



California Judge Rules G/L Marriage Ban Illegal

SAN FRANCISCO - A San Francisco judge ruled Monday, March 14, that it is unconstitutional for the state of California to deny marriage to Gay and Lesbian couples, reported 365Gay.com.

"It appears that no rational purpose exists for limiting marriage in this state to opposite-sex partners," County Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer said in a written ruling.

In striking down the state ban on same-sex marriage Kramer wrote that the state's historical definition of marriage, by itself, cannot justify the denial of equal protection for Gays and Lesbians.

"The state's protracted denial of equal protection cannot be justified simply because such constitutional violation has become traditional," Kramer wrote.

"We're still a little stunned, but we're overjoyed," said Lancy Woo, a 38-year-old lifelong San Francisco resident who is the lead plaintiff in the case with her partner, Cristy Chung, 40. "Our six-year-old daughter, Olivia, is just beginning to understand how the world works, and we can't wait to talk with her about today's ruling. We've always taught that her that our family is based on love, just like other families, and this ruling confirms that our family shouldn't be treated any differently by our government."

Another child of Lesbian parents was elated when she heard the news.

"I am so happy that my parents can finally get married," said Ericka Sokolower-Shain, the fifteen-year-old daughter of plaintiffs Karen Shain and Jody Sokolower. "My parents have been together for over 30 years. They have been together so long they can practically read each others' minds. It is only right they should be able to get married."

Plaintiffs Corey Davis and Andre Lejeune were elated by news of the decision. "As African American Gay men, we joined this lawsuit to lift the mantle of discrimination and inequality perpetuated by the state of California through its outmoded marriage laws," Corey stated.

"Years from now, when marriage for Gays and Lesbians is legal nationwide, our children will study this issue in school and wonder—just as the white kids in my generation did about those so violently opposed to the comingling of the races and ending legal segregation—they'll wonder and secretly pray that their relatives weren't any of those people perpetuating discrimination against Gays and Lesbians."

"We are overjoyed by today's ruling," said Stuart Gaffney and John Lewis, two other plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

"Fifty years ago, the California courts paved the way for my mom and dad to get married when they struck down the state law barring interracial couples from marriage," said Stuart.

At city hall, a beaming mayor Gavin Newsom was joined at a news conference by several of the Gay and Lesbian couples involved in the suit.

"We will not be appealing this decision," the mayor joked as the crowd broke into laughter.

"Today's ruling is an important step toward a more fair and just California that rejects discrimination and affirms family values for all California families," San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera said.

The ruling also brought cheers from the state's largest LGBT civil rights group

"We're thrilled that the court not only recognized that discriminatory marriage laws violate the constitutional guarantees of equal protection but also that the court struck down Prop 22 as being unconstitutional," Geoffrey Kors, the executive director of Equality California told 365Gay.com.

"This is a historic ruling that says the freedoms guaranteed in our state's Constitution belong to all Californians," said Jennifer C. Pizer, Senior Counsel for Lambda Legal in the Western Regional Office and its lead attorney on the case.

"The court recognized that same-sex couples aren't treated equally under the law unless we can marry. This ruling says that same-sex couples deserve all the protections and security marriage provides and that we're entitled to get them the same way straight couples do."

Kramer's ruling will be appealed and the California Supreme Court will make a final ruling.

California Attorney General Bill Lockyer is expected to file a notice of appeal later this week.

Kors urged Lockyer to reconsider.

"We're calling on the legislature and the governor to implement the ruling rather than drag it out in the courts," said Kors.

Two legal groups representing religious conservatives have vowed to appeal.

"To rule that there is no rational purpose to preserve marriage as the union of one man and one woman is ludicrous," said Matthew D. Staver, of Liberty Counsel which represented the Campaign

for California Families in the case

"Marriage is and must remain the union of one man and one woman."

The suit was brought jointly by the City of San Francisco and several of the 4,000 same-sex couples married in the city last year.

During oral arguments in December, National Center for Lesbian Rights attorney Shannon Minter told Kramer that same-sex couples who want to marry "are seeking nothing more and nothing less than the opportunities available to others in the state."

"They want the same right to marry the person of their choice, to take on the rights and responsibilities of caring for each other, and to provide for the security of their children," he said.

"These couples have done everything in their power to care for their families," Minter said, pointing to the plaintiffs. "But because the state prevents them from marrying each other, they are much more vulnerable."

Minter's arguments were echoed by San Francisco's Chief Deputy City Attorney Therese Stewart.

Stewart told Judge Kramer that the state ban on Gay marriage violates the California constitutional rights of equality, liberty and privacy and should be struck down.

Lawyers for Attorney General Bill Lockyer argued that the law limiting marriage does not violate the spirit of California's Constitution.

The state maintained that the traditional concept of marriage is deeply ingrained in the state's history and that there is no fundamental right to same-sex marriage.

Last February San Francisco mayor Gavin Newsom began allowing marriage licenses to be issued to same-sex couples.

More than 4,000 Gay and Lesbian couples were married before the California Supreme Court ruled that Newsom had exceeded his power in granting the licenses. But, the court did not take up the issue of Gay marriage itself, saying court cases challenging the constitutionality on the state law should work their way through the lower courts first.

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Three More Charged In Vicious Santa Fe Gay Bashing

SANTA FE - Police have charged three more men in an attack on a 21-year-old Santa Fe man beaten to unconsciousness and the bashing of his boyfriend, 365Gay.com reported.

That brings to six the total number of people charged in the case.

Isaia Medina, Gabriel Maturin and David Trinidad are charged with aggravated battery and criminal damage to property.

Three others, Trinidad, Gabriel Maturin, 20, and Isaia Medina, 19, each face charges of aggravated battery. The five adults also are charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor for bringing Trinidad into the beatings. In addition, Medina has been charged with kidnapping.

The case is officially being prosecuted as a hate crime. That means the judge could add a year in prison to the penalty for each count.

The district attorney and attorney general will be jointly prosecuting the case. Both of them said they believe this is the first time New Mexico's new hate

crime enhancements have been sought where the victim is Gay.

James Maestas and his friend Joshua Stockham 24, of Albuquerque had just finished lunch with several female friends at a Santa Fe restaurant and had gone outside for a smoke when five men drove into the parking lot. The men attempted to talk up the girls and at some point got into an argument with Maestas and Stockham.

A police statement says that the argument escalated with one of the men calling Maestas and Stockham "faggots" and trying to provoke a fight.

Stockham, Maestas and the females got into a car and began driving away. The men then began throwing rocks at the car according to the statement said.

Trinidad, who had waited on them in the restaurant, was just finishing work and came outside. The statement said that Trinidad knew the five men and joined in the rock throwing.

Trinidad, the police statement
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UPDATE

Family Of Philip Walsted Requests Letters To Judge

TUCSON - On January 27, 2005, David Higdon was convicted of first degree murder of Philip Walsted in June, 2002. Higdon will be sentenced anywhere from 25 years to life in prison.

Philip's family is asking that his friends, coworkers, and supporters write to the Judge prior to Higdon's sentencing at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, March 28, 2005. In order to convince the judge to impose a life sentence, we need to send letters not so much telling him why we think Higdon deserves life in prison but to focus our letters on talking about Philip, what a loss this is to those who knew him and those who didn't, as well as how the murder of a person because of their sexual orientation makes the world unsafe for everyone. It will be helpful for the Judge to see that people care about Philip's murder and that his murder was a devastating loss for all.

Send letters to: Judge Frank Dawley, Superior Court, 110 W. Congress St., Tucson, AZ 85701.

'Laughing Out Proud' April 8

TUCSON - Bas Bleu Production's spring show is bound to be another side splitting experience. The show will be Friday, April 8, 7:00 p.m., at Pima Community College West Campus Proscenium Theater.

Seattle's Lisa Koch (pronounced "Coke") is an irreverent comedian/singer who blends comedy, theater and music with dysfunctional characters and demented songs (original and parody).

Lisa's show features such memorable characters as Sister Mary Agnes (a repressed nun who enjoys discipline) who will be joining Lisa for the evening. Lisa has performed all over the globe and is a regular on Olivia Cruises at the Michigan Women's Festival and the Vancouver Comedy Festival. She has released three solo recordings including "Both of Me," "You Make My Pants Pound," "Stainies in My Undies Always Get Me Down" and other show tunes. She was recently nominated for an OutMusic Award and is currently touring her one woman cabaret show; Twos Company, I'm a Crowd". Some of you might remember Lisa as one half of Dos Fallopi, who made famous the songs my 'Breast Are Out of Control' and 'I'll be a Homo For Xmas". Lisa also finds work as an actor and last year appeared with the Tucson/Phx Theater

Company as Mae West in 'Dirty Blond'. She recently toured a one-woman version of the Vagina Monologues. Lisa's shows are always "outrageous and memorable".

Michele Balan is a brash, New York stand-up comedian who for the past 12 years has appeared all over the country. She has been described as a high-energy, quick-witted comic princess. Her performances include; Dinah Shore Weekend, Olivia Cruises, Michigan Women's Festival, pretty much every Comedy Club in New York, televisions Comedy Central and Lifetime Network, the Improv in La, and many pride events and fund raisers to name just a few. A few of the people she has shared the stage with include Kathy Najimy, Harvey Fierstein and Nell Carter. She has several CD's to her credit including "Neurotic by Nature". You won't want to miss this very funny lady coming to us all the way from NYC.

Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door and can be purchased at Antigone Bookstore, at the Theater Box Office or by mail until April 1, at Bas Bleu Productions POB 7766, Phoenix, Arizona 85011. For more information, or if you would like to volunteer at the show, please call Kendall at Wingspan, (520) 624-1779 or E-mail Kristen atL kristen_felan@hotmail.com.

Desert Voices: Fabulous Show, Fabulous Auction

TUCSON - Beautiful music! Stories from the heart! Enticing auction items! It must be time for Desert Voices annual Spring Show and Silent Auction Fundraiser! This year's spectacular is "Our True Colors," presented on Saturday, April 16, at The Muse Community Arts Center, 516 N. 5th Avenue in Tucson. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for shopping at the Silent Auction and the show begins at 7:30 p.m.

For its Spring show, the chorus will sing a wide variety of songs with color and rainbow themes. Director Chris Tackett has lovingly presented DV with a gorgeous new jazz arrangement of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," sure to become a DV standard! Other exciting numbers include "De Colores," "Purple People Eater," a funny new arrangement of "Red Roses for a Blue Lady" for Alegria (DV's female barbershop quartet), and many other pieces sure to delight the audience. Local "Rock Star" and DV accompanist, Namoli Brennet, also wrote two new songs for this concert, including the captivating new "Shades of the

Rainbow." Chorus members provide inspiration for song choices and stories told from the stage, making this a funny and entertaining show with some personal, poignant moments.

Surrounding the concert will be Desert Voices' exciting annual Silent Auction, with shopping before the show and during intermissions. This year's auction items include an exquisite reptilian pattern paperweight from the Philabaum Glass Gallery. Watch this column in coming weeks for featured auction items! (A complete list of items donated to date appears on the website at www.desertvoices.org.)

Audience members will also enjoy tasty hors d'oeuvres, donated by local eateries and chorus members, and complimentary beverages (beer, wine, and soft drinks) courtesy of DV Season Sponsor, Woody's. Other season sponsors include Pronto Printing, Whitespace Design and Coyote Moon Resort and Spa.

Tickets, available at Antigone Books, 411 N 4th Ave, Desert Pride 611 N 4th Ave, or by calling the Desert Voices office at (520) 791-9662, are \$18 in advance. All ticket outlets accept credit cards. Seating for the show is limited, so get your tickets early! Tickets at the door will be \$20 (if available).

Desert Voices is Tucson's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and straight/supportive others chorus, singing out for those who feel they have no voice, and especially for the Tucson GLBTS community, for the past 16 years.

For more information about the chorus, their upcoming show, or anything else you'd like to know about Desert Voices and their mission, check out their website at www.desertvoices.org, or call the office at (520) 791-9662. Thank you to Tucson Observer Readers for your terrific support!

National Crime Victims' Rights Week Event

TUCSON - The Wingspan Anti-Violence Project (AVP) and the Southern Arizona Gender Alliance (SAGA) are sponsoring a training during National Crime Victims' Rights Week to draw attention to Transgender victims of crime.

"Many members of law enforcement, health care providers, and social service professionals don't know much about the unique issues Transgender individuals face in their lives," commented Lori B. Girshick, Coordinator of the Anti-Violence Project. "Transgender individuals deserve the same professional and thorough treatment as any other person."

National Crime Victims' Rights Week is April 10-16. This presentation adds to scores of events across the country to remember crime victims and bring awareness to the issues crime victims face. "We hope this training will help service providers be more effective in their work. We don't want Tucson to experience the same tragedies found in other parts of the country where Transgender individuals have paid for prejudice or ignorance with their lives." One such case was that of Tyra Hunter, who died after a car accident in Washington, DC in 1995. Hunter bled to death in the street after emergency medical personnel discovered she was Transgender and refused to treat her.

The training, "Serving Transgender Crime Victims," will be held on April 12th from 9-11am at the Valdez Main Library, lower level conference room, 101 N. Stone Avenue. Lori Girshick, Coordinator of the Wingspan Anti-Violence Project and Michael Woodward, Executive Director

Continued on Page Five



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In Memoriam



JAMES E. SHAFER

For many in our community the familiar smiling gregarious presence of Jim Shafer at events, bars and the opera around town has been reliable and comforting for many years, dating back to the 70s. For me, my close friendship with Jim began when I moved to Tucson in 1988 and ended last Monday, March 7 at approximately 3:00 PM. Jim moved on to be at peace, during an operation to remove his gall bladder, surgeons found his kidneys nearly destroyed by cancer, which had spread significantly, and could not stop the bleeding. The best news for Jim and all who new and loved him, is that he only felt ill for two months, never knew he had cancer, and moved on quickly. Jim was 57 years old.

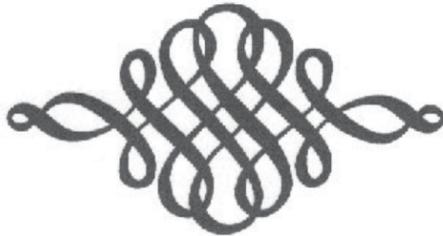
We, who are left, have many great things to remember and learn from Jim. He was an eager supporter of the community, who genuinely cared about people in the community. He was always there to listen, to cheer up, to give a back-rub, to pitch-in, etc. His commitment to

the groups he worked and played for ran deep. He may not have been the most financially wealthy of donors, the best bowler nor had a world class voice. But we know that he used his money to support many causes in the GLBT community as well as in the education, safety and music arenas; bowled as a member of the IGBO sanctioned Desert Coyote leagues for many years for great and not so great teams bringing home important victories; and, sang many small roles and chorus roles for the Arizona Opera Company and for several other professional, semi-professional and volunteer vocal performance organizations through the years. He put his talents to use to meet their full potential, and was happy doing it.

It will be difficult to replace his dedication and energy, and recover from this loss. But, remembering his love, energy, commitment, openness, joy and support; and, showing the same to others around each of us, we will grow stronger and keep the memory of our Dowager Empress Jim Shafer alive for years to come in our hearts and in our community.

At this time, Jim's brother, John Shafer, is taking Jim back to Indiana for burial in a family plot. A memorial service is being planned to take place in early April. Details later.

By: Max L. Vosskuhler



HERBERT F. HOOP
November 11, 1940 - March 13, 2005

Bert went home to his Heavenly Father on Friday, March 13th, at University Medical Center, after battling a brief illness.

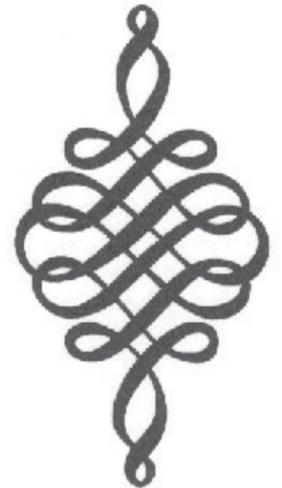
Those who knew Bert for any length of time quickly discovered his sense of humor, even when it was sometimes peculiar, or even bizarre. He was a long time resident of Tucson, having lived here in the 70's, and returning in 1984 with his partner, Ernie. He was a part of the early days of Tucson's GLBT community, having worked at various Gay bars during those tumultuous first years.

Bert had always felt a deep affection for the Tucson community, and he worked tirelessly on several different fundraising projects and committees within the GLBT community, especially through the social/leather clubs. As a member of Tucson Knight Owls, he was instrumental in the first Arizona 3-Way, which has since become known as the

Arizona Fellowship Run. He and Doc Hayes brought about the C.A.T. Awards. Bert was also a member of Partners, T.A.L.L., Copperstate Leathermen, as well as holding Associate Membership in numerous clubs around the Southwest. One of his proudest moments was the formation of Desert Leathermen, which grew to host the original Observer Community Benefit Dinners, TOGA Awards, the Wet Party, the Jungle Party, and began the community-wide distribution of condoms in all bars. He was a devoted member of Water of Life Metropolitan Community Church, and volunteered for many committees and helped the church through it's many stages of growth.

He spent several years as manager of Venture-N, and when his health would not allow him to work in that field, he worked for TUSD as a crossing guard. In the last few years, he had become very proficient in working with ceramics, and loved spending time at Desert Dove Ceramics in Tucson. The owner, Ken Mullis, and all the customers were continually entertained by his quick wit and ready smile, as well as his talent.

Bert is survived by his partner of 22 years, Ernie Freuler, as well as a host of friends and 'found family' in the GLBT community across the country. A memorial service will be held at a time and place to be announced.





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Following show Dance with Dj Q till 2am

SUNDAY MARCH 20TH
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Show time 9pm • Hosted By Bunny Fu Fu
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Report Details Global Lesbian-Baiting Trend

UNITED NATIONS - Publicizing a struggle faced by many international advocates for human rights, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) released a report documenting attacks on women's sexuality and gender roles through smear tactics in a process dubbed "Lesbian baiting."

The report, co-sponsored by the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University, is the centerpiece of a panel held Wednesday, March 9, during a United Nations conference examining women's equality and human rights around the world, the PlanetOut Network reported.

"With the rise of fundamentalism in both the U.S. and abroad, we are seeing that women who take public leadership on any range of issues are on the receiving end of very calculated attacks," says Susana Fried, IGLHRC's program director. "We want to connect the dots to show how women's sexuality is manipulated in this specific and increasingly common way to discredit and silence women around the world."

The 189-page report, written by Cynthia Rothschild, documents examples of such attacks in countries ranging from the United States to Argentina, India, Thailand, Costa Rica and more. "If a woman is single, she's attacked as a lesbian," says Paula Eitelbrick, IGLHRC's executive director. "If she's married, she's attacked for neglecting her family. Either way, the issue becomes gender and sexuality rather than the merits of the issue under discussion."

One result, says Eitelbrick, is that it becomes more difficult for women's groups to support gay and lesbian rights. "It makes our natural allies more afraid," she says. "We see female politicians retreat into self-censorship. Not only do campaigns go down to defeat, but leadership and vision suffer as well."

The conference, dubbed "Beijing & Beyond," focuses on work of the U.N.'s Commission on the Status of Women, which is reviewing the progress (or lack thereof) achieved since the U.N.'s Fourth World Conference on Women, held 10 years ago in Beijing, China.

The high-profile event, held Feb. 28 through March 11, has attracted hundreds of international advocacy groups

Santa Fe Gay Bashing

Continued from Page One

said, learned that Maestas and Stockham were staying at nearby hotel while he was serving them.

He told investigators that he and the five men followed the group to the hotel and along the way they "pumped" themselves up by talking about "fucking those faggots up". The statement also quotes Trinidad as telling investigators that they referred to Stockham and Maestas as "fucking white boys."

They arrived at the hotel just behind Stockham and Maestas and began beating the pair while yelling anti-gay epithets.

Maestas fell to the ground unconscious. Stockham was treated at hospital and released.

About 300 people attended a candlelight vigil to show support for Maestas. Among the attendees was Gov. Bill Richardson and Police Chief Beverly Lennen.

Maestas was released from hospital last Tuesday, March 8, more than a week after he was attacked, but his family say he is not out of the woods yet.

He has pneumonia. His lungs were damaged in the attack, and there is the risk of further infection, a spokesperson for his parents said.

to New York. Groups such as IGLHRC and CWGL are speaking at side panels and releasing new studies.

The lesbian-baiting report's authors also document strategies that show how international groups have responded and fought back.

"When advocates for equality and human rights come out with the gloves off," says Rothschild, "they have found ways to use the publicity and antagonism to their advantage. They've been able to point the finger back at their accusers and their real agendas and remind people that attacks on women's sexuality or gender roles is a smokescreen."

Eitelbrick also sees a bright spot in the way celebrities have approached the issue, facing rumors forthrightly. "They make it positive, explaining that there is no shame in the label, but it just doesn't fit them."

Both Eitelbrick and Fried say the response from those attending the U.N. conference has been very gratifying.

"As defenders of human rights around the world, we have to be vigilant," says Eitelbrick. "Their MO is to divide and conquer. If we can understand this dynamic, we can unite because of — rather than despite — these attacks. That will provide the strength we need to push through this ominous period of religious fundamentalism."

California Judge Rules G/L Marriage Ban Illegal

Continued from Page One

A pair of bills pending before the California Legislature would put a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage on the November ballot. It is unlikely either bill will pass, but if it should and California voters approve it that would put the issue of same-sex marriage out of the control of lawmakers and the courts.

"The most vociferous opponents of marriage equality will attack the court's decision not because it threatens their marriage, or even the institution of marriage, but because they know that the closer GLBT people get to achieving full equality, the more difficult it will be to marginalize us," said Jim Key a spokesperson for the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center.

Earlier this month the Washington state Supreme Court heard arguments in another constitutional challenge to barring same-sex marriage.

The New York state Appeals Court, the state's highest court, is about to take up the issue of gay marriage following last month's ruling by a judge in New York City that it is unconstitutional to deny same-sex couples the right to marry.

A ruling in Washington is likely before the New York Court of Appeals or the California Supreme Court gets the marriage case.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled in November 2003 that it was unconstitutional to deny gays and lesbians marriage. But, the court gave the legislature until May to repeal its ban on gay marriage. When the State House failed to act the court's ruling kicked in. The first gay weddings in the state began on May 17, 2004. Although a proposed amendment to the Massachusetts constitution is before the legislature but unlikely to pass.

The Massachusetts ruling led to calls for a Federal Marriage Amendment. It failed to get enough votes last year in either the House or Senate. It was reintroduced in congress in January.

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March 19th (Saturday)
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-AFTERNOON GAMES
-BEER BUST 3pm - 7pm
-PARTY UNTIL CLOSE

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Reaction To The California Marriage Decision

SAN FRANCISCO - Hundreds of cheering Gays and Lesbians marched through the Castro Monday night, March 14, celebrating a court ruling that declared California's ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional, 365Gay.com reported.

Some waved rainbow flags, others held up their marriage licenses. Couples held hands, others carried their small children.

In West Hollywood hundreds of people crammed into the Abby for a celebration party. A wedding cake was cut symbolizing what Gays hope is the first step toward marriage.

Gays began arriving at San Francisco city hall shortly after the written ruling was handed down.

County Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer in his ruling said that there is "no rational purpose" in denying Gays and Lesbians the right to marry.

"The denial of marriage to same-sex couples appears impermissibly arbitrary," Kramer's ruling said. "Simply put, same-sex marriage cannot be prohibited solely because California has always done so."

His judgment went on to say that California's domestic partner law without the ability to marry was insufficient likening it to segregation.

Kramer referred to the landmark 1952 Brown v. Board of Education civil rights decision. "The idea that marriage-like rights without marriage is adequate smacks of a concept long rejected by the courts: separate but equal," he wrote.

He also cited a 1948 decision that struck down California's ban on interra-

cial marriages.

Kramer then turned to the arguments made by two conservative groups that Gays cannot marry because they cannot procreate.

"One does not have to be married in order to procreate, nor does one have to procreate in order to be married," Kramer wrote. "Thus, no legitimate state interest to justify the preclusion of same-sex marriage can be found."

Last February San Francisco mayor Gavin Newsom began allowing marriage licenses to be issued to same-sex couples.

More than 4,000 Gay and Lesbian couples were married before the California Supreme Court ruled that Newsom had exceeded his power in granting the licenses. But, the court did not take up the issue of Gay marriage itself, saying court cases challenging the constitutionality on the state law should work their way through the lower courts first.

At a hastily arranged news conference Newsom was surrounded by same-sex couples who had launched the suit.

"This is an important day but hardly is this effort complete," Newsom told reporters. "It is inevitable there will be an appeal."

Kramer was also prepared for an appeal. He stayed the execution of his judgment for 60 days to allow California Attorney General Bill Lockyer and lawyers for two conservative groups to file their appeal notices.

"This is just the first phase of a legal challenge." Gov. Arnold

Schwarzenegger told MSNBC. "This will probably go to the Supreme Court in California."

But, Monday night, in the streets

of San Francisco there was hope that the long battle may be coming towards its conclusion.

Bitter Divorce Spells Trouble For Gay TV Network

TORONTO - The world's first Gay television network has become a pawn in a bitter divorce battle between its major shareholder and his ex wife, reported 365Gay.com.

Bill Craig who owns the controlling interest in Canada's PrideVision owes his ex-wife \$1.4 million. The couple broke up in 1993 and for the last seven years he has been in a relationship with another man.

But, over the years the unpaid alimony to Sally Craig has built up. This week it caught up with him.

An Ontario Superior Court judge ordered a receiver be appointed over his income and his assets. Craig's assets consists mostly of his shares in PrideVision and 2000 Jeep.

In an interview with the Globe And Mail, Craig said that if the receiver attempts to sell his shares, they would not be worth much. The network has struggled to make ends meet since it began several years ago.

Craig bought a 20 percent interest in the company last year and has been attempting to turn it around.

Craig also warned that a sale of his shares would lead to his resignation.

"They're welcome to liquidate it [the controlling stake.] At the moment it's losing money," Craig told the Globe. "It'd be kind of a dumb thing to do."

"The alternative is to leave it in place, and to let it come to fruition, and let it evolve into an enterprise that can support my wife's needs."

PrideVision has been hamstrung by being a solely digital channel when few cable subscribers have digital ability. Next month PrideVision will drop lower on the dial, making it more accessible, and it will spring off its adult content onto a new channel.

The change could enhance the company's ability to survive.

Craig bought the controlling interest in PrideVision for \$1.4-million and assuming \$1.1-million in the company's existing debt.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week

Continued from Page Two
of SAGA are the presenters. The training is free. Please RSVP to Lori Girshick at 624-1779, ext. 20 or lori@wingspan.org.

The Wingspan Anti-Violence Project 24-hour crisis line number is (520) 624-0348 or call toll free (800) 553-9387. TTY during office hours at (520) 884-0450. Bilingual English/Spanish services. The Southern Arizona Gender Alliance provides support and advocacy services for gender-variant people in the greater Tucson area. For more information, visit www.sagatucson.org or call (520) 867-0083.

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Gay Survivor 'Not Guilty' Of Tax Evasion

PROVIDENCE - Richard Hatch, the first winner of CBS's Survivor, said he thought the network was responsible for paying the taxes on his \$1-million US prize and that's why he didn't pay them. Hatch said in an interview from Los Angeles that he was "absolutely not guilty."

Prosecutors have charged the openly Gay Hatch with filing false 2000 and 2001 tax returns, omitting his income from the reality show, as well as \$321,000 he was paid by a Boston radio station, the Associated Press reported on the PlanetOut Network.

Hatch, who lives in Newport, backed out of a plea agreement, and the U.S. Attorney's office in Providence turned the case over to a grand jury.

He has been free on \$50,000 bond since his arraignment in January. The government has said the taxes Hatch owes are between \$200,000 and \$400,000.

Hatch's lawyer, Michael Minns, told AP Radio, that under California law, Hatch should have been classified as a CBS employee and therefore CBS was responsible for withholding taxes from his winnings.

Minns said the network has never explained whether Hatch's prize was \$1 million or \$1 million minus the taxes.

In an e-mail statement, CBS

said: "Richard Hatch was well aware of his obligation to pay taxes on his Survivor prize money."

Hatch said he was unfairly targeted by the IRS and prosecutors.

"I'm being used as an example, as a scapegoat. And I'm innocent," he said. "This is nothing more than their effort to use my notoriety to get other people to pay taxes."

Hatch, who lives in Newport, has been free on \$50,000 bond since his arraignment in January.

On "Survivor," Hatch stood out for being a cunning and ruthless competitor. He spent much of his time in the nude, and David Letterman dubbed him the "fat naked guy." He was also the only openly Gay contestant during the first season.

Since the television show, Hatch has weathered a series of legal battles. He was arrested in April 2000 on a charge of abusing his then 9-year-old son. That charge was later dropped. In 2002, Hatch



POLITICS 2005

by Mark R. Kerr

A Propaganda Free Zone

What is the difference between the current mainstream media in the United States, and the former Soviet Union, China and Cuba's government broadcast news, also known as propaganda machines, about the many successes of the government's policies and their respective dictators, described in government press releases as "leaders?"

Absolutely nothing, something the New York Times, in a March 13 article said (featured in the next three editions of the Observer), confirming for many what the American press has become and something the citizenry can't look down or should overlook.

"Under the Bush administration," according to the article, "the federal government has aggressively used a well-established tool of public relations: the prepackaged, ready-to-serve news report that major corporations have long distributed to TV stations to pitch everything from headache remedies to auto insurance."

"In all, at least 20 federal agencies," the article goes on stating, "including the Defense Department and the Census Bureau, have made and distributed hundreds of television news segments, (also referred to as video news releases (VNR's)) in the past four years, records and interviews show. Many were subsequently broadcast on local stations across the country without any acknowledgement of the government's role in their production."

So are there laws on the books to prohibit such government propaganda being disseminated at tax payer expense? In 1948, the U.S. Congress passed the United States Information and Educational Exchange Act, also known as the Smith-Mundt Act, authorizing the government to disseminate information about the United States and its policies abroad. The Act also stated that such information would not be disseminated within the United States, its territories, or its possessions; such material would be made available "for examination only." One of the reason's, proponents for the Smith-Mundt Act stated was that, Congress wanted to be certain that a U.S. government agency could not brainwash citizens as Hitler had in Germany.

Since 1951, on the annual Appropriations Bills for the U.S. Government, riders have been attached that makes it illegal for government funds to be used for propaganda. On the 2002-04 spending measures, the riders read:

Rider #1: No part of any funds appropriated in this or any other Act shall be used by an agency of the executive branch, other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships, for publicity or propaganda purposes, and for the preparation, distribution or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, radio, television or film presentation designed to support or defeat legislation pending before the Congress, except in presentation to the Congress itself. Rider #2: No part of any appropriation contained in this or any other Act shall be used for publicity or propaganda purposes within the United States not heretofore authorized by the Congress.

GAO (Government Accountability Office) Comptroller General David M. Walker, head of the nonpartisan government oversight department, wrote to the heads of federal agencies on Feb. 17, saying that prepackaged news reports that do not clearly identify their source as the government violates a federal ban on

covert propaganda.

With all that, it continues, thanks to Alberto Gonzales, Bush's flack lawyer now masquerading as Attorney General, for which the Justice Department told the heads of the federal agencies to just ignore the GAO directive. Sounds just like when Gonzales said torturing people was okay and the Geneva Convention pertaining to the rights of prisoners was outdated since "the war on terror" really wasn't a war! Bush defended this and said the government will continue sending out his propaganda and video news releases to the country.

So the government propaganda has been broadcast on television stations, the Times article states, giving examples, raising the question if any of Bush's propaganda has played in Tucson - (the 72nd media market in the U.S.) five commercial television news stations, KVOA-TV 4 (NBC) - "Southern Arizona's News Leader," KOLD-TV 13 (CBS) - "Live, Local, Late Breaking," KGUN 9 (ABC) - "Clear, Accurate, to the Point," KMSB-TV 11 (Fox), "Tucson's Number One News at Nine," and KWBA-TV 58, Cable 8 (WB) - "Tucson's First Primetime News Cast," whose news directors were contacted, by E-mail, seeking comment on this issue. As we all know, KUAT TV-6, are with PBS, the Pentagon Broadcasting System but digressing.

Bob Richardson, news director of KMSB, was the only news director to respond to the question, "We don't run VNR's. Just a policy," he said in an E-mail. When asked whether KMSB has a written policy, Richardson commented in another E-mail, "I'm the managing editor and I make those decisions. I don't like VNR's and won't run them."

Does the lack of comment, or response on this issue, mean Tucson television news, despite the graphics and inane slogans, have run the video news releases or continue to do so, spreading the government propaganda? Silence isn't golden on this, just ask George Orwell.

Ending the violence.

Wingspan launches the Anti-Violence Project - a community initiative to assist lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender victims of discrimination, domestic violence, sexual assault and hate crimes.

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Prepackaged Television News From The Bush Administration

[First of a Three Part Series]

WASHINGTON, D.C. - It is the kind of TV news coverage every president covets.

"Thank you, Bush. Thank you, U.S.A.," a jubilant Iraqi-American told a camera crew in Kansas City for a segment about reaction to the fall of Baghdad. A second report told of "another success" in the Bush administration's "drive to strengthen aviation security"; the reporter called it "one of the most remarkable campaigns in aviation history." A third segment, broadcast in January, described the administration's determination to open markets for American farmers, reported the New York Times.

To a viewer, each report looked like any other 90-second segment on the local news. In fact, the federal government produced all three. The report from Kansas City was made by the State Department. The "reporter" covering airport safety was actually a public relations professional working under a false name for the Transportation Security Administration. The farming segment was done by the Agriculture Department's office of communications.

Under the Bush administration, the federal government has aggressively used a well-established tool of public relations: the prepackaged, ready-to-serve news report that major corporations have long distributed to TV stations to pitch everything from headache remedies to auto insurance. In all, at least 20 federal agencies, including the Defense Department and the Census Bureau, have made and distributed hundreds of television news segments in the past four years, records and interviews show. Many were subsequently broadcast on local stations across the country without any acknowledgement of the government's role in their production.

This winter, Washington has been roiled by revelations that a handful of columnists wrote in support of administration policies without disclosing they had accepted payments from the government. But the administration's efforts to generate positive news coverage have been considerably more pervasive than previously known. At the same time, records and interviews suggest widespread complicity or negligence by television stations, given industry ethics standards that discourage the broadcast of prepackaged news segments from any outside group without revealing the source.

Federal agencies are forthright with broadcasters about the origin of the news segments they distribute. The reports themselves, though, are designed to fit seamlessly into the typical local news broadcast. In most cases, the "reporters" are careful not to state in the segment that they work for the government. Their reports generally avoid overt ideological appeals. Instead, the government's news-making apparatus has produced a quiet drumbeat of broadcasts describing a vigilant and compassionate administration.

Some reports were produced to support the administration's most cherished policy objectives, like regime change in Iraq or Medicare reform. Others focused on less prominent matters, like the administration's

efforts to offer free after-school tutoring, its campaign to curb childhood obesity, its initiatives to preserve forests and wetlands, its plans to fight computer viruses, even its attempts to fight holiday drunken driving. They often feature "interviews" with senior administration officials in which questions are scripted and answers rehearsed. Critics, though, are excluded, as are any hints of mismanagement, waste or controversy.

Some of the segments were broadcast in some of nation's largest television markets, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas and Atlanta.

An examination of government-produced news reports offers a look inside a world where the traditional lines between public relations and journalism have become tangled, where local anchors introduce prepackaged segments with "suggested" lead-ins written by public relations experts. It is a world where government-produced reports disappear into a maze of satellite transmissions, Web portals, syndicated news programs and network feeds, only to emerge cleansed on the other side as "independent" journalism.

It is also a world where all participants benefit.

Local affiliates are spared the expense of digging up original material. Public relations firms secure government contracts worth millions of dollars. The major networks, which help distribute the releases, collect fees from the government agencies that produce segments and the affiliates that show them. The administration, meanwhile, gets out an unfiltered message, delivered in the guise of traditional reporting.

The practice, which also occurred in the Clinton administration, is continuing despite President Bush's recent call for a clearer demarcation between journalism and government publicity efforts. "There needs to be a nice independent relationship between the White House and the press," Mr. Bush told reporters in January, explaining why his administration would no longer pay pundits to support his policies.

In interviews, though, press officers for several federal agencies said the president's prohibition did not apply to government-made television news segments, also known as video news releases. They described the segments as factual, politically neutral and useful to viewers. They insisted that there was no similarity to the case of Armstrong Williams, a conservative columnist who promoted the administration's chief education initiative, the No Child Left Behind Act, without disclosing \$240,000 in payments from the Education Department.

What is more, these officials argued, it is the responsibility of television news directors to inform viewers that a segment about the government was in fact written by the government. "Talk to the television stations that ran it without attribution," said William A. Pierce, spokesman for the Department of Health and Human Services. "This is not our problem. We can't be held responsible for their actions."

Yet in three separate opinions

in the past year, the Government Accountability Office, an investigative arm of Congress that studies the federal government and its expenditures, has held that government-made news segments may constitute improper "covert propaganda" even if their origin is made clear to the television stations. The point, the office said, is whether viewers know the origin. Last month, in its most recent finding, the G.A.O. said federal agencies may not produce prepackaged news reports "that conceal or do not clearly identify for the television viewing audience that the agency was the source of those materials."

It is not certain, though, whether the office's pronouncements will have much practical effect. Although a few federal agencies have stopped making television news segments, others continue. And on Friday, March 11, the Justice Department and the Office of Management and Budget circulated a memorandum instructing all executive branch agencies to ignore the G.A.O. findings. The memorandum said the G.A.O. failed to distinguish between covert propaganda and "purely informational" news segments made by the government. Such informational segments are legal, the memorandum said, whether or not an agency's role in producing them is disclosed to viewers.

Even if agencies do disclose their role, those efforts can easily be undone in a broadcaster's editing room. Some news organizations, for example, simply identify the government's "reporter" as one of their own and then edit out any phrase suggesting the segment was not of their making.

So in a recent segment produced by the Agriculture Department, the agency's narrator ended the report by saying "In Princess Anne, Maryland, I'm Pat O'Leary reporting for the U.S. Department of Agriculture." Yet AgDay, a syndicated farm news program that is shown on some 160 stations, simply introduced the segment as being by "AgDay's Pat O'Leary." The final sentence was then trimmed to "In Princess Anne, Maryland, I'm Pat O'Leary reporting."

Brian Conrady, executive producer of AgDay, defended the changes. "We can clip 'Department of Agriculture' at our choosing," he said. "The material we get from the U.S.D.A., if we choose to air it and how we choose to air it is our choice."

[Next week, Part 2 - Spreading the Word: Government Efforts and One Woman's Role.]

Let me ask you something...
Since when is bigotry a moral virtue?

Back in 1906, a leading American theologian published a best-selling book justifying discrimination against African Americans, saying they were creatures of uncontrollable "sensuality." Similar racist theories were spouted by politicians like the notorious "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman who toured the country under the banner, "Negro equality in politics means social equality, mongrelization, hellfire and damnation!" Belief in the innate immorality of black people, buttressed by selected scriptural references, formed the basis for slavery, segregation and lynchings.

Now come the homophobes, spouting the same hate-filled rhetoric about a different minority group. "Homosexuality is immoral, unscriptural and unhealthy," we are told. It is a "sin," like theft and drunkenness, according to Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott.

The Pitchfork Tillmans of today warn that the "homosexual lobby" wants to bring about the destruction of the American family. Just like their racist antecedents, they are trying to whip up hatred and intolerance in order to build public support for anti-gay laws.

Sure, they can try to hide behind morality, but we all know a bigot when we see one. Thank about it.

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Steve May To Speak at PFLAG Phoenix March 21

PARADISE VALLEY - Steve May, the former Arizona State Representative and new co-chair of the Arizona Human Rights Fund (AHRF), will be the featured speaker at the monthly PFLAG Phoenix meeting on Monday, March 21st, 7:00pm at the Palo Cristi Presbyterian Church, 3535 East Lincoln Drive, in Paradise Valley.

Steve will share his unique experiences of serving in the military while also serving as an openly-Gay representative in the Arizona State Legislature, fighting a very public battle to remain in the military, and serving now as co-chairperson of AHRF. Amazingly, this will be the first time Steve has shared his personal story with an audience here in his home state of Arizona.

In July of 1999, the U.S. Army began proceedings against Lieutenant Steve May under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law that forbids military members from disclosing their homosexuality. Though his sexual orientation had been public record and widely reported in the media since 1996, the Army ordered him into reserve service and then tried to discharge him. Steve fought the attempted discharge for two years until the Secretary of the Army unexpectedly intervened and allowed him to complete the tour of duty to which he was called. Steve's case highlighted the lunacy of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

Steve has appeared on numerous radio and television shows including Larry King Live, Good Morning America, The Today Show, The Early Show with Bryant Gumbal, 60 Minutes, The O'Reilly Factor, CNN Talk Back Live, Court TV, MSNBC Morning Blend, Hardball and many local programs throughout the country. In addition,

Steve's battle against the policy has been profiled in People Magazine, The New York Times, Newsweek, Time, The Arizona Republic, Phoenix New Times, Associated Press and many other publications throughout the U.S. and other countries.

As a State representative, Steve chaired the Way and Means Committee. He is well known for his advocacy of limited government, equitable taxation, the right to privacy, public education, property rights and civil rights.

Currently, Steve serves as co-chairperson of the Arizona Human Rights Fund. AHRF is the largest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender ed (LGBT) political, advocacy and educational organization working on behalf of all Arizonans.

We hope everyone will come to see Steve in person and hear about his incredible experiences. Please join us on Monday, March 21st, at our Phoenix/Paradise Valley location. The doors open at 7:00 p.m. and the meeting begins promptly at 7:15 p.m. with program speaker, Steve May, followed by our small PFLAG support groups. As always, we welcome everyone, whether member or non-member, and all GLBTI folks, families and friends.

PFLAG Phoenix (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) promotes the health and well-being of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender ed persons, their families and friends through support, education and advocacy. Additional information for PFLAG Phoenix can be found at www.pflagphoenix.org or by calling our confidential Helpline at (602) 843-1404.

HRC Names New President

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On Wednesday, March 9, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the nation's largest LGBT political group, named Joe Solmonese as its next president, the PlanetOut Network reported.

He replaces Cheryl Jacques, who parted ways with the Washington, D.C.-based organization in November.

Solmonese is the chief executive officer of EMILY's List, the nation's largest political action committee, which works to elect pro-choice Democratic women to federal, state and local office.

At EMILY's List, Solmonese managed a staff of 85 people and oversaw a \$40 million budget. At HRC, Solmonese will oversee a staff of 125 people with a \$30 million budget.

On Wednesday Solmonese revealed that after taking the helm at HRC on April 11, 2005, he will tour the country.

"We need to make sure every LGBT American has a safe place to come out and join us in the fight for equality," Solmonese said in a prepared statement. "Our equality under the law is evolving as the defining social and political issue of our time."

"As a Gay American, I am very honored to serve HRC and the LGBT community and to join the leadership of a movement that is working toward an America that keeps its promise to all its citizens," Solmonese said.

"Increasing our presence and visibility across America will be a top priority of my tenure," Solmonese added.

Former HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch praised Solmonese. "Joe will bring so much passion, muscle and strategic thinking to the work of HRC. He is the exact type of experienced and visionary leader HRC needs to move us closer to making HRC's mission a reality."

Praise for Solmonese also came from both sides of the political realm.

"I am very happy that Joe will be the next president of HRC. By his talent, commitment and experience, he is ideally suited to help lead the fight for the central American value of equal rights under the law," said Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass.

Rep. Rob Simmons, R-Conn., added, "Since I've been in Congress, HRC has always displayed a longstanding commitment to bipartisanship. I have very little doubt that Joe will aggressively maintain this tradition, and I look forward to working with him."

Patrick Guerriero, president of the Log Cabin Republicans, described Solmonese's record as "impressive" and "effective."

"Joe has my personal and organizational support as we work together to develop a smart and ambitious bipartisan strategy to realize full equality for all Americans in the years ahead," Guerriero said.

LGBT political consultant and blogger John Aravosis wrote on Wednesday that Solmonese has "the political experience to run the organization (and hopefully run it like a real organization that is accountable to its donors)."

Judge In California Gay Marriage Case, 'No Liberal Activist'

SAN FRANCISCO - Supporters of same-sex marriage found an ally in San Francisco Judge Richard Kramer — a Catholic Republican appointed to the bench by a former GOP governor, reported the Associated Press in the March 14 edition of the San Francisco Chronicle.

"We're certainly feeling the judge's decision is right," said San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, whose city's lawsuit prompted Kramer's ruling Monday, March 13, that Gays and Lesbians have the right to marry in California, despite a law and a voter-approved measure declaring marriage to be the exclusive realm of heterosexuals.

Opponents of Gay marriage immediately declared that 57-year-old Kramer is a judicial activist whose decision was "ludicrous" and "nonsense."

"We knew Judge Kramer was under tremendous political pressure to redefine marriage, but we were hopeful he would recognize the limited role of the judiciary," said Robert Tyler, an Alliance Defense Fund attorney trying to uphold California's traditional marriage laws. "We do not believe it is appropriate for judges in this setting to overturn the will of the people."

With a 27-page stroke of the pen, Kramer did just that. "The parade of horrible social ills envisioned by the opponents of same-sex marriage is not a necessary result from recognizing that

there is a fundamental right to choose who one wants to marry," he wrote in the decision, which won't be enforced for 60 days, to give opponents time to appeal.

Lawyers who have practiced before Kramer said the 1972 graduate of the University of Southern California Law Center is among the top judges in San Francisco, and is unswayed by public opinion.

"I think he does what he thinks is right," said Robert Stumpf Jr., who settled a class-action for \$6.7 million before Kramer last year while representing Wells Fargo.

The bank was accused of illegally selling customers' financial information. Stumpf said Kramer steered negotiations between the bank and plaintiffs attorneys for a year. "His proposal was legally sound and practical," he said.

Gov. Pete Wilson appointed Kramer in December 1996, when Kramer was specializing in bank litigation.

Kramer had made a name for himself in the legal world in 1992, when he successfully defended Bank of America in a class-action lawsuit in which the bank was accused of illegally freezing credit-card interest rates around 20 percent between 1982 and 1986. First Interstate and Wells Fargo, also plaintiffs in that case, had settled for a combined \$55 million, but Kramer the

lawyer took the case to trial and prevailed.

Nancy Hersh, a San Francisco-based class-action lawyer, said Kramer "listens carefully to both sides. His reasoning is excellent and he has great attention to detail."

"He's not irrational or unreasonable," added Hersh, whose plaintiffs sued Imperial Premium Finance. The Sherman Oaks insurer agreed to provide 30,000 customers with \$35 coupons to be used to pay their premiums after Kramer ruled the company was illegally holding onto customer refunds.

Kramer declined to be interviewed for this story. But he gave a sense of how dedicated he is as a jurist in a 1999 interview with the San Francisco Daily Journal, a legal trade publication.

While he said he sought out a judgeship so that he could spend more time with his wife and daughter, he said he spent his first months as a criminal court judge reading the Penal Code cover to cover and driving through crime-ridden neighborhoods in San Francisco to get a sense of what was happening in the community.

"It's all fascinating to me," he told the Daily Journal. "What you have to do is figure out what the person did and what to do about it. And most of these cases require common sense and humanity."

The case is Marriage Cases, Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding, 4364.

Navratilova Sues Sponsor Of Credit Card

SARASOTA, FL - Martina Navratilova is suing the sponsor of a credit card directly marketed to Gays and Lesbians, saying it uses her name and likeness after her request last month to stop, the PlanetOut Network reported.

Navratilova is seeking at least \$75,000 in damages from Do Tell, Inc., which offers the Rainbow Card. The card helps fund the nonprofit Rainbow Coalition, which promotes the health and social well being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people.

Do Tell had used Navratilova to market the card since 1995 with the tennis star's permission, said the suit, filed Monday, March 7. But in late 2004, Navratilova came at odds with the card's marketing, which she called "inappropriate and repugnant."

In a Feb. 8, 2005, Navratilova's attorneys sent a letter to Do Tell telling them to stop using the former Wimbledon champ's likeness.

The suit charges that Do Tell, based in Conshohocken, Pa., has continued to use Navratilova.

A call seeking comment from Do Tell after hours Wednesday, March 9, was not immediately returned.

Navratilova is a nine-time Wimbledon champion and winner of 18 Grand Slam singles titles. She also owns a record 167 singles titles and 40 Grand Slam doubles titles.

In her most recent action, she lost in the mixed doubles semifinals with Max Mirnyi at January's Australian Open.

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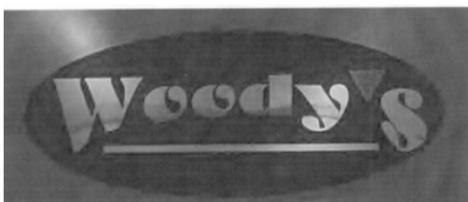
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Federal Judge Bans Use Of Gay Wedding Photo

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A federal judge Thursday, March 10, issued a restraining order prohibiting a conservative group from using a picture of a Gay Portland, Oregon in an ad condemning the American Association for Retired People, reported 365Gay.com.

The action came one day after M. Raymen and Steven P. Hansen filed a \$25 million damage suit against those behind the ad, accusing them of illegally using their image.

The ad, by USA Next, is attacking the AARP for opposing the Bush administration's proposed changes to Social Security and attempts to "discredit" the organization by suggesting it supports Gay marriage and opposes the war in Iraq.

The AARP has come under fire from conservatives for opposing President Bush's call for Social Security reform.

The ad features two photos, one of a soldier and one with a picture of two men in tuxedos kissing. The picture of the soldier has an X over it. The one of Raymen and Hansen has a checkmark. The ad has the caption "The real AARP agenda."

The ad was produced for USA Next by Mark Montini International, Montini is a GOP strategist and chief executive officer of CampaignSecrets.com.

Last week USA Next and Montini admitted they did not have legal rights to the picture of Raymen and Hansen. The couple married last year during Portland's brief attempt to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

The suit names both USA Next and Montini and alleges that the use of the couple's image without permission constituted an invasion of

privacy, was libelous, violated their right of publicity and constituted an intentional infliction of emotional distress.

"Our privacy and personal integrity were violated when our wedding photo was stolen and used to portray us as treasonous, unpatriotic, and a threat to American troops," Raymen said Wednesday, March 9.

"We have been harassed and humiliated by this hateful ad campaign and by the bigotry and anger it has generated against us nationwide."

"Our lawsuit is intended to make USA Next and Mark Montini pay for the harm they have caused and to send a message to them that they cannot recklessly play with peoples' reputations and make them targets of hate, as they have done with us," Raymen said. "When we get our judgment, we intend to donate to those who fight the kind of hate and homophobia that USA Next and Montini have demonstrated."

The couple's lawyer, Christopher Wolf, said USA Next and Montini should have known the harm publication of the picture in the attack ad would cause.

"As a result of the publication of the advertisement, plaintiffs have suffered embarrassment, extreme emotional distress, and invasion of privacy," Wolf said.

"In addition, as a result of the libelous statement communicated by the advertisement about plaintiffs, their reputations as patriotic American citizens has been severely damaged."

Both USA Next and Montini initially said that they had bought the rights to the photo of Raymen and Hansen from the Portland Tribune. But, they recanted that after the Tribune issued a statement that it had not sold rights to the photo.

"The paper did not give, sell or contribute its use in any way, and no request for its use was received before the photo appeared in the ad," said Tim Jewett, Portland Tribune photo director.

Jewett said the paper may launch its own suit against Montini and USA Next.

ABC news has linked some of the members of USA Next to the same people behind the controversial Swift Boat Veterans for Truth ads that challenged the war record of Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry.

And, there have been unverified suggestions that Montini has links to Talon News the now defunct conservative online publication that employed J.D. Guckert the man who posed as a White House reporter while working as a male prostitute.

Neither Montini nor USA Next has responded to the suit.

Gay Clinic Gave Wrong Syphilis Meds

LOS ANGELES - The Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center revealed Thursday, March 10, it had administered the wrong kind of penicillin to more than 650 patients treated for syphilis from 1999 to March 2004, the PlanetOut Network reported.

At first the center believed only 300 were exposed to the wrong drug.

But in a joint report with the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the center said 663 patients at the Center got Bicillin C-R, which contains only half the dose of benzathine penicillin G (brand name: Bicillin L-A) that the CDC recommends for treating the disease.

If a syphilis infection is not treated properly, debilitating symptoms can emerge years after the original infection.

"Early in 1999 the distributor of Bicillin L-A ran out of the medication. In fact, there was a national shortage. They substituted it with a lesser dosage," explained Darrel Cummings, chief of staff for the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center.

The medical mix-up was discovered last year after a patient read package instructions stating the medicine would not treat syphilis.

"When we discovered this we contacted the public health department in Los Angeles and then we got on the phone with the CDC," Cummings said.

As a result of the ensuing investigation, King Pharmaceuticals, whose subsidiary, Monarch Pharmaceuticals, markets Bicillin products, has agreed to packaging and labeling changes to prevent similar mistakes in the future.

Of the 663 patients treated with the wrong medication, investigators have been able to contact only 398 of them; there are 265 people who still do not know they were treated with the wrong version of penicillin.

Of the 255 who agreed to be retreated, 19 (4 percent) underwent a lumbar puncture procedure for suspected treatment failure. One such patient was subsequently diagnosed with neurosyphilis, according to a CDC report.

Dr. Jason Schneider, a board member of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA), said patients not treated with the right medication could see symptoms appear later on.

"The manifestations are very different than the initial ulcer or chancre," he said. "The most common sign is a diffuse rash all over the body. If syphilis is untreated for many years it could lead to heart problems and nervous system problems, including dementia."



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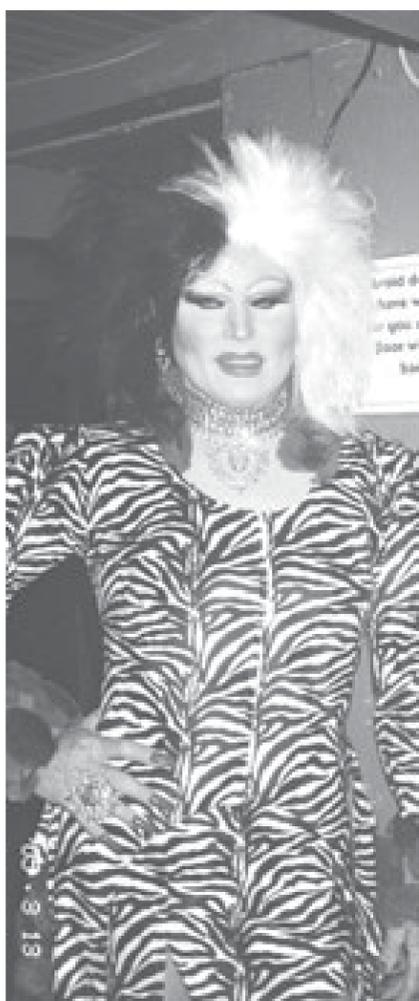
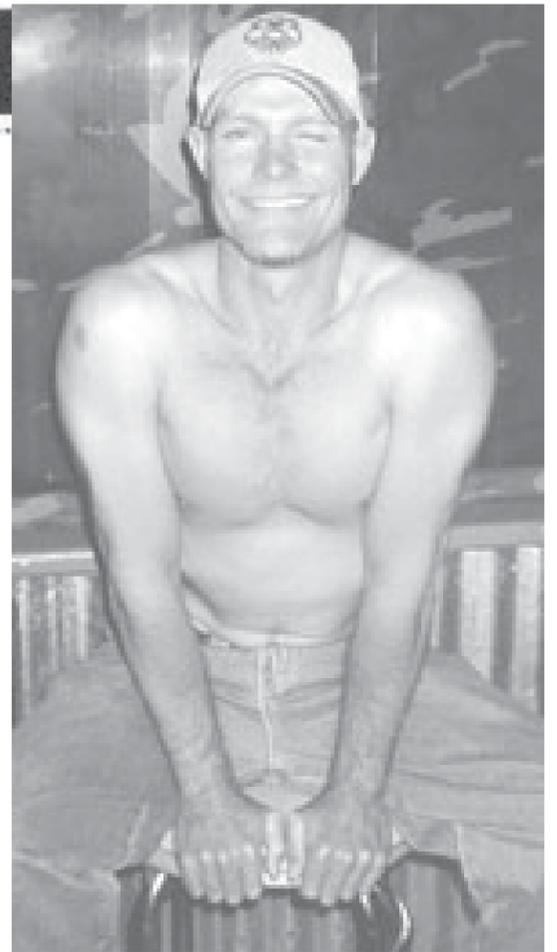
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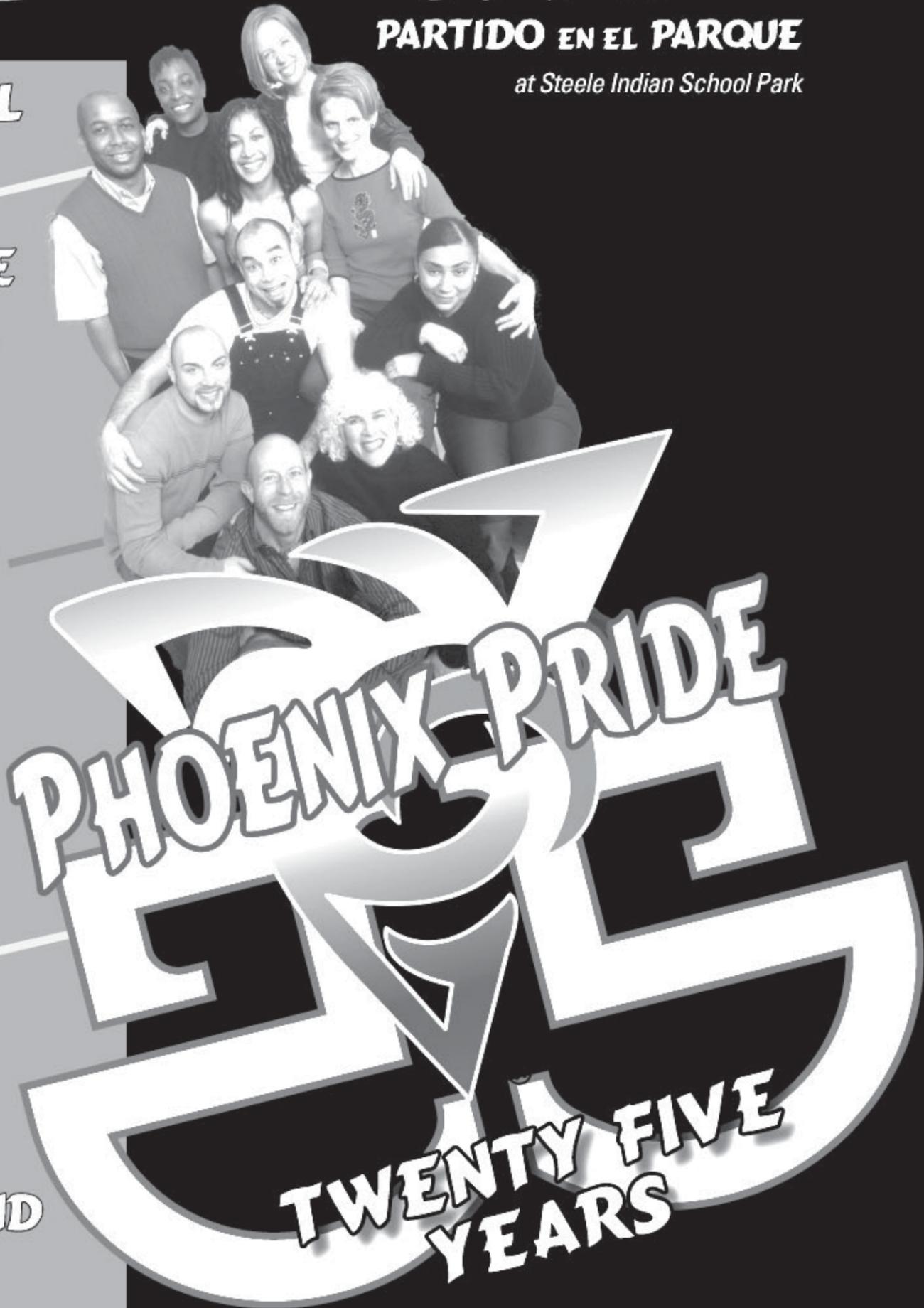
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Around the Gay World.....

Ian McKellen To Fulfill Dream Of Appearing On British Soap 'Coronation Street'

LONDON - Ian McKellen is fulfilling a long-held ambition: an appearance on long-running British soap Coronation Street. McKellen, who played the wizard Gandalf in the Lord of the Rings movies, will appear in 10 episodes of the show, producers said Thursday, March 10, the Associated Press reported on Advocate.com.

Wood. McKellen, 65, already has two Academy Award nominations, a reputation as Britain's finest living classical actor, and a knighthood from the queen.

He said last year his one remaining goal was to appear in Coronation Street, a much-loved soap about everyday life in the northern English community of Weatherfield. He will play Mel Hutchwright, a flamboyant romance novelist with a host of secrets, in episodes due to start airing in May.

"We are delighted that an actor of Ian McKellen's caliber has agreed to appear in the show," said producer Tony

Saudi Gay Men Executed For Killing Man Who Witnessed Sex Act

RIYADH - Two Saudi men were executed Sunday, March 13, for killing a Pakistani man who saw them in a "shameful situation," the Saudi interior ministry said in a statement issued by the official Saudi Press Agency, reported the Associated Press on Advocate.com.

ministry said. They feared the scene he'd witnessed could create a scandal for them, so they first ran him over in a car, then crushed his skull with a rock and set him on fire, the statement read.

Sunday's beheadings brought the number of people beheaded in Saudi Arabia this year to 24. Saudi authorities executed 35 people in 2004, down from 52 people the year before. Most were convicted of drug smuggling.

The phrase "shameful situation" is used to refer to homosexual acts, viewed as a sin against Islam and prohibited in Saudi Arabia and other Muslim nations. In Saudi Arabia, homosexual acts can be punished by flogging or prison terms.

Ahmed bin Shenayen bin Dhiya al-Inizi and Shaher bin Waqaaf bin Qayidh al-Ruwaily were convicted for killing Pakistani national Malek Zade Khan in the northern town of Arar, the

Saudi Arabia follows a strict interpretation of Islam under which people convicted of drug trafficking, murder, rape, and armed robbery can be executed. Beheadings are carried out with a sword in public.

IRA Turning To Attacks On Gays

LONDONDERRY - Terrorists from the Irish Republican Army are reportedly targeting Gays now that they have abandoned their war against the British government, the Associated Press reported on 365Gay.com.

after he was approached by another man on a Londonderry Street warned about complaining about being terrorized.

Mooney was turned down when he asked to be moved to another housing project.

"There's no doubt that there has been an increase in homophobic attacks in the city," said Damian Moran of the housing authority. "We have housed five or six Gay people over the last year as a result of homophobic attacks. In this case, investigation so far hasn't been able to substantiate his claims."

As the political wing of the IRA concentrates on peaceful talks about the future of Ireland with the government in London, members of the military wing in Northern Ireland have turned into marauding bands - robbing banks and beating Gay men.

A Gay student in Londonderry has gone into hiding after receiving threats from men he says identified themselves as IRA members.

Paul Mooney, 20, says that he has been beaten on a number of occasions. After one beating he required hospitalization for several days.

Mooney, who suffers from epilepsy, fled his home after two men knocked on his door and warned that if he continued to go to police about the attacks he "would have two less legs to walk on."

Kneecapping is a common form of reprisal for informants.

The threat came just two days

Swedish Pastor Calls Gays A 'Cancer'

STOCKHOLM - Sweden's chief prosecutor appealed Wednesday, March 9, a court decision to acquit a pastor who denounced Gays as "a deep cancer" during a sermon in his church, the Associated Press reported on 365Gay.com.

convicted under Sweden's tough hate-crimes legislation, which was ratified in 2003 to include attacks against Gays. An appeals court overturned the ruling in February.

In his sermon Green told a congregation on the small southeastern island of Oeland that Gays are "a deep cancer tumor on all of society" and warned that Sweden risks a natural disaster because of its leniency toward Gays. "Homosexuality is something sick," Green said, comparing it to pedophilia and bestiality. He said Gays are likely to rape children and animals.

Last month an appeals court threw out a hate-crimes conviction against the priest, Aake Green, saying his views on Gays could be "seriously questioned" but that it was not illegal to offer a personal interpretation of the Bible and urge others to follow it. In his appeal to the supreme court, chief public prosecutor Fredrik Wersaell said Green, 63, should be tried for "agitation against an ethnic group."

Green, a Pentecostal, was given a 30-day suspended prison sentence in June 2004. He was the first clergyman

Wersaell said the supreme court should review the case to determine "a balance between the ban against offensive statements and the interests of freedom of speech and religion."

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Are you talking to yourself? Consider doing that while Mercury retrogrades and screws up our communications. Havoc reigns from missed phone calls to lost emails. Every musing can become bruising if we don't think carefully before we speak. We can all do thatcan't we? Oops!

ARIES (MAR. 21 - APR. 20)
Every faint impression becomes an indelible mark with retro Mercury. Every proud Ram thinks they are quite the charmer but what you say may not be what you really mean. Chances are that you will rub certain folks the wrong way. Rather than rubadub elbows why not take a rest from socializing and find comfort and solace in quiet personal growth. Err, how personal?

TAURUS (APR. 21 - MAY 21)
While you are convinced that spirit guides have your best interests at heart, they could in fact lead you astray while Mercury retrogrades. That is because there is static on the psychic line and what you hear is not what they are transmitting. Avoid getting caught up in mystery and intrigue, queer Bull. Keep things crystal clear and save the fog machine for the next party.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)
Plans gone awry this week? Chalk it up to an innocent miscommunication and give friends a little extra latitude while Mercury retrogrades. Pink Twins find themselves in one place and their posse in another. It seems that even best laid plans become whipped and scrambled. Why go crazy? Enjoy the unexpected serendipities that come with chance and just make an omelette.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)
This is not be the best time to push for that promotion or pivotal interview. Retro Mercury makes almost every professional attempt a political gaffe. It is not worth the risk to try now. Retreat to your cubicle and rearrange your paperwork while you bide your time. Gay Crabs will have their chance at success in early April. Meantime, is that spinach in your teeth?

LEO (JULY 24 - AUG. 23)
If you think that travel nowadays is annoying, try not to travel during retro Mercury. Reservations get lost along with your luggage. Proud Lions may prefer to

roam the house rather than the world but if you cannot contain yourself, be sure to check and recheck all details of the trip. It

would be a shame to have your suitcase relaxing in Maui while you cool your paws in Buffalo.

VIRGO (AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23)
There is now another way to leave your lover - retro Mercury and the miscommunication it causes. No matter how much you would like to wax poetic and declare your love, it is best to let your actions speak louder and prouder than your words. Queer Virgins are apt to inadvertently say just the thing to scuttle their love boat. Better keep all hands on deck ... among other places.

LIBRA (SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)
Ever politic Gay Libra can come down with a case of foot in mouth while Mercury retrogrades. This will be especially true in any one-on-one conversation that is intended to help solidify and strengthen relationships. You are just not getting your point across. Nor are you listening. Perhaps this is a good time to let things simmer quietly. Let it become a potboiler next month.

SCORPIO (OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)
What a great time to catch up on backlogged projects! Proud Scorps are infused with energy and determination. However, as you tackle everything with verve, you stray from your initial intent and wind up with results far different from what you need or expect. Read all instructions, carefully listen to advice and take copious notes now. Or just relax and let things pile up.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)
One could say that you can never have too much fun. Usually that is true but now retro Mercury sez too much fun can indeed be too too much. Gay Archers pile so much on their plates that things begin to spill. Be discerning and enjoy in moderation, as difficult as that may be. Gluttony is often your fall back position but now you should savor one thing at a time. No names please!

CAPRICORN (DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)
Leave yourself plenty of reminders on post it notes around the house while Mercury retrogrades. You may forget to do things. Pink Caps can find that their domestic agenda does not make sense (sound familiar?). Confusion reigns and details get lost in the general melee. The next couple of weeks will teach you to handle and harness an array of loose ends. Anyone we know?

AQUARIUS (JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)
You talking to me, Aqueerius? Mercury retrogrades and blasts your more outrageous opinions on the front page. This may not be a bad thing; It can bring change and attention. But will it have lasting power? You can't move a big boat on a gust of hot wind alone. Turn up the motor mouth and be sure that your propeller doesn't get caught in a buoy... unless that is your plan...

PISCES (FEB. 20 - MAR. 20)
If you think that your finances are out of control you are right. Retro Mercury causes confusion and miscommunication where money is concerned. This means that you might waste a few bucks on a scheme that you think is failsafe but is really failure prone. Nothing is guaranteed so hold on to your hard earned dough Guppie. There is plenty of time to waste it in April.

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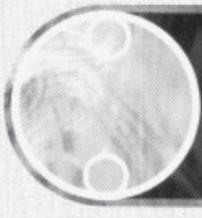
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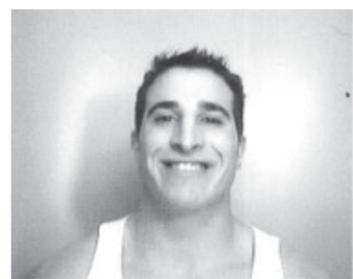


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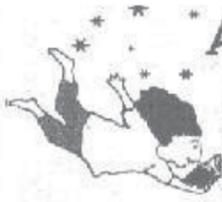


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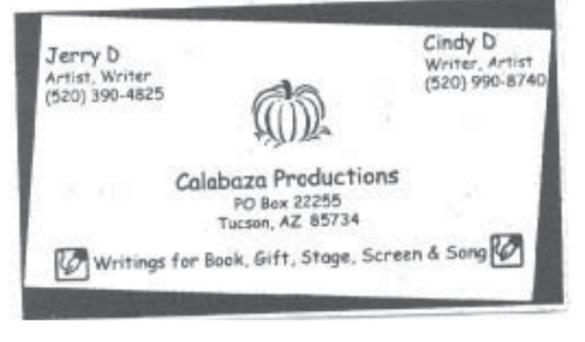
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by Lee Thorn

Mystery AT TUSD

A recent column in the ARIZONA DAILY STAR dealt with the Tucson Unified School District "magically or mysteriously" balancing its budget. I don't usually read articles about TUSD, but this one was so good I read it twice.

It seems that every year for the past four years the district has projected a budget deficit: one of \$20 million four years ago, \$2 million three years ago, \$29 million two years ago, and \$14 million currently. According to the STAR column, not one of these deficit projections came true. "Somehow, magically or mysteriously, the district balanced its budget every single year."

The piece goes on to point out that, since funding for the coming year is based on current enrollment, the district knows exactly how much money it will have to work with. It also opines that "Probably 90 percent of the budget is salaries and benefits." In other words, so much of the budget is set in cement that there's not all that much to predict.

The column really gets interesting when it says that the superintendent of TUSD doesn't seem to know for sure what's going on. More precisely, the super "offered several explanations" for the district's chronic budgetary hysteria.

What I love are the actual quotes from the super: "Frankly, there may have been a couple times when the situation was portrayed as a worse-case scenario rather than realistic....we have not been able to get up-to-the minute accurate information on budget or payroll issues out of the financial system... The Governing Board thought it had money to negotiate with, but it turned out we didn't have as much as we thought... (the district) has been unable to control unbudgeted expenses that come up."

What the super seems to be telling us is, "I don't know what I'm doing. I really have no clue whatsoever." The man is supposed to be running the district. What could be more basic to running an organization than knowing how much money is coming in and how much is going out?

As is so often the case here in the Old Pueblo, the real mystery inheres in attempting to understand what causes the apparent mystery. Why couldn't -- why wouldn't -- the super say something like this? "We thought we'd have a deficit of x dollars. We knew exactly what our income would be because it's based on current enrollment and we accurately counted heads. Here is a list of the expenditures we accurately predicted. Here is a list of the expenditures we got wrong. Our first inaccuracy came about because we had to make estimate y. We based that estimate on data w and z. We were off because the w figure was printed on Mrs. Hall's printer with the decimal point in the wrong place."

What I'm trying to say is that, unless they're coming up with their figures by throwing darts at numbers written on a wall, there's got to be a paper trail of their calculating process. If a paper trail exists, as it logically must, why can't it be retraced to find out exactly where it went wrong and exactly why it went wrong and exactly who made the mistake in arithmetic or error in judgment or whatever it was?

The fact that mistakes are made every year is nowhere near as disturbing as the fact that the superintendent "offers several explanations" and in effect throws up his hands and walks away. Mistakes get made. The guy who's driving the boat is supposed to run them down and see that

they're not repeated. If you can't get reliable information about this or that, you're supposed to fire the people you're paying to get you reliable information and replace them with more reliable people. The process is known as "management."

The STAR column concludes by saying that "one of (the superintendent's) key tasks... must be to eliminate these on-again, off-again deficits." Unfortunately, there's nothing in the super's quoted statements to indicate either the intention or the ability to eliminate them.

It reminds me of a governor of California who was recently impeached. When reporters kept badgering him about his financial cluelessness, he finally said something to the effect that the person who was supposed to keep track of the state finances told him the wrong numbers.

Shame, shame, shame on that naughty person.

[Thorn welcomes comments, suggestions for future columns, and tips on local skulduggery that ought to be exposed. Write to Box 85571, Tucson, AZ 85754. e-mail: Doid3@aol.com]

Youth Handed 13 Years Behind Bars For Gay Attack

AUSTIN - A teen convicted in the beating of a Gay Austin man was given a 13-year sentence on Friday, March 11, reported 365Gay.com reported.

The 17 year old, whose name is protected because of his age, must serve the first three years in a juvenile detention facility and will then be transferred to an adult prison. He was 16 at the time of the attack.

He was one of four men charged in the attack on the victim, whose name is also being withheld out of concerns for his safety.

The 32 year old victim left Oilcan Harry's, an Austin Gay bar, with one of the men on July 17, on the way out the man asked if he could bring his friends.

The group returned to the victim's home in East Austin where the attack occurred. Police say the four men drugged, tied-up, beat, cut, then sexually assaulted the victim. When it was over they threatened to kill him if he spoke a word about the violence.

The attack sent shockwaves through Austin's close knit Gay community, particularly since the attackers went to a Gay bar to find a victim.

In closing arguments at the teen's trial last month, prosecutors said the four men sadistically beat, tortured and sexually assaulted their victim.

The youth was the first of the four to go on trial. Shawn Regan, 21, Donald Bockman, 24, and Darren Gay, 21, all face charges of aggravated sexual assault and aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon.



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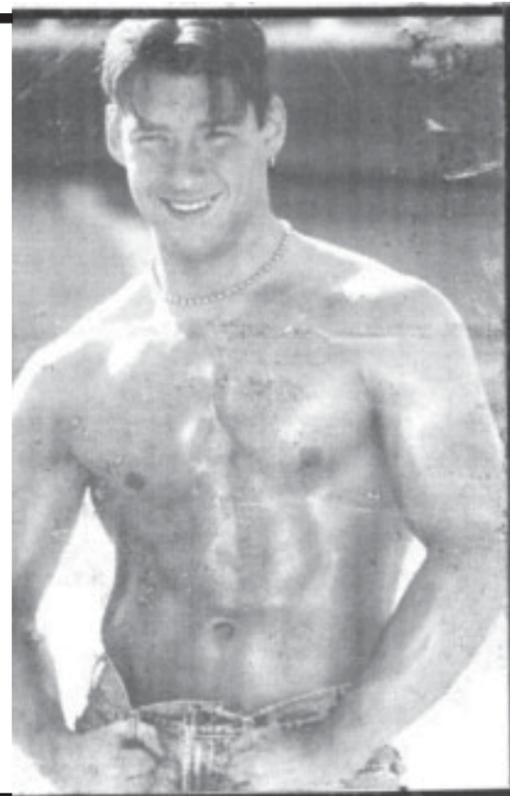
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Video That Raised Conservative's Ire To Be Distributed Nationwide

NEW YORK - A children's music video that conservatives charge is part of an effort to encourage acceptance of homosexuality is being distributed to more than 60,000 schools nationwide this week, producers said Thursday, March 10, the Associated Press reported.

The video features about 100 children's TV characters including SpongeBob SquarePants, Miss Piggy and Oscar the Grouch singing the disco hit "We Are Family." It will be accompanied by a teaching guide that promotes tolerance of diversity.

"The opportunity to bring that message to children around the entire country is truly exciting," said Caryl Stern, senior associate national director of the Anti-Defamation League. "We know at ADL that people are not born as little haters, we learn to hate. And just as we learn to hate, we have to unlearn to hate."

To produce and distribute the video, the ADL has teamed up with the We Are Family Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded by music producer Nile Rodgers, who co-wrote the hit 1979 song "We Are Family."

Television networks and production companies also are involved, and FedEx has agreed to ship the videos for free.

The effort sparked controversy in January when the Mississippi-based American Family Association, in an article by the editor of its monthly journal, charged that the video had a pro-gay subtext.

"On the surface, the project may appear to be a worthwhile attempt to foster greater understanding of cultural differences," wrote Ed Vitagliano. "However, a short step beneath the surface reveals that one of the differences being celebrated is homosexuality."

The video was also criticized by James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, who alluded to SpongeBob SquarePants' role in a "pro-homosexual video" during remarks to a pre-inauguration dinner in Washington.

In a telephone interview Thursday, Vitagliano said he does not object to the "innocuous" video itself but to the accompanying teaching guide, which he said "distorts the definition of family to produce a nontraditional model."

Although the guide does not specifically mention sexual orientation, Vitagliano said it is designed to lay the groundwork for acceptance of Gay parents.

He pointed to a section where children are asked who is in a family, and if they say "a mommy," "a daddy," "a sister" or "a brother," the teacher is prodded to "ask further questions of the class."

"We feel that this is part of an attempt to include same-sex couples in the institution of marriage and the family," he said.

Rodgers, who joined ADL officials and others at an event launching the video at Public School 87 on Manhattan's Upper West Side, said the project is not about sexual orientation.

"We're not talking about sex at all," he said. "This is for young children."

Christopher Cerf, the author and children's TV producer who is

another of the video's creators, said he was "amazed" by the criticism.

"At first I thought this was so ridiculous that it's funny," he said.

First-graders at P.S. 87 sang along with the catchy disco classic as the video was screened Thursday, March 10. It features characters from popular children's TV shows including "Sesame Street," "Blue's Clues," "Dora the Explorer" and "Winnie the Pooh," with cameos by Bill Cosby, Diana Ross and Whoopi Goldberg.

Afterward, children were asked to share artwork they had made about their families and to say what family means to them.

Answers included "Family means to me that when you want to do something you can sometimes do it with your family, and they'll take you and you'll have fun" and "It means that when I'm mad they let me be mad."

Connecticut Could Lose \$1 Million A Year If Civil Unions Allowed

HARTFORD - Connecticut could lose nearly \$1 million a year because of decreased inheritance tax revenue if the state allows civil unions for same-sex couples, a new legislative report says. Municipalities would also pay a price, up to \$1.5 million a year for health insurance, pensions, and other benefits for town and city workers who enter into civil unions, according to the legislature's nonpartisan Office of Fiscal Analysis, the Associated Press reported on Advocate.com.

The report provided general cost estimates but said the true cost of civil unions is difficult to estimate.

A bill that would create civil unions, which would allow same-sex couples to enter into legal partnerships and receive many of the same rights and guarantees as married couples, was approved by the legislature's judiciary committee last month. The measure would need approval from the appropriations and finance committees before it could reach the floors of the full house and senate.

The primary financial effect on the state budget would be lost revenue from the succession tax. Under state law, wives and husbands inherit property from their spouses tax-free, but unmarried partners are required to pay taxes.

If Gays and Lesbians are permitted to legalize their relationships by entering into civil unions, they would have the same tax status as married heterosexual couples. The office estimates that the lost revenue will total \$1 million a year until January 2008, when the tax is scheduled to be eliminated.

The state budget for the current fiscal year is more than \$14 billion.

Sen. Andrew McDonald, a Stamford Democrat and cochairman of the judiciary committee, said the lost revenue proves the inequities Gays and Lesbians now face. "Under current law, [same-sex] partners are at a real economic disadvantage because they are considered to be legal strangers—they're no more connected than if you left a bequest to your neighbor down the street," McDonald said. "To me, that underscores very real economic discrimination."

The loss of tax revenue is "the price we will pay to end this legal discrimination," McDonald said.

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COMMENTARY. . . .**'The Equality Issue'**

Before the talk-radio showmen sink their fangs into Monday's state court ruling overturning California's ban on Gay marriage, and before too many celebrations in front of San Francisco's City Hall, we'd like to say that Judge Richard Kramer reached the right decision. That doesn't mean having judges decide such explosive social issues settles them.

The historical definition of marriage, by itself, the judge said, cannot justify the denial of equal protection to Gays and Lesbians. The San Francisco Superior Court ruling was the result of a pair of lawsuits that focus on a voter initiative, passed in 2000, that amended state law to limit marriage to a union between a man and a woman.

Those uncomfortable with the concept of Gay marriage — and according to opinion polls, that includes a majority of Americans — may argue that marriage is an unnecessary step because California law already grants same-sex couples who register as domestic partners virtually the same state rights and responsibilities as married couples. That argument further undermines any reason for states to make the moral judgments about which adults can marry and which can't. Let priests, rabbis and imams decide which marriages should receive their blessing, but as to legal and social rights, the state has no business discriminating.

The legal battles over same-sex marriage are not the first time that the courts have gotten ahead of public opinion on social issues. This nation's long civil rights history is one of two steps forward, backlash, another step or two forward.

Kramer is the fourth trial judge across the country to decide in recent months that same-sex couples should have the right to marry. Those who oppose his ruling, and similar decisions elsewhere, are betting that higher courts and voters will ultimately settle the issue in their favor. Indeed, efforts to place a measure on the November ballot carving a Gay-marriage ban into California's Constitution no doubt got a big boost from Monday's decision.

Last November alone, voters in 11 states passed such mean-spirited measures, and President Bush says he still backs an amendment to the federal Constitution defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman. So far, only Massachusetts recognizes same-sex marriages.

Opponents of Monday's decision will be quick to denounce it as judicial activism and result-oriented jurispru-

dence. They will point out what is indisputable: that the authors of the identical words in the U.S. and California constitutions guaranteeing "equal protection of the law" never envisaged the possibility of Gay marriage, let alone making it a constitutionally guaranteed right. The judicial power to overturn the popular will is extraordinary and potentially dangerous medicine. But "use with care" doesn't mean "never use at all." The "equal protection" words are there, and are there to be used.

Respect for democracy and the Constitution — as well as simple prudence (judges can do things you don't like, as well as things you do) — requires us to consider the reasoning of a decision, however much we may like the result.

In the coming days, that reasoning will receive close scrutiny. The judge argues that forbidding same-sex marriage is gender discrimination. A better argument would be that Gays are a classic example of a group that needs constitutional protection from the tyranny of the majority. There is no special reason to assume that the Constitution's framers would disagree with that analysis if they were living in today's society.

[The following was the editorial in the March 15 edition of the Los Angeles Times.]

Dutch Lawmakers Move To Legalize Adoption Of Foreign Children By G/L Couples

AMSTERDAM - A coalition of Dutch lawmakers—representing a parliamentary majority—presented a bill Wednesday, March 9, that would legalize the adoption of foreign children by Gay couples and create greater equality for Gay and Lesbian families, the Associated Press reported on Advocate.com.

The adoption of Dutch children by Gay couples has been possible since same-sex marriage was legalized in the Netherlands in September 2000, but not cross-border adoption. If the bill is passed, it will remove hurdles for children adopted by Gays in general and resolve serious inheritance and legal parenthood issues, said Philip Tijsma of the Democrats 66 Party, which first suggested the law.

Justice minister Piet Hein Donner said the government is prepared to change the law but that it is a "dead issue" for the time being because there's no country willing to give children up for cross-border adoptions by Dutch Gays. Dutch Gays adopting from abroad have until now evaded foreign rules against adoption by Gays by signing only one parent's name on adoption forms and then completing the adoption once children are in the Netherlands.

One Gay couple who attended the bill's presentation Wednesday was Jos and Jarko de Witte van Leeuwen. They have been together for 16 years and were among the first to wed after same-sex marriage was legalized in the Netherlands. They said they are about to adopt a child from the United States but will have

to do so with only one of them registered as a parent, since the new law has not been passed. "We are a family, and we want to adopt as a family," said Jarko, 34. "We want to do this openly as Gay parents."

The backers of the new bill have accused the conservative government of dragging its feet in taking measures to remove discriminatory adoption practices that have caused serious legal problems for adopted children. It was put forward Wednesday by a coalition of three parties in parliament—the leading opposition Labor Party, the free-market liberal VVD, and Democrats 66—which hold a slim majority of the 150-seat house.

"Gay adoption has been legal in the Netherlands for years, but most adopted children come from abroad," Tijsma told the Associated Press. "The problem is that Dutch law prohibits adoption by both parents." He said 15 Dutch Gay couples have already adopted children from the United States and that Washington has not objected. Approximately 20,000 children are being raised by Gay couples in the Netherlands, he said. "It will give homosexual and heterosexual couples the same rights, and that is in the best interest of the child," he said.

South Africa and some Brazilian provinces are expected to soon allow Dutch Gay couples to adopt their children, Tijsma said. The Netherlands was the first country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage outright, followed last year by Belgium. Canada is currently reviewing similar legislation.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Terry for Canasta. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call Terry at 577-2396.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

Coyote Moon Health Resort & Spa, St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Show. Dinner is 5:30 - 7:30 PM (\$18). The Bunny O'Fu Fu Show starts at 8:00 p.m. and features Lucinda Holliday, Janee Starr, and Ajia Simone. Reservations Required. Call 744-2355 or check out www.coyotemoonresort.com

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join the men of MSN for an evening out at Rainbow Planet Coffee House. This is a chance to have a cup of coffee and chat with the men of MSN. This is a No-host event, so please ask Barista to point you in our direction.

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Bruce as he brings back an old favorite; "Pizza Night". Join your host and fellow MSN'ers for an evening of Pizza and sides and good conversation. All this for just \$5.00 per person. Reservations and directions, call Bruce at 743-3890 by noon Thursday, March 17.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed) 8:30 am Join Jack & Mike and Ed & Marcus for a morning of Volleyball. This is played for fun, and you'll get to know some nice guys as you play. For details and directions, please call Mike/Jack at 881-5733 or Marcus/Ed at 407-5733.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Steve hosts Pinochle Night. If you don't know how to play, but would like to learn, this is the place. For more information, please call Steve at 664-2076.

#1 - Tucson Prime Timers Lunch/Business Meeting, Noon, with Guest Speaker at Home Town Buffet, 5101 N. Oracle Rd.

#2 - Tucson Prime Timers Food & Drinks - 5:00 p.m., Woody's, 3710 N. Oracle Rd.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 9:00 am. Join Bill as he leads a tour up to the historic Casa Grande Ruins. Please bring a sandwich and Bill will supply drinks and dessert. Departure is promptly at 9:00 am and cost is \$4.00 per carload. Please call Bill at 546-7539 for reservations and details.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 12:00 pm. Join Marv and Steve on a tour of the Tucson Museum of Art's Designer Showcase home in the Catalina Foothills section. Cost is \$30.00 and includes lunch prior to the tour. RSVP by March 15. For reservations and more details, contact Steve at 490-4862.

MONDAY, MARCH 21

#1. Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join us for the "putting out the Newsletter" Night. For reservations and directions, please call Arlan at 323-7414.

#2. Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:30 p.m. Join us for the MSN Premiere of "Hit and Runway" (after Newsletter Night). For reservations and directions, please call Arlan at 323-7414.

Tucson Prime Timers Bowling - 10:30 a.m. Call: 888-7264. Lunch -12:30 p.m., The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

TUESDAY, MARCH 22

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Perry hosts Bridge Night. If you don't know how to play, they'll teach you-and it's a very relaxed atmosphere. For reservations and directions, please call Perry at 321-4387.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join David and Daniel for Canasta. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call David and Daniel at 579-9763.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join the men of MSN for an evening out at Rainbow Planet Coffee House. This is a chance to have a cup of coffee and chat with the men of MSN. This is a No-host event, so please ask Barista to point you in our direction.

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Lloyd hosts a fun evening of Scrabble. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call Lloyd at 792-8537.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

Miss Gay Western States America Pageant at the Double Tree Hotel, 445 S. Alvernon Way. This regional preliminary to Miss Gay America will feature the reigning Miss Gay America 2005 Raquel Chevallier as well as Patti Le Plae Safe, Miss Gay America 1995 and Catia Lee Cove, Miss Gay America 2000. VIP tickets \$25; General Admission tickets in advance are \$15 or \$20 at the door. For reservations aor more information call DRS Promotions, (520)241-3470 or (520)275-7999.

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Marv hosts Pinochle Night. If you don't know how to play, but would like to learn, this is the place. For more information, please call Marv at 745-0304.

Tucson Prime Timers Food & Drinks - 5:00 p.m., Woody's, 3710 N. Oracle Rd.

SUNDAY, MARCH 27

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Les hosts "Retro TV" Night. Join Les for hilarious episodes of "What's My Line" and "I Love Lucy". For reservations and directions, please call Les at 690-9565

MONDAY, MARCH 28

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 1:00 p.m. Les hosts a Lunch Out at Mariscos Chihuahua; his favorite Mexican Seafood Restaurant. For reservations and directions, please call Les at 690-9565.

Tucson Prime Timers Bowling - 10:30 a.m. Call: 888-7264. Lunch -12:30 p.m. The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

TUESDAY, MARCH 29

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Merlin and Lee for Canasta. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call Lee and Merlin at 207-5336.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.



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Cook, Part-Time, experienced. Coyote Moon Health Resort & Spa. \$9 - \$11/hr based on experience. Fax resume to 572-4096. 1080

NEEDED: HOME ASSISTANT for general cleaning and occasional driving services. Pay negotiable. Please call Dan at 622-4663. 1080

PERSONALS

GWM - MID-AGE RANGE. Some fun to ... 731-6152 1080

BLUE COLLAR MAN, GWM, 52, 5'9", brown hair, green eyes, beard, solid, rugged, good looks, outdoorsman. Looking for someone to share my life with. Interests: restoring old houses, motorcycles, old pick-ups, sport cars, dogs & horses. Contact P.O. Box 885, Tucson, AZ 85702-0885. 1080

HOUSING/FOR RENT

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WANT TO RENT Trailer, studio apartment, room (if it's private). Dependable, mature State employee works in Tucson and lives in Sierra Vista. Will do roommate situation if you are quiet and reasonably clean. Long-term house-sitting ok. 520-227-5698

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NON-BAR CALENDAR

Groups / Clubs / Organizations /

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Terry for Canasta. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call Terry at 577-2396.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

Coyote Moon Health Resort & Spa, St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Show. Dinner is 5:30 - 7:30 PM (\$18). The Bunny O'Fu Fu Show starts at 8:00 p.m. and features Lucinda Holliday, Janee Starr, and Ajia Simone. Reservations Required. Call 744-2355 or check out www.coyotemoonresort.com

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join the men of MSN for an evening out at Rainbow Planet Coffee House. This is a chance to have a cup of coffee and chat with the men of MSN. This is a No-host event, so please ask Barista to point you in our direction.

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Bruce as he brings back an old favorite; "Pizza Night". Join your host and fellow MSN'ers for an evening of Pizza and sides and good conversation. All this for just \$5.00 per person. Reservations and directions, call Bruce at 743-3890 by noon Thursday, March 17.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed) 8:30 am Join Jack & Mike and Ed & Marcus for a morning of Volleyball. This is played for fun, and you'll get to know some nice guys as you play. For details and directions, please call Mike/Jack at 881-5733 or Marcus/Ed at 407-5733.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Steve hosts Pinochle Night. If you don't know how to play, but would like to learn, this is the place. For more information, please call Steve at 664-2076.

#1 - Tucson Prime Timers Lunch/Business Meeting, Noon, with Guest Speaker at Home Town Buffet, 5101 N. Oracle Rd.

#2 - Tucson Prime Timers Food & Drinks - 5:00 p.m., Woody's, 3710 N. Oracle Rd.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 9:00 am. Join Bill as he leads a tour up to the historic Casa Grande Ruins. Please bring a sandwich and Bill will supply drinks and dessert. Departure is promptly at 9:00 am and cost is \$4.00 per carload. Please call Bill at 546-7539 for reservations and details.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 12:00 pm. Join Marv and Steve on a tour of the Tucson Museum of Art's Designer Showcase home in the Catalina Foothills section. Cost is \$30.00 and includes lunch prior to the tour. RSVP by March 15. For reservations and more details, contact Steve at 490-4862.

BAR CALENDAR

Of Upcoming Events

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

IBT'S - St. Patrick's Day "Green Party" here from 10:00 p.m. to closing. Drink specials all night. Underwear contest with cash prizes. Bar staff doing their dances on the bar. Don't forget to wear your hottest underwear and green.

VENTURE-N - St. Patrick's Day celebrated here with Bucky's Reuben Sandwiches from 11a.m. until 2 p.m. Steak dinner from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Then, a 'Locker Room Party' from 9:00 p.m. to closing featuring massages by Jacob and other good things. Check it out!

WOODY'S - St. Paddy's Day Party here. Corned Beef and Cabbage Buffet, 5:30-7:30 p.m. DJ Jeff. Drink Specials (you must wear green), Door Prizes starting at 9:00 p.m.

YARD DOG SALOON - Celebrate St. Paddy's day here with a corned beef and cabbage buffet served from 2:00 p.m. until it runs out.

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

HOWL AT THE MOON - It's T-Squares Club Nite here from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. If you like square dancing or want to find out more about it, come on down!

IBT'S - It's Street Fair Weekend here. Starts off with live music on the patio from 6-9 p.m. Then dance with Mike Lopes spinning from 9pm to 2am.

VENTURE-N - Hides of March 3-day celebration and party!!! Welcome reception 5:00 p.m., drink specials, prizes and a whole lot more.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

IBT'S - 4TH Avenue Street Fair continues with Showtime at 3:00 p.m. hosted by Bunny FuFu and starring Barbra Seville, Angela Dodd, Ajia Simone and Tori Steel. DJ Q plays until 2am.

VENTURE-N - Day Two of the Hides of March Party. Bucky will be serving Omelettes from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m. Beer Bust 3-7 p.m. Afternoon Games and party until close.

WOODY'S - 'Suck and Blow Party 10:30 p.m. til closing. An all new way to meet friends!

YARD DOG SALOON - 7:00 p.m. Prime Rib Dinner then at 10:00 p.m. the annual Toga Party with the contest starting at 10:00 p.m. Cash prizes are \$150 first prize; \$100 Second place and \$75 for third place winner. Plus Ides of March Special - Those in leather attire get 75¢ off their drinks prices.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20

IBT'S - Street Fair ends today but not before showtime at 3pm hosted by Bunny FuFu and starring Phaedra, Janee Starr, Veronica Halliwell and Tabatha Lovall. And the late show starts at 9p.m. hosted by Bunny again and starring Jessica Devereaux, Veronica Halliwell, Janee Starr & Poyzien Miles. Then dance with Mike Lopez til 2am.

VENTURE-N - Hides of March winds down today with a Beer Bust from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. with Boss Burgers available from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

WOODY'S - 'Boys Gone Wild' and Underwear Party 9:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

WOODY'S - 9:00 p.m. til closing, End-of-the-Month-Cheap-Party Nite. Pabst 12oz long necks \$1.00

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

WOODY'S - Miss Gay Western States-America pre-Pageant Show. 8:00 pm.

SUNDAY, MARCH 27

WOODY'S - Annual Easter Egg Hunt and Party here. Basket contest. Mark your calendars.

THURSDAY, MARCH 31

WOODY'S - 9:00 p.m. til closing, End-of-the-Month-Cheap-Party Nite. Pabst 12oz long necks \$1.00

DAILY BAR CALENDAR

sunday

COLORS - Fabulous Brunch 11am - 2pm with complimentary mimosa. Dinner 5-10pm.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 11:00 am. Chuckwagon Breakfast 10:30 am - 1:30 pm, includes Bloody Mary or Mimosa. \$2 Smirnoff Sunday. Free Texas Hold-'Em Poker Tournaments at 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm. Sign-up begins one hour before playing time. No Cash - Play for Prizes and Points. Great chance to learn the hottest game around

IBT'S - Open Noon. \$1.75 Bloodys, Screws or mimosas. til 4pm 4-7:30 Karaoke with Michael D. on the patio 5:30-8 Benefit BBQ for community organizations 7:30-2Am Dance with David Z. All drink specials not available during special events

VENTURE-N - Open 10am. Patio open 3pm. \$1.75 Bloody Marys or Screws til 3pm Patio Beer Bust 3-7. Burger BBQ 5-7. Selection of burger meats to choose from. \$2 proceeds go to Pet Watch (helping HIV/AIDS clients with their veterinary bills).

WOODY'S - Open 11am. Sunday Brunch 11:30 - 2:30. Eggs and meat du jour plus BMs, Mims or Screws \$5. \$1.50 Bloody Marys, screwdrivers, Mimosas; Happy Hour 11am-8pm. Patio Bar open 5-close. Pick-up Beach Volleyball games 5-7. \$2.50 sirloin burger w/salad 5-9pm. Karaoke with Michael D. 9pm

YARD DOG - Open Sundays 10am - 1am. Bloody Marys or Screwdrivers \$1.75 from 10am - 3pm.

monday

COLORS - Open 11am for lunch; 5pm for dinner. Happy Hour 4-7pm. Domestic beer and well cocktails \$2.25

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Monday Munchies 3 - 8 pm with reduced prices on appetizers - best deal in town! Free Texas Hold-'Em Poker Tournaments at 6:00 pm and 9:00 pm. Sign-up begins one hour before playing time. No Cash - Play for Prizes and Points.

IBT'S - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, Audio Anomaly 9pm-2am with DJ Trinidad, 10pm-2am \$1.50 well vodka. All drink specials not available at special events.

VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio 6pm. Free pool til 4pm. \$2.75 Skyy Martinis 4-8. Free Hot Dogs.

WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10-2. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Karaoke w/Michael D. 9-1

YARD DOG - Open daily 6am. 50¢ off any Scotch until 7pm. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

WEEKLY OBSERVER

tuesday

COLORS - Open 11am for lunch, 5pm dinner. Happy Hour 4-7pm. Domestic beers and well cocktails \$2.25. Karaoke 10:30pm to close w/Johnny DJ.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Tequila Tuesday: \$2.00 well margaritas, 50¢ off call tequilas. Karaoke with Debbie from 8 - midnight

IBT'S - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, Tropical Tuesdays \$2.50 Tropical drinks and DJ Q playing Retro Music 70's, 80's and 90's 9pm-close, All drink specials not available during special events.

VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm

WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Bartender Calls rink specials..

YARD DOG - Open daily 6am. 50¢ off any Tequila until 7pm Beer Bust 3-7pm.

wednesday

COLORS - Open 11am for lunch; 5pm dinner. Happy Hour 4-7pm Domestic Beers or Well cocktails \$2.25.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Free Pool all day. Draught Beer Specials all day. Beginning couples dance lessons with Amanda 7:30 - 8:30 pm. Country DJ Jake plays 8:30 - close

IBT'S - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, 9pm "Diva-Licious" show w/ Bunny Fu Fu. HiNrgy dance with DJ Q, All drink specials not available during special events.

VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Draft Special 12-4pm. \$2.75 Cuervo Margaritas 4-8pm

WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Free Hot Dog Buffet 5-11pm. Underwear- fetish- leather nite w/Gary and Chris with GMHP. \$1 off any drink or bottled beer. (Excludes draft & schnapps) for all in leather or underwear.

YARD DOG - Open daily 6am. 50¢ off any Vodka until 7pm Beer Bust 3-7pm.

thursday

COLORS - Open 11am for lunch, 5pm dinner. 4-7pm Happy Hour Domestic Beers or Well cocktails \$2.25. Karaoke 10:30 - close with Johnny DJ.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. \$2.00 Mexican Beers all day. Karaoke with Debbie from 8 to midnight.

IBT'S - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, Tricked Out Thursday with your Bartenders in their undies and DJ Mike Lopez spinning Top 40 & All request \$1.75 Long Islands and \$1.50 Cocksucker shots 10pm-2am, All drink specials not available during special events.

VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio open 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Pool Tourney 7pm. \$3 entry. Special prices for players. Steak Nite (4th Thursday of each month). Bring your own or get it here \$5.

WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Free Pool 8 to close. Volleyball Court is Open. See bartender.

YARD DOG - Open daily 6am. 50¢ off any Bourbon til 7pm. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

friday

COLORS - Open 11am for lunch. Dinner 5-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm domestic beers or well cocktails \$2.25.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Line Dance Lessons 7:30 to 8:30 pm. DJ Pat plays your favorite country dance songs 8:30 to midnight then a mix of dance & country 'til close. Kitchen open 10 pm - 2 am for late night munchies.

IBT'S - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, Live Jazz on the Patio with Susan 6pm-9pm, Hot Dance with David Z from 9pm-2am, All drink specials not available during special events.

VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio open 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm. DJ 9pm to close.

WOODY'S - 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Martini Party - Well Martini's \$2.00 3-4pm. Call Martinis \$3 from 3-4pm. Complimentary Shrimp Cocktail 4-8pm. Patio Bar Open 7pm - midnight.

YARD DOG - Open daily 6am. 50¢ off any Gin until 7pm. Beer Bust 3-7pm. Kennel open 9pm.

saturday

COLORS - Open 11am for lunch; 5-10pm full dinner.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 11:00 am. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. \$3.00 Burger & Fries all day. DJ playing your favorite country songs 8:30 - midnight, then "anything goes" requests until close. Kitchen open 10 pm - 2 am for late night munchies.

IBT'S - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, 8:30pm Show time w/ Ajia Simone or Janee Starr, Circuit Saturday's with DJ Q spinning Hot Club Music. All drink specials not available during special events.

VENTURE-N - Open 10am. Patio Bar open 3pm. Patio Beer Bust 3-7pm. DJ 9-1.

WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Patio Bar opens 5pm. 5-9pm Steak or Mahi Mahi BBQ with all the trimmings \$5, Live Jazz with Arthur Migliazza 6-9pm.

YARD DOG - Open daily 6am. Beer Bust 3-7pm. 75¢ glass, \$2.25 pitcher. 50¢ off any Rum 1pm to 7pm. Beer Bust 3-7pm. Kennel Open 9pm.

NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

HALLELUJAH RECOVERY DRUG & ALCOHOL 12-STEP. Every Thursday 5:30-6:30pm at Cornerstone Fellowship, 2902 N. Geronimo. 622-4626.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE CLINIC provided daily by the Pima County Health Department. Gay friendly. Confidential. Treatment and Medication too! Any questions? Call 624-8272

SOUTHERN ARIZONA AIDS FOUNDATION (SAAF), 375 S. EUCLID. Office Hours 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. Direct services and emotional support for persons with and affected by HIV. Anonymous HIV testing and support groups available. Prevention education programs. 628-SAAF (7223). World wide web: <http://www.saaaf.org>. VOLUNTEERS WELCOME.

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP. Involving discussion, support and activities. Designed to support each other. Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 8pm. Alternate Saturdays the group meets for social activities. For info call Dorian Easty. 882-7723 Facilitator.

P.F.L.A.G. - Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays - is a support group available to anyone who has a son, daughter or friend who is Gay. Call 575-8660 or write P.O. Box 36264, Tucson, AZ 85740-6264. All replies confidential.

TUCSON GLBT AL-ANON GROUP meets Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. at Wingspan, 300 E. 6th Street. Call 624-1779 for more info.

YOUNG AND GAY?

GLBT Youth 23 and under, meet every Saturday in Tucson for sharing, support and information. Meetings are held at 300 E. 6th Street from 3 to 4:30 pm. You are not alone. For more info call Wingspan, 624-1779.

The TUCSON Chapter of PRIME TIMERS WORLDWIDE invites Gay or Bisexual men and their admirers to join and share Prime Timers fellowship. We welcome mature men (and admirers) who wish to become involved with planned and future Prime Timers (TPT) activities. Meetings luncheons and dinners are held monthly. For dates, times and information call 529-2269, leave name and phone number. Tucsonpt@primetimersww.org

TUCSON GAY INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

For Information on human service organizations, health and mental health services, financial and government assistance, emergency services such as food and shelter, education, etc. Call Information and Referral 881-1794 - 8 am - 5 pm Mon. - Fri.

AIDS HOTLINE - 326-AIDS. Hours M-F, 9:00 am to 10:00 pm. Information, counseling, HIV-related services, Tucson.

GAY OR BI-SEXUAL MEN in relationships with women. Need friends you can talk to? Weekly support group meets Wednesdays 6:30 - 8:00 pm. Licensed psychologist facilitator. Call 745-6977 in Tucson for more information. Strictly confidential.

WINGSPAN - Tucson's Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Community Center, 300 E. 6th St., offers support groups / info line / social events / library / meeting space. Volunteer Opportunities. Board meetings every 2nd Thursday (open to all), 6:00 p.m. Information 624-1779.

GREATER PHOENIX GAY & LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (GPGLCC) P.O. BOX 2097, Phoenix, AZ 85001-2097. E-mail: webmaster@gpglcc.org or call (602)225-8444.

SOURCES UNLIMITED, a Lesbian & Gay referral service. Business and individual listings are free of charge. All information available to anyone just simply by asking. 322-5655. Leave msg. TucsonSources@aol.com

GAY COWBOY CLUB - Nationwide Personal Ads. Admirers welcome too. Send stamp for information: Mavericks, Box 9543, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

TNTucsonMEN, a nudist Gay men's club. We are a social and recreational group. By the way the TN means Totally Naked! Drop us an e-mail at TNTucsonMEN@nethere.com

INNER WISDOM - Try hypnotherapy for pain relief, past life exploration and addiction release. Also available: Spiritual Counseling and Dream Interpretation. 579-9020

BEARS OF THE OLD PUEBLO — a social club for bears and bigger, more robust men

(and of course, those who prefer their company). For more info, Call the Bears Hotline (520)790-5775 or write P.O. Box 43910, Tucson, AZ 85733-3910 of visit our website at www.botop.com All are welcome to our general meetings/potlucks on the 2nd Friday of every month, 7pm at Sentinel Bldg. On the City of Tucson Resource Campus, 310 N. Commerce Park Loop on Bonita St. between St. Marys and Congress.

LAMBDA CAR CLUB, a social organization of Gays and Lesbians who share interest, information and fellowship involving all cars and trucks. New Southern Arizona Region now in Tucson. Call the Hotline at 888-5541

LESBIAN AND GAY AL-ANON - Affected by someone's drinking? Meeting every Tuesday 8:45 to 9:45 p.m. at Lambda Center, 2940 E. Thomas, Phoenix. Ellie 581-8850 or Ronn 968-2384.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE GROUP - Outreach to Gay and Lesbian people in Arizona. Meets monthly. Write to P.O. Box 893, Phoenix, AZ 85001 or call Eddy Walters, (602)371-1102

CRONIES SOCIAL GROUP. A Social group for Gay men who enjoy the fellowship of their peers. Call Leo at 624-6768.

T-SQUARES Lesbian and Gay square dance club meets every Tuesday from 6:30-9:00 p.m. at Cornerstone Fellowship Social Hall, 2902 N. Geronimo (near 1st Ave. and Laguna). Open to All. Call Liz at 325-9466 or Ray at 749-5247.

LIGHTNING LIGHTING will provide lighting for AIDS and related benefits at no charge. For more info call Adrienne at 889-7298.

COME EXPLORE YOUR SPIRITUALITY! St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church offers a variety of Gay and Lesbian groups and services for the spiritually minded. Come meet the Family! For more information call Debbie 579-9827 or David 323-7943.

LESBIAN/GAY WRITERS: Workshop at 7:00 p.m. third Wednesday of every month. Read and critique current projects. Network and support. For info call 325-4737.

DESERT VOICES, Tucson's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Straight Chorus, has been singing songs of pride, hope and laughter for 16 seasons. Check out our website at www.desertvoices.org, or call (520)791-9662 for information about upcoming concerts or how to join.

Join the **LESBIAN & GAY PUBLIC AWARENESS PROJECT.** In Tucson write Awareness Project, 3661 N. Campbell Ave. #365, Tucson, AZ 85719.

AA Meeting with HIV/AIDS focus, Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., Wingspan Annex, 739 N. 4th Ave. All alcoholics welcome.

MEN'S SOCIAL NETWORK: Social organization for men of all ages. Building an extended Gay family in Tucson. Monthly social potluck gatherings the first Saturday of each month and almost weekly social activities. Call Jerry at 690-9565 for information and a newsletter. Check the Non-Bar Calendar in the Observer.

CARE TEAMS ARE AVAILABLE to offer support to people living with HIV/AIDS. The Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network offers trained, compassionate and committed volunteers to provide services including friendly visits, light housekeeping, assistance with meals, shopping, errands, transportation and companionship for medical appointments, and respite care for primary care givers. No judgement or proselytizing - we are here to be of service. For info call Scott at 299-6647.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT SPORTS TEAMS and updates on Gay Games 2002, contract TEAM ARIZONA at their website: teamarizona.org

ARE YOU GAY OR BISEXUAL AND UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE? The Gay Young Men's Project is now looking for volunteers for the project. We need people who want to help create a positive social change for young Gay men as well as reduce the risk for HIV infection. For more information please call 628-7223.

THE MEN'S MASSAGE GROUP meets the 3rd Sunday of each month. It is a good way to meet other men of all ages, safely, and with the art of nurturing touch. There is a fee. You must sign up in advance to participate. Call Marc at 881-4582 for more information or sign up.

COMMUNITY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (CBA), Tucson's Gay and Lesbian business

networking group holds regular meetings the third Thursday of every month. Call 615-6436 for more info.

TUCSON PRIDE, INC. (Formerly Tucson Lesbian and Gay Alliance - TLGA) meets on the second Tuesday at 845 S. Craycroft Road at 6pm. Tucson Pride events: Pride Week, Gay West and OUToberFEST. Inquiries about support groups and individual needs should be directed to Wingspan and other local agencies listed here. For more information call 622-3200 or visit the TPI website at www.tucsonpride.com

LEARN TO BE A LISTENING FRIEND Unique Hospital Volunteer Program teaches listening skills to Volunteers who provide a safe/compassionate environment to at-risk patients. Training every 6 weeks. 694-7063.

TUCSON INTERFAITH HIV/AIDS NETWORK (TIHAN), a coalition of faith communities committed to a compassionate response to HIV/AIDS, provides HIV education in congregational settings, volunteer CareTeams to support HIV+ persons, a referral network of HIV-sensitive clergy, and interfaith services of healing and hope. For more information call 299-6647.

ANONYMOUS HIV COUNSELING AND TESTING is available through the Pima County Health Department at sites throughout Tucson, Very Gay Friendly. For more information or to make an appointment call 791-7676.

GRACE GROUP - CATHOLIC GAY/LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP meets every 2nd and 4th Monday at 7:30 p.m. in the Madonna Hall at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church, 1436 N. Campbell across from University Hospital. For more info. Call Anabeli at 325-0892

SMART (Self Management And Recovery Training) a free non-12-step self-help alternative for people working to overcome addictive and other emotional problems meets in Tucson Monday thru Thursdays at different locations. For more information about SMART, contact Jennifer at 838-3975.

AZdykes is a new email list for Lesbians living in Arizona. For information mail tyan@theriver.com and request guidelines.

OUTLOUD! Tucson's premiere Local Lesbian and Gay Radio Show, broadcast every Sunday from 7-8 pm on 91.3 FM, Community Radio KXCI.

THEATER / DINNER / ETC! Non-Smoking Lesbian Network meets every 3rd Saturday night of each month. If you'd like to meet women 35+ (flexible) and socialize in a smoke-free environment 888-8010 before 10:00 p.m. The group dines out and attends shows or movies. Now in their 16th year! (2nd in Tucson).

SOUTHERN ARIZONA GENDER ALLIANCE (SAGA). The Southwest's largest transgender and gender-variant advocacy organization. Speakers and panelists available. General meetings monthly on the 1st Mondays at 7pm; Dezert Girlz MTF Support) meets 2nd Mondays at 7pm; Dezert Boyz (FTM Support) meets 3rd Tuesdays at 7pm. Also serving partners, youth, intersex, service providers and allies. Call (520)867-0083 for more info.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP FOR ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES. Not a dating club. Discreet. Meetings every Monday evening. Call for more info. APEX (Arizona Power Exchange) 602-415-1123. 24-hr multi-choice message including information, calendar and location.

ARIZONA AIDS POLICY ALLIANCE (AZAPA) seeks to educate legislators and citizens about sound AIDS policy. For more information write AZAPA, 6523 N. 14th St., #112, Phoenix, AZ 85014 or call 602-279-4805.

DESERT DOMINION, whose focus is providing information and education for people interested in the BDSM lifestyle, meets monthly for group discussion and social events. Web: <http://www.desertdominion.org> or call (520)792-6424

SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS. Starting this February, the Tucson Rape crisis Center will be providing free confidential group services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender survivors of all manner of sexual assault. Interested persons please call Mirto Stone, MSW, at 327-1171 (if unavailable leave message with phone number.

AAPSP - ARIZONA ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY PROFESSIONALS: a confidential organization committed to providing support and networking for all Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual public safety professionals in Arizona. Membership open to Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters, Probation, Parole and Corrections Officers and civilians working within these agencies. Website: AAPSP.org or e-mail: AAPSP@aol.com or call Dave (520)745-9059 (Tucson) or Kim (602)534-6219 (Phoenix)

GLSEN - Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network meets first Thursday of every month at 4:30pm at Wingspan, 300 E. 6th Street. 743-4800.

TUCSON CATHOLIC GAY & LESBIAN FAMILY MINISTRY. Currently meeting the 4th Monday of every month at SS Peter & Paul Church, Madonna Hall 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Fr. Fiedler in attendance every meeting and willing to speak one on one. Reaching out to Parents and Families. For more info call Doc or Barbara 293-6624.

SAA (Sex Addicts Anonymous) has 5 meetings a week in Tucson. People who wish to stop their compulsive sexual behavior, please call (520) 745-0775 for current info.

TUCSON GREATER SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION. Interested? Call Kelly Quinn, (520)906-0669 and or Mona Garcia 256-8728.

LUTHERANS CONCERNED — Tucson chapter for Gay/Lesbian Lutherans meets 3rd Sunday, 6:30 p.m. each month at Santa Cruz Lutheran Church, 6809 S. Cardinal Ave. For information visit www.lctucson.org write: LC, 7014 E. Golf Links Road, PMB 212, Tucson, AZ 85730.

ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS: Confidential individual or group support for Gay, Bisexual or Trans men who are victims/survivors of domestic violence. For more information call 624-0348 (24-hour line)

REVELLE GAY MEN'S CHORUS rehearses Tuesdays 7-10pm at MCC Church, 3269 N. Mountain. Have any history/ experience singing? Join us!! Call 617-3100 for more info.

"OUT ON THE TRAILS - EQUESTRIAN FUN!"

Rider Club forming. Looking for women and men to ride together on the trails of Southern Arizona. Must have own horse, truck and trailer. For more info write: "Out On The Trails" P.O. Box 44045, Tucson, AZ 85733-4045

LIKE TO READ?

The Guys Book Club (TGBC) invites new members to join them. The group meets once a month, on the 3rd Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at Magpie's Pizza on 4th Avenue to discuss the Gay-themed book read by members the previous month.

THE MAN TO MAN Social/erotic education club is the tantric men's group that offers passionate friendships, fun activities and sex education. Marc 881-4582

GLBT Buddhist meditation group meets Sundays from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. at the Wingspan annex space, 739 N. 4th Ave. Please be willing to sit for two twenty minute sessions in silence. All are welcome.

LGBT SUPPORT GROUP FOR VICTIM/SURVIVORS OF

Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Hate Crimes, Bias Acts, Harassment. Call Lori at Wingspan, 624-1779, ext. 20. Services are free.

NEW TUCSON SOBRIETY SUPPORT GROUP. Secular Organizations for Sobriety - Sundays 8:00 - 9:30 p.m. at 739 N. 4th Avenue. Contacts Rick R. 520-792-2604 or Gary S. 520-323-1969. More information at www.secularhumanism.org/sos/ This group is an alternative to 12-step programs.

MEN'S KINK DISCUSSION GROUP (Open to all who identify as male and are 118 or older). 7:00 p.m. at Desert Dominion, 3843 E. 37th Street, Tucson, AZ. (Map at www.desertdominion.org) For those who are kinky or just curious. No fee, contributions are appreciated, but not required

GET NAKED with TNTucson MEN! We're a social and recreational club. Have you ever longed to camp, swim, hike or play with others who enjoy the same, dropping all the masks, pretensions? TNTucsonMEN@nethere.com P.O. Box 12176, Tucson 85792 or call 514-9894

DESERT PRIDE - Your store for Gay Pride and more!

611 N. Fourth Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85705 (Across from IBT's, Next to Magpies. Come See Us!) (520)388-9829

COMMENTARY. . . .**'No Rational Purpose'**

No one should be under the illusion that Judge Richard Kramer's ruling on same-sex marriage, powerful as it was, will be the last word.

There will be appeals, there will be more court cases in other states and there will be plenty more legislative maneuvering in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., before this issue is settled.

As we have said many times before, the issue of whether the state can deny a citizen the rights and responsibilities of marriage on the basis of sexual orientation is fundamental to the U.S. Constitution's promise of equal protection. It may take years to resolve.

In the meantime, Kramer's ruling offers a measure of vindication to Mayor Gavin Newsom's decision last year to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples at San Francisco City Hall. At the time, the mayor's action was widely derided as being in reckless defiance of the law. Newsom maintained that time — and the law — was on his side.

Kramer's ruling showed there was a reasonable legal foundation to challenge the state law that limits the definition of marriage to being between a man and a woman.

"It appears that no rational purpose exists for limiting marriage in this state to opposite-sex partners," Kramer wrote.

The judge directly took on the most common argument against same-sex marriage, one invoked by Attorney General Bill Lockyer in defense of the state law: tradition.

"The state's protracted denial of

equal protection cannot be justified simply because such constitutional violation has become traditional," he wrote.

Other arguments against same-sex marriage were similarly lanced by the judge. Lockyer had cited California's domestic-partners law as evidence that the state does not discriminate against Gays and Lesbians.

"The idea that marriage-like rights without marriage is adequate smacks of a concept long rejected by the courts — separate but equal," the judge said, citing the U.S. Supreme Court's rejection of segregated public schools in *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

Besides, domestic partnerships are not equivalent to marriage, in the eyes of the law or, to most Americans, in the currency of cherished institutions. If they were truly comparable, there would be no controversy.

Passages of the judge's ruling will undoubtedly ring loud in the State Capitol when legislators consider a proposal by Assemblyman Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, to change the challenged law that prohibits same-sex marriage. Opponents of same-sex marriage are expected to press their campaign to put a state constitutional amendment on the ballot. The move for a federal ban will intensify.

Kramer's ruling did not settle the issue by a long stretch, but it did help reframe the debate in straightforward legal and practical terms, which is right where it belongs.

[This was the editorial from the March 15 edition of the San Francisco Chronicle.]

G/L Activists Blast N.Y. Mayor On Marriage Appeal

NEW YORK - On the day when same-sex couples would have been allowed to begin applying for marriage licenses in New York City, nearly three dozen Gay and Lesbian activists held a press conference at City Hall on Friday, March 11, to express their anger, the PlanetOut Network reported.

Specifically, they blasted Mayor Michael Bloomberg's appeal of last month's court ruling that said the state's ban on marriage for same-sex couples is unconstitutional.

A day after New York Supreme Justice Doris Ling-Cohan issued her ruling, Bloomberg publicly acknowledged for the first time that he personally supports marriage for same-sex couples. But Ian Au, board member for Marriage Equality of New York, said the mayor's decision to appeal the ruling amounts to continued discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender New Yorkers.

"Instead of opening the door for equality to all, Mayor Bloomberg has closed the door and appealed," he said during the press conference.

The historic court decision was the result of a lawsuit filed by five Gay and Lesbian couples who were denied marriage licenses by the New York City Clerk's office last March.

The Rev. Pat Bumgardner, senior pastor at the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) on Manhattan's far West Side, criticized Bloomberg as a hypocrite for expressing his support of marriage for same-sex couples while appealing Ling-Cohan's decision.

"It is fortunate that the mayor

can only speak out of both sides of his mouth," she told the PlanetOut Network. "He can't say he is for us and equal rights, and then file an appeal. He needs to take a stand one way or another."

New York City Councilwoman Margarita Lopez, D-Lower East Side, an outspoken Bloomberg critic who is also running for Manhattan Borough President, is one of several local politicians who spoke at the press conference. She echoed U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., who challenged Bloomberg at a Monday appearance at the LGBT community center in Manhattan, in urging the mayor to drop his appeal of Ling-Cohan's decision.

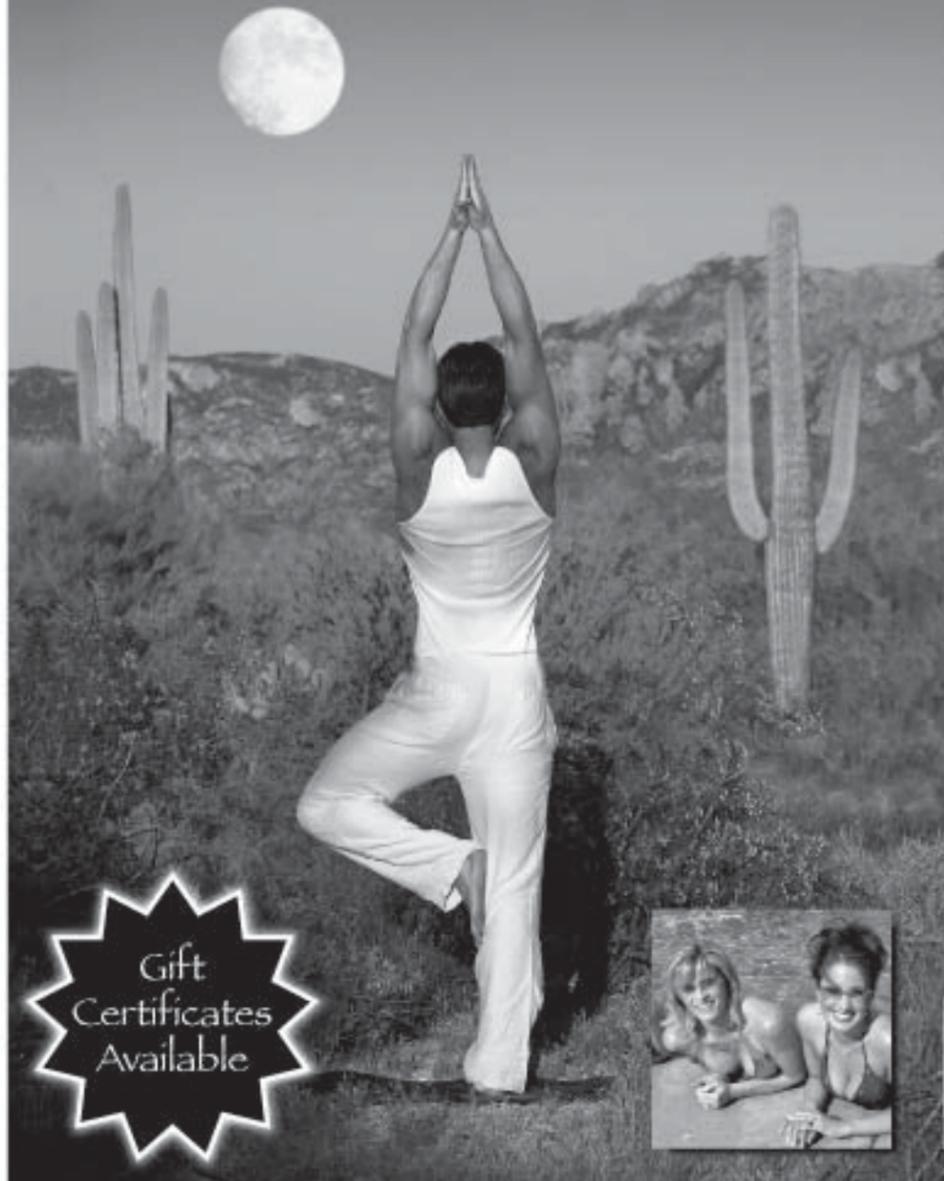
"The mayor claims he is for same-sex marriage," Lopez said. "But his actions speak much louder than his forced words."

Bloomberg has repeatedly said that he appealed the ruling because he did not want same-sex couples to experience the "unnecessary heartache" that those in San Francisco felt after the California Supreme Court invalidated thousands of marriage licenses issued last year by Mayor Gavin Newsom. Michael Sabatino, who married his partner of more than 25 years, Robert Voorheis, in Niagara Falls, Canada, in 2003, scoffed at the mayor's argument.

"He is hiding behind what happened last year in San Francisco," Sabatino told reporters.

As criticism continues to mount, the mayor and the city's lawyers have expedited the appeals process. The New York State Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, is expected to hear arguments later this year.

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