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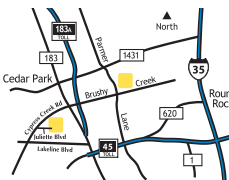
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The Future Is Glacial

Revisiting change in rocky times

BY LOUIS BLACK

Introduction

This is the last issue of the year. The next *Austin Chronicle* will be dated for 2010. Once again, we are here out on the dance floor with the exact same tired moves, dressed in the very clothes we wore last time. This is a traditional column, a reunion of sorts.

Not disputing the premise that life is difficult and uncertain, the future is unknown, while the present seems monstrously out of control: We are not living in “the best of times,” but what if we also aren’t living in “the worst of times”?

Without trying to argue that the world and modern life are any better than their most severe critics charge: What if things are now better than they were? Not everything for everybody, of course, but in general: Rather than sinking to the depths, getting dumbed down, or being close to the end of days, are things really just a bit brighter than they were in the past?

Usually, when I offer this grounded optimism, suggesting that times are better than they’ve been before, there has been a lot of response, most of it vicious and contemptuous.

This may be because it is not enough for many to just describe the enormous problems facing all of us, but that this darkness must have been deliberately created as a way of destroying the world as we’ve known it.

The argument espousing this view goes something like this: “It used to be better; people were more civilized and far better educated. Life in this country is not anywhere near as good as it used to be in the past. Historically, Americans had it better than they do now, but that’s because they were uncommonly courageous, strongly committed to freedom, and absolutely militant about protecting their constitutionally guaranteed rights. They had rights then, as well, and those were respected by the government. Corporations didn’t control the world, and politicians were more honest.”

Response

Crap! Crap, crap, crap.

This is based on a fantastical version of history, a Norman Rockwell version of American life: small towns, friendly neighbors, doors left unlocked, and community sings on the weekend. Even at its most limited, the take is distorted, saturated with nostalgia while ignoring history. Without even going into detail, one can just point out that this idyllic life was certainly not the one lived by minorities, immigrants, the rural poor, and the lower economic classes.

There is more than enough tragedy, difficulty, injustice, disease, and disaster to cause a pessimistic hopelessness about life without insisting that things are not only at rock bottom but are getting dramatically worse. It isn’t necessary to feel that there is a progressively escalating deterioration, with everything going rapidly to hell, to acknowledge that the world is facing all kinds of hardships. It is necessary, however, if one is justifying self-righteous patriotism and vicious, anti-government politics while advocating the religion of hatred and blame; to do that, one needs to argue that this collapse is due to an intentional, consciously orchestrated strategy initiated by a powerful, secret elite in pursuit of their own selfish evil ends – which may well include killing and/or enslaving most of the population.

This view privileges one’s own fear and paranoia, allowing for the deepest abhorrence of all politicians and most citizens. Given how evil they are and corrupt their goals, in this view, the most violent response is required. Instead of the sheeple in denial, who prefer wishy-washy mulling and no action rather than risking the wrath of the powerful, this calls for true patriots, willing to fight and die, following leaders who do not hesitate to expose and denounce evildoers.

This constant good-guy-vs.-bad-guy dichotomy includes an ever-resilient, ridiculously utopian worldview – something along the following lines: Bad things happen because of evil people. When they are vanquished, common sense will lead to harmonious, corruption-free politics. Since everything is viewed from one’s own perspective, there is no need to worry about abuse of power, corruption, or poor governing because each one knows that they are better and more moral people than all our current leaders.

Both Sides Now

A constitutional republic is an ugly, difficult, frustrating form of government. The Constitution is deliberately designed to hinder extreme politics and radical change, slowing it down if not stopping it.

Many people who swear allegiance to the Constitution seem to want to ignore that it not only protects one’s own rights but ensures that other folks’ rights are protected as well. The demand for extremes does not come from evil people or malicious forces but from all of us, both those on the left and those on the right. When Barack Obama was running for president, as much as he was hated for his politics by many on the right, there were also many on the left who had issues with him. They felt there was no chance under his leadership for radical change, that instead his administration would be more of the same.

Whenever politicians are described as “completely committed to their beliefs and unwilling to compromise their principles,” rather than being a sign of integrity or patriotism, this suggests that there will be a failure to govern. When any one of you gets mad at a politician for compromising or acting against what you imagined to be his or her beliefs, you are stepping away from the concepts of the Constitution.

The past administration of President George W. Bush pursued truly radical changes in our government. Centralizing

power in the executive branch and insisting on ideological loyalty from bureaucrats, it also ignored all the traditional bipartisan decencies of governing. As radical as it was, many radical right-wingers were disappointed that it didn’t go even further in instituting changes. It didn’t go very far, but it went more than far enough in its embrace of partisan extremes.

Now, many Americans found this excess troubling and offensive. Some of them also believe that certain situations in this country are so bad that radical change is required – not the bad, mean-spirited radical changes of the Bush administration but rather progressive, good radical changes. Well, the problem there is that citizens whose ideas and beliefs you despise are just as protected and empowered as those you like. When you go after an honorable extreme, it is just as damaging to the Constitution as is the same action by people with opposing, very different politics.

Spoiler Alert!: Often when I offer arguments such as those in this column, folks write in to accuse me of base hypocrisy. I keep lamenting that it seems discussions have become too charged, that no matter how extreme the disagreements or emotional the hostility, it doesn’t mean those with different ideas are evil.

I believe that those I disagree with are as sincere as I am. We all honestly believe in our perspective on issues and the ideas we advocate. They are not evil. I would never wish physical harm on them and would fight any attempt to deny them media access or shut them up.

I may disagree and intensely dislike their politics, but consistently blaming others is a terrible strategy. The more public discourse and dialogue, the better, even if some of it often worries, outrages, or disturbs me, seeming dangerous. The response to ideas has to be ideas.

As I wrote in a column in October of this year:

“The old Louis Black two-step: ‘Why can’t we all just get along?’ But that’s not really it. I don’t expect us to get along. ...

“Attacking the motives of others is twisted in two profound ways. It makes them evil: It’s not just that they have different ideas but that they actively want to do harm to others. The other is that by so attacking, you sanctify yourself: Presuming that you are ‘good’ to their ‘evil,’ you anoint yourself and your beliefs with holiness. ...

“[Objecting to the politics of hate] does not argue for tempering disagreement in any way. Even far surpassing the idea of principled disagreement – to think or claim someone is stupid, ill-informed, lying, blatantly disregarding information, or being a demagogue, all in pursuit of ideological goals – is not to think that he or she is a villain determined to destroy anything we hold dear. **Demonizing people allows us not just to dismiss their ideas but to murder them before they murder us.**”

The seeds of genocide are always planted the same way. One group demonizes another, insisting they are knowingly evil and planning to attack and intentionally inflict harm. This doesn’t just justify but demands a violent reaction. This is what happened in the former Yugoslavia and between the Tutsi and the Hutu. This is why Germans killed Jews and why some Southerners believed that killing civil rights workers who came South for the cause was patriotic. The easiest way to utopia is not elimination.

Holiday Good Wishes

Sure, these are rocky times, the world is dangerous and the future menacing, but still, our lives are very much what we make of them. Common to that comment are responses raising the difficulties created by all kinds of ingrained social prejudices – that there are often economic and social obstacles because of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and so on.

Despair is too convenient. Excuses may explain, but they don’t improve anything. There are many tactics available

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HOLIDAY HIATUS

The *Austin Chronicle* offices will be closed on the following days: Thursday and Friday, Dec. 24-25; Thursday, Dec. 31; and Friday, Jan. 1, 2010.

The offices will be open for regular business hours Wednesday, Dec. 23, and Monday-Wednesday, Dec. 28-30, and from Monday, Jan. 4, 2010, until we decide to take another day off (probably sometime in May).

with which to protest: Advocating change, political maneuvering, personal outreach, self-determination, and aggressive, determined ignorance are all strategies.

The best way out of oppression is liberation, not lament.

The real, profound, and widespread trouble most Americans face today is not oppression and the loss of their previously ensured rights. It is that so many of us live in a world of opportunity, where, if one is not happy nor doing what he or she wants, it is not because of the evil intervention of some secret malicious order of the Other.

So many people I know have ended up doing with their lives pretty much what they've wanted. There is still tragedy and heartbreak; there are still setbacks; there is still oppression, injustice, and all kinds of discrimination. None of these are new; all have been around for generations. Anybody who expects social, political, or economic change to be accomplished with giant steps is sadly misled. Real change is usually imperceptible.

Our lives are ours. We own our futures. There are many more opportunities for fulfilling potential and taking advantage of opportunities if one is moving forward rather than just looking back.

My thought for this holiday season is a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt: "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness." ■

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TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY

Dear Editor,

Re: "God vs. Taser: Officer Sues APD" [News, Dec. 29, 2006]: I look forward to the article in which Jordan Smith gives the defendants their opportunity to tell their side of the story and why the jury found Ramon Perez lacking in credibility and evidence to support his baseless claim. But "APD Does the Right Thing" isn't as sensational as "God vs. Taser," so it's unlikely.

Jesse Brown

[Editor's note: Sgt. Jesse Brown was a direct supervisor of probationary Officer Ramon Perez, among those who recommended his resignation or dismissal. Brown testified in Perez's trial last week; for more detail, see "APD Dismissal," p.18.]

BIASED AGAINST 'PRO-LIFERS'

Dear Editor,

Re: "Family Planning Contracts Approved" [News, Dec. 18]: I was quite astonished to read so much bias in a noneditorial news article. I know that *The Austin Chronicle* leans way to the left, so much so that it is practically parallel to the ground, which is where I wanted to leave this edition after reading your news story.

But joking aside, you would have more credence as a journalist if you pretended to be even-handed with those with whom you do not agree. "Spelman's remarks elicited a predictable chorus of boos from the dozens of anti-choice protesters."

Although you might think I am some crackpot überconservative, please note that I am a recent

graduate of the LBJ School of Public Affairs (where Spelman is a lecturer) and like to think I know a thing or two about the development of public policy, which is the arena in which this debate resides.

If you wanted to get in your shots at those "anti-choice" folks (we prefer the term "pro-life"), you could at least point out that we find abortion to be more than just "morally objectionable" — we are being forced to pay for the murder of children. (And many of us do not support the death penalty, in case you were wondering.)

Additionally and finally, Travis County is continuing a policy of making it "easier" for low-income, usually uneducated, and usually minority women to kill their own children, furthering Margaret Sanger's despicable agenda to prevent these groups from producing children in order to "better society."

"It is a vicious cycle; ignorance breeds poverty and poverty breeds ignorance. There is only one cure for both, and that is to stop breeding these things. Stop bringing to birth children whose inheritance cannot be one of health or intelligence. Stop bringing into the world children whose parents cannot provide for them. Herein lies the key of civilization." (Sanger, 1915)

In my view, the "better society" is the one in which people are welcomed and valued whatever their circumstances.

Lindsey Stringer

READING 'CHRONICLE' ONLINE

Dear Editor,

I just wanted to say how pleasing it's been to not have to seek out a print edition of the *Chronicle*; lest your staff deems this to be an insult, let me clarify. It is because over the last year or so, I've taken to reading the electronic version of each week's edition. I can download, read, then dispose of the *Chronicle* in the most environmentally friendly way possible. No trees killed, no ink on my fingers, no torn or rumpled pages, and best of all, no seeking out a recycling bin when I'm done. It's nice to have options, and kudos for offering the *Chronicle* in such a convenient format.

Eric Harwell

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

2009 THE YEAR IN CRAZY
PART THE FIRST

JAN. 11: JOE THE PLUMBER OPINES-- "I DON'T THINK JOURNALISTS SHOULD BE ALLOWED ANYWHERE NEAR WAR... I THINK MEDIA SHOULD BE ABOLISHED FROM, YOU KNOW, REPORTING!"

JAN. 20: CHIEF JUSTICE FLUBS OATH OF OFFICE; WINGNUTS FLIP OUT. OBAMA DIDN'T SAY THE MAGIC WORDS! HE'S NOT REALLY PRESIDENT!

JAN. 22: OBAMA TAKES SECOND OATH OF OFFICE-- BUT WITHOUT A BIBLE. WINGNUTS FLIP OUT. THEY DIDN'T USE THE MAGIC BOOK! HE'S STILL NOT REALLY PRESIDENT!

FEB. 24: IN HIGH-PROFILE SPEECH BOBBY JINDAL MOCKS "SOMETHING CALLED VOLCANO MONITORING." A MONTH LATER, VOLCANO ERUPTION IN ALASKA SENDS ASH CLOUDS 50,000 FEET INTO THE AIR.

MONTH OF MARCH: RIGHT-WING BLOGGERS START THREATENING TO "GO GALT." WE'LL TAKE OUR PRODUCTIVITY AND GO HOME! AMERICANS SOMEHOW RESIST URGE TO PANIC.

ALSO: WINGNUTS NOTICE THAT PRESIDENTS USE TELEPROMPTERS; APPARENTLY THIS IS NEWS TO THEM. HA HA! HIM NOT SO SMART! HIM READ WORDS OFF FUNNY SCREEN!

APRIL 9: NOT-AT-ALL CRAZY GLENN BEUR PRETENDS TO POUR GAS ON A GUY AND LIGHT HIM ON FIRE. NOT MUCH WE CAN ADD TO THAT.

APRIL 15: WINGERS CLAIM ONE MILLION ATTENDEES AT TEA PARTY PROTEST. IT WAS ONE OF THE BIGGEST RALLIES IN HUMAN HISTORY! THEY ARE ONLY OFF BY 950,000 OR SO.

APR. 16: GOV. PERRY SUGGESTS TEXAS COULD SECEDE FROM UNION. WE LOVE AMERICA SO MUCH, WE'RE READY TO DESTROY IT!

APRIL 22: CORNERED BY GUEST, SEAN HANNITY RELUCTANTLY AGREES TO BE WATERBOARDED FOR CHARITY. SURE...NO BIG DEAL... HEH HEH... NEVER FOLLOWS THROUGH.

APRIL 28: MICHELLE BACHMANN NOTES THAT LAST SWINE FLU OUTBREAK ALSO BEGAN UNDER DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT, CALLS IT "INTERESTING COINCIDENCE." ACTUALLY LAST OUTBREAK BEGAN UNDER GERALD FORD--AS IF IT REMOTELY MATTERS...

MAY 15: BILL O'REILLY WHO ROUTINELY SENDS CAMERA CREWS OUT TO HARASS PEOPLE, SAYS "AMERICANS SHOULD BE ABLE TO GO OUT...WITHOUT BEING HARASSED BY PEOPLE WITH CAMERAS!"

JUNE 16: "FAMILY VALUES" REPUBLICAN JOHN ENSIGN CAUGHT IN SEX SCANDAL. OOPS! JUNE 24: "FAMILY VALUES" REPUBLICAN MARK SANFORD CAUGHT IN SEX SCANDAL. MY BAD!

JUNE 17: HOUSE REPUBLICANS COMPARE SELVES TO IRANIAN DISSIDENTS. WE ARE JUST LIKE THEM, BUT WITH MORE SEX SCANDALS.

JUNE 29: 200+ PEOPLE SHOW UP FOR "TAKE YOUR GUN TO CHURCH DAY" IN KENTUCKY. PRAISE THE LORD AND PASS THE AMMUNITION! NEXT WEEK: MORE CRAZY!

FOOTBALL MONEY

Dear Editor,

It's great that the football team generates such a large amount of revenue for the school and for the community. And last time I checked, neither of those reasons are the purpose of the university, nor are they in its charter, which is to be a university of the first rank. What an opportunity for the university to ameliorate some of its funding problems, having such a cash cow on campus! And if running the athletics program as a business is so important, well, I never heard of a \$53 million corporation giving its CEO a \$5 million base salary. I've worked for a \$2 billion corporation where the CEO didn't make that much, even with incentives. And, I wonder what the impact of the entire university, students, and faculty is on the local economy? Come on, regents, you're acting like Wall Street bankers.

Russell Ashworth

EYES WIDE OPEN

Dear *Austin Chronicle*,

It's pleasantly surprising to read Jim Hightower encouraging people to "speak out" instead of Louis Black telling people to shut up. I've avoided reading your publication for a while out of anger at censorship and its biased reporting. Yet now, there is a faint hint of excitement as a definite shift (of opinion) has been stated, which is also noted in Michael Ventura's article ["Letters at 3am," Dec. 18].

And thank you, *Chron*, for acknowledging my recent "letter to the editor" and giving it a great caption. It (contempt) is based on personal experience. So it was liberating to see it posted so quickly and on the front page.

As Jim Hightower stated, "This is no time to be deferential. ... Stand up. Speak out." ["The Hightower Report," News, Dec. 18]. Things are happening. Too bad it took a war to open closed eyes.

But now that they are open ...

Sincerely,
Colette Michalec

Dear Internet lovers,

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AUSTINITES ARE INTERESTED

Dear Editor,
 Thank you for your coverage of the Copenhagen summit ["Austin@COP15," News, Dec. 11]. I like knowing Austinites are investing in the climate change debate and that your paper is interested in covering it.

Dan Fish

WILLING TO BE VENTURA'S REPLACEMENT

Louis,
 Please throw my hat in the ring for Michael Ventura's replacement as the *Chronicle's* ace columnist – should his number ever get called early, as was his hero's, Carlos Castaneda. And no, I have no delusions as to whether I or anyone else could fill Ventura's shoes. But I'll tell you this much: Even if I won the lotto tomorrow or sold my film script for millions in a Hollywood bidding contest that mostly only happens in the movies, I'd consider it an honor and a privilege to pick up where Ventura left off.

Now regarding Ventura's most recent column, "Conditions on the Ground" ["Letters at 3am," Dec. 18], I have one criticism. I sure wish your editors had titled it with Ventura's closing lines: "Merry fucking Christmas. We're at it again." You see, I'm of the opinion that 99.99% of Obamacans who started reading the article stopped the moment they got where Ventura was headed.

I'm a Democrat who is in the minority in believing that we should pull out of Iraq and Afghanistan immediately and provide political asylum for the

CONTINUED ON P.10



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"BIASED AGAINST 'PRO-LIFERS'"
 Tue., Dec. 17, 2009

Dear Editor:
 Thank you to Katherine Gregor and the *Chronicle* for the story ["Planning Contracts Approved" (News, Dec. 18)] I was so glad to see so much bias in a non-editorial news story. I was inspired to read about my own city's many advertising executives who would travel halfway around the world to attend the conference in Copenhagen. If a historic global agreement is reached, I'm grateful Austin is on the ground to testify upon their return as to how it will affect our city.

Brenda Thompson

Read their ruminations and check out the nifty new online design at

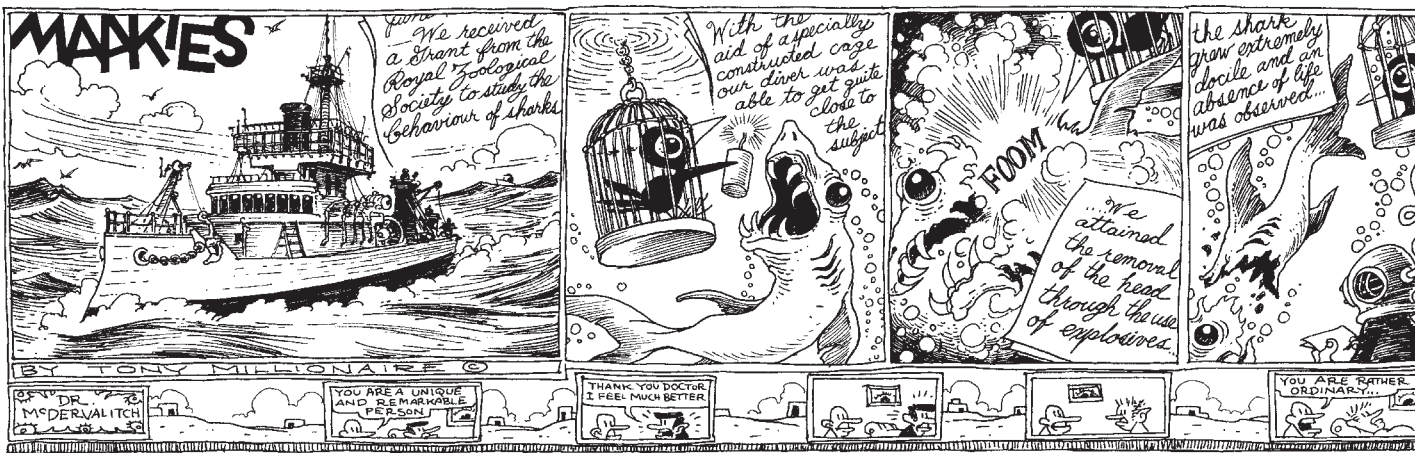
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women of both countries, whereas most everyone I know are Obamacans who, I'm convinced now more than ever, are not going to wake up on their own. And it's going to take the written equivalent of multiple electric shocks like what happens when one is struck by a cattle prod for my Obamacan friends to stop blindly worshipping decisions by President Obama that would otherwise be driving them crazy if those same decisions were being made by President Obama's predecessor, the Decider.

Charlie Ponzio

ANOTHER URBAN DESERT?

Dear Editor,

The Austin City Council authorized the completion of a construction contract (July 2009) with Austin Filter Systems to begin work on developing Roy G. Guerrero River Park. This project is part of a 1998 bond referendum. Improvements include: a memorial to Roy G. Guerrero, a performance pavilion, irrigated green space, two multi-use sport fields, a playscape, restrooms, nature trails, Great Lawn, parking, and a host of other upgrades. (Info from www.austinparks.org.)

I have been frequenting the park to document (by photographing) the wildlife (mostly birds) in this unique area. The Colorado River Preserve is across the river. A woodland swamp is adjacent to the park, along with open fields and wooded areas – a very diverse collection of eco-types in a relatively small area. The Austin Parks website proclaims it a magnificent riverfront park, the riverfront being totally undeveloped, and much of the park has reverted to a wild state.

The resident and migratory birds at Roy G. Guerrero River Park are a wonder: peregrine and merlin falcons, ringed kingfishers, raptors, ospreys, warblers, etc., and all manner of flora and fauna. The recent discovery of an undiscovered plant on an island right below the bluffs of the park is a remarkable find.

Much of this unique habitat is being altered. The maps on the Austin Parks website show that large areas will be developed. It doesn't mention any consideration for the wildlife that is currently present. These alterations and clearing will surely change the habit for the resident and migratory species.

With the recent discovery of an unknown plant in the area, I would hope that a recent inventory of flora and fauna has been completed before the OK for construction was granted. In the quest for more recreational space in Austin, it appears that little consideration is being given to the wildlife. Is Roy G. Guerrero River Park about to become Zilker East? And in turn an urban desert? So few of these wild areas exist. Its wild state is now becoming a thing of the past.

Chris DuCharme

REMINDER OF CAP MET'S PAST CLAIMS

Dear Editor,

Re: "Cap Met/Veolia War of Words Gets Nasty" [Newsdesk blog, Dec. 21]: Since none of us, yours truly included, have access to the information inside the rail project itself, it would be helpful for readers trying to decide who to trust in the "war of words" if the *Chronicle* were to remind them of past claims by Capital Metro that turned out to be false – like the attempt to blame Veolia Transportation for the original delays (way back in the first quarter of 2009). As it turns out, Veolia played nice and allowed themselves to be the scapegoat for signaling problems that even now have yet to be completely fixed.

Regards,
Mike Dahmus

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CITY OF AUSTIN SOLID WASTE SERVICES

news

Headlines



JOHN ANDERSON

- Hark! In a special meeting Tuesday, the UT board of regents partially reversed course on a plan to develop the university-owned **Brackenridge Tract** for commercial use, deciding against relocating the UT **biological field lab**, meaning the 350-acre researchers' paradise on Lake Austin will stay put.
- Travis County commissioners on Tuesday postponed indefinitely a decision on a proposed TXI quarry east of Austin, a project opposed by nearby residents.
- At its final meeting of the year Dec. 17, **City Council** tackled a laundry list of pressing items, from historic zoning cases to a lakeshore housing project to an extension on a recycling contract. See "Point Austin," right, and "City Hall Hustle," p.14.
- **Capital Metro** and **Veolia Transportation** have entered an ugly war of press releases after the local transit authority canceled the firm's contract to run the new MetroRail Red Line. Veolia claimed the termination was illegal; Cap Metro replied by touting the safety record of new contractor **Herzog Transit Services**.
- Deli owner **Marc Katz** is no longer the only Democrat running for lieutenant governor: On Dec. 18, former Travis County District Attorney **Ronnie Earle** filed for the race, and former Texas AFL-CIO Executive Vice President **Linda Chavez-Thompson** is rumored to be considering a challenge as well.
- While many East Coast airports were closed due to snowstorms, passengers on a Dec. 18 flight from **Austin-Bergstrom International Airport** to Chicago were delayed after the discovery of a note interpreted as a potential bomb threat forced the evacuation of an American Airlines plane. A sweep of the plane came up clean.
- Shaking up the congressional races, Democrat **Jack McDonald** announced Dec. 22 that he will not challenge Republican incumbent Congressman **Michael McCaul** in District 10, which runs from Travis County to Houston. Democrats must now scramble to find a credible replacement before the Jan. 4, 2010, primary filing deadline.
- The U.S. Senate passed its version of the **health care reform** bill, leaving Gov. **Rick Perry** and the Tea Partiers railing against Sen. **Kay Bailey Hutchison** for being one of the three Republicans to vote with the Democrats to block a Republican filibuster on defense spending. The bill is expected to receive its final vote before Christmas.



JANA BIRCHUM



SANDY CARSON



A Dec. 16 vigil for three construction workers included three small memorial crosses in honor of Raudel Ramirez Camacho, Jesus Angel Lopez Perez, and Wilson Joel Irias Cerritos, who died last June after falling from an 11th-floor scaffold at 21 Rio, a West Campus apartment building. See p.20.

What History Teaches

There are different ways of counting social costs

BY MICHAEL KING

What's the value of a human life? It depends on who's doing the counting. The U.S. government has deemed the life of a U.S. soldier in Afghanistan to be worth roughly \$30 million a year, the cost of keeping him or her there beyond eight years and all the bounds of reason. Simultaneously, Congress is straining mightily to provide the wherewithal to reform health care, thereby demonstrating how much it values the lives of the officially estimated 20,000 or more Americans who die each year for lack of health insurance. The accountants say reform will actually save money over the long term, and the politicians are more precisely balking over the notion that health care – like supermax prisons and war-making – is a fundamental expectation of government. Better we all pass

away silently rather than raise the stakes of community standards.

Another federal estimate of the value of human life was provided last week in Austin, when the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration proposed fines totaling \$159,600 in the June 10 deaths of three construction workers due to the negligence of their employers. At \$54,000 a man – certainly quite a bit more than Raudel Ramirez Camacho, Wilson Joel Irias Cerritos, or Jesus Angel Lopez Perez ever earned annually in the course of their brief lives – it might make a fleeting impression on the four contractors involved in the 21 Rio high-rise construction project. Split four ways, it's less of a bite, although the workers' direct employer, Cap-era Construction, appears to have left town

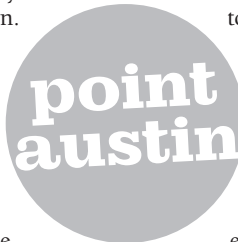
without a forwarding address. The other three are entering into negotiations with OSHA, so who knows whether their proportionate fines (\$123,200) will ever come due.

Perhaps the civil lawsuit filed by the families of the three men will better focus the attention of the companies on the safety of their employees.

The Rich Get Richer

There are other ways to calculate the worth of a life. In a revealing coincidence, the day following a memorial for the three workers (see "The View From 21 Rio," p.20), City Council approved roughly \$380,000 in tax breaks for two dozen West Austin homes, under the terms of the "historic zoning" ordinance. Because of notable architectural features and once locally prominent occupants,

CONTINUED ON P.15



QUOTE of the WEEK

"The most vicious thing that can happen in this debate is to end up saying, 'So it's poor people's fault that we can't fix the climate.'"

– Bee Moorhead, of faith-based advocacy group Texas Impact. See "The Rich, the Poor, and the AE Generation Plan," p.16.



JOHN ANDERSON

► **HANDS ON WHEEL, EYES ON ROAD** An expanded ban on **texting while driving** passed the City Council Dec. 17 – come the new year, texting, e-mailing, or using any other mobile applications will be illegal behind the wheel. A new measure, sponsored by Council Members **Laura Morrison** and **Chris Riley**, expands on a previous resolution that prohibited texting but didn't address use of mobile online apps popularized by the iPhone and other smart phones. Violations will be punished by a \$500 fine. "All of us can see what happens almost every day due to erratic driving behavior that's directly attributable to someone distracted on the cell phone or some other electronic device," said Mayor **Lee Leffingwell**. However, council did propose revisiting the ban language and enforcement questions in the future, beginning with a review in six months. — *W.D.*

► **A VERY MERRY PRIMARY** With just less than two weeks left to file for a slot in the March primaries, applications continue to arrive with few big surprises. The big announcement was former Travis County District Attorney **Ronnie Earle's** entrance into the Democratic lieutenant governor race: Along with rumors that former Texas AFL-CIO Executive Vice President **Linda Chavez-Thompson** is considering a run, the question now is whether Austin deli owner **Marc Katz** will actually file or not. In the agriculture commissioner race, the primary between former gubernatorial candidates **Kinky Friedman** and **Hank Gilbert** became official. That may disappoint Republican Land Commissioner **Jerry Patterson**, who had invited Kinky to challenge him. In local House races, sportscaster **Dan Neil** became the first Republican challenger to Rep. **Donna Howard**, D-Austin. — *Richard Whittaker*

► **NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY** Former Travis County Sheriff **Terry Keel** is the **Texas Facilities Commission's** surprise pick as the agency's executive director, in charge of managing and maintaining 134 state-owned buildings and 1,100 lease agreements. The seven-member commission (two appointed by the lieutenant governor and five by the governor) was broadly expected to make interim Chief **Thomas Forrest's** position permanent. But rather than going with the former assistant director of transportation, planning, and sustainability for the city of Austin, the commission instead opted for the ex-criminal prosecutor and five-term state rep – last seen around the Capitol in 2007, when embattled Speaker **Tom Craddick** tapped him as his parliamentarian. Keel's new appointment doesn't take effect until Dec. 31, but the agency website already reflects the change and notes that Forrest remains deputy executive director for operations. — *R.W.*

► **MAY YOUR CUP RUNNETH OVER IN 2010** If you're still looking for a last-minute Christmas gift, the **Breast Cancer Resource Centers of Texas** has held a series of signing sessions to promote its new **Art Bra 2010** fundraising calendar. Inspired by similar projects around the country, the center receives bras customized and donated by local artists and celebrities (supporters include musician Patrice Pike and actor Matthew McConaughey). The difference is that the calendar uses real cancer survivors as models. Barbara Formichelli, the center's director of marketing and events development, explained that it can be a real boost for women recovering from cancer treatment and surgery. She said, "Here's a beautiful opportunity for her to be made up by professionals, get all dolled up, put on a bra, and to be on a runway as a fashion model." The garments from this year's calendar were auctioned off in April for the **Pink Ribbon Cowgirls** network for younger cancer survivors, and all proceeds from the calendar go to the center. Organizers are working on a date and location for next year's auction (Blondie frontwoman **Debbie Harry** is already working on her next bra), but until then, fans of charitable undergarments can find the calendar at local stores and online at www.bcrconline.org. — *R.W.*

It All Costs Real Money

Historic zoning, affordable housing, recycling, firefighting ... and laundry

BY WELLS DUNBAR

Folding his clothes at the laundromat this weekend, the Hustle instinctively turned the handy establishment tube to **Channel 6**. The City Council meeting was being replayed, and a deluge of historic zoning requests had just begun, with City Planning Manager **Jerry Rusthoven** running through the case numbers like a meth-addled auctioneer. Great TV to match socks to, no doubt, but what did my fellow laundry-goers make of it?

As Michael King recounts (see "Point Austin," p.13), two dozen **historic zoning cases**, passed on first reading Dec. 10, were approved on final readings at council's year-end Dec. 17, at the not-inconsiderable annual cost of \$380,000. Lost revenues, lack of application limits, and the proliferating practice of homeowners hiring for-profit zoning wonks to execute their applications concerned council, so when Rusthoven returned with the cases, he proffered some solutions: limiting the number of cases that can appear before the Historic Landmark Commission, and implementing a financial cap on tax abatements each year and a cap on the number of cases from specific neighborhoods – a way to address neighborhood equity issues raised by Council Member **Sheryl Cole**. "We don't think these three ideas are mutually exclusive of each other," said Rusthoven, who should bring council some proposed guidelines in the new year.

Cole returned to the zoning spotlight a few cases later, as she and **Chris Riley** offered competing proposals over the **South Shore planned unit development's** affordable housing contributions, the last sticking point in the Riverside development's approval gauntlet. Cole recommended dividing the roughly \$3 million allocated by developers **Grayco Partners** into thirds: one for on-site housing (a whopping 13 apartments deemed affordable for those making 60% of median family income); another for low-income, first-time homebuyers in the **East Riverside/Oltorf Combining District**; and the final third for citywide housing measures, with an emphasis on housing for the elderly. Cole called her motion "a balancing act" between the impacted EROC neighborhood and the city at large. Riley offered a competing amendment that would split funds 50-50, half to on-site housing, the other half to EROC; with Riverside a cornerstone of city rail plans, he cited "the need to ensure that we have a significant amount of affordable housing near the transit stop." Riley's amendment failed on a tie, 3-3, possibly because the extra half-million would only garner seven more apartments on-site. Guess \$3 million doesn't go as far as it used to. In the end, the council approved Cole's motion, and thus the PUD, on a 5-2 vote, with Mayor Lee Leffingwell and

Council Member Laura Morrison dissenting, as they did on the first two rounds.

Another pricey item involved a choice among a bevy of proposed **recycling contract** extensions. Ultimately, council renewed in full the city contract with **Greenstar North America** until March 2011, with Greenstar to recycle only half the city's wares from March to September. That was the option recommended by the **Solid Waste Advisory Commission** and the shortest of three proposed extensions, with the argument that it will be best in helping facilitate a switch to a local materials recovery facility; Greenstar currently transports our stuff to San Antonio for recycling. The question hung over the proceedings of how soon a local MRF could indeed be operational, with SWAC member **J.D. Porter** saying the city's current request for proposals might result in one being operational as early as September 2010. Assistant City Manager **Robert Goode** was less certain, calling it "a pretty big gamble" that a 4,000-ton-a-month MRF could be online within nine months, without even knowing for certain a given contractor would be the city's choice.

But perhaps the day's biggest gamble had come earlier in the meeting, when **Bill Spelman** was the lone member to vote against the **Austin Fire Department's** negotiated labor contract, already approved by the union. Breaking down his vote, Spelman began by noting Fire's pay raises, roughly \$25 million over three years. "If somebody gave me \$25 million from the taxpayers ... I might very well say no. I think the taxpayers might very well have more use for that \$25 million than we do." But if forced to spend it, he said, he'd target city services, not salaries. And if forced to spend it on salaries, he said: "I'm not sure I would spend it on the Fire Department, not because the Fire Department isn't terrific, but because we've got 8,000 other employees who do not have the benefit of collective bargaining and who historically have not had the same increases in pay and benefits over the last 10 years as the police, the EMTs, and firefighters have had. I think it's a tremendously unfair situation for the other 8,000 employees."

Those weren't nearly all the issues before the dais, still tumbling around like sheets in a dryer as we head into the new year. It's a tired truism, to be sure, but local government affects our lives in ways far more direct and numerous than most debates at the federal level. If the quizzical stares at Channel 6 from my fellow launderers were any indication, however, it's difficult convincing the citizenry.

Tweet your holiday wishes to www.twitter.com/cityhallhustle.



res publica FOR MORE DETAILS AND EVENTS, SEE COMMUNITY LISTINGS, P.54.

THURSDAY 24

HOLIDAY CLOSURES City facilities will be closed Thursday and Friday, Dec. 24 and 25, including: Austin public libraries, municipal facilities, City Hall, city administrative offices, recreation and senior centers, museums and cultural centers, and the Household Hazardous Waste Facility. Open Thursday: the Austin Public Library's bookstore, **Recycled Reads**, 5335 Burnet Rd., 323-5123 (they'll be closed Friday, however). Also, don't bother putting your trash out Thursday night: Garbage/recycling pickup scheduled for Dec. 25 will "slide" to Saturday. www.cityofaustin.org.

FRIDAY 25

CAP METRO HOLIDAY SCHEDULE Buses run on a Sunday schedule on Friday. Don't bother to call and

complain, because the offices are closed as well. Everything will be back to normal Saturday, Dec. 26. 474-1200. www.capmetro.org.

PEOPLE UNITED features god-less churchgoer **Robert Jensen** on his book *All My Bones Shake: Seeking a Progressive Path to the Prophetic Voice*. 1pm. KOOP Radio 91.7FM.

SATURDAY 26

ROUND ROCK CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING Get all the tinsel off your tree and bring it to get pulverized into mulch. In return, get a free tree seedling. Saturdays, Dec. 26 & Jan. 2, 9am-6pm. Round Rock Brush Recycling Center, 310 Deepwood Dr., Round Rock, 512/218-5540.



SUNDAY 27

RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE Those of you who are not Pay-as-You-Throw customers can still recycle your Christmas trees: Just drop them off at Zilker Park, 2100 Barton Springs Rd. (follow the signs to the polo fields); Sun., Dec. 27; Sat.-Sun., Jan. 2-3; and Sat., Jan. 9, 10am-4pm. All trees will be ground into mulch, which will be given away free in the new year. See details at www.cityofaustin.org/parks/christmastree.htm.

ONGOING

BACKUP DRIVERS NEEDED Usually volunteers can be trusted for their stalwart devotion to a cause, but come the holidays, suddenly they want to spend time with their families. Not cool. The

good folks at **Meals on Wheels and More** are looking for a few good drivers to ensure that food gets to those who need it. *Through Dec. 31.* 476-6325. www.mealsonwheelsandmore.org.

AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY Learn what it's like to enforce the law. Next session starts March 2. For details or an application: 974-5941 or www.cityofaustin.org/police.

BARTON SPRINGS SURVEY The Parks and Recreation folks need your input on Barton Springs. The survey's at www.surveymonkey.com/s/ksgyrbw.

PBS PETITION With stalwart PBS shows *Now and Bill Moyers Journal* set to go off the air in April, media watch group FAIR is lobbying to "find worthy replacements." To participate, see www.fair.org.

the current owners are being given sizable annual abatements, from approximately \$8,000 to \$44,000, for homes appraised from \$670,000 to \$3.5 million. Because of various caps, the precise numbers are uncertain, but those are annual deductions from the owners' property tax bills, in return for maintaining the basic structural character of the houses – on the theory, I guess, that the rest of us can drive by those houses, wax nostalgic about the Austin that once was, and feel a brief, delusional pride of ownership.

Reading through the zoning cases, one could indeed learn quite a bit of local history. Some of the houses are architecturally significant, others unremarkable. Among the notable occupants were saddlemakers, store owners (e.g., the Scarbroughs), judges, professors, journalists (even hacks like me can be historic), and at least one convicted murderer – John Brady, a former judge who pleaded alcoholism from Prohibition hooch after killing his mistress; he served two years, then lived out his life at 1601 Pearl. Singer/songwriter Carole King briefly rented the same house from a subsequent owner, so the Brady House, has undeniably been visited by “history.”

Is it tax-abatable history? I find it hard to dispute the conclusion of local political consultant Alfred Stanley, who told the *Statesman's* Sarah Coppola, “We’re elevating the upper middle class of three generations ago to cult status.” Moreover, it’s the current owners (and their successors) cashing in on all that “history” – for having lived in historic houses, are they now also officially historic?

Thursday’s zoning vote did raise some council eyebrows, because there were so many historic houses in this one year-end swoop. Overall since 1972, reported Coppola, more than 500 houses have already been granted similar landmark status, at an impressive cost of roughly \$4 million annually to the rest of us. (That includes city, county, school, and community college taxes; there are caps limiting some of that, and the city’s historic zoning officer, Steve Sadowsky, believes that the *Statesman* estimate is “a little high.”)

I don’t mind at all springing for a plaque or two to honor local luminaries, but I have to presume that these homeowners bought

their fancy houses in their exclusive neighborhoods with the expectation that they would be paying property taxes on the assessed value, like everybody else. Turns out that, unlike death, taxes are no longer certain on the West side; you can be rewarded for your previous good fortune by going down to City Hall and requesting more of the same.

In Memoriam

With every abatement like these, city services from public safety to street maintenance take a hit, as do the county and the community college. But the biggest losers by percentage are the public schools, under state law mostly dependent on property taxes. If we’re going to ask schoolchildren to subsidize wealthy homeowners, we ought at least to do it right. Let’s match one of our underfunded schools to each historic home and have an annual Tax Abatement Day in the auditorium, when the kids can hand over one of those oversized checks to the designated homeowner. That way, the students can learn firsthand what history teaches – that some of us matter more than others, and the notorious “redistribution of wealth” is a welfare system that works mostly from bottom to top.

One other thing. When it’s not awarding historical zoning status to wealthy landowners, perhaps City Council can take a moment to consider the historical contribution to Austin of Raudel Ramirez Camacho, Wilson Joel Irias Cerritos, and Jesus Angel Lopez Perez. They weren’t here very long, and it’s unlikely their homes would meet the stringent standards of the Historic Landmark Commission.

But these three men undeniably gave their lives to Austin’s architectural history and to the apartment tower now claiming to be “the envy of every luxury residence” in Central Austin. Perhaps a small historical marker in their memory on Rio Grande Street, where they fell to their deaths, wouldn’t be too much to ask. It would comfort their bereaved families just a bit, and it might serve to remind a few other Austinites of the notable lives so often ignored by official historians. The residents at 21 Rio, and the rest of us, should occasionally bring to mind the actual human cost of building a city. ■

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SURVEY

The city of Austin wants to know what you love and hate about our fair town.

www.imagineaustin.net/survey.htm

COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING MARKET STUDY

The city of Austin’s Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office is trying to set priorities and shape Austin’s housing market into an equitable landscape. See the findings to date, and perhaps take a survey to help it in its goals: www.cityofaustin.org/housing/apr08chms.htm.

H1N1 FLU CLINICS Call 972-5520 with questions or to make an appointment. www.cityofaustin.org/health.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SURVEY The city’s Neighborhood Housing and Community Develop-

ment Office wants your input on how to prioritize funds made available through its Housing Financing Programs. www.cityofaustin.org/housing.

NOMINATE A HERO Know someone who deserves recognition for their heroism? The Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation is looking for nominations of ordinary Americans who became extraordinary through their indomitable courage and selflessness. The foundation is accepting nominations through Feb. 12 at www.citizenserviceaboveseffhonor.org.

WASTEWATER AVERAGING The Austin Water Utility has begun its annual wastewater averaging cycle, which means your billing rates for the year will depend on your usage over the next few months. Conserve now and save money all of next year. See www.cityofaustin.org/water for details.

15 LOCATIONS NEAR YOU

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 110 NORTH I-35, STE. 250 ROUND ROCK 512-244-4363
 3652 BEE CAVES RD. (Same center as Twin Liquors) 327-6846
 13492 RESEARCH BLVD. (183 & Anderson Mill Rd.) 258-8181
 920 B. N. AUSTIN AVE GEORGETOWN 512-930-0666
 11126 JOLLYVILLE RD. (at Balcones Woods Dr.) 346-8845
 13011 SHOPS PKWY #200 (Shops at Galleria) 263-1588
 3810 GATTIS SCHOOL ROAD #102, 78664 244-3733
 850 N. BELL #304 CEDAR PARK 512-258-4990
 5324 CAMERON RD. (Texas Thrift Store) 452-2200
 8400 BRODIE LANE #101, 78745 291-1588
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The Rich, the Poor, and the AE Generation Plan

As 2010 draws near, so does the passage of the **Austin Energy** Generation Plan, expected to go before City Council for a vote early next year. The new plan will attempt to establish the right mix of traditional and renewable energy resources to power most of Austin's homes and businesses through 2020. Announced in August, the plan recommended by Austin Energy staff succeeds in fulfilling the expectations of the **Austin Climate Protection Plan**, even surpassing them on many counts. But in these harsh economic times, that good news has been somewhat overshadowed by concerns over the plan's financial implications, especially for AE's most vulnerable customers – low-income ratepayers.

Regardless of the plan council ultimately approves, electricity bills are expected to rise over the next decade. In fact, according to data from **Pace Consulting** – hired by AE to analyze more than a dozen potential generation plan scenarios – the cost of doing nothing actually could be higher than the costs associated with AE's recommended plan. But no one knows the volatile energy industry's future for certain, a fact AE General Manager **Roger Duncan** repeated

steadily this fall during public discussions of the available choices.

Those discussions left social service groups such as **Meals on Wheels and More** wondering not only how to protect the low-income community they serve but how to keep themselves afloat while doing it. "We're very mindful of being green ... but we do a whole lotta cookin'," says MOWAM President **Dan Pruett**. "Our utility bills are going to go up significantly. ... Does that mean we can provide fewer meals for people that need assistance? Maybe."

The **Coalition for Clean, Affordable, Reliable Energy**, which formed in response to the generation plan, has also weighed in. While composed primarily of commercial and industrial interests such as Frescale and AMD – as well as more unusual players, including the Seton and St. David's hospitals and the Lake Travis Independent School District (as an "affiliate") – CCARE has found common ground with some social service organizations. It's even enlisted the **Catholic Diocese of Austin** – the group most vocal on the plan's potential impact on poor people – as its "social justice conscience."

AE PROGRAMS FOR THOSE IN NEED

- **Monthly Discounts for Qualifying Households:** AE offers a waiver on customer charges for electricity, water, and wastewater; a 50% drainage fee reduction; and a reduced fuel charge, from 3.65 cents to 1.7 cents. At the average monthly residential use of 1,000 kilowatt hours, these discounts altogether amount to about \$43 a month, or more than \$500 a year.

- **Casework Managers:** AE has on staff two full-time case managers with social work experience, an innovation noted by several area nonprofits as particularly useful. "The customer assistance group is very responsive and very much aware of needs in the community," says Joyce Hefner of Family Eldercare, whose clients "often have unexpected medical expenses come up" and who tend to live on fixed incomes in "energy-inefficient homes."

- **Emergency Assistance:** Funded by the city of Austin (at \$300,000 a year) and donations from AE customers (about \$45,000 a year), this program is available to households facing "extraordinary emergencies such as loss of job or medical emergencies." Ratepayers can apply through one of several area churches or social service organizations, such as Family Eldercare, AIDS Services of Austin, Any Baby Can, Meals on Wheels and More, St. Austin Catholic Parish, and Travis County Family Support Services. "One situation that we see all too often is a family whose child has been diagnosed with a critical illness," says Allison Daskam of Any Baby Can. "One or both parents may have to reduce hours or quit working to care for their child. ... The Austin Energy program allows Any Baby Can to bridge the financial gap and help the family get back on their feet financially."

- **Free Home Energy Efficiency Improvements:** AE provides solar screens, attic insulation, minor duct repair and sealing, caulking around plumbing penetrations under sinks, and weather-stripping around entry doors for homeowners and renters meeting income qualifications. On average, this program serves 500-600 homes a year. In February, AE will launch another similar program funded by \$2.9 million in federal stimulus money.

- **Deferred Payment Agreements:** Customers who fall behind on their bills qualify for a deferred payment agreement with a down payment of one-third of the amount owed and payment of the remainder over a maximum of six months; if beset by additional hardship, they may qualify to reset the payment plan again within a year.

- **Lifeline Rate:** All residential AE customers receive a discounted "lifeline" rate of 3.55 cents per kwh for the first 500 kwh of electricity they use each month; after 500 kwh, the rate goes up to 7.82 cents. Catholic Diocese Chancellor Ron Walker points to the lifeline rate as one example of a program that should more directly target the poor; authority for that kind of rate change would lie with City Council, in a process known as a "rate case." The next rate case is expected in 2012.

– N.A.



Dan Pruett

CCARE and the Diocese have recommended postponing the plan until other upcoming factors shake out, including a rider that will show up on bills next fall to cover fees owed to the **Electric Reliability Council of Texas**. Next fall also marks the beginning of a yearlong cost-of-service study to precede a 2012 "rate case" during which, among other things, City Council can adjust the rates assigned to different customer "classes." According to AE spokesman **Ed Clark**, City Council could establish a rate specifically for low-income customers, a possibility cited by Diocese Chancellor **Ron Walker** as a particularly good reason to wait.

But not all who work with the disadvantaged agree. **Bee Moorhead**, executive director of faith-based advocacy group **Texas Impact**, says she hopes AE will "act swiftly" both to implement a generation plan and to "incorporate a proactive plan" addressing low-income consumers. "If we don't do them both, we're not really fixing either issue," she says. "The most vicious thing that can happen in this debate is to end up saying, 'So it's poor people's fault that we can't fix the climate.' Now ... they can feel guilty for having ruined the whole creation. Great. That's a great theology."

"Delaying this until 2012 mostly hurts low-income people," says Solar Austin's **Cary Ferchill**, who served on the council-appointed **Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force**, one of three citizen bodies to make independent recommendations on the plan. The task force voted 5-4 in November to support AE's proposal (with the caveat that the utility revisit in two years the option of quitting coal completely). Ferchill was in that majority; the three task force members in CCARE voted for a different scenario.

However, the task force agreed unanimously on a set of additional recommendations to go to council. Many address disparity issues by setting guidelines for energy efficiency and distributed generation programs and by expanding AE programs already targeting low-income customers (see the full list of these recommendations with this story online at austinchronicle.com). "Those components don't stand alone," says Ferchill. Suspending the plan would mean suspending those, too, he says.

According to **Mark Zion**, executive director of the **Texas Public Power Association**, AE's policies regarding discounts, weatherization, deferred payment programs, and assistance through community-based organizations (see "AE Programs for Those in Need," left) "are among the most respectful for customers and among the most extensive in the state of

Texas." The utility's disconnection policy is also among the most generous: AE cuts service for nonpayment 45 to 50 days from the bill issuance date, while a TPPA survey of municipal utilities across Texas puts the average at just 29 days.

"In all fairness, they are touching some of the low-income," says Walker, but he hopes to see a policy shift – with appliance rebates, for example – toward more aggressively targeting those most in need. While Walker still supports postponing the plan, Pruett says he does support the plan with the task force's recommendations. "My only reservation is we need to make sure – and they do address this in their recommendations – that organizations representing low-income folks, and lower-middle-income folks, really have input into the process." – *Nora Ankrum*

"We're very mindful of being green ... but we do a whole lot of cookin'."
– Dan Pruett

See the AE Generation Resource Planning Task Force's recommendations for low-income ratepayers at austinchronicle.com/webextra.



RICHARD WHITTAKER

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

For dedicated fans of flat-track Roller Derby, every day is Derby day, but Mayor Lee Leffingwell made it official by proclaiming Dec. 18 as Texas Rollergirls Day. Calling the Austin-based league “the driving force behind the revival of the Roller Derby movement,” he issued the proclamation Dec. 17 to mark that their travel team, the Executioners, took the silver award at this year’s Women’s Flat Track Derby Association national championships in Philadelphia (see “Electric Skaterland,” Sports, Nov. 27). The team is reigning champion of the WFTDA South Central region.

Leffingwell also accepted an offer to blow the whistle at the opening bout of the 2010 home season, scheduled for Feb. 28 at Playland Skate Center, adding, “I’ll be privileged and honored, if you promise not to run me down.” See video of the ceremony at austinchronicle.com/chronocast.

Back row (l-r): Bloody Mary (Executioners co-captain), Belle Starr, Desi Cration (captain), Coach Koolaid, and Rice Rocket. Front (l-r): Cheap Trixie, Crackerjack, and Olivia Shootin’ John. — Richard Whittaker

HD 47: Playing Rough in GOP Primary

House District 47 Republican hopeful Paul Workman has gone negative fast in his primary fight with Holly White Turner by accusing her of carpetbagging in the race to challenge incumbent Rep. Valinda Bolton, D-Austin. Two years ago, Turner was campaign treasurer for her husband, Chris Turner (not to be confused with Rep. Chris Turner, D-Arlington), when he unsuccessfully ran for Fort Worth City Council. Giving an insight into the strength of his opposition research team, Workman’s campaign has released her Travis County voter registration information, showing it only became effective Dec. 19, 2009. It takes 30 days for a registration to be processed by the county, raising questions of whether Turner has lived in the district the required minimum one-year residency. Playing up his own 24 years in the district, former Real Estate Council of Austin board member Workman said, “My opponent may not own property in HD 47, or have any history fighting for Republican causes in Travis County, but at least she will be eligible to vote for herself.” This could be a sign of a vicious campaign to come: Workman’s team includes Eric Bearse, who, as Gov. Rick Perry’s former director of communications and communications strategist for ex-Speaker Tom Craddick, oversaw some hard-hitting campaign tactics. Turner is not without assets: Husband Chris is a partner in Republican campaign consultancy Murphy Turner Associates, winners of the American Association of Political Consultants’ 2009 Pollie Award for best use of negative/contrast in a campaign ad. — R.W.



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APD Dismissal: Religion, Incompetence ... or Psychological Misconduct?

Former Austin Police Department first-year officer **Ramon Perez** undoubtedly made mistakes during his rookie year. Whether those were simply rookie errors, or instead proved him unfit for law enforcement, was the central question argued last week in the federal civil rights lawsuit filed by Perez. Also at issue was whether those mistakes were the sole reason Perez was asked, in April 2005, to resign or face termination – or simply a pretext to get rid of him.

On Dec. 18, a five-woman, two-man jury concluded that Perez's forced resignation was not based on discrimination. Yet as is often the case, the legal decision did not answer all the questions about why – and more particularly how – the decision was made that Perez wasn't fit to wear APD blues.

Perez, at 41, joined the APD's 109th cadet class in December 2003; by the following summer he had graduated from the academy and was riding with a field training officer. At times his supervisors noted that he was slow to update his location by radio, and he was counseled for "officer safety" issues – exposing his "gun side" to a suspect or not moving quickly enough on a traffic stop to confine the stopped driver to his vehicle. But they also noted he was progressing; on the last monthly update before Perez was let go, his sergeant, **Jesse Brown**, wrote "no deficiencies noted." Perez contends that his errors were no more serious than those made by other rookie officers. Indeed, among his cadet class was **Amy Donovan**, who was killed in late 2004 when fellow rookie **Adrian Valdovino** backed his patrol car into her while on a call and pinned her against a utility pole. Valdovino was briefly suspended, but remains with APD.

Perez claims his errors were magnified by two of his immediate supervisors, Brown and Lt. **Daniel Zahara**, as a pretext for firing him. The real issue, said Perez, was that they disapproved of his religiosity. Raised a Catholic, Perez says he had a "revelation" as a teenager and was "born again." Part of his motiva-

tion for becoming a police officer, he testified last week, was to act on Christian principles in helping others. He became involved in planning APD's celebrations for the annual **National Day of Prayer**; he contends Brown and Zahara opposed such activities and began to pick apart every mistake he made as a way to get rid of him. They faulted him for not having backup on a traffic stop requested by members of the APD's Gang Suppression Unit – even though two gang detectives were already there – and faulted him for not following a direct order when he failed to use a **Taser** on a man during a domestic violence call in January 2005. Perez said he believed using the Taser would have violated APD's **use-of-force policy**, which requires officers to use the least amount of force necessary to effect an arrest.

Whatever the motivation, there were enough incidents to prompt his supervisors to request a "termination board" of superior officers to review Perez's performance and decide whether to recommend that he be given the opportunity to resign (meaning he would be able to keep his peace officer's license) or be fired. In early April 2005, that's what happened, Brown testified; it wasn't personal but "based on a totality of the circumstances."

While on first-year probationary status, officers are not protected by civil service laws, and the city can terminate for any reason – except an illegal, discriminatory one. But the tangible evidence that would have linked Perez's termination directly to his religious beliefs was, at best, thin. Nevertheless, portions of the case are troubling – in particular, the role played by APD psychologist **Carol Logan**. In March 2005, Zahara suggested that Perez be required to meet with Logan. Perez said he was told the meeting was intended to help "facilitate" better communication between him and his supervisors. At the end of the roughly two-hour meeting, Perez said, Logan told him that things had gone well, but Perez didn't know that the



A federal jury concluded that the forced resignation of former APD rookie Ramon Perez was not based on discrimination. Yet questions remain about why he was fired.

fied that Logan's failure to tell Perez why he was being evaluated, and her subsequent failure to share her conclusions with him, amounted to professional misconduct. (Perez testified that he filed a complaint with the state's psychologist licensing board but was told it could not take any action because Logan is a city employee and not a private practitioner.)

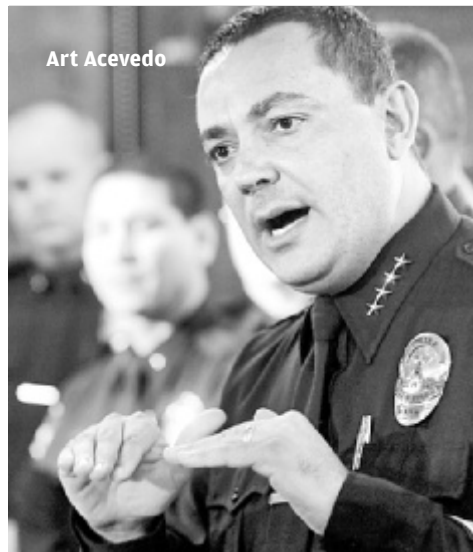
Perez's attorneys based their case for religious discrimination largely on the conclusions distilled in Logan's report. Perez was fired, they argued, not because he made egregious rookie mistakes but because his deeply religious nature caused personality conflicts with his supervisors, which ultimately prompted Brown and Zahara to turn to Logan to help them get rid of him. His "dream of being an APD officer was destroyed by religious prejudice," attorney **Lou McCreary** told the jury.

In response, Assistant City Attorney **Chris Edwards** argued that Brown and Zahara did exactly what they were supposed to do: monitor the progress of the rookies under their command, keeping an eye out for those that don't make the grade. "No matter what we did we were going to get sued," Edwards said, insisting that to put Perez on the street would be to risk not only his own safety but also that of other officers and Austin residents – also a sure recipe for an eventual lawsuit. Or, the city could cut its losses and get rid of Perez – that decision, she said, was also destined to end in litigation. But, she stressed, the decision to let Perez go "had nothing to do with religion." Ultimately, the jury apparently agreed.

– Jordan Smith

meeting was, in essence, a fit-for-duty evaluation. Perez never got to see Logan's report on that meeting until more than a year and a half later and had to request it through open records, because the city declined to release it until the Attorney General's Office ruled that the law required it. The report, reviewed by the termination board, focused largely on the officer's religiosity. Logan wrote that Perez's beliefs were so strong as to be an "impairment" that "puts him at risk if he were to continue in police work."

Melba Vasquez, president-elect of the American Psychological Association, testi-



Art Acevedo

JOHN ANDERSON

APD Implements Suggested 'Action Items'

The Austin Police Department concurs with and has implemented most of the 165 "action items" for improving the department made in a U.S. Department of Justice "technical assistance" document issued last December. In a letter penned last month and released publicly Dec. 21, Chief **Art Acevedo** detailed APD's responses to the suggested improvements in department policies and procedures – including, importantly, changes to the policy on use of force. So far, Acevedo said Monday, roughly 75% to 80% of the recommendations have been implemented.

The DOJ began reviewing APD policies and practices in mid-2007, when it agreed to look into complaints made in 2004 by **Nelson Linder** of the Austin NAACP and **Jim Harrington** with the Texas Civil Rights

Project, who were concerned about use of excessive force against minority suspects, including in the high-profile shooting deaths of **Sophia King** in 2002 and **Jesse Lee Owens** in 2003. (The DOJ told city officials it would be coming to town to investigate the complaint just one day after the fatal shooting of **Kevin Brown** in 2007; that incident was quickly added to the feds' investigation.)

In all, there were just four DOJ recommendations with which Acevedo did not agree – including two recommendations limiting how canines are used in searching for suspects (APD policy governing canine use is "very restrictive," he wrote), a suggestion that incidents in which an officer points a Taser at someone but does not pull the trigger be separately reported as use-of-force incidents

(APD already reports so-called "active targeting" incidents in field observation and incident reports), and a recommendation that the department check the use of pepper spray by weighing the canisters officers carry (Acevedo said in an interview that that sort of check would be redundant and not an effective use of time or resources).

"I think that in the overall scheme of things, this is definitely a dramatic improvement," said Harrington. "It will never be a panacea." After all, he said, "we're human beings and so there are always going to be malfunctions" – but the changes made since Acevedo took the helm in mid-2007 are a "major step" for "professionalizing" the department. "I think that certainly that has been the result of our complaint," he said.

– J.S.

A New Voice for the Waterfront

The Dec. 14 meeting of the **Waterfront Planning Advisory Board** revealed interesting dynamics emerging on the brand-new city board, an advisory group tasked by council with “promoting excellence in design, development and protection of the City’s waterfront.” At the group’s second meet-up, it got an update on the first proposed project it will consider Jan. 11, 2010: the **Park PUD** at 801 Barton Springs Rd. Sparks flew between the applicant’s representative, **John Donisi** (who asserted that the project complies with all Waterfront Overlay Ordinance rules), and board member **Mary Arnold**, who was cool to increasing the project’s height from 60 feet to 120 feet. Neighborhood advocates were on hand to oppose the PUD as well.

But in later discussions of the board’s goals and objectives, other members said that conversation – framed in the usual adversarial terms – was the antithesis of the tone they hoped to establish. Vice Chair **Dean Almy** said afterward, “We’re hoping to come to some reasonable consensus and formulate a vision for the future – a framework that allows us to evaluate each project that comes through against a larger set of city goals versus on a case-by-case basis.” Members anticipate a series of work sessions to craft that vision, in addition to monthly board meetings. Almy said he regretted being faced with the Park PUD fight so soon; as planned unit development zoning trumps Waterfront Overlay restrictions, the new board will consider whether the project meets “superior” PUD standards – and whether the small site merits a PUD at all. (See “Developing Stories: Chipping at the Waterfront,” May 22.) Council has tasked the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board with recommending a special waterfront density bonus system, specifying which community benefits developers must provide to earn additional height and entitlements. Almy believes 3-D modeling of the whole area could help clarify the vision.

The board’s makeup is noteworthy in itself. Unlike its predecessor group, the Waterfront Overlay Task Force, the board includes professionals with expertise in waterfront and urban planning and design – which bodes well for its ability to frame

a coherent and balanced future vision. The trade-off, noted Austin Neighborhoods Council President **Cory Walton**, is that these same professionals could have future conflicts of interest if they’re working on projects that come before the board or council.

As with all city boards, each Waterfront Planning Advisory Board member was nominated by (and reflects the perspective of) one council member. **Jim Knight** (Mayor Lee Leffingwell’s appointee) is a principal and chief development officer for Bury+Partners, one of Austin’s most influential engineering firms. As board chair, Knight said he will work as a consensus-builder; he has led project teams for many large, complex projects in environmentally sensitive areas subject to community review. Almy (Randi Shade) is an architect/planner; he serves as director of the graduate programs in urban design and landscape architecture at the University of Texas and is a principal at Atelier Hines Almy. Arnold (Laura Morrison) is a longtime environmental activist (see “Citizen Mary,” April 5, 2002); she brings three decades of experience opposing development interests and city deals on projects with environmental impacts – including those proposed for the shores of Lady Bird Lake. **Roy Mann** (Chris Riley) is a principal of the Rivers Studio and a nationally known waterfront planning and protection expert, and he authored the seminal book *Rivers in the City* in 1973. **Daniel Woodroffe** (Sheryl Cole) is a landscape architect with TBG Partners, where his work emphasizes collaborative and sustainable design. **Robert Pilgrim** (Bill Spelman) also is a landscape architect/planner and project manager with TBG. **Brooke Bailey** (Mike Martinez) is a native Austinite with a background in urban planning; she’s been active in the Old West Austin Neighborhood Association and the Clarksville neighborhood. “I don’t believe in ulterior motives,” said Knight. “I think that as a group we’ll make decisions that are right for everybody.” Said Bailey, “The waterfront is sacred.”

– Katherine Gregor

For more Chronicle coverage of this issue, see “Protecting the Waterfront,” in two parts, April 24 & May 1.

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The View From 21 Rio

The street scene outside the **21 Rio** apartment building at 21st and Rio Grande normally shows little sign of the June 10 construction accident that claimed the lives of three workers in a scaffolding collapse. The now completed tower sports a bright-red neon “21 Rio” logo atop its 21 floors, and the marketing website targeted primarily at University of Texas students (“iPhone and iPod Touch Compatible!”) proclaims the building “the most prestigious high rise residence in West Campus.” The only safety concern mentioned is “limited access entry” available to those prospective residents ready to carry the \$1,300 to \$3,500 monthly rent.

But last Wednesday evening, Dec. 16, in the cold, windy twilight, about 50 people, mostly construction workers and their families, held a vigil in memory of **Wilson Joel Irias Cerritos, Raudel Ramirez Camacho, and Jesus Angel Lopez Perez**, who were working on the building’s exterior and died after falling from the 11th floor to the street below. After a brief processional along the sidewalk, the crowd stood before three small memorial crosses marked by flowers and the workers’ boots and hard hats – akin to soldiers lost in combat – and held a ceremony eulogizing the three men and addressing the poor working conditions they had faced on the job site. Two local pastors, **Marivel Reyes** and **Tom Vandestadt**, spoke of the Christian tradition of defending workers and the poor, and two workers, **Filemón Salas** and **Ely Rodríguez**, described the unsafe conditions on the site and the workers’ struggle for just treatment.

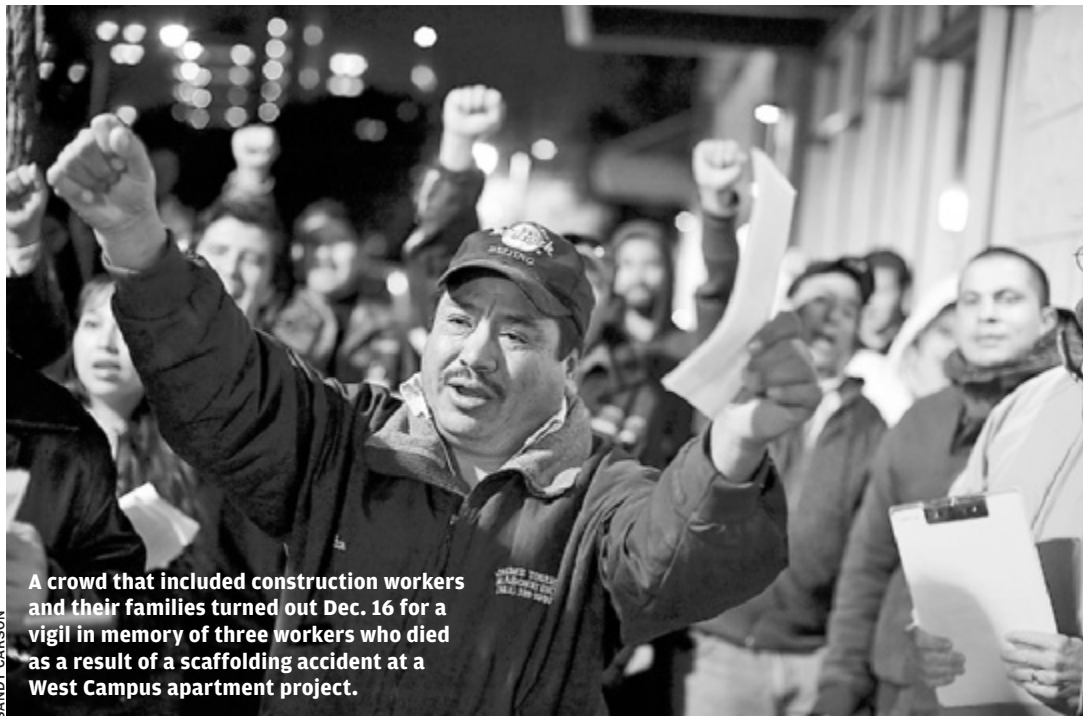
Their safety complaints had been officially validated earlier that week, when the **U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Admini-**

stration issued a litany of proposed penalties, totaling \$159,600, for safety violations against four contractors involved in the 21 Rio construction project. Specifically, OSHA cited:

- 1) subcontractor **Capoera Construction** for three “serious” violations for failures in health and safety and inspection standards and two repeat violations for inadequate scaffold protection and training systems (\$36,400);
- 2) scaffold manufacturer **American Mast Climbers** for a “willful” violation of poor design and installation, as well as eight related serious violations (\$86,800);
- 3) general contractor **Andres Construction Services** (\$14,000); and
- 4) exterior contractor

Greater Metroplex Interiors (\$22,400), for four serious violations based on similar failures in safety equipment and training. According to OSHA’s news release, “A willful violation is one committed with intentional, knowing or voluntary disregard for the law’s requirements, or with plain indifference to employee safety and health; a serious violation is one that could cause death or physical harm that can result from a hazard an employer knew or should have known exists.”

“The supported scaffold from which employees were working collapsed, causing workers to fall more than 100 feet to their



A crowd that included construction workers and their families turned out Dec. 16 for a vigil in memory of three workers who died as a result of a scaffolding accident at a West Campus apartment project.

SANDY CARLSON

death,” said **Eric Harbin**, OSHA’s Austin-area director, in a press statement. “If scaffolding parts had been inspected and replaced or repaired as needed, it is possible that this tragic accident and loss of life could have been avoided.” The companies have 15 business days to appeal the proposed penalties; according to **Elizabeth Todd** of OSHA’s Dallas office of public affairs, three of them (all but Capoera) have chosen to request an “informal conference” with the Austin office to discuss potential reductions of the penalties as well as any planned safety abatements. Austin-based Andres Construction Services declined to

comment on the accident or OSHA’s penalties; calls to American Mast Climbers (in Whitney) and Greater Metroplex Interiors (in Southlake) were not returned.

The three workers were employed directly by subcontractor Capoera Construction (hired by GMI), officially based in Margate, Fla., but apparently without a phone number there. The company has not been reachable since the accident, creating yet another hardship for the employees, who say many had not been paid for their final weeks of work, including overtime. The **Workers Defense Project**, which organized last week’s vigil, says that Capoera directly owed 18 workers an estimated total of \$55,000 on the 21 Rio job, and overall \$120,000 for work on 21 Rio and on another job site. **Emily Timm** of WDP said that the workers believe more than 25 workers may have been shorted on wages and that they’re trying to persuade the other contractors to take responsibility for the missing pay. “We did our work, we even risked our lives out there on that worksite,” said **German Zaravia** in a statement released by WDP. “No one should have to die for their job and no one should have to fight just to be paid.” Zaravia says he is owed \$7,000 in back wages.

A lawsuit is pending on behalf of the deceased workers, and the **Austin Police Department** is investigating whether any criminal violations occurred. Workplace safety is primarily governed by state and federal law, but the City Council is expecting staff recommendations in January to create a local construction safety program.

At the memorial, a brown paper sign taped to the 21 Rio windows invited public comment on the theme, “Safety is everyone’s responsibility.” In a statement, Timm commented: “We’ve seen that employers who are willing to cut corners on safety are also likely to show a complete disregard for workers’ rights. It’s not a coincidence that wage theft would take place on a worksite that had gross safety violations.” – *Michael King*

City Still Mired in Tires

The mounds of tires moldering on land leased by **Vic’s Tire Service** just southeast of Downtown – on which we first reported Dec. 4 – still remain moldering. **Victor Almaguer**, who has been accumulating abandoned city-owned tires since at least 2003 – without a city contract and seemingly in violation of state environmental regulations – said that fire marshals visited the site this week and have asked him to rearrange some of the tires in order to ensure they are not a fire hazard, a job he said he’s currently working on. When the city will finally remove the tires from the land remains to be decided, he said. (For more on the story, see “The Tire Mound of Mystery,” Dec. 4.)

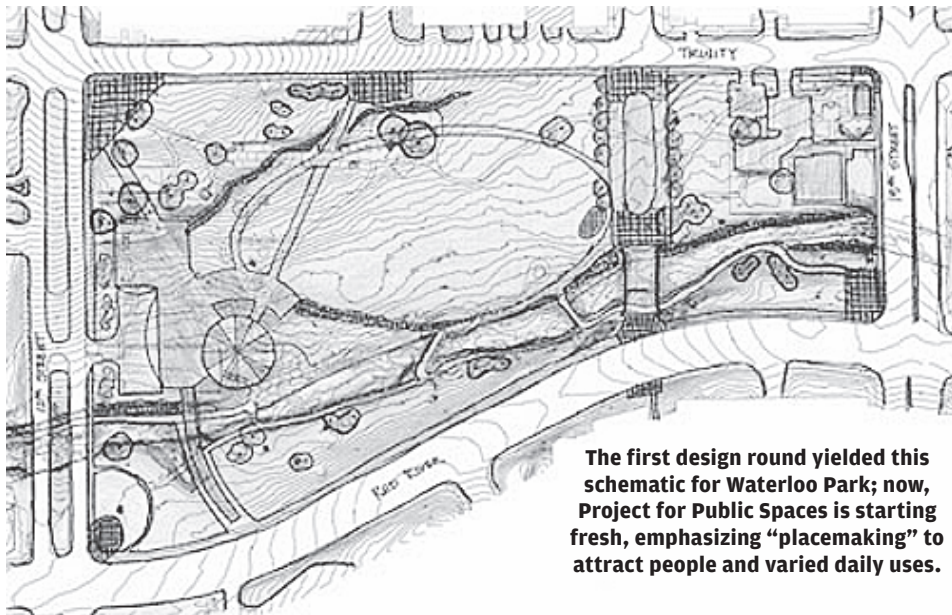
On Monday, after some delay, the city legal department released to the *Chronicle* 35 selected pages of documents concerning parts-tracking problems at the city’s **Fleet Services Division**. We’re still reviewing the documents, but they contain no references to the scrap tire program that’s at the center of an investigation into how and why thousands of city-owned tires were junked on a piece of property just miles from City Hall. We’d been look-

ing in particular for documents that might mention problems in the tire program, but, apparently because any such documents have been considered exempt from disclosure while the Austin Police Department investigates the program, they weren’t released to us.

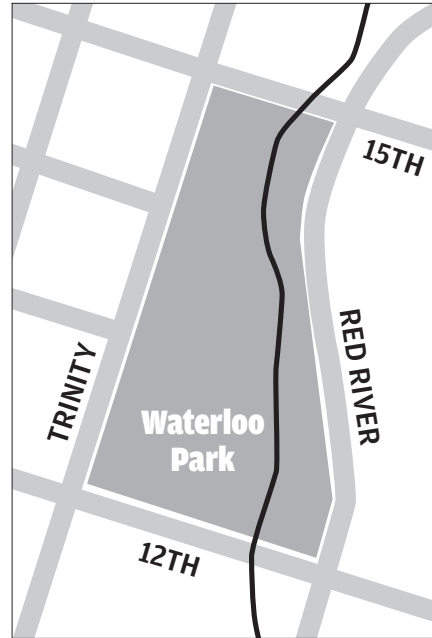
The documents that the city did make available cover the period from 2006 to 2009 and do reflect considerable dispute among managers – including Fleet Officer **Gerry Calk** and former Fleet Operations Manager **Hiram Kirkland**, whose whistleblower lawsuit against the city concerning alleged malfeasance in Fleet Services was dismissed by a Travis County judge earlier this month. The disputes center around the tracking of salvage parts and similar matters as well as related, sometimes personal disputes over which managers are responsible for the problems. So many pages have been withheld or redacted that it is difficult to determine their importance – but the documents reflect longstanding management problems within Fleet Services that the city has not been able to rectify. – *Jordan Smith*



JANA BIRCHUM



The first design round yielded this schematic for Waterloo Park; now, Project for Public Spaces is starting fresh, emphasizing "placemaking" to attract people and varied daily uses.



WHAT TO DO WITH WATERLOO

By Katherine Gregor

"It needs to be managed like a completely different place!"

That was the big-headline advice from **Project for Public Spaces** principals **Philip Myrick** and **Kathy Madden** at a Dec. 8 community workshop about **Waterloo Park**. Like all of Austin's Downtown green spaces, Waterloo Park – bordered by 12th and 15th streets and Trinity and Red River – has tremendous potential but attracts relatively few people on a daily basis. As Downtown becomes more dense, though, active urban parks become increasingly critical to the city's quality of life. What Waterloo needs now, said PPS, is an infusion of ideas, enthusiastic champions, community resources, and major philanthropy focused on transforming it into a great public space – the kind that "you never want to leave versus a place you can't wait to get through."

Waterloo Park is getting attention now because it's at the north end of the city's **Waller Creek Tunnel Project**, directed by the **Public Works Department**. It's the site of the tunnel inlet, a structure that will house pumps and other equipment; the engineer-led tunnel design team has already begun plans to add a rooftop pavilion over the inlet structure as well as other park improvements. But the construction project will necessitate closing the park altogether from 2012 to 2014. That creates an opportunity, points out **Austin Parks Foundation's Charlie McCabe**, to completely reinvent and reimagine Waterloo Park's role in city life. Seizing the moment has required a delicate bit of interdepartmental intercession; **Parks and Recreation Director Sara Hensley**, together with Austin Parks

Foundation, has stepped in to help shape the park improvements – with a fresh focus on fully realizing Waterloo's potential rather than on tunnel engineering.

Toward that end, PARD engaged national placemaking guru **Project for Public Spaces**. The consultant is working with Austinites to create a long-term vision and revitalization plan to re-create Waterloo Park as an attractive destination. (PPS played a similar role years ago, to mixed reviews, on what is now **Butler Park**; it has consulted more recently on the plaza for the new federal courthouse under construction across from Republic Square

(including the Texas Natural Science Center, home to the Texas Memorial Museum) and the **state Capitol complex**. UT and the state own huge parking garages that, unfortunately, line the park's western edge. Discussed: Could Waterloo host a seasonal beach where college students sunbathe (à la the Paris Plage, an artificial beach along the Seine River) or an outdoor dance pavilion atop the circular inlet structure? What about a picnic area and playground for all the school field-trippers who visit the Capitol and the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum? Other stakeholders PPS consulted included the Greater Austin Chamber of

Commerce, the Waller Creek Advisory Committee, special event organizers, disc-golf enthusiasts, City Council members, and city management.

On Dec. 22 PARD scheduled a public stakeholder meeting to discuss specific trees affected by the Waller Creek Tunnel Project, including those in Waterloo Park. Altogether 30 trees along Waller Creek, including 17 slated for removal, will need to be preserved, relocated, or replaced. (For more info, contact patrick.corona@ci.austin.tx.us.) PPS will soon be delivering a summary report of results from its workshops, place evaluation exercise, online survey, and interview findings, as well as a vision statement with recommendations. In January, PPS will start developing a written program recommending specific activities and destinations; it will also deliver a preliminary concept plan with a layout of uses and suggested improvements. Look for a public presentation in early February. ■

See **Project for Public Spaces'** "Ten Principles for Creating Successful Parks" online with this article at austinchronicle.com/webextra. PPS is still soliciting ideas at www.surveymonkey.com/s/frtlqgw.

DEVELOPING stories

Like all of Austin's Downtown green spaces, Waterloo Park has tremendous potential but attracts relatively few people on a daily basis.

Park.) The visioning work is intended to inform a detailed design for the park's development over time – if the money can be found.

To gather input, PPS and PARD staff met with a variety of stakeholder groups Dec. 7-9. By identifying how the park might serve the needs and dreams of Austinites and its neighbors, explained Myrick, PPS will help define exciting new uses and improvements – which in turn could attract the donors to make them happen. Waterloo Park sits across from **University Medical Center Brackenridge**; some brainstorming focused on how it might serve hospital patients and their families. Other sessions focused on linkages with the **University of Texas**

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RADIO WAVES

Station chiefs turn to electronic meters to gauge listening habits

BY KEVIN BRASS



The recent flurry of format changes and frequency juggling by local radio stations was only the first round of what is sure to be a tumultuous year for the industry. The foundation of the business – the Arbitron ratings system – is changing, prompting Austin stations to rethink every aspect of their programming.

Next summer Arbitron will begin using electronic devices called **Portable People Meters** to measure the listening audience in Austin, instead of the current diary system. In markets where Arbitron is already using PPMs, there have been dramatic shifts in the station rankings. For example, in several markets, Spanish-language and urban hip-hop stations have plummeted, while oldies and generic hits-oriented music stations jumped in the ratings.

The weak performance of Spanish-language stations helps explain **Border Media's** decision last month to drop Hispanic formats from four of its Austin stations – even though the company was founded on the concept of creating a network of Spanish-language stations. In some PPM markets, Spanish-language formats lost 50% of their estimated audience, **Border Media Austin** market manager and Vice President **Jerry Del Core** notes. "That was certainly one of our fears," he said.

PPMs also played a role in Emmis Communications' decision to drop its hip-hop format, **Hot 93.3FM**, and move **KGSR**, its signature Austin "adult album alternative" station, from 107.1FM to 93.3FM, a much stronger signal with greater reach in sprawling Williamson County. It was a risky move, as evidenced by the complaints on online message boards about spotty reception in Central and South Austin. But management believes the move will better position **KGSR** for the future.

"No question, we have [PPMs] in the back of our minds with what we do," said **Scott Gillmore**, Austin market manager for Emmis.

The portable meters, which look like pagers, are carried by participants and automatically pick up and track encoded radio signals – all radio signals. If a person with a meter is standing in a store or elevator listening to background music, the meter will take note, in the same way it will track a user flipping through stations in their car.

PPMs' ability to record every channel-surfing moment is a sharp contrast to the diary system, which requires participants to write down the stations they listen to in the course of a day. Although Arbitron goes to great lengths to make the diary system statistically relevant, the wild fluctuations and questionable accuracy are widely mocked within the industry. People filling out diaries, industry executives believe, often simply vote for their favorite stations instead of diligently listening their minute-by-minute listening.

The meters, most industry executives acknowledge, offer a far more accurate picture of listening habits. But the system has been controversial from the start. Ethnic groups say they are underrepresented in Arbitron's panels of listeners, skewing the results. Spanish-language giant **Univision** is refusing to participate. Earlier this month, the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held hearings on the impact and accuracy of the electronic data system.

On a station level, managers are wrestling with how to program for a PPM world. The meters tend to reward stations that play catchy, popular songs capable of grabbing the attention of a broad audience flipping through channels. In early PPM markets, the estimated audiences for oldies and generic all-hits music formats like **Bob FM**, which broadcasts nationally and in Canada, have soared. In response, after years

without an oldies format in Austin, **Border Media** last month replaced the Mexican pop format on **KXXS-FM** with a syndicated "True Oldies" format.

Stations that play mass appeal hits "end up rising to the top because they are no one's favorite station, but they are everyone's second or third favorite station," said Seattle-based consultant **Chris Mays**. "In the Seattle market, the Jack station [an all-hits format like "Bob"] was always an also-ran in the diary, never in the Top 10, and now it zoomed right to the top."

Mays specializes in so-called "triple A" adult album alternative stations like **KGSR**, which have not fared well in many PPM markets. PPM results, she says, are pushing many program directors to replace artists like Lyle Lovett and John Hiatt with more "broad appeal" hits from the likes of Journey or Steve Miller, hoping to catch a larger classic rock hits audience. **KGSR** is seen as "one of the stations in jeopardy" because it doesn't play a generic song list, Mays says.

In general, PPMs punish stations with more creative formats, as the meters diligently record every time a restless audience changes the channel. Early results show that long interviews or chatty talk hosts can drive away listeners. A comedic deejay may be popular in the diaries, but if the meters record 10% of the audience switching to find the next song, it can be devastating to a station's ratings.

Stations "have to be crisp, concise, and compelling," said **Charlie Silsen**, a partner in Research Director Inc., which tracks the industry. "If they are not compelling, the listener goes away."

Emmis managers have already talked to on-air personalities about tightening up their shows, Gillmore says. "If you're doing unprepared, undisciplined things, you'd be better off playing a song," Gillmore said. He emphasized that management won't try to "reinvent" established shows like **Dudley & Bob** on **KLBJ-FM** or **The Jeff Ward Show** on **KLBJ-AM**. But there can be a fine line between "creativity and self-indulgence," he notes.

It's not hard to envision what might happen in Austin. Already conservative and rigidly formatted stations will retreat further into their shells, slashing even more personality and on-air talent, turning into characterless automated jukeboxes, sticking to broad appeal, PPM-friendly music formats. In the diary world, stations needed to be memorable in order to prod Arbitron panelists to write down the station's call letters in the diary; under PPM, stations need only to play a hit song to grab a listener's attention for two minutes.

"The more disturbing fallout from this is that it reinforces all the philosophies that have made radio a bland afterthought," industry veteran **Steve Allan** recently told a reporter for an industry newsletter.

PPM results have varied market to market, making it difficult for local executives to predict the initial impact. Stations will begin encoding their signals in January for the PPM system, and there will be a test period before the system goes live, giving programmers a chance to evaluate the results.

"I do think it's more real" than the diary system, Gillmore said. "It's more reflective of what people are doing in the real world." ■

media watch

Portable People Meters' ability to record every channel-surfing moment is a sharp contrast to the diary system, which requires participants to write down the stations they listen to in the course of a day.

the hightower report

BY JIM HIGHTOWER

WEASELS UNDERMINE ETHICS REFORM

The word "weasels" not only describes furry, burrowing rodents but also corporate lobbyists who madly tunnel loopholes through our country's ethics laws.

Take Doheny Global Group, an energy and real estate corporation. Last year, it hosted a weeklong schmooze-fest for potential investors, inviting them to hobnob in Israel with "an elite cadre" of power brokers, specifically including such members of Congress as Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Florida Republican. Participants had to pay \$18,500 each to be part of Doheny's dog-and-pony show – but the corporation covered the tab for Congresscritters and their spouses.

Wait. Didn't Congress "reform the system" and make these influence-peddling junkets illegal by prohibiting corporate lobbyists from paying for congressional travel? Well, yes. Lobbyists can no longer pay for the travel, gala parties, and other bennies that lawmakers are given on these junkets – but a loophole allows lobbyists' corporate clients to foot the bill.

Likewise, the Congressional Black Caucus held a conference last year in a Gulf Coast casino. Again, major corporate interests weaseled their way into the gathering; the health care workshop was sponsored by Eli Lilly, the session on climate change was funded by electric utilities, and Wal-Mart sponsored a clinic on – get this – skeet shooting!

Since the caucus' events were organized by a lobbyist, the corporations were not allowed to fund them directly. No problem, though – a convenient loophole lets them give money to a nonprofit set up by the caucus, and it pays for the events. Caucus members did have to pay for their travel, but they could buy tickets using campaign funds, including money donated by the corporations.

Not all weasels are in the woods – watch out for them whenever lobbyists and lawmakers team up to "reform" the system.

For more information on Jim Hightower's work – and to subscribe to his award-winning monthly newsletter, The Hightower Lowdown – visit www.jimhightower.com. You can hear his radio commentaries on KOOP Radio, 91.7FM, weekdays at 10:58am and 12:58pm.

CONGRESS CODDLES CREDIT-RATING FINAGLERS

America has the wrong approach for dealing with thieves. Rather than looking backward at their misdeeds and punishing them, we merely need to ask that they not misbehave in the future, then monitor their behavior.

Believe it or not, this is how congressional leaders are addressing the thievery of three little-known gangs. Congress' compassionate approach is not meant for common robbers, of course. No, no – lawmakers are happy to punish them to the hilt. Rather, the kid-glove treatment is reserved for thieves named Moody's Investors Service, Standard & Poor's, and Fitch Ratings – the Big Three credit rating agencies that exist to evaluate the worthiness of corporate-issued bonds, assigning a grade (from triple-A to junk) that helps investors know the risk involved in buying the bonds.

But the Big Three run a rigged game that robs our pension funds and other investors. Moody's, S&P, and Fitch are not independent public regulators but for-profit firms that are paid fat fees by the very corporations whose bonds they rate. Yes, this is an inherent conflict of interest! It allows rating firms to profit by merrily putting smiley-faced grades on lousy bonds, thus deceiving (and robbing) the public. For example, the Big Three gave thumbs-up to the subprime housing bonds that turned out to be worthless, leading to trillions of dollars in losses for the public and crashing our economy.

Yet our soft-on-corporate-crime Congress critters have declared these finaglers too big to jail. Rather than taking the Big Three off the street, Congress is coddling them, meekly freeing them to continue their corrupt, for-hire, monopolistic system of credit-rating flimflamery.

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The Hands That Feed

The folks who care for Austin's hungry could sure use a few more helping hands

BY KATE X MESSER

The sweep of headlights cuts the night in two. The lights, the engine hum, the crunch of tires on gravel are usually enough. Sometimes, Alan honks the horn, just to let everyone know it's us. The moment is at once disconcerting yet sweet, as people begin to emerge from the dark – some to find nourishment, some to seek solace in a friendly face, most to break off one small, digestible part of the long, lonely night. It's one small event to jar the monotony and soften the struggle.

The food truck is here.

Despite the somewhat clandestine feel of its work, it's no secret that Austin-based non-profit Mobile Loaves & Fishes has been sending food missions into the empty belly of the city's street culture for years. In 2008 alone, it served more than 425,000 meals. Founder and President Alan Graham is a fixture on the streets, recognizable by his patented Santa whiskers. But don't mistake this dude for a jolly old elf. Graham ministers to the needy with tough love and by managing what amounts to a more than \$1.5 million annual budget. Elves don't handle that type of cash.

"This year, because of the economic downturn, we've had to make decisions that have negatively affected human beings – terminating employees, trimming certain services," says Graham. "We're even having to moderate how much food is going out on the trucks – that hurts. The tough choices are always human choices.

"If I had 1,000 people in Austin giving \$10 a month," he says, "the food problem is gone. We aren't looking for an angel, we're looking for 1,000."

Eight or so trucks go out just about every night; they are loaded with sandwiches (sometimes hot, like hamburgers or hot dogs), snacks, fruit, hard-boiled eggs, hot and cold drinks, and provisions, including socks, clothes, blankets, and toiletries. The MLF crews find folks where they live: dotting corners, clustered in building alcoves, gathered under live oaks, sequestered in weekly roach motels, and camped out in the woods.

An estimated 4,000 people are homeless in Austin at any given time, according to a number of studies conducted between 2001 and 2008 by area social-service consortium Community Action Network. That includes folks beset by temporary hardship, as well as transient populations. The chronically homeless – those without a regular place to call their own for more than a year – account for about 15%, or about 600 people, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The good news? "That number is so mitigable," says Graham. "Whether it's 15 [percent] or 20 percent, 600 or 800 homeless, it's ... well, I say 'mitigable' because I don't think the word 'solvable' is accurate.

"I just Twittered an MLK quote today," he says. "We are commanded to try to finish that which is unfinished." All this energy toward 'solutions' keeps us from the actual solution, which is simply reaching out there and helping people."

Frank Ringer agrees. Ringer retired after 28 years with the Texas Department of Health (now the Texas Department of State Health Services) and is currently a government relations consultant; he serves on both the Austin/

Travis County Reentry Roundtable and the Travis State Jail Advisory Committee, the social service constituency of which (ex-offenders who have done their time) frequently finds itself homeless. Ringer advocates efficient models for caregivers to cooperate and engage. "If we could get more individuals to interact with homeless individuals one-on-one ...," he says: "What it boils down to is one human dealing with another – with the same needs and wants. This empathy and realization is more prevalent face-to-face."

Back on the Mobile Loaves & Fishes truck, former University of Texas basketball player Drew Gressett (owner of Hat Creek Burger Co.) and his wife, Shelby, have come along to fill a warming oven with fresh, hot cheeseburgers. The burgers disappear in fewer than 10 stops – that's a lot of burgers to a lot of people.

**"All this energy toward 'solutions' keeps us from the actual solution, which is simply reaching out there and helping people."
- Alan Graham**



Mobile Loaves' Alan Graham puts his Santa whiskers to good use at the annual Foundation for the Homeless Christmas party.

The Gressetts are thrilled with the night's run and have committed to partner with MLF on a regular basis. "Hopefully starting in the spring, we're going to be doing nightly runs, providing the food right out of our restaurant on Burnet [Road]," says Drew. "Anybody can volunteer, shoot an e-mail, and well, boom! Come on!"

His enthusiasm is not unique. The truck brings out the happy in both volunteers and those in need. Back-claps and howdys ring out as volunteers load grocery bags with provisions and the night's hot meal. Bonds form on these regular journeys, so sometimes, the talk is personal – "How's Mom?" – or catching up with the day's events. Sometimes it's a simple query about the availability of socks.

Food is the great equalizer. The opportunity to serve others is humbling. As the truck empties, the volunteers all agree: We wish we could just fill it right back up again. As the Sermon on the Mount-rooted name of the group implies, we would like to wave our hands and (poof!) have enough to feed everyone this night. But no matter how hard we wish, it's time to finish the run and call it a night: We have but five loaves and two fish.

A Jesus Party

"My mama used to say: 'If ya sick, give me a fish. There's something about a fish.' Jesus healed a lot of people with fish," says Lola Stephens-Bell, aka Nubian Queen Lola, whose Eastside Cajun Soul Food Kitchen has been serving her deliciously soul-stirring concoctions not just to paying customers but to the homeless and the hungry since 2003.

"Fish is a healing piece of food. Try me! You find somebody real sick, and I don't care if they're on a feeding tube: If you can put a little piece of fish in their mouth, just the meat on it, watch. You gonna see a little change." She stands up, washes her hands, and checks on today's special brewing in the kitchen: crawfish étouffée. "Give them some fish, and love that fish," she says as she stirs. "Watch what happens. They're gonna start perkin' up, feelin' better. It's just a fact."

Diagnosed with lupus eight years ago – for which she has declined chemical treatment – and having survived homelessness as well as depression after a number of family members passed away, she knows another transforma-

CONTINUED ON P.26

The food truck is here: Kevin Dunn greets a familiar face on a Mobile Loaves run.

PHOTOS BY JANA BIRCHUM

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Nubian Queen Lola serves Thanksgiving dinner to her homeless neighbors.

JOHN ANDERSON



Peggy Forrest meets with the Mobile Loaves & Fishes crew to prepare for her new life off the street.

JANA BIRCHUM



Eddie Marrero was once homeless and now serves at the Mobile Loaves & Fishes Thanksgiving feast at Caritas.

JOHN ANDERSON

tive cure-all: “If anybody who’s sick would just get up off the bed and go help somebody, they’ll feel better.”

Just two weeks earlier, Stephens-Bell served Thanksgiving dinner to the folks who come to her homeless outreach program. Her outreach is food, and we’re not talking about some Sunday-go-to-meetin’ bun, but a hearty meal – soul food with a side of “The Word.” (Hold the hellfire and brimstone, please; she wants none of that.) Her services do just that: serve. Within this last year, her Sunday homeless offerings have expanded from weekly meals to three squares a day, seven days a week.

“They call what I’m doing ‘church,’” she says, “I don’t want them to call it church. I want them to call it ...,” she pauses and flashes a grin, “a ‘Jesus party.’ I’m using the Bible the way Jesus used it to tell parables.

“We don’t need all that screaming,” she says. “We don’t need to say, ‘Awww, amen! He live!’ That’s scary. That’s a little scary for someone on drugs.”

At Thanksgiving, a young woman named Ellie worked alongside Stephens-Bell in the kitchen. She sometimes serves the homeless side of the operation when Stephens-Bell needs a hand. Ellie herself is stabilizing after time without a home. “Lola helped me, and God took me off the street. Now I want to help other people,” Ellie says, hoping to tend to the needs of others after so recently not being able to tend to her own.

“People don’t understand what the poor and the suffering people are really suffering from,” says Stephens-Bell, whose own bouts of suffering could topple fellows twice her girlish size. Both women have experienced the reality of homelessness, and each possesses a unique insight that flavors her care. “You hit me around the last weeks of the month – I get about 100 people per day,” she says. “Around the first of the month, I don’t get so many, because many of them get their checks. And what I love about them: They get a check, they don’t ask for nothing.” So much for the misconception that greed and laziness go hand in hand with homelessness.

With three decades of service experience, Ringer insists, “If more people did stop and talk to [the homeless], to understand what they are experiencing, they would find these individuals, the majority of them, to be well-spoken and to be coping enormously well with their situation.

“Some people get upset when I suggest this and say, ‘Well these people have places to live, and they just do this for a living.’ *Damn right!* It’s all they have. They ‘have a place to live?’” he mocks incredulously. “That’s not the point. The point is: The longer we keep them homeless and jobless, the harder it’s going to be for them to ever have a home, want to work, or to integrate at all. Why should they? They’ve already developed a whole set of coping skills. They’ve learned the one thing they can be proud of: They can say, ‘I have adapted!’”

A Sort of Homecoming

“What is home to you?” I ask the friendly gal with the booming laugh and infectious smile. She thinks for a second, seeming almost afraid to say what’s come to mind. “I’m not going to lie. I’m scared to death,” she begins. “It’s coming true, but it’s too good to be true. I’m telling myself, ‘Hold on, don’t get carried away, you’re gonna get hurt again.’ Then I’m like: ‘Hell no! I’m comin!’”

Peggy Forrest has come home. For the first time in nine years, she has a house of her own.

“Miss Kay said I was going to have some fuzzy posters to do, and I am loving that,” she beams. Miss Kay is Kay Dalton, a Mobile Loaves & Fishes donor and activist who, along with David Shiflet and Kevin Dunn, is helping Forrest settle in to her new place. “Black velvet with white ... and the markers,” she says, describing the posters. “I love those! I haven’t done them since I lost my house.”

Forrest has been homeless for the better (or worse) part of the decade. To compound her predicament, Forrest has phocomelia, a congenital syndrome associated with the use of thalidomide by pregnant women, especially in the Fifties and Sixties. She does not have the standard configuration of limbs most of us take for granted.

“Lola helped me, and God took me off the street. Now I want to help other people.”
– Ellie

“When I have too much time on my hands, I don’t know what to do with myself. I don’t like that. When I had the fuzzy posters, I felt like I was somebody,” she grins. “I’ve been missing TV so bad. And I haven’t had a clock in so long, but now I’ll know what time it is by what I’m watching. TNT. I love my TNT.”

Life on the streets is a cruel enough test of anyone’s independence, but in Forrest’s extreme case, it was especially daunting. While most of us bemoan our lack of upward mobility, her survival has depended on mobility, period. Her wheelchair is electric – no luxury for someone with short arms – and requires charging. The number of places that would allow her to sidle up to an outlet and juice up while she slept had begun to dwindle when she was homeless. She had one reliable source: the kind manager of a small South Austin store who would allow her access for the eight-hour charge.

“When I am awake, I have to move,” she relates. “Otherwise I feel trapped. The most terrifying thing I ever dealt with since I was out on the streets was when I had to put my chair in to be fixed. That scared me the most.” Hopefully the ramp installed on her new home will help put those fears to rest.

MLF’s Habitat on Wheels program has successfully placed a number of individuals and families in RVs and mobile homes across Austin. HOW intends to create a village, with the goal of empowering the recently ex-homeless to create community within a supported structure, concentrating many of the necessary follow-up services required of the population. HOW considers cases like Forrest’s to be prototypes. The proposed name of the com-

The Hands That Give



Her hands have opened doors, stirred pots, and flipped levers in voting booths. They've caressed, guided, and even disciplined a couple of generations of kids. Today, they tremble ever so slightly as she lifts the latch on the screen door. Her hands bear the test of time, weathered and lined with the proof of experience. Ms. Treviño is just one of the many clients of Meals on Wheels and More, and today, her hands reach out to receive a meal, a thanks for the many years when the roles were reversed, when she did all the caretaking. The hands on the other side of the tray are sturdy, rough-hewn, but gentle. They belong to James Hart, a veteran driver for MOWAM.

Hart, a Vietnam vet, has lived in Austin since he was a kid growing up in the 1950s. Every Tuesday for the past six years, he's picked up hot lunches for his route, joining about 235

other volunteer delivery drivers who show up at the Meals on Wheels kitchen to distribute nutritional goodness across town (delivery includes 12 bicycle-friendly routes for the new Meals on Two Wheels program, popular with Austin's bike community). This past September, MOWAM celebrated its millionth meal of the year - its first million-meal year of its 37 in Austin.

"It's great that we could reach that mark and had the support to do so, but it paints a kind of sad and somewhat scary picture of what's going on out in the community," says communications manager Sarah Andrews. Fortunately, MOWAM boasts a total of 5,000 active volunteers getting out into neighborhoods and getting people the care they need.

For Hart, public service is a given. "My mom was the best waitress in the world," he says of her more than 40 years with Austin's beloved

Night Hawk Frisco Shop. "She had such regular customers that when they were in the hospital, she would take them food." Hart earned his own stripes both as a Marine and later by helping care for his bedridden father. The entire family took part. "I got to know him more in those three years than I did my entire life," he says.

He considers his mission with MOWAM a natural extension. "You take care of the elderly. You don't abandon them," he says. "They aren't a burden; they're a part of your heritage." And for Hart, they are part of his life. While the relationships remain professional, Hart and the folks along his route interact with the ease of dear friends. The seniors in his care look forward to his weekly stops. "You know, I put that picture you gave me on my fridge!" says one client, referring to a photo Hart gave her of himself with his Boston terrier, Abby. "I tell everyone, 'That's my boyfriend!'"

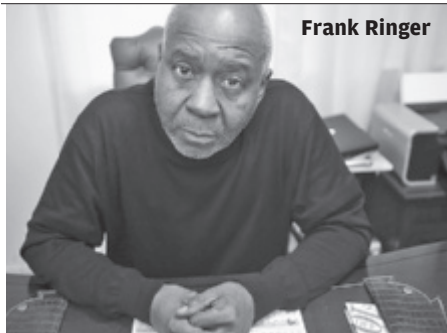
"It becomes such an important part of their day," says Hart. "Just to interact. Just to say hello and to have a laugh. It means so much. It costs, what? Nothing. A few minutes of my time."

- K.X.M.



James Hart and Abby

PHOTOS BY JANA BIRCHUM



Frank Ringer

munity is the Jennifer Gale Village, named for the homeless trans-woman who died on the street one freezing night last winter.

"We obtained some FEMA park homes, like the ones used last year in Galveston after Hurricane Ike," says Graham. "And we found one that is totally handicap accessible." That's when work began to set Forrest up in a house.

Move-in day came sooner than expected as the work crew put the finishing touches on the wheelchair ramp. Dalton, Shiflet, Dunn, and a number of other happy MLFers brought Forrest in to see her new home. Happy tears of gratitude and relief spilled over as she explored her new place, outfitted with all the basics; TNT on the remote; a fully stocked fridge featuring her favorites, including case upon case of Diet Coke; and of course ... lots of fuzzy posters.

Can't Not Do

"We, as a society, fail to see the cost of homelessness on our city, county, state budgets - on emergency rooms, in our schools," says Ringer. "It's outrageous what we are spending on the back end on things that are preventable. But it's hard to sell the concept of prevention."

"At the end of the day, I judge myself on what I've done," he reflects. "I do what I do because I wouldn't feel good if I didn't do it. You gotta make up your mind where you want to be with this."

Nubian Queen Lola has her mind made up. "People would never dream what makes me live. People tell me: 'Lola, you shouldn't be working seven days a week. You're working too hard.' No, no, no! It's harder to *not*. I choose to do this and stay strong. If it was taken away, I think I would die."

"To give," she insists. "That's my chemo. ... That's why I keep going on like this. It's unstoppable. It's important for me to tell the world to give and give and give, and don't stop. And have a little bit of fish!" ■



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FIRST NIGHT AUSTIN

100,000 revelers
can't be wrong

If you've yet to solidify those party plans for the last evening of 2009, and the prospect of watching the ball drop with Dick Clark and Ryan Seacrest yet again has you gagging on your eggnog, why not join the throngs at First Night Austin? The free New Year's Eve street party has a parade, fireworks, music, and, most importantly, all kinds of wild and funky art projects – in past years, a ginormous eyeball on a water tower, a three-story burning clock, a glowing dragon on Lady Bird Lake – that you just won't see any of the other 364 days of the year. And considering that the event typically draws about 100,000 people, you can count on being in good company (which is more than you can say about *New Year's Rockin' Eve*, right?). This year, some 850 local creatives will be contributing their talents to the celebration over the eight hours between 4pm and midnight, and in honor of First Night's fifth anniversary, organizers have arranged a party-within-the-party, the Long First Night, on the outdoor City Terrace and the mezzanine inside the Long Center for the Performing Arts. A \$20 ticket gets you access to the Long Center, cash bars and food, bands and DJs, and a children's activities area; a \$110 VIP ticket includes the same, plus access to open bars, complimentary buffets and chef's stations, and a private shindig. Tickets are available at www.thelongcenter.org and www.firstnightaustin.org.

This year's event stretches from Congress Avenue at Fifth Street down to Cesar Chavez, along Cesar Chavez to the South First Street bridge, across it to Riverside Drive, and across Auditorium Shores. The fun starts at 4pm with the traditional Family Festival. At 6pm, the Grand Procession starts at Fifth and Congress and proceeds to Auditorium Shores, where, at 8pm, Community Art Makers – the folks who brought you 2009's *Resolution Clock* – will ignite *Dorothy*, their 36-foot-tall tornado of colored flame, and Wolf Stuntworks will provide snow. At 9pm, look for the Waterlight Parade, an illuminated procession of boats on Lady Bird Lake provided by the Austin Rowing Club. Then, runners can get in their last race of the year at 10pm with the First Night Run, a 3K run through Downtown organized by RunTex. At 11:30pm, a unique Vespa painted by artist Sheri Mays and autographed by cinematographer Richard Linklater will be raffled off in front of City Hall. Then, when the clocks hit midnight ... what else? Fireworks.

Other highlights to tempt you:

- *Thirst, From Loss to Grace* – Diverse Space Dance Theatre's choreographic tribute to Austin creatives who died in 2009 (among them Lucia Rodriguez, Tina Marsh, Amy



COURTESY OF COMMUNITY ART MAKERS

The Resolution Clock
from First Night Austin 2009

Farris, and Robin Shivers). Toni Bravo, Sharon Marroquin, Orlando Casnove, and Christopher Swain provide choreography to music by the Creative Opportunity Orchestra and Russ Smith.

- The combined forces of the Austin Civic Chorus and Austin Vocal Arts Ensemble sing Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," the finale of Beethoven's *Ninth*, and Orff's "O Fortuna" from *Carmina Burana*.

- *The Human Powered, Road Going, Viking Boat* by EGAD Adventure Capital.

- Dale Jenssen's 11-foot-tall, illuminated, interactive spaceship sculpture.

- An installation of sounds and swings whose lights change color by artists Danielle and Jason Mika, technical wizard Joe Martin, and audio composer Jonathan Sylvan.

- A 20-foot-by-20-foot luminous cube by Richard Phillips.

- A 35-foot-long Art Bus created by high school students from Club Arthouse working with local artist Cybil Guess.

- Art cars by Rebecca Bass (Dragon Z), Bonnie Blue (Women Rock Art Car), Terry Brooks (Illuminaughty), Kenny Browning (Iron Maiden), Kim Ritter (the Peace Expedition), and Nicole Strine (Shattered Vanity).

- Music by Artificial Life Preserver, cellist Steve Bernal, the Blue Hit, Stephanie Briggs, the Daze, Foot Patrol, Gravelwhip, Hipnautica, Ky Hote, the Oziene Experience, the Austin branch of the Paul Green School of Rock, the Peterson Brothers Band, Ashleigh Stone, and Tres Womack & the Chubby Knuckle Choir.

- Contributions from past First Night participants such as Austin Bike Zoo, Austin Shakespeare, Austin Taiko, and Texas Juggling Society.

For more information, visit www.firstnightaustin.org.
– Robert Faures

AUSTIN ARTS GROUPS

Grants in their stockings

The National Endowment for the Arts has made its annual impersonation of St. Nick and dropped some federal funding into the stockings of a dozen local culture providers. It's nice to see so many five-figure grants and to see the city's Cultural Arts Division get \$35,000 to build up its very useful Take It to the Next Level workshop series. And congratulations to Vortex Repertory Company on getting its first-ever show of support from the NEA and to Austin Lyric Opera and the Austin Chamber Music Center for teaming up to present the opera based on Oliver Sacks' *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. Here are the recipients whose holidays will be a bit brighter, thanks to Santa NEA:

Austin Film Society: \$25,000 to support its curated film and video series;

Austin Lyric Opera: \$20,000 to support performances of *L'Etoile (The Star)*, by Emmanuel Chabrier, as well as education and outreach activities;

Austin Lyric Opera, in partnership with the **Austin Chamber Music Center:** \$15,000 to support performances of Michael Nyman's chamber opera *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* during the 2010 Austin Chamber Music Festival;

Badgerdog Literary Publishing Inc.: \$20,000 to support the publication, promotion, and distribution of the quarterly journal *American Short Fiction* and the publication of short stories exclusively on its website;

Ballet Austin: \$15,000 to support its juried choreographic competition New American Talent/Dance, in which emerging choreographers K.T. Nelson, Dominic Walsh, and Nelly Van Bomme will each create and premiere a new work;

City of Austin Cultural Arts Division: \$35,000 to support Take It to the Next Level, a workshop and speaker series for Austin cultural organizations, and to produce a statewide conference in partnership with the Texas Commission on the Arts;

Dance Umbrella: \$20,000 to support Discover Dance, a program in which dance companies that it presents in residency offer education and outreach activities;

Mexic-Arte Museum: \$25,000 to support "Young Latino Artists in Retrospect," an



The Star

exhibition that will feature current work by artists who have participated in this annual exhibition over the years;

Tapestry Dance Company: \$10,000 to support the 10th annual Soul to Sole Tap Festival, including performances and education and outreach activities;

University of Texas Press: \$7,500 to support the acquisition, publication, promotion, and distribution of English-language translations, with a specific focus on Latin America and the Middle East;

Vortex Repertory Company: \$15,000 to support a new production of the musical theatre adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty*, with a revised script and score by creators Bonnie Cullum and Content Love Knowles;

Women & Their Work: \$25,000 to support a series of solo exhibitions for young and emerging women artists of Texas, with accompanying catalogs, educational programs, and outreach activities. – R.F.

ARTHOUSE

Thanks, Secret Santa, for the job upgrade



Elizabeth
Dunbar

Christmas came a little early for Elizabeth Dunbar, with the present of a promotion landing on her desk at Arthouse. The visual-arts organization's first full-time curator – you can thank her for getting Okay Mountain to the Pulse Contemporary Art Fair in Miami this year and for "Matt Stokes: these are the days," "Fritz Haeg: Attack on the Front Lawn," "Florian Slotawa: One After the Other," and several other cool Arthouse exhibitions over the past three years – is now going to be its associate director/curator. Her

responsibility for shows and public programs will remain the same, but she'll be taking on some management duties, presumably off the plate of ever-busy Director Sue Graze. Also getting a job upgrade is Jennifer Gardner, who is now special projects manager, and joining the Arthouse team is Jennifer Wijangco, formerly of the Texas Cultural Trust, who's been hired as director of development. Merry Christmas, y'all! – R.F.

Let Him Entertain You



JOHN ANDERSON

Why producer Charles Duggan is staging the biggest holiday spectacular Austin's ever seen

BY ROBERT FAIRES

Charles Duggan probably doesn't want me telling you this, but for his upcoming seasonal spectacular at the Long Center, he plans to make it snow inside Dell Hall. And not just on the stage, but *all over the audience*.

That's the kind of audacious theatrical effect that you wouldn't expect outside of Radio City Music Hall. Or that maybe you thought went away with the Broadway extravaganzas of Flo Ziegfeld and Billy Rose 60 years ago. But as we shift from the first decade of the 21st century to the second, Austin-based producer Duggan is giving his hometown a heapin' helping of good old-fashioned stage spectacle with the production he's dubbed *A Texas Christmas Carol*. We're talking a holiday variety show that manages to pack into a mere two hours tap-dancing Christmas trees, the March of the Toys, a Rockette-style kick line, the Posada,

"Jingle Bells" performed on 1,500 kazoos, a sing-along "Hallelujah Chorus," a live Frosty the Snowman (who melts), "O Holy Night" with an opera chorus, "Go Tell It on the Mountain" with a gospel quintet, a handbell choir, a string quartet, a brass quintet, 20 classical guitarists, and a version of *The Nutcracker* that clocks in at nine minutes flat. Oh yes, and that cherry on this supersized sundae, the aforementioned snowfall.

And as if it weren't enough that this production manages to jam so much entertainment under one roof, it's also convening a veritable galaxy of Austin performing artists to present it: Tish Hinojosa; the Biscuit Brothers; Tosca String Quartet; jazz vocalist Kat Edmonson; Butler School of Music professor of piano Anton Nel; dancers from Ballet Austin and Tapestry Dance Company; singers

from Austin Lyric Opera; ALO concertmaster Stanislav Pronin; Matthew Hinsley and guitarists from Austin Classical Guitar Society; the River City Brass Quintet; Zach Theatre leading lady Jill Blackwood; gospel singers Dorothy Mays Clark, Tim Curry, Courtney Sanchez, Rod Sanford, and Janis Stinson; the Bowie High School Silver Stars; Zach Theatre's Showstoppers; the St. Martin's Ringers; and KVUE chief meteorologist Mark Murray.

Now, apart from the odd gala such as the grand opening of the Long Center, when do you see that kind of an all-star cast on a single stage these days, a congregation of high-wattage performers that cuts across the disciplines of dance, theatre, and music – and across so many genres of music at that: jazz, gospel, opera, folk, classical? And who puts together that kind of show anymore – not just in Austin but *anywhere*? Back in the early part of the last century, variety shows thrived, and a certain breed of producer could build his name and fortune on assembling the biggest, glitziest, most star-studded spectacle a stage could hold. But it's been 77 years since Ziegfeld ascended to that Great Balcony in the Sky and almost that many since Rose put the circus on Broadway in Rodgers and Hart's *Jumbo* (or had the original 4,000-seat Casa Mañana built for the Fort Worth Frontier Days, for that matter). As for a gutsy impresario such as Sol Hurok or a flashy theatrical producer such as David Merrick, well, nowadays you're lucky to find someone who remembers them, much less someone able to fill

their showman's shoes. That Duggan can, and does, makes him rather an anomaly in the modern world: a producer of the old school, with a flair for the theatrical and a sense of spectacle, not to mention strong instincts for what works on stage and, maybe most importantly, what the audience wants.

Show Biz 101

Duggan comes by his old-school theatre credentials honestly. He grew up with a passion for the stage, and, on graduating from Stanford University in 1975, he gave himself two years for a final fling on the boards. That led to him being cast in touring shows that starred some of the leading ladies of the previous generation – Ginger Rogers, Betty Grable, Ethel Merman – and left him with an indelible sense of what true stars of that era were like. And when he left Georgetown University Law Center with a degree and started practicing corporate, real estate, and entertainment law in San Francisco, it led to him gaining some clients from the connections made through those shows. About that time, Duggan also found a mentor in Arnold Saint Subber, the

man credited with hatching the idea for *Kiss Me, Kate* (after stage-managing a production of *The Taming of the Shrew* starring Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne) and who co-produced its original Broadway run, as well as produced on Broadway William Inge's *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, a Mike Nichols-directed revival of Lillian Hellman's *The Little Foxes* with Anne Bancroft and George C. Scott, and seven of Neil Simon's biggest hits, including *Barefoot in the Park*, *The Odd Couple*, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*, and *Plaza Suite*. While Duggan was still in his late 20s, Saint Subber invited him to co-produce Patrick Meyers' play *K2* on Broadway. The mountain-climbing drama didn't last three months in New York, but it picked up a Tony Award for Ming Cho Lee's set, and, more significantly, it gave Duggan a taste for producing and a new direction in life.

From that point, Duggan set out to follow in Saint Subber's footsteps. Back in San Francisco, he had obtained the Marines' Memorial Theatre in July 1982 and made the 640-seat venue his base of operations. One of his first hits

Duggan is an anomaly in the modern world: a producer of the old school with a sense of spectacle and a flair for the theatrical, not to mention strong instincts for what works on stage and, maybe most importantly, what the audience wants.

there was Christopher Durang's *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You*, which ran long enough to star in succession Lynn Redgrave, Cloris Leachman, and Peggy Cass. He went back to Broadway in 1992 with a revival of *Private Lives* toplined by Joan Collins and again the following year with Jonathan Tolins' topical drama *The Twilight of the Golds*, which was later made into a film for Showtime with Garry Marshall, Faye Dunaway, and Brendan Fraser. He

shepherded another Tolins drama, *If Memory Serves*, to New York with Elizabeth Ashley in the lead, in 1999 and mounted a London run of the one-man show *Jeeves Takes Charge* with Edward Duke before that actor's untimely death. Elsewhere and at various times, Duggan has also worked with everyone from Julie Harris and Sir Ian McKellen to Imogene Coca and Sid Caesar to Peggy Lee and Barbara Cook to Jose Greco. And, of course, on the home front, he's best known as the producer of *Greater Tuna*, *A Tuna Christmas*, and *Red, White and Tuna* with the original creative team of Joe Sears and Jaston Williams for a quarter of a century. It was Duggan's connection to *Tuna* that led him in 1992 to relocate to Austin, where he's been intimately involved in several projects, most notably Austin Musical Theatre, which he helped get off the ground in 1997 and tried to throw a lifeline to when it was drowning in red ink seven years later, and Actors Repertory of Texas, the short-lived professional theatre company created in partnership with the University of Texas' Department of Theatre & Dance.

CONTINUED ON P.32



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Judging by his 27 years in the business of show, Duggan has learned his lessons well. For instance, every penny counts. Contrary to the popular notion of a producer throwing buckets of cash at an extravaganza like his holiday show, Duggan opens the first production meeting for *A Texas Christmas Carol* by telling his team that the only place he could rent a large turntable for the stage was too expensive, so it's out. All of the set changes will now be done with lighting and scrims. Later, in referring to the 13,000 kazoos that will be handed out to audience members for "Jingle Bells," he notes that he ordered them from China, because they only cost 13 cents apiece there rather than the 75 cents it would cost from another source.

That thriftiness walks hand in hand with the lesson that "it's not worth doing if you don't get butts in seats." Duggan has been around the block enough times to know that the week between Christmas and New Year's is a notoriously tough sell. That's why he's devoted a full year to planning the project and developing an audience. The better part of the spring he spent pursuing a unique marketing strategy: Getting local charities to help market the show to their constituencies for a portion of the ticket sales;

for every ticket you buy on behalf of, say, the Austin Children's Shelter, the shelter gets 20% of the price as a donation. In addition, he's dedicated specific performances to benefit specific charities, creating even more of a draw among nonprofit supporters and developing the idea of the show as both entertaining and beneficial to the community at large.

Behind the Curtain

His dedication to his job and attention to detail have certainly paid off for Duggan. If you want to know what built *Tuna* into a multimillion-dollar empire and got Williams and Sears on Broadway 15 years ago or what made a going concern of the Marines' Memorial Theatre for more than 20 years or how he was able to step in as an angel for Austin Musical Theatre in its hour of need or partner with a university on a professional venture, those old-school virtues are where to find your answer.

"I think Charles is successful because of his amazing insight and uncanny knowledge of every aspect of production – artistic, financial, technical, marketing. He understands every facet of this business and how one area impacts the rest," says Carla McQueen, who has served as company manager, producing associate, and general manager of the Greater Tuna Corporation through the years. "He is more 'hands on' than anyone I've ever worked with. That's not to say that he doesn't trust his staff to do the job; it is more that he invariably

has an idea or approach that we had not thought of. In my nearly 19 years working with him, I can't tell you how often I've had one of those 'Why didn't I think of that?' moments!"

"He has no fear," adds Bill Sheffield, who has stage-managed shows for Duggan for ages and is pulling the same duty on *A Texas Christmas Carol*. "When he has a vision for a production, he will try anything and talk to anyone about it. He will coddle, coerce, cajole, caress, coax, and will always carry on to get the best show he can."

Paul Beutel can attest to that. The managing director of the Long Center was skeptical about at least one aspect of *A Texas Christmas Carol*,

Charles Duggan "has no fear," says stage manager Bill Sheffield. "When he has a vision for a production, he will try anything and talk to anyone about it. He will coddle, coerce, cajole, caress, coax, and will always carry on to get the best show he can."

but Duggan wouldn't let go. "I was very resistant to the idea of 'snowfall' in Dell Hall for one of the show's special effects," he says. "Not to give away the surprise, but Charles arranged for a demonstration of the effect, and I and the staff were won over. Often, when faced with resistance or push-back from someone involved in the process, Charles' low-key charm can be very persuasive."

That's not to say that Duggan always gets his way or comes out on top. He confesses to breaking the first rule of producing – "I do put my own

money in a show" – which has sometimes led to painful losses. That production of *Private Lives* with Joan Collins, which included an 11-city national tour? It saddled Duggan with a million-dollar debt that took him a year and a half to pay off. Actors Repertory of Texas? Its splashy debut with an unproduced early play by Tennessee Williams took a bath, as they say in *Variety*, and the venture only managed to mount a production of *Love Letters* with Stacy Keach and Collins again before vanishing altogether. And despite Duggan's infusions of cash and savvy, Austin Musical Theatre went under. These are the kinds of hits that would drive many another producer out of show biz. But Duggan perseveres. Why?

According to Beutel, "Charles is genuinely driven by passion, whereas some commercial producers seem to be driven more by profit-motive. He's created *A Texas Christmas Carol* because he loves the variety-show format, he wants to showcase Austin talent, and with the marketing plan he devised that returns a portion of ticket sales to area nonprofits, he wants to help those organizations who play a role in making Austin such a remarkable, caring community."

Duggan's colleagues McQueen and Sheffield have a simpler take on it: He just loves entertaining people. "Whether it's a small dinner party he's hosting or a full-blown Long Center production," says Sheffield, "he wants people to have a great time."

The man himself would not disagree. "Really, honestly, it's standing in the back of the the-



'A Texas Christmas Carol'

Each performance of *A Texas Christmas Carol* features a special guest artist or artists and benefits a specific area charity or charities. Here is the schedule for both.

Tuesday, Dec. 29, 7:30pm: Anton Nel, Stephanie Chen
(Dell Children's Medical Center)

Wednesday, Dec. 30, 7:30pm: Kat Edmonson (Austin Children's Shelter)

Friday, Jan. 1, 2pm: Tish Hinojosa, Felipe and Evangelina Gonzales
(Con Mi Madre, Junior League of Austin)

Friday, Jan. 1, 7:30pm: Tish Hinojosa, Felipe and Evangelina Gonzales
(Center for Child Protection, Autism Speaks)

Saturday, Jan. 2, 2pm: Matthew Hinsley, Austin Classical Guitar Society
(Helping Hand Home for Children)

Saturday, Jan. 2, 7:30pm: Anton Nel, Stanislav Pronin
(Any Baby Can, Ronald McDonald House)

Sunday, Jan. 3, 1pm: Anton Nel (St. David's Foundation)

Sunday, Jan. 3, 6pm: Matthew Hinsley, Austin Classical Guitar Society
(Make-a-Wish Foundation)

atre and hearing the audience," says Duggan. "With *Tuna*, it was hearing them laugh; with *The Twilight of the Gods*, it was hearing them gasp." And with *A Texas Christmas Carol*, it will no doubt be some combination of squeals of delight and sighs of contentment.

Being a showman is in Duggan's blood. As another old-school man of the theatre, Irving Berlin, put it:

"Even with a turkey that you know will fold You may be stranded out in the cold Still, you wouldn't trade it for a sack o' gold Let's go on with the show Let's go on with the show!"

A Texas Christmas Carol runs Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 29 & 30, 7:30pm; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 1 & 2, 2 & 7:30pm; and Sunday, Jan. 3, 1 & 6pm, at the Long Center for the Performing Arts, 701 W. Riverside. For more information, call 474-5664 or visit www.thelongcenter.org.

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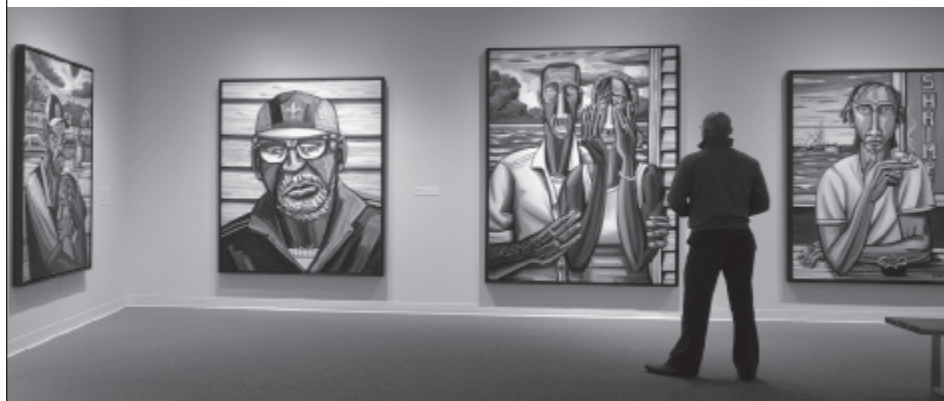


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after a fashion

BY STEPHEN MACMILLAN MOSER

I AM WAL-MART I got my hair cut the other day. I want to tell you *where*, but I can hardly utter the words. Okay, here goes: I had my hair done at **Wal-Mart**. *Le Salon du Wal-Mart*. My stylist, **Donna**, swore she'd cut my hair before. I assured her that was not possible. I'd certainly have remembered an occasion such as getting my hair cut at Wal-Mart. We did, however, determine that she had indeed sold hair products to me before. So I made an appointment, and she told me it would be about 20 minutes, so I shopped around and returned to her after 20 minutes. She wasn't quite ready, so I inspected the salon's hair-care lines while secretly watching Donna finish with her previous customer. I figured that I could learn something about Donna's technique by seeing how she worked with another customer's hair. But I was terribly wrong. I learned *nothing* by watching Donna work, though that may be because she was performing what is called a **comb-out** on an elderly woman who obviously did not mind coloring her hair at home (obviously). A comb-out is something you don't see much anymore; it's when ladies of a certain age arrive at the salon with their hair in rollers, and the stylist (I prefer the term "beautician") combs the hair out and styles it for Madame. It seems absolutely *wrong* for me to be talking about getting my hair done at Wal-Mart when, in January, I'm going to the

new salon at the flagship **Neiman Marcus** store in **Dallas**. The star of the salon will be my old friend **Ceron from Houston**. I guess having all of Houston talking about you really isn't enough when you can have not only all of Houston talking about you, but all of Dallas, too. The fact that I know someone who can charge \$900 for a haircut underscores the irony of me getting my hair done at Wal-Mart. It's true, though. I have indeed been to virtually every high-end salon in this city and had some world-class work done on my locks. But I've determined recently, after all these years, that being a "natural" lavender-blond is waaay too high maintenance for the *much* more low-key lifestyle that I now lead. I told Donna that I was indeed nervous about getting my hair cut at Wal-Mart, but going to any salon can be a gamble, so we worked together to figure out what was best, since I wanted all the blond hair gone from my head. Well, maybe not all of it, since I didn't really want that military boot camp look. The upshot? Donna was attentive, careful, and absolutely correct in her assessment of my hair, and cut it into a style I'm now very fond of. Would I say it is the best work done on my hair? No. But it was as *good* as some of the best. Would I go back? Yes. I'm not really a snob at all. Besides, go to www.peopleofwalmart.com and you'll see that looking good is a very relative thing!



MARGARET MOSER

Caught in the act at the Buda Wal-Mart

SNUGGIES Yes, **Snugglies**. I bought them for my whole family. I can't believe it. It's part of my total Wal-Mart-ization. It's not the *allure* of the Snuggie that has me so enthralled, it is the speed in which they became an absolute necessity of American life. I mean, please. A blanket with sleeves. Whatever. If it has sleeves, it's no longer a blanket. Period. Besides, can't you just put on your bathrobe backward and get the same effect? I'm waiting for my first sighting of a Snuggie worn in public. Well, why *not* if we can go around with our underwear hanging out of our trousers and wear pajamas to class? It's the fall of the **American empire**, I tell you.

'VOTE IN 'VOGUE' Who were the most fashionable female stars and socialites of the decade? Looking back over 10 years of red carpet, runway, and regular moments, *Vogue* asks you to vote in its **Best Dressed Women of the Decade 2000-2009** poll, www.vogue.com/polls/bestdressed/best_dressed_of_the_decade. The winners will be posted on Vogue.com Jan. 25, 2010.

'MAD' AS HELL *The New York Times* had a fascinating story on the men's fashion trends that are being ignited by **AMC's Mad Men** series. I'm totally hooked on the series, and I solemnly believe that the time is right for the return to the coolness of **Kennedy-era** Manhattan. Men had style, and the writer made an excellent point regarding the return of the slim-cut, skinny-tie look with plenty of accessories when he noted that to most men over 45, wearing jeans to work is a sign of success. It's *not* a sign of success. It's an abhorrent trend that has gone on *far* too long. Thank God. There may indeed be an end to the droopy drawers and poorly fitted jeans. One of my favorite purveyors of stylish skinny ties (at only \$15) is the **Tie Bar** (www.thetiebar.com). They also have tie bars (\$15), cuff links (\$20 and up), and even dress shirts (\$30).

Write to our Style Avatar with your related events, news, and hautey bits: style@austinchronicle.com or PO Box 49066, Austin, TX 78765 or 458-6910 (fax).

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Berkeley Breathed on putting Opus to bed and what comes next

BY RICHARD WHITTAKER

If you're crossing the street at 24th and Guadalupe, tread carefully: You may be stepping on a Pulitzer Prize-winner's autograph. Back in the 1970s, while cutting his artistic teeth at *The Daily Texan* with his college-based comic strip *Academia Waltz*, a young Berkeley Breathed (kinda rhymes with "method") carved his name into some concrete in front of the United University Methodist Church. Hired straight out of college by *The Washington Post*, his *Bloom County* daily strip became an internationally syndicated phenomenon that combined the charm of Walt Kelly's *Pogo* with the political edge of Garry Trudeau's *Doonosbury*. It also gave the world a new Everybird in the sweet-natured and perpetually flustered Opus the penguin. Over the course of nearly three decades, and through successor Sunday strips *Outland* and *Opus*, he was a pet, a suspected terrorist, a vice presidential candidate, a fill-in for Santa's reindeer, and a tuba player with punks Billy and the Boingers.

Last year, Breathed drew what he has sworn is his final panel containing his most famous creation. (It ended with Opus shown sleeping peacefully in the bed from the beloved children's book *Goodnight Moon*.) With his *Opus* opus now complete, he's concentrating on his illustrated kids' books, and this year jumped into the world of young adult literature with *Flawed Dogs: The Novel: The Shocking Raid on Westminster*. While his name in the *Drag*'s sidewalk is starting to fade, rubbed away by decades of students' shoes, comics firm IDW Publishing is preserving Breathed's complete *Bloom County* as part of its Library of American Comics imprint (placing him in the esteemed company of *Dick Tracy* and *The Family Circus*). The first volume of a planned five-book set takes readers back to the opening days of the 1980s, when America's idea of an incompetent president was Ronald Reagan and nothing in the world couldn't be solved with a trip to the dandelion patch.

Austin Chronicle: The strip was a landmark influence on a lot of cartoonists, adding a political punch to the genre of animal funnies that had been lacking before. What was the response of your peers at the time?

Berkeley Breathed: The comic page Old Guard were flummoxed by *Bloom County*. I went to one gala for the National Cartooning Society and was treated somewhat like those two

yahoos who crashed the White House State Dinner the other night. After I won the Pulitzer in 1987, the big-time editorial cartoon stars actually tried to boycott Columbia University [where the Pulitzers are awarded annually]. Pretty funny now that I think back. It didn't matter a wit to me as cartoons simply weren't my gig. I'm not trying to be provocatively ironic, honest. Just provocatively honest, ironically.

AC: There are a lot of pops at the newspaper industry and sensationalist journalism in Bloom County. Did you get much flak from papers at the time?

BB: Naw. They were still fat and sassy. Uh, not so much now. I wouldn't have the heart to nail their foibles these days.

AC: For a strip that some critics pigeonholed as straight-ahead liberal, you were an equal-opportunity satirist, taking potshots at televangelists and warmongering Republicans as much as you did horny Democrats and the Unshorn Sisters of the Apocalypse. Who got maddest at you?

BB: Nobody. That's the magic of the cartoon page. Even Mary Kay wrote a pleasant, passive-aggressive letter to me after my series on her bunny testing habits made her cosmetic company change their policies. You just can't get angry at a big-nosed, wide-eyed penguin. That was the fun part. Angry isn't fun. Nor effective satire.

AC: Last year, you sent *Opus* to his final resting place. What exactly was the motivation to place him out of reach?

BB: I like closure. Notice how Cher or the Judds keep coming back after Final Tours? Gad. I feel the same pull so [I] decided to actually make it so I couldn't.

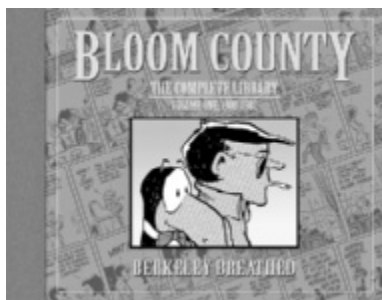
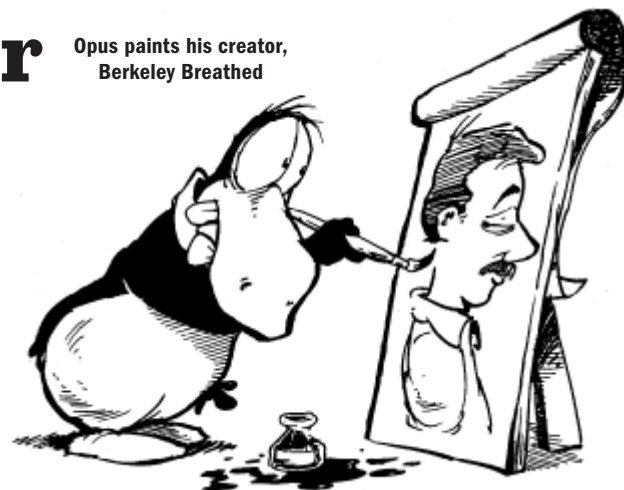
AC: After almost three decades, was it tough to let *Opus* go?

BB: Choked up drawing him the last time in bed with his bunny, in *Goodnight Moon*. Please don't tell anyone.

AC: With all the attention on *Opus*, it's been a little overlooked that this is the end of (sexist lawyer) Steve Dallas, who's been a part of your work since *The Academia Waltz*, when he was a satire on frat boys. Why did Steve remain such a constant part of your work?

BB: *Opus*' soulful counterpoint. Yin and Yang. Calvin and Hobbes. Harold and Maude.

AC: *Dethklok*, the fake metal band from Adult Swim's Metalocalypse cartoon show, have become hugely successful recording artists with two charting albums. Any chance of a Billy and the Boingers reunion?



BB: I fully suspect the fanatical zealots at IDW Publishing are trying to figure out how to do this as I type. Bastards. They'll talk me into it, too.

AC: You've moved to illustrated kids' books (although, again, that began with *Opus* with *A Wish for Wings That Work*) and now your first novel. What motivated that sideways shift?

BB: The question is: What motivated my becoming a cartoonist for 30 years, instead of doing what I really needed to always do and write stories. The answer is "naked opportunism." Somebody foolish at *The Washington Post* offered me a contract and forever delayed my becoming a writer for half my life. Then they paid me. Then people started writing and said things like "I couldn't have gotten through the death of my father without *Opus*." Then they stumbled and gave me a Pulitzer and I was cooked like a Christmas ham.

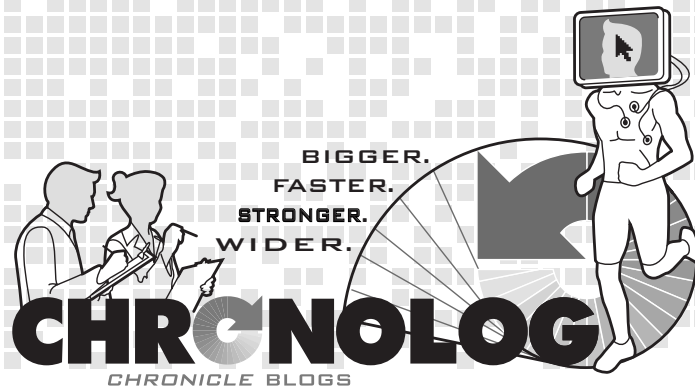
AC: Personal note: My niece demands that my sister read her *Pete & Pickles* every night – a kids' book with a plot about drowning. Your kids' books often have some serious peril involved, which never really seems to affect the intended audience but can upset some adults. Have your publishers ever had any problems with the darker content?

BB: I was published by Little, Brown for 25 years. We sold almost 7 million books together. They insisted on toning down the near-death scene of the kid's mother in *Mars Needs Moms!* so she would have appeared merely ill. I fired them. I'm now with Penguin, just to be cute. *Mars Needs Moms!* will be released as a film in 2011 by Disney. If you don't let the kids go dark, it's no fun to get back into the light. And every story should do this.

AC: Any hope for *Outland* and *Opus* collections?

BB: Oh, don't say that. The IDW folks are reading this.

Berkeley Breathed's three most recent books are *Bloom County: The Complete Library Volume One 1980-1982* (IDW Publishing, \$39.99), *Pete & Pickles* (Philomel, \$17.99), and *Flawed Dogs: The Novel: The Shocking Raid on Westminster* (Philomel, \$16.99). For more info, visit www.berkeleybreathed.com.



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In a relatively short time, **Josh Watkins** has developed a solid reputation among Austin foodies as a creative chef with a gift for combining ingredients in new and exciting ways. He was the chef de cuisine at the Driskill Grill during David Bull's tenure and then took over as executive chef upon Bull's departure. Not long after, he was hired away by the folks who operate the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center. With rooms going for a couple hundred dollars a night, the center needed a high-end chef who could also deal with all the day-to-day tasks of any hotel kitchen: weddings, parties, multiple restaurants, room service, etc. The jewel in the hotel's crown, the place Watkins would really be able to demonstrate his prowess was to be the Carillon.

Let's start with the good news. The nighttime menu shows Watkins' flair with flavors and ingredients. We tried the four-course chef's menu for \$45 (three-course is \$38, and six-course is \$60; great deals for the hungry diner) and saved almost \$60 by going for the menu pricing instead of making the same selections à la carte.

We started with an organic mesclun salad, which was lightly dressed to emphasize the freshness of the ingredients. We also had the crisp pork belly, which was lean as pork belly goes, with a tangy sauce, some pears, and a fried mint leaf.

Next up was a delicious concoction simply called Hawaiian Blue King Prawns, which included three big prawns, heads on, plus three clams, all over a bed of homemade pappardelle with a touch of saffron. The braised beef short ribs were meltingly tender and sat on a light-as-foam bed of celery root with a hint of apricot flavors. The home run that night was olive oil poached prime beef tenderloin, tender and perfectly cooked, served on a bed of lightly whipped fingerling potatoes.

For dessert, we split a goat cheese cheesecake with lingonberries and caramel. The caramel was delicious, but there was a curious flavor, something we just couldn't identify. We asked the server, who asked the chef. The answer was a tiny bit of thyme – very creative!

The wine list is well-priced and inventive, if quite small for a place of these standards. The service is very pleasant, and even though there was a big party going on at the same time, the staff kept everyone happy. The atmosphere is very modern and quite pretty. It's also stone quiet. The Carillon would be a great place for an intimate date because, like most hotel restaurants in Austin, it has many fewer diners than it deserves. There were only three occupied tables the night we were there.

When a server told us the restaurant's big business was at lunch, I wanted to see what kind of crowds the Carillon actually attracts. Since lunchtime is restricted to University



JOHN ANDERSON

of Texas faculty and staff, I asked fellow restaurant reviewer and UT staffer Mick Vann to join me. Lunch is a \$16.95 buffet, and as buffets go, it is quite nice. None of the foods are overcooked, and it's easy to put together a healthy lunch. Unfortunately, it is also uninspired. Green beans are crisp but uninteresting. The blackened salmon has a dark seasoning but no bite. The garlic in an artichoke and garlic soup is overwhelming. The service is pleasant enough. The place was nearly full.

So here's the bad news. You take a chef like Watkins, give him a beautiful restaurant, and then only open for dinner four nights a week? Make lunch a steam-table affair and exclude the general public? Make breakfast only from 7 to 10am and no weekend brunch? This is like the Yankees bidding on Alex Rodriguez and then making him a batboy. The bottom line is that dinner at Carillon is spectacular if you don't mind being alone in a restaurant later in the week. Lunch is out unless you work for the university, and breakfast is served like most hotels: a combo of omelets, cereals, and buffet items. The potential for greatness is there. It has the right staff, a great physical plant, a perfect location in the center of town, and a talented young man at the creative helm. Hopefully, management will see the light and let this place live up to its potential.

– Wes Marshall

Event Menu Dec. 26–Jan. 1

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food-o-file

BY VIRGINIA B. WOOD

If your life is anything like mine, the month of December has just disappeared in a flash! I've spent lots of time baking and making candy, and some of the cooking has involved trying out product samples. Perhaps when I reveal how things worked out, you'll discover a last-minute Christmas gift or just the right thing to look for at post-holiday sales.

• My Thanksgiving turkey adventure included two turkeys, two gallons of cooking oil, two helpful gentlemen (thanks Mike and Ike), a generous supply of **Tony Chachere's Creole Seasoning**, and a Masterbuilt Butterball Indoor **Electric Turkey Fryer**. Numerous horrifying video warnings from concerned friends notwithstanding, I found the turkey fryer safe and easy to use, frying both a carefully thawed 12-pound organic turkey from Whole Foods and a fresh, pastured local 11-pound turkey from Alexander Family Farm. What I learned: You must read and follow the directions, use a completely thawed 10 to 14-pound turkey, and correctly calculate the cooking time in order to experience success. Oh, and have someone around who's tall enough to lower and remove the turkey basket into and out of the hot oil. Though the trial-run turkey was a little undercooked (because of a faulty thermometer that was also the culprit in a candy disaster), it was eagerly devoured by my colleagues at the *Chronicle* and my boss' dog. On Thanksgiving Day, the Alexander Family Farm turkey emerged from the fryer in 38 minutes with a perfectly browned, crisp skin, and moist, juicy meat with great flavor and no hint of residual grease. It made a great holiday meal and a killer batch of turkey and andouille sausage gumbo for the first week of December. Once the oil in the deep fryer had cooled completely (four to five hours), it was easy to drain, disassemble, and clean the appliance. According to the instruction manual, it's good for all kinds of deep-frying projects. I'm not in charge of turkey for Christmas, but I'm thinking maybe beignets sometime soon. The Masterbuilt fryers retail for \$159.95, available locally at Academy, Home Depot, and the Sports Authority, or see www.masterbuilt.com.



• The Bonjour ceramic **Hot Chocolate Pot** with a battery-operated milk frother renders velvety, voluptuous hot chocolate every time. I used Tom Pederson's **Kakawa chipotle hot chocolate mix** from the Austin Farmers' Market Downtown, as well as the **Cacao Blanxart** traditional Spanish hot chocolate powder received from my office Secret Santa, and found both results delightful. The 32-ounce hot chocolate pot comes with two

12-ounce mugs and the milk frother and retails for \$24.99-34.99, depending on the model. Bonjour hot chocolate-, coffee-, and hot tea-making products (www.bonjourproducts.com) are available at most of our local cookware stores.

• I have yet to come across a **Microplane** product that I don't just love, and the new heavy-duty plastic **Hand Held Adjustable Slicer** with the easily adjustable V-shaped slicing blade is no exception. It rests easily on the edge of a work bowl and has a finger guard that holds vegetables firmly, keeping fingers away from the razor-sharp blade. We used it to slice whisper-thin homemade potato chips after frying the first turkey, and they were divine! (FYI – sweet potato chips, on the other hand, work much better baked in the oven.) The only drawback is that it only has one blade, so there are no julienne slices or waffle cuts, but the supersharp blade is very easy to adjust and makes wonderful cuts. The slicer retails for \$39.95 at local cookware stores.



Drink Texas This New Year

BY WES MARSHALL

Back in 1997, when Burt Butler “Tito” Beveridge II brought his eponymous vodka to the market, he was stuck with 18 maxed-out credit cards, a pickup truck full of debt, and a piece of property that he kindly described as “the cheapest dirt in Travis County.” He worked his tail off, crafting a great beverage and using cheap guerilla tactics to market it. Tito’s Vodka possessed a powerful strength that helped launch it as a juggernaut: It tastes great. In double-blind taste tests all over the U.S. (including at *The Austin Chronicle*; see “Texas Gets Spirited Away,” Dec. 28, 2007), Tito’s wins or places in the top three. It is also quite inexpensive for the quality. By about 2004, Tito was making it look easy. Of course, it wasn’t. Owning a business is never easy.

These days, Texas is home to distillers of good-quality vodkas, corn whiskey, malt whiskey, bourbon, rum, and various fruit liqueurs. For those of us who prefer to buy our foods from local growers and wines from local wineries, these new distilleries offer the opportunity to have some knowledge about what’s going into our adult beverages.

For instance, Matt and Kelly Railean of Railean Rum sought out a specific unsulfured molasses. The sulfur probably would have disappeared in the distillation process, but they’re being very particular about finding the best rum aromas possible. Chip Tate makes his Balcones Baby Blue whiskey with organic blue corn from the Hopi

tribe in New Mexico. Bruce Graham and Daniel Barnes make Treaty Oak Platinum Rum from scratch, solely from Texas sugarcane.

Besides the distillers, Texas is home to another group of businesses – places that earn the title “Tex-Mex.” These companies (four currently) are designing tequilas from the ground up and marketing them from Texas. Flavors, distilling methods, packaging, marketing, pricing, and all other important issues are decided here in Texas, but since anything called “tequila” must be made in a delimited area of Mexico, they are not strictly Texas companies. Hence, the Tex-Mex. They too are using the types of ingredients and care in manufacturing that foodies appreciate. Republic’s tequilas are organic – something you usually won’t find in the big brands. Z Tequila uses agave with a few years of extra age, and the hearts are cooked a few hours longer to help highlight the plant’s delicate aromas.

Of course, one of the problems locavores can face is that eating local is rarely cheap, and most of these Texas liquor manufacturers are aiming at the premium end of the market. Small companies have to find a way to make enough money to stay in business, and most are choosing to try to sell fewer bottles of more expensive liquor rather than more bottles of a less expensive product. And while no one has yet topped Tito’s profits, there are several Texas companies that are making a run at it (see “The Business of Booze,” right).



PHOTOS BY JOHN ANDERSON

So How Do They Taste?

While most of us would prefer to keep our hard-earned dollars in local folks’ wallets, the Texas liquors have to taste as good as or better than the competition to maintain a place in the bars and on retailers’ shelves. The good news is that all of the new Texas brands can stand up to the competition.

VODKA

Federal law requires that any liquor with the word “vodka” on the label be made from almost pure alcohol with nothing but water added. So, in theory, they should all taste alike. Of course, they don’t, and that comes mostly from the water used and partially from the distilling method. A lot of money in the world of vodka goes to the fancy bottles and fancier advertising campaigns. **Tito’s Vodka** is so ubiquitous that it’s easy to take it for granted. But remember, it has won a lot of contests, and the combination of a decent

price point (\$18, all prices for 750 milliliters) and delicious liquor make Tito’s a hands-down winner. **Savvy Handcrafted Vodka** has been an instant hit, even at its higher price point (\$26). Chad Auler, the owner, has a secret weapon. His family owns a long stretch of Fall Creek, which is where their water comes from. **Dripping Springs Texas Vodka** (\$20) uses artesian spring water and a proprietary still to deliver a pungent vodka great for mixing.

WHISKEY

Balcones Baby Blue (\$38) is currently Texas’ only whiskey (the company uses the traditional Scottish spelling of the word: “whisky”), though that is about to change. **Balcones** will also be making a malted whiskey, and **Garrison Brothers Distillery** in Hye is preparing to unveil an ultrapremium bourbon whiskey. The Balcones Baby Blue whiskey has a distinct aroma of blue corn, something the distiller, Tate, worked hard to preserve. It’s often difficult to smell what a whiskey is made from, but Baby Blue is clearly corn.

TEQUILA

The tequilamakers are all aiming at the well-heeled drinker. For the Texas aficionados, **Republic Tequila** offers each of its three tequilas (plata, reposado, añejo) in bottles shaped just like the state. These are organically grown and made and run from \$40 to \$50. All three have nice flavors and tropical fruit aromas, with the reposado winning out for its blend of aromatic complexity and agave nectar nose.

Dulce Vida tequilas (\$45-\$55) aren’t as sweet as the name would imply. They’re powerful, though. Each is a full 100 proof, compared to the normal 80. These tequilas are made from highland agaves grown closer to the ocean. Drinking them straight at room

RUM

Three Texas distillers are making rum: **Balcones Distillery (Rumble, \$38)**, **Railean Rum** (three levels, \$17-\$29), and **Graham Barnes Distilling (Treaty Oak Platinum, \$24)**. Other than the word nip, the five liquors bear little resemblance to one another. The Balcones Rumble is a dark rum, redolent of bananas and vanilla. Railean’s rums are gloriously fruity and aromatic. My favorite, the white (\$17), also happens to be the cheapest. Treaty Oak is a very dry, elegant rum aimed at being the friendliest of mixers, like a vodka but with a bit more oomph from the aromas.

FRUIT LIQUEUR

Paula Angerstein (r) has this market all to herself; her **Texas Orange** and **Texas Lemon** liqueurs (both \$24) are sui generis products. Though inspired by rustic Italian liqueurs, Paula’s drinks have bigger fruit and more generous alcohol, perfect for blending in an artful mixed drink.



temperature is a powerful experience, though I found a few drops of distilled water helped the aromas bloom and the tequila to go down a bit more smoothly. The aged tequilas are rested in old bourbon barrels, yielding a smooth, vanilla-tinged taste.

Z Tequila is the brainchild of Pepe Zevada, a bon vivant well known in the Austin party world. Like the others, Zevada’s tequila is 100% blue agave distillate. Pepe tends to harvest his plants when they are a bit older, hoping for additional aromas. He also uses cultivated yeasts directly from the agave. While all three of his tequilas have gorgeous agave aromas, it is his smooth and tasty Blanco that charmed me most. The Z tequilas run from \$29 to \$34.

The last Tex-Mex tequila isn’t yet available in Austin (look for it starting April 1). **Ambhar** tequilas will sell for \$45 to \$55. Its añejo is so rich-looking, you could be excused for thinking it’s a bourbon. The reposado is the color of most of the others’ añejos. Both are rested for the maximum time allowed by the Mexican government, in used Jack Daniels barrels.

By this time next year, we’ll probably have another 10 distillers operating in Texas, and who knows what they’ll be making. But you can already stock a whole bar with just Texas spirits. Oops! We’d still need gin, but two Texas distillers are talking about making gin sooner rather than later. In the meantime, enjoy these tasty liquors. For the New Year, drink local.



The Business of Booze

Anyone interested in getting into the booze business is well advised to talk to some of these other folks about the barriers they've faced. Just getting shelf space is a challenge with all the other products available. Store buyers can demand incredible discounts and other inducements; one producer talked about how difficult it is to create bonus programs for the retail folks who sell the products in the stores. The huge companies pay for trips or offer all sorts of incentives for selling their products. Little companies can seldom offer much more than heartfelt thanks.

Still, the money can be intoxicating. The Austin Entrepreneur Network Blog interviewed Paul Groepler of Santo Spirits, the Austin company that is making Ambhar tequilas. He is excited about the profit potential of his business and has some good ideas about marketing. Groepler's tequila is aimed at the more mature and well-off clubgoer in the 28- to 45-year-old bracket. It's for sippers, not shooters, and rather than using print or broadcast advertising, the company uses brand ambassadors hanging out at the town's hippest clubs and bars.

The tequila is distilled and bottled in Mexico at a cost of about \$6 a bottle. Add in the marketing and sales costs, and it's up to \$10. Santo Spirits wholesales it to the distributors at \$32, yielding a \$22 profit. That tequila will then hit the shelves at around \$45. Even with profit margins of more than 300%, Santo Spirits will have to sell a lot of tequila to pay the staff and keep the investors happy. Imagine then the dilemma of the Raileans, whose superb small-batch rum sells for \$17!

- W.M.

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KONNICHIWA, AUSTIN!

Celebrating Japanese pop culture at IkkiCon IV

BY RICHARD WHITTAKER

The first weekend in January, Austin embraces its inner *otaku* again as the IkkiCon Japanese Animation & Pop-Culture Convention returns for its fourth annual celebration of all things *manga*, *animé*, and culturally Nipponese. But don't go thinking it's just three days of Hello Kitty: As convention founder and Chair Michael Loredo puts it: "Animé shouldn't be classified as its own genre. It has action, drama, comedy, the whole nine yards."

Even though Japanese animation (*animé*) and graphic fiction (*manga*) have penetrated American culture, it's still hard for some outside of fandom to understand the appeal. When he tells people he runs an *animé* convention, Loredo says: "I get one of two responses: 'Oh, you're doing cartoons for kids?' or 'Oh, you're doing porn.'" Even among the more culturally literate, he adds, "people try to compare *animé* and comic books. But it's really just this decade that comic books have hit the entertainment industry, as opposed to just being on paper. *Animé* has always existed in comic books and TV and in media, movies, music. It's the pop culture of a country."

So how did that culture reach from Japan to Central Texas? Loredo recalls, "Everything for me started as a fan, like it does for most people." Growing up in Bastrop, he started an *animé* club in high school and parlayed that into a fan-friendly merchandise store. After three years, he shut up shop ("I got tired of trying to compete with Wal-Mart," he says), and in 2007 he decided to attempt a convention. IkkiCon (the name is a play on hit high school martial arts franchise Ikki Touden) started as a near-accidental replacement for Austin's previous major *animé* gathering, Ushicon. Loredo says: "I announced that I was going to do some form of convention. The very next week they announced that they weren't coming back."

With local *animé* fans looking for a new gathering, the first year of IkkiCon, Loredo admits, was a skin-of-the-teeth affair with a steep learning curve. He says: "Most companies start with some form of capital. I started with my first paycheck from Little Caesars." The organizers estimated they might sell 500 tickets and dreamed of 1,200 attendees. Instead, 2,500 fans came, and now IkkiCon is entering its fourth year. Even in that

short time, Loredo has seen a continuing change in the *animé* fan base. It used to be men in their late teens to mid-20s, but, he says, "the main demographic now, which makes up to about 65 to 70 percent of the [audience], is 12- to 16-year-old girls."

It hasn't always been so easy to get good *animé* in America. Back in the Seventies and Eighties, viewers had to make do with imports like *Battle of the Planets*, a kid-friendly but bastardized and poorly dubbed remix of sci-fi epic *Kagaku ninja tai Gatchaman*. Hardcore *animé* aficionados depended on tape trading, the odd arthouse cinematic release, and sporadic *manga* reprints by U.S. publishers. Now there are multiple dedicated publishers and DVD distributors, and both Adult Swim and the Syfy channel give over whole nights of cable broadcasting to imported Japanese shows. The *animé* influence is also ubiquitous in American animation (the superdeformed comedy Nicktoon's *Kappa Mikey*, Samuel L. Jackson's blood-splattered *Afro Samurai*, the martial-arts mystic *Avatar: The Last Airbender*). What's less obvious is how much attention the Japanese studios pay to the U.S. market. It was American viewers, Loredo explains, that saved *Samurai 7* – a steampunk riff on Akira Kurosawa's classic: "It got to the third episode in Japan, lost funding, and was about to be canceled. [U.S. distributor] Funimation bought the licensing to it. That allowed them to finish the series."

The convention is not just an excuse to watch *animé* or buy *manga*. Celebrity guests this year include a double bill of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, with Green Ranger and karate black belt Jason David Frank in attendance, plus Black Ranger Johnny Yong Bosch bringing his band Eyeshine. There are also celebrity cosplayers. To some Occidental eyes, that's just people dressing as *animé* and pop-culture characters, but in Japan, it's regarded as performance art. Meredith Placko, better known on the convention circuit as Ana Aesthetic, is back for her second



DIM HORIZON STUDIO

Meredith Placko (as Princess Leia, front left) and fellow cosplayers from Outland Armour mixing steampunk and *Star Wars*.

year at IkkiCon, but her fascination with *animé* goes back to middle school, when the Florida native fell in love with Spanish-dubbed broadcasts of shows like *Galaxy Express 999*.

Since attending her first *animé* convention (Anime Weekend Atlanta in 1999), she has become a regular on the ever-expanding convention circuit, famous for her elaborate costumes, such as Suigintou from *animé* series *Rozen Maiden* and Zero Suit Samus from Nintendo's *Super Smash Bros. Brawl*. A broadcast journalist and voiceover actress by trade, Placko says producing her own outfits is a handy outlet for her college background in costume design. When she and her friends started, "we just thought it would be fun to dress up as our favorite characters," she explains. "But then there was this whole entire world of people who dress up in these bright and colorful costumes from video games and comics. It was so much fun, being silly nerds and having our pictures taken."

This year Placko and her fellow cosplayers from Outland Armour will don their steampunk/*Star Wars* mash-up costumes. It's a fan favorite, but she admits that, like much of her hobby, it still baffles one person – her mother. Placko says: "She's just like: 'Have fun. At least you get to travel and do things that most other people don't.'"

IkkiCon takes place Jan. 1-3, 2010, at the Hilton Austin (500 E. Fourth). For more information, visit www.ikkicon.com.

FORGOTTEN FILMS FIND A HOME

Tim League talks about the newly formed American Genre Film Archive

It is estimated that more than 75% of films made during the silent era have been lost. A smaller but no less devastating percentage of sound films from the 1930s on have been damaged, misfiled, or just plain forgotten about, despite the best efforts of professionally run film archives such as the George Eastman House. When it comes to saving, salvaging, and storing *genre* film collections, the situation is even more dire, with collectors regularly discovering, often too late, caches of chop-socky masterpieces and former Deuce seat-fillers in abandoned warehouses, dead-end drive-ins, and mysterious estate sales.

To redress that neglect, Alamo Drafthouse owner Tim League and a group of other *genre* film enthusiasts and collectors have now announced the formation of the American Genre Film Archive, a nonprofit dedicated to

tracking down, preserving, and screening all manner of *genre* films, from its recently acquired trove of 250 Shaw Brothers films uncovered in the basement of a former Chinese theatre in Vancouver, British Columbia, (among them *Human Lanterns*, *Dirty Ho*, and Wu-Tang fave *Return to the 36th Chamber*) to virtually all of the films screened at the Alamo Drafthouse's Weird Wednesdays and Terror Tuesdays.

"The AGFA is separate from the Alamo operations," says League. "It's specifically about the preservation of the type of film that we've been programming for over a decade and also the type of film that most traditional film archives aren't doing anything about."



The Shaw Brothers' *Return to the 36th Chamber* is one of the AGFA's newest acquisitions.

Prior to the acquisition of what is ostensibly the largest Shaw Brothers collection in the United States, the League/Alamo archives had been sitting on roughly 1,200 35mm features and some 2,000 35mm trailers – all of which have been stored thus far at the Alamo Village and the Alamo South Lamar.

"One of the issues that we've had with some but not all film archives is that they do preserve the films but it's not part of their mission to get those films seen. Our main goals are a) to make sure the films are preserved, and b) to make sure the films are actually seen by audiences in cinemas."

To that end, the AGFA is planning a touring program of Shaw Brothers films and related

ephemera; it also intends to make the films available for rental to repertory venues near and far. With another massive (but as yet unannounced) film acquisition scheduled to happen in the first quarter of the new year, the AGFA is making waves fast.

League says: "Probably the only collection that's bigger than ours right now is Mike Vraney from Something Weird Video, but his is less of a traditional archive, and he doesn't loan out his films. So there's nothing even close to the size of what we have. In fact, the only other archive that's even close to ours is our good buddy Anthony Timpson in New Zealand. With the formation of the 501(c)(3) and the hiring of a director of the archive, we're trying to take it into a whole new serious and professional level. As far as I know, we're now the largest *genre* film archive in the world."

– Marc Savlov

The Season for Nominating

BY BELINDA ACOSTA

It's the end of an old year, so you know what that means – a new awards season is near. The Writers Guild, the Golden Globes, and the Screen Actors Guild recently announced the nominees for their respective soirees, which provided some holiday cheer to the recipients and started deliberations on who might win what and why.

As always, let me start with the writing noms.

Drama series nominated for Writers Guild Awards include AMC's *Mad Men* and *Breaking Bad*, *Dexter* (Showtime), *Lost* (ABC), and *Friday Night Lights* (NBC). Nominated comedy series include newcomers *Glee* (Fox) and *Modern Family* (ABC), along with *The Office*, *30 Rock* (both on NBC), and *Curb Your Enthusiasm* (HBO).

Glee is somewhat of a surprise here, only because of its unconventional pilot launch, followed by a long summer hiatus, and then a fall return to the air (where it has built a faithful following). Of the two newcomers, my favorite is the consistently strong, funny, and often touching *Modern Family*. They nail it week after week.

The Writers Guild Awards will be presented Feb. 20.

A couple of things that make the Screen Actors Guild awards different from the rest is that a lifetime achievement award is the centerpiece of the ceremony, which also includes ensemble acting awards in addition to awards for individual performances. This year's Life Achievement Award goes to the delightful Betty White (*The Golden Girls*). Nominated drama ensembles include *The Closer* (TNT), *Dexter*, *The Good Wife* (CBS), *Mad Men*, and *True Blood* (HBO). Nominated comedy ensembles include *30 Rock*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *Glee*, *Modern Family*, and *The Office*.

Individual SAG Award nominees for lead actors and actresses in dramas include the great: Glenn Close (*Damages*, FX), Julianna Margulies (*The Good Wife*), Michael C. Hall (*Dexter*), Jon Hamm (*Mad Men*), and the not quite great: Patricia Arquette (*Medium*, NBC/CBS), Mariska Hargitay (*Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, NBC), Bryan Cranston (*Breaking Bad*), and Simon Baker (*The Mentalist*, CBS). The nominees in the comedy category are more perplexing. I can understand Alec Baldwin (*30 Rock*), Steve Carell (*The Office*), and Larry David (*Curb Your Enthusiasm*). I'll take Tony Shalhoub (*Monk*, USA), but Charlie Sheen (*Two and a Half Men*, CBS)? Really? The actresses in comedy are also interesting. Christina Applegate (*Samantha Who?*, ABC) shows up, but she pales against *United States of Tara*'s Toni Collette and *Nurse Jackie*'s Edie



The Writers Guild, Screen Actors Guild, and Golden Globes all handed Best Comedy award nominations to ABC's new sitcom *Modern Family*.

Falco (both Showtime). Tina Fey (*30 Rock*) and Julia Louis-Dreyfus (*The New Adventures of Old Christine*, CBS) complete the list.

The 16th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards will be presented Jan. 23.

Breaking Bad fans will be displeased that the show, along with lead actor Bryan Cranston, has been excluded from the Golden Globes' nominees. *Big Love* (HBO) (and its star Bill Paxton) did make the list, alongside *House* (Fox), *Dexter*, *Mad Men*, and *True Blood*. Newcomers *Glee* and *Modern Family* show up on the Globes' Best Comedy list, along with *Entourage* (HBO) and NBC series *The Office* and *30 Rock*.

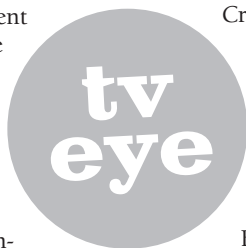
Golden Globe nominees for lead actors include all the leads of the aforementioned dramas, with the addition of *The Mentalist*'s Simon Baker; no one from *True Blood* made the cut. For lead actresses in a drama, January Jones (*Mad Men*) and Anna Paquin (*True Blood*) join Close, Margulies, and Sedgwick. The Globes part ways from the norm in the lead actor in a comedy category. Thomas Jane of *Hung* (HBO) and *Glee*'s Matthew Morrison join *Californication*'s (Showtime) David Duchovny, Carell, and Baldwin. *Glee*'s Lea Michele shows up on the best actress in a comedy roster, along with *Cougar Town*'s Courteney Cox. Collette, Fey, and Falco complete the list.

The 67th Annual Golden Globes will be awarded Jan. 17. The live telecast of the show begins at 7pm on NBC.

As always, stay tuned.

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A Decade Under the Influence

The 'Chronicle' movie critics take a look back at what the Aughts wrought



Agnès From Then to Now

BY MARJORIE BAUMGARTEN

This is not a story about the marvels and muddles I have witnessed during the last decade of film production – the advances, setbacks, trends, and fashions that have paraded before my eyes over the past 10 years. This is, rather, a personal story about how with the conclusion of the Aughties, I find I can now put the decade of the Seventies to rest.

Sometimes, after doing this for a while (read decades), a film critic discovers that his or her opinions and attitudes may shift. The director or film movement championed during one

decade may appear to be a turkey or casual infatuation the next. Chalk it up to experience, maturation, or even senility on the part of the reviewer. Or maybe it's the fault of the object under study: The subsequent work of that director with so much promise turned out to be old hat; the heralded trend or technological innovation ended up consuming itself or sputtering out of ideas and applications. In movies as in life, there are multitudes of things that can cause an inamorata to catapult from cherished status to passing fad. Re-evaluation

of old opinions should be an ongoing process, a mental closet-cleaning that strengthens the ideas that are still purposeful, discards the ones that have been outgrown, and mends the ones in need of repair or reconstitution.

While evaluating the films of the decade past, I discovered, to my amazement, two films by the French filmmaker Agnès Varda – *The Gleaners and I* (2000) and *The Beaches of Agnès* (2008) – were among my top picks of the 10-year period. My amazement is not due to the fact that these are both personal documentaries and my tastes generally favor narrative fiction over nonfiction, nor are they sentimental choices that privilege the work of a female filmmaker whose output remains stirring in her eighth – and now ninth – decade of life. What's startling is that Varda's work still speaks so clearly to me, just as it did in the Seventies.

First, some background. In the late Seventies I was a graduate student here in Austin at the University of Texas, working on my great, unfinished master's thesis, which compared two films by Agnès Varda: 1977's *One Sings, the Other Doesn't* and 1962's *Cleo From 5 to 7*. In truth, that thesis should be more accurately described as unstarted rather than unfinished, though that seems to negate the amount of time spent contemplating the subject. I brooded about my inability to write the damn thing while watching and reviewing all of Varda's work up to that point. *Cleo* is one of the key films to look at in order to understand why Varda is regarded as a progenitor of the French New Wave. Varda's handling of time in the film is both radical and natural; her story of a pop-music princess learning to stare down mortality is timeless. (In fact, at one

point, Madonna optioned the story.) Fifteen years later, Varda addressed the social conflicts made evident by the women's movement in *One Sings, the Other Doesn't* and, in particular, legislation regarding abortion laws. The film fared reasonably well at the arthouse box office and offered hope that female filmmakers and women's issues had secured a place at the vast filmmaking table.

Varda experienced more critical success with her dark 1985 film *Vagabond*, then spent much of the Nineties overseeing the unfinished work of her husband, filmmaker Jacques Demy, directing a film based on his memories of his childhood and supervising the restoration of a couple of his films. I, too, ventured down new paths and toward other discoveries during those years. Then in 2000, I was reminded of Varda's eloquence and social concerns with the release of her documentary *The Gleaners and I*. Within its framework, the personal becomes political, and vice versa. In this study of the past, present, and future of foraging, Varda is just as apt to study the lines on her hand as the neat rows of vegetables in the ground before her. Each is a fertile landscape. Closing out the decade, Varda gives us *The Beaches of Agnès*, an autobiography and analytic study of her own work. It traces her journey from birth to age 80 and does so with such artful self-reflection and understanding that it makes other diarists appear rapid and complacent.

I find it reassuring to end this decade in thrall to Varda's talent, much as I was at the end of the Seventies. Yes, my master's thesis was abandoned when I shifted from the world of academia to journalism, and no amount of time assuages my sense of something left undone. Yet I find comfort, and maybe even validation, in knowing that I am still sparked by many of the same influences that set me on this professional path in the Seventies. Onward through the millennium. ■



Apocalypse Now Redux

A Decade Under Unease

BY MARC SAVLOV

"Horror has a face, and you must make a friend of horror. Horror and moral terror are your friends. If they are not, then they are enemies to be feared."

– Marlon Brando as the "unsound" Col. Walter Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now*

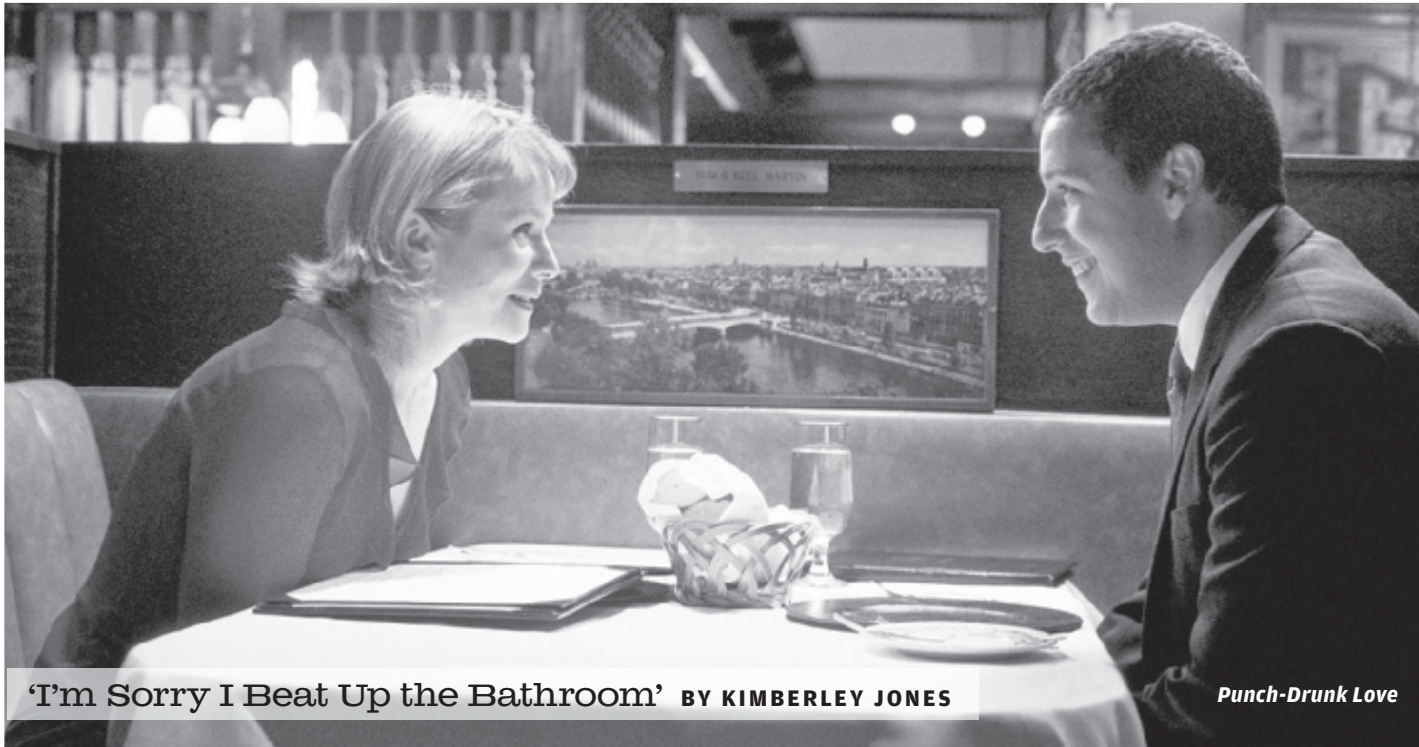
"Disneyland? Fuck, man, this is better than Disneyland!"

– Sam Bottoms as surfer cum Gunner's Mate Lance Johnson in *Apocalypse Now*

Personally, I had a hangover that morning. Not a skull-stripper, more of a minor league Emo's afterburn that dissipated somewhat between downing the OJ and Ibu and hitting the shower, and then opted to linger a while, like the low drone of a bad dream that's hazed over into the kind of vague, amorphous unease that can really dial down your day. Outta coffee, to boot. Nuts.

Still, that Tuesday's film review was practically writing itself, flowing easy but intense, and becoming, word for word, one of my favorite critical outbursts yet. It didn't hurt matters any that the recut and expanded masterpiece I was keystroking myself off over was Coppola's *Apocalypse Now Redux*, the final cinematic word on war-as-hell-as-humanity-obliterating societal time bomb. It's a joy to scribble on and on about those rare works of inexplicable genius that you truly, madly, deeply appreciate and, indeed, love.

So I was just polishing the penultimate sentence – "Such gorgeous explosions, such a terrible vision, such an amazing work of art" – when the landline yelped, breaking both the silence and my concentration. Annoyed (what sort of person rings a writer before noon?), I let it go to voice mail. Hearing my mother's voice, unexpected and far away and too brittle-sounding on that tinny Motorola speaker, forced me to pick up. Mothers, especially elderly ones, do not for nothing telephone their offspring on



'I'm Sorry I Beat Up the Bathroom' BY KIMBERLEY JONES

Punch-Drunk Love

I have a mind like a sieve. I confuse waking conversations with ones in my dream life. I've lost my wallet, my coat, my car keys too many times to count. My childhood might as well have happened to somebody else. So when tasked with summing up what the last decade in movies meant to me, no surprise, I drew a blank.

Sure, I might've gone on with a lot of gasbaggery about the movies I adored, the ones that influenced and inspired me, like *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and *Funny Ha Ha* and *All the Real Girls*. I might have made a mental note to mention *Shaun of the Dead*, *Closer*, *Wonder Boys*, and *The Royal Tenenbaums*, and worried if I'd have time left over for *The Lives of Others* and *Best of Youth*. I probably would have penned a reminder on my hand – "Wong Kar Wai! Michael Winterbottom! Pedro Almodóvar!" –

only to absentmindedly wash it off in the shower, much as those filmmakers' one-time clutch on me has lately fizzled. And the Post-it note meant to remind me not to forget fresher loves like Susanne Bier, Nicole Holofcener, and Arnaud Desplechin would get lost, probably stuck to the underside of a stack of not yet watched DVDs. No matter how many movies I watch, there will always be more, and most of them I'll never get to. If I were an optimist, that'd be happy news, but I'm not. I'm a cynic, and a completist, so no cartwheels forthcoming.

I started writing movie reviews for the *Chronicle* in the summer of 2000. I was 22, and the Martin Lawrence drag piece *Big Momma's House* was my first assignment. I remember little about writing the review – save my consternation over whether it was unseemly to use the word "fart" in my

first-ever review, in my first-ever grownup job (it was, and I did). I remember even less about the movie itself, which is the pleasant upside of a colander brain: Bye bye *Bride Wars*, *Yu-Gi-Oh! The Movie*, *Meet the Spartans*, *Stealing Harvard*, *A Walk to ...* well, you know.

But back to the task at hand: How do you memorialize movies you can only sketchily remember? In fits and starts, it seems – in fragments. The movies below don't make up some desert-island list; a couple of them make me want to spit with distaste. Still, owing to some weird algorithm unique to me (or maybe on account of that childhood I don't remember?), these are the ideas and images of the Aughties that lingered for me:

Wendy at a fence, bidding Lucy goodbye
Atonement's cut-diamond first third

deadline mornings. Not unless somebody's sick or hurt or worse.

It was, of course, all of the above. Ever the good son in times of crisis, I did as I was told and turned on CNN and saw and watched and struggled to comprehend, suddenly jonesing like Berlin-era Lou Reed for the caffeine that wasn't at hand. Ten-thirty am Austin time made it 11:30am in New York City – towers already down, news anchors reeling, frantic calls to friends and exes in the City that went (cue the dread) unanswered or netted (enter the awful) busy signals – but that day, time and its attendant sense of reality had already slewed over from garden-variety Einsteinian into something approaching the Philip K. Dickian, and it's never really snapped completely back into shape. There was a before, and now we are in the after, and the one thing that you heard repeated over and over, like some bad karma mantra, was this: "It was like watching a movie."

Cinema, particularly American cinema, has undergone a subtle shift in tone and temper, incrementally adopting an anxious *Parallax*

viewpoint that runs the genre-bounding gamut from the obvious (*Cloverfield*) to the viscerally reactionary and/or mordantly comic (the *Saw* franchise, pretty much any film featuring zombies) to the aggressively surreal (*Inland Empire*, which revels in a kind of post-9/11 disassociative disorder as perpetual panic attack) to the all-too real (*Taxi to the Dark Side*, *No End in Sight*, *United 93*).

It's coincidental but no less uncanny that Richard Kelly's apocalyptic puzzle box *Donnie Darko*, a hot ticket at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival, suffered the misfortune of receiving only a brief theatrical release a few short months after 9/11. Seen in hindsight, Kelly's doom-laden film was a bellwether moment for both American cinema and a national zeitgeist that changed seemingly overnight, even if we were slow to notice the cinematic bedrock shifting beneath the popcorn-crunchy, soda-sticky flooring. (Kelly spotted it, though; 2006's *Southland Tales* and the more recent *The Box* positively overflow with jittery, fretful überangst.)

If Bertolt Brecht's axiom "Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it" still holds – and there are plenty of reasons to suspect the obverse has become the norm – then the events of 9/11 and the bellicose, paranoid, hallucinatory mindset they evoked and implanted in the national consciousness appear to have acted as their own metaphorical Mjøllnir, shattering not only the art/reality mirror with a Thor-like thunderclap of metal on flesh on flame, but also bending out of true our own perception and appreciation of the real and the reel. As a society of moviegoers, we have toppled through some sort of Carrollian looking glass. This is reflected, weirdly but accurately, in the un-fun-house mirror of everything from the rise of "reality" television (which is itself patently unreal) to the terminally bad box office of any film that touches in any way whatsoever on what *The New York Times* journalist Dexter Filkins refers to as "the forever war."

The past decade has seen even our traditionally civic-minded silver screen heroes

Mathieu Amalric's loony-bin breakdance in *Kings & Queen* – and while we're on the subject of dancing: Sparkle Motion!

Marion Cotillard, going to a grave not watery but hardening into cement, in the infuriating *Love Me If You Dare*

49 Up: "Neil grew up in a Liverpool suburb ..."

Nicolas Cage, endlessly pelted with food and drink, in *The Weather Man*

Fat Girl, ruining rest stops forever for me

Julie Delpy's Nina Simone coo at the end of *Before Sunset*

They let it snow!: *The Claim*, *A Christmas Tale*, the weirdly compelling *It's All About Love*, and just briefly, whispering down on a beatific Javier Bardem in *Before Night Falls*

Gerry's shuddering landscape

The curious staying power of *Sweet Home Alabama*

Adam Sandler in P.T. Anderson's *Punch-Drunk Love*, with sincere desire to be a better man: "I'm sorry I beat up the bathroom."

Actually, turns out, I remembered the last one incorrectly. Instead, what Sandler confesses to his date, Emily Watson, is this: "At that restaurant, I beat up the bathroom. I'm sorry."

I worry what else I got wrong: I remember that film as magic – romance played at a different frequency, for fuckups and weirdos, my people – but do the color bars still dazzle? Was Philip Seymour Hoffman really that funny and raging? I suppose I could go rent it for fact-checking purposes, but that's sort of like peeking, or cheating, isn't it?

The movies are fixed. What fluctuates is how we process and perceive them. In 10 years' time I went from my early 20s to 30s, and I grew out of some movies, slowly came to understand the language of others. In another 10 years, there's no telling which movies I'll return to, which ones I'll wish I could rip out at the roots, and which ones will feel so personal that I'll confuse them with my waking life.

And so what if I remember them wrong? I think I got the gist. ■

crossing over, in varying degrees, to the dark side, à la *The Dark Knight*, *V for Vendetta*, and *Watchmen*. (Apparently this is Alan Moore's decade, whether he likes it or not.)

Locally, it's revealing to track Richard Linklater's animated arc from the intellectually invigorating and potentially life-affirming dream world of *Waking Life*, which premiered roughly eight months prior to 9/11, to the dystopic, paranoid nightmare scenario of *A Scanner Darkly*. (True, Linklater also helmed such nondowners as *School of Rock* and *Bad News Bears*, but I'd say the stark message of *Fast Food Nation*, with its meatpacking blood-baths and relentlessly grim mood, counters at the very least the forced jollity of *Bears*.)

Clearly, cinematic escapism is not what it used to be when even the smartest rom-com of this year, *Up in the Air*, arrives with and speaks to social baggage and the simmering unease of a world – and an art form – whose roll, pitch, and yaw appear to be increasingly out of control. It's all we can do to remain seated and enjoy the in-flight movie. ■



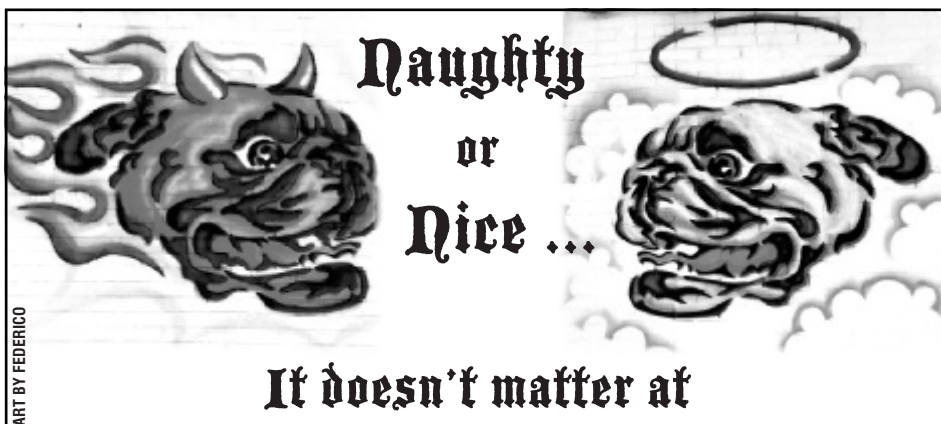
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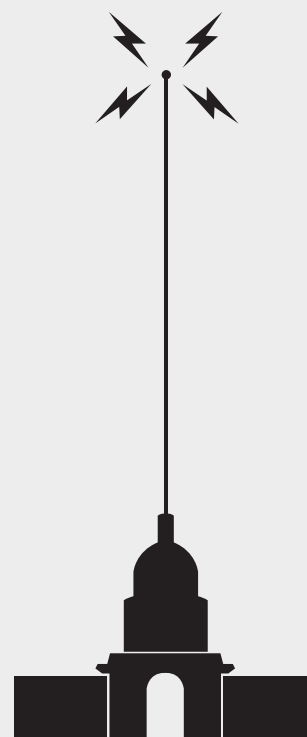
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OFF THE RECORD

MUSIC NEWS by Austin Powell

Mixed Signals 2009

More people bemoaned the state of Austin radio in 2009 than actually listened to it. For years now, airwaves have been dominated by automated programming manufactured in an Orwellian fashion to meet general approval, formats flipping faster than Allen Iverson's retirement – an effect that will only be heightened next summer by **Portable People Meters**, **Arbitron's** new rating system (see "Media Watch," News, p.22).

Things got personal in May, however, when **KUT** cut the hours of longtime staples **Larry Monroe** and **Paul Ray**, sparking grass-roots protest and an increasingly strong sense of communal disconnect. Then came the bombshell last month when **Jody Denberg** announced his retirement from **KGSR**, the adult alternative station he has embodied since its inception in 1990. Making matters

worse, the outlet's frequency change to **93.3FM**, which cleared the way for new Spanish-language station **La Z** on **107.1FM**, cut several Austin areas out of the loop, including the far Eastside abode of yours truly, a part-time employee of **Emmis Austin Radio**.

"Honestly it was a bit of a surprise to us since we never had any complaints with the signal when it was **Hot 93.3**, and it did great in the ratings over the last few years," relates **Scott Gillmore**, vice president and market manager for Emmis Austin, who notes that KGSR is now available on the HD-2 channel of 107.1 and streaming online. "Our intention was to put the two stations in the best position to succeed in the future, and this gives KGSR the bigger signal, at least on paper. We suspect that we have some sort of problem up on the tower, and a crew is coming to evaluate it in January."

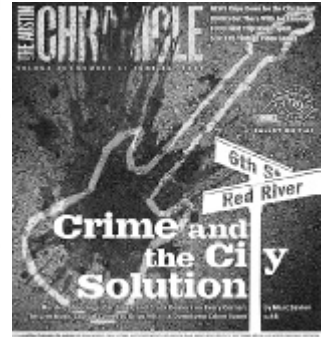
On the other side of the coin, renowned Web radio station **Woxy** moved to town in

September, providing a pivotal outlet for Austin's still-booming indie rock scene. This year's cream of the local crop included major offerings on renowned imprints: **White Denim** (Downtown), **Black Joe Lewis & the Honeybears** (Lost Highway), **Strange Boys** (In the Red), **Iron Age** (Tee Pee), **Brazos** (Autobus), and belle of the ball **Sarah Jarosz** (Sugar Hill), while **Grupo Fantasma's** mother ship beamed down two more Latin funk essentials in **Brownout's** *Aguilas and Cobras* and **Ocote Soul Sounds' Coconut Rock**.

Meanwhile, **Explosions in the Sky** crowned its decade with a fireworks display at a sold-out **Stubb's** on the Fourth of July, even as **Spoon** – calculated recently by **Metacritic** to be the most critically lauded band of the Aughties – held court there for three consecutive nights mere days later. Hometown heroes **Okkervil River** and the **Band of Heathens**, not to mention **Willie & the Wheel**, helped commemorate the 35th anniversary of **Austin City Limits**, while over on the silver screen, **Jesse Dayton** walked with a zombie in *Halloween II*, **Ryan Bingham** backed **Jeff Bridges** in *Crazy Heart*, and *Bandslam* further fueled the ever-growing homegrown **U-18** movement.

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times – the entire music industry doing more with less and for less. Locals took it upon themselves to develop new distribution methods, such as **Coma in Algiers' Your Heart, Your Hangout** campaign, and alternative revenue streams in lieu of label advances, most notably **Jon Dee Graham's** co-op and the Adopt a Song campaign by the **Belleville Outfit**. **Waterloo Records** and **End of an Ear** both established digital storefronts through **ThinkIndie**, as the resurgence of vinyl continued unabated, with an estimated 35% increase in total sales from last year, a trend seen locally in a spike of killer 7-inch debuts by the likes of **Followed by Static**, **TV Torso**, and **Woven Bones**.

Hands down the party of the year, the **South by Southwest Music Conference** reaffirmed itself as an invaluable promotional tool and pop-culture destination, crashed by the likes of **Kanye West** and **Jane's Addiction** and peaking with **Metallica's** exclusive guitar heroics at



Stubb's. Despite heavy rainfall, both the **Austin City Limits Music Festival** and **Fun Fun Fun Fest** boasted record numbers and heavyweight headliners **Pearl Jam** and the **Jesus Lizard**, respectively, while the second annual **Pachanga Latino Music Festival** spiced up **Fiesta Gardens** in May.

Concurrent with the turbulent debate over public health care, more than 90 bands and 170 local businesses came together Sept. 22 to raise \$164,000 for the **Health Alliance for Austin Musicians** – the homegrown nonprofit that provides low-cost medical and mental-health services to local artists – on the fourth annual **HAAM Benefit Day**, a fitting tribute to the continued legacy of the organization's beloved founder, **Robin Shivers**, who passed away suddenly in October. That's not counting the \$53,200 raised in February by the 60th birthday bash for **Marcia Ball**, who brought home **Pinetop Perkins'** award for piano player of the year from Memphis' **Blues Music Awards**.

Elsewhere on the political front, things weren't so uplifting. **Fleming Cantina** was tarred and feathered for closing during the annual **Clyde Littlefield Texas Relays** in April, citing safety concerns and an expected loss in revenue. Tensions on Red River boiled over two months later when **Brandon** and **LaBaaron Hutchison** of the Central Texas hip-hop outfit **LG Allstarz** opened fire outside of **Spiros**, wounding eight bystanders and resulting in the permanent closure of the club.

In April, **City Council** did its part to "clarify" the sound ordinance, turning down the volume

of live music at restaurants to a laughable 70 decibels, a decision made effective immediately because the circumstances were deemed to "constitute an emergency." The move resulted in plugs pulled on both **Freddie's Place** and **Shady Grove's** longstanding Unplugged at the Grove series, though the latter was quickly revived by some political wizardry.

Council then rejected the **Live Music Task Force's** recommendation for the

formation of a **Music Department**, creating instead a music program manager position within the **Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services Office**. That role was filled last week by **Don Pitts**, a longtime Gibson guitar executive who serves on the board of the **Austin Music Foundation**. He's just in time, too, given that rumblings about the **Waller Creek Tunnel Project** are starting to pick up again.

Looking back, 2009 felt less like the closing of a decade and more like the end of an era, not just for radio but for this city, South Austin in particular, which lost some of its

most beloved musical icons, including **Stephen Bruton**, **Randall "Poodie" Locke**, avant-garde jazz pioneer **Tina Marsh**, cosmic soul man **Rusty Wier**, **Amy Farris**, **Sky Sunlight** **Saxon**, and poster artist **Bill Narum** – an emotional domino effect of painful loss. Even the **Cornell Hurd Band**, bereaved of **Danny Roy Young** and **Paul Skelton**, danced its last shuffle at **Jovita's** last Thursday, ending the longest-running residency in town.

Turn the page.

GOING FOR BROKE NINE EXPENSIVE TICKETS 2009

Leonard Cohen, Long Center for the Performing Arts, April 1-2

Bruce Springsteen, Frank Erwin Center, April 5

Morrissey, Bass Concert Hall, April 12

My Bloody Valentine, Austin Music Hall, April 21

Sonny Rollins, Bass Concert Hall, May 3

Jane's Addiction, **Nine Inch Nails**, Frank Erwin Center, May 12

Bob Dylan, **Willie Nelson**, **John Mellencamp**, Dell Diamond, Aug. 4

AC/DC, Frank Erwin Center, Nov. 6

Jay-Z, Frank Erwin Center, Nov. 10

Do the Right Thing

Call me Commissioner

BY MARGARET MOSER

Early in December and without a great deal of fanfare, I was appointed to the Austin Music Commission.

This came on the heels of serving as one of five behind-the-scenesters on the Austin Music Memorial committee, which posthumously nominates Texas musicians for engraved discs at the Long Center's City Terrace. Whatever respectability this perhaps suggests feels almost fraudulent. I'm fairly certain that at some point a whistleblower will point out my lack of high school diploma, absence of college education, misfit personality, and degree in slacking, then rightfully demand I step down.

Yet the opportunity to engage in civic service is compelling. No question that the changes of 2009 affected me, much like it did KGSR architect and on-air personality/manager Jody Denberg, who admits that the sudden death in October of Health Alliance for Austin Musicians co-founder Robin Shivers at the age of 53 shook him to his soul and provoked his unexpected exodus from local airwaves.

Shivers' passing, followed so quickly by the death of Bill Narum, just about did me in. It's been a hideous roll call of death since January, friends passing in record numbers. Mr. Bones isn't content with a nudge of the scythe in the ribs; he's bitch-slapping us left and right. Into that emotional void echoed the call of the Music Commission.

I've always believed that I was extraordinarily fortunate to have fallen in with people like Narum and Denberg, a group of thinkers and doers who make things happen in this town. That's one of Austin's most unusual traits, the ability to not just nurture groups of like-minded people into action but to sustain them. Many of you reading the paper think of my editor, Louis Black, and publisher, Nick Barbaro, as establishment crossovers and figureheads of the *Chronicle* and South by Southwest. I think of them in terms of fart jokes and spontaneous trips to Laredo after work on Fridays, though I confess it's been a while since either occurred.

Which again brings me to feeling like a fraud for being on the Music Commission. Except for one thing: I deeply love the music made in Austin.

I care so little for new national acts (with plenty of exceptions) that I struggle every year to complete the *Chronicle's* national Top 10s. And yet I could make five completely separate lists of top local releases. My pride about Austin music is so distinct it could be chauvinistic.

Maybe that's why the shake-up at KUT wounded me the way it did. I noticed it most acutely on a Wednesday night a few weeks ago, the day that the news of Narum's death chilled a large segment of this community. Had it been a year ago, I know what would have happened: His friends would have wandered over to KUT where Larry Monroe would have been on the air playing ZZ

Top. Monroe would have brought us in, an ersatz minister overseeing a spontaneous mourning.

As it happened, the station put together a moving tribute to Narum several days later. It was lovely and meaningful, yet with all due respect, it did not come from the trusted KUT voice that Monroe has been for so many years. I can recall that booth at KUT filled on numerous occasions by Austinites who badly needed the community consolation KUT provided, like when Walter Hyatt died. I remember sitting across from Cleve Hattersley the night Mambo John Treanor died and handing the microphone over to him because I was too choked up to speak.

Even more emblematic, when Doug Sahn died, I was in such a state of shock that I sort of stumbled over to Monroe's show that night because I knew he'd be doing the right thing. He let me sit teary-eyed in the control room when Ernie Durawa walked in, his face frozen in pain over the loss of his childhood buddy. Monroe played the soundtrack to our grief, and I held Durawa as he wept. As we sat silent but for sniffles and the shuffling of CDs, the door opened and in walked Louis Black, Jody Denberg, and Raoul Hernandez.

Which again brings me to feeling like a fraud for being on the Music Commission. Except for one thing: I deeply love the music made in Austin.

And that, my friends, might have been a penultimate moment of recognition about why KUT has been so important to me and my life, and subsequently why Austin is so meaningful. Seeing the program director of a competing station walk into KUT under such terrible circumstances was stunning in its meaning to me. I've thought long and hard about that November evening 10 years ago. I've loved KUT for the authenticity of its voices, the sense that any of the deejays could speak with authority about Austin, music, and about the world for that matter. I gave money to KUT this last fund drive not because of what's transpired but because I trust and have faith that they will do the right thing and listen to the voices of the audience who really care.

Which brings me back to the Austin Music Commission and what it does. I had to look this up because I'm one of those armchair blowhards with a general opinion about governmental process that may or may not relate to actual issues. According to the city's website, the appointed members, "Advise city council on music development issues. Duties are advisory and include: studying the development of the

music industry, assisting in the implementation of programs to meet the needs created by the development of the industry; and review matters that may affect the music industry in Austin."

In other words, talking, discussing – brainstorming.

That had been my experience on the Austin Music Memorial committee, which culminated in a unanimous vote on the 10-name installation at the Long Center. In all cases, the actual presentation of honors provided more extensive documentation and testimonials that made for even more compelling cases. For a history geek with a love of genealogy and a passion for music, this was heaven with a 512 area code. It gave me new appreciation for the time I've spent in Austin since 1973.

When the invitation came to serve on the commission, it was accompanied by an insistent banging at the door, opportunity demanding entrance. That I could take 36-plus years of night-clubbing in barbecue joints, Mexican food restaurants, biker bars, honky-tonks, former National Guard armories, converted gas stations outside town, and even respectable rooms, plus more nights on the road than I can remember, let alone count, and put them to practical use was an extraordinary concept. That I could take the time spent hanging out, collecting cover charges and checking stamps at the door, making posters, standing in line, selling merchandise, fetching band drinks, and looking for parking spaces and use it all to inform my decisions was almost too good to be true. That if I believe passionately in the future of Austin's young musicians, I could make a difference.

That difference will come in issues the Austin Music Commission tackles and on which it advises the City Council. This year it convened the Live Music Task Force to deal with thorny sound ordinance issues, met with the Fire Department to review city ordinances related to public assembly and temporary use, worked with CreateAustin, and oversaw the Music Memorial selections.

Much is left on the table, including the quality of life for musicians, live music venue issues, working with other commissions such as the Downtown Commission and the Arts Commission, Waller Creek questions, and yes, even street busking, an activity that can be traced back centuries. Is an open guitar case panhandling? No? What about an open guitar case with a CD for sale? Does it matter?

It matters to the extent that music has saved my life many times over. Writing about music saved me much the same way, and gave me a voice I didn't know I had. Music amplified the good times, redeemed the bad times, and put together an unforgettable soundtrack to 33½ years of documenting the town whose music I so love.

Now it's time to listen to the voices of others who have also been saved – and/or just plain care – and do the right thing. ■



KEN HOGGE



KEN HOGGE



KEN HOGGE



MARTHA GRENON



MIKE VERNON

Lifetime Piling Up: (top to bottom) doing my homework at Raul's in 1980; at the 1979 'Dillo punk poster show; with Jeff Whittington and Lester Bangs (r), 1980; sitting on the groupie panel at South by Southwest 1993 with Kim Fowley, Ann Powers, and Pamela Des Barres; kissed by Roy Head, 2008

THE FLAMING LIPS *Embryonic* (Warner Bros.)

"There's no way back, it's complete devastation," warns Wayne Coyne on "The Ego's Last Stand," opening the second act of epic *Embryonic* in the throes of a maddening bassline that pounds from the deepest, darkest recesses of a repressed psyche. After a decade whirling in the ecstatic thrall of symphonic anthems and hallucinated spectacle, *Embryonic* washes away the euphoria commenced with 1999's *The Soft Bulletin* to present Lips 3.0. While the experimental Okies have always wavered in the searching rift of manic-depression, never have they so fully embraced the brutally incapacitating side of the psychological equation as on their 12th studio LP. Dense, dire, pushing at the shattered edges of psychedelia, *Embryonic* eschews the uplifting bravado of the *Yoshimi* years for an inextricable 70-minute acid trip. "Convinced of the Hex" culls traces of 2006's *At War With the Mystics* but quickly dissolves in a discordant blur and the metallicly etched scarring of "The Sparrow Looks Up At the Machine" and disquieting calm of "Evil." While Coyne & Co. cue from Pink Floyd, the Lips linger at the most disturbing edges of chaos ("Aquarius Sabotage") and rein in only further distress-frayed psychic penumbras ("The Impulse"). MGMT adds neo-glam glow to "Worm Mountain," magnificently warped by skuzzed and pummeling drum and bass, and Karen O contributes distraughtly to "Gemini Syringes" and closer "Watching the Planets." *Embryonic* gestates the Lips to a new phase, turning eerily inward to finally face the flipside of their frantic catharsis.

★★★★

— Doug Freeman



JAY FARRAR & BENJAMIN GIBBARD *One Fast Move or I'm Gone: Music From Kerouac's Big Sur* (Atlantic)

Jack Kerouac's *Big Sur* registers among the reluctant Beat standard-bearer's most brutally aware works, seeking to escape the aftermath of iconification and confronting the destruction created by his alcoholism and isolation. Yet even Kerouac's darkest howls and most yearning reflections are often dissolved by the breathless rapture of his prose, which is what makes Farrar and Gibbard's score for the new *Big Sur* documentary so surprisingly and devastatingly beautiful. Rather than adapting Kerouac's writing into the usual frantic jazz inflections, Farrar lifts lines into rootsy blues and Americana shades,



surfacing the author's uniquely skewed and stunning phrases. Farrar's aching moans on "Low Life Kingdom," "Breathe Our Iodine," and "Big Sur" balance with Gibbard's smoother, optimistic turns of "California Zephyr" and "These Roads Don't Move" in reflection of Kerouac's extreme nature, while "Final Horrors" and "San Francisco" beckon Townes Van Zandt. Reaching beyond mere transcription, Farrar and Gibbard hold Kerouac's words at their evocative essence. (**Farrar & Gibbard beat Antone's Jan. 27.**)

★★★★

— Doug Freeman

BUILT TO SPILL *There Is No Enemy* (Warner Bros.)

The nexus between Built to Spill's emotive early years and the more spacious guitar constructions of its post-millennium output traces back to a rapturous 20-minute re-creation of Neil Young's "Cortez the Killer" on 2000's *Live*. With seventh LP *There Is No Enemy*, leader Doug Martsch fully embraces Young's mid-1970s songwriter mold – the songs are a bit slower, with a reflective urgency and pop polish that garners strength in every repeat listen – and on that ground alone the album succeeds. Opener "Aisle 13" and the expetive-laced "Pat" conjure the precise indie rock of 1997 watermark *Perfect From Now On*, but are offset by the desolate "Oh Yeah," featuring Butthole Surfers guitarist Paul Leary, and the slow burn of "Nowhere Lullaby." Even then, *No Enemy* excels most in the country swoon of "Hindsight" and the Southwestern, mariachi-horn-accented "Tomorrow," a promising start into uncharted territory for Built to Spill's next decade.

★★★★

— Austin Powell



CLIPSE *Til the Casket Drops* (Columbia)

Be it for fame, money, "Freedom" from record labels, or more coke, Pusha T and Malice were never short on hunger in the studio, flipping freakishly minimalist beats from the Neptunes into big love from critics and a cult following. With *Til the Casket Drops*, the Virginia Beach brothers achieve crossover status (hello, Kanye



West and Keri Hilson) but lose the fire that defined 2002's *Lord Willin'* and 2006's *Hell Hath No Fury*. Look no further than Malice's prophecy on "Champion": "Life is with your kids watching *Madagascar*." So much for "Keys Open Doors." Lukewarm beats from the Neptunes ("I'm Good," "Counseling," "Showing Out") on eight of 13 tracks don't help the cause. It all starts so well with Sean C & LV's "Freedom," Neptunes' "Popular Demand (Popeyes)," and DJ Khalil & Chin's "Kinda Like a Big Deal," but Casket drops right after that.

★★

— Chase Hoffberger

THAO WITH THE GET DOWN STAY DOWN *Know Better Learn Faster* (Kill Rock Stars)

On 2008's *We Brave Bee Stings and All*, San Francisco multi-instrumentalist Thao Nguyen was the quirky folk singer with stories about ice cream and hammers: metaphors for sexual frustration. On her sophomore KRS LP with the *Get Down Stay Down*, she sorts out emotional laundry via foot stomps and soul-searching. "I will love you like this now, you can recognize it later," she coos in her deliciously husky voice on "Cool Yourself." That's Nguyen's lyrical theme, but the melodies, jubilant horns, and bouncy riffs throw off any sad-girl sap. Nguyen cleverly avoids the breakup album by taking its title and writing variations on it, like frenzied centerpiece "Body": "It's good to see you, it's too good to see you, but what am I, just a body in your bed?" On "Trouble Was For," she echoes the mindset of many independent women struggling with the idea of romance: "Come back, come back, 'cause I got smart."

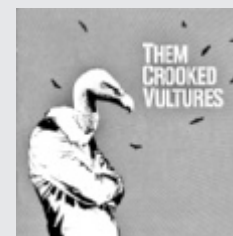
★★★★

— Audra Schroeder



metallurgy

Slayer's *World Painted Blood* (American) album of the year? Find one more convincing. Like a soundtrack to cinematic year-high *The Hurt Locker*, the follow-up to 2006's equally war-torn *Christ Illusion* ("Jihad") issues a total armored response to its predecessor's punker rototill. *WPB* rains lyric hooks and rhythmic breaks bursting at every turn from a jack-in-the-box of raging disillusionment. Titular first mantra ("world painted blood, no sanctuary") plus "Snuff" ("torture, misery, endless suffering") and "Beauty Through Order" ("God did not do this") match the industrial shifts of "Public Display of Dismemberment" and security breach guitars on "Human Strain." Funeral home of horrors "Playing With Dolls" ("you'll wish you were in hell") also names a 20-minute short on the deluxe edition DVD, *Frankenhooker* as soundtracked by *World Painted Blood*. **Saviours'** *Accelerated Living* (Kemado) gallops stronger, faster, meatier than the Sword-in-the-stone ballast of 2006 bow *Crucifire* and the heavier artillery of its follow-up on Kemado two years later, *Into Abaddon*. Guitars increase a thousandfold, Sonny Reinhardt teaming with Matt Pike Jr., aka lead shred and holler Austin Barber. Lightning tempo morphs (opener "Acid Hand") and straight 1980s riff fusillades ("We Roam") alight High on Fire only faster, "F.G.T." unleashing a pure blitzkrieg of tempo and guitar volley. Howitzer "Slave to the Hex" will blister air guitarists and drummers alike. **Baroness** continues in the footsteps of Georgian antecedents Mastodon, uncorking



second album *Blue Record* (Relapse), which parallels its former labelmates' *Remission* as a breakout disc, although aquatic CD art and the seafaring rhythms of "The Sweetest Curse" and "Jake Leg" spray hot 'Lantic seawater à la *Leviathan*. The backwoods ambience fleshing out the group's eponymous 2007 debut – *Red Album* – deepens here on fraternal order chorals ("Steel That Sleeps the Eye") and connective tissue interludes ("Blackpowder Orchard") that set up epic riff armadas "A Horse Called Golgotha," with its Brian May solar flare, and "O'er Hell and Hide." Eponymous DGC platter by Josh Homme, Dave Grohl, and John Paul Jones – **Them Crooked Vultures** – piles up more kills than it probably has any right to. The rhythm section's heavy elasticity boogies Humble Pie even as the Queens of the Stone Age frontman flirts with Darkness. Lyrical carrion "I know how to be lost in lust, not because you should, but because you must" on lead-off "No One Loves Me & Neither Do I" speaks to the time constraints of spontaneity in the face of sleek muscle burst "Mind Eraser, No Chaser"

and the Cream-y mucous of "Scumbag Blues." Far too much real estate ("Interlude With Ludes") abuts a back-end wasteland ("Gunman"), but riff jewel "Bandoliers" yields no quarter. Not only does **Alice in Chains'** *Black Gives Way to Blue* (Virgin) toll open with "All Secrets Known" and thus confirm that the Seattle warlords' vocal doom belonged as much to creator Jerry Cantrell as heroin casualty Layne Staley, but only the guitarist could bend the riff to "Check My Brain" into one of the band's signature staph infections. Rather than attempt a straight, early 1990s flood of Death Valley grunge, Alice's first studio effort since the Staley era sticks close to the *Boggy Depot* of Cantrell's frontiersman strum, "Your Decision" another instant AIC classic seemingly left off '94's *Jar of Flies*. Similarly pollinated comes "When the Sun Rose Again." A tighter edit would neutralize the LP's "Acid Bubble" on the slippery slope of the second side, but that's a material issue when the bigger one is the closing title track, the album's stripped and most affecting haunt.

— Raoul Hernandez

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame + Museum Live

(Time Life)

A 9-DVD set totaling 1,443 minutes, or 24 hours, Time Life's *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame + Museum Live* boxes up everything the music business represents. Stupidly curated and packaged, exclusionary, and finally, musically genius – as in the rock & soul pioneers actually honored – it also mirrors the institution it documents.

Fathered in 1983 by Atlantic Records chief Ahmet Ertegun and his so-called “funky nine” (Jann S. Wenner, Jon Landau, Seymour Stein, etc.), then inducting its initial class two years later and debuting an annual awards ceremony at New York's Waldorf-Astoria in 1986 (produced by Bill Graham until his death in 1991), the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame today totals 243 enshrinements and should probably house double that already. Rock & roll was built by all, not some exclusive frat, as much a reaction to Pat Boone (okay, maybe not) as Cannibal Corpse (okay, maybe not). Four ballots to get the Stooges in? Some serious disconnect there. Since 1987, an annual highlights reel has been edited together for cable broadcast.

Rather than an archive of once-in-a-lifetime mash-ups – Mick Jagger's *The Best Years of Our Lives* induction speech for the Beatles, Led Zeppelin's 1995 reunion (not included), and in 2009, Jeff Beck and Metallica leading Jimmy Page, Joe Perry, Ronnie Wood, and Flea through a two-ton “Train Kept A-Rollin'” – there's nine *American Bandstand*-style packages instead. Each comes with a cache of full induction speeches, plus snippets of rehearsal and backstage footage, but instead of the entire set of Eddie Vedder reigniting the Doors in 1993, the performance gets chopped into single-song segments spread throughout the nine discs. The sushi factor, as on the 9-DVD *Ed Sullivan's Rock & Roll Classics* box in 2002, gets old faster than shark-stuffed groupies.

Especially when so many of these 1,443 minutes truly rock. A VH1-type sampling:

VOL. 1, LIGHT MY FIRE: STAR-STUDDED JAM ERA

- George Harrison accepting Mick Jagger's Fab Four induction, 1988, then the Stones frontman and Bruce Springsteen screeching “I Saw Her Standing There” with the Beatle's harmony.
- Eric Clapton, all in black with his Blackie Strat, making child's play out of “Sunshine of Your Love” for the first time in 25 years with Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker.
- John Fogerty's discomfort in accepting induction with the remaining members of Creedence Clearwater Revival.
- Prince shredding dove's tears on “While My Guitar Gently Weeps,” as sung by Tom Petty next to a baby-faced Dhani Harrison.

Extras: Paul's letter to John, biblically Beatles, and Cream's backstage banter proving almost as colossal as the power trio itself.



VOL. 2, SWEET EMOTION: ROCK BLOC

- Jagger and Springsteen sharing a mic through “(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction” in 1988, accompanied by ol' Shakey himself, Neil Young, picking out its chords, then Jagger and Tina Turner cheek to cheek on “Honky Tonk Women.”
- James Taylor's solo shivers through Joni Mitchell's “Woodstock” and Stephen Stills' Fender catching fire on Crosby, Stills & Nash's “Wooden Ships.” Michael Stipe puts them all to shame delivering “Man on the Moon” out front of R.E.M. with Eddie Vedder.
- Early years MVP Keith Richards' lighthearted but sincere intro for ZZ Top and the Texas trio's ensuing rip through “La Grange” and “Tush.” Check out Dusty Hill's immaculate grill and Billy Gibbons' heavenly hands.
- AC/DC's three-minute pop of “Highway to Hell” preceding Metallica's extended, double-bass (Jason Newsted/Robert Trujillo) definitive take on “Master of Puppets.”

VOL. 3, START ME UP: ROCK BLOC TOO

- Carole King rocking her hair off during Who jam “Won't Get Fooled Again.”
- The Righteous Brothers rockestra delivering “You've Lost That Loving Feeling” for the ages, and the original Byrds' boys choir harmonies; stunning Michelle Phillips' tear-rimmed eyes as she projects Mama Cass wearing a size six on the moon (1998), then Denny Doherty nailing “California Dreamin'” with Michelle and John Phillips.
- Steve Winwood cooking his key-lime-pie-green Strat during his and Jim Capaldi's “Dear Mr. Fantasy.”
- Stevie Nicks slaying “Landslide” as Lindsey Buckingham picks some Shakespeare, chased by Mick Fleetwood's acceptance speech – with Mac founder Peter Green standing behind him – then the band, led by Buckingham on banjo, stripping back “Say You Love Me” right down to its Christine McVie.
- A shaved and short-haired Dave Grohl fuel-injecting Queen's “Tie Your Mother Down” alongside Brian May, 2001.

VOL. 4, FEELIN' ALRIGHT: THE BEST

- Bo Diddley's humble, charismatic acceptance speech in 1987 when he was 59, then Robbie Robertson introducing him, seated, in 2005, three years before his death, and at the age of 78 taking an ornery stab at what the Band leader terms “some of the most wicked jungle mojo shit the world has ever heard” (“Bo Diddley”). Then comes Clapton at his induction, 2000, tearing some shit up with Robertson on “Farther on Up the Road,” followed by Little Richard and Tina Turner doing the honors for Otis Redding and Phil Spector, respectively. Ms. Hot Legs leads a jam through “River Deep, Mountain High,” doing to the song what legs did for Homo sapiens.
- Etta James first holding court at the podium, then a reaction shot from Natalie Cole after the first lady of soul finishes “At Last.”
- Keith Richards and Chubby Checker facing off on “The Twist.” That's nothing compared to pirate Richards ringing in the Ronettes, who then perform. Veronica Spector, as

Richards addresses her, sings “Be My Baby,” but all three original Ronettes own the bow.

- Jimmy Page making a surprise appearance during Jeff “Beck's Bolero” for a swing at Led Zeppelin's “Immigrant Song,” Beck doing Robert Plant's vocal on guitar.

Extras: Twenty minutes of Steven Tyler and Joe Perry doing justice to Led Zeppelin, and Steven Van Zandt's entire Italianese of the Rascals, which got him cast in *The Sopranos*.

VOL. 5, WHOLE LOTTA SHAKIN': THE LEAST

- Johnny Cash in that baritone talking about Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Alan Lomax, and Blind Lemon Jefferson.
- Carl Perkins, “a sharecropper's son,” promising the Hall it will never be ashamed of inducting him.
- Ruth Brown and Bonnie Raitt teaming up on “Mama He Treats Your Daughter Mean,” then Raitt letting John Lee Hooker tear it up on “I'm in the Mood.”

Extras: Overall MVP Bruce Springsteen thanking even his lawyers, the “moneymen” (“these are great and complicated, misunderstood Americans”); Madonna accepting David Bowie's award; plus Lars Ulrich's power to the people and James Hetfield's personal poetry on Black Sabbath; and the Edge's case for the Clash.

VOL. 6, I'LL TAKE YOU THERE: SOUL OF THE SET

- Percy Sledge, the O'Jays, Jerry Butler.
- Mary J. Blige inducts Solomon Burke.
- Gamble & Huff receiving the first Ahmet Ertegun award.
- Martha & the Vandellas performing “Dancing in the Street” (1995).
- Stevie Wonder driving all Four Tops.
- Isaac Hayes giving the *Shaft*.
- The Staple Singers, led by Pops Staples, plinking “I'll Take You There” behind Mavis Staples telling it to the mountain, 1999.

Extras: Ronnie Wood on Bobby Womack, with the ensuing musical set criminally missing; Paul Simon's wry, spot-on honorarium for Stevie Wonder in 1989, followed by the inner science of the composer himself; George Clinton's warm, funny funk riff on Sly & the Family Stone, and the band's grateful reunion in acceptance – not to mention the surprise guest himself.

VOL. 7, COME TOGETHER: HODGEPODGE, OR 'WHO LET IN AXL ROSE?'

- Eddie Vedder, deadpan, quipping Johnny Ramone's revelation: “They're actually fairly long songs played very, very quickly.”
- Blondie rocking “Call Me,” and Elvis Costello reuniting with the Attractions to knock out “(What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love and Understanding.”



Chrissie Hynde and Neil Young, 2005

FROM THE ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME BOOK, 2009

- Heresy of Axl Rose in the John Lennon induction set, lending his rooster vocals to “Come Together.”
- Rehearsal footage of Springsteen and Robbie Robertson feeling the moment as John Fogerty demonstrates a solo acoustic, “Who'll Stop the Rain.”
- Eric Clapton's drug-dealer anecdote on Cream's day in 1993 and the threesome's subsequent preview of its 2005 reunion on a big footfalls “Crossroads.”
- Patti Smith's lump-in-throat acceptance followed up by her thanking Springsteen for “Because the Night,” then delivering it, encored immediately by her 2002 tearing of “People Have the Power.”
- Jeff Beck tributing fellow shaggy Rod Stewart with an instrumental lighter moment, Curtis Mayfield's “People Get Ready.”

Extras: The Grateful Dead backstage in the Waldorf-Astoria kitchen waiting to accept its induction – and then doing it – with a Jerry Garcia cutout in tow. Jefferson Airplane's moment is humbler, but no less heartfelt and equally deserving.

VOL. 8, MESSAGE OF LOVE: RUNNING ON EMPTY

- Bono's all-time treatise of noses in rock, beginning with Pete Townshend's.
- James Taylor's moving “Fire and Rain.”
- Bee Gees teasers “Massachusetts” and “You Should Be Dancing.”
- *Finally*, a complete three-song set, courtesy of the Pretenders, wherein inductor Neil Young channels the Crazy Horse in “My City Was Gone.”
- Metallica taking Sabbath's “Iron Man” box office.

Extras: Keith Richards inducting Chuck Berry, 1986; Warner Bros./Reprise Records' Mo Ostin demonstrating what a “record man” used to be and getting a standing O for it.

VOL. 9, THE CONCERT FOR THE ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME

Final 53-minute wood-chipper cut of Cleveland's Municipal Stadium celebrating the 1995 opening of the actual museum. A totally inadequate document, but as with the rest of *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame + Museum Live*, until it's redone right – and given the fabled music business, that could be the 12th day of never – this is all she wrote, and frankly, Lou Reed dedicating “Sweet Jane” to Sterling Morrison never gets old.

★★★

– Raoul Hernandez

LEAD STORY

Spare the Rod: In September, engaging in a 300-year tradition of the Dussera holiday in India's Tamil Nadu state, Hindu priests ritually whipped 2,000 young women and girls over a five-hour period as penance for a range of sins, from insufficient studying to moral impurity. Said one sobbing yet inspired lash recipient, to an NDTV reporter, "[W]hen we are whipped, we will get rid of our mental and physical ailments and evil spirits." (And in November, Pope John Paul II was revealed to have periodically atoned for sins by privately whipping himself, according to a nun who worked with him and who was cited in the Vatican's ongoing consideration of John Paul II for sainthood. The nun said she heard him distinctly several times from an adjacent room.)

COMPELLING EXPLANATIONS

From a police report in the *North Bay Nugget* of Ontario (Nov. 7): An officer in line at a traffic light, realizing that cars had not moved through two light changes, walked up to the lead car to investigate. The driver said she was not able to move on the green lights because she was still on the phone and thus driving off would be illegal. The officer said a brief lecture improved the woman's understanding of the law.

The inspector general of the National Science Foundation revealed that on-the-job viewing of pornography websites was so widespread at the agency that the resultant ethics investigations hindered his primary mission of investigating fraud on grant contracts. The agency report, obtained by *The Washington Times* in September, said the heaviest user was a senior executive who logged on to pornography at least 331 days in 2008. He subsequently retired, but before leaving defended his habit, claiming that his website visits actually helped impoverished women in Third World countries to earn a decent living (by posing for pornography).

Fine Lawyering: Jacob Christine, 21, acting as his own lawyer at an October hearing, denying charges that he severely slashed a fellow inmate at an Easton, Pa., prison, offered his own view of whoever the perpetrator was: "Whoever attacked [the victim] had a high regard for life," said Christine, because the cut "isn't deep at all. It's on his neck. It's not on his face."

IRONIES

When Minnesota's Riverview Community Bank opened for business in 2004, founder Chuck Ripka claimed divine inspiration – that God had told him to "pastor the bank" and, in exchange, that he would "take care of the bottom line," leading Ripka to use "prayer" as a theme in the bank's promotions. In October 2009, Riverview became only the sixth bank in the state to be shut down by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. Riverview acknowledged that it had invested aggressively in real estate.

Dr. Hulda Clark, 80, passed away in September of multiple myeloma, an advanced cancer of the plasma cells. Before she was stricken, she had authored three

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPHERD



ROY TOMPKINS

Albert Freed's lawsuit for defective underwear against Hanes was dismissed in October by a Pensacola, Fla., judge, even though Freed had complained that the briefs had caused severe pain and ruined his vacation. Freed said the garment's flap had inexplicably failed to close, allowing his penis to protrude and rub against swim trunks that contained sand from the beach, irritating the sensitive skin. However, Freed delayed diagnosing the problem – by declining to inspect his organ. He explained that he cannot easily peer over his "belly" (and wouldn't even consider, he said, examining his naked self in a mirror or asking his wife to inspect). Consequently, he had endured increased irritation before recognizing the source of the chafing.

books touting her eccentric remedies as cures, first, for "all diseases" and then, especially, cancer. In her books *The Cure for All Cancers* and *The Cure for All Advanced Cancers*, she urged those diagnosed to immediately stop chemotherapy and embrace her quixotic regimens to subdue the "parasites" that cause cancer.

THE LITIGIOUS SOCIETY

According to a November *Chicago Sun-Times* report, county officials in Chicago have agreed to pay a \$14,000 injury claim to janitor Mary Tait, of the sheriff's department. The amount covers two incidents, in 1997 and 1998, in which she hurt her back in the same way – while "reaching around to pick up a piece of toilet paper."

LATEST HUMAN RIGHTS

In November, a judge in Somerville, N.J., overruled a local police chief who had rejected a firearms license for hunting enthusiast James Cap, 46. The judge ordered the chief to grant the license, even though Cap is a quadriplegic and will need to mount the gun on his wheelchair and fire it by blowing into a

tube. Cap was an avid hunter before a football injury incapacitated him.

SMOOTH REACTIONS

1) In July, Charles Diez was charged with attempted murder for his angry reaction to a bicyclist who was carrying his 3-year-old son on the bike unsafely on a busy Asheville, N.C., street. According to police, Diez was so anguished that he pulled his gun and fired at the bicyclist, grazing the man's helmet. 2) In October, just as Pennsylvania Federal Judge Lawrence Stengel was launching into his explanation for the sentence he was about to impose, bank robber Trammel Bledsoe grew impatient. "Can you hurry this up? I don't have time for this. Just sentence me." "You'll have all the time in the world," responded Stengel, who gave Bledsoe 41 years.

PEOPLE WHO WENT TOO FAR

Great Expectorations: 1) Charles Hersel, 39, was arrested in Thousand Oaks, Calif., in November after police investigators overheard him offer \$31 to a Westlake High School boy to spit in Hersel's face. Several boys had complained to police that a man

(allegedly Hersel) had approached them, offering money for expelling saliva and other bodily fluids on him. 2) Also in November, Patrick Girard, 29, a member of the City Council in Plattsburgh, N.Y., apologized to the constituent in whose face Girard had spit at the height of a barroom argument about the Boston Red Sox. Said the constituent, "It got in my eye, on my face, on my jacket."

LEAST COMPETENT CRIMINALS

Could've Planned Better: 1) Vincent Salters, 46, was arrested in East Knoxville, Tenn., in November after having shoplifted shoes the day before from the Shoe Show store. He had dashed out hurriedly with several display shoes, but an employee said they were all for the left foot. Salters was arrested outside the store the next day, perhaps having come to pick up right-foot shoes. 2) Travis Himmler, 22, was charged with burglary in November after allegedly stealing the cash register from the Golden Wok restaurant in Bloomington, Minn., and carrying it away on his bicycle. He was found down the street, injured, after taking a bad tumble when the dangling cash register cord got caught in the bike's spokes.

A 'NEWS OF THE WEIRD' CLASSIC (DECEMBER 2000)

Las Vegas body modifier Nathan McKay, 24, complained in November 2000 about the difficulty of getting proper medical care, namely, further surgery to prevent his already surgically forked tongue from fusing back together and removal of all teeth (and replacement with platinum implants). Said McKay, who also has 1-inch-stretched holes in his earlobes (for holding ebony disks): "I want my tongue split ... as far back as possible, to the uvula, so I have two separate strands in my mouth." The original surgeon was a family friend, but he has balked at any follow-up. Said McKay, "I'm not trying to turn myself into anything except someone to remember."

Visit Chuck Shepherd daily at
www.newsoftheweird.blogspot.com
(or www.newsoftheweird.com).

Send your Weirdest News to: Chuck Shepherd, PO Box 18737, Tampa, FL 33679 or weirdnewstips@yahoo.com.
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES FOR WOMEN Join Friendship International and women from all over the world for education in the ways of vocabulary, conjugation, and so on. 9:45am. First Life Center of First Baptist Church, 306 Round Rock Ave., Round Rock, 512/246-1958. Free (child care available for a small fee). auldofus@austin.rr.com, www.fbcrr.org.

★ **BLUE GENIE ART BAZAAR** Need something Austin-y (art, jewelery, prints, clothing, etc., what-not, and then some) for a loved one this year? One hundred artists and artisans will help you with your gifting conundrums. Through Dec. 24, 10am-6pm. Monarch Event Center, 6406 N. I-35 #3100, 444-6655. Free admission. www.bluegenieart.com.

👑 **CREATIVE SPIRIT UCC SPIRIT TALK** This progressive community of faith meets as the spirit moves, now midweek. Wednesdays, 5:45pm. Romeo's, 1500 Barton Springs Rd., 527-4455. cheatham@austin.rr.com, www.creativespiritucc.info, creativespiritucc.wordpress.com.

★ **CHRISTMAS GLASS NIGHT** Pay a bit extra for a brew and get a commemorative glass to memorialize your holiday inebriation. 7pm. Flying Saucer, the Triangle, 454-8200. www.beerknurd.com/stores/austin.

👑 **BROWN BAG PARTY** A toy party with games and prizes. You know, "toys," as in the kind you might like to carry out in a brown bag. Wednesdays, 8pm. Sister's Edge II, 113 San Jacinto, 457-8010.

ARMADILLO CHRISTMAS BAZAAR Nothing says holidays in Austin like scouring aisles and aisles of local art, crafts, and lord knows what else, surrounded by tunes from one of many musical acts performing this year. Don't worry; post office reps will be on the premises to spare you from lugging all those herbal soaps home for the holidays. Through Dec. 24, 11am-11pm. Austin Convention Center, 500 E. Cesar Chavez, 447-1605. \$3, weekdays till 7pm; \$6, evenings and weekends. www.armadillobazaar.com.

CHAIR YOGA FOR SENIORS Folks with physical limitations (the elderly, those with fibromyalgia, etc.) who still want to increase their flexibility and relaxation can strike a yoga pose while remaining seated. Wednesdays, 1pm. Dittmar Recreation Center, 1009 W. Dittmar, 712-4451. Free.

★ **RECOMMENDED**
👑 **YOUNG ONES**
👑 **GAY PLACES**

SPECIAL SCREENINGS

(See Film Listings.)
Christmas Horror Remix: You Better Watch Out! @ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, 10pm
Dark Side of the Rainbow: The Wizard of Oz With Dark Side of the Moon @ Alamo Ritz, 9:25pm
The Holy Mountain @ Alamo Ritz, 10:30pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)
Alone Together Beerland

THURSDAY **24**

👑 **BLOGGITY BLOG BLOG BLOG** Why wait 'til Thursday? Come visit K8, Frank, Andy, and peep the new grill Lola Houston at the Gay Place Blog: Say hello, perhaps win a prize, and luv a unicorn. 454-5766. gayplace@austinchronicle.com, austinchronicle.com/gayplaceblog.

👑 **DONATE TO FAMILY: WIN A CRUISE** Win a seven-day Mexican Riviera cruise and make a year-end donation to the national org that reps our family's families. You are not required to donate to enter. To enter the drawing without a donation, send your e-mail, name, and phone number to info@familyquality.org

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 23 TO THURSDAY, DEC. 31

calendar

AUSTINCHRONICLE.COM/COMMUNITY

BY JAMES RENOVITCH

this week's
community
listings

before Thu., Dec. 31. Family Equality Council, PO Box 206, Boston, MA 02133. www.familyequality.org.

★ **BLUE GENIE ART BAZAAR** (See Wednesday.)

ARMADILLO CHRISTMAS BAZAAR (See Wednesday.)

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)
Beerfest With Beerlympics @ Alamo Ritz, 10pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)
Miss Lavelle White Saxon Pub

FRIDAY **25**

👑 **FREE CHRISTMAS DINNER AT CHARLIE'S** Home alone on the holiday? So what if you're no Macaulay Culkin. Get the hell out of the house, and go get dinner. For free. For realz. With your big, gay family. The food is yum (not to mention free!), and the company is as warm and friendly as you'd expect for this double-decade tradition. 1pm. Charlie's Austin, 1301 Lavaca, 474-6481. Free. www.charliesaustin.com.

👑 **ROSE'S BUFFET & FIND FRED** Fit for a queen - who may no longer be "fit" after this indulgence. Then stay for Find Fred. Kind of like *Where's Waldo?* but with color-coded name tags. Fridays, 5:30pm. Oilcan Harry's, 211 W. Fourth, 320-8823.

GHOSTS OF CHRISTMAS PAST This 1½-hour walking tour of Austin's most haunted haunts features the Driskill, the Old Land Office, and the Capitol building. Learn about our city's history and honest-to-goodness ghost stories while burning off some of those holiday pounds. Tours begin and end at the Capitol Christmas tree (11th & Congress). 7pm. 853-9826. \$5. www.hauntedtexas.com.

👑 **DISCO XMAS!** Santa's got a brand new bag. We mean, European shoulder murse. Come witness where Christmas balls, disco balls, and lots of balls meet. 10pm. Oilcan Harry's, 211 W. Fourth, 320-8823.

★ **CAP METRO HOLIDAY SCHEDULE** Buses run on a Sunday schedule today. Don't bother to call and complain, because the offices are closed as well. Everything will be back to normal tomorrow. 474-1200. www.capmetro.org.

👑 **THE HOLIDAY 12 STEP** Rob Nash's holiday compulsion, *12 Steps to a More Dysfunctional Christmas* is back. Get your tickets now. Or wait till the last minute, complain about it, tell your mom it's her fault, then get

some therapy, yo. Thu.-Sat., Dec. 25-Jan. 2, 2010, 8pm. The Vortex, 2307 Manor Rd., 789-7003. \$10-30. therobnash@aol.com, www.vortexrep.org.

THEATRE (See Arts Listings.)
12 Steps to a More Dysfunctional Christmas
The Vortex

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)
Beerfest With Beerlympics @ Alamo Ritz, 8pm
Dark Side of the Rainbow: The Wizard of Oz With Dark Side of the Moon @ Alamo Ritz, 11pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)
Carolyn Wonderland Antone's
Dale Watson & His Lone Stars Continental Club

SATURDAY **26**

BOXING DAY CELEBRATION Everyone's Canadian on Boxing Day, especially with fireside readings of *A Christmas Carol*, hors d'oeuvres, and holiday music from the Raggedy Cats. 10am-6pm. Becker Vineyards, 464 Becker Farms Rd., Stonewall, 830/644-2681. Free. www.beckervineyards.com.

78704 ARTISAN MARKET has arts and gifts hand-crafted by local artisans. Saturdays & Sundays, 11am-6pm. Corner of South Congress & Gibson, 914-3403. www.weare78704.com.

★ **TINPLATE TRACKERS TRAIN CLUB** This open house will have a Lionel model train setup with all the

foxin's. Come watch the choo-choos and inspire the next generation to keep this historic hobby alive and well. They might even let you sit behind the controls if you're kind enough to the the tip jar. Held over until Jan. 16 by popular demand. Saturdays through Jan. 16, 11am-5pm. 117 Lavaca (next to Ill Forks). Donations appreciated. www.trainweb.org/ttat.

HOLIDAY RESTORATIVE YOGA Let the vibrations of sound help you get over that holiday hangover. Noon. Sacred Streams Yoga, 2013-A W. Anderson, 600-4716. Donations appreciated. www.sacredstreamsyoga.com.

AUSTIN FARMERS' MARKET features fresh organic produce, meats, and cheeses straight from surrounding Texas farms, plus live music every week. Saturdays, 8am-noon. Republic Square Park, 422 Guadalupe, 974-6700. Free. www.austinfarmersmarket.org.

👑 **POINT FOUNDATION LGBT SCHOLARSHIPS** Hey students! Apply to the nation's largest scholarship-granting org for LGBT students of merit. Applications available now. Deadline: Fri., Feb. 12, 2010. shannon@pointfoundation.org, www.pointfoundation.org.

★ **ROUND ROCK CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING** Get all the tinsel off your tree and bring it to get pulverized into mulch. In return, get a free tree seedling. Saturdays, Dec. 26 & Jan. 2, 9am-6pm. Round Rock Brush Recycling Center, 310 Deepwood Dr., Round Rock, 512/218-5540.

SUNSET VALLEY FARMERS MARKET Saturdays, 9am-1pm. Toney Burger Center, 3200 Jones Rd., 280-1976. Free. www.sunsetvalleyfarmersmarket.org.

BY KATE X MESSER

gayplace

Send gay bits to
[gayplace@
austinchronicle.com](mailto:gayplace@austinchronicle.com).
Visit
[austinchronicle.com/
gayplaceblog](http://austinchronicle.com/gayplaceblog).

DRUNK SQUIFFY BLITZED AND BLOTTO Oh, dear darling queer quaffers: The holidays hold much merriment in her bosom (stop the vom-vom, boys, you have bosoms too). The merriment flows in Champagne rivers, tequila streams, white wine oceans, and cocktail dreams. Please dear **Gay Place** readers, do not drown. And if you find yourself wet wet wet and too drenched to drive, please do not. Better yet, let's make a plan, right now. A pledge, even. Let's go ahead and plan that we are probably going to be boozed up, spliffed up, tootin', and/or carousing. Let's just go ahead and consider that our default. So what are

our variables? Well, how you get there never seems to be an issue. What to drink is pretty much in the bag. Who you hit on is up to you. But! How you get home. Home. Safe and sound. That's worthy of a plan. So put these numbers in your phone or tattoo them to your forearm, now: **Sober Ride**, 657-2999 (that's the free-within-reason one); **Yellow Cab**, 452-9999 (not free but cheaper than a trip to the great beyond); **Capital Metro's Go Line**, 474-1200 (if you are an early tippler); **Tipsy Taxi**, 848-4553 (or as we like to call them: Tispy Taski, the folks who, for a wee fee, will drive you home in your car). Happy New Year's, queers!



| L - R: NEW YEAR'S GUIDE (P.59) | UT BASKETBALL (SPORTS, P.57) | ROCKIN' CHRISTMAS PARTY (ARTS, P.58) | SHERLOCK HOLMES (FILM, P.62) | FLOSSTRADAMUS (MUSIC, P.70)

THE HOLIDAY 12 STEP (See Friday.)

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)

Dark Side of the Rainbow: The Wizard of Oz With Dark Side of the Moon @ Alamo Ritz, 10:45pm
Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle With All-You-Can-Eat Miniburgers @ Alamo Ritz, 8pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)

Jimmie Vaughan Antone's
The Booze Weasels Continental Club

SUNDAY 27

MEDITATION CLASSES Sundays, 9:30-11am. Chittamani Buddhist Center, 1918 Bissele, 916-4444. \$10. www.meditationinaustin.org.

FLYING THEATER MACHINE Parents and their 4- to 10-year-olds work together to see where this winter adventure will lead. Don't forget to bring your suggestions to keep the improv coming. Sundays, 2pm. *The Hideout Theatre*, 617 Congress, 971-3311. \$5. www.flyingtheatermachine.com.

EDGAR'S MIMOSA HAPPY HOUR Give Edgar a dolla. He'll make ya holla (at how cheap his mimosas are). Sundays, 4-9pm. *Sister's Edge II*, 113 San Jacinto, 457-8010.

PRISM: UT LGBT CATHOLICS Explore what it means to be Catholic and gay, or even gay-friendly. Nonjudgmental, safe, and accepting: 100% open-hearted fellowship. 6pm. *University Catholic Center*, 2010 University Ave., 476-7351. prism@longhorncatholic.org, www.utcatholic.org.

RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE Those of you who are not Pay-as-You-Throw customers can still recycle your Christmas trees: Just drop them off at Zilker Park, 2100 Barton Springs Rd. (follow the signs to the polo fields); Sun., Dec. 27; Sat.-Sun., Jan. 2-3; and Sat., Jan. 9, 10am-4pm. All trees will be ground into mulch, which will be given away free in the new year. See www.cityofaustin.org/parks/christmastree.htm for details.

78704 ARTISAN MARKET (See Saturday.)

THE HOLIDAY 12 STEP (See Friday.)

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)

The Hangover @ Alamo Ritz, 10:50pm
The Holy Mountain @ Alamo Ritz, 7:50pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)

Daniel Francis Doyle, Air Traffic Controllers Beerland
The Bells of Joy *Theadgill's World HQ*
Hayes Carll Antone's

MONDAY 28

HOLIDAY HERB CAMP These three-day camps teach your 3- to 9-year-old about medicinal, poisonous, and tasty plants and herbs. Holiday crafts ensure that the kids stay in the spirit of the season. Mon.-Wed., Dec. 28-30. *Ronda's Montessori Garden*, 4300 Mount Vernon, 707-8635. \$90. www.rondasgarden.net.

KWANZAA CELEBRATION African native Elizabeth Kahura spreads the spirit of family values through storytelling, music, and art. 3pm. *North Village Library*, 2505 Steck, 974-9960. Free. www.cityofaustin.org/library.

LONE STAR LAMBDA GLBT square dancing in Austin? Heck yeah and yeeee-haw! Nothing square about this group. Every week. Get in on the ground floor, do-si-do. 7pm. *Gethsemane Lutheran Church*, 200 W. Anderson, 418-1629. info@lonestarlambdas.org, www.lonestarlambdas.org.

THEATRE ACTION PROJECT FIRST NIGHT VOLUNTEERS Help this community-building theatre group get prepared for First Night. Bring the whole family to help construct, assemble, paint, and create. See our New Year's Guide, p.59, for more volunteer opportunities on New Year's Eve. Mon.-Wed., Dec. 28-30, 9am-5pm. *Theatre Action Project*, 701 Tillery Ste. A-14, 442-8773. www.theatreactionproject.org.

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)

Christmas on Mars @ Alamo Ritz, 10:15pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)

Woody Allen & His New Orleans Jazz Band
Paramount Theatre
Hayes Carll Antone's

TUESDAY 29

KWANZAA CELEBRATION African native Elizabeth Kahura spreads the spirit of family values through storytelling, music, and art. 3pm. *Carver Library*, 1161 Angelina, 974-1010. Free. www.cityofaustin.org/library.

KOOP = QUEER Tweak your knobs (or Heath and Stephen's): 91.7FM. It's *OutCast*, for and about the Central Texas LGBT population. You might even hear a Gay Placer on the air now and again ... or every week. Tuesdays, 6-7pm. *KOOP*, 91.7FM. www.koop.org, www.outcastaustin.com.

KARAOKE WITH MARGARET North Austin's fave neighborhood gay bar may not offer cash to winners, but someone might offer you \$\$ to stop singing. Tuesdays, 9pm. *'Bout Time*, 9601 N. I-35, 832-5339. www.bouttimeaustin.com.

TUESDAYS TOGETHER This month's last-Tuesday-of-every-month event for Human Rights Campaign will feature a call up for table captains for the big spring gala. 6pm. *Hyatt Regency Austin*, 208 Barton Springs Rd., 289-2198. info@hrcaustin.org, www.hrc.org/austin.

THEATRE ACTION PROJECT FIRST NIGHT VOLUNTEERS (See Monday.)

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)

The Holy Mountain @ Alamo Ritz, 7:45pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)

Night Juice Red 7

WEDNESDAY 30

DRIVE THAT CHAIN Hump it with James & the Douchebags and DJ Mos Jeff. 10pm. *Chain Drive*, 504 Willow, 480-9017. Free. www.myspace.com/1chaindrive.

DRAG BINGO Saffire T. Stone presents all the plumage and pageantry of Chicken Shit Bingo, but without the, you know. Every other Wednesday. Jo's Coffee, 1300 S. Congress, 444-3800.

THEATRE ACTION PROJECT FIRST NIGHT VOLUNTEERS (See Monday.)

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)

The Hangover @ Alamo Ritz, 9:15pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)

Skullcaster, Owlbeemoth, How I Quit Crack
Discovery Village
Duke Ellington Orchestra *Palmer Events Center*
Total Abuse *Club 1808*

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

The *Austin Chronicle* is published every Thursday. Info is due the Monday of the week prior to the issue date. **The deadline for the Jan. 8 issue is Monday, Dec. 28.** Include name of event, date, time, location, price, phone number(s), a description, and any available photos or artwork. Include SASE for return of materials.

Send submissions to the attention of the appropriate writer (see roster below). Mail to the *Chronicle*, PO Box 49066, Austin, TX, 78765; fax, 458-6910; or e-mail:

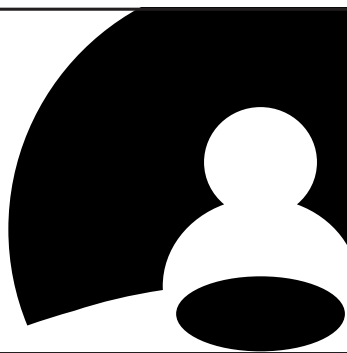
Kate X Messer (Gay Place): gayplace@austinchronicle.com.

Mark Fagan (Sports): gameplans@austinchronicle.com.

James Renovitch (everything else): calendar@austinchronicle.com.

For FAQs and an online submission form, go to austinchronicle.com/commform.

Questions? Contact Wayne Alan Brenner, Listings editor, 454-5766 or brenner@austinchronicle.com.



HELP THE HOMEBOUND TODAY!

The number of homebound disabled and elderly individuals in our community is increasing, and your neighbors need your help!

Meals on Wheels and More is seeking volunteers to fill several open routes in North and East Austin.

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www.mealsonwheelsandmore.org



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THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY

SWING IN THE NEW YEAR

TICKET GIVEAWAY

AUSTIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Register to win 4 tickets to the Thursday, Dec. 31 performance of the Duke Ellington Orchestra, featuring Freda Payne, at the Palmer Events Center.

To WIN TICKETS to the NEW YEAR'S EVE performance, log on to austinchronicle.com/contests.

BY GERALD E. MCLEOD *daytrips*

The Central Texas Wing of the Commemorative Air Force fills the giant wooden hangar at the San Marcos Municipal Airport with vintage flying machines and memories. The first you can touch; the second touches you.

Founded in 1974, the San Marcos unit of the flying museum organization has grown to include rare vintage airplanes and a military museum. Because this is also a maintenance shop, you can often see an aircraft stripped down to its working parts.

"When we first moved [into this hangar], it was a real mess," says Mike Colaluca, one of the many volunteers who work at the museum. Built in the early 1940s, the airplane garage the size of a football field was once part of the San Marcos Army Air Field, where navigators trained during World War II.

The facility was reactivated in the 1950s and renamed Gary Air Force Base in honor of Arthur Edward Gary, the first soldier from Hays County killed in World War II. During the Korean War, it was the largest training base for helicopter pilots and maintenance technicians. When the military left in 1963, the base became the San Marcos Municipal Airport and the Gary Job Corps Center, a technical school.

Colaluca arrived in Central Texas with the helicopter maintenance crews. He married a local girl 50 years ago and stayed after his enlistment ended. He is responsible for many of the displays documenting the history of the base.

The museum is an encyclopedia of World War II fighting paraphernalia, from bullets to model airplanes. The Col. Hank Potter Room is a memorial to Lt. Col. James Doolittle's raid on the Japanese mainland four months after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Potter was Doolittle's navigator and a Pflugerville resident until his death in 2002.

A flying memorial to Doolittle's Raiders sits out in the hangar. The CAF's B-25J Mitchell is similar to the planes used on Doolittle's legendary bombing run. Of the estimated 11,000 B-25s built, only 35 survive. Christened the "Yellow Rose," the plane is one of only 27 in flying condition.

Also in the museum's inventory is a very rare Bell P-39 Airacobra. By the end of the war, Bell had built 9,558 P-39s with nearly half going to the Soviet Union to use as anti-tank weapons.

In all, there are at least 13 vintage flying machines attached to the Centex Wing, including two replicas of Japanese torpedo bombers and a Japanese Zero built for the movie *Tora! Tora! Tora!*

Originally called the Confederate Air Force, the organization changed its name in 2002. The Commemorative Air Force has approximately two dozen units in Texas and squadrons in almost every state.

The Centex Wing of the CAF is northeast of San Marcos off TX 21. The public is welcome on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, from 9am to 4pm. For information, call 512/396-1943 or go to www.centexwing.com.

964th in a series. Day Trips, Vol. 2, a book of "Day Trips" 101-200, is available for \$8.95, plus \$3.05 for shipping, handling, and tax. Mail to: Day Trips, PO Box 33284, South Austin, TX 78704.



GERALD E. MCLEOD

outoftown

OLD COUPLAND INN AND DANCE HALL features Kyle Park in a hall that traces its history back to 1887. Come early to this all-ages show and eat your fill at the family-style restaurant next door. *Thu., Dec. 31. Old Coupland Inn and Dance Hall, Coupland between Taylor and Elgin, 512/856-2226. \$15, advance. www.couplanddancehall.com.*

JOHN T. FLOORE'S COUNTRY STORE The dance hall that Willie Nelson made famous and where Robert Earl Keen still plays features Two Tons of Steel and Ticket. Come early for supper at the Honky Tonk Cafe. *Thu., Dec. 31. John T. Floore's Country Store, Helotes, north of San Antonio, 210/695-8827. \$25. www.liveatfloores.com.*

SENGELMANN HALL invites you to wear your 2010 gallow hat while you dance to local legends the Telstars. Make a night of it with three levels of Champagne dinners available. *Thu., Dec. 31. Sengelmann Hall, Schulenburg, 979/743-2300. \$30. www.sengelmannahall.com.*

SCHROEDER DANCE HALL Texas' second oldest dance hall hosts the Moods. Self-contained RVs welcome. *Thu., Dec. 31. Schroeder Dance Hall, north of*

Goliad, 361/573-7002. \$20, all ages. www.schroederdancehall.com.

RILEY'S TAVERN features Andrea Marie & the Magnolia Band. Next to this saloon that was home to the first beer license in Texas after Prohibition, there's an overnight cottage for rent. *Thu., Dec. 31. Riley's Tavern, Hunter south of San Marcos, 512/392-3132. www.rileystavern.com.*

TWIN SISTERS HALL The Buckshot Country Band plays at this historic old German dance hall. *Thu., Dec. 31. Twin Sisters Hall, Twin Sisters south of Blanco, 830/833-4808. www.anhalhall.com/twinsisters.html.*

GRUENE HALL Texas' oldest dance hall ends the year with Dilbert McClintock and Clay McClintock. *Thu., Dec. 31. Gruene Hall, Gruene, 830/606-1601. \$75. www.gruenehall.com.*

LUCKENBACH DANCE HALL hosts perennial favorites Mike Blakely y los Whiskey Traders, featuring a balloon drop, Champagne toast, and breakfast tacos. Stay at one of the many bed and breakfast inns in the area. *Thu., Dec. 31. Luckenbach Dance Hall, Luckenbach, 830/997-3224. \$27. www.luckenbachtexas.com.*

THURSDAY 31

'BOUT TIME NEW YEAR'S Champagne toast at midnight with Austin's happiest family neighborhood bar. 9pm. *'Bout Time, 9601 N. I-35, 832-5339.*

RAIN ON 4TH NEW YEAR'S Champagne and ticket package presales available right now. 9pm. *Rain on 4th, 217 W. Fourth, 494-1150.*

SISTER'S EDGE NEW YEAR'S Champagne and entertainment packages: And not just on the pretty boys. 9pm. *Sister's Edge II, 113 San Jacinto, 457-8010.*

GOD-DES & SHE ROCK NYE IN SAN ANTONIO Newly Austinited G&S shall give SA the New Year flavor. But we won't hold that against them. 9:30pm. *Bar Eleven, 126 W. Rector #136, San Antonio, 210/524-1016. www.god-desandshe.com.*



NEW YEAR'S EVE LISTINGS For all you last-minute New Year's party-people, we've compiled a list of New Year's events. Check out our guide on p.57.

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)
New Year's Eve Bash: The Apartment @ Alamo Ritz, 7pm
The Black Candle @ Carver Library, 10am, 2pm

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)
Duke Ellington Orchestra Palmer Events Center
New Year's Eve! Everywhere

now ...

2010 FAERIES DATE CALENDAR Hey you alternative/progressive gay men who understand the goodness of all things fae, check out the new Radical Spaces calendar for sale. www.osoconscious.com.tribes.tribe.net/texasfaeries.

ACCESS GALLERY HOLIDAY SHOW More than 20 artists show off their sculptures, paintings, magnets, ornaments, and all sorts of whateveyou. The artists receive 80% of the sales. *Through Jan. 9. Access Gallery, 3701 Guadalupe #103, 323-6626. Free. www.vsatx.org.*

BACKUP DRIVERS NEEDED Usually volunteers can be trusted for their stalwart devotion to a cause, but come the holidays and suddenly they want to spend time with their families. Not cool. The good folks at Meals on Wheels and More are looking for a few good drivers to ensure that food gets to those who need it. *Through Dec. 31. 476-6325. www.mealsonwheelsandmore.org.*

BROWN SANTA needs volunteers to help receive, prepare, and deliver toys and food to Travis County families this holiday season. If you'd like to participate, call 24-SANTA. Brown Santa is also accepting donations of nonperishable food items, books, unwrapped toys (new or gently used), and cash, which you may drop off at the warehouse or mail to: *Brown Santa, PO Box 207, Austin, TX 78767-0207. (You may also donate online at www.brownsanta.org.) Brown Santa Warehouse, 15400 Long Vista #101.*

COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING MARKET STUDY The City of Austin's Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office is trying to set priorities and shape Austin's housing market into an equitable landscape. Go online to see their findings to date and perhaps take a survey to help assist them in their goals. www.cityofaustin.org/housing/apr08chms.htm.

FAMILYLAB provides a hands-on, experimental art experience for kids and parents. You can play and make your own take-home art projects. *During regular museum hours. AMOA, 823 Congress, 495-9224. \$5 (free, children under 12). www.amoa.org.*

FIRST NIGHT VOLUNTEERS & DONATIONS NEEDED The New Year's large-scale art spectacle that is First Night doesn't just happen. There is a cavalcade of volunteers that keeps things looking effortless and beautiful. Volunteer shifts are three hours long, which leaves you time to enjoy a large

chunk of the festivities. Go to www.firstnightaustin.org/volunteer for more info and an online volunteer sign-up form. If your time is too precious, then consider donating \$5 to the First Night, which has had a tumultuous year and could use all the help it can get to make the fifth year bigger and better. volunteer@firstnightaustin.org.

INTERNATIONAL POETRY FESTIVAL is calling for submissions for its youth poetry anthology from kids in grades K-12. Deadline: Feb. 1, 2010. aipfy@sbcglobal.net.

KIDSACTING SPRING REGISTRATION Young theatre buffs (ages 3 to 18) should sign up now for the spring semester. Classes include acting, theatrical design, musical theatre, and more. 836-5437. www.kidsactingstudio.com.

MCCOY ANIMATED CHRISTMAS DISPLAY has 40,000 lights synchronized to 10 holiday classics that you can listen to on your radio while you watch the lights fantastic. Donations go to the Make-a-Wish Foundation. *Through Dec. 31, 5:30-10:30pm. 8304 Roan. Donations appreciated. www.mccoyleftlights.com.*

MISS BLACK CENTRAL TEXAS PAGEANT Apply now for the scholarship pageant, Feb. 28. Kids and adults ages 4-27. Application and entry fees are due before Jan. 1. 350-4773. www.missblackcentraltexas.com.

PREORDER AMMONITE Support local poetry and order Abe Louise Young's upcoming chapbook now. E-mail for ordering info. Release: *Fri., Jan. 15. \$14 for one, \$25 for two, \$33 for three, etc. abelouiseyoung@gmail.com, www.abelouiseyoung.com.*

RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE! Those of you who are Pay-as-You-Throw customers may leave your Christmas trees (minus the stand and ornaments) curbside on your yard-trimming pickup day. Those of you who are *not* Pay-as-You-Throw customers may still recycle your trees: Just drop them off at Zilker Park, 2100 Barton Springs Rd. (follow the signs to the polo fields); *Sun., Dec. 27; Sat.-Sun., Jan. 2-3; and Sat., Jan. 9 10am-4pm*. All trees will be ground into mulch, which will be given away free in the new year. See www.cityofaustin.org/parks/christmastree.htm for details.

SANTA'S RANCH Santa's tired of waiting for global warming to catch up to the North Pole. He's spending most of his time among the 1.5 million lights of Santa's Ranch. Get in the car, and join in the festivities. *Through Jan. 2, 6-10pm. 9561 N. I-35, New Braunfels (two miles south of Tanger Outlet Mall), 830/743-1293. \$20/car. www.santasranch.net.*

UPCOMING FOODIES Foodies: la lez e-mail-based social network shall, for the holidays, present a New Year's Eve (with no Adam!). Wanna know more? E-mail Kitty to get on the list. beatsagogo@aol.com, www.foodiesaustin.com.

WIMBERLEY TRAIL OF LIGHTS has seven acres of lights designed by more than 100 local businesses. Roast a weenie or a marshmallow before jumping on the Jingle Express with the kids. Live entertainment and special events occur throughout the holiday season. *Open daily (weather permitting), 6-9pm. The EmilyAnn Theatre, 1101 FM 2325, Wimberley, 512/847-6969. Free (donations appreciated). www.emilyann.org.*

& later

CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY Learn about the many functions and operating procedures of the Austin Police Department. The next session starts March 2. For more information or an application, visit the APD website, www.cityofaustin.org/police. 974-5941. dennis.farris@ci.austin.tx.us.

EMPEROR JAKE'S UNDERGROUND BIRTHDAY SHOW You don't have to dig to find it: He'll be the one surrounded by all the hot high heels and even higher hair. Party at 8:30pm and United Court Show at 9:30pm. *Sat., Jan. 2, 8:30pm. Kiss & Fly, 404 Colorado, 476-7799. www.unitedcourtofaustrin.org.*

HER HRC Grrllz will be BoiZ, Holly Lorka, and Allie Rolison entertain this Austin installment of a 35-city concurrent party. Get your tickets now. *Sun., Jan. 17, 8pm. El Sol y la Luna, 600 E. Sixth, 444-7770.*

sports

BY MARK FAGAN

listings

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEN'S BASKETBALL

Following back-to-back games against the two teams who played for the last national championship, UT welcomes the **Gardner-Webb Runnin' Bulldogs** to the Drum. We go to press before knowing the outcome of Tuesday night's Michigan State game, but the Horns impressed on national TV against No. 10 North Carolina in the first-ever basketball game in Cowboys Stadium, defeating the Tar Heels handily 103-90 in front of a crowd of 38,052. Senior **Dexter Pittman** is slim and trim (for him) and has become a dominant force in the paint for the Horns and should be a lottery pick in the next NBA draft. Fellow senior **Damion James** leads the squad in scoring (26.7), minutes (267), and rebounds (10.6) and looks to pilot the deepest UT squad in years (if not ever) far into the NCAA tourney this coming March. Along with their senior standouts, freshmen guards **Avery Bradley** and **J'Covan Brown** are two stars in the making who have the Horns faithful excited for the bright future at hand. Vs. Gardner-Webb: *Tue., Dec. 29, 5pm. Erwin Center, 1701 Red River. \$7-45. www.texasports.com.*



Avery Bradley

COURTESY OF MATI HEMPEL AND UT

THE HOME TEAMS

★ **TEXAS STARS** welcome the struggling Syracuse Crush (.387 win percentage) to town for the last home game of the calendar year. *Tue., Dec. 29, 7:30pm. Cedar Park Center, 2100 Avenue of the Stars, Cedar Park, 512/GO-STARS. \$9-50. www.texasstarshockey.com.*

EXPRESS HOLIDAY CAMP will be run by former UT (and ex-MLBer) Kirk Dressendorfer, with assistance from Lexington Legends pitching coach Travis Driskill and current Astros and Express infielder Matt Kata. Kids will get a chance to learn from the pros over three days and get a leg up on their Little League chums. *Mon.-Wed., Dec. 28-30, 9am-noon (ages 6-11) and 1-4pm (ages 12 and up). Dell Diamond, 3400 E. Palm Valley Blvd., Round Rock. \$150. www.roundrockexpress.com.*

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY Women's Basketball Vs. Concordia University-Chicago: *Tue., Dec. 29, 5:30pm.* Vs. William Smith College: *Wed., Dec. 30, 5:30pm.* *Concordia Fieldhouse, 11400 Concordia University Dr., 313-4503. \$3-5. athletics.concordia.edu.*

SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY Women's Basketball Southwestern University Invitational: Vs. Central College: *Mon., Dec. 28, 5pm.* To be determined: *Tue., Dec. 29, 5pm.* *Corbin J. Robertson Center, Georgetown. www.southwesternpirates.com.*

TEXAS STATE Men's Basketball Vs. Texas Lutheran: *Tue., Dec. 29, 7pm.* *Strahan Coliseum, San Marcos. www.txstateobcats.com.*

ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY Men's Basketball St. Ed's Holiday Classic: Central Oklahoma vs. Missouri S&T: *Tue., Dec. 29, noon.* St. Edward's vs. SE Oklahoma State: *Tue., Dec. 29, 2:30pm.* SE Oklahoma State vs. Missouri S&T: *Wed., Dec. 30, noon.* St. Edward's vs. Central Oklahoma: *Wed., Dec. 30, 8pm.* **Women's Basketball** Hilltoppers New Year's Classic: Vs. Texas Woman's: *Wed., Dec. 30, 2:30pm.* Vs. Texas A&M-Kingsville: *Thu., Dec. 31, 2:30pm. www.stedwards.edu/athletics.*

RECREATION & FITNESS

HILL COUNTRY OUTDOORS Learn about Austin's most active outdoors and social club. More than 40 events each month: hiking, camping, sports leagues, socials, and more. *Mon., Dec. 28, 6:30pm. Opal Divine's at Penn Field, 3601 S. Congress. Free. www.hillcountryoutdoors.com.*

soccer watch

BY NICK BARBARO

Barcelona won the **Club World Cup** Saturday, beating Estudiantes, 2-1, on an overtime goal by World Player of the Year **Lionel Messi**. It's Barcelona's sixth major trophy of 2009; they've won Spain, Europe, the World, and all the available cups therein. If this is not the best team ever, at least this has been the best year any team has ever had.

A couple of much anticipated homecomings highlight the **European Champions League** round of 16 draw, held last Friday: Manager **Jose Mourinho** will bring Inter Milan to Chelsea, where he had such great success earlier this decade, while **David Beckham** will likewise be returning to the scene of his greatest glory when his AC Milan visit Manchester United. The full draw for the ECL, and the **Europa League** as well, is online with this story.

Otherwise, it's a quiet couple of weeks, with pretty much everyone but the British leagues taking a holiday/winter break of at least a couple of weeks. Coming next week: the **Top Soccer Stories of 2009**; after that, see you in MMX (2KX?).

RUNS, WALKS, & RIDES

FIRST NIGHT AUSTIN NEW YEAR'S EVE RUN Join the RunTex crew as they burn some calories before the First Night Austin festivities. *Thu., Dec. 31, 10pm. South First Street Bridge. www.active.com/running/austin-tx/first-night-austin-2009.*

Got a sporting event you'd like to see listed in *The Austin Chronicle*? Submit your sporty happening online at austinchronicle.com/commform.

Happy New Year!

Blue Collar Comedy's Next Generation!

Juston McKinney



Both New Year's packages include a pass for two to return in 2010, the late show also includes party favors, & a champagne toast at midnight.

Special Guest
Bryson Turner

467-2333 capcitycomedy.com

The New Charlie Hodge

Rock n' Roll Half-Time Show



"Listen Dammit!"
Weekdays 10 am - 2pm

93.7 KLBJ
The Rock of Austin

Matt Sadler

Charlie Hodge

arts listings

Rockin' Christmas Party

Zach Theatre Kleberg Stage, 1421 W. Riverside,
476-0541, www.zachtheatre.org
Through Dec. 27



Who doesn't like getting a new outfit for the holidays? A fresh addition to the wardrobe can get you more in the spirit of the season, get you feeling more spruced up and festive than usual

(especially if you've had to don the same gay apparel for quite a few yules now). So it is with the 2009 model of *Rockin' Christmas Party*, Zach Theatre's Santa-season musical tradition. Design wizard Michael Raiford has decked the Kleberg Stage with a new set that seems to have given the holiday perennial a little lift, making what's always been a holly-jolly time at the theatre more merry yet. Gigantic cutout snowflakes jut from the ice-blue proscenium, and a booklike set-piece opens to reveal cutouts that spring into the shape of a Christmas tree. For the finale, a monumental crystal ball appears, in which flakes flurry around Austin landmarks. These outsized evocations of pop-up books and snow globes pull us back to those early days when we found magic in such objects, and that helps reboot our sense of wonder – a quality that's useful for a show that revolves, however whimsically, around its performers being given the chance by St. Nick to live out their holiday fantasies.

This isn't the first time that *Rockin'* has updated its look. Dave Steakley, the show's creator and director/choreographer for lo these 17 years, knows how this kind of long-running revue can benefit from the occasional tweak, so he's regularly freshened the mix with new designs, new songs, new talent. In fact, stepping into this winter wonderland for the first time here are Tiffany Mann, seen at Zach last year in *Caroline, or Change*, and Bernard Davis, fresh from *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. As the party's lone male this year, Davis shoulders a load that's been

carried by two men in the past. His Solomon Burke/Wilson Pickett vibe may not make him the most natural fit for the Johnny Mathis-style schmaltz in the segment on TV holiday specials, but it sets "Sock It to Me, Baby" and "With a Little Help From My Friends" blazing like so many Yule logs. Mann manages a similar trick with her hilariously blistering take on Jazmine Sullivan's "Bust Your Windows," but she also delivers one of the show's most angelic performances in a pairing of the traditional hymn "Go Tell It on the Mountain" with Richard Smallwood's contemporary gospel number "I'll Go." (Add to these Gretchen Wilson's "Redneck Woman," sung with country gusto by Laura Benedict, and some of *Rockin'*'s most memorable numbers now date from the last five years – quite a turn for a show that was born out of our nostalgic craving for Top 40 hits of the Sixties.)

None of this is to say that what isn't new isn't rockin'. The returning artists are not only as polished as ever but appear energized by the changes. Felicia Dinwiddie shakes an even meaner tail feather in "Tutti Frutti," Rebecca Schooler milks even more LA-U-G-H-S out of "D-I-V-O-R-C-E," and Judy Arnold, bless her, knocks out a version of "That's Life" so fierce it would make the Chairman of the Board resign his position. If these performers feel the years of doing this, they don't show it. They all look as if they might be hosting this party for the first time. Like a fresh dusting of snow in the sunlight, they sparkle and fill your heart with joy.

– Robert Faires

theatre

OPENING

12 STEPS TO A MORE DYSFUNCTIONAL CHRISTMAS That talented rapsallion Rob Nash returns with his popular and many-charactered one-man show, illuminating the true, darkly twisted, hilarious meaning of Christmas in one family not terribly unlike your own. (Unless y'all were, like, *normal* or something.) (Doubtful, right?) Recommended. *Thu.-Sun., Dec. 25-Jan. 2, 8pm. The Vortex, 2307 Manor Rd., 478-5282. \$10-30. www.vortexrep.org.*

A TEXAS CHRISTMAS CAROL Nothing particularly Dickensian going on here, mind: This is a star-studded, locally grown variety show sure to get your toes a-tapping even as your heart's cockles are being warmed with holiday goodness. Featuring performances by PBS's **Biscuit Brothers**, **Tish Hinojosa**, **Austin Lyric Opera**, **Austin Classical Guitar Society**, **Ballet Austin**, **Tapestry Dance Company**, the **Zach Theatre Showstoppers**, **St. Martin's Handbell Choir**, and surprise guests. *Dec. 29-Jan. 3. Tue.-Wed., 7:30pm; Fri.-Sat., 2 & 7:30pm; Sun., 1 & 6pm. N.B.: No show on New Year's Eve. Long Center for the Performing Arts, 701 W. Riverside, 457-5100. \$20-65 (half-price, ages 11 and younger). www.thelongcenter.org.*

CLOSING

ANNIE Harold Gray's once-popular comic strip (about the adventures of a Depression-era orphan who, with help from her dog Sandy and a cast of wild characters, gets by on her gumption and pluck) is the origin of this still-popular musical, here staged by an exuberant cast up in Georgetown. *Through Dec. 30. Fri.-Sat., 7:30pm; Sun., 2pm; Mon.-Wed., 7:30pm. Palace Theater, 810 S. Austin Rd., Georgetown, 512/869-7469. \$22 (\$20, seniors; \$12, students, military; \$8, ages 15 and younger). www.georgetownpalace.com.*

ROCKIN' CHRISTMAS PARTY Zach's 16th annual Motown-flavored revue of holiday tunes and jingle-bell terpsichore features the usual hot lineup of golden-throated divas strutting their yuletide stuff amid a brand-new set design. Directed by Dave Steakley; recommended to toss a little tinsel onto your soul's barest tree. See review, left. *Through Dec. 27. Wed.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 2pm. Zach Theatre, 1510 Toomey, 476-0541. \$20-45. www.zachscott.com.*

ONGOING

HAMLET The Austin Drama Club presents its version of the Shakespearean chestnut, directed by the indefatigable Japhy Fernandes. E-mail for location information. *Through Jan. 2. Thu.-Sat., 8pm. Donations accepted. japhyfernandes@live.com.*

THE SANTALAND DIARIES This music-spiced staging of David Sedaris' popular tale of a reluctant Macy's Christmas Elf is directed by Dave Steakley and features an effervescent **Espie Randolph** as the child-besieged Crumpet. Here's a thoroughly enjoyable performance that goes beyond its source material and will make you believe in the joy of holiday cynicism all over again. *Through Jan. 10. Wed.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 2pm. Zach Theatre, 1510 Toomey, 476-0541. \$20-45. www.zachscott.com.*

AUDITIONS

HOW THE OTHER HALF LOVES City Theatre is seeking actors for its March-April production of this Alan Ayckbourn comedy about three married couples trying to hide their adulterous love affairs. Needed: men and women, ages 25-45. Call for appointment. *Sat., Jan. 2, 10am-noon. City Theatre, 3823-D Airport, 524-2870. www.citytheatreAustin.org.*

THEATRE CALL BOARD

THE ACTOR'S GYM Your acting coach, Amparo Garcia-Crow, will help you whip yourself into fine thespian shape with this four-session workshop (on the first Sunday of each month for four months). Master the dreaded audition; practice being in the zone; become a lean, mean, acting machine. *Beginning: Sun., Jan. 3, 2-5pm. Alleywood Studios, 1902 S. Congress, 441-6085. \$100. www.amparogarciacrow.com.*

comedy

IN THE CLUBS

CAP CITY COMEDY 8120 Research #100, 467-2333. Daily, 7pm-1am. www.capcitycomedy.com.

Andy Ritchie Christmas has come and gone, now this acclaimed comedian (a Montreal Comedy Festival veteran, no less) takes the Cap City stage to places you'll laugh your asses off at on Boxing Day night. Recommended. *Hell, Benjamin Reed* recommends it. *Sat., Dec. 26, 8pm.*

Justin McKinney McKinney falls (local reference, get it?) (Falls, see ... McKinney Falls?) (No?) (Okay, fuck it.) into that category of touring professional comics who 1) are based in L.A. and 2) have appeared numerous times in various sectors of Comedy Central. But you can't pigeonhole him, see? Because this man *hates* pigeons, and if you try to put him in a hole where a pigeon's been, whoa, *watch out, pal*, he'll dislocate your occipital ridge with a cinder block. No pigeons at Cap City, though, so we reckon it'll be safe and enjoyable to catch McKinney doing his stand-up there. And **Bryson Turner** opens. *Dec. 29-Jan. 2. Tue.-Wed., 8pm; Thu.-Sat., 8 & 10:30pm.*

Cap City Open Mic Hey, it could be you up there slaying your friends and neighbors as they've slain you. *Sundays, 8pm. Free with college ID.*

COLDTOWNE THEATER 4803-B Airport, 524-2807. www.coldtownetheater.com.

The New Year's Eve Show isn't even gonna be at ColdTowne Theater, because how could that popular but smallish venue contain crowds for a show this fierce? See our **But Wait – There's More** section for the deets. *Thu., Dec. 31, 7pm.*

ESTHER'S POOL 525 E. Sixth, 320-0553. www.estersfollies.com.

Esther's Follies: Folly Jolly Christmas The most popular troupe in town brings you the magic of **Ray Anderson**, **Sarah Palin's Family Christmas Special**, and **Michelle Obama Sings the First Lady Blues**. George Bush is visited by the ghosts of presidents past, present, and future in *A Christmas Carol in Crawford*, and there's *The Year in Review: Swine Flu, Tea Parties, Barack's Peace Prize, and White House Beer Summits*. **Sand Scheff** opens the show with his musical comedy and cowboy croonin'. *Reservations highly recommended. Sat., 8 & 10pm. Extra show: Sun., Dec. 27, 8pm. \$20 (discounts available Thursdays & Fridays for seniors, students, military). Additional \$5 for special reserved seats.*

THE HIDEOUT THEATRE 617 Congress, 443-3688. www.hideouttheatre.com.

Saturday: The Dickens, you say? Indeed, here's **The Final Weekend of Charles Dickens Unleashed!** It's "Improvvised Tales of Bleak Victorian England," from the wild talents of Parallelogramophonograph and their friends. What a smashing idea, old bean! Family-friendly show you can bring the kiddos to: 6pm. Regular adult show resplendent with post-Christmas Pickwickian debauchery: 8pm. \$10. **Maestro** is a fierce, multipartite battle for supremacy among improvisers, scored by you, the audience. Highly recommended, because it brings out the wackiest. *10pm. \$10.*

Sunday: The former Well Hung Jury-men and current L.A.-based duo of Jeff Amos and Jordan T. Maxwell – aka **7-10 Split** – have ditched California for the holidays and now throw themselves passionately onto the Hideout stage for your enjoyment. *Passionately*, we say, yes. Oh god, shield your children's eyes! *Sun., Dec. 27, 7pm. \$10.*

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

The Austin Chronicle is published every Thursday. Info is due the Monday of the week prior to the issue date. **The deadline for the Jan. 8 issue is Monday, Dec. 28.** Include name of event, date, time, location, price, phone number(s), a description, and any available photos or artwork. Include SASE for return of materials.

Send submissions to the attention of the appropriate writer (see roster below). Mail to the *Chronicle*, PO Box 49066, Austin, TX 78765; fax, 458-6910; or e-mail: Wayne Alan Brenner, theatre, comedy, visual arts. brenner@austinchronicle.com.

Robi Polgar, performance art, dance, classical. dance-classical@austinchronicle.com.

Ric Williams, litera. litera@austinchronicle.com.

Questions? Contact Wayne Alan Brenner, Listings editor. brenner@austinchronicle.com.

Don't spend another New Year's at home. You have options. In fact, we have your options listed below. If you're willing to travel for a killer party, see our Out of Town listings, p.56. Many of these events require that you RSVP. Last-minute scrambles are not recommended.

NEW Year's GUIDE

Peruse our expanded and unadulterated listings online at AUSTINCHRONICLE.COM/NEWYEARS.

FOOD

END OF LESBIAN 'DECADE'NCE: FOODIES NEW YEAR In the words of Kitty, "Get to know every single lesbian from Austin, from the state of Texas, from the USA, and beyond." Plus, plenty o' party "favors." That's what she said. *Thu., Dec. 31, 8pm. House Wine, 408 Josephine, 322-5210. \$10. beatsagogo@aol.com.*

FOOD & FUNK AT THE HIGHBALL Come early for a five-course meal, cocktails, and even a funny hat before the doors are opened to the masses at 11pm, for dancing to the DJ'ed funk and disco of DJ Resinhol. No dress code, but the Alamo folks recommend you dress to impress. You want to have someone to kiss at midnight, don't you? *Thu., Dec. 31. The HighBall, 1120 S. Lamar, 383-8309. \$120 (meal and party), \$25 (party only). www.thehighball.com.*

MURDER MYSTERY DINNER Head to the Spaghetti Warehouse for one of two showings of *The Linguini Code* accompanied by dinner and drinks (\$139 per couple). At Cool River Cafe, you will be a part of a New Year's Eve Cruise Ship Crime with an afterparty and live band in addition to the usual food and drinks (\$199 per couple). *Thu., Dec. 31: Spaghetti Warehouse, 117 W. Fourth, 7 & 10pm; Cool River Cafe, 4001 W. Parmer, 6:30pm. 404-9123. www.capcitymystery.com.*

NIGHT AT THE OSCARS If you're willing to make the trek, Messina Hof Winery & Resort hosts a classy soiree with a gourmet meal, music, dancing, and casino games. Dress to impress or as your favorite film personality. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm-12:30am. Messina Hof Winery and Resort, 800/736-9463 x234. \$150 (\$285, couples). www.messinahof.com.*

PAELLA DROP Music, dancing, and New Year's paelas from Executive Chef Jason Donoho, with a portion of the evening's profits going to the Be an Artist Program. *Thu., Dec. 31, 10pm. FINO, 2905 San Gabriel, 474-2905. \$85. www.finoaustin.com.*

STUBB'S As if the tasty barbecue wasn't enough - tickets include a show from Black Joe Lewis & the Honey Bears, a Champagne toast, and a buffet of all things slathered, smoked, and seasoned. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm. Stubb's, 801 Red River, 480-8341. \$32. www.stubbsaustin.com.*

HOTELS

AUSTIN SOCIAL SCENE GALA Get your cocktail attire out and prepare for some elegant partying with a cash bar and live music keeping the social interactions lubricated. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres begin at 7pm for people who purchased a hotel-room package so they can pick a prime seat at the gala. Things ramp up at 8pm as the doors are thrown open to all ticket holders and the amps are switched on. Cover bands the Newsboyz and LC Rocks supply the tunes inside the ballroom and Vallejo headlines the hotel stage. *Thu., Dec. 31. DoubleTree Hotel, 6505 N. I-35, 331-7890. \$60, gala only; \$330, gala and room combo. www.austinsocialscene.com.*

BARTON CREEK RESORT Enjoy a meal overlooking the scenic Hill Country followed by live music from Third Language, Champagne, and a balloon drop at midnight. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm. Barton Creek Resort & Spa, 8212 Barton Club, 329-7923. \$140 (dinner and party). www.bartoncreek.com.*

DRISKILL GALA Strap on your slacks and silk tie for this annual gala featuring music from Groove Daddy and appetizers from chef Jonathan Gelman. Dance the night away while awaiting the Champagne toast and balloon drop. *Thu., Dec. 31. The Driskill Hotel, 604 Brazos, 474-5911. \$49. www.driskillhotel.com.*

FOUR SEASONS Enjoy a New Year's Eve meal at the Four Seasons' restaurant TRIO (\$95) or just hang in the Lobby Lounge (8pm-12mid, \$25), where house favorite Brett Cline works the keys while you party in anticipation of the balloon drop at midnight. The next day, nurse that hangover away with a delicious brunch (10am-2pm, \$55). *Thu.-Fri., Dec. 31-Jan. 1. Four Seasons Hotel, 98 San Jacinto, 478-4500. www.fourseasons.com/austin.*

HYATT LOST PINES The package for a family of four include tickets to the NYE party, fireworks, a barbecue buffet, overnight accommodations, and breakfast the next morning. Every age group will be entertained: Kids should head to the Riversong Lawn Jamboree for games, face painting, and other activities; teens can chillax at the Total Request Teen Hangout with pool tables, music, and more; and couples can two-step to live music in the LBJ Pavilion. *Thu., Dec. 31. Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort & Spa, 575 Hyatt Lost Pines Rd., Lost Pines, 512/308-1234. \$369 and up. www.visitlostpines.com.*

LAKEWAY RESORT & SPA Make your reservation for a three-course meal followed by live music and dancing at Josey's Bar and Grill. Take a break from the boogie and toast at midnight before starting 2010 back on the dance floor. *Thu. Dec. 31, 5-11pm. Lakeway Resort & Spa, 101 Lakeway Dr., Lakeway, 261-2323. \$35. www.dolce-lakeway-hotel.com.*

PARTY AT STEPHEN F. AUSTIN No kegs or plastic cups, because this ain't no frat party. Step it up this year with live music, hors d'oeuvres, dessert, and Champagne for the witching hour. Packages include a room for the night, two tickets to the party, and breakfast the next morning. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm. InterContinental Stephen F. Austin, 701 Congress, 457-8800. \$310 and up (\$50, without accommodations). www.austin.intercontinental.com.*

MUSIC

See Recommended, p.70, for more live music happenings this New Year's Eve.

AUSTIN UPTOWN DANCE Kristy Watson spins the tunes on this night of dance and music. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm-1am. 8868 Research #706. 459-5678. \$30. www.austintuptowndance.com.*

BLUES BALL This all ages event helps you start the new year with a case of the blues. Leeann Atherton and the Little Elmore Reed Blues Band perform while you divide your time between the cash bar, dance floor, and appetizer table. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm-2am. TX Federation of Women's Clubs, 2312 San Gabriel, 453-3889. \$30-40. www.bluesassociationofaustin.com/bluesball.*

DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA The Austin Symphony and Duke Ellington Orchestra, under the seasoned hand of maestro Peter Bay, play tunes from the Duke's inexhaustible songbook to get you in the celebratory mood. *Wed. & Thu., Dec. 30 & 31, 8pm. Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd., 476-6064. \$30, bleacher seating; \$45, table seating. www.austinsymphony.org.*

FAD0 offers two New Years for the price of one. Toast at 6pm for the Irish New Year and again at midnight with a Champagne reception. Enjoy your favorite Irish dishes along with drinks, party favors, and music from U2 cover band Mysterious Ways. *Thu., Dec. 31, 6pm. Fad0, 214 W. Fourth, 457-0172. \$15. www.fadoirishpub.com/austin.*

FIERCE & FABULOUS NYE Champagne packages available now: the Britney for \$500, the RuPaul for \$1,500, and the Madonna for \$2010. If the menu had been set by gayer men, there'd prolly be a Lady Gaga for \$10,120-10 and a \$3 Adam Lambert. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm. Kiss & Fly, 404 Colorado, 476-7799. www.kissandflyaustin.com.*

LIVE AT SEAHOLM There are so many electricity puns running through our head about a dance party in the old power plant that we can't choose one. Flosstradamus, Car Stereo (Wars), and SHIV bring the beats that keep you moving long past midnight. Get a great view of the fireworks or just linger by the bar for hors d'oeuvres and Champagne. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm-3am. Seaholm Power Plant, Cesar Chavez. \$79 and up. www.liveatseaholm.com.*

MASQUERADE BALL The Gourds provide the music, you provide the charitable party vibe. Proceeds benefit the YMCA Partner of Youth Campaign to provide financial assistance for deserving families. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm. The Independent at 501 Studios, 501 N. I-35, 891-9622. \$30. www.austinyymca.org.*

MONARCH EVENT CENTER Drinks, food from Mason's Catering, and the blues and soul sounds of Mel Waiters. *Thu., Dec. 31, 8pm. Monarch Event Center, 6406 N. I-35 #3100, 709-1151. \$25. www.monarcheventcenter.com.*

NYE DANCE WITH ALVIN CROW For those who are looking for a midnight whiskey toast instead of Champagne, this honky-tonk's got you covered. Dance lessons are offered before the show. After that, Alvin Crow supplies the scoot, you bring the boots. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm. Broken Spoke, 3201 S. Lamar, 442-6189. \$20. www.brokenspokeaustintx.com.*

OCH NEW YEARS Champagne and entertainment packages: And not just on the pretty boys. *Thu., Dec. 31. Oilcan Harry's, 211 W. Fourth, 320-8823.*

PARKSIDE NYE DJ'd tunes, hors d'oeuvres, photo booth, open bar, and a champagne toast. Sounds like a recipe for sleeping in on New Year's Day. *Thu., Dec. 31. Parkside, 301 E. Sixth, 474-9898. \$100. www.parkside-austin.com.*

RILEY'S TAVERN features Andrea Marie & the Magnolia Band. Next to this saloon that was home to the first beer license in Texas after Prohibition, there's an overnight cottage for rent. *Thu., Dec. 31. Riley's Tavern, Hunter south of San Marcos, 512/392-3132. www.rileystavern.com.*

RIVER BOAT CASINO PARTY may be a misnomer since you'll be on dry land the entire time, but Lamberts will have the house rocking with a Vegas Buffet, casino games, an open bar, and live music upstairs. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm-2am. Lamberts, 401 W. Second, 494-1500. \$135. www.lambertsaustin.com.*

THEATRE, ART, & COMEDY

CAP CITY COMEDY CLUB Justin McKinney falls (local reference, get it?) into that category of touring professional comics who are based in L.A. and have appeared numerous times in various sectors of Comedy Central. Appetizers and Champagne will be served at the late show. *Thu., Dec. 31, 8 & 10:30pm. Cap City Comedy, 8120 Research #100, 467-2333. \$20 (early), \$37 (late). www.capcitycomedy.com.*

COMEDY REVUE brings the funny with Rich Talarico, the skit "Eye for an iPhone" and musical humor by Le Sexy. Prepare to snort your champagne. *Thu., Dec. 31, 7pm. United States Art Authority, 2906 Fruth. \$15. www.coldtownetheater.com.*

ESTHER'S FOLLIES NEW YEAR'S Laugh in the new year with Austin's go-to troupe for all things timely, funny, and magical. *Thu., Dec. 31, 8 & 10:30pm. Esther's Pool, 525 E. Sixth, 350-0553. \$45-55.*

FIRST NIGHT Expect a roaring smorgasbord of art, performance, random acts of imagination littering the Downtown landscape, and wide eyes aplenty. For those with some spending cash, there's a party at the Long Center (\$20) with music, dancing, and an open bar. See "First Night Austin," p.29, for more. *Through Dec. 31. www.firstnighaustin.org.*

FIRST NIGHT AUSTIN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED The New Year's large-scale art spectacle that is First Night doesn't just happen. There's a cavalcade of volunteers that keeps things looking effortless and beautiful. Volunteer shifts are three hours long, which leaves you time to enjoy a large chunk of the festivities. E-mail your contact info to volunteer@firstnighaustin.org or fill out the form at www.firstnighaustin.org/volunteer to help.

GAG REFLEX COMEDY BASH Come to the early show for sketch comedy and beverages. If you want in on the countdown-to-midnight party with pizza, Champagne, and cheesy door prizes, you'll want to go to the late show. *Thu., Dec. 31, 7:30 (\$20) & 9:30pm (\$35). Hyde Park Theatre, 511 W. 43rd, 479-PLAY. www.sockmonkeymedia.com/gag.*

IMPROV EXTRAVAGANZA The Hideout invites you to ring in the new year improv-style, with an evening of games and skits and a Champagne toast at midnight to top it all off. (See Arts Listings, Comedy, p.60, for more.) *Thu., Dec. 31, 8 & 10:30pm. The Hideout Theatre, 617 Congress, 443-3688. \$20. www.hideouttheatre.com.*

THE HOLIDAY 12 STEP Rob Nash's holiday compulsion, *12 Steps to a More Dysfunctional Christmas* is back. Get your tickets now. Or wait till the last minute, complain about it, tell your mom it's her fault, then get some therapy. *Thu.-Sat., Dec. 25-Jan. 2, 8pm. The Vortex, 2307 Manor Rd., 789-7003. \$10-30. therobnash@aol.com, www.vortexrep.org.*

OTHER

24-HOUR CHANT This New Year's might be a good time to get some god time in. Twenty-four hours, to be exact. From noon to midnight on New Year's Eve and from 6am to 6pm on New Year's Day, participants will chant the name of god under the roof of this Hindu temple. *Thu.-Fri., Dec. 31-Jan. 1. Barsana Dham, 400 Barsana Rd., 288-7180. Free.*

BAR & RESTAURANT EMPLOYEE PARTY Not everyone can party on New Year's Eve; some people have to work (namely, service industry employees). Luckily, there's an option for them: Celebrate early. Hats, horns, live and DJ'ed music, balloons, and a bit of time warping two days into the future. So, if you have bacon to bring home on NYE or just want to celebrate twice, this is the shindig for you. *Tue., Dec. 29, 8pm. Speakeasy, 412 Congress, 476-8017. Free. www.speakeasyaustin.com.*

DELTA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP DANCE The Austin alumnae chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority hosts this NYE dance with all the trappings. *Thu., Dec. 31, 9pm-1am. Wyndham Garden Hotel, 3401 S. I-35, 323-6901. \$55.*

MEDITATE & MANIFEST NIGHT For those of you who would rather ring out 2009 with an "om" rather than a "bang," there will be fiery yoga flow (no experience necessary), peaceful meditation, and Tibetan singing bowls. Get blissed before you get blasted this year. *Thu., Dec. 31, 6pm. Eastside Yoga, 1050 E. 11th. \$10 suggested donation. www.eastsideyoga-austin.com.*

RESOLUTION RUN Here's to hoping your resolution to exercise more at least lasts through the day. This chip-timed 5K will hopefully keep you motivated. *Fri., Jan. 1, 11am. St. Philip's United Methodist Church, 16321 Great Oaks Dr., Round Rock, 512/694-1446. \$20. www.resolutionrun2010.org.*

TRANSPORTATION

CAPITAL METRO The usual weekday bus schedule will be in effect on New Year's Eve, including the Night Owl, which runs 12mid-3am. Not sure which bus routes will get you where you need to go? You can always use Capital Metro's handy online trip planner (www.capmetro.org). But if you're nowhere near a computer, just send a text message with your origin and destination to austin@dadnab.com, and you'll receive a return text with the best routes and times for your trip. See www.dadnab.com for details. 474-1200. www.capmetro.org.

SOBER RIDE Free rides are available for the penniless and confused. Rules apply to this Yellow Cab service, of course: You must be 21 or older, the fare is free up to \$30, and you have to be going home rather than to another bar or party. And though the ride is complimentary, make sure to tip. 657-2999 (Sober Ride); 452-9999 (regular Yellow Cab services). www.yellowcabaustin.com, www.austinsoberride.com.



'My Wicked Twisted Sense of Love'

Women & Their Work, 1710 Lavaca,
477-1064, www.womenandtheirwork.org
Through Jan. 7, 2010



Who doesn't have a wicked, twisted sense of love? Someone who's never had a broken heart, not even once, not even slightly wounded by that one high school crush with the tight jeans and the habit of humming Morrissey songs in the hallway between

classes, much less by that co-worker they had a brief fling with in year 10 of their marriage but never told their spouse about? "Never told their spouse about," yes, who's wicked and twisted in that scenario?

"Listen long enough," writes the poet David Jewell, "and everyone is interesting and slightly destroyed."

Spend enough time at Women & Their Work's current show – part of a Downtown lunch hour, say, maybe a detour during a Saturday afternoon ramble – and you'll see where some of that interest and destruction has wound up.

This group exhibition is curated by Leslie Moody Castro, such a perfect middle name for this show, and she's gathered works by Anthony Romero, Laura Ann Meyers, Katri Walker, Gabriela Rodriguez, and Luis Carlos Hurtado: a quintessence of creative souls to render these signals of wracked romance.

Romero starts things off with a series of five videos, each playing in a different monitor, each featuring the artist as a version of some modern-day "shaman" pitching his availability on the Internet Shaman Dating Service. Damned funny, with Romero in different freaky getups and affecting diverse voices but also weirdly effective in its cumulative impact. Who among us could be so unself-conscious, if they've ever made their own lonely-heart pitch on a similar service, to feel other than as goofy/skeevy/*Beyond Thunderdome* as these passionate eccentrics?

Meyers harvests the high school crop of fantasy and longing, with her giant pink crepe-paper heart against one white wall, its title – *CRUSH* – scrawled in plastic cursive letters across the front of the symbol. Even simpler and more redolent of romantic yearning is Meyers' other piece in this show, where she's spelled out the name Mrs. Joseph Gough Daly IV in glittery pipe-cleaner calligraphy. Bonus: A little curious Googling will bring you, later, to the wedding announcement (on this just-passed Dec. 12) of the artist and the man who bears that name. (That's not wicked or twisted, though, is it? That's just a whole big pile of "awwwwwwww.")

What, on the other hand (or ventricle), is to be made of Hurtado's words carved into bark and the severed trunks of trees, arranged as for burning in a campfire? "Algo esta Pasando," these woods say, "Coma Bien, Via Bien" and "Hay Otros Dias Suaves." And it's all going up into flames, ashes to ashes, perhaps inspired by the light of someone's life and the fire of their loins, now consigned to burning dust? And what of the other works in this busted valentine of a show: Walker's videos and Rodriguez's drawings and watercolors?

Take a trip of eight syllables, we suggest, and see "My Wicked Twisted Sense of Love" at Women & Their Work. Bonus No. 2: Bring your significant other along, whether you're in the throes of emotional ecstasy or your dreams are on a train to train-wreck town, and try to work out the mystery for yourselves. – Wayne Alan Brenner

Same Year's Eve! Celebrate *this* year before the next year's celebrations begin – by treating yourself and your comedy-loving friends to a night of wild improv at the Hideout. Three 30-minute shows (with performers chosen at random from the entire Austin Improv Collective) bring you a perfect way to say "Don't let the door hit you in the ass" to the penultimate day of 2009. *Wed., Dec. 30, 8pm. \$10.*

BUT WAIT - THERE'S MORE!

THE AUSTIN COMEDY TRAINWRECK Stand-up comedy – right there in the Hole, on the Drag, in the heart of collegiate Texas. *Tuesdays, 10pm. Hole in the Wall, 2538 Guadalupe. \$5. www.myspace.com/austincomedytrainwreck.*

KICK BUTT COMEDY Open Mic Comedy Bring it or have it brought to you, clever citizen. *Wednesdays, 8pm. Kick Butt Coffee, 5775 Airport #725, 454-5425.*

COLDTOWNE NEW YEAR'S EVE SHOW isn't even gonna be at ColdTowne Theater, because how could that popular but smallish venue contain, in one night, crowds for the likes of SNL's Rich Talarico, the sketch revue called Eye for an iPhone, and the flirtatious crooning and tuning of Le Sexy? This shindig's at the United States Art Authority, yes, and admission here also gets you into the Spider House celebration – with live bands and DJs – that immediately follows. *Thu., Dec. 31, 7pm. United States Art Authority, 2906 Fruth. \$15. www.coldtownetheater.com*

COMEDYSPOZT Competitive improv? Yes, and maestro **Les McGehee** and his talented friends bring it in full force each weekend to one of the sweetest little coffeehouses in the 78704. Also, variety shows! Live music! So much goodness in this venue, in fact, that we'll be expanding this listing for the new year. *Fridays and Saturdays, 7:30pm. Cafe Caffeine, 909 W. Mary. www.comedy7.com.*

SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL Two Gnap!tastic improv troupes, one after the other, for maximum compare-and-contrast opportunities of comedy styling and schools of prov-fu. This weekend, right after Christmas, it's **Hugaday** and **Junk**. *Sat., Dec. 26, 10pm. Salvage Vanguard Theater, 2803 Manor Rd., 474-7886. \$10. www.salvagevanguard.org.*

classical music

OPENING

AUSTIN SYMPHONY POPS: THE DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA Get ready to dance when the Duke Ellington Orchestra and Freda Payne take the stage with ASO in this New Year's Eve Pops event. *Wed.-Thu., Dec. 30-31, 8pm. Long Center for the Performing Arts, 701 W. Riverside, 476-6064. \$30-45. www.austinsymphony.org.*

MUSIC APPRECIATION FOR GROWNUPS *Thu., Dec. 31. 474-2331. \$160 for 10 weeks. www.austinlyricopera.org.*

visual arts

CLOSING

BROCCA GALLERY New paintings and sculptures by local and international artists Kathleen Wilson, Gary Yarrington, Mary Morse, Tom Bishop, Bob Coffee, Augusto Brocca, and Carlos Estevez. *Through Dec. 31. 1103 E. Sixth, 971-3643. www.broccagallery.com.*

360 GALLERY: DAVID STEIN *Through Dec. 30. 6720 Capital of TX Hwy. N., 346-6789. www.360galleryofaustin.org.*

WALLY WORKMAN GALLERY: FEAST Here's a celebration of all things culinary, by some of the gallery's most excellent practitioners of shape and line, color and balance, ink and oil and watercolor and more. Works by Helmut Barnett, Carol Dawson, Angela Fife, Amy Guidry, Gordon Fowler, and others. *Through Dec. 24. 1202 W. Sixth, 472-7428. www.wallyworkmangallery.com.*

LORA REYNOLDS GALLERY: NORIKO AMBE The New York-based artist wields surgical skill to transform already beautiful books into objects of even greater and surreal beauty. Curated by Glenn Fuhrman and highly recommended. *Through Dec. 31. 360 Nueces #50, 215-4965. www.lorareynolds.com.*

ONGOING

DIBONA STUDIO Oil paintings and "sculptural tattoos" by Joyce DiBona. 404 W. Milton, 851-2646. www.joycedibona.com.

EYE CONTACT ART showcases the work of Joshua Garcia and others. 12400 Amherst #102, 825-8577. www.eyeccontactart.com.

ART IN A NUTSHELL This is the gallery of Ismael Cavazos, a Local Colorful Character and the creator of "The Old Man in the Peanut," featuring his creations involving scribbles, drip paintings, rocks, inkblots, and clouds. And work by *other artists*, too. 2209 S. First, 436-6551. www.ismaelcavazos.com.

CHAN CHAN: PHOTOS AND PAINTINGS OF CUBA The photography of Piercarlo Abate and the paintings of Luis Abreu show a side of Cuba that's seldom seen. 81 San Marcos St. www.piercarloabate.com.

AUSTIN GALLERIES: 20TH CENTURY MASTERS Original lithographs, etchings, intaglios, and screen-prints by Marc Chagall, Salvador Dalí, Pablo Picasso, and more. 1219 W. Sixth.

CORONADO STUDIOS The Serie Project, a nonprofit Latino arts organization based at Coronado Studios, produces, promotes, and exhibits serigraph prints created by diverse artists. 6601 Felix, 385-3591. www.serieproject.org.

STUDIO2GALLERY: TRANSLATIONS: NAVIGATING CULTURE THROUGH PAPER Juror and featured artist Benné Rockett presents new works from a group of artists from across the country who have explored the possibilities of expression via paper – as sculptural material or ground for color or, well, so many evocative forms in this excellent show. *Through Jan. 8. 1700 S. Lamar #318, 326-9102. www.studio2gallery.com.*

STUDIO C GALLERY: PONIES & PENGUINS New works by Holly Bronko and Alexandra Valenti. 2309 Thornton.

VSA ARTS OF TEXAS: HOLIDAY SALE More than 20 artists represented with ornaments, collages, painting, drawings, sculptures, poetry, music, cards, magnets, prints, mobiles, jewelry, and more. *Through Jan. 9. 3710 Cedar #7, 454-9912. www.vsatx.org.*

ART ON 5TH: SMALL WORKS The gallery's contingent of local artists, Texas artists, and national artists has painted a special group of smaller works for this show. *Through Jan. 2. 1501 W. Fifth, 481-1111. www.arton5th.com.*

ARTAMICI FINE ART GALLERY Artists from Argentina, Mexico, Chile, and Peru; paintings by Augustina Rodriguez, Oscar Riquelme, and Pablo Taboada; drawings by Gilberto Ramirez; and metal sculpture by Augusto Brocca. 78 San Marcos, 457-0171. www.pablotaobadastudio.com.

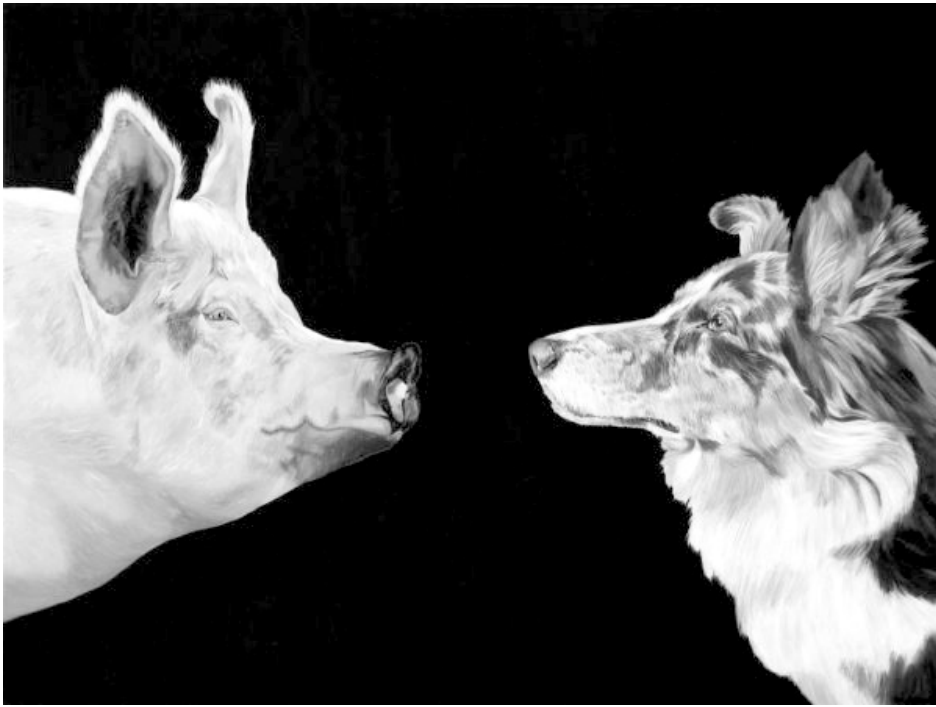
AUSTIN ART GLASS This glassblowing studio and gallery offers functional and decorative glass art, classes, and more. 1608 S. Congress, 916-4527. www.austinartglass.com.

AMOA: DAVID BATES AND JADE WALKER The large and expressive oil paintings of David Bates – vivid scenes of nature, near-documentary images (based on broadcast video) of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina – are paired with new sculptures and installations by Austin's own Jade Walker, she of UT's Creative Research Laboratory. *Through Jan. 31. 823 Congress, 495-9224. www.amoa.org.*

AMOA LAGUNA GLORIA: CASSANDRA JAMES "Earth, Fire, Wind, and Water" is an intimate exhibition of sketchbooks and paintings. *Through Jan. 10. 3809 W. 35th, 458-8191. www.amoa.org.*

BLANTON MUSEUM: THE PETROBELLI ALTARPIECE This work by Venetian master Paolo Veronese (1528-1588) was recently identified as a fragment of the head of Saint Michael, the central figure in the so-called Petrobelli altarpiece from 1565. *Through Feb. 7. MLK & Congress, 471-7324. www.blantonmuseum.org.*

BLUE MOON GLASSWORKS Unique handmade glass art and jewelry. 108 W. 43rd, 380-0770. www.austinbluemoon.com.



PAINTINGS BY AMY GUIDRY ARE PART OF THE SOON-TO-CLOSE "FEAST" GROUP SHOW AT WALLY WORKMAN GALLERY.

A LEGACY OF QUILTS: THE JOYCE GROSS COLLECTION This exhibit, on loan from UT's Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, spans more than 100 years of the enduring American art form and features 29 quilts made approximately between 1844 and 1950. *Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, 1800 Congress, 936-4639. \$4-7. www.thestoryoftexas.com.*

THE CATHEDRAL OF JUNK is approximately 60 tons of junk wired together over 15 years to form intricate towers and rooms in the backyard of a South Austin home. Hours: *Saturdays and Sundays, noon-9pm, or by appointment. 4422 Lareina, 299-7413. www.keepaustinweird.com.*

D BERMAN GALLERY: CHILL Cold, sh mold: This exhibition features work by a gathering of artists who know how to warm up a venue with intricate visual beauty: Cynthia Camlin, Sara Frantz, Jennifer Maestre, Leslie Mutchler, Raychael Stine, Steve Wiman, and Sydney Yeager. *Through Feb. 6. 1701 Guadalupe, 477-8877. www.dbermangallery.com.*

DAVIS GALLERY: HOLIDAY GROUP SHOW This array of the gallery's stellar regulars – David Leonard, Julie Speed, Dianne Grammer, and Stella Alesi among them – also features new work by Susu Meyer and Caprice Pierucci. *Through Jan. 9. 837 W. 12th, 477-4929. www.davisgalleryaustin.com.*

L. NOWLIN GALLERY: ROBERT SCHULTS This elegant gallery of photography features the artist's black-and-white images: like architecture's fever dreams of shattered symmetry, some of them, and uniformly stunning in their composition and rendition. *Through Jan. 2. 1202-A W. Sixth, 626-9301. www.knowlingallery.com.*

MITCHIE'S FINE BLACK ART presents an eclectic selection of African and African-American artwork. 7801 N. Lamar Ste. B-148, 323-6901. www.mitchie.com.

MUSEUM OF NATURAL & ARTIFICIAL EPHEMERATA A curator-led tour of this museum's quirky and delightful "Impermanent Collection" is one of the hidden wonders of Austin. Tours: *Saturdays, 1-4pm. 1808 Singleton, 320-0566. www.mnae.org.*

UMLAUF SCULPTURE GARDEN: DAMIAN PRIOUR'S WATER SPARKS Priour is best known for his elegant sculptures using fossilized limestone, glass, and rusted metal – the beach treasures he grew up with on the Texas Gulf Coast. His work is on fine display in this third in the Umlauf's series of annual exhibits of work by contemporary sculptors who studied at the University of Texas. *Through Jan. 3. 605 Robert E. Lee Rd., 445-5582. www.umlaufsculpture.org.*

WOMEN & THEIR WORK: MY WICKED TWISTED SENSE OF LOVE A globally diverse group of artists presents works on paper, videos, sounds, and mixed-media installations exploring the nuances of personal relationships, the fear of dying alone, and emotional indifference. See review, p.60. *Through Jan. 7. 1710 Lavaca, 477-1064. www.womenandtheirwork.org.*

SPACES

DECOLA & EUSEBI GALLERY Stained and leaded glass and mosaics. 701 Tillery Ste. A-11, 389-2266. www.decola-eusebi.com.

CHINATOWN New works by Matt Bowman, Zita Raymond, Phillip Wade, and Allison Young. *Through Jan. 15. 107 W. Fifth, 637-8888.*

EASTSIDE BOOKS Currently showing works by Patrick King, Ramon Lozano, and John Metcalf. 2415 E. Fifth. 472-2665. www.eastsidebooksaustin.com.

PICTURING AMERICA FROM EAST TO WEST Photographs of America and its art, in a periodically changing display. *Through May. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr., 989-3188. www.wblibrary.org.*

CAFFE MEDICI: LANCE ROSENFELD New photography. 1101 West Lynn, 569-0432. www.rosenfieldphotography.com.

LITTLE CITY: BARRY GEORGE Metal sculptural works by this multit talented local make for a more interesting cafe. *Through Dec. 31. 916 Congress, 476-CITY. www.littlecity.com.*

WESTS Artwork by Dan-Ramone Vivan Chavez, Raquel Reyes, and others. 408 Josephine.

WET: JESMINDA COLE Paintings, bones, plaster, and lead. Oh, oh my. 1109 S. Congress, 444-7375.

litera

READINGS, SIGNINGS, AND PERFORMANCES

PEOPLE UNITED features goddess churchgoer Robert Jensen on his book *All My Bones Shake: Seeking a Progressive Path to the Prophetic Voice*. *Fri., Dec. 25, 1pm. KOOP Radio 91.7FM. www.koop.org.*

TEXAS NAFAS presents *Lucille Clifton on Poetry*, taped at the Dodge Poetry Festival in 2008. This program airs every week in December on Channel 10 and Channel 16. See www.channelaustin.org for exact air time.



CHECK THE VIBRANT OFFERINGS AT BROCCA GALLERY BEFORE THIS YEAR TURNS INTO THE NEXT.

CLOSING SOON: FROM OUT THAT SHADOW The Harry Ransom Center has teamed up with the University of Virginia to present this **Edgar Allan Poe** show – an expansive and remarkable collection of manuscripts, letters, first editions, illustrations, and other storied ephemera concerning one of the country's most famous writers. *Through Jan. 3. Ransom Center, 300 W. 21st, 471-8944. www.hrc.utexas.edu.*

WRITING/BOOK GROUPS

NORTH AUSTIN KNITTERS meet weekly to knit and discuss great books. *Barnes & Noble Arboretum, 10000 Research #158, 418-8985.*

VOYAGE OUT CLUB is gunning for *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga. Sahib'd by Brian C. and Daniel. *Sun., Dec. 27, 5pm. BookPeople, 603 N. Lamar, 472-5050. www.bookpeople.com.*

HARD WORD CLUB books into *Bangkok 8* by John Burdett. With your concierges Charlie and Scott. *Wed., Dec. 30, 7pm. BookPeople, 603 N. Lamar.*

OPEN MICS

FRIDAY NIGHT MIC for poetry, music, drama, and stories. Hosted by Bear Man Poet. *Fridays, 8-10pm. JP's Java, 2803 San Jacinto.*

GENUINE JOE *Thursdays, 7:30-10pm. Genuine Joe Coffeehouse, 2001 W. Anderson, 220-1576. www.genuinejoe.com.*

THE HIDEOUT is hosted by Thom Moon 10 and features Edgar Pace and Justin Time. *Mondays, 7-10pm. The Hideout Theatre, 617 Congress, 476-0473. \$2 (or canned food for Poets Pantry). www.hideouttheatre.com.*

HOT MAMA'S OPEN MIC *Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm. Hot Mama's Espresso Bar, 2401 E. Sixth, 476-MAMA. www.myspace.com/hotmamaspresso.*

THE AUSTIN POETRY SLAM Mike Henry and a rotating group of slam ninjas captain the crew that has all the best of stand-up, pomo theatre, rock & roll, and phone sex rolled into one cosmic-heat blast. *Wednesdays, 8pm. The Independent at 501 Studios, 501 N. I-35, 485-3001. \$5 (\$21 and older). www.austinslam.com.*

LA TAZZA FRESCA Yes, it's Xmas and, yes, there be poetry! Hosted by Kathleen Romana each second and fourth Friday. *Fri., Dec. 25, 7-9pm. La Tazza Fresca, 519 W. 37th, 371-5383. latazzafresca@earthlink.net.*

SPOKEN & HEARD Bring words, make noise, bring yourself, make friends. American Sign Language interpreter available. Hosted by The Crew. *Every Sunday, 7-10pm. Kick Butt Coffee, 5775 Airport #725, 454-5425. www.kickbutcoffee.com.*

RUTA MAYA POETRY is one of the longest-running weekly open mics in Texas. Hosted by David Bates. *Tuesdays, 6-9pm. Ruta Maya, 3601 S. Congress Ste. D-200, 707-9637. www.rmpoetryaustin.com.*

CALL FOR ENTRIES

FIVE THINGS WRITING CONTEST Five Things is hosting its first-ever writing contest, with the theme *A New Year*. Restrictions: 1,250 words, one submission per person, Austin residents only. Send the story as the text of an e-mail; no attachments. Public reading: *Jan. 29*. Submission deadline: *Jan. 1. www.fivethingsaustin.com.*

ARDENT! POETRY IN THE ARTS seeks your poetry submissions. Poems not used will be destroyed, not returned. Include "permission to use" statement with submissions. Include name, complete mailing address, e-mail, and telephone number with submission and any subsequent correspondence. Send up to three unpublished poems for consideration to: *Dillon McKinsey, 1909 Hollow Ridge Dr., Cedar Park, TX 78613-6729. rimer777@gmail.com.*

MISCELLANEOUS

MORE POETRY *watching children play the piano their eyes closely studying the page or the keys or pivoting up & down: birds at the ground at the sky tentatively pecking with fingertip beaks stopping at once mid ... peck ... st- uck signals all tangled these sounds in the head in a space between action & expectation & ... flight a weight hovering weightlessly a weight a waiting a way a long the (who is awake on ... get to the end o Finn cut thru the deep water again ... breathing in ... & ...) ping ... eternity ... ping ... eternity ... pingping ... plang ... eternity ... eternity ... what is it now ... the keys look ... so ... different ... the air ... thins ... oh ... i ... am ... done ahhhhhhhhh stand up bow walk off into darkness the piano as life his mother says: i always wanted someone in the family to learn how to play the piano & he thinks: or bow politely when we leave. Namaste. Vaya con dios.*

POEM OF THE ISSUE

Wood energy, expands into forest sparks ignite fire, and becomes ash, earth, metal forged contracts Water accepts things as they are, accomplishes all by doing nothing.

– Kathleen Romana, from "Elementary Cycles"

film listings



The Young Victoria

D: Jean-Marc Vallée; with Emily Blunt, Rupert Friend, Paul Bettany, Miranda Richardson, Jim Broadbent, Mark Strong, Thomas Kretschmann, Jesper Christensen, Harriet Walter. (PG, 100 min.)

How young is young Victoria? At the film's beginning, she's just 17, with all the sullenness you would expect from a shut-in future queen fending off attack from her *maman* and prospective suitors cherry-picked by two kings. Blunt convincingly portrays the Princess Victoria as bullied, slightly silly, but most of all, desperately alone. Her mother, the Duchess

of Kent (Richardson), and her handler, Sir John Conroy (Strong), scheme to usurp her power via a regency; her uncle, King William of England (Broadbent, in a delicious little part darting mighty close to camp) fights to stay alive long enough for Victoria to turn 18; and her other uncle, King Leopold of Belgium (Kretschmann), plainly wants to put an inside man, his nephew, Prince Albert (Friend), either in her bed or, better yet, beside her on the throne. Trying times for a teenager, indeed. Scriptwriter Julian Fellowes (*Gosford Park*) makes admirable work of shorthanding the complicated lineages and motives and maneuverings, although time to time, it does feel, well, like work, especially when the inexperienced Victoria ascends to the throne and becomes the political pawn of the Whig Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne (Bettany, practically unrecognizable in brown contacts that blot out his pupils). Having just

typed this all out, I marvel at how exciting it all sounds – feuding families! palace intrigues! – but *The Young Victoria* is really too staid for such exclamation points. Director Jean-Marc Vallée (C.R.A.Z.Y.), surely inspired by *Barry Lyndon*, leans on candlelight for several key scenes, and the effect is not only gorgeous but also intimates the deepening attachment between Victoria and Albert – one that was mutually felt, but not spoken about plainly. (In fact, Victoria puts off Albert for some time – having just earned her independence, she isn't keen on giving it up again so soon.) All told, *The Young Victoria* is a very well-made if not especially memorable picture, moving with all the grace and steadfastness of a waltz Victoria and Albert share, but absent any urgency or anything particularly exclamatory. – Kimberley Jones



★★★ Arbor

new reviews

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL D: Betty Thomas; with Zachary Levi, David Cross, Jason Lee, Wendie Malick; with the voices of Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler, Jesse McCartney, Anna Farris, Christina Applegate, Amy Poehler. (PG, 88 min.)

It's a rare but not unheard-of event for a sequel to top its predecessor. *The Road Warrior*, *After the Thin Man*, and *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* all leap to mind as films that trumped their predecessors by upping the ante with better scripts, more coherent directorial chops, or Ricardo Montalban. This is not one of those sequels, however, and director Thomas (forever *Hill Street Blues* Sgt. Lucy Bates to my mind), working from a script by returning screenwriter Jon Vitti and *Kung Fu Panda* scribe Jonathan Aibel, does little to improve on 2007's original "film/rebranding event." While *The Squeakquel* might be appreciated by filmgoers aged 10 or younger, the rest of us should be investing heavily in d-CON and working feverishly through the night to build a better rodent trap, preferably something spring-loaded and inhumane (I've been reviewing the various killing mechanisms of the *Saw* franchise for just that purpose). This time out, the all-singing, all-dancing, all-CGI chipmunks – rebels with paws Alvin (Long), wise guy Simon (Gubler), and tubby emo vermin Theodore (McCartney) – are left in the care of gameboy layabout Toby (Levi), a younger cousin of the squirrely little bug-gers' surrogate dad, Dave (Lee). They wind up in a contrived "squeak-off" with a new trio of singing *female* chipmunks, cruelly dubbed the "Chipettes" by down-on-his-luck record exec Ian Hawk (Cross, returning from the original in search of a paycheck and not much else). Muskrat love, of a sort, is in the air, and while I suspect the sight of sexy little Chippette Brittany (Applegate) in an eensy-weensy, hot-pink leather jacket with matching New Wave 'do will appeal to the anthropomorphic titillations of the "furry" crowd, the film as a whole is only marginally less entertaining than playing roadkill Frisbee. One assumes that if this second installment in the franchise generates any box office whatsoever, there will likely be a third Chipmunk outing. My suggestion to the producers is to study the far more fun-filled and wacky aspects of the Rodentia order of mammals as seen in the films *Willard* and *Ben* and adjust their bullshit detectors accordingly. – Marc Savlov

★ Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Lakeline, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

IT'S COMPLICATED D: Nancy Meyers; with Meryl Streep, Alec Baldwin, Steve Martin, John Krasinski, Lake Bell, Caitlin Fitzgerald, Zoe Kazan, Hunter Parrish. (R, 118 min.)

The thing about *It's Complicated* is that it's not ... complicated. Writer-director Meyers has come to specialize in making wish-fulfillment fantasies for middle-aged women (*The Parent Trap*, *What Women Want*, *Something's Gotta*

Give, The Holiday) in which smart, professional, single, Caucasian women of a certain age have wonderful careers, picture-perfect homes, and love affairs aplenty. Their affluent careers seem to require no work on their part, their interior decor inspires the same acquisitive lust as the commercial photo spreads in a design catalog or upscale lifestyle magazine, and the men interested in them are ubiquitous and ardent: None of these premises is called into question in Meyers' otherwise realistically based films. "Having it all" is always a viable option in Meyers' worlds. In *It's Complicated*, Streep plays Jane Adler, a Santa Barbara, Calif., restaurateur who is 10 years divorced from Jake (Baldwin), following a marriage of 19 years. (To be fair, Jake, a lawyer with a second family and much younger wife, is never seen at work either.) At the college graduation of Jane and Jake's son (Parrish), while the exes are both staying at the same posh New York City hotel, an evening of drinks turns into a night of dizzying sex and, before he can stop the madness, Jake finds himself back in lust with Jane, who (to bastardize a phrase) is not really convinced she wants to repurchase the cow now that she's getting the milk for free. Also present in Jane's life is Adam (Martin), the architect who is overseeing the planned expansion of her already perfect home. Many are the amusing and knowing moments in this comedy, yet the fabric of Meyers' fantasy is too gossamer to sustain the weight of their truths. Still, this is an A-list cast (indeed, co-stars Baldwin and Martin have been tapped as the next Oscar hosts), who can imbue this contradictory material with just the right inflections and grace notes. Nevertheless, Streep, who is usually so impressive, seems little more than ordinary in this work, and Martin's unique talents are sadly wasted. A Greek chorus of girlfriends (played by Rita Wilson, Mary Kay Place, Alexandra Wentworth, and Nora Dunn) appears for two dinner scenes but is never heard from otherwise. And Jane's three grown children (Fitzgerald, Kazan, and Parrish) behave like little brats when they discover the truth about Mommy and Daddy, and as Jake's second wife, Agness, Bell gets the thankless task of playing a nubile harpy. Meyers does get in some role reversal by permitting Streep's flesh a tasteful degree of modesty while the chubby chest and tush of Baldwin (or a body double) are used to great comic effect. Meyers has a good feel for contemporary comedy; it's reality, however, that slips through her grasp. – Marjorie Baumgarten

★★★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse South, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

NINE D: Rob Marshall; with Daniel Day-Lewis, Marion Cotillard, Penélope Cruz, Nicole Kidman, Judi Dench, Kate Hudson, Sophia Loren, Fergie, Ricky Tognazzi. (PG-13, 118 min.)

For a film director, whom we're told is creatively blocked, Guido Contini (Day-Lewis) has a rich panorama of images cascading about his brain. Most of his images are of the women in his life dancing about elaborate stages in corsets, except, as befits an Italian man of the 1960s, his beloved Mamma (Loren), whose black garb is set off by the prominent crucifix dangling in her décolletage, and his betrayed wife, Luisa (Cotillard), whose hairdo and ladylike demeanor resemble that of the swan-necked



Sherlock Holmes

Audrey Hepburn. Otherwise, more corsets appear in the movie *Nine* than in your average Victoria's Secret fashion show. The movie is Marshall's adaptation of the twice-produced Broadway musical, which itself was an outgrowth of Federico Fellini's 1963 Italian film classic *8½*. Marshall, whose previous films include the popular but unarresting adaptation of the stage hit *Chicago* and the visually beautiful but listless *Memoirs of a Geisha*, has gathered in *Nine* an impressive stable of on- and off-screen talent but never gets these various pieces to jell. It's a bold move to film a musical with cast members who, apart from Fergie and Cotillard, are not known to possess any singing or dancing skills. The good news is that all of them are game; the bad news is that, for the most part, there appears to be good reason for most of them to have kept their singing confined to their shower stalls at home. Ultimately, nothing truly embarrassing makes it to the screen but each musical number gives the appearance of having been doctored to within an inch of its life with crazy pans, cuts, differing film stocks, and jewel-bedecked costumes constantly grabbing our focus and shifting our eyes toward the next glittery doodad Marshall tosses in our path. Each woman performs one song except for Cotillard, who gets two, and each is a signature piece that defines, one-dimensionally, the character's role in the movie. In addition to Cotillard's wife, there are Dench's longtime costume designer and Contini confidante, Cruz's sexpot mistress (singing while performing a bump and grind), Kidman's movie goddess modeled on Anita Ekberg, Hudson's *Vogue* reporter (performing one of the new tunes written for the movie), Fergie's beach-dwelling whore (who introduces little Italian boys to the mysteries of sex), and sainted Mamma Loren. Day-Lewis also performs and dances two numbers, and though he does so obligingly, the end result reveals the chinks in this great actor's performance arsenal. Also, most of the film's music is instantly forgettable, which can never be a good sign for a musical's longevity. Though there is plenty of razzle-dazzle onscreen, *Nine* is unlikely to ignite many sparks among viewers.

— Marjorie Baumgarten

★★ Arbor, Barton Creek Square, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

SHERLOCK HOLMES D: Guy Ritchie; with Robert Downey Jr., Jude Law, Rachel McAdams, Mark Strong, Eddie Marsan, Kelly Reilly, James Fox, Hans Matheson, Geraldine James. (PG-13, 128 min.)

Edgar Allan Poe invented the literary detective genre in 1841 via a short story showcasing the adventures of ur-shamus C. Auguste Dupin. Little did he know that his clever little Parisian "ratiocinator" would lead directly to the creation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "consulting detective" Sherlock Holmes some 46 years later. The fictional Holmes first arrived at the scene of the crime exactly one year prior to the emergence of the very real Jack the Ripper. Fittingly, both fictional man and factual monster appeared in their own variations in *A Study in Scarlet*, and both turned out to be equally adept at selling periodicals while gaining permanent positions in popular culture. Over the years, Holmes – obsessive, possibly bipolar, and never less than

openings & ratings

Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (PG)

It's Complicated (R)

Nine (PG-13)

Sherlock Holmes (PG-13)

The Young Victoria (PG)

- ★★★★★ As perfect as a movie can be
- ★★★★ Slightly flawed, but excellent nonetheless
- ★★★ Has its good points, and its bad points
- ★★ Mediocre, but with one or two bright spots
- ★ Poor, without any saving graces
- ◉ La bomba


a gentleman, even while prone to firing off guns and mainlining "medicinal" cocaine in the flat he shared with his friend and chronicler Dr. Watson – has been a cinematic staple. The character has been assayed by a veritable rogues' gallery of actors including the legendary (and stodgy) Basil Rathbone, Nicol Williamson (in 1976's *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution*, which notably featured a young Robert Duvall as Dr. Watson), Robert Stephens (in Billy Wilder's vaguely homoerotic *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*), and Christopher Plummer (in the excellent Holmes/Ripper face-off *Murder by Decree*, helmed by Bob Clark, of *A Christmas Story*). Now Guy Ritchie has reinvented the chilly, brainiac character as a tortured genius, ladies man (sort of), and occasional backroom brawler. As played by Downey Jr. (an inspired casting choice that works in the film's favor), this incarnation is a post-millennial man of action, spurred on by a woman of equal action: his former love, Irene Adler (McAdams, looking suitably flouncy-tough as per Ritchie's ongoing worldview), who engages his services to

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showtimes

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25 – THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE AT THE RITZ

320 E. Sixth, 476-1320.

High for the Holidays: Beefest With Beertlympics: Fri, 8:00pm

Music Monday: Christmas on Mars: Mon, 10:15pm

High for the Holidays: The Hangover: Sun, 10:50pm; Wed, 9:15pm

High for the Holidays: Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle With All-You-Can-Eat Miniburgers: Sat, 8:00pm

High for the Holidays: Last Cup: Road to the World Series of Beer Pong: Mon, 7:50pm; Wed, 6:45pm

Feast: New Year's Eve Bash: The Apartment: Thu (12/31), 7:00pm

Action Pack: New Year's Eve Sing-Along: Thu (12/31), 10:00pm

Terror Tuesday: New Year's Evil: Tue, 10:45pm

Weird Wednesday: Polk County Pot Plane: Wed, 12mid

***Sherlock Holmes:** Fri, 3:30, 4:30, 7:00, 10:30; Sat-Sun, 12:00, 1:00, 3:30, 4:30, 7:00, 10:30; Mon, 3:30, 4:30, 7:00, 10:30; Tue, 3:30, 4:25, 7:00, 10:30; Wed, 3:30, 7:00, 10:30; Thu (12/31), 6:00, 9:25

High for the Holidays: The Holy Mountain: Sun, 7:50pm; Tue, 7:45pm

High for the Holidays: Dark Side of the Rainbow: The Wizard of Oz With Dark Side of the Moon: Fri, 11:00pm; Sat, 10:45pm

ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE LAKE CREEK

13729 Research, 219-5408.

***Avatar (3-D):** Fri-Wed, 11:00am, 12:00, 3:00, 4:00, 7:00, 8:00, 10:45pm; Thu (12/31), 11:00am, 12:00, 3:00, 4:00, 7:00, 8:00pm

The Blind Side: Fri-Wed, 12:20, 3:30, 6:45, 9:50; Thu (12/31), 12:20, 3:30, 6:45

***Did You Hear About the Morgans?:** Fri-Wed, 1:45, 4:30, 7:30, 10:25; Thu (12/31), 1:45, 4:30, 7:30

***It's Complicated:** Fri-Wed, 11:45am, 3:15, 6:30, 9:40pm; Thu (12/31), 11:45am, 3:15, 6:30pm

***Sherlock Holmes:** Fri-Wed, 1:00, 4:20, 7:45, 11:00; Thu (12/31), 1:00, 4:20, 7:45

***Up in the Air:** Fri-Wed, 1:15, 4:10, 7:15, 10:10; Thu (12/31), 1:15, 4:10, 7:15

ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE SOUTH

1120 S. Lamar, 707-8262.

***Avatar (3-D):** Fri, 3:00, 6:45, 10:15; Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:30am, 3:00, 6:45, 10:15pm

The Blind Side: Fri, 3:35, 7:00, 10:00; Sat-Wed, 12:30, 3:35, 7:00, 10:00; Thu (12/31), 12:30, 3:35, 7:00

Fantastic Mr. Fox: Fri, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30; Sat-Sun, 11:05am, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30pm; Mon-Wed, 11:05am, 1:30, 3:50, 6:15, 8:30pm; Thu (12/31), 12:30, 7:20

***It's Complicated:** Fri, 4:00, 7:05, 10:05; Sat-Wed, 1:00, 4:00, 7:05, 10:05; Thu (12/31), 1:00, 4:05, 7:05, 10:05

The Road: Fri, 4:45, 7:40, 10:20; Sat-Wed, 11:15am, 2:05, 4:45, 7:40, 10:20pm; Thu (12/31), 11:15am, 2:05, 4:45, 7:40pm

***Up in the Air:** Fri, 4:35, 7:45, 10:35; Sat-Wed, 11:00am, 1:45, 4:35, 7:45, 10:35pm; Thu (12/31), 11:00am, 1:45, 4:35, 7:45pm

ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE VILLAGE

2700 W. Anderson, 459-7090. Tuesday matinee

Baby Day shows (first show of the day) are intended for parents and children aged infant to 6 years old.

***Avatar (3-D):** Fri, 2:45, 6:45, 10:30; Sat-Tue, 12:15, 2:45, 6:45, 10:30; Wed, 2:45, 6:45, 10:30; Thu (12/31), 12:15, 2:45, 6:45

Master Pancake: Christmas Show: Sun, 7:00pm

***Did You Hear About the Morgans?:** Fri, 4:00, 7:00, 9:45; Sat-Tue, 1:05, 4:00, 7:00, 9:45; Wed, 12:05, 7:00, 9:45; Thu (12/31), 1:05, 4:00, 7:00

Invictus: Fri, 4:10, 7:30, 10:45; Sat-Tue, 11:30am, 4:10, 7:30, 10:45pm; Wed, 7:30, 10:45; Thu (12/31), 11:30am, 4:10, 7:30pm

The Rocky Horror Picture Show: Sat, 12mid

***Sherlock Holmes:** Fri, 3:40, 7:10, 10:20; Sat-Wed, 12:25, 3:40, 7:10, 10:20; Thu (12/31), 12:25, 3:40, 7:10

ARBOR CINEMA @ GREAT HILLS

9828 Great Hills Trail (at Jollyville), 231-9742.

Discounts daily before 6pm and all day Wednesdays.

An Education: 11:55am, 5:15, 10:20pm

Nine: 12:05, 1:00, 3:00, 3:45, 6:45, 7:15, 9:40, 10:10

Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire: 12:30, 3:10, 6:55, 9:45

The Road: 2:15, 4:50, 7:35, 10:15

Up in the Air: 11:45am, 12:40, 2:25, 4:00, 5:05, 7:05, 7:45, 9:50, 10:25pm

The Young Victoria: 12:15, 12:50, 2:50, 4:15, 7:25, 7:55, 10:00

BARTON CREEK SQUARE (AMC)

Barton Creek Square mall, MoPac & Highway 360, 888/AMC-4FUN. Matinee discounts available

before 6pm on weekdays and before 4pm Friday through Sunday and holidays.

Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel: 9:55am, 10:45, 12:15, 1:05, 2:35, 3:35, 4:55, 6:00, 7:30, 8:30, 9:50, 10:50pm

Avatar: 11:35am, 3:10, 6:45, 10:25pm

Avatar (closed captioned and descriptive video): 11:35am, 3:10, 6:45, 10:25pm

***Avatar (3-D):** 9:30am, 12:05, 4:30, 8:00, 11:35pm

The Blind Side: 11:25am, 2:25, 5:25, 8:25, 11:25pm

Did You Hear About the Morgans?: 9:45am, 12:20, 2:55, 5:30, 8:05, 10:40pm

Invictus: 10:30am, 1:30, 4:40, 7:45, 10:45pm

It's Complicated: 11:10am, 1:50, 3:40, 4:45, 6:30, 7:40, 9:20, 10:30pm, 12:05am

Nine: 10:35am, 1:25, 4:05, 7:00, 9:45pm

The Princess and the Frog: 9:40am, 12:05, 2:40, 5:10, 7:50, 10:20pm

Sherlock Holmes: 10:15am, 11:15, 1:15, 2:15, 4:15, 5:15, 7:15, 8:15, 10:15, 11:15pm

Up in the Air: 11:00am, 1:40, 4:25, 7:05, 9:40pm

CINEMARK CEDAR PARK

1335 E. Whitestone, 800/FANDANGO. Call for complete showtimes Dec. 25-31.

***Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel:**

Fri-Sun, 10:50am, 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30pm

It's Complicated: Fri, 10:30am, 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:10pm

***Sherlock Holmes:** Fri-Sun, 10:40am, 1:40, 4:40, 7:40, 10:40pm

***Up in the Air:** Fri, 11:10am, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50pm; Sat-Sun, 11:20am, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00pm

CINEMARK HILL COUNTRY GALLERIA 14

12812 Hill Country Blvd., 800/FANDANGO.

***Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel:** Fri, 12:55, 1:45, 2:40, 3:30, 4:15, 5:05, 6:05, 6:45, 7:35, 8:30, 9:15, 10:05; Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:15am, 12:05, 12:55, 1:45, 2:40, 3:40, 4:15, 5:05, 6:05, 6:45, 7:35, 8:30, 9:15, 10:05pm

***Avatar:** Fri, 1:30, 4:05, 5:20, 7:40, 9:00;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 12:15, 1:30, 4:05, 5:20, 7:40, 9:00

***Avatar (3-D):** Fri, 2:50, 6:30, 10:10;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:00am, 2:50, 6:30, 10:10pm

The Blind Side: Fri, 2:45, 5:50, 8:55;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:40am, 2:45, 5:50, 8:55pm

***Did You Hear About the Morgans?:** Fri, 1:50, 4:30, 7:15, 9:55; Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:10am, 1:50, 4:30, 7:15, 9:55pm

***It's Complicated:** Fri, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 12:30, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50

***Nine:** Fri, 3:40, 7:00, 10:00; Sat-Thu (12/31), 12:45, 3:40, 7:00, 10:00

The Princess and the Frog: Fri, 2:35, 5:10, 7:50, 10:15; Sat-Thu (12/31), 12:00, 2:35, 5:10, 7:50, 10:15

***Sherlock Holmes:** Fri, 2:15, 3:45, 5:30, 7:05, 8:45, 10:20; Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:00am, 12:35, 2:15, 3:45, 5:30, 7:05, 8:45, 10:20pm

***Up in the Air:** Fri, 2:05, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:20am, 2:05, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30pm

CINEMARK MOVIES 8 ROUND ROCK

2120 N. Mays, Round Rock, 512/388-2848.

Discounts daily before 5pm.

Astro Boy: Fri, 1:50, 4:15, 7:40, 10:05;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:30am, 1:50, 4:15, 7:40, 10:05pm

Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs: Fri, 1:30, 4:00, 7:00, 9:30; Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:15am, 1:30, 4:00, 7:00, 9:30pm

Couples Retreat: Fri, 3:45, 7:20, 9:55; Sat-Thu (12/31), 12:30, 3:45, 7:20, 9:55

G-Force: Fri, 2:45, 5:10; Sat-Thu (12/31), 12:15, 2:45, 5:10

Law Abiding Citizen: Fri, 1:40, 4:30, 7:10, 9:45;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:00am, 1:40, 4:30, 7:10, 9:45pm

Paranormal Activity: Fri, 2:30, 5:00, 7:55, 10:10;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:55, 10:10

The Stepfather: Fri, 3:30, 6:45, 9:20; Sat-Thu (12/31), 12:45, 3:30, 6:45, 9:20

Where the Wild Things Are: Fri, 2:15, 4:45, 7:30, 10:00;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 11:45am, 2:15, 4:45, 7:30, 10:00pm

Zombieland: 8:00, 10:15

CINEMARK ROUND ROCK

4401 N. I-35, Round Rock, 800/FANDANGO.

Cost for 3-D shows is regular ticket price plus a \$3.50 premium.

***Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel:** 9:30am, 10:20, 11:10, 12:00, 12:40, 1:40, 2:20, 3:20, 4:20, 5:00, 6:00, 6:40, 7:30, 8:20, 9:10, 9:50pm

***Avatar:** 9:45am, 12:20, 1:30, 4:00, 5:10, 8:00, 9:00pm

***Avatar (3-D):** 11:00am, 2:40, 6:30, 10:10pm

The Blind Side: 9:50am, 12:50, 3:50, 7:00, 10:00pm

***Did You Hear About the Morgans?:** 10:10am, 12:45, 3:30, 6:50, 9:30pm

***It's Complicated:** 10:50am, 2:00, 4:50, 7:50, 10:40pm

***Nine:** 10:30am, 1:20, 4:30, 7:20, 10:20pm

***The Princess and the Frog:** 9:40am, 12:10, 2:50, 5:20, 8:10, 10:35pm

***Sherlock Holmes:** 10:00am, 11:30, 1:00, 3:00, 4:10, 6:10, 7:10, 9:20, 10:15pm

Up in the Air: 10:40am, 1:50, 4:40, 7:40, 10:30pm

CINEMARK SOUTHPARK MEADOWS

9900 S. I-35, 800/FANDANGO. Cost for 3-D

shows is regular ticket price plus a \$2.50 premium.

***Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel:** Fri, 12:00, 12:45, 1:30, 2:20, 3:10, 4:00, 4:40, 5:30, 6:25, 7:00, 7:45, 8:45, 9:25, 10:15; Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:20am, 11:10, 12:00, 12:45, 1:30, 2:20, 3:10, 4:00, 4:40, 5:30, 6:25, 7:00, 7:45, 8:45, 9:25, 10:15pm

***Avatar:** Fri, 12:25, 1:40, 3:55, 5:10, 7:25, 8:40;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:10am, 12:25, 1:40, 3:55, 5:10, 7:25, 8:40pm

***Avatar (3-D):** 11:30am, 3:00, 6:30, 10:00pm

The Blind Side: Fri, 1:20, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:15am, 1:20, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30pm

***Did You Hear About the Morgans?:** Fri, 1:10, 3:40, 6:40, 9:30; Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:30am, 1:10, 3:40, 6:40, 9:30pm

***It's Complicated:** Fri, 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:45;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:40am, 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:45pm

***Nine:** Fri, 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10:10; Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:05am, 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10:10pm

***The Princess and the Frog:** Fri, 1:35, 4:35, 7:35, 10:25; Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:35am, 1:35, 4:35, 7:35, 10:25pm

***Sherlock Holmes:** Fri, 11:40am, 1:00, 2:40, 4:05, 5:40, 7:10, 8:35, 10:20pm; Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:00am, 11:40, 1:00, 2:40, 4:05, 5:40, 7:10, 8:35, 10:20pm

***Up in the Air:** Fri, 1:05, 3:50, 6:50, 9:40;

Sat-Thu (12/31), 10:25am, 1:05, 3:50, 6:50, 9:40pm

DOBIE THEATRE

2025 Guadalupe (Dobie Mall, second floor), 472-FILM.

Antichrist: Fri-Wed, 4:45, 10:10; Thu (12/31), 4:45pm

Me and Orson Welles: Fri-Sun, 2:00, 4:30, 7:15, 9:50;

Mon-Wed, 4:30, 7:15, 9:50; Thu (12/31), 4:30, 7:15

Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire:

Fri-Sun, 2:15, 7:30; Mon-Thu (12/31), 7:30pm

The Road: Fri-Sun, 2:30, 5:00, 7:45, 10:20; Mon-Wed, 5:00, 7:45, 10:20; Thu (12/31), 5:00, 7:45

Sherlock Holmes: Fri-Sun, 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00;

Mon-Wed, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00; Thu (12/31), 4:00, 7:00

GALAXY HIGHLAND 10

North I-35 & Middle Fiskville, 467-7305. No

one under 18 will be allowed in the theatre on

Friday and Saturday after 7pm without an adult.

Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel: 10:20am, 12:35, 2:50, 5:05, 7:20, 9:35pm

***Avatar (3-D):** Fri-Sat, 9:30am, 9:45, 12:30, 12:45, 1:00, 3:45, 4:00, 4:15, 7:00, 7:15, 7:30, 10:15, 10:30, 11:00pm;

Sun-Thu (12/31), 9:30am, 9:45, 12:30, 12:45, 1:00, 3:45, 4:00, 4:15, 7:00, 7:15, 7:30, 10:15, 10:30pm

The Blind Side: 1:25, 7:05

Did You Hear About the Morgans?: Fri-Sat, 10:10am,

12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:25, 11:45pm; Sun-Thu

(12/31), 10:10am, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:25pm

Invictus: 10:05am, 4:15, 10:00pm

titles, but it's such a streamlined suspenser that you can forgive the dopey bits and go with the good-men-gone-bad flow of the film. Dillon plays an armored-car guard who, together with a crew of five others (among them Fishburne, who appears to be having a ball, and *The Professional's* Reno), plans an inside job worth a cool \$42 million. (12/11/2009) - Marc Savlov
★★★ Tinseltown South

ASTRO BOY D: David Bowers; with the voices of Freddie Highmore, Nicolas Cage, Nathan Lane, Donald Sutherland, Kristen Bell, Eugene Levy, Bill Nighy, Samuel L. Jackson, Charlize Theron. (PG, 94 min.)

Osamu Tezuka's pioneering Japanese *manga* and anime series about the coolest robot kid ever finally achieves Americanized big-screen status. Although something has been lost in the translation, this *Astro Boy* remains true to the heart and soul of the original. Screenwriter Timothy Harris comes up with a few new twists on Tezuka's original - most notably the nascent romance between Astro and plucky surface-dweller Cora (Bell) - and this *Astro Boy* moves along at least as snappily as its rocket-powered protagonist. But ultimately, Bowers' take on the anime legend feels too indebted to the far superior *The Iron Giant* and overstreamlined in both story and animation. It's a totally serviceable reboot for young people who are just discovering the joys of manga, but I can't help but miss the raw animation and even rarer emotional aesthetics of the original televised anime series. (10/23/2009) - Marc Savlov
★★★ Movies 8

AVATAR D: James Cameron; with Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Sigourney Weaver, Stephen Lang, Michelle Rodriguez, Giovanni Ribisi, Joel David Moore, CCH Pounder, Wes Studi, Laz Alonso. (PG-13, 162 min.)

At 162 minutes and a cost of somewhere between \$250 million and \$300 million dollars, Cameron's ne plus ultra of futuristic mechanized mayhem and seamless CGI trickery is both a cinematically spectacular slab of virtually nonstop action and an unmistakable diatribe against corporatized American imperialism. There are the usual muscled-up boys (and equally powerful girls) with big-bang toys, crying havoc and letting slip the dogs of war, to be sure, but at its heart this mammoth film is ... a chick flick. Despite a script that at times leaves its most interesting characters delivering some of the most banal lines in a Cameron film thus far, somehow it all holds together. As a purely visual experience, it's like nothing you've ever seen before: a lush, sexy, primal world created entirely by Cameron's legions of CGI masters. *Avatar* is thrilling, lovely, sad, and explosive in all the right ways. (12/18/2009) - Marc Savlov

★★★★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse South, Alamo Drafthouse Village, Barton Creek Square, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, IMAX Theatre, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

THE BLIND SIDE D: John Lee Hancock; with Sandra Bullock, Quinton Aaron, Tim McGraw, Kathy Bates, Jae Head, Lily Collins, Ray McKinnon, Kim Dickens. (PG-13, 126 min.)

Writer/director Hancock (*The Rookie*) overcomes most of the built-in problems inherent to inspirational sports dramas. Also in the film's plus column are two standout performances: from Aaron, as the sweet-mannered but largely uncommunicative football player Michael (Aaron does some very subtle body work, using the way he carries his heft as an emotional signpost), and Bullock, as the prickly, straight-talking Memphis socialite who welcomes Michael into her home and eventually makes him a part of the family. This is a dream role for Bullock - finally, a job that requires her to be adult, tart, and smart, all at once - and she makes good use of it. It's not an altogether convincing portrait, but it is an entertaining, even moving one, and the forcefulness of her presence goes a long way in pulling the film back from the brink of cuddliness. (11/20/2009) - Kimberley Jones

★★★★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse South, Barton Creek Square, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

THE BOONDOCK SAINTS II: ALL SAINTS DAY D: Troy Duffy; with Sean Patrick Flanery, Norman Reedus, Billy Connolly, Clifton Collins Jr., Julie Benz, Judd Nelson, David Della Rocco, Bob Marley, Brian Mahoney, David Ferry. (R, 118 min.)

Director Duffy's wickedly bloodthirsty and strangely humorous *The Boondock Saints* was a cult hit waiting to happen that somehow didn't. As a post-post-Tarantino hipster-shoot-'em-up, it seemed oddly dated back when it received a micro-release from Miramax before heading straight to video and developing a substantial following, in part due to the canny documentary *Overnight*, which chronicles the *Boondock* director's meteoric nonrise to and ego-fueled fall from indie cinema heaven. The original is all muzzle flash and zero smarts, but its loopy storyline, which has hard-drinking, harder-fighting Boston-Irish sibling vigilantes Connor and Murphy MacManus (Flanery and Reedus) laying waste to both the Italian and Russian mobs in modern-day Beantown, is delirious, brutish, testosterone-fueled un-fun. *All Saints Day*, from its dullish title on down to its final bullet, is the sort of outrageously bad filmmaking that defines the phrase "unnecessary sequel." Even fans of these blood-soaked bouncing Murphys might think twice before giving the downward-spiraling director a third chance. (12/04/2009) - Marc Savlov
★ Tinseltown South

BROTHERS D: Jim Sheridan; with Jake Gyllenhaal, Natalie Portman, Tobey Maguire, Sam Shepard, Mare Winningham, Bailee Madison, Taylor Geare, Clifton Collins Jr. (R, 110 min.)

Inferior in practically every way to Danish director Susanne Bier's original *Brødre* - but now with more U2! - *Brothers* draws from two rampaging traditions, Greek tragedy and romantic melodrama, and renders both weirdly inert. Maguire plays the elder Cahill brother, Sam, a captain in the Marines; an attentive husband to his high school sweetheart, Grace (Portman); and a devoted father to two little girls. *Brothers*, in its most effective and engrossing stretches, examines the malleability of the roles the various Cahills are assigned, either by themselves or by others. All the actors do well enough, but they don't mesh at all - it's as if everyone's acting in his or her own movie - and there's simply no lived-in quality to the film. Sheridan and scribe David Benioff stick closely to the bullet points of the original but can't seem to translate the rich complexity of the characters and the choices they make. (12/11/2009) - Kimberley Jones
★★★ Tinseltown South

CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS D: Phil Lord, Chris Miller; with the voices of Bill Hader, Anna Faris, James Caan, Andy Samberg, Bruce Campbell, Mr. T, Neil Patrick Harris, Benjamin Bratt, Al Roker, Lauren Graham. (PG, 90 min.)

The wildest fantasy of every hamburger-happy kid is realized in this zippy, lippy animated adaptation of the popular children's book. When a misunderstood inventor named Flint Lockwood (voiced by Hader) cooks up a contraption that converts water into food, causing all matter of epicurean delights to fall from the sky, he transforms overnight from town pariah to boy hero. The smart, lightly snarky *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs* is a visual feast, impressively rendering in 3-D ingenious sights such as a spaghetti tornado and a Jell-O funhouse. And the sounds - including cheeky voice work by Mr. T, Harris, and Bratt - are a blast. All told, this is spirited play with unlabeled lessons about good citizenship and the power of pluck that slide down as easily as the ice cream snowdrifts that blanket the ground. (09/18/2009) - Kimberley Jones

★★★★ Movies 8

COUPLES RETREAT D: Peter Billingsley; with Vince Vaughn, Jason Bateman, Jon Favreau, Faizon Love, Malin Akerman, Kristin Davis, Kristen Bell, Kali Hawk, Jean Reno, Peter Serafinowicz, Carlos Ponce, John Michael Higgins, Ken Jeong. (PG-13, 113 min.)

Intelligence is insulted at every turn in this date movie from former "swingers" Vaughn and Favreau, who now write themselves roles as middle-aged men grown flabby in both body and spirit. Vaughn also produces and, as the film's top-lined star, plays the only happily married man in this story's quartet of couples who attend a weeklong couples retreat. Random sequences follow in succession: a badly choreographed shark attack, a massage that requires a self-serve happy ending, ridiculous therapy sessions, a Fabio look-alike yoga instructor (Ponce) who provides the requisite homophobic sight gags, and a renegade excursion to the singles' side of the resort where, magically, everything resolves. Logic and credibility are defied at almost every opportunity. Even so, some of this might have worked if the script was, say, funny. The scenery looks good enough to be a screensaver, as one of the characters exclaims, and of course, the background offers an endless array of scantily clad hardbodies. (10/09/2009) - Marjorie Baumgarten
● Movies 8

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS? D: Marc Lawrence; with Hugh Grant, Sarah Jessica Parker, Sam Elliott, Mary Steenburgen, Michael Kelly, Elisabeth Moss, Jesse Lieberman, Wilford Brimley. (PG-13, 103 min.)

From its difficult-to-remember title on down, *Did You Hear About the Morgans?* is a forgettable and lackluster fish-out-of-water rom-com. The film exploits tired stereotypes about city and country folks while being propped up by the kind of irrational narrative logic that can only exist in the movies. Paul and Meryl Morgan (Grant and Parker) are a New York City couple who, though separated, together witness a homicide. The authorities decide to place the Morgans in the Witness Protection Program and ship them to Wyoming. Of course, a week cooped up together out West reminds the couple of how much they still love each other. The movie's wan script by writer-director Lawrence almost makes the viewer wish that actors Grant and Parker, who each here underplay their signature stammering and bubblyness, were allowed free reign to infuse their characters with greater liveliness. Used with even less regard for character definition are the supporting actors. (12/18/2009) - Marjorie Baumgarten
★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse Village, Barton Creek Square, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

DISNEY'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL D: Robert Zemeckis; with Jim Carrey, Gary Oldman, Colin Firth, Cary Elwes, Robin Wright Penn, Bob Hoskins, Daryl Sabara. (PG, 96 min.)

The initial "gee, whillikers" reaction to Zemeckis' motion-capture rendition of the Dickens classic eventually turns to "bah, humbug" as the film's technological novelty gives way to narrative mundanity. So absent is any emotional content that it's as though Dickens' ultimate cautionary tale is a mere afterthought onto which Zemeckis can drape his live-action/computer-animated visual hybrid that he has now used on his third sequential movie (following *Beowulf* and *The Polar Express*). Scrooge (Carrey) is still the same miserly old coot we know him to be, but instead of the transformative effect of Scrooge's glimpses into his past, present, and future, this film emphasizes the phantasmic elements of the ghosts and the pliable mechanics they use to show Scrooge such privileged viewpoints of his life. Carrey, never a slouch when it comes to his output, plays all three ghosts in addition to Scrooge. The actor sheds his usual silliness and adopts more of the tone and breeding of a British thespian. (11/06/2009) - Marjorie Baumgarten
★★ Metropolitan, Tinseltown North

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THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG (G) Fri. - Thu. 9:50 12:00 2:15 4:30 7:00 9:30
INVICTUS (PG-13) Fri. - Thu. 10:05 4:15 10:00
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Christmas on Mars

Christmas on Mars (2008) D: Wayne Coyne, Brad Beesley and George Salisbury. (NR, 82 min.) **Music Monday.** Psychedelic rock band the Flaming Lips perform and provide the score for frontman Coyne's directorial debut. It's full of sci-fi trippiness about a space colonist's hallucinations during a Christmas pageant. @Alamo Ritz, Monday, 10:15pm.

AN EDUCATION D: Lone Scherfig; with Carey Mulligan, Peter Sarsgaard, Alfred Molina, Cara Seymour, Dominic Cooper, Rosamund Pike, Olivia Williams, Emma Thompson. (PG-13, 95 min.)

Everything about Scherfig's coming-of-age story about a girl in the London suburb of Twickenham in 1961 is spot-on. The film tells a wonderfully nuanced story about a teenager's longing to break free of her provincial surroundings and enter the world at large. It's a story about her education in the university of life, an impartial proving ground that seduces many into its fold but whose revolving door is just as likely to hit you on the ass on the way out. Scherfig directs the drama, which is based on a memoir by Lynn Barber and adapted for the screen by Nick Hornby, with a steady but subtle hand. Crowning *An Education* is the central performance of Mulligan as 16-year-old Jenny: In this breakthrough role, the actress stuns us with a range that goes from dimpled schoolgirl to oh-so-sophisticated teen to Audrey Hepburn look-alike to disillusioned-but-wiser adult. (11/13/2009) - Marjorie Baumgarten

★★★★ Arbor

FANTASTIC MR. FOX D: Wes Anderson; with the voices of George Clooney, Meryl Streep, Jason Schwartzman, Bill Murray, Wallace Wolodarsky, Eric Chase Anderson, Michael Gambon, Willem Dafoe. (PG, 87 min.)

Certainly the source material appears, at first glance, far afield of Anderson's usual lens-finder. But instead of bending to the will of the source, Roald Dahl's 1970 children's book about a turf war between farmers and foxes, Anderson has instead made it conform rather giddily to his own sensibilities. This is an animated film that happily has room for both an existentialist dread of death and a grinning joie de vivre. Clooney voices the titular Mr. Fox, a former thief made to go straight by his wife (Streep) when they give birth to a son, Ash (Schwartzman). But Mr. Fox is too visionary and, well, prankish to stay settled down, so he masterminds one last caper. *Fantastic Mr. Fox* is rendered in traditional stop-motion animation - a style nearly bygone in these digital days - and both the antiquity and the laboriousness of that process are perfectly suited to Anderson. There's a terrific amount of talent corralled here. (11/27/2009) - Kimberley Jones

★★★★ Alamo Drafthouse South

G-FORCE D: Hoyt Yeatman; with Bill Nighy, Will Arnett, Zach Galifianakis, Kelli Garner, Gabriel Casseus, Jack Conley, Tyler Patrick Jones; with the voices of Nicolas Cage, Steve Buscemi, Tracy Morgan, Sam Rockwell, Penélope Cruz, Jon Favreau. (PG, 89 min.)

The adolescent ticket-taker at the matinee I attended told me I have pretty hair, and I nearly fell over - how often, really, are people kind without provocation? A little ashamed, I decided I was going to be a better person, starting right then

and there - starting, in fact, with *G-Force*, a movie I had an hour before referred to, sight unseen, as "that goddamn gerbil spy movie." My first mistake: *G-Force* stars guinea pigs. My second mistake: I should have started this open-hearts policy in another 89 minutes, which is how long it takes to weather this technically competent if utterly artless family film from überproducer Jerry Bruckheimer. In its gadget-lust and obvious *Transformers* envy, *G-Force* is as loud and stupid as anything Michael Bay ever cooked up, and its characters' sketchings are similarly crude. But the real head-stumper is how so much time, effort, and money could be spent in the service of something so colossally dumb, vacant, and pointless. (07/31/2009) - Kimberley Jones

✚ Movies 8

INVICTUS D: Clint Eastwood; with Morgan Freeman, Matt Damon, Tony Kgoroge, Julian Lewis Jones, Adjoa Andoh. (PG, 134 min.)

Freeman teams up once again with director Eastwood to play South African president and international hero Nelson Mandela. The story is based on John Carlin's book *Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation*. The game in question is rugby, and the events surround Mandela's enthusiastic support of the South African team's attempt to win the 1995 Rugby World Cup. Although a fan of the sport, Mandela's actions were born of an ulterior motive: that of building a post-apartheid nation. With racial tensions high after his release from prison and ascension to the presidency, Mandela saw a means of bridging the fears between his newly powerful black constituency and the fearful, white old guard. Eastwood's direction, though typically assured and understated, is nevertheless flabby at times. Yet *Invictus* remains inspiring and educational, especially during this present time in America in which we are supposedly muddling our way into a post-racial society. (12/11/2009) - Marjorie Baumgarten

★★★★ Alamo Drafthouse Village, Barton Creek Square, Highland, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

LAW ABIDING CITIZEN D: F. Gary Gray; with Jamie Foxx, Gerard Butler, Regina Hall, Colm Meaney, Bruce McGill, Leslie Bibb, Michael Irby. (R, 108 min.)

What to make of a film that opens with a brutal home invasion which leaves a mother and child dead and then uses that ghastly jumping-off point and all its circumlocutions - legal, moral, and mortal - as an assiduous flaying of the criminal justice system? Sounds promising so far, but *Law Abiding Citizen* ends on an even grimmer note, stuck fast between righteous indignation at our bankrupt system of jurisprudence and our (presumed) need for heroes. Butler turns a perfectly respectable, even riveting performance as the dead family's husband and father, who seeks a nominal form of justice via fast-rising D.A.'s assistant Nick Rice (Foxx). What he instead receives is a quick-and-dirty lesson in the painful subtleties and Faustian backroom dealings of the Philadelphia courts. Foxx has a thankless role here subbing for the entire justice system, and his main mode of expression is steely determination and precious little else. (10/16/2009) - Marc Savlov

★★ Movies 8

ME AND ORSON WELLES

D: Richard Linklater; with Zac Efron, Claire Danes, Christian McKay, Ben Chaplin, Zoe Kazan, Eddie Marsan, Kelly Reilly, James Tupper, Leo Bill. (PG-13, 113 min.)

The "me" in this boy-meets-boy period comedy is Richard Samuels (Efron), a dreamy-eyed high schooler who quite literally stumbles into the part of his life, as a walk-on in the New York theatrical production of *Julius Caesar*, Orson Welles' barn-burning 1937 debut production for his Mercury Theatre troupe. Richard, light on his feet, talks his way into Welles' production; Welles (McKay), only 22 and admiring of anyone with pluck (so long as said pluck doesn't steal from his own spotlight), takes a liking to the kid. McKay's performance seems effortless, so commanding is it, careening from cocksure boy genius to bellowing, beleaguered director to ice-in-his-veins slayer of baby dragons

such as disposable actors and mewling rival suitors. Efron brings a lively physicality to the film but his acting, nevertheless, lacks a certain sophistication. Linklater has crafted an always genial and at times even joyful period charmer about that moment on the cusp: before a boy becomes a man and another man becomes a mythological figure. (12/11/2009) - Kimberley Jones

THE MEN WHO STARE AT GOATS

D: Grant Heslov; with George Clooney, Ewan McGregor, Jeff Bridges, Kevin Spacey, Stephen Lang, Robert Patrick, Waleed Zuaiter, Stephen Root. (R, 93 min.)

All goats aside, this is one odd duck. A title card reads, "More of this is true than you would believe," but it's impossible to tell what's factual in this fictionalized take on Jon Ronson's book about Army experiments in the paranormal because it all sounds so deeply ludicrous. It's never uninteresting - but never entirely successful, either. Reeling from his wife's infidelity, journalist Bob Wilton (McGregor) leaves his podunk paper in Ann Arbor, Mich., for Iraq, and bumps into the story of a lifetime, packaged neatly in the mustachioed frame of Clooney's Lyn Cassady, psychic spy. This is Heslov's first time directing, after co-writing and producing with Clooney *Good Night, and Good Luck*, and there are too many tiny blunders to call his debut a triumph. Still, there is Clooney's deceptively layered performance, some startling bits of laugh-out-loud absurdity, and the not-at-all-negligible pleasure to be had in a cockeyed point of view. (11/06/2009) - Kimberley Jones

★★★ Tinseltown South

NINJA ASSASSIN D: James McTeigue; with Rain, Naomie Harris, Ben Miles, Rick Yune. (R, 99 min.)

Pitched somewhere between a preadolescent boy's fantasy world of nunchaku and *shuriken* (or fighting sticks and throwing stars) and a wildly off-kilter exercise in homoerotic beefcakery, this astonishingly crappy slo-mo gorefest proves once and for all that McTeigue wasn't the man responsible for the excellent *V for Vendetta* and that the writer/producer Wachowski brothers were. I'm not sure there's *anybody* at the helm of *Ninja Assassin*, which just flat-out sucks rice dumplings, beginning with its generic title on down to its preposterously dumb view of the ups and downs and, you know, bullet-avoidance techniques of your average contemporary ninja. That would be ginchy Korean pop-lite star Rain who plays Raizo, abducted as a child by the not even vaguely mysterious Ozuno Clan, and thereafter raised to be, like, totally unkillable and way superbuff. The convoluted and really, really lousy storyline has sexy Interpol agent Mika Coretti (Harris) digging up connections between international assassinations and the Ozunus. (11/27/2009) - Marc Savlov

● Tinseltown South



The Black Candle

The Black Candle (2008) D: M.K. Asante Jr.; narrated by Maya Angelou. (NR, 71 min.) The film is the first feature documentary about the history of the global, Pan-African celebration of Kwanzaa. An audience discussion will follow the screening. Call 974-4926 or send an e-mail to faith.weaver@ci.austin.tx.us to reserve a seat. @Carver Library, Thursday, 10am, 2pm.

OLD DOGS D: Walt Becker; with Robin Williams, John Travolta, Kelly Preston, Seth Green, Ella Bleu Travolta, Conner Rayburn, Lori Loughlin, Matt Dillon, Rita Wilson, Dax Shepard, Bernie Mac, Luis Guzmán, Ann-Margret, Amy Sedaris, Justin Long. (PG, 88 min.)

Old Dogs amounts to little more than an opportunity for Williams and the Travolta family (parents Travolta and Preston co-star alongside daughter Ella Bleu Travolta) to cash nice paychecks. *Old Dogs* is not so much bad as it is witless and predictable. No one's heart seems to be in the affair, and the paint-by-numbers comedy just doesn't sell itself. Travolta and Williams play Charlie and Dan, phenomenally successful sports marketers who are on the verge of the biggest deal of their careers when Dan is informed that he is the parent of twin 7-year-olds. Trivia connoisseurs should note that this film was Bernie Mac's last; *Old Dogs'* release was delayed eight months out of respect for the dead. Numerous other top-flight performers (among them Dillon, Ann-Margret, Wilson, an unbilled Long) make what amount to little more than cameo appearances. (11/27/2009) - Marjorie Baumgarten

✚ Tinseltown South

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY D: Oren Peli; with Katie Featherston, Micah Sloat, Michael Bayouth. (R, 96 min.)

Don't believe the hype: *Paranormal Activity* may be a lot of things, but the words "scary" and "movie" are not among them. It is instead nothing more or less than an excruciatingly tedious YouTube gag cleverly marketed to go viral in the broadest and most box-office-friendly way. (On the other hand, Paramount's midnight-screening, street-team hype machine is to be congratulated for pulling such a fast one on both audiences and critics alike.) Like *The Blair Witch Project*, its far creepier antecedent, *Paranormal Activity* purports to exist as actual found footage - the opening text says it was discovered by the San Diego Police Department - but that's no excuse for foisting a poorly acted (whoops! make that "realistic"), shoddily conceived, anti-art-directed nonstarter that pays off only in its final 10 seconds on a gullible moviegoing public that only wants to have its collective hair raised. At 96 minutes, it's at least 90 minutes too long. (10/09/2009) - Marc Savlov

● Movies 8

PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL 'PUSH' BY SAPPHIRE

D: Lee Daniels; with Gabourey Sidibe, Mo'Nique, Paula Patton, Mariah Carey, Sherri Shepherd, Lenny Kravitz. (R, 109 min.)

Much like its title protagonist Precious - a sexually, emotionally, and physically abused 16-year-old African-American girl who is functionally illiterate, morbidly obese, and pregnant with her second child fathered by her own father - this film is a rough-hewn entity with unlikely odds for success. Yet both the character and the movie overcome their handicaps to become the kind of success stories that the American mythmaking machinery loves to love. Claireece Precious Jones (Sidibe) and her mother, Mary (Mo'Nique), are women we rarely notice. But instead of looking the other way, this movie and the popular book on which it is based place them front and center. Newcomer Sidibe is a real find and not just a looming presence and narrative device. Daniels has also done a marvelous job of casting famous friends of his and getting heart-stirring, stripped-down performances from them all. Despite achieving such a remarkably raw and naturalistic tone, Daniels ups the ante with extreme melodramatic touches. (11/20/2009) - Marjorie Baumgarten

★★★ Arbor, Dobie, Highland, Metropolitan

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The Holy Mountain



The Holy Mountain (1973)

D: Alejandro Jodorowsky; with Jodorowsky, Horácio Salinas, Zamira Saunders. (R, 114 min.)

High for the Holidays. Trippy imagery, religious overtones, and hallucinatory symbolism are the hallmarks of in this epic film from cult visionary Jodorowsky. A Best Drug Story contest – with prizes – will be held before the film. @Alamo Ritz, Sunday, 7:50pm; Tuesday, 7:45pm.

THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG

D: Ron Clements, John Musker; with the voices of Anika Noni Rose, Bruno Campos, Keith David, Michael-Leon Wooley, Jennifer Cody, Jim Cummings, Peter Bartlett, John Goodman, Jenifer Lewis, Terrence Howard, Oprah Winfrey. (G, 97 min.)

The Disney 2-D animators, who have been losing face, of late, to their CG and 3-D brethren, here stage a bold, vibrant, and altogether bloodless coup on all things Pixar, and whaddaya know? They win. (For now, anyway.) Set in Twenties-era New Orleans, this umpteenth version of what was originally a Brothers Grimm fairy tale makes the Crescent City a major character in and of itself while dusting off the old story of girl-meets-frog and tricking it up with all manner of raucous, jazzy hoodoo, voodoo, and bayou panache. Directors Clements and Musker are the guys behind *Aladdin* and *The Little Mermaid*, and they employ their keen senses of story, pacing, and killer comic rhythm to support a new twist (several, actually) on an old amphibian. Also, the film features a nearly all African-American cast. It's Disney's best traditionally animated outing in ages. (12/11/2009) – Marc Savlov

★★★ Barton Creek Square, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

THE ROAD D: John Hillcoat; with Viggo Mortensen, Kodi Smit-McPhee, Charlize Theron, Robert Duvall, Guy Pearce, Molly Parker. (R, 119 min.)

Cormac McCarthy's novel, by any standard, is no one's idea of a giddy, fun, summer beach read. It's the story of a father and son (credited as "Man" and "Boy") wandering through a blighted American wasteland beset by some (unnamed) catastrophe. Cannibalism, rape, and worse are the order of the day, but McCarthy's unswerving humanity sees the novel through to a conclusion that is no less wrenching for the rusty sliver of hope it offers. Director Hillcoat proves an inspired choice to helm this film adaptation, and his rendering of McCarthy's words can't be faulted for its visual replication of the author's grim picture of mankind's final days. Mortensen, viewed either as a patriarchal Christ figure or simply as a devoted father, works minor miracles in what is essentially a one-note role. Who knew there were so many facial expressions approximating unrelenting despair? (11/27/2009) – Marc Savlov

★★★ Alamo Drafthouse South, Arbor, Dobie, Tinseltown South

THE STEPFATHER D: Nelson McCormick; with Dylan Walsh, Sela Ward, Penn Badgley, Amber Heard, Sherry Stringfield, Skyler Samuels, Braeden Lemasters. (PG-13, 104 min.)

The only raison d'être for *The Stepfather* – a dull, plodding remake of director Joseph Ruben's brutally suspenseful 1987 film of the same name – is for fans of the original to remind people who haven't seen it that there's a far more disturbing and transgressive *Stepfather* out there. It was penned by the late, great crime novelist Donald E. Westlake and resonated with Reagan-era family values. It also featured a standout, career-defining performance from a subtly unhinged Terry O'Quinn (*Lost*) as a deranged family man who marries, murders, and then remarries, desperate to re-create his own twisted vision of a picture-perfect nuclear family that never existed in

the first place. As written by J.S. Cardone and played by Walsh, *this* mad daddy feels contrived and unconvincing. He's going through the motions of O'Quinn's character, but there's no real context for his mania other than the fact that he's clearly, transparently insane. (10/23/2009) – Marc Savlov

★ Movies 8

3 IDIOTS D: Rajkumar Hirani; with Aamir Khan, Kareena Kapoor, Madhavan, Boman Irani, Sharman Joshi. (NR, 172 min., subtitled)

Not reviewed at press time. Two friends embark on a quest for their lost buddy in this new Bollywood comedy. (12/18/2009) – Marjorie Baumgarten

Tinseltown South

THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON

D: Chris Weitz; with Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Taylor Lautner, Ashley Greene, Michael Sheen, Peter Facinelli, Billy Burke. (PG-13, 130 min.)

Catherine Hardwicke started the saga with last year's *Twilight*, a deliciously trashy mash of pulp and pop art that managed to take seriously its central lovers – doomy vampire Edward (Pattinson) and his teenage human paramour, Bella (Stewart) – while maintaining a sense of humor about itself. But Summit Entertainment chucked Hardwicke for the second installment, and her successor, Weitz, brings zero sense of play or sexual energy to the piece. It's as if everything's been buffed to achieve maximum banality. At the film's beginning, Edward dumps Bella – like, the day after her birthday, OMG – and is mostly absent in *New Moon*, which turns out to be a boon. Bella, incapacitated with grief, turns to her old pal Jacob (Lautner), but then Jacob starts morphing into a werewolf. The digital effects here are top-notch (as were the ones Weitz supervised in his last film, *The Golden Compass*), and *New Moon* excels in two centerpiece action sequences. (11/27/2009) – Kimberley Jones

★★★ Metropolitan

2012 D: Roland Emmerich; with John Cusack, Amanda Peet, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Thandie Newton, Danny Glover, Woody Harrelson, Oliver Platt, Zlatko Buric, Beatrice Rosen, Liam James, Morgan Lily. (PG-13, 158 min.)

Life is simple in Emmerich's films. Confronted with unprecedented perils, the characters in his disaster epics manage to reaffirm their broken loves, make amends for slipshod parenting, and, most impressively, outrun fireballs and certain death with their hides and wits intact. Emmerich takes the disaster-movie genre to its logical conclusion in *2012*, obliterating or reconfiguring vast swaths of the planet's surface (solar storms boil the Earth's core; tectonic havoc ensues) and providing a 158-minute thrill ride that zips by like the real thing. Over the duration, there are homages (or lifts) to apocalyptic exercises of decades past (particularly *When Worlds Collide*) and plenty of cheeky references to Emmerich's own résumé. *2012* is PTSD – Popcorn Thrills and Sappy meloDrama – superseded to counter current real-world terrors, and it is, by turns, thrilling, ridiculous (the script, by Emmerich and longtime co-writer Harald Kloser, is riddled with howlingly goofy lines and seriously improbable deus-ex-machina moments), and just plain big, dumb fun. (11/13/2009) – Marc Savlov

★★ Millennium, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South

UP IN THE AIR D: Jason Reitman; with George Clooney, Vera Farmiga, Anna Kendrick, Jason Bateman, Amy Morton, Melanie Lynskey, J.K. Simmons, Sam Elliott, Danny McBride. (R, 109 min.)

Either by design or default, Reitman has customized a film perfectly in tune with these economically distressed, tetchy times, which may explain the near-universal hosannas with which *Up in the Air* has been met. Reitman sets the film in motion with an opening-credit sequence that highlights how America's vistas look from up above – apropos, considering that's where "career transition counselor" Ryan Bingham (Clooney) spends most of his time. Bingham, by choice, is a man without country or close ties, but very quickly two women (Farmiga and Kendrick) arrive in his life to shake up the status quo. Reitman's instincts, of both timing and tone, can feel just a hair off in the film's imperfect first and third acts. But the middle is terrific, especially in a lengthy, unassuming scene in which the three leads sit, sip drinks, and have a good chat: It marks one of the great celluloid pleasures of the year, so virtuosically written, performed, and filmed is it. (12/18/2009) – Kimberley Jones

★★★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse South, Arbor, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Tinseltown North, Westgate

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

D: Spike Jonze; with Max Records, Catherine Keener, Mark Ruffalo, Pepita Emmerichs, Steve Mouzakis; with the voices of James Gandolfini, Lauren Ambrose, Paul Dano, Catherine O'Hara, Chris Cooper, Forest Whitaker. (PG, 94 min.)

This is a freewheeling but tonally and aesthetically true adaptation of Maurice Sendak's 1963 children's book. Jonze, in collaboration with co-screenwriter Dave Eggers, seems to have tapped every primal feeling along the spectrum – joy, grief, rage, a relish for mayhem – and put it onscreen for our viewing pleasure. And a pleasure it is – the rare children's film that isn't coded for adults or made corny and flip for kids. Working with Jim Henson's Creature Shop and adapting quite literally Sendak's original etchings, Jonze has put to film what generations of children have only dreamed about: the nearness and *dear*ness of Sendak's woolly beasts. One of the many delights of the film is in how *physical* it is (somebody is always pummeling somebody else and then following the beating with a bruising bear hug). There are minor grievances with the film, all technical, but they frankly feel inconsequential when put next to the film's overall effect. (10/16/2009) – Kimberley Jones

★★★ Movies 8

ZOMBIELAND D: Ruben Fleischer; with Woody Harrelson, Jesse Eisenberg, Emma Stone, Abigail Breslin, Amber Heard. (R, 87 min.)

No spoilers here, but first things first: *Zombieland* has the single most outrageously entertaining and unexpected celebrity cameo of any film – genre or otherwise – this filmgoer has seen in a long, long time. It's not a sequence that makes or breaks the film, but it does tip *Zombieland* over the edge of zom-com ordinariness into something considerably weirder and therefore more fun. Debuting director Fleischer's action-and-innards-drenched film dials it all up to 11 from the opening credits sequence – which uses pop-music-backed mayhem to smart expository and staggeringly kickass effect – and only slows down for a breather for the length of the aforementioned cameo. Storywise, there's precious little going on here that we haven't seen before, but Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick's archly hip and often downright hilarious script, combined with a quartet of seamless performances and enough cranial destruction to sate even the most diehard *Fangoria* reader, makes for one hell of a wild ride. (10/02/2009) – Marc Savlov

★★★ Movies 8

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MON, DEC 28	SHERLOCK HOLMES LAST CUP: ROAD TO THE WORLD SERIES OF BEER PONG MUSIC MON: THE FLAMING LIPS CHRISTMAS ON MARS	330 430 700 1030 750 1015
TUE, DEC 29	SHERLOCK HOLMES HIGH FOR THE HOLIDAYS THE HOLY MOUNTAIN TERROR TUES: NEW YEAR'S EVIL	330 425 700 1030 745 1045
WED, DEC 30	SHERLOCK HOLMES LAST CUP: ROAD TO THE WORLD SERIES OF BEER PONG HIGH FOR THE HOLIDAYS THE HANGOVER WEIRD WEDS: POLK COUNTY POT PLANE	330 700 1030 750 1050 MID
THU, DEC 31	SHERLOCK HOLMES RITZ NEW YEAR'S EVE! THE APARTMENT FEAST THE ACTION PACK'S NEW YEAR'S EVE SING-ALONG	600 925 700 1000

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special screenings

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The symbol (*) indicates full-length reviews available online: austinchronicle.com/film.



THURSDAY 24

Beerfest With Beerlympics (2006)

D: Jay Chandrasekhar; with Chandrasekhar, Will Forte, Kevin Heffernan, Cloris Leachman, Steve Lemme, Mo'Nique, Eric Christian Olsen, Paul Soter, Erik Stolhanske. (R, 110 min.) **High for the Holidays.** Before Broken Lizard's comedy about the underground world of competitive beer drinking, there will be live Beerlympics games to get your juices flowing. @Alamo Ritz, 10pm.

Grandma's Boy Quote-Along (2006)

D: Nicholas Goossen; with Allen Covert, Nick Swardson, Peter Dante, Linda Cardellini, Shirley Jones, Shirley Knight, Doris Roberts, Kevin Nealon, Rob Schneider. (R, 94 min.) **Action Pack.** @Alamo Ritz, 7pm.

The Nightmare Never Ends (1980) D: Phillip Marshak, Tom McGowan and Gregg C. Tallas; with Cameron Mitchell, Marc Lawrence, Faith Clift, Richard Moll. (NR, 88 min.) **Cult Thursday.** A skeptic defies Satan. @Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, 10pm; free.

FRIDAY 25

Beerfest With Beerlympics (2006)

@Alamo Ritz, 8pm. (See Thursday, 12/24.)

Dark Side of the Rainbow: The Wizard of Oz With Dark Side of the Moon D: Victor Fleming; with Judy Garland, Margaret Hamilton. (G, 101 min.) **High for the Holidays.** Test those rumors you've heard about the synchronicity between Hollywood's beloved *The Wizard of Oz* and Pink Floyd's 1973 musical opus, *Dark Side of the Moon*. Supposedly, if you crank up the album with the third roar of the MGM lion, you'll enter an upside-down world of hidden meanings and trippy rabbit holes. (*) @Alamo Ritz, 11pm.

SATURDAY 26

Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle With All-You-Can-Eat Miniburgers (2004) D: Danny Leiner; with John Cho, Kal Penn, Paula Garcés, David Krumholtz. (R, 87 min.) **High for the Holidays.** Good, dumb, stoner fun, featuring authentic all-you-can-eat miniburgers (but note there's no other food service for this show). @Alamo Ritz, 8pm.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975) D: Jim Sharman; with Richard O'Brien, Barry Bostwick, Susan Sarandon, Tim Curry. (R, 95 min.) Austin fans have been dressing up and doing the "Time Warp" thing live for more than 30 years straight. For more info, see www.austinrocky.org. @Alamo Drafthouse Village, 12mid.

Dark Side of the Rainbow: The Wizard of Oz With Dark Side of the Moon @Alamo Ritz, 10:45pm. (See Friday.)

SPACES

"Wild Texas Weather" (2009) D: John Lewis and Patrick Fries; narrated by Ray Wylie Hubbard. (NR, 22 min.) See Texans struggle with nature – on the big screen and with immersive sound. The film features a score by David Hamburger and performances by Omar Kent Dykes, Toni Price, and Carolyn Wonderland. @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, 10:30am, 11:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30pm.

SUNDAY 27

Christmas Show Master Pancake Theater. The seasonal show features the Master Pancake regulars and clips from favorite holiday TV specials and other weird holiday programs. Owen Egerton and regulars John Erler and Joe Parsons orchestrate the fun. @Alamo Drafthouse Village, 7pm.

The Hangover (2009) D: Todd Phillips; with Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms, Zach Galifianakis, Justin Bartha, Heather Graham, Ken Jeong, Mike Tyson, Mike Epps, Sasha Barrese, Rachael Harris, Jeffrey Tambor. (R, 99 min.) **High for the Holidays.** Consistently funny, this comedy about Vegas-set bachelors' party is one for the ages. (*) @Alamo Ritz, 10:50pm.

The Holy Mountain (1973) See p.67.

501 Studios: Soundstage + HD Theatre 501 Studios' soundstage in Downtown Austin now doubles as one of Texas' largest public theatres – with a Sony Qualia HD projector, a 28-foot screen, 180 (removable) seats, a vintage popcorn machine, and affordable rates. Need a venue for premieres, wrap parties, or concerts/plays/performances featuring projection? This could be the place. Also still available as a soundstage/green screen. 485-3000. www.501studios.com.

Austin FilmWorks: Feature Lab is now accepting registrations for its new class sequence, in which filmmaker Steve Mims requires students to produce two short films and play a key role in a class-produced feature-length film. See website for details. www.austinfilmworks.com.

Austin School of Film Classes An excellent slate of classes is available for your cinematic advancement at the Austin School of Film, with professional instruction in Final Cut Pro, DV and HD cameras, animation and lighting techniques, and more. See website for details. www.austinfilmworks.org/classes.

ChannelAustin Classes Austin's digital media center offers filmmakers professional, hands-on instruction in HD field equipment and studio production, plus affordable access to the latest high-end gear and software by Sony and Apple. Learn more on Mondays from 6 to 7pm. See website for details. 1143 Northwestern. www.channelaustin.org.

Cine las Americas 13: Call for Entries Cine las Americas invites filmmakers, producers, and distributors to participate in the showcase of contemporary films from North, Central, and South America; the Caribbean; and the Iberian Peninsula, as well as works made by or about Latinos and/or indigenous groups of the Americas. See website for details. Deadline: Jan. 15, 2010. www.cinelasamericas.org.

Screen It Like You Mean It Austin Studios has a state-of-the-art screening room, which is available to the public on a rental basis. Community and indie rates are available for the room, which sports an 18-foot-by-7-foot screen, 28 fixed theatre seats, and a surround-sound system and supports Super-35, 35mm, 16mm, VHS, and DVD formats. Handicap accessible, restrooms – the works. It also has a "break room" suitable for presentations, meetings, and general cinematic tomfoolery. 322-0145. www.austinstudios.org.

The Screenplay Workshop: Winter Classes Fundamentals Tuesdays, Jan. 19-Feb. 16, 7-9:30pm, or Saturdays, Jan. 23-Feb. 20, 1:30-4pm. \$225 (\$210 through Dec. 30). **Master Class** Tuesdays, Jan. 19-March 23, 7-9:30pm, or Saturdays, Jan. 23-March 27, 1:30-4pm. \$395 (\$370 before Dec. 30). **Introductory Script Consultation** A 1½-hour private consultation on your screenplay or screenplay ideas. \$70. **Private Instruction and Story Consultation** Five sessions, 90 minutes per session. \$370. All classes taught by professional screenwriters. See website for details. www.thescreenplayworkshop.org.

SPACES

"A Hero's Welcome" (2009) D: Javier Sanchez. (NR, 47 min.) This documentary about Gainesville, Texas, the only Medal of Honor host city currently in the U.S., focuses on centenarian Lt. John Finn, the oldest living Medal of Honor recipient, and interviews other medal recipients and townsfolk. @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, 5pm.

"Wild Texas Weather" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30. (See Saturday.)

MONDAY 28

Christmas on Mars (2008) See p.66.

Last Cup: Road to the World Series of Beer Pong (2008) D: Daniel Lindsay. (NR) **High for the Holidays.** The title says everything you need to know about this documentary. @Alamo Ritz, 7:50pm.

SPACES

Die Hard (1988) D: John McTiernan; with Bruce Willis, Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia. (R, 131 min.) **Movie Mundi: Winter/Holiday Classics.** Free. (*) @Cafe Mundi, 7:30pm.

"A Hero's Welcome" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, noon, 5pm. (See Sunday.)

"Wild Texas Weather" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, 10:30am, 11:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30pm. (See Saturday.)

TUESDAY 29

New Year's Evil (1980) D: Emmett Alston; with Roz Kelly, Kip Niven, Chris Wallace, Grant Cramer. (R, 90 min.) **Terror Tuesday.** Bloody horror story takes place over the course of one New Year's Eve during which a victim is killed as it strikes midnight in each time zone. @Alamo Ritz, 10:45pm.

The Holy Mountain (1973) See p.67.

SPACES

"A Hero's Welcome" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, noon, 5pm. (See Sunday.)

"Wild Texas Weather" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, 10:30am, 11:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30pm. (See Saturday.)

offscreen

WEDNESDAY 30

The Hangover (2009) @Alamo Ritz, 9:15pm. (See Sunday.)

Last Cup: Road to the World Series of Beer Pong (2008) @Alamo Ritz, 6:45pm. (See Monday.)

Polk County Pot Plane (1977) D: Jim West; with Paul Benefield, Jan Jones, Randy Mewbourn, Wynona Myles, Debbie Washington, Bob Watson. (PG) **Weird Wednesday.** Inspired by real events, this movie was produced by Georgia state legislators wishing to "educate" the populace. @Alamo Ritz, 12mid.

SPACES

"A Hero's Welcome" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, noon, 5pm. (See Sunday.)

"Wild Texas Weather" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, 10:30am, 11:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30pm. (See Saturday.)

THURSDAY 31

New Year's Eve Bash: The Apartment (1960) D: Billy Wilder; with Jack Lemmon, Shirley MacLaine. (NR, 125 min.) **Food & Film.** A multicourse meal with drink pairings accompanies this Wilder classic. In the film, Lemmon plays a company man who tries to climb the corporate ladder by loaning out his bachelor pad to illicitly trysting higher-ups. As usual, office politics makes for some strange bedfellows. See www.originalalamo.com for menu and reservations. @Alamo Ritz, 7pm.

New Year's Eve Sing-Along Action Pack. @Alamo Ritz, 10pm.

SPACES

The Black Candle (2008) See p.66.

"A Hero's Welcome" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, noon, 5pm. (See Sunday.)

"Wild Texas Weather" (2009) @Texas Spirit Theater at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, 10:30am, 11:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, 4:30pm. (See Saturday.)

imax

Avatar (2009) D: James Cameron; with Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Sigourney Weaver, Stephen Lang, Michelle Rodriguez, Giovanni Ribisi, Joel David Moore, CCH Pounder, Wes Studi, Laz Alonso. (PG-13, 162 min.) (*) Thu. (12/24), 12:30, 3:45, 7, 10:15pm; Sat.-Thu. (12/31), 12:30, 3:45, 7, 10:15pm.

Texas: The Big Picture (2003) D: Scott Swofford; narrated by Colby Donaldson. (NR, 39 min.) Panoramic shots of Texas grace the screen as the state is shown to be a land capable of growing everything from grapefruit to microchips. Sat., 10am; Mon.-Thu. (12/31), 10am.

The Alps (2007) D: Stephen Judson; narrated by Michael Gambon. (NR, 45 min.) John Harlin III attempts to climb the North Face of the Eiger, the site of his father's death 40 years earlier. The music is by rock band Queen. Sat., 11am; Mon.-Thu. (12/31), 11am.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

The *Austin Chronicle* is published every Thursday. Info is due the Monday of the week prior to the issue date. **The deadline for the Jan. 8 issue is Monday, Dec. 28.** Include name of event, date, time, location, price, phone number(s), a description, and any available photos or artwork.

Send submissions to the *Chronicle*, PO Box 49066, Austin, TX 78765; fax, 458-6910; or e-mail.

Contact Marjorie Baumgarten (Special Screenings):

specialscreenings@austinchronicle.com;

Wayne Alan Brenner (Offscreen): calendar@austinchronicle.com.

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music

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listings



Woody Allen & His New Orleans Jazz Band

Paramount Theatre, Monday 28

Hello.

Oh, Woody, you scared me. I didn't hear you knock.

I hope I'm not too early?

No, no. Just wipe your feet, please. You're trailing mud and leaves everywhere.

Sorry, sorry, my therapist is always telling me I need to be less self-aware.

I'm glad you got my dinner invitation! Well, I'm in town with my New Orleans-style jazz band, so I thought I'd stop by.

Jazz band ... right! Sit down, sit down. Speaking of which, I'm having a daiquiri. Do you want one?

No, rum gives me hives.

So, I saw your last movie, and it's got me wondering: Is that why you're switching to music now?

Well, I'm not switching - what are you implying?

Well, I love Larry David, but c'mon, another movie about a neurotic, brilliant, misunderstood Jew falling for a younger woman ... After all these years, you still don't get us ladies, do you?

Boy, it's a little cold in here.

Do you want my Snuggie? I'm sorry, we've gotten off topic. The jazz band -

Your record collection - what is this stuff? Venom. Captain Beefheart. Is he German? David Bowie. I met him once at Studio 54. He had a cold and sneezed right in my face.

Look, I know you don't really like music after 1957, but be open-minded! Do you ever think about going solo, just you and the trombone?

I play the clarinet.

Oh You know, I never knew that was a clarinet solo at the end of Aerosmith's "Rag Doll."

I don't mean to alarm you, but what's that smell?

Oh god, the beef Wellington!

- Audra Schroeder

LAVELLE WHITE'S CHRISTMAS EVE SHOW

Saxon Pub, Thursday 24

It's Lavelle White's semiannual Saxon show, and she shows no signs of slowing down. The Austin blues powerhouse can still dominate the Saxon stage with style, grace, and a massive voice. On Christmas Eve, expect the blues, sacred and steely.

- Audra Schroeder

CAROLYN WONDERLAND/DALE WATSON

Antone's/Continental Club, Friday 25

Armadillo Christmas Bazaar and Zilker Park's Tree Holiday Festival are but a couple of Austin's 12 days of Christmas. Dale Watson's honky-tonk two-step every Christmas night at South Austin's workshop of wonders, the Continental Club, is the 12th. Voice of power and light, Carolyn Wonderland serves up Shelley King's feast *Welcome Home* that same crisp evening, plus the Blues Mafia and probably more. Musical mistletoe, pucker up.

- Raoul Hernandez

JIMMIE VAUGHAN

Antone's, Saturday 26

It's not Christmas without a dose of blues, and who better to cure it than local Jimmie Vaughan and his Strat? Plus, it gives us a chance to hear Lou Ann Barton put her velvet voice to the cause. The ever-soulful sound of Mike Flanigin's B3 Trio opens the evening in style.

- Margaret Moser

HAYES CARLL

Antone's, Sunday 27 & Monday 28

Texan Hayes Carll has become so popular since 2008's *Trouble in Mind* that he now commands back-to-back nights at Antone's, with two different radio stations sponsoring. KVET kicks off night one with support from Bruce Robison and John Evans, while KGSR taps Monday with Sideshow Tramps and Happen-Ins. Carll kicks off 2010 touring with KGSR *Broadcasts Vol. 17* covermate Steve Earle, with plans for a fourth album as well.

- Doug Freeman



Dressed to the Nines at
austinchronicle.com/earache

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Thursday 31

Hey, buddy!
See the New Year's Eve
Guide, p.59, for more.



Maybe in a few decades, the Aughties will be looked upon as something other than the extended manic-depressive funk it was. With this new decade comes a clean slate, at least in theory, so why not send off '09 with a handful of acts that helped define Austin in the last 10 years? The Austin Music Hall is a sterling venue for folk vet **Robert Earl Keen**, rallying behind this year's LP *The Rose Hotel*. **Joe Ely's Reunion Band** down the street is a sure bet for some classic Antone's rock, and the **Gourds** should have no problem shaking the walls at the Independent at 501 Studios. Locals **Grupo Fantasma**, **Brownout**, and **Peligrosa All-Stars** form a Latino funk-rock Voltron at Mohawk, and **Grimy Styles** holds down the reggae at Flamingo Cantina. For the more adventurous, **Thee Penetrators** pat down Stooges covers at United States Art Authority. For fans of hip-hop and urban development, **Flosstradamus** hits the Seaholm Power Plant Downtown. And lest we forget, **Metallagher** returns to Red 7. If you missed their soggy, thrashy, fruit-smashing Fun Fun Fun Fest appearance, please stand up front and enjoy the splatter. It's New Year's Eve.

- Audra Schroeder

TOTAL ABUSE

Club 1808, Wednesday 30

This ATX/Oakland thrash group's self-titled debut is a perfect specimen: 1980s Cali hardcore breakdowns and East Coast Dischord meeting in the heart of Texas. More deranged sounds due in 2010, which means brand new two-minutes-or-less jams, yo. Migraine, Ecoli, and White Dog open.

- Audra Schroeder



JIMMIE VAUGHAN (SAT., 12/26)



HAYES CARLL (SUN., 12/27 & MON., 12/28)



HOW I QUIT CRACK (WED., 12/30)



GRUPO FANTASMA (THU., 12/31)

DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA

Palmer Events Center,
Wednesday 30 & Thursday 31

According to *Beyond Category: The Life and Genius of Duke Ellington* (see "Stompy Jones," April 30, 1999), jazz's greatest big band played "a large Austin hotel for the elite" in the 1930s. A decade ago, almost to the month of the pianist composer's centennial, his grandson christened Spiros as we elite drank 100-year-old cognac and looked on at Mercer Ellington's young, skinny, Danish offspring. Two nights backed by the Austin Symphony Orchestra and fronted by Detroit diva Freda Payne ("Band of Gold"), Paul Mercer Ellington and his Orchestra return.

8pm. - Raoul Hernandez

soundcheck

BY AUDRA SCHROEDER

THE BOOZE WEASELS

Continental Club, Saturday 26

Davis McLarty, Jimmy Pettit, and David Holt power trio.

THE GUUD

Flamingo Cantina, Saturday 26

The four elements of ATX hip-hop.

DANIEL FRANCIS DOYLE, AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

Beerland, Sunday 27

Choose your own adventure in noise.

BELLS OF JOY

Threadgill's World HQ, Sunday 27

Best gospel brunch in town. 11am.

NIGHT SIEGE

Red 7, Tuesday 29

Texas metal high on fumes.

SKULLCASTER, OWLBEEMOTH, HOW I QUIT CRACK

Discovery Village, Wednesday 30

Gary Barfitts, Aunt's Analog, Venison Whirled, and many more climb the noise summit on the Eastside.

live music venues p.72

roadshows + club listings p.74

THREADGILL'S South

www.threadgills.com

SUN. 12/27 11am Gospel Brunch no cover
301 W. Riverside Dr. 512.472.9304
both locations will be open Christmas Day!



WED. 12/30 7pm Earl Poole Ball
Sittin', Singin' & Supper no cover

THUR. 12/31 Jimmy LaFave
check website for details!
9pm New Years Eve Dinner! \$75/\$50
6416 N. LAMAR BLVD. (512)451.5440

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SAT. DEC 26, 7PM: TBA
SUN. DEC 27, 7PM: WILL DUNLAP'S JAM
TUES. DEC 29, 7PM: MICHAEL REAUX & THE OUTRIDERS
WILL DUNLAP DECEMBER 27TH
WED. DEC 30, 7PM: PTARMIGAN

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY!

FRI. DEC 31 8PM: SOUTHPARK MEADOWS
KARAOKE, RAFFLE FOR PRIZES, COUNT DOWN
WITH CONFETTI, BALLOON DROP & FREE
CHAMPAGNE TOAST, DJ UNTIL 2AM
DRINK SPECIALS ALL NIGHT LONG!
\$4 JAGERBOMBS, \$3 WELLS, \$2 PINTS,
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AT WATERLOO!

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SUN. DEC 27, 10PM: OPEN MIC NIGHT
BOBBY KENNEDY DECEMBER 26TH

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THURSDAY DECEMBER 24
CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE
FRIDAY DOORS AT 9PM SHOW AT 10PM
MIKE FLANIGIN'S B-3 TRIO
w/ DAVE BILLER & FROSTY
SATURDAY
MIKE FLANIGIN'S B-3 TRIO
w/ JON MOELLER & FROSTY
SUNDAY
8PM JON DEE GRAHAM
10PM MIKE FLANIGIN w/
DEREK O'BRIEN & KYLE THOMPSON
MONDAY // 10PM
CRYBEAR
TUESDAY // 10PM
EPHRAIM OWENS EXPERIENCE
WEDNESDAY
10PM: TRUBE, FARRELL & SNIZ
EVERY WED. 8-10PM: JON BLONDELL

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and Happy Holidays!
SEE YOU TOMORROW AT 10PM FOR DALE
WATSON'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SHOW & DANCE
FRIDAY DECEMBER 25

DALE WATSON
AND HIS LONESTARS
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS
SHOW & DANCE

TUESDAY DECEMBER 29
H. H. 6:30 TONI PRICE
11:30PM SESSIONS ON
S. CONGRESS

ALEJANDRO ESCOBEDO
10:30PM THE FRANK
MUSTARD PROJECT
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 30
H. H. LISA MARSHALL

JAMES MCMURTRY
10:30PM JON DEE GRAHAM
THURSDAY DECEMBER 31
BLUE MOON! NEW YEAR'S EVE
HAPPY HOUR 6:30-9PM PLANET CASPER
PRESENTS THE LEROI BROTHERS

12AM T-BIRD AND THE BREAKS
10PM JADE IDOL
FRIDAY JANUARY 1
HAPPY HOUR TBA
CHUCK PROPHET
LEATHERBAG
SATURDAY JANUARY 2
10PM REDD VOLKAERT
12AM CHUCK PROPHET
FRANK SMITH

10PM TWO HOOTS AND A HOLLER
SUNDAY DECEMBER 27
10PM HEYBALE WITH EARL POOLE BALL AND ERIK HOKKANEN
MATINEE 3-7PM

JIMMIE VAUGHAN
12/31 NYE IN THE GALLERY
1/8 ELVIS 2 SHOWS

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DJ DOC

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& THE ALTAR BOYZ
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TUESDAY 12/29
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th 24 closed for the holidays

fr 25 gorging on holiday turkey

sa 26 Bay of Pigs

su 27 Daniel Francis Doyle, Air Traffic Controllers, Holy Wave

mo 28 ROCK & ROLL KARAOKE @ 9PM

tu 29 League of Extraordinary Assholes- Live and Uncensored Standup fea John Chapman et al

we 30 Bottle Service, The Zoltars, The Mysterious H

New Year's Eve- Flametricks Subs, Blue Flames, Izzy Cox

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Merry Christmas from everyone at Elysium!

Friday • Dec 25 **SPECIAL EVENT!**

A Special Christmas Night Edition of
RETURN TO PLANET 9
80's New Wave
WITH DJ ROGER WILSON

Saturday • Dec 26 **HAVEN**

goth, INDUSTRIAL, synthpop, & EURO DANCE
HAVEN WITH DJs VOID & THE GOTHFATHER

Sunday • Dec 27 **REGRESSION**

RETRO 80's **RETRO 80's** RETRO 80's
WITH DJs PUMPKIN SPICE & BOBA FETT

Tuesday • Dec 29 **ROCK BAND**

The ROCK BAND Experience
our stage, our lights, our console, your ROCK BAND
WITH DJ MINIMUS

Wednesday • Dec 30 **MID-WAVE**

UNDERGROUND retro & OLD SCHOOL goth
WITH DJs PUMPKIN SPICE & EDMINISTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thu, Dec 31 • NEW YEAR'S EVE -
Elysium's Annual New Year's Party

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w/ DJs Nephandius & Edminister

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live music venues

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THE AMSTERDAM, 121 W. Eighth, 236-1606
ANDERSON MILL TAVERN, 10401 Anderson Mill, 293-5563
ANTONE'S, 213 W. Fifth, 320-8424
ARTZ RIB HOUSE, 2330 S. Lamar, 442-8283
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AUSTIN FARMERS' MARKET DOWNTOWN, Fourth & Guadalupe, 236-0074
AUSTIN MUSIC HALL, 208 Nueces, 263-4146
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SUNDAY-DECEMBER 27 SPIDER WOOLIES TRINITY SKY STARGAZING PHENOMENA DARWIN'S FINCHES
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TUESDAY-DECEMBER 29 CHRIS NYERS BIRTHDAY Bash STACI GRIMM LAND ORAMINATION CONSUME THE FETUS (KISS UP IN A WOODS) (KISS UP IN A WOODS)
WEDNESDAY-DECEMBER 30 MONUMENT TO NO ONE TEX OFFENDERS INFINITE SKY FOUNDATION KNOCK ON WOOD
THURSDAY-DECEMBER 31 THE STUMMIES BORN TO LOSE NAKED EMPIRE CANDIDATE AM MELTDOWN
FRIDAY-JANUARY 1 FOR THE MOST PART UNDER THE GUN POSEY CHAPEL BLOODY STILETTO MOLOCK
SATURDAY-JANUARY 2 HERE'S TO NOTHING THE GRAPES TRIVERSE BROKEN STATE THE JALAPENO HEADS

UPCOMING SHOWS
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01/09 - BUTCHERWHITE, KOVEN THE LEVIATHAN
01/15 - HONKY, RED VOLKERT, BOB BLEED
01/16 - BRINK OF DISASTER, SCRAPS OF LIFE, LUG
01/22 - HAMMER, SNAKESKIN PRISON, VELVET BRICK
01/23 - VEGAS BOMB, 7 DAY TRIP
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SAT DEC 26 DOORS 9PM

SURLY JOE

{OV THA GIRLIE SHOW}
BURLESQUE & C.
HOLIDAYS GONE WILD!

SUN DEC 20

GOSPEL BRUNCH WITH
RIVERCITY CHRISTIANETTES

THU DEC 31 DOORS 9PM
NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

SOLD OUT

WITH **BLACK JOE LEWIS
AND THE HONEYBEARS**
AND **HARD PROOF AFROBEAT**
TIX INCLUDE BBQ BUFFET & CHAMPAGNE TOAST

FREE WEEK

SAT JAN 2 DOORS 9PM

FREE SHOW

BLACK BONE CHILD

WITH **WHITE RHINO**
& **THE SLIDESHOW TRAGEDY**

THU JAN 7 DOORS 9PM

FREE SHOW

THE WHITE HOTEL

WITH **WHITE DRESS**
AND **JESSIE TORRISI**

FRI JAN 8 DOORS 9PM

FREE SHOW

JESSE WOODS

WITH **THE MERCERS**

SAT JAN 9 DOORS 9PM

FREE SHOW

LEATHERBAG

WITH **THE PONS**
& **DANNY MALONE**

SAT JAN 16 DOORS 9PM

FEVER IN THE FUNKHOUSE

WITH **KEVIN MCKINNEY**
OF **SOULHAT**

WED JAN 20 DOORS 9PM

THE SPLIT SECOND TOUR

FEATURING **LANGUAGE ROOM**
WITH **COURRIER** AND **MAHONEY**

FRI JAN 22 DOORS 9PM

PERPETUAL GROOVE

SAT JAN 23 DOORS 9PM

THE UGLY BEATS

WITH **THE RIPE**
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SAT JAN 30 DOORS 9PM

THE BLUE HIT

WITH **SOME SAY LELAND**
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SAT 12/26 **JOHNNY HOOTROCK &
BURLESQUE DANCERS** 9:30PM
TUE 12/29 **THE BOOMSWAGGLERS** 8PM
WED 12/30 **JOE B.** 8PM
THU 12/31 **NEW YEAR'S EVE W/
THE STONE RAVERS**
9PM, \$5 COVER
FRI 1/1 **THE WEATHERMEN** 9PM
SAT 1/2 **THE HELLKATS** 9PM
WED 1/6 **THE SCOTCH MOUNTAIN
GANG** 8PM
FRI 1/8 **RED ALERT** 9PM, \$5 COVER
SAT 1/9 **GO FOR BROKE** 9PM

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THU 12/24 9PM **9TH ANNUAL
MAZEL BALL**

FRI 12/25 9PM **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**
When you are finished
with your family,
we open at 9pm!

SAT 12/26 9PM **ABOUT: BLANK**
LATER: DJ PROTEGE SPINS TIL 2AM

MON 12/28 9PM **YOUR LUCKY DAY!!!
DRINK SPECIALS ALL
NIGHT FEATURING
GUILTY
PLEASURES**

TUE 12/29 10PM **DJ RICH**
OPENS FOR THE INCOMPARABLE
BOOMBOX ATX

WED 12/30 10PM **1-NITE STAND
WEDNESDAYS**
HOSTED BY
**LANCE KOTARA
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PHOTO BY M. DAPRA

THU, DEC 24 MERRY CHRISTMAS EVE CLOSED

FRI, DEC 25 5PM RESTAURANT OPEN
8-9PM DANCE LESSONS
9PM **WELDON HENSON**

SAT, DEC 26 8-9PM DANCE LESSONS
9:30PM **GARY P. NUNN**

TUE, DEC 29 DEBRA PETERS AND THE ACCORDION ROUNDUP
NO COVER

WED, DEC 30 6-8PM TONY HARRISON
8-9PM DANCE LESSONS
9PM **DALE WATSON**

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TH DEC 24 HAPPY HOLIDAYS
NO LIVE SHOWS

FR DEC 25 CHRISTMAS EVE
OR CHRISTMAS DAY

SA DEC 26 HH 6P No Show Ponies
(S) 8P Allison
10P Chris McMurtry
and God's Chosen
People

SU DEC 27 HH 6P Leah and the
Moonlighters
8P THE INHERITANCE
Holiday Hootenanny

MO DEC 28 8P Law Offices of McMurtry
& Hanes

TU DEC 29 7P Sweet Bunch of Daisies
9P ERIK HOKKANEN'S
LABORATORY

WE DEC 30 6P George Carver
8P MATT THE ELECTRICIAN
& SOUTHPAW JONES
1030P STARS REGARDLESS

Flipnotics

COFFEESPACE CAFE
1601 BARTON SPRINGS RD
512.480.8646

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ROADHOUSE

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SPICEWOOD, TX

MON: BIG ASS BEER NIGHT:
\$2 LONE STAR (24 oz)

WED: MARC ALLEN ATWOOD
PRESENTS "NO BAD WEDNESDAYS"
OPEN MIC - \$2 LONE STAR
\$2.50 OLD WHISKEY RIVER SHOTS

THU: LADIES' NIGHT DRINK SPECIALS
FREE POOL, \$2 WELL DRINKS &
DOMESTIC BEERS & \$1
1ST DRINK FOR LADIES
W/ OUT-OF-TOWN DRIVERS LICENSES
NO COVER SUNDAY - THURSDAY NIGHTS

BEST DRESSED BURGER IN A COSMIC COWBOY HONKY TONK
- 'AUSTIN CHRONICLE' RESTAURANT POLL 2006

No Bad Days Free WiFi • www.poodies.com

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26
JOHNNY DEE AND THE ROCKET 88s

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31
NEW YEAR'S EVE
CAROLYN WONDERLAND
BLUE MAFIA
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT WWW.FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4
JEFF STRAHAN

THE GOURDS

NEW YEAR'S EVE MASQUERADE BALL 2009

BENEFITTING YMCA OF AUSTIN

TICKETS AVAILABLE THROUGH
FRONTGATETICKETS.COM
or 1-888-512-SHOW

CHAMPAGNE TOAST AT MIDNIGHT
DOORS @ 8 PM

INDEPENDENT
501 Studios - 501 I-35
512 485 3001

WWW.AUSTININDEPENDENT.COM

club listings

ALL AGES VENUE ROADSHOW RECOMMENDED HEAR MUSIC ONLINE

THU 24

311 CLUB Joe Valentine (8:30)

AUSTIN CONVENTION CENTER Armadillo Bazaar w/ Slim Richey (noon); Greezy Wheels, Texana Dames (3:30)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Alan Haynes (8:00)

BUENOS AIRES CAFE Una Noche Portefaña Tango w/ Daniel Montserrat

COPA BAR & GRILL Salsa Lessons w/ Tony, the Brew (8:00)

THE DRISKILL HOTEL Lobby Bar: Stephen Doster & Bill Carter (6:00)

EDDIE V'S PRIME SEAFOOD Mark Goodwin Trio (8:00)

ELEPHANT ROOM Jon Blondell (9:30)

FRIENDS J.T. Coldfire, Casey Epps

HOLE IN THE WALL Mike Dubose

JOVITA'S The Cornell Hurd Band (8:00)

LA PALAPA Triple Shot (7:00)

LUCKY LOUNGE Mazel Ball w/ DJ Ryry (9:00)

RED FEZ DJ Cashless (10:00)

SAXON PUB Special Miss Lavelle White Christmas

SPEAKEASY The Space Rockers (9:30)

T.C.'S LOUNGE Lisa Marshall (10:00)

TEXAS BAR & GRILL Acoustic Open Mic

TOM'S TABOOLEY Fractals (8:00)

TRIPLE CROWN Robbie Doyen (6:00)

TROPHY'S Two Hoots & a Holler

FRI 25

ANTONE'S Carolyn Wonderland Christmas Show

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Joe Gee (3:00), Suzanne Smith (9:00)

BLU Christian Barbutto (7:00)

BROKEN SPOKE Dance Lessons, Weldon Henson (8:00)

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Mike Flanigin (10:00); In the Club: The Blues Specialists (6:30), Dale Watson & His Lone Stars Christmas Show (9:00)

THE DRISKILL HOTEL Lobby Bar: Beth Chrisman, Darren Hoff (6:00)

ELEPHANT ROOM Red Young (9:30)

FRIENDS J.T. Coldfire (7:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Alvin Crow (9:00)

HANOVER'S Kevin Havron (9:00)

HOLE IN THE WALL Christmas w/ Debbie Kay, Rusty Trapps

SAXON PUB Earl Poole Ball & the Cosmic Americans (6:00), Monte Montgomery (10:00)

TRIPLE CROWN Keelphish, Van Sanchez, the Organics (10:00)

SAT 26

ANTONE'S Jimmie Vaughan (9:00)

ARTZ RIB HOUSE Mark Viator, Susan Maxey (7:30)

AUSTIN FARMERS' MARKET DOWNTOWN Jeffrye Tveraas (10:00am)

LISTINGS ARE FREE AND PRINTED ON A SPACE AVAILABLE BASIS. Acts are listed chronologically. Schedules are subject to change, so call clubs to confirm lineups. Start times are provided where known and are PM unless otherwise noted.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: Music listings deadline is Monday mornings, 9am, for that week's issue, published on Thursday. Please indicate roadshows and residencies. Send venue name, address, phone, acts, and start times to: Club Listings, PO Box 49066, Austin, TX 78765; fax, 458-6910; phone, 454-5766 x159; e-mail, clubs@austinchronicle.com.

Austin bands: We want to hear from you. If you haven't registered and uploaded your MP3s to the Musicians Register, go to austinchronicle.com/register. Anywhere your band is mentioned, your music will be featured.

BABY ACAPULCO NO. 5 Frank Gomez (7:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Preacher Keen (10:30)

BOTTICELLI'S Jacob Jaeger, Grupo Gruvo (5:30)

'BOUT TIME DJ Element (9:00)

BROKEN SPOKE Dance Lessons, Gary P. Nunn (8:00)

CENTRAL MARKET NORTH Manteca Beat (6:30)

CENTRAL MARKET SOUTH Chris Bell Trio (6:30)

CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE Sterling Fest (8:00)

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Mike Flanigin Trio (10:00); In the Club: The Cornell Hurd Band (3:00), Two Hoots & a Holler (10:00), Booze Weasels (11:30)

COTTON CLUB The Debonaires (8:30)

DONN'S DEPOT Albert & Gage

THE DRISKILL HOTEL Lobby Bar: Patricia G. (7:00)

EDDIE V'S PRIME SEAFOOD Kris Kimura Quartet (8:00)

roadshows

december

SAT 26
Emory Quinn, Gruene Hall

SUN 27
Tavana, Speakeasy

MON 28
Sideshow Tramps, Antone's
Andrew Weathers, Bryce Eiman, Club 1808
Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Frank Erwin Center
Woody Allen & His New Orleans Jazz Band, Paramount Theatre

TUE 29
Red Jumpsuit Apparatus, Emo's
Waylon Payne, Saxon Pub

WED 30
Skullcaster, Discovery Village

Duke Ellington Orchestra, Palmer Events Center

THU 31
Robert Earl Keen, Randy Rogers, Austin Music Hall
Jade Idol, Continental Club

Delbert McClinton, Gruene Hall
Lost Soul Review, Hole in the Wall
Duke Ellington Orchestra, Palmer Events Center
Metallagher, Empty Bottles, Red 7
Flosstradamus, Seaholm Power Plant

See
austinchronicle.com
for complete listings.

LOVEJOYS

TAP ROOM & BREWERY



Dec 10: High Watt Cricifixers, Splithoof, Altars

Dec 17: Shed Alfred, Waylon Speed (VT), The Dirty Charlie Band

Dec 24-25: Open X-Mas Eve and Day

Dec 31: Free NYE Party w/ DJs, Food, and Champagne

604 NECHES 512.477.1268

THE SCOOT INN

11 LOCAL DRAFTS * 2 FULL BARS * 2 STAGES

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 9PM
AT THE LONGBRANCH INN
NEW YEAR'S EVE
w/ **THE HICKOIDS**
CHRIS GATES & GATESVILLE
(BIG BOYS, POISON 13)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 9PM
NEW YEAR'S EVE AT THE SCOOT INN
PRIVATE PARTY

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 8PM
NIC WALKER
CHRIS NEWTON
JARRET KILLEN
SEAN MALONEY

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 9PM
SILENT LAND
TIME MACHINE
GOLDEN CITIES (HOUSTON)
GREAT HOPES (BOSTON)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 5PM
& TUESDAY, JANUARY 5 6PM
BREWSKEE BALL LEAGUE PLAY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 7PM
ROSE BOWL PARTY
UT vs ALABAMA
ON HD BIG SCREEN!
DRINK SPECIALS ALL NIGHT LONG!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 9PM
PASTOR GORY CROSS & THE GOOD OLE' BAND & GUESTS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 5PM
BREWSKEE MUG TOURNAMENT

COMING IN JANUARY
WOXY VAMPIRE WEEKEND
LISTENING PARTY, CROOKS,
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ALL AGES, ALL THE TIME

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29

INSIDE: **THE RED JUMPSUIT APPARATUS**
FIT FOR RIVALS • GO ACTION TEAM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

INSIDE: **NEW YEAR'S EVE AT EMO'S**
SCOTT H. BIRAM
THE BEAUMONTS
DARREN HOFF & THE HARD TIMES

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3

INSIDE, EARLY SHOW, DOORS @ 5PM:
CANDIDATE
LA DISPUTE (MI) (NO SLEEP RECORDS)
NATIVE (IN) (SARGENT HOUSE RECORDS)
BROTHER/GHOST

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13

OUTSIDE: NO CONTROL RADIO PRESENTS
BEHEMOTH
LIGHTNING SWORDS OF DEATH
SEPTICFLESH
PACK OF WOLVES

INSIDE: **ADAM FRANKLIN & BOLTS OF MELODY**
RINGO DEATHSTARR
MY EDUCATION

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15

OUTSIDE: **THIS WILL DESTROY YOU**
LYMBIC SYSTM • SLEEP WHALE
LOXSLY

INSIDE: **CRUISERWEIGHT**
PARACHUTE MUSICAL
WICKED CELTICS
SEQUOYAH PREP SCHOOL

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

OUTSIDE: **GOODIE MOB • SCARFACE**
INSIDE: 101X HOMEGROWN LIVE PRESENTS:
ZLAM DUNK
FRESH MILLIONS • THE COUCH
CUSTODIAN

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

INSIDE: **NEVER SHOUT NEVER**
CARTER HULSEY • THE DENISON

*ADVANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
emosaustrin.com, Waterloo Records,
End of an Ear Records, Trailer Space

1979 **Cactus** CAFE 2009

475-6515 23RD & GUADALUPE

GONE ICE FISHIN' Dec 16 - Jan 13

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE CACTUS CAFE SEE Y'ALL IN 2010

AN EVENING WITH THE WOOD BROTHERS THUR JAN 14 8:30PM

LIVE @ THE CACTUS IAN MOORE FRI JAN 15 8:30PM

COME ONE, COME ALL TROUT FISHING IN AMERICA SAT JAN 16 6 & 8:30PM

6PM KIDS SHOW
8:30PM ALL AGES
TIX @ THE DOOR

FROM THE COMMONWEALTH SCOTT MILLER TUE JAN 19 8:30PM

AUSTIN'S LAFAVORITE JIMMY LAFAVE FRI JAN 22 8:30PM

GUEST STAR • BETTY SOO

IN CONCERT @ THE CACTUS ELIZA GILKYSON SAT JAN 23 8:30PM

TWO FABULOUS NIGHTS! JONATHAN RICHMAN MON & TUE JAN 25 & 26 8:30PM

THE ONE & ONLY • LIVE & IN PERSON TODD SNIDER SAT JAN 30 8PM

GUEST STAR
AMERICAN TRAGEDY
TEXAS UNION BALLROOM
TIX @ ERWIN CENTER BOX OFFICE, HEBs
477-6060 OR TEXASBOXOFFICE.COM

TEXAS TREASURE WHEATFIELD MON FEB 1 8:30PM

FRED EAGLESMITH WED FEB 3 8:30PM

TWO GREAT NIGHTS WITH JOSEPH ARTHUR FRI & SAT FEB 5 & 6 8:30PM

www.cactus.union.utexas.edu
Coming Soon to a Cafe Near You

2.4 CHRIS KNIGHT	2.20 AUSTIN LOUNGE LIZARDS
2.9 SOME SAY LELAND	30TH ANNIVERSARY
2.13 TERRI HENDRIX	2.24 BATTLEFIELD BAND
2.14 CHRIS SMITHER	2.25 GENE WEEN
2.16 MIKE DOUGHTY	2.26 GENE WEEN
2.17 MIKE DOUGHTY	2.27 SARA BRITTENS

23rd & Guadalupe • 475-6515
The Cactus is located inside the Texas Union.
Happy Hour is 4-7pm, Monday-Friday.
Tickets @ the door & all shows @ 9pm
unless otherwise noted.

FROM TEXAS' OLDEST INDEPENDENT BREWERY



SHINER TOP TEN TEXAS ARTISTS



- 1) BOB SCHNEIDER
Lovely Creatures
- 2) BLACK JOE LEWIS
Tell 'em What Your Name Is
- 3) KAT EDMONSON
Take To The Sky
- 4) LYLE LOVETT
Natural Forces
- 5) SARAH JAROSZ
Song Up In Her Head
- 6) ROBERT EARL KEEN
Rose Hotel
- 7) NORAH JONES
The Fall
- 8) BOB SCHNEIDER
Live at the Paramount Theater
- 9) WILLIE & THE WHEEL
Willie & The Wheel
- 10) MATT THE ELECTRICIAN
Animal Boy



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Austin's far-out music hall in San Marcos
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MO **KENT FINLAY'S SONGWRITERS CIRCLE**
TU **MIDNIGHT RIVER CHOIR**
TH **NEW YEARS EVE WITH DOCTOR G & THE MUDCATS GOOD LUCK BLACKEYED PEAS AT MIDNIGHT**
FR **HAIR OF THE DOG FESTIVAL 9-2**
SA **TEXAS RENEGADE**

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CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE AT THE NOMAD!
WITH **MASONIC**
CHAMPAGNE TOAST AT MIDNIGHT!

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FRIDAY & SATURDAY 6:30 - 9 PM
SUNDAY 12:30 - 3 PM

@ CENTRAL PARK 40th and North Lamar call 512.206.1000 for details

@ WESTGATE 4477 South Lamar call 512.899.4300 for details

WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY 6:30 - 9 PM
SUNDAY 12:30 - 3 PM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26
MANTECA BEAT
jazz, blues, latin

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27
TAMECA JONES
jazz

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1
no music due to Holiday

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2
DAN DYER
soul grooves

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3
MICHAEL GOSS
singer-songwriter

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8
MARSHALL FORD SWING BAND
swing dance music

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26
BELLTOWER
jazzy blues

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27
SEAN HOPPER QUARTET
jazz

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1
no music due to Holiday

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2
PHIL BROWN
soul grooves

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3
KRIS KUMURA QUARTET
jazz

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6
BOCK, BBQ & THE BLUES
THE LITTLE ELMORE REED BLUES BAND
every Wednesday \$2 Shiners, BBQ specials, & blues!

at north lamar:
JAN 9 - Tiny Tin Hearts
JAN 10 - Courtney Sanchez Quartet
JAN 15 - Beckham Brothers
JAN 16 - Erik Hokkanen
JAN 17 - Steve Schwelling Trio
JAN 22 - Two High String Band

at westgate:
JAN 7 - Margo Valionte
JAN 8 - Iron City Soul Shakers
JAN 9 - Graham Wilkinson
JAN 10 - Lucky Strikes
JAN 13 - Diamond Simon & the Rough Cuts
JAN 14 - Flamenko 909

café open 7am-9pm sunday-thursday; 7am-10pm friday & saturday at both locations.
FREE MUSIC, GREAT FOOD, COVERED PATIO & KIDS PLAYSCAPE

CALENDAR (COMMUNITY SPORTS ARTS FILM MUSIC) LISTINGS

CLUB LISTINGS FROM SATURDAY

EL SOL Y LA LUNA Luz Marina (9:00)

ELEPHANT ROOM Jeff Lofton Quintet (9:30)

FLAMINGO CANTINA Park & Murray, the Pharmasis, the G.U.U.D. ♪, DJ Notion (9:00)

FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE No Show Ponies (6:00); Allison, Curtis McMurtry & God's Chosen People (8:00)

FRIENDS Travis Green, Princess & ATX Boys, DJ Southpaw (4:00)

GIDDY UPS Jason Arnold & the Stepsiders (9:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Robbie & the Rogues (9:00)

GRUENE HALL Gary Claxton, Erik Hokkanen (1:00); Emory Quinn (9:00) ♪

HANOVER'S Johnny Hootrock (9:30)

HEADHUNTERS Dark Rabbit, Excularte, Butchered Saints, Doom Siren, HOD (10:00)

LATITUDE 30 Jabarvy (9:00)

LUCKY LOUNGE About: Blank, DJ Protege (9:00)

MAGGIE MAE'S Rick Harvey & the Texcellorators (6:00)

MOMO'S Jeff Crowder, Drew Nix, Ryan Holley, Matt Noveskey, Joseph King

MOTHER'S CAFE & GARDEN Thomas "Doc" Grauzer (11:30am)

NORTH BY NORTHWEST RESTAURANT & BREWERY Stephen Doster & Bill Carter (6:30)

ONE 2 ONE BAR Jeff Plankenhorn (10:30)

POODIE'S HILLTOP BAR & GRILL Johnny Dee & the Rocket 88's ♪

RED FEZ DJ Kurv (10:00)

RENAISSANCE HOTEL Lobby Lounge: Rich DeMarco (6:00)

RUTA MAYA Austin Friends of Traditional Music (3:00); Freddie Steady V, Jenny Wolfe, Layton DePenning (7:00); Jeff Warren Johnston, Corrina's Dreamland Band (10:00)

SAXON PUB Teye, Joe Ely, Warren Hood (7:00)

SENGELMANN HALL Holiday Survivor w/ Kimberly Kelly

SPEAKEASY Dysfunkshun Junkshun (9:30)

STARDUST CLUB Al Monti

STUBB'S Surly Joe & Holidays Gone Wild (9:00)

TRIPLE CROWN Scott H. Biram (10:00)

WHIP IN Lee Barber & Scrappy Jud Newcomb (7:00)

SUN 27

ANTONE'S John Evans, Bruce Robison, Hayes Carll (9:00) ♪

ARTZ RIB HOUSE Christy & the Plowboys (6:30)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Irish Tunes Session (9:00)

BEERLAND Air Traffic Controllers, Daniel Francis Doyle ♪

'BOUT TIME A.J. Kline (8:00)

CENTRAL MARKET NORTH Tameca Jones (12:30)

CENTRAL MARKET SOUTH Sean Hopper Quartet (12:30)

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Jon Dee Graham, Mike Flanigin (8:30); In the Club: Heybale! (10:00)

COTTON CLUB Can't Hardly Playboyz (7:00)

EDDIE V'S PRIME SEAFOOD Kris Kimura Quartet (7:00)

ELEPHANT ROOM Jeff Hellmer Trio (9:30)

ELYSIUM Regression: Retro Eighties w/ DJ Pumpkin Spice

FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE Leah & the Moonlighters (6:00), the Inheritance Holiday Hootenanny (8:00)

FRIENDS Open Mic Blues Jam (8:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Dale Watson (4:00)

GREEN PASTURES RESTAURANT Jacques Vilmain (11:00am)

GRUENE HALL McKay Bros. (noon), Jeff Strahan (4:00)

HEADHUNTERS Not So Dirty Trio, Dave Insley's Careless Smokers, Izzy Cox

HILL'S CAFE Gospel Brunch w/ Jon Emery

HOLE IN THE WALL Lady Maybe, Rebecca Pronsky, Haunt (10:00)

LAMBERTS Black, Red & Black (7:00)

MOMO'S Charlie Shafter & the Gnomes, Warren Hood & the Hoodlums, the Shorthairs

NUEVO LEÓN Mariachi Relampago (1:00)

NUNO'S ON SIXTH Easy Pickens, Rusty Trapps & the Evil Man Babies (8:00)

NUTTY BROWN CAFE Java Jazz (11:00am)

RED FEZ DJ Kurupt, DJ Cauze-One (10:00)

RILEY'S TAVERN Open Mic w/ Glenn Allen

RUTA MAYA Mr. Steve (10:30am); Lisa Richards, Sol Surfers (7:00)

SAXON PUB Bret Graham (1:00), Dan McCoy (4:00), David Grissom, Joe Ely, the Resentments (8:00)

SENGELMANN HALL Brunch w/ the Pettit Bros. (11:00am)

SPEAKEASY Tavana (9:30) ♪

STUBB'S River City Christianettes (11:00am)

THREADGILL'S WORLD HQ The Bells of Joy (11:00am) ♪

TRIPLE CROWN Open Mic w/ Pat Pankratz, Holly Aiken, Nate Hinds

Z'TEJAS Tameca Jones (6:00)

MON 28

ANTONE'S The Happen-Ins, Sideshow Tramps, Hayes Carll (9:00) ♪ ♪

ARTZ RIB HOUSE Sarah Elizabeth Campbell & the Banned (7:30)

BAR 141 Robbie's Open Mic (9:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Eric Heard Showcase

BOTTICELLI'S Nick Ginbey, Kyle Clayton Ensemble (5:30)

'BOUT TIME A.J. Kline (9:00)

CHEZ ZEE Rich Demarco (6:30)

CHUGGIN' MONKEY Easy Pickens, Rusty Trapps & the Evil Man Babies

CLUB 1808 Hotel Hotel, Bryce Eiman, Andrew Weathers ♪

See austinchronicle.com for complete listings.

WEDNESDAY DEC 23
SPECIAL HOLIDAY SHOW
 DOORS 7PM
 VIP TABLES AVAILABLE




DEL CASTILLO
 WITH ACOUSTIC JUNGLE

ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM



FRIDAY JANUARY 8TH
Wailers
 WITH THE SUPERVILLAINS
 40 YEARS OF FAMS TOUR



93.3 KQSR

SATURDAY DECEMBER 26TH

VERY SPECIAL GUESTS
 DON'T MISS IT!



JIMMIE VAUGHAN
 HORTON BROTHERS
 MIKE FLANIGINS B3 TRIO

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MERRY CHRISTMAS!
 COME SPEND CHRISTMAS WITH
CAROLYN WONDERLAND
 SHELLEY KING
 AND BLUES MAFIA



FRIDAY DECEMBER 25TH

ON SALE NOW • RESERVED TABLES AVAILABLE TIX-FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

DECEMBER 27
HAYES CARLL
BRUCE ROBISON
 JOHN EVANS



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

DECEMBER 28
HAYES CARLL
 THE SIDESHOW TRAMPS
 THE HAPPENIN'S



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

DECEMBER 29TH
BILL CARTER & THE BLAME
 BILL'S SPECIAL GUEST: **MIKE THOMPSON** OF THE EAGLES
SEXTON FREEMAN
CARTER
SALMON
RAINS
 PLUS **WC CLARK**
CHRIS LAYTON & MORE



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

WED DECEMBER 30TH
THE SCABS
 FOOT PATROL OPENING
PRE-NEW YEARS EVE BASH!



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

NEW YEARS EVE PARTY!
 THURSDAY DECEMBER 31ST
 ONCE IN A BLUE MOON NEW YEARS EVE
 MIDNIGHT EXTRAVAGANZA!!!



JOE REUNION ELY BAND
 FEATURING **DALE WATSON**

ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

FRIDAY JANUARY 1ST
PINETOP PERKINS
 & **LOU ANN BARTON**
 DOORS 7 SHOW 8
 SPECIAL NEW YEARS SHOW!



RESERVED TABLES AVAILABLE ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

SAT JANUARY 2ND
 SPECIAL EARLY SHOW WITH
KICKIN' OFF 2010!
MARCIA BALL



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

SATURDAY JANUARY 9TH
SOUL HAT
 LIVE FROM THE BLACK CAT
 CD RELEASE
 PARTY
 PLUS **TOPAZ & MUDPHONIC**




ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

FRIDAY JANUARY 15TH
RAY WYLIE HUBBARD
 CD RELEASE
MICKY AND THE MOTORCARS



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

WED JANUARY 27TH
JAY FARRAR
 OF SON VOLT
 & **BENJAMIN GIBBARD**
 OF DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

SAT JANUARY 2ND
 10PM
 HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!
BOB SCHNEIDER
 KEVIN MCKINNEY OPENS



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

SATURDAY JAN 16TH
GARY CLARK JR.



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 11TH
HOWIE DAY
 WITH SERENA RYDER



ON SALE NOW • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

Yo La Tengo
 FRI JAN 29TH
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FRI FEB 5TH
JONATHAN COULTON
 WITH PAUL AND STORM
 FULLY SEATED GA SHOW



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SATURDAY FEB 6TH
HELLER WILLIAMS
 Performing Live



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FRIDAY FEB 12TH
RECKLESS KELLY



ON SALE SAT 12/19 • FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

SATURDAY APRIL 3RD
G. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE
 WITH GIANT PANDA GUERRILLA DUB SQUAD



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The HighBall
 BOWLING - KARAOKE - SKEEBALL
 - & SUPER SPECIAL EVENTS -

THIS WEEKEND IN THE HIGHBALL BALLROOM

NEW YEAR'S EVE AT THE HIGHBALL
 Optional five-course meal with matching wine & cocktail pairings!
 Even more drinking and a dance party to top it all off!
 Fancy clothes and party hats!
 The best New Year's Eve EVER!
 Private karaoke rooms & bowling lanes also available for reservation!
 Thu, Dec 31 11pm - Varied prices

Join us for HIGHBALL HAPPY HOUR
EVERY MON-FRI FROM 4:30 - 7:30
 Enjoy up to 2 hours of complimentary private karaoke room rental as well as \$2 Lone Stars, \$3 local beers or \$5 well drinks with any food purchase!

www.TheHighball.com
 1142 South Lamar Blvd
 (512) 237-7561

COUPLAND
 INN & DANCEHALL

Saturday, December 26th
CORY MORROW
 CURTIS GRIMES opening

Thursday, December 31st
NEW YEARS EVE
KYLE PARK

Saturday, January 2nd
GRANGER SMITH

Friday, January 8th
STEVEN FRANKS

Saturday, January 9th
RICKY CALMBACH

Friday, January 29th
THE GOURDS

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Jan. 28

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The Onion Present



The Fiery Furnaces

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Jan 29

101X's Daily Dose & Next Big Thing Present:
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THURSDAY DECEMBER 24

CLOSED/MERRY CHRISTMAS

SATURDAY DECEMBER 26 / \$12

JOSEPH KING 11:15
MATT NOVESKEY 10:15

(OF BLUE OCTOBER)

RYAN HOLLEY 9:45

DREW NIX 8:45

JEFF CROWDER 8

REED TURNER 7

Front Gate WWW.FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

SUNDAY DECEMBER 27 / \$10

WARREN HOOD 9:30
& **THE HOODLUMS** 12:15

THE SHORTHAIRS 12:15

CHARLIE SHAFTER & THE GNOMES 8

GORILLA PRODUCTIONS

"BATTLE OF THE BANDS" 1-8PM

MONDAY DECEMBER 28 / \$5

JESS KLEIN & RANDY WEEKS 8

DUSTIN WELCH 9:15

BRANDON JENKINS 10:30

REBECCA PRONSKY 7

NO COVER HAPPY HR **JUNKYARD GIRLS** 5:15

TUESDAY DECEMBER 29 / \$7

WORLD MUSIC NIGHT SPONSORED BY KUT50

& BEMBA ENTERTAINMENT

NAGA VALLI 8

THE BATIKUM 10

AUSTIN PIAZZOLLA QUINTET 12

PARKER AINSWORTH 7

NO COVER HAPPY HR **NANO WHITMAN** 5:15

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 30 / \$5

DAN DYER 11

SUZANNA CHOFFEL 8

TED

(FEAT: DREW SMITH) 9:30

GREG SCHROEDER 12:15

THE VERMEERS 6:30

NEW YEAR'S EVE / \$20 ADVANCE

THE BELLEVILLE 11:30

OUTFIT 11:30

WARREN HOOD 9

THE FIREANTS 8

Front Gate TICKETS WWW.FRONTGATETICKETS.COM

CALENDAR (COMMUNITY SPORTS ARTS FILM MUSIC) LISTINGS

CLUB LISTINGS FROM MONDAY

CONTINENTAL CLUB

Gallery: Crybear (10:00);
In the Club: Continental
Graffiti (6:30), Dale
Watson & His Lone Stars
(10:00)

DONN'S DEPOT

Chris Gage
EDDIE V'S PRIME
SEAFOOD Kris Kimura
Quartet (7:00)

ELEPHANT ROOM

Milkdrive
(6:00), Freddie Mendoza's
Jazz Jam (9:30)

EVANGELINE CAFE

Charles
Thibodeaux & the Austin
Cajun Aces (6:30)

FRANK ERWIN CENTER

Trans-Siberian Orchestra
(3:00, 8:00) Ⓜ

FRIENDS

Casey Epps, Eric
Tessmer (6:30)

THE GHOST ROOM

Paul
Green School of Rock
Music, Red Corner
Rhymers (7:00)

GRUENE HALL

Dan McCoy
(1:00), Bret Graham
(7:00)

GÜERO'S TACO BAR

Trio
Indiano (6:30)

HOLE IN THE WALL

Soul
Proprietors, Darren Hoff
& the Hard Times, Noel
McKay, Missy Beth,
Brennen Leigh (10:00)

HOUSE WINE

Song Swap/
Open Mic (7:00)

LA PALAPA

Baby Dallas

LATITUDE 30

Chris Tondre Ⓜ
(9:00)

LUCKY LOUNGE

Guilty
Pleasures (9:00)

MOMO'S

Rebecca Pronsky,
Beckham Bros., Dustin
Welch, Brandon Jenkins,
Rich O'Toole

NUNO'S ON SIXTH

Jo Hell &
the Red Roosters

PARAMOUNT THEATRE

Woody Allen & His New
Orleans Jazz Band (8:00)
ⓂⓂ

RED FEZ

DJ Cause-One &
DJ Taco (10:00)

RUTA MAYA

Dance Lessons,
Slim Richey & the
Jitterbug Vipers (8:00)

SAM'S TOWN POINT

Open
Blues Jam w/ Breck
English (8:35)

SAXON PUB

Matt
the Electrician Ⓜ,
Bob Schneider, Jeff
Plankenhorn (7:00)

SIX LOUNGE

Lucas Cook &
Abel James (9:00)

SPEAKEASY

Jonathan
Terrell (9:30)

TRIPLE CROWN

The
Christophers (6:00)

TUE 29

THE ALLIGATOR

GRILL Gator Child
(8:30)

ANTONE'S

Bill Carter & the
Blame (9:00)

ARTZ RIB HOUSE

Texas Old
Time Fiddlers Jam (7:30)

BASTROP SENIOR CENTER

The Kitchen Pickers
(6:30)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB

Suzanne Smith

BLU

Joey Colarusso Trio
(7:00)

BOTTICELLI'S

Kaki
Mendoza, Geron Hoy
(5:30)

'BOUT TIME

A.J. Kline (9:00)

BROKEN SPOKE

Debra
Peters' Accordion
Roundup

CAROUSEL LOUNGE

Lili &
Walter, Blue Squeeze Box,
Floating Opera Orchestra
(7:00)

CHEATHAM STREET

WAREHOUSE Midnight
River Choir (9:00)

CONTINENTAL CLUB

Gallery: Ephraim Owens
Experience (10:00); In the
Club: Toni Price (6:30),
Alejandro Escovedo, the
Frank Mustard Project
(10:00)

DONN'S DEPOT

Donn & the
Station Masters

THE DRISKILL HOTEL

Lobby
Bar: Will Sexton (6:00)

EDDIE V'S PRIME

SEAFOOD Mark Goodwin
Trio (7:30)

ELEPHANT ROOM

Stanley
Smith w/ Jon Doyle
(6:00), Brannen Temple
Quartet (9:30)

ELYSIUM

Nineties Night w/
DJ Boba Fett, DJ Minimus

EMO'S

Go Action Team Ⓜ, Fit
for Rivals, Red Jumpsuit
Apparatus Ⓜ

EVANGELINE CAFE

Brennen
Leigh (6:00), Kevin
Gallaughier (8:00)

FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE

Sweet Bunch of Daisies
(7:00), Erik Hokkanen's
Laboratory (9:00)

FRIENDS

Travis Green, Erin
Jaimes (6:30)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN

SALOON Jim Stringer
(9:00)

GRUENE HALL

Dan McCoy
(1:00)

GÜERO'S TACO BAR

Trio
Indiano (6:30)

HANOVER'S

Boom
Swagglers (8:00)

HILL'S CAFE

Singer-
Songwriter Night w/ Jon
Burklund

HOLE IN THE WALL

The
Bread (10:00)

LA PALAPA

Baby Dallas

LUCKY LOUNGE

DJ Rapid
Ric, Boombox w/ Carlos
Sosa (10:00)

MOMO'S

Parker Ainsworth,
Naga Vali, Oliver Rajamani,
the Batikum

ONE 2 ONE BAR

Karl
Morgan (11:00)

PATSY'S COWGIRL CAFE

Sand Sheff (7:30)

POODIE'S HILLTOP BAR & GRILL

Troubadillos

RED 7

Harm's Way, Night
Siege (9:00) Ⓜ

RED FEZ

Benmused
Showcase, Twist Up w/ DJ
Manny (9:00)

RUTA MAYA

Poetry Open
Mic, Music Open Mic
(6:00)

See austinchronicle.com
for complete listings.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28
**AUSTIN
CAJUN ACES**

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29

**BRENNEN
LEIGH** 6PM

**KEVIN
GALLAUGHER** 8PM



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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30 • 7PM

CRAIG TOUNGATE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31 • 7-9PM

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CLEVE &

SWEET MARY

HATTERSLEY



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CALENDAR (COMMUNITY SPORTS ARTS FILM MUSIC) LISTINGS

CLUB LISTINGS FROM TUESDAY

- SAM'S TOWN POINT** Open Mic w/ Erin & Michael (9:00)
- SAXON PUB** Waylon Payne (5:00) ♫, Bruce Hughes & the All-Nude Army, Uncle Lucius, Malford Milligan (8:00)
- SPEAKEASY** O Positivo (9:30)
- TRIPLE CROWN** Bruce Curtis (6:00)

WED 30

- THE AMSTERDAM** Subrosa Union
- ANTONE'S** The Scabs (9:00)
- BAR 141** Electric Mayhem (9:00)
- BOTTICELLI'S** Jamie Thomas, Rankin Twins (5:30)
- BROKEN SPOKE** Tony Harrison, Dance Lessons, Dale Watson (6:00)
- CENTRAL MARKET SOUTH** Bock, Barbeque & the Blues w/ Rob Roy Parnell (6:30)
- CHAIN DRIVE** DJ Mos Jeff, James & the Douchebags ♫ (10:00)
- CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE** Kent Finlay's Songwriters Circle (9:00)
- CHEZ ZEE** Jacinta (7:00)
- CLUB 1808** Total Abuse (9:00) ♫
- THE COCKPIT** Club Inclusive w/ Julie Nolan (9:00)
- CONTINENTAL CLUB** Gallery: Jon Blondell, Trube, Farrell & Sniz (8:00); In the Club: Lisa Marshall (6:30), Jon Dee Graham, James McMurtry (10:30)
- DISCOVERY VILLAGE** Skullcaster, Owlbeemoth, How I Quit Crack (6:00) ♫♫
- DONN'S DEPOT** Frank & the Station Masters
- THE DRISKILL HOTEL** Lobby Bar: Bruce Smith (6:00)
- EDDIE V'S PRIME SEAFOOD** Mark Goodwin Trio (7:30)
- ELEPHANT ROOM** Jazz Pharaohs (6:00), John Mills Times Ten (9:30)
- ELYSIUM** Mid Wave w/ DJ Pumpkin Spice, DJ Edminister
- FLAMINGO CANTINA** Achachay, Bob Floyd (9:00)
- FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE** George Carver (6:00); Matt the Electrician ♫, Southpaw Jones, Stars Regardless (8:30)

- FRIENDS** J.T. Coldfire, Swamp Sauce (8:00)
- GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON** Roger Wallace (9:00)
- GRUENE HALL** The Trishes, the Band of Heathens (8:00)
- HANOVER'S** Joe B. (8:00)
- HOLE IN THE WALL** Jenny & the Corn Ponies, Beth Lee, Spit & Tears (10:00)
- KEY BAR** Jukebox Heroes (8:00)
- LA PALAPA** Acoustic w/ James
- LAS PALOMAS** Javier Chaparro, Rick McRae, Terry Hale, Art Kidd (6:30)
- LATITUDE 30** Clay Jeffrey (9:00)
- LUCKY LOUNGE** Lance Kotara, Adam McInnis, Stephanie Daulong (10:00)
- MOMO'S** Kacy Crowley, Greg Schroeder, Drew Smith, Jessi Torissi, Deadman
- NUTTY BROWN CAFE** Bruce Newman's Nutty Idol
- ONE 2 ONE BAR** Big Circle, TX; the Twalls (8:00)
- PALMER EVENTS CENTER** Duke Ellington Orchestra, Austin Symphony Orchestra (8:00) ♫♫
- PARMER LANE TAVERN** Pete Benz (9:00)
- PATSY'S COWGIRL CAFE** Songwriter Night (7:30)
- POODIE'S HILLTOP BAR & GRILL** Mark Allen Atwood
- REALE'S PIZZA & CAFE** "Frankly" Singing w/ Ken Kruse (6:30)
- RED FEZ** Get Right Kids (10:00)
- RED SHED TAVERN** Dr. Dubbist (8:00)
- RENAISSANCE HOTEL** Lobby Lounge: Rich DeMarco (6:00)
- RUTA MAYA** Dance Lessons, La Mona Loca (7:30)
- SAXON PUB** The Nortons (6:00), Monte Montgomery, Carolyn Wonderland (8:00)
- SHINER'S SALOON** Jeremy Steding ♫ (10:00)
- SPEAKEASY** Soullution ♫ (9:30)
- THREADGILL'S WORLD HQ** The Bells of Joy (11:00am)
- TRIPLE CROWN** James Thompson Project (6:00)
- WATERLOO ICE HOUSE** Ptarmigan (7:00)
- WHIP IN** Screen Door Porch (8:00)
- Z'TEJAS** Will Sexton, Stephen Doster, Bill Carter (6:00)

THU 31

- 311 CLUB** Joe Valentine (8:30)
- ANDERSON MILL TAVERN** Bitta Blue (10:00)
- ANTONE'S** Dale Watson, Joe Ely & the Reunion Band
- AUSTIN MUSIC HALL** The Band of Heathens, Wade Bowen, Randy Rogers, Robert Earl Keen (8:00) ♫♫
- BARTON CREEK RESORT & SPA** New Year's Eve Bash w/ Jacques Vilmain (9:00)
- B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB** Preacher Keen (8:00)
- BEAUTY BAR** DJ Mel
- BEERLAND** New Year's Eve w/ Izzy Cox, Flametrack Subs
- BROKEN SPOKE** New Year's Eve Dance w/ Alvin Crow
- BUENOS AIRES CAFE** Una Noche Porteña Tango w/ Daniel Montserrat
- CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE** New Year's Eve w/ Dr. G & the Mudcats (9:00)
- CONTINENTAL CLUB** Gallery: Jimmie Vaughan (9:00); In the Club: LeRoi Brothers (6:30); Jade Idol, T Bird & the Breaks (10:00) ♫
- COPA BAR & GRILL** Salsa Lessons w/ Tony, the Brew (8:00)
- COTTON CLUB** New Year's Eve w/ Can't Hardly Playboyz (8:00)
- DONN'S DEPOT** Donn & the Station Masters
- THE DRISKILL HOTEL** Lobby Bar: Jasper & Woody (6:00)
- EDDIE V'S PRIME SEAFOOD** Mark Goodwin Trio (8:00)
- ELEPHANT ROOM** New Year's Eve w/ Ephraim Owens (9:30)
- EMO'S** New Year's Eve Party w/ Darren Hoff & the Hard Times, the Beaumonts, Scott H. Biram
- EVANGELINE CAFE** New Year's Eve w/ Cleve & Sweet Mary (7:00)
- FADÓ** Mysterious Ways (10:00)
- FLAMINGO CANTINA** Reggae Bash w/ Dr. Dubbist, Mau Mau Chaplains, Grimy Styles ♫ (9:00)
- FRIENDS** Eric Tessmer, DJ Southpaw (6:00)
- GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON** Alvin Crow (9:00)

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MON 12/28 **FREE JUKEBOX**

TUE 12/29 **FOREST WAYNE ALLEN**

WED 12/30 **MOLLY HAYES**

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X-MAS EVE WITH MIKE DUBOISE AND FRIENDS!!!

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25 ★ 9 PM ★
RUSTY TRAPP AND DEBBIE KAY'S 17TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS KARAOKE!!!!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26 ★ 10 PM ★
DJ HEADPHONES TEXAS SOUL PARTY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27 ★ 9 PM ★
HAUNT (MIATT HERBERT) REBECCA PRONSKY NYC LADY MAYBE

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28 ★ 10 PM ★
NOEL MCKAY AND FRIENDS DARREN HOFF AND THE HARD TIMES SOUL PROPRIETORS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29 ★ 10PM ★
THE BREAD AND FRIENDS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30 ★ 9 PM ★
BETH LEE SPIT AND TEARS JENNY AND THE CORNPONIES

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31 ★ 9 PM ★ \$10
NEW YEAR'S EVE SOUL SHAKEDOWN!!!
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1/2 price appetizers

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SIN TUESDAYS
\$1 Select Beers \$2 Wells
Food Specials All Night!
4pm-Close

LIVE MUSIC
TUESDAY DECEMBER 29 • NO COVER

CORNELL HURD
BIRTHDAY BASH
8-10pm


WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30 • NO COVER

GEEKS WHO DRINK
8-10pm

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

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KGSR 93.3 Presents **93.3**
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Christmas
\$15 Advance/\$15 Door

w/ **WC Clark** Tommy Shannon
Malford Milligan
and SURPRISE GUESTS! Doors 8pm/ Show 9pm

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25TH CHRISTMAS
MONTE MONTGOMERY
10pm \$15 Advance/\$15 Door
Carson Brock Trio
8pm \$15 Cover

George Devore
12-13am 57 Club Opens at 6pm

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26TH
Joe Ely
Saturday w/ TEYE
doors open at 10pm show starts at 10pm
\$20 adv. \$25 at the door (Saturday & Sunday)
Warren Hood
11:30pm \$40

* SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27TH
JOE ELY w/ DAVID GRISSOM
separate show w/
THE RESENTMENTS
doors open at 10:30pm show starts at 11pm \$10

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 28TH 8:30pm
LONELYLAND KARAOKE
w/ THE MUSIC OF BOB SCHNEIDER
\$10 come sing with the band and special guest singers
Matt the Electrician 7:00pm \$10
Jeff Plankenhorn 10:30pm \$5
The Twalls 12:30pm \$5

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29TH
Uncle Lucius 10pm \$5
BRUCE HUGHES
& THE ALL NUDE ARMY 8pm \$5
Bus Stop Stallions 12am \$5
No Cover Happy Hour **Waylon Payne**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30TH
Carolyn Wonderland
\$12 Advance/\$15 Door/ Show at 11pm
MONTE MONTGOMERY 8pm \$10
No Cover Happy Hour **NORTONS**

NEW YEARS EVE
w/ **GUY FORSYTH**
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CALENDAR (COMMUNITY SPORTS ARTS FILM MUSIC) LISTINGS

CLUB LISTINGS FROM THURSDAY

GRUENE HALL The Belleville Outfit (1:00), New Year's Eve Party w/ Clay McClinton & Delbert McClinton (8:00) Ⓡ

HANOVER'S New Year's Eve Party w/ the Stone Ravers (9:00)

HOLE IN THE WALL New Year's Eve Soul Shakedown w/ PJ & the Bear, Lost Soul Review, Soul Track Mind Ⓡ

THE INDEPENDENT AT 501 STUDIOS New Year's Eve YMCA Benefit w/ the Gourds (8:00)

JOVITA'S The Cornell Hurd Band (8:00)

LA PALAPA Triple Shot (7:00)

LONGBRANCH INN Big Chris Gates & Gatesville, Hickoids (9:00)

MOHAWK Peligrosa, Brownout, Grupo Fantasma

MOMO'S Warren Hood & the Hoodlums, the Belleville Outfit (9:00)

NUNO'S ON SIXTH PeeWee Calvin & D-Way Tiz, Rusty Trapps

ONE 2 ONE BAR Paul Renna, Alan Haynes (8:00)

PALMER EVENTS CENTER Duke Ellington Orchestra, Austin Symphony Orchestra (8:00) Ⓡ Ⓡ

THE PARISH New Year's Eve Party w/ Markus With a K, the White White Lights, Missions, Zeale (8:00)

POODIE'S HILLTOP BAR & GRILL Blues Mafia, Carolyn Wonderland

QUINN'S BAR Lixbox (8:30)

RED 7 Manzig, Stabba, Empty Bottles, Metallagher Ⓡ

RED EYED FLY The Stummies

RED FEZ DJ Cashless (10:00)

RUTA MAYA Soundsystem New Year's Eve w/ I/O & Sloppy Jackson, McPullish, DJ Ivor, DJ Notion, Ras G, Jah Remedy (9:00)

SAXON PUB Sideshow Tragedy, Guy Forsyth

SEAHOLM POWER PLANT 2010 Uncorked w/ Matt Shiv, Car Stereo (Wars), Flosstradamus (9:00) Ⓡ

SENGELMANN HALL The Telestars (8:00)

SPEAKEASY Dysfunkshun Junkshun (9:30)

STARDUST CLUB Sam Bentley

STUBB'S Hard Proof Afrobeat, Black Joe Lewis & the Honeybears

T.C.'S LOUNGE Lisa Marshall (10:00)

TEXAS BAR & GRILL Acoustic Open Mic

TX FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS New Year's Eve Blues Ball w/ Little Elmore Reed, Leeann Atherton (9:00)

TOM'S TABOOLEY Fractals (8:00)

TRIPLE CROWN Mashed Potato Johnson, Earle Brown (6:00)

TROPHY'S Two Hoots & a Holler

UNITED STATES ART AUTHORITY NYE 1969 w/ DJ Sue, DJ Tweedy, DJ Jason, Forever Changes, the Hi-Tones, Thee Penetrators (9:30)

Z'TEJAS Tameca Jones (6:00)

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Kim and Alex in the Morning

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THE MAU MAU CHAPLAINS
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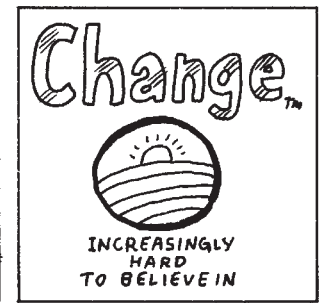
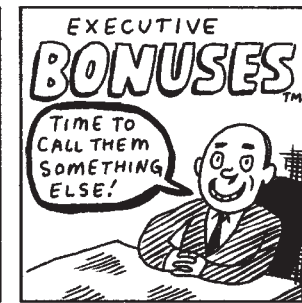
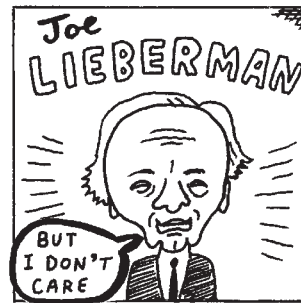
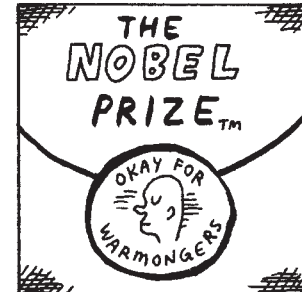
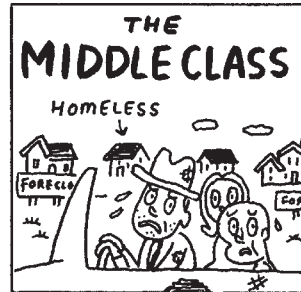
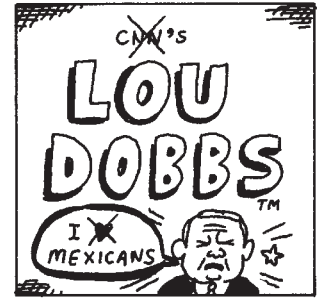
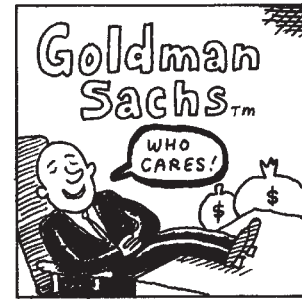
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 ***Call "Dr Kat" ***
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SUNDAY YOGA at The Monarch: Our 1 1/2 hour long Hatha Yoga Classes will start January 17th in our spacious Hall. The space is very relaxing, temperature controlled, and will accommodate 30-50 students per class. January 17th *Beginners Hatha, 2pm-3:30pm with Liz Belle. \$15 per student, or \$10 in advance online. *All Levels Hatha, 4:30pm-6pm with Bea (Brandy Arena), \$15 per student, or \$10 in advance online. www.themonarchtexas.com 6406 North IH-35, Suite 3100 512-371-1711 Location: Across from Highland Mall, in the Lincoln Village Shopping Center, facing Middle Fiskville Road. Just 2 miles North of Downtown Austin. Directions: From Airport Blvd - turn onto Highland Mall Blvd. Then Turn Right onto Middle Fiskville Rd. The Monarch will be on your left.

general

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LOST WHIPPET LOST DOG - Whippet *REWARD* (University Hills, Austin) Lost adult male whippet, Sunday evening about 7:30 pm on Langston Dr. He is white and tan (light brindle), about 40 lbs. - comes to the name KAZOO. no collar, but he is registered with the city and microchipped. He is diabetic and needs dailys meds. Please contact Suzie at 512-663-2784 if you have any information. Reward for recovery.

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Lot 21190, Highland Lake Estates, Section 21, Plat No. 55/59 as described in **Volume 6928, Page 1169** of the deed records of Travis County, Texas.

THE ABOVE SALE to be made by me to satisfy the above described judgment for \$4,757.21 Dollars in favor of plaintiffs, together with the costs of said suit, and the proceeds applied to the satisfaction thereof.

Witness my hand this 30th day of November, 2009.

BRUCE ELFANT,
CONSTABLE PRECINCT 5
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS
By /s/ Alan Redd DEPUTY ON THE PROPERTY SOLD, THERE ARE NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. YOU BUY THE PROPERTY "AS IS". BIDDERS ARE FURTHER ADVISED THAT PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY AT THIS EXECUTION SALE MAY NOT EXTINGUISH ANY LIENS OR SECURITY INTERESTS ON THE PROPERTY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU NEED TO CONSULT COUNSEL OF YOUR CHOICE.

480242
CONSTABLE'S NOTICE OF SALE
REAL PROPERTY DELINQUENT TAXES

BY VIRTUE of a certain Order Of Sale issued by the clerk of the 299th District Court of Travis County, on the 16th day of November, 2009 in a certain cause numbered 480242, wherein Travis County, Lago Vista Independent School District, Travis County Emergency Services District No. 1 and City of Lago Vista are plaintiffs, and William J. Heffernan, Marilyn M. Heffernan, Lauterborn Homes, Inc. (In Rem Only), F.D.I.C. in its corporate capacity as Receiver for Bank of the Hills (In Rem Only), City of Lago Vista (In Rem Only) are defendant(s), in favor of said plaintiffs, for the following sums: **Tract One: Billing Number 304899 = \$3,295.43 and Tract Two: Billing Number 304898 = \$2,014.71** Dollars, together with all costs of suit, that being the amount of judgment recovered by the said plaintiffs, in the 299th District Court of Travis County, Texas, on October 6, 1998.

I, on the 30th day of November, 2009, at 2:00 o'clock P.M., have levied upon, and will, on the 5th day of January, 2010 at 10:00 o'clock A.M., at 1000 Guadalupe Street in the City of Austin, within legal hours, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder, all the rights, title and interest of defendants in and to the following described property, levied upon as the property of defendants, to-wit:

TRACT 1: Billing No 304899
Unit 7-A, Building A, Lago Vista Lodges Condominiums, Condo. Records 8/542 as desc. in Vol. 7455, Page 562 of the Deed Records of Travis County, Texas

TRACT 2: Billing No 304898
Unit 6-A, Building A, Lago Vista Lodges Condominiums, Condo. Records 8/542 as desc. in Vol. 7455, Page 564 of the Deed Records of Travis County, Texas

THE ABOVE SALE to be made by me to satisfy the above described judgment for the following sums: **Tract One: Billing Number 304899 = \$3,295.43 and Tract Two: Billing Number 304898 = \$2,014.71** Dollars in favor of plaintiffs, together with the costs of said suit, and the proceeds applied to the satisfaction thereof.

Witness my hand this 30th day of November, 2009.
BRUCE ELFANT,
CONSTABLE PRECINCT 5
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

By /s/ Alan Redd DEPUTY ON THE PROPERTY SOLD, THERE ARE NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. YOU BUY THE PROPERTY "AS IS". BIDDERS ARE FURTHER ADVISED THAT PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY AT THIS EXECUTION SALE MAY NOT EXTINGUISH ANY LIENS OR SECURITY INTERESTS ON THE PROPERTY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU NEED TO CONSULT COUNSEL OF YOUR CHOICE.

CAUSE NO. C-1-PB-09-001207: THE GUARDIANSHIP OF ROBERT J. HARRIS, AN INCAPACITATED PERSON
IN THE PROBATE COURT NUMBER ONE OF TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Guardianship for the Co-Guardians of the Person and Estate of ROBERT J. HARRIS, an incapacitated person, were issued on November 23, 2009, in Cause No. C-1-PB-09-001207, in the Probate Court Number One of Travis County, Texas, to MARK R. HARRIS and BOBBIE B. HARRIS, as Co-Guardians of the Person and Estate With Full Authority of ROBERT J. HARRIS.

The residence of the Co-Guardians is in Austin, Travis County, Texas, the post office address is: c/o Deborah Green, The Law Offices of Deborah Green 7200 North MoPac Blvd., Suite 300 Austin, Texas 78731

All persons having claims against this estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this 17th day of December, 2009.

By: /s/ Deborah Green
Attorney for Co-Guardians

CITATION BY PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF TEXAS
CAUSE NO: D-1-GN-09-003964

To: PAULA ZAMARRIPA RANGEL, AND ALL HEIRS OF PAULINE ZAMARRIPA MATA, HEIRS OF SABASTIAN ZAMARRIPA, HEIRS OF MANUAL ZAMARRIPA, HEIRS OF VALENTIN ZAMARRIPA, HEIRS OF GILBERTO ZAMARRIPA AND ALL OTHER PERSONS CLAIMING AN INTEREST IN THE REAL PROPERTY TO WRIT. Defendant(s), in the hereinafter styled and numbered cause: D-1-GN-09-003964 YOU (AND EACH OF YOU) HAVE BEEN SUED. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 A.M. on the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days from the date of issuance hereof, that is to say at or before 10 o'clock A.M. of Monday the JANUARY 9, 2010, and answer the FIRST AMENDED ORIGINAL PETITION of Plaintiff(s), filed in the 200TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF Travis County, Texas, on NOVEMBER 24, 2009, a default judgment may be taken against you. Said suit being number D-1-GN-09-003964, in which LEON FELIPE RODRIGUEZ Plaintiff(s), and PAULA ZAMARRIPA RANGEL, ET AL Defendant(s), and the nature of which said suit is as follows: BEING A SUIT TO REMOVE CLOUD ON TITLE TO THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY TO-WIT: S 86.43FT OF LOT 10 BLK 17 PLT 8 & 82 DIV B GRANDVIEW PLACE, ALSO KNOWN AS: 2102 E. 9TH STREET, AUSTIN, TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS.

ALL OF WHICH MORE FULLY APPEARS FROM PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION ON FILE IN THIS OFFICE, AND WHICH REFERENCE IS HERE MADE FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES. Issued and given under my hand and the seal of said court at Austin, Texas, November 13, 2009.
AMALIA RODRIGUEZ-MENDOZA
Travis County District Clerk
Travis County Courthouse
1000 Guadalupe, P.O. Box 679003 (78767)
Austin, Texas 78701
By /s/ ALEJANDRA MEDRANO-CHAPA, Deputy
REQUESTED BY:
MARK GREGORY TORABI BARRETT DAFFIN FRAPPIER TURNER & ENGEL, LLP
15000 SURVEYOR BOULEVARD, SUITE 100, DEPARTMENT 4000
ADDISON, TX 75001

Issued and given under my hand and the seal of said court at Austin, Texas, November 25, 2009.

AMALIA RODRIGUEZ-MENDOZA
Travis County District Clerk
Travis County Courthouse
1000 Guadalupe, P.O. Box 679003 (78767)
Austin, Texas 78701
By /s/ IRIS LARVEA, Deputy
REQUESTED BY:
DON E. WALDEN
7200 N MO PAC EXPY #300
AUSTIN, TX 78731-2563
BUSINESS PHONE: (512) 349-9595
FAX: (512) 795-8079

CITATION BY PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF TEXAS

CAUSE NO: D-1-GN-09-000299 To: UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW OF GREGORY L. SMITH Defendant(s), in the hereinafter styled and numbered cause: YOU (AND EACH OF YOU) HAVE BEEN SUED. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 A.M. on the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days from the date of issuance hereof, that is to say at or before 10 o'clock A.M. of Monday the DECEMBER 28, 2009, and answer the PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION of Plaintiff(s), filed in the 200TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF Travis County, Texas, on JANUARY 29, 2009, a default judgment may be taken against you.

Said suit being number D-1-GN-09-000299, in which WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A. Plaintiff(s), and GRACIE SMITH, VELARIE CASTILLO, PAULA ANNY CASTILLO AND THE UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW OF GREGORY L. SMITH IN RE: 1301 LARELLEAF DRIVE, PFLUGERVILLE, TEXAS 78660 Defendant(s) and the nature of which said suit is as follows:

PLAINTIFF WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A., ITS SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS BY AND THROUGH ITS ATTORNEY OF RECORD, MARK G. TORABI OF BARRETT DAFFIN FRAPPIER TURNER & ENGEL, LLP, 15000 SURVEYOR BLVD., ADDISON, TEXAS 75001, 972-386-5040, BROUGHT SUIT AGAINST DEFENDANT'S GRACIE SMITH, VELARIE CASTILLO, PAULA ANNY CASTILLO, AND THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF GREGORY L. SMITH, TO ENFORCE THE VENDOR'S LIEN ON AND ASSERT SUPERIOR TITLE TO THE PROPERTY LOCATED 1301 LAURELLEAF DRIVE, PFLUGERVILLE, TEXAS 78660 AND LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS: LOT 1, BLOCK L OF HEATHERWILDE SECTION FOUR, PHASE FOUR, AN ADDITION TO THE CITY OF PFLUGERVILLE, TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS, ACCORDING TO THE MAP OR PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN DOCUMENT NUMBER 200100208 OF THE OFFICIAL PUBLIC RECORDS OF TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS.

ALL OF WHICH MORE FULLY APPEARS FROM PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION ON FILE IN THIS OFFICE, AND WHICH REFERENCE IS HERE MADE FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES. Issued and given under my hand and the seal of said court at Austin, Texas, November 13, 2009.

AMALIA RODRIGUEZ-MENDOZA
Travis County District Clerk
Travis County Courthouse
1000 Guadalupe, P.O. Box 679003 (78767)
Austin, Texas 78701
By /s/ ALEJANDRA MEDRANO-CHAPA, Deputy
REQUESTED BY:
MARK GREGORY TORABI BARRETT DAFFIN FRAPPIER TURNER & ENGEL, LLP
15000 SURVEYOR BOULEVARD, SUITE 100, DEPARTMENT 4000
ADDISON, TX 75001

BUSINESS PHONE: (972)386-5040
FAX: (972)341-0734

CITATION BY PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF TEXAS
CAUSE NO: D-1-FM-09-006448 To: VICTOR A VILLARREAL and to all who it may concern, Respondent(s); GREETINGS: YOU HAVE BEEN SUED. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 A.M. on the Monday next following the expiration of twenty days after you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you.

YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear and answer before the Honorable District Court, 250TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT, Travis County, Texas, at the Courthouse of said County in Austin, Texas, at or before 10 o'clock A.M. of the Monday next after expiration of twenty days from the date of service of this citation, then and there to answer the PETITION FOR DIVORCE AND TRAVIS COUNTY STANDING ORDER filed in said court on DECEMBER 9, 2009, and said suit being number D-1-FM-09-006448 on the docket of said Court, and entitled "IN THE MATTER OF THE MARRIAGE OF MARIA G. VILLARREAL AND VICTOR A. VILLARREAL, and In the Interest of ALIZE M. VILLARREAL AND ARIAL M. VILLARREAL, CHILD". The nature of said suit is a request to DISSOLVE the marriage of the parties, appoint managing and possessory conservators, and divide the estate of the parties in a manner that the court deems just and right.

The Court has authority in this suit to enter any judgment or decree in the CHILD'S interest which will be binding on you, including the termination of the parent-child relationship, the determination of paternity, and the appointment of a conservator with authority to consent to the CHILD'S adoption.

Issued and given under my hand and the seal of said court at Austin, Texas, December 11, 2009.

AMALIA RODRIGUEZ-MENDOZA
Travis County District Clerk
Travis County Courthouse
1000 Guadalupe, P.O. Box 679003 (78767)
Austin, Texas 78701
By /s/ IRENE SILVA, Deputy
REQUESTED BY:
MARIA G VILLARREAL
6202 LAIRD DR
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78757

CITATION BY PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF TEXAS

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF JOSE FRANCISCO CERDA, Deceased, No. C-1-PB-09-001682 in Probate Court Number One of Travis County, Texas.

ERIKA SANCHEZ aka ERIKA SANCHEZ CERDA and all The alleged heir(s) at law in the above numbered and entitled estate, filed on December 10, 2009, an Application to Determine Marriage and Heirship and for Appointment of Independent Administrator in the said estate and request(s) that said Court determine who are the heirs and only heirs of the said JOSE FRANCISCO CERDA, Deceased, and their respective shares and interests in such estate.

Said application will be heard and acted on by said Court at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publication of this citation, at the County Courthouse in Travis County, Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court at said above mentioned time and place by filing a written answer contest-

ing such application should they desire to do so.

If this citation is not served within 90 days after date of its issuance, it shall be returned unserved.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF SAID COURT at office in Travis County, Texas, on December 10, 2009.

DANA DEBEAUVOIR

County Clerk,

Travis County, Texas

P.O. Box 149325,

Austin, Texas 78714-9325

By Deputy:/s/ O. RUIZ

CITATION BY PUBLICATION THE STATE OF TEXAS

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF CALVIN HOUSTON SHANNON, Deceased, No. C-1-PB-09-001633 in Probate Court Number One of Travis County, Texas.

IRMA HARVEY SHANNON AKA IRMA HARVEY alleged heir(s) at law in the above numbered and entitled estate, filed on December 03, 2009, an Application to Determine Heirship and an Application for Issuance of Letters of Independent Administration in the said estate and request(s) that the said Court determine who are the heirs and only heirs of the said CALVIN HOUSTON SHANNON, Deceased, and their respective shares and interests in such estate.

Said application will be heard and acted on by said Court at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publication of this citation, at the County Court-house in Travis County, Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court at said above mentioned time and place by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.

If this citation is not served within 90 days after date of its issuance, it shall be returned unserved.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF SAID COURT at office in Travis County, Texas, on December 03, 2009.

Dana DeBeauvoir

County Clerk,

Travis County, Texas

P.O. Box 149325,

Austin, Texas 78714-9325

By Deputy: /s/ D. Mendez

CITATION BY PUBLICATION THE STATE OF TEXAS

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF SUSAN ELIZABETH WHITEHEAD, Deceased, No. C-1-PB-09-001735 in Probate Court Number One of Travis County, Texas.

LANTZ WHITEHEAD and all the alleged heir(s) at law in the above numbered and entitled estate, filed on December 21, 2009, an Application to Determine Heirship in the said estate and request(s) that the said Court determine who are the heirs and only heirs of the said SUSAN ELIZABETH WHITEHEAD, Deceased, and their respective shares and interests in such estate.

Said application will be heard and acted on by said Court at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publication of this citation, at the County Court-house in Travis County, Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court at said above mentioned time and place by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.

If this citation is not served within 90 days after date of its issuance, it shall be returned unserved.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND

AND THE SEAL OF SAID

COURT at office in Travis

County, Texas, on December

21, 2009.

DANA DEBEAUVOIR

County Clerk,

Travis County, Texas

P.O. Box 149325,

Austin, Texas 78714-9325

By Deputy:/s/ O. RUIZ

CITATION BY PUBLICATION THE STATE OF TEXAS

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF THOMAS ALCUS WHITEHEAD, Deceased, No. C-1-PB-09-001736 in Probate Court Number One of Travis County, Texas.

LANTZ WHITEHEAD and all the alleged heir(s) at law in the above numbered and entitled estate, filed on December 21, 2009, an Application to Determine Heirship in the said estate and request(s) that the said Court determine who are the heirs and only heirs of the said THOMAS ALCUS WHITEHEAD, Deceased, and their respective shares and interests in such estate.

Said application will be heard and acted on by said Court at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publication of this citation, at the County Court-house in Travis County, Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court at said above mentioned time and place by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.

If this citation is not served within 90 days after date of its issuance, it shall be returned unserved.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF SAID COURT at office in Travis County, Texas, on December 21, 2009.

DANA DEBEAUVOIR

County Clerk,

Travis County, Texas

P.O. Box 149325,

Austin, Texas 78714-9325

By Deputy:/s/ O. RUIZ

D-1-GV-08-001407

CONSTABLE'S NOTICE OF SALE

REAL PROPERTY DELINQUENT TAXES

BY VIRTUE of a certain Order Of Sale issued by the clerk of the 126th District Court of Travis County, on September 3, 2009, at 2:00 o'clock P.M., have levied upon, and will, on the 13th day of November, 2009 in a certain cause numbered D-1-GV-08-001407, wherein Austin Community College, City of Austin, Del Valle Independent School District, Travis County and Travis County Healthcare District are plaintiffs, and Wayne Carr, if alive and if deceased, the unknown owners, heirs, assigns and successors of the Estate of Wayne Carr and Roger Earl Robinson (In Rem Only) are defendant(s), in favor of said plaintiffs, for the sum of **\$17,850.65** Dollars, together with all costs of suit, that being the amount of judgment recovered by the said plaintiffs, in the 126th District Court of Travis County, Texas, on September 3, 2009.

I, on the 30th day of November, 2009, at 2:00 o'clock P.M., have levied upon, and will, on the 5th day of January, 2010 at 10:00 o'clock, A.M., at 1000 Guadalupe Street in the City of Austin, within legal hours, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder, all the rights, title and interest of defendants in and to the following described property, levied upon as the property of defendants, to-wit:

Lot 17, Block C, Villa Sueña, Section 2, Plat No. 48/53, Travis County, Texas and being more particularly described in document number 2006221493 of the deed records of Travis County, Texas.

THE ABOVE SALE to be made by me to satisfy the above described judgment for **\$17,850.65** Dollars in favor of plaintiffs, together with the costs of said suit, and the proceeds applied to the satisfaction thereof.

Witness my hand this 30th day of November, 2009.

BRUCE ELFANT,

CONSTABLE PRECINCT 5

TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

BY /s/ Alan Redd DEPUTY

ON THE PROPERTY SOLD, THERE ARE NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. YOU BUY THE PROPERTY "AS IS". BIDDERS ARE FURTHER ADVISED THAT PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY AT THIS EXECUTION SALE MAY NOT EXTINGUISH ANY LIENS OR SECURITY INTERESTS ON THE PROPERTY. YOU ARE SIMPLY PURCHASING WHATEVER INTEREST THE DEBTOR HAS IN THE PROPERTY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU NEED TO CONSULT COUNSEL OF YOUR CHOICE.

GV-501777

CONSTABLE'S NOTICE OF SALE

REAL PROPERTY DELINQUENT TAXES

BY VIRTUE of a certain Order Of Sale issued by the clerk of the 98TH District Court of Travis County, on the 19th day of November, 2009 in a certain cause numbered GV-501777, wherein Austin Community College, Austin Independent School District, City of Austin, Travis County and Travis County Healthcare District are plaintiffs, and STEVEN DEPAZ, United State of America (In Rem Only), City of Austin (In Rem Only), American Hermetics, Inc. of Austin (In Rem Only), Betty Vallner (In Rem Only), Sharon Stedman (In Rem Only), and Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for BNC Mortgage, Inc. (In Rem Only) are defendant(s), in favor of said plaintiffs, for the following sums: **Tract One: Billing Number 74195 = \$10,192.68; Tract Two: Billing Number: 75379 = \$1,492.72; Tract Three: Billing Number: 75431 = \$20,544.49 and Tract Four: Billing Number 76937 = \$12,165.08** Dollars, together with all costs of suit, that being the amount of judgment recovered by the said plaintiffs, in the 98TH District Court of Travis County, Texas, on September 3, 2009.

I, on the 30th day of November, 2009, at 2:00 o'clock P.M., have levied upon, and will, on the 5th day of January, 2010 at 10:00 o'clock, A.M., at 1000 Guadalupe Street in the City of Austin, within legal hours, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder, all the rights, title and interest of defendants in and to the following described property, levied upon as the property of defendants, to-wit:

TRACT ONE: BILLING NO.: 074195
A tract out of the J. C. Tammhill, ABS 2, Survey 29, Travis County, Texas, and being more particularly described in Volume 10936, Page 977, and Volume 13292, Page 237 of the Deed Records of Travis County, Texas

TRACT TWO: BILLING NO.: 075379
Lot 1, Block 9, Green Valley No. 2, Plat No. 5/15, Travis County, Texas, and being more particularly described in Volume 10774, Page 567 and Volume 13292, Page 237 of the Deed Records of Travis County, Texas

TRACT THREE: BILLING NO.: 075431
Lot 34, Brookwood, Plat No. 58/57, Travis County, Texas, and being more particularly described in Volume 10796, Page 1321 and volume 13292, Page 237 of the Deed Records of Travis County, Texas

TRACT FOUR: BILLING NO.: 076937
Lot 11, Block 2, Clara Pickle Subdivision (OIL 48 & 49, Div. A), Plat No. 4/168, Travis County, Texas, and being more particularly described in Volume 10909, Page 2704 and Volume 13292, Page 237 of the Deed Records of Travis County, Texas

THE ABOVE SALE to be made by me to satisfy the above described judgment for the following sums: **Tract One: Billing Number: 74195 = \$10,192.68; Tract Two: Billing Number: 75379 = \$1,492.72; Tract Three: Billing Number: 75431 = \$20,544.49 and Tract Four: Billing Number 76937 = \$12,165.08** Dollars in favor of plaintiffs, together with the costs of said suit, and the proceeds applied to the satisfaction thereof.

Witness my hand this 30th day of November, 2009.

THE ABOVE SALE to be made by me to satisfy the above described judgment for the following sums: **Tract One: Billing Number: 74195 = \$10,192.68; Tract Two: Billing Number: 75379 = \$1,492.72; Tract Three: Billing Number: 75431 = \$20,544.49 and Tract Four: Billing Number 76937 = \$12,165.08** Dollars in favor of plaintiffs, together with the costs of said suit, and the proceeds applied to the satisfaction thereof.

Witness my hand this 30th day of November, 2009.

BRUCE ELFANT,

CONSTABLE PRECINCT 5

TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

BY /s/ Alan Redd DEPUTY

ON THE PROPERTY SOLD, THERE ARE NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. YOU BUY THE PROPERTY "AS IS". BIDDERS ARE FURTHER ADVISED THAT PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY AT THIS EXECUTION SALE MAY NOT EXTINGUISH ANY LIENS OR SECURITY INTERESTS ON THE PROPERTY. YOU ARE SIMPLY PURCHASING WHATEVER INTEREST THE DEBTOR HAS

IN THE PROPERTY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU NEED TO CONSULT COUNSEL OF YOUR CHOICE.

GV-504176

CONSTABLE'S NOTICE OF SALE

REAL PROPERTY DELINQUENT TAXES

BY VIRTUE of a certain Order Of Sale issued by the clerk of the 53RD District Court of Travis County, on the 16th day of November, 2009 in a certain cause numbered GV-504176, wherein Austin Community College, Manor Independent School District, Travis County, Travis County Emergency Services District No. 4 and Travis County Healthcare District are plaintiffs, and Nicanora B. Rodriguez, Leandro Rodriguez, Sr., Cecilio Rodriguez, Jr., Joe Rodriguez, Henry Rodriguez, Martha Rodriguez aka Martha Stockton, Manuel Rodriguez, Ronaldo Rodriguez, Virginia R., Gonzales, Josie R. Ochoa, Johnny Bue-no Rodriguez a/k/a John Rodriguez, Linda Rodriguez, Rudy Rodriguez, Rosemary Rodriguez, Alex Rodriguez, Jr., Cynthia Rodriguez, Albert Rodriguez, and Michael Anthony Rodriguez are defendant(s), in favor of said plaintiffs, for the sum of

\$24,872.08 Dollars, together with all costs of suit, that being the amount of judgment recovered by the said plaintiffs, in the 53RD District Court of Travis County, Texas, on September 3, 2009.

I, on the 30th day of November, 2009, at 2:00 o'clock P.M., have levied upon, and will, on the 5th day of January, 2010 at 10:00 o'clock, A.M., at 1000 Guadalupe Street in the City of Austin, within legal hours, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder, all the rights, title and interest of defendants in and to the following described property, levied upon as the property of defendants, to-wit:

Lot 291, Block P Imperial Valley, Section 2, Plat No. 50/62, Travis County, Texas, and being more particularly described in Volume 12167, Page 396 and Volume 12204, Page 1887 of the Deed Records of Travis County, Texas.

THE ABOVE SALE to be made by me to satisfy the above described judgment for **\$24,872.08** Dollars in favor of plaintiffs, together with the costs of said suit, and the proceeds applied to the satisfaction thereof.

Witness my hand this 30th day of November, 2009.

BRUCE ELFANT,

CONSTABLE PRECINCT 5

TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

BY /s/ Alan Redd DEPUTY

ON THE PROPERTY SOLD, THERE ARE NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. YOU BUY THE PROPERTY "AS IS". BIDDERS ARE FURTHER ADVISED THAT PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY AT THIS EXECUTION SALE MAY NOT EXTINGUISH ANY LIENS OR SECURITY INTERESTS ON THE PROPERTY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU NEED TO CONSULT COUNSEL OF YOUR CHOICE.

NO. C-1-PB-09-00 1554

ESTATE OF ROY A.

BUTLER, DECEASED

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF ROY A BUTLER, DECEASED Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Roy A. Butler, Deceased, were issued on December 8, 2009, in Docket No. C-1-PB-09-00 1554, pending in the Probate Court of Travis County, Texas, to: ANN SHOWERS BUTLER, Independent Co-Executor and EDWARD SHOWERS BUTLER, Independent Co-Executor

Claims may be presented and addressed to the personal representatives of the Estate at the following address:

c/o William M. Harriss, Chief Financial Officer

Butler Family Interests

P.O. Box 9190

Austin, Texas 78766

All person having secured claims against this Estate are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. DATED this 25th day of December, 2009.

Sam R. Perry, Attorney for the Estate

State Bar No. 15805000

901 Congress Avenue

Austin, TX 78701

NOTICE OF NEW TRAFFIC REGULATION

Notice is hereby given that Travis County, Texas, proposes the approval of the following traffic regulation: **SET MAXIMUM PRIMA FACIE SPEED LIMITS ON WESTBANK DRIVE IN PRECINCT THREE.**

Any resident of Travis County, Texas, aggrieved by this proposal action may make written request for a mandatory public hearing.

Such request must be addressed to the Transportation and Natural Resources Department, Travis County, Texas, P.O. Box 1748, Austin, Texas, 78767, and must be received within seven (7) days of this notice.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

A Public Auction will be held to satisfy landlord's lien pursuant to Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code. **Sales will be held on January 16, 2010. A sale will be held at 12:00pm at A-A-A Storage 8956 Research Blvd. N. Austin, Phone 512-338-9900. A Sale will be held at 1:00pm at A-A-A Storage 10707 IH 35 North Austin,**

Phone 512-977-9777.

All units will be sold to the

highest bidder for cash.

Clean up and removal de-

posit will be required. Seller

reserves the right to reject

any bid. Sales include items

from the following tenant's

storage spaces #6406 Ange-

la Garcia, furni-

ture,household.

#6139 Elia Jaimes,Furniture.

#6109 Kirk Wiley,Lawn mow-

er,hosehold

#7022 Disan Rodrigue-

z,Household

#7066 Edward Mo-

rones,Household

#5103 Kyle Nathons House-

hold.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION OF ABANDONED MOTOR VEHICLES

THE VEHICLES DESCRIBED BELOW HAVE BEEN DECLARED ABANDONED IN TRAVIS COUNTY, AND ARE LOCATED AT THE FACILITIES LISTED. THE OWNER OR LIENHOLDER HAS THE RIGHT TO RECLAIM THE VEHICLE NO LATER THAN THE 20TH DAY AFTER THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE, UPON PAYMENT OF ALL TOWING, PRESERVATION AND STORAGE CHARGES RESULTING FROM PLACING THE VEHICLE IN CUSTODY, OR GARAGEKEEPER'S CHARGES. FAILURE OF THE OWNER OR LIEN HOLDER TO RECLAIM THE VEHICLE WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED CONSTITUTES A WAIVER BY THE OWNER AND LIEN HOLDER OF ALL RIGHT, TITLE AND INTEREST IN THE VEHICLE AND THEIR CONSENT TO THE SALE OF THE ABANDONED MOTOR VEHICLE AT A PUBLIC AUCTION PURSUANT TO SECTION 683.011 AND 683.012 et. sec., TEXAS TRANSPORTATION CODE. ANY OF THE VEHICLES LISTED BELOW WHICH ARE NOT RECLAIMED DURING THE TIME PROVIDED WILL BE SOLD AT PUBLIC AUCTION AS SCHEDULED BELOW.

GREG HAMILTON, SHERIFF TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS BY: RICK PATINO, DEPUTY II, WRECKER ENFORCEMENT UNIT

THE FOLLOWING ARE STORED AT:

AVILES WRECKER 13350 OLD KIMBRO RD. MANOR, TX 78653

CAT Equipment CAT0416DABFP16312

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

PS Oraneco, Inc. hereby gives notice that the property generally described below is being sold to satisfy a Landlord's Lien pursuant to Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code, at the time and place indicated below, and on the following terms: All property generally described below will be sold at public sale to the highest bidder for cash, or credit cards. **NO CHECKS**, with payment to be made at the time of the sale. Seller reserves the right to refuse any bid and to withdraw any item or items from the sale. The property will be sold on the 13th of January 2010 on or about the time indicated at each self-storage facility identified: **NO CHILDREN PLEASE.**

Wednesday, January 13th 2010.

9:00 a.m. Public Storage @9814 Westgate Blvd, Austin, TX 78748

0006 JOSEPH AVALON, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

0225 JOHN MURPHY FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS, BOXES

0237 SYLVIA VAQUERA, BEDDING

0265 KIMBERLY D WHITE, SCOOTERS, POOL TABLE, FURNITURE

0406 MELISSA BRADSHAW, FURNITURE, BOXES, TOTES

0453 JOSHUA BOSTICK, BOXES, TV, FURNITURE

0603 AUSTIN MICHAEL JONES, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

0930.a.m. Public Storage @ 7200 S 1st Street., Austin, TX 78745

B056 MARY CASTILLO, BOXES, BABY CAR SEAT, BED

E129 STEVE LOPEZ, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

J282 ANDREW ZAMORA, BEDDING

K288 ERIC REYNA, HAND DOLLY, FURNITURE, BOXES

L344 MICHAEL VASQUEZ, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

M374 LEE ANN PRIMEAU, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS, BOXES

N425 SAMUEL HERNANDEZ, BOXES, TRUNK, LIGHTS

R551 MATT WHETSTONE, FURNITURE, BEDDING, BOXES

R555 JAMES LAWLER, TOOL BOX, FLOOR JACK, TOOLS

U611 ANNA MARIE TAMEZ, BOXES, TOTES

U618 ALEX SUNIGA, TOOL BOXES, BOXES, TABLE

V706 LISA LYNN FRY, BOXES, BAGS, CLOTHING

W783 AMY SLEGGERS, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

10:00 a.m. Public Storage @ 7112 S Congress, Austin, TX 78745

C20 ANGELA DEANGELO, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

E10 FRANCES DAVILA, BOXES, DRUMS, FURNITURE

F4 ROBERT G RENTERIA, COMPUTER, LAMP, BOXES

F42 ROLANDO GOMEZ, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

M31 SARAH RAYAS, BBO, HAND DOLLIES, FURNITURE

M60 JOHNNY ANGEL RODRIGUEZ, WASHER, DRYER, FURNITURE

10:30 a.m. Public Storage @ 4202 Santiago, Austin, TX 78745

134 MICHAELA VILLENEUVE, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

350 KAYLA BAILEY, TOTES

553 HUGH PICKETT, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

647 MICHAEL ROSENFELD, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

J18 DEBRA FIGUEROA, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

J30 REBECA CLANTON, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

J38 RAYMOND RENDON JR, YARD TOOLS, LAWN FURNITURE, BOXES

J62 RAYMOND GRIFFIS, BOXES, COMPUTER, REFRIGERATOR

K2 MARY LESLIE MCNAUGHTON, TRUNKS, BOXES, TOTES

K7 SONYA MEDINA, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

K19 GINGER FLORES, BOXES, BEDDING, FURNITURE

K40 HERBERT ALLEN, BOXES, FURNITURE, REFRIGERATOR

K57 MONIKA POWELL, BEDDING, TABLE

L24 ANGIE BARRIENTOS, BOXES, TOTES, FILING CABINETS

M31 SARAH RAYAS, BBO, HAND DOLLIES, FURNITURE

M60 JOHNNY ANGEL RODRIGUEZ, WASHER, DRYER, FURNITURE

10:30 a.m. Public Storage @ 4202 Santiago, Austin, TX 78745

134 MICHAELA VILLENEUVE, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

350 KAYLA BAILEY

car talk

by Tom and Ray Magliozzi

VINTAGE CARS REQUIRE OLD-FASHIONED CREATIVITY

Dear Tom and Ray:

I have often wondered, when I see a street scene in Havana, how they've managed to keep those '50s vintage cars operating all these years. Of course, we are conditioned to replace a car because of a full ashtray or if a bird defecates on the hood. But still, wouldn't 50-plus-year-old cars be increasingly expensive to maintain? I would think the majority of those cars would be not only mechanically challenged but very unsound structurally. And how do they obtain replacement parts?

—John

TOM: They go to Pepe Boys: Fidel, Raul, and Hugo. Actually, they just get very creative, John.

RAY: The structural stuff is pretty easy. That's mostly welding, which is old technology.

TOM: Yeah, and I doubt they have annual safety inspections, like we do. So, the definition of "structurally sound" may be "the seat doesn't fall through the floor onto the street while I'm driving."

RAY: But structural things, like floors and frames, are pretty easy to fix.

TOM: And for all the mechanical stuff, they have machine shops. Remember, there were no electronics in cars in those days. There were no electronic ignitions, no emissions systems, no computers. So almost everything is some form of bent, lathed, or poured metal. Their machine shops can do that.

RAY: And I suspect they've gotten very good at rebuilding engines and transmissions. Remember, they've been rebuilding the same engines and transmissions for 50 years (literally, the same engines and transmissions!).

TOM: I suspect they make the simpler repairs themselves, like we used to fix exhaust pipes with empty cans of frozen orange juice concentrate.

RAY: Probably the hardest thing to make is something like spark plugs, which require special tooling. But even if they don't make those on the island, they have trading partners that make cars.

TOM: Yes, the global "rum for spark plug" trade is very hot these days.

What is the most cost-effective way to buy a car? Tom and Ray hash it all out in their pamphlet "Should I Buy, Lease, or Steal My Next Car?" Send \$4.75 (check or money order) to Next Car, PO Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or e-mail them by visiting the Car Talk website, www.cartalk.com.

Tune in to Car Talk each Saturday at 9am on

cut 90.5
AUSTIN TEXAS

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continued legal notices

712 DON RHOADES, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

11:00 a.m. Public Storage @ 2301 E Ben White, Austin, TX 78741

1042 TERRANCE HORTON, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE
1109 TRACEY WARG, BOXES, FURNITURE

2030 OLIVIA ARCHBOLD, BEDDING, BOXES, TOTES

2066 FABIAN SOTO, BOXES, FURNITURE, GUITAR

2083 TERRY TRISTAN, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

2138 APRIL KING, BOXES, BAGS, BEDDING

3020 KIM WHALIN, BOXES, BAGS

3026 NORMAN EDWARDS, WASHER, DRYER, COMPUTER

3069 NINA Sapeda, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

3093 AMBER CUNNINGHAM, TOTES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

11:15 a.m. Public Storage @ 5016 E Ben White, Austin, TX 78741

B030 SERGIO LEJARAZU, PARTY SUPPLIES, MOON-WALK

C090 RAY VERASTEGUI, TOTES, FURNITURE

C210 MARLANA LIVELY, FURNITURE

C273 SYLVIA MURRAY, BOXES, TOTES

C279 CHELSEA FORCEY, BAGS, TOTES

C311 MARCIANA SANTILAN, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

D009 GERALD GERHARDT, TOYOTA SCION

11:30 a.m. Public Storage @ 2121 S IH 35, Austin, TX 78741

1088 MICHAEL COUGHLAN, BOXES, TABLE, FILING CABINET

1098 AMY GARCIA, FURNITURE, BEDDING

2101 NATALIE BELL, SPEAKERS, CHAIR, BAGS

11:45 a.m. Public Storage @ 5220 US HWY 290W, Austin, TX 78735

1306 STACY FULMER, HAND DOLLY, LADDERS, BOXES

4288 ASHLEY LUCE, FURNITURE, BEDDING, BAGS

12:00 p.m. Public Storage @ 1213 W 6th Street, Austin, TX 78703

1027 JASON SHIELDS, BOXES

2052 RUBY MEDINA, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

3121 JOSEPH DRIGGERS, ELECTRIC ORGAN, KEYBOARD, FURNITURE

4022 GARY DICKSTEIN, BOXES, BAGS, ELECTRONICS

12:15 p.m. Public Storage @ 6726 Bee Cave RD, Austin, TX 78746

7137 DIANE KLOSTER, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

8076 DONALD WAGECK, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

12:30 p.m. Public Storage @ 3911 Ranch Road FM 620 S Bee Cave, TX 78738

1208 BRIDGET NOACK, FURNITURE, SPEAKERS, BOXES

1252 JACQUELINE KOELM, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

1255 GERALD DEWOLFE, ELECTRONICS, GUITAR CASES, GOLF CLUBS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE Delinquent Tenants

PS Orangeco, Inc. hereby gives notice that the property generally described below is being sold to satisfy a Landlord's Lien pursuant to Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code, at the time and place indicated below, and on the following terms: All property generally described below will be sold at public sale to the highest bidder for cash,

or credit cards. **NO CHECKS**, with payment to be made at the time of the sale. Seller reserves the right to refuse any bid and to withdraw any item or items from the sale. The property will be sold on the 14th of January 2010 on or about the time indicated at each self-storage facility identified: **NO CHILDREN PLEASE.**

Thursday January 14, 2010 9:00 a.m. Public Storage @ 1033 E 41st Street, Austin, TX 78751

1024 EDWARD SWIETEK, BOXES, FURNITURE

2036 SCOTT WEDGE, FILING CABINETS, BOXES, FURNITURE

2053 KATHLEEN ATWOOD, BOXES, FURNITURE, BAGS

3093 BRIANA DELLYN MEDERIS, BEDDING, BOXES, ELECTRONICS

3181 IVANA SORRELL, BOXES

4154 TORIE DANIELS, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

5045 JASON MOORE, BOXES, FURNITURE, TOTES

5046 DOMONICA IVORY, BIKES, COMPUTER, FURNITURE

5132 DONNA PHARR, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS, BOXES

5180 KANDYCE BOYD, BOXES, TOTES, CLOTHING

5191 CHRIS CARR, CLOTHING, BOXES, BAGS

9:30am Public Storage @ 1001 Nth IH-35, Austin, TX 78753

1051 KENYA D DAVIS, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

1059 ANTOINE BROWN, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

2049 MONICA A. LEYBA, BOXES, FURNITURE, TOTES

3037 VERONICA LEE, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

3051 DELBERT TOINS, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

3054 VICKIE ANDREWS, BAGS, BOXES, TOTES

3080 CELESTE SARABIA, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

3097 UNLIMITED SPRINKLER FIRE PROTECTION INC. ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

5034 JOHN BOSTON, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

5071 TIFFANY SUTTON, BOXES, BAGS, ELECTRONICS

7028 RAMON VILLANUEVA, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

8007 JASON VILLARREAL, BOXES, FURNITURE, TOTES

8023 JORGE VILLANUEVA, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

10:00am Public Storage @ 10100 Nth IH-35, Austin, TX 78753

B044 LARRY THOMPSON, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

B091 IAN C. BIDOT, BICYCLE, BOXES, FURNITURE

B131 GUILLERMO GOMEZ, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

C003 TROY DAVIS, BOXES, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS

C010 ERIC VERRA, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

C024 JOHN ALTON SAILORS, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

C029 STEVE SCHWARTZ, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

C092 MICHAEL THOMAS, BEDDING, ELECTRONICS, BOXES

D028 KATHRYN BROWN BURLERSON, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

G014 NEAL NEUNHOFFER, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

H010 JAMES WILLIE 3RD MERCER, BOXES, ELECTRONICS, TOOLS

10:30am Public Storage @ 937 Reinitl, Austin, TX., 78751

188 SONIA BAWA SIPRA C/O DR. NAIM SIPRA, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

193 ARA WILLIAMS, BOXES, BAGS, ELECTRONICS

217 HOLLY RENAY DANIELS, BOXES, REFRIGERATOR, TOYS

239 SEAN PAUL KELLEY, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

423 JOHN GIBSON, BOXES, FURNITURE

530 FOREST COOK, BOXES, FURNITURE

634 SHANTEL FISHER, BOXES, BEDDING

627 FRANK HUBERT, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

724 FOREST COOK, BOXES

752 LINDA GRAY, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

753 HARRY HUNTER, BOXES, TOTES, BEDDING

785 ANGEL PAZ, BOXES, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS

787 ERIKA TAYLOR, FURNITURE

830 FOREST COOK, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

913 FOREST COOK, BOXES, FURNITURE

11:00am Public Storage @ 8101 Nth Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78753

120 PERRY HEMPHILL, BOXES, TOYS, BAGS

174 MARGIE RAY, BOXES, FURNITURE, BAGS

223 TERRY PRICE, BOXES, ELECTRONICS, FURNITURE

251 JACORI VIENS, APPLIANCES, BEDDING, ELECTRONICS

400 MONIQUE TOWNSEND, BOXES, ELECTRONICS, TOYS

447 ROSE LEE, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

464 ERIC HARVEY, BOXES, ELECTRONICS, TOOLS

1042 SARA EMAMI, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

1325 RAY MENN, BOXES, ELECTRONICS, BAGS

1416 MCARTHUR SMALL, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

3077 JOHN GONZALES, FURNITURE, BAGS, BOXES

3166 LATASHA POLAND, BOXES, ELECTRONICS, FURNITURE

N2227 BRIAN BODINE, BEDDING, BOOKS, BOXES

N2286 SERGHEL GOMEZ, BOXES, BEDDING, ELECTRONICS

N2406 NOELANI FOX, BOXES, FURNITURE, PIANO

N2417 CHRISTINA CARPENTER, BOXES, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS

12:00pm Public Storage @ 8525 N Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78753

A020 TIM THIEL, BOXES, TOTES, ELECTRONICS

A046 RONALD KEITH GREENESS, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

B072 FAITH SALAZAR, BAGS, BOXES, TOTES

C061 JOHNNY LOPEZ, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

D045 MADAN RAO, BOXES, BAGS, FURNITURE

G016 FRANCISCO BENITEZ LOPEZ, ELECTRONICS, BAGS, TOTES

H045 ISAAC AVALOS, 1987 MERCEDES 560SEL VIN#CA39D2HA314***

J030 RON VENTURA, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

12:30pm Public Storage @ 8128 N Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78753

B028 WILFRED AGUILAR, BOXES, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS

D023 LEVERET FRANKLIN, BOXES, BAGS, BEDDING

E001 LILLIE PIPER, BOXES, BAGS, FURNITURE

E014 ESTELLE CHRISTEN, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

E122 SHANNON SANDERS, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

E123 MELVIN BELL, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

E131 ZENDA RIVERS, BEDDING, BAGS, ELECTRONICS

1:00pm Public Storage @ 9205 Research Blvd., Austin, TX 78758

B066 LISA NIETO, FURNITURE, BABY TOYS

C080 JAMES WALSH JR., BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

C092 GABRIEL JONES, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

C095 JONNA TUTTLE, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

D034 STEPHANIE MCFARLIN, BOXES, FURNITURE, TOTES

E033 TIA SCOTT, BOXES, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS

E057 DALTON MCGAFFNEY, BAGS, EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

E088 HAGEN JAMES, BOXES, ELECTRONICS, TOOLS

1:30pm Public Storage @ 12318 N Mopac Expressway, Austin, TX 78758

A029 DEBRA BISHOP, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

B107 MARSHALL BOWLING, FURNITURE, GOLF CLUBS

B111 NORMA GONSALVEZ, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS

C321 IAN DEHORNEY, BOXES, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS

C353 FERNANDO SOTO, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICE, WASHER/DRYER

C375 DUSTY DREWRY, TOTES, BEDDING, ELECTRONICS

C422 MORGAN ALAN GAITHER, BOXES, CLOTHING

C453 WILLIAM JOKIMAKI, FURNITURE, BEDDING

D516 ANGELA POCORABA, FURNITURE, BEDDING, ELECTRONICS

D517 ANGELA POCORABA, FURNITURE, BOXES, ELECTRONICS

D593 BOB MONTEZ, EXERCISE BIKES

D634 JUAN MARTINEZ, FURNITURE

2:00pm Public Storage @ 10931 Research Blvd., Austin, TX 78759

2066 MELISSA RODRIGUEZ, BOXES, FURNITURE, ELECTRONICS

A056 ADRIAN CLARK, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

C009 WENDY LISTER, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

D031 KIMBERLY S MCGILL, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

G015 JOHN HENDERSON, BOXES, FURNITURE, CABINET

G017 DENISE TREVINO, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

2:30pm Public Storage @ 12915 Research Blvd., Austin, TX 78750

3015 CHRISTOPHER JONES, BOXES, TOTES, BAGS

3098 RICHARD TOVAR, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

3100 MICHELE DOUGLASS, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

4045 FAIRFIELD DEVELOPMENT***PIA***, ALL ITEMS IN UNIT

A008 ROBERT MONROE, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

D011 JOANNA RUSSELL-DYSON, BOXES, BAGS, TOTES

3:00pm Public Storage @ 13675 N US HWY 183 Austin, TX 78750

0106 JERI BAYLOR, BAGS, BOXES, FURNITURE

0442 MEGAN PLANT, FURNITURE, BEDDING, BAGS

0522 MICHELLE ROSASCHI, BOXES, BEDDING, TOYS

1128 CURTIS DOUGHERTY, BOXES, BAGS, FURNITURE

1176 MICHELLE ROSASCHI, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

3:30pm Public Storage @ 1517 Round Rock Ave., Round Rock, TX 78681

1117 MARVIN HARRIS, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

1179 DONNISHA JONES, BOXES, TOTES, TOOLS

6112 GARY MICHAEL TAFF, BOXES, TOTES, FURNITURE

7142 NICOLLE FREDERICK, BOXES, FURNITURE, BEDDING

8146 DANIEL BIRD, BOXES, BAGS, ELECTRONICS

8182 ASUQWO EKENE, BOXES, BAGS, FURNITURE

9106 LARRY HATZFELD, BOXES, FURNITURE, TOTES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Pursuant to Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code, BEN WHITE MINI STORAGE located at 13444 POND SPRINGS ROAD, AUSTIN, TX 78729 and MOPAC SELF STORAGE located at 12900 N. MOPAC, AUSTIN, TX 78727 will hold a public auction of property to satisfy a landlord's lien. Auction to begin at 10:00 A.M., Tuesday, January 19, 2010 at BEN WHITE to be followed by an auction after 11:00 A.M., January 19 at POND SPRINGS MINI STORAGE and concluded by an auc-

tion at 12:00 P.M. at MOPAC SELF STORAGE. Property will be sold to the highest bidder for cash. Property in each space may be sold item by item, in batches, or by the space. Property being sold includes contents in spaces of the following:

BEN WHITE: Robert Powell, Mailene Lung, Katrina Carleton, Shawn Smith, Samuel Garcia Jr., Stephen Davis, Michael Lozano, Lashay Thomas, Kerry Tucker, Jessica James, Rafael Garcia POND SPRINGS: Scott Pattison, Thomas White, Jose Cuevas, Melissa Riley, Britny Hunt, Jessica Kham MOPAC: Christie Klam

Sale items to include: furniture, fake X-mas tree, radio, computer, fish tank, trading cards, yard equipment, washer/dryer, extension ladder, antique machinery, misc boxes, children's items, lamps, TV, mini fridge, golf clubs, tool box, speaker, dishes, couches, table, china cabinet, desk, chairs, fridge, ping pong table, toys, tote bags, futon

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

U-STORE-IT hereby gives notice of Public Sale under the provisions of Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code. This sale will be held on

January 6, 2010 beginning at 10:30 A.M. at the U-STORE-IT located at 610 E. Stansney Lane Austin, Texas. This sale is being held to satisfy a Landlord's Lien. Every thing sold is purchased "as is" "where is" for cash. U-STORE-IT reserves the right to set a minimum bid, refuse any bid, or to cancel any Public Sale that is advertised. Announcements made the day of the sale take precedence over any printed materials related to the sale.

U-Store-It #751

610 E. Stansney Lane Austin, TX 78745

512-441-8300

Mo (Tina) Chapman - unit 2050 - Bags, Bed frame and mattress, Chairs, Fan, Trash cans, Toys, Wheel Barrow

Amanda Zapata - unit 2128 - Bags, Boxes, Fan, Ironing Board, Microwave Oven, Shelf, Sofa, Speakers, Stool, Table, TV, Vacuum Cleaner, Chairs, Totes, Stereo, Blender.

Tony Wolford - unit 2218 - Bags, Boxes, Chairs, Dresser, Ice Chest, Speakers, Stereo, Tables, Tool Box, Vacuum Cleaner, Heater, Wine Rack, Totes, Dolly, Trunk, Bar Stools, Pet Carrier, Camp Grill, Extension cords, Tools, Baskets.

Sergio Guerrero - unit 3005 - Books, Chairs, Desk, Dryer, Pictures, Speakers, Table, Gun Rack, Totes, Cabinet.

Sharon Respass - unit 3048 - Books, TV, Tote.

</

DODD-CARLS NKA SUSAN GRAY.

The address of such Administrator is 14105 Hunters Pass, Austin, Texas 78734.

The Administrator directs that all claims against this Estate be addressed to:
SUSAN DODD-CARLS NKA SUSAN GRAY

Representative of the Estate of EARL F. CARLS

c/o Nancy N. Scherer

Scherer & Scherer

602 West 13th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

DATED this 15th day of December, 2009.

NANCY N. SCHERER

SCHERER & SCHERER

602 WEST 13TH STREET

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701

ATTORNEYS FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF ROBERT M. CLEMENTS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Robert M. Clements, Deceased, were issued on December 8, 2009, in Cause No. C-1-PB-09-001583, pending in the Probate Court Number 1 of Travis County, Texas, to Gerard H. Clements.

The post office address of Gerard H. Clements is 5832 Charlestown Drive, Dallas, Texas 75230-1704.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time prescribed by law. The claims are to be presented at the address given above and are to be addressed in care of the above named representative.

DATED the 14th day of De-

ember, 2009.

/s/ Gerard H. Clements

Attorney for the Estate

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Dorothy Nell Tisino, Deceased, were issued on December 17, 2009, in Cause No. C-1-PB-09-001625, pending in the Probate Court Number One, Travis County, Texas, to Kathleen Tisino Blakey nka Kathleen Blakey Garrett.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Estate addressed as follows:

Representative, Estate of Dorothy Nell Tisino, Deceased

c/o Walter C. Guebert

Walter C. Guebert, PC.

5900 Balcones Drive,

Suite 190

Austin, Texas 78731

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

DATED this 18th day of December, 2009.

WALTER C. GUEBERT, PC.

By: /s/ Walter C. Guebert

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Allen Gordon Hughes, aka Allen G. Hughes, Deceased, were issued on December 15, 2009, in Cause No. C-1-PB-09-001555, pending in the Probate Court No. 1, Travis County, Texas, to: Alicia G. Hughes.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: Brad Wiewel

Attorney at Law

1601 Rio Grande, Suite 550

Austin, TX 78701

DATED the 25th day of December, 2009.

/s/ Candice H. Bocock,
Attorney

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

On November 24, 2009, Jennifer Celedon and Nicholas Celedon qualified as Independent Co-Administrators with Will Annexed of the Estate of Olga Celedon, Deceased, in Cause No. C-1-PB-09-001458, pending in Probate Court No. 1 of Travis County, Texas. The address of the Co-Administrators is: c/o Donald F. Carnes, 400 W. 15th, Suite 808, Austin, Texas, 78701, and all persons having claims against this estate are required to present them to such address in the manner and time required by law.

Jennifer Celedon and Nicholas Celedon

Independent Co-Administrators with Will Annexed of the Estate of Olga Celedon

STOR SELF STORAGE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code, there being due and unpaid charges for which the undersigned is entitled to satisfy an owner's lien of the goods hereinafter described and stored at Stor Self Storage locations listed below; And due notice having been given, to the owner of said property and all parties known to claim an interest therein, and the time specified in such notice for payment of such having disposed of on the following dates. No one under 16 allowed. Cash only!

Stor Self Storage 2508 W. Pecan St, Pflugerville TX 78660 512-990-1000

January 6th, 12:30 pm

Robert McLaurin III -Mattress, end table,bed frame,chair.

Ryan Walquist - Padded chair, computer, floor sweeper,tv,desk,table saw,household items.

Tedra Feast - Toys,coffee table,end table.

motor

cars

1995 MERCEDES SL-320

Two seater roadster, in process of complete, professional paint job. This car will be a '10' and we can take your car in a trade. \$10,950. Auto Depot 909 Prairie Trail. 836-9767. www.autodepotatx.com

2000 COROLLA 4dr, only 77k. Minor hail dents. New motor. Warranty. \$4500. Auto Depot 909 Prairie Trail 836-9767.

www.autodepotatx.com

2000 LEXUS RX-300, had a minor ding at right rear quarter. Ready now. Stunning with 103k miles. Can trade and warranty. \$8500. Auto Depot 909 Prairie Trail 836-9767. www.autodepotatx.com

2001 MERCEDES SLK-230, red, nice, can trade, warranty. \$7950. Auto Depot 909 Prairie Trail 836-9767. www.autodepotatx.com

2002 CIVIC four-door, auto 92k, one year warranty. Clean, nice, \$6550. Auto Depot 909 Prairie Trail 836-9767. www.autodepotatx.com

2003 TACOMA 4dr, Crew cab, auto, 82,000 miles, light hail. Clean, warranty, \$10,550. Auto Depot 909 Prairie Trail 836-9767. www.autodepotatx.com

2005 NISSAN "Nismo" 4WD Xtra cab pickup. 53k miles. Can trade, nice. \$13,950. Full warranty. Auto Depot 909 Prairie Trail 836-9767. www.autodepotatx.com

2008 HONDA FIT 2800 miles (Yes, 2800 miles!) Auto, full factory warranty. Can trade. \$14,950. Auto Depot 909 Prairie Trail 836-9767. www.autodepotatx.com

TOYOTA COROLLA 2005 Black, grey interior, very clean, never smoked in. 82K miles, well-maintained, in great condition. \$8000 OBO. Call 422-3695

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1996 Mercedes E320 - 70k, clean as a pin. Gold, parchment leather, can trade, warranty, \$6,950.

1997 Olds Aurora - this luxury car is a one owner, loaded with leather, and only 119k. Has some hail dents, but drives perfectly, and just went through our rigorous check. \$2,650 with a full warranty.

1998 Firebird, extremely clean in and out. Recent major service. Drives super. T-tops; snappy red. \$3,250. 1998 Saturn. 5 sp. Warranty. \$1,950.

1999 Toyota Solara coupe, gorgeous red, leather, sun roof, \$4,950, warranty.

1998 Lexus SC300 coupe. Wow, what a car. Just a gorgeous classic. \$6,950. 1998 Camry, 4dr., LE, brand new engine rebuild, with new timing belt, oil pump, all bearings, seals, rings etc etc. Clean, 130k mileage car, with one year warranty. \$4,450.

2001 Toyota Tundra, auto, x-cab. 64,000 miles. Had cosmetic damage to front, in process of readying, just a beautiful truck. Can trade, warranty, \$7,500.

2002 Solara convertible, has minor hail dents, but clean, drives super, warranty. \$3,550. Needs new rear window - blow-out price! Can trade. Warranty? What do you think!

2002 Nissan Xterra, loaded with leather, really clean with ONLY 20,000 miles! Can trade...Warranty? Of course. \$9,950.

2007 Subaru Forrester, auto, 53,000 miles. This car took a really light hit to the rear and we are in the process of repairing it. Clean as a pin. Brand new tires. Can trade, \$8,950.

2004 XA Matrix, 4 door, 70K miles. Can trade. Warranty. Auto AT, \$6950

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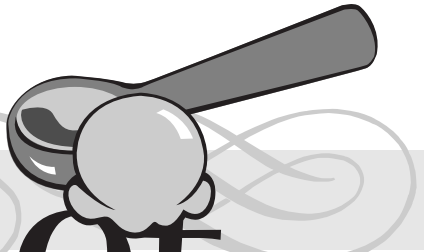
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TASTES LIKE CANDY

Still haven't found what I am looking for. [tasteslikecandy](#), 46, #132022

WET AND HORNY

looking for dominate much much older male 50 plus for discreet en counters. Loved to be spanked and teased. [hotneasy](#), 24, #131716

SENSUAL KISSER LOVER

I am a 37 year old woman who wants nothing more than to spend time with someone that I can call on when I want it! I am pretty simple... [boytoywanger](#), 37, #131255

ORGASM?

I have many fantasies. I want you to teach me and tell me how. 23 years old, 5'4", 110 lbs, very cute and willing. [LittleLady](#), 23, #131233

SUBMISSIVE SEEKS MASTER

I'm 26 years old and love being a submissive to a knowledgeable Dominant male. I am untrained but have enough brains to know how to respect my Dom/Master. [kinkykendra69](#), 26, #131116

ELMO LOVER

I'm a girl who just wants a lot of fun and wild things into my life. [lovablelibra12](#), 20, #130651

FALISHA

wants to meet old grey haired guy's with disposable income that enjoy deep tissue body work. I am near wimberley. [falishamc](#), 55, #130388

SUB, SHY, SWEET.

I'm witty, charming, and shy, and Gemini. I love learning and having fun. I am looking for a dominant, clever, and affectionate man to befriend and maybe more. [Willow1113](#), 18, #129849

SASSY NEEDING DOMINATION

Very busy and lacking release outside of daily life. Looking for someone not afraid to dominate and open to public role playing. I have a spanking fetish that needs satisfying. [burlyqgirl](#), 25, #128939

MAYBE SOMETHING MORE

I am not a thin, perfect Barbie type. I'm looking for an attractive M 25-36 who can keep up. [liltred](#), 31, #128782

IT'S PLAYTIME BOYS

I'm looking for a man that's sweet and caring but i get bored easily so he needs to be full of surprises so that i never get bored. [austinparitygirl1985](#), 24, #119045

COUPLE SEEKING PLAYMATE

Secure couple seeking a fun, sexy friend. She is bi, he's straight. [funlovincouple](#), 35, #131822

PLAY WITH US

Married Couple looking for women 41(her) 44(him). We are hwp, attractive, ddf,drama free. We like to watch and be watched. Seeking woman to share erotic adventures. Age 25-50 HWP Caucasian, Latin. [seekingfun1](#), 44, #132126

LETS ENJOY PARADISE

The only part incomplete is you. (a loving and committed bisexual woman) My love has been longing for that special woman to join us in our piece of Texas paradise. [paradisefound](#), 37, #132031

CUTIE = 3

We are looking for a cutie to come play for some laughs and naughtiness. we are attractive, very easy going and really know how to have a good time! [MrDestructo and CatastropheGirl](#), 29, #132001

NO CLOTHES NECESSARY

It's not that hard. We'll either want to have sex with you or not. Turning down someone and being turned down by someone is not that big of deal. [VeloSexy](#), 30, #131915

LITTLEPEOPLEBIGBANG

We are a "short persons" couple looking to get involved in some of Austin's most erotic group action it has. We put the "geeeeerrrr" in swinger. [SugarNSpice](#), 39, #131459

SEXY BLACK COUPLE

Sexy black couple looking for a woman to please us both. Almost anything goes. Just want to have a whole lots of fun!!!!!! [wnepps](#), 24, #131382

OPEN-MINDED, SEXY COUPLE

We are a happily married couple that loves to meet new people and make friends! We always play together and never force chemistry. Feel free to ask any questions. [curiousbikers](#), 27, #131117

ADVENTURE SEEKERS

We're an attractive, committed couple interested in meeting similar couples or select singles. We're sane, fun, and drama-free. If you're both bi (or at least curious) that's a plus. [PairOfAces](#), 29, #131110

SEXXITTEN & ROCKGOD

Sexy, young couple seeking first 3way. Me: tall, blonde, slender, great in bed. Him: equally hot/long hair and tats. [CattieBrie27](#), 27, #130620

HOT MARRIED CHICK

Hi! We're a couple looking for hot guys, pretty women and good looking couples to have fun and games with. roleplay, domination, submission, "cheating" and more. No strings allowed, thanx. [anya](#), 34, #128804

BOUR PLAYMATE

Couple looking for playmates to play and enjoy one another. Just friends with benefits, no attachments. Just sex, and more sex. [newbies](#), 37, #127079

FIRST TIME COUPLE

we are a couple in love but wanting to expand our sexual pleasures. This would be our first time but we are very open minded. Couples or females only. [080764](#), 45, #124403

FEMALE FOR ME

Married Hispanic BiFemale, 34 looking for BiFemale for fun encounters. Let's get together for drinks and see what happens? [femaleforme](#), 34, #131835

A WET TREAT

I am 28, sexy and looking for someone who knows how to use their hands and mouth well. Let's see how juicy I can get!!! [austinkristal](#), 28, #131787

HOTTIE SEEKING NAUGHTY

Happy in relationship with boyfriend, just curious for some girl on girl.. Have only been with one girl- often daydream about it. [temptress](#), 26, #131370

TRA-LA-LA

I'm looking to do some experimenting with a cute and fun chick. [xxxheart](#), 23, #131103

LUSCIOUSLY WET BI

Married Bi looking 4 other married bi-ladies (35-45) 4 daytime fun (occasional evenings) NSA/FWB situation. Would love 2 find a friend 2 hang out w/ & occasionally exchange some "benefits". [Luscious_n_wet](#), 39, #131050

PLAYMATE(S) FOR ASIANBEAUTY

AsianBeauty seeks Erotic Play with Woman or Man; couples considered. I'm very open-minded, feel free to suggest your sexual fantasies. Only Inquire if you're STE-Free. [AsianOrchid](#), 24, #131487

SEXY COLLEGE GRAD

Lonely sexpot seeks hot couple to bring fantasy to reality. Want a non-jealous couple to let me enjoy both at the same time. [youngnsexy](#), 24, #131182

SHY REDHEAD

chills at home. looking for spice. not very experienced, am willing to be shown the ropes. no into pain, but very imaginative. not sure what i'm looking for, open for suggestions. slightly goth but not in a gross way. [mutemuse](#), 20, #130686

YOUNGNTIGHT

looking for a couple to have some fun with...im young sexy and up for just about anything so if u think u can handle me then let me know....ava 18. [bossgirl45](#), 19, #129789

RAINMAKING TRUTHSEEKER

I am an attractive nineteen-year-old bisexual female. I consider creativity, health, and honesty to be the most relevant traits in a person. I'm looking to be friends first. Be real. [sweeteighteen](#), 20, #128243

MANPLEASURER

Love men of all types...just want to do whatever makes you moan with joy...! [OverEasy](#), 29, #131200

HOTGUY LOOKING FOR

Hispanic Bottom, looking for a discreet encounter and a relationship with a Top guy. I am discreet Open to new things with guys around my age or younger. 46yrs. [antonio_3638](#), 45, #118402

LOOKING FOR FUN

Looking for no strings fun and wanting to explore. Am a little bi-curious. [Tgun](#), 38, #131470

PARTY ANIMAL

hello ladies, im an attractive latino from colombia love to please women any race, im looking for ladies to have some adventures once a month and discreet. [latinlover4u](#), 34, #131378

READY TO PLAY

I ready to do some exploration but not alone. Who wants to play? [Stiff_Breez](#), 37, #131318

BLONDE T-GIRL TOP

Hot Blonde T-girl likes to "Dance and Prance". Seeking Hot "Athletic Model" type boys to work the Floor with. I like Muscles or lean. You will like All of me. [BlondeHottie](#), 35, #101055

MASCULINE ADVENTUROUS COWBOY

I am an unapologetic man: I like football, porno and books about war. I live on a ranch 20 min from downtown: think stack of haybales in an open field. [HillCountryCowboy](#), 38, #120439

LOVER, MISCHIEF MAKER

I seek a wild adventure, a night around Austin causing mischief, an impromptu evening exploring forbidden sensual experiences. I am looking for a discrete relationship with a like minded individual. [wickedCowboy](#), 42, #132084

EX MILITARY

New to austin so dont got that many friends yet other than work people. but yea im a guy, do i really need to tell you what we want. [Craquer6i](#), 22, #132083

FIT, FUN, FANTASTIC

Just got into town, looking for a/ some female/s to have fun with. Lets meet up, see if there's a spark. I'm 5'9", 160 lbs, muscular, great stomach, amazing stamina. [lets_have_fun](#), 21, #132071

SHY/FREAKY MUSICIAN

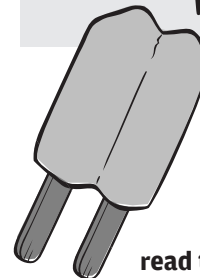
Recently moved to austin. i play drums. been divorced over a year so gettin back in the saddle has been fairly rough. especially for us quiet guys. have an obsession for asian women. [rawkfist](#), 31, #131993

free!

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Flavor of the Week



CattieBrie27 Age: 27
SexKitten & RockGod

We are a sexy couple looking for a casual good time. We want a girl who likes to have fun and is open to new things.

read the rest of **CATTIEBRIE27's** profile or enter your own profile for **FREE** online at austinchronicle.com/easystreet



GET ON THE LIST & GET THE LUV DOC ALL UP IN YOUR INBOX EVERY WEEK

austinchronicle.com/luvdoclist

Ideally by now the manic materialist melee of the Christmas shopping season is behind you. There may be a few last-minute convenience-store runs for retaliatory gifting, but hey, you can't anticipate everything. It's not realistic to expect gifts from your yoga teacher, your postal carrier, or the person who towels sweat off the equipment at your gym. What the fuck? This isn't Japan. People should at least be on a bro hug basis before they start buying useless shit for one another. A good rule of gifting is that if a present can be procured at the dollar store, a nice card will probably suffice. Handmade will do, too. You might even get away with a Monk-e-mail. Popping for Uchi gift certificates or weekend stays at the Four Seasons is downright creepy unless you're a real estate agent or a personal injury lawyer. Even a box of Godiva chocolates is a bit ostentatious for any relationship that doesn't involve blood relatives, heavy petting, or perhaps some sort of disturbing combination of the two. Otherwise, disproportionate gifting just has one effect: awkwardness.

The Luv Doc

Dale Watson's Annual Christmas Show & Dance
Fri., Dec. 25 • 10pm
Continental Club •
1315 S. Congress
www.continentalclub.com

next-door neighbor with foil on his windows is going to drop by with a fruit basket, a cheese ball, or a used pizza box full of pot brownies. Even though you know for an absolute certainty that his heartfelt offering of friendship will soon be clogging up your garbage disposal, you will still feel enough of a tinge of guilt to send you down to the corner store at 9 o'clock on Christmas Eve to buy him an ice scraper and a bottle of 10W-30 motor oil in retaliation. You could get him a sleeve of Donettes and a six-pack of Smirnoff Ice, but you won't want him thinking you're trying to get in his pants. Smarter, shrewder types will just leave the giver hanging ... not even a thank you note. It's a ballsy play, but the idea behind that strategy is solid: A giver is like a hungry kitten at your screen door. If you just ignore it, it will eventually go away. In the real world, not everyone has the cold chrome heart it takes to ignore a hungry, mewling kitten – not even a metaphorical one. Money can't buy everything, but occasionally it can buy some last-minute peace of mind, and sometimes that peace of mind just happens to come through a metal sliding drawer beneath a bulletproof glass window at 3am on Christmas morning – or as the Sikh on the other side of the glass likes to call it, "December 25." Regardless of what you call it, at least on Christmas Day the pressure is off. You might have done good or completely screwed the pooch with the gifting, but on C-Day there's no use worrying about it. In the immortal words of Clayton Williams, you might as well relax and enjoy it. "It" ideally would be Dale Watson's annual Christmas Show & Dance at the Continental Club. If you're on the fence about country music, Dale will definitely make you a believer. Plus there's no better way to meet the opposite gender in Austin than knowing how to country dance, so stop being stuck up and give it a whirl.

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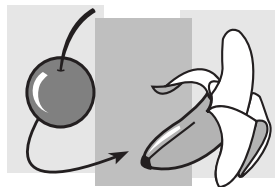
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I CAN

Animal and nature loving girl, who would like to meet somebody to spend some time with. No Drama, BS and Stress needed. Just be yourself and say what you mean. That's all. **oktoberkiki**, 37, #132129
SWPF SEEKING SWPM
Balanced, spiritual, connected, responsible, fun 50 something, curvy and mother of two dachshunds seeks lifelong friend and companion. **poetesstx**, 52, #115369

SILLY ARTSY AUSTINATIVE

Creative, easy-going, likes to laugh. Passionate about the arts, design, learning new things, the environment/ "saving the world", traveling to new places... Looking for someone appreciating and wanting the same. **shellebelle**, 34, #132112

OPTIMISTIC AND ATYPICAL

I'm a single mom with a full time job that I love. My favorite things are music and movies (hard rock and just about any good film). **TXgirl2282**, 27, #132062

KIND ARTIST GIRL

Kindhearted artist type seeks a person to share life with. I try not to take life too seriously. I have a big heart and want to share it. **Brighteyes**, 25, #132055

OUTGOING, RANDOM, FUN

I really enjoy meeting new people and where they come from. I love the outdoors, good food, and random adventures! **wmartinez**, 25, #132009

ETERNAL STUDENT

I'm a laid back gal who loves to learn about the world whether it be through reading, interacting with others, or traveling. **German_Longhorn**, 21, #131999

CHRISTIAN WOMEN

I am loving, romantic, friendly, caring, understanding, respectful and Christian women. I'm described as a person that is outgoing with a wonderful personality and I'm always full of life... **txrescuelady**, 35, #131935

CHILL, HONEST, FUNNY

I'm extremely laid back & brutally honest. I smoke a lot. I act a lot older than I really am. And I don't put up with any bullshit. **startuhriot**, 18, #131727

HELLO FOR STARTERS

Truth: 100 percent of us are not Neat, intelligent, funny... Most of us are Sloppy, insecure, narcissistic. Open up and show all of the characters that are distinctively you. **Dextria**, 24, #131895



many more ads online!

austinchronicle.com/loverslane

JUST SMILE

This is the hard part...lll keep it short and sweet, like me. I love music, reading, walking, spending time with my son, and meeting new people. **PhotographHER84**, 25, #131707

SWEETGIRL

I enjoy theatre (live and indie), hiking, and picnics. I just love life and having fun. I am very independent, but I would like to spend time with someone special. **justme62**, 47, #131846

PEACE LOVING CUTIE

I like artistry and ingenuity, daytrips, extended trips, cooking, eating, prefer to be outside not in. Looking for someone healthy, kind and genuine who enjoys life, and simple pleasures shared. **marisol**, 50, #131892

ADVENTUROUS LOVEABLE CUTIE

I love spending all my time outside, photography, music, good movies, art, discovering new places and new people. looking for a guy who's adventurous, spontaneous, and genuine. **em194**, 20, #131959

TAKE A WALK

I am honest and real, wittily self-effacing and interested in getting outside of my happy little world to explore laughter, wonder and good times with someone on their own path. **truthorconsequences**, 46, #131946

LOVE TO LAUGH!

Hi, I live east of Austin & am looking for cool people to hang out with! Thanks 4 checking me out & email me if you like what u see! **Spicy2nite**, 31, #131830

SILLY, FLIRTY, LOVEABLE

Silly woman that loves to spend time hanging out with the people that matters most. Very energetic but can be shy at first. Knows how to have a good time. **flirtylady04**, 20, #131820

EXTREMELY CLASSY BROAD

Probably not the watermark for maturity, but I just am looking for someone to make me laugh. **pomeller**, 23, #131818

THIS IS FUN

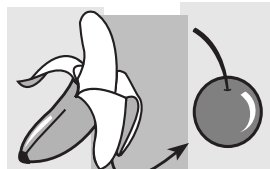
I've got a head on my shoulders and I can use it surprisingly well for my age. I love to laugh and I do it often. Life's a game. **itsruby**, 19, #131662

LATINLOVER

Latin lady looking for something real & genuine. someone who can stimulate & intrigue me. Seeking a gentleman with a big heart who knows how to treat a lady. **SexiMexi**, 32, #131544

ADVENTEROUS CHALLENGE.

Music. Movies. Escape routes. Zeigenbock. Merlot. Mary. Poetry. Running for hours. Wading through the past and determining not to have regrets this...is me. **pretty_much_awesome**, 21, #131495



PEACEFUL PHYSICIST

Looking for longterm relationship with similar minded person. **Avatar**, 46, #132107

WITTY, SARCASTIC, FRENCH

I'll be moving to Austin in a couple weeks time so I'm really just here to meet some new people, and if something develops from there then we shall see. **MrFrench**, 24, #132117

LIFE, BEAUTIFUL, SHORT.

Easy going person, not much for crowds although Enjoy going out. I would like someone that is creative & supportive, that I can be supportive of. I enjoy scifi, pool. **phillyrob817**, 46, #132118

OUTDOORSY LIBERAL DREAMER

I am a somewhat educated, outdoors-loving hippie-esque, hard-working, family-loving, agnostic, liberal, who likes to work, garden, camp, dream, think, read, watch tv, , cook, and talk with friends and family. **SirCampsAlot**, 28, #132099

...JUST -A-SHOT AWAY

live music! I love travel, I have many lands yet to explore this big blue world. I've lived in many areas, chronologically, Charlotte NC, Seattle WA, San Francisco CA & Austin Texas. **SouledAmerican**, 39, #132091

SENTIMENTAL GUY

Hope I'm not looking for love in all the wrong places, again :). **dantheman**, 41, #132093

BOHEMIAN POET 21ST CENTURY

I am a quirky, eccentric, romantic poet. Ever an optimist in the end, no matter how dark emotions may seem. Nesting and movies are better with a companion. **Oberon**, 69, #132087

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

Me- goofy, friendly, sarcastic, random, athletic, hungry, spontaneous, bad speller You - Strong, funny, beautiful, nurturing, outspoken, adventurous, sexy, unique David Copperfield can kiss my white, Irish ass- Tommy Gavin. **brewhaha**, 43, #120243

WHAT I NEEEEEED

I - am without a sense of shame - have a deep need to go against the grain, whichever way it runs. **space_heater**, 30, #132080

AUTHENTIC SENSUALIST

I'm basic, kind, down to earth kind of guy. A writer, recently completed a novel, an able cook, well read, decent conversationalist and an even better listener... **100secretssenses**, 41, #132078

PATIENT, LAID BACK

I like to offshore fish and deer hunt. My son is the most important thing in my life. I own my own buisness Marine Const, and teach welding part time. **rgilde**, 35, #132067

DREAM WISH LAUGH

Austin born dig music, Working out, and going out! Looking for fun loving sexy know how to make a man feel. I honest layed back open minded and strong. **Jade**, 32, #132063

EASY NATURED GUY

Fun-loving, professional environmentalist. Seeks free-spirited woman who's sincere and creative, first as friends, then everything's possible. **tom3_wi**, 56, #132054

CROCK POT MAGICIAN

38, divorced 2 years removed, date rarely, ready to pick up the pace a little. Like to see live music around town - Saxon, Cont. Club, Antones, the usual places. **Job_check**, 38, #132040

ANIMATED AND ECLECTIC

been here since may and need to get out and do austin stuff. love being outdoors but can stay in and hang as well, make it happen. **snarf_snarf**, 23, #132035

LOOK AT ME

Love long walks in the park, listening to anything by air supply, sleeping on rainy days, and eating small cats... looking for a partner in crime, is it you? **blowpopchoir**, 42, #132034

MY CHRONICLE AD

My life consists of great sarcasm, dry humor and almost never being serious. I love a good conversation accompanied with a great beer. **jakubceefin**, 25, #132021

FULL TIME STUDENT

I'm a student currently in Austin. I'm extremely easy going and often quiet, but I'll talk when I have something worth saying. I enjoy being outside running or biking. **bothebeagle**, 20, #132015

SUPER DUPER DESPERATE

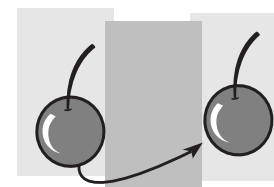
Can you imagine if that was really someone's headline for their personal ad? Anyway, if you never seriously read this section then get in touch. **newhere**, 25, #131996

SHOOT SOME POOL

Looking for someone to practice shooting pool with, or maybe to go throw some frisbees with at the park/ and or have drinks with. **milmascarsyelsanto**, 25, #126379

NEW AND IMPROVED!!

Looking for a fun, intelligent, drama-free partner to see all the cool stuff that goes on in Austin. I'm a fun loving, active, professional looking for the same. **heresme**, 45, #131997



WANNA BE FRIENDS?

I haven't dated in a while and I'm ready for a change. Looking for someone fun and funny, independent and drama free who enjoys the fine art of hanging out. **NlceGirl78**, 30, #132097

SCIENCE/MUSIC NERD

I just moved here and I'm many hours away from everyone I know and love. I love learning, reading, science, playing music, making jewelry, nature, my frogs, cooking, and unplanned adventures. **velvetgoldmine**, 23, #131887

LOOK BETTER ON

im Ace. moved to austin 2 weeks ago. love to laugh. very single. college student. love coffee. im very blunt, not rude. love mexican food. loooove walks. really laid back. **AceOfSpades**, 19, #131753

ADVENTURE BECKONS

fun, genuinely funny, three-year texan seeks someone to enjoy life with. spiritual is a plus. **pleasantly-human**, 29, #131741

NEW TO TOWN

Just moved to Austin from Florida. I also just graduated nursing school. For fun I like working out when I can, watching or playing sports, movies, chilling, food, downtown. **Swoosh12101**, 23, #131567

QUEEN SEEKS COURT

Let's go skinny dipping at night under the stars and drink wine by the pale of the moon. Make me laugh, make me happy - I'll reciprocate! **brownsugarjones**, 44, #120282

NEW TO AUSTIN

Generally a really positive person, I live life to the fullest and without regrets because my mistakes have proven to be my best teachers. **juicebysarah**, 23, #131478

DINO-S-RAWR

This lovely lady is into designer jeans and thrift store T-shirts. Pizza and beer, lots of yoga and a passion for green living. Ridiculously grown-up, but total Peter Pan syndrome. **Pedal-estrian**, 25, #131366

I LIKE QUESO

i don't really know what i am looking for, but i'm sure i will when i find it. **allietea**, 23, #131071



Flavor of the Week

TXgirl2282 Age: 27

Optimistic and a bit atypical I'm a single mom with a full time job (that I love) and I just haven't had much time to get out and meet people. I do LOVE to go out though. My favorite things are music and movies.

I like to think that I have a very eclectic taste in both. Although my favorites are hard rock and horror movies :-

read the rest of **TXGIRL2282's** profile or enter your own profile for FREE online at austinchronicle.com/loverslane

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

by Rob Breznsny for Dec. 25-31

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): I'm happy to announce that 2010 could be the year when you become a more expert communicator. It's not that you do a bad job now; it's just that there is always room for improvement, and this will be an excellent time to attend to that. Life will be bringing you an abundance of experiences that will help you learn to listen better, cultivate more tact, read people's body language like a pro, and consistently speak about the elusive truth with language that's both kind and effective.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): I've known some practical, sensible, well-grounded Aquarians in my life. They're outnumbered, though, by the dominant subtype of your tribe: the imaginative, idiosyncratic improvisers with lightning reflexes and high-flying notions. But even if you belong to the latter group, in 2010 you'll be gaining the capacities of the former. In fact, I think this will be the year you get more things done than you ever have before. Attention to detail will be your specialty. You're likely to excel in mastering the part of genius that's 98% perspiration.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): The pop star Pink is a successful singer. Not only does she have a great voice, she also has sold 32 million records and won two Grammys. Recently she added what I think is an extraneous element to her live performances: a trapeze act. At the MTV Video Music Awards in September, she delivered her song "Sober" while swinging through the air and hanging upside down 60 feet off the ground. I was perplexed as I watched her, thinking to myself, "Doesn't she have confidence that her song and her singing can stand alone?" In 2010, Pisces, I urge you not to follow her lead. There's no need for you to go way overboard as you try too hard to give too much. Just sing your songs.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): What influences do you really, really need to say goodbye to? The next six months will provide you with ample motivation and opportunity to finally bid those farewells. What long-term cycle really, really needs to be drawn to a close, no more hemming and hawing, all loose ends tied up and all mixed signals clarified? Again, the time between now and the middle of June will bring you the necessary inspiration to make it happen. But it'll take deep thought and sustained work and an expanded sense of humor, so get started soon.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): According to astronomer Mark Whittle, the Big Bang began in silence. Soon it crescendoed into a majestic major third chord 50 octaves below middle A. Then it transformed, over the course of a million years, into a wistful minor third chord. In my vision of the first two-thirds of 2010, the music of your life will have a similar pattern: It begins with silence. Next, it progresses into a lush major feel, with spirited and complex contrapuntal themes. Then in June, it evolves into a dreamy, contemplative phase. By late September, however - unlike the Big Bang - you will move into a third act, in which the music of your life returns to the lively mood it had at the start, only now with the gravitas that the reflective phase has instilled.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): I have good astrological reasons to suspect that a year from now, your empire will be bigger. The resources you have at your disposal will be more substantial, the influence you wield will be more meaningful, and the responsibilities you oversee will be more demanding. You can't, however, just sit back passively and expect fate to make it all happen for you. You will have to work your assets off: get better organized, clarify your game plan, and commit to taking better care of yourself. None of that is mandatory, of course. Being a lazy wanderer with no mission statement is definitely an option. If you do go in that direction, though, don't complain to me next December about how you feel like you're made of cookie dough.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will need to learn a lot in 2010, Cancerian. You'll be in a phase of your long-term cycle when it will be wise to enhance your problem-solving skills and increase the knowledge you have at your disposal. So let me ask you: What can you do to gently shock yourself into prying open your mind? What is it that you don't know but need to know? By the way, the coming year will also be a good time for you to offer yourself up as a teacher. In fact, sharing your knowledge and problem-solving skills will make you more receptive to what you need to learn.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Do you know any world travelers, shamanic healers, or visionary entrepreneurs? If not, there's a good chance you'll meet some in 2010, possibly even forge alliances with them. Crafty activists, brilliant artists, and deep thinkers may come your way, as well. Another possibility is that cohorts and comrades you've been linked to for some time will embark on mind-expanding quests that blow your mind as well as theirs. One way or another, Leo, the coming year will bring you more than the usual benefits and challenges that come from being in relationships.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): I was in my first rock band in North Carolina in the 1970s. We did a mix of cover tunes by David Bowie, Lou Reed, and Patti Smith, plus original hippie-punk songs and my poetry rants. Controversy arose virtually every time we performed, especially at places like the North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh (where we competed with the cacophony of mooing cows) and frat parties (where we endured the shouted insults of drunken jocks). It wasn't until I moved to California that I synced up with an audience that appreciated my idiosyncratic musical sensibilities. According to my reading of the omens, Virgo, 2010 could bring you a comparable transition: finding listeners or hooking up with collaborators who are a better fit for your unique qualities.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): I'm always befuddled by astrologers who preach the gospel of doom and gloom when they talk about the influence of Saturn. My experience is that the ringed planet provides the greatest gift imaginable: motivation to become the person you were born to be. It steers you away from pursuing goals that aren't in alignment with your soul's code. It pressures you to give up vain fantasies that even if fulfilled wouldn't make you happy. That's why I'm happy to report to you the following good news: As Saturn travels through your sign for much of the time between now and October 2012, I expect that you will be prompted and prodded to cut away the irrelevancies that distract you from claiming your birthright.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Comedian Chris Rock has a joke that plays on the stereotypes about your sign: "Scorpio, you're gonna die making love!" (Only he uses the "F" word instead of "making love.") I understand the source of his satire. There are more than a few grains of truth in the notion that Scorpios revel in the enigmas of eros and death. On the other hand, I wouldn't reduce your mystique to such a simple formula. I'd prefer to say something like this: You're sexy when you're letting go of your staunch self-control. Or: You're an expert at transcending humdrum modes of awareness by stimulating intense pleasure. Or: If fully harnessed, your orgasmic power could kill off any destructive compulsions you might be harboring. And by the way, 2010 will be one of the best years ever for you to cash in on these capacities.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): According to my analysis of your astrological omens, 2010 isn't a year to get your head in the clouds, but rather to grow deeper roots. Your job, as I see it, isn't so much to explore the heights, but the depths. I think you should focus on getting to the bottom of things, not the top. Your instrument of choice should be a microscope, not a telescope. Your specialty won't be playing spectacular guitar solos, but rather groovalicious bass lines.

Go to RealAstrology.com to check out Rob Breznsny's EXPANDED WEEKLY AUDIO HOROSCOPES and DAILY TEXT MESSAGE HOROSCOPES. The audio horoscopes are also available by phone at 877/873-4888 or 900/950-7700.

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SMART, LOVING, LOYAL.

I am honest and very blunt. Love cuddling. Love being outdoors. Love animals and nature. If you want to know something about me ask it. **Gabe7373**, 21, #131975

NICE AND SIMPLE

Laid back guy seeks low drama situation with another guy. Enjoy hanging out with friends, margaritas, red wine, dining out. Road bike riding, 24Hour Fitness. Dog lover. Disease/smoke free here. **jodetx**, 50, #131890

OPERA OR PUNK

Wait a minute... He likes Opera and punk? He likes Grindhouse and Love, Actually? He likes Chez Nous and The Salt Lick? Is fun and capable of making a commitment? **pparker**, 53, #131728

LOOKING FOR LOVE

Originally from Boston. I enjoy going back east to visit family. I'm looking for someone with the same interests, cooking, taking walks, talking about the important things in life. **It-TakesTwo**, 47, #131616

HIPSTER GAYSIAN WANTED

Are you: awesome? asian? hipster? hilarious? social and homebody? 21-30ish Do you: like electro and indie? dance? drive? want to find love? I'm: skinny, white, 6'01", dark hair musician, hairdresser. **artist4asian**, 22, #131400

ROMANCE 2 WILD

I love a man that thinks about me first thing in the am and the last thing at nite. hand holding and cuddling is a must, as is kissing. **man2man**, 52, #131299

NEW TO AUSTIN

Very blessed, spiritually-changed. 51 GPM ISO honest, outgoing, totally real, self-confident and self-loving gay man who wants to work hard on a friendship and relationship together. **newtoaustinguy**, 51, #131167

HUGS & KISSES

Austin man desires friend & lover. 45/ GWM/6'2"/200. Love to laugh, share and explore. You be smart, healthy and open to possibilities. **bluehead-lights**, 45, #131094

SLAY MY DRAGON

A regular guy who believes in 'happily ever-after'... seeks prince in shining armor to slay the Lonely-Ness monster. **tkaustin**, 48, #119526



DON'T READ ME

I'm who I'm, which means I'm nobody. **bbenitez**, 24, #132110

WHY I OUGHTTA...

just moved back to austin. it's a crazy out there. i like making people laff. hard. come have a drink and laff with me. **eweezie**, 30, #132049

LOOKING FOR FRIENDS

Hoping to move back to Austin. Looking to move back there. Let's have coffee and see what we like to do. Not looking for sex/dating. **hip-pyatheart**, 56, #131994

SENSATIONAL, THEATRICAL, PRESENTABLE,

I love the theatre, I like moves, I am a great fan of Video Games. I like musicals. I make re-make music videos for fun and write scripts for fun. **alexcrumb**, 24, #131826



IT'S VERY CLEAR, our love is here to stay! Merry Christmas

MERRY CHRISTMAS BRENNNA ! ! love you!! - Jvonne

a shot in the dark

SUPER SINGLE DAD

You:Black truck struggling with 3-4 kids in the HEB Wells Branch/I-35 parking lot on Dec.20th. Me:Red Jeep. I told you that you sure have your hands full. I'm interested. **When: Sunday, December 20.** **Where: HEB @ Wells Branch/I-35.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904559**

SEXY METAL DUDE

You were looking at paint/stains on Saturday at my work. I was wearing a brown velvet hat. Please say I didn't miss my only chance to flirt with you! **When: Saturday, December 19.** **Where: Eco-Wise.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904558**

TOPS PARTY UNREACHABLE

Sexy,Lorenzo.. We met briefly at the party. Didn't have the chance to say what I wanted..I had on black slacks,short black jacket. Sheryl knows where I am. Kelley. Let's meet..... **When: Saturday, December 19.** **Where: Tops Christmas party.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904556**

UNACCOMPANIED MINOR MEETING

We sent off kids at gate 12, made some small talk, my heart skipped a beat when you turned to say "take care" before walking away. coffee/conversation sometime? **When: Friday, December 18.** **Where: austin airport.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904555**

CHUY'S WAITRESS

Dark haired beauty w/ hair in bun waiting tables Saturday night. I was wearing Missouri shirt. Got caught burning you up. Think your cute and want to get some drinks. **When: Saturday, December 19.** **Where: Chuy's on Barton springs.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904554**

SCOOTER RIDING PROWLER

Knocking & prowling around my house at 2:30am NOT COOL. It is rude to skip introductions you creepy lurking twerp. The only thing we share is a case number STOP **When: Thursday, December 17.** **Where: my window.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904553**

CURLY HEADED BOY

I see you every day and think you're so cute. Must be the curly hair, or those pouty lips. You should kiss me next time. **When: Thursday, December 17.** **Where: Work.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904551**

ASIAN GIRL ROCKINTOMATO

We shared glances @lunchtime. I was the faux-hawked guy with glasses completely mesmerized by you. I didn't want to interrupt your lunch with your friends, but realize i should have. **When: Friday, December 18.** **Where: Rockin' Tomato.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904550**



BECCA AT CO-OP

You came into the Co-op for your rebate. Your name is Becca and you wear a silver double heart necklace. You said I was funny. Let's get together. Find me!! **When: Sunday, December 13.** **Where: University Co-op.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904549**

BECCA AT CO-OP

You came into the University Co-op for your rebate. Your name is Becca, and you were wearing a silver double heart necklace. You said I was funny. Let's talk more!! **When: Sunday, December 13.** **Where: University Co-op.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904548**

LET'S DANCE

You: One of the three cute girls dancing to the right of the DJ. Me: Black jacket, black striped shirt, dancing next to you Plush Sat nite? **When: Saturday, December 12.** **Where: Music Gym after hours.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904542**

DEAR BOY

i told you i was as cynical as daria. you told me to stay that way, we could sit at opposite ends of the couch, our feet in the middle. **When: Sunday, December 13.** **Where: shangri-la.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904541**

B.S.SALOON

You:blk jeans and blk leather jacket. You knew every person there and the bartenders.You drink Jameson. Me:jeans and a blk tank top with a gray jacket playing pool.You winked at me.) **When: Monday, December 14.** **Where: Barton Springs Saloon.** **You: Woman. Me: Woman. #904547**

FLGRLSUZY

Bonjour! You canceled before I got to meet you. Maybe you scan these - didn't know where else to try. **When: Saturday, November 28.** **Where: Online.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904543**

UFUNDO MY PURSE!

Thank-you so much for bringing my purse back to me on Monday!!! Thank-you, thank-you, thank-you!!! Who are you? I owe you lunch! **When: Monday, December 14.** **Where: 3409 Banton Road.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904546**

SATURDAY SANTA-FEST

I was wearing a black suit and Santa hat, participating in the pub-crawl. You were dressed as Santa. Meet me at Dirty Dog next Friday. Wear your hat! **When: Sunday, December 13.** **Where: Rain.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904540**

SUBMERGED IN SPEED

Where'd you go Alissa? Met in 8 minutes. Haven't stopped thinking about you. You're gorgeous, hes an idiot for not fighting for you. I bought boxing gloves, hit me up! **When: Tuesday, December 8.** **Where: Submerged.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904539**

MOLTOV'S LAST FRIDAY!

Dec. 4th. You just moved here. You have a "misfit" tattoo on your finger. Your friend ran me off!! I showed you my tattoo on my ankle. **When: Friday, December 4.** **Where: Moltov.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904534**

PARKING LOT FROLICKING

Made out from bar to car, did donuts in the the street. You tried to follow me home but got lost. I hope you didn't die ... or worse : **When: Friday, December 11.** **Where: Downtown.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904538**

"MISFIT" TATTOO ONFINGERGIRL(25YRSOLD)

MOLTOV'S(W6thSt.) Moved from outofstate w/a friend. You went to the bathroom, he said you said for me to leave. He lied, then probably lied to you. I like you alot! **When: Friday, December 4.** **Where: Moltov's Cocktail Lounge(W.6th)St.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904544**

WHOLE FOODS CHEMISTRY

You,blonde woman on laptop on table by registers. Me, brunette wearing hotpink beanie. Your penetrating stare followed me to escalators. I rode escalators twice to look at your blissful face. **When: Tuesday, December 8.** **Where: whole foods.** **You: Woman. Me: Woman. #904537**

IRON CACTUS GENT

Me: red coat, blond hair You: dark coat and hair, brown shoes, held the door for me. Wanted to talk, but your date showed up. You have a great smile. **When: Sunday, December 6.** **Where: Iron Cactus North.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904536**

BJ'S BREWHOUSE BRODIE

You wearing white hat and grey pants. Me blonde in maroon shirt sitting in booth. We met eyes. I'll be there again 12/14 for Monday Night Football. Drinks? **When: Monday, December 7.** **Where: BJ's Brewhouse on Brodie.** **You: Man. Me: Woman. #904535**

BRUNETTE KERBEY WAITRESS

Long hair, dark shirt, Campus Kerbey late Saturday. Busy @ bar while I picked up takeout. Didn't see me, but you might be the most beautiful girl I've ever seen! **When: Saturday, December 5.** **Where: Kerbey Lane.** **You: Woman. Me: Man. #904533**

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LIVE MUSIC BY WORLD FAMOUS "ATASH" MUSICIANS, BELLY DANCING FIRE DANCERS AND SPECIAL APPEARANCE BY "PHARA!"
A SHOW YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS! RESERVE EARLY!
111 E. NORTH LOOP
632.7067 OR 970.1677