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Dimensions is published by Visions Publishing Co., P.O. Box 856, Lubbock, TX 79408, Phone (806) 797-9647. Opinions expressed by columnists do not necessarily reflect those of Dimensions or its staff. Publication of the names of any person or organization is not an indication of sexual orientation. Subscription rates: 6 mos. \$15.00, 1yr. \$24.00. Payment must accompany all subscription orders. Copyright ©1995 Visions Publishing Co. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited.

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DIMENSIONS

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Lubbock, TX 79408
(806) 797-9647

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Guest Editorial

Election Should Galvanize Community

An open letter to the gay community:

The day after the election, almost all of the gays and lesbian in Texas are moping around wondering what happened. Governor Ann Richards in now former Governor Ann Richards. A lady who had a 60% approval rating was defeated by George Bush, Jr. The soon to be governor Bush brings a lot of fear to the lesbian/gay community for now they know that the "good life" under Ms. Richards is over. The next four years are already being considered years of oppression and defeat.

Unlike most of my brothers and sisters, I am saddened about the defeat of Ms. Richards, but I also have a sparkle of hope for the gay and lesbian community. Maybe now, you will all get up off your butts and fight for what is rightfully ours. Under Ms. Richards, we did enjoy a bit more freedom, but what little amounts we enjoyed were just that, little! If we want to mope around in sorrow for the next four years, then we are going to receive what is rightfully due us, nothing. It is more important now than ever to shop gay, lesbian and gay friendly stores. We must get the vote out as well.

In 1985, Houston lost an election for equal employment rights. In 1994 Austin lost an election for domestic partnership benefits. On November 8, 1994, Texas lost an election for Ann Richards. All of these losses were due to apathy and self righteous thoughts such as, "It can't happen here," or "They won't vote against us."

If our past has taught us nothing, then we are doomed to the concentration camps as the Jews and other gays and lesbians were during Hitler's time. You may think this to be a crazy thought, but just go back over the past ten years and see how things are shaping up, then compare it to Hitler's time. Is it really a crazy thought?

As Director and founder of Spectrum '95, and executive producer of the Gay 90s, I will continue my fight to teach people who we are and that we are not the terrible monsters the right wing wishes us to be.

However, I and the people I work with can only do so much. It is time for the closeted gays and lesbians to be counted, for the gay dollars to be spent where gay and lesbian jobs count on it. We must show our strength now, as in the past, regardless of who is in the Governor's office or the President's seat. We cannot trust those in politics, simply because they sell out. We must make our strength untied and act as one for the common goal of equal rights.

Sincerely yours,

B. Alan Bourgeois



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THE NEWS

FROM AROUND THE REGION, THE COUNTRY & THE WORLD

GAY/LESBIAN GROUP THREATENS STEPHEN F. AUSTIN UNIVERSITY

The Gay and Lesbian Student Association (GLSA) of Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) has selected the Texas Human Rights Foundation (THRF) to coordinate litigation against the university and its Student Government Association.

GLSA President Keith Roberts announced that the organization has selected the Texas Human Rights Foundation to represent it in court against the University if the administration adopts the discriminatory practices recommended by a few radical right students.

The university administration has not announced whether it will follow the recommendation of those students advocating discrimination, and THRF's Board of Trustees hopes they will overrule the recommendation to revoke GLSA's charter and cut off its funding. Garbarino mentioned that student members of the radical right have organized on college campuses around the state, just as their parents have for local elections. "We're their rallying cry. Queer baiting sells. The pattern of campus incidents is no accident. It's clear the Radical Right is even reaching into our schools to arm its war of hate and misinformation. They wish to corrupt the long and excellent tradition of free expression on college campuses, and their tactics are reprehensible."

Although the Student Government

Association cited section 21.06 of (the sodomy law) of the Texas Penal Code as justification for its actions, this statute was declared unconstitutional by the Third Court of Appeals in the case England vs. City of Dallas. The Texas supreme Court had the opportunity to reverse that ruling in the case of Texas v. Morales, but instead dismissed the case on a technicality and left the England ruling intact.

In discussing whether SFASU's administration should reverse the SGA's actions, THRF Vice President Eugene Sepulveda stated, "It's ridiculous to think that a state institution would squander taxpayer money and unnecessarily incur court costs. The legislature doesn't tolerate this type of frivolous spending any longer. It's not as if there hasn't already been a court case against a state university on this very issue. The administrators in Nacogdoches know this."

THRF has retained the services of Austin civil rights attorney Patrick Wiseman to represent GLSA. THRF Board President Donald Skipwith, in announcing the hiring of Wiseman, stated that "Patrick is one of the preeminent civil rights attorneys practicing today. With Patrick as counsel, THRF defeated Texas A&M University's attempt to discriminate against gays and lesbians in College Station, and we'll do the same in Nacogdoches." THRF sponsored *Gay Student Services v. Texas A&M University*, in which the university administration was compelled to grant

a charter for a gay student group. THRF Executive Director, Michael Garbarino noted, "THRF's mission is to challenge discrimination based on sexual orientation" and that the organization "has successfully litigated this type of case before," referring to the Texas A&M decision. "If SFASU's administration follows the recommendations of the Young Conservatives, acting through the Student Government Association, we will see them in court."

The Texas Human Rights Foundation, founded in 1978, is a statewide non-profit organization working to end discrimination based on sexual orientation or HIV status through high-impact litigation and legal services programs.

RECORD NUMBER OF OPENLY GAY OFFICIALS WIN IN ELECTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Twelve of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund's 17 openly gay candidates won their races on November 8, constituting a seventy-five percent success rate. According to Victory Fund deputy Director, the 12 winners are:

- Will Fitzpatrick, Rhode Island State Senate
- Cal Anderson, Washington State Assembly
- Sheila Kuehl, California State Assembly
- Ken Chevront, Arizona House of Representatives
- Tim Van Zandt, Missouri House of Representatives
- George Eighmey, Oregon House of Representatives

- Cynthia Wooten, Oregon House of Representatives
- Susan Leal, San Francisco Board of Supervisors
- Tom Ammiano, San Francisco Board of Supervisors
- Bonnie Dumanis, San Diego City Court
- Teri Schwartz, Los Angeles City Court
- Tom Chiola, Cook County (Illinois) Court

Debold notes that this 75 percent success rate for openly gay candidates is especially significant in light of the campaign of gaybaiting that were waged against them by opponents and because of the overall conservative swing of the electorate nationwide. "Each of our candidates won *two* races on November 8th," she says, "One against their opponents; the other against the Radical Right's distorted image of gay men and lesbians."

In addition to these successes, a number of openly gay elected officials won reelection. These include: U.S. congressman Gerry Studds, Wisconsin State Assembly member Tammy Baldwin, Oregon State Representative Gail Shibley and Texas State Representative Glen Maxey.

LESBIAN AVENGERS PUSH BACK CHRISTIAN RIGHT IN NORTHERN IDAHO

MOSCOW, ID - The Lesbian Avengers Civil Rights Organizing Project (LACROP), along with lesbian and gay residents of Idaho helped defeat Proposition 1 in the November elections. The Proposition was voted down by a mere 4,000 votes.

Proposition 1, sponsored by the Idaho

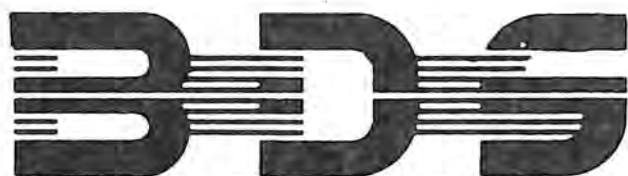
Citizens Alliance (ICA), would have made it illegal to spend state money in a manner that would show acceptance or approval of homosexuality. It also would have made it illegal for public school teachers to discuss homosexuality as a positive behavior and force libraries to create an "adults only" section for materials that address homosexuality.

ICA founder Kelly Walton has already said he will try again in 1996 to pass the initiative. He has also indicated there may be an effort in the Idaho Legislature to pass the initiative.

LACROP targeted three counties in Northern Idaho for a visible, grassroots campaign to defeat Proposition 1. Two of the counties are historically very conservative. Neo-Nazis wearing swastikas regularly showed up at Human Rights Task Force meetings. LACROP and local activists organized visibility actions in both counties, as well as door to door canvassing efforts

and literature drops using brochures that talked openly about lesbian and gay lives. Both counties finished the election with 54% voting "no". This was higher than the capital city of Boise and the statewide average which defeated the measure with only 51% of the vote. By comparison, the county considered to be the second most liberal in northern Idaho (where LACROP did not do campaign work) voted to pass the measure by 54%.

LACROP is a working group of the New York Lesbian Avengers and was established to assist lesbian activists in communities under attack from the Christian Right. The group was invited to northern Idaho by the Palouse Lesbian Avengers in early August and sent eight full-time lesbian organizers to work in Idaho from August through November.



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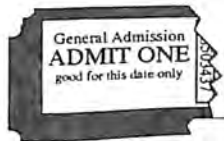
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WHAT'S GOIN' ON

A MONTHLY LISTING OF SPECIAL EVENTS ALL AROUND THE AREA

FORT WORTH - **Pleiades Productions** is bringing hot-hot-hot lesbian comic, **Suzanne Westenhoefer** to the Metroplex on February 11, 1995. Reserved seating tickets are \$15 and are available from **Pleiades** by sending a check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: P.O. Box 101661, Fort Worth, TX 76185. Remaining seats will be sold at regular Pleiades ticket outlets on a general admission basis beginning in January. The show will be held at **Orchestra Hall** (4401 Trail Lake) in Fort Worth. Act fast — tickets to this event won't last long!

HOUSTON - **Bar Hoppers** is a new social club for gays and lesbians who like to party at Houston's hottest clubs, but don't like going out alone. The group meets every Saturday at 7pm at an inner loop restaurant then goes to a club nearby. Women's clubs as well as men's are included. For details, call (713) 952-4048 and ask for **Jimmy**.

AUSTIN - **AIDS Services of Austin** will be offering a volunteer orientation on Wednesday, December 7. This is a 2 1/2 hour seminar that gives basic AIDS information, as well as an overview of all the Volunteer opportunities **ASA** has to offer. Volunteers are needed in many areas. Some aspects deal directly with clients while others are educational or administrative in nature. For more info on volunteering with **ASA**, contact **Cathy Cook** at (512) 406-6150 or **Russell Walker** at (512) 406-6167.

HOUSTON - The **Bar Association for Human Rights'** (**BAHR**) annual holiday party will be held Friday, December 16th at **KIMSON** restaurant (downtown at 2001 Jefferson) from 7-9pm. The event will feature food, cash bar and entertainment. Admission is \$25 per person (\$17.50 for law students). **BAHR** welcomes legal professionals, law students and all persons interested in the legal rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. For reservations, call **Gary** at (713) 622-1320 or **Marion** at (713) 942-8408.

DALLAS - The **African American Lesbian, Gay Bisexual Coalition** meets every second Sunday at the **Cathedral of Hope MCC** (5910 Cedar Springs). The group also holds a **Jubilee Service** in the African American tradition every 3rd Sunday at MCC. For more info about the group, meeting time and dates, call (214) 521-5342, ext. 828.

HOUSTON - The **Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents Group** (**HGLP**) offers support and social activities for lesbian/gay parents and their children. Activities include a **family party** each month, a **monthly support group** and "**Just For Us**" an activity group for children in 6th-12th grades. For information about how you can join, call (713) 666-8256, or write **HGLP**, P.O. Box 35709-262, Houston, TX 77235-5709. The group will hold its **December Family Activity** on December 10 from 1-5pm at a

member's private home. They will be making gingerbread cottages, and Hanukkah treasure boxes.

DALLAS - The Turtle Creek Chorale, Dallas' world renowned 200-member male chorus will pull out all the stops to make the Christmas season bright. The **Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center**, the Chorale's home is the setting for the holiday concerts on Sunday, Dec. 11 and Monday, Dec. 12. All performances begin at 8pm. Concertgoers are asked to bring an unwrapped toy for the Chorale's fifth annual toy drive benefitting **Children's Medical Center** and **Parkland Hospital**. Tickets are \$10-25 and are available by calling ArtTix at (214) 520-ARTS.

HOUSTON - Lesbians in Business (LIB) will host its holiday party from 5-10pm on December 15 at the **Penthouse Club** (3400 Montrose). There will be live musical entertainment. Cash donations are appreciated and will benefit the **Women's Center** and **Stone Soup**. The party is open to all.

OF INTEREST TO ALL

Writing Retreat for Women: Norcroft, a project of **Harmony Women's Fund** has been established to provide space and time for women writers to concentrate fully on their craft. This is a writing retreat, not a workshop.

There are no instructors. **Norcroft** is located on the **North Shore of Lake Superior** and offers residencies of one to four weeks for four women at a time. Each writer has a private room in the lodge, as well as a writing shed in the woods. Residencies, including lodging and food, are provided at no cost to residents. 1995 residencies are available from April 29-October 28. For more info and application forms, contact: **Norcroft**, P.O. Box 300105, Minneapolis, MN 55403, or call: (612) 377-8431



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DEAR AGNES

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT LOVE,
RELATIONSHIPS & PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Dear Agnes,

I know your column is for people who have problems, but I'm writing to give your readers encouragement.

My lover and I have our spates, just as every other couple, but nothing we don't work out before going to sleep at night. We've both had previous relationships. We've both pulled through addictions, abuse, abandonment issues and had given up on ever finding that special someone.

When we met it was as if we'd known each other forever. It was as if destiny stepped in and took over. There were alot of factors standing in our way though. We lived in different States, one of us had relapsed, we both had financial ties with previous relationships and many other things, but everything worked out.

When I'm sad, she makes me smile. When we have problems, we help each other through them. When I'm scared about things, she makes me feel safe.

There is someone out there for each of us that makes that perfect balance for all of our imperfections. You don't have to make the pieces of life's puzzle fit, they'll all fall into place when you least expect it (and you never have to accept wooden nickels).

In closing, I'd like to say Happy Anniversary (Dec. 4) and thanks to my knight in shining armor for making my life complete. From your Angel, I love

you with all my heart.

**Unbelievably Happy
Jackson, Mississippi**

Dear Happy,

Thanks for sharing your anniversary with us. What an inspiring letter. It's so nice to hear from someone who is happy. I wish you many more happy anniversaries.

Dear Agnes,

Where are all the feminine women? I have just started going out to the bars after a ten year relationship ended, and all I see are a bunch of butches.

I'm not attracted to someone who looks like myself. If the feminine women are not going to the bars, how do you recognize them at work, shopping, the movies, etc... Maybe someone could come up with a universal sign like rubbing your stomach while patting your head at the same time. If you do it and they do it back, you know they are a lesbian and then all you have to do is get up the nerve to approach them.

If you do see a femme in the bar and you are not a good dancer, what is another way to approach her?

Maybe your femme readers could help me by writing with some of their ideas.

Sincerely,

**LOOKING FOR FEMMES
Dallas, TX**

Dear Looking,

I can't believe that, living in Dallas, you can't find any femme women. Maybe they could all have a tattoo stamped on their forehead or carry a purse with "lesbian" printed on the sides in four-inch letters. Maybe there are lots of femme women out there and you just can't see them. Maybe you could get special glasses to spot them. Or maybe you're just too damned picky.

Whatever the case — when you find one, you can offer to buy her a drink,

ask to read her palm, or compliment her on her dress and pumps. If you can't manage any of these, try taking dance lessons.

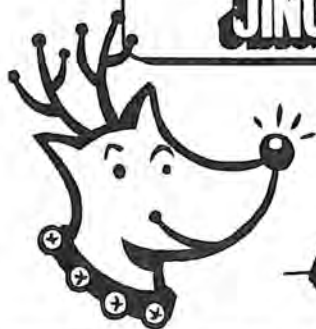


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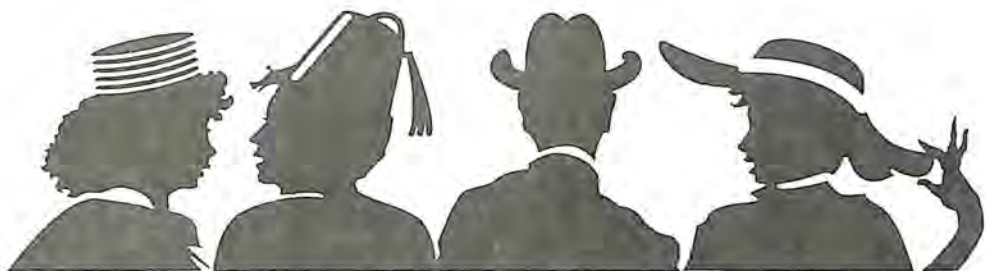
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Millinery Outlook For Spring/Summer 1995

by Karen Easterwood

When I was a little girl I always looked forward to winter. Every winter had the potential of bringing magic. Snow. For all I knew, it might be the year when it would snow the way it did in the books I read. Or snow and make it look like Wide World of Sports when they showed ski jumping events. It didn't matter that I had to watch on an old black and white television, the picture almost as snowy as the venue. I was there every Saturday in hopes of seeing those guys zoom off that hill.

I didn't quite get climatic zones as a kid. So on the infrequent occasions it snowed in Fort Worth, I can remember my almost frantic excitement. I'd sit by my bedroom window watching the scanty

flakes drift through the backyard light. Certain, if I just tried hard enough, I could will it to snow through the night. And sometimes it worked. There might be all of two or three inches on the ground in the morning. And when I would finally be allowed out, swaddled (the baby Jesus should be grateful he didn't live with my mother) to the point of near immobility, I would struggle to keep up with the other kids. Unable to bend at the elbows or knees, I was so effectively hobbled by clothing that I may as well have stayed indoors.

But I've never quit looking for that winter day when it might snow. It just doesn't happen often enough to avoid feeling trapped, when weekend after

dreary weekend is rainy and cold. The wife wants to get out and ride her bicycle. She gets surly. I want to get the Christmas lights down (I think it's really tack when you leave them out too long after New Year's Eve) but the weather has been so vile I've had to put it off again. I get surly.

It's not exactly depressing, but it sure can be irritating. But that's how winter is. Inevitable. So relax and enjoy it the way we do. By planning a summer vacation.

Having something bright and sunny to look forward to makes the alarm going off at five-thirty in the morning five days a week a little more palatable. And reservations are important. They make the vacation real. And due to where we vacation, reservations make our vacation possible. The place books so far in advance we will have had our reservations for over a year when we finally get there this spring.

And by we, I don't mean to mislead anyone. It's not just the wife and myself. We vacation with friends whenever possible. I enjoy seeing my friends as charmed by a sunset as I am. And I like knowing we all shared that Marty Stoufferish moment when we stood in silent amazement and watched the mountain lion mother lead her two cubs across the Rio Grande and back into Mexico.

For the most part, we've vacationed over the past ten years with the same couple, Bob and Terry. It works great for us because even in the most perfect of relationships (and of course, ours are) there's always going to be one of you who's more frisky than the other. In our set of circumstances, my wife and Terry are the ones always breaking out in a rash to be doing something. So

they put on their helmets and go racing around park roads on their bikes or rent a canoe and paddle around whatever lake we happen to be camping by.

Bob and I compliment each other by our attention to detail. Our chairs are placed just so, adjusted just right, drinks at hand, we settle in to lounge. We read, we chat, we nap, ostensibly watching the dogs.

Best of all, everyone takes home what they envisioned their vacation was to be.

By 1986, when we went camping in Fort Davis State Park, the four of us were like a well honed camping machine. The act of camping was an art and we had it down pat. Comfortably sharing our little jokes about erecting "pleasure domes," we pitched our respective tents.

Alas, the pleasure domes were in serious trouble the entire time we were there. Threatening to roll off like large nylon tumbleweeds if enough weight weren't kept inside. We'd fought a lot of enemies in our camping forays; storms, heat, flies, fire ants. But the constant, unrelenting wind of the Davis Mountains was a whole new challenge. One of the reasons we'd chosen Ft. Davis was because none of us had ever spent anytime in West Texas. There's so much out there, we had a long list of things to do. One of our "must do's" was the Marfa Lights (If you don't know what they are, ask someone else.) So we drove out one evening and yes, we saw them. We also saw one of those green highway department signs on the way to Marfa. It was innocent enough; "Big Bend National Park 100 miles." We talked it over that night after looking at the map and decided that as long as we were so close we should go. The

OOPS!

We Goofed. We failed to identify the author of the article "The Bar: 12 Years Later" in the November issue of Dimensions. The author is: (drum roll) **Karen Easterwood**, who also authored this month's article. Our sincere apologies to Ms. Easterwood for our mistake.

next morning we set off on a flying trip to and through Big Bend National Park. A one day trip that drew at us like a magnet until we were able to get back for a far longer stay the next year, and the year after, and all the years since.

If you haven't been there, I don't think I'm adequate to describe the absolute beauty of the solitude. It's a very stark, real place. Where mountains float like cool flags of color above the hot, white floor of the cactus clad desert. For those of you who know what I'm talking about, then we'll just share a nod of understanding. Because there's really no way to put Big Bend into words.

And it's funny, it seems we're always hearing of other women who share our fascination for the park. But ladies, as God is my witness, I've never seen you when we've been there. Granted, we're only there for two of the fifty-two weeks available, but there seem to be such numbers of us that I'm amazed that I (or Bob for that matter) haven't spotted one of you by now.

So, I've thought about it. What if all us lesbians who flock to Big Bend on vacation order one of those rainbow flag baseball hats from the "Shocking Grey" catalog. It's impossible to do Big Bend without a hat, so why not wear

one of those? It would be quite covert unless you knew what was what. And, I think the hats might help us be a little more comfortable in approaching each other in an out of context setting.

So look for us if you're out that way in early spring. We'll be using those reservations I mentioned earlier when we claim our cabin up in the Basin. We always make a one day event of Lajitas for lunch followed by a photo ramble of the Terlingua cemetery and that neat old hotel, so maybe we'll bump into each other somewhere. Besides having a camera and a pair of binoculars draped around my neck like every other tourist, I'll be wearing my hat. And I'll be looking for yours.



INTRODUCTIONS



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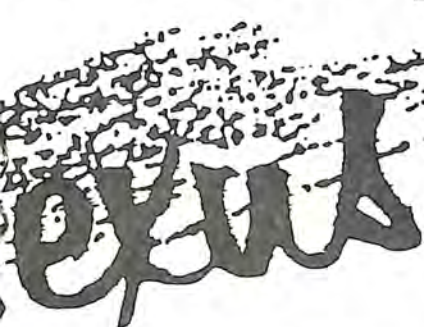
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WHAT A WORLD, WHAT A WORLD

1994 RETROSPECTIVE

BY NANCY FORD

1994. What a year, what a year — if ever there was a year full of ups and downs, it was this one. Ask Heidi Fleiss. Ask Kato Kaylin. Ask Mitt Romney. And what a life, what a life....Forthwith are the high points, from one lesbian's perspective:

JANUARY • Greeted the New Year while on the road, doing a show for a bunch of Austin queers. Kissed a man at midnight for luck. Don't worry — it was a gay man. Spent the rest of the month realizing that I had indeed reached the year in which I would turn forty years old. There was no looking back now. After I stopped screaming, I celebrated by shopping for cosmetic surgeons for me, and a European boarding school for my inner child. Welcome to 1994.

FEBRUARY • Valentine's Day month. Spent the month in hiding.

MARCH • IKEA, a Swedish-based international furniture and decor chain introduces television commercials featuring a gay male couple discussing their purchase of home furnishings. Moments later ABC airs an episode of Roseanne entitled "I Feel the Same Way," in which Roseanne Connor visits a gay bar, in which a loose-lipped lesbian, played by Mariel Hemingway, plants a kiss on her. As a direct result of being influenced by the media, I respond by buying a new couch, and purchasing my own video copy of *Personal Best*.

APRIL • April Fool's Day month. Chose to spend month hiding again. Instead, opened for the fabulous Flirtations, renowned a Capella 4-man singing group, in a benefit performance for Houston's Assistance Fund. Discussed the feasibility of becoming an honorary "Flirt." Later decide the required hormone treatments would be cost-prohibitive and hinder my progress in getting in touch with my female side.

MAY • Spent month sleeping in preparation for summer.

JUNE • Performed at the 1994 Gay & Lesbian Pride Rally in Houston. Wept as I watched fireworks explode over hundreds of gays and lesbians in Buffalo Bayou Park, united together in the spirit of a cause they have no choice but to stand for. Performed in conjunction with Stonewall 25 Cultural Festival in New York City. Wept as I watched fireworks exploding over thousands of gays and lesbians at Yankee Stadium at the closing ceremonies for Gay Games IV. Avoided street vendor hotdogs and plaquard-waving Fundamentalist tourists. Also spent time with Rose Troche and Guin Turner, the producer/writers/star of *Go Fish*, the "ground breaking new film about life and love," as Goldwyn refers to it. Was encouraged that finally a lesbian film was available that didn't portray that two women be drunk, drugged or mentally ill before they could achieve any level of intimacy together.

JULY • While preparing for an interview with her, kept Melissa Etheridge waiting on hold while I gathered enough composure to remember how a telephone works. *Speak into one end of the receiver, Nancy, and you'll hear her voice coming through the other end.* Modern technology.

AUGUST • During the month of August, my life was dominated by straight women. But oh, such straight women! One afternoon was spent talking to songstress Sara McLachlan about flying labias, trying to convince her that she really is a lesbian, regardless of what her boyfriend has to say. Don't laugh — it almost worked. August's other het-fem preoccupation was sharing the stage with former *Saturday Night Live*-er, Julia "It's Pat!" Sweeney at Houston's Plaza 9200 to raise funds for supplies distributed through AIDS Foundation — Houston's new *Respect Yourself: Safer Sex for Lesbians* workshops. Read on.

SEPTEMBER • Spent month sleeping in recuperation from summer. Woke up long enough to rejoice that Colorado's long battle against very anti-gay legislation prohibiting protection of gay rights had been declared unconstitutional by the State's Supreme Court. This not only allowed for much more pleasant dreams on my part, but I'm sure Colorado homosexuals are sleeping a bit easier now, too.

OCTOBER • Learned that a lesbian couple on the verge of a break-up when one of them tested HIV-positive, found the confidence to stay together upon attending one of AIDS Foundation-Houston's *Respect Yourself: Safer Sex for Lesbians* workshops, initiated with Julia Sweeney's benefit performance

in August. What do you know — it works.

NOVEMBER • Paid a surprise Thanksgiving visit to my family in Ohio. Taught my infant nephew how to do a head slap and the accompanying woo-woo-woo-woo, (a la Curly from the Three Stooges). Left other relatives with similar lasting impressions, but that's another story for another column. Chastised my father for never becoming president of the United States so that I too, might enjoy governorship of one of the nation's most powerful states, regardless of my ineptitude and lack of political experience.

DECEMBER • Prepared for 1995.



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THIS MONTH, TASHA SUMNER INTRODUCES:

Holiday Reading List

Body Guard by Claire McNab

Painted Moon by Karin Kallmaker

Cactus Love: Short Stories by Lee Lynch

The Mysterious Naiad: Various Authors

This month we'll take a look at four new books from Naiad Press. Two are novels and two are collections of short stories that are perfect for reading during those short breaks between holiday shopping trips.

We'll start with the novels. The first is **Body Guard** by Claire McNab, the sixth in the Detective Inspector Carol Ashton Mystery series. Carol has recovered physically, from a gunshot wound. However, she is having a hard time dealing with the emotional aftershocks. Then she is given the unsavory assignment of safeguarding the notorious American feminist, Marla Strickland.

Marla has already had one of her staff killed by a letter bomb and is receiving threats from various right-wing groups in Australia. Although Marla doesn't particularly want a body guard and has already hired a private security firm, she finally comes to accept Carol. The

danger grows when a group calling itself Wellspring states that it intends to see Marla dead before she leaves Australia. This is an exciting mystery with a big surprise ending. Claire McNab's novels are always good, and **Body Guard** is no exception.

Next, we'll look at **Painted Moon** by Karin Kallmaker. This romance revolves around architectural intern Jackie Frakes and artist Leah Beck. Leah is having a hard time dealing with the death of her lover when she finds Jackie trapped in a snowstorm near her mountain cabin. Jackie is in an unsatisfactory romance with a man and locked into a job she hates. When Jackie shows up in her life, she gives Leah new inspiration to paint after a two year hiatus.

The story gets more complicated from there. Jackie thinks she might be gay, even though she hasn't done anything but kiss Leah. Leah sleeps with her agent, moves back to the city and

prepares to exhibit a series of paintings that will reveal her to the world as a lesbian. Misunderstanding upon misunderstanding stand in the way of their ever being together.

This is a very enticing romance with a series of twists and turns that will keep you turning pages.

Now, on to the short stories. First, we'll look at **Cactus Love**, a collection of stories by Lee Lynch (author of **Home in Your Hands** and **Morton River Valley**). Lynch writes a good novel, but she writes excellent short stories. This particular collection brings back many of the characters from her past novels and short stories. The stories are good, well-developed and easy reading. The only problem I have is with Lynch's old-fashioned notions of butch and femme. Her characters tend to fit very snugly into the slick-haired dyke who works in a manly job and the well-coiffed femme who cooks all the meals. Having said that, I will say that her characterizations don't interfere with her storytelling skills. My particular favorite is the first story in the book, "Truck Stop Woman." The truck-driving woman whose long-long-term lover has passed away finds a little solace with a truck-stop prostitute. (No, it isn't sex - the story doesn't reach that point - it's the notion that you should take love where you can find it.)

Next is **The Mysterious Naiad**, a collection of mystery/romance stories by Naiad authors including Claire McNab, Penny Hayes, Lauren Wright Douglas and many others. The book is edited by Katherin V. Forrest and Barbara Grier. There are some great stories in this collection. My favorite was about a woman who receives a

subscription renewal card from "Ferret" magazine, only to find out that she must subscribe or lose her lover. I found this collection to be much more intriguing and well done than either **The Romantic Naiad** or **The Erotic Naiad** collections.

All the above books are available from your local women's bookstore or by mail from Naiad Press, Inc., P.O. Box 10543, Tallahassee, FL 32302. **The Body Guard, Painted Moon** and **Cactus Love** are \$9.95, **The Mysterious Naiad** is \$14.95. Please include 15% postage and handling. Complete Naiad catalogs are available upon request.



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POETRY

FROM OUR READERS

On the threshold of a dream,
long ago lost and forgotten,
viewed through misty gauze of cotton,
Hazy borders, frayed and worn,
threadbare, thoughts of love forlorn.
Some places tiny holes are torn,
and memories have fallen through,
of things I used to do with you.

Now tears, in steady rivulets,
course down my face in salty wet.
Revive the past, I'd soon forget.
Retrieve an image in my mind,
of love I thought I'd never find.
A ghostly shadow makes me cry
apparition of better days gone by.

Lonesome hugs me like a shroud.
I moan and call your name out loud.
Whimpering like a little kitten,
I taste the bitter fruit I've bitten,
remembering when I was first smitten.

We were young, without a care,
said you'd follow anywhere.
I liked your smile, you liked my hair.
We loved, we played, we shared, we fought.
Life lessons were gradually taught.

But now I ponder all I've learned.
I question, was this heartache earned?
And wonder how your life has turned.
Tug-of-war and to-and-fro
round and round, these thoughts now go.
I feel I'll never really know
Where hearts divided long ago.

-Cynthia Francis
Garland, TX

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QUIZ

Do The Holidays STRESS You Out?



Even if you love all the hype and activity surrounding the holidays, they can still be a stressful time. If you don't like dealing with your family, spending money or social obligations, it can be even more stressful. To find out what your stress level is this time of year, answer the following questions.

1. When it comes to shopping, you:
 - a. love it, anytime of year.
 - b. like it when you know what you want and where to find it.
 - c. hate it, hate it, hate it.
2. Your family relationships could be described as:
 - a. wonderful.
 - b. okay most of the time.
 - c. strained.

3. You would be happiest if holiday

- hype started:
- a. in July.
 - b. when it does now, in October.
 - c. on December 20th.

4. You start your Christmas shopping _____ and have it finished by _____.

- a. at the January clearance sales / August
- b. in September or October / December
- c. 6am Christmas Eve / midnight Christmas Eve

5. The holidays mean alot of social engagements, you:

- a. love and attend them all.
- b. enjoy your friends, but dislike the company/business parties.
- c. hate planned events. You prefer impromptu get-togethers.

6. When it comes to crowds and traffic, you:

- a. don't mind them.
- b. can tolerate them, but prefer to avoid them.
- c. can't stand them, they make you feel crazy.

7. Your holiday spending is usually:
- a. within the budget you set for yourself.
 - b. a little over-budget, but not enough to break you.
 - c. horribly over budget, you end up paying on it until April.

SCORING

Give yourself points as follows:
 4 points for every "A" answer.
 6 points for every "B" answer.
 10 points for every "C" answer.

If you scored:

28-41 points

The holidays don't normally stress you out. You enjoy the hectic pace and really get into the spirit of the season. You handle the demands on your time and finances very well and your advance planning gives you time to relax. However, you may have a real "holiday letdown" come January. Try to schedule some fun activities for the first of the year. You need something to look forward to past New Year's Eve.

42-55 points

Although you handle the holidays fairly well, you do tend to get stressed out by all the activity. Poor planning may add to your stress as holiday spending and social engagements mount up. Try to start your holiday shopping earlier when you can take advantage of sales and

avoid holiday crowds. Say no to some of the invitations you receive, and remember that it will all be over soon enough and you'll have plenty of time to relax.

56-70 points

You tend to get very stressed out this time of year. Just the thought of all those parties, all that money flying out of your pockets and having to deal with your family is enough to raise your blood pressure. Your anxiety may cause you to put things off until the last minute which only causes your stress level to climb even higher. Try following the advice above and be sure to schedule some time for yourself. Get a massage, go on a leisurely walk, or just plan some time to do nothing.





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PHOTO: RAHIER ELSTERMANN OF POP AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

HOROSCOPE

WHAT'S IN THE STARS FOR YOU THIS MONTH?

ARIES

December - You'll have to keep out of the limelight right before Christmas so that you can finish a project at work before the holidays. Once you're finished, watch out! Going out and having friends over dominate the rest of the month.

January - Your personal life is looking up for 1995, but you'll have to take a serious look at how you handle your personal finances. Now is a good time to sit down and figure out a budget for the coming year. A hot new romance may come on the scene this month, it may not last, but it will be fun while it does!

TAURUS

December - A holiday bonus or raise could lift your spirits right now, but don't be tempted to spend it all! You may be asked to host a party or assume leadership for an organization that you belong to. Your love life gets a boost around the 20th.

January - The trick this year is to get off to a good start, and it looks like you'll have all the right opportunities as January rolls around. Home, business and especially love are all looking up this month. Now is a good time to sit down and set some goals for your career and personal life.

GEMINI

December - You feel short-tempered this holiday season. Try to control yourself or you could make everyone's

Christmas miserable. Social activities could bring back your good will, so take advantage of all those invitations. After Christmas, you feel more relaxed and you are ready for a festive New Year's celebration!

January - You may feel like everyone is picking on you, particularly at work, as the new year gets under way. The feeling will pass by the 10th. Try to keep your temper under control, it's better to lose a few battles than to lose friends. After the 15th, things smooth out and you're able to get everything back on track at work and at home.

CANCER

December - Focus on your work in the weeks before the holidays and your lifestyle could change for the better after the first of the year. There will be plenty of time for social activities after hours. Pay holiday bills before the 1st so you can have a relaxing New Year's.

January - If you made any resolutions, you'll have to work hard to keep them this year. Some goals you set for yourself in past years may have been set too high and you'll have to adjust them to more realistic terms now. A raise or promotion at work could be just what you need to lift your spirits after the stress of the holidays.

LEO

December - Your career is spotlighted and a raise or bonus could bring the money you need to make this a special Christmas. You may be in a mood to

reminisce during the holiday season and having old friends and family around you is just what the doctor ordered to relieve some of the stress you've been feeling.

January - 1995 may start out a bit confusing for Leo. Conflicting orders from the boss and friends who say one thing and do another may be making you crazy. A platonic friendship may be heating up this month and the romance you find could be just what you've dreamed of. Be very careful when driving this month, your potential for accidents is very high.

VIRGO

December - A relationship that has been on the rocks could take an unexpected turn for the better and lift your spirits for the holidays. Finances are also on an upswing and you can afford something special for a loved one.

January - An argument with a friend or family member could quickly escalate into a major war. Try your best to work out a compromise. Keep a low profile until the 20th and that should help in relieving tensions. Someone you've helped in the past will come back to help you in an unexpected way late in the month.

LIBRA

December - Travel is on the agenda during the holiday season, it may be a working vacation, but that doesn't mean it won't be fun! A new romance could brighten your social life and new friends come into the picture that can make your holidays happy.

January - Any partnerships that you

involve yourself in this month will be around for a long time. Romantic commitments could last for years, as could business partnerships set up this month. You will want to work these commitments out in writing or sit down and talk about it in detail. Co-workers seem easier to get along with right now.

SCORPIO

December - All work and no play makes Scorpio a very unhappy girl right now. Everyone is getting into the holiday spirit and you have tied yourself down with work. Try to sneak in some social activities after hours, you may be tired, but this time of year is short-lived and you don't want to miss out!

January - A temper tantrum early in January could cause you problems throughout the month. Yelling won't solve the problem. Keep your mouth shut and things will solve themselves in time. Your career is looking up after the 10th, a raise or promotion may not be in the cards for several months, but the attention you get from higher-ups is definitely working for your benefit.

SAGITTARIUS

December - All that hard work you've been doing lets up so you can enjoy a holiday rest. A long trip at Christmas may be just what the doctor ordered to help you relieve some stress. Keep a cool head when it comes to romance, you could be in over your head.

January - You'll need to set some goals about what you want to do with your career during the first part of January. Tax time is a few months away but some organization right now

could save you some heartache later on. Romance is put on the back burner this month as more pressing matters take your attention.

CAPRICORN

December - Social obligations could be getting you down right now. You want some peace and quiet to work out some personal or family problem that has been bothering you. Turn down a few invitations and focus on your problem. Once it is solved, you'll be ready to get back in the holiday party scene.

January - Don't give in to the temptation to go off on a wild spending spree or extravagant vacation right now. You could wind up in financial trouble for the rest of the year. Take the time to express your feelings to your loved ones, it will keep them happy and make you feel more secure. Say no to all business deals after the 20th, someone may be taking you for a ride.

AQUARIUS

December - You may have a tendency to go overboard on holiday spending if you don't keep a close eye on your pocketbook. Small inexpensive gifts will be just as appreciated. Work gets easier in time to allow you to enjoy the holiday social scene and you've never been happier to get out of the house.

January - The first part of January is a good time to relax and make plans for the coming year. However, some Aquarians will be so busy they won't have time to sit down, much less relax. If your love life has been good for awhile, it can only get better, if it hasn't been up to par, now is the time to get things moving again.

PISCES

December - Money is the main focus in the weeks before Christmas. With a little work and thought, you could hit the jackpot! After the 22nd, your focus switches to family and loved ones. A love relationship that has fallen on hard times recently could take on a new glow. Enjoy.

January - Taking criticism personally could lead to some anger on your part during the first part of January. Try to control your temper and take this criticism as it was meant — constructively. You may be looking for a romantic commitment right now, but don't count on getting what you want.



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XTC • 9212 Buffalo Spdw. • 666-3356

organizations

AIDS Foundation • 3927 Essex Lane • 623-6796

AIDS HOTLINE • c/o Switchboard • 529-3211

Gay/Lesbian Students University of Houston • 4800 Calhoun • 529-3211

Gay/Lesbian Switchboard • PO Box 66591 77266 • 529-3211

Houston Gay & Lesbian Parents • 980-7995

Houston Gay Political Caucus • P.O. Box 66664 77266 • 521-1000

Integrity • P.O. Box 66008 77266-6008 • 432-0414

Kingdom Community Church • 614 E. 19th • 862-7533

Lambda ALANON • 1214 Joanne • 521-9772

Lesbian/Gay Students-Univ. Houston Clear Lake • 2700 Bay Area 77058

LTN Houston • Lesbian Teacher Network

PO Box 1835 • Bellaire, TX 77402 • 529-3211

Metropolitan Community Church Of The Resurrection

1919 Decatur • 861-9149

Montrose Counseling Center • 900 Lovett #203 77006 • 529-0037

Montrose Pool League/Billiards • P.J. 863-8482

P-Flag (Parents/Friends Lesbians/Gays) • 867-9020

PWA Coalition - Houston • 1475 W. Gray #163 • 522-5428

SORA (Sex or Relationship Addicts Anonymous) lesbian group • 523-9338

The Women's Group • 529-5871

Womynspace • P.O. Box 980601 77098-0601

Women's Softball League • 6431 Pineshade • 868-6256

LUBBOCK, TX (area code 806)

businesses

Distinct Travel • 793-8374

organizations

Lubbock Lesbian/Gay Alliance & Wild Wilde West Prod.

P.O. Box 64746 79464 • 791-4499

Community Outreach Center & Outreach AA (Tues. & Thurs. @ 8pm) • 102 N. Ave. S • 762-1019

MCC Lubbock • 5502 34th St. • 792-5562

P-Flag (Parents/Friends Lesbians/Gays) • 799-8529

South Plains AIDS Resource Center (SPARC)

4204-B 50th St. 79413 • 1-800-627-7079 • 796-7068

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian/Gay Concerns

PO Box 1021 • Evanston, IL 60204

AIDS Action Council • 729 Eighth St. S.E. Suite 200

Washington, DC 20003 • (202) 547-3101

AIDS 800 • 1-800-221-7044

Conference For Catholic Lesbians

PO Box 436, Planetarium Station • New York, NY 10024

GLAAD/USA • 80 Varick St. #3E • NY, NY 10013

Hate Crime Line • 1-800-347-HATE

Gay & Lesbian Parents Coalition International (GLPCI)

PO Box 50360, Washington, DC 20091 • (202) 583-8029

Lesbian Mothers' National Defense Fund

PO Box 21567 • Seattle, WA 98111 • (206) 325-2643

Lesbian Teachers Network (LTN)

PO Box 638 • Solon, IA 52333

National Gay Alliance for Young Adults, Inc.

PO Box 190426 • Dallas, TX 75219 • (214) 307-7203

National Gay/Lesbian Clearinghouse

666 Broadway 4th Floor • NY, NY 10012

National Gay/Lesbian Task Force

1517 U Street NW • Washington D.C. 20009 • 202-332-6483

Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-Flag) • 1-800-4-FAMILY

The Fund for Human Dignity

666 Broadway 4th Floor • NY, NY 10012

NEW ORLEANS, LA (area code 504)

club & accommodations

Charlene's • 940 Elysian Fields • 945-9328

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK (area code 405)

organizations

Oasis the Community Center

2135 NW 39th 73112 • 525-AIDS

Herland Sister Resources, Inc.

2312 NW 39th 73112 • 521-9696

SAN ANGELO, TX (area code 915)

organizations

P-Flag (Parents/Friends Lesbians/Gays) • 944-4323

Concho Valley Gay/Lesbian Alliance

P.O. Box 750 76902 • 653-2956

SAN ANTONIO, TX (area code 210)

clubs

Bonham Exchange • 411 Bonham • 224-9219

Nexus San Antonio • 8021 Pinebrook • 341-2818

organizations

Deaf Rainbow • 804-1904 TTY

Dignity/San Antonio • 202 N. St. Mary's • 349-3632

Integrity/San Antonio

PO Box 150006 78212 • 684-4920

P-Flag (Parents/Friends Lesbians/Gays) • 822-4135

River City Living Metropolitan Community Church

202 Holland 78212 • 822-1121

Lambda Students Center • 1140 W. Woodlawn Ave.

LISA (Lesbian Information SA) • 828-LISA (5472)

SALGA - San Antonio Lesbian/Gay Assembly • 733-7300

SALSA - San Antonio Lambda Students Alliance

PO Box 12715 78212 • SALSA Line 733-1225

San Antonio AIDS Foundation

PO Box 120113 78212-9313

San Antonio Tavern Guild • 822-2823

SHERMAN, TX (area code 903)

organizations

AIDS Resource Center of Tethoma • 813-1272 or 800-525-6381

Alliance for Life • PO Box 1695 75091 • 892-9049

HIV/AIDS Services • PO Box 1695 75091 • 463-7258

WACO, TX (area code 817)

organizations

P-Flag (Parents/Friends Lesbians/Gays) • 750-7211

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BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

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M 001 111 081

University of the Center

The Graffiti Page

M.F.M.
Happy Birthday
I ♡ U, Sweet ♡
Love L.V.T.

Nita,
Thinking of you,
♡ Me



Killer~
Getting to know you
is a terrific thing to be
doing. I look forward to
doing more of it.
Barbara



K&R ~ OUR DOGS LOVE YOU FOR
TAKING CARE OF THEM AND
SO DO WE!
C. B. F. & J. S.

DEAR BABE,
I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS. I DO KNOW THAT I
WILL ALWAYS LOVE AND BE HERE FOR YOU. I STILL NEED YOU
I WISH YOU HAPPY HOLIDAYS, I WILL BE VERY LONELY
WITHOUT YOU. I HOPE THAT WE CAN START THE YEAR WITH
OPENESS AND HONESTY AND FIND THAT SPIRITUAL BOND
AGAIN AS BEST FRIENDS. LOVE, C.B.

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