



Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender: Your quality of life matters.

401 Branard Street | 2nd Floor | Houston, Texas 77006-5015 | 713.529.0037 | Fax 713.526.4367

## NOVEMBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

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United Way of Greater Houston

### Rainbow Fading to Blue?

The holiday season may be a wonderful time to reconnect with loved ones and reflect on the passing of another year, but it also may be a stressful time in which anxieties mount and disappointments threaten. This year may be especially difficult as we continue to struggle in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike and the instability of a weak economy. As in all challenging times, it is important to focus on things over which we do have control. Start by taking good care of yourself. This includes getting enough sleep and exercise, maintaining a healthy diet, and surrounding yourself with supportive and positive people.



According to Montrose Counseling Center staff therapist, Cheryl Siard, LCSW, the holidays are not a magic cure for feelings of sadness or distress. "Sometimes we think that when the holidays arrive, our state of mind is going to change," she says, "however if we go into the season with stress and anxiety, the holidays are not going to make that disappear." Siard adds that it may be detrimental to your overall wellbeing if you chastise yourself because you think that if you only tried harder that you could change your mood. "That is an unrealistic expectation to put on yourself," Siard says, adding that it may be more realistic to treat yourself with the same compassion and mercy that you would extend to others during the holiday season.

Having difficulty coping with problems? Feel like turning to drugs or alcohol to dull the pain? No matter what, remember that you are not alone. If the stress of the impending holidays becomes overwhelming, help is just a phone call away. Whether you'd like to speak to a trained volunteer or a licensed counselor, we are here to help. You may call Gay & Lesbian Switchboard at 713.529.3211 to speak with a friendly ear. Montrose Counseling Center also is here. Call 713.529.0037 for an intake appointment. For 30 years, Houston's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities have trusted MCC with their mental health concerns. We are proud of our commitment to these communities, and we are here if you need us.

### Montrose Counseling Center Elects New Officers

At the October board meeting, Corey Devine was elected President of the Board of Directors. He takes the helm from Sash Cavin, who remains on the board. Chris Maple was chosen as Vice President. Mark McFarlane was re-elected as Secretary, and Chris Robertson was selected as Treasurer. For MCC's Permanent Endowment Board, Ralph Herring, OD, MHA returns as President. Tommy Schwartz is the new Secretary of the Endowment Board, and Paul Han was elected Treasurer.

### The Secret's Out, November 13

Come find out why Montrose Counseling Center has often been called the "best kept secret" of Houston's GLBT communities. Many people have no idea how our mental health and support services extend to all sectors of the community. From youth to senior services, substance abuse to domestic violence, street to prison outreach, and HIV prevention to case management, we are meeting our communities' needs head on.

RESCHEDULED AFTER HURRICANE IKE

## SAVE THE DATE

THURSDAY  
NOVEMBER 13

## THE SECRET'S OUT

Come find out why Montrose Counseling Center is the BEST KEPT SECRET in Houston's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender communities.

6:30 p.m. Light Dinner & Presentation  
Arrive a half hour early for social time.  
Stay a half hour after for dessert and tours.

Montrose Counseling Center  
401 Branard St. • 1st Floor  
Houston, Texas 77006

Rsvp to your Table Captain or to 713.529.0037 x372 or  
communitydev@montrosecounselingcenter.org

### What's New?

[Job Openings](#)  
[2008 CEU Training S](#)

[Subscribe to the MCC](#)

### Did you know?

An organization Counseling Cen tough economic our clients had a \$15,000 or less i

### Clients past an hear your story

has touched you Email us at [mcc@montrose](mailto:mcc@montrose)



Montrose The Joint Approval client sa Montrose report these concerns Renaissance Blvd.; O at <http://www.jointcouncil>

Please join us to find out more information about our programs and how they help improve the quality of

our clients' lives at *The Secret's Out*. The event (including light dinner) is free, but we do hope to inspire you to support our work in the community. Tours also will be available. Rsvp is required. Deadline is Thursday, November 6. Contact [communitydev@montrosecounselingcenter.org](mailto:communitydev@montrosecounselingcenter.org) or 713.529.0037 x372 for more information.

## Transgender Day of Remembrance, Saturday, November 22

Since 1989, more than one new anti-transgender murder is reported every month, and countless others go unreported. Too many people have lost their lives as victims of these violent hate crimes, many of which include the maiming of the body after death, as if in an attempt to erase these individuals' very existence.

And these murders are not isolated incidents. They are the tip of the iceberg in terms of the violence and hate that follows many transgender individuals throughout their lives. This can include sexual assault, rape, vandalism, harassment, discrimination, assault, intimidation, and verbal abuse, and often starts as early as elementary school in the form of bullying.

Be sure the lives lost were not in vain.

**Remember Maribella Reyes**, who was killed in Houston, Texas, after being denied emergency medical care on August 30, 2007. After being turned away from multiple emergency rooms, Mirabella was sent in an ambulance from a clinic to Ben Taub, where she was removed from the ambulance and left in the waiting room for more than 12 hours. By the time she was finally admitted, it was too late. It is suspected that she died due to a treatable complication of HIV. Despite being told that she was Male-to-Female transgender, Harris County dressed her as a man before burying her. She was 37 years old.

Organizations like Montrose Counseling Center's Anti-Violence program provides education about violence towards the transgender community, along with counseling, support groups for survivors of hate crimes, domestic abuse and sexual assault, emergency shelters for individuals fleeing domestic violence, youth empowerment, and domestic violence primary prevention. **Are you**

**a transgender youth, between the ages of 13 and 20, who would like to connect with your peers in a safe, affirming environment? Attend the HATCH Transgender Youth Support Group Tuesdays from 6 - 7 p.m.** Topics vary to meet the interests and needs of participants.



This year's **Day of Remembrance** Ceremony will take place at the **Houston Holocaust Museum** on **Saturday, November 22, from 6 - 9:30 p.m.**

## World AIDS Day Turns 20, December 1



Be a part of this historic day, where events are held around the world to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. Wear a red ribbon. Attend a local event. Above all, don't let this day pass without recognizing the impact this disease has had, not just on our community but in the world. Montrose Counseling Center is part of the [World AIDS Day Houston Committee](#), a collaboration of various nonprofit groups acting together to raise awareness of World AIDS Day. World AIDS Day Houston was formed in 2007 to put World AIDS Day back on the map. Click on the link to find other events and observances marking this day.

**A Paper Chain of Remembrance** will decorate Montrose Counseling Center's second floor lobby area through the month of December. Everyone is welcome to decorate a link in memory of someone or pass along a message of hope. The chain continues to grow each year as people from the community share their memories and experiences as a tribute to those who have been affected by HIV/AIDS.

In addition, Montrose Counseling Center will put up a display, **HIV/AIDS Around the World** in the second floor lobby, showing the effect of HIV/AIDS in various countries. The display features both pictures and stories of how HIV/AIDS has impacted nations around the world.

### Citywide Candlelight Observance, Tranquility Park, Monday, December 1, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

For the last four years, Montrose Counseling Center has sponsored the annual World AIDS Day Candlelight Observance. This year we have teamed with the City of Houston, and the event has been moved to the beautiful [Tranquility Park](#) in Downtown Houston. According to Ann J. Robison, PhD, MCC's Executive Director, "We welcome those who would like to come light a candle in memory of those we've lost, those who continue to struggle with the disease, and share hope for the future."

### Illuminations Project, Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall, Thursday, December 6, 7:30 p.m.

**Illuminations Project**  
 "What does World AIDS Day mean to you?"

December 6, 2008  
 7:30 pm  
 Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall

Tickets:  
 Orchestra \$35.00  
 Mezzanine: \$25.00

**A Benefit For**

- \* AIDS Foundation Houston
- \* Montrose Counseling Center
- \* Legacy Community Health Services and AssistHers through ERSICSS

**Featuring:**

- \* Hope Stone
- \* Resurrection MCC
- \* Houston Ballet
- \* The Debris Sisters
- \* Houston Metropolitan Dance Company
- \* Houston's Fly Boys
- \* Shawn Welling's Planet Funk
- \* City Ballet of Houston
- \* Marcia Mink Anne Gill
- \* Lone Star Lariats
- \* Sara Sjolander
- \* Urban Souls
- \* Shy Anne



This years show is being presented in cooperation with  
 The Empire of the Royal Sovereign Imperial Court of the Single Star, Inc.  
 All donations may be tax deductible.  
 For more information please email at ILLUMINATIONSPROJECT@YAHOO.COM

## MCC Targets Domestic Violence Before It Begins

Our community is known for loyalty to businesses that support us. If you are keeping a list of stores to frequent this holiday season, place a check mark next to Target® Stores.

In August, MCC received a \$3,000 grant from Target to support our Anti-Violence Program's primary prevention efforts, which help prevent GLBT domestic violence. MCC will host a three-part series of workshops on intimate partner violence prevention aimed at young GLBT individuals and couples. The goal is to stop violence before it occurs by helping participants:

- identify negative gender and orientation stereotypes,
- define power and control,
- identify ways in which to gain personal power; and
- offering tools to help prevent domestic violence in the GLBT community.



Since opening its doors in 1962, Target has given five percent of its income to organizations that support education, the arts, social services and voluntarism. Today that translates to more than \$3 million every week.

"At Target, our local grants are making a difference in the communities we serve," said Laysha Ward, vice president, community relations at Target. "We're proud to partner with Montrose Counseling Center as part of our ongoing commitment to give back to the communities where our guests and team members live and work."

## Shopping Online Can Benefit You and MCC

This holiday season more than ever, people are doing their holiday shopping online. No need to get up before dawn to rush to the stores the day after Thanksgiving. By using [Goodshop](#), you can avoid long lines and irritable salespeople, and a percentage of your purchase will be donated to Montrose Counseling Center by choosing us as your designated charity.



Goodshop allows you to shop at over 700 stores online, including Target, Walmart, Best Buy, Macy's, Sears, Old Navy, and Barnes & Noble. Goodshop will donate up to 30 percent of your purchase. Yes, it's that easy. Shop for a good cause by *Goodshopping* for MCC this holiday season and all year long.

Goodshop is a part of Goodsearch. If you use [Goodsearch](#) as your online search engine, one penny will be donated to MCC for each search. Choose Montrose Counseling Center as your designated charity, and use Goodsearch every time you're online. If 1,000 people were to Goodsearch for MCC twice a day, MCC would make \$7,300 in a year. Get started today by [adding Goodsearch to your internet toolbar](#).

## Give A Gift That'll Last Forever

How? Sponsor a room in your loved one's name at Montrose Counseling Center. In this way, you or someone you know may become a part of our community's history by sponsoring a room at the only local organization proudly dedicated to Houston's GLBT communities for the last 30 years. Opportunities are available starting at \$5,000. Contact [communitydev@montrosecounselingcenter.org](mailto:communitydev@montrosecounselingcenter.org) or 713.529.0037 x372 for more information.

## Wedding Bells

We are very pleased that a member of the MCC family was featured as the first same-sex couple in the print edition of the Houston Chronicle's Wedding announcements. Congratulations to our very own Bob Hergenroeder, a staff therapist, and his partner, Tom Mathews. Bob and Tom were wed on September 22 in Beverly Hills, California. Feel free to leave Bob & Tom a message [here](#) in their online guestbook.



## SPRY Worker Ben Morgan Talks to Us about SPRY Socials



### What is the purpose of the SPRY Socials?

Ben: It's a combined effort to get our community's seniors active and out of isolation, where they can meet with peers and friends to socialize and help each other with certain needs. SPRY Socials help get them involved in different activities. From road trips, to visiting the theater and museums, we vary the activities to meet everyone's interests.

### What happens at a SPRY Social?

Ben: That depends on that day's activity, but there is always a lot of sharing. Participants like to tell stories about what it was like for them growing up and to compare this with the way things are now. There is always a lot of socializing. As friendships grow, people look forward to reconnecting with one another.

### Who may attend the SPRY Socials?

Ben: Anyone who is 55 years or older and identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender is welcome. Most attendees are SPRY participants, their partners and guests.

### What is the process for someone who wants to attend but has never been before?

Ben: People are welcome to just show up, or they may Rsvp. If you'd like an email or phone call reminder about our upcoming events, just let us know. Call 713.529.0037 x350 or email [spryl@montrocounselingcenter.org](mailto:spryl@montrocounselingcenter.org). Feel free, too, to visit the **SPRY Drop-In Center Thursdays from 1 - 4 p.m.**

### Upcoming SPRY Socials

#### **Thursday, November 13 at 4 p.m., Thanksgiving Potluck**

Bring a dish and come mingle with the OWLS from Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church.

#### **Sunday, November 23 at 10 a.m., Houston Zoo Outing**

Join us for a docent-led tour of the zoo followed by lunch at Luby's on Old Spanish Trail.

## This Month's Continuing Education Features Sexually Transmitted Infections, Hepatitis, and Tuberculosis

Montrose Counseling Center's next [Continuing Education](#) training will be held at 401 Branard Street on Friday, November 21, from 1 - 4 p.m. The topic this month is **Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), Hepatitis & Tuberculosis**, and the speaker will cover detailed information about STIs: bacterial, viral, and protozoan – common symptoms, safer-sex practices, treatment options and general facts. Information about chemical and viral hepatitis – acute and chronic; risk, prevention, symptoms, treatment methods, and vaccination. Classes are open to everyone, and Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are available for LMSWs, LBSWs, LCDCs, and LPCs. The cost for the HIV/AIDS training is \$30 if prepaid, \$40 at the door. A registration form is available [here](#). Please call MCC's Education Department at 713.529.0037 for more information.

## Meeting Space for GLBT Non-Profit Groups



The [GLBT Cultural Center](#) is now open! Located on the 1st floor of MCC, at 401 Branard, this multi-use space is dedicated to GLBT nonprofit and community groups. Fully-accessible by elevator and stairs, a variety of rooms are available to rent or lease, from small meeting rooms to a large conference/event hall. Our largest room is perfect for a commitment ceremony or movie screening. The smaller spaces are ideal for board meetings or workshops. Amenities include electrical outlets, nearby public and private restrooms, kitchenette, and optional beverage service (coming soon). If you would like to **schedule a room**, check the [floor plan](#) (pdf) to determine which space best meets your needs and then check the calendar to determine its availability. Then, simply download [this file](#) and fax the first and last page to 713.526.4367. Someone from our staff will contact you to confirm your room's reservation. Email questions that are not answered in the attachment to [mcc@montrocounselingcenter.org](mailto:mcc@montrocounselingcenter.org).

## Save the Date - New Year's Eve

We are very pleased that the **SPRY Program** has been selected as a beneficiary of this year's **Houston Black Tie Dinner**, one of the premiere fundraising events for Houston's GLBT communities. This is the first time the SPRY Program has been chosen. This



year's event, BLACK TIES and BIG HEARTS Charity Ball will be held on **New Year's Eve**, December 31, 2008 at Houston's new luxury Hotel ZaZa in the Museum District.



## Simple Ways to Support Us

### ***Buy Holiday Groceries***

Who can think of the holidays without anticipating turkey dinners and delicious baked goods? The next time you visit your neighborhood Kroger, be sure to link your Kroger Plus card with MCC's account, and we will receive a donation every time you grocery shop through **Kroger's Neighbor to Neighbor Program**. Simply **Print this bar code** or [download this letter](#), and ask your checker to scan it the next time you use your Kroger Plus card. After that, every time you use your card, you will be supporting MCC!



### ***Purchase Jewelry to Fight HIV/AIDS***

Looking for the perfect gift for the person who has everything?

Buy him or her **The Bracelet™** with the ribbon. They are available through **Until There's A Cure®** Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raises funds



and awareness about HIV/AIDS. Mention Montrose Counseling Center with your order, and 25 percent of the sale will go to MCC. Bracelets are available in a variety of colors, designs, and materials. Visit [Until There's a Cure](#) to find the design that'll make that perfect gift.

### **Thanks 1,000,000!**

We would like to thank Pride Houston, Gary Wood and Bryant Johnson for selecting Montrose Counseling Center as a beneficiary of their annual Coming Out Day event. Thanks also go to the Stella Link SeVille Gay Pride Pageant for donating the proceeds of Big Knobs and Broomsticks towards the Stella Link SeVille room on the second floor at Montrose Counseling Center. We also are grateful to Houston Area Bears for making HATCH its beneficiary for 2008. Finally, thank you to Bob Hergenroeder and Tom Mathews for hosting the MCC staff party.

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