

# OutSmart

AUGUST 1999 • COMPLIMENTARY

Houston's Gay & Lesbian Monthly Magazine



## *Houstonian Holliday*

**Diva Jennifer Holliday Strikes Against AIDS**

---

**Millennium March Madness • Better Than Chocolate**

**TAKE OUR GAYEST & GREATEST READERS' SURVEY**



# CONTENTS

Vol. 7 • No. 7 • August 1999

## FEATURES

### Houstonian Holliday

Diva **Jennifer Holliday** returns home and strikes against AIDS.....**36**

by *Blase DiStefano*

### Sweeter Than Chocolate

Director/lesbian/mother **Anne Wheeler** talks about her new film *Better Than Chocolate*....**40**

by *Blase DiStefano*

### OutSmart's Gayest & Greatest

**Readers**, cast your vote for the gayest and greatest of them all in Houston.....**41**

by *OutSmart Readers*

### Millenium March Madness

Why leaders are divided over plans for next year's **March On Washington**.....**58**

by *Bradley David*

## DEPARTMENTS

Letters .....	7
In&Out .....	8
Business News .....	20
Calendar .....	26
Queer Quotes .....	33
The Source .....	67
Classifieds .....	72
OutSmart Advertisers .....	74
SceneOut .....	78

## COLUMNS

TimeOut/ <i>Steve Poruban</i> .....	22
GrooveOut/ <i>Chris Sill</i> .....	31
Inside Hollywood/ <i>Romeo San Vicente</i> .....	32
LeftOut/ <i>Daryl Moore</i> .....	52
OutRight/ <i>Dale Carpenter</i> .....	53
Simon Says/ <i>Simon LeVay</i> .....	56
WorkOut/ <i>John-Aaron</i> .....	59
TravelOut/ <i>Sandra Wilkins</i> .....	62
SignOut/ <i>Madilyn Stein</i> .....	76

COVER PHOTO: JENNIFER HOLLIDAY - UNCREDITED

THIS PAGE: MONTROSE MARCHING BAND AT THE 1979 MARCH ON WASHINGTON - BLASE DiSTEFANO

# MISS CAMP AMERICA

*Fast Becoming a Houston Legend*



The Red, White & Blue Closing Act 1995

UNCREDITED

If you were to pick one trait typical of the gays in this millennium it probably would be our sense of humor and clever repartee we have all come to call “camp.” At the beginning of the century Oscar Wilde was the master of camp. He was soon followed by Noel Coward and later by many other notables. Camp was established as a special brand of humor and joy to gays facing almost unendurable persecution. “When you can laugh at yourself and your problems—they disappear.” Through the 1950s camp was an important part of gay life, since most of our socializing was at small private parties behind closed doors.

In the 1960s the sexual revolution was going full force. Blacks were striking out for civil rights, and hippies were creating havoc everywhere. Consequently, police harassment of gays pretty much came to an end. Gays were now able to expand into many fields. The first political movements, newspapers, magazines, and a variety of social clubs were begun. Energy was soon diverted from trying to be the most clever,

the most funny, or what was called the campiest gay person to advocacy and the activism still present in gay society.

However, in September of 1969 “two newlyweds,” Pat Petty and David Stewart, would take steps to see that camp would continue to thrive and keep going strong in Houston. Petty, with a special talent for organization, had been conducting a series of small-town beauty pageants throughout the state, in addition to his job as a salesman. He decided that month that he would have his own gay pageant to coincide with the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City, and he and David invited eight friends to their apartment to participate. With David and his eight guests, he had the necessary 10 contestants to vie for the Miss America Crown. However, one of the guests showed up with a friend, and the number was now 11. Not wanting to exclude any of their guests from participating, Petty crowned himself Miss Camp America 1969 and relinquished the crown an hour later when the new Miss Camp America was picked by a draw

among the other 10. A crown, robe, and scepter was furnished, along with a very long speech covering the duties of the new Miss Camp America—Coretta Scott King.

The following year 50 people were invited to the newlyweds’ apartment for the pageant and each was given the name of a state, with a script that covered that state. The format began to take on the structure of what has today become the annual Miss Camp America Pageant.

In the years that followed, the pageant was held in a series of small clubs. Then, in 1976, things changed when Bill Halbert, with his unique talent for design and construction of theater sets, became a member of the organization. That year the event was held at the Sheraton Hotel, complete with sets, props, scenery, and even a revolving stage. Miss Camp America was now on its way to becoming one of the most popular drag shows in America.

Over the years the Miss Camp America Pageant has been held at the now-shuttered Tower Theater and Music Hall, the Alley Theater, and Cullen Performance Hall at the University of Hous-

## TIMELINE 1985-87

Each month OutSmart continues its timeline series on the past 30 years of Houston gay history.

**1985** The gay and lesbian community continued to emerge with the formation of organizations such as the **AIDS Interfaith Council, the Houston Forum, and Houston Pride**. However, it was the explosive opening of the **Heaven Dance Club** that got people moving. Unfortunately, Heaven couldn't sustain the heat of being the hottest dance club; it closed in 1997 when it caught fire and sent screaming queens prancing out the door. Heaven was expected to resurrect as South Beach last year, but everyone is still waiting....

**1986 Bering Omega Community Service Foundation** began when then 76-year-old

Eleanor Munger, while visiting local AIDS patients at Jefferson Davis Hospital, decided to seek out a place for a residential hospice for medically indigent, terminal-phase AIDS patients. Munger sought out space for the proposed center, attaining only one hospital bed at first, and Omega House was born. The housing eventually



**Bowlers have fun at past Strikes Against AIDS, one of the PWA Coalition's largest fund-raisers.**



grew to three beds, and today, the nonprofit, volunteer-supported foundation serves hundreds in the Montrose area. Omega's list of services has also grown over the years and now includes centers for financial assistance, psychosocial support, dental care, daycare, as well as providing a support network. **PWA (People With AIDS) Coalition** also began to provide direct services and support for those with HIV/AIDS. Today, the coalition serves more than 1,600 people in Harris and neighboring counties. Some of the key coalition services include the warehouse program,

which provides furniture and household goods to indigent PWAs free of charge. Other coalition programs include case management, the volunteer program at Thomas Street Clinic, emergency rental, and utility assistance. The coalition prides itself as being "the only Houston organization of, by, and for people living with HIV/AIDS [in which] 51 percent of its executive board is HIV positive."

**1987 DIFFA/Houston (Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS)** boasts itself as "the largest source of private dollars for AIDS care in the greater Houston area." Since starting up, DIFFA/Houston


has provided more than \$2million for HIV/AIDS care, research, treatment, and preventive education, according to the organization.

**H.A.T.C.H. (Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals)** was started to provide sponsorship and role models for Houston's gay and lesbian population between the ages of 15-21. "It is

the goal of H.A.T.C.H. to enable youth to be positive contributors to the gay and lesbian community and to society as a whole," says H.A.T.C.H.'s mantra. The organization holds weekly meetings, which "provide peer support, esteem-building activities, educational and motivational speakers, social and recreational opportunities, small group discussions, and HIV/STD information."

*Timeline constructed from personal interviews, personal recollections, and documented information.*

UNCREATED



robert  
snellgrove,  
lmsw-acp

counselor &  
psychotherapist

713-522-7014

4200 MONTROSE • SUITE 540



KARINA  
and MICHAEL'S  
CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY

**AUGUST SPECIAL:**

**FREE 5X7**  
With your  
Portrait Session.

STUDIO HOME  
LOCATION

BY APPOINTMENT  
TEL 713.522.1942

2990 Richmond Ave.  
Suite 480

**We won't shoo you away!**

Suzanne Pleshette (pictured) had to shoo away those pesky birds in Hitchcock's *The Birds* because they were trying to peck her to death (they eventually succeeded). August being Hitchcock's birth month, we have neither Pleshette here to shoo you away nor Tippi Hedren here to pretend to be a salesperson, but we do have plenty of memorabilia that'll keep you from flying away in a fit of psychotic frenzy. Oh, and we do great custom framing!

Open 10am-6pm, Mon-Sat,  
till 8 on Thurs

**HOLLYWOOD**  
FRAME GALLERY

Reel Framing for Real People  
2431 Bissonnet  
713/942-8885

A Mortgage is too Important  
to trust to an Amateur.

## Meet the Decision-Maker!



Marc Archuleta

20 Minute  
Loan Approvals!

Low Rates  
Rapid Decisions  
Honest Answers  
On-Time Closings

**RESULTS!**

\*Loan Approval is subject to proper  
documentation & credit worthiness

*Home Loan* CORPORATION

1717 St. James Place, Suite 200 • Houston, Texas 77056

**713.297.8000**

ton. Performances held at the Music Hall attracted nearly 2,000 patrons.

The pageant closely follows the format of the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City. The participants compete in evening gown, swimsuit, and talent presentation. When two-piece swimsuits and bare feet were permitted in Atlantic City, Miss Camp did as well. The only difference in the format of the two is that contestants in Miss Camp were picked by a drawing process; thus the words "BEAUTY CONTEST" went

Yep, he gained control of the stage for himself once again.

The pageant each year also has several major production numbers which are performed by the entire cast. You will see more feathers, rhinestones, and sequins during those numbers than most people see in a lifetime. Another highlight of the pageant is the presentation of the Princess Paza Marcella Borghese Taylor Award, which was created in 1984 in memory of Jim Taylor, the first MCA member lost to the battle against AIDS. The award recognizes



Vegas Showgirls 1993

out the door. A Miss Camp America contestant can be six feet tall, anorexic, or a full-figured beauty of undecipherable girth. The humor and bizarre antics seen and heard on stage during a Miss Camp America Pageant make it a league of its own. There is always a surprise around the corner.

In 1993 during Desert Storm, a contestant wearing a military evening gown came on stage riding a camel. The overfed camel soon began "pooping" all over the stage, and the other contestants ran for the hills, leaving the sole contestant by himself. The following year history repeated itself when the same contestant appeared in evening gown presentation with a 12-foot boa constrictor, rather than a feathered boa, wrapped around his neck and arms.

the Miss Camp America member who best exemplifies the fine art of camp. Winners are selected by the membership.

In June of 1992 Miss Camp America became a non-profit organization and began raising funds for AIDS. In that year alone the pageant raised \$14,000 for local organizations. During the years 1997-1998 a combined amount of \$150,000 was raised. To date Miss Camp America has distributed in excess of \$359,500 to some of the most important AIDS support groups in Houston.

In addition to the pageant, Miss Camp America has two other fund-raisers for AIDS each year, both in keeping with the theme of camp—the "Deb U Not Ball" in February and "Wigs on Fire" in June. The Deb U Not Ball introduces new MCAF members to

the public. A "coming out" party, so to speak. If you have never been to a debutante ball (or a coming out party) this is not to be missed. Wigs on Fire is a party where everyone attending has an opportunity and is encouraged to participate. The most outrageous, bizarre wigs, hats, crowns, or whatever else someone can get on top of his head appear at this party. There is no way to describe this one. Plan to attend.

In 1988, the reigning Miss Camp America Lana Love created a project called "Care Bear" that was quickly embraced by the membership. Four times a year the Miss Camp America membership contributes its time, talent, and own money to decorate stuffed bears and to present them to HIV/AIDS patients in area hospitals and hospices.

The Miss Camp America Pageant in recent years has hired professionals to help with the evening's entertainment. Ms. Stephanie Mitchell now does the choreography and Mr. Danny Williams has been the master of ceremonies for the past few years. Williams, who normally commands impressive fees for his talent,

waived his fees upon hearing of MCA's role in raising funds for AIDS charities.

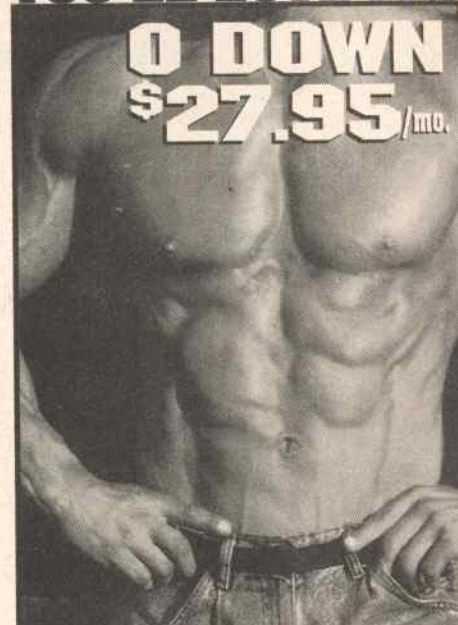
Of the many awards received by the organization over the years, the most cherished are the letters of commendation from governors Ann Richards in 1994 and George Bush in 1995, acknowledging the Miss Camp America's annual evening of joy and laughter and important fund-raising for AIDS-related charities.

Harold Myrick, the current Miss Camp America president, said, "Not only the joy and laughter, but the funds for AIDS makes all the hard work worthwhile." He said that this year's performance will cover a period from the 1920s to the end of the millennium.

The 1999 pageant will be held at 8 p.m. on Sept. 18 at the Lilly and Roy Cullen Theater at the Wortham Center. Tickets may be purchased by calling 713/940-STAR. If you want to have a laugh of a lifetime, don't miss this "camp" event.

*George Rimmey, is a community advocate with a long history of charitable involvement. He can be reached care of this publication at [GeorgeRimmey@outsmartmagazine.com](mailto:GeorgeRimmey@outsmartmagazine.com)*

**YOU'LL LOVE IT!!**



**0 DOWN**  
**\$27.95/mo.**

**HOUSTON GYM**  
**713.880.9191**

233 Birdsall Near Memorial Park and Downtown

M-F 6-10 • Sat. and Sun. 10-6

## TRAVEL OUT AND SMART!

**Join Sandra Wilkins & The Memorable Millennium Tour:**

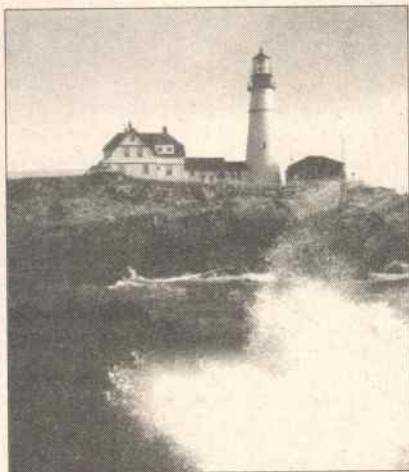
**Nomads in New England**

**December 28, 1999- January 2, 2000**

Visit Providence, RI; the mansions of Newport, RI; Mystic, Connecticut's Aquarium and Seaport. Enjoy the world's largest casino "The Foxwoods" in the Connecticut woods. Join our private Millennium Recovery Party on January 1, 2000 at playwright Eugene O'Neill's private home. Party on New Year's Eve with New England "family."

**Tour includes:**

- Roundtrip air from Houston to Providence.
- Private van transfers from airport to the all-suite Niantic Inn (5 nights accommodation with continental breakfast daily).
- Mid-size rental car for 4 days.
- Private lunch at S&P Oyster Company in Mystic.
- Tickets to Mystic Aquarium.
- Recovery Party on January 1st.



• *Space is very limited* •

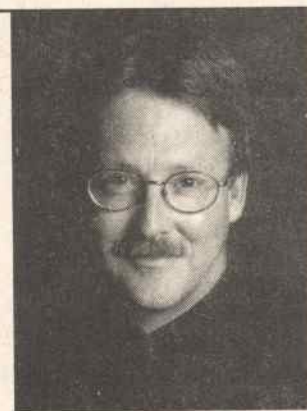
Tour cost, per person  
\$1228 double, \$1069 triple, \$1028 quad.

**THE TRAVEL PARTNERSHIP**

**Sandra Wilkins**

**713/526-4471**

E-mail: [OutTravel1@aol.com](mailto:OutTravel1@aol.com)



**Brad Brager, MA, LPC**  
Psychotherapy & Counseling

- Licensed Professional Counselor
- 18 years mental health experience
- Individual, couples & group therapy
- Interpersonal problem resolution

Museum District & Galleria locations  
Evenings & Saturday appointments available

**713.318.4788**



ELIABE DUTTEFANO

# MARCH MADNESS

## Why local and national gay leaders are divided over plans for next year's Millennium March On Washington

by Bradley David

**W**hile the world waits with anticipation to see if the technological doomsdayers are correct in their forecasts of mass chaos at the stroke of midnight on January 1, 2000, the gay community may be faced with a Y2K problem of our own. Ambitious plans for a Millennium March on Washington—scheduled for April 30, 2000—have been met with extreme opposition, even from some of our movement's most high-profile movers and shakers.

U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, the highest openly gay elected official in the country, has called the march "a diversion of resources" and "not a good idea."

Other activists complain that, unlike previous marches in '79, '87, and '93, this one is being run by a small group of elitist national leaders who decided on the theme and focus of the march before inviting activists at the grassroots level to be involved.



Robin Tyler co-emceed the 1979 March on Washington. Inset: Tyler is executive producer of the 2000 March.

PHOTOGRAPH BY [unreadable]

"Each of the three previous marches had a process that involved lots of different kinds of grassroots organizations and leaders, and that's what you need for a national march to work," says Urvashi Vaid, the dynamic lesbian visionary and orator who currently heads the New York-based Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). "You need discussion. You need smart people from all over the country giving input about how the march will impact key issues that are being addressed at the local level."

the involvement of the entire GLBT community. I cannot serve on a board that will not open itself to greater input and scrutiny from the communities we claim to represent."

Political marches on our nation's capital have been a hugely important tradition in American history. When people think of the suffrage movement, they automatically replay in their minds the grainy black and white film footage of suffragettes, dressed in white, marching on Washington, and demanding the right to

But more importantly, marches are empowering and often life-altering experiences for the individual marchers.

"It doesn't make a damn bit of difference on Capitol Hill—we do this for ourselves," says longtime local activist Ray Hill, who calls himself "the old man of the Houston movement." Hill says the purpose of marches "is to reinforce your own troops and to build your own movement."

While he plans to attend the Millennium March, Hill has been critical of corporate involvement in the event. Unlike previous marches that have refused to accept corporate sponsorship (often resulting in massive debt after the marchers have gone home), the Millennium March will be sponsored by PlanetOut, which has pledged \$250,000 in cash and plans to carry the event on a live worldwide cybercast.

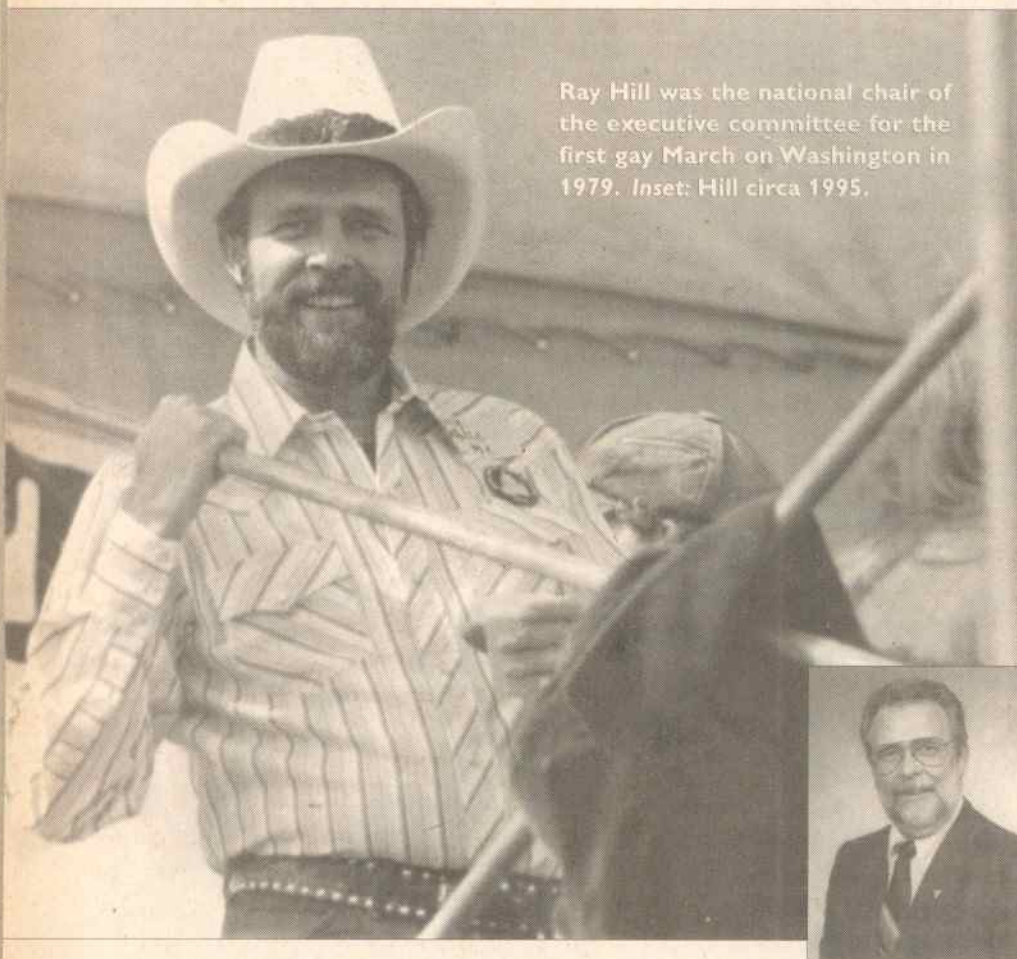
"If we convert from marches based on grassroots politics to marches that are merely commercial enterprises, the future of our movement will be for profit and not for principle," says Hill, who was national chair of the executive committee for the historic first gay March on Washington in 1979.

Hill also has problems with the event's executive producer Robin Tyler, with whom he emceed the rally at the '79 march.

"She stands to make several million dollars off of this," Hill alleges, referring to Tyler's booking of 3,000 Washington hotel rooms through her own travel business to re-sell to march participants.

Tyler, a pioneer in the gay rights movement as well as the world's first openly gay or lesbian comedian, says that any profits made from the brokering of hotel rooms will go back to the march.

"As a tour operator, I knew to call and secure these rooms," says Tyler. "I think it was a great idea because apparently the last march only collected \$15,000 in revenue from hotel rooms, and we'll be able to collect almost a third of a million dollars. People have also said that I'm getting the T-shirt money, but all of the proceeds go to the march and all of the contracts are in the name of the march."



Ray Hill was the national chair of the executive committee for the first gay March on Washington in 1979. Inset: Hill circa 1995.

BLASE DUSTAFANO; INSET: FRANK PARSELEY

The NGLTF, the oldest national organization in the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) movement, withdrew its initial support for the march in April when NGLTF executive director Kerry Lobel resigned her seat on the march's board of directors. In her letter of resignation, Lobel stated, "The board has largely ignored the fundamental issues that led me to become involved: why we should march, the agenda, and

vote. The massive march against the war in Vietnam allowed TV viewers across the country to see just how passionately so many Americans felt about bringing an end to the carnage overseas. Martin Luther King's famous "I Have A Dream" speech at the civil rights march in 1963 forced many Americans to acknowledge the righteousness of that movement's efforts.

Another of Tyler's detractors is Houston activist Deborah Bell, who spent 10 months in Washington as national organizer of the '93 march and is now a member of the Ad Hoc Committee For An Open Process, an organization formed specifically to

anti-march flyers rather than following the conference rule to place leaflets on a designated literature table.

"It's just an example of the way these people behave," Bell says of the march organizers. "You have to question what's going on here, that



TOP - TERRY GYDESEN; BOTTOM - GREG JEU

Top: Lisa Sullivan, Nancy Ford, and Greg Jeu demonstrate their pride at the 1993 March on Washington.  
Bottom: The Houston, Texas, contingent make their mark in Washington, D.C. at the March on Washington in 1993.

pressure Millennium March organizers for more inclusive planning. Bell had a run-in with Tyler in May at the Texas Lesbian Conference in Dallas, where Tyler, a featured speaker at the event, objected to Bell handing out

they're not willing to be open." Tyler says she thinks the march's vocal critics are small in number, citing a recent poll in *The Advocate* indicating that 86 percent of respondents hope to attend the march.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CLINICAL TRIAL

# HIV VACCINE TO PREVENT HIV



Research volunteers are needed for clinical trials to test a synthetic vaccine to prevent and immunize against HIV (the virus that causes AIDS). You cannot get HIV infection from this synthetic vaccine.

#### VOLUNTEERS MUST BE:

- 18-60 years of age
- Gay or bisexual males at risk for acquiring HIV
- Negative for HIV by HIV-screening test
- Willing to accept safe-sex counseling

The study involves a double-blind administration of receiving either vaccine or placebo. The chances of receiving active vaccine versus placebo are 2 to 1. HIV testing is anonymous and FREE.

For more information call  
The University of Texas Medical Branch  
Center for Clinical Studies

Houston (281) 333-2288

Galveston (409) 772-1641

UTMB



**Alan Morlan**  
Knowledge From the Ground Up

**SOLD!**

(713) 459-1705

**COLDWELL BANKER**  
S WILLEY · HUDSON

Alan Morlan • Realtor®/Associate

## OPEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION

MMOW distributes community ballot for platform preparations

Over the next several weeks, supporters of the Millennium March On Washington (MMOW) are launching "the largest grassroots polling operation in the history of the gbt justice movement," said Jim Birkitt with MMOW communications.

As part of the platform preparations for the Millennium March On Washington—the 4th national gbt march and the first human rights march of the new millennium—MMOW organizers have created a ballot to determine what areas of interest will be addressed at the march. Thirteen key issues have been identified on the ballot as predominant concerns for the community.

In past marches, participants had to travel to desig-

nated cities to participate in the platform preparation. Now, for the first time, members of the community have the opportunity to have a direct vote and voice in the platform of the upcoming march on Washington. The platform survey ballot will be distributed by volunteers and grassroots activists across the country, or participants can vote on-line at [www.mmow.org](http://www.mmow.org).

### Platform Survey Ballot

Cast your ballot for the platform of the Millennium March On Washington for Equality April 30, 2000, Washington, D.C.

You can help make history! For the first time, every member of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender communities—and our families, friends, and allies—has the opportunity to vote for the



Because  
Every  
Woman  
Needs an  
OB/GYN

## Sterling H. Weaver II, MD

*Specializing in*

- Prenatal Care
- Management of Adult and Adolescent Gynecological Health
- Reproductive Infertility Evaluations
- Family Planning
- STD Prevention, Treatment and Counseling

Monday-Friday

9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Medicaid and Most Insurance Accepted

1140 Westmont Street • Suite 200

(713) 451-3030

"I think it's a few people and they've just been allowed a voice," Tyler says. "I think when some people

talk about diversity, they mean diversity as long as it fits in with their political agenda. The majority of gays and lesbians in this country are not highly to the right or highly to the left. They're essentially like everybody else; they're

moderate or they're centrist. We have to be able to work around what we agree on and not kill each other over what we don't agree on."

Tyler calls the infighting among activists "extremely dysfunctional," and says "it's the pathology of oppression to



Houston activist Deborah Bell, a national organizer of the '93 march, is pressuring Millennium March organizers for more inclusive planning.

do this to each other. It's like fighting within a family—it becomes so crazy that you don't even remember what you're fighting about. Continuing to waste our energy by fighting with each other is very sad and extremely self-serving, and I believe it is why leftism has

seen such a demise in this country."

The march board tried to be inclusive, says Tyler, by creating a Leadership Coun-

*continued on page 66*

March on Washington platform.

Take a moment to make your voice heard by casting your vote. While all of the issues below are important to the glbt communities, please vote for only your five of top concerns.

Ballots must be completed in full to be counted, including name and address. All information will remain confidential. Names and addresses will not be used, released, or sold to any other organization or for any purpose other than MMOW. They will only be used to follow up with 1) those interested in serving as march volunteers and organizers, 2) those interested in lobbying Congress during the march, and 3) those indicating they have not yet registered to vote.

Ballots will be collected through Nov. 30.

### VOTE

#### for up to five issues:

- Hate Crimes Legislation
- Right to Marry
- Non-Discrimination in Employment
- Right to Serve Our Country
- Lesbian Health Issues
- AIDS/HIV Issues
- Child Custody and Adoption Rights
- GLBT Aging Issues
- GLBT Youth Issues
- Immigration Rights
- Overturning Anti-GLBT Laws
- Right to Privacy/Choice
- GLBT Global Issues
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you plan to attend the march on Washington?**

Yes  No  Not Sure

**Are you willing to serve as a volunteer in your community for the march?**  Yes  No

**Are you registered to vote?**  Yes  No

**Would you be willing to visit your Congressperson while attending the march?**  Yes  No

**I self-identify as:**

Lesbian  Gay Male  Transgender  
 Bisexual  Straight  Other

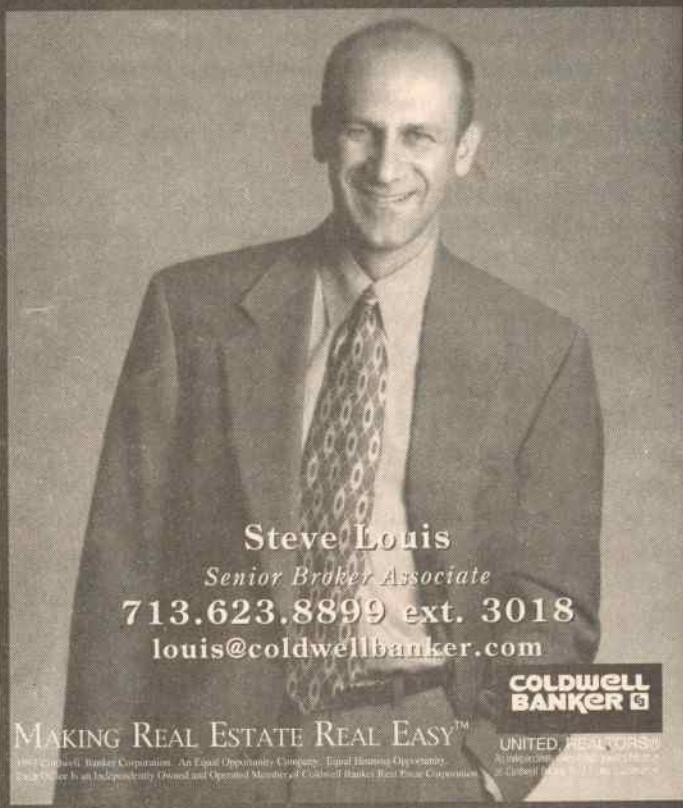
An e-mail version of this ballot is available by writing to [MMOW2000@aol.com](mailto:MMOW2000@aol.com). You may reproduce and distribute this ballot in your community. Ballots may be faxed to 818/893-1593 or mailed to:

Millennium March On Washington Platform Ballot

15842 Chase St.

North Hills, CA 91343

## REAL ESTATE, REAL EASY™



**Steve Louis**  
Senior Broker Associate  
713.623.8899 ext. 3018  
[louis@coldwellbanker.com](mailto:louis@coldwellbanker.com)

**COLDWELL BANKER**  
UNITED REALTORS®

**MAKING REAL ESTATE REAL EASY™**  
©1999 Coldwell Banker Corporation. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Office is an Independently Owned and Operated Member of Coldwell Banker Real Estate Companies.



**YOUR HOME?®**

*"It's where we'll raise our family."*

**RE/MAX**  
The Real Estate Leaders®  
Each office is independently owned.



*"I'll be there, every step of the way helping you find your dream home."*

**RONNIE KEE**  
Sales Associate

Office 713.528.1800  
Direct 713.557.4404

PAST ISSUES  
WEB LINKS  
ARTS  
ENTERTAINMENT  
HEALTH  
TRAVEL

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Options Directory Window

Netscape: OutSmart Magazine

Stop

Find

Print

Open

Images

Reload

Home

Forward

Back

Location: <http://www.outsmartmagazine.com>

OUTSMART ON-LINE

## March Madness

continued from page 50

cil and inviting every organization in the country to designate a representative. Also, she notes, the march's board is 50 percent people of color, including Dianne Hardy-Garcia of the Austin-based Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby of Texas.

"I had originally had some issues with another national march, but I really think this march has made great strides in making sure that this event benefits our community on the state and local levels," says Hardy-Garcia. "I was a part of tense meetings where many of us said we wanted some of the money that's raised to be given back to state organizers so we can help build our statewide organizations. We got a commitment from the board for raising a minimum of \$300,000 that will go back to state organizations and another \$300,000 to go to people-of-color organizations."

Hardy-Garcia says the march will be pivotal in mobilizing our troops to influence next year's elections.

"We have a crucial 2000 election that will decide our fate for like 10 or 15 years to come because of redistricting," she says. "The Texas Legislature will redraw not just our state legislative districts but also our U.S. congressional seats. If there is a right-wing sweep of Texas, we could lose up to 10 congressional seats. And we could lose a majority in the legislature, which would surely mean the passage of legislation like the antigay and lesbian adoption bill and the antigay marriage bill, which we were able to fend off this year. It's extremely significant for Texas—especially when we have George W. Bush running so strongly for president—to have a major voter turnout."

Houston activist Clarence Bagby, former president of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus and currently a national board-member of the NGLTF, says that despite philosophical differences with march organizers, the NGLTF will have some kind of presence at the event.

"We're not going to pass up the opportunity to be in contact with folks," says Bagby. "We will continue our dedication to statewide organizing

and people-of-color organizing, and we believe that's the finest legacy we can leave."

Bagby was involved in the NGLTF's hugely successful Equality Begins At Home campaign, which resulted in demonstrations and grassroots organizing events in all 50 state capitals around the country in March.

While most activists on both sides agree that this behind-the-scenes squabbling probably won't affect the turnout for the march, many feel that the controversy is a great opportunity for the GLBT movement to take a hard look at why we remain so splintered.

"Part of what we've been trying to do all year is to view the problems we see with the march and the whole process around it as the jumping-off point to talk about the state of the GLBT movement more generally," says Leslie Cagan, a New York activist and member of the Ad Hoc Committee For An Open Process.

The Ad Hoc Committee operates an elaborate Web site (MillenniumMarch.com), which acts as a forum for dissenting voices. Many articles on the site criticize the influence of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the Metropolitan Community Church, who together put up \$17,000 in seed money for the event. The HRC has come under heavy fire from activists for its endorsement last year of incumbent Republican Sen. Alfonse D'Amato in New York.

Perhaps the biggest irony in all of this internal ideological bickering is the fact that an event of this scale transcends politics.

"It's not just about changing the laws, though we have only barely begun to change the laws," says Vaid, whose significant other is lesbian comedian Kate Clinton. "The phase of the movement we're in right now is a cultural transformation in our country, shifting how our culture thinks about homosexuality, gender, and even the broader issue of sex. The biggest obstacle right now in our struggle is the mischaracterization of homosexuality as immoral."

*Bradley David is a freelance journalist based near Dallas.*