

GHGLCC NEWS

the impact network

JANUARY, 2000

volume 5, issue 1



GREATER HOUSTON
GAY & LESBIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Board of Directors

President

Debra E. Hunt

Vice President

Richard Wiederholt

Secretary

Gordon Bayless

Treasurer

Rene Guerra

Sandi Bubbert

Marion E. Coleman

Phyllis Randolph Frye

Richard Hill

Randy Mitchmore D.D.S.

Anita Renteria

Coy Tow

Clyde Williams

Administrator

Kevin Davidson

Media Relations

Marion E. Coleman

Richard Wiederholt, Ed.D.

Community Affairs

Gordon Bayless

Empower 2000

Marion E. Coleman

Coy Tow

Newsletter

Marion Coleman

Connie Marmolejo

Program

The Board

Ethics and Legal

Debra E. Hunt

Annual Membership Dues

Individual \$125.00

Business \$200.00

Corporation \$1,000.00

GHGLCC News is underwritten by

Shell Chemical Company

For membership information call

713.523.7576

P.O. Box 66129

Houston, Texas 77266-6129

Happy New Millennium

Gerald E. Miller with the Johnson Space Center to be Guest Speaker at January dinner meeting

Jerry Miller is employed at the Johnson Space Center (JSC) as Manager of Extravehicular Activity (EVA) Operations in the Space Flight Systems Division of United Space Alliance (USA). Formed through a partnership between Boeing and Lockheed-Martin, USA is the company responsible for operating NASA's space shuttle fleet. Mr. Miller leads the astronaut trainers and flight controllers specializing in EVA, commonly known as space walking.

His office is responsible for end-to-end activities associated with space walks for the Space Shuttle and International Space Station Programs. This includes participation in payload design, flight procedures development, payload integration, direct astronaut crew training and flight execution as EVA Flight Controllers in the Mission Control Center.

Mr. Miller was assigned to the team that initiated cooperation with Russian Space Agency counterparts and he is the

first American to staff a console in the Russian Mission Control Center for space walks by American astronauts from the Mir station. As the EVA Officer for shuttle mission STS-49 in 1992, Mr. Miller planned and controlled the world's only three-person space walk to rescue the Intelsat communications satellite, for which he also holds the record of the longest EVA in history, 8 hours and 29 minutes. He has trained more than 50 crews for EVA on Space Shuttle, Mir and International Space Station missions.

With 17 years of conducting space flights, he is NASA's most experienced EVA Operations Officer. As such, Jerry represents the space agency's EVA interests with international partners including Russia, Japan, Canada and the European Space Agency.

Jerry Miller received his degree in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering from the University of Illinois.

RSVP is required by January 7th at 713-523-7576. It's extremely important for us to coordinate our number of participants. Please be responsible and make the RSVP call! The cost for the dinner meeting is \$22 for members and \$25 for non-members or guests.

The Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce advances the economic and cultural development and vitality of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and supportive heterosexual businesses and organizations.

2000 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Debbie Hunt
PRESIDENT



Richard Wiederholt
VICE PRESIDENT



Rene Guerra
TREASURER



Gordon Bayless
SECRETARY



Marion E. Coleman



Sandi Bubbert



Phyllis Randolph Frye



Richard Hill



Randy Mitchmore



Anita Renteria



Coy Tow



Clyde Williams



*The Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian
Chamber of Commerce advances the
economic and cultural
development and vitality of gay,
lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and
supportive heterosexual
businesses and organizations.*

President's Message

I remember several years ago when Sandra Wilkins first pestered me about joining the newly formed *Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce*. As a small business owner in the community I was used to being asked to join various associations and networking groups. So when Sandra later faxed an application I did what I usually do: I put it in a pile with everything else, thinking I would get around to it eventually. As many of you know, Sandra is very persistent, and my application did not sit idle for long.

After becoming a chamber member I started doing some committee work and eventually joined the board as a director. I have enjoyed working with the chamber board for the past two years, and I am honored to assume the duties as your president for the year 2000. It will take some concentrated effort to surpass the results achieved in 1999, but your board is committed to ensuring that the chamber has another successful and productive year. We are all

pleased that Coy Tow, Marion Coleman, and Richard Wiederholt have renewed their leadership roles for the next Empower event. Other board

members have expressed a great interest in improving and expanding our member services and in developing an executive director position. At our board retreat January 8th we will put together our annual plan for implementing these and other terrific ideas. Anyone is welcome to participate, so if you have ideas, skills, talents, or interest, please make plans to join us.


It was great fun to end the year with our December party at Sonoma restaurant. Kudos to Jay Allen and crew who made the place available to us on their off night, and to the Houston Pride Band for providing spirited entertainment.

Our January meeting will feature a presentation by Jerry Miller of NASA. If you haven't made it to a membership meeting in awhile, please plan to attend.

I look forward to seeing you there.



Debbie Hunt



**River Oaks
ANTIQUES
CENTER**

Roger Howard
*An accredited member
of the International
Society of Appraisers*

2030 Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77098
713.520.8238



HUBBARD
Financial Services, Inc.

Bookkeeping and Tax Service

KATHY HUBBARD, EA
(713) 522-9000
FAX: (713) 526-6588

2615 MONTROSE BOULEVARD
PO BOX 66588 ♦ HOUSTON, TX 77266-6588



Tiburon Systems

JOEL ANDERSON
DARYL HICKMAN

PO BOX 1024
HOUSTON, TX 77251
713.350.0555 T
713.350.0556 F

Microsoft Certified
Professional
Systems Engineer

TIBURONSYS.COM
NEW COMPUTERS • NETWORKS • SERVICE



**IMAGE
CLEANERS**

George Froming
owner

3407 Montrose Boulevard
Suite B4
Houston, Texas 77006

713.527.0880 tel
713.527.0119 fax

New & Renewing Members

The following companies and organizations have realized the importance of economic growth and development for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. They have pledged their continued support by investing their time and efforts in the Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

Please support your community by calling on these companies when you have a need for their products and services.

STATSCRIPT Pharmacy

Pharmacy
Member Since 12/01/1995
Bill Southward
3407 Montrose Blvd Suite A5
Houston, Texas 77006
713-522-7373

Basic Brothers

Retail Store
Member Since 12/01/1995
Richard Wiederholt
1232 Westheimer Road
Houston, Texas 77006
713-522-1626
richardw@neosoft.com

LifeSmiles

Dentist
Member Since 11/07/1997
Randy Mitchmore DDS
2617 W. Holcombe Suite E
Houston, Texas 77025
713-592-9300

H.A.T.C.H.

Non Profit
Member Since 12/01/1997
Kevin Davidson
PO Box 667053
Houston, Texas 77266
713-942-7002
hatch@neosoft.com

Carroll, Tony, Psychotherapy Associates

Health Care / Psychotherapy / Consultation
Member Since 12/01/1995
Tony Carroll, LMSW-ACP
2211 Norfolk, Suite 505
Houston, Texas 77098
713-522-3045
tcarroll@wt.net

The Hollyfield Foundation

Non Profit
Member Since 12/01/1997
Wayne Bockmon
PO Box 66722
Houston, Texas 77266
713-523-6900
hollyfield@hollyfield.org

Suzanne Anderson Properties

REALTOR
Member Since 12/01/1995
Suzanne Anderson
239 Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77006
713-529-8484
montrose@wt.net

Hill, Richard, Coldwell Banker Swilley-Hudson

REALTOR
Member Since 12/01/1995
Richard Hill
1505 Heights Blvd.
Houston, Texas 77008
713-869-6142
richard@richardhill.com

Sonoma Restaurant & Bar

Restaurant & Club
Member Since 12/01/1999
Jay Allen
1415 California
Houston, Texas 77006
713-522-7066
JayAllen@Pacifictreet.com

Here are just some of the benefits of becoming a G.H.G.L.C.C. member.

- Monthly Newsletter
- Monthly Dinner Meetings
- Small Business Counseling through the University of Houston
- Monthly Social Events
 - Web Site Listing
 - Mentoring Program
 - Resource Directory

Membership is just
a phone call away

713-523-7576



M E M B E R B I O

Robert G. Lawson *Director, Volunteer Services* AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc.



Robert (Bob) Lawson has been Director, Volunteer Services at AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc. (AFH) since February 1997. In this capacity he oversees a staff of three professionals who are accountable for the recruitment, training, placement, and management of 365 individuals serving on 15 direct and indirect client service volunteer teams. Prior to his employment at AFH he spent 18 years with the E.I. DuPont de Nemours Company in positions of increasing responsibility managing employees and suppliers. Bob became known as an expert in problem resolution, negotiations, motivation, and financial management.

Bob came to AFH via his work as a volunteer weekend facilitator for the agency's volunteer orientation program. Bob first got involved with AFH because of the loss of a dear friend to AIDS and felt that volunteering would be a way to give back to the community. Bob's passion that drove him then still drives him today as evident with his countless hours of dedication and service to AFH. Bob believes that the volunteers of AFH represent a tremendous ability to give of themselves and encourages the volunteers to realize that everything they do impacts the mission of AFH and people battling HIV/AIDS.

Bob has diverse interests from basketball to theatre. An avid lover of the sun (hence his exodus from Rochester, NY) he enjoys jogging, in-line skating and walking. Bob has been involved in the wellness industry for over 8 years as a group exercise instructor and as a personal trainer. Bob is co-guardian of a teenage daughter and takes great pride in guiding a member of the next generation to be respectful and just in their actions.

Bob is a member of Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Houston Class XVIII (1999-2000), Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, National AIDS Service Volunteer Administration, Houston Association of Volunteer Administrators, Community Advisor-American Humanics Graduate School at the University of Houston, Timbergrove Manor Homeowner's Association Membership Committee and the Houston HIV Consortium. Bob also presents at many local and national conferences on HIV/AIDS and related issues.

RICHARD HILL

SWILLEY-HUDSON'S #1 SELLING AGENT

QUALITY STANDS OUT!™

**BUYING, SELLING, AND
RELOCATION SPECIALIST!**

713.869.6142

Voice Mail
713-642-4300

View our web page at
www.RichardHill.com

Email: Richard@RichardHill.com

Swilley & Hudson
& ASSOCIATES INC. - REALTORS

CAROLYN L. GARDINER, M.D., P.A.
INTERNAL MEDICINE
BOARD CERTIFIED

411 W. 21st, Suite 2
Houston, TX 77008

Tel: 713.802-9740
Fax: 713.863-9321

K
GRIFF

INVESTIGATIONS & CIVIL PROCESSING

Kathy Griffin

4106 McDuffie
Houston, Texas 77098
Email: kgriff@pdq.net

(713) 526-7711
FAX: (713) 526-7730
Pager: (713) 285-8869

Pride Parade Nominations

The pride committee is currently accepting nominations for this year's Pride Parade.

The chamber is asking its members to support the following nominees: Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce as organization, Anita Renteria as Female Grand Marshall and Richard Wiederholt as Male Grand Marshall.



Please RSVP your support by sending and email to Kevin Davidson at ghglcc@neosoft.com



Law Offices of Clyde Williams

- CRIMINAL DEFENSE
- ASSAULT
- DRUGS/DWI
- PUBLIC LEWDNESS
- INDECENT EXPOSURE

1314 Texas Avenue • Suite 712 • Houston, Texas 77002 • 713-236-0064
Board Certified in Criminal Law by The Texas Board of Legal Specialization

Image...
until they get
to know you,
it's what's on the
surface that counts.

David E. Coleman
PROPRIETOR



With that, do you want your
image quickly splashed on paper? Or do
you want House of Coleman to ink a better job?

House of Coleman
Fine Printing & Graphics

901 WEST ALABAMA • HOUSTON, TX 77006-4693
713.523.2521 • FAX 713.524.2643

NeoSoft™

Houston's largest Internet Provider.

Open the world right from the comfort of your own computer.
Explore the Internet, taking journeys you have yet to imagine!
Unlimited time! Unlimited uses!

NeoSoft now offering discounted rates for Chamber members!

1770 St. James Place, Suite 500, Houston, Texas 77056
Call for details! (713) 968-5800

YOUR OUT AND PROUD CLOTHING STORE

BASIC

1232 WESTHEIMER, HOUSTON, TX 77006
713.522.1626 • FAX 713.526.1972

www.basicbrothers.com
email: basicbro@neosoft.com

BROTHERS

MON-SAT 10-9 • SUN 12-6

GREENWHITE

ADVISORS



- FINANCIAL PLANNING
- INVESTMENTS
- RETIREMENT PLANNING
- ESTATE PLANNING

713.869.1144

Securities offered through Commonwealth
Financial Network, Member NASD/SIPC

houston voice

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

500 LOVETT BLVD., SUITE 200 • HOUSTON, TX. • 713-529-8490

www.houstonvoice.com

J A N U A R Y						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 <i>New Year's Day</i>
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Annual Retreat 8:30am-4:30am Park Plaza Warwick Contact Kevin Davidson for more info 713-523-7576
9	10 Dinner Meeting Guest Speaker Jerry Miller Social 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm	11 Networking Breakfast 7:30am Le Peep <i>S. Shepherd at Greenbriar</i>	12	13	14 Newsletter Deadline	15
16	17 Board Meeting 6:30pm Location TBA Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28	29



The right relationship is everything.SM

- ★Loan by Phone.....800-221-LEND
- ★24 Hour Customer Service.....713-216-7000
- ★Chase Mortgages.....713-216-HOME
- ★Small Business.....713-216-1720
- Assistance Center
- ★Hearing Impaired TDD.....713-216-7146

Over 140 branches statewide
24-hour ATMs available at over
300 statewide locations

CHASE
P.R.I.D.E.
team

Where people make the difference

member FDIC



**AMERIQUEST
MORTGAGE
COMPANY**

Tommye L. Rodgers
Account Executive

1155 Dairy Ashford, Suite 214, Houston, TX 77079
Phone (281) 558-2223 Fax (281) 558-2227 Pager (281) 434-1190
Toll Free (888) 326-5407 www.ameriququest.net

computer



factory

**Custom
Configured Systems**

- Upgrades • Peripherals
- Repairs • Software

(713) 462-3453

13147 Northwest Freeway, #155
(290 at Holister)

Announcements

Notes From the Board

The board of directors is always available to listen to your ideas, suggestions, or concerns about our growing organization. If you would like to address the board at a board meeting, call the hotline at 713-523-7576 and ask to be put on the agenda to speak at a board meeting held the 2nd Monday of each month.

The board is currently looking for members interested in becoming more involved in our chamber. If you are interested in participating, or you know of anyone who is, please contact President Debbie Hunt at 713-522-4282. Positions available include committee chairs, committee members, and/or any other assistance a member would be willing to provide to the chamber.

Newsletter Advertising

Here we grow! Our newsletter has increased to 8 pages, thanks to member advertising and article contributions. Remember, this is your newsletter, so if you have a submission you'd like included, contact the newsletter committee. A one-month business card-size ad is only \$30. If you reserve between 3-6 months, the monthly rate is only \$25, and if you reserve space for 7-12 months, your monthly rate is only \$20. Call Marion E. Coleman at the House of Coleman at 713-523-2521.

Deadline for materials is the second Thursday of the month prior to publication.



Please Recycle

Address Correction Requested

GHGLCC NEWS

the impact network

FEBRUARY, 2000

www.ghglcc.org

volume 5, issue II

TAKING YOUR BUSINESS
INTO THE NEW
MILLENNIUM **3**

...INSIDE...

HEARTS
AFIRE **4**

KEEPING
ON TOP
OF THE FLU **9**

GREATER HOUSTON
GAY & LESBIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Board of Directors

President

Debra E. Hunt

Vice President

Richard Wiederholt

Secretary

Gordon Bayless

Treasurer

Rene Guerra

Sandi Bubbert

Marion E. Coleman

Phyllis Randolph Frye

Richard Hill

Randy Mitchmore D.D.S.

Anita Renteria

Coy Tow

Clyde Williams

Administrator

Kevin Davidson

Media Relations

Marion E. Coleman

Richard Wiederholt, Ed.D.

Membership

Debra E. Hunt

Program

Clyde Williams

Networking

Gordon Bayless

Community Affairs

Randy Mitchmore

Education

Coy Tow

Fund Development

Sandi Bubbert

Finance

Rene Guerra

Empower 2000

Marion E. Coleman

Coy Tow

Richard Wiederholt, Ed.D.

Ethics and Legal

Debra E. Hunt

Annual Membership Dues

Individual \$125.00

Business \$200.00

Corporation \$1,000.00

For membership information call

713.523.7576

P.O. Box 66129

Houston, Texas 77266-6129



Grabbing the Spotlight

How to Get Your Business the Media Attention it Deserves

Would you like to have your organization highlighted in the Houston Chronicle? How would you

like to see yourself featured in television or radio news stories? Are you making use of the Internet news sources that are available?

If you've often wondered how some businesses keep getting all the attention and others don't, there are many reasons why that happens over and over again. Sandy Rivera can tell you how to gain access to newsrooms all across the country.

You can get all that attention you want and more by understanding the way in which the media

works. There are certain 'rules of the game' and Sandy Rivera can teach you the tricks of the trade in an informative and entertaining way.

Her background as a television news anchor, reporter and talk show host coupled with her experience as the Chief Communications Executive and Press Secretary for the Houston Independent School District enables her to share her first hand knowledge of the media with her audiences.

Ms. Rivera will be the keynote speaker at the February monthly dinner meeting. She can be seen weekly at 11 a.m. Sunday mornings on the Newsmakers program on Channel 2, KPRC-TV. Ms. Rivera is married to Dexter Chinn, a local television producer and has a new daughter, Christy.

Is New DWI Law Protection or Trap?

By Attorney Clyde Williams, Board Certified by State Bar of Texas in Criminal Law

In September of 1999, the Texas Legislature passed a new law concerning the offense of driving while under the influence lowering the legal limit of intoxication from 0.10 % blood alcohol content to 0.08%. What does this mean to the host, hostess or partygoer? It's easier for the police to arrest and for prosecutors to convict persons who have had a drink or two but are not actually intoxicated or impaired.

The most widely used testing device is the breathalyzer. Studies even by local experts show that the breathalyzer consistently reads higher than a blood test. So the bottom line is that there is a high potential of being convicted of driving while intoxicated although one is not truly impaired. Of course no one disagrees that we need to protect citizens from persons who are impaired to the extent that they are a danger to themselves or others.

RSVP is required by February 3rd at 713-523-7576. It's extremely important for us to coordinate our number of participants. Please be responsible and make the RSVP call! The cost for the dinner meeting is \$22 for members and \$25 for non-members or guests.

GHGLCC News is underwritten by Shell Chemical Company

The Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce advances the economic and cultural development and vitality of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and supportive heterosexual businesses and organizations.

President's Message

I am so excited about the plans for the chamber this year. While most of you sloshed around in the rain or stayed home watching movies on Saturday, January 8, 2000, your chamber board members holed up at the Warwick and spent the better part of the day planning this year's projects agenda. Some of those projects include chamber-sponsored education seminars, participation in the pride parade, area membership luncheons, member discount cards, fund raising events, and of course Empower 2000.

During the next month, board members will be looking for committee members to help work these projects. I encourage you to donate some time and talent to one of our committees because that's how we get things done. If you have ever thought that there is a better way for us to be doing something, now is the time to get involved and show us how to do it. If there is a project you believe the chamber should tackle, call me or any other board member and we'll consider it at our next board meeting.

If you missed the January dinner meeting you really missed an incredibly interesting program. I talked to several folks ahead of time who questioned what a guy who works with the space program would have to say to a business group like ours.

Although I admit not many of our members have a pressing need to purchase a space walk anytime soon, I believe all of us who heard Jerry Miller's talk have a much better understanding of what it takes to make a space walk happen. The show-and-tell space suit alone was worth the price of admission!

(I sure am glad I don't have to type this article wearing one of those funky gloves.)

In addition to this month's speaker, our dinner program will include a raffle for a Valentine's Package for Two. Kudos to those chamber members who have donated items for the package. Please make plans to join us. You never know what you may learn or whom you may meet, and who knows - you may go home a winner!



Debbie Hunt

Member Bio



My name is Randy Mitchmore. Those of you who are aware of my existence probably know that I am a dentist. Although I will provide readers of this mini autobiography a brief overview of my business, I also intend to shed some light on how I have evolved as an individual and how that transformation has affected me personally and professionally.

My life journey has encompassed professional directives that can best be described as polar opposites

and personal affirmations that have been monumental and self fulfilling. As a native Houstonian, this journey relocated me to Austin, where I graduated from Austin High School prior to migrating to Georgetown, Texas to attend Southwestern Texas.

Ironically, my first career choice, believe it or not, was to be a Methodist Minister. The fact that I did not proceed in that direction can be attributed to the maturation process that college affords most students - the time required to grow emotionally and intellectually and reflect upon the path in life which we choose. It's too bad, however, that I wasn't in college long enough to figure everything out!

Nevertheless, what I did discover is that I like to work with people and that I intuitively have a basic service instinct that I needed to include in my chosen profession. And, I realized I wanted to model my life after a very important

mentor, Rev. W.C. Hall Jr., more than I was cut out to be a minister. Hence, I changed my major from pre-God to pre-Med and loved it.

I graduated from dental school at UT Houston. Upon completion, I lived and worked in the V.A. Hospital in exchange for room and board and my mode of transportation throughout was a bicycle. Those were some tough years. Subsequently, I got married and started my first practice in Cleveland, Texas.

I wanted a small life as long as it was close to a big city. I acquired advanced dental education at Institutes in Key Biscayne, Florida and Scottsdale, Arizona. As a result, I earned the title of a Fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry.

I always believed in the notion that it is important to give back to the community some of the goodness one has received. In Cleveland, I was involved in just about everything. From being a CubMaster for scouts to serving as a director of a bank. I was president of the Rotary Club and am still an active member there. My involvement also included a stint as the director for Tri-County Mental Health and Mental Retardation and participation in the Chamber of Commerce and public Library.

Analogously, being elected as a City Councilman for three consecutive terms was the most public of my community involvement. Epigrammatically, it was during my election campaigns that rumors of my sexual orientation were circulated by my opponents.

Keep in mind that I had a very successful dental practice and, for the most part, everything was going my way. But, I was not fulfilled. Yet, after fourteen years of marriage we were blessed with a baby girl, Emily. What a wonderful thing having a child is.

Continued on page 4

CHAMBER NEWS

Taking Your Business into the New Millennium

By David M. Hendrickson, III, P.A.-C.

The computers didn't crash, the lights stayed on and planes didn't fall out of the sky. The ATM's worked, the water still flowed from the tap. They didn't blow up Seattle or Times Square. Dick Clark is still alive and dropping the ball.

The new Millennium dawned with a yawn instead of a bang or a crash. What a good time to look back and see all that has been accomplished in the last one hundred years. Major triumphs over death and disease top the list.

The life expectancy in 1900 was 47 years old. It is now 77 years old. Infant mortality was 100 per 1000 live births in 1900. It is now only 7 per 1000 live births. In 1900 only 8% of homes were electrified. Now over 99% are electrified. The poverty rate in 1900 was 40%; it is now 13%. Eighty-eight percent of people now complete high school as opposed to only 34% in 1900.

These things we all take for granted need to be remembered as the clock rolls over.

In business, great strides - pros and cons - have taken place. The day of the romantic "robber baron" is gone. Large corporations with increasing large cash flows, greater buying power, and greater networking power dominate the business place. Large mergers and mega-companies dominate the large landscape. Major changes in telecommunications and the Internet have made the economy a truly global one.

Where does this leave the small business owner? With great opportunity and with some exposure. The travel industry has seen its profits slashed with the advent on online bookings. The advent of HMO's and managed care has left physician's office, true "mom and pop" operations, working harder and turning less profit.

All businesses have felt the impact of a strong economy, a tight labor market and E commerce directly or indirectly. If you have been thus far spared, it is time to prepare for the future. The Internet is not a fad; it is here to stay. As a small business you may not feel touched by e-commerce and the global economy, but your suppliers, vendors and customers are.

The dawn of a new age gives us pause and time to reflect. It almost commands reflection. Personal introspection is most important. It was Thoreau who said, "The unexamined life is the life not worth living". Personal reflection can lead to reflection and assessment of how one fits into the business world.

Critical assessments of your present operation systems can yield great results. Take a clean look at your business. Look at it with a critical eye even if you believe it is the best it can be. Everything can be made leaner, tighter and most profitable. Place it in the context of the global market. Define goals sharply. Develop long and short term strategies for the changing market place:

- What is the purpose of your business?

- Is it ready to meet the challenge of large corporate takeovers and e-commerce?
- Are you Internet savvy? Do you have a web site? More importantly, does your web site either sell product or increase your business? A cutesy little web page that produces nothing is useless.
- Where can expansion into a larger market take place? With the Internet you are no longer limited by location.
- Where can the fat be cut? How can you expand, cut, trim?

With the advent of the term "Human Resources" as opposed to personnel we see a major shift in business. Your greatest assets are the people that sell, trade, bargain, answer phones, and produce product. In this boom economy good staff is harder and harder to retain. Retraining new staff is costly. What are you doing to retain staff into the new age? Aggressive retention of staff will be the next great challenge of business. A personal pet peeve: I want to speak to a human when I call a business. The advent of voice mail has distanced the customer from the product.

Small businesses have an edge here. Small operations not taking volume calls can hire someone to answer the phone. Do it. It will insure customer satisfaction. Recently, we tried a voice messaging system at my office. With tongue planted firmly in cheek the message ran:

"You have reached the office of Drs. Blah, Blah, Blah. Please listen to the following menu options for our menu has changed. If you are having a heart attack, please press one. If you are having a stroke, press two. If you are depressed, press three. If you are experiencing Erectile Dysfunction, press four. If you have no insurance, hang up immediately and don't call back."

You get the idea. We did try voice mail in our small operation. Over a 6-month period, our patient base dropped almost 17%. The money spent on voice messaging was much better spent on a clerk to answer phones. We did that and business is up and running again.

So many small businesses are based on personal loyalties. In this ever changing and shifting economy, it is critical to expand customers' bases. A simple price shift can change a loyal customer into a customer of the competition. Broad consumer bases are essential; small business is still in the position to offer what large companies can't and what people want above all: personal, real and attentive customer service.

So as we enter a new age and new time, take this opportunity to take stock. Clearly define your business goals and its strategies within the context of a new business world. A good healthy economy may mean more income but it also may mean more competition and more competition for good staffing. See your business with a critical eye, become part of the global economy and expand, cut and trim.

Source: www.cato.org.pubs.pas.html

CHAMBER SPECIAL

February Meeting resolved to set some Members 'Hearts A'Fire'

The February Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Dinner meeting is pre-ordained to set some lucky members 'Hearts A'fire,' thanks to the generosity of several chamber members. In addition to the exciting prospect of inflaming your businesses marketability, those in attendance will have a chance to inflame the romance of their dating mates or significant others on St. Valentines Day.

With the demands of time required to manage a successful business, your Chamber realizes it can be difficult to find the time to ameliorate other tasks. So, we decided to ease the burden of having to plan your Valentine's Day itinerary. All you have to do is make a reservation for the February dinner meeting.

The Chamber Newsletter Committee sent an e-mail/fax to all Chamber members asking them to proffer something to the members that they can use to set their loved ones 'Hearts A'fire.' At press time, the Chamber has received the following:

- A \$100.00 Gift Certificate from Basic Brothers. The clothier has some of the most exciting attire in the city that is certain to set the flames of desire in any relationship.
- A 'Sweetheart Cake' from the "baker to the stars." The Acadian Bakery is renowned for its sinful delights. Owner Sandy Bubbert bakes a cake that will tantalize the palate and set the mood for a perfect evening of after dinner enjoyment.
- A Living Will provided by the president, Debbie Hunt. While on the outset, this does not appear romantic, it is indeed just that. The mere fact that your loved one wants to make sure that your interests as a couple are ensured is demonstrative of the deep rate of

commitment they have placed on your relationship.

- A night at the Sheraton Brook Hollow Hotel for 2. Need we say more? What better way to burn the passion than capping off an evening at this luxurious hotel with the individual who sets your 'Hearts A'fire.'
- A Stationary Package (letterhead, envelopes and business cards) from quality printing firm House of Coleman valued at \$350.00. The lucky winner of this gift certificate will be able to send their loved ones romantic correspondence year round to keep the romance aflutter.

Everyone who makes a reservation for the February Chamber Dinner meeting will have a chance to receive one of the aforementioned complimentary Valentine offerings. And, if your business wants to proffer something for the 'Hearts A'fire' promotion, there is still time to do so. Just contact Newsletter Chair Marion E. Coleman at House of Coleman, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 713.523.2521.

This month's meeting promises to be exciting and fun. That is the goal of Program Chair Clyde Williams and if you were at last month's meeting, you are well aware that she is serious about making our meetings a pleasure to attend.

So, make your reservations now and prepare for the possibility of leaving with the prospect of increasing media awareness for your business and romantic awareness from your partner with one of the many exciting gifts that we hope will indeed set your 'Hearts A'fire.'



Member Bio Continued from page 2

I truly believe life is a journey. That journey does not always go down the straight and brightly lit path. Sometimes it takes some turns through some dark forests.

When Emily was four, my wife and I divorced. It was one of those nasty, angry and expensive divorces. Indeed, the process invoked blackmail in an attempt to ruin me professionally with regard to the rumors of my being gay if I did not cooperate.

Needless to say, that was a dark time in my life. As though it wasn't enough that my family was broken up, my staff - a body of religious fundamentalists - quit because they could not support my "evil lifestyle." My practice was devastated and so was I.

In spite of the aforementioned, I can honestly state, and am happy to report, that I am on a journey of a wonderful new beginning. With the support of fellow chamber members Dr. Bruce Smith and Tony Carroll, I made the move to begin a practice in Houston. I could have never imagined how wonderful and fulfilling life can be when you are out and safe at work and home.

Before my new practice in Houston was ready, I joined the Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce and obtained a small booth at Empower '97, the annual business expo organized by

our Chamber at the George R. Brown Convention Center. I was very nervous. Trepidation aside, I spent the entire day passing out business cards and meeting people.

As a result, I had the good fortune to meet Marion Coleman and Bill Green, Robert Yale and Anita Renteria, and then-president Coy Tow. They helped encourage me to start my new practice and pointed me in all of the right directions. Accordingly, every chance I get, I use Chamber members, or other community businesses, when I need services or purchase items for work and home.

My new practice is wonderful and comfortably growing. I specialize in adult dentistry, which includes many cosmetic procedures as well as taking care of people that simply want to maintain good healthy teeth and gums. I have not absolved the Cleveland practice as of yet and continue to work there and at my Medical Center Practice.

Personally, I have started getting involved in my new community here. I am an active member at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, the Chamber and some parent groups. The Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce has worked for me!

(Dr. Mitchmore's practice is at 2617 W. Holcombe at Kirby, Suite E. He can be reached at 713.592.9300)

CHAMBER TRAVEL

Amsterdam in winter

By Dave Sharp

Europe in winter. In a word, cold. In another word, (very, very) cheap. I am a self-exposed Internet junkie. I email. I shop. I communicate. And, I conduct business through the web. However, when it comes to travel, I use the Internet as my resource and then go to my local travel agent and tell them what I want.

As a consumer, you have choices. You can call those minimum wage simpletons employed by the airlines and try to plan your trip or you can interact with a travel agent face to face. Personally, I prefer the second option – it's more friendly and accountable. Travel agents are still the best buy in travel today. They can put together a complete vacation.

Right now, Amsterdam is cold. You might even see snow. But that cold and dampness with fog rolling in over the canals give it a romance unlike any other European capital. Everyone speaks English, a plus. It is the Gay capital of Europe, another plus. With more canals than Venice and more museums than Paris and more nightclubs than New York, Amsterdam offers something for everyone.

KLM-Northwest Airline offers package deals that fly direct and nonstop from Houston. Consult your GHGLCC travel agent for details.

Amsterdam is a city with a split personality: It's a gracious, formal cultural center built on canals, and it's the most offbeat metropolis in the world. There is an incomparable romance about the canals at night and during the winter, not to mention a depth of cultural heritage in its great art museums. But, there is also a houseboat crawling with stray cats (Das Posen Boat) permanently parked in front of an elegant gabled canal house, and prostitutes displaying their wares in the windows facing the city's oldest church.

Only in Amsterdam can you marvel at the acoustics of the Concertgebouw one evening and be greeted by a hurdy-gurdy barrel organ pumping out happy tunes on the shopping street the next morning. When you know what to expect, Amsterdam is a delight to visit; when you don't, it can be disconcerting.

The city is laid out in concentric rings of canals around the old center, crosscut by a network of access roads and alley-like connecting streets. Visitors can easily see the city on foot, though there are also trams and water taxis for the weary. Most of the art museums are clustered conveniently at the edge of the canal district.



Amsterdam - Dam Square

This cobweb like layout of the city means that you can dart back and forth with ease, rather than having to confine your sightseeing to one specific area of town. Stay in the Central part of the city. This is a walking city. Go to Dam Square and marvel at the Queen's Palace, now open for tours. While on the Dam, check out the celebrated Madame Treadwell's wax museum.

Proceed to the Museum district. Go to Riskmeasum and behold Rembrandt's "Night watch". Across the street is the Van Gogh Museum with a starting collection. 'Must See' attractions include the Anne Frank house and a nearby monument built in honor of Gays who were killed in the concentration camps during WW II. The monument is on a canal and is composed of three large pink triangles.

For the strong of heart, the red light district has the infamous "ladies in the window". No cameras here please and one must be careful at night. The bulldog coffee shop is where one goes to partake of the government's latest supplies of Marijuana. Yes, it is legal here.

Nightlife abounds with small to large clubs. Curl up with a coffee in one of the cities infamous brown cafes. These are homey places that serve beer, liqueur and coffee. They are local hangouts, usually with the added décor of one or two cats sunning themselves in the windows.

The Netherlands is small, so day trips are very easy. The Hague is two hours by train, Brussels three hours, and Paris six. Partake of Amsterdam in winter; experience the romance, the culture and grandeur of the old world.

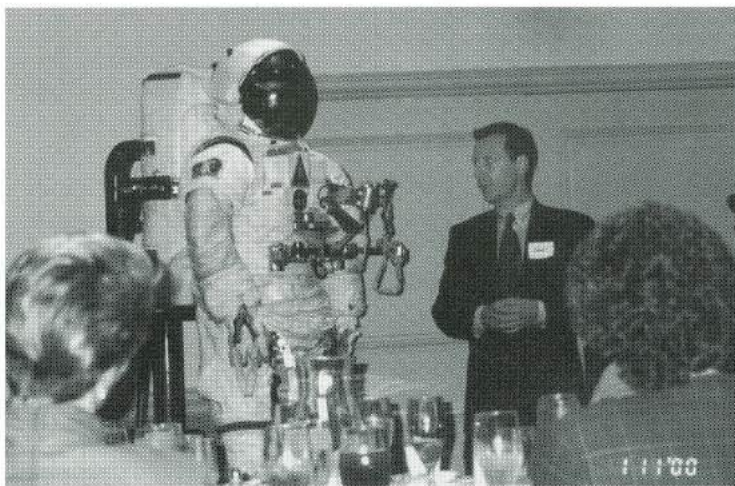
*With more canals
than Venice and
more museums
than Paris and
more nightclubs
than New York,
Amsterdam offers
something for
everyone.*

CHAMBER MEETING**Extraterrestrial January General Meeting***by Clyde Williams, Program Chair*

On January 10, 2000 Jerry Miller of NASA described how space work outside spaceships is accomplished. Mr. Miller heads up the extra vehicular activity program for NASA. His tenure with NASA dates back to the time of working with the Challenger crew in 1986.

Members of the chamber who attended the program were delighted to examine the space suit with all kinds of super equipment which Jerry explained. Most of the members actually viewed the space equipment up close and personal because of the interest Jerry generated. Hopefully we won't have too many little pink space suits from the next generation, just our fair share.

We learned how difficult it is to use the space suit especially in space because of the size, composition of the suit and variance in pressure from earth pressure. There is an additional problem associated with the inability of the wearer to actually have any physical clues as to their location in space. So one could easily say space work outside a space craft is a difficult task.



Jerry is responsible for teaching the astronauts how to accomplish projects in space like working on the Hubble Telescope. He spends many hours with customers who need help with their equipment in space whether it's a telescope or some satellite, defining what it is they need done. Then a plan

is made to accomplish the work, then the astronauts are brought in and taught how to do the work on earth. A lot of the activities are simulated under water using weights to assimilate conditions in space. Then, of course, that's not all. Jerry has to keep contact with them from NASA as they are actually in space doing whatever project needs to be done.

The most wonderful news, however, that Jerry brought to the chamber was that he is "out" at his work. So for those of you who missed the program, the above is a recap of some of the information we learned about an individual in our community who has a vital and stimulating job that affects what happens in outer space. Sorry you missed the January general program meeting. Each month the general membership program attempts to focus on an individual, business or organizational topic of interest to our diverse membership.

Photos by Trudy Denny

CHAMBER REVIEWS



The Houston Symphony Soars with Princess Leah's Mother

Miss Debbie Reynolds, born Mary Francis Reynolds on 4/1/32 in El Paso Texas graced Jones Hall with her presence and enormous talent. Singer, dancer and actress known for her tireless energy, wit, pertness, and staying power. Her films include *Singing in the Rain* (1952) *The Affairs of Dobbie Gillis* (1953) and *Goodbye Charlie* (1964) just to name a few. She also starred in *The Debbie Reynolds Show* (1969-1970). But she is best remembered for her live shows. Miss Reynolds has been in the biz for over 51 years. She has got it down pat.

Her venue in Houston was Jones Hall, an imposing hall to say the least. Miss Reynolds was dressed in a glittery three-piece royal blue outfit. Her skirt had a slit up one side, which showed off one leg, which looked rather inspiring since she is 67 years old. Liz Taylor is three months older as Miss Reynolds is quick to point out. She started off with happy songs because she likes her audience to be happy. She stopped mid song because she said everyone looked happy enough. She did a very funny rap number next set to her own music.

Autographed Photo Courtesy of Marion E. Coleman

She talked of many things with searing wit and great comedy. She talked of growing up poor in Texas. Her family moved to California when she was six. In California she won Miss Burbank after which her career took off and the rest is as they say, history. Miss Reynolds is a real piece of living, moving, shaking history.

Miss Reynolds constantly talked to her audience in her warm, friendly and affectionate way. She recounted her marriage to Eddie Fisher and poked fun at herself for marriage to a shoe magnate only to wind up losing it all again.

She gave impressions of Katherine Hepburn and Betty Davis. She recounted endless Hollywood glory day stories.

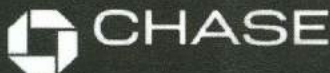
Miss Reynolds is a very funny lady.

Her most incredible impression was that of Barbara Streisand. Changing into a wig and a phony nose she spoke with that Streisand New York nasal twang and was amazing.

She returned in a black dress with a glittering jacket. Here she did a poor rendition of Liza's "I love a Piano". This led into her high point of the evening. She recounted how she lived near the late and great Miss Judy Garland and would listen to her sing. This led into her doing a medley of Garland great numbers. She was in her best voice for the night, the symphony not drowning her out for these numbers.

She is in good voice and throughout the show never missed a note. Her singing voice is still strong and clear albeit a little lower and huskier. She looks great and her acting, dancing and comedic talents allowed her to give the audience a funny and entertaining evening.

Brava, Miss Reynolds, Brava.



The right relationship is everything.SM

- ★ Loan by Phone 800-221-LEND
- ★ 24 Hour Customer Service . . 713-216-7000
- ★ Chase Mortgages 713-216-HOME
- ★ Small Business 713-216-1720
- Assistance Center
- ★ Hearing Impaired TDD 713-216-7146

Over 140 branches statewide
24-hour ATMs available at over
300 statewide locations

CHASE
P.R.I.D.E.

team

Where people make the difference

member FDIC



**AMERIQUEST
MORTGAGE
COMPANY**

Tommye L. Rodgers
Account Executive

1155 Dairy Ashford, Suite 214, Houston, TX 77079
Phone (281) 558-2223 Fax (281) 558-2227 Pager (281) 434-1190
Toll Free (888) 326-5407 www.ameritrust.net

computer



factory

**Custom
Configured Systems**

- Upgrades ● Peripherals
- Repairs ● Software

(713) 462-3453

13147 Northwest Freeway, #155
(290 at Holister)

CHAMBER FEATURE**Putting Your Best Face Forward**

By Trudy Denny

We all change over the years. We grow taller, gain weight, lose weight, change our hairstyle, add to or change our wardrobes, just to mention some physical changes. But one thing we will have for a lifetime is our skin. I believe women and men both want healthy-looking, smooth, beautiful skin.

One way to achieve this, of course, is to avoid prolonged exposure to the sun and to wear sunscreen when you are in the sun, even for short periods. Besides increasing the possibility of developing skin cancer, the sun also causes wrinkling, sagging, and premature aging.

Another way to achieve good skin is to cleanse well (not with soap, especially on the face). Some people think they have dry skin when it's the soap that is drying it out and after switching to a good cleanser, their skin returns to a normal state. Always use a moisturizer. Even oily skin needs moisture, not more oil, but moisture.

Using a mask or a scrub (be gentle please) cleans deep down in those pores and removes dead skin which accumulates if not removed. This is often the cause of breakouts on the face.

If you're thinking that it's too late for your skin, that it's beyond recovery - that is simply not true!

A good product containing alpha-hydroxy and other acids does a lot to minimize the visible signs of aging or past sun-damaged skin to improve the skin's overall appearance. If you are just starting to see the effects of the sun or aging on your skin, now's the time to start using such a product to slow down or prevent some of the process.

And don't neglect your body either. There are products to cleanse, moisturize, and even improve the skin all over.

For those of us who wear makeup, it looks a lot better on top of clean, healthy skin. For those who don't, you certainly want healthy and healthy-looking skin. So let's go out there and put our best face forward!

(Trudy Denny is an Independent Skin Care & Beauty Consultant for Mary Kay Cosmetics. For a consultation, call 713.522.9806)



Law Offices of
Clyde Williams

- CRIMINAL DEFENSE
- ASSAULT
- DRUGS/DWI
- PUBLIC LEWDNESS
- INDECENT EXPOSURE

1314 Texas Avenue • Suite 712 • Houston, Texas 77002 • 713-236-0064
Board Certified in Criminal Law by The Texas Board of Legal Specialization

BASIC
BROTHERS

YOUR OUT AND PROUD CLOTHING STORE

1232 WESTHEIMER, HOUSTON, TX 77006
713.522.1626 • FAX 713.526.1972

www.basicbrothers.com
email: basicbro@neosoft.com

MON-SAT 10-9 • SUN 12-6

GREENWHITE
ADVISORS

• FINANCIAL PLANNING
• INVESTMENTS
• RETIREMENT PLANNING
• ESTATE PLANNING

713.869.1144

Securities offered through Commonwealth Financial Network, Member NASD/SIPC

Bill Green, CPA, CFP
Sandy White, CFP, CFS

houston
voice

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

500 LOVETT BLVD., SUITE 200 • HOUSTON, TX • 713-529-8490
www.houstonvoice.com

CHAMBER HEALTH

Flu and the workplace

By: David M. Hendrickson, III P.A.-C.

Influenza-commonly called the "flu"- is one of the oldest and most common diseases known to man. It is presently making its annual appearance in Houston. As of the date of this publication, flu is present in only small numbers in Houston. The Dallas-Fort Worth area is reporting an active pandemic. There is still time to protect yourself.

Influenza was first reported by the "father of medicine," Hippocrates, in 412 BC and the first well-described pandemic of influenza occurred in 1580. Since that time, 31 such possible influenza pandemics have been reported, with three occurring in this century: 1918, 1957 and 1968.

The disease today still affects large sections of the population each year. Its ability to kill stems from the fact that the virus can mutate quickly, often producing new strains against which human beings have no immunity. When this occurs, mortality from influenza can be staggering such as the "Spanish Flu" pandemic of 1918-1929, when at least 20 million people died.

THE DISEASE

Influenza is an acute respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus A and B. Its effect on the work place during winter months is staggering. It is not unusual to have half the entire work force struck down by influenza. Untold is its loss to commerce. The sad part is that most influenza can be prevented. Influenza is transmitted through sneezing, coughing and casual contact. After a person has been exposed, symptoms usually appear in 2 to 4 days. The infection is considered contagious for another 3 to 4 days after symptoms appear.

SYMPTOMS

Fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches and extreme fatigue. Most people recover completely in 1-2 weeks. However, influenza can cause pneumonia and other complications in high-risk groups such as the elderly, children and the immune-compromised.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Each year scientists formulate a new vaccine made from a killed virus. This preparation is based on the strain expected to circulate at the time. Sometimes, an unpredicted strain appears after the vaccine has been made and results in people getting the flu even with the vaccine. However, the disease and its course is milder and some protection is afforded.

Since the immune system takes time to respond to vaccination, the inactivated vaccine should be given 6-8 weeks before flu season begins. The vaccine itself CANNOT CAUSE FLU. The most likely side effects of vaccination are a local soreness at the site. Very few people, but some, experience fever and sore muscles 6-12 hours after vaccination.

Getting your flu shot is the best protection. Having the whole

office or workplace vaccinated provides greater protection. The good news is it is not too late. Although most doctors' offices are no longer carrying the vaccine, it should still be available at the health department.

Getting a flu shot this late in the season may still prevent flu. However, your protection will not be as great as those people who were vaccinated 6-8 week before the onset of flu season. In addition, avoid large crowds during flu season, wash your hands often, stay away from persons with known flu and send them home if they are in the workplace. Get lots of rest and take 1000 mg of vitamin-C daily. All this will reduce your chances. However, remember that GETTING A FLU SHOT IS THE BEST PROTECTION.

TREATMENT

If you do get the flu, see your doctor within 48 hours. New medications are available that shorten the course and duration of the flu. However, they must be given within 48 hours of onset. Increase fluids, stay in bed and take OTC medications for fever. Antibiotics are not effective against the flu. Stay home until you are no longer infectious - 3 to 4 days after onset of symptoms.

Influenza is as old as mankind. In the past 50 years we have made great strides in medicine combating death and disease. The flu is now preventable and treatable. If more persons were vaccinated, fewer people would contact and spread the virus and business could go on as usual in the winter months.

Moreover, having a healthcare provider come to your workplace and offer Flu vaccine is a great idea whose time has come. The vaccine is available at minimal cost; one worker who does not contact the flu because of vaccine that you provided could make up the entire cost of immunizing the whole office. Think about it for next year.

SOURCES:

American Lung Association. (No date.). Influenza (flu) [Online]. Available: <<http://www.lungusa.org/learn/lung/lunifluenz.html>> [1999, Dec 1].

Arden, Nancy - MN, Brammer, Lynette - MPH, Fukuda, Keiji - MD, Regener, Helen - PHD, Schmeltz, Leone (1997.). Chapter 5: Influenza [Online]. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/manual/influenza/influenz.htm> <<http://www.cdc.gov/nip/manual/influenza/influenz.htm>> [1999, Dec 1].

Billings, Molly. (No date.). The Influenza Pandemic of 1918 [Online]. Available: <<http://www-leland.stanford.edu/~uda/flu.html>> [1999, Dec 1].

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1997.). INFLUENZA SUMMARY UPDATE - UNITED STATES (for the week ending November 15, 1999-Week 46) [Online]. Available: <<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>> [1999, Dec 1].

Gladwell, Malcom, "The Dead Zone", The New Yorker Magazine, September 29, 1997

Kimball, J. (1997.). The "Flu" [Online]. Available: <<http://www.ultranet.com/~jkimball/BiologyPages/I/Influenza.html>> [1997, Dec 1].

World Health Organization. (1997.). Emerging and Other Communicable Diseases (EMC) INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE [Online]. Available: <http://www.who.ch/programmes/emc/flu/flu.htm> <<http://www.who.ch/programmes/emc/flu/flu.htm>> [1999, Dec 1].

Investment in knowledge pays the best dividends - Anonymous

New & Renewing Members

The following companies and organizations have realized the importance of economic growth and development for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. They have pledged their continued support by investing their time and efforts in the Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Please support your community by calling on these companies when you have a need for their products and services.

Council, Kenneth D.
CPA

Member Since 01/01/1996
Ken Council
1609 Woodhead
Houston, Texas 77019-5335
(713) 309-4667

Epicurean Publicist, The
Restaurant Marketing and Public
Relations
Member Since 12/01/1995
Dick Dace
1418 Vermont #5
Houston, Texas 77006-1055
(713) 6835133
DickDace@pdq.com

Thermoplastic Fabrication, Inc.
Manufacturer
Member Since 12/01/1995
Don Hauboldt
7402 Shady Villa Lane
Houston, Texas 77055
(713) 7475410

Hubbard Financial Services, Inc.
Tax & Bookkeeping Service
Member Since 12/01/1995
Kathy Hubbard
PO Box 66588
Houston, Texas 77266-6588
(713) 5229000
Khubbard@HubbardFinancial.com

Williams, Clyde, Attorney-at-Law
Attorney, Criminal Defense
Member Since 12/01/1995
Clyde Williams
1314 Texas Avenue #712
Houston, Texas 77002
(713) 2360064
chwlaw@hypercon.com

Gilmer, M.D., P.A., William S.
Physician
Member Since 01/01/1996
William Gilmer, M.D.
1213 Hermann Drive #745
Houston, Texas 77004
(713) 5205155

Today's Health Center
Chiropractor/Acupuncture
Member Since 12/02/1996
Daniel A. Boudreaux, D.C.
5225 Katy Freeway, Suite 460
Houston, Texas 77007
(713) 8804444
drdaniel@goforhealth.com

Premier Fine Flooring
Floor Covering
Member Since 11/01/1999
Rick Taylor
6110 Pinemont #110
Houston, Texas 77092
(713) 290-9100
rickt@premierfineflooring.com

It is not the strongest of the
species that survive, nor the
most intelligent, but the one
most responsive to change.

— Charles Darwin

RICHARD HILL

SWILLEY-HUDSON'S
#1
SELLING AGENT



QUALITY STANDS OUT!™

**BUYING, SELLING, AND
RELOCATION SPECIALIST!**

713.869.6142

Voice Mail
713-642-4300

View our web page at
www.RichardHill.com

Email: Richard@RichardHill.com

Swilley & Hudson
& ASSOCIATES INC. - REALTORS

CAROLYN L. GARDINER, M.D., P.A.
INTERNAL MEDICINE
BOARD CERTIFIED

411 W. 21st, Suite 2
Houston, TX 77008

Tel: 713.802-9740
Fax: 713.863-9321

INVESTIGATIONS & CIVIL PROCESSING



GRIFF

Kathy Griffin

4106 McDuffie
Houston, Texas 77098
Email: kgriff@pdq.net

(713) 526-7711
FAX: (713) 526-7730
Pager: (713) 285-8869

F E B R U A R Y						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Dinner Meeting Guest Speaker Sandi Rivera Social 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm	8 Networking Breakfast 7:30am Le Peep S. Shepherd at Greenbriar	9	10	11 Newsletter Deadline	12
13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Board Meeting 6:30pm Location TBA	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29			Black Tie November 11	Christmas SongFest December 12

River Oaks ANTIQUES CENTER

Roger Howard
An accredited member
of the International
Society of Appraisers

2030 Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77098
713.520.8238

We must BE the change we wish to see.

—M Ghandi



JOEL ANDERSON
DARYL HICKMAN

PO BOX 1024
HOUSTON, TX 77251
713.350.0555 T
713.350.0556 F

Microsoft Certified
Professional
Systems Engineer

TIBURONSYS.COM
NEW COMPUTERS • NETWORKS • SERVICE



IMAGE CLEANERS

George Froming
owner

3407 Montrose Boulevard
Suite B4
Houston, Texas 77006

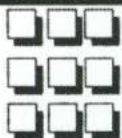
713.527.0880 tel
713.527.0119 fax



HUBBARD

Financial Services, Inc.

Bookkeeping and Tax Service



KATHY HUBBARD, EA
(713) 522-9000
FAX: (713) 526-6588

2615 MONTROSE BOULEVARD
PO BOX 66588 ♦ HOUSTON, TX 77266-6588

Announcements

Notes From the Board

The board of directors is always available to listen to your ideas, suggestions, or concerns about our growing organization. If you would like to address the board at a board meeting, call the hotline at 713-523-7576 and ask to be put on the agenda to speak at a board meeting held the 2nd Monday of each month.

The board is currently looking for members interested in becoming more involved in our chamber. If you are interested in participating, or you know of anyone who is, please contact President Debbie Hunt at 713-522-4282. Positions available include committee chairs, committee members, and/or any other assistance a member would be willing to provide to the chamber.

Newsletter Advertising

Here we grow! Our newsletter has increased to 12 pages, thanks to member advertising and article contributions. Remember, this is your newsletter, so if you have a submission you'd like included, contact the newsletter committee. A one-month business card-size ad is only \$30. If you reserve between 3-6 months, the monthly rate is only \$25, and if you reserve space for 7-12 months, your monthly rate is only \$20. Call Marion E. Coleman at the House of Coleman at 713-523-2521.

Deadline for materials is the second Thursday of the month prior to publication.

CHAMBER TIPS

Planning Pays: Pet Insurance is increasingly worth while because of rising veterinary bills – especially for animals that are very young or old. Ask your veterinarian to estimate typical medical expenses for a pet like yours – and if he/she recommends any particular policy. Basic plans cover illness and injury. More expensive policies cover dental and wellness services, including annual checkups and immunizations.



Stuart Little

E-MAIL: ghglcc@neosoft.com OR info@ghglcc.org



**P.O. Box 66129
Houston, Texas
77266-6129**



Address Correction Requested

GHGLCC NEWS

the impact network

MARCH, 2000

www.ghglcc.org

volume 5, issue III

EUROPE'S
NEW
BOOM TOWN

4

...INSIDE...

STOCK PICKS FOR THE
NEW MILLENNIUM

7

CHER AND
BEA ARTHUR
IN CHICAGO

9



GREATER HOUSTON
GAY & LESBIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Board of Directors

President

Debra E. Hunt

Vice President

Richard Wiederholt

Secretary

Gordon Bayless

Treasurer

Rene Guerra

Sandi Bubbett

Marion E. Coleman

Phyllis Randolph Frye

Richard Hill

Randy Mitchmore D.D.S.

Anita Renteria

Coy Tow

Clyde Williams

Administrator

Kevin Davidson

Media Relations

Marion E. Coleman

Richard Wiederholt, Ed.D.

Membership

Debra E. Hunt

Program

Clyde Williams

Networking

Gordon Bayless

Community Affairs

Randy Mitchmore

Education

Coy Tow

Fund Development

Sandi Bubbett

Finance

Rene Guerra

Empower 2000

Marion E. Coleman

Coy Tow

Richard Wiederholt, Ed.D.

Ethics and Legal

Debra E. Hunt

Annual Membership Dues

Individual \$125.00

Business \$200.00

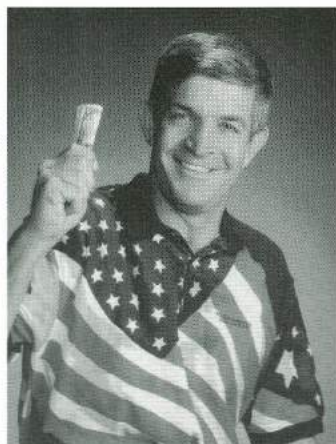
Corporation \$1,000.00

For membership information call

713.523.7576

P.O. Box 66129

Houston, Texas 77266-6129



CHAMBER SPOTLIGHT

Houston's "MAC" to Keynote Chamber Dinner

by JC Michalek
Newsletter Editor

HOUSTON – McIngvale, more commonly referred to as "Mattress Mac," is the founder and co-owner (with his wife, Linda) of Gallery Furniture in Houston. Legend has it that the highly successful entrepreneur began his venture with five thousand dollars and a dream. To his credit, that dream has become a reality.

Insomniacs have seen him on television for years. His name is synonymous with success. His philanthropy is well documented. And, he hangs out with the likes of Chuck Norris, a.k.a. *Walker, Texas Ranger* on the CBS hit series of the same name. Come Monday, it's Big "Mac" time.

James (Jim) F. McIngvale, the self-propelled king of furniture stores in the Lone Star State will be the keynote speaker at this month's Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (GHGLCC) dinner meeting, March 6, 2000.

Gallery Furniture is recognized as the most successful single furniture store based on sales per square foot of showroom. Since its inception in 1981, sales have increased to more than \$100 million annually.

The success of Gallery Furniture is truly a representation of who "Mac" really is. Dedicated to his customers, employees and family, McIngvale knows no boundaries when it comes to the oft forgotten phrase

Continued on page 5

CHAMBER EDITORIAL

Wooing the Gay Consumers

by David Sharp

HOUSTON - It is time to ask hard questions and get hard answers. The Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce's primary function should, and needs to be, the promotion of businesses that are gay owned and operated and/or gay friendly. The key here

is to get the gay community to patronize your business above, but not to the neglect of, others. How do we get to this point?

As responsible gay consumers, the majority of us, myself included, have consulted a gay and lesbian phone directory when seeking a product or service. Now, as a chamber member, I consult the chamber's Resource Guide. This is out of a sense of community and brotherhood

continued on page 3

RSVP is required by March 3rd at 713-523-7576. It's extremely important for us to coordinate our number of participants. Please be responsible and make the RSVP call! The cost for the dinner meeting is \$22 for members and \$25 for non-members or guests.

GHGLCC News is underwritten by Shell Chemical Company

The Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce advances the economic and cultural development and vitality of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and supportive heterosexual businesses and organizations.

CHAMBER PRESIDENT**Take the 'Empower' Plunge before its too late**

by Debbie Hunt
President, GHGLCC

HOUSTON – They say time flies when you're having fun. Time also flies when you plan and host a big event like EMPOWER 2000. Although it's only March, the first important Empower deadline happens this month.

If you want to get in on the advance registration discount, return your paid booth reservation form before March 15th. By the time I write to you next month the price will have gone up! If you need a registration form, please call the Chamber phone line and let us know where to send it.

Last month's general membership meeting was once again very informative and entertaining. Sandy Rivera gave us several insiders' tips about dealing with the media, and the audience got a chance to talk with her about the media's perception of our community. It was a terrific learning experience for all of us. Congratulations to those lucky winners of the "Hearts A Fire" giveaways.

If you have gotten this far in reading your newsletter you know by now that this month's speaker is Jim "Mattress Mac" McIngvale. Mr. McIngvale is more famous nationwide for his

rag to riches success story, but he has also gained community notoriety for his generous contributions to Pride celebrations and other worthy causes. Be sure to make your reservations for what promises to be a well-attended dinner meeting.

Besides dinner meetings and the Empower event, members may also take advantage of promoting business and individual efforts through newsletter advertising, member profiles, Resource Guide advertising, ribbon cuttings, and hosting chamber socials, to name a few. Call the Chamber phone line @ 713-523-7576 for more information on any of these services.

Committee chairs are hard at work on this year's tasks and projects. If you can contribute some time, energy, and ideas to a committee or project, let us know. If you want to help out but don't know where to start, call me directly and I'll find a place for you. Have a great St. Patrick's Day and we'll see you at this month's meeting.



Debbie Hunt

CHAMBER PROFILE**Consulting, Hypnotherapy, Health Care and Humor?**

HOUSTON – As a professional healthcare specialist, hypnotherapist, humorist and consultant, Lois Kemp keynotes across the country sharing her involvement in the aforementioned arenas cumulatively for nearly 30 years.

The founder and proprietor of Kemp Consulting in 1990, Ms. Kemp has an extensive background in Critical Care Nursing and hospital administration in addition to her three-decade involvement in healing arts.

"Hypnotherapy is transforming many aspects of the health and counseling professions. There is overwhelming evidence that holistic, mind-body approaches strengthen our internal healing abilities," Ms. Kemp responds when asked about Hypnotherapy.

"Through the natural, relaxing process of Hypnosis," she continues, "you may stop smoking, sleep better, manage pain, cope with life-challenging illness, prepare for stressful events such as exams, surgery, chemotherapy treatments, job interviews, and much more."

Ms. Kemp integrates her extensive training, education and experience when working with her clients. With a Bachelors Degree in Nursing, a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology, certification as a Clinical Hypnotherapist by the American

Council of Hypnotist Examiners, and over 400 hours of Psychodrama training, Ms. Kemp has directed Psychodrama training in Moscow, Russia, and is an instructor at the University of California - Davis, extension program.

The focus of her private practice, now celebrating its tenth year, is holistic, supportive and change-oriented. Ms. Kemp believes that while working hard in the outer world, it is important to pay attention to the world "within" our lives.

"You may free yourself of limiting habits and beliefs, increase confidence, make life transitions, heal relationships and experience a higher level of energy in a comfortable, supportive atmosphere" she informs.

"You may free yourself of limiting habits and beliefs, increase confidence, make life transitions, heal relationships and experience a higher level of energy in a comfortable, supportive atmosphere" she informs.

(Ms. Kemp may be reached at her office, 713.524.1771, or mobile phone, 281.384.1325. Kemp Consulting is located at 1712 Fairview in Houston, Texas)



Lois Kemp

CHAMBER NEWS

April, May and June Dinner Meetings to be held at Sonoma's

MONTROSE – Sonoma's Restaurant, a fine cuisine gay friendly New York style supper club, will host the April, May and June monthly Chamber dinner meetings. The site was selected for several reasons, most important being it's gay owned and supportive of the community. Future Dinner meeting locations will be determined by the board of directors based on comments and suggestions from the membership following the three month trial period at Sonoma's.

Poll: Members Prefer Meeting on Tuesday

HOUSTON – In a poll conducted by the GHGLCC, the membership overwhelmingly voted to move the monthly Chamber Dinner Meetings to Tuesday, beginning in April. The March meeting with furniture maven Jim "Mac" McIngvale will take place Monday, March 6, 2000 at the Warwick Hotel.

Protesters Condemn Exxon Mobile Corporate Decision

HOUSTON – For the second time in as many months, an Equality Rally has been held to protest the decision of Exxon Mobil

Corporation to rescind their Domestic Partner Benefits policy in the workforce. The organization, Equality Rally Team, held its first protest January 28 drawing a crowd of nearly 100 protesters.

At press time, it was not known how many attended the second rally, aptly titled Equality Rally II. What is known however is that the boycott of Exxon Mobil will continue until the Houston based corporation reverses its decision and reinstates the provision covering domestic partners. Organizers are urging every gay consumer to cut their Exxon Mobil credit cards in half and mail them to the corporate headquarters in protest of their conduct.

New Communications Network Promises to Give Back to Community

HOUSTON – CCN, a.k.a. Community Communications Network, a new virtual network telecommunications company plans to market its services to gay consumers by pledging to share a percentage of profits with a community related non-profit organization. The firm claims to offer the latest state of the art communications, including "shadow service," while providing its clients with the satisfaction of knowing a portion of their money is being reinvested in the gay community. According to Jan Roberts, special markets coordinator at CCN, the company plans to directly market to gay consumers within the next few months.

CHAMBER EDITORIAL *continued from page 1*

– it allows us to feel connected to one another. However, this sense of brotherhood will only take gay commerce so far.

Gay businesses need to provide the best product at the best prices to compete. How many times have you been disappointed when you've conducted business with gay owned businesses? Many of us have attempted to support such businesses, only to get a bad deal.

Case in point: Recently, My partner and I decided the time was right to combine households. Like the good loyal gay men we are, we consulted the Gay Yellow pages. We contracted with a gay owned and operated moving company, which shall remain nameless. Moving day came, and we knew there was trouble when 3 handsome men appeared at my house dressed to go clubbing. It was obvious from first glance they had no intentions of moving anything.

The crew immediately proceeded to hem and haw over the fact that there was too much to move even though they had been told the precise amount of furniture to be moved in a phone consultation. I promptly showed them the door, albeit reluctantly, because the furniture needed to be moved. They insisted my household would take several days to move.

Furious yet determined, my lover contacted several moving services in the mainstream phone directory and remarkably was able to ameliorate our dilemma. Salvation came in the form of an older black gentleman with a rented truck and an illegal alien as an assistant. They were quick, respectful and half the price of the club queen movers. In essence, the two men were able to move in four hours what three men claimed would be an eight-hour job, at minimum. To be sure, this does not construe that all gay businesses are irresponsible; nevertheless, this experience was a tremendous disappointment.

Gay business can rely on the community's sense of brotherhood to perhaps get a foothold. After that, they must provide competitive services at a fair and reasonable price that appeal to all consumers. What the businesses give back to the community, however, are

important. When I see a caterer or a business at a charity function and I know that they are supporting the less fortunate among us, I remember that business and try to trade with them.

Now I have a confession to make. As much as I try to patronize gay owned businesses and my community, when it becomes clear that I can get a better deal elsewhere, I defect. Case and point: I patronize gay owned and friendly bookstores that have gay themed books not available anywhere else. However, I do not buy my New York Times bestsellers there. I can get them 30% off down the street at a mainstream bookstore. I am sure the hope of the owner is that if I am there already I will just pick up my New York Times Bestseller. NOT!! I may be gay, but I am not stupid. And, to be honest, there is a little part of me that thinks they think I am stupid. Another matter that gay owned businesses should take into consideration is that not all gay consumers want to be "outed" as they walk in the door of your establishment. Don't fawn and scream "sister girl". Indeed, they may be patronizing your business with a co-worker or business associate who they have not 'come out' too. Many gay consumers merely want to support their community, but they also want to be treated with the same respect and courtesy they are afforded at any other establishment.

Moreover, eye candy is all well and good in gay businesses as well as straight. Yes, marketing studies have proven over and over that sex sells. But guess what? When the eye candy supersedes service and quality, the technique becomes ineffectual. Face it, most consumers, gay or straight, know that that really young, really cute guy or gal is not going to sleep with them because they buy a shirt or a book from them. Is it easy and pleasant to look at? Yes. Does it sell the product? No. In business, we are here to work, not date.

You can expect me as a gay consumer to try you once. Then my obligation ends and you must show me that you are a fair and honest business, competitive and support the community. Therein lays the key to successful business. Really relatively simple, don't you think? *(The views and opinions of this author do not necessarily reflect the views of the GHGLCC or its members.)*

CHAMBER TRAVEL

Europe's New Boom Town

by David Sharp



Dublin, Ireland — As Saint Patrick's Day nears along with visions of the Saint chasing snakes out of Ireland, now is the perfect time to consider a trip to Dublin, Ireland.

At press time of this printing, round trip airfare on KLM (Royal Dutch Airlines) is about \$600.00 from Houston. Air Lengus, the national airline of Ireland is also running specials.

Today, Europe's most intimate capital has become a boomtown—presently undergoing the most dramatic period of transformation since the Georgian era.

Dublin is riding high on the back of the Celtic Tiger (as the roaring Irish economy has been nicknamed). Massive construction cranes are hovering over both shiny new hotels and old Georgian houses.

Irish culture is in. Patriot Michael Collins has become a Hollywood box-office star; Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes* conquered the American best-sellers lists, and *Riverdance* has become a worldwide tear-jerking Old Irish mass-jig.

Because of these and other attractions, travelers are coming to Dublin in ever-greater numbers.

So, don't be surprised if you stop to consult your map in Temple Bar — the city's most happening neighborhood — and are swept away by the ceaseless flow of bustling crowds.

Dublin has transformed into an immensely entertaining, attractive city—all the more amazing considering its tender size. Originally a Viking community, Dublin is situated on the banks of the River Liffey, which divides the city north and south.

The city's liveliest round-the-clock spots, including Temple Bar and Grafton Street, are both on the south side, although a variety of construction projects on the north side are helping to bolster areas that have not typically been on visitors' paths.

The majority of the city's most notable buildings date from the 18th century — the Georgian era — and, although many of its finer Georgian buildings disappeared in the redevelopment of the '70s, enough remain, mainly south of the river, to recall the elegant Dublin of centuries past.

Literary Dublin can still be recaptured by those who follow the footsteps of Leopold Bloom's progress, as described in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Trinity College, alma mater of Oliver Goldsmith, Jonathan Swift, and Samuel Beckett, among oth-

ers, is a green, Georgian oasis, alive with young students scurrying to and from, just like generations of aspiring scholars before them.

Perhaps the most important thing to do in Ireland is see the neighborhood pubs. Legendary in truth and in fiction, it is highly recommended that you go to one of the local pubs, if for nothing else but to soak up local color.

Behavioral studies have shown that much can be learned from, and told about, people by where they drink and with whom they socialize. Nowhere is this more prevalent than in Ireland.

Renowned for its literary achievements both in fact and fiction, Dublin is a walking city. Most attractions are accessible on foot. If you encounter a rainy afternoon (very likely in Ireland) spend it in the Dublin Writers Museum.

The restored 18th-century townhouses on the north side of Parnell Square, an area rich in literary associations, lodge one of Dublin's finest cultural sights.

Rare manuscripts, diaries, posters, letters, limited and first editions, photographs and other mementos commemorate the lives and works of the nation's greatest writers (and there are many of them, so make allowances for plenty of time) including Joyce, Shaw, Wilde, Yeats, and Beckett.

Readings are held in the upstairs drawing rooms, gorgeously decorated with paintings and bas-relief wall decorations. The bookshop and café makes this an ideal place to spend a rainy afternoon.



Dublin City Center Photo Credit: Preview Travel, Inc.

The North side city center is a mix of densely thronged shopping streets and run-down sections of once genteel homes. Nevertheless, there are some classic sights here, including some gorgeous Georgian monuments — the Custom House, The

General Post Office, Parnell Square, and the Hugh Lane Gallery. And be sure to visit two landmarks celebrating literary Dublin — the Dublin Writer's Museum and the James Joyce Cultural Center, hub of Blooms day celebrations.

Most travelers begin heading up O'Connor Street to Parnell Square and the heart of James Joyce country. "In Dublin's fair city — where girls are so pretty" went the centuries-old ditty about Ireland's historic capital.

Dublin is still one of the most charming cities in Europe, resplendent in parts of dignity and elegance of the 18th century, primarily by virtue of the elegant Georgian style art and architecture, which flowered in the city between 1714 and 1820 during the English reigns of the three Georges.

CHAMBER TRAVEL

South of the Liffey are the graceful squares and fashionable terraces from Dublin's elegant heyday. Interspersed with some of the city's leading sights, this area is perfect for an introductory city tour.

Many travelers begin at O'Connell Bridge — as Dublin has no central focal point. Most natives regard it as the city's Piccadilly Circus or Times Square—then head south down Westmoreland Street to Parliament House.

If you are in the area near 12 Westmoreland Street, drop in on Bewley's Coffee House, an institution that has been supplying Dubliners with coffee and buns since 1842. Open Monday-Saturday 9-5:30, its historic interior evokes the Dublin of everyone's dreams.



Trinity College

Check out Trinity College on your voyage — the Book of Kells, Ireland's greatest artistic treasure, is on view there. Then head eastward to Merrion Square and the National Gallery, south to St. Stephen's Green and Fitzwilliam Square, then west

to Dublin's two beautiful cathedrals — Christ Church and St. Patrick's — before heading back north for supper in a Temple Bar restaurant overlooking the Liffey. "An absolute avalanche of new hotels" characterized the Irish Times, in an April 1997 article on Dublin's hotel boom. New lodging establishments are being built in all areas of the city, including a fair number in Ballsbridge, an inner "suburb" that's a 20-minute walk from the city center.



The Book of Kells, an intricately illustrated version of the Gospels, is housed in Trinity College Library. Photo Credit: Preview Travel, Inc.

The boom in construction is a response both to Dublin's thriving business climate and its draw for visitors whose only business is fun. What this means is that for all the supply of new rooms, rates are still high at the best hotels by the standards of any major European or American city. Service charges range from 15% in expensive hotels to zero in modern and inexpensive ones. Be sure to inquire at the time of booking.



The newly gentrified Temple Bar district, home to great shopping and some of Dublin's most popular watering holes. Photo Credit: Preview Travel, Inc.

Many hotels offer a weekend, or "B&B" rate that is often 30%-40% cheaper than the ordinary rate; some hotels also offer a midweek special that provides discounts of up to 35%. These rates are available throughout the year but are harder to get during high season. If you've rented a car and you're not stay-

ing at a hotel with secure parking facilities, it's worth considering a location out of the city center, such as Dalkey or Killiney. The surroundings are more pleasant and you won't have to worry about stashing your car on city streets, as parking can be difficult to find.

Enjoy modern and revitalized Europe at its best; see castles from old time lore, walk the paths of literary genius and have a few at the pub. Enjoy Dublin, rich in history, rich in future.



CHAMBER SPOTLIGHT...Continued from page 1

'hard work.' Ironically, while most businessmen do not share their recipe for success, "Mac" made, and kept, a commitment to helping others meet and exceed their own dreams and expectations.

It is a recipe with several key ingredients that is sure to make his address at the Dinner Meeting sumptuous indeed. The furniture maven will also share some of his thoughts on other topics as well. His vision is clear and precise. Having made more than 2,000 speeches to area schools, McIngvale has often articulated his formula for success to America's youth: Don't do drugs. Stay in school. And, make a commitment to hard work and dedication.

His philanthropy well documented, "Mac" has always championed those less fortunate. Each Christmas, Gallery Furniture gives furniture to 15 needy families. The store has raised money for the Selena Foundation, donated money to the Houston Live Stock Show and Rodeo and sponsored the event's Black Heritage Day, and proffered numerous contributions for the purchase of new equipment and other learning tools by Houston's inner-city schools. He is also an ardent supporter of Chuck Norris' "Kick Drugs out of America" Foundation.

No matter where you turn, or where you look for that matter, you can see the effect that Gallery Furniture (hence, the McIngvales) has had on Houston and Texas. Now, you can meet the man behind the empire and hear him talk about the methods he used to make sure his dream did not become a nightmare.

Image...
until they get
to know you,
it's what's on the
surface that counts.

David E. Coleman
PROPRIETOR



With that, do you want your image quickly splashed on paper? Or do you want House of Coleman to ink a better job?

House of Coleman
Fine Printing & Graphics

901 WEST ALABAMA • HOUSTON, TX 77006-4693
713.523.2521 • FAX 713.524.2643

CHAMBER FEATURE

Local Antique Proprietor Reaches his 'Impossible Dream'

by JC Michalek

HOUSTON – It was August 1998. One of Houston's biggest antique centers celebrated its official Grand Opening at an impressive, if not arresting, new 15,000 square foot location near Montrose. An antique lover's paradise, the new Center was relocated to 2030 Westheimer, one block east of Shepherd.

What makes the grand opening of River Oaks Antiques Center so remarkable? Its history. The event marked the twenty-first anniversary of owner Roger Howard's foray into the business of antiques, a business that he readily admits he had little or no knowledge of.

Mr. Howard's two-decade involvement in the antique genre began by chance and took a roller coaster ride to its own destiny. In 1975, with little knowledge of the antique business, Mr. Howard embarked on a journey that began with a small pink glass he inherited from an old house owned by his relatives in Kansas. Inheriting that home turned out to be a lesson on the value of antiques that was instrumental.

Figuring that the glass was practically worthless (estimating its value at three dollars), along with the other items in the home, Mr. Howard decided to sell the estate and move to Houston. Unfamiliar with such transactions, he hired an antiques expert he was familiar with to handle the sale. The first item to sell was, you guessed it, the glass. It turned out that the glass was an authentic pink depression glass and sold for two hundred dollars.

"I was amazed," Mr. Howard says. "I had no idea that glass was so valuable and I began wondering how much the other antiques would bring."

In completion, the estate produced many other equally impressive sales. But it was the sale of the small pink glass that eventually led to the establishment of one of Houston's most respected antiques centers.

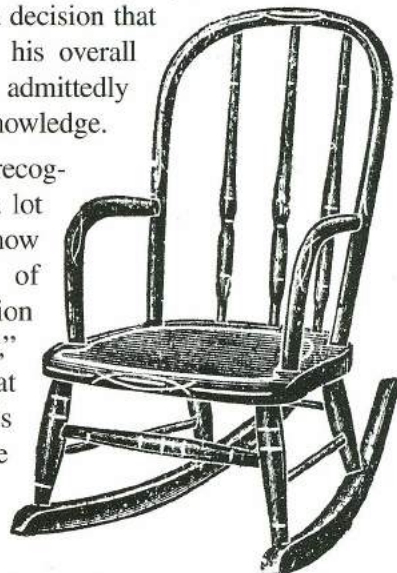
With his interest in antiques sparked, Mr. Howard moved to Houston in 1976, took a fulltime job purchasing oilfield equipment for a local company, and spent evenings and weekends buying antiques at estate and garage sales learning all he could about the business as he went along.

Setting up his first shop in 1977 (located at the old Addicks Flea Market on Highway 6) to be opened on weekends only, Mr. Howard periodically continued to lease other booths at similar locations around the Bayou City. Then he met Don and Katy Pearson, a Minnesota couple who envisioned an "antiques only" mall in the area, an idea that both intrigued and fascinated him.

"I had been steadily improving the quality of my merchandise," Mr. Howard informed. Acknowledging it was becoming "more and more difficult to sell higher priced antiques in a flea market-type atmosphere," he teamed up with the Pearson's and they opened 'Antique World' at the Meyerland Shopping Center.

Indicative of successful entrepreneurs, Mr. Howard eventually expanded his business even further. He began selling his wares at prestigious antique shows in Atlanta, Chicago, Denver and Miami. It was a decision that had a profound impact on his overall success in an industry he admittedly embarked upon with little knowledge.

"Selling at internationally-recognized shows... taught me a lot about market values and how greatly the popularity of antiques varies from one region of the country to another," Mr. Howard explained. "That kind of information is extremely important because it tells an antiques dealer how to buy for his shop and shows. Without it, he can make the mistake of buying antiques which are either overpriced for his market or have limited popularity."



In 1987, Houston appraiser Bill Boyd approached Mr. Howard about leasing a booth in his just-opened River Oaks Antiques Center. A smaller facility, it was located at 2119 Westheimer. Boyd's plan was to lease booth space to an exclusive group of better quality antique dealers.

"Bill wanted [his Center] to surpass all other antiques malls. He saw it as a venue for a more upscale type of customer, and my shop fit the bill," Mr. Howard explains. "My antiques just weren't right in a place where other dealers were selling everything from Barbies to California Raisins merchandise. Bill wouldn't be leasing to those sorts of dealers, so I decided to jump on board."

It was the decision that made the aforementioned profound impact. Still working fulltime in a business (oilfield equipment) that had fallen on hard times, Mr. Howard counted himself fortunate when Mr. Boyd offered him a partnership in his business.

"It seemed like the right time and the right thing to do," surmised Mr. Howard. "So I sold nearly everything I owned to get the money I needed and moved into a tiny garage apartment. From that point on everything fell into place."

Indeed. Within months, Mr. Howard decided to buy out Mr. Boyd. The Center flourished and, at one time, he had thirty antiques dealers under his domain. But the economy turned downward in the late 80's, forcing some of his dealers out of business and thereby prompting Mr. Howard to make yet another important decision.

"As dealers left, I replaced their booths with my own antiques," Mr. Howard informed. "When my last dealer moved out in 1991, I took over the entire space and filled it with merchandise I had acquired through estate sales and consignments. It was a real risk being the only dealer and the sole owner of such a large shop."

A risk, one might add, that has returned good dividends. The

continued on page 10

CHAMBER FINANCE

Stock picks for the new Millennium

These are not your Grandma's stocks

by David Hendrickson, III, P.A.-C.

Looking for cash preservation? Read no further. Tie up your money in Bonds, Money markets, and CD's. But, if you are looking for great financial gains and are willing to cope with the possibility of some risk, read on.

Stock pick one: America Online (AOL). The Internet is here to stay. CEO Steve Case is a proven manager. With its forthcoming merger with Time Warner, AOL should soon be bargain priced. It's a sure winner. AOL has extensive revenue, enormous marketing muscle and Case has vision.

Stock pick two: Yahoo (YHOO). Here is a company that runs like a well-oiled machine. It's fast and flexible. One of the Internet winners. Buy low, and keep.

Stock pick three: Lucent (LU) A technology winner that has a hand in everything. If you buy one Tech stock, make it Lucent.

Stock pick four: Pfizer Pharmaceuticals (PFE). A proven pharmaceutical winner. Makers of Zithromax, an antibiotic that has changed healthcare. The leadership here is good. The new drug pipeline looks excellent. Expect another merger soon. While the company has endured recent tumult, they are the makers of the ever-popular Viagra. How can you lose? Thank you Bob Dole.

Stock pick five: Wal-Mart (WMT) if you can't find it at Wal-



Mart, you don't need it. What else is there to say about this industry giant? Did they put some small retailers out of business? Yes, they did. So get a piece of this at the other end. Again, not politically correct but a moneymaker.

Stock Pick six: Home Depot (HD) another killer of small retail, but well run, popular and here to stay. Strong buy and hold.

STOCKS TO BUY WITH YOUR LAS VEGAS GAMBLING MONEY

Only for the very strong of heart, the following, mostly high tech and Internet, promise large gains but are very, very risky. Proceed with caution, have this money to lose.

Imanage (IMAN) They help companies manage e-mail, voice mail and other messages. Offered at an IPO of \$1 1.00 its now trading at three times that. CEO and President Max Panjwani is predicting "viral" growth for his company. Strong proven business model and a track record of achieving financial goals make this a winner.

Others to watch: Eprise Corp offering IPO in mid January, another Internet stock. Neopoint Inc., a wireless and Satellite Company. Happy Trading!!

(David Hendrickson is a local medical professional and freelance writer who has had tremendous success studying economic indicators and investing accordingly. Mr. Hendrickson claims no responsibility, financial or otherwise, for any reader's investment decisions.)



The right relationship is everything.SM

- * Loan by Phone 800-221-LEND
- * 24 Hour Customer Service . . 713-216-7000
- * Chase Mortgages 713-216-HOME
- * Small Business 713-216-1720
- Assistance Center
- * Hearing Impaired TDD 713-216-7146

Over 140 branches statewide
24-hour ATMs available at over
300 statewide locations

CHASE
P.R.I.D.E.

team

Where people make the difference

member FDIC



Law Offices of
Clyde Williams

- CRIMINAL DEFENSE
- ASSAULT
- DRUGS/DWI
- PUBLIC LEWDNESS
- INDECENT EXPOSURE

1314 Texas Avenue • Suite 712 • Houston, Texas 77002 • 713-236-0064
Board Certified in Criminal Law by The Texas Board of Legal Specialization

computer



factory

Custom
Configured Systems

- Upgrades • Peripherals
- Repairs • Software

(713) 462-3453

13147 Northwest Freeway, #155
(290 at Holister)

CHAMBER HEALTH

Five Common Habits That Harm Your Health

by Daniel Boudreaux, DC

HOUSTON—New health and fitness trends pop up daily in our society and almost all are fads devised by the marketing industry and fueled by our society's desire for quick and easy solutions. Rarely do we hear of common sense things that are easily made a part of our everyday routine and can benefit us in the way we feel and in our long-term health.

You know that smoking and other addictive habits are harmful to your health, and these should be addressed as a priority. Here are five less obvious habits that many people follow daily without realizing their effect on health. Though they may seem harmless, these habits can lead to serious problems over time:

Skipping breakfast. Your body is very busy during the night generating energy, maintaining blood sugar levels, and regu-

lating hormones. By morning, you've used up much of your stored energy. You need to "break" your "fast." You would not expect your car to run without fuel. It's important to have a balanced meal at breakfast, including natural carbohydrates, proteins and fats.

Exercise balance. It seems that most people are at one or the other end of the exercise spectrum: those who don't exercise at all and those who exercise to extremes. Those who exercise in moderation are reaping the most benefit, including increasing the quality of their lives. Those at the extremes are causing significant physical, chemical, and mental stress.

Not staying hydrated. Humans need good quality, clean water
continued on page 10

Perfection Plus Services

A Premier Cleaning Service for 2000

- Family owned & operated • Move in-out
- Travel in team w/supervisor • Weekly-bi-monthly-one-time
- Specialists in detail cleaning • Organizing closets, drawers, etc.
- Packing or unpacking for relocating • Bonded for your protection

BUSY PEOPLE
WORKING COUPLES
SINGLE PROFESSIONALS
RETIRED SENIORS

YOU OWE YOURSELF A PROFESSIONAL
HOME CLEANING SERVICE

FREE ESTIMATE
BY PHONE
713-895-2766



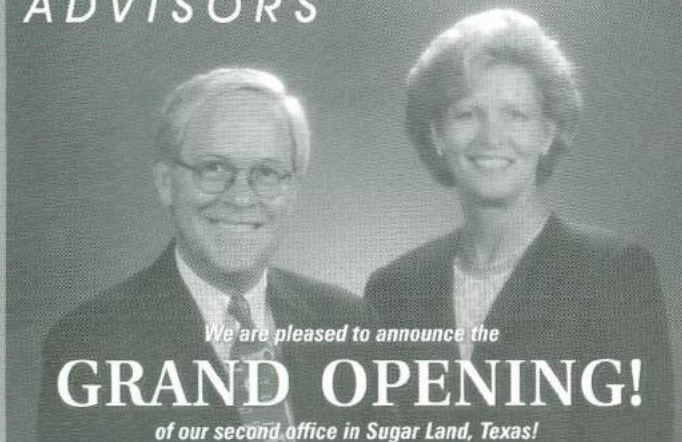
CAROLYN L. GARDINER, M.D., P.A.

INTERNAL MEDICINE
BOARD CERTIFIED

411 W. 21st, Suite 2
Houston, TX 77008

Tel: 713.802-9740
Fax: 713.863-9321

GREENWHITE ADVISORS



We are pleased to announce the
GRAND OPENING!
of our second office in Sugar Land, Texas!

BILL GREEN, CPA, CFP

Financial Planning
Investments

SANDY WHITE, CFP, CFS

Retirement Planning
Estate Planning

Securities offered through Commonwealth Financial Network, Member NASD/SIPC

4645 SWEETWATER BLVD., STE. 500
SUGAR LAND, TX 77479
281-491-5566

1225 N. LOOP WEST, STE. 1030
HOUSTON, TX 77008
713-869-1144

YOUR OUT AND PROUD CLOTHING STORE

BASIC

1232 WESTHEIMER, HOUSTON, TX 77006
713.522.1626 • FAX 713.526.1972

www.basicbrothers.com
email: basicbro@neosoft.com

BROTHERS

MON-SAT 10-9 • SUN 12-6

**houston
voice**

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

500 LOVETT BLVD., SUITE 200 • HOUSTON, TX • 713-529-8490
www.houstonvoice.com

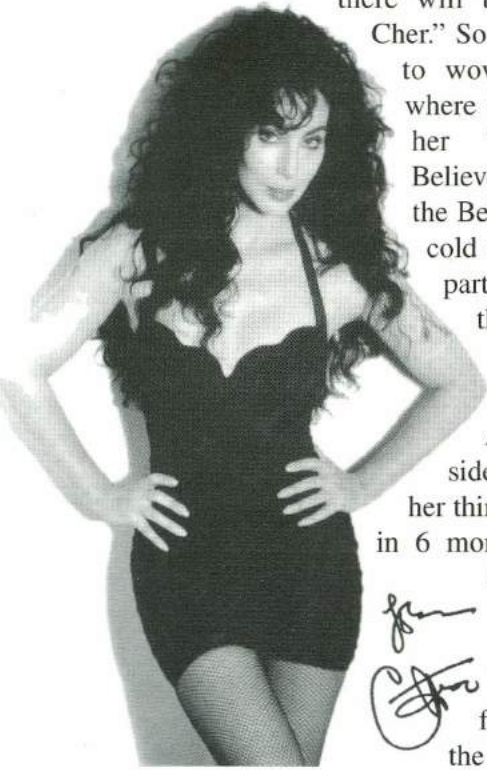
CHAMBER REVIEWS

Golden "Girls" in the Windy City

by David Sharp and JC Michalek

CHICAGO - Someone once said, "After a nuclear holocaust, there will be cockroaches and Cher." So true. Cher continues to wow audiences everywhere with an extension of her "Believe" tour. The Believe 1999 tour is now the Believe 2000 tour. On a cold and frigid night, my partner and I jetted off to the Windy city to see the show - again.

Her Venue: The Allstate Arena outside of Chicago. This is her third concert in Chicago in 6 months. And they love her. Playing to a sold out crowd of 19,000, Cher took Chicago once again, in a fashion not seen since the days of Al Capone.



We had seen the show in other cities, and this was by far her best performance. The ultimate Diva is in perfect voice. We were wowed once more with incredible sets, 15 costume changes and 75 minutes of uninterrupted and absolutely mesmerizing music.

The show is reminiscent of a Broadway production. It was tumultuous, showy and bold. Cher is at home with her audience. She takes us back on a nostalgia trip, doing a medley of her classics with the backdrop of lava lamps and bean bag chairs.

Her new hit "Dove L'Amore" is executed with a hot and spicy dance number and, more importantly, that deep and throaty voice that can move you to tears. Performing her European hit "Walking in Memphis," the diva remembered her gay fans by warning them: "If there are any gay guys in the audience who think the guy in the (Walking in Memphis) video is hot, they should remember it's me."

Cher is one of the few performers who remembers her gay fans, supports the gay community and did so before learning the shattering news that her daughter is lesbian. In fact, upon releasing "Believe" to the clubs, a same sex version was recorded and marketed as well as a mainstream version.

The night ended with perhaps Cher's greatest hit, the global smash "Believe". The song was the biggest selling song of 1999 according to Billboard magazine, who ranked it #1 on its year end chart. Bungee jumpers to the right and left of the stage during 'Believe' put forth the notion of taking risks and learning to live and love again after being hurt.

At 53, Cher is at her peak. The winner of a Tony, Emmy, Oscar and, now, a Grammy for best dance song. Truly, in this critics opinion, wronged by the Grammy's this year as she only picked up one Grammy of her four nominations, in the glare of Santana's sweep for *Supernatural*, featuring the great hit "Smooth" with Rob Thomas of Matchbox 20.

Looking great, sounding great, and making 54 look easy Cher is truly a living legend. Star of stage, screen and the concert hall, look for great things to come from this truly remarkable lady.

As a bonus to our weekend pilgrimage to the Windy city, we were treated to an evening with the great Bea Arthur, another supporter of our community. Known for her role in "Mame" with Lucille Ball, and as Archie Bunker's cousin Maude in *All in the Family*, Ms. Arthur went on to star in her own spin off, aptly titled *Maude*.



Beatrice Arthur on Rosie O'Donnell

Another groundbreaking Norman Lear (the David E. Kelly of the 70's) sitcom, Bea Arthur took on taboo subjects such as alcoholism, rape, gay rights and women's rights. She is also known for her role as the ever lovable and downtrodden Dorothy in the great hit *Golden Girls*. Ms. Arthur is also known for her tireless work for AIDS Charities.

Headlining a presentation of Gershwin's "Strike up the Band" provided Ms. Arthur a chance to show off her talents. And, she did. She is still a great actress. The show itself was poorly staged and poorly presented. But Ms. Arthur's performance was outstanding.

This critic encourages everyone to support this great and noble lady by attending this production as it tours the country. You will be stunned. With a stroll down Michigan Avenue, we bid a fond adio to Chicago, a great city, and flew home with fond memories and new appreciation for these two very great ladies.



**AMERIQUEST
MORTGAGE
COMPANY**

Tommye L. Rodgers
Account Executive

1155 Dairy Ashford, Suite 214, Houston, TX 77079
Phone (281) 558-2223 Fax (281) 558-2227 Pager (281) 434-1190
Toll Free (888) 326-5407 www.ameriquet.net

CHAMBER FEATURE *continued from page 6*

River Oaks Antiques Center prospered beyond anyone's expectations, including Mr. Howard's. But as the economy improved and competition among dealers increased in subsequent years, he was faced with yet another challenge. Should he once again expand the business to stay ahead in the market or simply maintain the status quo? In the spring of 1998, Mr. Howard made his decision and chose the former.

Today the River Oaks Antiques Center is one of the largest antique centers under sole proprietorship in Houston, a city with the distinction of being the fourth largest in the nation. Specializing in American and European antiques from the 19th and 20th centuries, the Center takes particular pride in its vast array of "smalls," the collective name dealers use when referring to antiques such as figurines, china, art glass, cut glass, and sterling silver.

While most of the Center's antiques are acquired through private sales and estate sales, Mr. Howard also displays merchan-

dise from some of his customers who sell their antiques on a consignment basis.

"Consigning can be a good idea for some folks because it relieves them from the hassle of selling on their own and they retain ownership of their antiques no matter how long they are on our floor," according to Mr. Howard. "If a customer changes her mind or the antique simply doesn't sell, she can always take it back whenever she likes without a fee."

Mr. Howard attributes the success of the Center to a fundamental belief [that] he has adhered to since the day he opened his first shop: honesty. "The most important thing is to be honest with your customers," he emphasizes. "Just because a chair is more than 100 years old doesn't mean it should have a high-priced ticket."

(Mr. Howard, in addition to owning River Oaks Antiques Center, offers estate sale services to attorneys, trust officers and heirs. He can be reached at 713.520.8238. The Center is open 7 days a week from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

CHAMBER HEALTH *continued from page 8*

throughout the day. If you don't drink water at all or you drink large quantities one or two times per day, you could be dehydrated. Dehydration is a common cause of fatigue.

Dieting. Many diets not only don't work, but they're also dangerous, with the end result being weight gain and added body fat. Years of dieting can be devastating to your metabolism. Most people would be better off consistently eating more rather than going through phase after phase of dieting, commonly referred to as yo-yo dieting. Moderation is the key to nutrition and a healthy diet.

Not taking responsibility for your own health. I have seen patients who underwent questionable medical procedures, or took medications just because it was "free" - insurance paid for it. Others did not take advantage of necessary procedures or did not take an effective remedy because insurance did not cover it. Make your own health care decisions based on sound advice from professionals. Always choose the most conservative (i.e. non-invasive) approach first; if it does not work, progress to less conservative choices.

Above all, educate yourself about your own body and health care choices. While others may try to interfere with your ability to be naturally healthy and fit, you have the ability and responsibility to avoid and ignore fads and treatments that don't make sense. As C. Everett Koop says: "The best prescription is education."

(Daniel Boudreaux is a Doctor of Chiropractic, a Fellow of the International Academy of Medical Acupuncture, and is certified by the International College of Applied Kinesiology. He is the founder of Today's Health Center in Houston and has a special interest in chronic health conditions including allergies, fatigue, and digestive disturbances. For more information, please contact him at 713-880-4444 or visit www.goforhealth.com)

RICHARD HILL

SWILLEY-HUDSON'S #1 SELLING AGENT

QUALITY STANDS OUT!™

**BUYING, SELLING, AND
RELOCATION SPECIALIST!**

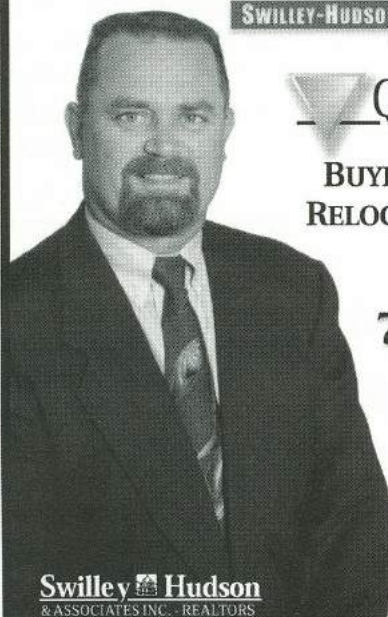
713.869.6142

Voice Mail
713-642-4300

View our web page at
www.RichardHill.com

Email: Richard@RichardHill.com

Swilley & Hudson
& ASSOCIATES INC. - REALTORS



INVESTIGATIONS & CIVIL PROCESSING

K G R I F F

Kathy Griffin

4106 McDuffie
Houston, Texas 77098
Email: kgriff@pdq.net

(713) 526-7711
FAX: (713) 526-7730
Pager: (713) 285-8869

CHAMBER CALENDAR

M A R C H						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	Dinner Meeting Guest Speaker Jim McIngvale Social 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm	6 Networking Breakfast 7:30am Le Peep S. Shepherd at Greenbriar	7 8	9	10 Newsletter Deadline	11
12	13 Board Meeting 6:30pm Location TBA	14	15	16	17 Happy St. Patrick's Day	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 Black Tie November 11 Christmas SongFest December 3	

River Oaks ANTIQUES CENTER

Roger Howard
An accredited member
of the International
Society of Appraisers

2030 Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77098
713.520.8238

Coming Up...

Tony Award-winning Alley Theatre managing
director Paul Tetrault at the April Dinner meeting.



JOEL ANDERSON
DARYL HICKMAN

PO BOX 1024
HOUSTON, TX 77251
713.350.0555 T
713.350.0556 F

Microsoft Certified
Professional
Systems Engineer

TIBURONSYS.COM
NEW COMPUTERS • NETWORKS • SERVICE



IMAGE CLEANERS

George Froming
owner

3407 Montrose Boulevard
Suite B4
Houston, Texas 77006

713.527.0880 tel
713.527.0119 fax



HUBBARD

Financial Services, Inc.

Bookkeeping and Tax Service



KATHY HUBBARD, EA
(713) 522-9000
FAX: (713) 526-6588

2615 MONTROSE BOULEVARD
PO BOX 66588 ♦ HOUSTON, TX 77266-6588



CHAMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notes From the Board

The board of directors is always available to listen to your ideas, suggestions, or concerns about our growing organization. If you would like to address the board at a board meeting, call the hotline at 713-523-7576 and ask to be put on the agenda to speak at a board meeting held the 2nd Monday of each month.

The board is currently looking for members interested in becoming more involved in our chamber. If you are interested in participating, or you know of anyone who is, please contact President Debbie Hunt at 713-522-4282. Positions available include committee chairs, committee members, and/or any other assistance a member would be willing to provide to the chamber.

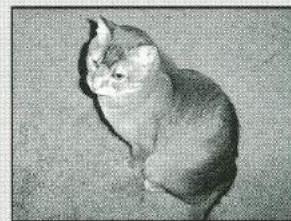
Newsletter Advertising

Again, we grow. For the second month in a row our newsletter has increased to 12 pages, thanks to member advertising and article contributions. Remember, this is your newsletter, so if you have a submission you'd like included, contact the newsletter committee. A one-month business card-size ad is only \$30. If you reserve between 3-6 months, the monthly rate is only \$25, and if you reserve space for 7-12 months, your monthly rate is only \$20. Call Marion E. Coleman at the House of Coleman at 713-523-2521.

Deadline for materials is the second Thursday of the month prior to publication.

CHAMBER TIPS

March is national spay and neuter your pet month. Pet overpopulation is a real problem in Houston. Too many homeless cats and dogs roam the streets and are put to death in Houston every year. Do your part and have your pet spayed or neutered. Low-cost spay and neutering is available from SNAP with three locations in Houston. If your pet is already spayed or neutered, a donation to the non-profit organization can help prevent more homeless animals in your communities.



Rusty

e-mail: info@ghglcc.org



P.O. Box 66129
Houston, Texas
77266-6129



Please Recycle

Address Correction Requested

GHGLCC NEWS

the impact network

APRIL, 2000

www.ghglcc.org

volume 5, issue IV

MAINTAINING
A GOOD
CREDIT RATING

4

...INSIDE...

ROME...
THE ETERNAL CITY

5

18 YEARS OF
FASHION FROM
BASIC BROTHERS

8



GREATER HOUSTON
GAY & LESBIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Board of Directors

President

Debra E. Hunt

Vice President

Richard Wiederholt

Secretary

Gordon Bayless

Treasurer

Rene Guerra

Sandi Bubbert

Marion E. Coleman

Phyllis Randolph Frye

Richard Hill

Randy Mitchmore D.D.S.

Anita Renteria

Coy Tow

Clyde Williams

Administrator

Kevin Davidson

Media Relations

Marion E. Coleman

Richard Wiederholt, Ed.D.

Membership

Debra E. Hunt

Program

Clyde Williams

Networking

Gordon Bayless

Community Affairs

Randy Mitchmore

Education

Coy Tow

Fund Development

Sandi Bubbert

Finance

Rene Guerra

Empower 2000

Marion E. Coleman

Coy Tow

Richard Wiederholt, Ed.D.

Ethics and Legal

Debra E. Hunt

Annual Membership Dues

Individual \$125.00

Business \$200.00

Corporation \$1,000.00

For membership information call

713.523.7576

P.O. Box 66129

Houston, Texas 77266-6129



Photo by Ricardo Merendon

Paul Tetreault

CHAMBER SPOTLIGHT

Managing Director of Alley Theatre to Keynote Chamber Dinner

Tony Award Winning Theater Unveil American Premier of Albee Production

The History

HOUSTON - The Alley Theatre began in 1947 when high school teacher Nina Vance sent out

214 penny postcards to an extended network of friends and neighbors that read: "It's beginning! Do you want a theatre for Houston? Meeting. 3617 Main. Bring a friend! Tuesday, October 7, 8 p.m."

The positive public response resulted in the mounting of a full season of six plays, including works by Lillian Hellman and Clifford Odets. In February 1949, the alley moved to its second location at 709 Berry Avenue. A former fan factory, the new stage could seat 230 theatre patrons around a central arena stage.

Ms. Vance chose Ms. Hellman's then controversial *The Children's Hour* as the inaugural production in the Alley's new home. Over the next 20 seasons, the Alley began its celebration of American playwrights, producing new works by Williams, Miller and O'Neill. In 1954, the Alley formed a contract with Actor's Equity Association, the professional actor's union, creating a permanent company of actors.

By 1969, the Alley had outgrown its Berry Street Location and moved to 615 Texas Avenue in the heart of downtown Houston. A new structure designed by architect Ulrich Franzen for the theatre's expanding needs - houses two stages: a modified thrust stage seating 824 and a smaller arena stage seating 296, modeled after the one at Berry Avenue.

Continued on page 9

CHAMBER EVENT

EMPOWER 2000:

'Community Event of the Millennium' Gains Momentum

HOUSTON - There is an old adage in business. It reads: Success breeds Success. Taking a cue from that dictum, the Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (GHGLCC) is

proudly heralding **EMPOWER 2000** as "The Community Event of the Millennium."

Basking from the phenomenal success of **EMPOWER '99**, the chamber is throttling full steam ahead with preparations for **EMPOWER 2000**. Not ones to rest on their laurels, EMPOWER Committee Co-Chairs Coy Tow, Marion E. Coleman and Richard Wiederholt are

continued on page 8

RSVP is required by April 7th at 713-523-7576. It's extremely important for us to coordinate our number of participants. Please be responsible and make the RSVP call! The cost for the dinner meeting is \$22 for members and \$25 for non-members or guests.

GHGLCC News is underwritten by Shell Chemical Company

The Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce advances the economic and cultural development and vitality of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and supportive heterosexual businesses and organizations.

CHAMBER PRESIDENT

March was a Time for Moving at the Chamber

by Debbie Hunt
President, GHGLCC

HOUSTON - March was a time for moving at the Chamber. The most important move to talk about is the shift in our monthly membership meeting date. The next three dinner meetings will be held on the first Tuesday of each month instead of Monday.

The change in our meeting date gave us the chance to consider other meeting place opportunities, and so we have chosen to move our meetings to Sonoma Restaurant while they are on Tuesdays. Some of you will remember Sonoma from our holiday party last December. The move will allow us to meet in the heart of Montrose for a change and hopefully help a few folks get to membership meetings that have not been able to attend.

March also saw a virtual move for the Chamber as well. Our web site host decided to start charging us for hosting our site so we made the move to Fresh Baked Graphics, which is affiliated with Chamber member Computer Exchange. Fresh Baked Graphics is allowing us to continue having a website at no charge, and we thank them!

To complete our month of moves, the board approved swapping office space at the Gay & Lesbian Community Center with another non-profit group so that space would be better utilized and our rent amount would stay static. The community center

also changed its policy about charging tenants for meeting space, which enabled the board to resume meeting there instead of off-site.

The change in our membership meeting date was a direct result of the membership poll. Almost half of our active members expressed an opinion and the clear majority voted for the change. Other issues may arise during the year where the board needs your input.

One of the only ways we have of making the Chamber worthwhile to our members is to understand what the membership wants and needs from the chamber. Please know that we welcome your comments and suggestions at all times. You can contact the Chamber by phone, by fax, by e-mail, or by showing up in person at any of the board meetings.

Thanks to Clyde Williams who continues to arrange for terrific programs for our monthly membership meetings. Those of us who attended Jim "Mattress Mac" McIngvale's talk were inspired to go back to our businesses and figure out the best way to serve our customers. This month we will learn more about the theatre business. See you at Sonoma!



Debbie Hunt

CHAMBER PROFILE

Vanguard Honoree Shines in Post at Houston Ballet

HOUSTON - A Native of Knoxville, Tennessee, Andrew Edmonson graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in May 1989 with a B.A. in English literature with distinction.

After completing internships in London and Dublin, Mr. Edmonson assumed the position of public relations manager at Houston's Tony Award-winning Alley Theatre. In this capacity, he oversaw all media and public relations for LORT B theatre with a twelve-play season and two stages. In October 1993, Mr. Edmonson joined the staff of the Houston Ballet.

During his six years with the company, he has directed the public relations campaigns for the company's 25th anniversary celebration, the troupe's historic 1995 China Tour, the retirement of the company's prima ballerina, Janie Parker, and the world premieres of Ben Stevenson's blockbuster productions of *Dracula* and *The Snow Maiden*.

Moreover, he has significantly raised the Houston Ballet's national and international profile by placing articles on the company in *The*

New York Times, *The London Times*, Germany's *The World on Sunday* newspaper, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *Vogue*, and *People* magazine.

His efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 1996, Mr. Edmonson was the recipient of the Vanguard Award, the highest honor bestowed by Women In Communications, for a profile he had written for *The Houston Voice*, a community newspaper.

Mr. Edmonson has been extremely active in Houston's arts community. He served as media chair for the city's first Theater District Open House in August 1994, and for the commemoration of World AIDS Day/A Day Without Art in 1994, 1997, and 1998. He has served on the board of directors of Body Positive, an AIDS service organization, and Halloween Magic, a fundraising event that has raised over \$500,000 for Houston's AIDS charities.

Mr. Edmonson was chairperson of the 1999 Houston Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, an event he will chair again in 2000 and one that he will speak about at a future dinner meeting. In his spare time, he enjoys theater and travel in Europe.



Andrew Edmonson

Photo: Jann Whaley

CHAMBER HEALTH

It's Back! The Season of Sniffling, Sneezing and Itching Returns

How to Avoid Allergy Season from Impacting Productivity in the Work Force

by David Sharp



Cute, but may make you sneeze!

HOUSTON - Allergy season has arrived in Houston. The flowers are blooming, the trees are budding and many people are ducking for cover.

Allergies, in and by themselves, can just make you miserable; however, allergies may lead to upper respiratory infection, sinus and ear infections and a host of other conditions that can seriously impact the work force and, potentially, the productivity of business.

In truth, the allergen is a true disrupter of interstate commerce. But now there is help. In years past the only answer was medications that truly impaired people's ability to perform in the workplace. Now, there is Deliverance. The development of new medications has been salvation for many allergy sufferers.

Allergen History

Allergic Rhinitis affects the lives of tens of millions of people a year. The symptoms include sniffing, sneezing, itching, runny or stuffy nose, and watery eyes. These have a true impact on a patient's quality of life. It's cost is an invaluable toll on business. Allergic disorders are the most diagnosed chronic condition in children, many times a precursor to Asthma, a more serious condition..

The most logical approach to managing SAR (Seasonal Allergic Rhinitis) is identification of the allergy triggers and the sound but simple advice for the patient, when able, to stay away from these triggers. However, this advice may not always be practical.

Case in point - An individual can stay away from dogs and cats, he/she cannot stay away from dust mites. Easy as it may sound, identification and removal of allergy triggers is key in management. The advent of RAST testing (a simple blood test that identifies allergy triggers) has made this simple. However, since many of the medications to treat allergies are safe and easy to take, the usual approach is to simply place a patient on a daily allergy medication and see if the symptoms go away.

Allergen Treatment

Pharmacological intervention is called for when these triggers cannot be identified and/or removed. There is a multitude of

treatment available, all claiming to be bigger and better.

Decongestants are agents in which the mechanism of action involves vasoconstriction of the nasal blood vessels. Many of these are available OTC (over the counter). The down side is rebound nasal congestion and a high incidence of other effects. Although decongestants are effective in treating nasal congestion, they are ineffective in relieving sneezing and itching.

To provide better relieve most health care professionals administer decongestant in combination with non-sedating antihistamines. Several combinations are available including fexofenadine and loratadine. Decongestants are most likely better used to treat the common cold.

Antihistamines are selective H1 receptor antagonists that block the binding of histamine at its receptor site. In addition, some antihistamines appear to inhibit the releases of inflammatory mediators. The second generation of antihistamines are considered first line defense. These are non-sedating. This has been a major breakthrough in allergy care.

These non-sedating medications are available from your health care provider. Antihistamines provide rapid relieve and are long acting. They are safe for long term and seasonal use and tend to have no cardiac effects or drug interactions.

Mast cell stabilizers interrupt the allergic process by blocking the break down of mast cells, thereby blocking the release of allergic and inflammatory mediators. Mast cell stabilizers are a main stay in the management of asthma and can play a vital role in the management of allergies.

Mast cells are limited by their short duration (less than six hours) and the need to administer before the allergic symptoms develop. These are safe with a dry cough being the most reported side effect. These too are only available from your health care provider.

Nasal Corticosteroids are becoming the real star in the management of SAR. Available only by perspiration, a puff to each nostril everyday can provide daily relief. A very important point: this medication takes about a week to work and taking it more than once a day will cause a worsening of symptoms.

Nasal Corticosteroids prevent allergies' symptoms. One downside is the long onset of action. With the exception of mometasone and fluticasone, the onset of action is 12 hours and may require several days before a real response is seen. Nasal steroids deliver poor relief for ocular symptoms. Therefore, nasal steroids are often given in combination with oral antihistamines.

Immunotherapy is useful for selected patients for whom triggered allergens are unavoidable. The goal of immunotherapy is to desensitize the patients to particular allergens through a series of injections that have progressively increasing doses of the triggering allergens.

Immunotherapy is usually a long-term commitment continued for 3-5 years. The treatment is generally well tolerated with

Continued on page 6

CHAMBER FINANCE

Obtaining a Copy of your Credit Report Essential to Maintaining a Good Credit Rating

by Mark A. Swaim

HOUSTON - We all know the value of having a good credit rating. It gets you better interest rates on credit cards, car loans, and mortgages. Employers often check credit reports for perspective employees and banks will check your credit report before they open an account. What many of us don't know, however, is how to maintain a good credit report.

Of course, what many people will tell you is that all that you have to do to get and maintain a good credit report is to pay all of your bills on time. Simple as that sounds, it's not always possible and doesn't always work. Maintaining a good credit rating takes more energy than just paying your bills on time. You should periodically review your credit report. The purpose of this review is twofold. It both puts you on notice of any mistakes in the report, and allows you to become familiar with what kinds of information are reported.

There are three leading "consumer reporting agencies" (CRA's) in the United States. They are Equifax, Experian (formerly TRW), and Trans Union. You can either write to each of them for a copy of your report (they'll charge \$8 each), or you can go to www.yourcredit.com and, for \$29 receive a combined report from all three CRA's. The report comes with the necessary forms to dispute any discrepancies. You should review the report very carefully. It will come with instructions on how to read it, as well as instructions on how to dispute any discrepancies.

The Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act is designed to promote accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of every CRA. This law gives consumers certain rights, as outlined below.

- You must be notified if information in your file has been used against you, such as to deny you credit.
- You have the right to find out what is in your file.
- You can dispute inaccurate information and the burden is on the CRA to verify any disputed information.
- Inaccurate information must be corrected or deleted.
- You can dispute inaccurate items with the source of the information. If a creditor is notified that you dispute the information, then the creditor may not report the information without reporting that it is disputed.
- Outdated information must be purged. A CRA may not report negative information that is more than seven years old; ten years for bankruptcies.
- Access to your file is limited. It is usually limited to creditors, insurers, employers, landlords, or other businesses.

- Your consent is required for reports provided to employers, or reports that contain medical information.
- You may choose to exclude your name from CRA lists for unsolicited credit and insurance offers.
- You may seek damages from violators.

A good credit report is a valuable asset. Like most assets, however, it does not appreciate without some effort on your part. Your credit report can have a snowball effect, for better or worse.

A good report will get you lower interest rates, save you money, and enable you to more easily pay your bills. A bad report can cause you to pay much higher rates, put more money down for purchases, and make it harder to pay your bills on time, thereby making your credit report even worse. The first step on the road to maintaining good credit is to order and review your reports. So, what are you waiting for?

(Mark Swaim is a local attorney and partner in the law firm of Baggott and Swaim, PC.)

RICHARD HILL



SWILLEY-HUDSON'S #1 SELLING AGENT

QUALITY STANDS OUT!™

**BUYING, SELLING, AND
RELOCATION SPECIALIST!**


713.869.6142

Voice Mail
713-642-4300

View our web page at
www.RichardHill.com

Email: Richard@RichardHill.com

Swilley & Hudson
& ASSOCIATES INC. - REALTORS



AMERIQUEST MORTGAGE COMPANY

Tommye L. Rodgers
Account Executive

1155 Dairy Ashford, Suite 214, Houston, TX 77079
Phone (281) 558-2223 Fax (281) 558-2227 Pager (281) 434-1190
Toll Free (888) 326-5407 www.ameritrust.net

CHAMBER TRAVEL

From Here to Eternity, Rome Exemplifies its Moniker as 'The Eternal City'

Steeped in History, Rarefied with Art, and Ripe with Personality, Rome's Beauty is Mystifying

by Dave Sharp

ROME - With Easter fast approaching and the Catholic Church celebrating the year 2000 as a holy year, what better time to go to Rome? Not that there is really a bad time to go to Rome. Spring is Glorious with the city in full bloom, fall and winter offer less tourists and bargain airfares. August is the only time not to go; even the Romans abandon the city due to the oppressive heat. During this heat wave, the Pope flees to the Vatican's summer residence and the Romans flock to the seashore.

What you might notice about Rome first, other than its outstanding beauty, is that nothing seems to work well there. Telephone service is spotty, public transportation a real mess and traffic, well; suffice it to say it is worse than New York City.

Rome is still a government of ineffective bureaucracy; a city where your tour guide will tell you with a straight face that Mussolini was not such a bad guy and he did make the trains run on time. That alone should convince you to avoid the topic of politics during your stay. Americans and Italians are not on the same wavelength when it comes to polemics.

Interestingly, the city literally closes down from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Romans nap so they can dine late. Dinner is served late here and Romans are night people. Public transportation is confusing and difficult. Stay in hotel near the major attractions you wish to see and walk. Rome is meant to be walked. For longer trips, book day trips from your hotel. They are well planned and reasonably priced. If at all possible, do not drive under any circumstances.

However you arrive in Rome, by train or plane, you can tell by the traffic that you are entering a grand city. All paths lead to Rome. As you enter the city proper, edifices, icons, and images to match your expectations take shape: a bridge with heroic statues along its parapets; a towering cake of ornate marble decorated with allegorical figures in extravagant poses; a piazza and an obelisk under an umbrella of pine trees; a massive marble arena, even bigger than you imagined, that you realize with awe is the fabled Colosseo.

More than Florence, more than Venice, Rome is Italy's treasure trove, packed as it is with masterpieces from more than two millennia of artistic achievement — for this is where Republican Rome once bustled around the extravagant buildings of

the Roman Forum. Centuries later Michelangelo Buonarroti painted the ceiling in the Cappella Sistina, and in modern times, Federico Fellini filmed *La Dolce Vita* and *8½* at Cinecittà Studios.

Rome is all things to all people. You'll find pieces of Ancient Rome casually strewn about, topped by Medieval and Renaissance Rome, topped by Fascist Rome and finally today's Rome, where decades of political apathy are giving way to a revitalized city.

Ancient Romans, Vandals, Popes and the Borgias, Michelangelo and Gianlorenzo Bernini, Napoleon, and Mussolini all left their physical and spiritual marks on the city. Today its people uphold Rome's formidable legacy, history knit into the fabric of their everyday life. Students walk dogs in the park that was once the mausoleum of the family of the Emperor Augustus; Raphael-esque Madonna's line up for buses on busy corners; a priest in flowing robes walks through a medieval piazza talking on a cell phone.

Modern Rome has one foot in the past, one in the present — a delightful stance that allows you to have an espresso in a square designed by Bernini, then take the Metro back to your hotel room in a renovated Renaissance palace.

"When you first come here you assume that you must burrow about in ruins and prowl in museums to get back to the days of Numa Pompilius or Mark Anthony," observed Maud Howe, in her book, *Roma Beata*. "It is not necessary; you only have to live, and the common happenings of daily life —

yes, even the trolley car and your bicycle - carry you back in turn to the Dark Ages, to the early Christians, even to prehistoric Rome."

Vatican City, an independent nation, is in Rome and deserves at least a full day. Here is the seat of the Catholic Church. Great works of art live here to be seen only once in a lifetime. The Vatican Museums require a full day.

Take a day trip to Florence. Easily booked at your hotel, you will leave at 6 a.m. for a glorious trip through the Italian countryside. You will pass the Popes summer residence and many quaint Italian towns. In Florence, you will behold many works of art, the most outstanding being Michelangelo's David.

While in Florence, shop. One of the few bargains left in Europe leather goods and gold are bargain priced in Florence. Back in Rome, walk the streets and behold a city where old meets new. Stroll the Piazza's, enjoy the varied cuisine.

Eating pizza off the street provides a very unique and very different experience than dining out on American pizza. The two have few similarities. Wine is the nation's beverage. A bottle of table wine is likely to cost less than a bottle of water. Mixed drinks are foreign here. So, when in Rome do as the Romans.

Don't forget: Legend has it that if you throw a coin in Trevi Fountain, you will always return to Rome.

Rome is like no other European Capital, steeped in history, rarefied with art, ripe with personality. Precisely why they call it "The Eternal City."



Trevi Fountain

CHAMBER FEATURE**Millennium Marks 18th Year for Successful Community Clothier***by J.C. Michalek*

HOUSTON - Fashion never goes out of style. That is to say the general concept of fashion. To be sure certain fashions come in and go out of style on a regular basis. Hence, it is the retailer that can best ascertain which fashions will be the season's hottest garments that determines their overall success. One of those clothiers is Basic Brothers in Montrose.

It's been more than 18 years since local retail proprietors Richard Wiederholt and Jerry Prox opened their doors for business. The year was 1982. Ronald Reagan was president, Michael Jackson was indeed the King of Pop, Cheers was a bar where everybody knew your name and the country was in the midst of a recession that let the air out of Houston's boom.

Nevertheless, a community resale shop targeted to the gay community celebrated its grand opening featuring rare, eclectic and just-like-new selections of tuxedos, US Army surplus clothing, and Levi's 501s. It was the beginning of a legend we know today as Basic Brothers.

Originally located at 1625 Richmond, the clothier moved to a new location at 1220 Westheimer after seven short months of operation. Before long, the "out and proud" community retailer expanded their inventory to include new clothing as well as resale items.

By 1984, co-owner Jerry Prox created the stores first line of swimwear, thongs, gymwear and costumes on their own label (Hot Line), after learning how to

sew. In addition, the store continued to increase its inventory to include costume attire, wigs and accessories for any occasion.

After five successful years in the industry, Basic Brothers decided to discontinue its used clothing inventory in 1997 to make room for its latest in swimwear, exotic dancewear, casual wear, costumes and more drag. And, they moved their facilities a few paces down the sidewalk to 1232 Westheimer where they still reside to this day.

That same year Prox expanded the retailers Hot Line label into a manufacturing company and soon became a force to be reckoned with in the design and production of men and women's swimwear this side of the Mississippi. Soon, they expanded their exotic line of swim and dancewear nationally. By 1992, the store sported a 16-Page full-color catalog for new and numerous customers not only in the USA, but also in Japan, Europe and Mexico.

Unfortunately, Prox was unable to see for himself the tremen-

dous success of his labor. In 1989, he passed on to another plane of existence leaving Wiederholt to helm all three enterprises - Basic Brothers Clothing Stores, Basic Brothers Mail Order Co., and Hot Line Manufacturing. Shortly thereafter, Wiederholt sold the mail order and Hot Line businesses and focused his attention solely on the Montrose clothier and its namesake website, www.basicbrothers.com.

Basic Brothers has been a staple in the Montrose area for nearly two decades. Managed by Ken Claude, a well-known and respected community member, Basic Brothers continues to thrive. The clothier carries the latest fashions from the likes of Lucky, California Muscle, Verge, Body Body, LA Sporting Club, Sauvage, Greg Perry and 2(x)ist.

"It took us 15 years to get to where we are now. You're welcome to come in and see the variety of merchandise we offer - underwear, swim wear, club wear, high fashion, gym wear, casual attire and Gay Pride merchandise," says Wiederholt. "We also offer a great selection of accessories such as sunglasses, belts, watches, and jewelry."

Despite all of its success, Wiederholt is still focusing on Basic Brothers. In fact the store is looking forward to the year 2012 when they will be celebrating their 30th year of operation. "Who knows what we'll grow into by then," laments Wiederholt.

During the interim, stop by Basic Brothers and check out the latest fashions. Tell them you read about their business in the Chamber Newsletter. Go ahead — take your time, feel the fabric and try something on.



Ken Claude
Store Manager

**CHAMBER HEALTH...Continued from page 3**

early or delayed local reactions observed less than 2% of the time.

The treatment of SAR in the office can be difficult. Your healthcare provider can find the right combination of medications to control your allergies. Many products are available. It is just a matter of choice for the right medication for the right patient.

Allergies can be managed effectively. Being educated about the many methods out there will help your healthcare provider in treating you. Healthcare management is a team effort with patient and provider working together for a common goal.

Because allergies have an adverse impact on millions and millions of people, patient with SAR should be taken seriously. Aggressive treatment of SAR will lead to happy, more satisfied patients, less loss to the business community and happy healthier patients all the way around.

CHAMBER REVIEWS

Liza's 'Minnelli on Minnelli'

"It was no great tragedy being Judy Garland's daughter. I had tremendously interesting childhood years except they had little to do with being a child."

—Liza Minnelli

by Rusty C. Stuart

ENTERTAINMENT - At the age of seven, Liza Minnelli made her first appearance at New York's renowned Palace with her mom, the legendary Judy Garland; by eleven, she had already become adept at coping with Judy's boozy stabs at suicide. At nineteen, she was on Broadway, and she became the youngest actress to win a Tony (*Flora, The Red Menace*).

Singing and dancing in nightclubs and London's Palladium, recording albums, and appearing on TV, Minnelli's exuberant talent quickly made her an international star. At twenty-three, she won an Oscar nomination as a dramatic actress, for her second film, *The Sterile Cuckoo*, and, at twenty-six, took home the statue for *Cabaret*.

Subsequently, Tonys and Emmys piled up rapidly for a TV special (*Liza with a Z*), a stage show, and another Broadway production. She piled up difficult lovers with equal speed: Peter Sellers, Desi Arnaz, Jr., a Parisian nobleman, and a Brazilian playboy.

First husband Peter Allen turned out to be gay, and she left her second husband, Jack Haley, Jr., for Scorsese. A third marriage, to sculptor Mark Gero, produced miscarriages and a third divorce. In 1984, the Betty Ford Clinic provided detox from drugs and booze. A few years later, hamming it up again, Minnelli toured with Sinatra and in her own new stage act.

True, she inherited her mother's great piercing voice and teary, twitchy vivacity; we can be thankful that the mother-to-daughter legacy didn't include Garland's shaky instinct for survival.



Now, she's back - on Broadway. On December 8th, 1999 Liza once again took the stage at the Palace theater to do the songs of her father in a show called *Minnelli on Minnelli*. Recorded for history, the CD gives us Liza in all her glory, again.

Perhaps true Liza fans were so worried about this comeback because of location. It was a night where ghosts walked the earth. Liza had performed here with her mother. Her mother would be digitally resurrected for a duet. And dear Judy's last and most terrible performance took place in 1968 at the Palace. Judy was drunk, late and fell.

What would happen to Liza? We should not have worried. At the end of the first night she had 12 standing ovations with all of Hollywood royalty present. Does *Minnelli on Minnelli* represent her best work? Well, of course not. She is no longer young, has had two hip replacements and abused her body with drugs and booze.

But none of that matters, because it's LIZA!! Liza is a living legend, the comeback kid, and we relate with her difficult life. The choice of music is good, and shows off an older Liza, who is still in good voice. What is missed on the CD is Liza's presence.

Listening to Liza and seeing Liza are two very different things. Liza has a stage presence like that of her mother. At the end, no one would say Judy sang well. But it was Judy and she still packed them in. Well, Liza has done better than that. She can still sing, move a little and still has that magic sparkle that separates a star from a Diva. And Liza is a Diva.

Simply put, Liza's new work is extraordinary. Indeed, Liza is extraordinary. And, why wouldn't she be, she comes from an extraordinary family. Buy this CD. It was worth the wait. You will enjoy her throaty renditions of all your favorite show tunes. After all, its Liza, isn't that enough?



JOEL ANDERSON
DARYL HICKMAN

PO BOX 1024
HOUSTON, TX 77251
713.350.0555 T
713.350.0556 F

Microsoft Certified
Professional
Systems Engineer

TIBURONSYSTEMS.COM
NEW COMPUTERS • NETWORKS • SERVICE



IMAGE
CLEANERS

George Froming
owner

3407 Montrose Boulevard
Suite B4
Houston, Texas 77006

713.527.0880 tel
713.527.0119 fax

K
GRIFF

INVESTIGATIONS & CIVIL PROCESSING

Kathy Griffin

4106 McDuffie
Houston, Texas 77098
Email: kgriff@pdq.net

(713) 526-7711
FAX: (713) 526-7730
Pager: (713) 285-8869



Law Offices of
Clyde Williams

- CRIMINAL DEFENSE
- ASSAULT
- DRUGS/DWI
- PUBLIC LEWDNESS
- INDECENT EXPOSURE

1314 Texas Avenue • Suite 712 • Houston, Texas 77002 • 713-236-0064
Board Certified in Criminal Law by The Texas Board of Legal Specialization

CHAMBER EVENT...*Continued from page 1*

working tirelessly to maximize the enormous advantage and potential gain that stems from unbridled momentum.

Still in its infancy, the Empower event (in its fourth year) has continued to grow in the number of vendors and the number of attendees. Last year's event drew an unprecedented 5,000 attendees and the committee hopes to exceed 7,500 attendees at the 2000 event.

Ever expanding, **Empower 2000** will incorporate many successful elements of prior exhibitions and debut a host of new concepts as well. In addition to the perennial Business Marketplace, Job fair and Health Fair conferences, the committee plans an eclectic array of Performing and Visual Art displays and events, as well as Sports and Outdoors venues.

"Previous vendors have already been contacted and given early registration discounts," according to Co-Chair Coy Tow. "Our vendors are increasing booth space, reserving advertising in the resource guide, and taking advantage of this great event! We already have over one third of our vendors from 1999 pre-paid and we expect all of the sponsors to return as well."

The heightened awareness of the powerful economic clout of gay and lesbian individuals, which has been steadily reported in mainstream media outlets, has prompted many corporations to seriously

consider the benefit of marketing to, and being supportive of, gay and lesbian consumers in an ever increasing competitive market.

Combined with the success of past Empower expositions, this mindset has allowed the business exposition to grow, thereby affording the Chamber to take on new and exciting opportunities to showcase the benefits of conducting business with the GLBT community.

"The Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce invites new ideas, and welcomes suggestion from both the profit and non-profit communities to assure this event promotes the full diversity of our great community," says Tow. "If what your organization or business needs is access to loyal consumers then **EMPOWER 2000** is the event to seize that opportunity."

(EMPOWER 2000 will be held at the George R. Brown Convention Center, Sunday, October 8, 2000. To receive current information, pricing and/or details about participation, contact the Chamber Hotline at 713-523-7576. Empower 2000 is one of the largest expositions in the United States dedicated to reaching and promoting the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities.)

Perfection Plus Services

A Premier Cleaning Service for 2000

- Family owned & operated • Move in-out
- Travel in team w/supervisor • Weekly-bi-monthly-one-time
- Specialists in detail cleaning • Organizing closets, drawers, etc.
- Packing or unpacking for relocating • Bonded for your protection

BUSY PEOPLE
WORKING COUPLES
SINGLE PROFESSIONALS
RETIRED SENIORS

YOU OWE YOURSELF A PROFESSIONAL
HOME CLEANING SERVICE

FREE ESTIMATE
BY PHONE
713-895-2766



CAROLYN L. GARDINER, M.D., P.A.
INTERNAL MEDICINE
BOARD CERTIFIED

411 W. 21st, Suite 2
Houston, TX 77008

Tel: 713.802-9740
Fax: 713.863-9321

GREENWHITE ADVISORS



SANDY WHITE, CFP, CFS

BILL GREEN, CPA, CFP

We Help Your Money Grow!

HOUSTON

1225 N. LOOP WEST
SUITE 1030
713-869-1144
800-304-3365

SUGAR LAND

4645 SWEETWATER BLVD.
SUITE 500
281-491-5566
800-281-0567

www.moneysmart.com

Securities offered through Commonwealth Financial Network, Member NASD/SIPC

YOUR OUT AND PROUD CLOTHING STORE

BASIC

1232 WESTHEIMER, HOUSTON, TX 77006
713.522.1626 • FAX 713.526.1972

www.basicbrothers.com
email: basicbro@neosoft.com

BROTHERS

MON-SAT 10-9 • SUN 12-6

**houston
voice**

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

500 LOVETT BLVD., SUITE 200 • HOUSTON, TX • 713-529-8490

www.houstonvoice.com

CHAMBER SPOTLIGHT...Continued from page 1

In 1989, Gregory Boyd became the alley's Artistic Director, signaling a new era for theatre in Houston and, indeed, the country. By focusing on the Alley's core company of actors,



Gregory Boyd & Paul Tetreault
in front of the Alley Theatre.

and an internationally known group of Associate Artists, Boyd has shaped the Alley into one of the nations most innovative professional resident theatre companies.

The Program

Paul R. Tetreault earned a Bachelor of Science in Theatre Arts from Emerson College in Massachusetts.

Throughout his graduate studies, Mr. Tetreault served as special assistant to the executive director at Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College where he maintained the operating and university department budgets.

Later in life, he assumed the position of general manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, a \$4 million LORT (League of Resident Theatres) company and, later yet, the director of entertainment finance at Madison Square Garden while also consulting for the Crossroads Theatre Company.

Mr. Tetreault, a member of Phi Alpha Tau and past president of the Brooklyn College Managers for the Arts, moved to Houston in 1994 to join Gregory Boyd at the helm of the Alley Theatre. As managing director, he is responsible for the theatre's financial and administrative operations including marketing and development. Mr. Tetreault also serves as the chairman of the Houston Theatre District Association.

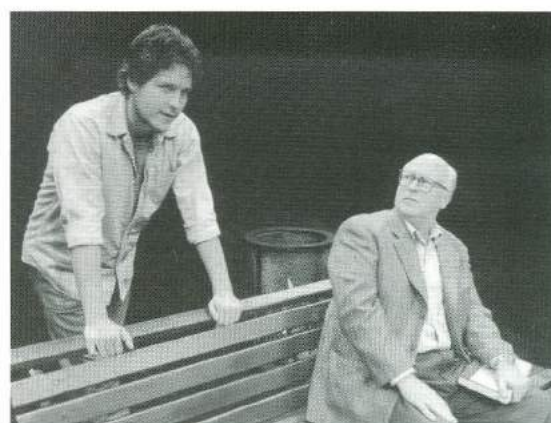
Alley Exclusive

In an extraordinary coup, the Alley Theatre will produce the U.S. premier of a major new work by America's preeminent playwright, Edward Albee.

Directed by Mr. Albee and featuring Marian Seldes (recent Tony nominee for *Ring Round the Moon* and recipient of Tony Award for Albee's *A Delicate Balance*) and Earle Hyman (Off Broadway's *Driving Miss Daisy*), *The Play About the Baby* follows a young couple who appear to have just had a child.

When an older man and woman enter, the stage is set for an unpredictable turn of events. Part puzzle play, part vaudeville, *The Play About the Baby*, begins preview performances Friday, April 7, opens Wednesday, April 12 and plays through May 6, 2000.

Albee has received three Pulitzer Prizes in his 40 year career and has written more than 25 plays ranging from the existential *The Zoo Story* and the brilliant *Who's Afraid of*



Albee's *The Zoo Story*

Virginia Woolf?, to the stunningly introspective *Three Tall Women*. Albee, a Broadway legend, also teaches at the University of Houston and resides in the Bayou City part-time.

Proudly Serving OUR Community Since 1987

Larry French Enterprises

Complete Plumbing & Water Purification Service

- ◆ Repairs & Remodeling
- ◆ Residential
- ◆ Commercial
- ◆ New Construction

Licensed & Insured
MPL No. 16724

713-956-7733
Fax 713-956-1107

River Oaks ANTIQUES CENTER

Roger Howard
An accredited member
of the International
Society of Appraisers

2030 Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77098
713.520.8238



When you have legal
concerns, you don't need
a lot of lifestyle questions.

Connie Moore
Debra E. Hunt
3608 Audubon Place
Houston TX 77006
713-522-4282

Abbe L. Shiller/Personal Computer Consultant

"Attending to your needs in the Information Age"

- Certified QuickBooks
Professional Advisor
- Training
- Recommendations
- Software Support

2620-B S. Shepherd Drive
Suite 185
Houston, Texas 77098-1534
Tel./Fax: (713) 522-2782

CHAMBER MEMBERS

Surge in Renewals and Continuous Outreach Efforts Increase Membership

HOUSTON - The Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce has amassed a steady rise in its member base. The organization attributes its success to the highly successful EMPOWER franchise and the outreach efforts of its board of directors.

In addition, the organization's Program Committee has drawn such notables as Sandy Rivera and Jim McIngvale to keynote their monthly dinner meetings under the stewardship of committee chair Clyde Williams.

Advantage Capital Corporation
Financial Services
Member Since 12/01/1995
Patrick McKee
5959 West Loop South, Suite 525
Bellaire, Texas 77401
713.668.6069
prmckee@aol.com

Healthcare Organizational & Strategic
Business Consultant
Business Consulting
Member Since 01/01/1996
David Arpin
3611 Graustark, #2
Houston, Texas 77006
713.960.8008
darpin@compuserve.com

Houston Voice
Publication
Member Since 01/01/1996
Mike Fleming
500 Lovett, Suite 200
Houston, Texas 77006
713.529.8490
feedback@houstonvoice.com

Tiburon Systems
Computer Consulting
Member Since 02/01/1998
Daryl Hickman
PO Box 1024
Houston, Texas 77251
713.868.9133
dhickman@TiburonSystems.com

ViAdvocate, Inc.
Vital Settlements
Member Since 01/15/1999
Janet Cohen
5201 Bernardo de Galvez
Galveston, Texas 77551
409.744.3200
janetcohen@aol.com

Williams, Birnberg & Andersen L.L.P.
Attorney
Member Since 01/15/1999
Mitchell Katine
6671 SW Frwy #303
Houston, Texas 77074
713.981.9595
mkatine@wba-law.com

Douthit Design Group
Graphic Design
Member Since 03/01/1999
Dwight Douthit
2010 Commonwealth St.
Houston, Texas 77006-1804
713.526.2712
ddouthit@aol.com

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston
Non Profit
Member Since 02/01/1999
David Faber
PO Box 541004
Houston, Texas 77254-1004
713.521.7464
info@gmch.org

Green/White Advisors
Financial Services
Member Since 01/01/1996
William Green, CPA, CFP
1225 N. Loop West, Suite 1030
Houston, Texas 77008
713.869.1144
bgreen@moneysmart.com

Image Cleaners
Dry Cleaners
Member Since 11/01/1997
George Froming
3407 Montrose, Suite B4
Houston, Texas 77006
713.527.0880

Nurse
Member Since 01/18/1996
Cary Russell
13939 Telge
Cypress, Texas 77429
281.304.9304
TheMaleNurse@hotmail.com

Schroder, Rick
Shell Oil Company
Member Since 12/02/1995
Rick Schroder
1819 Augusta Drive, #431
Houston, Texas 77057
713.241.8922
raschroder@shellus.com

Executive & Professional Assoc. of Houston
Non-Profit
Member Since 11/01/1997
Carlos Reyes
PO Box 130227
Houston, Texas 77219
713. 869.5002
dccatering@infohwy.com

House of Coleman
Printing, Graphics & Copy Writing
Member Since 12/01/1995
Marion E. Coleman
901 W. Alabama
Houston, Texas 77006
713.523.2521
hocprint@aol.com

K. Griff Investigations
Investigative Service
Member Since 12/01/1995
Kathy Griffin
4106 McDuffie Street
Houston, Texas 77098-3420
713.526.7711
Kgriff@pdq.net

Moore and Hunt, Attorneys
Attorney
Member Since 02/05/1996
Debra Hunt
PO Box 300788
Houston, Texas 77230-0788
713.522.4282
debbiehunt@compuserve.com

"It is important that members look forward to the monthly dinner meetings," explains Williams. "That's why we have been working very hard to bring people who will energize our community and those who support our community."

Williams also said she believed attendance would increase while the meetings were held at Sonoma's, a popular New York style supper club in the Montrose area. And, she said, it was important for members to support other members of the Chamber in a good faith effort to demonstrate the benefits of being a member.

Following is a complete list of individuals and businesses that have joined or renewed the Chamber in March:

Peden Business Group
Business Consulting
Member Since 02/01/1999
Johnny Peden
1700 Seaspray Court #1086
Houston, Texas 77008
713.880.5647
M1269@aol.com

Warwick Hotel
Hospitality
Member Since 01/19/1998
Gary Baumann
5701 Main Street
Houston, Texas 77005
713.639.4512
gary@net1.net

Community Communications Network
Telecommunications
Member Since 02/01/2000
John Lang
17150 Butte Creek Drive
Houston, Texas 77090
281.587.1100
jroberts@virtualnetworkcompany.com

Deborah M. Denson, LMSW-ACP
Psychotherapist
Member Since 03/01/2000
Deborah Denson
3100 Wesleyan, Suite 300
Houston, Texas 77027
281.650.4596
dmdenson@aol.com

Enron Corporation
Community Relations
Member Since 02/01/2000
Deb Gebhardt
1400 Smith Street
Houston, Texas 77007
713.853.9606
deb_gebhardt@enron.com

Excec/Pro International, Inc.
Accounting & Staff Placement
Member Since 03/01/2000
Rantz Wagner
2513 South Gessner Road, #430
Houston, Texas 77063
832.541.8007

Baldemar Rodriguez, Jr.
Member Since 02/01/2000
Baldemar Rodriguez, Jr.
PO Box 772
Pasadena, Texas 77501
713.477.9446
baldemarrodriguez@latino.com

Anita Renteria
Individual
Member Since 02/01/2000
Anita Renteria
514 Byrne Street
Houston, Texas 77009

J. Roe Photography
Photography - Fine Art/Portrait/Wedding
Member Since 02/01/2000
Janet Roe
409 Byrne Street
Houston, Texas 77009
713.861.3538
jsr@swbell.net

John Steven Kellett Foundation
Grant Making
Member Since 02/01/2000
John Kellett
PO Box 66574
Houston, Texas 77266-6574
713.529.8368
kellett@aol.com

Larry French Enterprises
Plumber
Member Since 03/01/2000
Larry French
2203 Hiaheah
Houston, Texas 77018
713.956.7733

Manfred Dehmer
Individual
Member Since 03/01/2000
Manfred Dehmer
1701 Hermann Drive #2104
Houston, Texas 77004
713.528.7482
manfred@ix.netcom.com

Personal Computer Consultant
Computer Training & Support
Member Since 03/01/2000
Abbe Shiller
2620-B S. Shepherd Drive, PMB 185
Houston, Texas 77019
713.522.2782
abbe@worldnet.att.net

PFLAG-Houston
Non Profit
Member Since 03/01/2000
Jeanne Edmonds
PO Box 53796
Houston, Texas 77052
713.867.9020

Progressive Health Care Services Inc.
Healthcare
Member Since 03/01/2000
Rose Schmitz, PT
3107 Fountain View
Houston, Texas 77057
713.952.2273

State Representative District #137
State Representative
Member Since 02/01/2000
Debra Danburg
PO Box 66602
Houston, Texas 77266
713.520.8068
ddanburg@hypercon.com

CHAMBER CALENDAR

A P R I L						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		MEETING AT 				1
2	3	4 Networking Breakfast 7:30am Le Peep S. Shepherd at Greenbriar Dinner Meeting Guest Speaker Paul Tetreault Social 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm	5	6	7 Newsletter Deadline	8
9	10 Board Meeting 6:30pm Location TBA	11	12	13	14	15
16 Palm Sunday	17	18	19	20	21 Passover	22 Good Friday
23 Easter Sunday	24	25	26	27	28	29 Black Tie November 11
30					Empower 2000 October 7 and 8	Christmas SongFest December 3

Image...
until they get
to know you,
it's what's on the
surface that counts.

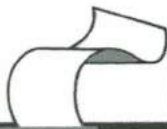
With that, do you want your
image quickly splashed on paper? Or do
you want House of Coleman to ink a better job?

Marion E. Coleman
PROPRIETOR



House of Coleman
Fine Printing & Graphics

901 WEST ALABAMA • HOUSTON, TX 77006-4693
713.523.2521 • FAX 713.524.2643



HUBBARD
Financial Services, Inc.

Bookkeeping and Tax Service



KATHY HUBBARD, EA
(713) 522-9000
FAX: (713) 526-6588

2615 MONTROSE BOULEVARD
PO BOX 66588 ♦ HOUSTON, TX 77266-6588



The right relationship is everything.SM

- * Loan by Phone 800-221-LEND
- * 24 Hour Customer Service . . 713-216-7000
- * Chase Mortgages. 713-216-HOME
- * Small Business 713-216-1720
- Assistance Center
- * Hearing Impaired TDD 713-216-7146

Over 140 branches statewide
24-hour ATMs available at over
300 statewide locations

CHASE
P.R.I.D.E.
team

Where people make the difference

member FDIC

CHAMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS**Notes From the Board**

The board of directors is always available to listen to your ideas, suggestions, or concerns about our growing organization. If you would like to address the board at a board meeting, call the hotline at 713-523-7576 and ask to be put on the agenda to speak at a board meeting held the 2nd Monday of each month.

The board is currently looking for members interested in becoming more involved in our chamber. If you are interested in participating, or you know of anyone who is, please contact President Debbie Hunt at 713-522-4282. Positions available include committee chairs, committee members, and/or any other assistance a member would be willing to provide to the chamber.

Newsletter Advertising

Again, we grow. For the third month in a row our newsletter has increased to 12 pages, thanks to member advertising and article contributions. Remember, this is your newsletter, so if you have a submission you'd like included, contact the newsletter committee. A one-month business card-size ad is only \$30. If you reserve between 3-6 months, the monthly rate is only \$25, and if you reserve space for 7-12 months, your monthly rate is only \$20. Call Marion E. Coleman at the House of Coleman at 713-523-2521.

Deadline for materials is the second Thursday of the month prior to publication.

CHAMBER TIPS

It is time to start paying attention to the prospective "First Pets" as we enter the national election campaign. Presently, Socks the cat and Buddy the dog are the nation's First Pets. Texas Governor George W. Bush has two cats and a dog named Spot. Spot is Millie's boy, former First Lady Barbara Bush's dog, so he was born in the White House. Vice-President Al Gore has no cats, but a black lab and a mutt that Gore picked up injured at the side of the road. So there you have it, both candidates are pet lovers.



Cody

e-mail: info@ghglcc.org



Address Correction Requested

GHGLCC NEWS

the impact network

JUNE, 2000

www.ghglcc.org

volume 5, issue VI

ESTATE PLANNING
AND SAME SEX
COUPLES

3

...INSIDE...

TRANSSEXUALS
AND THE LAW

4

REMEMBERING
RICHARD
WIEDERHOLT

5

JUNE CHAMBER MEETING

JUNE'S SPOTLIGHT is on Houston's Tourism. VIRGINIA N. FISHER, travel professional and Director of Tourism for the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau is our featured speaker. Ms. Fisher has invested four decades in the travel and tourism industry. Following graduation from high school in Dallas, she spent a summer in Mexico. She received a degree from Tulane University and spent a year fulfilling an internship at the University of Madrid before commencing her career as a travel agent in Dallas.

The agency position led to an inside sales position with an international air carrier, which immediately transferred her to Houston. It was the early 60s, an exciting time to be involved in Houston's travel community with the building of the Astrodome, the opening of Astroworld and the construction of Intercontinental Airport. The 70s were spent in Missouri, where her responsibilities of homemaker were coupled with teaching tourism courses at St. Louis

University and St. Louis Community College, a year with a major incentive house, and seven years with one of the country's foremost international tour operators. The

opportunity to transfer to Houston came in 1984 and again, she moved in familiar circles within the Texas tourism industry, applying her skills in sales and marketing with the tour operator, then a major corporate travel company and the hotel industry, before joining the Bureau in April.

She has developed relationships with CVB representatives, airline personnel, travel agents and tour operators and with the corporate sector both domestically and internationally. Now a widow, she regrets only that her husband, a thirty-year airline sales veteran, is not here to witness the current boom in Texas tourism nor feel the energy and excitement in Houston. With two grown sons residing in the Metroplex and a daughter in Houston, she now willingly shares her time, her knowledge and her experience with all around her. A positive influence on any group and her depth of understanding of the industry make June a meeting to anticipate.

For entertainment **ONLY ONE WALTER** will be front and center. He has appeared at Ovation's, Post Oak Grill and J. R.'s. See you at Sonoma's 1314 California Street. Arrive at 6:00 to get the best networking in and RSVP to ensure best price and prevent dinner and program delays.

**Due to the 4th of July holiday, our next meeting will be held
on July 11th at 6:00 PM at Sonoma, 1415 California.**

RSVP is required by June 1st at 713-523-7576. It's extremely important for us to coordinate our number of participants. Please be responsible and make the RSVP call! The cost for the dinner meeting is \$22 for members and \$25 for non-members or guests.

GHGLCC News is underwritten by Shell Chemical Company

The Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce advances the economic and cultural development and vitality of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and supportive heterosexual businesses and organizations.



GREATER HOUSTON
GAY & LESBIAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Board of Directors

President

Debra E. Hunt

Secretary/Treasurer

Rene Guerra

Sandi Bubbert

Marion E. Coleman

Mike Fleming

Phyllis Randolph Frye

Richard Hill

Randy Mitchmore D.D.S.

Anita Renteria

Michael Tolleson

Coy Tow

Clyde Williams

Administrator

Kevin Davidson

Media Relations

Marion E. Coleman

Membership

Debra E. Hunt

Program

Clyde Williams

Networking

Gordon Bayless

Community Affairs

Randy Mitchmore

Education

Coy Tow

Fund Development

Sandi Bubbert

Finance

Rene Guerra

Empower 2000

Marion E. Coleman

Coy Tow

Ethics and Legal

Debra E. Hunt

Annual Membership Dues

Individual \$125.00

Business \$200.00

Corporation \$1,000.00

For membership information call

713.523.7576

P.O. Box 66129

Houston, Texas 77266-6129

CHAMBER PRESIDENT**Founder's Vision Continues**

by Debbie Hunt
President, GHGLCC

The Chamber has lost a good friend and a great leader. Richard Wiederholt's life here on earth ended April 28, 2000. Among the many things that Richard devoted himself to was our Chamber. As one of the Chamber's founders Richard provided the vision and guidance to help the Chamber grow from just a handful of members to the size we are today. Richard's involvement did not stop with just getting things started. He continued to serve on the board of directors and in various officer positions, and was an integral part of each Empower event that the Chamber has sponsored. It will take several people to do all of the jobs that Richard did for our organization. Multiply that void by the numerous groups that Richard worked with, and you can see that he will be truly missed.

I believe that Richard would be happy knowing that the Chamber's various projects will continue in his absence. Marion and Coy may be calling on some additional folks to help take on Richard's Empower 2000 tasks, so if you are contacted or just want to join in on the fun, please consider volunteering some time to help out.

I am pleased that Michael Tolleson of Michael Tolleson Designs has agreed to join the Chamber board for the remainder of

Richard's term and will be assisting with membership concerns. As one of his first projects Michael will be contacting member businesses to participate in our discount program. If you are a business member and would like to participate, there's no need to wait for his call. You can contact Michael at (713) 201-2900.

Due to the apparent success of moving our membership meetings to first Tuesdays at Sonoma Restaurant, the board decided to extend this setup through July. We are still making some adjustments in our new location to accommodate our needs and help our program run smoother, but overall the change has been favorable. Our June membership meeting will feature Virginia Fisher of the Greater Houston Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Please make plans to join us for what should be a very informative meeting. And don't forget to make your reservations so we can get dinner served on time!



Debbie Hunt

"Pain nourishes courage. You can't be brave if you've only had wonderful things happen to you."

—Mary Tyler Moore

CHAMBER PROFILE**Kathy Griffin**

HOUSTON – Kathy Griffin is the owner of K. Griff Investigations, a full service investigative agency providing services to commercial business, the legal profession and private individuals.

K. Griff Investigations & Civil Processing was founded in 1992 with only a handful of dedicated employees and a mission to become one of the largest woman-owned investigation agencies in Texas. In 1999, K. Griff Investigations Inc. was awarded as one of Houston's top 100 woman-owned businesses. They have grown to twenty-one employees and currently serves most of the hospitals in the Medical Center by providing background checks on every potential employee they hire. K. Griff Investigations is also one of only three vendors approved by the City of Houston to provide surveillance on their worker's comp cases and works with many law firms to provide with all types of investigative services.

Performing a criminal background check on a potential employee or "spouse" has become a necessity in this day and age. With the new era of Internet dating services and chat

rooms, these checks can at least "weed out" those who you might want to get to know just a little bit more. It is always better to be safe than sorry!

Ms. Griffin is often asked, "Is being an investigator just like it is no the TV show 'Snoops.'" Her response is, "Well, not quite! It is certainly not as glamorous. Many days and nights are spent inside a hot car watching people who we might suspect of infidelity and catching them on film. However, it is rewarding when you know you have helped someone out by confirming that his or her suspicious feelings are indeed valid.

"Speaking of TV shows-there will be a great new show on this fall called (believe it or not) 'Cheaters.' I had the great opportunity to work together with the producers of this show to bring to you the live confrontations between a spouse (non-discriminatory) and the cheater and the cheatee when they get caught red handed. It's sure to get everyone's attention."

Ms. Griffin invites all members and non-members who might have any questions regarding pre-employment background checks or personal matters to please call her office at 713-526-7711. Confidentiality is always adhered to.

CHAMBER FINANCE

WHY SAME-SEX COUPLES NEED ESTATE PLANNING

by Mark A. Swaim

Attorney at Law, Baggott & Swaim

The ceremony over, the minister asks the beaming couple to turn and face the crowd. An exuberant racket rises from the guests as they happily cheer and applaud the couple's union.

Besides the teetering stack of gifts wrapped in silver and white, this couple shares a common bond with all newlyweds: the need for an estate plan that reflects their newly-forged commitment to one another.

But unlike their peers, this same-sex couple faces an urgency and a host of complications that traditional spouses never encounter.

Same-sex marriages are not legally sanctioned in any state except Vermont, making the vows the partners share in all other states a moral—not legal—bond. As a result, the rights of inheritance, the rights as next of kin, and a whole host of other prerogatives traditional couples may assume are denied the same-sex couple.

That's why gay and lesbian couples must do what a wedding ceremony cannot yet do: legitimize their commitment to one another with a legally binding contract giving them the rights heterosexual couples take for granted. The good news is that it can be handily done through the estate planning process.

GAY OR STRAIGHT, SOUND ESTATE PLANNING SEEKS TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES:

- To ensure that the person of your choice oversees your personal and financial care if a serious illness or injury keeps you from doing so yourself.
- To leave your estate to whom you want, not to whom the state says you must.
- To prevent hostile family members from interfering with your Estate Plan.
- To control how and when your designated heirs receive your estate.
- To minimize estate taxes.
- To avoid probate, a potentially costly, time-consuming and public legal proceeding.

While these goals are important to everyone, for gays and lesbians they have even greater priority.

Unless you've made plans ahead of time, for example, a devastating injury or illness can throw you squarely in the middle of a legal nightmare called Living Probate, also known as a guardianship proceeding. That's when a court determines whether you should be declared legally incompetent, and if so, who should be placed in charge of your personal and financial care.

At a time like this, most of us would want our life partner to oversee our care. Who else knows our wishes and fears as well, and is thus in the best position to speak for us when we cannot? But without a plan in effect ahead of time, other relatives may have a greater legal right to that role. Or the court may appoint a professional guardian—quite possibly a total stranger. In either case, your lover could be shut out of your affairs and forced to watch from the sidelines as others make critical decisions regarding your care.

When it comes to inheritance, once again the law weighs in on the

side of tradition and ignores the personal commitments you've made.

Unless you've left behind other instructions, at death your estate will go to those individuals whom the state decides are your legal heirs. That could, for instance, mean that all your worldly goods pass to a parent you haven't spoken to in 20 years, while your partner of the last two decades is left out in the cold.

Nearly as bad can be what occurs if you and your lover own property as tenants in common. In that event, your lover could suddenly become an unwilling financial partner with a hostile parent, estranged child or some other relative who inherits your interest in the shared asset.

One reason that both gays and straights in non-traditional unions fail to make plans for the distribution of their property after they die is the mistaken assumption that those they leave behind will be civilized and work things out among themselves. Somehow they expect parents and partners who didn't get along while they were alive will suddenly reconcile in their shared grief after their death.

In real life, that rarely happens. Consider that the loss of a loved one is often a watershed for a lifetime of emotions. If there were hard feelings before, grief often exacerbates them. Far from thinking clearly, many of us deal with these overwhelming feelings in highly charged, sometimes even irrational ways.

The kindest thing you could do for those you love is to clearly lay down your wishes well ahead of time. It's the best way to ensure that your loved ones—all of them—receive what you want them to from your estate. It's also the best way to minimize estate taxes as well as control how and when your estate is distributed.

Here's one last reason why estate planning should be high on your list of priorities:

Most of us would prefer to keep our private affairs just that—private. And that's as true in death as in life. It's nobody's business whom we love, how much we owe and to whom, and what we've left behind. Yet, all those details—and much more—could easily become the fodder of gossips and snoops if you don't plan your estate properly.

If you die without any estate plan at all, or if you use a Will to dispose of your property, your estate will go through probate. This legal proceeding can be time-consuming, costly, and always public. It can also be bureaucratic and annoying. Most people want to spare their loved ones this arduous experience.

A Revocable Living Trust, on the other hand, avoids probate. Quietly and discreetly, your property is distributed to whom you want, in the way you want, when you want. Your private affairs remain that way. A Revocable Living Trust also helps you avoid guardianship proceedings, so you can designate the person of your choice to manage your financial affairs and personal care should you become disabled.

Wise estate planning can help you achieve control over your affairs, both in life and in death. And for the same-sex couple, it allows you to enjoy the same rights that husbands and wives take for granted.

CHAMBER SCOPE

Transsexual Case May Radically Change Many Other Laws: Homophobia Alive and Well in Texas Appellate Courts

by Phyllis Randolph Frye

A case pending in the Texas Supreme Court may radically affect the rights of the transsexual community, specifically those in relationships bound by marriage. In the case of Littleton vs. Prange, a Texas woman is fighting for the right to sue over the wrongful death of her husband. Although the grounds for the lawsuit are not unusual, the case is weighed down with a complication that blurs the line between same-sex and opposite-sex marriage. Mrs. Littleton is a transsexual.

Over twenty years ago, Littleton underwent male-to-female corrective genital surgery and ten years later married a man in Kentucky who knew of her past. The couple moved back to Texas and lived happily together until three years ago when her husband died of an alleged medical malpractice. As the surviving spouse, Mrs. Littleton sued for wrongful death.

Homophobia raised its head. The doctor's insurance lawyers argued that although Mrs. Littleton has had female genitalia for over 20 years, she was still male by chromosomes (which have never been tested). In truth, the lawyers contend, Mrs. Littleton was in a same-sex marriage. Since same-sex marriages are not recognized, Mrs. Littleton's marriage was void of any legal rights and consequently, she had no grounds to sue. A summary judgment went against Mrs. Littleton.

The trial court in San Antonio agreed with the insurance company as did the 4th Appeals Court in San Antonio who went on to use the case to denounce same-sex marriage in the name of "our Creator" as provided for by the federal Defense of Marriage Act (D.O.M.A.). The Texas Supreme Court denied the initial petition for discretionary review. Littleton vs. Prange remains in the Texas Supreme Court on a motion for rehearing.

Mrs. Littleton and the Texas Human Rights Foundation hired Attorneys Alyson Meiselman of Maryland and Phyllis Randolph Frye of Texas. They obtained an extension to file for rehearing and have filed that Motion for Rehearing. Meiselman is working with a team of volunteers across the nation on a brief that, with adjustment, can be used in Texas if the Motion for Rehearing is granted.

Frye is representing Littleton on the Texas Supreme Court level and in the event of an unfavorable ruling, Meiselman will take the case to the US Supreme Court.

The case is already having repercussions in Texas. In Austin, a female-to-male transsexual married a woman. The couple created a family of offspring through artificial insemination and adoption. The couple eventually divorced and shared visitation rights with the children. However, the ex-wife has since "found

religion" and is using the 4th Court's decision to declare her marriage void for reasons similar to Littleton's. She contends that her former female-to-male transsexual ex-husband has no legal rights to the children.

The text of the Motion for Rehearing in the Littleton v. Prange case was filed on 18 April 2000. It can be read in its entirety on Mrs. Littleton's web site found at <http://christielee.net>. The Motion is located in the "Filings" link. At your first reading of the Motion, please note the following along with endnotes 2, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 14:

"Moreover, this case deserves to be resolved on a full factual record developed during a trial on the merits. As the court of appeals' opinion indicated, there are only a handful of reported cases addressing this issue world wide. Given this shortage of authority, if allowed to stand, the court of appeals' opinion will be cited in common-law countries around the world.[7] Thus, the court of appeals' simplistic approach has the potential to adversely impact the legal sex of individuals around the world.[8] For this case to be cited around the world, all the while it violates a Texas statute, the Texas Constitution and the Constitution of the United States [9] and is at odds with the American Medical Association [10] and possibly the Human Genome Project [11], could be embarrassing for the state."

The irony of this case is that when the 4th Appeals Court's reasoning is carried through by lawyers in future litigation, it will hurt far and away more non-LGBT folks in Texas than the transsexuals (and by implication LGBs) it was designed to hurt.

Thus far, the Motion has been posted on lists around the world. These lists include several for law professors. A law professor from England has sent an unsolicited letter to the Texas Supreme Court detailing how bad the 4th Appeal Court's decision is. The San Antonio Express-News published an article on 4/9/00 about the 4th Appeal Court's decision's adverse effects. (Both are available on the web site.)

Win or lose, this case will be used as a future guide for the education of law students, litigators and LGBT activists in various areas of law that affect transgendered persons and in the preservation of error for appellate endeavors. The primary text deals with summary judgment practice. The endnotes deal with adverse effects of discriminatory rulings on general public policy, health law, tort law, estoppel by prior actions, family law, prison law, insurance law, civil rights and constitutional law, and civil procedure.

This Motion's text is truly a "team product." It is a true reflection of the input of over a dozen lawyers (mostly transgender but also LGB), law students and legal assistants. The transgender community, through its openly-out transgender lawyers and their good friends, has reached a "critical mass" such that it will be fighting more frequently and more successfully in the courts and in the legislatures for its legal and civil rights

Updates on this case are frequently posted at <http://christielee.net>.

CHAMBER REMEMBRANCE

Richard J. Wiederholt

June 9, 1942 – April 28, 2000



*"The birds are flying Grandpa around —
he is with the clouds, stars, moon, rainbows, and angels."*

—Sean

"You will always be my angel."

—Karie

Richard, I Give You My Heart

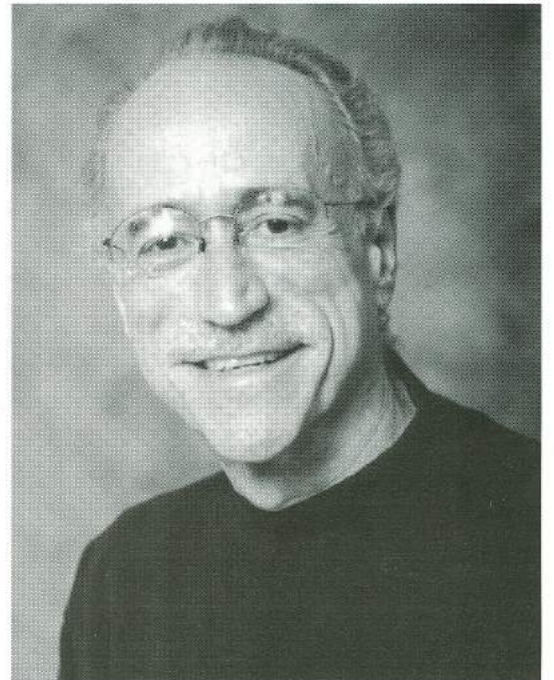
*I give you my honesty, my loyalty, my devotion, sincerity, my
helplessness, my strength, my endurance, my shyness,
my weaknesses, my happiness, my sadness, my fears,
my knowledge, my inquisitiveness, my truth, and
my feelings on a morning as the sun rises and my feelings as
I look up at the sky as the sun sets, the joy at looking at time
as it arrives and the sadness as the time ends.*

I give you my heart.

I love you, Richard.

I miss you!

—Ian



Richard J. Wiederholt



*The softness of your eyes and the gentleness of your voice will be sorely missed around The Acadian Bakers. We
will miss your friendship and your smile.*

—Sandi Bubbart and her staff

*Richard was the kindest and wisest person that I knew. He provided great support to me personally through our
friendship and to the community at large by his being involved in so many important activities. While he is
already greatly missed, I know that his love and presence will continue to be felt by all who knew him and by many
who did not. Thank you, Richard, for staying with us as long as you could.*

—Daniel Boudreaux, DC

*Through tough times you always wore a smile. Caring about others was more your style. We'll miss your gentleness, kindness
and love which embraced us all around. We'll mourn and miss you, but your fond memories will abound.*

—Marion E. Coleman

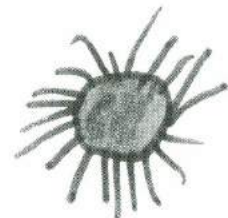
*I stood on the shore of an ocean of leaders, searching for ways to succeed
A many great people were riding the waves, but they were going too fast for my speed
Disappointed, for I was too quiet and shy; I thought I was out of my league
Then I met a man who would give me hope, not so much by his words but his deeds*

*A man, sort of quiet, yet assertive and strong
A man who could teach me the rights from the wrongs
A man who did not need to be loud to be heard
A true man of wisdom, Richard Wiederholt.*

*He taught me that my thinking was enough to succeed
That I didn't have to yell to be a great lead.
I thank you Dear Richard, for giving me new light
For showing me how to quietly fight.*

I stand on the shore with an ocean of leaders all the better for knowing this man.

—Rene Guerra



Last Month's Program...

The May program was packed full. Gerry Quiones and Regina Dotson provided "unforgettable" entertainment. Rick Schroder and Vickie McClanahan gave a sincere portrayal of being "Out in Corporate America" and continuing to self-identify as gay or lesbian. Although some progressive companies like Shell are spending monies to foster support programs for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, many employees are too afraid or complacent to participate. We urge you to participate in these programs. Many thanks from the CHAMBER BOARD to all who participated in the May program.

CHAMBER seeks Logo Redesign!

The GHGLCC is seeking proposals for a redesigned logo. Interested designers are asked to contact Anita Renteria at 713/861-3612 for details and guidelines. Bids will be solicited from Chamber members first, so please hurry if you're interested!

Is Your Relationship in Trouble?



Dr. Maria Minicucci and the *Center for Creativity Knowledge and Change* specializes in conflict resolution/mediation for couples, groups and organizations. Let us help your organization move to the next level of effectiveness with team building and effective communication skills.

This is an innovative approach to conflict resolution and mediation developed through 20 years of experience working with couples, groups, and organizations in conflict.

This method is:

- Results oriented
- Short Term (generally 6-12 sessions)
- Affordable

Is your relationship worth it?



Maria E. Minicucci, Ph.D.
Human Behavior Specialist

5959 W. Loop South, Suite 525 • Bellaire, TX 77401
713/592-5262

E-mail: drmeam@cs.com



June 18th



Happy Father's Day!

RICHARD HILL

SWILLEY-HUDSON'S #1 SELLING AGENT



QUALITY STANDS OUT!™

BUYING, SELLING, AND
RELOCATION SPECIALIST!

713.869.6142

Voice Mail
713-642-4300

View our web page at
www.RichardHill.com

Swilley & Hudson
& ASSOCIATES INC. REALTORS

Email: Richard@RichardHill.com



AMERIQUEST MORTGAGE COMPANY

Tommye L. Rodgers
Account Executive

1155 Dairy Ashford, Suite 214, Houston, TX 77079
Phone (281) 558-2223 Fax (281) 558-2227 Pager (281) 434-1190
Toll Free (888) 326-5407 www.ameriquet.net

Voted Nation's Best Local Gay & Lesbian Magazine—1998 Vice Versa Awards

OutSmart

Houston's Gay and Lesbian Magazine

*It's marketing with
3 times the power!*

InPrint OnLine OutSource
MAGAZINE WEBSITE DIRECTORY

For Advertising information,
call 713/520-7237

CHAMBER PROCEDURE

Parliamentary Procedure

Marion E. Coleman

MOTION	IN ORDER WHEN ANOTHER HAS THE FLOOR	MUST BE SECONDED	DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	VOTE REQUIRED FOR ADOPTION
MAIN MOTION	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY
AMEND A PENDING MOTION	NO	YES	IF MOTION TO BE AMENDED IS DEBATABLE	YES	MAJORITY
AMEND AN AMENDMENT OF A PENDING	NO	YES	IF MOTION TO BE AMENDED IS DEBATABLE	NO	MAJORITY
DEBATE, TO LIMIT OR EXTEND LIMITS	NO	YES	NO	YES	TWO-THIRDS
INFORMATION, POINT OF	YES	NO	NO	NO	IS NOT VOTED ON
LAY ON THE TABLE/ REFER TO COMMITTEE	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY
MINUTES (TO DISPENSE WITH)	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY
PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OR POINT OF ORDER	YES	NO	NO	NO	IS NOT VOTED ON
PREVIOUS QUESTION/ CLOSE DEBATE	NO	YES	NO	NO	TWO-THIRDS

SPECIAL NOTES: 1. CORRECT WAY TO BRING A MOTION THAT HAS BEEN CARRIED OR DEBATED; 2. CHAIR CANNOT VOTE; 3. ADD #'S ON BOARDS

Perfection Plus Services

A Premier Cleaning Service for 2000

- Family owned & operated • Move in-out
- Travel in team w/supervisor • Weekly-bi-monthly-one-time
- Specialists in detail cleaning • Organizing closets, drawers, etc.
- Packing or unpacking for relocating • Bonded for your protection

BUSY PEOPLE
WORKING COUPLES
SINGLE PROFESSIONALS
RETIRED SENIORS

YOU OWE YOURSELF A PROFESSIONAL
HOME CLEANING SERVICE

FREE ESTIMATE
BY PHONE
713-895-2766



CAROLYN L. GARDINER, M.D., P.A.
INTERNAL MEDICINE
BOARD CERTIFIED

411 W. 21st, Suite 2
Houston, TX 77008

Tel: 713.802-9740
Fax: 713.863-9321

GREENWHITE ADVISORS

SANDY WHITE, CFP, CFS
BILL GREEN, CPA, CFP

We Help Your Money Grow!

HOUSTON 1225 N. LOOP WEST SUITE 1030 713-869-1144 800-304-3365	SUGAR LAND 4645 SWEETWATER BLVD. SUITE 500 281-491-5566 800-281-0567
---	---

www.moneysmart.com

Securities offered through Commonwealth Financial Network, Member NASD/SIPC

YOUR OUT AND PROUD CLOTHING STORE

BASIC
BROTHERS

1232 WESTHEIMER, HOUSTON, TX 77006
713.522.1626 • FAX 713.526.1972

www.basicbrothers.com
email: basicbro@neosoft.com

MON-SAT 10-9 • SUN 12-6

**houston
voice**

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

500 LOVETT BLVD., SUITE 200 • HOUSTON, TX • 713-529-8490
www.houstonvoice.com

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Application for membership in the Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, an organization supporting the economic development and business opportunities in the Gay and Lesbian Community. Membership is continuous unless cancellation is in writing. Membership investment is deductible as a business expense, not as a charitable contribution.

Business Name _____
 Your name _____
 Type of Business _____
 Street Address _____
 Mailing Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone _____
 Fax _____
 email _____

Membership Level (check one)

- ☐ Non-profit (\$75.00)
☐ Individual (\$125.00)
☐ Business (\$200.00). Includes up to 3 members.
☐ Corporate (\$1,000.00). Includes up to 5 members.

Sponsored by: _____

Membership Directory

- ☐ Yes! Please include my name in the directory.
☐ No. I do not want to be listed in the directory
☐ OK to fax?

Signature _____

Check Committee(s) you will commit to serving on:

- ☐ Newsletter ☐ Program ☐ Public Relations ☐ Internet
☐ Directory ☐ Membership ☐ Social ☐ Community Affairs

Please send this form with your check by mail to:

Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce • PO Box 66129 • Houston, Texas 77266-6129

The Chamber will have an entry in the Pride Parade in June. Jeffrey Bules has offered to let us use his new baby—a restored black Cadillac convertible. We want a number of members to walk in the parade. It will be a fun entry for the Chamber. If you have been putting off marching in a Gay Pride parade, this is your chance. If you want to have some fun, come and join us. For more info, contact Randy Mitchmore at 713.667.8821. We will also have sign-up forms at the May monthly meeting.

Proudly Serving OUR Community Since 1987

Larry French Enterprises

Complete Plumbing & Water Purification Service

- ◆ Repairs & Remodeling
- ◆ Residential
- ◆ Commercial
- ◆ New Construction

Licensed & Insured
 MPL No. 16724

713-956-7733
 Fax 713-956-1107

River Oaks ANTIQUE CENTER

Roger Howard
 An accredited member
 of the International
 Society of Appraisers

2030 Westheimer
 Houston, Texas 77098
 713.520.8238



When you have legal
 concerns, you don't need
 a lot of lifestyle questions.

Connie Moore
 Debra E. Hunt
 3608 Audubon Place
 Houston TX 77006
 713-522-4282

Abbe L. Shiller/Personal Computer Consultant

"Attending to your needs in the Information Age"

- Certified QuickBooks
Professional Advisor
- Training
- Recommendations
- Software Support

2620-B S. Shepherd Drive
 Suite 185
 Houston, Texas 77098-1534
 Tel./Fax: (713) 522-2782

CHAMBER MEMBERS

Surge in Renewals and Continuous Outreach Efforts Increase Membership

HOUSTON - The Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce has amassed a steady rise in its member base. The organization attributes its success to the highly successful EMPOWER franchise and the outreach efforts of its board of directors.

In addition, the organization's Program Committee has drawn such notables as Sandy Rivera, Jim McIngvale, Paul Tetreault, Rick Shroder and Vickie McClanahan to keynote their monthly dinner meetings under the stewardship of committee chair Clyde Williams.

"It is important that members look forward to the monthly din-

ner meetings," explains Williams. "That's why we have been working very hard to bring people who will energize our community and those who support our community."

Williams also said she believed attendance would increase while the meetings were held at Sonoma's, a popular New York style supper club in the Montrose area. And, she said, it was important for members to support other members of the Chamber in a good faith effort to demonstrate the benefits of being a member.

Following is a complete list of individuals and businesses that have joined or renewed the Chamber in May:

Bartlett Tree Experts
Arborists
Member Since 05/01/2000
James Doyle
1719 West 24th
Houston, Texas 77008
(713) 862-4777
jdoyle@bigplanet.com

CHASE Bank of Texas
Bank
Member Since 03/11/1996
Rene Guerra
PO Box 2558 (13-1111F-12)
Houston, Texas 77252
(713) 750-2170
renwar@msn.com

OutSmart/Uptown Express Magazine
Publisher
Member Since 01/01/1996
Greg Jeu
3406 Audubon Place
Houston, Texas 77006-4412
7135207237
outsmart1@aol.com

Gay & Lesbian Yellow Pages, Inc.
Directory Publisher
Member Since 01/04/1996
Laura Villagran
4200 Montrose, Suite 480
Houston, Texas 77006
7139420084
info@glyp.com

Computer Exchange
Computer hardware new/refurnished systems & parts
Member Since 03/01/1997
Ryan Herbst
1212-A Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77006
7135296789
ryan@compexchange.com

Schmerler Insurance Agency
Insurance Agency
Member Since 05/01/1997
Rob Schmerler
6575 West Loop South #185
Bellaire, Texas 77401
7136617700
schmerler@pdq.net

Shell Chemical Company
Chemical Company
Member Since 01/01/1999
Mike Lemanski
306 Tamerlaine Drive
Houston, Texas 77024
(281) 544-7176
mlemanski@shellus.com

HomeWorks Apartment Locators
Apartment Locating
Member Since 03/01/1998
Jason McLawchlin
2210 West Dallas #1943
Houston, Texas 77019
(713) 521-7325
homeworks@pdq.net

Green, Bill, Law Office of Attorney
Member Since 04/01/2000
Bill Green
6233 Haskell Street
Houston, Texas 77007
(713) 266-1004

Rainbow Ranglers Dance Club
Non Profit
Member Since 05/01/2000
Joe Blanton
PO Box 1421
Houston, Texas 77251
(713) 524-9500
uugb@swbell.net

Stonewall Democrats-Houston
Non Profit
Member Since 05/01/2000
Mark Wood
PO Box 980126
Houston, Texas 77098
(713) 522-2595
RNR4MSW@aol.com

Best of Both Worlds

Andra Haviland – Multi-Instrumentalist & DJ

Best of Both Worlds features Andra Haviland, who offers a unique service as a one woman, multi-instrumentalist for holy union and wedding ceremonies, receptions, and private parties. Instruments played include saxophone, flute and guitar. **Best of Both Worlds'** versatility combines live music with full DJ service and light show creating the perfect musical setting for any special event.

Andra has been performing music for over twenty years. She studied at Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA. She has led her own jazz band, performed on cruise ships, played for classical ensembles, theatre orchestras, big bands, drum & bugle corps as well as contemporary groups. She has performed, written and arranged music, directed choir and instrumental ensembles for Metropolitan Community Churches. She tours cross country performing her solo multi-instrumental music ministry. In addition to being a popular private music instructor, Andra is also a member of the Houston Pride Band, Houston Civic Jazz Orchestra, and Carol Morgan Quintet.

For more information, contact Andra Haviland at
PO Box 58844, Houston, TX 77258, (281) 412-3321, or andramusic@hotmail.com.

CHAMBER CALENDAR

MEETING AT



1415 CALIFORNIA

J U N E

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Empower 2000 October 7 and 8	Black Tie November 11 Christmas SongFest December 3			1	2	3
4	5	Dinner Meeting at Sonoma, 1415 California Guest Speaker Virginia N. Fisher Social 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm	7	Newsletter Deadline 8	9	Pride Day at Astroworld info: 713-529-6979 10
11	Board Meeting 6:30pm Location TBA 12	13	Flag Day 14	15	Empower 2000 Kickoff Sonoma 6 to 8 1415 California 16	HATCH Prom Lovett Inn 8 PM 17
Father's Day 18	19	20	21	22	23	Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade 9:00 PM 24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Image...
until they get
to know you,
it's what's on the
surface that counts.

With that, do you want your
image quickly splashed on paper? Or do
you want House of Coleman to ink a better job?

David E. Coleman
PROPRIETOR



House of Coleman
Fine Printing & Graphics

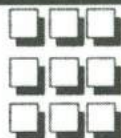
901 WEST ALABAMA • HOUSTON, TX 77006-4693
713.523.2521 • FAX 713.524.2643



HUBBARD

Financial Services, Inc.

Bookkeeping and Tax Service



KATHY HUBBARD, EA

(713) 522-9000

FAX: (713) 526-6588

2615 MONTROSE BOULEVARD

PO BOX 66588 ♦ HOUSTON, TX 77266-6588

Chamber of Commerce Meeting
at Sonoma, June 6th

Dinner Menu

Mixed Field Greens
with Sweet Corn Relish
Cilantro Vinaigrette

Petite Filet, Crabcake and a Garlic Shrimp
Poblano Roasted Potatoes
Harvester Beans
Sun Dried Tomato Beurre Blanc

Apple Walnut Torte

CHAMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notes From the Board

The board of directors is always available to listen to your ideas, suggestions, or concerns about our growing organization. If you would like to address the board at a board meeting, call the hotline at 713-523-7576 and ask to be put on the agenda to speak at a board meeting held the 2nd Monday of each month.

The board is currently looking for members interested in becoming more involved in our chamber. If you are interested in participating, or you know of anyone who is, please contact President Debbie Hunt at 713-522-4282. Positions available include committee chairs, committee members, and/or any other assistance a member would be willing to provide to the chamber.

Newsletter Advertising

If you have a submission you'd like to include in the newsletter, contact Marion E. Coleman at the House of Coleman at 713-523-2521. A one-month business card-size ad is only \$30. If you reserve between 3-6 months, the monthly rate is only \$25, and if you reserve space for 7-12 months, your monthly rate is only \$20.

Deadline for materials is the second Thursday of the month prior to publication.

e-mail: info@ghglcc.org



**P.O. Box 66129
Houston, Texas
77266-6129**



Please Recycle

Address Correction Requested

The next dinner meeting will be held on January 9th at 6:00 p.m. at Sonoma, 1415 California.*

The Chamber Board of Directors

President

Michael Tolleson

Vice President

Sara Rook

Secretary

Rick Taylor

Treasurer

Rene Guerra

Gary Baumann

Larry Broughton

Marion E. Coleman

Mike Fleming

Debra Hunt

Ian Leffler

Randy Mitchmore D.D.S.

Administrator

Kevin Davidson

Media Relations

Marion E. Coleman

Membership

Michael Tolleson

Networking

Michael Tolleson

Community Affairs

Randy Mitchmore D.D.S.

Education

Coy Tow

Finance

Rene Guerra

Ethics and Legal

Debra E. Hunt

Annual Membership Dues

Individual \$125.00

Business \$200.00

Corporation \$1,000.00

For membership information call

713-523-7576

P.O. Box 66129

Houston, Texas 77266-6129

theChamber

the greater houston glbt chamber of commerce

JANUARY, 2001

www.ghglcc.org

volume 6, issue 1

A NEW LOOK FOR 2001
AND BEYOND

3

...INSIDE...

LEADING AND
LEARNING SERIES

5

PREMIER FINE
FLOORING -
A CUT ABOVE

6

WHO, WHAT, WHEN AND HOW?

A DIALOGUE ABOUT CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP AND BENEFITS, AND HOW TO MAKE THE CHAMBER WORK FOR YOU

What's in it for me? This is a question we all ask ourselves when we first considered joining the Chamber as a member.

The fact is that each of us joins the Chamber for our own reasons and we attend each meeting with our own agenda. The Chamber is really an umbrella of services, programs and opportunities that can help us:

- Make the right contacts.
- Gain knowledge about our community.
- Learn valuable business information.
- Facilitate opportunities to form relationships that allow us to gain new customers, friends, or prospects.

But we have to know how best to take advantage of these opportunities.

With the New Year beginning and excellent new leadership in place, this is a great chance for all of us to examine all that the Chamber can offer us. Also we can discover what each of us as members may be able to offer in the way of ideas, time or resources to add even more benefits and

enhance existing ones. This is your chance to have an impact on the Chamber and drive positive changes for the coming year!

Please plan to attend the meeting on January 9th and get a clear understanding of all the membership benefits. Plan on bringing others who will also benefit from this presentation and discussion. The Chamber is positioned to play a very significant role in economic and image development for Houston's GLBT community, and it will be active members like you that see the greatest rewards in the coming year!

Coy Tow and Anita Renteria are both past Presidents of the Chamber who can testify to the real benefits that come from being an active member. Both have had experience in working for major corporations and in owning their own small businesses. In Coy's work with Uniglobe, he has facilitated and taught many business people as a corporate trainer. Join him and Anita in what is sure to be an entertaining, lively and beneficial program.

See you there!

* To reserve your seat at the next dinner meeting, please RSVP by Monday, January 8th at 713-523-7576. It's extremely important for us to coordinate our number of participants. Please be responsible and make the RSVP call! The cost for the dinner meeting is \$22 for members, \$25 for non-members and guests.

The Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce advances the economic and cultural development and vitality of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and supportive heterosexual businesses and organizations.

The Chamber News is underwritten by Shell Chemical Company

CHAMBER PRESIDENT

LOOKING AHEAD TO A YEAR OF GROWTH

by Michael Tolleson
President

As I enter into the duties of your President, I feel very blessed to have the privilege to work with the new Board of Directors and Officers. The Chamber has a wealth of experience and talent in its membership and once again we are fortunate to be able to utilize those resources. Our new Board members are Gary Bauman, Larry Broughton, Sara Rook, Rick Taylor and Ian Leffler. Our remaining Board members are Marion E. Coleman, Rene Guerra, Mike Flemming, Randy Mitchmore and myself. Debra Hunt will remain on the Board to fulfill her duty as Past President and to help guide me as I learn the duties of Board President. In addition to myself as President, we elected Sara Rook as Vice President, Rick Taylor as Secretary and Rene Guerra was re-elected as Treasurer.

More community visibility, more member benefits and more membership involvement are a few things that I'm looking forward to in the coming year. The January meeting will be your chance to voice your own desires and opinions for this coming year. The board will follow the January meeting with

a retreat to set the goals for the year, so your voices are very important! Please try to attend the January 9th meeting and help make the Chamber the organization that you truly want it to be.

I look forward to this next year as your President and want you to feel comfortable expressing your comments or questions. Please send your comments or questions to me at mtolleson@earthlink.net

May we all work to make this the very best year for *our* Chamber!



Michael Tolleson

CHAMBER PROFILE

IAN LEFFLER

Before moving to Houston, Mr. Leffler was a professional ballet dancer for twenty-four years, dancing with such notable companies as the Oakland Ballet, the San Francisco Opera and many others.

He has been the recipient of the Public Citizen of the Year 1995, awarded by the National Association of Social Workers Gulf Coast for his contribution to the Gulf Coalition for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

In 1990, Mr. Leffler arrived in Galveston and created his own business—Art St. Ballet Theatre. He then became a teacher for the Texas Commission for the Arts and Education. Mr. Leffler created a curriculum for Galveston Independent School

District and taught for L.A. Morgan Academy of Fine Arts for grades K-5.

Mr. Leffler has been the entertainment coordinator for Empower for the past two years.

He currently operates Basic Brothers where his mentor and partner for life, Richard Wiederholt (who departed us on April 28, 2000), taught him all aspects of business, networking and activism.



Ian Leffler

Mr. Leffler is currently working on his degree in computer science, and is in the process of graduating from Project Leap. He will work intensively with the Ryan White title one organization reviewing grant applications for the year 2001.



BASIC BROTHERS

YOUR OUT AND PROUD CLOTHING STORE

1232 WESTHEIMER, HOUSTON, TX 77006
713.522.1626 • FAX 713.526.1972
www.basicbrothers.com
www.eroticatfite.com
email: basicbro@neosoft.com
MON-SAT 10-9 • SUN 12-6

A NEW LOOK FOR 2001 AND BEYOND

By now you've all noticed that our old Chamber has a new look! Last year, our Marketing subcommittee wrote a report for the Board of Directors recommending a change in promoting the Chamber. The key points were that:

- The name "Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce" was unwieldy.
- The acronym GHGLCC was difficult to remember and pronounce and was NOT catchy!
- GHGLCC was also often confused with HLGCC (Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center) and as a result did not help in promoting name recognition for us.
- With our Mission Statement updated to include Bisexual and Transgender persons, so should our name be inclusive.

The committee recommended that something easy, identifiable and "brandable" be adopted. Since most of us have shortened it to "The Chamber" in conversation, we decided to make it official.

This happened at the same time as the Board decided to change us from the "Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce" to the "Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce." Not only is this more inclusive, which mirrors our membership, mission state-

ment and culture, but it doesn't require spelling out all the words, so it's a little easier to write!

Finally, to seal the deal, the marketing committee advertised a new logo design contest. We are pleased to announce that Chamber member *The Houston Voice* submitted five styles and choices for review. The final selection was made by the marketing committee and will

the chamber
the greater houston glbt chamber of commerce

become the new masthead for our newsletter and web page, as well as our business letterhead.

Many thanks to Natasha Marquez, who works in the Graphics and Production department at *The Houston Voice* for her winning designs and her hard work!

Look for a new advertising campaign in 2001 from the Chamber. This new look will be promoted via badges, EMPOWER 2001 and our 2001 Resource Guide.

Congratulations to the Chamber's newly-elected board members:
Gary Baumann, Larry Broughton, Ian Leffler, Sara Rook and Rick Taylor

2000 CHAMBER AWARDS

President Debra Hunt presented awards to Chamber members during the December Holiday Party. Awards and recipients included:

Coy Tow Leadership Award—In recognition of a person who shows the vision and leadership for promoting the Greater Houston Gay and Lesbian business and organizational community through fostering cohesion and community partnership. **Presented to Coy Tow**

President's Award—In recognition of a person who has shown the vision and leadership in achieving the goals and objectives of the Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. **Presented to Clyde Williams**

Membership Development—In recognition to the member who has contributed significantly to the development of Chamber membership and services to its members. **Presented to Michael Tolleson**

Rookie of the Year—In recognition of a person who has contributed significantly to the Chamber over the past year as a relatively new member. **Presented to Rene Guerra**

Outstanding Member—In recognition of the member who has contributed significantly to the mission and objectives of the Chamber and has shown outstanding leadership qualities. **Presented to Ian Leffler**

Community Service—In recognition of a community organization to further the objectives of the Chamber in fostering economic and educational opportunities within the gay and lesbian community. **Presented to the Houston Gay and Lesbian Community Center**

Special Recognition to Outgoing Board Members

Sandi Bubbert
Richard Hill
Anita Renteria
Coy Tow
Clyde Williams
Phyllis Frye

Special Recognition for promoting the mission of the GHGLCC

Houston Voice
Outsmart Magazine
Texas Triangle
Vilven Design Group

Special Recognition to 2000 Committee Chairs

Empower 2000	Coy Tow / Marion E. Coleman
Program	Clyde Williams
Membership/Networking	Michael Tolleson
Newsletter	Marion E. Coleman / Russell Ben Williams
Media Relations	Anita Renteria
Corporate/Website	Lee Ingalls
Community Affairs	Randy Mitchmore

WELLS FARGO HOUSING FOUNDATION BUILDS 1000TH HOME

The Wells Fargo Housing Foundation will celebrate a significant milestone in its seven-year history with the construction of its 1,000th home made possible by a foundation donation. The foundation's 1,000th home is located in Bryan, Texas, and was constructed by volunteers from Wells Fargo Home Mortgage and Wells Fargo Banks in the Bryan-College Station area.

Kimberly Jackson, executive director of the Wells Fargo Housing Foundation, said team members' dedication to the foundation's mission made this achievement possible. The foundation's mission is to increase home ownership opportunities for low-income families and address the shelter needs of the transitionally homeless. "As long as we have team members who are willing to volunteer their time to work on a project, we can provide the funding to make it happen," Jackson said.

HOME LOAN LIMITS INCREASED FOR 2001

Good news for homebuyers—the maximum loan amount for conforming conventional loans has been increased for 2001. Previously, the loan limit for 1 unit was \$252,700 for conforming conventional loans, but effective immediately, the maximum loan limit has been increased to \$275,000!

What does this mean to buyer's who are needing to finance the purchase of a home? It means a better interest rate for buyer's with loan amounts between \$252,700 and \$275,000. Also, because the interest rate is lower with the new maximum loan amounts, it means that qualified borrowers can qualify for larger loan amounts than before.

Wells Fargo Home Mortgage is the leading lender in the U.S. with over 8,000 loan officers nationwide. In fact, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage provides funding for one out of every 15 homes financed in America.

If you would like additional information regarding these changes or any information regarding a home mortgage loan, you can contact **Larry Broughton** at Wells Fargo Home Mortgage. He can be reached at 713-654-3085.

WELLS FARGO HOME MORTGAGE



Larry Broughton
Home Mortgage Consultant

1301 McKinney
Houston, TX 77010
713-654-3085 Office
713-971-1818 Pager
713-951-9541 Fax

RICHARD HILL



GREENWOOD KING
PROPERTIES

*Buying, Selling, and
Relocation Specialist!*

713.864.0888

mobile number:
713.828.7866

Email:
Richard@RichardHill.com



The right relationship is everything.SM

- ★ Loan by Phone 800-221-LEND
- ★ 24 Hour Customer Service . . 713-216-7000
- ★ Chase Mortgages. 713-216-HOME
- ★ Small Business 713-216-1720
- Assistance Center
- ★ Hearing Impaired TDD 713-216-7146

Over 140 branches statewide
24-hour ATMs available at over
300 statewide locations

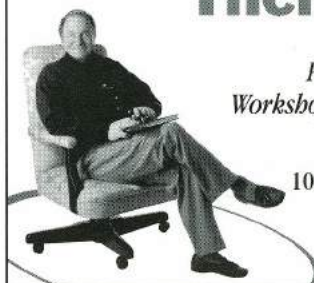
CHASE
P.R.I.D.E.

team

Where people make the difference

member FDIC

houston
Therapist.com



*Psychotherapy, Counseling, and
Workshops for individuals and couples*

Tony Carroll LMSW-ACP

1006 Missouri St., Houston, TX 77006

713.527.0000

houstonTherapist.com

LEADERSHIP SERIES FOCUSED ON THE GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY PLANS TO ACCEPT 35 LOCAL PARTICIPANTS

The GLBT Chamber of Commerce continues to provide excellent opportunities for community building and personal growth. Last year The Chamber began the **Leading and Learning Series** designed to enhance and increase the leadership abilities of prospective board members in the community. The idea is to have members from all walks of life within the GLBT community come together to learn and grow, and perhaps build a coalition of cooperation among the leaders of the community.

The Chamber is currently seeking applicants who are interested in investing more time and talent into the GLBT community. This eight-month leadership series promises to benefit the individual both professionally and in volunteer community service. Learning skills like diversity training, team building, fund raising, and personal leadership as well as understanding the laws that govern non-profit groups, how to correctly run a meeting, and how develop a network of volunteers. The series requires anywhere from four to eight hours a month and also includes two weekend overnights.

The graduating class of 1999 is making a huge difference in the community as they have taken on new responsibilities, board positions and in some instances even National positions to help lead us into the new Millennium. "If we can make a difference in the quality of lead-

ership and help make our community more inclusive, productive, and cohesive, then we have succeeded" says Coy Tow, coordinator and education chair for the Chamber.

Thanks to the Elliott H. Matthews Foundation, the John Kellett Foundation and the Hollyfield Foundation, most of the fees for the program have been underwritten. The Chamber is hoping that the

community will give this program the full support again in 2001 and all non-profit organizations should consider enrolling any new board members into the program.

If you are interested in participating or underwriting someone else's participa-

tion please contact Coy Tow at 713-218-8931 or e-mail to jctow@hotmail.com.

The first session of the series will be held in February 2001. The series tuition is \$250.00 and scholarships are available through local underwriting. No fee is necessary for submitting application or requesting tuition assistance. **The deadline for application is January 21, 2000.**

All interested applicants are encouraged to send a short resume or bio about past community work, and a letter explaining why they would like to participate. Please send these materials to 4401 Lafayette St., Bellaire, TX 77401.

"If we can make a difference in the quality of leadership and help make our community more inclusive, productive, and cohesive, then we have succeeded"

—Coy Tow

Proudly Serving OUR Community Since 1987

Larry French Enterprises

Complete Plumbing & Water Purification Service

- ◆ Repairs & Remodeling
- ◆ Residential
- ◆ Commercial
- ◆ New Construction

Licensed & Insured
MPL No. 16724
713-956-7733
Fax 713-956-1107

River Oaks
ANTIQUES
CENTER

Roger Howard
An accredited member
of the International
Society of Appraisers

2030 Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77098
713.520.8238

GREENWHITE ADVISORS



BILL GREEN, CPA, CFP

SANDY WHITE, CFP, CFS

HOUSTON

1225 N. LOOP WEST
SUITE 1030
713-869-1144
800-304-3365

INVESTMENT PLANNING
RETIREMENT PLANNING
EDUCATION PLANNING
ASSET ALLOCATION

SUGAR LAND

4645 SWEETWATER BLVD.
SUITE 500
281-491-5566
800-281-0567

www.moneysmart.com

Securities offered through Commonwealth Financial Network, Member NASD/SIPC

We Help Your Money Grow!

BUSINESS PROFILE

WHAT MAKES PREMIER FINE FLOORING 'A CUT ABOVE?'

by Rick Taylor

After ten years in department store management and four years of outstanding reviews with the latest store, I was fired. I will never forget it. It was the big kick-off for swimwear season and to boost sagging moral, I volunteered to put together a big beach bash to tie in with the swimwear season kick-off. It was a casual dress day—more Hawaiian shirts that you would ever want to see in one place ever again. I wore hot pink shorts (knee length, of course), a perfectly coordinated garish print shirt and the requisite lei ... I drew the line at the 'gimme cap with the logo,' though.

I was called in to the VP's office and 'let go.' No real tangible explanation was offered. Obviously, sales increases were not the deciding factor, but rather the Matriarch of the family-owned store had decided that I didn't like her, so I had to leave ... hot pink shorts and all! Later the VP told me that the family did not like change, and that I was a threat because I embraced change, particularly when my ideas produced sales increases and their old methods did not. Needless to say, I was devastated. But in hindsight, it was a major step in a journey that eventually led me to take the plunge and open my own business. I learned that change could be good and that it was important for me to take control of my destiny.

Still, I wasn't quite ready to take the plunge and go out on my own, but the seed had been planted. I spent the next four years working to develop a franchise, gathering business development skills and eventually getting back into sales—this time in the flooring business. I went to work for a couple for whom I had done some consulting work. Their sales increased and business was good ... actually TOO good. They got the beach house and I got a fifty dollar a month raise for the cellular bill. *Hello!!! Wake up call #2001.*

I decided that I had had enough and that I should do something about it. Several of my clients urged me to open my own store. I decided it was a safe bet when I had collected three checks for deposits on jobs. They left the name blank and said, "Fill it in when you have a company name and let me know when you can start."

I finally took the plunge on September 1, 1996. Bravery is a good thing—change is a good thing. Nike says it best: *Just Do It!*

So we did it. We opened our business with a \$500 deposit and those three blank checks. That \$500 covered our deposit and

first month's rent for an office space (basically a garage with a window unit) behind a private mini-storage facility. But our first year in that garage, we hit sales of \$250,000. Last year, in our third year of business, we did over \$1.2 million in sales.

We outgrew the garage and moved into a real showroom. The core of our business is residential, both new and remodeling, carpet, tile and hardwood. We also do commercial business—everything from offices to manufacturing plants to hospitals. For the past two years we have been developing a program with Custom Home Builders providing specification, design and installation of flooring for new custom homes. We anticipate this portion of our business to represent over two million in sales for 2001.

We have been very fortunate that our business has grown so rapidly. For one, the economy has been strong and that has fueled both new construction and remodeling. Secondly, we have found a niche in the flooring market. We are not self-service like the 'big-box' home improvement stores, yet we are not high-end exclusive design. Flooring is a major expense, and in many cases, the homeowner is trying to make a selection from a small sample and trying to envision who it will look in a room. They want to know: "Is this the right color? How will a pattern look in this room? Should I go with wood or tile? Will it last until Billy gets out of college?" That customer is spending a lot of money and they deserve to get the answers they need, however we can't answer them until I've been to their home to survey the rooms. Once I've noted traffic patterns, furniture styles, colors, kids, pets, etc., I can more accurately answer questions and recommend a solution.

We recognize that today's customer is educated and seeks information and recommendations so that they can make confident, informed decisions. We built our business on the premise that a customer wants to be educated, wants a fair price and wants a quality installation. And that satisfied customer will tell their friends. Over eighty percent of our business is repeat or referred customers.

Design assistance is another important service that we provide that separates us from other flooring stores. Most clients do not require a major design scheme or redo. Some want a complete new look, but in most cases the basic elements are already set—furnishings, paint, etc. We can provide assistance to give you the look you want and the product performance you need.

Continued on page 7



That is why we offer a free in-home consultation.

I have learned many things in the last four years about running a business. The most important lesson is that you never reach 'it.' It is very difficult to rest on your laurels and say, 'I've made it.' the target is constantly moving and changing. The successful business must continually reinvent itself and continue to change to stay on track. Change is not only good, it is imperative. Even customers recognize the importance of change. Industry average estimates that homeowners change their carpeting every seven years. The number one reason for carpet replacement is to change the color. Maybe it is time for you to change your colors ... maybe even hot pink.



Visit us at Premier Fine Flooring, 6110 Pinemont, Suite 110, or call us at 713-290-9100.

You may also visit our web site at www.premierfineflooring.com or send us an email at ricket@premierfineflooring.com

K G RIFF

INVESTIGATIONS & CIVIL PROCESSING

Kathy Griffin

4106 McDuffie
Houston, Texas 77098
Email: kgriff@pdq.net

(713) 526-7711
FAX: (713) 526-7730
Pager: (713) 285-8869

Perfection Plus Services

A Premier Cleaning Service for 2000

- Family owned & operated • Move in-out
- Travel in team w/supervisor • Weekly-bi-monthly-one-time
- Specialists in detail cleaning • Organizing closets, drawers, etc.
- Packing or unpacking for relocating • Bonded for your protection

YOU OWE YOURSELF A PROFESSION-

BUSY PEOPLE
WORKING COUPLES
SINGLE PROFESSIONALS
RETIRED SENIORS

FREE ESTIMATE
BY PHONE
713-895-2766



Is Your Relationship in Trouble?



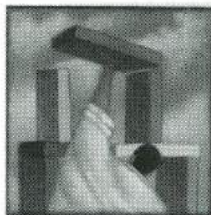
Dr. Maria Minicucci and the *Center for Creativity Knowledge and Change* specializes in conflict resolution/mediation for couples, groups and organizations. Let us help your organization move to the next level of effectiveness with team building and effective communication skills.

This is an innovative approach to conflict resolution and mediation developed through 20 years of experience working with couples, groups, and organizations in conflict.

This method is:

- Results-oriented
- Short Term (generally 6-12 sessions)
- Affordable

Is your relationship worth it?



Maria E. Minicucci, Ph.D.
Human Behavior Specialist

5959 W. Loop South, Suite 525 • Bellaire, TX 77401
713/592-5262

E-mail: drmeam@cs.com



All Phases
of Tree Care:
Residential and
Commercial

Your Trees Deserve The Best Of Care

Trees are valuable assets. Don't entrust their future to less than caring professionals. Bartlett leads the way in tree care with trained arborists, research facilities, nationwide experience and specialized equipment.

For a professional evaluation of your tree care needs, call today.

There is no obligation.

JAMES DOYLE
(713) 862-4777

www.bartlett.com

Guided by The Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories and Experimental Grounds, Charlotte, NC.

TOP TEN WAYS TO AVOID A TAX DISASTER

by Peter Berkery

April 15th looms, and you're in a jam. It goes something like this: you owe too much, you can't pay, and/or your tax bill is so high you're actually thinking about voting Republican! Don't despair ... and definitely don't convert! There are things you can do to get through this year, and to make sure nothing like this happens again next year. Let *PlanetOut's Guide to Avoiding an April 15th Disaster* keep you from being an April fool.

10. GO ON EXTENSION

If you can't pay your entire bill by April 15th, you can get a valid extension as long as you pay in 90% of what you owe. You then will have til August 15th to come up with the rest. Two warnings come with this strategy, though. First, you have to do your math carefully. If you don't, and you pay in less than 90%, then IRS can cancel your extension and apply a gob of penalties. Second, IRS will charge you interest on the balance you owe from April 15th til the day you pay. Still, this tip can help if you're just a little short.

9. USE THE INSTALLMENT PLAN

Okay, that last strategy might work for some people, but you really, really, really can't pay, and a 10% break just isn't gonna cut it. What can you do? In many cases, IRS will enter into an installment agreement to let you pay your balance over time. This is a tricky area, and you're probably better off getting a tax pro's help. Basically, if you owe less than \$10,000, can pay off your balance in three years or less, are current on all other back years, and will stay current for all future years, IRS is pretty easy going for IRS about cutting these deals. If you want to try this, you'll want to get a Form 9465, fill it out and attach it to your return, and file by April 15th. By the way, if you owe more than \$10,000, you still can try for an installment agreement, but you really should get professional help.

8. KEEP BETTER RECORDS

Okay, admit it—part of the reason you're in this mess is that you haven't saved any of your paperwork for the past 12 months, so you have no idea how to prove some of your deductions. It's hard to undo the past, of course, but invest in a good shoebox—that's not just accountant humor—and avoid missed opportunities next year. Unorganized records are better than no records at all.

7. SELL STOCK

Speaking of investments, here's a way to generate a nice little year-end loss: sell under-performing stocks. If you're an investor, you probably know that you can use your capital losses to offset your capital gains. But did you also know you can generate an extra \$3,000 in losses each year to offset other sources of income—like your salary? If you think you're gonna need some relief next April 15th, sit down with a pencil and your portfolio in December and pick a few dogs to unload. Just be sure that your tax strategies don't conflict with your investment strategies—in other words, don't let the tax tail wag the investment dog. Only sell those stocks it makes good sense to sell, anyway.

6. SHIFT INCOME

If you're in a high tax bracket, and expect to remain there, it may make sense to shift some of your income-producing assets to a lover or family member in a lower bracket. This is a tricky strategy on several fronts: you can't get back assets you give away, you might create estate or gift tax problems if you give away too much to one person (or the wrong person), and special rules limit the usefulness of this strategy when the recipient is under age 14. Nevertheless, this is a tried and true technique for lowering taxes. Be sure to check with a tax advisor before giving away more than \$10,000 in assets to any one person in a single year, though.

5. NOT ALL INVESTMENTS ARE CREATED EQUAL

After last year's big tax bill—brought to you by the same people who pledge to make your taxes simpler!—the law now favors investments that generate capital gains over those that generate interest or dividends. This is because Congress lowered the tax rate that applies to capital gains. So, if you're in a high bracket and do

a lot of investing, it might make sense to look for mutual funds that deliver gains instead of ordinary income.

4. CLEAN HOUSE

Here's a great way to kill two birds with one stone: clean out those closets (no, not those closets, the other ones!) AND get a tax deduction. Turns out you can deduct the value of clothing and household goods you give to charity. This is another great late December strategy; just be sure to get things to the Goodwill, Salvation Army, or other community organization before the stroke of midnight on December 31st. Remember to get a receipt, and also remember that there are extra forms you have to file if any donation of property exceeds \$500.

Finally, bear in mind that you have to use the thrift store value when claiming a deduction, which means that hideous bridesmaid's dress in the back of your closet is probably only worth \$25, even if you forked out \$350 for it!

3. FILE EARLIER

Probably another good part of the reason you're in a fix now is that you waited too long to start working on your taxes. Right? Now maybe some of the other items on our hit list also are at play—bad records, not enough money, whatever. Nevertheless, these things haven't gone away, and they were never gonna. Even if there's a problem, the sooner you address it, the sooner it will get resolved. Next year, don't wait til the last minute to deal with your taxes. You should have all the paperwork you need by the end of January, so why not make an appointment with a return preparer for early February?

2. CHECK YOUR WITHHOLDING

If you've found yourself owing Uncle Sam money this April 15th, there's a reasonable chance it is because you didn't have enough taxes withheld from your paycheck over the course of the last year. If you've had a major life change (such as a [legal] marriage, a divorce, birth of a child, a child reaching maturity), for sure your tax situation has changed as well. Get yourself a W-4, crank out the worksheet, and see if you're having enough withheld. If not, decrease your withholding allowances and increase the taxes taken out each pay period. If you have substantial non-wage income (like self-employment income, retirement income, or investment income), you may even need to make quarterly estimated tax payments. Estimated taxes involve higher math, and often are better left to a tax pro.

1. SAVE MORE, PAY LESS

If you're covered by a tax savings plan at work—usually a 401(k), but maybe also a SEP, SIMPLE, 403(b) or other plan—and you are not contributing the maximum, you have no business whining about your tax bill! A golden opportunity is staring you in the face: the government actually is willing to subsidize your retirement planning. Amounts you contribute to these plans reduce your taxable income for the year.

If you can't afford to jump to the max all at once, go in increments—say 1% more of your savings each month til you get to where you need to be. These plans are the best tax savings strategies going, and until you put every penny you can into them, you're not doing all you can to lower your taxes or to save for retirement. We know that not everybody can take advantage of all the pointers we've provided. In some cases you probably should check with your tax advisor to see how these ideas will work in your case. It's a pretty good bet there is something in our top ten list to make next year's taxes less taxing for you!

© 1995-2001 PlanetOut Corporation. All copyright & trademark rights reserved.

PlanetOut Corporation permits, without charge, the reproduction and distribution of PlanetOut materials for non-commercial educational and personal uses, provided that such materials remain unaltered and are accompanied by a clearly visible copy of this copyright notice and by PlanetOut's URL (<http://www.planetout.com/>) and America Online keyword (Keyword: PlanetOut).

CHAMBER MEMBERS**SURGE IN RENEWALS AND CONTINUOUS OUTREACH EFFORTS INCREASE MEMBERSHIP**

The Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce has amassed a steady rise in its member base. The organization attributes its success to the highly successful EMPOWER franchise and the outreach efforts of its board of directors.

In addition, the organization's Program Committee has drawn such notables as Sandy Rivera, Jim McIngvale, Paul Tetreault, Rick Shroder and Vickie McClanahan to keynote their monthly dinner meetings under the stewardship of committee chair Clyde Williams.

"It is important that members look forward to the monthly dinner meetings," explains Williams. "That's why we have been working very hard to bring people who will energize our community and those who support our community."

Williams also said she believed attendance would increase while the meetings were held at Sonoma's, a popular New York style supper club in the Montrose area. And, she said, it was important for members to support other members of the Chamber in a good faith effort to demonstrate the benefits of being a member.

Following is a complete list of individuals and businesses that have joined or renewed the Chamber in December:

STATSCRIPT Pharmacy

Pharmacy
Member Since 12/01/1995
Bill Southward
3407 Montrose Blvd Suite A5
Houston, Texas 77006
(713) 522-7373

Yankee Clipper Travel

Travel Agency
Member Since 12/01/2000
Todd Carmichael
2209 Morgan Street
Houston, Texas 77006
(713) 523-7997
todd@yankeeclippertravel.com

Detail Cleaning Service

Cleaning Service
Member Since 12/01/2000
William Pace
7900 Westheimer #322
Houston, Texas 77063
(832) 251-0723
prelude@gateway.net

Hewitt Associates LLC

Employment Service
Member Since 12/01/2000
Mike Barthel
25231 Grogan's Mill Road
The Woodlands, Texas 77380
(877) 557-3838

Happy New Year!



**IMAGE
CLEANERS**

George Froming
owner

3407 Montrose Boulevard
Suite B4
Houston, Texas 77006

713.527.0880 tel
713.527.0119 fax



Tiburon Systems

JOEL ANDERSON
DARYL HICKMAN

PO BOX 1024
HOUSTON, TX 77251
713.350.0555 T
713.350.0556 F

Microsoft Certified
Professional
Systems Engineer

TIBURONSYS.COM
NEW COMPUTERS • NETWORKS • SERVICE



When you have legal concerns, you don't need a lot of lifestyle questions.

Connie Moore
Debra E. Hunt
3608 Audubon Place
Houston TX 77006
713-522-4282



*Law Offices of
Clyde Williams*

- CRIMINAL DEFENSE
- ASSAULT
- DRUGS/DWI
- PUBLIC LEWDNESS
- INDECENT EXPOSURE

1314 Texas Avenue • Suite 712 • Houston, Texas 77002 • 713-236-0064
Board Certified in Criminal Law by The Texas Board of Legal Specialization

CHAMBER CALENDAR

MEETING AT



J A N U A R Y

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Dinner Meeting at Sonoma, 1415 California Social 6:00pm Dinner 7:00pm	10	11	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	16	17	18 Newsletter Deadline Email articles and/or photos to hocprint@aol.com	19	20 Board Retreat 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Location Warwick
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	Please submit articles and/or photos for publication in <i>The Chamber News</i> via email to hocprint@aol.com , or by fax at 713-524-2643		

TEXAS Triangle

315 WEST ALABAMA, SUITE 101
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77006
(713) 521-5822
WWW.TXTRIANGLE.COM

houston voice

ALL THE NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE. AND YOUR STYLE.

500 LOVETT BLVD., SUITE 200 • HOUSTON, TX. • 713-529-8490
www.houstonvoice.com

Image...
until they get
to know you,
it's what's on the
surface that counts.

Marion E. Coleman
PROPRIETOR



With that, do you want your
image quickly splashed on paper? Or do
you want House of Coleman to ink a better job?

House of Coleman
Fine Printing & Graphics

901 WEST ALABAMA • HOUSTON, TX 77006-4693
713.523.2521 • FAX 713.524.2643

Voted Nation's Best Local Gay & Lesbian Magazine—1998 Vice Versa Awards

OutSmart
Houston's Gay and Lesbian Magazine

*It's marketing with
3 times the power!*

InPrint OnLine OutSource
MAGAZINE WEBSITE DIRECTORY

For Advertising information,
call 713/520-7237



CHAMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notes From the Board

The board of directors is always available to listen to your ideas, suggestions, or concerns about our growing organization. If you would like to address the board, call the hotline at 713-523-7576 and ask to be put on the agenda to speak at a board meeting held the 2nd Monday of each month.

The board is currently looking for members interested in becoming more involved in our chamber. If you are interested in participating, or you know of anyone who is, please contact President Michael Tolleson at 713-201-2900. Positions available include committee chairs, committee members, and/or any other assistance a member would be willing to provide to the chamber.

Newsletter Advertising

If you have a submission you'd like to include in the newsletter, contact Marion E. Coleman at the House of Coleman at 713-523-2521. A one-month business card-size ad is only \$30. If you reserve between 3-6 months, the monthly rate is only \$25, and if you reserve space for 7-12 months, your monthly rate is only \$20.

Deadline for materials is the second Thursday of the month prior to publication.

e-mail: info@ghglcc.org



P.O. Box 66129
Houston, Texas 77266-6129



Please Recycle

Address Correction Requested