

A COMMUNITY SERVICE OF TARRANT COUNTY LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

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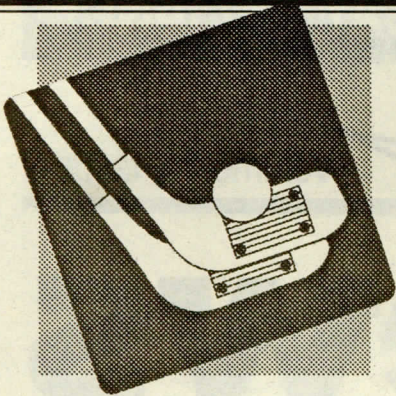
Alliance News



IT TAKES

A THIEF:

Widower's
stolen moments
at Fort Worth's
Botanical
Gardens are his
declaration of
love. *See p. 9.*



First Annual

Harvest Open

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Radical Right group seems guilty of what it accuses us

MILITANT, DISORDERED PRACTICES

By SCOTT FORSGREN

On a recent religious broadcast, Keith Fournier, executive director of the American Center for Law and Justice, invited "believers" to request his literature related to the gay agenda. The offer piqued my curiosity, and I requested a copy. The information I received some weeks later addressed me as "Dear Friend," and yet the material was far less than friendly to me. Not surprisingly, the letter also made a futile plea for my money.

The cover story was a discussion of the "militant British homosexuals" who had gathered around the English Parliament to protest. They were protesting on the grounds that although the age of consent for sex between men had recently been lowered from 21 to 18, 16 was the standing age for sex between women. Whether or not one agrees with the reason they were protesting, the generalizations made by the American Center for Law and Justice were appalling.

In the article, Pope John Paul II was referred to as having courage and clarity as he spoke of "homosexual practices" as disordered. He further indicated that family life could not be built around homosexual unions. The Center supported the Pope's viewpoints and pleas to society to "jump out of the water of immorality." One quote in particular clearly shows an attempt to take an isolated part of our community and generalize it to refer to all gay and lesbian people. "Like the frog that got used to the water's slowly changing temperature until it boiled to death without protest, our

culture is gradually getting used to decadence as the heat is turned up by misguided and mistaken zealots."

I don't think anyone would disagree that there is a significant amount of decay in today's society. We've seen it time and again. Jerry Falwell and Jim Baker are two prime examples. Unlike the frog that got used to the water's slowly changing temperature until it boiled to death, we in the gay and lesbian community won't let the religious right turn the heat up any further, and we will take a stand and protest the erroneous attitudes and beliefs that are being used to poison society against us. Who here are the misguided and the mistaken?

The material went on to claim that "the agenda of militant homosexuals is quite clear. They want their disordered sexual appetite recognized as a civil right." What we really want is to be given equal status and opportunity to partake in many of the traditional things that the straight society takes for granted.

At some time in the future, I hope there will be a Mr. Right with whom I can share every aspect of my life.

When that time comes, I think it only fair that I should have the opportunity to be recognized as legally united with that special person and attain those benefits that come with that status. Just because we are gay beings doesn't mean that we don't want the big house with a white picket fence, two cars in the garage, children and a dog (or maybe more appropriately for some, a cat). For many of us, the "traditional" may not be our heart's desire. Nonetheless, every person (straight, gay or otherwise) deserves equal opportunity to become the incarnation of their own personal dreams.

The Center then goes on to make the claim that "most homosexuals do not see such marriages and family groupings as permanent or monogamous." I found this statement quite unsettling. First of all, I find it hard to imagine this group so closely in proximity to us that they could conduct a poll of "most homosexuals." I do not recall being contacted as to whether or not I included polygamy in my definition of family or marriage. Some gay people may believe that mo-

nogamy is not in their cards. However, it seems to me that many straight people have this same problem. Don't they call it "infidelity"?

Further claims are made to suggest that we want nothing less than a "cultural revolution." Well, finally they got one thing right. That's exactly what we want. We want the religious right to go back to their religion and stop making the gay and lesbian community a profit center. We aren't a carnival side-show. We are children of God just as they are. The only difference is that we seem to have understood the concept that God loves all people, and they seem to have closed their eyes to it.

I don't always support some of the tactics that some in our community take to become visible, but that's not the issue here. At issue are the erroneous generalizations that are being made and the misrepresentations that are being sold to unsuspecting "believers".

I am a believer, as are many other gay and lesbian people, and I'm not buying what the religious right has for sale. Someday, they will realize that God loves all His children without reservation. For now, we have to make every effort to be seen proudly as gay and lesbian people with values and morality. Each opportunity we have to educate someone is another step to being victorious. For if we each get through to two people, and they get through to two people, and they get through to... we will someday be witness to the biggest victory of all, to say with pride "liberty and justice for all" and mean it. ☘

Education Bill fails in decency

HELMS ADD-ON THREATENS YOUTH

The mission of Tarrant County's Teen Project outreach program to lesbian/gay/bisexual youth could be affected by a U.S. Senate amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act if it passes successfully through the legislative process this fall.

The Bob Smith/Jessie Helms amendment, called a "cheap gay-bashing vote" by the *Washington Post*, bans federal funds to schools that "carry out a program or activity that has either the purpose or effect of encouraging or supporting homosexuality as a positive alternative lifestyle." The amendment would cover the distribution of instructional materials, counseling and referral of students to outside organizations.

According to Susan Steele,

TCLGA president, the Teen Project's goal is to work with school staff and youth-serving agencies to create a community-wide effort to curb the desperation that often leads to teen suicide attempts, substance abuse, separation from family and other self-destructive behavior. The Smith/Helms amendment, by taking school staff out of this community-wide effort, would make access to Teen Project services more difficult for teenagers and their parents, Steele said.

After the Smith/Helms amendment passed in the Senate 63-36, Senator Edward Kennedy offered two conflicting amendments to counterstrike: one to prohibit federal funds to promote sexual activity, whether homosexual or heterosexual; and one to prohibit

federal funds for condom distribution in schools.

According to National Gay and Lesbian Task Force analysts, Kennedy's amendments, which passed, were a political strategy to counteract the anti-gay campaign of Helms and his supporters by forcing combination of the three amendments into a single conflicting one.

With a similar measure passed by the U.S. House, all of the amendments were bumped to a Senate/House joint conference committee that meets later this fall to reconcile differences between house and senate versions.

Locally, Dr. Rita Cotterly, director of the Sexuality Education Center in Fort Worth and coordinator of the Teen Project, regis-

SEE HELMS' ON P. 18

THE ALLIANCE NEWS

is published monthly and distributed to community-based organizations and businesses throughout the county.

Viewpoints expressed herein are not official views of TCLGA unless explicitly stated. Inclusion of any name or photograph is not a representation of sexual orientation.

We welcome submissions of materials relevant to the lesbian/gay culture, including illustrations, photography, columns, features, short stories, poetry, reviews, etc. We reserve the right to enforce our own judgments regarding the suitability of advertising copy and submitted materials. We cannot return manuscripts unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Copy and advertising deadlines are the 15th of each month for the next month's issue.

LEADING AGENDA

Board nominees compete for September election

A call for nominations to the TCLGA Board of Directors in August found seven candidates for five positions open. Elections at September's general membership meeting will decide TCLGA's leadership.

Paid members of TCLGA are eligible to vote at the meeting. Those who are new to the meetings or who have lapsed membership may pay their dues that night if they are interested in voting.

To be elected to the board, candidates must meet two conditions: they must be among the top five who receive the most votes; and they must receive more yes votes than no votes.

The business meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 15 at Luby's Cafeteria, 251 University Dr., Fort Worth. Dinner will be at 6 p.m.

The following nominees comprise the ballot.

JOHN BLAND

Development Associate,
AIDS Outreach Center



"My primary interest is in working on development to find innovative funding

sources for TCLGA in order to build a stronger, more powerful voice for our community. Too, I am particularly interested in building new leadership and in identifying role models for lesbian/gay youth."

COURTNEY CHATFIELD

Financial Planner,
American Express



"Through my financial planning practice I have worked over the past several years

to help individuals and couples within the community to financially empower themselves. As a life member of TCLGA and an active member of the community, I

have worked to promote lesbian/gay rights, lesbian/gay issues, community awareness, and the support of lesbian/gay-owned and operated businesses.

"I believe I can offer new ideas, enthusiasm and positive energy to the Alliance board and its members. I believe I can make a difference."

STEVE EAGLE

Public Health Worker, six years



Eagle has served a one-year term as an appointee to the board to fill a vacated position.

He filled the secretary post during his term.

His civic work includes providing lectures on AIDS education for Tarrant County AIDS Interfaith Network outreach programs.

ANGELA LANSEY

Advertising Director,
Alliance News



Lansey is a five-year member of TCLGA; she has served on the board two years

and as treasurer one year.

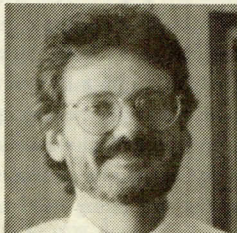
"I have enjoyed the luxury of working in the Alliance office and regret that my employment has

now limited my time there. I am committed to finding resources to staff the office so no call will go unanswered more than 24 hours.

"I am interested in nurturing diversity among the board. I see hopeful work being accomplished on programs like the Teen Project, and I am pleased to help in that work."

FRANK PROVASEK

Business manager



"I am a 37-year-old Fort Worth native and a graduate of University of

Texas at Arlington. I was employed for 11 years as an engineer at General Dynamics, where I was fired shortly after my photograph and name appeared in the *Star-Telegram* after an Alliance demonstration, a 'coincidence.'

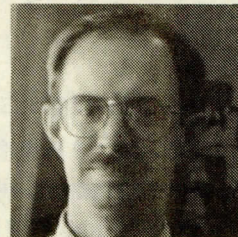
"I was the Alliance's first dues-paying member when the organization was begun in 1980. Shortly thereafter, I was elected to the board of directors, where I have served continuously. I have variously held all four officer positions, including five years as treasurer when I fought a successful battle with the IRS to grant the Alliance nonprofit status - not an easy task for a gay group during the Reagan years.

"I was the editor of the *Alliance News* for its first 10 years, using the pseudonym 'Frank Roper' at first,

when it was still hazardous to be openly gay in Fort Worth."

DAVID REED

Supervisor at Bookstop



"I am a past president of the Alliance and also served terms as secretary

and treasurer. I currently serve on the Alliance of Baptists Task Force on Human Sexuality, and I am a board member of the Greater Fort Worth Civil Liberties Union. I hold degrees from the University of Tennessee and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. I really haven't quit being a preacher..."

JAN WYNN

Private Practice Counselor

"As a mental health care provider



of services, I am concerned about the mental health care

needs of this community and the lack of advocacy for gay/lesbian issues in the Tarrant County community. My participation as a board member and a professional role model will be an effort to enlighten, educate and bring to the forefront the need for services to all people regardless of sexual orientation and/or preference.

"My agenda also involves the alleviation of social injustice in Tarrant County and encouragement for unity among our community in an effort to obtain equal rights. Increasing self-esteem, building support systems and encouraging healthier communication will assist in building unity and pride among the gay/lesbian community."

September TCLGA Meeting:

ELECTIONS FOR
ALLIANCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS POSITIONS

• ALSO •

CANDIDATE FORUM:
Democrats and Republicans in November's
General Election compete for your vote!

Thursday, Sept. 15
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Dinner at 6 p.m.
Program begins
at 6:30 p.m.

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NATIONWIDE

WORK ETHICS

Senate investigates impact of job discrimination on lesbians, gays

A U.S. Senate hearing July 29 on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) was the first ever held on legislation that would extend any form of civil rights protections to lesbian and gay Americans.

The Labor and Human Resources Committee, chaired by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.), heard the stories of two people who suffered job discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation, as well as testimony from business and labor lead-

ers in support of the bill.

ENDA would ban job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, which is currently not prohibited under federal law.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund arranged the appearance of two key witnesses in the hearing: Cheryl Summerville of Atlanta, who was fired from her job at a Cracker Barrel restaurant, and Ernest Dillon of Detroit, who was harassed and beaten at work. To educate lawmakers about the problem of anti-gay job discrimination, the Campaign Fund's "Documenting Discrimination" project also provided the committee with job discrimination cases from around the country.

"I worked hard at my job, and my reward was getting fired for no good reason," Summerville told the committee. "The right to hold a job shouldn't be based on whether someone is black or white, male or female, gay or straight. It should be based on ability and dedication. I hope that you will take action to ensure that people like me - a fellow American - can have the same rights as everybody else."

Dillon filed an Equal Employment Opportunity claim after he was continually harassed and eventually attacked at work. A federal court dismissed his claim, stating that the discrimination Dillon experienced was not prohibited by federal civil rights laws.

"I turned to my union, my supervisors, my doctor and court, only to find that, in America, I am not entitled to work without fearing for my life," Dillon told the committee. "I want what every other American wants - the ability to work, to be treated fairly, to be judged by who I am, and to be free from discrimination and harass-

ment. I look to Congress for leadership in stopping the pain and prejudice, and in passing a federal law to protect me."

The Campaign Fund also recruited Warren Phillips, former chief executive officer of Dow Jones & Co., to testify in favor of the bill. "It has been the law of the land that employment discrimination is unacceptable based on race, gender, religion, ethnic origin or other non-performance-related consideration," Phillips testified. "It is time to include sexual orientation. It is the right thing to do. It is the sensible thing to do. It is also the businesslike thing to do."

Other supporting witnesses included Stephen Holter, executive vice president of Pacific Telesis; Richard Womack of the AFL-CIO; and Chai Feldblum, a professor of law at the Georgetown University Law Center.

The legislation has 30 cospon-

sors in the Senate and 120 in the House of Representatives. It is being championed by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the nation's leading civil rights coalition representing more than 185 women's labor, religious, disability and civil rights organizations. The Leadership Conference has been the driving force behind every major piece of civil rights legislation passed in the past half century.

"We are poised to take a major step forward in securing equal rights in the workplace for lesbian and gay Americans," Daniel Zingale, the Campaign Fund's public policy director, said. "We have unprecedented bipartisan support in Congress, as well as the active participation of the American civil rights movement. Our job now is to educate the general public about the need for this legislation and continue to build support in the House and Senate." ■

MYTHS DEBUNKED:

Latest study shows lesbians and gays hit in the pocketbook on the job

New research on the impact of anti-gay job discrimination refutes stereotypes of gay and lesbian citizens as an affluent population and demonstrates the need for legal protections against anti-gay discrimination in employment.

An independent study by the University of Maryland at College Park found that the gay and lesbian population is economically and socially diverse - and disadvantaged by unfair job discrimination. No federal law protects Americans from being fired, re-

fused work, paid less or even harassed in the workplace because of their perceived sexual orientation.

The study found that gay men and lesbians actually earn less than their non-gay counterparts with similar education, training and occupations. Gay men earned 11 to 27 percent less while lesbians earned five to 14 percent less.

Opponents of equal civil rights protections for gay and lesbian citizens often cite marketing surveys of gay magazine readers to spread a stereotype of gay people as affluent. This data, compiled by the marketing firm Overlooked Opinions, Inc., was misused recently in testimony before a U.S. Senate committee hearing on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA).

"This data is not of the gay community, it is for the readers of specific gay publications," Jeffrey Vitale, president of Overlooked Opinions, said. "To compare these figures to the average individual income in the U.S. is ludicrous." ■

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POSTAL DELIVERY:

Coming out by letter freed me from binding fears

By **SCOTT FORSGREN**

Over the past few months, I have become increasingly ready to start the coming-out process. Thus far, I have really only been completely open with my therapist of many years and my circle of gay and lesbian friends. However, I realize that this just isn't enough. There has got to be some point in time where I start telling other people that I am no longer going to let myself be repressed by their attitudes toward homosexuals. It's time that I turn this anger into something positive through being

more open about my sexuality.

With more than a few people whom I have loved and thought of as dear friends throughout my years, I ultimately felt confined to expressing only a part of my entire self. At some point within our friendship, they took serious stances on their opinion of gays and made claims that God could not accept such an "alternative". Well, if that was true, then God could not have accepted me, and yet I knew that he did.

The worst part was that I believed these people because I respected them for so many years. From my perspective today, their attitudes make me feel a certain level of anger. I am angry at them for not having a more open mind, but then I also realize that I have to be angry at myself for not revealing to them that I was gay. They all knew me well and loved me very deeply, and maybe my revelation would have made them stop and reevaluate their position. Further, if I could change someone's attitude toward homosexuality, maybe someone else down the road would not be forced to struggle through being confronted with the same negative viewpoints.

The more I live, the more I tell myself that I have to learn to confront fear head-on. Don't let me fool you by making it sound easy; it's not. Nonetheless, I know that if I ever want to be completely confident and happy with myself and if I ever desire to have a life-long relationship that has any chance of survival, I have to do whatever it takes to not be restrained by fear. I'm taking baby steps, but as time passes, babies learn to walk and, ultimately, they learn to run.

It was time to take this anger and convert it into something positive. There were two people to whom I

once felt very close, but now I feel a great chasm in our friendships which are, in fact, essentially non-existent. I had such admiration and respect for both women but when comments were made, I found I had to pull away for my own well-being. Now I no longer feel that I can just leave things the way they are. It's been over a year since we've talked. It's taken me that long to become confident that I like who I am. Now maybe it's time to break the silence and communicate once again.

"Sabrina" is a religious woman with strong beliefs. She prides herself on being involved in a church that is so loving - "loving" because they have a recovery group for homosexuals. I'm still not sure what such a group might do to help one recover or from what exactly they are trying to get us to recover.

Further, Sabrina feels called to do God's work in the pro-life movement and is very active in one group that is nationally known for shut-downs of abortion clinics as well as having added opposing gay rights to their agenda when Clinton proposed lifting the ban. I never took issue with her conviction on that front, and whether or not I believe abortion is right or wrong is not the issue here. What did bother me was that Sabrina was involved in this movement in an effort to save lives, and yet, her other attitudes were contributing ultimately to the loss of life.

I wrote a letter to her and by the time this article is printed, she will have received it. I expect one of two responses: none, or I may get bombarded with efforts to get me on the road to "recovery".

With the letter I included some additional literature on what it means to be gay and Christian. It was scary sending it but that didn't

SEE 'COMING OUT ON P. 19



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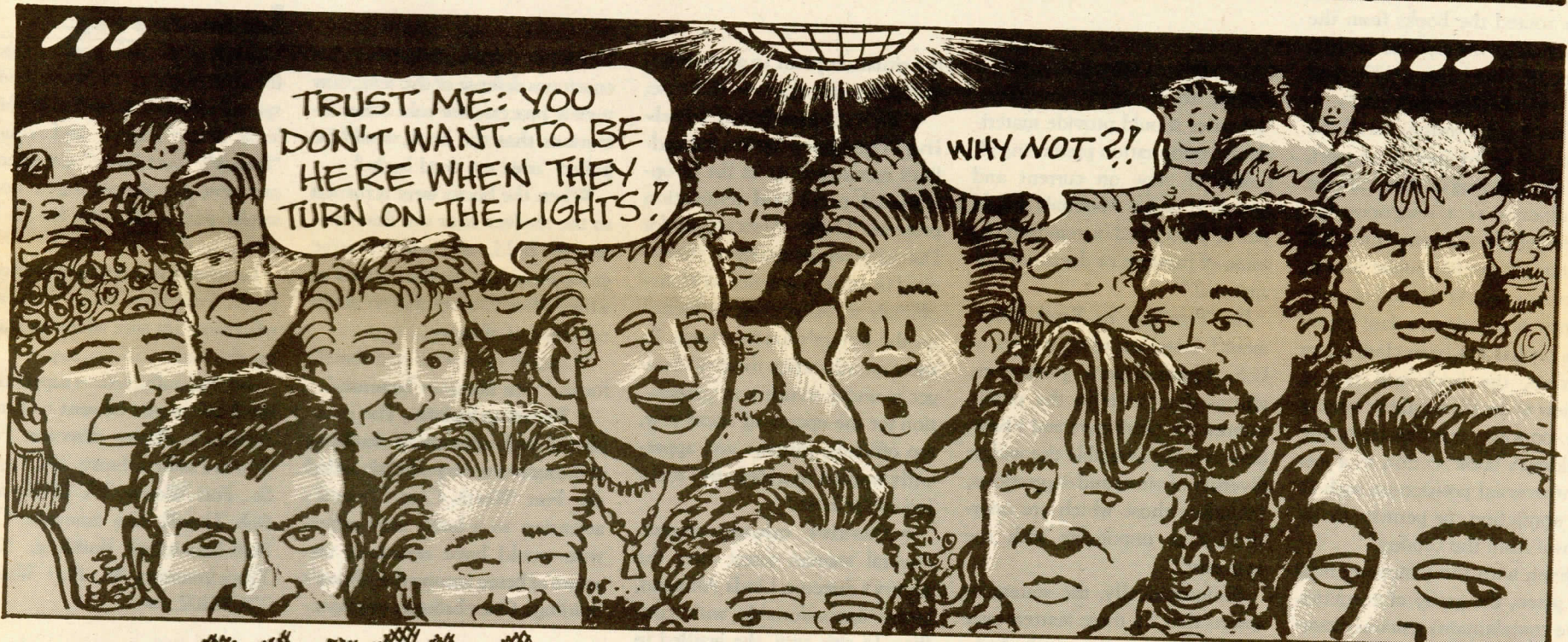
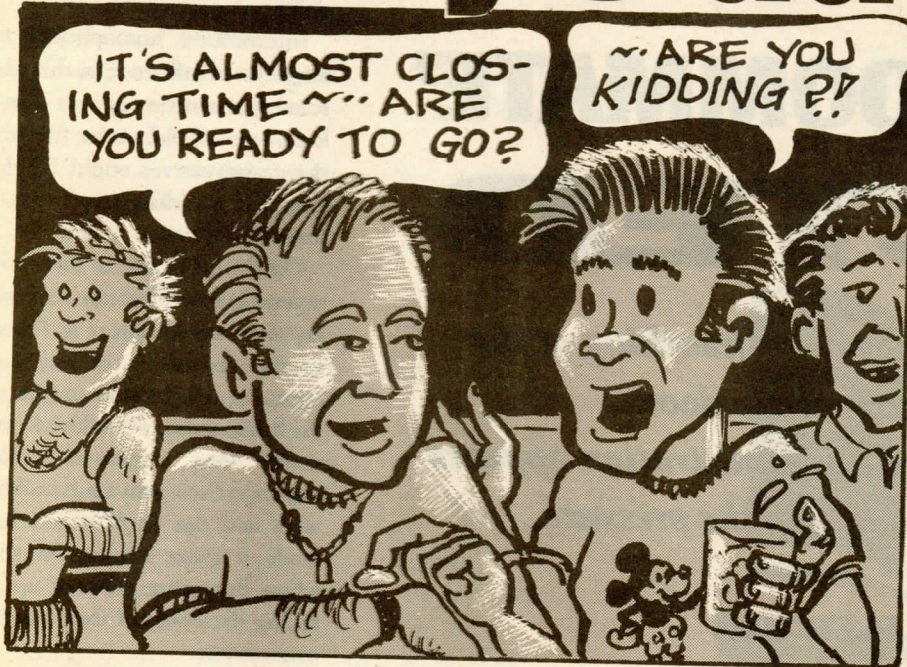
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"A LOVING HEART IS A HELPING HAND."

-TIM HAYES

dewey's daydreams By Todd CAMP



Under what some librarians have called an organized campaign underscored by manipulation and intimidation, a conservative group here has attacked "Daddy's Roommate" among the Fort Worth Public Library's holdings and demanded its removal.

The children's picture book, by Michael Willhoite, supports the nontraditional families of gay parents.

Until recently, the public library held four copies of the book distributed among several branches. In response to insistent complaints by seven patrons who are backed by the Dallas Association for Decency, library officials have routed the books from the branches to the central facility, where they are being held behind the children's section desk.

The books might still be checked out by specific request, but this shelving of them, offered by officials as a temporary appeasement to the complaints, has effectively limited public access, librarians say. At the end of a six-month moratorium, a date librarians say has not been clarified by officials, the book will face a review to decide its status: among the options, transfer from the children's book section to a less controversial positioning such as in nonfiction, or permanent removal from the catalog.

Even with the temporary hold in place, the group of conservative complainants remains dissatisfied, according to sources, and appears determined to pressure officials to ban the book completely.

Nationally prescribed freedoms on vacation in Fort Worth

Several on staff are alarmed by this latest threat to intellectual freedom; they fear it is a portent of further invasive assaults for censorship. And they are disappointed in an administration that has succumbed to pressure instead of protecting the public's free access, a mission to which all librarians are pledged to uphold.

Resolutions and amendments adopted by national and state library associations promote free access to materials that pass the selection process, regardless of special-interest objections. The American Library Association's

'DADDY'S ROOMMATE' EVICTED

Radical Right censorship has come knocking at the Fort Worth Public Library door. According to inside reports, the administration appears to be trembling and bending to the pressure.

By BEVERLY FLETCHER

(ALA) Bill of Rights issues a policy specific to these circumstances: "Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval."

Its "Freedom to Read Statement," based on what it cites as U.S. constitutional guarantees, affirms that "it is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority."

Philosophically, the statement asserts that "in these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others."

The ALA formally opposes restricting access for minors and holds that "it is the parents - and only parents - who may restrict their children - and only their children - from access to library materials and services."

Closer to home, the Texas Library Association advises in its *Intellectual Freedom Handbook* on "what to do when the censor calls:" do not remove disputed materials when a complaint is made.

Why freedom took a fall

With policies and guidelines so clearly outlined at national and state levels, it might seem surprising that local reaction has catered to censorship. Librarians close to

the situation point to a combination of circumstances in this case:

- **The scramble for funding.** The library has made headlines recently with its list of operational needs and renovation projects. Dallas Association for Decency representatives threatened in correspondence to library officials to exert their influence on the library's funding body. In these months when the city's budget is under scrutiny in preparation for the upcoming fiscal year, top officials, insiders say, apparently wanted to avoid any "rocking of the boat."

- **Passive management.** Several sources assert that the library's director, Linda Allmand, seems uncomfortable with conflict. In this case, she waffled in mediation and then turned the matter over to the city manager to decide, who ordered a two-month hold on the book that extended to six months.

When one librarian challenged the extension, Allmand defended the measure as protection of the books to prevent theft during this period of controversy. The librarian offered that the lesbian/gay community, through the Alliance, surely would finance replacements, but Allmand said the expense of "processing" new purchases was at issue.

The bottom line, however, was not one of funding. Allmand told the librarian, "We just have to compromise on this."

- **The top sentinel was down.** Camille Connor, materials coordinator, initially was in charge of handling the complaints.

Her letter to complainants was a courteous defense of the selection review process; she told other librarians that the book would be pulled "over my dead body."

When the books were returned to the shelves after the first two-month hold, the conservative group launched another attack at a time when Connor was on medical leave of absence.

"Camille's not there to do battle for us," one librarian lamented.

- **Homophobia.** The complaints and subsequent shuffling of the matter to city officials called the Fort Worth City Council's attention to a book they otherwise would have remained unaware of being among the library's holdings. Once brought to inspec-

tion, several on the council considered the "decency" of displaying a homo-positive book in the children's section.

Internalized homophobia too might be of influence in this case: some speculation suggests that at least one official under fire from the conservatives might be closeted and avoiding association to sexual orientation issues.

On the other side of that fence, several gay and lesbian staff, who say they would object as fiercely to the censorship of any book there, are especially distraught over the limbo status of "Daddy's Roommate": they recounted sending copies to their own adult children who said the book would have made a great impact on them when they were growing up and facing the issues of their parents' orientation.

Let freedom ring...

Defenders of the book suggest that supporters, to show widespread interest, should visit their local library branch and request "Daddy's Roommate" for checkout. Patrons requesting a book might pay a 50 cent fee to be added to the waiting list.

Increased circulation of the book might convince some librarians who were not sure where to stand on the issue, insiders say.

Additionally, letters supporting the book might be sent to Linda Allmand, library director, Fort Worth Public Library, 300 Taylor St., Fort Worth, TX 76102; and Bob Terrell, city manager, City Hall-Municipal Building, 1000 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth, TX 76102. *fb*

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*Some say love, it is a flower.
Doyle has sown the seed.*

Crime of PASSION

By BEVERLY FLETCHER

Doyle didn't look like a criminal. His eyes were piercing blue, solidly connected to mine, eye-to-eye, no darting, sneaky dance to his gaze. The sharp lines of his face were softened by a thoughtful, gentle quality permeating. If I was asked to pick a criminal out of the people gathered around me, I would not have chosen him, nor

would I have pegged him as a victim, too strong of character he seemed to ever be in a position of helplessness.

Doyle earned his criminal status by refusing to be a victim. I might have been shocked by his confession to breaking and entering, to stealing, had I not first heard the tale that preceded his arrest. I present it to you here to judge.

When Doyle's lover, Luther, met the final stages in his struggle against AIDS, Luther's family stepped in to provide care and relief. During Luther's good health the family had accepted Doyle's role to their son and welcomed him into the fold, but as Luther faded his mother began to edge Doyle out, pushing him away from his spot by the bed.

It is difficult enough under smooth sailing to struggle for validation for our relationships like we deserve. Family and friends might insist on devaluing our significance to each other by treating us as if we aren't a couple. In some cases, under such contentious circumstances, even some within

our community might detract from the roles of our couples. Some might resist upholding what is so widely denigrated past the lines of our community.

"They just don't get it," Luther said, and I understood he was referring specifically to his and Luther's families. "They look at us and think 'sex.' They don't see the caring and the love and the sharing — that ultimate bond between us."

Living our lives as married couples when we are barred from marrying is hard enough when we're traveling at an even keel. Throw in life-and-death issues, the numbing struggle to just hang on, hang tough, and that burden becomes overwhelming. At a time when Doyle and Luther both most needed support, Luther's mother tugged at that ultimate bond they shared to gain her baby back, unencumbered.

Doyle put the question to Luther, for him to decide. "Do you want me to stay or do you want me to leave?" Luther, severely weakened, clouded in dementia, chose the path of least resistance. "I'm sorry," he said, and closed his eyes.

Doyle is no victim. He stands firmly for self-responsibility, accountability to self. "I should have

stayed, I should have said, 'This is where I belong.' That's the kind of person I am — I don't know why I didn't," he told me, but his tired eyes gave him away.

Luther's mother called Doyle in February, at 5 in the morning: "You can come see his body now, before the coroner gets here."

Doyle was robbed of his final good-bye, and he missed too the farewell rite where Luther's ashes were to be scattered, as per his request, over a favored section of the Botanical Gardens.

Luther's sisters stayed in the car while his mother and a gay friend of his, "Dennis," strolled out to the garden to fulfill the request. When they returned, they carried an empty urn.

Later, Dennis related to several of his friends in our community that he'd kept the bag of ashes, that the mother had agreed and left the rest of the family to assume Luther's request had been granted.

During a friendly chat at a local bar, Dennis invited Doyle to come view the ashes if he desired, "but you can't have them," he said. It was Doyle's impression that Dennis was displaying the ashes to curious viewers as a trophy, a medal of honor insinuating a

higher position among Luther's affections.

Regardless, the point for Doyle was that Luther's wishes for his remains had been violated under that most ultimate vulnerability. Doyle pledged to free his lover. He waited and planned and then ... he broke the law. He shattered a front window at Dennis' home, climbed in and stole his soul-mate's remains from be-

neath the coffee table.

Luther's father accompanied Doyle to the Botanical Gardens. Doyle offered the ashes to the father to scatter over that lovely corner, but he deferred: "No — you should do it."

Every day Doyle visits that garden made more lush and thriving by Luther's infusion. It is a quiet, peaceful corner, he sighed, where beauty and blossoms push back the jagged edges of an ugly picture just beyond it. For Doyle, Luther's artistic vision is embodied in that idyllic scene. There, Doyle and Luther can share quiet, distanced moments together without interference or intrusion.

I asked Doyle which section of the gardens that was and like a seasoned botanist, paying tribute to Luther, he counted off the beds of eternal rest: "Old Smoothie, Snowfire, Black Garnet, Coral Bay..." Those gentle eyes of his welled tearfully and he stopped himself, embarrassed. "I've never told anyone that," he said, surprised at his admission to how seriously he'd studied Luther's new domain. But I would have known, without that list, that Doyle had memorized every waking bud, every soft petal comprising that garden corner they shared every day.

Doyle's lawyer offered him a plea bargain; he declined. He wants his day in court, come what may, where the value of our love will be on trial.

The judge might very well deem Doyle the "hardened criminal." After all, he did break in and steal back what was taken. He did violate the boundaries imposed on him, the ones that minimized the significance of his relationship to Luther.

I must claim I am a criminal too at heart, a rogue, a bandit — for I would do the same. ☛



SHARED BED

She's an emperor who once was attracted to a female impersonator. There's no confusion here as Flories plans her reign, setting her sights on a rigorous

Court Agenda

By BEVERLY BENNETT

Fort Worth/Arlington's newest Imperial Court Emperor, Melissa Flories, hasn't always been the worldly butch about town whose strong following recently made her the second woman in the local court's history to win the Emperor title. Seventeen years ago, a wet-behind-the-ears, 15-year-old Melissa told her new gay friends at the old Mad Hatters, "That's my next girlfriend. I want her!" upon first sighting Raina Lea, the now gone and much beloved drag queen, up on stage.

Young Melissa had sneaked into her first gay bar that night with the help of some gay friends and a fake ID. She was out on the town feeling her "baby dyke oats". No one bothered to tell this naive little dykelet that Raina and the other queens weren't really women.

"I know it's hard to believe I could have been so naive," Flories traveled nostalgically down memory lane, recalling when she was instantly smitten with the great illusionist. Our baby-dyke Melissa was in for a rude awakening after the show. Her friends told Raina the young upstart was ready to sweep him off his feet. Everyone got a grand laugh out of this at baby dyke Melissa's expense. After the show, Raina, the man, sat down in the youngster's lap. "Who are you!?" screamed an uncharmed Melissa.

Raina roared with laughter: "I just love it when these baby dykes come in here and think I'm a real woman!"

So began Emperor Flories journey into the gay/lesbian community. "I grew up in the bars. By 15 I was a regular at the Mad Hatters. I had no trouble getting in. I had a fake ID. That was back in the days when you could just take your birth certificate down to the DPS. I took an older friend's birth certificate down there. They used to make driver's licenses while you waited. It said I was 19 or 20. I'm sure the management knew I was underage."

Flories does not recommend the bars as a hangout for today's gay youth. "In that time frame of being gay, I needed to be there. I didn't have anywhere else to go. But to a 15-year-old today, I'd say 'go home'. The difference is that there's a strong contingency of organizations to help gay/lesbian teenagers today. That did

not exist 17 years ago when I was coming out."

Flories seems proud and at ease with her butch roots. "I've always been butch identified." Being the femme that I am, I couldn't resist asking her if the older butches passed on the torch with "lessons" for baby dykes. This brought out a very tight-lipped Melissa. I guess I was edging too closely to the sacredly guarded secrets of the "butch buddy club." I did get her to reveal a few tidbits. She said the older butches passed on a code of ethics to the young dykes - how to act, how to be cool. "It wasn't so much like lessons. They didn't sit me down and say, 'This is how you sit. This is how you walk.' It was just a little bit here, a little bit there. Sometimes I find myself doing the same thing today with young butches," 32-year-old Emperor Flories said. Just like the elders before her, she says she occasionally finds herself going up to a baby dyke to admonish her behavior. "When I see them doing something they shouldn't be doing, I go and tell them. They respond just like I used to and say, 'Whatever you say.' I was just like that. I looked up to the older butches. They were like parents."

Squeezing specific reasons for these "pearls of wisdom" out of Emperor Flories was like trying to get top-secret security documents. With a little coaxing, she said, "When the young ones start acting too cocky, too cool, too arrogant - that's the kind of thing you correct them on. Like acting too pushy with a woman - The older butches taught me how to act," she said.

These days Emperor Flories has all the women she can handle. She has her Empress, Pat Wyatt, and her partner, Beverly Winn, the court's Princess Royale. "I have two wives now - a drag queen and a real woman... I've always said 'wife'. When we were working at Samaritan House, these straight people were parading through. One of them said, 'Who did this?' I answered, 'Me and my wife.' 'You and your wife?' 'Yeah,' I said. 'I'm Melissa. Nice to meet you.'"

"I've noticed you have to be careful today about calling one half of a couple wife, 'cause it does make some girls mad."

Flories wears her new title of Emperor XVI of the Imperial Court de Fort Worth/Arlington proudly. "I've always wanted to help people - especially since the AIDS epidemic. I don't have zillions of dollars. What I can do is help those in need... I didn't expect to win the first time around. We talked more about what I was going to do if I lost... One of the questions the candidacy board asked me was 'What will you do if you lose?' I said, 'Run until I win.'"

Flories began her community work the year she was elected president of the Gay Pride Association for 1991-92. Flories said she chose the Imperial Court over other local gay/lesbian organizations due to the court's simple philosophy of raising money and giving it away.

The Fort Worth/Arlington court can boast a tidy sum. Her predecessors raised \$23,000 for charity during the 15th reign.

The Court works hard for this money. Flories said they average four fund-raisers per month - sometimes as many as eight. This work comes from a core group of about 40 people. "So many of us are also in gay pride. From April through July it's a 24-hour-a-week project."

When asked if camp is dying, she said, "AIDS happened to camp. I remember back when the biggest fund-raising worry the court had was how to send someone's child and neighborhood friends to the softball team in uniforms. It's serious business now. There's a constant pressure to keep raising more money."

Flories said that the bulk of the funds raised go to AIDS-related charities; however, she emphasized the Court's willingness and past record for donating money to a variety of local gay/lesbian organizations. Flories said that by raising big dollars, the participants feel like "they're killing this virus." She also believes it is important for the Court to have fun and play together. She said she doesn't want the Court to get so caught up in fund-raising that they forget how to cut-up and have a good time.

Emperor Flories has ambitious plans for the 16th reign of the Impe-



Pat 'Cookies' Wyatt, the Golden Phoenix Empress, and Melissa Flories, the Emerald Phoenix Emperor

rial Court. Back in the days of her "first love," Raina Lea, the court roster boasted more than 350 members with half of them active. "That was 11 or 12 years ago. There's no reason why we shouldn't have double that today," she said.

"There's plenty to do besides shows." Flories wants to broaden the court's reach beyond the clubs. She said they would welcome anyone. One does not even need to go to the bars at all to be an active court member. "There are many things beyond the bars that people can do." Flories said some of their fund-raisers during reign 16 will take them outside the bars.

"We're going to do a monthly newsletter. We're looking for writers, layout people... We need people who like to sew costumes..." Flories wants to network with all of Tarrant County's gay/lesbian organizations and churches. She sees that as the best way to help the community and to broaden the court's focus and size.

"We have three primary goals for this term: raising money to distribute to charities, increasing membership and starting a care unit to relieve spouses from the burden of caring for their HIV-impacted partners."

Flories realizes that some mem-

bers of the community scoff at the court. "People don't understand what we do... All they see are these big crowns and this big glitz and funky titles like King Father and Queen Mother." Flories wants Tarrant County to know that the court is a serious fund-raising organization. In fact, no other gay/lesbian organization raised more money for charity last year than the Court.

"Coronation is just for fun. It's a big party. Yes, it's serious in that we are showing respect to those people who have come before us. I take that very seriously. I respect them... TGRA raises money all year long and has a rodeo. The leathermen have a leather run. The Court raises money all year long and has a coronation. Really when you think about it, all the organizations are a court. We're all raising money to put back into the community," she said.

Flories' popularity already extends well beyond the Court. Her face is popping up at Alliance meetings, Fellowship of Love and Trinity MCC. She is regularly asked to keynote special events and is both a gifted speaker and comic. Her reign is surely destined for success. Perhaps she can do her old "sweetheart," Raina Lea, proud and find the roster topping Raina's old record of 350. ♣

Windows to the soul. I could see it in his eyes, eyes that danced with light and laughter – sparkling, enchanting, drawing me into his remarkable soul. In 1977 I had the honor of watching him perform and sat mesmerized by the tilted head, the sweep of bangs, the expressions of deep emotion or light-hearted humor followed by a mischievous wink.

Beauty, style and grace is how I see the entertainer who is Pat Gilliam.

But over the past year, I have seen so many different expressions in those precious eyes. I have seen commitment, loyalty, pain, frustration, sorrow, fear, anger and grief that turned into solid determination.

Tough, proud and strong is how I see the man who is Pat Gilliam.

Still today, I am captivated by the new things I see in these eyes. There is a loneliness that seems to penetrate his soul, a look that says, "Do you know how hard it was? – I hope you never have to experience this pain." "Will you protect me for just a little while? I need a hug." "Was it all worth it? Help me take one day at a time."

Gentle, kind and sweet is how I see the child who is Pat Gilliam.

Pat Gilliam, the man, is a survivor and Pat Wyatt, the drag queen, helps maintain his sanity. Pat Gilliam is more reserved and withdrawn while Pat Wyatt is a brazen hussy in a demure sort of way. Pat Wyatt does things in drag that Pat Gilliam would never do as a male.

Pat "Cookies" Wyatt (Gilliam) was crowned Empress XVI of the Imperial Court de Fort Worth/Arlington July 16. Voter turnout July 10 was one of the largest in the court's history.

Pat is resolved to make a difference by challenging court members to personally help our brothers and sisters who may have needs that have gone unmet. Pat lost his father in May and his lover in June this year and "knows of what he speaks". While all the help was appreciated, there is still so much more that needs to be done.

What were you like as a child? Where did you grow up?

"I was born and raised right here in Fort Worth. I never really liked outdoor activities and didn't care for sports or hunting. I enjoy fishing (a little) and camping 'as an escape to get away'. I played in the school band (instead of taking physical education) and went to college on a journalism scholarship. I majored in journalism and minored in business and currently work as a bookkeeper. I learned to love writing poetry as a child and fortunately this love has remained with me."

Some people believe that drag queens want to be women. What are your thoughts on this issue? How do you see yourself as an entertainer?

"I do not want to be a woman. I think of myself as a male actor. I looked upon drag in the beginning as simply a form of entertainment, but now it has expanded to involve community service. I am always the last one in drag and the first one out.

"I consider myself a drag queen, not

a female impersonator, as I impersonate everyone. Some people have asked me, 'Are you a transvestite?' 'No, I am a drag queen.' 'What's the difference?' I told them, 'A transvestite lives in it and a drag queen works in it!'"

What do you see as the major differences between Pat Wyatt, the entertainer, and Pat, the man? Which one do you like best?

"I like the male aspects best. I describe myself as caring, giving, gentle, vulnerable, and a not-very-complex person who likes simple things like dinner at home, fireplaces and cozy, romantic evenings. I love to cook and create good memories for people. I live to 'wine and dine.' Pat, the man, is somewhat more reserved and is usually not recognized out of drag.

"Pat Wyatt, the entertainer, hides behind the wig and the make-up and creates a real facade. Therefore, the female aspect is more outgoing and outspoken, protected a little more by the mask of drag. Pat Wyatt can get by with outrageous, spontaneous behavior but is only an exaggerated version of Pat Gilliam. One aspect does not exist without the other. Pat Wyatt is an entertainer, and entertain is what Pat Wyatt does best!

Both the male and female aspects have a great sense of humor!"

What titles have you won?

"I have never been a pageant person. But, I did win Miss Gay Universe 1978-1979!"

Why did you want to be Empress XVI de Fort Worth/Arlington?

"David Pennington was my motivation. We both believed in the Court System and had seen the many great things accomplished through the years. I wanted to be Empress because I knew that I would serve this community to the best of my abilities while bringing innovative thinking to the position. My personal experiences had given me strength and insight into many of the most complex problems within our society."

How do you think your personality as Empress and Melissa Flories' personality as Emperor will complement one another?

"We are both honest, strong personalities, somewhat stubborn, idealists and innovative thinkers. I believe we will make the court stronger and draw more of the community into it.

"If we ever do have a difference of opinion, we will sit down and talk as two adults. We both believe there is no problem that can't be resolved by discussion. But, if we ever become deadlocked, we will simply let the court vote on the issue. After all, the entire community owns the court; we are here to guide, not to dictate."

The court is based on camp titles and symbols which were meant to amuse and entertain. Do you think camp is going to last into the 21st century or has it outlived its usefulness?

"I certainly hope Camp will last as long as the Court does. It is carefree and exciting. I don't think Camp has outlived its usefulness. If anything, we

Pat campaigned for empress after just losing his lover to AIDS. The courage and determination he gave to his partner's struggle

follow him into his reign.

The Lady has Balls

By GLENDA GARDNER

need it more today than when the court began. As the problems in our society get worse, we need camp and fun to help us maintain our sanity."

How much do you estimate it will cost you personally this year to represent the community as Empress XVI?

"Between \$8,000 and \$10,000, at least, for the year. I spent approximately \$200 campaigning for Empress. In the first three weeks of being Empress, I spent over \$1,000.

"I will attend all in-state Coronations and at least one-out-of-state Coronation. This is all I feel I can attend without affecting my goals here in the community.

"For benefit shows over the next year, I anticipate spending \$3,500 - \$4,000 on gowns; \$200 on music/tapes; \$250 on make-up; \$300 on pantyhose; \$350 on wigs and styling; and more than \$1,000 on personal tipping or donations, in addition to travel expenses anticipated at \$3,000 - \$4,000.

"Many people are very surprised at how much expense is involved in being an Empress. These looks don't come cheap, folks!"

How much money did the court raise last year? What are your plans for the current reign? Who will be the recipients of the money?

"In excess of \$22,000 was given to charity by the 15th reign of the Imperial Court. During the current reign, the needs of the majority of the community will dictate where funds are used. We would like to expand monetary benefits to more agencies this year who provide services to the community. The Fund-Raising Committee will investigate and recommend recipients and then the general court membership will vote on their suggestions.

"We would like to implement a court-based Support Team Committee that will give non-monetary support to individuals who are in need. Their primary focus will revolve around providing 'very personal' services such as companionship and one-on-one contact. Time and compassion is what the Support Team will give. Time to spend on trips to the park, outings to the

museums or leisurely afternoon drives. And compassion by loving and respecting our friends in their time of need. Training for Support Team members will be provided by area resource agencies. While the money is important, we will consider this year a great success if we can provide that 'personal touch' to the community."

In your new leadership capacity you will be involved in many aspects throughout the community involving HIV programs and issues. How do you see yourself relating to these issues?

"David believed that I would make a great Empress and saw the potential of using this position to champion causes that are so important to each of us. Through our experiences, I have had a better opportunity to see the problems that need to be corrected. David will be with me throughout this reign. The only thing I can do for David now is to dedicate my life to making sure that others do not have to suffer some of the things he did! I want to be there to help the families when they have to make some of the hardest decisions of their lives.

"David and I were lucky in a way – I had a good job and we didn't have to worry about a roof over our heads. But, I remember vividly coming home from work one day to find David's lunch still

sitting there because the person who delivered it didn't take the time to feed him! And he was blind by then! There are too many out there who don't have monetary advantages and no one who is suffering should have to do without, either monetarily or emotionally. I buried my lover. I know what works and what doesn't work. While we appreciated everything that was done, there is so much more to do.

"David and I were together for five years and shared our devotion to the Imperial Court System. We were selected to be Prince and Princess Royale for the 15th reign and were honored to serve Emperor Bob Jackson and Empress Rhonda Mae. Unfortunately, David's health declined to the point that we had to resign. David was losing his battle with the ravages of AIDS and I was determined to stand by his side throughout the ordeal.

"In my personal moments, I look back and think, 'There but for the Grace of God go I, but it just wasn't my turn.' David was infected with this disease, and to this day I have still tested negative. Through my personal experiences, I believe I have found strength and character because I know that God has a plan for me, a plan to help end some of the suffering and isolation of our community.

"My memory always fades back to happier times and there we are, David and myself snuggling in front of a blazing fire sipping Amaretto. Life was so good and we just didn't know it. Please take the time to enjoy life for it is so precious and too short."

Most of us within the community have been touched directly or indirectly by AIDS. What do you feel is the most important gifts that we can give those who are HIV positive?

"Dignity, compassion and human contact. Interact without fear! It maintains your dignity and theirs. Discuss gay-related issues, if appropriate. Do everything possible to eliminate the deterioration of spirit: the loss of self-esteem, low self-body image. Be respectful of feelings but don't ever pity them! And, don't stare! It's rude!"

PARTING - By PAT GILLIAM

Days have turned to months and years;
We shared the laughter, we shared the tears.
The glory of truth, the pain of lies
We conquered it all; We strengthened our ties.

As we made our way down the path of life,
We experienced the usual toil and strife
Of two people who are joining to become one,
And reaching for a unity known to none.

The love we gave and received in return,
Gave us the weakness to falter and the strength to learn.
We built our dreams on solid ground,
And shared a love that few have found—

A love that will live with the beats of my heart,
Though for now, God prepares us to part.
I know your spirit will light my way
Until we're together, again, someday.

Anything left unsaid, will forever be implied
And the love that we have shared, will never be denied.

*Written to David Pennington and selected by David to be a part of his funeral service.

POLITICAL COALITION

Tarrant County's latest grassroots group is chomping at the bit, ready to fly

The newly formed Lesbian/Gay Political Coalition Tarrant County (LGPC-TC) has adopted by-laws, elected officers and initiated the filing process for nonprofit incorporation.

As the group develops, it will serve as an advocate within political spheres on behalf of the Tarrant County lesbian/gay community. The coalition will survey candidates for regional and state public offices to identify and endorse supporters and allies; it will lobby and educate on orientation-related issues; and it will strengthen the community's voting influence by conducting voter registration drives.

New officers include civic activ-

ists Lisa Raihl and John Huffman as co-chairs.

Raihl, a Democrat, was active in the Gay/Lesbian Organization at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and in state and local politics while living there. Since moving to Fort Worth, she has worked locally on the Martin Frost campaign. She is a member of Agape MCC where she serves in the choir and helped to form an orchestra.

Huffman, a Democrat and Air Force retiree, has been active locally in political campaigns and served as a delegate to the Democratic Party state convention this year. He is a director on the boards for the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas and TCLGA; he is the

coordinator for the local chapter of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Veterans of America.

Charlotte Mehal, a Republican, was elected vice president. She is a trainer for the Fort Worth Council of Girls Scouts and a deacon at Agape MCC in Fort Worth.

Lynn Person, Democrat, was elected secretary. A Philadelphia native, she is serving locally as president of Colors of Love. She is a member of Agape MCC where she serves as a Worship Participant. A registered nursing administrator, Person also owns Accu-Trans Medical Transcription. Her hobbies include dancing and reading.

Sue Sims, an Independent, was

elected treasurer. A native Texan and three-year resident of Tarrant County, she serves as librarian of the Fort Worth Women's Chorus and as a committee chair of the Imperial Court. Her hobbies include computers and quilting.

LGPC-TC will meet next at 7 p.m. Sept. 20 at the First Jefferson Unitarian Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth.

All persons within the community are encouraged to join as members of the coalition, not only

to help fund the work of fielding candidates but to add to the base of influence and empowerment. The membership list, while confidential, will be an important tool in asserting the lesbian/gay community as a major voting bloc.

Yearly dues are \$35 and can be mailed to Lesbian/Gay Political Coalition-Tarrant County, P.O. Box 17437, Fort Worth, TX 76102. Inquiries may be directed to Huffman at 817/263-9006 or Raihl at 817/860-0326. ☪

INVESTITURES:

Imperial Court rolls out the red carpet for its new line of leadership

An unprecedented 250 persons, including visitors from throughout the state, gathered Aug. 13 at Ashburn's for the investitures of the Imperial Court de Fort Worth/Arlington's newly elected emperor and empress.

The theme, "A Black and White Ball - an Evening of Elegance," was carried out with stylishly set tables featuring black and white appointments and vases of yellow roses. Alton Cryer Jr and C.J. Chamberlain presented a wall banner to Empress Pat "Cookies" Wyatt and Emperor Melissa Flories, honoring the new court theme of "The Rainbow Phoenix."

Up to 100 titles were named and some 200 certificates presented. Tiaras, green/gold sashes and crown pins were given to members of the line of succession, who include:

Beverly Winn, Princess Royale; Mikey "Santa Fe" Brooks, Prince Royale; De De Deviant, Crown Princess; Jerry Glazner, Crown Prince; Jacki Jori, Queen Mother; Bob Slentz, King Father; Country Tate, Grand Duke; Glenda Gardner, Grand Duchess; Serena, Tzarina; Cryer, Baron; Jerri Dawn, Baroness; Michael Winchester, Marquis; Mary Beth Williams, Don; and Toni Michaels, Reyna. Committee co-chairs announced

are Sue Sims, advertising; Winn and Roxanne Anderson, fund-raising; Rhonda Mae, Empress XV, new membership; Robin Hancock, newsletter; Aaron and Lady Hawk, special productions; Lisa Reddick, Pat Powell and Mickey Shields, support team; Margaret Eyler and Gardner, telephone.

New protocol for the swearing-in ceremony this year had honorees pledging on the Bible their support to the community, to each other and the Imperial Court's 16th reign.

Former empresses Lady Carlotta and Foxie Roxie, and Empress Jackie O'Dare of United Courts of Austin, performed. ☪

ALLIANCE NEWS ▼ SEPTEMBER 1994



Imperial Court de Fort Worth/Arlington Investitures Ceremony

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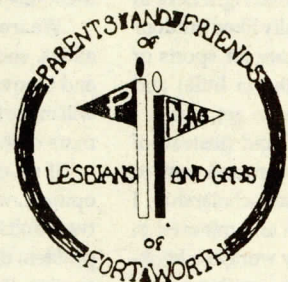
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PROGRAM:

SANDY SCHUSTER, MADDY ISAACSON

ON THEIR LANDMARK CASE BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT FOR CHILD CUSTODY

**7 P.M. THURSDAY, SEPT. 1
AT FIRST JEFFERSON CHURCH
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I wonder sometimes how this state continues to operate with the people we elect into public office. How can the Republicans say they are against abortion and then deny universal health coverage to the general population? Somehow it makes more sense to me to abort a child before it is born than to allow it to suffer a painfully slow death after birth. Maybe I have become too cynical from all the suffering I see around me. It could be that I live in the reality of the situation and see the horrors that await us. Time will tell.

Recently I met yet another person who was newly diagnosed HIV positive. He went off the deep end and is currently digging his own funeral plot and having his suit cleaned. With a T-cell count in the high 800s, he is a bit premature, I think. It is difficult to help someone who does not want to be helped or who cannot see any positive light in this situation. Granted, the light is dim initially, but 75 percent of any illness is what one believes it to be. I get fearful when someone newly diagnosed goes off the deep end.

Of course, every time I meet a new member of the HIV club, it stirs memories. I was cleaning out some old boxes the other day and ran across a letter from an old boyfriend. We dated in 1984. In the letters, my old boyfriend talked about how if

POSITIVELY POSITIVE

BY ROBERT WEBSTER

Advice to HIV Club initiates: Goals help put the emphasis back on 'living' with HIV

someone was in a relationship they could be immune to the AIDS disease.

I always remember the old voices and how naive we all were way back in the '80s. But what I find odd is how in the '90s we still encounter people in the gay community who are naive in regards to HIV information. This newly diagnosed guy was terrified. He believed he was due to drop into the grave any second. Granted, the road ahead is rough, but it is what one makes it.

I recommended that he read a book by Kaiser, "Immune Power". The doctor of a friend of mine has modified the program to help his patients with diabetes. He has a low volume of HIV patients but plans to utilize the program with them. We were lucky to get Richardson's Health Food store in south Fort Worth to carry the herb supplement.

The hardest part of this whole

illness is trying to convince people that life is still worth living and that time can be a positive factor in the HIV process. It is sad to see such an attractive young gay man lose the desire to live long before he has experienced life.

He was concerned about when to tell his family and friends about his test results. He was afraid they would

abandon him. He was also concerned that he would never have sex again with anyone other than himself. Granted, the waters out there are full of sharks, but there are some nice men tossed into the mix. The hard part is that some people eliminate HIV-positive people before they understand the risk involved in the relationship. I am probably the wrong

person to ask about dating in Texas, but I still try to be optimistic. I wish we never had to get on this rollercoaster ride we call HIV infection, but as long as we are willing to take risks, we are all eligible to ride the HIV rollercoaster.

I told the young man to make several goals to keep him focused. I ran out of goals for myself the other day. When there is no need for growth, we lose our interest in the present. I had to set time aside and create new goals. Now, the hard part is to implement them. Exercise is always the hardest goal to start. He seemed to understand the need for goals and for dealing with the reality of HIV.

Until next month, think positive, act positive, and live your life with passion! ♣

ON THE AIDS FRONT:

Cisneros promises HUD attention to PWA housing needs

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Henry G. Cisneros promised AIDS advocates Aug. 6 that his department plans to launch new initiatives to improve housing opportunities for men, women and children living with

HIV/AIDS (PWAs).

The pledge came in an emotional two-and-a-half-hour meeting between Cisneros and 12 AIDS housing advocates. Participants shared with the secretary personal stories about inaccessibility in housing, discrimination and inadequate resources for PWAs, who face illegal eviction from their homes, loss of wages, and greater needs for supportive services as a result of declining health.

In response, the secretary proposed the creation of a new HIV/AIDS Office at HUD to improve the department's planning, coordination and implementation of policies and programs relating to PWAs, and committed to ongoing dialogue and efforts to find shorter term solutions to the problems.

Aimee Berenson of the AIDS Action Legislative Counsel, a na-

tional organization to lobby federal government on AIDS policy, legislation and funding, found the meeting hopeful. "In 13 years of the AIDS epidemic, this is the first time (HUD) has shown genuine interest in and commitment to addressing one of the most significant problems facing PWAs," Berenson said. "People have a fundamental right to live and die in their own homes with their friends and families around them." Berenson is a steering committee member of the National AIDS Housing Coalition, which coordinated the meeting.

In its 1993 final report, the National Commission on AIDS noted that "more flexibility and attention by (HUD) regarding the housing needs of people living with HIV would diminish the problems of homelessness" and that better housing could substantially reduce unnecessary hospitalizations.

Jan Wynn, LMSW-ACP AND ASSOCIATES



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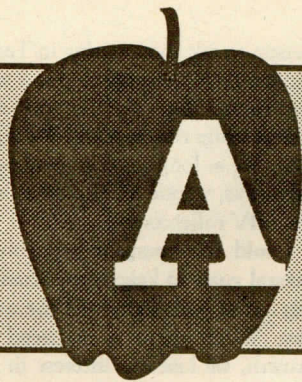
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AGAPE's Apple a Day

Healthy advice from the heart by
Doug Rich, RN, MA, an Agape MCC Deacon

We at Agape MCC have "DREAMS" for everyone's health. The realization of this dream will take more than "an apple a day". Therefore we offer several health tips based on the letters in DREAMS as a memory-jogger.

Diet: Choose a diet that is well balanced with a majority of servings from grain products, green or yellow veggies, and fruits. Add in two or three small servings of meat, poultry and fish, and another two or three portions of low-fat milk products. The final group of food to include should be used sparingly – your seasonings: salt, sugar and fat. Your own health situation will determine your diet restrictions. We're sorry to report that the "junk food group" was left off the healthy diet list.

Relationships: According to Betty Berzon, PhD, a lesbian noted for research in homosexual relationships, partners must keep lines of communication open. One warning sign of poor communication is the absence of arguments. Berzon's book, *Permanent Partners*, offers suggestions on communication and conflict resolution. Nowhere in her guidelines for fair fighting does she list screaming or walloping your mate with a purse, so you might want to go to the library and check this one out.

Exercise: Walking is a safe exercise for people of all ages and fitness conditions. A brisk 30-minute walk that raises your heart rate to one-and-a-half times your resting rate, done three or four times a week, will help you increase lean muscle, improve your heart's circulation, lower your blood pressure, and may improve your love life: you could bump into another healthy walker (remember to smile at everyone you meet!).

Attitude: Your own attitude toward health maintenance and health promotion is one of the most difficult challenges you face in improving or maintaining your health. If you think of yourself as being healthy despite getting out of breath

after only three or four minutes of dancing, walking up a flight of stairs or chasing your pets, then nothing I say or write in this column will convince you otherwise. Nola Pender, RN, PhD, suggests that "self-confrontation" – simply listing your feelings about things like diet, exercise, tobacco use and recreation/relaxation – is a critical step toward changing unhealthy behaviors to healthy ones. Over the last decade, we gay men have confronted negative attitudes toward reducing our risks and significantly lowering our HIV infection rate. Now, my pretty, click your heels together three times and say, "There's no health like good health."

Maintenance: Most of us wouldn't think of driving a new car very far without keeping it in good order by changing its oil and checking on the battery and tires every now and then. Unfortunately, quite a few of us run our bodies at high speeds until we can no longer function, without ever a thought given to routine maintenance. The surgeon general recommends regular check-ups for healthy adults (between 20-45) at least every two to five years (more often after 50). Try to select a health provider whom

you can develop a trust in and whom you will be able to visit for all of your care. According to research, many of us have some reservations about disclosing our sexuality to health care workers. Fortunately, most health care workers have proved to be tolerant if not accepting and *all of them* are bound by their profession's code of ethics to provide care without prejudice. If you decide to disclose your sexual orientation to a health care provider and it does not go well, *call me* – Deacon Doug – and I'll read their beads, honey!!

Spirituality: For me, the best way to nurture my spirituality is to study scripture and consider it in a light that reflects positively. The following verse inspires me to believe in the possibility of God's acceptance of me and from that possibility a strong faith has grown: "Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another. I know and am persuaded in Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself." Romans 14: 13-14.

Of special note: our Smoking Cessation Class will be from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Sept. 18, 20, 25 and 27.

Call the church to register. The class is limited to 20 participants. If our class is not convenient for you, please call the American Cancer Society at 817/335-1500; they will be able to tell you about other classes.

Address comments and questions to the Deacons of Agape MCC, 4615 SE Loop 820, Ft Worth, TX 76119; or call 817/535-5002 and leave a message for the Deacons. ☪



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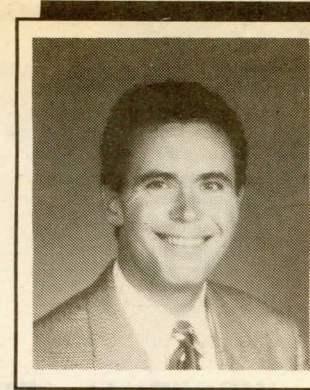
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Shared joys and sorrows in community creates

COMMON UNITY

By Rev. JO CRISCO, TRINITY MCC

In discussions about the ills of society today, it is common to hear the complaint "we have become too impersonal - we are all just a number in some computer." 'Tis true. However, I think the world's being impersonal is just a symptom rather than the disease.

I think the disease is better labelled selfishness and greediness.

The disease is the selfishness and greediness which permeate all aspects of modern society. From the Savings and Loan scandals to individual priorities, the world as we know it seems to revolve around "it's my right" to "it's only bidness" attitudes. What a sad way to live.

We grew up being taught "watch

out for yourself 'cause no one else will..." And we learned well. Taken to the wall, this attitude becomes selfishness. And it is self-centeredness, self-seeking, that can destroy an organization, a business, a church, even a community.

This self-focus drags us into greediness. Whatever we want, we get if we can, if we're not caught in the process. Everything from possessions to spouses to destroying each other's good name or position in life is fair game - if we want it. Little or no thought is given to the destruction or the pain that follows. After all, "we're watching out for number one."

I wish I could say that we could jump from the world-at-large to our

people, our community, and that it would be different. But we are not. We can label these attitudes and actions in our community as "horizontal hostility" or "internalized homophobia." The labels may, in fact, be true.

Whatever the diagnosis, healing is in order. I do not want to be like

the rest of the world. And I believe my people who have suffered so much oppression for so long can rise above selfishness and greediness. Having had the wherewithal to survive - we can be living examples, I believe, of gentleness, of caring, of loving, of seeking the best for each other.

This one thing I know for sure: until your pain is my pain, your joy is my joy, your success is my success, your struggles are my struggles and vice versa;

until we are willing to sacrifice our own rights for the betterment of our community;

until we can accept that what each of us does affects all the others; until we come to terms with the notion that we help each other along the way and "circle our wagons" against attack from our enemies...

we are simply fooling ourselves. We are no people! And we are certainly no com-unity as in a common unity. We are just a bunch of isolated folks talking a good cry in our beers! ☘

TORAH! TORAH! TORAH!

Local gay/lesbian Jewish congregation gains holy book

A Torah, the first five books of the bible, written on parchment and rolled on two scrolls, has been passed to Congregation Beth El Binah of Dallas. The Torah comes from Congregation Beth Ahavah, a gay and lesbian synagogue in Philadelphia. When that congregation obtained another Torah, they decided to pass this one to another gay and lesbian congregation.

Beth El Binah was contacted several months ago by Beth Ahavah. The Torah originated at Emanuel Congregation in Chicago, a main-

stream Reform temple that specifically wanted this Torah to go to a gay and lesbian synagogue. Significantly, it is being passed from one gay and lesbian synagogue to another. The two groups held a ceremony Aug. 6 in Philadelphia to pass the Torah. Beth El Binah President Mark Slitt represented Dallas.

The Torah arrives in time for the Jewish High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, which begin Sept. 5. At their Rosh Hashanah service, Congregation Beth El Binah will welcome the Torah into the congregation and read from it for the first time.

Members have built an ark to

store the Torah at the AIDS Resource Center where Beth El Binah holds its services. The ark will be decorated with tiles made by children at Solomon Schechter Academy, the Jewish Day School run by Congregation Shearith Israel, a conservative synagogue located in north Dallas.

Rabbi Lawrence Jackofsky of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations said, "A Torah represents hope and continuity and is a symbol of light so it is very appropriate that this Torah be passed to such a vibrant group as Beth El Binah and be stored at a place as caring and providing as much hope as the AIDS Resource Center."

A Torah is handwritten in Hebrew by scribes on parchment. The pages are sewn together and rolled onto two wooden scrolls.

A Torah, divided into a number of readings, is read from beginning to end through a calendar year beginning the week after Yom Kippur. Six portions are read during the High Holiday.

Six readers from Beth El Binah will divide the three Torah portions read on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in the original Hebrew. ☘

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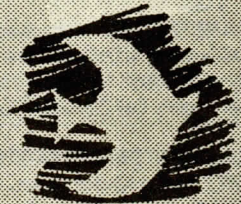
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- Sep 05 Colors of Love Bar-B-Q
- Sep 11 Second Sunday Celebration (7 pm)
- Sep 17 Welcoming Diversity Workshop (9am-4pm)

SUNDAY SERVICES:

9 and 11 am (Children's Sunday School each service)

WEDNESDAYS:

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Beth El Binah president Mark Slitt carries the congregation's new Torah from the plane at DFW Airport.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

CHURCH/RELIGION

SUNDAYS:

AGAPE MCC services, 9 and 11 a.m., 4615 SW Loop 820 (at Anglin exit), Fort Worth; 817/535-5002. Children's Sunday School at both services.

CATHEDRAL OF HOPE MCC-DALLAS services, 9 and 11 a.m., 6:30 p.m. (available on video). Rev. Michael S. Piazza, senior pastor. Nursery and children's Sunday school at 11 a.m. service. See guide for address.

DIGNITY DALLAS, 6:30 p.m. at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Inwood at Mockingbird, Dallas. Support and advocacy group for Catholics.

FELLOWSHIP OF LOVE OUTREACH services: Morning worship, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday Night Live! evening service at 6 p.m., 711 W. Gambrell St., Fort Worth. 817/921-LOVE.

FIRST JEFFERSON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST services, 11 a.m. at 1959 Sandy Lane in East Fort Worth.

HARVEST MCC worship service, 10:30 a.m. at 5900 S. Stemmons (I35E at exit 460, just south of Denton).

TRINITY MCC: Children's Sunday School, 10:45-11:30 a.m.; Church services, 11 a.m. 331 Aaron Ave., Suite 125, Arlington.

WHITE ROCK CHURCH WEST services, 5 p.m., 1959 Sandy Lane in East Fort Worth, located between Meadowbrook Drive and Brentwood Stair Road. For more information call Jerry Cook, pastor, at 214/320-0043 in Dallas, or, in Fort Worth, 817/451-7880.

WEDNESDAYS:

AGAPE MCC Wednesday Break, 12:15 p.m. at the church. Communion service.

AGAPE MCC Study Series: Sexuality and the Bible, 7 p.m. at the church; meets every Wednesday in August. \$8 for cost of books.

CATHEDRAL OF HOPE MCC-DALLAS, Dinner, 5:30 p.m., \$5. Rev. Shelley Hamilton's six-week series of talks on "Evil" at 6:30 p.m. See community guide for address.

FELLOWSHIP OF LOVE OUTREACH Heart Group, Home Bible Study, 7 p.m., Bedford. Call metro 817/267-8644.

HARVEST MCC Community Prayer, 6:30 p.m.; Bible Study, 7 p.m.; at 5900 S. Stemmons (I35E at exit 460, just south of Denton).

TRINITY MCC worship service, 7 p.m.; Theological Express Class (TEC), 7 p.m., 331 Aaron Ave., Suite 125, Arlington. Led by Rev. Belle Armstrong, the Bible relevant to modern-day living. Different topic each week.

WHITE ROCK CHURCH WEST Bible Study, 7:30 p.m., 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. Call 817/451-7880.

THURSDAYS:

AGAPE MCC choirs: Carillon Bells and Children's choir, 6 p.m., Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m., 4615 SW Loop 820.

FELLOWSHIP OF LOVE OUTREACH Heart Group, Home Bible Study, 7 p.m., East Fort Worth. Call metro 817/429-2140.

FRIDAYS:

AGAPE MCC's Nite Life, weekly social/support meetings for lesbian/gay young adults, Agape MCC, 4615 SW Loop 820. Call 817/535-5002.

BETH EL BINAH Shabbat services, second and fourth Fridays, 8:15 p.m., Dallas Gay and Lesbian Community Center, 2701 Reagan, Dallas.

SEPT. 5:

AGAPE MCC Colors of Love Barbecue

"Pig-out," \$5. Call 817/535-5002 for time and place and for reservations.

SEPT. 11:

AGAPE MCC Second Sunday Celebration, 7 p.m., 4615 SW Loop 820. Monthly offering of varying worship experiences.

SEPT. 13:

AGAPE MCC Board of Directors meeting, 7 p.m. at the church.

SEPT. 17:

AGAPE MCC Welcoming Diversity Workshop, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the church. To promote appreciation of diversity, prejudice reduction and cooperation between all groups. Facilitator: Rev. Colleen Darraugh of Harvest MCC of Denton.

CATHEDRAL OF HOPE MCC-DALLAS, Women's Time, 6:30 p.m., at the church. A monthly gathering of women in celebration of heritage. Bring something to grill; potatoes, salad and drinks supplied. See community guide for address.

SEPT. 18:

LUTHERANS CONCERNED, HONESTY, INTEGRITY AND AFFIRMATION monthly meeting, 3-4:30 p.m., St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 5709 Granbury Road at Welch, Fort Worth. Meeting open to all regardless of religious or organizational affiliation.

TRINITY MCC fund-raiser: Designer Images will take individual and couple portraits, 1-3 p.m. at the church. \$10 sitting fee. For appointments call 817/265-5454.

SEPT. 26:

AGAPE MCC Spiritual AIDS Ministry (SAM) Training Session, 7-9 p.m. at the church. Newcomers welcome.

SEPT. 27:

CATHEDRAL OF HOPE MCC-DALLAS, Women's Worship Service led by women, open to everyone. 6:30 p.m. at the church. See community guide for address.

ORGANIZATIONS

TUESDAYS:

TWU'S SALGA, Student Advocates for Lesbian/Gay Affirmation, weekly meetings, 6 p.m. at the Student Center, Room 110.

WEDNESDAYS:

FORT WORTH MEN'S CHORUS practice, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Texas Wesleyan University Fine Arts Building. Call 817/731-0122.

UTAGAY/LESBIAN ASSOCIATION student meeting, noon, Room 115, Social Work Complex on campus.

SEPT. 1:

P-FLAG FORT WORTH meeting, 7 p.m., at First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. Program: Landmark case in child custody. Meets the first Thursday of each month. For more information call 817/498-5607 or 817/498-4855.

SEPT. 4:

IMPERIAL COURT DE FORT WORTH/ARLINGTON "Cream a Friend," a pie-throwing event, 2 p.m. at the Corral Club, Fort Worth. Food for sale. Special Court Matinee Show at 6 p.m., proceeds for Healing Wings.

SEPT. 9:

WOMEN'S SINGLES meeting, social group for lesbians, an off-shoot of Second Tuesday. Meets at 7 p.m. the second Friday of each month at varying locations. Bring your own food and drinks. For more information call Dana at 817/249-1622.

SEPT. 10:

LEADERSHIP FORUM LUNCHEON, 12:15 p.m. at Dos Gringos. Representatives from community organizations meet the second Saturday of each month for networking.

IMPERIAL COURT DE FORT WORTH/

ARLINGTON co-sponsored show with Dallas Court, at Arlington 651.

SECOND SATURDAY SOCIAL monthly meeting, a networking group for men, 7-10 p.m. Call Alvin at 817/795-1376 for directions.

UMOJA HERMANAS, pot-luck dinner and discussion, 7-10 p.m. at the Lesbian Resource Center, 1315 Skiles in Dallas. Support group for lesbians and bisexual women of color and their female allies. Meets the second Saturday of each month. Call Alpha Thomas at 214/943-8750 for more information.

SEPT. 11:

IMPERIAL COURT DE FORT WORTH/ARLINGTON business meeting, 3 p.m. at Across the Street, Fort Worth.

UJIMA: AFRICAN-AMERICAN LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL COALITION general meeting, 3 p.m. at the DGLA Community Center, 2701 Reagan, Dallas.

SEPT. 12:

FORT WORTH WOMEN'S CHORUS rehearsal, 7 p.m. at Meadowbrook United Methodist Church, 3900 Meadowbrook, Fort Worth. Snacks and singing; no auditions required. Call 817/498-5733 or 817/731-9851.

NAMES PROJECT monthly meeting, 7 p.m. at 665 S. Jennings. Education Committee meeting at 6:15 p.m. Call 817/33-NAMES for information.

TCLGA Board of Directors meeting, 6 p.m., TCLGA office.

SEPT. 13:

SECOND TUESDAY FORT WORTH, (formerly First Friday) social meeting for women, 6-9 p.m. at Mad Hatter's Cafe. \$1 donation. Call 817/485-0134 for directions.

SEPT. 15:

TCLGA membership meeting, 6 p.m., Luby's Cafeteria on University. Program: Board of Directors elections; forum to meet candidates running for November general elections. Meets the third Thursday of every month. Call 817/763-5544.

SEPT. 16:

LAMBDA MERMAIDS for scuba divers, 7 p.m., Texas Aquatics in Dallas at Central Expressway and Beltline. Meets the third Friday of every month. Call 214/669-5SEA.

SEPT. 17:

IMPERIAL COURT DE FORT WORTH/ARLINGTON Two of a Kind or Better, 11 p.m. at Across the Street, Fort Worth.

SEPT. 18:

NAMES PROJECT Quilting Bee, 2-5:30 p.m. at the Project Workshop, 665 S. Jennings, Fort Worth. Meets every third Sunday.

WOMEN OF COLOR POETRY GROUP, 5-7 p.m. at the Lesbian Resource Centre, 1315 Skiles in Dallas. Readings of published or amateur works. Meets the third Sunday of each month. Call 214/821-3999 for more information.

SEPT. 20:

LESBIAN/GAY POLITICAL COALITION - TARRANT COUNTY, 7 p.m., First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth.

SEPT. 26:

P-FLAG DENTON meeting, 7 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 633 Hobson Lane at Denton. Support group that meets on the fourth Monday of each month.

OCTOBER 7:

P-FLAG FORT WORTH meeting, 7 p.m., at First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. For more information call 817/498-5607 or 817/498-4855.

EDUCATION

SEPT. 2:

AOC FRIDAY FORUM: Update on the 10th International Conference. 11:30 a.m., AIDS Outreach Center, 1125 W. Peter Smith, Fort Worth. Lunch served at 11:30 a.m.; program noon to 2 p.m. \$10 donation requested; free to volunteers, persons living with HIV/AIDS infection or their caregivers. LPC, social work and TAADAC credits available. Reservations required by the preceding Thursday. 817/335-1994.

SEPT. 28

CANDY MARCUM INSTITUTE FORUM: "Spirituality," with Rev. Dr. Laurel Hallman, 7 p.m. at Oak Lawn Community Services, Room 200A, 4300 MacArthur, Dallas. Call 214/520-8108.

ENTERTAINMENT

SUNDAYS:

KNON RADIO: *Lambda Weekly*, radio programming for lesbians and gays. 89.3 FM, 2-4 p.m.

THURSDAYS:

LADIES ONLY NIGHT AT BANANAS, a private club at Don Carter Bowling Center, I-30 at Beach Street, from 7 p.m. until midnight each Thursday. Country/Western music, drink specials, dance lessons.

SEPT. 2:

STAGE WEST "Two Trains Running" by August Wilson, runs through Sept. 24 at Stage West Theatre, 3055 S. University Dr., Fort Worth. Contact metro 817/784-9378.

SEPT. 15:

FORT WORTH THEATRE "For Marrieds Only," Sept. 27, 28, and Oct. 4, 5 at Casa's Theatre on the Square, 110 E. 3rd St. Call 817/738-7491.

SEPT. 23:

PLEIADES PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS KAREN WILLIAMS, "The Diva of Comedy," 8 p.m. at Agape MCC Auditorium, Fort Worth. Comedian rated #1 among Olivia Cruise entertainment, billed on 12 of the 14 excursions. Tickets are \$12 in advance; \$15 at the door. Tickets available in Fort Worth at Connections Bookstore, Collections Antique Gallery and Agape MCC; in Dallas at Crossroads Market. Call 817/923-4625.

OCTOBER 7-9

LONE STAR WOMEN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL, at the Guadalupe River in Texas Hill Country. Registration \$95. Call 512/929-0002.

EVENTS

SEPT. 11

ANN RICHARDS RECEPTION, 5-7 p.m. at Sundance West.

SEPT. 25

ALAN ROSS TEXAS FREEDOM PARADE, 3 p.m. on Oak Lawn in Dallas, ending in Lee Park with the presentation of awards, speeches and entertainment.

OCTOBER 1:

HARVEST MCC HARVEST OPEN, Four-Person Scramble, Tee times begin at 11 a.m. at Eagle Point Golf Club at the Radisson Hotel in Denton. Hole in one contest features a Buick Skylark as prize. Entry fee \$80, includes green fee and cart; \$70 for students. Call 817/321-2332.

OCTOBER 11:

NATIONAL COMING-OUT DAY, Local events include letter-writing campaigns at social groups; broadcasts on area stations. Coming-Out Day accessories available through TCLGA.

HEALTH SERVICES

SEPTEMBER

SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAM, gay-friendly offering of the American Cancer Society, 7-8:30 p.m. at Agape MCC in Fort Worth. Four sessions: Sept. 18, 20, 25 and 27. \$10 donation to the American Cancer Society suggested but not required. For registration, call the church at 817/535-5002.

MONDAYS-THURSDAYS:

HIV TESTING, Ryan White Clinic (Health Dept.), 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays; 4 p.m.-8 p.m. Tuesdays; 1-8 p.m. Thursdays.

SEPT. 17:

FORT WORTH HEALTH DEPARTMENT provides free and anonymous HIV testing, 8 p.m. - 12 a.m., NAMES Project house, 665 S. Jennings, Fort Worth. No appointment necessary. Monthly offering every third Saturday. Blood drawn first visit; results provided second visit.

SUPPORT GROUPS

DAILY:

LAMBDA AA, 8 p.m., call 817/921-2871.

MONDAYS:

POSITIVE HEALING (diagnosed ARC or AIDS), 5:30-7 p.m. AOC.

LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS, Arlington/Mid-Cities AOC office, 179 S. Watson Rd., Suite 416, Arlington, 6-7:30 p.m.

CARE PARTNER SUPPORT GROUP, St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, 1 p.m.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR INCEST SURVIVORS, 6 p.m. Call Kathy or Crickett at 817/335-4330 for location.

TUESDAYS:

POSITIVE WOMEN, AOC, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

SUPPORT ARLINGTON, Arlington AOC office, 179 S. Watson Rs., Suite 416, Arlington, 6-7:30 p.m.

FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES, 6:45-8 p.m., AOC.

EL SOL WOMEN'S GROUP, 11:30 a.m. Tarrant County AIDS Interfaith's wellness support for women challenged by HIV. For more information call 817/927-2437.

HIV SUPPORT GROUP, 7 p.m., College of Osteopathic Medicine, Room 540.

LAMBDA GROUP CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS, 8 p.m., 5316 Wooten.

WEDNESDAYS:

CARING FOR PERSONS WITH HIV/AIDS, Arlington/Mid-Cities AOC office, 179 S. Watson Rd., Suite 416, Arlington, 6-7:30 p.m.

SPIRITUAL SUPPORT GROUP, JPS Hope Room, 7 p.m.

RAY OF HOPE SUPPORT GROUP, Agape MCC, 7:30 p.m.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR INCEST SURVIVORS, 6 p.m. Call Kathy or Crickett at 817/335-4330 for location.

THURSDAYS:

MAN TALK, support and fellowship for gays in the age of AIDS, AOC, 6:30-8 p.m.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP, 7-8:30 p.m., meets at the Family Service Central Office, 1424 Hemphill, Fort Worth.

LAMBDA TARRANT COUNTY OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS, 7 p.m. at First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. Call Joan, 817/232-5261; or D'Anna, metro 817/461-6418.

FRIDAYS:

LAMBDA ALANON, 6 p.m., 817/737-7861.

SPECIAL NOTE

INTERFAITH SERVICE ADDS RECEPTION TO HONOR LEADER

Tarrant County AIDS Interfaith Network's fall worship service, *On Eagles' Wings: A Celebration of Life*, is at 7 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 11, at Polytechnic United Methodist Church in Fort Worth. The worship service is for anyone whose life has been touched by AIDS, according to organizers.

The focus of the service is on celebrating the importance of life. Featured will be students from the Texas Wesleyan University theatre department and Guy Sells, music minister from St. Bartholomew Catholic Church. An opportunity for remembering and celebrating those lost to AIDS will also be a part of the interfaith service.

Following the service will be a celebration in honor of Duane Bidwell, AIDS Interfaith Network executive director from 1991 until recently. The Appreciation Celebration in honor of Bidwell's leadership for three years will be at the Student Union Building of Texas Wesleyan University. Bidwell left his AIDS Interfaith position Aug. 12 to pursue studies at Brite Divinity School.

Polytechnic United Methodist Church is located at 1310 S. Collard Ave. at Rosedale Avenue. Parking is available on the north side of the church. Texas Wesleyan University's Student Union Building is located at the north end of the parking lot.

AIDS Interfaith Network hosts three interfaith worship services a year for people affected by AIDS. The next service will be on World AIDS Day Dec. 1.

For more information, contact AIDS Interfaith Network at 817/927-2437.

SAMARITAN HOUSING NEEDS DONATIONS

Samaritan Housing invites contributions for its fund-raising garage sale Sept. 23 and 24 at the facilities, 2200 Ephriam in Fort Worth. Proceeds from the sale will be applied to the recreational and kitchen fund for the residents.

Samaritan Housing is a residential facilities for homeless persons who are impacted by AIDS or HIV.

Donations to the sale might include clothing, furniture, household items, books, toys and appliances. Goods may be delivered to Samaritan Housing, where residents invite a tour of the facilities; or donors may call Greg Wesley at 817/625-8024 to arrange pick up.

Residents also invite volunteers to work at the sale.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR HIV STUDY

The University of Texas-Arlington Psychology Department is in need of volunteers for an ongoing HIV-positive cognition study. The department is seeking candidates who are HIV-positive or HIV-negative.

To volunteer, contact the department at 817/273-3245.

COMMUNITY GUIDE

BARS/CLUBS

ACROSS THE STREET, 700 S. Jennings, Fort Worth, (817) 332-0192

ASHBURN'S, 3012 E. Rosedale, Fort Worth, (817) 534-6630

CORRAL CLUB, 621 Hemphill, Fort Worth, (817) 335-0196

D.J.'s, 1308 St. Louis, Fort Worth, (817) 927-7321

KING'S CROSS, 2701 E. Lancaster, (817) 531-3986

MAGNOLIA STATION, 600 Magnolia, Fort Worth, (817) 332-0415

ROPER'S FOOD AND SPIRITS, 2023 S. Cooper, Arlington, (817) 265-5574

651 ARLINGTON, 1851 W. Division, Arlington, (817) 275-9651

651 CLUB, 651 S. Jennings, Fort Worth, (817) 332-0745

BUSINESSES, SERVICES

ADT SECURITY SYSTEMS, 1-800-ADT-4636
ALPHA AND OMEGA PRINTERS, (817) 921-3670

ALTERNATIVE VISIONS VIDEO DATING SERVICE, (214) 521-3024

BILL'S A#1 MOVERS, metro (817) 588-0908

BUFFY'S HOME PET CARE PLUS, (817) 545-2464

BOOK STOP, 4801 S. Hulen, Fort Worth, (817) 346-9055

CASA MANANA THEATRE, (817) 332-CASA
CHUCK CAMPBELL, lawn and home maintenance, (817) 572-3517

COURTNEY CHATFIELD, financial planner, (817) 498-1833

B.C. CORNISH, attorney, (817) 870-9159
COUNTRY DAY TRAVEL, (817) 731-8551

DARWIN AND ASSOCIATES, bookkeeping, (817) 589-1666

FLOWERS FANTASTIC, fresh or silk flower arrangements, (817) 534-3570

HAYES PHARMACY, (800) 258-9897
HOUTS PRIVATE INVESTIGATION, (817) 265-1354, Fax (817) 860-7379

HUTTON HOUSE HAIRDRESSERS, (817) 731-6801

J3 PHOTOGRAPHICS, (817) 923-4625
LAMBDA PAGES, (214) 880-7577

THE LEMON TREE ANTIQUES AND ART, (817) 332-5519

M-ONE insurance services, (817) 498-4308
OMEGA PROPERTIES, real estate services, (817) 354-7201

ELLEN J. PESSERILLO, attorney, (817) 283-6693

CHRIS PHILLIPS, attorney, (817) 339-1139
PLEIADES PRODUCTIONS, (817) 923-4625

RIZZO AND SCHAAF, attorneys, (817) 877-0388, fax (817) 877-0380

CHERYL STRANGE, Realtor, (817) 732-3294

TWO PEARLS BED AND BREAKFAST, (817) 596-9316

CHURCHES/RELIGIOUS

AFFIRMATION/TARRANT COUNTY (Methodist), (817) 656-8056

AGAPE MCC, 4615 SE Loop 820, Fort Worth, (817) 535-5002

CATHEDRAL OF HOPE MCC-DALLAS, 5910 Cedar Springs (Behind Ruth Chris' Steak

House), Dallas (214) 351-1901

CONGREGATION BETH EL BINAH (Jewish), P.O. Box 191188, Dallas, TX 75219, (214) 497-1591

E.C./CHRISTIAN GAYS IN FELLOWSHIP, (817) 446-1555

FELLOWSHIP OF LOVE OUTREACH, 711 W. Gambrell, Fort Worth (817) 921-LOVE

FIRST JEFFERSON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH, 1959 Sandy Ln., Fort Worth, (817) 451-1505

GLAD (Disciples of Christ gays/lesbians), (214) 946-2184

HARVEST MCC, Denton, (817) 321-2332

HONESTY (Baptist), (817) 923-8487

LUTHERANS CONCERNED, (817) 924-3966

TRINITY MCC, 331 Aaron Ave., Suite 125, Arlington, (817) 265-5454

WHITE ROCK CHURCH WEST, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth, (817) 451-7880

COMPUTER BBS's

BARE FACTS Computer BBS, (817) 429-2667

GAY MATCHMAKER Computer BBS, (817) 355-6600

OTHER SIDE Computer BBS, (817) 280-0775

HEALTH, AIDS,

COUNSELING

AIDS COORDINATING COUNCIL, (817) 870-1937

AIDS INFORMATION LINE, (817) 336-0066
AIDS INTERFAITH NETWORK, (817) 927-2437

AIDS OUTREACH CENTER, (817) 335-1994
SHERRY BREWER, LMSW-ACSW, LMFT, LCDC, (817) 783-2400, (817) 478-0095

CRISIS/SUICIDE LINE, (817) 927-5544
HIV ANONYMOUS GROUP, (817) 292-9494

INCEST SURVIVORS SUPPORT GROUP, (817)

335-4330

LAMBDA AA, (817) 921-2871

LAMBDA ALANON, (817) 737-7861

LAMBDA GROUP CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS, (817) 370-7473

LESBIAN RESOURCE CENTER's Domestic Violence Task Force Hotline, (214) 432-2683

CATHY MCGINNIS, psychotherapist, metro (817) 461-4063

OVER THE HILL, HIV testing, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., no appointment necessary. 2001 S. Freeway, Fort Worth, (817) 922-9955.

SAMARITAN HOUSING CENTER for HIV+ homeless, (817) 626-9398

SEXUALITY EDUCATION CENTER, (817) 338-4551

TRICIA SEYMOUR, MA, LPC, LMFT, (817) 282-2999, Metro (817) 268-4221

SUZETTE SHELTON, MS, RN, LCDC, CCGC, CADAC, (817) 732-1159

SPIRITUAL AIDS MINISTRY (SAM), (817) 535-5002

TARRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT, Preventive Medicine Clinic, (817) 871-7357; Testing and Counseling, (817) 871-8920; AIDS helpline, (817) 871-7346

TCMERF AIDS AWARENESS CLINIC, (817) 534-CARE or (817) 534-2273

RAY WOFFORD, LMSW, LPC, (817) 457-2673

JAN WYNN, LMSW-ACP, LCDC, therapist, (817) 331-1881

ATIQUE KHAN, MD, psychiatrist, (817) 461-5454

ORGANIZATIONS

DFW WOMEN IN BUSINESS GROUP, (214) 880-7577

FEDERAL CLUB OF DALLAS/FORT WORTH, (214) 699-5889

FEDERAL GLOBE, lesbian/gay advocacy group of government and school district employees, P.O. Box 50961, Dallas, TX

75250, (214) 264-2800

FORT WORTH MEN'S CHORUS, (817) 731-0122

GAY AND LESBIAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION (GLAAD), (214) 521-5342, ext. 816

GAY AND LESBIAN GARDENERS, (214) 339-0787

GAY/LESBIAN YOUTH, (817) 338-4551
IMPERIAL COURT DE FORT WORTH/ARLINGTON, (817) 261-3558

LEADERSHIP FORUM LUNCHEON, (817) 763-5544

LESBIAN/GAY POLITICAL COALITION OF TARRANT COUNTY, (817) 263-9006

LESBIAN/GAY RIGHTS LOBBY OF TEXAS, (512) 474-5475

LESBIAN INFO. LINE/LESBIAN VISIONARIES, Dallas, (214) 528-2426

LESBIAN RESOURCE CENTER, Dallas, (214) 821-3999

METROPLEX REPUBLICANS/LOG CABIN, (214) 520-6655

NAMES PROJECT, 665 S. Jennings, (817) 33-NAMES

PARENTS, FAMILIES, FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS/DENTON COUNTY, (817) 387-1491

PARENTS, FAMILIES, FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS/FORT WORTH, (817) 498-5607

RICE GAY AND LESBIAN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, DFW chapter, (214) 821-5979

SECOND TUESDAY FORT WORTH (Lesbian), (817) 485-0134 WOMEN'S SINGLES, lesbian socializing, (817) 249-1622

SECOND SATURDAY SOCIAL for men, (817) 795-1376

TARRANT COUNTY LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE, (817) 763-5544

TEXAS GAY VETERANS, (817) 763-5544

TEXAS HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION, (512) 479-8473

UMOJA HERMANAS, (support group for lesbian, bisexual women of color, (214) 943-8750

U.T. ARLINGTON GAY/LESBIAN ASSOC., (817) 794-5140

GOOD MOVES

DENTON INTERFAITH

The Denton County branch of AIDS Interfaith Network has moved into facilities that will better accommodate the growth of its programs.

The new office is at 920 I-35E, Denton, TX 76205. The phone number remains the same, 817/383-2784.

AIDS Interfaith invites tours of the new facilities.

DALLAS AIDS SERVICES

Dallas' AIDS Arms Inc., AIDS Interfaith Network and Oak Lawn Community Services (OLCS) have all moved into the same building, located at 4300 MacArthur off Lemon. Each agency has its own space but all are located in close

proximity, allowing better access for clients who are served by the three agencies.

The collaborative move shortens the traveling distance and reduces waiting time for clients of the agencies, creating a "one-stop shopping" concept that is patient-centered and facilitates access to services, according to Ron Anderson, MD, president and chief executive officer of Parkland Memorial Hospital and AIDS Arms board member.

The building, Highland Park West, is owned by Harwood Pacific, which has been cooperative and accommodating, Shelley Vandegrift, OLCS interim executive director, said.

AIDS Arms Inc., a case management agency, helps clients obtain financial, medical, emotional and physical

needs services, including home health care, funds for insurance premiums, housing, food and transportation.

AIDS Interfaith Network is a multicultural, nondenominational organization to help meet the spiritual, emotional and practical needs of persons living with AIDS.

OLCS is a nonprofit, community-based organization providing mental health services specializing in wellness to gay men and lesbians, and comprehensive programs for any person impacted by AIDS.

An open house for the three agencies is planned for late September or early October. For information call AIDS Arms Inc. at 214/521-5191; AIDS Interfaith at 214/559-4899; or OLCS at 214/520-8108.

HELMS

continued from p. 3

tered her dismay over the senate proceedings in correspondence to Senator Phil Gramm and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison:

"I am sad and disappointed by the Senate's 63-36 vote to withhold funds from schools if they teach the facts about sexual orien-

tation.

"All teenagers have the right to a safe environment, accurate information, respect, support and role models. Your vote

"•promotes ignorance over education, prejudice over equality, and violence over respect;

"•depresses gay and lesbian teenagers who are denied information, adult guidance and the opportunity of socializing with similar people;

"•encourages heterosexual people to consider gay and lesbian people as second-class citizens, unworthy of protection and respect;

"•attacks family life by fostering isolation over understanding.

"I have studied theology, sociology and sexuality extensively and find absolutely no basis for the inferior treatment of any person based on orientation alone. I urge you, as an official of this country, to get the facts.

"Thank you for your leadership in rescinding this bill so that we can proudly say that 'America stands for one nation under God with liberty and justice for all.'"

Letters to Hutchison may be addressed to 703 Hart, Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510; and to Gramm at 2459 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

Senate conference committee members include Senators Chris-

topher Dodd, Tom Harkin, Paul Simon, Dan Coats, Nancy Kassebaum, Edward Kennedy, Barbara Mikulski, Dave Durenberger, Paul Wellstone, Jud Gregg, Jeff Bingaman, Howard Metzenbaum, Harris Wofford, Claiborne Pell, Strom Thurmond, Orrin Hatch and Jim Jeffords. Correspondence to them may be addressed to The Honorable _____, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

COMING OUT

continued from p. 6

stop me. Fear will repress a spirit until the spirit becomes strong enough to reveal itself openly. Here goes....

"Sabrina, It has been quite some time since we have talked or corresponded. I have missed your friendship, and now seemed like a good time to drop you a letter.

"For a couple of years, you were one of the best friends I had. I admired you, and I respected your strength. You went through so many things to get to where you are in your life today, and I, to this day, think the world of you.

"The reason that I write now is to share one of my convictions with you. It has taken me nearly a quarter

of a century to build the self-confidence and love of self that I have today. I thank God for his guidance in my life, and I am ever the stronger for my religious upbringing. It provided me with a sense of values and morals that I live by on a daily basis.

"From an early age, I found that some of the places where I expected to find the most love were actually the most constricting forces on my life. For me, I am now happy with who I am as a gay man in today's difficult world. I have a strong sense of right and wrong, and I will never lose sight of its importance. As I now consider myself to have grown up and lived through some very difficult times fearing revealing my true self, there is little I can do to change those times. However, I can make every effort to enlighten others in hopes that other teens and

young adults do not suffer through years of pain.

"I know that you are dedicated to the pro-life movement and against abortion. I also am not an advocate of sacrificing life. This is why I have to speak out now.

"Did you know that the teen suicide rate for gay and lesbian teens is estimated to be at least six times higher than that of their counterparts? This doesn't mean that gay and lesbian people are less stable, less together, or less God-like. What it means is that gay and lesbian people are less comfortable about expressing who they really are because they fear rejection, emotional violence, or physical abuse. Trust me when I say it isn't easy. Also trust me when I say it still isn't easy today. Other than my gay friends, you are one of the first people I chose to open up to.

"Some time back, you had made some negative comments and jokes about the gay lifestyle and God's view of it. I can no longer outwardly condone such attitudes when I know that my doing so hurts not only myself, but many others.

"I don't expect that you will

become a gay-rights advocate, but I do hope that you will open your mind and consider the possibility that God loves me without reservation just as he loves you. I know that is fact today, and I wanted to share it with you.

"In Friendship, Scott" ♣

Miss Black Gay Fort Worth pageant promotes pride

A NEW REIGN



PROUD SYMBOLS - From left to right: Ronel, Miss Black Gay Fort Worth Emeritus; Suzanne Lynx, Miss Black Gay Fort Worth 1993; Tiffany King, Miss Black Gay Fort Worth 1989; and, kneeling, the 1994 winner, Vanity.

Vanity was named the 1994 Miss Black Gay Fort Worth in a pageant sponsored recently by Laj'-Ray Productions and hosted by Kings Cross. The pageant is an annual gala to crown a new symbol of pride and dignity for the black gay community.

Suzanne Lynx, the 1993 title holder, mesmerized the audience in her farewell performance as the illusion of Diana Ross. Carlotta, a former empress and the pageant's founder, was honored with an honorary title, along with Tiffany King and the late Coffee de LaKreeme. In special awards that evening Ronel, the 1986 winner, was given top honor of Miss Black Gay Fort Worth Emeritus.

FOR RENT:

- Efficiency apartment
- One-bedroom balcony apartment
- Two-bedroom house

Located on Fort Worth's west side near cultural district, downtown and TCOM.

For more information call

Jan Wynn,

817/827-6155, pager

FOR SALE:

'78 MG-B CONVERTIBLE

White with black interior and tops. Excellent condition, runs great. 62,000 original miles, asking \$5,000.


Send us your coming-out tales or perspectives by Sept. 16 for publication in next month's Alliance News...



**NATIONAL
COMING-OUT DAY
IS OCTOBER 11**

- Look in next month's edition for a schedule of events and activities sponsored by local organizations.
- Order your coming-out accessories - T-shirts, flags, buttons, etc., through the Alliance, 817/763-5544.
- Fly your banners, show your pride, on Oct. 11, National Coming-Out Day.

AIDS OUTREACH CENTER



Arlington/Mid-Cities
Satellite Office

179 South Watson Road, Suite 416
Arlington, Texas 76010
817-633-5552

TRIPLE THE FUN!

**Across
the
Street**

**COME
JOIN US!**



FORT WORTH



**Magnolia
STATION**

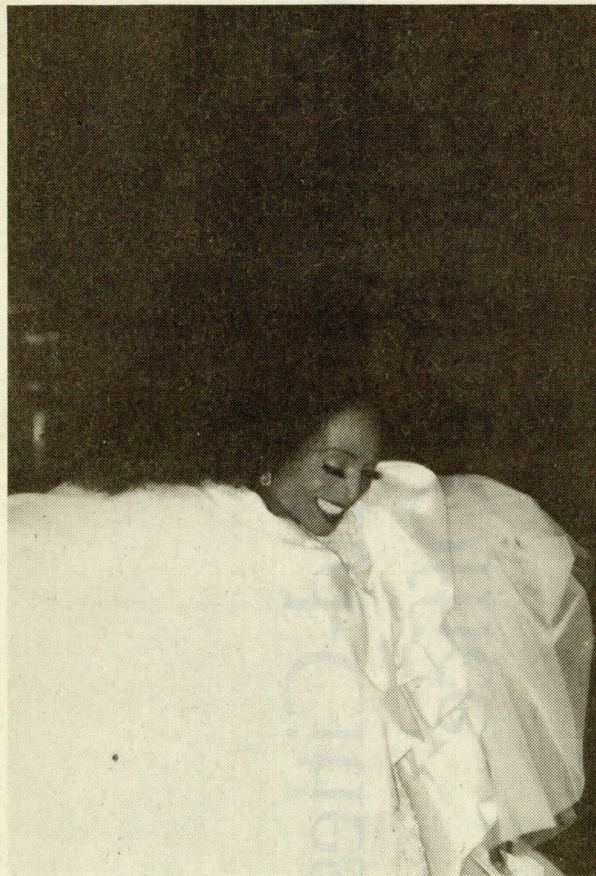
A COMMUNITY SERVICE OF TARRANT COUNTY LESBIAN/GAY ALLIANCE

SEPTEMBER 1994

Volume 14, Issue 9

Alliance News

Inside this issue:



BOWING OUT

Suzanne Lynx bids a gracious adieu as she turns over Miss Black Gay Fort Worth title to successor. p. 18

And:

•'Daddy's Roommate' under attack: Fort Worth Public Library caves to Radical Right censorship

•Inquiring minds want to know – all the dish on Imperial Court's newest monarchs.

•Helms' gay-bashing amendment threatens educational outreach to youth

•'I fear for my life on the job' – harassed workers testify before senate, plead for nondiscrimination act.

•Perspectives on the 'homosexual agenda,' setting straights straight, living with HIV, living healthily, and strengthening community

•AND MUCH MORE!