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EDITION

# THE TEXAS TRIANGLE

Vol. 5 ▼ No. 6

Your Gay News Source

November 28, 1996

## out in Houston

Happy Thanksgiving! If you haven't made other plans, **Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection (MCCR)** will be holding its annual Thanksgiving service and dinner today (Thursday). The worship service begins at 11 a.m. The dinner will follow at noon. **MCCR** is located at 1919 Decatur one block off of Washington and White. Call the church office during business hours at 861-9149 or at its pay phone at 862-9165 for more information. Check out **MCCR's** web site on the Internet at [http://www.neosoft.com/~mccr/mccr.html...](http://www.neosoft.com/~mccr/mccr.html)

**Elizabeth Birch**, executive director of the **Human Rights Campaign** will be the guest speaker at a "Town Meeting" from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Dec. 2 at the **West End Multiservices Center** at 170

By **Tristan MacAvery**  
TRIANGLE Staff

**D**eborah Moncrief Bell, editor of the Houston Voice since May of this year, has left the newspaper following what she said was a dispute with the publisher over editorial control and the paper's editorial content.

"I think 'forced out' is the appropriate term," Bell said in an interview Saturday. "The publisher left no viable alternative for me to stay. I was told that the position of editor was the only one that they had for me, but I was not allowed to retain the paper's editorial integrity."

Publisher Crad Duren, M.D., was not

available for comment. Members of the Voice staff also declined comment.

Bell's battle began when Duren said that the "layout" of the front page would be turned over to Stephen Schmidt, who had been hired recently as an advertising representative, Bell said. Bell said she understood the term "layout" to refer to placement of photos and stories, but Schmidt also selected the content of the page, including which photos and stories to run.

"I explained to Dr. Duren, and whoever else would listen, that I couldn't be the editor of the paper and then have my editorial decisions usurped by someone else—especially someone who has no qualifications whatsoever to do the job," she said.

The issues of Nov. 15 and 22 have both featured partially clothed men as their primary photos—a move

that Bell said she feels may cost the paper some readership and credibility. "If they want to be a sleazy bar rag, fine, but there's no way that I could be editor under those conditions," she said. "It's not my vision of the paper."

Bell, who has been active in the gay and lesbian community for many years, succeeded Sheri Cohen Darbonne as editor in May. In the past six months, Bell said she had worked to increase the scope of the newspaper's coverage to include activities and events spanning the vast range of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Bell accepted an award, on behalf of the paper, from the Names Project for its coverage of the Washington display of the AIDS Quilt—coverage that began in February this year, but which Bell had increased and intensified as the event drew nearer.

"I really felt betrayed on that point," Bell said. "This week's (Nov. 22) paper seems to

*continued on page 7*

## The '97 'Gay Agenda' LGRL Pushes Hate Crimes, Transgender Issues

By **Dan Quinn**  
TRIANGLE Staff

**Bathhouse Issue**

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The **Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Houston (GLSH)** will be conducting training for phone staff volunteers Dec. 6-8. **GLSH**, which is staffed entirely by volunteers, is a non-profit service that provides information on organizations, services, events and matters of interest to the gay and lesbian community in the Houston area. Call 529-3211 for more information or leave a message at 529-9615...

**A Christmas Songfest** will ring in the holidays on Dec. 8 at the **Edwin Hornberger Conference Center** at 2151 W. Holcombe Blvd. Tickets are \$45 at the door. Reserved tables for 10 are available starting at \$400. The event benefits local AIDS groups... □

—Dan Quinn and  
Tristan MacAvery

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## The '97 'Gay Agenda'

**LGRL Pushes Hate Crimes, Transgender Issues**

By Dan Quinn  
TRIANGLE Staff

**S**trong hate-crimes legislation, increased AIDS funding and transgender issues are among the items on an ambitious agenda set by gay lobbyists for the 1997 state legislative session.

Dianne Hardy-Garcia, executive director of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby (LGRL) of Texas, unveiled LGRL's 1997 priorities in a community workshop on lobbying in Austin last Saturday.

"This is the 'gay agenda,'" Hardy-Garcia told nearly 40 people, including activists and representatives of gay political caucus groups in Austin, Dallas, Houston and San Antonio, who crowded into Soma restaurant and coffeehouse after a mix-up left the Capitol City Playhouse unavailable.

At the top of LGRL's



Dianne Hardy-Garcia

agenda is passing strong hate-crimes legislation. The legislation would enhance penalties for crimes that are committed because of hate or bias toward a particular group of people, including gay men and lesbians. However, for practical reasons, LGRL has not pushed for transgendered people to be included in the legislation, Hardy-Garcia said.

"I wish we lived in a pro-  
*continued on page 10*

## Bathhouse Issue Reveals Split

By Dan Quinn  
TRIANGLE Staff

**A**s city officials begin looking more closely at bathhouses in Austin, the controversy surrounding the opening of these businesses has begun to reveal fissures between various AIDS activists and organizations and their respective approaches to battling HIV.

But even though the debate over bathhouses has deeply split gay political groups elsewhere, especially in San Francisco in the 1980s, so far there has been almost no debate over the issue in Austin's largest gay political group.

The split in the AIDS community has not developed into a public brawl. In fact, activists and HIV educators on both sides of the bathhouse issue are quick to say that they



**INSIDE:**  
**WORLD AIDS DAY**  
**Remembering Our Losses**

**Page 11**

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Managing Editor: Dan Quinn

Art Director: Mary S. Benner

Arts Editor: Sean Moynihan

Houston Bureau: Clarence Bagby,  
Tristan A. MacAvery

Columnists: Jeff Bray,  
Amy Adams Squire Strongheart,  
David M. Cohen, Beren deMotier,  
Lesléa Newman, Ellen Hobbs,  
Wayne Hoffman, Marvin Liebman,  
Lynn C. Miller, Gary Reese,  
Hastings Wyman Jr.

News/Feature Contributors:  
Gip Plaster, Jeff Bray, Chris Dennis

Arts Writers/Reviewers:  
Lee Lynch, Dale Reynolds,  
Steve Warren

Photographers: Jana Birchum,  
K. Young

Cartoonists: Alison Bechdel,  
Joe Hoover, Eric Orner,  
John D. Anderson

Illustrator: Sean Moynihan

Office Manager: Sean Moynihan

Advertising Sales:  
Austin Doña Hatch 512/476-0576 x4  
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**Houston Office:** 3400 Montrose,  
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Houston, TX 77006  
713/521-5822 FAX 713/521-5830

**E-Mail:** txtriangle@aol.com

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Happy Thanksgiving!



**Guest Column**

## Former Houston Voice Editor: Editorial Integrity Was at Stake

Deborah Bell, former editor of the Houston Voice, sent this letter to Triangle editor/publisher Kay Longcope on Nov. 21 and asked that it be published. In her letter, Bell refers to a recent Voice editorial critical of the Triangle's new Houston Edition.

This letter may come as a surprise to you, but these days are surprising ones. The editorial I wrote in the Houston Voice a few weeks ago was in the sense of competition and to defend "my paper" in response to certain things that were said at the community meeting the Triangle held. However, I now know that I was acting out of misplaced loyalty.

I have worked very hard over the past six months that I have been editor of the Houston Voice to make it a better publication, and most people seem to agree that is what I have done. One of the goals I had was to make sure the paper reflects all the diversity of our community. Well, recently I was informed that there were some people who were bothered by the fact that "there are too many women" in the paper now (apparently for some reason this was threatening to them). True, there were more women represented than before, but it still wasn't 50/50 gender parity, as the number of pictures of men and articles by men and about men far outweighed those of women. I was also told that an advertiser had complained about this because "women don't spend money."

So in spite of the many compliments and positive response from the larger community, the publisher of the Houston Voice made a decision that conflicted with the vision I had for the paper. I'm sure that he knew that I would not be in support of these changes, so what he

# Editorial

## We Listen to You

### POWELL CLINIC OFFERS TOP CARE

#### To the Editor:

Medical needs in our community are being addressed by several systems and clinics that are funded by several methods, including city and county funding and grants from corporations and the federal government. Many thanks are due to the people from all walks of life that carry on this mission.

The David Powell Clinic is one such organization. Being a client at this clinic is not only necessary but also very valued. Staff and patients alike are fortunate to have some of the best professional medical personnel as team members in our daily and long-term care.

When I became ill, I was working for a company that provides no benefits of insurance, sick pay, profit sharing or retirement. Consequently I was forced to go on to Medicaid and now the MAP program of the City of Austin and Travis County. The professionals at Powell Clinic have never treated anyone in my presence with anything but dignity, concerning themselves

with only the best care possible with limited resources.

Recently the Ryan White Foundation performed a three-day evaluation of the clinic and its program. I as well as many others are extremely pleased to learn of the outcome. David Powell Clinic passed the evaluation with high marks in every area. This is not a surprise to those of us who are their patients.

The staff of this clinic are always available to answer any question about our illness without hesitation—offering their caring and nurturing support at all times (and) using compassion and non-judgmental understanding of the unique and complicated concerns of the HIV patient.

From all of us who are served by the exemplary group of medical care professionals, we offer our thanks. We congratulate them on their success and pray that one day they will receive the greatest testament of all, a cure. God bless you, one and all.

**Eric D. Silvernale**

**Glenn Helton**

**Austin**

### WRITE TO US

*The Triangle welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be no longer than 250 words. Submissions for Readers' Forum guest editorials should be no longer than 450 words. Write to The Texas Triangle, 1615 West Sixth St., Austin, TX 78703, fax us at 512-472-8154 or send e-mail to [txtriangle@aol.com](mailto:txtriangle@aol.com).*

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So in spite of the many compliments and positive response from the larger community, the publisher of the Houston Voice made a decision that conflicted with the vision I had for the paper. I'm sure that he knew that I would not be in support of these changes, so what he did was to assign someone to handle the "layout" of the front page. Now, at first I thought this meant that this person was to handle the "artistic and graphic" aspects of layout, but, much to my surprise and dismay, I found out that this meant that this person had the authority to use whatever pictures, graphics AND stories that were to go on the front page (after consulting with myself and other staff supposedly, but ultimately he had final say over and above any decisions I made as editor).

I'm sure that you can understand that this is not an acceptable arrangement, especially since the person who was given this authority has no qualifications to be placed in such a position. As a bartender/photographer/advertising representative with no education, training, experience or talent in the field of journalism or layout production, it is truly appalling. I think this week's issue with a porn star on its front page will pretty much prove my point.

Last week I did manage at least to get the stories I selected on the front page. This week all I did was process stories, doing no original writing or making any editorial decisions as to placement or other matters I normally would handle. I had asked that my name only go on the masthead as copy editor or not at all, but I was denied that request. It is important to me that people know that this was not my work.

The publisher has informed me that he has no position of employment for me other than that of editor, and, without editorial integrity, it is impossible for me to stay. My farewell note to express thanks to the readers who have supported my work and the contributing writers was not allowed in the paper. It has meant so much to me that my work was appreciated by so many. So thanks to you all. I don't yet know what I will do, but you're sure to find me active somewhere in the community.

—Deborah Bell

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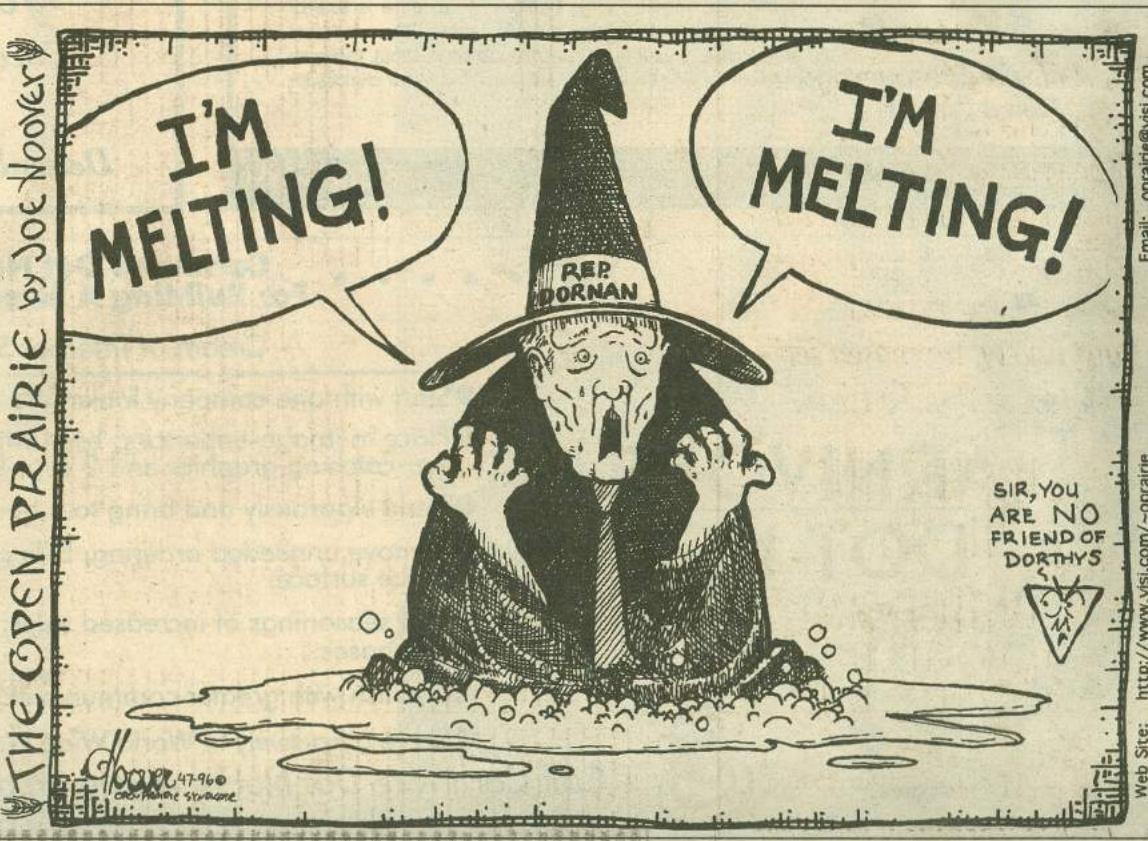
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**Eric D. Silvernale**  
**Glenn Helton**  
**Austin**



# Bathhouse Issue Reveals Split in AIDS Community

continued from page 1

respect and understand the concerns of those on the other side of the debate.

The most recent flare-up in the controversy came last week when Jose Orta, the project director of the Austin Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization-Informe SIDA until Nov. 20, and several other AIDS and community activists spoke out at an Austin Planning Commission meeting against the planned opening of A.C.I. (Alternative Clubs Inc.) Health Club at 500 Chicon in East Austin.

The Planning Commission ordered

city staff to review permits granted to A.C.I. as a health club, and the commission was scheduled to address the issue Tuesday night (after the Triangle went to press early on a holiday schedule). An aide to Mayor Bruce Todd also said last week that the City Council may have to consider revising the city's ordinance on sexually oriented businesses because the law currently does not address bathhouses.

**W**hile one of the major investors in A.C.I. has said the facility will be a health club and not a bathhouse, other people, including Orta, have charged that the name "Health Club" is simply a cover for a bathhouse. Orta and others said they oppose the opening of the club because it will be located in a mixed residential/business and predominantly minority neighborhood.

In addition, Orta said he was concerned that A.C.I., if opened as a bathhouse, would be a health hazard because men visiting the facility might engage in unprotected sex with multiple partners—major risk factors for HIV infection. Orta's comments echoed similar criticisms he made in August when he said that another new bathhouse, Midtowne Spa, could become an "HIV incubation factory" unless the facility made strong and credi-

ble efforts to provide outreach for AIDS education and prevention.

However, Oscar Lopez, a public health program specialist with the Gay Men's Health Project at the Austin/Travis County Health Department, does not see A.C.I. or Midtowne Spa necessarily as health threats.

Lopez said he has been encouraged by Midtowne's apparent willingness to work with AIDS outreach workers and he worried that Orta's criticisms of A.C.I. might work against similar education efforts there.

"I'm worried that some bridges may be burned, and that may make our jobs harder," Lopez said.

Mike Zappas, one of the owners of Midtowne, said his managers are working with AIDS educators.

"We've had a list of things they want us to do, and we're in the process of implementing some and discussing the others," said Zappas, who was in Austin Tuesday to discuss the bathhouse issue with city officials.

Lopez also said that bathhouses provide unique opportunities to provide AIDS prevention education to men in a sex-positive environment.

"People tend not to feel as ashamed going there as at a video shop or porn theater," he said.

As more men go to bathhouses, fewer will risk getting arrested or assaulted at public parks, video shops and adult the-

aters, Lopez said.

In addition, surveys, such as one conducted last year by AIDS Project-Los Angeles, have shown that most men visiting bathhouses engage in sexual activities

that are considered low-risk or no-risk for HIV infection, such as oral sex or masturbation.

"A lot of us in AIDS education stand by the statement that oral sex is safer sex," he said.

(There is some debate among educators about how safe oral sex is.)

While the bathhouse debate in the AIDS community continues to build, debate in gay political organizations has yet to surface. Allan Baker, chairman of the Austin Lesbian/Gay Political Caucus, said the issue of bathhouses has not been an official topic of discussion in ALGPC.

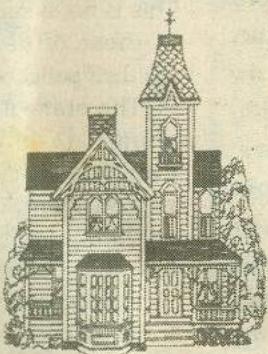
"If the membership felt it to be an issue we needed to address, I think we would," he said.

Baker said he hopes public debate over bathhouses, especially as city officials become more involved in the issue, does not degenerate into anti-gay attacks.

"I would hate for it to be an occasion for a lot of homophobes to go bashing gay men on the pretext of health issues," Baker said.

"The one issue ALGPC could have with City Council is to make sure the debate doesn't become a gay-bashing issue," he said.

## Claudette Lowe



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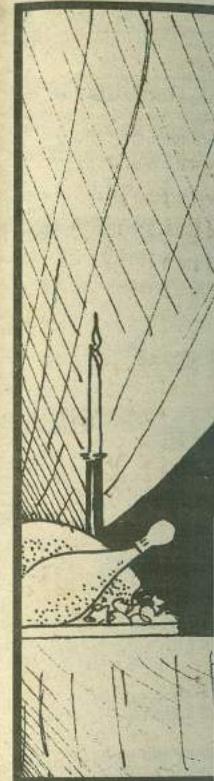
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Known as 'bonding', this painless procedure is one of several choices for transforming tooth defects. If you feel that the appearance of your teeth is nothing to smile about, make an appointment for an examination and learn about your choices for change.



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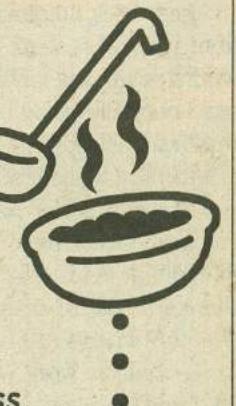
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the Austin Lesbian/Gay Political Caucus, said the issue of bathhouses has not been an official topic of discussion in ALGPC.

"If the membership felt it to be an issue we needed to address, I think we would," he said.

Baker said he hopes public debate over bathhouses, especially as city officials become more involved in the issue, does not degenerate into anti-gay attacks.

"I would hate for it to be an occasion for a lot of homophobes to go bashing gay men on the pretext of health issues," Baker said.

"The one issue ALGPC could have with City Council is to make sure the debate doesn't become a gay-bashing issue," he said. □

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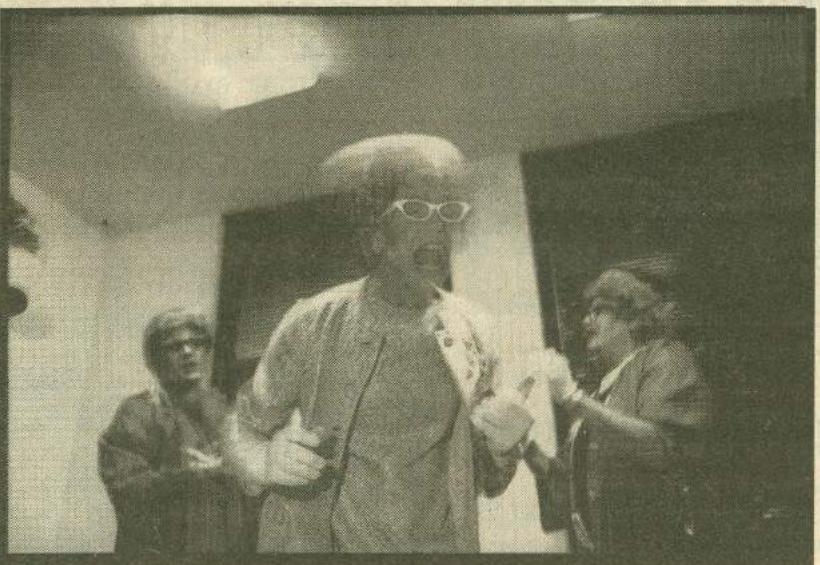


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Austin's very own Baptist Women give praise in yet another smashing performance at the Cornerstone Gay and Lesbian Community Center's release party for the new "Family Values" CD. The release party was held on Sunday. The CD, compiled by Kirt Kempter, includes tunes from several Austin musicians. Sales of the CD will benefit Cornerstone and Out Youth Austin. Photo by Jana Birchum.

## Project Transitions Plans 'Holiday Swing'

Project Transitions will host its 8th Annual Holiday Swing benefit from 8 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Dec. 6 at the Ben Hur Shrine Ballroom at 4300 Westbank Drive.

The event raises money to help Project Transitions provide hospice care and supportive housing for individuals

and families living with HIV/AIDS.

The event will feature music by Swingtime, holiday food, a cash bar and a silent auction.

Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door.

Call 512-454-8648 for tickets.

## Austin Spotlight

Texas Spotlight features one of many groups and organizations available to the community. To be considered for a future Spotlight, e-mail a 300 word description to [TxTriangle@aol.com](mailto:TxTriangle@aol.com). Or fax to 512/472-8154.

### PANEL TO DISCUSS BIAS AGAINST GAY, LESBIAN TEACHERS

A panel of experts will discuss and

Austin.

# Austin News

## Orta Departure Has Informe-SIDA Looking for New Director

By Shanti Avirgan  
TRIANGLE Staff

ALLGO / Informe-SIDA, Austin's second-largest agency dedicated to curbing HIV/AIDS transmission, is undergoing changes in leadership following the resignation last week of Project Director José Orta.

Orta began working with ALLGO (Austin Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization)/

Informe-SIDA as a volunteer. He later was a board member and has held the position of project director for the past three years.

Orta, who was diagnosed with AIDS in January, said he

was leaving for health reasons. He and the ALLGO Board of Directors created a contingency plan at the time to reduce his workload, protect the organization's infrastructure and to attempt to reduce his stress level, Orta said.

The last point of that contingency plan was for Orta to resign from his position and, in July, he notified the board of his decision to resign.

Orta admits that his decision to step

ALLGO has begun a national search for someone to fill the position Orta is vacating. Michelle Casanova, ALLGO's executive director, said that the position of project director has been streamlined to create the position of project manager. The organization is publicizing the open position throughout Texas as well as in California and New York.

Filling the position may be difficult. Before he assumed the position of project director, the position was open for six months, Orta said.

"When I was first approached about the job, I declined," Orta said. "It's such a public role. I have very strong family connections and I was apprehensive about being so public about being gay and HIV-positive."

Orta said he finally took the position because he wanted to validate people's lives and struggles. "I define social change organizing as a means of leading by example in the struggles that define you," he explains.

Casanova said Orta will be missed.

"José is not just an employee," Casanova said. "He's a noted figure in the Austin community—not only in the Latino community or the gay community, but in the community at large."

Indeed, Orta has been widely recognized for his work, most recently by the Austin Minority Health Network, which honored him with an Outstanding Service Award as Health Professional. "We will never be able to replace José," Casanova



José Orta

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### PANEL TO DISCUSS BIAS AGAINST GAY, LESBIAN TEACHERS

A panel of experts will discuss and answer questions about whether or not school employees are protected from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation at a Dec. 6 meeting of the Gay, Lesbian, Straight, Teachers Network (GLSTN) of Austin.

The meeting, in which panelists also will discuss what can be done to stop threats of discrimination, will be held at 7 p.m. at the Cornerstone Gay and Lesbian Center at 1117 Red River.

The panel will include attorneys Martha Fitzwater of Austin and Priscilla Magouirk of San Antonio, who will share their knowledge and expertise of both educational and employment law in Texas. Louis Malfarro, president of the Austin Federation of Teachers, will discuss his experience in advocating for teachers' rights in the Austin Independent School District (AISD).

If colleagues, administrators, parents or students learn about their sexual orientation, many gay and lesbian school employees often fear serious repercussions, including losing their jobs, said Steve Siefert, co-chair of the GLSTN

Austin.

Unlike their heterosexual colleagues, gay and lesbian teachers and staff often then feel compelled to conceal who they are, Siefert said.

To any student this sends a dangerous message of "it's wrong to be yourself, if you're different," he said.

The City of Austin prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (City Code Chapter 7-3). However, "political subdivisions" of the state are exempt. Interpretations vary on whether or not AISD employees are covered under the city ordinance, Siefert said.

The goal of this panel discussion is to clarify whether or not AISD employees are protected, and to identify what recourses they have when facing discrimination, he said.

GLSTN seeks to develop school climates where difference is valued for the positive contribution it makes in creating a more vibrant and diverse community. Further legal information and other information about GLSTN can also be found at the GLSTN web site at <http://www.glstn.org/respect/> □



José Orta

Orta was a board member and has held the position of project director for the past three years.

Orta, who was diagnosed with AIDS in January, said he

was leaving for health reasons. He and the ALLGO Board of Directors created a contingency plan at the time to reduce his workload, protect the organization's infrastructure and to attempt to reduce his stress level, Orta said.

The last point of that contingency plan was for Orta to resign from his position and, in July, he notified the board of his decision to resign.

Orta admits that his decision to step down from the position of director has not been easy.

"Of course, I'm having some separation anxiety," he said. "But I plan to continue to be involved with the organization, just not in such a stressful role. I know that with a life-threatening illness, I personally should be working at stepping down and mentoring others to continue this important work."

Orta said his immediate plans are to take a three-month sabbatical.

"I would like time to be alone, to be peaceful and to pace myself so that I can be here to support our struggles for years to come," he said.

After his sabbatical he plans to continue working with ALLGO/ Informe-SIDA as a volunteer, a consultant and possibly as a board member.

public role. I have very strong family connections and I was apprehensive about being so public about being gay and HIV-positive."

Orta said he finally took the position because he wanted to validate people's lives and struggles. "I define social change organizing as a means of leading by example in the struggles that define you," he explains.

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Indeed, Orta has been widely recognized for his work, most recently by the Austin Minority Health Network, which honored him with an Outstanding Service Award as Health Professional. "We will never be able to replace José," Casanova said. "But I am confident that we will be able to fill the position."

ALLGO/ Informe-SIDA is the largest of four projects run by the 11-year-old ALLGO. □



Diana Gorham (left), co-chair of the ALLGO Board of Directors, and Adrianna Ayala were just two of the happy faces at the Austin Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization's recent Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner. Looking for some great food for your holiday party? ALLGO is now taking orders for its famous tamales. Call 472-2001. Photo by Kay Longcope.

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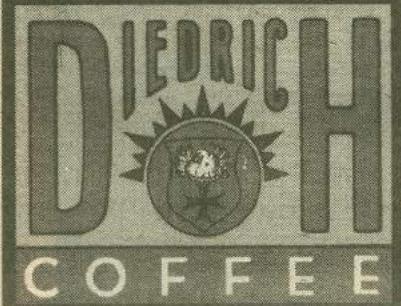


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Continuing

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Toni Jones Gallery: "Daniel Lechon." Through Dec 6. 713-528-7998.

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Toni Jones Gallery: "Daniel Lechon." Through Dec 6. 713-528-7998.

Blaffer Gallery (U of H): "Contemporary Art from Japan: Clayworks, Painting & Sculpture." Through Dec 15. 713-743-9530.

Houston Center for Photography: "When 2 or More: New Typologies" & "Dan Estabrook: Interior Views." Through Dec 22. 713-529-4755.

Contemporary Arts Museum: "Lari Pittman" & "Jesse Amado." Through Dec 31. 713-526-3129.

Mexican Cultural Institute: "Nostalgia: Posters of Mexican Cinema 1936-1956." Through Dec. 713-524-2951.

"A Christmas Carol."  
Through Dec 22. Zach Scott  
Theatre Center. 512-476-0541.

## World AIDS Day

Body Count 1996. Dec 1.  
Gathering @ the Capitol,  
6pm; procession starts,  
6:30pm; Body Count on  
Congress Avenue Bridge  
starts, 7pm, followed by  
performances by local  
artists. Volunteers are still  
needed: 512-447-6222.

Mass for the Anointing of  
the Sick. Dec 1, 5:30pm.  
The Cathedral Church of St.  
Mary, 203 E. 10th. 512-  
472-4540.

## Other Happenings

The Tribe: Thanksgiving  
Pot-Luck Dinner. Nov 28,  
12:30pm. Cornerstone.  
434-3280.

Austin Stonewall Chamber of  
Commerce Power Breakfast.  
Dec 4, 7:30am. Cafe Soma.  
512-707-3794.

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gay Austin residents).

# Houston Voice Editor Out After Editorial Dispute

continued from page 1

be saying, 'Look at us, we're so good, we got this award,' and yet, by firing me, they threw away all of the editorial integrity that caused them to win the award."

Bell reportedly drew fire from some members of the community for her comments in the Nov. 1 installment of her column "In My Own Voice." Responding to criticism raised in the "town hall meeting" of the Texas Triangle in Austin some weeks prior, Bell's column was interpreted as disapproving of the Voice's policy of running overtly sexual advertising.

"If people had actually read that column, they would have seen first that my comments were personal, not a reflection of the paper itself, and second that I support anyone's right to advertise whatever they want," Bell said. "I'm not in the business of censorship."

Texas Triangle publisher Kay Longcope had responded to the column in a "Letter to the Editor" that Bell said she was forbidden by the publisher to print.

Another column, appearing in the Nov. 15 edition of the Voice, reiterated Bell's points, explaining clearly that her opinions were merely opinions. After publication of this column, however, publisher Duren stated that he felt that he couldn't trust Bell to write an editorial

doing something they didn't like," Bell said. "If there was some kind of problem, I should have heard about it."

With Schmidt taking over control of the front page content, Bell said she felt that her reputation as editor was compromised. "I could not have my name associated with an inferior product, nor something that I find objectionable," Bell said.

***I really felt betrayed  
on that point. This  
week's paper seems  
to be saying, 'Look at us,  
we're so good, we got  
this award,' and yet,  
by firing me, they threw  
away all of the editorial  
integrity that caused  
them to win the award."***

way that I could be an editor under those conditions, and since he made no other place for me, I was forced to leave the company," Bell said.

Bell said she does not see her removal as based on a rational business or employment decision. In recent issues, the Voice had been conducting a reader poll for feedback from the community. Although the survey review has not been completed, the results appear to be largely favorable of her work, she said.

# Houston News

## HRC's Birch to Join Houston Panel Discussion

**H**uman Rights Campaign Executive Director Elizabeth Birch will join with local officials and activists for a panel discussion on national and local political victories and challenges for the gay and lesbian community at a Houston "Town Hall Meeting" on Dec. 2.

The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. at the West End Multi-Service Center at 170 Heights Blvd. between I-10 and Washington Avenue.

In addition to Birch, the panel will include former Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus President Annise Parker, HGLPC Board Chair Matthew Huston and Tom Combs, an openly gay aide to U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Houston. Parker will moderate the panel discussion.

"The panelists will give a report on the state of gay politics in America, as well as here in our local community, and answer questions from the audience," said Clarence Bagby, an HRC Houston Steering Committee member.

"Elizabeth wanted to come to Houston to hear first hand from the com-

munity about our priorities and goals as a community," said Shelley Porter, a Houston member of the HRC Board of Governors.

Birch will be meeting individually with community leaders and activists during her visit on Monday and Tuesday, according to Porter.

HRC's Houston Steering Committee includes Porter, also the HRC Houston city representative; Bagby and Sandra Hall, co-chairs of the Houston Federal Club; Denay Hudson and Trey Yates, members of the Board of Governors and co-chairs of the May, 1997 Alley Theater Event; Deborah Seitzer, co-chair of the 1997 Valentine's Day HRC Red Tie Ball; and Ron Grose, co-chair of the Spring 1997 Bowl Over Bigots bowling tournament.

The Human Rights Campaign lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public on issues important to the gay and lesbian community.

For more information about HRC and to send an instant e-mail to your member of Congress, check out HRC's Online Action Center on the World Wide Web at <http://www.hrcusa.org> □

## Houston Spotlight

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Texas Triangle publisher Kay Longcope had responded to the column in a "Letter to the Editor" that Bell said she was forbidden by the publisher to print.

Another column, appearing in the Nov. 15 edition of the Voice, reiterated Bell's points, explaining clearly that her opinions were merely opinions. After publication of this column, however, publisher Duren stated that he felt that he couldn't trust Bell to write an editorial without his prior approval, regardless of the content of the column, Bell said.

"I'd wanted to do a 'remember when' piece on some of the old dyke bars from a while back," Bell said.

Duren's reasons for his decision, Bell said, were based on complaints from advertisers and from the community, although Bell was given no names, businesses or correspondence to substantiate Duren's claims. Bell did not write a column for the Nov. 22 issue.

"No one came to me—not in person, in writing, nothing—to tell me that I was

***'we're so good, we got this award,' and yet, by firing me, they threw away all of the editorial integrity that caused them to win the award."***

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Bell said she does not see her removal as based on a rational business or employment decision. In recent issues, the Voice had been conducting a reader poll for feedback from the community. Although the survey review has not been completed, the results appear to be largely favorable of her work, she said.

"I can't help but feel that (Duren) was creating a situation which he knew I would object to," Bell said. "I didn't even see the (Nov. 22) paper until Saturday night, and I noted that there were a great many more ads than usual which showed graphic pictures of men. I'm wondering if that was something in the works behind my back."

Bell said she had written a farewell letter to be run in the last issue of the Voice but the publisher refused to run it. Her letter to the Triangle may be found on page 3 of this issue of the Triangle.

## New PFLAG Chapter Names Leaders

The recently founded Galveston County Chapter of Parents, Families, & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) has chosen Susan Quinn Bryan and Janet Cohen as its first co-presidents.

The organization also has named Donna Johnson as its first secretary and Eileen and Ronnie Penn as its first co-treasurers.

Galveston PFLAG meets the third

Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. at the Health Merchant on the corner of 27th and Broadway in Galveston. The next meeting is scheduled for Dec. 15. Meetings are open to everyone, and members may also attend PFLAG meetings in other cities.

The Galveston Helpline phone number is 409-744-7558. The North Galveston County Helpline number is still 713-338-1228 or 481-1692.

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### UJIMA PARTICIPANTS FOCUS ON BLACK CHURCHES, SEXUALITY

Participants at this month's UJIMA Conference, a joint effort of the African-American Lesbian and Gay Alliance (AALGA) and the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum (The Forum), focused on developing strategies for Black Churches to be more openly accepting of gay, lesbian and transgender people.

Workshops at the Nov. 16-17 conference covered various topics, including working with families and friends, homophobia and AIDSphobia and the Black Church, and studies in biblical history.

The historic documentary, "All God's Children," was also shown during a town hall meeting on sexuality and spirituality.

"Many people report to be experts on the bible," said Sylvia Rhue, the film's co-producer. "But ask them a few simple questions, and you will see that there is much people don't know about the Bible."

Rhue facilitated the town hall meeting and Bible history sessions. Rhue told participants that there are more than 105 translations of the Bible, that King James was gay and that the word "homosexual" was not created until 1849.

"If the word homosexual didn't exist until 1849, how did it appear in the Bible?" Rhue said. "We have to critically think about the influence man has had on the translations and actual text of the Bible."

Many UJIMA Conference attendees worshipped on Nov. 17 at St. John's United Methodist Church, a predominantly African American congregation. The church welcomes all people, including lesbian, gay and transgendered people.

"Here at St. John's we welcome all people as God's Children," said the Rev. Rudy Rasmus, the church's associate pastor.

AALGA and The Forum are dedicated to empowering all people by strong leadership. The Forum earlier this year announced the 10th anniversary celebration of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Conference will be held in Long Beach, Calif., Feb. 13-17, 1997. For more information about AALGA or The Forum, call 713-523-5950.

# Scientists Debate New AIDS Drug Effectiveness

**G**AITHERSBURG, Md. (AP)—Scientific advisers deadlocked last week over whether to allow AIDS patients to buy a new drug, citing conflicting evidence over whether it works and who should use it.

Pharmacia & Upjohn had argued that delavirdine would help kill the HIV virus in early-stage patients' blood and slightly boost their immune system when used in combination with older medicines.

But the improvement was so slight—and the drug failed to do any good for late-stage patients—that advisers to the Food and Drug Administration were left wondering how any doctor would know how to prescribe delavirdine.

"We're in a tough position," said Dr. Wayne Greaves of Howard University Hospital, before the panel voted 4-4 on whether the drug should be approved. "There are still patients who need additional drugs."

"A year ago, I would have viewed this very differently," said Dr. Christopher Mathews of the University of California, San Diego, who questioned approving a drug that showed such minimal effect when just this year three powerful new

medicines began selling, promising patients significant improvement.

But the panel urged the FDA not to make a final decision until doctors finish analyzing an additional study to confirm the drug's impact, data due to be completed in mid-January.

The tie vote came after mothers tearfully protested that Pharmacia, like almost every AIDS drug manufacturer, had not even begun testing to determine whether delavirdine would help HIV-infected children.

Of the nine AIDS drugs sold as of last week, only three are approved for children's use—and they do not include the newest, most potent AIDS therapies. The mothers accused drug makers and the FDA of ignoring children's desperate need in the race to sell AIDS medicines to adults.

"Love will not stop the virus," said Deborah Scheer of Sonoma County, Calif., as her HIV-infected son, Dylan, gazed at the panelists. "I cannot protect him alone and I need your help."

The panel issued a stern warning to drug makers not to seek approval for any more AIDS therapies without at least preliminary testing in children. □

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# National News Briefs

Compiled by Keith Clark

## Pioneering Psychologist Dies

**L**OS ANGELES—Dr. Evelyn Hooker, whose psychological research on homosexuality in the 1950s eventually led the American Psychiatric Association to eliminate "homosexuality" from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders in 1973, has died at the age of 89.

Dr. Hooker was the subject of the 1992 documentary film "Changing Our Minds," which was nominated for an Academy Award.

## HIV Care in Rural Kentucky Surveyed

**C**HICAGO—Researchers with the University of Kentucky report in the Archives of Family Medicine that a significant portion of people infected with HIV and living in rural areas of Kentucky seek testing and treatment in urban areas.

The researchers reported that 74 percent of rural HIV-positive Kentuckians traveled outside their home county for care, with 64 percent of them traveling to a nearby urban area.

The researchers said that the patients they interviewed reported they had gone to urban areas outside their counties because of concerns over confidentiality, because they felt physicians in larger cities would be more informed about HIV treatment or because they were referred to another doctor.

with the virus.

Proceeds from the foundation's fund raising at the game will go to local HIV/AIDS groups, including the Stanford Positive Care Clinic and ARIS of Santa Clara County.

Stanford defeated Washington State 33-17.

## Arkansas Prepares Move on Anti-Marriage Bill

**L**ITTLE ROCK, Ark.—The Arkansas General Assembly doesn't convene until Jan. 13, but one of the issues lawmakers there have already put on the table for this legislative session includes a measure that would outlaw same-sex marriages in the state.

Several dozen states have already approved similar laws that would refuse to recognize same-sex marriages in their states, even if legally performed elsewhere.

## HIV Home Testing Making Progress

**D**EERFIELD, Ill.—Walgreens, the country's largest retail drugstore chain with some 2,200 stores in 34 states, has begun selling the Home Access Express HIV-1 Test System, made by Home Access Health.

The home test instructs users to collect a blood sample and send it to a lab for testing, receiving results in three business days.

Meanwhile, the manufacturer of the

**HALF GAY**

**W**h

male member a member? Could the trend? If it is, I duos that follow Blind and McAlmon

The Butler is the straight guy (I speak) and is also same Bernard, that from the lamented bar London Sued Now he's teamed up with singer David McAlmont, an openly gay, British, black man, to record "The Sound of...McAlmont Butler" (Hut Records' jubilant blend of r opener, "Yes," su

Wayne Greaves of Howard University Hospital, before the panel voted 4-4 on whether the drug should be approved. "There are still patients who need additional drugs."

"A year ago, I would have viewed this very differently," said Dr. Christopher Mathews of the University of California, San Diego, who questioned approving a drug that showed such minimal effect when just this year three powerful new

in the race to sell AIDS medicines to adults.

"Love will not stop the virus," said Deborah Scheer of Sonoma County, Calif., as her HIV-infected son, Dylan, gazed at the panelists. "I cannot protect him alone and I need your help."

The panel issued a stern warning to drug makers not to seek approval for any more AIDS therapies without at least preliminary testing in children.

## HIV Care in Rural Kentucky Surveyed

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The researchers said that the patients they interviewed reported they had gone to urban areas outside their counties because of concerns over confidentiality, because they felt physicians in larger cities would be more informed about HIV treatment or because they were referred to another doctor.

The researchers say doctors delivering primary care in rural areas should receive more training in diagnosing and treating HIV and related illnesses.

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The home test instructs users to collect a blood sample and send it to a lab for testing, receiving results in three business days.

Meanwhile, the manufacturers of the first home HIV test, Confide, have reported that 99 percent of customers tested with the unit are HIV-negative and only 1 percent are positive.

It also says that 96 percent of the testers call for their results, compared with the 67 percent who return to public test sites for results.

## Hey, Pass That 'Jungle Red #4,' Would Ya Fred?

NEW YORK—Allure, the makeup magazine, reports that San Franciscans buy more lipstick and eyeliner per capita than residents of any other area in the country.

The savvy women's magazine says this may be because of what it calls "the Castro Street factor," giving lipstick and eyeliner manufacturers a larger potential market among San Francisco's gay men—and presumably its "lipstick lesbians," too.

No wonder San Francisco often promotes itself as "the city that knows how."

London Sued  
Now he's teaming up with singer David McAlmont, an openly gay, British, black man, to record "The Sound of...McAlmont Butler" (Hut Records' jubilant blend of rock and opener, "Yes," sure to be a hit).

If the world doesn't seem filled with stupid politicians and corporate crooks, it's only because you don't read



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# Man Wins \$10 Million in Gay-Bashing Trial

By JUSTIN HYDE  
Associated Press Writer

**D**ETROIT (AP)—A homosexual man paralyzed in a gay-bashing attack as a security guard stood by has won a \$10 million judgment from Pinkerton's Security and Investigation, the guard's employer.

Sean McBride, 28, was shot six times and beaten outside his apartment building in January 1994 by three men who had taunted him for being gay.

His lawyer, Carol McNeilage, said the 20-year-old female security guard watched as McBride was harassed several times during a half-hour period, and even laughed at some of the insults.

A spokesman for Pinkerton's, Derek Andrade, said the company would appeal the Nov. 21 verdict.

"Our position has been and remains that Pinkerton acted appropriately and could not have prevented the incident from occurring," he said.

McBride testified he first encountered the three men in the apartment building

lobby as he returned from work, then passed them twice more when he went out for a snack. Each time, the men swore and shouted slurs at him.

The guard did nothing, except laugh at some of the taunts. "He thought she (the Pinkerton guard) would have gotten them out of there," McNeilage said.

When McBride realized he had forgotten part of his snack, he went back through the lobby. The men followed him outside and attacked him.

McBride sued Pinkerton's and the apartment management company in November 1994, claiming they were negligent. The management company was later dismissed as a defendant.

The jury ordered Pinkerton to pay \$6 million for McBride's paralysis and \$4 million in other damages.

One of the three attackers was never caught. A second was convicted of assault and firearms charges and sentenced to up to four years in prison. The third, a juvenile at the time, pleaded no contest to assault and firearms charges and will remain in custody until he turns 21 in July.

## Virginia Councilor Wants Same-Sex Marriages

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—Lonnie Rich, a member of Alexandria city council, has suggested that Virginia consider legalizing same-sex marriages—a proposal almost no one in the city's government thinks has any chance of being acted on—including Rich himself.

Rich said he would like to see the proposal included in the city's "wish list" to state lawmakers, although he said he would be "shocked" if it actually passed.

Among other things, Rich said that the measure might "promote stable families," reduce promiscuity and possibly slow the spread of HIV.

—Keith Clark

“Quoted Unquote”

# State & Nation

## Unsafe Haven: Survey Shows South Beach Home of Risky Sex

By WILL LESTER  
Associated Press Writer

**M**AMI (AP)—People who come to South Beach, the trendy Art Deco district at the southern tip of Miami Beach, "seem to think they're on a holiday from everything—including AIDS," says a pioneering AIDS researcher.

But a new study released this week in New York City shows that HIV infections are rampant in the resort community and many gay men who must know better are practicing unsafe sex. South Beach is a popular destination for gays from around the country.

Dr. William Darrow, one of the early researchers to help discover the spread of the disease in the 1980s, said his survey showed three fourths of the men declining to follow safe sex practices.

"Most recent studies have shown that if you provide gay and bisexual men with accurate information on safe sex and give them motivation they will protect themselves,"

Darrow said. "That's not true in South Beach."

**“Most recent studies have shown that if you provide gay and bisexual men with accurate information on safe sex and give them motivation they will protect themselves. That's not true in South Beach.”**

Dr. William Darrow

One problem may be increased optimism that a cure for AIDS is within reach, Darrow said.

Beach men in both age groups had participated in unprotected anal sex in the last year, the survey found.

That rate is far higher than the one-in-four gay men in San Francisco who participated in unprotected sex over the course of a year, Osmond said.

"We've got an AIDS epidemic among gay and bisexual men in South Florida," said Darrow, a professor at Florida International University who worked at the Centers of Disease Control in Atlanta when reports first began arriving that gay men were dying at an alarming rate.

The investigative work done by Dr. Darrow and his colleagues at the CDC led to the first solid understanding of how AIDS was spread, documented in the late Randy Shilts' book "And the Band Played On."

The new study raised concerns about efforts to control the spread of AIDS in the gay community here, Darrow said, noting the incidence of unprotected sex among the older men was even more surprising.

One problem may be increased

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Among other things, Rich said that the measure might "promote stable families," reduce promiscuity and possibly slow the spread of HIV.

—Keith Clark

## "Quote•Unquote"

by Rex Wockner

*"What beat me was more homosexual money than in any race in history, including from a group called Lesbians for Motherhood."*

*—Ousted Orange County, Calif., Congressman Bob Dornan to The Wall Street Journal Nov. 20. Dornan, rabidly anti-gay, lost to gay-friendly Loretta Sanchez by a few hundred votes.*

*"He's deeply disturbed. He was the single largest source of nastiness in Congress."*

*—Gay U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., on ousted U.S. Rep. Bob Dornan, R-Calif., to The Wall Street Journal Nov. 20. Dornan was arguably Congress' top homophobe.*

*"I'm always suspicious of anybody who claims that his or her oppression is so severe that all of society must be completely altered before that oppression can be lifted and the perversely proud mantel of victimhood can finally be relinquished. A recent example is the claim among transgendered activists that gender itself is just a social construct, never mind the fairly clear physical differences between the sexes that most of us have no problem distinguishing. This argument holds that the rest of the world's very perception of reality must shift in order for this tiny minority to feel comfortable, wishful thinking of the highest order."*

*—Windy City Times Editor Dan Perrelet in a November column.*

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"Most recent studies have shown that if you provide gay and bisexual men with accurate information on safe sex and give them motivation they will protect themselves,"

Darrow said. "That's not true in South Beach."

Darrow released his final study at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association in New York City. Preliminary results were first publicized at the 11th International Conference on AIDS in Vancouver last summer.

His 1996 survey through October found that one in six men aged 18 to 29 were infected with the AIDS virus, a rate almost as high as that reported in a similar 1994 study of gay males that age in San Francisco, long the epicenter of the AIDS crisis among gay males.

The HIV infection rate among gay men in San Francisco in the mid 1980s was as high as 50 percent, but that has dropped slightly to about 40 percent, said Dennis Osmond, an epidemiologist at the University of California-San Francisco.

Darrow surveyed 87 gay and bisexual residents of the Art Deco district of Miami Beach between 18 and 29 years old and another 70 who were 30 and older. The infection rate among men age 30 and older in South Beach was two out of five.

Almost three fourths of the South

The investigative work done by Dr. Darrow and his colleagues at the CDC led to the first solid understanding of how AIDS was spread, documented in the late Randy Shilts' book "And the Band Played On."

**"Most recent studies have shown that if you provide gay and bisexual men with accurate information on safe sex and give them motivation they will protect themselves. That's not true in South Beach."**

**Dr. William Darrow**

One problem may be increased optimism that a cure for AIDS is within reach, Darrow said.

"Significant numbers of gay men may believe that there is a cure," he said, noting recent reports that protease inhibitors and combination therapies have been effective in fighting AIDS in the short run. "One hypothesis is that gay men are reacting to this bit of news by throwing caution to the wind."

But Darrow said the study has raised many new questions about how to change sexual behaviors.

"Quite frankly, we don't know quite what to do at this point," Darrow said.

Gary Knight, an administrator with a Miami Beach AIDS clinic, said he's worked for the last 18 months on a task force trying to stem the rate of AIDS infection in the region. The groups have worked to raise awareness with owners of bars and nightclubs in South Beach's hyperactive social scene as well as placed decals in likely locations reminding of the dangers of AIDS.

"After hearing the survey's numbers, I kind of felt like falling on my sword," Knight said. □

# The '97 'Gay Agenda' Pushes Hate Crimes, Transgender Issues

continued from page 1

gressive state and I could just add those words, but we don't," she said.

**T**he hate-crimes bill, which already has been filed in the state Senate by state Sen. Rodney Ellis, D-Houston, is modeled after similar legislation that has passed court scrutiny in Wisconsin. Hardy-Garcia said keeping the same language was important to countering arguments from opponents that the bill would be unconstitutional.

LGRL will lobby on other issues important to transgendered people, however, Hardy-Garcia said.

Those issues include passing a law that bars employment discrimination based on gender identity and supporting the ability of people to have gender re-assigned on their Texas driver's licenses.

Hardy-Garcia said lobbying efforts on such issues is important because transgendered people are harmed by the same kinds of discrimination faced by gay men and lesbians and because bills specifically addressing gay and lesbian concerns often do not include specific concerns of transgendered people.

"LGRL will lobby actively on transgender issues this time because it's painful for them to be left out this way," she said.

Other LGRL goals during the session include:

- passing a law that provides civil penalties for hate crimes;
- increasing funding for police training on hate-crime issues;
- increasing funding for HIV/AIDS services, medication programs and prevention efforts;
- passing a bill barring employment discrimination based on sexual orientation;

• defeating a bill filed by state Rep. Warren Chisum, R-Pampa, that would amend the state's Family Code, reinforcing existing state laws barring same-sex marriage;

• enacting into law a measure that protects students from discrimination based on sexual orientation in public schools, colleges and universities;

• and defeating efforts to enact a measure called initiative and referendum, which would allow citizens to gather petition signatures for putting issues on a referendum ballot.

Hardy-Garcia said LGRL will oppose initiative and referendum because well-funded organizations, especially those that oppose equal rights for gay men and lesbians, would be able to use the process to enact anti-gay measures.

"We know it will be dominated...by people who have a lot of money," she said.

Hardy-Garcia pointed to the passage by referendum of Amendment 2 in Colorado in 1992. Amendment 2, which earlier this year was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, barred the state of Colorado, cities or other governmental bodies from passing laws protecting gay men and lesbians from discrimination.

The LGRL workshop, which was co-hosted by the Austin Lesbian/Gay Political Caucus, included a description of the legislative matching program. The program will match at least one volunteer with each state legislative district. Each volunteer will lobby his or her district's legislator on gay and lesbian issues and will build a list of other people in the district who also will write letters, call or visit the legislator.

Those who wish to volunteer to work with the program should call LGRL at 512-474-5475. ☐

## World News Briefs

Compiled by Keith Clark

### Researchers Report Prostitutes with HIV Immunity

**L**ONDON—Researchers from Kenya and Canada have reported in the British medical journal *Lancet* that they have found a group of prostitutes in Nairobi who seem resistant or possibly even naturally immune to HIV infection despite repeated exposure to the virus.

It is the second study to find a group of Africans who seem resistant to HIV. The researchers said the women did not seem to have the same genetic mutation as some Caucasians shown to be resistant to infection reported earlier this year.

Dr. Francis Plummer and colleagues at the University of Manitoba studied 424 prostitutes in Nairobi, Kenya, between 1985 and 1994. All were free of HIV infection at the beginning of the study and, during the 10 years they studied the women, many became infected.

visor brought by a heterosexual woman who worked for the London-based Taylorplan Services, sometimes cleaning the offices of Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth.

The tribunal unanimously ruled Carol Connor's story of being given sex toys and sexually touched by her openly lesbian boss Kay Baille were fabrications and that Connor had "defamed" the former employer in the case, ordering her to pay Taylorplan Services about \$560 for costs involved in defending itself and Baille against the charges.

Baille and Taylorplan have maintained throughout the case that Connor was lazy and unreliable in her work, provided extensive documentation of poor performance evaluations of the woman's work, and insisted that her complaint was simply a vindictive move on her part since she thought Baille would be vulnerable to such harassment charges because of her sexual orientation.

### D.C. Giving PWAs Water Filters

WASHINGTON—People with AIDS in the nation's capital are being given government-funded carbon water filters in an effort to reduce their exposure to dangerous high levels of bacteria in the District's water system.

Earlier this year, the Environmental Protection Agency ordered several hundred U.S. cities to monitor their water systems for possible dangers to people with compromised immune systems.

While some cities, such as Seattle, Tampa and Milwaukee, showed low risks to AIDS patients from their water systems, other cities, including Atlanta, Dallas, Minneapolis, Newark, NJ, St. Petersburg, Fla., and Washington, were of concern because of inadequate water monitoring programs.

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But 43 never became infected, despite what must have been repeated exposures to the virus. Plummer's group reported in the journal.

## Two Commit Suicide in Toilet-Sex Police Sting

**S**TINGLING, Scotland—Two men have committed suicide after a hidden spy camera set up by police in a public toilet recorded them having sex with men.

In October a 60-year-old worker, Michael Cummings, leaped to his death from a bridge after he was charged with having public sex as a result of the TV monitoring of the public bathrooms.

Then in mid-November, a Stirling council community worker, Cameron Daisley, hanged himself in his home after police confronted him with the videotaped evidence of public sex. Two more men still face charges in the spy camera operation.

## Panel Rules Harassment Charges a Lie

**E**INBURGH, Scotland—A Scottish industrial tribunal has dismissed a case charging sexual harassment by a lesbian super-

visor brought by a heterosexual woman who worked for the London-based Taylorplan Services, sometimes cleaning the offices of Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth.

The tribunal unanimously ruled Carol Connor's story of being given sex toys and sexually touched by her openly lesbian boss Kay Baille were fabrications and that Connor had "defamed" the former employer in the case, ordering her to pay Taylorplan Services about \$560 for costs involved in defending itself and Baille against the charges.

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## British Police Recruit Gays, Lesbians

**L**ONDON—Britain's South Yorkshire police force has taken out ads in the UK's *Gay Times* to recruit gay and lesbian officers. The ad—headlined "Fancy a Chat with Tom"—features an officer and former ballet dancer who works in the region's recruiting department. A photograph shows him tilting his helmet to a jaunty angle.

The initiative is aimed at increasing the number of gays and lesbians in the force. Earlier this year, the South Yorkshire force took on a former gay serviceman who had been discharged from the British armed forces because of his sexual orientation.

Sgt. George Roper of the South Yorkshire police said that the initiative was designed to ensure the force reflected the community as a whole. "Just because somebody's sexual orientation is different doesn't mean they won't make a good police officer," Roper said. "In fact, they often make better officers than their straight colleagues. Gay officers have a great affinity with people who suffer and are subjected to victimization."

London's Metropolitan Police has actively recruited gays and lesbians for several years, but few police forces outside the capital have followed the Metropolitan's lead.

## D.C. Giving PWAs Water Filters

**W**ASHINGTON—People with AIDS in the nation's capital are being given government-funded carbon water filters in an effort to reduce their exposure to dangerous high levels of bacteria in the District's water system.

Earlier this year, the Environmental Protection Agency ordered several hundred U.S. cities to monitor their water systems for possible dangers to people with compromised immune systems.

While some cities, such as Seattle, Tampa and Milwaukee, showed low risks to AIDS patients from their water systems, other cities, including Atlanta, Dallas, Minneapolis, Newark, NJ, St. Petersburg, Fla., and Washington, were of concern because of inadequate water monitoring programs.

The D.C. government, using federal and city funds, has distributed about 600 of the filters to people with AIDS through the organization Food and Friends.

City officials say they're also working to try to get Medicaid approval for purchase of the filters as a health necessity for people with AIDS. —KC

## Santa Clara Stalls on Partner Benefits

**S**AN JOSE, Calif.—The Santa Clara County board of supervisors has decided not to decide what to do about a stalled domestic partner registry approved earlier this year.

After religious conservatives in the county gathered more than enough signatures on a petition against the measure, the supervisors were legally required to either repeal the measure or put it on the ballot for voters to decide.

But the supervisors decided instead they would let the new board tackle the question next year. —KC

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# On the Arts & the Art of Living

By Gip Plaster

## Special to the TRIANGLE

A red ribbon alone is not enough anymore.

Since AIDS began, the world has looked for ways to raise awareness about the danger of contracting the HIV virus and to remember those who have died from it. World AIDS Day was first designated in 1988 to help people impacted by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus do just that.

Today HIV is present in virtually every country and continues to spread. That means the virus affects almost everyone in some way.

More than 20 million people may now have the HIV virus. By the year 2000, 30-40 million people could be infected, according to World Health Organization projections.

Almost 40,000 cases of the virus, which was first discovered in this country in 1981, have been reported from almost every county in Texas. More than 20,000 Texas deaths from HIV/AIDS have been reported to the Texas Department of Health.

Facing numbers like that, communities often feel powerless against what is now called a "pandemic," an epidemic over a wide geographic area. Around Texas and around the world, though, communities will do what they can as the planet observes World AIDS Day this weekend.

In 1988, health ministers from around the world named Dec. 1 as World AIDS Day, a day that has become one of action and observance designed to raise awareness of AIDS. The day has been sponsored by the World Health Organiza-

year a new agency is in charge. UNAIDS, the United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS, brings WHO together with the World Bank, UNICEF and other agencies as co-sponsors of World AIDS Day.

The day is observed in lots of different ways around the world and around the state.

In Houston one remembrance will come a day late. AIDS Foundation Houston will hold a kickoff party for their January gala "In Your Ear and Off the Wall."

Since part of the kickoff party is a display of a mural by local school children, the event cannot be held on Dec. 1 because on World AIDS Day many also observe A Day Without Art. Art in some museums, galleries and other locations is covered in shrouds in recognition of the artists who have died of AIDS.

Elsewhere around the state, other events will also recognize this year's theme, "One World, One Hope."

In Dallas participants will gather at a place called hope, Cathedral of Hope Metropolitan Community Church, for a service of remembrance and a celebration of life. Then, worshipers become marchers as traffic is stopped and the city watches while hundreds make the two-mile trek from the church to the Oak Lawn/Cedar Springs crossroads.

In Austin the community once again gathers for Body Count, which organizers said draws attention to the AIDS crisis and is a way of "remembering those we have lost and sending a message of hope" to people living with HIV.

Because the Capitol grounds, the traditional site of

## WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR WORLD AIDS DAY

- Cover your art as a sign of support for a Day Without Art.
- Turn your Web pages black for the weekend in observance of a Day Without Graphics. (Go to <http://www.cyberzine.org/html/WAD> to find out how.)
- Donate money to AIDS charities.
- Attend and participate in a World AIDS Day observance.
- Practice safer sex and help end the AIDS pandemic.

—Gip Plaster

the observance, are closed, participants will gather at 6 p.m. at the Capitol and walk silently to the Congress Avenue bridge, where they will lay on the bridge and shine a flashlight through a muslin cloth placed over them, symbolizing those who have died from the virus.

"It's a place where people can come together and collectively grieve," said Sally Jacques, the organizer of the Austin event. "There are so few ways that we acknowledge death in our culture."

The event is being held on a bridge this year because it's a "bridge over water" and that is "such a powerful metaphor," she said.

"I do it as a public performance statement — a visual statement," Jacques said. "It's a powerful image."

In San Antonio, World AIDS Day will be marked Sunday and Monday at the city's Central Library Auditorium with exhibits representing the HIV/AIDS organizations in the area that offer prevention, education, direct and social services to those affected by the disease.

World AIDS Day will be observed in Cyberspace, too. Many World Wide Web pages turn black for the weekend in a show of support for A Day Without Graphics, another part of the observance. World AIDS Day also has its own site on the Web at <http://www.wad.hea.org.uk>. (Netscape or another frames-compatible browser is required.)

For whatever reason people gather on World AIDS Day and however they observe it, they all hope they are a part of a tradition that doesn't last much longer. They

hope for a time when AIDS is read about in history books, not newspapers.

# WORLD AIDS DAY

Remembering Our Losses

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continues to spread. That means the virus affects almost everyone in some way.

More than 20 million people may now have the HIV virus. By the year 2000, 30-40 million people could be infected, according to World Health Organization projections.

Almost 40,000 cases of the virus, which was first discovered in this country in 1981, have been reported from almost every county in Texas. More than 20,000 Texas deaths from HIV/AIDS have been reported to the Texas Department of Health.

Facing numbers like that, communities often feel powerless against what is now called a "pandemic," an epidemic over a wide geographic area. Around Texas and around the world, though, communities will do what they can as the planet observes World AIDS Day this weekend.

In 1988, health ministers from around the world named Dec. 1 as World AIDS Day, a day that has become one of action and observance designed to raise awareness of AIDS. The day has been sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO), but this

two-mile trek from the church to the Oak Lawn/Cedar Springs crossroads.

In Austin the community once again gathers for Body Count, which organizers said draws attention to the AIDS crisis and is a way of "remembering those we have lost and sending a message of hope" to people living with HIV.

Because the Capitol grounds, the traditional site of

The event is being held on a bridge this year because it's a "bridge over water" and that is "such a powerful metaphor," she said.

"I do it as a public performance statement — a visual statement," Jacques said. "It's a powerful image."

In San Antonio, World AIDS Day will be marked Sunday and Monday at the city's Central Library Auditorium with exhibits representing the HIV/AIDS organizations in the area that offer prevention, education, direct and social services to those affected by the disease.

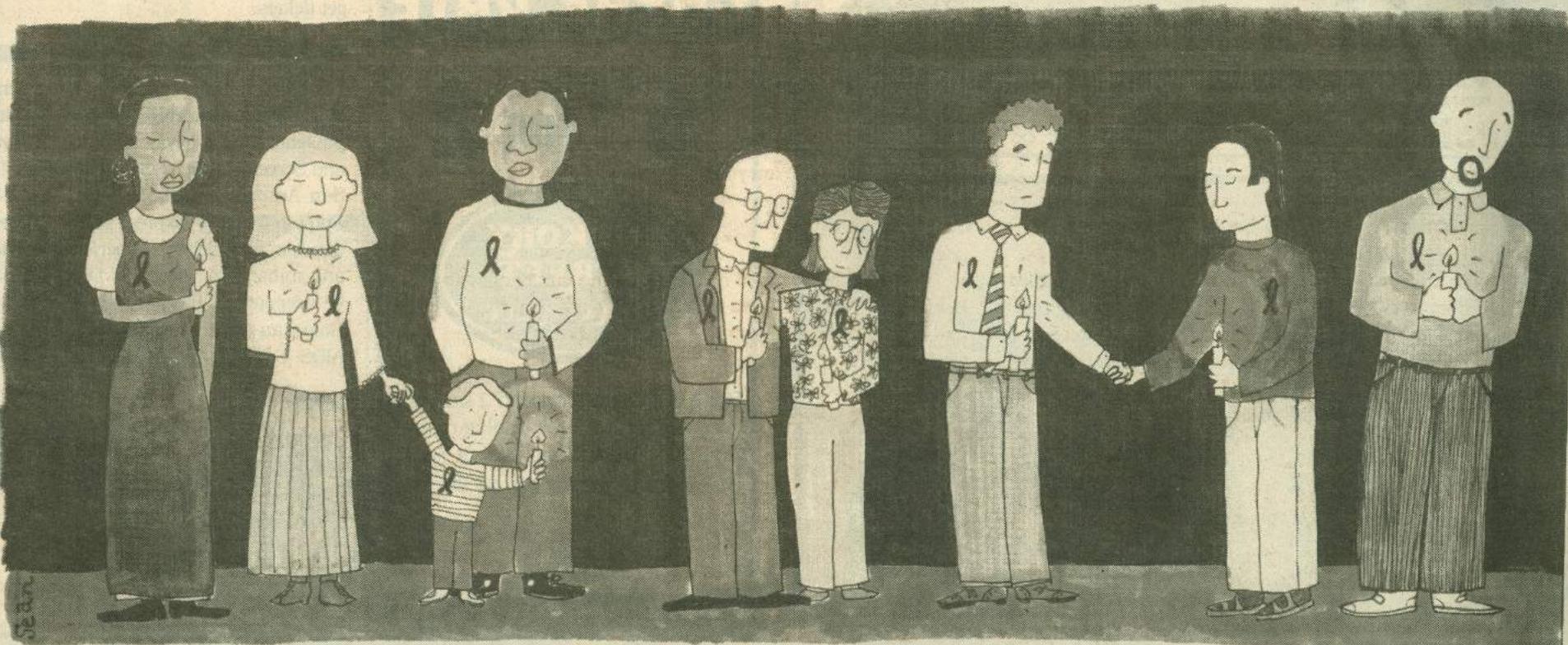
World AIDS Day will be observed in Cyberspace, too. Many World Wide Web pages turn black for the weekend in a show of support for A Day Without Graphics, another part of the observance. World AIDS Day also has its own site on the Web at <http://www.wad.hea.org.uk>. (Netscape or another frames-compatible browser is required.)

For whatever reason people gather on World AIDS Day and however they observe it, they all hope they are a part of a tradition that doesn't last much longer. They

hope for a time when AIDS is read about in history books, not newspapers. □

# WORLD AIDS DAY

## Remembering Our Losses



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# Arts, Briefly

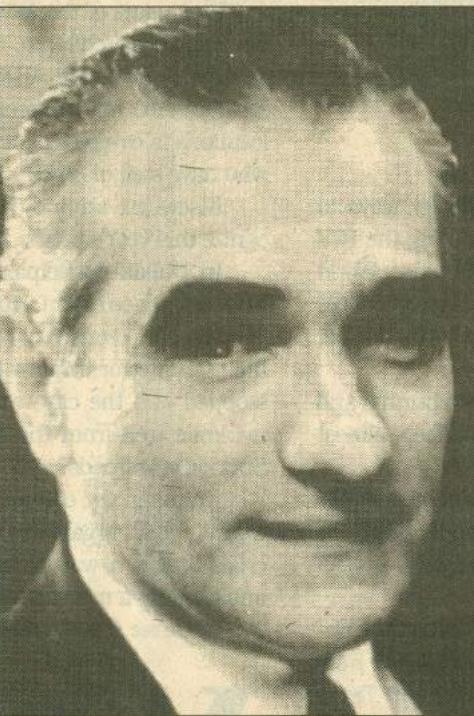
## SEAN MOYNIHAN

### CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

Get nostalgic at Austin's historic Paramount Theatre this holiday weekend with two huge movie classics. "Gone With the Wind" shows on the big screen on Nov. 29 at 7:30 P.M. and Nov. 30 at 2:30 and 7:30 P.M. And Judy Garland sings "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and "The Trolley Song," among other great songs of filmdom, in "Meet Me In St. Louis," Dec. 1 at 3, 5:15 and 7:30 P.M. Tickets are \$5 for adults. Call the theater at 512-472-5411.

### MOVIE HISTORY

MFA Films (at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston) continues the series "The Century of Cinema" with "A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies" on Nov. 29 and 30. It's a three part history of American filmmaking narrated by director Scorsese ("Taxi Driver," "Raging Bull"). Part one traces the evolution of three popular movie genres; part two looks at some of the filmmakers who bend the rules of these genres; and part three pays tribute to some great American filmmakers, including Orson Welles and Stanley Kubrick. Screenings are at 7:30 P.M. Tickets are \$5. Call the museum's film information line at 713-639-7515.



Martin Scorsese

### SUGAR PLUM FAIRY

Clara's back in dreamland. Houston Ballet presents its glorious "The Nutcracker," complete with magically flying characters, a Christmas tree that grows to 40 feet before your very eyes, an exploding cannon, and lots of pretty dancing, Nov. 29 through Dec. 29 at Wortham Theatre Center.



By Doña Hatch  
TRIANGLE Staff

**T**he New Tony A. Patinkin entert today - period.

It is no wonder the stage at the Saturday with a locomotive and maintaining the entire

The set was revealing the stage while in rehearsal for a very intimate

Question: How an intimate evening theater with 1200 Answer: Mandy Patinkin the remarkable to embrace everyone honesty as a perfor

This honesty only singing in Patinkin style, but delivery of each short story.

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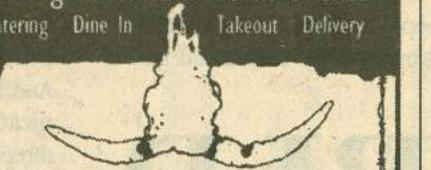
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Martin Scorsese

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Call 713-5-BALLET to find out dates and get tickets.

### RAZZLE DAZZLE SHOW TUNES

The Bishop's Hall Chamber Concert Series at Austin's Cathedral Church of St. Mary presents "Three Divas and Deb: A Stage and Screen Revue," Nov. 30 at 8 P.M. The San Antonio ensemble, which the San Antonio Mercury Express called "a razzle dazzle of pure delight..." performs comical and romantic selections. Donations will be accepted at the door to benefit Faith Home, an Austin hospice for children with AIDS. Call 512-472-4540 to find out more.

### ARF!

Theatre Under the Stars presents the 20th anniversary, Broadway-bound revival of "Annie," Nov. 29 through Dec. 15 at the Music Hall in Houston. Altogether now: "TOMORROW! TOMORROW! I LOVE YA! TOMORROW!..." Leapin' lizards! Call TUTS at 713-622-TUTS or 800-766-6048. □

by

HAN

**By Doña Hatch**  
TRIANGLE Staff

**T**he New York Post describes Tony Award winner Mandy Patinkin as, "The greatest entertainer on Broadway today - period."

It is no wonder. Patinkin burst onto the stage at the Paramount on Saturday with all of the energy of a locomotive and was relentlessly entertaining the entire evening.

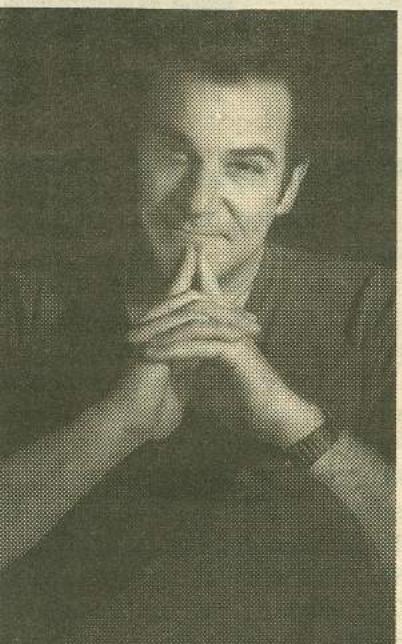
The set was an undressed set, revealing the stage that actors work on while in rehearsal. The mood was set for a very intimate evening.

Question: How can you experience an intimate evening in a sold-out theater with 1200 audience members? Answer: Mandy Patinkin. Patinkin has the remarkable talent for being able to embrace everyone present through his honesty as a performer.

This honesty is achieved by not only singing in that very unique Patinkin style, but through crafting the delivery of each song as if each is a short story.

Patinkin showcased a varied repertoire performing old vaudevillian selections, songs from his album releases which include songs by Stephen Sondheim, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Irving Berlin, Randy Newman, Harry Chapin, along with some catchy Yiddish numbers.

In 1990 he released his second recording entitled, "Mandy Patinkin In Concert: Dress Casual," which explains why he wore a black t-shirt and tennis



Mandy Patinkin

shoes. Patinkin comes prepared to work and work he does.

He had the audience on their feet when he sang "Trouble" from "The Music Man." He had the audience playing with him, singing, clapping and generally having a great time as he

## On Theater

worked up a sweat singing his soul out while telling the River City story about the evils of a pool hall coming to their community.

The show came to an absolute stand still when he performed "Honey Bun," from Rodgers and Hammerstein's "South Pacific." This is really a rather

silly song, but he was able to engage the audience by taking what appeared to be three rather shy audience members and having them perform a very large and long sing-a-long. The audience loved it.

This was particularly funny because one of the individuals he pulled on stage was a retired doctor who was very interested in Patinkin's doctor role on Chicago Hope and they did a five minute shtick on that alone.

As funny as Patinkin was, he was able to change moods and take the audience right along with him. You could have heard a pin drop when he performed "Bring Him Home" from "Les Miserable."

**O**f course it would not have been a complete Mandy Patinkin concert without hearing some of Stephen Sondheim's work, to which his voice is so well suited. He sang from "Sunday in the Park with George," with all of the intensity of the George Seurat character for which he was nominated for a Tony award. He also revealed a very tender side of himself when he sang "Children Will Listen" from "Into the Woods," to close his performance.

At this point I was a little concerned because he had not sung anything from "Evita," the Andrew Lloyd Weber musical in which he won the Tony for his portrayal of Che. I was not disappointed for long. His first encore was indeed from "Evita." I could leave now, knowing that I had seen the best that Broadway has to offer. □



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# The Texas Triangle

It's What You Think.

## The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Green

BY ERIC ORNER

### Vetting the issue

ON THE ONE HAND, YOU SPENT LAST WEEKEND TOGETHER IN BED... ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE MUST BE AN OTHER HAND.



SO YOU'RE AT THE VET BECAUSE THE CAT KEEPS HAVING HAIRBALL ATTACKS.



AND YOU'RE CHEWING OVER THE PROS & CONS OF GETTING BACK TOGETHER WITH DOUG. THIS HAS YOU SO PREOCCUPIED THAT YOU BARELY NOTICE & LUCY'S CARRYINGS-ON DURING THE CAR RIDE OVER.



RIDICULOUSLY, YOU'VE NEVER BOthered to correct the VET'S RECORDS. "LUCY" IS FILED UNDER YOUR EX-BOYFRIEND LEO'S NAME. (HE BROUGHT HER FOR HER FIRST VISIT) THIS always CAUSES A LITTLE SCENE WITH THE RECEPTIONIST...



LUCY, STARTLED BY A BOXER PUP, HAS RUN OUT THE DOOR AND INTO THE PARKING LOT WHERE SHE IS HIDING UNDER A CAR & SPEWING KITTY INVENTIVE...



RECEPTIONIST IS TRYING TO COAX HER OUT WITH A BOWL OF fancy feast, WHICH LUCY WOULDN'T EAT IF IT WAS THE LAST BOWL OF KITTY FOOD ON GOD'S GREEN PLANET.



MAYBE YOU & DOUG WILL SPEND THE HOLIDAYS AT YOUR MOM'S...



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## Stage Struck

DAVID MARK COHEN



### MAGIC FLUTE: THE MELODY LINGERS ON

The memory of a great art event can last for days.

That's certainly the case with Austin Lyric Opera's blissfully satisfying season opener, Mozart's "The Magic Flute."

It's impossible to walk around town without overhearing someone humming Papagano's jaunty "Ein Madchen oder Weibchen." Sarastro's serene hymn "O Isis und Osiris," or—more ambitiously—the Queen of the Night's terrifying "Der Holle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen" (The Pangs of Hell are Raging in my Bosom). No matter that high 'F's are out of most people's range. As the saying goes, the melody lingers on.

And while Mozart's music is the primary factor, it's also the splendor and wit of author/illustrator Maurice Sendak's settings and costumes that also remain. Their clever hybrid of Masonic Egyptian and high Vienna Hapsburg style cast a magic spell that you never want to break. But ALO's Magic Flute was more than just the music and the physical production.

As Queen of the Night, soprano Sally Wolf nailed her high 'F's with aplomb, even while riding a balky platform elevator. Bass Edward Russell was a majestic, if oddly stiff, Sarastro. Jeff Mattsey avoided the shtick that often undermines birdcatcher Papagano—or perhaps it was just that his particular shtick was so honest and endearing. And since Papagano's search for his Papagena occupies more stage time than Tamino's search for his Pamina, Mattsey's great comic timing and freshness sustained us through some of the less than inspired

lovers, though Mozart does give the best music to the lower-born couple. Suzanne Ramo's undisguised Papagena was probably more appealing than her disguised old crone, but her ultimate frolic with her Papa G. was sweetly done.

The Three Spirits of Amy Baker Stinson, Carol Hopkins, and Debra Mandel were a constant delight, whether sailing in their hot-air balloon or crouching statue-like in the mausoleum. The same goes for the trio of Ladies attending the Queen of the Night: Dory Creedle, Cindy Sadler, and Rose Taylor.

The orchestra and chorus under Julian Reed had a fine polished sound, though it's increasingly apparent that the large male chorus is in dire need of lessons in basic stage deportment. If I've blamed ALO directors in the past for awkward ensemble staging, let this serve as an apology. It's now clear that the fault lies in the gentlemen of the chorus themselves: director Laura Alley was reduced to having them file in and out like schoolkids in an assembly. David Nancarrow's inspired lighting effect—delicate pyramid-shaped lanterns for the Temple scene—was marred by the Chorus' inability to walk and carry at the same time. And yes, while I found the priests' Macarena a bit startling, it's important to remember that Mozart wrote this piece for the people's theatre, not the Opera house. It's a nice touch. A special nod to the effective English dialogue by Susan Threadgill and Joseph McClain is also in order.

My few remaining quibbles (an ineffective entrance for Sarastro, a few odd

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Tenor Mark Thomsen and soprano Jee Hyun Lim were solid as the royal

though it's increasingly apparent that the large male chorus is in dire need of lessons in basic stage deportment. If I've blamed ALO directors in the past for awkward ensemble staging, let this serve as an apology. It's now clear that the fault lies in the gentlemen of the chorus themselves: director Laura Alley was reduced to having them file in and out like schoolkids in an assembly. David Nancarrow's inspired lighting effect—delicate pyramid-shaped lanterns for the Temple scene—was marred by the Chorus' inability to walk and carry at the same time. And yes, while I found the priests' Macarena a bit startling, it's important to remember that Mozart wrote this piece for the people's theatre, not the Opera house. It's a nice touch. A special nod to the effective English dialogue by Susan Threadgill and Joseph McClain is also in order.

My few remaining quibbles (an ineffective entrance for Sarastro, a few odd scene shifts) are inconsequential in light of the overall satisfaction level shared by the audience. I don't need to see another Christmas Carol or Nutcracker. With this "Magic Flute," the holiday season has finally, truly begun. □

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# Making Connections

By Sean Moynihan  
TRIANGLE Staff

Earlier this month, Sharir Dance Company, the professional dance company in residence at the University of Texas College of Fine Arts, began its fourteenth season with performances at U.T.'s McCullough Theatre. The four pieces presented (three of which were premieres)

were mesmerizingly beautiful works that, each one in its own way, captured a sort of haunting ethos of contemporary life and relationships. Much of the choreography involved was based on simple, natural movements ("pure human motion" as artistic co-director Yacov

Sharir calls it) that, through refinement and repetition, became gracefully more elaborate and charged with understated emotion.

The program started with the premiere of Yacov Sharir's "2X5+", a piece that deals with the tenuousness of interpersonal relationships and the often only-temporary connections that people are able to make with each other throughout life. There is a coolness and an aloofness to the dancers in "2X5+" as they go through their motions. Every once in a while there are fleeting pairing-offs among them from which they are continually and repeatedly being thrust into new situations, with or without new partners. The whole piece has a feeling of yearning to it. Even though they look like they really want to connect

with each other in the roles they play, each dancer's own individual-ness keeps getting in the way. As the curtain comes down, the dancing continues, suggesting some sort of sad infinity to this human search for real connectedness.

The action of "In the Gallery of the Soul," choreographed by Sharir company member Bryan Green, takes place in a big bed upended on stage so that the audience gets a view from above of the "dance" of sleep. Here, a man and a woman (Green and Terry Hardy) have achieved a connectedness that the dancers in the previous piece weren't able to attain. As the couple sleeps and dreams, we see that even as they're off in their own separate dream-worlds they're anchored by their shared bed and their comfortable familiarity with each other.

"Cyber Human Dances/Hollow Ground II" doesn't have as much to do with interpersonal relationships as it does with the relationship between the physical, human world and the computer, cyber world. The choreography, by Sharir and guest artist Andrea Beckham, juxtaposes

## On Dance

dancing computer-animated cyborg images with real-life dancers and makes you think about the connections that humans have with computers and how, even though we are the ones that push the buttons and enter the data to make them work, the line of who's in control sometimes blurs. It's hard to tell if the cyborg is repeating the simple movements of the human or vice versa. At the beginning of this piece, the (human) dancers are stuck to a small, square, velcro wall, which—maybe—relates to the cyborg's

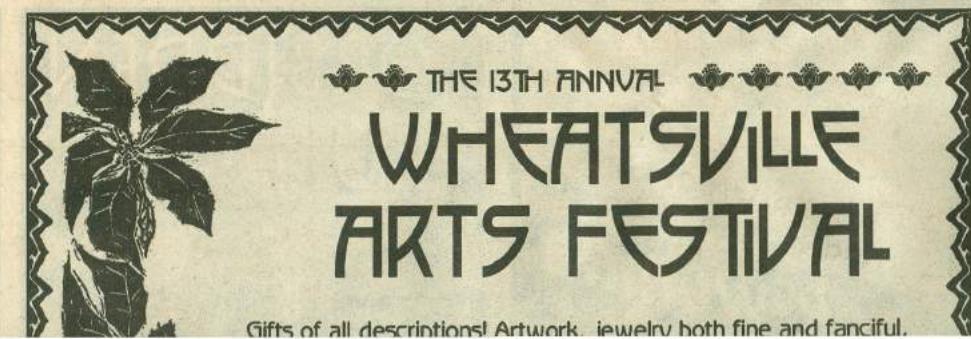
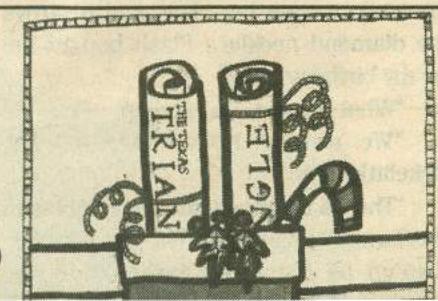
being confined to its small, square, video screen.

In the final piece, "Unending Rose," by the company's other artistic co-director, Jose Luis Bustamante, the dancers are cast in roles that are quite the opposite of those they danced in "2X5+." Here their interconnectedness and interdependence is unquestionable and permanent. Even if they wanted to, they can't break apart from each other, as they are integral parts of a greater whole (a big flower). Their individuality doesn't get in the way because they don't have any. Inexplicably, they are drawn to each other, but struggle against each other and suffer when they get detached. Every once in a while, when the situation is at its best, when harmony is achieved in their interaction, something beautiful happens.

The music for the featured works, by Tom Lopez, William Meadows and David Lang, was quite computerish and technological in nature, at times eerie and space-like. It added to the 21st century, brave new world feel of the program.

Sharir Dance Company's next performance will be in February. It's a site-specific piece choreographed by Bustamante to be performed in a racquetball court with glass walls. □

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The program started with the premiere of Yacov Sharir's "2X5+", a piece that deals with the tenuousness of interpersonal relationships and the often only-temporary connections that people are able to make with each other throughout life. There is a coolness and an aloofness to the dancers in "2X5+" as they go through their motions. Every once in a while there are fleeting pairing-offs among them from which they are continually and repeatedly being thrust into new situations, with or without new partners. The whole piece has a feeling of yearning to it. Even though they look like they really want to connect

## On Dance

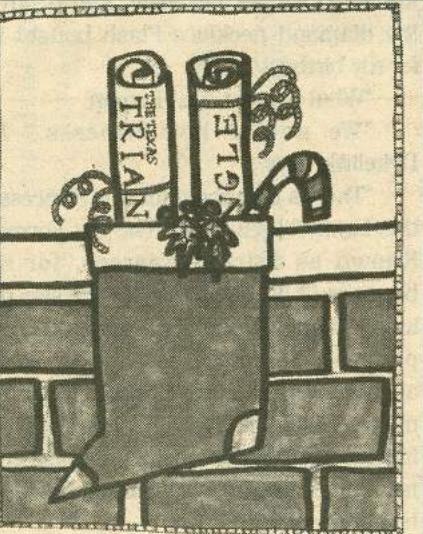
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Sharir Dance Company's next performance will be in February. It's a site-specific piece choreographed by Bustamante to be performed in a racquetball court with glass walls. ☀

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# Out of the Closet and Nothing to Wear

LESLEA NEWMAN



## THE WAY WE PURR

"We are gathered here to mourn and celebrate the nine lives of CousCous Kerouac..."

"Come back, little Cousy, come back." I throw myself on top of her size IOEEE shoebox-coffin. Now that Cousy has gone to the Great Litter Box in the Sky, Flash and I are a feline-free family. And let's face it: a lesbian without a pussy is like, well, a lesbian without a pussy.

Weeks pass, but my grief does not. I sob in the supermarket in front of the Friskies display. I play the soundtrack to Cats every night much to Flash's dismay. "Do we have to hear that now?"

"And forever." I turn up the volume and take out Cousy's photo album. There's Femme-top Cousy with a rhinestone collar, and Jock Cousy scaling the furniture. There's Cousy getting in touch with her inner kitty, nursing on my sweater, and Cousy getting in touch with her inner bitch, biting the hand that feeds her (I still have the scar). There's Country Cousy chasing a mouse and City Cousy chasing a rat. There's hippy Cousy growing her own catnip. Separatist Cousy

hissing at my father and Activist Cousy, a red ribbon pinned to her collar. There's even a picture of Couscous the Bulimic Wonder, barfing her dinner back into her bowl.

After looking at the photos, I take a cat nap. Something sharp, like a claw, digs into my ankle. I turn to see a run travel up my stocking faster than the speed of light, and Couscous, looking proud, something furry in her mouth. What is it this time, a mole, a bat, a squirrel? No, it's a kitten. I pick up the little ball of fur. It nestles into my neck and purrs. "Cousy, where did you get her?" I ask, but Couscous is gone and I am awake, telling Flash the dream.

The next day I call our vet, Dr. Dykelittle to see if she has any kittens. "Someone just brought in a stray," she says. Flash and I get to the vet in two seconds flat. Dr. Dykelittle hands me a small ball of white fur. The kitten nestles into my neck, swipes her claw, and destroys the diamond necklace Flash bought me for my birthday.

"What a sweet cat," I croon.

"We named her Princess," Dr. Dykelittle says.

"There's only room for one Princess in this family," I tell Flash. The Cat Formally Known as Princess agrees, for she becomes QUEEN the minute she sets paw in the house.

whose cat just had kittens. Flash and I race to Kitty's house. She leads us to the den where a little Morris-like red head is tearing up the curtains.

"What a pretty, witty, itty bitty kitty," my boot-stomping butch squeals through clenched teeth, her voice suddenly high enough to crack my contacts. The kitten

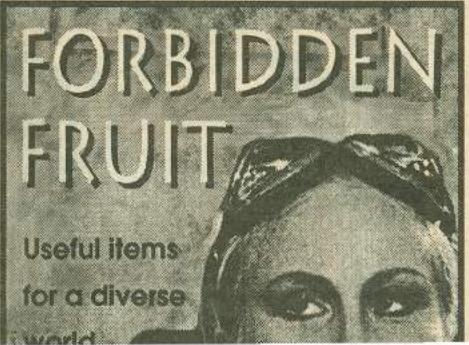
**"There's only room for one Princess  
in this family," I tell Flash.**

**The Cat Formally Known as Princess  
agrees, for she becomes QUEEN  
the minute she sets paw in the house.**

chirps something equally incoherent in reply.

"He discovered his meow yesterday," Kitty tells us. Flash names her pal New Cat on the Block and brings him home to his sister. The Cat Formally Known as Princess goes wild with excitement. She runs toward her new brother and then dashes away. He gallops after her and then both kittens run past me and Flash. They thunder through the apartment like little horses for hours, running, leaping, and doing triple toe loops that would make Tonya Harding proud.

Flash and I are so in love with these kittens, our friends are worried about us. Flash cuts her hours to half-time so she can be home with them more. I cancel a fifteen-city book tour because I can't bear being away from our little darlings. But



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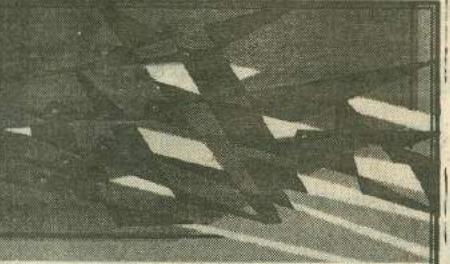
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And forever. I turn up the volume and take out Cousy's photo album. There's Femme-top Cousy with a rhinestone collar, and Jock Cousy scaling the furniture. There's Cousy getting in touch with her inner kitty, nursing on my sweater, and Cousy getting in touch with her inner bitch, biting the hand that feeds her (I still have the scar). There's Country Cousy chasing a mouse and City Cousy chasing a rat. There's hippy Cousy growing her own catnip. Separatist Cousy

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"What a sweet cat," I croon.

"We named her Princess," Dr. Dykelittle says.

"There's only room for one Princess in this family," I tell Flash. The Cat Formally Known as Princess agrees, for she becomes QUEEN the minute she sets paw in the house. When she decides the only place she'll take a cat nap is on my angora sweater, I don't argue. When she makes it clear that the only bowl she'll eat from is my grandmother's cut-glass crystal, I apologize for not offering the family heirloom sooner.

But while we are ecstatic, Flash wonders if The Cat Formally Known as Princess is content. "Maybe she needs a playmate," Flash says one night as I polish my nails and The Cat Formally Known as Princess' claws Pussy Pink. "I was an only child," Flash reminds me, "and I always wanted a sibling."

"I had a sibling," I remind Flash, "and I always wanted to be an only child."

Flash retires to the living room to watch "Lifestyles of the Butch and Famous." In a flash I see what the problem is: our new kitty isn't lonely. Flash is lonely. Two femme-tops and one bashful butch equals an unbalanced household. Flash agrees.

The next day I call Mitzi who tells me her roommate's therapist's therapist's roommate knows a dyke named Kitty

the minute she sets paw in the house.

chirps something equally incoherent in reply.

"He discovered his meow yesterday," Kitty tells us. Flash names her pal New Cat on the Block and brings him home to his sister. The Cat Formally Known as Princess goes wild with excitement. She runs toward her new brother and then dashes away. He gallops after her and then both kittens run past me and Flash. They thunder through the apartment like little horses for hours, running, leaping, and doing triple toe loops that would make Tonya Harding proud.

Flash and I are so in love with these kittens, our friends are worried about us. Flash cuts her hours to half-time so she can be home with them more. I cancel a fifteen-city book tour because I can't bear being away from our little darlings. But our friends don't know the half of it. We haven't had sex in weeks because Flash thinks it will upset the children.

"Maybe they could sleep in the kitchen tonight," I dare to suggest. Flash glares at me. "Well then shut the light."

"I can't," Flash says. "New Cat on the Block is sleeping on my arm. You shut it."

"I can't get up. The Cat Formally Known as Princess is asleep on my chest." I lift the covers to show Flash.

"Oh, look at the burly, curly, twirly, pearly, surly girly," Flash squeaks in a falsetto that sounds like a cross between Mickey Mouse and Melanie Griffith.

Suddenly I have an idea. "Flash," I say in a kittenish peep, "wouldn't you like some pretty titty and itty bitty clitty?"

"There's two too many pussies in this bed," Flash growls in a low Tina Turner "Private Dancer" voice. We remedy the situation and soon all the pussies in the house are satisfied and sound asleep. ♦

*Lesléa Newman's book of humor, Out of the Closet and Nothing to Wear, based on her columns, will be published by Alyson Publications in 1997.*

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GREGG SHAPIRO

## HALF GAY, HALF STRAIGHT

**W**hat are the odds of two albums being released within the same year by duos boasting one gay male member and one straight male member? Could this be the beginning of a trend? If it is, I certainly hope that the duos that follow are as good as Driving Blind and McAlmont & Butler.

The Butler in McAlmont & Butler is the straight guy (so to speak) and is also the same Butler (Bernard, that is) from the late, lamented band London Suede. Now he's teamed up with singer David McAlmont, an openly gay, British, black man, to record "The Sound of...McAlmont &



Butler" (Hut Recordings). The result is a jubilant blend of rock and soul. The disc's opener, "Yes," sung in McAlmont's warm

falsetto, has a feel-good, summer of 1970 sound to it. McAlmont's voice has a Sly Stone via Prince quality in the song "What's the Excuse This Time?" The emotion in McAlmont's voice is without equal in "Although," a song about AIDS. Butler's playing "guitar and other musical instruments" in "Don't Call It Soul" and "Disappointment" recalls the best of his London Suede work. It would be perfectly alright to call "You'll Lose a Good Thing" and "You Do" good for the soul!

McAlmont & Butler co-wrote nine of the eleven songs on the CD. The word is that this was a one-time-only collaboration. With chemistry this powerful, it's hard to believe that they'd abandon such a promising experiment before all the positive data has been recorded.

The self-titled debut CD by Driving Blind (Vanguard Recording Society) is a blue-eyed soul



affair that ranks just slightly lower on the originality scale than McAlmont & Butler. For listeners with less daring tastes, Driving Blind is a safe ride.

Hailing from Montreal, the band's main components are Bil Riggengberg (who's gay) and Andrew Frank (who's straight). Their cover of Fleetwood Mac's "Hypnotized" gains a new listening perspective with the addition of a horn. Of the nine other songs on the album—all written or co-written by Riggengberg and Frank—"Fly," the fine and funky "Contradictions," "Anything Can Happen," "Boomerang" and the ethereal "Cover Your Eyes" are all praiseworthy.

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of...McAlmont



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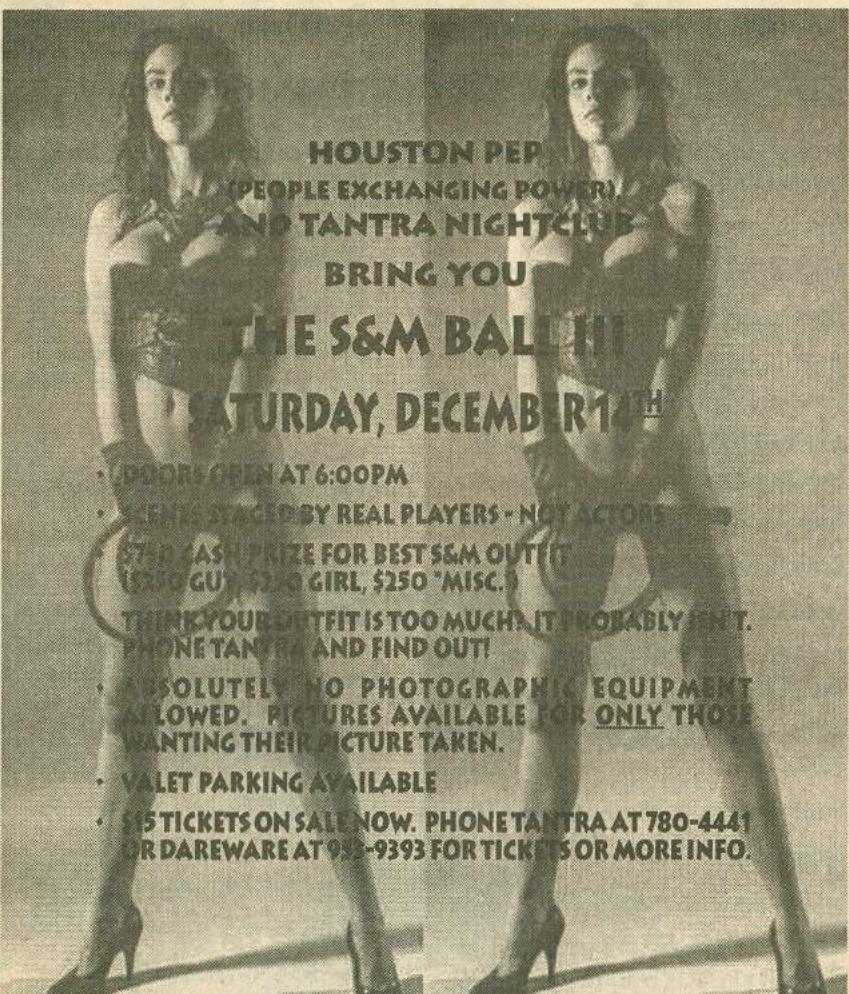
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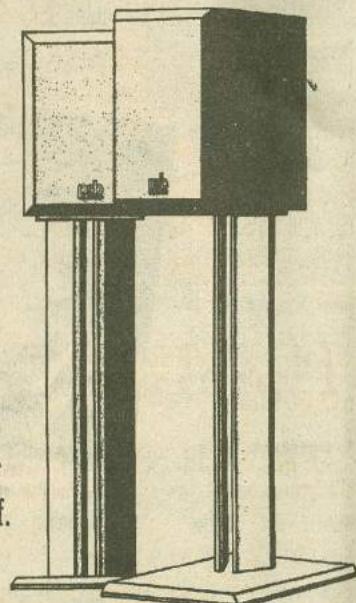
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Sundays, Dec 1-15. Cafe  
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512-326-2670.

Austin Contemporary  
Ballet: "The Nutcracker."  
Dec 6 & 7. Paramount  
Theatre. 512-472-5470.

Ariel Dance Theatre:  
"Proto." Weekends,  
through Dec 14. Nalle  
Plastics Warehouse, 110  
W. 2nd. 512-469-2901.

Exhibition & "Recent  
Acquisitions: 19th Century  
Prints." Through Dec 8.  
512-471-7324.

Scarborough-Phillips Library  
(St. Ed's): "A Personal  
Mythology" (Sam Yeates).  
Through Dec 13. 512-448-  
8685.

Austin Museum of Art  
Downtown: "I Dream a  
World: Portraits of Black  
Women Who Changed  
America," through Dec 18;  
"De Mujer a Mujer: A  
Celebration of Latinas by

Austin Museum of Art @  
Laguna Gloria: "2 Cents:  
Works On Paper by Jean  
Michel Basquiat & Poetry  
by Kevin Young." Through  
Jan 5. 512-458-8191.

**Film**

The Paramount: "Gone  
With the Wind," through  
Nov 30; "Meet Me in St.  
Louis," Dec 1 & 3. 512-  
472-5411.

Image & Identity (films by  
&/or about African-  
American women):

Christmas @ the French  
Legation: museum tours,  
food, entertainment, crafts  
& holiday items. Dec 1,  
noon-5pm. The French  
Legation Museum, 802  
San Marcos. 512-472-  
8180.

Project Transitions' 8th  
Annual Holiday Swing - a  
benefit for Doug's House &  
Roosevelt Gardens featuring  
dancing to Swingtime,  
singing by the Studebakers,  
fancy food & silent auction.  
Dec 6, 8pm-12:30am. Ben  
Hur Shrine Temple Hall,  
4300 Westbank. 512-  
454-8646.

10th Anniversary Art Show  
& Sale to benefit the  
Austin Museum of Art @  
Laguna Gloria. Dec 7,  
10am-6pm. The Carillon,  
2630 Exposition. 512-  
477-6112.

13th Annual Wheatsville  
Arts Festival. Handcrafted  
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Dec 7 & 8, 10am-dusk. Wheatsville Food  
Co-Op. 512-478-2667.

2nd Annual Holiday Arts &  
Crafts Bazaar. Dec 8, 1-  
5pm. 311 LeGrande. 512-  
445-0602.

Holiday Art Show & Sale.  
Through Dec 24. Women  
& Their Work. 512-477-  
1064.

**Music**

DiverseArts' East Side  
Circuit: Harold McMillan's

8pm. Bass Concert Hall.  
512-476-6064.

La Folia Austin Baroque:  
"Musick is the Speech of  
Angels." Dec 7, 8pm. 1st  
English Lutheran, 3001  
Whitis. 512-892-1326.

Capital City Men's Chorus:  
"Home for the Holidays."  
Dec 8, 4pm. St. Martin's  
Lutheran, 606 W. 15th.  
512-477-SING.

**TV**

Austin Museum of Art's  
"The Territory" - Multi-cul-  
tural Collages: "Nine Fish,"  
"Remnants" & "Video-  
book." Dec 3, 10pm. KLRU

ch. 18 (PBS). 512-458-  
8191.

**Theater**

**New**

"A Christmas Carol." Dec 4-  
22. Live Oak Theatre @  
the State. 512-472-5143.

"The Express Intent." Dec  
5-15. Planet Theatre. 512-  
459-7018.

"The Gifts of the Magi."  
Dec 5-21. Hyde Park  
Theatre. 512-499-TIXS.

"The Christmas Schooner."  
Dec 6-22. McCallum Fine  
Arts Academy Theatre. 512-  
459-2289.

"Sonata Escondido."

"Cyrano de Bergerac." Dec  
6-Jan 11. The Public  
Domain. 512-474-6202.

"A Christmas Memory" by  
Truman Capote. Sundays,  
Dec 8-22. Hyde Park  
Theatre. 512-499-TIXS.

**Continuing**

"The Birthday Party."  
Through Nov 30. Hyde Park  
Theatre. 512-499-TIXS.

"The Glass Menagerie."  
Through Nov 30. Capitol  
City Playhouse. 512-472-  
2966.

"Sylvia." Held over through  
Nov 30. Zach Scott Theatre  
Center. 512-476-0541.

"Sonata Escondido."

Through Dec 7. John  
Henry Faulk Theatre,  
204 E. 4th. 512-  
499-8497.

"The Way of the  
World." Through Dec  
7. The Acting Studio.  
512-499-TIXS.

"A Christmas Carol."  
Through Dec 22. Zach Scott  
Theatre Center. 512-476-  
0541.

**World AIDS Day**

Body Count 1996. Dec 1.  
Gathering @ the Capitol,  
6pm; procession starts,  
6:30pm; Body Count on  
Congress Avenue Bridge

starts, 7pm, followed by  
performances by local  
artists. Volunteers are still  
needed: 512-447-6222.

Mass for the Anointing of  
the Sick. Dec 1, 5:30pm.  
The Cathedral Church of St.  
Mary, 203 E. 10th. 512-  
472-4540.

**Other Happenings**

The Tribe: Thanksgiving  
Pot-Luck Dinner. Nov 28,  
12:30pm. Cornerstone.  
434-3280.

Austin Stonewall Chamber of  
Commerce Power Breakfast.  
Dec 4, 7:30am. Cafe Soma.  
512-707-3794.



Members of the Ariel Dance Theatre performing "Proto."

## In the Community

### A directory of Gay and Lesbian Organizations

(To list your group, fax information to Sean at 512-472-8154)

Ad Hoc (Alliance to Defeat Human Oppression &  
Condemnation). 1117 Red River. 793-2049.

Adventuring Outdoors. 445-2870.

National Leather Association Austin. 703-8927.  
<http://www.io.com/~austinla/austinla.html>

New to Austin (networking for new gay Austin residents).  
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## November 28 through December 8

### Dance

Powell Shepherd's "Changing Time." Sundays, Dec 1-15. Cafe Dance, 3307-B Hancock. 512-326-2670.

Austin Contemporary Ballet: "The Nutcracker." Dec 6 & 7. Paramount Theatre. 512-472-5470.

Ariel Dance Theatre: "Proto." Weekends, through Dec 14. Nalle Plastics Warehouse, 110 W. 2nd. 512-469-2901.

### Exhibits

#### New

Dougherty Arts Center Gallery: The Waterloo Watercolor Group. Dec 4-28. 512-397-1455.

Mexic-Arte Museum: "Divine Art," Dec 7-14; "Artesanias," Dec 7-31. 512-480-9373.

#### Continuing

The Artspace Gallery: "A Natural View" (Rachel Koper & Christa Bialkowski). Through Nov 30. 512-474-7799.

Alternate Current Artspace: "The Tarot Show." Through Dec 1. 512-443-9674.

Huntington Art Gallery: 58th Annual Art Faculty



Septimo Poinsette Clark, part of the Austin Museum of Art's exhibit "I Dream a World."

through Jan 5. 512-458-8191.

Women & Their Work: 1st Annual Members Exhibition. Through Dec 24. 512-477-1064.

7pm-8pm. The Canyon, 2630 Exposition. 512-477-6112.

13th Annual Wheatsville Arts Festival. Handcrafted gift items and entertainment. Dec 7 & 8, 10am-dusk. Wheatsville Food Co-Op. 512-478-2667.

2nd Annual Holiday Arts & Crafts Bazaar. Dec 8, 1-5pm. 311 LeGrande. 512-445-0602.

Holiday Art Show & Sale. Through Dec 24. Women & Their Work. 512-477-1064.

### Music

DiverseArts' East Side Circuit: Harold McMillan's Friends, Nov 28. The Victory Grill/Kovac Theater. 512-477-9438.

The Bishop's Hall @ the Cathedral Church of St. Mary: "Three Divas & Deb: A Stage & Screen Revue," Nov 30, 8pm; Classical & Folk Sacred Song w/Lynn Parra, mezzo-soprano, & John Balka, pianist, Dec 6, 8pm. 512-472-4540.

Amparo Garcia. Dec 1, 2-4pm. Austin Museum of Art Downtown. 512-458-8191.

Westminster Sunday Afternoon Music Series: "Music of the Baroque." Dec 1, 3pm. Westminster Presbyterian, 3208 Exposition. 512-459-5497.

Austin Symphony w/Daniel Gaisford, cellist. Dec 6 & 7,

### Film

The Paramount: "Gone With the Wind," through Nov 30; "Meet Me in St. Louis," Dec 1 & 3. 512-477-5411.

Image & Identity (films by &/or about African-American women): "Perfect Image?," "A Litany of Survival: The Life & Work of Audre Lourde" & "Now Pretend."

Dec 3, 7:30pm. Austin Museum of Art Downtown. 512-458-8191.

### Holiday Stuff

Southwest Holiday Art Festival. Nov 29 & 30, 10am-5pm. Austin Museum of Art @ Laguna Gloria. 512-458-8191.

Austin Symphony w/Daniel Gaisford, cellist. Dec 6 & 7,



Members of the Ariel Dance Theatre performing "Proto."

LOVE. 7pm. 512-499-8497.

"The Way of the World." Through Dec 7. The Acting Studio. 512-499-7115.

Austin Stonewall Chamber of Commerce Power Breakfast. Dec 4, 7:30am. Cafe Soma. 512-707-3794.

NOV. 28. Thanksgiving Pot-Luck Dinner. Nov 28, 12:30pm. Cornerstone. 434-3280.

Austin Stonewall Chamber of Commerce Power Breakfast. Dec 4, 7:30am. Cafe Soma. 512-707-3794.

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# in the Community

## A directory of Gay and Lesbian Organizations

(To list your group, fax information to Sean at 512-472-8154)

Ad Hoc (Alliance to Defeat Human Oppression & Condemnation). 1117 Red River. 793-2049.

Adventuring Outdoors. 445-2870.

Affirmation (gay & lesbian Methodists). 451-2329.

AIDS Services of Austin. 451-2273.

ALLGO (Austin Latina/o Lesbian & Gay Organization)/Informe SIDA. 472-2001.

Austin Radical Faeries. 3rd Thursdays, 7 p.m. @ Cornerstone. 703-8952.

Austin Stonewall Chamber of Commerce. 707-3794.

Bisexual Network of Austin. 370-9573.

Capital City Men's Chorus. 477-SING.

Cornerstone Gay & Lesbian Community Center, 1117 Red River. 708-1515.

GLSTN (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Teachers Network). 323-2329.

Integrity Austin (gay & lesbian Episcopalians). 445-6164.

Lesbian Avengers. 447-9226.

Log Cabin Republicans of Texas. 467-9797.

Lutherans Concerned of Austin & Central Texas. 2nd Sundays, 2 p.m. @ 1st English Lutheran. 832-4159.

MCCA (Metropolitan Community Church of Austin), 1117 Red River. 708-8002.

National Leather Association Austin. 703-8927. <http://www.io.com/~austinla/austinla.html>

New to Austin (networking for new gay Austin residents). 346-8666.

Out Youth Austin, 1117 Red River. 708-1234.

P-FLAG (Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays Austin. 3rd Tuesdays @ Grace United Methodist. 302-FLAG.

Prime Timers Austin (middle aged & older gay & bisexual men). 1st Sundays, 2 p.m. @ Austin History Center. 282-2861.

Project Transitions. 454-8646.

SapphFire ("Bringing the Lesbian Community Together"). 1st Fridays, 7:30 p.m. @ Trinity United Methodist Church. 323-2476.

Staying Negative. 1st & 3rd Sundays, 7 p.m. @ Cornerstone. 406-6165.

Tapestry Women's Chorus. 453-1691.

Texas Gay Rodeo Association Austin Chapter. 346-0561.

The Tribe (social/networking group for gay men). 2nd & 4th Wednesdays @ Cornerstone. 434-3280.

Unity Church of North Austin. 836-6372.

Waterloo Counseling Center. 329-9922.

Fax submissions to (512) 472-8154, or mail to 1615 West Sixth St., Austin, TX 78703

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**November 28 through December 8**

#### Dance

Houston Ballet: "The Nutcracker." Nov 29-Dec 29. Wortham Theatre Center. 713-5-BALLET.

#### Exhibits

##### Continuing

Glassell School of Art: "Reconfigured: 6 Approaches to Figurative Painting." Through Dec 1. 713-639-7500.

Toni Jones Gallery: "Daniel Lechon." Through Dec 6. 713-528-7998.



#### DiverseWorks:

"Reconstructedness." Through Jan 4. 713-223-8346.

#### Menil Collection:

"Louis Fernández." Through Jan 5. 713-525-9400.

#### Museum of Fine Arts,

Houston: "Masterpieces from the Pierpont Morgan Library,"

through Jan 5.

#### Film

MFA Films: "A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies,"

Nov 29-30;

"The

Project Row Houses: "The Blues & the Abstract Truth." Through Mar 1. 713-526-7662.

Da Camera: Pharaoh Sanders Ensemble: "Message from Home." Dec 6, 8pm. Wortham Theatre Center. 713-524-5050.

Gerhard Stäbler, new German music. Dec 8, 8pm. DiverseWorks. 713-228-0914.

#### Theater

"Annie." Nov 29-Dec 15. The Music Hall. 713-622-30;

"The

River Oaks 3 (Saturday midnight shows): "Blue Velvet," Nov 30; Spike & Mike's Sick & Twisted Festival of Animation, Nov 30 & Dec 7; "The Rocky Horror Picture Show," through Dec 7. 713-444-FILM (#037).

Rice Cinema: "Alien," Dec 6; "How Much Wood Would a Woodchuck Chuck?" & "Burden of Dreams," Dec 7; "King Lear," Dec 8. 713-527-4853.

#### Music

Rockefeller's: Jack Ingram, Nov 29; Marty Stewart, Nov 30; John Mayall, Dec 5. 713-869-8427.

Houston Symphony: "Boléro & Beethoven," Nov 30-Dec 2; Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1, Dec 7-9. Jones Hall. 713-224-7575.

Da Camera: Pharaoh Sanders Ensemble: "Message from Home." Dec 6, 8pm. Wortham Theatre Center. 713-524-5050.

Gerhard Stäbler, new German music. Dec 8, 8pm. DiverseWorks. 713-228-0914.

#### New

"Annie." Nov 29-Dec 15. The Music Hall. 713-622-30;

"The

"An Ideal Husband." Through Dec 22. Main St. Theater @ Chelsea Market. 713-524-6706.

"John & Jen." Through Dec 22. Theater Lab Houston. 713-868-7516.

"She Loves Me." Through Jan 5. Stages Repertory Theatre. 713-527-0220.

"The Compleat Works of Wllm Shakespeare (abridged)." Through Jan 11. New Heights Theatre. 713-869-8927.

#### Other Happenings

DiverseWorks Artist & Artisan Market. Through Nov 30. In the subspace gallery, 1117 E. Freeway. 713-223-8348.



The 20th Anniversary production of "Annie" plays at the Music Hall through Dec. 15. Joanna Pacitti, front, plays the title role. She is pictured here with the show's creators, from left, Thomas Meehan, Martin Charnin, Peter Gennaro and Charles Strouse.

## in the Community

### **A directory of Gay and Lesbian Organizations**

**(To list your group, fax information to Sean at 512-472-8154)**

AIDS Foundation Houston. 713-524-AIDS.

Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. 713-526-1017.

Bisexual, Transgendered, Gay, Lesbian & Straight Society. 281-496-0210.

Covenant Baptist Church. 713-668-8830.

Dignity (gay & lesbian Catholics). 713-880-2872.

Integrity Houston (gay & lesbian Episcopalians). 713-423-0414.

Just For Us (a group for kids grades 6-12 who have gay or lesbian parents, sponsored by HGLP). 713-284-4939.

Lambda Rollerskating Club. Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. @ Starlite Skating Academy. 713-933-5818.

LiB (Lesbians in Business). 713-529-2598.

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Houston Ballet: "The Nutcracker." Nov 29-Dec 29. Wortham Theatre Center. 713-5-BALLET.

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Glassell School of Art: "Reconfigured: 6 Approaches to Figurative Painting." Through Dec 1. 713-639-7500.

Toni Jones Gallery: "Daniel Lechon." Through Dec 6. 713-528-7998.

Blaffer Gallery (U of H): "Contemporary Art from Japan: Clayworks, Painting & Sculpture." Through Dec 15. 713-743-9530.

Houston Center for Photography: "When 2 or More: New Typologies" & "Dan Estabrook: Interior Views." Through Dec 22. 713-529-4755.

Contemporary Arts Museum: "Lori Pittman" & "Jesse Amado." Through Dec 31. 713-526-3129.

Mexican Cultural Institute: "Nostalgia: Posters of Mexican Cinema 1936-1956." Through Dec. 713-524-2951.

DiverseWorks: "The Reconstructedness." Through Jan 4. 713-223-8346.

Menil Collection: "Louis Fernández." Through Jan 5. 713-525-9400.

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston: "Masterpieces from the Pierpont Morgan Library," through Jan 5; "An Enduring Legacy: Masterpieces from the Mr. & Mrs. John D.

"Buddha Amitabha" is one of the pieces included in the Museum of Fine Arts' exhibit, "An Enduring Legacy: Masterpieces from the Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection of Asia Society

Rockefeller III Collection of Asian Art," through Jan 19; "Splendors of Ancient Egypt," through Mar 30. 713-639-7300.

"Sleep" & "S'en Four la Mort (No Fear, No Die)" w/dir. Claire Denis, Dec 6-8. 713-639-7515; en español 713-639-7379.

Project Row Houses: "The Blues & the Abstract Truth." Through Mar 1. 713-526-7662.

### Film

MFA Films: "A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies," Nov 29-30;

"Nénette et Boni," "J'ai pas Sommeil (I Can't Sleep)" et Boni," "J'ai pas Sommeil (I Can't Sleep)"

"Arizona Strip," Nov 29-Dec 21. Main Street Theater. 713-682-6557.

"A Christmas Carol," Nov 29-Dec 29. Alley Theatre. 713-228-8421 (800-259-ALLE).

"Christmas Party of One," Nov 29-Dec 29. Grace Theater. 713-526-2721.

**Continuing**  
"A Chorus Line." Through Dec 7. Country Playhouse. 713-467-4497.

"Sylvia." Extended through Dec 8. Alley Theatre. 713-228-8421.

"A Little Something" & "The Wintery Kingdom." Through Dec 21. Nancy Calhoun Paulson Children's Theater. 713-526-2721.

Da Camera: Pharaoh Sanders Ensemble: "Message from Home." Dec 6, 8pm. Wortham Theatre Center. 713-524-5050.

Gerhard Stäbler, new German music. Dec 8, 8pm. DiverseWorks. 713-228-0914.

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Bisexual, Transgendered, Gay, Lesbian & Straight Society. 281-496-0210.

Covenant Baptist Church. 713-668-8830.

Dignity (gay & lesbian Catholics). 713-880-2872.

Front Runners (running group). 713-522-8021.

GAYS (Garden & Yard Society) - A Gay Gardening Club. 713-862-3922.

Gay & Lesbian Hispanics Unidos. 713-813-3769.

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. 713-521-7464.

Greater Houston Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, 1109 Hyde Park, #178. 713-523-7576.

Heartsong Women's Chorus. 713-947-1488.

HATCH (Houston Area Teenagers Coalition of Homosexuals). 713-942-7002.

Houston Area Women's Center, 1010 Waugh. 713-528-6798.

Houston Chain Gang Bicycling Club. 713-863-1860.

Houston Gay & Lesbian Parents (HGLP). 2nd Tuesdays, 7 p.m. @ MCCR. 713-284-4939.

Houston Outdoor Group. 4th Thursdays, 7 p.m. @ 1116 Jackson Blvd. 713-526-7688.

Houston Professional Men's Association. 713-866-4079.

Houston Women's Flag Football League. 713-315-9368.

Integrity Houston (gay & lesbian Episcopalians). 713-423-0414.

Just For Us (a group for kids grades 6-12 who have gay or lesbian parents, sponsored by HGLP). 713-284-4939.

Lambda Rollerskating Club. Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. @ Starlite Skating Academy. 713-933-5818.

LiB (Lesbians in Business). 713-529-2598.

Log Cabin Republicans of Houston. 713-529-9100.

Lutherans Concerned. 713-869-4218.

MCCR (Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection), 1919 Decatur. Sunday services, 9 & 11 a.m. 713-861-9149.

Montrose Counseling Center. 713-529-0037.

Montrose Ice Picks. 2nd Thursdays @ Galleria Ice Rink. 713-522-3687.

National Gay & Lesbian Journalists Association. 713-528-1793.

National Leather Association Houston. 713-434-2417.

P-FLAG (Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays) Houston. 713-867-9020.

Prime Timers Houston. 713-867-3903.

Rainbow Fishing Club. 713-523-6381.

Roundtable, the Houston Philosophy Forum. 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 7 p.m. @ Cafe Express. 713-779-8620.

Survivors of Loss. Tuesdays, 7 p.m. @ Sharpstown General Hospital. 713-778-2677.

Twenty Something. 713-315-6786.

Fax submissions to (512) 472-8154, or mail to 1615 West Sixth St., Austin, TX 78703

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## GIVING THANKS

**A**h, Dear Fans, it is Thanksgiving, and Amanda is thinking of all the wonderful things she has to be thankful for—Mona the cat, Sebastian our slave god manhunk, and all our friends and family.

Thanksgiving is one of those strange times of the year when we Americans wander the continent in search of a place to celebrate. Some go north, some go south, others go east or west. In Houston, there is a complete evacuation of the gay community that rivals Christmas Eve.

We remember going to Acapulco for Thanksgiving with some of our more well-adjusted friends in years past. We would sit high above the bay and dangle our heels from the cross on the mountain

Then at night we would hold sumptuous parties for a few hundred of our dearest and closest friends who would trash the house and traumatize the help.

Since then, Amanda has graduated to other venues. For several years, we had family in Texas during Thanksgiving. We would gorge on turkey with them in New Braunfels while dodging flying cranberry sauce from the two nephews who seemed to vibrate at a different speed than the rest of humanity. Now they have all moved back to the frozen north, and the streets of New Braunfels are silent once again.

So, since we find ourselves here in Houston, we have secured Sebastian and Mona for a quiet little family gathering at home, ordered a whole turkey dinner for three from Epicurean and sprayed Turkey Delight scent in all the rooms to make us feel like we've prepared dinner all by our-

and Mona likes to claw the upholstery on the couch. We personally enjoy our glass of wine and the thought that we have so much to be thankful for—health, comfort and some semblance of sanity.

Thanksgiving is a time for reflection for those who don't find themselves immersed in the wild vacation scene or ensconced with family. Both those alternatives are in their own way dysfunctional because we are running from reality either way. Both escapes take us out of our daily location and all the pressures, sorrows and boredom of our daily lives. Staying in a city that looks like it has been completely deserted can be almost frightening.

Videos are impossible to find. Movie theaters are packed. The bars are sparse. Restaurants seem dim. It's all very alien during Thanksgiving. And of course, if you were a very lucky child as we were, you have these memories of grandma and Mom cooking like fiends in the kitchen. There

was the smell of turkey in the oven all night long; the rare tang of table wine; the privilege of dining formally in the dining room with the best china and silver; candle light reflected on the shiny skin of the bronzed turkey and over the pool of dark gravy in the heirloom bowl.

The family is now scattered. Most of

# Amanda

AMANDA B. RECKONDWITH

and Mother hates to cook. Instead of the parents having our siblings over, our siblings invite our parents to visit at two-hour intervals. By the end of the day, our parents are so fat they can hardly walk—and so angry at everyone for not getting together as one family, they can barely talk. They go home and collapse in front of the television, wondering what they did wrong and why they don't have magical Thanksgivings like they used to enjoy.

It's all probably part of the general disintegration of the family, Dear Fans. Nuclear families, like all atomic particles, eventually destabilize and fall apart. Perhaps there was just too much bumping and rubbing together over the years.

So, Amanda will stay home for Thanksgiving and go up north for

***Thanksgiving is one of those strange times of the year when we Americans wander the continent in search of a place to celebrate. Some go north, some go south, others go east or west.***

***In Houston, there is a complete evacuation of the gay community that rivals Christmas Eve.***

Christmas, when there will be more to see and do. Thanksgiving is always brown and dead up north, just as it is always green and dead down south. We thank the gods for what we have, and hope for what we want—but it has nothing to do with material goods, does it? We're just lucky to have each other and thankful for

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HMO Blue Medicaid  
**Columbia St. David's Health Network**  
**Cigna Healthcare**  
HMO/PPO  
**Ethix Southwest PPO Network**  
**Foundation Health Plan**  
HMO/PPO

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Happy Thanksgiving! If you haven't made your Thanksgiving plans, **Metroparks Community Church Resurrection** (MCRR) is holding its annual Thanksgiving meal and dinner today (Wednesday) at 6 p.m. The dinner is free. The church is at 1919 Decatur Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. Call the church at 202-333-1965 during business hours or at its pay phone at 202-333-9165 for more information. Check out **MCRR** on the Internet at <http://www.nwmcrr/mccr.htm>.

*Elizabeth*

ive director of  
**Rights Campa**  
gues speaker  
Meeting" from  
p.m. Dec. 2 at  
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# Effective January 1, 1997, participation in Prudential Health Plans will NOT include services provided by Columbia St. David's.



At Columbia St. David's, we've worked hard to provide an integrated health care system that takes good care of Austin families. We believe a health plan should allow you access to all the health care choices available, not just those selected by an insurance company. By selecting one of these health plans instead of Prudential, you will have

the freedom to choose which hospital you want to go to. You will have access to such trusted names as St. David's Medical Center, St. David's Medicenters, Austin Diagnostic Medical Center, South Austin

Medical Center and Round Rock Hospital. For more information, call (512) 482-4100.

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*Plan participation may vary by facility.*

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Columbia St. David's Health Network  
Cigna Healthcare  
HMO/PPO  
Ethix Southwest  
PPO Network  
Foundation Health Plan  
HMO/PPO  
POS  
Healthsource  
Humana Health Plans  
HMO/PPO  
United HealthCare of Texas (MetraHealth)  
HMO/PPO  
NYLCare  
One Health Plan  
PCA Health Plans of Texas  
HMO/PPO  
Qualicare  
PCA Star  
Private Health Care Systems  
PPO Network  
St. David's Select  
The Health Advantage Network

worship service a.m. The dinner noon. **MCCR** is 1919 Decatur of Washington Call the church business hours or at its pay phone 9165 for more. Check out **MCCR** on the Internet <http://www.netmccr/mccr.htm>. **Elizabeth** tive director of **Rights Campaign** guest speaker "Meeting" from p.m. Dec. 2 at **Multiservices** Heights Blvd... **The Gay and Switchboard of GLSH** will be training for volunteers Dec. 6 which is staffed by volunteers, is a service that provides information on organizations, events of interest to the lesbian community Houston area. 3211 for more or leave a message 9615...

**A Christmas** will ring in the Dec. 8 at the **E. Hornberger Center** at 2151 Blvd. Tickets are \$400. The event is local AIDS group.

—L. Tri