

Gay Houstonian Susan Jackson, who is deaf, helps lead the way to offer sign language interpretations of theater productions.  
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### INSIDE



Long-time gay activist Bill Agosta died this week after being struck by a car near his Houston Heights home.

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Senior political correspondent Lisa Keen questions President George W. Bush's proposed 2003 budget.

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Houston gay playwright Fernando Dovalina's 'The Man in the Trunk' both entertains and disappoints on stage.

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## City's AIDS rate up 39 percent

Health officials: Part of significant rise due to increase in testing

by PENNY WEAVER

Health officials agree that a newly reported rise in the number of AIDS cases in Houston may be partly due to an increase in testing, but they list apathy as another reason more people have contracted the disease.

"People have let their guard down, certainly," said Joel Martinez, a founding director of Center for AIDS. "I think that people are not practicing safe sex."

The city's AIDS rate has climbed nearly 39 percent while the rest of the country seems to be on the decline, according to a study released late last week by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

The estimates, which counted the rate of new cases between June 2000 and June 2001, showed that 275 new

> Continued on Page 6



Health leaders say an increase in AIDS testing — often done by drawing the patient's blood — may be one reason behind a sharp rise in the number of Houstonians with AIDS.

## Rights of gay partners may fall short



More than 300 bodies have been discovered on the grounds of Tri-State Crematory in Noble, Ga., a case that highlights the difficulties gay partners may have in tracking down details of a deceased partner if they don't put in place legal protections, according to gay legal experts.

As bodies uncovered in North Georgia, one gay man struggles to find out details of deceased partner

by JENNIFER J. SMITH

In late 1998, Chris Bondurant thought he had it all — a job he enjoyed, a boyfriend who was successfully living with AIDS and had agreed to marry him, and a loving family.

But things changed quickly as boyfriend Christopher Blankenship was admitted to an Atlanta hospital and soon died.

Bondurant's outpouring of grief pushed his family to admit him to a mental health facility. In the meantime, Blankenship's family, who disapproved of their gay son, returned his body to Chattanooga, Tenn., where they lived, keeping details on his cremation from Bondurant and his friends.

Now Bondurant is haunted by a new

> Continued on Page 7

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# Agosto: Gay Americans should wield voting power

*Editor's note: The following letter was written by Bill Agosto prior to the Feb. 25 elections for Stonewall Democrats of Houston officers. Agosto was competing to be president of the group, and outlined his belief in activism for gays.*

If every American GLBT did their minimal civic duty like voting and communicating with our representatives in government, we'd get everything we want.

You name it: employment nondiscrimination, repeal of the sodomy statutes, even gay marriage would be ours in short order.

Voter participation has dropped almost 20 percent since the 1970s. Trouble is, when you drop your political clout, the opposition appropriates your power and uses it against you. That's why American conservatives have become so powerful over the past 25 years.

The good news is the big bad American government is just a myth because everybody has a voice. The system works if you work it. But you must speak up.

A case in point is the recent passage

of campaign finance reform by the Congress. A combination of the public outcry over the scandalous collapse of Enron, freedom of the press, and congressional investigative power has revived the Shays Meehan campaign finance reform bill that all the pundits pronounced dead just a few months ago. It now appears very likely the bill will pass in the Senate because it's virtually identical to the McCain Feingold campaign finance reform bill the Senate passed last year.

If so, it will be very hard for President Bush to veto it. And that's all happened on public demand.

Gays are in an especially strong position. We are potentially the most powerful American minority because we cut across all social divisions. We represent every race, every religion, every ethnicity, every persuasion, every profession, every economic division, every institution public and private, every gender, and every family everywhere.

If we harnessed our collective strength, we would be unbeatable. Get involved. Start making a difference.

## Obituary

**Bill Agosto, 69, retired  
NASA engineer**

William Neville Agosto, 69, of Houston died Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2002, as a result of injuries he received after being struck by a car while walking near his home Monday evening.

A memorial service will be 2 p.m. Sunday at the First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin.

Agosto was born on March 24, 1932, in New Jersey. He relocated to Houston in 1981 to serve as the principal scientist for Lockheed Engineering & Management Services, a NASA contractor. He established a laboratory at Johnson Space Center to study industrial properties of lunar materials. Later in his career, he was a consultant for Lunar Industries, studying processes to extract oxygen from lunar materials.

A well-known gay activist, Agosto was a multi-term trustee for the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus; a charter member and founding trustee of the Henry David Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Stafford; a sought-after speaker at Unitarian congregations in the area; a member of Stonewall Democrats of Houston; and



**Bill Agosto**

heavily involved in several Houston political campaigns.

In 1972, as an electronic engineer, Agosto challenged the Department of Defense when it denied him security clearance to work on classified projects because he was gay. Agosto won the four-year battle with the help of Frank Kameny, a well-known gay advocate in Washington, D.C.

Survivors include his brother, Gonzalo A. Agosto and wife May of Westfield, N.J.; one nephew; two nieces; and numerous friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents and one nephew.

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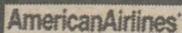
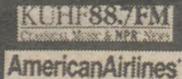
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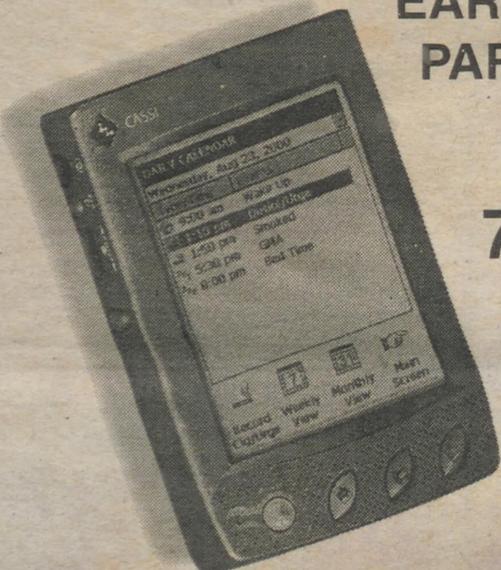
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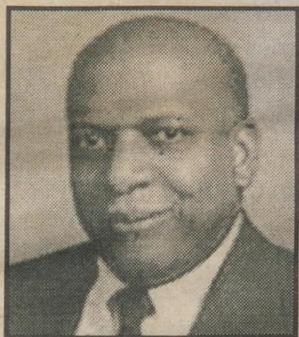
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## Workplace bias bill moves forward with hearing

WASHINGTON — Executives with the Eastman Kodak Company and the Fleet Boston Financial Corporation joined an official with the AFO-CIO at a Senate hearing Wednesday in giving a ringing endorsement of a bill that would ban employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. "It's unmistakably clear that the goal here is to have individuals judged on merit rather than prejudice or stereotype," said Robert L. Berman, Kodak's vice president and director of human resources, in testimony before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions. Lawrence Lane, a Long Island, N.Y., business manager, also testified in favor of the legislation. Lane has charged in a lawsuit that he was fired by a carpet manufacturing company based on his sexual orientation. Lane said he had worked in the New York City branch office of the Dalton, Ga.-based Collins & Aikman Floorcoverings, Inc. Because the firm operated in New York City, which has a gay civil rights law, Lane had legal jurisdiction to file suit based on sexual orientation discrimination. "I hope that hearing about what happened to me helps others to realize that there are many gay people who simply have no protection," Lane told the committee. Republican members of the Senate panel chose not to present any witnesses who oppose ENDA. Sponsors hope to send the legislation, known as ENDA, to the Senate floor later this month.

## Ala. Senate committee passes hate crime measure



A bill sponsored by Alabama state Sen. Rodger Smitherman would expand the state's hate crime law to cover sexual orientation.

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — A state Senate committee split along party lines Feb. 21 in voting to expand Alabama's hate crime law to cover a crime committed because of a victim's sexual orientation. Six Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee voted for the bill, and five Republicans voted against it. The bill, sponsored by Democratic Sen. Rodger Smitherman, now goes to the Senate for consideration. The committee's vote came three years after a gay Sylacauga man, Billy Jack Gaither, was beaten to death and his body burned. Two men were convicted of capital murder and are serving life in prison without parole. Alabama law mandates minimum mandatory sentences for crimes motivated by race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, or physical or mental disability. Senate Republican leader Jabo Waggoner of Vestavia Hills said he objects to hate crime legislation because it creates a special class of people by enhancing the punishment for crimes against them.

## Maine may add 12th city with gay rights law

WESTBROOK, Maine — Westbrook would become the 12th community in Maine to adopt a gay rights ordinance under a proposal up for consideration by the City Council, AP reported. The measure would ban discrimination in employment, housing and at public accommodations based on a person's sexual orientation. Resident Susan Gilpin, who is heterosexual and the pastor of Prides' Corner Congregational Church, is leading the push for the proposal, according to the Portland Press Herald. Gilpin told the Press Herald she felt compelled to take action after the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. "If we are going to praise him, we need to pick up the torch and run with it." The measure would mirror the statewide gay rights law that was overturned by voters in November 2000, according to AP. Gilpin brought the matter to City Council Chairman Jim Violette, who referred it to a panel of councilors that will begin deliberating in March.

## Calif. high school teacher loses harassment case

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. (AP) — A San Mateo County high school teacher failed to convince a jury that two other teachers had sexually harassed her because she is a lesbian. In a 9-3 vote on Feb. 21, the jury's verdict found the two teachers did not harass Teresa "Tere" Curl. She was fired from Menlo-Atherton High School in March 2000 after teacher Alan Ida discovered a gun in Curl's classroom. Curl, 43, sued Ida and teacher Al Ramirez, along with the Sequoia Union High School District, for harassment after the incident. She claimed Ramirez and Ida called her derogatory names and taunted her with sexually explicit gestures. She accused the district of ignoring the harassment. School district officials said they were not aware of the complaints until after a .22-caliber pistol was discovered in Curl's classroom. Curl, who wanted \$300,000 in damages for emotional distress, was upset with the decision but said she didn't have any regrets. Curl's lawyer, Sally Mitchell, has said she will appeal the decision.

## Gay-straight alliance approved in Calif. city

CLOVIS, Calif. (AP) — The Clovis Unified School Board has approved creation of a gay-straight alliance club despite threats that parents will pull their children out of the district. Jerry Behrens, school district attorney, said lawsuits could have been filed against the district if the club was not approved. State laws say the district cannot discriminate against a student or student organization on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religious belief or sexual identity. Supporters say the club promotes tolerance and equality among students of varying sexual orientations. Opponents say it promotes homosexuality and has no place in the schools. Gay-Straight Alliance will be the first club of its kind in the Clovis district.

— From staff and wire reports



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# Blacks make up most of HIV infections

➤ Continued from Page 1

cases contributed to an average of 21.2 cases per 100,000 people in the Harris County area.

That's up from 15.3 cases per 100,000 the previous year, according to the study. But it also showed that the rate in U.S. metropolitan areas declined overall.

Ahmed Adu-Oppong, director of Thomas Street Clinic, which offers free AIDS testing, said a reason for the rise might be increased testing after Mayor Lee Brown declared a "State of Emergency" in 1999 to raise AIDS awareness in the black community.

The declaration came after reports that blacks made up more than 60 percent of all new HIV infections in Harris County, the Associated Press reported.

After Brown sounded the alarm, drug companies paired with Houston agencies to provide AIDS testing.

"We're not going to see that kind of increase next year, provided we continue the awareness campaign," Adu-Oppong said, the AP reported. "If you can test them in early stages of infection and get them into care, it will take a longer time before they enter the

AIDS category."

Martinez agreed that a rise in testing likely contributed to the increase in reported cases of AIDS, but he said there is a "level of frustration," particularly among gay men, when it comes to preventing the disease.

Many young gays are less concerned about AIDS, and many other gay men simply do not practice safe sex all the time, he said.

"That's a real dramatic increase," Martinez said of the CDC's findings. "I don't know that it's solely increased testing. I would be surprised if it's just that."

"There's also been some recent studies in general that show that most of the people who present for care are presenting late for care," he added. "That really to me would say that it is really an increased incidence."

Eric Roland, director of education for the Montrose Clinic, which provides services including AIDS education and treatment, also noted that health officials have seen more patients come in for treatment when the disease already has progressed to full-blown AIDS.

Katy Caldwell, executive director of

Montrose Clinic, agreed that the increase in testing is likely a main reason behind the rise in incidents of AIDS in Houston.

"I think that's a big part of it," she said. "I think you might see a smaller increase [next year]. I think it's going to level off somewhat."

Across the nation, metropolitan areas with the highest AIDS rates saw significant declines, according to the CDC report. New York City's AIDS rate per 100,000 fell to 49.4 from 67.4. San Francisco dropped to 39.9 from 52.1.

Miami's rate increased by nearly 4 percent, to 60.1 AIDS cases per 100,000 people.

The CDC said AIDS has declined in most populations, but increases were seen in some groups, including women and people infected through heterosexual contact.

"In AIDS by ethnicity and year of diagnosis, we have seen blacks climbing and fairly dramatically, Hispanics climbing less dramatically, and whites going down dramatically over the years," said Kathy Barton, spokeswoman for the Houston Department of Health and Human Services.

Blacks make up 34 percent of AIDS cases in Houston, Hispanics 15 percent, she said.

In HIV infections, 59 percent are black, 25 percent are white and 16 percent are Hispanic.

—The Associated Press contributed to this story.

## INFO

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# Protect rights before death, experts say

➤ Continued from Page 1

fear: Was his boyfriend taken to Tri-State Crematorium in Noble, Ga., the site in North Georgia that received national attention when it was discovered more than 300 bodies had been buried and dumped around the property, rather than cremated, over several years?

Tri-State served funeral homes in several states, including Georgia and Tennessee.

"I haven't been able to make sure Christopher wasn't taken to Tri-State Crematorium," Bondurant said. "I can't sleep. The not knowing is going to drive me crazy."

Bondurant's search for answers is similar to the plight of hundreds of other families who are flooding emergency workers in Walker County, home to Tri-State Crematorium, with calls in an attempt to discover whether the bodies of their loved ones were dumped somewhere at the facility.

But unlike most, Bondurant is gay, a factor that is complicating his quest and highlights the difficulties, according to gay legal experts, that surviving gay spouses have if they don't have legal documents in place to protect themselves.

"I'm not legally family. They're telling me I have to have the documentation that Christopher's family barred me from to be able to determine if he is one of those already identified," Bondurant said. "Who should have more right to determine what

happened to him — his family who ostracized him right out of Tennessee, or me, who loved him and accepted him?"

## Searching for answers

Authorities involved with the Tri-State Crematorium investigation said they don't have in place a process to help gay spouses.

"We don't have any specific system set up to help gay and lesbian partners right now if they were not the ones to have the body cremated," said Ken Davis, a spokesperson for the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, the Atlanta-based state agency overseeing clean-up operations at Tri-State.

Davis said most families are tracking whether their loved ones were taken to Tri-State through information provided on a death certificate, which requires crematoriums to be listed, or calling the funeral home the family used.

Bondurant said he has neither piece of information. Blankenship's family could not be reached for comment.

"We were together over a year and a half. We were completely dedicated to each other. We had planned on spending the rest of our lives together, and now I'm having problems even finding out if his body is among those left out there to rot," Bondurant said.

Other agencies involved in the cremato-

ry case — including the American Red Cross, which has sent volunteers and counselors to the area — said requests for tracking down loved ones have yet to include gay men or lesbians.

"We've dealt with hundreds of people so far, but to my knowledge we haven't dealt with any gays or lesbians looking for loved ones," said Bill Maddox, director of external communications for the American Red Cross. "I can't imagine that the system would be any different for them, though."

## The rights of gay couples

Officials with gay rights groups like the Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund said they have not received any complaints from gays or lesbians.

"But it's probably just a matter of time," said Greg Nevins, a staff attorney in Lambda's Southern Regional office in Atlanta. "Gay couples will have a harder time finding information and might be denied access. It's something we're tracking and researching."

In addition to maintaining control of the body after death, gay couples should take steps to be able to make life and death decisions in the hospital and establish a durable power of attorney, said Georgia State University law professor Mary Radford.

"Everyone should have a will stating

what they want to happen to their body and who they want to handle it," said Radford, a wills and trusts instructor. "But an even better document is the durable health care power of attorney, where you appoint someone to make medical decisions for you."

Same-sex couples should also make arrangements for burial or cremation before a partner dies and meet with funeral directors with their partner present, she said.

"Prepaid plans are much more difficult to change," Radford said.

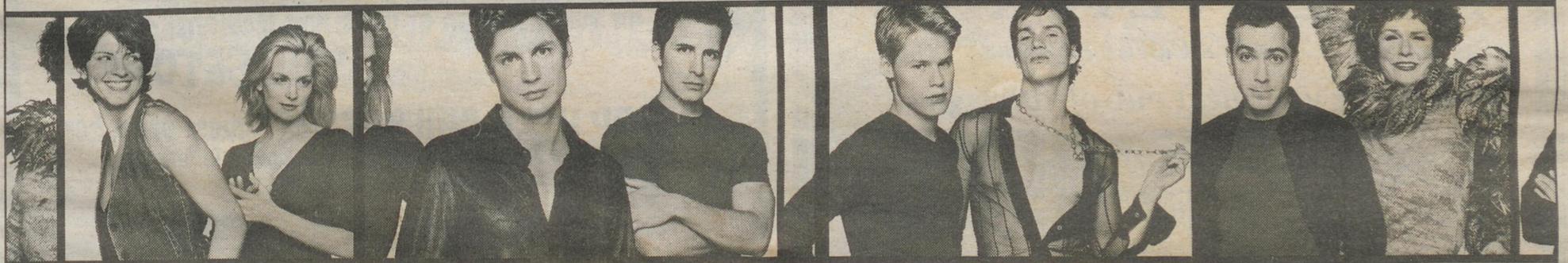
The lack of legal rights shows the disparity in how gay couples are treated under the law, as compared to married heterosexuals, said Saralyn Chesnut, co-chair of Georgia Equality, a statewide gay advocacy group.

"Walker County, like Sept. 11th before it and the AIDS crisis before it, brings to light that gays will continue to have difficulties getting assistance as easily as heterosexuals in emergency situations because our civil rights aren't recognized on a state level," Chesnut said.

For now, Bondurant has been relegated to filing an open records request for Blankenship's death certificate.

"I can't get the information from his family, but if I could just see on his death certificate where he was cremated, maybe I could put this all to rest," he said. "I just need to know. It's the not knowing that kills you."

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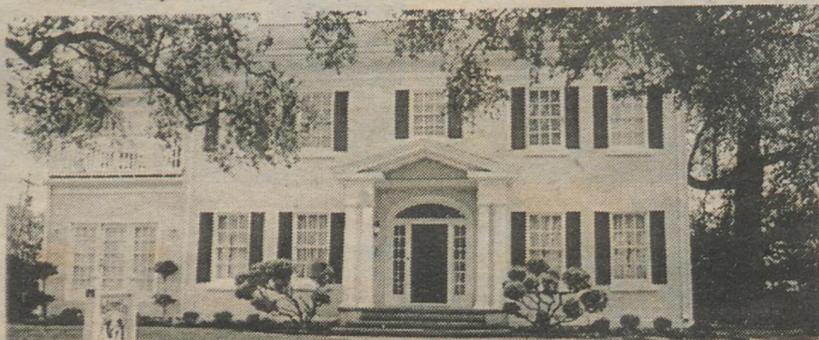
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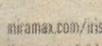
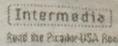
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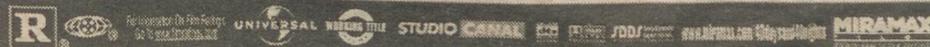


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Issue 1114



## VIEWPOINT

# Bush's budget throws money at wrong issues

by LISA KEEN

When President Bush released his proposal this month for the nation's fiscal year 2003 budget, he said "war" over and over again in sound bites that have, at least for me, soured into moronic clichés.

"The budget for 2003 is much more than a tabulation of numbers," said Bush on Feb. 5 in presenting his proposed budget. "It is a plan to fight a war we did not seek, but a war we are determined to win."

If only he was talking about a "war on AIDS" or a "war on breast cancer" or even a "war on crime."

But Bush was talking about a "war on terrorism" — a war that, based on the self-congratulatory rhetoric coming out of Washington in the past month, I might think we had already won, if I didn't know better.

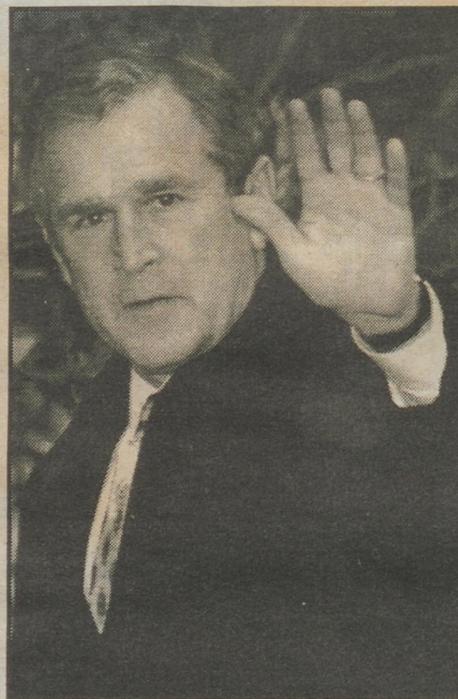
The "war" has been satisfying the American public's thirst for revenge over the Sept. 11 attacks. And it's a war that has been good for George W. Bush — improving his popularity, muting his critics, and giving him license to increase the defense budget more dramatically than it has been boosted in years.

No wonder he began talking tough about other "evil" countries. He can keep his popularity rating high by claiming victory over terrorism in one country after another. Let's face it: Americans love to win. It doesn't matter whether it's Olympic medals or wars; we love to win.

Winning, of course, does require some spending, and the president's "war" budget is designed to ensure victory over terrorism through military strength and superiority.

Any kind of budget talk in Washington amounts to a kind of rocket science for most of us. From the sheer magnitude of dollars involved (trillions, as in \$2,100,000,000,000) to the political complexities of entitlements and tax expenditures, it just seems like a blurry web of huge numbers, hidden agendas, and competing interests.

Even if the billions of neurons in our



I'm not happy that Bush proposes spending less than half a penny per dollar on HIV, and even less on breast cancer.

brains are capable of wrapping themselves around these trillions of dollars being divided, allocated, added and shifted about, we still might be inclined to ignore the president's proposed budget because Congress has the final say.

But, the U.S. is the first or second richest nation in the world per capita (in competition with Luxembourg), and how we spend our money says something about our character as a nation. It is, therefore, something we should not just leave to the politicians in Washington.

I'm not entirely comfortable with the president's proposed budget. I'm not happy that he proposes spending less than half a penny per dollar on HIV, and even less on breast cancer. To be honest, I can't really blame President Bush for this alone. Previous presidents have not done better.

But what does it say about the wisdom of our spending if we spend less than a penny per dollar on HIV while spending 17 cents per dollar to build up a military that is already 30 times larger than the combined military budgets of President Bush's so-called "axis of evil" countries?

Are we not conceding some measure of our wealth and freedom to "evil" when we spend so much on guns and armor to defend ourselves against it?

And just how much has the threat of terrorism been diminished by all the bombs we've dropped and the troops we've deployed in the war on terrorism? To the extent terrorism has been mitigated thus far, hasn't it been mitigated primarily by an alert citizenry and

improved evaluation and dissemination of intelligence reports?

I don't mind that we're spending 54 cents of every dollar to provide income and health care to citizens who are elderly, who have disabilities, or who have very low incomes. But I think it shows a certain lack of compassion that we spend less on foreign aid to poor people around the world than we spend on HIV.

I frankly don't know whether President Bush's budget of \$16 billion for emergency purposes is adequate. But I do have a quarrel with his proposal to spend \$100 million on a program to encourage single mothers with low incomes to get married. I don't like the politics of that.

The aim of this new proposed model program, according to the Bush administration's welfare director, is to improve "the well-being of children."

Some studies show that children in one-parent homes are more likely than children in two-parent homes to be living in poverty. But trying to persuade single mothers to get married is not a very efficient way of helping children in need, is it? Particularly since the Census Bureau reports that 50 percent of first marriages end in divorce, as do an even greater percentage of second marriages.

If the point is to help the children, we should not be spending \$100 million trying to cajole their mothers into finding a husband. We should spend it helping to make available more affordable day care. We should help their mothers provide the children with food, education, health care, and housing.

But that's clearly not the point of the new program. The point is funding right-wing conservatives' idolatry of the man-woman-child family structure. It smacks of politics in much the same way as making a fetus eligible for federal medical insurance coverage does.

Kim Gandy, president of the National Organization for Women, captured the irony of this program in remarks to the *New York Times* this week: "This is a crowd that says it wants to get government out of people's lives and here they are pushing people they don't even know to get married."

If marriage really is such a wonderful way of providing for children, then the government should repeal the Defense of Marriage Act so that children living with gay parents can have those benefits, too.

Our nation's budget should reflect real needs and democratic values, not politics. The real irony is that, for years, Republicans have accused Democrats of just "throwing money" at various social problems. Now, Republicans need to be careful that they're not proposing the same solution for addressing our defense needs.

Lisa Keen is senior political correspondent for the *Houston Voice* and can be reached at lkeen@washblade.com.



VIEWPOINT

# If Rosie's coming out, she better act like it

by PAULA MARTINAC

Reaction among gays to reports that Rosie O'Donnell may be finally coming out have been mixed — everything from "Good for her" to "Better late than never" to "What took her so long?"

The buzz about O'Donnell once again raises my wrath about celebrities who seem to believe that treating their sexual orientation as an "open secret" counts as being out of the closet.

Any queer can tell you that being out and fudging the truth aren't the same. We've all done the lying-by-omission thing, even those of us who consider ourselves as far out as we can get. Many's the time that a salesclerk has asked if my partner and I are related, and I just gritted my teeth, politely said no, and grabbed my purchase. And a lot of us have made more grandiose omissions about our homosexuality at one time or another, maybe to please our parents or to keep our jobs.

Since most of us have lied by omission, it doesn't seem fair to fault celebrities who choose to dodge questions about their sexual orientation — a popular tactic these days.

"I've never denied or confirmed anything," O'Donnell told USA Today last year about her private life. Sean Hayes, who plays Jack on "Will & Grace," refuses to discuss his sexual orientation, claiming that the mystery allows him to be convincing in both straight and gay roles.

Omitting the truth strikes me as less offensive than a closeted gay actor contriving a marriage or actively seeking out the press to boast about his amazing feats of heterosexuality.

The truth is, for queer performers, being in versus being out is often an employment

issue. Ellen DeGeneres, the queen of coming out, told the New York Times Magazine last summer that she doesn't blame her fellow gay actors for remaining closeted, given the harsh realities of Hollywood.

In the same way, many just-plain-gay people aren't free to come out on the job at schools, at factories, or, as Michael on "Queer as Folk" demon-

strates, at the Kmart-like Big Q.

What bothers me is when celebrities try to fool us into thinking that omitting the truth is somehow the same as being open.

Lily Tomlin, for example, has talked about her 30-year relationship with writer Jane Wagner to the gay press, but not to the mainstream press, and yet she avoids calling herself gay. Moreover, she told Denver's Out Front newspaper in 1999 that she saw no need to come out on a grand scale because she "always lived very simply and openly."

Similarly, syndicated gossip columnist Liz Smith — one of the many targets of Michelangelo Signorile's famous "outing" rants in Outweek magazine years ago — sort of came out in her memoir, "Natural Blonde." Although she discussed her same-sex relationships in the book, Smith refused to "categorize" herself as gay or bisexual because, she said, "I might change my mind tomorrow."

And when New York Magazine asked what prompted her to come out, Smith replied, "I don't think I have ever really been in." Despite her annoying doublespeak, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation inexplicably honored Smith with their Vito Russo Award for being "an openly lesbian cultural icon."

Remember, too, when Nathan Lane told The Advocate that being gay was "never something I kept a secret" — even though he spent years joking his way out of questions about his sexuality?

Now it's looking like O'Donnell may be going the casual "I was never in" route in her upcoming memoir, "Find Me." Like Smith, O'Donnell apparently talks

one" already knew, I'm going to send her the telephone number of my mother, who watches her talk show religiously and thinks Rosie's just a cute single mom who never found a guy who measured up to Tom Cruise.

In a perfect world, of course, no one would have to come out to their families or their bosses. We wouldn't even have to identify as straight or gay; we'd be "just people," as Tomlin told Out Front.

But until that happy day arrives, we shouldn't have to hear one more celebrity implying that coming out is much ado about nothing. It's insulting to those of us who know exactly what an enormous deal coming out can be.

Paula Martinac is an author and syndicated writer and can be reached at [Lncolumn@aol.com](mailto:Lncolumn@aol.com).

If Rosie O'Donnell is finally coming out, she better not claim it was never a secret. If she really thinks so, she needs to call my mom.

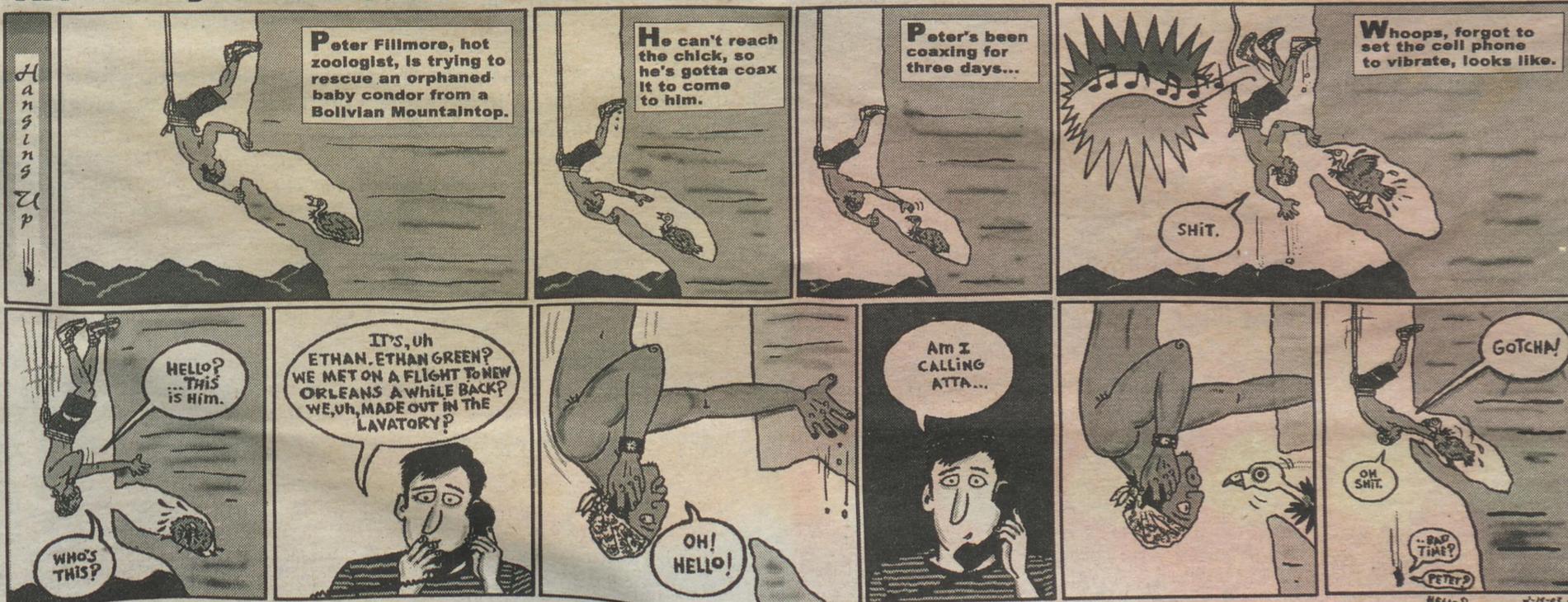
about her relationships with women in a very matter-of-fact way, but without ever using the "L-" or "G-word."

OK, maybe Rosie's a postmodern, post-gay kind of girl who doesn't like labels. But I swear, if she claims that she thought "every-



## The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Green

by eric orner



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## on the record

"I have been too lax too long in doing something really significant about AIDS. I'm not going to lay it aside on my agenda for the remaining months I have. ... I'm so ashamed that I've done so little."

Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), telling a group of Christian activists that he favors an HIV prevention campaign that teaches "biblical values and sexual purity," like one run by Janet Museveni, first lady of Uganda (Associated Press, Feb. 20)



Sen. Jesse Helms

"It's so funny because I've only come across, like, two skaters that are gay, and a lot of them that I know that are touring with me on Champions on Ice are all basically straight. I mean, they're married, they have wives, they have children."

Former U.S. figure skating champion Rudy Galindo, on rumors that most male figure skaters are gay (Salon, Feb. 22)

"Moore's opinion could have been written by the Taliban. He has proven that he is a religious fanatic who can't separate his personal beliefs from his judicial mandate to dispense fair and impartial justice."

Lorri Jean, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, on the inflammatory, anti-gay opinion by Ala. Chief Justice Roy Moore (Florence, Ala. Times Daily, Feb. 23)

"What you are seeing is hostility toward a Christian judge and hostility toward Christianity. This group of people, this fringe group of people, is like a gnat on the rear end of an elephant."

Dean Young, executive director of the Christian Family Association, on critics of Ala. Chief Justice Roy Moore (Florence, Ala. Times Daily, Feb. 23)



John Rocker

"He has a crazy persona, and the character needed a wild streak."

Kevin Greene, co-producer of the new film "The Greenskeeper," starring former Atlanta Braves pitcher John Rocker as a slasher-killer. Rocker angered gays and minorities with comments he made to Sports Illustrated in December 1999 (Associated Press, Feb. 23)

"They're one of the most dedicated couples in the penguin enclosure. They sleep in the same nest. They even have sex, though I don't know how successful that is."

Penguin keeper Stephanie Mitchell, on two 14-year-old male penguins, Wendell and Cass, who have begun mating at the New York Aquarium on Coney Island (Ananova, Feb. 21)

"As a group, you're a bright, creative people who bring a lot to the community. In fact, I'd like to have some of you move into my neighborhood because you're immaculate homeowners."

Orlando City Council member Vicki Vargo, at a forum with a gay community organization, deflecting questions about whether she would support protection for gays against housing discrimination (Orlando Sentinel, Feb. 23)

"I hope that not being gay doesn't count against me."

Joanne Fanizza, a city council member in Wilton Manors, Fla., near Ft. Lauderdale, who is in a race against the incumbent gay mayor and a gay challenger (Miami Herald, Feb. 21)

"We feel like rats. They run after us all the time."

Ezra Yitzhak, a gay Israeli who is hiding Selim, a gay Palestinian, on their life together running from authorities (Salon, Feb. 21)

"I met him in Australia and it was either shag the sheep or shag Russell, so I chose Russell."

Sting, on the origin of his friendship with actor Russell Crowe (U.K. Mirror)



Sting

# Out on the Bayou



## LIGHTS, CAMERA, SOUND

**Deaf lesbian helps lead efforts to enable the hearing impaired to enjoy theater productions**

by KAY DAYUS

Imagine walking into your favorite dance bar and not hearing any noise at all — you can feel the vibrations from the music, but absolutely no sound.

Imagine a trip to the live theater and seeing the actors and actions, but hearing no words. Imagine for a moment only the overwhelming silence.

For most people, hearing and sound are taken for granted. They hear the music, feel the beat and hear the actors' words.

But for the many who are deaf and hard of hearing, silence is the norm. They can't hear music and theater, but still want to savor and enjoy it.

The deaf "feel the vibes," but cannot hear the sound, explains Susan Jackson, artistic director of Houston's Illuminations Theatre for the Deaf.

"We feel the vibes to feel the music," Jackson writes in an interview with the Voice. Since there was no sign language

interpreter available for the interview and Jackson is profoundly deaf, the interview was conducted in writing.

Jackson is a lesbian and one of about 50 gay men and lesbians who belong to Houston's Astro Rainbow Association for the Deaf. She says that although all members have hearing problems, some wear hearing aids to provide them some modicum of hearing.

But she doesn't wear one even though it would probably help. "I rebelled against a hearing aid because my parents are deaf and they don't use one. Why do I need to bother to use one even though I have some decibels that I can hear?"

Her mother and father, as well as her sister, are deaf. Besides, Jackson adds, "I just like to communicate well so I use paper and pen all the time."

Jackson grew up in a silent household, but she doesn't want to wear a hearing aid because she fears she'll look dumb, a feeling a lot of deaf peo-

ple experience. Many people whose hearing is intact assume that deaf people are dumb or stupid because they can't hear. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Take Jackson for example. Her passion is theater for the deaf, a field she has been in for 35 years. She took acting at Gallaudet University, an institution for the deaf in Washington, D.C. She worked for the National Theatre for the Deaf in Connecticut before moving to Houston in 1999 to assume the position of project director for Illuminations' OPTICA program (Our Path Together Initiating Cultural Access).

Illuminations is the only professional theater company for the deaf in Texas, and Jackson is the one of only five deaf artistic directors in the country and the only woman in that role.

She was lured here with the aid of a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Although

> Continued on Page 14



Houston lesbian Susan Jackson, artistic director for Illuminations Theatre for the Deaf, helps bring the sounds of the theater to hearing impaired people such as herself through sign language interpretation.

PHOTOS BY KIMBERLY THOMPSON

houston voice • march 1, 2002

## appts

### saturday, march 2

Houston's annual Night In Black Leather (NIBL) raises funds for HIV/AIDS organizations in the city. This year's beneficiary is the PWA Holiday Charities. In addition to the volunteers who take the stage to show off their singing and other talents for the audience, a silent auction will be part of the event, coordinated by Don Gill Productions and a number of community activists. 7 p.m. at Rich's, 2401 San Jacinto. 713-759-9610. [www.richs-houston.com](http://www.richs-houston.com)

### saturday, march 2

"Beginning the Dialogue: Reconciling the Issue of Sexuality and Faith in the Church" is the topic as retired Lutheran Bishop Herb Chilstrom serves as the keynote speaker for a Houston seminar. Chilstrom's latest book, "Sexual Fulfillment," offers advice on issues including divorce, cohabitation and homosexuality. He is an advocate of full inclusion of gay men and lesbians in the church. Other speakers include Dr. Norman Beck, professor of theology at Texas Lutheran University, and Rev. Dr. Don Carlson from Zion Lutheran in Houston. Cost: \$20 per person, which includes lunch. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. Program runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Grace Lutheran Church, 2515 Waugh. 713-528-3269.

### sunday, march 3

Montrose Soccer Club of Houston plans its first practice. Men and women who have played soccer before are invited to join the first gay soccer club in the city. 1 p.m. at the field at Woodrow Wilson School, Yupon and Fairview streets. For more info, e-mail [MontroseSC@soccer.com](mailto:MontroseSC@soccer.com) or go to [www.geocities.com/MontroseSoccer](http://www.geocities.com/MontroseSoccer).

### sunday, march 3

In honor of International Women's Month, acclaimed Puerto Rican poets Sandra María Esteves and Gloria Vando will read in a program titled, "Voices Breaking Boundaries Presents Our Puerto Rican Sisters." The event, cosponsored by Arte Público Press and VBB, will be accompanied by words from VBB Core Voices and music by the Austin High School Rondalla. 4-7 p.m. in Blaffer Gallery at the University of Houston campus.

### sunday, march 3

Marc Adams, author of the Lambda Literary Award finalist and Silver Pen Award recipient autobiography, "The Preacher's Son," will speak at the monthly meeting of PFLAG Houston. "The Preacher's Son" chronicles Adams' life growing up gay as the son of a fundamentalist Baptist minister in rural Pennsylvania where he endured a childhood of physical, emotional and spiritual abuse. 2 p.m. at Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas at San Jacinto.



Gay author Marc Adams speaks Sunday at the regular monthly meeting of PFLAG Houston.

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# Gays unite with Astro Rainbow Association for the Deaf

> Continued from Page 13

the grant was not renewed, Jackson pursues her passion as the part-time artistic director. Illuminations is currently funded by the Cultural Arts of Houston and Harris County.

Although funding is a challenge, Jackson is not only dedicated to bringing the theater to the deaf, she is also adamant that plays she works on are translated fully into American Sign Language (ASL). She also insists that plays be theatrically interpreted.

"I demand that interpreters develop into theatrical interpreters, not just signing of what actors say," she says, struggling to make herself understood. "For interpreting, we sit together, read the script, translate to signing and rehearse before the performance. I have a few good theatrical interpreters; these are not the same as interpreters: They need to analyze the script, develop the character and match the actor."

Generally, Jackson explains, regular interpreters, "sign only what they hear in the conversation."

Theatrical interpreting is a new concept aimed at providing more access to deaf people so they can enjoy the professional theater.

Deaf signers can even mimic the accents or dialects in the plays they perform. "We deaf do have our own 'accents' just like the hearing, but it's hard to explain," Jackson writes. "We sign in a different style."

Illuminations produced its first play, "Middle of Nowhere" by deaf playwright Michelle Verhovsky, in 1999. Since then, Illuminations has staged one such production each year.

Jackson is especially proud of last season's production, "Interpretations: A Language of Loss," by deaf playwright Ray Luczak. The play was drawn from Luczak's writings as a deaf gay man responding to the AIDS crisis since the mid-80s.

Upcoming performances include "Legends of Wildflowers" by Jackson and Carol Morgan, slated for March 10. This production is part of Illuminations' series of "Hand Held Tales: Stories in ASL and English," and will be staged in Central Market's community room.

Also scheduled this month is a theatrical interpreted performance of "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" at the Alley Theatre on March 17. This play will also be open captioned, similar to closed captioning on television.

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# eating out

RESTAURANT REVIEW

## Atmosphere enhances dining

Restaurant's ambiance complements well-prepared Italian dishes at Buon Appetito

by TRAYCE DISKIN

With the hints of a balmy Gulf Coast spring last week, Houston diners began to congregate under patio table umbrellas to sip margaritas and watch the city drive by.

It was the kind of weather that invited fragrant salads with chunks of ripe avocado and chilled oranges, or desserts of fresh berries heaped on melting sorbet. Then, just when we were enjoying the fruits (and other offerings) of outdoor dining, the blustery wind sent us inside to hibernate, if not in our homes, than in warm, cozy restaurants that reminded us of them.

Thankfully, Buon Appetito provides all the ingredients for cold weather comfort food, as well as the ideal abode in which to enjoy it.

The small, homey rooms that compromise the two-story frame house effortlessly evoke the romance of Sicily and the casual charm of a neighbor bistro. The plush carpet, oak bureaus, and walls adorned with maps, photos and other mementos all radiate a warmth and intimacy that eludes other establishments that try way too hard for a similar effect.

The owners and staff complement the setting — no one is rushed or hectic, yet the service is impeccably efficient. Friendly, good-humored waiters manage to maneuver themselves around the close-fitting tables to refill a glass of wine or to ask if a particular dish is cooked to a diner's satisfaction. A guitar player strums and sings Italian classics so softly that he blends into the atmosphere that entices diners to linger over the parfait style Tiramisu or Rum Cake.

At Buon Appetito, the start is as promising as these grand finales. The Calamari Fritti (\$5.95) wasn't the meatiest squid I've tried, but the coating was light enough to keep the modest rings from becoming encrusted with fried batter. What redeemed the dish, however, was the bold marinara that served as a dipping sauce, and was topped with melted Parmesan. The velvety texture, sprinkled with Italian herbs, was delightfully rich.

For those who want to take a break from this appetizer staple, try the Calamari Richini (\$6.95), squid stuffed with crabmeat and sautéed with a garlic, basil and marinara sauce. The Babaluci Casalinga (\$6.95), or escargot, allowed the snails to retain their tender flavor, and the sauté of onions, garlic, and wine had us dunking in every last chunk of garlic bread. Try to save room for Minestrone Nonna Bettidda (\$4.95), or grandmother's minestrone, with chunks of steamed potatoes, carrots and beans in a zesty broth.

House salads come with most dinner

entrees, including pasta dishes, and the addition of artichoke hearts and plump mushrooms do a fair job of hiding the more pedestrian iceberg lettuce. Buon Appetito offers a tremendously wide range of seafood, chicken, veal and beef (thus the four-page long menu), but I recommend grabbing the best of both worlds with the Pasta E Pesce dishes.

The Penne Al Salmone (\$10.95) features succulent grilled salmon in hearty strips atop a bed of al dente penne pasta. The sauce of chopped tomatoes, shallots, garlic and herbs achieves a gorgeous rustic texture and a sweet flavor that allows the ingredients to mingle and retain their piquancy. The same superb sauce appears in the Linguine Pescatore (\$10.95). Although we lamented the dearth of mussels (two fairly meaty ones) and scallops, the sauce compensated and we devoured the dish in a flash.

The six items listed as "Cuore Sano" or Healthy Heart use basic ingredients such as lemon juice, garlic and extra light olive oil to season steamed fish like the Snapper in Umido (\$10.95) and grilled chicken breast like the Insalata di Pollo (\$9.95) or Chicken Piccata (\$9.95).

Which brings us back to the decadent, creamy Tiramisu (\$5.95), which improves once you eat past the cloying icing, and the frothy cappuccino that must accompany it.

Don't let the warmer weather keep you away. Even on the hottest of Houston nights, Buon Appetito will beckon you with its romantic and hearty cuisine.



Buon Appetito  
2231 W. Holcombe  
713-665-4601

Food: ●●●●●  
Service: ●●●●●  
Value: ●●●●●  
Scene: ●●●●●

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FOOD FILE

## Weekly **FOXY** fun

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### Tuesday



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### Wednesday

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### Thursday

Student Night Out featuring \$1.50 domestic beer at the bar, discounted fried chicken dinner with student ID.

### Friday & Saturday

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### Sunday-Our Double Header!

**One:** Houston's only traditional gospel brunch with Dianna Greenleaf from 11 AM to 3 PM.

**Two:** Swing with Jerry's Kids, 6:30 to 8:30pm. The Jerry Vann Ensemble will be playing, Come & indulge in our drink specials & the unique Carolina Gumbo in addition to the regular Fox Menu.

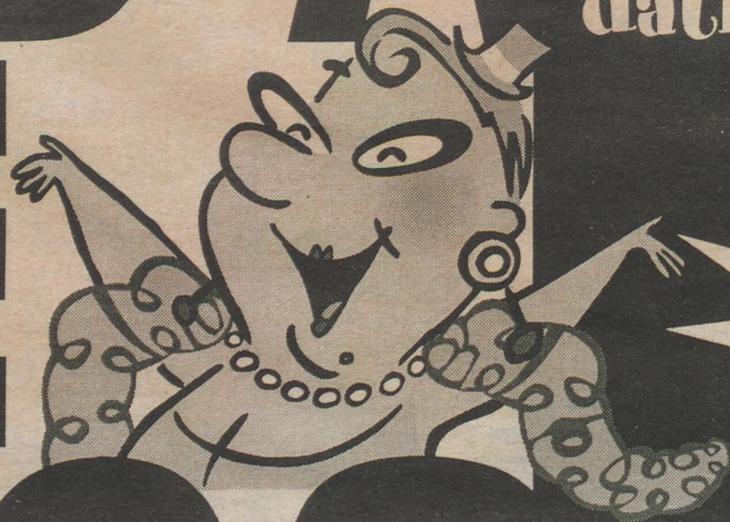
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# on stage

THEATER REVIEW

## New play imperfect

'Man in the Trunk' provides a good evening of theater despite flaws

by GEORGE JONTE

True to its mission statement, Unhinged Productions launched another production by a local playwright last Friday night. As Artistic Director Chris Jimmerson said, "If you don't produce new plays, you won't find new playwrights."

In their intimate space on LaBranch in mid-town, Unhinged is now producing Fernando Dovalina's two-act drama, "The Man In The Trunk."

According to program notes, "Man In The Trunk" was once a one-act play, recently expanded to a two-act. This reviewer has some serious issues with Dovalina's script in its present form. I am loathe to rip it to shreds, and there are some values that make this production well worth seeing. However, there are some large flaws in the script's structure that prevent it from being a first-class play, despite the strong values.

As a one-act, I suspect the play is or was strong. When expanded to a two-act, it rambles without any true focus. To get it to a two-act version, it appears that Dovalina has inserted tired jokes that are mild groaners, at best. This, coupled with some one-line zingers that reduce the script to pretty much a television soap opera, cause the play to lose a lot of its potential punch.

The piece is presented in present day with flashbacks to previous years. This is a difficult trick for even the seasoned playwright. There are no smooth dialogue transitions to the flashbacks or return to the present day action, additionally making the script awkward and patchy.

On the positive side, when the dialogue focuses on the real situation, it is terse, full of delicious subtext and acerbic wit.

The action takes place at Randy's San Francisco apartment. He has invited his best buddies from high school, Frank and Cozy, for a 20th anniversary celebration. Also in the mix are Cozy's best friend from high school (Martha) and a new character, (Annie), a copywriter at Frank and Cozy's advertising firm.

The celebration is marred by resentment that has been built up over the past two years, between Frank and Cozy, over the inexplicable "accidental" death of their son. Add to this conflict the revelation that Randy is gay and has a lover, Cozy had an affair with Martha's husband and Frank subsequently had an affair with Annie.

Although it might have just as easily been done at the party itself, Dovalina creates an interesting stage metaphor - having Frank fulfill an old high school fantasy by riding in the car trunk on the ride back to the hotel, allowing him to divulge his innermost thoughts directly to the audi-



Retired journalist Fernando Dovalina's two-act 'Man in the Trunk' is now on stage at Unhinged Productions.

ence yet, actually, in a muffled tone that only one person in the car can understand. Unfortunately, these episodes are not fully realized at times, either in the dialogue or in the characters.

Director Jimmerson has added fluid touches, oftentimes compensating nicely for the absence of transitional dialogue in and out of the various episodes. In addition, he has pointed up the humor and the pathos with equal strength and has made excellent use of the intimate acting space.

Real standouts in the cast are Paul Locklear as Frank and Deborah Hope as Cozy. Hope brings zingy humor and the right amount of pathos to her character as a mother ridden with guilt over the death of her son and not knowing how to reconcile that guilt within herself to save her fragile marriage. Locklear opts for subtle underplay, and it works nicely, allowing his quiet seething and anger to build to a fever pitch in Act Two.

Strong support is derived through Kelly Williams' affable portrayal of Randy, the "Mr. Fixit" who tries even though he knows it isn't working. Also turning in pleasing performances are Susan Oltmanns-Koozin, delivering her anger and resentment at just the right time and just the right spot — below the belt; and Yvonne Aguirre as Annie, the hopelessly drunk yet witty young copywriter full of correct grammar, alliteration and the object of Frank's latent affections.

The cast works well as an ensemble, giving the play strong production values and providing an evening of theater that is worth one's attendance despite the script's flaws.

### "The Man in the Trunk"

Through March 30.  
8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays  
Tickets: \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors and students  
Unhinged Productions  
3304 LaBranch  
713-524-8707

INFO

UNHINGED PRODUCTIONS presents a bold, funny and exciting new work by a Houstonian

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A feuding Houston couple draw into their dramatic whirlpool the gay man who is the husband's best pal, a newly liberated divorcee who knows a secret and a drunk copy editor who's in love with more than the parts of speech. **The Man in the Trunk** is hilarious, gut-wrenching and moving.

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# community calendar

## saturday, march 2

**Rummage-A-Rama.** Sale hosted first Saturday of each month to benefit AIDS Housing Coalition Houston. 202 Tuam Ave. 713-521-1613.

## every saturday

**All-Spanish Worship Service/Culto en español.** 6 p.m. Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2026 W. 11th. 713-303-9403 or 713-861-9149.

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

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

**Gay & Lesbian Breakfast Club.** 9:30 a.m. 281-437-0636.

**Houston Chain Gang Bicycle Club.** Call for ride locations. 713-863-1860.

**Houston Outdoor Group.** Memorial Park walk. 9:30 a.m., meet in front of tennis center. Jimmy, 713-864-7299.

**Houston Wrestling Club.** Practice. 1:30 p.m. 713-453-7406.

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

**Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center.** Drop-in noon-4 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

## sunday, march 3

**PFLAG-Houston.** Meeting. 2 p.m. 713-867-9020. [www.pflaghouston.org/meetings.html](http://www.pflaghouston.org/meetings.html)

## every sunday

**Anarchist Black Cross Federation/Anarchist Reading Group.** 1 p.m. [www.houstonabc.org](http://www.houstonabc.org). 713-595-2103

**Bering Memorial United Methodist Church.** Services at 8:30 & 10:50 a.m. Sunday school 9:45 a.m. 713-526-1017.

**Community Gospel.** Service at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. Sunday School for children 10 a.m. 713-880-9235 or [www.communitygospel.org](http://www.communitygospel.org).

**Covenant Church, Ecumenical, Liberal Baptist.** Service 9:30 a.m. & education hour 11 a.m. 713-668-8830.

**First Congregational Church (Memorial).** Service at 10 a.m. Christian Education, 11:30 p.m. 713-468-9543 or [fcc-houston.org](http://fcc-houston.org).

**First Unitarian Universalist Church.** Services at 9:30 & 11:30 a.m. Brunch available, 10:30 a.m. 713-526-5200. [church@firstuu.org](mailto:church@firstuu.org).

**Gay Catholics of St. Anne's-Houston.** 5 p.m. worship service. Dinner and social. [alexcam@wt.net](mailto:alexcam@wt.net). 713-623-0930.

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

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

**Houston Tennis Club.** 9 a.m. to noon. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. [houstontennisclub@aol.com](mailto:houstontennisclub@aol.com)

**Maranatha Fellowship Metropolitan Church.** Service, 6:30 p.m. 713-528-6756.

**Rainbow Riders.** A bicycle club for women. 713-869-1686.

**Resurrection MCC. Services.** 9 and 11 a.m. Adult Sunday School, 10 a.m. Youth

Sunday School, 11:15 a.m. Handbell Choir rehearsal, 1:30 p.m. 713-861-9149.

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

**The Women's Group.** Meeting and discussion. 10:45 a.m. 713-529-8571.

**Thoreau Unitarian Universalist Congregation.** Adult discussion, 9:45 a.m. Service, 11 a.m. 281-277-8882. [www.tuuc.org](http://www.tuuc.org).

**Unitarian Fellowship of Galveston County.** 502 Church St. Service, 10:30 a.m. 409-765-8330.

**Unitarian Fellowship of Houston.** Adult forum, 10 a.m. Service, 11 a.m. 713-686-5876.

**Houston Gay & Lesbian Community Center.** Drop-in 2-5 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

## monday, march 4

### every monday

**AIDS Mastery.** 7 p.m. Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.

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

**gayDAR.** Wellness Community. Support Group. 7 p.m. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.

**Gay Fathers/Fathers First.** Support group. 8-9:30 p.m. Grace Lutheran Church. Tom, 713-726-8736.

[www.geocities.com/gaydadshouston/](http://www.geocities.com/gaydadshouston/)  
**Gay Men's Chorus of Houston.** Open rehearsals, 7 p.m. 713-521-7464.

**Grief & Divorce Support Groups.** 7 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, ext. 208.

**Houston Tennis Club.** 9 a.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. 713-692-2703.

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

**Lesbian & Gay Voices Radio Show.** 8-10 p.m. KPFT 90.1. 713-529-1223.

**Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry.** Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 936-441-1614.

**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

## tuesday, march 5

**Lesbian Health Initiative of Houston, Inc.** Nonprofit organization working for lesbian health meets the first Tuesday of each month. 7 p.m., 404 Westheimer. 713-603-0023. [LHIhouston00@aol.com](mailto:LHIhouston00@aol.com)

### every tuesday

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

**CPR Classes.** 3 p.m. 713-607-7700.

**For Mature Audiences Only.** Support group. 7 p.m. Bering Memorial UMC. 713-526-1017.

**Free HIV Testing.** Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m. to midnight. Club Houston. 713-830-3000.

**Gay Men's Process Group.** 7 p.m. 3316 Mt. Vernon. 713-526-8390.

**Gay youth.** New program for young gay males, ages 18-29. 7 p.m. 614 Avondale. 713-533-9786.

**Helping Cross Dressers Anonymous.**

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Support group. 7 p.m. 713-524-0439.  
**Houston Women's Rugby Team.** No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.  
**HTGA.** Support group. 7 p.m. 713-520-0439.  
**Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry.** Open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. 281-633-2555.  
**Rainbow Ranglers.** Free C&W dance lessons. Brazos River Bottom. Two-hour free dance workshops. No partner needed. Beginner. 2 Step, Waltz, Shuffle & Swing. Drop in anytime. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.  
**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

### wednesday, march 6

**Bering Omega Care Center.** First Wednesdays lecture series. "Adherence Issues and HIV," 6 p.m. Reservations required. 713-520-7070, ext. 141.  
**Classic Chassis Car Club.** Monthly meeting at The World Café, 1340 West Gray. 713-797-8615. www.classicchassisclub.org.

### every wednesday

**Bering Memorial United Methodist Church.** Dinner, 6:30 p.m. Various support groups, 7 p.m. 713-526-1017.  
**Bible Study.** Noon & 6:30 p.m. St. Stephen's Episcopal. 713-526-6665.  
**Free HIV Testing.** Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas St. OraSure method. Call for appointment. Sharon, 713-873-4157.  
**Houston Pride Band.** Open rehearsal. 1307 Yale. 713-527-0931. www.houstonprideband.org  
**Houston Tennis Club.** 7:30-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com  
**Lesbian Literature Discussion Group.** 7 p.m. Meets every other Wednesday. 713-383-6738.  
**Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food Pantry.** 10 a.m.-6 p.m. 936-441-1614.  
**Spiritual Uplift service.** 7 p.m. Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Resurrection MCC. 713-861-9149.  
**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Free HIV testing, counseling, 6-9 p.m. • Houston Committee for People's Radio, 6:30 p.m. • Bi-Net Houston, 7:30 p.m. • 713-524-3818.

### thursday, march 7

**Gay/Lesbian Jewish Study Group.** Meets the first Thursday of the month. 7:30-9 p.m. at Congregation Beth Israel, 5600 North Braeswood Blvd. Alan: 713-523-3673 or Rabbi Glickman: 713-771-6221.  
**Gulf Coast Transgender Committee.** Meeting. 713-780-4282.

### every thursday

**Community Gospel.** Service. 7:30 p.m. 713-880-9235. www.communitygospel.org.  
**Free HIV Testing.** By the Montrose Clinic. 8 p.m. to midnight. Toyz Disco. 713-830-3000.  
**Freelance Art Classes.** By Kermit Eisenhut for HIV+ individuals. 1-4 p.m. Lunch provided. 713-523-9530.  
**FrontRunners.** Running club. 6:30 p.m. 713-522-8021.  
**Hep C Recovery.** Support group. 6:30 p.m. Bering. 713-526-1017, Ext. 211.  
**HIV Art Therapy Program.** 1-4 p.m. Kermit Eisenhut. 713-523-9530.  
**Houston Women's Rugby Team.** No experience necessary. Practice, 6:30-8:30. Westland YMCA. Kay, 713-208-1529.  
**Lambda Skating Club.** 8 p.m. Tradewinds. Skating Rink. www.lambdaroll.org. 713-410-7215.  
**Northwoods AIDS Coalition Food**

**Pantry.** 10 a.m.-6 p.m. 281-633-2555.  
**Rainbow Ranglers.** Free C&W dance lessons. Two hours free line dance instruction. No partner required. Drop in anytime. Brazos River Bottom. 8:30 p.m. 713-528-9192.  
**STD exams & treatment.** Free. AVES. 713-626-2837.  
**Spanish Charla Conversation Group.** Empire Cafe, 7 p.m. Email charlahouston@msn.com. 713-416-7203.  
**Women's Clinic.** Montrose Clinic. 713-830-3000.  
**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop in 6-9 p.m. • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

### friday, march 8

#### every Friday

**Free HIV Testing.** Thomas Street Clinic. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 2015 Thomas St. OraSure method. Call for appointment. Sharon, 713-873-4157.  
**Freelance Art Classes.** By Kermit Eisenhut for HIV+ individuals. 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Light breakfast provided. 713-523-9530.  
**Frost Eye Clinic.** Free eye exams for people with HIV. 713-830-3000.  
**Govinda Yoga Club.** Free yoga classes at 3115 West Loop South, No. 21. 713-439-0455.  
**Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals (H.A.T.C.H.) Meeting.** 713-942-7002.  
**Houston Tennis Club.** 7:30-9 p.m. Memorial Park at the Tennis Center. houstontennisclub@aol.com  
**Kolbe Project.** Morning prayer, 10 a.m. 713-861-1800.  
**Lesbian & Gay Voices.** KPFT 90.1 FM. 7 p.m. 713-526-5738.  
**Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center.** Drop-in 6-9 p.m. • Card Players Club meets every fourth Friday of the month, 7 p.m. Call Jimmy: 713-864-7299 or 281-437-0636 • 803 Hawthorne. 713-524-3818.

#### volunteer/self-help

**Gay & Lesbian Help Line.** For gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. Staffed by volunteers of all ages. 6-11 p.m. Monday-Friday, 5-10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. 888-340-GLBT.  
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**Montrose Counseling Center** Permanent Endowment, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is looking for an attorney who wants to give back to the community by providing pro bono legal counsel to its Board of Directors. Attorneys with estate planning or real estate experience are encouraged to respond. Please send a letter of inquiry with your resume/CV to: Montrose Counseling Center Endowment — LC, Attn: Executive Director, 701 Richmond Avenue, Houston, TX 77006, or fax to 713.526.4367. No phone calls.  
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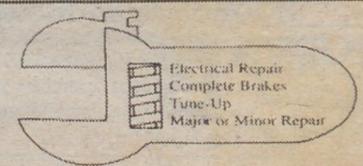
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### NIBL 2002

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**YMSM OF COLOR HIV SPECIALIST.** The specialist will be responsible for supporting the implementation of NYAC's HIV/STD prevention education programs and technical assistance for youth-service providers and YMSMs of color. Demonstrated experience working on issues impacting young men who have sex with men and working within communities of color experiencing health disparities are

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Applicants must be committed to social justice and working with and for LGBTQ youth in an anti-racist environment. Please send cover letter, resume, and writing sample to: NYAC, PPD or YMSM Review, 1638 R Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009. No calls. People of color, transgender people, women, young people, and people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. Please visit our website at [www.nyacyouth.org](http://www.nyacyouth.org) to download job descriptions. Application Deadline: March 15th.

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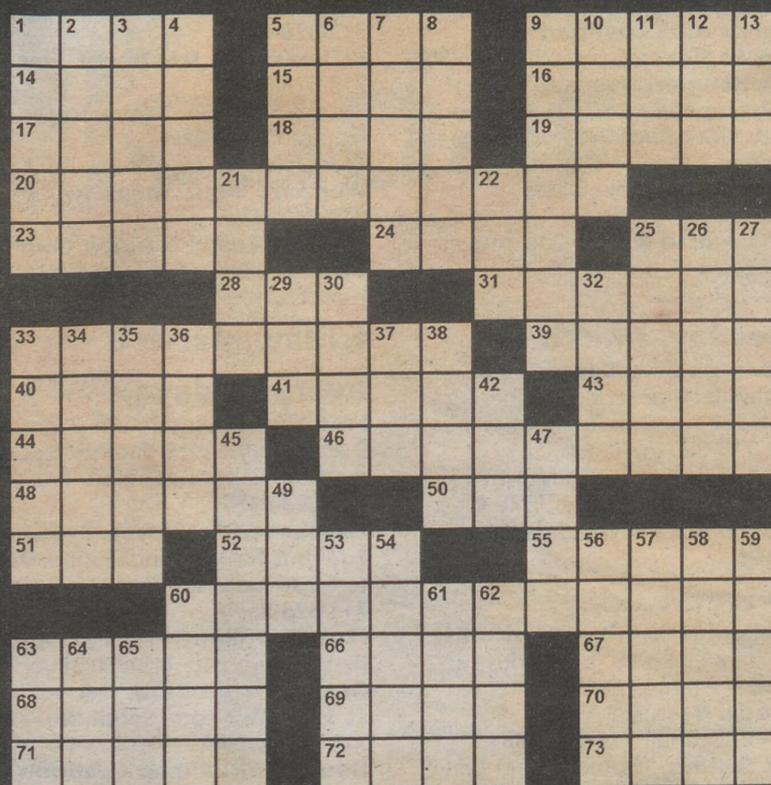
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## Q Puzzle



### "HOMO-GENIZED"

#### ACROSS

1. Stage show with "Sodomy"
5. Sherman Helmsley religious sitcom
9. Hanks' award for Philadelphia
14. Barry Humphries' Dame
15. \_\_\_ boy
16. "You'll Never Walk \_\_\_"
17. Cumming on the stage
18. On \_\_\_ with
19. Skirts for men
20. Applied makeup to Harvey?
23. Dog of Hagar the Horrible
24. Gilbert of "Roseanne"
25. Gerund suffix
28. Interjection for Ernst Roehm
31. Max Robinson, to news
33. Glad hand from Harvey?
39. Ross of "The Wiz"
40. Foundation for Humanity name
41. Exams on sexual technique?
43. Middle name of "Jailhouse Rock" singer
44. Cukor's "\_\_\_ and Juliet"
- 46 "Here's to Harvey!"?
48. Columnist Zipper
50. Optimist's place for a cock?
51. Amazon, for short
52. Lancheater of "The Bride of Frankenstein"
55. Surface that isn't straight
60. Harvey with lover?
63. B. D. Wong, for one
66. Eligible for service
67. Robert of "The Defenders"
68. It's found among Whitman's bloomers
69. Gay video directory name
70. Painter and homophone of Levi
71. \_\_\_ Fruit Records
72. Do-overs for Billie Jean
73. "Showboat's" "Nobody \_\_\_ But Me"

#### DOWN

1. Jane of "The Little Review" and others
2. Lesbian pulp author Arthur
3. Like someone blown away
4. You can get this at Russian River
5. It makes gelatin get hard
6. Hang on to head
7. "Great balls of fire!"
8. "Goodbye \_\_\_ Jean"
9. "There is no there there," per Stein
10. Lube brand
11. Cammermeyer's rank (abbr.)
12. Queen of the hill
13. Lawyers' things
21. Some of Sappho's vowels
22. "I Got Rhythm" writer Gershwin
25. Samurai writer Saikaku
26. Homophobia and intolerance
27. Randolph Scott's one-time companion Cary
29. Margaret of "All-American Girl"
30. Hurt
32. Hello from Madonna's grandparents
33. Strep of Silkwood
34. "\_\_\_ Paris"
35. Transportation for Liberace and Elton
36. "Washington Blade" columnist Lisa
37. Chiang \_\_\_-shek
38. "She" to Bonheur
42. "Pie in the \_\_\_" (Heche TV show)
45. Embarrassingly short
47. New-age composer John
49. Eliza Doolittle's 'ades?
53. "Bottoms up!"
54. Cable channel
56. "Zami" author Audre
57. Tatum of "The Bad News Bears"
58. Prepares for a nude beach
59. Partner of Steve, but not Adam
60. Nannies' cries
61. Straight, in a bar
62. Oral sex protectors
63. Furry TV alien
64. What one becomes after kneeling before a queen
65. Island in gay Paree

Answers on Page 23



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# My Stars!

by JILL DEARMAN

YOUR WEEKLY HOROSCOPE



## March 1-7



### ARIES (March 21 to April 20)

Pluto's square to the Sun could be making you edgy. You really don't have to change every aspect of your life just 'cause you're feeling an itch. Change one thing. A Cancer loves you just the way you are.



### TAURUS (April 21 to May 20)

Mars in your sign in early March could be making you aggressive. Be careful not to rub someone in power the wrong way. Be civilized, darling. Act out your power fantasies in bed, with a Sag. This is a great time for you to rethink your peripheral relationships. They may need an overhaul.



### GEMINI (May 21 to June 21)

The Sun is transiting the top of your chart and bringing you closer to the fame and recognition you covet. Just be careful not to get too hooked on results. If you don't enjoy the process of doing your work, does the rest really matter? An Aries is keeping her eye on you. Act like you don't notice!



### CANCER (June 22 to July 22)

Mars, the "let's get physical" planet, moves close to volatile Pluto during the week of March 4. The way to change your mood is to work on your body issues, baby. They're holding you back. An Aries can get you off the couch with a bark and a bite.



### LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)

Mars at the top of your chart is seducing you into playing hardball. Why not, darling? You've been an ole softy long enough. You can step up to the plate and take the power that you deserve. A Capricorn is on your side and wants to be your right-hand mate. Sounds profitable and delicious.



### VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)

The moon makes a lovely trine to the Sun on March 5, and you could make a lovely connection with a new colleague. You can never have too many allies, my suspicious dear. A Leo is definitely on your side.



### LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)

Venus moves into your house of love during the second week in March and at last you feel "at home in the world." It's time for you to turn an on-again, off-again fling into a real honest-to-goodness relationship. As your love life comes together, the rest of your life follows suit. Confidence seeps out of your every pore. An Aries wants to seep into your every pore.



### SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)

You are too multi-talented to focus on just one creative project. This is the best time of year for you to dabble in many different forms. An Aquarius sees you for the genre-busting hipster that you really are.



### SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)

If you think you can change someone close to you, forget it. The stars keep sending you the same message this winter, but you keep ignoring it. Change thyself, righteous Sag! A Gemini is waiting for you to finally get it.



### CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)

You are going to have to slip out of a messy relationship before it starts to infiltrate other key areas of your life. A Virgo is a trustworthy soul and can help you oust a bad apple from your life, with grace.



### AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)

Venus moves into your ultrasocial third house in early March and could bring you more options in your love life. You don't have to keep obsessing about the same tired old crushes and ex-lovers, babe. A Pisces wants to breathe some new life into your world. Let this friend get close enough to do so.



### PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)

You are truly the master of your own destiny now, babe, so please start acting like it. The Sun in your sign gives you extra influence, so start using your powers, darling. A Scorpio sees the magician inside you.

Jill Dearman is the author of the best-selling "Queer Astrology for Men" and "Queer Astrology for Women" (both from St. Martin's Griffin). For information on charts and consultations, call 212-841-0177 or e-mail QScopes@aol.com.

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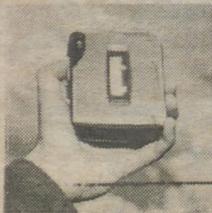
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answers to puzzle on page 20

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