

HeatStroke

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You've got Male

How did America Online become the bathhouse of the Internet? Size matters.

By Michael Alvear, Contributor

Men and women alike are using America Online to pick up, peel off and put out with a kind of glee unseen since the summer of love. But for heterosexuals, AOL is merely a swinger's lounge. For gay men, it's more like a 1970s bathhouse.

"I can have dick delivered to my door faster than a pizza," says Steve, an Atlanta P.R. executive who cruises for men in America Online's chat rooms. (Like many of the men in this story, he asked that his real name not be used.) Within minutes of entering one of six AOL chat rooms designated for gay men in Atlanta, he exchanges naked photos with other men—some with their faces cropped out—and arranges a sex date.

What AOL lacks in steam rooms and towel-wrapped men it makes up for in steamy chat and naked pictures zooming across its servers. "GayOL," as many gay men have christened it, is home to hundreds of thousands of men "window-shopping" in the M4M (men for men) chat rooms.

There are, of course, several Web sites devoted specifically to the gay community—like gay.com and Planet Out. But none of these has the reputation among gays that AOL does as the go-to place to get laid.

Why are so many gay men flocking to AOL?

"It offers an easier means to an end," says Paul, a health-care analyst in Atlanta who says he visits AOL's chat rooms nearly every day. "I don't have to get dressed up and go to a bar, drink, get my clothes full of smoke and wonder if anybody's interested."

But avoiding the bar scene is only part of it. At 18 million members, AOL is so big you can find just about everything—or anyone—you're looking for. It turns out size does matter, and AOL has become the de facto online meet market

largely because of its big member base.

"There are a lot of other gay Web sites that have chat rooms, but they came after the fact, after AOL," says Ron, a San Francisco marketing consultant who maintains two AOL accounts—one for cruising and one for everything else. "They have millions of subscribers, which would keep even the most active gay man busy."

The popularity of the gay penis prowl on AOL has more to do with the company's technology than any gay-friendly stance on AOL's part. Instant messaging, for example, allows private conversation in public rooms. And then there's the system's legendary ease of use. "I've tried other sites like Gay.com," says Paul. "It's just not that easy to exchange pictures."

"It offers an easier means to an end. I don't have to get dressed up and go to a bar, drink, get my clothes full of smoke and wonder if anybody's interested."

Nothing beats AOL for the immediacy of naked pictures popping up on your screen almost instantly.

Rory O'Neill, president of Cybersite, which specializes in building online communities, says Paul isn't just imagining AOL's speed and ease of use. "AOL uses a local client software resident on the user's hard drive," he says. "Which makes it more robust than other sites which use HTML or Java. Self-contained systems like AOL's always run better, faster and with fewer problems."

Paul doesn't care about AOL's technol-

ogy but he likes the effect:

"With AOL it's simpler to evaluate the merchandise." AOL's chat rooms are overflowing with gay men most nights of the week. Steve often has trouble getting into the virtual meat markets like AtlantaM4M, AtlantaM4M2 or AtlantaM4Mnow. With a limit of 23 participants each, the six Atlanta rooms are always packed—Steve has to hit the "return" key over and over to get in. "Persistence is the key," he says.

The first thing you notice upon entering a gay chat room is the absence of, well, chat. On repeated visits to different chat rooms, you'll find the public area of discussion silent. The point of being in a gay room is unmistakable: You're there to attract flies—literally. The best way to do

that is with a descriptive screen-name that other chat members can click on to see if you have a fly worth unzipping. AOL forces you to use a maximum of 10 letters in your screen-name, which serves to weed out

the creatively feeble. It's a Darwinian process: If your screen-name doesn't attract the energy for fueling libidos, you starve, sexually.

An effective screen-name—like "Opnwide4me" or "Uinmyass"—leaves little room for second-guessing. Double-click on the member profiles and there's even less confusion. "URABTTM," for example, asserts: "You seek control and domination by aggressive top."

If the chat rooms are too busy, Steve will do a "member search" of men currently online who live in Atlanta and have keywords like "muscular" or "hung" in

their profiles. Straight men tend to put "looking for female" in their profiles, so it's easy to distinguish gay profiles from straight. Then, using the instant message feature, he "IMs" the ones he likes, usually with an innocuous message like "Hey, I like your profile."

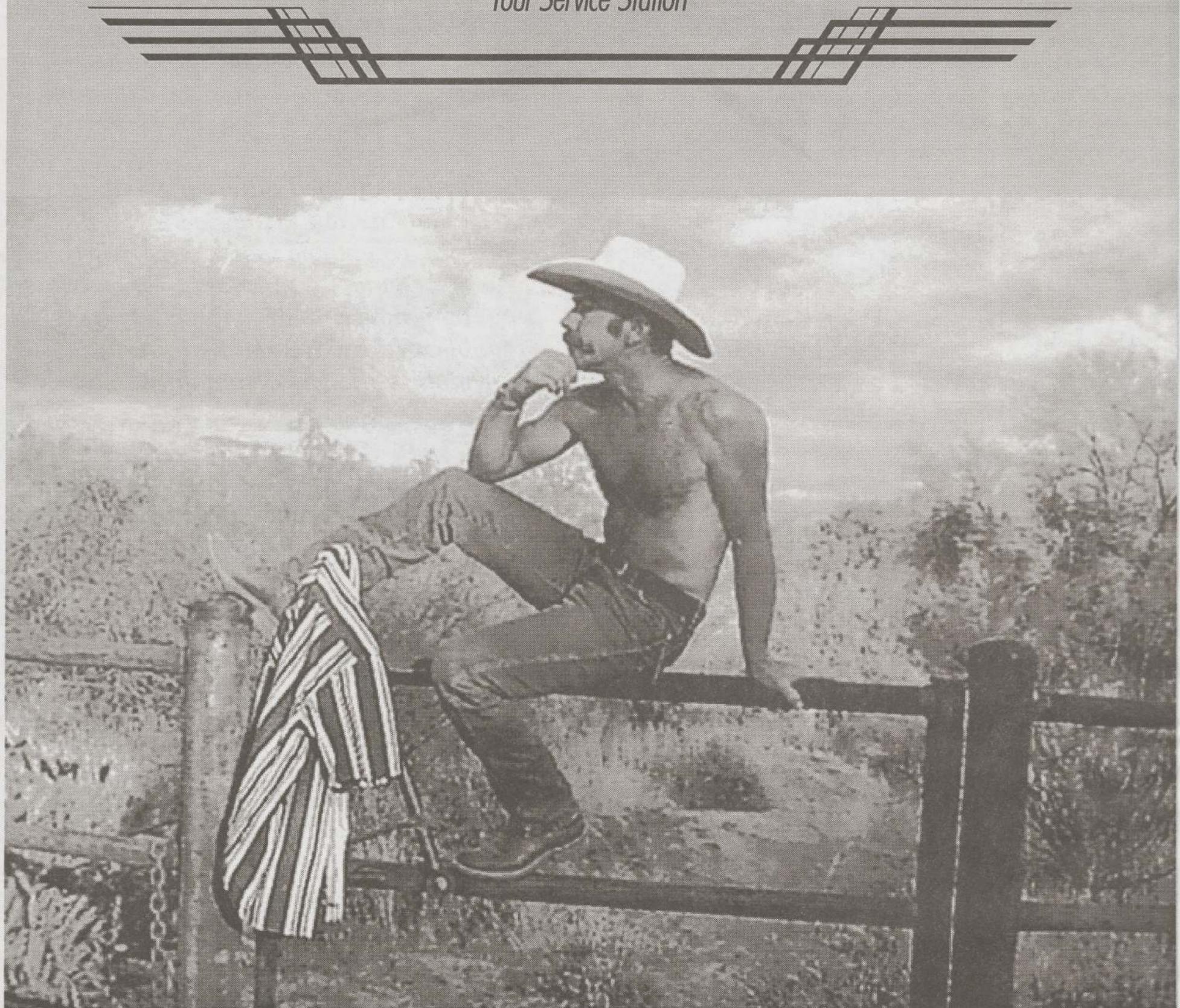
After a flurry of exchanged photos—"I want pictures of faces and bodies. Dicks if I can get them"—Steve arranges a rendezvous. "Your place or mine?" is a refrain reverberating all over AOL's servers. It usually takes Steve 45 minutes from the time he starts his computer till he hears a knock on the door. His record? Five minutes. "I logged on, clicked into a room, exchanged GIFs and bam, I was out the door."

Not everyone is happy when they finally do meet offline. As Tim, an inveterate chat-room user from Long Beach, Calif., says, "You cannot believe how much some of these guys lie. If you use their definition of a swimmer's body, Orca would qualify." Tim was addicted to AOL chat rooms. He'd meet guys on business trips by firing up his laptop and entering the chat rooms of the city he was visiting. But no more—he's living with his lover. Guess where they met?

To understand how the squeaky-clean all-American portal of family friendly fun got turned into trick central you first have to grasp the dramatic impact the Internet is having on any group stigmatized by society. Indeed, the Net is changing the way gay men come out. Tom Rielly, co-founder of PlanetOut (which operates gay

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Horowitz:

Discrimination by any other name

I am fascinated by the story of Dana Rivers, the transgendered Sacramento schoolteacher recently fired by her local school board.

Ms. Rivers has support from past students and many community members. Detractors include a few parents backed by the religious establishment. The school board states that Dana violated board policy when she spoke about her medical condition with her students following her sexual reassignment surgery.

Prior to her firing, Dana—then known as David Warfield—developed an accomplished teaching career including outstanding teaching awards and program development grants.

We'll see news stories and hear debates discussing the school board's decision. I used to say that discrimination against gays and lesbians was the last form of discrimination still deemed acceptable by large segments of society. Yet the discrimination we fight so hard to eliminate remains pervasive within our own community. We ask that society treat us equally, regardless of our sexual orientation. We want the same rights, understanding and respect that everyone else gets.

Our battle for civil rights, however, has routinely excluded people on the fringe of the gay and lesbian community. I find it interesting that we place certain folks on the edge of or outside our community just as we are forced outside the population at large.

I am ashamed that some political activists, including me, have ignored or shunned the potential inclusion of drag queens, leathermen, bisexuals, transsexuals, butch women and effeminate men in our movement. At strategic planning sessions, we often hoped that they wouldn't show up—or that they would at least tone down their appearance for the cameras and news crews.

Our community forgets our own elderly members and dismisses the physically unfit. We idolize wealth and physical beauty. We easily buy into the notion that our best spokespeople are the ones who look like the establishment and who follow most of the rules.

I have assisted in the deification of Rep. Steve May for his efforts to end discrimination in the Arizona legislature and in the armed forces. Steve's national acclaim comes not only from the fact that he is a gay man who has been discriminated against, but that he is a white, conservative, generally law-abiding, religiously-conscious and quite attractive young man who votes the same way arch-conservative Rep. Karen Johnson does 70 percent of the time. I have the highest regard for Steve and his work and have said so in this column, but I think Karen Johnson is wrong more than 70 percent of the time.

In the 2000 presidential race, Steve and most other Log Cabin Republicans already endorse John

McCain. Among Republicans, McCain is one of the least offensive. He doesn't outwardly attack gay people, and he has supported Steve and U.S. Congressman Jim Kolbe as openly gay elected officials.

But McCain's voting record on gay issues has been horrific. He may believe in equal rights for all, but he certainly doesn't vote that way in the United States Senate.

Clearly, we have established different standards for Democrats and Republicans when it comes to acceptable behavior on our issues. A Democrat must fight for

We have established different standards for Democrats and Republicans when it comes to acceptable behavior on our issues. A Democrat must fight for us without compromise at all times, while a Republican is lauded simply for refusing to demonize the gay community.

us without compromise at all times, while a Republican is lauded simply for refusing to demonize the gay community.

Both Al Gore and Bill Bradley stand head and shoulders (and torso and legs) above the best Republican candidates. Democrats don't have the philosophical luxury of excluding those who aren't as pretty—or who are too pretty—from the list of those deserving equality. Dana Rivers doesn't get the widespread support that Steve May does because she looks different to society and to the gay community.

When Steve May has equal rights, Steve May will have equal rights. When Dana Rivers has equal rights, maybe we all will.

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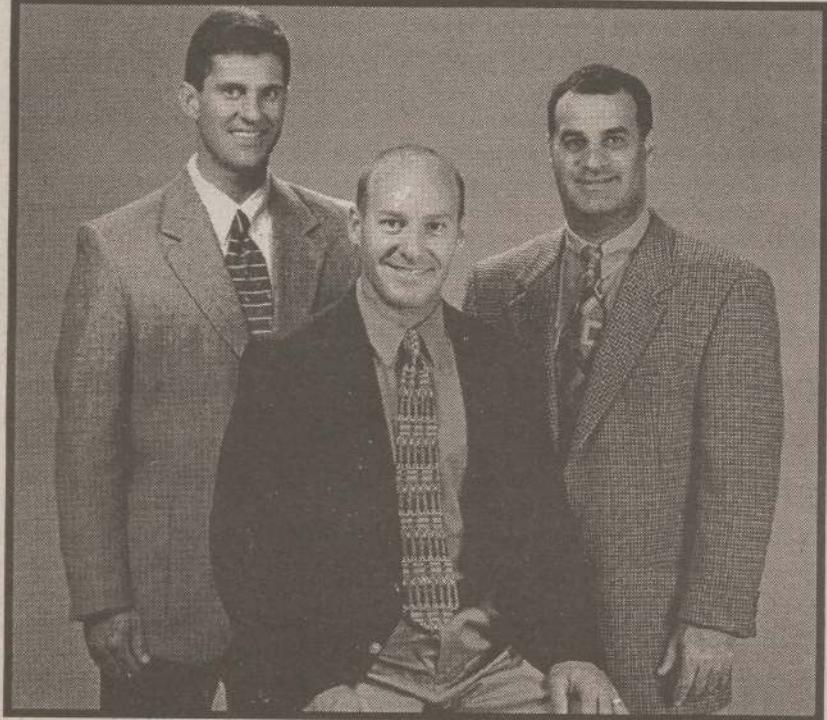
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Deb Price

Congressional, White House wins offer high stakes for gay electorate



With the 2000 elections just one year away, Republican presidential front-runner George W. Bush's strength in early polls makes the stakes over which party controls Congress even higher for gay Americans.

That's because most of our gains at the national level have come about through Bill Clinton. As president, he has used his executive power to appoint the nation's first gay ambassador, for example, and to ban anti-gay job bias in the federal workforce, despite howls of protest from anti-gay Republicans whose party has controlled both houses of Congress since the 1994 election.

Without an ally in the White House, our political prospects at the national level would be grim. Continued advances would be virtually impossible unless the Democrats retook at least one house of Congress. Fortunately, Democrats have an excellent chance of regaining control of the House and a long shot—but not impossible—chance of retaking the Senate.

A shift to Democratic control in either chamber would for the first time put into power a majority leader dedicated to pushing ahead a positive gay-rights legislative agenda. Both House Democratic leader Richard Gephardt and Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle say they would work to pass legislation outlawing anti-gay job bias nationwide.

The very real prospect of Gephardt becoming House speaker holds out the promise of a history-making break away from today's Congress, where gay allies—most of them Democrats—largely play defense against Republican-sponsored anti-gay amendments.

"Democrats in the House of Representatives eagerly await the moment when we can get that (speaker's) gavel back and begin to play offense," Gephardt boomed at a recent fund-raiser where a California gay group raised \$850,000 to help Democrats take back the House.

In his spirited Oct. 2 speech, Gephardt promised to launch a gay-supportive legislative agenda if he's made House speaker, including an all-out effort to pass the bill banning anti-gay job bias.

That bill—known as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, or ENDA—lost by only one vote in the GOP-controlled Senate in 1996. If the House were to pass it, it would be the biggest legislative milestone of the gay-rights movement.

Even if it couldn't then get through the Senate, or did and was vetoed by a Republican president, ENDA would have gotten the boost it needs to become law in the near future.

That possibility of dramatic change from today's House is precisely why the California gay group ANGLE hosted what turned out to be the most successful fund-raiser ever for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, which works to elect House Democrats.

"We felt our single most important goal was to raise money for the House," explains Bill Melamede, co-chair of ANGLE's event. "We felt that if you take

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the House back to a Democratic majority, you wouldn't have bills even getting to the floor that are hate-filled and divisive."

One year out, here's how Democrats' chances look:

- House: The House is a toss-up. Republicans now reign with just a five-seat majority. Since it's so hard to knock off incumbents, the Democrats' best shot at taking over is with "open" seats, where incumbents aren't running. Democrats have an advantage, with only five open seats, so far, to defend—versus the Republicans' 16. "That's really going to be the battleground," says Amy Walter of the nonpartisan Cook Political Report.

- Senate: Republicans hold a 55-45 majority. Democrats need to pick up five seats if they keep the White House or six seats otherwise. Of the 33 seats up in 2000, Republicans must defend 19 compared with 14 for Democrats. But Jennifer Duffy of the Cook Report calls it "highly improbable" that the Democrats can take the Senate because few seats are expected to be competitive.

Gay Americans have never had more riding on the outcome of congressional races.

Deb Price of the *Detroit News*' Washington bureau writes this gay-issues column. Write to her in care of *HeatStroke*, or at GNS Features, 1000 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22229-0001.



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Deb Price**Log Cabin's spiritual leader isn't afraid of a fight**

Rich Tafel, an ordained American Baptist minister, faithfully tries to shepherd a flock that he believes has wandered far astray from justice—the Republican Party. As executive director of the gay Log Cabin Republicans, Tafel continually pushes his party to get back on a righteous path by treating gay Americans fairly.

"I do look at my work right now as, in a sense, a ministry and a very challenging one because I believe in a very active faith where you've got to be in the trenches," says Tafel, the Log Cabin's spiritual rudder.

The devoutly Republican Tafel is best known as the most public face of the Log Cabin, as the gay man who in 1995 scolded GOP presidential front-runner Bob Dole for returning a Log Cabin contribution. Tafel makes no show of his religious credentials. He doesn't ask to be called the Rev. Tafel when going head-to-head with some televangelist on *Larry King Live*. He doesn't cite his degree from Harvard Divinity School when quoting Scripture to Jerry Falwell.

Yet faith undergirds Tafel's actions, he says. He leads a weekly Bible study class at his home. He spends his Saturdays cutting the grass at a tiny Washington, D.C., Protestant church, part of the Swedenborgian denomination to which his parents and minister grandfather belonged. He regularly attends services there and recently preached on angels.

"I have a strong belief in guardian angels," explains Tafel, 37, author of *Party Crashers*. "I believe my life is guided."

Tafel isn't looking for an overnight miracle. He and the Log Cabin are seeking progress, not perfection, in the Republican Party's attitudes toward gay

Americans. And, despite still being ostracized by the most narrow-minded elements of both their party and the gay community, they are seeing progress. The

two most credible Republican presidential candidates—George W. Bush and John McCain—are steering away from hard-edged anti-gay rhetoric that has cost their party dearly in past elections.

The immediate challenge for the Log Cabin is not to yield to the temptation to read too much into a tone change, not to climb aboard anyone's bandwagon. Tafel is



Gay Republican Rich Tafel

If the Republicans do recapture the White House, Democratic-leaning gay groups will likely lose their newfound places at the table. The Log Cabin would be the only gay group with any real chance of being seated.

keenly aware of the need for the Log Cabin to remain vigilant, guard its integrity and keep its distance at this stage of the campaign. He is convinced that the Log Cabin's gains thus far are largely due to its integrity.

Especially with gay marriage, domestic partner protections and hate crimes legislation becoming high-profile campaign issues, the Log Cabin must not compromise its ability to be a stern critic of any candidate who tries to score points at the expense of gay Americans.

If the Republicans do recapture the

White House, Democratic-leaning gay groups will likely lose their newfound places at the table. The Log Cabin would be the only gay group with any real chance of being seated—a reality that makes it all the more important that it not reduce itself from a truth squad to a

cheerleading squad. (For information, contact: www.lcr.org)

The Republican Party is still in the midst of what Tafel calls a "civil war" over gay rights. Gay Americans' most relentless foes usually claim to have morality on their side. But Tafel wants his party to understand that "the gay movement, by its very nature, is a moral movement. It's people who have decided that honesty is important, who say, 'I might lose my job, my family might not speak to me, but I've got to be honest about who I am.'"

Ensuring the rights of honest, open, gay people to serve in the military and to adopt children are top Log

Cabin priorities, Tafel says. He wants to talk to GOP contenders about a host of gay issues. And he expects his group will decide at its August conference, immediately after the GOP convention, whether to endorse the party's nominee.

Regardless of who wins the nomination or the White House, Tafel expects to remain an outsider. His calling is to challenge injustice wherever he sees it. To him, that's an article of faith.

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Ammiano expected to force SF mayoral runoff

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—An 11th-hour write-in campaign and a crowd of challengers may force political powerhouse Willie Brown to defend his mayoralty in a runoff election.

Pundits once gave Brown a good chance of winning the majority he needs in the Nov. 2 election to become the first incumbent returned to the San Francisco post in 16 years.

But the late entry of Board of Supervisors President Tom Ammiano is likely to siphon off enough of Brown's support to require a Dec. 14 runoff between the top two finishers.

"It's a 99 percent chance that Mayor Brown is going to have to face a runoff," said Richard DeLeon, chairman of the political science department at San Francisco State University. "The odds are it will be against (former Mayor) Frank Jordan, but it could be Ammiano."

Ammiano said he got into the race on Oct. 13 because he felt a sense of "despair that was palpable" among the city's voters.

"Potentially, (his entry) could be huge, in the sense that there seems to be an enthusiasm for somebody other than the three major candidates and he comes in as somebody who's not marred by criticism from the debates or TV ads," said Bruce Cain, director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

Ammiano, who is gay, draws support from the city's large and politically active gay community, and also has many non-gay liberals on his side.

While Brown and Ammiano do share supporters, DeLeon sees Brown as a traditional big-city liberal and Ammiano as more in the progressive mold, concerned with environmental issues, social justice and neighborhood preservation.

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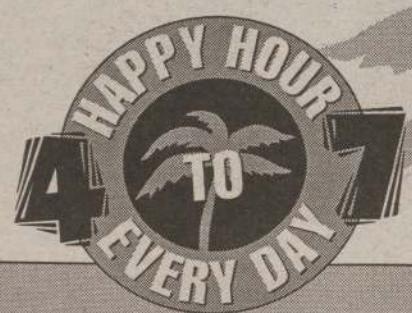
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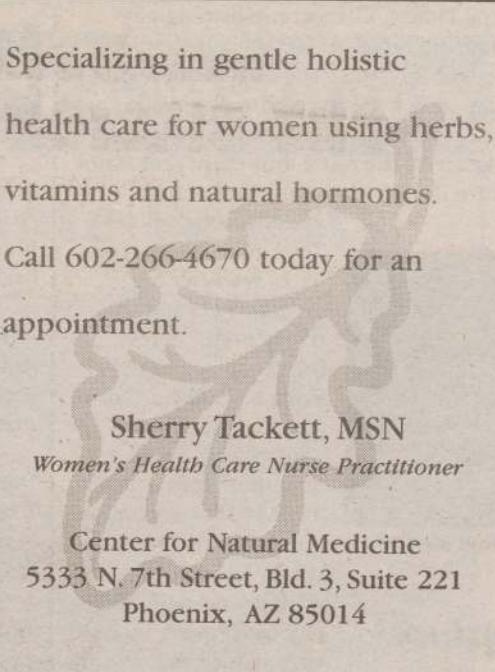


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Jury gets Shepard case

Laramie Judge disallows 'gay panic' defense

LARAMIE, Wyo. (AP)—Jurors began debating the beating death of a gay college student Nov. 2 after prosecutors gave a dramatic reminder of Matthew Shepard's helplessness during his final moments of consciousness.

Prosecutor Cal Rerucha paused for 60 seconds to let the jury reflect in silence on the one-minute beating inflicted on Shepard before he was left for dead on a fence Oct. 7, 1998.

"Think what 60 seconds was to Matthew Shepard," Rerucha said. "It's a short time if you're eating an ice cream cone. It's a long time if you're descending into hell not knowing what fate will meet you there."

Public defender Dion Custis told the jury that defendant Aaron McKinney, 22, was in an "emotional rage" at the time of the beating.

"(He) is not a cold-blooded murderer, ladies and gentlemen, he reacted," Custis said. "There was no thought process."

He said the beating started because of a sexual advance by Shepard, and it continued because McKinney was under the influence of chronic methamphetamine use.

"He hit him too many times. The question is why," Custis said.

Minutes later, jurors began deliberations. McKinney, 22, could get the death penalty if convicted of murder.

About 70 people were in the courtroom, including Shepard's parents, Dennis and Judy Shepard. McKinney's father, William, sat across the aisle.

Prosecutors said McKinney and Russell Henderson, 22, posed as homosexuals, lured the 21-year-old Shepard out of a bar, drove him to a remote fence and pistol-whipped him into a coma. Police said that robbery was the main motive but that Shepard may also have been singled out because he was gay. Henderson pleaded guilty in April and is serving two life sentences.

Before resting Monday, the defense had called seven witnesses, including two men who claimed Shepard made unwanted sexual advances toward them.

The judge barred the lawyers from using a so-called "gay panic defense." District Judge Barton Voigt ruled that the strategy adopted by McKinney's lawyers was akin to temporary insanity or a diminished-capacity defense—both of which are prohibited under Wyoming law.

"What the defendant is trying to do is

Arkansas sodomy law challenge: are correct parties being sued?

LITTLE ROCK (AP)—A lawyer for the state says that, because officials named in a lawsuit challenging the state's sodomy law actually ignore that law, they should not be sued.

A group suing to have an sodomy law overturned was back in court Nov. 1 for a hearing on whether it sued the right people.

Seven people sued Attorney General Mark Pryor and local prosecutors in an attempt to void a 1977 law that prohibits certain sexual contact between people of the same gender.

The seven say their constitutional rights are being violated because similar contact between heterosexuals isn't illegal.

Assistant attorney general Tim Gauger said the lawsuit was actually a direct challenge to a state law—a challenge that would be barred under a claim of sovereign immunity. And he said lack of enforcement of the law means the defendants shouldn't have been sued.

A New York group sued on behalf of seven lesbians and gay men, saying the law unfairly discriminates against them. The lawsuit names Pryor, Pulaski County Prosecutor Larry Jegley and others similarly situated.

to raise a mental status defense that is not recognized by Wyoming law," Voigt said. "Even if relevant, the evidence will mislead and confuse the jury."

During opening statements last week, McKinney's lawyers said painful memories of a homosexual encounter in his youth prompted him to lash out violently when Shepard made a sexual advance.

A "gay panic" defense is built on the theory that a person with latent gay tendencies will have an uncontrollable, violent reaction when propositioned by a homosexual.

Denver-based legal analyst Andrew Cohen said the defense had little to stand on after the ruling.

"If you're planning on one particular strategy as the lynchpin to your success and the judge throws it out, option B doesn't seem that appealing," he said.

Other lawyers noted that McKinney's attorneys still were able to argue that the crime happened in a moment of passion. They just couldn't present the theory that the passion was caused by a specific mental condition.

"This was gravy or frosting, but it certainly wasn't the whole shooting match," said Carbon County prosecutor Tom Campbell. "They must have known ahead of time that their odds for getting that into evidence were slim and I don't think good lawyers rely on evidence that is slim."

Some gay rights leaders have condemned the "gay panic" defense as a blame-the-victim strategy. However, Bill Dobbs, a gay New York lawyer and civil rights advocate, said the defense should be allowed wide latitude in death penalty cases.

"Gay panic exists and any gay man knows that just holding the gaze of a straight man on the street and giving him the idea that you might be sexually interested can create a dangerous situation," he said.

Among the witnesses who testified Monday was McKinney's stepsister, Afton Timothy. She said that McKinney's girlfriend, Kristen Price, told her that Shepard "reached over and grabbed Aaron's crotch" and "Aaron got mad and hit him in the truck."

Dr. Robert Lantz, a toxicologist, testified that methamphetamine can cause violent outbursts, especially in chronic users. Defense lawyers have said McKinney's actions were clouded by his use of methamphetamine and alcohol.

A lawyer for the seven said the prosecutors were sued because they would be the key people in deciding whether the law should be enforced.

But Gauger said the law is enforced only in non-consensual cases or over acts that take place in public.

Ruth Harlow of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund said the mere threat of prosecution concerns the plaintiffs, even with the state's unofficial practice of not prosecuting gays.

Attorney general's office spokesman Michael Teague wouldn't comment about the law.

"It is the attorney general's statutory obligation to defend the statute against suits brought by anyone who challenges the constitutionality of state law," Teague said.

A U.S. Supreme Court ruling 13 years ago upheld a Georgia sodomy law but state courts in Tennessee, Kentucky and Montana have since thrown out laws prohibiting consensual homosexual contact behind closed doors.

Pulaski County Judge Circuit David Bogard said he will rule on whether the proper parties were sued in a couple of weeks.

Gore, Bradley meet in first debate of Democratic Presidential race

Both candidates stress support for gay issues

HANOVER, New Hampshire (AP)—In the first debate of the Democratic presidential race, Al Gore sought to stem his decline in the polls by attacking rival Bill Bradley's health care and spending plans. "The numbers have to add up," Gore said.

Bradley said they did. "We each have our own experts," the former New Jersey senator replied. "I dispute the cost figure that Al has used."

That was as close as Bradley came Oct. 27 to lashing back at the vice president, who was folksy and playful with the audience while jabbing at Bradley.

It was an audience member who pressed Gore about

President Bill Clinton's personal behavior. Gore said he shared the public's disappointment and anger over the Monica Lewinsky affair and sought to provide "as much continuity and stability" as possible during the impeachment crisis.

"He's my friend," Gore said of Clinton.

Another crowd member probed a soft spot of Bradley's, asking about Gore's criticism of his Senate retirement in 1996 after Republicans had taken control of Congress.

"The things I wanted to do I couldn't do in the Senate," Bradley said, referring to stops at Stanford, in the private sector and at Notre Dame. In a gentle dig at Gore, who has been in government continuously since 1976, Bradley said that by leaving office he had been able to "encounter people where they live their lives."

Gore and Bradley sat on stools or strolled the stage in a Dartmouth College auditorium for the 60-minute debate co-sponsored by CNN and WMUR-TV. The first primary election ballots of the 2000 campaign will be cast in New Hampshire on Feb. 1, and polls show Bradley with a slight lead, having overcome Gore's enormous early advantage.

Gore sought to take the offensive 15 minutes before the television cameras were switched on. On stage for introductions, Gore turned to the audience and said: "Why don't you start asking some question while we're waiting?"

So they did.

And after the debate ended, Gore hung around for 90 minutes, taking questions while Bradley was long gone.

In other highlights:

- The two rivals pledged support for an overhaul of campaign finance laws to reduce the role of money in politics.

- Gore said his biggest mistake was "my choice of words when I claimed to have taken the lead in the Congress for inventing the Internet"—a comment that has earned him ridicule from

Republicans and stand-up comics alike.

- Bradley spoke emphatically about his support for gay rights. "I support gays being able to serve openly in the military. If gays can serve openly in the White House, in Congress, in the courts, in the Treasury Department ... why can't they serve in the military?" he asked.

When Gore got a similar question, he said Bradley's answer had been eloquent, then followed by saying he supports legal protection for same-sex domestic partnerships, but "not the same sacrament, not the same name," as marriage.

The debate rules weren't designed for

"I support gays being able to serve openly in the military. If gays can serve openly in the White House, in Congress, in the courts, in the Treasury Department ... why can't they serve in the military?"

Democratic Presidential Candidate Bill Bradley

the two men to address one another directly. Gore, however, found ways to press Bradley—particularly on his proposal to provide universal health care coverage.

Gore cited a study—which Bradley disputed—claiming the ex-senator's plan would cost \$1.2 trillion. "That's more than the entire surplus over the next 10 years," the vice president said.

He conceded that Bradley's plan would give health insurance to "a few more people" than his own plan, but he said the price was too high. "You're going to shred the social safety net," Gore said. "I think the cost is way excessive."

He said his more limited approach would cost \$146 billion over 10 years, while providing insurance for all children. Bradley said the next president should not settle for less than full coverage for all Americans.

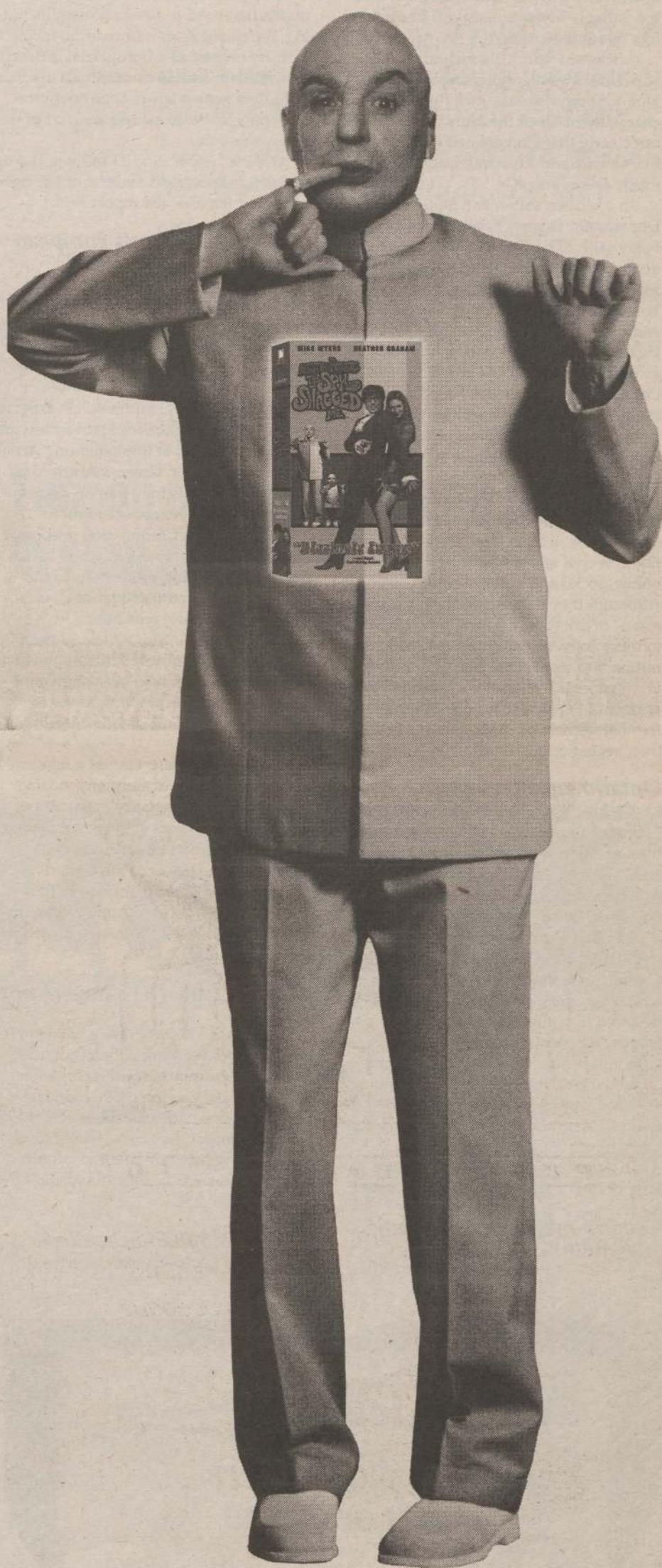
"It's a big problem," he said, "and it needs a big solution."

The topic illustrates the difference between Gore and Bradley on a host of issues. The vice president says he is offering practical, affordable solutions to the nation's ills. Bradley is setting higher, more expensive goals on everything from poverty to racial strife.

The dynamic puts Bradley to the left of Gore on many issues, though the vice president is the favorite among party regulars—many of whom are considered liberal.

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Arson suspected in fire that burned down Wichita gay bar

WICHITA, Kan. (AP)—A fire which destroyed a Wichita gay bar Nov. 2 was caused by arson, a fire investigator said.

"At this point, we cannot find any accidental causes," said Lt. Kent Grier, fire investigator with the Wichita Fire Department. "The fire started where it shouldn't have."

The fire, which began shortly after midnight, caused about \$450,000 damage to Our Fantasy and two other adjacent businesses, he said. The roof over the gay bar and an adjacent cafe collapsed, and another night club sustained lesser damage.

The building was closed at the time, and no one was injured.

Grier told KFDI radio that investigators were considering whether the fact the business was a gay bar played a role in the arson. But he stopped short of calling it a hate crime, saying the fire could have been started by an angry customer or a disgruntled employee.

"We are going to keep our mind open and look at all aspects of it," he said.

Investigators said they have no suspects.

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Goings On

The King of Horror's daughter at Border's, Nov. 14

Victoria Price, out lesbian offspring of dearly departed horror master Vincent, will read from and sign her new book, *Vincent Price: A Daughter's Biography*, on Sunday, Nov. 14 at Border's, 2401 E. Camelback in Phoenix.

Giuliano event Nov. 16

A fundraiser for Tempe Mayor Neil Giuliano's reelection campaign will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 16 at 5:30 pm at the Cultivated Cafe, 5394 S. Lakeshore Drive at The Lakes in Tempe.

The suggested contribution range for the event is \$50 to the allowed maximum of \$320. For information, call 480/820-3713.

ACP Seeks Miss/Mr./Ms. Gay Pride contestants

Arizona Central Pride (ACP) has started the countdown to Pride 2000 by seeking contestants for its annual Miss, Mr., and Ms. Gay Pride Contest. Title holders act as ACP's official Ambassadors of Pride at various local, state and regional Pride functions. Individuals interested in running for one of the titles should contact the 3MGP Committee at

602/279-1771 Box 3, or 602/265-3536. Interested parties may also call one of these numbers for the time and location of the next 3MGP Committee Meeting. Deadline for entries in the contest is December 15, 1999.

The Contest/Pageant has grown in popularity since it was started in 1993. It has also become one of ACP's major fund-raising efforts each year. The 1999 contestants raised almost \$20,000 to help ACP fund the 1999 Pride Parade and Festival. This year, interest has started early with seven contestants entered and already hard at work scheduling fund-raising events. There may be more entrants before the Dec. 15 deadline.

Working with the contestants are the 1999-2000 Royalty (Miss Gay Pride—Mimi Rae Rose; Mr. Gay Pride—Jeff Edwards; and Ms. Gay Pride—Donna "DaMomma" Powers).

Nuevo servicio en Español

Casa de Cristo ha visto la necesidad de tener servicios en Español para nuestra comunidad. Los invitamos a celebrar al Señor Jesucristo con nosotros. Queremos que todos sepan que el amor de Dios es para nosotros también. Nos reunimos los domingos a las 3 pm. Nuestra dirección es 1029 E. Turney, Phoenix, AZ 85014. El teléfono es 602/265-2831. También tenemos servicios en Inglés los domingos a las 10 am y a las 6:30 pm. Entre semana tenemos servicios los miércoles a las 6:30 pm.

New Spanish speaking church service

Casa de Cristo church in Phoenix is offering a new Spanish Worship Service on Sundays at 3 pm. Casa de Cristo is located at 1029 E. Turney (Turney is between Indian School and Camelback Roads). Call 602/265-2831 for more information. Sunday services in English are held at 10 am and 6:30 pm. There is also a Wednesday night service at 6:30 pm. Translators are available at all services.

DA camping this month, crossing border in Dec.

The annual Desert Adventures Nogales Shopping Extravaganza is set for Saturday, Dec. 4. The group will meet to depart for Mexico by bus at 7:45 am at the Bank One parking lot on Thomas and 7th Ave. in Phoenix. Organizers plan to be back in Phoenix around 10:30 pm. This trip sells out early, so call 602/266-CAMP and make reservations soon. The cost is \$18 for members and \$20 for guests.

Other adventures planned by the area's gay and lesbian outdoor social group include a campout at West Clear Creek in the Verde Valley the weekend of Nov. 18-21. The cost for this weekend trip is \$20 for members and \$30 for guests.

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partner with the Community Church of Hope in Phoenix for a turkey and ham feast. Bring a side dish, a dessert, or a \$6 donation for the food. Call the DA hotline for information.

Alternative Healing at Hand of Love

The monthly Alternative Healing Workshop & Networking Meeting will take place at Hand of Love Ministry on Tuesday, Nov. 16 from 7-10 pm. The meetings will continue the third Tuesday of each month through the spring.

Join organizers under the stars in a candlelit garden, where Reiki, chiropractic and other alternative healing practitioners get to work and learn together. The Ministry is at 6605 N. 14th St. in Phoenix (between Maryland and Glendale).

Admission is by good will donation. Adepts of all disciplines of healing therapies, willing patients and guest speakers are welcome. For information, call 602/264-1470.

Hand of Love will also hold a Garden Party & pre-Christmas Yard Sale on Sunday, Nov. 21 from 9 am to 6 pm at the same location.

GPGLCC coming events

The Greater Phoenix Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce is the Valley's networking and social organization for gay and gay-friendly business professionals. The active organization has several activities planned in coming weeks.

The regular Phoenix Lunch Bunch still meets every other Tuesday at Pookie's Cafe at 11:30 am. The East Side Lunch Bunch gets together at 11:30 on the second

Tuesday of every month at the University Club, 425 E. University Dr. in Tempe. A new Scottsdale Lunch Bunch has been added—join other gay professionals the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Chompie's at 9301 East Shea, also at 11:30.

The November NetMix will be hosted by Glenna Justiniani at First Travel in Phoenix on Nov. 10 at 6:30. This is a great place to meet and network with other gay and gay friendly professionals.

To join the chamber or learn more about GPGLCC programs and networking opportunities, call 602/225-8444.

Diamond Ladies lunches lined up

The Diamond Ladies, a new Valley social group for women who are retired or otherwise free to have a late, leisurely lunch, meets one Thursday every month for a midday get-together. It's always in a different part of the Valley and it's always a good time.

The next gathering will be on Nov. 16 at Fast Freddy's, 7557 E. Camelback in Scottsdale. The December event will be at a private home on Dec. 16 and will include a Christmas White Elephant gift exchange. To RSVP these events, call Barb at 602/840-4993.

Mrs. Bradley to speak in Valley Nov. 6

Ernestine Bradley, wife of Democratic presidential candidate Bill Bradley, will be the keynote speaker at the 16th Annual Hall of Fame celebration on Saturday, Nov. 6 at Fort McDowell Desert Adventures.

Ernestine Bradley has dedicated her life to teaching and survived a bout with

cancer. The evening dinner event will also honor Cesar Chavez and Arizona's Democratic governors. The night will feature an informal atmosphere with fun entertainment and great food. For ticket information, call Cortland Coleman at State Democratic Headquarters, 602/298-4200.

Team AZ plans meeting, Sedona trip

The Valley's gay and lesbian athletic organization, Team Arizona, will hold its next monthly meeting on Nov. 7 at 4 pm at The Community Center, 24 W. Camelback in Phoenix.

The group has announced a bus trip to Sedona for Dec. 11. The holiday shopping trip to Tlaquepaque Arts and Crafts Village will depart at 1:30 pm so travelers can enjoy thousands of glowing luminarias in Sedona that evening, at Los Abrigados.

The trip costs \$20 per person and the money raised will go toward sending local athletes to the 2002 Gay games in Sydney, Australia. For reservations and more details, call Barbara at 602/840-4993 or Wayne at 602/264-2645.

PGLBVA hosting banquet

The Phoenix Chapter of the Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of America will host a banquet to celebrate Veterans Day, Nov. 11, at 7 pm. The location is the Ramada Hotel on Camelback (just east of 7th Ave.).

The guest speaker will be Arizona State Rep. Steve May. May has been an ardent supporter of glbt vets and will discuss his experience with the military.

Master of Ceremonies will be local activist Jeff Oftedahl. Members of the Grand Canyon Mens Chorale will perform the National Anthem and the Navy Hymn. Rev. Patrick Stout from the Community Church of Hope will offer a Blessing.

Tickets for the banquet are \$25 and must be purchased in advance. Tickets are available at the Community Center (24 W. Camelback) or from Wally Straughn, make checks payable to PGLBVA and mail to: 2039 W. Northview Ave., Phoenix, Az 85021. Call 602/864-6092 for information.

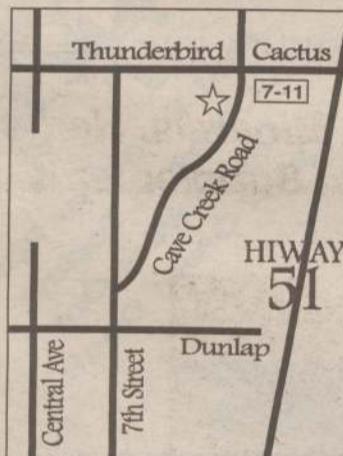
Wreaths for Life '99 underway

The annual Wreaths for Life fundraiser, a holiday event held each year at the Biltmore Fashion Park to benefit Aunt Rita's Foundation, is seeking sponsors and decorated holiday wreaths to display and sell.

The deadline for delivery of completed wreaths to the outdoor mall is Nov. 22 and 23 from 4 to 6:30 pm. Wreaths should be 24" to 36" in diameter and be made of durable, non-perishable items as they will be displayed outdoors through the holiday season.

Those who don't have time to make a wreath are encouraged to participate in the program by donating the money for supplies—volunteers are standing by to make a wreath for you. Another way to help is to sponsor a door, getting recognition for your business or organization for as little as \$200.

Last year's Wreaths for Life program raised more than \$31,000 for people living with HIV/AIDS. To get more information or find out how you can help, call Tom Snyder at 602/867-3619.



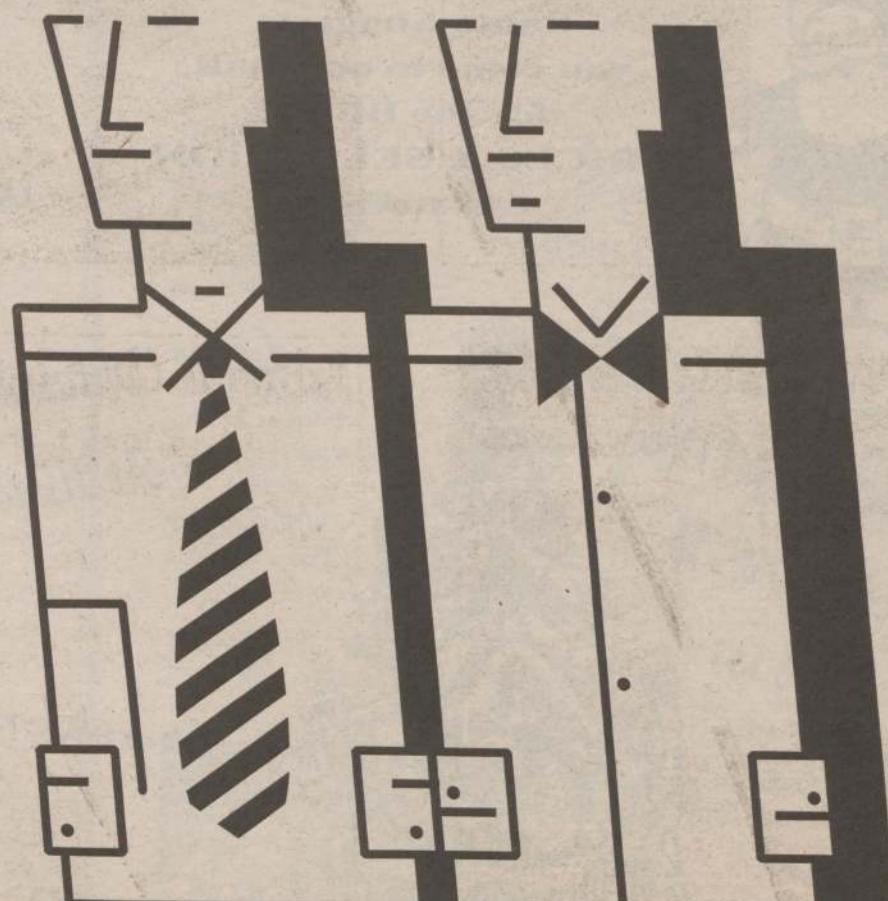
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A NEW LEVEL OF GAY SOCIALIZATION

One Clear Calling

This Valley woman gives back by turning voices into heirlooms

By Allen Kalchik, Editor

Everyone has a story to tell, no matter how much or how little of a life they think they've lived."

That's the message Kathy Andrew gets out of the one-woman company she founded earlier this year called 1 Clear Voice, and it's a message she is eager to share.

Many people enter into a new business enterprise with the idea of making a buck or two. Others see a void in the supply-and-demand economy that they aim to fill.

Then there are people like Andrew, who says she began tape-recording the voices and stories of dying people because she was spiritually called to do so. "It was clear that I was supposed to do this once I got the idea," she says. "It was a very strong calling."

Andrew is an eight-year Scottsdale resident who had time on her hands after she divorced her husband, then sold her share of a credit consolidation business they had started together. She began volunteering at Phoenix's Hospice of the Valley about three years ago as a way of giving back to her community.

At the hospice, Andrew spent a lot of time bedsitting terminally ill people—mainly cancer patients who were alternately accepting and struggling through their difficult last weeks.

"In today's world the family is working," she says. "Sometimes they have time

enough just to clean [the ill person] up before bed. I ended up being the one who would sit during the day and hear their stories."

Small-framed, calm and soft-spoken, Andrew saw (and heard) that many hospice patients desperately needed to talk about their shortening lives to whomever would listen. She became an excellent listener.

But hand-holding wasn't enough. "I felt like a lump on a log not contributing anything." That, she says, is when the spiritually inspired idea to start 1 Clear Voice came to her.

So Andrew registered a business name and purchased a rather clunky, professional quality cassette recorder. With her new Panasonic, a few blank tapes and a detailed but very flexible questionnaire, 1 Clear Voice provides a voice recording service to dying people and their loved ones that can make a world of difference to terminally ill people and those they leave behind.

"Everyone has had so many experiences and such a rich life, but you never know that until you sit down and talk to someone," she says.

Andrew charges \$20 per hour for her service, with a two-hour minimum. The average tape runs from two to four hours. "But I make allowances for everything," she states, adding, "money is not my

motivation."

When Andrew finishes a tape, family and friends get a personalized heirloom that is a lasting reminder of the person's speaking voice after he or she is gone.

The dying patient gets something important out of the process, too. "It can be kind of a cleansing and letting go at the same time," Andrew explains.

Andrew travels to the client, either in a hospital or at home, to make the recordings. She prefers to be alone in the room with the patient during the taping.

"As a third party, I'm a neutral person," she says. That means the patient is less likely to self-edit during the recorded interview process. Usually, she says, a person is unwilling to open up to a caregiver or someone else they have a personal relationship with. Andrew's one-on-one

neutrality makes for more honest story telling.

The detailed questionnaire that Andrew uses as a guide also helps clients get beyond the basics, like where they were born, their ethnic background and how many siblings they have.

Questions like "What pets did you have growing up?", "What part of parenting are you most proud of?" and "What are some favorite meals or recipes?" can trigger the patients' deepest memories and often lead to unexpected stories and private revelations that loved ones may never have heard before. The resulting originality makes the tapes Andrew provides all the more valuable to those who will keep them and cherish them well into the future.

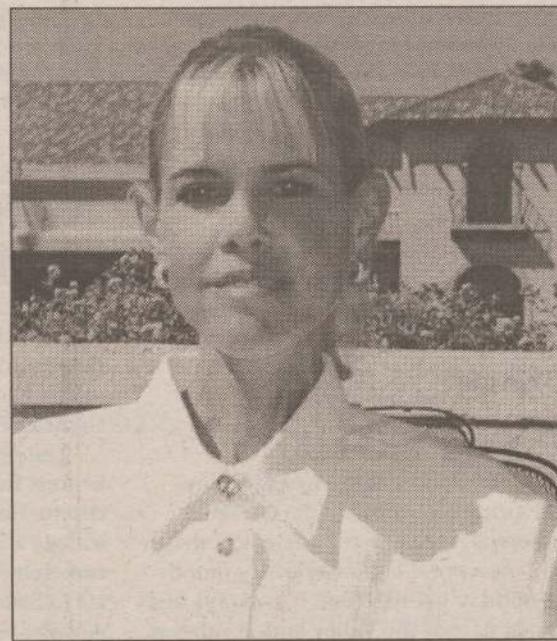
Andrew has thus far worked mainly with cancer patients but wants people in the HIV/AIDS community to know about her service. Although Andrew is not gay, she understands that not everyone's "family" fits society's typical definition. *HeatStroke* readers should know that she doesn't discriminate and that her questions can be easily adapted to the lives of gay or lesbian clients.

"There's just so many different people in the world with so much to tell and share. It's a shame that anyone would discriminate against anyone else—that's not why we're put here," Andrew says. "I think one reason we are put here is to learn as much as we can from each other."

Andrew believes that what she is helping patients create is not so much a product as a work of art. "That's what every tape is, really. An individual work of art." In that sense, she says, every one of us is an artist, "because we all have something to say."



To enlist Kathy Andrew's help in making a tape or to find out more about 1 Clear Voice, call 480/419-4234.



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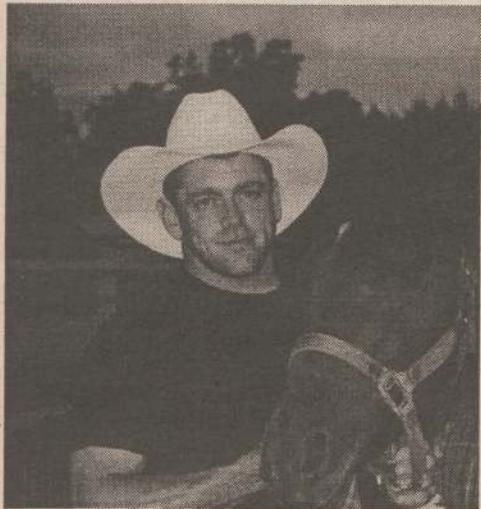


AGRA rocks at IGRA Finals

Arizona Gay Rodeo Association (AGRA) cowgirls and cowboys brought home several International Gay Rodeo Association International Championship Buckles from the Oct. 29-31 weekend International Finals Rodeo competition in Little Rock, Arkansas.

More than 160 of the top competitors from the 1999 rodeo season converged in Little Rock for the invitation-only event.

Three AGRA cowboys made the top



AGRA-Phoenix President took the 1999 Chute Dogging and Bull Riding Championships at the IGRA Finals Rodeo in Little Rock.

ten in the All Around Cowboy category, including Phoenician Andy Anaya who won the 1999 All Around Cowboy title. Anaya earned several top scores in every division of the competition including roping, horse and camp events.

AGRA-Phoenix Chapter President Chuck Browning won the 1999 Chute Dogging and Bull Riding Championships, along with a first and second place in the hotly contested Goat Dressing event.

Brian Helander, also of Phoenix, took third place in Calf Roping on Foot and an eighth place in Team Roping, along with a first and second in Goat Dressing with partner Chuck Browning. Helander and Browning won the 1999 International Champion Steer Decorating Competition.

Sandra Anaya, sister of Andy, won the Women's Calf Roping Championship and placed third in the Women's All Around Cowgirl competition. AGRA's Tonya Gates earned the 1999 Women's Rookie of the Year buckle.

All the Phoenix area international title winners plan to compete in the first IGRA contest of the 2000 season, to be held in Phoenix at the Corona Rodeo Grounds Jan. 14-16.

Community Center working to enhance the volunteer experience

By Anne Caldwell, for The Community Center

Have you heard what is going on at The Community Center in Phoenix?

The board members and staff are making a concentrated effort toward attracting and retaining volunteers. They are improving the process for contacting and training new people, and are planning social events to acknowledge the commitment of the volunteer teams.

Whatever your area of expertise or interest, The Community Center can almost certainly use your help. If you are looking for a great way to get out of the house, meet new people and make a difference in your community, call 602/265-7283 and let the great people at 24 W. Camelback put you to work.

There are more than 250 volunteers on the roster and more than 170 people are currently volunteering in some capacity. Most volunteers start out working in the Communication Hub, but there are opportunities in many other areas including Youth Services, Lesbian Night Out, the Discovery Group, the BJ Bud Memorial Library and Archives, the Anti-Violence Project, Rainbow Families, or the newly created Tech Team.

The sign-up process has become much more organized and the new, more professional approach to managing the varied teams should enhance the volunteer experience for everyone. All new volunteers are provided with training and knowledge about the Community

Center as a whole.

Another concern recently addressed by organizers is volunteer burnout. To combat this, volunteer opportunities in different areas will be posted so that when someone is ready for a change, he or she can easily see what else is available.

There is a new Volunteer Management Team to better organize the volunteer groups. Naturally, it is hoped that this will serve the community better.



I was impressed by my first visit to this meeting. This is a very talented group of people who are totally committed to making The Community Center a viable place for members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community.

We want to provide an overview of The Community Center and its activities because we want everyone to know what is coming up and what the various groups are doing. I am looking forward to being the conduit for information between the community and The Community Center.

Upcoming articles will offer general information about what's happening as well as more details about groups and teams with The Community Center, so watch this space in future issues.

Next: details on the team structure. What does the gang at The Community Center have up their sleeves?



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Wednesday: Hump Day: remember Happy Hour starts at 4pm! Don't miss Karaoke with Denise & Dee, 7pm-?.

Thursday: Clogging lessons for beginners, 6:15-7:30. Country Western Dance Lessons with Geri 7:30-9:30pm. Our DJ, Molly, spins every Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday!

Friday: Country Western Music with DJ Molly

Saturday: Country Western Music with DJ Molly

Sunday: Come on down for our Sunday afternoon Tea Dance! A Grand Master Molly Event, from 4pm until ?

UPCOMING EVENTS

Attention Softball Fans!

During women's softball season, Cash Inn will open at 12 noon every Sunday, with Happy Hour from 1-4pm.



Now on Sundays: Cash Inn kicks off its regular Sunday afternoon Tea Dance with our DJ Molly, starts at 4pm.

*Thursday, Nov. 25:
Cash Inn is closed for Thanksgiving.*



*Friday, Dec. 3:
Live music by Diamond Fire starts at 9pm; cover.*

Gay on-line services continue to gain in popularity

Continued from page 1

sites both on the Web and on AOL), thinks the Net is a lifeline for people unable or unwilling to come out in public. "How do you find your kind in a hostile world?" he asks. "The Internet provides safety for people too scared to come out. You can remain anonymous but participate in a community of people like yourself. It's the first medium to reach the closeted."

PlanetOut's mission, according to Rielly, is to help gays and lesbians meet each other online and off. "Flesh still matters," he says. "We've failed if all we do is connect people in cyberspace. Chat is an important part of our core mission to bring people together. Yes, some people use our service to look for sex, and I see nothing wrong with that, but the majority don't."

Those who do go online looking for lust say the Net allows them to put aside their inhibitions,

end retreat. "I was there," says Bennett. "It was not a pick-up, cruisy scene. It was about fellowship." Eighty people showed up at Charlie's Restaurant & Bar in Denver after the Gay.com Colorado chat room decided to hold annual dinners so the group members could meet each other.

Ron, the San Francisco consultant, says that through AOL he and his friends have developed friendships and paid visits to gay men in places like Israel and Ireland. "We're building a global community," he says. "Most of us use computers."

In fact, the research firm Computer Economics puts Internet use by gays and lesbians at 10 percent higher than the general population. The

more options," he said. David Gardner, advertising sales director for *Frontiers*, a gay magazine with Los Angeles and San Francisco editions, agrees: "We've seen a general decline. More noticeable, though, is the drop-off of audio-text advertisers" (900 or 976 lines that promise hot talk and the potential to meet).

AOL has approximately 16,000 chat

rooms. Tom Rielly of PlanetOut recalls, "A few years ago people thought a third of all their rooms were gay. But no one really knows."

AOL divides its chat rooms into theme categories. An informal count during a recent visit to the "Town Square" category revealed 242 rooms, of which 160 had the "M4M" designation. That's about two-thirds of the Town Square rooms. Other sections of AOL don't seem to be nearly as dominated by a gay presence.

O'Neill, president of Cybersite, thinks AOL's success in gay hot

chat is due to its

"unthemed" service.

"Contextualization is important for the direction and quality of con-

Grain Belt ("OmahaM4M") and parts in between.

So is AOL aware of its reputation as the preferred penis provider for the gay community?

"I think AOL is very well aware of its role in ... in ..." said Jupiter analyst David Card, struggling for the right words, "romance-creation." A couple of clicks

"The Internet provides safety for people too scared to come out. You can remain anonymous but participate in a community of people like yourself. It's the first medium to reach the closeted."

through AOL's chat rooms offer ample evidence.

But AOL apparently doesn't want to talk about how gay men are using its service. With the exception of reading a one-line boilerplate about the "amazing diversity" of AOL's community, spokesman Andrew Weinstein refused to comment. AOL strikes a gay-friendly stance publicly; it's one of three major investors in Planet Out and has a gay-friendly work environment (promoting many of its openly out employees). But commenting on how gay customers are using the service to score is probably beyond the scope of even the most progressive corporate culture.

AOL would not release what percent of online time is spent on chat, probably fearful of the business repercussions. When it charged by the hour, AOL was undoubtedly thrilled with its chat-room success: More chat meant more revenue. But now, it would probably rather divert those chatters to other parts of its site, where advertising and e-commerce are bringing incremental revenue. "Some traffic is more desirable than other traffic," said Jupiter's Card. "Chat gives AOL stickiness, but obviously it's bad for other revenue producers in their system."

There's a striking contrast between the way AOL ads portray the service and how some gay men use it. AOL cultivates a cheerful, wholesome entertainment theme in its ads, touting "parental controls," blocking software that lets parents restrict content and chat rooms. Meanwhile, "URmyNxTrik," "WorkMyAsGd" and "Ikneel4U" are furiously woodpecking the keys, hoping for a little action.

This contradiction deepens when you read AOL's terms of service. "There is a difference between affection and vulgarity," states AOL's written policy. "For example ... the words 'breast' or 'testicular' would be acceptable, but slang versions of those words would not be." In other words, you can use AOL to get plowed like a snow-covered Minnesota freeway—but not if you use raw language. While AOL parses cleavage and baskets, "BstBtmNtwn" is working the AtlantaM4M room hoping for another notch in his bedpost.

If AOL has a policy, gay men don't seem to know about it. They're too busy ordering from what they perceive as an online sex catalog. And why not? The items are always in stock, there's a liberal exchange policy and you can take delivery in a matter of hours.

The absurdity is captured by writer John Royce, who—upon seeing how his gay friends use AOL—quips, "Gay men don't need to support theater. They ARE theater." And now, America Online is their stage.

HeatStroke

Michael Alvear is an Atlanta-based writer who authors "Slouching Through Gomorrah," a culture column syndicated to the gay press.

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speak frankly and lay out what the ground rules will be for the sexual encounter. "I want to know if they're into oral sex or whether they're a top or a bottom," says Paul. "And it's easier to ask about their HIV status online than it is in person."

Jeff Bennett, co-founder of Gay.com, one of the largest gay Web sites, downplays the steam factor for gay communities online: "For the most part, people come to our site to build a sense of community, to find somebody like them, not to have sex." He points to a recent meeting in California arranged by frequent visitors to an HIV chat room. Seventy men from all over the world met for a week-

firm estimated the figure through a combination of focus groups with knowledgeable gay observers and extrapolations from previous studies of gay Internet use.

Ad salesmen for the gay press see firsthand how the Internet is changing gay culture. "There's been a slow but steady decline for the past two years in gay print personals," says Adam Segel, product manager for Tele-Publishing International, a firm that handles the classified personals for 18 gay publications. Segel believes the Internet is the principal cause of the decline. "There's so many

versa-
tion," he
said. "For the
most part, AOL is
uncontextualized." In
other words, many gay
men don't turn to AOL for
"community," because unlike
gay.com or Planet Out, it's not a gay-
themed service. Ironically, it's this very
lack of theme that makes AOL, rather
than the gay Web sites, so popular among
gay men hoping to score.

Besides the AOL-created chat rooms, the company allows people to set up their own chat rooms. Many create geographically specific rooms, which only add to AOL's popularity. Where else are gay men in Harrisburg, Penn., going to meet online other than "HarrisburgPAM4M"? Most Web sites catering to gays have a New York chat room, but no other online service has developed AOL's reach into the gay communities in smaller towns. In fact, for every room in gay-friendly cities like San Francisco, there are over 100 in the Bible Belt ("GreenvillesM4M"), the rural Northeast ("PoughkeepsieM4M"), the

Researchers hope HIV drug is alternative to complicated 'cocktail'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Medical researchers hope a drug that could boost the immune system will allow some people infected with the HIV virus to do away with their harsh medication regimens.

Doctors at Vanderbilt University, the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Washington University in St. Louis will begin testing the drug Remune in the next few weeks.

Currently, hundreds of thousands of people with HIV try to control the virus through a complicated regimen of drug "cocktails," taking several pills daily, some on an empty stomach, some with food, often at inconvenient times.

If found effective, Remune could replace that with a single shot every three months.

"That would be great," said LaDonna Hester of La Vergne, who has been HIV-positive for 15 years. "I'd rather have a shot every three months than take pills three to four times a day."

Joe Interrante, who's been HIV-positive for 14 years, is also hopeful.

"Maintaining the schedule (of medications) easily and comfortably can be a difficult thing," said Interrante, executive director of Nashville CARES, an AIDS education and service organization. "All this time we've been saying, 'Stay on your medications, stay on your medications. Don't miss a dose.'

"Now we're saying you may be able

More fear, suspicion among nation's ethnic and gay groups, police chiefs told

CHARLOTTE (AP)—Americans are "petrified of one another" in ways they haven't been before, with ethnic and gay groups especially suspicious and fearful, the nation's police chiefs were told Oct. 31 at their annual convention here.

"I honestly think things are getting worse," said William Johnston, former deputy superintendent of the Boston Police Department, who has been monitoring hate crimes since 1980.

Johnston was on a panel of national experts who told about 200 police chiefs and other law enforcement officials that police must take responsibility for preventing crimes based on hate and bias.

The panel discussion was part of the five-day annual convention of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Johnston said police must take seriously even hate crimes involving only property damage, such as a spray-painted slur on a wall.

"There's no other crimes that tear at the fabric of our society like these," he

Actor charged in alleged anti-gay beating says victim provoked him

LOS ANGELES (AP)—*Veronica's Closet* regular Wallace Langham, charged with a hate crime for allegedly beating up a man who looked at his girlfriend's tattoos, says he was set up by the victim and forced into a fight.

Langham, who plays Josh on the NBC sitcom, was charged Nov. 1 with misdemeanor battery and committing a hate crime.

A 35-year-old man—whose identity was not made public—told authorities that while shopping at a Hollywood supermarket on Sept. 7 he was beaten and kicked by Langham after looking at the tattoos on the arms and midriff of the actor's girlfriend.

The man, who was treated at a hospital for bruises and an injured jaw, said Langham "approached, shouted slurs about the man's sexual orientation and punched him," according to a news release from the city attorney's office.

Langham's publicist said the man actually provoked the fight and that the actor planned to pursue extortion

to stop," he said.

Remune was developed by Dr. Jonas Salk, who discovered the polio vaccine. Also known as HIV immunogen and the Salk HIV vaccine, the drug consists of inactive HIV, which cannot cause HIV infection. After the drug is injected in the arm, the body responds by developing immunity to its contents.

What is not known is whether Remune can actually control the virus, said Dr. David Haas, director of Vanderbilt's AIDS Clinical Trials Center. He said patients may have to take it in combination with other drugs to do that.

"The new concept is that in some people, it may be possible, if the immune system can be stimulated to fight HIV, to stop the treatment they're on and for the immune system to fight the virus itself," Haas said.

Researchers are seeking 40 volunteers who are on their first treatment regimen of an effective therapy and who have had undetectable levels of HIV in their blood for at least six months.

Along with their current medications, half of the study's participants will receive doses of Remune every three months for the next six months. The other half will receive an immune booster that does not specifically target HIV.

"People who do not have the virus well-controlled are not likely to benefit," Haas said.

"Now we're saying you may be able

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My Queer Life

RUNAWAY TRAIN

By Michael Thomas Ford

There is a danger that is particular to dating writers. We are people who are used to dealing in possibilities. Our minds, either through training or natural inclination, can come up with a shocking number of ideas to explain any situation we might find ourselves in. Sometimes this can be comforting. But if, as I am, you are a writer drawn to the grimmest and most dramatic of options, it is more likely to turn perfectly reasonable situations into opportunities for disaster.

On Tuesday, Dave did not call me all day. For most people, this would probably not be a huge deal, or even a small one. But I'm used to hearing from him at some point during the day, so I started to wonder. I tried not to wonder too much, as I know how I get, but by late afternoon I couldn't help but have a couple of thoughts as I pretended to distract myself by working. I started small. Maybe, I thought, he was busy working on something himself and just hadn't had time to pick up the phone. That made me a little better.

But of course I couldn't leave it there. That would be too easy. There is a scene in one of the Winnie the Pooh books in which the perpetually bitter donkey Eeyore tells the perpetually optimistic Piglet, "Think of all the possibilities, Piglet, before you settle down to enjoy yourselves." And this is what I did. I did it all evening, while I waited for the phone to ring.

Eventually I decided to just go to bed. Sleep is a great way for me to avoid this kind of mind game, as I can channel all the extra worry into my dreams and pretend it's all just some healthy process of filtering out my neuroses. Besides, Dave frequently calls me late at night so that we

can talk without interruption, and this way I could just be unconscious until the phone rang, which was better than staring at it and willing it to do so, a tactic that only gave me a headache.

This turned out to be a fine idea, at least until I woke up for no reason whatsoever, rolled over, and saw that it was 1:37 in the morning. I checked the phone for the telltale beeping that told me there was a message waiting, heard nothing, and put it down again. I closed my eyes and tried to go to sleep quickly, before my brain started in and ruined things utterly.

It was too late. My imagination had already kicked in. And as every first-rate worrier knows, fretting in the middle of the night takes on a life of its own. As if a film were screening on the inside of my head, the images began to flicker on and off. Dave was out on a date with someone else. I just knew it.

He hadn't called all day because he knew I would be able to tell that he was up to something. He was tired of our relationship, and he'd decided to sow his oats elsewhere. Fine. Let him do that. I didn't care. Oh, who was I kidding. Of course I cared. But who might he be out with? Did he look like me? Was he better in bed?

Then, abruptly, the scene changed.

Dave was lying in a hospital bed. A careless driver had crashed into him. The car was totaled. Jaws of Life were involved. There were many paramedics, all shouting just like in ER. He was in a coma, and no one knew to call me because he hadn't given my number to any of his friends. Even worse,

I didn't know any of his friends either so I couldn't call them and ask which hospital he was in.

I wondered if the operator would connect me to all the emergency rooms in his city. But what if I didn't find him? It could be weeks, months, before I knew what happened. And what if he had died? I'd be a widow. How long would I have to wait until I dated again, and would that hot guy who smiled at me at the gym even want to go out with me if he knew my last lover had died tragically? Or would it be more satisfying to grieve for a really long time? I was torn.

Another scene change. Dave had fallen asleep and forgotten to call me. He was sleeping peacefully while I laid in my bed and worried. How could he? Didn't he know I was waiting to talk to him, that

me mad? Would he do such a thing? I didn't think so, but you never know. In that case, he deserved to suffer a little bit too. I hoped he was having nightmares.

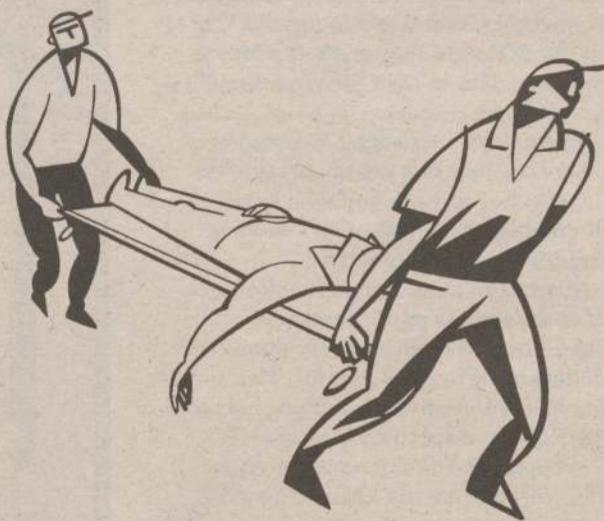
I looked at the clock again. It was 1:39. In the span of two minutes I had gone from being horribly jealous to horribly concerned to horribly vexed. It was a new world record in anxiety, even for me, and I was impressed. But still the phone didn't ring, even when I counted backwards from three hundred and told myself if everything was all right he would call before I got to zero. I dawdled on three, two, and one, but nothing happened. Finally, I turned on the light, picked up a book, and read until I fell asleep again a few hours later. Then, it seemed only moments after I dozed off, it was time to get up and walk the dog.

You might be wondering why I didn't just pick up the phone and call him. Well, that's easy. If I'd done that, then Dave would have known that I was worrying, and I couldn't have that. It's one thing to be mentally unwell; it's another to prove it to those who suspect it might be true.

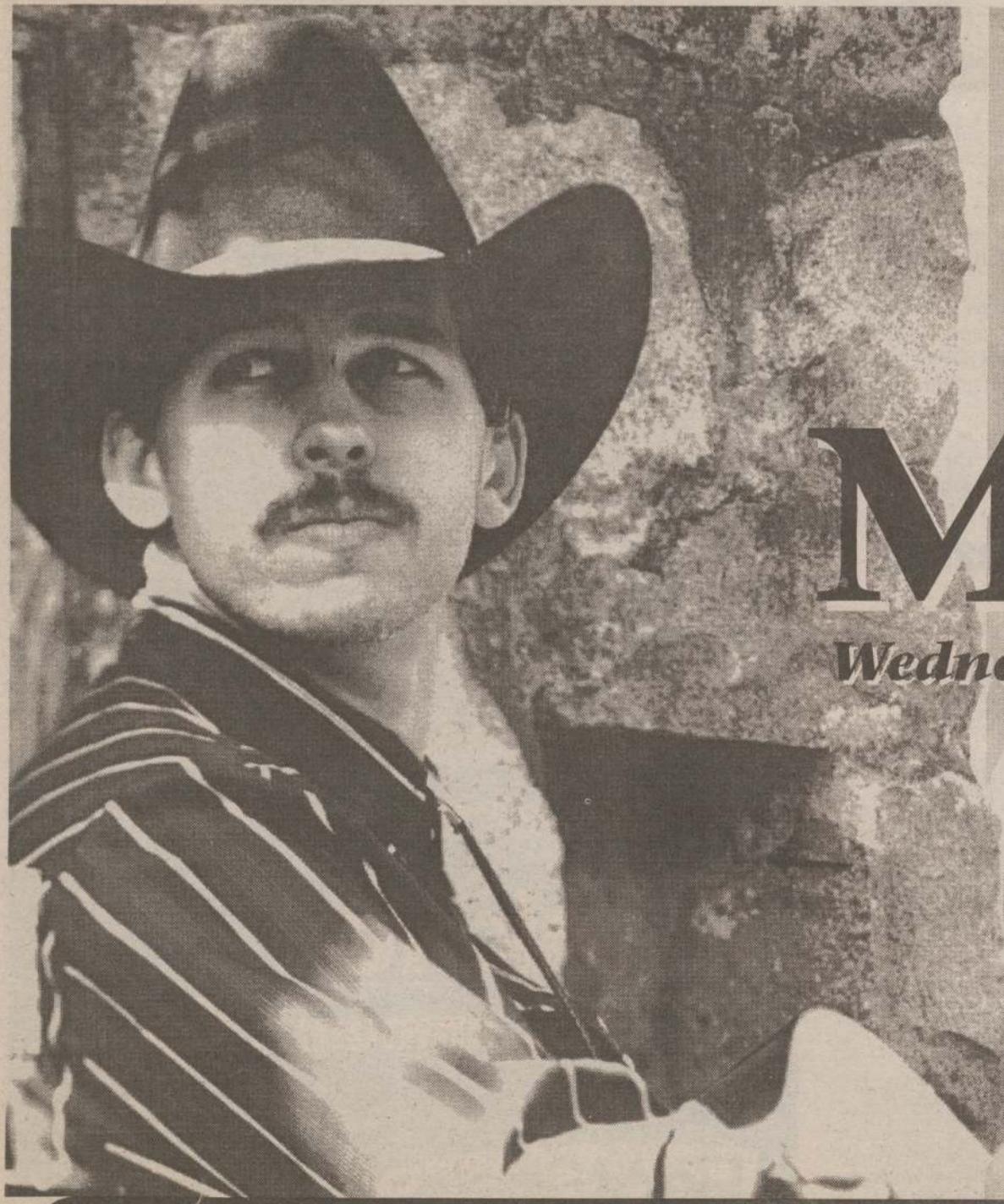
He did finally call, the next afternoon. And of course as soon as I heard his voice I was fine again. "I'll call you later," he said before we hung up, "and I love you." It doesn't get much better than that. Still, about half an hour later I looked up from where I was happily pecking away at my keyboard and thought, "I wonder if he meant he loves me like he loves his favorite shirt or as in he can't possibly live without me?"



Michael Thomas Ford is the Lambda Literary Award-winning author of the essay collections *Alec Baldwin Doesn't Love Me* and *That's Mr. Faggot to You*. He can be reached at Shopiltee@aol.com.



when people say, "I'll call you later tonight" to a writer it really means, "I will call you before midnight because at one minute after midnight it is morning and no longer later tonight?" Why wasn't he as worried about our daily conversations as I was? Or was he doing it just to make



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Broadway's blank canvas comedy comes to Gammage

By John Lotardo, Contributor

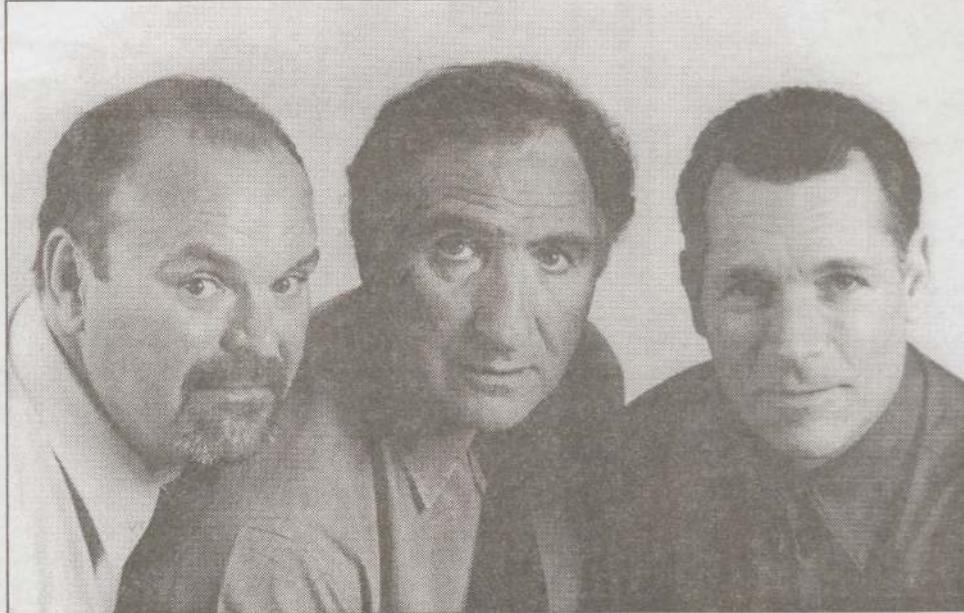
Yasmina Reza's Tony Award winning comedy, *ART*, will have its Arizona premiere this month at Gammage Auditorium in Tempe. Starring Judd Hirsch, Cotter Smith and Jack Willis, the play is a witty portrait of modern art and old fashioned friendships as three middle-aged friends come to blows over the value of a very expensive piece of art.

ART tests our ideas about friendship

and classicism to play out onstage.

Smith says the play is very audience-friendly as well. He declares, "*ART* is a very interesting animal. It is rare in contemporary theater to have a play which is very accessible and humorous audience-wise, yet ultimately takes a very serious look at some universal themes."

Smith points out that the universality of the show helps theatergoers relate. *ART* shows people grappling with whether



Jack Willis, Judd Hirsch and Cotter Smith star in the Tony Award winning play *ART*.

and worth in society. The issues unfold when Serge, played by Smith, purchases a very expensive work of art and is belittled for it by his friend Marc, played by Hirsch.

Marc considers the work a plain white canvas and holds no punches saying so. Their mutual friend, Yvan (Willis), attempts unsuccessfully to mediate between the two. The heated conversation ignites into intense examinations of their longtime friendships. It is a play about nothing and something all at the same time. This seemingly contradictory presumption is what adds excitement and intellectual depth to this humorous play.

Written by French author Reza and directed by Matthew Warchus, the play loses little in the translation and gains plenty, according to American audiences. In fact, actor Cotter Smith says he is "stunned by the brilliant translation done by Christopher Hampton." *HeatStroke* spoke with Smith while he was in Denver for the second city stop on the nine-month tour of *ART*.

Smith, whose credits include the portrayal of Robert Kennedy in the mini-series *Blood Feud* and a regular role on the ABC series *Equal Justice*, has twice received the Outstanding Performance Award from the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle. He is very excited about the show touring and looks forward to seeing how audiences from different cities react to the play.

He considers the play to be nothing about the painting and little to do with art at all. Through penetrating dialogue, the play transcends the original assumption that its focus is the painting.

Even the actor's nine-year old daughter understands this. She came to him after seeing the show and declared, "You are not really fighting about the painting." Smith explains the artwork is a mere "catalyst to conversations about the perceptions of friends. It asks questions like: what is a friend, and why does what you like or dislike matter to me?"

The play explores the notion of value-versus-worth. "Reza has created a play with three archetypal characters in whom everyone can relate," says Smith. Smith sees the characters, while dealing with their issues of morality and friendship, as permitting the battle between modernism

and their feelings about a subject are strong enough to destroy relationships they have with others. For gays and lesbians, this idea has been played out in many coming-out scenarios under the theory that individuals are more important than the circumstances of their personal lives.

Smith agrees, and gives this example of people in relationships: "Is this marriage worth more than the topic we are arguing about?" How questions like that are

"It is rare in contemporary theater to have a play which is very accessible and humorous audience-wise, yet ultimately takes a very serious look at some universal themes."

answered onstage adds breadth to *ART*'s appeal.

However, Smith admits the show is more likely to be found on the stage rather than on television or in movies. He acknowledges that without a doubt, theater is much more liberal when it comes to this type of story as well as such seemingly controversial themes as explorations of sexual orientation.

Of working with Jack Willis and Judd Hirsch, Smith is delighted to say they all get along great. In fact, Smith says Hirsch set the stage for some great friendships. "For the first week of rehearsal, Judd had the three of us stay together at his home. He [Hirsch] even hired a cook for us! It was a terrific bonding experience."

Originally opening at London's Wyndham's Theatre on October 15, 1996 to consistently favorable reviews, *ART* received both the 1996-1997 Olivier and Evening Standard Awards for Best Comedy. The Broadway production opened to critical acclaim at the Royale Theatre on March 1, 1998 where it won both the 1998 Tony and Drama Critics Circle Awards for best play.



ART runs one week only, Tuesday, November 9 through Sunday November 14 at Gammage Auditorium. Tickets are on sale now at ASU's Gammage Box Office, 480/ 965-3434, and at all Dillard's ticket outlets, 480/ 503-5555. Tickets range from \$17 to \$39.50.



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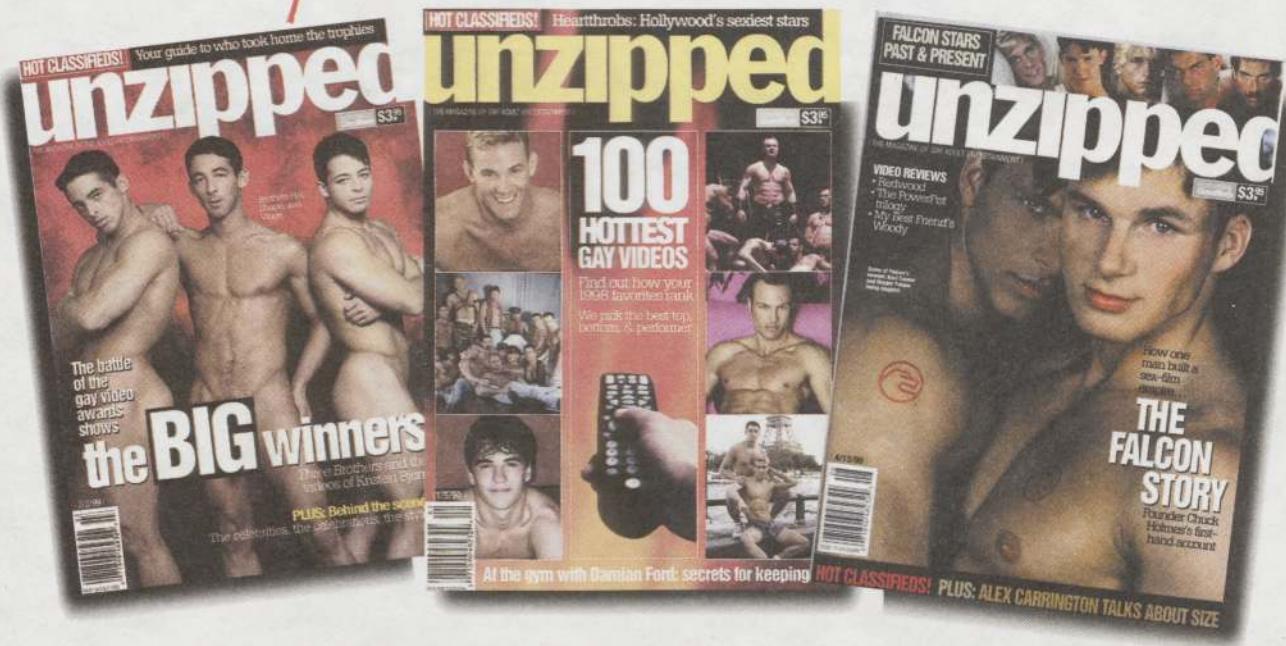
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Boys Don't Cry

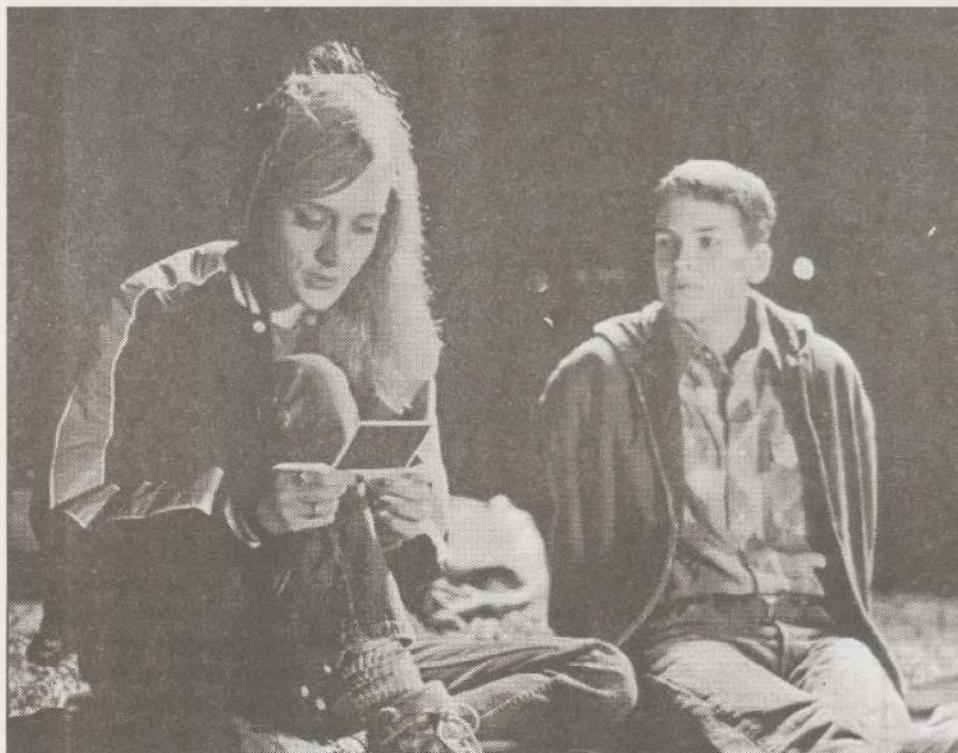
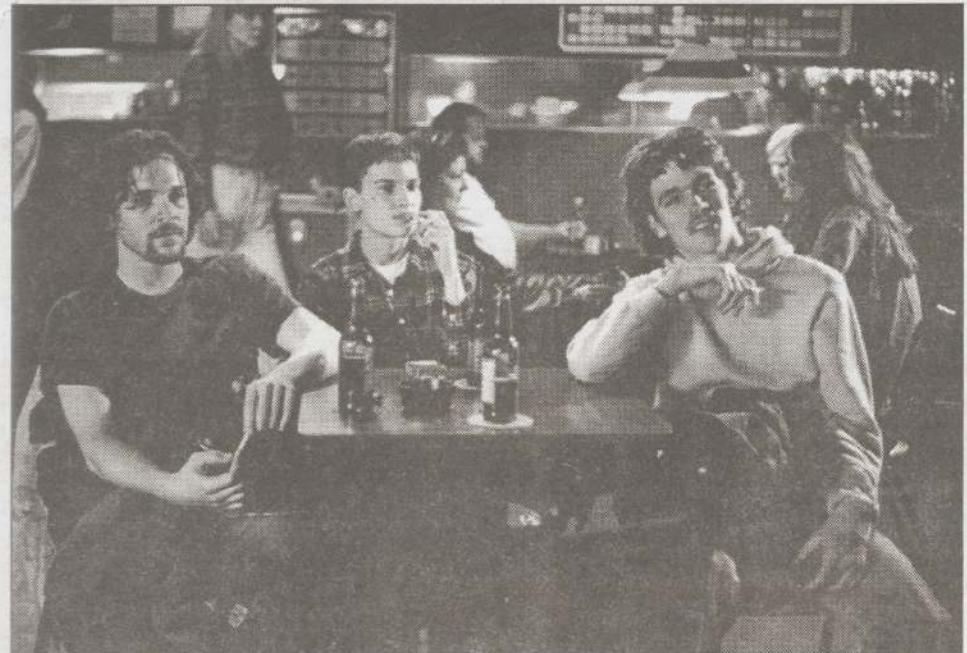
With this polished indie, director/co-writer Kimberly Peirce has perfectly captured the bleakness of middle America's forgotten lower class while painting a loving—though never idealistic—portrait of Brandon Teena, a real-life martyr for the sexually disenfranchised.

Brandon Teena was murdered in 1993 in Falls City, Nebraska at the tender age

of 19—killed by a former drinking buddy after it was crudely and dramatically revealed to Teena's circle of friends and lovers that the sexy and charming young man was, in fact, biologically female.

Painstakingly researched by its out-lesbian auteur, *Boys Don't Cry* adequately and unflinchingly explains the events leading up to Teena's "outing" and death, and on that basis alone makes for some pretty compelling true-crime drama.

Yet Peirce probes beneath the surface to force provocative questions on such weighty topics as gender perception, sexuality, love, self acceptance, and what it ultimately means to be human. That the movie asks such interesting questions in a



subtle and stylish way makes it a good film. That it provides no easy answers makes it great.

There's already industry talk about a best actress Oscar nod for Hilary Swank, who stars as Teena. The buzz is well deserved. Swank doesn't merely play Teena; she inhabits him. In every frame, her complex character's inherent magnetism is as apparent as his heartbreaking vulnerability.

Swank's supporting ensemble is equally good, featuring Chloe Sevigny as

Teena's teenaged lady love. Peter Sarsgard, Brendan Sexton III, Alicia Goranson and Jeannetta Arnett also star. Peirce's co-writer is Andy Bienen and the outstanding cinematography is by Jim Denault.

With a minimal budget, no feature-length directing experience and a cast of relative unknowns, Peirce's achievement is nothing short of amazing. If you see only one movie this month—if you see only one movie this year—see *Boys Don't Cry*. You'll be blown away.

Indie Latin film at Scottsdale Center Nov. 8

The City (La Ciudad), the 1998 Havana Film Festival's "Best Film" winner, will screen at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts on Monday, Nov. 8 at 7 pm as part of the civic art organization's ongoing Independent Film Fest.

An exceptional compassion for humanity is expressed in this authentic portrait of Latin American immigrants in present day New York. The film was directed by David Riker. Tickets are \$8. Call 480/994-ARTS.

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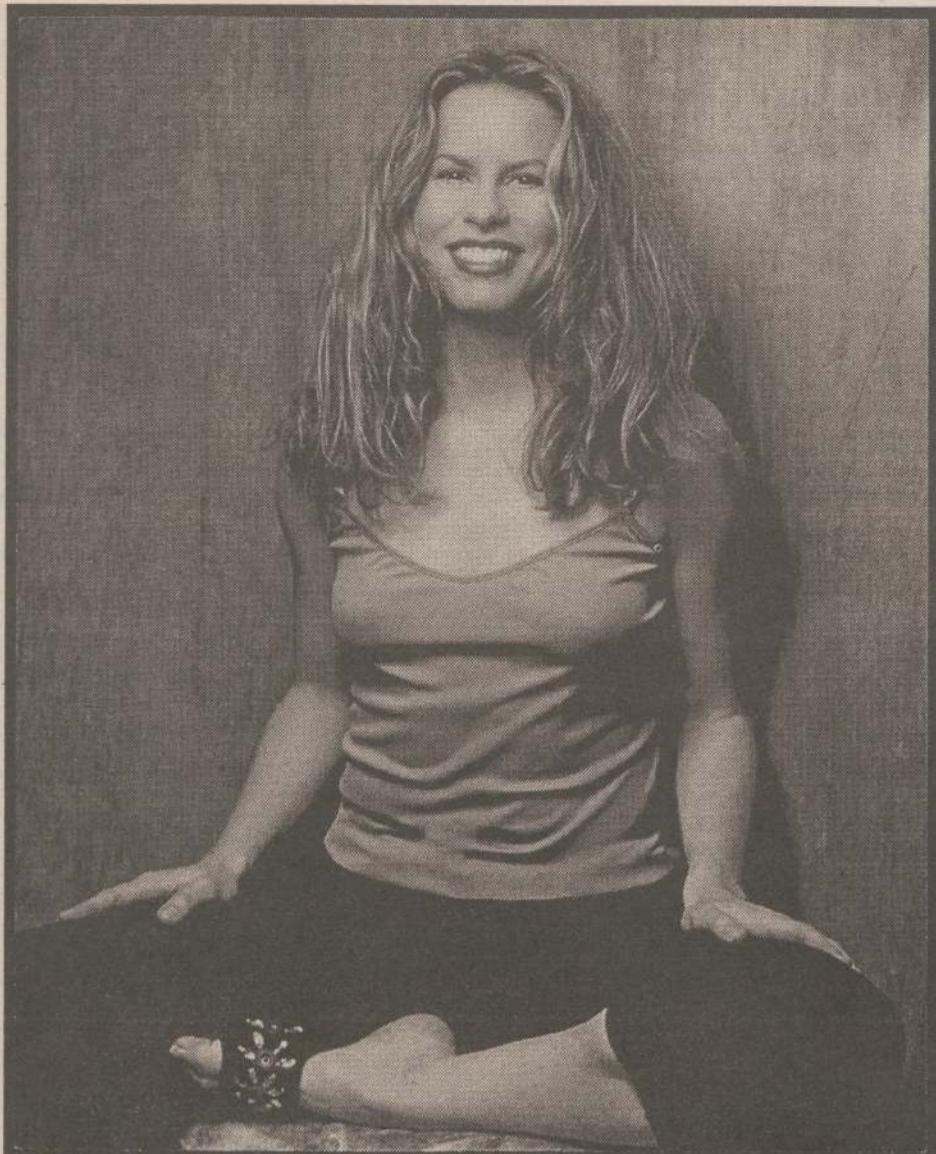
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Charlie's



Ally's alter-ego in Scottsdale Nov. 5

Singer/songwriter Vonda Shepard may be best known for the throaty R&B tunes she covers on Fox's *Ally McBeal* every Monday at the law gang's favorite pub. But she's also penned her fair share of soulful ballads and uptempo originals. Find out in person what Emmy win-

ning producer David E. Kelley saw in Shepard when she struts her vocal stuff under the stars at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts on Friday, Nov. 5 at 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$26 (\$22 in advance) and available by calling 480/994-ARTS.

Notable Quotes

Newsmakers, Celebrities & Others Speak Out

Compiled by Rex Wockner



"I have a saintly partner who has endured 30 and more years of this kind of life. Not many people put up with it and I honor him for doing that. It's one of the reasons I thought the time had come to reach the conclusion that this was not just a fling, that this was something that ought to be publicly acknowledged. And I'm glad I did it."

—Openly gay Australian High Court Judge Michael Kirby on why he recently came out, to Australia's *The Eye* magazine, Oct. 20. The High Court is Australia's supreme court.

"It's always seemed to me as a person brought up in a Christian belief, and who still counts himself as a Christian, as really ironic that some of the chief haters of gay people masquerade as followers of Jesus. It's astonishing to me because I believe I do understand the message of Jesus. But nothing will be changed in that respect unless people break the silence, and breaking the silence will end the game of shame."

—Openly gay Australian High Court Judge Michael Kirby to *The Eye* magazine, Oct. 20.

"That community [gays] has been with me since day one. All I can say is continue doing what your heart desires. If you've got a dream, stick with it—persevere."

—Singer Gloria Estefan to the U.S. national Latino glossy *qvMagazine*, current issue (Vol. 2 No. 4).

"That song ['Simplemente Amigos'] is about friends of mine who are homosexuals. I'll write songs about love relationships which are considered taboo."

—Spanish-language superstar singer Ana Gabriel to the U.S. national Latino glossy *qvMagazine*, current issue (Vol. 2 No. 4).

"One couple came through to see me earlier tonight—two men, one was from Australia, the other from New Zealand—and they said that as a couple, they hadn't the same immigration rights coming into America as they did in either Canada or New Zealand. I don't think that's right; I think that ought to be changed."

—Bill Clinton addressing the Empire State Pride Gala in Manhattan, Oct. 7.

"When we were in that awful battle that I waged and didn't win over the military service issue, there was a national survey run which showed that the most significant factor tilting people in favor of the so-called gays-in-the-military policy was whether they consciously were aware that they had known a gay person. And those who said they were consciously aware that they had a personal relationship, contact with a gay person were two to one in favor of the policy."

—Bill Clinton addressing the Empire State Pride Gala in Manhattan, Oct. 7.

"[I have] fantasies about drag queens parachuting in and disrupting it."

—San Francisco Board of Supervisors President Tom Ammiano on an Oct. 11 "come out of homosexuality" rally at the San Francisco county fairgrounds sponsored by the American Family Association and Kerusso Ministries, to the *Examiner*, Oct. 9.

"Bradley's far better than Gore. Bradley's a human being who can hold a conversation. Gore is a phony liar who would probably be good on most of our issues but certainly can't be trusted. Bradley would help us move forward, but would still hold back some. George Bush makes lovely speeches but is likely to be much meaner and more dangerous than his father."

—Lesbian syndicated columnist Ann Northrop's thoughts on the presidential campaign, Oct. 6.

"It energizes the people who come. It doesn't have any impact on the outside world. This is a morale booster. It's like the USO for the troops: It strengthens their resolve. All these people take a lot of grief for being gay, and tonight is a night for getting credit for taking that grief."

—Gay U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., at the Human Rights Campaign dinner Oct. 9 in Washington, D.C.

"If I had to do it all over again, there's only one thing I would change. I would have come out a lot earlier."

—Tennis legend Martina Navratilova at the Human Rights Campaign dinner Oct. 9 in Washington, D.C.

"I don't know why we're not forming an exploratory committee for you to run for president. You never expect your mother to become an activist for gay rights. She blows me away. I'm so proud."

—Actress Ellen DeGeneres to her mom, Betty, at the Human Rights Campaign dinner Oct. 9 in Washington, D.C.

"Many times I hate my name. I became commonplace. They made me an adjective: This is Almodovarian. Which is the worst that can happen to you. I'm sure that Fellini felt very bad about it."

—Gay Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodovar to gfn.com, Oct. 11.

"You know, they [my parents] wish I was drawing Charlie Brown and making a zillion dollars a year, but they're supportive. As it happens, my mother is the Illinois Secretary of Arts and Culture and works with a bunch of gay men, so they kind of gleefully bring her the Ethan strip from the Chicago gay paper each week."

—Cartoonist Eric Orner (*The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Green*) to Phoenix's *HeatStroke*, Oct. 7.

"If a heterosexual couple is the union between a man and a woman and respects nature, the union of two homosexuals is an obvious aberration that is abhorrent to the conscience and truth about the identity of man, his biological characteristics and the complementary functions of men and women."

—The Vatican Oct. 14 in response to France's passage of a partnership registration law that includes gay couples and grants most of the rights of matrimony.

"Her version [of 'Somewhere' is] horrible, isn't it? It's legendarily horrible, her version. Barbra Streisand came out in the '60s. She was a comedienne—*Funny Girl*, and those early records and the films she made. It's amazing. But the humor. What happened to it? I think there must have been an accident during the filming of *A Star Is Born*. I think her sense of humor went when the perm came. She's a great singer, though."

—Singer Neil Tennant of the Pet Shop Boys to the *Texas Triangle*, Oct. 8.

"I have her greatest hits at home. I quite often play it. I think if she did [ever say something to the effect that AIDS was God's punishment for the sin of homosexuality], we can all forgive her now, because she was absolutely crazy at the

time. We have to move on. And let's face it, she's a really great singer. What about the record with Streisand ['No More Tears (Enough Is Enough)']? She blew Barbra Streisand away, more or less."

—The Pet Shop Boys' Neil Tennant on Donna Summer to the *Texas Triangle*,

Oct. 8. Summer denies ever making the anti-gay remarks that have been attributed to her by concert-goers.

"I sort of think the whole idea of gay is a rather old-fashioned idea, that it's kind of a 1970s political response to oppression. Although I am gay sexually, I don't think I am necessarily gay culturally—if there is such a thing as gay culture. I like to think that sexuality doesn't define a person's life completely. There are tons of things that define our lives and sexuality is one of them. But when you say you're gay as I have done, there's a tendency to think of you as 'outrageously gay pop star Neil Tennant,' and I don't like that."

—The Pet Shop Boys' Neil Tennant to Miami's *The Weekly News*, Oct. 13.

"Can you imagine what the divorce courts will look like when gay men start filing adultery suits [after gay marriage is legalized]?"

—Columnist Cliff Bostock in Atlanta's *Etcetera* magazine, Oct. 15.

"I was cruising in the park last Friday. An undercover police officer pulled up to my car and rolled down his window. We chatted some basic then got to the part when he asked me what I like to do and I said 'oral' and 'both.' He said we could go to his house which was 5 miles away. I told him we would have to hurry in that I did not have much time. I followed him out of the park to High Point and was pulled over by a marked police car which wanted license and registration. They then told me what I just did was against the law, read me my rights and gave me a citation for soliciting Detective J.H. Marsh to commit a crime against nature. They then came back to the car for and wanted to know my social security number, home phone, work info, which I, at this point asked if it was required and finally he said not. They then told me I needed to get some pictures made. They took 2 shots. I assume they will put it in the paper and I will be history. I am married with 2 kids and ready to have a nervous breakdown. I cannot eat or sleep. What should I do? Anyway to stop it getting put in the paper? Are these conversations recorded and is it legal? PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE HELP ME!"

—Note posted at www.cruisingfosex.com Oct. 17 regarding entrapment arrests at Hester Park in Greensboro, N.C.

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Halloween

Deep Inside Hollywood

By Romeo San Vicente, HeatStroke Contributor

Rosie Outlook for Lesbians

Saucy Latina actress and AIDS activist **Rosie Perez** gets some Sapphic action in her next role, playing the lover of **John Leguizamo**'s mother in the upcoming thriller *King of The Jungle*.

The movie focuses on a mentally challenged New York man (Leguizamo) who witnesses a murder and then takes to the streets, where he's pursued by cops, the killer, and his insensitive father.

While the spunky Perez thought the gay role was cool, in real life she's strictly



Rosie Perez plays a lesbian in the upcoming *King of The Jungle*.

hetero: she recently married the film's very male director **Seth Zvi Rosenfeld**. No release date has yet been set for the picture.

Heche gets Killer Role

Anne Heche is in negotiations for a role in an upcoming Showtime feature called *One Kill*. If the deal closes, Heche will play an Army captain who has an affair with her commanding officer (played not by her real life C.O., **Ellen DeGeneres**, but by actor-playwright **Sam Shepard**).

After the affair ends, the C.O. winds up stalking Heche and breaks into her home, where she mistakes him for a burglar and shoots him. *One Kill*, which is based on a true story, will be directed by **Christopher Menaul**, who got an Emmy nomination for his work on the cable tele-flick *The Passion of Ayn Rand*.

Is Hyde Pierce a Truman?

Frasier star **David Hyde Pierce** is practicing his lisp. Rumor has it the actor has been approached by actress **Rita Wilson** to play **Truman Capote**, the writer and

bon vivant who made it chic to have a speech impediment, in a Lifetime Television made-for-TV movie.

Wilson, perhaps best known for her role as **Mrs. Tom Hanks**, is executive-producing and starring in the still untitled project about the high-society Cushing sisters of New York. She'll play Capote's one-time pal **Barbara (Babe) Cushing Mortimer**, who married legendary CBS founder **Bill Paley** in 1947. A script for the project is expected in December.

Get Cumming

Tony-winner and *Plunkett and MacLean* star **Alan Cumming** is taking a role in the high-octane *Sylvester Stallone* gangster pic *Get Carter*.

Cumming will play Stallone's nemesis in the revenge tale about a mobster (played by **Sly**) who infiltrates the pornography business to avenge the murder of his younger brother. The film is a remake of a 1971 movie of the same name.

Look for more Cumming on the silver screen next May when the Broadway star has two roles in the upcoming *Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas*—playing both "the Great Kazoo" and a (Rolling?) Stone Age version of **Mick Jagger**.

Liza's Diet Tips

You might not recognize **Liza** if you see her one-woman show *Minnelli on Minnelli*, which opens in December at New York's Palace Theater.

Judy's daughter has shed 40 pounds for the role thanks to daily workouts with a trainer, dancing every day, and eating health food and lots of protein. Combine that with her grueling rehearsals with **Marvin Hamlisch**, vocal training, an occasional massage, and Minnelli barely has time to sleep.

The show is more than a professional comeback for Liza, it's a sort of "coming home." The diva earned her first paycheck ever at the Palace at the age of 5 when she was paid \$5 to dance on stage with mom, who sang *Swanee*. The lithe Liza's show is scheduled to run through New Year's Day.

Showtime's Dirty Pictures

If nudie pictures and sadomasochistic imagery are your idea of fine art (that's certainly mine), then sign up for Showtime.

The cable network has announced that it's shooting a fact-based TV movie, called *Dirty Pictures*, about the controversial 1990 museum exhibit of homoerotic images by famed gay shutterbug **Robert Mapplethorpe**. The controversy resulted in obscenity indictments for both the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, which put on the exhibit, and its artistic

director, **Dennis Barrie**, as well as a barrage of protests against the National Endowment for the Arts, which partially funded the photo show.

Both the museum and Barrie were later acquitted, but the NEA took a near-fatal blow it's never recovered from.

James Woods, recently seen in *The General's Daughter*, has signed on to portray Barrie in the telepic, which will examine both sides of the controversy. Woods, who is vocal about his anti-censorship stance, has a history of cable films with queer content; he starred as **Roy Cohn**, the HBO drama about the infamous closeted right-wing kingmaker. **Frank Pierson**, who helmed the 1976 *Barbra Streisand/Kris Kristofferson* version of *A Star Is Born*, will direct *Dirty Pictures*, which is set to air in May 2000.

The British funny guys have actively policed any alteration of the troupe's routines and sketches, even bringing copyright lawsuits against ABC and the BBC back in 1976.

But Stone and Parker have convinced the surviving Python members (Eric Idle, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Michael Palin, and Terry Jones—Graham Chapman died in 1989) to let them spin Monty Python's revered "dead parrot" skit into an animated short starring the *South Park* kids—Cartman as John Cleese, Kyle as Palin and, of course, Kenny (who dies in every episode of the cartoon show) as the parrot.

The spoof, called *The Dead Friend*, will be part of a Monty Python 30th-anniversary television special, which will also include both classic material and new sketches by Monty Python members.

Ellen Does the Pageant Circuit

Ellen DeGeneres is doing the beauty queen thing—sort of.

The lesbian comedienne is attached to star with **Meg Ryan** in an untitled project about a '70s beauty pageant whose outcome is called into question some 20 years later. Producer **Bob Kosberg** is currently searching for a writer on the project.

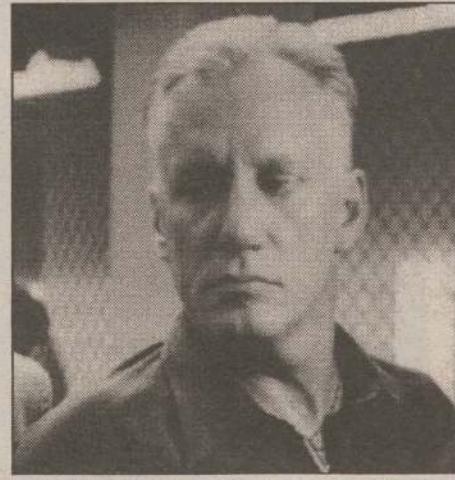
Louganis Dives Into Musical Theater

Olympic diver **Greg Louganis** has traded in his Speedo for the next two months... for an unflattering black dress.

Louganis is currently starring in an all-male production of *Nunsense* in Hollywood, Florida. He plays the habit-clad Sister Robert Ann.

While Louganis might not be as confident about singing on stage as he is about leaping off the high board, it's not the buff blonde's first foray in the theater—among other things, he's starred in an Off-Broadway production of *Jeffrey* and in a Chicago production of *Larry Kramer's Just Say No*.

Romeo San Vicente's python is named "Monty." You can reach Romeo (and Monty) in care of HeatStroke or via e-mail RomeoDeep@aol.com.



James Woods is slated to star in Showtime's *Dirty Pictures*—inspired by the controversy generated by Robert Mapplethorpe's homoerotic photography.

More "Monsters" for Condon

Bill Condon, the openly gay director of *Gods and Monsters*, is considering another "monster movie." He's looking at turning the novel *Invisible Monsters*, by *Fight Club* author Chuck Palahniuk, into a feature film.

Monsters is the quirky and often exhausting revenge tale of a disfigured former model who hits the road—a la *Thelma and Louise*—with her husband (whom she forces to take estrogen) and her new mentor/girlfriend, Princess Brandy Alexander, who is in the process of gender reassignment. Together, they get even with ex-boyfriends and others.

While the project doesn't seem like a natural for the big screen, Condon likes challenges. Let's hope he rises to the occasion.

Stroking the Python

Matt Stone and **Trey Parker**, the creative force behind Comedy Central's irreverent animated series *South Park*, have scored the Holy Grail: they've received permission (and a blessing) to re-work the comedy routines of the legendary Monty Python troupe.

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Out of Town

By Andrew Collins



The Evolution of Gay Dining

It wasn't long ago that browsing menus in so-called "gay ghettos"—like San Francisco's Castro, New York's West Village and Chelsea, Chicago's Boys' Town, or Washington, D.C.'s Dupont Circle—meant settling for serviceable but often unimaginative cuisine.

The point of eating in these parts was more to congregate in an inviting and like-spirited setting than to savor a truly memorable meal. Gay restaurants, after all, evolved out of the popularity of gay bars. And even in resort towns like Palm Springs and Provincetown, the search for stimulation—of the taste buds—has presented a formidable challenge.

But America has witnessed a culinary revolution over the past 20 years, and these days restaurant patrons—whether in cities, suburbs, or vacation destinations—demand increasingly sophisticated and dazzling fare.

It was only a matter of time before queer neighborhoods caught on, and it's been remarkable just how far and how quickly the culinary stars, and specific restaurants, of some of the nation's most gay-popular neighborhoods have risen.

The problem has never been that gay diners are any less discriminating about what and where they eat than the rest of the population—an argument could actually be made to the contrary. But ambitious chefs crave visibility and recognition, just as other entertainers and artists do, and great cooking is both entertainment and art.

If you're a talented singer or painter, you might be content performing and exhibiting in predominantly gay establishments for a while, but at some point you may want to branch out and share your abilities with the whole world.

Outstanding gay chefs are no exception, and a number of openly queer "kitchenhold" names have made it big in the '80s and '90s, helming the kitchens at America's snazziest restaurants.

Just consider Gary Danko, who presides over the critically acclaimed Dining Room at the Ritz-Carlton in San Francisco, or Susan Feniger, the lesbian half of the phenomenally popular TV Food Network cooking show *Too Hot Tamales*. Feniger also runs, with cooking partner Mary Sue Milliken, L.A.'s Border Grill and Ciudad, plus a new Border Grill at the Mandalay Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

But if you're a die-hard foodie or gourmet, you may still wonder whether

you can really find a great meal in gay neighborhood eateries. And culinary quality can be of utmost importance, especially if celebrating a special occasion or attempting to impress somebody.

After all, if last night's trick was a treat, you may just want to find a memorable and predominantly gay venue for your second date (one that serves something more than jalapeno poppers and chicken wings).

Just keep a couple points in mind when deciding where to make your next dinner reservation. First, revisit your favorite city's gay nightlife district—you may be surprised.

San Francisco's Castro District, for example, especially along Market Street, has witnessed a steady influx of hip new eating places, including the upmarket Restaurant 2223—where you might sample roasted monkfish with rock shrimp tamale, chayote squash, and shellfish tomato broth—and the reasonably priced pan-Asian entry, Tin Pan. Even fast-and-easy cooking has gone inventive in these parts, with bargain-priced cafes like Chow and Fuzio churning out tasty, eclectic fare.

A pre-club meal in Washington's Dupont Circle neighborhood used to mean steak-and-eggs or spaghetti and meatballs at some no-frills eatery. Nowadays you can opt for pan-seared Southwestern chicken breast with a tomato-corn relish and sweet-potato puree at the Mercury Grill. Or, if you want to go all out, saunter down to P Street and partake of the inventive prix-fixe menu at one of the city's culinary temples, Obelisk.

In Dallas, gay-trendy Oak Lawn delights food connoisseurs with Star Canyon, while in Atlanta, a slew of top restaurateurs have invaded the city's gay-bar hub, Midtown—of particular note is South City Kitchen, where regional cooking of the American South has been reinvented.

Walk around Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood, and you'll find exceptional and creative fare at places like Yoshi's, Arco de Cuchilleros, Oo-la-la!, and Madame B. And cooking aficionados in Boston all know to head for the guppified South End to sample the masterful cuisine of Aquitaine, Le Bettola, Hamersley's Bistro, Metropolis, and Franklin Cafe.

It seems that whatever the city's gay nightlife center—and let's not leave out Seattle's Pike and Pine streets, Vancouver's Davie Street, West Hollywood's Santa Monica Boulevard, Philadelphia's South 13th and Walnut streets, and Manhattan's Eighth and Seventh avenues—dining critics are flocking there.

A second rule of thumb: don't automatically assume that the dining room at a popular gay bar or resort serves only passable food; a lot of these places still regularly parole their food from deep freezers, but many more have sprung to life in recent years, hiring talented chefs and revamping their menus.

It used to be a fact of life that when visiting California's Russian River, you had to drive clear to Santa Rosa for great dining. Now Guerneville's own gay-pop-

ular Applewood Inn has become one of Sonoma County's top food destinations; the lesbian-owned Huckleberry Spring serves sublime

four-course dinners (by advanced reservation only); and Fife's (the gay community's own party central) presents a very good menu of contemporary American and Continental specialties.

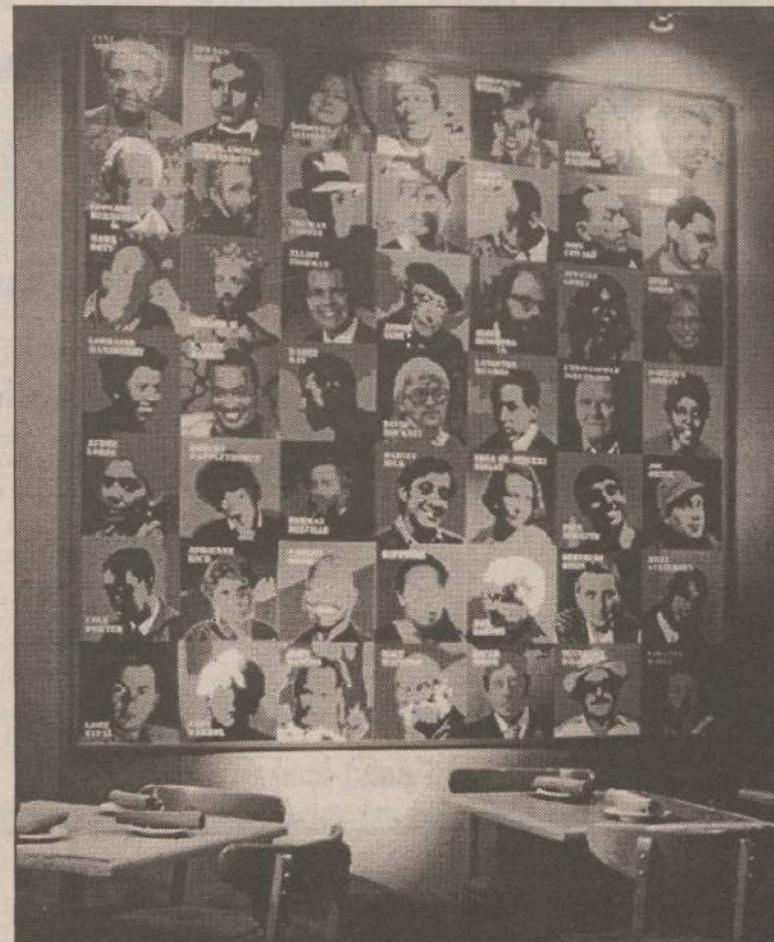
The best gay bar in Delaware's Rehoboth Beach, the Blue Moon, also happens to be one of the town's most sophisticated restaurants. Ditto for Godfrey's at La Terraza guest house in Key West; 11 Carver at the Gifford House hotel and the Provincetown Ferry restaurant and bar in P'town; and the postmodern and ultra-chic ARO.space nightclub and restaurant in Seattle. At all of these places you can combine socializing with serious noshing.

The impact by gay-oriented restaurants on the dining scene is remarkably visible even in a thoroughly all-American city where you might not expect to witness major trends: Columbus, Ohio. It's here that eateries like Lemongrass and Rigsby's have helped turn the stylishly queer Short North neighborhood into a dining mecca.

And right in the heart of downtown Columbus, you'll find a restaurant whose theme, name, and exceptional menu tell us to exactly what degree gay-oriented establishments have landed a prominent place in the culinary landscape: Out on Main, which is literally "out" on the city's Main Street, could be called America's first true gay theme restaurant.

The place is decked with memorabilia, from costumes worn by Elton John to a display of homo-pulp novels. But dining is no mere afterthought here. The management has worked hard to develop an

outstanding menu of contemporary American favorites. Columbus Dispatch dining critic, Doral Chenoweth (a.k.a. "the



Among the gay and lesbian luminaries celebrated in this mural at Out on Main are Audre Lorde, Oscar Wilde, Langston Hughes, Dorothy Allison, and Andy Warhol.

Grumpy Gourmet") named Out on Main one of the city's top ten restaurants of 1999—a clear sign that gay dining has truly come into its own.

Andrew Collins authored the second edition of *Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA*, as well as six gay guides covering the West Coast, New York City, South Florida, and Amsterdam. He can be reached in care of HeatStroke or at GayFodors@aol.com.

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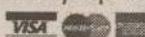
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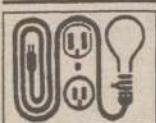
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Dear Cowboy,

When I first met my girlfriend she had two small tattoos on her leg and a stud through her tongue. I thought they were kind of sexy. After we had been dating a few months, she got yet another tattoo (on her neck!) and expanded the one on her calf. Then she got her navel pierced. The other day she showed up at my door with a pierced eyebrow. Now she is talking about having her cheek and both nipples pierced.

Enough is enough, don't you think? The woman is almost 30 and she looks like a skater. She won't discuss her plans with me because she says she already knows I don't like it. How can I convince her to stop all the body modification?

Signed, In Love With a Holey Woman

Dear Love,

I'm not sure you can. Your gal's body adornment decisions are hers alone to make. Too much whining from your end after the fact will only cause more problems between you.

Part of the deal of being in an intimate relationship is that the other person gets a certain amount of access to our bodies for their own pleasure. I think it's only fair that she listen to you, share her ideas, and be willing to make some compromises. Can she live without you ever touching her nipples again after those rings are in place? Can you learn to like—maybe even eroticize—her numerous alterations?

If the answers are "yes" and "no", then you ought to ask yourself how necessary it is to be in a relationship with a

gal who's hellbent on permanently changing her appearance so often, and who won't heed your requests to leave her various parts the way they came.

Maybe you are just too different to make each other happy. Some joint counseling could be in order. First you have to decide that what you have is worth saving. Good luck.

Dear Cowboy,

Settle a bet. Is it possible to get crabs without having sex with someone who had them?

Signed, Disbelieving Roommate

Dear Roommate,

According to my trusted medical

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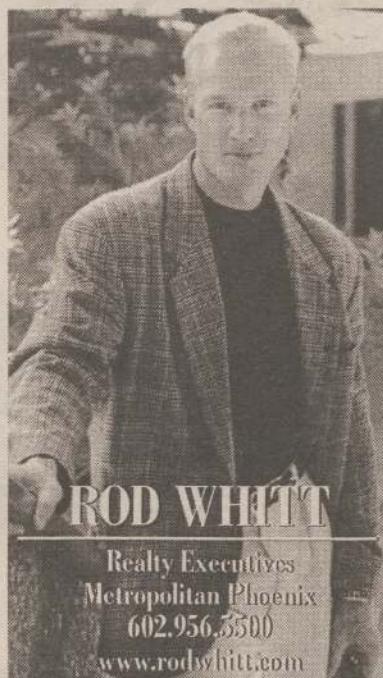
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sources, yes, it is possible to get the pesky critters (actually pubic lice) without having sex. But you'd have to be awful close to the infested person—as in: cuddling in the same bed; using a bed right after the other person used it; or sharing their longjohns right after they wore 'em. These critters like things warm & cozy, so the old "outhouse-seat" claim is generally considered an implausibility.

Stop placing bets on your pal's condition and encourage him or her to accept

it as a natural but bothersome part of being sexually active. The important thing for the person with crabs is to get rid of them ASAP. The important thing for the rest of us is to grow up about it.

**The important thing
for the person with
crabs is to get rid of
them ASAP. The
important thing for
the rest of us is to
grow up about it.**

HeatStroke's Funny Page

The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Green...

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QScopes

By Jill Dearman, Contributor

ARIES: The Sun is transiting your house of other people's money right now, which means you could gain through the right investment or partnership. You may be asked to get serious in a relationship, but wait till you're absolutely sure before signing on the dotted line. A Cancer offers clarity.

TAURUS: Bad memories from past lovers could come back to haunt you. They are just here to remind you of all you have to be thankful for now. Security and wealth are important, but don't forget your emotional desires, especially if you're getting involved with a Virgo.

GEMINI: Venus moves into the most outgoing sector of your chart on the 10th, so you should definite get out more and mingle. You have the opportunity to do a great favor for someone who means a lot to you. Be generous, sweetie. An Aries is intrigued with your depth.

CANCER: You are so smart about practical things, but so naive these days about people—including yourself! Remember your old powers of perception? Well, use 'em darling! An Aquarius needs your insights. And you need some time alone. Other people are distracting you too much.

LEO: Forgive someone close to you for being a total jerk. Yes, you are the bigger person—that's just the way it is. Let go of some of your anger—you've got more important things to deal with at home and in your family. A Sag needs some attention, too.

VIRGO: Venus is traveling through your money sector, which bodes well if you are trying to succeed in a creative career. In your personal life, it's time to decide who means what to you, and let the interested parties know. You've been enigmatic long enough, especially with an Aquarius.

LIBRA: Good luck could come your way in your work or sex life. Your ability to make people feel comfortable is your best asset, so use it. And don't neglect yourself: Do something

meditative to regain focus, and feed your body only gourmet food. Or let a Gemini feed you something even more delicious!

SCORPIO: The new moon in your sign at the beginning of the week signifies a major turn of events. You could be given the power you crave so desperately, and maybe you'll finally stop feeling so desperate. Act like the force of nature you are, honey, and a Libra will be blown away by you.

SAGITTARIUS: You are getting many psychic messages and they may be confusing. Ask your dreams for some insight, but read the metaphors carefully. You are apt to do business with people from past lives this week, so don't screw up your karmic credit. Be kind, Sag, especially with a Leo.

CAPRICORN: You could get the chance to expand either your business or your sexual repertoire, darling. Which will it be? Be open to change, especially within yourself. You've been in a sexual rut for awhile, but with a little prodding you can break free. Begin said prodding with a Gemini: *pronto!*

AQUARIUS: Venus moves through your travel sector in mid-November, so get as much wandering in as you can manage. On the way, expect to meet several important characters in that dark musical comedy called "My Future!" (exclamation point optional). A Scorpio plays a most fascinating role.

PISCES: A friend from another country (or a trip to another country) could change your life. Forget about all the petty people from the past, and don't let family members or colleagues force you to "get real." You're realer now than ever, and a Leo knows it. You need believers in your life, not cynics.

Jill Dearman is the author of two new books, *Queer Astrology for Men* and *Queer Astrology for Women* (both from St. Martins Griffin). For information on charts and consultations, call 212-841-0177 or e-mail QScopes@aol.com.

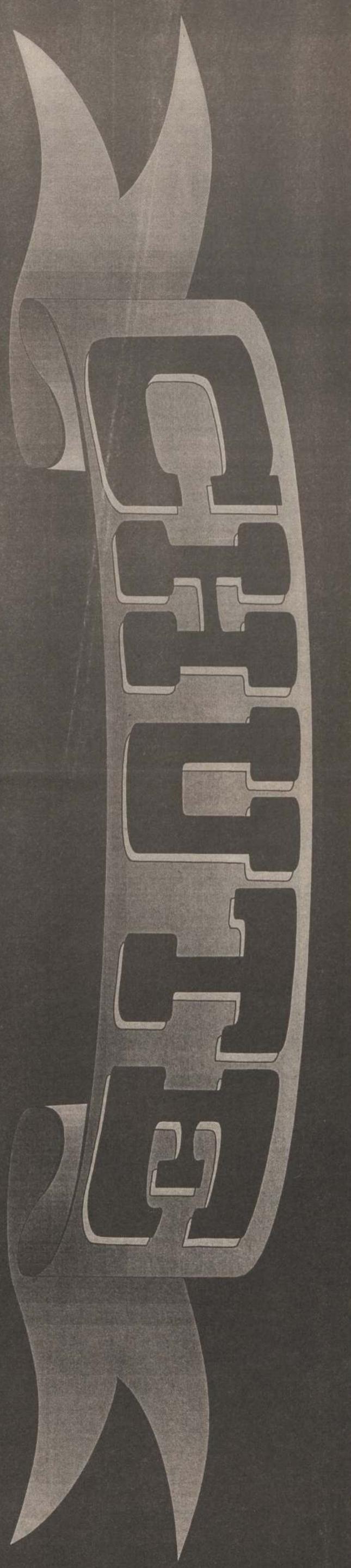
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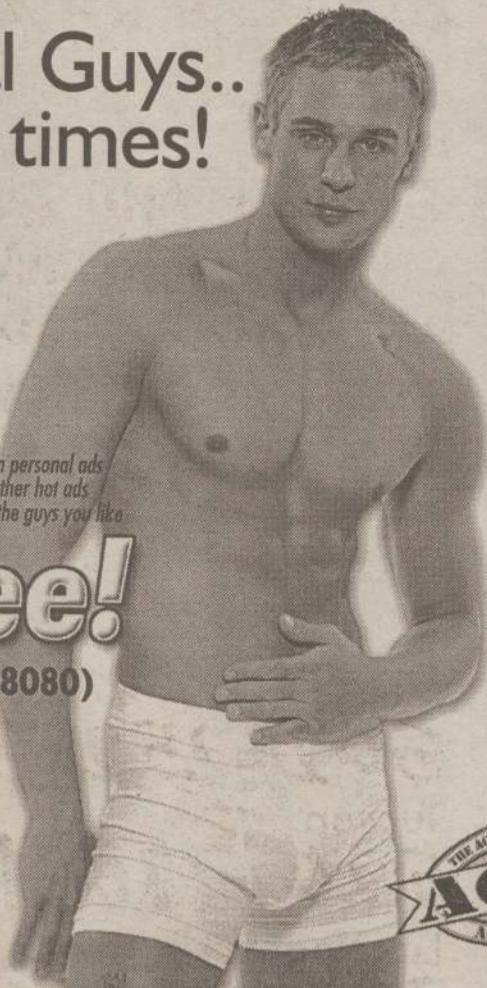
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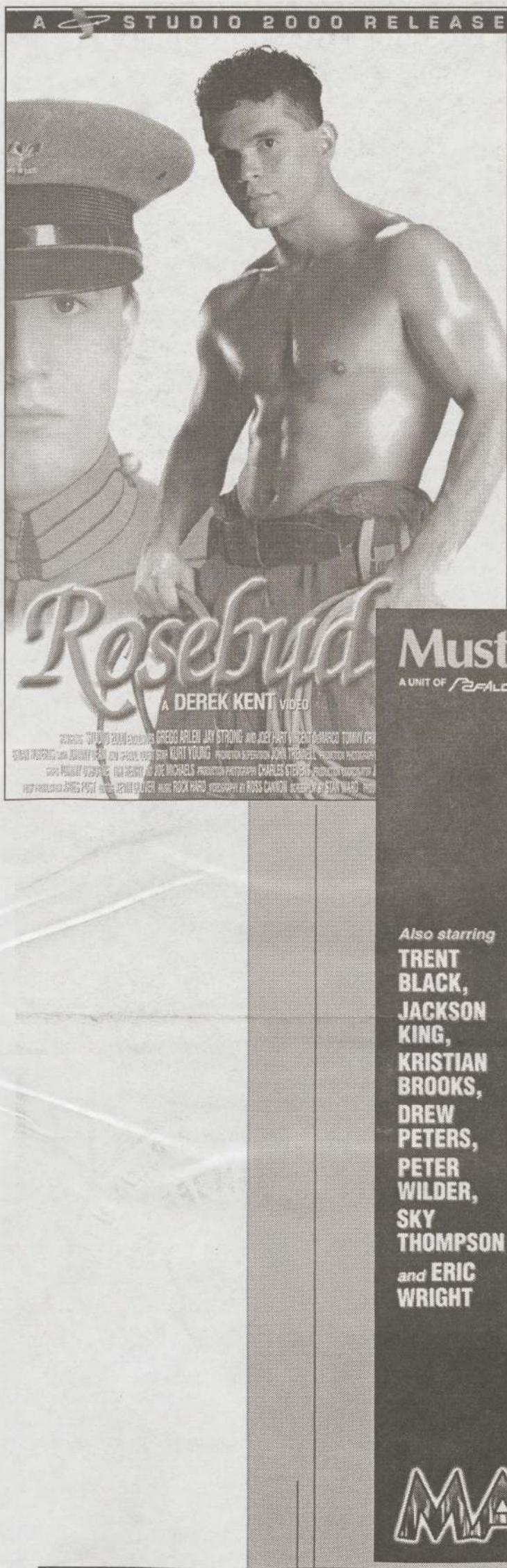
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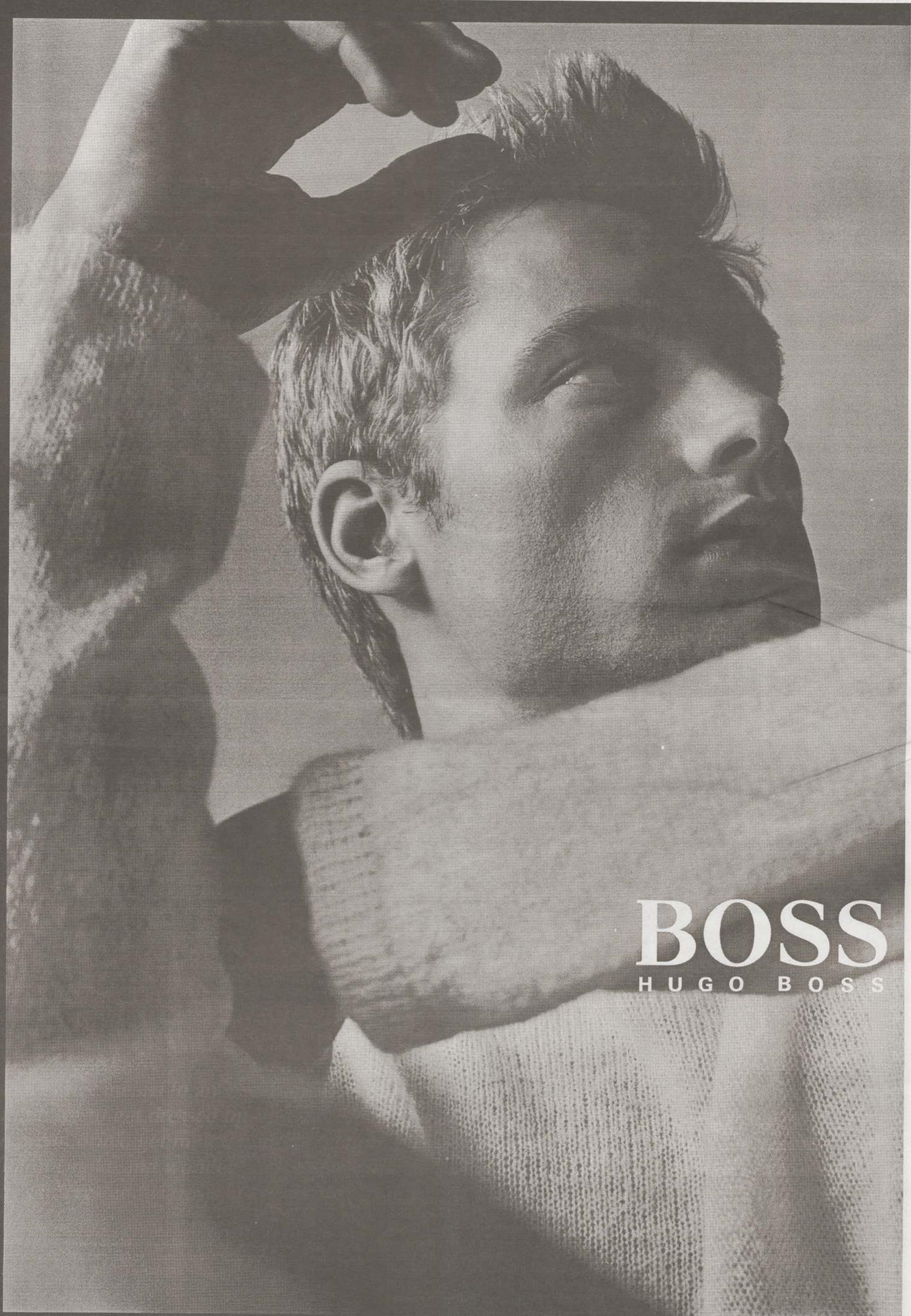
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Theatre Locations

- 4029 E. Washington
- 1838 Grand Avenue

Other Location

• 6527 N. 59th Avenue



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