



UPDATE

Think Kink

Last April, *Houston* magazine reported that arts patron Carolyn Farb and Stages Theatre founder and *Always...Patsy Cline* Broadway hitmeister Ted Swindley were hatching a play based on the wild life of singer/songwriter/novelist/failed gubernatorial candidate Kinky Friedman. This month, ***Becoming Kinky: The World According To Kinky Friedman*** hits at McGonigel's Mucky Duck (2425 Norfolk, 713.528.5999). Honky-tonk musician **Jesse Dayton**, who has also worked on horror films with producer Rob Zombie, stars. Selected after reading for the part and playing his version of Friedman's

ARE YOU KINKY?
Honky-tonker Jesse Dayton is, as he plays Kinky Friedman in a show this month.

"They Ain't Making Jews Like Jesus Anymore," Dayton hung out with the comedic, cantankerous Friedman to get into character. "I'm approaching this like Johnny Depp approached playing Hunter S.

Thompson," laughs Dayton. "I'm now smoking cigars." Dayton has the mid-life Kinky leading role, playing guitar and singing tunes like "Get Your Biscuits In the Oven (and Your Buns In Bed)." Others play the title character at different ages. (Longtime Friedman associate "Little Jewford" plays himself.) "Life is full of unexpected twists," says Dayton of *Kinky's* take-away lesson. "The guy thought he was going to be a country star. He was the first Jew to play the Grand Ole Opry. But he ends up this best-selling novelist. The moral is, just roll with the punches." See *Calendar* for details.

—William Michael Smith

PASSING THROUGH



Returning to Rodeo

Beaumont native **Clay Walker**, 41, has been a country-music staple for years, with 11 albums and No. 1 hits like "Live Until I Die." And even though he divides his time between Tennessee and his hometown, he says: "I'll always be a Texas boy. Don't start calling me a Tennessean. It's just a pride thing." Gov. Rick Perry, Walker's longtime friend and hunting buddy, introduces the musician to the stage on March 1 when he performs opening night at this year's Rodeo. For more, see *Calendar*. —Tara Seetharam

Did you go to the Rodeo as a kid? My first time, I saw the group Alabama. It's vividly burned in my memory. I remember staring up there going, "You know, one day I'm supposed to be on that stage."
What was it like when you finally got up there in '92? Overwhelming. All of my family from Beaumont came. That night marked something significant, not only for me but for my family and friends. They had watched me growing up singing, and they all said when I was a kid, "One day you're going to make it." I think that night defined it.
Do you watch any of the rodeo competition? I'll be actually riding. I'll be in the cutting portion [when riders on horses attempt to separate a bull from its herd], competing.
Would your wife kill you for riding a bull? I think so. She's pretty much drawn a line now.