

# Views Around The Lake

by Cindy Klopsteck

"It's our first kinky experience," I explained to the man wearing Elvis Presley's shower curtain and the man in black with the long unlit Cuban projecting from beneath his mustached lip.

(Before you put down this family newspaper and search for The Headlight's number to protest the printing of an unsavory, x-rated article, this is not about THAT kind of kinkiness.)

"Welcome," said the pseudo-Elvis with the deep, rich voice of a news anchor or game show announcer. Closer to the latter, this was Jewford I was speaking to, gubernatorial candidate Friedman's #1 PR man and sidekick of, you will have correctly guessed by now, the black-clad gentleman (I've used that term correctly) next to him, looking all the world like Paladin from the 1950's "Have Gun, Will Travel" western TV series, none other than Kinky Friedman in person.

My friend and I were attending a book signing and discussion in Houston some three weeks ago. Recognition for this particular author's works was not the kind of function we normally attend. Avid readers and theatrical junkies, we enjoy touring local bookstores, attending Houston Great Books events and meeting "Books on the Bayou" published authors.

We have season tickets to TUTS. So, what were we doing here? We had a vacant Thursday night, a thirst for adventure in reading and life, saw the book signing announcement and, to use Kinky's campaign bumper sticker slogan, we figured "Why the hell not?"

It had started with our arrival 45 minutes prior to the scheduled event. Expecting a large, diverse crowd, we were still surprised to see the number of cars spilling over from the parking lot.

Uneasy about possible towing, I slid my window down to ask the lady leaving an adjacent parking area where she had parked and how safe it looked. Handsomely dressed, long dark red hair flowing, she pointed a long bejeweled finger toward the back of the lot. "It's safe here."

Park next to my Lexus over there. It's the one with the bumper sticker "Well-behaved women rarely make history," she purred with perfection.

Indeed, my friend and I, both randomly within the fifth decade of our lives and both recent first-time grandmothers are, we now realized, boringly well-behaved. And we don't anticipate making history any time soon.

As we entered the bookstore, sure enough, right before us was a colorful display of the author's most recent work "Cowboy Logic - The Wit and Wisdom of Kinky Friedman (and some of his

friends)," and an extended array of his previous publications. We were just beginning to enter the Kinky-zone and learn more about this controversial, eclectic man. First Kinky-fact I learned, his new book I would buy was one of twenty-plus he's written, many of them mystery novels.

While my friend stood in the long line to purchase our books, I scurried up the winding flight of stairs to grab seats for us. Regular row seating was already full, but I did manage to find one small round table near the coffee shop.

Saving our seats and sitting back to wait for my friend, I scanned the crowd. It was even more diverse than I expected - a good number of intellectual types, Polo-shirted, loafer-clad men, and women of all ilk and design.

Some teachers were recognizing their profession with "Teachers for Kinky" t-shirts. To be expected, there were a handful of long-haired, neatly dressed hippie-types, a totally black-dressed Goth or two - in general, representation from all age groups and class distinctions.

"Kinky wrote a regular column for Texas Monthly, you know," the blue-shirted man seated to my right informed us. In fact, I had noted upon first taking my seat that he had seemed very knowledgeable about Kinky and his history.

He had been talking with a man in a maroon shirt with the words "Aggies" and "Kinky" somehow incongruously blended into a slogan. I can't remember the exact wording now, but at the time I could only think how my two Aggie daughters (both Republicans, I think) would have been soo-ooo proud to know that these two very distinct entities could somehow be bound permanently together on that maroon shirt.

It turned out that friendly Mr. Blue Shirt had been an active participant in Kinky's musical history. He talked to us at length about playing with Kinky and a band, knowing him in Texas and years ago in New York. He confirmed the obvious fact that Kinky is quite the character - what you see is what you get.

He offered a litany of literary works and musical scores that he said must be absorbed to know the real Kinky and his very real and rich history. Apparently not surprised by many Kinkyisms, I asked if he was surprised that the man was running for governor. "A little surprised, yes, but I haven't seen him now for a good two years or so."

I had already estimated that a good 150 people were congregated upstairs and more still at the lower level anticipating Kinky's arrival. Among them, we spied our ill-behaved Lexus lady and

some others we had either spoken to or seen downstairs.

And then came the arrival of the man in black - from black tilted cowboy hat all the way down to black boots, all neatly topped by a knee-length black cowboy duster. All he needed was a gun - Paladin.

For security reasons it was the two uniformed police officers escorting him who carried the guns. He looked good, my well-behaved friend and I decided. Of the four Kinky books on our table, the book jackets depicted two subtly different Kinky's - one scruffier version and one neatly-coiffed cleaner version.

This was the well-groomed version and, repeating my earlier evaluation, a cowboy gentleman. After the smooth-voiced Jewford's brief introduction and a humorous barrage of thank-you's and one-liners between the obviously close-knit pair, Kinky Friedman took over the microphone. This was when Jewford (a Jew who drives a Ford in Kinkyspeak) was formally introduced and recognized by Kinky as "wearing Elvis' shower curtain."

His jacket did have a lovely iridescent shine. Kinky spoke a few words about his book and a few more about his campaign. He answered most questions in a prepared, insightful, honest manner and of course frequently interspersed with that dry, often irreverent humor that floats just on the surface of almost any topic he discusses.

And there were some relevant topics - illegal immigration, taxes, education, insurance, lobbyists. Of course there was some name-dropping - long-time friend Willie Nelson and his shared interest in bio-diesel fuel and Jimmy Buffet, whom Kinky admits to only meeting twice.

Buffet wants to throw a campaign benefit concert, with only

one favor asked in return: Port Aransas. "That might be a good combination," concedes Kinky, "Port A and Jimmy Buffett." Celebrity.

I don't want to be discussing politics here, but then neither did Kinky. After all, he was there for the book promotion and signing, but as in so many apparent phases in Kinky's interesting career, the quest for governor is just another addendum in life that pleasantly rides his long black denim coat-tails. He's the first to tell you that he's running for office, but he's not a politician.

He closed the question and answer session to supportive applause, and it was on to the book signing. When Group C was called we were already in line. The lady in front of us shared her interests of Broadway in Houston and the recent televised Tony awards, but it was apparent she was a long-time Kinky fan.

Behind us a giggling, friendly group of college students remained in constant Kinky discussion among themselves. "I can't wait to meet him," one said as she hugged her recent book purchase. Celebrity.

I then noticed our blue-shirted musician friend already at the autograph table. Kinky had risen to greet him warmly and they looked to be animatedly discussing a colorful past as well as a possible future.

Then my friend and I were at the front of the impatient line. We received a friendly greeting and a bumper sticker from Jewford. "I heard you on the radio this morning," I commented. "Where's your next stop?" "We're on to Austin about 2:00 AM," said Jewford. Paladin will travel.

As we neared the signing table, Kinky rose to graciously greet us and shake our hands. "Do you ever light that thing?" I asked, pointing to his always present

cigar. "Oh, yes," he responded, "but if I did now those gentlemen would be walking me out." He was referring to the two officers who held court near his table and who laughingly agreed with his statement.

When my friend admitted to Kinky that she was a high school English teacher, he responded, "You're my hero." We spoke briefly as he signed and then Jewford, at our request, took a picture of the three of us. Kinky warmly and wisely used our names in telling us goodbye. I told him good luck with the campaign, and I do believe at that moment I meant it.

Walking away I skimmed through my autographed "Cowboy Logic" and found a Kinky quote that fit the evening and the person I briefly met: "I'm not afraid to live. I'm not afraid to die. I'm not afraid of success. I'm not afraid of failure."

I'm not afraid to fall in love. I'm just afraid I may have to stop talking about myself for five minutes." - Celebrity? Paladin? (which happens to mean champion of a cause) And Kinky himself? - I'm not sure.

Right now I don't know who will get my November nod. I do know that Chris Bell, addressing the Texas Democratic Convention that very next day called for a "new Texas Revolution" (in education), Governor Perry rhetorically asks Texans if they're proud of their home state in his TV ads, and another candidate is trying to be listed on that November ballot as Carole Keeton "Grandma" Strayhorn.

And our fifth candidate is representing the Libertarian party. folks.....only in Texas.

If we Texans can agree on nothing else during this cattle drive of candidates plowing through our state on its colorful

journey towards November, we can certainly agree Mr. Friedman has added an additional - and to some, undesired - "kink" to an array of already burgeoning campaign antics.

On exiting the store that evening, my friend made her own political statement. Like the Kinky we met, one can wonder if it's a little bit country or a little bit satirical humor - she purchased the new CD by the Dixie Chicks for us to listen to on our drive home.

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## Gator Swim Team Results

On Saturday, July 1, the Eagle Lake Gators traveled to West Columbia for their fifth swim meet. The next meet will be the Championship meet in Rosenberg Saturday, July 8. This meet includes all the teams in the Coastal Cities Aquatic Association. The Gator kids are a dedicated group who practice every morning at 7:30 a.m. and we wish them all great success at the Championship.

Go Gators!  
 Results listed are for swimmers that placed in the top eight for that event and ribbon swimmers (R).

Note: For relays, only during regular season swim meets, swimmers can move one age group up and swim on a relay.

**Girls**  
 8 & Under, 100 yd. Medley Relay: Jill Nava, Arlesia Henderson, Emma Kelley, Diamond Cadriel, 1st.

8 & Under, 50 yd. Free: D. Cadriel, 1st, J. Nava, 2nd, 11-12, 100 yd. Free: Allyssa Young, 1st.

13-14, 100 yd. Free: Blythe Nava, 1st; 15-17, 100 yd. Free: Hillary Johnson, 1st.

6 & Under, 25 yd. Backstroke: Sophie Kelley, 2nd, Summer Zarate, 3rd.

7-8, 25 yd. Backstroke: A. Henderson, 2nd, E. Kelley, 4th, Cameron Marsalia, R, Carlee Vandermark, R, Hailey Ferguson, R.

11-12, 50 yd. Backstroke: Kesslie Perez, 2nd; 13-14, 50 yd. Backstroke: Paige Vandermark, 3rd, Amber Tristan, 4th.

8 & Under, 25 yd. Breaststroke: E. Kelley, 1st, C. Marsalia, 3rd.

11-12, 50 yd. Breaststroke: K. Perez, 1st.



Arlesia Henderson

son, 1st.  
 6 & Under, 25 yd. Free: S. Kelley, 1st, S. Zarate, 3rd.

7-8, 25 yd. Free: D. Cadriel, 1st, J. Nava, 3rd, C. Marsalia, R, H. Ferguson, R, C. Vandermark, R.; 11-12, 50 yd. Free: A. Young, 1st, K. Perez, 3rd.

13-14, 50 yd. Free: S. Gertson, 1st, P. Vandermark, 3rd, A. Tristan, R.

8 & Under, 100yd. IM: E. Kelley, 1st.

11-12, 100 yd. IM: A. Young, 1st; 13-14, 200 yd. Free: Blythe Nava, 1st.

8 & Under, 100 yd. Free Relay: A. Henderson, J. Nava, C. Marsalia, D. Cadriel, 1st.

15-24, 200 yd. Free Relay: A. Young, S. Gertson, B. Nava, H. Johnson, 1st.

**Boys**  
 9-10, 50 yd. Free: Paul Cadriel, 1st; 11-12, 100 yd. Free: Logan Young, 1st.

13-14, 100 yd. Free: Alex Roque, 2nd; 9-10, 50 yd. Backstroke: P. Cadriel, 2nd, Dylan Ferguson, 3rd.

13-14, 50 yd. Backstroke: A. Roque, 2nd; 9-10, 25 yd. Breaststroke: P. Cadriel, 2nd, D. Ferguson, 3rd, 11-12, 50 yd. Breaststroke: L. Young, 1st.

13-14, 50 yd. Breaststroke: Eric Gross, 2nd; 9-10, 25 yd. Free: D. Ferguson, 3rd; 11-12, 50 yd. Free: Jacob Gross, 3rd.

13-14, 50 yd. Free: E. Gross, 2nd; 11-12, 100 yd. IM: L. Young, 1st; 13-14, 200 yd. Free: A. Roque, 1st.

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