

JIMMY: Great. OK, so what are we up to next? Hello?

BETH: Hello.

JIMMY: Hello. Where were we going? Jackie, have we finished with you? Oh, we're never finished with her.

ALYSSA: : I've got a lot more sordid details about Grand Central Station, if anybody wants to hear about that.

JIMMY: I've been to Grand Central Station back in the '60s. And there were a lot of sordid details there, especially in the men's restroom.

BETH: I see.

JIMMY: But we're not going to talk about that.

ALYSSA: : No.

BETH: One of the things that I did want to talk about is information access, because I know when I was coming out-- and when Kristen was coming out, and when Jackie was coming out-- we all had different ways that we found out about the community. And Jackie and I both, more or less, found out about it through print. I happened to be in the library looking for something on electronics, turned around, and saw this title staring at me from the medical section that said *Transsexuality in the Male*. It about dropped my-- dropped me right off my seat to think that there was actually somebody was going to write books about this stuff, because nobody talked about that. But there it was. And Jackie, you mentioned having seen it in the medical library, was it?

JACKIE: Yeah. Well, again, this was back in the '50s, when there were very damn little information available. The one thing I would indicate to our listeners is the fact that in the last 10 to 15 years, there has been an incredible amount of research and literature that has been published.

BETH: That's where I'm going. And so Kristen, how did you-- I mean, of the three of us, you got your information much more recently.

KRISTEN: Well, I found--

BETH: The twit you were mentioning.

KRISTEN: I'm sorry?

BETH: The twit you were mentioning.

KRISTEN: Yes, the twit. Yes, that's how I found the information both times. And I didn't have internet access until well after I began going to [? Tats ?]. So that's how I found out. I did-- of course, I went through the stage where you go to the library, and look up the periodicals, and copy reams and reams and reams of copies of every article or newsprint that you can find that has anything to do--

BETH: You should've just come over to my place. I would have made a copy of all the stuff I already had.

KRISTEN: See? If I had known. [CHUCKLES] So somebody coming out today-- well, if someone was coming out today, well, there's, of course, the helpline. That's actually the CATS helpline. It's 281-585-8089.

BETH: One more time.

KRISTEN: 281-585-8089. You can also reach us by email at tghelp@tghelp.org. So that's tghelp@tghelp.org. You can also go on the web at www.tghelp.org and check us out about CATS.

There's a lot of different support groups in the Houston area. You know, the Houston transgender community is just-- I've got to say, I'm so proud of this community down here. We have lots of transgender support groups. We have a committee where all the groups get together and work on unity.

The cross-dressers, the transsexuals-- everybody gets together. And not only that, we're probably one of the few towns-- maybe the only town in America-- that has an organization dedicated to the health and well-being of the transgender community. And that's what CATS does now.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

BETH: CATS is relatively new by comparison to some of the groups. It's only been around about three years, now? Two and a half?

KRISTEN: Right.

BETH: And you guys have just done some amazing work.

KRISTEN: Thank you.

BETH: [LAUGHS]

KRISTEN: Yeah. Actually, whenever I came out and started going to some of the meetings, the truth was that for every year that I was there, I would two people who would kill themselves.

BETH: Wow.

KRISTEN: And if you needed to get your name and gender changed, but you didn't have the money because you couldn't get a job because you didn't have your name and gender changed, you were just kind of out of luck. And if you were homeless, you're out of luck. And if you needed medical assistance and couldn't get it, you were out of luck.

Just-- there were so many things that were just so lacking. And that's kind of what CATS has developed into. CATS stands for Community Awareness for Transgender Support. It's an official 501c3 nonprofit organization.

And CATS has a few goals. And those goals are to ensure accessibility to health care-- including, but not limited to, mental health care, surgical intervention, and medication-- to educate the public concerning gender related issues, to provide shelter to transgenders who would otherwise be homeless, and to provide peer support to those who are dealing with gender-related issues. So if you're coming out and--

JACKIE: Or if you have been thrown out of your home.

KRISTEN: If you have been thrown out of your home, we can assist you in lots of different ways. We have a transitional living facility, because shelters just generally don't take people who are transgendered.

If you're having problems getting your medication-- affording medication-- if you're having problems affording therapy, if-- and this is something new-- if you're an immigrant from, say, Mexico, and you can't hook into any of the social services, you're transgender, give us a call. If you're in a position where you named your name and gender changed and can't get it, give us a call.

If you need electrolysis, and you can't afford it, give us a call. We have a couple of support group meetings, a regular-- open to anyone who is dealing with gender-related issues-- that meets the first Friday of every month.

And we also have another meeting called STAG, which is Some Transgenders Are Guys. And this is a female-to-male transsexual support group. And they meet twice a week. So if you're interested in that, give us a call.

We also have the clothes bank. Let's see. We do schooling assistance, medical assistance. And the newest thing that we're doing-- we're scheduled, for the end of this month, to start taking applications for our new SRS-assistance program, which I might add, is the first in the nation.

JIMMY: Wow.

BETH: SRS-assistance program.

KRISTEN: SRS-assistance.

BETH: I think that might be more explanation.

KRISTEN: OK. Well, what that is-- we're networking with some of the world-renowned SRS doctors to donate their services. And we've developed certain policies and procedures for accepting individuals for this. And it all falls in line with the Harry Benjamin Standards of care.

Lots of people can't get surgery, because it's just really hard to come up with 12,000, or 15,000, or \$20,000. And if you're one of those people, this program is for you.

BETH: I think that's a first. There's nobody else that's got anything like that, right?

ALYSSA: : Cutting edge.

BETH: Definitely.

KRISTEN: Right.

JACKIE: Well, the other thing that I would mention is that it takes some effort on your part. We're not going to do it for you.

KRISTEN: Absolutely.

JACKIE: You have to participate. You have to put in something into this, as well. We're not going to solve all your problems for you.

KRISTEN: That's right. What CATS is for, is for people who are wanting to transition. They're trying to get jobs, but they just can't. It's for people who need-- are looking for-- therapy and just can't afford it.

We do some comprehensive case management. And we look over the issues that you're facing. If you're dealing with issues with making budgets and things like that, we work up an action plan-- a program of action. And we kind of take you from stage one, coming out-- what kind of issues you're going to be dealing with, some practical solutions, and make some goals.

And that's what we're about. And I don't know of another organization like this in America. I think it's just so wonderful that-- this is something that I would have liked to have had whenever I came out. So again, if you want to contact us, the area code is 281. The phone number is 585-8089.

On a caveat, of course, because we're a 501c3, non-profit organizations's donations are tax deductible. See? All these programs cost money. So if you do have \$5, even, that can go a long way. That can buy a meal for someone who's in our homeless facility.

If you'd like to find out how you can support these programs, support the shelter, give us a call. Drop us a line via email. We'll get right back to you. And like I said, the helpline is 24-hours.

ALYSSA: : You know, there's something really cool. Something that was said a few minutes ago reminded me of-- by my count, there are half a dozen transgendered organizations in Houston. And I understand they all pretty much get along. I don't know how true it is. But someone, I think, at the Unity committee meeting-- which was my first few weeks ago-- somebody pointed out Houston is the only city in the country where all the groups get along. I don't know how true that is. But I think it's really cool that we all get along.

JIMMY: They've worked hard. In the past-- it's not always been that way. And it's been a real push to get the groups together. And a lot of progress has been made. I've had a transgender segment on this show for about seven and a half years. And early on, it was not always-- the groups were not always friendly to each other.

JACKIE: Trust me, they were not.

JIMMY: Yeah. And over the years, I've seen them warm up to each other and become one community. There's still--

JACKIE: The thing about it is, we've realized that we have more things in common than we have in differences.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

The Unity committee basically has two purposes in life. One is the promulgation of the Unity banquet, which occurs in March or April. And this year, it's April the 20th. And it's an opportunity to get together and interact with other transgendered individuals.

The second thing that the Unity committee is involved with is, of course, the transgender participation in the Pride Parade. And I really, really-- I think Jack Valinski probably had more to do with moving the Pride Parade out of the exclusivity of the gay and lesbian denomination into the entire GLBT aspect of it.

JIMMY: Yes, it was him.

JACKIE: But the transgender community has participated for the last several years-- I don't know how many just off the top of my head-- where we have actually had a unit that has marched with the parade. And it has been absolutely incredible, the acceptance that the transgender community has received from the audience and the people who are watching the parade when we marched by.

JIMMY: And I want to mention that the Unity Banquet is not just-- it's actually Unity Banquet for Transgenders and Their Friends.

JACKIE: Yes, exactly. Yeah, you do not have to be transgender to come to the Unity Banquet. We have a great number of people who are not transgender who attend, as well.

JIMMY: I missed it last year, because I was out of town. But I will be in town this year. And I've been to past ones and had a wonderful time.

JACKIE: I have tickets.

BETH: Some of the things that happen at the Unity banquet, among everything else that's going on, is awards are given out for different activities in the community and to recognize the people who've done a lot of effort. Some of those awards are specifically intended for people who are not part of the transgender community who have contributed a lot to it.

JACKIE: Yeah. I don't think I am talking out of school, because it's probably one of the worst kept secrets in the Houston community. But this is the 10th anniversary of the Unity Banquet. The first one was held 10 years ago at Dante's off the Gulf Freeway. And two of the people who were instrumental in two of the organizations bringing this thing together, and helping the two organizations-- that at that time had great animosity towards each other-- are being honored. So if you can at all possibly attend, you really will enjoy it.

JIMMY: See history in the making.

JACKIE: Exactly.

JIMMY: I want to move on to a couple of other things going on in the community, especially Valentine's Day. And I just lost that piece of paper. Great. But Big Roy has a couple of things.

JACKIE: I don't know about you, but I'm going to be over there at the Landmark theater-- or at the River Oaks Theater for *The Sound of Music*.

BETH: Yeah, *Sound of Music*. The first other transsexual person that I really got to know, her deepest, darkest secret in her past is that she starred as Captain Von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* in her high school play. So hearing this all again is springing back memories.

JIMMY: Well, we all know that Louis Weekend is coming up this week.

BETH: That's right.

JIMMY: And also, for Thanks-- Valentine's Day-- why do I keep saying Thanksgiving? Valentine's Day.

ALYSSA: : Give thanks for Valentine's.

JIMMY: I guess. I don't know.

JACKIE: Yeah, that's Thursday.

JIMMY: A Valentine production of the most fabulous story ever told at Theater New West. Now, that play was running through January. And it was held over until February the 23rd. And a special February 14th production is going to help-- what? I don't know.

JACKIE: You're a big help.

JIMMY: No, it's like the Chamber of Commerce, because Coy Tao sent this out. It's February 14th to see the play. And it's followed by a fabulous dessert reception. Well, that's nice. Isn't that sweet?

BETH: That is fabulous.

JIMMY: Yeah. And the play has adult content. So you can get all worked up, have dessert, and take your honey home, and just do what you do.

BETH: And it would be fabulous.

JIMMY: Yes.

JACKIE: Don't go there, Jimmy.

JIMMY: I was going to, but I decided against it. Big Roy, I know you've got a couple of things, as soon as you get a microphone.

BIG ROY: A couple of items here is-- one that--

BETH: He doesn't like those things pointing in his face.

JIMMY: Yeah, I know. No, he likes it, actually.

BIG ROY: Tomorrow, at the BRB on Sunday--

JIMMY: Sunday, Sunday, Sunday.

BIG ROY: And I find my notes on this, but they are having a benefit for some beauty pageant tomorrow afternoon.

JIMMY: Ouch.

BIG ROY: And Shawn Carter, the new Emperor-- Empress or Emperor-- is going to be hosting the show.

JIMMY: Well, he does that every Sunday.

JACKIE: No. And the Empress is Shelby St. John.

JIMMY: That's right.

BIG ROY: OK. Also, wanted to mention that the Houston Pride Band-- if you have a horn to blow or you're looking for a horn to blow--

JIMMY: If you can beat it or blow it, you belong in the band.

BIG ROY: That's right. And they're welcoming new members to rehearsals every Wednesday at 7:00 PM, at 1507 Yale. And if you want more information, call Andy at 713-527-0931.

JACKIE: They will also take musicians who have other talents.

BIG ROY: Then, Jackie, why don't you listen up for this one, because the Houston Gay Lesbian Bi Veterans Association for Transgenders meets the first Monday of the month at the Houston Lesbian Gay Community Center at 803 Hawthorne. and if you'd like more information on that, call them at 713-524-3818.

JIMMY: Great. *Kellye Gray Live*-- Kellye Gray is a jazz singer from Houston, lesbian. And she invites you to join her for the taping of her new CD, *Kellye Gray Live*. Joining Kellye on stage will be a luminary of Texas talent, such as Erich Avinger, Brennan Nase, Dennis Durick, and introducing Pamela York.

OK, I don't know any of those people. But I do know Kellye Gray. So that is going to happen February the 22nd and the 23rd at Ovations, at 2536 Times Boulevard. I'll talk about that more next week, too. And stuff going on with the Court.

Well, of course, Louis is next weekend. And we all know what that means. The Court will be serving food from 1:30 to 2:30 at the Ripcord.

BIG ROY: On what day?

JIMMY: With [? Tiffletee ?]. That's on Saturday.

JACKIE: Sunday. No, [? Tiffletee's ?] on Sunday.

JIMMY: No, can't be.

JACKIE: Saturday, I'm sorry.

JIMMY: Yeah, because the show's on Sunday.

JACKIE: The Louis weekend, the pre-registration, and the early registration is at Outpost on Thursday night.

JIMMY: That's right, Michael's Outpost.

JACKIE: Yeah. And then, it moves on Friday night. The regular registration is going to be at Mary's.

JIMMY: And if Louis isn't enough, on Sunday night-- Sunday, Sunday, Sunday-- the 17th, at 8:30 at the BRB, will be the DJ's choice show benefiting PFLAG. On the 20th, Wednesday, at 7:00 PM, the BRB is production rehearsal for Corpus Christi, for Court folks.

The 22nd is Friday. At 7:00 PM at EJ's is Kick-ass Cabaret-- the cast of Dee-Dee, Larry, SaFonda, Shawn, and Shelby. Food is at 7:00 PM by Peggy and Jarrell. And the show starts at 8:30. So that's going to be a wonderful Friday evening for you folks.

This will be the first monthly benefit for the new year. Shawn and Shelby will announce who is receiving the following night at PR Ball. So I won't go into anything later after that. We'll be talking about that next week. And don't forget about NIBL.

BIG ROY: NIBL?

JIMMY: NIBL, Nights In Black Leather. Yes, that's--

BETH: OK.

JACKIE: We have already received a number of checks for that.

JIMMY: Really?

JACKIE: It is going to be a fabulous show.

JIMMY: Yes.

JACKIE: There is live entertainment. I mean, no lip sync garbage, you know? It is live entertainment. And it's throughout the state of Texas. There's some fabulous entertainers who are going to be involved in NIBL.

JIMMY: Yeah. This has been going on for seven years. NIBL, Nights In Black Leather, has raised funds for the Bering Community Service Foundation, LVL Holiday Fund, Colt .45s, Steven's House, Body Positive, Colt .45s Stone Soup, and the Houston Buyers Club. This year's beneficiary is the PWA Holiday Charities.

JACKIE: OK. And what the PWA Holiday Charities does-- our four major things that we do is the Christmas in July and the Christmas in December shows that we have, as well as the Easter and the Thanksgiving food handouts at the Stone Soup.

And then, in July and Christmas, we give out checks to the clientele from the Colt .45s AIDS people. This is money that they do not have to account for. Christmas last year, we gave out checks for \$100. We're hoping that we'll be able to do so again next year, next December.

Normally, in July, it's somewhere in the neighborhood of \$50 to \$60. But this is money that they do not have to account for. We have gotten a number of thank-you notes from people who have received this money-- particularly in the summer-- who have said that they use it to pay their electric bills so that they could have air conditioning-- just some of the things that we take for granted.

JIMMY: Exactly, yeah.

JACKIE: And the PWA Holiday Charities, in addition to that, once a month on a holiday-- which August, there's no holiday, so we have the Dog Days of August-- but what we do is we have a program whereby we go to visit the hospitals-- 12 Oaks, Park Plaza, as well as the hospices such as Milam house and so forth-- and we provide the PWA's there with a gift of some kind-- just a little remembrance-- so that they know that they are not forgotten on these holidays.

JIMMY: You bet. Now, NIBL is going to be March the 2nd at the Ripcord at 7:00 PM.

BIG ROY: OK. I wanted to mention that the Montrose Counseling Center Permanent Endowment Inc-- which is a 501c3 nonprofit organization-- is looking for an attorney who wants to give back to the community by providing pro bono legal counsel to its board of directors. Attorneys with estate planning or real estate experience are encouraged to reply. Please send a letter of inquiry with your resume to the Montrose Counseling Center / LC Attention, Executive Director at 701 Richmond Avenue, Houston, Texas 77006.

JIMMY: Speaking of lawyers, John Nechman, who is the president of the Stonewall lawyers of Greater Houston, SLOGH--go figure-- will be attending a three-day national planning conference in New York City for Lesbian and Gay Immigration Rights Task Force.

So as the sole representative selected from the Houston area, John is anxious to hear the suggestions or opinions of the Houston GLBT community on immigration issues, so that he may carry them on to New York. The planning conference is destined to have a far-reaching effect on how immigration issues are addressed for the next five years. And think of it.

If you were a heterosexual couple, and one is not an American citizen, you can marry. And that person is automatically-- can come into the country. Not so for same-sex partners.

So this is important work that's being done. If you or a loved one have been affected by the current state of the immigration laws in the United States, or if you would just like to share some thoughts, please contact John Nechman at nechlaw@bigfoot.com. So he's looking for that.

And something a little of this-day-in-history kind of stuff, February 8th in 1910, the Boy Scouts was founded by Lord Robert Baden-Powell.

JACKIE: A gay man.

JIMMY: A man who enjoyed seeing naked boys swimming just a little too much. It is odd that such a homophobic organization would be founded by a repressed homosexual. And thank you, Chris, for bringing that to my attention.

BIG ROY: Now, I want to bring-- while Jim is looking for his next [INAUDIBLE]--

JIMMY: Yeah, you're going to jump in there. Yeah.

BIG ROY: I want to mention how the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus now has a new President, Ken Jones. Deborah Rogers did resign earlier this month due to illness. She's been feeling really under the weather. Myself, I'm really concerned about her.

JIMMY: We all are.

BIG ROY: She is a magnificent person. She had a very difficult transitory job to do.

JACKIE: And she did a fabulous job--

JIMMY: Yes, she did.

JACKIE: --of bringing the caucus out of the problems that they had previously.

BIG ROY: And Ken Jones has got a big battle in front of him. And word has it, he does want to run for that office permanently.

JIMMY: Good, good. Let's go to a quick--

JACKIE: You need you need to participate in, and put your input into, the Political Caucus.

BIG ROY: And folks, it is transgendered-friendly, trust me.

JIMMY: Of course.

JACKIE: It was not in the past. But it is now.

JIMMY: It is now. Let's go to a quick piece of music, and regroup, and come back, and then see where we are. And stuff like this-- this is something I haven't played in a while.

As I see Big Bobby Fats coming in for the next show of the Early Morning Groove, I am reminded of Rainbow Flava, one of the few queer rap groups around. And this is something that they've had for a little while. I really like this little piece of music. I think you will, too. It's called "Sweet Playa."

Rainbow Flava with a "Sweet Playa." And you're hearing that right here. And let's see. We're about ready to kind of wrap up.

BETH: Wrap up the December show, is it?

JIMMY: The December show, right. Or the Thanksgiving show.

BETH: That'd be-- yeah, for sure.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY: Oh, gosh. Do we have any parting thoughts, words? Thanks-- well, first of all, I want to thank everyone for hanging on for the second half of the show.

BETH: Absolutely.

JIMMY: Wait a minute. I don't have you on. There we go.

ALYSSA: You're welcome.

JIMMY: Yes. Jackie, you're here a lot. And I always thank you for being here, because you report a lot.

JACKIE: Thank you.

JIMMY: And that's a fabulous dress you have on. Thank you very much.

JACKIE: Well, I thank you, Jimmy, for providing it for me. But no, as parting thoughts, and so forth, I recall a thing that I saw on the internet one time. And basically it said the best revenge is a great lifestyle.

JIMMY: There you go. You're absolutely correct.

BETH: So give me the dish, girlfriend. Is that, like, one of your hand-me-downs Jackie's wearing? Is that what you're trying to tell me?

JACKIE: No. Jimmy Carper gave me this dress. And I wear it absolutely proudly. I am so grateful to him for giving me this. And I am so proud when I wear it.

JIMMY: Thank you. It's held up well.

BETH: So what's the story?

JIMMY: Every once-- you know I'm a shopper. And every once in a while when I'm out shopping I see something--

JACKIE: It wouldn't fit him.

JIMMY: --that's an incredible bargain. And I think, gee.

BETH: You know somebody who could--

JIMMY: Well, yeah, I know-- and the entertainers spend a lot of money on their outfits, and wigs, and makeup, and stuff. And it's all of their own pocket. And the money that is raised all goes for charity. And I just thought it's be nice every once in a while to give back a little bit. And I've done that for several other entertainers.

JACKIE: We are-- the Imperial Court is in Reign 18 right now. And as Jimmy knows, I've been a member of the Court since Reign 3.

JIMMY: Yes.

JACKIE: More years than all I can think about. But we have raised literally thousands and thousands of dollars for any number of charitable organizations within the community. It's not limited only to the AIDS organizations. We have raised incredible amounts of money for the Montrose Clinic Women's Program, the mammogram program, Pet Patrol was one of my-- before it went belly-up. And basically, what Pet Patrol did was they provided pet sitters for the pets of people who had PWA or who were living with AIDS and had to go in the hospital and so forth like that and couldn't take care of their pets.

JIMMY: And also found homes for them after these people died.

JACKIE: Found homes for them after the person passed away. And it just-- it was a wrenching-type thing when Pet Patrol kind of went belly up, because it's a needed thing. This is one of the things that has proved true. It doesn't necessarily-- only PWAs, but it has been shown that the interaction between an individual and a pet-- whether it be a dog or cat or whatever-- is a very positive thing. And that's one of the reasons why there is a new group here in Houston that is trying to fulfill this. And I'm not that familiar with them. But it's one of my intentions to find out about it.

JIMMY: OK, good. Please do that and report back to us on that. Alyssa, thanks for being here and the news segment.

ALYSSA: Oh, my pleasure.

JIMMY: We'll try to fit one in whenever we can.

ALYSSA: Wonderful.

JIMMY: We had a space open up. And I happened to run across you. So that worked out very well.

ALYSSA: I actually had fun doing it. And I think it's a public service. So I'm happy to do it.

JIMMY: Yes, thank you.

JACKIE: And don't forget the transgender shelter down in Galveston that's run by CATS and Kristen Williams who is the-- she is the pillar behind that thing.

KRISTEN: Absolutely and CATS-- we talked a little bit about some of the things they do. We just wanted to mention that they are, right now, holding a fundraiser to help defray the cost of some of these really amazing things that are going on with that group. And you can get in touch with them through their website www.tghelp.org or by calling 281-585-8089.

JIMMY: Yes, please, jump in there quickly.

KRISTEN: That's 281-585-8089.

JIMMY: That's the CATS 52nd Street house fund.

KRISTEN: Yeah.

JACKIE: Exactly.

KRISTEN: Well, Sarah de Palma likes to close the show with a quote from Abby Hoffman. and I think my tradition is going to be to find a new quote each month.

JIMMY: OK.

KRISTEN: And for this month, I'm going to quote William Shakespeare. "To thine own self be true."

JIMMY: Yes!

JACKIE: Yes.

JIMMY: Right, thank you very much.

ALYSSA: I love that.

JIMMY: You've been listening to "After Hours, Queer Radio With Attitude" on KEOS College Station, and good old KPFT Houston.

BETH: The Mighty 90.1.

JIMMY: That is exactly right. The voice of the many who have no voice. And in the background, you're hearing Rodney Crowell with his rendition of "A Wandering Boy." He's a local guy. And speaking of local guys, Bobby Fats is right behind me trying to push my happy ass out the way so he can get in here and do an Early Morning Groove. We'll see you next week.