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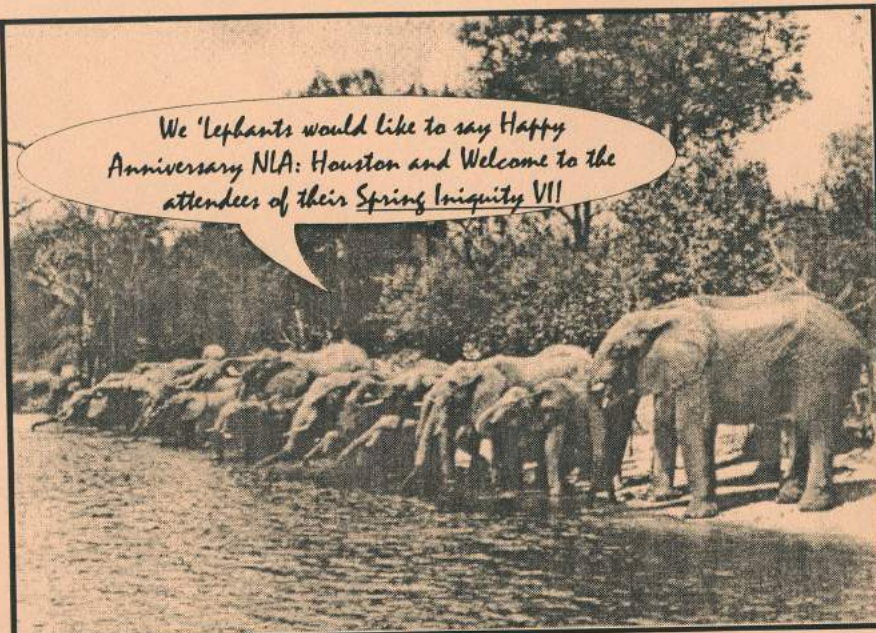
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**WESTERN NEWSLETTER**

**Volume 1, Number 2**

**APRIL - JUNE 1997**



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## From the Editor

This issue is dedicated to the late Walter Carter, Sr., a close companion who passed away February 25, 1997. He is survived by his mother, Joyce DeLaVergne, father, Sanford Carter, son, Walter Carter, Jr., and granddaughter, Sara.

Walter was a well respected member of the gay and lesbian community of Houston. He was the owner of the Brazos River Bottom from the early '80s through the fall of '93.

He was a member of the Colt 45's and Texas Gay Rodeo Association. At the time of his death, he was serving as Treasurer on the Montrose Clinic Board of Directors.

In lieu of flowers, make donations to the Montrose Clinic in Walter's name.

## Leather Alternatives

Staff & Management

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J. R. Ewing

Editor-In-Chief:  
Richard Strickland

Reporters:  
(See by-line)

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**Leather Alternatives** is published in Houston, Texas, by and for members of the leather, levi, uniform, and western communities.

Views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Publisher and Staff.

Alternative views are appreciated and will be addressed. You may write to us with your comments to the address listed above.

**Advertisers:** If you wish to advertise in our Gay Pride issue, please call (281) 536-3602 for more information. Space is limited, so call and make your reservations in our next issue.

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## S/M and B/D Safety

by Bondage Buddy

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is an edited reprint of the article that appeared in our *Let Us Entertain You* Special Edition.

It takes a good bottom to make a good Top. I am certain you have heard that one before. The main reason I feel the statement was made was because of the experiences a good bottom has gone through. He/she has experienced pleasure and knows why they experienced those feelings. They also have felt **true** pain and understand **why** it may have happened. What follows is **not** an all inclusive safety rundown. Both Top and bottom, as individual players, are responsible for all aspects of safety during a scene.

There are bottoms who feel a need to stretch their limits and instead wind up stretching a ligament or worse. There are Tops who want to see how much their bottom can endure, until a shoulder or something else pops out of socket. Tops and bottoms do not run into damaging scenes very often, but you need to be aware that the danger exists for serious injury or death.

Please, do not focus on the potential hazards of the lifestyle. You might come to the erroneous conclusion that it is just too

dangerous for you or anyone else. All I am saying is that there is always the possibility of danger with this lifestyle. It is no different than the danger you live with everyday. You are not guaranteed that you are going to survive the day, and you accept this fact every day you wake up.

I stress communication for reasons of safety. This is especially important when involved in a scene with someone. Tops and bottoms must be able to communicate with one another, especially to reduce the chance of harm coming.

Before you go home with someone, you must first build-up a level of trust with this person. All parties, especially the bottom(s), must feel comfortable. If anything, and I mean anything, about the other person does not feel right, the best thing to do is not to get involved.

Competent Tops know that any prospective bottom needs to trust and feel comfortable. In order to accomplish this, each party involved must be as open and honest as possible. The bottom must decide if the Top is communicating freely and not being deceptive. Common-sense and "gut" instinct are the best judges. This may not be the case if your senses have become dulled by alcohol and/or drugs, or if you think with your sex organs instead of the head on your shoulders.





Alcohol and drugs, in my opinion, are the leading causes for injury, illness, and life threatening situations in the lifestyle. You need to maintain a state of "normalcy" when entering a scene, **especially** if you have never played with the person before.

The next statement I make is not an endorsement or condonement on the use of alcohol and/or drugs, but I feel it needs to be made. (Please pay attention to **how** I am saying this, and do not read **anything** into what I have said!) If you have played with an individual and are "extremely familiar" with that person's scene or method of play, alcohol and/or drugs, **within reason**, can be **relatively** safe for use during the scene.

When involved in bondage scenes, whether you are using rope, leather restraints, chains, or other materials, caution **must** be exercised.

The "normal" length of time that has been placed on safe bondage is fifteen (15) minutes before problems can arise. As far as I am concerned, **there is no set time for safe bondage**.

It is the duty and/or responsibility of the Top to monitor the bottom constantly. The more elaborate the scene, the more attention that is required by the Top. Let's use an example: the bottom is securely bound, blindfolded, and gagged

while being suspended. The Top **must** monitor the bondage for potential problems. And, because of the gag, the Top should be right there with the bottom constantly.

Secure bondage can cause circulation problems. The gag can also cause problems with the respiratory system. A suspended body is being put into stress, and we all know what stress can do without being bound.

For many bottoms, the scene is exciting. Most times, a bottom feels excitement event before the first piece of clothing comes off or the bondage first begins.

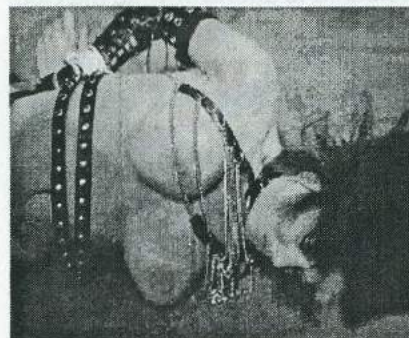
Hyperventilation can, and does, increase as the scene progresses.

At certain levels, it can lead to unconsciousness. When someone passes out, the bondage, blindfold, and gag, can complicate the situation and requires immediate attention by the Top. The gag should be the first thing to go. The person

need to be lying on the floor, so the suspended body is the next concern.

A level head and pre-planned emergency plan are required. The bottom can, most of the time, feel when something is not right and should express what is happening or how they feel. Of course, with a gag in their mouth, it becomes difficult to talk. This is why the Top needs to pay attention.

On a different scenario, a gag



can cause serious problems by itself. Here is an example. The bottom has been tied to a chair. A gag is used, and for whatever reason, the bottom starts gagging and vomits. The gag **must** be removed immediately. The bottom could die if the vomit has nowhere to go outside of the body, thereby causing suffocation.

I have had first hand experience in dealing with the situations mentioned above several times, and fortunately, everything worked out. In 99.9% of my "close calls," I prevented the other person from passing out and/or getting sick by reassuring them that I was there and they were going to be fine.

I used a soft reassuring voice, light pats of my hand, gentle hugs, and lightly running my hands over their head, neck, shoulders, and back while steadily reassuring them vocally. Yes, I still had to release them from whatever position or situation they were in, but at least they stayed with me. To be honest, two or three spilled their cookies, but at least they held off until I could get them a container.

The following information is general, but directed more towards those of you who play Top but have not been into the lifestyle long, bottoms might be interested too.

1. When whipping or paddling someone, stay away from the kidney area.

2. When playing with electrical devices, **never** use them above the waist.

3. When it comes to violet wands, **never** come near the eyes.

4. When hands or feet become numb due to bondage or restraint, massage from as high as possible from the extremity, i.e. from shoulder to hands down each finger and thumb; or from upper thigh to calf, ankle, foot, down each toe. **NOTE:** This is not an instant cure, but it helps.

5. Never tie someone up securely and leave them alone.

6. Never gag someone and leave them alone, even for a minute. Stay with them.

7. When playing with someone



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with pierced nipples, especially people pierced through the tip of the nipple, be careful not to play too rough. **NOTE:** Anyone pierced through the tip of the nipple can be easily damaged without effort.

8. Establish a "safe word" or "body movement" that the bottom can use to when his/her limit has been reached. If the bottom has to use the signal often, you can be playing too rough, or the bottom does not want to test his/her limits.

9. Readily acknowledge if you are a novice Top and do not have extensive experience while communicating.

10. Absorb all the knowledge you can get your hands on, but never think you know it all. Life is a learning experience and offers knowledge daily.

Any other information that you need or want? There is a local (Houston) leather club that holds educational events at a local leather bar (Ripcord) on the patio. You are

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welcome to attend or write the club.  
Until next time. BB

## Ms. Gulf Coast Leather

by Peter Winfree

Texas Leather Productions held its 3rd annual Ms. Gulf Coast Leather competition was held on March 8th this year at Venture-N in Houston, TX. It was a night to remember.

This year's judges included: Ms. Ginni, **Ms. Gulf Coast Leather 1996**; Viola Johnson, E.C. member of **National Leather Association: International**; Ms. Stacey, **Ms. NLA: International 1995**; Steve Waldren, **Leather Knights** of Dallas, and Mike Geinzer, President of **NLA: Houston**.

Emcees for the contest were Ms. Jill Carter, **Ms. Gulf Coast International 1996**; and Chuck Higgins, E.C. co-chair of **NLA: International 1992**.

This year, there were two contestants for Ms. Gulf Coast Leather: Tiffany Swagner representing Texas, and Mistress Cheryl, representing Florida. States **not** sending representatives this year included: Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Oklahoma. We are hoping that most, if not all, of these states will send a representative to next year's competition.

There were many different seminars held at Mary's (Naturally). If you did not get a chance to attend this year, make plans to attend next year.

Each of the contestants were judged on attitude, fantasy presentation, a personal interview with the panel of judges, and live speech given on-stage. The highest and lowest scores in each category are discarded, and the remained scores are then totaled.

This year is a year to remember. This year's winner ended-up in a tie between the two contestants. Both of the titleholders will be attending events throughout the next year promoting the Ms. Gulf Coast Leather competition.

Make sure that you attend and support the Ms. Gulf Coast Leather winners during throughout this next year. We will be there to lend our support and would like to see you too. Till then, have fun and play safe.

## Night In Black Leather

by Peter Winfree

Don Gill Productions held its 3rd annual *Night In Black Leather* at Venture-N in Houston, TX on Saturday, March 1st.

In 1994, the host committee of Houston's Soiree Aubergine, an annual series of events which raises funds for different charities and organizations, asked Don Gill, Mr. Prime Choice 1994, to organize and produce a show that would serve as an outreach from their organization to Houston's leather/Levi community. (**Editor's Note:** Mr. Prime Choice is a contest for men over 40. Mr. Prime Choice is owned and sponsored by Ripcord

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in Houston, TX.) Don was both honored and excited by being given the opportunity to put together an event of this kind. The result we now know as *Night In Black Leather*.

The objective of *Night In Black Leather* was to bring together all



Regina Dane (l) during her performance at *Night In Black Leather* held at Venture-N.





# Our Life

## A Memorial to the Late Walter Carter

There are many people who knew you in this life...  
and a few of us who loved you.

It hurts not to see you.

It hurts not to hear you.

It hurts not to touch you.

It hurts to lose you.

But we are comforted knowing...  
that you have passed onto a new life.

I know the day will come,  
that I will hear you again.

I know the day will come,  
that I will touch you again.

I know the day will come,  
that I will never lose you again.



Until we meet in our new life...  
I will miss you.  
I will love you.  
I will wait for you.

Richard De Wayne Strickland


Written February 28, 1997



# Leather Alternatives April 1997

		1 	2	3 Dallas Bears - Texas Bears RoundUp	4	5 Ripcord - PrimeChoice
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20 Int'l Ms. Leather	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



segments of our community - leather, Levi, uniform, western, drag, etc. - for a common purpose. That purpose is raising money for people in need. To achieve this goal, Don assembled a cast of leathermen, leatherwomen, female impersonators, and live vocalists. Performances have included leather fantasies from well-known titleholders Mark Frazier, J.D. Buchert, David Walker, and many others. A leather fashion show was added to insure that this event



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included something for everyone. Needless to say, it was a success.

The 2nd annual *Night In Black Leather* benefited the *Lady Victoria Lust PWA Holiday Fund*, which at that time was sheltered by the Colt 45's. The show's home location, Venture-N (Houston), was once more packed with people ready to give their money to a worthy cause and have a good time. It was during this year's (1996) event that Don presented two awards. They were the "Helping Hand Award," which went to Don's longtime friend and emcee, Larry Arbo, and the "Producer's Award," which went presented to the show's entertainment director, Regina Dane.

Don believes that unity is the crucial factor in our battle against AIDS. In addition to *Night In Black Leather*, Don has taken his dream on the road. In August 1995, he assembled a group one again and took them to Dallas to raise money for the AIDS Resource Center's Food Pantry.

The 3rd annual *Night In Black Leather* was held once again at Venture-N this year to benefit the Colt 45's Inc., a 501(c)(3) charity. Master of Ceremonies at this year's event included: Larry Arbo, Mr. Gulf Coast Drummer 1990; and John Benavides, Mr. Gulf Coast Drummer 1995.

This year's *Night In Black Leather* raised a total over \$5900. There were many different contributors to this year's fund,

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including **Leather Alternatives**. This brings the total raised to-date by *Night In Black Leather* over \$16,900 since its beginning.

If you are an international or regional titleholder and would like to participate in next year's events, please contact Don Gill Productions for further information at:

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**Leather Alternatives 13**



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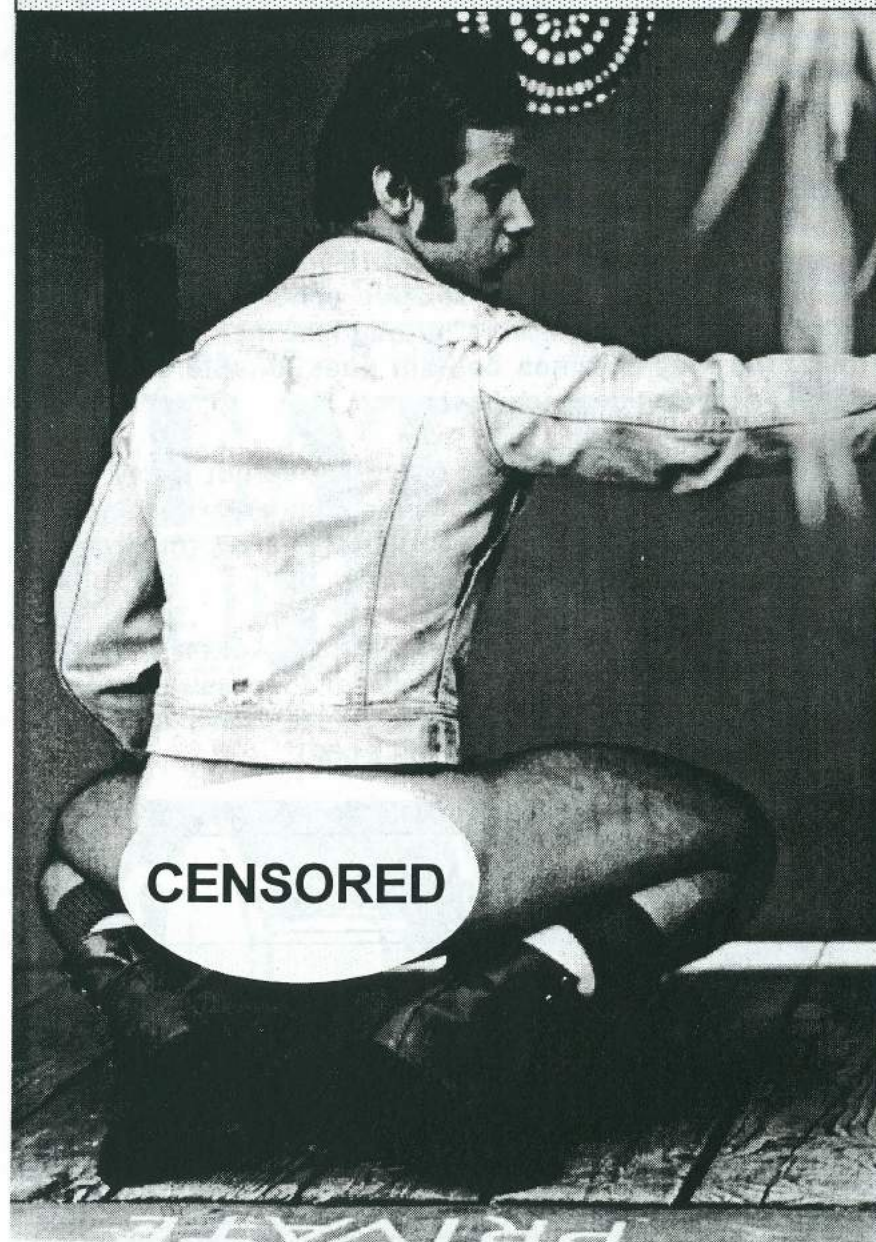
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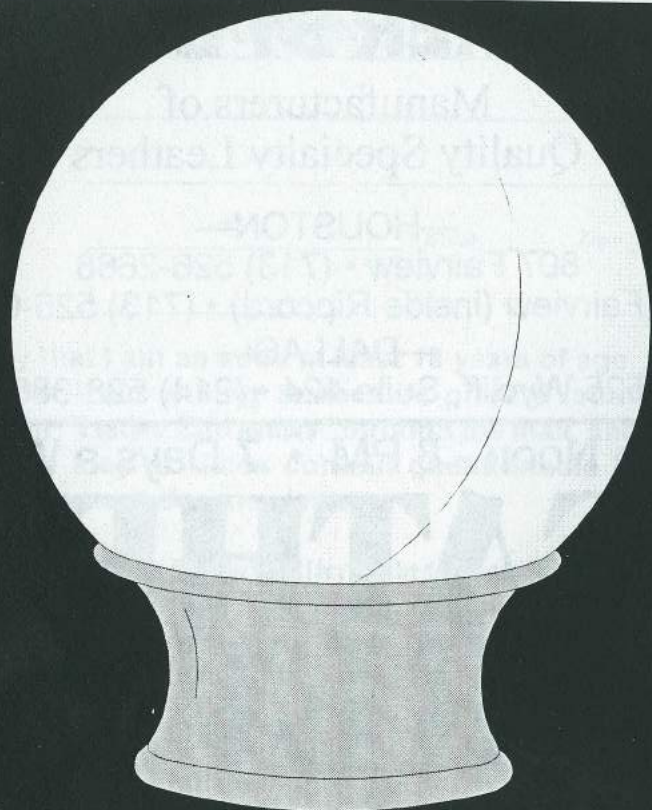
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