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SPEAKERS

Greg Gordon, Vanessa Edwards Foster, Glenn Holt, Jack Valinski, Joan Devlin

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Glenn Holt 00:00

We're at 90.1 FM This is KPFT in Houston, the sound of Texas and now more of lesbian and gay voices I'm Glenn Holt and this is lesbian and gay voices year in review a y2k retrospective. In this hour, we'll look back through the lesbian and gay voices archives at the issues and concerns, national and local that captured our attention throughout the year. Remember, don't ask don't tell as an election issue. Gays being allowed into the British military, the death of the magazine this week in Texas, the March on Washington, Gay Pride Day, World AIDS Day, PFLAG billboards and stop Dr. laura.com. The local fight against 2106 Vermont gay marriages, California domestic partnerships and Oregon's ballot initiative number nine, and how the Supreme Court overruled democracy in a bitter partisan decision. Sit back and fasten your seat belts why 2k was a bumpy year. This is lesbian and gay voices Why 2k retrospective. In January of 2000, a bill became law in Vermont, the result of a state Supreme Court decision, which set up the equivalent of gay marriage in that state. It was a big victory for gay and lesbian rights. But of course, it wasn't without controversy.

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02:00

Lesbian and Gay couples in Vermont are being joined in civil union, even as opponents to the law granting the state's marriage benefits to same gender partners are taking aim at those responsible for its passage. Many opponents cite religious grounds. But there were also church leaders supporting the representatives who carried civil unions through the legislature, Elaine Clift reports. Among those

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02:23

who understand the human dimensions of the struggle for gay marriage, or at least civil union, are more than 100, Vermont clergy who've been active advocates. Among them is Catherine Kidd, you, Pastor of the United Church of Christ in the small village of Saxtons. River.



02:39

I've always been a sucker for justice issues. And this particular issue of legal civil rights for same sex couples and for gay and lesbian people in transgendered and bisexual people as well has always been sort of on my plate. And I've never been able to say no to it. And it's caused some difficulty with the church in the beginning in the early years. But as people grow and understand, it seems to be a less problematic, but even if it were, I wouldn't be able to say no to it, because it is a real justice issue for me. And so I'm happy to be part of this.



03:14

So how did the church community and Vermont organize around this, how they're come to be 100 or more clergy who signed on and who gave testimony, and maybe talk a little bit about that testimony,



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grassroots folks began to contact clergy to see where they stood. And of course, the United Church of Christ has had a taskforce ongoing for many years, to look at this issue of lesbian and gay rights in the church. And it's been ongoing dialogue. And I think more and more people have just become aware that this is a justice issue and have signed on. And you sort of make yourselves known and you go to the booths, at the fairs and at the annual meetings and pick up the stickers and, and then you find that people will contact you and ask you to be an advocate. And I've been involved with the taskforce for about two and a half years and I was asked to be part of a panel to talk about the issue of same sex marriage about two years ago and my first thought was, this is really scary because it's going to be very public. But then I realized that if you believe something you have to go public and just let it be. I attended one hearing where the leaders the Episcopal Bishop and United Church of Christ conference Minister Arnold Thomas and the rabbi Josh Chasen were asked for their opinions at the same time that bishop Harold Angell, the only Catholic bishop was testifying against it in another room, and I heard the positive testimony and then I went into the other room and heard the last of Bishop Angels testimony and I felt really sad because it seems so kind of wrote it seems so by the book and so if you start at a certain place, then you have to And at a certain place, but it seemed like he was starting in the wrong place. You know, even rabbi, the rabbi said, I love Kenneth Angel, but he's just so wrongheaded about this, you know, it was very, very powerful. I also heard Craig Benson from take it to the people. And it was just, I wanted to hit and move, but I didn't. Because it just seems so slick and so insensitive to gay and lesbians, humanity. It was clear that we have to talk about this because even the people who are against gay and lesbian rights needed to be flushed out in a way we needed to know why they were against it. And it's very hard to say, Well, I love these people, but then say that they're an abomination. And they're the cause of disease. You know, some of the things that people said were just so so ignorant. The other the positive things were people who have been married for 40 or 50 years to say, this isn't going to hurt my marriage. And then people who say I used to be a priest, or I've been married for 40 years, because I have suppressed my homosexual yearnings. But they're still here, but, but I'm not acting on them. And I think everybody should have a right to have a family and a life. You know,



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according to two term state legislator, Elaine Alfonso, a healthcare advocate, when she's not in her legislative role. It was the women in the legislature who made all the difference, perhaps because they do understand family issues. So well,



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the women were overwhelmingly supportive of civil union, had it been left to the male legislators, if they only their votes counted, civil unions would have failed. So I think it was a really interesting cultural difference. In many ways, I think women often talk and learn more about other people's lives than men do. And that's more of a subject of conversation, and that women are more comfortable talking about and often no more situation, because I was actually pretty astounded at a recent poll that was done here. had also showed that people who knew or knew that they knew of gay and lesbians were much more supportive of civil unions than those who didn't. Probably the people who said they didn't know anybody just didn't know that they knew somebody. But a factor is when there's really a human face on it. And it's not an abstract issue. But it's somebody you know, who's deeply involved in a committed, caring relationship. It makes a tremendous difference.



Glenn Holt 07:20

Of course, the Vermont court decision was precedent setting and California flirted with its own kind of state domestic partnerships. KPFA



Greg Gordon 07:28

Berkeley reporter Erin grants has more from the state capitol.



07:32

The Assembly Judiciary Committee heard three bills designed to expand domestic partnerships in California, won by Assemblyman Darrell Steinberg of Sacramento. We've placed domestic partners in line to inherit property if one partner dies without a will. And another by Assemblywoman Sheila Culo of Los Angeles gives registered domestic partners the right to control the dispersal of their partners remains when they die. The third by Assemblywoman Gloria Romero of Los Angeles would allow a domestic partner to make medical decisions when his or her partner lacks the capacity to make decisions about his or her own health care. Canal Johnson of Los Angeles spoke in favor of that bill. She told the committee this story of an illness she had nine years ago,



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I became seriously ill with pneumonia. I had an allergic reaction to the antibiotic that my doctor put me on and had to stop taking it. My temperature went up to 104 degrees. I became unconscious and delirious. I was not capable of making decisions for myself or calling my

physician. My partner made numerous phone calls to my doctor to try and inform him of my condition, and let them know that it had worsened. But he refused to speak with her because she was not a blood relation. She was not next of kin. My partner attempted to call my parents knowing that they have disowned me because I am a lesbian, and my parents refused to help. I was in a situation in which my life was at stake. And my partner was terrified to take me to a hospital for fear that the same thing would happen with the doctors there. Janelle



09:22

said her partner instead cared for her from home using herbal remedies. Dr. R. Ron RnL, a neurologist at USC Hospital in Los Angeles said Grinnell story is not an isolated one. He says one story repeats itself again and again. Their life partners



09:40

are holding vigilantly at their bedside. But they were unaware that in order to help make decisions about their loved ones medical care, they had to fill out special legal forms when they were both competent to sign these forms.



Glenn Holt 09:52

The other States saw the writing on the wall and got scared state legislatures across the country hurried to pass laws. banning similar same sex unions and denying recognition of out of state unions. That's a violation of the Full Faith and Credit Clause of the US Constitution. So perhaps 2001 will be the year that that clause is put to the test in the US Supreme Court on a case involving recognition of a Vermont gay marriage somewhere else in the country. One example of state sponsored homophobia was the infamous Oregon ballot initiative. Number nine,



Greg Gordon 10:28

Nevada and Nebraska have initiatives that would ban recognition of same gender relationships. They'll be voting in Maine on anti discrimination protections. And in Oregon, there is a proposal to prohibit schools from encouraging promoting or sanctioning homosexuality, yet another measure sponsored by the rabidly anti gay Oregon Citizens Alliance. Sally Shukla, a lesbian feminist activist based in Eugene Oregon, who performs with a group whom prob got the okay to record new words to the music of a 41 year old pop classic by Leiber and Stoller for a musical call to action.



11:04

My travels down to an Andrew some friends of mine who always know the truth they gave me about me and handed me the sign it said vote no on ballot measure number nine I told him that I had a thing I've been that way since 1966. They said then beware because your rights are on the line and you better vote no on a ballot measure number now. We'll look at movie and gave

her a wink. She said I've got a sign up sheet right here by the sink. You can make the difference get people to think and suddenly I realized I was the link. I started working every day to guarantee that your money and volunteer your time and tell everybody vote no on Measure nine that damn OCA wants to make up the rules that we know the violence. Their prejudice kills the voters of Oregon. Hey, we're no close. We don't believe that bigotry. Protect our schools. We started working every day to guarantee that we don't lose our rights. So call up your money and volunteer your time and tell everybody vote no on Measure now. no on Measure no on Measure No on measuring.

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Glenn Holt 13:04

This is lesbian and gay voices. Why 2k? Retrospective? Not since Anita Bryant has the gay community rallied to protest the kind of gay bashing in the media that Dr. Laura Schlessinger is famous for. She tried to take her radio show to television this fall. And it went over like a lead balloon. One after another big corporate sponsors dropped her show. The fight against the show was led by the stop Dr. laura.com website. Good

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Joan Devlin 13:35

evening, you're listening to KPFT lesbian and gay voices. And I'm in the studio with dandy and Otto and Vanessa Edwards-Foster. And they're fresh from the stop Dr. laura.com rally preparation meeting. They're going to be having a rally to against Dr. Laura will actually are going to be picked in que se v is that correct? That's

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13:55

correct. Yes.

J

Joan Devlin 13:56

And that will be when

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that's coming up this Friday, July 14, at 11 o'clock. We're going to meet outside Jr's and somewhat carpool over to KSV the studios over there and I 10.

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Joan Devlin 14:11

And what is the reason that you're picketing?

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Vanessa Edwards Foster 14:14

The reason that we're picketing is Dr. Laura obviously just recently was awarded a television show. Now obviously, this is not the television show that we're picketing. This is a radio station. However, this particular radio station has Dr. Laura show on currently, and it's

J Joan Devlin 14:34

on for several hours a day. Yes,

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 14:36

exactly. Six o'clock in

14:38

the morning. Yes.

14:39

Right.

14:40

If you're up bed early.

J Joan Devlin 14:42

The drive time, yeah. Six to nine. I mean, so you're talking like three hours a day of this woman and she's

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 14:49

got a very good audience with that particular group. But what we're hoping to accomplish by bringing this to the public forefront is to At least put in people's minds exactly what this woman is about. And also to kind of spotlight the fact that she is getting a television show to spread this kind of hate. Obviously, she's got a long history, and everyone's apparently aware of it. But we want to try and stop her before she gets on the airwaves. Television was, if we give her that particular type of forum, we're afraid that this is basically going to spread it to a much wider medium than what it has already. And by having the audience that she has, it's it's enough of a backlash against our community, but by giving her a much wider one, obviously, we worry about the repercussions that can happen as a result of them right



15:49

now we understand that she is in our element, her conservative radio environment. And we know that we can't do much about that other than to create more of an awareness of the general public or to the general public that she has out there. And that she's going to be expanding into the main airwaves over the Houston area. And



J Joan Devlin 16:11

you know, she hasn't had much luck with getting sponsors for her TV show, though hashing? Well,



16:15

that's, that's very true. Just a couple of days ago, actually, Geico had cancelled out their sponsorship of her radio show and the TV show understand. And also, we have word just today informally, that there's going to be other sponsorships that are cancelling out. So my feeling on the whole situation is that it's such a sensitive matter right now with everybody, you know, dropping her that nobody wants to advertise on her show. And my feeling personally as that she won't even make it to, to the TV. You



G Glenn Holt 16:52

know, one of the nice things is that the corporate community is waking up to the goldmine of gay and lesbian dollars. Exactly. They understand what side their balance sheet is buttered on.



J Joan Devlin 17:07

I'd also like to think, though, beyond that, and obviously, that's I'm sure their first consideration, but I think they're also taking a stand in many cases, just for human rights. I mean, you know, in the same way that any company that has any kind of reputation at all, would not dare to sponsor say, a show put on by the kk k, exactly. I think, you know, they're looking at her in that same light, because she does, she's so divisive. She's so ugly, and it's not just to gay and lesbian people. This



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 17:38

is quite widespread. She's very hateful towards even folks within the heterosexual community that don't fit her particular views on what she considers acceptable social mores, single moms, yes, single moms. Anything that I guess is two divergent from the mainstream for her is something that she likes to target. And it's kind of similar to a lot of the other talk show hosts, they press certain hot buttons that they know are going to cause controversy. And by drawing up this controversy, they draw the ratings whether for negative or for positive purposes. And by having those ratings, they continue keeping themselves on the air right.



18:23

And they continue to stay on the air on the am stations where you know that that same behavior won't be would not be acceptable on the TV.



G Glenn Holt 18:33

This past year saw the Millennium march on Washington, even that wasn't without controversy, as rumors were flying about sponsorship money going mainly into profits. But it was a success. Anyway, Ellen DeGeneres was one of the featured speakers at the Millennium March



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1 of all I want to mention this, how wild this is, for me, first of all to be here. And what a privilege this is for me to be here because I wasn't out for the last March. And I sat at home and watched it on TV and cried, because I was not a part of a family that I knew I belong to. And I know that there are a lot of people at home watching feeling the same way because you can justify it any any way. You want to justify why you're not out. But it's because you're ashamed of yourself and you you've let society beat you down so much that you believe them. But the wild thing for me is that this March is happening three years to the day of the airing of the coming out episode. Thank you, Disney. We love you for that Disney. Think we're kind of preaching to the choir here. We're all sending out these powerful messages and we all feel the same way. People wonder why this is important to have a march like this and to have a celebration. And it's because when you grow up being bombarded with messages subconsciously or just as blatant as they can possibly be that there is something wrong with you simply for being gay or for whatever Reason for you the color of your skin. If you're bombarded with that, it's hard enough as a human being, to have self respect, it's hard enough to deal with the fear of rejection and approval. And it gets worse and worse and worse as you get older. But it's compounded when you're gay. And when you're raised with that, for so many years, we need a day like this to overcompensate as much as we possibly can. We need this love and support. Anybody can relate to going to school, going to high school or grammar school and just being tortured by the school bully. And as a gay person, we are bullied by society every single day of our lives. And it hurts, it hurts so, so bad, that sometimes you feel like it's safer to just stay in the closet, and live your life and be safe. But there are children out there that are being tortured and killed. Because we're not visible enough. And I know as a celebrity, the most important thing I'll ever do is to stand up and make a difference for those children who need voices to speak for them. We owe that to them. And I would beg anyone, any celebrity to please come out, it is the most important thing you'll ever do to save lives. I do feel proud that I'm gay, I feel very proud that I'm gay, because I feel like I'm on a special spiritual journey that most people don't get to experience. If you're, if you're not a minority, you don't have a struggle, and you don't have a purpose to your life, you're just going along with, with whatever your daily routine is. But when you're gay, and when you're fighting for something, or you're a person of color, and you're fighting for something, your life takes on such a meaning. And there's such a bond that we all have with each other because of that struggle. And that's why we cheer each other. And that's why the parades are necessary. And that's why we need to walk away from this day and and spread this. We can't just have this day and you go back to your jobs. People think this is a political thing. It is a political thing. It's still legal to fire people in 38 states just because they're gay, this is political. This is who we are. We

are human beings who are being treated as second class citizens. And we can't do that we just can't we see so much hate around us from Dr. Laura to to you know anybody that the picketers when and when you see that kind of hate it is just a blatant absence of love. That's what hate is it's an absence of love. And it's, it's hard because I feel like I see those picketers and I think, you know, if I were a loving, non violent spiritual person, I would really go over there and grab those signs and smash them over their heads and shove them up there

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Glenn Holt 22:42

and use them the y2k nighttime gay pride parade was even bigger and better than ever. The Houston area motorcycle society called hams led the parade with motorcycles and got things off to a thunderous start.

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And Glenn was on a motorcycle at the beginning. Actually, what was your perspective plan?

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Glenn Holt 23:05

Well, it was very interesting, because

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turn your microphone on. Yeah, it's my headphones that are.

G

Glenn Holt 23:13

Now it was very interesting, because we were I think it was run over by a motorcycle. We were heading down the street, just absolutely as slowly as we could possibly go. And very warmly received by the crowds, of course. And we had planned and what we did was when we got up to the reviewing stand we we had written up there, two by two, and then then we sort of formed up four by four. And everybody you rev their engines and made a great thunderous noise. And then the the crowd responded with great applause and everybody was very happy. And then nothing happened. We rode away and nothing else happened for a long time, but now the crowds looked about the same as last year. I noticed some real good eye candy in the crowds, some real good eye candy on the floats. See, what I did was after I rode through with with the hams motorcycle club, I thought that I was going to circle around because I had been told to Q Patrol was at the back towards the back of the parade. And so I was going to ride through again with them. Just change T shirts and ride through again. But it turns out that Q Patrol was number 41. So by the time we got through the parade, they were already in the parade. Okay, so anyway in in circling back around and looking for them, and touring up and down the streets. I saw all the floats close up. So it was interesting because there were some floats that were very tall. I remember, MCC RS float was very tall and they had trouble getting through some of the back streets because of low hanging branches on the trees. So that might be something to think about next year. Well, that



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is always a concern. And one of the that's sort of unique things of Houston's per right is that instead of being on a wide downtown street or a wide street heading into downtown like Dallas, we just where they line up, we're in a neighborhood. And there are trees there and we do the best we can. But there are trees there.



G Glenn Holt 25:13

Well, it also occurred to me, looking at MCC RS flowed that the idea of doing the parade at night really opens up the avenues for creativity. Oh, absolutely. Because the things that that that they did and some of the other people did with their floats with lighting and lighting effects and colors.



J Joan Devlin 25:32

I mean, who could get over Tori Williams light up roses. I mean, who would have thought of such as saying a lot of bouquet of roses? I mean, you know phenomenal and you just



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heard sent to her by by family or writings or something and it wasn't Olympus or get them working? That



J Joan Devlin 25:49

was that was what she told us. Yeah,



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cuz I think she was started a fire when she first tried. Well, the two things I really noticed that was OutSmart there was somebody else that had a boat with like a sail on it. Yeah. And they use the Christmas lights to make the sail up. And I just thought, you know, that's so incredible. Absolutely incredible.



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Christmas lights work better this year. They haven't worked so well in the past because of all the ambient light in the area. Yeah, with the streetlights but the streetlights for shut off.



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There were a couple of streetlights burned out along the route I noticed and reliant energy per the request of the pride committee of Houston. And with the help of a nice Parker's office city council, they and and the barking dog of Lee Harrington. They turned off the lights in a two block area around Montrose and Westheimer. Because that's where the disco ball was, and there was so much light in the disco ball, it seemed that we didn't need those lights. And it really helps show that up. And the interesting thing about the disco ball this year, or the mirror ball is that it moved around and have movement. And there was a couple times I was watching from the reviewing stand, where it went right over the people that were on the mound on Montrose watching the parade. And it looked like you were in a club. I mean, it was just really, really neat.



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But a club with an eight and a half foot disco ball, right, that



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was out in a big club. And that was really, really neat.



Glenn Holt 27:16

Well, the idea of shining spotlights on it, even from on top of Cody's from that far away. That was very interesting.



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Yes. And the original idea was to do it in from the American general building, believe it or not, but I think that was a little bit overkill. They actually they were from four different angles. And that was that working out the logistics for that was really incredible. Of course now we're gonna have to figure out what we're going to do next year to top that.



Glenn Holt 27:42

While the gay pride parade was probably the highlight of the year, there were other notable events, such as the billboards put up around the city, by Parents and Friends of Lesbians and gays. PFLAG



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Cindy Murphy is here with us. And Cindy, what position are you on? With PFLAG? I'm



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the Vice President. Okay.

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28:03

Okay. Something like the minister of propaganda, you know, yeah, that's sort of my title. I love it. So you're all going to be putting up billboards. And it's like, every time PFLAG has done something like this before, there usually has been more controversy, which ended up getting you more publicity. And this time, what do you think is going to happen? Is it going to work? Is it you know,

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28:28

oh, it's going to work? We're going to have billboards, hopefully all over the city. Really? Yes, we're going to try to have at least three up and it's going to last for about a year. Great. And some of these will be able to move them around the city. Okay. And, you know, just real nice messages.

J

Jack Valinski 28:46

And is it I mean, it's basically what I can see here is it's just like hate hurts or safe schools or unconditional love with your information. And your name is a very, very wholesome type of message. I

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29:00

love the value. Yes, the last

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one was very wholesome. I thought too, but that Yes, right. It is about family values. It's all very newsworthy. I mean, it's, you know, all the hate crimes in the safe schools. My goodness, you know, where else you know, should a child be able to go to feel safe?

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Sure. School? Absolutely. Especially with, you know, the taxes that we pay that a lot of us pay that don't have kids, but we don't mind paying because, you know, the future of our countries, you know, dependent on schools. So you're gonna have to pay for these signs, right? Oh, yes. They don't come

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through. That's very true. We're starting our fundraising campaign as of today. And we're looking for donations from the community for you know, really whatever you could donate, we would like to have sponsors for the billboard if an organization would like to sponsor a billboard or a business or you know, really individuals we don't care. You know, we just are looking to raise the funds so we can have this year long campaign. We want PFLAG to have exposure. And for people to know what PFLAG is and why we're here.



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Is this something that's you're doing? This is a Houston chapter. That's



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the Houston chapter. And we had great success. The last time we did it in 96. And, you know, we hope to have that same success being



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I mean, is this something that Houston is doing ahead of everybody else? Are there other chapters doing that? Because I know Houston usually, in the last, you know, five, six years had been way ahead of the curve. Yeah, we'd



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like to be in your face. I know. Yes, we, there's chapters all over the United States now that do put up billboards. We kind of led the way with our 96 campaign, and have apparently loaned out those vinyls to other chapters. So in New Jersey, now, they just started their billboard campaign. And, you know, we like to think that that's, you know, we were kind of helpful in getting these other chapters seeing that something like this will work.



31:08

You know, I've worked on Pride Week, you know, maybe too many years. But I remember, many times when we would go out and do business with somebody printing a pride guide, or, and we've done billboards to, we would make sure we told them who we were so that, you know, we wouldn't get surprised and say they didn't want to do business with us. Did you have to go to the same thing when you went to this billboard company and say, This is what we want to do. And they agree to do it. I



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did not personally go to do the setup and everything. But yes, that they are aware of what we are, what we stand for, and why we want to do these things. You know why we want to have these billboards up for our kids and for the community. You know, it's part of the community

part of the part of the world. You know, let's get real here. They were very supportive as far as getting our message out,



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right? It's great, because I know when you all went to some of the TV stations with those ads, they all decided that they weren't interested in doing them. I know that scene is too scary. Exactly. But then again, you got more publicity out of that then then you're right, probably you would have been if they ran that's true. So what is this going to start we're



32:16

hoping to get it going mid March depending on location, we want good locations, so they're going down this week to sign the paperwork and our target is mid March have three billboards up those three the hate hurts unconditional love and safe schools. And, you know, like I said, we want prime locations, we don't want to be you know, out on a rural route somewhere or we want you know, 610 59 So we have the exposure, so people can drive by there every day and say, okay, okay. Make sense? To me. It's just it's just a nice, easy message. It's a it does say PFLAG Houston. It does say parents, families and friends of lesbians and gays. So there is no doubt who the sponsoring or who's putting up these billboards.



Glenn Holt 33:09

This is lesbian and gay voices. Why 2k retrospective. Unfortunately, AIDS and HIV are still with us in the new millennium. But the new drug cocktails are providing longer life expectancy, and better quality of life for those infected. There were a number of important medical advances in HIV research in 2000. Benefits which will apply to a broad spectrum of virology and immunology, perhaps even to cancer. World AIDS Day was marked this year on December 1, Francisco Sanchez from others appeared on our show to talk about it.



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It's been going on since 1980 1988, I think this is the 13th year that we've had World AIDS Day, it's a good opportunity for for us to be able to get the mainstream media involved and get the message across. But certainly in our community, it's something we need to continue to do everyday in the gay lesbian community. You see, the numbers are decreasing a little bit in the gay and lesbian community when you get when you look at the overall infections of HIV and AIDS. And when you calculate all the numbers, I think gay men still account for 48 something 47% Are men who have sex with men still and 82% of infections are men cumulatively since up until 1999. Over the past couple of years, we've seen that increase in the minority community eventually that'll swing the numbers a little bit, but overall, they still have a significant problem in the gay and lesbian community. So and



34:36

This audio has been edited and it still hasn't quite filtered down to everybody's ears yet

IT'S ALL JUST EDUCATION, AND IT STILL HASN'T QUITE FILTERED DOWN TO EVERYBODY HAS IT?



34:42

No, it hasn't. I think it's very unfortunate that it's taking this long for there to be a state of emergency declared in this city right in the city. And I'm even more concerned with OB is particularly deals with reaching out to Hispanic community. And I'm really concerned sort of how long is going to take for the city in funding sources to recognize the pattern that experts are already seeing in increasing numbers there. While it's certainly not a state of emergency, I call it a state of emergency. I mean, if we don't do something now, then I think we should have learned a lesson by this point and know that we ought to be funding efforts that address education in a culturally sensitive way. And how do



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you do that? Well, even if you had a check tomorrow, that as much money as you can possibly use, how do you do that? Well,



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I we've been successful. And obviously, we sort of created a niche for Sheldon, in terms of dealing with Hispanic women. And I think we're hit a little ahead of the curve there. And there was an increase in HIV infection among Hispanic women. And when you're alone about that the increase was about 20 something percent. If we, I think the more nonprofits are the more that H ASO is apply marketing techniques that advertising agencies use and sort of where my background as a human from Hispanic niche agency, we did Hispanic advertising and marketing, those same principles apply. Whether you're doing health education, and even HIV and AIDS education, and the more agencies have those resources available to him, and that sort of knowledge available to them, the more impact they're gonna have.



36:17

So education and marketing. Is that done? How's that differ? I mean, I guess we learned some this about smoking, you know, the smoking campaigns, that, of course, all this windfall of money we're supposed to be getting from the tobacco industry really hasn't gotten into it, for the most part, but some of it has, in some of the techniques they use. Is it sort of an MTV type style, is it?



36:40

No, it's the trick in dealing with the Hispanic community is focusing the impact that HIV and AIDS can have on the family. The slick marketing, it's probably going to be a two prong approach with we've got levels of assimilation. And if you're dealing with with, with recent immigrants, and people that are that are parents and their kids are still young, you still have to use you have to associate what they're being educated has to do with HIV and how it impacts

the family. If they don't understand it, you need to make the connection that they need to educate their kids to prevent this from happening to them. That's the message that we need to take to recent immigrants, when you deal with a younger generation that are influenced by the Ricky Martin's Jennifer Lopez is and the the next generation in the Hispanic community that's grown up over the past 2030 years. Some of that's like MTV advertising really works. And but you still need to try to use some cultural aspects of it to get the message across.

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So what does all this do? We

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do a variety of things we got we, we have a primary health clinic where we provide medical services to our clients. One of the challenges that we found, for a long time, we did education prevention, and we did social services, we would give people professional counseling, we'd give them case management, but we could never get them into a clinic because they didn't, there wasn't a doctor that that could speak Spanish, the staff didn't speak Spanish, and they just had a big distrust. We saw those numbers we saw the numbers grew up in dramatically, once we got the clinic we were we became a one stop shop. So people felt a lot more comfortable and get accessing medical care. And so that's really the clinic's the gem of the agency in terms of the impact that it has, because I mean, as we all know, the sooner we get people on medications, and the sooner we get them into treatment, and being involved in that and doing actively, the better off they're going to be in the long run. We still have street outreach programs and prevention programs we but we have two very exciting programs that were pioneers and we've got a program with Office of Minority Health where we talk to recent immigrants about HIV and AIDS and then we talked to the adolescents about HIV and AIDS. And in that course, we also educate teens about acculturation issues, self esteem issues, and make sure that we address all the issues of desert being a cultivator important so that they have a high esteem of themselves and accept the message better about HIV and AIDS. We've got another program, which is the substance abuse of Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA, where we are in a community in Willow Creek, it's an apartment complex in southeast Houston 9000 people and when complex, and it's 98%, Hispanic, the bulk of those recent immigrants and what we do there because those are recent immigrants, we do a lot of the acculturation training we teach them how to strengthen families, we tell them how to talk about sex with their kids, and that their kids are expecting that conversation here in the United States because it's a culture that growing up in and those are two very innovative programs that I'm very proud of and we're really taking the lead on And so I'm looking forward to, to seeing those grow, and I hope other agencies will, will be in to take on those as well to

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get into schools at all. We,

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through the OMH program we do a little bit because a part of our target population there is

through the CHART program, we do a little bit, because a part of our target population there is dealing with, with adolescents, so we have to recruit at churches and schools. And actually, we've got a collaborative partner with the Center for AIDS. It'll be on with the program later and they're helping us go to physicians that treat the Hispanic and treat primarily Hispanic clientele so that they can one know how to talk to them about it. And B know what some of the signs are, because they may think this isn't a population that's at risk because for cultural values, in

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Glenn Holt 40:43

local news to Houston men and their lawyer decided to take on the Texas sodomy law known as 2106. That case is still not settled. But we spoke with the lawyer working the case for the defense, Mitchell Katyn, actually,

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I'm one of the attorneys, Lambda Legal Defense from New York are the lead attorneys. And I'm the local counsel with Williamsburg and Anderson. And with this being Gay Pride Week celebrations, it's it's it's really amazing that the courts, the 14th, court of appeal has decided to give us this opinion. And my clients John Lawrence and Tyrone Gardner, both here in Houston are two men who, in in one sense, are really heroes. This is something that they didn't have to do. They didn't have to go forward and and let the lawyers do their thing. But for those of you I guess, if you're gay or lesbian, and weren't, we're living under a rock and don't know, last Thursday, I guess it was last Thursday, let's get the it was filed on June 8. The decision where the 14th Court of Appeals here in Houston, determined that the homosexual conduct law is unconstitutional, because it makes a sex based distinction in order to determine the criminality of the law, and really I have the opinion here in front of me. And I like to read this one sentence right here says, The simple fact is the same behavior as criminal for some, but not for others, based solely on the sex of the individuals who engage in the behavior. That sentence is key. And that sentence may be the basis as to why we when we go to the next level. And I understand the district attorney is appealing this decision. When we go to the next level, which is the highest criminal court in Texas, known as the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, we do not go to the Supreme Court because that only hears civil cases, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. Hopefully they will look at this simple fact. And the law and determined that the Court of Appeals was correct, or they can actually even declined to hear the case. And if they did, because it's discretionary with them. And if they declined to hear the case, then in essence, it affirms the decision below and it's it remains good law. Some people are talking though, if we go to the next level, and we win there, that will make it the definitive law for the entire state. If we don't make it to the next level, then it's persuasive authority for the state. But it's binding for the 14 counties that go to the 14th Court of Appeals. So you know, and then if we do if we go to the next level, and we lose there, there's always the possibility of going to the United States Supreme Court, and having this decided for the entire country.

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Glenn Holt 44:02

Mitchell, I understand how the different courts of appeals have different jurisdictions. But it has always confused me that in a case like this, you could have relief from a law like 2106 in a limited geographic area of the state. It that does the Texas Constitution not have something

similar to the US Constitution about equal protection under the law, or equal application of the law across the state? You



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mean, Full Faith and Credit? Yeah, I think credit within the state and actually, that's why I've when when critics and people like from Dallas have been saying, Well, this law doesn't help us. And that's not really true. In at least 90 If not 95% of the cases. The other courts around the state follow each other they follow the first appellate decision. Remember, this is the third appellate court that has held 2106 to be unconstitutional. You had one in Dallas, in the mica, England case versus City of Dallas, that was a Dallas police officer, the lesbian Dallas police officer, then you had the Morales decision out of Austin. And now you have the Houston decision. So we have Dallas, Austin and Houston all agreeing, we don't have any cases that go the other way. So this is extremely persuasive. And 90 to 95% of the other courts will do it, but they don't have to. But they usually do so. So



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in the first two decisions, the court above it chose not to hear it is that



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that's right, the Supreme Court got the case and said, Hey, this is a criminal statute, you're in the wrong court. So we're going to dismiss it, we're not going to say the lower decisions were wrong. We're just not going to decide this because it's a civil case. And I guess for non lawyers, it's hard to understand what I'm saying. But let me just try to clarify it. In the past, in Texas, these type of challenges have been brought in a declaratory judgment where you really haven't had someone injured except for Myka, England, but that was an employment case. And they were proceeding along a civil track, you have civil and criminal laws, or civil, civil and criminal courts. And you have criminal laws, you have civil statutes. And so all along in the past, because quite frankly, we didn't have anybody who was really arrested, people who got arrested, who chose not to fight, it would plea bargain out or the case might be dismissed. But we didn't really have people willing to go all the way as we do now with John Lawrence and Tyrone Gardner. And so when the case got to the Supreme Court, they simply said, this is a criminal statute, it's in the wrong court, we're going to dismiss it and not rule on it. That's what's so important about this case, is that we have people who are really arrested. Remember, my clients were arrested at 1130, at night, dragged in handcuffs out of their apartment, in their underwear, put in the police car, and put in jail for nothing more than what 1000s of other people are doing. And sensual activity is essential adult and you know, a reporter said the other day said well, weren't they in a window? Couldn't you see it? Now? Remember, this is nothing being done in the public or the public view. This was in the privacy of their home. That's why so many people can't believe that it really happened. I mean, I've gotten calls from Germany from the BBC did an interview, think probably saying, well, these crazy Americans, you know, look what they're doing. But we are in a different state. Now. We are now different state. We're in the same state of Texas, but we're in a different state of mind. Now we are legal. And, you know, as as Ray Hill says, he goes back historically and looks at the

history of what we've done. And this period, and we don't know what's going to happen at the Texas Court of Appeals Criminal Appeals, but at least for the next six months, nine months, gay and lesbian people for the first time, in a long time, maybe 190. Since 119 years are free.

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Glenn Holt 48:20

This is lesbian and gay voices. Why 2k retrospective in 2000, the local magazine affectionately called the twit this week in Texas, stopped publication and went out of business. Brian Keever is well known locally. He worked at the twit offices in Houston.

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48:40

I've been working for the magazine for 15 years in some form or fashion. I started as a reporter working for Chuck Patrick, who was the person in charge down

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so yeah, and Chuck is no longer with us. Like he's

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no longer as a matter of fact, Jim, Jim Chappell, Jim Cagle, who were the two original owners both are not with us anymore. Chuck Patrick and Jim Vito. Were the next people. They're no longer with us anymore. And it was sold a couple of years ago to Alan Galvin and Steve Miles who worked for the magazine for years.

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49:12

Well in Twitter's always been us, you know, they call it a bar magazine. But the quality especially in the early days, when they started to go with, you know, heavier paper and eventually with color and stuff like that. That was way ahead of the time.

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49:25

Yeah, when we started doing color no one else just about was doing color with the exception of maybe there's a sister publication on the East Coast that was called cruise, which I'm sure is still business, but and then we had some friends that moved from Houston to Atlanta, Georgia, that were good friends of the owners here and they started a publication in Atlanta, and they patterned after twit and they called it etc, or et cetera. And because we were TW t they became etc. And every time we changed here in Houston, they would change in Atlanta. And so that was kind of like our, our child Atlanta was, etc. But we were only separately.

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And then there was one in Florida called David Right? Yeah.



50:03

David was the original one in Florida. Unfortunately, they folded went out of business. I actually worked for David magazine. I lived in Charlotte, North Carolina back in the 70s. And was the North Carolina representative for David magazine and like 70.



J Joan Devlin 50:18

Now the time that you've been doing, twit, what are some of the major changes you've noticed in the way the magazine has has unfolded? And what are some of the things that have stayed pretty true to the original plan?



50:31

We used to have a really cool Colin, back in many years before I came to work for us, it was called Life with Vera. And it was it was a very tongue in cheek type column which did well. We've had showbiz columns we used to have, we used to have a poetry editor, a showbiz editor a, you know, I mean, we had like 130 to 150 pages back in the mid to late 80s, you know, of everything, we covered the entire state of Texas heavily. But you know, after so many years, you know, in money cost. And you know, some of the business aren't around anymore, we became more entertainment oriented, as opposed to hard news oriented and more, entered the theater. When it first started, there was nothing else around. And so this was like, four years long before the pink triangle was was adopted long before the rainbow flag was adopted. And there were two things that you identified with in the community. One was a lambda, which was a very discreet symbol that people used in 70s to talk to each other. If you were alarmed a necklace or Pricer and all your Oh, okay. And the other one was a twit sticker. We had that we had twit stickers that people would put on their cars across the state of Texas. And if you were in, you know, say the South Texas Valley and you saw someone with a trip sticker on their car, you kind of figured, well, they must be part of the family.



G Glenn Holt 51:55

Of course, there were many other things which happened locally, so many that we just don't have time to review them all. The Exxon Mobil merger and employee rally the formation of the gay and lesbian immigration Taskforce, the HATCH gay and lesbian prom, the forum on racism held at the community center, GLBT Aggie Awareness Week, and many others worthy of mention. But the final big news item of the year 2000 was the disaster of the presidential election. The whys and wherefores have been beaten to death in the public media already. But here's what we heard from Deborah Rogers, about what it means to the GLBT community in Houston.



J Joan Devlin 52:38

JOAN DEVLIN

I really think the Wright felt like once they got bush in he was in their pocket.



52:43

I get that feeling too. And I think a lot of people get that feeling. One of the counter attacks that I've heard, and then also appeared in the salon article was that there may be a bone thrown to the religious right, by Bush with him immediately trying to seek some sort of partial birth abortion ban. Yeah, but



J Joan Devlin 53:05

are we going to be the bone? Well,



53:07

I you know, that's that's always the the question is who is really going to be the the bone when all of a sudden done. The other thing that they've suggested we may see play is the religious right may take an extreme view and just rattle their change horribly, so that bush can then come in with his so called moderate compassionate conservatism, and seem to wrestle with this extreme idea and settle for a compromise, which will make him look like he's fighting the religious right and winning, but actually, he'll be playing in conjunction with them. I



J Joan Devlin 53:42

find that hard to believe simply because I really get the overriding impression that these people feel like he owes them. Oh,



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I think they do. I think they I think they feel that strongly. I think



J Joan Devlin 53:55

in their mind, I use the term loosely. They think he's there's, they think he's in their pocket, and that he's in office now to completely and totally put forth their agenda.



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I think so. And I think my gut feeling is that he'll he'll go for things like making a run against ru 486, the partial birth abortion ban, which would be such a tremendous waste of energy, because that's going to get bogged down. And it's going to divert everyone's attention from all the other issues that are going on. You have other major issues that we're going to be looking

at for the next four years that he's going to be trying to throw on the table, such as the privatization of security. Further issues with HMOs and how people are protected. School choice and school choice and vouchers, which really is a hot potato. Interestingly enough, wasn't it just in Cleveland, Ohio this past week or week before last when one of the federal courts declared their voucher system unconstitutional.



55:04

Yeah, that seems to be happening a lot. Yes. Well, because



J Joan Devlin 55:07

in the few states where it's been allowed to go forward, they quickly have found out that they have no control over it. These are they're a public organization when it gets the money, but they're a private organization when it comes to making gay people scoutmasters? Well, it's kind of like that flip



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flop on states, right? states rights are a wonderful thing until you need the Supreme Court to step in. Right. I noticed in this article, they were quoting Barney Frank, quite a bit. And his point was that you're gonna have a lot of fluff going on on both sides for the, you know, up until February and March. And it isn't gonna be till probably after March that we get into some real meat and potatoes on things. But the spin is spinning out of control on both sides. You have some Republicans who are suggesting that the Democrats are going to make a big deal out of bipartisanship. And they're going to define the rules of bipartisanship so strictly that no matter what Bush does, he will have failed this bipartisanship issue at the end of his four years. I don't know that that's necessarily a bad thing. And I see a lot of centrist Republicans saying the same thing. They want the bipartisanship effort as well. They have to have it in the Senate, there's nothing's going to get done otherwise. And God help any congressman or whatever that's trying to push through some pork. He's going to need that extra help and that extra vote.



G Glenn Holt 56:29

And that was the year 2000. It started with fears of blackouts and riots because of the y2k bug. The problem that wasn't it ended with a much worse fate than we could have imagined last New Years, a breach of democracy from our nation's Supreme Court. So what's ahead for 2001? We have a conservative president whose legitimacy is questionable at best, and a Senate which is split 5050. So will this be the year that the hate crimes bill is passed in Congress? Keep your seatbelts fastened 2001 could be even more bumpy than the Millennium year. But one thing's for sure. It's going to be interesting. Stay tuned to lesbian and gay voices throughout the year for further developments. for lesbian and gay voices. Why 2k retrospective. I'm Glenn Holt. You going to be listening to lesbian and gay voices heard each Monday at 8pm. Here on KPFT, a publicly funded Pacifica network station, lesbian and gay voices is produced live in Houston. The executive producer is Jack Valinski. On Air voices are Joan Devlin Glenn Holt, David Sanders and Jack Valinski. You can write to us at PO Box 66071 Houston, Texas 77266 or

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58:55

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