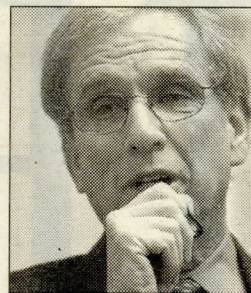


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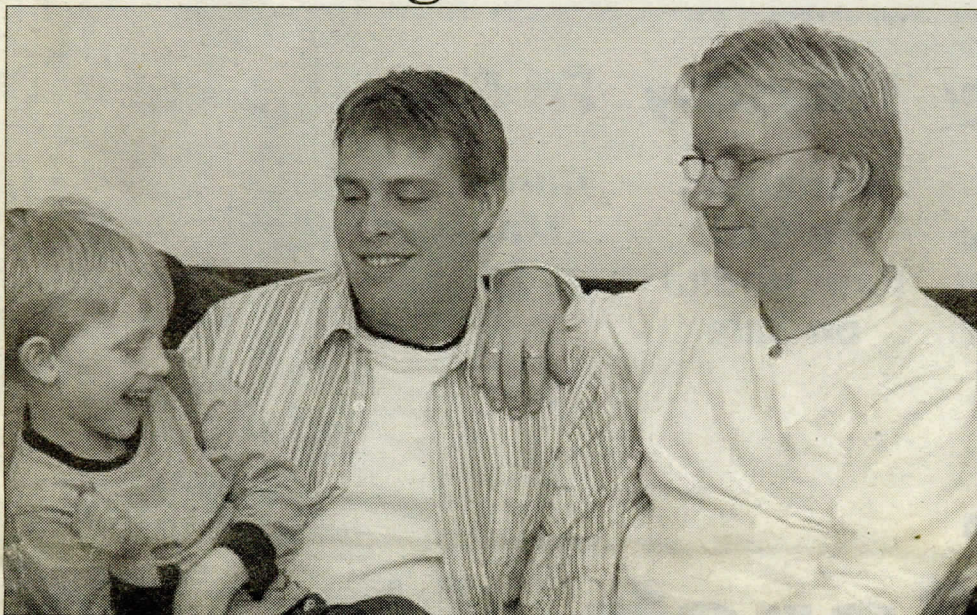
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Vol 4 Edition 10 March 12, 2004

Gay couple knows 'it's a long battle' to have their marriage



Jason P. McDowell, 25, center, and Bill A. Watson, 36, right, play with McDowell's nephew, Adam Gilliam, 5, Tuesday, March 9, 2004, in Chattanooga, Tenn. The couple married Feb. 23 in San Francisco and live in Chattanooga. McDowell has custody of Adam. McDowell said the Tennessee Department of Children's Services didn't hesitate to qualify him to be a foster parent after his sister became ill two years ago. He and Watson are considering adoption. (AP Photo/Dan McLaughlin)

CHATTANOOGA, Tennessee (AP)

Fresh from their wedding in San Francisco, Jason McDowell and Bill Watson requested new driver's licenses in their home state with their last names hyphenated.

They were turned down.

"What difference does it make to the state of Tennessee if we want to be called McDowell-Watson?" Watson said. "What skin is it off their nose?"

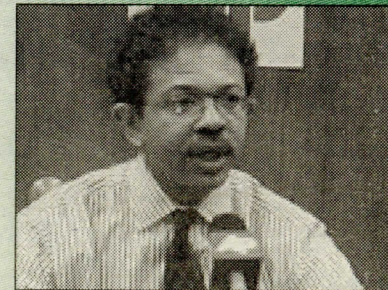
Now, the two men intend to challenge Tennessee's ban on same-sex marriages. And they know Tennessee "is going to be a tough state," Watson said.

But they say they have hope. Watson, a 36-year-old nursing home administrator, said it took 19 years after California allowed interracial marriages for the U.S. Supreme Court to force other states to recognize them.

"It's a long battle. We know that," he said.

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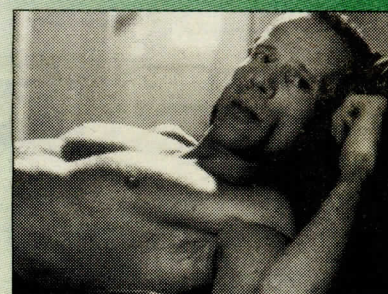
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Little money for HIV testing despite surge in college outbreak

By DANIEL YEE
ATLANTA (AP)

Federal health officials are urging Southern states to be vigilant for signs of campus HIV outbreaks like the one that recently surprised health officials in North Carolina.

But so far, little has been done. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says it doesn't have the money to do widespread testing.

Meanwhile, officials worry that unwitting infected students will spread the AIDS virus across the country when they return to their hometowns during class breaks or after graduation.

"There's no way we've diagnosed all the infections," said Dr. Peter Leone, HIV medical director at the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

"We have every reason to believe there's continuing ongoing transmission."

The North Carolina researchers reported last month that they found 84 newly infected male college students over the past three years, 73 of them black. The cases were linked to 37 North Carolina colleges. Up to a dozen cases related to the outbreak also were found in schools in Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

While those numbers are small, they are worrisome because they are higher than expected. Health officials fear there could be many more undetected cases.

Despite the alarm, the government has done little to curb the outbreak, Leone said. No additional federal funding has been provided to health agencies in the South, he said.

"I'm mortified more isn't being done," Leone said. "It suggests apathy at the federal level."

CDC officials say they are doing the best they can. They are providing technical assistance, planning more HIV surveys in North Carolina, and designing an intervention program for young black men who have sex with other men, said Lisa Fitzpatrick with the CDC.

"The overall problem is that CDC funding has been cut," Fitzpatrick said. "We need money from Washington to trickle down to us so we can help."

The agency is urging other states, especially in the South, to check for similar college outbreaks, Fitzpatrick said. However, North Carolina discovered its cases through a new way of testing for HIV that other states are not using yet.

More on HIV on Page 9

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BEST FRIENDS' CLUB GUIDE

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Vodka on Sale
Dance Class 7pm
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Dance Class
Pool
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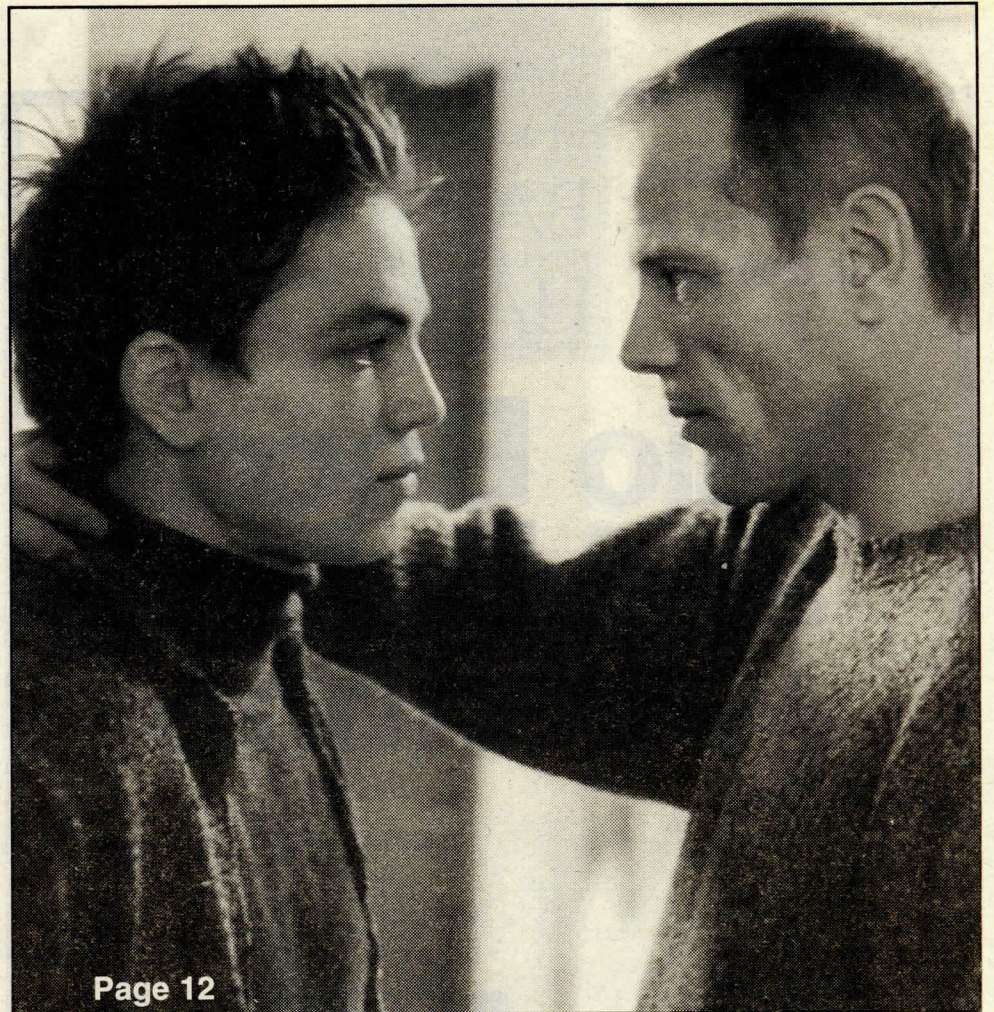
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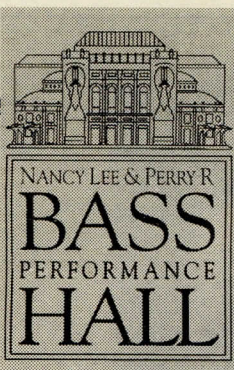


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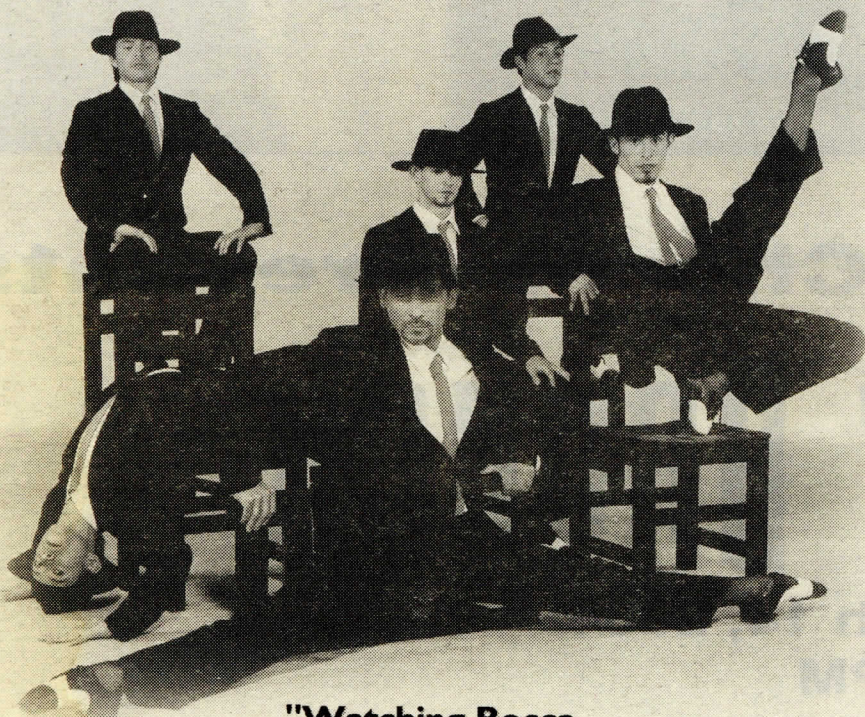


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Opinions Poll finds Texas Democrats unified against Bush

Texas Democrats expressed anger and unhappiness with President Bush, blaming him for the nation's economic ills and urging a withdrawal of troops in Iraq, according to an Associated Press exit poll and interviews with voters Tuesday.

Loyal Democrats, largely unified by their Bush opposition, rallied around Sen. John Kerry, the party's presumptive nominee.

Kerry ran especially well among voters who judged the state of the economy as poor or not so good or said that their family's financial situation was worse than four years ago.

But independents and conservatives who voted in the Democratic primary were lukewarm about the Massachusetts senator, giving him only a slight majority and suggesting that Kerry faces a tough battle in his bid to deny Bush a second term.

These findings were pulled from a poll of 1,380 people who voted Tuesday in the Democratic primary. The poll was conducted for AP and television networks by Edison Media Research and Mitofsky International. The poll, which did not count early voters, had a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points, higher for subgroups.

The economy was the top issue for more than two of every five Democratic voters, and about three of every four rated the economy poor or not good. Iraq and terrorism were far behind on Democratic voters' minds.

Democrats were evenly divided on the issue of gay marriages, with roughly equal groups saying gays should be allowed to marry, allowed to form civil unions, or have no legal recognition of their relationships.

Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., who dropped out of the presidential race last week, emerged as the favorite running mate among more than two out of five Texas Democrats who voted Tuesday, ahead of Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., preferred by about one-fourth.

State officials predicted a turnout of 14 percent, including about one-third in early voting, so Tuesday's voters were likely the most active and loyal members of each party.

Political observers said the Democrats' anger at Bush, who enjoyed support from powerful Democrats while he was Texas governor from 1995 to 2000, was another sign of the divided electorate that resulted in a close election in 2000 and may fore-

shadow another tight race this fall.

Richard Murray, a political science professor at the University of Houston, said Democrats' hostility toward Bush runs from worrying about the economy to disliking his personal traits, even his gait. It approaches the contempt they had for President Richard Nixon in the 1970s, he said.

"We've had layoffs in Austin and Dallas-Fort Worth. The energy industry isn't hiring. He's the president and gets blamed for a lot of things," Murray said. "As governor, he was viewed as a bipartisan, pretty well liked across the spectrum, but he has been a polarizing figure as president."

More than two out of five who voted in the Democratic primary said they were angry at Bush's administration, and the number grew to four out of five after including those who said they were dissatisfied but not angry. Only one in seven said they were satisfied.

"He makes me sick," Melissa Radey, a 27-year-old student, said after voting in Austin. She called Bush out-of-touch with ordinary Americans.

Clay Johnson, a 52-year-old computer technician in Houston, said Bush was trying to do the right thing but his policies, including tax cuts, weren't helping black families like his.

"I live in the same place, have the same job, been getting the same increases," Johnson said. "When they say the American family, they're not talking about my family."

Some voters said the Bush administration was focusing too much effort on Iraq and terrorism, which each ranked only in single digits as Democratic voters' top issue.

"It's absurd to think we can fight a global war without focusing on some economic issues at home first," said Van Volentine, 34, who works in a Lubbock bookstore. He said many of his friends have been looking for work for two or three years. "Something is not right."

Other Democrats accused Bush of helping well-connected businessmen.

"He hasn't done anything but help his own people, his buddies," said Bertha Baily, 66, of El Paso.

Democrats didn't reserve their anger for the president. Three in four said they were angry or dissatisfied with Republican Gov. Rick Perry, who is up for re-election in 2006. Those, however, were slightly better than the marks that partisan Democrats gave to Bush. ▼

Local News

Controversial British film debuts in Fort Worth



Glen Mulhern and Brenden Mackey are best mates in "9 Dead Gay Guys."

After a sold-out screening of the Canadian import, "Leaving Metropolis," in February, the producers of Q Cinema, Fort Worth's Gay & Lesbian International Film Festival continue their international film series with the controversial British film *9 Dead Gay Guys*.

"While our intention is never to deliberately shock, we couldn't pass up a chance to bring this outrageous little gem to Texans for the first time," says Q Cinema artistic director Todd Camp. "I've described it as *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* as directed by John Waters, but even that description hardly does it justice. You just have to see it to believe it."

The film caused a sensation at Cannes when several angry critics stormed out of the theater dismissing the picture as one of the rudest films they'd ever seen. But after soaking in the picture's unmistakably good nature, it's tough to work up any real righteous indignation (though it could rub a few people the wrong way).

"One thing is certain, you're only going to see it here and you're only going to see it once," Camp says. "So don't miss your chance."

Two straight lads from Belfast, Kenny (Glenn Mulhern) and Byron (Brendan Mackey), embark upon a voyage of discovery through London's outrageous gay scene, with the intention of finding their fortune. They are on the lookout for what they loosely term "gainful affair;" that is to say turning tricks for well-to-do older gentlemen. A roller coaster of events and extraordinary characters greet the lads as they

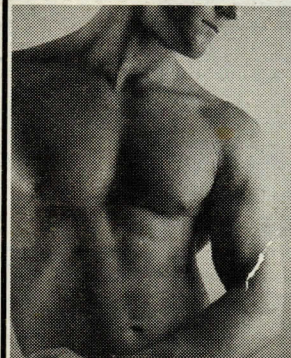
commence upon an odyssey to find the legendary "bread in the bed," a wedge of cash rumored to reside in the bed of Golders Green (Simon Godley), a gay Orthodox Jew.

Unfortunately, the kiss of death seems to follow this pair in their adventure. The gentlemen who come into contact with them seem to be quite literally dropping like flies. Is sex possible without money? Is there such a thing as love? Well, these are the questions our unlikely heroes discover themselves confronted with. A dwarf, an electric cattle prod and three West African brothers later, the film twists and turns to a raucous conclusion.

Funny, wacked-out and completely meaningless, *9 Dead Gay Guys* has caused walk-outs at Cannes and controversy wherever it plays. We couldn't wait to show this truly original comic romp of epic proportions. The film is 80 minutes and is unrated (though an R equivalent) for strong language, sexual situations, crude humor and violence.

9 Dead Gay Guys screens at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 18, 2004 at the Rave Motion Pictures Ridgmar 13, 2300 Green Oaks Road in Ridgmar mall. Tickets are \$10; \$5 with student ID, which includes the movie as well as one complimentary drink and hors d'oeuvres at our special monthly after-party at Club Vivid, 900 Houston St. in downtown Fort Worth. Tickets are available in advance at Vivid and at the theater about an hour prior to showtime. Next month's screening of *Adored: Diary of a Male Porn Star* will show on April 15. ▼

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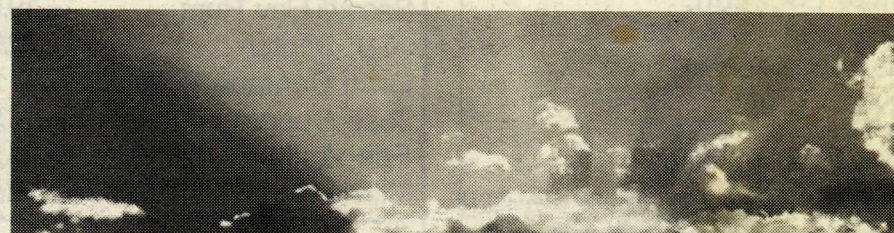


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MANAGING EDITOR:

Steven Geer

Administrative Assistant:

Kathy M. Lacy

Graphic Designer:

Michael Bain

Feature Writer:

B J Laray
Christopher Soden

Staff Writers:

Curtis Smith
Eddie Thees
Trevor Matthew

Chris Hightower
J. Garret Potts

Contributors:

James W Marchbanks
Ron Zimmerman
Mary Evelynnn



Advertising Sales and Support:

Jamie Owens
877-4TX-ALLY (Dallas, Denton, Waco)
817-336-2341 (Fort Worth)

Photographer:

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The Ally's Pet of the Week



Remi is a 6 year old Lab/Weimeraner mix with a chocolate coat and gold eyes. Her previous owner's house burned down, so HSNT is trying to help her find a new home. Remi is very scared and shy right now. She also has a leg injury that is starting to heal. The staff and volunteers have been working with her to help her overcome her fears. She is making progress slowly but surely. She is a beautiful girl but has the saddest, most worried look in her eyes. She will need a family with no small children and with lots of patience as she learns to trust.

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U. S. News

New Jersey attorney general orders halt to marriage licenses for gay couples, or else

ASBURY PARK, New Jersey (AP)

New Jersey's attorney general ordered city officials to stop marrying gay couples, or face criminal charges. In California, San Jose became the second major U.S. city to recognize same-sex marriages of municipal employees performed elsewhere.

In New York, Cardinal Edward Egan and Roman Catholic bishops lobbied lawmakers over issue following a small New York town mayor's decision to allow gay marriage.

"My position would be that marriage would be an agreement to be faithful and to stay together in a union between a man and woman with openness to children and with a seeking of mutual support," Egan said after a closed-door meeting Tuesday with state Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno. "I believe that this is perhaps the position of every civilization as long as we know."

In Asbury Park, letters were sent Tuesday to the city clerk, mayor and deputy mayor, who married two men a day ago. Harvey told Deputy Mayor James Bruno he was wrong to do so.

Attorney General Peter C. Harvey also warned officials marriage licenses issued to same-sex couples are invalid.

"We urge you to carry out your official duties in a manner consistent with the well-established court decisions and advice set forth in the accompanying letter to avoid the initiation of legal action by our office," Harvey wrote.

More marriages could mean "potential criminal prosecution." A conviction could result in a fine up to \$10,000 and possible jail time, a spokesman for the attorney general's office said.

Frederick C. Raffetto, an attorney for Asbury Park, said a decision would be announced Wednesday about whether the city intended to abide by the order.

New Jersey on Monday became the latest state where same-sex marriage was performed after San Francisco's mayor last month decided to sanction gay marriage. The marriages triggered a series of lawsuits seeking to stop them, and President George W. Bush said a constitutional amendment is needed to bar same-sex marriage, already banned in more than 30 states.

In San Jose, the city council passed a motion 8-1 that could provide more comprehensive health and retirement benefits to partners and family members of gay and

lesbian city workers who get married in San Francisco or other cities that allow same-sex marriages.

The motion was drafted by San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales and openly gay council member Ken Yeager.

It's unclear whether health care providers will also agree to extend the benefits.

More than 400 residents crowded into council chambers and more than 200 were in overflow seating downstairs, including dozens of outspoken Christians who brought copies of the Bible and quoted scriptures. More than 100 people addressed council members, and roughly three out of four speakers said they were opposed to same-sex marriage.

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"I don't live my life in fear of my God," Gonzales said in response to a resident who compared California to Sodom, the ancient city that God destroyed for its wickedness. "I hope when I have the opportunity to meet my God ... he or she will say, 'Good job.'"

In San Francisco, the son of the state's most prominent opponent of gay marriage exchanged vows with his longtime boyfriend.

David J. Knight, 42, the son of state Sen. William J. "Pete" Knight, married his partner Joseph J. Lazzaro, 39.

The elder Knight is a Republican senator who authored a successful 2000 ballot initiative that strengthened California's ban on same-sex marriage. ▼

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COUPLE

Continued from Page 1

Watson and McDowell said they are watching to see how the California Supreme Court rules on challenges to the more than 3,600 same-sex marriage ceremonies performed in San Francisco in the past three weeks.

McDowell, a 25-year-old nursing home nurse, has custody of his sister's 5-year-old son. He said the Tennessee Department of Children's Services didn't hesitate to qualify him to be a foster parent after his sister became ill two years ago. The two, who met two years ago and were married Feb. 23, are considering adopting the boy.

McDowell said they deserve the same rights and benefits that marriage brings in Tennessee with regards to tax filings, property ownership, inheritance and insurance benefits.

Watson said he has the larger income and if he dies he wants his Social Security benefits to go to McDowell and the child.

"He would have no rights to Social Security benefits if something happens to both of us," Watson said. He said they shouldn't be required to seek power of attorney arrangements.

The two are seeking an attorney to help

them challenge Tennessee's version of the federal Defense of Marriage Act, which allows states to refuse to recognize gay marriages outside their borders. A Tennessee attorney general's opinion in 1996 said gay marriage is unconstitutional.

Hedy Weinberg, Tennessee director of the American Civil Liberties Union, said she was unsure if her organization might take on a request to challenge Tennessee's marriage law.

Sharon Curtis Flair, spokeswoman for Tennessee Attorney General Paul Summers, said the office would "stand by our previous opinions on this subject."

Pending legislation sponsored by Rep. Chris Clem, a Republican, would expand Tennessee's ban on same-sex marriages to include civil unions and domestic partnerships.

Vanderbilt University law professor Rebecca Brown said it's too soon to tell how Tennessee courts might decide on a constitutional challenge of the state's ban on same-sex marriages.

"There are so many things happening all around the country right now it is all kind of a blur," Brown said. "I think California will

be first on validity of the marriages and then other states on acceptance. The issue is not shaped yet." ▼

Former police officer sentenced in obscenity case in Dallas

DALLAS (AP)

A former Dallas police officer and his wife were sentenced Friday in an obscenity case.

A U.S. district judge sentenced former officer Garry Layne Ragsdale, 35, to 33 months in prison and Ragsdale's wife, Tamara, 33, to 30 months in prison.

The two were convicted of conspiracy to mail obscene material and two counts of mailing obscene material and aiding and abetting, U.S. prosecutors said.

Prosecutors said that, between April and July 1998, the Ragsdales distributed obscene videotapes depicting rape scenes through the Internet and U.S mail.

The couple was doing business under the name G Rags Inc., and owned and managed a Web site that showed the rape scenes, which they categorized as "Real Rape Video Series" and "Brutally Raped Video Series," prosecutors said.

Bank records revealed that the couple made more than \$60,000 on video sales.

The couple's attorney, Clinton Broden, said the Ragsdales will appeal, adding that the case has been a waste of taxpayer money.

"This prosecution probably cost the taxpayers over \$100,000 dollars, and resources have been diverted from child pornography (prosecution), so I don't know that the government has something to congratulate itself on," Broden said.

Garry Ragsdale was a Dallas officer in the 1990s and was fired after a federal investigation into the rape videos. The couple last lived in Fort Worth.

The two will remain on bond pending their appeal. ▼

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U. S. News

Log Cabin Republicans to run ad urging defeat of Bush-backed amendment

By LIZ SIDOTI
Associated Press Writer
WASHINGTON

A group of gay Republicans who supported President Bush in 2000 will air a television ad opposing a Bush-backed constitutional amendment that would prohibit gays from marrying.

The 30-second spot by the Log Cabin Republicans shows Vice President Dick Cheney at a debate four years ago saying, "People should be free to enter into any kind of relationship they want to enter into." The ad begins Thursday in several states.

The vice president also says: "I don't think there should necessarily be a federal policy in this area." The words "We agree" then flash on the screen.

Cheney said last week that he supports the president, even though one of his daughters, Mary, is gay.

Last month, Bush called for quick election-year enactment of the amendment following a Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling in November that it is unconstitutional to bar gay couples from marriage. Since the ruling, several cities and mayors have been conducting gay marriages in defiance of local and state laws.

The Log Cabin Republicans' \$1 million effort to defeat the amendment includes lobbying, grass-roots mobilization and print advertisements with the TV ads, which will run in Washington, D.C., Ohio, Missouri, Florida, Minnesota, New Mexico, New Hampshire, and Wisconsin. ▼

Date set for custody battle in Idaho Supreme Court

Nearly two years after Theron McGriff had to give up living with his gay partner to continue seeing his daughters, the Idaho Supreme Court is

ready to take up the custody case.

"It's exciting news for us but it's also the most scary news I've had because I know the fate of my family is in the court's hands," McGriff said Tuesday.

The high court will hear arguments in Boise on May 3, and a ruling could come weeks later.

The precedent-setting case began in December 2000, three years after McGriff and his wife, Shawn McGriff, were granted a divorce.

They had shared equal custody, but Shawn McGriff asked Bonneville County Magistrate Mark Riddoch to grant her primary custody because Theron McGriff was now living with his gay partner.

She contended that Theron McGriff did not consider the effect the living arrangement would have on the two young girls, especially since they lived in the conservative, heavily Mormon town of Idaho Falls.

Riddoch restricted Theron McGriff's visitations even more than Shawn McGriff requested, ruling that Theron could visit the children only if he did not live with his partner.

The state Supreme Court agreed to hear the case directly, allowing it to bypass intermediate courts.

Theron McGriff said that in the mean-

time, he has complied with Riddoch's order living apart from his partner so he can see his daughters, now 9 and 13, every weekend.

"I don't want to visit my kids, I want to raise them," he said. "My kids are still 150 percent behind this."

Shawn McGriff could not be reached for comment. Her attorney, Marie Tyler, said it was against her policy to comment on any cases that are pending out of respect for the confidentiality of her clients and their children.

An Idaho Supreme Court clerk said the briefs in the case are sealed. But Theron McGriff has posted those filed by his attorney on his Web site, www.idahodad.org.

Theron McGriff's attorneys are attacking Riddoch's ruling from several angles, including arguments that Riddoch should not have based his decision on Theron's sexual orientation.

Theron McGriff also argues that because Riddoch originally dismissed Shawn McGriff's petition and ordered both parents to attend counseling, any subsequent ruling in the case was moot.

"He's basically made this ruling on a dismissed notion, so if the Supreme Court wants to throw it out on a technicality and More on CUSTODY onNext Page

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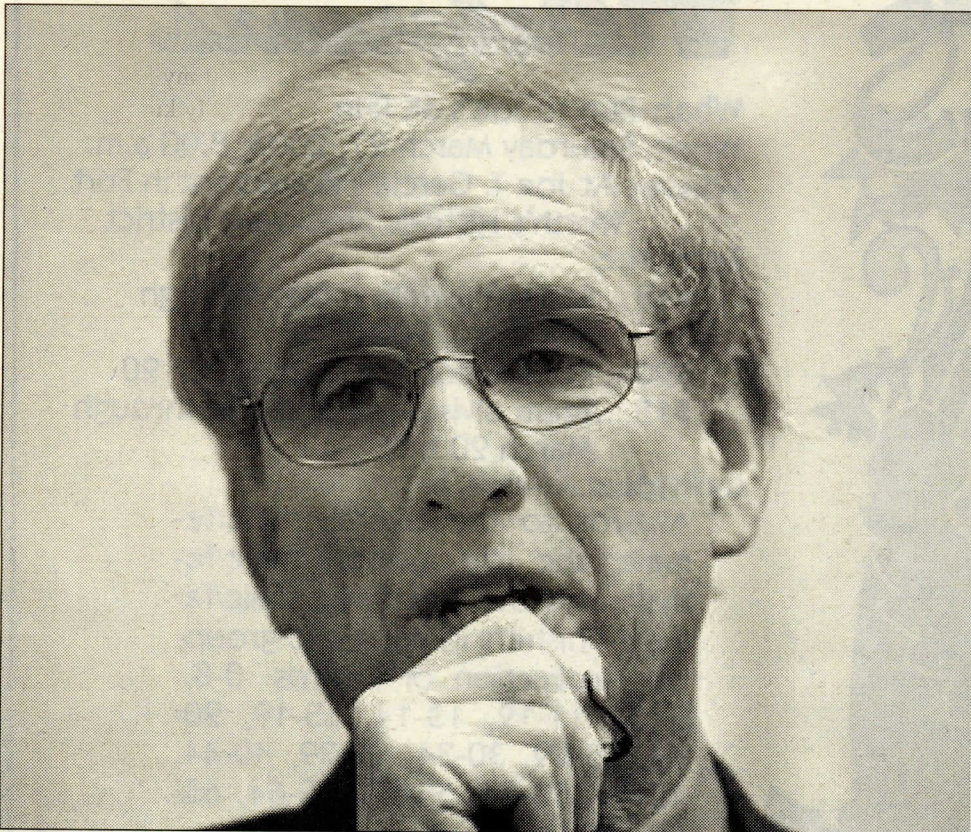
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Virginia's Senate OKs ban on civil unions



Sen. Richard L. Saslaw, D-Fairfax, speaks in opposition to a bill underscoring the state's prohibition of same-sex marriages during debate during the floor session of the Virginia Senate at the State Capitol in Richmond, Va., Wednesday, March 10, 2004. (AP Photo/Richmond Times-Dispatch, Bob Brown).

By JUSTIN BERGMAN
Associated Press Writer
RICHMOND, Va. (AP)

Virginia's Senate approved a bill Wednesday prohibiting the recognition of same-sex civil unions from other states, a move one senator said tells

gays and lesbians to "essentially stay out of Virginia."

Republican Del. Robert Marshall's bill, which passed the Senate by a veto-proof margin of 27-10, would add a section to the state's Affirmation of Marriage Act banning civil unions and other partnership contracts

"purporting to bestow the privileges and obligations of marriage."

Sen. Kenneth Cuccinelli, R-Fairfax County, said the legislation is needed to prevent court challenges from Virginians who travel to other states for civil unions, then try to get their legal rights recognized in Virginia.

Vermont is currently the only state where civil unions can legally be performed.

Sen. Richard Saslaw, D-Fairfax County, said Virginia would be heading in the wrong direction with the bill, warning that companies may avoid moving to a state where their employees do not feel welcome.

"We're telling these people who happen to be gay, essentially, 'Stay out of Virginia,'" Saslaw said. "We want to make it as inhospitable as possible for you all to live in this state.' I don't know how else you can describe this bill. No more, no less. 'Get out.'"

Saslaw said the Maryland legislature killed a similar measure last week, and California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has said he supports civil unions.

"Once again, we'll be at the back end of history," he said, referring to Virginia's reluctance to accept interracial marriages in the 1960s.

Sen. Janet Howell, D-Fairfax County, said she has been contacted by residents concerned about the impact on businesses relocating to Virginia and on successful gay professionals moving out. She questioned the motives of the bill's supporters.

"What I can't figure out is, what are people afraid of?" she asked. "As someone who's been married for 37 years, I've never, ever been afraid of people who loved each other or committed to each other and wanted to take care of each other, and I think that's what civil unions are all about."

Sen. William Mims, R-Loudoun, rejected Howell's arguments and said the bill's purpose was to clarify and strengthen what is already Virginia public policy.

He said the state's Affirmation of Marriage Act was drawn so narrowly in 1997, it may not cover civil unions or similar partnerships that are legal in other states.

"The intention, clearly, is to ensure that the full faith and credit of the laws of the commonwealth are not given to certain statutes that would be against the public policy of (Virginia)," he said.

The Virginia legislature also has passed a resolution this year urging Congress to propose amending the U.S. Constitution to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

Another measure that would have allowed employers to offer health insurance benefits to gay domestic partners died in a Senate committee after barely passing the House of Delegates.

Marshall's bill now goes before Gov. Mark R. Warner, who has not taken a position on it. The legislation earlier passed the House, 79-18.

The bill is HB751.

On the Net: <http://legis.state.va.us/> ▼

CUSTODY

Continued from Previous Page

not even address the gay issue they can do that," Theron McGriff said.

He said he would be thrilled if state's highest court decided it was illegal to decide custody cases based on hetero- or homosexuality alone.

But he is worried that the nation's current political climate, with gay marriages being performed and contested in several states, is raising emotions that could harm his case.

"If being gay can be used against you, what's next? If you're an obese parent? If you're in a mixed race relationship and the community doesn't support that can they take your kids away? Kids could be harmed and teased about obese parents or parents with disabilities," he said.

The case has been emotionally and financially stressful for his entire family, McGriff said.

"From a financial standpoint it's been pretty devastating for us. I'm to my break-

ing point now," he said. "My youngest daughter broke down in tears and said she hated living like this. My older daughter is into her friends and she's a teenager now, she's more into social things, but my younger daughter, it's killing her." ▼

HIV

Continued from Page 1

North Carolina officials pooled blood samples of people who tested negative in conventional HIV tests. Then they used a different, faster test that can detect the virus itself, rather than relying on the conventional test that checks for antibodies which show up in the blood later.

While all but two of the men infected in the outbreak had sex at least once with another man, they typically did not consider themselves to be gay or bisexual, according to North Carolina's research.

That finding worries health officials who fear their prevention messages, mainly tailored to strictly gay or straight men, might

not be getting through to those who do not identify themselves as homosexuals, even though they have casual sex with men. Leone said most of the people infected didn't think they were at risk.

"We've been somewhat remiss in focusing on people's sexual identity," Fitzpatrick said. "It doesn't matter what their sexual identity is, we need to focus on their behaviors."

Those infected also frequently traveled outside the state, used the Internet to meet partners and were 34 times more likely than non-college men to have sex with other college students.

"Because of the way we pigeonhole people in this society, we don't think of college students as being at risk for HIV," Fitzpatrick said. "Our prevention efforts have not focused heavily on college campuses ... they are actually an important place to implement prevention activities." ▼

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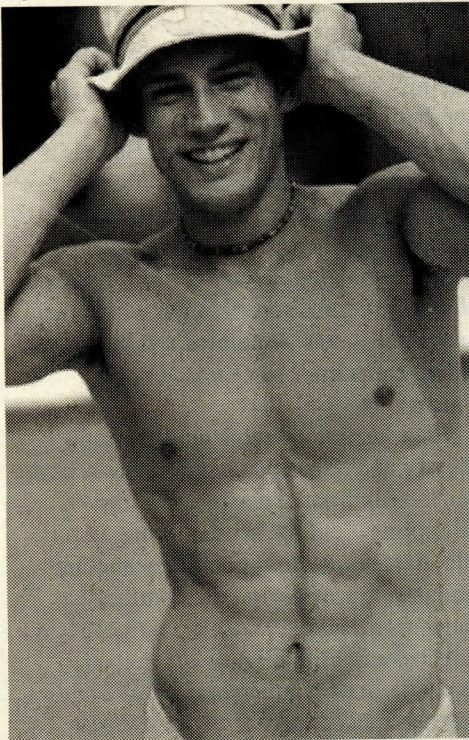
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Don't be repetitious in your reps!

By C.T. Hightower



will get used to the rut. Okay, so you've developed a routine with a trainer or designed your own routine from the weekly fitness column and you conditioned to doing 5 miles on the treadmill; therefore, you may think you can walk take a 5 mile on a nature hike with your other half when you go camping next month. Well, here's the news flash! You have got to add variety in your workout.

As a matter of fact you might think that you're working hard at the gym, but perhaps what you really need is an even harder workout. Your body doesn't tell you, "Hey, lazy! We've been doing that same old routine, and I can do it without you!" So, here's a quick guide to boosting your workout and move to the next level of bulking up. Here are four things to watch out for in your workout.

Repetitious - You find yourself doing the same exercises in the same order, even with the same number of reps.

Ease - Over the past few weeks, you've found your weightlifting getting progressively easier.

Machines - You use the machines only

and have never tried the free weights room at the gym.

Static - Your muscles have basically been at the same size and strength for several months.

This doesn't mean going all out and loading massive weights or working out till you pass out. Making progress won't work unless you do so carefully choose to increase your work out step by step. Here are a couple of things to try, remember don't do it all at once. Pace yourself and chose variety.

Reverse Pyramid - For a set of exercises, use a heavy weight that you can only lift for three reps. Then do a few more reps with a lighter weight, and so on, for the same exercise. If you do this correctly, you'll end up lifting more overall weight than doing a standard 10-12 reps of your typical weight.

Heavy Weight - Another technique is simply to lift heavier weight. Try to remember how much weight you've been lifting and increase the weight. I bet you'll be surprised at the developments that you've made. Remember not to sacrifice form, concentration and breathing for excessive

weight. This is why working out with a trainer or buddy helps. You might need a spotter to get squeeze out that last rep or two.

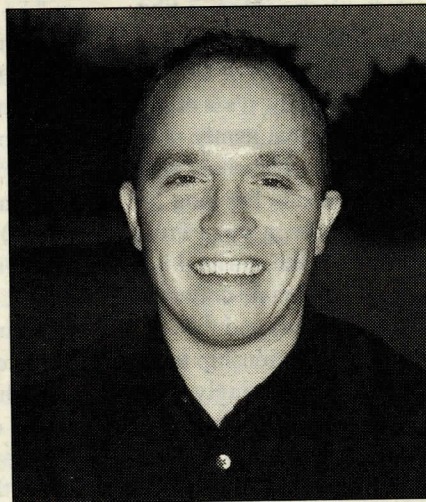
Initially, gains seem to come easily, but every weight trainer will reach a point where progress becomes difficult. Because the body adapts rapidly at first, many of the gains are due as much to learning new exercises as to actual changes in the muscles. Most trainers agree that one of the most important things in training is rest.

If you find that you've reached a brick wall in your routine and your not making any progress. Take a break from it - and when you come back try new exercises and increase your weight. If you are doing normal grip bench presses, change your grip and do the exercise with a narrower or wider grip. Another effective technique is to add exercises that strengthen muscles needed for the primary exercises. For example, Dips improve bench press and leg extensions improve squats. Change the nature of the exercise stress, and your body will again adapt more quickly. ▼

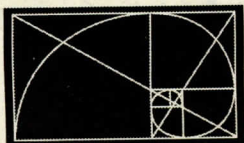
If you want to make real progress with body conditioning, you can't do the same routine over and over. In fact, you can lose progress because your muscles

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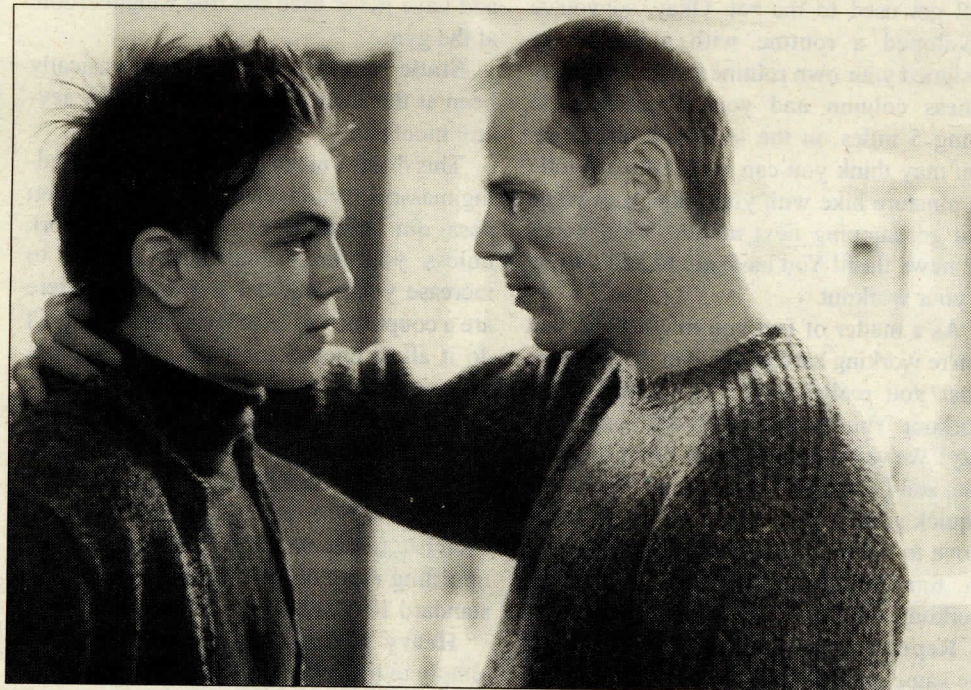
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Film **Prisoners of Love**

by CHRISTOPHER SODEN



Cyrille Thouvenin and Pascal Gregory in *Confusion of Genders*

Back in the 60's what we called Romantic Comedies were also about sex, but the sex was implied. What we now call Sex Comedies almost always imply romance, if only by the absence of it, say in black comedies like *Happiness* or *Your Friends and Neighbors*. Ilan Duran Cohen's *Confusion of Genders* is not exactly a Sex Comedy, it's a dry, ironic, sharp-witted film that gently pokes fun at its' lost and lonely characters, who crave the urgency of passion but long for stability. Alain (Pascal Gregory) a French attorney, is torn between the spiritual intimacy he shares with his female colleague Laurence (Nathalie Richard) and the intense sexuality of his relationship to Christophe', a young, intoxicatingly handsome Cyrille Thouvenin. As the narrative evolves we learn more about the "secondary" characters: Marc, one of Alain's clients, who gives new meaning to the expression, "prisoner of love", Babette, the hairdresser he robbed and killed for, his cellmate, Laurence's sister, the in-laws to be, each one provides another clue in the conundrum. They are all made to look silly in their turn, but never ridiculous. There is also a pervasive, bleak undertone that informs *Confusion...* that does not amount to ambivalence but seems to balance it out.

The title could have several interpretations, and most likely, all of them accurate. At the beginning we see a parade of Alain's paramours (male and female) but as we take a longer look at he and his fiancée we begin to wonder if he really

wants anything sexual from women at all. Like the longsuffering martyrs who trade (or forfeit) sex for love, Alain seems to want the nurturance rather than the bang. "I feel like I'm having sex with my mother," he tells Laurence, as he clumsily tries to unbutton her blouse.

"Is that exciting?" she asks, grateful for a potentially kinky jolt. When we see Alain and Christophe' making love there is a pointed, combustible energy so infectious it's almost distracting (what's a poor critic to do?) And Cohen doesn't shy away from supplying us with the visual information.

But *Confusion of Genders* could also refer to what may be an irresolvable lack of understanding between men and women and what the other wants. Or perhaps what comes down to irreconcilable personal agendas. I suspect, too, that Cohen is playing with gender expression and behavior. Certainly "Laurence" is an ambiguous name for a female character, late in the movie

Babette gets a "boyish" haircut, both the women have small breasts and there's a weird riff on *Cyrano de Bergerac*, in which Alain "courts" Babette on Marc's behalf (he buys an engagement ring) but only out of attraction to him.

I have had a longtime appreciation for the gestalt of well-orchestrated shots in film. Moments when the raw effect of combining light, music, composition, situation, dialogue, and mood surpass the sum of its parts. For the audience it can be an instant of transcendence. Grace or

epiphany.

Granted, they may be under-stated, and only hit you long after you've left the theater, but I love their implacability.

Confusion of Genders features: Babette's second visit to Marc in prison, Alain and Christophe' together in the tub, Laurence alone on the floor, refusing to answer the door, the wedding ceremony from hell, Alain's flirtatious conversation with a male nurse. Cohen has assembled a subtle, compelling experience in *Confusion of Genders*.

The dialogue operates on different levels, wry and humorous in ways that reflect adult sensibilities. They're funny because they spring from the ache of living in our cold, dangerous, disappointing sometimes exhilarating world. And the comfort that comes from the reliable and routine. Many films have lines that tip us off to their Thematic Statement. *Confusion of Genders* may have several. After being released from prison, Marc's cellmate asks to feel the texture of Babette's skirt. Departing, he observes, "Pretty or practical, we all have to choose." Like the rest of the characters, Alain does not want to choose. It's not that they don't feel jealousy or possessiveness, they just won't admit to it.

The harder they look for clarity and simplicity the more it eludes them. And while *Confusion...* concedes that life is indeed complicated, the story of Marc (Vincent Martinez) and Babette (Julie Gayet) makes raw sexuality seem creepy and compulsive and marriages of convenience, forced and hypocritical.

Desire is a prison and matrimony a farce. Cohen pretends he has no answers but in his sly way, plenty of insight. Perhaps Alain and Laurence and Christophe' and Marc and Babette are unhappy because they presume a false dichotomy. Or they prefer security to the risk of being turned down flat, if they insist on what they truly desire. The "dizzy" terrifying adventure of freedom.

Confusion of Genders is available at Tapelenders. ▼

fortworthally.com

The Arts

2003 Grammy Award winning pianist Emanuel Ax to perform with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra

Fort Worth

Performing the action-packed concerto written for him by living composer John Adams, pianist Emanuel Ax will join Music Director Miguel Harth-Bedoya and the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra for three performances April 2-4 at Bass Performance Hall. The Grammy Award winner is considered to be one of the 21st Century's most brilliant pianists and consistently performs with "greatness and overwhelming authority" (Los Angeles Times).

The concert begins with *Falling Dream*, written by Kevin Puts, one of the most promising young composers in the United States today and one "well worth paying attention to" New York Times. Ax joins the Orchestra for *Century Rolls*, the glorious piano concerto written for him by the great American composer John Adams. The program concludes with *Rimsky-Korsakov's* brilliant *Scheherazade*, one of the most popular orchestral works ever written. The concert begins at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and at 2 p.m. Sunday.

Ax is renowned not only for his poetic temperament and unsurpassed virtuosity, but also for the exceptional breadth of his performing activity. Each season his distinguished career includes appearances with major symphony orchestras worldwide, recitals in the most celebrated concert halls, a variety of chamber music collaborations, the commissioning and performance of new music, and additions to his acclaimed discography on Sony Classical. Ax captured public attention in 1974 when, at age 25, he won the First Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv.

Mr. Adams is one of America's most admired and frequently performed composers. He serves as Composer in Residence at Carnegie Hall and makes frequent appearances as a guest conductor with the world's major orchestras. His works have received numerous awards, among them the 1994 Royal Philharmonic Society Award for his *Chamber Symphony*, and the 1995 Grawemeyer Award for his *Violin Concerto*.

Adams was inspired to write *Century Rolls* for Ax after spending a late night listening to a recording of old piano roll music from the 1920s. Adams wrote "I was struck in an unexpected way by the fact that, regardless of the performer or the repertoire be it Gershwin or Rachmaninoff, Jelly Roll

Morton or Paderewski, the technology of the piano roll transformed the music into a realm that could not have been anticipated before what Walter Benjamin called the 'age of mechanical reproduction.' In other parts I was conscious of the special gifts of Emanuel Ax, and, particularly in the central slow movement, I attempted to tame my normally clangorous style of piano writing and create something that would fit the sense timbre and lyrical warmth that sets his performances apart from all other pianists."

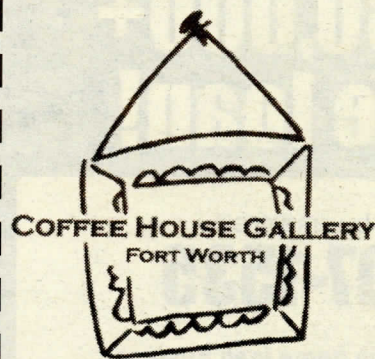
Ax gave the world premiere of *Century Rolls* with the Cleveland Orchestra in 1998, and the New York premiere with the Cleveland Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in 2000.

Kevin Puts, 31, serves as an assistant professor of composition at the University of Texas in Austin. His honors include a 2001 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, a 2001-2002 Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, and the 1999 Barlow International Competition, which resulted in premieres by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the Utah Symphony in 2002. In November 2002, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra gave four performances of his piece *Network* and the Phoenix Symphony commissioned him for a premiere as part of its Beethoven Series in 2002. The Boston Pops premiered his *Millennium Canons*, commissioned by the Institute for American Music, in 2001. A Young Concert Artists' Composer-in-Residence, he wrote two critically acclaimed compositions during his tenure: *Canyon* and *Alternating Current*.

Tickets to the concert are \$13-\$72 and are available from the FWSO Ticket Office at 330 E. Fourth Street, Suite 200, in downtown Fort Worth; by phone at 817-665-6000; and through the website at www.fwsymphony.org. The Ticket Office is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. All concerts take place at Bass Performance Hall, on the corner of Fourth and Calhoun streets in downtown Fort Worth.

These concerts are made possible, in part, by the generous support of American Airlines and the Rosenthal Great Performance Fund. Promotional support is provided by WRR Classical 101.1 FM and the Star-Telegram.

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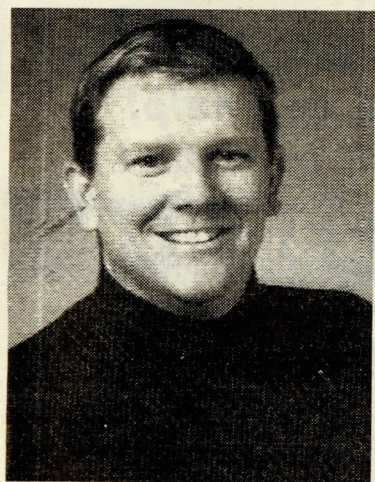
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Editors Note:

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Mary Evelyn is no longer able to write her column. She wishes to thank all of her readers for submitting questions and reading her column. On behalf of The Fort Worth Ally, we wish her a speedy recovery and the best of luck.

This week we debut Ask Eddie. Straight answers for gay questions.

Dear Ask Eddie:

As a guy I'm hesitant to ask the about this, but how much is TOO MUCH masturbation?

I realized over the weekend that I was masturbating at least every 12 hours, sometimes more (no, I'm not sore). Why I do it doesn't matter. Maybe late at night I'm trying to sleep and the thought creeps in that a little "relaxation" would help. Or maybe I wake up in the morning "aroused". Maybe I just want to "relive" some fascinating and exciting experience. Or maybe I just want to "imagine" something or somebody new. I've masturbated most of my life, but not as much as lately.

Yes, I know – there might be people who say why masturbate when it's so easy to find someone. Well, for some of us it's not so easy. There are other people who might say just go pay for sex. Again, for some of us that's not an easy option or even something we want to do. And I hate to say this, Mary Evelyn, but I can masturbate even when I am in a relationship with regular sex.

Is "too much" when you can't get it up anymore? I've read current reports

stating the average person has sex two and a half times per week – is it more or less than that? Is it never or some other ambiguous measure? I've read that as long as my body can get aroused, it's telling me "I'm good to go!"

I'm not obsessive or compulsive, schizophrenic, or bipolar. I don't believe I think about sex a lot, I don't collect porn, and I don't have any sexual fetishes. I don't even have any phobias. Plus, I'm a healthy middle aged man. So why is this happening to me?

How often should I be masturbating, Mary Evelyn? Or is it something I shouldn't even worry about?

Signed, Joe Bisexual

Dear Joe

Joe, Mary Evelyn is buried out back. Never take your own advice.

This is "Ask Eddie" - Straight answers for queer questions.

Joe B; you are certainly starting us off on the right foot. We tend toward the "too much is never enough" line of thought. Not to worry, fire at will.

You will know you are masturbating too much when something starts to bleed.

As for the "Grandma you never had", she died from jacking off too much in 1928. (Remember about the bleeding.)

Best of luck and if we ever meet remind me not to shake hands.

XXOO

E.

If you need advice or have a question for me email me at askeddie@sbcglobal.net.

fortworthally.com

"Seize the opportunity, Cancer!"

ARIES March 21 - April 20

Avoid taking yourself too seriously this week. You have a tendency to work yourself into the ground - are you just a conscientious worker or a workaholic? Lighten up. Pay close attention to an important relationship, you may be in way over your head.

TAURUS April 21 - May 21

It's time to take a softer approach in expressing your love and appreciation for someone you care for. Avoiding any problems that are on the front burner will not make them go away. Take a deep breath and jump in. The resolution will be easier than expected.

GEMINI May 22 - June 21

Your financial situation seems to be steadying this week, and will remain so for at least the next several months. Build a solid foundation now - you can never be too sure of what the future holds. If you're feeling restless and bored, go do something new.

CANCER June 22 - July 23

If you are bursting with energy this week, take the opportunity to get some fresh air and exercise. If you are trying to break free of a difficult relationship or habit, a close friend may be able to help. Changes may be difficult to face, but will be best in the long run.

LEO July 24 - August 23

This week is not time to be taking major risks with a primary relationship. Any changes must be made slowly, keeping in mind the feelings of others involved. You are experiencing a feeling of contentment, that everything is well, in spite of contrary evidence.

VIRGO August 24 - September 23

There is some surprisingly good advice concerning money coming your way. Take financial advice of a close friend. A conservative approach is definitely best, and any investments should be well thought out first. Taking time just for you will help to unwind, putting things in perspective.

LIBRA September 24 - October 23

You are in a great mood this week, and can remain so if you look on the bright side of what is really quite a wonderful life. Use your wit and charm on those stick-in-the-mud folks who always want to play it safe and rarely have much fun.

SCORPIO October 24 - November 22

Your work is a major concern during this week. Start to organize and delegate more than usual, and you'll be surprised how quickly goals are accomplished. If you are overwhelmed by choices regarding monetary purchases, sleep on it first. It is time for introspection and much needed rest.

SAGITTARIUS November 23 - December 21

Use your creativity to the max to solve problems that you would usually put off to the side. By the week's end you may feel quite secure and successful in your present quest to provide the best use of your resources. You may get caught up in a project and lose all sense of time.

CAPRICORN December 22 - January 20

Any connections you make in your present love relationship will reflect the interconnection you have cultivated within yourself. Take a leadership role where money matters are concerned. You may not know what is best, but you know enough to bring about success.

AQUARIUS January 21 - February 19

Are you suddenly being drawn into an unusual relationship? Pay attention to your hunches and intuition, particularly where love is concerned. Don't act out of ego if you expect to get anywhere. You will emerge victorious in a situation due to your ability to reason things through.

PISCES February 19 to March 20

Your feminine side is present, and this may make you feel a bit uncomfortable in a society where everyone is encouraged to act and think in a macho way. Don't be your worst enemy; thinking things through may only take you out of the game. Know when to leave well enough alone.

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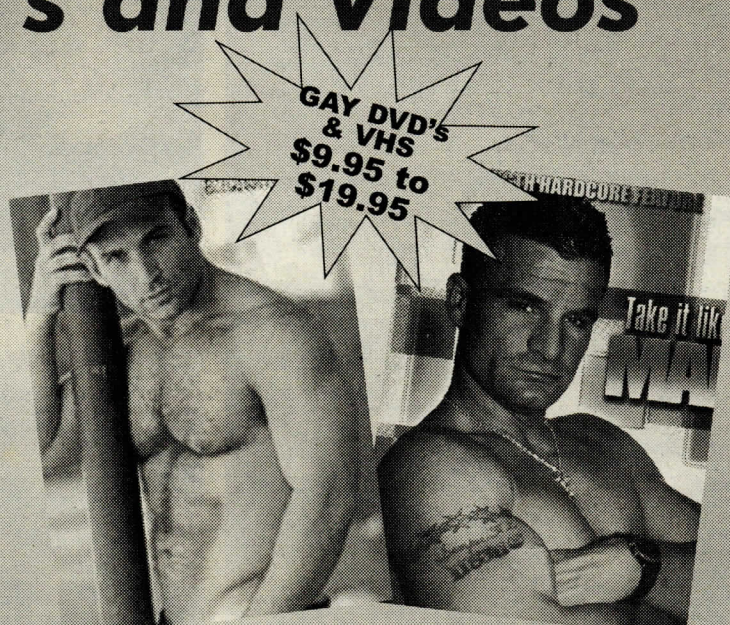
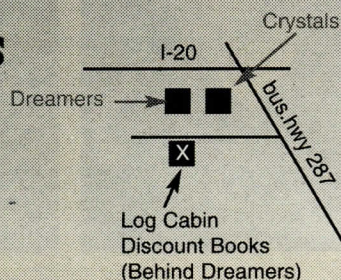
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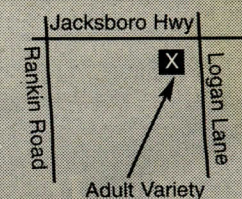
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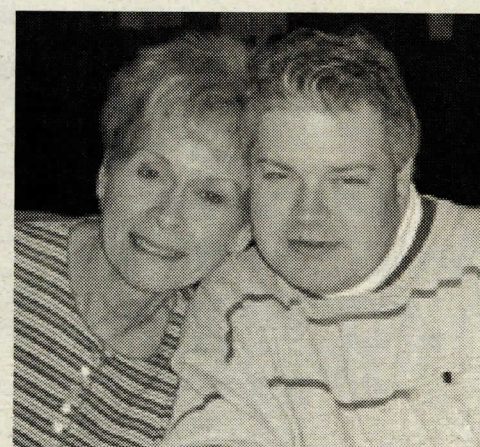
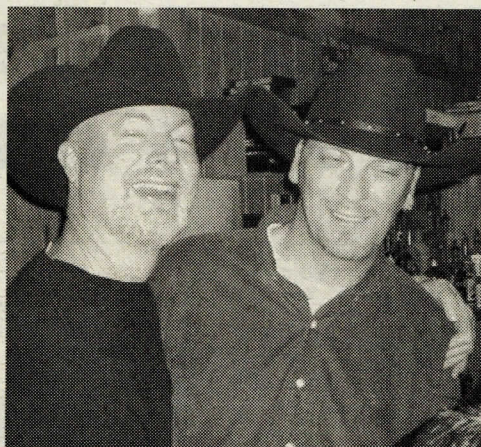
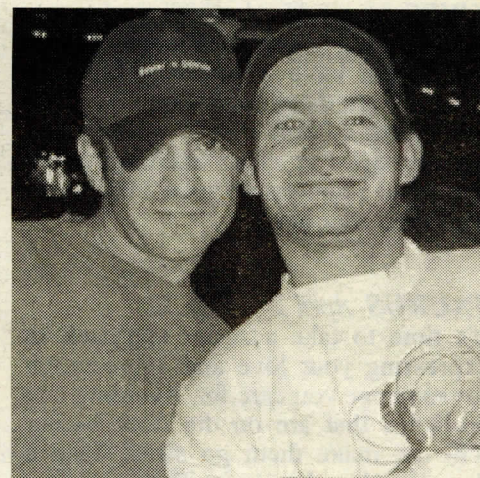


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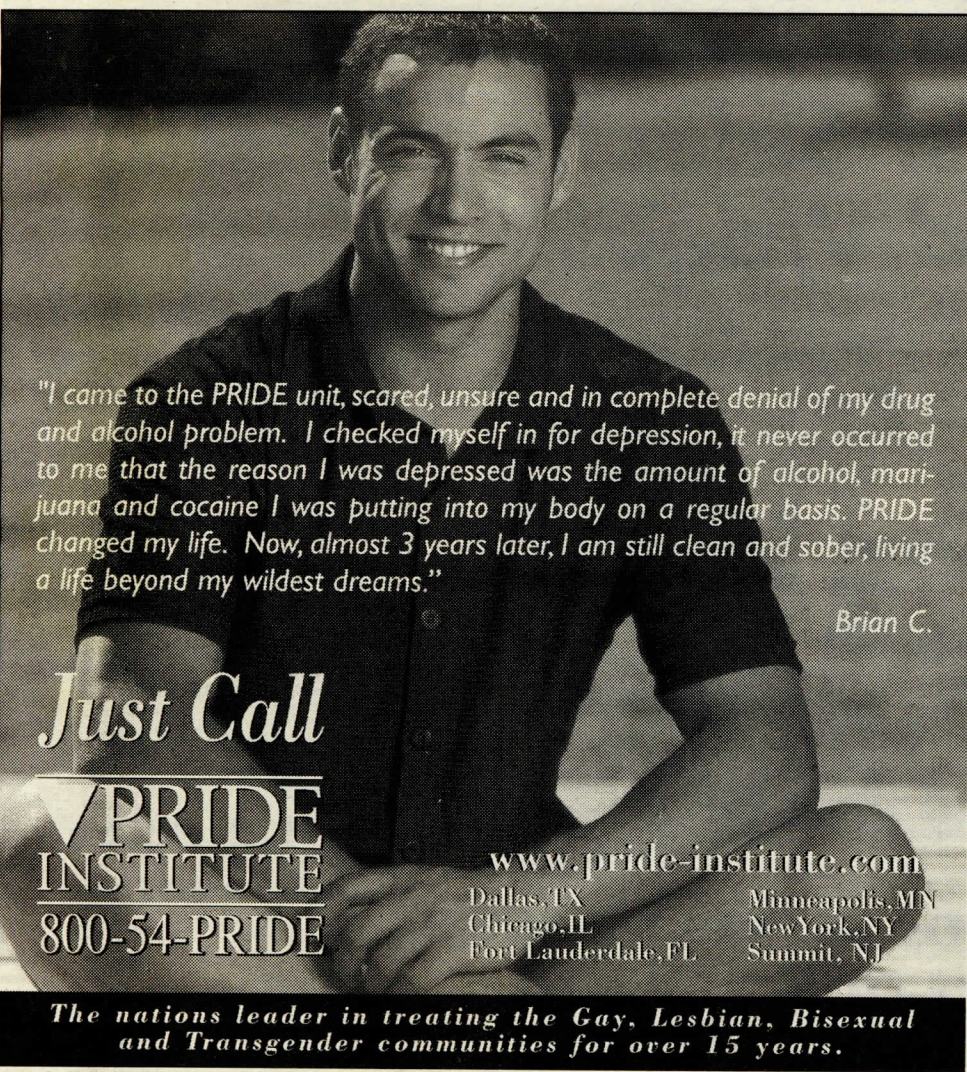
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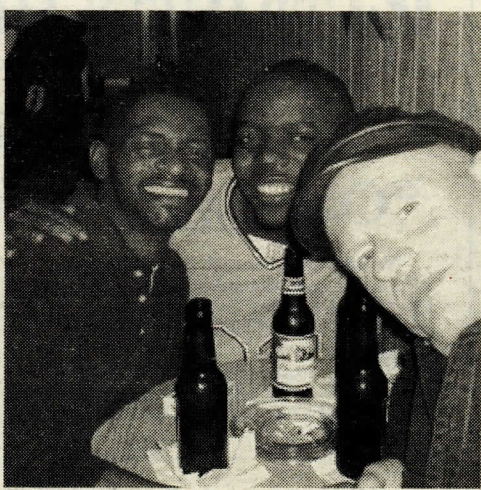
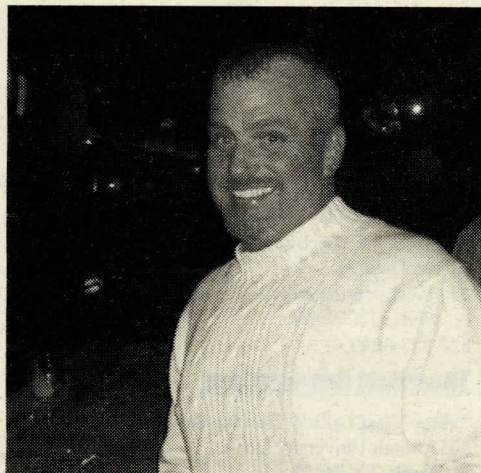
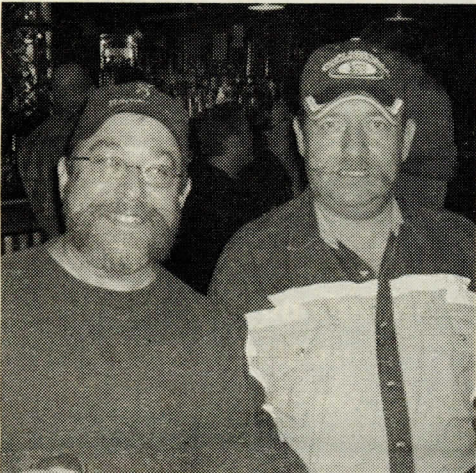
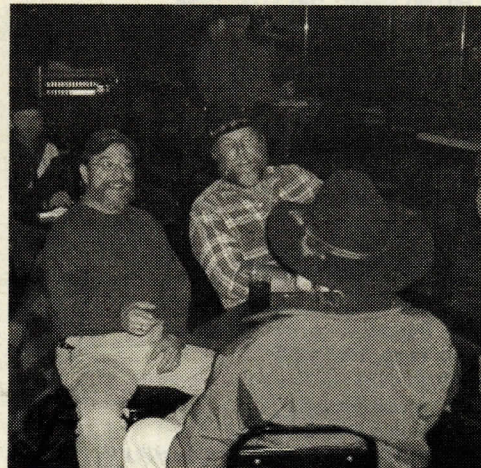
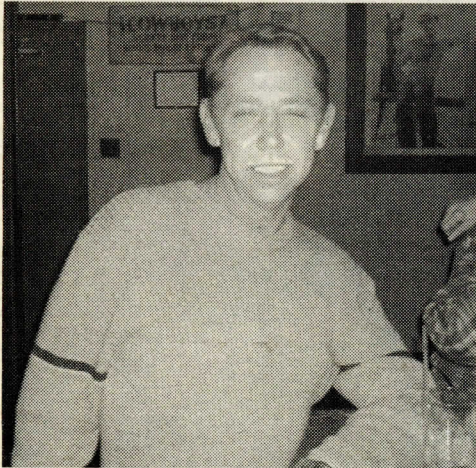
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***Health Education Learning Project**

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***Tarrant County AIDS Interfaith Network**

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Tarrant County HIV Testing & Counseling

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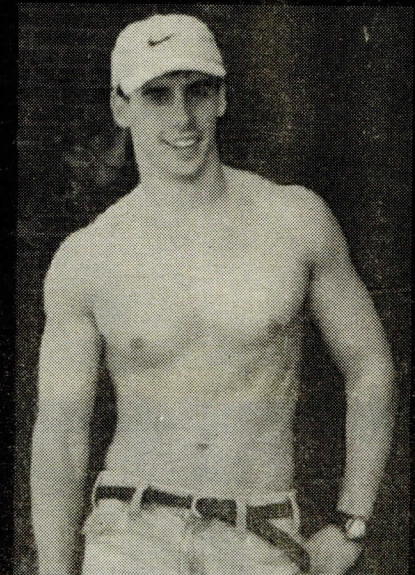
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