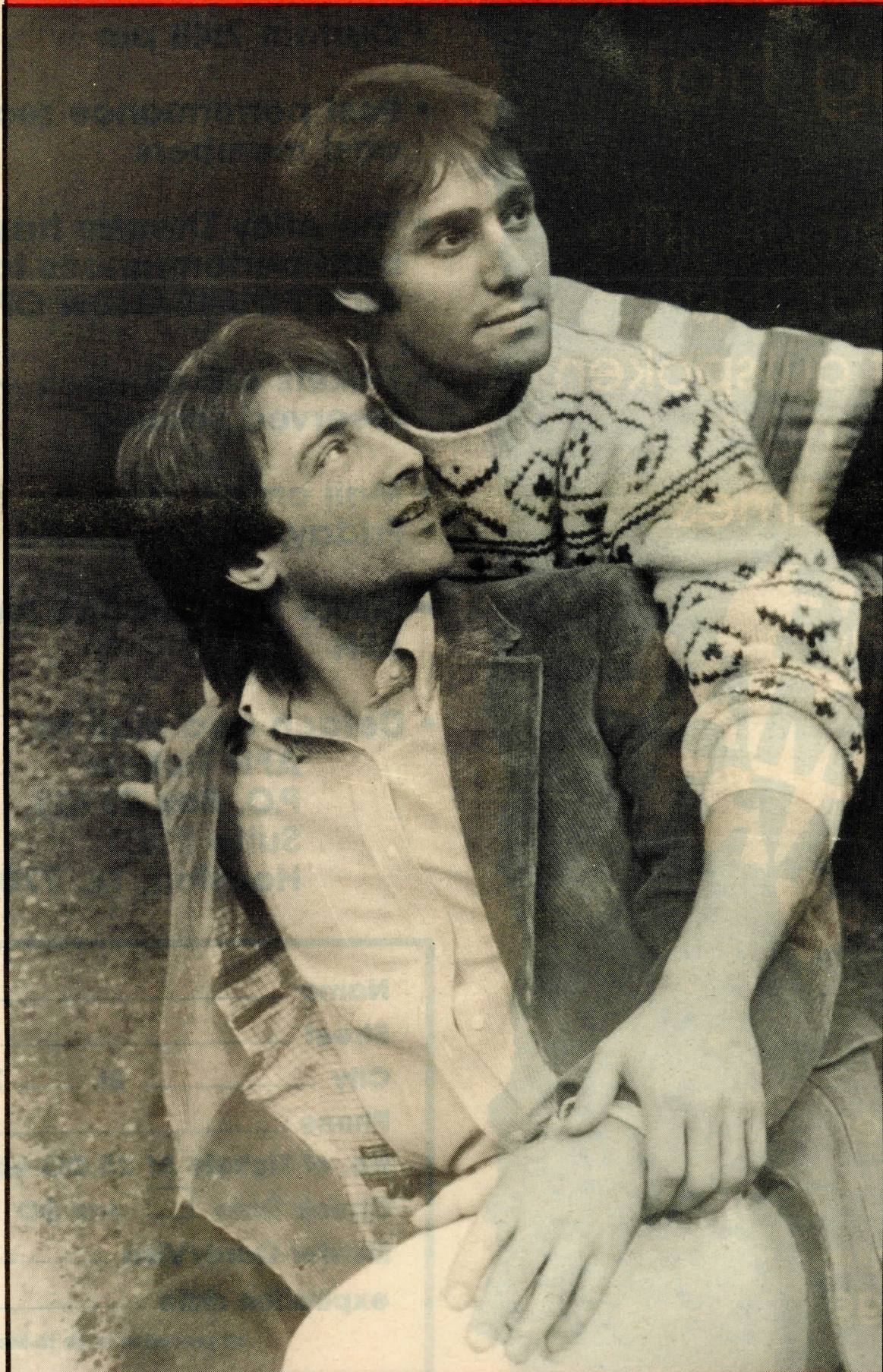


Volume 3, Number 3

H O U S T O N FORUM

"The Best Revenge Is A Great Lifestyle"



MICHEL R. GILL &
JOHN GOULD RUBIN

January 16, 1987

**“The blood
that’s
coursing
through
‘The Normal
Heart’ is
boiling hot.**

**“There can be little
doubt that it is
the most outspoken
play around.”
New York Times**

THE NORMAL HEART

**By
Larry Kramer**

**Alley Theater
Arena Stage**

**A Play about the effects
of AIDS
on the Total Community
Benefitting
AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc.**

- **FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 1987
AND SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 1987**
- **Curtain 7:45 pm**
- **Post performance reception with
cast members**
- **The Alley Theatre has donated
both performances to the
AIDS FOUNDATION OF HOUSTON**
- **Tickets \$25.00 each —
reserved seating**
- **Mail orders must be received by
Friday, January 23rd**
- **MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
AFH**
- **Detach and mail to:
AFH Tickets
P.O. Box 27703,
Suite 216,
Houston, Tx. 77027**

Name _____
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City _____ **St.** _____ **Zip** _____
Phone _____
No. of Tickets At 25.00 ea. _____
Check Date **Jan 30** **Jan 31**
Master Card/Visa _____
expiration date _____

all proceeds to go to the AFH Inc

HOUSTON FORUM

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PUBLISHER:
Randy Brown

FRONT COVER:
Ken Rabalais

EDITOR:
Randy Brown

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER:
Bar Wilson

PRODUCTION:
Tobi Chapman and Associates
Graphics: Gary Watashe
Camera: David Williams
Typesetting: Tobi Chapman

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR:
Bar Wilson

ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES:
Kurt Smith, Troy Evans

COLUMNISTS:
Jeff Bray, Nancy Ford,
Bryan Busbice, Hugh Gotteim,
Frank Carello, Imelda Marcos,
Sister Inez

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EDITORIAL: LET'S GET REAL "TV Networks Are Killing People"

By Randy Brown

While the TV networks are sitting around trying not to offend people, other people are dying. Because of their reticence to allow condom commercials to air, there are at least *thousands* of people in this country who are going to die of AIDS who would *not* if they had information about how not to get in contact with the virus.

It's bad enough that the networks have been so slow in coming up with any kind of organized public service campaign to inform the public about AIDS, but it borders on the criminal that they have steadfastly refused legitimate commercial messages access to the airwaves because of their fear of the religious right.

Once again, the fundamentalist Bible-thumpers are putting their beliefs before the health, welfare and well-being of millions of Americans. And, once again, they've blackmailed the networks into non-action. Because the networks are fearful of the religious right, they do not allow any commercials that deal with any product associated with sex.

Now, these are the same people who are bringing us *Dynasty*, *Dallas* and a whole slew of made-for-TV movies about all the aspects of sexual behaviour, and violence, known to man. The daytime soaps are seething with hot hunks and fiery females who spend the days of their lives in varying states of undress and passion. And more power to them. It's a free country.

But—and this is a very big *but*—sex these days could have a very high price tag. It shouldn't, but it could.

In our community, the bill has come due already, and the cost is devastating. Despite what some people say, no one is replaceable. Each person has his own unique set of circumstances, his own successes and failures, his own miseries and joys. Each person, no matter what, has an inestimable

value. And each day that passes, we are poorer for the loss of those we know and love.

We should be doing everything we can to keep others from dying. It doesn't matter if people are gay or not. People are people, and we should reach out with our understanding and concern even when we did not get that understanding and concern from others.

Once again, the fundamentalist Bible-thumpers are putting their beliefs before the well-being of millions of Americans.

And one thing we can do is to write to the networks asking them to please lift the ban on condom commercials. Sure, some people are going to get offended. But what's worse, offending someone or letting someone else die? There's no comparison.

Every day, we are bombarded with commercials that are offensive to certain people. I think *douche* commercials are a bit much, and I'm not that keen on hearing about diarrhea, either. Hemorrhoids are not my idea of pleasant dinner conversation. Smelly underarms, bad breath and slimy teeth are all targets of the TV adman. And they should be. These are all things that we have to deal with in one way or another (except not all of us need to *douche*), and knowing about products that help us deal with our bodies on a regular basis is helpful.

If TV ads can deal with everything from vomiting to athlete's foot, why can't they deal with disease protection associated with

sex? If AIDS were transmitted in some other way and a product was out there that could stop that transmission, don't you think the networks would allow it to be advertised? The reason condom commercials are not on the air is because they have to do with sex, and the religious right thinks that if you advertise a product associated with sex, you are encouraging people to have sex. They don't like the idea of people having sex. Well, that's not true. *Married* heterosexuals who are fit for raising their own little Jerry Falwells can have sex. But you're not supposed to do it because it feels good. That's sinful.

And it doesn't matter if you don't belong to their church or follow their religious teachings. They don't *care* if this is a free country. They want to force their beliefs on everyone.

Sadly, they're succeeding.

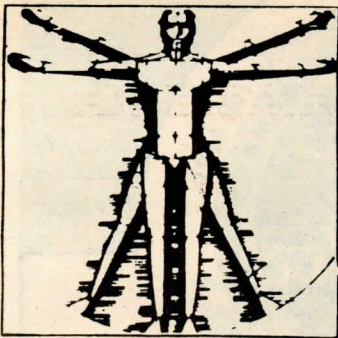
But how they've gotten the networks bamboozled into thinking that they represent a majority of the thinking in this country is beyond me. They don't.

The problem is that people who are the majority are not speaking out. So, it's going to take getting concerned people together and aware of the problem. Then action *must* be taken.

Because while we're sitting around complaining about the religious right, the problem is not getting better on its own.

Write to the networks. Let them know that the greatest instrument for spreading AIDS is ignorance. Let them know that while they are banning condom commercials, people are dying who might not if they were informed.

And, let them know that they don't even have to foot the bill for informing the populace about safe sex. The condom companies are willing to *pay* them to do that service for the people of this country.



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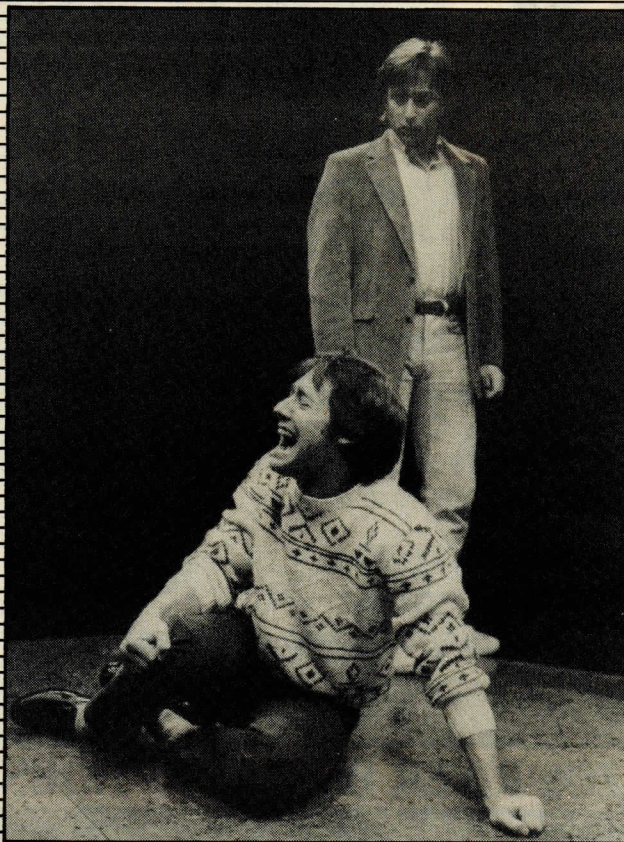
Photographs by Ken Rabalais

MICHEL R. GILL & JOHN GOULD RUBIN

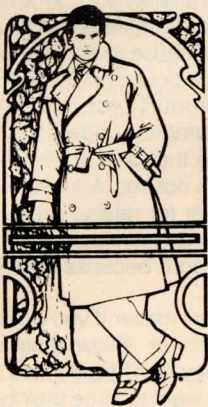
On January 30 and 31, 1987, a very special event will take place in which I would like very much to encourage your participation. It is not often that a professional performance of outstanding actors on a subject as important as AIDS is booked into one of Houston's premier theaters. You have an opportunity not only to see this play (an award-winning performance which was the longest-running play in the history of public theater in New York City), but also to assist the AIDS Foundation Houston (the primary community organization combating the AIDS epidemic in Houston).

The Alley Theatre has booked Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* for a run as part of its regular series of entertainment, and it has donated the proceeds for the two opening night preview performances to AFH. *The Normal Heart* is a play about the effects of AIDS on the total community. This is a "must see" presentation for all those involved with the AIDS effort, and for anyone with any concern at all for what this disease is doing to individuals and to our community. The performances are available at just \$25 per person and include a wine and cheese reception with the cast following the performance.

This is a reserved seating performance. You will need to send your check or credit card information to: AFH Tickets, P.O. Box 27703, Suite 216, Houston, TX 77027.



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MONA: Advice & Beads Read

Dear Mona:

I have done something really awful. I have gotten myself financially involved in a relationship that is going bad. It's hard enough to break up without having to go to a lawyer about it. I knew I was doing the wrong thing when I did it, but I really thought this was the big relationship of my life, and now I'm paying for it. My friends all tell me "I told you so," so I can't get any comfort there. What should I do?

Signed: Too Upset

Dear Upset:

I don't blame you one bit for being upset. Unfortunately, we never know for sure whether a relationship is going to work out or not, and I'm not going to say I told you so for things you probably already have kicked yourself over. All I can offer is some good advice. If you're really unhappy in your relationship, get out of it, and try to work out some sort of arrangement. If you feel a lawyer is necessary, by all means, contact one adn have an amiable agreement drawn up. There is no reason why these things should result in financial ruin for either of you, if it is handled properly. Call the Gay Switchboard for information and legal reference. Good luck.

Dear Mona:

What do you do when you find yourself fantasizing about someone who is totally unreachable? I can't help it. I fall asleep with him in my mind, and I find myself crying over him for nothing.

Signed: Pining Away in Montrose

Dear Pining:

Enjoy the fantasy, if that's all there is. Surely if he is totally unreachable, there's no harm in making use of his image for your pleasure. If, hosever, you find that the image is imply not enough and it causes



you too much pain, try talking to him. Otherwise, you are only hurting yourself, and if you are friends with this person, you are not being honest with him.

Dear Bi:

Hmmmmm. You are one of a growing number of people who find themselves separated from gay society and straight society because you actually seem to prefer both sexes. I think you should accept the fact that people are very complicated beings, and that some people are capable of loving many different people, regardless of gender. With your girlfriend, you must be honest. Don't marry her unless you truly mean to dedicate your life to her—that's good sound advice to anyone who is planning to marry, don't you think? Otherwise, there's nothing wrong with the way you feel. Be proud of who you are, and consider yourself lucky that you aren't limited in love the way most people seem to be.

Dear Mona:

What is the best thing to do when you find out that you're attracted to a member of the opposite sex? I've been gay for over ten years, and now I'm dating a woman. I've told her I'm bisexual, and she says it doesn't matter. But to me it's kind of weird. I really like her, but I'm confused about what I really feel. Does this make any sense? My family would love for me to marry a woman, but I don't know if this is just some passing thing or not. It's all pretty strange to me, and my gay friends act like I've got the plague or something. Help!

Signed: Bi in Southwest Houston

THE BRB IS PROUD TO PRESENT
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"The King of the Cotton-Eyed Joe"



2 Nights — 4 Big Shows
Fri., Jan. 30 — 9:00 & 11:00
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performing his hits
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Let Isaac teach you his new dance!

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Watch out HOUSTON—
1987's only starting—
We'll be bringing you lots of Entertainment!

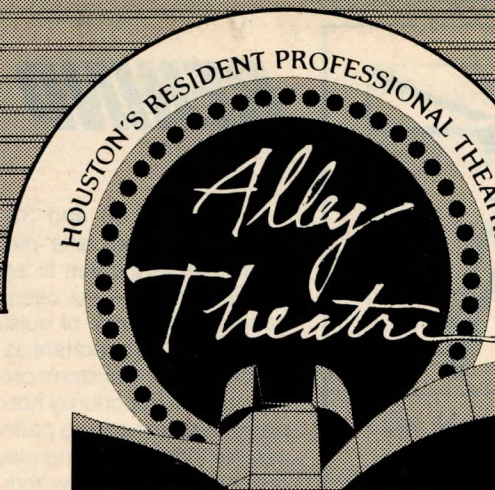
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Previews: January 30, 31, February 1, 3, 4

Larry Kramer's

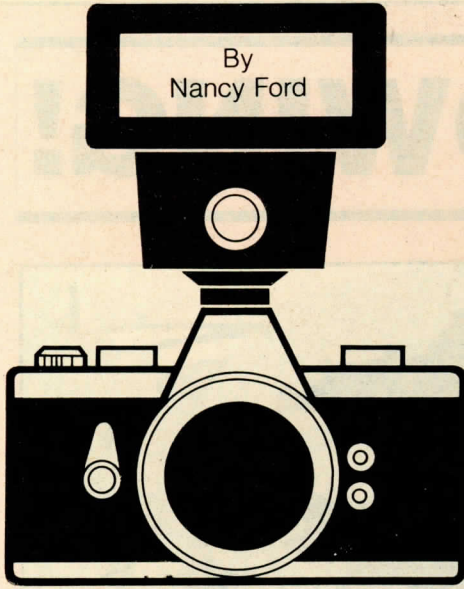
THE
NORMAL
HEART

Directed by George Anderson

It's about AIDS.
And it's about time.

PLEASE NOTE: PREVIEW PERFORMANCES OF "THE NORMAL HEART" ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 30 and SATURDAY, JANUARY 31 at 8:00 PM WILL BENEFIT THE AIDS FOUNDATION OF HOUSTON. FOR TICKET INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 524-2427.

By
Nancy Ford



CAN WE TALK...

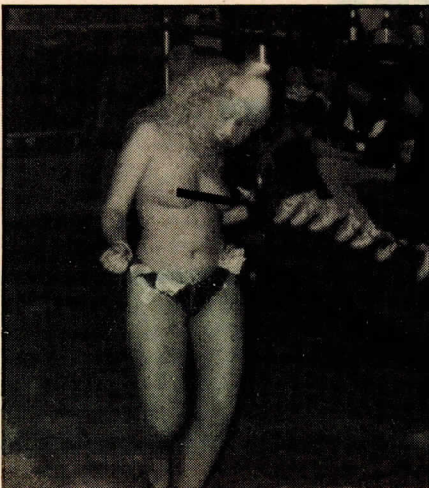
Yes, we can talk. We can listen, too! **OVERHEARD AT THE GROCERY STORE:** There's a new stereotype in the neighborhood. I heard it while at the checkout of my favorite supermarket. *That lesbians always take more than 12 items through the 12-items-or-less lane. Always* And when the sign says "cash only," lesbians always try to write checks. Always. I'd heard the ones about how we lesbians make terrible cooks and terrific softball players, but the express lane rule is a new one on me. Thanks for the scoop, guys.

My friend **Craig** at **The Zoo** would like to thank the gay community at large for the overwhelming outpour of love, concern, and cash at the benefit last Sunday organized to assist the family of **Jeff "Babycakes" Horpole** who recently passed away. In return, I'm sure the gay community at large would like to thank you, **Craig**, for your compassion. Watch for **The Zoo's** upcoming Valentine's Day Extravaganza.



JoBeth of Crystal's, fully clothed.

And right around the corner from **The Zoo** the doors of **Crystals** have finally opened. Sunday nights **Crystals** features professional female strippers. There was one woman who danced to Stevie "Betty Ford, make me better!" Nicks music (and very well, might I add). While she danced I couldn't help but notice that she had a tattoo on her bottom and nothing on her top. Honest. Expect to see wet T-shirt contests there each Thursday. Do I detect a pattern here?



See what I mean.

Welcome Home Dept.: **Rick Cantu** is back in the Big H from NYC where he is a successful and semi-famous rock singer. And, knowing **Ricky**, a very good one, no doubt. **Dana Rogers** is back from a seriously hot New Year's Eve show at **Caesar's Palace** in Las Vegas. So hot, in fact, that those smart Nevada boys have already booked her for *next* New Year's Eve when she will open the show for perennial Grammy nominees—**The Four Freshmen**. *Auld that lang syne, Girl!*

Also home is **Tom**, formerly of **E/J's**. But come to think of it, I guess now we're all "formerly" of **E/J's**. Thanks for the mam-maries, Ed. I mean, *memories*. (Sorry, I guess I've still got *Crystal's* on the brain.) Looking forward to Ralph Street, guys.



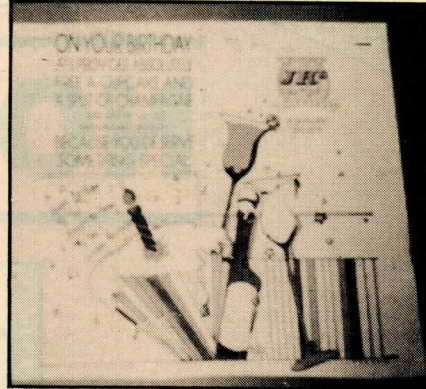
Brooke McDonald and her keyboard will return to entertain on Fridays at Kindred Spirits as soon as her foot heals.



Brooke McDonald's sick foot.

Kindred Spirits will present another *major* lip sync event the evening of Thursday, the 22nd. This one isn't a contest, however, but will feature Spirits' faves **Stevi, Flo**, and **Shirley** mixing live entertainment with *er-unlive* entertainment. I'll be there emceeing, probably complaining about missing **Mary Tyler Moore** at 11:00.

Did you know that between 2 and 7 p.m. on Fridays draft beer is free at **Hot Rod**? And on Saturdays? And Sundays as well? It's true.



Do you have a birthday coming up? JR'S will make it special.

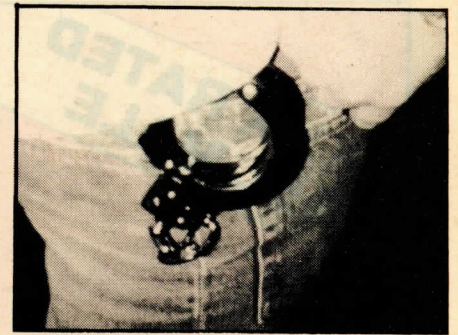
Heaven hosted the **1987 Man of the Year Pageant**, an official preliminary to the **Mr. Texas Pageant**. The contestants reaffirmed why they call this club **Heaven**. Pix will follow.

Take the Montrose Trolley to **Coffee & Tea World** at 3939 Montrose for brewed beverages with a designer flair. Caffeine never tasted so elegant.

Last week they celebrated **Miss Cecilia's** birthday at **Just Marion & Lynn's** where she received from her friends, among other gifts, a lovely new pair of handcuffs. This year for my birthday I received from my friends one of those wind-up plastic penguins that swims around the bathtub. It worked exactly once. Cecilia honey, can we talk? Peaches tells me to expect *major* fun coming soon on Sundays to **JM&L's**.



Birthday girl Cecilia...

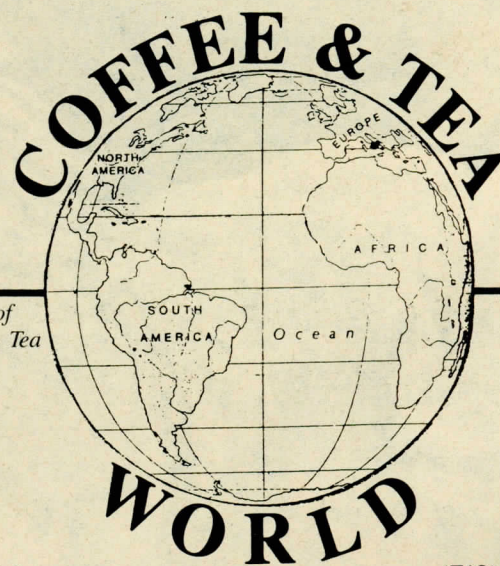
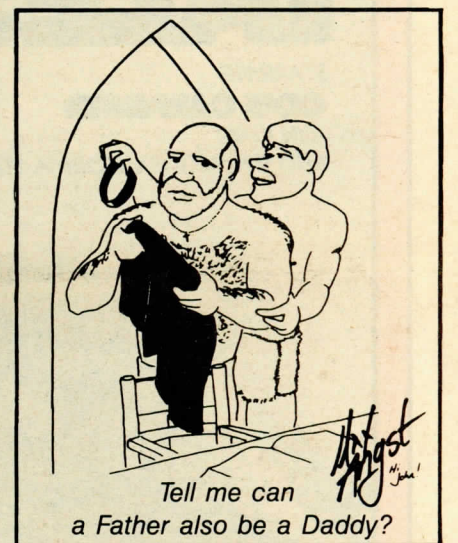


...and birthday gift.

So **Numbers** has closed, too. Where is a girl and her \$1 bills to go on a Sunday night to *serve*? Before you rip out all your shoulder pads and quilt them together into a giant futon cushion, you need to know something: Don't be surprised if soon a very pop (though presently dark) hot spot with a lovely piano bar, expensive dance floor, and roller-skate wheel marks on the stage should re-open under the auspices of its original, more *successful* owner. Remember—you read it *first* in the **FORUM**.



Checkerboard Deli's David King, bouncing quarters and winning.



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**TYGER
TALES**

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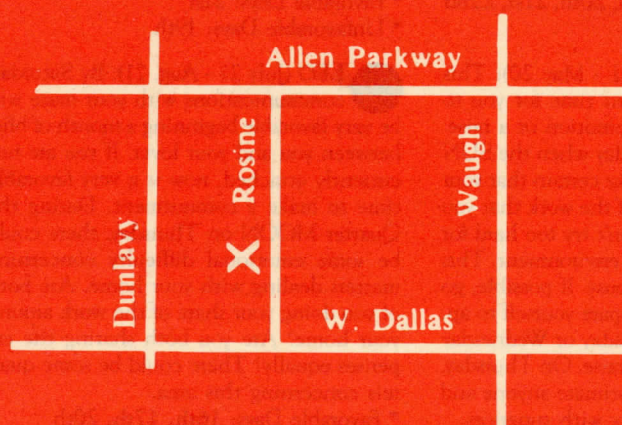
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NEWS BITS . . .

Anonymous Blood-testing to Begin

In order to assess the prevalence of the AIDS virus in the general public, federal health officials have started to test blood samples anonymously at participating hospitals.

Testing will be done on blood samples from people who have been hospitalized for reasons other than AIDS or ARC. Since the blood will be tested after the patient's identification has been removed, there will be no way to inform people of a possible positive test result.

Freeway Dinosaur Torched

"Stegosaurus," the 15-by-30 foot debris-sculpted dinosaur who had been on display under the Southwest Freeway at Montrose, was set on fire by vandals,

destroying all but the frame.

Artist Paul Kittelson, who had been commissioned last year by DiverseWorks to create the piece as part of the "Art in the Streets" projects, retrieved the frame and has plans to recreate the sculpture, which was made of foam and wire, with flashing battery-powered eyes.

England Launches \$29 Million AIDS-Awareness Campaign

With 599 known cases of AIDS (including 296 deaths) in England since 1982 and with cases doubling every 10 months, the government has launched a new hard-hitting ad campaign to educate the public. Using the slogan "AIDS: Don't Die of Ignorance," the \$29 million drive will combine the distribution of leaflets to each of the country's 12 million households with a media blitz on television and radio, as well

as in the newspapers, youth press, movie theatres and on billboards.

Conservatives and religious leaders have called the campaign "distasteful," while many health officials have criticized it for coming too late and with too little information.

Convict Suspected in St. George Slaying

Darryl James Jackson, in Harris County Jail accused of robbery, is being investigated as the possible assailant who brutally stabbed gay businessman Pete St. George to death in December of 1985.

Jackson is also suspected in the homicide of a Houston man killed last month in the 4400 block of Westheimer. Police suspect that Jackson may have met the men in gay bars and killed them as a response to an inner religious urging.

Ribavirin Studied As A Way To Slow AIDS Advance

Insisting that Ribavirin is no cure, health officials across the United States released preliminary results of experimental testing of the drug that indicate that it is effective in keeping certain pre-AIDS from becoming the full-blown disease.


Patients who had Lymphadenopathy Syndrome (enlarge lymph nodes caused by HIV infection) were divided into three groups, one of which received 800 milligrams of Ribavirin per day, one of which received 600 milligrams and the other of which received a placebo. Of the 163 people studied, 10 of those receiving the placebo developed AIDS, six of those receiving the lower dose developed the disease and none of those taking the 800 milligrams a day developed AIDS.

H O R O S C O P E S


by Jack Marvin, AMAFA

Since we are on the downside of the Full MOON, you should not plan on many exciting and unusual events occurring until the Full MOON next month in LEO. Two major events will occur this week in the Zodiac. The first is MERCURY entering AQUARIUS early Saturday morning. This will make all of you somewhat less inhibited in conversation and generally much more "at home" in meeting people when you are out-and-about. The second event will be the SUN exiting cold and restrictive CAPRICORN and entering outgoing and gregarious AQUARIUS. This indicates that you will be more willing to meet new people and will become more involved in organizations. This will also set the stage for you to begin pursuing the goals that you set for yourself at the beginning of the new year.


NOTES: During the daytime on Saturday, you may feel lazy because of an adverse aspect to your energy planet, MARS, but by the evening, you should feel like getting out and mingling with people. I would suggest either going to a party or throwing one yourself. If you have a party, it will be very successful.

 **ARIES** (Mar. 21 - Apr. 20): This weekend will be an excellent time for intellectual stimulation. This will involve new and, quite possibly, exciting friends. As the third quarter MOON approaches (on Thursday), you could become disinterested in your work and could become somewhat irritable. Maintain your good sense of humor and this will carry you through some of the "boring times" that may occur. Do not reveal any confidential projects to anyone. On Thursday, you may feel somewhat disinterested in sex. This will change.


* Favorable Days: none
* Unfavorable Days: 17th, 20th, 21st, 22nd

 **TAURUS** (Apr. 21 - May 20): This will be an excellent time for you to ask for and receive a promotion or a raise. But wait until after Tuesday when the SUN enters AQUARIUS. Make certain that your boss knows the quality of the work that you are doing. Obviously, don't try too hard for recognition in the office environment. This could lead to petty jealousy. If possible, go to work on Saturday. Prepare yourself to approach your boss on Tuesday or Wednesday with your demand for a raise. On Thursday, be careful not to underestimate anyone and don't get into arguments with superiors.


* Favorable Days: 16th, 21st
* Unfavorable Days: 18th

 **GEMINI** (May 21 - June 20): This will really be a great week for you, but not until Saturday evening, after MERCURY enters AQUARIUS. Romance is not necessarily favored, but making new friends is heavily favored. Be very careful concerning your health especially around Thursday. People who are not from this locality or who are from a different background than you could have an adverse effect on your health. Be alert while driving, you could be given a citation due to carelessness.


* Favorable Days: 20th
* Unfavorable Days: none

 **CANCER** (June 21 - July 20): This remains a very good time for you to begin new projects because of last week's Full MOON in your sign. On Saturday, you may feel like getting out and cruising the bars a little more than normal. Sex will really be on your mind. The good thing about this is that you can talk about sex and feel comfortable about it. Sometimes you may have felt somewhat inhibited talking about sex—but not this week. Beginning on Saturday, you will begin to meet new people and they will be interested in some hanky-panky. So will you.

* Favorable Days: 21st
* Unfavorable Days: 19th

 **LEO** (July 21 - Aug. 21): By Saturday, communications with your mate will be very favorable beginning a month of bliss between you and your lover. If you are not currently attached, now is a very favorable time to make a commitment. During the Quarter MOON on Thursday, there could be some emotional difficulty concerning matters dealing with your home. Are both of you doing your share of the work around your home? Are you both sharing the expenses equally? There could be some quarrels concerning this area.


* Favorable Days: 16th, 17th, 20th
* Unfavorable Days: 22nd

 **VIRGO** (Aug. 22 - Sept. 21): If you have been having some problems learning and communicating with your job, this should all come to an end by this weekend. MERCURY, the planet of communication, will enter this area of your life. By Wednesday, you will really begin to "get into" your job again after several months of just plain boredom. This weekend will begin a period of excellent health for you if you have been paying attention to everything that has been printed concerning your health and well-being. Close relatives could cause some problems on Thursday.


* Favorable Days: 18th, 19th, 20th
* Unfavorable Days: none

QUESTION: "What is the story that no president survives that was elected in a year ending in a '0'? Does this have anything to do with astrology?" L.L.R.


ANSWER: Any president that was in office during a JUPITER/SATURN conjunction in an earth sign did not survive the office beginning with William H. Harrison, elected in 1840 (JUPITER/SATURN conjunction in CAPRICORN), and died in 1941 through John F. Kennedy, elected in 1960 (JUPITER/SATURN conjunction in CAPRICORN), and died in 1963. Every president in office during this conjunction for the past 150 years has died in office. However, all these conjunctions were in earth signs. The latest conjunctions between JUPITER/SATURN occurred in January, March, and July of 1981 in LIBRA, an air sign. This was the end of this "curse," but, oddly enough, President Reagan was shot in the lungs (air). He, of course, survived. J.M., AMAFA

 **LIBRA** (Sept. 22 - Oct. 22): Romance and love affairs will be the rule of thumb for the next month beginning on Saturday. Get out of your house as often as possible and entertain others. It's time for you to pay back some of those social obligations. For the next month, you will meet some people that you may think are rather odd or strange—well, they probably are, but what of it? Ask them out and have a good time. Do not speculate, gamble, or get off on a financial tangent on Thursday.


* Favorable Days: 20th, 21st, 22nd
* Unfavorable Days: none

 **SCORPIO** (Oct. 23 - Nov. 22): Communicating about problems dealing with your home are very favorable during the next several weeks. Results will be positive. This will also be a good time for you to work on improving yourself, but domestic or community affairs may interfere with your personal programs. You could experience some periods of absent-mindedness, nervousness, and disinclination to work during the next several weeks. This is an excellent period for you to gamble.


* Favorable Days: 18th
* Unfavorable Days: 16th

 **SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23 - Dec. 20): Get on the phone and say "Hello" to those close relatives that you have been neglecting. All you have to say is that you were just thinking of them. This is a good month to take some short trips and improve your knowledge of the world around you. Have you been working on mental improvements? Analyze yourself and your difficulties in order to discover how you can overcome inhibitions and frustrating conditions. If someone is interested sexually, oblige them.


* Favorable Days: none
* Unfavorable Days: 19th

 **CAPRICORN** (Dec. 21 - Jan. 19): Personal assets will be the highlight for the next several weeks. There will be a marked improvement in this area. You could seek out the odd or the out-of-the-ordinary in which to invest your money, but it will pay off in the long run. Thursday will not be a good day for investments, however. There is still some confusion concerning yourself and exactly how you fit into this world. You should be working with a therapist for your mental well-being.

* Favorable Days: 16th, 21st
* Unfavorable Days: 19th

 **AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18): This weekend will begin your time of the year as MERCURY enters your sign followed closely by the SUN on Tuesday. Some mental laziness that you may have been experiencing will be over by Saturday and you will enter a period of creativity and intellectual curiosity. Short trips are favored and if you play your cards right, you could meet a wonderful LEO (this is a recommended sign for romance . . .). Because of current duties and responsibilities, some of your leisure time will be sidetracked.

* Favorable Days: 22nd
* Unfavorable Days: 16th, 17th, 19th

 **PISCES** (Feb. 19 - Mar. 20): Work on improving yourself mentally. You generally have a good grasp of your spiritual nature, but mentally, you are a wreck. Seek a therapist. Talk to them and listen to what they have to say. You will tend to argue with others over existing conditions and beliefs. Avoid this, you will merely upset yourself and you will convince no one. You will have a tendency to want to do for others so they will "owe" you something. Not true. If you want to do someone a favor, do it with no strings attached.

* Favorable Days: none
* Unfavorable Days: 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th

If you have any questions, address them to JACK MARVIN, AMAFA, c/o Houston FORUM, 1110 Bayland, Houston, Texas 77009. Please include your birth date, birth time, and birth place, if known. If you are asking a compatibility question, please include the above information for the other person, if known. Your questions will be answered as time and space permits. JM

By Amanda B. Recondwith
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The flu bug has hit Houston with a vengeance, Dear Fans, and since Amanda has a certain immunity to such dreadfully inconvenient things, we have been playing Florence Nightengale by visiting sick friends with bowls of our mother's Cold and Flue Shoo Soup. It's really a very easy recipe. First, you take seven ripe carrots and chop them up into itty bitty pieces into beef broth (or chicken if you're so inclined). Then, you take a big cabbage and tear it up like the world's last Dear John letter and stir into the broth with the carrots. After that, take potatoes, peas, beans, broccoli and cauliflower and chop them all up into the broth and let simmer for several hours until hot and wonderful.

Of course, most of you think it's just another recipe for vegetable soup, but NOT SO, Dear Fans, because after the soup has simmered for several hours, then comes the last and most important ingredient! Take two heaping tablespoons of Vicks VapoRub and stir into the soup, then let boil for ten minutes. It not only gives the soup a certain spicy smell—it will also clean the rust off a sewer pipe. Besides, being sick isn't supposed to be fun, is it?

We remember some of our mother's home cures. She would have us lay in bed, then she'd turn on the humidifier and lop a big glob of Vicks (she was really big on Vicks) into the little tray near the nozzle. Soon the whole room would resemble a semi-tropical rain forest, complete with thunder storms and tze tze flies. Several times, we felt that we could have simply traded our flu for elephantiasis, but usually we got better before such a dreadful thing could occur.

Mrs. McMullen, across the street, used to follow her mother's hillbilly cures from the



Amanda always hates January, because that's usually when the flu gets around.

Ozarks. They believed that you had to beat the sickness out, so everytime their little girl, Carol, appeared in school with a black eye, we knew that the flu bug was starting to make the rounds.

Fortunately, Amanda's parents were more enlightened than the McMullens, but

mother had some pretty strange cures, always revolving around Vicks VapoRub. There was Vicks with a towel on our chest. There was Vicks rubbed on the roof of our mouth with a Q-Tip. There was Vicks applied between our toes, and Vicks stuffed up our nose and covered with hot wash-

cloths. In fact, to this day, when we smell Vicks, we immediately think of childhood sickness, and we would assume that a whole generation feels the same.

Then there were the nuns at school who had many interesting cures for the flu. Most believed that abject prayer and poverty would cure just about anything, and if it didn't, death would be a blessing from the Lord. Once, when Billy Sandergraster came down with the croup during math class, Sister Strofus tied him down to her desk and lit candles on his body until he was covered in holy wax. We didn't really know what the healing significance was in this procedure, but we do remember seeing several of the nuns with patches of crusty wax on their arms where the wash cloth had missed them.

Amanda always hates January, because that's usually when the flu gets around. These days, of course, the flu virus is far more dangerous because so many people out there are already struggling with sickness, and one more nasty virus can sometimes take them away. But throughout all the years of home cures and bizarre philosophies, Amanda still sticks to her usual advice to her dear friends with the flu—and many who don't even have it: Get the rest you need. Don't drink too much, and reduce the stress level in your life. Those three things may mean giving up Wookie-Wookie Night at the Samba Club, but if you make it through January, the rest of the year is usually a snap.

Oh yes, and by the way. Don't use Vicks for a lubricant. When we were young and stupid, a boyfriend of ours did just that, and for several months we couldn't sneeze without seeing God.

NETWORK

"Turn It Off Before I Throw Up"

By Jeff Bray

If I really took television seriously, I would think that something was really wrong with me. While sitting home with a cold, I watched daytime TV until it was coming out of my ears, and all I saw were commercials for aches and pains and all sorts of new gadgets and devices for cleaning the house.

Nothing is more unsettling than seeing a rather plain woman dressed in a slinky evening gown, mopping her ceilings with a new fangled broom/mop/dustpan/scouring pad. It's especially wonderful when at the end of the commercial she stands in her dining room with the device in her left hand, while her right hand does a Vanna White number, waving gracefully over the furniture and moldings.

Then, of course, there are the usual feminine hygiene commercials. The latest is the napkin with "wings." It's in the shape of a sting ray, with little dorsals that come out and wrap around the panties to "absorb 30 percent more than ever before." I cringe at the thought of what happened to that 30 percent before this miraculous new discovery.

In fact, while watching television, it seems that advertisers don't really know who their market is. They're still playing on the predominant statistics of the 50's—that most people watching TV during the daytime are married women with families. Unfortunately, that predominance has been rapidly changing over the years. There are now whole segments of the male population who work at night, or can't find work, or maybe don't work by choice, who are subjected to this onslaught of female oriented advertising. As a man, I must comment that this advertising is really low budget, and sometimes too crude for words.

I especially love the ad that shows the

beautiful businesswoman standing in a conference room in front of a chart, her little pointer bouncing off facts and figures. She excuses herself, then walks into the bathroom, where she immediately shoves her finger down her throat. Then, the deep

The products offered always improved the "image", or hid a problem that was supposed to be "embarrassing".

male voice tells us about the horrors of bulimia. The next time we see the young woman, she is squirting breath freshener in her mouth and staring at herself hatefully in the mirror. Then, she resumes her conference in perfect order, but we all know her hideous secret.

Then there's dear Greer Garson, standing on a street corner, telling us what a drag it is to have bladder control problems. Yes, I would think that it would be pretty difficult being a school crosswalk patrolperson when you may have to run to the bathroom every fifteen minutes. But thanks to another wonderful device (which looks hauntingly like that feminine hygiene product mentioned before), she can stand out there all day. Her secret horror is hidden from the world.

While watching daytime TV, I started to think that every commercial dealt with certain issues that were in common. The product always improved the "image," or hid a problem that was supposed to be "embarrassing." Don't get me wrong. I know that the advertisers on Fifth Avenue are practically looking at me through that screen. They know that I'm one of millions who are

staying home sick from cold or flu, and that's why coughing sneezing wheezing people are projected before me all day long. The overall feeling, however, is that the entire nation is suffering from hay fever, nausea, cold and flu. We're all experiencing trouble sleeping, and we're all trying to lose weight. As a nation, we're all striving for the best toilet bowl cleaner and basin tub and tile solution. As a race, we are afflicted with gastric problems, weak bladders and leaky feminine hygiene products that must always be improved. And as if we didn't have enough to worry about, Nancy Reagan comes on the screen twice a day, telling us to tell our children to "just say No." Then, when we've seen all that, it is supposed that we all rush to the kitchen and devour large quantities of junk food, then run to the bathroom and throw it up.



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Forms of Gambling

Galveston is still deciding whether to allow legalized gambling on the island. The pros argue it will provide jobs. The cons say it will increase crime. Obviously, they're both right. It will provide jobs for lots of people, including criminals.

HISD would rather gamble that no kid in the district could eat enough paint off the desks painted with the leaded paint than repaint them, but the job will probably be done in any case. I think they should leave the desks as they are and set up a lottery to see if any kid actually does die or become ill because the desks are painted with the leaded paint. If they don't, then HISD saves the repainting expenditure. If they do, the lottery pays off to the family. Everyone is happy.

Burger King is going to test mini-burgers in Houston to see if people like bite-sized sandwiches better than having to deal with a whopper. Personally, I like to have to use both hands.

Some More Fallen Mighties

To hear the news people talk, we should feel sooooo sorry for Mitchel Wiggins and Louis Lloyd because the poor dears got caught with their hands in the cocaine jar. They've been suspended for life (with the chance to appeal in two years) from the NBA. Come on. These guys knew about the rules. They chose to keep snowing their lives even though it was clear they were risking their careers. I don't feel sorry for them. I feel sorry for me and all the other Rockets fans who have to watch their team

go down the tubes because of these jokers.

Another guy who made a mistake and is about to go down the tubes is that teamster in San Juan, Puerto Rico, who set the fire that killed 95 people. He didn't mean to do that, he claims. He just put a little stereo on some furniture in an empty room and lit a match to scare people. Well, that's all right, then, isn't it?

And then we have the biggest joker of them all: the Pres. Yes, good old Ronnie knew that the arms deal was linked to freeing the hostages. What else is new? And now we have information deleted from a secret Senate committee report on the Iran-around Contra-versy at the administration's request. I wish I could request that information that made me look bad could be deleted from places. I'll bet Lloyd and Wig-

By "Perfectly" Frank Carello

gins wish they could have their drug test results deleted from the NBA files too. I guess the Pres doesn't have to follow the same rules as the rest of us citizens.

Beauty Is In The Eye

Jessica the cow will have to do without her suiter moose. The 700-pound misguided lover left her when his antlers fell off. I know how they both must feel. I was once in love with a pine sapling, but left it when my car needed an oil change. No one understood that relationship either.

HARLAN GRAPHICS

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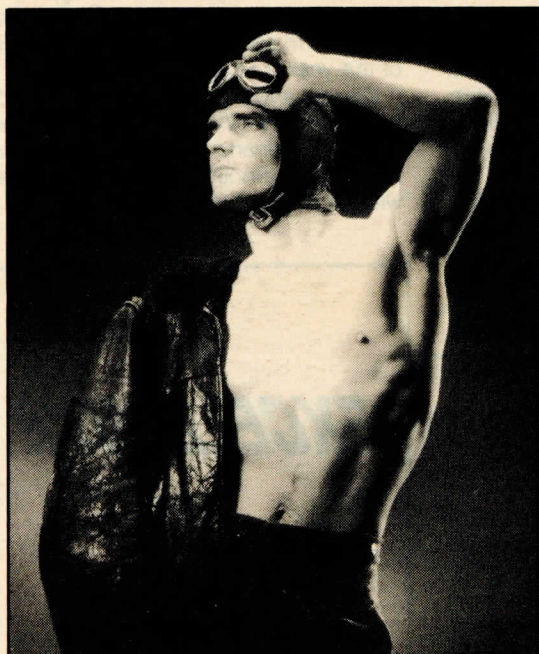
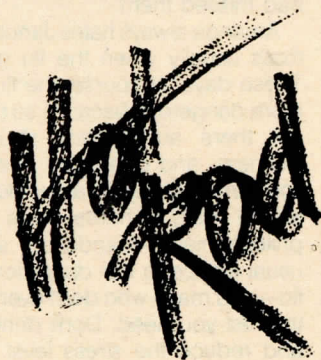
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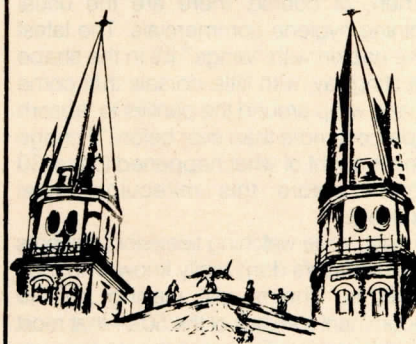
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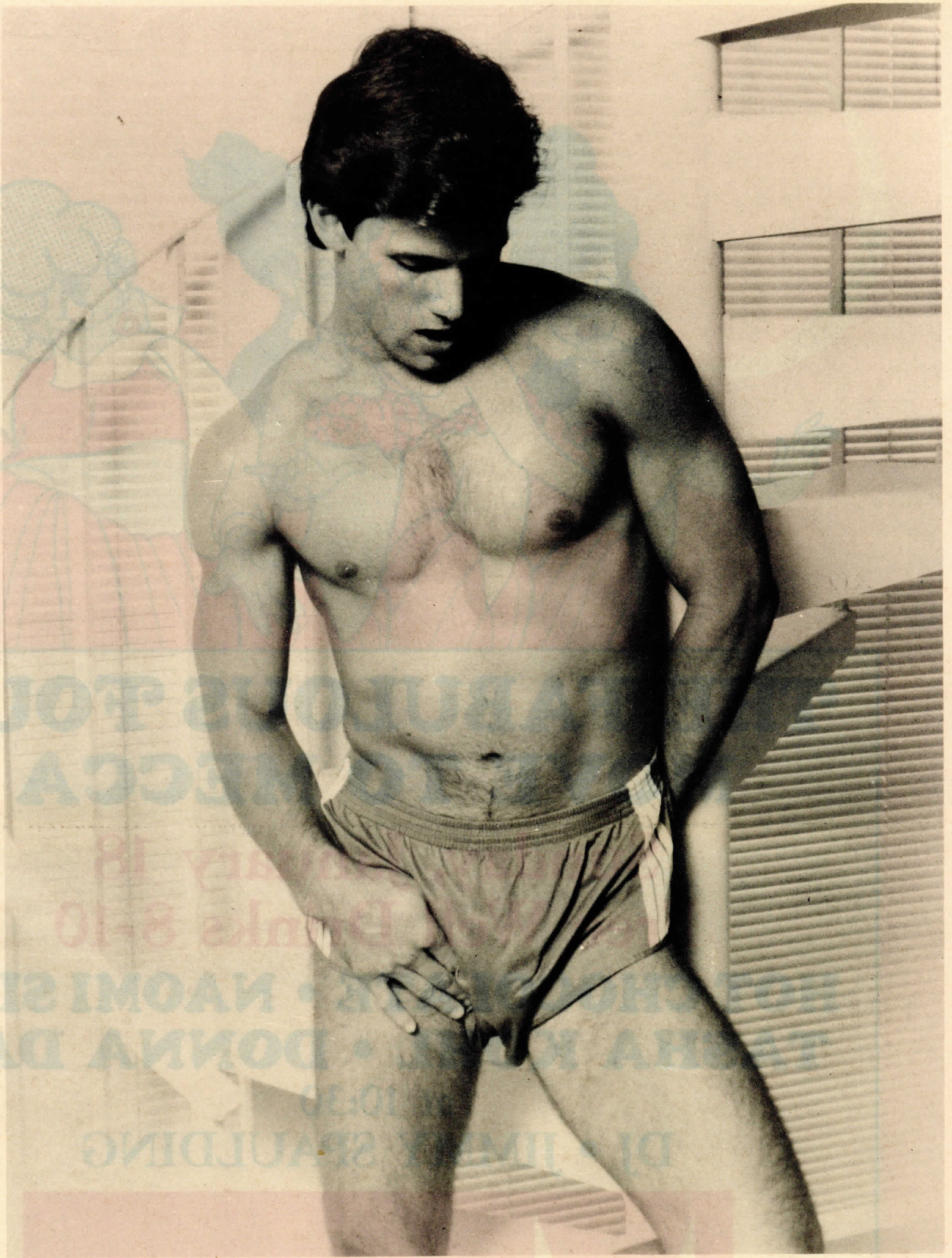


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