

VOLUME II Issue 11

MAY 16 - MAY 29, 1986

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הפירייה והפירייה



**MISHPACHAT AM**  
On Being Gay and Jewish  
Pg. 10

**THELMA TELLS ALL**  
Thelma Houston on  
Thelma Houston  
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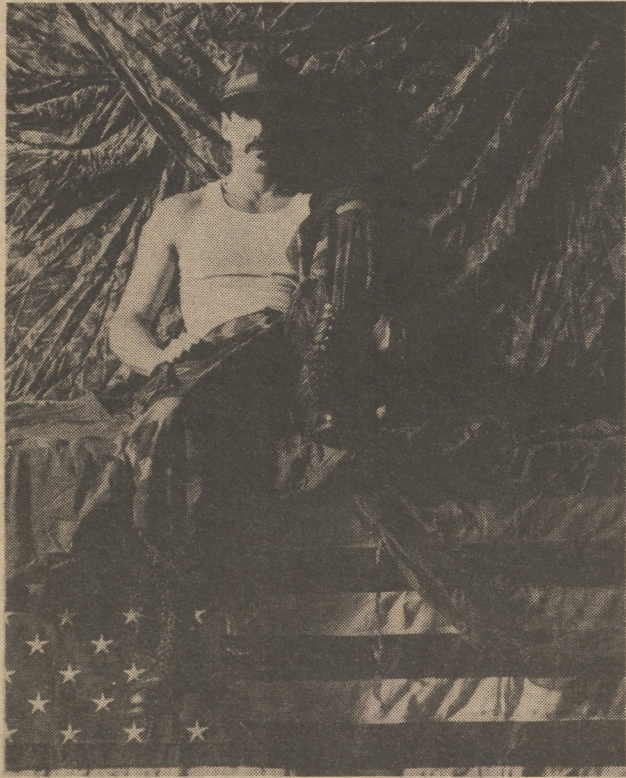


**THIRD ANNUAL SPRING  
AFFAIR**  
An Afternoon Incognito  
Pg. 10



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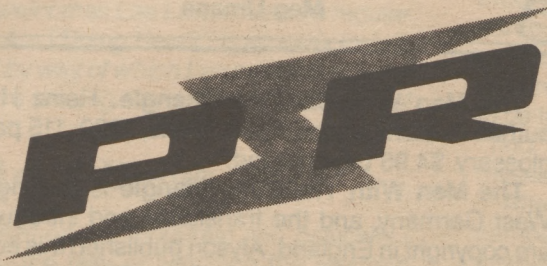
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# VOLUME II, ISSUE 11



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## EDITORIAL

Robrt L. Pela

I've filled many a pica space herein bitching that our community would surely serve to benefit from a more unified, cohesive support effort. Friends refer to me as the Soap Box Queen.

I've spent considerably less time complaining in general about the Gay Grapevine. It has always disturbed me the rate at which news—good or bad, important or insignificant—travels within the community. Probably this has disturbed me given that the bulk of the "news" imparted is usually inconsequential, sometimes damaging, and almost always, nobody's business. "Dishing," if you will. Friends tell me to shut-up, give in, and "dish," too.

Therefore, when I recently experienced a personal loss, I was annoyed and alarmed at the number of people who were aware of my situation. However, rumor and the usual tittle-tattle weren't forthcoming; instead, I received a good deal of support in taking care of what troubled me.

A new friend invited herself to my home and "made me talk about it"; another friend invited me to her home and tactfully steered our conversation away from what was on my mind; one of our P & R writers took me to a restaurant I'd always wanted to go to, and called me "Martha" all night until I laughed; Bob Hegyi reminded me, without saying as much, that there are other people with bigger problems.

The point here is not my story, but rather that I have been happily proven wrong and would like to consider myself standing corrected.

Perhaps, if my story is an example of the kind of support we are capable of giving one another, then there is more to be said about our strength as a community than my previously pessimistic editorials have indicated. If such love and respect are being passed among us, it seems likely that we can translate that kind of concern into the strength our Gay Community needs.

*An interesting addendum to the above editorial is this piece, by one of our staff writers who chooses to remain anonymous, submitted to me several days after I'd written the above.*

### Life on a Smaller Scale

My jobs and my personal activities give me frequent contact with many people. For the past few months, my busienss and personal situations have been stable and rewarding. A business change at the end of April tipped my personal equilibrium for a few days . . . a small-scale upset that's now history. The month of May isn't half over, and it's made a major impact on almost every life that touches mine.

May has been rough on people. . . The large-scale impact, as always, has been on our personal lives. My family, friends and acquaintances have survived far more than the predictable number of misfortunes: deaths, diagnoses of AIDS or cancer, hostility or rupture with families, friends and lovers, damaging evaluations, loss of something or

*continued on page 4*

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## HUMANSPACE BOOK REVIEW

Meg Umans

**The Men With the Pink Triangle.** Heinz Heger, author. Boston: Alyson Publications, 1980. 115 pages, glossary. \$4.95 paperbound.

**The Men With The Pink Triangle** is copyright in West Germany, and the translation and introduction are copyright in England. Alyson published this edition in cooperation with Gay Men's Press. The catalog data doesn't include the German title, and "men" in this edition is misleading. This isn't a documentary overview or a historical summary: it's one man's story, with

the events described as he saw them and felt them. It's first-person real.

During the Nazi regime, homosexuals were required to wear pink cloth triangles, larger than those worn by other categories of prisoners; all prisoners wore triangles, or color-coded triangles to indicate their origin or offense. The anonymous narrator described the situation to German writer Heinz Heger. Homosexuality was legalized in West Germany in 1968, and the story was first published there in 1972.

The narrator was arrested at age 22, and eventually sent to Sachsenhausen for the crime of homosexuality. He gives us an emotionless description of the physical set up of the camp and a verbal flow chart of administrative authority, interspersed with factual accountings of conditions and treatment, including direct quotations. After a few months, he was transferred to Flossenburg where he stayed for five years.

Freezing cold, discipline and humiliation, hunger, forced labor, forced sex, torture and other amusements of the guards and administration are described as they're experienced, through their physical effects on the narrator and other men with pink triangles. Some of these men used the last of their free will to devise creative ways to kill themselves, and some used previously unthinkable behavior in order to stay alive. Emotional effects are described as simply and starkly as physical consequences.

Friendship and encouragement grew among prisoners, and sexual and even romantic liaisons were formed between prisoners and men in various positions of power. Loyalty and affection are the only emotions elaborated.

We've known for a while that all this happened, but I never knew, until **The Men With the Pink Triangle**, the special parts of this hell reserved for homosexuals. As a Jew, I've always known one part of this story; here's another part we all need to remember.

Meg is a counselor in private practice in Phoenix, and owner of Humanspace Books, Inc. **The Men With the Pink Triangle** is available from the publisher and at Humanspace.

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someone we love. If I haven't talked with you during May, I don't know what's changed for you personally, but you've probably experienced a major personal shock. I have no idea why this is happening now, but I do know that we'll integrate the impact, support each other, and move on.

On a smaller scale, May has been rough on businesses and organizations. The best-known examples in the community are Tuff Stuff and Janus Theater. Tuff Stuff will continue to serve us under new ownership, and Janus Theater will continue to serve us in a new location. All of us who've supported these community institutions will feel the anger and sorrow that go with imposed change and we'll want Tuff Stuff's new ownership and Janus's new location to meet the standards we've come to expect. On a small scale, we'll support their adaptation and growth because we need them in our community.

And on a larger scale, we'll support the survival and adaptation and growth in our personal lives, and we'll be here for each other as we change.

# LETTERS FROM THE FARM

**Editor's Note:** With this first installment of "Letters to the Farm," P & R welcomes Lee Lawrence as a regular columnist. "What Am I Doing Here?" is an early installment of "Letters," by way of which Lee explains how he came to move from the Big City to the backwoods of Tennessee.

## "What Am I Doing Here?"

It's Saturday night on the mountain and basically I have two choices: the telly or watching the washing machine go around. The nearest bar is an hour and a half away. By the time I got into my "can't fail" bib overalls, boots and cowboy hat and made it to town, the place would be closed up tighter than a greasy popper bottle. Besides, I've only found three MEN in that place in the past three years. That's a long way to drive just to end up spending the night with Tinkerbell.

Standing on the front porch and looking up at the full moon, I feel its pull and think, "This is going to be a very long night."

Turning back to the house, I head straight for my trusty porno collection and start peeling apart the choice pages. Hey, don't knock it. When the only men around have tobacco juice drooling out the spaces where their teeth used to be, then those 8x10 glossy he-hunks can become man's best friend. I know. I've got a right hand that can scramble an egg in the shell!

What am I doing here anyway? Why am I putting myself through this? I remember way back in the distant past—cruising Third Ave.—stumbling home through Greenwich Village in the predawn hours—or going around the corner for a loaf of bread and coming back with seven inches of love.

Oh yes, it's coming back to me . . . I was tired of the one night stands, the meaninglessness, the emptiness, the faceless bodies and moist hands touching, groping, pinching, poking, Poking! me in sweaty back rooms, sleazy baths and subway johns. I wanted to get

away from all that . . . from the gay facade, the endless parties, the "Oh yeah, give it to me baby!" There were so many "baby's" in those days. I wanted to leave the city and divorce myself from all it represented. I wanted to be free. To travel. To live without hassles. I wanted to "find" myself. I have succeeded. I frequently find myself so horny I could fuck a knothole.

After years of living on the road in a pickup truck and camper—going from here to there (I used Bob Damron instead of Trip-Tics) I finally settled in the hills of Tennessee. Remember ol' Davey, Davey Crockett? There had to be at least a few like him still running around. There were so many adventures along the way and so many men.

But all that is different now. So different. Last year, I met a priest and yes, everything you've heard about the priesthood is true. We compared. He had more sex during the past year than I did. Under those circumstances there's something to be said for celibacy. "Bless me Father, for I have sinned and sinned and sinned . . ."

Actually, I handled "doing without" quite well, the first year or so. Considering I was accustomed to going to the baths a couple of times a month back in civilization. To go from that to nothing . . . well, I was older. I certainly didn't need "it" quite so often. Or did I? The first inkling that anything was amiss came with last summer's Shasta commercials. All that "Pop, Pop, I wanna SSshasta!" with the muscles, armpits and teeth left me lightheaded and licking the TV screen.

But wait a goddamn minute here—think back. I remember the nights I would go into a bar and pick out number 1 and then number 2. While giving number 1 my best shot I would give number 2 just enough to keep him on the line. Number 1 looked up. Eye contact was made. He ordered another beer and with one in each hand headed my way.

"Alright—I gottem!" silently congratulating myself, I



prepared to drop the voice an octave or two and be suave . . . He smiled broadly, passed me by and gave "my" beer to number 2. I ended up going home with number 38.

Did I want that again? Did I need that again? Oh God, yes! But . . . I chose this life. It was my decision to live in the mountains—close to the land—to be one with nature—to share in the timeless simplicity of the country lifestyle. I truly enjoy sitting around the wood stove in the general store whittlin' (you expected needlepoint?) and talking with my neighbors about 'maters, 'taters, and t'bakker. But some day when one of them asks, "What y'all been up to?", I'd give anything if I could say, "Well, last night I had this really hot dude sit on my face."

Pray for me and stay with us.

P.S. Contributions of old porno magazines would be gratefully appreciated. This is tax deductible.

**Lee Lawrence**

The Staff of  
**CONNECTION**  
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invites  
the entire Gay and Lesbian Community to  
join them for a Memorial Day Celebration  
Saturday, May 24, with special guest

Thelma Houston  
One Show Only  
Three Dollar Cover



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# VALLEY CRUISIN' with Paul Stanley

Who said "too much going on?" And where do we begin this time? By reminding everyone to set aside all of next week for **Stixx** Second Anniversary Celebration with **Donna and Joe** and company? Or by congratulating **Bob Hegyi** on his receiving a night-of-nights party at Trax (and a commemorative plaque, presented by **Linda and Grace**) to benefit the Switchboard?

Maybe not. Maybe we'll start off by telling you about **Wella Gallez** at **Shamoo's** (she's there Monday through Thursday, playing and singing and . . . well, perhaps we won't attempt to explain Wella. You *have* to experience this woman in person!).

There doesn't seem to be any really swell place to begin—so how about mentioning that **Bill and Eddie** of **Apollo's** are back from China! Go ask them what they did there—and why they came home on separate flights.



**Le Taxi** is a year old and has added still more vehicles to its fleet . . . 307 has doubled their Monday Morning Madness and will be bringing us two consecutive shows (frightening!) . . . AAFT has postponed the **Rusty Warren** benefit show and has just now presented Casino Night at **Charlie's**.

Mark your calendars for May 18 . . . **Desert Sky**

**Singers** will be presenting "Pizza and Song" at Organ Stop Pizza, 5330 N. 7th St. Unfortunately, the pizza is



not "on the boys" . . . **Richard** of **Charlie's** is now at Trax; former Trax doorman **Rory** is now doorman-ing at Connection; **Gary Mangum** can be found at the Dimestore . . . and was that **Keith Morris** behind the bar at **Charlie's** last week? We'll call this our Mobile Bartender Period, and keep you posted about who's gone where—if we can find them all!

Before closing, let us remind you to drop in on **Damion Michaels** at the **Dime Store** this May 25 . . . and warn you that **Phil** at the **Grand Camel** refers to his Jockey Short Contests as "Wet Weinies" (get off the

phone, Phil!) . . . and lastly to commend **Trax** on another swell party—the **Biker's Ball** was truly festive. Buy why was **Michael Rouse** so very . . . greasy that night?

Our editor spends a lot of time (and most of the grocery money) at the **Framing Center**, having everything he owns matted and framed while he visits with



**Steve and Gary**. If you haven't dropped in on the boys, do yourself a favor. A warning: it's difficult to leave the Framing Center empty-handed . . .



The **DIME STORE** and **L.J. PRODUCTIONS** proudly present a special **Memorial Day Show** starring **MCA Recording Artist DAMION MICHAELS**. Also starring **Jim Fredricks** (of **Jim & Shelly**) and emcee **Little John**.

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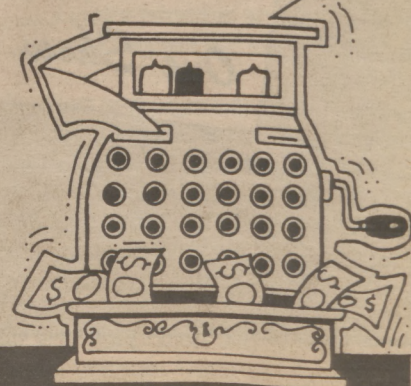
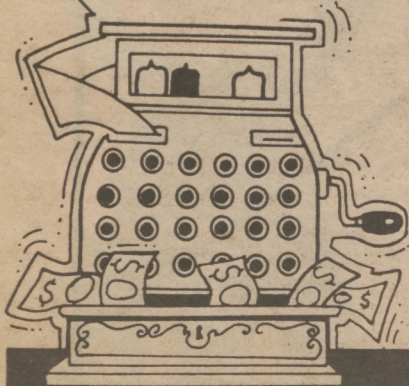
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<p><b>FRIDAY</b> Steak Fry 7 - 9 \$2.00</p>	<p><b>SATURDAY</b> Country Dance Lessons 7:30 - 9</p>	<p><b>SUNDAY</b> Charlie's Dime Store Specials</p>	

**GAY GAMES II: PHOENIX ORGANIZES FOR VICTORY**

Greetings to the athletes of Arizona! The time draws near for renewal to the greatest sports and cultural festival to be held in the Gay Community: GAY GAMES II.

Gay Games II will become a reality August 9-17, 1986. The process of organizing Arizona athletes and teams is currently underway, and you are invited and encouraged to participate. It should be stressed that no great skills are required and that some events are broken down into age groups.

Competition is not the only goal. Participation is the true reward. We are all winners and everyone can be a part of GAY GAMES II. The games are not made up only of competitors; we also need great people to be coaches, trainers, managers, organizers, and of course, cheerleaders.

Competitions will be held in: BASKETBALL, BOWLING, BOXING, CYCLING, GOLF, MARATHON, PHYSIQUE, POWERLIFTING, POOL (billiards), RACQUETBALL, SOCCER, SOFTBALL, SWIMMING and DIVING, TENNIS, TRACK and FIELD, TRIATHLON, VOLLEYBALL, and WRESTLING.

Many teams are already organized and practicing. The deadline for all entries to the games is May 30, 1986. If you are interested, contact LAMBDA SPORTS at 234-2420 or 954-0654.

**MOTHERPEACE AUTHOR AT HUMANSPEACE**

Vicky Noble, author of the best-selling book *Motherpeace: A Way To the Goddess Through Myth, Art and Tarot*, and creator (with Karen Vogel) of *The Motherpeace Round Tarot Deck*, is coming to Humanspace. She'll be with us on Sunday, May 18 at 3 p.m. The event is free and everyone is welcome.

Noble is an author, artist and teacher of the Tarot and yoga involved in feminist/spiritual healing communities. She'll tell us about her experiences and realizations, and answer our questions... why did she design a *round* Tarot deck, and why is it more popular than any other in feminist/spiritual communities? You'll be able to purchase her tape, currently available only directly from her. Join us for an informal and enlightening presentation!

**The Lesbian and Gay Pride Festival Committee presents**

**"PHOENIX PRIDE EMERGING"  
June 22, 1986**

The Annual Gay and Lesbian Pride Week event this year will be a Festival Picnic to take place at South Mountain Park on June 22 from 5 p.m. until 11 p.m. Featured will be Valley organizations, clubs, bars, shows, food and fun and a keynote speaker whose name will be announced after we receive confirmation. This traditional observance of the 1969 Sonewall Riots in New York marks the lesbian and gay community in rebellion against brutality and oppression. A \$2.00 per person cover charge will be used to cover expenses of the Festival. Any extra will be applied to future events relating to Gay and Lesbian Pride. This year's event is called "The Lesbian and Gay Pride Festival" and the theme is "Phoenix Pride Emerging." Chairs of the Festival Committee are Lynn Schumal and Andrew Axelrod. For more information, please call Paul at 248-8414.

# APOLLO'S

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## P. R. Entertainment Review

### Now You See It, Now You Don't

Pippo Boticella and Amelia Boneti are two aging Italian folk who had their day on the stage with an act that imitated the popular yankee export of Astaire and Rogers. Some forty or more years later, a television variety show, WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT (sic), wants them for a quick nostalgic reunion on a Christmas special. (This TV production resembles a nightmarish blend of *This Is Your Life*, *Real People* and *The Tonight Show*—on amphetamines.)

Time has been kind to Amelia. She views the frantic indoctrination process—as well as her introduction to the other scheduled guests—with optimism and grace. Pippo finally shows up and it is immediately obvious that he has lived less “successfully.” His drinking, smoking and casual disregard for the protocol of events are superficial (though no doubt real) diversions; he is cognizant and pessimistic, graceful and accepting in his own way. A list of their fellow “celebrities” includes: an aging Admiral who is dottering; a group of celebrity look-a-likes; a monk who claims he can levitate; a psychic who tape records in empty locked rooms, then plays the tape back to hear voices; a convicted criminal having his moment of fame; the world's smallest dancing act (dwarfs, little people); a cow with 14 or 18 tits; the cow's owner (some small village mayor) and his wife, with tits big enough for three women. Lastly, there is the transvestite who talks of “some wonderful American doctor who has devised an operation involving the implantation of a fetus into any body.”

Precious little time is allowed for rehearsal, or much of anything else. Like cattle off to the slaughter, everyone is rushed along like product for the market. Just as Ginger and Fred begin their routine on the flashy, mirrored set, another power outage occurs. Everyone in the studio waits patiently for the return of normalcy while Fred earnestly tries to talk Ginger out of the whole thing—escape now before the lights and cameras come back on. Ginger—ever the optimist—wants to continue, but Fred convinces her and just as they begin to creep off the stage, the power returns; but not until Fred delivers an *up-yours* fist for all to see. They dance. He falls and gets up to continue. They finish and depart; she to her home and he to some unidentified curb with a loan from her. *Fin.*

I don't usually enjoy transcribing a film's story for the following reasons: If you've seen it, why go over it again? If you haven't yet seen it, why spoil it? If you haven't seen it and don't plan on it, why bother?

In this particular instance, you probably haven't seen it, probably didn't plan on seeing it, and probably couldn't see it if you even wanted to. When a prime-time showing of a film elicits the attendance of only four people, you know something is wrong.

I like the stuff I have seen directed by Federico Fellini. His films are filled with images that amuse, entertain and startle . . . A bird flying into a winter covered plaza and landing next to a frozen fountain . . . An ecclesiastical fashion show on roller skates . . . Fellini turns a highly critical eye on television and the results are not pretty. While the production rolls along like some unstoppable locomotive, piles of garbage are everywhere, holiday decorations look worn and shabby. *Ginger and Fred* were meant to be a comedy. You could have fooled me. What ruined the movie were the subtitles. Whoever was responsible should be beaten with a Berlitz manual. For every ten minutes of dialogue on the screen, there were perhaps two or three sentences of translation. Mamma mia, what a mess! 🍷

(*Ginger and Fred*: Directed by Federico Fellini. Starring Marcello Mastroianni and Giuletta Masina, both of whom were a delight to watch even if I didn't understand what they were saying.)

**Quick Clips:**

**Critters:** Funny and frightening flick. Not a classic in any sense of the word, but it sure beats another TV rerun.

**FX:** Word of mouth was so good for this film that it is being given another run at the theatres. It is good, fast paced entertainment.

**Ran:** Quite simply the best film to come out of Japan in a very long time. Epic and visually impressive.

**Short Circuit:** A humorous romp with a computer that comes “alive.” More fun than you might imagine.  
—Paul King

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**AZ. AIDS INFORMATION  
LINE  
UPDATE**

**Bob Hegyi**

This may well be the last article I write from the LGCS/AAIL. As of May 12, 1986, we have barely enough funds to finish out the month. However, we are awaiting a two thousand dollar grant from the Chicago Resource Center, and chances are good that we may receive this grant by the end of the month. This would mean the possibility of our continuing service for another month.

As of May 12, the Switchboard has received 11,086 calls. We've held 191 counseling sessions regarding such topics as AIDS-couple problems, coming out, job discrimination, harassment, and many other subjects. Seventy-four meetings have been attended, including the State Task Force on AIDS (I haven't missed a meeting in three years), Camelback Business and Professional Assn., MCC Church, AGBA, AAFT, and many more. Approximately 50 media presentations have been made through the Switchboard in the last six months.

The Switchboard has operated for the last nine years as the last remnant of ARC. However, as things stand now, this office will be closing at the end of the month for lack of funds.

We have tried everything we know to keep this office—and the phone lines—open. We have given up this office space and must be "out of here" by May 31.

A few examples of the services rendered by the Switchboard: one doctor was referred 73 times in one month; the HTLVII Clinic over 220 times in one month; Arizona Gay Youth 32 times in the same month; the list goes on.

It appears that Phoenix will have to do without its Lesbian and Gay Information Line because very few people care. I'm wondering where some of us will receive the information that the Switchboard has thus far given out? Where will we go when we need to hear a

friendly voice on the other end of the phone? It seems that the service provided here—as well as a personal dream I've had for sixteen years—is unimportant to the Phoenix Community.

I'd have to say that the office staff here has really given this the "old college try." If any of you out there have any ideas about what can be done to keep the Switchboard going, please contact us. And please forgive me my "getting up on a soapbox"—I have been very dedicated to this cause and find it difficult watching it go under.

On a much lighter note, and in closing, I would like to thank Linda and Grace, Michael Rouse, Clint, and all the staff at Trax (as well as all of you who showed up with light sticks, and those who didn't) for providing me with the most wonderful night of my life. Thanks again to all of you who were involved in the Take Back the Night Party this past May 4th at Trax.

**SOURDOUGH**

We at Sourdough Productions have again opened our eyes and hearts to a very disturbing problem . . . H U N G E R .

Sourdough Productions is happily working along, side by side with St. Mary's Food Bank to reach our goal of 101,000 cans of food.

BENEFIT TOUR 1986 will kick off on May 25th, 1986 at the Impulse, 2326 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix. The doors will be open from 1:30 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Entertainment will include the talents of Whiplash, Taker, Brides of Science, Soul Touch Skin, and more. \$2.00 or two cans of food serve as cover charge!

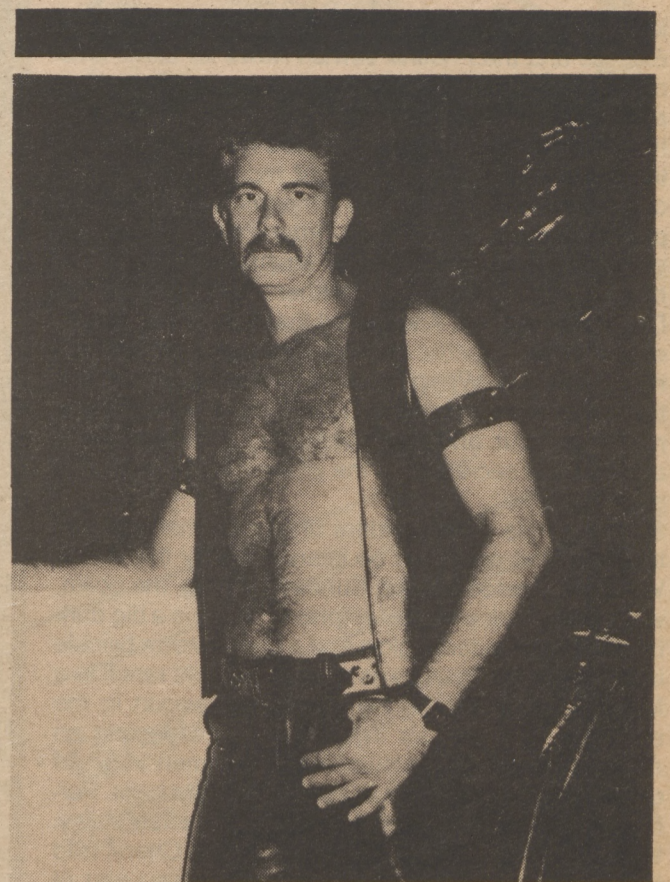
Sourdough Productions has set its own schedule back exclusively for this 161 day tour, so with cans in hand, aim them at our enemy—HUNGER!

On a different note, May 11th, 1986 was the shooting of WORM DAY for the video "ROCK'N'ROLL GULCH." This segment of the video was shot at Ron Nix's Cowcamp, an old west town and movie ranch out on the Carefree Highway and 99th Avenue. Back at Impulse that night, a "Worm Day Party" featured the bands

Taker and Whiplash as entertainment.

Working together all the way around is what brings the community together, so let's put our efforts to work and stop hunger.

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# ON BEING GAY AND JEWISH

Mishpacham Am has been running an ad in the *Western Express* and the *Phoenix Jewish News* for some time now, which has the phone number and mailing address, and a call for members. The words Mishpacham Am have always intrigued me. They're mysterious, like a charm one might repeat to make the corn grow. Well, I found that it means "Family of People" in Hebrew, and it's an organization for Jewish gays. Andrew Axelrod formed Mishpacham Am with a handful of like-minded brothers and sisters, in December of 1983. Andrew felt that it was time, apparently, that Mishpacham Am happened, and we all know how Andrew is. Within hours of the idea's conception the group was born, officers appointed, financial statements sent out, and the first meeting underway. He is currently the secretary for the group and still one of its guiding forces.

Simcha is the vice-president of Mishpacham Am and the man who agreed to be interviewed by this writer. When he greeted me last Sunday evening, the polite, well-spoken voice on the telephone became a big dark bear with a wonderful glow and a child's warm twinkle in his eyes. The house was any ten year old ranch in a Mesa subdivision with the same Ford wagon in the driveway. So much for mystery. I was expecting an Ashram of sorts, with numerous dark men in white cloths walking slowly through incense-filled halls. Perhaps a big rambling mission-style in Paradise Valley. Wrong. Simcha and his two roommates, Cheryl and Linda (two wonderful, reserved women, also part of Mishpacham Am), rent the house independently of the group, although meetings are held there on occasion. It seems that the organization really lives up to its name, and is as comfortable with itself as its vice-president is with himself. They hold meetings and services roughly twice a month; whenever they can and feel the need. There are monthly planning sessions, and a newsletter. They have no special meeting hall. Instead, they round-robin from member to member's house. "One of the nice things about Judaism is

**"When you deny a Jew their Judaism, they get very upset . . ."**

that you don't have to have a physical structure to worship in. Some of the reformed Jews in California hold services in hot tubs. We're not quite that relaxed around here." The family takes turns supporting and entertaining itself, and makes sure it speaks and confers within itself on a regular basis.

There are roughly sixty-five members, distributed evenly between the sexes—although a few months back that was a problem. It seems the women felt the men were taking things over a bit much, and so they stopped coming. The men subsequently turned the eye of scrutiny inward and found that the issues to which the women referred were valid. The situation was promptly mended, and now everyone is happy and balance is restored. Mishpacham Am specializes in non-genderized services. Non-sexist, yet traditional. Membership is dependent more on faith than on sexual preference. "We celebrate our common Jewishness. Being gay is secondary." At present, the only non-Jewish members are the spouses of Jewish members. Most are gay. As long as they're supportive it doesn't seem to matter where the preferences lie. If one expresses interest and contacts Mishpacham Am, they are invited to attend services. If the interest deepens and continues, they are invited to join.

I asked Simcha to tell me what Mishpacham Am is and does. He was extremely open and knowledgeable. It's not that easy to dissect and categorize an organization, so we ended up conversing about this and that, weaving in and around a few central ideas. The following "interview" is mostly a fabrication of a very good, enlightening conversation.

"When you deny a Jew their Judaism they get very upset. It's part of the daily routine and has to be followed. Even if a Temple denies you entrance because you're gay (apparently some of the most

orthodox ones would), they won't cast you from the faith. It's too sacred. In Judaism we're more cohesive. All other Jews recognize our Jewishness. It's not like the Christians. We're not denied our Jewishness by straight Jews. Mishpacham Am is here for affirmation and support. It allows us a vehicle to celebrate our Jewishness. The Temples respect that."

I admire his blatant, unadorned faith. Simcha does not go overboard on explanations, only when I ask him to clarify some point for me. He has integrated his beliefs into his lifestyle quite well; better than most of the Christians I know.

"A lot of that is Mishpacham Am, but it's also just me. I grew up gay. I also grew up Jewish." The two seem to have little to do with each other. "They're each a part of



my life, and I'm comfortable with them both. They're not separate from me, they are parts of me with which I am comfortable."

That's why you're so comfortable with yourself. "I guess."

Now, what about growing up and going to Temple and all that? I know when I was a boy, being raised Catholic, going to Church was a real pain. Once I hit a certain age, I felt hypocritical being there, just doing it not to make waves in the family. My religion never gained a strong hold. Although I retain a lot of Christian philosophy, I feel no need to worship within the structure anymore. How important is Temple to you and the other members?

"Temple is real important. Most of us belong to a Temple and do Mishpacham Am on the side. And in a way, Mishpacham Am is going to Temple, too. It's not so much a reaction to a bad experience within a certain Temple as an alternative we've discovered which serves the religious needs of our community. Nobody gets hassled here."

Would the Jews excommunicate an openly gay person like the Mormons would?

"No, nothing that severe. Although the Hassidic Jews

shoulder. There's no way you'd go back to a Temple you'd been shut out of."

Do they deny you entrance, or lay a curse on you? "It's not that dramatic. You just wouldn't go back. They would never deny you your Judaism. It would just be made an uncomfortable place for you to worship. Well, maybe uncomfortable is too nice a word. You just wouldn't go back there. You'd come to Mishpacham Am."

Would family treat you the same way?

"No, in family one would be put through much harder

**"We have the support of most of the Temples . . ."**

paces. Jewish parents can do amazing things with guilt. But that has less to do with Judaism than with the traditions that go along with those beliefs. Like I said, the Jewish spirit is never questioned, but Jewish sensibilities must always be addressed." I got the impression Simcha had had some run-ins with his family. "Oh sure. No big deal. My father would excommunicate me, and we'd have a scene, and I'd leave. But we'd be over it in a few days. It was never really serious. It's all in how you deal. We have lots of love."

A lot of Christians tend to get confused in their faith. Like with Easter. With the eggs, and the candy, and all, they forget about Jesus rising and bringing the Light back to the world, and all that. It seems that the Jews are more in touch with their beliefs.

"Oh most definitely. See, we have a whole range of beliefs in the Jewish faith. There are the Reconstructionists, who are the most liberal and want to rewrite everything. And then there are the Hassids, who live their lives according to every word that was ever written and change nothing. In between there are Reformed, Conservative, and Orthodox Jews. If a part of the faith doesn't mesh with you, you just go more liberal in that area."

In other words, there's no stigma attached to jumping from, say, a Conservative upbringing to a Reconstructionist's view later in life.

"Not really. It's up to you. See, I fall somewhere between Conservative and Orthodox in most of my beliefs. But there are areas where I just don't fit. So I just don't practice those areas. I make that choice. Most of my brothers implicitly respect my right to make that choice."

Where does Mishpacham Am fit into the scheme of the religion?

"We are under the Reformed umbrella. Eventually we'll apply for organizational status under the Union of American Hebrew Congregations which is based out in Southern California."

So you're not official yet?

"Oh we're official. We have the support of most of the

*continued on page 12*

# AFTERNOON INCOGNITO Third Annual Spring Affair

Sunday, May 4th dawned sunny and beautiful and by 10:00 a.m. the parking lot of The Incognito was busy as a beehive with vendors and the staff turning it into an outdoor bazaar.

Among the many attractions were body painting, leather goods, books, flowers, tarot card reading, blown glass, dunk tank, massages, food and drink of course, and other sights and sounds too numerous to mention.

A variety of DJ's spun for everyone's listening and dancing (yes, right out in the parking lot on Thomas



As usual, the bar staff, Vicki, Sharon, Cindy, Phyllis, Kim and R. J. made sure that everything ran smoothly.

A good time was had by all and we hope Penny and the staff continue to provide us with such great special events.



Road!) pleasure.

Needless to say, this is an annual event that should not be missed.

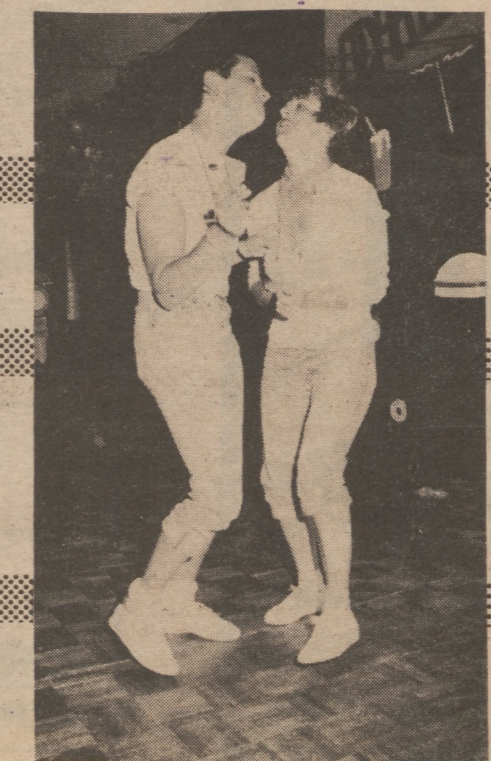
Nostalgia was the word at Incognito's Oldies Night Wednesday, April 26th.

DJ's Donna Lee and D.W. outdid themselves with their great selection of "oldies but goodies" music. We understand that Darleen played an integral part in as supplying records and finding interesting bits of trivia that made the evening (and just how old did you say you were, Darleen?) Decorations ranged from 45's hanging from the ceiling to the front end of an Edsel painted on the DJ's booth. If anybody needs any interior design for a party, Phyllis is the girl to call. It was great to see that all the effort put into this event was appreciated by a full house that night.

A dance contest was held and the winners were none other than Lisa and Suzy from Rags. We hope that they have recovered the use of all of their limbs.



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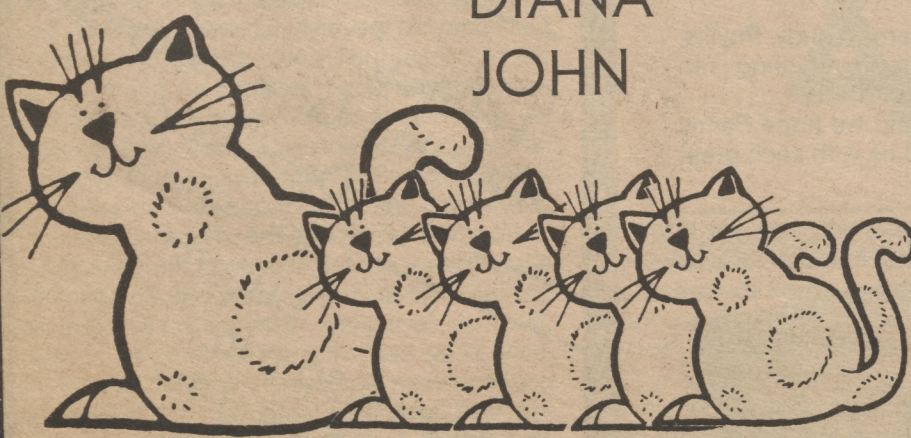
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continued from page 10

Temples out here, or at least they're not cutting us down. We are what is identified as a CHEVURA, a group of friends. A family of people, you know? that's an official sort of status to have, even though we're not registered and non-profit or any of that. Being a CHEVURA is important. It's valid. The only thing it would take to become a group from this point is a lot of paperwork. Right now it's not that important to us." Simcha is stretched out, playing cat. He is so relaxed. He speaks effortlessly about things which to me seem very big deals.

"We're mellow. Jews tend to change only what they can, and deal with the rest. We only allow ourselves to get so upset, then we just . . . deal. It is effortless once you've become strong enough in your faith."

How does Mishpachat Am strengthen you?  
"We have services together. We do socials. We're more social than anything. Mishpachat Am is a time and a place where we all come together to celebrate our common Jewishness. If you can't make it, you don't come. You don't get penalized or anything. Nobody takes attendance. Board meetings are more structured, of course, because that's work. Somebody has to keep it organized and send out the newsletters. If there's work to be done, we all show and get it done." What kind of social things does Mishpachat Am sponsor?

"We just had our third annual Passover Seder—that's Passover dinner, more or less. Passover is one of the major holidays, and it's also an upbeat one. Rosh Hashana is a somber time. Yom Kippur is a somber time. But Passover is one of our happier times. We get together and have good food and listen to the old tales of Moses and the flight from Egypt, and the Angel of Death, and the Ten Commandments. It is ceremonial to a degree. After that it's a party. The whole Mishpachat Am family got together for it just this past April 24th. It was lovely."

Is Passover like Easter?

"Better. I guess. I never did Easter like I do Passover. And what else?"

"We're real bit on potlucks. They often turn into discussion groups. We talk a lot about the faith. We study Hebrew, help each other along in the education process. There's a lot to know about Judaism that a lot of Jews are not readily exposed to. You have to seek it out. Hebrew, for example, is not required to be a Jew in America, you know? Like Latin with Christians. It's something we choose to do to expand on our knowledge of Judaism. It's a way of celebrating the spirit. The organization as a whole benefits and grows from that."

You speak a lot of the Jewish spirit.

"Well that's what it is. A Spirit. Israel was formed to preserve the Spirit. That was the form the reaction to Hitler took. It is very strong. You can't kill it. If there were five Jews left in the world, Judaism would continue. And probably with all the same traditions. Jews are real into tradition."

What about this month? What does Mishpachat Am have planned for May and the rest of the summer?

"We slow down in the summer months. All the Temples do. When it's hot, we like to go on vacation. Mishpachat Am is just like the Temples in that respect. We're sporadic. You know, it's like eating. When it's hot, who wants to cook?"

**Chris Cerrato**

Mishpachat Am can be contacted by writing to:

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## DIMESTORE DAMION

In the field of entertainment, Damion Michaels has done everything from Shasta Cola commercials to starring on Broadway. His appearances in television series such as "Happy Days" and "Brothers," and frequent dates at L.A. nightspot The Rose Tattoo keep Damion busy . . . but never too busy to stray far from his first love, singing.

Michaels has toured as back-up singer with Elton John, and has recorded a solo LP for the now defunct Rocket Records. Currently signed to MCA Records, Damion plans to release an album very soon.

Michaels is currently starring off-broadway in "Legend," portraying the legendary Nat King Cole. May 25th marks Michaels' first Phoenix appearance; he'll be performing at the Dimestore, 1810 E. McDowell.

### A Personal Touch

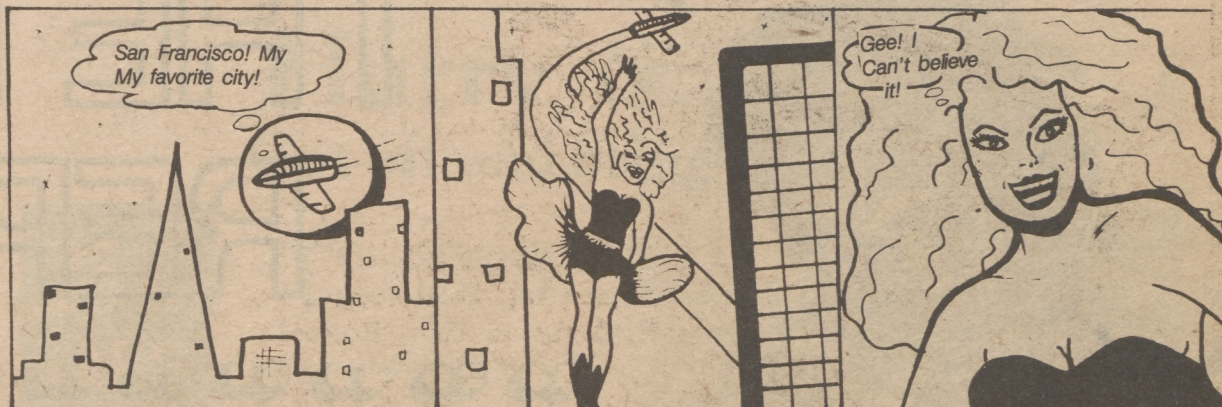
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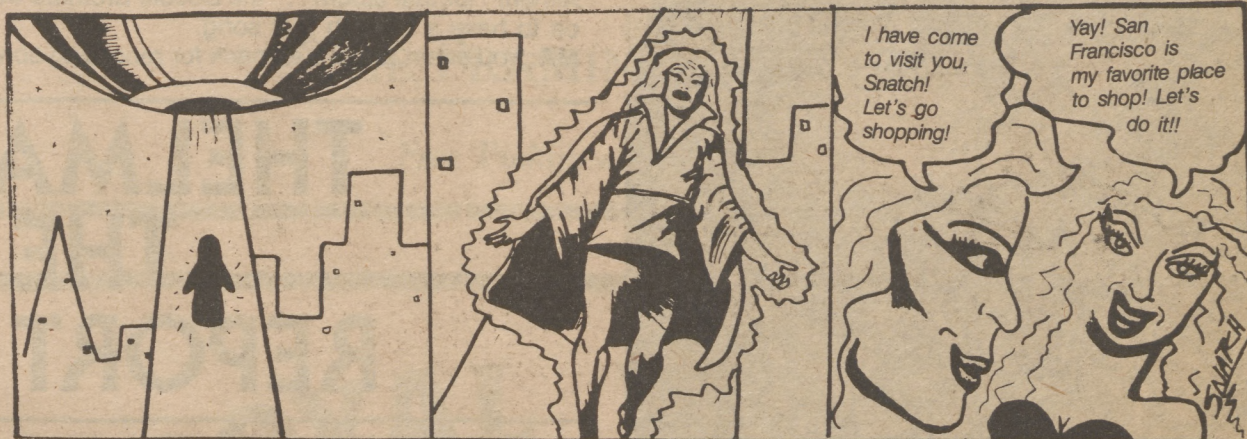


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# THE MUSIC REPORT

recorded for ABC Dunhill.

**TH:** *Sunshower* was my first solo album. I'd recorded one other album, *Tellin' It Like It is*, with the Art Reynolds Singers. We wrote the song "Jesus Is Just Alright" for that album . . . the Doobie Brothers went on to have a hit with that song.

**MR:** You seem to have a knack for recording songs

LP project. Later on, he changed some of the words and they used it for the film "Mahogany."

**MR:** What about "New Attitude?"

**TH:** I missed that one, too. My friend Sharon Robinson wrote that song for *Qualifying Heat*. MCA didn't think the song was a hit, so we didn't record it. Later, it was suggested for the soundtrack for "Beverly Hills

## THELMA HOUSTON: THE MUSIC REPORT INTERVIEW

that become hits for other artists later on. I recall your earlier version of "Do You Know Where You're Going To" before it was a hit for Diana Ross.

**TH:** How'd you know that?! It's true . . . that song was written for me by Michael Masser for an LP I was recording for Motown. That was Michael's first

Cop." That's okay . . . Patti LaBelle's a good friend of mine . . .

**MR:** We were discussing your first album, which was produced by Jimmy Webb of Fifth Dimension fame. How did you end up with a sought-after such as Webb so early in your career?

*continued on page 16*

*The Thelma Houston Story is neither one of overnight success nor of Rise and Fall. Thelma's has been a "name" since the start of her career, although she waited ten years for her first "real" hit. Houston was a member of the Motown Family, where she struck pay-dirt in 1977 with "Don't Leave Me This Way," the song often cited as the unofficial kick-off of Disco music's commercial heyday.*

*Thelma's Motown period was preceded by a largely disappointing stint with ABC/Dunhill, and followed by a lackluster contract with RCA Records (for whom she recorded the marginal hit "Can You Feel It"). Signing with MCA in 1980 allowed Houston the creative space to record a trio of slick, well-produced LPs. Her 1985 collaboration with Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis (formerly of the Time) produced a Top 5 Black Radio hit with "You Used to Hold Me So Tight." In a recent telephone interview, Houston and I discussed how she came to hook up with Jam and Lewis.*

**Thelma Houston:** When we were preparing the *Qualifying Heat* LP, MCA was asking me who I wanted to produce some of the material. I'd met Jim and Terry, and had always liked their work. I felt that they really worked closely with whoever they were producing, and brought out what was best for the performer.

Their studio is in Minneapolis, and I wasn't so thrilled about going out there to record. Once I got there, I loved it. We really had a great time recording those cuts. I remember Terry's mom going out and catching a fish and then preparing it for our dinner. That doesn't happen much in L.A.

**Music Report:** Your first album, *Sunshower*, was

### The ALBUM review



BILLY OCEAN  
"LOVE ZONE"

*Jive Arista; Produced by Barry Eastmond & Wayne Brathwaite*

This review will exclude mention of the first cut on side "A". That cut, "When The Going Gets Tough, The Tough Get Going," was previously released in late 1985 on the "Jewel of the Nile" movie soundtrack. There's really no need to review, or even to mention "Going". We've all heard it more times than we'd care to remember.

The majority of the eight remaining cuts here can be classified as romantic ballads. In fact, all but two of the eight cuts fall far below 100 beats per minute.

"Bittersweet" is a misleading cut. At 134 BPM, there is very little instrumental activity and/or interaction.

This is not meant to imply that "Bittersweet" is a bad cut; in fact it is quite competent. The rhythm track is catchy, and that relates to easy movement on the dance floor. "Bittersweet" is also musically sound. It is orchestrated with numerous stringed instruments, and the break includes a hot (but too short) sax riff.

"Showdown" at 116, sounds as if it should be much faster on the BPM count. It is a more powerful cut than "Bittersweet", and the rhythm track is much stronger.

As for the remaining six cuts on "Love Zone", as stated previously, they can all be classified as romantic ballads. The term "Summer Music" comes to mind. These cuts, although dissimilar, do contain that mellow, sweltering jazzy sound and a slow steady rhythm track that can best be described as "grinding". Also present are some very sexy smatterings of acoustic and electric guitars and keyboards.

As for Ocean's vocals, he performed as though he were born to sing romantic ballads. If any vocalist can be said to be responsible for leading his/her listeners onto "more" romantic activities, it is true of Ocean.

Over all, "Love Zone" seems to have been produced with the easy listener in mind. Nothing wrong with that. I have heard that there is life beyond dance clubs. If you're a romantic at heart, or if there's someone special you would like to invite over for an evening of "indoor activities", pick up on "Love Zone". I guarantee positive results.

—Cathy

*continued on page 15*

continued from page 14

The 12" review . . .

**ALAN RECTOR of CONNECTION . . .**

Alan Rector began his "club" career as a light technician. As such, he worked with some of the most talented D.J.s in Phoenix at clubs such as Hisco Disco, Bullwinkles, Hotbods, and Odyssey 1 in Hollywood.

His first job as a D.J. was at the popular valley nightspot, Gatsbys. He worked there for one year, and then moved on to Connection. Alan has been at the Connection for three years now.

The Music Report is happy to have him aboard as a staff writer.

STEVEN PAUL PERRY

**Target**

*Air Wave Records; produced by Stephen Singer.*

*Time: 5:28. BPM: 123.*

For those who enjoy high energy music at its least intense, this cut will be a favorite. The pressing is fairly good quality, although the 123 BPM sounds more like 118, or 116.

This cut is quite likable, and as it is on a domestic label, it should be easy to get ahold of.

—Alan Rector

PETER GABRIEL

**Sledgehammer**

*(Geffen; remixed by John Potoker; engineered by Tokes)*

*Time: 7:20. BPM: 102.*

Aah, the sweet soul sounds of the sixties . . . "Sixties soul had a huge influence on me. I've been thinking about doing a record with that slant, and this is the first song in that direction."—Peter Gabriel.

I'll have to agree that Mr. Gabriel is certainly headed in the right direction. This production is a magnificent piece of blue-eyed soul. Opening with a wonderful and magical interplay of flute and guitar, we are quickly picked up by a set of horns that boast an arrangement right out of the James Brown era.

The really unique aspect about this record is its use of the production formula of heavy metal rock. This formula is fueled and driven by the bop and rhythm of get-down sixties soul. Technology of the eighties is also apparent in the various phased passages of music.

The record features an extended dance mix that runs 7:20, as well as an extended mix at 5:40. The extended mix opens with an absolutely rhapsodic guitar.

With such a good combination of musical styles, techniques, and across-the-board appeal, look for this one to do well both at clubs and on the radio air waves.

—Hubert

DEN HARROW

**Bad Boys**

*Baby Records; produced by Roberto Turatti and Miki Chierigato. Time: 5:50. BPM: 114.*

The Italians, it seems, are the masters of dance techno-pop with hit songs such as, "I Love My Radio" by Taffy, and "Tarzan Boy" by Baltimora. Now we have Den Harrow's "Bad Boys", an Italian import in the vein of the techno-pop we've come to expect from Italy. In short, it's no disappointment. While not as electric and as righteous as his last single, "Future Brain", "Bad Boys" is a lot more entertaining and positive.

The cut is mixed with some surprisingly accurate edits (not a strong point of Italian productions), and the synthesized bass lines and keyboards are very reminiscent of "The Safety Dance." The vocals are the good, clean, storytelling type; the chorus is quite sing-along. Overall, the entire production is tight, and with a length of 5:50 this piece jogs along at a nice party pace. "Bad Boys" should prove to be a great addition to anyone's playlist.

—Hubert

continued on page 16

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**TH:** My manager, Mark Gordon, was also managing the Fifth Dimension, and Jimmy was working with them at the time. They'd just had a big hit with "Up, Up and Away," and Jimmy was really hot. When ABC signed me, Mark Gordon told (then-president) Jay Lasky that he wanted Jimmy Webb to produce me. Jay said, "no way, he's too busy."

So Mark and I ran over to Jimmy's house—thank God he was home—and asked him would he produce me. He agreed on the spot . . . I couldn't believe it.

**MR:** How did you come to be signed by ABC/Dunhill?

**TH:** Well, they used to have these showcase nights at a place called the Factory in L.A.—it's called Studio 1 now—and I went and performed at one out there. After I sang, Mark Gordon came backstage and asked was I serious about being a singer? He said that he wanted to manage me, but I didn't believe him. I'd heard a lot of that kind of thing by then. Anyway, Mark took me to ABC for an audition, and they signed me.

**MR:** You were with Motown Records from 1970 to 1977. Your biggest hit with them was "Don't Leave Me This Way," a song originally recorded by Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes.

**TH:** That's right. I'd been with Motown for awhile by then, and we'd tried everything to get me a hit. Things just didn't gel. Someone mentioned "Don't Leave Me," and when I found out that Motown was not going to release it as a single from Harold's album, I recorded it . . . this time I recorded someone else's song and had a hit with it!

**MR:** While you were with Motown, you recorded a direct-to-disc LP for Scheffield Labs entitled "Pressure Cooker."

**TH:** That was really a great experience. It's so much more exciting to record with the musicians live, right there with you in the studio. Usually, it's just me and the engineer and some studio tracks.

As a matter of fact, I'm recording another direct-to-disc for Scheffield right now. We're using contem-

porary writers and musicians—it really has a feel for what's out there now. I'm really excited about this one.

**MR:** I've read that there was some resistance from Motown about your doing an album for another label at that time.

**TH:** Not at all. Actually, Motown was the only label I've been signed to who *let* me do anything outside the label.

You're always hearing that Motown held back their performers—so let me say this. Working for Motown really prepared me for my future in this business. They really supported me in what I wanted to do with my career. Motown was wonderful.

**MR:** Yet you left the label when your contract was up in 1977.

**TH:** I really just wanted to stretch my wings—what Motown expected of me at that time was not what I expected of myself. It was scary, "leaving the nest" like that. But I wanted to get out there and see what I could do.

**MR:** You've just cut a song with Jeff Lorber for Warner Brothers.

**TH:** This is such a hot cut. Working with Jeff was fantastic. We're going to be touring Japan toward the end of the summer. The song is called "Atomic Battery." The best part about all of this is that I got to work with Luther Van Dross—Luther came in and did some backing vocals on the cut.

**MR:** What will you do after returning from Japan?

**TH:** Well, there's this LP with Scheffield, and then I'd like to really concentrate on my acting. I did some television last season, and I'm up for a role in a Broadway play that I can't tell you the title of.

I guess I've always wanted to pursue my acting, but when you're recording, it's really difficult. You know, you do a record, then you go on the road to promote it, and then you're right back in the studio recording your next project. I've been in that mode for so long now, I haven't had the chance to really center on my acting career. I'm looking forward to

it now.

**MR:** Is there anything that hasn't been printed about you that you'd like to read in a Thelma Houston interview?

**TH:** I'd like to put this idea out there: that whatever it is in life that you want to do, you really do have the ability to do it. It's all just a question of believing in yourself . . . and hangin' in there.

R. Pela

continued from page 15

FALCO

"MACHO MACHO"

A & M Records. Time: 4:55. BPM: 132.

Out of Austria came Falco, and eight years later comes his latest successful album, "Falco 3." "Vienna Calling" and "Rock Me Amadeus," the singles from this album, have enjoyed commercial and club success in various countries. There's not much left to say about either of them.

There is another cut on "Falco 3" that is destined for twelve inch release; in my opinion, "Macho Macho" has the potential to become another Falco hit, especially in the club market. It is for this reason that I have taken the liberty of reviewing not a twelve inch, but an album cut.

At 132 beats per minute, "Macho Macho" is a fine dance-floor cut. The intro is heavy with guitar; in fact, until the first vocal line it's necessary to keep reminding yourself that this *is* Falco, and *not* Dire Straits.

Musically, I found "Macho Macho" to be a very tight, energetic piece of product. There is a distinct vocal-and-synth balance, and, as always, Hans Holzel is in fine form. "Macho" is quality stuff; it should only be a matter of time until it receives the "special attention" given to twelve inch presses.

—Donalee

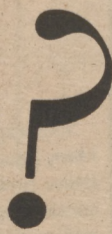
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Bravo! I'd like to congratulate Pennie and staff for the tremendous success of Spring Affair. Also thanks to Cynthia, Cyndi, Phyllis, BJ, Micky, Vicki and crew for making this one of the most enjoyable jobs I've had.  
Little John

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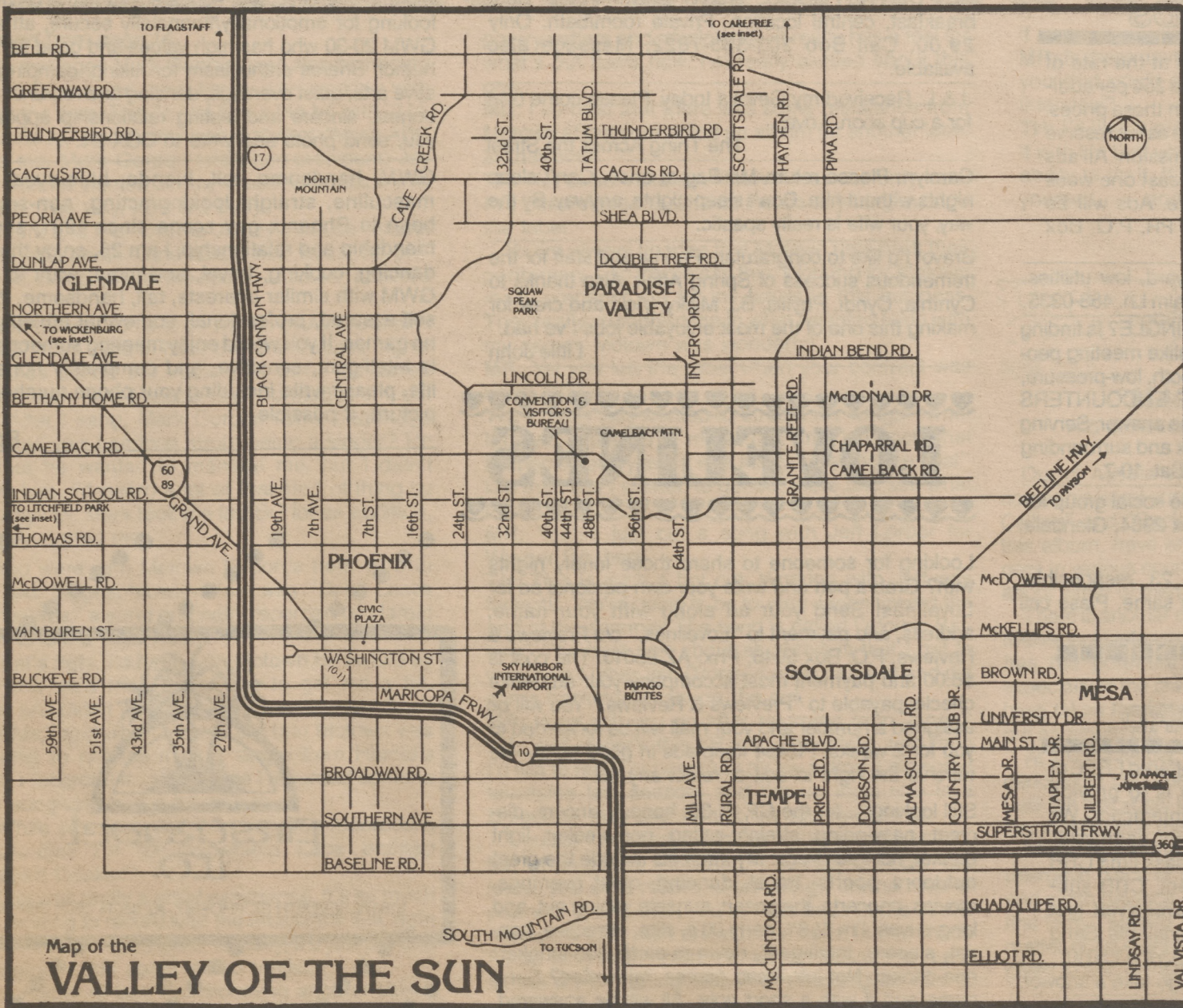
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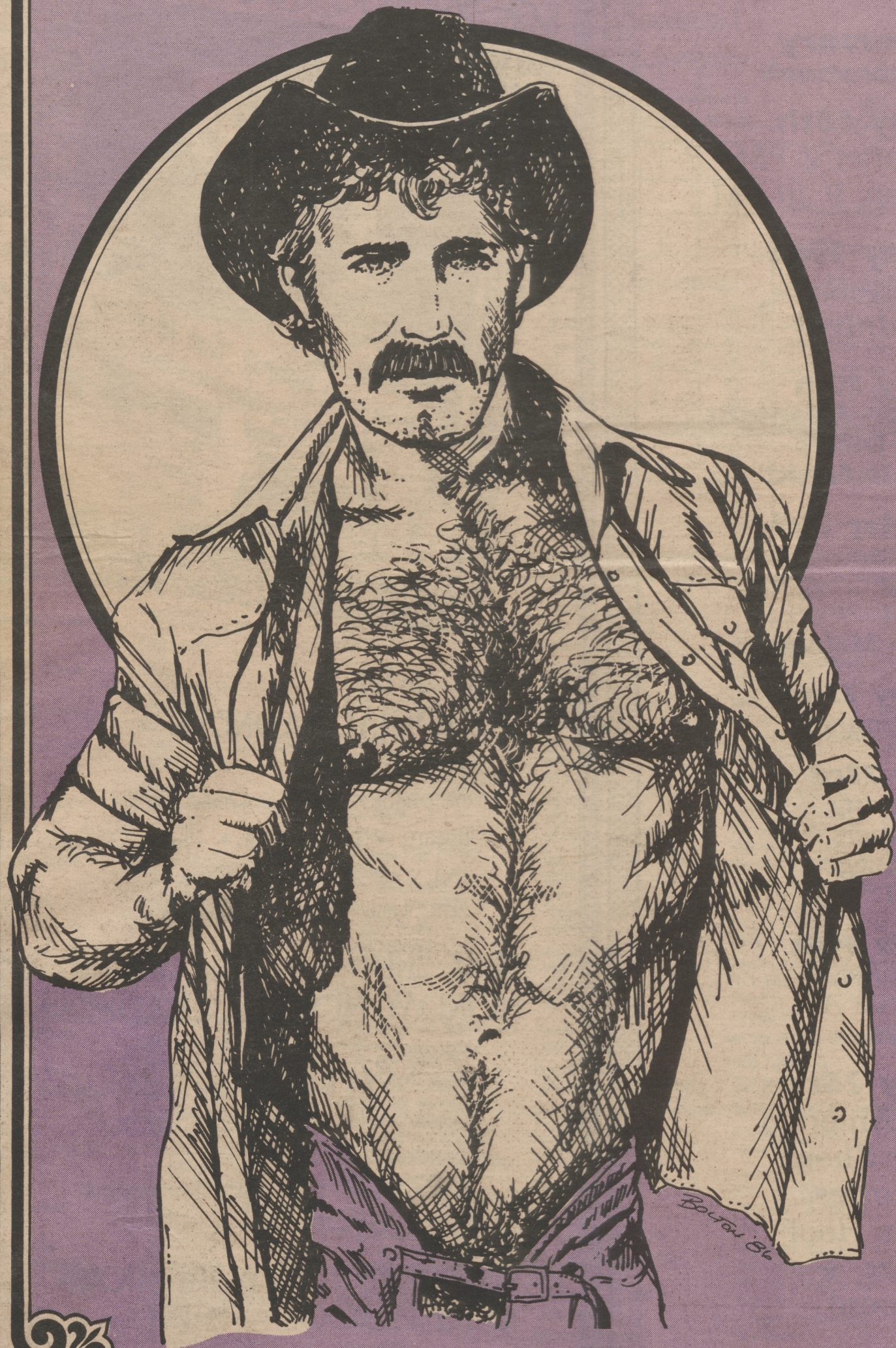
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