

JIMMY CARPER: Then all different facets of INS, whether in family immigration or work immigration, we have a process called the Diversity Lottery, which basically allows almost anybody in the world, unless they've been previously deported or if they have a major criminal record, they can apply for a lottery basically. And if they're chosen, they get to come to the United States.

But the strange thing is that they're-- well, a lot of countries are not allowed to do it because they've sent so many to the US in the past. So many countries, including Colombia and Mexico and the Philippines, they are not allowed to utilize this process, but other countries are. And I've seen figures where some nations they allow like 30 and then other nations it's 112,000. And when it was originally came about, it was-- the Kennedys were really behind this Diversity Lottery. And the nation that was benefiting the most was Ireland for years and years as a result of that.

JOHN: Go figure. Yes, the workers. I understand that. And maybe it's based on what's happened before. But what happens if there's like an overthrow of government and suddenly a whole slice of a country's population might be killed by this new regime? What--

JIMMY CARPER: It makes it difficult. We didn't exactly allow a bunch of Bosnians to come in during the--

JOHN: Right.

JIMMY CARPER: Or Somalis either. But what will a lot of times happen is you'll see that when they have a lot of their citizens here in the United States, illegal or not, we usually will put something in place such as a temporary protective status so that they're allowed to remain here during that time of turmoil in their nations and sometimes for long periods of time. Right now, Hondurans and Salvadorians who were affected by the hurricanes that hit the Honduras and the earthquake that hit El Salvador are living here on temporary protective status now and being able to renew that every couple of years. So that's some step that we usually take.

JOHN: It's so complicated.

JIMMY CARPER: INS immigration is extremely complicated.

JOHN: So complicated.

JIMMY CARPER: And more complicated when you're trying to figure out why we as gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendereds are just absolutely left out in this.

JOHN: Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: And why the fight is so important right now because--

JOHN: You bet.

BIG ROY: Sure.

JOHN: Because we're getting killed in other countries.

JIMMY CARPER: Exactly.

BIG ROY: Now I know of a gay Cuban guy. His name's Tony.

JIMMY CARPER: I know Tony. Just kidding.

[LAUGHTER]

JOHN: OK.

JIMMY CARPER: Well.

JOHN: [INAUDIBLE] Well, now wait. Now, there's your other half over there, now.

JOHN: He knows Tony, too.

BIG ROY: At any rate, though, Tony had written me, years ago, back here at the station. And he was a gay Cuban guy. And he was in TDC.

OK. And what had happened was he got busted out-- he was one of the Marielito boat people who came in in 1980, '81, something like that. And he was pretty naive. OK?

JIMMY CARPER: Mm-hmm.

BIG ROY: And he was supposed to bring, from Houston, back to Florida, a package for a friend.

JOHN: Oh.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, no.

BRENDA: Oh, boy.

BIG ROY: OK. And then, needless to say--

BRENDA: [INAUDIBLE].

JIMMY CARPER: I know what was in that package already.

BIG ROY: Before he even got out of Texas--

JIMMY CARPER: I take back knowing Tony.

[LAUGHTER]

BIG ROY: And here this-- the guy was naive. [LAUGHS] OK? But he did his whole time. OK? A week before his release date, INS comes in and locks him-- takes him out to Louisiana, where he's still there. I mean--

JIMMY CARPER: How long has he been there now?

BIG ROY: [SIGHS] About five years now.

JOHN: That's-- he should be allowed to seek [INAUDIBLE] at this point.

BIG ROY: The law is that it's open-ended. It's not-- they do not say you're in prison. You are a detainee, an INS detainee.

BRENDA: But you do have a right, after a time period, to petition for release. If they can't prove and show cause, why they still must maintain you, then they do have to release you. So he does have that right to petition.

JOHN: And they have to show you're a danger to the community. I mean, they can't just show that-- they have to show, basically-- well, they have to look at two things. One, the possibility-- I don't believe Cuba-- Cuba, at this point, is not going to take back convicted felons here. I mean, they were basically trying to get their big ones--

BIG ROY: Convicted felons.

JOHN: --and sending them off on the boat lifts to here. So whenever-- Vietnam is another nation that won't take back criminals. And those individuals in jail, who've served their time, can petition. They can file a-- they can do a letter.

They can just sit there and respond orally, but usually best to do some kind of package that shows that, one, they will not be a threat to the community and, two, that they are reliable to return, should the day ever come that Cuba will take back their nationals. So, and as long as those factors are in place, INS should release them. And they do go put them through a long period where two or three individuals will look over and make a decision on the matter, based on those issues. But people are being released, regularly.

BIG ROY: OK. So if you're gay and you wind up getting locked up for any reason, INS can still revoke your Visa, or your work permit, or whatever.

JOHN: Almost any drug offense is a kiss of death in INS eyes, almost any drug offense, except for very, very small amounts of marijuana. Any what's called crime involving moral turpitude, usually crimes that require this evil intent, as they might say-- but that could even be construed--

BIG ROY: What's moral turpitude?

JOHN: Well, moral turpitude involves a mental state of actually taking a step--

BRENDA: Having a guilty mind.

JOHN: Exactly.

BIG ROY: A filthy mind? Oh, brother, would I be in trouble.

[LAUGHTER]

JOHN: A DWI wouldn't be a crime of moral turpitude, but a theft case would. Robbery might. Burglary, of course, and then aggravated felonies where you have allegations of deadly weapons or serious bodily injury resulting. And those are almost impossible to overcome, even when you're as good an attorney as I am.

[LAUGHTER]

Now, they're very, very difficult to overcome. In those circumstances, INS will just throw a hold on them and, whenever they can, deport them. And if they can't deport them, they will hold on to them. And they'll-- it can be a very difficult job of getting them out. But the drug offense you mentioned earlier, what I'm assuming it was with this Tony, the Cuban, he should be able to petition for a review.

BIG ROY: Of course, this is what he tells me. So, I mean, I never knew this guy. Like I said, he just contacted me. And I'm always-- I mean, you go to any prison, they're all innocent.

BRENDA: True.

JOHN: [LAUGHS]

BIG ROY: You know what I'm saying?

BRENDA: Ray Hill is on our board of directors.

JOHN: Yes, Ray Hill, he's on the board of the Stonewall lawyers, so we hear from Ray's perspectives on that all the time.

BIG ROY: OK. So, now, what is the Stonewall lawyers association doing now?

BRENDA: What aren't we doing?

JOHN: Yes. We're doing-- go ahead, Linda.

BRENDA: Basically, we're working to build some coalitions between the area groups here on the Gulf Coast. We have organizations. Such as Community Awareness for Transgender Support.

BIG ROY: CATS.

BRENDA: Yes, CATS, absolutely.

BIG ROY: And we have CATS in here quite frequently. Mm-hmm.

BRENDA: I'm sure.

BIG ROY: Every second Saturday.

JOHN: There you go.

BIG ROY: [LAUGHS]

BRENDA: We also work with Q-Patrol, trying to increase their awareness and the presence on the street.

BIG ROY: I'm glad you mentioned that.

BRENDA: Oh, please.

BIG ROY: There was a article in this week's *Triangle*. Do you care to mention it?

BRENDA: Oh, absolutely.

BIG ROY: [INAUDIBLE].

BRENDA: Well, I was quite surprised to find out that, as soon as I got certified to lead a patrol, they weren't going to exist anymore, according to this article, which I have to tell you is absolutely wrong. We have been meeting. We've been cash poor, but we have been meeting.

BIG ROY: [LAUGHS]

BRENDA: We have been going out on the streets. Chris Horizon has done a fantastic job of keeping us alive.

JOHN: Harrison.

BRENDA: Harrison.

JOHN: Sorry.

BRENDA: I [INAUDIBLE] pronounce it. He can kill me now.

JOHN: Hey, he's my co-host. [LAUGHS]

BRENDA: He can kill me. But Chris has done an awesome job.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, he has.

BRENDA: Tonight, we met up with the CATS group. Like I said, we're trying to build a coalition. We got together with them, down at JR's, and did some fundraising.

I would like to thank Mr. Armstrong for welcoming us in there. He is going to help support us for the coming year. So he's pledged some support our way.

And we're looking to expand our numbers. We're challenging all other groups to join up. Volunteer a night a month or a night every three months. Bring your members out. Let's get them on the street to show people--

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

BRENDA: --that you can--

JOHN: That's what Stonewall has been doing for the last few months.

BRENDA: --visible volunteers and put your citizenship up front.

JOHN: That's right. It's very important. And we're needed. You are needed.

BIG ROY: Now, I'm going to be talking about that and that you were at Club Energy, just recently, within the last--

JOHN: Right, tonight.

JIMMY CARPER: An hour ago.

BIG ROY: Yes, but just recently, within the past month, there was a transgendered person whose body was found out there near Energy. If I can understand-- if I can recollect the information that I received, she was last seen leaving one of the Hispanic clubs from out there in Washington, north of downtown.

JOHN: Viviana's

BIG ROY: Yes, Viviana's.

BRENDA: And was traveling [INAUDIBLE]--

BIG ROY: And was traveling in her vehicle, with another person. But the next time anybody saw her was her dead body. Anything on that? Because I received a lot of questions on that.

BRENDA: I'm continually amazed that people can count a dead person laying in the street as being, somehow, at blame for, one, being who they are, living as they do, and as, somehow, they're at fault because someone decided to take the law into their own hands and take their life from them.

JIMMY CARPER: Isn't that amazing?

BRENDA: Talk about transference. I'm just like--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

JOHN: Well, you know--

BRENDA: It amazes me that more people aren't outraged. They go, oh, well, she was probably a druggie. Oh, she was probably a prostitute. What if she was? She was a human being.

JOHN: That's right.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

BRENDA: She could have been any one of us, walking down any street.

JIMMY CARPER: And no one deserves to be killed.

JOHN: Exactly.

BIG ROY: Period.

BRENDA: I mean, it is just as tragic, to me, that she was struck down as [? Bill ?] [? Augusto ?] was struck down in front of his own home, walking down his own street.

BIG ROY: Now, I've had people tell me that Paul Broussard deserved what he got because he was probably walking like a fag. That's what people-- now, talking about transference, it reminds me of back in the bad old days, when a woman would get raped, it wouldn't-- 90% of those cases never made it to court. Why? Because the woman was always at fault. The woman always enticed. I mean, that is the way the prosecutor--

JOHN: Sure.

BIG ROY: --or the defense attorneys would-- I mean, they would humiliate the woman.

JOHN: Right.

BIG ROY: What were you wearing?

JOHN: It's time to change that attitude.

BRENDA: Back in the '80s, there was a lady. I believe her name was Tracey Thurman, brought a civil rights action against the police of her city, saying, here I was, in a domestic dispute, and I kept coming to you for help, coming to you for help. You did nothing. I was nearly killed.

She was partially paralyzed, had her throat slit, while a police officer was standing by, keeping the crowd back off of her for 30 minutes. They found in her favor. Suddenly, policy started changing. Police forces were required, now, to get involved in domestic disputes and to involve themselves to separate that violence out.

Now, suddenly, here we go with Mark Katz. We just did a program for Stonewall lawyers with Robert Rosenberg, one of our members who was bringing the appeal on behalf of Mark's mother. Goes in, he's shot down in the street, in front of a very popular Montrose restaurant, broad daylight.

He had made numerous complaints to the police. Here, help me. This person has threatened my life. Just hours before he was killed, was in the police station, trying to turn him in, trying to say, come out here. Help me.

They're saying, well, we can't do anything at the moment. Nothing is happening at the moment. He's dead. Now, suddenly, we're left to pick up the pieces.

JOHN: That's right.

BRENDA: This is not the way that we can allow the law to go on. I'm hoping that the Fifth Circuit will reconsider its position in the case that Mr. Rosenberg is bringing, simply because I see no difference between domestic violence between a heterosexual couple and a domestic violence and a homosexual couple. Excuse me. There's still valuable life here, jeopardized.

There was an opportunity to intervene and save a life. I think that's a worthy cause. I think that's something we should require of our police forces.

And, yes, I have carried a gun. Yes, I have worn a badge. Yes, I have put my life on the line, so I know of which I speak. Police officers don't like having their hands tied by policies that will put them to blame or lawsuits that will place them at blame for trying to do what's right in that situation.

You're in there, and you're trying to preserve life. To me, that's a worthy cause. And I think that's something our community should get behind.

And to tie back into the immigration topic, tonight, I hope John will take a moment to talk about the Violence Against Women's Act, which is something that-- is a loophole that is opened, especially for our community. And [INAUDIBLE]--

BIG ROY: I've never heard of this.

JOHN: Oh, well the VAWA, as we call it, the acronym, the Violence Against Women's Act does allow, in circumstances, for an individual, US citizen, spouse, alien, partner, of course, or legal permanent resident, the spouse-- if the spouse faces abuse from her husband, or if a man from his wife, can petition to the United States to allow them to continue on with their green card petition. Normally, any-- I mean, a US citizen wields enormous power over the person that they're petitioning for. If they decide to drop it, in most circumstances, it's dropped and gone.

It's done. It's dead. The person's put into proceedings for removal. But this law basically allows for women or men who are the victims of violence--

BRENDA: Victims of domestic violence.

JOHN: --exactly, to continue on with their petitions. Unfortunately, though, it does not allow for a same-sex partner in those circumstances to do so. Again, the discrimination comes into play, I mean, in terms of not allowing for a same-sex partnership to receive the same treatment under VAWA as is given to a heterosexual partnership.

BRENDA: However I like to point out that there is the possibility of a loophole of getting transgendered members in under VAWA We're going to cause the government to define its terms. If it wants to live by these rules, OK, but they're going to die by the rules, too. They can't play it both ways.

So I see no problem with a person who has actually gone through a transition has become legally a different sex, pursuing all the legal protections that they are entitled to as a member of that sex.

BIG ROY: Mm, OK, now John, what can nonlawyers do to help?

JOHN: Well, there's one bill right now in congress called the Permanent Partners Immigration Act introduced by Jerrold Nadler, a representative in New York, and that now has 92 co-sponsors or signers, I should say. And right now, the big push by groups such as Lesbian and Gay Immigration Rights Task Force is to try to propel this bill towards passage.

This bill would allow for same-sex partners to petition for their alien partner and allow them residence here in the United States as a result. Anything at this point that can be done to contact congresspersons to try to get their support would be of extreme help.

Listening to the stories of some of the people because-- I mean, the stories of some of the members of Lesbian and Gay Immigration Rights Task Force and others that we've dealt with would just break your heart. I mean, these are the stories. When a person falls in love, they don't ask the person to show their green card. They don't ask them to prove they're a citizen.

You fall in love and love transcends borders. And so those individuals who find themselves falling in love as I have with someone from another nation-- I mean, it doesn't make you angry the way that the nation shows such disrespect for our relationships. Based on the discrimination within the immigration laws as they exist now, it should.

BIG ROY: Well, I think that a lot of the discrimination that we in the community and other gay people trying to come to this country-- I think that a lot of it-- a lot of it has its roots-- I hate saying it, but it's true-- within our own religious upbringings.

This country is-- while it has never sent anybody out in a plane to crash into somebody else's-- some of the foreign countries' office towers, our religious leaders are just as bigoted. I mean, I hate saying it, but just recently, Jerry Falwell said that the Taliban was following God's--

BRENDA: Well, it's just a proof that no one has a corner on ignorance.

BIG ROY: And it was--

BRENDA: That man has a permanent.

BIG ROY: I mean, I was just like reading Jerry Falwell's comment on this. I was just shocked. My sock's off. I mean, I could not believe this.

JOHN: Sure.

BIG ROY: And while we may not do that, we do have religious leaders who go around and encouraging people to shoot doctors and other clinic people, blow up clinics, blow up gay, lesbian bars, and things of this nature. But they will get up there.

I remember when I was a young-- in my younger years as a teenager, I was a prostitute. I was a male whore out there in New York, OK? And my johns were priests and ministers. And they would get out there on the sun on Sunday morning, and they would be there Bible thumping and all this other stuff.

And they would say how terrible they were. But let me tell you, that night before, they were down on their knees or their legs were spread open or my legs were spread open. It didn't matter. I mean, they were doing it. But I guess they had the Bill Clinton-- that was not really sex.

JOHN: Well, Ray Hill says that the best sex he ever had was in church, so--

BIG ROY: And so I can say--

BRENDA: I don't have a problem with them saying what they say.

BIG ROY: I do.

BRENDA: If they want to stand up there and be ignorant for the world to see, fine. What I have a problem with is people listening to it.

BIG ROY: Yes, I feel the same.

BRENDA: I believe in freedom of speech. Let them stand up there. I can deal with rattlesnakes. They tell you exactly what they're going to do. It's these boa constrictors that get in real close and squeezing to death while they're being buddy-buddy with you that worries me.

BIG ROY: Well, we have young impressionable minds.

BRENDA: That's why it's important for voices like yours and Mr. Nechman's to get out there so that people hear the alternative view, and then they can use their reasoned mind to decide.

BIG ROY: And it's these people who hear these preachers and hear these people who say this in school and in church. And it reinforces them and emboldens them to come down to the Montrose and gay bash perceived person who is gay or lesbian, or out there in Wyoming and crucify them and set them on fire or do God knows what, or go out there to a lesbian bar out there in Georgia and just let's bomb that place.

JOHN: Yeah.

BIG ROY: And who knows--

BRENDA: Look, I'm a long believer that right will win out and passion is good, but persuasion is better. We need to develop our arguments. When we hear these people out there railing against us as being sinful or evil, we need to be prepared to fight and counter those arguments.

And we need to do it intelligently and give them positive alternatives because we expend too much of our energy just trying to shout them down. No one ever hears our message.

BIG ROY: True, but what I'm trying to say is that it's their message, right, their idiocy, which has formulated our immigration laws and formulated much of our laws.

JOHN: You're exactly right. But I'll tell you, if there's one reason to be confident and hopeful, it's that in just in the last three weeks, I think I've given about seven speeches to straight student organizations at universities here in Houston, Austin, Georgetown. And without question, all I found from them is support for GLBT issues. I had not one time did a bad incident occur.

And it gives me a lot of hope for what the students are doing right now. At South Texas College of Law right now, Professor James Durham gives a class on gay and lesbian, bisexual transgender law. And almost all his students have identified as straight. And I actually spoke to them this past Thursday, and I believe they are. And they're there to learn more about the issues.

They want to educate themselves. It's like me as an Asian-American educating myself on Hispanic issues and realizing the beauty of the diversity of the community and how-- if unity is going to come to this country, it's going to come from our diversity. Once we realize how beautiful and precious that is and we realize how beautiful and precious we all are, we're going to come to that point.

BIG ROY: I've often said that on our coins, we have that our national motto, E pluribus unum, but for me-- it actually means out of many, one. And for me it is-- I've always said that E pluribus unum shows that we are strong because of our diversity--

JOHN: Sure.

BRENDA: Exactly.

BIG ROY: --not in spite of it.

JOHN: Exactly.

BIG ROY: And that our Spanish-speaking cultures or our Vietnamese-speaking cultures, our Black cultures are to be cherished and not to be pushed aside and say, why don't you become more European, and why don't you become more white?

JOHN: You're exactly right, Roy.

BIG ROY: I think we need to hold on to that and cherish it and protect it.

BRENDA: Absolutely.

BIG ROY: I'm sad. My Spanish is pretty lousy, but yet I can speak more Spanish than a lot of Chicanos that I know.

JOHN: Mm-hmm.

BIG ROY: And I think that's sad. And I know more about Black history and about the civil rights movement than a lot of 20-year-old Black kids that I know.

JOHN: Sure.

BIG ROY: I mean, it seems like there's this unofficial bleaching of cultures going on in this country. And we've got to not have that.

JOHN: Yeah, we're so hung up on sex and religion in this country. And those are such core feelings in so many cultures that so often a country like ours, no different than the Taliban, no different than Saudi Arabia in a lot of ways, is so reluctant to give up on those ideas. Well, as you said before, you've got preachers who are off molesting [INAUDIBLE].

BIG ROY: [INAUDIBLE] me.

BRENDA: Altar boys.

JOHN: Exactly.

BIG ROY: Yeah, hey, lookit.

JOHN: I mean, the hypocrisies are so enormous.

BRENDA: He has congress in the pokies. Come on.

JOHN: Exactly.

BIG ROY: Lookit, in my Catholic school, I was voted one of the top 10 students. The priests voted me one of the top 10 students in school. My grades were Cs and Ds and a couple extra. And to give you an idea of what-- I wonder what I was good at. I know where my talent slide.

JOHN: There you go. Well, the United Kingdom used to be the most homophobic nation in Europe and maybe in the northern hemisphere. And it wasn't that long ago. I used to live in London.

And we used to joke about how ridiculous the laws were because the government in London would look and see what was happening in the Netherlands and in Scandinavia, where GLBT rights were just sweeping all across the continent. And there was just digging their heels in saying, well, we're just not going to let it happen here. And they'd come up with the most ridiculous laws you ever heard of.

But what it took, it took just a complete spotlight on the hypocrisy. It took members of parliament being caught at cottaging in the urinals in the Hampstead. It took all sorts of just outings basically. And it took finally the public realizing this is just ludicrous. So right now, well, Britain is one of the more progressive voices in Europe.

BRENDA: It took the same sort of attention that it took for apartheid to end in South Africa.

JOHN: Sure.

BIG ROY: Well, apartheid ended in South Africa. I don't believe it ended so much because of the global isolation that we've put on. I think it ended within the-- the people themselves had to stand up.

BRENDA: Yeah.

BIG ROY: Sure, but I mean, through the embargo and everything else that we had on it, that helped, but it took the people themselves.

BRENDA: And I think that's what you see in our country today. The gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender movement, and yes, it is a movement, is taking root, not because in DC laws are being passed, not because in our state capital laws are being passed. It's because I know someone who's gay that's in my family, that is a friend, that is a coworker. And they're in all those evil bad things that these crazy people are yelling at me every weekend.

BIG ROY: Well, it's funny because I'm very out at work. And I'm in a what people would think would be a very homophobic-type profession, OK? But I've always been out. I could not be in. Being with the caucus every year, being in the Gay Pride Parade, when you're in the Gay Pride Parade, you are always subject to having a television camera or the *Houston Chronicle* taking your picture.

BRENDA: Of course.

BIG ROY: I mean, you're always-- you're there. If you're in the parade, you're there in somebody's event. And I do a radio show on Saturday nights. That's out on the air, so I could not be closeted even if I wanted to be. And I never wanted to be closeted anyway, so I never was closeted. I always knew how the fag from the time that-- before I even knew what it was, I knew I was.

But I was just going to say that all this stuff that people are so prejudiced against and are afraid of coming out if you are out. I have never had any problem at work. I received promotions. I have gotten respect from people because I am out, but I've gotten respect not because I'm out, but because of the quality of work that I do.

JOHN: That's what it's all about.

BIG ROY: And I just happen to be gay or something like that. OK, now, I'd like to know what is the Stonewall Lawyers Association going to do next.

JOHN: Well, we have a lot of wonderful things planned. We are planning to continue our first Fridays working with the switchboard and also with Q-Patrol. We want to be able to make sure that we step up for one night per month and make sure that the patrols cover that our members are out doing the walks.

And we challenge all the community organizations to do the same thing. I mean we'd sure like to see the patrols going till after the bar is closed, not ending early so that we can make sure that the neighborhood's covered. We have our annual meeting coming up in April. We continue our monthly CLE, continuing legal education meetings, where we have speakers from the community come.

The wonderful thing is that a significant number of the people who show up for our lunch meetings are nonlawyers who come to hear the quality speakers that we bring in. We have Dan Parsons from the Better Business Bureau coming next month-- pardon me, in April.

BRENDA: April.

JOHN: Richard Clarkson, the president of the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identification Issue Section of the State Bar, will be talking on hate crimes next month. And for \$10, you get an incredible meal. We've been having the lunches at Rivas, which just puts forth a tremendous lunch for us. And we have them on the last Wednesday of every month. And that includes materials, and it includes the presentation from the speakers.

BIG ROY: Last Wednesday, at what time?

JOHN: 12 o'clock.

BIG ROY: 12:00 noon?

JOHN: Mm-hmm, 12:00 noon.

BRENDA: Just come on your lunch hour. Students in the public are more than welcome to attend.

BIG ROY: At Rivas?

BRENDA: We encourage it, mm-hmm.

BIG ROY: And if you haven't had any Rivas pastas, boy, are you missing something.

BRENDA: Oh, they put a special menu together for it.

JOHN: But we're going to keep working with the clinic. We're going to keep doing our work with the various organizations. And our main goal is to continue to do whatever we can to raise the reputation of attorneys. I mean, it's been suffering for a while, but we've been really working hard to be out in the community and let everybody know that we're ready to do our part to make the Bayou City the best place it can be.

BRENDA: We're working also to put together a Stonewall directory so that people will know that if you're looking for a GLBT-friendly attorney or at least someone who's educated on the issues, we'll have more than enough names for you to contact.

BIG ROY: That is so needed. And if you all can make sure that I would get a copy of this--

JOHN: You'll get our first copy.

BIG ROY: --because I do get-- we do get calls. I mean, tonight, during the first segment, I had called left and right.

BRENDA: And you have to remember we searched all areas of the law. I mean, it's not just GLBT civil rights or immigration. We touch everything. We were having lunch with a new member who does estate planning and elder law for GLBT members. If you have an area where you--

BIG ROY: Criminal law?

BRENDA: --think you need representation-- yes, sir.

BIG ROY: Criminal law too.

JOHN: Mm-hmm.

BRENDA: Criminal law. Mr. Nechman has a very lucrative--

JOHN: We're going to do quite a bit in criminal law. And we have numerous attorneys in the group who practice criminal law and board certified specialists.

BIG ROY: Great, great. What about for a minor traffic violations?

BRENDA: We have those, too.

JOHN: We handle those also or we will direct you the people who can do them. And any time the community has a question, feel free to call us. I mean, if it comes down to it, we'll know where we need to refer you. And those questions could come any time, day or night. We'll always get back to you on those.

BIG ROY: So how did the Stonewall lawyers-- I should ask this as my first question. I'm sorry I didn't.

BRENDA: No, that's all right, Roy.

BIG ROY: Hang me. How did the Stonewall lawyers come about.

JOHN: Well.

BIG ROY: I'm glad you all are here, but how did it happen?

JOHN: This is the 11th year of the organization.

BIG ROY: 11 years?

JOHN: Mm-hmm, it started as the Bar Association for Human Rights. That's what it used to be called. We changed the name three years ago, a vote to try to come up with a name that might be more--

BRENDA: Recognizable.

JOHN: --2,000. Yeah, and recognizable. And over the course of the last decade, we've seen some of the great leaders of the community come through.

Ray Hill has always been an active part, Phyllis Randolph Frye, of course, one of the greatest leaders in the country on transgender issues and on legal issues, period, and a tremendous, tremendous role model for us all, Mitchell Katine, of course. He served as president. Charles Kin Spain-- he served as president, Mary Anne Bobinski, Clyde Williams. I mean, this is a Who's Who list of attorneys.

BIG ROY: The A-list, the A-team.

JOHN: Yeah, not just for Houston, but for the whole country. I mean, we have such an incredible legal history in this country. And it's reflected there in our membership.

We talked with Judy Reeves of GCAM about doing a documentary basically or a series of stories about some of the leaders that have passed through this organization. Annise Parker-- Kathy Hubbard, her partner, of course, has also been very-- she's the one who got our 501(c)(3) status.

BRENDA: Gene Harrington.

JOHN: Gene Harrington, yeah.

BIG ROY: That is like a Who's Who and an A-list of people in the community. And of course, we got Jimmy Carper here from GCAM.

JOHN: Sure.

BIG ROY: We're always pushing--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I'm always pushing GCAM. That's right.

JOHN: Well, so do we. I speak with Judy all the time. We were just there the other day. And it's one of the most-- I mean, we're working to do whatever we can to work with GCAM at this point.

JIMMY CARPER: I feel so fortunate because the press and the whole communities-- there's just been a big outpouring, not in volunteers particularly, but certainly in stuff. We outgrew our space the day we moved into it, totally.

JOHN: We'll start Jimmy run against everybody.

JIMMY CARPER: And I'm glad. I'm glad, yes. And when you're a museum, you can't have too much stuff.

JOHN: Yeah.

BIG ROY: Well, I'll tell you, Jimmy, something like GCAM was so needed. Well, like you said, the day you open your doors, you found out how badly it was needed.

JIMMY CARPER: And the whole thing started from Rainbo de Clown--

JOHN: Sure.

JIMMY CARPER: --who wrote an email saying, where's our museum?

JOHN: Exactly, God bless, Rainbo.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, he's weird, but he's our conscience.

JOHN: He is wonderful.

BIG ROY: A weird conscience, but he's our conscience.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, it is.

BIG ROY: Well, John and--

BRENDA: Brenda.

BIG ROY: --Brenda, I want to thank you all for coming in. I have no other question, but Jimmy, do you have anything you want to--

JIMMY CARPER: You covered it, honey.

BIG ROY: Well, guys, listen, don't be a stranger to our show because--

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

JOHN: We're so honored to be here. We really are.

BIG ROY: And I am just so happy to have you here and your silent other half. He's so gorgeous. Look at that. Oh, he got a-- folks, this guy's got a smile that can melt the ice caps. So that's where our global warming is coming from. He's responsible for you. And the two of you together-- oh, my goodness.

JOHN: Six years as of February 21.

JIMMY CARPER: Congratulations. That's great. That's wonderful.

BIG ROY: Well, congrats.

JOHN: We're very, very happy.

BIG ROY: And again, I would really like to have you all come in again.

JOHN: By all means, you name it.

BIG ROY: And also the second Saturday of every month at this time slot is our Gay Hispanic segment.

JOHN: I've got to listen to that.

BIG ROY: If you contact Francisco Sanchez, I'm sure he'd be glad to have you in.

JOHN: Oh, wonderful.

BIG ROY: Or get in touch with me or Chris or Jimmy. Just let us know. We'll get you in here somehow or another. We'll always fit you in. We've got a can of Chris come ready to switch in.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: I have a new schedule so that I have some free time in between the first segment and the second segment. And I can always fit somebody in if they want to promote something or whatever's going on.

JOHN: Well, thank you so much to all of you, to you, Jimmy. And you, Big Roy, I'm just so honored to finally meet you.

BIG ROY: And I am so happy to have you all here. All right, great.

JIMMY CARPER: You take care, OK? Thank you very much. Thanks for being on *After Hours*. And now, a little something from Horse, the lesbian singer from Scotland who stops by in Houston once a year. This is for in yeah, I love her. This is from her latest CD called *Hindsight, It's a Wonderful Thing*. This is the song she wrote about her new baby. It's called "Starfish."

Yes, you've been listening to *After Hours*, Queer Radio With Attitude right here on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. Coming right up is the early morning groove. Bobby Phats is right here behind me, ready to give it to you the way you like to get it just like this.

[MUSIC PLAYING]