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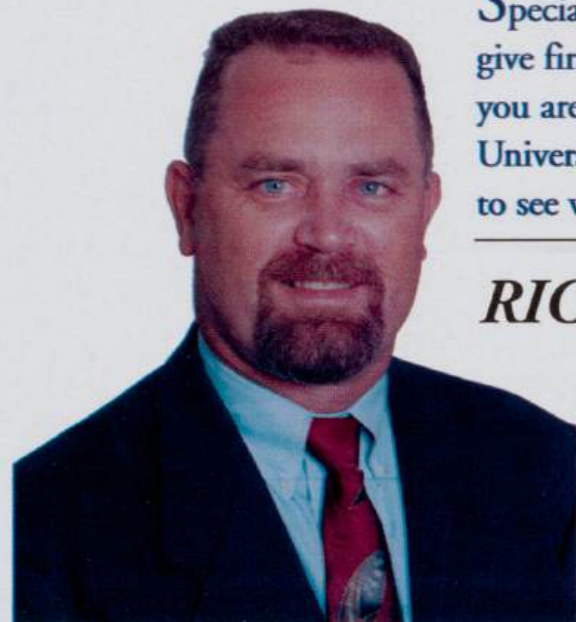
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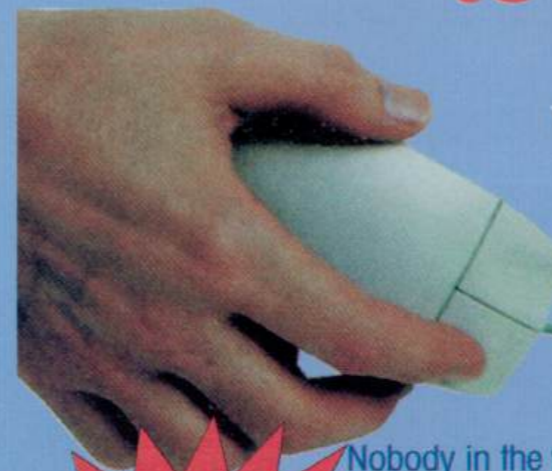
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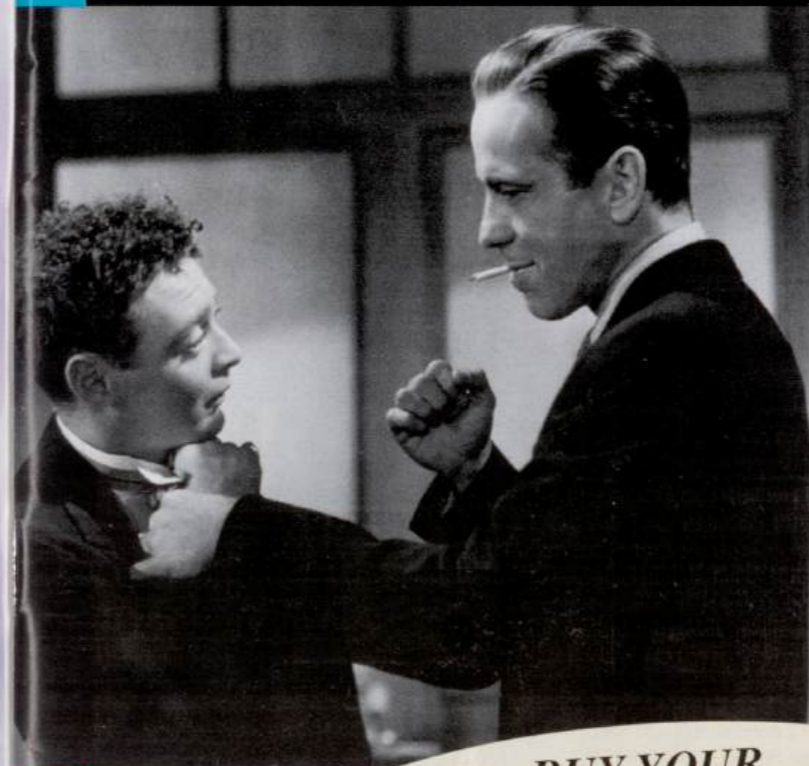
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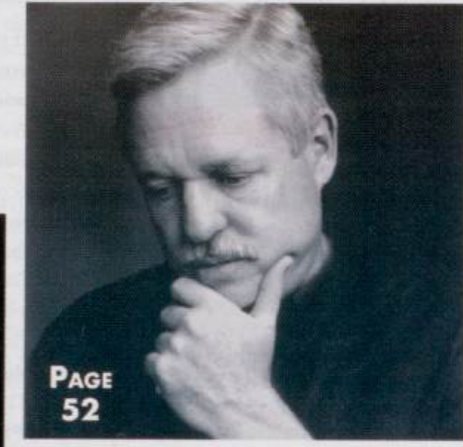
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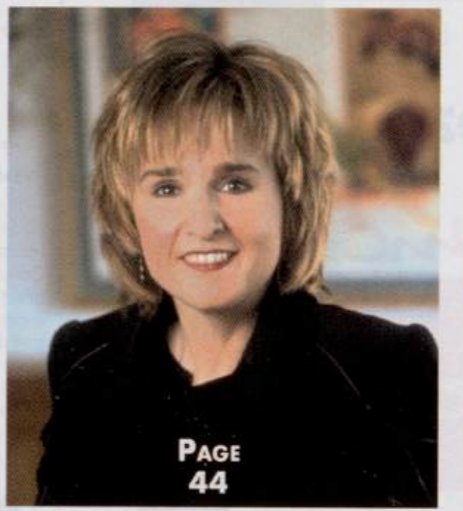
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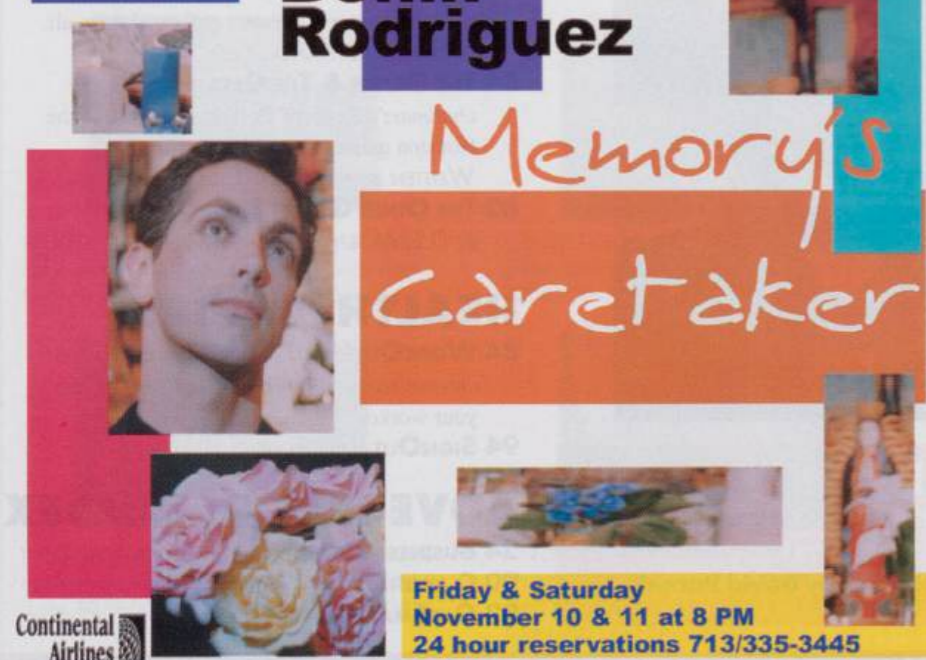
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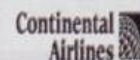
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A FOUNDING MEMBER OF
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AN ANTI-HATE CRIMES, PRO-PRIVACY, PRO-LIFE READER SPEAKS OUT

To Daryl Moore,

After reading your article ["Get Out of the Closet, Dick Cheney," LeftOut, by Daryl Moore, September 2000]—and so many others like it—I wanted to respond to some of your themes. I have not responded before to an article in *OutSmart*, but few others who read *OutSmart* believe what I believe.

Privacy was a very important concept to my liberal friends two years ago when President Clinton found himself fooling around with a subordinate—a sexual harassment case if there ever was one. But now you imply that because the Cheneys have a gay daughter, it should influence the way they vote on issues.

The Cheneys are obviously struggling with the issue that their daughter is gay. Not all Americans celebrate the event of a coming out party like they passed the bar exam. Can you respect their effort to maintain a civil and loving relationship with a gay daughter even though they disagree on lifestyle? Sustaining a good relationship with a daughter with whom they disagree is compassion too.

Why is a gay person to be treated any differently under the law than other Americans? [As] an American citizen, I vote based on what I believe to be the best for America and I do not ever want to be associated with a voting block, a union, a minority group of any kind. The Hate Crimes Bill has no basis in our Constitution. How are some victims of crime to be treated differently than other victims? If my mother and I were assaulted by the same mean person, does the criminal get a longer sentence for assaulting me?

On the issue of abortion, the rape question makes me laugh until I fall over. You're probably a

damned smart guy, I bet you already know that less than one percent of abortions are the result of rape. It barely registers. Abortion is inherently wrong and every American knows it. It is a means of avoiding responsibility. Interestingly, we never hear Katie Couric or Dan Rather break the news on any physical consequence to women who get abortions, like the recent revelation that there is a higher rate of certain cancers in women who get one.

I am not defensive about being pro-life. This country is the best place in the world to be, make no mistake about it. The real question is, "Mr. Gore, are there any circumstances when it's wrong to have an abortion and are there any limits to this 'right' (although not found in the Constitution)?"

The military issue is simple. A person who joins the military loses most of his Constitutional rights. He cannot publicly criticize the president. He cannot protest a presidential decision to go to war, etc. He is taught to kill in order to defend U.S. interests. Announcing that you're gay and then joining the military is not an option. It is not the arena for social engineering.

About the GW Bush drug issue, perhaps you should know that a college classmate of Al Gore's (identifiable by name) claims the two smoked pot and did drugs routinely in college while Al Gore's grades suffered. Yes, Al Gore received some "F's" but you probably did not know that. The press won't take the gloves off on Al Gore. Not even with a named source put in front of the press's face.

I am sorry that every article I read in *OutSmart* is so biased. The only issues that matter are those showing how selfish people can be. I could not imagine

Letters

going up to a presidential candidate and asking him, "What are you going to do for ME?" ...Our world, as much as gays would like to believe, does not revolve around gay issues. It's unfortunate that a reader never gets a different opinion.

—Mike Crowe
[via the Internet]

Daryl Moore responds:

Although I will not address every point in your letter, I would like to note:

• The Cheneys are not "obviously" struggling with the issue that their daughter is gay. They accepted it almost a decade ago. Indeed, Dick Cheney declined to seek his party's nomination for the presidency in '92 because he thought it would be an issue. There's a difference between struggling with an issue and lying about it.

• You are correct that the Constitution does not expressly state that a woman has a right to have an abortion; why would it? The word "woman"—like the term abortion—does not appear in the Constitution. Under your strict construction of the Constitution, do women have rights?

• The military issue is simple. Gays and lesbians can do everything you said the military needs them to do. They can learn to kill. They can be barred from publicly criticizing the president. They can even hate homosexuality. (Note, we call that self-hatred.)

In closing, I write an editorial column. It is called LeftOut. If you seek a sense of "proportion" on gay and lesbian issues, read the "straight" press or my counterpart's column, OutRight. ■

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In&Out

News IN our community & OUT in the nation

ERNIE'S OUT!

After finally coming out, I realized it really wasn't a big deal after all

by Ernie Manouse

Editor's note: We were surprised and delighted when Ernie Manouse chose to come out in our magazine, in the Pride edition. (Ernie's comment as the OutSmart float went past the reviewing stand at the Pride

Parade: "Hey Maria [Todd], I'm gay! It must be true, I read it in OutSmart!")

So, six months later, in honor of National Coming Out Day, we thought we'd check in with Ernie and see how coming

out has affected his life and his work relationships. Ernie's experiences serve as inspiration to everyone who is wondering if they have the courage to come out of the closet themselves.

Since October 11 is National Coming Out Day, two things come to mind. First, they have a day for everything these days, and second, I guess I am "out"...officially!

When I sat down in May to be interviewed for *OutSmart*, it was to help promote the Pride Parade. Well, I have never thought of myself as closeted until the question about whether or not I was gay came up—and funny as it seems, it was strange to answer. Of course, I wondered how people would respond. Would this affect the show, the audience's relationship with me; would there be a backlash? Now everyone could know that "secret" part of me...and not just those who I chose to tell. But then again, anyone who looks at me knows the color of my skin or the color of my hair (well, that one can be a bit tricky) and that has never bothered me, so why should this?

Truth be told, after reading the article (which I rushed to pick up the hour it hit the street), I was more concerned that my edited comments about public television would get me in more trouble than the gay stuff (the complete comments can be read on the web version of the article [www.outsmartmagazine.com]). Neither happened—life went on, and now in some strange way, I had become the most visible openly gay person in Houston television.

So how has the *OutSmart* article changed me? I would say "very little, if at all," but being the journalist that I am, that knee-jerk reaction was not enough. I had to investigate, and so I asked the people I work with every day how this has changed me, them, us...and here is what they had to say.

"As far as I'm concerned, whether Ernie is gay or not is irrelevant. I never have cared



BLAKE DUSTAFANO

who people sleep with. I see Ernie as I do everyone else, as human beings; sexuality is only part of it. I love Ernie. He's talented, funny, well-read, and smiles all the time. Most importantly, he's very comfortable with himself and I wish everyone, gay or straight, would be like that. As far as I'm concerned, Ernie was always 'out'—out of fear, confusion, and pain that many have felt due to other people's ignorance. He chose to be who he is and to share that with us all, and that is fine with me. Thank God." —*Patricia Gras, Producer/Reporter*

"Out?" Ernie always tells people he's part of the 'in' crowd." —*Will Hilton, Programming*

"Ernie's OUT?" When was he ever really IN? Out, in, upside down, right side up or side-

ways, Ernie is always fun to work with. He is a top-notch interviewer who has always been able to get more meaningful conversation out of his interviewees than most talk-show hosts—gay or straight." —*Heidi Slater, Program Guide Editor*

"Ernie is the same as he ever was, completely open and friendly. I've only known him for about two years—in fact, I've only been out of college for two years—but in that time he has actually helped me realize that the stereotypes I've heard/had about gay men are completely untrue. I've lead what most people call a sheltered life, and Ernie is actually the first gay man I've ever worked with. So, my experience with Ernie has been completely mind-opening and wonderful. He is truly one of my favorite people to work with." —*Amanda King, Intern Producer*

"Gee, I really can't answer that 'cuz you never told me you were gay. I kinda figured it out by myself. In terms of how it affected our working relationship, it meant I had no one at work to look at chicks with. It really did not affect the way we worked together except that I learned about a new culture and how to dress better." —*Jim Collins, Director, Crosstalk With Ernie Manouse (Chicago)*

"For most of the years I've worked with Ernie, I was pretty sure he was gay, but we never spoke about it. A couple of years ago, we were having a conversation about someone he was dating, and he kept awkwardly avoiding the use of the words 'he,' 'him,' etc. I told him, 'You know I know you're gay, don't you? You don't have to dance around it.' There was a sense of relief between both of us. Our working relationship and our friendship has gotten even stronger now, because he knows →

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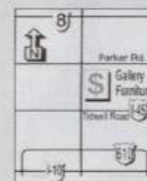
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In&Out

it doesn't bother me and there is nothing to hide." —*Doug Mueller, Producer, Broadcast Creative Services*

"I didn't notice a dif." —*Kirk Kauder, Crew Member/Producer*

"Ernie's coming out has been nothing short of a tremendous pain-in-the-ass to me. Now all he wants to do is follow me to the bars and try to steal all the men I am cruising!" —*Nick Brines, U of H Alumni Relations*

"Even if it was not spoken, I think we all knew, and Ernie never really made much of an effort to hide it. After the article came out, we all found that we could openly joke about it, as we do with everything else in everyone else's lives. So it took a pressure off us and equalled the field. It made no difference that he was gay—the problem was there was something we couldn't talk about and that's what built the walls. Now, nothing is sacred during lunch!" —*Jill Snyder, Programming Assistant*

"Having never seen E's mid-drift, I was unaware that he has an outie. Actually, Ernie's friendship with his co-workers has not changed or altered itself in the least, except that now we have to bow our heads when we speak to him—but I think that was coming anyway." —*Mark Kennedy, Director*

"I guess I should have figured out that Ernie was gay before the article came out. I mean, how many ABBA albums can one man actually own? His openness and sincerity about his life outside of work has made our working relationship and friendship much stronger." —*Michael Horne, Crew*

"Ernie was always with my girlfriend, and they would chat together and hang out—kinda made me worry. But then that article came out and all that gay stuff—so everything is alright. So, I don't have to worry. I mean, he really is gay, right? This isn't just some sort of a joke?" —*Matt Brawley, Crew*

"I knew early on that Ernie was gay. I would drop hints letting him know that I was fine with 'the gay thing,' hoping that it would make him feel more comfortable and able to open up to me. I didn't want to press the issue and say, 'Look, I know you're gay and I'm cool with it.' I wanted him to feel comfortable with it first. But I have to admit that it bothered me that he wasn't being honest. I felt he was hiding something from me and that it was an impediment to the growth of our friendship. Friendships are based on trust and I felt that by him not sharing that part with me I wasn't getting the whole Ernie, the real Ernie. I remember the exact moment he came out to me. He was really bothered about a problem he was having with someone he was dating

but he wasn't telling me what was bugging him. FINALLY, he opened up to me. The first thing I said to him was, 'Thank God, finally,' and then 'It took you freakin' long enough!' From that moment on, our friendship became deeper and more honest. Basically, as a straight person looking from the outside, what I think about this whole 'out' issue is, life is too short to live a lie and the people who are truly worthy of being your friend will stand by you no matter what. And if they don't, well they weren't worth your time to begin with. Rock on!" —*Julie Coan, Co-Producer WeekDay*

"I was SHOCKED...I mean I just couldn't believe it! But, in the end, it didn't really change anything at work or in our friendship. Now I just go to him for fashion advice!" —*Gina Miller-Parker, Development*

"I believe Ernie's 'coming out' has enabled him to draw from a significant part of his life that he felt compelled to conceal before. Although he and I were friends months before he actually told me, it wasn't until after he told me he was gay that I feel he was allowed to truly be himself in our friendship." —*Ted Westby, Producer*

"Coming out? Are you nuts?!!!!!! You'll never replace Pat O'Brien now." —*James Manouse, Ernie's Brother* ■

SUNDANCE FAMILY OUTING

Coming out on Sundance Channel

Sundance Channel celebrates Coming Out Day with two films that tackle the subject with candor, sensitivity, and humor. In his award-winning short *Family*, Stephen Patrick Foery details his coming out experiences from age 18 to 22, from first discussing his sexuality on Philadelphia's public radio show "Gay-dreams," to finding an influential gay mentor on the Internet, to finally coming out to his father in a tense interview. *Family* airs on Oct. 11 at 9:45 p.m. Also airing is David Moreton's critically acclaimed *Edge of 17*, a sweet, funny, and knowing tale of an Ohio boy's coming out circa

Stephen Patrick Foery (right) comes out in *Family*, while Chris Stafford and Anderson Gabrych (below) come out with each other in *Edge of 17*.



1984, a giddy period when gender-bending pop stars like Boy George were making major inroads into mainstream culture. *Edge of 17* airs on Oct. 11 at 8 p.m.

LIVE IN COLOR: COME OUT

To me, it was like being in a black-and-white movie that suddenly converted to color. —*Andrew Sullivan*

October 11 is National Coming Out Day, as sponsored by the Human Resource Council's National Coming Out Project. Headed by Candace Gingrich, the Coming Out Project puts out a resource guide to coming out that includes a way to do it one step at a time, and an extensive list of organizations, books, hotlines, religious organizations, and on-line resources to help and support you as you contemplate this important step. For a free resource booklet or "Coming Out Kit," call 800-866-6263 or e-mail ncop@hrc.org.



Coming out was the best thing I ever did... it took all the fears away. —*k.d. lang*

For me, [coming out] has been the most freeing experience because people can't hurt me anymore. —*Ellen DeGeneres*

Almost everyone I know has had a better experience coming out than they thought they would. —*Barney Frank*

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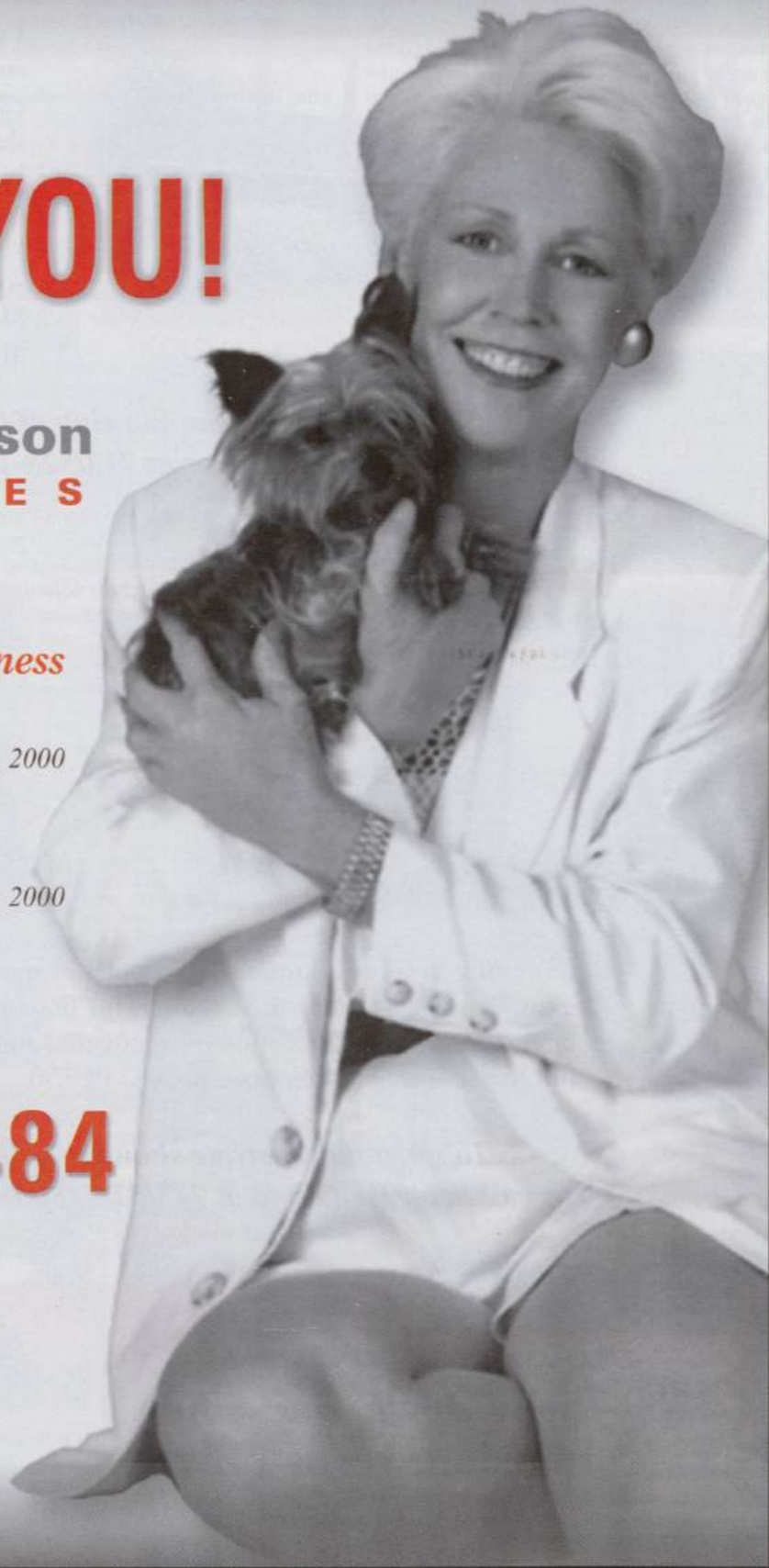
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ROAD TRIP TO SAN ANTONIO

*A report from a member of the Wicks's wedding party...
or, if marriage is an institution, maybe we should all be committed*

by D.L. Murphy



of the Littleton decision, two lesbians are getting legally married. (Editor's note: When a San Antonio area court declared void the marriage of trans-woman Christie Littleton and her husband, her lawyer Phyllis Frye decided that this was a bad situation that she could take delicious advantage of, and urged all gay couples in which one partner is transsexual to get legally hitched. Jessica and Robin Wicks are the first to take advantage of this Texas

ding experience. Bunny Soo spent 12,000 1972 U.S. dollars on a true Italian wedding, while Georgia Sue was married a little less than a year ago. I actually put on a f--ing dress to be the maid of honor at Georgia Sue's wedding; post-traumatic stress disorder makes it impossible for me to even consider looking at the wedding photos.

The day of the wedding dawns. We all leap into the car for the trip to San Antonio.

Not only am I thrilled to be giving one of the brides away, I am racking up major bonus points in the dyke daddy ranking system.



ABOVE TOP: Christie Littleton (center) poses with the happy couple, Jessica (left) and Robin Wicks.

ABOVE BOTTOM: The Road Sisters on a rampage—Georgia Sue (left), Billie Sioux (center), and Bunnie Soo.

Deb, will you give me away at my wedding?

This simple question led to yet another of the Bad Girls' famous road trips. Don't know the Bad Girls? Let me introduce us. I'm Billie Sioux Wallace, my partner is Bunny Soo LaSalle (her Canadian mother used to serve rabbit for Easter dinner), and my good friend and neighbor is Georgia Sue Sherman (a true Southern lady). We decided to recruit a new member for this trip. So, we put her through our secret formula for road trip names and, ladies and gentlemen, meet our newest

addition, Tommy Su Park. Tommy Su was immediately dubbed Mu Su Park, or Take Out for short.

Now every road trip needs a destination. Ours is the Wicks's wedding in San Antonio. If you haven't heard of this wedding, you've been living in the Land of the Mole People. As a result

loophole.) Anyway, not only am I thrilled to be giving one of the brides away, I am racking up major bonus points in the dyke daddy ranking system.

My partner, Bunny Soo, is to be one of the matrons of honor. Georgia Sue is doing the flowers. Both Bunny Soo and Georgia Sue have major wed-

Only one little problem, there is no room in the car. We have ourselves (all suffering from middle-aged spread), our clothes, buckets and buckets and buckets of cut flowers (we're one wreck short of an instant roadside shrine), and all of the stuff needed for preparing and displaying these flowers. There is so much stuff in this car that you could measure the time it takes us to get from 0 to 60 using a calendar.

We arrive in San Antonio, check into the motel, and start getting ready for the big event Flower preparation begins. Georgia Sue has spent the entire trip wiring roses and she still isn't done (told you we had a lot of flowers). So flowers get wired (although at this point they are way less wired than we are), flowers get taped, flowers get trimmed, flowers get arranged, boutonnieres get made, bouquets get made, bouquets get decorated. Great, except now

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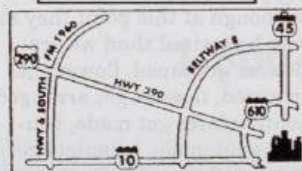
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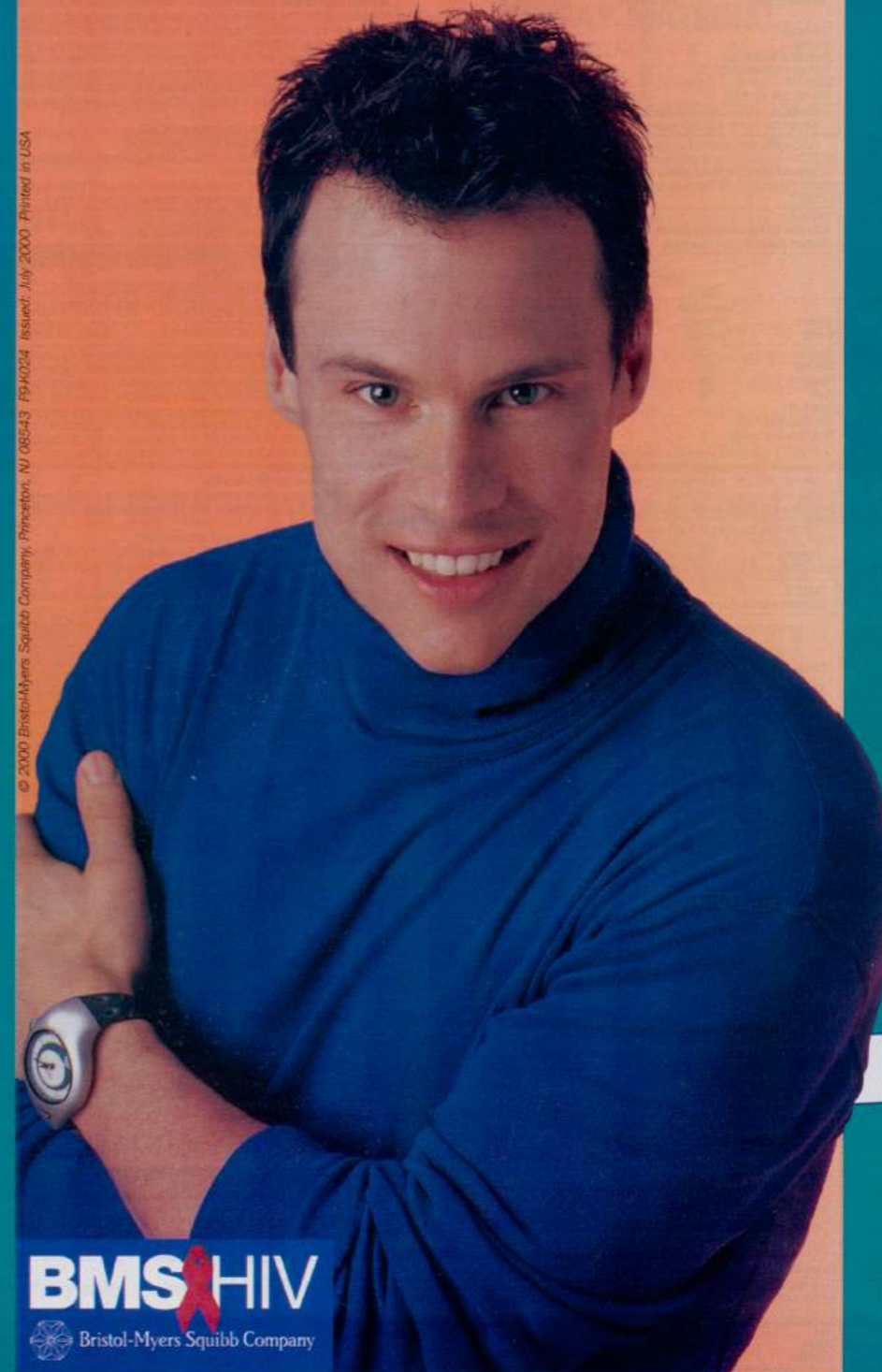
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SAFETY INFORMATION:

There have been cases of acid buildup in the blood and enlarged liver, including fatal cases. Fatal and non-fatal pancreatitis has occurred when ZERIT was part of a combination regimen that included didanosine, with or without hydroxyurea.

ZERIT may cause numbness, tingling or pain in the hands or feet (neuropathy). This risk is increased in patients with advanced HIV disease or a history of neuropathy. If this occurs, your doctor may suggest lowering the dose or stopping ZERIT to improve symptoms. Patients treated with ZERIT in combination with other medicines that may cause similar side effects may have a higher chance of developing these side effects. The most frequent side effects are nausea, diarrhea, headache, rash and neuropathy. ZERIT does not cure HIV infection or prevent passing HIV to others. ZERIT, in combination with other antiretroviral agents, is indicated for the treatment of HIV-1 infection.

1) 83% (49/59) and 49% (49/101) of patients taking ZERIT with lamivudine and didanosine had viral load undetectable at 48 weeks in an as-treated and intent-to-treat analysis respectively. (START 1. Data on file, Bristol-Myers Squibb).
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WARNING
LACTIC ACIDOSIS AND SEVERE HEPATOMEGALY WITH STAEOSIS, INCLUDING FATAL CASES, HAVE BEEN REPORTED WITH THE USE OF NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES ALONE OR IN COMBINATION, INCLUDING STAVUDINE AND OTHER ANTIRETROVIRALS (SEE WARNINGS).

INDICATIONS AND USAGE
ZERIT® (stavudine), in combination with other antiretroviral agents, is indicated for the treatment of HIV-1 infection (see CLINICAL STUDIES).

Combination Therapy: The combination use of ZERIT is based on the results of clinical studies in HIV-infected patients in double- and triple-combination regimens with other antiretroviral agents.
One of these studies (START 1) was a multicenter, randomized, open-label study comparing ZERIT (40 mg BID) plus lamivudine plus didanosine to zidovudine plus lamivudine plus didanosine in 202 treatment-naïve patients. Both regimens resulted in a similar magnitude of inhibition of HIV RNA levels and increases in CD4 cell counts through 48 weeks.

Monotherapy: The efficacy of ZERIT was demonstrated in a randomized, double-blind study (A455-019, conducted 1992-1994) comparing ZERIT with zidovudine in 822 patients with a spectrum of HIV-related symptoms. The outcome in terms of progression of HIV disease and death was similar for both drugs.

CONTRAINDICATIONS
ZERIT is contraindicated in patients with clinically significant hypersensitivity to stavudine or to any of the components contained in the formulation.

WARNINGS
1. **Lactic Acidosis/Severe Hepatomegaly with Steatosis:** Lactic acidosis and severe hepatomegaly with steatosis, including fatal cases, have been reported with the use of nucleoside analogues alone or in combination, including stavudine and other antiretrovirals. A majority of these cases have been in women and prolonged nucleoside exposure may be risk factors. Particular caution should be exercised when administering ZERIT to any patient with known risk factors for liver disease; however, cases have also been reported in patients with no known risk factors. Treatment with ZERIT should be suspended in any patient who develops clinical or laboratory findings suggestive of lactic acidosis or pronounced hepatotoxicity (which may include hepatomegaly and steatosis even in the absence of marked transaminase elevations).

2. **Peripheral Neuropathy:** Peripheral neuropathy, manifested by numbness, tingling, or pain in the hands or feet, has been reported in patients receiving ZERIT therapy. Peripheral neuropathy has occurred more frequently in patients with advanced HIV disease, a history of neuropathy, or concurrent neurotoxic drug therapy, including didanosine (see ADVERSE REACTIONS).
Information for Patients: Patients should be informed that an important toxicity of ZERIT is peripheral neuropathy. Patients should be aware that peripheral neuropathy is manifested by numbness, tingling, or pain in hands or feet, and that these symptoms should be reported to their physicians. Patients should be counseled that peripheral neuropathy with associated numbness, tingling, or pain in patients who have advanced HIV disease or a history of peripheral neuropathy, and that dose modification and/or discontinuation of ZERIT may be required if toxicity develops.

Caregivers of young children receiving ZERIT therapy should be instructed regarding detection and reporting of peripheral neuropathy.

Patients should be informed that when ZERIT is used in combination with other agents with similar toxicities, the incidence of adverse events may be higher than when ZERIT is used alone. These patients should be followed closely.

Patients should be informed that ZERIT is not a cure for HIV infection, and that they may continue to acquire illnesses associated with HIV infection, including opportunistic infections. Patients should be advised to remain under the care of a physician when using ZERIT. They should be advised that ZERIT therapy has not been shown to reduce the risk of transmission of HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Patients should be informed that the long-term effects of ZERIT are unknown at this time.

Patients should be informed that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that HIV-infected mothers not nurse newborn infants to reduce the risk of postnatal transmission of HIV infection.

Drug Interactions: Zidovudine may competitively inhibit the intracellular phosphorylation of stavudine. Therefore, use of zidovudine in combination with ZERIT is not recommended. (See CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY.)

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility: In 2-year carcinogenicity studies in mice and rats, stavudine was noncarcinogenic at doses which produced exposures (AUC) 59 and 168 times, respectively, human exposure at the recommended clinical dose. Benign and malignant liver tumors in mice and rats and malignant urinary bladder tumors in male rats occurred at levels of exposure 250 (mice) and 732 (rats) times human exposure at the recommended clinical dose.

Stavudine was not mutagenic in the Ames, *E. coli* reverse mutation, or the CHO/HGPRT mammalian cell forward gene mutation assays, with and without metabolic activation. Stavudine produced positive results in the *in vitro* human lymphocyte clastogenesis and mouse fibroblast assays, and in the *in vivo* mouse micronucleus test. In the *in vitro* assays, stavudine elevated the frequency of chromosome aberrations in human lymphocytes (concentrations of 25 to 250 µg/mL, without metabolic activation) and increased the frequency of transformed foci in mouse fibroblast cells (concentrations of 25 to 2500 µg/mL, with and without metabolic activation). In the *in vivo* micronucleus assay, stavudine was clastogenic in bone marrow cells following oral stavudine administration to mice at dosages of 600 to 2000 mg/kg/day for 3 days.

No evidence of impaired fertility was seen in rats with exposures (based on C_{max}) up to 216 times that observed following a clinical dosage of 1 mg/kg/day. **Pregnancy:** Pregnancy Category C. Reproduction studies have been performed in rats and rabbits with exposures (based on C_{max}) up to 399 and 183 times, respectively, of that seen at a clinical dosage of 1 mg/kg/day and have revealed no evidence of teratogenicity. The incidence in fetuses of a common skeletal variation, unossified or incomplete ossification of sternebra, was increased in rats at 399 times human exposure, while no effect was observed at 216 times human exposure. A slight post-implantation loss was noted at 216 times the human exposure with no effect noted at approximately 135 times the human exposure. An increase in early rat neonatal mortality (birth to 4 days of age) occurred at 399 times the human exposure, while survival of neonates was unaffected at approximately 135 times the human exposure. A study in rats showed that stavudine is transferred to the fetus through the placenta. The concentration in fetal tissue was approximately one-half the concentration in maternal plasma. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Because animal reproduction studies are not always predictive of human response, stavudine should be used during pregnancy only if clearly needed.

Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry: To monitor maternal-fetal outcomes of pregnant women exposed to stavudine and other antiretroviral agents, an Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry has been established. Physicians are encouraged to register patients by calling (800) 258-4263.

Nursing Mothers: Studies in lactating rats demonstrated that stavudine is excreted in milk. Although it is not known whether stavudine is excreted in human milk, there exists the potential for adverse effects from stavudine in nursing infants. Mothers should be instructed to discontinue nursing if they are receiving stavudine. This instruction is consistent with the Centers for Disease Control recommendation that HIV-infected mothers not breast-feed their infants to avoid risking postnatal transmission of HIV infection.

Pediatric Use: Use of stavudine in pediatric patients is supported by evidence from adequate and well-controlled studies of stavudine in adults with additional pharmacokinetic and safety data in pediatric patients.

Adverse events that were reported to occur in 105 pediatric patients receiving ZERIT (stavudine) 2 mg/kg/day for a median of 6.4 months in study ACTG 240 were generally similar to those reported in adults.

Stavudine pharmacokinetics have been evaluated in 25 HIV-infected pediatric patients ranging in age from 5 weeks to 15 years and in weight from 2 to 43 kg after I.V. or oral administration of single doses and BID regimens (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY, Table 1 in full prescribing information).

ADVERSE REACTIONS
Adults: ZERIT therapy has been associated with peripheral neuropathy, which can be severe, is dose related, and occurs more frequently in patients being treated with neurotoxic drug therapy, including didanosine, in patients with advanced HIV infection, or in patients who have previously experienced peripheral neuropathy.

Patients should be monitored for the development of neuropathy, which is usually manifested by numbness, tingling, or pain in the feet or hands. Stavudine-related peripheral neuropathy may resolve if therapy is withdrawn promptly. In some cases, symptoms may worsen temporarily following discontinuation of therapy. If symptoms resolve completely, patients may tolerate resumption of treatment at one-half the dose (see DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION). If neuropathy recurs after resumption of ZERIT, permanent discontinuation of ZERIT should be considered.

When ZERIT is used in combination with other agents with similar toxicities, the incidence of adverse events may be higher than when ZERIT is used alone. Patients treated with ZERIT in combination with didanosine may be at increased risk for adverse events such as pancreatitis, peripheral neuropathy, and liver function abnormalities. (See WARNINGS and PRECAUTIONS).

Selected clinical events that occurred in adult patients receiving ZERIT in a controlled monotherapy trial (Study A455-019) are provided in Table 1.

Adverse Events	Percent (%)	
	ZERIT (40 mg BID) (n=412)	zidovudine (200 mg TID) (n=492)
Headache	54	43
Diarrhea	50	44
Peripheral Neurologic Symptoms/Neuropathy	52	39
Rash	40	35
Nausea and Vomiting	39	44

* Median duration of stavudine therapy = 79 weeks; median duration of zidovudine therapy = 53 weeks.

Pancreatitis was observed in three of the 412 adult patients who received ZERIT in a controlled monotherapy study.

Selected clinical adverse events that occurred in antiretroviral naive adult patients receiving ZERIT from two controlled combination studies are provided in Table 2.

Adverse Events	Percent (%)			
	START 1		START 2	
	ZERIT+ lamivudine+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=109) ^a	zidovudine+ lamivudine+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102)	ZERIT+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102) ^b	zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=103)
Nausea	43	63	53	67
Diarrhea	34	16	45	39
Headache	25	26	46	37
Rash	18	13	30	18
Vomiting	18	33	30	35
Peripheral Neurologic Symptoms/Neuropathy	8	7	21	10

* START 2 compared two triple-combination regimens in 205 treatment-naïve patients. Patients received either ZERIT (40 mg BID) plus didanosine plus indinavir or zidovudine plus lamivudine plus indinavir.

^a Duration of stavudine therapy = 48 weeks.
^b Pancreatitis resulting in death was observed in one patient who received ZERIT plus didanosine plus indinavir in the START 2 study.

Selected laboratory abnormalities reported in a controlled monotherapy study (Study A455-019) are provided in Table 3.

Parameter	Percent (%)	
	ZERIT (stavudine) (40 mg BID) (n=412)	zidovudine (200 mg TID) (n=492)
AST (SGOT) (>5.0 x ULN)	11	10
ALT (SGPT) (>5.0 x ULN)	13	11
Amylase (≥1.4 x ULN)	6	13

* Data presented for patients for whom laboratory evaluations were performed.
^a Median duration of stavudine therapy = 79 weeks; median duration of zidovudine therapy = 53 weeks. ULN = upper limit of normal.

Selected laboratory abnormalities reported in two controlled combination studies are provided in Tables 4 and 5.

Parameter	Percent of Patients			
	START 1		START 2	
	ZERIT+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=109)	zidovudine+ lamivudine+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102)	ZERIT+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102) ^b	zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=103)
Bilirubin (≥2.5 x ULN)	7	6	16	8
SGOT (AST) (≥5 x ULN)	5	2	7	7
SGPT (ALT) (≥5 x ULN)	2	2	8	2
GGT (≥5 x ULN)	2	2	5	2
Lipase (≥2 x ULN)	6	3	5	5
Amylase (≥2 x ULN)	4	<1	8	2

ULN = upper limit of normal.

Parameter	Percent (%)			
	START 1		START 2	
	ZERIT+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=109)	zidovudine+ lamivudine+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102)	ZERIT+ didanosine+ indinavir (n=102) ^b	zidovudine+ lamivudine+ indinavir (n=103)
Total Bilirubin	65	60	68	55
SGOT (AST)	42	20	53	20
SGPT (ALT)	40	20	50	18
GGT	15	8	28	12
Lipase	27	12	26	19
Amylase	21	19	31	17

Observed During Clinical Practice: The following events have been identified during post-approval use of ZERIT (stavudine). Because they are reported voluntarily from a population of unknown size, estimates of frequency cannot be made. These events have been chosen for inclusion due to their seriousness, frequency of reporting, causal connection to ZERIT, or a combination of these factors.

Body as a Whole: abdominal pain, allergic reaction, and chills/fever.
Digestive Disorders: anorexia.
Hematologic Disorders: anemia, leukopenia, and thrombocytopenia.
Liver: lactic acidosis and hepatic steatosis (see WARNINGS), hepatitis and liver failure.

Musculoskeletal: myalgia.
Nervous System: paresthesia.

Pediatric Patients: Adverse reactions and serious laboratory abnormalities in pediatric patients were similar in type and frequency to those seen in adult patients.

OVERDOSAGE
Experience with adults treated with 12 to 24 times the recommended daily dosage revealed no acute toxicity. Complications of chronic overdosage include peripheral neuropathy and hepatic toxicity. Stavudine can be removed by hemodialysis; the mean ± SD hemodialysis clearance of stavudine is 120 ± 18 mL/min. Whether stavudine is eliminated by peritoneal dialysis has not been studied.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION
The interval between doses of ZERIT should be 12 hours. ZERIT may be taken without regard to meals.

Adults: The recommended dose based on body weight is as follows:
40 mg twice daily for patients ≥60 kg.
30 mg twice daily for patients <60 kg.

Pediatrics: The recommended dose for pediatric patients weighing less than 30 kg is 1 mg/kg/dose, given every 12 hours. Pediatric patients weighing 30 kg or greater should receive the recommended adult dosage.

Dosage Adjustment: Patients should be monitored for the development of peripheral neuropathy, which is usually manifested by numbness, tingling, or pain in the feet or hands. These symptoms may be difficult to detect in young children (see WARNINGS). If these symptoms develop during treatment, stavudine therapy should be interrupted. Symptoms may resolve if therapy is withdrawn promptly. In some cases, symptoms may worsen temporarily following discontinuation of therapy. If symptoms resolve completely, patients may tolerate resumption of treatment at one-half the recommended dose.

10 mg twice daily for patients ≥60 kg.
15 mg twice daily for patients <60 kg.

If neuropathy recurs after resumption of ZERIT, permanent discontinuation of ZERIT should be considered.

Renal Impairment: ZERIT may be administered to adult patients with impaired renal function with adjustment in dose as shown in Table 6.

Creatinine Clearance (mL/min)	Recommended ZERIT Dose by Patient Weight	
	≥60 kg	<60 kg
>50	40 mg every 12 hours	30 mg every 12 hours
26-50	20 mg every 12 hours	15 mg every 12 hours
10-25	20 mg every 24 hours	15 mg every 24 hours

Since urinary excretion is also a major route of elimination of stavudine in pediatric patients, the clearance of stavudine may be altered in children with renal impairment. Although there are insufficient data to recommend a specific dose adjustment of ZERIT in this patient population, a reduction in the dose and/or an increase in the interval between doses should be considered.

Hemodialysis Patients: The recommended dose is 20 mg every 24 hours (≥60 kg) or 15 mg every 24 hours (<60 kg), administered after the completion of hemodialysis and at the same time of day on non-dialysis days.

Method of Preparation:
ZERIT (stavudine) for Oral Solution
Prior to dispensing, the pharmacist must constitute the dry powder with purified water to a concentration of 1 mg stavudine per mL of solution, as follows:

1. Add 202 mL of purified water to the container.
2. Shake container vigorously until the powder dissolves completely. Constitution in this way produces 200 mL (deliverable volume) of 1 mg/mL stavudine solution. The solution may appear slightly hazy.
3. Dispense solution in original container with measuring cup provided. Instruct patient to shake the container vigorously prior to measuring each dose and to store the tightly closed container in a refrigerator, 36° to 46°F (2° to 8°C). Discard any unused portion after 30 days.

HOW SUPPLIED
ZERIT® (stavudine) Capsules are available in the following strengths and configurations of plastic bottles with child-resistant closures.

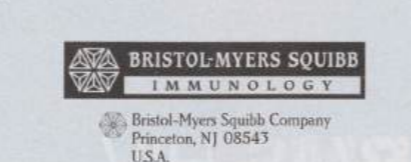
Product Strength	Capsule Shell Color	Markings on Capsule (in Black Ink)	Capsules per Bottle	NDC No.
15 mg	Light yellow & dark red	BMS 1964	15	60 0003-1964-01
20 mg	Light brown	BMS 1965	20	60 0003-1965-01
30 mg	Light orange & dark orange	BMS 1966	30	60 0003-1966-01
40 mg	Dark orange	BMS 1967	40	60 0003-1967-01

ZERIT® (stavudine) for Oral Solution is a dye-free, fruit-flavored powder that provides 1 mg of stavudine per mL of solution upon constitution with water. Directions for solution preparation are included on the product label and in the DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION section of this insert. ZERIT for Oral Solution (NDC No. 0003-1968-01) is available in child-resistant containers that provide 200 mL of solution after constitution with water.

US Patent No.: 4,978,655
Storage: ZERIT Capsules should be stored in tightly closed containers at controlled room temperature, 59° to 86°F (15° to 30°C).

ZERIT for Oral Solution should be protected from excessive moisture and stored in tightly closed containers at controlled room temperature, 59° to 86°F (15° to 30°C). After constitution, store tightly closed containers of ZERIT for Oral Solution in a refrigerator, 36° to 46°F (2° to 8°C). Discard any unused portion after 30 days.

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In&Out

VATICAN ARTICLE SUGGESTS CONDOMS MIGHT BE OK TO BATTLE AIDS

ROME—An April 19 article in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the official paper of the Vatican, that almost went unnoticed, suggests that use of condoms may be the "lesser evil" in battling the AIDS epidemic.

The article, by Monsignor Jacques Suaudeau of the Pontifical Council for the Family, upholds the Catholic Church's historic opposition to birth control, but goes on to suggest that condoms are "one of the ways to contain the sexual transmission of HIV/AIDS."

As a senior Vatican official, Suaudeau's article is believed to reflect at least a willingness to consider some modifications in its opposition to birth control.

CLINTON TO CAMPAIGN IN LESBIAN'S CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION BID

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund says Bill Clinton will help campaign for Gerrie Schipske, a lesbian Democratic nominee who is campaigning for

a congressional seat in Southern California against incumbent Rep. Steve Horn.

"President Clinton's decision to campaign for Gerrie Schipske is but the latest sign that her race has become very competitive," said Brian Bond of the Victory Fund.

Clinton will be the featured guest at an Oct. 16 fundraising luncheon for Schipske in Long Beach, Calif.

COURT UPHOLDS SCHOOLS' RIGHT TO LIMIT TEACHER'S ANTIGAY MATERIAL

SAN FRANCISCO—A three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has unanimously ruled that the Los Angeles Unified School District didn't violate the free speech rights of teacher Robert Downs when it ordered him to remove an antigay bulletin board he had put up during a district observation of gay and lesbian awareness month.

The court upheld a lower court ruling that tossed out Downs' suit, saying that schools can decide not to talk about gay and lesbian tolerance in general, but that it could also "advocate such tolerance if it so

desires, and restrict the contrary speech of one of its representatives." Downs vowed to appeal the decision.

NETHERLANDS OKS SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

AMSTERDAM—The Dutch parliament has overwhelmingly approved a measure that gives same-sex marriages the same legal standing that married male-female couples currently enjoy in the country.

The parliament voted 107-33 for the legislation as scores of people packed the public gallery, where cheers erupted as the vote tally was announced. Even several lawmakers joined in celebrating, thumping their desks as gays and lesbians applauded.

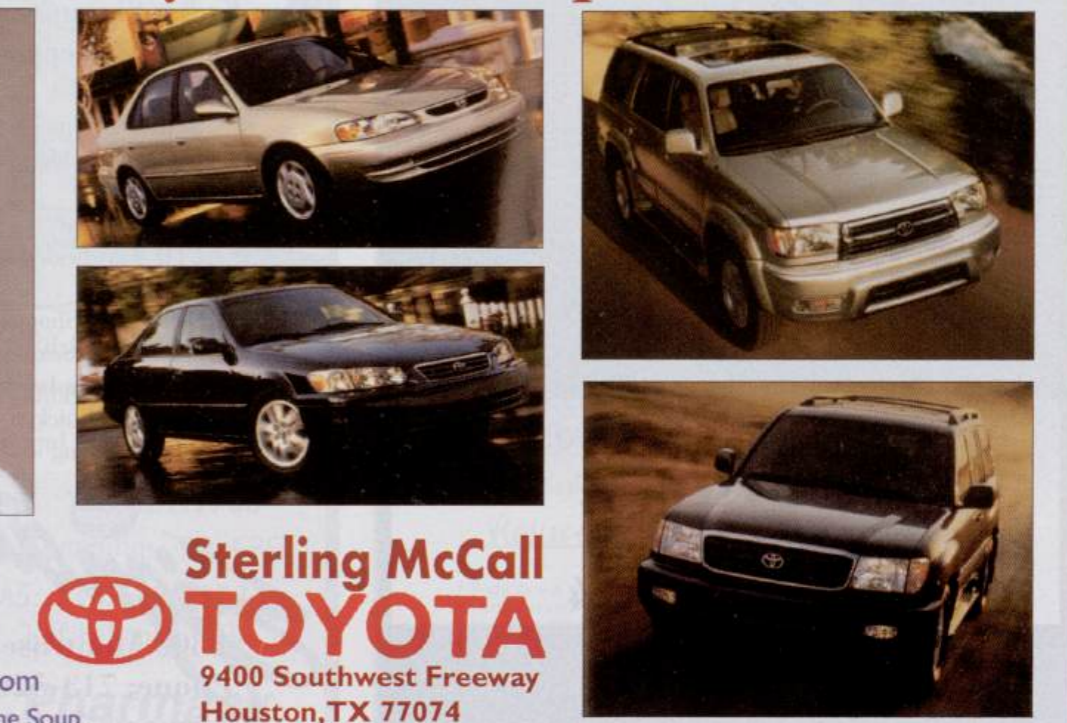
A companion bill the lawmakers also approved gives married gay and lesbian couples wider adoption rights in the country as well, often a stumbling block in legislation concerning same-sex couples.

Backers of the new legislation say it gives same-sex couples stronger relationship rights than anywhere else in Europe. Boris Dittrich, a member of parliament who backed the measure, said the new law "ac-

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knowledges that a person's sex is not of importance for marriage."

The new law will go into effect early next year. The Netherlands already had one of the most sweeping domestic partner laws in Europe, but the new measure essentially establishes a "legal parity" between married gays and lesbians and their opposite-sex counterparts.

While churches are not required to officiate at same-sex marriages under the new law, gay and lesbian couples can have their marriage ceremonies performed at town halls throughout the nation. Ending their marriages will also fall under the same divorce courts that heterosexuals currently use in Holland.

Denmark legalized same-sex marriages in 1989, but the Danes added limitations on the adoption rights of gay and lesbian married couples that the Dutch have eliminated in the new legislation.

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES ADDS PARTNER BENEFITS

NEW YORK—Southwest Airlines in Dallas, Universal Orlando, and Dow Jones & Company have all announced the addition of domestic partner health insurance benefits programs. The programs all cover same-sex and opposite-sex couples.

Southwest Airlines becomes the fourth air carrier in the U.S. to offer the benefit program. Ironically, Southwest extended its anti-bias protections to prohibit workplace harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation in January after the Transport Workers Union to the carrier some workers at the company complained about even discussing domestic partner benefits.

Union officials said the tone of discussions about benefits "shows the ingrained homophobia at Southwest Airlines" when

it asked the airline to expand its workplace protections.

Universal Orlando, operators of Universal Studio's theme park in Florida, has announced it is extending domestic partner benefits to same-sex and opposite-sex employees. The theme park operators said the benefits package will be in place Oct. 1 and will be available to any of its qualified 11,800 workers in the area.

Dow Jones publishes the *Wall Street Journal* along with other financial publications and the Dow Jones News Retrieval Service.

UNITED WAYS CAUTIOUS IN BOY SCOUT FUNDING DECISIONS

SEATTLE—United Ways around the country continue cautiously deciding what to do about funding the Boy Scouts of America following a Supreme Court decision earlier this year that ruled the youth group can in fact exclude homosexuals.

In Seattle, the United Way of King County is tip-toeing around the issue and says it will only fund scouting programs that

don't discriminate based on sexual orientation, which is the philanthropic agency's own policy as well. The agency has allocated some \$442,000 for the Scouts, but is holding that money until the local scouting council signs a new contract with United Way that, among other things, will assure that its funds won't support programs that discriminate.

But United Way officials said they are looking for ways to continue funding scouting programs that don't discriminate even though the local scouting council says it will follow the national BSA policy of expelling anyone it learns is gay.

But in Southeastern Pennsylvania, the United Way says it has no intention of cutting off or even redirecting its approximately \$200,000 annual contribution to local Scout councils in the area. A United Way official there said, "Our position, plain and simple, is that we require our agencies to be in compliance with the law, and the Scouts are in compliance with the law."

Officials at the national United Way of America in Alexandria, Va., have said only a few of the 1,400 United Ways around the country have cut off funding to the Boy Scouts, including three agencies that cut

off funds before the Supreme Court decision. Since then, national United Way officials said they knew of only two others that have dropped funding for the Scouts—one in Providence, R.I., and another in Fall River, Mass.

Nationally, United Ways provide about \$83.7 million in funds to the Boy Scouts.

COURT BATTLE OVER HYPHENATED NAME WITH LESBIAN PARTNER

NEWARK, N.J.—Saying it had never encountered such bias in a court ruling, the ACLU has appealed a decision by state Superior Court Judge Anthony Iuliani denying a petition by Jill Bacharach to hyphenate her last name with that of her lesbian partner's.

Iuliani rejected the application, saying it might look like the two women were married. He told Bacharach that if she wanted to marry her partner she should go to Vermont, which recognizes same-sex unions.

Legal authorities say they know of no other instance where a court refused a similar name-change case. →

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In&Out

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, HEATHER!

by Leslea Newman

*Editor's Note: Last year, a group of library patrons in Wichita Falls, Texas, got a city ordinance passed that allowed them to move the children's books *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* to the adult section of the library.*

But this September, a federal court judge told them that their handling of free speech is unconstitutional. Both books have been re-

turned to their proper place, so that the children of Wichita Falls can read them, and—we hope—grow up to be more loving and enlightened than some of their parents.

*In celebration both of this victory, and of the 10th anniversary of *Heather Has Two Mommies*, we present the following reverie by the author.*

So, tell our studio audience and the viewers at home some of the most interesting things that have happened since *Heather Has Two Mommies* was published 10 years ago," says the Oprah of my fantasy life who has chosen the special 10-year anniversary edition of *Heather* for her newest reading club selection.

"Well, Oprah." I lean back in my chair, crossing my legs at the ankle and keeping my best side to the camera. "There was the time Representative Robert Smith read portions of the book to the entire United States Senate, though no milk and cookies were served. There was the time a man took the book off a public library shelf, went into the bathroom, and defecated on it. There were many instances when I was accused of writing a book that taught first graders the ins and outs of sodomy, no pun intended. And there was that nasty 'no promo homo' bill which, if approved, would make reading *Heather Has Two Mommies* to a child without parental permission a felony." (Luckily the bill never passed.)

As we cut to a commercial and the studio audience in my mind ponders what I have just said, I can't help but think what a long, strange trip it's been.

The idea for writing *Heather Has Two Mommies* cannot be credited solely to me. In 1988, I was strolling along Main Street in downtown Northampton, Massachusetts (affectionately known as Lesbianville, USA) when a dyke I knew approached me. "Listen," she said, "somebody needs to write a book I can read to my kid about a family like ours: a family with two moms and a daughter." She looked me right in the eye and I swallowed hard. This was not a lesbian who would take no for an answer (it takes one to know one). So I went home, started writing, and came up with little *Heather*, who has two elbows, two earlobes, two kneecaps, and two mommies.

When the book was finished, I sent it out to publishers. Editors' reactions varied from, "Great idea, but I wouldn't touch it with a 10-

foot pole" to "What are you, nuts?" When the book had been to every publishing house I could think of, I remembered two things: the fiery eyes of the lesbian mother who had planted the idea in my head, and the words of my beloved, stubborn grandmother: "Just because they say no to me, you think I'm finished?"

There had to be a way. And there was. A friend of mine, Tziviva Gover who was a new lesbian mom, had just started a desktop publishing business. We decided to publish the book ourselves. Through the lesbian grape-

**Reactions varied from
"Great idea, but I wouldn't
touch it with a 10-foot pole"
to "What are you, nuts?"**

vine we found a friend of a friend of a friend who was an illustrator. We sent out fundraising letters and raised \$4,000 mostly in 10-dollar donations. We found a printer and a distributor and before you could say "turkey baster," a truck pulled up to my driveway, and 40 cartons of 100 books each were unloaded into my living room. Six months later, Sasha Alyson, the publisher of *Daddy's Roommate*, called. He had seen *Heather* in a bookstore and thought we should join forces. After conferring with my business partner, I had a better idea. "Why don't you take over?" I asked Sasha. "That way, you can be *Heather's* publisher, and I can have my living room back."

Soon after *Heather* became an Alyson Publications title, the book started hitting the news. Some people were ecstatic and called me an "honorary lesbian mother." Other people, less-than-thrilled, called me "America's most dangerous writer." From that day forth, the phrase "the pen is mightier than the sword" took on a whole new meaning. I watched in fascination as *Heather* was included in New York City's Rainbow Curriculum and then in horror as Chancellor of Education Joseph Fernandez

lost his job because he supported *Heather's* inclusion. I watched the town of Fayetteville, North Carolina, divide itself over the question of whether or not *Heather* should remain in the public library. Some citizens felt it was their duty to defend freedom of expression. Others felt it was their duty to defend freedom to express homophobia. When the controversy became a ballot issue, the latter group ran an ad in the local newspaper that said, "Cumberland County Library takes the lead in pursuit of legitimizing homosexuality. Can prostitution, bestiality, or incest be far behind?"

My response to all this brouhaha is one big fat *oy*. I never intended or expected to cause such a fuss. I just wanted to give the dyke on the street a warm fuzzy bedtime story she could read to her daughter.

The commercial break is over and we're back on the air, only my fantasy has changed and now I'm sitting next to Rosie, that champion of children's literature. Rosie welcomes me warmly and then tells everyone in the audience they are going home with a free copy of *Heather Has Two Mommies*. There is a wild burst of applause. Then Rosie asks me how kids have responded to the book. I show her a photo of a little girl grinning proudly and wearing a homemade T-shirt that says, "Heather Has Two Mommies....and so do I!" Rosie motions for the cameras to move in, and a close-up of the little girl's photo is flashed across the screen of every television set in America. Again the studio audience bursts into wild applause. The show ends with Rosie and her audience singing an enthusiastic, off-key rendition of "Happy Birthday to You" in honor of *Heather* turning 10 and I am presented with a cake even bigger than Ellen DeGeneres' coming out confection.

Hey, I can dream, can't I? ■

*Leslea Newman is the author, most recently, of *Girls Will Be Girls*, a novella and short stories for adults. Visit her website at www.lesleanewman.com.*

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Walker has been a steadfast supporter of the gay community through his involvement in numerous charities, fundraisers, and community-planning groups. Walker is looking forward to continuing his involvement in the community at his new Montrose location. He can be reached at 713/552-1117 or 800/732-2934. For more information on Walker's services visit his website at www.WalkerTexasLawyer.com.

Early October will mark the opening of Montrose's newest icehouse, **Chulo's**, conveniently located at 502 Elgin, corner of the Brazos/59 off-ramp exchange. The establishment will feature an inviting atmosphere and a rooftop view of downtown. Long-time community member David Melina is the general manager.

The **Fifth Annual Common Ground Co-ed Softball Tournament**, which will be held on October 14 at Memorial Park Fields 4 and 5, will benefit Camp Hope, a camp for HIV-positive children. Please come show your support. If you are interested in participating or volunteering, please call 713/957-5192.

The month of October is officially "Listen to Your Inner Critic Month." According to **Dr. Joyce M. Gayles**, clinical psychologist, success coach, and founder of the month-long experimental event, "This month is set aside to explore and learn ways to overcome the negativity of self-criticism."

Self-criticism is rampant in Western culture, according to Dr. Gayles, and affects all facets of life—from your sense of competence as a boss to your trust in yourself as a lover. It dampens creativity, affects corporate productivity, interferes with effective communication between people, and can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion and depression.

Dr. Gayles will be speaking to business and professional groups on the topic of mastering your self-critical voice through a four-hour workshop on October 21. For a free handout on transforming your inner critic and a workshop schedule, send a SASE to: TransformationWorks, ATTN: IC Handout, 5909 West Loop South, Suite 620, Bellaire, TX 77401, or request by e-mail to Transworks@aol.com. 713/667-1745. For more info, look at her website at www.Transformationworks.com. ■

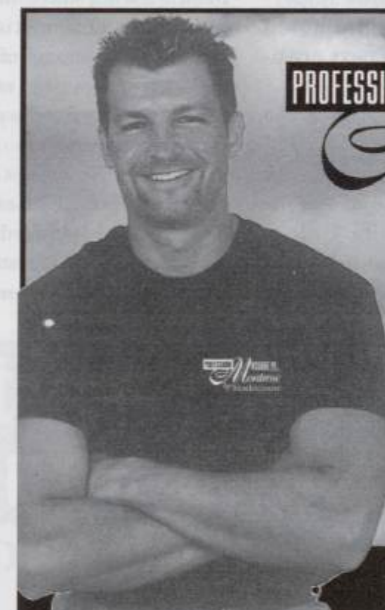


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40 MORE YEARS IN THE CLOSET?

You may be voting for president, but it's the Supreme Court that really matters

On November 7, gays and lesbians will help decide who will be the next president of the United States of America. Of course, this decision is an important one. The reason our decision is so important is not what our next president will do about social security, the budget surplus, or education. It's not even about who would be more gay-friendly, who would support hate-crimes legislation, or who might lift the ban on gays and lesbians serving openly in the U.S. military. While important, each of these issues—if handled badly—could be remedied by the next president and Congress.

Our decision is important because the next president we elect will decide who will serve on the United States Supreme Court for the next 30 to 40 years. And the question is: How many appointments to the United States Supreme Court will the next president of the United States get?

Justice John Paul Stevens is 80 years old; Justice Sandra Day O'Connor is 70; and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is 67. Justice O'Connor has had breast cancer. Justice Ginsburg was treated for colon cancer just last year. In other words, four years from now, one or more of these individuals will likely be gone.

Two of the three (Stevens and Ginsburg) have ruled favorably on issues that affect gays and lesbians. The other (O'Connor) has been a swing vote, supporting gay and lesbian rights at some times, but not others. To consider the impact of any of these individuals' leaving, we need only consider two recent decisions: *Boy Scouts of America v. Dale*; and *Romer v. Evans*.

In *Boy Scouts v. Dale*, a majority of the Supreme Court held that the Boy Scouts could exclude homosexuals from serving as scout leaders. This was a 5-4 decision. If O'Connor had voted differ-

ently, the Boy Scouts of America would be a little more diverse.

In *Romer v. Evans*, a majority of the Supreme Court held unconstitutional Colorado's "Amendment 2," which invalidated any legislative, executive, or judicial action designed to protect gays or lesbians from discrimination. This was a 6-3 decision. If Stevens and Ginsburg had not been there, states might now be free to ban non-discrimination laws.

So when we step into the last American closet—the voting booth—we need to remember that during the next

continued on p. 30

Writing from the liberal end of the spectrum, Houston attorney Daryl Moore has a general practice and is board-certified in civil appellate law. He can be reached at DarylMoore@outsmartmagazine.com.



HOW COULD THEY?

Explaining the Log Cabin Republicans' endorsement of Bush

How could they? The Log Cabin Republicans' (LCR) endorsement of George Bush has drawn criticism from Fire Island to the Castro. Gay political groups, notably the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), blasted LCR. The critics not only disagreed with the endorsement but seemed dumbfounded by it. Yet even if Gore is objectively the better choice for gays, the endorsement of Bush advances gay equality.

There are three possible explanations for the endorsement. The first is the ignorance theory: Gay Republicans must be unaware of the candidates' differences. This theory reminds everyone that Bush supports antigay sodomy laws, opposes allowing openly gay people to serve in the military, and opposes gay adoptions. On each of these issues and others, Gore takes the better position.

So, in a press release, HRC instructed gay Republicans to compare the candidates' records. If gay Republicans would just famil-

iarize themselves with the facts, the argument goes, they wouldn't support Bush.

The problem with the ignorance theory is that its assumption is wrong. Some gay Republicans are undoubtedly oblivious to the candidates' stands on gay issues. But that is certainly not true of the hundred-plus activists from across the country who overwhelmingly backed the endorsement (the vote was 109-2).

It's safe to say no one knows better the GOP's antigay record than gay Republicans do. They know it because they work day-by-day within the party. And they know it because if a Republican so much as sneezes within the vicinity of a gay person, they hear about it from other gay groups. Whatever else they are, gay Republicans are not ignorant.

The second explanation of the endorsement is the selfishness theory: Gay Republicans know Bush's record is worse but support him because they put their individual interests ahead of the interests of gays as a group.

This theory holds that gay Republicans tend to be professional and wealthier than most people. By backing Bush, they support a candidate who will tax them less and will spend less on social welfare programs that don't directly benefit them. It's a charge any gay Republican has heard many times: You're willing to trade your civil rights for a tax cut.

The selfishness theory probably explains support for Bush among a few gay Republicans. Mark this irony, however. A similar theory explains the fervor of at least some gay Democrats for Gore. Their enthusiasm →

Writing from the conservative end of the spectrum, Dale Carpenter was president of Texas Log Cabin Republicans from 1995-98. A law professor and former Houston resident, Dale has won three Vice Versa awards for excellence in gay writing. Now living in Minneapolis, he can be reached at OutRight@aol.com.



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LeftOut

continued from page 28

four years, one to three new justices appointed by our next president might be asked to consider one or all of the following: (1) whether the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) violates the Full Faith and Credit Clause of the United States Constitution; (2) whether the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy of the U.S. military violates the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech; and (3) whether a lesbian can be denied custody of her child solely because of her sexual orientation.

We can all argue about whether Gore or Bush will do a better job with the economy, foreign affairs, and social security. But when it comes to whether Gore or Bush is more likely to appoint judges to the Supreme Court who believe that the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment guarantees protection for all—not just all heterosexuals—there is no real debate.

Why? Because Gore has expressly stated that he supports the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). He's spoken at the Human Rights Campaign dinner in Washington. He opposes the "don't ask, don't tell" policy and supports lifting the ban on gays and lesbians in the military entirely. And, he supports hate-crimes legislation that in-

cludes the term "sexual orientation." Does anyone really wonder whether he will appoint judges who believe that gays and lesbians deserve constitutional protection from discrimination, just like women and racial minorities have?

On the other hand, Bush has promised that he will not use any litmus test (i.e., abortion) when considering judicial appointments. He's also said, however, that he would nominate only "strict constructionists," like Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. These two have consistently voted against civil rights protections for gays and lesbians. And, it was the "strict constructionists" in *Bowers v. Hardwick* that held "there is no fundamental right to engage in deviant (i.e., homosexual) sexual behavior" when they upheld the constitutionality of Georgia's sodomy statute.

If Stevens, Ginsburg, or even O'Connor retires during the next four years, we cannot afford to allow "President Bush" to appoint another Clarence Thomas, who is now only 52 years old and who might remain on the court for the next quarter century. We cannot afford another Antonin Scalia, who with two new Bush appointees, would not be an angry voice of dissent on a moderate court, but the loud voice of a majority unafraid to pronounce that gays and lesbians are "deviants" unworthy of constitutional protection.

This election is about more than the economy, prescription drugs, and education. This election is about who will pick the judges that decide whether it will be a better America for all, or a better America for all but gays and lesbians. So when you step into the last American closet on Tuesday, November 7, don't just think about the next four years. Think about the next 40. ■

OutRight

continued from previous page

is a product of their other personal commitments (like support for abortion rights or affirmative action) rather than their faith that Gore will actually accomplish something for gays.

But the selfishness theory can't explain the activism of most gay Republicans. If economic self-interest is gay Republicans' chief cause, LCR is an odd vehicle to promote it. There are plenty of conservative groups that far more directly and effectively press an economic agenda. LCR, as an organization, spends little time on tax cuts but lots of time on gay issues.

The third explanation is the strategic theory: Gay Republicans know Bush's record is worse than Gore's, and aren't just acting on

their selfish interests, but endorsed Bush because it helps the cause of gay equality more in the long run. Under this theory, backing Bush makes sense even if he's inferior on gay issues.

Such strategic behavior—sacrificing short-term principle to long-term interest—is common among gay political organizations. Consider HRC's own early endorsement of Gore over Bill Bradley, his Democratic primary opponent. Weighing just the issues, which is what critics of LCR's endorsement claim to do, Bradley was probably better than Gore. But HRC's early endorsement nevertheless made strategic sense because Bradley was a sure loser by that point and Gore would likely reward his early friends.

But how could endorsing an inferior candidate help us reach equality? If gay Republican activism is good for anything, it's the assistance it gives the broader gay civil rights movement by working within the GOP for change. Gay Republicans cannot work within the party if they forever position themselves outside it. That means they must publicly reward Republican candidates who show tangible signs of progress.

There is justifiable skepticism in gay political circles about whether Bush's talk of tolerance is more cosmetic than substantive. But there is no doubt *within the GOP*, LCR's target audience, about the significance of Bush's moves toward gays. He not only met with gay Republicans, setting a precedent for GOP candidates around the country, but declined to meet some antigay preachers who subsequently demanded an audience with him. He made a modest attempt to strip antigay language from the party platform. And for the first time ever an openly gay person spoke to a Republican National Convention. It was enough to send some true-blue Republican delegates into paroxysms of prayer.

Snubbing Bush after he made those controversial positive moves would have been a strategic mistake. If LCR had refused to endorse Bush, many Republican stalwarts would have concluded that courting gays is a waste of time.

The alternative endorsement standard suggested by LCR's critics—that the group should not endorse unless the GOP candidate is as good as his opponent—is impractical. Under that approach, by the time LCR endorsed a Republican the goal (equality) would have been accomplished.

The fundamental challenge for every organization is to figure out how to achieve its ends. LCR wants both parties competing for gay votes, something they don't do now. Endorsing Bush helps us get from here to there. ■

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Calendar of Events

OCTOBER

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4, 11, 18, 25 (Wed.)

HIV Testing. The Montrose Clinic offers free confidential HIV testing and counseling every Wednesday, 6-9 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne. Center: 713/524-3818. Clinic: 713/830-3000. **PLEASE NOTE:** Free & confidential HIV/AIDS testing is also available from 2-4 pm on the 11th & 25th in Conroe at Northwoods AIDS Coalition, 1414 South Frazier, Ste. 106. More info: 936/441-1614.

5 (Thu.)

Zrazy. The internationally known duo from Dublin Ireland, performs at the Mucky Duck at 8:30 p.m. Combining jazz, pop and traditional Irish instruments, Carole Nelson and Maria Walsh make music that has been described as sensuous, soaring, smooth, electrifying and sublime. The duo was honored this year by the Gay and Lesbian American Music Awards for best jazz song. They have been featured in the Advocate, Curve, Girlfriends and other national publications. For more information about Zrazy, access their web site at: <http://www.iol.ie/~zrazy/>. The Mucky Duck is located at 2425 Norfolk off Kirby Drive. Tickets are \$10. For more information, call 713-528-5999.

5 (Thu.)

Loving a Transgendered Person. This provocative topic continues the series on lesbian sexuality & controversial issues in the lesbian community called "What Lesbians Do." Sessions are facilitated by Maria Minicucci, a psychologist and director of the Center for Creativity, Knowledge and Change, and lesbian health educator Deborah Bell, founder/moderator of the Fem-Net online community. A \$3 donation is welcomed, but not required. 7 pm @ the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 713/524-3818.

6 (Fri.)

On the Borders. The Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center hosts "Building Bridges With Borders," a reception at the new Borders Books. Activists, advocates, politicians, society types, & others are invited to attend for socializing & networking. Borders will serve refreshments. 7-9 pm @ Borders Books at Kirby Dr. & W. Alabama across from the new Whole Foods Market. For more info: 713/524-3818.

6 & 7 (Fri.-Sat.)

Snakebit by David Marshall Grant starts the first season of Ashland St. Theatre Co. In this comic & poignant exploration into the limits of modern friendship, a struggling married couple & their gay best friend re-examine their lives after the arrival of a young & unexpected stranger with a secret. 8 pm @ Ashland St. Theatre, 2610 Ashland. Tickets \$15. Info: 713/426-3019. Also through Oct. 7 at Ashland St. Theatre Co. in the Cheap Shot Room is "September Alliance": Five Houston artists exhibit new paintings, drawings, photographs, mixed media, & digital works.



Denis Lavant in *Bad Blood* (see Oct. 20)

6-8 (Fri.-Sun.)

Deathtrap by Ira Levin is one of the great thrillers of the Broadway theater. It combines ingenious detective work with raucous laughter, and it doesn't hurt that it has a gay sub-plot. University of Houston School of Theatre directions: take the Cullen exit off I-45; go south on Cullen to entrance 16; free parking in lot 16B. For show time/ticket prices/more info: 713/743-2929.

INFO NEEDED FOR YOUR EVENT LISTING: a few lines of info about your event; date/time; cost; location/address; organization name; AND two phone numbers—one for OutSmart to reach you for questions and one for OutSmart readers to get more info on your event. **Mail info to:** OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston 77006. **Fax info to:** 713/522-3275. **E-mail info to:** letters@outsmartmagazine.com. **NO LISTINGS CAN BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—THURS., OCT. 12.**

7 (Sat.)

The Texas Women's Racquetball Club is hosting a one-day tournament to benefit the American Cancer Society. Call Kiki Hummel at 281/556-0703 or e-mail khummel@houston.rr.com for details & entry forms.

7 (Sat.)

Free Legal Advice at The People's Law School. This free program, designed to help make the law "user-friendly" to the lay person, will cover such subjects as consumer law, wills, family law, criminal law, business law, landlord/tenant law, credit & debt collection, health insurance, and how to work with an attorney. 9 am-noon at the University of Houston Law Center. Info: 713/743-2168 or visit www.peopleslawyer.com.

8 (Sun.)

Empower 2000. Earn, educate, enlighten, encourage, energize, enrich, entertain, envision, equalize, exercise, and evolve at Houston's nationally recognized business expo & trade show. Empower 2000 entertains everyone with an emporium of exhibits: business fair, job fair, health resources, performing & visual arts, sports & outdoors, food & drink, and special-interest seminars. Experience this one-day event and celebrate National Coming Out Day @ the George R. Brown Convention Center. Empower hotline: 713/523-7576.

12 (Thu.)

The Community Center Wants You. As the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center prospers & serves more gblt folks, the board of directors is seeking interested individuals to fill several board positions. To that end, the board is hosting the 2nd board recruitment reception for people who want to learn more. If you are a community-minded, fun-loving person with a desire to contribute your skills, abilities, & efforts to the center, the receptions is at 7 pm @ the center, 803 Hawthorne. Info: 713/669-6069 or 713/592-5262.

13 (Fri.)

Armistead Maupin. Get personal with the creator of the popular *Tales of the City* series. Openly gay Maupin will read from his new *Night Listener* and will answer all your gay questions! He's as comfortable on the stage as he is on the page. 8 pm @ Galveston's Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice. Tickets range from \$14.50-\$55. For more info: 409/763-7173. (For an interview with Maupin, see page 52 of this issue of OutSmart magazine.)

13 (Fri.)

United We Party! Last year, the first Unity Party set attendance & fundraising records for the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. For the 2000 event, the board & volunteers plan to bread those records while saluting the individuals & organizations that have helped sustain the center over the past year. The trio Smokin' Hair Day will perform. Beer, wine, & snacks will be served. \$10 includes refreshments & entertainment. 7 pm @ the center, 803 Hawthorne. More info: 713/524-3818.

13 & 14 (Fri. & Sat.)

Teatro Tinglado. Contemporary puppetry with a distinctive south-of-the-border sensibility, Teatro Tinglado creates a high-flying mix of puppetry & acting styles in their Texas premiere of *The Repugnant Story of Clotario Demoniak*. Demoniak is a psychopath who murders his best friend to possess a woman he doesn't truly love. It's a tale of circuitous plans, plots, & mysterious

intrigues, told with a bite & impetuous glee. 8 pm @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. Tickets \$20 (\$10 students/seniors, \$15 members). For more info: 713/335-3445.

14 (Sat.)

Meditation in Humble. This meditation workshop is open to everyone, and no experience is necessary. Several techniques that anyone can use to reduce stress, improve concentration, & bolster creative thought will be explored. Cost of \$40 includes printed material. 1-5 pm @ The Yoga Place, 510 Second St., Humble. More info: 281/446-9642.

14 (Sat.)

Nowhere. The final installment in director Gregg Araki's "Teen Apocalypse Trilogy," *Nowhere* finds itself in What-ever, California, where vapid teen zombies, following in the footsteps of hedonistic parents, seek out exotic physical pleasure with a frequency surpassed only by rabbits. Appearances in this 1997 film include Christina Applegate, Heather Graham, Denise Richards, Ryan Phillippe, Chiara Mastroianni, Debi Mazar, Mena Suvari, Shannen Doherty, Rose McGowan, John Ritter, & Traci Lords. 11:30 pm @ Rice Media Center, Rice campus, entrance #8. Cost: \$5 (\$4 students with valid ID/seniors over 65). Info: 713/348-4853 or www.nce.edu/~cinema.

14 & 15 (Sat. & Sun.)

Bayou City Art Festival Downtown. 300 artists from around the country selling their original artwork: juried festival, which includes painting, sculpture, jewelry, ceramics, glass, furniture, photography, wood, fiber art, & leather works. There's also music, food & beverage, and a Creative Zone that offers an interactive art area. \$7 adults; children under 12 free. 10 am-6 pm @ Hermann Square, downtown Houston at City Hall. Free parking on the streets, or \$3 all day in the Theater District garages, or take trolley A. Entrances: Bagby @ Walker; Walker @ Louisiana; Smith @ Rusk; door E, Theatre District underground parking.

14 & 27 (Sat. & Fri.)

The Neptones. who play mostly instrumental surf music, are ready to entertain you on the 14th @ Club Madrid, 1815 Washington, and on the 27th @ Maryjane's, 4216 Washington. According to one of the members of the fabulous foursome, the cost is "little to none," and they'll get started around "10ish." More info: 713/868-4179 or www.neptones.com.

19-22 (Thu.-Sun.)

Ride 'em, Cowboy/Cowgirl! It's the International Gay Rodeo Association's

GAY-FRIENDLY TV



The new *Bette* (l-r): James Dreyfus, Joanna Gleason, Bette Midler, Lindsay Lohan, and Kevin Dunn.

BETTE MIDLER's new foray into sitcom TV is appropriately titled *Bette*, because she plays a somewhat distorted version of herself. And, as usual, the endearing diva's got something gay going on: Openly gay actor James Dreyfus (the guy sitting at the piano in the above photo) plays her gay accompanist. At press time, *Bette* was scheduled to start **October 11** on CBS. —BD



JOHN GOODMAN (left) leaves behind his normal TV persona as Dan Connor (Roseanne's husband) to become a different kind of normal—gay! That's right, in the new Fox sitcom *Normal, Ohio*, Goodman plays a divorced gay man who has moved from Los Angeles back to Ohio with his family. Mo Gaffney plays his ex-wife, and the wonderful Anita Gillette and Orson Bean are on board as his parents. At press time, it was scheduled to premiere on Fox on **November 1**. —BD

NEUROTIC BY NATURE

Comedian Michele Balan laughs her way through four stops in Texas

AT FIRST GLANCE at the pictured photograph, you might think this woman is Bette Midler. You might also think that this is not a neurotic person. You would be wrong on both counts. • The New York-based Michele Balan is a nationally known, neurotic (her own description) talent in the gay and lesbian community. She has hosted major HRC events, entertained on gay and lesbian cruises, and helped emcee the mainstage at the Millennium March on Washington. • Now Lavender Lounge is bringing her to Texas: **Oct. 26** in Beaumont; **Oct. 27** in Austin; **Oct. 28** at Houston's River Cafe on Montrose; and **Oct. 29** at Cafe Horizons in Galveston. Info: www.christyclaxton.com or 512/423-1770. —Blase DiStefano



(Clockwise from top left) Michele Balan, Michele Balan, Michele Balan, and Michele Balan on the cover of her CD *Neurotic by Nature*.

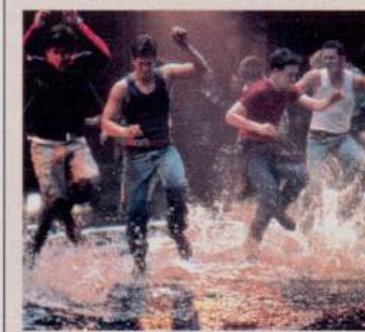


ALL PHOTOS THIS PAGE - UN-CREDITED



Bass player for the Neptones, seen here in her "Madame YAYA, Goddess of the Undertow" mode (see Oct. 14 & 27)

FILM FEET



BOOTMEN. Cocky, rebellious, and ambitious, Sean Okdean (Adam Garcia) is determined to follow his passion to become a tap dancer, and not resign himself to a life toiling in the local steel mill. He nails big metal cleats onto his work boots, cranks up the music, and comes up with an industrial-strength dance never seen before. Scheduled to start **October 6** in Houston.

(L-R): Christopher Horsey, Adam Garcia, Matt Lee, & Lee McDonald

HALLOWEEN HORROR



Three horrors from director Lucio Fulci: **THE BEYOND.** A young woman (Catriona MacColl) inherits an old southern hotel, only to discover the realtor failed to mention it sits atop one of the seven gateways to Hell! Hailed as Fulci's masterpiece, this 1981 film is replete with grisly special effects, including the unforgettable band of blood-sucking tarantulas. 11:30 p.m., Saturday, **Oct. 28.**



FRIGHT KNOWS NO GENDER: Male (above left) or female (above center), the blood-sucking tarantulas are gonna get you in *The Beyond*. And so will *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (right).



THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON (3-D). Amazon scientists stumble upon the Gill-Man, a prehistoric humanoid fish monster who takes a fancy to a fetching coed (Julie Adams). This 3-D classic is one of the first films to feature underwater photography, and it remains one of the most entertaining monster movies ever made. *You will be provided with 3-D glasses for this presentation!* 7:30 p.m., Friday & Saturday, **Oct. 27 & 28**, and 7 p.m., Sunday, **Oct. 29.**

The Creature from the Black Lagoon plays in the Eleanor and Frank Freed Auditorium at the Glassell School of Art, 5101 Montrose. Cost: \$5 (\$4 members, students with valid ID, seniors over 55). Film information line is 713/639-7531; the website address is www.mfah.org.

THE GATES OF HELL. In a small New England town, a priest commits suicide in a church cemetery, thereby unlocking the fiery gates of hell. Noted for its gruesome special effects, this 1980 film has acquired such a notorious reputation for violence that it is still banned in some countries. Starring Catriona MacColl and Janet Agren. 7:30 p.m., Saturday, **Oct. 28**, and 9 p.m., Sunday, **Oct. 29.**

ZOMBIE is the 1979 film that put Fulci on the map and insured the success of the "zombie/atomic-holocaust/gore film," a staple for almost a decade of low-budget Italian horror movies. Prompted by the

mysterious disappearance of her father, a young woman travels to a remote Caribbean island only to discover it is inhabited by indestructible, flesh-eating zombies. "Grossing" over \$30 million in its initial release, *Zombie* features Tisa Farrow, sister of Mia and daughter of Maureen O'Sullivan (the Jane in "Me Tarzan, you Jane"). 9:30 p.m., Saturday, **Oct. 28**, and 7 p.m., Sunday, **Oct. 29.**

All films will play at Rice Media Center on the Rice University campus, University Blvd. @ Stockton, entrance #8. Cost: \$5 (\$4 students with valid ID/seniors over 65). Film information line is 713/348-4853; the website address is www.ruf.rice.edu/~cinema.

THE COSTUME SALE. The University of Houston School of Theatre is holding a costume sale, which will include clothing, hats, shoes, coats, and suits, as well as a large selection of custom-built theatrical costumes. The UH School of Theatre's Costume Shop has one of the largest stocks of costumes in Texas and occasionally sorts through the inventory to make room for new items. Many pieces from the Houston Shakespeare Festival and Children's Theatre Festival (produced by the School of Theatre) will also be available. Cash, checks, and purchase orders accepted. 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Friday, **Oct. 20** at Lyndall Finley Wortham Theatre, UH main campus, I-45 & Cullen, entrance # 16 off Cullen Blvd. More info: 713/743-2919, opt. 1.



NOT A DRAG: One of many outfits to make your Halloween night a major photo opportunity is on sale for one day only. Hurry!

THE COSTUME CURE. After you buy your costume from the UH School of Theatre Costume Sale, let ComedySportz put you through the paces. Just wear your get-up to one of their Friday, Oct. 27 matches, and you'll get a 50-percent discount on admission. And just think, after you work out all the kinks you discovered on Friday night, the actual Eve of all Hallows (Tuesday the 31st) will go so smoothly it'll scare you! • Audience members in costume will also be able to enter a costume contest. 7:30 & 10 p.m., Friday, **Oct. 27**, @ Lambert Hall, 1703 Heights Blvd. at 17th St. Admission sans costume is \$10; costumed patrons \$5. Info: 713/868-1444.

THE COSTUME CONTEST. If you've already got a great costume, and you think your garb is damn good, you might win \$500 (1st place), \$300 (2nd), or \$200 (3rd)! Friday, **Oct. 13**, 9:30 p.m. @ The Haunted Hotel, 2817 Fannin at Tuam.



MISERY LOVES COMPANY: Annie Wilkes (Marcy Banner) is about to do some miserable damage to her houseguest Paul Sheldon (Jim Lawrence). Isn't Halloween fun?

MISERY. Just in time for Halloween, this new adaptation of the Stephen King novel takes a darkly comic look at the story of a best-selling romantic fiction writer and his "number-one fan." **Oct. 13-Nov. 18** at The Little Room Downstairs Studio, 2328 Bissonnet, 713/522-LRDS (5737).

& HALLOWEEN MAGIC



HALLOWEEN—MONTROSE STYLE: Honorary chair Maria Todd (center) joins the Halloween Magic Players in *West Side Cabaret—Montrose Style*, benefitting eight Houston AIDS service organizations. Inset: Gilbert Perez as Venezuela (left) with Joel Quinones spoofing Mango.



WEST SIDE CABARET—MONTROSE STYLE is a millennium Montrose moment not to be missed! The Halloween Magic Players return this year to unveil this freewheeling satire, liberally mixing elements of the legendary Broadway musicals *West Side Story* and *Cabaret* with contemporary references straight from today's entertainment and news headlines. True to form, the performance will be dosed with liberal helpings of Broadway show tunes and disco favorites (re-written with special inner-loop lyrics), along with a healthy skewering of public figures, current events, and popular culture. • Of course, Halloween Magic's recurring heroines—Wanda June Smathers (the reigning debutante of Adalou, Texas), the Hispanic spitfire Venezuela, and the blonde bombshell Pleasure Nouveau—return in another sticky situation. When Venezuela wins one million beauty bucks to "Dame Edna's Institute of Charm, Etiquette and Higher Learning for Dames" from television's *Who Wants to Look Like a Millionaire*, the girls are off to a cabaret-like setting to redeem their winnings. • To everyone's surprise, Venezuela's long-lost Latin relative Mango runs into the threesome at "Dame Edna's." When government officials—especially one with a resemblance to Janet Reno—learn of Mango's entrance to the U.S. to pursue a career in choreography, efforts to send the boy back to Cuba begin. Will Mango's choreography dreams be shattered? How will Venezuela, Pleasure, and Wanda June protect him from being deported? • Find out at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, **Oct. 21** at the Edwin Hornberger Conference Center, 2151 West Holcombe, Texas Medical Center. Tickets/tables info: 713/226-2342.

ROCKY HORROR. Pop culture phenomenon *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is now on DVD and VHS in 25th anniversary editions! We can see you shivering with anticipation, so come up to the lab and see what's on the slab. (And you can still do the time warp every Saturday at midnight at Landmark's Greenway Theatre.)



DOING THE TIME WARP AGAIN: Columbia (Nell Campbell, left), Dr. Frank-N-Furter (Tim Curry, center), and Magenta (Patricia Quinn) celebrate 25 years of absolute pleasure.

DRACULA: THE MUSIC AND FILM. A chilling and eerie new score composed by Philip Glass for the Kronos Quartet rejuvenates the 1931 film classic starring Bela Lugosi (pictured at right). You'll see the movie in its entirety while Glass and the quartet perform a concert with one of the most



intense and atmospheric scores ever written for film. Presented by Society for the Performing Arts on **Saturday, Nov. 4**, 8 p.m. @ Jones Hall. Tickets can be purchased at all Ticketmaster outlets or go to www.ticketmaster.com. For more information, call 713/227-4SPA or visit www.spahouston.org.

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finals in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Rodeo hotline: 505/255-5045.

20 (Fri.)

Focus on Human Sexuality is a capacity-building workshop of special interest to professionals who work with populations experiencing HIV. 8:30-11:30 am @ Fifth Ward Multi Service Center, 4014 Market St. To register: fax name, agency, & contact numbers to 713/861-0009, or e-mail dpscott@sageways.com. More info: 713/861-6667 or visit www.sageways.com.

20 (Fri.)

Bad Blood. Symbolically referencing the age of AIDS, this 1986 cult phenomenon features Denis Lavant as a naive youngster who falls in with a gang of thugs who steal a serum for a virus that kills people who "make love without love." Also starring Juliette Binoche, Julie Delpe, & Michel Piccoli. French with English subtitles. 9:30 pm @ Rice Media Center, Rice campus, entrance #8. Cost: \$5 (\$4 students with valid ID/seniors over 65). Info: 713/348-4853 or www.rice.edu/~cinema.

20 (Fri.)

Da Camera presents pianist & composer Jason Moran & his quartet in a homecoming concert to kick off Da Camera's Jazz Series. 8 pm @ Wortham Center's Cullen Theater, 500 Texas Ave. Tickets (\$27-\$37; students/seniors half-price). Da Camera Music Center, 1427 Branard, 713/524-5050, or online at www.culturefinder.com.

20-22 (Fri.-Sun.)

Texas Home & Garden Show. The "ultimate living environment" brings thousands of home & garden products, services, and trends to life. From builders to major appliances, water gardens to aquariums, window & doors to financial consultants, home owners will discover what they need to improve their homes & gardens. Adults \$7; children under 14 free. More info: 713/529-1616 or www.TexasHomeandGarden.com.

21 (Sat.)

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer is a 4.5-mile walk, with monies raised to support local breast cancer research, educational programs, & breast cancer patients in the Houston Metro market. 8 am @ the Superblock in front of the George R. Brown Convention Center. For more info, call 1-877-606-WALK or visit Strides_Houston@cancer.org.

21 (Sat.)

Container Herb Gardening. Mary Versfelt—a native Houstonian, a member of the Herb Society, & a North Harris County master gardener—will talk about which herbs can grow together best in containers and what types of containers work for herbs. For those living in apartments with small balconies, containers may be the best way to go. 1-3:30 pm @ Wabash Antique & Feed Store, 5701 Washington Ave., 713/863-8322.

21 (Sat.)

See the Light Gala 2000. Planned Parenthood is off to a running start with plans for this 14th annual black-tie event, with live & silent auctions. Tickets \$200/person. 7 pm (cocktails & silent auction); 8 pm (dinner, live auction, & dancing) @ Westin Galleria ballroom, 5060 W. Alabama. Info: 713/831-6516.

21 (Sat.)

Johnny Suede. A wonderfully offbeat tale of an aspiring pompadour-sporting pop star (portrayed by a then-unknown Brad Pitt) who dreams of stardom as a Rick Nelson-like crooner. Featuring cameos by Nick Cave and Tina Louise, with a knockout performance by Catherine Keener (*Being John Malkovich*) as Pitt's saucy girlfriend. 11:30 pm @ Rice Media Center, Rice campus, entrance #8. Cost: \$5 (\$4 students with valid ID/se-

niors over 65). For more info: 713/348-4853 or www.rice.edu/~cinema.

26-28 (Thu.-Sat.)

Shuffle A Long A Musical Extravaganza. The Texas Tap Ensemble's show opens at the reading of Momma Rose's will, which states: "If Dainty June and the Famboys resurrect the show, they will each inherit a million dollars." The show is an entertaining look at the trials & tribulations that the cast faced on their journey back to Vaudeville. The concert is free and open to the public. 8 pm @ Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park (between the Medical Center & downtown). Info: 713/284-8350.

27 & 28 (Fri. & Sat.)

Spirit of the Dance will hit the stage like a runaway express train as 25 pairs of shoes drum as one. Continuing the tradition of the original Riverdance, Spirit of the Dance invites you to experience the cultures of their world by celebrating traditions of dance, music, & passion. Tickets \$16.50-\$65. Friday at 8 pm, Saturday at 2 & 8 pm @ Galveston's Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice, 409/765-1894.

28 (Sat.)

The 6th Annual Houston Women's Festival. Celebrate the achievements of established & emerging musicians, artists, poets, and artisans; stroll through the tree-lined marketplace; participate in fun activities; see old friends and make new ones. Some of the highlights of the Main Stage include Tina (of Tina and the B Sides), Tret Fure, Terri Hendrix, the Therapy Sisters, Tchiya Amet, and more. In the performing and visual art exhibit, the work of photographer Sharon Stewart, artist Charla Bruce, poet Donna Garrett, and others will be featured. In the community marketplace, a variety of goods, services, games, and activities can be enjoyed by people of all ages. The festival is open to all. 1 pm-midnight @ Garden in the Heights, 3926 Feagan. Tickets are \$10 in advance at Lobo Bookshop and Tracy's Retreat, or \$12 at the door. More info: www.hwfestival.org, or call 713-861-3316.

28 & 29 (Sat. & Sun.)

The 5th Annual Eastwood Historic Home Tour features six homes dating from 1916-1938. The homes range in styles from a recently-renovated 1916 raised craftsman cottage to a large 1920s high-craftsman bungalow to a 1938 two-story colonial with New England-inspired seasonal gardens. Eastwood's tree-lined streets are home to many gay & lesbian families. Tour tickets are \$10. For more info/directions, call 713/926-6722 or e-mail at Easthc@aol.com.

PLANNING AHEAD

NOVEMBER

1 (Wed.)

Copland and Friends is Da Camera of Houston's free lunchtime performance from their series, "A Little Day Music," which is presented on the first Wednesday of every month from October through June. Concertgoers are encouraged to bring & enjoy their lunches while listening to the music. Noon in the Grand Foyer of the Wortham Theater Center, Texas @ Smith. More info: 713/524-7601, ext. 15.

3 (Fri.)

Max Klinger and Brahms. Klinger, a young contemporary of Johannes Brahms, took his obsession with the composer and turned it into a new work of art, a cycle of Brahms songs that he assembled, illustrated, & entitled *Brahms-Phantasie*. The performance of this cycle, accompanied with projections of Klinger's prints, is the focus of the evening. 8 pm @ Wortham Center's Cullen Theater, 500 Texas Ave. Tickets (\$22-\$33; students/seniors half-price with valid ID) are available at

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Da Camera Music Center, 1427 Branard, at 713/524-5050, or online at www.culturefinder.com.

4 (Sat.)

A Taste of Belgium. Café Montrose hosts a benefit luncheon for the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. Diners can feast on a three-course Belgian meal & help raise funds for a good cause. \$25, with a portion of the proceeds supporting the center. 1-3 pm @ Café Montrose, 1609 Westheimer. For more info, contact the center at 713/524-3818.

4 & 5 (Sat. & Sun.)

Stargazer 2000: Texas' Oldest & Largest Movie Memorabilia Show. This movie & autograph show features modern & vintage autographs, posters, stills, books, magazines, cartoon & comic art, old TV/movies on video, and more. The holidays are upon us, and this could be the place for getting those gifts ahead of time. The show is sponsored by Hollywood Frame Gallery, where you can have those gifts framed. Stargazer takes place on Saturday, 10 am-6 pm, and on Sunday, 10 am-4 pm, @ the Holiday Inn Hotel, 7787 Katy Freeway (near I-10 & Antoine). Admission is \$5/day (children under 12 free). For more info, contact Robert at 713/365-0266.

23 (Thu.)

Give Thanks. Don't have a family to spend Thanksgiving with? Can't bear spending the feast day with your family of origin? Stop by the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center for the traditional holiday dinner plus football on the big-screen set. Donations welcomed. Noon-6 pm @ the center, 803 Hawthorne. More info: 713/524-3818.

PERFORMING ARTS

◆ **A Bad Night's Sleep** is all about the agony of suffering through a bad night's sleep. It's loaded with original music, bogus commercials, & several of Radio Music Theatre's most hilarious pieces from their nationally syndicated radio comedy...plus a one-act featuring "The Singing Fertle Family." \$15 admission & reservations required; food & drink are available throughout the show. Thursdays-Saturdays @ Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt, 713/522-7722.

◆ **Black Comedy.** In this British play, the usual conditions of light & dark are reversed. When the stage lights are up, the characters are plunged into darkness; and when the stage lights are dim, the characters see light. How the characters behave under the cover of darkness when a light fuse blows and expected and unexpected visitors arrive makes for a very physical, fast-paced comedy. Fridays & Saturdays at 8 pm, through Oct. 28 @ The Company Onstage, 536 Westbury Square, 713/726-1219. Tickets \$12 (reservations strongly recommended).

◆ **Closer.** Hailed as one of the best new plays of the 1990s, Patrick Marber's *Closer* is a biting & severe tale of four strangers who become caught in a matrix of love, sex, & betrayal. Highly contemporary and written with brutal honesty, the play explores the four's entangled relationships & their common desire to be closer. Oct. 20-Nov. 19 @ the Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. Tickets to preview performances (Oct. 20-24) are \$23; tickets to performances on or after the Oct. 25 opening range from \$37-\$42. Tickets can be purchased at the Alley Theatre box office or by calling 713/228-8421.

◆ **Houston Ballet.** Three exciting young choreographers take center stage in the Cullen Contemporary Series, designed to foster the creation & performance of new works. Australian dance maker Natalie Weir has created pieces for American Ballet Theatre, the Australian Ballet, & numerous contemporary troupes in

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Calendar

Australia. Native Houstonian Timothy O'Keefe, who made his choreographic debut in 1999 with *Fascinating Evening*, will create his second work for the company. A third choreographer for the series had not been announced at press time. Oct. 26-29 @ the Wortham Center. Tickets \$11.50-\$51.50 can be purchased by calling 713/227-ARTS (2787).

◆ **Houston Grand Opera** opens its 46th season with a new production of Bizet's popular masterpiece *Carmen*, Oct. 20-Nov. 11. • Also in October: *Katya Kabanava*. Trapped in the claustrophobic household of her tyrannical mother-in-law, Katya is torn between her marital & social duty and her need to love & be loved. Oct. 27-Nov. 12. • Both operas @ Wortham Center's Brown Theater, Texas Ave. at Smith St. Tickets (\$22-\$200) are available by calling 713/227-ARTS; at the Wortham Ticket Center in the lobby of the Wortham; or at www.houstongrandopera.com.

◆ **Joined at the Head** is a drama that explores the life of a writer as she and her friends & family deal with the discovery that she has cancer. Tickets \$9 (\$8 students/seniors); matinees \$7. Through Oct. 14 @ Theatre Suburbia, 1410 W. 43rd, 713/682-3525.

◆ **MacBeth**. Ambition gone amuck best describes this classic tale of the haunted killing machine & his power-hungry wife that spans time with a ferociousness found in no other Shakespearean play. Tickets \$14 (students/seniors \$10), Fridays & Saturdays at 8 pm, Sundays at 2 pm, through Oct. 28 @ Actors Theatre of Houston, 2506 South Boulevard, 713/529-6606.

◆ **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. This new production of William Shakespeare's popular fantasy tale opens the Alley Theatre's new season. When lovers Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius, & Helena follow one another into the woods, they discover a secret fairy kingdom where the magical trickster Puck administers a love potion that stirs up emotions among the moonstruck couples. Oct. 6-Nov. 4 @ the Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. Tickets to preview performances (Oct. 6-10) are \$19-\$35; tickets to performances on or after the Oct. 11 opening range from \$32-\$49. Tickets can be purchased at the Alley Theatre box office or by calling 713/228-8421.

◆ **Misery**. Just in time for Halloween, this new adaptation of the Stephen King novel takes a darkly comic look at the story of a best-selling romantic fiction writer and his "number-one fan." Oct. 13-Nov. 18 @ The Little Room Downstairs Studio, 2328 Bissonnet, 713/522-LRDS (5737).

◆ **The Old Settler**. In World War II Harlem, New York, 55-year-old spinster (or as they were called in those days, an old settler) Elizabeth, takes in a young male roomer. Also living with Elizabeth is her sister Quilly, 53. There is an ominous cloud of tension that hangs over the sisters' relationship, a tension further exacerbated when Elizabeth and the roomer take a liking to each other. Through Oct. 15 @ The Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main St., 713/520-0055.

◆ **One Tit, a Dyke & Gin** and **The Bathtub**. *One Tit* by Pennell Somsen is a warm-hearted comedy about a heterosexual woman who has had a mastectomy, is accidentally locked in her doctor's office, and is then found by a gay female security guard. They pass the time away by playing gin rummy as they cope with the situation, demonstrating that human connection & caring are possible regardless of sexual preference. • *The Bathtub* by Lisa Shipley is a two-character comedy/drama about a lesbian couple, one of whom has been in the bathtub for two weeks and refuses to come out (of the tub, that is). Will she or won't she? Go see for yourself. • The two one-act plays are directed by Joe Watts and will play on Fridays & Saturdays through

Nov. 4 (no performance on Oct. 14) @ Theatre New West, 1415 California (on the ground floor of the Sonoma Restaurant building). Tickets are \$20. Reservations: 713/394-0464. Info: 713/522-2204.

◆ **1776** recounts the debates, the intrigues, & the comic by-play leading up to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Set in Philadelphia in the humid summer of 1776, it shows the human side of the founding fathers—their foibles, passion, & scheming; and the impact of the women in their lives. But what's most important is that Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, & John Adams sing & dance! Theatre Under The Stars brings this winner of three Tony Awards to the Arena Theatre, Oct. 10-22. Tickets available by phone from Admission Network (800-678-5440); at TUTS TIX (2600 SW Frwy @ Kirby); outlets (Sound Revolution, Vinal Edge); online (www.tuts.com).

◆ **The Turn of the Screw**. In this adaptation of the well-known classic, a young governess, newly arrived at an English manor, is haunted by the ghosts of the servants who came before her. In order to save herself and the children under her care, she must confront these malevolent spirits. But are these beings truly supernatural or merely physical manifestations of the governess' own psychological torments? Oct. 13-Nov. 5 @ Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway, 713/52-STAGE.

PERFORMING ARTS

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◆ **The Adventures of Peer Gynt** tells the story of a ne'er-do-well young boy from a small town in Norway who dreams of becoming a king. Gynt, who faces many trials on his long & dangerous journey in his quest for greatness, comes to realize his own self-worth, discovering that the happiness & love he has at home have already made him the king he longs to become. *Peer Gynt* is a production of Opera to Go!, a professional touring company which presents fully-staged portable operas for children in grades K-7. The hour-long opera plays three days, Oct. 17-19, at 11 am @ Miller Outdoor Theatre, 100 Concert Dr. in Hermann Park. It is free and open to the public. For more info: 713/284-8350.

◆ **Alice in Wonderland**. Come along with Alice on a visit to Wonderland as she meets the White Rabbit, the Mad Hatter, the King, the Queen, & the Knave. Who has stolen the Queen's tarts? The answer lies in Wonderland. Saturdays at 11 am & 1:30 pm, through Oct. 28 @ The Company Onstage, 536 Westbury Square, 713/726-1219. Tickets \$6 (reservations strongly recommended).

◆ **In Between** examines peer pressure, confrontation, and courage as a new student is forced to choose between the friendship of the popular Tad & the ignored "B." For 4th grade-9th grade. Tickets are \$8; \$6 a ticket for groups of 10 or more. Saturdays, 11:30 am & 2 pm, Oct. 14-Nov. 4 @ Stages Repertory Theatre, Allen Parkway at Waugh, 713/52-STAGE.

◆ **The Story of the Lone Star State: 600 Years of Texas History in 60 Minutes!** InterActive Theater Company begins this season with a fast-paced, action-packed, knee-slappin' 60 minutes of the history of Texas. Beginning with the Caddo tribes, moving through the conquistadors, saddling up with the vaqueros, discovering oil, and blasting into space, this story promises an educational & entertaining outing for all. Tuesdays-Fridays at 9 & 11 am, Saturdays at 11 am, through Oct. 14 @ Lambert Hall Performing Arts Center, 1703 Heights Blvd. at W. 17th St. Tickets \$5 for children & adults. Info/reservations: 713/862-7112.

RADIO

◆ **After Hours** Saturdays, midnight to 3 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. KPFT 90.1 FM.

◆ **Houston Grand Opera's** national radio broadcasts over NPR's *World of Opera*: Richard Strauss's *Elektra* on Oct. 14 (Christoph Eschenbach conducts the Houston Symphony); Mark Adamo's *Little Women* on Oct. 21 (Patrick Summers conducts the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra); and Gaetano Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* on Oct. 28 (Patrick Summers conducts the HGO Orchestra). 12:30 pm on KUHF 88.75FM. For more info: www.npr.org/programs.

◆ **Lesbian & Gay Voices** Mondays, 8-10 pm. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

◆ **Art Classes for People With HIV: The Art League of Houston** is offering free art classes for people with HIV. The ongoing course meets every Thursday & Friday from 1-4 pm at the Art League, 1953 Montrose. Mixed media projects for the artist and non-artist. Constructive art-making in a relaxed atmosphere. Focus is on the healing power of art. More info: 713/523-9530. **The Museum of Fine Arts**

Houston is offering free art classes for those with HIV/AIDS. Patrick Palmer begins his 9th year offering art instruction. Abstract painting, linoleum-cut greeting cards, & ceramics are some of the media offerings for the fall semester. Class is limited to 16. Everything is free, even lunch! The classes meet at the Glassell School of Art every Friday, 1-4 pm, 5101 Montrose Blvd., room 202. For more info: 713/639-7500 or 713/526-1118.

◆ **Art-o-mat**. DiverseWorks joins a network of sites throughout the U.S. serving as hosts for a national project known as *Art-o-mat*. Artists T. Clark Whittington and George Doles III, residents of the tobacco town of Winston-Salem, founded the *Art-o-mat* project in 1997. Their mission was to create an outlet where artists can expose their names & works to people who would otherwise not see it. They worked under the premise that art should be progressive, yet personal & approachable. What better way to do this than with a heavy cold steel machine? Whittington has refurbished an old cigarette vending machine specifically for DiverseWorks. The group Artists In Cellophane, as well as Houston-based artists, have filled the machine with original works of art that can be yours to keep for a mere \$3-\$5. The machine will be refilled with new art monthly. DiverseWorks will keep it filled to meet your demand. Through June 2001 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/223-8346.

◆ **Deborah Kass: The Warhol Project**. In 1992 Kass began the Warhol Project, appropriating the style & images of pop culture icon Andy Warhol. Thirty years after Warhol completed his first silkscreened image, Kass substituted her own likeness for Warhol's. And by replacing Warhol's treasured celebrities with her own cultural & personal heroes, Kass goes to the very heart of questions about originality, celebrity, & representation. The exhibition features 28 large-scale silkscreen images and is accompanied by a 100-page catalog. Through Dec. 17 @ Blaffer Gallery, which is located on the University of Houston's main campus, entrance # 16 off Cullen Blvd. Info: 713/743-9528.

◆ **From Above**. Twenty-five views of the city of Houston, taken from the perspective of Alex

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MacLean's single-engine Cessna. From the Ship Channel to the suburban prairie, his photos reveal landscapes as abstract compositions, providing a vital perspective on the relationship between natural & manmade environments. Through Jan. 7, 2001 @ the Menil Collection, 1511 Branard, 713/525-9400.

◆ **Fury** is an exhibition of paintings of Galveston and the storm of 1900 by gay Houston artist Claude Pollard. The *Fury* exhibit focuses on a variety of Galveston's numerous themes—the forces of nature, resilience, & ingenuity, to name a few. Pollard has previously exhibited in the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, Toopees, Bamaby's, and in & around various Houston Museum District locales. Through Oct. 14 @ E Street Gallery, 2219 Postoffice, Galveston. ◆ **Hot Sauce** represents an optimistic yet flawed vision of our world. The artists hook viewers with style & form, shut them out with meaning & social critique, but always invite them back for more with color-coated beauty. Through Oct. 21 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/223-8346.

◆ **The Holocaust Woodcuts.** A suite of six monumental woodcuts on the theme of the Holocaust, presented with the original woodblocks, is on view through Nov. 27 @ Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline, 713/942-8000.

◆ **Houston Center for Photography (HCP).** Main Gallery: *Brazil Without Frontiers* is a group exhibition of five documentary photographers—Elza Lima, Antonio Augusto Fontes, Celso Oliveira, Tiago Santana, & Ed Viggiani. • Gallery X: *Jack Spencer: Native Soil* features a selection of lyrical, toned black-&-white photos of the South. • Gallery Y: *Hazel Hankin: Rhythm & Rapture.* In this premiere exhibition of the work, HCP presents color photos by a photographer & dancer obsessed with the social dancing craze. Through Oct. 29 @ Houston Center for Photography, 1441 West Alabama, 713/529-4755.

◆ **New Works by Chris Menconi.** Chris is known for those whimsical clay dogs & other animals who show up sometimes. Through Oct. 14 @ Archway Gallery, 2013 W. Gray, 713/522-2409.

◆ **Notes from Underground** will feature the work of three women whose work transcends traditional boundaries of "high" art. Mary Nason, an artist from Macon, Georgia, creates a line of girl-positive stickers as well as functional art objects; Nason's heroines are smart, sexy, & full of attitude. Houston's Elizabeth Jackson writes a sly comic entitled *Action Jackson* which features female leads who come straight out of *Blackboard Jungle* or *Switchblade Sisters*; Jackson's characters are self-assured bad girls who exude an air of homoerotic tension. Holly Hinson is a DJ & author of the new zine *Hello Lunchmeat* which features reports on the local music scene; *Hello* seeks out positive female role models and also features articles on contemporary girl gangs. Hinson concentrates on positive activism and not style. Oct. 6-28 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/223-8346.

◆ **Outreach Exhibition.** More than 200 works of art created through the outreach programs of The Glassell Junior School of Art are on view in this annual Junior School Outreach Exhibition. Included are paintings, sculpture, & ceramics made by Houston-area residents who participate in the programs. Through Oct. 20 at the school, 5100 Montrose Blvd. For more info: 713/639-7700.

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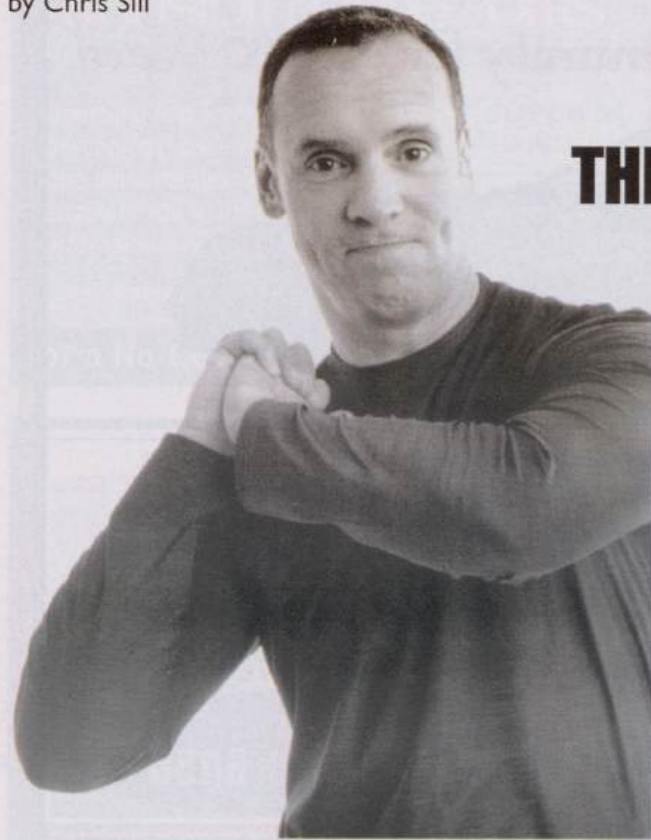
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GrooveOut

by Chris Sill



THE DRAG QUEEN IN MY INNER EYE

Chatting with remix diva Barry Harris

DELANEY BISHOP

was [with] New Kids on the Block at a club called Karz. Kon Kan was bigger than they [New Kids on the Block] were in Houston, so they opened for us! Little did we know that three months later they would become huge. **Do you still have ties to Houston?**

Not really, but Bruce Godwin at Record Rack holds a special place in my heart. He was the first person who faxed us [Kon Kan] and said you've got a big record that's breaking out of here. That was a very early sign that my life was about to change.

How did you and Chris Cox come together as Thunderpuss?

We met in a studio in New York in 1991 when I was working on the second Kon Kan album. Later he

moved to L.A. and I returned home to Toronto. We kept in touch and became friends over the years by telephone. Eventually we decided to experiment and see if we could work together, and by 1997 we did our first mix for Priority Records. We enjoyed working together and that's when I decided to take the whole step of getting all the work visas and return to the states and actually team up.

And the rest is history...

Well, kind of. We were just doing what we loved and it felt right. Now every-thing's just exploded.

You both have done so many fabulous remixes, do you have a favorite?

My favorite—and it took me a year to realize it—was "Body Rock" by Louchi Lou and Meechie One. I had forgotten it and then I heard someone play it at a club in New York, and I thought, gee, this sounds like us. It got better and better and I said to myself, I

hope this is us 'cause I really like this! Hearing it from a different perspective a year later, I realized everything production-wise was very good. I'm my own worst critic and there's always something I can do better, but with that record there's nothing.

Thunderpuss is very popular with the gay crowd. Why do you think that is?

We like drama! There's one thing that's never gone out of style with the gay crowd and that's divas. For some reason gays love drama divas and so do we. While we're making the records we often see a drag queen doing the song in our minds. Sometimes it's kind of hard not to! [Laughs]

[Laughing] Well, that leads me right to my next question. You have a big hit record out that you did with vocalist Pepper Mashay, called "Dive in the Pool." It's total drama and diva. Where did you come up with the words?

A lot of it is just ideas I get from hanging out at a club. We've worked with Pepper Mashay for a couple years and this was kind of written for her. I wanted her to record the vocals as if she was onstage talking to the crowd and expecting a response. It fits her personality and I felt it would be something that record DJs could use to communicate with their crowd. When she asks, *How y'all feeling out there?* and the crowd responds, it's really communication between the DJ and the crowd. Plus it's just a fun party record.

Are there any plans for a Barry Harris solo album?

No, just a lot of singles for now. I've got a lot of ideas in my head but I haven't had the time to get them out. "Dive in the Pool" I've had in my head for a year. I already know what the follow-up is, but I'm not telling anyone!



Producer/remixer/DJ Barry Harris will bring the Thunderpuss sound to Rich's on Sunday, Nov. 12.

Chris Sill spins tunes at Rich's and can be reached at csill@infohwy.com.

"For some reason gays love drama divas and so do we. While we're making the records we often see a drag queen doing the song in our minds."

Barry Harris is half of dance music's dynamic remixing duo known as Thunderpuss. Together with studio partner Chris Cox, they've taken over America's club scene and topped the charts with their galvanizing remixes of Whitney Houston, Amber, Jennifer Lopez, and Enrique Iglesias, just to name a few. Barry Harris returns to Houston in November for the first time in over 10 years. GrooveOut recently caught up with this in-demand producer/remixer/DJ and asked him about his first trip to the Bayou City, gays and divas, and his splashing solo hit "Dive in the Pool."

GrooveOut: Back in the late 1980s you were half of the group Kon Kan and had a big hit with "I Beg Your Pardon." Did you perform in Houston?

Barry Harris: Absolutely! Houston is the city where it all started. Our very first gig

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Liz Smith

(20/20, 9/2000, Mike Wallace)

Mike Wallace: Are you gay?

Liz Smith: I don't characterize myself sexually. I wouldn't like to do that.

Pope John Paul II

(The Advocate, 9/12/2000, Michelangelo Signorile)

...Pope John Paul II unleashed a tirade against gays and lesbians...because World Pride Rome 2000, a week of gay pride events that included a march, occurred in his own backyard despite his having used all the powers of the Vatican for months to try to shut it down.... [A]fter the World Pride march, addressing tens of thousands of pilgrims after celebrating a mass for prisoners, [the pope said:] "Homosexual acts are against nature's laws. The church cannot silence the truth, because this would not help discern what is good from what is evil." He then called homosexuality "objectively disordered."

...[B]y uttering these words so vehemently and so publicly, he revealed before the whole world that he is a hateful man with little regard for the discrimination and violence he brings upon people's lives.

Emmy Awards

★ Todd Holland (who won for Best Director of a Comedy Series, *Malcolm in the Middle*): The last person Holland thanked was "...my sweetie Scotch for his patience and his support always." The camera panned to Scotch who was on the verge of tears.

★ When Sean Hayes won for Best Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series (*Will & Grace*), what caught the attention of millions of people was not what Hayes said but the fact that his costar (the straight Eric McCormack) gave Hayes a big wet one on the mouth!

★ As presenters of an award, the four stars of *Will & Grace* made banter:

Eric McCormack: I think I speak for all of us...when I say that we are very fortunate to be working at a time when the networks are brave enough to put a show like *Will & Grace* on the air. [Applause]

Megan Mullaley: One can only imagine what the television landscape might have looked like had gay-themed shows had always been accepted.

McCormack: That's true, Meg. We might have had shows like *I Dream of Johnny*. [Laughter]

Mullaley: *Lesbionic Woman*. [Laughter]

Sean Hayes: *Ozzie and Harry*. [Laughter]

Debra Messing: *Maude*. [Laughter/applause]

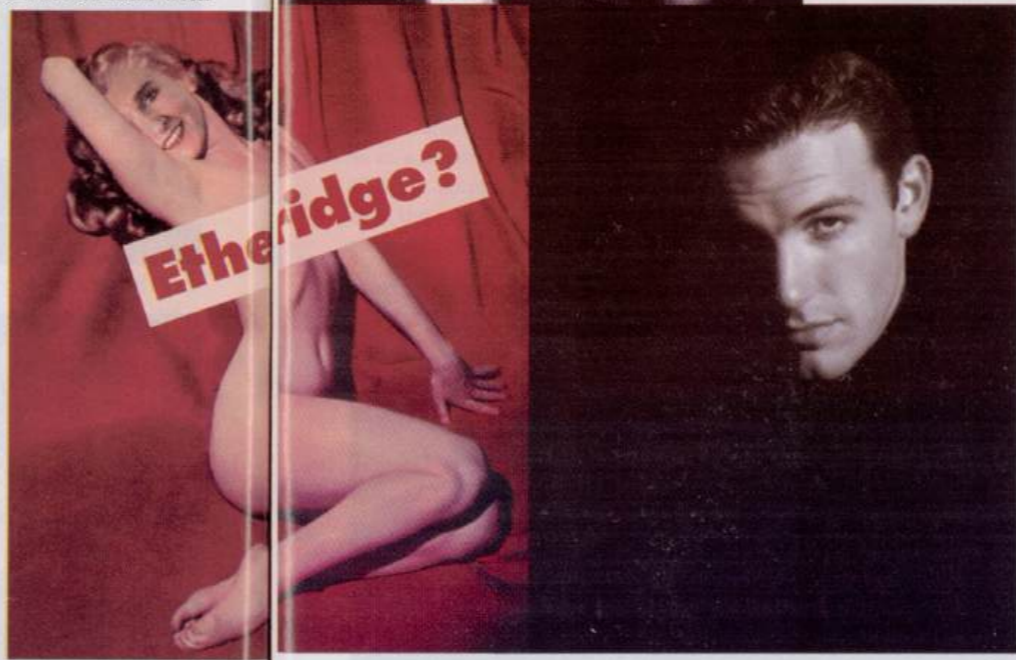
McCormack: *The Courtship of Eddie's Father by His Bachelor Friend Rick*. [Laughter]

Hayes: *Chico on the Man*. [Laughter]

Mullaley: *Little Bathhouse on the Prairie*. [Laughter]

Messing: *Frasier*. [Laughter/applause]

★ Accepting the award for Best Comedy Series (*Will & Grace*), Max Mutchnick said: "Oh my God, she [the Emmy Award he was holding] is so beautiful. And, as a gay man—I cannot believe that I'm saying this, but I think I finally met a girl I wanna sleep with!" [Laughter/applause]



Ben Affleck

(Talk, 10/2000, Chris Connelly)

Chris Connelly: For a guy who's pretty open and accessible, you can really generate the hot rumors.

Ben Affleck: When I broke up with Gwyneth [Paltrow], somebody came to her—a friend of hers, a person I actually like—and said, "Well, I feel really bad telling you this, but I know people in the gay community who have slept with Ben." This was not a rumor that was being passed on, this was fact: "I hate to break it to you, but he's been sampling the kielbasa out there." [Laughter] And luckily, if you know me, that is the one thing that is outside the parameters of what's believable, and so I was kind of off the hook, because I was able to say, "You know me—do you see how ridiculous this is?"

And I'm sure this guy really did hear it from somebody who heard it from somebody who made it up. They said that about Brad Pitt, they said that about Leonardo DiCaprio—they said it about me and Matt! [Laughter] I felt like we were in good company.

Robin Williams

(Entertainment Weekly, 9/15/2000, Jim Mullen)

It's been announced that Robin Williams is thinking of playing Liberace in a new film bio. Didn't Nathan Lane already do that in *The Birdcage*?

Victoria Principal

(Out, 9/2000, Michael Musto)

Michael Musto: Will there be gay characters on the soap—I mean, show [Aaron Spelling's new NBC series *Titans*]?

Victoria Principal: I would certainly hope so. I mean, it's based in L.A. Hello! I don't think we'll have Gwen [Principal's character] coming out, though, if that's what you're asking.

Damn. Do gay people inspire Victoria?

Yes. Half my friends are gay. I have a problem with people who *can't* love, not with people who choose to love.

Melissa Etheridge

(Us Weekly, 9/11/2000, William Keck)

William Keck: You opened the Democratic National Convention with a patriotic medley. Big Al Gore fan?

Melissa Etheridge: Huge—from the Clinton years. Clinton was the first to even discuss gay and lesbian issues. He failed, but he tried. And Al and Tipper embrace it even more.

You no doubt have heard that Dick Cheney has a lesbian daughter.

How 'bout that? There's one in every family. The Republicans are just gonna have to finally let us in the door and deal with it....

Would you encourage other gay celebrities to come out?

I would, just because I found it to be such a relief. Always worrying "God, are they going to ask me that?" Or "I've got to go to this premiere and I want to take my significant other, but no." That was horrible....

Would you ever pose nude in *Playboy*?

I'm leaning toward yes. My feminist friend Kathy Najimy would tell me "Are you kidding? That's stupid!" But I think it would be kind of funny. I'd do it to be the first boundary-crossing big-dyke-gone-*Playboy*. Well, the first *out* dyke, anyway.



ROBIN WILLIAMS Is he a Liberace look-a-like?
MELISSA ETHERIDGE Is she posing for *Playboy*?
BEN AFFLECK Is he dating gay men?
VICTORIA PRINCIPAL Is her character in *Titans* coming out? Pictured with the cast of *Titans* (l-r) Jack Wagner, Jason George, John Barrowman, Lourdes Benedicto, Ingo Rademacher, Principal, Elizabeth Bogush, Yasmine Bleeth, Perry King, Casper Van Dien, and Josie Davis



Compiled by Blase DiStefano



A Taste of Houston

Tapas-style reviews
OutSmart Restaurant Guide

A note about our "tapas" dining reviews: You may have noticed that our advertisers are listed in our tapas section. Biased? You bet! By advertising in *OutSmart*, our advertisers are indicating that the business of the gay & lesbian community is important to them—and that's important to us at *OutSmart*. Of course, there are many other excellent and supportive restaurants out there, and we rotate mention of them into our tapas section.

Baba Yego
2607 Grant St. (Missouri St.)
713/522-0042

A Montrose institution. Sometimes we're tempted to eat here every day, it's so homey and healthy. We especially love Tuesday pasta night (\$9.95 for the pasta du jour and a glass of wine), their "Old Smokey" nosing platter of salmon with accoutrements, their in-house sesame dressing, Sunday brunch, and almost any of their specials. If you're feeling outdoorsy, you have the choice of their open patio under the trees, the covered patio, or the porch facing their secret garden. \$

NEW
Baich's Bar and Grille
2016 Main
713/650-8830

Baich's (pronounced Bay-Chess) Bar and Grille is housed on the ground floor of the 2016 Main Condo. Serving uptown Southwest cuisine in a downtown atmosphere, this classy spot is the perfect location for a quiet romantic dinner. For starters try the corn crab chowder, a Baich's specialty made with sweet yellow corn and fresh lump crabmeat. There are pizzas, pasta, and a variety of sumptuous entrees: my favorite being the Southwestern Pasta consisting of chicken breast grilled to perfection, black beans, and pico de gallo with a tomato-cilantro cream sauce over fettucini. The art covering the walls is by superstar artist and 2016 Main resident Kermit Eisenhut. Live jazz on Friday nights. Entrance on Main with valet parking. \$\$

Beck's Prime
Multiple locations.

These upscale burger joints have been touted as the best in Houston, although many complain of inconsistent hamburgers, which sometimes taste like ground sirloin and other times like a prefab from Sam's. But there's no denying their unforgettable fries, the thick, skin-on kind that can be cooked extra crispy on request, nor their

dessert-sized mocha shakes. And the Alpine Chicken sandwich—basted in hickory barbecue with sautéed onions, mushrooms and Swiss cheese—makes you wish you were bulimic so you could just keep on eating. \$

Café Chino
6140 Village Pkwy (b/w Amherst & Times)
713/524-4433
600 Travis (tunnel level @ Texas)
713/223-1011

Houston Chronicle food editor Ann Criswell was dead on when she referred to Café Chino's ethereal seared green beans as "a little slice of heaven." Owner Eddie Chen prides himself on his glass-enclosed kitchen and piping hot wok, and he should: each dish is meticulously prepared, and try as they might no other restaurant can duplicate those famous green beans, or that wonderfully textured cashew shrimp and chicken. And, contrary to its Hunan label, Chen added sushi to his already winning menu early last year. \$\$

Colina's Italian Cafe
3835 Richmond Ave. (@ Wesleyan)
713/621-8844
2400 Times Blvd. (Rice Village)
713/365-9497
12311 Kingsride

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The Solero Also Rises

After three years serving tapas to the cognoscenti, Solero restaurant finds Spanish-tapas are more than trendy, as is the rise of historic downtown

Learned any new words lately? Eaten any ethnic food recently? As foreign food continues to grow in popularity, so does our food vocabulary: humus, dolmades, falafel, cannelloni, sushi, sashimi, tapas. These terms roll off the tongue with such ease and familiarity that one forgets these words are from another language, another culture, and really another time.

The Spanish word *tapa* translates into English literally as "lid" or "cap," as in a covering for something. A friend of mine from Madrid explained to me how the word *tapas* came to be associated with food. Hundreds of years ago when Spaniards visited their local watering hole and ordered a glass of wine, they would receive an extra little bonus. Covering their glass would be a piece of bread with a topping like cheese, tomatoes, olives, marinated fish, or meat. These were considered the lid to the drink and thus the name. It's just the way it was—if you ordered a drink, you got a snack. In Spain today, this old tradition continues with tapas bars all over the country, but like any tradition that is imported to America, it has changed and grown.

Arturo Boada, chef and part owner of Solero, has taken the concept of tapas and transformed it into something larger. Instead of getting only one small bite, there are several in each portion—which is great for sharing. Instead of only Spanish recipes, Arturo, inspired by his worldly experiences, includes spices and ingredients from many cultures in his creations. Examples of this on his menu are seafood bouillabaisse, tempura vegetables, mussels Prague, and grilled quail. If you're in the mood for a variety of unique and flavorful tastes, then grab some friends and head to Solero in the downtown Market Square Historic District.

Don't let downtown scare you. After negotiating a frustrating path through the one-way streets—currently crammed with con-



struction pylons and detours—arriving at Solero is like finding an oasis.

"Ahhhhhhh!" Once inside Solero, the good vibes immediately begin to penetrate. Order a glass of wine from their selection of over 50 offerings and enjoy the scenery. The partially exposed original brick walls and the rough wooden floors allow the building's 19th-century personality to seep through and combine with the chic modern elements. The high ceiling magically pulls the buzz of the chatting up and away from your neighbors and pushes the music back down. At Solero it's easy to enjoy the pleasure of feeding your senses. The food will kick-start your taste buds and tease your olfactory zone. Settle in and talk to your companions.

When your friendly server arrives, ask a lot questions—the menu is not self-explanatory and can be intimidating if you don't know a lot of Spanish, and even if you do, the descriptions are limited. Monopolize their

time until you figure out your strategy.

This restaurant is best experienced with good friends. By ordering the portion-sized tapas to share, all of you will get a buffet of tastes and have a great time moaning and laughing your way through double-dipping, spit-swapping, and finger-licking without inhibitions.

Last week two of my closest friends and I had a great evening at Solero. After each of us selected a glass of red wine, we courageously agreed to let the manager order for us. Shortly thereafter four tapas hit the table: cucumber salad, ceviche, shrimp pepperoncini, and something called Suhrid's Hot! Hot! beef tips.

My compliments to the chef for the best ceviche that I have ever tasted outside of South America. The combination of fresh red snapper with shrimp marinated and cooked in the acidic juices is unbelievably refreshing and tasty. It comes with a tiny amount of crackers, but this is where the basket of bread begins its important role. Tear off a hunk and dab it into the aromatic garlic and lime, then use a spoon to load up the bread with the fish, red onion, sweet bell peppers, and diced jalapeño. It's cold, it's spicy, it's tender, it's fresh. Zowie! Smack your lips and move on to the next item.

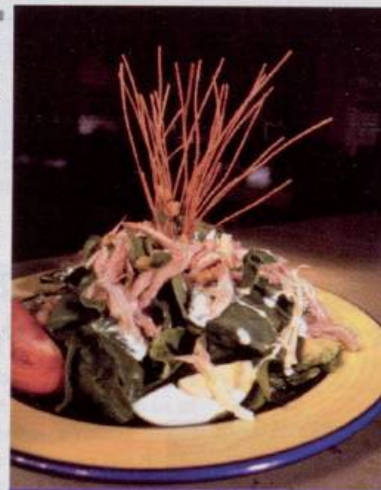
The beef tips were interesting because we were warned that they were spicy hot, so of course we proceeded with caution. The large chunks of beef sit in a white wine, olive oil, and garlic sauce with tomatoes, green beans, and habenero chilis. I was surprised. Initially, the beef tasted flavorful but not something I would consider hot. That is until I chomped into one of the hidden habeneros, and my head nearly exploded. This dish is deceptively, nastily hot. It's a masochist's fantasy.

I was incredibly thankful that the ignored-until-now cucumber salad was also on the table. I quickly stuffed several cool pieces into my mouth and found relief. The

fresh cucumber sparingly coated with an olive oil and garlic vinaigrette is the ideal vacation for in-between spicy bites.

Interesting combinations of food always intrigue me, and the shrimp pepperoncini as a house favorite definitely qualifies. The shrimps swim in a creamy sauce with salty prosciutto and capers. We went through a lot of bread, dredging up every last bit of this dreamy sauce. Keep asking for more bread if you run out, and don't let the server steal away your sauces until you're ready to move on to something else.

Next we tried the award-winning paella. Solero's version has been severely altered from the original recipe born in Valencia, with the chef adding pork and chicken to the traditional shrimps, clams, and mussels. It comes straight out of the oven to your table and arrives piping hot and beautiful. The saffron-flavored rice is delicious—but I believe that a squeeze of lime unites and



Even the spinach salad is a festive event at Solero, with grilled chicken and a garlic parsley dressing.

brightens the intensity of paella, so that I added on my own.

At this point we were ready to move on to dessert. Maybe it was the wine, maybe it was all the silly talk, maybe we were just in the mood, but when our "Caribbean Banana" arrived we took our first bites a full five minutes later because we were laughing so hard. This is officially, without trying to be so, the

most phallic dessert that I have ever had the pleasure of eating. Imagine a ripe banana rolled in walnuts and cinnamon, encased in a flour tortilla, deep fried, drizzled with caramel, then sliced in half and served with one dead soldier lying on his side and the other standing at attention beside Arturo's house specialty: homemade vanilla ice cream. The ice cream melts. The nuts stay crunchy. The cinnamon snaps. Simultaneously hot, cold, hard, and soft—what a grand finale.

Congratulations are in order for the brave owners of this tapas restaurant and bar. They were among the first to recognize the potential of Houston's badly neglected downtown and took a huge risk to offer a night-time destination for city workers and dwellers. When Solero opened in 1997 it was voted one of America's top new restaurants by Esquire, and the Houston Press chose them for best tapas. Fortunately, Solero's success has encouraged other entrepreneurs, and downtown is starting to swing. Go join the party. ■

Solero, 910 Prairie (between Main & Travis), 713/227-2665. Hours: Mon.-Wed., 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 11 a.m.-midnight; Sat., 6 p.m.-midnight.



Jeff Stryker would be proud: the Caribbean Banana dessert.

BOTH PHOTOS: UNCREDITED

A Taste of Houston

Tapas-style reviews
(continued from page 46)

With its reliable Italian food, unpretentious feel, and BYO wine option (with no corking fee), Houston yuppies flock to these neighborhood locations. And as long as you don't expect haute cuisine, you'll be perfectly content. Order the pizza Marguerite and one of the antipasto salads and you may even border on exhilaration. \$

Dish

2300 Westheimer
713/528-2050

Sleek and stylish, Dish offers a refined American menu at fabulous prices. Sister restaurant of Benji's in the Village, Dish continues in chef/owner Aaron Guest's commitment to a singular dining experience at affordable prices. For starters, try the arugula salad, or the fried goat cheese and wild mushrooms turnovers. Our pork chop and salmon entrees had the entire table vying for first dibs on our plate. More than just the flavor of the month, this is the place to see and be seen. \$\$



Estancia Grill

414 West Gray
713/807-1111

An open grill is the focal point of the kitchen at this casual upscale eatery. Already known for its Argentinian dishes, the new menu features cuisine from all of the Americas including Mexico and other Latin American countries. The bar menu serves up mouth-watering tapas. Also served are pastas, steaks and seafood entrees along with a variety of soups, salads and sandwiches all of which reflect the bold flavors of South America. Best of all, chef Greg Webb promises to dish up some of his favorite items, most notably the Opal Duckling. The atmosphere sparkles with simple elegance and the service is attentive. \$\$

Kam's

4500 Montrose Blvd.
713/529-5057

Located right at the juncture of where Montrose turns into the museum district, we like to go to Kam's when we're in the mood for upscale Chinese food in an elegant, quiet, yet unpretentious, atmosphere. The white tablecloths, genial waiters, and view of Montrose out of Kam's storefront windows are all oddly soothing. Although some complain that Kam's cuisine is rather Americanized, we are longtime fans of their sesame chicken, Singapore vermicelli, wrinkly sautéed green beans, and crispy hot and sour whole fish (although it's been known to seem slightly less than fresh). \$\$

Lai Lai Dumpling House

9262 Bellaire Blvd.
713/271-0080

The best dive on Bellaire, not to mention the best Chinese for the least bucks. No kidding—how about feeding a group of 12 for under \$50? Soothe your soul with the Tofu Hot Pot, chock full o' steaming fresh vegetables and firm chunks of tofu. Or the pork- and veggie-filled dumplings, or the green onion pancakes, or just about anything on their menu. Top off with a fortune cookie and you're set till your next craving. \$

continued on next page

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A Taste of Houston
Tapas-style reviews
(continued from page 49)

Latina Café
1972 Fairview
713/521-2611

An authentic repository of soul-satisfying Cuban cooking. Dishing out plantains of two varieties, beans in three colors (black, red, and green), exquisite seafood creoles, ropa vieja (literally "old clothes" because that's what this shredded beef looks like), Latina Café has been a Montrose standby for forever, it seems. Their intimate non-fussy decor has the feel of Continental sophistication to me, an informal place where one can just relax with old friends over a glass of wine or a demi-tasse of Cuban coffee, in a cup as small as a baby's fist, yet as strong as a gym rat, and as dark as top soil. \$

Lobo Bookshop & Café
3939 Montrose
713/522-5156

A tasty little neighborhood sandwich shop/bookstore for the adult in everyone. The pristine sandwich menu features tasty turkey, chicken, and roast beef sandwiches—simple, fresh, and filling. Add chips, a drink, and a touch of voyeurism and you've got a sensual meal. Bring a friend or a good book, or peruse the store for some interesting reading. If anything, it will whet your appetite. And their desserts won the Gayest & Greatest readers' poll in 2000. \$

Mings
2703 Montrose
713/529-7888

The friendly fast-food Chinese eatery in the heart of the Montrose. Serving up stir-fries, crispy green beans, and killer egg rolls, Ming's has taken on landmark status in only four years as a late-night chopstick feast on their patio under the stars has become an essential part of the Montrose repertoire. Their staff always cheerful and welcoming, Ming's has endeared itself to the community—and many a GLBT organization has benefited from their donations.

Niko Niko's
2520 Montrose
713/528-1308

Dishes up authentic Greek food with Kalamata olives as salty as they get. Caters as much to vegetarians as meat lovers. Grab a chicken and spinach pita on the go or chat outdoors over a plate of humus. Bring your own ambiance—everything's plastic except the food. \$

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NEW **Ragin' Cajun**
4302 Richmond
713/623-6321
9600 Westheimer (at Gessner)
832/251-7171

Houston's authentic source of crawfish, red beans and rice, and anything you'd eat with tabasco. We love their fried oysters. This family business (Frank Messina and Luke Mandola) is busy just about anytime they're open. And now, after more than 20 years as a Houston institution at their atmospheric Richmond location, they opened a new restaurant in earlier this year.

Riva's Italian Restaurant
1117 Missouri St. (Montrose)
713-529-3450

In one of the most verdant and restful eatery atmospheres we know of, the brothers Silboey bring you Italian cuisine so unusually well seasoned you'll notice the pasta as well as the sauce. The simple dinner salad is alive with fresh vegetables and a tangy vinaigrette and a pleasant forecast of things to come. These men know herbs, and their fish dishes will make seafood converts out of diehard carnivores. And pastry chef Pierre kneads up some tasty little numbers. \$\$

Sonoma
1415 California St.
713/522-7066

Wildly eclectic menu features steak pasta, Osso Bucco, and crispy crab cakes (heavy crab with minimal cake), bursting with fun and flavor. Very reasonable, and a great party atmosphere. For their Sunday brunch and afternoon T-Dance (on their patio, with its exhilarating wide-open view of downtown), owner Jay Allen makes the ultimate host. \$\$

Ziggy's Healthy Grill
2320 W. Alabama
713/527-8588


Ziggy's was always healthy and wholesome, but now that the three new owners are doctors, you know you're in for a guiltless gourmet experience. Although the decor is still a bit on the utilitarian side, we seek out Ziggy's when we don't feel like being embarrassed about our urge to eat healthy—you can even ask to see their binders with the nutritional contents of all their dishes. Both healthy and yummy, they offer comfort food like lean meatloaf, sweet yam fries, and pecan acorn squash; we especially love Ziggy's baked veggie sandwich and buffalo burger. They've all sorts of wild game burgers (known for being way lower in fat than regular cow beef)—even such exotica as ostrich, antelope, caribou, or kangaroo! Their latest offering is the Tuesday happy hour, with fresh blueberry margaritas and discounted appetizers. \$

The cost guide reflects the average cost of dinner with one drink and tip. Deduct about 25 percent for average lunch prices.

\$	\$15 and below (inexpensive)
\$\$	\$16 to \$30 (moderate)
\$\$\$	\$31 to \$50 (expensive)
\$\$\$\$	\$51 or more (very expensive)

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How appropriate that Armistead Maupin is part of our Gayest & Greatest issue—he's way Gay, what with being extremely open and honest about his sexuality, and he rates Great, what with being a best-selling author and a damned good writer. Maupin is probably best known for his *Tales of the City* series of books, which produced five best-selling books and two wildly popular television mini-series, with a third on the way. *Tales of the City* and *More Tales of the City* interwove gays with straights with bisexuals with transgenders with AIDS with dope with sex. If you haven't read them, take some time to do so—they were ahead of their times and are still considered controversial. If reading doesn't flip your wig, rent the two videos, which are true to Maupin's originals. And now available for your reading pleasure is Maupin's newest piece of fiction, *The Night Listener*. (True Maupin die-hards have been listening to a "radio serialization" version of the novel read by the author on Salon.com from Sept. 5 to Sept. 29, an Internet first—"like having Uncle Armistead read to you every night before bedtime," Maupin describes it.) Meanwhile, sit back and enjoy these nonfiction tales.

OutSmart: Hi, this is Blase.

Armistead Maupin: Hi, Blase, it's Armistead Maupin.

How are you doing?

I'm fine, how are you after all these years?

Well, I'm fine. The last time we talked was 1985.

Back when you were with *TWT*, right?

That's right... So, I read your book [*The Night Listener*]. It's wonderful. It's been so long since your last one. What took you so long?

Well, I wrote and produced two mini-series. I was actively involved in *Tales of the City* and *More Tales of the City*. I was there on the set...

That's why they were so good.

Thank you, I believe that, too [laughs]. It's important for the writer for any property to remain close to the material, to see it survive. Especially something this personal. It would be so easy to get it wrong culturally. So I've been present for that, and I spent about a year and a half adapting my last novel, *Maybe the Moon*, as a feature film and have yet to find a producer. There's been a fair amount to occupy me and a story that was very slow in coming. I had the general mystery outlined in my head for a long time, but I was lacking an additional dramatic element which life managed to provide for me when

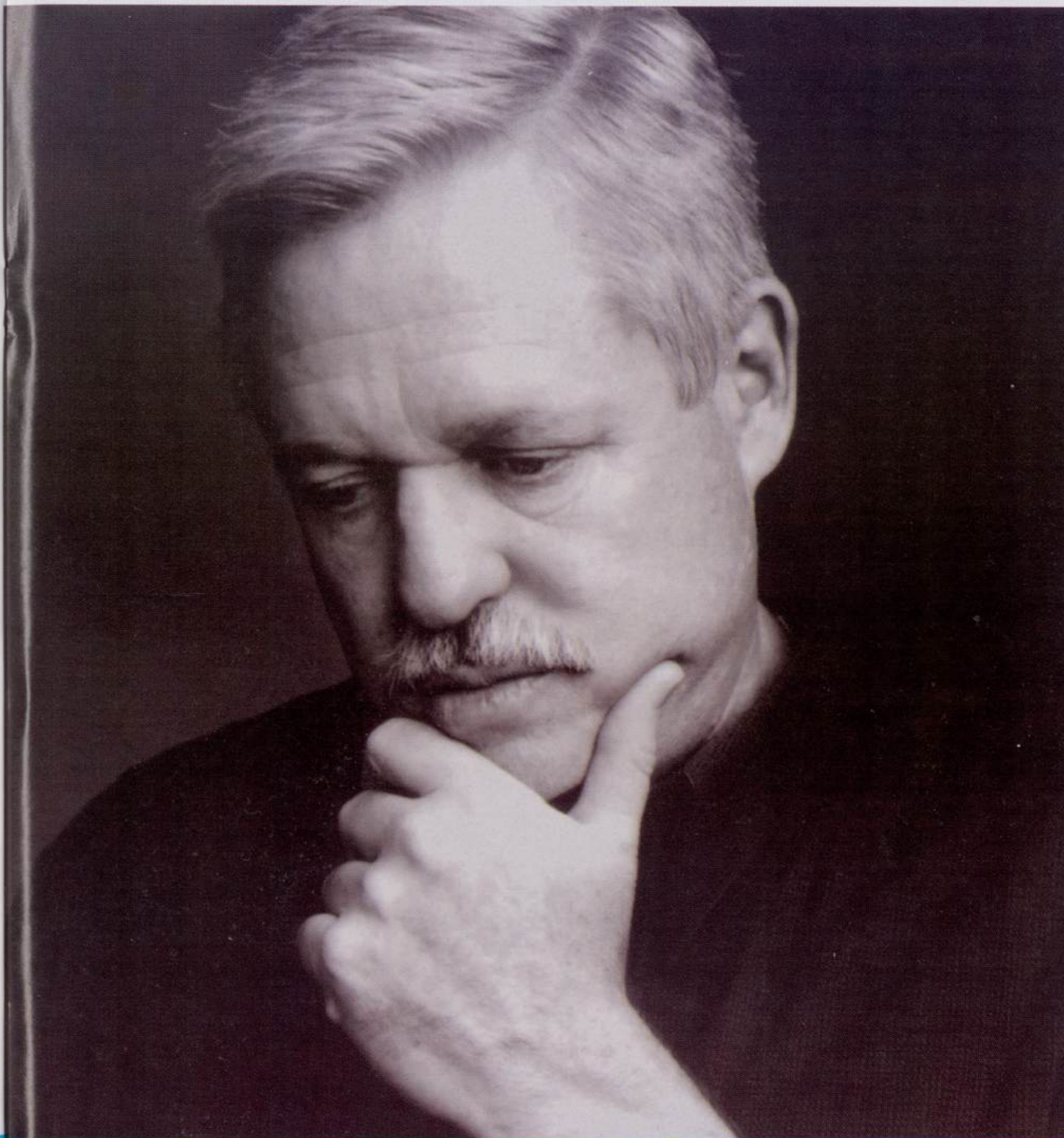
Jerry and I broke up four years ago. I realized I could weave the experience of that into this little mystery.

What percentage of the book is...

True? [Laughs] It's *fiction*, Blase. Writers write from every aspect of their own lives and weave it together. In some ways it's not true at all, so I won't even go down that road with you. I'd like to think it's all emotionally true. I tried to stay very close to my feelings when I wrote that novel and expose them, warts and all. I made myself a promise to be as honest as possible even when it was unattractive.

I actually started reading it at around

continued on p. 86



ANNIE LIEBOVITZ

Honest Talk With the Outspoken Maupin

Author Armistead Maupin shoots more than the breeze with OutSmart's Blase DiStefano

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Your indispensable low-down on the who, what, where
of Houston's gay and lesbian community

Mirror mirror on the wall,
who's the gayest and greatest of them all?

Oh my God, did I just get stamped by
3,000 drag queens in Carmen Miranda outfits?
Just kidding. But here we present for your pleasure
OutSmart's fourth annual roundup of all that
we hold most dear in our fabulous Houston
queer community. We polled you wonderful readers,
plus added in a few more special choices of our own.

Enjoy!

Contributing writers are Clarence Bagby, Caroline Burum, Alan Davidson, Blase DiStefano, Jeffrey Downs, Joy Fajardo, Steven Foster, Shane Hennessey, Ed Marx, D.L.Murphy, David Parnell, Lilly Roddy, Ann Walton Sieber, Chris Sill, Sandy Stutz, Pete Szatmary, Craig Thistleton, and Scooter Workinger.

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SHANNON R. SCHRADER, MD

PENNYE M. ROHDE, PAC

Divine Dining

Readers' Choice

Best New Restaurant: Sonoma
(runner-up: Barnaby's)

In the beige mosaic tile lobby, the only clue you have to what goes on just above your head is a curvy, swervy, translucent paper and pink-lit sculpture-chandelier. But once you take the stairs, passing rusty glowing glass sconces, you discover the smash of style the lobby only hinted at—the very thing that has made Sonoma a fascinating, sexy, delicious haute cuisine hybrid—a new millennium supper club. Dim lights, arresting artwork, circle booths, and see-me center tables are intriguingly bookended by the city glow from an enormous deck outside and the spotlights of a grand stage within. Sonoma boasts some of the best service in the city (we're gonna miss Julie more than we can say), and tastiest, savviest fare served in romantic, almost glamorous surroundings.

The portabello mushroom nachos are the stuff of miraculous legend and the champagne risotto chicken is a rich, indulgent masterpiece. Cocktails are served 1920s stiff, the food sublimely served and prepared, and Sonoma (on California, get it?) features one of the best wine lists in the city. The only beef? The music. From big bad jazz combos to (con)fusion guitarists, Sonoma's stage is begging for the perfect accompaniment to the impeccable everything else—one sensual chanteuse and her key-fondling piano man, cooing about the lush life, stormy weather, and the one that got away. Deservedly, Sonoma takes the Best New Restaurant title. (Steven Foster)

Queerest Curse: That Place On Alabama

Museum. That South American place. Podmore's. That new place. And a few other poor unfortunates who decided to make the charming two-story villa on Alabama across from the Menil and catty-corner from the Houston Center for Photography,

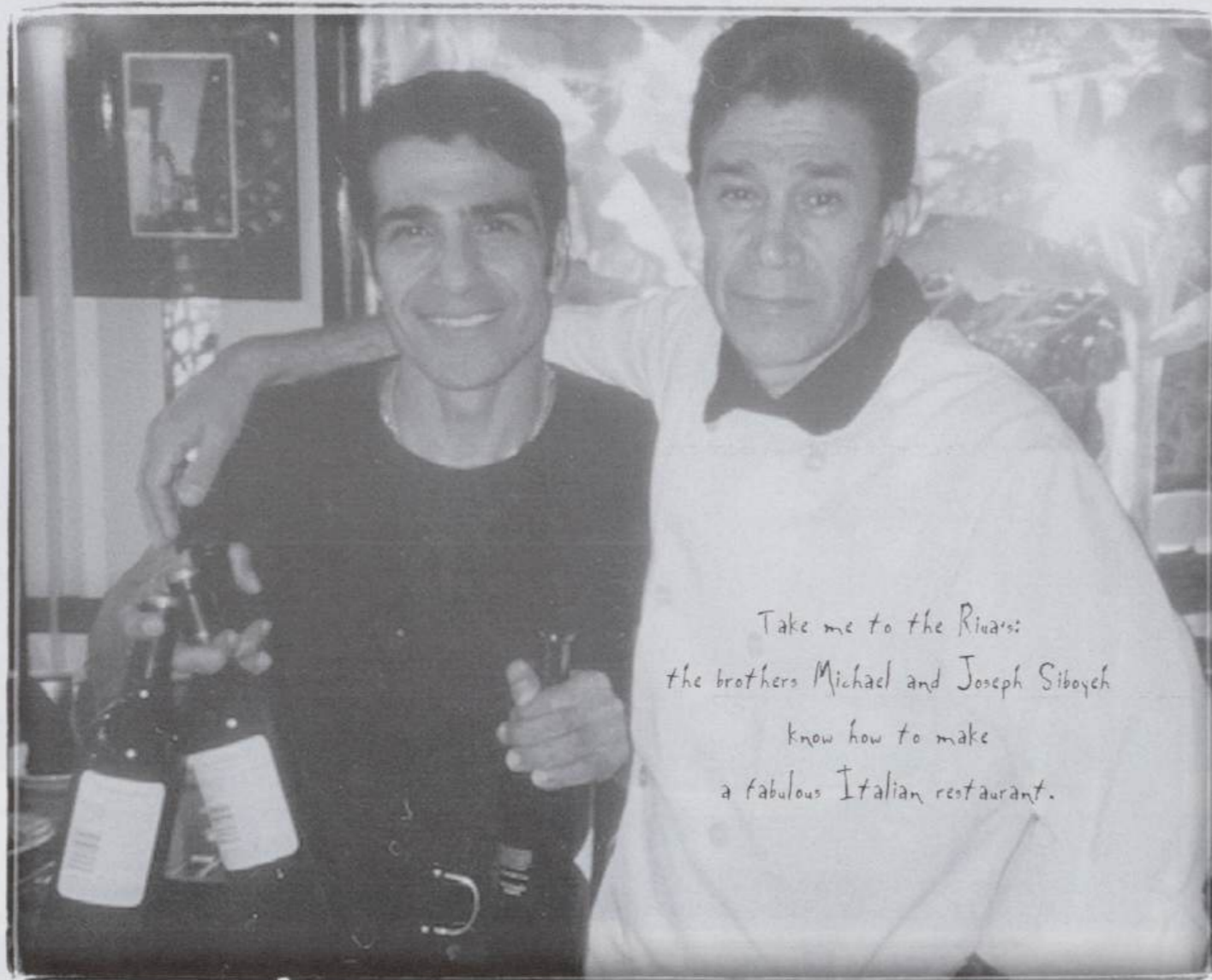
this arty location is the Blair Witch coven HQ of Houston. Museum was an arty homo-friendly hideaway with killer cocktails and delicious dining. Its fate? DOA after a year. South American bistro? You'd think the Contras had attacked and taken no prisoners. Podmore's was horrendous, so that one was kind of expected. But what of the others? Will any intrepid toque dare to take this space and whip up a recipe that will break the curse? Somebody get the rainbow flag and the crucifix and start hailing Mary, Mary, because this place needs an exorcism worse than Trent Lott needs a heart transplant. (SF)

Most Missed: Toopees

Boo-hoo. Sob, sob. This one really hurt. And, worse, for most of this year, on the way to Cactus to rent the latest hip vid, or stopping nearby at the ever-cool Alabama Ice House for a cold one, we were forced to drive by the tombstone location and miss the good thing that we had. (At least now



A toast to the
best new restaurant:
Kip Granberg of Sonoma.



Take me to the Rivas:
the brothers Michael and Joseph Siboyeh
know how to make
a fabulous Italian restaurant.

there's another restaurant in the building.) From the food to the friendship, losing Toopees was like losing a limb. (SF)

Readers' Choice
Best Vietnamese: Mai's
(runners-up: Kim Son, Mo Mong)

Despite the urban legendary golden rule (NEVER look in the kitchen when the doors swing open), Mai's has maintained its downtown charm and satisfying menu. While lunch is full of the usual casual suits and ties, it is the later, nocturnal hours where Mai's exudes her discreet urban seduction. Its diner-bright light is an Edward Hopper-esque beacon in downtown's darker edges and, once you step inside, you're greeted with a pleasant audio mix of whispered and guffawed conversation, the energetic hustle of efficient servers, and an intoxicating aroma of some

of the best Vietnamese cuisine this side of the homeland. Oh, Mai, indeed. (SF)

Readers' Choice
Best Italian: Riva's
(runners-up: Michaelangelo's, Macaroni Grill, Mia Bella, Vincent's)

Under the gracious ownership of Michael and Joseph Siboyeh, Riva's has been staunchly supporting the gay community since they opened at this location. And supporting them back is nothing but a treat: The atmosphere is calming, the waiters very Montrose, the food is fresh and wonderful, and the sweet creations by pasty chef Pierre-Yves Lumbroso are delectable. I think of Riva's as a refreshing green plant, or an underwater boat—any image that conveys peace and healthy nurturing. Riva's is where I go when Baba Yega or Barnaby's just seem too hectic, I

want more of a tête-à-tête. I walk in the door and they know to start grilling me their fat tasty salmon ringed in roasted veggies. I sit by the huge shady plate-glass windows, fascinating companion across from me, wine glass in hand...all is well again. (Ann Walton Sieber)

Readers' Choice
Best Mexican: Cafe Adobe
(runners-up: La Mexicana, Ninfa's, Pappasito's)

This, the Cozumel of Queso Cuisine, is truly the place on HoMonday, where it's hard to tell which is more gloriously presented (the meals or the men); more potent (the margaritas or the men); or louder (the lisping crowd or the clothes they wear). No matter, this Mexican mecca is still king for south-of-the-border comfort food that is always consistent and never too challenging on the tastebuds. (SF)

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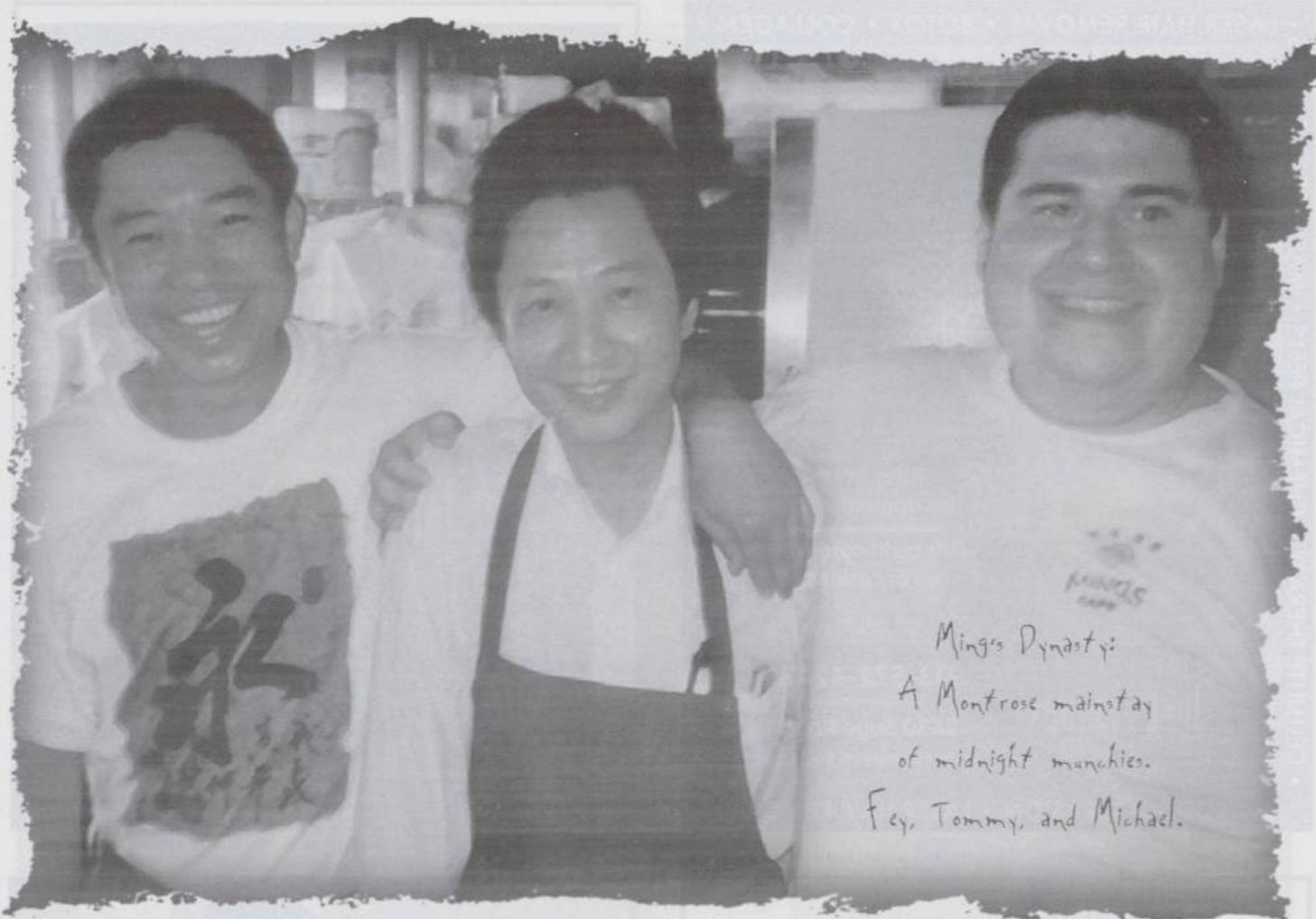
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Ming's Dynasty:
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of midnight munchies.
Fey, Tommy, and Michael.

Readers' Choice

Best Chinese: Ming's Cafe
(runners-up: Hunan Dragon, Kam's)

Serving up stir-fries, crispy green beans, and killer egg rolls, Ming's has taken on landmark status in only four years: The late-night chopstick feast on their patio under the stars has become an essential part of the Montrose repertoire. Their staff always cheerful and welcoming, Ming's has endeared itself to the community—and many a GLBT organization has benefited from their donations. Located within a fortune cookie's throw of Montrose and Westheimer, the Ming's marquee provides a sometimes solemn, often cheeky commentary on Montrose life. 2703 Montrose, 713/529-7888 (AWS)

Readers' Choice

Best Greek: Niko Niko's

Serving good hearty Greek food since 1977, Niko Niko's is the crossroads of Montrose, where you can see just about everybody pass through on a Saturday night, from Urban Animals, to hungry

Pacific Streeters, to white-haired Unitarians. As hearty as Zorba the Greek, every item in the house is full of flavor, from the mousaka to the souvlaki. (AWS)

Readers' Choice

Best Cajun: Ragin' Cajun

It's Houston's authentic source of crawfish, red beans and rice, and everything you'd eat with Tabasco for more than 20 years. The atmosphere is so thick here, you could trick yourself that you'd just stepped in from the wharf, and they're gay-friendly to boot. When I asked where owners Frank Messina and Luke Mandola learned to cook Cajun, the answer I received was, "From their mommas." 4302 Richmond, 713/623-6321. (AWS)

Readers' Choice

Best Thai: Thai Spice

(runners-up: Bangkok Palace, Thai Pepper, Nit Noi)

Thai Spice's serene second-story dining room and congenial balcony tables makes for a most ambient atmosphere. Located in

a former bank building on the outskirts of the Village's sprawl, all the food at Thai Spice tastes fresh and intriguing, from the grilled tenderloin salad in ginger-lime sauce to the Pho Take seafood stew. (AWS)

Best Sushi: Cafe Japon

Offers every seaweed, rice, seafood combo in your heart's desire, and they can all be requested in user-friendly terms, so no butchering of the Japanese language is necessary. Also, almost the entire restaurant is one big sushi bar, so there is no mistaking what is good here. (Joy Fajardo)

Readers' Choice

Best Indian: Bombay Palace

When you're in the mood for Houston's best sag paneer in an elegant setting, Bombay Palace is the place to go. The food is rich and redolent, the waiters courteous and elegant, the lights dim, the furnishings sumptuous and refined. The lunch buffet is a treat as well. However, look sharp, because of the encroach of the new Central Market, Bombay Palace is moving to 4100

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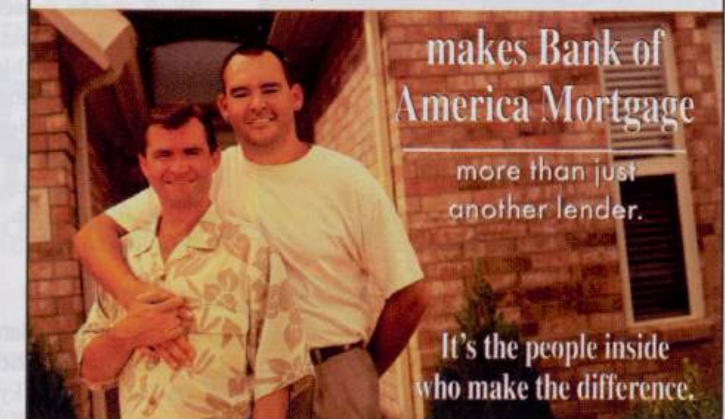
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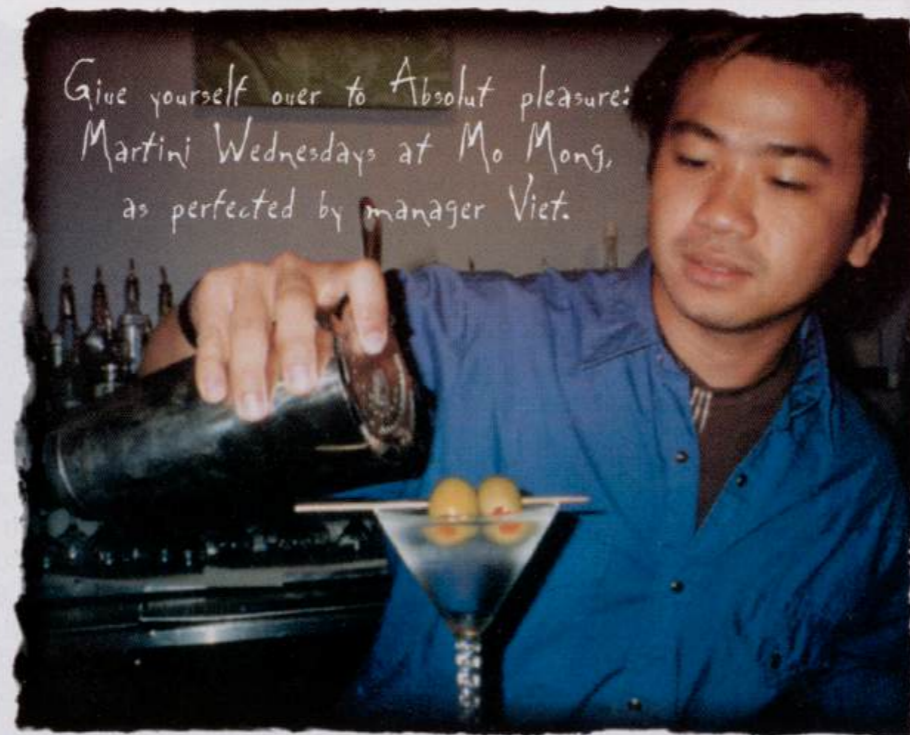


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Westheimer, across the street from their longtime location. (AWS)

Readers' Choice

Best Vegetarian: A Moveable Feast
(runners-up: **Baba Yega, Hobbit Cafe, Souper Salad**)

With a good variety to choose from and food that is consistently sparkling with freshness, Moveable Feast's vegetarian cafeteria-style lunch (you pay by the pound) is the easiest and most delicious way to satisfy that healthy urge. Eat in their sunny dining area, the sky blue booths filled with interesting healthy-looking folks. (AWS)

Readers' Choice

Best Cheap Eats: Barnaby's
(runners-up: **La Jalliscience, Chef's Cafe**)

It's fast, it's funky, and it spans salmon to spaghetti (well, they call it Whole Wheat Pasta with Marinara, but we know the truth). Go visit Cuba, Jentry Nicole, and the gang...where else can you get food with an attitude? There are even two locations, now that the Shepherd store is open. (However, purists know that the Fairview location is the only true Barnaby's.) (Shane Hennessey)

Best Vegetarian You Might Not Know About: Quan Yin

Quan Yin is located at the corner of

Bellaire and Wilcrest just outside the beltway. It is 100-percent vegetarian. They use no animal products whatsoever. And they have a wonderfully extensive menu of Chinese and Vietnamese choices. If you are looking for your favorite without the meat, they have it. One of the fun things is that the menu has pictures of what your food will look like. They have great lunch specials, close at 9 and are not open on Mondays. For a real treat, give them a try. (Lilly Roddy)

Readers' Choice

Best Swanky High-end Establishment: Café Annie

(runners-up: **Tony's, Mark's**)

When you want the very best, Café Annie delivers in every way. Out-of-this-world food (each dish is a work of art), the city's best wine list, and the impeccable service all add up to make this Houston's finest dining experience. Under the ingenious palate of master chef Robert Del Grande, Café Annie was named in the top three fine dining rooms in America last year. Houston's gay community knows a good thing when they taste it. (Chris Sill)

Best 24-hour Restaurant: House of Pies

When it is fondly referred to as "House of Guys," there is no other place for a gay person to nurse her or his impending hangover. It is the best place to network,

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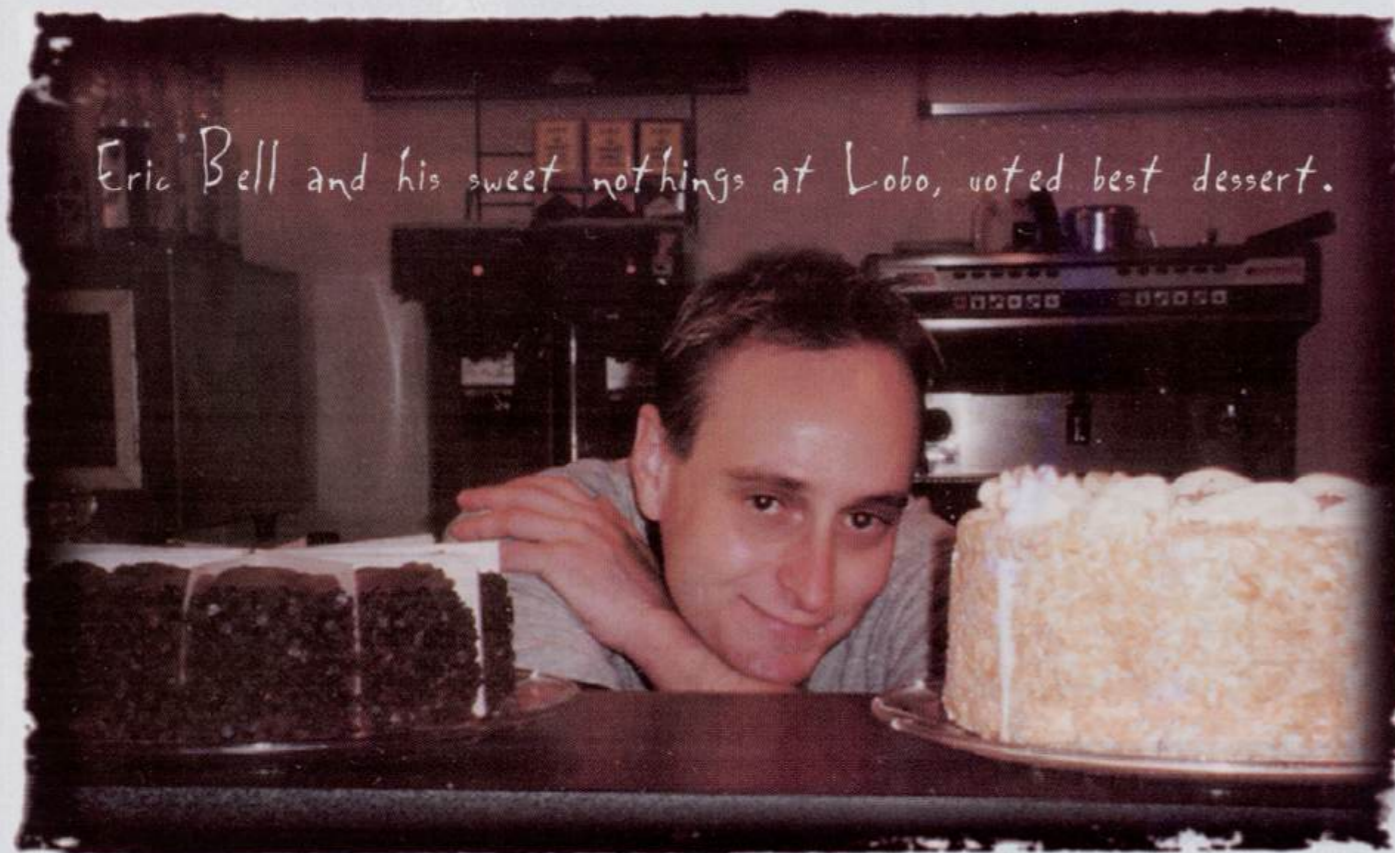


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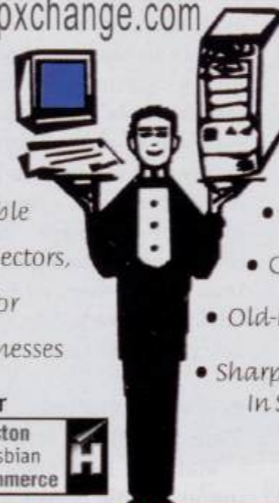
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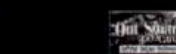
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because if you stay long enough to smoke a cigarette, you might catch the entire gay community pass through on a weekend night. Also, the waitstaff is ever-so-friendly, knows almost everyone by name...and is unshockable. There is always service with a smile even at 3 a.m. (JF)

Readers' Choice

Best Coffee: Starbucks
(runners-up: Lobo, Diederich)

I don't know anything about Starbucks's decaf mochas with a twist of whatever, but I do know that Starbucks (specifically the one on Montrose at Hawthorne) has one helluva good iced coffee. It taste like real coffee and is as strong as the odor of a person who doesn't use deodorant in Houston's heat...uh, maybe that's not such a good analogy. Let's just say that this java house, with a slew of gay clerks, is obviously gay-friendly, and I never fail to see gay clientele waiting in line for their buzz of the day. P.S.: Buy coffee for the whole office and watch the atmosphere change from gloomy to gay. (Blase DiStefano)

Best People Watching: Cafe Brazil

With a relaxed atmosphere and live music every night, all sorts of people come here for a watering hole. Students, musicians, artists—all come to camp with their laptops and books and to soak up the vibes for inspiration and seek good conversation. (JF)

Readers' Choice

Best Dessert: Lobo
(runners-up: Empire Cafe, Crossroads)

OK, readers, you're talking about the cakes and the pies, right? You are, right? Riiiiiiight. (SF)

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Night Life

Best Martini: Mo Mong

Escape the stress of the workday by stepping into the cool and relaxing ambiance of Mo Mong. On Wednesday evenings you're bound to make new friends in the cozy bar area where you'll find a mixture of young to middle-aged professionals sipping half-priced martinis. Add one of nine different flavors to your vodka and upgrade to Mo Mong's "famous Absolut-infused martinis." Charming manager Viet says, "Mo Mong creates a comfortable atmosphere for gay people that allows them to be themselves." Our advice: Upgrade the martini and bring a designated driver. (CS)

Best Vodka Martini:

Made by **Matthew Remington** at **Pacific Street**
 Matthew Remington has been bartending at Pacific Street since 1994. You can find him at the downstairs bar by the door to the patio. He is one of the friendliest, most engaging (and handsome!) bartenders in town. His skillfully-made vodka martinis are a guilty pleasure worth pursuing. So the next time you're at PS to dance and make merry, add a touch of sophistication by treating yourself to the greatest vodka martini in Montrose! (Jeffrey Downs)

Best Margarita: El Tiempo

Fresh lime juice, quality tequila, and the perfect frozen consistency are of the utmost importance when it comes to great margaritas. El Tiempo supplies all three with consistently great results in their standard frozen margaritas. While other cantinas may be more popular, they don't deliver the frozen goods on a regular basis. No melted ritas or sweet and sour mixes here! With locations at both 3130 Richmond and 502 Main, El Tiempo serves them up right...á la natural. (CS)

Readers' Choice

Best Lesbian Bar: Club Rainbow
 (runners-up: **Chances**, **The New Barn**)

Mix pumping dance music with a festive gay and straight clientele, throw in a sexy female dancer or two in an intimate club environment, and you have a recipe for the fun we call Club Rainbow. Pretty girls are definitely not in short supply here. Owner Alexis Wasifuddin raises the adrenaline by prowling the bar, mike in hand, daring patrons to take body shots off a provocative dancer. This bar is also cleaner and less smoky than most. (Sandy Stutz)



Rich's beyond compares: Jerry, Gary, Stacy, Phil, Howie and Steve have all been at the gayest & greatest dance club for over two hundred years! Or so it seems...

Best Lesbian Bar, Wednesday Night: Bocado's

Besides being one of the few places that does not count on a jukebox as the sole source of music, Bocado's is an upscale and stylish place to catch a few drinks after work and dance off some steam. Always hopping on a Wednesday night, besides a little too much Latin music, the DJ always rocks the house with a great dance selection. The crowd is polished and professional, and the scenery, wink, wink, ain't too bad. (JF)

Readers' Choice

Best Drag Bar: EJ's
 (runners-up: **Cousins**, **Rascals**)

Drag seems to be a somewhat political-ly incorrect term these days. Let's just say the best female impersonators can be seen one block north of Westheimer on Ralph Street. EJ's, a popular neighborhood bar, is the perfect venue for performers. Newly remodeled, it still maintains its intimacy between stage and audience. A fun spot to watch new talent emerge or view seasoned pros pick up fistfuls of ones. (Craig Thistleton)

Readers' Choice

Best Dance Club: Rich's
 (runners-up: **Pacific Street**, **Inergy**)

For over 20 years faithful denizens of the nightlife have turned to Rich's for the best in Houston night clubbing. Trendy, edgy, and always good for some late-night exploration, Rich's has never failed to live up to its reputation of having its fin-

ger placed firmly on the pulse of what's hip, cool, and classy. (David Parnell)

Readers' Choice

Best Leather Bar: Ripcord
 (runner-up: **Venture II**)

Every night of the week you can find men in Levi's, leather, or uniform. Monday night even gets the men down to their boxers for happy-hour prices. Friday and Saturday nights, you can take in the leather aroma till 4 a.m. The garden patio is always popular, and the local leather clubs guestbartend outside on Saturday nights. Should you forget to strap on your cod piece, you can pick up some new leather and accessories in the shop located inside the main bar. (Scooter Workinger)

Readers' Choice

Best straight bar: Prague
 (runners-up: **City Streets**, **Roxy**, **Griff's**, **Tonic**)

Once you get past the velvet rope, you're in for a treat. The "in" gay crowd has obviously discovered this trendy downtown club. Prague is almost as serious about its partying as any gay club could be, which adds to the gay-friendly environment. Only that infamous staircase that severely constricts the flow of the dress-to-impress crowd flaws the gorgeous interior. Advice on getting in: dress up and bring all your straight girlfriends with you. (CS)

Best Cigar Bar: Sambucca's

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in by a wine colored velvet drape and welcomes the outcast with a well stocked humidior, leather couches, TVs, a bar, and checkerboard walls. The place for smokers to hang out and catch the jazz. (JF)

Readers' Choice

Best after hours: Club Some
(runners-up: **Club Nsomnia, Ripcord**)

It's a Houston institution. A place where creatures of the night gather to dance till the sun comes up . . . and then some. Other after-hours clubs have come and gone but Some continues to attract the who's who of clubbing with its legendary music and DJs. From rave kids to drag queens, this late night favorite is truly one of Houston's best melting pots. Hours: Wed.-Sun., 1 am.-dawn. (CS)

Best Community Biz

Gayest & Greatest Music: Soundwaves

"Blockbuster Music is now Warehouse Music," the urban demo-friendly voice coos. "Oh, shut up, corporate crap," we reply. If we're not downloading Napster, we're riding Waves. This icon of musical independence has successfully stayed true to its one-note marketing tune—that one note being F(*#@ing)-sharp. From humble beginnings to a hugely successful regional chain, this gang of stores continues to supply the hottest tunes at the hippest prices. In-store signings (ground zero for the Pumpkins' last smash), magical murals (like local anime cult-fave

ADV), thrilling threads (the place to go for BC Ethic and bowler-chic), superb surf stuff, blindingly cool eyewear, tasty time-pieces, and, oh, yeah, CDs for cheap—there is no other music land than Soundwaves. (SF)

Best Place to Frame k.d. lang or Nathan Lane or . . . : Hollywood Frame Gallery

OK, so the name makes it sound like it's a gallery of frames...which is not totally off the mark. It's just that in the frames are movie posters, lobby cards, and auto-graphed stills, which are available for purchase. Also, if you want your poster or photograph professionally framed, the gay-friendly owners, Kathleen and Rick, can do it exquisitely. Oh, you can peruse through unframed movie posters and photos, also available for purchase. They're located at 2431 Bissonnet, 713/952-8885. (BD)

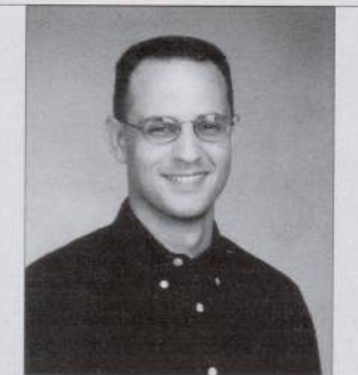
Readers' Choice

Best antique store: River Oaks Antiques
(runners-up: **Rosenkavalier, Texas Junk Shop, Heights Antiques**)

Roger Howard got into the antique business some 20-plus years ago, when he inherited a house in Kansas and all its contents, including a lot of glassware. When he sold the items, he was "shocked" at the prices paid, he says in his dry way, and an antique dealer was born. Roger opened the River Oaks Antique Center two years ago (in the unlikely location of a former Academy surplus store), and since then has held fundraisers for Annise Parker and several community organizations. (C. Bagby)

Gayest Gallery in the Universe: Hyde Park Gallery

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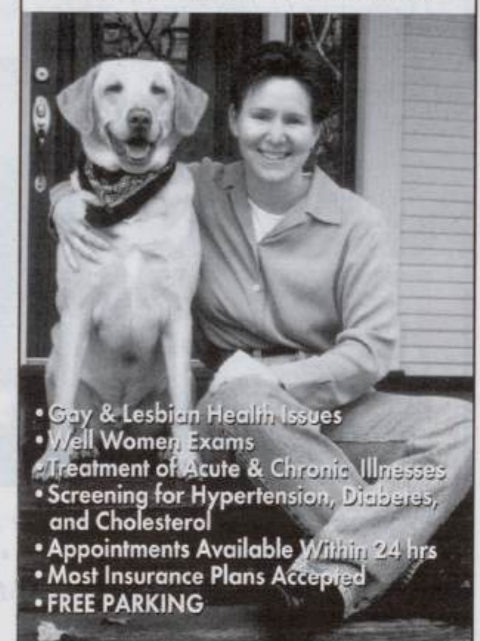
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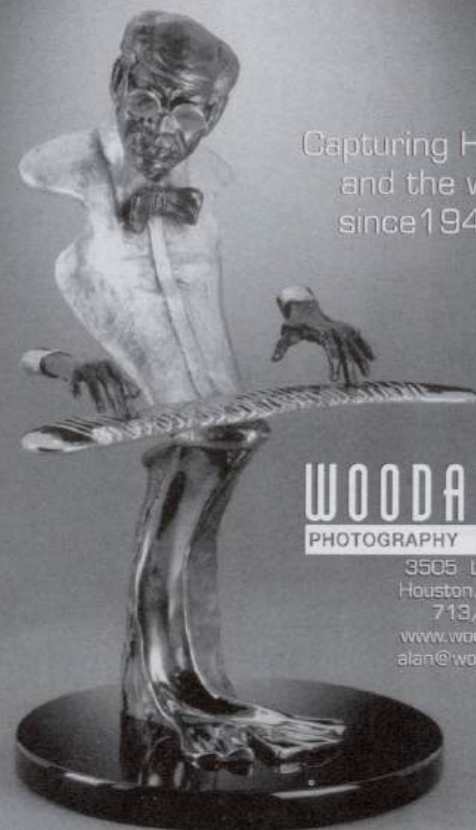
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HARDWARE STORE SQUARE-OFF

By D.L. Murphy

• **Best Hardware Store (if you know what you're doing): Home Depot, North Loop**

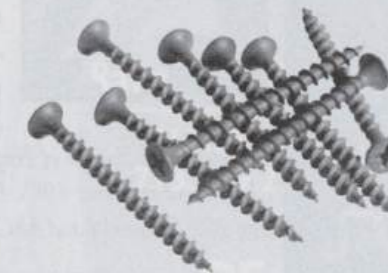
This store features a wide selection, low prices, and knowledgeable personnel. Also, they don't sling the 'tude you get at the 610 and Fourness store (see below).

• **Best Hardware Store (if you don't know what you're doing): Southland Hardware**

A real, live, old-fashioned hardware store. You either like what they have or go elsewhere. However, if you're clueless, or even semi-clueless, the advice you get is well worth the slightly higher prices and limited selection.

• **Best Hardware Store (to cruise in): Homo, oops, the Home Depot at 610 and Fourness.**

If you're femme, stand there and look clueless. If you're butch, wander around and watch out for the dazed-looking sisters. Just remember, at least half of them know more than you do, they just seem to be helpless. Sorry, boys, I just really don't want to know about you and hardware.



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Hyde Park Gallery is delightfully gay. Owner Larry Iola has made this venue a must-see for both art fanciers and supporters of local color. This cozy two-story regularly hosts a surprising assortment of artistic stylings in the front two rooms. In the back, Larry's own one-of-a-kind masks compete for attention with costumed Ken (wannabe) dolls. Who could resist these pint-sized honeys? Hyde Park Gallery, 711 Hyde Park, 713/526-2744. (SS)

Best Convenience Store: Hollywood

The Hollywood convenience store on the corner of Hyde Park and Montrose is more than a place to stop for cigarettes or a soda. For over 10 years it has been a business that openly encourages its gay clientele. Gay with capital "G," it offers one of the best selections of Pride jewelry and stickers I have seen so far, and carries numerous gay publications. You may also find a wide range of imported tobacco products, if your tastes lean to the exotic. With all the changes going on in Montrose right now, it's an affirming experience to pop in and see the gay community so appreciated. (JD)

Best Cruising, Virginia Woolf-style: Book Stop

Forget your smoky bar Cruising for potential mates is best done from the balcony of the Book Stop's coffee shop. The aerial view makes it easy to spot cuties that can actually (a) read (always a good sign) and (b) share your interests. For success, target your prey, set down your drink, and nonchalantly pick up a similar topic book while moving into her/his section. "I've read that book," or "Is that one any good?" spoken softly with a smile usually works. (SS)

Best Resale: Buffalo Exchange

It's thrift-store finds without having to waste time rummaging through mile-long racks of lavender-colored tights. The employees are

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entrusted fashion experts who filter through incoming clothes and only display what they think is up to season. They rarely go wrong: You can tell who works there when every customer is likely to comment on their outfit of the day with, "That is so neat!" (JF)

Best Website for a Nonexistent Organization: www.neosoft.com/~meeker
 "The Meeker Museum is a nonexistent,

nonprofit organization dedicated to the pursuit of inner peace through movie stars" or so reads the first line of this site, which began as a tribute to B-movie actor Ralph Meeker and then somehow evolved into a tribute to dozens of other actors and trends you've somehow managed to neglect. Click on "inner peace" (at your own risk) and you may find the Creature from the Black Lagoon, or a salute to Steve Reeves, or, God

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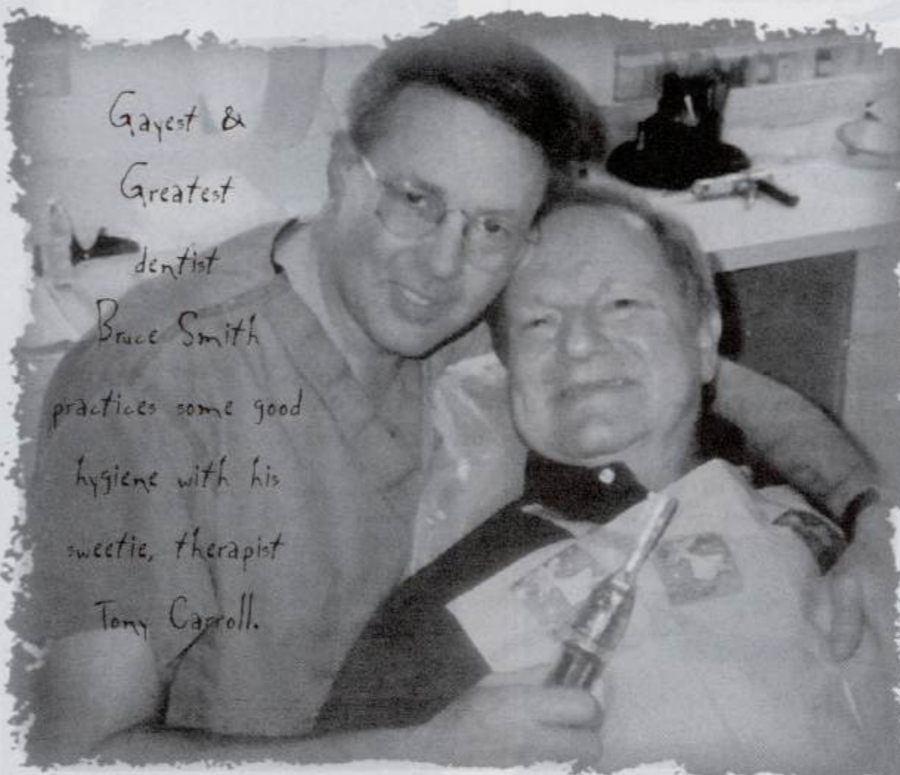
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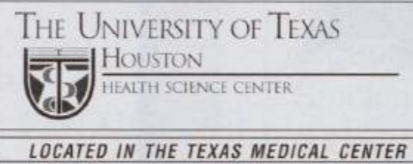
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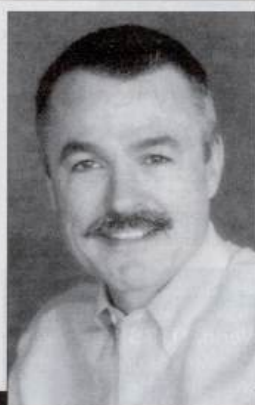
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Clockwise:
Francisco, Annise
and Grant.



**Readers' Choice
Favorite Activist: Francisco Sanchez**
(runners-up: Ray Hill, Annise Parker)

**Readers' Choice
Ultimate Gay Socialite: Grant Martin**
(runners-up: Scott Crowl, Janine Brunjes)

Favorites:

Gayest & Greatest



**Readers' Choice
Pinkest Politician: Annise Parker**
(runners-up: Barney Frank, Dalia Stokes)

**Readers' Choice
Best Place to Volunteer: AFH, AssistHers, BeringOmega**
(runners-up: Lesbian & Gay Community Center, H.A.T.C.H.)



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help us, the "Wasp Woman." You can then visit the various galleries of the museum, among them: "Peyton Place Revisited"; "Human Sexuality in the 20th Century: What were we thinking?"; "Gun Control: We don't have opinions—we have photos!"; and "The Films of Conway Twitty." If you like movie stars, especially the lesser-known ones, you'll love this site. Informative and well-written with a wonderfully bizarre sense of humor, the site is the work of "curator" Jack (Varsi) Stalnaker. Some of you may remember his 1980s Showbiz column in the now-defunct TWT magazine. Check it out for something really different. (BD)

Readers' Choice

Best Gym: Fitness Exchange
(runners-up: YMCA, Bally's)

Fitness Exchange has been voted best gym since we started the Gayest & Greatest poll four years ago...and no wonder, for this is the Montrose gym. Everyone in the neighborhood goes here, from the serious body sculptors to the queens just in to chat and spectate. Gay-owned and -operated for 23 years, Fitness Exchange offers massive amounts of high-tech equipment and an assortment of classes. (AWS)

Readers' Choice

Best Grocery Store: Kroger
(runners-up: Whole Foods, Randall's)

The place to shop and meet your friends. Kroger has been such a mainstay in the Montrose community, it is hard to imagine shopping elsewhere. I clearly remember one day I was there, standing in line behind a gay couple, a lesbian couple, and two drag queens. And me the TG at the end. I knew I was in my neighborhood. (LR)

Readers' Choice

Best Gay Bookstore: Lobo
(runner-up: Crossroads)

For those who do not thrive on noisy, smoky bar scenes, Lobo on Montrose Boulevard is a wonderful alternative: a friendly neighborhood coffee shop. A staple in the community, Lobo provides a quiet social setting with comfortable easy chairs for enjoying a leisurely coffee or latte, some cake or pastry, and magazine or newspaper browsing. It is great for rendezvousing with friends, both old and new (cruising is permitted). The store offers books, magazines, cards, prints, gifts, and an extensive variety of videotapes. Visit it, you'll love it! (Ed Marx)

Readers' Choice

Best Hairdresser: Will at Supercuts
(runners-up: Robin Duncan, Robinhoods, Jon Hendersen)

Will Fingleman has been cutting hair at Supercuts for the past six years. Even though he's only one of two gay hairstylists over there, he has a huge loyal following who just keep telling their friends, who tell their friends, who tell... Sounds like more gets told than just teasing tips, as the cutting chair conversation ("I don't like to call it gossip," Will says) can get pretty spicy. "You hear a lot of things first before everyone else hears them," he says. "You know, it's such a small community. The grapevine either starts or ends with me." (AWS)

Readers' Choice

Most Supportive of the Community/Best Real Estate Agent: Suzanne Anderson Properties

(Supportive runners-up: Lobo, Gallery Furniture)
Real estate runners-up: Richard Hill, Paul Stanley)

Suzanne Anderson is the winner of two awards this year. As the first real estate agent to advertise to the lesbian and gay community, she was also the first to openly advertise to the transgender

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community. She is a past president of LiB (Lesbians in Business), and has made her offices available as a meeting place for the LGBT community. Her accolades could fill this page. And the most supportive thing that she did was to put her money, business, and reputation right out there. She paved the way so that it was easier for others to follow. (LR)

Our Favorite People

Readers' Choice

Favorite Athlete: Cynthia Cooper
(runners-up: **Sheryl Swoops, Jeff Bagwell**)

I can't think of another athlete—male or female—who has worked harder and accomplished so much as Cynthia Cooper, who retired in glory after leading the Comets to their fourth straight WNBA Championship this season. Coop didn't pick up a basketball until she was 16 years old, played street ball in California, won a scholarship to USC (a reminder that she played in the deep shadows of Cheryl Miller and the McGee sisters), started playing overseas in 1986 for 11 years in Europe, played on two U.S. Olympic teams (winning a gold and a bronze), quiet-

ly entered the WNBA in the inaugural year in 1997, and the rest is history! She is an incredibly gifted athlete and has fought through much adversity to accomplish her awards. Most people would have hung up their shoes and moved into a new career. Coop was motivated by the diversity (on and off the court) and rose to the top. She is a unique role model who has lead many young girls and women to strive for their personal goals in life. Coop has had an incredible impact on the city of Houston, the state of Texas, and the country! You go, GIRL!! I hope Coop and the WNBA office have plans for her to stay in the game at some capacity. She will be missed. (Caroline Burum)

Best Up-&-Coming Activist: Jessica Redman

Jessica Redman is the third transgendered person to be elected to the board of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus. As a radio advertising executive, she was instrumental in getting radio ads pulled when inappropriate remarks were made about Houston City Councilmember Annise Parker several months ago on one of the AM radio stations. She has also done a great job this year chairing the Caucus Fundraising Committee. (C.Bagby)

Best faith activists: Gail and Pat Rickey

Gail and Pat Rickey have worked for sev-

eral years as PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) activists in the Presbyterian Church. They have spearheaded the fund drive for a paid statewide position for More Light Presbyterians, the group working for inclusion of gays and lesbians in the Presbyterian Church. Pat recently spoke about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered youth issues at a Congressional hearing convened by Congress Member Sheila Jackson Lee on mental health issues. (C.Bagby)

Readers' Choice

Favorite Doctor: Dr. Shannon Schrader
(runners-up: **Dr. Patricia Salvato, Dr. Sandra Scurria**)

Devoting the last several years of his life to the medical needs of his patients, Dr. Schrader sets the highest standards for compassionate medical care. Not only is he a great GP, he's a super specialist in HIV, and from friends who've needed prostate exams, I hear the good doctor thankfully has warm hands. You can find him at the Southampton Medical Group off Greenbriar. (SH)

Readers' Choice

Favorite Dentist: Bruce Smith
(runners-up: **Joseph Longoria, Randy Mitchmore**)

When my family dentist retired a few years back, I went to four dentists before I finally found Dr Bruce Smith, and now

exercise as a form of medication and an integral part of rehabilitation from CFS. Exercise programs for people with CFS are not much different than any other comprehensive training program, with cardiovascular, strength, and range-of-motion training. However, CFS patients need to pace themselves, allowing time to build their strength and adapt to the increased demands of exercise. And, as with any other physical condition, CFS patients should consult with their doctor before beginning an exercise program.

People suffering with depression or CFS feel limited by their condition from enjoying the benefits of an active life. But that doesn't have to be the case. As anyone who exercises will tell you, expending energy brings about increased energy in return. The same may hold true for individuals who are plagued by the unexplained symptoms of depression and chronic fatigue syndrome. So, when faced with the onset of the "blues," seek the help of friends, family, or a professional. Above all, be good to yourself and don't neglect exercise.

John-Aaron is a nationally certified personal trainer, member of the International Assoc. of Fitness Professionals, and owner of Muscle Mechanics, a personal fitness training and nutritional guidance facility. He can be reached at Musclemech@aol.com.

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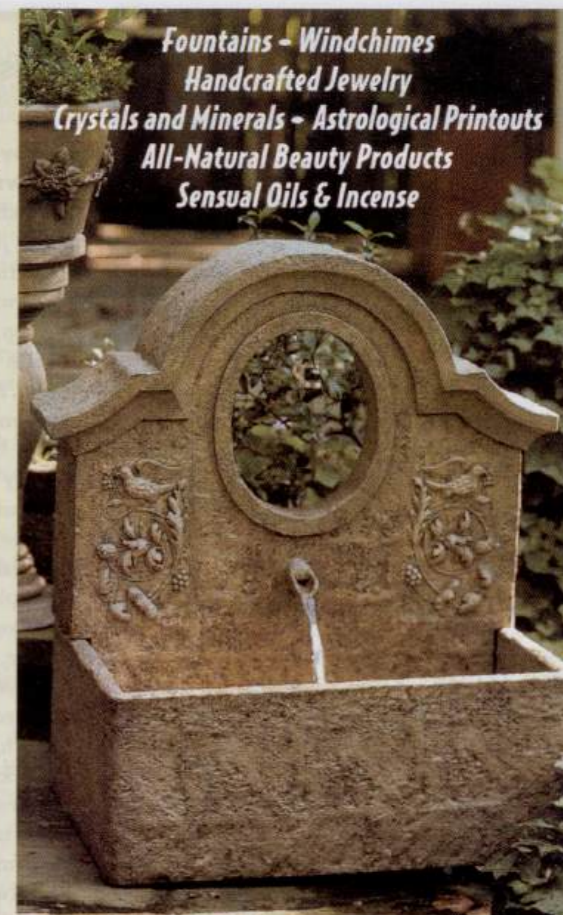
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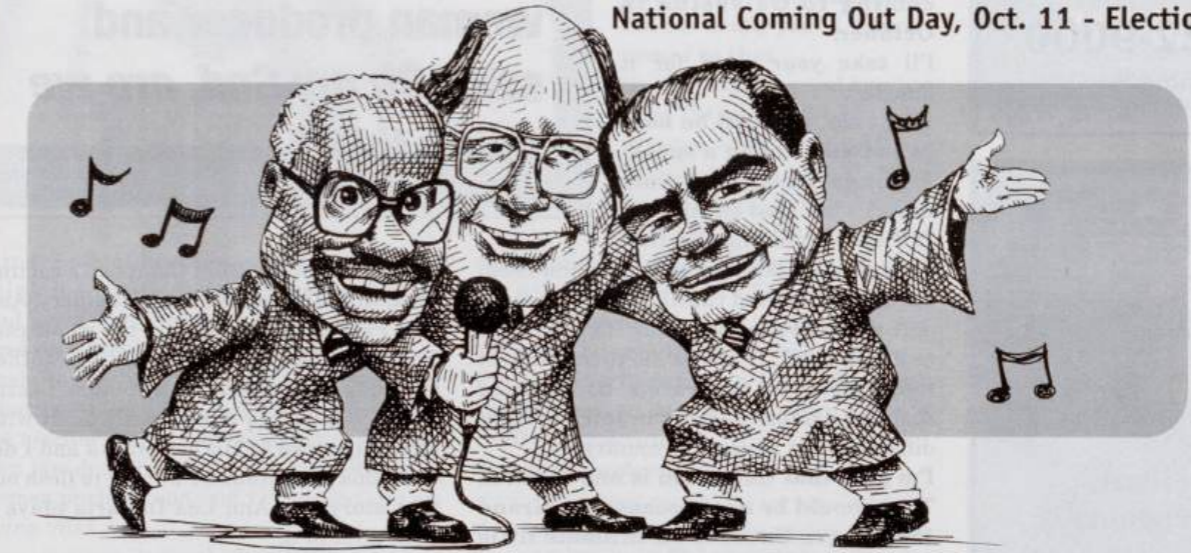
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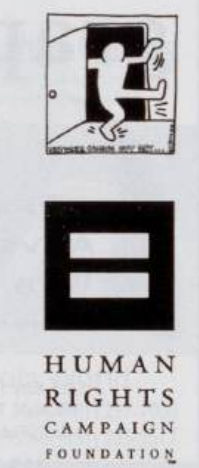
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Armistead Maupin

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6:30 or 7:00 one evening and I didn't put it down until it was around 1:30 or 2:00. I finished the book.

That's just what I like to hear [laughs]... That continues to be the strongest drive I have when writing—the need to make people want to keep reading.

At the end of that first chapter, I was in tears. And then the story changed, and I was enthralled.

Good. Do me a favor when you write about it—try to stay as mysterious as possible without giving the surprise in the middle of the book.

Consider it done.

A couple of the advance reviewers gave very positive reviews but almost all of them went too far, [which] was tremendously frustrating.... Most of my life I've been inspired by the film *Vertigo*. It had a big impact on me when I was a kid and it still moves me in ways that surprise me, especially now that I'm approaching Jimmy Stewart's age. And I've always wanted to write a novel that was about human longing and obsession that stays very close to the bone emotionally, but that completely turns you around halfway through.

And that it did. So, you're coming to Galveston in October.

I'll take your word for it [laughs].

Trust me, you will be here in October [doing a speaking engagement].... I wondered what that entails.

It'll entail reading the first chapter of the book, probably the first chapter, usually is. And chatting with the audience and answering questions. It's what I like to do the most. It allows me to have direct interaction with the readers. So I'm doing that and a number of gigs in seven or eight different halls around the country.

I'm glad that Galveston is one of them. That should be neat because the Grand 1894 Opera House is an intimate little place. It'll be perfect.

Yeah, it fills my age-old desire to tell stories directly. I used to do that when I was eight years old—you know, make my friends sit down around the campfire and tell ghost stories. It's changed a bit, I just make a living at it. Still the same little queen I was then.

[Laughs] So how is *Further Tales of the City* coming?

Further has wrapped. And it's being edited as we speak. It should be on Showtime in April or May of 2001.

So, what do you think?

Oh, I'm thrilled to death. It's twice as sexy as the other shows.

I can deal with that.

I thought you might like that. All of the actors get naked at one point. They've been extremely generous in that regard.

Is Thomas Gibson...

He died in the last one.

Oh, stupid me.

He's furious about that, by the way. I talked to him a few days ago, and he doesn't like to even hear me talk about the new show: *You could have let me come back as a ghost or something*. But he remains a dear friend, but unfortunately we killed off Beecham

"I stood in front of the monitor during a love scene [for the film *Further Tales of the City*] and found my own jaw dropping. I turned to this woman producer and said, *Oh my God, are we doing this?*"

last time around. Billy Campbell's coming back...in all his naked beautiful glory. And so is Paul Hopkins. We have the whole cast from last time around, including Mother Mucka (Jackie Burrows) who wasn't actually in the book. I never really dealt with what happened to Mother Mucka and I decided this time around I wanted to flesh out that storyline. And Lea DeLaria plays a bush pilot in it.

A what pilot?

A bush pilot. What other kind would you expect? It's like an Alaskan float plane pilot who flies through the bush.

[Laughs] Oh, that is too perfect.

She had such a laugh out of that. She wanted us to credit her that way on the credits,

where it would say, "Lea DeLaria as The Bush Pilot." And Joel Grey has a cameo this time around playing the guy that presides over Rock Hudson's Boy Party. Rock Hudson is called Cage Tyler in *Further Tales of the City*, not because I felt any compunction about avoiding naming him, but I was afraid viewers would spend their whole time saying *That's not Rock Hudson*. So we made him into a sort of generic closeted superstar named Cage Tyler. It happens that the actor we picked has some qualities that are very like Rock. So it was quite eerie for me to watch that portion.

Because you were friends with Rock Hudson.

Oh yeah, and the pathetic little sexual escapade you'll see in *Further Tales* was drawn from my own life. [Laughs] It's pathetic, you'll see. It's in the book that way, but it's basically Michael...well, never

come to know each other very well and like each other. His name is Pierre Gang. And he's gay and has a wonderful combination of sentiment and liberal sexual attitudes. And a great visual sense.

I may have to order Showtime just for that. The only other thing, when you were doing *Celluloid Closet*, did you write that with other people?

I wrote the narration myself.

Then Lily Tomlin came in and narrated. Oh, you don't want me to dredge up that tired old thing all over again.

What I was going to say is that I had read, probably a couple of months ago, that she actually came out.

You know, if Lily Tomlin had come out a couple of months ago, it would have been big news.

It was in a little publication.

That's where it always is.

Oh, so you think they just made it up?

I don't know, I don't know. She's been walking the line for such a long time that I've lost interest whether she's in or out. If she came out, it would supplant Ellen DeGeneres, you know. Lilly Tomlin's a major established star. The sad reality is it's too late for Lily. She had her chance and she missed it. And Ellen made that abundantly clear when she came out.

And it was remarkable, too. I'm not really jaded when it comes to that.

Oh, I'm hugely moved by what Ellen DeGeneres did. I have no patience whatsoever with gay people who find fault with her in any way. It's hard to imagine how she could have done it

with more class. I don't know if you've seen her new HBO special. It's funny and honest and just gay enough. And totally her. I was sitting all by myself just hooting.

I'm looking forward to the video. And thank you so much for your time, I really appreciate it.

You're very welcome, Blase.

*Armistead Maupin will be at Galveston's Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice, on Friday, October 13 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$14.50 to \$55 and are available by calling the Grand 1894 Opera House's box office at 409/765-1894. His book, *The Night Listener*, is available through HarperCollins Publishers or at your favorite bookstore.*



Armistead Maupin in Houston in 1985, when he spoke at MCCR's 10th anniversary dinner.

mind. Lots of kissing, lots of humping. I think it's sexier, funnier, sadder, faster, and more adventurous.

And on Showtime!

Yeah, so far there have been no restrictions whatsoever. Several times I stood in front of the monitor during a love scene and found my own jaw dropping [laughs]. I turned to this woman producer and said, *Oh my God, are we doing this?*

Are you concerned about the editing process at all?

Oh sure, and I'll have a chance to look at the rough cut, to make suggestions if I feel the directors made a choice that doesn't comply with what I imagined the scene to be. But I also trust our director a great deal. We've

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HEALING WORK IS
SPIRITUAL WORK

continued from page 81

Lexus set, and sets her class fees accordingly. Mentored by Ernest Perez (the amazing owner of Ernest & Co.), Kay herself gave up a status-rich (but spirit-poor) career. She has quite a following of yoga monsters—as she affectionately calls her students—in the gay community. As one of Houston's few full-time yoga instructors, Kay teaches all over town, but her gayest & greatest classes are at the Fitness Exchange, Downtown Y, and the YWCA on Waugh. (AWS)

Wild About...

Best Place to Find Your Family: Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center

It's all about community, and that's the numero uno objective at the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. And of course having a blast while we're communing. Over two dozen community groups meet here, from Q-Patrol to the Lesbian Coming Out Group. The community center has initiated an excellent series of forums that have been setting the intellectual agenda for the Houston queer community, plus actively working at bringing all the diverse community organizations together, co-hosting events from Empower to the Harvey Milk birthday celebration. (AWS)

Best Drag queen, Joan Crawford-style: Joel Sandel in Die! Mommy! Die!

Joel Sandel was to-die-for as Angela, the demented diva who schemes to kill her hubbie so she can run off to New York with her gigolo boyfriend in Charles Busch's

campy spoof Die! Mommy! Die! which had its U. S. regional premiere at Theater LaB. Hyperventilating when piqued, cooing when aroused, and petulant when pressed, Sandel infused the aging chanteuse with the pluck of a Girl Scout and the high-handedness of a mommie dearest. And she bared lots of leg, too. Outsized yet sincere, she played the character "straight" to the hilt. (Pete Szatmary)

Best Production: Refuge at Stages

Although Stages Repertory Theatre artistic director Rob Bundy is gay, his most insightful work is depicting the comically biting, emotionally tortured dynamics of heterosexual relationships in general—marriages, friendships, alliances—and of nuclear families in particular. This past season, through his sensitive probing, twentysomething playwright Jessica Goldberg's Refuge—a scathing yet sympathetic portrait of the dysfunctions of a nuclear family of generation Xers who're abandoned by their parents—was both social commentary and therapy session, Chekhovian rumination and Durang-like satire. The play sets up stagnant ambivalence without following through with it; Bundy, however, made the action ebb and flow like some psychic tide washing in and washing the drifting characters out. At his frequent best, Bundy motivates actors to shine brightly and burn deeply; here he was the mindful parent that the numbed yet throbbing offspring so conspicuously missed. (PS)

Gayest & Greatest Clothed Audience Listening (and Watching): Naked Boys Singing

Bienvenue's rendition of the off-off-off-Broadway cult hit looks like it's heading for

a Rocky Horrified run for perpetuity. But this guilty pleasure, universally lauded crowd- and-critic-pleaser has enjoyed several successful runs, thanks to a charming, cute, and charismatic crowd of choirboys who are as energetic as their audience is appreciative. (SF)

Readers' Choice

Best Place to Find a Date: Crossroads (runners-up: JRs, Ripcord)

From age 16 to 76, you can find a date at this local coffee shop and bookstore. You just have to pry that O32utSmart they're pretending to read out of their hands—reading at Crossroads is mostly pretense, you know. Or, for you cell-phone queens, at least write your phone number in big letters on the back of your magazine. (SH)

Readers' Choice

Most Fabulous Concert/Best Drag Queen: Diana Ross/Kofi

Well, 15 people who paid \$150 to see Ross love on herself thought so. This "reunion" tour that featured only one of the original Supremes was one of the summer's big busts. Ross herself even kept mum when promoters shut her down before her tour concluded. We're saving our hard-earned diva dollars for Tina's farewell. And speaking of divas, one of the true requirements for achieving divadom is aging well. Kofi, Best Drag Queen for yet another year running, has done this sublimely. Ageless skin, sparkling eyes to match her sparkling wit, and a still-shaking-'em-in-their-boots shimmy worthy of girls half her age, Kofi's still the strongest, blackest, most awakening D-cup of joe this side of Starbucks. (SF)

Readers' Choice

Gayest Weekend Getaway: New Orleans (runners-up: Austin Splash, Galveston)

They don't call it the Big Easy because it's hard to get a date. Southwest and Continental have cheap fares (most under \$100) and dozens of flights to fit any schedule. Only 50 minutes out of Hobby and you're there. Hardly enough time to have three cocktails. The Crescent City has the best food you'll ever want to eat (try the alligator nuggets at Ralph and Kakoo's) and more partying per square inch than any place on the planet. If gay folks didn't invent Mardi Gras, then somebody's lying. Stay at the St. Pierre or the Ursuline Guest House, both in the Quarter and close to everything. (CT)

Readers' Choice

Best Theater: River Oaks Landmark (runners-up: Alley, Angelika)

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Readers' Choice

Favorite Part of OutSmart: Queer Quotes (runners-up: Astrology, News)

Readers' Choice

Favorite Writer: Alan Davidson (runners-up: Blase DiStefano, Ann Sieber, Chris Sill) ■

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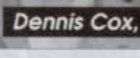
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SignOut

by Lilly Roddy

Our friend Mercury goes retrograde this month on Oct. 18. This means that all of your new projects and plans have to be put in motion by Oct. 14. After that, you will be moving into a time of review. And it will be time to look at what you have been doing for the last four months and correct any problems that you find. Mercury will be retrograde until Nov. 7, but wait to start new endeavors after Nov. 11. Neptune goes direct this month on Oct. 15 along with Uranus on Oct. 26. These planets are going to have the most impact on the Leos, Aquarians, Scorpios, and Tauruses. For you, life gets a bit more complicated. Just what you needed!! The full Moon occurs on Friday the 13th (cue the spooky music) in the sign of Aries. It will be a Me time for everyone. You will be hard to find during the end of this week. The new Moon will be on Friday, Oct. 27 in Scorpio. This should really bring out the dark side during the festive Halloween time. We will all be on an MGM ride at a theme park—Freddie Meets the Creature from the Black Lagoon II.

Aries (March 21–April 19) Relationships are really emphasized for you this month, as you will be wanting to get down and dirty with your lover this month. You can expect electrical currents to charge up your life especially Oct. 7–8 and 18–19. Boredom will have no place in your life. Humdrum relationships will be tested thoroughly. They will be rejuvenated or sent to the scrap heap. Look for hidden emotions to come to the surface that trigger these events. Even financial problems can be a detonator. Take it easy on the 26th through the 28th. You will need it.

Taurus (April 20–May 20) Mercury is making you review your relationships this month. You will not be likely to give up on your relationship very easily. You like to drag it through the mud over hill and dale. You like durability in a relationship. You may be drawn to call those old lovers that you have listed in the back of your head. See, I told you that you don't give up. If you are a single cow or bull, you will be very interested in those other green pastures, sending out "I'm available" signals everywhere you go.

Gemini (May 21–June 21) Get that office and home into shape—you are into a real organizing mood, and want your life to be effective and efficient. The mood at work can really be erratic this month. You may try to start a lot of things only to find yourself back at square one. You are more serious than usual and others may wonder where your sense of humor has wandered off to. Home is a volatile place on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th as

well as the 27th, 28th, and 29th. You could be remodeling, moving, or looking to buy. You will be better by next month.

Cancer (June 22–July 22) You are in the mood to entertain at home and express your creativity. Or to be very creative in an entertaining way at home. You certainly don't want to work as much. You are more likely wanting to be the center of attention. Your sexual energies are stronger and you will want to be creative and playful here, too. You have been in a very exploratory mode this entire year, and now you will want to up the ante. Or maybe dress up as your Auntie!!

Leo (July 23–Aug. 22) The pressure this month will be emanating from the old home place. You will be getting things in order, straightening out the closet and looking for money behind the sofa pillows. You will be feeling pressure from your family—or the family that lives inside of you—to get some stability in your life. Your relationships are very distracting now. You are being pulled in two different directions. One is what you are supposed to do, and the other is what you want to do. This is an easy choice.

Virgo (Aug. 23–Sept. 22) Your ruling planet, Mercury, goes into review in your house of communications. You are going to be examining everything you ever said as far back as you can remember. And for the things you don't remember or had taken pains to forget, don't worry—all of your ex-lovers are going to come waltzing back to help remind you. Bury yourself in your work. Take a trip out of town to an herbal spa. Have a big cup of green tea or a margarita, whichever comes first. There is just too much stress for you.

Libra (Sept. 23–Oct. 23) This month you are focused on your talents, your personal resources, and your money. If you have been avoiding a money problem in the past, this month you will be encountering that quandary. Your vast talents of diplomacy and schmoozing will be put to the test. You will not be taken for granted this month by anyone. You may appear a bit hypersensitive to those around you. Save your energies for next month when you go on a combat mission to retrieve those misplaced emotions.

Scorpio (Oct. 24–Nov. 21) You are a mixed receptacle of nuts this month. You are sensitive yet active. You are introspective yet vibrant. You are spiritual yet real. And, no, more Prozac won't help. Pay a lot of attention to your intuition this month and then follow that up with some action. Then these apparently separate pieces will act together as one. You won't feel so confused, and your fellow human beings will have to take responsibility for their mixed messages—god-dess knows you don't need to spend your

time trying to figure out which message is the truth. Be sure and get some rest this month. It will be easy to overdo it.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22–Dec. 21) This is a good month to fade into the background. Only spend time with people that you really like, and don't draw too much on your energy reserves. You will feel like putting some energy into some new projects at work, but be sure and get those done before Oct. 15. Watch your conflict with authority figures, especially at work: You may be right in principle, but if you aren't the boss, you may want to decide if your position is worth the fight. Consider the question, "Is this the hill you want to die on?" It might be or it might not be.

Capricorn (Dec. 22–Jan. 19) This is a good month to visit those friends from your past. You are really ready to renew old contacts in both business and social organizations. Take some time this month to do some planning for your next business moves. The time for action in that part of your life is next month. This is a great time to get your office into shape. Some of you are updating the equipment and systems in your office. Get this stuff done before Oct. 15. And you could do some cleaning as well. You may change locations by next summer.

Aquarius (Jan. 20–Feb. 18) The planets are spending a lot of time this month in the career and future-planning sector of your horoscope. Some people may confuse you for a Capricorn. With Mercury, planet of review and renew, moving through your career sector, you are in the mood for getting those old projects finished and putting those old boxes out for the trash. You will be more black-and-white than usual. Time seems shorter now, and you feel the urge to push forward. Even the new moon at the end of the month is in your career sector. Time to invest in your future. Onward through the fog!

Pisces (Feb. 19–March 20) Confrontation is your watchword this month. This is usually not your best personality trait, except when you are doing it for others. This will probably show up a lot in your relationships. You can put some excitement in your sex life or go 10 rounds in the ring. But the need for real interaction is there. You just are not as flexible as you used to be. Your boundaries are more well-defined. And your tolerance of other people's SAD STORIES is at an all-time low. You have stories of your own. Family continues to pull on you psyche-ly. Make that phone call even if they don't.



Lilly Roddy is a Houston-based astrologer. She can be reached at lillycath@aol.com or www.cybersim.com/hermes.

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1 Kristine W with OutSmart's Chris Sill at Sonoma.



Southern Decadence 2000 brought 91,000 revelers into New Orleans August 30-September 3.

2 Houston attendees Isreal, Sunshine, and Carlos.



3 Sarah Gish, retiring queen of Landmark Theatres, hands over the keys of the kingdom to new Landmark Houston manager AmyBeth Gilstrap.

The recent Fork-in-the-Road dinner sponsored by ROADwomen (River Oaks Democratic Women) honored the families of James Byrd Jr. and Matthew Shepard.

4 Seated: Mrs. & Mr. James Byrd, Sr. (parents of James Byrd Jr.); Standing, l-r: Darrell Verrett (nephew of James Byrd Jr.); Louvon Harris (sister); Sherry Merfish (honorary event chair); Judy Shepard (mother of Matthew Shepard); Gerald Merfish (honorary event chair); Mary Beth Malcolm (Texas Democratic Party Chair); and Muffie Moroney (event chair).



Ernie Manouse, anchor of Channel 8's Weekday (formerly Week-night Edition), celebrated his "31st" (ahem) birthday at Sonoma restaurant on September 1.

5 Ernie with partygoers Chuck & Tivana Watson (who run Tiger Productions) and the Epicurean Publicist Dick Dace.

6 Award-winning actress Deborah Hope and husband Leo Aston.

7 Ernie with Stages treasurer Bill England and KRBE's Sonny Garza, who have been partners for 16 years.

8 Ernie with Amanda Perry (PR Professionals) and Randy Parrott (executive producer of Fox 26 News).

9 Celebrating "31 years," Ernie gets to have his birthday cake and repeat it too.



3



4

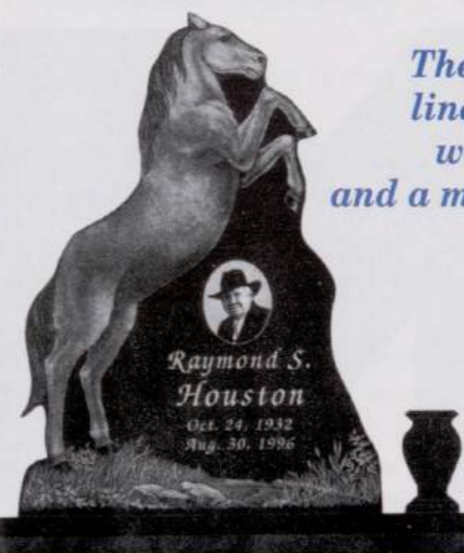


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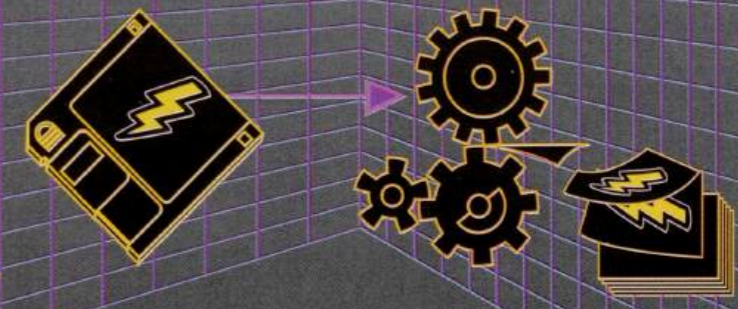
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