

TEXAS ALLY

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New Jersey becomes fifth state to recognize same-sex partnerships

By JOHN P. McALPIN
Associated Press Writer
TRENTON, N.J.

New Jersey became the fifth state to recognize same-sex partnerships Monday, but activists said they will not stop the fight until openly gay couples can legally marry.

Under the new law, domestic partners will gain access to medical benefits, insurance and other legal rights. New Jersey also will recognize such partnerships granted in other states.

The bill does not authorize gay marriage, which is against the law in New Jersey and Gov. James E. McGreevey said he would not support legislation that would amend the state's marriage laws to include same-sex partners.

The law will not force businesses to offer health coverage to same-sex partners of employees but does require insurance companies to make it available. It also allows a surviving partner to gain property rights and other survivor's benefits.

"This legislation is a matter of fundamental
More on NEW JERSEY on Page 5



Gov. James E. McGreevey, seated center, reacts after signing bill allowing same-sex partners access to legal benefits during a news conference at the Statehouse in Trenton, N.J., Monday, Jan. 12, 2004. New Jersey is the the fifth state to recognize same-sex partnerships. Background standing are from left: Sen. president Richard J. Codey, Assemblymen Jerry Green, D-Plainfield, and Bonnie Watson Coleman, D-Trenton. (AP Photo/Brian Branch-Price)

Marriage debate taking on form, rhetoric of civil rights movement

By JENNIFER PETER
Associated Press Writer
BOSTON (AP)

The words of Martin Luther King Jr. have reverberated through the Statehouse.

Denunciations of "separate but equal" laws have energized a crowd of protesters fighting for new rights.

U.S. Rep. John Lewis of Georgia, who helped organize the 1963 March on Washington, has weighed in with a brief to the state's highest court.

Comparisons between the 21st century battle for gay rights and the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which have echoed through Massachusetts' gay marriage campaign from its outset, came to vivid life in the past week as the legislative phase of the debate began and the courts prepared to revisit the landmark decision.

"Let freedom ring. Let freedom ring. My God Almighty, let freedom ring," Rev. George Welles, an Episcopalian minister from Milton, proclaimed last

week, paraphrasing King's famous speech. He spoke at a rally celebrating the state Supreme Judicial Court's gay marriage decision.

In the November ruling, a split court decreed it unconstitutional to bar same-sex couples from the rights and responsibilities of marriage.

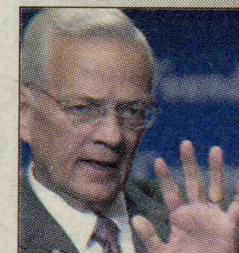
In a fortuitous twist for gay rights advocates, the timeline established by the court could lead to the nation's first state-sanctioned gay weddings on May 17, the 50th anniversary of

the U.S. Supreme Court's decision striking down school segregation.

"God has a very good sense of humor," said Gary Daffin, co-leader of the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, referring to the apparent coincidence. "For those of us who are both black and gay, the parallel between the civil rights movement of 40 years ago and the gay rights movement of today is very apparent."

Other black Americans, however, More on DEBATE on Page 6

Inside TEXAS ALLY



Editorial
O'neil speaks out

4



U.S. News
Gay-rights groups hope to exploit conservative split over amendment to ban gay marriage

6



Film
Butch-Slapped, Christopher Sodens review of the new film Venus Boyz

10



Out and About
See who was out and about last week

13

And More!

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CONTENTS

5

Local News

6

U. S. News

12

Horoscopes

13

Out and About

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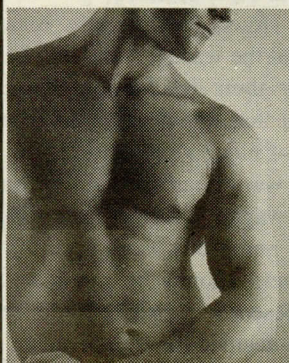


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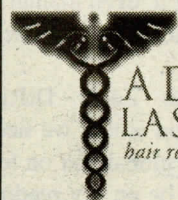
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PUBLISHER

Allied Media Inc.

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

Contributors:

James W Marchbanks

Ron Zimmerman

Mary Evelyn



Advertising Sales and Support:

Calvin Cunningham

877-4TX-ALLY (Dallas, Denton, Waco)

817-336-2341 (Fort Worth)

Photographer:

Bernie Bagley

Office Location:

101 S. Jennings Ste. 201

Fort Worth, TX 76104

Hours:

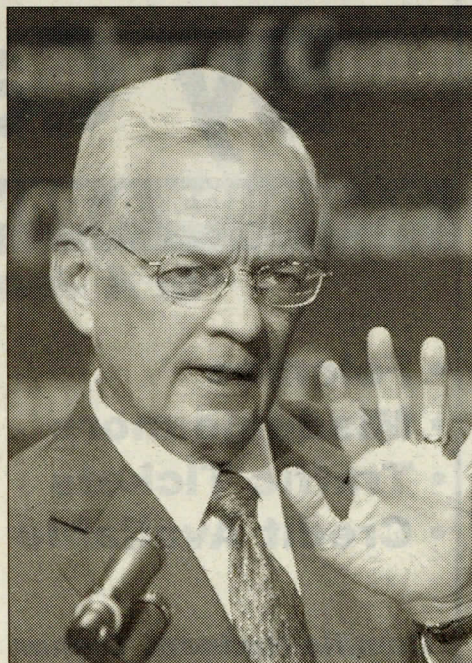
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Editorial

O'Neill Speaks Out



Former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill has recently spoken out against President Bush and his administration. (AP Photo/Kenneth Lambert)

By JAMES MARCHBANKS

Can you imagine what would happen if a small progressive organization publicly questioned President Bush's leadership qualities, accused the administration of ignoring enormous budget deficits, and said the path to war with Iraq was in the works long before 9/11?

White House officials would practically trip over themselves to criticize these nutty left-wing charges as "unpatriotic." But what happens when they come from former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill?

O'Neill, who served as Bush's first treasury secretary for nearly two years, recently told "60 Minutes" that Bush's presence at his own cabinet meetings was like "a blind man in a room full of deaf people." He recounts being shocked at his first meeting with the president because "it turned out me talking, and the president just listening. As I recall...it was mostly just a monologue."

Of course, this tale reinforces the image of the president as a not-so-bright figure, an impression driven by his mediocre collegiate record, list of failed business dealings, and pretty much his entire professional career leading up to his governorship.

O'Neill's memories also soil the White House's repeated attempts to paint Bush as a strong leader - an image they will undoubtedly continue to portray over the next year.

In fact, not only do O'Neill's comments undercut the president's leadership qualities, they also taint the White House's record on the economy and the war in Iraq as well. The former Cabinet member says

he tried to warn others in the administration of the dangers of such astronomical deficit figures - only to be rebuffed at every turn.

"You know, Paul, Reagan proved deficits don't matter. We won the midterms. This is our due," Vice President Cheney told him.

But the vice president's oh-so-scientific analysis of the budget figures flies directly in the face of a report issued last week by the International Monetary Fund, which states that such enormous deficit figures represent "significant risks" for the US and the rest of the world.

The White House quickly tried to downplay the findings, but these numbers aren't lying: With such a huge debt burden, the US is forced to borrow heavily for repayment, a maneuver that jacks up interest rates for the rest of the world.

"Higher borrowing costs abroad would mean that the adverse effects of US fiscal deficits would spill over into global investment and output," the report said.

Other economists were quick to laud the IMF for taking the Bush administration to task for their wayward stewardship of the economy. C. Fred Bergsten, director of the Institute for International Economics, said, "The IMF is right. If those twin deficits - of the federal budget and the trade deficit - continue to grow, you are increasing the risk of a day of reckoning when things can get pretty nasty."

For millions of middle and low-income Americans, things have already gotten pretty nasty under the Bush administration, and all the spin in the world isn't creating jobs for the people that need them the most.

Officials have touted the fact that the nation's unemployment rate dropped by 0.2 points last month, even though this appears to be a result of misleading statistics, as only 1,000 new jobs were added. This figure falls woefully short of Treasury Secretary John Snow's prediction in the fall that the economy would add roughly 200,000 jobs a month.

While middle and low-income citizens and families continue to fall behind under the Bush tax plan, wealthy individuals and large businesses are thriving. The Government Accounting Office estimates that tax cheats are bilking the government out of almost \$15 billion a year. And in the permissive Bush economy that figure is on the rise.

"Tax evasion is a growing problem. When this happens, those who do pay their fair share - the real victims of tax evasion - are made to feel like suckers," said Robert Morgenthau, the Manhattan district attor-

ney.

Former Treasury Secretary O'Neill suggests that the American public should feel like suckers about the Iraq war as well. He recently told "60 Minutes" that ousting Saddam Hussein was a top priority at Bush's first ever National Security Council meeting, held just days after his inauguration.

For the record, that's eight long months before the 9/11 tragedy. O'Neill has also revealed that various internal memos were passed around on the subject including one entitled "Plan for post-Saddam Iraq."

Apparently all the extra time planning didn't help them enact what should have been rule number one: "Don't let the region descend into chaos." (Incidentally, it can not be confirmed that the memo consisted of one simple line: "Let Halliburton figure it out.")

Even more damning for the administration is O'Neill's assertion that he never saw any evidence of Iraq's WMDs at any NSC meetings. "In the 23 months I was there, I never saw anything that I would characterize as evidence of weapons of mass destruction. There were allegations and assertions by people...To me there is a difference between real evidence and everything else."

Which, of course, puts him at odds with the rest of the administration.

To make matters worse for the Bush administration - not to mention our domestic security - a new report has been released by the Army War College condemning their tactics in the war on terrorism.

The White House has already issued clear signals that the war on terror will be a cornerstone in their re-election efforts, despite the fact that this new report is the latest in a line of negative reviews.

"The global war on terrorism as currently defined and waged is dangerously indiscriminate and ambitious, and accordingly...its parameters should be readjusted," wrote Jeffrey Record, a visiting professor. The report also deemed the Iraq invasion as "unnecessary."

Already, the Pentagon has indicated that it will adopt the time-honored Bush administration strategy of dealing with constructive criticism by ignoring it, even though in this case the source is the Army's top academic institution.

Pentagon spokesman Larry DiRita scoffed, "If the conclusion is that we need to be scaling back in the global war on terrorism, it's not likely to be on my reading list anytime soon." ▼

Local News

Texans are mixed on redistricting ruling

By LISA FALKENBERG

While some Texans aren't happy about Tuesday's federal ruling that supports a new Republican-friendly congressional map for the state, others hope it signals the end to a political battle that's dragged on for months.

Ealy Boyd, a 69-year-old black veteran from East Texas, said for the first time in his life, he may not vote in a presidential election, his way of protesting the decision.

Three federal judges upheld as Constitutional a redistricting plan Boyd believes violates the Voting Rights Act.

"Now I don't have a voice," Boyd said. "Can anyone imagine all the pain and suffering we went through to get the right to vote, and now it's being marginalized. They did it without any regards for the concerns of the minorities in North Texas."

"I can better serve myself by not even voting."

The redistricting map passed by the Texas Legislature was drawn to increase the number of Texas Republicans in Congress. Republicans say it reflects a growing trend of Republican voters. Democrats and minority groups challenged the plan in federal court, saying it diluted minority voting strength in some districts.

Boyd said his Fort Worth district, represented by Democratic congressman Martin Frost, will now stretch all the way up to the Oklahoma border to include white, wealthier voters he doesn't believe think like or vote like him.

Unlike Boyd, Fred "Mickey" Jones, legislative affairs chair of the Odessa Chamber of Commerce, said he was pleased with the ruling. He hopes it will increase representation from his West Texas city and produce a member of Congress who will focus predominantly on oil and gas interests rather than farming.

"It's a relief to us," Jones said. "I'm hoping this means it's all over, because I think it's time that we go forward and know who our candidates for Congress are going to be."

Others said they didn't think the ruling

would have much impact on voters.

Bill Summers, president of the Rio Grande Partnership, said the new map won't keep Valley voters from electing effective representative.

"No matter who is the congressman, they'll work for the Valley," Summers said. "The people of the Valley will not be left out, because we're so strong an influence on the economy of the whole state."

Summers said he supports equal representation, but he doesn't believe districts have to be divided by race or ethnicity to achieve that.

"It breaks my heart to see them talk about racism and Hispanics and Anglos," Summers said. "You can still have a person who's Anglo and still be favorable to Hispanics."

But Steve Ahlenius, who lives in District 15 represented by Democratic U.S. Rep. Ruben Hinojosa of Mercedes, said the new map splits his community and stretches the district from South Texas all the way to Bastrop in Central Texas.

Ahlenius fears voters farther north won't understand issues important to those along the South Texas border, such as water rights, trade issues with Mexico and unemployment.

"I wish the elected officials would just be more aware of what the impacts are," said Ahlenius, president of the McAllen Chamber of Commerce. "It takes time to build consensus and to get everyone pulling the same direction. When you have something like this, you basically start from scratch. There's a lot of educating, getting people up to speed on things. It's a challenge."

Plaintiffs in the redistricting lawsuit, Democrats and minority groups, said they intend to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, but Ahlenius said he's not waiting around for that ruling.

"We'll just keep working and just hoping the people up north of us come to understand what's important to us and we come to understand what's important to them," he said. ▼

NEW JERSEY

Continued from Page 1

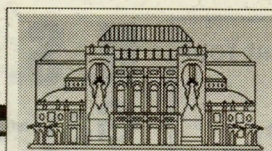
decency," McGreevey said before signing the law.

At least one conservative group plans a court challenge to the law, while gay rights activists said they would push for more.

"We are pursuing all roads to justice,"

said Laura Popel, president New Jersey Lesbian and Gay Coalition.

Domestic partnerships are recognized in California, Massachusetts and Hawaii, and civil unions between same-sex couples are legal in Vermont. ▼



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U. S. News

Gay-rights groups hope to exploit conservative split over amendment to ban gay marriage

By DAVID CRARY
NEW YORK

Intrigued by divisions within conservative ranks, gay-rights strategists are trying to portray a proposed constitutional ban on same-sex marriage as a radical step that true conservatives should oppose.

The Human Rights Campaign, a national gay rights group, is targeting conservatives with a radio and print ad campaign starting Monday in 10 areas, including Omaha, Nebraska; Indianapolis; Tampa, Florida; Milwaukee; Las Vegas; and Philadelphia.

"Be conservative with the Constitution," the ads say. "Don't amend it."

Disagreements among conservatives have emerged in recent months over the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment, which would stipulate that marriage is only between a man and woman.

Some want the measure toughened so it would bar same-sex civil unions and domestic partnerships as well as gay marriages. Other conservatives, including several prominent columnists and politicians, say the Constitution is the wrong place to address contentious social problems and

contend the measure would infringe on states' rights.

The critics include former U.S. Rep. Bob Barr, a Republican who called the amendment "needlessly intrusive," and columnist George Will, who said it would unwisely override state responsibility for marriage law.

Tony Perkins, president of the pro-amendment Family Research Council, said he respected some of the criticism. However, he said the amendment was the only effective option now that the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court has ruled the state cannot deny marriage rights to same-sex couples.

"It's no longer a theoretical discussion about 'What ifs?'" Perkins said in a telephone interview. "It's a public policy crisis."

President George W. Bush addressed the issue during an interview with ABC News last month, but his comments confused and dismayed many conservative activists.

On the one hand, Bush said, "If necessary, I will support a constitutional amendment which would honor marriage between a man and a woman, codify that."

However, in what some conservatives perceived as an endorsement of civil unions, Bush added, "The position of this administration is that whatever legal arrangements people want to make, they're allowed to make, so long as it's embraced by the state or at the state level."

Among the conservative leaders disappointed by that remark was Gary Bauer, president of American Values. "His unfortunate statement undermines pro-family conservatives around the country who are working in state legislatures to prevent such 'fake marriages' from being forced on the American people," Bauer said in a statement.

As introduced in Congress, the Federal Marriage Amendment was designed to ban gay marriage but leave open the possibility that state lawmakers approve civil unions or domestic partnerships extending some marriage-like rights to same-sex couples.

New Jersey's legislature has just approved a domestic partnership law, joining California and Hawaii. Vermont has marriage-like civil unions. ▼

DEBATE

Continued from Page 1

have taken umbrage at comparisons to the fight for racial equality.

"As an African-American, I find it highly offensive to associate homosexuality with civil rights," said Rev. Steven Craft, 60, a retired pastor living in New Brunswick, N.J. "People have been trying to run on that civil rights banner and to use this whole idea of homosexual marriage to say it's the next wave of the movement. But race and sexuality have nothing to do with each other."

In recent weeks, the focus of the Massachusetts debate has turned to the Legislature, which is contemplating a constitutional amendment that would define marriage as a union between one man and one woman. It is also considering a civil unions bill that would give gay couples the benefits, but not the title, of marriage.

The state Senate has asked the high court whether the civil unions bill would meet constitutional muster. Senate President Robert Travaglini, D-Boston, has said he will postpone a scheduled Feb. 11 vote on the constitutional amendment if the court has not given an answer by then. If approved by the Legislature, the amendment could appear on a ballot for voter consideration no sooner than November 2006.

References to the civil rights fight

against the ban on interracial marriages were numerous in both the plaintiffs arguments to the Supreme Judicial Court and, subsequently, in the majority opinion issued Nov. 18.

The decision said that the past rulings on interracial marriage made clear that "the right to marry means little if it does not include the right to marry the person of one's choice."

As in those rulings, the court said, the gay marriage case revolves around a statute that "deprives individuals of access to an institution of fundamental, legal, personal and social significance."

The references became much more explicit as the debate heated up on Beacon Hill, with gay rights advocates using them to bolster their argument that marriage is a fundamental right. Opponents have tried to dispel any comparisons to racial bigotry.

At a recent rally organized by conservative groups from across the state and country, speakers said there was no basis for comparing a ban on gay marriage to many states' former ban on interracial marriage.

"Race has nothing to do with marriage, while gender is at its very core," said Bishop Gilbert Thompson, a black minister who leads the New Covenant Christian Church in

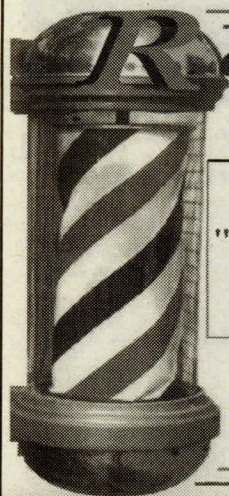
the Mattapan section of Boston.

In briefs filed in the case Monday, several interested parties referred to the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 desegregation ruling, saying that idea of "separate but equal" civil unions was discriminatory.

"Creating a separate status for a group of people when there is no legitimate reason for doing so is inherently unequal and therefore unconstitutional" reads the brief submitted by Lewis and many civil liberties organizations. "The starkest example of this betrayal and of the profound effects of a government stamp of inequality is this country's history of racial segregation."

Even among many gay rights leaders, however, there is an acknowledgment that gays have not had to endure the level of brutality that blacks encountered in America.

"While I would never assert that the discrimination faced by gays is comparable to some of the horrible discrimination and violence suffered by African-Americans, it is nonetheless a severe form of discrimination," said Arline Isaacson, co-leader of the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus. "Discrimination against different groups need not be exactly the same in either form or intensity to make both discrimination." ▼



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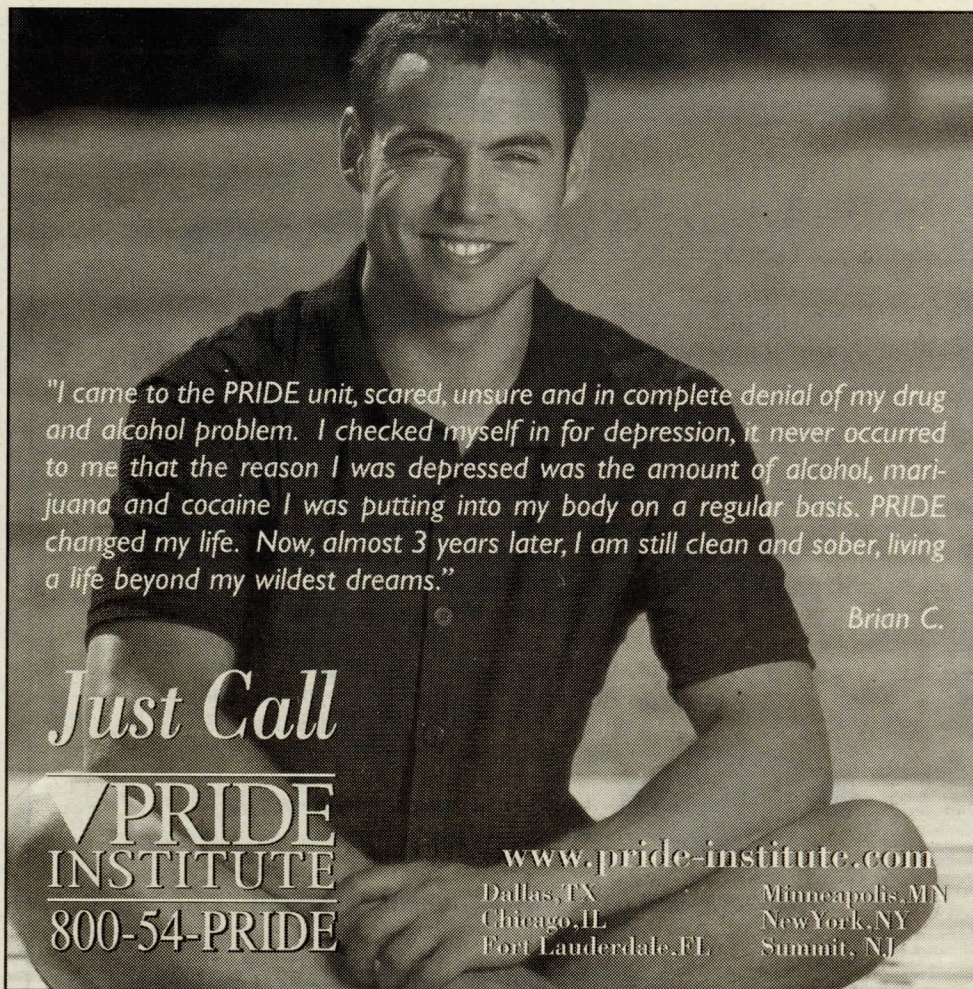
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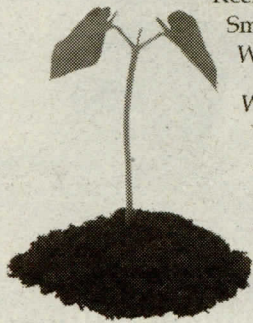
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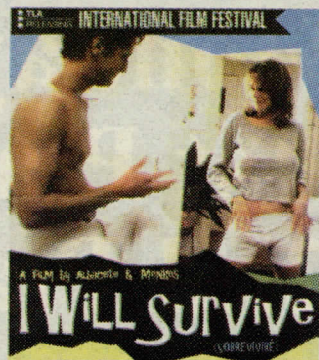
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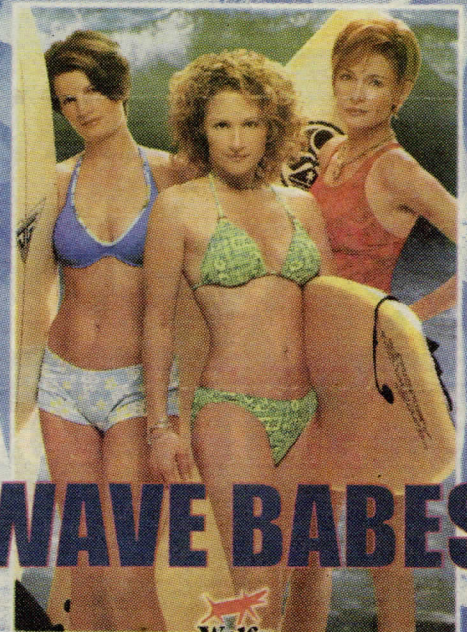
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Butch slapped by Christopher Soden

Perhaps one idea the queer community might agree upon in its entirety (gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered, and undecided) is that gender is ultimately a mystery. Enigmatic and elusive. Fluid but not necessarily shapeless. Detectable but impossible to pin. However we express it we have found the limitations a dominant culture places on gender to be unacceptable, or at any rate, without merit. The irony of culture, gender and politics is that it's our oppressors who interpret our actions as anarchy. We simply

recognize the nature of our sexual attraction without shame, and those who find this behavior inappropriate call us rebels because we are unwilling to hide, apologize or plead not guilty by reason of insanity. Our mere existence has been politicized by our opponents (as if you could oppose a class of people). Because we want the "privileges" of respect, housing, and the right to earn our daily bread, we have a special "agenda."

It may not be a coincidence that the Gay Rights Movement was precipitated by the Drag Queens that hung out at the now legendary Stonewall Inn in New York City, back in 1969. If announcing we're queer makes us de facto anarchists then I'm guessing our cross-dressing sisters and brothers may deserve the title in earnest.

The original gender warriors, who understood that what passes for "male" and "female" in American (and human) culture is nothing more than a collection of gestures, actions, inflections and comportment that comprise an illusion that anyone can cultivate. And if anyone can cultivate them, then, to quote Diane Torr, "masculinity is no longer sacred." When Drag Queens and Kings adopt a persona in the other gender, they challenge the status quo. The popular notions that genitals are destiny, gender is a script, a map, a codified manifesto of values and desires.

Venus Boyz, Gabriel Baur's documentary celebration of Drag Kings, explores women who have endeavored to summon their "female masculinity". Some are performance artists, some entertainers, some identify as men or choose to live in the context of a masculine identity. Some are combinations. Some call themselves intersexed (what was once referred to as "hermaphroditic") or "other-sex." Some are androgynous in the truest sense. They do not wear makeup or other trappings. They are fetching and wise and charismatic and you can't tell by looking what gender they were born with. And you start to grasp that maybe it doesn't matter. *Venus Boyz* makes us startlingly aware of how gender perception affects our attitudes towards one another.

Baur touches on many different aspects of transgenderism for women. They speak candidly about anguish, cruelty, violence, the sense of elation, emancipation, and empowerment. Some women strap on dildos as part of their transformation; male-transgender workshop participants pass around a "faux penis" more supple than customary sex toys. Some of the ladies act out male identities as a way of channeling their male spirit, or creating a third, or gender other than "male" or "female". They don't necessarily identify with, or need to make themselves into men. It is

never suggested there is one simple answer. Though the women seem to share some traits, we learn what makes each one unique.

In *Venus Boyz*, Gabriel Baur captures all the grace, eeriness and loopy humor of Drag King performance and the women who feel they must live as male or "other-gender" identified. Bridge Markland is sardonic and withering when she creates her men. In one number, she comes out in "female drag" looking like a man dressed as a woman. All voluptuousness and sexual allure, she vamps and camps like a force of nature. Then she pulls off the wig, tears off her blouse to expose taped nipples and now, suddenly her gender becomes even more obtuse. You can't tell what the hell she is! She's next to naked and yet wickedly, grotesquely, confounds our need for gender assignment.

What's so engaging about *Venus Boyz*, so mesmerizing and enchanting, is how it spins the mystery of gender. It doesn't just deconstruct it. It mocks it, worships it, shatters it, and somehow it all works. Somehow the net result is subtle and jarring and reverent and provocative. Watching the performances at Club Casanova and the Slipper Room we cannot tell if it's Queer Vaudeville or the liturgy of Dionysiac priestesses. They could be wielding seltzer bottles or suckling fawns. The players are engulfed in butchy incantation and the audience is spellbound. Markland, Dred, Torr and the others take this sorcery to transcendent realms. They reveal gender as simultaneously sacred and profane.

Venus Boyz a documentary by Gabriel Baur features Dred Gerstand, Diane Torr, Del LaGrace Volcano, Bridge Markland, Mo Fischer, Storme Webber, Queen Bee Luscious, Mistress Formika, Judith Halberstam

Venus Boyz opened Friday, January 9th, at The Angelika in Dallas, Texas. ▼

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Dear Mary Evelynn:

You made a statement in your January 9th column, "In my book, your either gay or your straight." I don't think so.

Here's why: I'm a man who loves women, but I also like anal stimulation (because nine out of ten orgasms agree, anal stimulation while coming is better).

What does it matter where I stick my thing? Anal sex with a woman is straight, but with a man it's gay -- does that make sense? Hardly.

Let's say that my butt gets screwed with a dildo by my girl friend. That's just sexual fun. If a man uses that same dildo on me, is that fun too? What would I be if he uses his thing in me instead of a dildo? Uhm, that's confusing -- now it's gay...

Okay, if I'm male and I only like male, that's gay. But if I'm male and I enjoy having sex with men AND women -- mix and match -- that's bisexual. Of course, female plus female is lesbian, but aren't females who like men AND women bisexual?

Finally, if I'm screwing a woman or her butt while I'm being screwed by a man, what's that? I say bisexual.

Bottom line (sorry for the pun) is that I disagree with your restrictive labels of gay and straight. To try and pigeonhole people by sexual practices is as stereotyping as it gets. You've got to add bisexual as an option because it's ALL sexual.

Signed, Joe Bisexual

Dear Joe Bisexual

Perhaps there are bisexual people out

there after all. In last weeks column I was writing to a young (gay) man who was in a relationship with a young (bisexual) man who was seeking advice because he was in love with this guy who didn't return the same feelings. I appreciate your letter, and I will keep an open mind about bisexuality. I'd like more of my readers to email me about this subject and let me know what you think. Thanks!

...

Dear Mary Evelynn,

I think my co-worker is flirting with me. He's a hottie but supposedly straight. Everyone at work knows that I'm gay. When this guy comes around me he's always rubbing on my shoulder, or smiling at me. How do I let him know I'm interested in him to?

Signed, Interested.

Dear Interested,

If everyone knows that you are gay then there is a good chance that he is flirting with you. It could also be that he is just being friendly and not flirting. Maybe you should just ask him if he is interested in you. If he is then go from there, if he isn't then tell him to quit rubbing your shoulder.

...

Dear Mary Evelynn,

I read your column last week about how you thought that people were either straight or gay. I think that you couldn't have been more right. I dated this guy who was married for about two years. He said he loved me but wouldn't ever leave his wife. Yet he didn't have sex with his wife only me. I finally had enough and got away from him.

Signed I agree.

Dear I agree,

Seems like my column last week really ruffled some feathers. Thanks for agreeing with me but I promised Joe-Bi that I'd keep an open mind to this. Maybe straight people should stick with straight people, gay people with gay's and bisexual people with bisexual people. It's when you mix the three sexually that someone's feelings get hurt.

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

Pride Scopes

"Listen to a friend, Leo!"

ARIES March 21 - April 20

You are in a very practical frame of mind and unusually sharp in all your money matters. In your can-do-anything mood, no matter how busy, you will be more than able to take care of everything. Speak softly and avoid disagreements with a loved one.

TAURUS April 21 - May 21

Family is highlighted for now. Heart-to-heart talks with children will prove advantageous. The financial goals you've had in mind are going to be realized in the very near future. Strive for fairness in all your decision-making.

GEMINI May 22 - June 21

Any problems in family or home life will finally be resolved. Keep your cool in the workplace; co-workers may be overly sensitive. There are changes, from a distance, which will stir things up at work for the next few weeks. Unreasonable demands may be made.

CANCER June 22 - July 23

You'll start the week in a dream world of your own. It may be best to take time alone and treat yourself better. A short trip may be the ticket to fun and adventure. Work runs smoothly for a change, but there are tensions in the home. Remember your mate.

LEO July 24 - August 23

Listen to a friend's advice regarding financial planning. Once you have your plan in order, take time to discuss it with your beneficiary. Others may accuse you of living with unrealistic expectations - don't let it bother you, your best ideas come to you this way.

VIRGO August 24 - September 23

This week will bring passion and intimacy with your love. Business and household projects are favored, and you'll be surprised at how much you get done. There may be a bonus for your recent efforts. Take time for laughter, and make plans to further your education.

LIBRA September 24 - October 23

The more you depend on your inner reserves, the stronger you are. Your actions inspire family members to strive for their best. There are some self doubts you have been wrestling with which only you can work through. Self-improvement efforts will succeed.

SCORPIO October 24 - November 22

Spend time with close friends and have some fun. Both your friendships and love relationships are very fulfilling. Keep your cool; someone is trying to undermine your position with flattery or outright bribery. There is a lucrative job possibility in the future.

SAGITTARIUS November 23 - December 21

It's a pretty effortless and pleasurable week. You have the power to make changes for the better. Personal achievements and romance will be highlighted for the next few months. You need to resolve an old misunderstanding with an estranged friend.

CAPRICORN December 22 - January 20

This week will start on a very upbeat note. Wherever you are, you are surrounded by luck and friendship. Unexpected money is most likely to come your way. Your work and family responsibilities are heavy; you have people relying on you from all sides, take things one at a time.

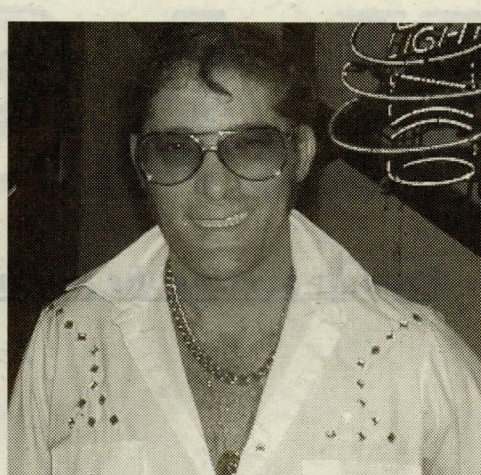
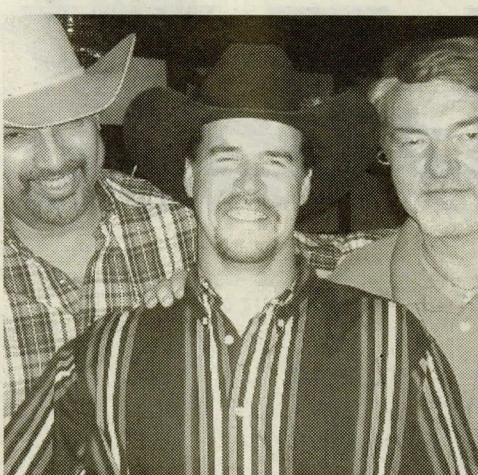
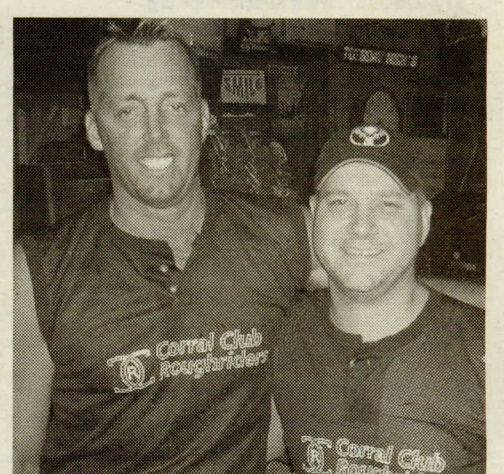
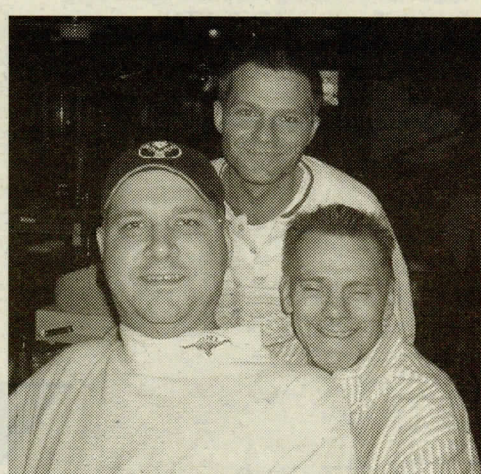
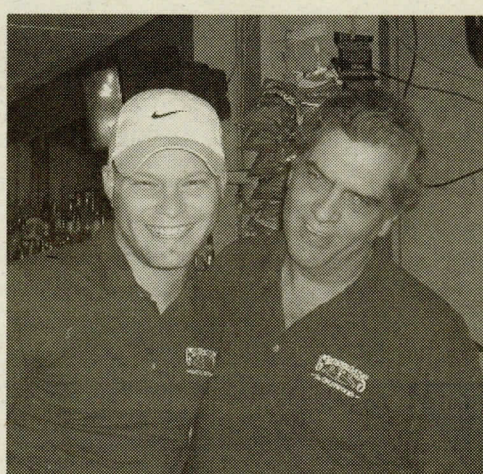
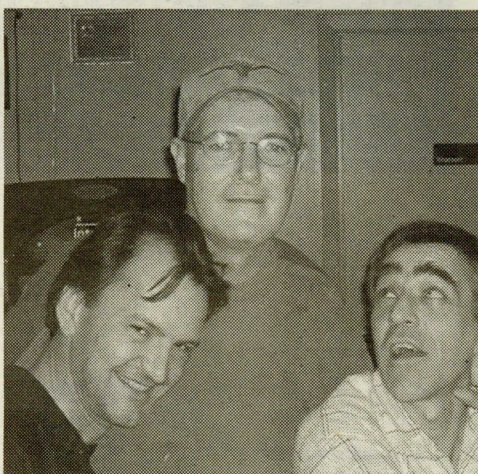
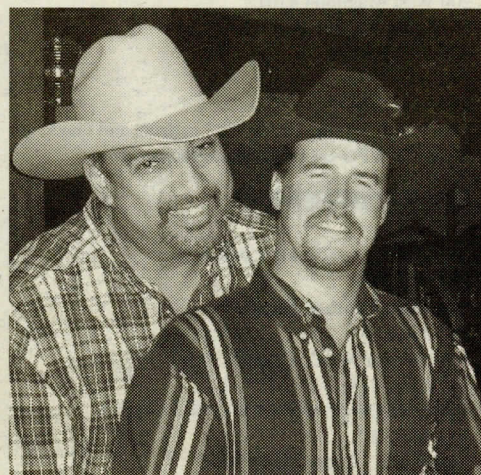
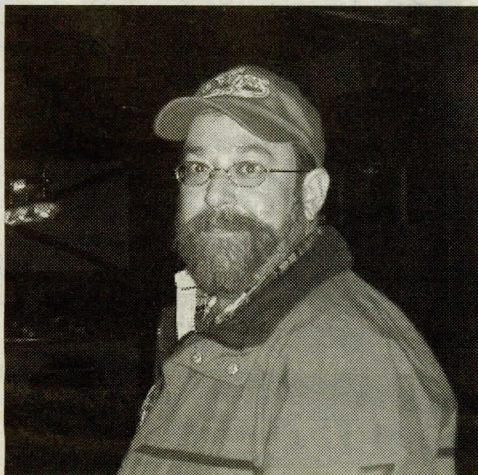
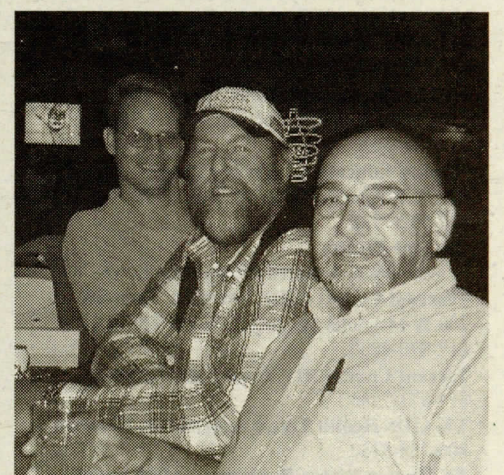
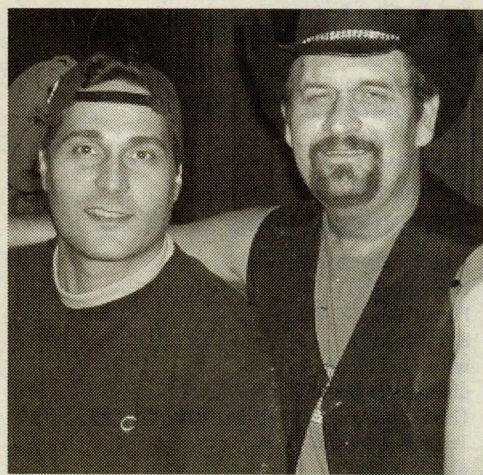
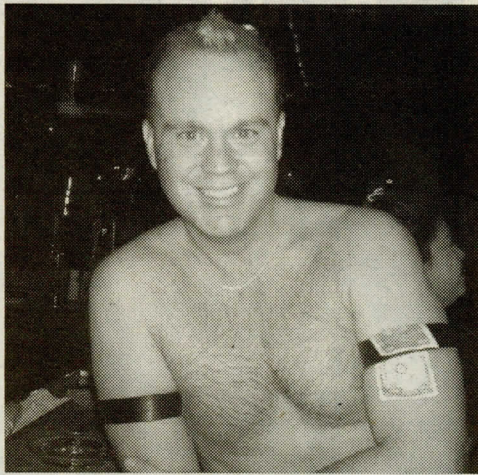
AQUARIUS January 21 - February 19

There are many things that need your attention right now. Try to prioritize, and do the most important things first. Verbal clashes are unavoidable - both your kids and co-workers will challenge your authority. Check out any opportunities to increase your income.

PISCES February 19 to March 20

Spend some time with your mate and family. You are both assertive and charming. It feels good to succeed at work and know your family's happy too. The week will be full of heavy mental stimulation and many challenges. Innovative and unconventional approaches may work well.

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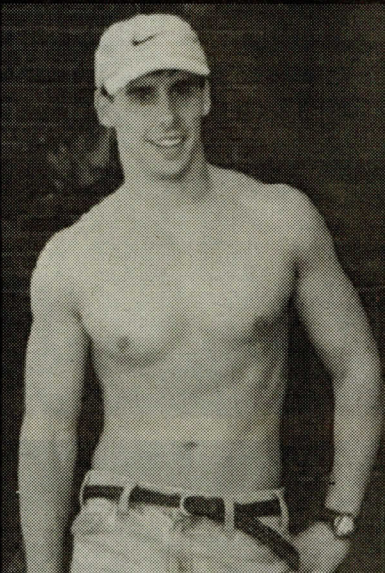
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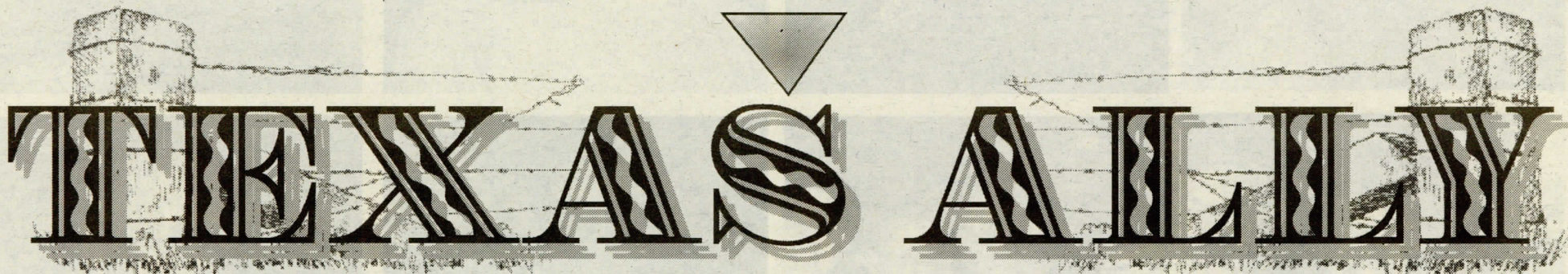
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