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# UNANSWERED QUESTIONS:

Former Orlando salon owner Robert Murray was murdered on a dark Baton Rouge street. What was he doing there?

## INSIDE:

Tampa Bay's  
Guerrilla Queer Bar  
Sarasota's Shelley Craig  
*Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*

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Orlando Theatre Project presents *Boston Marriage*, a play about independent female longtime companions.



# EDITOR'S DESK

By **Dave Wiethop**

If you were forced to compare me to a summer's day, you might choose phrases like "hot," "moist" and "insufferable."

"You get this look on your face," my boyfriend said as we walked the dog. "When you're hot, you look angry."

"I am angry," I snapped. "And, I'm hot." It's the same discussion we have every summer.

With temperatures hovering in the low 90s and the humidity much like that of cream of broccoli, I'll be indoors until sometime in October. This is the way I cope. While I endure the outdoor pride festivities in June (oh, how I wish the police had chosen to raid the Stonewall Inn during the cooler months of March or October 34 years ago!) and the poorly scheduled August arts festivals, I find great joy in the sweat-free sanctity of my tiny, air-conditioned home and the occasional visit to the chilly movie theater, museum or mausoleum.

Every day is a wet t-shirt contest for me and while they have their place, wet t-shirts are more fun if the moisture has come from beyond the body, not from within.

Here lies the single problem that faces my boyfriend and me: He likes to sweat and I do not. He can mow lawns, clean gutters and dig holes during the summer's most humid days and I "hit the wall" during the 15-foot trip between the car and the house. If I can't carry the groceries with one trip, well, that ham's not going to be any good tomorrow morning now, is it?

He resolved a long time ago that he would help make me more heat-tolerant. One of his solutions came in the form of a word that is no longer allowed in my presence: "Gatorade."

The world of sports drinks and energy drinks has long escaped me because of some nutritional quirks that I have. For example, I won't eat raisins because they "look weird," and American cheese because it's "too clingy." Sports drinks, someone once told me, taste salty, and I believe that something that looks like Tang should taste like Tang. Gatorade will likely become one of those beneficial life experiences I'll never experience, like asparagus, PBS and power bars.

My solution to handling the heat is different: I simply adjust grind to a halt. I won't mow. I won't take the bike out and I most certainly will not eat

anything outside — even watermelon (you can, in fact, spit seeds through the crack in a door).

Camping can be a real problem, particularly during the summer months. During the chilly evenings of the winter and spring, I can snuggle in a pup tent and mask my claustrophobia with my love of coziness. The summer is a different matter. One ill-fated June trip found me shoved deep inside a hot, moist, tightly enclosed cocoon where I later woke in a panic, terrified that I was being squeezed back into a vagina.

Clothing options are a dilemma as well: While black is slimming, it's also a poor choice for Florida, as is red. I have one scarlet polo shirt that prompted a pal to shout "Hey, Kool-Aid!" at me, proving that I need a new wardrobe and new friends. Shorts, while comfortable, reveal scars and the irrefutable truth that I have never learned where my coffee table is located.

Sandals are my least favorite footwear, if only because of the phrase "hammer toes." I don't have them, but many, many people do, along with nail fungus and an aversion to pedicures. Flip-flops, while cooling to wear, prove there are more than a few who could claim "Hobbit" in their ancestry.

Legend has it that the Stonewall Riots occurred because some drag queens had been standing in line *in the heat* for hours to pay their last respects to the late Miss Judy Garland, thank you very much. When the police decided to raid their nice little neighborhood bar, these overexposed, under-hydrated and exhausted individuals knew *they had just had enough* and began punching back. I know how they feel.

This issue of *Watermark* takes a look at some grand indoor ideas: Tampa Bay's Guerrilla Queer Bar scene and the Orlando Theatre Project's *Boston Marriage*. We also cover the disturbing story behind the death of Robert Murray, who operated a prominent Orlando hair salon, and the mourn the departure of Shelley Craig from Sarasota's ALSO Out Youth. We even focus on a *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* on Bravo.

With no sweatbands in sight, we know you'll find this issue entertaining, informative and enlightening. ▽

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## PREVIEW

# Water Picks

EVENTS YOU SHOULDN'T MISS

## ORLANDO

### SUNDAY, JULY 20

The too-handsome-for-his-own-good **DAVID COPPERFIELD** brings his new show, *Grand Illusion*, to the Bob Carr Performing Arts Center for shows at 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Sunday, July 20. Known for dating a supermodel (and who isn't, if you really think about it) and making elephants levitate, this master of legerdemain has been known to take members of the audience and transport them beyond the confines of the theater (and not just through the emergency exits either). Copperfield has also been known for making aircraft disappear, but he can't perform the same stunt with bad credit. We've asked. Call (407) 839-3900 for details.

### JULY 28 - AUG. 2

The **PARLIAMENT HOUSE** celebrates its 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary in style — as usual — with a week of festivities including strip contests, amateur talent finals, an Employee Turnabout Benefit for Hope and Help on July 30 at 9 p.m., a concert by chanteuse **BECKY BAEILING** on Aug. 1, a concert by the oh-so-exciting **MARTHA WASH** on Aug. 2 and the premiere of **MICHAEL WANZIE's** *Carolina Moon*. Check [www.parliamenthouse.com](http://www.parliamenthouse.com) for details.

## SARASOTA

### THROUGH JULY 18

Sarasotan **JACK GILHOOLEY** and friend **DANIEL CZITROM** present *Red Bessie*, a two-character musical set against the backdrop of an anti-fascism rally in 1938 New York. The writers acquired copies of 30 agit-prop posters for use in this tale of the Spanish Civil War. This ambitious production offers shows at 8 p.m. Thursday, July 17, and Friday, July 18, at the Art Center Sarasota. For tickets, call (941) 365-2032 or visit [artSarasota.org](http://artSarasota.org).

## TAMPA BAY

### JULY 20 - 26

The **TAMPA BAY GAY MEN'S CHORUS** brings the sounds of the Sensational Sixties to two venues this month: St. Pete's Palladium Theatre, 253 Fifth Ave. North, at 3 p.m. Sunday, July 20, and at 8 p.m. Saturday, July 26, at the Friday Morning Musicale, 809 Horatio St. in Tampa. Advance tickets are \$18 for one or \$30 for two. They're also \$20 each at the door. Call (727) 865-9004 between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays.



A British girl discovered that The Hulk carried some bulk in his pants.

# Water Cooler

PEOPLE ARE TALKING



## OH, HE'S RAGING ALRIGHT ...

Imagine the surprise of the 6-year-old British girl who playfully pulled off the pants of her plush version of **THE HUNK**, er, **THE HULK** ... only to find the 12-inch doll sported a 2-inch hard-on. According to London's *Sun*, the girl's mother won the stuffed creature, complete with kelly green skin and tight purple pants. When the tyke ripped open the shorts of the angry alter ego of Bruce Banner, her mother exclaimed that "A hulk with a bulk like this just shouldn't be allowed."

If you're doing the math, if the average man — as determined by *Watermark* Sex Survey data — has a 6-inch package, then he should be ... about 3 feet tall.

The doll is apparently made by a Spanish company, Play by Play, and available in the United Kingdom.

## SAVAGE REMARKS

When are they going to learn that they can't say every asinine remark that pops into their addled little minds? Perhaps Christian Coalition sycophant **MICHAEL**

**SAVAGE** can have a pity party with **DR. LAURA SCHLESSINGER**: MSNBC canceled his 5 p.m. Saturday talk show after he insulted a gay caller.

"Oh, you're one of the sodomites," Savage charged after the caller started to insult him. "You should only get AIDS and die, you pig! How's that? Why don't you see if you can sue me, you pig? You got nothing better than to put me down, you piece of garbage? You got nothing to do today? Go eat a sausage and choke

on it. Get trichinosis."

MSNBC, a division of GE that will also allow its gay employees to receive domestic partnership benefits, cancelled the show two days after his remarks. Apparently no one else was watching the show, so media reports about his statements had to circulate before anyone at NBC News could do something.

The network apparently hired the brash ultra-conservative commentator without actually hearing his radio show: "You pig!" is tame by Savage standards.

"Get trichinosis?" Oh, we get it now.

## GLAMOROUS HOLLYWOOD

He played the principal in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, but it was his role as the director of some porno pictures of a 14-year-old boy that got actor **JEFFREY JONES** in trouble: He was sentenced recently to five years probation and ordered to register as a sex offender.

Jones was arrested Nov. 14 after a year-long investigation that also resulted in the arrest of actor Sarasota's own **PAUL REUBENS**, who is best known for the character Pee-wee Herman. Reubens, 50, who is free on \$20,000 bail, has pleaded innocent to one misdemeanor count of possessing material depicting children under 18 engaging in sexual conduct.

## OUT OF LUCK

Showtime and MTV have iced a proposed all-gay 24-hour television called **OUTLET**. Scheduled to debut this spring — whoops! — the channel never launched. Outlet would have offered original gay series, GLBT movies and news with a gay slant, but the parent company, Viacom, has suggested that a slow economy might not be the best environment for a new venture such as this. Outlet may never air — but several other cable channels continue to pursue gay programming options. Bravo has already brought *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* — (see our story on page 29) that puts **RICKI LAKE** to shame — and *Boy Meets Boy*, also known as *Mystery Date*, which premieres on July 31.

# FORMER ORLANDO SALON OWNER MURDERED

**Robert Murray's death leaves a lot of questions unanswered.** by Dave Wiethop

**BATON ROUGE, La.** - So many questions remain about the shooting death of Robert Murray, yet few associated with the man seem to have answers.

The popular former Orlando hairdresser was shot to death in the wee hours of June 24 in one of the rougher neighborhoods of Baton Rouge, La., his hometown. Murray had moved back to Louisiana about four years ago to take care of his grandmother and continue his battle with some of the demons that plagued him.

"He was on a street that had its good parts and its bad parts and it was near the (Louisiana State University) campus, so he could have been using it as a shortcut back home from an AA call," said his mother, Jean Ahlers. "At least, that's what I hope he was doing there."

The original owner and operator of the Robert Dean Salon in Orlando's Thornton Park, the 6-foot-1-inch, blond and blue-eyed Murray was a popular fixture in the

city's nightlife. He loved music, dancing, night clubs — and could be equally content as a homebody, recalled Paul Horan, who had been his boyfriend for about seven years here. They broke up before Murray moved back home.

"He was a kind and gentle soul who was terribly popular," Horan said. "He was the kindest of people and the best of friends."

Yet, the 38-year-old was also troubled by some addictions.

"Having gone through the demons with him, I always knew that something might happen. I hoped it would not and I hoped that he could return to Orlando," Horan said.

Those demons may have gone away during his stay in Baton Rouge. He became active in the gay Alcoholics Anonymous program and worked with others who attended the meetings.

Friends involved with the AA program were stymied about why Murray was on that Baton Rouge street at 1:30 a.m. that Tuesday morning.

"We'll never know why he was there, but we pride ourselves on loving each other, no matter what," Murray's 12-step program sponsor, Cindy Miller, told Baton Rouge's daily newspaper, the *Advocate*. "Even if he

was there for the wrong reasons, we love each other unconditionally."

Horan also speculated the trip to East Roosevelt Street could have been for a good reason.

"My only hope is that he was on that street helping someone in his support group," the Orlando man said.

Authorities at first thought they were responding to a car wreck that morning. Murray was shot in the chest, causing his car to flip, said police Cpl. Mary Ann Godawa.

The doors of the car had been locked, and Murray remained secured in his seat belt when authorities arrived. Police found that a bullet had been fired through the rear passenger window and into Murray's shoulder. The bullet then ricocheted on a rib and then into his heart. He had told rescue crews at the scene that he was trying to get away from someone, his mother said.

He was taken to Baton Rouge General Medical Center, where he died shortly afterward. While the bullet that killed him has been recovered, a green bag with AA materials and his Daytimer has not been found. Murray had no money with him at his death, but Ahlers, his mother, said that wasn't unusual. She had given him money



Former Orlando salon owner ROBERT MURRAY.

for cigarettes that day and police found a carton at his home.

Police plan to stage a re-enactment of the crime and possibly offer a reward for tips leading to the arrest of the shooter.

"Robert had been having a very hard hard time with drugs and depression. He was struggling, struggling, struggling,"

*Continued on page 20*

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## ORLANDO NEWS

**FUNDRAISING IN THE RAIN**

**ORLANDO** - Despite a torrential downpour, the June 22 Ultra-Glam Brunch on Betty (a street in Colonialtown) attracted several dozen die-hard supporters to a fundraiser for Orlando City Commissioner **PATTY SHEEHAN's** upcoming District 4 re-election campaign. The commissioner poses with party hosts **JASON LOWE** (left) and **BRETT CHAMBERS**, right, who collected more than \$1,000 at the event. The election is in March, 2004.

Photo by Tom Dyer.

## LAKE COUNTY TOWN COULD RETHINK DISCRIMINATION BAN

**MONTVERDE** - While the small Lake County community of Montverde passed a charter amendment in November to prevent discrimination among city job applicants because of their sexual orientation, city leaders could consider rescinding this change.

The town became one of a handful in the state to include such language. City leaders said they wanted to amend the town's 1925 charter, in part, so Montverde could qualify for more federal grant money, according to the *Orlando Sentinel*.

Since the amendment passed, however, the conservative Liberty Counsel — the same organization that supports the state's ban on gay adoptions and fought Orlando's anti-discrimination ordinance for gays —

has sued the town.

Some voters told the *Sentinel* that they didn't understand the "vague" language of the amendment they faced in the polling booths. The resulting change has led at one town council member to ask the others on the panel to join him in apologizing for their part in passing the amendment, a request that went unfulfilled.

So far, the town has not received any written settlement offers and election officials say that changing it back to the old charter would require another vote.

Because an election is already scheduled for the fall, the election cost of about \$1,400 wouldn't increase by adding the charter issue. The matter will be discussed in a closed meeting in August. ▽



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### ORLANDO BRIEFS



#### DINNER AND A MOVIE FRIDAY AT THE CENTER

For \$7 per person, the Gay Lesbian Bisexual Community Center, 946 N. Mills Ave., in Orlando, will offer its monthly Dinner and a Movie event. This month will feature the satire, *But I'm a Cheerleader* starring Cathy Moriarty, Natasha Lyonne and Clea DuVall. Questions? Call the center at (407) 228-8272.

#### BREVARD POLYAMOROUS SOCIAL SET FOR JULY 21

The monthly dinner and social for Brevard County residents who are involved in polyamorous relationships is scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m. Monday, July 21. Write to [brevardpoly-owner@yahoo.com](mailto:brevardpoly-owner@yahoo.com) for details.

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## ORLANDO NEWS

## HOPE & HELP GEARS UP FOR HEADDRESS BALL 2003

ORLANDO – It's time once again. Hope & Help's annual Headdress Ball has been scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 4, and will once again be held at the Royal Pacific Resort at Universal Studios Orlando.

The theme of this year's event is *Naughty, Bawdy, Risqué* and has been described as *Chicago* meets *Moulin Rouge*. To reflect the theme, the silent auction area will be set up to resemble a red light district and the VIP area will become a "VIPeep Show."

The Lachrymosa Diamond Mask, created by award-winning jewelry designer Henry Dunay and valued at more than \$1 million, will be on display during the ball. The 136-carat mask includes 936 diamonds set in platinum and gold and was created in 1991 to be used raise awareness and funds for HIV and AIDS. The mask's golden tear symbolizes the pain and sadness of AIDS.

Guests at the ball will be able to pay to have their picture taken with the mask. Last year's ball raised \$205,000.

The Headdress Ball will be held again in the Pacifica Ballroom, but this year the room will have a different configuration.

"We are thrilled and overwhelmed by the generosity of the Royal Pacific Resort," said Maggie King, development director for Hope & Help. "They have been both amazingly charitable and a pleasure to work with."


Sponsors for this year's event include *Watermark*, *WKMG*, *Orlando Leisure* magazine, *XL 106.7*, *Ten United* and *A & U* magazine. Sponsorship packages are still available and organizers are still in need of donations for the silent auction portion of the event.

"We are looking for really great silent auction items to be donated to a very worthy cause," King said. "This is a really great way for businesses and organizations to advertise their name to an upscale audience."

The Hope & Help Center of Central Florida is a non-profit HIV and AIDS service organization whose mission is to provide information, community referrals

and resources for people living with HIV and AIDS. A large portion of their annual operating budget comes directly from the profits of the annual Headdress Ball.

"It's a really important event," King said. "It raises awareness and sorely needed dollars that will go to provide services for children, women and men who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS."

Ticket prices range from \$175 to \$2,500 and can be purchased by calling (407) 645-2577 or by e-mailing [EVENTS@HOPEandHELP.org](mailto:EVENTS@HOPEandHELP.org).  John Sullivan



### POINT AFTER

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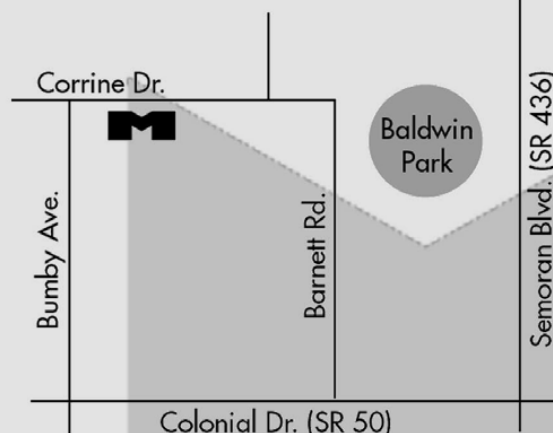
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## TAMPA BAY BRIEFS



### DEBATE OVER NON-DISCRIMINATION CONTINUES IN LARGO

Largo city commissioners continue to struggle with extending citywide nondiscrimination protections to gay, lesbian, and transgender residents. At a second work session on the issue in late June, commissioners voted to hold a public hearing in August so that the public could participate in the debate. The original proponent of the ordinance, commissioner Charlie Harper, has apparently retreated from sweeping protections under pressure from some vocal Christian constituents. "The city commissioners are just in torment about how far you get out in front of your community," said City Manager Steven Stanton.

### WOMEN-ONLY EVENT RAISES FILM FEST FUNDS

A women-only gala benefit at downtown Tampa's Mise en Place restaurant will raise funds for the 14<sup>th</sup> Tampa Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival. The private party — billed as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Red Carpet Affair — takes place on Saturday, July 19, at 7:30 p.m. Attendees will be asked to become members of Friends of the Festival with donations ranging from \$100 to \$1,000. The festival takes place in early October, and has an annual budget of close to \$100,000.

### PALM HARBOR'S FIRST GAY BAR OPENS

Residents of North Pinellas County no longer have to drive to Clearwater, St. Petersburg and Tampa for gay nightlife. On Thursday, July 10, Club Zoo opened in Palm Harbor and welcomed large crowds throughout the weekend. The 7,000-square-foot club, at the corner of U.S. 19 and Klosterman, has been remodeled and contains a show room, dance bar, billiard room and more. Call (727) 939-4212 for directions and information.

### ST. PETE PRIDE OFFERS COLLECTOR'S ITEMS, CAMARADERIE

Capitalizing on the good vibes at St. Pete Pride last month, a follow-up gathering has been planned for Sunday, Aug. 3, at 11 a.m. at Fort DeSoto Park's pavilion 2. Look for the rainbow flags and email dtfiorini@fiorinigallery.com for more information. And with the success of the inaugural event, St. Pete Pride logo merchandise is being made available as gift and collector's items. Embroidered polos and t-shirts by B-Charming Designs are available at the Pro Shop Pub in Clearwater. Silk-screened t-shirts and tanks, coffee mugs, mouse pads, license plates and koozies can be purchased at Spirit Graphics, 2414 Central Ave. in St. Petersburg. All profits benefit St. Pete Pride.

## LAWSUIT ALLEGES CITY NEGLIGENT IN MARRERO'S DEATH

TAMPA — The parents of slain Tampa police Officer Lois Marrero have filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the city of Tampa, alleging that her death could have been prevented with better police support.

Marrero was gunned down in the parking lot of a South Tampa apartment complex while pursuing bank robbers on July 6, 2001. The shooting of the openly lesbian police officer took place on the opening day of PrideFest Tampa Bay that year, casting a pall on festivities. The attempt by Marrero's life partner, Mickie Mashburn, to obtain pension benefits has since become a rallying point for the local GLBT community.

The wrongful death lawsuit, filed in Hillsborough County Circuit Court on July 1 by Maria and William Marrero, seeks \$3 million in damages. It claims that veteran police officer Marrero requested help the day she was killed, but that garbled radio transmissions and the lack of an observer in an overhead police helicopter placed her at risk.

Specifically, the lawsuit says an observer would have seen armed robbers Nestor DeJesus and Paula Gutierrez waiting to ambush Marrero in an apartment building parking lot. After shooting Marrero, DeJesus forced his way into an apartment where he killed himself. In May 2003,

Gutierrez was convicted of murder and sentenced to three life terms in prison.

Attorney Richard Hirsch said Marrero was "wide open to being shot," because of the lack of police support. One month after Marrero was killed, Tampa police Chief Bennie Holder made it policy for an observer to be present during all police helicopter flights.

Mashburn has not joined the wrongful death lawsuit. A lesbian in San Francisco is currently seeking damages from the owners of two dogs that mauled her partner to death in 2001. **▼ Tom Dyer**



Did a police helicopter fail to warn Tampa police Officer LOIS MARRERO of armed robbers?



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## TAMPA BAY NEWS



Organizer **BUD BROMWELL** promotes Gay Days Tampa Bay at St. Pete Pride.  
Photo by Rex Maniscalco.

## FALL PRIDES TAKE SHAPE

**TAMPA** - A successful St. Pete Pride is in the rear view mirror, and gay Tampa Bay is now looking ahead with more than a little curiosity at new pride-related celebrations planned for October and early next year.

With recent announcements, both Gay Days Tampa Bay and Tampa Bay Pride Fest are beginning to take form. And after a successful fundraiser, Don Bentz's Pride Tampa Bay Foundation is lying in wait, seeking the right opportunity to reassert itself.

## WOMEN'S ENERGY BANK WEATHERS CONTROVERSY

**ST. PETERSBURG** - The venerable Women's Energy Bank (WEB) was formed in 1981 as a "safe, supportive space where women could meet, dialogue, socialize, learn, grow and play together." But for many members the last year has been more work than play. A dispute surrounding inclusion of transgender women - and different styles of conflict resolution - has threatened support and forced leaders to meet in secret.

In the July issue of the organization's newsletter, *Womyn's Words*, a letter stated that a group of women had infiltrated and disrupted business meetings to the point that they had become "unsettling." Leaders took the unprecedented step of disinviting certain women from meetings that would now be held in private homes instead of at the Quaker Friends Meetinghouse in St. Petersburg. Popular monthly "salon" gatherings remain open to all women.

Signs have been posted outside WEB meetings stating, "Women-born Women Only." But at least some of the banished women say that issue has been resolved, and that personality issues are the core problem for an organization that prides itself on inclusion. ▼ *Tom Dyer*

Gay Days Tampa Bay organizer Bud Bromwell announced last week that respected circuit DJ Roland Belmares has committed to the Better Than Wet party on Saturday, Oct. 11. The event is designed to entice thousands of bathing suit-clad partiers to the 30-acre Adventure Island water park near Busch Gardens for a wet night of dancing similar to Orlando's Beach Ball. (Although at \$55, ticket prices are considerably lower.) Belmares' credits include the White Party, the Winter Party and Volcano.

In addition to Better Than Wet, the Oct. 10-12 Gay Days Tampa Bay will feature a Friday night kick-off party at a site not yet determined. Saturday is Gay Day at Busch Gardens, with special below gate prices available. And Sunday offers up an Expo and pool party at host hotel Holiday Inn Busch Gardens.

Bromwell was initially disappointed when the Tampa Bay Business Guild and the Tampa International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival declined offers to affiliate with his event, choosing instead to adopt a "wait and see" approach after the controversy surrounding last year's PrideFest Tampa Bay.

Bromwell believes the thousands he hopes to attract to Tampa will enlarge the audience for the Oct. 2-11 Film Fest. He has promoted Gay Days Tampa Bay - which also coincides with National Coming Out Day - at Pride events in Sarasota, Orlando and St. Petersburg and he said the response has been positive.

"People like the fact that it's in the fall," he said, "and they like the lineup of events and the reasonable prices."

Bromwell said community organizations can earn money by selling tickets to the event through an affiliates program. For more information on Gay Days Tampa Bay, visit [www.gaydaystampabay.com](http://www.gaydaystampabay.com).

The following weekend, another ambitious first-time event kicks off. The centerpiece of Tampa Bay Pride Fest is a free day-long festival at the Florida State Fairgrounds on Saturday, Oct. 18, featuring a parade, mass commitment ceremony, comedy and fashion shows, and "special celebrity guest performers

Continued on page 25

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## ALSO BIDS FAREWELL TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SARASOTA - After serving for more than four years as the executive director for ALSO Out Youth, Shelley Craig resigned to pursue her doctorate in social work at Florida International University in Miami. Craig will continue to oversee the organization through the end of July while she trains her replacement.

ALSO provides its services to GLBT youth in Manatee, Sarasota and Charlotte counties. Founded in 1992 to compensate for the lack of available specialized services

in the region, the organization has grown to be the largest provider of services for sexual minority and questioning youth in the Sunshine State.

While many members of the local community credit Craig for the overwhelming success of the organization, she is quick to point out that the organization's success has more to do with community support than it does her efforts.

"ALSO has done well over the last four years," Craig admitted. "But that has more to

do with the number of people that thought we were a worthwhile organization, and jumped in to help, than it has to do with me."

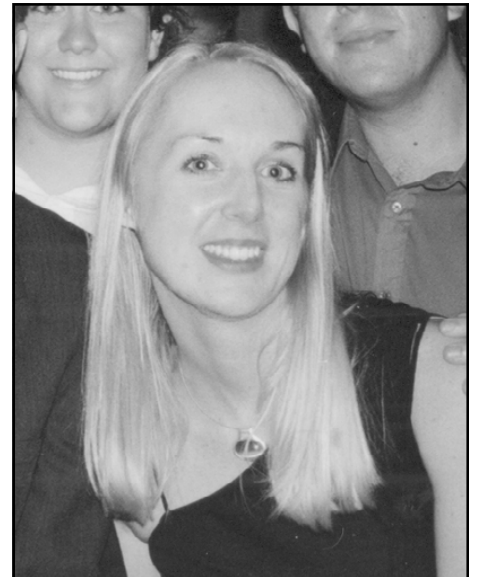
Having completed her master's degree in social work, Craig will attend the university on a full fellowship through the Florida Department of Health and Urban Affairs. When the opportunity presented itself, Craig took a few days to think it over before making her decision. One of her biggest concerns was making sure she had done everything could have for ALSO and she wanted to be certain that there would be new energy coming.

"I'll miss being here," Craig said without hesitation. "I'm a little tired but the work has been challenging. I will miss the young people the most because they are the reason that I come to work every day. I will really miss their energy and honesty and of course I'll miss their hair and sense of style."

Her girlfriend of four years, radio personality Wanda Myles, will join her in Miami. The couple found a home just south of downtown Miami and will move in during the first week of August.

Aside from concentrating on school-related issues, Craig will be redoubling her efforts into her position as a member of the national board of directors of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, another organization that she believes in whole-heartedly.

Craig would like to focus some of her research on GLBT youth and the statistics



SHELLEY CRAIG: "I am leaving with a sense of my own ability to affect change."

that show they have higher suicide rates and higher incidences of drug use. She believes that changes can be made for and by gay youth will see an increase of more positive statistics.

"I have always been interested in the resiliency of any population that is at risk," Craig said. "I think that if we have healthier data, we will have healthier youth."

Craig said her departure will have no negative impact on the organization that she has seen go from having no one on the payroll to having four paid staff members and a drop-in center for GLBT youth.

"If you build an organization strong enough it can withstand any changes that it goes through," Craig said. "The youth at ALSO feel ownership in the leadership of the agency, they feel they are full and equal partners in how the organization is run."

As she prepares for the big changes ahead, Craig said she will leave Sarasota with a renewed belief in the power of community to come together.

"We have seen it in the youth community here, the gay community and the community in general. I believe people will come together to support gay youth," Craig said. "I am also leaving here with a sense of my own ability to affect change. And with that I have been able to work with gay youth to help them discover their abilities to change the world." ▽ John Sullivan

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## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW FALLS SHORT FOR GAYS

**TALLAHASSEE** - A new civil rights law has earned praise for prohibiting discrimination based on race, religion, gender or age — but fails to address bias against the GLBT community in the workplace.

According to the *Orlando Sentinel*, the new law, which took effect within days of the U.S. Supreme Court decision striking down sodomy laws, did not include the GLBT clause because state leaders felt that area was “too controversial.”

At least 12 other states already specifically prohibit discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation.

Florida Attorney General Charlie Crist said including discrimination against gays was considered too controversial and could have distracted from the main goal of fighting discrimination against minorities. “That was the prime focus,” he said.

Crist said while the issue of gay discrimination came up briefly in Florida, it was opposed by the bill’s Senate and House sponsors, Sen. Alex Villalobos, R-Miami, and Rep. Jeff Kottkamp, R-Cape Coral, and by the leader of the Black Caucus, Rep. Ed Jennings, D-Gainesville.

“There was some discussion along the way,” Crist said. “Sen. Villalobos and Rep. Kottkamp and Rep. Jennings and others felt we really wanted to make a strong

statement about how minorities are treated. They wanted to keep it to that point.”

Lawmakers also dropped a proposal to ban discrimination against pregnant women in the workplace, fearing that too would have sunk the entire bill.

Nevertheless, legal experts call the new Florida law a big step forward and say it sends a strong warning against discrimination in renting an apartment, getting a job or promotion, or the treatment of tourists visiting the state’s restaurants, hotels and stores.

“It’s important because now the Florida attorney general can enforce the civil rights law directly,” said Tampa attorney Sam Smith, who won a \$1.1 million court settlement after the Adams Mark hotel in Daytona discriminated against hundreds of black guests at the 1999 Black College Reunion by making them wear arm bands and pay special fees and security deposits.

Among new powers is a penalty of up to \$10,000 per incident.

“The new law allows the state to target a pattern or practice of discrimination directly in court as federal prosecutors do, rather than using creative legal maneuvers. The change makes it easier for the state to pursue cases such as Adams Mark and other big cases that can set an example,” said Smith, who specializes in discrimination cases involving employment and businesses.

The new law does not keep individuals from also filing private lawsuits on civil rights violations or interfere with the power of U.S. attorneys to fight discrimination.

“It’s really good that the state is stepping up its efforts,” said University of Florida law professor Sharon Rush, co-founder of the Center on Race and Race Relations. “There’s a lot of discrimination that continues. It’s really tragic.”

Almost all states, with the exception of Alabama and Mississippi, have civil rights laws that bar discrimination based on race, religion, age and gender. The new Florida law also bans bias toward national origin, handicap or marital status.

Many states also include discrimination against pregnant women, and at least a dozen specifically prohibit discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation.

Rush said such legal actions against people and businesses that discriminate can’t solve the problem entirely.

She noted that Denny’s restaurants paid \$54.7 million in 1994 to settle racial discrimination complaints and instituted a series of policy changes.

But only a month ago, a black Florida Highway Patrol trooper filed a discrimination lawsuit against a Denny’s restaurant in Ocala.

“One would think the publicity alone would be a deterrent,” Rush said. “Denny’s got sued and got all that bad publicity, but it just happened again.” ▼

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## WORLD BRIEFS



### CALIF. DOMESTIC PARTNERS GET TAX PARITY

Registered domestic partners will get the same tax benefits as married couples who transfer property, under tax rule changes adopted by the California Board of Equalization. Previously, transferring real estate from one domestic partner to the other brought an automatic reassessment of the property's value. The board estimated the statewide tax cost at \$737,000 the first year and \$3.2 million after five years.

### LOUISIANA CAPITAL CITY FORBIDS DISCRIMINATION

Baton Rouge, La., parish government quietly added protection for gay and lesbian employees to its nondiscrimination policy in April. An update of the city-parish's Equal Employment Opportunity policy dated April 29 forbids discrimination or harassment because of sexual orientation as well as race, age, religion, gender and other protected groups. There is no Louisiana or federal law against discrimination because of sexual orientation. Most state employees are not similarly protected, and only one other city in the state has such a policy: New Orleans, which adopted its rule in 1991.

### HONOLULU SUED FOR BARRING GAYS FROM PARADE

A lawsuit accusing Honolulu of excluding gay and lesbian groups from a parade last month could result in new guidelines on city event sponsorships. Attorneys for the city and the American Civil Liberties Union met with U.S. District Judge Helen Gillmor behind closed doors regarding the Family Day Parade organized by the Hawaii Christian Coalition. The ACLU filed the lawsuit on the behalf of three gay groups after their applications to march in the parade were refused.

### GEORGIA COUNTY ADDS DP BENEFITS

Fulton County has become the fourth local government in Georgia to provide domestic partner benefits for gay and lesbian employees. The board of commissioners voted 4-2 to give health care coverage to employees who fill out a form declaring they are in a "committed relationship" with the person they seek to insure. Atlanta was the first to provide such benefits, in 1999, followed by DeKalb County and Decatur.

### PROTESTERS PICKET SANTORUM'S OFFICE

A small group of gay rights supporters picketed U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum's Erie, Pa., office to celebrate a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling striking down laws against sodomy. A spokesman for Santorum previously said the senator wasn't aware of the protest, in which 10 people took part.

## JUDGE CANDIDATE DRAWS IRE FOR VIEWS ON GAYS

WASHINGTON - A coalition of groups trying to block the confirmation of Alabama Attorney General Bill Pryor for a federal judgeship is ratcheting up pressure on Sen. Arlen Specter, who appears to hold the crucial swing vote in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The coalition, representing civil rights, women's rights and the environment, opposes Pryor, who compared homosexual acts to "prostitution, adultery, necrophilia, bestiality, possession of child pornography and even incest and pedophilia" in a brief he filed with the U.S. Supreme Court earlier this year.

Specter generally supports gay and abortion rights — both of which Pryor vehemently opposes, but he said, "I've never applied a litmus test on a Supreme Court nominee."

The 19-member committee, where Republicans have a one-seat edge over Democrats, was expected to vote on Pryor's nomination for the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals as early as this week.

"Arlen Specter will play a pivotal role in the outcome of this vote," NAACP Washington Director Hilary Shelton said, adding that the Pennsylvania senator "has a record of being one of the most thoughtful on the Republican side of the aisle."

But, Shelton warned, "he has also

consistently voted with other Republicans very much in lockstep on these judicial nominees."

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People spurred a letter-writing and phone-calling campaign among its members in Pennsylvania and Washington to persuade Specter to block Pryor's nomination.

Specter, a moderate Republican, said he was still undecided about Pryor, with whom he served on a legal panel in Colorado just a few weeks ago.

"I'm thinking about it," Specter said. "I've got two big stacks of paper on my desk — one for and one against, and I'm going to try to read it tonight."

Asked if he was holding the swing vote on the committee, Specter said dryly, "If that's true, that'd be the first time in the history of the judiciary committee." He added: "That was said in jest."

The committee vote would come as Specter faces a harrowing Republican primary challenge next year when he defends the Senate seat.

During the June committee hearing, Specter, a former prosecutor, sharply questioned Pryor on his stands to eliminate abortion, repeal part of the Civil Rights Act and overturn the Family Leave Act. (AP)

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## BRITISH COLUMBIA NOW ALLOWS GAY NUPTIALS

**TORONTO** - British Columbia became the second Canadian province to OK same-sex marriage under a court ruling last week.

Two men were wed shortly after the ruling in Vancouver.

The decision by the province's Court of Appeal further increased pressure on the Canadian government to follow through with plans to rewrite federal law that defines marriage as between man and woman.

An Ontario court issued a similar ruling last month, leading to more than 250 same-sex couples obtaining licenses to marry in Toronto.

British Columbia's Appeals Court earlier ruled in favor of same-sex marriages, but gave the federal government a year to draft a new law redefining marriage.

Homosexual rights groups then asked the court to reconsider the one-year delay after the Ontario ruling. The three-member B.C. Appeal Court panel said it was unaware of any opposition to lifting the one-year delay.

"It is also apparent that any further delay in implementing the remedies will result in an unequal application of the law between Ontario and British Columbia," the decision said.

In the courtroom, partners Tom Graff and Anthony Porcino wept with joy.

"I didn't know that I was going to do that," Graff said.

After the hearing, they went to the

nearby Vital Statistics Branch to get a marriage license. Dressed in dark suits with red carnations, they were married outside the courts building by a United Church minister.

That same week, religious and family groups opposed to same-sex marriage said they will ask Canada's Supreme Court to allow them to appeal the Ontario court ruling that legalized homosexual weddings.

Angered by the government's plan to let the Ontario ruling stand and instead propose a new law permitting same-sex marriage, the groups said they would try to intervene.

"The federal government has abdicated its leadership role," Derek Rogusky of Focus on the Family, a conservative lobby group, told a news conference. "This matter has far-reaching consequences nationwide, and the nation's highest court should be permitted to consider the fundamental issues."

Prime Minister Jean Chretien has said his government is drafting a new law that would legalize same-sex marriages while allowing churches to decide what ceremonies they sanctify.

Focus on the Family and other conservative family groups were joined by the Interfaith Coalition on Marriage, a collection of Roman Catholic, evangelical Protestant and Islamic organizations, in planning to seek intervener status in the case. (AP)

## SCHOOL SUED FOR BARRING GAY STRAIGHT ALLIANCE

**LUBBOCK, Texas** - The Lubbock school district violated a federal access law and students' constitutional rights when it barred a group from forming a Gay Straight Alliance on a high school campus, a lawsuit alleges.

Ricky Waite, who graduated from Lubbock High School in May, helped organize the alliance last fall but the group's application to meet on school premises during non-instructional time was denied by school officials in December, the suit alleges.

Lambda Legal, a New York City-based national gay rights organization, filed the lawsuit in Lubbock federal court.

Skip Watson, spokesman for Lubbock schools, said, "We have not seen it so therefore, until we see it, we have no comment on it."

The suit claims the district violated the Equal Access Act which prohibits secondary schools receiving federal funds and allowing non-curricular student groups to meet on campus from discriminating against any groups based on their viewpoints, the suit alleges.

The students' were discriminated against

by district officials in actions that violate the students' First and Fourteenth Amendments and the Civil Rights Act, the suit claims.

The district's stance against students forming the alliance also violates the school's own policy, the suit claims. District rules state it "shall not prohibit student expression solely because other students, teachers, administrators, or parents may disagree with its content," the suit claims.

Lambda Legal has successfully argued two other similar cases in California and Utah, which set precedent on the issue and that there are now more than 1,200 such groups at schools nationwide, a press release states.

A Dallas attorney representing two members of the alliance referred in the release to the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that struck down Texas' sodomy law.

That ruling "called for gays to be given full respect, equality and dignity from government institutions," Brian Chase said in the release. "Lubbock High School runs afoul of that by treating this group differently simply because it supports gay students." (AP)



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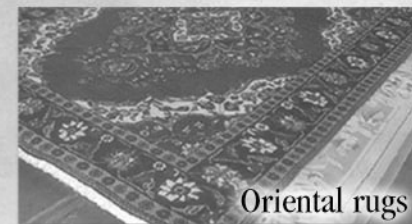
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## HEALTH BRIEFS



### BUSH PLEDGES TO HELP AFRICA FIGHT AIDS

Wrapping up a five-day tour of the continent, U.S. President George W. Bush pledged American help in fighting AIDS. At every stop, he promised his hosts they would "not be alone" as they struggle to fight the deadly plague. He talked of his proposal to spend \$15 billion over five years to help the hardest-hit African and Caribbean nations battle AIDS, even as Republicans trimmed it back home. Bush also praised African leaders who are speaking out openly and candidly about the spread of the disease.

### IOWA MAN CHARGED WITH INFECTING FOUR

A fourth Iowa woman has come forward claiming to have been exposed to the virus that causes AIDS by a man who failed to disclose that he was HIV-positive. Adam Musser, 22, of Iowa City, was charged with four counts of criminal transmission of HIV, a felony. Under Iowa law, it is a felony for people who know they are infected to have sexual contact with others without informing them of their HIV status. The crime is punishable by up to 25 years in prison.

### NEW RESEARCH FACILITY OPENS IN RHODE ISLAND

The University of Rhode Island has opened a new facility that will allow researchers to work toward curing health threats including cancer and AIDS. The laboratory is a critical part of a statewide biomedical research network that includes scientists from seven of the state's colleges and universities.

### HAWAII MAN CLAIMS HE WAS FIRED OVER HIV STATUS

A former worker at the Makiki Post Office in Honolulu claims in a federal court lawsuit that he was fired after he disclosed to his supervisors that he was HIV-positive. The lawsuit filed on behalf of Matthew Walker says the dismissal also was a result of an earlier discrimination complaint Walker filed against one of his supervisors.

### CONGRESS DEFEATS SEXUAL HEALTH STUDIES PROGRAM

A bid to block some federal research grants for sexual health studies, including projects focused on GLBT sexuality, was narrowly defeated in the U.S. House of Representatives. The measure focused on four particular projects selected for grants totaling \$1.4 million from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). One of the grants, estimated at \$500,000, was awarded to the University of Washington in Seattle to study GLBT groups in the American Indian and Alaskan Native population segments.

## WOMAN JAILED FOR INFECTING BOYFRIEND

**FORT LAUDERDALE** - A South Florida woman has been charged with a crime for allegedly infecting her former boyfriend with the virus that causes AIDS.

Perdita Harris, 31, was charged with a third-degree felony for knowingly spreading the HIV virus to a partner through sexual intercourse.

Her former boyfriend filed a police report in May after he learned he had contracted the human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV, which leads to AIDS. He told police he was infected by the woman, whom he had been dating for two years.

Harris never told him she had the disease, the victim said.

The 44-year-old victim told the *Miami Herald* that if Harris had told him from the beginning that she was infected, he would have respected her for her honesty. But now he's happy to see Harris in jail.

"I feel like she should be punished," he said. The man said he would have never exposed himself to HIV.

Harris would take pill after pill during their relationship and he often joked that she was like a pharmacy, he said. She told him she had cancer. (AP)

## GADHAFI: STRAIGHT PEOPLE CANNOT CONTRACT AIDS

**MAPUTO, Mozambique** - Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi told a conference of African leaders that Africans who are "straight" need not fear AIDS, which is ravaging many countries on the continent.

Speaking through a translator, Gadhafi drew some laughter with his reference to AIDS only affecting homosexuals.

He told the closing session of the eight-day annual African Union conference, "All you have to do is observe the rules. If you are straight, you

have nothing to fear from AIDS."

Of the 42 million people worldwide infected with HIV, 29 million live in sub-Saharan Africa. AIDS has already killed more than 17 million in sub-Saharan Africa and is the leading cause of death among South African women.

More than 11 million African children have lost at least one parent to the pandemic.

The devastating AIDS pandemic was one of the major themes of President Bush's five-nation African trip. (AP)

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## YOUR HEALTH NEW ANTI-HIV DRUGS HIT THE MARKET

by Dr. Edwin DeJesus

Although pricey, the new injectable anti-HIV medication Fuzeon or enfuvirtide is already becoming an important tool in the treatment of the experienced patient who may have limited options. The drug has minimal side effects and attacks HIV at a different level than other medications now available.

Last month, drugmakers released Reyataz or atazanavir, a new protease inhibitor that can be given once a day. It has proven efficacy in all types of HIV patients, and it does not cause problems with lipid abnormalities.

Even more recently, the FDA gave the green light to the release of another new anti-HIV medication, Emtriva (also known as emtricitabine, FTC), which will be manufactured by Gilead Sciences.

This drug was approved for patients who are infected with HIV to be used in combination with other anti-HIV medications.

Emtriva will be available as a 200 mg capsule to be given once a day with or without food. This drug has been found to be safe and effective in both patients who have just begun their treatment or who have been treated with other medications. Emtriva attacks HIV by inhibiting an enzyme called "reverse transcriptase" that is needed by the virus to make copies of itself. This enzyme is blocked in a similar way by other drugs such as Retrovir (AZT), Zerit (d4T), Efavir (3TC), Videx (ddI) and Ziagen (abacavir).

In fact, Emtriva is very similar in structure and action to Efavir. The only difference between these two drugs appears to be that Emtriva has a longer "half-life," meaning that it stays longer in the blood stream, assuring anti-HIV action for a littler longer than Efavir.

Efavir, on the other hand, which was initially approved in 1993 as a 150 mg tablet given twice a day, has been reformulated into a single 300 mg tablet that can be given once daily. But for the most part, both Emtriva and Efavir are practically identical. We should not get too excited about the approval of Emtriva, as it does not add much to the current armamentarium that we have available to fight HIV infection.

So, if Emtriva is so similar to the

already existing Efavir, why is the company even bothering to manufacture it? That's because Gilead Sciences also produces another once-a-day anti-HIV drug, Viread. This one was released about two years ago and has in a short time become one of the most popular, effective, safe and simple drugs that we have on the market. The goal of Gilead Sciences is to eventually develop a fixed-dose co-formulation of both Emtriva and Viread together in one pill, which could potentially be available by early 2005. If this co-formulated pill is developed, we could treat HIV in the future with a

cocktail as simple as Emtriva-Viread plus "Sustiva" — two pills total once a day.

That is a long way since the treatment we had available in the recent past of almost 10 pills two to three times a day.

So why not combine Viread and

the already existing Efavir instead? That's because Efavir is manufactured by a different company, GlaxoSmithKline, which probably not allow the co-formulation of these two drugs.

Emtriva should be available at pharmacies as early as next month. The wholesale cost is \$252.83 per month — very competitive with other available drugs. But buyer beware: *New* does not necessarily mean *better*. There is no reason to ask your doctor to switch to this new medication, especially if you are already taking and tolerating Efavir well. Also, if you have already taken Efavir and developed a resistance to it, Emtriva will not work for you.

Who should consider using Emtriva? In my opinion, the only benefit at this point would be patients who take Efavir and other drugs once a day just to take advantage of the longer duration of the drug in the blood stream. Otherwise, the benefit of Emtriva will be found if it is co-formulated with Viread as a single tablet.

It is amazing that in just two months, three anti-HIV drugs have hit the market. Most incredible is the fact that we are expecting the approval by the FDA of a yet a fourth anti-HIV drug by the end of this year. Although no cure in the immediate future, the life of many HIV patients requiring medications is becoming brighter, or at least a lot easier. ▽

**If this pill is developed, we could treat HIV in the future with a cocktail as simple as two pills once a day.**

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## HEADLINE NEWS

**Robert Murray from page 6**

Ahlers said. At first, Murray moved in with his grandmother and then relocated to his mother's home, leading to the breakup of her marriage.

"When you have to choose between your second husband and your child, you choose your child," she said.

Alcoholics Anonymous, she said, "saved his life. That group gave him back to us for a few more years."

Miller, his Baton Rouge AA sponsor told the *Advocate* that he had been sober for about seven months.

"He was fighting some battles, and he was doing damn good," Miller said. "Recovery means living your life one day

at a time and that's what Robert did."

He had joined the group about two years ago and Miller began supervising his recovery six months later as a sponsor. It was a favor that she was willing to offer.

"Robert saved my life," she told the

*Advocate*. "Two years ago, I was in a real hard place, and he said that he needed what I had and that I had to

stick around to share it with him. That's what I did for these last two years." She found her role to be much like that of "a best friend, a mom and a daddy, all in one."

Murray had moved to Central Florida about 15 years ago with a lover and

established the Robert Dean Salon. He sold the salon several years ago (it's now known as the David James Studio) and used part of the money to travel throughout Europe, fulfilling a lifelong dream. A native of the small town, Baker, just outside of Baton

Rouge, he moved back to the Louisiana state capital with hopes of opening another salon.

Much of his time had been spent dealing with the drug and depression issues and working in some area salons, his mother said. He had also begun to spend time working on some oil paintings.

Horan, a well-regarded artist based in

the Orlando area, said Murray had taken up the brushes after they broke up.

"I saw one of his paintings, and said 'Damn, you're good.' He was really good, particularly for someone who hadn't painted before. But he was talented in everything that he did with his hands," Horan said. "He was a great colorist at the salon and that lends itself to being able to understand and create art. When you're working as he did in a salon, you're dealing with a fairly small area to create."

At the time of his death, Murray had been working on two canvases, one a depiction of his roommate, Jean Richardson, and the other, a portrait of the Dalai Lama.

That second painting should come as no surprise to those who knew Murray. Horan recalled that his ex-boyfriend was a "voracious reader," one who particularly loved studying world religions.

"He was the only person I knew who had read every major religious texts cover to cover, including the *Koran*, the *Bible* — even the *Satanic Bible*. When we first moved in, I saw that he had the *Satanic Bible*, and he told me not to panic. He said, 'I just want to understand what other people are reading,'" Horan recalled.

Murray enjoyed his home life as much as he did the night clubs.

"When we were together, we went everywhere — the Parliament House, the Firestone, the downtown scene, you name it. He had a lot of fun," Horan said.

A small memorial service was held in Louisiana on June 27.

"All I know for sure is that Robert is OK now," Miller said. "If someone is apprehended, then that's great, but Robert wouldn't have wanted everyone to mourn him. He was very happy like that."

At press time, Baton Rouge police had no suspects and no motives in the murder. ▼

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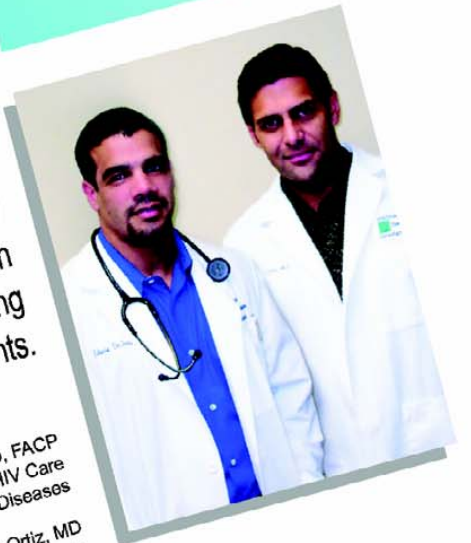


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## SPIRITUALITY BRIEFS

### RAINBOW PROMISE CREWS MEET TO CLEAN, BUILD

Volunteers gather at Rainbow Promise MCC, 1145 U.S. 92 East in Auburndale, on the fourth Saturdays of the month to clean and maintain the church grounds. The work days have led to the creation of such groups as the Black and Deckers, who build and move items. Interested in joining the crews? Call (863) 802-6769 for details.

### GAY CLERGYMAN WON'T TAKE BISHOP'S JOB

An openly gay clergyman whose appointment as a bishop divided the Anglican church has decided not to take up his post, the Church of England said. The Rev. Jeffrey John declined the post of bishop of Reading.

### CLERGY SEEKS END TO COLORADO'S GAY MARRIAGE BAN

More than 40 clergy members rallied in Denver to criticize Colorado's ban on gay marriages, calling the recognition only of heterosexual couples "state-imposed discrimination at its worst." The group includes clergy from the United Church of Christ, United Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran churches.

## TENN. CHURCH STANDS BEHIND LESBIAN PASTOR

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** - The congregation at Nashville's Glendale Baptist Church face a difficult dilemma: Follow what they believe to be God's model of love for everyone — or face the scorn of the Southern Baptist Convention because the church's sole full-time minister is a lesbian.

Glendale's half-century associations with the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention have been dissolved over the past month because of April Baker, who lives openly with a partner. Baptist officials said the church's choice to support Baker,

currently its only full-time minister, left them with no choice.

"In having a homosexual or lesbian minister, they are clearly endorsing homosexual behavior, and thus have defined themselves outside of the Southern Baptist Convention," said Richard Land, president of the SBC's public policy arm.

Glendale's 250-member congregation long ago forged bonds with more liberal Baptist umbrella organizations, including the Alliance of Baptists, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

But the church had belonged to the SBC and TBC since its founding in 1951. The loss of tradition hurts, as does the rejection, members of the congregation say.

At a recent Sunday service in a simple sanctuary decorated with homemade banners and mobiles of paper birds were a diverse mix of members — elderly people, a city councilman, a teenager with a mohawk and several children in Tennessee Titans jerseys.

Glendale has long been known as a liberal church, but not one that particularly caters to gays.

When the search process for an associate pastor turned up two of three candidates who disclosed they were lesbians, church leaders took the matter to the congregation. It decided to pick the best candidate for the job, regardless of sexual orientation.

Since hiring Baker last summer, the church has drawn unwanted attention from a local conservative talk radio show and pickets one Sunday by an anti-gay group. Stewart Clifton, a lay leader, said Glendale wasn't out to court controversy.

At the SBC's annual meeting in Phoenix last month, leaders proclaimed an initiative to help homosexuals "find freedom from this sinful, destructive lifestyle." Baker, a 39-year-old graduate of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., has worked as a counselor to women felons but never before held a minister's job.

She becomes visibly uncomfortable when asked about the controversy over her sexual orientation. She frowns and pauses several moments to gather her thoughts. She says the denomination has "terribly wounded" gay people.

"I say that the Southern Baptist Convention left me, because the SBC as it is today is not the same spiritual and theological home in which I grew up," Baker said. "I think that there's a distinct call to the church to push the edges of inclusiveness."

When Kreis White's family was considering whether to join Glendale, he was told about Baker's sexual orientation. He didn't see it as relevant.

"My kids got to help in the soup kitchen yesterday, and Habitat for Humanity is a blast. The activism is what attracted me," he said. ▽

## SPIRITUALITY LISTINGS

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Open and welcoming congregation is located at 1124-FF Beville Rd., Daytona Beach. Contact Chris at (386)441-8431.

#### HOPE MCC

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### ORLANDO

#### FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ORLANDO

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#### GOOD SHEPHERD SUPPORT GROUP

Nondenominational support group open to anyone affected by HIV/AIDS. Meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 7:30 PM at Good Shepherd Catholic Church, 5900 Oleaner Dr. (407) 277-3939.

#### INTEGRITY

Monthly meetings for gay Episcopalians. Newcomers always welcome. Call Irv at (407)895-4749.

#### JOY MCC

All are welcome at worship services held each Sunday at 8:30 AM, 10 AM, 11:30 AM, and 7 PM at church building, 2351 S. Ferncreek Ave. Taize meditation and prayer on Wednesday at 7 PM. (407) 894-1081 or [www.joymcc.com](http://www.joymcc.com). Rev. Carol Trissell, Senior Pastor.

#### ORLANDO CHURCH OF RELIGIOUS SCIENCE

Everyone is welcome at Sunday Celebration, 10:30 AM at the Maitland Civic Center, 641 S. Maitland Ave. Bookstore, youth church, classes, counseling available. (407) 673-3030. Cath DePalma and John DePalma, ministers.

#### PATHWAYS MINISTRIES & CHURCH

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#### UPLIFT MINISTRIES, INC.

Minority-focused spiritual ministry meets Sundays at 10:50 AM at the House of Power, 750 S. Orange Blossom Tr. Liberation discussion Tuesday at 8 PM. HIV counseling/testing Wednesday at 6 PM. (407) 839-5051 or email [upcenter@bellsouth.net](mailto:upcenter@bellsouth.net).

### TAMPA BAY

#### AMERICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Gay-affirming liturgical church meets for Sunday Mass at 10:30 AM, 7813 N. Nebraska Ave., Tampa. (813) 238-6060.

#### BETH RACHAMIM SYNAGOGUE

Growing reform congregation with special outreach to the gay and lesbian community. Sabbath services are every Friday at 8 PM, 719 Arlington Ave. N., St. Petersburg. (727) 822-7503 or [www.bethrachamim.org](http://www.bethrachamim.org).

#### BREATH OF LIFE FELLOWSHIP COMMUNITY CHURCH

An all-affirming and nondenominational ministry rooted in Christ and biblically based, pastored by Rev. J. Ricc Rollins, II. Service is at 10:30 AM. At the Doubletree Hotel, 4500 West Cypress Street, Tampa Bay. (813) 873-1889.

#### CHRIST THE CORNERSTONE CHURCH

All are welcome at this Christian church that offers a variety of ministries and counseling services. 1025 7th Ave. N., St. Petersburg. (727) 823-1806 or [www.christcornerstone.com](http://www.christcornerstone.com). Rev. Joyce Stone, Pastor.

#### DIGNITY OF TAMPA BAY

Mass with GLBT Catholics, their families and friends on Sundays at 10 a.m. at Holy Spirit Ecumenical Catholic Church. For more information, call (813) 238-2868 or write to [info@dignitytampabay.org](mailto:info@dignitytampabay.org).

#### FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DUNEDIN

Part of the "More Light Presbyterians" seeking full participation of GLBT people of faith. Services are Sundays at 10:30 AM at 5 Patricia Ave., Dunedin. (727) 733-2956 or [www.faith-pc.org](http://www.faith-pc.org).

#### FELLOWSHIP/BIBLE STUDY

For information, call (813) 494-5736.

#### FRANCISCAN CENTER

Mass for the lesbian/gay community on Sundays at 7 PM at the Franciscan Center, 3010 Perry Ave., Tampa. (813)229-2695.

#### FRANCIS HOUSE

A non-profit, interfaith day respite center for those affected by HIV/AIDS. (813) 237-3066 or [www.franchishouse.org](http://www.franchishouse.org).

#### INTEGRITY OF TAMPA BAY

All are welcome at this support group for members of the GLBT community within the Episcopal church. Meets the 1st Sunday of each month at 6 PM at St. Catherine's Episcopal Church in Temple Terrace. (813) 988-5283.

#### INTERWEAVE OF CLEARWATER

Giving support to GLBT Unitarian Universalists and their heterosexual allies. (727) 531-7704.

#### KING OF PEACE MCC

Worship services are at 10 AM each Sunday at 3150 5th Ave N., St. Petersburg. Prayer/Communion service is at 6:30 PM each Thursday, followed by dinner and bingo. (727) 323-5857.

#### MCC OF TAMPA

Liturgical and Evangelical Christianity. Worship services Sunday at 10:30 AM. Mid-week dinner on Wednesday at 6 PM, with worship at 7 PM. 408 E. Cayuga St. (813) 239-1951 or [UFMCCtampa@aol.com](mailto:UFMCCtampa@aol.com). Rev. Phyllis E. Hunt, Pastor.

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#### SPIRIT OF LIFE MCC

Worship service at 10:30 AM each Sunday at 4133 Thys Rd., New Port Richey. Night services of prayer and praise on Wednesdays at 6:30 PM. (727) 849-6962 or [www.jord1.com/Spirit](http://www.jord1.com/Spirit) or [pastorandy@earthlink.net](mailto:pastorandy@earthlink.net). Rev. Andy Sidden, Pastor.

#### ST. GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

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#### UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF CLEARWATER

Open and welcoming congregation worships Sundays at 10:30 AM at 2470 Nursery Rd., Clearwater. (727) 531-7704.

#### UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF BROOKSVILLE

Sunday mornings at 10:30 AM at the Pines Conference Center, 7029 Cedar Lane, Brooksville. Call (352) 796-4457 or [rbkeim@gte.net](mailto:rbkeim@gte.net). Chaplain Bob Keim.

#### UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ST. PETERBURG

Worship services are at 11 AM each Sunday, 719 Arlington Ave. N. (727) 898-3294.

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Worship services at 11 AM Sundays, 11400 Morris Bridge Rd.

#### UNITY CHURCH OF TODAY

Sunday meetings at 9:45 AM, service at 11 AM. 710 Crenshaw Lake Rd, Lutz. (813)909-9590 or visit [cctampa.tripod.com](http://cctampa.tripod.com). Rev. Bob and Ruth Fatur, ministers.

#### UU RAINBOW OUTREACH OF TAMPA BAY

Outreach by Unitarian Universalists to the local GLBT community. For more information call (727) 531-7704, ask for Rev. Abhi Janamanchi.

### SARASOTA

#### CHURCH OF THE TRINITY MCC

Rev. Nancy Wilson leads traditional worship services at 9:15 AM, and a contemporary service at 11 AM. 7225 N. Lockwood Ridge Rd. (941)355-0847 or [Trinity1srq@aol.com](mailto:Trinity1srq@aol.com).

#### CONGREGATION B'NAI EMMUNAH

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#### DIGNITY OF SARASOTA

Mass for GLBT Catholics, their families and friends on Sundays at Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota, 3975 Fruitville Rd., Sarasota, FL. (941)359-9504 or [www.dignity Sarasota.com](http://www.dignity Sarasota.com).

#### SOULFORCE

An interfaith movement committed to ending spiritual violence perpetuated by religious policies and teachings against GLBT people. Meets the first Tuesday of each month at the ALSO drop in center, 1624 Ringling Blvd. Contact Luann Conaty at (941) 493-9036, e-mail [Soulforce.swflorida@verizon.net](mailto:Soulforce.swflorida@verizon.net), or visit [www.soulforce.org](http://www.soulforce.org).

#### SUNCOAST CATHEDRAL MCC

Meets at 11 AM on Sundays for Worship & Celebration with Rev. Dr. Sherry L. Kennedy. 3276 East Venice Avenue, Venice, FL. (941)484-7068 or e-mail [scmcc@mindspring.com](mailto:scmcc@mindspring.com).

#### UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SARASOTA

This welcoming congregation with an openly gay minister features worship services at 10:30 AM each Sunday, 3975 Fruitville Rd. (941) 371-4974. Rev. Don Beaudreault, Minister.

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## WAL-MART TREADS WHERE EXXON MOBIL WON'T

SEATTLE - Victory wasn't supposed to come this easy.

Pride Foundation, a Seattle-based philanthropic group for gay and lesbian issues, spent more than two years talking with Wal-Mart Stores Inc. about making it company policy not to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

The foundation was preparing to draft a shareholders resolution to further pressure the Bentonville, Ark.-based company.

Then word came that Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer and private employer, was making the change voluntarily. The company announced that it is including gays and lesbians among groups protected by its anti-discrimination policy.

"We assumed we would be working on Wal-Mart for quite a while," said Zan McColloch-Lussier, campaign director for Pride Foundation. The group owns a small amount of Wal-Mart stock and had expected to write a proposal for shareholders.

"We are quite proud that we did not need to do that," he said.

The change resulted in part from external pressure but also from Wal-Mart workers, who have long urged the company to make the change, company spokesman Tom Williams said.

"It's the right thing to do," he said. "The issue was that everyone feel valued and treated with respect. ... No exceptions at all."

The success bolsters Pride Foundation and those who assisted in the Wal-Mart campaign, including Trillium Asset Management and Walden Asset Management, both of Boston. All three groups are members of the Equality Project, a New York-based coalition of funds, investors and others that seek to change corporate policy with the voice



Wal-Mart voluntarily agreed to a policy to ban discrimination against its GLBT employees.

that comes from being a shareholder — even a small one.

The groups now are considering where to focus their energies next.

With Wal-Mart's conversion, nine of the top 10 Fortune 500 companies expressly include sexual orientation in their anti-discrimination policies, said Shelley Alpern, an assistant vice president at Trillium.

The exception is Exxon Mobil Corp., she said.

Exxon Mobil, which is based in Irving, Texas, issued a statement saying it did not plan to add the language and believes its "intentionally broad" policy clearly bars discrimination on any basis, including sexual orientation. In May, shareholders of the oil giant defeated a resolution to ban discrimination against homosexuals.

Pride Foundation, founded in December 1985 to provide grants and assistance to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender organizations, has given more than \$4.2 million to Northwest groups and projects. (AP)



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## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### DALLAS PAPER TO PUBLISH CIVIL UNION ANNOUNCEMENTS

The *Dallas Morning News* will print same-sex commitment ceremony and civil union announcements in its Sunday Texas Living section. The *Morning News* decision brings the number of newspapers with inclusive announcements policies to 207 — exactly triple the number of papers that accepted gay couples' announcements when GLAAD launched its Announcing Equality campaign last August. The *Morning News* is the first newspaper in Texas to amend its announcements policy since the historic Supreme Court ruling striking down Texas' discriminatory "homosexual conduct law."

### EXECUTIVE QUILTS OVER END OF DP BENEFITS

The executive director of the city-owned Memorial Hospital planned to resign in protest of a Colorado Springs, Colo., City Council decision to eliminate benefits for same-sex couples. Michael Schrader said it has become difficult for him to do his job because he told employees same-sex benefits would be available. Mayor Lionel Rivera and the majority of the new council members elected April 1 had pledged to eliminate same-sex benefits as a cost-cutting measure.

### GAY NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER BUYS *GENRE*

*Genre* magazine has been purchased by Avalon Equity Partners, a New York City-based private equity fund that already controls the nation's largest gay newspaper group. Avalon owns Window Media, the publisher responsible for several gay and lesbian newspapers — the *Washington Blade*, the *New York Blade News*, the *Houston Voice*, Atlanta's *Southern Voice* — and *Eclipse* magazine, distributed in southern U.S. cities. By acquiring the 12-year-old *Genre*, Avalon has branched into yet another media arena.



## REAL ESTATE

Tampa Bay News  
from page 11

from New York and Los Angeles."

The driving force behind the event is an energetic group of activists, business and bar owners, including Valentines' Chris Chagnon, Metropolis' Danny Valdez, *Hotspots*' John "J.W." Whitaker, Pictureman Kevin Gore, and *Bridging the Gap* radio host Renee Bray. Sponsors include *Hotspots*, *Contax*, *TLW* magazine, Valentines, Underground, Blue Jeans Bar, and Metropolis.

Tampa Bay Pride Fest e-mails recently shared that a sponsor that had promised to purchase showcase tents "didn't come through," so organizers are currently seeking someone to cover the \$660 cost. Pride Fest Queen and King contests have raised some cash, and future fundraisers are planned at Blue Jeans and Metropolis. For more information, visit [www.tampabaypridefest.com](http://www.tampabaypridefest.com).

Like Bromwell, Chagnon believes that all the October events can coexist and possibly create a synergy.

"With the Film Festival and Bud's event, there will be a lot going on in Tampa in October," he said. "I'd like to see us become the place for gays and lesbians to go at that time of year - kind of like Orlando the first weekend in June. There's certainly no reason we can't all work together."

But Chagnon is quick to distance himself from last year's Pridefest Tampa Bay, which lost more than \$100,000 and continues to be a source of controversy. "We're free, no officers or volunteers will be paid, and our books will be available for review on our web site at any time," he noted.

Although plans for a July 4 party at Adventure Island were scrapped (leaving DJ Bill Bennett miffed), the June 21 One Laurel Pride party raised close to \$2,000 for the organization. Bentz says he's now pointing toward February and a possible "Gaysparilla" event during the Gasparilla Festival — Tampa's rowdy annual version of Mardi Gras.

In the meantime, relationships and trust are being rebuilt. According to One Laurel Pride organizer Dan Henrikson, amounts raised at that event will be escrowed until contracts have been signed and funds can be released for specific purposes.

▼ Tom Dyer

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## VIEWPOINT



## MY TURN DESPITE RULING, STILL MUCH WORK LIES AHEAD

Viewpoint by Karen M. Doering

When the U.S. Supreme Court threw out the Texas sodomy law on June 26, the legal landscape for LGBT rights changed forever, and nothing will ever be the same again. The winds are definitely shifting.

So what's the big deal? All they did was strike down a criminal law in Texas that was hardly ever used anyway? The ramifications for people throughout the country and here in Florida are huge.

In a shockingly apologetic opinion, six of the nine members of one of the most conservative Supreme Courts in our nation's history ruled that the government can no longer justify discriminating against gay and lesbian people based on "moral disapproval" or by arguing that we are criminals.

In declaring this antiquated sodomy law (and all other sodomy laws around the country) unconstitutional, the Supreme Court did something that will have an even greater impact: It struck down the flimsy excuses and rationalizations that have been used by states like Florida to "justify" denying us equality. Elected officials can continue to think we are immoral all they want – but they can no longer pass

discriminatory laws based on their own moral views.

So what about the discriminatory laws that they've already passed – Florida's ban on gay adoption, the so-called Defense of Marriage Act, the ban on gays in the military and so on? We will have to wait until future cases are decided to find out for sure, but I suspect they'll be heading for the trash heap as well. Justice Antonin Scalia seems to think so too.

In his scathing dissent, he not only accuses the six justices who voted our way of buying into the "homosexual agenda," (I can almost picture him stomping his feet and pounding his fists) he also explained that under the reasoning used in the majority opinion, legalizing same-sex marriage and the end of all "morality" laws (like the ban on gay adoption) are right around the corner. You know, I don't typically agree with Justice Scalia on much of anything, but on this

point, I quite happily agree.

The majority ruled that our relationships must be respected and declared that the government cannot demean our existence or control our destiny by making our private sexual conduct a crime. Justice Anthony Kennedy correctly noted that the old sodomy laws in and of themselves invite discrimination in both the public and private spheres.

Anyone who has ever worked to pass a local human rights ordinance recognizes the truth of that statement. It has become routine for those who oppose equality for LGBT people to stand up and declare that

**Have we finally won full equality? Not in the least, because there is still work to be done.**

passing a law prohibiting discrimination against us would be the same as protecting criminals and immoral heathens! Nope, this court got it right.

Does this mean the gay rights battles are over? Have we finally won full equality? Not in the least, because there is still much work to be done. Private employers in Florida and many other states may still legally fire us from our jobs, landlords may refuse to rent to us and restaurants and hotels can refuse to serve us.

Celebrate this landmark ruling and then get back to work. It's not over yet. This ruling only applies to what the government

does. Private employers and business owners can still discriminate at will – unless we convince our elected officials to pass laws making such discrimination illegal.

On Tuesday, Aug. 5, the city of Largo will conduct a public hearing to decide whether to create a human rights ordinance that will protect LGBT people from discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations. The city of Tampa is currently considering a domestic partnership registry for city residents. The St. Pete City Council needs to fulfill on its promise nearly two years ago to add gender identity or expression to its human rights ordinance.

But none of these things can happen without you. To paraphrase the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, change doesn't roll in on the wheels of inevitability; it takes folks like you and me taking a stand and demanding justice.

To find out how you can help with local actions in your area, contact Vonn New at Equality Florida, (813) 870-3735 ext. 214 or send your donation today to Equality Florida, 122 S. Dale Mabry Blvd., No. 652, Tampa, FL 33629. Together we *are* changing the world. ▽

*Karen M. Doering is a staff attorney with the National Center for Lesbian Rights and a consultant to Equality Florida.*

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## VIEWPOINT



## EVERYBODY GETS READ U.S. GAYS GET SEX INSTEAD OF MARRIAGE

Viewpoint by Ken Kundis

The recent decision by the Supreme Court, which could preempt existing anti-sodomy laws across the country, has engendered a great deal of discussion about things other than the content of the decision. This was, if we're all being honest, about anal and oral sex.

Filed under the category of catching up with the times, I suppose it's a good thing that adult, consensual, non-vaginal sex is no longer a jailable offense. But, in practical terms, when exactly was it? With the exception the Texas case, where the police stumbled across and then punished two men for engaging in sodomy, no one was enforcing that law anyway. If they were, I would be locked away for the rest of my life and so would you, in all likelihood. Since the definition of sodomy includes oral sex, so has nearly every adult male in the country. I mean, if you've never gotten a blow job, I'd wager that you don't have a penis.

However, what this ruling uncovers is how deeply out of touch a large chunk of the Supreme Court truly is. Justice Antonin Scalia, in particular, was vitriolic in his tirade against the ruling.

"The court has taken sides in the culture war, departing from its role of assuring, as neutral observer, that the democratic rules of engagement are observed," Scalia said.

What nonsense. The Supreme Court is *designed* to take sides, to make a final decision. If the decision had come down the other way, a side would have been chosen in that case as well. Scalia just didn't like the side that was chosen. The ironic part to me is that I'd bet my 401(k) on the fact that Scalia has gotten a couple of hummers in the last 50 years. Of course the bathwater that was thrown out with the baby called "sodomy" was gay sex, specifically. It has almost been a tacit

wink between courts across the country and straight America for decades.

"We won't ask if you and your wife have anal sex, but pretend like you don't, so we can get all the gays to stop."

What Scalia did by jumping on the "cultural" aspect of this and his fears about the "gay agenda," was uncover his hypocrisy in the whole matter. The court was supposed to be deciding about sodomy laws, and that's what it did. Because they had the greatest benefit for gays was simply icing (for our part). How can a rightful and fair democracy say that a specific act is OK for some and not OK for others?

Sodomy laws for decades have been a tool to persecute gays and lesbians. The court fixed it, but Scalia, as he loudly demonstrated, still doesn't like gay people. He will never be on our side. Scalia has become an anachronism still trying to legislate his own idea of morality to a nation that has moved beyond his way of thinking.

The resultant media has, interestingly, all been about another issue that the nation hasn't moved forward on: gay marriage. If we let them fuck, the thinking seems to go, then we better let them get married. That's a sweet idea. Did they think we weren't having sex because we couldn't get married? Quite the opposite, some would argue, is true.

But Americans, who want to keep the government out of the bedroom, also by and large want to keep gays and lesbians out of the chapel. At a time when it seems we have won a solid victory, viewpoints like this from someone as powerful as Scalia prove that, at least for the time being gay marriage is off the table.

As bitter a pill as that may be for us to swallow, and no matter how much political capital we expend pursuing it, our "culture" isn't ready for that. ▽



### DISCRIMINATION RUNS RAMPANT AMONG GAYS

I was quite disappointed that *Watermark's* coverage of the St. Pete Pride events offered no mention or photos of the Starburst transgendered support group.

This is just one more reason we are not included in the human rights ordinance. How can we expect to be recognized when even the gay and lesbian community fails to recognize that we even exist? But then again, I guess that's my fault. I should have read the fine print under your magazine's name: "Florida's Distinctive Gay and Lesbian Publication."

Thanks again for showing me that there is just as much, if not more, discrimination in the gay community as there is in the straight community. I guess it is up to transsexuals like me who are not afraid to let the world know we are not all *Jerry Springer Show* freaks, but human beings like everyone else who also deserve to live our lives to our liking, without being discriminated against.

*Dilhia Ledha Hamblin*

### WHERE WERE THE TRUE TRANSGENDERED?

Reading *Watermark's* coverage of the St. Petersburg Pride events is an allusion that transgender people were not part of the festivities. In the eight pictures chosen from the pride street festivals, there is only the classic drag-queen-with-tiara image!

In Orlando, there is a huge problem with the gay/lesbian community accepting transgendered people. A major part of the problem is the uneducated bigoted image perpetrated

that transgendered people are just gay men who perform in drag shows!

Here in the Tampa-St. Petersburg area, we have a true LGBT community. They understand that transgendered is not equal to drag queen! As executive director of the Florida Gender Equality Project (Forge), I also was a speaker on the St. Pete Pride stage. Starburst, a local transgendered support group, proudly marched in the promenade. There was a Forge and Starburst information booth at the street festival event. There was a Starburst dance as part of the pride week events, held at the Suncoast Resort. The promenade coincided with the anniversary of the Stonewall Riots.

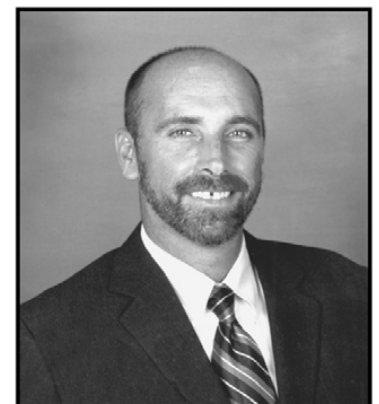
Silvia Rivera, one of the combatants at Stonewall, died in February 2002. One of her last essays was published in *Gender Queer: Voices from Beyond the Sexual Binary*, available from Alyson Books. Her closing remark in her essay stated: "Before I die, I will see our community given the respect we deserve. I'll be damned if I'm going to my grave without having the respect this community deserves. I want to go wherever I go with that in my soul and peacefully say I've finally overcome." I got to know Silvia a little bit and I do not think that she is resting peacefully yet!

*Janice Josephine Carney*

*Letters to the Editor are always welcome, but they may be shortened for clarity and length. Submit letters to Watermark, P.O. Box 533655, Orlando, FL 32853 or via e-mail at editor@watermarkonline.com.*

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# WATER COLOURS

ISSUE 10.15

JULY 17 - 30, 2003

ENTERTAINMENT & DIVERSIONS

A new Bravo series proves what a lot of people have always known: If you want to transform a schlub of a straight guy into one who's both attractive and socially adept, you need to get the right man for the job — the right *gay* man.

*Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, debuted Tuesday with two back-to-back hours, is a clever and entertaining twist on the newly popular makeover shows. It even manages to impart a message.

Straight and gay men "are just guys, and they want to feel good about themselves," said David Collins, the series' creator. "We all do."

In *Queer Eye*, gay and straight men forge a new kind of brotherhood, one cemented by properly applied hair gel.

## WE'RE IN CHARGE NOW

Bravo brings a 'Queer' spin to makeover shows.

by Lynn Elber

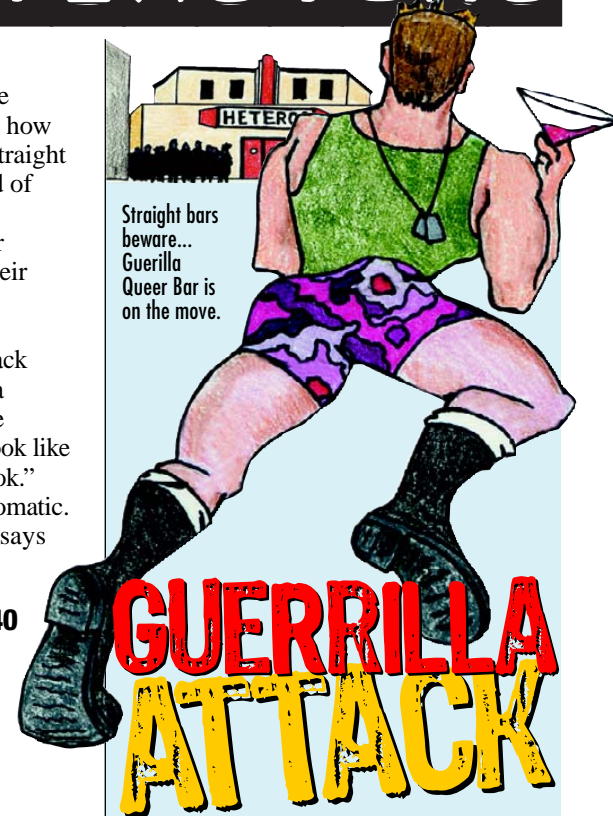
Gays, at least the ones featured in the series, are leagues ahead in knowing how to achieve lifestyle perfection. The straight men are a group of sad sacks in need of rehab, Eliza Doolittles one and all.

They don't know how to dress or groom themselves properly, make their homes comfortable or entertain for business or family.

"Let's talk about the shaving, or lack thereof," one *Queer Eye* expert tells a stubbly subject. "Shaving is one of the simple things you can do to make it look like you've given some thought to your look."

Family members are far less diplomatic. "He looks like a clown," a wife says in lamenting her unkempt spouse.

Continued Page 40



Straight bars beware... Guerrilla Queer Bar is on the move.

## GUERRILLA ATTACK

Straight bars will turn gay for one night only, thanks to this new group. by John Sullivan

TAMPA - How many times have you found yourself in line at a club, thinking there *has* to be something more exciting than this? There must be *something* more than seeing the same scene, hearing the same music and cruising the same Abercrombie & Fitch clones who always populate the place?

Take heart, Tampa Bay club kids, because a group known as Guerrilla Queer Bar hopes to declare war on gay nightlife (hence the "guerrilla" moniker).

"It's about getting out of our regular haunts and seeing some of the other great nightspots that Tampa Bay has to offer," explained Jim Walsh, one of the organizers behind GQB Tampa. "We all go to the same four or five places but alcohol is served all over town in places that can be a lot of fun to hang out in."

When Walsh, 41, moved to Tampa

Continued Page 42



From left to right: Design doctor THOM FILICIA, food and wine connoisseur TED ALLEN, fashion savant CARSON KRESSLEY, grooming guru KYAN DOUGLAS and culture vulture JAI RODRIGUEZ take a stand in *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*.



## WATERCRESS SNEAKY SEX CAN BE MUCH MORE FUN

Salad by Jim Crescitelli

**COMPLIMENTS? MAYBE.** A friend told me he loved one of my recent columns. "It was so random," he exclaimed. Maybe I misunderstood and he really said "randy." So maybe I'm writing a sex column but I don't realize it? Oy. I don't think I ever could.

I read that sex column in the *Orlando Weekly* and I get embarrassed. He talks about gay sex and straight sex and all kinds of sex in the most graphic terms. Nothing's sacred anymore! If you ask me, and I know you won't so I'm telling you anyway, sex was a whole lot more fun when it was sneaky. Maybe I'm getting old and prudish, I don't know.

In any event I wouldn't be able to write a very good sex column because I would spend more time telling you what *not* to do.

**BUT LET'S NOT BE MEAN!** Let's go to Missouri, the next stop on our tour. Our editor is from Missouri, but I can't ask him anything because I'm on deadline. Anyway, I knew one other gay guy from Missouri (unless the rest of you aren't telling), from a town called Cape Girardeau, which he referred to as Cape Garage Door.

Even the state's biggest city reminds you of another state entirely! He used to say that what was called Missouri should actually be called *Misery*, a geographic hallway between Kansas and Illinois, not particularly stimulating for gay people.

But listen: "Society and politics have never been more inclusive — women, African Americans, the poor, the disabled, and, in growing numbers, gay Missourians are, in varying degrees, far more integrated into the mainstream of Missouri politics and society than they were in 1900." So it's taken 100 years! It's still a good thing.

**IOWA REDUX ...** Everyone's favorite cornfield is on everyone's favorite lips this week (mine) judging by how many times I've heard about a state often referred to as *The Gateway to Missouri*.

Michael Slaymaker, David Almeida and Steve Miller all trooped to the land of Michael's roots to blow in the Fourth in a

big way, and Shannon and Lori just moved to Ottumwa. And our friend Cathy is also from Iowa. (She's the one who just had a momentous and Manhattan-fueled birthday.) Funny how you can ignore a state for years, and then suddenly it's taken over the newsroom of your mind.

**TOBY AND I** were talking recently at the bookstore about something, and it got kind of complex, and he said at one point, "you know, in the true cooperative sense of anarchy." Isn't that a fabulous quote? I forget what it was we were discussing, but I don't think it was an in-depth discussion about floor wax. This makes me wonder:

Does anybody even wax their floors anymore? We have wood, broadloom, tile and vinyl here at the house, but you certainly don't find me on my hands and knees waxing any of them.

And speaking of waxing, I guess you've all heard by now that they're remaking *The Stepford Wives*, with Nicole Kidman as Joanna and Bette Midler as Bobbie. I'm looking forward to it, though it's going to have to go far to come close to the original, which used actual television commercial actresses in key roles! I love when Toni Reid, who played Marie Axhelm, basically blows away the entire women's lib movement. When Katharine Ross asks her

if it ever bothered her that the only organization in Stepford that gets anything done civically was off limits to women, Marie replies, with a smile: "Nope!"

The TV-movie follow-ups weren't too great: Julie Kavner played a wife in *Revenge of the Stepford Wives* (1980), Barbara Eden played a mom in *The Stepford Children* (1987), and Michael Ontkean played a lobotomized hunk in *The Stepford Husbands* (1996); in this version, Louise Fletcher and Cindy Williams played the evil masterminds behind the plot.

All these campy movies are based on Ira Levin's horrifying and extremely disturbing little thriller, which is far better than any of the videotape it spawned. The movies presume a premise, but Levin doesn't ever let on. He makes you decide, and still — even after all the clues — the reader can yet decide that it can't be happening! Either way, what makes it all so ultimately horrible is that the Stepford Wives are mommies!

"I'll just die if I don't get this recipe," gushes one of the characters at an elegant, very over-the-top barbecue. One comment I read about this line of dialogue likened Stepford's perfect setting to Martha Stewart's Connecticut Utopia, except Martha has Cuisinart-ed it to "*You'll* just die if *you* don't get this recipe." But honestly, Bette in the remake? I can't wait! ▼

Jim Crescitelli can be reached at [WaterCressGuy@aol.com](mailto:WaterCressGuy@aol.com).

You certainly don't find me on my hands and knees waxing any of my floors.

JUNE 6 – OCTOBER 19, 2003

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Lawrence Lebduska (1894- ca.1965), *Horses and Lightning*, 1934, oil on canvas. Gift of the Friends of the Mennello Museum.

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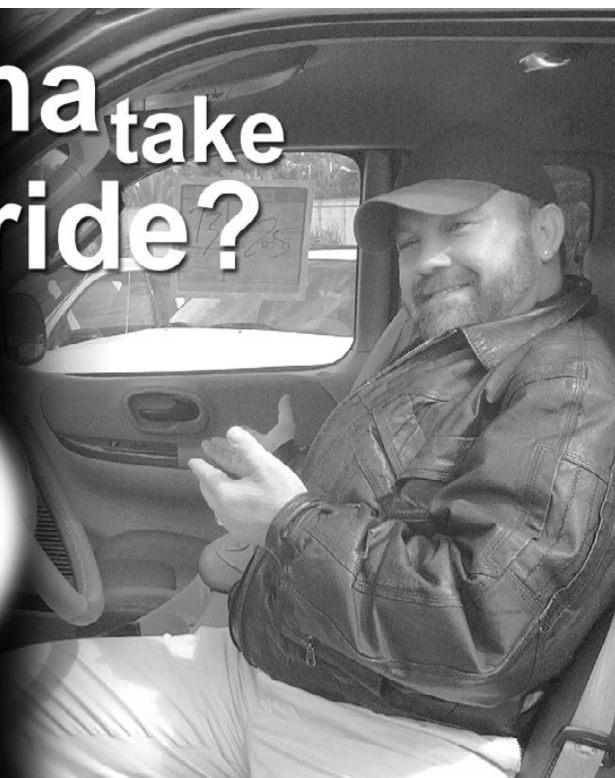
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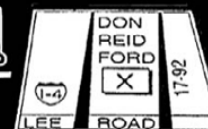
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## WATER COLORS



## AMAZONS HAMMERING AWAY AT HOW LITTLE I KNEW

Speaking Out by Karen S. Murray-Parker

Like many lesbians, I have always prided myself that I was pretty self-sufficient — that is until my recent move to Sarasota.

The house I moved into is an old 1930s wood-frame home with wooden floors, a fireplace and an old iron claw-foot tub. There's a wooded park across the street and huge live oaks shading my home. It's near the Ringling Museum, just a couple of blocks from Sarasota Bay and the Ringling School of Art and Design.

At first glance the home seemed perfect. To my inexperienced eye, all it needed was a couple of coats of fresh paint and I'd be set to move in. This shows you how little I know. The moving had been traumatic enough, but nothing compared to what awaited me at the new place.

In the usual way of breakups, most of my old friends in Englewood for whom

I had done many favors in the past, opted not to help me move. This I assume was at least in part because of divided loyalties: I was moving to Sarasota while my ex was staying in Englewood. I was disappointed, but not surprised. I was surprised, however, that my ex actually helped me pack and gave me more support in the move than most of those old friends.

My new landlady asked me to help paint and prep the house in exchange for not having to pay a deposit. I readily agreed figuring I'd spend one or two days painting and cleaning up. How easily one's illusions are shattered.

My landlady's ideas of what constitutes a habitable home and mine turned out to be worlds apart. Practically nothing in the house worked the way it should.

The tub and shower leaked, the wall wiring was jury-rigged, there were small holes in the walls and floors used as highways by all sorts of six- and eight-legged critters, lights that didn't work, outlets that were bad, the gas stove leaked ... the list went on and on. I felt I was in a nightmare that wouldn't end. Every small repair turned into a major project.

Over the years in my various careers I had always prided myself that I was something of a Ms. Fix-It, but how naïve I turned out to be. I was always handy with a hammer and had even helped my grandfather build a large addition to his house, but I found out it's a lot different being the assistant than being the boss when it comes to knowing how to do major remodeling.

Enter the woman my landlady and I now refer to as the "genius." I had met her several months earlier and knew her as an ex-nurse-turned-engineer who was now semi-retired and doing seasonal tax preparation work. She's a smart, funny transplanted New Yorker.

Innocently enough, she offered to help me paint the house. I thought great, we'd spend a couple of days painting, then I'd hold a nice house-warming party to say thank you and we'd be on our merry way.

She came for a couple of days and didn't leave for a month. It turns out she used to do remodeling professionally and instantly recognized what a disaster I had on my hands. She could have thrown her hands up in disgust and left me to my misery, but she was merciful.

Besides, I made sure my car was parked behind hers and she couldn't leave easily. I also bribed her with cold pizza (since the gas stove didn't work for weeks), brownies and beer. I learned how to make her favorite drink — super-strong espresso.

We spent 20-hour days unloading the Pod and U-Haul, then painting, caulking, rewiring and rebuilding into the early morning hours. I felt I was in the middle of a crash vo-tech course on remodeling.

I tried gamely to keep up as she explained the difference between AC and DC currents and the vagaries of natural gas lines. I also learned is how little I knew about just about anything to do with remodeling and what a poor excuse for a dyke I am. There's a whole world of plaster tools out there that I never knew existed. I've finally mastered the use of vice grips and how to change the torque on my drill (I always wondered what those little numbers meant).

She's a tough taskmaster, insisting that no corners be cut and that every job be done as professionally as possible. The house is finally coming together. It feels good.

I've been so inspired by all the hammering, banging and casual engineering over the past month, that I'm now considering building a shed to store all my belongings I haven't had time to unpack.

I'll just have to make sure I stockpile plenty of pizza, brownies, espresso and beer to entice the genius to help. I've also learned a lot about home improvement, but even more about the value of friendship. ▼

Karen S. Parker-Murray can be reached at [dolphinwahini@aol.com](mailto:dolphinwahini@aol.com).

**I had always prided myself that I was something of a Ms. Fix-It, but how naïve I turned out to be.**

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# Lesbians, Sex and Intrigue

Orlando Theatre Project offers this formula for a Victorian-era Boston Marriage. by John Sullivan

ORLANDO - Despite their finest scheming and manipulation, so-called "longtime companions" Claire and Anna have found that their relationship is in trouble. Sneaking behind one another's backs and hurling insults at their maid, the pair are independent, self-supporting — and scandalously not married.

The Orlando Theatre Project explores the brittle relationship forged between this pair in the Central Florida premiere of David Mamet's *Boston Marriage*, beginning July 24. The title phrase comes from Henry James' book, *The Bostonians*, which detailed a marriage-like relationship between two women — "new women" in the language of the turn-of-the-century.

Whether these were lesbian relationships in the sexual sense is debatable but the likelihood is that some were. Today, "Boston marriage" sometimes describes lesbian relationships — two women living together — which are not sexual.

"It describes two women who have a close relationship and, depending on what source you read, sometimes a romantic relationship," explained the drama's director Chris Jorie.

## BOSTON MARRIAGE

**WHEN:** July 31-Aug. 24

**WHERE:** Goldman Theatre at the Orlando-UCF Shakespeare Festival.

**TICKETS:** Calling (407) 328-2040 or visit [www.Otp.cc](http://www.Otp.cc)

"It was women in the Victorian era who had independent means and were educated and considered the feminists of their time," Jorie said. "What's interesting to read about the Victorian era is that back then basically the general public opinion was that these women were not sexual because Victorian women were raised with the idea that they had no sexual drive. That's the way 'polite society' dealt with it."

For OTP's production of *Boston Marriage*, Jorie has assembled a cast of actresses who are no strangers to the stages of Orlando's theater community. Becky Fisher, Anne Hering and Darby Ballard have all worked with Jorie before and this was a play that everyone involved wanted to see done.

"We just thought it was an interesting

piece and it was something that interested all of us," Jorie said. "It's kind of complicated and daring and adventurous."

Jorie worked with Anne Hering in *Wit* in 2000, a play that got a lot of local attention when the company sought to, and finally succeeded in, performing just as it is written, nudity and all.

Jorie and Becky Fisher did a reading of *The Guys*, Anne Nelson's piece about Sept. 11, 2001, at Temenos Theatre a year after the tragic events took place. David Lee, who recently starred with Fisher in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, directed it.

When choosing plays, OTP looks to the most recent seasons in New York and regionally and look for pieces that peak not only national interest but also the company's as well. In the case of *Boston Marriage*, Jorie was instantly interested in directing and Hering was definitely interested in playing Claire.

OTP follows Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre model, where the entire company serves as artistic director and selects the plays. In a democratic process, the company votes on the play and everyone makes proposals as to what they want to participate in as actors, directors and designers.

Jorie was particularly excited about directing his first Mamet play, and the playwright's first piece with an exclusively female cast of characters.

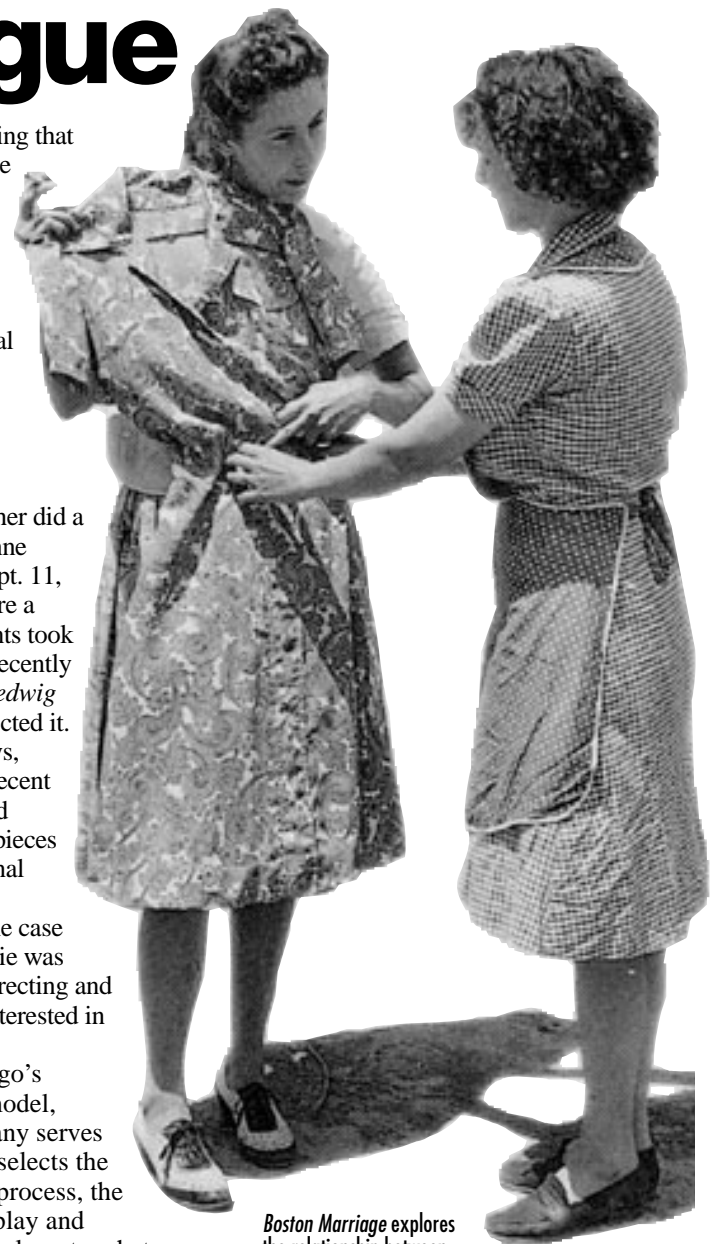
"I think Mamet is known for creating pieces of intrigue, puzzle plots. His language is razor-sharp and he is always taking chances," Jorie said of the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright. "When you think of the other plays that he has written,

*Boston Marriage* explores the relationship between two strong-minded women.

like *Glenarthy Glen Ross*, his characters are always so demonstrative. His characters are people with very, very strong intentions and this is no exception."

Mamet is best known for his staccato dialogue.

"The common ground is that these are strong women with strong intentions who use precise language and go after the things that they want," Jorie explained. ▼



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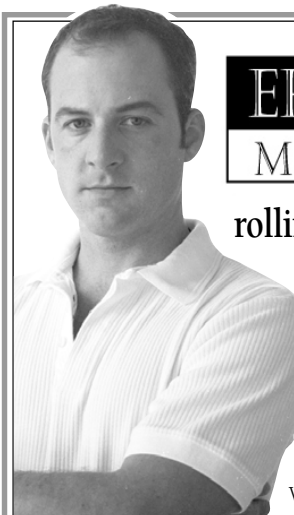
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Nelson has given more than 200 seminars around the country and comes to Orlando for this unique forum. Learn ways to increase lean body mass, strength, energy levels, emerging therapies for lipodystrophy, multi-resistant virus, facial wasting, and best ways to minimize other debilitating side effects of HIV medications.

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## CINEMA SNOB SUMMER MOVIES WITH RIDICULOUSLY LONG TITLES

Film Reviews by Scott J. Smith

### PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL

Who would have guessed that Disney would be the studio to watch in 2003? After disappointing fare like *Treasure Planet* last year, it looked like the entertainment giant was in a dangerous tailspin toward disaster.

But this year things are looking up for the Mouse. They've already released a

critical success (*Holes*), a financial and critical sensation (*Finding Nemo*), and now they've put out what is sure to be another blockbuster with *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

*Pirates* could have been a bland, safe film. It has a run-of-the-mill, damsel-in-distress plot. But ably handled by director Gore Verbinski (*The Ring*), this yo-ho-ho-hum tale has a delicious spice worthy of

Captain Morgan.

At 2 hours and 20 minutes, *Pirates* is a bit long, but it is seldom boring thanks to a swaggering, swarthy performance by Johnny Depp. His Cap'n Jack Sparrow is absolutely fabulous. In fact, his slurring enunciations, his gestures and even his costumes make him seem like the illegitimate lovechild of Patsy and Edina. When he is on screen, even drawn out action sequences fly by with refreshing, swashbuckling swiftness.

Geoffrey Rush, as the leader of the undead pirates, is also quite good — and doesn't say "arg" even once. His band of scalawags and scoundrels is quite fun as well. In the end, everyone it seems — even the audience — would like to be a pirate, dead or alive. It's actually a bit confounding that the priggish Brits come out on top.

*What's in it for us?* There have been theories that pirates — the enemy of all mankind — were gay. Watching Depp get into character and this concept becomes extremely easy to believe. ★★★

### TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES

You can't judge a book by its cover. Nor, it seems, should one judge a film by its trailer.

The ubiquitous promos for *T3* were positively painful. Chock full of explosions, panicked reaction shots and monotone one-liners, the most recent installment in the *Terminator* franchise looked like a low-budget entry into the *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* series. It was an extremely pleasant surprise to find out that the film wasn't that bad.

Sticking closely to the formula established by *T2: Judgment Day* — which was little more than a role-reversal remake of *The Terminator* — *T3* is an exciting pursuit movie worthy of its predecessors. Sure, we've all seen it before, but as far as two-hour chases go, the *Terminator* movies rank as one of the most creative, tension-filled, and relentless. And there's something satisfying about watching Arnold Schwarzenegger getting his futuristic butt kicked by newcomer Kristanna Loken.

Schwarzenegger has fun reprising a character he could play in his sleep. And Nick Stahl does a nice job taking over as John Connor from the annoyingly frantic Edward Furlong. In fact, the only thing that's particularly wrong with *T3* — aside from it being a bit paint-by-numbers — is Claire Danes, who is more shrill and piercing than all the squealing tires used by the sound effects editors.

*What's in it for us?* In a somewhat insulting scene, Ah-nold gets his fashionable duds from a stereotypically queer male stripper. But it is amusing to subsequently witness the cyborg struggle with his own sunglasses fetish. ★★ 1/2

For more reviews, including *Legally Blonde 2* and *Capturing the Friedmans*, go to [watermarkonline.com](http://watermarkonline.com)



JOHNNY DEPP steals gold, rum and every scene in Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*.

### THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN

The pen is mightier than the sword. At least that seems to be the underlying theme of *LXG*, the comic book film that features famous fictional Victorian-era characters confronting bad guys who use advanced weaponry. It's not a bad theme to toy with, but how much one enjoys the overall execution of the idea will depend greatly on one's familiarity with late 19<sup>th</sup>-century literature.

If one is fairly well acquainted with Allan Quatermain, Mina Harker, Dorian Gray and the works of Edgar Allen Poe and Sir Conan Doyle, then one will enjoy this surprisingly witty, albeit silly, romp through the pages of fictitious history.

Director Stephen Norrington (*Blade*) has created a conspicuously cinematic and synthetic world for his motley crew of characters to do battle. In lieu of realistic computer-generated background or elaborately constructed sets, Norrington employs the use of matte paintings, giving the movie a strangely surreal perspective that works well to invoke a sense of make-believe.

Norrington places the first encounter between the evil "Phantom" and the League in an overstocked library, which is a nice touch. But then the action goes beyond the library walls and the viewer is whisked around the old world to picturesque locations such as Vienna, Mongolia and Kenya. Each site offers a unique look and feel, but there's always the sense that nothing is real. This is a movie that's supposed to *look* like a movie.

Amid the gorgeous art direction and sly literary references, the film also benefits from a cast of relative unknowns, Sean Connery notwithstanding. And the actors, especially *La Femme Nikita*'s Peta Wilson, hold their own opposite the former James Bond quite well.

*What's in it for us?* Dorian Gray, an Oscar Wilde creation, is appropriately feminine, but it's still disappointing when he lusts over *Dracula*'s Mina Harker. As it turns out, Dr. Jekyll may be the "distinguished" gentleman. ★★★

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## ART &amp; EXHIBITS

## DAYTONA/SPACE COAST

## PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACK MITCHELL

On ongoing exhibition at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, in the Hester Merwin Ayers Gallery. Mitchell is known for his photos of celebrities and dancers. The exhibit is free and open to the public. For more information call (386) 427-6975.

## ORLANDO

## PAINT &amp; SURFACE: CERAMICS BY TIM LUDWIG AND PAINTINGS BY ROSE CASTERLINE

Through July 26 in the Alice and William Jenkins Gallery at the Crealdea School of Art in Winter Park. This two-person exhibition will feature works of Orlando-based painter Rose Casterline and Daytona Beach ceramist Tim Ludwig. Although the subject matter differs, the works of both artists complement each other in style and color. For more information call (407) 671-1886.

## MOMENTS IN TIME

Through July 21 at the Mount Dora Center for the Arts. This exhibit will feature evocative, nostalgic images in three media — watercolor, hand-colored Polaroid transfers and oil. Sandy Donn, Steve Katz and Polly Podolsky are the artists responsible for this fascinating exhibit. For more information call (352) 383-0880.

## TAMPA BAY

## COLLECTOR'S VISION II: CONTEMPORARY ART

Through Sept. 28 at the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg. This exhibition includes about 50 artworks in a wide range of media, including paintings, sculpture, prints, fiber arts and ceramics, all created post-1960. Among the artists represented are those who live in or have been associated with the area: Rocky Bridges, Christine Federighi, Leslie Frye and more. Other works are by Keith Haring and Jean-Michael Basquiat, who emerged as New York graffiti artists and whose work was quickly championed by some of the world's leading galleries and museums. For more information call (727) 896-2667.

## CLERMONT

## I HATE HAMLET

Through July 27 at the Moonlight Warehouse Players Theatre in Clermont. The witty Paul Rudnick (writer of *In and Out*, *Jeffrey* and quite possibly Libby Gelman-Waxner's column in *Premiere*) penned this funny farce about an out-of-work actor, his virginal girlfriend, his conscience and a ghost. Strangely enough, most people hate *Henry III* more. Tickets are \$7 and \$10. Call (352) 319-1116 for ticket information and driving directions.

## THEATRE &amp; FILM

## DAYTONA/SPACE COAST

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Through July 20, Seaside Music Theatre presents the musical adaptation of Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* by ... Milton Granger? You'd better believe it. The New Jersey composer has long dreamed of putting this epic novel into a musical format without the drumbeat of such predecessors as *Les Miserables* or *The Phantom of the Opera*. The romance of Charles Darnay and Lucy Manette comes to life against the backdrops of Paris and London in this world-premiere musical. Call (386) 252-6200 for ticket information.

## CHICAGO

July 24-Aug. 10, Seaside Music Theatre Downtown. Long before it was a movie, *Chicago* was a musical and some say not a very good one. Lacking in real emotion, credible characters or much taste, this Fred Ebb-John Kander-Bob Fosse pastiche played a few years on Broadway and closed unceremoniously. It's 1996 revival was another matter, providing work to Bebe Neuwirth, Sandy Duncan, Marilu Henner and Melanie Griffith. Still, the show has more sass and spunk than a dozen reruns of *Will & Grace* and better songs than the next six Andrew Lloyd Webber musicals, proving why Seaside would revive this one. Call (386) 252-6200 for ticket information.

## ORLANDO

## THE LIFE OF GALILEO

Through Aug. 10, the always-reliable Mad Cow Theatre offers a new translation of Bertolt Brecht's *The Life of Galileo* by David Hare. While Brecht revolutionized the art of theatre, he found a soul mate in Galileo, a great inventor and theoretician who found himself pit-

CALENDAR  
of Events

ted against the Catholic Church over the fundamental question of the Earth's place in the universe. Sound too deep? Don't worry — Mad Cow Theatre will make it an enlightening evening of entertainment. Besides, it's not like you're the center of the universe, right? Call Mad Cow at (407) 297-8788 for tickets.

## HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH

Through July 26 in the Footlights Theater at the New Parliament House Resort. Orlando's David Lee is back by popular demand starring as the transgender songstress that we love most. Also returning are the Sam Singhaus and Zoa as the Angry Inch Band. Call Fall River Productions to reserve seats. For tickets call (407) 398-6900.

## THE GIN GAME

Through July 20 at the UCF Conservatory Theatre. The winner of the 1978 Pulitzer Prize, the play uses a game as a metaphor for life. Weller Martin is playing solitaire on the porch of a seedy nursing home. Enter Fonsia Dorsey, a prim, self-righteous lady. They discover they both dislike the home and enjoy gin rummy so they begin to play and to reveal in-

timate details of their lives. Fonsia wins every time — and their secrets become weapons used against one another. For tickets or information call (407) 823-1500.

## TAMPA BAY

## ANGELS IN AMERICA, PART I: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES

Through July 27 in the Shimberg Playhouse at the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center. Tony Kushner's play is regarded as one of the most important and entertaining plays of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and winner of the Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1993. The play focuses on the paths of two troubled couples, one gay and the other straight, whose fates quickly become intertwined as they grapple with such tantamount issues as life and death, love and sex and loyalty. The play touches on several timely, provocative themes including politics, religion, race and AIDS, all in a humorous, poignant and thoughtful manner. For tickets or information call (813) 229-STAR.



DAMON KEITH and MEGHAN MORONEY star as M. and Mme. Defarge in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

## MERE MORTALS AND OTHER PLAYS

Through Aug. 3 at the American Stage Theater in St. Petersburg. Six short plays by David Ives, a master of language and wit, *Mere Mortals* is fresh and thought-provoking. The plays range from the story of a man who goes in search of his personal nirvana in the form of a *Green Hill*, to a chance meeting between a couple that turns into a *Sure Thing* only through the help of a sound designer, to three *Mere Mortals* who claim greater heritages than their blue-collar jobs would imply. For tickets call (727) 823-1600.

## CATS

Through July 20 at the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center. On one hand, it's a celebration of T.S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* and with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. On another hand, it's a show with grown men and women acting up a storm in pussycat costumes, with one of the kitties dying and going to Kitty heaven. Despite having virtually no plot, *Cats* won seven 1983 Tony Awards. Now that it has been seen by 8.2 million audience members, it is time to introduce *Cats* to a new generation. For tickets or information call (813) 229-STAR.

## DIVA DIARIES

Through July 20 in the Jaeb Theater at the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center. The "sassy new musical with big hair" takes place on closing night at Pandora's Box night club as its three aging drag queen stars face their future by reflecting upon their past and spilling a few secrets. Six actors portray younger and older versions of the characters on their 30-year journey from disco amateurs to drag veterans. The score features new songs, which recall the pop hits of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. For tickets and information call (813) 229-STAR.

## SARASOTA

## ROSE

Through July 27 at the Florida Studio Theatre. *Rose* is the story of an extraordinary life. Her journey has taken her from a humble childhood in Russia to the ghettos of Warsaw, to an immigrant ship and the beaches of Atlantic City and Miami. A bright, feisty Jewish woman, *Rose's* story is the history of a life lived to the fullest and shaped by some of the most important events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For tickets and information call (941) 366-9000.

## EST IMPROV TROUPE

Through July 26 at the Florida Studio Theatre. The Florida Studio Theatre Improv Troupe returns for six special performances. Audience participation helps spark the creativity of the troupe members as they create a performance of spontaneous laughter and hilarity. All performances are at 8 p.m. and tickets can be purchased by calling (941) 366-9000.

## WINTER HAVEN

## LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

Through July 27, at Theatre Winter Haven. Howard Ashman and Alan Menken won Oscars for their scores to *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Little Mermaid*, and they owe those little gold men to this little show about an introverted horticulturist, his mean boss, a man-eating plant and a girl with bad taste. Theatre Winter Haven, which is worth the drive from any direction, presents *Little Shop of Horrors* as its "Summer Mummies" production. Tickets are \$16. Call (863) 294-SHOW for ticket information.

## MUSIC &amp; DANCE

## ORLANDO

## AMERICAN IDOL LIVE! TOUR

Aug. 10 at the TD Waterhouse Centre, the top finalists from American Idol will cling to their final few minutes of fame for your amusement. Ruben Studdard, Clay Aiken and Trenyce will be there. Fittingly, the tour is sponsored by Pop-Tarts. Tickets for the 7:30 p.m. show are \$25 and \$45. Call (407) 849-2020 for information.

## MARIAH CAREY

Aug. 30 at the Bob Carr Performing Arts, the fragile former Mrs. Mottola brings her song stylings and incessant demands for attention to Orlando. For \$51 per seat, concert-goers can hear and see her perform; for \$111 per seat, they can watch the breakdown unfold up close. Call (407) 849-2020 for details.

## TAMPA BAY

## BROOKS &amp; DUNN NEON CIRCUS WILD WEST TOUR

Saturday, July 26 at the St. Pete Times Forum. Wrangler butts drive us nuts and they're plentiful during the annual B&D (Brooks & Dunn, that is) festival. This year, featuring Aaron Lines, Jeff Bates and that hunka-hunka bummin' love Brad Paisley. Oh, yeah, Cletus T. Judd's along for the ride as well. Don't know who he is? If Rip Taylor and Weird Al Yankovic had a love child and left him in Nashville ... he'd grow up to become Judd. Tickets are \$48 and \$38. The show starts at 6 p.m. Call (813) 301-2500 for details.

# Let The Season Begin!

**Watermark's Fall Arts Preview Issue**  
Publishing Date: 08.28.03 • Ad Deadline: 08.21.03

Support of the arts is tradition for the gay community, and each year Watermark celebrates this relationship with a special **Fall Arts Preview**. This expanded issue of the paper spotlights upcoming events at local theaters, dance halls, visual arts galleries and concert venues. With full schedules inside, many of our readers refer to this issue throughout the entire fall/spring arts season.

If your cultural group or business would like to include your upcoming schedule in our Fall Arts Preview, please submit events, including title, date, time, location, price and brief description to: [editor@watermarkonline.com](mailto:editor@watermarkonline.com) by no later than Thursday, Aug. 14. Your advertising must be submitted by Thursday, Aug. 21.

And our readers are the people you want to reach. Consider:

- Their average individual income is \$42,000, and their average household income is \$69,000.
- More than 70% have advanced degrees.
- 72% attend a concert or theater event at least once a month.
- Two thirds attend at least two movies each month. More than a quarter go to the movies every week.
- 59% dine out at least five times a week, spending an average of \$25 per person. Over a third report dining out more than six times a week.\*

As the Wall Street Journal said, this is a "dream demographic." And with more than 600 distribution locations throughout Orlando, Tampa Bay and the Sarasota area, Watermark is the only publication that allows art groups to draw from a regional audience.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to tell local gays and lesbians about your upcoming season. To reserve advertising space, call us today.

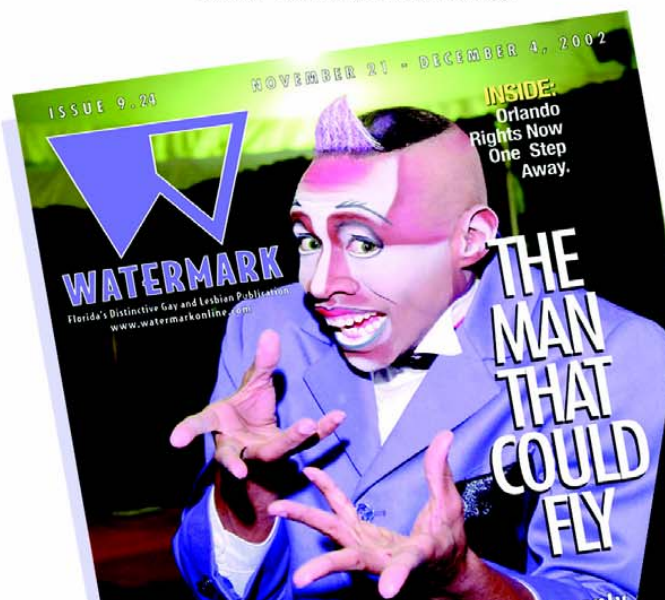
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# ORGANIZATIONS & MEETINGS

## DAYTONA BEACH/SPACE COAST

### BREAKTHROUGH

Networking organization for gays and lesbians in Seminole and Volusia counties. (407)668-6112.

### BREVARD LESBIANS

Lesbian social group. <www.brevardlesbians.com>.

### COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Member of HIV/AIDS Florida Community Planning Group. Meets at Volusia County Health Department. (904)238-4727.

### DAYTONA BEACH REGIONAL BEARS ASSOCIATION

Social group of bears, cubs and other friends who congregate, not hibernate. <www.gaydaytona.com/DBRBA.htm> or e-mail at gntlbear@comcast.net.

### FUN COAST BEARS

Social group that meets the 3rd Sun. of the month at 3 PM at Rumors on Nova Rd., Holly Hill. E-mail bears@funcoastbears.org or go to <www.funcoastbears.org> for more information.

### GALBA

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Association. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University student group. (904) 226-7222 voice mail 333-3000; <www.db.erau.edu/campus/student/clubs/galba/index.html>.

### GAY/BI MARRIED MEN RAP GROUP

Peer counseling and support group. Meets the last Mon. (407)777-9833.

### GREATER DAYTONA BUSINESS GUILD

Guild of gay-friendly businesses. Meets every third Mon.; 7 PM. (386)322-8003; <www.gaydaytona.com>.

### OUTREACH, INC.

HIV/AIDS service organization. Offers testing, counseling and support groups. (904)255-5569; <www.outreachinc.org>.

### OVER THE RIVER

GLBT and supporters social group for those living in Volusia and Seminole counties. Meets second Fri. (407)400-2879; <http://hometown.aol.com/nolikehypocrites/index.html>.

### PFLAG DAYTONA

Parents, Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Meets third Tues.; 7 PM; Hope MCC in Daytona, 500 South Ridgewood Ave. (US1), (386)322-4169; support@pflagdaytona.org; <www.pflagdaytona.org>.

### SPECTRUM

Social group for GLBT and supporters. Meets every other Thurs. (904)228-8187; rapunzel69@hotmail.com.

## ORLANDO

### AA WAKE UP CALL

Twelve-step program. Meets each Sun.; 10 AM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### BEARS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Social group for bears and their admirers. Meets second Sun.; 4 PM; Full Moon Saloon. (407)896-0239; <www.bocf.org>.

### BMCO

Big Mans Club of Orlando. Social club for big men and their admirers. Visit <communities.msn.com/BIGMANSCLUBOFORLANDO/\_whatsnew.msnw> or call Ricky at (407)422-6040 or (407)310-7612.

### BOOKLOVERS

American Association of University Women social group for those who love to read and talk about books. Meets first Tues. (407)677-1186.

### CENTAUR

Central Florida AIDS United Resources. Offers counseling, support groups, educational programs and HIV testing. Phone (407)849-1452. Hotline: (407)841-2437.

### CODA

Twelve-step program dealing with codependency. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### COLAGE

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere. A youth support group for ages 13-20. (407)897-2266; BardMerlin@aol.com.

### EVOLVE

A transsexual support group that meets on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month from 1 - 3 PM at the Joy MCC Church. To find out more visit [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/evolve\\_orlando/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/evolve_orlando/).

### FLORIDA GREAT OUTDOORS

A social and educational outdoor recreation group for the GLBT community. Check <www.floridagreatoutdoors.org> for a schedule of activities write to info@floridagreatoutdoors.org.

### GALA

Gay and Lesbian Association. Valencia Community College student group. Meets each Thurs.; 1 PM; east campus. <www.geocities.com/vccgala>.

### GLBCC-THE CENTER

Gay Lesbian Bisexual Community Center. Hosts various social groups and offers programs assisting the GLBT community. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### GLIMMER OF HOPE

12-step AA group. Saturday evenings from 10 PM to 11 PM; GLBCC (407) 228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### GNOMES

Gay Naturist Orlando Males Evolving Socially. Private gay male naturist group welcomes men of all ages, body styles and race. Activities include social events, boating, camping, swimming, cruises and travel. For more information visit [www.naturalmales.org/gnomes](http://www.naturalmales.org/gnomes) or call (407) 540-9391.

### GREATER ORLANDO COUPLES

A social group for same-gender couples. Various meeting times and monthly events such as potlucks, pool parties, museum trips, etc. Call (407) 644-4486 or visit <www.couples-national.org>.

### HARBOR HOUSE

Orange County Center Against Domestic Violence. Crisis Line: (407)886-2856. Community Outreach: (407)895-6099. Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence Hotline: (800)500-1119.

### LADY CYCLE RIDERS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

For ladies who love to ride motorcycles. Meetings are held monthly at the Orlando Fitness and Racquet Club. Visit [www.ladycycleriders.com](http://www.ladycycleriders.com) for details, or call (407) 880-4044.

### LAMBDA CAMPING

Gay and lesbian campers. Camping rallies once a month. (407)831-4926.

### LONG YANG CLUB

International friends social group for single men and couples of various ethnic backgrounds. (407)324-1846; ifoflor@aol.com.

### MEN'S COMING OUT GROUP

Support group for men 18 and over dealing with coming out. Meets Wed.; 7:30 PM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### MEN'S DISCUSSION

A group for gay men to come together and discuss issues affecting gay men, past and present. Thursdays at 7 PM; GLBCC (407) 228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### METROPOLITAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

General meeting first Thurs. (407)420-2182.

### MISHPUCHA

Jewish gay and lesbian group. Meets at the Center Monday night, 7 PM. Please call 407-895-0706 or e-mail [Mishpuchamail@yahoo.com](mailto:Mishpuchamail@yahoo.com) for info.

### OPEX

Pansexual support group. Meets third Sat.; 11 AM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### ORLANDO GAY CHORUS

Community chorus; welcomes everyone. Meets Wed.; John & Rita Lowndes building. (407)841-SING; <www.orlandogaychorus.org>.

### ORLANDO GAY PARENTS GROUP

Playgroup for children of gay parents. Social and networking opportunity for gay parents. Meets for picnic and playtime first Sat. of each month. For information (407)420-9955; or <Jettbabies@cfl.rr.com>

### ORLANDO MEN'S DISCUSSION

Discussion group for gay men. Meet Thurs.; 7:30 PM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### ORLANDO QUEER ACADEMICS

O-QUAC. Social/resources group for GLBT academics and intellectuals. [cschippe@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:cschippe@mail.ucf.edu); [tpugh@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:tpugh@mail.ucf.edu).

### ORLANDO SOCIAL CLUB

A gay men's group to network with other professionals meets monthly. Beach outings, parties, and community building activities. <http://hometown.aol.com/flausaguy/myhomepage/club.html>

### ORLANDO YOUTH ALLIANCE (OYA)

Social/support group for gay and lesbian youth and their straight friends. Call Andy Trujillo for meeting time. (407)468-1190

### PFLAG

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Meets third Wed.; 7:30 PM; First United Methodist Church. (407)236-9177.

### POLY-CENTRAL

For the polyamorous, poly-curious, poly-friendly or those interested in the concept of loving more than one person. Meets once a month. <www.polycentralfl.com, (321) 984-8463 or polycentral@mail.com>.

### PRIME TIMERS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Social/support group for gay and bisexual men over 50 and younger men who admire them. Meets last Sat.; 3:30 PM; Parliament House Footlight Theatre. (407)884-9834; PRIMETIMECFL@aol.com.

### PRINCIPLE BEFORE PERSONALITIES

Twelve-step AA program geared towards diversity and fellowship. Meets Fri.; 7 PM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### RAINBOW DEMOCRATIC CLUB

GLBT group of Democrats and Independents. Meets fourth Mon.; 6:30 PM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### RAINBOW NA

Twelve-step narcotics recovery program geared toward gay community. Meets Wed.; 8 PM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### RAINBOW SPIRIT

Discussion group for gay and bisexual men about lifestyle choice and spiritual development. Meets at Center of Light Church & Spiritual Center. (407)228-0101.

### REFLECTIONS

Social/support group for men and women of any gender or orientation ages 20-30. Meets Wed.; 7:30 PM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### S.H.A.R.E.

A Social Forum for singles: Discussion and Social Interaction. Make new friends, network with singles and participate in outside activities. First Thursday at GLBCC, 7PM, \$5. Third Thursday outside GLBCC (location varies), 7PM. please contact Joe at 407-716-7207 or visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/share-orlando/>.

### SISTAH CIRCLE

Support, discussion and social group for lesbians of color. <www.mysistahcircle.bizland.com>; littleafrica77@hotmail.com.

### TEEN ACT (AIDS COMMUNITY THEATER)

Group of teens and young adults 13 and older who use theatre to educate others on HIV/AIDS. Meets Thurs.; 6:30 PM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### TRANS CENTRAL STATION

A transgender, transexual, transvestite, cross dressers, and gender benders discussion group for those in any stage of transition and supporters. Meetings on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 7 PM at

The Center. (407) 228-8272.

### TRIDENT INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL FLORIDA

Levi/leather/uniform social group. Meets first Sun.; 2 PM; GLBCC. (321)549-0713; <www.tridentcfl.org>.

### 30 SOMETHING

A support / discussion group for all genders or orientations in the age range of 30 through 39. helping you to deal with the stress, challenges, & fun of being 30. Meets at The Center 1st & 3rd Monday, 7pm. 407.228.8272

### UCF GLBSU

University of Central Florida Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Student Union. Meets Tue.; 8 PM; Student Union Building on Main Orlando Campus. [ucfglbsu@ucf.edu](mailto:ucfglbsu@ucf.edu).

### WILLOW

Social group for women who live in Lake County. Meets second Sun.; Mt. Dora Chamber of Commerce. (352)383-2165.

### THE WOMYN'S EXCHANGE

Social/support group for all womyn of all orientations. Meets Thurs.; 7:30 PM; GLBCC. (407)228-8272; <www.glbcc.org>.

### ZEN SITTING GROUP

A place for GLBT Zen Practitioners. This group continues the Buddhist meditation tradition of over 2,000 years by sitting quietly in a compassionate way. Second and fourth Tues. of each month at 7 p.m. at Mojo's. For more information visit [www.lonekimono.org/ZenAtTheCenter](http://www.lonekimono.org/ZenAtTheCenter).

## TAMPA BAY AREA

### BAMACT

Bay Area Men of All Colors Together is Tampa Bay's local chapter of the National Organization of Black and White Men Together. We are a gay interracial group with a social, political and educational focus. Call (727)461-2617 or visit <www.geocities.com/bamact\_fl> for more information.

### BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Support group for friends and family who've experienced a recent loss of a loved one. Meets second and fourth Thurs.; 7 PM; The Center of Tampa Bay. (813)871-2232.

### BOAT AND SCUBA WEST OF TAMPA BAY

A social and recreational club of gay and lesbian boating, scuba diving, and outdoor enthusiasts in Tampa Bay. Activities include boating raft-ups, kayaking, diving, picnics, parties, and more. Meets the first Weds of the month at Holiday Inn Sunspree, St. Pete. For info visit <www.boatandscubawest.com>

### BROTASSPEAK

Discussion group that touches on issues that are germane to same-gender-loving men of color. Meets the second Sun. of each month, 5 PM at the Equality Florida Offices, 3708 Swann Ave., Tampa. (813)236-8809.

### CRESCENDO: THE TAMPA BAY WOMEN'S CHORUS

Lesbian, feminist chorus. Meets Sun.; 6:15 PM; MCC Tampa. (813)679-7585; CrescendoSings@aol.com.

### THE CENTER OF TAMPA BAY

GLBT community center. Offers phone referrals, meeting space, resource center and more. Located next to Equality Florida, 3708 Swann Ave. (813)875-8116; <www.tampacenter.org>.

### EQUALITY FLORIDA-HILLSBOROUGH

Meets third Thurs.; 6:30 PM; 3708 W. Swann Ave.. (813)870-3735.

### EQUALITY FLORIDA-PINELLAS

Meets last Thurs.; 7 PM; Positive Expressions. (727)527-3197.

### EZRA GROUP

S.A.G.E. sponsored support group for GLBT persons who have experienced a recent death or loss. Meets second Sat.. (813)932-4359.

### FACT HIV/AIDS SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Tues., from 6:30 - 8 PM at 136 4th St., N., St. Petersburg. (727)895-4439.

### FACT SPANISH-SPEAKING HIV/AIDS GROUP

Meets the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month at 136 4th St., N., St. Petersburg. (727)895-4439.

### FACE TO FACE YOUTH GROUP

Youth group for GLBT and their supporters ages 14-21. Meets Sun.; 7 PM. (813)935-4101; Fce2FceYouth2aol.com.

### FACT TRANSGENDER HIV/AIDS GROUP

Meets the first and third Friday of the month at 136 4th St. N. St. Pete. For info call (727)895-4439.

### FAMILY BRIDGE CLUB

Playing card variety. (813)832-2999.

### FLAMINGO AUTO GROUP

Central Florida Region Lambda Car Club International. <www.hometown.aol.com/flamingoautogr/>.

### FLORIDA GENDER EQUALITY PROJECT

An organization for the trans/gender community and our allies. Meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month at Equality Florida in Tampa. For more information call (813) 870-3735 or visit <www.forge.8m.com>.

### FLORIDA GULF COAST COUPLES

Social group for same gender couples. (813)360-6852; (727)347-7412.

### FREEDOM RINGS ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Pasco County's only AA meeting for GLBT individuals. Meets Sun.; 7 PM; Spirit of Life MCC. (727)849-6962.

### FRIENDS CLUB FOR GAY MEN

Gay men's social club. A wholesome, healthy atmosphere to make new friends. (813)960-1664.

### FRONT RUNNERS OF TAMPA BAY

Not-for-runners only club orientated to the gay and lesbian community. Meets Sat.; 9 AM; Old Hyde Park Village and Wed.; 6:45 PM; Fred Ball Park. (813)891-7098.

## Over The Rainbow by Renee Lukas



## WATER COLORS

**GAY & BISEXUAL MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP**

Open and frank discussion on many topics. Meets every Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the G & L Center, 4708 W. Swann Ave. for more information call (813) 961-6871.

**GAY & BISEXUAL SENIOR MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP**

Meets Fri.; 10 AM; The Center of Tampa Bay. (813)875-8116.

**GAY AND LESBIAN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

Meets every evening; 8:15 PM; 3644-A Henderson Blvd.. (813)273-8741.

**GAY FUN CLUB**

Movies, amusement parks, dinig out, water parks, beaches, picnics, etc. 18 and up. Contact Steve at (727)344-0512.

**GAY MEN'S OUTDOOR GROUP**

Biking, hiking, canoeing, diving. Come join us for some good clean, healthy, outdoor fun. Call (813) 961-6871

**GAY SKATE**

Tue.; 9 PM; United Skates of America. (813)876-5826; <members.aol.com/tampagayskate>.

**GENDER QUESTIONING DISCUSSION GROUP**

Starting the 2nd Sat. in Jan. at 11 AM at the Equality Florida offices on Swann Ave. Call Janice at (813) 870-3735 x 258 or visit <www.forge.8m.com>.

**GIRL TALK**

A safe place for lesbians to meet. Coffee, companions, and conversation. Tuesdays at p.m. at the G & L Center, 3708 W. Swann Ave. for more information call (813) 645-2213 or email Girltalkers@aol.com.

**GLBT PARENTS**

Support group for GLBT parents. Meets second Thurs.; Equality Florida. (813)831-8207; <www.glbtparents.homestead.com>.

**GLSEN TAMPA BAY**

Organization working to end anti-gay bias in Hillsborough County schools. Meets third Fri.. (813)258-8817; GLSENTB@aol.com.

**GREATER TAMPA BAY PRIDE**

Meets third Wed.. (813)960-3022.

**INTERWEAVE/ST. PETERSBURG**

Meets at UU Church of St. Petersburg. (727)898-3294.

**L.I.G.H.T./FACT**

Free dinner on the first Tues. of the month. 140 4th St. N at the St. Petersburg Cathedral Parish Hall. (727)895-4439.

**THE LINE**

Gay & Lesbian Crisis/Service of Tampa Bay, Inc. Phone volunteers 7-11 PM; computerized system 11-7 PM. (727)586-4297.

**LOG CABIN REPUBLICANS OF TAMPA BAY**

Inclusive, diverse Republicans. Meet 3rd Weds of each month. 7 PM at HoHo's chinese, 9 PM at Different Grind. (727)455-9866, <www.lcrtampabay.com>, or LCRITampabay@yahoo.com.

**L.O.L.A.**

Lesbians On the Lookout Association. Social club for womyn. pianolez@aol.com.

**METROPOLITAN CHARITIES**

A community services organization offering HIV/AIDS case management, counseling services, referrals and thrift store. In Pinellas and Hillsborough counties. (727)321-3854. <www.metrocharities.org>.

**NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS**

Open meeting for gays and lesbians. Meets Thurs.; 8:15 PM; GALAA Club. ecg@tampabay.rr.com.

**OUT OF THE CLOSET THRIFT STORES**

All proceeds benefit AIDS and breast cancer patients in St. Petersburg and Tampa Bay areas. Donations of clothing and household items are needed daily. Located at 631 4th St. North, St. Pete. (866)250-1959.

**T.A.N.G.L.O.**

Tampa Area Naturists Gay and Lesbians Outdoors. Gay and Lesbian and bisexual naturists outdoor activity club. (813)962-8459.

**PFLAG**

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Meets second Tue.; 7 PM; 5800 Nebraska. (813)831-8207; onecoolguy@hotmail.com.

**OPERATION H.O.P.E. OF PINELLAS, INC.**

St. Petersburg AIDS organization dedicated to the needs of the minority community. (727)822-2437; POCAS@aol.com.

**PFLAG PINELLAS**

Meets fourth Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. at Saffron,s Restaurant, 1700 Park St. N. St. Pete. For more information call (727) 345-7688 or email Pflag@tampabay.rr.com.

**POSITIVE EXPRESSIONS**

Non-profit web-based organization working to empower HIV+ individuals by developing and supporting their self-expression and educating the public through presentations of creative work. <www.positiveexpressions.org>.

**PRIDE AL ANON FAMILY GROUP**

Support group for anyone who has a realitive, friend, partner, co-worker, etc., who has a drinking problem that is affecting their lives. Meets Wed. and Fri.; 6:30 PM; King of Peace Church. (727)323-5857.

**PRIDE ALLIANCE**

Meets second and fourth Thurs. during the summer; every Thurs. in fall; 8 PM; USF Marchall Center. (813)974-4297.

**PRIDE TAMPA BAY**

The general meeting is held on the second Thursday of each month. (813)854-8160 or <www.pridetampabay.com>.

**PRIME TIMERS OF TAMPA BAY**

Social group for mature gay and bisexual men and those younger men who admire them. (813)231-8817; <http://www.primetimersww.org/tampabay/PTTB\_c.html>.

**PWA COALITION OF TAMPA BAY**

AIDS service organization dedicated to disseminating updated and accurate information about HIV/AIDS. (813)238-2887; <www.pwactampa.homestead.com>.

**RAINBOW CHIPS INVESTMENT CLUB**

Investment club for the GLBT community. Meets monthly. (813)962-8459.

**RAINBOW FILM SERIES**

A series of GLBT films, 7 PM, 2nd Saturday of each month except Oct., in the social hall of the Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater, FMI (727)531-7704.

**RAINBOW READERS**

Discusses a new book each month. Meets second Mon.; 7:30 PM. (813)221-1423.

**RAINBOW SURF 'N' SAFARI CLUB**

Monthly gay days in Tampa. Busch Gardens: fourth Sun.; Adventure Island: second Sat.; Brandon restaurant tour: second Sat. at 5:30 PM. carl813@hotmail.com; <www.geocities.com/southbeach/wharf/6587>.

**RAINBOW TRAVEL CLUB**

Florida's largest gay and lesbian travel organization. (813)414-9933; (800)881-3600.

**SEX AND LOVE ADDICTS ANONYMOUS (SLAA)**

A twelve-step program that helps hetero and homosexual men and women understand and recover from unhealthy compulsive sexual behavior. (727) 896-SLAA or <www.tampabayslaa.com>.

**SOUTHERN EXPOSURE**

Gay male non-sexual nudist group. Meets monthly. (813)237-2436.

**STARBURST OF PINELLAS PARK**

Starburst of Pinellas Park, support group for cross-dressing and transgendered persons, regardless of stage. Meetings at 7 PM on the third Saturday each month. Call Georgia at (727)523-8760.

**TAMPA BAY BEARS**

Bears social club. Meets second Fr.; 7:30 PM; Suncoast Eagle Bar. <www.TampaBayBears.com>.

**TAMPA BAY BUSINESS GUILD**

Meets second Tue. (813)237-3751; <www.tbhg.org>.

**TAMPA BAY GAY MEN'S CHORUS**

Meets Mon.; 7 PM; Suncoast Resort. (727)865-9004.

**TROPICAL RAINBOW ALLIANCE FOR THE DEAF**

Periodic social gatherings for both hearing and non-hearing gays. (813)236-3123.

**TRUE EXPRESSIONS**

Make sure the hours are correct. They should be: Tuesdays 2 to 6 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays 6 to 9 p.m. and Sundays from 4 to 9 p.m. The phone number should be (727) 898-TRUE and the web site www.true-expressions.org.

**WEST FLORIDA GROWLERS**

Bear club. Meets first Sun.; DTs. (727)824-7810; info@westfloridagrowlers.com; <www.westfloridagrowlers.com>.

**WOMYN'S EXCHANGE TAMPABAY**

A diverse mix of womyn that do not support intra-community prejudice, separatism, or discrimination of any kind. Meets Sundays at 3 PM at Gulfport Beach. Check their Web site for activities, polls and other discussions <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WomynsExchangeTampabay>.

**SARASOTA/BRADENTON AREA****AIDS MANASOTA**

AIDS service organization. Offers peer counseling, testing, activities, support groups and social events. (941)954-6011; aids-manasota@prodigy.net; <www.aidsmanasota.com>.

**ALSO**

GLBT youth group. (941)252-2576; jbalso@aol.com; also.executive@verizon.net.

**GAY & LESBIAN INFOLINE**

Provides information about local faith, social, support organizations and events to the GLBT community. (941)923-INF0.

**GLAD**

Gays and Lesbians Advocating Diversity. A Manatee Community College social and support group. <http://hometown.aol.com/mccglad/myhomepage/gaylesbian.html>.

**GULF COAST LOG CABIN CLUB**

"Inclusive, diverse Republicans." GulfCoastLogCabin@iname.com or jimboffa@yahoo.com.

**GULF COAST MEN'S CHORUS**

Meets Mon.; Universalist Unitarian Church, Sarasota. (941)377-9043; <www.gulfcoastmenschorus.org>.

**PFLAG SARASOTA**

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Meets third Tue.; 7:30 PM; Unitarian Church. (941)378-3536.

**PRIMETIMERS SARASOTA**

Social group for mature gay and bisexual men and those younger men who admire them. (941)359-8212; ptimes@tampabay.rr.com; <http://home.tampabay.rr.com/ehurley/ehurley/>.

**SARASOTA AIDS THEATRE PROJECT**

The group meets at 5 p.m. on the third Monday of every month at Bethesda House, 1670 Fourth St. in Sarasota. For info, call Garry Allan Breul at (941) 365-6348.

**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA BUSINESS GUILD**

Meets third Mon.; 6 PM; Quay. (941)953-8419; <www.swfbg.org>.

**PAST OUT****BISEXUAL ACTIVISTS STRUGGLE TO BE INCLUDED**

Gay and Lesbian History by Liz Highleyman

While people who pursue sexual or romantic relationships with both women and men have existed in all eras and cultures, the contemporary self-identified bisexual movement in the U.S. dates from the early 1970s.

The first openly bi activists were sexual liberation advocates of the 1960s, including Margo Rila, head of the San Francisco chapter of the Sexual Freedom League, and Maggi Rubenstein, who worked with Daughters of Bilitis co-founder Phyllis Lyon's National Sex Forum, an early sex education organization.

Although many people who had sex with both women and men were active in the early gay liberation

movement, fewer identified publicly

as bisexual. In 1966 out bisexual Stephen Donaldson (then known as Robert Martin) co-founded Columbia University's Student Homophile League, the first campus gay group. He also helped draft the Quaker Committee of Friends on Bisexuality's *Ithaca Statement on Bisexuality* (published in *The Advocate* in 1972), perhaps the earliest public expression of a new bi consciousness.

"Gay" was originally interpreted as encompassing anyone who had same-sex relationships, exclusively or not. But tensions grew as the gay — and later the gay and lesbian — movement adopted a more identity-based politics. Perceived as being "on the fence," bisexuals were pressured to choose sides and embrace a gay or lesbian identity — or else were told that they didn't exist. "For all the credibility I get, I might as well be calling myself a centaur or a mermaid," wrote Louise Knox in a 1974 article.

Among the first bisexual groups were New York City's National Bisexual Liberation Group (begun in 1972), New York's Bi Forum (founded in 1975), the San Francisco Bisexual Center (opened in 1976), and Chicago's BiWays (formed in 1978). These co-gender groups, which typically included more men than women, tended to focus on social activities and support rather than politics.

But by the early 1980s, political and cultural shifts brought a new generation of bisexual feminists to the fore. Some bi women felt increasingly alienated from lesbian-feminist communities as separatism took hold in the late 1970s and the limits of acceptable lesbian sexual practices narrowed.

Among these bi feminists was Lani Ka'ahumanu, a former housewife who in the 1970s had left her marriage, moved to San Francisco, and become a public lesbian activist. After falling in love with a man in 1980, she came out as bisexual, much to the chagrin of her lesbian community. In 1983 Ka'ahumanu helped found BiPol, one of the first of a new wave of explicitly feminist bi groups. That same year a group of feminist bi women (several of whom were "hasbians") founded the Boston Bisexual

Women's Network — the oldest bi group still active today.

The bisexual movement came into its own in the late 1980s. In 1987 two Boston women, Lucy Friedland and Liz Nania, distributed a flyer

Perceived as being "on the fence," bisexuals were pressured to choose sides or were told that they didn't exist.

asking, *Are We Ready for a National Bisexual Network Yet?* Bi activists from around the country began organizing, and 75 people participated in a bi contingent in the 1987 March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights — the first nationwide gathering of bisexuals. In June 1990 the first national bisexual conference took place in San Francisco, drawing more than 450 attendees. That meeting saw the birth of the North American Multicultural Bisexual Network, later renamed BiNet USA.

During these years bisexuality was a contentious issue within the gay and lesbian community, as exemplified by the 1991 *OutWeek* cover story, *The Bisexual Revolution: Deluded Closet Cases or Vanguard of the Movement?* Many bi organizers devoted their energy to convincing lesbian and gay organizations to add "bisexual" to their names, while others encouraged bisexuals to create bi-specific groups or focus on a broader sex and gender liberation agenda.

But changes were afoot that would lead to greater acceptance of bisexuality. The early 1990s saw the birth of a mixed-gender queer activist movement that emphasized diversity. The same decade also witnessed the popularization of queer theory, which stressed the fluid and socially constructed nature of sexuality and gender. After months of organizing, bi activists succeeded in achieving inclusion in the April 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation. By the turn of the 21st century, hundreds of gay and lesbian groups had changed their names or mission statements to include bisexual and transgender people. ▼

## WATER COLORS

**We're In Charge Now**  
from page 29

A second gay-themed series arrives on Bravo on July 29. In *Boy Meets Boy*, a gay leading man will choose from 15 potential mates — with the twist that some are actually heterosexual.

Bravo has run gay-themed programming in the past, including last summer's documentary series on same-sex weddings and, for several years, the *Out of the Closet* film festival.

While there is some stereotyping at work in *Queer Eye*, Collins emphasizes that each of the style mavens — dubbed the “fab five” — stands on their professional credentials and not their sexual orientation.

“We were very specific about the fact that just because you're gay doesn't give you style, taste and class,” Collins said. “Just because you get your gay card doesn't mean you know how to arrange flowers.”

The pros include food and wine connoisseur Ted Allen, co-author of *Esquire* magazine's *Things a Man Should Know* column, and Thom Filicia, named by *House Beautiful* magazine as one of America's top designers. Culture maven Jai Rodriguez (and former “Angel” in Broadway's *Rent*), “grooming guru” Kyan Douglas and fashion sage Carson

Kressley round out the advisory board.

Kressley is a hoot. “You put a living room where a crack den used to be,” he exclaims, lauding a colleague's decorating makeover of an apartment. When Kressley hears that a menu includes an expensive kind of ham, he quips: “I love a good designer meat.”

The experts, however, are quite serious about helping their straight charges look, feel and live better. In the first episode, they got a scruffy artist ready for a gallery exhibit. The second hour featured a scruffy husband — there's a trend here — and his home getting

overhauled in preparation for the wife's birthday.

The series, said to be the first to promote same-sex relationships, has already drawn criticism from the Washington-based Traditional Values

Coalition. It was asking its 43,000 member churches to protest it.

The idea for the series came to Collins while gallery-hopping one day in Boston. He overheard a woman comparing her spouse, unfavorably, to a trio of sharp-looking gay men.

The three men heard too, and intervened to offer constructive criticism, Collins recounted. “As I left with my buddy, I jokingly said, ‘That was kind of the queer eye for the straight guy.’ These guys swooped in there and helped this man out.”

**“We're hoping to break down some walls here.”**



ANDREW LANE laughs as fashion savant CARSON KRESSLEY adjusts his shirt in an episode of *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*.

Collins marched into Scout Productions, the film and TV company which he co-founded, and suggested that a show had been born. Collins, who's gay, enlisted a straight colleague, David Metzler, to join in producing it for Bravo.

The “straight guy, gay guy perspective” is at the heart of the show, Collins said. “We're hoping to break down some walls here.”

In what turned out to be a lucky break, Bravo was bought by NBC after the channel picked up *Queer Eye* — and Jeff Gaspin, the NBC executive vice whose responsibilities include the cable channel, was enthusiastic about the series.

That support has translated into on-air NBC

promotions as well as high-profile billboards touting *Queer Eye* in New York's Times Square and on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles.

Like NBC's gay-themed sitcom *Will & Grace*, the Bravo series is groundbreaking, said Gaspin. “We're taking a common genre, the makeover show, and we're being really honest with it, we're having fun with it.”

Many American men do seem to have an aversion to incorporating style in their lives, Collins said, and they're missing out.

“One thing the show is saying is if you look better, if you feel better, it's part of overall confidence-building,” he said. ▽



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## WATER COLORS

**Guerrilla Attack**  
from page 29

a year ago, he discovered that unless you were into the circuit scene or hooking up online, there was no real way to meet people outside of a handful of gay bars or night clubs.

Grabbing the bull by the horns, Walsh decided to try out an idea for alternative nightlife that had already proven successful in major cities across America, from Portland, Ore., to Portland, Maine.

Guerrilla Queer Bar is a phenomenon that began in Walsh's hometown of San Francisco in May 2000 as a tongue-in-cheek protest against the uniformity and conformity of gay club culture. GQB is one part political theater and one part social club, shaken together to produce a once-a-month night of fun, frolicking and getting out of the box that gay night life has become.

In an effort to find a solution to their occasional wanderlust, the organizers of GQB San Francisco came up with the idea of

taking a fun group out of the usual bars and thrusting them upon an altogether different night spot that may or may not be expecting them. All the while heeding the sage advice of GQB founder Barney Schlockum's mother: "It's not where you go, dear, it's who you're with."

According to the official Web site, the idea isn't so much to "attack" or show strength in numbers, as it is to show "surrealism" in numbers. These aren't the sneak-attack-hostile-takeovers of the militant guerrilla kind. The only mission is to go out and have as good a time as you can, in an environment that takes you away from the same old places you usually hang out in.

Walsh said he thinks the social aspects

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Some straight bars already work to draw the GLBT crowd, offering special nights for the community. For a non-inclusive list of some that do, visit [Watermarkonline.com](http://Watermarkonline.com) for a complete list of venues, dates, and times.

of the monthly outings should be well received by the local gay community as a refreshing way to make new friends and mingle with the ones you already have.

"In unfamiliar surroundings people tend to be more into conversing," Walsh explained. "It's kind of like being stuck in an elevator, only with better music and cocktails."

GQB Tampa will work a lot like it's sister groups in cities like Austin, San Diego, Atlanta, New York and Detroit. The Tampa group will hold its gatherings on the third Friday of each month and members will receive an e-mail 48 hours prior to the day of the event that will inform them of the meeting place or "warm-up" bar.

At the specified time and place GQB hostess and drag personality Anita Drink will lead the group into the establishment chosen as that night's destination. Once inside, the mayhem ensues as 100-plus GLBT revelers turn an ordinary bar into a queer space for one night only.

The only criteria for being chosen as a GQB destination is that there's little or no cover, good music and cheap drinks. If for any reason the GQB organizers decide that the group is not being made to feel welcome at a particular establishment, they will get on the bullhorn and announce the next destination. So, if you hear someone yell "bottoms up" they are talking about finishing your drinks, not the position they most want to see you in.

For participants who arrive late or after GQB has moved on to another location there is the "vine line," a voice mail service that allows revelers to call to learn where the party has moved.

Walsh also plans to take a cue from the other GQB cities by making some of the monthly events themed events and encouraging participants to come in costume. There are already ideas for Cinco De Mayo, Beach Blanket Bunghole, and even a guerrilla leather bar. Imagine 150 people in leather turning up at the lobby bar of one of the swanky hotels in downtown Tampa, he said.

Walsh and his guerrilla crew have spent a lot of time getting the word out by going to gay bars and events and handing out cards with the Web address on it. They have also spent a considerable amount of time in online chat rooms making sure that everybody hears about GQB Tampa.

For more information on GQB Tampa or to become a member, visit its Web site at [www.gqbtampa.com](http://www.gqbtampa.com). ▽

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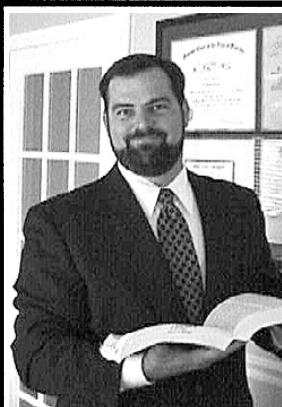
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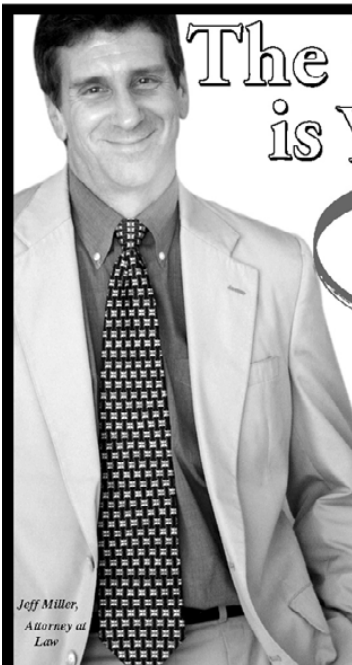
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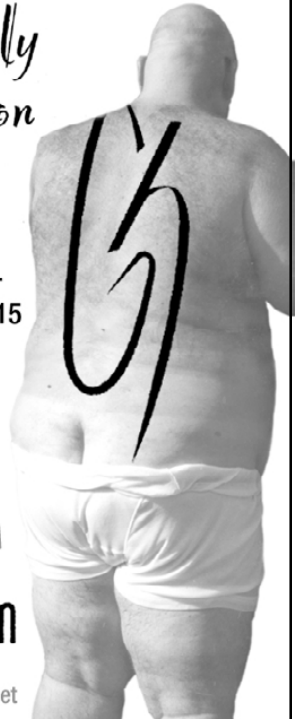
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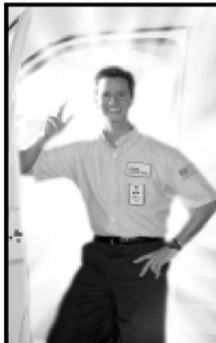
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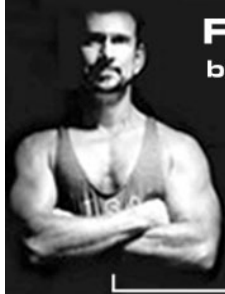
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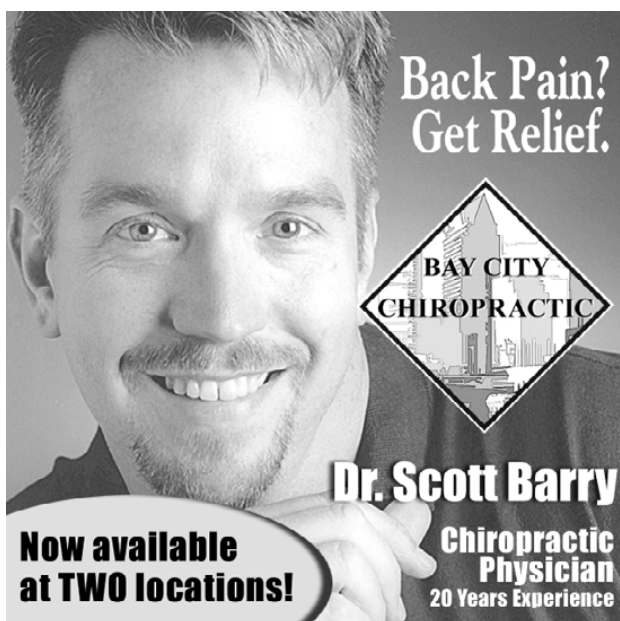
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## SPORTS

## NAVRATILOVA STILL WINNING

WIMBLEDON, England - A hero to so many, tennis legend Martina Navratilova was inspired by others, including Katherine Hepburn. The actress, who was 96 when she died recently, loved tennis and particularly admired Navratilova for the streak of independence they both shared. They became good friends.

"She didn't let any social ideas limit her," Navratilova said. "And that's what it's about, doing what's your passion, what's in your heart."

So, when she tied Billie Jean King's record of 20 Wimbledon Titles, Navratilova thought of Hepburn.

"I know she was watching," Navratilova said, her eyes glistening as she pointed a finger to heaven. "When I heard the news of her passing, I thought, 'OK, Kate, this one's going to be for you.'"

The 46-year-old Navratilova's unprecedented achievement was not lost on the packed Centre Court crowd. Many were misty-eyed as her playing partner, India's Leander Paes spoke eloquently of being grateful to be "the vehicle" helping a legend break records.

There was a time when the Czech-born Navratilova felt like an outcast in her adopted America, ostracized by narrow-minded critics and advertisers who couldn't tolerate her lesbian lifestyle or candid voice. Times change, and more who have come to admire her courage, honesty and tenacity.

In her prime 20 years ago, Navratilova said she played to be No. 1, to win the Grand Slams and try to become the greatest of all time.

This time around, she just wanted to see what it would feel like to play again.

"The response that I've gotten from the people has been such that I just didn't want to stop," she said. "And that's what my message has been: 'Don't let age ... bring you down or make you think that you shouldn't be doing something.'" (AP)



Wimbledon champion MARTINA NAVRATILOVA: "Don't let age bring you down."

## PRIME BEEF TUAOLO PROMOTES CHILI'S STEAK

HONOLULU - A beaming Esera Tuaolo takes center stage in a new television campaign for the Chili's restaurant campaign. In the commercials called "tastemonials" the openly gay former NFL lineman's disarming smile, charm, good looks and appealing singing voice are displayed as never before to millions of television viewers.

When Tuaolo first made headlines eight months ago by outing himself on HBO's *Real Sports*, he weighed 30 pounds more and was burdened by the gravity of his disclosure. As he sings about Chili's Hawaiian steak, that all seems far behind.

"I went to the audition with my

ukulele, jeans and a tight shirt, and I sang the Baby Back ribs song," Tuaolo told Outsports.com. "I always loved Chili's... it must be a jock thing."

Tuaolo is not identified in the commercial, nor is it disclosed that he is a gay football player. But Commercial Closet.org's Michael Wilke thinks Tuaolo's new gig is positive. ▼



ESERA TUAOLO

## FINAL FOUR COMING TO TAMPA

TAMPA - Women's basketball has grown in leaps and bounds in recent years, and one of the sport's premier showcases is coming to Tampa in 2008. On July 1, the NCAA announced that the University of South Florida will host the Women's Final Four in April 2008 at the 20,000-seat St. Pete Times Forum.

Expect area hotels to be full, and the resurgent downtown area to be packed throughout the major event. Atlanta, which hosted last year's Final Four at the Georgia Dome, realized a \$33.8 million economic as a result.

Florida has never had a team in the women's Final Four. The Florida Gators made it to the regional finals in 1997.

Both Florida-based WNBA teams, Orlando and Miami, have relocated.

"The sport needs to grow in Florida," said USF women's basketball coach Jose Fernandez. "But what better way than to host the women's Final Four." ▼



The St. Pete Times Forum seats 20,000, and is expected to sell out during the Final Four.

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## WATER COLORS



## STILL WATCHING

Alison Bechdel's *Dykes to Watch Out For* celebrates 20 years this month.

NEW YORK - Unquestionably political, Alison Bechdel's *Dykes to Watch Out For* has evolved from a monthly single-panel feature in *Womanews*, a feminist newsletter, to a dense, bimonthly strip featured in more than 50 newspapers nationwide, including *Watermark*.

In fact, Bechdel celebrates 20 years of producing the strip this month, following the relationships, careers, families and evolving sexualities of Mo, Lois, Clarice, Toni and Ginger against the backdrop of the somewhat mystifying world news.

A new volume of strips, *Dykes to Watch Out For (Dykes and Sundry Other Carbon Based Life Forms to Watch Out For)*, will be presented in October by her new publisher, Alyson Publications.

Bechdel talks about the evolution of her strip, her fans, *Ellen* and the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling on Texas' sodomy law.

**WATERMARK:** You write in the introduction of the new book that you set out to write about a subculture and now that subculture is disintegrating. Some might say it's evolving.

**BECHDEL:** The sodomy ruling brought up a lot of feelings about this "evolution." Did you hear about the scene in the Castro in San Francisco? Some gay military vets sang the national anthem, took down the rainbow flag and raised the American one. It's a huge leap forward, and I'm thrilled about it. Yet, I can't quite shake a tiny little pinprick of, not exactly regret, but a kind of loss. A loss of outsider-ness. I don't want to cling to an outmoded outlook, like Antonin Scalia, but I have to say I was kind of glad to hear his vitriolic little hissy fit from the bench.

**What have been some other moments that have impacted you?**

Maybe the second political moment was the civil unions ruling here in Vermont. I wasn't involved directly, wasn't even paying a whole lot of attention, I didn't feel like it meant much to me since I'd never had the slightest urge to get married to anyone. But when it happened, I felt a kind of seismic shift inside me. It meant much more than I could have ever imagined before hand, to get that kind of legitimization.

I kind of hate to say this, but probably that *Ellen* coming-out

episode was the death knell of the subculture that I had loved so fondly for so long. It really is a kind of watershed moment culturally. I know it was unquestionably a good thing, just like the sodomy decision. But like I said, there's that pinprick of loss.

**Death knell?**

Perhaps I'm being a little macabre. But I do think it was a tipping point, where gay people stopped needing the subculture in the same way they had

until then. If you can get validation on network TV, who needs to pick up the local bar rag? I know it's time to move beyond validation. I'm working on it.

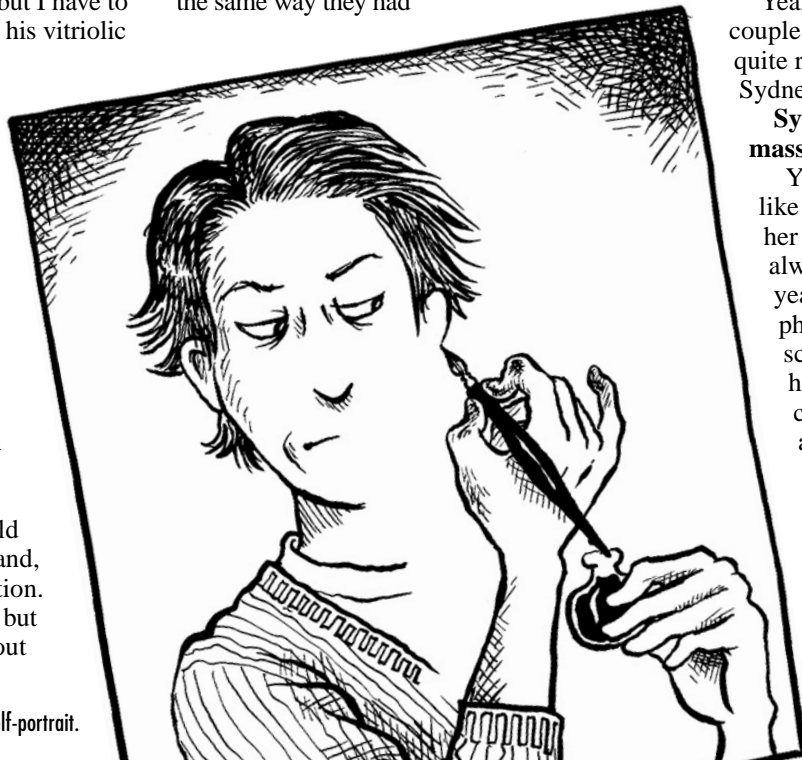
**There is an inherent contradiction though in fighting for acceptance and mourning the passing of our outsider-ness. It's similar to what Mo often expresses in *Dykes to Watch Out For*, but Mo is no longer the character that you most completely relate to.**

Yeah, somewhere over the past couple of years I morphed without quite realizing it from Mo into Sydney.

**Sydney, the over-achieving mass-consumer?**

Yeah. Well, I'm not in debt like Sydney. But I lust after all of her consumer gadgets. She always gets stuff a couple of years before I do. The cell phone, the laptop, now the flat-screen TV. But fortunately, I have a lot of Mo's anti-consumerist instincts, which acts as a buffer. That's why I'm not in debt.

**Ethan Green popped into a scene with Lois and Carlos at the gym. Did you draw him or did Eric Orner?**



Cartoonist ALISON BECHDEL's self-portrait.



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**Still Watching**  
from page 50

I drew him! And he was really fun. My own characters seemed so lackluster in comparison.

**Do you have a lot of gay male fans?**

One species of gay fan I've always had is the guy who sort of wishes he could be a lesbian. They're sort of new-agey and don't like the bar scene and they read the strip because it's kind of a lesbian community for them. Then there are the old-school leftist gay men who like the strip for its politics. My most fun gay fans are very smart, erudite guys who like the strip ... I don't know. Maybe it's because I use big words.

You know, I've never called myself a separatist, but for a long time, I did lead a pretty functionally separatist life. I think this is most evident in the conspicuous absence of AIDS as an issue in my strip in the 1980s. I don't know why I didn't have more gay men in my life. That's changing

now. I even have straight friends. But I think it had to do with my father. I'm writing a memoir about growing up with my flaming, closeted father.

**A portion of your commentary has begun to take place in the form of television or radio broadcasts in the background, on book covers, magazine and newspaper headlines, while the characters moved the story ahead.**

Striking the balance between opinion and soap opera is the fun part for me. That's what's great about working in a visual medium. You can have several things going at once. I've always loved that. I want to say three things simultaneously. I think I might have Attention Deficit Disorder.

**You can be more satirical since you don't have characters saying these things like "House Votes: Fuel Efficient SUV's No, Earth is Flat, Yes."**

Yeah. Sometimes the news is so moronic that it would be too boring to have the characters even discuss it. ▼

**Dykes To Watch Out For** by Alison Bechdel

www.DykesToWatchOutFor.com

**ADVICE-O-RAMA**  
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Advice by Keith Baber, M.Ed.

Dear Keith:

**Several years ago, "Debbie" and I were inseparable. It was very much a Will & Grace kind of scenario: She was the single, straight girl and I was the gay best buddy with relationship issues of my own. Everything seemed to change, though, when I started dating "Robert."**

**I accept a lot of the blame for Debbie and I growing apart at the beginning of the relationship I was starting with Robert. It was typical: Robert and I wanted to spend all of our time together, and we thought about each other all of the time.**

**Fearful that Debbie might think she was unneeded or unloved, I tried to include her in as much as I could. I still called her every day, and I suggested that she and I should start planning "dates," when only she and I would go out. Eventually, she stopped returning my phone calls, and I think we went out three times by ourselves.**

**My relationship with Robert continued to grow while my relationship with Debbie diminished. After about a year, I ceased hearing from Debbie. After two years, I stopped calling her. Now, after three solid years of being with Robert — whom I love deeply — I find that I am upset with Debbie for ditching me so readily. Did she not know that I could have used her friendship? Did she think that I stopped loving her? What do you think?**

**Fizzled Friendship**

Dear Fizzled:

Developing and maintaining healthy friendships are essential for creating a

healthy personal and social support system. Unfortunately, friendships are sometimes neglected during the time for romantic relationship-building.

It appears that Debbie and you had developed a strong, solid and supportive bond. These types of friendships are few and far between. Therefore, holding onto her friendship needed to be high on your list of priorities. Friends usually understand that their roles will change once their friends begin dating on a serious level.

However, understanding does not mean that feelings will not get hurt along the way. What is most difficult to accept is being slighted or forgotten. Most likely, Debbie felt that her friendship with you was no longer valuable. Her way of coping was to withdraw.

Your approach to resolving the issue must start by taking ownership for allowing the friendship to fade. It was you — not her — that entered into the new romantic relationship that ultimately became a key factor in altering the friendship. Acknowledging your actions that contributed to the break will help the mending process. And you need to allow Debbie to voice any feelings of rejection that she encountered.

Balancing a romantic love and a friendship can be a delicate task. Forsaking your network of friends while you establish your relationship is always a mistake. Preserving a friendship takes energy, especially when one is also trying to build a long-term, romantic relationship. ▼

Watermark's Advice-O-Rama counselor, Keith Baber, M.Ed., has a degree in counseling-psychology. He can be reached via e-mail at [editor@watermarkonline.com](mailto:editor@watermarkonline.com).

**TRANSITIONS**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:** Watermark publisher TOM DYER (7/30); hell on heels SAM SINGHAUS (7/21).

**CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS:** Nearly 100% plastic PHYLLIS DILLER (7/17); daughter with issues LIZZIE BORDEN (7/19); somewhat confused man's man ERNEST HEMINGWAY, stop calling me CAT STEVENS and glazed DON KNOTTS (7/21); Loudon's singing son RUFUS WAINRIGHT (7/22); fellatiator MONICA LEWINSKY (7/23); still-missing fly girl AMELIA EARHART, quickly wearing thin J. LO and fun-to-say RUTH BUZZI (7/24); still-not-talking-about-his-private-life KEVIN SPACEY (7/26); Orlando's favorite sad girl DELTA BURKE.



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## FILTH AIRING AARON'S UNENDING ERROR

Celebrity Gossip by Billy Masters

Could it be that bachelor **AARON BUERGE** has a thing for trannies? That remains to be seen. Recently, Aaron donated his "services" for a bachelor auction to benefit the Developmental Center of the Ozarks in Springfield, Mo. Buerge allegedly arranged for a female friend to outbid everyone else. But he didn't know that a group of female impersonators had raised money to try and win the choice piece of beefcake for local drag performer **VIVIAN POWERS**.

In the end, the drag queens had the high bid of \$2,800 and Buerge yelled foul, saying that the bidding "may have been halted too abruptly" even though his "friend" had ample opportunity to outbid the "girls." Early the next morning, Aaron was still seething and dashed off an angry e-mail to the organization stating that the staff "did nothing to protect the integrity of DCO or your participants who so kindly donated their time."

He changed his tune once he found out that the press (including *The Enquirer*) was in attendance. Suddenly, Buerge had no problem going out with Viv — "Why not? We're definitely going to honor the date and just have fun." Uh huh.

*Broadway: The Golden Age* is an exciting new documentary that illuminates Broadway's so-called "Golden Age" and tried to capture a bit of what that time was like. I've known

filmmaker **RICK McKAY** since this idea was just being formulated, so it's thrilling to see this rough cut with 100-plus stars.

The irony is that many of the stars are nearly 100, making them a dying breed indeed (Rick has the last interviews with people like **GWEN VERDON** and **KIM HUNTER**). This documentary should be required viewing for anyone even contemplating work in the theatre. A sneak preview was held at Hollywood's Egyptian Theatre and was attended by many participants including **KAYE BALLARD**, **NANETTE FABRAY**, **JOHN RAITT**, **MARTIN LANDAU** and others. As in awe of these individuals as I always am, I did quip that I was probably one of the few people in the theatre who still had both of his original hips! *Variety* called the film "the screen's most authoritative encapsulation of Broadway history and an intimately resonant one." Bravo.

After the film, Nanette Fabray stated that she believes amplification has killed the living theatre — that today's artists no longer have the skill (or the necessity) to project due to miking. Those words came back to me days later when I attended the delayed opening of *Sneaux*, a new musical at the Matrix Theatre.

The show is about a high school misfit who finds escape in her gothic mystery novels — particularly one about a girl named Sneaux who is raised in the

Bayou, yearns to be a figure skater, but is really the illegitimate heir to the throne of France. The ridiculous situations multiply to the point that the audience (and perhaps the writer) completely loses track of what the actual story is — if in fact there ever was a point.

As uproarious as many of the individual scenes and performances are, I am not convinced that the show holds together. Severe cutting and rewriting must take place before its merits can be assessed. As it stands, *Sneaux* is wildly over-written, over-produced — and unnecessarily over-amplified. Going back to Miss Fabray's point, there is absolutely no need to amplify performers in a 99-seat theatre. If they cannot be heard, then either it's a problem with the casting or the band is too loud (in this case, sometimes both).

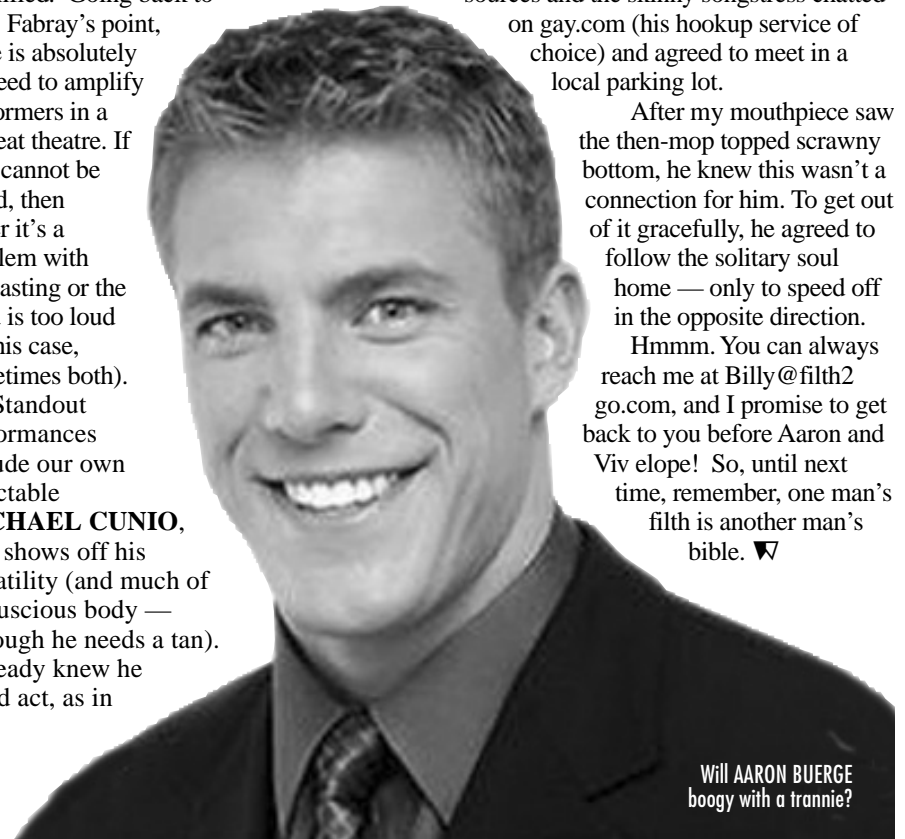
Standout performances include our own delectable **MICHAEL CUNIO**, who shows off his versatility (and much of his luscious body — although he needs a tan). I already knew he could act, as in

*The Fluffer*. But in *Sneaux*, he proves himself to be a chameleon, running the gamut from outrageous comedian to earnest leading man — and each segue is committed, professional, and believable. He leaves on July 27 to begin rehearsals for the national tour of *Hairspray* with our pal **BRUCE VILANCH**.

Could it be that a very popular chart-topper is more of a bottom in his private life? So say people who have connected with the big-mouthed boy. And I've heard one very funny story about a tryst that didn't quite happen. Two years ago, one of my sources and the skinny songstress chatted on gay.com (his hookup service of choice) and agreed to meet in a local parking lot.

After my mouthpiece saw the then-mop topped scrawny bottom, he knew this wasn't a connection for him. To get out of it gracefully, he agreed to follow the solitary soul home — only to speed off in the opposite direction.

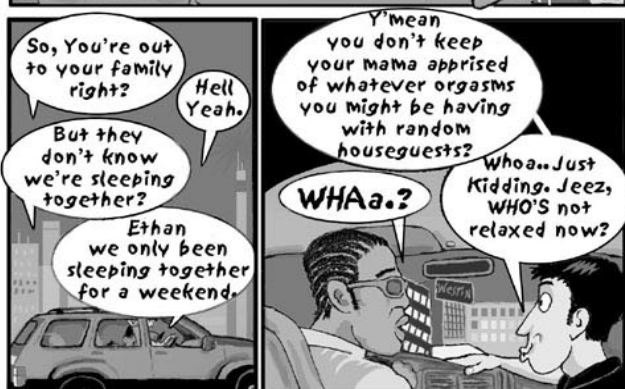
Hmmm. You can always reach me at Billy@filth2go.com, and I promise to get back to you before Aaron and Viv elope! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible. ▽



Will AARON BUERGE boogy with a tranny?

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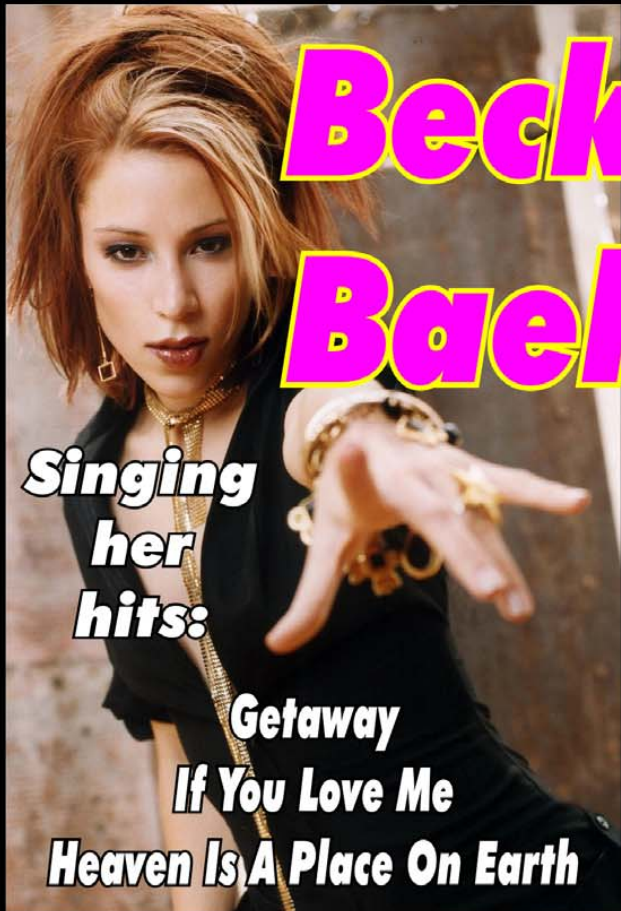
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