

ANNOUNCER: The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature, which may be considered objectionable by some. Listener discretion is advised.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes, you've tuned in to *After Hours*, queer radio with attitude right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of *After Hours* is ready to bring you news, interviews, dialogue, and music geared for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people and their friends.

Here at *After Hours*, we may be diverse, but we have one thing in common. We are all out of the closet and urge everyone to come out of their closets. That means standing up for yourself, taking responsibility for your own life, and being proud of who you are.

Realistically, we know not everyone can do that because of age, job, or frame of mind. That's OK. We're here for you, too. So sit back, relax, and enjoy this week's edition of *After Hours*.

Hello, Houston, and College Station, and the world, and welcome to *After Hours*, queer radio with attitude. I'm Jimmy Carper, and I'll be your producer for the evening. We've got several co-hosts here tonight, and before we get into that, I want to mention the music that you heard at the opening.

We started out with Dave Hall with Biff and Tony's wedding from his new album, his new album called-- no, his old album. This new album called *Places*. OK.

JD DOYLE: That's not the new one.

JIMMY CARPER: That's not the new one. OK, his old album called *Places*, and I get that on advice from JD Doyle, who happens to be here in the background. And he is the guru on music. Second was Miss Celie's Blues, and that was by Suede from her album from 1992 called *Barely Blue*.

And the reason that I've played those songs, and the reason that all the music you hear tonight is-- will be artists that are going to be at the Pride Festival next Sunday, Sunday, Sunday, Sunday. Yes, the day after the parade, we're having a Pride Festival.

Out there laughing in there. May as well turn them on. Hey, hello.

RAINBOW: Hello. Hello. Like the Three Stooges. Hello. Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: Your co-hosts for the evening are--

RAINBOW: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: --are Jewel--

JEWEL GRAY: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: And Jim.

JEWEL GRAY: And Jim.

JIM SONGRINI: And I'm not-- there I am.

JIMMY CARPER: There you are.

JIM SONGRINI: Wow, I can hear myself.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. I don't know how that worked.

JEWEL GRAY: And Rainbo's here.

JIM SONGRINI: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: And the official unofficial co-host for *After Hours*, Bobby.

BOBBY: Hello. Always a pleasure. I'm the official unofficial co-host.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

BOBBY: I like that, tough.

JIMMY CARPER: Anyway, the music that you heard, and the music that you will be hearing throughout the evening are artists who will be playing at the festival, and quite a few of them are from out of town.

BOBBY: Cool. Cool.

JIMMY CARPER: Here it is.

JIM SONGRINI: Groovy.

JIMMY CARPER: Dave Hall, Marcus Hutchison, who you've heard here on this show many times. They're coming in from New York, right? Yeah?

JIM SONGRINI: Get a rope.

JIMMY CARPER: Christy Claxton, who you've heard here because she's been a guest on the show and has done several concerts. Her famous ones being the lavender concerts that are held at the River Cafe. Sarah Pinkster-- Pinsker. Pinsker. Pinsker. She's from Balt--

RAINBOW: Baltimore.

JIMMY CARPER: Baltimore. She's a new artist to me. I do not-- I'm not familiar with her work, but JD is.

JD DOYLE: That's her first CD, and it was produced by Sonia of Disappear Fear, so you can expect good things

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, you can. You can. Suede, of course, you heard. Nancy Ford.

RAINBOW: Hey, Nancy. We love Nancy Ford.

JEWEL GRAY: They're afraid not to book Nancy.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, they have her--

--sending threatening letters.

RAINBOW: I'll be there with Nancy Ford--

JIMMY CARPER: They have her down here as Nancy Ford and the Dyke Show, but she assured me that--

RAINBOW: She will be a dyke?

JIMMY CARPER: No, no, no, no. It's really Nancy Ford and the Vulva Maddox.

RAINBOW: Oh, they're good. I've seen them perform at the Chances

JIMMY CARPER: At the Vulva Maddox?

RAINBOW: Or the in-between. Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: Others. Bob Smith, the comic, is going to be here. Yes. Dave West. I'm not familiar with his work.

JD DOYLE: Dave Hall.

JIMMY CARPER: Why does it say, Dave West?

JEWEL GRAY: Who is Dave Hall West?

JIMMY CARPER: Dave West is a mistake. He's not going to be here. True Soul, who-- a two-man group from Houston. You've heard their music here. They do a rap R&B type of stuff. It's really nice music.

Christie Ray, who was one of the performers-- listen to this. Christie Ray is a lesbian performer, who was here last night doing a fundraiser for the switchboard.

JEWEL GRAY: Well, cool. She must be quite a person, this Christie Ray.

JIMMY CARPER: I first heard her do-- this is the introduction I gave her because I introduced the act. I first heard Christie Ray perform as an opening act for an event that happened at Diverse Works about four or five years ago. And to be perfectly honest, I have no idea what the main event was, but I remember Christie Ray. She's that good. She is that good.

RAINBOW: Playing angry guitar stuff?

JIMMY CARPER: Not angry.

RAINBOW: Oh.

JIMMY CARPER: No.

RAINBOW: OK

JIMMY CARPER: No, not at all.

JEWEL GRAY: Tracy Chapman angry?

JIMMY CARPER: No.

JEWEL GRAY: OK.

JIMMY CARPER: No, no. Miss Money will be here. She is a rap artist. And she is formerly from Houston. She's now in LA, I believe. That's kind of the rumor that has it on the--

BOBBY: And I wouldn't bet money on that.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK, don't bet money on that. But she's not in Houston, I can tell you that. And the Houston Storytellers Guild.

JEWEL GRAY: That's a cool thing, storytelling.

JIMMY CARPER: I don't know that.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JIM SONGRINI: I don't know anything about it.

JEWEL GRAY: I wish we do that.

JIMMY CARPER: And the Pride Band. The Pride Band--

SEVERAL: Yay!

JIMMY CARPER: Houston Pride Band, yeah. Yes.

JEWEL GRAY: Bring your instrument. Yeah, that's the one? I like--

RAINBOW: You're a bit of a bard.

JEWEL GRAY: I'm a bard?

RAINBOW: Yeah, you're a bard.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, you know their motto, if you can beat it or blow it, you belong in a band.

JEWEL GRAY: Man, that's racey.

BOBBY: Oh, my [INAUDIBLE].

[LAUGHTER]

Well!

RAINBOW: Now, Jimmy the Volvo Maddox, you can see them at the Dyke Show every Thursday.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh!

RAINBOW: Yeah. They're very good, very good.

JIMMY CARPER: Cool.

RAINBOW: I have a good time in there.

JEWEL GRAY: Well, Nancy is quite an entertainer.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, she is.

RAINBOW: And Nancy is about 4' 5". Girl.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, women.

[LAUGHTER]

JEWEL GRAY: Women, I don't know [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: Women, girls.

JEWEL GRAY: I don't do it right either.

JIMMY CARPER: They're girls to themselves.

JEWEL GRAY: Oh, girls to themselves? Oh, they're girls to us.

JIMMY CARPER: Mm.

JEWEL GRAY: Oh, girls, that's what I call them.

RAINBOW: Oh, it's the Dyke Show, so they're dykes.

JIMMY CARPER: Tada.

[LAUGHTER]

Mm-hmm.

[LAUGHTER]

RAINBOW: But it's a fantastic show. They do--

JIMMY CARPER: Have ever performed?

RAINBOW: No.

JIMMY CARPER: So you're not officially a dyke?

RAINBOW: No, but I watch. I like watching [INAUDIBLE]

JIM SONGRINI: But I'm willing to learn

JEWEL GRAY: Performed what?

[LAUGHTER]

BOBBY: I hear he's performed a lot of things in his time.

RAINBOW: I don't play a musical instrument.

JEWEL GRAY: Oh, OK. No blowing horns.

RAINBOW: I used to blow a horn--

JEWEL GRAY: Oh.

RAINBOW: --years ago in band.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, and I bet you Dory's about that too.

JEWEL GRAY: I'm blown a harmonica.

[LAUGHTER]

RAINBOW: When I was 13--

[LAUGHTER]

13, 14.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, you started young.

RAINBOW: Well, yeah, you got to start young [INAUDIBLE] you learn how to blow a horn, yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

Get those lips ready.

JIMMY CARPER: I know.

RAINBOW: Ask anybody, I really started--

JEWEL GRAY: And I've heard tale you're talented.

[LAUGHTER]

JIM SONGRINI: Get those talents started early.

[LAUGHTER]

RAINBOW: Really, I started late, at around 14. Because you're really supposed to start getting your lips ready for a horn--

[LAUGHTER]

JIM SONGRINI: Much earlier?

RAINBOW: --much, much earlier.

JEWEL GRAY: I should've ask you about his lips before.

[LAUGHTER]

JIM SONGRINI: Oh, we're about to blow--

RAINBOW: If you're going to blown a horn.

JIMMY CARPER: It's part of you that I've never discussed. I have to admit that.

RAINBOW: Jimmy, it's like going to the museum. We sit around and talk and talk. And we talk about old times.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, gosh, do we.

JEWEL GRAY: That's what a museum's about.

JIMMY CARPER: And we're not going to discuss any of that today.

RAINBOW: I know, no.

[LAUGHTER]

JIM SONGRINI: Let's try to put the Volvo Maddox and lips into the same sentence.

[LAUGHTER]

My God.

BOBBY: And just in case he's listening, Jeremy, yes, the show is like this every--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes,

[LAUGHTER]

And, yes, Blaze, if you're listening, it's like this every week too.

JEWEL GRAY: No, it's more like the church lady, and you know it.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Well, sometimes we do get church-- more serious than other times.

RAINBOW: On occasion.

JIMMY CARPER: This is obviously not one of them.

RAINBOW: Not one of them?

JIMMY CARPER: No, no.

JEWEL GRAY: Well, we have some great guests, people to talk to.

JIMMY CARPER: Do we?

JEWEL GRAY: Well, yeah. Who's here, Rainbow?

[LAUGHTER]

RAINBOW: Ah, you got me on the spot. I was not ready for it.

JEWEL GRAY: OK.

RAINBOW: Janine, The Mayor's "lee-eye-ay-zee"--

JEWEL GRAY: Liaison.

RAINBOW: Liaison.

JEWEL GRAY: I thought you were saying last name. That was our deal.

RAINBOW: Janine Brunjes.

JEWEL GRAY: Brunjes.

SEVERAL: Yay.

JEWEL GRAY: I was panicking in here because I couldn't-- all I've ever seen is--

RAINBOW: I only have a problem saying lee-ay-- whatever that word--

JIM SONGRINI: Liaison.

RAINBOW: "lee-ay-zee-on"--

JEWEL GRAY: I've never heard anybody pronounce it.

RAINBOW: "lee-ay-zon."

JEWEL GRAY: And I've only seen it written on the email--

RAINBOW: Yeah, on email.

JEWEL GRAY: --in publications.

RAINBOW: Janine Brunjes.

JEWEL GRAY: Brunjes.

RAINBOW: --the Mayor's--

JIMMY CARPER: I emailed--

JEWEL GRAY: She's going to talk to us a little bit.

JIMMY CARPER: --liaison.

RAINBOW: Yeah. Oh, is she?

JEWEL GRAY: Mm-hmm.

RAINBOW: She's out in the wings. So I guess--

JEWEL GRAY: And Melanie Black is here, and--

RAINBOW: And the cream [LAUGHS]

JEWEL GRAY: --we're going to talk a little bit about transsexual lesbianism.

RAINBOW: When did this [INAUDIBLE] green room?

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JEWEL GRAY: I'm curious, I really am.

JIMMY CARPER: What?

JEWEL GRAY: I'm interested in this, transsexual lesbianism. I guess that's what you call it, right?

JIMMY CARPER: There's a lot of that going around.

JEWEL GRAY: Right.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

JEWEL GRAY: I noticed that. There's like a fever or something--

[LAUGHTER]

--everywhere I look.

RAINBOW: And, Jewel, Jewel, when I go to the Dyke Show, Melanie's there, right with me. I mean, she's really sitting right across the table--

JEWEL GRAY: Well, she's very popular. She's in everything, thank God.

JIMMY CARPER: OK--

[LAUGHTER]

--since sexual orientation is a separate entity from transsexualism--

JEWEL GRAY: Right. [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: --and we know that 10%--

JEWEL GRAY: We're dealing with two issues at once.

JIMMY CARPER: --we know that 10% of any population is homosexual.

RAINBOW: Oh, OK, I see where he's going with [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: So if we take the entire transgendered community, the 90% is going to be-- after the transition, 90% is--

JEWEL GRAY: Has he been taking his [INAUDIBLE]?

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: --90% is going to be into same sex relationships, and 10% will not.

JEWEL GRAY: That's right. That's right. And it's something that's totally overlooked. I was thinking about this the other day. And many times, I've talked with Melanie and Kristen--

JIMMY CARPER: Kristen.

JEWEL GRAY: --Kristen about these things. And I thought it would be interesting to have a conversation. Kristen couldn't make it tonight, but Melanie's here.

JIMMY CARPER: Ah.

JEWEL GRAY: And we'll talk to her after we talk to Janine, Janine Brunjes.

JIMMY CARPER: Brunjes.

JEWEL GRAY: Janine Brunjens, Brunjes.

RAINBOW: There you go, you're getting--

JIMMY CARPER: Well, let's take a short musical break and bring her on. You're listening to *After Hours: Queer Radio With Attitude*. on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. This is Sarah Pinsker with her song, *Sweet & Strange*. Oh, yes, that song was made for this show, Indeed it was. We'll be right back.

[LAUGHTER]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Sarah Pinsker, *Sweet & Strange*. You will be hearing her in person next Sunday. (MOCKING COMMERCIALS)
Sunday,

JIMMY CARPER (MOCKING COMMERCIALS) Sunday,

AND ANOTHER:

JIMMY CARPER: Sunday, yes, indeedy, at the Pride Festival, Garden in the Heights. And right now, we're back with Jewel.

JEWEL GRAY: Oh, I'm here, I'm sorry. I'm playing with my mic--

[LAUGHTER]

--playing with my mic.

JANINE Like a personal problem.

BRUNJES:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

JEWEL GRAY: But we're back, and we're going to talk a little bit about something that [INAUDIBLE].

JIMMY CARPER: She's going to fit right in, Jewel.

JEWEL GRAY: That's right. She says she's done some of this. She's, you know, cheated on us.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh?

JANINE Yeah. She's been unfaithful to us.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: We're not getting a radio virgin here.

[LAUGHTER]

JANINE Yeah, but the other ways you're winning.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: It's a sacrifice to the love volcano here in Montrose. But what I want to do is kind of get some background on what exactly it is that makes you who you are in town. You started out doing other things before you became the liaison to the Mayor. What kind of things were that you did.

JANINE Right, community activity [INAUDIBLE]?

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Uh-huh. Mm-hmm.

JANINE Well, it probably kicked off about 10 years ago. And I won't take you through that whole chronology.

BRUNJES:

JIMMY CARPER: No, please.

JANINE I know we just have three hours.

BRUNJES:

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, but we've got a long time.

JANINE Yeah. Please tell me how many days we have of this, I was wondering.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Well, just the highlights, I want people to have an idea.

JANINE Sure.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Suddenly, this last situation, in your shoes, I wasn't real happy with that situation at all, with the person who had your job before you.

JANINE OK.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: I wasn't happy with the way that person got that job. And I wasn't happy with the way that person just disposed of it the way they did it. I didn't see a commitment there. I saw this as a business thing. And with you, I see a different thing. So I want to see what kind of things spark that. So I really would like to know what kind of things sparked you getting to be the mayor's liaison. I'm doing that on purpose, Rainbow.

JANINE Well, I think it's a good question, Jewel, thanks. Let me go right to the heart of it, what really kicked this off. In **BRUNJES:** November, I went down to West Palm Beach to visit my aging mother. And, bottom line, I ran to West Palm Beach. Her lab tests had come out very negative. And she was, quote, really on the brink of death. That was the message I got. So I ran down to West Palm Beach, of course. And come to find out, she had been engaged with an HMO, and they had misdiagnosed and misread the lab. And I was very thrilled about that.

[GASP]

JEWEL GRAY: Oh, yeah.

JANINE So here I was in West Palm Beach. And myself and my other sisters-- which I have three, we're all nurses-- so **BRUNJES:** here I was, we were all focused on mom and getting her well. Well, the whole Palm Beach debacle kicked off. Here we were, right in the middle of the biggest, most, I think, historic--

JEWEL GRAY: I do too.

JANINE --one of the most historic--

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: In 100 years, this will be something they look back on with--

JANINE Oh, it was just-- it was chaotic. But what I did that morning with my brother-in-law, we jumped in his car and said, **BRUNJES:** let's go down and help, and went down to the Emergency Center and drove right up to the security box, security stand. And the police officer looked at us and he said, yes, can I help you? And I said, well, I'm here for the recount. He said, are you authorized to go in? I said absolutely.

[LAUGHTER]

[INAUDIBLE] So that's what got me prepared for the mayor's job.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: You go, oh, yeah.

JANINE So what happened is--

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: That's a good way you describe it.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

JANINE You know, I've learned over the years that it's a matter of-- I don't know if you saw the movie with Peter Sellers, **BRUNJES:** *Being There*.

JEWEL GRAY: Oh, yeah, I love it.

JANINE Well, it soon became evident to me that I needed to just be a part, just jump in. Don't wait to be asked.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Right.

JANINE So I went down to the Emergency Center. And I ended up following one of my favorite bumper stickers into the

BRUNJES: Emergency Center. And it was a Gore-Lieberman. It wasn't a sore loser, man, it was a Gore-Lieberman. I followed this car in, and got out, this big woman emerged from this car. And I ran up to her and I said, I'm a Democrat from Texas. She said, you're a what? There's no Democrats in Texas.

[LAUGHTER]

JEWEL GRAY: My friends say that all the time.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

RAINBOW: But they are wrong. They are so wrong.

JANINE But they are very wrong. As a matter of fact, I heard that Gore had taken Houston anyway. But anyway, so she

BRUNJES: said, right this way, young lady. And she took me over and got me all set up in one of the headquarters of the Democrats with the AFL-CIO. And they asked me to come inside with my brother-in-law and be trained to take affidavits from people who had been kind of roughed up at the polls, not been given the opportunity to vote, for one reason or another, and then also, how to observe the chads, you know, the falling, pregnant--

[LAUGHTER]

--whatever the chads were doing. So we got to go inside the Emergency Center to do that. Well, I left Palm Beach five days later. And I was just out of my mind. Because I was walking through crowds of people that, quote, didn't know what my political persuasion were. But it was very ugly. And so, I came back to town deciding that it was time-- I had already been very out in the community and the charitable organizations and worked some with HRC. And I was just ready to do something. So I called and asked Cathy Hubbard, an council member, Annise Parker, to go to brunch one day.

JEWEL GRAY: It sounds like destiny to me--

JANINE Well, it was really

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: --fate.

JANINE [LAUGHTER] I didn't know the mayor's liaison position was available. I didn't know that. And she didn't know that,

BRUNJES: at that moment. So I said, Annise, how is it? And we just talked through how political life is and some of the things that I would need to do to get a taste of what was going on. And she gave me some excellent advice. So I sought out, kind of scratching my head. And, lo and behold, I got a phone call from Sue Lovell. You know Sue Lovell?

JEWEL GRAY: Mm-hmm.

JIMMY CARPER: Mm-hmm, oh, yeah.

JANINE Yeah.

BRUNJES:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah.

JANINE Nobody knows Sue Lovell.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: She has never met a stranger.

JANINE Who doesn't know Sue? Well, I know Sue from back in the early '70s. I went to Texas Woman's University.

BRUNJES:

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

JANINE That's where I went to be, quote, normal. I went to TWU to escape my lesbian lifestyle.

BRUNJES:

[LAUGHTER]

And that was the wrong way.

JIMMY CARPER: It appears you flunked.

[LAUGHTER]

JANINE Right out, I was called front and center. What is it you're trying to do, young lady? Well, Sue, at that time, was

BRUNJES: really doing a really good job cruising our campus.

[LAUGHTER]

RAINBOW: I can see it too.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh--

RAINBOW: I can see it.

JIMMY CARPER: --I see, yes.

JANINE She, it's that look in her eye.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Smooth Sue, yeah.

JANINE Very smooth. So that's how I got to this Sue Lovell. So she called me, said, Janine, I was having dinner with

BRUNJES: Annise last night. I understand that the mayor's liaison is moving on to California. And I think that you ought to go and see what is going on there. Now, this is what you need to do. So she gave me this assignment. And I didn't realize that there were other folks that were vying for the position.

JEWEL GRAY: Who were they? I'm not familiar. Do you know?

JIMMY CARPER: No. And we don't need to talk about it, actually.

JEWEL GRAY: We don't need to talk about-- it, actually.

JANINE Yeah, but there were a couple of attorneys. oh yeah? I was very impressed with--

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Attorneys from out of town?

JANINE Yeah. No, from in town, people that I didn't know personally, but I've grown to have an amount of respect for

BRUNJES: because I've learned a lot about them. So I sent my GLBT résumé in to the mayor. And I didn't have a GLBT resume.

JEWEL GRAY: [GIGGLES] yeah, what's that?

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, what do you do?

JEWEL GRAY: What is that?

JIM SONGRINI: Is that like the union card?

JEWEL GRAY: This is my résumé.

JANINE Yeah, it's like a lavender paper.

BRUNJES:

BOBBY: These are the things I've done [INAUDIBLE].

[LAUGHTER]

JANINE It's the one that's in my file, it's my G, resume. And, basically, I had to list the organizations that I had been

BRUNJES: affiliated with over the past 10 or 12 years--

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

JANINE --and also attach my professional résumé. And at that point, I was invited into the mayor's, I call it, chamber to

BRUNJES: have a discussion with him.

JEWEL GRAY: A [INAUDIBLE]

JANINE Yeah. And he actually interviewed me and asked me some really important questions. I thought about my

BRUNJES: interests. And he looked at me at one point, and he said, so, you ready to do it?

JEWEL GRAY: Well, that was it.

JANINE And I said, yes, sir. It was after a battery of questions.

BRUNJES:

JIMMY CARPER: Cool, cool.

JANINE I said, of course I will. And that was it. So it became official on January 30th.

BRUNJES:

JIMMY CARPER: Wow!

JEWEL GRAY: Cool.

RAINBOW: Wow.

JANINE Yeah.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Cool

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

JANINE Yeah. So I think, at that point, because they had a pretty official folder on me, and I'm sure they had done

BRUNJES: background checks. Did a little background.

[LAUGHTER]

BOBBY: Did a little background ch--

JANINE Who is this woman?

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: That was cool. What kind of relationship do you have with him? Is he typically the big guy that you rarely get a chance to talk to? Or is he acceptable to just running into you in the hallway?

JANINE Well, he's one who's very available and very approachable. There hasn't been a time when I wanted to get on his calendar that I couldn't. And the other thing I've been very pleased-- I haven't been amazed by m but pleased by it-- in that he has a senior executive assistant, Carol Alvarado, that I work with kind of day in and day out. For example, issues like, they needed my help with the Pride Parade a little bit with getting street clothes for the Pride-- but things like that that I'm helping with. But he and I meet frequently. And, actually, more frequently than across the desk, which I just did last week, I'll get a call to, not chaperone him-- [LAUGHS] [INAUDIBLE] -- escorting--

JEWEL GRAY: Escort, yeah.

JANINE --to a GLBT event, like the HRC dinner.

BRUNJES:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

JANINE I would go and kind of front run and make sure that I tapped everybody on the shoulder for the mayor to meet.

BRUNJES: But I can be driving down the street, and I'll get a cell phone call. And he'll say, Janine, it's the mayor. No,

JEWEL GRAY: Cool.

JANINE He wants to know how he's doing and--

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Cool.

JANINE --what's close to our hearts. And he listens. And then he acts. See, that's what I love. When I finish with

BRUNJES: roundtables and I finish with activities such as that, he wants to know what's going on. He loves the columns I do in OutSmart.

JEWEL GRAY: Great. He sounds like a supportive man, I'd really like to meet him sometime. Have you met him?

RAINBOW: No.

JEWEL GRAY: I almost had a chance to meet him when he was police chief. It wouldn't have been a pleasant meeting, but--

[LAUGHTER]

I almost had an opportunity to meet him.

JANINE You don't look as good in handcuffs, right? Well, maybe.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: It wasn't quite that bad. But-- [LAUGHTER] [INAUDIBLE]. At the moment, I really didn't want to meet him.

JANINE Oh.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: It wasn't quite that bad.

JANINE Well he's a looming fellow.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Yes, he was.

JANINE He's a big man.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Yes, he was.

JANINE And I look like a munchkin next to him.

BRUNJES:

[LAUGHTER]

JEWEL GRAY: Yes, he was.

JIMMY CARPER: He is big, I have met him, yeah.

RAINBOW: And he's accessible on Tuesdays--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, he is.

RAINBOW: --for the general public, for sure, when they had the--

JEWEL GRAY: Cool, I'm proud as I can be of him.

RAINBOW: --citizens meetings--

JEWEL GRAY: And I'd elect him tomorrow--

RAINBOW: --the speakers list--

JEWEL GRAY: --if we had elections tomorrow.

RAINBOW: --on Tuesday afternoon.

JEWEL GRAY: I'd elect him again tomorrow if we could tomorrow. I'd do it again. I've been proud of him, what, since he was our police chief and he started making changes downtown. So I've always been supportive of his administration. And I was really pleased when I saw someone that I felt like had commitment and this wasn't just a job, step into that position. Like I said, I was not happy with the situation before. I wasn't happy with how that person became the mayor's liaison. And then I wasn't happy-- and I don't know this person, and I'm not trying to be personal about this.

JANINE Yeah, yeah, I don't either.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: I just wasn't happy the way thing worked out.

JANINE I didn't either. Right.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: He came out of nowhere, nobody knew him. He was from somewhere else, came in to be the liaison with a community he'd never been part of. I felt that kind of strange. So when you stepped into that position, I thought that, obviously, the mayor is paying attention. Because here's somebody he picked for commitment and not for because they have an MBA.

JANINE Well, right, right. And it was so important to me for that position to really-- if the intent-- and the intent is for the

BRUNJES: position, the person to be some eyes and ears for the mayor. What's important to us? What floats our boat?

JEWEL GRAY: Well, I think there should be one like you for every culture in a city. I think every culture should have some kind of representation to the head honcho. And I think that that's what, really, what I grew up thinking, democracy was. You start from this level where your mayor can be accessible. And you make the people at top listen to you. So I think that that's, basically, democracy under a microscope.

JANINE Right. I know there's a woman's liaison and a Hispanic liaison. I'm meeting with the women's liaison next week.

BRUNJES: I've never met her yet, but I thought it was important to get out and meet the liaisons. Because part of the work is, of course, being focused on what our community's up to so I can keep the mayor informed, but also to expose our issues to other liaisons that don't have any focus in what we do, so that they understand we're not a bunch of three-headed people.

JEWEL GRAY: We have someone in the house able to negotiate and navigate for us.

JANINE Right, right. And it's a volunteer position. Someone said to me, you know, Janine, how much time are you

BRUNJES: spending on this work? And I said, it's one of those things that likens to when I managed a division over at Memorial Hermann's. It's like you go to bed with it. It's like what you all do, you believe in--

JEWEL GRAY: You don't think there's anything else.

JANINE No. so I can't even begin to identify the amount of time it takes, other than it's what I'm up to all the time. But
BRUNJES: I've got to balance, of course, work life with this work, too.

RAINBOW: And you have another job, then.

JANINE I do.

BRUNJES:

RAINBOW: OK, yeah.

JANINE I do, yeah, one that pays.

BRUNJES:

[LAUGHTER]

JEWEL GRAY: Except, since it's long-term position--

JANINE Well--

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: --it would help.

JANINE --this pays in a different way. But it probably isn't even a good word, but it's very gratifying. But four years ago,

BRUNJES: when I left Memorial Hermann, I began my own health care consulting work. And I help physician practices get ready for the Office of Inspector General, that now has some new guidelines.

JEWEL GRAY: Oh--

JANINE So I have a very serious--

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: --so you're a popular lady.

[LAUGHTER]

JANINE Yeah. Well, yeah. And it was President Clinton's way of pulling fraud and abuse out of the health care work. So

BRUNJES: physicians are kind of last on the rung. But we're friend of physicians, not foe.

JEWEL GRAY: Well, good. Well, one of the things that I found really stimulating about you being in this position, and maybe just new blood, is that this town meeting that we had, and set up, and had quite a few people there. Do you remember? Were you there? I couldn't be there. I live in the other side of the river.

RAINBOW: Colorado, Colorado River.

JANINE I heard about it, but I wasn't th-- I think I was out of town at that timing. You don't mean the Round Table?

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: The one where Annise came together with the first meeting.

JANINE Oh, yeah!

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Yeah.

RAINBOW: It was right after-- what was that thing that Todd didn't like?

JEWEL GRAY: It was the one-- yeah.

RAINBOW: The domestic partner thing.

JANINE Oh, yes.

BRUNJES:

RAINBOW: There was a meeting after that.

JANINE And there's a commitment that that will remain on the docket, so to speak, for after election, of course. Should

BRUNJES: the Mayor get another term, that's high on his list, which I think's real exciting.

JIMMY CARPER: From what you've been saying-- I always think of, maybe, the mayor's liaison as kind of a glory job. You get to go to fancy dinners and all that. But you just mentioned, just briefly-- and I imagine there's a lot more of it-- that there's a lot of the other work, too, where you have to work with street closings and other things that are happening in the community. Is there a lot of that? Or do you get to go to fancy dinners a lot?

JANINE Well, there's more of the other. There's more of the front running or interceding, in some ways, on different

BRUNJES: issues. I'll get a call and say, well, Janine, what do you think about this? What do you think, on a variety of issues that are coming before? Is this a good time for us to do this? So there have been some dinners. But the mayor's office doesn't, Janine, we need you to go to this dinner. If I see something coming up that I made-- for example, my mother's homeland is Ireland. President of Ireland was coming in. She brought her first openly gay senator with her, who I met that Sunday night. So--

JEWEL GRAY: Cool.

JANINE --where I can, from a it broadens me perspective. Also, it gives, I think, us an opportunity to be more-- I don't

BRUNJES: want to be so granular to say global. But let's face it, I mean, it really helps to know those people from around the country. Because email's been such a blessing. For example, Mayor Daley's liaison emailed me two weeks ago. You know, hey, hear what you doing. So I try to be at events--

JEWEL GRAY: And it really felt like you were part of a bigger thing.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

JANINE Oh, well, yeah. He said, Janine, but I'm getting paid and you're not. And I said, well, that's OK.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Maybe, maybe.

JANINE Maybe someday. I don't think it's time right now in Houston. I think that the very fact that we have a liaison in the

BRUNJES: South is a very major step forward.

JEWEL GRAY: Yes, it is.

RAINBOW: How many liaisons are there in the different cities?

JEWEL GRAY: Well, there's at least one more.

JANINE There's one--

BRUNJES:

RAINBOW: In Chicago.

JANINE --well, I know DC.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Chicago.

RAINBOW: DC?

JANINE So I hear. I asked this, Bill Greaves is his name, he said, you know, Janine, that's a good question. In the fall,

BRUNJES: there's a meeting of appointed officials. And I don't know where that meeting is, and I have to find out more about it. And that's where I can get my hand around who those people are. But the numbers, I don't know yet. I think they're out there, but I don't know how many there are.

JEWEL GRAY: Yeah, that'd be interesting to know.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

JANINE Yeah.

BRUNJES:

JIMMY CARPER: It would be.

JEWEL GRAY: A great resource, too, to network with.

JANINE Well, the thing that I think, in some camps, there's been some discussion about, gee, does a mayor even need a

BRUNJES: liaison? And I know there have been some comments from time to time about-- from other folks that, gee, well, no, we understand the issues of the gay community. We don't need a liaison. But I don't believe that's true, not because I'm the liaison. But the mayor is not GLBT. He can't totally understand our issues. So I think they'll--

BOBBY: Somebody's got to be there to--

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, somebody.

JANINE Somebody. And I can't totally understand the BT. But I certainly can be as close as close can be to

BRUNJES: understanding, to take the message back. So I think it's a key, it's a needed position. And I hope, some day, it's an on-staff position.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

JEWEL GRAY: That would be great.

JANINE I'll probably be getting my dentures polished about then.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: Well like I said--

[LAUGHTER] I'm exceedingly proud that you have the position. And I feel like you're the picture that people are going to get of Houston gay people. You're the image that I'd be proud for them to have. Sometimes, I've seen too many people with long hair and passion that we desire, need in our-- but they end up in the wrong places. And they're so passionate that the place they're in suffers. The position they're in suffers. And it's good to see somebody who's a little more committed to this, rather than being so passionate about, this is my job, I got to do this job.

JANINE No.

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: But it's a matter of commitment, not a matter of status.

JANINE No. And, Jewel, truthfully, having come out of corporate America, where it was important for me in my 30s to

BRUNJES: kind of climb that little mountain. I was going to be a CEO. I was going to do this and do that. And I did that. And then when I left Memorial Hermann, I was a vice president CEO. It was kind of a double thing, I'm not sure why. But that was not important anymore. Because I had had some health problems and my whole world changed, where, oh--

JIMMY CARPER: Funny how that happens when you have health problems.

JEWEL GRAY: Yep, health problems, yes. It changed my life. Having grown up, I felt I was very lucky in a lot of ways, and I work very hard. But you I was just like everybody else, you know what I'm saying?

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

JANINE You come to that point where-- so what you have to do is do what you're absolutely-- you want to begin

BRUNJES: contributing. And that's what made the difference for me.

RAINBOW: Do you were close with the chief of police, also?

JANINE I've met him.

BRUNJES:

RAINBOW: But I mean, do you converse with him or anything?

JANINE Not routinely.

BRUNJES:

RAINBOW: OK. But you probably have access to him better than anybody.

JANINE Yes, I do, I do. I met--

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: [CLEAR THROAT] See Rainbow later.

[LAUGHTER]

JANINE Do what?

BRUNJES:

JEWEL GRAY: See Rainbow later. He's trying to get a ticket fixed.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Janine, do you find that your position helps take a little pressure off of Annise as being the only