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unusual knowledge of things like what kinds of dogs Martha Stewart has (chows). On Jan. 31, Douglas and O'Neill "surprised" Elliott with the test. (He had full knowledge of their plans ahead of time, but pretended ignorance on the air for dramatic effect.)

The test included 20 or so impossible questions, such as "What breed of horse did Paul Revere ride?" "What is the square footage of Guam?" and "When was popcorn first marketed in Europe?" The second-to-last question on the test was "For the primary bulk of her career, who has been Cher's main designer?" Elliott's correct answer, "Bob Mackie," was met with cheers and a chorus of "It's Raining Men," followed by the very last question on the test: "What is your boyfriend's name?" to which he replied simply, "Derek." Elliott was

then able to speak with his partner of six years live on the air for the first time in his career.

"We took our headphones off and my face was flushed and we were nervous," Elliott says. "We were watching the phones because we didn't know if we were just going to be screamed at, if some religious-right person was going to call and tell us we were going to hell. We didn't know what was going to happen."

As predicted, the phones in the studio lit up. The first call was from a woman who sounded close to tears, thanking Elliott and hailing him as an excellent role model. Everyone *Just Out* spoke to at The Buzz confirms that the station has received only positive feedback in the weeks since "The Mitch Test."

"We liked Mitch before we knew he was gay, and that was the key," says McHugh. "I predict that other radio stations will go out

and try to hire their own gay air personalities, and the joke is on them because we didn't hire Mitch because he was gay. He's not going to be successful because he's gay. He's going to be successful because he's a very funny, entertaining air personality."

Now that the initial excitement is over, Elliott thinks a lot of people are shrugging their shoulders and asking, "What's the big deal?" while others are wondering if he has committed what might amount to career suicide. One thing is for sure: Elliott won't be making the switch to a country music market anytime soon.

Only time will tell whether listeners will start tuning out "The New Afternoon Buzz" now that relationship discussions will include gay content. "I think it's going to be all good, and you know, if it doesn't work out, fuck 'em. That's how I feel—fuck 'em all. I'll go work at a pizza restaurant," says Elliott.



Daria O'Neill encouraged Mitch Elliott (left, with producer Ted Douglass) to be honest with his new listeners.



Elliott has the full support of KRSK program director Jeff McHugh, who gushes: "He's not going to be successful because he's gay. He's going to be successful because he's a very funny, entertaining air personality."

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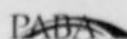
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