

MELANIE: I was having a conversation with someone one time, and they said, you know, most women who are lesbians, you know-- she said, it's better that they know you as Melanie the woman that, you know, used to be male as opposed to Melanie the guy trying to be a woman.

BETH: Yeah, absolutely. That very concept definitely affected my timing for transition. It moved me up by a month because the new VP was coming in on the 4th of July week so it's like, cool, I'll take the week off a 4th of July and then she will have met me when she comes back as Beth. And the rumors might be running around and all that, but she met me as Beth. The first impression she had with me as a woman.

Turned out she was coming three weeks early so I ended up getting my transition date moved ahead 3 weeks, which was fine by me. I was great-- glad that my employer could cope with that. But I was very-- you know, this person was going to have a big impact on my life being my boss's boss's boss. I wanted her to know me. I didn't want her to know some concept that wasn't me, you know what I mean?

MELANIE: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, like for the most part, most of the people I know [? 'round ?] the community and everything. When I first started transition, I kind of stayed in like the TATS meetings and HGG on Tuesdays and everything like that until I got like about halfway or so through the transition where I didn't need to wear like 85 pounds of makeup to go out and everything.

And I got a lot more comfortable with myself going out and getting more involved in things like the caucus and the community center and other things that are going on, Q-Patrol. You know, so pretty much I think just about everybody like here in the station when they've met me, they've met Melanie. They didn't meet the old person that I had to be as I went to work or whatever.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, we have one of these situations where the first half is running into the second half. But I've got a new segment that I want to throw in the middle here.

BETH: Is it that time, Jimmy?

JIMMY CARPER: It's that time.

BETH: It's that time.

JIMMY CARPER: But I want I want everyone to stay. And we can continue to this after the news segment.

PRESENTER: And talk about all kinds of things.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right because I want to find out more about Deb Rogers.

MELANIE: Yeah.

BETH: Yeah, I do too.

PRESENTER: [INAUDIBLE] shows today.

BETH: Especially what she did before she came here.

PRESENTER: Oh my.

JIMMY CARPER: It's all on tape.

PRESENTER: Somebody wants to take notes or something apparently.

JIMMY CARPER: It's not lost. It's on tape.

MELANIE: I'm saying nothing.

JIMMY CARPER: So is that OK with everyone?

BETH: Great.

MELANIE: OK. Do we need to clear out?

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, kinda.

PRESENTER: Big Roy's sitting on your lap.

MELANIE: I'm getting out of here.

PRESENTER: Running for the hills now.

MELANIE: Do we have music to do? That's the green button, Jimmy. That one. Oh, there we go.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

JIMMY CARPER: Oh yes. Now it's time for the *News and Views* with Big Roy and Chris.

BIG ROY: Hello! I'd like to welcome everyone to this week's edition of *After Hours News and Views*. I'm Big Roy. With me tonight is Chris. And I want to give a hearty shout out to all of our listeners in the far flung state of Texas and here in the Montrose area. You know, there's--

JIMMY CARPER: Hey, Randy.

BIG ROY: Hey, Randy.

JIMMY CARPER: Hey, Paul.

BIG ROY: Paul. Tony. In fact, we got three Tonys. We got a Tony up in Midway. We have another Tony here. And I believe there's another Tony down in-- well, he just moved from here with his other half down to Beaumont.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, Randy. Randy wrote and said, thanks for giving out the address but you guys never give out the zip code.

BIG ROY: 77006 is our zip code. And honey, it is more than a zip code. It is a lifestyle.

JIMMY CARPER: Told ya.

BIG ROY: Anyways.

JIMMY CARPER: And also don't forget Froy and Blaze, our--

BIG ROY: Oh yes.

JIMMY CARPER: --next generation of listeners.

BIG ROY: That's right. And to our closet-- to our still closeted police officers that are listening in right now-- we do have them. And we've got closeted teens all over the place listening in. And folks, we're going to start this week's news with a very special report from Chris who's the head of Q-Patrol. And this is one of the reasons why we have Q-Patrol, to try to prevent similar type of things from happening, although it can't always work.

CHRIS: Yes, we have some very unfortunate news here to report here. It was reported to Q-Patrol on Friday that there had been a mugging in the neighborhood earlier on Friday. A person was accosted by some of the street hustlers out in the area of 611 Hyde Park.

This was followed up later on by a story we're still getting some information on about a murder. Apparently a person-- two people were out enjoying some of the clubs last night. One walked his friend to his apartment in the Montrose area. The person then got into their vehicle and was driving home, and apparently they picked up someone along the way. And they were found murdered in their Galleria area apartment.

Their vehicle was discovered later on on fire, which is a typical device used to try and cut back on the chance of evidence being found in a vehicle. Police right now are asking for any information regarding this incident or if you have any information about the mugging as well. But the murder is the most pressing part. And once we get more information, we will pass it along. If you have information you want to make an anonymous tip on that, call Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS.

Also if there's any time that you're out and about and an incident occurs there, let Q-Patrol know so that we can keep an eye out in that area. Also if you want to join a patrol, we're glad to have you out there. You can call 713-528-SAFE. That's 7233.

Now this comes on the heels of the state's crime rate dipped slightly in 2000 compared to 1999, but a number of certain offenses, including rape and hate crimes, grew according to the Texas Department of Public Safety. The overall crime rate or the number of crimes committed per capita dropped 1.6%. The violent crime was down, but major crimes committed increased by 2.3%.

There were 1,236 murders statewide in the year 2000 up from 1,218. Hate crimes increased 7.1% from 267 in 1999 to 286 in the year 2000. The largest percentage of hate crimes reports were racial in nature. Second most common involved sexual orientation bias. And it just goes to show that even though we have come a long way, we still have these incidents occurring out there.

BIG ROY: Got a long way to go yet.

CHRIS: Yes. So please, if you have any information on the incident-- the murder that occurred yesterday, like I said, contact Crime Stoppers at 713-222-TIPS. Or you can call HPD homicide department and ask for Detective Allen.

BIG ROY: And moving along on the same venue but a little further to the west from San Antonio comes this very important news story that has broke from the Texas Triangle. The Canadian government is investigating allegations of police brutality and gay bashing in San Antonio. Representatives from the Canadian consulate-- [COUGHS] excuse me-- are actively investigating allegations that San Antonio park rangers used unnecessary force and verbally assaulted two Canadian citizens during an arrest made on Thursday night, July 12th.

That night, Joey Abruzzi, who is 20 years old, Derek [? Ambraddy ?], who's 21, and Gregory [? Malijic ?], who's 19, while on visiting from Toronto, Canada left a nightclub near Mad Dogs British Pub and Jim Cullen's Jazz on the River along the world famous San Antonio River walk.

The cops saw the Ontario license plates and he looked at the other three officers present and he said, two Canadian faggots. The officer then asked, what are you fags doing in our city? I replied, I was in Austin visiting a cousin. From that point, the officer kept referring to us as faggots. You do not have to be gay to be a victim of gay bashing, as HPD found out. You can be as hetero as a person can be and still be a victim of gay bashing.

CHRIS: In fact, I believe reading in that article one of the three is actually straight.

BIG ROY: He says, after a while, [? Malijic ?] says he became angry and responded to the officer's comments "just because we're Canadian does not make us faggots. I am not a fag." These people have been manhandled, handcuffed, and verbally assaulted and--

CHRIS: As well as being arrested and detained without receiving a Miranda Warning or having the ability to contact their consulate.

BIG ROY: And, folks, this is something that we have been watching here on the News and Views for quite some time. There's been over 500,000 arrests in the last two years. And recent confirmation of the undercover program by both the San Antonio's Mayor and the director of Parks and Recreation department, the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of San Antonio issued a travel warning in December of '99 and again in February of this year.

And that travel warning states in part, "gay men living in and around San Antonio, Texas and those contemplating travel to that location are warned that the city of San Antonio operates a covert operation that targets gay men. Park rangers in civilian clothes prowl public areas pretending to be interested in homosexual contact.

They engage in flirtatious behavior and conversation and either insight their prey to a technical violation of the indecency ordinance or arrest the subject as soon as they determine their homosexual orientation," which means that they will just create a lie to make the right to arrest.

CHRIS: Well, these Canadian citizens were arrested for resisting arrest but there was no charge to what they were being - what they were supposedly resisting.

BIG ROY: Right. And Canadian officials are concerned not only because they want to ensure their visitors to the United States are treated in accordance with the United States law but also because of the Vienna Convention and international agreement mandates. Law enforcement officials notify residents of other countries of their right to contact their consulate once they are detained. Folks, there is a very, very serious problem in San Antonio with homophobic police.

CHRIS: Quit reminding me because that's where I'm going next week. It's why I won't be here.

BIG ROY: Yeah folks, we will be blessed. We will not have Chris.

CHRIS: Oh darn it, I just moved my wire and I could start hearing Roy again. I must change that. The Stonewall Lawyers Association of Greater Houston is proud to present health law issues involving HIV on the 20th anniversary of its discovery by Professor Mary Anne Bobinski, director of the Health law and Policy Institute of the University of Houston Law Center.

It will be held on Wednesday, July 25th from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM at the Blue Agave restaurant the corner of West Gray and Waugh. Special lunch menu will be provided there for the entrance fee of \$10. Continuing legal education credit available with the State Bar of Texas. Members of the public and students are encouraged to attend this. For more information, call 713-661-7651.

BIG ROY: OK, moving right along. The Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force released a new report on July 12th that explores some of the reasons Latino gay men in the United States have a disproportionately high HIV infection rate. Latinos and African-Americans account for 69% of the new HIV infections primarily among those men who have sex with men. Latinos are three times more likely than whites to be diagnosed with AIDS. African-Americans are eight times more likely.

Much of the information in the new report, which is the byproduct of an earlier study financed by the National Institute of Health, is applicable to both African-American and the Latino gay communities. The trend attests to the compounding negative effects of multiple sources of discrimination, said Rafael Diaz of the International Gay and Lesbian Task Force statement marking in the release of the report.

If we are to be effective in our fight against AIDS and any other public health tragedies that feed on human powerlessness, HIV prevention workers and advocates must be agents of social and cultural change. Folks, this is what I have been saying for a long, long time and many others here at the station have been saying the same thing that just because we may be a gay male, does not mean we have \$35,000 to \$50,000 a year jobs. It just doesn't happen. I bet that there's a much smaller proportion of gay men and lesbian women who have that and a much smaller proportion of transgenders.

CHRIS: They look at the fact that-- since the fact we don't have to pay for children's daycare, we don't have to pay for children's clothes, we don't have to pay for schooling and books and soccer and all that stuff for the children because we don't have them, they figure we all must be rich. Just having money coming out the wallet. I mean, it's-- trust me.

BIG ROY: It does not happen.

CHRIS: We got several shoestrings that go on in here.

BIG ROY: I'll tell you what, and Chris can vouch for me on this, we go from paycheck to paycheck. And we may make ends meet, but somehow or another there's always a big gap in the middle.

CHRIS: Oh yeah. This weekend is a big weekend in gay history.

BIG ROY: This is going to be a new segment on the After Hours News and Views brought to you by the host of After Hours.

CHRIS: He's a producer.

BIG ROY: The producer. Our boss.

CHRIS: Yeah, because if he was hosting he'd be either in the booth or serving us tasty beverages. But you have to get his coffee.

BIG ROY: Right.

CHRIS: And July 21st in 1414, Francesco della Rovere, later became Pope Sixtus IV, was born. Shortly after being elected pope he appointed his lover as a cardinal.

BIG ROY: [LAUGHS]

CHRIS: In 1730, Holland adopted an edict which made anal intercourse between men a capital offense but left the method of execution to be at the discretion of judges. The most common method was garroting-- strangulation with a thin rope because it was a typical method of executing women. In 1980, Enzo [INAUDIBLE], a 32-year-old Italian in Moscow for the Summer Olympics, chained himself to a fence in Red Square to protest Soviet persecution of homosexuals. He was dragged away by KGB officers.

In '86, US representative Barney Frank addressed the House of Representatives for an hour regarding a Justice Department memo which misrepresented medical evidence to give the impression that AIDS is casually transmitted. He just criticized the memo as an invitation to discriminate.

In 1997, Chrysler employee and gay activist Ron Woods spoke out about-- spoke out about his coming out in *The New Yorker*. He has been physically assaulted and received death threats and was featured on the HBO documentary special *Out At Work*. In 1998, Lesbian Health Initiative in Houston received a \$50,000 grant from the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. And also in 1998, Stevie Nicks, the singer, was granted a restraining order to keep Ronald Anacelteo away. He was under psychiatric care and believed that Stevie was a witch who could cure him of his homosexuality.

BIG ROY: Oh boy.

CHRIS: On Sunday--

BIG ROY: Sunday, Sunday, Sunday.

CHRIS: --in 1778 in England, Anne Murrow was found guilty of impersonating a man in marriage and sentenced to the pillory where she was to be severely pelted-- she was so severely pelted she was blinded. In '85, two Australian domestic airlines announced they would no longer serve passengers with AIDS.

In '86, Chicago Cardinal Joseph Bernardin announced his personal opposition to a gay rights bill before the city council on the grounds that it would interfere with the rights of those who were offended by homosexuals. And in 1997, three same sex couples in Vermont filed a lawsuit claiming the ban on same sex unions violated the state constitution, and the constitutional amendment that was passed as a result of that lawsuit went into effect one year ago at the beginning of this month. And I guess we have to do the quote of the day here.

BIG ROY: OK.

CHRIS: You have some queer friends, Dorothy, she said. The queerness doesn't matter so as long as they're friends was the answer. And that was L. Frank Baum, the author on the book *The Road to Oz*.

BIG ROY: Which later became the wizard.

CHRIS: No, *The Wizard of Oz*. *The Road to Oz* was a follow-up.

BIG ROY: *The Road to Oz* was a follow-up. OK. All right, we have a bit of a sad thing to report on. David Williamson, also known as Meg of Mary's, Naturally, a bartender and entertainer, passed away this morning around 10:00 AM. Arrangements are pending. For more information, give Mary's a call.

CHRIS: And we don't have-- Mary's, Naturally is located at Westheimer and Waugh Drive. Sounds good to me.

BIG ROY: Yeah.

CHRIS: Oh look, if you don't know where Mary's is in this neighborhood--

BIG ROY: Then we're going to take away your gay license.

CHRIS: Get real. OK, RISCSS, the Royal and Sovereign Imperial Court of the Single Star presents *Do You Remember When* featuring '80s music benefiting the Garden Party and Texas Children's Hospital Children's AIDS unit. And that will be on Saturday-- that was tonight. Roy, you gave me an event that already occurred.

BIG ROY: Oh, OK.

CHRIS: Over at Chances, a gay time was has by all. An Uncommon Legacy Foundation Inc Sixth Annual Uncommon Legacy Extra Mile Award brunch features Monica Lamb formerly of the Houston Comets. Special guests will be poet laureate Donna Garrett and the Gay Men's Chorus of Houston. Those will be taking place on July 29th at 11:00 AM at the Doubletree Hotel Post Oak Hotel. That is a change in location due to the tropical storm flooding. For more information, call 713-774-1744.

BIG ROY: OK. Now, Sean Carter, Mr. Gay Pride 2001 and the Royal Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star Incorporated present *My Next 30 Years*, Sean Carter's birthday show benefiting Hatch and the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center. On Sun--

CHRIS: Sunday, Sunday, Sunday, Sunday.

BIG ROY: At the BRB 2400 Brazos. Silent auction and light buffet at 7:00 PM. Showtime at 8:30. Admission is free, but please bring money to give to performers for Hatch and HLGCC, the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center. Carol [INAUDIBLE], who is the program director of Hatch-- for more information about Hatch, give them a call at 713-942-7002. Or you can contact them on the web at HatchYouth.org.

CHRIS: Or you can listen in next week when they'll be on the first half here of *After Hours*.

BIG ROY: Also as far as the fundraising, the PWA Holiday Charities is doing-- is a little low on funds this year. And to assist in this situation, Don Dowden graciously donated his talent to produce a tongue in cheek fundraiser titled *Daddy Don Dowden's Dynamic Dog Days of Summer Extravaganza*.

CHRIS: A tongue in cheek?

BIG ROY: In cheeks. *Daddy Don Dowden's Dynamic Dog Days of Summer*. OK. The show will be held at Bricks today-- Sunday.

JIMMY CARPER: Sunday, Sunday, Sunday.

BIG ROY: Finally he's here.

JIMMY CARPER: I have been told--

BIG ROY: [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: I have been told by friendly folks that I am the one to do Sunday, Sunday, Sunday.

CHRIS: Well, if you would keep your ass in the control booth.

JIMMY CARPER: No one else should do that.

CHRIS: Except-- unless it's--

JIMMY CARPER: Because nobody else has that faggy voice like I do. So--

BIG ROY: Oh really?

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. I'm the sole Sunday, Sunday, Sunday-er.

BIG ROY: OK.

CHRIS: So we'll work our schedule--

BIG ROY: The boss has spoken.

CHRIS: --around whenever you show up.

JIMMY CARPER: Please do.

CHRIS: OK.

BIG ROY: At any rate, there we go on that.

CHRIS: Roy, this also happened tonight.

BIG ROY: At the poetry night?

CHRIS: Yeah.

BIG ROY: Well, Jimmy said he wanted us to do it tonight.

CHRIS: Well, unfortunately it already occurred. So let's just go out with the last thing. Right? Yeah. All right, so next up here then is are you able to do it with your hands without using your hands? Can you keep it going for 90 minutes? Do you mind smacking a leather ball with your forehead? I never did get Jimmy's attention on that.

JIMMY CARPER: You had my attention on all of that.

CHRIS: Oh OK. The Montrose soccer club is up and running.

JIMMY CARPER: You got to watch those guys. They've got leather balls.

CHRIS: If you've played soccer-- if you've played soccer before or want to join them for league play and tournaments or just practice once a week, join them on Saturdays at 10:00 AM for a practice pickup game. A pickup is when you just choose up sides.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK. Thanks. Yeah, I needed to know that.

CHRIS: Yeah, it's not at Memorial Park so it's not that kind of pickup. They'll be meeting at the Woodrow Wilson School at 2100 Yupon in the heart of Montrose.

BIG ROY: In the heart of Montrose?

CHRIS: Oh yes. I think it's a little- I think it's a little more over in the left aorta. For more information or detailed directions, send an email to MontroseSC@soccer.com.

BIG ROY: OK, and for our final news story of the evening, and Jimmy you really need to listen to this one. Chris brought this one to my attention--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, he's been dying to talk about this.

BIG ROY: --you know, earlier tonight. And this one, it comes to us from Columbus-- from Columbus.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh my god, this is the S&M thing, right?

CHRIS: Yeah, when--

BIG ROY: The Columbus division of police--

CHRIS: I'm referring to it as when S&M turns TG.

BIG ROY: All right, don't give away the story yet, folks. And it's titled-- it's officially titled as a miscellaneous incident. On reported date and time, reporting officer responded to the above location on a medical emergency. Medic stated victim had accidentally removed his penis and testicles. Mr. [GRUNTS] was taken to the Riverside Hospital where car 36 police officer followed up and spoke with Mr. [GRUNTS] to confirm the incident was an accident.

The officer was informed by Mr. [GRUNTS] that he and witness number one were attempting to perform a sexual act which involved bondage and had both hands tied and was being pulled up with a device by witness number one. Mr. [GRUNTS] also had several devices around his penis and testicles. As witness number one pulled him up - ouch-- the device suddenly broke causing him to fall, ripping his penis and testicles off his body. Now, folks, if you listen to our leather show here, they always say safe, safe, sane.

CHRIS: Sane.

BIG ROY: Let me repeat those two words-- safe, sane. And consensual.

CHRIS: Jimmy-- Jimmy is still in shock here.

BIG ROY: This was consensual, but I have no idea about the safe and sane of this.

JIMMY CARPER: And it certainly wasn't Hedwig because there wasn't even an angry inch left.

BIG ROY: Oh my.

CHRIS: But if you want to see the whole thing on that, that's a great little website for a lot of interesting parts. You can find the wonderful-- this is TheSmokingGun.com. And several-- last month they had a-- one of their documents of the week was, *Was Hitler a Bisexual Circus Freak?*

BIG ROY: Well, what?

CHRIS: *Was Adolf Hitler a Bisexual Circus Freak?*

JIMMY CARPER: And what an insult to bisexuals.

BIG ROY: What an insult to circuses!

CHRIS: What it is is--

BIG ROY: And an insult to freaks.

CHRIS: The Smoking Gun gets actual papers like through the Freedom of Information Act and other venues. And this was a declassified story or dossier done on Adolf Hitler. And it talks about his sexual proclivity and that he'd like the circus over this. It's an interesting site. If you want to send us news, information, love mail, hate mail, dirty pictures--

BIG ROY: Dirty pictures!

CHRIS: --you can email us at AfterHoursKPFT@hotmail.com.

BIG ROY: OK, folks. That's all the news we have for this week in *After Hours News and Views*. For Jimmy, Chris, I'm Big Roy. Thanks for listening. Tune in next week and who knows what kind of craziness we'll have for you in store then.

JIMMY CARPER: You're listening to *After Hours* right here a KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. And here is something-- a little something from Dana International. Dana International with *Diva*. And that was just for you, Kat. We are back. And gosh, we've got just about the same here. Yeah, we do. Beth is here. Bobby's here.

BOBBY: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: Kristen's here. Alison is here.

ALISON: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: Melanie is here. And our special guest Deb Rogers, newly elected president of HGLPC, Houston Gay and Lesbian Politic Caucus. Big Roy is coming in here too because he is a honorary board member for life. Is that exactly what--

DEB ROGERS: That is correct. We wanted to honor Roy and his contributions to the caucus as a tireless volunteer doing the unthinkable when no one else would. And we thought the best and, in caucus manner, cheapest way to honor him was to make him an honorary board member for life.

CHRIS: Well, that works and he's-- I'm putting him right here in the-- no, he's over here.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK. If you want to be over there. OK. Deb, you were the vice president when some controversy ensued and ended up now as president. But you took the reins as acting president and then ran for president. Did you ever aspire to be the president? Was that your goal?

DEB ROGERS: No. I don't think anybody with any sane sense wakes up and says, I want to be president of the caucus when I grow up. Not that it's-- not that it's an unhonorable position. It's just that, I think by nature of what the caucus does, which is to screen candidates in various elections and then bring various people from all walks of life together to make an endorsement to recommend to the community at large, what we do very often is not pretty. I mean, there are passionate people involved in this. And we're the only organization that will actually put it on the line and do it. So whoever is in a leadership position, whether it be president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, or a board member, you're in a hot seat because you're going to have people coming at you from all sides saying, well, I think something should be done this way or that way or whatever way.

JIMMY CARPER: Or we used to do it that way.

DEB ROGERS: Or we used to do it that way or we need to do it this way in the future, et cetera, et cetera. So it was not something that I had aspired to. It was something I had thought about maybe doing in another year or two, you know, to see if I could do it. But certainly this kind of came suddenly. And all I can do is just the best I can do.

JIMMY CARPER: OK. And do the best you can do with a not full contingent of board members and committee members, as I gather.

DEB ROGERS: This is true. I mean, we had a lot of resignations of which, because of the timing, looked as though there was some sort of mass walkout on the board, and that wasn't true at all. I think actually our resignations were pretty reflective of the community at large. We had a couple of people with idealistic differences.

We had a couple of people who had health reasons. We had a couple of people whose jobs had finally taken off so well they just didn't have the time to put into it. And then another board position was opened up when I became president. So you look at those types of reasons and it's very reflective of the community at large.

JIMMY CARPER: Very good, yes. Yes. Have you been very successful in filling all of these positions?

DEB ROGERS: We've got a few. We've got a couple of board seats open right now. The people that were recently elected, I applaud them coming forward.

JIMMY CARPER: And some new people.

DEB ROGERS: Some new people too. And that's the thing, we're trying to bring some new faces and new ideas into the caucus to make it very representative of the community. In terms of whether or not you have to have a full board to be effective, I think that's not an issue. In the history of the caucus, over 26 years now or some 26 years now, you've had full boards sometimes that did nothing, OK? And you've had--

JIMMY CARPER: I've been on those boards.

DEB ROGERS: OK, and you had-- and this isn't just for the caucus. This is with any organization.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. That's right.

DEB ROGERS: Any organization. You can have a board that is packed and just looks absolutely fabulous but produces nothing. You can have a board that looks skeletal and anemic but yet is kicking butt. And this happens in every organization. So the actual numbers of who's on the board really don't matter. It's what's going on with the general membership that really is the most important.

JIMMY CARPER: Let me direct this toward Big Roy. I was there at the meeting when you were elected honorary board member for life. When did you find out about it, and what was your reaction?

BIG ROY: Well I was there at the meeting when it happened. And I was very-- I was shocked when it was-- I did not expect it to happen. I was just dumbfounded. I just did not know what to say. I was really shocked. And it's definitely quite an honor. And I'm not done with the board at all.

JIMMY CARPER: Good.

BIG ROY: I mean, just because I'm a board member for life and all that, that's nice honorary. But I'll tell you what, it's a lot more fun to be in there doing the work. It actually is. It's a lot of fun to be out there volunteering, going out, meeting with people, meeting their concerns.

When I was an elected board member, I made it a point to go out and meet everybody before the general meeting and introduce myself and welcome them to the caucus meeting and find out what their concerns were, if they had anything they wanted me to talk about or bring up because I took my position as a board member-- I took it very seriously that I did represent the people in the community. And I wanted to know what people in the community were thinking.

JIMMY CARPER: I have to say this because at the time I remember when you were running for the board and I thought it was a very good thing for you to run for the board because I thought you would be representing people who weren't being represented on the board at that time.

BIG ROY: And Jimmy, you know very well-- I'm going to make a little bit of a confession here, Deborah. There were times when I had my low points. And Jimmy-- and I would talk with Jimmy about it. And Jimmy just always just encouraged me to stay and to hang in there and keep working at it because I was making a difference. And I really didn't think I was, but I guess I must have.

DEB ROGERS: Well, you know, I think that-- and I feel very strongly about this for the caucus. I think this is something that can work in many organizations, but for the caucus in particular because of what our purpose is and what we do and what we're trying to do. It's so important to bring everybody to the table on an equal basis.

If ever there was a need for around table, it certainly that in the caucus. And the last thing you need is to ever disenfranchise one group of people over another. Everyone has to be able to come to that table feeling that they are equal in their vote and their voice. And that's something that I feel very strongly about, much to the dismay of others who may not agree with that.

But I do believe that because I think then you get the best representation of what the community thinks is the best vote in a given situation. We have a number of organizations for just about every predilection you can imagine, whether it be political, fetish, or otherwise.

And I think that those organizations are necessary and a real blessing for our community in terms of what we have now in terms of options. But there are certain things where we need to reach out all together, all the organizations together, and hear the voices all come together. And that's the direction I'd like to see the caucus go into again.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, me too.

CHRIS: Isn't that-- isn't that a difficult-- to some extent a difficult task, because as we were talking about earlier, such a large and diverse group of people that we have so many different directions, that being able to combine everybody into one-- as a part of this group--

DEB ROGERS: Frankly, it's impossible. Yeah, it's totally impossible. There's no way you're ever going to get 100% harmony and agreement on these things. And there's always going to be one mindset trying to turn things a different way and that sort of thing. That's the nature of the beast in politics in particular. But I still think it's a worthy goal to work towards that you get the best effort towards that.

BIG ROY: Well, while that may be true, you know, how there's such a wide diversity of opinions within the community and it may seem-- and in fact, it is a bit of a major miracle that we can get the caucus to agree on anything. The truth of the matter is, the people that come to the caucus are already predispositioned to be concerned and wanting to do something about the community.

And everybody comes in with a specific idea in their mind. And we try our best to be a clearinghouse and see which way is the best. You have to understand that there are other groups like the Stonewall Democrats, the Log Cabin Republicans, and a bunch of other groups where there is only one strict mindset.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. We're talking about the caucus, which is a non--

BIG ROY: Partisan.

JIMMY CARPER: Right, right. Supposedly taking in all views but, of course, we're a little bit more liberal than conservative.

DEB ROGERS: Well, that reflects the community.

JIMMY CARPER: That probably does. Probably does. And I think what I wanted to get at is that I am a member of the caucus but I look at my membership differently because I think it's important to be a dues-paying member. I wish every gay person in this city was a dues-paying member of the caucus. I think we could do a lot more. I just-- you know, my volunteerism is in other areas. I like this. I like the switchboard and other areas. And I attend meetings, but I'm not real-- I'm not one to get on the political--

BIG ROY: You're not politically active.

JIMMY CARPER: No, I'm not.

DEB ROGERS: You don't put your time into it but you put your money in.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BIG ROY: Well, that's fine too, you know? We do need financial support.

JIMMY CARPER: So how many members do we have-- paying dues members? Do we know?

BIG ROY: Yes, I do.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

DEB ROGERS: Yes, but if we told you we'd have to kill you.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

BIG ROY: I worked on-- me and about two or three other board members worked for like three or four months until like 10 o'clock in the evening--

JIMMY CARPER: Getting that list.

BIG ROY: --getting that list together.

JIMMY CARPER: OK. So you don't have to tell me, but it's probably not a high percentage of all of the queers in Houston.

BIG ROY: No, it's not. But it's a heck of a lot more than I thought.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK. OK.

BIG ROY: Can I give out numbers?

DEB ROGERS: I really don't think the numbers are important so much as what the caucus does come election day.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, and that is the part-- that is the part that is so important to me because I look forward to that endorsement card because I know that people are there in the caucus who represent my views and have looked into these people, have talked to these folks, and made good decisions.

DEB ROGERS: And there's a whole lot more endorsement cards go out to people than are simply just members. I mean, those cards go all over.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh yeah.

DEB ROGERS: They go everywhere. In fact, it's been amazing, especially with the different actions going on with the ordinance that's going on Citywide and so forth at the caucus phone line, on our answering machine. I've received numerous phone calls from people identifying themselves as straight members of the community who are on our side and think that the discrimination of GLTB people is just abhorrent and that the city really needs to move on. So the support is out there. The progressive support is out there.

BIG ROY: You know, I can say from my own personal experience that I have had people on election day come up to me and ask me for the push card.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. I wouldn't vote without one.

BIG ROY: There are a lot of people-- a lot of people in this community, not just gays but straight as well, depend on our voter card, our recommendations card. And I worked the last six big elections here. Two presidential and a bunch of Texas [INAUDIBLE] elections at the Lovett Inn. And I can tell you, those cards are in demand. And I have people ask me. In the last--