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[MUSIC PLAYING]

SPEAKER 1: OK girl.

SPEAKER 2: Oh, here we are. Now, we're moving some things around.

SPEAKER 1: That's true. That's true. *After Hours* is changing.

SPEAKER 2: Well, just a little bit, because we're going to have the BBC News at midnight. And then at 12:15, This Way Out with Greg Gordon and Lucia Chappelle.

SPEAKER 1: Which runs for a half hour.

SPEAKER 2: And it'll be moving.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah.

SPEAKER 2: It used to be at some time, and now it's on at 12:15.

SPEAKER 1: 12:15.

SPEAKER 2: Immediately following the BBC. And then Frank will be here with local gay and lesbian news. All on After Hours beginning-- when? Soon.

SPEAKER 1: Soon.

SPEAKER 2: So stay with us.

SPEAKER 1: Coming a theater near you.

SPEAKER 2: Every Saturday night at midnight on KPFT, the BBC News at midnight this way out with Greg Gordon and Lucia Chappelle at 12:15. And then Frank with local news. And then we'll be here to scream we're here.

SPEAKER 1: And we're queer.

SPEAKER 2: Saturday nights at midnight on KPFT After Hours tune in and hear what you've been missing, girl.

SPEAKER 1: I know that's right. Bye.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

MAN 1: Back in November we filed an application for a marriage license, Patrick and I. A few days later, the marriage license Bureau decided to deny our license. And about a week after that, we filed suit.

MAN 2: [INAUDIBLE] Marian is where gay and lesbian couples would go down to their local marriage license bureau. They can politely ask for a license or be more vociferous, pound their fist on the table.

LUCIA CHAPPELLE: This is Lucia Chappelle.

GREG GORDON: And Greg Gordon. And you're listening to This Way Out, the international Lesbian and Gay Radio Magazine on After Hours.

LUCIA CHAPPELLE: Right here on Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM KPFT Houston.

CHRISTOPHER DAVID TRENTAM: Welcome to *This Way Out*, the international lesbian and gay radio magazine. I'm Christopher David Trentham.

LUCIA CHAPPELLE: And I'm Lucia Chappelle. Gay couple peeks through legal loophole.

CHRISTOPHER DAVID TRENTAM: ACT UP moves to free the Anti Age 6.

LUCIA CHAPPELLE: And homophobic Blarney denounced by New York Mayor.

CHRISTOPHER DAVID TRENTAM: All that and more because you've discovered This Way Out.

MARK SACCOMANO: I'm Mark Saccomano.

CINDY FRIEDMAN: And I'm Cindy Friedman.

MARK SACCOMANO: With News Route, a summary of some of the news in or affecting the Lesbian and Gay Community for the week ending March 16, 1991. Dr. Robert Gallo's research into development of a vaccine against AIDS, the longest running government sponsored vaccine research in the nation, has been terminated by the National Institutes of Health as a result of illegal human trials on children in Africa. Mary VanClay reports--

MARY VANCLAY: The National Institutes of Health have shut down the government's longest running attempt to find a vaccine for AIDS headed by Dr. Robert Gallo of the National Cancer Institute. The NIH is unprecedented move has put a stop to Gallo's collaborative research with French immunologist, Daniel Zagury. The NIH is not commenting on its move but an internal report obtained by the Chicago Tribune newspaper says Zagury had not guaranteed the safety of human subjects in his experiments overseas. Zagury has not only inoculated himself with an experimental vaccine but according to the report he's also tried it on four Zairean children.

The NIH does not allow its researchers to participate in human experiments abroad that would not be allowed here. Gallo has claimed that he knew of no irregularities. But his lab is also under investigation because of other charges, including the allegation that the HIV samples Gallo said he discovered actually came from the Laboratory of his rival, Dr. Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute in France.

In a recent article in the British Journal Nature, Gallo says samples of HIV isolated in his and in Montagnier's labs in 1983 now appear to be completely different. An that no one may ever know who was really the first need to isolate the virus that leads to AIDS. In San Francisco, I'm Mary VanClay.

CINDY FRIEDMAN: The fourth issue of the USSR's only gay paper, *Tema*, has yet to be printed even though it was prepared for publication in November. Four printing houses, including the Lithuanian press that produced the earlier issues, have turned down editor [? Roman ?] [? Cullinan ?] as a result of denunciation in the government run media. [? Cullinan's ?] group also filed a formal complaint with the Human Rights Commission as a result of a September raid on a gay cafe in the Black Sea town of Sochi. *Tema* reported that 50 soldiers with machine guns forced 20 patrons onto a bus for HIV testing.

MARK SACCOMANO: In California, new state mandated police training to develop sensitivity to racial and cultural differences does not include sexual orientation differences. And San Francisco's top law enforcement officials are among those protesting the omission. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors made a formal demand for inclusion mentioning the enormous increases in violence against lesbians and gays in the last few years. Joining their protests were San Francisco County Sheriff Mike Hennessy and San Francisco City Police Chief Willis Casey. Chief Casey said his department would refuse to offer any training program that did not explicitly include lesbian and gay issues.

CINDY FRIEDMAN: In Wisconsin, a circuit judge has ruled that state's hate crimes legislation can be applied in the case of a police officer who assaulted a man he believed to be gay. [? Brian ?] Brown of the Blanchardville Police Department is accused of beating a former hairstylist after other police officers had taunted the victim as being gay. Denying a defense motion challenging the law as unconstitutionally vague, Outagamie County Circuit Judge Harold Froehlich ruled the hate crimes ordinance could be applied to Brown's felony assault charge. Wisconsin's hate crime law provides for stricter penalties for hate crimes against minorities, including gays and lesbians.

MARK SACCOMANO: The need for hate crimes legislation continues to be documented as 1990 California statistics become available. In San Diego, 144 incidents were reported to the Lesbian and Gay Men's community Center from January through September 1990 compared to only 43 logged by the city's police department. In Los Angeles, the number of incidents reported to the Gay and Lesbian Community Service Center in 1990 was double that reported in 1989. And of the 199 incidents reported, 24 involved abuse by police in San Francisco, Community United Against Violence received 28% more hate crimes reports in 1990 than in 1989. The 425 reported incidents involved over 1,000 assailants and 500 victims, with 116 victims sustaining injuries requiring medical attention.

CINDY FRIEDMAN: Briefly in other news, in London, gays and lesbians marched 7,000 strong in mid-February protesting anti-gay and lesbian legislation and the so-called Operation Scanner. Operation Scanner has led to police raids on the homes of those receiving material deemed pornographic by mail from other countries.

MARK SACCOMANO: The Argentine consulate in San Francisco received a visit earlier this month from representatives of Comunidad Homosexual Argentina, demanding the country's Supreme Court legalize the Gay and Lesbian Organization.

CINDY FRIEDMAN: Finland's only gay magazine, *SETA*, has fallen victim to internal dissension. Last month, the board of directors fired the editor for having made the publication too highbrow and literary leading to the mass resignation of the staff and loss of government financial support. A new group plans to produce a new magazine with more popular appeal.

MARK SACCOMANO: In Albania, according to the Danish newspaper *Pan-Bladet*, homosexuality is a taboo subject even though it is not mentioned in the Penal Code nor distinguished from heterosexuality in age of consent legislation. Albania is the only European country not screening blood donations for HIV as only one person is known to have tested positive and no AIDS cases have been reported.

CINDY FRIEDMAN: And finally, would you believe lesbians in space? Since astronomers agreed to name the recently discovered geological features of the planet Venus for notable women, the inclusion of lesbians was almost inevitable. Lisa Keen reported the following in the *Washington Blade*, the US Capital's Gay and Lesbian newspaper. A crater discovered by the US Pioneer Project in 1978 was named for Sappho, the Greek poet whose school on the Isle of Lesbos gave lesbians their name. In 1984, the USSR spacecraft, Venera, discovered craters named for US novelist, Willa Cather, and poet, Emily Dickinson. There's also a crater named for Swedish lesbian author Selma Lagerlof.

Now, in naming features discovered by the Magellan project, the US Geological Survey has recommended naming major craters for US lesbian poet, Edna St. Vincent Millay; bisexual US anthropologist, Margaret Mead; and bisexual British novelist, Virginia Woolf; as well as a major crater triplet for the lesbian US émigré to France, Gertrude Stein. While the craters may be a tribute to the depth of the work of these women, it isn't all downhill. The fiery bisexual French novelist, Colette, is immortalized by a volcano.

MARK SACCOMANO: That's news wrap for the week ending March 16, 1991, compiled from publications and broadcast throughout the world and written by Cindy Friedman.

CINDY FRIEDMAN: Remember, an informed community is a strong community. Find out what's happening in your area by monitoring your local gay and lesbian media. For *This Way Out*, I'm Cindy Friedman.

MARK SACCOMANO: And I'm Mark Saccomano.

[MUSIC - "WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING"]

LUCIA Gay and lesbian Irish eyes were definitely not smiling last week in New York City where the huge annual St. Patrick's Day parade promised to be a day early and a dyke short. First, parade organizers moved the parade to March 16th because the traditional March 17th date falls on a Sunday. Then, they rejected an application by the Irish lesbian and gay organization to participate claiming the parade was too long.

CHAPPELLE: The organization's application was placed at the end of a long waiting list. The parade organizers rejected New York Mayor David Dinkins offer to add an hour to the parade prompting his honor to suggest he might boycott the parade if the gays and lesbians were not allowed to march. Finally, a compromise was reached. The gays and lesbians would be allowed to March only if they were invited to become a part of another contingent and promised not to carry any of their own banners.

When such an invitation was issued by the Manhattan chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the lesbians and gays reluctantly accepted the compromise. And while they won't be carrying their own banners, they will still be highly visible. Mayor Dinkins announced on Thursday that he has given up his traditional spot at the head of the parade and will march with the gay and lesbian contingent instead.

[MUSIC - "WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING"]

CHRISTOPHER DAVID TRENTAM: ACT UP, the Age Coalition to Unleash Power, is in the early stages of its countdown 18-month program, during which the nationwide organization is focusing on the release of at least a half dozen of the most promising anti-aids therapies. This past week, an ACT UP group in San Francisco staged a protest at a subsidiary of the Illinois based Abbott Laboratories. With 5 and 1/2 billion in sales last year and a 16% after tax profit, this company according to AIDS activists, can do more to help end the epidemic. Mary VanClay has the story.

PROTESTORS: Hey Abbott, think on this, people with AIDS are really [BLEEP]. Hey Abbott, think on this. People with AIDS are really [BLEEP].

MARY VANCLAY: Active protesters say the Abbott Laboratories drug, clarithromycin, is the most effective therapy for mycobacterium avium intracellulare, or MAI, a type of tuberculosis. Up to 60% of people with severe AIDS get MAI which can cause fever, night sweats diarrhea and weight loss. Michael Wright of ACT UP Golden Gate says clarithromycin has produced dramatic results in studies in Europe, and it's now available in Ireland and Italy. Wright cited a test of 22 AIDS patients with MAI in France.

MICHAEL WRIGHT: After a 42 day course of clarithromycin alone, the levels of in the blood were reduced by 99.98%. It virtually wiped MAI disease out of their blood.

MARY VANCLAY: The actor protesters say that despite the encouraging European results, Abbott Laboratories refuses to expand access to clarithromycin while clinical trials continue in the US. MAI is a very difficult infection to treat with drugs that are now available. Some MAI patients in the US like Paul Trupin have turned to expensive underground sources for clarithromycin.

PAUL TRUPIN: It's going to cost me roughly \$700 a first a month and about \$300 each additional month. That's to keep the fever, sweats, vomiting, diarrhea away. And that seems like an exorbitant amount of money to be paying for something, especially when the drug is very easily made and it's a very inexpensive drug. The reason it's so expensive is we're having to get it on the underground and they're having to get it for Europe. And it's just very costly that way.

MARY VANCLAY: At last week's rally, more than 50 activists protested in front of the local Abbott subsidiary in San Francisco chaining themselves to the main door. Four demonstrators were arrested. Meanwhile, another promising AIDS related drug is also produced by Abbott Labs.

This one is called HIVIG, or HIV Immunoglobulin. HIVIG is a gamma globulin that has been enriched with high levels of AIDS antibodies taken from people recently infected with HIV. Donald Abrams is associate professor of Medicine at the University of California at San Francisco and chair of the Community Consortium, a community based AIDS research organization. Abrams thinks HIVIG has a promising potential.

DONALD ABRAMS: There have been some studies that suggest that people then who are more ill with AIDS or AIDS related illnesses who receive this in which antibody preparation gets some benefit. And some of the members of the activist community here in San Francisco are very interested in doing a larger study to see if there's a clinical benefit to the use of this HIVIG agent.

MARY VANCLAY: ACT UP did present a proposal to Abram's group to study HIVIG. One of the obstacles to the research according to Abrams was Abbott Laboratories.

DONALD ABRAMS: We're currently funded by the government and other studies that we're not doing through the multicenter contract with the NIH need to have some outside support. What happened to date is that the protocol or concept sheet was sent to a sponsoring pharmaceutical company who said that they were not interested in sponsoring it financially and helping us so that the people could get the HIVIG produced from the donors and transfused into the recipient. So, that sort of puts a damper on our ability to do this study at this time. Abbott is the sponsoring pharmaceutical that I just mentioned that actually said that they were not interested in supporting or sponsoring this trial.

MARY VANCLAY: That's Dr. Donald Abrams of the San Francisco based Community Consortium. Several phone calls to Abbott Laboratories were not returned in San Francisco. I'm Mary VanClay.

LUCIA CHAPPELLE: You're listening to This Way Out the international lesbian and gay radio magazine with Christopher David Trentham. I'm Lucia Chappelle.

[MUSIC - "TO KNOW HIM IS TO LOVE HIM"]

A Washington DC gay male couple is filing a lawsuit after being denied a marriage license although the District of Columbia laws do not specify that marriage is for heterosexuals only. Patrick Gill and Craig Dean's application was rejected. Now, the courts will decide. Bert Wylen has the story.

BERT WYLEN: Tell us your story. What happened?

CRAIG DEAN: Well, back in November. We filed an application for a marriage license, Patrick and I. And a few days later after considering it, the marriage license Bureau decided to deny our license. And about a week after that, we filed suit.

We looked at the reasoning. I mean, what kind of backing we could have in the law. And Washington is a very ideal jurisdiction for a suit of this kind. First of all, the marriage code in DC doesn't say that you must be a man or a woman to get married. In fact, it's silent as to what a couple should be. It doesn't say you must be a man or a woman. It doesn't say you can't be a man a man or a woman and a woman.

Furthermore, the DC code has a Human Rights Act. The DC Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination based upon sexual orientation. And in fact, the language of that Human Rights Act, under prohibited acts of discrimination state that every individual shall have an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of life, including the economic, cultural, and intellectual aspects of life in the District of Columbia.

And I think that marriage with the legal and social and economic benefits and protections of law, I think it's easy to argue that marriage is an aspect of life. And the fact that we were denied our license because we're gay is a flagrant violation of the law. So, that's the basis for our lawsuit.

BERT WYLEN: And just out of curiosity, how long have you two been together?

CRAIG DEAN: 4 and 1/2 years

BERT WYLEN: 4 and 1/2 years.

CRAIG DEAN: Going on five years.

BERT WYLEN: Long enough to know that you're made for each other. And why Patrick do you want to get married?

PATRICK GILL: It's the only logical next step in a relationship, such as ours. We thought about Holy Union when we first moved in together.

BERT WYLEN: What's Holy Union?

PATRICK GILL: Holy Union is getting married in church but without a legal license. And a lot of gay churches, the Metropolitan Community Church, the Unitarians, the Episcopalians, perform such services. And we could do that. And we plan on doing that. But we want the traditional marriage that our parents had where you get in-- somewhere in a sacristy or something like that, sign a marriage license and become each other's next of kin.

BERT WYLEN: What's been the reaction in the gay community to what you're doing?

CRAIG DEAN: It's been a mixed reaction, grassroots wise from individuals in the gay community in certain gay organizations, we've been receiving support. I mean, received hundreds of letters. We've been criticized by several gay legal organizations for bringing this case. I think there's a lot of ego involved here. And they look at us and say--

PATRICK GILL: Not ours, but theirs.

CRAIG DEAN: And they look at us and they say, who are these upstarts who think that they can try to fight for gay rights in the legal forum when we are the organizations and institutions who set the political agenda for the gay community.

BERT WYLEN: Which organizations are these?

CRAIG DEAN: Well, Tom Stoddard from Lambda Legal defense in New York has criticized us in [INAUDIBLE] in the *Advocate*.

PATRICK GILL: And *The Washington Post*.

CRAIG DEAN: And Bill Rubenstein from the American Civil Liberties Union Gay and Lesbian project. Their concern has been that Congress eventually is going to get involved, because we are doing this in the District of Columbia. They're afraid of us setting a bad precedent. And why say that? There is no good precedent out there to begin with.

BERT WYLEN: How would winning the right to marry each other set a bad precedent?

CRAIG DEAN: Well, if we lose, they're afraid it's going to set up.

PATRICK GILL: Or if we do win in the district itself and the federal government comes in and knocks down the laws which they can in DC. But even if they do that, then we would have triumphed in at least that we had won something. And then the National-- the whole country would have seen that the Fed has taken something away from us that we had won.

CRAIG DEAN: And if we ever get to the point where Congress feels the need to get involved, I think we would have had a tremendous victory.

BERT WYLEN: That's what I would think.

PATRICK GILL: The mayor of the District, the new mayor, Sharon Pratt Dixon, has sort of been pulled into this. She's been an advocate of gay marriage since the--

BERT WYLEN: 1970s.

PATRICK GILL: Since the middle of the '70s. And her husband when he was on the DC council in '77 submitted legislation that she wrote that would have legalized gay marriage that have been passed.

CRAIG DEAN: And she said she was still in favor of legalizing gay and lesbian marriages, that societies are changing place, and this is something that we should accept.

PATRICK GILL: We feel our most important media is the gay media, getting on things like this, reaching out to our own people. And a lot of gay people are concerned as they don't want marriage because they see it as the old traditional male dominated type thing.

CRAIG DEAN: Assimilationist.

PATRICK GILL: But marriage has been changing at least especially over the last 100 years. Or so-- and we should at least have the option as a community, whether you want to or not, with your relationship. The same thing that heterosexuals now want domestic partnership as well. A lot of those people don't want to get married but they want the rights and benefits of a legal relationship.

CRAIG DEAN: What we're doing is trying to get the option of marriage for a couple. If they wish to take advantage of it, they can. If they don't, they don't have to. What we're trying to do is change the very-- bring an evolving nature to the marriage.

For instance, 20 years ago, a Black person couldn't marry a White person in most of the states in the country until the Supreme Court ruled-- struck down all the miscegenation laws around the country. And 20 years ago, the definition of marriage was a Black man with a Black woman and a White man with a White woman. Well now, we're looking to change that definition one step further and say marriage is a relationship between a person and a person.

BERT WYLEN: With Craig Dean and Patrick Gill in Philadelphia, I'm Bert Wylen for *This Way Out*.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

CHRISTOPHER DAVID TRENTAM: Gay and lesbian marriages are also the number one priority of a new Chicago based organization called The Citizens for Gay Action. Craig Teichen, one of its founders, told this way out of the organization's legislative agenda in Illinois and elsewhere.

CRAIG TEICHEN: We would like to see a repeal of all the sodomy laws in all of the states and of course, we'd like to see the legalization of gay marriage. The legalization of gay marriage is the top item on our agenda. We have a petition drive going where we're enlisting the aid of people within the straight community and the gay community.

We're encouraging them to sign our petition. We are petitioning the state for the right for gays and lesbians to marry legally. When we get 10,000 signatures, then we're going to xerox them off and hand-deliver them to each and every one of the 176 state senators and representatives in the state of Illinois and the newly elected Governor Jim Edgar.

And every time we get another series of 10,000 signatures, we're going to do the same thing. These petitions are generic so they can be used by anyone. And they can be sent to their state legislature calling for their state to legalize gay marriage.

CHRISTOPHER DAVID TRENTAM: Citizens for Gay Action is also promoting a more visible and direct way for lesbians and gays to register their sentiments.

CRAIG TEICHEN: We are calling on gay and lesbian organizations, individuals, couples to honor the month of June as national Marian month, the month where we would go down to our local marriage license Bureau and in some way, express our vehemence, outrage, that the state is not recognizing our relationships. We chose the month of June because that month is the traditional month that heterosexuals have their weddings.

CHRISTOPHER DAVID TRENTAM: One of the actions that you're suggesting people do is something called a Marian. Describe what that's all about.

CRAIG TEICHEN: Well, Marian is where gay and lesbian couples organizations would go down to their local marriage license Bureau and express in whatever way they feel comfortable, their outrage, that the state is not recognizing our relationships. They can go up to the clerk and politely ask for a license or be more vociferous, pound their fist on the table, and engage in whatever creative theater they find appropriate.

Our group has sent out a national flyer to over 100 gay and lesbian organizations to encourage them to participate in national Marian month. That national flyer is accompanied with a what to do at a Marian suggestions on what people can do at their local marriage license bureau. Locally, and we're suggesting this nationally too, that each city select a given day, a target day, to cap off the month's festivities with a major citywide protest where people would go en masse down to their local marriage license Bureau and protest the state's refusal to recognize that relationships.

CHRISTOPHER Craig Teichen is an activist advocating the legalization of gay and lesbian marriages and is a founder of the
DAVID Chicago based Citizens for Gay Action.

TRENTAM:

LUCIA Thanks for choosing This Way Out, the international lesbian and gay radio magazine. This week, Cindy Friedman,
CHAPPELLE: Mark Saccomano, Mary VanClay, and Bert Wylen contributed program material. Thanks also to [? Gary ?] [? Taylor, ?] Mike [? Alcalay, ?] and [? Lisa ?] [? Anne ?] [? Colton. ?]

CHRISTOPHER The Flirtations and Acoustic Alchemy performed some of the music you heard. And Kim Wilson composed and
DAVID performed our theme music.

TRENTAM:

LUCIA This Way Out is brought to you by a staff of community volunteers and is sustained by financial support from the
CHAPPELLE: community. Audio cassettes of our programs are available by mail, individually or by subscription. Write to us for more information.

CHRISTOPHER We'd also like to hear from you with any comments, suggestions, or questions you might have or just to let us
DAVID know you're listening. Write to This Way Out, post office box 38327 Los Angeles, California 90038.

TRENTAM:

LUCIA This way out was produced this week by Christopher David Trentam.

CHAPPELLE:

CHRISTOPHER And Lucia Chappelle. And we thank you for listening on WHBK Chicago--

DAVID

TRENTAM:

LUCIA KUMD Duluth--

CHAPPELLE:

CHRISTOPHER --and CJAM Windsor--

DAVID

TRENTAM:

LUCIA --among others.

CHAPPELLE:

CHRISTOPHER And for supporting your local community radio station.

DAVID

TRENTAM:

LUCIA Now you all stay tuned.

CHAPPELLE:

SPEAKER 2: And that's us, 90.1 FM KPFT Houston. *Afterwards* with Frank White coming up right after this so stay with us.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

NARRATOR: This community radio station thanks you for your pledge. You should have received a statement in the mail by now. Please pay your pledge as soon as you can so you won't forget. You can call 526 KPFT to charge your pledge by phone if you wish. This broadcast is made possible by you.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

FRANK WHITE: This is *Afterwards* for the week of March 31. I'm Frank White.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

On March 26, the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus unveiled a plan for restructuring the Houston City Council during a District C special hearing on redistricting. The GLPC plan calls for 16 single member districts and retains the five at-large positions for a total of 21 council seats. The plan was presented by Rob Bridges, vice president of the GLPC and chairperson of the caucus redistricting committee. Stated Bridges, the GLPC plan provides increased opportunity for all minority groups, not just for some.

Every 16 district plan that we have seen thus far has incorporated an element of robbing Peter to pay Paul. Unless you retain at large positions it is just about impossible to draw a 16 district map that creates the desperately needed new Hispanic seats without diminishing the current percentage of Black representation on council or slashing the Montrose area to ribbons with district lines. The Montrose is generally acknowledged to be the primary base of Houston's gay community.

Said Bridges, the GLPC is also very proud of the fact that our plan provides the most favorable district to the growing Asian population of any plan we've seen. The main message of our plan is higher quality representation for all residents of Houston. The GLPC is participating in this process to ensure that the gay community doesn't become the disposable element during redistricting. The extensive GLPC plan also calls for an examination of allowing special elections for midterm vacancies of district seats and the possibility of council electing its own presiding officer.

Under this plan, all present council incumbents would be eligible for re-election with seven district seats having no incumbent. Approximately 40 people attended the hearing. And of this 40-- of these 40 people, approximately 25 were members of GLPC, the Neartown Association, and other community organizations that support the redistricting plan of the GLPC.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

This is Around the Capitol. It's a weekly legislative report from the Lesbian and Gay Rights lobby of Texas. And it's written by the director of the LGRL, Laurie Eiserloh. With all the activity from the March on Austin, this has been a busy week at the State Capitol. In a historic meeting on Saturday, March 15, Attorney General Dan Morales invited about 15 lesbian and gay leaders from around the state to his office to discuss a recent Travis County Court decision which declared the state sodomy statute, 2106 unconstitutional.

Section 2106 of the Texas Penal Code makes contact between consenting adults of the same sex illegal. Although individuals are rarely charged with violating the statute, 2106 is often invoked by landlords, employers, legislators, and others to deny lesbian and gay people our rights based upon our criminal status. The tone of our meeting with the attorney general was extremely positive. He demonstrated a real concern for our community and also demonstrated a willingness to learn about the issues affecting lesbian and gay people.

As the attorney general-- excuse me, Dan Morales has the duty to uphold the laws of the state, even unjust laws such as the state sodomy statute. However, the way in which the attorney general goes about upholding the law can make a big difference to our community. For instance, in the past when addressing gay and lesbian issues, attorney general's office have been notorious for focusing on morality and common decency issues which play to people's homophobia.

Dan Morales assures us that his approach to this most recent 2106 case would be very different. He pledged to us that in his appeal of the 2106 case, he would stick to the legal issues and make certain that gay and lesbian people are not subjected to hatred and ridicule at the hands of the Attorney General's office. Another issue that has been causing some confusion in our community is the appeal of the 2106 case.

It is the lobby's position and the position of most community leaders that an appeal of Judge Paul Davis's ruling in the 2106 case is absolutely necessary even though we won in Travis County District Court. While our victory in Travis County is a very positive first step, District court decisions are not published in law books and have little precedential value outside of the district in which the decision was handed down. And appeal to a higher court is needed to make the case a valid precedent for the rest of the state.

Other news from around the Capitol. The Lesbian and Gay Rights lobby successfully blocked an attempt by the Texas Board of Optometry to prohibit persons with HIV disease from practicing optometry. The law governing optometrists, like the laws governing most professions which involve interaction with public, prohibit the practice of the profession if the practitioner is infected with a contagious disease. This language dates back to the influenza epidemic of the 1930s as-- and was intended to prevent the transmission of airborne diseases.

Recently, the boards of various professions are attempting to amend licensing language so that it states HIV or any other contagious disease. These amendments are questionable and are unfair because HIV is not an airborne disease and should not be singled out as a disqualification for the practice of professions such as barbering, cosmetology, and optometry.

Representative Glen Maxey, the first openly gay elected official in the history of Texas and the past legislative director of the Lesbian and Gay Rights lobby, has introduced legislation in the House of Representatives, which should prevent further licensing laws such as those nearly passed by the Board of Optometry. Often people on the inside of their profession hear about changes that might be occurring in licensing laws before the news is released to the public.

If you hear about proposed changes in the licensing laws of your profession that could lead to discrimination against gay men and lesbians or persons living with HIV disease, please contact the offices of the Lesbian and Gay Rights lobby of Texas in Austin immediately. Other issues being addressed by the lobby this session are hate crimes legislation, a civil rights bill, child custody legislation, and HIV grant and medication funding. In the coming weeks, this column will examine these and other related issues.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Pursuant to his election to the Texas House of Representatives, Glen Maxey, the executive director of the Lesbian and Gay Rights lobby of Texas relinquished his lobbying activities for the LGRL. Maxey will continue working for the LGRL as a community organizer and as a part time administrator. Laurie Eiserloh, a graduate of the University of Texas School of Law and past lobbying assistant to Gary Morrow and the Texas Consumer Association, will be taking Max's place as the legislative director of the LGRL.

Eiserloh, who has been on the LGRL staff since mid-November has already had great success in lobbying legislators to introduce issues concerning domestic partnership and child custody. To determine his new relationship with the LGRL, Maxey requested a special ruling of the legislative legal counsel. Because of this ruling, all questions involving Maxey's new association with the lobby have been resolved.

Since the gay and lesbian community will now have a lobbyist carrying our agenda to all legislators and the legislator working on our issues within the legislature, our community will be greatly benefited. Texas is one of only five states to have a full-time professional lobbyist and one of only six states to have an openly gay elected official in the state legislature.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

On October 31, 1990, an officer with the Houston Police Department improperly arrested [? Clare ?] [? Legroux ?] and [? Kelly ?] [? Kerstetter. ?] Their crime, roller skating in the street. To help pay for the legal expenses of their upcoming civil lawsuits, the Downtown Grounds, located at 908 Wood Street, will host a benefit for the skaters on April 4th 1999-- 1991. Doors will open at 8:00 PM. There's a \$5 donation.

At 9:00, there will be an auction of skates decorated by Houston artists. The William [? Tipos ?] Trio will perform before the auction. And if you need additional information on this call, 524-4277.

The AIDS Equity League is urging Texans to write their legislators in support of the AIDS funding bills currently in the Senate Finance Committee. Stipulations set up by the federal government, which mandate termination of all federal funds to states that cut back on their president AIDS-- present AIDS budget cannot be ignored. If the amount the state spends on AIDS is reduced, Texas would lose all the federal funds available to combat this terrible health problem facing many Texans today.

According to the AIDS Equity League, the indigent catastrophic insurance and high risk insurance funding bills are in need of your support. Under the high risk insurance plan for catastrophic illness, the state is allowed to provide an insurance program for health coverage for major illnesses such as AIDS, cancer, et cetera, who would ordinarily be unable to purchase private insurance. This would provide basic private health care and help many ill Texans from having to rely on our already overburdened public health care systems.

Senate bills need-- these Senate bills need your support. Many persons who are initially covered by health care insurance eventually lose it as they become indigent and can't afford premiums. The insurance subsidy program allows the state to pay the insurance premiums for those indigent but insured seriously ill Texans. This allows them to retain their basic private health care.

This also is a major savings for Texas's staggering public health system. If this program is not funded, the consequences for local and counties could be far reaching and catastrophic. The AIDS Equity League urges all Texans to write the legislators and let them know that you support these two valuable plans.

Queer Nation has announced that their meeting location has moved from a member's home to the Montrose palace on Nevada at Commonwealth. Tonight, you might find members of the Houston tribe out at various clubs around town giving a queer quotient test. Some of the questions included are do you have track lighting and can you operate power tools other than a Cuisinart food processor?

Southern Methodist University Student Senate is considering a proposal banning discrimination and harassment against gay and lesbian people on the campus. They would be the third major Texas University with such a policy. Nationwide, 127 universities have adopted anti-discrimination policies. This is according to Kevin Berrill of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which is based in Washington, DC. On a local level, the University of Houston took the lead last year with the introduction of a very similar anti-discrimination policy.

When you think of BFI, you think of trash. Well thanks to Browning Ferris Industries pledge of \$100,000, the Bering Community Service Foundation will clean up. This corporate donation kicks off the evening of Hope Fundraiser. Other corporate sponsors are Enron, Houston Lighting and Power, Arthur Andersen, and Conoco.

The sets for the evening of Hope's Opera, *The Magic Flute*, were designed by local artists Tim Gray and Richard Sellers and will be on display at the Pennzoil building downtown on Milam. If you want more information on this event, call the Baring Foundation.

SPEAKER 3: Keep reading.

FRANK WHITE: I'm running a little over tonight. Many questions have been raised concerning the article entitled, "Getting Rich Off AIDS," which is in the April issue of Houston Metropolitan magazine. The--