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# The Houston Gazette

## Local Bands Join To Help Local Charity

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Four Houston bands have joined together to help out the non-profit community after the floods and Sept. 11. "Rock The Holidays" gives the Houston community an opportunity to have fun, get prizes and help out a charity at the same time.

Because of the events that have plagued Houston and the nation, many businesses exhausted their funds budgeted for charities this year, leaving the non-profit community with a lot less money than they usually receive during the holiday season.

To help the situation, Gel, Deep Ella, The Sly Letter and solo artist Rebecca Torrellas will be **performing at the Engine Room** at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 13th, to help out Goodfellows, a charity dedicated to buying toys for underprivileged children for Christmas.

Torrellas said she and the bands hope that this show helps jumpstart the holiday season by reminding the Houston community and the community in the surrounding counties to support their local charities.

"The tragedies took Houston by surprise and has affected everyone both emotionally and financially. People don't want to give the extra money they have to charity because they fear not having a job tomorrow," Torrellas said. "Typically charities are overflowing with donations this time of year, but the circumstances have made every penny count even more so than before. We hope that with the festival we can increase the amount of pennies and entertain at the same time."

Not only will attendees get entertainment, but the bands have also acquired door prizes to be given out in between their sets, including band merchandise, discounts and free food. Prizes include free tickets to the planetarium and free Freebird's World Burrito burritos.



In addition, the entertainment is being supplied by some of the best in Houston. The show is headlined by Gel, a modern rock band that has headlined in every venue in Houston. Their high-strung energy combined with scorching vocals and chest-pounding grooves proves to be one that young audiences will want to see

Missing



Kevin Young

Name: Kevin Young  
From: **Houston**, TX  
Age: 17  
Height: 6 ft. 1 in.  
Weight: 160 lbs.  
Race: Caucasian  
Last Seen: 01-19-03

[Click for Laura Recovery Center Foundation flyer.](#)



again and again.

Deep Ella has been captivating the young Houston audiences for years. Blending strong vocals with an alternative rock groove, this band continues to grow into one of the best original bands in the area.

Rebecca Torrellas recently hit the Houston music scene, performing at the Stevie Nicks concert at the Woodlands this past August. Her powerful voice fused into alternative rock grooves is sure to leave a permanent mark in the minds of music listeners.

Back from their east coast tour, The Sly Letter has had some of their music featured on MTV. The acoustic rock band, originally from College Station, will start off the show at 8:30 p.m.

## Houston Bicycle Advocates Are on the Move

By Russell Moore

Advocacy for bicycling in Houston is largely a matter of battling the entrenched paradigm of a car dependent city, says Houston bicycle coordinator Lilibeth André. Few places in the world are more dependent on the private automobile than Houston. Even Detroit, the car-manufacturing capital of the world offers its citizens more options for transportation.

Education is a big part of the job for André. She is promoting her office through local events to educate the public on improvements that are being made to Houston's infrastructure for the benefit of those who travel without a car.

"We have completed 207 miles of 365" miles of the city's hike and bike trails, says André.

Part of the problem with increasing bicycle use in Houston is overcoming the common perception that streets are there only for cars and should be designed to move cars as fast as possible with as few inconveniences as possible.

"Some people seem to be of the opinion that only drivers pay taxes," said Wes Johnson a senior analyst for the city.

A common complaint is that bicyclists do not have to pay registration fees, inspection fees or gas taxes that motorists pay. This is true; however, the amount of money collected by these methods pays only a small portion of the cost of maintaining the existing road system. Most of the funding for road construction comes out of general revenue and is thus paid for by everyone, including those who choose not to drive.

Some people consider the current system to be a subsidy for motorists by those who are not. Yet, many argue that bicyclists should not be on the road, complaining that they interfere with traffic, which implies that bicyclists are not traffic.

Complaints have arisen after the striping of W. Dallas and W. Alabama to include bike lanes. Both streets were two traffic lanes in each direction before the changes and were re-striped to one traffic lane in each direction with a center turn lane and bike lanes on both sides.

W. Dallas was returned to its original configuration quickly after complaints from neighborhood motorists.

"We have decided to go with the shared lane concept on W. Dallas," said André. That is the street will remain two lanes in each direction however the right lane will be wider and signage will instruct drivers to yield to bicyclist riding in the right lane.

Motorists have also complained about the traffic on W. Alabama.

Traffic flow studies have shown that there has been no increase in congestion from the realignment of the lanes, said Johnson. The addition of the turn lane may have decreased congestion do to the avoidance of traffic backing up waiting on motorists making left turns.

The other side of André's job is the coordination of improvement projects.

The federal government has made funds available to the states under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to make improvements aimed to facilitate bicycle riding. The federal government will pay 80 percent of the cost of the project