

JENNIFER I say, Bubba--

WAGNER:

SPEAKER 1: Yeah.

JENNIFER Tell me that I had to pretend to be a guy on the radio because of my voice because I was afraid Bubba might

WAGNER: object. And right about the time that you called me Jennifer when you filled in on my show about 15 times, I had come to the point where I was saying, well, bleep you, Bubba.

Because the week after you did that, I was doing my second ladies night show because I am the only radio host I know of who will play three hours back to back of nothing but female artists. I've done that twice now.

And I have come to the frame of mind where I was jolly gosh darned if I was going to come in to KPFT, play female artist for three doggone hours and call myself Jay on the radio because I got a whole wallet full of pieces of plastic that says, my name is Jennifer Wagner. And I said, to heck with a whole bunch of that noise. My name is Jennifer. That's how it's going to be. Get over it.

And I'm here. I'm queer. I'm transgender. I'm post-op. I'm everything you say I am. And Bubba, kind of pushed me into this community because I've been living out in the straight world, living in the closet, and this and that, and trying to get-- and thinking that somehow all sorts of operations and this and that was going to change how the world perceived me. And boy, was that a big lie. Boy, was I living in a dream world?

So I just had to readjust my whole priorities. Well, I can't stand tall because I'm a shrimp, but I can stand loud and proud. And say, this is it. Spit in their eye. Like I said, the other night, stand tall, stand proud, spit in their eye. And say, this is who I am. This is what I do. I play damn good music on the radio. If you got a problem with me, we'll just shut up and listen to music, and we can probably get along.

SPEAKER 2: That show, your voice, it reminds me of a back when I had the office supply store out of town and country. It was next door to the Windmill Dinner Theater. And they would have a group that was called the Barnstorm. They were college students that would come in there and they would be the waiters and waitresses and so forth like that. But they would also put on a little show just before the play started.

And I remember one summer I came over there, and they had this one little gal that was probably not 5-foot tall and probably didn't weigh 100 pounds soaking wet. She was from the University of Texas and she was a member of the University of Texas a cappella choir. And I'm a bass baritone, myself.

JENNIFER Yes.

WAGNER:

SPEAKER 2: And she had a deeper bass voice than I did.

SPEAKER 1: Wow.

SPEAKER 2: And I mean, she would blow people. They would do the rolling on the river, and they would start off with the group there. And she would be facing away from the audience and she would be singing the lead on that thing with this deep bass voice. And when she turned around, I mean, it just blew everybody's mind.

JENNIFER You think that's funny. As a goof, I worked on this for weeks. I attend-- can I throw in a plug for Steve Downing here?

SPEAKER 1: You bet you can.

JENNIFER I attend, fairly often, an open mic called Steve Downing's outlaw open mic, and that takes place on first and third Monday of every month at Sooki's. And Steve Downing is there, Tim Zinn, who KPFT knows very well is always there and his wonderful wife, Sarah, who bartends, and they are a bunch of really open minded people.

They're very friendly people. And they invite everybody who's the singer-songwriter to come on down there and play some songs and hang out and jam with them. And I do that. And a couple of times, some people who were there for the open mic made some comments about my voice.

And me, being the hopeless smart aleck that I am, what I did is I went and practiced something I learned years ago because I'm a musician and a singer and everything. And I went and figured out-- I practice lowering my voice and I did a Waylon Jennings impression at Sooki's, going, I've heard some you all say, hey, you look small, you're small, you look real feminine. And you look real, real. But you got that voice, so therefore you got to be a dude in the dress.

And I've gotten some rude comments. And I finally got pissed off about that. And I came in there and I decided to do my Waylon Jennings impersonation. And so I sang with a guy there who does a pretty good Willie. Let me give you an example, OK? I'm going to do this for you just to blow your minds.

(SINGING) Cowboys ain't easy to love and they're harder to hold.

SPEAKER 1: Whoa.

JENNIFER Waylon Jennings, OK.

WAGNER:

SPEAKER 1: [? Broke J's ?]

JENNIFER Because that's not my natural voice. I actually sing a tenor and the soprano. It goes [VOCALIZING]. It's up there.

WAGNER: But I did that just to blow their minds. And I'll tell you what, there wasn't a mouth closed in the joint pretty quick. Steve Downing looked at me and he said, Jennifer, that is uncanny.

SPEAKER 2: Where is Sooki?

JENNIFER On Washington Avenue. I don't know the phone number, but they're in the phone book. I know this for sure. Call

WAGNER: them for more information. This is every first and third Monday if you're a singer-songwriter. And I'll tell you what, Steve Downing and Tim Zinn and Sarah and the regular crowd of solid folks that come there, they don't care who you are. They just care where you're at.

SPEAKER 1: OK.

JENNIFER You can be transgendered. You can be gay. You can be anything you want to be. And if you go to that place, ain't nobody going to give you a hard time.

SPEAKER 1: The show is called Reach Out in the Darkness. It's on this Monday morning 1:00 to 4:00.

JENNIFER Yes.

WAGNER:

SPEAKER 1: Right here on this station. And if people can listen to this show, they can listen to yours.

JENNIFER You're darn tootin'.

WAGNER:

SPEAKER 1: Your right. OK, Thanks for being here. I got to get some music on.

JENNIFER Oh, it's a pleasure.

WAGNER:

SPEAKER 1: And I got to get a couple of news items going. And Ryan, a message came in.

RYAN: Ward in the Galleria area said that he just wanted to congratulate us for playing the kind of music that you won't find anywhere else.

SPEAKER 1: Thank you very much. And this is an example of it. It's by the late, great Sid Spencer, openly gay cowboy artist, singing some Christmas music right here for you on *After Hours*, queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SPEAKER 1: Hello. Yeah, that's a great version of that song. "Please come home for Christmas." That was by the late, great Sid Spencer. A couple of things I want to talk about is that there is a court show going on at Chance's on December the 15th. That'll be next week at 8:00 PM.

And don't forget the NLA, National Leather Association toy drive, which is ongoing. And there's going to be a show at Decades on the 16th at 6:00 PM for that. And let's see what else here. Probably, we're going to have a car wash tomorrow at Mary's from 10:00 till 3:00. That Sunday, Sunday, Sunday, Sunday, 10:00 till 3:00. Because it was supposed to be on the second and it got rained out.

SPEAKER 3: It's very bad.

SPEAKER 1: And they said if-- yeah, if it was a rain out, then it was going to happen. Yes, so there we are.

SPEAKER 3: Basically, if they just put it out in the rain, rain will do. Of course, our rain will probably take an inch of paint off the--

SPEAKER 1: Yeah.

SPEAKER 3: --car

SPEAKER 1: Was that number one you wanted to hear?

SPEAKER 4: Oh, one and--

SPEAKER 1: On that CD.

SPEAKER 4: Yeah, one's fine.

SPEAKER 1: Yes. That's engineering stuff that's supposed to be going on behind the scenes.

BOBBY: Behind the scenes. However, here at After Hours.

JIMMY CARPER: Here at After Hours, we do it-- oh, we do it differently.

BOBBY: Unlike politicians, we do everything up front.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. Yeah.

SPEAKER: Speaking of volunteer stuff.

BOBBY: [LAUGHS]

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, really. That's the biggies. You know, if I've got some other stuff, I'm going to hit it at the end of the show.

BOBBY: Nothing like the sound of rustling paper on--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I know.

BOBBY: --radio.

JIMMY CARPER: Jackie, thank you so much for being here. Yeah. No, actually we're not, because, at 1:45, I'm trying to get the second half of the show.

SPEAKER: Oh.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I'm trying to kind of be a little bit tighter in the scheduling and getting people on when they're supposed to be.

BOBBY: We're trying to be a little tighter.

SPEAKER: Oh, so that's not coffee in that cup there.

JIMMY CARPER: No. [LAUGHS] Jackie, thank you so much for being here tonight and all the great information, and I do have-- oh, before you go, I do have that cats address. It's the cats, C-A-T-S, 52nd Street House Fund, and that's care of Capital Bank, 3007 South Sheppard Drive, Houston, 77098. And if you didn't catch that, give us a call at 526-5738. 526 KPFT. And Big Roy will give it to you. Now.

BOBBY: There's a lead in line.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I know.

BOBBY: [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS] Oh. It's time for the Latino hour with Francisco Sánchez.

FRANCISCO How are y'all?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Sánchez.

FRANCISCO Sánchez.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: I may add. Sánchez, not Sanchez.

FRANCISCO Sánchez with an accent over the A.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: There you go. So how are you doing?

FRANCISCO Doing good. How is everyone else doing?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: I'm doing great, and I got to tell you, this is the second month without Sandy.

FRANCISCO Well, I got some bad news.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, you know, I figured out what that news was, because I got a letter from one of our listeners, who is behind the bars, who is just in love with Sandy.

FRANCISCO Ah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: And mentioned to me that he had heard that Sandy saying that he might move to Tennessee.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: And did he?

FRANCISCO No. He's trying to move to Tennessee. So he's spending, I guess-- doing that, and a lot of things are coming up

SANCHEZ: with him, but he's trying to transition out there.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

FRANCISCO All that fun stuff.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: OK. So what's in Tennessee?

FRANCISCO I have no idea.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

BOBBY: Not a whole lot.

FRANCISCO Cowboys maybe.

SANCHEZ:

BOBBY: Last time I checked.

JIMMY CARPER: No, I don't think in Tennessee.

FRANCISCO But last time he was talking about which University? University in Knoxville.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Is that what it-- yeah.

FRANCISCO And so.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: But he just said it in passing, and so I didn't really--

FRANCISCO Yeah, is it Vanderbilt? No.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: I don't know.

FRANCISCO Some school.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Something like that. So now you're looking for--

FRANCISCO I'm single again.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Looking for a new co-host.

FRANCISCO Yes, and actually, we have someone that's going to do a little second segment of our segment in a little bit just

SANCHEZ: as a guest co-host.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

FRANCISCO So we're taking applications if anyone wants to call in.

SANCHEZ:

BOBBY: That's right.

FRANCISCO And let us know what they're up to. It's fun. It's 1:45 in the morning, but, you know, it's fun.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: And that's it. I want to get you on at 1:45 to make sure you can get everything on. We'll talk about that.

FRANCISCO OK.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS] It's just a new [INAUDIBLE]. Trying to just tighten up the show a little bit so everybody gets their chance, and I know that, in the past, I've kind of shorted the second half folks. So I'm taking steps to change that.

FRANCISCO New Year's resolution, huh?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, before New Year's. Trying to get it done before New Year's so I won't get out of the habit.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS] What's been going on with you?

FRANCISCO Not much, keeping busy. I tried to start some Christmas shopping today.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

FRANCISCO Didn't get the chance. Still trying to wind down after the whole election process.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, tell us about your side of it.

FRANCISCO Well, it was interesting.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO It was very interesting. I think we have a lot to learn from this past election cycle.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I do too.

FRANCISCO Yeah. So we'll see.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Was your community kind of torn between voting for Mr. Sánchez or not voting for him because he was conservative?

FRANCISCO Not at all. 75% to 80% of the Hispanic community voted for Orlando Sanchez.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Uh-huh.

FRANCISCO And it was actually kind of ironic. [INAUDIBLE]. The barbershop poll. I was getting my haircut a couple of months

SANCHEZ: ago, and, lo and behold, gay people work at hair salons.

JIMMY CARPER: What?

FRANCISCO [LAUGHS]

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: How unusual.

FRANCISCO And three of them happened to be Hispanic and gay, and the discussion always comes up for Orlando is he a
SANCHEZ: handsome man.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, he is. It's those blue eyes.

FRANCISCO Hispanic.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

FRANCISCO It's time, and blah, blah, blah. It was interesting because one person was staunchly-- this is before the runoff,
SANCHEZ: before the general election. One person was staunchly for Orlando. The other person was leaning towards Lee Brown.

JIMMY CARPER: Mm-hmm.

FRANCISCO And the third person was undecided. These were Hispanic gay men. I got my haircut today after the whole runoff
SANCHEZ: election and everything that occurred after that. The Orlando supporter was still staunchly supporting Orlando.
The undecided person had ended up voting for Orlando.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

FRANCISCO And the third person still voted for Lee Brown but had a very serious concerns about how that campaign had
SANCHEZ: been run and how negative it had gotten and was very disappointed in the mayor's campaign for that.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO And I guess, in terms of our community, I guess we have a lot to learn. In proposition 2. There was no significant
SANCHEZ: outreach to Hispanic voters. Excuse me. Yes, sir.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

FRANCISCO Well, I'll keep my pen actually.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

FRANCISCO Hand it back. Thank you. I'll stop clicking. We have a lot to learn from that. I don't know if you-- yeah, I was
SANCHEZ: actually here. I was here the Saturday after the election last time.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO And our community, or in the Hispanic community, there has just been very little outreach in terms of voting
SANCHEZ: against proposition 2. So people were a little confused.

JIMMY CARPER: That was confusing.

FRANCISCO It was.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Because, the wording of it, you had to really think hard about which way you wanted to vote on that.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: It's that kind of reverse language thing.

FRANCISCO Even for people that went in there knowing what the election was about were sort of, you know. I know how I
SANCHEZ: want to vote.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, right.

FRANCISCO It just doesn't mean I'm voting the right way.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO And so that, compounded by the fact that the LG community sort of didn't do any significant outreach to the
SANCHEZ: Hispanic community, was a concern, and I think that played a little bit into the runoff. I think it's something we're going to have to sort of deal with in the future. So we'll see what happens.

JIMMY CARPER: I pointed out that no matter-- well, no matter who won, but we know who won, but it was so close that nobody really had a mandate.

FRANCISCO Right.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Lee Brown had better kind of look around and really take into consideration some other types of views because he didn't get elected with a mandate. Yeah. That's right. It was not overwhelming. It was so close that you have to think about it in different terms.

FRANCISCO No, you do, and I think he's got a new council to deal with.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. And there are more conservatives on this council than before. Is that--

FRANCISCO Yeah, slightly more. I was going down district by district, and there's not really-- I think the number of people you would classify as conservatives versus those that you would classify as more progressive really hasn't changed.

What has changed is the people that are on there are probably a little bit more willing to buck the Mayor, because him and other folks lined up against Michael Berry, for example, and took Chris Bell's seat.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

FRANCISCO And Chris Bell was a pretty moderate Democrat but generally stuck with the Mayor. Berry is a pretty moderate conservative, and he's done work in this community. A lot of people are concerned with how he ran his campaign and his position or lack of position on Proposition 2.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I was very against that. Yeah.

FRANCISCO I think he's going to be willing to sort of work with the Mayor and work with people on council, but he's certainly got-- people like him and [INAUDIBLE] Rodriguez and other folks that weren't supported by the Mayor, he and his campaign campaigned against them and that sort of thing. They were already going in very independent and very open minded.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, but they're not.

FRANCISCO [INAUDIBLE]

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: The Mayor cannot-- yeah, the rubber stamp thing. Yeah, the Mayor--

FRANCISCO Those days are over.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: --cannot count on their votes just for anything. Yeah. Yeah, you're right.

FRANCISCO So as a community, I think we have a lot to learn in terms of continuing to do outreach to other minority

SANCHEZ: communities and that sort of thing, one thing that Orlando's campaign did very well.

JIMMY CARPER: And I think, maybe, the changing populace of this city.

FRANCISCO Right. I think a lot of folks wanted to write off Hispanic voting for Orlando Sanchez as well. They don't understand what his record is. If they understood, they wouldn't appreciate his philosophy, and they wouldn't vote for him.

I could understand that argument at the beginning of the campaign, prior to the general election, the first in November, but the community knew that by the time the first election rolled around. They definitely knew by the time the runoff rolled around, as negative a campaign as the mayor's folks ran and trying to make issues of some of those things.

People knew, and a lot of the people in the community got very defensive in saying, you know-- I mean, I was out there on election day at the polls, seeing what was happening, and a lot of people that hadn't voted before were coming out and supporting Orlando, and little Hispanic old ladies walking a couple of blocks to go vote.

BOBBY: That's right.

FRANCISCO For the first time, they actually had hope that they could elect a Hispanic candidate, and they were willing to put **SANCHEZ:** those issues aside.

JIMMY CARPER: And it's a very definite-- more than a definite, maybe, for the next-- in two years.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Because there's going to be more Hispanic people of voting age.

FRANCISCO Yeah, there are.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: And that percentage is going to keep going up and up and up.

FRANCISCO Yeah, if you look at voter turnout this past time around, the Hispanics constitute about 22% of the voter turnout.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Mm-hmm.

FRANCISCO Which was a dramatic increase, but not only that, I think if you saw the returns on election day, more African-

SANCHEZ: Americans turned out to vote than they did in November. More Hispanics turned out to vote than they did in November. Not only did more of them go out and vote, but prior to the election, maybe only 60% of Hispanics voted for Orlando.

In the runoff, about 75% to 80%, depending on what neighborhood you were, voted for Orlando. And so one of the challenges, I think, the challenge for Democrats next year, is to address some of the concerns that came up with these sort of things.

In California, the Democratic Party lost a lot of Hispanic votes in a municipal race where they hindered a Hispanic Democrat from trying to make inroads. In New York City, the mayor's race there, just by a very narrow margin, went to a Republican.

Hispanic voters voted for the Republican candidate because the Democratic party sort of made sure the Hispanic candidate didn't have an option here. And then what you're looking at here, I think we've got a lot of concerns in making sure that Hispanics feel at home.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, you know, yeah, that, and there's going to come a time when the two people up for Mayor may be a Democratic Hispanic and a Republican Hispanic.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: So everybody else-- yeah, in my own community, the Anglo community, I keep hearing about-- we've been talking about the percentage of Hispanics is going up and up and up, and very, very soon, it's going to be the dominant populace of this city, and, you know, Anglos are just not ready for this, and they're not getting ready for this, and they're going to be very upset when it happens.

FRANCISCO No. And being behind the scenes, I saw a lot of that dynamic this past election.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: I'll bet.

FRANCISCO Especially in the gay and lesbian community, some folks could not understand why a lot of Hispanic gays were

SANCHEZ: really torn on this issue, and we're dealing with multiple identities.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

FRANCISCO We're hispanic, and we're gay.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: That's exactly right.

FRANCISCO This is one of those opportunities, or one of those dilemmas, where you had to say, OK, where are my loyalties.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Uh-huh. And what's more important to me.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO And people would ask me, what should I do, and I was like, do what you think you need to do. I'm not going to tell

SANCHEZ: you what to do in this. I'm just not. Normally, I will tell you. I'll be more than glad to tell you who to punch on the ballot.

JIMMY CARPER: I've got to tell you, several months ago, when you and Sandy were here on the show, and you were talking about Orlando running, and Sandy said, gee, I think he really has a chance, and I was poo-pooing the idea because I thought there's no way, but it happened, and we've got to get used to that. We've got to get used to the idea that this is going to be, if it isn't already, a two-language city.

FRANCISCO Right.

SANCHEZ:

BOBBY: I find it difficult to believe that people don't know already, considering that--

JIMMY CARPER: They should. They should.

BOBBY: And it's interesting when I hear the word minority getting used when you're outnumbered.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, well that's going to change too.

BOBBY: When you outnumber everybody else. It's like, you're not a minority anymore when you're powerful enough to elect anybody.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. I've been wanting, in my *Pollyanna* way, to ensure that what happened in the gay Black community doesn't happen in the gay Hispanic community where it's two separate communities that there are very few Black gays who mingle with white gays. I think it's already happened in the Hispanic community. I think there's already a separate community.

FRANCISCO A thriving community.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, absolutely, absolutely.

BOBBY: About how we separate out.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BOBBY: And it's like, OK, isn't this exactly what we were trying to avoid.

JIMMY CARPER: I know.

BOBBY: From the rest of the world.

JIMMY CARPER: I know.

BOBBY: And we're doing it within our community.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BOBBY: I'm like, excuse me.

FRANCISCO There's enough people trying to separate us than for us to be worrying about trying to separate ourselves.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO If those people live in Montrose, they're going to have a surprise when they go to the ballot box in the March

SANCHEZ: election, in the primary.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

FRANCISCO Half of them will be voting now in Garnet Coleman's district, those folks that used to be in Debra Danburg's. And

SANCHEZ: the other half are going to be in Debra's district, but her district has changed dramatically, and so she's going to be in a very tough fight come November.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I don't even know how that's-- I know it's been redrawn. I don't know how. I'm not that astute in politics. I just know that [INAUDIBLE]. That's all I know.

FRANCISCO The ironic thing is this. The Republicans passed a plan for congressional and state legislative lines. That was

SANCHEZ: taken to court. Everything's taken to court in redistricting.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

FRANCISCO It went to a three-panel judge that was dominated by Republicans on the Congressional plan that would have

SANCHEZ: added Republican seats and made the delegation predominantly Republican. They said that was unconstitutional and re-instituted a plan that basically protects incumbents. It keeps the Democratic majority and only adds two Republican seats.

That was done by Republican judges. So the plan that was protesting the way the Senate and House lines were drawn in the Texas legislature went to Democratic judges, and we thought, OK, this is some hope here. They approved the plan.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I remember.

FRANCISCO Passed by the Republicans.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: What? What?

FRANCISCO That basically gives them control of the Senate and House. So both parties were like, what the?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO You know?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: What were you thinking?

BOBBY: What were you doing here.

FRANCISCO So I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: I don't know.

FRANCISCO They were either on something or our judicial system maybe isn't as tainted as I thought it was. Still not the

SANCHEZ: brightest folks in the world sometimes, but we get to wonder. A lot of people are shifted around. We were trying to look at some maps this week, still trying to figure out who's where because there's still some confusion about that. We have the maps, but, oh, did that move too.

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS]

FRANCISCO A friend of mine--

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I'm just waiting for the experts to iron it out, because I have no idea.

FRANCISCO A friend of mine was thinking about running for office, and he was like, well, this is the district I want to run in

SANCHEZ: because I've lived here 20 years. And so we looked at the map, and I was like, I hate to tell you, but your precinct is the border, and you're out now.

JIMMY CARPER: Oops.

FRANCISCO He was like, but I've lived here for 20 years.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, oh well.

FRANCISCO Well, you still live there.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: It's a whole new game.

FRANCISCO Welcome to a new ballgame.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. So I need to remind people that they're listening to After Hours, queer radio with attitude, on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. I'm Jimmy Carper. Bobby's here.

BOBBY: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: And Francisco Sánchez.

FRANCISCO And let's talk a little music break, and let's get in the Christmas spirit.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

FRANCISCO Listen to a couple of songs. These are by Raúl Di Blasio. Blanca Navidad, which is White Christmas, and Año Viejo, **SANCHEZ:** which is translated as this past year, I guess is the translation for the song, and then we'll bring out our guest co-host.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Oh, that was really pretty. Tell us about that again.

FRANCISCO That is Raúl Di Blasio. He's an Argentinean pianist, and this is from his Christmas album called *Christmas*.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: That works. OK. OK.

FRANCISCO But it's very beautiful music. I listened to it earlier in the evening.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO Got me in the Christmas spirit before I did Christmas shopping.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Good. Good.

FRANCISCO Didn't get anything bought, really.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, where did you go? Did you do the mall thing?

FRANCISCO Yeah. So I went to the gallery. All I paid for was for parking, and then that's all I spent money on. Then I tried to

SANCHEZ: have dinner at Cheesecake Factory. That didn't work.

JIMMY CARPER: Didn't have enough money?

FRANCISCO No. Exactly.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: They are pricey there.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO \$8 for a piece of cake.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I know.

FRANCISCO But that's where David likes to eat. He goes there for the chocolate mousse cake.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh. Whatever they have, I know it's pricey, but it really is good.

FRANCISCO Oh, their strawberry shortcake is, like, to die for. It's like this huge biscuit thing, and they put two scoops of

SANCHEZ: vanilla ice cream between them, and they top it all with strawberries, I mean fresh strawberries.

JIMMY CARPER: Nice.

FRANCISCO It's sinful. [LAUGHS]

SANCHEZ:

BOBBY: Oh. [INAUDIBLE].

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

FRANCISCO And we have us Riano. Hi, Riano.

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: Hey, how's it going?

JIMMY CARPER: How do you spell that?

RIANO: R-I-A-N-O.

JIMMY CARPER: R-I-A-N-O. Riano.

RIANO: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: Is there a meaning to--

RIANO: Umm, actually, it's a longer name.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

RIANO: It's Cipriano, and, of course, it means the beautiful one.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Well. Well, OK.

RIANO: And my number is--

[LAUGHTER]

FRANCISCO So he's our co-host for the evening. He's also my roommate.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Welcome to After Hours.

RIANO: Well, thank you.

FRANCISCO He's normally not this shy in person actually. Usually, I can't get him to stop talking.

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: I do talk forever.

JIMMY CARPER: Give him a few minutes.

FRANCISCO [LAUGHS]

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Give him a few minutes.

RYAN: Look at what happened to me.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. Ryan used to be really quiet.

BOBBY: Ya'll need to start hanging out with me.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BOBBY: Look what happened.

FRANCISCO And with Sandy, the problem is trying to get a word in edgewise. [LAUGHS]

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: No kidding.

FRANCISCO [INAUDIBLE] meant to call him or email.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, please do. Yes. Yes, I miss having him here and certainly wish him the best, and I know there's at least one guy behind bars who's going to be really unhappy that he's not going to be back.

FRANCISCO Yeah, [INAUDIBLE] he had fan mail.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. I forgot to bring it. I do have fan mail for him.

FRANCISCO Wow.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO Well, that'll work.

SANCHEZ:

BOBBY: Fan mail from behind bars.

JIMMY CARPER: There you go.

FRANCISCO It's the highest rated show in its time slot, in and out of bars, right?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: There you go. There you go.

FRANCISCO So what are y'all doing for Christmas?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: I'm going to be right here doing the usual stuff. I know, in the past, you've talked about different traditions.

FRANCISCO Yeah, we always--

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Doing the tradition thing.

FRANCISCO Yeah, my personal tradition has always been going to St. Ann's for midnight mass every year. I usually go with

SANCHEZ: my friend Diane and Terrence and whoever else wants to tag along.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, I do have it.

FRANCISCO Oh, good.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: I thought I had forgotten it, but I do have it.

FRANCISCO Wow.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: A card and a letter.

FRANCISCO Wow.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Not for you, for Sandy.

[LAUGHTER]

FRANCISCO So you're saying I have to go pay him a visit before he leaves.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Yes. Where were we?

FRANCISCO Traditions.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes, yes.

BOBBY: We started talking about where we were going to be for Christmas.

JIMMY CARPER: It's kind of a family thing for me, although it's a family of choice. I have a couple of different things I do. One is with my best friend, who died in 1994, and his family kind of took me in as a second brother, and so I'm expected to be there for Christmas Eve.

FRANCISCO Wow.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: And then I have a family of choice on Christmas Day. So I've learned over the years that you may have your traditions, but sometimes you find that, when things change, or you move away, or people die, sometimes you have to make new traditions.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that's what's happened to me a couple of times in my life.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

BOBBY: Spending it with some friends, who I also spent Thanksgiving with. They invited me back for Christmas.

JIMMY CARPER: Nice. Nice.

FRANCISCO And my family always used to go to-- when I was a kid, my dad would take us down to Mexico to visit our

SANCHEZ: grandparents down there. After my parents got divorced, that sort of changed. Now we do two Thanksgiving dinners, and then we--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, my God.

FRANCISCO Two Christmas dinners. You've got to coordinate when dad does his and when mom does hers and make sure it's

SANCHEZ: spaced enough. My sister is always like, just make sure there's enough time there so we were hungry. Don't have one at 5:00 and one at 8:00.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

FRANCISCO One of you has it at noon, and one of you has it in the evening because there's only so much we can eat. We

SANCHEZ: don't want you to get your feelings hurt.

BOBBY: [INAUDIBLE] so hurt.

JIMMY CARPER: No kidding.

FRANCISCO And I just got a house this past year.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: What?

FRANCISCO I got a house this past year.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: I didn't know that.

FRANCISCO Yeah. Moved over into Oak Forest in that part.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, that's right, the lesbian enclave.

FRANCISCO Yeah.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: You did message me that.

FRANCISCO So I figured maybe it'll help me butchen up a little. So I moved out there.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. Learn some things from your lesbian neighbors.

FRANCISCO You go out there on Sundays, and they're doing their lawn, and they're building stuff.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, my.

FRANCISCO I always run into them at the Kroger, and David works at Blockbuster, and they're always in there. It's always

SANCHEZ: interesting. We had Thanksgiving dinner there for the first time. One of them was there. My mom agreed to move her's to my house, and then--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

FRANCISCO --my dad has his in the evening, but they were all there, and so that was kind of interesting. Didn't have enough

SANCHEZ: chairs for everyone just yet.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

FRANCISCO It was kind of nice. So we had fun.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Good.

FRANCISCO And then Riano was there, and I don't know what his plans are for Christmas.

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: Actually, everything changes every year. So I really don't know right now. Talking about traditions. My traditions change every year.

JIMMY CARPER: Really? Well, I was just going to ask you about your traditions.

RIANO: I mean, there's something different every year. There's nothing really special. It just depends on what the whole family wants to do, and who's going out of town, and who's staying in.

FRANCISCO To go to Mexico?

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: Yeah. Well, they did go for Thanksgiving. I'm not sure if they're going this time.

FRANCISCO Did you used to go as a kid for Christmas?

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: Oh, I used to go all the time. [INAUDIBLE], going over there, but, you know, everything changes.

FRANCISCO My favorite part of going to Mexico for Christmas was we get to play with firecrackers and stuff.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

RIANO: That's a good thing.

FRANCISCO Right?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Not only talking about where you celebrate it, but how you celebrate it. I know you've done a couple of things, talking about how you celebrate and what you celebrate, and different foods, different this, different that, and I always like to hear that.

FRANCISCO Yeah, well, when we used to go down to Mexico as kids, it was kind of interesting. We'd go down there, and it was

SANCHEZ: probably a gathering of 20 to 30 people at my grandparents' house, at their little ranch house in Mexico.

JIMMY CARPER: All the kids slept on the floor.

FRANCISCO All the kids slept on the floor on blankets or in the car. I remember sleeping in the backseat of the car once every

SANCHEZ: couple of years. It was interesting. So the men would basically sit outside all day and, if weather permitting, drinking beer and talking.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

FRANCISCO Figuring out what pig they were going to kill that night or what goat they were going to kill that night.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Do the manly things. Yes.

FRANCISCO Exactly. And that was a daylong process. The women were sitting around the kitchen waiting for them to figure

SANCHEZ: out--

RIANO: What's going to happen.

FRANCISCO --what's going to happen, what animal they're going to have to cook that night. So by the time they got started,

SANCHEZ: that was in the afternoon. So we didn't eat until the evening.

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

FRANCISCO Us kids, we'd just run around because there were little plots of land, little ranches, and there was just to what I
SANCHEZ: guess you would call convenience stores. So we would be saving up our money all year to buy firecrackers.

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh.

FRANCISCO Most of us lived in Houston. So we didn't have it.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Couldn't have them. Yeah.

FRANCISCO We couldn't have them, and down there, it was like a big Christmas thing. I have a couple of scars to show from
SANCHEZ: that.

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS]

RIANO: You would pop them in your hand.

FRANCISCO Throw them at each other.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

FRANCISCO One of us went to the bathroom, and, of course, we would aim it at the outhouse while [INAUDIBLE].

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: And there'd be more than one mother screaming at you.

FRANCISCO [LAUGHS] Exactly. So that's what we used to do. I don't know if Riano's were that wild or not.

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: Wilder. I'm sure.

FRANCISCO No, now we don't go down there as much. Most of my grandparents have passed away that lived in Mexico, and
SANCHEZ: so maybe we'll get to the Valley every once in a while, but mostly we spend time here.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. Riano.

RIANO: Well, I haven't been to Mexico in about, I would say, 15 years.

JIMMY CARPER: Really.

FRANCISCO Oh, wow.

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: Actually, no, it hasn't been that long, but everything Francisco says just brings back a lot of memories.

FRANCISCO [LAUGHS]

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: That's something we did every year. Every time there's a holiday, that's where we went is Mexico.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

RIANO: But now all my aunts and uncles from Mexico come to Houston, and they'll come celebrate here. They said it's a lot better over here. I'm just like, no, we've got to go back. I want my memories back. It's very fun to go out there.

JIMMY CARPER: That's true, yeah, because it changes.

FRANCISCO And we would drive. So it's like a seven hour drive to get down there.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

FRANCISCO So we would leave early in the morning and then make it down there, and we would-- another tradition, we'd sit

SANCHEZ: there at the border trying to get our permit to go past the first state, and so it would be-- so we wait there for a couple of hours, and it'd be a couple of hours before my dad would finally break down and bribe the border people--

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS]

FRANCISCO --to get our permit, and then--

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Which is--

FRANCISCO --all of a sudden--

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: --what they've been waiting for.

FRANCISCO Exactly. So he would finally break down and do that. And by then, we were out of there in 15, 20 minutes. As we

SANCHEZ: get closer and closer to the border, he and my mom started getting into an argument. She's like, why don't you just pay the guy, and we get there. We had to wait. The kids are tired. They're getting all frustrated. So we'd sit there. The good old days.

JIMMY CARPER: That's amazing. I love that story.

FRANCISCO You'd sit there, and they'd come up with-- no, you would sit there, and they'd come up with some excuse as to

SANCHEZ: why they can't give you a permit to go past the first state or the first checkpoint driving South into Mexico. So my dad would be insistent. All right, I have that documentation. I have this, or I have that. There would always be another excuse.

JIMMY CARPER: It's like, dad, you don't even know the game, do you?

FRANCISCO He knew the game. He was just stubborn. So we'd see these people come in. We'd see them give the guy 20.

SANCHEZ: They'd get through. So we were just sitting there. And of course, there's a little taco stand right across from everything. So we'd be sitting there. We'd get hungry, and we'd eat and wait for my dad to--

RIANO: Your dad's negotiation.

FRANCISCO --finally break down.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Gosh.

FRANCISCO Supposedly, all that's changing. I don't know if it is or isn't because I haven't been there in a few years, but that
SANCHEZ: was Christmas.

JIMMY CARPER: That's nice.

FRANCISCO [LAUGHS]

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: No, these are the memories that live with us, and like Riano was saying, you know, gee, he hadn't thought of that in probably a long time.

RIANO: No.

FRANCISCO One time, my dad actually decided-- one Christmas, he decided he didn't want to deal with that. We were there
SANCHEZ: all day. The border people obviously didn't break down. I mean, he's got business coming in.

Every minute, it's just people lining up to get their permit to go. So we drove another hour and a half to another border town to try to pass through and encountered the same problems there, and so, finally, he broke down at that point.

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS]

Gosh.

FRANCISCO But that was Christmas for us.

SANCHEZ:

[LAUGHTER]

Half of it included one day of getting there and waiting around, and my grandparents only lived an hour and a half into Mexico. So it wasn't too bad of [INAUDIBLE].

JIMMY CARPER: Is decorating the Christmas tree part of tradition in Mexico?

RIANO: Not in Mexico. I never had one there. Here it was. We would decorate it here, and then we'd leave and pick up all the presents in a little bag, trash bag, and take them all to Mexico. Had all these kids running around. You were trying to give them their gifts. Those were the days.

FRANCISCO But no, they don't really put trees up. No.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Really?

FRANCISCO A handful of trees, but mostly it's just the cooking.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Must be lights.

RIANO: It depends on where you're at.

FRANCISCO Yeah, I mean, I would spend it in rural Mexico.

SANCHEZ:

RIANO: A fire was our light.

FRANCISCO Yeah. It's interesting.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Because I remember, in the '70s, I was in Mexico City for Thanksgiving. It was a vacation thing, and they were putting lights up already.

FRANCISCO And where was this at?

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Mexico City.

FRANCISCO Oh, OK. Yeah. It's a different world. That's very different.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, really?

FRANCISCO Yes.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

FRANCISCO What size city? It's one of the top five biggest cities in the world.

SANCHEZ:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, it is. It is.

FRANCISCO It's humongous. It's very urban.

SANCHEZ: