

# Dare

FROM THE HEART OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH

FREE

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 5

THE GAY AND LESBIAN NEWSPAPER

APRIL 20-26, 1988



THE NASHVILLE BALLET will present Prokofiev's *Cinderella* Friday, May 29 at 8 pm and Saturday, May 30, at 2 and 8 pm. The show moves to Chattanooga the following weekend.

## "...As it is in Heaven": Penny Campbell Fights Alone

By JEFF ELLIS

With purpose in her stride, Penny Campbell walks to the front of the room, picks up a piece of chalk and begins to write on the blackboard.

"Black. White. Male. Female. Gay. Straight," are the column heads she writes at the top of the board. In the room, several people are visibly shaken. They stiffen as they suspect her purpose is to begin naming names, so to speak.

But the only names enters on the list is her own. For now, the closeted lesbians and

gay men in the room are "safe."

Penny Campbell stands alone at the front of the room.

Penny Campbell stands alone among the Vanderbilt Divinity School community as the only person who will admit to being homosexual.

But she is not alone in her struggle to overcome homophobia at the school. She's just the only lesbian fighting the bigotry, many of the school's students say has become a tradition at the school, despite its status as a liberal institution.

"Penny Campbell is like an oasis in the

## Chattanooga Street Preacher Targets "Sinners"

By STUART BIVIN

CHATTANOOGA - It's dark, and the night's starting to take on a chill. A crowd of men and women stand clustered around the doorway, some clucking tongues, some shaking heads, and some murmuring what they'd like to do to him, what he deserves.

Across the street, a lone figure props up a twelve-foot wooden cross splattered with red paint to simulate blood and reads aloud - very loud - from the Old Testament. A police squad car sits nearby. The cop looks bored, then chats with the also-bored-looking local TV crew.

Dan Martino, Chattanooga media hound

and self-proclaimed street preacher, is at it again. This time, his target is Alan Gold's, the city's only remaining gay bar.

What's he doing here on a Wednesday night, and what does he think he can accomplish?

Martino claims to have single-handedly shut down ten adult bookstore and two gay bars in Chattanooga. He said that he's done it by focusing community attention on the "festering boils" and by converting the businesses' patrons to his brand of hellfire-breathing Christianity.

"The Bible, God's Word, says that what these people are doing is wrong," Martino said. "And this is one of their few remaining

## Sundquist Files AIDS Assault Bill

### Would Make AIDS Transmission Felony

By JEFF ELLIS

Anyone who knowingly donates AIDS-infected blood to a blood bank could be charged with a felony if recently proposed federal legislation becomes law.

Any military person who knowingly infects another person with the virus also would be a felon if the legislation, introduced by Sixth District Rep. Don Sundquist (R-Tenn.), is approved by Congress.

Further, the bill orders any federally regulated blood banks, such as those operated by the Red Cross, to store blood donations for an individual's use at a later time. However, officials for the American Red Cross warn that such storage requirements would call for blood banks "the size of hospitals."

The "AIDS Assault Act of 1988," as the

bill is called, states that any person who knowingly passes the virus "shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both."

Sundquist said last week that "someone knowingly donating AIDS-infected blood, is to me the same as committing murder. AIDS is a certain death sentence. As a matter of public health and safety we cannot permit individuals who have the disease to deliberately and purposely spread the virus to others."

According to Sundquist's legislative director, Debby Wilson, the purpose of the legislation is to provide guidelines for local governments.

"We hope that they will follow suit with their own regulations," Wilson said.

However, Hedy Weinberg, of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

desert," said Vickie Phillips, a heterosexual student at VDS who supports Campbell in her fight. "When she speaks, you listen because she's so dynamic."

Still, other lesbians and gay men at VDS have yet to publicly acknowledge Campbell as "one of them."

"I've received several anonymous notes through the mail," Campbell said. "But no one wants to admit they are gay or lesbian because they're afraid of what might happen."

"Many students are dealing with fear," said Moses Dillard, president-elect of the

school's student government. "Although this is a fairly liberal institution, these folks must still return to a church and a world that is not."

"I'm beginning to think," Campbell said, "that we should spend time educating gay men and lesbians about the importance of letting people know who we are. People who are oppressed must be the first to speak out. I think some gay men and lesbians are waiting for straight society to do it for them."

Campbell is one of several VDS student

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## INSIDE

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Listings  
Dates  
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Reviews

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# Dates

## April

### 20 Wednesday

ACT UP Nashville Meeting, Towne House Tea Room. 7 pm.

### 20-May 15

#### Wednesday/Sunday

Cobblestone Gallery Tennessee Special Olympics Art Show. Free. 9-5:30 pm or by appointment.

### 21 Thursday

ACT UP Nashville Protest government inaction on AIDS issues, outside the Cordell Hull Building, 5th and Union. 8 pm.  
Alcoholics Anonymous Closed meeting for lesbians and gay men, MCC. 8 pm.  
Lesbian Adult Children of Alcoholics

(ACOA) Phone 385-4776 or 352-5822 for details. 8 pm.

### 22 Friday

Gay Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting, Belmont United Methodist Church. 7:30 pm.  
Warehouse 28 Alternative Dance Party. 9pm-3am.

### 22-23

#### Friday/Saturday

Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Alliance Yard sale, 1401 Cedar Ln. 8 am-6 pm.

### 23 Saturday

Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Alliance and Vanderbilt Lambda Association *Dos Lesbos*, musical comedy, Underwood Auditorium, Vanderbilt University. \$5 at the door. 8 pm. Info phone 383-1041 or 333-2215.

### 23-24 Saturday/Sunday

New South Softball League *Southern Shootout '88* softball tournament, George Ward Park, Birmingham. Noon.

### 24 Sunday

The Office Co-ed softball, Mericourt Park, Clarksville. 1 pm.  
Tennessee Association of the Deaf Women's softball practice, Calvert Field. 1-3 pm.  
Pride Week Organizational meeting, Towne House Tea Room. 4 pm.  
The Chute Western Jamboree, live western band. 9:30 pm.

### 25 Monday

Lambda Group Closed Alcoholics Anonymous meeting for gay men and lesbians, Unitarian Church. 8 pm.

### 26 Tuesday

Vanderbilt Lambda Association Meeting. 5:30 pm.  
Al-Anon Meeting, MCC. 6:30 pm.  
Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous Closed meeting, MCC. 8 pm.

### 27 Wednesday

ACT UP Nashville Meeting, Towne House Tea Room. 7 pm.

### 28 Thursday

Alcoholics Anonymous Closed meeting for lesbians and gay men, MCC. 8 pm.  
Lesbian Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) Phone 385-4776 or 352-5822 for details. 8 pm.

### 29 Friday

Gay Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting, Belmont United Methodist Church. 7:30 pm.

### 30 Saturday

New South Softball League *Second Annual Miss Thang*, pageant, the Chute.

## May

### 1 Sunday

The Office Co-ed softball, Mericourt Park, Clarksville. 1 pm.  
Tennessee Association of the Deaf Women's softball practice, Calvert Field. 1 - 3 pm.  
Pride Week Organizational meeting, Towne House Tea Room. 4 pm.  
Alan Gold's *Miss Alan Gold's* pageant. 11 pm.

### 2 Monday

Lambda Group Closed Alcoholics Anonymous meeting for gay men and lesbians, Unitarian Church. 8 pm.

### 3 Tuesday

Vanderbilt Lambda Association Meeting. 5:30 pm.  
Al-Anon Meeting, MCC. 6:30 pm.  
Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous Closed meeting, MCC. 8 pm.

### 4 Wednesday

ACT UP Nashville Meeting, Towne House Tea Room. 7 pm.

### 5 Thursday

Vanderbilt AIDS Project *Safe Ball*, fundraiser, Urban Lounge. \$12. 7:30 pm.  
Alcoholics Anonymous Closed meeting for lesbians and gay men, MCC. 8 pm.  
Lesbian Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) Phone 385-4776 or 352-5822 for details. 8 pm.

### 6 Friday

Nashville Ballet *Cinderella*, Fine Arts Theatre, UT-Chattanooga, \$12 and \$15. 8 pm.  
Gay Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting, Belmont United Methodist Church. 7:30 pm.

### 7 Saturday

Nashville Ballet *Cinderella*, Fine Arts Theatre, UT-Chattanooga, matinee \$10 and \$13, evening \$12 and \$15. 2 pm and 8 pm.

### 8 Sunday

Mothers' Day

### 11 Wednesday

ACT UP Nashville Meeting, Towne House Tea Room. 7 pm.

### 12 Thursday

Alcoholics Anonymous Closed meeting for lesbians and gay men, MCC. 8 pm.  
Lesbian Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) Phone 385-4776 or 352-5822 for details. 8 pm.

### 13 Friday

Gay Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting, Belmont United Methodist Church. 7:30 pm.

### 14 Saturday

The Office *Miss Gay Clarksville*, \$4. 9 pm.

Your event or organization can be listed at no charge in Dates or Listings. Just drop a postcard or letter to DARE, Box 40422, Nashville, TN 37204-0422, or phone 292-9623 and leave a message. Please include information about time, location, cost, sponsor, and a contact person's name with address and/or phone number for verification.

## Listings

### RESTAURANTS AND CLUBS

#### NASHVILLE

The Cabaret	1711 Hayes St	320-7082
The Crane	2535 Franklin Rd	297-4571
Chez Collette	407 1st Av South	256-9134
Crazy Cowboy II	2311 Franklin Rd	269-5318
The Gas Lite	167 1/2 8th Av North	254-1278
Juanita's	1700 4th Av South	256-9681
The Jungle	306 4th Av South	256-9411
New Attitude	1803 Church St	320-5154
Ralph's Rutledge Hill Tavern	515 2nd Av South	256-9682
Victor/Victoria's	111 8th Av North	244-7256
Warehouse 28	2529 Franklin Rd	385-9689
World's End	1713 Church St	329-3480

#### CLARKSVILLE

The Office	130 Franklin St	645-1157
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#### CHATTANOOGA

Alan Gold's	1100 McCallie Av	
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### ORGANIZATIONS

American Civil Liberties Union	Hedy Weinberg, <i>Director</i>	
	Box 120160, Nashville 37212	256-7028
Conductors	Box 40261, Nashville 37204	
Nashville CARES	Sandee Potter, <i>Director</i>	
	Box 25107, Nashville 37202	385-1510
	AIDS Crisis Line	385-AIDS
Nashville Women's Alliance		
	Box 120834, Nashville 37212	366-0555
National Organization for Women (Tennessee)	Elizabeth Jamison, <i>President</i>	
	Box 120523, Nashville 37212	
Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA)		
	Box 24181, Nashville 37212	
Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Task Force (TGLTF)	Carole Cunningham, <i>President</i>	
	Box 24181, Nashville 37212	
Vanderbilt AIDS Project		
	Hotline	322-AIDS
Vanderbilt Lambda Association		
	Box 121743, Nashville 37212	
Women's Resource Center (YWCA)		
	1608 Woodmont Blvd	385-3952
SERVICES		
Jane Parkey	<i>Attorney</i>	227-3958
Irene K. Ratner, Ed.D.	<i>Psychologist</i>	
	Suite 234 B, 4004 Hillsboro Rd	298-5369
RELIGIOUS		
Metropolitan Community Church	Rev Paul Tucker, <i>Pastor</i>	
	131 15th Av North	320-0288

# Chattanooga Street Preacher Targets "Sinners"

## Martino Wants to Shut Down Alan Gold's, Reform "Perverts"

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the media when he's around. One make likens coverage of Martino to throwing gasoline on a raging fire, saying, "He loves the publicity. He's always stirring up trouble somewhere."

Another says he'd like to physically show Martino just how unwelcome he is, but the crowd calms the man. Martino himself said that he has been the target of physical attacks more than once.

"He thinks he'll be a martyr," said Mark Souders, one of the club's customers.

Some in the crowd claimed that Martino targeted the bar because he is a "reformed" homosexual.

"We figure he's mad because he can't get a lover any more," Souders said.

Martino denied charges that he has ever had homosexual orientation or experience.

The gay bar is not Martino's only target. He has often picketed a women's clinic in Chattanooga that he says performs abortions, and is associated with a blood-stained doll that he waves in front of the building, according to Laura Napier, another of the bar's patrons.

Richard Everitt, a reporter covering Martino for Chattanooga's ABC affiliate WTVC (Channel 9), confirmed that Martino is well-known in Chattanooga. "He's a Chattanooga fixture," Everitt said.

Martino is not ordained by any recognized denomination, although he says that he is a Baptist. Everitt, who is preparing an in-depth report on Martino, said that Martino attends Friday night services at a Chattanooga

synagogue.

"He leaves his cross in the parking lot," Everitt said.

Even though those in the bar quickly lost interest in Martino and went back to their friends, his effort wasn't without effect. For the hour or more that he held the street, cars would pull up, slow down and drive on, the police car's lights glinting off them as they receded into the darkness.

## Sundquist Proposes AIDS Bill

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee, said voluntary testing programs will be seriously undermined if the legislation becomes law.

"We believe the criminalization of AIDS passage would be devastating to local health organizations' voluntary testing programs," Weinberg said.

"The only people who could be charged under this law are those who have taken the test and know they are HIV-positive, she said. "There are those who might think it would be better not to know."

It is already illegal in Tennessee to donate infected blood to a blood bank, however no laws are on the books which deal with AIDS transmission through sexual relations or

shared intravenous needles and Weinberg sees no need to "create new ones to deal with AIDS."

"Historically, I think, criminal laws for public health have had little, if any, effect on changing sexual behavior or intravenous drug use," Weinberg said.

Weinberg said the proposed legislation could present new obstacles to those people who fear testing. "They're not certain if or when they could be charged with a felony," she said. "By not being tested, they would be free from prosecution."

If passed, the law would apply to all U.S. military personnel and to people guilty of federal crimes, such as kidnaping, interstate prostitution and child and adult pornography.

## "...As it is in Heaven"

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

leaders who recently have met with faculty and administration in efforts to overcome what the students contend are "years of

hypocrisy" at the school. According to the students, racism, sexism and homophobia are rampant at the school.

In an effort to placate the students, faculty and administration welcomed noted civil rights educator C.T. Vivian to the Vanderbilt

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PENNY CAMPBELL

campus two weeks ago for a dialogue on racism. Most recently, the faculty met to decide whether to include sexual orientation in the school's non-discrimination policy statement which appears in the institution's various publications.



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# Men in Dresses: A Perspective on Female Impersonation

First in a four-part series  
By SHERRE DRYDEN

*"And it was really weird because initially these guys thought I was a girl, so they were attracted to me. But when they realized I was a man, they wanted to hit me. That says something..."* - Amber, British drag queen

Sitting in the bar one night, the question was posed: Why do we have drag shows, anyway?

Drag and drag shows are an integral part of social life in the gay and lesbian community. It's the rare bar these days that doesn't have at least an occasional show. Yet there seems to be little understanding - among gay people or straight - about what or why drag is.

Some attention has been given to drag in both the scholarly and popular press. Much of what has been published falls into one of two camps: attempts to define and differentiate between homosexual and heterosexual cross-dressing, or more or less voyeuristic excursions into the lives of performers.

In general, both transvestism and cross-dressing are terms used when a person of one sex adopts - either temporarily or permanently, in performance or in everyday life - the clothes approved by society for the opposite sex.

The contemporary clinical definition of

homosexuality is symbolized in American culture by transvestism. To gays and straights alike the male homosexual stereotype is the drag queen, despite the truthful assertions of many gay men that they never go to drag performances, never wear drag themselves and prefer "masculine" men.

So, in a way, the drag queen stands for all gay men - all they fear in themselves, all they feel guilty about, all they wish they could say and do, all the stigma they endure.

By using drag performance to embrace the stigma and make it theirs, gay men have neutralized the sting, made it laughable and ridiculous. Drag queens have for many years been "public homosexuals," indeed have at times been the only public homosexuals.

They openly declare their homosexuality on the stage, without apologies. As one performer put it, the drag queen "accepts his role as a homosexual and flaunts it."

In fact, the first stage in the process of becoming a drag performer is recognition of oneself as a homosexual: coming out. Before the lesbian and gay rights movement, drag queens were among the very few visible, aggressive homosexuals. They have always been the most harassed members of the gay population, and were essentially responsible for the Stonewall riots which began the modern gay-rights movement.

Yet drag has come under strong criticism,

*Before the lesbian and gay rights movement, drag queens were among the very few visible, aggressive homosexuals. They have always been the most harassed members of the gay population, and were essentially responsible for the Stonewall riots which began the modern gay-rights movement.*

transvestism describes an act of cross-dressing which is accompanied by fetishistic obsessions. Most psychological/psychiatric literature contends that transvestites of this type are usually heterosexual. Careful distinctions between transvestites (and transsexuals) on the one hand, and homosexual cross-dressers, or "drag queens" on the other, are made.

What motivates a drag performer, then, and what is the role of drag in the lesbian and gay community?

First of all, regardless of clinical definition,

from both gay men and lesbians.

When the organizers of the 1979 gay and lesbian march on Washington met to plan the event, there was discussion of whether cross-dressing would be permitted. In 1980, the San Francisco Lesbian Chorus walked out of a program commemorating the anniversary of the San Francisco earthquake to protest female impersonator Charles Pierce's act.

Some gay and lesbian activists object to drag performers as representing an acceptance of the stigma imposed by heterosexist society.

Although drag performance is an assertion of gay existence, much of it is also self-hating and self-denigrating. Critics see drag artists as the "Uncle Toms" of the gay and lesbian rights movement. This stance meets objection from others, who equate the failure of lesbian and gay rights organizations to recognize and protect the rights of drag queens from the hostile attitudes of a homophobic society.

Some feminists object to drag queens on the grounds that they perpetuate traditional stereotypes of women, or are otherwise demeaning to women. There is often a strong misogynistic element to drag performance. The women represented are often grotesque; many performers use sexist and anti-lesbian humor.

Defenders say that the drag queen's desire is to depict power or strength; glamorous and exotic performer rather than real women. Their strength may come from their beauty, their successful "femininity," or their biting wit.

The truth may be that drag is demeaning to both women and gay men, but for another reason.

It may be that it is the nature of drag itself rather than homosexuality per se that accounts for the stigmatization of drag queens. Who but a queer would want to perform as a woman? Current models of gender and sexuality marginalize and degrade women.

And gay men, as the stereotype goes, are just like women.

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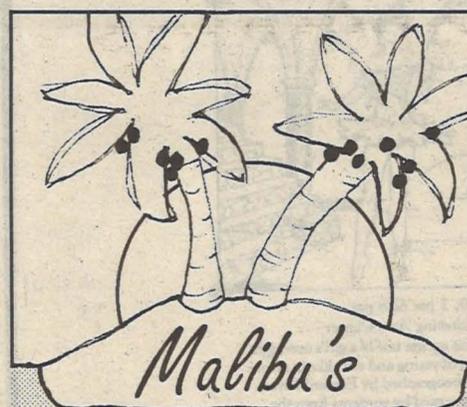
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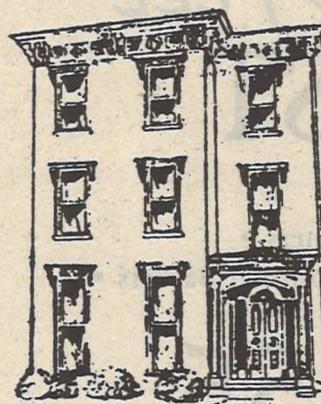
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# Reunion: A Family Comes to Terms With AIDS

Second in a five-part series  
By JEFF ELLIS

Jamie graduated from high school on a stormy May night in 1981. The next day, he packed his new car with his belongings and drove to Memphis to begin the new life that lay ahead.

To Jamie, it was the realization of a dream. Finally, he thought, he would be able to escape the stifling confines of small town life.

Jamie had known for quite some time that he was different from the other kids in his hometown. Still, he tried to fit in by being the class clown and once, he tried out for the football team.

"But I guess my heart wasn't in it," he remembers.

When Jamie arrived on the Memphis gay scene, he achieved the instant popularity that had eluded him in high school. His winning ways and charming sense of humor attracted people of all ages.

In 1981, AIDS wasn't talked about in Memphis gay circles. I know, because I moved there two months after Jamie to begin a new career in visual merchandising. And for a couple of months, Jamie and I shared an apartment.

Because only five years separated our birthdays, Jamie and I were raised together, more like brothers than anything else. Yet we were quite different - Jamie's apparent promiscuity compared to my then-provincial

prudishness.

Jamie would wake me every morning by throwing open the shades, jumping on my bed and singing: "Wake up, wake up, the sun is up. The dew is on the buttercup." Honest to God.

I would throw a pillow, an alarm clock, a shoe or whatever was handy and hurl expletives at him. Then, he would begin to tell me about his sexual escapades of the previous night.

And for a while, at least, I marveled at the ease with which he went from one bed to another. I would never do that, I told myself.

But then I did. We didn't keep score, but there were times when we compared notes and names. You see, it was as if your place in Memphis society was validated by the men you bedded.

I offer no excuses for myself. There have been moments when I've wished those times never existed, but it's behind me. That was then and this is now.

I don't have AIDS, but my nephew does. Why? It was just the luck of the draw, I guess. Still, there are times when the guilt engulfs me and I ask God how I was able to escape those days virtually unscathed. I don't understand. Maybe I'm not supposed to.

So I deal daily with the fact someone I love dearly may die from a disease no one seems to understand. And I deal daily with overcoming the guilt I feel.

"If only I'd told him what I really thought

about things," I say. "What if I'd set a better example by not sleeping around?"

"What if?" is a question my nephew Scott, 22, asks himself daily. Last summer, Jamie's illness prompted Scott to move to Boca Raton, Florida, where Jamie now lives, so that he could help care for him.

It was not an easy decision for him to make. Though close, years of childhood rivalry were hard to forget. Yet, Scott realized the importance of a family presence in Jamie's life.

"I can't bear the thought of him being hundreds of miles from home, sick and unable to be with his family," Scott said, as he packed for the trip.

## Freedom Train Rides Again

By CAROLE CUNNINGHAM

Being hailed as a visibility and civil rights event paralleling the "freedom rides" of the '60s, the "Gay Freedom Ride" got off to a start in March, with freedom riders holding rallies, press conferences and a "kiss-in" throughout North and South Carolina.

Michael Petrelis, a PWA activist and founding member of ACT UP, has been spearheading the event since the idea received enthusiastic response from southern gay and lesbian activists at the War Conference held near Washington, D.C., in February.

The conference was billed as an attempt to gather a broad spectrum of gay and lesbian activists from across the country to set a national agenda for activism. Petrelis has continued to receive support from War Conference attendees and plans to contact "prominent, wealthy" activists who attended the conference for support in funding the ride through southern states this summer. Dare interviewed Petrelis via telephone last week.

DARE: How did the idea of a freedom ride get started?

PETRELIS: It really got off the ground at the War Conference in February. I was really skeptical about the whole conference and had a lot of problems with the way it was organized, so I got in all my complaints at the beginning and then started talking to people I really wanted to hear from. People in the heartland of America, not the same old song and dance from New York and San Francisco. What I really discovered at the War Conference is that we all need to network with non-New York areas if we're going to get what we're fighting for. Some friends and I had been tossing around the idea of a freedom ride through the south since early this year. Getting such a good response from people like Leland Wyckoff (Johnson City) and Robert Sheets (Charlotte, N.C.) made it seem like southerners would support the ride.

DARE: You're calling this event a freedom ride, I assume, because you see some similarities between what you're doing now and what activists did in the '60s?

PETRELIS: Right. In the '60s, activists for black civil rights who'd been working the north, came south to join forces with activists there in a show of national solidarity. They were taunted, harassed, sometimes beaten, but their strength and visibility grew. I've been a little worried about southerners being

Their mother has not seen Jamie since he was diagnosed as having AIDS. And our fear of telling Mama only seemed to multiply as the days passed. Jamie may as well have been on the moon for all our family knew.

When he would talk to Mama by telephone, he pretended all was well: he was still working, getting a good share of sun and surf. Scott simply longed for a more exciting life than he could find in Nashville. At least that's what we told Mama.

Then, the time came when we couldn't wait any longer. If Jamie's days were going to be peaceful, Mama would have to be told.

And I was the one for the job.

distrustful of a handful of New Yorkers coming down to take on their issues. But what we're finding - what we found at the March on Washington and at the War Conference - is that lesbian and gay issues everywhere are our issues, yours and mine. Our success in North and South Carolina was astounding. And it was only possible because of the terrific help of local organizers. They made us feel that we are at home wherever we go with the ride.

DARE: What's the involvement of ACT UP in the freedom ride and of Bailey House, the New York AIDS hospice you're living in?

PETRELIS: There are people from ACT UP involved in the freedom ride and who went with us to North and South Carolina. The important thing about the ride is that it doesn't "belong" to anyone, except to those people who join together at any given place. Since February, when we went to the Democratic Primary in New Hampshire, the handful of us who've been travelling have had the Bailey House quilt with us. The quilt memorializes in 25 panels, three feet by six feet, the people from Bailey House who have died of AIDS. There are 56 more panels we need to add. The quilt went to North and South Carolina where it was displayed in parks and at the capitol in Raleigh, and about 250 people came to see the quilt, buy buttons, talk to us. Even one of the capitol police, a lesbian, came and bought a "Silence=Death" button.

DARE: Where do you plan to take the freedom ride now?

PETRELIS: What we want to do is go with the 20 or so people here who can take the time off and travel to the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta. Then we want to wander to as many cities and towns as possible during the weeks between the Democratic and Republican conventions, ending up at the Republican convention in New Orleans. Right now, we're thinking we'll ride a Greyhound bus to Knoxville, then Nashville, then Memphis, then Oklahoma and Texas. We're sort of afraid of hitting Alabama and Mississippi because we don't know anyone there and we aren't sure there will be the support groups to pull it off. I'm really excited about coming back to Tennessee. I travelled through there when I was in college and I loved the state. We also really want to bring the quilt to Tennessee since the Names Project won't be hitting any southern city except Atlanta.

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## Does Mr. Sundquist Really Care?

Sixth District Congressman Don Sundquist last week proposed legislation which would make a felony the act of transmitting the AIDS virus from one person to another.

Sundquist, whose district stretches from suburban Williamson County to the eastern portions of Shelby County, called AIDS "a certain death sentence." Further, the Republican Congressman said anyone who "knowingly" donates AIDS-infected blood to a blood bank is "committing murder."

Thus, if Sundquist has his way, anyone who knows they are HIV-positive and then donates blood or has unsafe sex will be criminally charged and levelled with a fine or face imprisonment of not more than 20 years or a combination of the two.

How to avoid prosecution? Refuse to be tested.

While the legislation is ostensibly to provide guidelines for local governments, it is instead providing yet another example of ill-founded fear and loathing from yet an obviously uneducated member of Congress. Does Mr. Sundquist not know there are already laws in many states, including Tennessee, which carry stiff penalties for knowingly donating AIDS-infected blood? Does Mr. Sundquist advocate that his constituents not be tested? Does Mr. Sundquist care?

We think not.

However, many of his constituents will do just that - choose not to be tested. In cases

involving the proposed "AIDS Assault Act of 1988," ignorance of the law could be a defense. The only people who would be prosecuted are those who were first aware they were HIV-positive when donating blood or infecting another person.

Anyone who would knowingly infect another human being is reprehensible. However, that isn't really the issue here. There are already laws in this state, and others, that deal with that. The issue here is what passage of this legislation will do to voluntary testing programs conducted by public health officials.

We are not advocating testing. That is a decision we must each make on a personal basis.

But by criminalizing the passage of AIDS, Sundquist and others like him are once again proving themselves to be as unfeeling and as ignorant as we oftentimes suspect public officials to be.

## What Can We Say to Penny Campbell?

Penny Campbell is a woman who's not afraid to take the heat, as long as she can shed a little light in the process.

Campbell is the woman who's been working diligently with the student coalition at the Vanderbilt Divinity School to effect changes in the school's faculty, curriculum and catalog. The group has been fighting the triple evils of racism, sexism and homophobia at the school, which has long had a reputation as a bastion of liberalism and tolerance.

But when Campbell and the other members of the group began to ask questions about the depth of the school's commitment to full equality, doors started slamming in their faces.

Some members of the faculty and administration attempted to break up the coalition by offering to talk only with the black students in the group and excluding Campbell and the other women. Thankfully, the members of the coalition held their ground and refused to be divided.

What concerns us most is the fact that not a single other gay man or lesbian has come forward to stand publicly with Campbell. Not one.

*They are the ones who have finally stood up and said, "Enough!" to those who would use fear and ignorance to force us back in the closet.*

Out of a student body of about 200, it's unlikely that Campbell is the only homosexual at the Divinity School. Indeed, she has

received anonymous letters of support from other students who say they are too afraid to stand with her.

That kind of mealy-mouthed "support" is a slap in the face to someone who daily puts herself on the line in an effort to make the world safer for lesbians and gay men.

Penny Campbell and others like her are to be commended for their courage.

They are the ones who have made it possible for the rest of us to come out as much as we have.

They are the ones who have finally stood up and said, "Enough!" to those who would use fear and ignorance to force us back in the closet.

They are the ones who will continue to serve as role-models for those who will come out after us.

That said, it's time to say something else. Thank you, Penny Campbell.

## Dare

The Gay and Lesbian Newspaper  
From the Heart of the American South

April 20-26, 1988  
Volume 1, Number 5

Editor/Publisher  
Stuart Bivin

News Editor  
Jeff Ellis

Staff Writers  
Carole Cunningham  
Sherre Dryden  
Spencer Jenkins

The Dare logotype was designed by Rusel Brown. Dare copy is set in Galliard, with Aachen Bold heads and Helvetica Condensed Oblique Light subheads.

Dare is published weekly by Pyramid Light & Power, Box 40422, Nashville, Tennessee 37204-0422, (615) 292-9623. Subscription rate: \$31.20 per year. Please phone for ad rates. Postmaster: Send address changes to: Dare, Box 40422, Nashville, Tennessee 37204-0422.

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## Dykes to Watch Out For™



# Pages

## Ellmann's *Oscar*: Still as Wilde as Ever

*Oscar Wilde*. Richard Ellmann. Knopf, 1988.

By JOE MAROHL

Picking up Richard Ellmann's biography of Oscar Wilde, readers with little or no knowledge of the playwright and *fin-de-siecle* icon (apart from what is popularly reported about him) will no doubt find the book a revelation.

Contrary to what one may expect of the author of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Wilde was a serious utopian visionary, perhaps equal in importance to Walt Whitman. His life and writings exude a keen intelligence and solid ethical stances on contemporary social issues, and though he came out of the closet late in life (he was 32 and married when he had his initial homosexual encounter with Robert Ross), he earns a place alongside Edward Carpenter, John Addington Symonds and others as a forerunner to the modern gay rights movement.

Not to underestimate the writer's complex-

ity (or the complexity of the times he lived in), Wilde was both the self-advertising aesthete who overplayed himself flamboyantly for the amusement and outrage of the English public and also a dignified and intelligent exponent of humanitarian ideals. And it is Wilde the social theorist and champion of the outcast who is the less familiar figure to us. It is this Wilde that Ellmann's book delineates with particular eloquence, and it is this Wilde who surprises and inspires us.

For instance, Ellmann's account of Wilde's 1882 visit to this country faces the reader with peculiarly Wildean contradictions. The champion of the aesthetic movement in England, Wilde visited America to earn money by lecturing on the idea of "beauty" and wore elaborate tailor-made costumes while in New York and Boston.

Among his stops was a silver-mining community in the Rockies, where Wilde doffed his European finery and wore the plain work clothes of the miners, asserting that the only well-dressed men he had seen in the States were the miners in Colorado. One of the most amusing incidents of the trip occurred while Wilde was feted by the miners in a mineshaft:

Because the miners mined for silver, Wilde

read them passages from the autobiography of that eminent silversmith Benvenuto Cellini. "I was reproved by my hearers for not having brought him with me. I explained that he had been dead for some little time which elicited the inquiry, 'Who shot him?'"

This and other incidents in the book indicate an egalitarian spirit which is invisible in the writer's plays, which are solely concerned with society's upper crust - or, at least, society's upper middle crust.

The chapters on the trial which ultimately led to Wilde's two-year imprisonment for sodomy are affecting and, in light of how little the law's attitudes towards gays have changed in 100 years, a little meaning.

Here Ellmann casts Wilde as an overly naive idealist in an avoidable bad situation, but he does so with obvious sympathy for the victim's idea of honor and his suffering. He portrays Wilde's young and handsome lover, Lord Alfred Douglas, however, as a self-centered cad, not at all the tragic figure Douglas cast for himself in later writings. Ellmann apparently felt the playwright's most significant romance was his unending friendly relationship with his "first love" Robert Ross, not the Wilde-Douglas affair.

The biography portrays Ross first as a sexual liberator and initiator to the secret

pleasure of a comradely love, and later as the "ex-lover" and friend who heroically, almost single-handedly, with little means, supported the writer through the imprisonment and the humiliation of life after prison. The portrait of Ross's mundane but reliable devotion is a revealing contrast to Douglas' fiery but inconstant passion.

Richard Ellmann built his distinguished reputation on biographical studies of James Joyce and W.B. Yeats. He died in 1987, and *Oscar Wilde* is his final work, a product of nearly 20 years of research. The book, however, should not be shunned as dry scholarship. Ellmann's prose is as readable as any novel and very entertaining, with occasional signs of a Wildean gift for epigrammatic under-statement. For instance, reporting that both the Marquess of Queensbury and his son Lord Alfred had on different occasions threatened to shoot their enemies down "like a dog," Ellmann lovingly remarks, "Dogs had little to hope for from the Queensbury family arsenal."

The biography also generously quotes Wilde's own words, giving us a full sense of the writer's presence and personality. *Oscar Wilde* is an important book for us less so for its insights to Wilde the artist than for its insights to Wilde the person.

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## Games

### Zippers Topple Numbers

By JACK BURDEN

Juanita's Zippers stunned the number-one-ranked and undefeated Nashville Numbers Sunday 11-10 in league play.

The upset came as a standing-room-only crowd watched New South Softball League (NSSL) play at Nashville's Whitfield Park.

The Zippers came back from 10-5 in the last inning to even their record at 2-2. In the process, the Zips had to overcome a breath-

taking performance by the Numbers' third-base phenom Dennis Meyers, a new arrival from San Diego. Meyers went 4 for 4 at the plate and had 6 RBIs for the 3-1 Numbers.

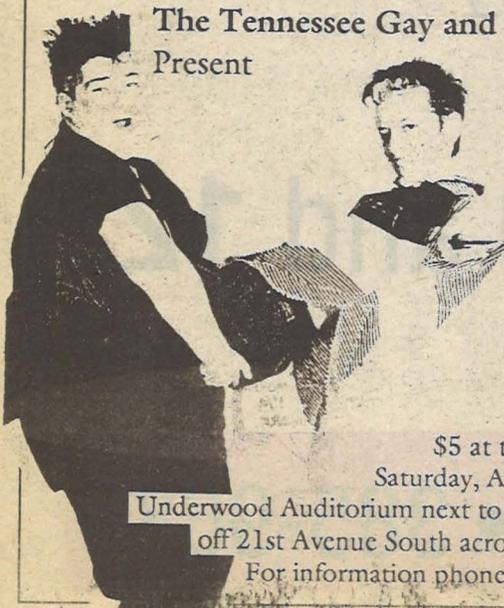
In other league play here Sunday, the Numbers spooked Birmingham's Phantoms 22-4, and the Bama Xpress ran over the Zippers 21-7.

The Huntsville Bombers also fell to the Bama Xpress, 18-4 before taking their turn to beat up on the Phantoms, 16-7.

The two Nashville teams will not meet again in regular league play until July 10. That game, too, will be at Whitfield Park.

Next week, the Numbers return to Birmingham for the Southern Shootout '88, where they'll be pitted against at least a dozen other teams from as far away as Chicago, Virginia and Texas. The Zippers will not play in the tournament, although many team members will be in Birmingham to cheer on their cross-town rival Numbers.

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