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switchboard, people, call, opera, harvey milk, hate crimes, harvey, houston, gay, community, report, hear, montrose, penthouse, san francisco, listening, lesbian, electing, patrick, coming

SPEAKERS

Jimmy Carper, Ray Hill

00:05

Whoa, and it is 2359 45

00:11

and it's just about time for after hours

J Jimmy Carper 00:24

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

00:39

KPFT Houston

J Jimmy Carper 00:45

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



01:42

Hello, you're listening to after hours a continuing tradition on KPFT 90.1 FM, and after hours queer ready with queer radio with attitude with Evelyn Carroll. And Hi,



01:55

I'm Don aka babassu Yeah, we



01:58

got babassu odd and tonight to special throw. We've got a couple of songs coming up. And then we're going to be talking to Patrick of the gay and lesbian switchboard Houston. Later on, we'll be hearing original and recorded live music from Peggy and the dreamers. Two members of which you might recognize as being members of destiny. QM z is scheduled to air at 130. And we will be listening to a little bit of an interview with Michael Curry, who is the playwright for the Harvey Milk opera, which by the way, was divine. And so stay tuned.



02:46

That goes out to my sister Debbie, whom I love very much. And my nephew Ryan, I got to babysit Ryan, usually every Saturday. And I was thinking about how wonderful it is, especially with you know, some of the people that don't even aren't even close to their family. And my sister means a whole lot to me. And she's been there for me, and she's going through a tough time and I just want to say I love her. And I think she's the greatest that was for you, Debbie.



03:20

This one goes out to Dan. And that was Elton John. Anybody who's listened to me for any length of time knows that Elton John is not only my favorite performer, but probably comprises the majority of my collection of music. And that particular piece resulted from a conversation I had with a gentleman by the name of Damn, who I hold utmost respect for. It's not often that I meet someone of his intellectual level who shares my love and music and we were talking about some of the really great songs that Elton John has done that never received the airtime that we thought they deserved. And that was one of them. Dan, if you're listening out there, you can give us a ring at jam KPFT that's 5265738 I think anyway, jam KPFT I'm numerically impaired. You're listening to after hours on KPFT queer radio with with attitude and this is Evelyn Carolyn, I have with me tonight Patrick and Patrick is with the gay and lesbian switchboard.



04:31

Good evening.



04:32

Yes and it is really morning but morning. Oh, I'm Patrick. Tell me a little bit about what's going on at switchboard these days.



04:44

Okay, we've got a lot of exciting things that are going on. For those of you that don't really know a lot about the switchboard. The switchboard has been around since 1981. We are an all volunteer non profit organization. And we are a phone counseling and phone referral board. People call in and get information on bars, organizations events. Also people call in when they're having problems and they need someone to talk to. We take a lot of those calls at the switchboard. Yes, we do very much. We take a lot of coming out calls, we take a lot of calls from people who are having relationship problems or calls from people who are having happy things in their life and just want to talk anything. We take a lot of those calls.



05:37

You know, I've noticed, I work at the switchboard too. And I've noticed a trend. Probably in the past year and a half or so we're getting more and more conventioneers people coming in with big media events, wanting to know what the bars are wanting to know what's going on in our city. Yeah, so



05:53

and that's one of the things that we do also is we provide a really good service to those people coming in from out of town. As you know, most of the major cities have switchboards. And when people are in town for business, usually on the weekends, or even on weeknights, they want to know where to go. And we're the place to call and we have the most up to date list of bars and restaurants, gay friendly businesses and so forth.



06:23

I think we probably have the most up to date community calendar entries. Yes,



06:27

I definitely think so. We have a



06:31

person that is assigned that task to keep up with our our community calendar. So he's constantly busy at his computer updating and updating and does a really good job.



06:43

Yes, yes. Some of the other things that are going on, as I said, We are an all volunteer organization. We usually hold training every few months. We are having a training session coming up. As a matter of fact, next week in February 3, fourth and fifth.



07:03

Tell us tell us how to volunteer. We need volunteers people



07:07

Yes, we do very much. If you would like to volunteer, you can call 5293211 or 5299615, which is the hate crimes hotline, which you could leave a message on if you needed to. training involves three days. It's well actually two days and Friday evening. The times are Friday evening from 630 to 10. Saturday and Sunday, both days is 830 to seven.



07:40

That's a small commitment out of your life. And I'm here to tell you that switchboard training will change your life



07:48

yes in it's very intense. And you'll get a lot out of it personally.



07:55

One of the things that you get out of switchboard training that a lot of people probably don't realize is you learn communication skills that will help you in your job. It will help you in interpersonal relationships, both on the job and off. You'll learn how to listen and I know everybody thinks well I already know how to listen well that's not exactly it. You learn how to really hear what other people are telling you. And there's a lot of techniques that are taught during switchboard training that will help you to hold your temper hold your personal opinion and to really be able to hear for the first time I went through switchboard training twice and believe me, each time I got something different out of it. And it really did turn my life around. It made me a different person. Yes,



08:45

definitely. It's very rewarding to go through switchboard training. It will change your life and and not only that, you get to meet a lot of interesting people and make long lifetime friends. Attention now. Yeah. Which is another great thing about the switchboard is, not only do you get to talk to people on the phone, but there there are a lot of other opportunities as far as working

on committees. We have various committees and there are opportunities for those people who may not want to work the phones and who may want to do committee work, such as public relations or



09:22

fundraising.



09:25

Any we have a number of committees that whatever your forte is, I'm sure we could find a spot for you if you don't feel like working on the phones.



09:33

Boy, that's the truth. And you know, I don't know I don't know if everybody out there knows what committee work really involves. When you're when you're working on a committee in an organization like the switchboard and like many others in our community. You are making fast friends. You are doing something that you feel is worthwhile. You you get to Meet lots of people I know, you know, I work fundraising. And in the fundraising committee, I have met more of the nicest people. Yeah, I mean, just just tons and tons of people. And I'm sure it's the same in public relations.



10:16

Oh, definitely. With public relations of course, we're dealing with a lot of people in the gay community and in the community in general. And, and it's the switchboard is a great opportunity to meet people. A lot of people think of the switchboard is, you being an anonymous person on the other end of the phone, but actually you have a lot of opportunities to meet people, make friends and meet other people in the community. It's also a great way to keep up with what's going on in your community. I think the switchboard volunteers are some of the most well informed members of our community.



10:51

Yeah, I agree with that, you know, we have we have current up to date information at the switchboard on every organization. And every bar, we know, I mean, the day the bar opens, they give us a call. We have all of the all the current events, really, it's a clearinghouse of information for our community. And we really enjoy being active and, and helping people out there. If you want to know more about the switchboard, you can call us up here jam KPFT. You can also call hate crimes hotline, which we're going to talk more about in just a minute. And hate crimes hotline number is 5299615. And the switchboard telephone number is 529 3211 almost lost it there for a minute. I'm gonna I'm gonna take a sidestep here for just a second. I know that as a regular regular diet that the q patrol usually listens in to us if any of you are out there listening. I'd like for Q patrollers to give us a call and give us an update what's going on in

our community this weekend. You know, the q patrols and other volunteer organization that could sure use a lot of help. Patrick, I want to talk to you a little bit about hate crimes. I know that there's been a group of people at the switchboard and a group of people outside the community at large that is looking at redefining what a hate crime is



12:26

exactly. Traditionally on the switchboard and and within the community. We've defined a hate crime in terms of what the legal system defines a crime. And more and more we're trying to get away from that, as we realize that crimes aren't necessarily what the law says is a crime. A crime can be badgering verbal badgering. There are all sorts of incidents that may occur on the job that you couldn't technically file a suit against someone because of those incidents. So we're trying to broaden our view of what a hate crime is, and we're trying to get to consider them hate incidents. I know a lot of organizations are talking more and more about hate incidents as opposed to hate crimes.



13:17

For example, one one day last summer, I was walking with a girlfriend and we were hand in hand and we were walking down probably cost Ark. We were very close to the University of St. Thomas. And we had a gentleman cruising up and down the street harassing us calling us dye can this net and the other and offering us all kinds of not so enticing offers and that to me is harassment and harassment is criminal. It is not okay to call me di or not it's not okay to call me fag. Well, I might be a fad. But it's not okay to call me that I mean you know a fad can call a fog of fact but it's not okay for people to walk up and down the street yelling obscenities of any rank or color at you. And and this is an A hate incident. This is the kind of thing that we need to document we need to report to a federal reporting agency we need to begin keeping statistics perhaps our political figures can use these statistics in lobbying for for our rights. We are a minority and we are discriminated against and this is not okay behavior.



14:44

No and, and that's one of the things we do. You're talking about reporting there and at the switchboard the hate crimes hotline. We collect statistics from the hate crimes calls that we receive. And we compile those statistics on a rare Do their bases and report those to government agencies as well as gay organizations. And that reporting really brings a greater awareness to what's going on out there. So, if you feel like you've been a victim of not necessarily just a hate crime, but a hate incident, please call our number 5299615. That's what we're there for. We keep track of these, and we do report them.



15:30

Yes. And, you know, I think a lot of people hesitate to report to report hate crimes. First of all, if you're a victim of a gay bashing, the first people you're going to report to her is probably the hospital. The second person you report to is the police department. And then if somebody

thinks about it, they might call us. I think it's the people on the periphery, or it's the friends of those who have been bashed that might be most likely to call us and it's, it's you that I'm speaking of out there, I want you to call us and let us know. And let us keep statistics.



16:15

Exactly. And if you call 5299615, and no one's answering the phone at that point, you can leave a message and we will return your call. That line does have an answering system.



16:29

If you're interested in assisting us in documenting hate crimes, if you're interested in assisting us and telephone peer counseling, for example, committee work for another. There's a lot of administrative work that needs to be done at the switchboard. You can call the hate crimes hotline number, leave your telephone number and your name or leave an address where we can send a nondescript letter to you. And sign up for training. Training occurs about every three months. It's one weekend out of your life, and it's a life altering experience. I'd like to talk a little bit about some of the exciting fundraising that's coming up the gay and lesbian switchboard. And, you know, I know the listeners out there are so tired of fundraising, we just got over two weeks of marathoning. Yes, and I know that everybody's always begging for your money. And it's unfortunate, but it's true. Marathon went well here at KPFT we thank all of you who called in and donated your money. And we definitely thank all of those who volunteered time and came up and answered telephones. But the switchboard needs money too. And what the switchboard is asking you to do is show up and have a good time. Isn't that easy? Very easy. Yeah. And I think the next switchboard fundraiser that's coming up is February 12 at chances for new titles for new crowns. If you guys are have any drop of entertainment blood within you. You can call chances and register to be a participant in this event, they're going to be naming a king, queen, Prince and Princess of Montrose. Ohana you're going to have to talk to Susan about all that I really don't know. Who's who and what's what. But there are going to be four new titles and I know there's a lot of title collectors out there. Come on by the girls I know fist is listening tonight. And so some of those fifth fantasies. Oh god, I got to



18:43

want to be king of Montrose.



18:47

Baba, baba Soo. Baba su here. She wants to be king of Montrose. She I think she's gonna



18:52

I've got my Elvis outfit ready.



18:55

Elvis drag. Don't give you that luck, girl, Miss Sarah. But the fundraisers going to be a good time. They're going to have a raffle for us at chances. And we're going to have a lot of entertainment. Susan is part of the imperial court. This is not an imperial court event, but she definitely is a professional and knows what she's doing. Our next fundraiser beyond that



19:23

is in March. Correct. March 17. St. Patrick's Day. This sounds like a fun one. It's at the penthouse Club. We're going to have Peggy and the dreamers. They're alive. musical group. In fact, they were going to be playing some of their music tonight. In a little bit. They will be playing March 17 at the penthouse and we asked you to come out and support us. That night at the penthouse. What else is going to be going on that night? Evelyn?



19:55

I'm not sure what all is happening there. We're still in the planning stages in in our March fundraising, but we're definitely having a live band. It's going to be donation at the door. And if you haven't been to the penthouse it was formerly Cody's. It's across the street from Kroger's on Montrose. And Hawthorne, I believe in that. Right, right. Yeah.



20:19

And it's very nice. It's an excellent view of downtown.



20:23

Oh, great. Okay. Well, Patrick, it's been very, very fun. I hope you stick around for a few minutes here. We're going to move on to a piece of music here for a minute. I believe Rihel popped in and we want to talk to Ray a little bit. He wants to talk about Harvey Milk and I was there on opening night it was grand honey, we saw everybody from Maryland near Deborah Dannenberg. Eleanor Tinsley just on and on and on, and I think Mr. Mr. Hill was there too. We're going to we're going to tweet Well, Sarah is making noises over here. Was it good, Sarah? Okay, we're gonna move now to another Elton John tune. You probably get sick of hearing Elton John. He's my fav the last song



21:21

Alright, this has been flooded the Dead Sea at the rain. I'm over at chances. We're having an excellent time over here on a Wednesday night. We're talking to KPFT Houston. come out and visit us at the range or if that is not close enough. Come to chances on Westheimer listen to and I listen to KPFT Houston.



Ray Hill 21:44

After hours Hello, are we here? Are we on? This is live radio. I mean really real time live radio. Well, first we got to identify, Don so you start. Okay. Well,



21:59

I'm Don also known as Bob Sue.



Ray Hill 22:01

I'm Ray Hill also known as Sally Jane.



22:05

Sally James. Hi, this is Evelyn also known



22:07

as evil and we're gonna be talking about the Harvey Milk opera.



Ray Hill 22:14

Absolutely. Which I saw only tonight. Well, what



22:17

happened to go opening night and like I said, Deborah Dannenberg was there and Eleanor Tansley. But I think I was the only female there with boxer shorts on. I said, I would dress up for the opera. But you know, I still had to be the little rebel. I wore my



Ray Hill 22:31

new tennis shoes, that high tops, why? Same thing I wore to the prom?



22:36

Well, part of the excitement was seeing all the queens and their beautiful, beautiful jackets, you know?



22:37

Well, part of the excitement was seeing all the queens and their beautiful, beautiful jackets, you know?



Ray Hill 22:42

Well, I thought the lesbians were especially well dressed tonight.



22:45

Thank you for your fashion.



22:49

I'm going to take Cindy Crawford's job, which,



Ray Hill 22:51

actually, this is in tune with what we're about because, excuse me, we're just kicking off here. Harvey Milk. I met Harvey Milk back in the late 70s. And there were so many so few gay and lesbian activists in the late 70s. That we all knew one another. I mean, at least we would talk over the telephone about things. And the one thing that that one should never forget, in this movement, is who we are and who we are, is the culture that you just heard in our introductions. Who we are are the people that have both male and female names, who we are the people who notice how people dress, who we are the people who go to the opera, not because we're trying to impress somebody, but because that is an island refuge. farnesol



23:47

well, they had the same thing, oddly enough, and The Lion King. Yeah. And also, Hamlet, you know, we were talking about that today, the same thing about being true to who you are. And, you know, that was basically the theme of The Lion King.



Ray Hill 24:01

And there's a lot of that in this opera. Oh, yeah. Now, my friends came back and reported that the second act was their favorite act. Not the first act, I think was my favorite. Because the first act had the pain that might have missed a lot of people. If I were a young revere for the Houston Post, the Houston Chronicle, I might not understand what it feels like in the 60s and 50s to get busted by the cops trying to catch me in in the park after the opera. But since I'm Ray Hill, and that's been part of my experience, as well as Harvey Milk's experience. I knew what that scene was all about.



24:48

And that, you know, that's when he came out at 39 to try to figure out who he was was in the first act.

R

Ray Hill 24:53

Yeah, that was the of the coming out process is becoming the person he always was. But now We're dealt with,

♂

25:00

right, coming out of the closet is what basically,

R

Ray Hill 25:03

I thought that, you know, the set was masterful. Oh, yeah, that was the one set that I mean, the set designer really worked was a big pink triangle, which turned out to be the floor of everything. And they had all these closet doors, which they used and used and used and used and what a metaphor. What a strong metaphor.

♂

25:25

Well, you know, the point was brought home that Harvey didn't have when it came to standing up for being Jewish, you know, he didn't have a problem with it. He was right there. And he, you know, he was proud. But when it came to standing up about being gay, he he had a hard time with it. But you know,

R

Ray Hill 25:41

I don't think that Harvey could have done what Harvey did because because, mean, San Francisco. How did San Francisco get to be the mecca for gay people? Harvey used to call them the Jeep people because they came from Oklahoma in jeeps, especially the women.

♂

25:59

And they still are today. Still going for hi to my friends. My sister's

R

Ray Hill 26:02

going from Missouri and Oklahoma and Texas does envisage how that happened is in 1968 10 years before the setting of the last thing in the play. Mike Wallace, on CBS did a documentary called CBS reports via homosexuals Of course we were all men back then when there were no women back then. But it is told of this this really sick character from Washington DC, who was a doctor and had a wife that he was no doubt abusing him not physically, least emotionally by by his male friend that was sick and twisted. And then they went to New Orleans and antique queens who were into Satanism. That was really sick. And then they went to Los Angeles where somebody was getting busted. And then they went back to New York where there was some far out music people that didn't match anything. And then they went to San Francisco and CBS

reports in 1968 showed this nice San Francisco couple who looked like normal people having breakfast in like a real kitchen. And just you know, like, what's the big deal. As soon as that was off the air, people began to pack all over this country. And they bought into San Francisco. So by 1978, when Harvey Milk makes his successful political strike, San Francisco is indeed a city full of people from everywhere. And that was a very much a significant part of the registered vote routine. The political establishment that was in San Francisco before Harvey got there. Never liked Harvey Milk. They didn't support Harvey Milk, the organization that now bears his name, the Harvey Milk Democratic Club never endorsed him while he was alive. But as soon as he got elected, they all got on board his ship. But Harvey was elected by those immigrants from everywhere else. And they that's right there. I mean, it's like Ray goes to get his thoughts. It's in there you can see it. It's part of the opera was this people coming from everywhere, registering to vote for the sole purpose of electing Harvey. It's not so much electing any gay or lesbian candidate, it becomes electing Harvey who becomes a symbol of a crusade for people in San Francisco. And all of that is in this story. Very rich vein of it. Yes, it's for gay and yes, it's for gay rights. And yes, it's for men and women and yes, it's includes Asian coalition's and Hispanic coalition's the teamsters union and the teamsters union, but it's all for Harvey. You know, we set the course out on the streets in Houston. That was that was called for in the 77 course thing. And the guy that plays the teamsters really Howard Wallace, who's still in the mood, but



29:00

you know, you know that nine on opening night we met the daughter of the Teamster union, later that set him in action and she apparently is an activist in our community and another. And that was really a thrown



Ray Hill 29:16

about In fact, the the Corps distributor in Houston was a fella by the name of John Barksdale he had the mottos was his territory. His territory went broke, because without gay bar business, forget it. And he is now an Associate Minister at Second Baptist Church. And whenever we went out there to like, raise hell about



29:41

to do your church thing. It's



Ray Hill 29:43

so nice to do business with someone who has surrendered to me before. Well, I mean, that's part of the culture, right? You shouldn't try to match woods with a queen over 40 You know, you shouldn't try to out dance the dichondra Dwayne



30:00

As we were reading this document, this was my first choice. And we were reading

Are we we really want to encourage people, this was my first opera. And we really want to encourage people to go out. It's in English. But subtitles, subtitles. And you know, they have the parade scene in it the gay pride parade scene. And there's a chilling scene in it at the end, and I can't talk about it because I don't want to give it away

 Ray Hill 30:28

at the beginning, so you get together both things.

 30:30

Right? And it's very, it's very easy to follow along and and being my first opera, I really enjoyed it. And I felt I felt very prideful and watching the people in front of me, there were some parents in front of me, whose son and his lover were there. And they were standing on their feet clapping and there was only one guy the opening night that we were there and old man that got up and walked out. While the performance was going on. There was a few people that left during

 Ray Hill 30:53

lunch to have more to do with his kidneys in the show.

 30:57

No, he was hurt. He was heard to say let's see, the cigarette time gossip was that he was heard to say, Well, I've had enough of this while he certainly hadn't had tongues wagging evening. When you get old, you know? Yeah, we are. You know some of us look forward. Grumpy Old oldsters

 Ray Hill 31:17

for you real opera buffs. The portrayal of Harvey is a very fine baritone voice. The voice of the whole thing is Randall Wong, a male soprano Oh, voice rings Dougie, Crystal Bell,

 31:36

divine,

 Ray Hill 31:37

just wonderful voice.



31:39

You know, I'm not an opera goer. But I became so impressed after interviewing the playwright that I that I started looking into opera a little bit. This opera is really so true to what opera has always stood for. It's always been opera has always been set to music, high drama, about shocking events of the time overloaded with symbols, and very symbolic. This is just, this is just true opera.



32:11

I'll never forget the symbol that he took of the yellow triangle mixed in with a pink triangle and that's who he was. He was Jewish and gay. And that's what



Ray Hill 32:23

they made gay Jewish people were during World War Two is they had they had that symbol. All of the symbols of the Nazis were various arrangements of triangles. And the Jewish star of David wasn't designed to be a Star of David. It was designed to be a combination of triangles as a result that if you were Jewish and gay, the bottom triangle was pink and the top one was yellow.