

start a new writing group named **Scratch Pad**. Scratch Pad is a group by men who identify as writers who also happen to be queer—men who aren't too concerned about defining themselves by their writing or their queerness but wouldn't be complete without one or the other.

Scratch Pad meets the fourth Wednesday of each month in an intimate downtown public place, usually a tavern or coffeehouse. Members gather and read a few pages of whatever they are working on and discuss. The material can be fiction, nonfiction, poetry, prose poetry, rambling lists, journals, plays, whatever makes you you and whatever makes you write. The group focuses feedback on constructive ideas, pointing out the strengths of the writing and places of confusion. There are no rules or gurus, and each member is encouraged to bring his own joy and method of writing to the group.

The group wishes to stay intimate, around seven or eight members, so enrollment is limited. There is no cost to join the group. Meetings usually last two or three hours. The next meeting is June 22. For more information, contact the group at scratchpad_writers@yahoo.com.

—Glenn Scofield Williams

Messin' with Texas

Texas is about to invade Portland. Don't worry, though, not with its generic brand of family values but with ours—in a good old-fashioned lesbian hootenanny.

TX 2 PDX **QueerMusicFest** is the brainchild of Austin transplant **Marie Fleischmann**, who you might remember from her organization of Friday night music at In Other Words or her MCing of DK PDX shows or belting out her own tunes with Portland duo **Pirate Jane**, whose guitar player also moved here from the Lone Star State. In fact, there are just a gaggle of gay girls in this city lately who've journeyed across the wild west to settle their haunches here among the evergreens.

A couple of years ago, explains Fleischmann, "a friend moved out here to get away from the heat, chaos and general ick of Texas summers and conservatism...."

Hilariously, about a dozen of us thought over the course of two years: 'Hey, that sounds like a great idea. Can we come, too?'

And come they did. "Here we are, a group of Texas queers all living, working and doing activism in PDX," Fleischmann continues.

Not to mention making music. Terri Lord and Stacy Hoobler, two of Austin's hardest-working drummers-for-hire, will be in town to back up a wealth of Texas transplants, including punk band **Littermeet**, acoustic gems **Tamara J. Brown** and **Laura Mejia**, pop rockers

Excuse Me Sir and, of course, **Pirate Jane**. Portland's **Glam Star Burlesque** and **DK PDX** will lend their own brand of cowboy imagery to the fray.

"Austin and Portland are sister cities in that the queer communities are a sort of liberal mecca in a vast land of conservatism," claims Fleischmann. "This kind of progressive artistry



Tamala Jones (left) and Janeane Garofalo star in the romantic comedy *Nadine in Dateland*, premiering June 25 on Oxygen.

manifests similarly in the two cities, and I thought an event like this would be a good start in celebrating, showcasing and meshing those communities."

TX 2 PDX is 8 p.m. **July 2** at Mississippi Pizza Pub, 3552 N. Mississippi Ave. Admission is \$5-\$10 sliding scale.

—Lisa Bradshaw

It's a hard Knox life

The only thing bigger than **Shelby Knox's** hair is Shelby Knox's heart.

Reared in a conservative Christian family in the ultra-Republican city of Lubbock, Texas, Knox emerged four years ago as a crusader for

safe-sex education and a fag hag who supported queer teens in their efforts to form a Gay Straight Alliance at school.

New York film-makers **Rose Rosenblatt** and **Marion Lipshutz** spent four years in Lubbock profiling this headstrong teen and her community, resulting in a fascinating documentary called *The Education of Shelby Knox*. Winner of the Excellence in Cinematography Award at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, it airs 11 p.m. June 21 on OPB.

Liberals, queer and otherwise, often scoff at the

religious right. But we rarely get a firsthand look at how this growing political faction works its dark magic on constituents. Rosenblatt and Lipshutz provide us with that opportunity by trailing Knox as she confronts school and church officials of the God-fearing persuasion.

When we first meet Knox, she's an obedient girl who embraces her community's abstinence-

only approach to sex education. She's initiated into a national program called True Love Waits, promising she won't have sex (with a man, of course) until her wedding night.

But in a split from her abstinent pals, she promotes condoms and safe-sex training when she learns that Lubbock has astronomically high rates of sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy.

We're never given any reason to believe Knox is not a heterosexual. But after learning that guys with baseball bats regularly threaten the out queer teens, she shifts her attention from sex education to gay rights.

Knox fights to the brink of tears against a community that believes God, family and country (in that order) are the only priorities anyone should worry about.

"Look to your Bible," says a pastor who's trying to convince Knox once and for all that homosexuality is sinful.

She replies, "There's something in me that somehow doesn't disapprove."

If more people followed Knox's example and listened to their guts instead of their preachers, maybe places like Lubbock wouldn't seem quite so scary.

—Stephen Blair

Janeane meets her match

In Oxygen's newest romantic comedy, *Nadine in Dateland*, the title character (**Janeane Garofalo**) is a 30-something, down-on-her-luck matchmaker who can't even seem to fix her own loveless love life. She owns a dating service that needs a professional revamping soon to prevent its doors from closing.

Short on cash, Nadine convinces her mother (**Swoosie Kurtz**) to invest in her business endeavor. But there's one small catch: In order to get out of the red, Nadine must prove to her mother that she can make a successful romantic match between herself and Adam (**Brad Rowe**), her old college sweetheart. With the help of her lesbian best friend, Star (**Tamala Jones**), she'll go to any measure to win Adam's heart in order to keep her agency—even if it means taking a "mission impossible" approach to dating. The movie premieres 8 p.m. June 25.

Nadine in Dateland offers a wonderful combination of funny and entertaining moments, great sidekicks and good music. It's a pleasure to see Janeane's comedic talent at her best.

—Yvonne P. Behrens



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