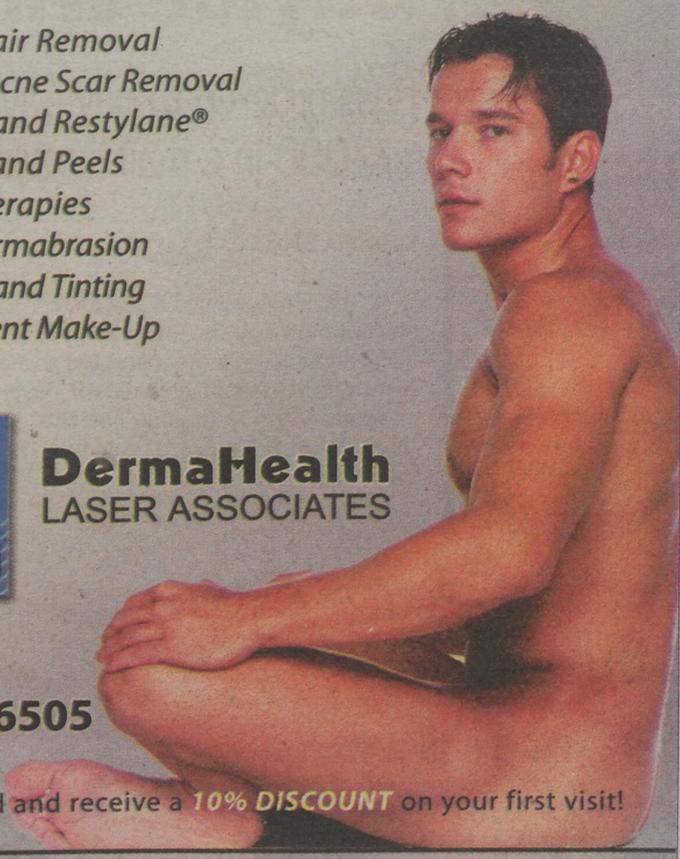


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local news briefs



Houston City Controller Annise Parker is one of seven fellows named to the Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute.

Parker selected for Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute

Houston City Controller Annise Parker is one of seven fellows selected in 2005 by the Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute, the only national organization solely committed to the leadership and professional development of the nation's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender public, private and not-for-profit leaders. She and other fellows are attending classes this month at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government. Fellows are recognized for their commitment to and accomplishments in the pursuit of establishing equal access to the American dream for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender citizens. Other fellows include: Michael Fleming, executive director of the David Bohnett Foundation; James McKissic, public education programs manager for the Urban League of Greater Chattanooga; Mario Acosta-Velez, human rights commissioner, DC Commission on Human Rights; John Brady, recorder of deeds for Sussex County Delaware; Stephen Glassman, chairperson for the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission; and Mark Kleinschmidt, a member of the Town Council in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. "The Fellows we are sponsoring are a part of the most talented and motivated individuals entering the world of public service today," said Chuck Wolfe, president and CEO of the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund and Leadership Institute. "This educational opportunity will serve to amplify their talents and bring the day closer when all LGBT citizens are provided the equal rights to which they are entitled as American citizens."



Elena Guajardo, San Antonio's first lesbian member of the City Council, will join Chrissy Gephardt for a Victory Fund event August 6 in Houston.

Chrissy Gephardt and Elena Guajardo to speak at Victory Fund event

Chrissy Gephardt, the out lesbian daughter of U.S. Rep. Dick Gephardt (D-Missouri), and Elena Guajardo, the first lesbian ever elected to the San Antonio City Council, will speak during an event staged by the Victory Fund on August 6 in Houston. The event is scheduled from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the home of Liz James and April Ayers. The event is a fundraiser for the Victory Fund, an organization that identifies, trains and helps elect gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender candidates

to public office. Guajardo is among the recent candidates for office endorsed by the Victory Fund. Tickets are \$70 per person. For more information, contact the Victory fund at events@victoryfund.org or at 202-842-7316.

The Community Center hosts GLBT Night at Montrose Diner

The Houston GLBT Community Center will host GLBT Night at the Montrose Diner, 1111 Westheimer, at 6:30 p.m. August 9. The event takes place on the second Tuesday of each month and usually features door prizes and discount coupons. "We are happy to continue our partnership with Montrose Diner, which is in the heart of our community," said Christopher Bown, president of the Center, a home base for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and their allies in the metropolitan Houston area and Southeast Texas. "We hope everyone will join us for a family night with food and fun." The Houston GLBT Community Center is located at 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207. More information is available by calling 713-524-3818 or on the Internet at www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

From staff and wire reports

regional news

Dallas gay bar found partially liable in mugging of patron

Jury awards \$39,318 to man who claims he was assaulted while leaving the bar parking lot

By DON MAINES

Jurors, shocked that a popular neighborhood gay bar in Dallas posted a security sign indicating it video-monitored its parking lot but it actually did not, awarded \$39,318 to a patron who was shot at by armed robbers while leaving the club after midnight.

"It was just a lie," Dallas attorney J. Scott Helwig told the Voice, referring to a "chest-high" sign posted in the parking lot of the Hidden Door at 5025 Bowser, on the northern fringe of the city's Oak Lawn area where most of the gay bars are concentrated.

The sign read, "For your protection and ours, this lot is monitored by video and videotaped, but park at your own risk." Helwig told VerdictSearch Texas, a publication read by lawyers throughout the state, that the video screen was actually tucked away in a liquor closet of the club and the video system apparently was broken at the time of the attack.

"There was no tape (of the incident)," explained Helwig, who represented Bill Bush, 42, in the case in which a jury in Dallas County's 162nd District Court found that the Hidden Door provided inadequate or negligent security.

The four-day trial ended July 1, with at least one juror revealing afterwards that the sign was an important factor in finding the Hidden Door negligent under a theory of premises liability.

"The jury simply got it wrong," countered Dan Cutrer, lead attorney for Hidden Door, Inc. "They can't seize on one part of the sign that said, 'for your protection and ours, this lot is monitored by video and videotaped,' and say, 'Aha! Customers might have been aware of third parties driving through the neighborhood,' but ignore the rest of that sign that said, 'but park at your own risk.'"

Cutrer, who said he is filing "voluminous" post-judgment motions attacking the verdict, told the Voice, "The Texas Supreme Court has not upheld a premises liability case in ages, and this is not going to be the first one. We will appeal this case until hell freezes over, unless the judge throws it out before the verdict even becomes an appealable final judgment."

Bush, 42, testified that he had been going to the Hidden Door two or three times a week for about 15 years when, at about 12:20 a.m. on Sept. 14, 2003, he and a friend left the bar, walked across the street to the parking lot, smoked a cigarette and urinated.

As they were about to get into

Bush's car, two attackers threatened Bush with a gun and demanded his wallet. Bush ran, but fell and broke his arm in three places. The attackers fired a shot at him and fled.

Hidden Door Inc. denied negligence, contending that Bush assumed the risk and was himself negligent for stopping to smoke and urinate instead of immediately getting into his car.

As its expert witness on commercial security, the bar hired Danny Defenbaugh, a former FBI inspector who headed the investigation of the Oklahoma City bombing. Defenbaugh testified that crime levels near the Hidden Door were lower than in other areas of Oak Lawn.

Helwig, however, presented evidence that in the previous two years, at least 22 violent crimes had occurred in the area, with a number of victims making 911 calls from a phone inside the bar.

"Gunshots, sexual assaults, you name it, that is a very bad area," Helwig said.

Tony Bobrow, owner of the bar, testified that he was not aware of many of the allegations but he did know that the bar itself was robbed at gunpoint four months before the attack on Bush.

Helwig said the armed security guard employed by the bar, "sits on his butt."

Helwig said he asked the bar's owner whether he planned to increase security following the attack. "He said 'no.' Then I asked the jury, 'Is that reasonable, to not change anything at all?'"

Helwig said Bobrow, "kept himself blind" to "a dangerous situation that was bound to happen. We're lucky it wasn't a death."

Bush claimed \$4,318 in medical bills for injuries that required surgery and placement of pins. An orthopedic surgeon told jurors that Bush probably would need future surgery to remove the pins and therapy to treat numbness and tingling in his fingers.

On July 18, VerdictSearch reported that the jury deliberated for five hours before finding the Hidden Door 60 percent negligent and Bush 40 percent negligent. The judge could reduce the award to \$23,590.80 in keeping with the jury's finding of comparative fault.

"They found that Bill Bush was negligent, too, and I understand that because he had been going there for 15 years. He knew that it had lackadaisical security, and the security guard sat in a van where he could not see the attack, but he had no idea there was no video system or no videotape, as the sign said," said Helwig.

At the Hidden Door's request, the 6 person jury was prevented from hearing any information that identified the Hidden Door as a gay bar. Helwig explained that he did not contest the defense request because if a juror was biased against gays, the juror would be biased against his client as well as the bar.

| regional news

Matt Bass offered no defense in e-mail case

BAYLOR, continued from Page 1

Mayfield in Waco, Texas, to pay Baylor University \$30,000 in attorneys' fees and \$47,000 in fees associated with tracking down the sender of the offending e-mails, Baylor attorney Andy McSwain said Tuesday.

Bass did not attend the hearing in Texas on July 15 and did not present court papers in his defense. While he did not outright deny the charges against him, Bass told the Voice in a written statement that Baylor University pursued a civil suit against him "purely for retributive reasons."

"There is much I could say in my defense; church ministers, activists and friends who are privy to all the details of the suit have come down squarely behind me," Bass said in the statement released Wednesday.

"However, I chose not to defend myself in the civil suit brought against me by Baylor because my legal counsel and I do not believe the court in Texas has proper jurisdiction over me as a resident of Georgia. Additionally, as a full time student, I simply haven't access to the funds necessary for participation in a civil suit.

Bass declined further comment, claiming he had not yet received any court documents.

Baylor's lawyer, Andy McSwain, said the judgment against Bass was fair but he was unsure if any money would ever be collected.

The \$47,000 figure came from several months of work involved in tracking down the source of the offensive e-mails, using Comcast Cable records and Baylor Internet and computer experts, McSwain said. Another \$30,000 was awarded for McSwain's fees.

In addition to seeking reimbursement for attorneys' fees and costs for tracking the e-mails, Baylor University received a permanent injunction prohibiting Bass from e-mailing Baylor employees and their family members, McSwain said.

Bass lost his scholarship to attend Baylor's George W. Truett Theological Seminary in November 2003 after administrators discovered Bass was gay and said his lifestyle was incompatible with the school's Christian teachings on homosexuality. Bass said he was forced to quit Baylor because of losing his scholarship and enrolled at Emory University last year.

The Candler School of Theology issued a statement July 19 saying it is aware of Bass' troubles but cannot publicly comment on a student's conduct.

"We take seriously the responsibility of Candler to its students, the church and the community, as well as the standards and procedures in place regarding student conduct," the statement read.



Matt Bass spoke during a rally a 2004 rally near Baylor University after he lost his scholarship to the George W. Truett Theological Seminary.

The lawsuit stemmed from a rash of offensive e-mails sent to Baylor faculty and staff in the fall of 2004, including President Robert Sloan, that were filled with sexually explicit and racially offensive remarks allegedly sent from someone with a Baylor-affiliated e-mail address.

"Daddy, didn't Jesus tell you to stop licking me 'down there'?" read a Nov. 12 e-mail sent to a male Baylor employee, and an unspecified number of other employees. The e-mail appeared as though it was sent by the child of the male employee, according to the lawsuit.

Several of the e-mails Bass is accused of sending also included racial epithets.

Ryan Lee contributed to this report.

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national news briefs

Hawaii bans anti-gay discrimination in housing

HONOLULU (AP) — A new law prohibits Hawaii's landlords from discriminating against gays, lesbians or transsexuals. The measure amends existing law to include sexual orientation and gender identity among the criteria that can't be used as the basis for denying housing. The amendments exempt housing owned and operated by religious institutions for church purposes or for church-run higher education housing programs. Another bill passed by lawmakers that would have added gender identity to a law banning discrimination in the workplace was vetoed by the governor. In her veto message, Gov. Linda Lingle said the language of the measure was not clear enough in defining gender identity. Activists decried Lingle's veto of the second measure. "No one should be fired simply for who they are," Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese said in a news release. "Employment protections increase business productivity and ensure that employees are evaluated on their work, not their gender identity." HRC also decried the legislature's failure to attempt an override of Lingle's veto.



Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle last week signed a new law to protect gays, lesbians and transsexuals from discrimination in housing but vetoed a move to ban bias in the workplace based on gender identity. (Photo by AP)

Wife sues N.C. gay man for loss of husband's love

DURHAM, N.C. (AP) — A spurned wife has sued her husband's gay lover, accusing him of wooing away the woman's husband. Pamela Lavone Putjenter alleged in a lawsuit filed in Durham Superior Court that Stephen Glenn Barefoot began to "willfully and intentionally seduce, entice and alienate the affections" of her husband in January 2002. She said her husband, Ronald Joseph Putjenter, eventually admitted to the alleged affair. As a result, the couple separated in March 2004, said the lawsuit, which seeks compensatory and punitive damages of at least \$10,000 each. North Carolina is one of a handful of states that still allow scorned spouses to collect money damages for alienation of affection. Successful plaintiffs have won awards ranging from \$1 to more than \$1 million.

Ore. legal group may exempt military from ad restrictions

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — The Oregon National Guard would be allowed to resume advertising in the magazine of the Oregon State Bar Association, despite the military's ban on openly gay service members, under a recommendation made by a bar advisory committee. Such advertising was temporarily banned by the bar board in April, after concerns about conflicts with the bar magazine's policy that prohibits its advertisers from employment discrimination. The policy requires employers buying employment ads not to discriminate in hiring on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, military status, national origin, handicap, family status or sexual orientation. Now, committee members are recommending that the bar, which licenses and regulates Oregon lawyers, add a sentence exempting the military from its nondiscrimination policy. The military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, requires the discharge of soldiers who acknowledge being gay or engaging in homosexual activity.

Wash. Supreme Court grants fast review of West recall effort

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — The state Supreme Court has granted a fast-track review of the effort to recall Spokane Mayor James West, who is embroiled in a sex scandal but has refused to resign. The decision last week by the Olympia-based panel is considered a victory for recall proponents, who hope to put the measure before voters as soon as November. The court unanimously decided that all briefing should be concluded by Aug. 15. No date for oral arguments was set. In late June, a Superior Court judge ruled that a recall effort — which contends West used his public office to improperly offer internships to young men for his own personal gain — could proceed. West appealed to the high court, and recall leader Shannon Sullivan then asked the Supreme Court for an accelerated review.

Officials break ground for nonprofit gay retirement home in Hollywood

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Calling it an overdue "environment of tolerance," officials broke ground last week for what they say is the nation's first nonprofit senior housing facility designed for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered adults. The \$20 million Encore House in Hollywood will accommodate low-income seniors in 104 rental units and feature a swimming pool and 3,000 square feet of public space. Expected to open in 2006, it's part of a burgeoning number of retirement communities for older gay Americans. Others, however, are for-profit developments generally for more affluent retirees. Jack Reauley, 82, and his partner, Bob Claunsh, 80, said they would consider such a facility to be with people who understand them. "It's just a matter of living with other people that you know and live like," said Claunsh, who has been with Reauley since they met in the Army 54 years ago.

From staff and wire reports

international news

Canada approves

By ELIZABETH WEILL-GREENBERG

On Tuesday night, the Canadian Senate overwhelmingly voted to legalize same-sex marriage in a 47 to 21 vote, becoming the fourth nation in the world to do so.

Canadian courts have ruled to recognize the rights of gay couples to marry since 2003, legalizing the practice in most provinces. In June, Canada's House of Commons voted to approve legislation allowing gay couples to marry.

Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium are the only other countries to recognize gay marriage. In the United States, one state, Massachusetts, has legalized gay people's right to marry. Many American gay couples have traveled to Canada to marry because it has no residency requirements for marriage.

"This law is based on the principle that no minority is diminished when another minority is acknowledged," said Laurie Arron, director of advocacy of Egale Canada and political coordinator for Canadians for Equal Marriage.

The legislation was drafted and vigorously supported by Prime Minister Paul Martin's minority Liberal Party government.

Liberal senators had threatened to force a vote on the bill if Conservatives dragged out the debate. Conservative Senator Gerry St. Germain tried to push through a motion that would have delayed a final vote for six months.

St. Germain told the Senate that recognition of gay marriage would damage heterosexual marriage, according to Canadian news reports. The vote for marriage equality finally came around 11 p.m. on Tuesday night.

"There is no point in further postponement," said Jack Austin, the Liberal leader in the Senate, as reported by the Canadian Press. "There are no new issues to be argued, there are no new positions to be taken. I think everyone in this chamber understands that we have, along with the Canadian people, come to our own conclusions."

Arron said that polls show that a majority of Canadian voters don't want Parliament to reopen this issue. According to the Toronto Globe & Mail and CTV News, 55 percent of those polled in July want a same sex marriage law to stand. Thirty-nine percent said they favored a repeal and 6 percent were undecided.

If elected Prime Minister, the conservative party leader Stephen Harper has said he will try to repeal the law.

"For [Harper] to win he has to get the middle ground and folks in the middle are sick of this debate," Arron said, who noted that Harper's popularity sinks when he raises the gay marriage issue.

Many Canadians view opposition to marriage equality as a wedge issue, designed to distract and divide voters,



Julian Zanett, 15, participated in one of many demonstrations outside of Parliament in Ottawa over same-sex marriage. The debate ended this week with final approval of same-sex marriage by the Senate. (Photo by Sean Kilpatrick/AP)

he said.

When asked why Canada differs from the U.S. on the gay marriage question, Emily Turk of Canadians for Equal Marriage said their conservative party is not as right-wing as the U.S. Republican Party.

"Our right and our left are not quite as polarized [as the U.S.]," she said. "The Conservative Party [in Canada] is split amongst themselves."

Canada's gay marriage debate was not without controversy and contention. Recently a conservative, religious organization, Marriage Canada, started a petition drive to urge the Queen of England to intervene.

Premier Ralph Klein of Alberta had publicly opposed recognizing marriage between gay couples but he has said he will respect the law.

"This is federal legislation," Klein's spokesperson Jerry Bellikka said.

Brian Rushfeldt, executive director of Canada Family Action Coalition, said that his organization would now fight to overturn the bill, which becomes law when it receives royal assent, a formality expected to occur Wednesday. Unlike the U.S., Canada is run by a "fascist type liberal government," Rushfeldt said.

"There are other solutions to the problem of homosexuals supposedly wanting to be equal," he said.

Canada's Catholic Church has also been vocal in its opposition. The archbishop of Quebec, Cardinal Mark Ouellet, recently announced that the Church could refuse to baptize children of same sex parents. Charlie Angus, a member of Parliament, was denied communion for his support of the bill.

While opponents to marriage equality pledge to kick into high gear, Canadians for Equal Marriage happily shut their doors, Arron said. "Our goal has been accomplished," Arron said. "We will close down."

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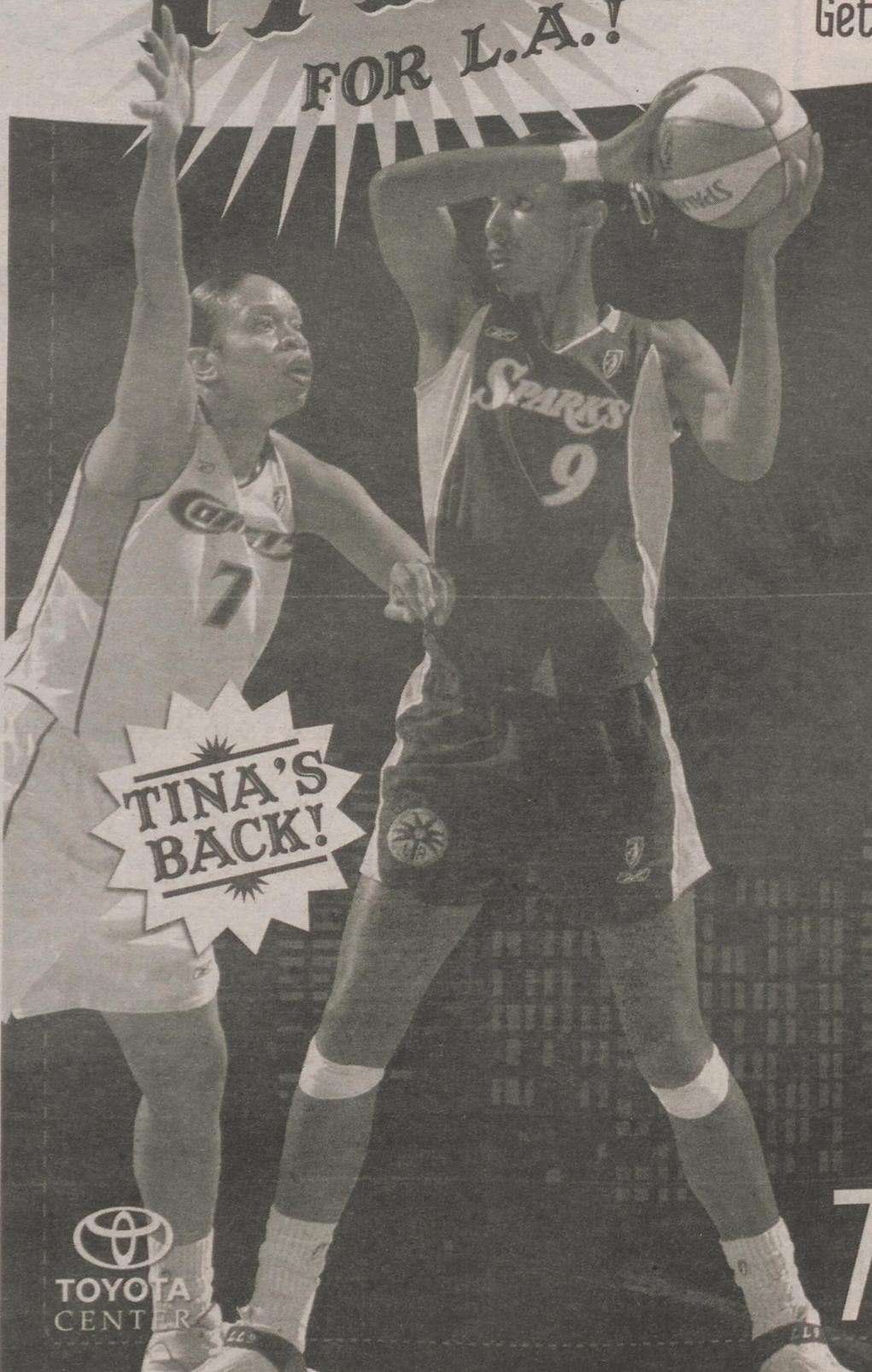
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national news

Cases in pipeline include Solomon, 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'

ROBERTS, continued from Page 1

Abortion, school prayer 'indicators' on gay rights?

In that role, he co-wrote a 1990 brief arguing that *Roe vs. Wade*, the landmark abortion case, be overruled. Roberts wrote that the court's ruling on abortion has "no support in the text, structure or history of the Constitution."

He also argued in that role for more limited application of the First Amendment toward public school graduation prayers.

"Judge Roberts has advocated for prayer in public schools and for weakening the wall between church and state," said Joe Solmonese, head of the Human Rights Campaign. "He should make clear whether or not he would distort religion for misuse as a proxy for discrimination. Americans deserve a justice who will uphold the separation of church and state."

Lara Schwartz, senior counsel for HRC, said that a judge's views on reproductive choice are an indicator of whether he is ready to embrace legal protections for gay men and lesbians.

Some observers have questioned whether the positions Roberts argued while working for the White House should be seen as reflecting his own positions on issues, since he was acting as a lawyer on behalf of the Bush administration.

"He wasn't just a lawyer in the Justice Department, he was the political deputy in the Solicitor General's Office, as a political deputy he had intimate political contact with the administration," responded Neil Siegel, professor at Duke University School of Law. "He endorsed the position that *Roe* should be overturned. Under those circumstances the burden is on him to disabuse senators of the inference that that is his position."

"There are many ways the court can eviscerate *Roe*," Siegel added. "More probable than not, that is what he is going to do."

Because Roberts does not have a lengthy record on the bench, his judicial philosophy is expected to be evaluated largely on the basis of his answers to questions posed by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Tony Perkins, president of the conservative Family Research Council, thanked Bush for nominating Roberts and called him, "intellectually powerful, committed to the rule of law, steeped in character and determined not to legislate from the bench." Perkins said he trusted that Roberts fits the mold of conservative justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas.

Schwartz, HRC's senior counsel, said she expects that conservatives will argue that it is improper to question Roberts' ideology and that aggressive questioning on church-state separation or abortion issues amounts to an attack on Roberts as a "person of faith."

HRC concluded it had "grave concerns" about the nomination in a press statement released even before President Bush made the official announcement at 9 p.m. on Tuesday night. The National Gay & Lesbian

Task Force took a wait-and-see stance.

"President Bush's announcement that he is nominating U.S. Court of Appeals Judge John Roberts to the Supreme Court of the United States gives us great pause, particularly in light of Roberts' role in the Counsel's office of President Reagan and the Solicitor General's office of President George H.W. Bush," said Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, in a statement.

The Log Cabin Republicans, a gay GOP group, did not take an immediate position on the Roberts nomination.

"Recognizing the importance and impact of the Supreme Court, we support the confirmation of all fair-minded jurists to the bench. Log Cabin will carefully study the record, writings, and testimony of Judge Roberts during this confirmation process, particularly as they relate to questions of basic fairness gay and lesbian Americans," Log Cabin Executive Director Patrick Guerriero said in a statement.

Gay-related cases to be heard in fall

If Roberts wins confirmation after the Senate's August recess, he will have two chances this fall to weigh in on issues relevant to gays and lesbians.

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear a case that deals with whether the federal government can withhold funds from schools that maintain non-discrimination policies requiring them to bar military recruiters from campus based on the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

In *FAIR vs. Rumsfeld*, a group of law schools is challenging the Solomon Amendment, which requires schools to give military recruiters access to their campuses or forfeit all federal funds to their university.

The American Law School Association requires that member schools adopt non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation. Because the military bars open gays from service with its "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, some schools had banned military recruiters from their campuses. But most law schools that had banned military recruiters eventually caved to the legislation, fearing the loss of millions in public funding.

The case is likely to deal only tangentially on gay rights, instead focusing on whether the law infringes on the universities' First Amendment free speech rights to express their dissent from the military ban.

Another case the court has already accepted for review involves the Americans with Disabilities Act, the strongest and broadest law protecting people with HIV, according to Jon Givner, HIV project coordinator for Lambda Legal. The ADA protects people with disabilities, including HIV, from discrimination in employment, public services and public accommodations.

This fall, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear *Goodman vs. Georgia*, a case that will determine whether a prisoner can sue a state prison under the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Sgt. Stacy Vasquez and 11 other gay and lesbian former service members are suing the Defense Department for the right to serve openly in a case that may well reach the Supreme Court after a replacement for Sandra Day O'Connor has been sworn in.

The plaintiff in the case is a wheelchair-bound man who claims he suffered injuries because of the state's failure to accommodate his special needs.

Goodman vs. Georgia will affect people with HIV, Givner said. The prevalence of HIV in state prisons is four to six times what it is in the general population and prisoners with HIV frequently suffer discrimination, he noted.

HIV-positive prisoners frequently experience segregation, insufficient access to medical care and violations of privacy through unwarranted disclosure of information relating to their HIV status, Givner said.

"If the law doesn't provide maximum protection to people that are HIV positive, we fear that peoples' rights will be violated, and the remedies might not be available in some cases," Givner said.

Military ban challenge may be next big case

Another case that legal observers expect could make it to the Supreme Court in the near future is *Cook vs. Rumsfeld*. In this case, which is currently in the U.S. District Court in Boston, 12 gay and lesbian U.S. service members are challenging the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

All of the plaintiffs in the case were discharged because of their sexual orientation and seek, not back pay and damages, but only to be reinstated to their old positions and for the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy to be overturned.

This is the first challenge to the military's ban on open service by gay men and lesbians to reach arguments in a federal court since the *Lawrence vs. Texas* case overturned state sodomy laws, said Steve Ralls, spokesperson for the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network.

SLDN is arguing that the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution because it applies a different set of standards to gay and lesbian service members, creating a kind of second class citizenship.

SLDN also argues that policy violates service members' fundamental liberty to engage in private intimacy and relationships and that the policy is arbitrarily enforced. Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, there has been a more than 40 percent decrease in gay and lesbian discharges. The phenomenon of reduced discharges during wartime goes back as far as the Korean War, Ralls said.

"If gays and lesbians do their jobs well and don't disrupt morale and discipline during time of war, ... then they shouldn't be a problem in peacetime," Ralls said. "It seems that during wartime the 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' policy is unofficially relaxed."

The military has filed a motion to dismiss the case, arguing that it has no legal basis to continue to trial.

"The government's case is based in military deference, and the courts have a long history of ... allowing the military to have rules and regulations that may not be applicable to civilian society," Kathi Westcott, senior counsel for law and policy at the SLDN said. "But gay and lesbian service members should not be asked to check all their constitutional rights at the door."

Another case some observers believe may make it to the Supreme Court soon involves a Nebraska constitutional amendment that bans recognition of gay relationships.

In May, a federal judge in Nebraska ruled that the state's 2000 constitutional amendment that banned all recognition of same sex relationships was unconstitutional.

The case is currently being appealed in the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Fiona Dawson is on a mission to save the world

Her 'save the world' agenda began in Bangladesh and has since brought her to Bering Omega

By BINNIE FISHER

Bedding down among tribal people in Bangladesh seems a far cry from the idyllic village of Swineshead in the English Midlands, but for Fiona Dawson, it was a must-do after graduating Essex University.

"I knew a lady who had started a program there," says Dawson, Director of Resource Development at Bering Omega Community Services. "I always wanted to save the world."

People often joke about saving the world, but when Dawson utters those words, she sounds as though she means it.

Teaching English to tribal people in a third-world setting was a step in that direction, and it eventually led her to the Bangladesh capital of Dhaka, where she worked with an American couple organizing an international conference on workers' rights.

"It was there I met my husband to be," she says. "He was in the Marines."

When he was transferred to Lisbon, Portugal, she went along and taught English there. When the Marine came back to the U.S., she says, "I came over to the states and we got married."

With a desire to save the world but no green card, Dawson volunteered with Casa de Esperanza, an agency that works with abused children.

"I volunteered in their development office," Dawson says. "Three months later I had my green card. They gave me my first real job opportunity."

She started as a caseworker and was promoted to volunteer coordinator. When a volunteer coordinator position opened at Houston Area Women's Center, Dawson applied and was hired.

Dawson may have been on a mission to save the world, but being associated with



Fiona Dawson, Director of Resource Development for Bering Omega Community Services, graduated college in Great Britain and embarked on a mission to "save the world." (Photos by Dalton DeHart)

Houston Area Women's Center may have saved her.

"It opened my eyes to domestic and sexual violence," she says. "I realized that the relationship I was in really wasn't healthy."

She came to see that domestic violence didn't always mean physical bruises and that emotional abuse can be as harmful as anything.

Dawson says she left her husband. To fill additional hours in the day and evening, she volunteered at Omega House, the hospice run by Bering Omega.

"HIV/AIDS is an issue deeply rooted inside me," she says. "I want to see it addressed."

That volunteer stint led to a permanent position working with volunteers. Now, she's in charge of resource development. At the present, that means planning the organization's major fundraiser,

"Songs of Hope: Art Songs and Arias."

"My job is, I'm the party planner," she says.

But with a soon-to-be 20-year-old organization with more than 700 volunteers and an annual budget of \$3.5 million, there's more than that to it.

Dawson sees it this way, "I get to meet people and introduce them to a mission that I love. What better job can you have?"

Among the people she's had the opportunity to meet is Reesa Hedrick, an attorney who is a Bering Omega volunteer.

"You know that feeling when someone walks in the room, and you're knocked off your feet," she asks.

She and Hedrick discovered that they share the same birthday. They began a relationship that is now a year old. Although she was married once, Dawson says, having a relationship with a woman wasn't a foreign concept to her.

i FIONA DAWSON

Age: 28

Birthplace: Swineshead, England

Home: Houston

Education: University of Essex

Occupation: Director of Resource Development, Bering Omega Community Services

Relationship Status: Partner of Reesa Hedrick

Pets: Two dogs, Hope and Charity

Mission: Save the world



Fiona Dawson and her partner, attorney Reesa Hedrick, have been together for a year.

She traveled back to England this week for her 10-year high school reunion. Word of her relationship has found its way across the Atlantic.

"There's a huge amount of gossip back in England," she says. "One reason I'm going is to see who has the balls to approach me and ask about it."

Although she will be out at her reunion, Dawson says she's hesitant to describe herself as gay. "I wouldn't have described myself as straight before."

Her parents, both in the medical field and working in the national health system, are supportive of her relationship and her desire to remain in the United States.

She says she returns to Britain after the recent bombings feeling "more British than ever."

When she returns to Houston, it's back to "Sing for Hope" and working to save the world through Bering Omega.

"I'm a very, very lucky girl," she says. "I just hope I can do something to make a difference."

i MORE INFO

'Sing for Hope: An Evening of Art Songs and Arias'

Benefiting Bering Omega Community Services

7 p.m. Sept. 17, 2005

Zilkha Hall

Hobby Center for the Performing Arts

713-315-2525

www.thehobbycenter.org

out in houston

(Photos by Dalton DeHart)



D.J. **Manny Lehman** (left) talked with **Joel Atkins** when he was in town recently to spin at South Beach.



As they usually do, Austin Babbist Women brought down the house at Miss Mint Julep.



Keith Vyvial (**Kendra Dior**) was named Miss Mint Julep during the pageant that benefits Montrose Clinic.



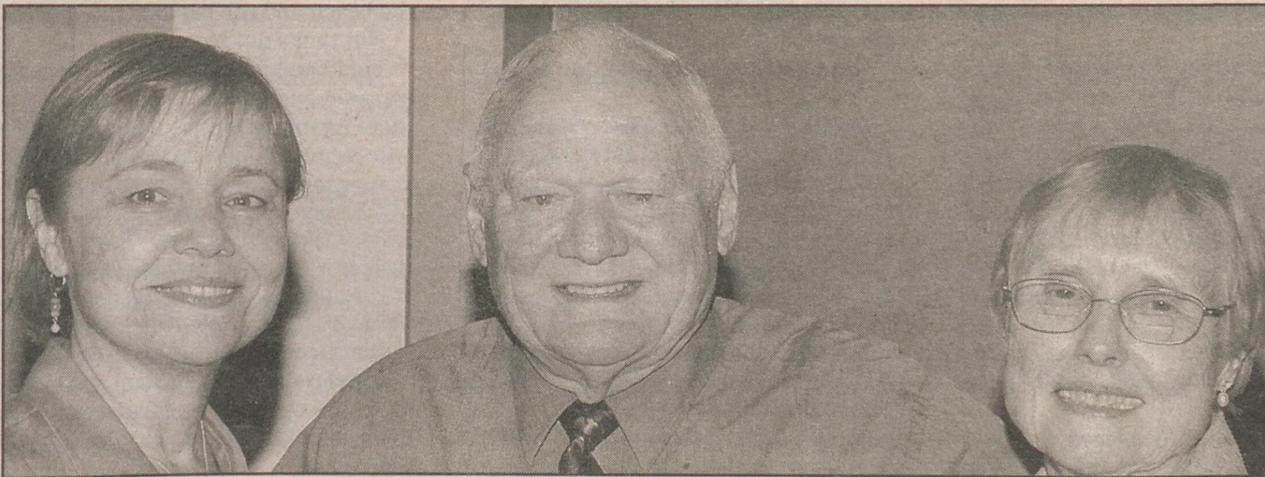
Joseph Ayala was presented an award for his volunteer efforts during 2005 Pride by (from left) Pride Houston Committee President **Nick Brines**, Executive Director **Jack Valinski** and Parade Chair **Lynn Sixkiller**.



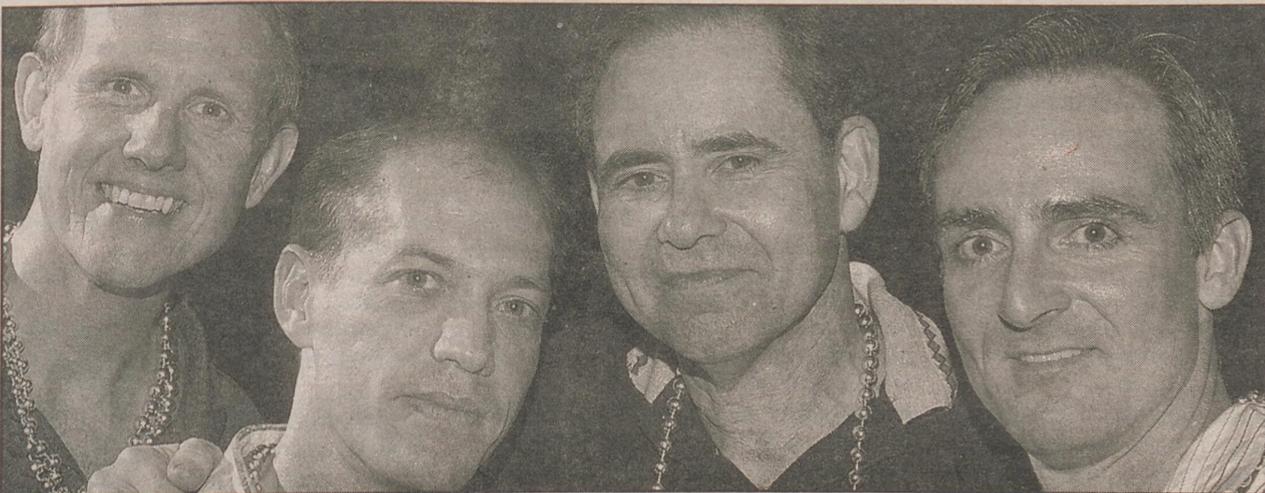
D.J. **Scotty K** was master of the decks recently for Spoiled Boyz.



Kaye Sedilla was among the performers at Miss Mint Julep.



Rev. **Marilyn Meeker Williams** (left), pastor of Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, talked with retired pastor **Don Sinclair** and wife, **Kathy**, during the Dome Project fundraiser.



Calling themselves Quadra because they have in common the same birthdate, (from left) **Dan Meador**, **Trevar Ross**, **Gary Killingsworth** and **Ray Marak** recently celebrated another one together.



King and Queen Olympus, **Richard Watson** and **Floyd Martinez**, reigned during the recent Casino Night staged by the Krewe of Olympus.

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Forum

HOUSTON VOICE

JULY 22, 2005

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editorial

Don't get trapped in gay bars

I will always be thankful for the men
I've met and fun I've had in gay bars.
But there's so much more to gay life.

By MUBARAK DAHIR

a

IKE MOST GAY MEN MY age, I still remember the first time I went into a gay bar.

It was 1985, and I had only recently turned 21. I was living at home with my parents in Hershey,

Pennsylvania, on summer break from college. I had landed an internship at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, in downtown Harrisburg, the state capital.

One warm summer afternoon, I was walking with two co-workers back from lunch, headed to the oddly round building that housed our offices. The traffic light stopped us on the corner just across the street from the dome-shaped cylinder of a structure where we worked.

"Oh great!" one of my co-workers said out loud, smirking. "Guess we get fruit salad for dessert!"

My office mates cackled as they clued me in: Just next to us was a gay bar, the Neptune.

I glanced over at the place.

There was a huge plate glass window facing the street, but it was tinted, so you couldn't see inside. A small, semi-circular canopy covered the plain black door, upon which silver, stick-on letters, some of them askew, spelled out the name of the bar.

It was a totally unremarkable façade. And I was burning with curiosity to know what was behind it.

That same night, after dinner at home with my parents, I jumped in the car and nervously drove the ten miles back to Harrisburg.

I passed the Neptune three times in my car that night, watching men go in and out, before I gathered enough courage to park and go inside.

When I opened the door, I saw a long, rectangular room. In the dead center was a huge bar island, in the middle of which stood a tall, slender bartender with long, stringy black hair. The bar was big enough and the room was small

enough so that when you walked by the stools on either side, you brushed up against either the walls or the patrons — your choice.

Madonna's hit, "Like a Virgin," was washing over the Wednesday night crowd as I stalled in the doorway, feeling like I was teetering on the precipice of something scary and wonderful.

I tried to decide whether to enter or flee.

"Don't stand there like a deer in the headlights, sweetheart, you're letting all my air conditioning escape," Joel, the bartender, finally quipped.

The door shut behind me, and I was in.

I HAD BEEN HAVING SEX WITH MEN for two years before I found the Neptune.

But prior to that night, the only places I met gay men were in bathrooms on campus, or late at night in dark cruisy shadows.

The Neptune was the first place where I felt both "normal" and safe in the quest for and company of other gay men.

Since that evening in Harrisburg, I have been to probably hundreds of gay bars, all around the country and the world.

I'm glad for it. The bars remain vital meeting places and social outlets for gay men and lesbians everywhere. They are still a crucial common denominator, particularly for gay men, one of the most important places for us to meet and relax in comfort.

But now, exactly 20 years after first setting foot into the jovial, smoky, loud, cruisy world of gay bars, I can't help but wonder if we as gay men don't lean on them way too much to define our social lives.

It's not that there is anything wrong with gay bars. I've logged plenty of hours in them in the past two decades, and I am sure I will log plenty more in the next two.

But the problem with bars, like television, isn't what they do to us. It's what they keep us from doing.

I know far too many gay men who have precious little notion what they might do for a gay social life beyond going to the bars. Few, if any, of my straight friends so narrowly define their social circles around the bars. Indeed, most straight friends my age rarely go to bars anymore at all.

SO WHY DO SO MANY OF US, AS GAY men, let our social lives revolve like satellites around the beckoning of the bars?

Part of the answer, no doubt, is the promise of sexual energy that springs eternal at the bars. Perhaps part of the answer is habit, too: The bars are an easy answer to an evening of nothing else to do. They're also a sure bet for finding other gay men who are also out to socialize.

But there is so much more to gay life than the bars, and I often fear far too many gay men overlook or neglect it.

An online search for gay bars in Fort Lauderdale turned up the remarkable number of 30. Since I moved here a little more than a year and a half ago, I can't count the number of gay men who have complained to me that there is nothing to do in Fort Lauderdale other than go to the beach and the bars.

But that's not true.

Fort Lauderdale is full of things for gay men and lesbians to do. For starters, there are numerous social clubs and athletic organizations, as well as non-profit groups to get involved with.

On stage right now are two terrific plays with gay themes—"Trafficking in Broken Hearts" at the Sol Theatre in Fort Lauderdale, and "Men on the Verge of a His-Panic Breakdown" at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden.

The French Film Festival starts in town this weekend, and features two gay-themed flicks, at least one of which —

The Closet — is well worth catching. And the Gateway movie theater on Sunrise thankfully brings a stream of quality, independent gay and lesbian films.

These are just a few options for broadening our horizons beyond the two-for-one happy hour outlet. Look around and you'll easily find plenty more.

I am thankful for the men I've met and times I've had at gay bars. I will always be particularly grateful to the bartender, Joel, for pulling me in the Neptune with his humor and friendliness.

I'm not suggesting gay men to give up the bars. I'm just hoping we don't trap ourselves in them.

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



viewpoint SETH KILBOURN

Fighting the proposed marriage amendment in Texas means gays and lesbians must educate their families, friends and acquaintances.

Gays and lesbians must now fight the good fight

TODAY SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE already denied critical rights, protections and responsibilities that come with having their relationship recognized by the government – everything from hospital visitation privileges to social security survivor benefits to family and medical leave rights. But things could get even worse.

Fourteen states have amended their state constitutions to ban marriage for same-sex couples and set gays and lesbians apart as second-class citizens. As it stands now, Texas is not one of those states. But this could all change come November.

A constitutional amendment would permanently close the door on equality for same-sex couples by imposing a strict ban on marriage and civil unions. Despite the tremendous leadership of the Lesbian and Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (LGRL), our opponents – not shy about putting our rights up to a public vote – have put an amendment to permanently deny recognition for our families on the statewide ballot for the November 8 election.

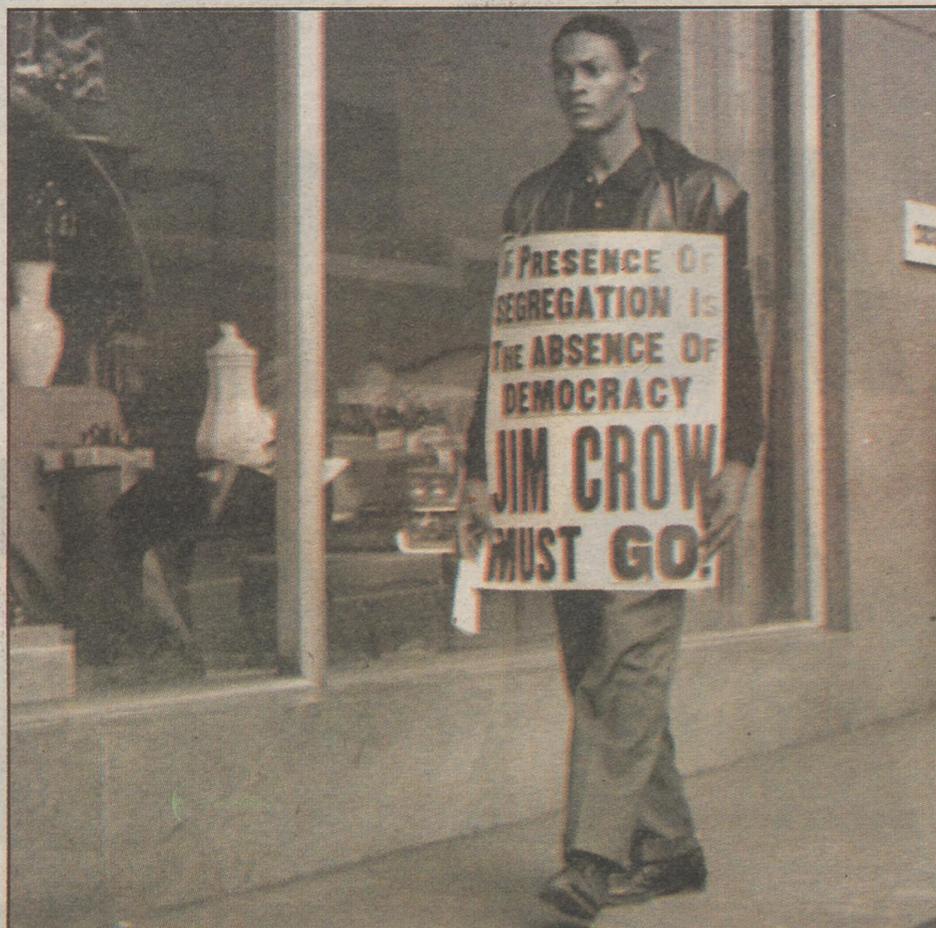
The constitution exists to protect our civil liberties and ensure equal treatment for all Texans. If the amendment is passed, an estimated 43,000 same-sex couples living in Texas will be permanently denied hundreds of state level protections and 1,138 federal rights that come with being married. As a result, many

Texas families will be denied health care, inheritance rights and the ability to make life-saving medical decisions. Not only does the amendment alienate GLBT Texans, it could also endanger their lives and the lives of their families.

The proposed amendment undermines the right of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Texans to equal protection under the law, a right granted to all Americans by the U.S. Constitution. A ban on marriage for same-sex couples does more than deny marriage rights– it declares GLBT people to be fundamentally second-class citizens undeserving of the same rights and protections as every other citizen.

Texas Sen. Rodney Ellis, a Democrat from Houston, compared the anti-gay amendment to the Jim Crow laws that legalized discrimination against African-Americans. "At least they had the good sense to never write their bigotry into the state Constitution," said Ellis.

IF PASSED, THE ANTI-GAY amendment will allow the constitution to be used as a weapon against targeted communities. This will open the door to the potential loss of protections for other minority groups, or the elderly, or whomever the legislature decides to put in their crosshairs. A threat to the civil liberties of any community is a threat to freedom for all communities. No citizen



stands to gain from an amendment that will write second-class citizenship into the state constitution.

The Texas constitution was not intended to promote one set of religious beliefs over another; instead, its purpose is to protect all Texans and their civil rights. As we discuss marriage equality in our communities, more and more Americans learn that families headed by same-sex couples need the same protections as every other family. This amendment forces that conversation to a halt.

The GLBT community has a responsibility to ourselves, our families, and our country to take action and fight this attempt to discriminate. We have to ensure that our constitution will be free of bias that sets one group of people apart from another.

November is just a few months away

and now is the time to educate your friends, your family and your neighbors about the amendment. Tell them that this not a theoretical debate – this is about real people. Tell them how your family is threatened or how this amendment threatens your dream of someday forming a family.

It is critical that we all join together to stop this attack on our rights and our families. Visit www.SaveOurConstitution.org to learn more about how you can make a difference in your future and the future of thousands of Texans.

@ Seth Kilbourn is vice president for the Human Rights Campaign's Marriage Project. He can be reached at 202-628-4160.

THE

Q Of the cities and countries that now allow same-sex marriage, where would move if you could and why?



Spain. The country, history, people and culture are so beautiful. The sense of family is strong, sense of self is passionate and self-respect is permanent. Religion is personal and not political as it should be!

GARY TEXIERA, 56
Houston
Retired



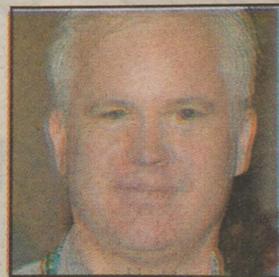
I would be a little biased and say Spain because of my ancestry. It is a beautiful country with a rich tradition, and now it is a place where you can be free to love.

ROBERTO REGÁS, 25
Houston
Student/tutor



Amsterdam. The freedom to openly love and claim my love.

SANDRA VARELA, 44
Houston
CTE



Canada. A beautiful country with beautiful people. Their culture is non-violent, and they are protective of their environment. They seem to have their priorities right, which is no surprise that they support same-sex marriage.

RON BEAGLE, 50
Houston
Owner, Rockport Solutions



Spain. It's a country of amazing beauty and surprisingly, a country of progressive attitudes and laws. What a perfect combination.

GARY BRISTOW 54
Houston
Medical I.T.

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Interviews and photos by Dalton DeHart

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eclipse

'Skin' deep
Joseph Gordon-Levitt stars in a film about boys abused by a coach that is making waves down under
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GAY HOUSTON NIGHTLIFE, ARTS & CULTURE

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JULY 22, 2005

it's not just camp, it's **Camp Camp**

A QUEER TAKE ON THE SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE

By BINNIE FISHER

S

ING-A-LONGS AROUND A CAMPFIRE, paddling across a scenic lake in a kayak and hiking through trails surrounded by tall pines is a scene that most adults probably attribute to their days at camp as a child.

Some adults mourn that fact that their parents never sent them off to summer camp or that the camp experience they had wasn't as fulfilling as the four-color brochures promised.

Gays and lesbians may look back and wonder what it would have been like to attend a summer camp that was made for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons.

Fast-forward to 2005, to a set of rustic cabins in a forest of pine trees near a lake in Maine that for a week in late summer is transformed into Camp Camp, where rainbow flags fly and where all campers have something in common.

The weeklong camp experience for gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons scheduled August 21-28 in Kezar Falls, Maine is all about replaying the summer camp experience with a gay twist.

Now in its ninth year, Camp Camp is the invention of Bill Cole, who came up with the idea of a gay summer camp as he was going through the coming-out process at age 49.

Cole, whose career has centered around marketing and strategic planning for educational institutions, said he had been married to his second wife for 12 years when he realized that something was amiss.

"I was happily married to a wonderful woman," he said. "After a series of depressions, it became apparent that I was avoiding something pretty major in my life."

That "something pretty major" was that he was gay.

Cole and his wife began the process of dissolving their married relationship. He helped her move to Boston and he recalled, "She put me on a ferry to Provincetown for my first excursion into gay life."

Provincetown was celebrating Carnival. It was definitely an introduction to gay life, but Cole returned home without having experienced much of it.

It was while attending a workshop about making dreams come true that Cole first dared to voice his idea for a summer camp for gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons.

As a former summer camp counselor and a volunteer for the American Camping Association, Cole had a good idea of the elements needed to launch a successful camp. Since most camps are for youths, Cole said his camp would need an additional element - beds long enough for adults.

Cole consulted with a friend in Maine who ran a camp for teenagers and presented his idea. The friend suggested that his camp would be available at the end of August that year.

So, in 1996, Cole had brochures printed up and began advertising Camp Camp in gay and lesbian publications.

"I had no idea who would come," Cole said. "I worried, would they all get along?"

NINE YEARS LATER, CAMP CAMP IS HOME FOR a week in late August each year to 200 to 215 campers who for the most part do get along.

Some first-time Camp-Campers show up terrified and unsure of what to expect.

"You have to be willing to give up your privacy for a week and live in cabins with six other people all sleep-



Please see **CAMP CAMP** on Page 19

i MORE INFO

Camp Camp
August 21-28
Kezar Falls, Maine
888-924-8380
www.campcamp.com

'GREY GARDENS': A 1975 documentary about Jackie O's eccentric aunt and cousin is a must-see. **Page 14**

AND THE AWARD: Awards are plentiful with GLADD Media Awards and the Emmys coming up. **Page 15**

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dvd JOHNNY HOOKS



The 1975 documentary, 'Grey Gardens,' takes viewers on a voyeuristic trip through the lives of two overly eccentric relatives of Jackie O.

Trip to 'Grey Gardens'

I RECENTLY GAVE UP MY Blockbuster card to finally join Netflix. The reasons are numerous but mainly the convenience of Netflix, coupled with the wide variety of films that are unavailable at traditional retailers.

The first film I ordered was a 1975 documentary called "Grey Gardens." I was first introduced to the movie through a song on Rufus Wainwright's 2001 album "Poses."

At the beginning of the song, a woman says, "It's very difficult to keep the line between the past and the present, ya know what I mean?" I had no idea what the song was about, but after some digging I found my answer.

In 1975 the Maysles brothers were up and coming documentary makers who had found success with their debut effort, "Gimme Shelter," which focused on the Rolling Stones.

"Grey Gardens" is the name of a formerly grand estate in Easthampton, New York belonging to Edith Bouvier Beale, an aunt of Jackie Bouvier Kennedy Onassis. The Maysles spent five weeks at Grey Gardens with "Big Edie" as she was known and her daughter, Edith Beale, "Little Edie."

The 28-room estate had fallen into a terrible state with no running water, hordes of fleas, multitudes of cats, raccoons and other creatures. The smell was apparently so vile that when the wind blew towards town, people were reported to have vomited.

Authorities in the Hamptons threatened to condemn the estate if not brought up to code. The news made the front page of the New York Times and ended up in newspapers around the world. An embarrassed Jackie convinced Ari Onassis to spend an estimated \$50,000 to bring it up to code.

As the film begins, viewers meet Little Edie as she greets the Maysles in the jungle-like yard of the house. The then 56-year-old Edie strikes a commanding pose.

Her outfit consists of a black sweater tied around her head like a turban, buttoned at the throat and held in place by a large golden dragonfly pin. Her skirt is a pair of brown pants tied up this way and that and held in place by several large safety pins. Underneath she wears hot-pant-type shorts, fishnet stockings and white high-heel shoes.

She announces that she is wearing her "revolutionary costume" and says, "I think this is the best costume for the day."

Big Edie, 85 at the time and in ill health, sits in chair calling for Little Edie, wearing nothing but a towel and sweat-shirt haphazardly draped over her body.

"Edie, Edie...yoo who...Edie! Have you



Little Edie Beale, a cousin of Jackie O, had a flair for fashion of her own making.

fed the cats?"

Little Edie was a beautiful young woman with aspirations of being a singer, dancer and a model. Black and white photos reveal her thin graceful body at debutante events.

LITTLE EDIE DONS OUTFIT AFTER outfit of her own "making," always wearing her signature golden dragonfly pin somewhere. Little Edie always wears something on her head because she is completely bald. The viewer is never given an explanation for her missing hair.

Big Edie stays mostly in a small room with filthy twin beds, piles of old records, a hotplate, a small refrigerator and scores of cats. Newspaper seems to serve as sheets.

Big Edie, as it turns out, recorded many songs onto thick LP's that she asks Little Edie to play as she sings along.

Her version of "Tea for Two" will have viewers in stitches or in tears mourning this once aristocratic woman's lost life.

After the first viewing I raced to my computer to see what other information I could find out about these two women, the house and their whereabouts now.

Hundreds of sites abound. "Grey Gardens" seems to have a huge gay following, beyond cult status that rivals that of Garland. Go to www.greygardens.com for the back story and news of what has taken place since the film.

Amazingly Little Edie's outrageous fashions have stood the test of time. Both Harper's Bazaar and Vogue have displayed multi-page spreads of fashion photos inspired by Little Edie.

On the Grey Gardens DVD, designer John Bartlett credits Edie's blue head towel/brown dress concoction as being the inspiration for one of his Fall 2000 designs.

The film is truly a marvel to behold. It's like watching a fiery car crash. There's no turning away.

television RHONDA SMITH



There are plenty of statues to go around between the GLAAD Media Awards on Logo and the latest Emmy nominations, which include a few gay twists.

Masters of ceremony

THE STRANGEST THING ABOUT THE GLAAD Media Awards is that not everyone is dressed very well. If the stereotype is that gay men are sartorial geniuses, then why is Carson Kressley from "Queer Eye" wearing a tux with pink pants that look like they were rejected from MC Hammer's wardrobe, circa 1995?

Logo, the new all gay cable channel, is airing the awards, which was produced by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation and took place in Los Angeles in April and in New York in March. Logo's first telecast is to air Sunday, July 24, at 9 p.m.

Comcast, the major cable carrier in the D.C. region, recently signed a deal to carry Logo. It is already available in many markets across the country and Comcast is rolling it out in all its other markets over the next 90 days. Metropolitan D.C. will get the channel, which will be included with some Comcast packages, within that window, but no fixed date has been set.

For a pre-recorded awards ceremony, the GLAAD Media Awards show makes for surprisingly good TV. GLAAD honors the best movies, TV shows, magazines and news specials that present positive images of gay men and lesbians. It's unclear how the nominees and winners are chosen, but it's still fun to watch a ceremony that is entirely our own.

Emotionally intense speeches by honorees Billy Crystal, Alan Cumming and Liza Minnelli make the show political as well as uplifting. Sure, it may be old news but some headlines are worth rereading.

MAKING HEADLINES ARE THIS YEAR'S list of Emmy nominees, which were announced last Thursday. Topping the list are NBC's "Will & Grace," a show about two gay men and their female friends, and ABC's "Desperate Housewives," a show created by a gay man, Marc Cherry. Both shows garnered 15 nominations. They go head-to-head in the best comedy category with CBS's "Everybody Loves Raymond," NBC's "Scrubs" and Fox's "Arrested Development," which co-stars Ellen DeGeneres' girlfriend, Portia de Rossi.

"Housewives" conquered the comedy

actress category though, with Marcia Cross, Teri Hatcher and Felicity Huffman all getting nods for their roles on the show. "Raymond's" Patricia Heaton, a past winner, and Fox's "Malcolm in the Middle" star Jane Kaczmarek round out the category, ousting "W&G's" Debra Messing.

All the other show's actors also were nominated: Eric McCormack, who plays Will on "Will & Grace," for lead actor, alongside "Scrubs" star Zach Braff, "Raymond's" Ray Romano, "Arrested's" Jason Bateman, and Tony Shalhoub from the USA Network's cable program "Monk."

Megan Mullally, who portrays Karen on "Will & Grace," received an Emmy nomination for best supporting actress, along with "Arrested's" Jessica Walter, "Raymond's" Doris Roberts and Evelyn Harper, and Conchata Ferrell from CBS's "Two and a Half Men." Sean Hayes, who plays Jack on "Will & Grace," was nominated for best supporting actor, alongside "Raymond's" Peter Boyle and Brad Garrett, "Arrested's" Jeffrey Tambor, and Jeremy Piven from HBO's "Entourage."

"W&G" better win the comedy guest actor category, where Victor Garber, Jeff Goldblum, Bobby Cannavale and Alec Baldwin are all nominated for their turns on the show. The only other possibility is Fred Willard doing a stint on "Raymond."

A big disappointment was HBO's gay-inclusive drama "Six Feet Under," which has gotten many nominations but few wins in past seasons. This year among the major awards, the show only netted a nod for best drama — competing against HBO's "Deadwood," ABC's "Lost," Fox's "24" and NBC's "The West Wing" — and a lead actress nomination for Frances Conroy, who plays mother Ruth Fischer.

Gay director George C. Wolfe got an Emmy nod for his gay-inclusive, made-for-TV movie "Lackawanna Blues," which aired earlier this year on HBO. The movie as a whole is nominated with HBO's "The Life and Death of Peter Sellers" and "Warm Springs," TNT's "The Wool Cap," and BBC America's "The Office Special." Wolfe is also nominated in the directing category.

S. Epatha Merkerson, who plays the lead role in "Lackawanna," is nominated for the lead actress in a movie category. Other Emmy nominations in this category include gay actress Cynthia Nixon (playing gay icon Eleanor Roosevelt) in "Warm Springs," Halle Berry in "Their Eyes Were Watching God," Debra Winger in "Dawn Anna" and Blythe Danner in "Back When We Were Grownups."

Performance in a musical or variety program is an especially gay category,



Gay icon Liza Minnelli gave an impassioned performance after receiving the Vanguard Award at the GLAAD Media Awards recently. The show is scheduled to air on Logo, the gay cable channel, this week. (Photo courtesy of Logo)

featuring gay faves Whoopi Goldberg and Tracey Ullman for their one-woman shows that aired on HBO, Hugh Jackman for hosting the oh-so-gay Tony awards ceremony on CBS, NBC's late-night host Jay Leno, and Comedy Central's gay-friendly "The Daily Show" host Jon Stewart.

"The Daily Show" is also nominated for best variety, music or comedy series with gay-inclusive "Da Ali G Show" on HBO, the gay-supportive HBO political roundtable "Real Time with Bill Maher," NBC's "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," and CBS' "Late Show with David Letterman."

"Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" tries to repeat its win in the reality program category, this time competing against PBS' "Antiques Roadshow," Showtime's

"Penn & Teller: Bullshit," ABC's gay-inclusive "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," and Bravo's "Project Greenlight."

Another Bravo project, the surprise hit "Project Runway," which included several gay contestants, including the show's winner Jay McCarroll, is up in the competitive reality show category along with CBS' "Survivor," which featured three gay castaways in its last two seasons, "The Amazing Race," which included a gay couple on its last season on CBS, Fox's "American Idol," and NBC's "The Apprentice."

Showtime's lesbian drama "The L Word" received one nomination, a posthumous nod in the guest drama/guest actor category for Ossie Davis, who portrayed Melvin Porter, Bette and Kit's father.

i MORE INFO

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music **ARMAN D. REYES**



Nikka Costa returns with funky sophomore effort that showcases her ability to easily float between rock, soul, funk and R&B.

The crossover queen

2001 WAS A GOOD YEAR FOR introducing hungry listeners to some of the most dynamic new voices in music. Acts like Craig David, Dido, Alicia Keys and Nelly Furtado made huge impacts both radio and video rotations while churning out massive record sales back then.

In the same year, another act would make her own splash in that sea of over-achievers — enough so to nab a nomination for MTV's coveted "Best New Artist" award and a nod for VH1's "Best Kept Secret." The song was "Like A Feather," and the artist was Nikka Costa.

Now Costa returns with her sophomore effort "can'tneverdidnothin'," an album that only perpetuates her role as the funkier white girl in music today.

What makes Costa so unique is her ability to effortlessly float between rock, soul, funk and R&B.

The album's pole position track, "Till I get to You," pulsates with a head-nodding funk and infectious bass groove that could have been written by Lenny Kravitz circa "Are you Gonna Go My Way?" The formula reappears toward the end of the CD with "On and On," which features ripping electric guitar riffs that would make Joan Jett jealous.

Costa tries her hand on slower tempos with "Fooled ya' Baby" and "I Gotta Know," both of which pass the fickle fan test with flying colors.

The lyrical content isn't exactly revolutionary; it mentions being broken-hearted and/or feeling distanced from a loved one. But listeners should easily be convinced by the passionate tones in Costa's voice.

Fans of Joss Stone, beware: You'll easily fall in love with this track and may even second-guess your allegiance to the 17-year-old phenom.

ANOTHER FAST FAVORITE FROM THE disc is "Around the World," not to be confused with the song of the same title by Daft Punk a few years back. This track serves up a bouncy vibe complete with an interesting blend of violins and bass guitar. First listens demand a rewind, but after the second or third run through, a definite fondness develops.

The album's funk and soul is epito-



Fans of Lenny Kravitz, Macy Gray, Mary J. Blige, Joss Stone and Anastacia should flip over **Nikka Costa's** sophomore effort, 'can'tneverdidnothin'.'

mized in "Swing it Around," which sounds like a throwback to Sly Stone tinged with the vocals of Teena Marie. Costa then goes tribal with "Funkier than a Mosquita's Tweeter," which starts off with only her voice over layered percussions, then with subtle breaks from that ever-present bass guitar.

The slick style that made "Like A Feather" so popular back in 2001 is reprised in "Happy in the Morning." Costa throws every trick she has in one bag. The voice, fun synths, cool flashback vibe and rock 'n' roll touch are all present throughout the track, which stands the best chance on the album to hit the airwaves.

Fans of Lenny Kravitz, Macy Gray, Mary J. Blige, Anastacia, Joss Stone and Prince should all flip over Nikka Costa's "can'tneverdidnothin'."

Trust. This disc will be part of 2005's essential summer soundtrack.

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nitelife JOHNNY HOOKS



South Beach is four years old, Rich's also celebrates, 'Tamalalia' begins final run, and 'Honky Tonk Angels' at Stages.

Happy Birthday SOBE

RAIN, RAIN GO AWAY! FIRST THE driest June on record, now a wet and humid July! Remind me why I live in Houston again? Actually there are plenty of reasons as you will read below.

LET'S BEGIN WITH SOME NIGHTCLUB news. This weekend **South Beach** turns four years old and the whole of Pacific Street is having a party. **Saturday**, SOBE offers \$1 vodka cocktails from 9 till 11, \$4.50 for all UV Vodka and Red Bull Cocktails throughout the night, free non-alcoholic beverages from 2:30 a.m. until 3:30 a.m. for after hours and free Red Bull, Gatorade, bottled water, juices and soda. You can also pick up your free Sunday pass for the new "Beach Party" from your fave Pacific Street bartender. Did you know **Wednesdays** at JR's is **Aussie Bum Underwear Night** with great giveaways from MaleUWear? Now you do. Congratulations to **Charles, Kofi, Jim McDermaid** and the crew for four fabulous years. www.southbeachthenightclub.com.

RICH'S IS ALSO CELEBRATING THE SOBE birthday! Stop by **Friday** and **Saturday** wearing a SOBE armband and Rich's will buy your first cocktail and let you in **free!** **Sunday's** at Rich's continue to draw crowds to the original pool party, starting at 2:30 p.m. Enter through the patio, bring a towel and some flip flops and find out why this event grows each week. HotGG can tell you that wasn't all that was growing there last Sunday! 713-759-9606 or www.Rich's-Houston.com.

AS THEY SAY, AND NOW FOR something completely different! Actually it's a couple of things for you and yours to do.

FIRST, SHEEEES BAAACK! THE hilarious **Tamarie Cooper** returns with her final installment of **Tamalalia**. Sad but true, the longest running original musical series in Houston is coming to an end. But you have plenty of time to see it. **Tamalalia 10** runs through September 3 at the Axiom. This retrospective has 17 original musical numbers, an appearance by Papa Smurf and the "Bacon Ballet." Thursday's through Saturday's through September 3 at 8 p.m. Special show times are at 10:30 p.m. July 30, and August 6, 20 and 27. Prices range from \$12 to \$17. The Axiom is located at 2524 McKinney. Call 713-522-8443 or go to www.infernalbridegroom.com for all the dish!

ARE YOU IN THE MEDICAL profession? This is for you. The M. D. Anderson Cancer Center **GLBT Network Mixer** will be **Friday, July 22,**

HoVo on the go-go

beginning at 5:30 p.m. at **Meteor**, located at 2306 Genesee St. The mixer is for MDACC GLBT Network members, their friends, and other Texas Medical Center employees.

THEATRE NEW WEST IS LOOKING for actors for its upcoming production of "Bent." Martin Sherman's international hit play "Bent" premiered in London in 1979. The production portrays Nazi persecution of homosexuals during the Holocaust. The production is being revived for five performances (possibly more) the last half of September, again at Holocaust Museum Houston. The production will feature most all of the original cast from last fall, except for the roles of Horst and Wolf. The role of Horst, a lead role, calls for an attractive male actor 25-35 with at least a reasonably trim physique. The role of Wolf calls for a very attractive and well-built male actor 25-35. There is compensation! To set an audition time to read with original cast actors call Artistic Director **Joe Watts** at 713-522-2204.

RATHER SEE A PLAY THAN BE IN one? Here ya go! See "**Honky Tonk Angels**," a country western musical featuring three country crooners. **Sunday** at **Stages Theater**, 3201 Allen Parkway. Doors and bar open at 2 p.m. and play begins at 3 p.m. Ticket price is \$40 and includes **open bar** including cocktails and mimosas. This BCBC event benefits **The Center for AIDS** with tickets available online at www.bcbc.org or from any BCBC member.

FINALLY THIS WEEK, **KATIE** Glover, administrator of the website www.trannyweb.com announces the launch of www.trannybay.com.

"Trannybay" is an auction site by and for the transgender community with no listing fee. Check it out!

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

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There's a Fine Line Between Telling the Truth and Talking Trash

Under your 'Skin'

Aussies want to ban gay movies, rock star loves Brad Pitt and the Village People's cop gets arrested

It's funny that a little gay movie is making big waves in the homeland of gay Mardi Gras and the sexiest lifeguards in the world. Yes, Australia is having a little controversy surrounding "Mysterious Skin," the recently released film about two boys molested by their Little League coach and how they deal with the problem later in life.

Gay auteur GREGG ARAKI directed the film, which stars JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT as a gay hustler living in Kansas.

Before its debut down under next month, the Australian government's Office of Film & Literature Classification, which metes out the official ratings for films, gave the flick a R18+, comparable to our NC-17, which the voluntary Motion Picture Association of America also slapped it with here. It also has to be listed with the "consumer advice" that the movie contains "adult themes, strong sexual violence and medium-level sex scenes."

The Aussie government office called the film "a serious and legitimate exploration of a disturbing and confronting theme."

The Sydney Morning Herald reported that federal Attorney General Philip Ruddock has petitioned to have the rating challenged, possibly bumping it up to an X18+, which means it would be considered pornography and only available in retail stores and theaters where such materials can be shown.

Apparently, the conservative Australian Family Association spearheaded this review.

"Being able to get hold legally of a DVD where they can play the scene over and over again, showing the adult baseball coach fellating an 8-year-old boy ... could prove very helpful to some pedophiles," AFA spokesperson Richard Egan told the Herald.

Margaret Pomeranz from the Australian Watch on Censorship shared another view.

"This film is about the damage pedophilia creates," she told the Herald. "Pedophiles could watch this film and be stricken by remorse. It could be a pedophile-curing film."

Cruise missile

Last week, Dish heard the rumor that TOM CRUISE, who is not gay but may be a bit wacky, was caught in bed with Matchbox 20 lead singer ROB THOMAS, who was reported to be a Scientologist. Rumormongers think this is what spurned Cruise to recruit his new



Joseph Gordon-Levitt stars as a gay male hustler who was abused by his Little League coach as a boy in 'Mysterious Skin,' a gay-related film that some Australians want to ban. (Photo courtesy of TLA Releasing)

fiancée, KATIE HOLMES.

Some stories had the man-on-man

action being witnessed by Thomas' wife, while others had them in bed with a giraffe and a chimpanzee.

But, of course, these rumors are all bunk.

Thomas told the World Entertainment News Network that



Rob Thomas

he is not gay and, more importantly, that he is not a Scientologist.

"If I were gay, Tom wouldn't be on the top of my list. It would be BRAD PITT," he said. "I'm more offended by the rumors saying I'm a Scientologist."

It takes a village

Victor Edward Willis, the original cop from the campy disco group THE VILLAGE PEOPLE, was arrested early last week in Daly City, Calif.

The Associated Press reported that police stopped his car because Willis was wanted on a \$15,000 felony warrant for possession of narcotics. In the car, they found a loaded gun, crack cocaine and drug paraphernalia. He posted \$100,000 bail and was released the day after his arrest and will be arraigned on Aug. 16.



Victor Edward Willis

This isn't his first skirmish with the law. Willis was charged with drug possession in 1990.



Send comments, suggestions to
Dish@houstonvoice.com

eclipse cover story

Camp Camp provides camp activities with a gay bent

CAMP CAMP, continued from Page 13

ing in bunk beds," he said. "That's a big deal for some people."

It's a co-ed camp, and Cole said especially among gays and lesbians, that may require a willingness to be open.

"I mean, grow up," he said.

Sometimes, he said, campers go away having had what they consider to be life-changing experiences.

Gay men who have not been around lesbians and lesbians who don't want to interact with men are among the biggest issues. Cole said he has seen gay men go home in tears because they've had to leave their newfound lesbian friends.

In the past eight years, he said, only two campers have gone home before the end of the week.

"One of those left in the middle of the night," Cole said. "For him, it was a socialization issue."

He's had lesbians call excited about the camp only to balk after learning that Camp Camp is a co-ed experience.

For the most part, he said, campers enjoy one another and find lifelong friends at Camp Camp.

For anyone who wanted to go to camp as a child but never had the opportunity, Camp Camp leaves out few of the typical camp activities

Morning opportunities include aerobics, swimming and time for meditation. Campers choose to spend their late mornings and afternoons negotiating an adventure course, wall climbing, playing basketball, canoeing and kayaking, creating crafts such as wire baskets, stained glass, pottery and jewelry.

There are lessons in photography, filmmaking, fishing, tennis, massage and yoga. There's also mountain biking, hiking, sailing, windsurfing, soccer and softball.

EVENING ACTIVITIES INCLUDE square dancing, a tea dance and pajama party, a talent/no talent show and a karaoke lounge.

Those staying up late have the opportunity to sit around a campfire and share songs and stories, to take a guided late night hike or go stargazing.

"One of the things we do every year is tie-dye T-shirts," Cole said.

Cole added that the closing campfire is always an emotional event. Camp Camp ends appropriately with a brunch.

For the last few years, Houston caterer and chef Jim Benton has served as chef for the camp. Instead of mac and cheese, he serves cous-cous. He provides vegetarian meals for those who request them.

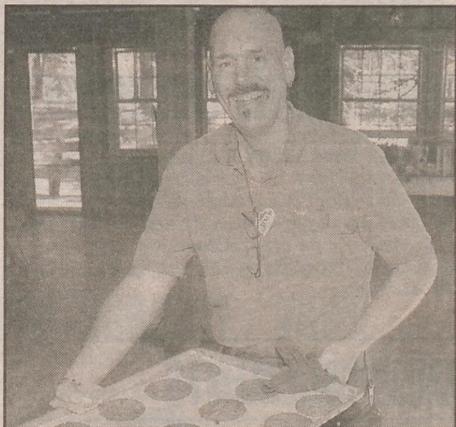
Cole said food tends toward healthy, and Benton manages to work magic each year with the budget he's given.

"It's simple, wholesome cuisine with lots of vegetables," Cole said. "We tend to downplay fat."

Directions to Camp Camp and other per-



Bill Cole founded Camp Camp nine years ago as part of his coming-out process.



Camp Camp chef Jim Benton, who owns a Houston catering business, bakes several batches of cookies on oversized trays to satisfy the sweet tooth of



Houston Chef Jim Benton and Kay Gabel, also from Houston, stir up a big batch of cous-cous for dinner at Camp Camp. (All photos by Dalton DeHart)

inent information are available on the Web site. Because of location, Cole said, many campers are from the northeast, but some come from as far away as the West Coast. Each year, he said, he can usually count on having about 28 states represented.

"It's meant to be a happy, light time outside," Cole said. "For people who have not been here before, it's like a fantasy or a dream."

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bitch session



It's not easy being a gorgeous male sex goddess, but someone had to bloody do it.

IF YOU "LOVE" SOMEONE BUT HATE the things that make him who he is, you don't love him at all.

WOULD SOME PLEASE EXPLAIN GAY male "culture" to me? You're supposed to look butch and have the physique of a competition bodybuilder but love queeny, disco-diva music.

WHAT IS IT YOUR BUSINESS WHAT my status is? What — besides being a polite conversationalist — led you to believe that I wanted private time with you?

ALTHOUGH SLIGHTLY REPULSED BY "Bitch Session," I end up reading it occasionally, hoping one day someone will end my disillusionment with the gay community. Unfortunately, nothing has changed.

ARE YOUR PARENTS, SIBLINGS OR relatives stressing you out because you are gay? You can't choose your relatives, but you can choose your family.

HEY YOU 30 TO 40-YEAR-OLD MEN: Look around next time you're at Abercrombie; most of the shoppers there are escorted by their parents. Shop within your own age range.

JUST BECAUSE I DON'T DATE LOSERS doesn't mean I'm a stuck up bitch. **BITCH BOY RESPONDS:** Here's guessing there are no shortage of reasons for reaching that conclusion about you.

ATHLETIC TRANSLATES TO HEIGHT and weight proportionate.

TO ALL YOU GUYS WHO HAVE "neg only" in your profiles or will only talk to someone who says they are HIV-negative: Stop making your personal responsibility someone else's problem.

STOP ACTING DESPERATE JUST because you're getting close to 40. I'm in my late 30s and loving it.

TO THOSE WHO WEAR SLEEVELESS shirts: Trim your armpits. It looks like

you could start a comb-over from there.

SOME OF US WEAR THOSE "TIRED yellow bands" for our family members who are dealing with cancer; not for trendiness, you superficial jerk.

IF SOMEONE DECLINES YOUR advances, just leave them alone and don't bounce from friend to friend in their group. Get a clue, especially if they move away from you multiple times.

ALL THE HOTTEST MEN IN HOLLYWOOD today — Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt and Russell Crowe, to name a few — are over 40. So you ageist queens who think life ends after 30 need to shut up and sit down.

STOP DUMPING ON BEAUTIFUL queer people for ignoring you! Last time I checked, being ugly wasn't an impediment to success. In fact, it's the trolls with money who seem to keep the lion's share of hot guys.

HOW CAN BLACK MEN DATE OUT OF their race and not treat each other right?

QUEER COMMUNITY LEADERS: YOU can attract and retain people willing to do hard work, or you can run your organization as a social club for your clique of popular people. But you can't do both.

YES, THERE ARE PLENTY OF GAY MEN who are neither wannabe thugs nor junkies. We're the ones who are instantly written off for being "not really gay."

TO THE PERSON WHO COMPLAINED about every lesbian she meets: try finding a different place to meet them.

STRAIGHT GIRLS GO TO GAY CLUBS because they can be as obnoxious, sleazy or as drunk as they want without fear that a straight man will take control. Unfortunately, some straight men have caught on and go to gay clubs looking to score.

WHY IS IT FUNNY TO SEE GAY MEN decide what constitutes a "real man" when straight men not only arrogantly think they can do that but also think they know what it constitutes to be a gay man?

WHY DOES GAY LIFE ALWAYS SEEM to revolve around either a gym or a bar? You faggots need to get out more and expand your horizons!

GIRLS CAN WEAR ANY FREAKIN' thing they want and their sexuality is seldom an issue, which is more than any man can say.

I'M SO SICK OF QUEENS WHO SAY they don't do chocolate, but when their racist friends aren't looking, they try to buy the entire Hershey factory.

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

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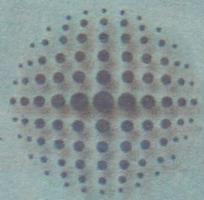
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