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Tue, Nov 29, 2022 9:15AM 23:40

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

switchboard, people, volunteer, talk, burnout, involved, gay, hours, committed, organization, chris, committee, called, tonight, community, song, directors, plaque, jewel, good

SPEAKERS

Jewel Gray, Jimmy Carper, [Introduction]

[I] [Introduction] 00:00

The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature that may be considered objectionable by some listener discretion is advised.

[J] Jimmy Carper 00:17

Whoa, it must be Saturday night at midnight because you're listening to after hours, a continuing tradition on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of after hours is ready to bring you news interviews and music here for gay and lesbian people. Just as Gloria Gaynor says in this song, it's time to open up your closets we at after hours urge everyone to come out of their closets by our definition that means standing up for yourself and taking responsibility for your own life. But if you feel that you can't come out right now because of your age, your job or whatever reason that's okay, we're here for you too. So sit back relax and enjoy this week's edition of after hours

[J] Jewel Gray 01:20

I am what I am and I do my own deck sometimes no return no deposit. Okay, you're live here in Montrose with jewel on the after hours program tonight. We're gonna be doing some fun things. I've gotten a few calls people out there waiting for us word we're not going to be on we're gonna be on about about 1510 or 15 minutes after the hour following the BBC update news. So stick with us there those people who've been trying to find this tonight. Oh, gonna do some new co host tonight. Someone that I've been friends with for a long, long time. And I want to talk with him about what he does and some of his interest. And we'll chat about some of the things going on in town. One of the things we're going to talk about is this Senator Krueger issue that's come up in town and seems to be the word on the wires these days is looking at his voting package is not a very pretty picture. And how our community is split on support and surprise that he's, he's going to be sitting in that seat will be playing music. I want you to know that. This is my birthday show. I'm 38 years old and 15 minutes and 30 seconds old. And Jimmy got me a kick down here. So we're really partying down here tonight. I wish I brought my little

party hat. I had some friends over today. And we did a little party in and I managed to get a couple hours sleep. So I'm really up tonight, and we're ready to go. Does Jimmy has some music for us?

J

Jimmy Carper 04:08

I do I do. I do. Hi, it's Jimmy with the non QMZ. We're gonna we're not going to exactly do Q MC tonight. For one reason, the Q-Patrol is in desperate need of people and they're just barely hanging together. And I've got a whole lot of great music from non gay, lesbian or bisexual people that I want to get in tonight and I know it's gonna be a packed show. So starting off, yes, it's here. It's finally here. Ta ta ta ta. Martha washes new CD. Boy, is it hot? It's great. You're gonna love it. And we're going to do my favorite my absolute favorite from it right now. It's called hold on part two. Oh boy, kids. This is for you. If you're feeling down, listen to this Whoa, yes, Martha with hold on part two, you'll be hearing a lot of that. I hope that gets play on those commercial stations y'all like to listen to, because that is really a good hot song. Coming up next, we've got a group called the Austin Lounge Lizards. Yes. In their great, great, seedy the highway Cafe of the Damned. Cut number two, while not doing highway Cafe Cafe of the day, which is which is a great song. But they've got this great one called Cornhusker refugee. And it's about being gay and Midwest. America and having to move to San Francisco when maybe you really didn't want to let's let's give a listen. I was walking down the street holding hands with my lover when suddenly we were attacked after being publicly identified as breeders

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06:28

hetero phobia can kill education is the only lasting weapon against bigotry which is why the National Federation of contributors to overpopulation wanted you to hear and think about this message

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06:45

it's Christmas time gonna sing a little song for you

J

Jimmy Carper 07:06

spent meddler from the for the boys. That is an old Lennon McCartney tune in my life done by bet for just for that movie and brought in by our own rainbow to clown and I'm so glad he did and we can share it. Now to end up this non version of the QMZ. I want to do a song just for jewel because it's one of her favorite artists. It's Laurie Anderson. Laurie Anderson, you can hear every week being played on esoteric adventures, a little shameless plug there, Fridays at 1010 o'clock PM. But we had to do some more. Because jewel likes her. And she's Nate. And it's really is one of my favorites and one that we get requested quite a bit on esoteric adventures from the big science album. It's Oh, Superman ha

J

Jewel Gray 08:21

to be with her in a great time down here. Because you were here. We have a lot of fun down

na na we're having a great time down here. Because you were here. we see a lot of you over there at mother's waving at us from across the street. Hi, how's it going? We We are fortunate you know a lot of people say Jul. You have a show on at midnight it Saturday night. Well, who do you think's listening? And I tell them, we have the gay rush hour Saturday night, the bars closed. We have that hour. We are the only ones dominating the airwaves at that time. And we're here talking to you. Those out there who are free and queer, who are in the closet and queer, who are queer and queer. So we're at we're here tonight, and we want you to perk up and have a good time with this. I invited a special friend of mine down this evening to kind of see how he likes to be on the radio and maybe see if we can talk him into being a permanent co host. My friend is Chris Dorman. I met Chris Watts six years ago, longer seven Do you think so? Seven years ago, when I joined the game has been switchboard, which is what I always tell you all out there about it being someplace where you can meet people that you stay connected to for life. And Chris is one of the people and just one not not belittling your position, but I've stayed friends with people I've met at switchboard for many, many years and has become an extended family mine as I know it's been with you. So one of our pluses here is that we've known each other long. It's matter of fact you help tray Amy, you were one of the facilitators, weren't you?



10:02

I was helping out. I believe in you raining



Jewel Gray 10:05

in and out, I believe you and I met a couple other people that only see on rare occasions, you know,



10:10

I may have told you what it was like to be gay or something.



Jewel Gray 10:13

That's what it was. You were the panel. I was on the panel. Yeah, you were on the panel that comes and tells the new volunteers what it's like to be an old volunteer.



10:20

Can't tell everybody everything about telling the horror stories. Horror Stories, there aren't any to be told only dish gossip, and good information. Anyway, anything to do. And you're right, we wouldn't have become friends had we not met on the switchboard. And so it's blossomed into a seven year relationship. I don't think a month or two has gone by without us talking.



Jewel Gray 10:47

Well, there have been times but you know, we both get kind of busy. But even those periods when we kind of lost touch with each other. I thought about you often and I know you probably thought about me please say did.



10:59

We aren't rainy day friends. You know, we're the sun's out and shining and it's come on, let's go have a picnic. And then, you know, bad times happen and people disappear. And we know that happens in life, too. You know, to



J Jewel Gray 11:13

cry people ship. Yeah, right. People go about their busy days, and sometimes they don't zigzag cross each other's trails as often as they do other times during their friendship. And I'm hoping that this is one of those times when we zigzag a lot so we can spend some time together. I've always enjoyed your company. This is Chris doorman in case I didn't tell you. And we're going to talk to Chris a little bit about his involvement and community and how long ago he was part of the Switchboard and maybe even ask him a few questions about Switchboard. Although I understand that you're on kind of a hiatus from Switchboard and you're kind of in a burnout, kind of rehab or in burnout recovery or something. Six years, ya know,



11:56

kind of like on a on a personal type of sabbatical. Really, I know what you mean, you know, I found it very necessary to take time off and get myself you know, all the circuitry, readjust.



J Jewel Gray 12:13

That's what happens to committed people we got to get someplace in breakout, I, I my commitment to the switchboard is that I do six months a year now, I do do either one shift and then skip a shift and do another shift, or I do two shifts back to back, and two shifts back to back, I don't do so I make sure that I'm keeping myself at a comfortable place. And I know that that's one of the things in the community people need to talk more about is how not to burn out how to plan and space their talents that they volunteer for other organizations to a place where they don't burn out and where they where they don't get to a place where they need to kind of take a break and, and sit back and smell some coffee and actually have a social life and, and be involved in in their own thing. Because I've been committed to meet community and volunteering and organizations takes a lot out of us. And I think that more of us need to sit back and and take a break because it's really getting to be quite a struggle out there. Even though it seems pretty free out there. Now, it is still a struggle and there are still people beating at the doors, keeping our faces names on the on the forefront of of political talk and, and medical talk and civil civil rights talk. And Chris and myself and people who volunteer are part of that. That larger scheme of things. We're going to talk to Randy fields in just a little bit about his part in the scheme of things. But I wanted to talk with you a few more minutes before we get to

Randy, about your involvement and community how you've been involved in community how you were with switchboard before I was that means what, eight, nine years now? Yeah, nine years, nine

13:57
years now.

J Jewel Gray 13:58
That's almost from inception in

14:01
just a couple of years after inception. It's changed quite a bit, structurally but the essence of what goes on at switchboard is still the same the ambiance, the ambiance. Yes, it's the same it's still the same. It's still basically one on one talking to people on the telephone, answering questions giving out information you know, active listening. That was never changed.

J Jewel Gray 14:30
Do you remember what what you thought about before you join switchboard did were you a different kind of person it that tell people it's a life altering experience. You become a part of a group that is well in tune with what's going on in the community and because you're have your finger on the pulse of things you become more involved in things and is your was your life different after you join switchboard than it was before?

14:53
Oh, definitely. I I became very committed to switchboard after I first joined and I joined And not only to, you know, to help other people but to become involved become aware, more aware, I should say, of issues affecting the gay and lesbian community. And the more involved I got, the more involved I want it to be. And it does it's insidious. Yes, it is. And that's when I hit my first burnout stage was a couple years after I first joined. And so I took a hiatus and I was gone for about a year and then I came down, I remember that we were lonely without you. I remember that. Oh, you still have me around? Yeah, you visited? Yeah, that's right. And you called me? Yeah, that's, that's always something you can do. And then I came back, and I went full tilt boogie. Again, working every week and serving on various committees and having committee work. That good old committee work. This the the system changed back in the mid 80s, from a Executive Director and Board of Directors type format to a board of directors and committee, function format. And what do you think

J Jewel Gray 16:17

of that change? I know you were really involved before and after, what do you think of that change? Well,



16:21

I was kind of in the maelstrom of the whole thing, because I was involved in one of the most involved in the Administrative Committee at the time that we did the changeover from a paid executive director who oversaw the day to day operations, and basically was, you know, kind of like a managing general partner, or a general manager of the switchboard. And the board of directors really saw that a lot of that can be handled by volunteers. And so the structure was changed to an all volunteer format. And as we, as we moved from the executive director and Board of Directors, for front with, with committees on the back burner, we made, we made up a list, we just started writing down things. And I can remember doing that it was like, Okay, what are things that are gonna fall through the crack, and can't unless we address them. And we just came up with a page and a half or two pages of things that we had to do or had to make sure we're delegated to a certain committee or to a certain entity to make sure that everything got addressed as it had been before. And so after successfully delegating everything out, the switchboard now operates without any paid personnel, everybody there is a volunteer from your newest telephone volunteer, to your board of directors, you know, everybody volunteers their time and efforts.



J Jewel Gray 18:03

Yeah, I think, although I was very fond of the Executive Director, when he was running the show, I think the way it runs now is substantially better. They're more checks and balances, shall we say? Because more people are involved, and less room for abuse of any sort of oneself because you're working too much, or of the organization because you're not working enough. Yeah. So I really think that it's much better this way. But I wanted to I wanted to talk a little bit about that because I knew you were in on that. And I wanted people know that kind of commitment you have you sit down and write down basically what has become policies and procedures of an organization and and help create or reborn kind of body to govern the switchboard so I wanted people to understand that you're not just out there you know slapping food on a tray at noon every day for the Salvation Army or something you really are committed to doing the nitty gritty stuff and and staying involved long enough to follow follow it up and see it through which is a real important thing in our community these days. A lot of people that are out there initially all firecracker it up and lit and ready to go off and and after they go off and you never see them again. And the real battle starts when the firecrackers go off.



19:39

Well, there's a problem with burnout there again. You know, I I'm on my hiatus, and I find it really a nice break. But I know that in a couple of months I'm going to be very restless to go back. That's probably because I've been there as long as I've been there for There are people that are there that get committed and over committed too quickly. And they're there for six months and then boom, out they go

J

Jewel Gray 20:06

because they know everything there is, well, you're talking about somebody who's who comes and goes, but I'm talking about what I'm about to say is concerning people like yourself who belong switchboard, when they know everything there that there is, I mean, there, they were there when the, you know, the nails were put in the wall, and the paint was chosen for the colors and they know everything about the switchboard. So those people are naturally turned to for everything and, and you have to be very, very good at saying no, and have very strong willpower to follow through and not do these things because you do feel the commitment and, and the love and respect for the organization that you belong to. And that's one of the things that I respect most about you is your commitment to the organization that you belong to. And what you your participation in that you were volunteers a year. Remember that we went out was that you and I got went out who was it? Myself and someone else? I thought it was you that went out and got the plaque for the Volunteer of the Year award? No, because I was the viewer, the recipient yeah, here so it was my Dear

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21:07

Bob, that's right. It was Bob. You all didn't let me know if that's right.

J

Jewel Gray 21:12

Because it was you and I was so tickled because it was just, it was perfect. It was my idea to get a plaque. I said let's get let's do something for this, you know, because these people need to be acknowledged because and now we have what seven of them? A six of them. I think six to as seven sevens of them. Yeah, I think it was a pat Turner last year. It was Pat Turner last Turner, who's the president this year. And one of the most committed members of our Switchboard, Pat Turner very committed

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21:43

and love you. Hi, Pat. And

J

Jewel Gray 21:49

somebody else who somebody else out I'm talking about her? I'm sure we can't mention at this time. There are several anyway people are very committed committed enough that the organization itself recognizes them on a plaque on the wall in the office and we're proud to look at it and and proud of the people blowing the Switchboard and proud of Chris doorman in and of himself and away from the Switchboard. Tell me about something. Some of the other things you've been involved in Chris, I know you were big on the wigs.

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22:18

Oh, big wig, big wig? Well. I would like to finish just by saying that, you know, switchboard is, you know, so rewarding not just by getting in there and doing committee work or getting on the

board of directors or you know, helping to revamp anything but getting on the phones and talking to the people that call in with whatever they need. And that's a reward in and of itself, even though the person that's answering the phone at that time might not think so at that time. Yes. You know, their makes get off the phone. Thank God that was an awful call or, or I handled that badly or something like that. And believe me, I've had plenty of new trainees that go, Gosh, I wish I could have done that over I would have done it differently. It was like you did fine. Next time you'll do even better. Just remember there's no real wrong way to do it. If you follow the way we've trained you and fortunately, you know people catch on to that training real quickly. So as to your question, we exhaust fire wiggers wigs on fire. I've been down here to promote wigs via the airwaves. It's not