

Dare

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 21

TENNESSEE'S GAY AND LESBIAN NEWSWEEKLY

MAY 26 — JUNE 1, 1989

Artist claims discrimination Plans picket of printer

by STUART BIVIN

Nashville layout artist Jim Aldredge has charged his former employer with anti-gay discrimination. Aldredge told *Dare* that Big Red Q Quick Print franchisee Bill Breyfogle fired him because another employee stopped speaking to Aldredge when he learned that Aldredge was gay.

Breyfogle, in a telephone interview, said that Aldredge was let go because "he was not available for full-time work," and denied any anti-gay motivation for the dismissal.

Aldredge, a senior in graphic arts at Middle Tennessee State University, has retained an attorney.

"This is a good opportunity for the community to take a stand and let people know we're not going to be discriminated against. I would like people in the community to call Big Red Q and let them know they won't use their services," Aldredge said, adding that he didn't want to harass Breyfogle, but wanted to send a message that the lesbian and gay community will not support businesses that discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

"There will be an informational picket outside the shop Thursday [June 1], any time between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. We'll pass out leaflets telling what Big Red Q did, and asking people not to do business with them," Aldredge said.

Aldredge said his on-the-job problems be-



Jim Aldredge, a graphic artist, has charged Big Red Q printing, on Harding Place in Nashville, with anti-gay employment discrimination. Aldredge says he was fired when another employee refused to work with him because Aldredge is gay. — DARE STAFF PHOTO

gan when another employee told the shop's head printer that Aldredge was gay. The printer refused to speak to Aldredge, instead communicating through notes or through other employees, and had his minister come to the shop to counsel him about having to work with a homosexual, Aldredge said.

Breyfogle acknowledged some problems between Aldredge and the printer, whom he described as "a Christian," but denied that the

• continued on page 3

Memphis Gay Coalition plans Pride

by DEBORAH BURKS
Staff Writer

Like most other major cities, Memphis will celebrate Gay Pride Week at the end of June. This year's national Pride celebration commemorates the 20th anniversary of the riots at Stonewall, the event credited with creating this country's gay and lesbian rights movement.

The Memphis Gay Coalition, the city's oldest gay and lesbian organization, has been planning events to remember Stonewall and celebrate gay pride "Memphis-style." According to Ken Horton, Coalition president, the community has been "getting ready to celebrate Pride Week" at GayRap, a Coalition-sponsored forum held the 3rd Monday of each month.

"Gay Pride" has been the topic for discussion at the April and May sessions. The April meeting focused on the history of the gay and lesbian rights movement and featured a presentation by a Memphian who participated in the Stonewall riots. May's meeting centered on "cornerstones of pride," including acceptance, coming out and establishing community.

Calling it "a gift to the community", Horton

said the Coalition is sponsoring Gay Pride Fest Sunday, June 18. The celebration, to be held on Mud Island again this year, will include a cookout and volleyball. The National Organization for Women, the Gay Women's Social Group, and other groups will also participate in Gay Fest with booths and literature tables. The event is free and tickets may be obtained from Coalition officers or by phoning the Gay Switchboard at (901) 324-GAYS.

The "big event" scheduled for Pride Week is the annual River Ride on Saturday, June 24. This night-time Mississippi River cruise will feature Memphis musician Joyce Cobb. Tickets are \$15 at Star Search Video, 1264 Madison Avenue in Memphis. Proceeds will help fund Coalition-sponsored community services such as the Gay Switchboard.

"The major purpose of Pride Week here in Memphis is to make people aware of our community and to make our community aware of pride," said Horton. "Participating in events such as Pride Fest gets people involved. We're excited and looking forward to a successful week." •

Tennessee House OKs AIDS-discrimination bill

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Members of the Tennessee House of Representatives Tuesday passed a bill which would protect people with AIDS (PWAs) and other contagious diseases from job discrimination.

The House vote, coming two weeks after a Senate committee rejected the bill, comes two years after a state law prohibiting job discrimination was amended to eliminate protection for people with AIDS or other contagious diseases. The new bill passed with a 58-35 vote.

A joint House/Senate committee will next consider the bill before it is re-introduced in the State Senate. However, proponents of the bill are faced with a fighting a Friday deadline for adjourning the legislature's 1989 session. Lawmakers have already used 50 of the 90 days allotted for their 1989-1990 session and are trying to wrap up legislative business before the Memorial Day weekend.

If the Senate fails to act on the bill before ad-

jourment, the bill will have to be re-introduced in both houses during the 1990 legislative session.

Approval of the bill by House members was met with almost unanimous pleasure among AIDS experts throughout the state.

"I'm just delighted that the House voted as they did," said Sandee Potter, executive director of Nashville CARES, an AIDS services organization. "It will now make it possible for the Senate to reconsider the bill."

"It will mean much better care for a lot of people in Tennessee," said Rita Underhill, education director for the Memphis-based Aid to End AIDS Committee (ATEAC). "A lot of companies and organizations have been discriminating against people with AIDS, simply because they thought they could legally do so."

Passage of the bill in the House was not an easy process, as some legislators feared reper-

• continued on page 3

Budget crunch hits CAT, GCN

by STUART BIVIN

Nashville mayor Bill Boner has denied reports that he will propose debilitating cuts in the Community Access Television (CAT) budget. The proposal to transfer more than half the cable channel's budget to Metro Nashville's Office of Telecommunications, forcing CAT to close, was announced by Telecommunications director Joe Foster.

City government sources, however, told *Dare* that the cuts are intended to shut down CAT as punishment for the station's allowing Gay Cable Network/Nashville to use CAT's

channel 35 for its twice-weekly cablecasts. Metro Councillor George Armistead raised a furor last fall when he urged CAT to refuse to air the show.

"We're gonna have a problem with this movie about queers," Armistead said, and threatened then to move to cut the station's funding if it refused.

The station's charter requires it to allow citizens to air programming that is not commercial, obscene or defamatory.

Money for both CAT and the Office of

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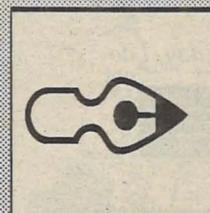
I N S I D E

Dare this week

Part three of Jeff Ellis' "change therapy." *A Promise Broken*, page 4.



Personal growth and oppression, *Soapbox*, page 6.



The Business of Marriage and Frivolities reviewed. *Curtains*, page 7.



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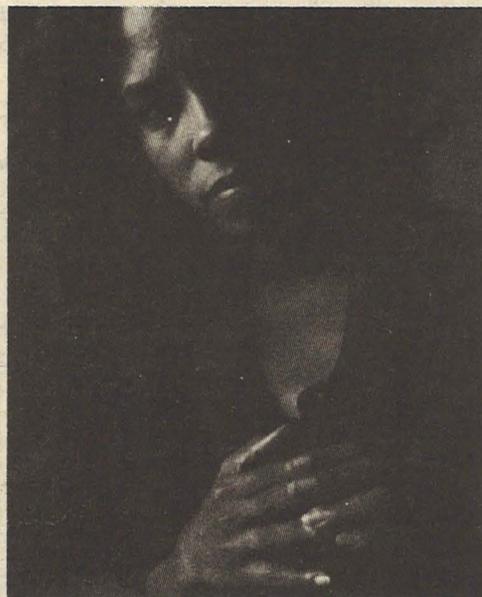
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Answering service 24 hours call (901) 762-8401

a public service message from Dare and Tennessee Responds to AIDS

D A T E S

MEMPHIS

Mondays

Gay Alternative Hour Radio show, WEVL-FM 90, 6-7pm.
Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Tuesdays

Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, 5:30 and 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Wednesdays

Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Thursdays

P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Support group, St. John's Episcopal Church, 322 S Greer, 1st Thursday only. Info 901 761-1444.
Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, 5:30pm. Info 901 272-9459.
Into the Light (Women's Alcoholics Anonymous) Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, 8pm. Info 901 276-7379.

Fridays

Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, 5:30 and 10pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Saturdays

Twisted Sisters (ACOA) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, Noon. Info 901 276-7379.
Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

Sundays

Agape New Life Church Sunday School, 9:30am. Worship service, 11am. Info 901 276-1872.
Holy Trinity Community Church Worship service, 11am, 1216 Forrest Ave. Info 901 726-9443.
Into the Light (Women's Alcoholics Anonymous) Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, Noon. Info 901 276-7379.
Phoenix (Gay Alcoholics Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center, 8pm. Info 901 272-9459.

NASHVILLE

Mondays

Gay Overeaters Anonymous Open meeting for lesbian and gay overeaters, MCC, 5:30pm. Info 615-327-4614.
Nashville CARES HIV Education/Support Group, 6:30pm. ARC/AIDS Support Group, bimonthly, 6:30pm. Family Support Group, bimonthly, 6:30pm. Info 615-385-1510.
Lambda Group Closed Alcoholics Anonymous meeting for gay men and lesbians, Unitarian Church, 8pm.
MAGNET (Married and Gay Network) Support group for married gay men, 1st & 3rd Mondays only. MCC, 8pm. Info 615-320-0288.

Tuesdays

Nashville CARES ARC/AIDS Support Group, 4pm. Info 615-385-1510.
Al-Anon Closed meeting, MCC, 6:30pm.
P-FLAG Meeting of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, 4th Tuesday only, Unitarian Church, 7:30pm. Info 615-662-0332.
MTSU Lambda Association Meeting for lesbian and gay Middle Tennessee State University students, faculty, staff, and alumni, Murfreesboro, 7pm. Info 615-890-3787.
Sober Sisters (Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous) Closed meeting, MCC, 8pm.
Gay Cable Network Viacom Channel 35 (Community Access Television), 9pm.

Wednesdays

Sex Addicts Anonymous Closed meeting for gay men and lesbians, MCC, 5:30pm.
Nashville CARES ARC/AIDS Support Group, 6:30pm. Info 615-385-1510.

Thursdays

Incest Survivors Anonymous Closed women's meeting, First Church Unity, Franklin Rd, 6:30pm.
Nashville CARES Visualization Group, 6:30pm. Info 615-385-1510.
Alternatives (Alcoholics Anonymous) Closed meeting for lesbians and gay men, MCC, 8pm.
Lesbian Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) Meeting, 8pm. Info 615-385-4776 or 615-352-5823.

Fridays

Sexuals Anonymous Closed meeting, MCC, 5pm.
Gay Parents Support Group Meeting, MCC, 1st Friday only, 7pm. Info 615-831-2941 or 615-320-0288.
Alcoholics Anonymous Program Study Group Meeting, Belmont United Methodist, 7:30 pm.
Saturdays
Nashville CARES HIV/ARC Support Group, bimonthly, 4pm. Info 615-385-1510.
Incest Survivors Anonymous Open meeting, First Church Unity, Franklin Rd, 5:30pm.
Metropolitan Community Church Community Dinner, all you can eat, 7:30pm. \$5. Info 615-320-0288.
Gay Cable Network Viacom Channel 35 (Community Access Television), 8pm.

Sundays

Metropolitan Community Church Worship services, 11am and 7pm. Info 615-320-0288.

Special Events

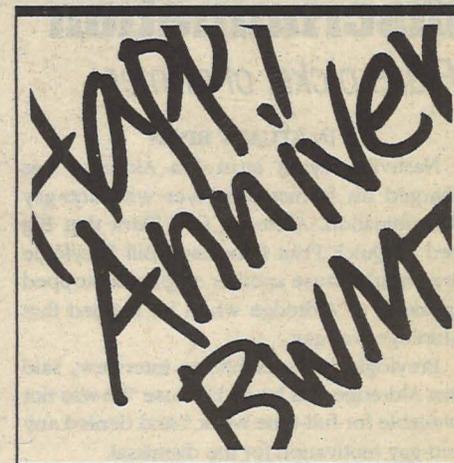
Friday, May 26

Reception Anniversary celebration, Black and White Men Together/Memphis, 8pm. Free. Info 901-452-5894.

Saturday, May 27

Brunch Anniversary celebration, Black and White Men Together/Memphis, 11am. Info 901-726-1461.

Party Anniversary celebration, Black and White Men Together/Memphis, 6pm. Info 901-452-5894.



Sunday, May 28

Brunch Anniversary celebration, Black and White Men Together/Memphis, Shoney's, 1400 Union, Memphis, 11am. Info 901-452-5894.

Meeting Planning meeting for Nashville Pride Week '89, 1pm. Free. Info 615-297-4293.

Barbeque Anniversary celebration, Black and White Men Together/Memphis, 6pm. Info 901-452-5894.

Benefit *Music of the '50s, '60s and '70s*, sponsored by Mystic Krewe of Aphrodite. Proceeds benefit Aid to End AIDS Committee PWA fund. WKRB in Memphis, 1528 Madison, Memphis, \$3. 7:30pm. Info 901-278-9321.

Monday, May 29

MEMORIAL DAY

Brunch Anniversary celebration, Black and White Men Together/Memphis, 10am. Info 901-726-1461.

Thursday, June 1

Picket In support of artist Jim Aldredge. Big Red Q Printing, 321-B Harding Place, Nashville. Info 615-320-0288.

Saturday, June 3 — Sunday, June 4

Yard Sale To benefit the Tennessee Gay & Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA). Donations accepted, 8am-5pm, 1401 Cedar, Nashville. Info 615-297-4293.

Tuesday, June 6

Benefit Show Tracy Day presents *A Night Among the Stars*. Cover and tips benefit Nashville CARES. Shows at 9pm and 11:30pm, 111 8th Av North, Nashville, \$3 cover. Info 615-244-7256.

Your nonprofit event can be listed free in *Dares*. Write to Dare, Box 40422, Nashville, TN 37204-0422, or phone 615 327-3273 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. Deadline noon Tuesday for publication next Friday.

Michaud appeals sentence

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Nashville entertainment manager George Michaud was ordered to spend 45 days in jail and three years on probation by Judge Tom Shriver last week.

Michaud was convicted on sex solicitation charges by a Davidson County Criminal Court jury last March.

Defense attorney Charles Ray immediately filed an appeal following Shriver's sentencing order. Action on the appeal is expected by the end of 1989.

Michaud is the first of some 43 men who were arrested as a result of a three-month long undercover sex sting operation conducted in east Nashville during December, 1987, and January, 1988. Authorities were seeking to stem the boy prostitution trade which they claimed flourished in the area.

Fifteen-year-old Tony St. Clair, the central figure in the undercover operation, testified that during a meeting with Michaud outside a Franklin Road gay bar, the older man solicited sex from him. St. Clair, wired with a listening device by Vice Squad officers, was instrumental in bringing about the arrests of the 43 men.

More than 30 of the men pled guilty to the charges and were assessed fines and given

periods of probation. Most of the men were ordered to undergo counseling.

Shriver sentenced Michaud on April 21 to a three-year prison term, but delayed until Tuesday a decision on whether Michaud should serve time or be given a suspended sentence.

In April, Shriver ordered Michaud to undergo psychological evaluation to help him determine the sentencing order.

Psychologist Kenneth Anchor testified that Michaud is "a homosexual with a reasonably well-adjusted lifestyle, except for an adjustment disorder related to a very lonely childhood."

"Both psychologists who interviewed me told both the judge and the district attorney that I'm definitely not a pedophile," Michaud told *Dare*. "But both the judge and the D.A. seem to think that until I admit I'm a pedophile that I'm not rehabilitated. I am not a pedophile."

Michaud admitted he was surprised, in light of the suspended sentences given the other men charged in the sting, that Shriver had sentenced him to spend 45 days in jail.

"They [the authorities] have been malicious all through this case," Michaud said. "And they were malicious in using that child to entrap those men." •

...AIDS bill

• continued from page 1

cussions come next election day.

"This addresses a subject nobody wants to talk about," said Rep. Guy Gain (D-Memphis), one of the bill's co-sponsors.

"You can't live in fear all the time. This is the right thing to do," said Rep. Roscoe Dixon (D-Memphis).

Rep. Shelby Rinehart (D-Spencer) opposed the bill, calling for disclosure of the names of PWAs in order to "protect the public."

"The passage of the bill is important on several levels," Potter said. "On one level, giving people diagnosed with AIDS or as HIV-positive a better feeling of job security. It's horrible to think you could lose your job just

because you have AIDS or are HIV-positive. It will help to alleviate an anxiety that shouldn't be there."

The action by members of the House should also send a message to the rest of the country that Tennessee is not as ignorant as the two-year old law indicates, Underhill said.

"I think people across the country thought we were in another age, allowing discrimination in employment for people with AIDS," she said. "They can't understand why we're in this position."

Gov. Ned McWherter said he was not aware of the bill's exclusion of people with AIDS and other contagious and infectious diseases when he signed it into law two years ago. •

...artist charges discrimination

• continued from page 1

minister had been in the shop. "No, that never happened," he said.

When Aldredge tried later to work out a return to work, "The first thing Bill [Breyfogle] said to me was, 'I don't want you to take this as sex discrimination,' and then told me I would have to work on an on-call basis. Who could do that? I have to have some way to make a living, and to pay for school," Aldredge said.

"I had been there for nine months. I got two 50-cent raises. I had no write-ups. I was never late. Bill even gave me my own key to the shop. "They're telling people that they fired me

because I would only work two days a week, and that's just not true. I had repeatedly offered to change my class schedule or even lay out of school a semester to work full time if Bill needed me to," Aldredge said.

Breyfogle said that the shop has gotten several phone calls complaining about the firing, "from as far away as California."

"I liked Jim — we had no problems personally," Breyfogle said, "I'm sorry for any misunderstanding, but he doesn't have any legal basis for his complaint."

Aldredge said information about the picket can be obtained by phoning (615) 320-0288. •

...budget crunch

• continued from page 1

Telecommunications comes from a special fund set aside by Viacom Cablevision under its agreement with the city.

GCN/Nashville executive director Krzysztof Krakoviak noted that Boner had not yet made a formal budget proposal. "There is still time to prevent him from filing it by phoning his office to express disapproval. Already, many have called him," Krakoviak said.

Krakoviak said that he did not believe that the budget move was aimed at GCN, but

doubted that a proposal to merge CAT's operations into the Office of Telecommunications would work.

"I come from a country where the media are controlled by the government, and I can tell you that that is destructive to the ideas of free speech and democracy," he said. Krakoviak lived in Poland for 23 years before defecting to the United States.

If CAT does fold, Krakoviak said he does not know "where GCN will end up. But we will continue to cablecast, no matter what." •

Judy Eron, LCSW
Licensed Clinical Social Worker
Jim Siebold, PhD
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

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A Promise

Part Three of Jeff Ellis' report on his six-month investigation into fundamentalist Christian sexual-orientation "change therapy"

the block in order to look at him again. You have to change your thought patterns so you can just drive on."

Supposedly that was Richard's problem: too often he allowed his thought patterns to go beyond thinking, "he's a nice looking guy" to "I want to have sex with him."

THE KEY WAS CONDITIONING the mind not to wander off into dangerous territory. Proper conditioning would allow Richard the opportunity to enjoy heterosexual relations without fear of a homosexual liaison.

In mid-April, Malloy told Richard of the reactivation of Promise. Several groups had operated in past years, but had been disbanded for various reasons. Now, enough men were involved in change therapy to indicate a need for group meetings.

"The meetings have a group leader who acts as more of a facilitator than anything else," Malloy said. "Although sometimes other people will, for lack of a better term, come in to teach. The program is somewhat didactic in its approach with some teaching needed because of the time limitations."

"We define homosexuality as romantic and/or sexual involvement with a member of your own sex," a Promise brochure reads. "We do not believe the attraction to the same sex or homosexual orientation is sin. How that orientation is acted upon makes the difference."

THAT INITIAL MEETING with the other men of Promise brought some surprises: "Why should we return to the Christian church

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The write stuff.

HARRISON HICKS
Staff Writer



Tennessee's Lesbian and Gay Newsweekly

by JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

"YOU KNOW, RICH, I think I know you. You look awfully familiar."

With those words, spoken by a man undergoing sexual orientation change therapy, I realized that my undercover reporting assignment may have run its course.

Since last November I had been investigating Christian fundamentalist sexual orientation change therapy, culminating in my being accepted as a member of Promise, a 24-week program administered by the Nashville-based Christian Counseling Services (CCS). Promise is affiliated with Exodus International, a coalition of evangelical ministries across North America, "dedicated to lifting up the ultimate hope of Jesus Christ to those struggling with homosexuality."

I had gone undercover as "Richard" to learn about the workings of "change therapy," its methodology and techniques, and to learn about those people seeking change and those who hoped to bring it about. My investigation had begun last fall with telephone calls to several local churches, in an attempt to determine if such a program existed in Nashville.

A suggestion by a heterosexual friend led to a telephone call to CCS' executive director Mike Malloy. Malloy, at that time, denied the program's existence.

However, a phone call in January proved different: Malloy told me, as Richard, about Promise.

CCS serves as the mid-south's primary Christian counseling and social services center dealing with "the sensitive topic of homosexuality," according to its informational brochure, and reportedly people travel hundreds of miles for counseling.

The story I told, as Richard, was about a young man who had experienced sexual relations with men in his past. Now, hoping to marry a woman, he sought help in controlling his desires for members of his own sex.

BEFORE RICHARD COULD JOIN Promise, he must first undergo several weeks of individual counseling, to determine if he was right for Promise and if Promise was right for him, Malloy said.

Those weeks of individual counseling sessions centered primarily on techniques of changing thought patterns — the key, Malloy suggested, to changing one's sexual "preferences."

"In this society in which sex is so prevalent, we are often sent conflicting messages about men as sexual beings," Malloy said. "It's okay to see a handsome man and think, 'He's a nice-looking guy.' What's not okay is when you allow yourself to have sexual thoughts about him. But sometimes that can be difficult."

"Say you're driving down the street and you see some good-looking guy, with a good body, running down the sidewalk in his onion-skin shorts. You might find yourself making



e Broken

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for help when the Christian church has turned its back on us for centuries?" the facilitator asked rhetorically, then answered himself with references to Biblical teachings on overcoming temptation.

"The scripture does speak against homosexual behavior. Some would say it speaks against only certain homosexual behavior. We think not," the Promise brochure reads. "In the midst of personal relationship with God — diligent prayer and study — scriptural and otherwise, we stand on the promise that as individual believers truth will be revealed to us.

"This revelation is personal and it continues throughout our Christian walk. The freedom we have may not be from the homosexual orientation but from the control of it — from the bondage that so many experience. For some their freedom is more complete."

THE MEN OF PROMISE, ranging in age from the early 20s to the late 40s, all seemed to have one thing in common — a desire to eliminate their homosexual leanings in order to lead a more "Christian" existence.

Prior to that meeting, I was skeptical about attending. How would the activist in me react? What would I do if someone recognized me as a journalist, out to get a story?

Listening to the men's stories, it was easy to let emotion take control and to feel for their anguish. The stories they told were at times genuinely heartbreaking and at others almost fantastic.

Listening to their horror stories of the tor-

ture existence of leading double lives, I was shocked by their naïveté and their refusal to believe that anyone could be homosexual and be happy at the same time.

I listened, almost awestruck, as they recounted their stories of fear and self-loathing.

When, finally, I was able to tell Richard's story, they listened intently, offering words of advice and encouragement. However misguided I found their stands on homosexuality to be, I must admit that they seemed to genuinely care for Richard.

My misgivings about attending the meeting and about possible discovery of my true identity were, at least momentarily, assuaged.

THEN, AS I STARTED TO LEAVE, William, a young, married minister of a fundamentalist church, approached me:

"I think I know you. You look awfully familiar to me," he said.

"You've probably bought something from me before. Actually, that happens to me a lot. I guess I have a common face," I responded.

"That's not something you should say in a group like this," Steve, another member of the group, joked to William.

"I hope you didn't get the wrong idea when I said he probably bought something from me before," I laughed. "I just meant I had probably waited on you some time."

But William was not easily put off.

"No, I know I know you. Where did you go to school?" he asked.

Suddenly, it was clear to me: William and I had both gone to Middle Tennessee State University. Although he had graduated before I even entered the school, we had several mutual friends.

In fact, William and I had met a year or so earlier at a political function where I had asked for his support in my efforts to be elected as an openly-gay delegate to the 1988 Democratic National Convention.

Before William had an opportunity to remember who I was and where we met, I left. My cover was still intact.

Or so I thought.

THE FOLLOWING MONDAY, a member of the group paid a visit to my office:

"I just wanted to talk to you before tonight," he said. "I have a pretty good idea you're working on a story and I just wanted to let you know that you could really hurt a lot of people."

"My intention is certainly not to hurt anyone," I said. "I'm there to find out what change therapy is all about."

"Well, I don't think it's a good idea for you to come back. You could really jeopardize a lot of hard work," he argued. "I've got to go, but think about what could happen if you continue to come to the group and then write about it."

As he left, I realized that a decision must be made:

My investigation was over. •

BEDDED OUT LATELY?

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VIEWS

Right to violence?

THE NASHVILLE *Tennessean* reports that Laura Milner, Nashville Planned Parenthood Community Services director, had been attacked by so-called "pro-life activists." Luckily, Milner suffered no debilitating physical injuries. But the attack raises disturbing questions about the consequences of violent rhetoric.

There is a bitter irony in the anti-choice movement's claim to moral correctness. The movement, which seeks to deny women control over their own bodies under the rubric of the sanctity of life, has neither eschewed nor disavowed violence in the pursuit of its goals.

Odd that a political movement that has tried to hijack Christian principles in order to shore up its agenda would so conspicuously avoid condemning violence against those who have already been born.

From firebombings of abortion clinics to physical attacks on those who work to provide women with their rightful choice to the verbal and emotional violence used to shout down reasoned debate, anti-choice fanatics, like all who try to force their religion on those who believe differently, demonstrate that their cause is control, not concern.

They should be ashamed. •

GCN's importance

NASHVILLE MAYOR BILL BONER's office first proposed axing half of Community Access Television's (CAT) budget, then Boner himself denied that he had made a decision about his recommendation. The initial announcement said that the CAT funds, all of which, by law, come from cable subscribers' fees, would be transferred to the Metro Office of Telecommunications, the branch of Metro government that tapes and distributes Metro Council meetings and other government hearings.

While the Office of Telecommunications serves an important role in allowing the citizenry access to the goings-on at City Hall, CAT provides what might be an even more important service: it allows those who would not otherwise be unable, either because of the unpopularity of their message or because they cannot afford the expense of commercial television, to present their views the opportunity to speak to fellow citizens by cable television.

The trouble with chopping up the CAT budget is that doing so would force the already underfunded agency to shut down. And that would silence an important outlet for the free expression of opinion, and one voice that is particularly important to our community: Gay Cable Network/Nashville.

GCN is important to all of us, even to those who have never seen the program, because it provides some balance for the violent homophobia and "Christian" guilt-mongering so prevalent on television.

The thought that back-door politicking to silence CAT just because GCN uses the service — a service open to all citizens — is chilling, and should outrage every fairminded voter. That Boner would even consider trading such an important community asset as CAT for the votes of a few loudmouth bigots on the Council is unconscionable.

CAT should receive its full funding, so that it can continue providing a conduit for free expression. •

Dare

TENNESSEE'S LESBIAN AND GAY NEWSWEEKLY

"I am the Love that dare not speak its name."
— Lord Alfred Douglas, "The Two Loves," 1892

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SOAPBOX

Learning by contrast

by CAROLE CUNNINGHAM
Staff Writer

"Not strangeness, but strange likeness."
— Geoffrey Hill, "Mercian Hymns"

THE STIR CREATED by a story like Jeff Ellis's "A Promise Broken" (Ellis's account of a six-month investigation into a Christian "change therapy" group), like most stories that engage, challenge, and question, will say as much about those reading the story as about those with whom the story is concerned. Reactions ranging from outrage to pity to protest point out the lines that divide activist from non-activist, therapist from journalist, Christian from non-Christian.

As an activist reading Ellis's story, I know what reaction other like-minded activists expect me to have, a reaction of disbelief, horror, outrage, pity, outrage and anger toward Mike Malloy and Nashville-based Christian Counseling Services's (CCS) transparent attack on homosexuality *per se* as a deviant, sinful, and ultimately unfulfilling "lifestyle"; pity and disbelief toward the men attending the Promise group for the futile attempt at changing something as fundamental and irreversible as their sexuality.

But as I have turned to Ellis's story for the last two weeks, I have surprisingly been struck not with horror, but with awe. And it is that feeling of awe with which I chiefly credit the value of *Dare's* coverage of "A Promise Broken."

BECAUSE DESPITE MY OWN expectation that I would be alternately angry and depressed by the existence of a group like Promise in Nashville, I found myself engaged with the stories of men in change therapy, and with how dramatically their stories diverged from my own. They seemed like the kind of stories from which I would have much to learn if my activist persona's visceral aversion to the idea of change therapy would willingly yield to the curiosity and concern of the student.

While it has been tempting to assume that the participants in Promise have buckled beneath the burden of their society's and religion's intolerance for homosexuality, I must consider that quite the opposite may be the case: that rather than buckling, these men may be better prepared than I to bear the weight they carry down a path I may not understand but cannot help in some way respecting.

I feel called by their stories and their examples to remember that by taking divergent paths we often arrive at the same end: that, strange though it may seem to the activist in me, there are those upon whose ears the exhortations of one or one million passionate activists fall with little effect and to little advan-

tage. That same individual whom the activist may account a lost soul today may in fact develop the self-affirmation and self-acceptance the activist promotes through activism by means of a path the activist dismisses or despises: a path that might include participating in a group like Promise.

However offended I may be by the premises of those who created Promise, I cannot help but recognize the fact that Promise brings gay men together in a setting that allows them to acknowledge their attraction for other men, allows them to speak openly of their experiences, and, regardless of the homophobic rhetoric dominating their meetings, ultimately allows participants to decide for themselves which "promise" they want to live out and how.

THAT WE OFTEN learn more by contrast than by example is a fact of human nature Cato the Elder pointed to when he observed that the wise have more to learn from fools than fools from the wise. Ultimately, those who might never be driven to self-acceptance by the example of self-accepting gay activists may well be driven to acceptance and affirmation by the self-loathing promoted in groups like Promise. And that in fact is not

Cato observed that the wise have more to learn from fools than fools from the wise. Ultimately, those who might never be driven to self-acceptance by the example of self-accepting gay activists may well be driven to acceptance and affirmation by the self-loathing promoted in groups like Promise.

so strange after all. My own convictions about self-affirmation and activism, while not the product of a group like Promise, were indeed the product of living in a society in which my difference was often abhorred and feared, a world in which examples I might emulate and admire were few and far between.

I learned who I was by reason of my contrast with the examples around me and by ultimate refusal to accept judgments of my life by anyone but me. The participants in Promise are no less likely than me to arrive at those same conclusions.

WHILE THE STORY OF THE MEN in Promise is not my story, it is I who would be the fool to believe there is no wisdom in listening to the story of their lives and understanding that one day they may, by means I could never guess at or devise, arrive in the same place I arrive by a very different or divergent path.

I do not have to accept the ideology of Promise to believe there is promise in the people who gather each week to share their lives, and I refuse to believe that their story being told endangers either them or me: rather, it throws me by its contrasting example toward a model of understanding, clemency and compassion I often lose sight of in my own heated pursuit of "truth."

Their truths and mine both merit the telling because the promises we keep may not be so different after all. •

CURTAINS

The Business of Marriage

reviewed by **JEFF ELLIS**
Managing Editor

CREATING A MUSICAL COMEDY for the theater is hard work. Creating a good musical comedy for the theater is extremely difficult work. Creating a smash hit musical comedy for the theater is extremely hard work made difficult by the whims of the theater-going public.

So, the talents behind *The Business of Marriage* — Judy Eron and Greg Armbruster — had a hard-to-difficult task ahead of them when they sat down to create an entertaining show about relationships. The end result? A few hits, a few misses and, overall, a pleasant evening of theater.

The Business of Marriage does for relationships in the '80s what Stephen Sondheim's *Company* did for the '70s: cast a slightly jaundiced eye at personal interrelationships in the context of the times. While *Company* takes a look at the swinging singles scene of the mid-'70s, *Business* pokes fun at the wild and harried married scene of the late 1980s — along with a few swipes at those singles still swinging, a.k.a. Yuppies.

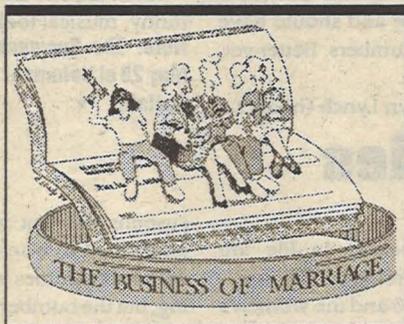
As performed by the cast in this first-ever stage production from the newly-formed Galatin Arts Council, *The Business of Marriage* is, like the business of "singlehood", not all cut and dried. Instead, it's like an obstacle course — with enough twists and turns and unexpected trapdoors — to keep you guessing who's doing what with whom and for how long.

Essentially, *Business* is about the Whitakers — Alex and Margaret — who are celebrating their twentieth anniversary with family and friends. As with any celebration of the passage

of time, Alex and Margaret find themselves questioning themselves and their relationship.

As if that's not enough, Margaret's father is dating a waitress young enough to be his daughter, while sister Crystal plans a wedding to a non-existent fiancé just to keep everyone off her back.

Alex's brother Jeff, as vacuous a Yuppie as you could imagine, can't seem to find a girlfriend despite his cellular phone, his "Beemer", his designer labels and his bottled water.



Then there's Aunt Grace, a Bible-quoting fundamentalist Catholic; Shirley Century, a lustful lush who's in real estate, and a trio of Franks — Dr. Franklin, Frank the bartender, and Father Francis — who play fathers confessor to the entire brood.

The cast performs with all the vigor and energy you would expect from community theater. Their performances — although a bit uneven — are just right for the characters they play.

AS ALEX AND MARGARET, Denny Morice and Jacque Scarbrough look, and act, as if they could be married to each other, and give good performances. Morice tends to gesture too much while singing and borders on overacting during the big fight with Margaret. Scarbrough's voice is good (but her first song, "Who Am I In This All?" is the show's weakest number) and she plays the superwoman — mother, wife, career woman — well.

As the Whitaker children — Katie and Bobbi — Amy Phillips and Amanda Kepley are well-cast, a fact made obvious when they sing

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Frivolities

reviewed by **JEFF ELLIS**
Managing Editor

FRIVOLITIES, the Circle Players' production of the Richard Northcutt-Judy Brown musical adaptation of Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, is an absolutely delightful theater experience.

The show, which is in its world premiere engagement at Nashville's Tennessee Performing Arts Center Johnson Theatre, is an amusing comedy set to a score that's eminently singable. As a matter of fact, you'll probably leave the theater humming either "Labour of Love" or "Raz-zamatazz," the show's two most memorable tunes.

Frivolities is a spirited good time — an old-fashioned comedy of manners with a decided contemporary twist — done up in a British accent that's sure to entertain.

With a nod to Gilbert and Sullivan, Sigmund Romberg, and maybe even a little wave to Cole Porter and Noel Coward, *Frivolities* brings



Shakespeare's work glowingly to life in the early twentieth century.

The show follows the tried and true formula of romantic goings-on amid the surroundings of political change and intrigue. Not that *Frivolities* is that staid or formulaic.

Instead, we are introduced to three very upper crust gentlemen, striving to maintain the traditions of the all-male sanctuary — the gentlemen's club. The young men include Lord Fredrick Ellengraf, a young nobleman, and his friends Dumain Hyde-White and

Beroon Fox-Fenwick.

THE CHARTER CREATED by the trio for their new club includes such dictates as studying for a year and refraining from keeping company with young women and eating but one meal a day for the same time. "The two

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