

SPEAKER 1: The guy who wrote the song listened to the prison program one time. And the actual stories that he talks about are the stories he heard.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, wow.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. It's an amazing experience. if you've never heard it. 9:00 to 11:00 every Friday night.

SPEAKER 2: Wow.

SPEAKER 1: And Ray, and Big Roy, and Deb will be here at 1 o'clock. We're going to start-- we're going to intermingle the first and the second half, because we got folks here already. And we want to talk about Proposition II and to say nothing of the election.

SPEAKER 2: Really?

SPEAKER 1: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: For sure. Well, what I wanted to touch on next is, as I said, I went through some growing pains surrounding bisexuality, and polyamory, and--

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. I'll bet, I mean because you're just--

SPEAKER 2: And being intersex.

SPEAKER 1: The whole thing of-- I mean all that you've talked about, this journey that you've come to just couldn't have happened overnight.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. And part of what helped me through this was, interestingly enough, is studying philosophy.

SPEAKER 1: Really?

SPEAKER 2: Because all of a sudden I learned that there were bisexual heroes and sheroes throughout time.

SPEAKER 1: Yes. And one of the big ones is Oscar Wilde.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah.

SPEAKER 1: Everyone in the gay community keeps claiming him for one of their own, but he was married and had two children.

SPEAKER 2: Well, let's go back even further to Socrates.

SPEAKER 1: Oh yeah. Yeah. Well--

SPEAKER 2: And Plato and all the Greeks, or a lot of the Greeks. That was a part of history that was whitewashed, I mean, and heterosexually whitewashed totally and sterilized.

SPEAKER 1: Funny you should mention that. There was a program on cable tonight, XY, about sex through the ages. And they were talking about the same thing in China with men having wives and having boyfriends. And nobody thought anything of it.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. I mean it's kind of interesting. Jay and I have kind of done some studying on it since. And I forget the dates exactly, but the word homosexual hasn't been around very long.

SPEAKER 1: No. Late 1800s.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. The word heterosexual hasn't been around that long.

SPEAKER 1: No, because there wasn't any--

SPEAKER 2: It wasn't something people distinguished in the past.

SPEAKER 1: No. You're right.

SPEAKER 2: Basically, especially in ancient civilizations, behavior was behavior.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: Love was love.

SPEAKER 1: And I don't think that there were a whole lot of same sex relations as primary relationships.

SPEAKER 2: Well--

SPEAKER 1: I think there was always a marriage involved and then--

SPEAKER 2: But it also depends how you define marriage.

SPEAKER 1: Well, I guess so.

SPEAKER 2: Because the modern day definition of marriage, a boy meets girl, falls madly in love, and has 2.5 kids, and the whole concept of romantic love--

SPEAKER 1: Oh. That's new.

SPEAKER 2: --is only since the Victorian era.

SPEAKER 1: That's true. That's true. In fact, in the same program they were talking about in China and Japan, it was not uncommon for the husband and wife to not even have met until the wedding day because it was arranged.

SPEAKER 2: It was arranged at birth and sometimes before birth during pregnancy. Basically, marriage was originally started as a way to kind of pass on wealth--

SPEAKER 1: Pass on wealth.

SPEAKER 2: --and dowries, and through many other means.

SPEAKER 1: And in so many ways in society that it was also an ownership of a husband owning a wife.

SPEAKER 2: In some cultures, but the other thing it was also was a political set up. If you've got country A that you're having some rough tensions with, get your daughter out, get the prince over in that country to marry him, and all of a sudden you've formed a linkage.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. Some sort of--

SPEAKER 2: So marriage was as much a political tool, maybe more so than it is today--

SPEAKER 1: Than for passing of wealth and lineage.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. So you take a look at that. And what we think of marriage isn't what it's been for very long.

SPEAKER 1: No. You're right.

SPEAKER 2: So once you take a look at the definition, all of a sudden you realize, wait a minute, this had nothing to do with love in the past.

SPEAKER 1: That's right.

SPEAKER 2: That's a pretty modern concept. Gosh. Once you kind of get that seated, then all of a sudden it makes sense that when you fooled around with other people outside of this set up marriage, pre-arranged, it wasn't frowned upon so much because that almost became the glue that would hold these marriages together. If you didn't fool around and you didn't get along--

SPEAKER 1: Oh yeah. Whoa.

SPEAKER 2: --because you got a bad pick, your parents picked the wrong person for you, tensions would build. And you got to get them out somewhere.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. And back then, in ages past when the world was more agrarian than urban, it was important to have a wife and lots of children to help out on the farm. I mean you needed a wife for her to do certain things and you had to do certain things.

SPEAKER 2: And then in ancient times, the other thing that a lot of people aren't aware of is the Beltane fires.

SPEAKER 1: I'm not aware of the Beltane fires.

SPEAKER 2: Well, during Beltane, men and women would go and pair off at the fires. Didn't matter if they were-- marriage was kind of revoked for the night.

SPEAKER 1: Oh. That was kind of an, oh, well, that's sort of like Mardi Gras.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. And basically, you just got with whomever.

SPEAKER 1: Oh OK.

SPEAKER 2: And sometimes it wasn't even boy and girl. It was boy and boy or girl and girl. I guess what I'm trying to bring up with all this is that once I started discovering that what our society calls normal and what our society calls perverted is pretty modern definitions that haven't existed that long.

SPEAKER 1: Yes. You're right.

SPEAKER 2: But we're programmed by society to think this has always been this way. And when--

SPEAKER 1: Yes, I know.

SPEAKER 2: --we read the history books, it's plain that it's always been this way.

SPEAKER 1: Right. And especially when I hear the Christian right wing talking about maintaining the--

SPEAKER 2: Family values?

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. It's like, hello, first of all, 50% of marriages end in divorce.

SPEAKER 2: Well, hang on. Let's step back to family values for a minute.

SPEAKER 1: OK.

SPEAKER 2: I went to an interesting sermon at Jay's church, Christian church. And the minister got up and he said, OK, let's take a look at family values. What do we mean by this? Shall we go to the Bible as our guide?

SPEAKER 1: Ooh.

SPEAKER 2: And he started flipping through. He said, should we turn to King Solomon, or should we say-- shall we turn-- who do we turn to in the Bible to give us the kind of diagram for family values?

SPEAKER 1: Boy, that would be hard, wouldn't it?

SPEAKER 2: Where do you look?

SPEAKER 1: Where do you look?

SPEAKER 2: I mean even Jesus hung around with prostitutes.

SPEAKER 1: That's right. That's right. And the Bible doesn't really talk about a lot of his family, and brothers or sisters, or all that growing up stuff is just kind of--

SPEAKER 2: So what do we use as a model for these? If you can't even turn to the Christian Bible that these right wing Christians promote for a model of what they call family values, where do they come up with this sense? It's not in the Bible.

Look a little deeper and I think what we're looking at is a lot of people looking at the '50s lifestyle. And you look at the '50s. And that was an interesting time in history. A lot of people focus in on all the, quote--

SPEAKER 1: It was the age--

--"Beaver Cleaver" stuff. It was the age of assimilation. And everybody pretended that their family was like television but no one's was.

SPEAKER 2: But if you look closer at the '50s, the '50s was a witch hunt time.

SPEAKER 1: Boy, was it.

SPEAKER 2: I mean McCarthyism, looking for the bad communists.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: It was a witch hunt. Totally. And people were scared to death and forced into this so-called family values system. If you didn't live by this strict code, you were labeled a communist.

SPEAKER 1: Pretty much.

SPEAKER 2: And so we want to return to this model? And so I guess what I'm trying to get at is that growing up with all these myths and all these things that I was taught were supposed to be, and then starting to discover there's other things in history that aren't talked about and aren't revealed in the history books-- you go into it a little deeper and you start studying philosophy and ancient religions, all of a sudden you realize, wow. People-- if you take a look from a geologic time scale, people have been practicing what we've been practicing for just a few minutes in the whole picture of humankind.

SPEAKER 1: Yes. That's true. Oh, absolutely.

SPEAKER 2: Geologic time.

SPEAKER 1: And yeah. And they talk about-- you talk about this family values thing coming from that--

SPEAKER 2: A couple of seconds.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. And that's when a man got married so he could own a wife, and so she could be dependent upon him and obey him in all things. What is that about?

SPEAKER 2: I think it gets to discrimination.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: It's a tool used to promote imbalance in relationships, to promote the authoritarian model, to promote power.

SPEAKER 1: Well--

SPEAKER 2: Unequal power.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. We're talking about this now. And we better bring some other folks on.

SPEAKER 2: I think it's time.

SPEAKER 1: It works right into Proposition 2.

SPEAKER 2: But before we do, I do want to say, look to your-- take another look at the history books because we do-- whether homosexual, or bisexual, or lesbian, we have many, many heroes and sheroes that are our family, I mean everyone from Joan of Arc to Oscar Wilde to Leonardo da Vinci to-- there's many, many of us that have existed throughout time.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: And I think that was the thing I missed growing up struggling with the issue of am I OK being bi or am I OK doing these behaviors. I didn't have anybody to look up to and say, oh wow.

SPEAKER 1: That's right. That's right.

SPEAKER 2: It is OK. I mean a lot of people have done this. It's not something-- it's not the myth that they say, oh, you're perverted, and bad, and nasty, and indifferent. It's pretty incredible once you start looking between the pages and reading a little deeper and learning. And I think education is one of the keys to enlightenment.

SPEAKER 1: OK. Let's bring them on. I want you to stay.

SPEAKER 2: Do you want to get to music and then bring them?

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. Let's do that. And this is music by a group called Y'all.

SPEAKER 2: Ooh.

SPEAKER 1: They are coming to the Millbend Coffeehouse on Saturday, November the 10th, at 8:00 PM. Y'all-- or two men, Steven, Jess Lick, the mayor, and Jay Bird. And they do kind of a queer country type thing. Ooh. Yeah some--

SPEAKER 2: Beat stuff.

SPEAKER 1: They've been around quite a few years. They've got a couple of CDs out. I'm very fortunate to have my friend JD Doyle, from Lesbian and Gay Voices, who does the music there, give me some of their music so that we can get to it.

So this is what you'll be hearing Saturday, November 10, at the Millbend Coffeehouse. That's located at 1370 North Millbend Drive in the Woodlands. It's actually the UU Church. And the Millbend is what they do every second Saturday I believe it is or one Saturday a month at least.

So when we come back, we're going to have-- we're switching out our schedule. And we're going to have Big Roy McCarthy. He gave me this note that Tracy Hunter and Patrick say hi from Dietrich's, Dietrich's Coffeehouse.

SPEAKER 2: Hey. Hey. Hey.

SPEAKER 1: And for you three, here's Y'all. I think you're going to find this very, very good.

SPEAKER 2: Ooh. I can't wait.

SPEAKER 1: And you're hearing it all on After Hours, queer radio with attitude, on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station.

Oh yeah. Y'all will be at the Millbend Coffeehouse on November the 10th at 8:00 PM, located at 1370 North Millbend Drive in the Woodlands. And now we're kind of rescheduling here, because we got some folks in early. But it's a Big Roy segment.

ROY OK. Yeah, I thought it was news and views news magazine.

MCCARTHY:

SPEAKER 1: Yes. It is.

ROY And I want to welcome you too my first shot at this. And with me tonight I have the president of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus.

RAY HILL: Yay, Deborah.

ROY Deborah Rogers. And I have Mr. Activist Extraordinaire and--

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: Grandmother.

ROY --grandmother, grandpa, and god knows what else.

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: You know, I don't have a problem with that gender crap.

ROY Big Daddy Radio with us.

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: And Joe Mama. And Radio is president of [INAUDIBLE].

SPEAKER 1: Yes.

ROY I wonder what on Earth I could possibly be talking about tonight.

MCCARTHY:

SPEAKER 1: Well, before we get into that, I want to talk about Ray's song.

RAY HILL: no kidding.

ROY Isn't that clever? I love-- that is a great song.

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: This guy, his name is Gerald Bates. And the name of the group is, would you believe, Bates Motel.

SPEAKER 1: Well. Hey, why not?

RAY HILL: got his album. And it's kind of rockabilly. Is it rockabilly? It wasn't much different from that cut you just played.

SPEAKER 1: Oh, good.

RAY HILL: And so if you like that kind of music--

SPEAKER 1: I do.

RAY HILL: Down at the end of it is this right real tender piece. And the story that Gerald tells is that-- oh, by the way, the CD is available wherever you get CDs.

SPEAKER 1: OK.

RAY HILL: I don't know anything about music so I don't know where you get the CDs. But Joe--

SPEAKER 1: Oh, Cactus or Sound Wave.

RAY HILL: Wherever. Gerald, bless his heart, he was going to do a gig. It was his girlfriend. He just got a new girlfriend. And she was expecting him to go earn some money instead of hang around the house all the time. And so he was going to go do a gig.

And he was driving up out there in his pickup. And he was listening to KPFT because we had played one of his other songs here on the radio station earlier in the day. And so he had his ears on. And the second hour of the prison show entered the reality. And he sat out in front of the venue and wrote the song before he went in to do the gig.

SPEAKER 1: Wow.

RAY HILL: And he was late getting on stage.

SPEAKER 1: I can imagine.

RAY HILL: And so that-- but bless his heart. He come down during the fundraising and made his presence known. And I really appreciated doing that. And the ladies that are working on the documentary on The Prison Show and my foolishness are just beside themselves, because this is the background music that they need for the documentary.

ROY And it is just like such a great sounding piece. I really enjoyed it.

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: It's tender

ROY It's a very--

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: It's tender. It works.

ROY And everything.

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: The second hour on my show is a-- hey, Tom. Second hour on my show is one of the most tender pieces of media that I've ever heard, much less done. I mean it's voices of wives, mothers, and children calling in to give a little encouragement to somebody in prison who is alone and misses those family connections. On my show, we say KPFT stands for keep prison families together.

SPEAKER 3: That's right. That's right. When can they hear your show?

RAY HILL: Every Friday night I come on at 9 o'clock. You get a full mix of social criticism and politics.

SPEAKER 1: Boy, do you.

RAY HILL: Yeah. Varda is a tough lady, ain't she?

SPEAKER 1: Woo.

RAY HILL: Before she came, I had to be the mean guy.

SPEAKER 1: She must have bars on her windows, I mean, because the stuff that she talks about--

RAY HILL: Well, she names those guys.

SPEAKER 1: She does.

RAY HILL: She tells what they do.

SPEAKER 1: She tells these like felony offenses that they commit on a daily basis.

RAY HILL: One time she exposed 12 doctors that worked for the prison system that did not have license to practice medicine at all.

SPEAKER 1: Wow.

SPEAKER 3: Goodness gracious.

DEBORAH: Unconscionable.

ROGERS:

RAY HILL: --in the state of Texas. And so the prison system called a news conference because one of the doctors, a Dr. Jones, a Dr. Robert Jones that she named, was not the same Robert P. Jones that worked for the system. So out of 12, she got one wrong. And they hold a news conference and said, see, this woman lies. And the other media said, well, what about the other 11? And they said we're not here to talk about that.

SPEAKER 3: Of course not.

RAY HILL: No, I raise them up right. Everybody on this show is somebody that's got somebody in prison or somebody that's been in prison. And it makes a wonderful tapestry. You know, I get up every Friday morning and think that I've got something important to do that day. And that is that show.

SPEAKER 1: It is.

RAY HILL: And 25 years ago, I get up every Monday morning and think I had something important to do. And that was Wilde N Stein, the gay and lesbian programming, on KPFT, which I did from 1975 until I became general manager in 1980. And After Hours and Lesbian and Gay Voices are kind of prodigies.

SPEAKER 1: Oh, definitely.

RAY HILL: So radio is a very powerful tool, especially when it comes to political seasons.

SPEAKER 1: Ooh. Yeah.

RAY HILL: See how I got that segued in there?

SPEAKER 1: Oh.

ROY You're just a [INAUDIBLE].

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: Of course, everybody has got their pantyhose in a twist about Proposition 2.

SPEAKER 1: Oh.

RAY HILL: And let me tell you something. I want you to listen to me. I mean I'm the old man. I've been doing this for a long time. And I know you don't want somebody to say, well, I told you so. We stand a very good risk of not winning Tuesday.

SPEAKER 1: Yes.

RAY HILL: That is entirely possible. As a matter of fact, if you study the history of referenda, the first time we won one was the first Briggs Amendment, Proposition 6 in California.

SPEAKER 1: And that took a lot of person power and a lot of money.

RAY HILL: I went out there and got involved in the media. And can I give you a story?

SPEAKER 1: Sure. What can you?

RAY HILL: Troy Perry called me and said, I want you to come out here and help us with the media because it is rumored that I'm pretty good at media manipulation. And so I went out to California at Troy's expense. And he picked me up at the airport. And we talked. And we codified a friendship that at that had been going on for a decade. And we drove up to his little studio, out of the way studio. And I walked in. There was Ethel Merman.

SPEAKER 1: Really?

ROY No.

MCCARTHY:

SPEAKER 1: Wow.

RAY HILL: Sitting in a chair with the lights on and cameras all around. And they called Wayne-- that was the director of The Her Thing-- was trying to tell Miss Merman-- now Miss Merman, you don't need a script for this. We just want you to look in the camera and talk about the nice gay people that you've known in the entertainment business. And we'll edit it so that it fits so you don't have to worry about talking too long and all that. Let me tell you something about Ethel Merman.

A newsman dropped by Ethel Merman's house. She had a script. And she studied it for two weeks. The woman could deliver a line with the best of them but she never worked without a script in her whole career. Write the line. Ethel can deliver it. All right. And this queen just didn't have a hint.

And I was just fixing to pull him off to the side when she brightened up and she said, oh, I know. I know what I'm going to say. And they turned up the lights. And they turned on the camera. And she looked dead in that camera and she said, oh, I have known many wonderful gay couples in the show business world.

I used to go to the horse races every year with J. Edgar Hoover and Clyde [INAUDIBLE]. They were such a lovely couple. And I turned to Troy and I said, of course, we can't use that but save that film.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah. No kidding.

RAY HILL: And we won-- how we won No on Six was not with clever ads. And incidentally, we do have very clever ads.

SPEAKER 1: Yes.

RAY HILL: We've got great television ads with "Vote no on Proposition 6." And they did [INAUDIBLE]. We also held an army of PFLAG people and everybody they can find, and the churches they attend, and where they go, and their social circuits out there working. How these things are won is for you.

No. I'm not talking to Pete [INAUDIBLE]. I'm talking about you sitting there by your radio. You. I want you to get up in the morning, Sunday morning. Let your neighbors sleep. Have your long day sleep on Sunday morning.

And I want you to go next door, wherever your neighbors are. And I want you to say, look, I need your help. This doesn't affect me directly because I don't work for the city, but it affects me indirectly because I know people that do and I care about people that do. And my rights are going to be on the ballot.

SPEAKER 1: Yes.

RAY HILL: And I want you to go all the way to the end of the ballot where the propositions are. And I want you to vote on city proposition two. Let me tell you another thing. That same person, and the lady you work next to, and the guy you've been flirting with down at where you have lunch, all those people that know you, recognize your face, you're somebody important to them, even if you're a small tipper. All right. And I want you to talk to all those people because they not only don't know about Proposition Two, they don't know about the rest of the ballot.

SPEAKER 1: That's true.

RAY HILL: And so they don't know but when they walk into that polling place, there's going to be like three pages of state referenda stuff. All right. They don't know that. And you do now. You didn't know that till I said that. You didn't know that the first thing when you open up the voting thing-- you're going to vote with the punch card the way we always do. There's all those state referenda.

SPEAKER 1: 19.

RAY HILL: Yes. And then you open another couple of pages and there is county stuff, county bond issues that affects things like parks, and things like road repair in the county. All right. And then you go over and there's the mayor and the city council things to vote on. And then after that is a city referendum. That's how it's laid out. And they're not expecting that.

And so I'm going to tell you how to sound real smart. All right. On the county-- I mean on the state referendum, which is the first thing, all of the bond issue things, vote for this bond issue, that bond issue, and spend money here, all of that is corporate welfare that's going to give kickbacks to members of the legislature. All right. So you can safely tell them vote against all that. All right.

On the other thing it's like are we going to have a treasurer in Duval County and change the constitutional amendment to do that. You can tell them to vote for that because it won't affect them. It's not going to raise their taxes. Might get rid of another politician in some faraway county. Vote for that. It's safe.

SPEAKER 1: You bet.

RAY HILL: All right. Then when you get to the county stuff, oh, there's a couple that you want to vote for. There's chocolate and coffee.

DEBORAH Always vote for chocolate and coffee.

ROGERS:

SPEAKER 1: Oh, yes.

RAY HILL: If you don't understand about chocolate and coffee, then vote for that. That's important to vote for.

DEBORAH Extremely important.

ROGERS:

RAY HILL: Because that's money right here in Houston. I mean that's a job for the neighbor and all that. You know that waiter that you don't tip enough, coffee and chocolate may be the apple of his eye someday. That may get you a trick.

OK. And the other thing you need to tell them is when you get to the county thing-- now I want to confess. I'm a pretty liberal fellow. All right.

SPEAKER 1: Oh, that's a surprise.

RAY HILL: And I believe in parks. I've actually one time was young enough to cruise parks.

SPEAKER 1: Yes, you were.

RAY HILL: Had to do that very carefully. That's where I met Jimmy. And you got to be careful about that--

SPEAKER 3: Now we know.

RAY HILL: --these days. But actually, I like park space. I like green space. I'm kind of interested in environmentalism and things like that, and make the city and the county lovely. I would suggest that you vote for the county bond issues. That's basically what they are. There's no people to elect there.

And then when you get to the city thing, how our community-- and you don't have to be gay. You can be gay supportive to listen to this. Our community-- and if you're not gay and you're gay supportive, you're a member of our community, too. And if you're bisexual or transgender, you're a member of our community.

SPEAKER 1: That's right.

RAY HILL: There's only one community. And we only have one goal. And that is freedom for everybody. Do you understand that? Well we've got an organization in town that has gone to a great deal of trouble to make endorsements in every race that you're likely to find in your ballot.

Now when Patrick voted, my former companion-- I voted one day and Patrick went to vote the next day. I found out that the caucus endorsed candidate in district H. Didn't even have an opponent. But it's a good idea to vote for him anyway.

DEBORAH Well, we had several races where the candidates at the time of our screening were unopposed. And we still

ROGERS: treated those candidates as though they were looking for our endorsement based on where they stood on issues that we thought were important for everyone in the community, whether they were a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered individual or not.

And we even had a couple of races, well, one in particular, where we did screen an individual who was unopposed at the time. And we did not issue an endorsement. So in the races that we endorsed in District H, you would have had Gabriel Vasquez, right? He screened very well with us. And we were very, very proud to give that endorsement.

Deborah, why don't you run through the rest of the endorsements while people go, wait a minute, y'all go get a pencil first. All right.

SPEAKER 1: Not only that, while they're getting the pencil, I want to add that not only did I get an endorsement in the mail, nice big postcard type thing--

DEBORAH Oh good--

ROGERS:

SPEAKER 1: Oh yeah. But I've been seeing in the press and in the *Houston Voice* there's the endorsement thing there. I've been seeing it on the internet. I mean it's just available in a lot more places.

DEBORAH We've really tried to make it as available as possible. I want to thank Caucus Secretary Carmen Hanson for really

ROGERS: running ragged over the last couple of days making sure they were in various bars, and strip centers, and bookstores--

SPEAKER 1: Just wonderful. Yes.

DEBORAH --and everywhere that people go in and around at least the Montrose area community and encourage people to

ROGERS: go to our website at HGLPC.com.

SPEAKER 1: Easy enough. Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus. HGLPC.com.

DEBORAH Exactly. So if your pencil breaks on you in the middle of this, because mine always does-- that's what always

ROGERS: happens to me-- you can at least go to our website as well for this. But let me just start at the top and work our way down, basically.

Our first endorsement that I'm going to talk about is the mayor of Houston. We had two major candidates screen with us and one first-time candidate. Mayor Brown, Chris Bell, and Larry Devoy screened with the caucus. And I have to say this first for people who are not familiar with our screening process.

I am particularly proud of our screening committee members this year because of the work that they did. And our screening committee is made up of members of the caucus, everyday people, like everyone out there that goes out, goes to their job, does their stuff, pays their bills, pays their taxes, tries to pay their bills or taxes, whatever, and just live their lives as best they can. And people volunteer for this. They're not paid for it. If someone is a known advocate of a particular candidate, they don't screen in that race. We have to have objectivity as much as humanly possible.

And these people put the candidates through the drill. They sit there right across the table from them, face to face, and ask them the hard questions, both off of a written questionnaire that the candidates have ostensibly answered-- we all know it's really their campaign people answer it for them. And then those same questions are gone over again in a face to face confrontation with the caucus member screening the candidates. See if the candidate even knows what was said.

ROY Actually knows that.

MCCARTHY:

DEBORAH Yeah. You'd be surprised. Some of them aren't really sure even what the questions were.

ROGERS:

SPEAKER 1: Ooh.

DEBORAH And you always catch them up on that.

ROGERS:

ROY And I remember one year, I was a member of the--

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: Put your head at that microphone.

ROY Oh. OK. I remember one year I was a member of the screening committee. And I was really impressed at how the

MCCARTHY: members of that committee were able to come up with definitely the hard questions. And it's interesting to see some of these politicos just sitting in there just squirming in their--

RAY HILL: Well, from a politician standpoint, they need to understand I've not only-- I was chair of that committee for 10 years. And I've also come back before that committee as a candidate. Of all of the screening processes in town, I can assure listeners to the show that it is very difficult for politicians to evade issues.

And what is important to gay people is the same thing that ought to be important to everybody else. And that is quality of government, the honesty of government service, and the sincerity of the people that seek positions. And that comes through. And it is a wonderful process. It has evolved. It has changed.

I mean there was a time way back in the very beginning of the caucus when I sat down and interviewed Barbara Jordan and went back and gave a report. And the caucus endorsed her. It was one time in the very first year that the caucus was being created that Fred Huffines came to a community meeting, and gave a speech, and left with the endorsement of the caucus.

SPEAKER 1: Wow.

RAY HILL: So we have evolved from that kind of formal and casual way into a system where actually I really like to see the young members of the caucus involved in the screening, because this old political hacks can work it out on the floor of the caucus. This is true. It's true.

We're a reality check because somebody can come in and bamboozle the kids, but the kids come with recommendations entirely honestly. And we know their track records. I mean the Sue Levels, and the Rae Hills, and those folks who have been around since dirt can do a reality check. I was parliamentarian. I couldn't get involved in the process at all. Deborah tied me up in a corner. And of the caucus endorsement, I was very, very pleased with the professionalism.

But what Deborah hasn't told you is that, on the bottom line, the members of the caucus gather. They debate these issues. They discuss them. They listen to the screeners. And then the organization in the most parliamentary, democratic way raises their hand to vote for and against these endorsements. It is the cleanest process in this community.

ROY It's one of the cleanest processes I've seen anywhere.

MCCARTHY:

DEBORAH Well, it's something that we worked really hard to do this year in terms of keeping our membership accurate and

ROGERS: making sure we had members only vote. I'm just really proud of the process, and how it worked for us this year, and the people who volunteered to work with it, so that when we did get to a major race, such as the mayor's race, it wasn't something that was just a foregone conclusion.

There were a lot of people who said, oh, the caucus votes always. You can buy off the caucus vote. No. You can't buy off the caucus vote because you have people like Ray, or Phyllis Frye, or any number of other people sitting there about to call you on your shorts for trying to pull something on somebody in a meeting. And it always comes to the surface. But the bottom line is it's the membership that votes on this.

RAY HILL: And I have won some of those votes. And I have lost some of those votes.

DEBORAH Exactly. Exactly.

ROGERS:

ROY When the caucus does-- I want people to understand that when the caucus does the voting on this, it is the

MCCARTHY: general membership of the caucus, not some elite committee but the general membership.

DEBORAH Definitely. I mean the general membership is everyone.

ROGERS:

ROY That part of the meeting becomes a closed meeting when only voting members of the caucus--

MCCARTHY:

RAY HILL: Deborah's having hell with her ear goggles in here.

ROY And I'm having trouble with my microphone. We're having a blast today.

MCCARTHY:

SPEAKER 1: Yes, we are. All right. Run through the list. I've chewed that pencil down to the nub.

DEBORAH So OK. So we get to the mayor's race. And the bottom line is we endorsed Mayor Brown. There are a lot of people

ROGERS: say, why did you endorse Mayor Brown? Well, I can explain that pretty easily. First of all, the membership agreed to. And it was a pretty strong vote on that.

The reason is very simple. First of all, the city has been doing very well under Mr. Brown's leadership. Something that Ray pointed out in the conversation that he and I were having earlier this evening is that we have probably one of the best police chiefs--

RAY HILL: No question.

DEBORAH --that we've had in a long time.

ROGERS:

RAY HILL: I've had to deal with all of them since Herman Short. And Clarence Bradford is a prince of a police chief.

DEBORAH And that's something that many of us take for granted in our late age or in our early age. And it should not be taken for granted because this is something that can affect every one of us, no matter what kind of car we drive. There was a day in this town when it didn't matter what color car or kind of car you drove. If you had something that suggested you were of the gay lesbian community, that was a flag to be harassed. So we can't take this for granted.

SPEAKER 1: And also the mayor was the first sitting mayor to ever ride in the Gay Pride parade.

DEBORAH Yeah. This is quite a statement.

ROGERS:

SPEAKER 1: And that is quite a statement.

DEBORAH It really is.

ROGERS:

SPEAKER 1: In past years, that could have been political suicide.

DEBORAH Exactly.

ROGERS:

RAY HILL: The police chief would have ridden in it too but this is the first year his officers had been in and he didn't want to steal that thunder.

SPEAKER 1: That's right.

RAY HILL: But he asked me to use my influence to see if I could get him an invite for next year.

DEBORAH Let me tell you something. The night of the parade this past year when the word was making its way down the

ROGERS: chain of parade entrants that the police really were going to be able to pull this off, there was an electricity in the air--

SPEAKER 1: There was.

DEBORAH --that people could feel because this was a monumental event, a very big step forward. But keep in mind also

ROGERS: Mayor Brown has been incredibly intense and supportive on issues that mean something to not just the gay lesbian transgendered bisexual community but to all of us, which is that discrimination will not be tolerated.

And he has taken the initiative to bring this to the forefront. We haven't had other candidates do that. We haven't had other people in that office do that. And that's something that when it ain't broke, don't try to fix it.

ROY MCCARTHY: And I'll say this that Lee Brown is one of the very few politicians I've ever met in my entire life, 51 years, in which he makes promises and he keeps them. I mean how revolutionary.

RAY HILL: Well, I've known [? Leathy ?] Brown since he was the police chief here. I mean, I deal with police chiefs. And I knew him then. He's a nice guy then. He's a nice guy now. He has a vision for Houston that will carry it into the 21st century as a world class, modern city deserving of the accolades that a successful city deserves. And part of that process is to include all Houstonians, including us. Cities do not prosper discriminating.

DEBORAH I can't emphasize enough the economic disadvantages of discrimination. If you want to get really cold and calculating, I'll say it. It puts us in a position where our city can't compete economically with other communities, not just in our country but in the world.

RAY HILL: And an outstanding example of that-- remember when was it Apple that was going to put in a plant in Georgetown. And Georgetown passed a resolution that they couldn't come in if they didn't discriminate against gay people. They said fine, we'll move all this to Austin. And what you had in Georgetown, Texas, not one of the more sophisticated places on the planet, you had a complete change of political leadership so they could get that Apple plant.

DEBORAH That's right. Or as we say, it's the economy, stupid.

ROGERS:

ROY Yeah. And there's another thing-- there's a very real reality check here, folks. Everybody wants the Olympics here

MCCARTHY: in 2012. The International Olympic Committee definitely looks at [INAUDIBLE] discrimination.

RAY HILL: Well, when we were having the Olympics in Atlanta, there were some venues up in Cobb County. And Cobb County who had a referendum similar to the one that's on the ballot in Houston. They voted in favor of discrimination. As a result of it, Cobb County could not be used by the committee by the Olympics for any venue. So they had to build another stadium somewhere else so they could make it. But who else is on the endorsement list?

DEBORAH Oh yes. We've got some really great candidates. At large position one is this unknown that's coming back again

ROGERS: for her third and last term. God, what is her name? Anise seed or Annise. No.

RAY HILL: Let me tell you-- let me tell you about this little gal. Many, many years ago, she called me angry. Angry. She said why doesn't Rice have a gay and lesbian organization. I said because you haven't started one.

DEBORAH Well, that's got fixed.

ROGERS:

RAY HILL: And she got busy. And they got a little help from her peers over at the University of Houston, which already had a gay and lesbian organization. And nothing has stopped her since. I am so proud of that girl.

ROY Annise Park is really--

MCCARTHY:

SPEAKER 1: The original group was called GALOR, wasn't it?

RAY HILL: Yeah.

SPEAKER 1: Gays and Lesbians of Rice.

RAY HILL: Of rice.

SPEAKER 1: And I think they've changed it now to PRIDE.

RAY HILL: Yeah. PRIDE. They come up with these acronyms. But the fact of the matter is I'm watching-- I'm the only person in the world that actually watches municipal television.

SPEAKER 1: No. You're not the only one.

RAY HILL: On the committee meeting.

DEBORAH Oh wow. You get it though.

ROGERS:

RAY HILL: I know. Right. I sit there and--

DEBORAH Oh, wow. I don't get it.

ROGERS:

SPEAKER 1: That's right. Excuse me. Rainbow D. Clown doesn't watch it. He's there.

RAY HILL: And so I'm watching television. And Martha Wong was complaining that she couldn't marry a contractor with the City of Houston because he would have to give up his contract. And Annise Parker said, oh, that's no problem. Cathy can get any job with the city she wants and all the contracts because you don't recognize the legality of it.

SPEAKER 1: That's right.

RAY HILL: And so we are not in the nepotism laws. And so you know, Cathy can do it [INAUDIBLE]. If you would recognize our relationships as a matter of city policy, I would be willing to abide. I mean right out of the clear blue sky. Of course, it was-- and she was kind of hinting that Martha Wong actually couldn't catch is a city--