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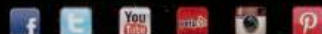
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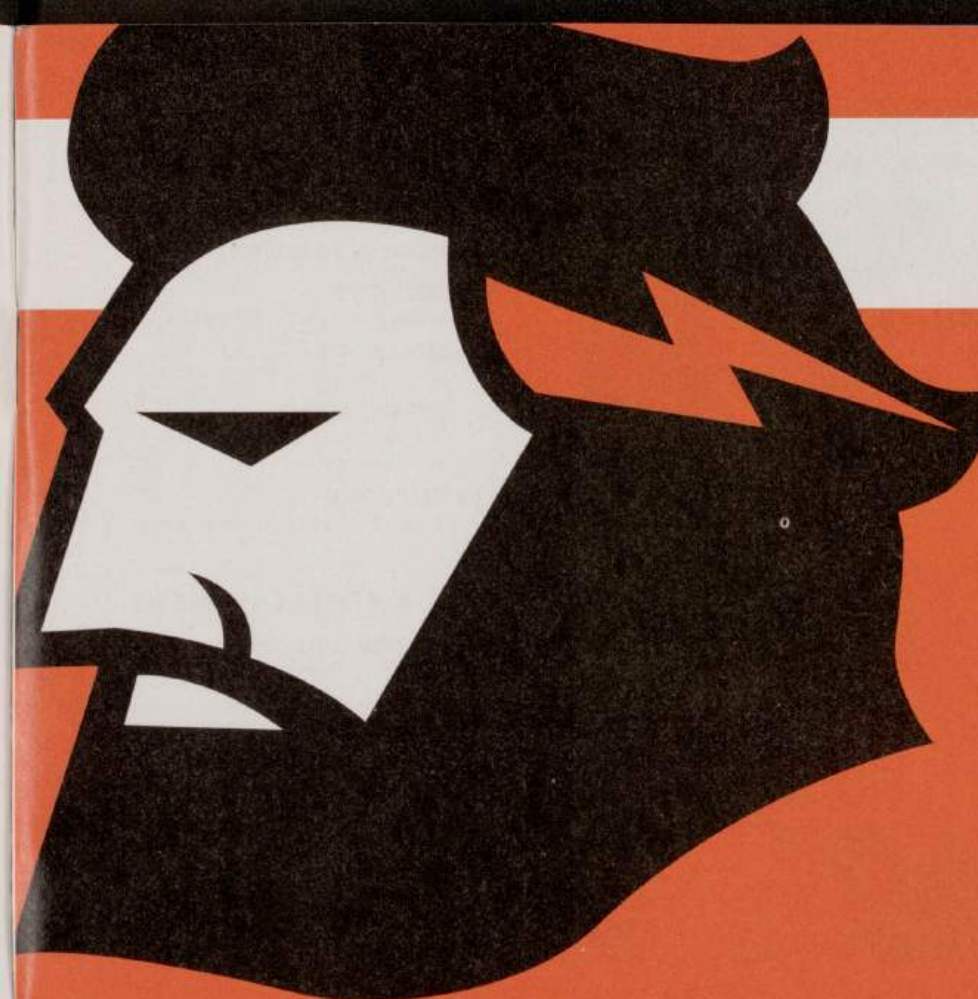
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SITTING (FROM LEFT): DAUGHTERS DANIELA
PARKER AND MARQUITA PARKER, AND
SHERRY ALLEN (GODDAUGHTER)
DOGS (FROM LEFT): JAX, CHANEL, AND COCO
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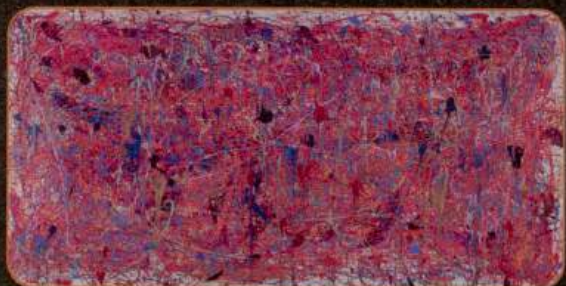
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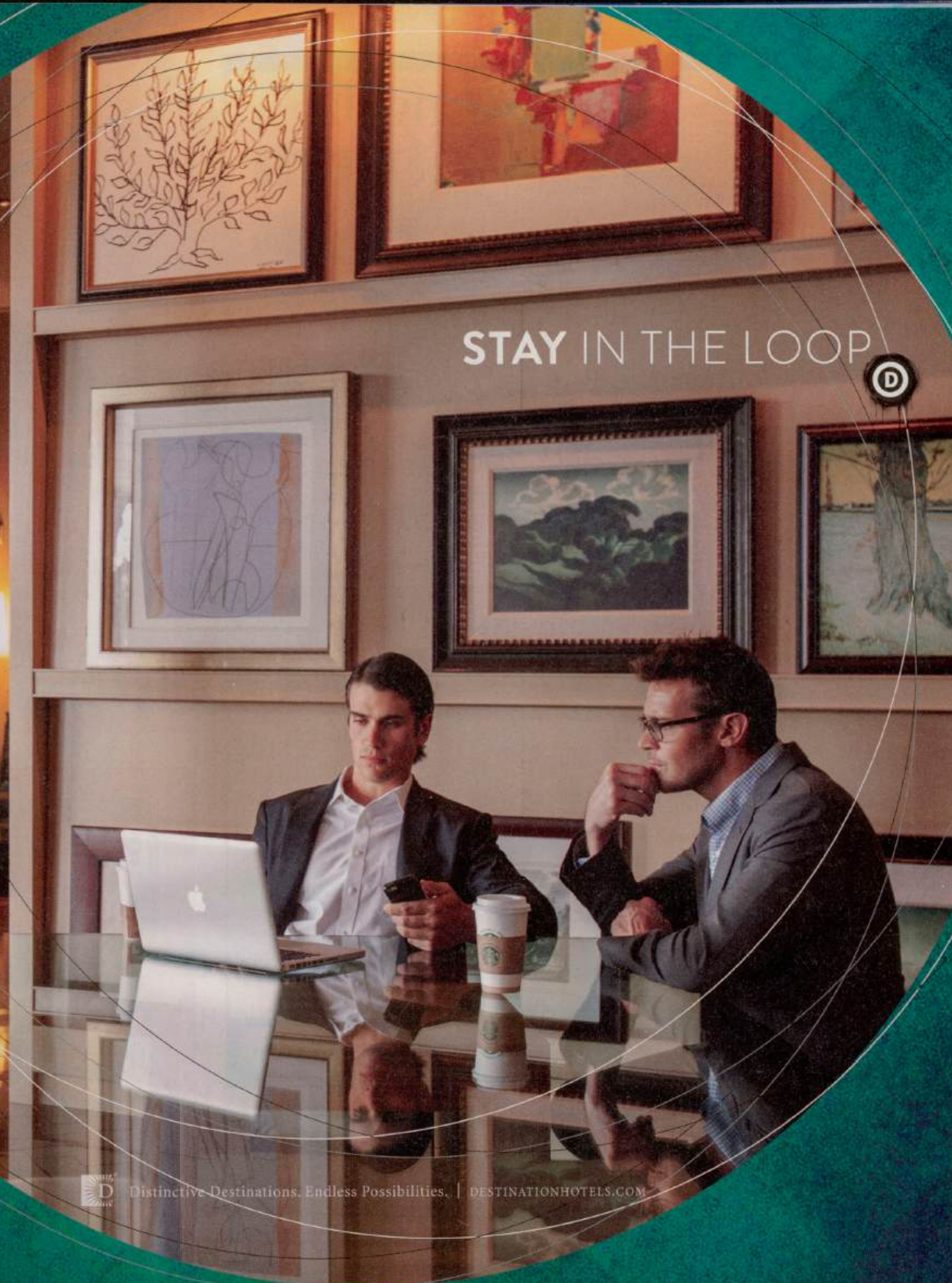
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George H.W. Bush a Witness at Maine Same-Sex Wedding

Former President George H.W. Bush was an official witness at the same-sex wedding of two longtime friends, his spokesman said.

Bush and his wife, Barbara, attended the ceremony as private citizens and friends of Bonnie Clement and Helen Thorgalsen, who were married on September 21, spokesman Jim McGrath said.

Thorgalsen posted a photo on her Facebook page showing Bush signing the marriage license as a witness. She captioned the photo: "Getting our marriage license witnessed!"

In the photo, Bush is seated in a wheelchair, a stack of papers on his lap and his left hand poised with a pen. Mismatched bright-red and bright-blue socks peek out below the cuffs of his blue slacks.

The forty-first president has deep ties to the area and owns a compound in Kennebunkport, a small coastal town. Thorgalsen and Clement own a general store in neighboring Kennebunk. They were honeymooning overseas and didn't immediately respond to an e-mail seeking comment.

Gay marriage became legal in Maine in December.

One of Bush's sons, former President George W. Bush, opposed same-sex mar-

riage and in 2004 announced his support for a proposed constitutional amendment to outlaw it. But his wife, Laura Bush, and daughter Barbara Bush support gay marriage, as does his former vice president, Dick Cheney, whose daughter Mary Cheney is openly gay.

A spokesman for George W. Bush declined to comment on his current feelings about same-sex marriage or his thoughts about his father's official role in a same-sex wedding.

In July, George W. Bush made headlines when he said he wouldn't comment

on the issue, saying he "shouldn't be taking a speck out of someone else's eye when I have a log in my own." He later explained that he just wasn't going to answer the question because he was out of politics.

His brother, Jeb Bush, a former governor of Florida and a potential presidential candidate, has said same-sex marriage is an issue best left to the states to decide. In a speech in June, he told the Faith & Freedom Coalition that the nation needs to be supportive of non-traditional families. —AP

Same-Sex Marriages Must Be Allowed in New Jersey, Judge Rules

by Jason Hanna, CNN

Same-sex couples must be permitted to marry in New Jersey, a state judge ruled in late September, arguing that the parallel label "civil unions," which the state now allows for gay couples, is illegally preventing them from getting federal benefits.

The judge ordered that same-sex marriages be allowed in the state starting October 21. The office of Gov. Chris

Christie, however, indicated the case would be appealed to a higher court.

The ruling cites the U.S. Supreme Court's June rejection of part of the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), a move that allows legally married same-sex spouses to receive federal benefits.

After the DOMA ruling, some federal agencies are extending benefits

continued on page 14

Houston GLBT Political Caucus November 5 Election Endorsements

Members of the Houston GLBT Political Caucus met on September 28 to consider endorsements in the November 5 Houston municipal races and races for Houston Independent School District and Houston Community College System.



Mayor Annise Parker and twenty-five other candidates attended the four-hour meeting, during which candidate qualifications and support of equality issues were discussed and debated at length. All eligible candidates previously completed an extensive candidate questionnaire and sat for an interview with members of the Caucus Screening Committee.

"As always, our members engaged in spirited and passionate debate over which candidates are best equipped to serve Houstonians and the GLBT community," said Caucus president Noel Freeman. "It is a very difficult process when you have so many great candidates competing for our support."

The full list of endorsed candidates is as follows:

- Mayor: Annise D. Parker
- Controller: Ronald C. Green
- City Council, District B: Jerry Davis
- City Council, District C: Ellen R. Cohen
- City Council, District D: Assata Richards
- City Council, District H: Ed Gonzalez
- City Council, District I: Graciana "Graci" Garces
- City Council, District J: Mike Laster
- City Council, District K: Larry Green
- City Council, At-Large Position 1: Stephen C. Costello
- City Council, At-Large Position 2: David W. Robinson
- City Council, At-Large Position 3: Jenifer Rene Pool
- City Council, At-Large Position 4: C.O. "Brad" Bradford
- City Council, At-Large Position 5: Jack Christie
- Houston ISD Trustee District 1: Anna Eastman
- HCC Trustee District I: Zeph Capo

The Houston GLBT Political Caucus was founded in 1975 and is the oldest LGBT civil rights organization in the South. ■



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to legally married same-sex couples, but denying them to same-sex couples in "civil unions," Judge Mary Jacobson of the Mercer County Superior Court wrote in her ruling.

"If the trend of federal agencies deeming civil union partners ineligible for benefits continues, plaintiffs will suffer even more, while their opposite-sex New Jersey counterparts continue to receive federal marital benefits for no reason other than the label placed upon their relationship by the state," Jacobson wrote.

"This unequal treatment requires that New Jersey extend civil marriage to same-sex couples to satisfy the equal protection guarantees of the New Jersey Constitution," she continued.

Jacobson ruled on a lawsuit that six same-sex couples and their children, as well as gay-rights group Garden State Equality, filed against the state.

New Jersey has recognized civil unions between same-sex couples since 2007, after a New Jersey Supreme Court ruling that said the state must allow same-sex couples all the rights and benefits of marriage. As far as state rights and benefits went, civil unions and mar-

riages differed only in label, Jacobson noted.

Friday's ruling comes more than a year after Christie vetoed a bill that would have legalized same-sex marriage in the state.

On Friday afternoon, Christie's office said it had wanted "the issue of marriage equality" to be on the ballot this November, but said the legislature scuttled the effort. It also indicated that Jacobson's ruling would be appealed.

"Since the legislature refused to allow the people to decide expeditiously, we will let the Supreme Court make this constitutional determination," read a recent statement from Christie's office.

New Jersey is one of four states that offer civil unions, but not marriage, to same-sex couples. The others are Colorado, Hawaii, and Illinois.

Same-sex marriage is legal in thirteen U.S. states and the District of Columbia: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.

Same-sex marriage is banned in every state not mentioned above, except for New Mexico, which has no laws banning or allowing it.

ExxonMobil to Extend Benefits to Same-Sex Couples

by Blake Ellis, CNN

ExxonMobil, which has been bashed by gay rights advocacy groups for years over unfriendly employee policies, announced last month that it will start offering benefits to same-sex couples.

Beginning October 1, ExxonMobil employees in legal same-sex marriages will be eligible to receive health insurance coverage for their spouses, the oil giant said in a statement.

The company's decision was less of a change of heart than it was a technical update stemming from this summer's Supreme Court decision to recognize same-sex marriages for federal purposes.

"The decision is consistent with the direction of most U.S. government agencies," ExxonMobil said in the statement. "We have made no change in the definition of eligibility for our U.S. benefit plans. Spousal eligibility in our U.S. benefit plans has been and continues to be governed by the federal definition of marriage and spouse."

ExxonMobil has long been criticized for having anti-LGBT policies. It currently has a lawsuit pending against it for discriminating against a lesbian applicant, and it received the lowest "corporate equality" score of any U.S. company in last year's Human Rights Campaign rankings.

The recent announcement was therefore welcomed by gay rights groups.

"After years of stubbornly refusing, we commend Exxon for joining the majority of the Fortune 500 business leaders that already treat gay and lesbian married couples equally under employee benefit plans," Tico Almeida, president of Freedom to Work, said in a statement. "It's a shame Exxon waited until after the Labor Department issued official guidance explaining that their old policy does not comply with American law, and now it's time to move forward."

A growing number of companies have been updating their policies to become more LGBT-friendly. This summer, Walmart announced it will offer benefits to same-sex and domestic partners. As of the beginning of this year, 89 percent of U.S. companies provide health benefits to same-sex couples, according to the Human Rights Campaign. *More News →*

Community

Photos by Dalton DeHart

On August 28, the Young Professional Caucus of the Annise Parker Campaign Steering Committee hosted Happy Hour with Mayor Annise Parker at Buffalo Bayou Brewery. Pictured (l-r): Steve Wilson, Gustavo Vincenti, Mayor Parker, and Buff Brew founder/CEO Rassul Zarinfar.



On September 15, Bayou City Performing Arts (BCPA) introduced their new artistic director, Kenneth Clayborne, and unveiled the winner of their 35th anniversary art contest.

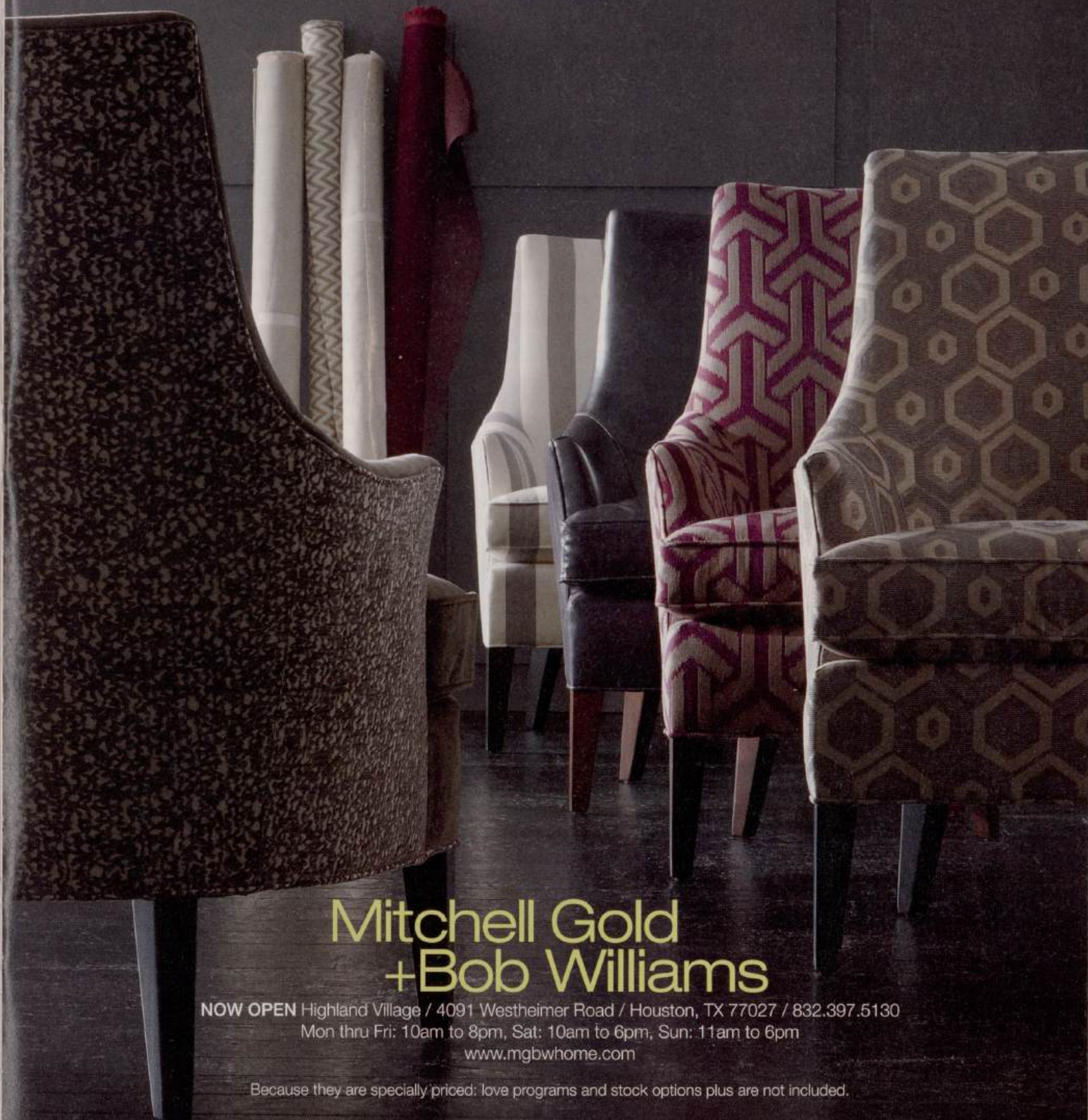


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Suit Challenges Pennsylvania's Non-Recognition of Gay Unions

by Kathy Matheson, Associated Press

Two women who wed in Massachusetts before moving to Pennsylvania asked a federal court last month to force their new home state to recognize their marriage, just as it does for opposite-sex couples.

The plaintiffs, Isabelle Barker and Cara Palladino, say they are being denied about six hundred marriage-related benefits, from filing joint state tax returns to co-owning property. They also have encountered reams of paperwork for health-care coverage and prepared legal documents to protect the interests of their son—red tape they say wouldn't be needed if their marriage were recognized.

"My Massachusetts marriage certificate is the same as any other couple that comes from Massachusetts," Palladino said. "It seems to me that that's the essence of discrimination. If you're taking the same piece of paper and you're treating it differently because of our status, that doesn't seem fair."

Pennsylvania is the only state in the northeastern U.S. without same-sex marriage or civil unions. Like thirty-six other states, it also does not recognize gay marriages performed legally in other jurisdictions. The lawsuit asks a judge to

declare unconstitutional the state law barring recognition of such unions.

At a news conference overlooking Independence Hall, lawyers for Barker and Palladino said the statute infringes on the pair's constitutional right to travel among states without penalty and violates the guarantee that states will respect each other's judgments and decrees.

The lawsuit notes Pennsylvania honors opposite-sex marriages performed elsewhere "without qualification or question." Yet the plaintiffs "are denied the basic rights that were conferred on them by another sovereign state, solely because of a discriminatory, arbitrary and irrational distinction," it says.

Palladino and Barker lived in Massachusetts when they got married in 2005 and moved to Philadelphia later that year when Barker got a job at Bryn Mawr College. The couple had a son in 2009, and Barker said the boy has begun asking if his parents are married.

"And it's sort of befuddling to us that we don't have a really clear answer for him about that," Barker said. "If we lived in Massachusetts, we would have a very easy answer: 'Yes, of course.'"

Their lawsuit, which names Gov. Tom Corbett and Attorney General Kathleen Kane as defendants, is at least the fifth pending legal case regarding gay marriage

in Pennsylvania. A representative for Corbett did not immediately return a request for comment.

In one of the other lawsuits, Kane has refused to defend the state law defining marriage as between one man and one woman. After the U.S. Supreme Court threw out part of the federal Defense of Marriage Act earlier this year, she called the Pennsylvania marriage statute unconstitutional.

Corbett's office is now defending that case, which was filed two months ago in federal court by the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania on behalf of thirty-two gay couples.

That complaint parallels a separate challenge filed recently, in which twenty-one same-sex couples sued in state court to overturn Pennsylvania's ban on gay marriage.

In another lawsuit, the state Health Department has sued to stop a Montgomery County official who decided on his own to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. A couple who married using one of those licenses also has filed their own lawsuit.

Barker and Palladino's legal complaint was coordinated by the Equality Forum, a Philadelphia-based gay-rights organization. ■

Pasta Maker Barilla Under Fire for Antigay Comments

by Blake Ellis, CNN

Italian pasta maker Barilla is in hot water for antigay remarks its president made in an interview last month.

Company president Guido Barilla said on an Italian radio program that he wouldn't feature same-sex couples in his company's commercials because he prefers the "traditional" family.

Soon after, LGBT advocates began calling for a boycott of the company. Many flocked to Twitter using the hashtag #BoicottaBarilla.

"Sigh. I'd like my pasta without the side of homophobia, thanks," one Twitter user wrote.

Another directed a tweet at the company: "Dear @BarillaUS I will no longer be feeding my LGBT family your pasta. We are a @Bertolli family now!"

Barilla issued a statement, titled "Guido Barilla's Clarification on Gays," apologizing for the remarks.

"I apologize if my words have generated controversy or misunderstanding, or if they hurt someone's sensitivity," the statement says. "I have the utmost respect for anyone, without distinction of any kind. I have the utmost respect for gay people and for everyone's right to express themselves. I've also said—and I would like to reiterate—that I respect gay marriages. In its advertising, Barilla represents the family—because it's what welcomes everyone." ■

The apology wasn't enough for LGBT advocacy groups.

"These insulting antigay comments will not only lead to LGBT people skipping Barilla, but their family members, friends, and co-workers as well," said a spokesman for gay rights group GLAAD. "Homophobia is bad for business—plain and simple."

This isn't the first time consumers have boycotted a company over its stance on LGBT rights. Bars around the world have stopped serving Russian vodka in protest of the country's antigay laws, and customers boycotted Chic-fil-A after its CEO expressed his opposition to same-sex marriage. ■

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by
Susan
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Bathrooms with Circles and Sticks

Yeah, Houston, I'm talking to you

At other places in this magazine you will read about Mayor Annise Parker and the fabulous job she has done for the city of Houston.

I know she is smarter than Rice University with a fifty-pound dictionary and can watch *60 Minutes* in half an hour. I know she is a bound-and-determined woman. I know she is so cunning that foxes come to her for advice. She is so honest that you can shoot dice with her over the phone. She's sweet as a grandmother's kiss and tough as a wagonload of wet rawhide.

She's a shero, no doubt about that.

In my opinion, we need for her to win the mayor's race with a large margin because after she term-limits out of office we need her to run for a statewide office. So sticking a star in her bonnet for a landslide victory on

"Just as I make my decision, a man comes out of the F door. Was he as confused as I was and went into the F-room by mistake?"

November 5 won't hurt.

However, I do have one major complaint to discuss with the mayor.

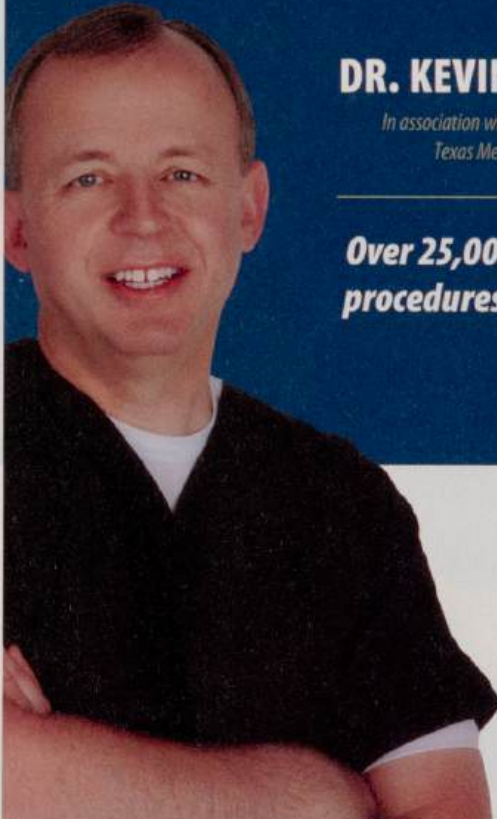
I spend a lot of time at trendy restaurants in Houston, and it's

obvious to me that the mayor needs to make a new law about restroom signage.

I am not an enormous fan of public bathrooms, but there are times when you cannot avoid them—which is pretty much why they are there.

You know what I really hate? I really hate being pointed to the bathrooms in a chic Midtown restaurant, only to discover that I cannot figure out which door to enter. Are restaurants having some kind of contest to see which one can have the most ambiguous signs for men and women?

Look, when I head for the bathroom, I have business to take →



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LeftOut continued from page 18

care of. I'm not going to admire the decor or write an opera. The last thing I want to do is to stand there trying to figure out if I am the cow or the bull when both of them have things hanging south. In one restaurant, I had to figure out if I was the circle or the stick. I finally got that one, but it took me some time. Time I did not have, mind you.

I do not want to play this game. Not when I am on a mission.

Last night, I was headed into the restroom in a very nice Midtown restaurant. After a long, friendly, and very delicious dinner with people I truly enjoy, the waiter pointed me, at my request, to the ladies' room. In most restaurants, the ladies' room is right next to the men's room, as it was in this one. I turn the corner and see something that resembles a Chinese word on the wall, which was really strange because this was a Salva/Tex restaurant. All I could think was, *Damn, I wish I hadn't had that second Margarita and Crap, I don't read Chinese.*

There I stood, in great need of doing some business and unable to figure out the two symbols. (I was, however, damn-near certain that they had something to do with Korean algebra.)

I swear on all that is holy that I stood there for two full minutes waiting for someone else to come along, preferably wearing gender-specific clothes, and enter one of the doors. As my ears were starting to leak, I closed my eyes and then focused again on the two symbols until I was at least 25 percent certain that one was an M and the other was an F.

Just as I make my decision, a man comes out of the F door. Now I had to ask myself: was he as confused as I was and went into the F-room by mistake?

I finally decided that I am sixty-five years old and can play senile with the best of them. I walked in a door, completed my task, and walked out. There was nothing hanging on the wall, so I suspect I picked correctly.

I know there is always the reliable stand-by tactic of pleading drunk. "Excuse me, I'm drunk. Can you tell me if I am what appears to be a glass of water or a cup of coffee?"

What about people who are not gender-static? Do they just have to barge through a door—any door—singing *The Eyes of Texas Are Upon You* at the top of their lungs and hope for the best?

I want to make it clear that I am not in favor of exclusively unisex bathrooms. I married a man and gave birth to three of them. As far as I know,

there are only two positions for a toilet seat: up, and wet.

As an alternative, should we just designate one bathroom for polite and empathetic people, and one for savage bastards? But I don't know what kind of symbols they'd have to come up with for that. Maybe a monocle and a spear?

So I want you, Mayor Parker, to make it a law that bathroom doors must be marked with clearly identifiable gender symbols. Hell, I'll even settle for a circle and a stick. But the circle has to be clearly round and the stick has to be up and down, like normal. I am flat-out not standing there in public trying to figure out if I am a horseshoe or a sliding board.

Y'all, if I ever end up in jail for puddling outside a bathroom door, make sure the headline says, "What Is Wrong with Putting MEN and WOMEN on Bathroom Doors?"

Thank you, Mayor Parker. Other than that, everything in Houston is just fine.

Susan Bankston lives in Richmond, Texas, where she writes about her hairdresser at The World's Most Dangerous Beauty Salon, Inc., at juanitajeane.com.

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by
Blake
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Tricks or Treats

How did Halloween get so naked?

I waddled up to the front as soon as I heard my name, my beaming face hidden behind a felt hat.

I was squished by pillows to help fill out the orange felt sack that formed my "body," and my eyes, ears, nose, and mouth were all Velcroed into position.

I had just won Best Halloween Costume at my grade school: "The award goes to . . . Blake as Mr. Potato Head!"

Since my mom is an artist, most of my Halloween costumes growing up were pretty creative, and mostly homemade. We didn't have a lot of money, but that didn't get in the way of a good costume!

There was the "Short Man" (small jeans and a shirt around my legs, and a face painted on my stomach, upper body hidden in a large "hat"). The mandatory Mime (which I acted the hell out of, if I may say so myself). Pinocchio, with a prosthetic nose.

Hmm. Was my passion for Halloween an early sign of my emerging sexuality? Us gays love Halloween!

It makes sense: we like dressing up (or down), parties, tricks and treats (sugar-free, please?), and it's an excuse to yank almost anything out of the closet!

Back some two thousand years ago when Halloween supposedly began in Celtic culture, the dead were thought to emerge on October 31 and join the living. (Now we call that "Sunday brunch.") That's where the ghosts came from—but what about the costumes?

Well, the celebration was to mark the end of the harvest and the beginning of winter, a daunting and threatening season way up north.

The Celts believed their priests could better predict the future—telling them how harshly nature would bear down—in the presence of these otherworldly spirits. So they'd create bonfires, sacrifice crops and animals, and dance and cavort in costumes mostly made of animal skins and heads, hoping that the gods would bless them with a safe winter. (I'm sure this didn't look creepy at all.) It's a far cry from what we mean today when we "dress up" for Halloween, but this was the beginning.

Half a millennium later, the Catholic Church would officially establish All Saints Day (November 1) to honor not only saints, but martyrs and other passed souls on All Souls Day (November 2). In ancient English the term is "All-Hallows," so the night before it became "All Hallows Eve."

"Hmm. Was my passion for Halloween an early sign of my emerging sexuality? Us gays love Halloween!"

These traditions eventually evolved in colonial America, and by the 1920s, Halloween had become a common community-oriented secular celebration with parties, costumes, and trick-or-treating.

Today, it's a billion-dollar industry. And to think it all started with a bunch of Irish people dancing around in animal skins.

The primary difference between these ancient costumes (including the ones from my own early years) and what I see people dressed in at most gay Halloween parties today can be boiled down to one word: skin. (This time our own, instead of the hide of an animal!)

When did Halloween become "clothing optional"? Not that I'm complaining; I've seen a lot of sexy costumes at these parties. But it almost seems like nudity is valued over creativity. "What can I wear to show off these abs I've worked on?" we ask ourselves, and end up going as "Sexy Fill-in-the-Blank." Sexy Sailor. Sexy Firefighter. Sexy Power Ranger. Sexy Eighties Guy. What's next? Sexy Priest? ("Forgive me, for I have sinned!")

(Well, I guess this doesn't appeal to the people who are into cosplay. Gosh, Halloween must be thrilling for them.)

Anyway, I'm not trying to be a prude and act like the old man barking at scantily clad Halloweeners to "get off my lawn!" I'm just asking: is the goal just to wear almost no clothing in public and get away with it? (And don't we get enough of this once a year at Pride?)

How about we ask ourselves, "What can I wear this year?" instead of "What can't I wear?"

I don't mean to sound bitter. Do I sound bitter? I'm really not. I mean, if I went to the gym a little more, maybe I'd be into more revealing costumes. But honestly, I think I'd save the skin for the pool and the beach.

Or who knows, maybe I'd go for a "Sexy ____" outfit. Hmm.

Sexy what?

Sexy Pinocchio? Too obvious.

Maybe I'll really throw it back this year and get some animal skins and go as one of the Celtic creators of Halloween. Think anyone will get it?

Or, I'll completely cover up and dig out the old, hot, bulky Mr. Potato Head outfit. Yep, a giant talking carb—just to scare you toned queens in your underwear.

Happy Halloween, y'all!

Blake Hayes is the morning host at Mix 96.5 KHM.

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by
Grace S.
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Loved Ones in Need

The cost of caring for an aging family member

As the U.S. population continues to age, and overall longevity increases, the issue of long-term care insurance has remained front and center in terms of the impact it can have—both for those needing care and those who offer informal caregiving to a loved one.

Caregiving is usually defined as “unpaid assistance that is provided by family members, friends, and neighbors, in order to help ill and disabled individuals remain in the community.” Factors such as the changing nature of the family, as well as increased life expectancies, have significantly influenced the nature and the extent of caregiving today.

The True Cost of Giving Care

It may seem surprising that most long-term care for older adults is actually not provided in nursing homes, but rather on a more informal basis in private homes or other community-based settings.

“Contrary to popular belief, government sources such as Medicare and Medicaid provide very few reimbursements to cover long-term caregiving.”

Unfortunately, while most people would not hesitate to offer care for an aging partner, this arrangement often comes at a very high cost. Due to the physical and emotional strain that caregiving can entail, caregivers who are employed in addition to providing care to a loved one are more like-

ly to have their own health negatively affected. Given their added responsibilities, caregivers typically have less time to exercise and get sufficient rest.

The financial cost of caregiving, while somewhat different depending on gender, is quite staggering. For example, according to the Met Life Study of Caregiving Costs to Working Caregivers, men who leave the workforce early or reduce their working hours

in order to provide care for a loved one lose an average of more than \$89,000 in cumulative wages. When also considering a man's reduced Social Security retirement benefits due to his decreased wages, the total loss can be in excess of \$144,600.

For female caregivers, the financial cost is even more substantial. In one scenario, a loss of wages of nearly \$142,700 is coupled with lost Social Security benefits of approximately \$131,351 and a \$50,000 impact on pension/retirement savings to bring the average lifetime cost of providing care to around \$324,000.

Sources for Financing Long-Term Care Needs

While providing care to a loved one can take its toll on future income and savings, current savings are also depleted relatively quickly if other sources of financing are not in place.

Contrary to popular belief, government sources such as Medicare and Medicaid provide very few reimbursements to cover long-term caregiving. For example, in order to qualify for limited Medicare funds, an individual must be considered “home bound,” while Medicaid typically requires that an individual's assets be at his or her state's poverty level. (This differs from state to state, but is generally in the range of \$2,000 in total assets.)

There are, however, ways to plan for long-term care needs that can lessen both the physical and financial impact that a caregiving situation can bring about.

Long-Term Care Insurance

One option is to purchase long-term care insurance. Today's long-term care insurance policies cover myriad expenses, including a number of home-care options. This can allow a partner who needs care to receive the services that he or she needs, while the other partner continues to earn income and retain savings and assets for their originally intended purpose.

Likewise, many current long-term care insurance policies will allocate a certain amount of benefit to cover expenses that the caregiver incurs—even if that individual is a friend or family member. (Older policies often provide benefits only when trained medical professionals provide the care.)

In addition, long-term care insurance benefits can be increased over time by opting for the inflation rider. This can help a great deal in covering the rising cost of medical care—and it can be particularly beneficial for younger applicants who may not need to file a claim for several decades.

Many of today's long-term care insurance policies also offer premium discounts to domestic partners who both apply for coverage at the same time. This can help keep the overall cost of coverage down, while ensuring that money will be available should the need for care arise.

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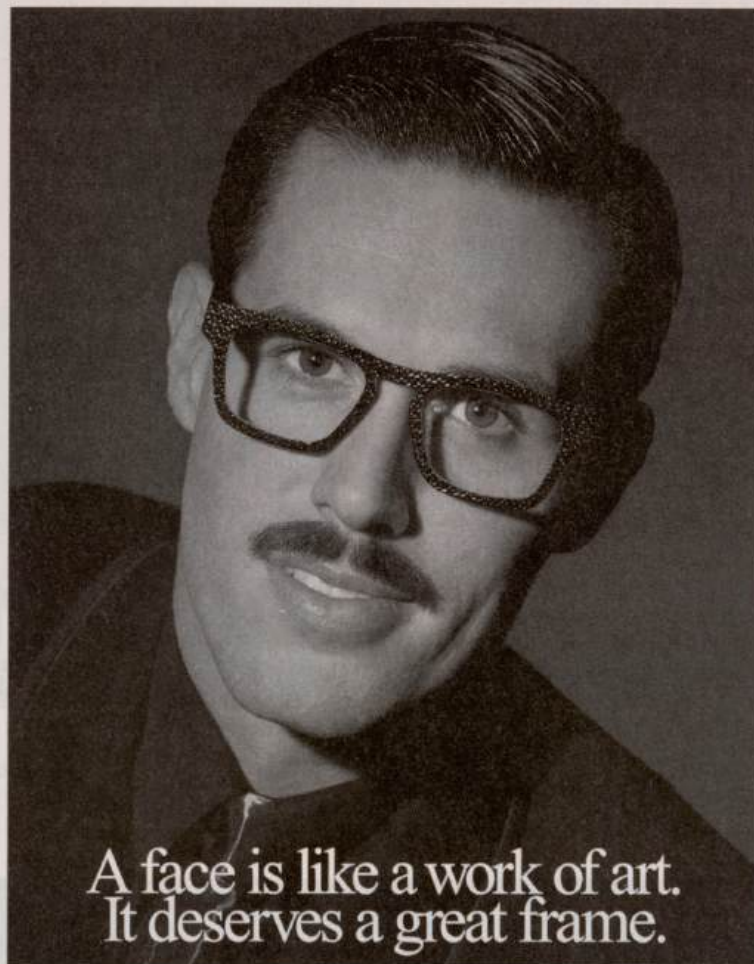
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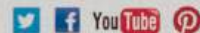
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MoneySmart continued from previous page

insurance policies, there are also "hybrid" plans offering a combination of benefits. For example, a combination annuity and long-term care insurance plan can consist of either an immediate or a fixed annuity that has a long-term care rider attached.

These plans allow the gain in the annuity contract—funds that would otherwise be considered taxable income—to be paid out as a tax-free long-term care benefit. In addition, the annuity holder can retain the increases in account value in the fixed annuity if these funds are not all used for long-term care needs.

These plans can offer a great way for someone who may not otherwise qualify medically for a stand-alone long-term care policy to obtain coverage. And, if the long-term care benefits are not needed, the policyholder still retains those benefits from the fixed annuity.

Combination life insurance and long-term care policies are also gaining more popularity. With these plans, a policyholder may be able to make one lump-sum deposit into the plan, and a certain multiple of those dollars can then be used for long-term care expenses, life insurance coverage, or a combination of both.

These linked-benefit plans can also allow one to leverage two benefits in a single policy. And, given that the plan was funded with just a single lump-sum premium, the policy is considered paid in full—and, therefore, there is no risk that premium payments will go up in the future.

Even if the policyholder never uses the long-term care benefits, their loved ones can still benefit from the life insurance proceeds. It is important to note, though, that a medical exam is still required in order to qualify for this type of plan. In addition, depending on the plan, the long-term care benefits may need to be received in a skilled-care facility.

In any case, it may be a good idea to review existing life insurance coverage and/or fixed annuity policies in order to determine whether a hybrid plan that also offers long-term care benefits would be more beneficial. In certain cases, individuals might be eligible for a Section 1035 tax-free policy conversion to a new plan that provides more appropriate benefits.

The Bottom Line

In any type of long-term care planning situation, it is essential to discuss your needs with a qualified professional who is well versed in providing tax and financial solutions for those who are approaching retirement, and specifically to individuals and couples in the LGBT community who may have unique planning needs.

Grace S. Yung, CFP, is a certified financial planner practitioner with experience in helping domestic partners plan their finances since 1994. She is a principal at Midtown Financial LLC in Houston.

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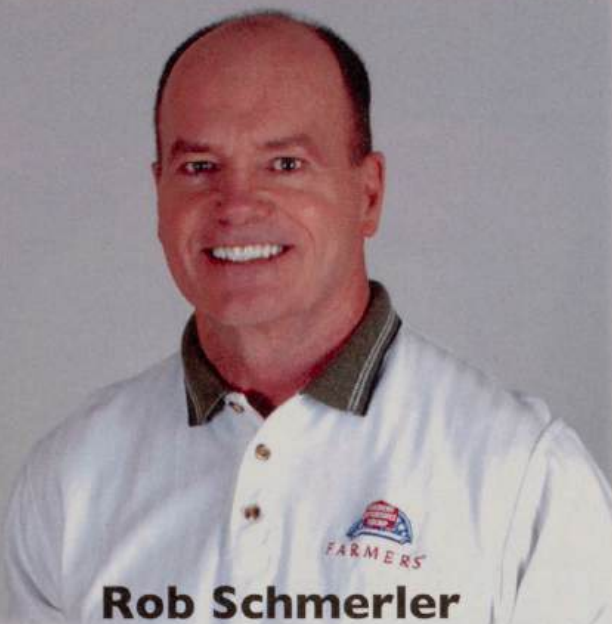
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Franki Navarro (l) and Jerry Conry got married in New York City. Here is the happy couple with OUTSMART and their marriage license.



Shelly Kennedy and Debra Denny were legally married in Provincetown, Massachusetts, on September 1, and celebrated by posing with a photo of OUTSMART. Also shown in the photo is **Morgan Mascio (l) and John Cano.**

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Check out these fabulous events co-sponsored by OUTSMART and our marketing partners.



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and benefiting local charities. INFO: outreachunited.org

October 5: Houston Pride Band presents *Heroes* at Resurrection MCC, 2025 W. 11th Street, 3 p.m. INFO: houstonprideband.org

October 12: The 42nd Annual Bayou City Art Festival in downtown Houston benefiting local nonprofits. INFO: bayoucityartfestival.com

October 12: Coming Out Party presented by OutReach United featuring comedian Alec Mapa

SAVE THE DATE November 2: Lesbian Health Initiative Fall 2013 offering complimentary lifesaving tests and services. INFO: lhihouston.org

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Making History while Running a City

It's been a busy four years for Mayor Annise Parker

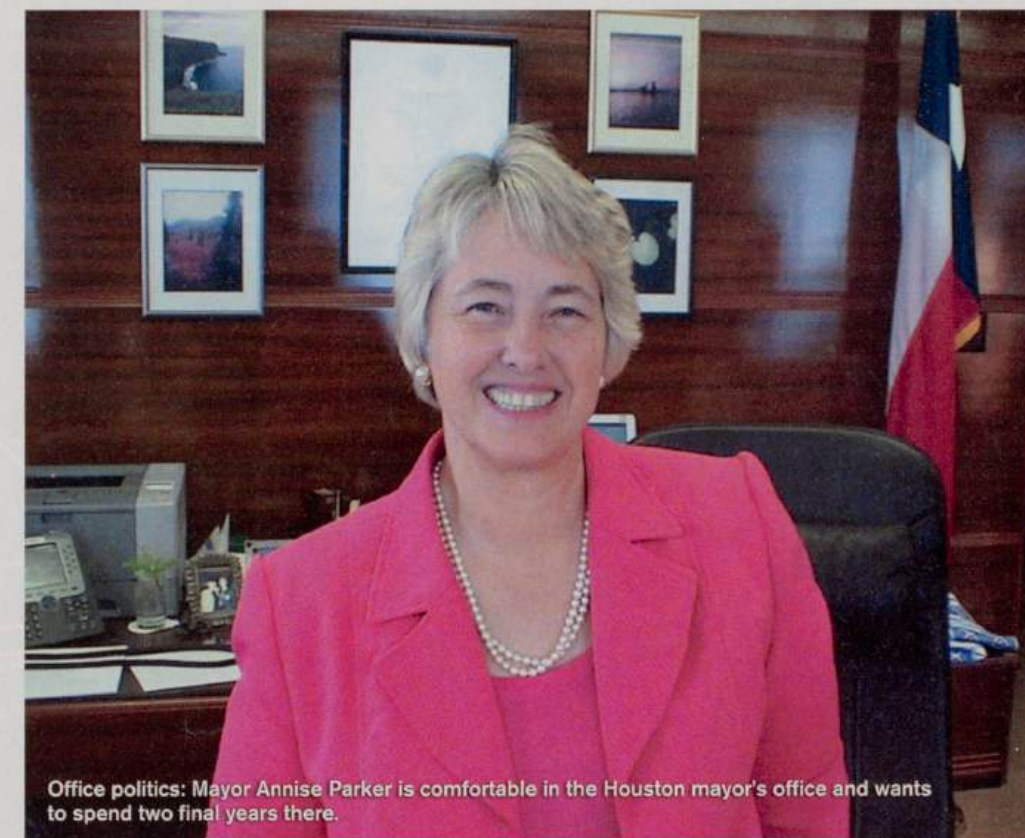
by Brandon Wolf

Photo by Brandon Wolf

The Houston mayor's office in City Hall is impressive—not so much for its grandeur, but from a sense of the power and responsibility that has resided within its walls for almost seventy-five years. And for the last four years, a member of Houston's LGBT community has been the person occupying that office.

When Annise Parker made history on December 12, 2009, by becoming the first openly gay mayor of a major U.S. city, it seemed like an impossible dream had finally come true. A woman from our community was now the most powerful person in the city.

Parker won reelection on November 8, 2011, and is now aiming to be reelected to a third and final term on November 5, 2013. Although she has a city to run and a campaign to wage, she graciously accepted an invitation from *OutSmart* magazine to look back on her nearly four years in office and reflect on those two busy terms.



Office politics: Mayor Annise Parker is comfortable in the Houston mayor's office and wants to spend two final years there.

The Seat of Power

Mayor Parker's office suite is located on the second floor of the original Art Deco City Hall building, completed in 1939. This is the focal point from which the sprawling metropolis called Houston is run. From here the orders go out, and back here is where the buck stops.

Visitors wait in a lobby area until shortly before their appointment with the mayor. They are then ushered into an anteroom next to the mayor's office. This room also serves as the mayor's press conference room. Convenience and efficiency

are essential in this office. The mayor is the most powerful and sought-after person in the city, and her staff must combine hospitality with discipline in order to make it all flow.

The mayor's huge inner office boasts a large conference table at one end and a comfortably intimate conversation nook at the other. The mayor's working desk is on one side of the room, facing

work tables on the other. On the tables are stacks of papers and briefing booklets. The office is imposing, yet friendly—busy, but not cluttered; orderly and without fussiness.

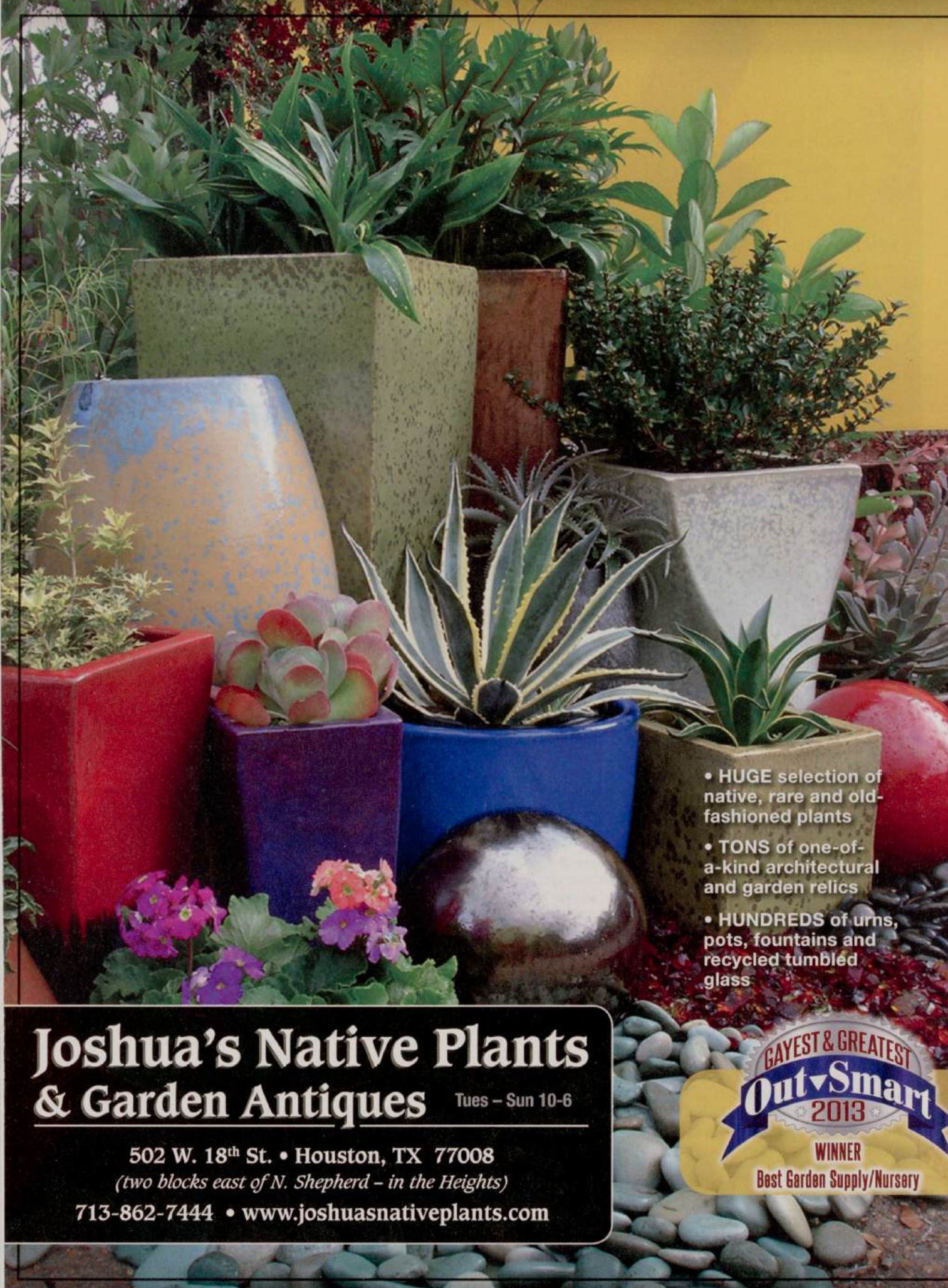
Easily visible on Parker's desk is a snow globe of Houston, and also her fountain pen collection. "This pen belonged to my grandmother, who was a schoolteacher," she says. "I recently had it restored."

What Does Houston's Mayor Do?

Asked to describe what she does as the mayor of Houston, Parker pauses. There is no slick sound bite, no rehearsed narrative. She ponders the question, and then says slowly and distinctly: "The mayor runs the city... leads the city... markets the city... and loves the city."

She smiles, pleased with her response. Then she sets out to explain her answer in more detail.

"I run Houston because this is a strong-mayor city," Parker explains. "I'm the CEO, and the Council is the board →



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Making History . . .

continued from page 31

of directors. I have a tremendous amount of administrative authority. In fact, I have *all* the administrative authority. Additionally, I preside at the Council meetings, set the agenda, and have a vote. Houston is one of the strongest-mayor cities in the nation.

"I *lead* Houston by being the public face of the city," she continues. "When there is a crisis, I am the person people see and hear. When things go wrong, I am the person who has to make sure they get handled. If a hurricane is coming in—and thankfully, one hasn't yet—it's me and the county judge who are standing out there, calling the shots and telling people what to do.

"I *market* Houston by spending a great deal of time promoting good business here—I'm the head cheerleader for the city," Parker says. Earlier this year,

she and her partner, Kathy Hubbard, flew to Istanbul to publicize Turkish Airlines' new non-stop service between the two cities.

"I *love* Houston, because one couldn't put in the amount of hours it takes if they didn't," Parker finishes. Her schedule is constant, seven days a week, and she is "on call" at any hour of the day or night.



Mayor Parker at the Houston Area Women's Center Race Against Violence in 2012.

Parker's Major Accomplishments

Parker has lots of pride in her administration's accomplishments. When asked to identify four major ones, she focused on these:

- *The economic recession*—"I came into office at the lowest point of the recession, and was able to help right the ship, sail it through the storm, and get it to where we are today. I had to make difficult decisions to re-focus and turn the economy around—without raising taxes or making short-term decisions that would have impacted the long-term health of the city."
- *Houston's infrastructure*—"I was able to have productive discussions with Housto-

nians about the critical issues of our city's infrastructure. We undertook a massive project of overhauling the water/sewer system and adjusting the rates. We went to the voters with the Rebuild Houston program to create a new dedicated revenue source for this system, which must fund itself. Then we asked voters to approve bond money once again to continue this investment. When a house has problems, you have to fix them. But Houston had not been doing this."

• *Redistricting*—"In 2011, we added two new Council seats. We literally had to move every [district boundary] line in the city. It was the most complicated redistricting ever done in the city. We brought people together, we had a transparent process, and we showed how it could be fair to everyone. Although Harris County and the State of Texas are still litigating their redistricting, the City was never sued."

• *Homelessness*—"I picked up something no one wanted to deal with for a very long time. Last year we chose to move the needle on homelessness. There is much left to do, but we have dropped the homelessness rate by 25 percent. In one year, we brought together resources that hadn't worked together before, and we →

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Making History...

continued from
previous page

housed five hundred chronically homeless veterans. I can't prevent homelessness, because there will always be situations where people end up in circumstances beyond their control. But I can solve the problem of people who have been on the streets for years. We are on track to end homelessness in the next two years."

But along with the accomplishments in political life come the disappointments. Parker says the worst political loss for her was the traffic red-light cameras controversy. "It was a no-win situation right from the beginning. Doing away with the cameras was the wrong thing to do. But I respect the democratic process, and the voters voted. The cameras are now gone, but the city lost a lot of money—from revenue and from the broken vendor contract." The issue cost Parker a lot politically, too, and dogged her for months after the issue was settled.

The Mayor's Proudest Moments

Parker says that the victory celebration following her first election was undoubtedly her most exciting night of the last four years. "That's when everything seems possible," she says. "The harsh reality of all the things that have to be done hasn't hit you in the face yet."

But in everyday terms, she says her most triumphant moment was when the Council gave a supermajority vote to her proposed overhaul of the water/sewer system in early 2011. "That's not a super-sexy thing," she says, "but it was very significant."

"We knew there was a problem. We identified the scope, we outlined the issue for the Council and the public, and we presented different options for correcting it. We worked with the Council to find the option that was the most appropriate. We came to agreement, and we got it done. It was the right thing for the right reason with the right outcome. It was the best-executed thing we've done."

The benefits of that new infrastructure plan were soon felt throughout the city. "It helped us get through the drought of 2011." During that time, an average of seven hundred water-main breaks were occurring daily. The new revenue stream enabled the replacement of aging pipes in Houston's 7,000-mile-long system. The majority of failing pipes were giving way as they expanded in the heat. The soil that usually provided pressure on them was now dry and unable to provide stability. With the new financial plan in effect, the City was able to deal with the unexpected crisis without losing

traction on the long-term goals.

Mayor Parker's moments of greatest pride come from seeing the performance of the City's more than twenty thousand employees. "I love it when a whole team executes a plan, or when a department does something amazing," she says.

"There have been cave-ins from massive water main breaks in freezing weather that caused giant sinkholes—and City employees have been out there in the middle of the night making repairs. If an ice storm is expected, Public Works crews are pre-stationed around the city, ready to go to work immediately."

"And we are now on the map for major sporting events," she continues, "because we execute so well. The NBA All-Star Game and the NCAA Final Four ran like clockwork. Visitors came and enjoyed the event, and it's been a smooth experience for them. Traffic is heavy, but it moves quickly. Thousands of City employees and other Houstonians make every aspect work."

Moments of Emotion

"The worst moments are when we lose an employee in the line of duty," Parker says. "And public memorials really tug at my heart." On May 31, 2013, the worst tragedy in the history of the Houston Fire Department occurred when four firefighters were lost while containing the blaze at a burning hotel.

Parker and her partner immediately went to the hospital to offer support to the families. During that time, a news conference photo of an obviously stricken, teary-eyed mayor hit the media outlets.

"I don't do drama and a lot of emotion," says Parker. "Not that I don't feel it. But my normal state is to close the door and deal with it privately. But that night I was overwhelmed with emotion, and I felt that it was a time when I had to deal with it publicly. People needed to grieve, and I had to let myself be the face of it."

The Daily Routine

"We are the level of government that functions every day," Parker says. "We function 24/7 and we have a direct impact on people's lives. Whenever we solve a problem or get something fixed, it's a great feeling."

But the job is also demanding of her time. "I'm picked up at 8 a.m., unless there is a breakfast meeting scheduled, and then it's earlier." Her daily staff meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. and can run from thirty to sixty minutes. "That's when I find out what blew up overnight—figuratively and literally." →

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Making History ...

continued from previous page

The rest of the day is scheduled in half-hour increments. "It's meeting, meeting, meeting, a speech at lunch to a civic association, and then more meetings." The mayor tries to walk back in the front door of her home at 8 p.m.

Weekends are different, but still demanding. Usually there is an early-morning kickoff of an event that she is asked to attend. During campaign season, there are candidate forums. She is asked to judge events ranging from a school reunion cook-off to the Art Car Parade entries.

Most weekend evenings are filled with various galas and charity fundraising parties. Occasionally, Parker may have a few hours to herself and her family on the weekends. "I ask my staff to try to keep one day a month, usually a Sunday, totally free of any activities," Parker says. She admits even that is not always successful.

"The sheriff is here," an aide announces as we wrap up our conversation. It sounds like a cue to end the interview, but the mayor's assistant says calmly, "That just means he's next in line."

Parker's Legacy

Asked what she would like her legacy to be, Parker says it shouldn't be a building with her name on it. "I'd just like to be remembered as having led the City well—managing it through difficult times, undertaking an amazing amount of projects, and leaving it better than it was."

"It's a great gift to me to be able to make decisions that shape the future of my home town," Parker says. "To be able to work with professionals and Council members to do things which are truly transformative—to work on things like the expansion of the Bayou hike-and-bike trails that will pay off for Houstonians for generations to come."

"During my administrations, there have been no scandals. People have disagreed with some of the things I've done, but we've been honest and ethical. I've told the voters the truth—whether it was pleasant or not—and I've accepted accountability for my actions."

From the beginning of her campaign for the mayor's seat, Parker has been careful not to be stereotyped as "the lesbian mayor." She's responded to the issue when asked, but always moved on to the real issues that face the city.

When she was first elected in 2009, the international media attention was unparalleled. But it gave Parker an amazing opportunity to pivot away from the gay issue and focus on showing the world what



Mayor Parker at the AIDS Walk in 2010.

Houston has to offer.

"Now we are always showing up on 'Ten Best' lists," Parker says. "And none of this is made up. My election just gave Houston an opportunity to sell itself. It has evolved from a 'big small city' to an

demonstrates the depth of that pride.

For the older generations in our community, she represents the sea-change that has occurred in Houston during the last few decades. The Police Department that once raided gay bars with impunity now reports to a

urbane, cosmopolitan place."

Although Parker has avoided the one-dimensionality of being "the lesbian mayor," Houston's LGBT community will always think of her as "one of our own." The deafening applause that greets her each year as she and Hubbard ride in the Pride Parade

lesbian. That same department whose harassment of LGBT citizens led to ruined careers and reputations a few generations ago is now tasked with protecting the life of a lesbian mayor at all costs, even if it means sacrificing their own lives.

For the younger generations in our community and beyond, Mayor Parker is a role model, a celebrity, and a hero. Sometimes when she is out and about, not in an official role, a young child might approach her and ask if she is the mayor. Assured that she is, the young fan asks her to pose for a picture of the two of them together, and then seeks a hug. "That is the coolest part of being Houston's mayor," Parker says.

Brandon Wolf also writes about Kathy Hubbard in this issue of OutSmart.

It Takes Only One Vote to Become First Lady

Kathy Hubbard loves Houston's vast diversity

by Brandon Wolf

Photo by Brandon Wolf

Houston's First Lady, Kathy Hubbard, longtime partner of "the first out lesbian mayor of a major U.S. city," has been making some history of her own during the last four years.

The role of Houston's First Lady is undefined, and each of Hubbard's predecessors had her own way of handling the job. The visibility of recent mayoral spouses has run the gamut from Elyse Lanier's office in City Hall to Frances Young (Brown)'s chosen near-invisibility. Kathy Whitmire, whose husband died five years before she became mayor, remained single during her ten-year administration back in the '80s.

The position is also unfunded—if the mayor's spouse accompanies the mayor on a trip, they pay their own expenses, including airfare. About the only thing they are truly expected to do is to be at the mayor's side during the swearing-in ceremony.

Our current First Lady met with OutSmart magazine in late August and talked about her experiences in fulfilling this role. She is warm and approachable, attentive and genuine. She approaches life



Happy birthday: Kathy Hubbard sits at her desk in her bookkeeping-service office, with yellow birthday flowers from her partner, Annise Parker.

with a calm pragmatism that is tinged with a mischievous sense of humor.

"A Naturalized Houstonian"

Hubbard was born in Boston and grew up in chilly Buffalo, New York. She is the oldest

of four children, with two sisters and a brother.

In 1979, she traveled to Houston for the first time to visit her sister who was living here. She says she was ready to live in a warmer climate. Houston could definitely provide that, but it was her →

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It Takes Only One Vote ...

continued from previous page

trip to the Galleria that sold Hubbard on the city. "I was amazed when I saw people of all races and nationalities there," she remembers. She fell in love with this diversity and moved to the city the next year.

Her entire family has been very supportive of Hubbard's twenty-three-year relationship with Annise Parker. Although her parents still live in Buffalo, they have attended every one of Parker's swearing-in ceremonies—three as council member, three as controller, and two as mayor. They hope to return to Houston next January if Parker wins a final two-year term on November 5.

Coming to Grips with a New Role

During Parker's first mayoral race, Hubbard says that she was too busy with the campaign to think about what she might do as First Lady. While candidates for mayor need to talk about what they will do if elected, the spouse's role is rarely a topic of discussion. "It only takes one vote to become First Lady," Hubbard says with a smile.

The reality that she might have a very public position hit her during the 2009 victory party after the election that put Parker into a runoff. "Someone came up to me and asked if I would be a host at the next annual picnic of their nonprofit organization." At first Hubbard didn't understand, but then realized people were already starting to get in line to win her attention.

Even on the night of Parker's runoff election victory, Hubbard took nothing for granted. It wasn't until she and Parker stepped onto the stage at the victory rally that it became real. "It was one of those thunderbolt moments," she says. "I knew I would remember this for the rest of my life. It suddenly seemed like we could accomplish anything, and I thought, 'Wow, maybe there is hope for world peace.'"

What Does a Houston First Lady Do?

Hubbard is frequently seen accompanying Mayor Parker to fundraising galas and other events. With her usual gracious style, Hubbard often poses for pictures with attendees and answers questions from local society reporters.

But the bulk of Hubbard's effort is spent representing Houston and her partner at consular events. Houston is a port city and conducts business with many foreign countries. As a diverse melting pot, Houston has large populations of citizens from around the world who have made Texas their new home.

Houston is home to ninety-four busy



The First Lady with her partner, Mayor Parker, at a Discovery Green gala in 2012.

consulates that host public events to celebrate their countries and their cultures. Hubbard says it's not possible to accept all the invitations she receives. Instead, she tries to attend events where several consulates join together to celebrate a common interest.

Fittingly, her biggest event is the annual reception for spouses of consulate officials. "Most of the attention is given to the officials throughout the year," says Hubbard. "So we organize one big event annually to recognize their spouses, because families are important, too."

The event is held during the holidays, and the venue used to be the beautiful "Rienzi" mansion in River Oaks that was

ments she feels have been especially important:

Gay inclusion—Hubbard says she has tried to be involved in anything where the heterosexual spouse of a mayor would traditionally participate. "I believe we've helped people see that gays are just like everyone else, and that we belong here."

Adoption—"We brought attention to the importance of giving children a home," Hubbard continues. "Our own children are all past eighteen now, and they are doing fine. Having gay parents hasn't affected them adversely."

Good will—"I've always been interested in people getting along with each other," says Hubbard. "It's still hard for me to understand why so many don't seem to be able to.

willed to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. "But we outgrew that," Hubbard says, "and now it's held in the newly renovated Julia Ideson Library."

Accomplishments that Matter

As she reminisces, Hubbard highlights four accomplish-

I've done what I can to foster acceptance of all people."

The environment—"Healthy planet, healthy people," says Hubbard. Hubbard's public role has given her many new opportunities to spread the word about the importance of recycling and protecting our environment. She has teamed up with predecessors Elyse Lanier and Andrea White to continue promoting bayou cleanup efforts.

The Ups and Downs of Political Life

On the positive side, Hubbard says that being the First Lady has increased the size and importance of her contact list, affording her the ability to promote favorite causes and to help link people who share similar goals for the city.

Hubbard says she also gets to make trips to interesting places. When Mayor Parker visited Turkey last spring to promote the new non-stop flight linking Houston and Istanbul, Hubbard joined her. She was especially moved by a tour of Anıtkabir, a mausoleum dedicated to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey.

On the flip side, Hubbard says she doesn't get to see as much of her partner as she used to. "Three days a week she →

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It Takes Only One Vote ...

continued from previous page

is out the door at 7 a.m. for a breakfast meeting, and we're lucky if she arrives back by 8 p.m."

Hubbard says she also misses spending time with old friends. "We just don't have the luxury of 'hanging out' with the kind of schedule we have to follow. And when we do find some free time, we often pull up the drawbridge and enjoy staying home."

"I can't go slumming to run errands anymore, either," she laughs. "Some of the outfits I used to wear just don't work when you're the First Lady of the city."

In addition to her First Lady duties, Hubbard still runs her own bookkeeping service. "I'm thankful for great employees," she says, when asked how she gets it all done.

As for her children, they miss seeing their other mom. "They practically have to make an appointment," she sighs. "But then, they have discovered they get the best seats in the house at sports events and the rodeo! Life compensates."

Hubbard is philosophical about it all. "As the old saying goes, 'Everyone gets what they need, but no one gets all that they want.'"

Being a Part of Human Rights History

During the 2009 mayoral campaign, an opponent sent out a mail piece that clearly featured Hubbard standing with her partner at an inaugural ceremony. A headline asked, "Is This the Image Houston Wants to Portray?" The implication was that it wasn't—but voters didn't buy that outdated attack strategy.

Hubbard says she doesn't take the negativity personally. "I understand their psychological construct, and the fact that they think we violate their beliefs and values."

But there is a line that cannot be crossed. Hubbard mentions a mailer from a self-appointed "Texas Ethics Advisory Board" that condemned her support of Planned Parenthood. The mail piece included pictures of Hubbard's children. "How dare they endanger my children's lives! Adults can disagree civilly, and there are ways to go about dealing with differences. But only cowards hide behind children!"

Other than these rare episodes, Hubbard says people have gone out of their way to be welcoming. "If there are people who are purposely excluding me, I guess I haven't had time to notice—because there are so many people who are kind and accepting."

Hubbard ends the interview with a favorite memory of Mayor Parker's appearance on *The Colbert Report*. "He asked her if she had a partner, and Annise said she did. Then he asked her if she called me the First Lady. 'No,' Annise responded, 'I call her Kathy.'"

Brandon Wolf also writes about Mayor Annise Parker in this issue of OutSmart.

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OFTEN associated with misfortune, the number 13 is proving to be rather lucky for these winners of OutSmart magazine's 2013 Gayest & Greatest awards. After all, we did survive the apocalyptic prediction at the end of the thirteen cycles of the Mayan calendar (see OutSmart, October 2012). Unlucky 13, we're not buying what you're selling.

There's something special about the number, perhaps only in that triskaidekaphobes give the rest of us some breathing room. We thumb our nose at the superstition, embracing all that makes 13 a prime number in our book. Tell that to Betsy Ross.

Bar mitzvah, anyone? Who doesn't remember counting down the days to becoming a bona-fide teenager— and isn't a baker's dozen always sweeter than just twelve?

In fact, even in this very superstitious month of 2013, we say, "Bring on the black cats and the broken mirrors." We'll step on a crack if we feel like it, or walk under a ladder. We'll say "Good luck" and scream "Macbeth" in a theater. Bring it on, Halloween! You don't scare us!

—By Sally Huffer





People

Community Hero (Male)

Ray Hill

Finalists: Don Gill,
Bryan Hlavinka

Community Hero (Female)

Mayor Annise Parker

Finalists: Cristina Gorczynski,
Carol Wyatt

Most Prominent LGBT Male Activist

Bryan Hlavinka

Finalists: Noel Freeman,
Ray Hill

Most Prominent LGBT Female Activist

Januari Leo

Finalists: Robin Brown,
Cristan Williams

Most Valuable Male Volunteer

Bryan Hlavinka

Finalists: Jason Gallegos,
David Lorms

Most Valuable Female Volunteer

Cristina Gorczynski

Finalists: Sol Lara,
Januari Leo, Carol Wyatt

Leading Male Fundraiser

Bryan Hlavinka (tie)

Gary Wood (tie)

Finalists: Christopher Garrett,
Don Gill

Leading Female Fundraiser

Cristina Gorczynski

Finalists: Robin Brown,
Carol Wyatt

Favorite Local Politician (Male)

Mike Laster

Finalist: Garnet Coleman

Favorite Local Politician (Female)

Mayor Annise Parker

Finalists: Ellen Cohen,
Jennifer Rene Pool

Best LGBT Businessperson (Male)

Tom Baker

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Finalists: Charles Armstrong,
Ryan Monceaux, Rob
Schmerler

Best Female LGBT Businessperson

Kathy Hubbard

Hubbard Financial Services
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713/522-9000
Finalists: Lea Bogle,
Monica Pope

Best Attorney (Male)

Mitchell Katine

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lawkn.com
Finalists: James Kovach,
John Nechman, Dwane Todd

Best Attorney (Female)

Connie Moore

and Debbie Hunt

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713/522-4282
mooreandhunt.com
Finalist: Clyde Williams

Best Eye Doctor (Male)

Stewart Zuckerbrod, MD

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Finalists: Evan Mapes, OD;
Scott Sawyer, MD

Best Eye Doctor (Female)

Juliet Farmer, OD

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Finalists: Christine Tyler, OD;
Lisa Woo, OD

Best Physician (Male)

Gordon E. Crofoot, MD, PA

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Finalists: Octavio Barrios, MD;
James Carroll, MD

Best Physician (Female)

Julia Kovacs, MD

1213 Hermann Dr., Ste. 430
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Finalists: Patricia Salvato, MD;
Sandra Scurria, MD

Gayest & Greatest

continued from previous page

OutSmart presents the 2013 Gayest & Greatest local winners from our community, coupled with some all-time "Greatest" national lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender icons as we celebrate LGBT History Month in October.

We "queer-ied" a few of our winners. Some dealt with their own superstitions and past Halloween experiences. Other questions dealt with the personal significance of the number 13. Their responses are as diverse as they are and hopefully will show that we are lucky that they all call Houston and Galveston home.

Mike Copenhaver, Re/Max

Best Realtor

Do you know what Houston Texans backup quarterback T.J. Yates has in common with Aggie linebacker Reggie Chevis and Aggie wide receiver Mike Evans? All three sport the number 13 on their jerseys. Like many football fans, Mike is superstitious about his teams, scrutinizing how his actions contributed to a loss. Did they lose because he was running late and missed *The Star-Spangled Banner*? Did he upset the advertising gods by taking a bathroom break when he shouldn't

have? He doesn't apply the same reasoning when the Texans or Aggies win. That's how superstitions are. Mike lets trending news inspire him for his Halloween costume, but if nothing trips his fancy, he'll go as himself. One of his favorite costumes was during the first Gulf War. As a bartender at JR's, he dressed in a black burka with a sash reading *Miss Gay Saudi Arabia 1995*. Perhaps this year, he'll blend football and current events and go as Johnny Manziel.



PLAYWRIGHT Edward Albee

b. March 12, 1928

Edward Albee is a celebrated playwright who won three Pulitzer Prizes and three Tony Awards. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, his first Broadway play, helped establish Albee as one of America's greatest playwrights.

Born Edward Harvey in Washington DC, he was adopted as an infant by the prominent Albee family of New York. The family's ownership of a national theater chain nurtured Albee's passion for the arts. Albee and his parents were constantly at odds over his desire to pursue a career in theater. After failing out of two private schools, he graduated high school and matriculated to Trinity College.

In 1949, Albee dropped out of Trinity to pursue a career in writing. He moved to Greenwich Village, an artistic epicenter. Albee experimented with writing poetry and short fiction before finding a niche in playwriting. Albee's early off-Broadway shows received praise for their unconventional themes, including homoeroticism. He made his Broadway debut with *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, which earned him his first Tony Award.

Albee has written more than twenty-five plays. His willingness to experiment with various styles earned him Pulitzer Prizes for *A Delicate Balance*, *Seascape*, and *Three Tall Women*. He received two additional Tony Awards for *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* and a revival of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Since moving to Greenwich Village, he has lived an openly gay life. Recognized for pioneering the depiction of homosexuality on stage, Albee weaves same-sex relationships throughout his work.

He lived for thirty-five years with Jonathan Thomas, his partner, until Thomas's death in 2005. Albee received a Special Tony Lifetime Achievement Award and The Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award for exceptional accomplishment in the arts. →



OutSmart Gayest & Greatest Awards 2013

Congratulations To All Legacy Nominees and Winners!

Christopher Garrett
Finalist
Leading Male Fundraiser

Januari Leo
Winner
Most Prominent LGBT Female Activist

Legacy Community Health Services
Finalist
Favorite Community Organization

Ms. Mint Julep
Finalist
Favorite Benefit Event of the Year

Scott Sawyer, MD
Finalist
Best Eye Doctor (Male)

Bryan Hlavinka
Winner
Most Prominent LGBT Male Activist

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LegacyCommunityHealth.org

Legacy
Community Health Services



continued from page 44

Best Dentist (Male)

Bruce Smith, DDS
1006 Missouri
713/529-4364
bruce-smithdds.com
Finalists: Marcus De Guzman, DDS; Mason Jones, DDS; Cory Logan, DDS;

Best Dentist (Female)

Shirley Parikh, DDS (tie)
Bristles
701 Shepherd Dr., Ste. 102
281/506-0539
bristlesdental.com
Dianna Wilde, DDS (tie)
Floss Dental
514 Elgin
713/942-0101
flossdental.com

Best Chiropractor (Male)

Kenneth Lester, DC
Kirby Health & Wellness
1603 Shepherd Dr.
713/526-5252
kennethlesterdc.com
Finalists: Art Keller, DC; Byron Menard, DC

Best Chiropractor (Female)

Darla Thompson
House of Chiropractic
202 Knox St., Ste. A
713/880-1555
houseofchiropractic.com
Finalist: Jackie Duval, DC

Best Cosmetic

Surgeon (Female)
Angela Sturm, MD
Facial Plastic Surgery Assoc.
6655 Travis, Ste. 900
713/526-5665
drangelasturm.com

Best Cosmetic

Surgeon (Male)
Jon A. Mathy, MD
NuJuv Plastic Surgery Ctr
16605 S.W. Freeway, Ste. 175
281/846-4692
nujuv.com

Best Aesthetic Physician

Octavio Barrios, MD (tie)
Skin Renaissance
517 West Gray St.
713/942-7546
skinrenaissance.net
Patrick McNamara, MD (tie)
The Skin Renewal Center
1512 W Alabama St.
713/533-0800
theskinrenewalcenter.com

Best Mental Health

Therapist (Male)
Tony Carroll, LCSW
1006 Missouri
713/527-0000
houstontherapist.com
Finalists: Tony Aucoin, LCSW, LCDC; Ken McLeod, LCSW, ACP; Robert Snellgrove, LCSW

Best Mental Health

Therapist (Female)
Denise O'Doherty, LPC, LMST, LCDC, RN
3730 Kirby, Ste. 910
713/524-9525
relationshiptherapist.com
Finalist: Enod Gray, LCSW, CSAT, CGP

Best Psychiatrist

Daniel R. Garza, MD
2323 S. Shepherd, Ste. 805
713/980-5577
Finalist: Barry F. Gritz, MD

Best Psychologist (Male)

Woodja Flanigan, PhD
2600 Southwest Freeway
Ste. 409, 713/589-9804
woodjafanigan.com
Finalists: Mike Harrison, PhD; Ken McLeod, LCSW, ACP

Best Psychologist (Female)

Kristin K. Anderson, PhD
9525 Katy Freeway, Ste. 200
713/263-0400
drkristinanderson.com

Best Massage

Therapist (Male)
Tom Zeppelin
2510 Whitney St.
713/542-0426
zeppelinmassage.com
Finalists: Armando Arango, Brad Brandt, Joel Leal

Best Massage

Therapist (Female)
Robin Maek
1301 Marshall St.
3deepbreaths.org

Best Personal Trainer

(Male)
Ryan Monceaux
Houston Trainers
4150 Westheimer Rd.
832/623-7823
houstontrainers.com
Finalists: Drake Abshire, Eric Turner

Best Personal

Trainer (Female)
Dawne Ledano
832/257-5670
dawneledanotrainer.com
Finalists: Amy Christiansen, Kimberly Marler

Gayest & Greatest

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Sarah Pepper

Best Radio Personality, Female
The New HOT 95.7

Sarah Pepper delays her own adulthood as much as she can, frequently letting out her inner child. Her advice for thirteen-year-olds who are just entering their teen years: "Be a kid. Don't try and grow up now. There will be plenty of time to be old later." She's not the kind of person who says, "Do what I say and not what I do." A few years ago, she won an award dressed as Honey Boo Boo for Halloween, with her coworkers playing Mama June and a pageant announcer. Looking back at her own life, she would



go back and tell her younger self, "Listen to your mom; she is right!"

Hug your brother and tell him you love him. Let him tag along. Listen to your big sister; she is right, too. Enjoy being thirteen!" Sarah does a lot of appearances at Houston-area schools, and the children adore her. She recently hosted a segment on Radio Lollipop at Texas Children's Hospital. What else can we tell you about Sarah "Peter Pan" Pepper? She raises money to build a school and boarding house in memory of her younger brother, Andrew, believing that every child deserves an education.

Kris Cogliano

Best Automobile Dealership - Import

You can't work for Momentum without understanding that both *less is more*, and *more is more*, whether it's a BMW with all the icing on top, or a Mini that packs a world-class punch. Kris Cogliano puts it this way regarding a baker's dozen: "There are never enough cupcakes!" He doesn't go for faux, so if he has to knock on wood, he won't go artificial. One year, Kris dressed up as Steve McQueen (not Lightning or Alexander), the anti-hero's hero, for Halloween. He hasn't decided what he's going to do come October 31 this year, but he is hoping it doesn't require a wig.



Charo Beans DaBarge

Best Drag Performer

"It was horrible. I had fun that year," says the notorious emcee/host of FBar's "Dream Girls and Legends." Charo likes to push herself out of her comfort zone. The year of the *horrible fun* was the Halloween she went dressed as Pebbles from the Flintstones. Except that Pebbles was all grown up. She wore denim shorts and "an awful wig with a bone in it," dangling a cigarette from a toothless snear. For 2013 she plans to switch it up with a costume influenced by a beautiful and bloody Spanish tradition. Charo says her guilty pleasure is never having enough wigs and costumes. "It's always Halloween for me." →



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the LGBT Community"

—2013 OutSmart Readers' Choice Awards

October 2013

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

On behalf of everyone at Bud Light and Silver Eagle Distributors, I would like to thank the readers of OutSmart Magazine for once again recognizing our role and partnership in the LGBT community. Bud Light is honored to be selected as FAVORITE beer among OutSmart readers for the seventh year in a row. We also greatly appreciate the distinction of MOST SUPPORTIVE COMPANY of the Houston LGBT community for the fourth year in a row, and are happy to share this honor with our Anheuser-Busch family, who was recognized as the MOST SUPPORTIVE NATIONAL COMPANY.

As the largest Anheuser-Busch wholesaler in the U.S., Silver Eagle Distributors is proud to call Houston home, and enjoys supporting the city in various ways throughout the year. This commitment is evident in the LGBT community through the variety of events and non-profit organizations we support, including Pride Houston, The Montrose Center, Bunnies on the Bayou, The Montrose Softball League, and many others. We greatly enjoy supporting these events each year and also thank each of you for enjoying our products in a safe and responsible manner when celebrating.

Our heartfelt thanks again, for recognizing us with these great distinctions. We look forward to another great year of continued participation in the many activities of the LGBT community. Cheers to the readers of OutSmart magazine!

Sincerely,

John L. Nau, III
President and CEO
Silver Eagle Distributors, L.P.



ENJOY RESPONSIBLY



continued from page 46

Best Veterinarian (Male)

Richard Clive, DVM
Midtown Veterinary Hospital
1434 W. Alabama St.
713/528-4900
midtownvethospital.com
Finalists: Randy McBride, DVM; Tom F. Vining, DVM

Best Veterinarian (Female)

Danielle Rosser, DVM
West Alabama Animal Clinic
2030 W. Alabama
713/528-0818
westalabamaanimalclinic.com
Finalists: Christie Cornelius, DVM; Jacquelyn Marshall, DVM

Best Astrologer (Male)

Kevin Casey
Body Mind & Soul Bookstore
7951 Katy Fwy, Ste. N
713/993-0550
bmshouston.com

Best Astrologer (Female)

Lilly Roddy
920 West Main
713/529-5842
lillyroddy.com

Best Interior Designer (Male)

Kevin Hamby
Kevin Hamby Designs
281/250-9678

Best Interior Designer (Female)

Laura Umansky
1840 Westheimer
713/522-0855
laurau.com
Finalist: Glenda Eason

Best Insurance Agent (Male)

David Lorms (tie)
1244 Candlelight
713/688-8669
davidlorms.com
Rob Schmerler (tie)
6575 W. Loop South
Ste. 185, Bellaire, TX
713/661-7700
schmerleragency.com
Finalist: Allen Tran

Best Insurance Agent (Female)

Pam Ellis
5900 Memorial, Ste. 301
713/869-7263
callpame.com
Finalist: Pippa Wiley

Best Real Estate Agent (Male)

Mike Copenhagen (tie)
RE/MAX Metro
2626 Richmond Ave.
713/528-4963
mikecopenhagen.com

Richard Ray (tie)

John Daugherty Realty
520 Post Oak Blvd.
713/351-4674
johnndaugherty.com
Finalists: Eric Gage, Tim Surratt, Andy Weber

Best Real Estate Agent (Female)

Karen Derr (tie)
Boulevard Realty
1545 Heights Blvd.
713/875-7050
yourblvd.com

Pat Walker (tie)

Keller Williams Realty
Metropolitan
5050 Westheimer, Ste. 200
713/412-6682
har.com/patriciawalker
Finalists: Pam Efferson, Debbie Levine, Lynette Lew

Best Hairdresser (Male)

Joel Quinones
Q The Salon
1512 B W. Alabama
713/807-0000
qthesalon.com
Finalists: Jesse Cougot, Carlos Gomez, John Rubio

Best Hairdresser (Female)

Celina Arzola
Nu-Cuts Salon
515 Westheimer, Ste. H
713/524-7858
Finalists: Traci Duff, Patty Gooch

Favorite Community Photographer (Male)

Dalton DeHart
713/622-2202
daltondehart.com
Finalists: John Cox, Oliver Puzon

Favorite Community Photographer (Female)

Yvonne Feece
832/876-1053
yvonnefeece.com

Gayest & Greatest

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Christina Gorczynski Best Volunteer, Female



Christina was born in the month of October, so she says Halloween is a natural favorite. She loves how Halloween stories always begin with something like, "I was dressed up as a flamingo and accidentally got locked out of my house..." She also loves drag, and in her words, "Halloween is the draggiest holiday on the calendar." Christina dresses up ev-

ery year, usually as a celebrity, and remembers back to grade school when she used her allowance to buy a blonde wig at Walgreens and an eighties prom dress from a thrift store. Instant Vanna White. If she could give a thirteen-word acceptance speech for being selected as Best Volunteer, it would be, "The best volunteers recruit other volunteers. Thank volunteers—they'll be dedicated for life."



ACTIVIST Mandy Carter

b. November 2, 1948

Mandy Carter describes herself as an "out, Southern, black, lesbian, social justice activist." She has been advocating for human rights for more than forty-five years. Born in Albany, New York, Carter was raised in orphanages and the foster care system. After high school, she attended Hudson Valley Community College before dropping out and moving to New York City. She met a group of people at the League for Spiritual Discovery and traveled with them to San Francisco. In 1969, she joined the War Resisters League.

In 1992, Carter became a public policy advocate for the Human Rights Campaign. The following year, she helped establish Southerners on New Ground, an organization that integrates people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities and working-class members of the LGBT community in the South. She cofounded the National Black Justice Coalition, the only national organization focused on African-American LGBT civil rights.

In the 2000 election, she participated in the statewide voter empowerment campaign, which produced one of Florida's largest turnouts of black voters. In 2008, Carter was a National Co-Chair for Obama Pride.

Carter won a Spirit of Justice Award from GLADD for advancing LGBT rights. The National Organization for Women called her "one of the nation's leading African-American lesbian activists."

She is the National Coordinator for the Bayard Rustin Commemoration Project of the National Black Justice Coalition. Carter lives in Durham, North Carolina. →



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continued from page 48

Favorite Radio Personality (Male)
Jimmie Carper KPFT 90.1 (tie)
Blake Hayes, MIX 96.5 (tie)
Finalists: Bryan Hlavinka, Special K

Favorite Radio Personality (Female)
Sarah Pepper, HOT 95.7
Finalists: Angie Moreno, Julie Takahashi

Best TV Personality (Male)
Frank Billingsley (tie)
Channel 2, Houston KPRC
click2houston.com
Ernie Manouse (tie)
Channel 8, Houston PBS
ernieontv.com
Finalists: Andy Cerota, Ryan Korsgard

Best TV Personality (Female)
Dominique Sachsa
Channel 2, Houston KPRC
click2houston.com
Finalists: Casey Curry, Deborah Duncan, Maya Shay

Favorite Blogger (Female)
Cristan Williams
transhouston.com

Favorite Blogger (Male)
Joey Guerra
Houston Chronicle and 29-95.com
Finalists: A.J. Mistretta, Michael Pearce

Favorite Tweeter
Joey Guerra
Houston Chronicle
chron.com

Community

Favorite Social Organization
Bunnies on the Bayou
bunniesonthebayou.org
Finalists: EPAH, Houston Gaymers, Montrose Softball League

Favorite Philanthropic Organization
Bunnies on the Bayou (tie)
bunniesonthebayou.org
Kindred Spirits (tie)
kindredspirithouston.org
Finalists: Diana Foundation, OutReach United

Favorite Community Organization
AssistHers (tie)
assisthers.org
Bering Omega (tie)
beringomega.org
Finalists: Legacy, Lesbian Health Initiative

Favorite Benefit Event of the Year
Bunnies on the Bayou
bunniesonthebayou.org
Finalists: Kindred Spirits, Ms. Mint Julep, Victory Fund Brunch

Favorite National LGBT Organization
Victory Fund
victoryfund.org
Finalists: Human Rights Campaign, National Gay & Lesbian Task Force

Favorite Place to Worship
Resurrection MCC
2025 W. 11th
713/861-9149
resurrectionmcc.org
Finalists: Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, Cathedral of Hope, Grace Lutheran, Living Mosaic

Business

Most Supportive Business of the LGBT Community (Local)
Aquafest (tie)
4801 Woodway, Ste. 400W
800/592-9058
aquafestcruises.com
Silver Eagle Distributors (tie)
7777 Washington Avenue
713/869-4361
wideworldofbud.com
Finalists: Charles Armstrong Investments, Deeter Mazda, FBar

Most Supportive Business of the LGBT Community (National)
Anheuser-Busch/Bud Light
anheuser-busch.com
Finalists: Macy's, Shell, Wells Fargo Bank

Best Local LGBT Website
OutSmartMagazine.com
Finalist: mygayhouston.com

Gayest & Greatest

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Gary Wood Best Volunteer, Male

October is one of the busiest months for Gary Wood. He and his partner, Bryant Johnson, throw Houston's annual Coming Out Day Party, raising money for various charities. When it comes to superstitions, Gary says that he doesn't believe in them as much as he's "not willing to put fate to chance." He says that if you do random acts of kindness



and have unwavering ethics, good karma will follow. Thirteen words to describe his outlook: "My advice to everyone—get involved, make a difference, and leave a legacy." The same applies to today's youth. He says it's not too early to start the good karma. "Put down the electronic device and go outside. Start working now on what you want to get out of life tomorrow."



BELGIUM PRIME MINISTER Elio Di Rupo b. July 18, 1951

Elio Di Rupo is the prime minister of Belgium and head of the Socialist Party. He is the first openly gay man to lead a nation.

One of seven children born to Italian Catholic immigrants, Di Rupo was raised in a small town in Belgium's French-speaking Wallonia region. His father died when Di Rupo was one year old. Because his illiterate mother was unable to raise seven children, Di Rupo and two of his siblings were raised in an orphanage.

Di Rupo earned a master's degree and a doctorate in chemistry from the University of Mons-Hainaut. As a student, he became active in the Socialist Party. In 1982, his political career began when he became a municipal councillor in Mons, where he later served as mayor.

Di Rupo has served as a member of Parliament, a member of the European Parliament, and as Belgium's deputy prime minister.

In 1996, Di Rupo's personal life came under fire when he was falsely accused of having sex with underage males. During the media frenzy, he recalls being pursued by journalists, one of whom blurted out, "Yet, they say you're a homosexual!" Di Rupo replied, "Yes. So what?" His political future was not hindered. Three years later, he was named president of the Socialist Party.

In 2011, Belgian journalist Francis Van De Woestyne documented Di Rupo's rise from rags to riches in a biography titled *Elio Di Rupo. Une Vie, Une Vision* (One Life, One Vision). In 2012, Di Rupo was appointed prime minister by King Albert II.

Prime Minister Di Rupo is credited with saving his nation from an economic crisis. In 2003, with Di Rupo's support, Belgium became the second nation to legalize same-sex marriage. →



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continued from page 50

Best Bank/Credit Union

Bank of America (tie)
bankofamerica.com
Chase (tie)
chase.com
Wells Fargo (tie)
wellsfargo.com

Best Copy/Print Shop

Copy.com
1201-F Westheimer
713/528-1201
copydotcom.com

Best Financial Advisor (Male)

Rick Dickson
Wallstreet Texas
5120 Woodway, Ste. 9000
281/953-2050
wallstreettexas.com

Best Financial Advisor (Female)

Grace Yung, CFP
Midtown Financial Group, LLC, 3355 W. Alabama Ste. 230
713/355-9833
midtownfg.com

Best Mortgage Company

Zeus Mortgage
230 Westcott St., Ste. 120
713/275-9387
askzeus.com
Finalists: Buildwealth, John Frels

Best Title Company

Chicago Title, Innerloop
3700 Buffalo Spdwy Ste. 400
713/418-7000
chicagotitleinnerloop.com

Best Homebuilder

Lloyd Russel Homes
Russel Garrison
3939 Washington, Ste. 200
713/529-4399
lloydusselhomes.com

Best Furniture Store

High Fashion Home (tie)
3100 Travis Street
713/528-3838
highfashionhome.com

Best Furniture Store

IKEA (tie)
7810 Katy Fwy.
713/688-7867
ikea-usa.com
Finalists: Frog at Home, Rooms to Go

Best Furniture Store on a Budget

IKEA
7810 Katy Fwy.
713/688-7867
ikea-usa.com
Finalist: Gallery Furniture

Best Landscaping Company

AJ's Landscaping
1223 W. 21st
713/957-0449
ajslandscaping.com
Finalists: Glenwood Weber, Windswept Landscaping

Best Garden & Nursery Supply

Buchanan's Native Plants (tie)
611 E. 11th
713/861-5702
buchanansplants.com
Joshua's Native Plants & Garden Antiques (tie)
502 W. 18th St.
713/862-7444
joshuanativeplants.com
Finalist: Another Place in Time

Best Energy Provider

CenterPoint
1111 Louisiana St.
713/207-1111
centerpointenergy.com
Finalists: Cexa, Green Mountain Energy

Best Pool Company

Tranquility Pools
1935 Richmond Ave.
713/533-0932
tranquilitycustompools.com
Finalist: Reflections

Best Plumber

Village Plumbing
5403 Kirby Dr.
713/581-8353
villageplumbing.com
Finalist: Nick's Plumbing

Best Grocery Store

HEB
Multiple locations
heb.com
Finalists: Kroger, Whole Foods

Best Specialty Food Store

Whole Foods
Multiple locations
Finalists: Central Market, Phoenicia, Spec's, Downtown, Trader Joe's

Gayest & Greatest

continued from page 50

Stewart Zuckerbrod, MD Best Eye Doctor

Dr. Zuckerbrod knows the trials that come with 13, although with a birthday on October 13, he's always considered it a lucky number. His daughters, Samara and Frances, turned 13 in August, which means daddy is planning two bat mitvahs.

We think his good fortune may be because he has rescued so many of his

patients from the evil eye. It's easy to see that Stewart has the gift of the good eye—or, in Jewish culture, one who enjoys seeing others prosper. If the gematria for "chai" (the Hebrew word for "life") is 18, then we'll add five to wish the Zuckerbrods "Kina Hora" for added measure.



DESIGNER Jason Wu

b. September 27, 1982

Jason Wu is a fashion designer who became an overnight sensation when the first lady, Michelle Obama, wore one of his gowns to the inaugural ball in 2009. The First Lady chose a Wu design again for the inaugural ball in 2013.

Wu was born in Taipei, Taiwan. His parents, who own an import-export business, recognized his creative talent at age five. His mother would drive him to bridal stores so he could sketch the dresses. Wu learned to sew by producing doll clothes.

When Wu was nine years old, the family moved to Vancouver, British Columbia. He attended Loomis Chaffee, a prestigious Connecticut prep school. At sixteen, he was designing doll clothes for Integrity Toys. A year later, Wu was named the company's creative director. Wu attended the Parsons School of Design in New York. In 2004, he dropped out six months before graduation to intern for designer Narciso Rodriguez.

In 2006, at age twenty-four, Wu launched his own label and presented his first ready-to-wear collection. His clients include Ivana Trump, actresses January Jones and Kerry Washington, and RuPaul, for whom he designed six RuPaul dolls. In 2008, Wu was recognized with the Fashion Group's International Rising Star Award.

Ikram Goldman, of the Chicago boutique Ikram, introduced Wu's designs to Michelle Obama. Wu created a sparkling white chiffon inaugural gown for her and submitted it to Ikram. Wu didn't know until he saw the First Lady on television that she had chosen his design. Wu, who was twenty-six, became the youngest designer to outfit a first lady for the inauguration. "I was over the moon," he said. "I didn't think it was my turn yet."

Wu's inaugural ball gowns for Mrs. Obama are on display at the Smithsonian Institution.

Jason Wu lives in New York City with his business partner and boyfriend, Gustavo Rangel. Wu has grown his label into an internationally acclaimed fashion brand. →



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continued from page 52

Best Liquor Store
Spec's Liquor Stores

2410 Smith
713/526-8787
specsonline.com

Best Domestic
Auto Dealership
Stewart Cadillac

2520 Main St.
832/369-8318
stewartcadillac.com
Finalists: Helfman Dodge,
Knapp Chevrolet,
Planet Lincoln

Best Import
Auto Dealership
Advantage BMW (tie)

2101 San Jacinto
713/289-1200
advantage-bmw-houston.
com

Momentum Dealerships
(tie)

Multiple locations
713/596-3450
momentum-mini.net
Finalists: Deeter Mazda,
Sterling McCall

Best Place to Buy
Cellular Phones
Apple Store (tie)

Multiple locations
apple.com

Premier Paging(tie)

12220 Murphy Rd., Ste. F
Stafford, TX
281/575-8500
premierwireless.com

Best Place to Buy
Women's Clothes
Macy's

2727 Sage
713/968-1985
macys.com
Finalists: Nordstrom,
Settlement

Best Place to Buy
Men's Clothes
Macy's

2727 Sage
713/968-1985
macys.com
Finalists: MPenner, Nordstrom,
Settlement

Best Jewelry Store
I.W. Marks

3841 Bellaire Blvd.
713/668-5000
iwmaks.com
Finalist: Silverlust

Best Place to Buy
Pet Supplies
Arne's Warehouse

2830 Hicks • 713/869-8321
arneswarehouse.com

Best Antique Store
Thompson's Antique
Center of Texas

1001 W. Loop North
713/688-4211
antiquecenteroftexas.com
Finalist: BJ's Oldies Antique
Shop

Best Place to Buy Eyewear
Eye Gallery (tie)

1806 Westheimer Rd.
713/523-1279
eyegalleryhouston.com

Spectacles (tie)

4317 Montrose Blvd.
713/529-3937
wearusout.com
Finalists: Eye Contact,
Eye Elegance

Best Place to Buy
Erotic Playthings
Hollywood Super Center

2409 Grant St.
713/527-8510
hollywoodsupercenter.com
Finalists: Black Hawk Leather,
Erotic Cabaret, Executive
Video Superstore

Computers/Electronics
Apple Store

Multiple locations
apple.com

Best Catering Firm
Jim Benton of Houston,
LLC

2811 Eastman St.
713/802-2860
jimbentonhouston.com
Finalists: City Kitchen,
El Tiempo, Melange Catering

Best Florist
Glenwood Weber
805 Hyde Park Blvd.
713/295-1498
glenwoodweberdesign.com
Finalist: John Friedman

Best Tattoo Parlor
Electric Chair Tattoo
& Body Piercing

8722 Richmond Ave.
713/780-3500
electricchair.cc
Finalists: Sacred Heart Studio,
Shaw's Tattoo Parlor

Gayest & Greatest

continued from page 52



ACTIVIST José Sarria

b. December 12, 1923
d. August 19, 2013

José Sarria was a drag performer, singer, and activist. He was the first openly gay man in the world to run for public office.

Sarria, who was of Latin-American descent, was born in San Francisco. He was raised by his mother and grandmother, who allowed him to dress in women's clothes.

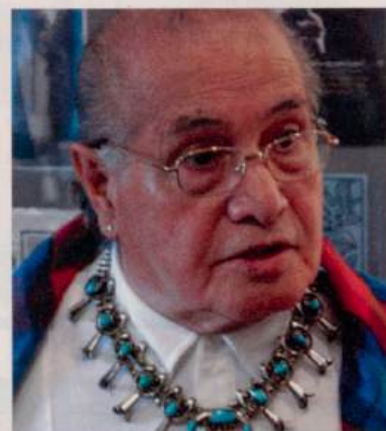
During World War II, Sarria enlisted in the army. His fellow soldiers discriminated against him because he was gay. Sarria became friends with some by giving them tours of San Francisco.

Sarria began performing at The Black Cat, a San Francisco gay club. His shows, which included warning guests of police extortion and raids on gay bars, were a hit. Although the messages were often serious, Sarria presented them humorously and with a gay twist. He became famous for his closing song, "God Save Us Nelly Queens."

In 1961, Sarria became the first openly gay candidate for the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. He lost, but received 5,600 votes, demonstrating that a gay voting bloc could wield political power. The possibility of empowerment laid the groundwork for the election of Harvey Milk.

In the 1960s, San Francisco gay bars were being shut down. The Tavern Guild of San Francisco organized a drag ball to protest. Sarria was crowned Queen of the Ball.

Sarria cofounded the Imperial Court System, an international organization that raises money for people living with HIV/AIDS and other causes. In 2006, a street in San Francisco was named in his honor.



Best Cosmetic Skin
Care Center

Skin Renaissance (tie)
517 West Gray
713/942-7546
skinrenaissance.net

The Skin Renewal Center (tie)

1512 W. Alabama
713/533-0800
theskinrenewalcenter.com
Finalists: Edward Sanchez
Vanity Lounge, Heights
Dermatology, Nu Juv

Best Tanning Salon
Eclipse

415 Westheimer Rd.
713/520-6611
eclipseunlesstanning.com

Best Gym/Place
to Work Out

Anytime Fitness (tie)
1102 Yale St. • 713/869-3222
anytimefitness.com
Houston Gym (tie)
1501 Durham • 713/880-9191
houstongym.com
Finalists: Club Houston, FIT,
Quality Life Fitness

Best Auto Mechanic
Tech Auto

37 Waugh Dr.
713/863-8244
techautomaintenance.com
Finalists: Montrose Car Care,
Silvio's Autohaus

Best Copy/Print Shop
Copy.com

1201 Westheimer Rd.
713/528-1201
copydotcom.com

Best Local Hotel
Hotel ZaZa

5701 Main St. • 713/526-1991
hotelzaza.com/houston
Finalists: Granduca Hotel,
Hotel Derek

Best Airline
Southwest Airlines

southwest.com
Finalist: United Airlines

Best Local Travel Agency
Concierge Travel

4920 Mimosa • 713/661-2117
conciergetravel.cc

Best Travel Website
Orbitz.com

Finalist: kayak.com

Best LGBT Cruise
or Tour Company
Aquafest (tie)

4801 Woodway
Ste. 400W
aquafestcruises.com
Concierge Travel (tie)
4920 Mimosa
713/661-2117
conciergetravel.cc
Finalist: Gayibbean Cruise

Dining

Best New Restaurant
Eleven XI (tie)

607 West Gray
713/529-5881
elevenxi.com
Seasons 52 (tie)
4410 Westheimer Rd.
713/621-5452
seasons52.com



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Sunday, July 13, 2014
Dance Kick-Off

Saturday, August 23, 2014
Celebration Dance

Sunday, December 7, 2014
Holiday Cabaret Sing-A-Long

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— Alison Cook, Houston Chronicle

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Wed. & Sun. closed



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VisionSource-HoustonHeights.com



continued from page 54

Best Restaurant for People Watching

Barnaby's
414 W. Gray St.
713/522-8898
barnabyscafe.com
Finalist: Baba Yega

Best 24-Hour Restaurant

Katz's Deli & Bar
616 Westheimer Rd.
713/521-3838
ilovekatzs.com
Finalists: House of Pies,
Midtown Bar & Grill

Best Restaurant for Elegant Dining

Mark's American Cuisine
1658 Westheimer Rd.
713/523-3800
marks1658.com
Finalists: Da Marco, Sorrel,
Tony's

Best Restaurant for Cheap Eats

Jenni's Noodle House
3111 S. Shepherd/
multiple locations
713/523-7600
noodlesrule.com
Finalist: Tacos a Go-Go

Best Food Truck

Bernie's Burger Bus (tie)
281/386-2447
berniesburgerbus.com
Tila's (tie)
1111 S. Shepherd Dr.
713/522-7654
tilas.com
Finalists: H-Town Streets,
Monster PBJ

Best Restaurant for Outdoor Dining

Baba Yega
2607 Grant St.
713/522-0042
babayega.com
Finalists: Backstreet Café,
Cedar Creek, Tila's

Best Breakfast

Baby Barnaby's
602 Fairview
713/522-0106
barnabyscafe.com
Finalists: Breakfast Klub,
Tacos a Go-Go

Best Brunch

Chelsea Grill
4621 Montrose
713/942-9857
chelseagrill.com
Finalists: Gloria's, Riva's,
Sorrel, St. Genevieve

Best Deli

Katz's Deli & Bar
616 Westheimer
713/521-3838
Finalists: Jason's Deli,
Kenny & Ziggy's

Best Lunch

Barnaby's
604 Fairview
713/522-0106
barnabyscafe.com
Finalists: The Acadian Bakers,
Auntie Chang's, Gloria's,
Jenni's Noodle House

Best Dessert

The Acadian Bakers (tie)
604 W. Alabama
713/520-1484
acadianbakers.com
Dessert Gallery (tie)
3600-D Kirby
713/522-9999
dessertgallery.com
Finalists: Chocolate Bar

Best Barbecue

Goode Co. Barbeque
5109 Kirby Dr.
713/522-2530
goodecompany.com
Finalists: Hickory Hollow,
Pappas

Best British

Black Labrador Pub
4100 Montrose Blvd.
713/529-1199
blacklabradorpub.com
Finalist: Red Lion

Best Cajun

BB's Cajun Café
2710 Montrose Blvd.
713/524-4499
bbscafe.com
Finalists: Ragin Cajun,
Woodrow's Heights

Best Chinese

Kam's
4500 Montrose Blvd.
713/529-5057
kamsuisine.com
Finalists: Auntie Chang's,
Cafe Ginger

Gayest & Greatest

continued from page 54

Tara & Kara Dion Best Drag Performers - Galveston



Tara Dion is the show director at 3rd Coast Downtown in Galveston and hosts Fab Friday and the Super Saturday Shows. Members of the audience laugh a little when she's introduced as "the one and only Tara Dion." Everyone knows she is one half of the notorious Texas Twins, the Dion sisters. Kara often performs there too, and in Houston at Guava Lamp and FBar. Imagine all the tricks a pair of identical drag queens can pull. And the treats. (All puns intended.) →

Best Cuban

El Rey
9742 Katy Fwy, #100
832/358-8100
elreytaqueria.com
Finalists: Cafe Piquet,
El Meson

Best French

Charivari Restaurant
2521 Bagby St.
713/521-7231
charivarirest.com
Finalists: Brasserie 19,
L'Olivier Restaurant

Best Greek

Niko Niko's
2520 Montrose Blvd.
713/528-1308
nikonikos.com
Finalist: Theo's

Best Hamburger

Lankford Grocery
88 Dennis St.
713/522-9555
lankfordgrocery.com
Finalists: Barnaby's, BRC,
Hub Cap Grill, Rudyard's

Best Indian

Bombay Brasserie
2414 University Blvd.
Ste. 210, 713/355-2000
thebombaybrasserie.com
Finalists: Pondicheri, Shiva

Best Italian

Riva's
1117 Missouri • 713/529-0666
rivasrestaurant.com
Finalists: Carrabba's, Damien's

Best Japanese

Uchi
904 Westheimer Rd.
713/522-4808
uchirestaurants.com
Finalist: Kata Robata

Best Mexican

1308 Cantina/El Tiempo
1308 Montrose/multiple
locations • 713/807-8996
eltiempocantina.com
Finalists: Gloria's,
Teotihuacán, Tila's

Best Mediterranean

Aladdin
912 Westheimer Rd.
713/942-2321
aladdinhouston.com
Finalists: Fadi's, Skewers

Best Pizza

Pizza L'Vino (tie)
544 Waugh Dr.
713/526-1000
pizzalvino.com
Star Pizza (tie)
2111 Norfolk St.
713/523-0800
starpizza.net
Finalist: Romano's

Best Seafood

Danton's Seafood
4611 Montrose Blvd.
713/807-8883
dantonseasfood.com
Finalists: Goode Company
Seafood, Liberty Kitchen

Best Sushi

Osaka (tie)
515 Westheimer Rd.
713/533-9098
osakasushi.com
Blue Fish House (tie)
2241 Richmond Ave.
713/529-3100
bluefishhouse.com
Finalist: Oishi

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Dr. Barrios is an
American Academy of Aesthetic Medicine Member &
American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery Fellow

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continued from page 56

Best Steakhouse Laurenzo's (tie)

4412 Washington Ave.
713-880-5111 • laurenzos.net
La Casa del Caballo (tie)
322 Westheimer Rd.
832/623-6467
lacasadelcaballo.com
Finalist: Morton's

Best Thai Nidda

1226 Westheimer Rd.
713/522-8895
niddathai.com
Finalists: Thai Cottage,
Thai Spice

Best Vegetarian Radical Eats (tie)

507 Westheimer Rd.
713/697-8719
radicaleats.com
Ruggles Green (tie)
2311 W. Alabama St.
713/533-0777
rugglesgreen.com
Finalists: Field of Greens,
Hobbit Café

Best Vietnamese Mo Mong

1201 Westheimer Rd.
713/524-5664
mo-mong.com
Finalists: Kim Son, Van Loc

Best Wings

Buffalo Wild Wings
Multiple locations
buffalowildwings.com
Finalist: Griff's

Drinks/Spirits

Best Coffee House Starbucks

Multiple locations
starbucks.com
Finalists: Ben's Beans, Black-
smith, Southside Espresso

Favorite Wine Bar Boheme

307 Fairview • 713/529-1099
barboheme.com
Finalists: 13 Celsius,
Max's Wine Dive

Best Happy Hour Crocker Bar

2313 Crocker • 713-529-3355
m.crockerbar.com
Finalists: FBar, Guava
Lamp, JR's

Best Margarita FBar

202 Tuam • 713/522-3227
fbarhouston.com
Finalists: Bayou City Bar, JR's

Best Martini FBar

202 Tuam • 713/522-3227
fbarhouston.com
Finalists: Guava Lamp, Venus

Favorite Brand of Beer Bud Light

budlight.com
Finalists: Shiner, Stella Artois

Favorite Brand of Liquor Ketel One

ketelone.com
Finalists: Jager, Smirnoff

Favorite Brand of Energy Drink Red Bull

redbull.com
Finalist: Monster

Entertainment/ Nightlife

Favorite Gay Bar Crocker Bar (tie)

2313 Crocker St.
713/529-3355
m.crockerbar.com

JR's (tie)

808 Pacific St.
713/521-2519
Finalists: FBar, George

Favorite Sports Bar George Country Sports Bar

617 Fairview
713/528-8102
georgescountrysportsbar.com

Best Women's Bar Venus

2901 Fannin St.
713/751-3185
venushouston.com
Finalists: Ranch Hill Saloon,
The Usual

Best Club for Dancing South Beach

801 Pacific St.
713/529-7623
southbeachthenightclub.com
Finalists: Blur Bar, FBar

Gayest & Greatest

continued from page 56

IKEA

Best Furniture Store

Chant with us: "Malm, Brimnes, Brusali, Mandal, Fjell." What are we conjuring? A bedroom suite from IKEA. "Hemnes, Expedit, Besta!" is the spell to organize your cookbook library. Just outside of Smaland, you can smell the Swedish meatballs and cinnamon rolls. Just a friend and a set of allen wrenches are all you need to assemble your Scandinavian furniture. For those

who can't wait to get their IKEA catalog each year, you'll be excited to find out that in 2014, IKEA is re-introducing the piece that started it all—the "Lövet" leaf table from the 1950s. If you want one, the incantation is easy to remember. Although now it's spelled "Lövbacken," who can forget the phrase *Love Bacon*? It's perfect for a witch's brew served in a Blanda.

The Acadian Bakers Sandra Jean Bubbett

Best Dessert (tie with Dessert Gallery)

The ghosts of specialty cakes past haunt the walls of the Acadian Bakers. Owner Sandra Jean Bubbett is known around these parts as Baker to the Stars, so it was no surprise when Gothic novelist Anne Rice came to town several years ago for a book signing and the bookstore asked Bubbett to make a black wedding cake. She had so much fun with it that she attended Rice's

book signing dressed as a priest, convincing the author for a minute that she actually was one. She's created a cake to look like the old governor's mansion in Austin, so she can probably make a haunted one, too. Bubbett is a little superstitious, knocking on wood for good luck. But luck doesn't factor into baking—it's all about very precise measurements. Sandra has that down to a wickedly delicious science. →

Best Drag Show Bar FBar

202 Tuam • 713/522-3227
fbarhouston.com
Finalists: JR's, TC's Show Bar

Best Straight Bar Royal Oak

1318 Westheimer Rd.
281/974-4752
royaloakhouston.com
Finalists: Boheme,
Rudyard's Bar

Best Place for Two-Step Dancing Neon Boots

11410 Hempstead Hwy.
713/677-0828
neonbootclub.com
Finalists: Ranch Hill Saloon,
Rebels Honky Tonk

Best Place to Shoot Pool George Country Sports Bar

617 Fairview
713-528-8102
georgescountrysportsbar.com
Finalists: JR's, Ripcord,
Tony's Corner Pocket

Best Place to See Male Dancers Meteor

2306 Genesee St.
713/521-0123
Finalists: JR's, Tony's
Corner Pocket

Best Place to Show Off Your Leather Eagle

213 Milam St. • 713/236-8777
eaglehouston.com
Finalists: Montrose Mining
Company, Ripcord

Best Club if You're Under 21 South Beach

810 Pacific • 713/529-7623
southbeachthenightclub.com
Finalists: Bayou City Bar and
Grill, Blur

Best Club After 2 a.m. South Beach

810 Pacific • 713/529-7623
southbeachthenightclub.com
Finalists: Ripcord, Viviana's

Best Bartender (Male) Chris Robinson (tie)

Marc Ruiz (tie)
Finalists: David Cunningham,
Mike Rubio

Best Bartender (Female) Amanda Plocheck

Finalists: Ailiah Crawford,
Crystal Murley

Best DJ (Male) DJ Eddie E (tie)

Joe Ross (tie)
Finalists: Chris Allen, DJ Level

Best DJ (Female) DJ Athenz

Finalists: DJ Melle Mel,
DJ Rocky B

Most Divine Drag Queen Charo Beans DaBarge

Finalists: Kara Dion, Kofi,
Violet S'Arbleu

Best Local Non-Drag Entertainer (Male) Marty Adamson

Finalists: Jerry Atwood,
Blake Hayes

Best Local Non-Drag Entertainer (Female) Morena Roas

Finalist: Nina Lombardo

Best Local Band Kerri K & the Stonewall Riot

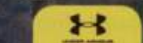
Finalists: Fluff the Kat,
Gadget White Band

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continued from page 58

Galveston People

Community Hero (Male) Rodney Seiler

Finalists: David Bowers,
Joe Jaworski

Community Hero (Female) Jill Costa

Finalist: Misty Valdez

Most Prominent LGBT Male Activist James Stork

Finalist: Rodney Seilers

Most Prominent LGBT Female Activist Jennifer Meyers

Finalist: Misty Valdez

Most Valuable Male Volunteer Robert Evans

Finalists: David Bowers,
James Stork, Robert Zahn

Most Valuable Female Volunteer Pam Froeschner

Finalist: Misty Valdez

Leading Male Fundraiser Rodney Seiler

Finalist: James Stork

Leading Female Fundraiser Misty Valdez

Favorite Local Politician (Male) Mayor Joe Jaworski

Favorite Local Politician (Female) Betty Massey

Finalist: Elizabeth Beeton

Best LGBT Businessperson Rodney Seiler

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice
409/765-6911

Finalists: David Paschall,
VJ Tramonte

Best Attorney (Male) Eric Kirkpatrick

1 Moody Plaza, 18th Floor
409/797-3200 • greetherz.com
Finalists: Joe Jaworski,
VJ Tramonte

Best Attorney (Female) Debbie Hunt & Connie Moore

3608 Audubon, Houston, TX
713/522-4282
mooreandhunt.com

Best Eye Doctor Kevin Katz, OD, MS

Texas State Optical
515 22nd St.
409/762-8679
tsogalveston.com

Best Physician (Male) Jim Hunderup, MD

1401 St. Joseph Pkwy
713/756-4080
Finalist: Victor S. Sierpina, MD

Best Physician (Female) Angela Shepherd, MD

6710 Stewart Rd., Ste. 100
409/744-4030

Best Dentist (Male) David Colombo, DDS, PC

4410 Seawall Blvd.
409/763-8444

Best Dentist (Female) Barbara A. Pickering, DDS

8333 Stewart Rd.
409/744-4330
barbarapickeringdds.com

Best Chiropractor Chad Duchon, DC

2724 61st St., Ste. 5
409/744-9355
galvestonspine.com
Finalist: Daniel Hatmaker, DC

Best Massage Therapist Larry Campbell

Best Veterinarian Jackie Cole, DVM

Campeche Cove Animal
Hospital
3802 Cove View Blvd.
409/740-0808
campechecoveanimalhospital.com

Best Interior Design Seamus Kraham

Frog at Home
2701 Broadway
409/762-3764
frogathome.com
Finalist: Trent Brown

Gayest & Greatest

continued from page 58



SINGER Ma Rainey

b. April 26, 1886

d. December 22, 1939

Ma Rainey, called the "Mother of the Blues," was one of the earliest known American blues singers and recording artists. She is recognized as one of the first great female blues vocalists.

Born Gertrude Pridgett in Columbus, Georgia, she was one of five children in a family of performers. From age fourteen, she sang and danced with traveling minstrel shows. At eighteen, she married singer Will "Pa" Rainey, and took the stage name Ma Rainey. Billed as the Assassinator of the Blues, the couple toured the Southern minstrel circuit. In 1916, Rainey separated from her husband and began touring the nation with her own band.

In 1923, Paramount Records signed Rainey. Over the next five years, she recorded more than one hundred songs with some of the great musicians of her era, including Louis Armstrong and Thomas Dorsey, the "father of black gospel music."

In 1928, Paramount considered Rainey's classic style of blues no longer fashionable and terminated her contract. Before that, she recorded one of her last songs for the

label, "Prove It On Me Blues," which was cited as a watershed for its lyrics about lesbian desire. In the mid-1930s, she returned to her hometown, where she was the proprietor of two theaters.

Her song "See See Rider Blues" was included by the National Recording Preservation Board in the Library of Congress National Recording Registry, and was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame.

In 1983, Rainey was inducted into the Blues Foundation's Hall of Fame. Seven years later, she was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

In 2007, the Gertrude "Ma" Rainey House and Blues Museum in Columbus, Georgia, opened to the public. →



Galveston Community

Best Insurance Agent (Male) Alex Monteith

SMI Agency
1802 Broadway, Ste. 118
409/765-9515
smiagency.com

Best Real Estate Agent (Male) David Bowers (tie)

The House Company
2615 Broadway
409/763-2800
thehousecompany.com

VJ Tramonte (tie)

Joe Tramonte Realty
1802 Broadway, Ste. 206
409/765-9837
tramonterealty.com
Finalists: Tom Schwenk,
Robert Zahn

Best Real Estate Agent (Female) Karen Flowers

Joe Tramonte Realty
(409)789-7377
11 Mariner Pass
tramonterealty.com

Best Hairdresser Jim Windmiller

Windmiller's Hair Salon
1015 26th St.
409/762-1627
windmillers.com
Finalists: Roy Fronsee, Loi Gurley

Favorite Community Photographer (Female) Susan Henry

2115 Postoffice
409/762-6454
susanhenryphotography.com

Favorite Community Photographer (Male) Billy Hill

409/771-8211
g-townsurf.com

Best TV Personality Frank Billingsley

KPRC, Channel 2
click2houston.com

Favorite Social Organization Krewe of Bacchus

kreweofbacchustexas.com

Favorite Community Organization Galveston Historical Foundation

502 20th St. • 409/765-7834
galvestonhistory.com
Finalist: AIDS Coalition
of Galveston

Favorite Benefit Event of the Year ACCT Annual Brunch

Finalists: 3rd Coast Turn-About,
PAWS Gala

Most Supportive of the LGBT Community (Local) 3rd Coast Downtown

2416 Postoffice • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com
Finalists: Galveston.com, Island
ETC Theatre, Stars Beach Club

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www.ResurrectionMCC.org



continued from page 60

Best Local LGBT Website
Galveston.com
523 24th St.
409/765-3502
galveston.com

Best Bank/Credit Union
HomeTown Bank
1801 45th St.
409/763-1271
bankofgalveston.com
Finalists: Amolo Fed Credit Union, Bank of America

Best Mortgage Company
David Paschall
Secure Mortgage Co.
6511 Stewart Rd.
409/741-9300
securemortgagecompany.com

Best Title Company
Stewart Title
222 Kempner
409/763-4641
stewartgalveston.com
Finalists: Chicago Title, Southland Title

Best Furniture Store
Star Furniture
3727 Broadway
409/762-7821
starfurnituregalveston.com
Finalist: The Frog at Home

Best Garden/Nursery Supply
Tom's Thumb Nursery & Landscaping
2014 45th St.
409/763-4713
tomsthumbnursery.com

Best Art Gallery
Buchanan Art Gallery
302 25th St.
409/763-8683
832/289-0029

Best Grocery Store
Kroger
5730 Seawall Blvd.
409/741-8580
kroger.com

Best Specialty Food Store
Spec's
6815 Stewart Rd.
409/740-3161
specsonline.com
Finalist: Oasis Market

Best Liquor Store
Spec's
6815 Stewart Rd.
409/740-3161
specsonline.com
Finalist: Economy Liquor

Best Domestic Auto Dealership
Classic Auto Group
Galveston
8020 Broadway
409/744-5711
classicgalveston.com

Best Place to Buy Women's Clothing
Ginger Snaps
501 E. Main St.
League City, TX
281/338-1001
Finalist: Rue21

Best Place to Buy Men's Clothes
Cruz Cortez Clothiers
2227 Postoffice
409/763-9600
cruzcortezclothiers.com

Best Jewelry Store
Fullen Jewelry
2215 Postoffice
409/763-0555
fullenjewelry.com

Best Place to Buy Eyewear
TSO/Kevin Katz, OD, MS
515 22nd St.
409/762-8679
tsogalveston.com

Best Place to Buy Erotic Playthings
Wild Side Things (tie)
902 Seawall Blvd.
409/762-0074
XTC Boutique (tie)
5309 I-45/multiple locations
La Marque, TX
409/986-6144

Best Catering Firm
Cathy Townsend
1719 25th St.
409/765-7005
Finalist: Catering by Benno

Best Day Spa
Hotel Galvez
2024 Seawall Blvd.
409/765-7721
wyndhamhotelgalvez.com
Finalist: San Luis

Gayest & Greatest

continued from page 60

Giacomo's

Best Italian Restaurant

It's so refreshing to walk into an Italian restaurant that isn't hung up on visual cues instead of letting the food speak for itself. Nestled in Upper Kirby at 3215 Westheimer, you won't find red and white checkered table cloths, sangria bottles on the table with ivy and grapes falling abundantly from baskets adorned with swatches of red, white and green fabric. Oh no. Not here. Bright and

bold meet your palate. The food is authentic. If you decide to order the Spaghetti Alla Carbonara, twirl the pasta on a spoon. Italians believe that it's bad luck to cut your pasta. Italians aren't as superstitious about 13 as they are about the number 17. Rearranging the Roman numerals XVII spells VIXI, which means "I have lived" in Latin, or in other words, "my life is over."

Farley Girls Café

Best New Restaurant - Galveston

Ghost tales haunt Galveston, considered to be one of the most haunted cities in the U.S. after New Orleans. Frightful tours are offered throughout the month of October. During a séance at the Menard House, you feel a cool breeze and hear someone whisper, "Farley Girls Café." The building on the corner of 8th and Postoffice looks as if it could have been haunted. If the

paranormal are present, it's not hard to figure out why they stay. Order the thirteenth item on the dinner menu, the "Very Popular Shrimp & Grits." It's grits made with gouda and mushrooms with grilled shrimp on top. Toast the fact that your parking will be validated, so you can head off to the Hotel Galvez for more spooky fun. →

Best Local B&B
The Mermaid & the Dolphin Resort
1103 33rd St. • 800/930-1866
mermaidanddolphin.com
Finalist: Lasker Inn

Best Local Hotel
San Luis Resort
5222 Seawall Blvd.
409/744-1500
sanluisresort.com
Finalists: Commodore on the Beach, Hotel Galvez & Spa, The Tremont House

Best Local Travel Agency
Galveston.com
523 24th St. • 409/765-3502
galveston.com

Galveston Dining

Best New Restaurant
Farley Girls Café (tie)
801 Postoffice • 409/497-4454
Zack's Mac Shack (tie)
2219 Postoffice • 409/539-5618

Best Restaurant for People Watching
The Spot
3204 Seawall Blvd.
409/621-5237
thespotgalveston.com

Best Restaurant for Elegant Dining
The Steakhouse at San Luis Resort (tie)
5222 Seawall Blvd.
409/744-1500
sanluisresort.com
Shearn's Seafood and Prime Steaks (tie)
Moody Gardens Hotel
Seven Hope Blvd.
409/741-8484
moodygardenshotel.com

Best Restaurant for Cheap Eats
Gorditas
712 Seawall Blvd.
409/621-1944
galveston.com/gorditas
Finalist: The Press Box.

Best Restaurant for Outdoor Dining
The Sunflower Bakery & Cafe
512 14th St.
409/763-5500
thesunflowerbakeryandcafe.com

Best Breakfast
Mosquito Cafe
628 14th St.
409/763-1010
mosquitocafe.com
Finalists: Miller's Landing, The Sunflower Bakery & Cafe

Best Brunch
Hotel Galvez & Spa
2024 Seawall Blvd.
409/765-7721
galveston.com/galvez
Finalists: Mosquito Cafe, The Sunflower Bakery & Cafe

Best Lunch Spot
Mosquito Cafe
628 14th St.
409/763-1010
mosquitocafe.com
Finalist: The Sunflower Bakery & Cafe

Best Dessert
The Steakhouse at San Luis Resort
5222 Seawall
409/744-1500
sanluisresort.com
Finalists: Mosquito Cafe, The Sunflower Bakery & Cafe

Best Barbecue
Queen's Bar-b-que
3428 Avenue S
409/762-3151
galveston.com/queens

Best Steak
The Steakhouse at San Luis Resort
5222 Seawall Blvd.
409/744-1500
sanluisresort.com

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continued from page 62

Best Cajun

Benno's on the Beach
1200 Seawall Blvd.
409/762-4621
benno'sofgalveston.com
Finalist: Cajun Corner

Best Chinese

Happy Buddha
2827 61st St.
409/744-5774
galveston.com/happybuddha
Finalist: Beijing Garden

Best Greek

Olympia Grill
4908 Seawall Blvd.
409/766-1222
olympiagrill.net

Best Hamburger

The Spot
3204 Seawall
409/621-5237
thespotgalveston.com

Best Italian

Di Bella's Italian Restaurant
1902 31st St.
409/763-9036
galveston.com/dibellas
Finalist: Mario's on the Seawall

Best Japanese

Yamato Japanese Restaurant
2104 61st St.
409/744-2742
Finalist: Sky Bar

Best Mexican

The Original Mexican Café
1401 Market St.
409/762-6001
theoriginalgalveston.com
Finalists: Gorditas, Salsa's

Best Mediterranean

Mediterranean Chef
2402 Strand
409/765-7700
Finalist: Olympia Grill

Best Pizza

Mario's on the Seawall
628 Seawall Blvd.
409/763-1693
mariosseawall.com
Finalist: Jack's Pub on Postoffice

Best Seafood

Gaido's Seafood
3900 Seawall Blvd.
409/762-9625
gaidos.com
Finalist: Benno's on the Beach

Best Sushi

Sky Bar
2107 Postoffice
409/621-4759
skybargalveston.com
Finalist: Yamato Japanese

Best Thai

Pho 20
2101 Broadway
409/750-9200
pho20.com

Best Vegetarian

Mosquito Café
628 14th St.
409/763-1010
mosquitocafe.com
Finalists: Pho 20,
The Sunflower Bakery & Cafe

Best Vietnamese

Pho 20
2101 Broadway
409/750-9200
pho20.com

Galveston Entertainment

Favorite Gay Bar

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com
Finalists: Pink Dolphin, Robert's
Lafitte, Stars Beach Club

Best Women's Bar

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice
409/765-6911
Finalist: Stars Beach Club

Best Coffee House

MOD Coffee & Tea House
2126 Postoffice
409/765-5659
modcoffeehouse.com

Best Happy Hour

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com
Finalist: Stars Beach Club

Best Margarita

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com
Finalists: Salsa's, Stars

Best Martini

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com
Finalists: Sky Bar,
Stars Beach Club

Best Straight Bar

Bucks Bar/BuckShot Saloon
2409 Market St.
409/599-9437
galveston.com/bucks

Best Club for Dancing

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice
409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com
Finalist: Stars Beach Club

Best Drag Show Bar

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice
409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com
Finalist: Lafitte's

Best Place for Two-Step Dancing

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com
Finalist: Stars Beach Club

Best Place to Shoot Pool

3rd Coast Downtown
2416 Postoffice • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastdowntown.com

Best Place to See Male Dancers

The Pink Dolphin Tavern
1706 23rd St. • 409/621-1808
thepinkdolphintavern.com
Finalist: Stars Beach Club

Best Bartender

John Timothy Branstetter
3rd Coast Downtown
Finalist: Josh Mills

Best DJ

DJ Houseman (Joe Flores)
3rd Coast Downtown

Most Divine Drag Queen

Tara Dion & Kara Dion
3rd Coast Downtown
Finalists: Lana Blake,
Kymbor Divine, CC Ryder

Best Local Band

The Line Up
Jeff Pennington
thelineupmusic.com

Gayest & Greatest

continued from page 62



Transgender Hero

Gwen Araujo

b. February 24, 1985
d. October 3, 2002

Gwen Araujo was a transgender teen who was the victim of a brutal murder. Her attack brought national attention to the issue of violence against transgender people.

Born in the San Francisco Bay area, Edward Araujo Jr. underwent hormone therapy in high school and adopted the name Gwen Amber Rose Araujo. She left school because of incessant bullying and ridicule.

The night Araujo was murdered, she attended a party at the home of Jose Merél. According to police reports, there were four young men involved in the attack—Michael Magidson, Jose Merél, Jaron Nabors, and Jason Casarez. At trial, Nabors testified that Araujo had consensual sex with a few of the men before it was revealed that she was biologically male. Araujo was beaten and strangled to death, hog-tied, wrapped in a blanket, and buried in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

In exchange for his testimony against the other defendants, Nabors pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter. The other three men, charged with first-degree murder and committing a hate crime, invoked the transgender "panic defense," claiming that the victim provoked the attack by having sex under false pretenses. By invoking this defense, Magidson and Merél were convicted of second-degree murder and acquitted of the hate crime. Casarez pleaded no contest to voluntary manslaughter.

Araujo's murder helped bring awareness to the incidence of violence against transgender people and the "panic defense." In 2006, California enacted the Gwen Araujo Justice for Victims Act. The law allows a judge to instruct jurors not to consider their anti-LGBT biases during deliberations. That same year, Lifetime

aired an original movie, *A Girl Like Me: The Gwen Araujo Story*. The case was the subject of a 2007 documentary, *Trained in the Ways of Men*.

Each November, communities across the nation hold a Transgender Day of



Remembrance to memorialize the dozens of transgender people like Gwen Araujo who are murdered every year. ■

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Blue State of Mind

Does Lane Lewis have what it takes to turn Texas blue?

by Megan Smith

Looking at a recent electoral map, Harris County is a blue island floating in a vast Republican-red sea. While the razor-thin margin of Obama's 2012 victory in Harris County may seem like a temporary fluke, this small blue island is instilling fear into Republicans nationwide, according to Harris County Democratic Party Chair Lane Lewis. Why the concern? Harris County may be the key to turning that surrounding sea a different color—blue.

With 25 percent of all Texas votes coming out of Harris County, Lewis may very well hold that key to future Democratic victories in elections on all levels. "What I realized is that I was standing in the center of a storm," he says. "If we can [permanently] flip Harris County [by delivering substantial and consistent margins of victory], we can flip Texas. If we flip Texas, the White House is ours for generations."

Turning Texas blue isn't feasible if Democrats aren't fully engaged at all times, Lewis says. After his unanimous election in 2011, Lewis presented his vision for the party that included more fundraising and, most notably, year-round organizing—a system that has just begun to pay off. In the 2012 presidential election, Obama won 49.38 percent of the Harris County vote to Romney's 49.33 percent. "My vision is that if Harris County can go blue three cycles in a row in 2012, 2014, and 2016, it's game over," he says.

A political and community organizer since his teenage years, no one knows the power of good organizing better than Lewis. "My first big political act was coming out," he says. "From there, I wanted to make it better and easier for others to come out and live as the people they were born to be."

In 1987, Lewis gave his first speech in front of the Houston City Council at age nineteen, speaking out against an ordinance that would only allow people twenty-one or older to patronize nightclubs that served liquor. "The place was standing-room only," he says. "I was hooked. I realized that my voice and my words could actually influence and make a difference on politics and on people's lives."

It wasn't until 1991 that Lewis re-entered the political sphere. His work as marketing director for a treat-

"I think Texas is a blue state. I just don't think we're voting."

ment facility that specialized in LGBT issues led him to the Houston GLBT Political Caucus—an organization where he would later serve as president. There he met prominent activists Sue Lovell, Ray Hill, and Annise Parker. "They actually listened to my opinions and were actually interested in what I had to say," Lewis says. "Probably because

I was so interested in what they had to say."

The caucus also led Lewis to community leader Bill Scott, and together they formed The Lewis-Scott Youth Center, the nation's first organization to provide shelter to LGBT street kids living with HIV. Up until that point, LGBT youth were completely overlooked when it came to funding.

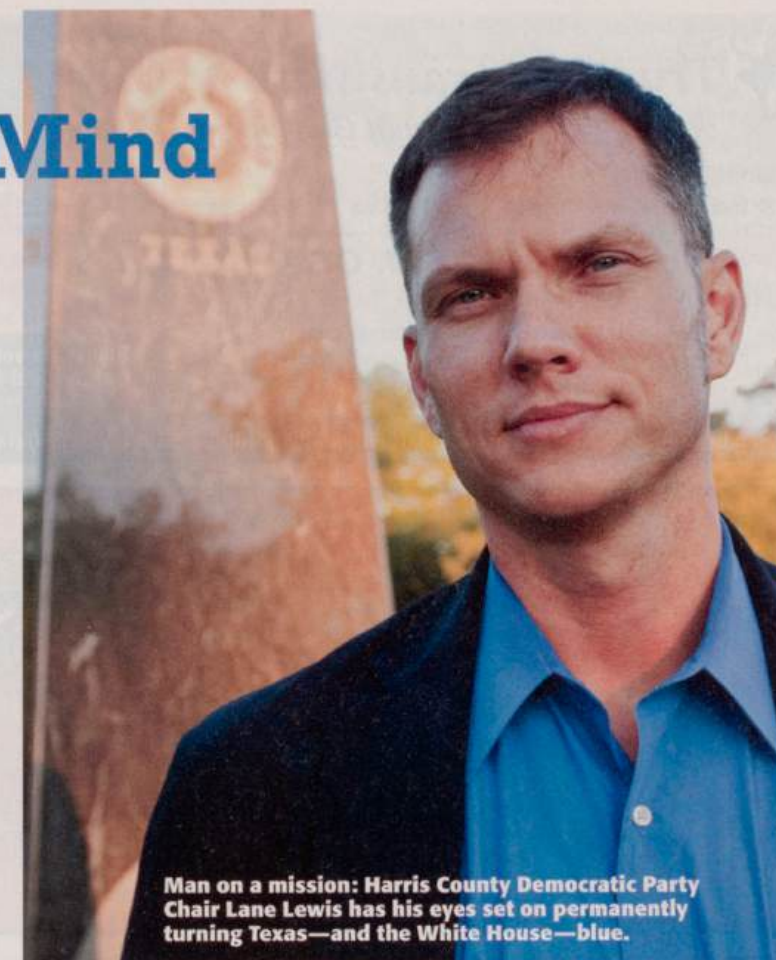
A civil rights history buff, Lewis became fixated on an idea he had read in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*—you can't take your argument for civil rights to a government that oppresses you; you have to take it to the United Nations to make the world recognize your plight.

Through Ray Hill, Lewis was able to do just that. Hill brought

Lewis to the initial meeting for Stonewall 25, the 1994 Stonewall anniversary march on the United Nations to bring global attention to the needs of LGBT people. When he heard their plan, "I almost fell out of my chair," Lewis says. He went on to serve as both the youth constituent and chair for the direct-action working group for the organization.

The Houston bar where Lewis was working in 1998 seemed an unlikely place for history to be made. Everyone who knew Lewis was aware that he was focused on getting rid of Texas Penal Code 21.06, which made homosexual sex illegal. "I was like a dog with a bone with 21.06," Lewis says. "I wanted it gone. So I had put feelers out everywhere I knew."

A Friday night in October brought Lewis just what he was looking for. A bar regular named Mark, who was a semi-retired →



Man on a mission: Harris County Democratic Party Chair Lane Lewis has his eyes set on permanently turning Texas—and the White House—blue.

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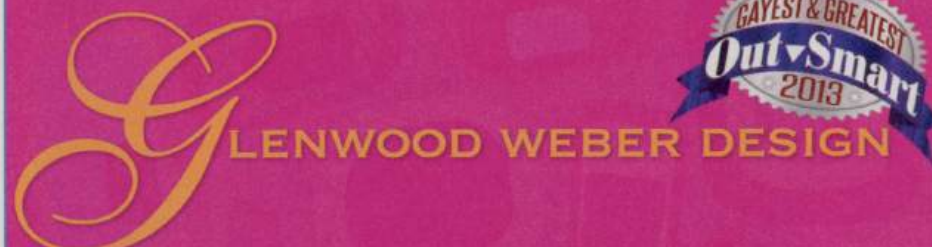
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Blue State of Mind

continued from previous page

deputy, came in and said, "I think I've got something for you." A few days later, Lewis received a copy of the police report by fax that detailed the arrest of John Lawrence and Tyron Garner. "As soon as I saw it, I knew I had it," Lewis says. "I knew this was it, but I also knew I had to keep them from pleading out."

After convincing Lawrence and Garner to trust him, Lewis called Lovell, Hill, and Parker. They all agreed that the men had a case and that Mitchell Katine should be their lawyer. "The reason I called them is that, from the very beginning, I didn't want this to be my case," Lewis says. "This was a community case. Mitchell was well-liked in the community and had spent years giving away his legal services. He had paid his dues and he deserved it." The case went on to the U.S. Supreme Court as *Lawrence v. Texas*, one of the most prominent victories in gay-rights history.

"Think about it like this," Lewis says. "If I want equality for all gays and lesbians, the ultimate prize, other than changing the hearts and minds of the naysayers, is equality in job opportunity—your ability not to be fearful and to be protected at your job for who you are. But you can't go right there, can you? If I want to be protected in my job, then I need to be protected in my personal life. That means legalize marriage. But I can't go straight there either. So where do I start? I can't be protected in my job if it's illegal for me to be gay—21.06. I can't be legally married or comfortable in my relationships, married or otherwise, if it is illegal for me to be in those relationships [because of Texas Penal Code] 21.06. So 21.06 wasn't about me personally. The goal was job equality and protection under the law."

Lewis credits Hill for advice he still uses in his political career today. "We were sitting at lunch one day, and Ray told me that the antigay movement had already lost; they just didn't know it yet," Lewis says. "We've already won—we just need to start acting like it."

After Lewis left a teaching job in 2009, he decided to take that mentality a step further. He ran a solid campaign for City Council in District A and lost by only a small margin. Undeterred, he was soon elected as Chair for Texas State Senate District 15. There, he ran a phone-bank program that turned out 63 percent of targeted voters in 2010, "which was unheard of," he says. "I think there was some hope that 'if he can do that in Senate District 15, I wonder what he could do for the whole county.'"

When Gerry Birnberg, former Harris

County Democratic Party chair, announced he was stepping down in late 2011, Lewis got his opportunity.

Lewis hit the party with something they'd never done before—a mail ballot program. Postcards are mailed to county residents age sixty-five or older, allowing them to easily request a mail ballot. The party then provides follow-up phone calls to ensure these people have received their ballot applications, ballots, and have gotten their questions answered.

The Republicans usually receive about 24,000 straight-ticket Republican votes from their mail ballot program, which they've been doing for years, Lewis says. Democrats at the time were only receiving about 3,000 straight-ticket Democratic votes. "With those numbers, we've practically lost all the races already," he says.

"I think Texas is a blue state. I just don't think we're voting. If you look at an electoral map, and you've got New York that is blue, California that is blue, and if you [could make Texas] blue, you can pretty much give up on the rest of the United States and still win the White House. The only reason we're fighting over all these other states is because Texas is red."

The initial year of the Harris County Democratic Party's mail ballot program more than quintupled the number of

straight-ticket Democratic votes, totaling around 17,000.

Lewis explains that beginning on January 5, 2014, each voter that previously cast their ballot by mail is going to get another call from the party to offer them the chance to vote by mail in the spring primary. "I'm trying to create habit," he says. "And, on January 5, a new law goes into effect that says you no longer have to request a mail ballot every time there's an election. From now on, if you request a mail ballot once, they will automatically send you a ballot for all the elections for the year. You don't have to request another one for twelve months."

The party has now partnered with Senator John Whitmire and Senator Sylvia Garcia to run a mail ballot program in their districts for municipal nonpartisan elections. "We're not telling them who to vote for, we're just saying every election matters," Lewis says. "And if you're a Democrat, every election matters to you, too."

Another benefit to the program is that you don't have to show a photo ID if you vote by mail, Lewis says. He argues that the Republican Party is attempting to suppress voters within the county—a trend that is occurring nationally following the Supreme Court's decision last summer to strike down key elements of the Voting Rights Act.

"Republicans don't have any ideas," Lewis

says. "All they do is sit around complaining about other people's ideas. Their policies have failed. So the only way they can hold on to power is to disenfranchise voters. What the Supreme Court said in their decision on the Voting Rights Act was not that preclearance is illegal, just that the system they use is out-of-date. I am very hopeful that our Congress will lead the charge to fix [these new voter-suppression laws] and not leave it the way that it is."

Unlike the Republicans, Lewis says he isn't interested in separating voters into groups. He is the first chair of the party to eliminate minority outreach coordinators, in an effort to move away from identity politics. Instead, he has field organizers responsible for organizing every voter in a district, regardless of their identity. "Too many politicians think if they can just speak Spanish, they'll get the Latino vote," Lewis says. "Latinos do not vote their language, they vote their culture and they vote their need. And their need is not for me to speak Spanish. Their need is for health care and education."

"It's about looking where you want to go, and backing it up," Lewis continues. "21.06 wasn't about 21.06, it was about equal opportunity to work. Flipping Harris County is not just about flipping Harris County, it's about owning the White House." ■

Tony S. McClung, M. D.

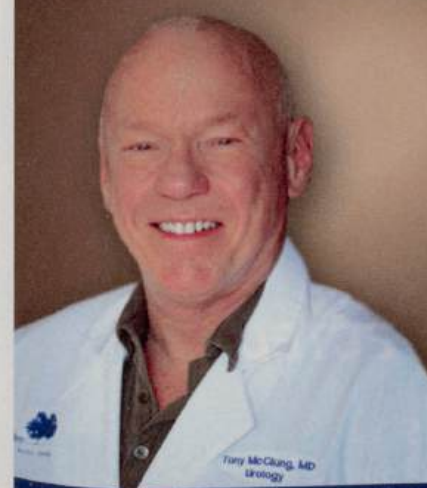
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OutSmart's Candidate Q&A

Political roundup

by Megan Smith

Whether you're worried about your child's higher education or frustrated by that nasty pothole down the street, the best place to start is to exercise your right to vote. However, deciding which candidate will best represent you can often be a difficult task. *OutSmart's* candidate Q&A is here to help make that decision a little easier before you head to the polls on November 5.

JENIFER RENE POOL

Houston City Council At-Large Position 3

OutSmart: How has your background shaped your politics and made you best qualified for this position?

Jenifer Rene Pool: As a child of World War II parents, I was taught responsibility and duty to our country and my neighbors. These concepts have shaped my life and belief in fairness. When I see discrimination or unfairness, I have taken action to redress the situation. My history shows how I will take on [issues that] appear to be impossible, to make Houston better where it matters.

If elected, what do you hope to accomplish in the next two years?

Bring a nondiscrimination ordinance to a vote and make the city responsible for the maintenance of sidewalks.

What do you feel is the biggest challenge currently facing the city of Houston?

Pension insolvency and [the need to expand] economic growth within the city.



Where the sidewalk cracks end: Jenifer Rene Pool plans to hold the city responsible for the maintenance of sidewalks and bring a nondiscrimination ordinance to a vote.

You were recently endorsed by the Houston GLBT Political Caucus. How will you effectively represent the interests of Houston's LGBT community?

I have been an advocate for equality and nondiscrimination. My actions and accomplishments have shown how I will conduct myself as a councilmember.

How will you ensure that Houston remains one of the most livable urban centers in the country?

By making the City responsible for the maintenance of sidewalks, and by working to stop illegal dumping to clean up neighborhoods.

Is there anything else about yourself that you would like our *OutSmart* readers to know?

For years I have worked individually and

as a member of organizations to promote equality in all aspects of our lives. I will continue to follow my heart until

"My history shows how I will take on [issues that] appear to be impossible, to make Houston better where it matters."

all people can share the blessings of liberty and freedom. I have been endorsed in this race by the Honorable Frances "Sissy" Farenthold,

former congressman Chris Bell, Harris County Constable Alan Rosen, the Houston GLBT Political Caucus, and Democracy for Houston. →



Community builder: Zeph Capo wants to create a more transparent Houston Community College that is truly developed and supported by our community.

OutSmart's Candidate Q&A

continued from previous page

ZEPH CAPO

Houston Community College District 1

OutSmart: How has your background shaped your politics and made you best qualified for this position?

Zeph Capo: I am the first generation in my family to attend college after high school. I attended community college as a student to reduce tuition costs, as I was required to put myself through college. While in college, I started substitute-teaching at a local elementary school and realized how much

"I have been a passionate advocate of public education and social justice."

I took for granted in what was offered to me in a quality public education. Since that time, I have been a passionate advocate of public education and social justice.

Additionally, I have been impacted on many levels in my life by issues of inequity, and I strive toward building a more just society. My experience as a classroom teacher allowed me the opportunity to view how we develop as young

people. Teachers see that the root of inequity and injustice is based on learned behavior—therefore we retain the hope that inequity and injustice can be corrected. It takes so much more than simple platitudes about [a person's] Zip Code, though. It takes hard work and dedication to make forward strides. My understanding of how much hard work is necessary to make a difference will guide me, should I be given the opportunity to serve as a trustee for my district.

If elected, what do you hope to accomplish in the next two years?

It is unfortunate that at this time the most important issue to tackle at HCC is a stronger board ethics policy and more transparent business practices. Simply put, we must rebuild the trust

in our board with the communities we represent. Once that is accomplished, I would like to turn to the really important issues of clear and complete communication with our students about the excellent opportunities available to them through Houston Community College. We need to increase our visibility within the communities we represent and have real conversations with our workers and our students. Expanding dual credit programs in high schools to cover career and technical fields will be a welcome addition that will allow us to impact more students. We can accomplish so much by simply increasing student and family awareness regarding the workforce opportunities that

are opened up by having skills training offered at the community college.

What do you feel is the biggest problem currently facing the Houston Community College System?

There is a significant level of concern expressed by stakeholders, including the business community, regarding the level of transparency in our business practices. The public just approved almost a half-billion-dollar public bond that will be spent by our community college. It is imperative that those who pay the bill receive honest and efficient results for their investment. We can't afford to continue to erode the trust our community has bestowed upon the college without causing significant harm to the workforce training that our economy depends on to remain competitive.

What steps will you take to ensure HCC students have the skills they need to enter the Houston workforce upon graduation?

We must first ensure that the programs we invest in are aligned to the workforce needs in our community. Our programs must focus on the major job-growth industries and ensure that we are graduating students with the most up-to-date skills and information required to hit the ground running upon graduation. It is imperative that we develop a more formal system for gathering industry and community leader input regarding workforce needs and community concerns.

How can HCC better provide an equal opportunity for students to succeed, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity?

First and foremost, sexual orientation and gender identity shouldn't even be an issue when it comes to equality in a college we say is developed for and supported by our "community." Everyone deserves the right to reach their full potential and should be treated with the same level of dignity and respect that we would expect for ourselves or our

continued on page 76

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Ready for success: Kevin J. Hoffman plans to build bridges between Houston Community College and local school districts to make sure students have the basic skills they need to succeed in college coursework.



OutSmart's Candidate Q&A

continued from page 72

family members. Everyone should have a voice and feel comfortable engaging in all aspects of our society—especially continuing their education and personal development. I hope that all students at HCC feel they have an equal opportunity at success, and if elected I would want to be the first person to know about it if they don't.

Is there anything else about yourself that you would like our OutSmart readers to know?

I would like every reader to know that I am deeply committed to making our community college a place we can all be proud of and call our own. Too often, public school districts and colleges are the last to be thought about when it comes to electoral politics. I make a promise to all readers to govern with integrity and to be a trustee you can be proud of if you make time to take pride in your college and vote for me on November 5.

KEVIN J. HOFFMAN

Houston Community College District 1

OutSmart: How has your background shaped your politics and made you best qualified for this position?

Kevin J. Hoffman: My background as a business professional and community activist, coupled with my high levels of ethics, makes me the most qualified person in this race.

In my more than twenty years working in the energy industry in project management, land administration, contract administration, and acquisition and divestiture, I have developed a sound, proven history and ability to handle multiple tasks and make the sound business decisions that are required of an HCC board member.

In my role as a civic and political activist, I have lobbied local, state, and national political leaders for positive change for the benefit of our community. I have worked to help keep blighted lots and buildings clean, to keep bars and cantinas from opening near area schools and churches, and to help keep our young people out of gangs. I have worked

with the public through neighborhood meetings, stakeholder groups, and community outreach as a civic club president and board member to various civic, political, and governmental groups. I have also implemented community outreach programs for stakeholder groups. For this work, I have received letters of appreciation from two mayors of the City of Houston and members of Houston City Council.

In my roles in business and as a civic and political activist, I have always acted with high ethical standards, and will continue to do so.

I have the best overall understanding of the needs of the community and how to best engage the community. I am best able to get the message out about how and what HCC can do to help community members move forward by providing job training and higher-education opportunities.

If elected, what do you hope to accomplish in the next two years?

I will call for HCC, HISD, and other school districts to begin a dialogue about what school districts are doing correctly and, most important, what improvement plans are needed in areas that students are lacking the skills and tools they need to succeed. It is a major issue at HCC that so many new students are not ready for the demands of college life, nor do they have the basic skills needed to complete the coursework required.

I will work with my fellow board members to make sure all employees of the college have, as one of their health-care options in their benefit package, an Employee-Plus-One Health Insurance plan. I will work to make sure this plan

covers same- or opposite-sex domestic partners.

I will work to bring back the public's trust by making HCC's Code of Conduct and Ethics stronger.

I will also work to cut back on the need for students to travel across

Houston to as many as four campuses in order to enroll in basic courses for →

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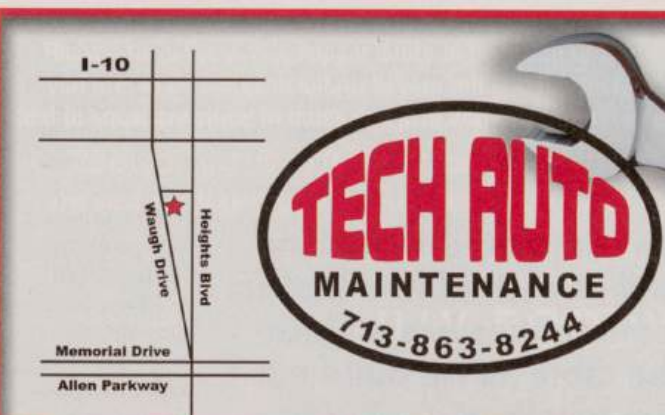
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A place at the table: incumbent Mike Laster continues to work to ensure that the diverse communities in his district have equal roles in bettering their future together.



MIKE LASTER

Houston City Council District J

OutSmart: How has your background shaped your politics and made you best qualified for this position?

Mike Laster: I have lived in Houston since 1985 and have been a resident of District J for the past sixteen years. Since moving to the District J area, I have been active in the Sharpstown Civic Association as a board member and past president. I was chairman and board member of the Sharpstown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone and was a founding board member of the Greater Sharpstown Management District. As Council Member for District J, my experience in the community has given me a strong foundation of understanding the district's challenges, needs, and assets. That experience, coupled with the countless relationships I have been honored to develop during those years, has allowed me to hit the ground running in addressing the needs of the constituents of District J.

a member of the board, I will take action to help put an end to this once and for all.

Is there anything else about yourself that you would like our OutSmart readers to know?

I have been endorsed in this race by U.S. Congress Member Gene Green, GLBT activist Ray Hill, the American Coalition for Justice, and many precinct chairs of Houston's north side and Houston Heights.

I have been an active member and officer of many civic groups, which include LULAC 402, Stonewall Democrats, past president of Greater Heights Democratic Club, past president of Super Neighborhood 51, and past president of Lindale Park Civic Club. I have also served as a board member of the Weed & Seed Program for the near-north side for the mayor's Anti-Gang Office, and as a member of the City of Houston's Health Department HIV Prevention grant review panel.

A native of Dallas, North Carolina, I hold a BFA from Western Carolina University in Speech & Theatre Arts. I have been a resident of Houston for twenty-six years. My life partner/husband, Jesús Gonzalez, and I are entering our twenty-fourth year together this October. We live in Lindale Park in Houston's Northside Village with our two dogs, Milo and Trixie.

If re-elected, what do you hope to accomplish in the next two years?

I and the District J staff have spent the first two-year term focusing on addressing the daily needs of the district's constituents, on bringing communities together, and on laying a foundation for future growth and development of the area. I plan to use the next two-year term to build upon that foundation. Working with community leaders, I hope to further strengthen our neighborhoods by providing improvements to our parks and city infrastructure, help revitalize the Richmond Avenue business corridor and other business areas, increase single-family housing stock in the area, further the battle against blight and litter, and continue to provide quality constituent services to our residents.

What do you feel is the biggest problem currently facing District J?

As a district council member, I am reminded daily that providing good

continued on page 137

"I am committed to making sure that each of [the District J] communities has a place at the table as we build our future together."

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Same-sex Marriage in Texas

... from a lawyer's perspective

by **Connie Moore and Debra E. Hunt**

What a difference a few months makes! When last we wrote about same-sex marriage, the U.S. Supreme Court had not yet issued the historic rulings in the *United States v. Windsor* and Prop. 8 cases. Now we have the blessing of the federal government for same-sex marriage, and it seems that every few days we learn of more benefits that will apply to all couples, regardless of their state of residence.

There have also been a few setbacks in states that prohibit same-sex marriage. Although some have refused to follow the federal government's lead, there seems to be an escalating trend toward acceptance. We had the opportunity in August to confer with other legal professionals across the country, and most are hopeful that discriminatory laws will fail—possibly sooner than anyone anticipated.

In the meantime, we are busy getting the word out and adapting to the changes that acceptance brings. While Texas remains a “non-recognition” state for most state-administered benefits, there are an increasing number of federal benefits that apply to all same-sex married couples, regardless of domicile. As of this writing, here's what Texas same-sex couples who were legally married elsewhere need to know.

Federal Income Taxes

If you are in a same-sex marriage and remain so through the end of the year, you and your spouse are required to file either “married joint” or “married separate” federal income tax returns beginning in 2014 for the 2013 tax year. If you were married on Decem-

“Legal professionals are hopeful that discriminatory laws will fail, possibly sooner than anyone anticipated.”

ber 31 of any of the three prior tax years, you have the option, but are not required, to file amended tax returns. Texas does not have a state income tax, but if you are a wage earner in a state that does require you to file a state income tax return, check with your local tax advisor about how to file in that state. There is no such thing as “common law divorce,” so if you were legally married, have separated from your spouse, and have not divorced before the end of a tax year, you are required to file under the “married” status.

Federal Estate and Gift Taxes

All same-sex spouses are now entitled to the unlimited marital deduction for avoiding gift and estate taxes, regardless of domicile. Consult with your tax professional for advice on how to recover gift or estate taxes that were paid because your marriage was not recognized.

Tax-deferred Retirement Savings Plans

The fall of DOMA has opened the door for application of spousal benefits and protections for employer-provided retirement plans. While not all retirement plans are affected, those governed by ERISA must now acknowledge and protect the spouses of same-sex married employees. If you are married and have not named your spouse as a primary beneficiary on ERISA-governed benefits, you should complete a new beneficiary designation with your spouse giving the required consent for you to name a non-spousal beneficiary.

Employer-provided Health Insurance

Employers who provide health insurance for same-sex married employees may no longer assess the costs of a spouse's insurance to the employee and withhold →



We do: after an engagement that lasted twenty-seven-plus years, **Connie Moore (l)** and **Debbie Hunt** were married on August 19, 2013, in Napa Valley, California.

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Same-sex Marriage in Texas

continued from previous page

taxes for that portion. Spouses are also entitled to COBRA coverage if a qualified employee loses his or her job.

Immigration

Same-sex spouses can sponsor their non-resident alien spouses for U.S. residency, subject to requirements that are now the same for all married bi-national couples.

Military Spousal Benefits

Military benefits are available to the same-sex spouses of active-duty military personnel on the same basis as opposite-sex couples.

Veteran's Spousal Benefits

The Department of Justice has determined that VA benefits will extend to all same-sex spouses. Regulations that currently limit the availability of benefits to opposite-sex spouses will not be enforced.

Civilian Federal Employee Benefits

The Office of Personnel Management, which oversees benefits for civilian federal employees, issued one of the first post-Windsor policy changes extending benefits to all same-sex spouses of federal employees. Federal employees who were married at the end of June were notified to enroll their same-sex spouses in the applicable benefits program within sixty days.

Social Security Retirement, Disability, and Death Benefits

As of this writing, the Social Security Administration has not issued guidance on whether it will ignore the current regulations defining a "spouse" based on the laws of the state of the applicant's domicile when benefits accrue. SSA has started paying benefits for eligible same-sex spouses who live in recognition states, and has asked that all persons who may be eligible for benefits file claims even if they currently live in a non-recognition state.

Dissolution

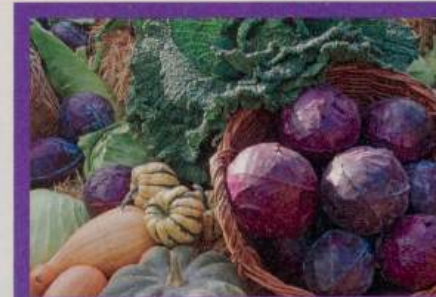
Divorce is generally not available to same-sex married couples in Texas. There are two dissolution cases pending at the Texas Supreme Court that are set for oral argument later this fall. While these cases are pending, same-sex divorces are being granted on a limited basis to residents of Travis County as long as all issues are agreed. Until Texas courts are fully available, couples who married in California, Delaware, Washington DC, Minnesota, Vermont, or Canada and now live in a non-recognition state can return to those jurisdictions to obtain a court-ordered dissolution of the marriage. All others must

establish residency in a recognition jurisdiction to obtain a divorce.

For more detailed information about these and other federal benefits that extend to same-sex marriages, visit our website at mooreandhunt.com and look for the links to marriage information.

The decision to marry remains a personal decision that should be made with careful consideration. It is remarkable that we now live in an age when same-sex couples are able to consider so much more than just their personal commitment in making this important decision.

Moore & Hunt is the first women-owned boutique law firm in Houston to openly focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues. Operating in the same location since 1987, the firm is comprised of attorneys Connie Moore and Debra E. Hunt. Moore works with families of all types with formation issues and family dissolution. Hunt concentrates on personal document drafting, estate planning, probate litigation, contract negotiations and disputes, corporation and small-business formations, and real-estate matters. Both attorneys are members of the National Family Law Advisory Council of the National Center for Lesbian Rights. Moore and Hunt are charter members of the Texas State Bar Section on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification Issues.



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The Progressive Muslim Movement

Faisal Alam presents 'Hidden Voices: Lives of LGBT Muslims'

by Sadiq Ali Sheraze



Faisal Alam

"I wasn't intending to start an organization," says Faisal Alam, a queer-identified Muslim activist. "I struggled with trying to reconcile my sexuality with my faith. I didn't know how that was going to happen. I thought I was the only one who was dealing with these issues."

This was all before 1998 when, at the young age of nineteen, Alam used an international email Listserv to create Al-Fatiha, which was once one of the largest Muslim LGBT organizations in the nation.

Since then, Alam has been selected as an "Innovator" by *Advocate* magazine and has been recognized by *Genre* magazine as a "Founding Father." He has received several awards and recognitions for his activism, and has been touring the country presenting his lecture "Hidden Voices: The Lives of LGBT Muslims."

In this presentation, Alam shares LGBT stories

(including his own) about growing up in Islam—stories that reveal some of the issues that LGBT Muslims face. Despite the criticism he has received, he has found a platform where he can speak about issues that, according to Alam, "most people do not often think about. People do not think about LGBT Muslims, and if they do, they think that people are being killed because of it, or that there is really no way to reconcile [their sexuality and their faith]."

Among the many Muslim organizations developing in the U.S., the Muslim Alliance for Sexual and Gender Diversity (MASGD) is one that Alam and several other organizers created this year. Many of these groups are working to debunk the myth that LGBT Muslims do not exist and that all Muslims are homophobic.

"We have really come a long way with the exposure [that LGBT Muslims] have received and the work we have done to make our presence known, both within the mainstream LGBT community and the mainstream Muslim community. That also has a lot to do with the progressive vision of Islam that many of us are pushing," Alam says of the strides MASGD and similar organizations are making on behalf of LGBT Muslims globally.

Organizations such as MASGD and Muslims for Progressive Values, a similar group that promotes LGBT and women's equality and other progressive causes, are all pushing to create an environment where Islam can be more inclusive and accepting on issues such as gender and sexuality. Alam believes that things are quickly changing for both the LGBT Muslim community and the mainstream Muslim population.

Alam explains this evolution in thinking: "The rhetoric was always 'Our religion condemns homosexuality, there is no place for homosexuals within our faith, the Quran says that homosexuality is forbidden, and that is the end of the story.' [But then the thing that really changed] the conversation we were having with mainstream Muslims was 9/11. September 11 really changed a lot of different things, because now mainstream Muslims [have much bigger issues than simply worrying] about what is going on with queer Muslims."

"All of a sudden, American Muslims are dealing with Islamophobia and hate crimes and this real, visceral

backlash that also affected LGBT Muslims in a different way," he adds.

According to Alam, for many American LGBT Muslims, "Islamophobia is seemingly a bigger issue than homophobia, and much more visible to people in regards to our skin color and our names. The sexuality becomes secondary to people. Many more LGBT Muslims are taking on a political identity—being Muslim and asserting a cultural identity."

Alam also believes the atmosphere is changing for LGBT Muslims because of congressmen such as Keith Ellison (D-Minnesota) and →

**"People do not think
of LGBT Muslims, and
if they do, they think
that people are being
killed because of it."**

The Progressive Muslim Movement continued from previous page

Andre Carson (D-Indiana). These men are the only two Muslims in Congress and, according to Alam, "Both of them are very supportive of LGBT issues."

"They have also become bridge builders for bringing these issues to light." Alam explains the similarities between the LGBT community and the larger Muslim community: "They are oftentimes facing the same struggles. They are both ostracized, and they are both viewed as minorities. The same religious figures and the same political figures [often speak out] against both communities."

For many individuals, there is this seemingly vast difference in ideologies between the Muslim communities and the LGBT communities; however, regardless of the differences, there is a similar prejudice that both groups are facing in America today.

The progressive Muslim

groups like MASGD, and individuals like Alam, are working diligently to reduce prejudices held by both Muslim and non-Muslim individuals.

Alam believes that Muslim youth are changing as well. "There is a second generation and now a third generation of Muslims that are growing up in the United States that have been exposed to issues of sexuality, and are much more open to conversations and dialogue around issues of gender and sexuality," Alam adds.

God willing, these conversations will remain open and individuals like Alam will continue to make progress toward acceptance and tolerance.

What: Hidden Voices: Lives of LGBT Muslims

When: October 10

Where: University of Houston

Details: hiddenvoices.info

Sadiq Sheraze is a Houston-based freelance writer.

More on LGBT Muslims



Alam after a White House visit.

AI-Fatiha, a Washington DC-based organization that advocates for the rights of LGBT Muslims, is just one of several such groups around the world.

Founder and former director Faisal Alam points out that most traditional scholars of Islam consider same-sex acts to be sinful, and many believe that having a gay or lesbian sexual orientation is unnatural. Yet he shares his story of faith and sexual identity around the world as a way of opening conversations about how Islam and homosexuality are not mutually exclusive.

With more than 1.5 billion followers, Islam is the second-largest religion in the world. An estimated six to eight million Americans call themselves Muslim, and Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the United States. It's impossible to estimate how many of them are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.

Alam's presentation "Hidden Voices: The Lives of LGBT Muslims" has been featured at more than 125 universities and colleges across the country since 2003. While highlighting the diversity of Islam around the world and in the United States, "Hidden Voices" explores the legacy of colonialism and sodomy laws within the Muslim world, and the suppression of LGBT rights around the world under the guise of the so-called war on terror.

Alam has been profiled in numerous national publications, has received many recognitions and awards for his activism on behalf of queer Muslims, one of thirty "Young Visionaries Under 30" by the *Utne Reader*. In 2005 the Equality Forum honored Alam as one of "40 Heroes" who have "made a defining difference in LGBT civil rights over the last forty years."

In 2011 he was invited to the White House to attend President Obama's annual White House Iftar Dinner, the traditional breaking of the fast at the end of Ramadan.

For more information, visit hiddenvoices.info. —Marene Gustin

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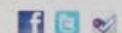


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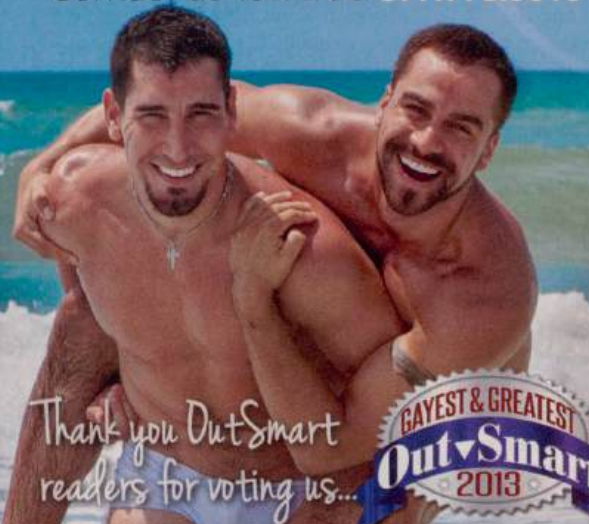
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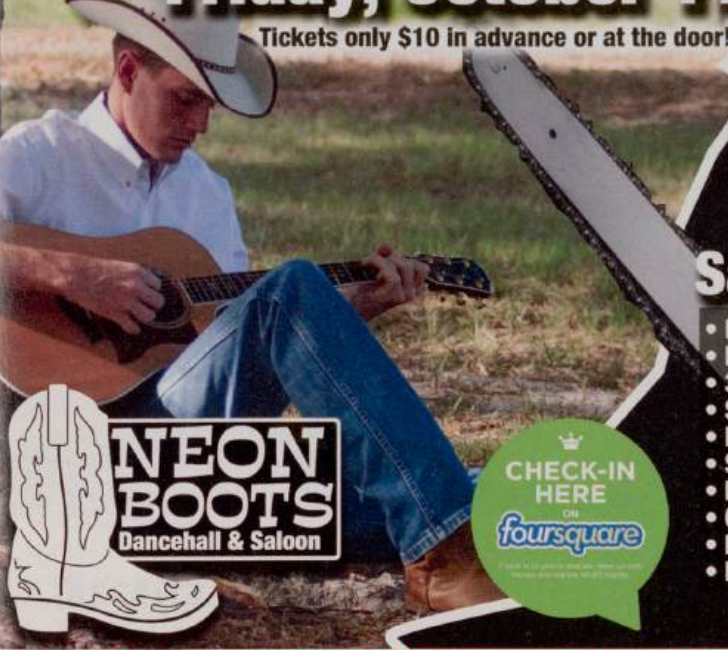
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Health Care

An issue of LGBT equality

by Randall Ellis



Equal care for all: Kathleen Sebelius, Health and Human Services secretary, says the LGBT community will be "hugely impacted" in a positive way by the Affordable Care Act.

Community leaders from across the country gathered at the White House on September 12 to learn how they can help hundreds of thousands of uninsured LGBT Americans get health care coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The briefing featured remarks from Valerie Jarrett, senior advisor to the president; Kathleen Sebelius, Health and Human Services secretary; and LGBT health-care and health insurance reform experts from across the country.

On the same day that these Obama administration officials were touting the advances in LGBT rights over the past five years and policy wonks were explaining how the LGBT community would benefit under "Obamacare," Republicans in the United States House of Representatives were busy with their fortieth attempt to derail or repeal the historic

health reform law.

Secretary Sebelius, addressing LGBT leaders who were gathered at the briefing as well as a wider online audience, seemed confident that the House effort would fail.

"Thanks to all of you, this law is now a reality, and it is going to happen in spite of some of the best efforts of our friends at the Hill," she told the crowd. "This is what we call a law. It was passed. It was signed. It was upheld by the Supreme Court. And the president got re-elected. This is a law, and the people are entitled to these benefits."

As Sebelius stressed the importance of making sure LGBT Americans know their rights, responsibilities, and options under the ACA, she also stressed President Obama's firm belief that health-care reform is an essential part of the fight for LGBT equality. "Here is the fact you all need to keep in mind," she said. "One in three LGBT

adults in America doesn't have health insurance. We are talking about a community that can be hugely impacted by what's about to happen."

Insurance Inequalities

Like many people across the country, LGBT Americans have often struggled to get the health care they need, when they need it. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is a constant reminder to our community that adequate health care can literally mean the difference between life and death. Yet too often, barriers like the lack of insurance stand between the LGBT community and good health.

Research commissioned by the Center for American Progress not only shows that LGBT Americans lack health insurance at higher rates than their heterosexual counterparts, but that being uninsured results in more disparities. Because not all LGBT families are recognized under the law, employer-based health insurance is not always an option for spouses or partners, resulting in higher costs to obtain health insurance for our families. High numbers of LGBT Americans also report putting off getting care because it is too expensive.

LGBT individuals have encountered discrimination in the health-care system for decades, and many studies have shown that LGBT people are affected by chronic diseases, such as breast cancer and HIV/AIDS, at a higher rate than other Americans. Getting

access to health coverage is indisputably an LGBT equality issue.

Improving LGBT Access to Care

The ACA makes investments that will help address health disparities that exist within the LGBT community. Funding →

"This is a law, and the people are entitled to these benefits."

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Health Care continued from previous page

is in place to promote a more diverse and culturally competent health-care workforce, and to support community health centers such as Houston's Legacy Community Health Services. Through increased research and data collection on health disparities, policymakers will have the knowledge and tools they need to continue to address the health needs and concerns of LGBT people.

Starting in 2014, the ACA prohibits insurers from denying coverage or charging a higher premium based on pre-existing conditions, including HIV or AIDS. The law also prohibits insurers from charging someone more because of gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The ACA will help ensure that LGBT Americans will receive ongoing treatment of chronic diseases by ending lifetime dollar limits on key benefits, as well as restricting the use of annual dollar limits.

Under the ACA, health insurance plans will also have to provide preventive care, including annual checkups, mammograms, HIV testing, cancer and diabetes screening, and vaccinations—all without co-pays or deductibles.

The Out2Enroll Campaign

To access all of these benefits, people must have a health insurance plan. Uninsured Americans can find coverage in the online marketplaces that are scheduled to open on October 1. The open enrollment period runs until March 31, 2014.

To encourage LGBT Americans to sign up for the new health insurance plans under the ACA, the White House briefing also announced an outreach effort aimed at uninsured LGBT Americans.

Out2Enroll will work at both national and state levels to link LGBT communities with their new coverage options under the health reform law. The centerpiece of the campaign is a website—out2enroll.org—that is tailored to LGBT community concerns and includes information about key issues such as same-sex partner coverage, transgender-inclusive coverage, and LGBT-inclusive discrimination protections. Out2Enroll will also work with partners such as Enroll America, Community Catalyst, consumer health advocates, health centers like Legacy Community Health Services, and LGBT equality organizations to host regional forums and conduct state-level advocacy campaigns to educate LGBT communities about available coverage and to encourage enrollment through the online health insurance marketplaces.

The Out2Enroll campaign will launch on

October 11, National Coming Out Day—an observance created to raise awareness of and empower the LGBT community. This day advocates something simple, yet elusive—that people need the freedom to be who they are. That freedom won't be fully achieved until the LGBT community feels it is being served by the nation's health-care system.

Legacy Community Health Services will have trained staff members available throughout the clinic on October 11 to assist anyone who is interested in learning about their health insurance options under the Affordable Care Act. October 11 will be a great opportunity to show your pride and help raise community awareness about the importance of health care as an LGBT equality issue. Since open enrollment will run until March 31, 2014, there is plenty of time to explore and understand your options.

For more information about Out2Enroll and to learn more about supporting efforts to connect every American with appropriate health insurance coverage, visit out2enroll.org.

Randall Ellis is Vice President of Public Affairs for Legacy Community Health Services.

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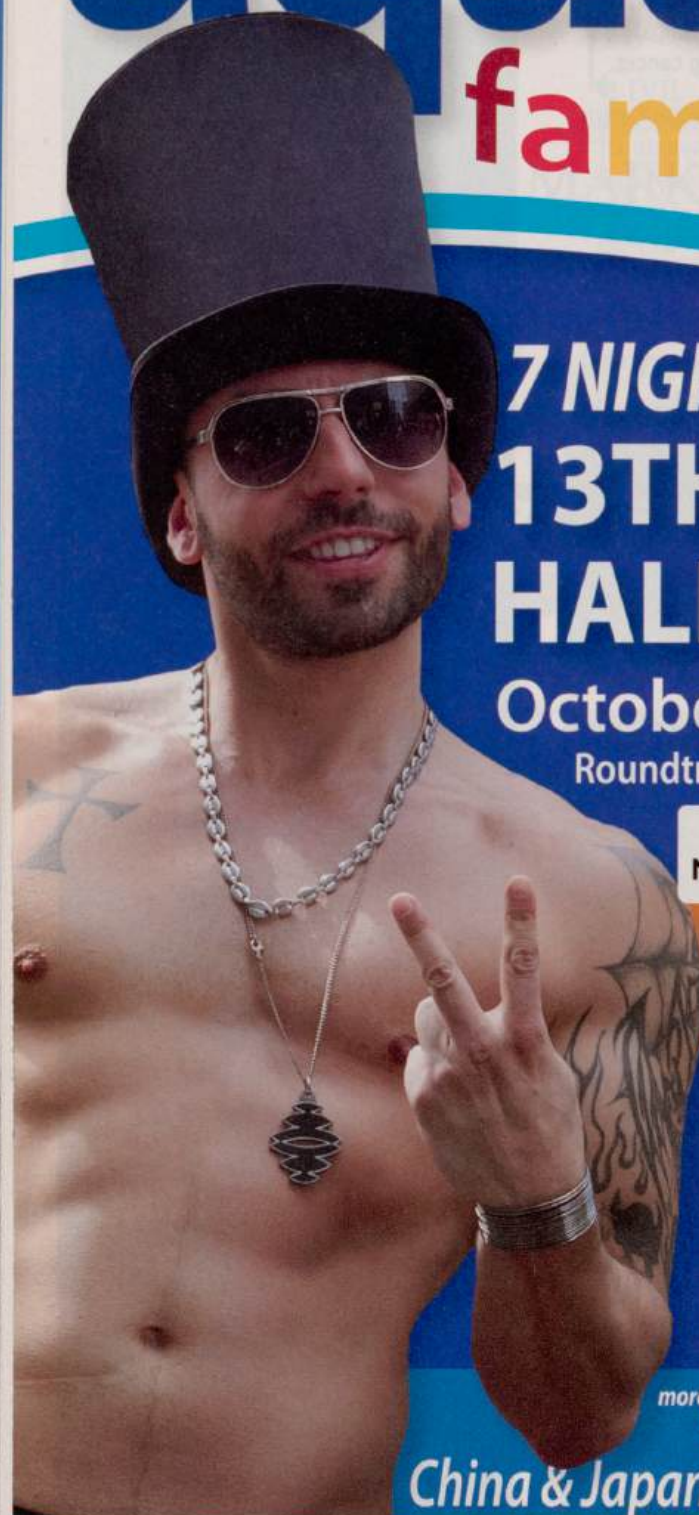
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Just a Little Bit Gaysian

An interview with comic/actor Alec Mapa

by A.J. Mistretta

Alec Mapa is everyone's favorite gay bestie. His no-nonsense, boundary-pushing comedy has kept American audiences rolling for nearly two decades. An award-winning one-man show *I Remember Mapa* chronicled the Filipino comic-actor's rough start in Los Angeles, and garnered rave reviews. That led to memorable television roles, from Suzuki St. Pierre on *Ugly Betty* to Vern on *Desperate Housewives*.

Now America's Gaysian Sweetheart is all grown up—an acclaimed columnist and LGBT activist with a husband and a son. But Mapa's comedy remains raw and riotous. His new stand-up special will explore what it's like to be a gay dad—in a way that only he could do.

This month, Mapa is headed to Houston to perform one night only at OutReach United's 2013 Coming Out Party. The annual event raises money for Houston-area LGBT nonprofits such as Montrose Center and HATCH. We caught up with Mapa packing his bags.

A.J. Mistretta: You've been conspicuously absent from TV lately. What gives?

Alec Mapa: You're just not paying attention. I hosted an all-new reality show for AMC called *Showville*, which ran for eight episodes, and I was on the *Tonight Show* with Leno twice. If that's me being conspicuously absent, I'd need to pick better hiding places than AMC and NBC.

Fair enough. I never watch Leno. So you have this risqué—some would say raunchy—stage persona. Is that you, or is that just for the show?

I ramp up my energy onstage, but I'm not like that in real life. Nothing's worse than a comic who's "on" all the time. That's exhausting. I talk about sex a lot because, with all the talk about sexual freedom in the gay community, we're all still ashamed about taking it up the butt. Gay people use the word "bottom" as an insult, and it just perpetuates self-loathing. I'm a sex-positive person. I love sex and I love being gay, and if folks see me as raunchy, that's their own baggage talking. I'm not raunchy, I'm shameless. There's a difference.

I know you're a father now. How is that experience? Do you enjoy being the out gay dad?

Being a dad is the best

"I'm not raunchy, I'm shameless. There's a difference."

thing that's ever happened to me. The minute my son came into my life, it was like a ton of rainbow-colored oxygen was pumped into my world. It's hard work, and I occasionally get it wrong, but having a kid has made everything better. Also, it's impossible to be a closeted gay dad—your kids out you all the time.

How much fodder does family life give your comedy?

My new comedy special *Alec Mapa: Baby Daddy* was filmed this July and should be ready by November. It's all about how my



Alec Mapa

husband and I became dads. It has a bit of everything: sex, poop-and-fart jokes, and heartwarming stories. You'll love it even if you hate kids.

I know you do a lot of gay events, cruises, etc. So who's the dirtiest gay performer out there?

Again with the dirty. Are you the Church Lady? To me, there's only funny and not funny. Currently I like gay comics →



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Just a Little Bit Gaysian

continued from page 93

Casey Ley and Nico Santos. They're hilarious. Nico's on *Chelsea Lately* a bunch, and Casey is in San Francisco. I also like Shawn Pelofsky a lot.

Tell me about the worst standup crowd you ever had.

Drunk Russian River audience that wouldn't shut the f-k up. They paid a lot of money, too. Whatever—the check cleared.

Do people still bug you about *Ugly Betty*? Does that bother the hell out of you?

You have to understand I was broke and unknown in L.A. for years—far more years than I've been famous. There's nothing annoying about being recognized for being on a hit show. Anyone who tells you that is an asshole.

What's been your favorite role?

Suzuki on *Betty* was fun, because I never had to be likable or nice. As a people-pleaser, that was very liberating.

I know you're a big *American Horror Story* fan. While we wait for the new

season set in New Orleans with Kathy Bates (sooo excited), what are you watching now?

I'm living for the new season of *AHS*! I watch *Orange Is the New Black* and *So You Think You Can Dance*.

If someone came to you tomorrow with the perfect gig—doing standup at this place or being on that show—what's that perfect gig for you right now?

Network sitcom. Third-banana role like Rosario on *Will and Grace*. Wisecracking maid/assistant/best friend/bellhop. I'd just love a gig with hours that allow me to make my kid breakfast and pick him up from school. I co-hosted *The View* twice, too—a steady gig like that'd be gravy.

As a dad, I'm sure you want to be a role model for your own son. But how important is it to you that you be an activist and advocate for LGBT young people?

So important. Kids think high school or the Internet is their entire universe, and it just isn't so. That's why bullied gay youth feel trapped and kill themselves. I try to remind kids that there's so much more to life than high school. Look up, look ahead. Everything and anything is better than high school. I survived and thrived—so can you. At a high

school reunion, the gays are always the hottest guys in the room. Everyone else looks like they've given up.

Have you ever been to Houston? Anything you're looking forward to on your visit?

Big Texas cowboys and BBQ. I love Houston. I've always had fun when visiting.

What's on your gay agenda for the rest of the year? And will 2014 hold any surprises we can look forward to?

I'm filming a movie in Halifax this month—*Beethoven's Treasure*. And my new comedy special will hopefully be playing at a gay film fest near you!

Alec Mapa is represented by Divas and DJs; check out their full roster of talent at divasanddjs.com.

What: OutReach United's 2013

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Where: Jaguar Houston Central

Tickets: start at \$25

Details: outreachunited.org.

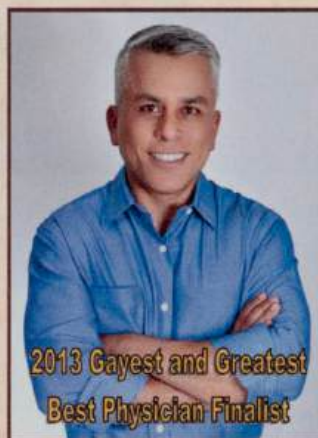
A.J. Mistretta is editor of *MyGayHouston.com* and public relations manager of the Greater Houston CVB.



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'The Book of Matt'

Are there hidden truths about the murder of Matthew Shepard?

by Jack Berger

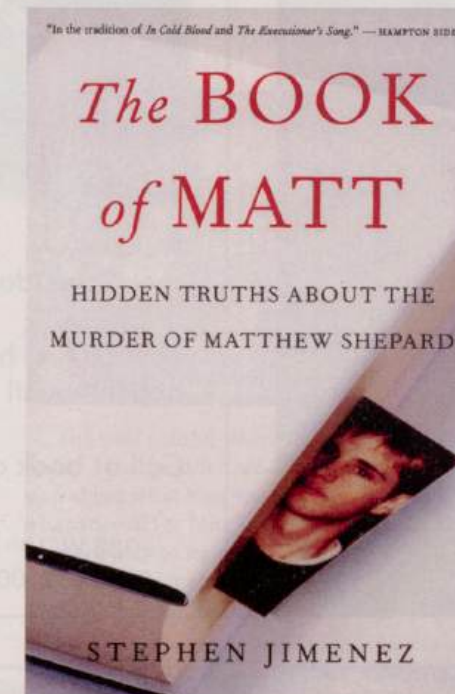
Matthew Shepard. Hate crime. It's hard to say one of these without automatically thinking about the other, even though it's been exactly fifteen years this month since Shepard's gruesome murder.

Now Steven Jimenez, a former NYU professor-turned-journalist, has published *The Book of Matt* (Steerforth Press), releasing this month, that goes into painstaking detail about the events leading up to, during, and after the attack. He prompts the reader to question whether Shepard knew his attackers and why this may have in fact not been a hate crime at all.

But do we really want to know every detail of this murder case? Matthew Shepard's story has posthumously helped move the LGBT community forward in its quest to show the struggles involved in gaining equal rights on several fronts. He has become the poster child for hate-crime activism in America. Might it be best to just let sleeping dogs lie?

The information that Jimenez presents is tough to read at times, as the picture he paints is not the same as the one in our heads. We have seen Judy Shepard, Matthew's mom, in numerous interviews and at Human Rights Campaign events. So why, fifteen years later, would we want to read about Matthew's involvement with drugs and hustlers and everything that is part of that scene? Maybe it's just because we can.

Jimenez presents his findings and conclusions in a comprehensive fashion that brings all of the questions to light.



He was unafraid to ask tough questions, and he seems to have been quite thorough in his thirteen years of research and documentation.

Shepard had a challenging childhood—certainly no *Leave It to Beaver* or *Brady*

The author "lays out the possibility that [one of the convicted murderers] knew Shepard quite well, and the two may have spent some time together dealing crystal meth and hustling."

Bunch plot lines here. Jimenez's information suggests Shepard was a small player in the crystal-meth underground in Colorado and Wyoming, as were his attackers. The book depicts Shepard as a depressed college student who liked to have a good time, with parents living overseas. Jimenez also learned from sources that Shepard was HIV-positive. The book provides some thoughtful insights into Shepard's development and his bad choices that played a part in his death.

There are several jailhouse interviews with Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson, the convicted murderers who were sentenced to two consecutive life terms with no chance of parole. In addition, there are recol-

lections from their families, girlfriends, and other key players in the case. Particularly interesting are the people connected to Henderson who did not commit the assault, but did nothing to prevent it.

Getting into Aaron McKinney's psyche is much more challenging. Violent behavior, drugs, and an alleged challenge to his heterosexuality all played a role, according to Jimenez's research. He lays out the possibility that McKinney knew Shepard quite well, and the two may have spent some time together dealing crystal meth and hustling. McKinney would hustle for drugs or for the money to buy drugs, and he ran in a circle that occasionally included Shepard. Their involvement as sex partners is also suggested by various sources.

The insights and perspective of Cal Rerucha, the Laramie prosecutor handling the case, are also important. During his thirteen years of research, Jimenez spent some one hundred fifty hours with Rerucha, extracting his legal point of view. And while Rerucha did push for a death sentence, he believes that Shepard's murder was driven by drugs.

Jimenez is not the first or the only one who has researched the Shepard story. Other writers include JoAnne Wypijewski in *Harper's Magazine* in 1999, and Moises Kaufman, the director and co-writer of *The Laramie Project*.

This latest 354-page case is laid out →

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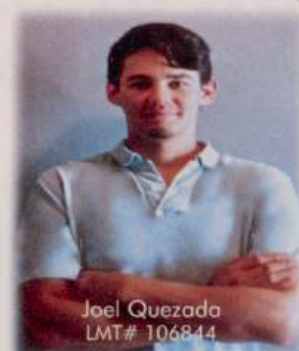
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'The Book of Matt'

continued from page 97

in a way that invites you to decide what it all means. Do these details diminish the legacy of Matthew Shepard? So much

good has come out of this tragic episode in LGBT history, including the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, named in honor of Shepard and James Byrd Jr.

But the questions are still there. *The Book of Matt* may offer the most complete and

well-researched account of who Matthew Shepard was, and how and why the events unfolded as they did on October 6, 1998, in Laramie, Wyoming. And, if it was truly a hate crime.

If we want to know. ■

'Matt Shepard Is a Friend of Mine'

New film features archival footage from home movies, photos, and journals to help tell this personal story

Michele Josue met Matthew Shepard overseas at The American School in Switzerland (TASIS) in the early- to mid-1990s. It was their first time being away from home, and with their shared love for acting, they became very much like family.

According to Matthew's mother, Judy Shepard, Josue and several others were the greatest people her son had ever met in his life. To Matthew, they would always be the most important.

This month marks fifteen years after the death of her friend, and Josue is set to premiere the film at the Mill Valley Film Festival. Told from a deeply personal perspective, the film is intended to show a side of Shepard that the world may not be familiar with.



Matt and Michele

"It's still painful when I think about my friend. I feel guilt for not being there, confusion about what happened, and anger about what they did to him. I miss my friend and I'm not ready to let him go," says Josue, "and that's why I'm making this film, because if the world knows our Matt, the real Matt, I know

they won't be able to let him go either."

Archival footage from home movies helps tell the story of Shepard's life, as well as the photos and journals he left behind. Viewers will follow Josue as she travels to Laramie, Wyoming, Morocco, and various other locations that are important in telling his story.

These stories from the people who knew Shepard best are the highlight of this emotional film. Those who share their memories of Shepard include Zeina Barkawi, his best friend, and Walt Boulden, his guidance counselor.

"Matt was the type of friend I thought I would know my whole life. But on October 12, 1998, we lost him forever. And the Matt I knew became 'Matthew Shepard' to the world," says Josue. —*Jed Ocat*

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It's All about the Art

This year's Bayou City Art Festival Downtown has over three hundred artists

by Karen Derr

The Bayou City Art Festival Downtown, held October 12–13 this year, features native-Houstonian artist Syd Moen and her “Little Planets” series. The photographic works are created by altering a panoramic photo to produce a round image. The creative and unique “little planets” are otherworldly yet familiar, especially to Houstonians and those who are acquainted with the Texas Gulf Coast. Moen’s works invite the viewer into a whole world she creates from a single location. They are alluring, whether one recognizes the landmarks or not. Moen was chosen along with artists from all over the U.S. and is among the three hundred who will be at the two-day show and festival at downtown’s Sam Houston Park.

“To be chosen as this year’s featured artist is an absolute honor,” Moen says. “Photography is the core resource for my explorations of self-expression, and I’m very excited to be able to share this with the patrons of Bayou City Art Festival Downtown as this fall’s featured artist.”

Just as Moen’s works of art engage the viewer to interact in her created worlds, the Bayou City Art Festival offers a unique experience where festivalgoers interact with over three hundred artists who are required to be present and available in their respective booths for the entire show. Bayou City Art Festival board member Joseph K. Plumbar says his first involvement with the festival was as a collector. “I fall in love with a new artist at every festival,” Plumbar says. “Last year I fell in love with Linda Lesperance. I haven’t talked with her recently. You see, talk about personal—we’re friends now!” Having participated in the artist-selection jury, he says over a thousand



Art and more art: Bayou City Art Festival takes place October 12–13. Inset: this year’s featured artist Syd Moen’s photographic work of River Oaks Theater.



printmaking, sculpture/3-D (one media—stone, clay, glass, metal, or wood), and wood. The organization’s executive director Kelly Kindred says, “Houston is not only a melting pot of various cultures, but also has incredible art media, and Bayou City Art Festival takes pride in celebrating its local artists and art forms, as well as those from across the country. We are honored to present one of our city’s own, Syd Moen, as this year’s featured artist.”

This year, board member Plumbar also serves on the Art Heist committee. He explains this Saturday evening ticketed event: “It’s always a theme party, and this year it’s ‘Treasures of the New World.’”

The Adult Creative Zone offers adults the chance to create their own works of art.

artists apply from all over the world, but only 330 are chosen each year.

Bayou City Art Festival accepts work in eighteen disciplines: clay, digital (not photography), drawing (pastels, ink, pencils), fiber and textiles (decorative), functional art (includes furniture, wearable art, etc.), glass, jewelry, leather, metal, mixed media 2-D (minimum of two media used to create), mixed media 3-D, paintings (acrylic, oil, or watercolor), photography (digital or computer manipulated), photography (traditional film, no machine enhancements),

The event, held on the steps of City Hall, is the largest fundraising element of the festival. “Treasures of the New World” features heavy hors d’oeuvres from Melange Catering, refreshing libations, a DJ, and the “heist,”

which provides patrons with the chance to “steal” donated art pieces. “Vic Lee was the featured artist the year of my first Art Heist, and he was the most fought over. I actually ended up winning his piece!” recalls →

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It's All about the Art

continued from previous page

Plumbar, who says the event makes for a very exciting evening. Each \$100 ticketholder has a one-in-four chance of "stealing" a work of art which has been donated by participating artists and valued well above the ticket price. This year, attendees are encouraged to wear pirate attire in keeping with the "Treasures of the New World" theme.

Plumbar says, "This year's festival will be larger than ever. The main stage has been expanded, and we'll have more bands from both Austin and Houston. We're still the fine-arts festival, but we're going to have more emphasis on the festival theme." The revamped music lineup includes the Suffers, Kashmere Reunion Stage Band, Bombon, Hardproof Afrobeat, and many more. To add to the festival atmosphere, there will be activities for children in the Green Mountain Energy Creative Zone, special areas for adults, including a wine garden and an Adult Creative Zone presented by The Tinderbox. New to the festival this year, the Adult Creative Zone offers adults the chance to create their own works of art, including an industrial lamp or a screen-printed tote. And, of course, it would not be a festival without dozens of food and beverage vendors.

Bayou City Art Festival is a nonprofit organization that provides financial support to its nonprofit partners, and 100 percent of proceeds from festival tickets and food and beverage sales are given to them. Bayou City Art Festival has partnered with fifteen local nonprofit organizations, which volunteer their time to help staff the festival. These organizations include The Orange Show, Lawndale Art Center, SNAP, and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

The festival attracts at least 30,000 art patrons each year and has raised more than \$3 million since it began more than forty years ago. *Sunshine* magazine ranks the art festival as one of the top ten in the nation.

What: Bayou City Art Festival
Downtown

When: October 12-13

Where: Sam Houston Park, 1000 Bagby

Tickets: Free for children age two and younger; non-members may purchase tickets online or at festival entrances (\$15 for adults and \$3 for children ages 3-12)

Info: bayoucityartfestival.com.

Karen Derr is a Houston-area Realtor and the founder of Boulevard Realty. She writes and speaks about home and small-business topics.

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Houston's Mental-Health Crisis

You can help

by Marene Gustin



On October 12, hundreds of folks will be walking with a purpose: to raise awareness for mental health.

The nonprofit Walk for Mental Health Awareness-Houston is actually hosting a three-day event this year, but awareness of mental health issues and funding for solutions should be a 365-day-a-year event.

Just how bad is the crisis in mental health care?

"In Houston, it's probably better than anywhere else in the state," says Dr. James McSwain. "But it's still terrible. The Harris County Jail treats more mentally ill [inmates] than the entire State of Texas mental-health system combined."

Think about that for a minute. And then think about the fact that the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County treats fifteen thousand people per month.

Dr. McSwain, who will be speaking at the walk, knows very well the plight of the mentally ill. His eldest son, Phillip, was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia at the age of twenty-four. By thirty-one, he was dead from an overdose of alcohol and medication.

"Paranoid schizophrenia is a brain disorder like Alzheimer's disease, yet



McSwain

"The Harris County Jail treats more mentally ill [inmates] than the entire State of Texas mental-health system combined."

it doesn't get the same support," says Dr. McSwain. "It's still looked at as a personal problem. We were lucky—we had insurance, but we still went into debt and could not afford the long-term care he needed."

Dr. McSwain explains that the problem lies in the many obstacles to treatment. Government clinics are overwhelmed and don't have the funding they need, and private clinics that can handle long-term treatment for patients are incredibly expensive.

"The Menninger Clinic here is like the M.D. Anderson of mental health hospitals," he says. "But for my son to stay there for six months, to receive the treatment and training he needed would have cost us \$1,000 a day. And they didn't take insurance."



Walking with a purpose: C. Patrick McIlvain (c), Sheila Jackson Lee (U.S. Representative for Texas's 18th congressional district), Juliet K. Stipeche (HISD board trustee District VIII), and Sergeant Cindy Leija (constable Precinct 2) are all smiles at last year's Walk for Mental Health Awareness-Houston. *INSET: walkers bring awareness to the importance of treatment for those with mental-health issues.*

So many people suffering from mental health issues wind up falling through the cracks. They can't get into treatment centers because they can't navigate the intake processes, they may not know where to go for help, or they may have no support system.

Many wind up homeless. They may commit petty crimes and wind up in jail, which is where Dr. McSwain's son wound up. "We actually tried to keep him there as long as we could," he says sadly. "Because he was getting better care there than we could get him on the outside."

Dr. McSwain says that most of those fighting mental illness are young and don't have the support of grown children who can advocate for them that →

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Houston Mental-Health Crisis

continued from previous page

Alzheimer's patients have—making it easier for politicians to ignore the problem. "Even when the Affordable Care Act kicks in," he says, "it won't be much better, since the insurance companies don't want to pay for long-term treatment. They want a Band-Aid fix and then send them off."

From a strictly economic point, it would make a lot more sense for the state to fund mental health systems fully. When a bill was introduced earlier this year to fund a pilot program to transition mentally ill inmates into community facilities, Sen. Joan Huffman (R-Houston) said: "It costs around \$137 per day to keep someone behind bars, as opposed to \$12 per day for community mental health services. The majority of the individuals in the Harris County jail never received the services they needed—services that would have kept them out of jail in the first place."

The jail's medical budget is almost \$50 million a year, about half of which is spent on mental-health care. An estimated 25 percent of the inmates receive psychotropic medication.

"When I tried to get my son into a state facility, I was told he needed to show up across town and wait in line for several

hours to meet with someone who, if he qualified, would schedule an appointment with a counselor in a couple of weeks," sighs Dr. McSwain. "If he could do all that, he wouldn't need help."

This will be the doctor's first Walk for Mental Health Awareness, but since his son's passing in 2009, he has been a devoted advocate for the mentally ill. Besides researching and speaking out on the subject, he's also tried to show families an easier way to navigate the system.

As principal of Lamar High School, he's worked with the nonprofit Communities in Schools to create a one-stop-shopping center that provides referrals for families with at-risk teens.

Join the walk or the luncheon the day before at the United Way offices to learn more about the mental health problems in Harris County. Proceeds from the walk aid local nonprofits providing mental health care services.

What: 2013 Walk for Mental Health Awareness—Houston

When: October 12 at 7 a.m.

Where: Spotts Park

Cost: Entrance fee is \$25 (\$35 on the day of the walk)

Details: thehoustonwalk.org.

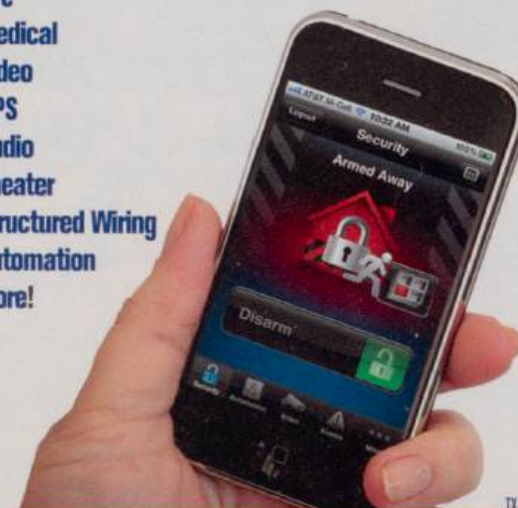
Marene Gustin is a regular contributor to OutSmart magazine.

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They Do Their Own Stunts

Gay rodeo is changing attitudes in rural America

by Karen Derr

The International Gay Rodeo Association (IGRA) holds its 2013 World Gay Rodeo Finals October 17-20 at the John Justin Arena in Ft. Worth. Finalists from all over North America will come to compete in "Cow Town" from as far away as Alberta, Canada. Each year, up to twenty gay rodeo competitions are held in places like Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, and most of the western states, to qualify for the annual World Gay Rodeo Finals.

Ken Pool, a rodeo announcer and former IGRA rodeo director, grew up in Tomball, Texas, in the sixties and seventies. He recalls that he had no gay role models back then in Tomball. In 1976, Phil Ragsdale organized the first gay rodeo as a charity fundraiser in Reno, Nevada. Reportedly, Ragsdale had trouble getting local ranchers to provide livestock for a gay rodeo. Pool says, "Gay rodeo was started because we didn't have a place to compete; we weren't welcome at other rodeos."

Pool continues, "While this is no longer as true today, gay rodeo still has a great function by being open and welcoming. Straight people who join us appreciate that." And Pool says straight rodeo athletes are now competing in IGRA events all over the country. "They come for the camaraderie. The level of competition is good, but the level of fun is much

greater than other venues. I believe this is real outreach and education. These are people who have horses; they're not involved in a traditional urban gay environment. They wouldn't necessarily be involved knowingly with gay people."

Today, many women are involved



If you ain't makin' dust, you're eatin' it: gay and straight men and women alike gather for lively competition and tons of fun at the 2013 World Gay Rodeo Finals in Ft. Worth.

in the rodeo both as competitors and as volunteers. "When you talk about outreach to straight people, we're very inclusive. If a straight woman wants to ride bulls, there are very few places she can go to do that except here," explains Pool. There are competitions for both women and men in all events, so women can ride broncs and men can barrel race and pole bend. All participants compete against whichever sex they identify as.

"The level of competition is good, but the level of fun is much greater than other venues."

Contestants this year in Fort Worth will compete in bull riding, bareback bronc riding, steer riding, chute dogging, roping events (such as team roping and mounted breakaway roping), and speed events such as barrel racing and pole bending. Both men and women ride the same rough stock livestock under the same rules and requirements. Roping teams can be made up of any combination of men and women.

Besides the inclusiveness and camaraderie, the level of professionalism

of the IGRA is also a big draw. Both horse professionals and amateur horse enthusiasts are attracted to IGRA's well-run rodeos. Pool says he believes this is the reason that IGRA rodeos are making an impact on rural America. As far as straight cowboys and cowgirls who choose to join in the competitions, he explains it starts with the families in the stands. "Suddenly there is a group of ten people who have never been to a gay bar, but they're attending our rodeo, and they stay. And they bring friends back on Sunday, and next they say, 'I want to compete.'" He adds, "The Denver rodeo has a whole contingent of straight families who want to be a part of the group because we are a nonprofit and they know we give money back to the community." Each IGRA chapter's events are fundraisers for that chapter's local designated charities.

Pool, who was Mr. International Gay Rodeo 2005, likes to say gay rodeo is three-quarters rodeo and one-quarter circus. The IGRA may be breaking stereotypes, but the "camp" events add some comic relief as only gay rodeo can. These events include goat dressing, where a team of two puts jockey-style underwear on a goat. There is also a steer-decorating event, and the wild drag race is a three-person team—one in drag, and the other two helping the drag queen get on a wild steer and cross the finish line. Pool says it's probably the most dangerous event at the IGRA finals. He reports that no one has ever been killed in the event, but several have been hurt. The "camp" events are great for those who want to compete but who are not skilled on horseback. The IGRA also sponsors educational rodeo schools for novices who want to learn how to rodeo. One such workshop was held last March in the Houston area at the Pasadena Fairgrounds. Most IGRA events also include country-western dance competitions.

While there is, of course, a level of danger for the competitors, the IGRA has strict rules regarding safety and animal welfare. The association has an international Animal Issues Committee whose LGBT cowboys and cowgirls track issues related to animal use, annually review animal use and welfare policies, and report directly to the IGRA annual convention.

According to Pool, the Gay Rodeo Finals draw in thousands of participants and are often second only to Pride events as the largest gay gatherings in a host city. This is the third year Fort Worth has won the bid for the event, which spans three days.

As for the seemingly opposing worlds of conservative rural America and gay rodeo, Pool states with the pride of a longtime organizer and participant, "People who come to gay rodeo are more concerned about how you treat your horse, or how well you ride, than who you are sleeping with afterwards."

What: 2013 World Gay Rodeo Finals

When: October 17-20

Where: John Justin Arena at the Will Rogers Memorial Center, 3401 West Lancaster Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas

Details: igra.com.

Karen Derr is a Houston-area Realtor and the founder of Boulevard Realty. She writes and speaks about home and small-business topics.

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(Maclean's, 9/8/13, Elio Iannacci)
"I can't name names but my friend called who is a big oligarch [in Russia], and asked me if I'd like to be an ambassador for the Olympics and open the show. I immediately said no. I want to know why all of this gay hate just exploded over there. He said the Russian people don't feel the way the government does."

Cher



Pope Francis

(La Civiltà Cattolica, 9/19/13, Fr. Antonio Spadaro)
"A person once asked me, in a provocative manner, if I approved of homosexuality. I replied with another question: 'Tell me: when God looks at a gay person, does he endorse the existence of this person with love, or reject and condemn this person?' We must always consider the person."

Chloë Grace Moretz

(actress, Carrie)
(Seventeen, 10/13)

"I have two gay brothers and two straight brothers, and my gay brothers were treated horrifically until they grew up and understood how to deal with it. I will delete you and I will block you, and you will not be part of my life if you ever say anything bad about my brothers."



Sara Gilbert

(actress/cohost of The View)

(The Huffington Post, 9/12/13)

As part of secret-spilling week on *The Talk*, Gilbert began by describing how she dated Johnny Galecki (now starring on *The Big Bang Theory*) as a teenager back in the 1990s while filming *Roseanne*. "I thought he was super cute and had a total crush on him. We started dating and he would come over and we would make out, and then I would start to get depressed. Johnny felt badly, I think, and started to take it personally and didn't understand what was going on. So I eventually told him that I thought it was about my sexuality, and he was super sweet about it."

Before the episode of *The Talk* aired, she called Galecki and told him she was planning on telling the story. He gave his full support, saying he is proud of her and offering to appear on the show to hold her hand if she needed.



All smiles: Sara Gilbert and Johnny Galecki on the set of *The Big Bang Theory* when Gilbert guest-starred on the show in 2007. Inset: Gilbert and Galecki on the set of *Roseanne* in the nineties.



Nancy Pelosi
@NancyPelosi

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Mario Cantone

(Miss America Pageant, 9/15/13, ABC)

Re: LGBT ally Miss Texas Ivana Hall had just sung a sultry "Fever" when co-host Lara Spencer interviewed judge Mario Cantone before the commercial break.

"I'm overwhelmed. It's very powerful. They're all beautiful, and it's very difficult, and they keep coming at you. I feel like I'm in some gay-to-straight conversion right now. It's intense. . . . I can't wait—when we come back [from the commercial break], I'll be straight."



Mayor Annise Parker

(CNN, 8/30/13, John King)

John King says that Mayor Annise Parker would "like to marry her partner of twenty-three years, Kathy."

Cut to Mayor Annise Parker: I wanna get married in my city, in my state. I'm gonna get married in Houston.

John King: When will that happen?

Parker: It'll be in my lifetime. . . .





by
Megan
Smith

DVD Shorts

Behind the Candelabra



As glittering and outrageous as Liberace himself, *Behind the Candelabra* takes a look at the flamboyant entertainer's private world, focusing on his relationship with Scott Thorson, his live-in lover for five years. Based on Thorson's tell-all memoir *Behind the Candelabra: My Life with Liberace*, the film is directed by Steven Soderbergh and stars Michael Douglas as Liberace and Matt Damon as Thorson. HBO Home Entertainment (hbo.com). —Troy Carrington

The Bling Ring



A group of celebrity-foxed teens living in the suburbs of Los Angeles begins burglarizing the empty homes of the rich and famous by tracking the celebrities' whereabouts via the Internet. The ringleader, Rebecca (Katie Chang), leads the group of misfits, including a gay character, Marc (Israel Broussard). Also stars Emma Watson. Directed by Sofia Coppola. Lionsgate (lionsgateshop.com). —Suzie Lynde

The Wizard of Oz



MGM's sublime 1939 masterpiece is available again in a new 75th Anniversary Collector's Edition, which includes Blu-ray, Blu-ray 3D, DVD, and UltraViolet versions. There are many bonuses and special features included, but most of us will simply want to cheer this visually enhanced incarnation of Our Lady of the Green-Faced Witches as she fights to get her dead sister's shoes back from that dreadful little Dorothy. Warner Home Video (wbshop.com). —Jack Stalaker ■

'Call Me Kuchu'

The struggle continues



Illegal:
Uganda's
first openly
gay man,
David Kato.

Russia's recent antigay law banning the "propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations to minors" has the international community up in arms. Celebrities are boycotting the upcoming Winter Olympics in Sochi. LGBT bar owners are pouring their Russian vodka into the streets.

But with time, headlines fade—even when conflicts are not resolved. *Call Me Kuchu* reminds us not to forget those headlines—especially when they read, "Kill-the-Gays Bill Proposed in Uganda."

Directed by filmmakers Katherine Fairfax Wright and Malika Zouhali-Worrall, *Call Me Kuchu* follows the life of David Kato, Uganda's first openly gay man, and his small band of "kuchus," a local term for "queers."

This is not your average activist documentary. Kato and his followers are living in a country where homosexuality is illegal and punishable by incarceration for up to fourteen years.

Merely existing is a constant battle, as locals seem fixated on eradicating homosexuality from

the country. The local tabloid publishes pictures of any LGBT-identified person with headlines reading, "Hang Them," to feed the public's obsession with hatred. When interviewed for this film, the newspaper's editor showed no remorse.

The intimate stories told by Kato and his followers reveal just how deep the horrors for LGBT people in Uganda run. We meet Stosh, a trans-man who suffered through a "corrective" rape after a man caught him fooling around with a young woman when he was still a teenage girl. This same man infected him with HIV.

Then there's Naome, a feminine lesbian with two children she provides for after leaving a loveless heterosexual marriage so she could be honest about her sexuality.

And of course there's Kato, a teacher and activist who, despite his strong will and leadership, is constantly scared to sleep alone in his bedroom for fear of being murdered in the night.

Overcoming hardship, they find strength and hope in community. It's all laughs and smiles during anniversary parties and household drag balls,

held out of sight in the privacy of their homes.

Outside those walls, smiles are scarce. American evangelical leaders, who no longer get much support for their antigay message at home, have found new believers in Uganda. Ridding this nation of homosexuality will return the country to prosperity, they say. Ugandans must take action against "sodomites" who "corrupt" and "recruit" their children.

This message resonated with Ugandan parliament member David Bahati. In late 2009, he submitted the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, often known as the "Kill the Gays" bill. The bill prescribes life imprisonment for "the offense of homosexuality" and the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality."

Kato fought hard against this bill until January 2011, when a man he had previously been kind to bludgeoned him to death with a hammer. Kato was forty-six.

Although this tragedy shocked both the filmmakers and Kato's friends, his death was not in vain. The murder sparked international condemnation, and his killer was ultimately captured. The anti-homosexuality bill was also tabled shortly after Kato's death, but it has since been revived.

Kato's band of followers vows to never give up the fight. Until this bill is killed once and for all, a *luta continua*—the struggle continues.

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by
David-Elijah
Nahmod

'Sean Saves the World'

After *The New Normal* and *Smash*, NBC tries again



Yay!: Sean (Sean Hayes) and daughter Ellie (Samantha Isler) rejoice while mom (Linda Lavin) looks concerned in the new NBC sitcom *Sean Saves the World*.

"I hope it runs for a million years," says Megan Hilty. "Or at least seven." The actress is very happy about being reunited with Sean Hayes (*Will and Grace*) in the new NBC sitcom *Sean Saves the World*. Last season, the pair was seen in a five-episode story arc on the cherished if embattled musical drama *Smash*. On *Smash*, Hayes and Hilty played co-stars on Broadway in an ill-advised musical based on *Dangerous Liaisons*. Though *Smash* barely got through its second season, it amassed an intensely loyal cult following that continues to support its reruns on the Ovation Network, and its DVD release.

Smash, along with *The New Normal*, were both cancelled this past summer after struggling in the ratings. Both series featured gay characters in leading roles and were

Sean and best friend Liz "met at his wedding to a woman, and she outed him!"

expected to be huge hits. Both debuted with great fanfare and initially brought in decent numbers. No one is sure what happened when both series ultimately failed. Yet NBC, which brought both shows to the airwaves, is willing to try again.

"*The New Normal* didn't have Sean Hayes," says TV legend Linda Lavin (Alice). "He's an extraordinary talent."

In the new series, Hayes plays Sean! He's a single gay dad whose wise, wisecracking teen daughter (from a previous marriage) has moved in with him. As he struggles to be the best dad he can be, he also searches for Mr. Right, deals with the boss from hell, and spars with Lorna, his overbearing but loving mom (Lavin). Hilty plays Liz, Sean's best friend.

"*Sean Saves the World* is an identifiable story about a gay single dad as he balances his home and work life," says Lavin. "I'm delighted to be a part of it. It's a terrific company filled with talented people and talented writers."

"Sean Hayes is magical, incredibly funny, and a nice guy," says Hilty. "Liz is

kind of a mess. She talks before she thinks, but she has the best intentions. They met at his wedding to a woman, and she outed him!"

The fast-paced trailer now posted at nbc.com gives potential viewers a glimpse of what to expect when they tune in to *Sean Saves the World*.

"If you're gay, then how did you and Mom have sex?" inquires daughter Ellie (Samantha Isler), as Sean nervously drops a pile of dishes. "Fish have the right idea," says mom Lorna. "You just drop them and go!"

"She's a force of nature," Lavin says of Lorna. "She's a very energetic, funny woman, with a strong affection for her son. They see life the same way, and she's very committed to his happiness."

Hilty feels that Sean's gayness is incidental to the story. "It's just another detail of who he is," she says. "It's not 'OMG, he's gay!' He just is. That says a lot about where we are now."

In the aftermath of the *New Normal*/*Smash* failures, we'll have to wait and see whether or not *Sean Saves the World* clicks with viewers. The online trailer is genuinely funny, and the buzz around the show has been positive, so perhaps this time the Peacock Network will enjoy the kind of success they saw with *Will and Grace*.

"When you start a new show, you hope for a long life," says Lavin. "You hope for growth, and for a substantial income for those working on the show."

Tune in to NBC on Thursday, October 3, at 9 p.m., for the premiere of *Sean Saves the World*.

David-Elijah Nahmod lives in San Francisco. His eclectic writing career includes LGBT publications, monster magazines, and the Times of Israel.

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Sarah McLachlan
The Essential Sarah McLachlan



This album serves as a twenty-fifth anniversary commemoration of the singer-songwriter's career, which evolves over the course of this chronologically sequenced and fully annotated thirty-six-song double CD. Legacy Recordings (legacyrecordings.com). —S.L.

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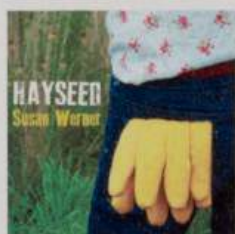


Taking a "traditional" song-writing approach as much as an electronic one in their music-making, Rudimental mixes live instrumentation with digital programming. They write as a group pulling from one another's strengths. The result is bubbling with energy and thick, layered basslines, live instruments, and contagious hooks. Big Beat Records (wearebigbeat.com). —S.L. ■

Hunx (aka Seth Bogart) isn't through surprising and thrilling us quite yet. From his (dark) roots in the queer-electro act Gravy Train!!!! to his solo work (*Hairdresser Blues* is a queer-pop must) to his mind-blowing turn as the front man of gay garage band Hunx & His Punx, he has lots of tricks up his leather-jacket sleeve. Cranking up the volume and mood he set on Hunx & His Punx's lo-fi 2011 debut *Too Young to Be in Love*, Hunx goes straight for your eardrums on the aptly titled *Street Punk* (Hardly Art). Reduced to a trio (from a quintet), what Hunx & His Punx lack in numbers they make up for in sheer volume and aggression. Hunx shares visceral vocal duties with bass player Shannon Shaw, and they run through a slew of emotions over the course of a dozen songs that penetrate the listener like the needle of a tattoo gun. From the (ga)rage of "Everyone's a Pussy," "Don't Call Me Fabulous," and "Kill Elaine," to lighter fare such as "Born Blonde" and sophisticated cuts including "Mud in Your Eyes" and "You Think You're Tough," *Street Punk* earns its street cred.



From the sound of it, Susan Werner hasn't taken off the cowboy boots she slipped on for her 2011 album *Kicking the Beehive*. The twang is still intact on her latest, the aptly titled *Hayseed* (Sleeve Dog/Thirty Tigers). Werner, who has a gift for finding a balance between the humorous and the serious, continues to do so on this album. *Hayseed*, with its farmer theme, opens with the sly wink of "City Kids" and then turns more serious on "Snowmobiles." Werner brings a smile to our lips on "Herbicides," "Iowa," and "Egg Money," while songs such as "While You Wait for the Rain," "Something to Be Said," and "Plant the Stars" are good examples of her somber side.



The late drag legend and actor Divine is the subject of the marvelous doc *I Am Divine*. Divine's career as a dance music artist during the mid-'80s is highlighted in the film. The import reissue disc *Maid in England* (Cherry Pop) features some of Divine's biggest hi-NRG club hits including "You Think You're a Man," "Walk Like a Man," and "I'm So Beautiful," all performed in Divine's own "distinctive singing style." The fifteen-track disc includes three bonus tracks, 12-inch mixes of the aforementioned songs.

Trans musicians are rapidly moving to the forefront of the LGBT music scene. Singer/writ-

er/academic/activist/performer Elias Krell, formerly of the Homoticons, steps out on his own with the self-titled disc by his new band Elias Krell & the No Good. The ten songs are Krell's "first serious attempt to explore a through-line" between the jazz and blues vocalists of the mid-twentieth century and contemporary female singer/songwriters. Interestingly, two of the covers are of songs by gay male singer/songwriters Rufus Wainwright ("Vibrate") and Stephin Merritt ("This Little Ukulele"). The best of the originals includes the instrumental "Won't Help You Dance" (in which Krell's accordion plays a prominent role) and "Averay." Laura Love-approved Bay Area-based indie folk singer/songwriter Eli Conley describes himself as "an out gay transgender man." You can hear Conley's Virginia roots in his voice and in his lyrics throughout his Indiegogo-funded debut album *At the Seams* (eliconley.com). In fact, the Commonwealth gets name-checked in the song "Dry as Sin."

For the complete article, including Jamie Anderson's Dare and Stephen Sondheim's Passion: 2013 New York Cast Recording, log on to *OutSmart Magazine.com*.

Gregg Shapiro is a regular contributor to *OutSmart magazine*.

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While some of the shows, including *Lizzie* and *50 Shades!*, are tours, ten to twelve local performers will probably nab roles in *Hands on a Hardbody*. The fourth show, *Murder*



Bloody Borden: *Lizzie* is a rock musical that retells the legend of America's first axe-wielding double-murderess, Lizzie Borden.

Ballad, could also provide employment for a few local actors.

Tickets to TUTS Underground productions range from \$24 to \$49.

John Breckenridge, the CEO and president of TUTS, says the new venture has been brewing for a long time. "We are thrilled to finally make it a reality," he says. "Through our strong New York City connections, we are granted unpar-

alleled access to the freshest, most innovative musicals coming out of the Broadway community. As a multi-million-dollar musical theater organization, we have the unique opportunity to take new material from obscurity to notoriety right here in Houston. That is pretty exciting."

TUTS artistic director Bruce Lumpkin adds, "I want to bring important theater to Houston—shows that make people think and view the world around them differently and from a new and exciting angle. TUTS Underground will showcase just how dynamic musical theater can be. Houston is ready for this. TUTS is ready for this."

Donalevan Maines wrote about the Emmys and numerous theater pieces in the September issue of OutSmart.

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TexasMonthly





by
Kit van
Cleave

Painful Tales

Successful gay American men of color tell their stories

ReadOut Shorts

Love in the Time of Global Warming
Francesca Lia Block



Francesca Lia Block's new novel takes place in a post-apocalyptic world and is told from the viewpoint of a young heroine who survives a major earthquake.

With its cast of vagabond queers, readers will enjoy a fantasy novel that tells a story with characters whose genders and sexualities are not the sole focus of the plot. Henry Holt (us.macmillan.com). —Aisha Bouderdaben

Hide and Seek: Out of the Darkness and Into My Life

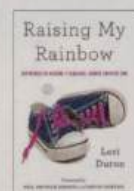
Dr. José Beth Smolensky



Smolensky's book tells the story of abuse by her husband. Emotional abuse. Physical abuse. Incarceration in a mental institution. Continued threats of taking

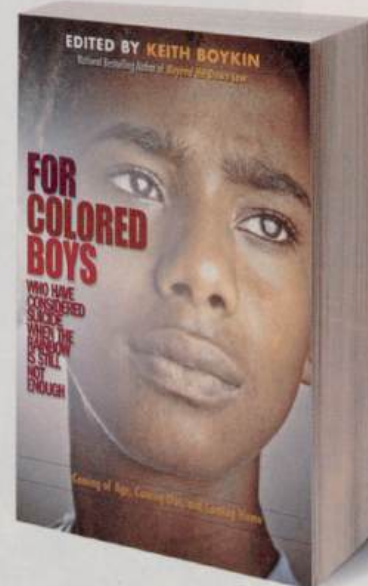
away her children, culminating in the need to simply disappear with her new partner, a woman, in order to keep her family. The most telling part of the story goes unsaid—more than fifty years after the abuse ends, the need for catharsis remains. Inkwater Press (inkwaterpress.com). —Angel Curtis

Raising My Rainbow: Adventures in Raising a Fabulous, Gender Creative Son
Lori Duron



Lori Duron writes a fabulous blog with the same title as this book. Her writing is funny and poignant and uniquely captures the desire of a mother to love her gender-variant child

no matter what. In this memoir, she deconstructs everyone's notions about what a boy is and isn't. Broadway Books (crownpublishing.com). —A.C. ■



For Colored Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Still Not Enough

Edited by Keith Boykin

2013 • Magnus Books (magnusbooks.com)

280 pages • \$15.95 • paperback

Keith Boykin has had a lot of experience with the despair of being a gay American black man who was bullied and humiliated in childhood for not living up to an über-masculine image.

In the introduction to his new anthology *For Colored Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Still Not Enough*, Boykin recalls trying to estimate the number of U.S. gay men who have recently committed suicide, including friends. These personal tragedies moved him to request submissions for a new anthology about black men who suffered through their childhoods and coming-out periods. The resulting book is a remarkable group of essays from successful men like himself who have distinguished academic and professional backgrounds.

Their stories, however, are marked with pain. Most seemed to know very early—at five or six years of age—that they were gay, and most of them also had childhood sexual experiences. Their communities and relatives forced them into the closet with name-calling or threats.

Only a few of these writers were effeminate; several were pro football or basketball players, and others served in Iraq. While they all finally found their way to sanity and inner peace, their struggles cost them their adolescence, relatives, friends, jobs, and sometimes even their parents.

Daren J. Fleming, in "The Night Diana Died," remembered when he was part of a group of four out black men attending Millikin University in central Illinois. He and his "boys" went shopping before a theater party, and some of them were "flaunting" on the streets when several white men in a pickup tried to run over them. Later, at the party, a girl came up to Daren and told him the "townies" had infiltrated the party and were looking for them to beat them. Other students helped them to narrowly escape the party. It was a bone-chilling experience followed by a rash of anti-black and homophobic incidents in the small college town.

In "Just the Two of Us," Curtis Pate III recalled when he

took his lover, Carwyn, home to meet his parents as he was coming out. His parents had always been supportive and loving. However, when the introduction came, his father stood and said, "I don't want

to hear about these sick feelings you have. I want you and that thing out of my house, now." For the next ten years, he never spoke to his folks about his life.

When he finished Rutgers University, became financially successful, and bought a home—with Carwyn—his family finally accepted them both.

Highlighting the close relationship between the black community and Protestant churches, Boykin notes that several of these writers were lay ministers as teens, taught Bible study classes, and then were excluded from →



Keith Boykin

We look through the eyes of many

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ReadOut continued from page 120

leadership positions when their secret was revealed. Some of the writers are quite hostile about how pastors—many of whom are gay—thunder from the pulpit about the damnation and hellfire brought on by homosexuality. Even today, the hypocrisy is staggering; black churches accept gay people as long as they never speak about sexual issues.

A particularly touching story was filed by José David Sierra, better known as the drag performer Jessica Wild. Born in Puerto Rico, he was always more feminine than masculine, so his schoolmates, aunts, and cousins taunted him early on with a variety of insulting names—*pato*, *maricon*, *loca*, *nena*. As a result, he spent much time alone, writing, dancing, drawing, and creating music.

When Sierra was sixteen, his mother allowed him to start dance classes, and he immediately started planning a career in show business. As he started going to gay clubs and saw drag queens for the first time, he decided he should do drag because his purpose in life was to entertain. His friends helped him, and soon he was a popular entertainer all over the country.

When RuPaul had a concert in Puerto Rico, the producer asked Jessica Wild to be in the opening of the show. Due to his subsequent TV appearances, Sierra's parents soon discovered not only that he was gay, but a drag performer. Their reaction: "El es mi hijo. No importa lo que haga lo voy a reconocer." ("He's my son. I'm going to know my son no matter what.")

After Sierra first saw RuPaul's *Drag Race*, he auditioned for the second season and was chosen. He flew to Los Angeles for the international hit show, and his career took off. Today he says, "It's just about doing what I love and making your dreams come true."

The title of Boykin's anthology comes, of course, from Ntozake Shange's play, first presented in New York, about a group of women who suffer indignities and tragedies, yet continue to thrive. *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf* (1974) was produced in 2010 as a film starring Janet Jackson, Whoopi Goldberg, Anika Noni Rose, and other major actresses of color.

Boykin has certainly reclaimed his life, having attended Harvard Law School with President Obama and served as a special assistant to President Clinton. He is currently serving as a political commentator for CNN, MSNBC, and CNBC.

Thoroughly recommended.

Kit van Cleave is a freelance writer living in Montrose. She has published in local, national, and international media.



2013



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WWW.THEHOUSTONWALK.ORG



5K SATURDAY OCT 12, 2013

SPOTTS PARK

WALK 401 SOUTH HEIGHTS BLVD

Our theme this year is "Optimism - Your glass is ¾ full!"
We are wanting to be as GREEN as possible Ride your bike or car pool.
Walk will start at 8 AM sharp by Mayor Annise Parker

Mission Statement:

The Walk for Mental Health Awareness - Houston is a community based event to raise awareness and funds for greater Houston area non-profit agencies and programs that provide mental health services.

Vision Statement:

For those struggling under the weight of depression or a mental illness, past failures or harmful relationships, everyday living can feel like a death sentence. The physical, mental and emotional suffering steals the heart out of life and if left untreated, will ultimately destroy them. There is help and there is Hope. But you can only find this by reaching outside of yourself. The Walk for Mental Health Awareness - Houston is a celebration of hope of the life after mental illness and a call to action by people in our community. We are a "Positive Public Dialog"

WALK WITH A PURPOSE

The Walk for Mental Health Awareness - Houston

Date and Time:

Saturday - October 12, 2013 - 8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
On site registration and packet pick-up will open at 7 AM
We will have off-site parking - posted on web site & Facebook

Program

7:20AM Soji Ceremony
7:25 Art of Living Foundation will lead walkers through a stretching and breathing centering routine
7:40 Remarks by Walk creator C. Patrick McIlvain
7:45AM Introduction of guests

Location

Spotts Park - 401 S. Heights Blvd. @ Willia St. (Tennis Courts), Houston, TX 77007

On METRO bus Routes:

34 Montrose Crosstown (S. Heights @ Willia/Feagan)
36 Kempwood/Lawndale (Washington @ Heights)
50 Harrisburg/Heights (Walk south on Heights)

Program Details:

This is a family fun event! You can walk and even optionally bring your dog to the walk so lace up your sneakers and grab your leash, this is also a dog friendly event! All dogs on leash with collar have free access to our "Pup Tent" (sponsored by Bayou City Veterinary Hospital), humans MUST be accompanied by a doggie to gain entrance. The Walk also features a wonderful Mental Health Expo with exciting exhibits, resource booths to help you find the right people to help in your family journey and of course refreshments, family entertainment and so much more!

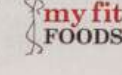
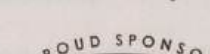
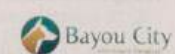
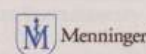
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Calendar of Events

Compiled by
Marene
Gustin

'The OUT List'

LGBT diversity in America

If you were a fan of photographer and filmmaker Timothy Greenfield-Sanders' HBO documentary *The OUT List*, you'll love the exhibit at Hiram Butler Gallery (4520 Blossom Street). From October 5 through November 30, the gallery shows Greenfield-Sanders' companion portrait exhibit of the same title. *The OUT List* photography exhibit features portraits of high-profile members of today's LGBT community in America, including *The OUT List* documentary stars: screenwriter Dustin Lance Black; former Log Cabin Republican executive director R. Clarke Cooper; former NFL football player Wade Davis; TV personality Ellen DeGeneres; co-founder of groundbreaking LGBT organizations Larry Kramer; writer/activist Janet Mock; actress Cynthia Nixon;



finance author and TV personality Suze Orman; New York City Council Speaker and mayoral candidate Christine Quinn; lead vocalist of Scissor Sisters Jake Shears; stand-up comedian and actress Wanda Sykes; and Muslim educator Wazina Zondon.

'OUT' in Houston: *The OUT List* exhibit includes photos of (clockwise from far left) ballroom performer Twiggy Pucci Barcon, iconic drag queen Lady Bunny, actor Neil Patrick Harris, and Dallas County sheriff Lupe Valdez.

The OUT List documentary, released in June of this year, follows in the same vein as Greenfield-Sanders' well-known projects *About Face: Supermodels Then and Now*, *The Latino List*, and *The Black List*. There is an opening reception at the gallery on October 5 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call 713/863-7097 or visit hirambutler.com. —Marene Gustin

OCTOBER

PERFORMING ARTS

• THROUGH OCTOBER 12

Going Bare. Theatre Suburbia presents a play by Houstonian Mary Jane Taege, a hilarious look at love in the time of liability and lawyers, lust and lies. Visit theatresuburbia.org for more details.

Priscilla, Queen of the Desert: The Musical. We have a lot to thank Bette Midler for, but this month it's that she was instrumental in bringing *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert: The Musical* to our shores. And now Theatre Under the Stars is bringing this fab and funny romp through the Outback to Houston. Drag queens, a purple bus, more than five hundred, 2011 Tony Award-winning costumes, and a hit parade of more than twenty dance-floor favorites including "It's Raining Men," "Finally," and "I Will Survive." Details at tuts.com.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. See the '80s fun every Friday and Saturday nights at Pasadena's Stage Door Inc. See stagedoorinc.com for tickets.

The Last Prince of Soulville. The Ensemble Theatre kicks off its youth theater production, *The Last Prince of Soulville* by Broderick Jones. See ensemblehouston.com for more information.

• THROUGH OCTOBER 19

The Pine. The Catastrophic Theatre presents the world premiere of this new play by Mickie Maher, the author of past Catastrophic favorites *There Is a Happiness That Morning Is, Spirits to Enforce*, and *The Strangerer*. Visit catastrophictheatre.com for details.

• THROUGH OCTOBER 20

Immediate Family. The Ensemble Theatre kicks off the season with this play about family secrets. See ensemblehouston.com.

You Can't Take It with You. This hilarious Pulitzer Prize-winning play features the Alley Resident Company of Actors. See alleytheatre.org for times and tickets.

• THROUGH OCTOBER 26

Saloon Songs. The cabaret-style performance blends a dizzying array of country western, folk, and bluegrass favorites that span the decades. At The Music Box Theater, themusicboxtheater.com.

• OCTOBER 2-6

Houston Fringe Festival. Houston's 6th annual alternative performance festival. Five days of independent film, theater, dance, music, and visual arts. See schedule and ticket information at houstonfringefestival.org.

• OCTOBER 3

Thursday Concerts at Discovery Green. A free concert in the park featuring Young Mammals and The Wheel Workers. See discoverygreen.com for details.

• OCTOBER 3-5 AND 10-12

Rabbit Hole. The Rice Players present this family drama by David Lindsey-Abaire at Hermann Hall. See players.blogs.rice.edu for details.

• OCTOBER 3-26

Young Frankenstein. Based on the Mel Brooks classic movie, this musical comes to Obsidian Art Space this month. Check sro-productions.com for details.

• OCTOBER 4-6

Classic Soul. Houston Symphony and guest vocalists dish up some soul classics. See houstonsymphony.org.

• OCTOBER 4-26

Enchanted April. Matthew Barber's play that was the 2003 Tony Award-nominee for Best Play is at Playhouse 1960 this month. See ph1960.com for details.

• OCTOBER 9-NOVEMBER 3

Veronica's Room. Stages Repertory Theatre presents this forgotten gem by Rosemary's *Baby* author Ira Levin. See stagesreptheatre.com for details.

• OCTOBER 10

Thursday Concerts at Discovery Green. A free concert in the park featuring Del Castillo and ESPANTAJAROS. See discoverygreen.com for details.

• OCTOBER 10-20

Lizzie. TUTS's "killer" first performance of the new TUTS Underground series of modern theater is a rock opera about Lizzie Borden. "Nuff said. Check out tuts.com.

• OCTOBER 11

The Growlers. Catch the band live at Fitzgerald's before their new album drops. See fitzlivemusic.com.

• OCTOBER 12

Lunada. A free concert at Miller Outdoor Theatre featuring Sphinx Virtuosity. See milleroutdoorththeatre.com.

• OCTOBER 14 & 15

Jerusalem String Quartet: The Shostakovich Cycle. Da Camera presents this show at The Menil Collection for two days only. See more at dacamera.com.

• OCTOBER 15

Grown-up Storytime. Theatrical readings of real stories by BooTown held monthly at Rudyard's British Pub. See bootown.org for more.

• OCTOBER 15-20

Peter and the Starcatcher. This prequel to Peter Pan, and five-time Tony Award-winning musical, is part of the Gexa Energy Broadway at The Hobby Center. See thehobbycenter.org.

• OCTOBER 16

In the Round. Jen Foster, Patrice Pike, and Michelle Malone on tour at The Mucky Duck. Tickets are on sale now at jenfoster.com/gigs.

• OCTOBER 17

Thursday Concerts at Discovery Green. A free concert in the park featuring Shemekia Copeland, a powerful blues and soul singer. See discoverygreen.com for details.

Midori Plays Mendelssohn. The famous violinist joins the Houston Symphony for this concert at Sugar Land Baptist Church. See houstonhousingsymphony.org.

• OCTOBER 18-20

Midori Plays Mendelssohn. The famous violinist joins the Houston Symphony for this concert at Jones Hall. See houstonhousingsymphony.org.

• OCTOBER 24-27

Mozart & Schumann. A classical Houston Symphony concert. See houstonhousingsymphony.org.

• OCTOBER 25 & 26

The Buddy Holly Story. A high energy musical featuring Holly's greatest hits. At The Grand in Galveston, thegrand.com.

• OCTOBER 26

Peter and the Wolf. A family favorite from the Houston Symphony. See houstonhousingsymphony.org.

• NOVEMBER 1

Young Trailblazers: Robert, Clara, and Jo-

hannes. Da Camera explores the concert works of young Robert Schumann, Clara Schumann, and Johannes Brahms. See more at dacamera.com.

ART & PHOTOGRAPHY

• THROUGH OCTOBER 12

Kathleen Earthrow: Sensory Paintings. Harris Gallery presents a solo exhibition of Kathleen Earthrow's recent paintings. The Houston-based artist captures moments in landscape with abstracted realism and sensual color. See harrisgalleryhouston.com.

• THROUGH OCTOBER 13

LaToya Ruby Frazier: WITNESS. A special exhibit of the artist's work at the Contemporary Museum of Art Houston. See cmh.org for details.

• THROUGH OCTOBER 19

Red Hot. Nicole Longnecker Gallery features Parisian artist Anne Ferrer and her sensually whimsical inflatable sculptures. Made from brightly colored sailcloth, each invites the viewer into a world of delightful decadence. See longneckergallery.com for details.

• THROUGH OCTOBER 27

Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War, and the Holocaust. Holocaust Museum Houston exhibits six decades of work by Soviet photojournalists. See hmh.org for details.

Gifts from the Past: The Isabel Brown Wilson Collection. Presents over fifty artworks from the bequest of Isabel Brown Wilson, a lifelong supporter of the MFAH. See mfah.org for details.

• THROUGH NOVEMBER 2

TransAMplitude. A group exhibition of four artists whose work is tied together by an investigation of transit at BLUOrange. Details at blueorangehouston.com.

• THROUGH NOVEMBER 24

From Here to Afternoon. An exhibit of seven contemporary artists exploring relationships between space, time, and movement at the Glassell School of Art. See mfah.org.

• THROUGH DECEMBER 8

Gaia. Rice University Art Gallery's fall season opens with a new installation by street artist Gaia, in which painting, drawing, printmaking, and collage come together to express the artist's larger-than-life impression of Houston's sprawling urban landscape and increasingly international demographic. For more information visit ricegallery.org.

• THROUGH DECEMBER 15

Calaveras Mexicanas: The Art and Influence of José Guadalupe Posada. This exhibit marks the 100th anniversary of the death of José Guadalupe Posada, "the father of Mexican printmaking," whose prints of calaveras (skulls) and *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) imagery have become icons. At the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, mfah.org.

• THROUGH JANUARY 11, 2014

Daniel Anguilla and Aaron Parazett Mural. See this beautiful mural, called *Skywriting*, at Lawndale Art Center. Visit lawndaleartcenter.org for more details.

WOLS: A Retrospective. An exhibit devoted to the famous European postwar artist at The Menil Collection.

• OCTOBER 5

Jorge Galván Flores: Paisaje Roto/Passage Rot. Opening reception for the artist's exhibit that runs through November 15 at Winter Street Studios. See fresharts.org for details.

• OCTOBER 5-31

Woven Spaces—Lines and Layers. Works by Sherry Tseng Hill at the Archway Gallery. See archwaygallery.com.

• OCTOBER 5-NOVEMBER 30

The OUT List. Hiram Butler Gallery presents *The OUT List*, a series of intimate portraits from photographer and director Timothy Greenfield-Sanders' HBO documentary *The OUT List*. See article above for details.

• OCTOBER 8-13

Performance and installation by William Basinski and James Elaine. The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston presents a performance and installation by composer William Basinski and artist James Elaine. Site-specific installations by the duo will be on view at CAMH as well as at the Texas Contemporary Art Fair. A free live performance by the two will take place at CAMH on October 11 at 7 p.m.

• OCTOBER 10-13

Texas Contemporary Art Fair. Scores of leading art galleries from around the world head to Houston for the Texas Contemporary Art Fair. See txcontemporary.com/texas.

• OCTOBER 19 & 20

ARToberFEST. Galveston's October art festival. See artoberfest.com for details. →



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INFO NEEDED FOR YOUR EVENT LISTING: a few lines of info about your event; date/time; cost; location/address; organization name; and phone number.

E-MAIL INFO TO: calendar@outsartmagazine.com. MAIL INFO TO: OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston, TX 77006. FAX INFO TO: 713/522-3275.

NO LISTINGS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—5 P.M., THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10.

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Calendar continued from previous page

• OCTOBER 23

Jorge Galván Flores: Paisaje Roto/Passage Rot. Artist talk for the exhibit that runs through November 15 at Winter Street Studios. See fresharts.org for details.

RADIO

After Hours: Queer Radio with Attitude features the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. Sunday mornings, midnight-3am. KPFT 90.1 FM • kpft.org • 713/526-5738.

Queer Voices. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. Monday nights, 9-11pm. KPFT 90.1 FM • kpft.org • 713/526-4000.

AND OTHER FUN THINGS

• OCTOBER 4

Pink Out Day. Show your support for breast cancer awareness by wearing pink!

Transgender Social with PFLAG. PFLAG sponsors the monthly first Friday transgender social cookout in October. Good food, drinks, good people, and good fun. 7-9 p.m. at the Transgender Center, 604 Pacific St.

• OCTOBER 5

Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. Run to fight breast cancer at this annual event. See komen-houston.org for details.

3rd Annual Beer Fest. Raise a pint at this Kemah Boardwalk event with twenty-five breweries and live music. See kemahbeerfest.com for more details and tickets.

• OCTOBER 12

Diana Foundation's Honky Tonk Kountry Dinner. Join the fun and support The Diana Foundation at Rebels Honky Tonk at 10 p.m. Tickets are \$45, call 713/385-0403.

5th Annual Art Heist. Bayou City Art Festival Downtown 2013 is exploring the "Treasures of the New World" at its fifth annual Art Heist, a fundraising gala that boasts an evening of "thievery," fine arts, and fun to benefit the festival's fourteen nonprofit partners and the Artist Relief fund. On the steps of City Hall. See bayoucityartfestival.com for details.

• OCTOBER 12 & 13

Bike around the Bay. A two-day, 180-mile bike ride around Galveston Bay. See bikearoundthebay.org.

• OCTOBER 19

D'Feet Breast Cancer. A Celebration of Life walk/run in Galveston. Details at dfeetbreastcancer.com.

• OCTOBER 25 & 26

32nd Island Oktoberfest. Oompah, beer, sausages! See www.galvestonoktoberfest.com for more.

• OCTOBER 26

Houston Margarita Festival. Margaritas, food trucks, and tons of fun at Discovery Green! See houstonmargarita-festival.com for tickets and details.

• OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 3

Lone Star Motorcycle Rally. Check out lonestarrally.com and get your hog ready to roll on down to the island.

ONGOING

• DAILY (SUN.-FRI.)

HIV Testing. Planned Parenthood offers free, anonymous, or confidential testing at clinic locations throughout the area. To speak with an HIV counselor: 1-800-230-PLAN. DICKINSON: 281/337-7725. FANNIN: 713/831-6543. FM1960: 281/587-8081. GREENSPRING: 281/445-4553. HUNTSVILLE: 936/295-6396. LUFKIN: 936/634-8446 x223. ROSENBERG: 281/342-3950. STAFFORD: 281/494-9848.

• DAILY (MON.-FRI.)

HIV Testing. Free HIV testing, with no Gold Card or donation required or requested. 9am-1pm. HCHD Thomas Street Clinic, 2015 Thomas St. • 713/873-4157 • 713/873-4026.

• DAILY (MON.-FRI.)

HIV Testing. Houston Area Community Services (HACS) offers free, confidential HIV testing with results in less than one minute on a daily basis (Mon-Thurs: 9 am-6 pm; Fri: 8 am-5 pm). No appointment necessary. 2150 West 18th St. (Heights area). HACS Testing Calendar with additional outreach locations: hacstx.org/testing.html. Contact HACS about testing: testing@hacstx.org or 713/426-0027.

• DAILY (MON.-FRI.)

HIV Testing. Legacy Community Health Services provides free rapid HIV testing with results in 20 minutes at the following locations on a weekly basis. MONDAYS: LEGACY MONTROSE CLINIC (1415 California St.), 11am-6pm; LEGACY LYONS CLINIC (502 Lyons Ave.), 1-5pm; GEORGE SPORTS BAR, 6-9pm; E.J.'s, 9pm-12am • TUESDAYS: LEGACY MONTROSE

CLINIC, 11am-6pm; LEGACY LYONS CLINIC, 1-5pm; MIDTOWNE SPA, 5-9pm; 611 HYDE PARK PUB, 5:30-9pm • WEDNESDAYS: LEGACY MONTROSE CLINIC, 11am-6pm; LEGACY LYONS CLINIC, 1-5pm; WALGREENS-MONTROSE, 4-8pm; CLUB HOUSTON, 6-10pm; Crystal Night Club, 10pm-2am • THURSDAYS: LEGACY MONTROSE CLINIC, 11am-6pm; LEGACY LYONS CLINIC, 1-5pm; WALGREENS-LYONS, 2-5pm; MIDTOWNE SPA, 5-9pm; GUAVA LAMP, 6:30-9pm; RIPCORN, 6:30-10pm • FRIDAYS: LEGACY MONTROSE CLINIC, 11am-4pm; CLUB HOUSTON, 1-4pm; LEGACY LYONS CLINIC, 1-5pm; TC's SHOWBAR, 4-8pm TONY'S CORNER POCKET, 4:30-8:30pm • LEGACY TESTING CALENDAR: http://www.calendarwiz.com/calendars/calendar.php?cd=legacytestingservices&

• WEEKLY (SUNDAYS)

The Women's Group. A feminist group for all women. 10:15am. First Unitarian Universalist Church's Sojourner Truth Room, 5200 Fannin St. • 713/529-8571.

• WEEKLY (MONDAYS)

EMBody: Whole Health, Wellness and Resiliency peer group. 2pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

LBT Breast Cancer Survivors Support Group. 5pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

EMBody: Introduction to Yoga. 6pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Depression Bipolar Support Group. 7pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Helping TransGenders Anonymous, a facilitated support group for all transgenders, supporters, family, and significant others. 7pm. 604 Pacific St. • tgctr.org.

Fathers First. Houston's original gay fathers group supports gay dads who are dealing with coming-out issues, and family and life challenges after being married to a woman. Meets every Monday except holidays. 7:30pm. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St., Room 230 • fathersfirstofhouston.com.

• WEEKLY (TUESDAYS)

EMBody: Mindfulness, Well-Being, Stress Reduction. 11am. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

HIV Support Group Lunch Brunch. 11am. Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold, Room 214 • 713/526-1017, ext. 202.

HATCH's Transgender Support Group and Speak Out for Youth. 5pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

• WEEKLY (WEDNESDAYS)

Gulf Pride for Youth. a support group for GLBTQ youth ages 13-20. 6-9pm. 707 23rd St., Galveston • gulfprideforyouth.org.

HIV Support Group BSSG. 6:30pm. Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold, Fellowship Hall • 713/526-1017.

Zumba exercise class with Crystal Wall. 6:45pm. House of Deréon Media Center, 2204 Crawford St. • 713/772-5175.

Houston Pride Band seeks all brass, woodwind, and percussion players of all skill levels for rehearsal. 7:30pm. Bethel UCC, 1107 Shepherd Dr. • 713/315-2525 • houstonprideband.org.

• WEEKLY (THURSDAYS)

Center HIV Support Group. Facilitated support group for HIV-positive individuals. 6pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, Historic Dow School, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Southern Country, a country-and-western dance troupe, offers free dance lessons. 8:30 p.m. Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos St. • southerncountryhouston.com.

• WEEKLY (FRIDAYS)

HATCH Youth Group. 7pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

• WEEKLY (SUNDAYS)

HATCH Youth Group. 6pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

• SEMI-MONTHLY (1ST AND 3RD FRI.)

Positive Brothers United, a social/support group for GLBT, HIV-positive men of color. 6 pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • csmithpbu@yahoo.com • 713/454-7548.

• MONTHLY (1ST SUN.)

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) Houston provides educational presentations of LGBT topics, small-group confidential discussions, and supportive fellowship. 2pm. St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 5501 S. Main St. • pflaghouston.org. →

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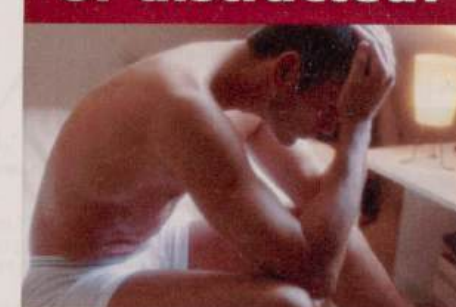
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Shutting down

Needing to belong, but feeling separate

Hurt, pain, loneliness

Feeling unappreciated, inadequate, or misunderstood

Difficult with understanding or expressing their emotions

Sexual and relationship concerns

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Calendar continued from previous page

- MONTHLY (1ST SAT.)
First Saturday Arts Market. Local artists display and sell original works of art. 11am-6pm. Wind Water Gallery, 548 West 19th St. Free admission. yalestreetmarket.com.
- MONTHLY (1ST SAT.)
First Saturday Queer Bingo benefits Houston GLBT Community Center. 4:30pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, Historic Dow School, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.
- MONTHLY (2ND TUES.)
Free Legal Consultations for PWAs. AIDS Foundation Houston and Katine & Nechman L.L.P. offer 30 minutes of free legal consultation on any legal issue to persons with HIV and AIDS, by appointment. Katine & Nechman, 1111 North Loop West, Suite 180 • lawkn.com • info@lawkn.com • 713/808-1000.
- MONTHLY (2ND THURS.)
Ryan White Planning Council. 11:30am. 2223 W. Loop South • rwpchouston.org • 713-572-3724.
- MONTHLY (2ND THURS.)
SPRY Potluck for Seniors. 4pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.
- MONTHLY (2ND SAT.)
National Leather Association-Houston. Movie night. 7pm. Montrose Center, Room 106 • 832/744-8607.
- MONTHLY (2ND SAT.)
AssistHers helps lesbians coping with life-threatening illnesses by providing non-medical assistance. Volunteers meet for fellowship and education followed by lunch at a local restaurant. 9:30am-noon. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St. • assisthers.org • 713/521-4628.
- MONTHLY (2ND SAT.)
National Leather Association-Houston. Leather craft class. Noon. \$20+ materials. Locations vary. bihouse@comcast.net.
- MONTHLY (3RD SUN.)
LOAF Meet and Greet. Lesbians Over Age Fifty meet for munchies and fellowship. 2-4pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • loafhouston.org • 281/467-2578.
- MONTHLY (3RD TUES.)
Affected Community Committee of the Ryan White Planning Council. Noon. rwpchouston.org • 713-572-3724.
- MONTHLY (3RD WED.)
Log Cabin Republicans. Theo's Restaurant, 812 Westheimer • facebook.com/groups/102199491979/?fref=ts.
- MONTHLY (3RD THURS.)
HIV Testing. 1pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.
- MONTHLY (3RD THURS.)
SPRY Counseling Center. 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.
- MONTHLY (3RD THURS.)
EMBody: Understanding Mental Health Issues. Rotating topics: addiction, depression, anxiety, bipolar. 5pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.
- MONTHLY (3RD THURS.)
EMBody: To Cook or Not to Cook. Demystifying raw foods. 6pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.
- MONTHLY (3RD FRI.)
Share with PFLAG Houston in a safe, confidential setting. 7:30-9pm. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's Chatham Room, 1805 W. Alabama • pflaghouston.org.
- MONTHLY (3RD FRI.)
Triple D: Dykes, Dinner, and Discussion offers dinner and conversation about health, family, dating, equality, community awareness, and freedom of speech. 7pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, 1901 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.
- MONTHLY (3RD SAT.)
Discovery Green Flea by Night. Local music, kids' activities, bicycle repair workshop, and 40+ vendors selling vintage clothing, antiques, collectibles, jewelry, and more. 6-10pm. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney St. • discoverygreen.com • 713/400-7336.
- MONTHLY (4TH SUN.)
Share with the Clear Lake satellite of PFLAG Houston in a safe, confidential setting. 2-4pm. Bay Area Unitarian Universalist Church Fellowship Hall, 17503 El Camino Real, Clear Lake • pflaghouston.org.

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Howling Halloween



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- OCTOBER 26
Séance. Contact the spirits aboard the Tall Ship *Elissa*. See galvestonmerchants.com for details.
- OCTOBER 26
Annual 800 Pacific High Heel Race. Annual high-heel drag race where anyone can enter the race, in or out of drag, just have to wear heels! 9 p.m. registration on 800 Pacific Block. Race at 9:45 p.m.
- OCTOBER 26-30
Ghost Hunts. Scare up some spirits with a tour of the 1838 Menard House. See galvestonmerchants.com for details.
- OCTOBER 26 & 31
JR's. Costume Contest encourages

all things Nightmare on Pacific Street for Montrose's largest no-cover Halloween party. Call 713/521-2519.

Mining Company. Encourages patrons to dress as their favorite werewolf. Celebrating Halloween with no cover on October 26 and 31st. Call 713/529-7488 for details.

• OCTOBER 27
Ghostly Gardens. Moody Gardens' annual event. Free trick or treating, games, and a costume contest for kids from 2-4 p.m.

AssistHers Halloween Costume Dance. Ghoulish fun, delicious bites, raffle, fabulous music, and costume contest. 4-8 p.m. South Beach, 810 Pacific. Details at assisthers.org.

• OCTOBER 31
Pleasure Pier Halloween Party. Unlimited rides, live music, and trick or treating! See pleasurepier.com.

South Beach. Two shows with Detox, from *RuPaul's Drag Race*! Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. See sobehouston.com for details.

JR's. Costume contest encourages all things Nightmare on Pacific Street for Montrose's largest no-cover Halloween party. Call 713/521-2519.

Meteor. This year Meteor has gone crazy for vampires. You're encouraged to enter the costume contest in your favorite vampire outfit or any costume you want. Call 713/521-0123 for details.

Mining Company. Encourages patrons to dress as their favorite werewolf. Celebrating Halloween with no cover. Call 713/529-7488 for details.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. It's your favorite late-night horror picture show by Bayou City Theatrics with pre- and post-parties and even a Time Warp dance-off. See the company website at bayoucitytheatrics.com. ■

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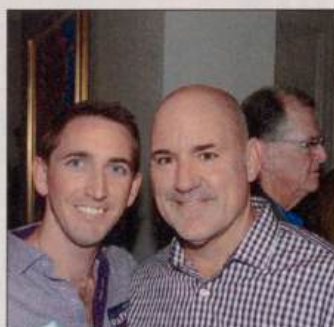
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According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, it's men that are fueling the rise in cosmetic surgery these days. "I think it's become more acceptable, safer and less invasive," says Dr. Jon Mathy, a board certified plastic surgeon and director of NuJuv Plastic Surgery Center. "And that's becoming apparent to men as well as women."

Dr. Mathy should know, two thirds of his Sugar Land practice is made up of male patients. Most want an edge up in the competitive workplace, they don't want to look different so much as just a little younger and healthier.

"Men generally want more subtle results than women," he says. "For example with sagging upper eyelids they do well with a smaller tuck to help them look refreshed without looking done."

"We have also developed different techniques for men. In the torso we can correct 'man boobs,' and use liposuction to accentuate a toned and cut chest and abs," he says. Body contouring, removing excess skin and fat after large weight loss, is another major part of his practice for men.

NuJuv Plastic Surgery Center offers a full range of treatments for guys that also includes rhinoplasty, chin implants, and neck lifts. "Chin implants can deliver a squarer jaw line, and neck lifts can replace a double chin or turkey waddle with a more defined face and profile," says Dr. Mathy.

Dr. Mathy opened his clinic a year and a half ago. He was raised in Sugar Land but left to attend Duke University, where he graduated summa cum laude. Then it was on to Stanford University School of Medicine and later Harvard Medical School for his plastic surgery training. He returned to his home community to be near family and friends. He is board certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgeons.

Besides plastic surgery, Dr. Mathy also specializes in hair transplant techniques. "Hair restoration is nothing like it used to be with those plugs at the hairline and a long scar in the back of the head from hair harvest," he says.

"Now we use microsurgery to harvest single hair follicles from the back of the head and transplant them along the receding hairline in front and to add density for thinning hair on top. This provides very natural results." The process is called Follicular Unit Extraction or FUE. For most men this process can be done in the office, with no visible scarring and they can be back to work the next day.

Dr. Mathy and the NuJuv Plastic Surgery Center are very supportive of the LGBT community. They are proud that OutSmart readers have selected them as Houston's Best Cosmetic Surgeon in this year's OutSmart Magazine Gayest & Greatest Survey.

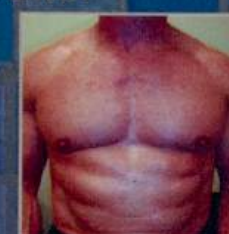
Dr. Mathy and his staff are located on US Highway 59 just southwest of Houston. You can learn more about Dr. Mathy and his staff at their website. Call today for a consultation.



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BEFORE



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BEFORE



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2013 DINNER MEETING
AT TONY MANDOLA'S

September 17



OutSmart's Candidate Q&A

continued from page 78

constituent service—"customer service" if you will—is the primary duty a district council member owes to their residents. To be sure, District J has its ongoing needs and challenges: crime, blight, litter, infrastructure in need of repair, etc. Addressing those tasks is a matter of management and attention. However, one of the biggest challenges facing District J specifically, and southwest Houston generally, lies in addressing the public's sometimes-negative perception of the area. I take seriously my role in using the "bully pulpit" to tell the real story of this part of town. I use every opportunity to educate the larger community about our unique diversity, our great and affordable housing stock, our good schools and solid neighborhoods, our flourishing social service network, and our business opportunities. Telling that story is an ongoing task that I welcome.

As the incumbent, how will you continue to make District J an "opportunity-for-everyone" district?

By now, many folks know that I coined the phrase "District J is the Ellis Island of Houston." It is true. Over fifty different language groups call the area home, call-

ing attention to our differences in worldview and life experiences. However, there is one common idea that unites us: we all chose to live in District J. One of the exciting aspects of serving this part of Houston is having the opportunity to work with each of the many different communities. Each of those communities is doing their part to strengthen and better their chosen home. My job is to help those communities be connected in purpose and communications and to provide them with the municipal resources needed for their work. I am committed to making sure that each of these communities has a place at the table as we build our future together.

How do you plan to lower the area's crime rate and protect all residents of your district?

One of the challenges I am called to address is the public's perception of crime in southwest Houston. To be sure, we do have criminal activity in District J—as do all districts. Most people do not realize that District J is three times more densely populated than the rest of the city. We have over 9,000 persons per square mile, while the remainder of the city has a density of about 3,100 persons. Yet, District J does not have three times the amount of crime experienced by the rest of the city. Our crime rates are average in comparison [with the rest of Houston]. Toward that end, I have worked hard to assist com-

munications between the city's Midwest, South Gessner, and Westside HPD command stations and the neighborhoods they serve. By working closely with HPD, we have been able to target crime hot spots, tear down a dilapidated condominium complex, close down sexually oriented nightclubs, and monitor human trafficking locations. Using surplus dollars from the District J operating budget, I was able to recently contribute over \$15,000 to each of the Ranchester, Westwood, Gulfon, and Richmond police storefront offices. Those dollars will supplement the operating budgets of those locations. Working with the Greater Sharpstown Management District, the Harris County Attorney, and the City Attorney's office, we have been able to target lawsuits and additional police resources toward addressing prostitution hot spots. I am pleased with the aggressive approach we have been able to take in fighting crime in District J.

Is there anything else about yourself that you would like our OutSmart readers to know?

I am grateful for the privilege of serving the people of District J and proud to be the first openly gay man to serve on the Houston City Council. Thank you for giving me this privilege to serve you. ■

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Bar & Club Guide

Houston

13 ENTERTAINMENT

Formerly In-N-Out, this comfortable club located in the northern Heights is a convenient alternate to inner-Montrose haunts. Patrons journey past the comfy seating and romantic lighting to find a spacious patio where they sometimes fire up the barbecue grill. 1537 N. Shepherd • 713/426-1313.

BAYOU CITY BAR & GRILL

DJ Wild and DJ CJ provide tunes for this lively, down-home bar in the heart of Montrose known for its cheap drinks, Wednesday's steak night, and Thursday's 25¢ wings during happy hour. 2409 Grant St. • bayoucitybar.com.

BLUR

This multi-level dance club features an expansive patio upstairs lounge and balconies that overlook the Pacific St. traffic. Ladies enjoy Wet and Wild Wednesdays, 18-year-olds are welcome on Thurs., resident DJ Lorenzo spins Wed.-Sat. nights, DJ Pollo spins Karumba Latin night on Sun. Happy hour 8-10pm; free cover before 11pm. 710 Pacific St. • blurbar.com.

CLUB 2020

Located downtown near the Toyota Center, this urban club features Clubbers Friday with male and female dancers. Its 6,400 square feet also offers theater-sized viewing screens and VIP rooms. 2020 Leeland • 713/227-9667 • club2020houston.com.

CLUB CRYSTAL

If you miss the now-closed Inergy, you'll find many of its former staff, management, and décor at this two-room Latin/hip-hop club. Sunday evening drag shows rule the roost. 6680 Southwest Fwy, next to Colorado • 713-278-2582 • crystaltheclub.com.

CROCKER BAR

Resident DJ Johnny spins on Fri. and Sat. nights at this comfortably remodeled Montrose nightspot that also offers karaoke on Tuesdays and Thursdays and extended happy-hour prices throughout the week. 2312 Crocker • 713/529-3355.

THE EAGLE

Houston's newest dance club for masculine men is full of private nooks and crannies for dancing and cruising. Resident DJs JD Arnold and DJ Rudy man the turntables. Fri. and Sat., 9pm-afterhours; Sun., 6pm-afterhours. 213 Milam St. • eaglehouston.com • 713/236-8777.

EJ'S

Located on the western front of Montrose, EJ's retains the charm of a colorful, local hangout. Frequent shows, including community benefits, pack the stage. The upstairs martini bar offers a quiet retreat. 2517 Ralph • 713/527-9071 • ejbar.com.

F BAR

Award-winning DJs spin nightly at this "boutique nightclub" that offers elegance without arrogance and features a stage, dance floor, VIP area, glass-encased quiet bar, and attractive patio. Tues. and Sun. drag shows feature frequent special guests. 202 Tuam St. • fbarhouston.com • 713/522-3227.

GEORGE

Regulars rule at this comfortable neighborhood sports bar, just like most other neighborhood sports bars in town. But George's occasional benefit drag show makes it a wonderful, campy alternative. Sports Saturdays start at 3pm with dart and pool tournaments; Steak Night is Sun., 3-7pm. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

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BEHIND THE BAR

WHO:

Matthew Landry

WHERE:

Guava Lamp
570 Waugh Drive • 713/524-9035

WHAT'S UP: Renovations are complete, and Guava has added a few scheduling highlights. Thursday is Urban Cowboy night; Friday stars Dana Jacobs & two guest queens; and Wednesday and Sunday are karaoke with the dynamic duo of Kara Dion & Ty Frazier.

GUAVA LAMP

This trendy and friendly video and cruise bar gets busy during happy hour and stays busy 'til closing. Karaoke on Wed. and Sun., sometimes offering prizes, always packs the place. 570 Waugh Dr. • 713/524-3359 • guavalamphouston.com.

JR'S BAR & GRILL

With house emcee Kofi, OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest reigning drag champion, this Montrose standard offers drag and strip shows throughout the week, karaoke Thurs. and Sun., plus pool tables, male dancers, and award-winning cocktails. 808 Pacific St. • jrbarandgrill.com • 713/521-2519.

METEOR

The men of Manwatch and Muscles in Action rinse down in the "Meteor Shower" stall in this posh but comfy lounge on the downtown edge of Montrose, accompanied by DJ Tad on Fri. and DJ Jimmy Skinner on Sat. Open Thurs.-Sat. 2306 Genesee St. • meteorhouston.com • 713/521-0123.

MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

Jerry Atwood, Clay Howell, Neil Massey, Steve Wheaton, and Roger Woest take turns at the keys at this comfortable neighborhood piano bar. 1419 Richmond Ave. • 713/520-8446.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Sturdy male dancers bump and grind every night at this leather/denim spot, offering Montrose's lowest vodka drinks with Trash Disco Sundays. The two-tier back patio bar provides a perch for viewing the Pacific Street scenery. 805 Pacific St. • theminehouston.com • 713/529-7488.

NEON BOOTS DANCEHALL & SALOON

Country is back! Houston's new gay country & western dancehall is located at the Historic Esquire Ballroom and is opening this summer. 11410 Hempstead Hwy • neonbootsclub.com.

THE RIPCORD

This well-kept, multi-roomed leather bar for men and their friends boasts a busy patio, especially on the weekends. The Black Hawk Leather shop is located inside the club, providing BDSM essentials. 715 Fairview Ave. • 713/521-2792 • theripcord.com.

RUDYARD'S

The eclectic British pub is known for its craft beers as well as for the burgers. Most weekends you'll find up-and-coming local bands rocking the house. 2010 Waugh Dr. • rudyardspub.com • 713/521-0521.

THE 611

This neighborhood club is a popular spot with pool sharks. On Fri. and Sat., the 611 dishes up buffet dinners. Features include a garden-style patio. 611 Hyde Park • 713/526-7070.

SOUTH BEACH

This mega-dance club is a frequent winner of OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest awards, with Billboard contributor DJ Jimmy Skinner spinning on Fri., and DJ Joe Ross playing pop & dance music videos on Sat. No cover before 11pm. 810 Pacific St. • sobehouston.com • 713/529-SOBE.

TC'S SHOWBAR

New owners Tim and Corey have revamped the deep-Montrose neighborhood bar, erasing any hint of its former occupant, Cousin's. Numerous flat-screen televisions and day-long drink specials highlight the updated décor. 817 Fairview • 713/526-2625 • tcshowbar.com.

TONY'S CORNER POCKET

This comfortable club located close to downtown has one of the friendliest bar staffs in town, both inside & outside at its patio bar. The raised stage where local charities perform also features an amateur dance contest each Thurs., Fri., & Sat. at 11pm. Opens daily at noon. 817 W. Dallas • 713/571-7870 • tonyscornerpocketbar.com.

THE USUAL

Formerly a house of ill repute, this lesbian-owned neighborhood bar now has plenty of reputation, especially on Wed., when "Her Usual" night packs in the women. Enjoy drink specials, dancing, karaoke, & gazing at the downtown skyline from the spacious front deck. 5519 Allen St. • 281/501-1478 • theusualpub.com.

VENUS

Houston's newest, hottest lesbian nightclub in midtown. This 21+ venue offers beautiful bartenders, incredible drink specials, & sexy shot girls while keeping it classy. Everyone is welcome. The event calendar is full of themed nights, DJ Athens & DJ Zane headline, and a killer Sunday Funday. Thurs.-Sat., 9pm-2am, for nights of pure equality. 2901 Fannin • 713/751-3185 • venus-houston.com.

VIVIANA'S

This club, in a new location, appeals to fans of Latino music and drag alike. 4624 Dacoma • 713/681-4104.

Beaumont

ORLEANS STREET PUB AND PATIO

The place to hang for food, fun, and booze in a newly renovated pub, in good weather or bad. Open every night from 7pm-2am. 650 Orleans • 409/835-4243.

Bryan/College Station

HALO VIDEO BAR

The only LGBT dance club in Bryan/College station, this sleek spot is open Thurs.-Sat. Smack in the middle of Aggieland, "our venue is always packed with the hotties," the owners promise. 121 North Main • 979/823-6174 • halobcs.com.

Galveston

3RD COAST DOWNTOWN

Just because its owners moved the club from its longtime Seawall location, it doesn't mean it's not still one of the most popular spots for Galveston's LGBTs. Its new "urban chic" look maintains its tropical flair. 2416 Postoffice St. • 409/765-6911.

PINK DOLPHIN

A familiar name returns to Galveston's roster of gay bars, with new owner Tom Long. The friendly, neighborhood BYOB spot offers affordable setups and an off-the-Seawall, downtown-based island escape. 1706 Tremont St. • 409/621-1808.

ROBERT'S LAFITTE

A neighborhood bar, the island institution attracts a colorful crowd of regulars and travelers. The private patio includes a swimming pool. On Sat. and Sun. nights, the Ladies of Lafitte show takes the stage. 2501 Avenue Q (at 25th) • 409/765-9092.

STARS BEACH CLUB

The island's newest entry into its ever-growing roster of gay bars is energized by visually stunning touches of light throughout. DJ Joe Rios spins for the spacious club, which also offers ample outdoor seating. 3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/497-4113 • starsbeachclub.com.

Spring

RANCH HILL SALOON

With its two pool tables, 52-inch plasma televisions, and large dance floor, this popular northside spot also offers Humpty Hump Wednesdays with DJ Brian Moya & a monthly drawing for a flatscreen TV. 247041 I-45N Suite 103 • 281/298-9035 • ranchhill.com.

THE ROOM

Northside LGBTs relax on couches and enjoy multiple television screens, pool tables, & an ample dance floor where famed local DJs Triple-S and Dylan Barnes rotate to provide the music on Retro Fridays, New Mix Saturdays, & Trash Disco Sundays. Open daily. 4915 FM 2920 #148 • theroombar.net.

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by
Lilly
Roddy

Get Ready, Girls and Boys . . .

Mercury is going retrograde this month, so get all of your ducks in a row by October 15

Mercury will be direct on November 15, and the Mercury retrograde is a wonderful time to take care of whatever you have on your plate before you add any more to it. The beginning of the month is more active and somewhat volatile. The latter half of the month will be quieter. We also have a lunar eclipse and Full Moon on the 18th in Aries. This will help to bring forth our courage and our desire to do what is right.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). As the month begins, you are very restless. This is a time when you will be confronting life's big issues, especially career and relationships. This is a good month to pay attention to your health, and perhaps start on a regular diet and exercise program. If you are in a relationship, this is a good month to revitalize it. It could be a real time of crisis if the relationship is not doing well. If you are single, this is a good time for you to be out looking. Keep working on getting your finances in order—it will really pay off.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). You are definitely in a clean-up and get-organized mode this month. A good place to start is at home. Family problems may surface, but you are ready to nip them in the bud. At work, you are trying to get your workspace more organized and efficient. Relationships are going through a time of review and renewal. You need to find common ground with your business or personal partner. Mercury retrograde would be a great time for a meeting, after the 15th. You may begin to see people from your past. Those old contacts could be especially good for your business and financial security.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). Set your plans into motion before October 15 when Mercury, your ruling planet, goes retrograde. After the 15th, take the time to explore where you have been, and make sure you are on track. You may feel very out of sorts from the 15th through the 23rd. Keep a low profile and make sure you have plenty of time to rest. You will want to put some energy into the task of reorganizing at home, especially after mid-month. This is a time to get clear with your co-workers about boundaries and responsibilities. Don't compromise too soon!

CANCER (June 22–July 22). With Jupiter (planet of growth and expansion) moving through your sign, you will continue to be busy, even with the Mercury retrograde coming up on the 15th. The first part of the month is a great time to start new projects and get your ideas moving. The latter half is more about fine-tuning and making your plan work better. The New Moon on the 4th is a wonderful time to start any new projects, especially those associated with your home and family. Keep a handle on your spending until after the 15th, when you will be less

inclined to spend money so easily. The first week of the month could be very intense, and potentially emotionally upsetting. Make sure you have your priorities straight.

LEO (July 23–August 22). As the month opens, you continue to be busy and active. You have more energy than usual, so you can really tackle your ongoing projects. With Mercury retrograding in your family and home area after the 15th, this would be a wonderful time to connect with family that you haven't seen in a while. This can be a time when there is a power shift in the family as the younger ones take on more adult roles. It would be a great time to clean out closets or finish those week-end-warrior projects. Watch your spending during the last half of the month.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). With your ruler, Mercury, going retrograde on the 15th, you need to get all of your projects under way so you will have time to do some fine-tuning later. Groups and organizations can be especially beneficial to you this month. If you get involved, you will easily rise to the top of the heap. After the 15th, you will need to take a chill pill and relax—especially through the 23rd. Those would be wonderful days to take off for a spiritual retreat. You will have a lot of energy, but it will be hard to direct it. Watch for problems with computers and phones after the 15th. They will get resolved by the middle of next month.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). This month, Mercury (planet of communication, travel, phones, siblings, and small animals) goes retrograde in your sign. This will certainly make the process more personal. All of this starts after the 15th, so get your activities started before then. You have been feeling more courageous and willing to take on a few risks last month and this month. In general, you are still working on new long-term plans for your future. After the 15th, with Mercury retrograding, you should take some time for personal introspection. At the minimum, clear your calendar and give yourself some time off.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). As with most of the other signs, the first half of the month is going to be the most productive for you, even though you are working at a slower pace than you are used to. There are some new projects coming your way at work, but you may not be able to really start on them until after mid-November. The last half of the month is definitely a time of rest and retreat, especially through the



LIBRA (September 23–October 23). **Happy Birthday to the Librans, the harmonizers and balancers. This is your personal yearly cycle when you are looking at what you did last year and considering what new projects you will start this year. Best to get those projects started before October 15, or wait until after November 15. Relationships are especially edgy as the month opens. Be careful what you say, as you will not be able to take things back. Your personal relationships are at greatest risk. Continue to work on your finances and getting those in shape. You could have all of that finished by the end of the year if you stick with it.**

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). Relationships have been very active lately, and they continue to be until mid-month. If you are single, this is a super time to put yourself out there if you are interested. If you are involved, you and your partner need an adventure to re-stimulate your partnership. Without this stimulation, it can be easy for anger to show up. You still have your sense of adventure, but it may not be leading you to have as much fun. You are working on getting your career plans in order. With Mercury retrograde in your career sector, you will have time to rethink your plans and make sure you are on the right track. Put your new ideas into play after November 15.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). This is a big rest-and-retreat month for those of you born in the early days of the sign. You will be feeling this urge from around the 8th through the 11th, and then it will be very strong again in the latter half of the month, particularly the 16th through the 20th. Keep things simple. For the Mermaids and Mer-men born later in the sign, you are feeling good and there are lots of options for you. This could be a good time to consider going back to school, starting your writing project, or learning how to be more playful with your children. If you are single, after the 15th would be a good time to date someone from your past. If you are involved, you will need to get out there and have fun! Don't let neglect bring anger into your relationship.

Read Lilly Roddy's 2013 forecast at OutSmartMagazine.com. For more astro-insight, log on to lillyrodgy.com.

26th. This can be a good time to write, visit a spa, or take a trip to Mecca. You will be feeling more sensitive, so be careful about the company you keep. The negative influences of some people will impact you.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). With the Sun moving through your career sector, this is normally a busy and productive time for you. The very beginning of this month, through the 6th, could be a rocky and stressful time for your career and your relationships. Be careful what you say, and don't burn any bridges unless you really mean it. In the latter half of this month, you are focused on groups and organizations. You will be staying in some, leaving others, and rejoining some that you had previously left. Friendships are also tense in the latter half of October. You want others to grow up and act more like adults. Watch your commitment levels—this can be a time when you could easily overdo it.



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