

Published for the Houston Gay and Lesbian Community by AD Enterprises

Vote Saturday in school and municipal election

City Council spot, City Charter amendment proposal, a vote on an initiative petition and various school district positions on ballot

On Saturday, January 18, 1997, the polls will again be open to consider the voter's choices on a City councilman, tax reform, minimum wages, along with smaller school districts electing board members and area cities bond and tax problem.

Houston City Councilman

The following candidates are running for the Position 4 at-large seat on the Houston City Council that was left vacant with the resignation of John Peavy, Jr. There is only a year left in his term.

—**Chris Bell** - Native of Abilene, Texas and is an attorney (partner) in a law firm. Mr. Bell is 37 years old and is married with one child.

—**Florida "Flo" Cooper** - Native of Beaumont, Texas and is a business accountant consultant. Mrs. Cooper is 48 years old and is widowed with one daughter.

—**James W.E. Dixon** - Native of Houston, Texas and is pastor of a Baptist church. Mr. Dixon is 34 years old and is unmarried.

—**Sam "Texas" Fayad** - Native of West Africa and is a social worker, political consultant and lobbyist. Mr. Fayad is 38 years old and is unmarried.

—**John Fonteno, Jr.** - Native of Galveston, Texas and is a real estate appraiser. Mr. Fonteno is 70 years old and is widowed with two children.

—**Michael "Griff" Griffin** - Native of Boston, Massachusetts and is a businessman. Mr. Griffin is 55 years old and is divorced with two children.

—**Ray Hill** - Native of Houston, Texas and is a broadcaster and community activist. Mr. Hill is 56 years old and is unmarried.

—**W. Delano Jenkins** - Native of Trinity, Texas and is a real estate broker. Mr. Jenkins is 60 years old and is unmarried.

—**Karen Kay Kristopher** - Native of Wabash, Indiana and is a businesswoman. Mrs. Kristopher is 50 years old and is divorced with two children.

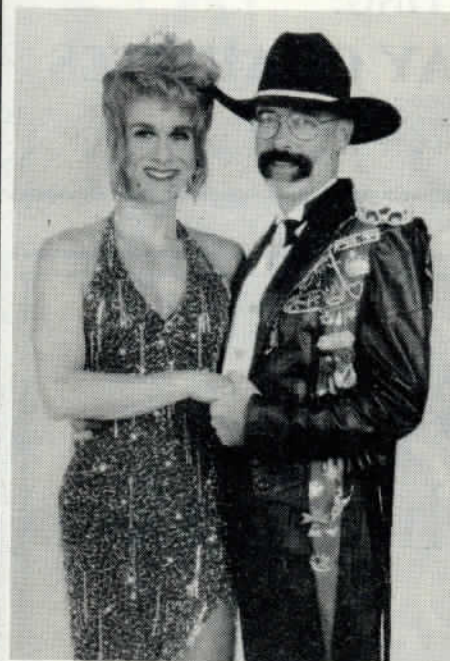
—**Dana LeJune** - Native of Beaumont, Texas and is a lawyer. Mr. LeJune is 40 years old and is married with two children.

—**Dionne Roberts** - Native of Denver, Colorado and is a student and activist. Ms. Roberts is 24 years old and is unmarried.

Please see Election on page 3

RSICSS 'Coronation XIII' part of gala weekend celebration

By Barry Larson
Co-publisher



Outgoing monarchs Empress XII Ruby Stone and Emperor XII Jim Halbert

On Saturday, January 18, 1997, The Royal, Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star of Houston will hold its 13th annual Coronation. This is the gala function of the organization in which the reigning monarchs celebrate the end of their year in office and the new monarchs are announced.

This year's gala will take place at the Stouffer Renaissance Houston Hotel beginning at seven o'clock in the evening. Tickets are \$25 and may be purchased at the doors to the ballroom that open at 6:00 p.m.

This year's Coronation theme is Winter Fantasy Ball. Festivities for the event include command performances chosen by their majesties, awards ceremonies, production numbers performed by local businesses and organizations, presentation of visiting courts as well as other organizations and clubs. The evening will climax with the final walks of Emperor XII Jim Halbert and Empress XII Ruby Stone and the crowning of the newly elected monarchs.

The court system emerged in San Francisco in 1965 as strictly 'camp' in nature, under the direction of its founder Empress I, Jose the Widow Norton. Each year at Thanksgiving, Jose I would prepare a Thanksgiving meal for the homeless. After time, Jose I gathered assistants to help and this became the first court.

Today, The Imperial Court is an international, non-profit, community service oriented organization.

The Royal, Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star Houston, Inc. (RSICSS) has been in existence since

1983. It began as the Imperial Court of the Single Star (ICSS) by founder Laura Lee Love, Empress I and II. It was later re-registered with the Secretary of State's office as RSICSS.

There are courts throughout the United States and Canada including Alaska and Hawaii. In Texas, there are courts in Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio and Waco, which constitute the United Courts of Texas. Each court is a self-governed organization in its own right and inclined to follow those traditions established by the founding courts; however, they are not bound by rules and regulations as required by national associations.

The Houston court has an outstanding record of community service work and financial contributions. Aside from direct contributions, the Court also returns money to the community that is derived from Coronation. In recent years, each reign has raised in excess of \$20,000 that has been returned to the community. This year's beneficiary is the Colt 45's.

The Court could be compared to the Shriners, Elks or Masons of the heterosexual community. These organizations also give themselves titles, pomp and circumstance and raise money to distribute to those in need in their communities. That is why 'camp' fun and work are the key words in RSICSS organization.

They take their community endeavors as very serious responsibilities. The 'camp' fun is intended to relieve the stress of those responsibilities. The court finds joy in knowing that they are attempting in a meager way to provide care and assistance to those in need.

RSICSS Coronation events begin on Thursday, January 16, with their in-town show scheduled for 9:00 p.m. at Chances. This show features Houston's court members and gives them the opportunity to perform for their guests.

On Friday, January 17, coronation weekend continues with an out-of-town show at the hotel beginning at 7:00 p.m. This show features the talents of out of town monarchs.

The show will end by 10:00 p.m. at which time two buses load up and hit the streets for a bar run. Saturday, January 18, is Coronation.

The gala weekend ends with a victory brunch Sunday, January 19, in the hotel at 11:00 a.m. and the victory show at Chances beginning at 9:00 p.m.

Ric Nelson to perform at Coronation XIII

By Barry Larson
Co-publisher

Ric Nelson, of the Turtle Creek Chorale in Dallas Texas, will be performing at RSICSS Coronation XIII on Saturday night, January 18, in the Stouffer Renaissance Houston Hotel.

Ric is originally from Miami and majored in piano and voice performance while attending college.

After college he traveled with the band Foxy, touring with the Jackson 5 and Sister Sledge.

In 1979 he recorded his first single 'I Don't hear the Music,' a very Latin disco song.

From 1980 until 1982 Ric worked with record producer Joe Beard, under a small label called JBP Records. He recorded and released an old ballad called 'Traces' and a dance version of 'For All We Know,' by Karen Carpenter.

After the album 'Traces' was released he and Joe went their separate ways. 'Traces' reached in the top 10 on the dance charts.

Ric moved to Dallas in 1987 and joined the Turtle Creek Chorale in 1991.

With the help of Gloria Estefan and her manager Frank, Ric recorded and released the music video 'Come with Me' in August of 1996 and the CD single in September. He made an agreement with the production company to give all the profits of the CD in Dallas and Fort Worth to the TCC AIDS Fund.

In October of 1996 Ric started on the project Yummy. This project is taking the 1966 hit Yummy, yummy, yummy, I got love in my tummy and making a dance version of it.

'Yummy' will be released on South Beach Records the first week of February, with the video to follow about a week later.

Also in the works is a ballad called 'Make Believe its Your First Time,' a country, two stepping style song and a techno dance song called 'HIV From You to Me.' It is a very uplifting song of hope.

Ric Nelson is an openly gay performer living in Dallas, Texas and recording under the production company South Beach Records. His videos and CD's can be seen and heard at the Dallas club Moby Dick.

RSICSS BUS TOUR • JAN. 17

Buses leave Souffer Renaissance Houston Hotel promptly at 10:00 p.m. for the following locations:

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Upfront With The Community

by

SEAN CARTER

Mr. Gay Houston All-American 1997

The other day I was speaking to a friend of mine, Richard Bang (a.k.a. Regina Dane, Miss Gay Houston USofA At-Large). We were talking about pageants and contests, and he brought up a point that I agreed with whole-heartedly.

He told me that in his interviews, he always replies the same when asked, "Why do you want to be Miss...?" His answer is always along the lines of wanting to "change the image of titleholders."

As Richard said, "Many people see us as being in it for the money or for the crown, and they don't see us as helping the community or really joining in the fight against AIDS or HIV."

Yes, it's true that some people enter pageants and contests because performing or female impersonation is their career choice, but many of us do it as a hobby. I studied voice at Louisiana State University, and I'm sure the last thing my opera professor planned on me doing was singing country western music in a gay bar.

The first show that I performed in 1993 was a fundraiser in Baton Rouge, and since then I haven't stopped. I have entered the contest scene, because I view it as a position to channel my efforts toward fundraising and benefiting the people in our community who need it. That is why I decided that I could use this column to help educate our community about the many groups we have out there working for us.

We have heard about the Court elections that recently occurred. This weekend we will find out whom the community has chosen to fill these honored positions. It's been a hectic campaign. Many times over the past three months, people have asked me, "What is the Court?"

When I perform at different fundraisers and benefits, I'm asked the same question about the various organizations or groups being funded. This week I have chosen to highlight a group that will be in full swing over the next two months, Soiree Aubergine.

Founder Barry Petree, Ph.D., told me about the group's history. "It basically started as a joke. In October of 1991, a group of us was sitting at the corner of the bar at Gentry on a Sunday afternoon joking about the Gray Party and White Party.

Somebody said we needed a 'purple party.' Since earlier the conversation was about *Steel Magnolias*, we decided on Soiree Aubergine. Well, we were too good at our own game, because people started asking when our first event was going to be, and how they could help."

Barry told me that their first decision was the beneficiary. After gathering information on different groups,

they found that (at the time) no group was doing anything for the Bering Community Service Foundation.

Because of their quality of service, and their overall reputation, Bering was chosen as Soiree's beneficiary. As Barry said, "90% of our initial success was because no group in particular was helping Bering. Everybody was ready to contribute."

The second decision was that the host committee fees of \$50 would be used to underwrite all fundraising expenses, so that 100% of every dollar raised would go to Bering. "We never intended to do this more than once," said Barry, "but our initial goal was \$3,000.

A month later we raised \$5,000; we then raised it to \$10,000, and finished the fundraiser with over \$14,000. So we had no choice but to continue."

Since then, in five years of Soiree, then have raised over \$159,000 for the Bering Community Service Foundation, primarily funding the Meals Program. As Barry continues to say of Soiree's central theme, "Never underestimate the power of cheap vodka!"

Chairman Rusty Mueller told me about Soiree VI, "This year's theme is 'The Maiden Voyage of the S.S. Aubergine' and we have a lot of annual activities with a few new names and additions."

The first major function on the calendar is Super Bowl Sunday. As Rusty stated, "January 26th, the S.S. Aubergine docks in New Orleans for the Super Bowl." The festivities will be held at Gentry, 2303 Richmond.

Barbecue plates will be sold for \$5.00, and gaming will be held, including Black Jack, Roulette and a 'Gem Dig.' A sand pit will be on hand for sifting, as anyone wishing to donate to the cause will be given a shovel to search for hidden jewels.

The activities will last from 4:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. and of course the game will be on television in the bar. At 9:00 p.m. that evening, Mr. Gentry, Xavier Luna, and Miss Gentry, Shelby St. John, will be hosting "A Bermuda Triangle Revue," a show benefiting Soiree Aubergine.

Also at Gentry, February 1st is "Divas of the Delta Queen." Rusty explained that, "This was formerly known as 'Creme de la Creme,' but we changed the name to follow our nautical theme." This show will feature title holders and representatives of bars and organizations, including Garden Party, the Colt 45's, TGRA and many more.

February 21st is the "Eveready Show — The Show that keeps going and going..." This show will start at 8:00 p.m. at the Venture-N and the same show will start every half hour at another bar. Yes, the same show

Please see **Upfront** on page 3

Election

Continued from page 1

—**Herschel C. Smith** - Native of Hempstead, Texas and is a minister. Mr. Roberts is 37 years old and is married with six children.

—**Bruce K. Tatro** - Native of Malone, New York and is a computer systems developer. Mr. Tatro is 37 years old and is unmarried.

—**Dave Thomas** - Native of Lake Charles, Louisiana and is a tax preparer. Mr. Thomas is 43 years old and is unmarried.

—**Dave Wilson** - Native of Springfield, Illinois and is a businessman. Mr. Wilson is 50 years old and is married with three children.

—**George A. Young** - Native of Frankfurt, Germany and is an attorney. Mr. Young is 45 years old and is married with two children.

Half of the candidates (Bell, Fayad, Hill, LeJune, Kristopher, Smith, Wilson and Young) are in favor of the tax reform measure.

Cooper is the only candidate that totally supports the minimum wage issue.

Ray Hill is a founding member of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus. He is a member of the Houston Lesbian and Gay Pride Week, AIDS Foundation and a long-time host of KPFT Wilde-N-Stein Show and The Prison Show. This is his third try for a position on the Houston City Council.

The Montrose Area Pride is not recommending anyone in this election. We will look forward to interviewing the runoff candidates to help our readers become more aware of their views.

Minimum wage issue

This initiative petition special election is a proposal that the City of Houston adopt an ordinance establishing a minimum wage in excess of the federal minimum wage for all persons who work and are employed in the City of Houston.

The ordinance would make wages of less than \$6.50 per hour a class C misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more \$200 per day per employee paid wages in violation of the ordinance.

The Montrose Area Pride recommends a negative vote on this proposal. It would require a massive force to enforce, would tend to be a major source of inflation and would effectively force small business to rethink wages for all of their employees.

Tax reform Charter Amendment

This amendment effectively will force a citywide election everytime City Council needs to increase any type of taxes or fee schedules in excess of the percentage increase of the Consumer Price Index.

Half of the candidates are flatly against the proposal because taxation has been left to the legislative branch of government by the Constitution. The taxpayers control taxation by the people they elect.

The Montrose Area Pride recommends a negative vote on this amendment. Elections are very costly and it would require numerous trips to the polls to vote for even the smallest fee schedule or minor tax rate change. This role should be left with the City Councilmen.

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Upfront

Continued from page 2

and the same performers will also be featured at the BRB, Ripcord, Chances, Rascal's, E/J's, and Gentry all in one night!

March 1st through March 7th is "Treasures of Atlantis," Soiree's Silent Auction, at Gentry. March 7th at 6:00 p.m. is the Admiral's Reception and Buffet, and at midnight the Silent Auction will close.

Finally on March 9th at BRB, is the H.M.S. Queen Mary Cotillion. Beginning at 5:00 p.m., the Cotillion will be the closing of Soiree VI. There will be a live band and the raffle drawing will be held. This year's raffle prize is a trip for two to Paris, including airfare, hotel, ground transportation and taxes.

Raffle tickets for the trip to Paris

cost \$2.00 each and are available at Gentry, Leather By Boots, Leather Forever, Boudreaux's, Houston Voice or any Soiree host member.

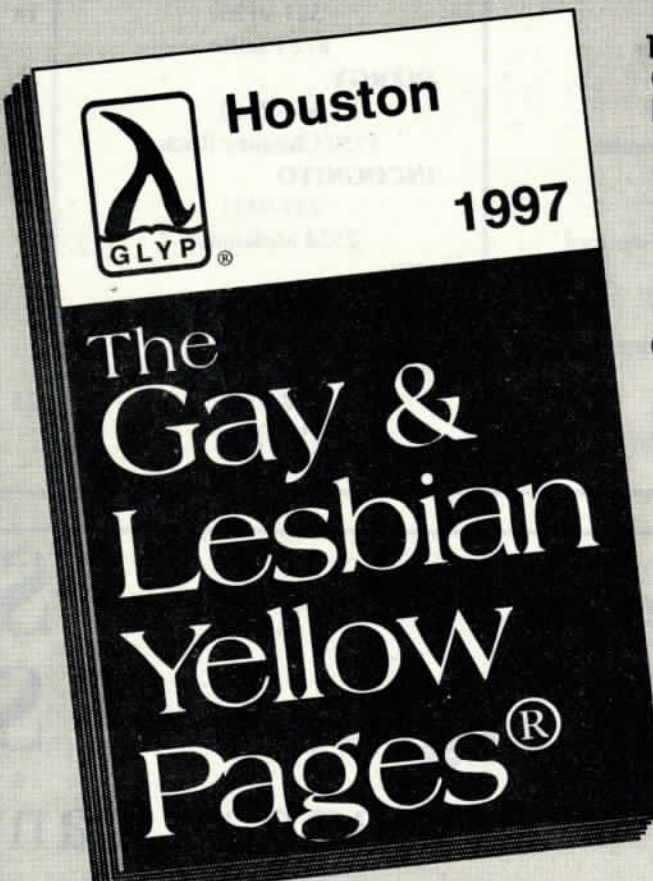
Rusty stated, "The H.M.S. Queen Mary Cotillion is basically our end of the season party. We want everybody to join us in celebrating another successful fundraising season."

Anyone needing more information about Soiree Aubergine or the Bering Community Service Foundation may leave their name and address with the Montrose Area Pride (THE MAP) and the responsible organization will be asked to send you the information.

This is just one group out of many in our community that is working to help our brothers and sisters who need it. Next week, we will find out about the new reign of the Royal, Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star of Houston, Incorporated and what is in store for the next year.

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Saturday, January 18th • 9:00 PM
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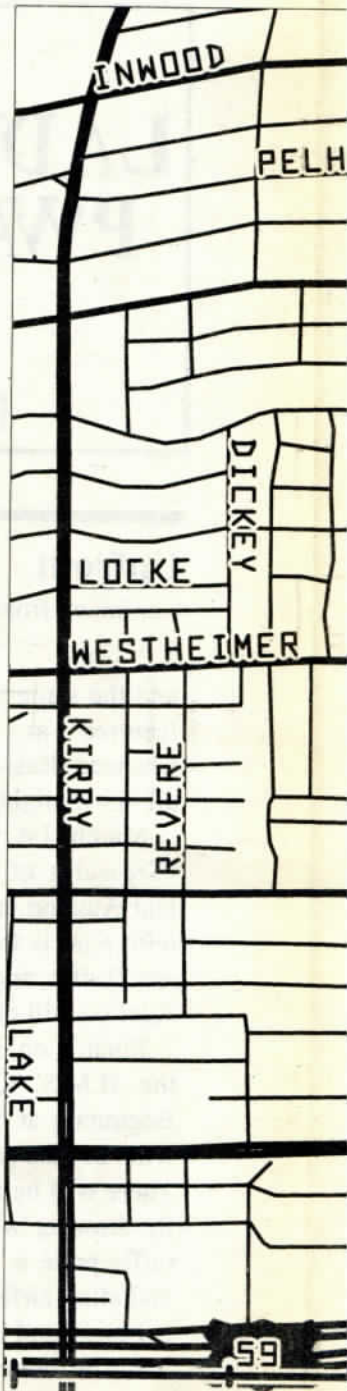
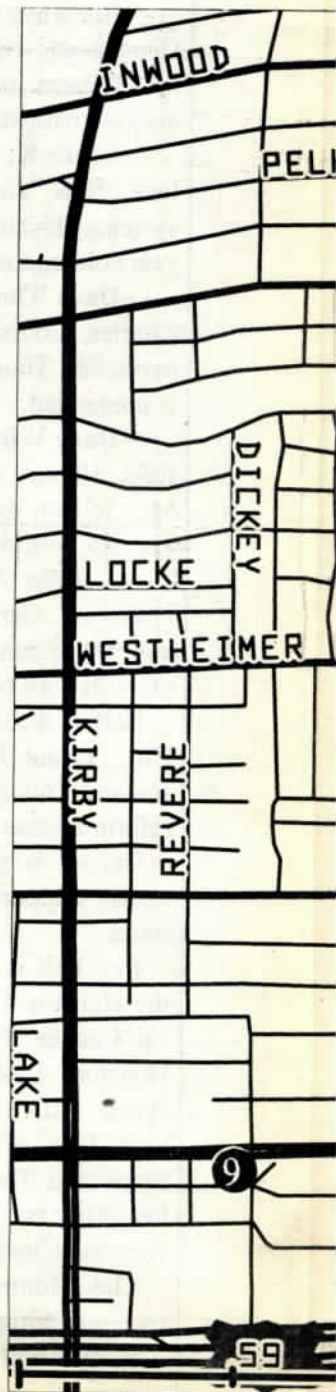
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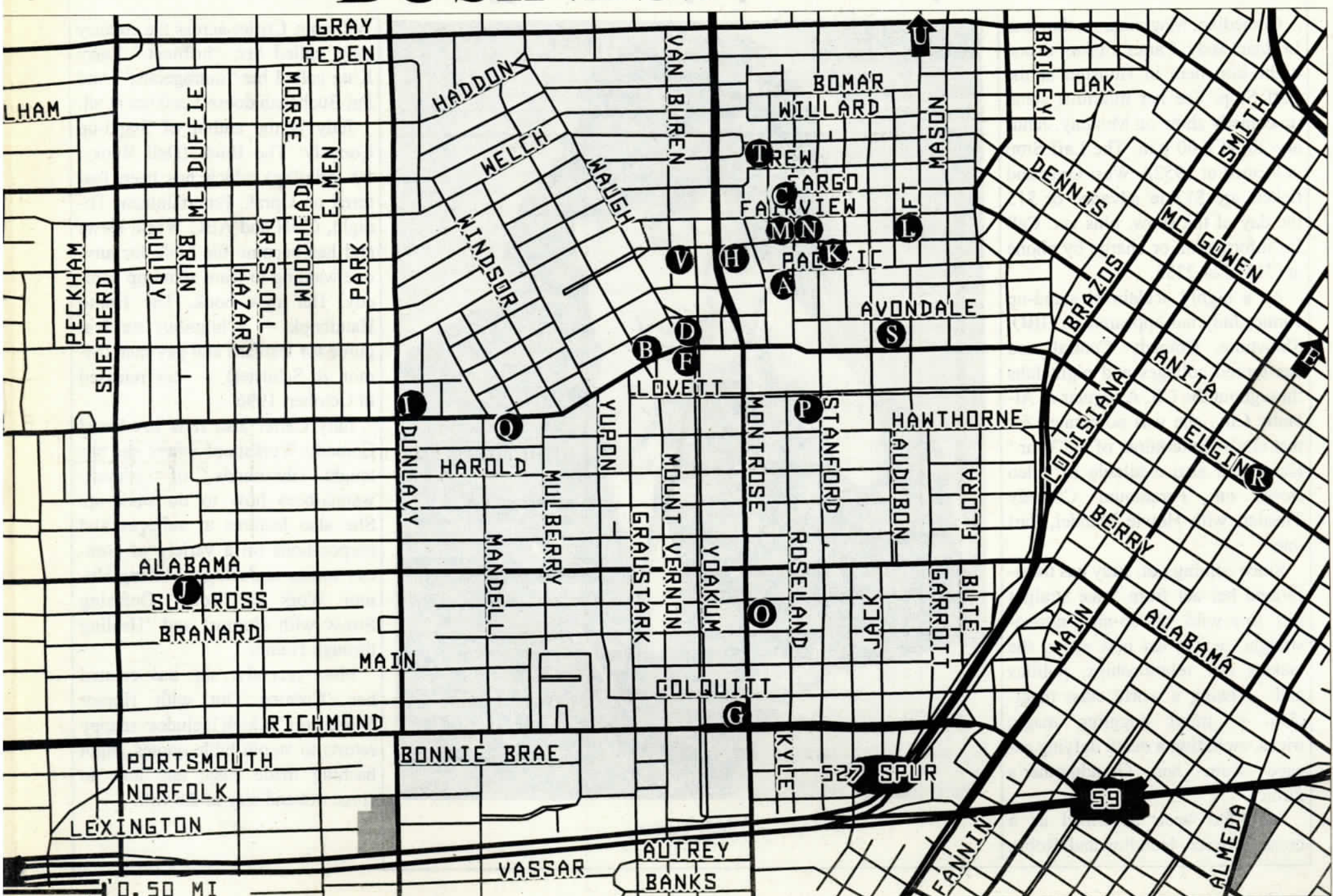
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As a highly acclaimed stand-up comic, Judy has appeared on HBO, Showtime, Comedy Central and has toured colleges and nightclubs throughout the US. A regular in Atlantic City, she was nominated for that city's 'Entertainer of the Year.' Her act is also available in video stores on 'Paramount Comedy Theater, with Howie Mandel, Part one.'

Since coming out, Judy has transformed her act from 'nice straight girl' to a wild 'not-so-nice, not-so-straight' act. In her new show, she tackles gay relationships, politics and — being a world class magician — mind boggling magic tricks, including a death defying escape from her Grandmother's girdle.

Judy has been described as a cross between Houdini and Robin



Judy Carter

Williams. Critics across the country have called her, "brilliant." Larry King called her "outrageous!" And Pat Buchanan doesn't call her at all.

Judy is the author of Stand-up Comedy: The Book (Dell Books, 5th printing) which has been featured on Oprah, Entertainment Tonight, CNN and ABC World News and has become the bible for anyone wanting to learn stand-up comedy. Her new book, The Homo Handbook — a hilarious survival guide for lesbians and gay men (Simon & Schuster) — was released in October, 1996.

Judy Carter also runs LA based Comedy Workshops where she has taught thousands of comedy wanna-bees how to do stand-up. She also lectures at colleges and corporations on a variety of comedy topics including: 'Making Humor Work for You,' 'Defusing Stress with Humor' and 'Healing through Humor.'

Most recently, she has created her 'Coming Out with Humor Workshop,' which includes: snappy retorts to stupid bible quotes, bigot bashing made easy; and how to come out and stay in the will.

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