

DEAN --trip it's been. Folks, the drug war is over. The prohibitionists, though still Band-Aiding the wounded, are out of ammunition. The day you say the war is over, it's over. But what we have in place of truth and reality is rather an 88-year history of hysteria. What we have here is a failure to communicate. Thank God for the enlightened Brits and Europeans, the Canadians and the Australians, else this drug war would have swallowed us alive.

Now, who needs to communicate, and what should be said? Well, I think you. You need to communicate to your elected officials, to the Chronicle, to the Austin American statesman, to ABC, CBS, NBC. and Fox. And perhaps more importantly, you need to get it straight with your parents, your kids, and your cohorts. It's time to end this drug war. The drug war is a failure, has always been a failure, and we know that it will continue to be a failure.

Diffuse responsibility. The ability to view a car wreck and tell yourself that somebody will surely stop to help and I'm a little afraid, or I'm in a hurry, or I'm just confused and I'm not going to help. Now, the drug war is a perpetual car wreck-- a government mandated daily stampede over the cliff of thousands of our young people.

Because of the recognition and success of drug harm reduction efforts in countries outside the US, our media has begun to recognize and publish some of the truth about the drug war, and they're starting to expose the bias and the outrageous deceptions of these US drug warriors. Now, all that's lacking-- the only change that really must occur to end this unnecessary harms of the drug war is for you to take action.

And here's that letter I spoke of. It was published in yesterday's Chronicle. It was headed up, War on Drugs-- Larger Tragedy. And I stated, regarding the Chronicle's August 10 article, drug dealer convicted of killing teenage client sentenced to life. It took a jury less than two hours to sentence Nathan Neil McKinney to life in prison for the murder of a teenage drug user. According to the evidence and testimony presented to the court, the sentence seems appropriate.

There is, however, a larger continual tragedy when we fail to consider the reasons behind this and thousands of similar deaths each year-- the tragedy of drug prohibition. Houston has had more than its share of prohibition-related deaths. Within the last year, several law enforcement officers have been shot and killed by drug users trying to avoid arrest.

Last summer, 15 young people died in just one weekend from heroin overdoses because they thought the powder was cocaine. What our society has done through the implementation and escalation of the drug war is to create a huge and often violent subset of the population with no recourse to the law. Drug users and vendors have no legal recourse, having to either write off any losses or take the law into their own hands. Until such time that we realize the utter failure of drug prohibition, we are certain to reap a continual harvest of ignorance, death, and destruction.

Jimmy, I hope your listeners will join us on my next show. This is going to be Friday, August 31. But our guest will be attorney Greg Schmidt who will help us present a memorial to two other fallen reform warriors-- Tom [? Crosland ?] and [? Rollin ?] [? Rome-- ?] who were assassinated last year on September 3 and 4 by Michigan police and the FBI while they were on their own lands.

And we'll visit with Wes Fager about the tortures inflicted on those mostly adolescent patients who were captured and abused by Straight, Incorporated-- by an organization run by [? Max ?] [? Sembler-- ?] the guy who's currently head of the Republican National Committee.

Now, someday soon, we'll be able to show the complicity and hatred of these drug warriors. I ask you to hang tough, my friends. We shall overcome. And don't forget to write the media and the politicians.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. That's right. Dean, thank you so much. I really look forward to your little five-minute spot. But you bring us lots of good information. OK, take care. OK, thank you, Dean. Now--

DAVID: Howdy.

JIMMY CARPER: Hey, David. How you doing?

DAVID: OK.

JIMMY CARPER: Now, David, you're here a lot.

DAVID: Apparently.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Yes. And you are with Hatch?

DAVID: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: But you sent me an email this week about a situation that occurred. And especially because the guy involved spoke at a Hatch meeting.

DAVID: He spoke at a Hatch meeting because he was in town and he was going to-- he spoke to HISD principals and vice principals at a required meeting-- for the principles anyway-- about gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender issues in schools.

And the email I sent you was about-- he won his lawsuit that was pending at the time as [INAUDIBLE]. They were embroiled in it. And he, Derrick Hinkle, won \$451,000 from the school district in Nevada that he was suing.

JIMMY CARPER: Now, why was he suing?

DAVID: They moved him around from high school to high school after he was getting abused-- all kinds of physical abuse, verbal abuse from teachers, staff, administrators, and a lot of the kids and everything. And it was, it's for your own safety. But it was, we don't want to deal with you. We're going to send you to somewhere else. And he ended up dropping out of school.

JIMMY CARPER: I remember reading something about it. And when he complained to one principal, the principal said, well, it's your own fault.

DAVID: Yeah, for discussing [? security ?].

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

DAVID: It's your personal life. And people would write things on the board. I don't remember what, specifically, his examples were. But they would write things on the board. And the teacher would ignore it or he would have to erase it.

And he said he was always in fear when he was walking around the campus of what they're going to do to him because once in the parking lot, they were-- a group of boys pushed him around, started hitting him and everything. I think he got a bloody nose or something like that. And was threatening to do like a James Byrd thing-- you know, drag him behind the truck.

And the cops saw. They were talking the cops saw. And they just went back to their conversation and walked inside the building and everything.

JIMMY CARPER: So he was really afraid for his life.

DAVID: Yeah. Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: And people in authority didn't care.

DAVID: Yeah. It was like, I think there might have been a few-- very few adults that actually cared. But they were just overwhelmed with all the other people. They were afraid of for their jobs and everything. And he ended up dropping out of high school.

And I can't remember if he's getting his GED or-- he's continuing his education--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, good, good.

DAVID: --in San Francisco I think. Trying to get a degree in social work, media relations, something like that. So he's continuing his education, which is good. But it's sad that someone had to leave school because they weren't accepted for who they are.

And it's the school administrators. It's not about-- the teachers teach. And the school administrators are to keep people safe, you know?

JIMMY CARPER: Steven, do you have something to add to this?

STEVEN: What are you all talking about?

DAVID: The Derek Hinkle.

STEVEN: OK.

DAVID: Yeah. What do you know about it?

STEVEN: Very little. Besides when he came to Hatch. That's about all I do know about it. And as far as like, the PFLAG's participation in it. And

I guess the good thing that came out of that is we're doing one-- about the same thing-- reaching out to the HISD here when school comes back in session about principals-- are not principals-- head coaches and assistant coaches. It's not going to be mandatory for them to come, but we're trying to--

DAVID: Encourage them.

STEVEN: Right, to encourage them to come at least.

DAVID: This is the email that I sent to Jimmy. I got it off the PlanetOut website. Thank you, PlanetOut. On Tuesday, trustees of a Nevada school district endorsed a settlement with gay former student who sued the district for discrimination and failing to protect him from harassment.

The \$451,000 settlement brings to an end the two-year court battle started by Derek Hinkle, who claimed that district teachers, principals, and police officers in Washoe County failed to intervene when classmates harassed and assaulted him because he is gay. The settlement includes changes to school district policies on how to better protect the civil rights of gay and lesbian students. Because of that, a second and final vote is needed. The board is scheduled to take that action when it meets August 27.

According to court documents, Hinkle's harassment was so pervasive ranging from verbal taunts and being punched in the face and lassoed around the neck, that Hinkle, 21, now living in Atlanta, transferred to three different high schools to escape it. Hinkle said administrators ignored threats of violence and physical attacks at three Washoe County High schools between fall of 1995 and fall of 1996.

When school officials constantly switched me from school to school, they said that they were keeping me safe. In fact, they didn't care about me at all. They just wanted to sweep the abuse under the rug, Hinkle said in an interview two years ago. According to court documents, school staff witnessed several incidents of harassment but refused to intervene and instead told Hinkle to keep his sexuality private-- a request his lawyer said violated his First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and expression.

Do you have anything to--

MERLIN: Oh, I was just-- as you're sitting here talking about this, I can't help but hearken back to my high school years. And I remember quite vividly having verbal taunts and--

JIMMY CARPER: I'm sorry. You were out in school, weren't you, Merlin?

MERLIN: I was-- I came out at 14.

JIMMY CARPER: All right,

MERLIN: Yeah.

STEVEN: I-- I was not out because of the town I'm from. There was no way in the world I could've.

MERLIN: And the first high school I was in was a Roman Catholic high school.

DAVID: I had--

MERLIN: Nothing like being surrounded by Roman Catholic Republicans-- straight Roman Catholic Republicans let me--

STEVEN: Well, there's one Republican here, but you won't hold me against that, right?

MERLIN: Yeah. No, I don't hold that against you. You're gay.

STEVEN: You know what, David?

MERLIN: But it was a thing of-- I remember going off because they had the-- there was a-- they destroy-- I-- somebody, apparently, and nobody apparently saw it, destroyed a locker of mine. Tore, literally, peeled the door back and destroyed everything in my locker, including school books-- destroying school books. So, yeah, I feel for people who are still going through that kind of thing.

STEVEN: Sadly enough, it happens. And it's not--

MERLIN: I'm 34 now.

STEVEN: I know--

MERLIN: That was a long time ago.

STEVEN: I know in our-- we push the gay issue because we're all queer and-- but it happens in I know Santa Fe, the town I'm from, just settled out of court on a Jewish about a young boy who was abused in class verbally not-- but because he was just a lone Jewish. And I know Santa Fe cannot handle another lawsuit as far as from a gay kid or anyone else because they just had the Jewish one. They just had the prayer in school lawsuit.

MERLIN: Now would not be a good time.

STEVEN: Right. And I mean, that goes for a lot of these school districts. And that's what PFLAG is trying to push out is to change the different policies.

DAVID: I would have loved to have been a PFLAG when I was a kid.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, guys, Thanks for being here.

MERLIN: You're welcome.

JIMMY CARPER: As always. As always. I mean, folks, these are guys-- Steven and David who are here most weeks in the background just ready to give an opinion whenever I ask.

STEVEN: Jump in.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. [INAUDIBLE].

MERLIN: Right, I can give him 10 minutes every once in a while.

DAVID: Me? Opinionated?

JIMMY CARPER: You?

STEVEN: No.

JIMMY CARPER: Never. Yes--

DAVID: Not me.

JIMMY CARPER: David's the one with that satirical wit. Yes. Yes. That I appreciate so much.

MERLIN: Aw [INAUDIBLE].

DAVID: Hey, wait a minute.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, well, we've got Steve and Jerome coming up. And we're going to open with a little tune from Sylvester-- our late, great treasure. This is something that you probably wouldn't associate with Sylvester because it's not a dance song. But he does it very well.

And if you're of a certain age, you'll remember the tune. Here we go. And we'll be right back with Steven Jerome right here on After Hours-- queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

Ah, the late, great Sylvester with a wonderful ballad version of "One Night Only." That was a dance song from the '70s actually. And he just-- he turns it into a ballad. That that's just incredible, just incredible.

Just like-- it kind of reminds me of Gladys Knight doing a ballad version of I Will Survive.

STEPHEN She did that.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, I've got that on tape. I have that on tape. Ooh, that is good too.

STEPHEN She needs to come to town. Oh, good morning, everybody.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Stephen Jerome, how are you doing?

STEPHEN All right, doing all right.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Good. Good. Good. What's up?

STEPHEN And to all my brothers and sisters out there, good morning in case you're still woke.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, you know, if you haven't been to bed, it's still Saturday night. If you've been to bed, it is Sunday morning. So that's how we work it.

And speaking of working it, you've got quite a schedule going this weekend yourself, don't you?

STEPHEN Every weekend. Every weekend. Somebody told me I was moving so fast I was going to miss my funeral. I'm like-

JEROME: -

JIMMY CARPER: You might.

STEPHEN --that's a good idea.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You might.

STEPHEN [INAUDIBLE] there. Sorry I couldn't hang around. First, I guess, catching up on community events going on. For
JEROME: those who may have missed it, the Men's Gathering had their monthly meeting and discussion at Community Gospel Church yesterday. Stay tuned. Check out their web page. They have a real great web page, and it let's you know about all their upcoming events.

One of their upcoming events will be the Black Expo, 2002, which will be the weekend of October 4 through the sixth held at the courtyard by Marriott, 3131, West South Loop. Go to their web page--
themengathering.dream2.org and check it out.

Also going on this week in the community, the Black Houston Black Lesbian, Gay, and Transgender Coalition is saluting transgender this month.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

STEPHEN And they actually kicking it off with a roundtable discussion on Friday, August 23, from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the
JEROME: Houston Lesbian Gay Community Center.

JIMMY CARPER: You know, and I wanted to-- I meant to say this earlier, but I'm so very, very proud that one of our transgender hosts here-- assistant producers, Vanessa Edwards Foster was just named chair of NTAC-- National Transgender Advocacy group.

STEPHEN You go [INAUDIBLE].

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Yes. That's a national group. And she is the chair of it.

STEPHEN OK, because she got [? qualitative ?] teaching at the training session.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, she's incredible.

STEPHEN Yes, if anybody ever get to hear her speak, you should. take advantage of it. Real great lady. Also, we have a
JEROME: beauty workshop going on on Saturday morning, August 24 at the community center from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Mr. Morris Ridley, he's a fashion consultant for Fashion Fair Makeup will be doing--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, cool.

STEPHEN --for the transgender. But you don't have to be transgender. If you just want to get your face pretty, come on out.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

STEPHEN On Sunday evening, August 25, starting at 7:00 PM till 9:00, there will be a mixer to the team for the transgender
JEROME: community at the community.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIMMY CARPER: It's a great place.

STEPHEN If you want to have more information about the Houston Black Lesbian, Gay, and Transgender Coalition, just
JEROME: check out hblagc-- H-B-L-A-G-C-- @yahoogroups.com.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, let's have that again.

STEPHEN Hblagc@yahoogroups.com.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: OK, H-B-L-- Houston Black Lesbian and Gay Coalition.

STEPHEN It's still under the original name on there. Nash this month for-- well, it's for next month now. They meet on the
JEROME: second Sunday of each month.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK. So that--

STEPHEN And it's Men of all Shades.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Shades? Rather than colors?

STEPHEN No, this isn't a racial group. It's not connected with Men of all Colors or BWMT, which is a great group also.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Yes.

STEPHEN But this is just a local group for guys who are into interracial dating just to meet and support each other, talk
JEROME: about issues that are particular to interracial dating. We'll be having a picnic out at Memorial Park over in the fruit loop area. I don't know any other way to describe the place. The fruit loops area.

JIMMY CARPER: The fruit loop. OK, now, where exactly is that?

STEPHEN In the barbecue part side--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: For those of us who haven't trolled the park lately.

STEPHEN Any of those around? OK. For those who don't know about the cultural advantages of Memorial Park, if you're
JEROME: going westbound on Memorial, you would turn left at the second signal light. They have a signal light there now. It's where the barbecue and the picnic area is. It's still a fruit loop. Anyway.

But moving on-- so on the second Sunday next month-- September-- the weather permitting, we will have a barbecue. It's a potluck, so if you want to bring something, come on out. And you do not have to be a member to attend this barbecue.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, so where is this now?

STEPHEN Just come on out to Memorial Park over in the picnic area side. You'll see my car. Look for the red Bronco. And
JEROME: you'll see a bunch of guys out there in one area. Probably be towards the back area.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, sounds good.

STEPHEN We have more information about it. I'll pass it on to you.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

STEPHEN Tonight, looking at the word diva, one of the things that caught my eye with the definition is that a diva is a
JEROME: forerunner. Divas don't sit back and wait for somebody else to make the first step. They get out there and break the ice, break the mold. What's the word I'm looking for? Shock the nation.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. You know, and we associate the word diva with women, but, boy, I think Sylvester was certainly a diva.

STEPHEN Yeah. And with this being transgender month down at the coalition and thinking about divas, Sylvester is our
JEROME: diva.

JIMMY CARPER: You bet. You bet.

STEPHEN I mean, Sylvester was one of the very first, and the very first, I think, Black openly gay. And that's the difference
JEROME: there. We've had Black gay stars. but openly gay.

JIMMY CARPER: Openly gay with national contracts-- recording contracts. Yes.

STEPHEN In fact, international. And was not something that was a product of a producer such as the Village People.
JEROME: Sylvester was Sylvester.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

STEPHEN Sylvester was the first openly gay. And the first-- I can use his word-- drag queen to hit the stage.
JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Every time that the record company wanted him to butch it up, he just-- I mean, he just put on more makeup.

STEPHEN It was shocking.
JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And there's an album cover.

STEPHEN Every time they said, butch it up, he went shopping.
JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: There was album cover of him in heels. And he said he did that because the record company told him to butch it up. And so he said, oh, you can't tell me what do.

STEPHEN I think his most butch cover was the one where he had on some cowboy boots on.
JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

STEPHEN They were red and white. I loved him for that. Also, tonight, I'm actually dedicating this program, not only to our
JEROME: divas-- and I mean our transgender sisters out there-- but also to all those ones who are over 25.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

STEPHEN This is this night where we're going to bring you down memory lane. We're not going to do a lot of talking
JEROME: tonight. I'm going to kind of let you jam a little.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

STEPHEN But give you a little history on Sylvester. Sylvester's whole name was Sylvester James, but he dropped the James
JEROME: because he didn't want anybody to pester his mother.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

STEPHEN And to partially protect his family identity, so he dropped the name-- the James name. He was born in 1946. So
JEROME: you mathematicians, y'all figure that out. And he was born in Los Angeles.

He started out with the-- you ready for this? I love this name of this group-- the Cockettes.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes. Oh, you know, there's a new movie out on the Cockettes. All of a sudden, there's been a great move to locate pictures and get interviews with people who were still alive who were one of the Cockettes. That was one of the first really out there groups.

STEPHEN --Cockettes back then. Oh, my. Moving on. Then, in the '70s, he started this band called Hot Band. I didn't really
JEROME: remember him with hot band.

JIMMY CARPER: No, me neither.

STEPHEN But that was in the early '70s. And we all remember Dance, Disco. That's when I think everybody liked Sylvester.
JEROME:

A thing about butching it up-- remember this picture where he was holding a cigarette?

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

STEPHEN It took me a long time to figure out that was the same Sylvester. I was like, I didn't know they had another
JEROME: Sylvester.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I know. And it was this that kind of clear, clear, crisp falsetto voice that he used a lot. It was just the beautiful voice.

STEPHEN And even without the makeup-- and I think that's one of the things that really stuck in my head with that
JEROME: particular album because he didn't have any makeup or anything on. But even without all the makeup and all the gimmicks and everything else, the man could sing.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, absolutely.

STEPHEN And it's like the quote he used to say about for Two Tons O' Fun. Your ears have to be in your foot not to know
JEROME: that these girls can sing. Well, all of them could sing.

I remember at one of his concerts I saw him at, he talked about how when they first started. And I have always tried to picture Two Tons O' Fun and Sylvester in a Volkswagen. But he said they were going to a concert. And at that time, the only transportation they had was this little Volkswagen that was half dead, half alive. And they're going down.

Maximum weight limit on a Volkswagen is only like 500 pounds. And he got both of them in there.

JIMMY CARPER: And both of them in there. Ooh.

STEPHEN And we all know that Two Tons O' Fun, they're still because Martha Wash is still on the scene and still very much
JEROME: recognized and always-- everybody's always trying her.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, and she fought for it too. I mean, when the record companies were using her voice and putting somebody else in the videos, I mean, she finally had enough of that, took them to court, and they had to put out a whole album of her stuff. And she's still in demand to this day in clubs-- singing her old songs, singing some of her new songs because she's still putting out new stuff.

STEPHEN I remember when they came to Houston years ago, you know? And it's like, oh, that was the-- I think that was
JEROME: one of the concerts that actually brought me to Houston because I would always go the other direction like New Orleans and along the East Coast. And they were here in Houston. I'm like, OK, I got to go see them. And that was great.

Well, right now, before we get too tied up in memory lane, we're going to let you hear something from Sylvester. What you want to pull out the head on me over there?

JIMMY CARPER: Well, actually, I cued up something that you asked about before.

STEPHEN Oh, yes. This is-- I won't even say it's a remake because when Sylvester sings "Cry Me A River," the only thing
JEROME: that's remotely similar to the original recording is the name.

JIMMY CARPER: That's it.

STEPHEN This is not a remake. This is Sylvester's own rendition of "Cry Me A River."
JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And you're listening to it on After Hours-- queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

Oh, yeah. "Cry Me A River."

STEPHEN Just don't use all the Kleenex.
JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I know. I know. It gets you going.

When you talk about him being a diva and doing all this dance music, you think of somebody that was just doing the social play stuff. But no. He has a special place in San Francisco history.

STEPHEN Oh, yes.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Because several times when police were raiding bars and the gay men of San Francisco got together and they got mad and they wanted to march on City Hall or they wanted to do something destructive, the city supervisor-- Harvey Milk at the time-- used Sylvester, asked Sylvester to come and sing at some of these political rallies. And it kind of calmed nerves down and kept people from being destructive because at that time--

STEPHEN They were really ready to burn the city.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. And they had done it.

STEPHEN And at the same time, can you picture Sylvester singing and the city administrators trying to work?

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I know. With all that music going, you just can't--

STEPHEN The secretaries up dancing, you know? Nothing would get done, so.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

STEPHEN They knew that if Sylvester was there, let's get something done either way.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. Yeah.

STEPHEN Not only during those early days, but even as time wore on and the AIDS came up on the scene, Sylvester played

JEROME: a major role in San Francisco with AIDS awareness.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, he did.

STEPHEN In fact, the year that he died, he was in the Gay Pride Parade that year in a wheel-- he was in a wheelchair at the

JEROME: time. And he actually went through the entire route of the parade pushing it with his wheelchair.

JIMMY CARPER: I didn't know that. Wow.

STEPHEN And so he holds a very dear heart in the city of San Francisco. They actually claim him as their native son.

JEROME:

You know, it's funny because we have so many great actors, singers who come out of San Francisco.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Yes. Yes.

STEPHEN Even though this young man is not gay as we know, Danny Glover is out of a Frisco. A lot of our great stars went to Frisco before they even went down to LA to get their [? starts ?] [INAUDIBLE]. We thank Frisco for another icon-

-

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

STEPHEN Sylvester.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

STEPHEN Before we get too far, I want to mention, everybody, we still need volunteers at the switchboard.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

STEPHEN We need more and more ears. We're trying to have an ear convention. We need your ears here. We need

JEROME: compassionate hearts. We need people who don't mind listening to somebody else's problem.

We do have a training class starting tomorrow.

JIMMY CARPER: Tomorrow or today. If you have been to bed already, it's today.

STEPHEN Yeah, I forgot what day I was on. OK. The orientation for training class starts at 5:00 PM this evening. Now, at this

JEROME: time, we will make a special consideration if a person is that determined that they wanted to be in the training program-- and I must say, it's not a one-class training class.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, no.

STEPHEN This is a series of classes totaling almost 30 hours over the next four weeks. But if a person still was interested in

JEROME: being a volunteer, if they would call my number at the switchboard, call the switchboard-- 713-529-3211. Leave your name, number, get in touch with me.

If I can meet with you on Monday and we get all your paperwork done, get reference check-- which we do have do.

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

STEPHEN Get all that done by 2:00 so you can start with the class Tuesday.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Great.

STEPHEN But give us a call-- 713-529-3211. And just ask for me.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. 529-3211-- the number for the switchboard. It's been that number for 20 years.

STEPHEN Yup, and it's still working. So. Give us a call. We like to talk to people. And we even listen sometimes.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

STEPHEN Plus we know where all great spots are in town.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: 20 years without a hang up.

STEPHEN In fact, if you call the switchboard, they can actually give you directions to where the picnic would be for
JEROME: [INAUDIBLE].

JIMMY CARPER: See? See?

STEPHEN So everybody there knows where the fruit loop is. Anyway, moving on. You know, Sylvester-- the music of
JEROME: Sylvester basically paints the picture of that era-- the disco era as some of us know it. For those who don't know what the disco era, we're talking about an era of great music that brought rise to dance clubs across America during the '70s and '80s.

And the disco era was really dampened by the AIDS epidemic.

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

STEPHEN AIDS epidemic had pretty much the same effect that 9/11 tend to had on lives in our community. It just brought
JEROME: everything to a screeching halt all of a sudden.

But moving with Sylvester, Sylvester hung in there even with the changing-- as the music pattern started changing during the '80s. Sylvester was still pumping out all these great hits.

And right now, this song is dedicated to all those ones who are out there who may be alone right now looking for that special lover man, wondering where he's at, and he's not on Main and Elgin, OK. So this song is for you.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

JIMMY CARPER: Thank you, Sylvester. Oh, that was good. Little bit of the blues, y'all.

STEPHEN For you young people, that's how we used to party. Well, we used to turn the lights down in the den.
JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh, yeah. Ooh, yeah.

STEPHEN And turn the music on a little loud. Parents will still at home. They'd come in. Turn the light back up.
JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

STEPHEN They never asked us what we was doing. They knew what we was doing. They just turned the light back on. Stop
JEROME: that.

But that's going down memory lane. We're sitting here talking about other artists who have come along and did renditions of Sylvester's--

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, Jimmy Somerville has done quite a few Sylvester hits. He did this one when he was with Bronski Beat. And he did one we're going to play later on, which is "You Make Me Feel Mighty Real."

STEPHEN Patti LaBelle, after she left LaBelle, she kind of went on a hiatus for a while.
JEROME: