

[MUSIC PLAYING - MARK ALLEN SMITH, "HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW"]

JIMMY CARPER: A wonderful song. It's by a Dallas drag queen by the name of Mark Allen Smith. His Eye Is on the Sparrow one of my favorite gospel songs. And there's a reason that I played it because I got several phone calls today and an email from Brandon Wolf from [? Handnet ?], and this is what Brandon had to say. It's very concise.

"I learned earlier today that Carolyn Roberts, a longtime friend of Houston's GLP community, died last night of a massive heart attack. Many members of the community will remember Carolyn as the Montrose Voice columnist Cuervolyn because Jose Cuervo was her favorite drink.

Carolyn's most recent community activity was the 2002 Nights in Black Leather. She leaves behind a legacy of love and involvement and many, many friends who are saddened at this sudden and unexpected loss. She also leaves behind her husband Jeff and a menagerie of animals."

I know a ferret and her dog Brandy, and she was a very remarkable woman. And I got phone calls today from Jim Songrini. He used to do the leather line here. I got a phone call from Doug Decker. I got a phone call from Evelyn Carroll, who knew Carolyn very well. And I haven't heard from a couple of these folks-- and many others that I hadn't heard from in a long time.

And that made me think of how much Caroline meant to this community. She was the queerest straight woman I have ever, ever met. And she cannot be replaced. But I have a song, yes, you know me. I always have a song, and this kind of expresses how I always felt about Cuervolyn. This is the kind of woman that I thought she was, and this is how I am going to remember her.

[MUSIC PLAYING - CANDYE KANE, " I'M THE TOUGHEST GIRL ALIVE"]

Oh, yes, you've tuned in to *After Hours* queer radio with attitude right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of *After Hours* is ready to bring you news, interviews, dialogue, and music geared for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and their friends. Here at *After Hours*, we may be diverse, but we have one thing in common.

We are all out of the closet and urge everyone to come out of their closets. That means standing up for yourself, taking responsibility for your own life, and being proud of who you are. Realistically, we know not everyone can do that because of age, job, or frame of mind. That's OK. We're here for you too. So sit back, relax, and enjoy this week's edition of *After Hours*.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Hello, Houston and College Station and Sarasota, Florida, and the world, and welcome to *After Hours* queer radio with attitude. This is the May 11 edition. I'm Jimmy Carper. I'll be your producer for the evening. A couple of things before we get to the transgender segment, that's the first segment tonight. The second segment on the second half of the show will be the Latino hour with Francisco Sanchez.

And in between, oh, we're going to do music, and news, and items, and all kinds of good stuff. Right now I want to say, hello to my MBBs out there. You know who you are, guys. Wilson, Reggie, Gilbert, and Gilbert sent a really cute photo of himself. Randy, Randall, Paul.

Paul, thank you for your letter, and I'm going to really watch what you said. Mark, new person who wrote in, Mark, Terry. And unfortunately, for those of you out there who know him, the T Man is currently housed downtown Houston at 1301 Franklin, wherever it is.

MBBs, my men behind bars. These guys write and they're good guys. And several of them are looking for pen pals. And if any of you would like to do that kind of thing, these are good guys. Several of them are getting out soon. I've got addresses here for you that Big Roy can give you at 713-526-5738 jam KPFT.

A couple little things. I wanted to make sure everybody knows that-- a shameless plug here for the Miss Brazos Tack and Feed Pageant, which is occurring Sunday, Sunday, Sunday May the 12th at 8:30-ish at the BRB, benefiting Camp Hope Camp Hugs through the Lights of Love and the Royal Sovereign Imperial Court of the Single Star. This is a show date that was going to be there for Deedee DeMarco. So Deedee and Woody Steiner are co-hosting this event.

So also, you may have heard earlier in the show that I did a little Memorial for [INAUDIBLE] and played a song by Candy Cane, "I'm the Toughest Gal Alive." And also, the Mother of Montrose show is going to be held tonight, Sunday night. Sunday, Sunday, Sunday yes, indeedy on Mother's Day. It's the Mother of Montrose show at Mary's, naturally, and it will be dedicated to Carolyn Roberts, our own [INAUDIBLE]. So without further ado, let's get Beth Richards here.

BETH Hi again.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Hey, how you doing?

BETH Wow, that's me with a little bit of a scratchy throat going on here.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, that's nice.

BETH Still trying to get over a cold.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: OK. And you've got a phone in your ear.

BETH I've got a phone in one ear because we're waiting to hook her in, but--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, we have to put her on hold.

BETH Oh, we have to put her on hold?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH OK. So that's how we do this?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Just hit hold.

BETH I'm learning as we go.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH Hang on a second. We'll get you on hold.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: OK. And the people--

BETH Did that work?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. And you can hang it up.

BETH OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And then you hit air.

BETH Air.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And hit the dial until it-- it's going to--

BETH Hit the dial?

RICHARDS:

MAN: The one that's flashing.

BETH This one?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

MAN: There you go.

BETH Oh, this one?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Hello?

JAMIE WARD: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: Hey.

JAMIE WARD: It worked.

JIMMY CARPER: It worked.

BETH OK, so--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And these are-- everyone here is-- well, everyone on this side of the control room is very non-mechanical, I'll tell you that.

MAN: Ain't that the truth.

BETH Well, I'm pretty good with that stuff once you train me.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, I see.

BETH But it's like, the first time through, it's like, huh?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Does this mean you're going to know it next time?

BETH Next time, I'll know it.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Whoa, I'm scared.

BETH But anyway we're doing the transgendered segment--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH --again tonight.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH And--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: We have incredible people in the studio. We have someone incredible on the line.

BETH Yeah. Basically we're talking about something that happens only in Houston. Of all the places that I've ever lived,

RICHARDS: I have seen a lot of active groups.

I used to live in Philadelphia. We had a group there called Renaissance Education Association, which a lot of people all across the country have seen their newsletters and that sort of thing. An average night with them was, I don't know, 80 to 100 people at one of their meetings.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

BETH Which, yeah, it's just enormous. But there's also a [? Tri-S ?] group in town and a TS support group in town--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH And several other groups in town, and--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH And they never actually do anything together. Houston on the other hand--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. Yeah. Houston, on the other hand, has been doing it together for quite a while, 10 years, huh?

BETH It's 10 years this year.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I am so--

BETH And so what we're going to talk about tonight--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --amazed at that.

BETH --is we've got some people here from the Unity Committee, and we're going to talk about the history of the

RICHARDS: current standings of and where the Unity Committee is going in the future.

JIMMY CARPER: And if only the gay community could learn from the transgender community about unity. I mean, we would have it made, wouldn't we?

BETH Well, one thing I've noticed about the most visible part of the Unity Committee is on Unity Banquet that we have

RICHARDS: every year, it is not a transgendered-only event.

JIMMY CARPER: No

BETH It is-- the whole community comes out. The whole community supports us. The whole community-- there's even

RICHARDS: some award there that's not for a transgendered person. It's for others that have helped the transgender community. It is not only about the transgender community, it's about all of us.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, that's what unity is about, isn't it?

BETH I'd say so. So let's get the people in the studio here to introduce themselves. We'll start over here.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY I'm Joe Pauley Titsworth, and glad to be here.

TITSWORTH:

JIMMY CARPER: Glad to have you.

BETH And?

RICHARDS:

WENDY And I'm Wendy Russell, and I'm very glad to be here, too. First time on radio, so I'm a little nervous.

RUSSELL:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

BETH A virgin.

RICHARDS:

WENDY Oh. Oh, God.

RUSSELL:

BETH But we can fix that.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: We already have.

BETH And on the phone?

RICHARDS:

WENDY And on the phone, Jamie Ward. From Houston, currently in Oakland.

RUSSELL:

JIMMY CARPER: Ah.

BETH And--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: What's going on in Oakland?

JAMIE WARD: I'm working.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

BETH Bidness.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Bidness.

JAMIE WARD: Yeah, bidness. We're doing bidness in Oakland.

JIMMY CARPER: Got you.

WENDY Yeah, I heard that before.

RUSSELL:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

JAMIE WARD: I'm staying in a big hotel.

BETH Yeah. See what I was talking about--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah

BETH --with scratchy voice there?

RICHARDS:

MAN: She's trying to die on me.

BETH Yeah, well I better get that better in the next seven and a half weeks.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

MAN: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I know what you mean by that.

BETH Seven and a half weeks is my date for surgery and they are not going to put somebody with bronchitis down.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: No, probably not.

BETH Got to get over this quickly. Anyway, back to the show. Could you tell us, Joe, what part in the Unity Committee

RICHARDS: you play?

JOE PAULEY Well, this past year I was co-chair of the Unity Committee. I like to refer to it as the Houston Transgender Unity

TITSWORTH: Committee.

BETH There you go.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY And my cohort on the chair was Sara Rook. And we had a challenging year ahead of us. And it was really

TITSWORTH: interesting and exciting. Exciting.

BETH And for those of you who can't see Joe over the radio here, grab your copy of *OutSmart* from the most-- April, and

RICHARDS: she's one of the people featured on the cover, as is our next person.

WENDY Yes. Well, let me see. So like I said, I'm a novice. So [INAUDIBLE]

RUSSELL:

BETH Well, what involvement did you have in the Unity Committee? Let's start with that.

RICHARDS:

WENDY Basically, I like to call myself kind of a walk on. I came into the Unity Committee late. I've been active in the

RUSSELL: community for years, but I'm taking over the position of Secretary for the Unity Committee for this next year and trying to get more involved within planning some of these functions, which I've been enjoying for so many years.

BETH And how about you, Jamie?

RICHARDS:

JAMIE WARD: Gee. I was kind of dragged kicking and screaming into this. I was roped in to be the emcee of this year's committee, and afterward had my arm twisted to stay on and be on the committee. So that's where I am.

I haven't been to a meeting yet, but-- not this year. Not since I've been on the committee. But I went to several beforehand and that's about it. I represent those who aren't represented, who don't belong to any group, the non-aligned. I was voted in by all the people who don't belong to any group.

BETH So the structure is that there's officers and then there's members, and the members are representatives of the different groups. Is that how it works? I know that's what it was. Joe's over there shaking her head quite vigorously and the good folks on the radio, it's not like TV, Joe, you have to speak up.

JOE PAULEY I have to say something.

TITSWORTH:

BETH There you go.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Oh, that's right.

TITSWORTH:

BETH There you go.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Sorry.

JOE PAULEY The People can't see me shaking my head?

TITSWORTH:

JIMMY CARPER: No, sorry.

BETH So yeah, there's the membership and to get involved in the membership. I mean, Wendy said she was a walk on.

RICHARDS: Can just anybody show up then?

JOE PAULEY Well, this past year we did a little reorganizing on the Unity Committee and we established what we call the

TITSWORTH: executive planning committee, which is made up of the officers of the committee only. And we did that to-- so we can get some of the miscellaneous stuff taken care of to where we didn't take up a lot of time in our regular general meeting. But anybody is welcome to attend the general meetings, and we encourage every organization out there to send someone to represent their organization. Bering Methodist church has graciously allowed us to use their facilities for all our meetings.

BETH That's excellent.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Yes.

TITSWORTH:

BETH I know I've been involved with TATS years ago and we had a lot of trouble finding meeting spaces. That was one

RICHARDS: thing. Another thing that we definitely saw was that more hands make the work easier. So--

JOE PAULEY That's true.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Anybody can come work on this. You heard it from Joe. I'd say definitely it's worth doing then.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY There's a lot of rewards in knowing that you came in and you helped others. And that's what this is about.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Now in the last several years, my community activism has primarily been turned towards my company's GLBT or

RICHARDS: employee organization. And before that I was pretty active in TATS. In fact, when I was the secretary of the organization about six years ago, it was TATS' turn to put on the Unity Banquet.

At that time, we didn't have a Unity Committee just yet. We were all taking turns, the different groups would share around, and each group would take their turn. So the Unity Committee goes back quite a way, or the Unity Banquet itself goes back quite a ways. This was, I understand, the 10th year. Is that right?

JOE PAULEY This is the 10th year. It originally was started by Dr. Peggy Rudd and Renee Finner.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY And that's when we started the process of each year, a different organization would take control of it and we'd go

TITSWORTH: to a restaurant. And we really have matured.

BETH Yeah. I think we probably had 30 or 40 people at the one, I think it was the fourth one was the one that I was

RICHARDS: involved in the planning with back then. And like I said, I think maybe 30 or 40 people. We held it in the top floor of the-- oh, the Mexican restaurant right around the corner from the Alabama Theater, which is now the Bookstop. What's that restaurant?

JOE PAULEY I can't remember. You got me on that one.

TITSWORTH:

BETH It's right around the corner from the Bookstop that used to be the Alabama, the Mexican restaurant. In any case,

RICHARDS: we took the top floor of the meeting room there and we had 30 people. And that was considered a big crowd then. And I believe that was the year where we had our first award. And this year, we ended up with-- Joe, maybe you can tell me how many awards while I--

JOE PAULEY Well, there's six awards.

TITSWORTH:

BETH --count them off here. Six awards here. And can you tell me a little about the Dee McKellar award?

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Well, let me see. I don't have my notes in front of me.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Well, OK. First off, Dee McKellar is one of the--

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY She's a very, very exceptional person that used to be part of our community.

TITSWORTH:

BETH One of the old time strong activists in this community, and she passed away, I think it was about four years ago

RICHARDS: now. Dear friend of After Hours, dear friend of the entire transgender community.

JIMMY CARPER: She once did a show that I still have the original tape because it was so good.

BETH Oh, it was.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: She and Ray Hill did a show together about what to do if you are arrested and things to do to keep from getting arrested.

BETH People laugh, but that's a lot less trivial than it sounds like--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: You betcha.

BETH --when you actually hear what goes on and hear how it all has to work. We've added one more person to the

RICHARDS: studio here.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, they know her. She's old hat.

BETH Want to say, hello?

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Hi.

BETH Hi. It's Jackie Thorn come by again.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Hi, Jackie. Welcome.

BETH And were you involved in this year's Unity Committee, too?

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Well, no. I was just one of the peons.

BETH One of the peons.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah. I was the one that got peed on.

JOE PAULEY Never. Never. Never. Never.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Got to have some chiefs, got to have some Injuns.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yep.

JOE PAULEY Jackie was very involved.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: I think that Joe Pauley was asking-- somebody was asking about the different awards and so forth.

BETH Well, yeah. We're going to go through those.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Oh, OK.

BETH And so Dee McKellar.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Because the night of the Unity Banquet, Jackie came in to tell the listening audience who won.

BETH Ah.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah. I didn't bring my notes-- like Joe Pauley, I didn't bring my-- oh, you've got them. OK, there you go.

BETH I got them up here. We're going to go through this.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Good girl.

BETH We're going to get through this. So--

RICHARDS:

HOST: She stole your notes.

BETH If I can yank it out of the back of my-- the last couple of firing neurons left--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Well, I know I know that Renee Finner won the Heritage Award because I gave it to her.

BETH We'll get to all that. The purpose of the Dee McKellar award is the activist within the community, is that what it

RICHARDS: was? Yes.

JOE PAULEY Yeah

TITSWORTH:

BETH That was won this year by Sara Rook. A well-deserved award. She's very active in SEAShell. She's very active in,

RICHARDS: well, obviously the Unity Committee being one of the co-chairs.

JOE PAULEY She has a nationwide-- on a nationwide level has interacted with corporations across the country. And it's been

TITSWORTH: very effective.

BETH Shell was a sponsor of one the conferences.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: One of the tables there, yeah. But--

BETH Well, one of the conferences that is going around presenting things to the human resources groups of various
RICHARDS: companies.

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

JOE PAULEY That's right.

TITSWORTH:

BETH And she gets up and tells her story. She did that here in the Woodlands and the CEO of Shell was sitting front
RICHARDS: row, and that's the first time he'd heard her story about what the transition was like in his company. And he
became somewhat of an activist for GLBT in its entirety as a result of that.

JACKIE THORN: Yeah. Sarah's done wonderful work because she has not only opened up Shell, but she has also, through her
opening up Shell, has opened up other companies as well.

BETH Absolutely. I hope that she's been helping to open up mine, even, without even knowing it.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: There you go.

BETH Because one of the other co-sponsors of that conference besides Shell was Hewlett-Packard. And so since I'm
RICHARDS: Compaq Plus' executive board member for the human resources liaison. I guess I'm not Compaq Plus' anymore.

JACKIE THORN: You're now Hewlett-Packard Compaq.

BETH That's right.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Or HPQ, I think they call it now.

BETH So that's how we train, anyway. So the result is that we've gone from a company that was just starting to gain its
RICHARDS: legs in the concepts of GLBT diversity, we had a couple of really strong advocates in HR, to a company that's old
hat. They have been around the block, they know what's going on, and they are very supportive of GLBT issues.
And so it's an amazing jump to see all at one time. So anyway, our next award that I wanted to talk about was
the Apogee award.

JACKIE THORN: Apogee.

BETH Apogee. yeah. Could we--

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Well--

TITSWORTH:

BETH Somebody want to tell us a little more?

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY The person that got that award really did deserve that award.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Yes. And so--

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY That would be--

TITSWORTH:

BETH --can we tell what the purpose of the award is, though?

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Just for being the outstanding person, more or less. Kristen Williams has done wonders for this community.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah, let me interject one item here. The apogee is for the person who, in the last year, has done something absolutely outstanding--

BETH Has she ever.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: --for the GLBT community, primarily the T community. Go on.

JOE PAULEY But Kristen is just-- I can't say enough good stuff about Kristen.

TITSWORTH:

BETH So Apogee literally means the--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: The very highest.

BETH --highest point of an orbit. Now I'm sorry, Kristen Williams is not at her highest point. This child is just zooming.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

JOE PAULEY She's still going up.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

BETH She's still going up. She is--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah, she's still got rocket boosters going behind her.

BETH She certainly does.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

BETH I mean, she's not yet at her apogee.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Well, but I think really the--

BETH But she's definitely the high point of our community this year, that is without a doubt.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah. Well, without a doubt, I think over the last year for the 2001-2002 year, the establishment and the continuation of the transgender shelter down there in Galveston, which Kristen served as executive director. And she has several people who help her out, Julie and a couple of others, Sarah, and somebody. But Julie has really-- I mean, she has shouldered the load on this thing, and it's just absolutely incredible. I don't know where in the world she gets the time to do all the things that she has to do.

BETH You said Julie. I think you meant Kristen, right?

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Yeah.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Yeah. Kristen, I just-- bottle that energy because you could sell it and make a million.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY I'd like to do a little plug here while we're talking about Kristen and TG shelter.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Sure. go ahead.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY --shelter.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Sure. Go ahead.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY We've initiated-- immediately after the Unity Banquet, we initiated a major fund drive for the TG shelter. And we

TITSWORTH: have until July 1 to raise \$12,000. And in the first week after the Unity Banquet, we had already raised \$2,000.

JIMMY CARPER: Excellent.

BETH Definitely on the way.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Yeah. So--

TITSWORTH:

BETH Keep it coming.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Keep it coming, folks.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Well, they raised, what was it, 800 and something at the Unity Banquet itself. And then the following night, Sunday night, the show at the Briarpatch, which was specifically for the transgender shelter raised another \$770.

JOE PAULEY Yes. So we're on our way, and we're going to be moving that shelter to Houston.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

BETH Yeah. I was wondering how this--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: That-- well, the thing about it is--

BETH I think we need to get Kristen on here some night and we will go through the whole--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

JACKIE THORN: Yeah

JOE PAULEY You need to.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: The reason for the moving it to Houston is not because of any problems with the shelter down there in Galveston.

BETH No, no.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: We were relying on the UTMB. And with the influx of money that they have gotten from the unclaimed prizes in the lottery which were distributed out to all the hospitals and so forth, a lot of the hospitals here in Houston got a lot of money out of it. But UTMB did as well.

But the problem was is that the direction that the UTMB chose to take with that money did not really address the problems of the transgender community. And so we've actually got more support here in Houston if we were able to get the shelter up here in Houston.

BETH Both support and the community that would need it--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Exactly

BETH --is larger--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Exactly.

BETH --in Houston than in Galveston.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Absolutely. Yes.

BETH And the distance isn't so far that somebody who is in that kind of need in Galveston couldn't get to Houston.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah. Well, of course, the other thing, too, initially the rationale behind that was is that having it in Galveston would get people out of Houston who were being exposed to all of these influences that were negative on their life.

BETH So our next one on our list here is the People's Choice Award.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY That was fun.

TITSWORTH:

BETH So tell me a little bit about what the People's Choice Award is all about.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY This is where it's a popularity contest.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Straight up.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Every organization in the Houston area has an opportunity to cast a vote on the person they think that during the

TITSWORTH: year was their choice.

JACKIE THORN: Well, not their organization, but every member of every organization.

JOE PAULEY Every member, yeah. Every member.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah, each member. Yeah.

JOE PAULEY And it's-- this year was really close. And Lilly Roddy took the title.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah. Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Good for her.

BETH Good for her, that's right.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Well, again, Lilly is one of those people that has been around forever. And--

JOE PAULEY You bet.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Keeps on going and going.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah, she has really, really supported the T community. She's been involved in so many things. And of course, she's the resident horoscope person for *OutSmart* and she was involved with the martial arts school, and learning to defend yourself type of thing. So Lilly has just really, really worked for this community.

JOE PAULEY Absolutely, yeah.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: And deserved the recognition.

BETH Yes, she does.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Absolutely. And she's very modest about this. She was really afraid. And I hope Jamie is listening, she was really

TITSWORTH: afraid Jamie was going to crack a joke about her at the banquet, because she's on the EPC and got voted People's Choice.

BETH What do you say, Jamie? Would you?

RICHARDS:

JAMIE WARD: I would never have done such a thing.

BETH Never.

RICHARDS:

JAMIE WARD: Ask Joe [? Paulie ?].

BETH Excuse me. Our next one is the Champions award.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY I got to give that award. I'm a voting member of the Houston HIV Prevention Community Planning Group and we

TITSWORTH: work with the city of Houston Health Department STD division and coordinate with CDC.

BETH So tell us what the Champions Award is all about.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY The Champion Award is for either someone within the community or outside the community that during the year

TITSWORTH: has done something very exceptional for the transgender community.

JACKIE THORN: It does not have to be an individual. Can be an organization.

JOE PAULEY Exactly.

TITSWORTH:

BETH As it was this year.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: As it was this year, exactly.

JOE PAULEY And what they had done is they had authorized the development of the Houston Transgender Task Force for

TITSWORTH: AIDS.

BETH Excellent.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY And on their applications, in any form you fill out when you go to Health Department STD division, when they ask

TITSWORTH: for sex, it'll say, male, female, TG.

JIMMY CARPER: Hey. Hey.

JOE PAULEY Every one of their forms.

TITSWORTH:

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

BETH I am-- yeah.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: They have come a long way.

JIMMY CARPER: That's impressive.

BETH Forms amaze me how they can really-- forms can be oppressive at times.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Oh, they're very intimidating.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY And they intentionally went out to seek out a transgendered person to bring in to work for the health department.

TITSWORTH: And that was Brenda Thomas.

JIMMY CARPER: I was going to say, that's right. That's right.

BETH Yeah, Brenda, right?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

BETH Brenda's enjoying the preparations for Mother's Day today. She was invited and couldn't make it tonight.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Now if they--

JACKIE THORN: Well, of course, Brenda clutters up the [? Handnet ?] email list with all of her things that come out of--

JIMMY CARPER: I love it. I love it.

JACKIE THORN: --the CDC.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH She does know how to hit the Send button.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: But it's neat stuff.

BETH It is. It is.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: It's stuff that I-- you know, I'm HIV positive. And I--

BETH Really?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, no. Surprise!

BETH Jimmy, you're hurting me.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Five foot eight, 135. What do you think? Anyway, yeah. And I'm always amazed at things that I've not heard about, about the AIDS community that Brenda sends out.

BETH Well, jeez. You could join up with the TG community here and yeah, hook right in there.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I think I-- hope I have.

JOE PAULEY You have.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Jimmy, I'll lend you my dress. I don't think so.

JIMMY CARPER: That's OK.

BETH Yeah, that's OK. Our next award was the Heritage Award.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, Jackie.

BETH Let Jackie talk about that one?

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: I was the person who gave that out. Renee Finner is probably one of the longest term members of the T community in Houston. She and about three or four other people back in the mid-'60s used to get together and they would go down to a place down on West Galveston out-- I don't know-- Jamaica Beach, Spanish Grant, someplace.

Anyhow, one of their members had a beach house down there and they would meet about once a month down there. And keep in mind this was back in like 1965. This was back when there were still the ordinances against-- particularly in Houston there was ordinances against it. I don't know if there were in Galveston or not.

BETH It's crossdressing in general. I mean, it was--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH Women walking down the street with zip front flies in their pants were considered cross-dressing.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Exactly. And Renee was one of the people who formed and kept alive what is now the Gulf Coast Transgender community. Back then, it was GCTVC, which was the Gulf Coast Transvestite Club, I think. They changed the name several times.

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: But the thing that a lot of people don't realize is that almost every other transgendered organization has their roots in GCTC. The TATS group was a committee of GCTC at one time, and then they became sufficiently strong enough that they were able to go out on their own. The Tri-Ess Tau Chi chapter was a split off from GCTC, and the less said about that, the better.

JAMIE WARD: Unity. Unity.

JACKIE THORN: The ICTLEP which was the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, was a baby of GCTC when Phyllis Frye was our vice president. And she came up with the idea of having this conference, and now it has provided an incredible amount of legal information relating to transgender issues. And the catch group, as I understand it, was an offshoot of TATS.

BETH That's correct.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Because the TATS group was Houston, and the CATS group was basically the--

BETH Driving up a long way from Galveston.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah, Galveston-Fort Bend area. So GCTC has a long, honorable history. And Renee Finner was one of the founders and encouragers of the GCTC organization. And she very, very much deserving of-- again, she, like Lilly, is not one of these people that puts herself in the limelight or anything like that. She worked behind the scenes and of course, now with-- she has some problems with her legs and so forth like that. But she still does what she can.

JOE PAULEY Absolutely.

TITSWORTH:

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Yeah

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: And of course, the other thing was is she and, I don't know, I guess you've addressed the Peggy Rudd award--

BETH Actually, just--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: --that was given. Oh, you have not yet? OK.

BETH Next one.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Oh, OK. Well, all right. Then I will hold off on that.

BETH Nice segue.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Go ahead.

BETH OK, nice segue.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: OK.

BETH The next award is the Lifetime Achievement Award. Can somebody tell us a little bit about that award?

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY I want to say right here that Peggy Rudd is one of my best friends.

TITSWORTH:

BETH And Peggy Rudd was our winner for the Lifetime Achievement Award this year. And so can you tell us a little bit

RICHARDS: about the purpose of the award there?

JOE PAULEY I was the first cross-dresser she ever met. And Peggy's husband was the first cross-dresser I ever met.

TITSWORTH:

BETH No kidding.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Peggy Rudd has done so much for the transgender community. She's authored, I believe, four or five books

TITSWORTH: already.

JACKIE THORN: At least five.

JOE PAULEY Oh, at least five. She has worked with individuals on the phone, in her home, at conferences trying to help

TITSWORTH: people deal with their issues. And I met her in 1981 and she's been around all these years and working with the transgender community. She's an absolutely fantastic person.

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

JOE PAULEY I love her to death.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Peggy is-- Dr. Peggy Rudd. She has a PhD. She's not a medical doctor, but she does have a PhD psychology, counseling, and so forth like that. And she does do a great deal of marriage counseling. And I wouldn't even want to guess at the number of marriages with transgendered people involved that she has saved--

JIMMY CARPER: Absolutely.

JACKIE THORN: --by her counseling.

BETH Good work.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: But I think really that the main thing that I appreciate about Peggy is the books that she has written, the first one of which was called, *My Husband Wears My Clothes*.

BETH Absolutely.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Oh, very good book.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: And the second one was *Cross-dressing with Dignity*. And whenever I talk to people on the phone, I invariably recommend that they get-- particularly where there is a marriage involved, or a relationship of some kind, I invariably suggest that they-- recommend that they get a hold of both of these books and read them, and then give them to their significant other to read as well. Because the thing about it is, the books not only go into what transgender behavior or transvestism is, but perhaps more importantly, what it is not.

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: And--

BETH There's a lot of misconceptions out there.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Oh, a whole lot.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

BETH Education will cure that.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And that's right. And what it is probably more important than for outside folks than what it is because of misconceptions.

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: And I bought that book way back when at Inklings years ago. Pokey Andersen had quite a selection of material there at the time.

BETH That was before yesterday, wasn't it?

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, was it ever.

[LAUGHTER]

JOE PAULEY Well--

TITSWORTH:

JIMMY CARPER: Probably she had all of the whatever was available.

JACKIE THORN: Of course, actually, the Lifetime Achievement was not only for that, but also the Unity Committee determined that this was the 10th anniversary of the Unity Banquet. And since Peggy Rudd was essentially the instigator of the Unity Banquet, she and Linda and Cynthia Phillips, who were the powers behind the Texas T Party, and Renee Finner, who at that time was president of the GCTC group, the four of them got together over in San Antonio during one of the earliest Texas T parties.

And Peggy came up with the idea. She said, we have two groups now in Houston and we don't associate with one another. And she says, I think we need to have some sort of a Unity Banquet, and that's how this came about. And so Peggy was the idea person behind the thing. And one of the reasons why Renee was given the Heritage Award was because of the fact that had Renee not also bought into this idea and worked with the organization of which she was a president, it never would have come to fruition.

JOE PAULEY Never would have, no.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: Never would have happened. And so this is why. We were basically honoring both of them.

JIMMY CARPER: Absolutely.

JACKIE THORN: But Peggy has done so much, not only the Unity Banquet, but all of the other things that she has done that literally the Lifetime Achievement was really, really deserved in her case.

BETH Now this was the 10th banquet.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Yes.

TITSWORTH:

JACKIE THORN: It was the 10th banquet, yes.

BETH It was, what, the fourth one or the third one or something like that operating under the committee?

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY Actually, we're into the third year--

TITSWORTH:

BETH Third, OK.

RICHARDS:

JOE PAULEY The third year of the actual Unity Committee program. And if we use the banquet as our fiscal period, we're

TITSWORTH: starting our fourth year now.

BETH OK. And as--

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: The thing on the committee, again as initially, Peggy's idea was is that the two groups would alternate years of hosting the banquet. Tau Chi hosted the first one. GCTC hosted the second one. And I think by the time the third one rolled around--

JIMMY CARPER: TATS was--

JACKIE THORN: --TATS was a viable organization.

BETH Yes. Yes.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: And TATS hosted the third one.

BETH That's correct.

RICHARDS:

JACKIE THORN: And then we went round again about one more time. And then along-- I think it was after the sixth or seventh one, they finally decided that this is like [INAUDIBLE]. It has grown to the point where it's too big for one group to handle.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, it is.

JACKIE THORN: And so therefore-- and plus, we had all other groups that had formed since then. So they decided, well, what we will do is we will form a unity committee consisting of a representative, one or more from each one of the affiliated groups. And the Unity Banquet-- or, I mean the Unity Committee will be in charge of putting the banquet on.

BETH RICHARDS: Yeah. I moved to Houston after the second, but before the third. And earlier than the program, I said it was the fourth that TATS had hosted. But having thought about it, you're right. It was the third one that TATS was hosting.

JIMMY CARPER: The Unity Banquet also takes on the responsibility of planning for the transgender community's participation in the pride parade.

BETH RICHARDS: Yeah. I'd like to get to that in just a--

JACKIE THORN: Right. Yeah. That's been the last couple years that they've done that.