



Observing Tucson And
The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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WEEKLY OBSERVER

MARCH 22, 2006

ISSUE 1131

Jell-O Wrestling A Time-Honored Tradition

TUCSON - On Sunday, May 7, wrestlers will be slipping and sliding in a pit of Jell-O (the color is a secret!) to help raise funds for the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF) in a totally unique way. The 19th anniversary of the Reno Gannon Memorial Jell-O Extravaganza and Benefit Auction will take place that day at Woody's, located at 3710 N. Oracle Rd., with doors opening at 2:00 p.m. and wrestling scheduled to begin at 4:00 p.m.

The Jell-O wrestling website is now available at jello-wrestling.org, where you can read about the history of the event, fill out an online wrestler application, download a form to be a sponsor or donate something to the live auction, or just enjoy the photographs from past years. At a committee meeting last week some of the long-standing members shared their memories of Jell-O from the past and they were hilarious. Many involve trying to dispose of the Jell-O following the event, or transporting the cold Jell-O across town in 112° weather in the backs of pickup trucks and being stopped by police on suspicion of transporting hazardous materials as the Jell-O melted into the street.

Jell-O was begun in 1987 when funds to help support people with HIV/AIDS were non-existent and so the community banded together to find a way to help, forming the organizations of Shanti, PACT and TAP. Each of

these organizations started different fundraisers, such as Jell-O, Festival for Life and AIDS Walk, all of which still take place today. If you've never been to Jell-O Wrestling, be sure to put May 7 on your calendar now and enjoy the most fun and amazing spectacle of fund-raising that you could possibly ever imagine!

Tickets for Jell-O and Raffle tickets will both go on sale at Woody's and at SAAF this week. Tickets to Jell-O are \$6 in advance and \$10 at the door. This year's Jell-O Wrestling Raffle features a grand prize of a one-week stay in Mazatlan during the month of November, plus \$250 in cash and tickets are only \$1 each.

Between wrestling matches there is also a live auction, and this year's auction crown jewel is a decked out captain's hat that belonged to Cher until she threw it into the crowd at her concert in Phoenix. The hat has been autographed by the incomparable Cher and will be available for bids during the Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza. Many other wonderful auction items will also be paraded around by our hostesses, everything from artwork that you'd only see at Jell-O and an inflatable Bud Light Island, to restaurant gift certificates and theatre tickets. It's sure to be great shopping!

Please visit the Jell-O website at www to get more information or contact Mae at (520) 628-7223 or by email at events@saaf.org. See you at Woody's on May 7!

War Protesters Include Gays and Lesbians

NEW YORK - Tens of thousands of antiwar protesters took to the streets around the world on Saturday (Mar. 18), marking the third anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq with demands that coalition troops leave immediately. Several thousand protesters in San Francisco danced in the streets, beat drums, and carried signs that read "Stop U.S. Imperialism," reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

Among them were many Gay groups and Gay rights leaders who denounced president Bush for launching the war. "It's very painful to me that our country is doing this and killing innocent people," said 70-year-old Joan Emerson, who attended with the group Old Lesbians Organizing for Change.

There were large-scale protests in New York City and other major cities across the United States. Rallies were also held in Australia, Asia, and Europe, but many events were far smaller than organizers had hoped. In London, police said 15,000 people joined a march from Parliament and Big Ben to a rally in Trafalgar Square. The anniversary last year attracted 45,000 protesters in the city. "We are against

this war, both for religious reasons and on a humanitarian basis, too," said Imran Saghir, 25, a Muslim student who attended the London rally.

Britain, the United States' strongest supporter in the Iraq war, has about 8,000 troops in Iraq but plans to pull out 800 of them by May. The British military has reported 103 deaths there. More than 2,300 American troops have died.

In Washington, a protester wearing a President Bush mask and bearing fake blood on his hands waved to passing automobiles outside Vice President Dick Cheney's residence, where about 200 people demonstrated against the war. At Dudley Square in Boston, a few hundred college-age protesters and baby boomers waved placards that read "Impeach Bush" and "Stop the War."

Protesters in several cities worldwide carried posters showing pictures of President Bush, calling him the "World's No. 1 terrorist." In Turkey, where opposition to the war cuts across all political stripes, about 3,000 protesters gathered in Istanbul, police said.

Continued on Page Two

Death Threats Against Supreme Court Justices

CAPE TOWN - Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said that she and former Justice Sandra Day O'Connor have been the targets of death threats from the "irrational fringe" of society, people apparently spurred by Republican criticism of the high court, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com. Ginsburg revealed in a speech in South Africa that she and O'Connor were threatened a year ago by someone who called on the Internet for the immediate "patriotic" killing of the justices.

Security concerns among judges have been growing. Conservative commentator Ann Coulter joked earlier this year that Justice John Paul Stevens should be poisoned. Over the past few months O'Connor has complained that criticism, mainly by Republicans, has threatened judicial independence to deal with difficult issues like Gay marriage.

Worry is not limited to the Supreme Court. Three quarters of the nation's 2,200 federal judges have asked for government-paid home security systems, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said. Ginsburg said the Web threat was apparently prompted by legislation in Congress, filed by Republicans, that would bar judges from relying on foreign laws or court decisions. "It is disquieting that they have attracted sizable support. And one not-so-small concern - they fuel the irrational fringe," she said in a speech posted online by the court earlier this month and first reported Wednesday (Mar. 15) by LegalTimes.com.

According to Ginsburg, someone in a Web site chat room wrote: "Okay commandoes, here is your first patriotic assignment ... an easy one. Supreme Court Justices Ginsburg and O'Connor have publicly stated that they use (foreign) laws and rulings to decide how to rule on American cases. This is a huge threat to our Republic and Constitutional freedom. ... If you are what you say you are, and NOT armchair patriots, then those two justices will not live another week."

Rep. Tom Feeney, R-Fla., a sponsor of one of the congressional proposals, wrote about the legislation on his Web site and in bold letters featured a quote from O'Connor predicting the Supreme Court would probably increasingly rely on foreign courts.

Ginsburg pointed out that the legislation was first proposed in 2004, an election year. Justices, in



Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

some of their most hotly contested rulings, have looked overseas. Last year, for example, justices barred the executions of juvenile killers on a 5-4 vote. Justice Anthony M. Kennedy said then that "it is proper that we acknowledge the overwhelming weight of international opinion against the juvenile death penalty."

In an angry dissent to that decision, Justice Antonin Scalia said capital punishment policy should be set by states, not "the subjective views of five members of this court and like-minded foreigners." Ginsburg said, "Critics in Congress and in the media misperceive how and why U.S. courts refer to foreign and international court decisions." She said those decisions are used for guidance only.

O'Connor said during a speech at Georgetown Law School that the justices have received threats. But the Ginsburg remarks at the Constitutional Court of South Africa provide unusual detail. Ginsburg, who turned 73 Wednesday (Mar. 14), told the audience O'Connor "remains alive and well - as for me, you can judge for yourself."



May, 7, 2006
Info: 628-7223

UPDATE

The End Of Marriage? The War Over The Future Of State- Sponsored Love, March 27

TUCSON - Lisa Duggan will speak on why anti-Gay marriage initiatives succeed, why they appeal to voters at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St., Monday, Mar. 27, 5:30 p.m.

Looking specifically at Arizona, she asks, why does an institution in such seeming decline as marriage (according to national census statistics) appear at the center of ideology and aspiration on the international stage? Marriage politics played a strange role in the "wedge" politics of the 2004 election in the U.S.—and have been at the center of a range of debates over welfare "reform," single parent families, same sex partnerships, and celebrity lifestyles.

Duggan is a historian, journalist and activist who teaches at New York University. She is author of Sapphic Slashers: Sex, Violence and American Modernity, co-author of Sex Wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture, co-editor of Our Monica, Ourselves: The Clinton Affair and National Interest, and author most recently of Twilight of Equality: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics and the Attack on Democracy. She is currently at work on The End of Marriage? The War Over the Future of State Sponsored Love. Her articles on marriage politics in the Mar. 15, 2004 and July 18, 2005 issues of The Nation, and are available online at henation.com.

For more information, E-mail: lbriggs@email.arizona.edu.

Exploring Biblical & Theological Values About Homosexuality April 3

TUCSON - Dr. Bill Hillman will be leading a study "Exploring Biblical and Theological Values About Homosexuality" on Monday evening, Apr. 3, 7 - 9 p.m. at Wingspan 425 E. 7th St.

Please encourage your church members and friends to attend this free discussion.

For more information, E-mail: ScottMorr@aol.com.

Pride Theme & Logo Contest Announced

TUCSON - Tucson Pride Inc. (TPI) announced the launch of the 2006 theme and logo contest, with this year's theme "Stand Together . . . For Equality, With Pride, In Action!"

This year's theme, according to a statement from TPI was chosen as a call to action for their community; asking everyone to stand and be recognized. The winning entry's logo will be used in an array of print advertising for 2006, including posters, flyers, ads, t-shirts and more. The winner of this year's contest will receive \$150 for their entry.

Contest specifications include: Entries must coincide with this year's theme. Entries should be created in color, in PDF, JPEG or TIF format. Deadline for entry submission is midnight, Apr. 8. Entries received after that time may not be considered. Winning entry will be chosen Apr. 12. Winner must agree to sign over all rights of use for winning entry to TPI, submissions cannot be returned and all submissions become the property of TPI.

To submit your entry, mail to P O Box 57478 Tucson, AZ 85732, or E-mail: info@tucsonpride.org.

TPI also announced that this year's OUToberFEST is being rethought and re-designed from the ground up. Everything you think you know about our pride event is changing, including the name. If you have suggestions for the new name of Tucson's annual pride event, please send them to TPI via one of the addresses above. This is not a contest and no prize will be awarded. TPI will make its final decision at their monthly Board meeting on Apr. 12 as well

TIHAN Moving And Preparing

TUCSON - TIHAN (Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network) is expecting to move to new offices in April, addressing TIHAN's growth and our current lack of office space, and will providing almost twice as much square footage.

TIHAN is asking for support to help make the transition as smooth as possible. For more information, call Cherwee Hughley, (520) 299-6647 to help or for more information. . . .

Join TIHAN on Tuesday nights, 5:30 - 8 p.m., for a drop-in volunteer opportunity. TIHAN has all sorts of volunteer projects for you, your friends, partners, anyone interested. Make a difference, have fun, and make new friends. Whether you

have never volunteered, or are a long-time TIHAN volunteer, help is needed and appreciated. Call (520) 299-6647, to volunteer. . . .

"Treasures for TIHAN," the signature fundraising event for the programs and services is coming up on Saturday, May 6, 6 p.m. at The Hotel Arizona (formerly the Radisson Hotel), 181 W. Broadway. A sparkling evening of great music, fantastic food, and wonderful auction items to raise funds to support the programs and services, the "Treasures" benefit is the largest event of the year, raising over \$84,000 last year.

Tickets for the event are \$50 (\$23 is tax-deductible), and can be purchased by calling (520) 299-6647 or online at tihan.org If you can help by donating or soliciting items for our auction—trips, gift certificates, massages, antiques, jewelry, rugs, unique gift items, and collectibles of value (over \$50 in value, please), please contact Scott at TIHAN, (520) 299-6647, E-mail: scott@tihan.org.

No Impeachment For Pro-G/L Maryland Judge

ANNAPOLIS - Republican delegate Don Dwyer of Anne Arundel County, Md., has long promised to impeach any judge who attempted to overturn Maryland law banning same-sex marriage, reported Advocate.com. And after Baltimore circuit court judge M. Brooke Murdock ruled in favor of same-sex marriage earlier this year, Dwyer vowed to carry out that promise. But his fellow lawmakers didn't agree, voting 20-3 late Thursday (Mar. 9) to reject a proposal to impeach Murdock.

According to the news Web site Maryland Online, Thursday's committee hearing was held near midnight to discourage attendance by the public or the news media. Dwyer, who earlier this session made a failed effort to get a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage on the November ballot, took the opportunity to warn his colleagues about their inaction.

"I have kept my commitment to the citizens of Maryland that I would hold the court accountable," Dwyer said. "I have done my duty to protect and defend the laws of Maryland, and I have carried the ball to the end. At the end of the day, I am not responsible for my colleagues' inaction, but the citizens of Maryland might want to remember this during November's election."

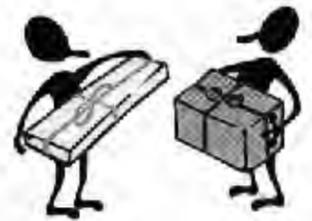
War Protestors Continued from Page One

"Murderer USA," read a sign in Taksim Square.

In Stockholm, Sweden, about 1,000 demonstrators gathered for a rally and march to the U.S. Embassy. One protester was dressed as the hooded figure shown in an iconic photograph from the Abu Ghraib prison. In Copenhagen, Denmark, more than 2,000 demonstrators marched from the U.S. Embassy to the British Embassy, demanding that Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen withdraw the 530 Danish troops from southern Iraq.

On Sunday (Mar. 19), up to 3,000 protesters were expected in Seoul, South Korea, which has the third-largest contingent of foreign troops in Iraq after the U.S. and Britain.

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Observer on the World Wide Web :
www.tucsonobserver.com
E-Mail: info@tucsonobserver.com

EDITOR/PUBLISHER:

Bob Ellis

ARTS & GRAPHICS:

Gary Clark

MANAGING EDITOR:

Mark Kerr

Special Events Photos:

Bill Morrow

Amanda Irvine

Horoscope:

Charlene Lichtenstein

Contributing Columnists

MARK R. KERR - LEE THORN

JERRY DIAZ

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Informing the Community
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Douglas J. Newman, P.C.

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3131 North Country Club Road, Suite 203 · Tucson, Arizona 85716
Phone 520-325-2053 · Fax 520-325-2274 · Email TucsonAtty@aol.com

WASHINGTON - The US military allowed at least 36 Gay soldiers last year to stay in uniform, despite efforts by their commanders or fellow soldiers to have them discharged under the "don't ask, don't tell" policy, according to a review of hundreds of cases in which soldiers sought to remain in uniform without denying their homosexuality, reported the Boston Globe.

The number of soldiers allowed to stay despite being identified as Gay - 36 of 120 contested cases - was substantially higher than in 2004, when 22 of 125 soldiers prevailed, and three times as many as in 2003, when only 12 of 107 were able to persuade their commanders or a military review board to keep them in uniform, the data show. The Pentagon declined to explain why more Gay soldiers were being retained, but the lawyers who represent soldiers challenging cases under the policy say the Pentagon seems to have softened its stance on homosexuality.

The lawyers attributed the change both to a growing acceptance of Gays within the ranks and to the military's need to keep more highly trained soldiers in the Iraq War. "As the country has changed, so have the people in the military," said Sharra Greer, director of law and policy at the nonprofit Service Members' Legal Defense Network, which represents Gay soldiers challenging their dismissals. "More commanders are not enforcing [don't ask, don't tell] strictly."

In several of the cases over the past year, service members who were found to have listed their homosexuality on Internet dating sites were reprimanded but returned to duty, according to the case files. In other cases, senior officers were swayed by a service member's strong performance reviews. "The equations for commands have shifted," Greer said.

Military Retaining More Gays

"They are under enormous pressure to retain people. They do a cost-benefit analysis and we are hearing the same thing: 'I really don't care if you are Gay and I am not going to kick you out.'"

Recent studies have shown that many soldiers dismissed in past years under "don't ask, don't tell" tended to be in highly trained specialties now in demand, including linguists and medical technicians. Meanwhile, observers have noted that the Defense Department has recently softened its position on the "don't ask, don't tell" policy. For many years the Pentagon's public position was that the policy was crucial to maintaining "good order and discipline" and that having Gay soldiers serve openly in the ranks would harm unit cohesion.

But recently, the military has stopped defending the policy, and merely notes that it is the law. Last fall, Bill Carr, deputy undersecretary of defense for military personnel policy, described the policy to the armed forces' press service as "a choice the nation has made about its military." A Pentagon spokeswoman, Lieutenant Colonel Ellen Krenke, asked why the policy is necessary, responded by e-mail message Thursday, writing: "The Department of Defense policy on homosexual conduct in the military implements a federal law enacted in 1993 after extensive hearings and debate. The law would need to be changed to affect the department's policy. We are complying with this statute."

Overall, the number of soldiers facing discharge under the policy has dropped steadily - from 1,273 in 2001 to 906 in 2002 and 787 in 2003, the most recent year

available. Most soldiers do not try to contest their dismissal, except to seek an honorable discharge. In total, since the advent of "don't ask, don't tell" in 1994, 9,682 members of the military have been discharged for homosexuality, according to the most recent statistics.

The Pentagon says it cannot explain the downward trend in cases. "Since total discharge numbers are a compilation of individual cases throughout the Department of Defense, we cannot definitively say what has caused the decrease," Krenke said. Under the policy, any service member can initiate proceedings against any other soldier, based on evidence that the soldier is Gay. The relevant command then opens an inquiry. The standard for evidence is low, according to legal specialists and military regulations, and cases can turn on one soldier's testimony.

The service members being targeted can challenge the allegations before a panel of three to eight service members of equal or higher rank. In the cases handled by the Service Members Legal Defense Network, Greer said, the soldiers did not deny their homosexuality, but rather argued that it did not affect their performance or their units' missions, and that the grounds for their removal were not sufficient. Greer is also representing 10 service members who have been discharged since 2001 for being Gay, and are suing Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld in federal court in Boston to be reinstated. The court has yet to issue an opinion on a motion last July by the government to dismiss the case.

Yet the number of instances in which Gay soldiers and their lawyers have persuaded commanders to drop

investigations indicates that the standards for discharge are being applied less stringently, according to the data. "During wartime the military is always desperate," said Aaron Belkin, director of the Center for Sexual Minorities in the Military and a political science professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara. "There have been a declining number of discharges when the bullets start flying." Meanwhile, there is a growing body of evidence that attitudes have changed within the ranks. A recent study by the Naval Postgraduate School found that a majority of military personnel felt comfortable around openly Gay colleagues. "There is no doubt that the attitudes within the military have changed," said Belkin.

the LAW OFFICE of Carol L. Lohmann, P.C.



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Rep. Barney Frank Slams Security-Clearance Rule

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Barney Frank on Monday (Mar. 20) criticized the Bush administration's revised policy on security clearances, saying it discriminates against Gay men and Lesbians, reported 365Gay.com. "President Bush is breaking yet another promise to protect Gay and Lesbian people from discrimination," said Frank, D-Mass. "Recently, the administration decided to revise rules for obtaining security clearances in cases involving sexual misconduct, but these new rules offensively also include sexual orientation in the same policy," he said in a written statement. "Use of the two terms only confuses the issue, as employees' sexual orientation has nothing to do with how they do their jobs."



Representative Barney Frank

The criticism follows news reports last week about the policy change, which altered a 1997 regulation to state that security clearances cannot be denied "solely on the basis of the sexual orientation of the individual." The previous version said that sexual orientation "may not be used" as a disqualifier for security clearances. Though officials claimed the new policy does not change how the federal government treats sexual orientation, some Gay rights advocates disagreed, saying the revision leaves room for discrimination.

Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. The group called on National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley to explain why the change was made.

"Sexual orientation has no relevance to a person's reliability, trustworthiness or ability to protect classified information," Lesbian Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., told the Associated Press.

"Subtle changes can have drastic consequences for Gay Americans looking to serve their country with honor and courage," said Human

"This policy was not broken," Rep. Frank said, "so I see no need to fix it."

White House Defends New Security Rules

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The White House said Wednesday (Mar. 15) a revised policy on granting security clearances to Gays and Lesbians does not reflect a change in how the government will treat sexual orientation. But several Democrats denounced the new rules, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

reflect exactly what was spelled out in the executive order."

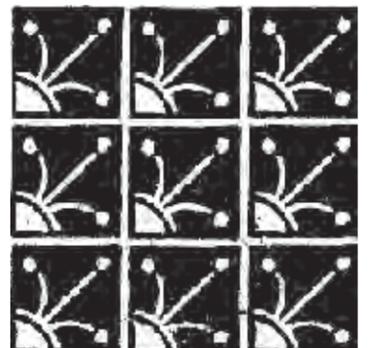
"The Bush administration is waging a covert war on loyal federal employees who happen to be Gay," said California Rep. Henry Waxman, the top Democrat on the House Government Reform Committee.

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Susan Collins, R-Maine, and House Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis, R-Va., both requested briefings on the issue, their aides said. Waxman said the revisions come as the administration has refused to enforce a policy that protects federal employees from discrimination based on sexual orientation. The administration has rejected the allegations.

News of the changes first came on Tuesday (Mar.14). The administration rewrote a 1997 regulation that had said sexual orientation "may not be used as a basis" for denying clearances or determining whether individuals should be eligible to access to classified information unless it could make them vulnerable to coercion or exploitation. President Bush's updated language says security clearances cannot be denied "solely on the basis of the sexual orientation of the individual." If sexual behavior is "strictly private, consensual and discreet," that could lessen security concerns, according to the regulations that came as part of an update to clearance guidelines distributed in December.

Several million civilian and military personnel have security clearances that require lengthy background checks. Investigators look at whether applicants have shown signs, including drug use, criminal activity and sexual behavior, that they could be a security risk. Steve Ralls, spokesman for Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, said his organization is going to watch closely to be sure the White House follows through on its assurances about the new rules. "We want to be sure sexual orientation is not used as a road block for security clearance approval," said Ralls, whose group advises Gay military personnel on how to answer questions during the background checks.

Gay rights activists said the change could open the door to added attention on sexual orientation - and discrimination. White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the new language stems from a 1995 executive order aimed at preventing discrimination based on sexual orientation. He insisted no language has been removed and that the new rules are similar to the old ones. "There's no change in our policy," McClellan said. "I think that they updated the language to



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New Push To Get LGBT Rights On UN Agenda

GENEVA - The International Lesbian and Gay Association this year will make a renewed attempt to get the United Nations to recognize LGBT civil rights, 365Gay.com reported. The Brussels-based International Lesbian and Gay Association ILGA will hold its World Conference - coinciding with the meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission.

ILGA spokesperson Stephen Barris said Monday that the UN body should be embarrassed that it has consistently ignored the plight of Gays, Lesbians and Transgendered in dozens of countries around the world. "How long can Lesbian and Gay rights be ignored at the UN," he asked.

The 53-nation Commission is unlikely to take up the issue, however, a spokesperson for the UN said. The Commission's plenary session is expected to last only a few days and the agenda has been set. The UN Commission on Human Rights has failed on two occasions to add sexuality to the list of categories protected by the world body. The proposal had been put forward by

Brazil and supported by Canada and most of the European Union states. Brazil dropped the motion when it became clear the Vatican and Arab countries led by Egypt would not let it pass.

The Vatican and the 56 member nations of the Islamic Conference also fought Secretary General Kofi Annan's plan to give the partners of some Gay and Lesbian UN workers the same benefits as the spouses of heterosexual employees. Most recently, in January, a second UN body also rejected LGBT participation. The United States joined with three of the world's most repressive regimes - Iran, Zimbabwe, China, Cameroon - to reject an application by two international LGBT groups seeking to join a UN agency that advises the world body on economics and social issues. The application by the International Lesbian and Gay Association and the Danish Association of Gays and Lesbians was dismissed without a hearing. The State Department later said the US voted against hearing the application out of concerns about potential support for pedophilia.

SF Archbishop: Adoptions By G/L Families Conflicts With Catholic Teachings



Archbishop George Niederauer

SAN FRANCISCO - Without barring adoptions by Gay and Lesbian families outright, San Francisco's new archbishop has made it clear he believes that placing children in same-sex households conflicts with Roman Catholic teachings on homosexuality, a spokesman said. Archbishop George Niederauer therefore has asked the social services arm of the Archdiocese of San Francisco to bring its adoption program "fully in sync" with the church's views while continuing to find homes for hard-to-place youngsters, spokesman Maurice Healy said, reported the Associated Press on Advocate.com.

"Our teaching on marriage and family life precludes these kinds of adoptions," Healy said. "We need to find another way to help this vulnerable population. How, remains to be worked out." Niederauer, who was installed on Feb. 15, first offered his thoughts on the subject following an announcement by the Boston Archdiocese that it would stop providing adoption services because Massachusetts law requires Gays and Lesbians to be considered as prospective parents. Similar laws exist in California and seven other states. "We realize that there are people in our community, some of whom work side by side with us to serve the needy in society, who do not share our beliefs, and we recognize and respect that fact," Niederauer said in a written statement.

Since 2000, five of the 136 adoptions facilitated by Catholic Charities of San Francisco have been to Gay couples, according to Brian Cahill, the agency's executive director. Stressing

the small numbers involved and the difficulty of finding homes for the handicapped children Catholic Charities serves, Cahill said Monday that he interpreted the new archbishop's remarks as a guideline, not a ban.

Healy said Catholic Charities might be able to complete any adoptions by Gay couples that already are in the pipeline, but he was less sure whether Niederauer's position offered any wiggle room. "It's clear to him, under Catholic teaching, a Catholic agency should not be making these kinds of adoptions," he said, adding that one option for the archdiocese is to work harder to recruit heterosexual Catholics as adoptive parents.

Following the announcement from Boston, former San Francisco Archbishop William Levada, who is now second-in-command at the Vatican, told The Boston Globe he had been aware of a handful of Gay adoptions during his tenure in California and at the time saw them as "prudential judgments." But he issued a statement saying they should not continue. In response, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom decided not to attend Levada's official elevation to cardinal in Rome, said Peter Ragone, a spokesman for Newsom. Meanwhile, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors is scheduled to consider a resolution calling on Levada to withdraw his comments and for local Catholic leaders to "to defy all discriminatory directives of Cardinal Levada."



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Lesbian Tennis Star Aamellie Mauresmo Grabs Top Spot Again



Amelie Mauresmo

NEW YORK - Australian Open champion Amelie Mauresmo will start this week's Nasdaq-100 Open in the United States as the top-ranked female tennis player in the world—again, the Associated Press reported on Advocate.com. Mauresmo replaced Kim Clijsters atop the WTA

Tour rankings on Monday, regaining the number 1 position she held for five weeks in September-October 2004 and again making her one of the most prominent Lesbian athletes ever to have taken the top spot in her sport.

Mauresmo and Clijsters missed last week's Pacific Life Open in Indian Wells, Calif., which was won by Maria Sharapova. Clijsters won the Indian Wells title last year, but the Belgian has been out with an injury and fell to number 2 in the rankings after losing her points from that win.

Justine Henin-Hardenne was third in the rankings, followed by Sharapova and Lindsay Davenport. Mary Pierce, Nadia Petrova, Elena Dementieva, Patty Schnyder, and Venus Williams round out the top 10. All are entered in the Nasdaq-100 Open in Key Biscayne, Fla., starting on Wednesday. Clijsters is the defending champion. Mauresmo, the first and only French player to be number 1, leads the WTA Tour this year with three titles, including her first Grand Slam. She has 3,511 points, and Clijsters 3,290. In the previous rankings on March 6, Mauresmo trailed by only 28 points.

LGBT Equality Riders Arrested At Oral Roberts University



TULSA - About seven members of the Soulforce Equality Ride were arrested when they ignored a warning from Oral Roberts University police not to enter the campus, reported 365Gay.com. Several dozen young Gay activists are on a 51 day cross-country trip organized by the non-denominational group Soulforce to draw attention to colleges and military academies that discriminate against LGBT students.

Their bus arrived in Tulsa Monday (Mar. 20). The riders stood on the street, across from the main entrance to the university, and held hands as they said a prayer. The university created by televangelist Oral Roberts will not enroll openly Gay students and students already enrolled that are found to be Gay can be expelled. All students are required to sign an honor code that says, "I will not engage in or attempt to engage in any illicit, unscriptural Sexual Acts, which shall include ... any homosexual activity."

One by one members of the Soulforce crossed the street. As they reached the gate to the school they were warned by ORU public safety director Gerald Isaacs that if they tried to enter the campus they would be

arrested for trespassing. About seven of the riders kept on walking were arrested by Tulsa police. Oral Roberts was the fifth school to be targeted by the Equality Ride Saturday (Mar. 18) the riders held a rally at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee. Thursday and Friday (Mar.16-17) the riders were at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee where they were allowed on campus to meet individually with students. But late Thursday night their bus was defaced when someone spray painted "Fags Mobile" in foot-high pink letters on the side of the bus as it was parked at a Cleveland hotel. Lee students joined with Soulforce members in cleaning off the slur.

Tuesday (Mar.14) seven riders were arrested as they tried to enter Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Regent, which is affiliated with Christian Broadcaster Pat Robertson, says it does not bar Gay enrolment, but its student handbook states "...homosexual conduct or any other conduct, which violates Biblical standards, is prohibited." At their first stop 24 members of the group were arrested when they entered Jerry Falwell's Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia.



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COMMENTARY . . .

by Paul Krugman

The Right's Man

It's time for some straight talk about John McCain. He isn't a moderate. He's much less of a maverick than you'd think. And he isn't the straight talker he claims to be.

Mr. McCain's reputation as a moderate may be based on his former opposition to the Bush tax cuts. In 2001 he declared, "I cannot in good conscience support a tax cut in which so many of the benefits go to the most fortunate among us."

But now - at a time of huge budget deficits and an expensive war, when the case against tax cuts for the rich is even stronger - Mr. McCain is happy to shower benefits on the most fortunate. He recently voted to extend tax cuts on dividends and capital gains, an action that will worsen the budget deficit while mainly benefiting people with very high incomes.

When it comes to foreign policy, Mr. McCain was never moderate. During the 2000 campaign he called for a policy of "rogue state rollback," anticipating the "Bush doctrine" of pre-emptive war unveiled two years later. Mr. McCain called for a systematic effort to overthrow nasty regimes even if they posed no imminent threat to the United States; he singled out Iraq, Libya and North Korea. Mr. McCain's aggressive views on foreign policy, and his expressed willingness, almost eagerness, to commit U.S. ground forces overseas, explain why he, not George W. Bush, was the favored candidate of neoconservative pundits such as William Kristol of The Weekly Standard.

Would Mr. McCain, like Mr. Bush, have found some pretext for invading Iraq? We'll never know. But Mr. McCain still thinks the war was a good idea, and he rejects any attempt to extricate ourselves from the quagmire. "If success requires an increase in American troop levels in 2006," he wrote last year, "then we must increase our numbers there." He didn't explain where the overstretched U.S. military is supposed to find these troops.

When it comes to social issues, Mr. McCain, who once called Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell "agents of intolerance," met with Mr. Falwell late last year. Perhaps as a result, he is now taking positions friendly to the religious right. Most notably, Mr. McCain's spokesperson says that he would have signed South Dakota's extremist new anti-abortion law.

The spokesperson went on to say that the senator would have taken "the appropriate steps under state law" to ensure that cases of rape and incest were excluded. But that attempt at qualification makes no sense: the South Dakota law has produced national shockwaves precisely because it prohibits abortions even for victims of rape or incest.

The bottom line is that Mr. McCain isn't a moderate; he's a man of the hard right. How far right? A statistical analysis of Mr. McCain's recent voting record, available at www.voteview.com, ranks him as the Senate's third most conservative member.

What about Mr. McCain's reputation as a maverick? This comes from the fact that every now and then he seems to declare his independence from the Bush administration, as he did in pushing through his anti-torture bill.

But a funny thing happened on the way to Guantánamo. President Bush, when signing the bill, appended a statement that in effect said that he was free to disregard the law whenever he chose. Mr. McCain protested, but there are apparently no hard feelings: at the recent Southern Republican Leadership Conference he effusively praised Mr. Bush.

And I'm sorry to say that this is typical of Mr. McCain. Every once in a while he makes headlines by apparently defying Mr. Bush, but he always returns to the fold, even if the abuses he railed against continue unabated.

So here's what you need to know about John McCain.

He isn't a straight talker. His flip-flopping on tax cuts, his call to send troops we don't have to Iraq and his endorsement of the South Dakota anti-abortion legislation even while claiming that he would find a way around that legislation's central provision show that he's a politician as slippery and evasive as, well, George W. Bush.

He isn't a moderate. Mr. McCain's policy positions and Senate votes don't just place him at the right end of America's political spectrum; they place him in the right wing of the Republican Party.

And he isn't a maverick, at least not when it counts. When the cameras are rolling, Mr. McCain can

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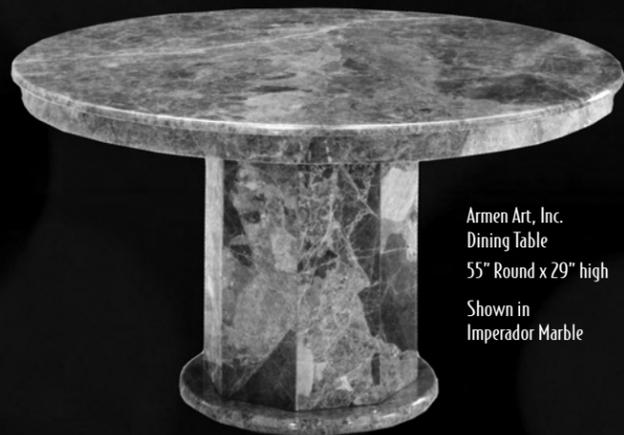
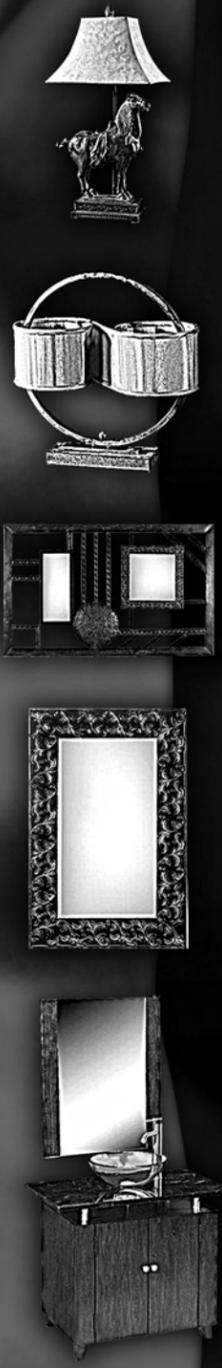


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President Bush and Sen. John McCain embracing

sometimes be seen striking a brave pose of opposition to the White House. But when it matters, when the Bush administration's ability to do whatever it wants is at stake, Mr. McCain always toes the party line.

It's worth recalling that during the 2000 election campaign George W. Bush was widely portrayed by the news media both as a moderate and as a straight-shooter. As Mr. Bush has said, "Fool me once, shame on - shame on you. Fool me - you can't get fooled again."

[Paul Krugman is a columnist for the New York Times, from which this is reprinted from the Mar. 13 edition.]



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PERSPECTIVE

by Dahlia Lithwick

Verdict's In, Same-Sex Parenting Is A Done Deal

A heads-up to those of you still fretting about the alleged evils of Gay marriage: The parade has moved on. Try as you may to vote, or legislate your way out of a country that solemnizes such relationships, committed Gay couples are already giving birth to, adopting and fostering children. Whether or not same-sex marriage becomes widely legal in America, same-sex parenting is a done deal.

Around the country, courts are increasingly recognizing that reality, with more generous notions of what "parenting" and "family" mean. Critics are launching the predictable counter-attack: deriding Gay parenting with the same claims they use to attack Gay marriage and dismissing any judge who recognizes such relationships as an unprincipled liberal activist. But there's a crucial legal difference between claims that liberal judges are inventing a right to same-sex marriage and inventing a right to same-sex parents: Judges who do the latter are adhering to a bedrock principle of family law.

The Delaware Supreme Court found this month that a Gay woman could retain joint custody of triplets she co-parented with their biological mother. That makes Delaware one of a growing number of jurisdictions unwilling to reflexively downgrade involved Gay parents to third-party interlopers. According to the 2000 Census, 34 percent of female same-sex households and 22 percent of male ones include children. The Lambda Legal Defense Fund estimates 6 million to 10 million Gay parents are caring for 6 million to 14 million children.

Adoption laws vary widely by state. Most states allow adoption by single parents, including Gay parents. Only Florida categorically prohibits Gay parents from adopting, although Mississippi, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Utah and North Dakota do so as a matter of practice. Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio and Missouri are now considering constitutional amendments or laws banning Gay adoption. Three states (Arkansas, Nebraska and Utah) prohibit Gay people from even serving as foster parents.

These legislative bans fly in the face of both necessity and truth. There are 119,000 children waiting to be adopted in this country, about half of them racial and ethnic minorities. There are about 588,000 children in foster care. Legislators — like a clutch of Ohio Republicans — pushing bans on Gay adoption and fostering must argue that it's better for these children to languish in state custody, or bounce from foster home to foster home, than be raised by Gay parents.

Just as there is no data to support the claim that children raised by married Gay parents fare worse than those raised by heterosexual ones, there is no data to suggest that foster care is preferable to Gay parenting. That's why almost every serious child welfare entity, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Child Welfare League of America and the American Psychological Association, recognizes that Gay parents are no worse than heterosexual ones.

Efforts to prevent Gay parents from obtaining joint custody over their children crash against the same practical realities. The majority of states, by denying Gay partners the right to "second-parent" adoptions or joint custody with a Gay partner,

effectively enshrine a legal regime in which millions of children have one legal parent and one legal stranger. That means that millions of children lack the security of two parents for purposes of health insurance, life insurance, inheritance, child support payments, emergency medical authorizations or parental leave, particularly in the event that their parents separate or their primary parent dies.

To defend the current adoption and custody regimes, therefore, you need to subordinate the practical and emotional interests of children to the moral preferences of lawmakers. That is precisely what family law prohibits.

The arguments for locking Gay parents out of formal parenting arrangements include the familiar litany of complaints about health, morals and the sanctity of traditional marriage. But when real family court judges face real children in real family relationships, those arguments are quickly blunted by real concerns. In the Weekly Standard, Sara Butler Nardo of the Institute for American Values takes just such a whack at the expanding legal notion of parenting. She dismisses "de facto" or "psychological" parenthood — equitable remedies used by judges to preserve relationships between children and their Gay parents — as a wacky "new concept" invented by reckless judges to "serve adults more than children." Nardo warns that while we are loudly and properly debating the legal change in the word marriage, the legal definition of the word parent is "quietly" changing under our noses.

But where Nardo and social conservatives are dead wrong is just here: If judges are increasingly inclined to recognize the validity of same-sex parenting arrangements, it's not because they are mangling a long-established tradition of family law. Courts that adopt broader visions of "parent" and "family" aren't reading radical new rights into their state constitutions. They are doing precisely what family courts are asked to do: Make a determination about what's in the "best interest of the child." That remains the polestar for judicial decision-making in both the adoption and custody contexts. As it turns out, children usually have more urgent concerns than what their parents do in bed.

The best-interest test reinforces the legal proposition that children are not their parents' chattel; the state has an obligation to privilege their needs, sometimes even over the needs of their own parents and other adults. The test is a not a fixed rule, precisely because judges must figure out what's best for kids on a fact-specific basis. And while judges can and should be able to make subjective decisions about whether two-parent adoptive homes are better than single-parent homes, they also need to be free to decide that it's preferable for little Joey to have a Gay adoptive father than none, or to have two legal mommies rather than one.

Rules rooted in sweeping moral judgments don't generally work in family law for the same reason they don't work for families: Kids love and need the parents they have, not necessarily the parents we love.

[Dahlia Lithwick covers legal affairs for Slate, the online magazine and this is a reprint from the Mar. 18 edition of The Chicago Tribune.]

POLITICS 2006

by Mark R. Kerr

Arizona Legislative Update

HB 2696, dealing with adoption received approval from the Senate Family Services Committee on Monday, Mar. 20, by a party-line vote, 3-2 (Republicans voting in favor, Democrats against).

HB 2696, gives preference to married couples applications and greatly restricting the ability of single people, straight, Gay and Lesbian, to adopt a child in the state's overburdened and crowded, foster care system and with the approval goes to the Senate Rules Committee. . . .

SB 1153, a bill that would permit student organizations in public colleges and universities to discriminate, denying equal opportunity access for all students all in the name of "moral proclivities."

In Arizona, the three state universities, several community colleges, schools and school districts have policies to protect the rights of LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) students but these measures would be gutted if SB 1153 is approved and signed into law.

SB 1153 was approved by the state Senate and sent to the Arizona House, which assigned the measure to its Universities, Community Colleges and Technology Committee (UCCT), (information of committee members and agendas online at azleg.state.az.us/CommitteeInfo.asp?Committee_ID=60), and the House Rules Committee respectively.

As of press time, the House UCCT Committee met Monday, Mar. 20 but SB 1153 was not scheduled to be heard. . . .

After delay, objection and amendments, SB 1518 was finally considered by the Senate Committee of the Whole (COW), Tuesday, Mar. 14.

Sponsored by state Senator Carolyn Allen (R-Scottsdale), the legislation would require a pharmacy to properly fill valid prescription orders and to attempt to accommodate an employee's religious objections to prescriptions, subject to specified condition and most importantly, making sure that customers and patients with respect and dignity and to ensure a seamless delivery of prescription services.

Attempts to gut or severely water down SB 1518 were voted down by Senate COW and the legislation was approved but now sits, awaiting to receive its third reading. . . .

It is important to contact your state Senator and Representative and speak out on these measures. In Tucson and Pima County, call the Tucson Legislative Office, (520) 398-6000; for Phoenix and Maricopa County, call the Capitol Complex, (602) 926-3559 (State Senate), (602) 926-4221 (State House); and, for those outside these two areas or who wish to reach their legislators offices at the Capital directly, one can also call toll-free, (800) 352-8404.

Send an E-mail to your state Senator, by going online to azleg.state.az.us/MemberRoster.asp?Body=S, and click on the E-mail link for your Senator, and to send an E-mail to your state

Representatives, go online to azleg.state.az.us/MemberRoster.asp?Body=H, and click on the E-mail links for your two Representatives.

If you want to send an E-mail or perhaps don't know who your representatives are, go online to eqfed.org/ahrf/home.html, the Arizona Human Rights Fund Advocacy Center, to send messages on these measures in support and opposition, as well as finding out who represents you by just entering your zip-code and pressing enter. So, speak out because if you don't, who will speak out for your rights when they are taken too. . . .

Candidate Announcement: Southern Arizona's openly LGBT State Senator, Paula Aboud, will announce her candidacy for Senate for District 28, and launch her campaign, Monday, Mar. 27, at the Democrats of Greater Tucson luncheon at the Rose Garden Restaurant, 1800 E. Ft. Lowell in Tucson. For more information about Aboud's announcement, the upcoming campaign, volunteer, donate (Aboud is running as a Clean Elections Candidate) ask questions, call (520) 323-7264 or E-mail: paboud@msn.com.

Cincinnati Moves To Stop Anti-LGBT Bias

CINCINNATI - In a move hailed by Gay rights advocates, the Cincinnati City Council voted Wednesday (Mar. 15) to protect LGBT residents from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations, reported the PlanetOut Network. The action is the city's first pro-Gay step since voters repealed a one-of-a-kind law in 2004 that prevented the city from passing any laws that specifically protected LGBT people.

The city's ban on LGBT rights had been in effect since 1993 and was the only such law in the United States. The 8-1 council vote will amend the city's human-rights ordinance to include "sexual orientation or Transgendered status" to the categories of people protected from discrimination, the Associated Press reported. The change will take effect next month.

The Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBT rights group, called the City Council vote a "triumph for fairness." "Cincinnati is a symbol of where America itself is when it comes to fairness," said HRC President Joe Solmonese. "In large cities and small towns, on the coasts and in the heartland, Americans want us moving toward equality, not away from it."

Councilman David Crowley, a sponsor of the ordinance, told the AP, "It's very important for us to say, 'Whoever wants to come to Cincinnati, we'll treat you fairly and justly and welcome your contributions.'"



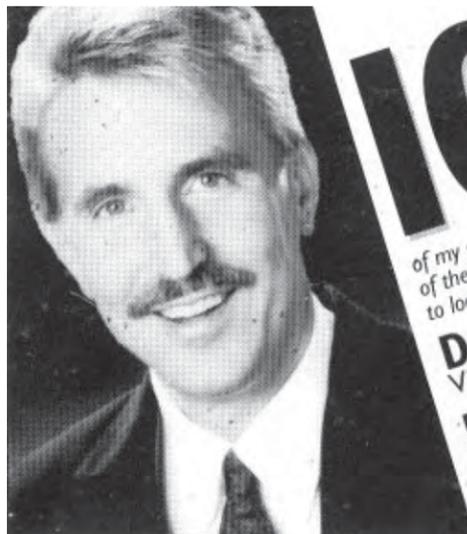
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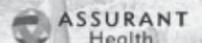
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Democrats Block Bush's Appointment For New FDA Director

WASHINGTON, D.C. - President Bush has nominated Andrew von Eschenbach as commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, the regulatory agency that the urology surgeon has led on an acting basis since September, reported Advocate.com.

Plan B, which can prevent pregnancy if taken up to 72 hours after sexual intercourse. Von Eschenbach, appearing before the House agriculture appropriations subcommittee, last month told lawmakers that the delay in addressing the application is due to the more than 10,000 public comments filed on the measure.

As head of the FDA, Von Eschenbach would oversee approvals of all new medications, including those to treat HIV. He also would oversee the approvals of vaccines—such as those in development to prevent infection by the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus, which has been linked to most forms of cervical cancer—as well as the marketing applications for microbicide products aimed at preventing HIV and STD infections.

But Clinton and Murray said that in 2005 they were tricked into removing their hold on the nomination of Von Eschenbach's predecessor, Lester Crawford. Health and Human Services secretary Mike Leavitt pledged that a decision on the application for Plan B would be finalized by September 1, 2005, and Clinton and Murray subsequently removed their hold on Crawford's nomination because of Leavitt's guarantee. Instead, the FDA in August announced it was again delaying its decision.

But angry Congressional Democrats may scuttle Von Eschenbach's appointment, which must be approved by the U.S. Senate. Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York and Patty Murray of Washington have placed a legislative hold on a confirmation vote in the Senate because of the FDA's lengthy delay in a decision on Barr Laboratories' application for over-the-counter sales of its emergency contraception

Saying they were "double-crossed" by Leavitt, the senators again have placed a legislative hold on the FDA appointment. "This time around they are not going to get their nomination until a decision has been made," Murray told The New York Times. "You cross somebody and lose their trust, it becomes very difficult to do things the second time around."

Gay Campground Owners Sue Neighbors For Alleged Hate Crimes



SPRINGFIELD - For the past seven years Charles Franzke and James Thideman have worked to build their Cactus Canyon Campground into a popular resort for Gay men in this Ozarks community, but they say from day one their neighbors, including a federal employee at the Mark Twain National Forest Service, have tried to shut them down, reported 365Gay.com. The men say that their campers have been shot at, have had rocks hurled at them, were threatened and that a petition was circulated to have the campground closed. They also claim that one neighbor opened a hog farm and polluted streams in and effort to drive them away.

conspiracy. Named are Ricky Moon a federal employee at the Mark Twain National Forest Service of Ava, Missouri, Carrie Moon, Dan Fish of Fish and Sons Lumber of Ava Missouri and a member of the Ava Church of the Nazarene, Shannon and Trish Watterson of Show Me Real Estate of Mansfield Missouri and also a member of the Ava Church of the Nazarene.

The suit claims that the conspirators worked together "for the purpose of harassing, intimidating and disrupting the business of Cactus Canyon Campground and the rights of the owners to peacefully enjoy their property." "That is the whole crux of the harassment: that we are Gay and that we run a successful Gay business," Thideman said. Lawyers for the accused dismiss the claims. "From my perspective, the case is a land dispute at its heart," said Brian Malkmus the attorney for Fish, Moon and the Wattersons.

Now Franzke and Thideman are fighting back, taking their neighbors to court accusing them of violating Missouri's hate crime law, which includes crimes based on sexual orientation. The suit alleges that the neighbors engaged in a



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SLDN: 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Unfairly Targets Lesbians

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Women are facing discharges from the military under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" at a rate nearly twice their presence in the armed forces, Department of Defense figures show, 365Gay.com reported. While women comprise about 15% of the total military force, they represent nearly 30% of all Gay-related discharges.

"Lesbian baiting goes back to the early days of World War II, when women began volunteering for service in what was traditionally a man's world," said Brigadier General Evelyn "Pat" Foote, USA (Ret.), an honorary board member of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network. "Women have never been deterred, however, from raising their hands, volunteering and putting their lives on the line. In Iraq today, women represent approximately 15% of the forces reporting for duty and have made sacrifices equal to men. They should be valued for their service and in no way held back because of gender or sexual orientation. 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' doesn't pass the common sense rule and continues to deprive our nation of talented Americans who have important contributions to make," Foote said.

An October 2004 study by the Urban Institute indicates Lesbians comprise 5% of all female service members and that nearly 10% of all coupled Lesbians between the ages of 63 and 67 served during the Korean War. In the ten years from 1990 to

2000, service rates among coupled Lesbians aged 18-27 were more than three times higher than rates among other women. Lesbians also tend to serve longer than other women, the report said, noting that nearly 82 percent of coupled Lesbians report serving more than two years, compared with 74 percent of other women.

Discharging troops under the U.S. military policy on Gays cost \$363.8 million over 10 years, almost double what the government concluded a year ago, a private report released last month says. Congress approved the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in 1993 during the Clinton administration. It allows Gays and Lesbians to serve in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps as long as they abstain from homosexual activity and do not disclose their sexual orientation.

The Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, which has represented service members who left the military under the policy, estimates the Pentagon has discharged more than 10,000 service members for being openly Gay since "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" went into effect in 1994. The number of discharges has gone down in recent years. A bill to repeal 'don't ask, don't tell' is before congress. The Military Readiness Enhancement Act currently has 90 bi-partisan supporters and was endorsed by eight retired military officers.

Lesbian Sues Fire Chief Ex-Partner For Bias

MINNEAPOLIS - A Lesbian firefighter has filed a discrimination suit Tuesday (Mar. 14) against the city's fire chief, a woman who happens to be the firefighter's former domestic partner, reported the PlanetOut Network.

Capt. Jennifer Cornell sued in U.S. District Court in Minneapolis against Chief Bonnie Bleskachek, naming the city as a co-defendant, the Pioneer Press newspaper reported. Cornell claims Bleskachek denied her training opportunities and stood in the way of her advancement through "a history of animosity, ill-will, malice and bad faith conduct," the paper reported. The suit seeks an end to discrimination and \$75,000 in damages.

The case puts Mayor R.T. Rybak, who appointed Bleskachek as chief in November 2004, in a potentially difficult political situation. Both Rybak and Bleskachek have refused comment, the mayor saying through a spokeswoman that he cannot comment on ongoing litigation. Bleskachek, one of the nation's few openly Gay fire chiefs, oversees a staff of 450 and a budget of \$43 million. The lawsuit also claims that Bleskachek was violent toward Cornell during their relationship. They were domestic partners from 1996 to 2001 and share custody of two children, the paper reported. Bleskachek and Cornell co-founded the Minnesota Women Firefighters Association.

4th Annual TOGA Contest Held At Yard Dog

TUCSON - The Annual TOGA Party and contest was held last Saturday, March 18, at the Yard Dog Saloon.

Contestants competed for cash prize money as well as enjoying the camaraderie of the Roman event.

A record number of contestants participated in this years event. A few of those party-goers are shown below. One can easily see why the judges had such a difficult time picking the winner!....

The judges had a difficult time picking the top three, but when the dust settled, the winner of the \$150 first prize was the contestant at the upper right.



NOTES FROM THE FOR-REAL SIDE

Anticipating History

by Lee Thorn

With the public pretty much sleeping through the disasters of the Bush administration, with the press trying to put the best face on them, and with congress rolling over and playing dead, my only solace is in contemplating what history might make of the current catastrophe. Unlike our timid reporters and our cowardly politicians, the historians will be writing from a safe distance in time. They'll be warm and dry and well fed, with little or no fear of telling the truth. Of course I'm assuming that we won't be continuing down the present road to becoming a police state, an assumption that might charitably be characterized as "optimistic."

So what do historians notice? Caligula is not remembered for his fiscal policy. American presidents are generally remembered in history for what they did that their predecessors didn't do - JFK going to the moon, Teddy starting the National Parks, Harry dropping the atom bomb, Jefferson doubling the size of the country, or was it tripling it? When you look at Bush's countless blunders, they may seem larger than similar blunders of past presidents, but are they really different in kind? Sure he's run up a massive debt, but lots of presidents have been reckless spenders. Sure he's shoveled money to his friends, but only the colossal scale is new. Breaking the law is nothing new for presidents. Abrogating the Constitution is nothing new; Lincoln did it when he suspended habeas corpus to the everlasting detriment of his reputation. Even making the US hated the world over isn't breaking new ground (see Nixon). Persisting in a lost war and wasting young lives just to save your own pathetic face was pioneered by LBJ. Nothing new there.

The historically unique thing about the present administration is that, for the first time in American history, we have a government that unofficially approves of torturing prisoners. I say "unofficially" because they still make half-hearted denials of the facts that enormous and ever growing evidence irrefutably proves. Viewers of C-SPAN already know that there's simply too many instances of torture in too many places and too much of a pattern in its methodology for it to have been thought up and put into practice by privates who got bored on the night shift. The torture policy went all the way to the top with everybody but Colin Powell signing off on it. And C-SPAN viewers won't be alone in their knowledge for long. The photos and testimony just keep oozing out. They'll eventually permeate everything.

Meanwhile, Rumsfeld of all people, a man who admits having offered his resignation over the issue's becoming public, is still trying to sell the bored GIs malarkey. And if you don't buy that one, how about Rummy's implication that he doesn't really know what the definition of torture is? I'll give him a real easy definition: Imagine you have a son who's a POW; torture is whatever you wouldn't want the enemy doing to him to "soften him up." Could Rummy wrap his mind around that simple notion?

The apologists for the Bush torture program, and there are plenty of them, when they finally have to admit that it's government policy and they finally have to admit that they really do understand what torture consists of, all come around to the same lame last stand of an argument. It goes like this: If you knew that by

torturing a terrible person, a guy who never even washed between his toes, you'd obtain a piece of information which you could then use to save the lives of a million smiling innocent children, wouldn't torturing that one nasty man be morally justified?

The problem with this hypothetical is that it can never obtain. You can never know the future. If you knew the future you'd be God and you wouldn't have to torture anybody to save innocent children because you'd be all powerful as well as all knowing so you'd just snap your fingers or whatever it is that God's supposed to do and they'd all be saved.

In real life torture is a bad policy because it begets torture. When one side in a war starts torturing prisoners, the other side feels more justified in torturing prisoners. It's also bad policy because it doesn't work: people being tortured are not necessarily going to tell the truth; they're going to attempt to tell the torturer whatever they think he wants to hear.

Taking the high moral ground and rejecting torture has served the United States very well for the last couple centuries. Giving that high moral ground up will serve to mark Bush and Rummy and Cheney for the amoral grotesques that they are.

[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.]

Kids Books About G/L Families Placed On Restricted List

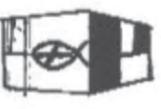
OKLAHOMA CITY - Books for children about Gay families will have to be removed from the kids' sections of public libraries under legislation passed Wednesday night (Mar.15) by the Oklahoma House, reported 365Gay.com. The bill allows the state to withhold funding from local libraries that don't restrict children's access to reading material with sexually explicit or Gay themes.

During two hours of debate opponents of the measure called it censorship. Nevertheless the bill passed 60-to-33. The author of the legislation Rep. Sally Kern (R-Oklahoma City) said that children need to be protected from sexually explicit material that "is turning young people into sex machines." The bill now heads to the Senate where opponents say they have enough votes to defeat it.

The bill is similar to a non-binding resolution passed by the House last year and led to libraries in several cities moving Gay themed books. Lawmakers specifically criticized "King & King," "Daddy's Roommate," "The Duke Who Outlawed Jelly Beans" and "Heather Has Two Mommies." The LGBT-themed books are geared to children's reading levels - from just learning to read to about age 12. Last month Oklahoma City's Metropolitan Library Commission has voted to move the books to a separate section available only to adults.



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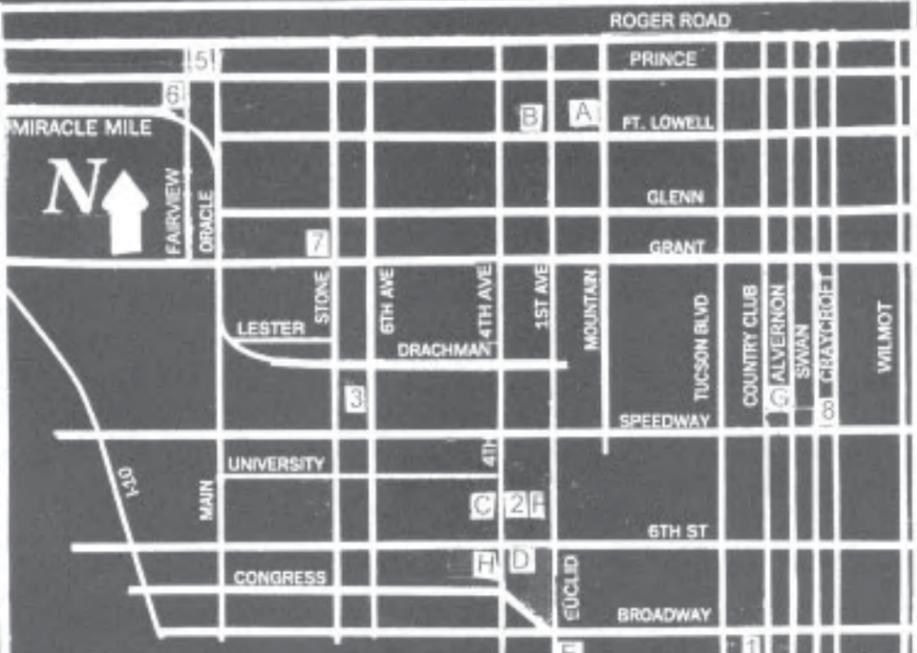
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Non Bar Calendar

Wednesday, March 22

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

Thursday, March 23

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 7:00 p.m. Join the men of MSN for Coffee Night 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 24

Lambda Literary Award recipient Fenton Johnson will speak this evening at 7:00 p.m. at Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 2331 E. Adams (near Tucson Blvd.) As part of Grace St. Paul's ongoing series "Story, Faith, and Contemporary Living". Admission is \$10, students \$2.

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 25

#1Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed):

1:00 p.m. Join Danny for a midday hike honoring Elton John's Birthday to the Romero Pools at Catalina State Park, classified as Intermediate to Difficult. Please call Vaughan at 834-9980 beforehand to arrange a meeting place and carpooling where available. Come prepared with Water, snacks and sunscreen.

#2Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed:6:30 p.m. Join Tom as he hosts the 2nd Annual March Hare Tea Party with a 1965 Italian movie, "Juliet of the Spirits" starring Giuletta Masina, Sandra Milo and Mario Pisu. Cupcakes will follow after the movie. Somewhat limited seating, so please contact Tom at 744-9036 for reservations and directions by the 23rd.

#3Men'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.

Sunday, March 26

'Old Fashioned BBQ Picnic' and Comedy Show at MCC Water of Life Church, 3269 N. Mountain Ave. Services start at 10:15 a.m. Comedy Show 11:30 a.m. BBQ (Tickets \$6.00) at Noon.

#1Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 3:00 p.m. Join your hosts Rick and John for a Potluck. The hosts will supply the burgers and dogs, you bring a sidedish to share. For reservations and directions, please call John & Rick at 743-3289.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 6:00 p.m. Thom hosts Dinner Out at one of Tucson's Fabulous Buffets. This week we will dine at Hometown Buffet (5701 N Oracle). Dinner is usually under \$10 bucks. For reservations and directions, please call Thom at 623-2941.

Monday, March 27

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Bill for "Josh Groban at the Greek" on DVD. For reservations and directions, please call Bill at 546-7539.

Tuesday, March 28

#1Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 6:45 p.m. Join Danny for "Cheap Movie Night". at Crossroads Festival Theaters (Grant and Swan. We will vote on a movie to see together. For more info, please call Danny at 349-5295.

#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.

#3 Men's Social Network(open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Terry 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 Terry at 577-3545.

Wednesday, March 29

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

Thursday, March 30

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 7:00 p.m. Join the men of MSN for Coffee Night 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 31

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 8:30 a.m. Join Tom and the Sunrise Scientists for a Bagel Brunch and a 2 hour lecture from Einstein's Relativity and the Quantum Revolution: Modern Physics for Non-Scientists. Monthly 2-hour meetings will finish this 12 hour course in 6 months. Please contact Tom at 744-9036 for reservations and directions.

Sunday, April 2

Tucson Prime Timers, Brunch, Noon, Colors 5305 E. Speedway

Monday, April 3

Tucson Prime Timers, Lunch 12:30 p.m., The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

Friday, April 7

Tucson Prime Timers, Cocktails 7:00 p.m., Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Saturday, April 8

Tucson Prime Timers, Business Meeting 11:00 a.m., Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St.

Sunday, April 9

Tucson Prime Timers, Brunch, Noon, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Monday, April 10

Tucson Prime Timers, Lunch , 12:30 p.m., The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

Friday, April 14

Tucson Prime Timers, Cocktails, 5:30 p.m., Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Sunday, April 16

Tucson Prime Timers, Brunch, Noon, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Monday, April 17

Tucson Prime Timers, Lunch, 12:30 p.m., The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

Friday, April 21

Tucson Prime Timers, Cocktails, 5:30 p.m., Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Sunday, April 23

Tucson Prime Timers, Brunch, Noon, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Monday, April 24

Tucson Prime Timers, Lunch, 12:30 p.m., The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

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HOROSCOPES

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The Sun glides into randy Aries this week. What a rush! Let's us this energetic time to redefine who we are, what we want out of life and who we want to out it with.

ARIES (MAR. 21 - APR. 20)

You are in your glory when the sun enters your own sign. Proud Rambos can make their dreams come true as all eyes turn their way. This is a fertile time of year so give it the best shot you've got. Begin new things, meet new folks and harness new energies. It's also time for a spring sprucing up. Polish those horns honey. You want to make a pointedly great first impression.

TAURUS (APR. 21 - MAY 21)

Queer Bulls can go with the cosmic flow. Your mind expands and is open and clear. You can feel intuitive and spiritually cleansed. (Or maybe its the wine?) Rub your crystal ball and see what you can divine or even better, rub a friend's. Reduce stress through yoga or meditation. Posing naked in the window maximizes feng shui... or something along those lines.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Fans come out of the woodwork. You become the center of attention and will have to learn to parcel out your time judiciously to keep up with increasing demand. Don't be shy. Pink Twins must not waste time plugging holes in the same old circles. Explore beyond and make it memorable. How memorable is the question. Will you remember it all in the morning haze...?

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

All Gay Crabs have the tenacity to go the distance in their careers this week. Good thing too; You may have begun to feel like it was time for something new. Changes and moves are possible now, but great advances can also be garnered right where you are. Pick and choose, my choosy friend. You deserve the best, even if you don't always work hard enough for it.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUG. 23)

It doesn't take a genius to know that this is a perfect time for proud Lions to expand their knowledge and improve their brainpower through coursework and possible travel. Get a charge by surrounding yourself with new stimuli. (No names please!) Any legal entanglements should untangle now. Show your briefs and rest your case. The jury is Out!

VIRGO (AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23)

Hot queer Virgins raise the general temperature this week. You gain confidence and know how to package yourself beautifully. This aptitude almost guarantees that you will get the lover of your wet dreams. But don't sit home and phone it in, pal. For best results, you have to go out and shop in person. Squeeze, smell and pluck the best of the bunch.

LIBRA (SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)

All sorts of relationships are highlighted. Pink Libras have a tendency to get caught up in various work and personal vendettas while ignoring those around them who might help make life a bit easier. Don't take partners for granted; this is the time to show them that you care. Looking for love? The opportunity to meet someone special is at hand. Use it. Ahem.

SCORPIO (OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)

Life takes some twists and turns at work. Proud Scorps may find themselves eating at their desk, slowly putting on the pounds and working longer and longer hours in their

miserable drudgery. Boo hoo! Time for a change, compadre; use an affirming outlook to get your desk cleared and body buffed. I know you can do it, you ultimately sexy thing, you.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)

Let the music and festivities begin this week. It's time to get down and party hearty, Gay Archer. Show your inhibitions and restrictions the exit door. As much as you enjoy a good time, remember that this can also be a time of unparalleled creativity and artistic output. Let your Gay muse run wilde. Do I smell a masterpiece... or is it just stale beer?

CAPRICORN (DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)

Forget about putting off your spring cleaning any longer Gay Cap. You have just run out of excuses. Overwhelming urges to spruce up your surroundings and make it in tune with the true lavender you cannot be ignored. Everything from furniture to family will have to fall into place... or else. You've nothing to lose but your macrame plant holders and plastic puce ottoman.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)

Inspirational ideas run rampant and so should you. Aqueerians see the landscape clearly and seem to know exactly what to say now to get events rolling in the right direction. Roll on, cousin; we are coming into a major professional life cycle for you and this is the time to advance your cause. While your at it, think "midterm election year". Vote blue? red? or lavender?

PISCES (FEB. 20 - MAR. 20)

Guppies begin to reassess their personal values vis a vis their financial status. You may find that all that glitters is not gold... or then again not. Use the next weeks to chart your monetary course in the framework of your deeply personal needs. If that means splurging on a hot little import, so be it. If it means socking it into an already bulging endowment, who am I to disagree?

Internet Obscenity Ruling Upheld

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Supreme Court turned back an appeal on Monday from a photographer who claimed a federal decency law violated her free-speech rights to post pictures of sadomasochistic sexual behavior on the Web, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com. Justices affirmed a decision last year by a special three-judge federal panel upholding the 1996 law which makes it a crime to send obscenity over the Internet to children.

The court could have used the case to set online obscenity standards. The subject of children and indecency has gotten more attention recently. The government renewed its crackdown on indecent television by proposing nearly \$4 million in fines for controversial broadcasts.

The Supreme Court appeal was brought by photographer Barbara Nitke, whose work is featured in the book "Kiss of Fire: A Romantic View of Sadomasochism," and by the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom. Material that is obscene is not protected by the First Amendment, but Nitke's lawyer contends her work is art that is not obscene. Justices were told by attorney John Wirenius of New York that if they turned down the case, "many more Internet users will likely

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face the constitutionally unsupportable choice faced by Ms. Nitke: either to censor her published images or risk prosecution."

The law requires that those sending obscene communications on the Internet take reasonable actions to keep it away from children, like requiring a credit card, debit account or adult access code as proof of age. The Bush administration had urged justices to stay out of the case.

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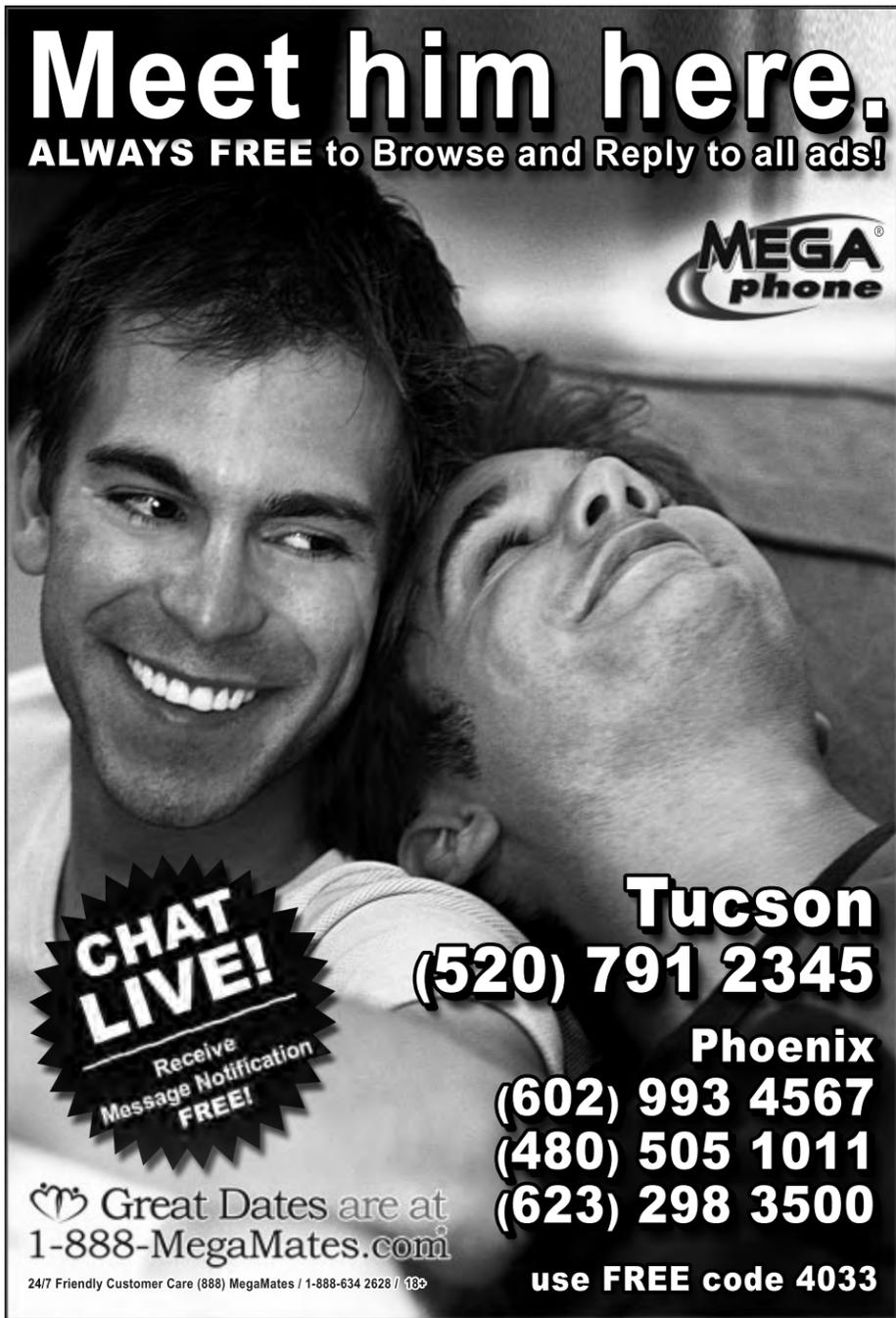
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CDC: Gay Men Are Fueling Rising U.S. Syphilis Rate

ATLANTA - The number of new syphilis cases in the United States rose 8% between 2003 and 2004, with Gay and Bisexual men accounting for much of the increase, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say in a new report, Advocate.com reported.

Female cases declined between 2003 and 2004, but cases among men rose from 2.6 per 100,000 people in 2003 to 4.7 per 100,000 in 2004, reports The Washington Times. About 65% of all male syphilis cases were diagnosed among Gay and Bisexual men, according to the report. Many of the male syphilis cases also were diagnosed among Gay and Bisexual men who are coinfecting with HIV, according to the report. Gay men who use crystal methamphetamine and who meet casual sex partners through the Internet also had high rates of syphilis infection.

Syphilis rates were shown to be 5.6 times higher among African-Americans than whites, according to the study. The South had the largest regional increase in new syphilis diagnoses, with a 16% rise between 2003 and 2004.

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

sunday

COLORS - Open 11am - 11pm Champagne Brunch 11am - 2pm with choice of complimentary mimosa, Bloody Mary or Screwdriver. Happy Hour 4-7pm \$3 Skyy Cocktails, \$2.50 Domestic and Well. Full menu served 2-10pm. Nightly dinner specials. Live music from Bob Feldhaus during Brunch (11:30-2:30) & Dickie Steede during dinner (6:30-9:30)

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 11am. Kitchen open until 9pm. Watch the NFL here! \$1.00 Jumbo Hot Dogs, \$2 Chili Dogs. \$2 Smirnoff Sundays. Free Texas Hold'Em Poker Tournaments at 4 and 7pm. 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 -Troy's Recovery Bar noon-4pm. 4-7:30 Karaoke on the patio. Benefit B-B-Q for the Pride Parade 5:30-7:30 and dance with DJ Mike Lopez 9pm to close.

VENTURE-N - Open 10am. Patio open 3pm. \$2.00 Bloody Marys or Screws til 3pm Patio Beer Bust 3-7. Burger BBQ 5-7. Selection of burger meats to choose from. \$3 proceeds go to Pet Watch (helping HIV/AIDS clients with their veterinary bills).

WOODY'S - Open 11am. Brunch \$5, 11:30 - 2:30. Patio open 1pm-close. Yard games on the grass. Beer Bust 16oz \$1 2-7p. \$2.50 Sirloin Burger or Chicken w/sides 5-9pm. Karaoke with Michael D. 9pm-close. Drag Bingo every other Sunday 8-9

YARD DOG - Open 10am - 2am. Patio Bar opens at 5pm.

monday

COLORS - Closed on Mondays.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Kitchen open 4-9 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-8pm, DJ Craig Carter 10pm-2am \$1.50 well vodka drinks, All drink specials not available during special events.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio 6pm. Free pool til 4pm. \$2.75 Skyy & Beeefeaters Martinis.

WOODY'S - Open 10am. w/Special Happy Hour til 2pm \$1.50 well or domestic longnecks. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Karaoke w/Michael D. 9-1

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am. 50¢ off any Top Shelf Rum until 8pm. Beer Bust 4-8pm

tuesday

COLORS - Open 4-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7 \$3 Skyy cocktails, \$2.50 Domestic and Well. 1st Tuesday of month "Dinner & Movie" sponsored by GMHP. All other Tuesdays "Dinner and a Concert" shown on 52" projection system. Full menus served until 10pm.

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-8pm, Tropical Tuesdays \$2.50 Tropical drinks and DJ Q playing Retro Music 70's, 80's and 90's 9pm-close.

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

WOODY'S - Open 10am w/Special Happy Hour til 2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. 80s Nite 9-close. \$1 off to those wearing 80s concert t-shirt. (Excludes draught & schnapps).

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

wednesday

COLORS - Open 4-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$3 Skyy cocktails, \$2.50 Domestic Well. Full menu served 4-10pm. Nightly dinner specials.

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. Kitchen open 4-9pm. Women-only Texas Hold-Em Poker at 6:30 p.m. Play for prizes and points.

IBT'S - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, "Diva-Licious" show 9pm w/ Bunny Fu Fu & Friends. After show dance with DJ Q til 2am,

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

WOODY'S - Open 10am w/Special Happy Hour til 2pm \$1.50 well or domestic longnecks. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Underwear- fetish-leather nite \$1 off for those wearing underwear-fetish or leather. (Excludes draught & schnapps) for all in leather or underwear.

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am. 50¢ off any Top Shelf Vodka until 8pm Beer Bust 4-8pm.

thursday

COLORS - Open 4-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$3 Skyy cocktails, \$2.50 Domestic & Well. Full menu served 4-10pm. Nightly dinner specials.

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. Kitchen open 4-9pm. Karaoke with Debbie from 8 to midnight.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, Boyz Nite Out with your Bartenders & GoGo Boys dancing in their undies and DJ Mike Lopez spinning Top 40 & All request \$1.75 Long Islands and \$1.50 Tequila shots 10pm-2am.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. 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 \$6.00.

WOODY'S - Open 10am w/Special Happy Hour til 2pm \$1.50 well or domestic longnecks. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Free Pool all day. NTN Game Nite w/prizes 9-close. \$1 Pabst Blue Ribbon. Patio bar open 8pm-close

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am. 50¢ off any Top Shelf Bourbon til 8pm. Beer Bust 4-8pm. Patio Bar opens 5pm.

friday

COLORS - Open 4pm-1am. Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$3 Skyy cocktails, \$2.50 Domestic and Well. Full menu served 4-11pm. Nightly Dinner Specials. 6:30-9:30pm. "Hot Jazz, Cool Martinis" with Susan Artemis 10pm "Guys & Dolls" hosted by Lucinda Holliday. Reservations suggested.

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 4-9pm.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, 9pm Hot Dance with DJ Mike Lopez outside on the patio and DJ Raynman spinning club music inside. 9pm-2am.

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

WOODY'S - Open 10am. w/Special Happy Hour til-2pm \$1.50 well or domestic longnecks. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Patio Bar open 8-close. Party w/DJ Jeff 9-close.

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am. 50¢ off any Top Shelf Gin until 8pm. Beer Bust 4-8pm. Patio Bar Opens 5pm

saturday

COLORS - Open 4pm-1am, Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$3 Skyy cocktails, \$2.50 Domestic and Well Full menu served 4-11pm. Nightly dinner specials. Singer, piano player Marilyn Harris performs during dinner from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Reservations suggested.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 11:00 am. Kitchen open til 9pm. Happy Hour 11am-8pm, \$2 Well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 small pitchers, \$5 large pitchers. \$4.00 Cheeseburger & Fries all day. DJ Johnny D playing your favorite dance & country 9pm to close. Kitchen re-opens 9pm - midnight for late night munchies.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, 5-8pm karaoke and Teryaki Kabobs on the patio. 8:30pm Show time w/ Ajia Simone or Janee Star. DJ Q spinning Club Music inside and Mike Lopez spinning on the patio 10pm to close..

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

WOODY'S - Open 10am. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. \$5 Steak or Fish w/all the trimmings 5-9. Patio Bar open 5-close. Live Jazz w/Arthur Migliazza on the patio 6-9. Party w/DJ Jeff 9-close.

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am. Beer Bust 4-8pm. \$1.25 glass, \$2.25 pitcher. Patio Bar Opens 5pm.

Arts & Entertainment

Now playing thru APRIL 23

"Born Yesterday" Top Hat Theatre Club, 3110 E. Ft. Lowell. Fridays & Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. Sundays at 3:30 p.m.

Now playing thru MARCH 25

"Sherlock Holmes; The Final Adventure" by the Arizona Theatre Company. Temple of Music and Art, 330 S. Scott Ave. 622-2823

Now playing thru MARCH 26

"The Philadelphia Story" by Arizona Repertory Theatre Company at Morroney Theatre, SE corner of N. Park and E. Speedway) on the UofA campus. 621-1162.

Now playing thru APRIL 30

"Black Coffee" at Live Theatre Workshop. 327-0160

MARCH 31 - APRIL 1

"Brundibar - Hear My Voice" Arizona Onstage Production. Temple of Music and Art. 270-3332

APRIL 10

"The Bob Dylan Show" starring Bob Dylan and his Band with Merle Haggard and the Strangers. Tucson convention Center Arena 321-1000

Arts and Entertainment

APRIL 15 - MAY 6 Continued

"Tuesdays With Morrie" Arizona Theatre Company. Temple of Music and Art. 622-2823.

APRIL 18

Engelbert Humperdinck at Casino del Sol AVA Amphitheater.. 838-6700.

AUGUST 17 - SEPTEMBER 24

"The Lion King" Broadway's Award Winning Musical. At Tucson Music Hall. Tickets: Tucson Convention Center Box Office, 260 S. Church Ave. Ticketmaster 321-1000.

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

FRI-SAT-SUN, MARCH 24-25-26

IBT'S - 4th Avenue Street Fair. Always packed with fair goers with shows on Saturday and Sunday. Great cruising on the Avenue too!

FRIDAY, MARCH 24

IBT'S - Noon to 8:00 p.m. Happy Hour with Tommy. 9:00 p.m. to closing DJ Raymond spinning inside on the dance floor and 10:00 p.m. to closing DJ Mike Lopes on the patio.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25

HOWL AT THE MOON - 8:00 p.m. Miss Southern Regions - National Capital Cities "Pageant Show" Featuring Mr. Scott-Mr. NCC 2005; Miss Ebony - Miss NCC Elite 2005; Josie P. Katt - Miss NCC Newcomer 2005; Ayida Monroe - Miss NCC 2005-2006; and Amanda Nicole - Miss NCC - EOY 2005.

IBT'S - Opening today at 10:00 a.m. 3:00 to 6:30 p.m. IBT's famous Drag Show hosted by Bunny FuFu and starring Janee Starr and Veroniica Halliwell with special guests Ms. Alina Malletti and Gia Monique.. 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Karaoke on the Patio. 9:00 p.m. to closing dance with DJ Q and DJ Mike Lopez.

SUNDAY, MARCH 26

IBT's - Opening today at 10:00 a.m. 3:00 to 6:30 p.m. IBT's famous Drag Show Hosted by Bunny FuFu and special guests Alina Malletti, Barbara Seville and Devina. 4:00 to 8:30 p.m. Karaoke on the Patio. 8:30 "Singer's Showcase" all live acts hosted by Jason Brock.

YARD DOG SALOON - "Yard Dog Cowboys" Beer Bust from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. Serving Hamburgers and Hot Dogs to help sponsor Jim and Jeff at the IGRA Finals in Reno.

MONDAY, APRIL 3

WOODY'S - Watch the NCAA Championship Game on their 8' Mega Screen.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

WOODY'S - "suck and Blow Party". Full details forthcoming.

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.
Call the Anti-Violence Project 24-Hour Crisis Line at 624-0348, or toll-free 1-800-553-9387.



Southern Arizona's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center

www.wingspan.org

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.sAAF.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 360-3795 or write P.O. Box 36264, Tucson, AZ 85740-6264. All replies confidential.

GLBT-friendly AL-ANON group meets Saturdays at 11am at Unitarian Universalist Church, 4831 E. 22nd Street, Tucson

YOUNG AND GAY?

GLBT Youth 23 and under, meet every Saturday in Tucson for sharing, support and information. Meetings are held at 425 E. 7th 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 298-6727, 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 M-F.

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, 425 E. 7th 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 message. TucsonSources@aol.com

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 and pretensions? We're for you! TNTucsonMEN@nethere.com, P.O. Box 12176, Tucson 85792 or call 514-9894

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, at 3202 E. 1st St. (the "Ward 6" Office Bldg.) Just south of Speedway & East of Country Club. PotLuck Dinner begins at 6:30 and the monthly meeting follows at 7:15 p.m.

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, 425 E. 7th St. 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 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 information 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.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GLBT, Tucson's Gay and Lesbian business networking group holds regular meetings the third Thursday of every month. Call 615-6436 for more info. www.tucsonglbtchamber.org

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 indi-

vidual 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 Care Teams 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 / MOVIES / ETC! Nonsmoking Lesbian Network meets every month. If you'd like to meet women 50+ (flexible) and socialize in a smoke-free environment, please call or email: 888-8010 'til 9pm, or joycesmth1@aol.com. The group dines OUT! and attends shows, movies, comedy events, etc. Now in our 23rd year, 7th in Tucson.

SOUTHERN ARIZONA GENDER ALLIANCE (SAGA). The Southwest's largest transgender and gender-diversity advocacy organization. Speakers and panelists available. General meetings monthly on the 1st Mondays at 7pm; Dezerz Girlz (MTF Support) meets 2nd Mondays at 7pm; Dezerz Boyz (FTM Support) meets 3rd Tuesdays at 7pm. Also serving partners, youth, intersex, service providers and allies. Call (520)624-1779 x26 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. Visit our web site <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)

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 information.

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.

REVEILLE 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

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

LGBT BUDDHIST MEDITATION GROUP. Join us for two 20 minute silent sitting meditations, and reading from Buddhist spiritual text and discussion. Bring a friend and a pillow or cushion. Takes place every Sunday from 10:00 - 11:30am at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St.. Contact Maurice Grossman for more info. 323-2293.

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 18 or older) meets 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at Desert Dominion, 3843 E. 37th Street, Tucson, (Map available at www.desertdominion.org) For those who are kinky or just curious. No fee, contributions are appreciated, but not required.

SUN WORSHIPERS OF TUCSON (SWOT) is a local men's nudist organization for men of all ages. Events feature swimming, hot tubbing and socializing in a relaxed, private setting

MAN TO MAN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY FORMING for anyone wanting quality friendships, better health and more passion in their lives. This group has far-reaching benefits for those who want to explore their own spirituality, sexuality and purpose in life. Contact Marc Haberman, Holistic Health Practitioner at 881-4582.



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VA. Judge Spurns Pro-G/L Visitation Ruling

EDITOR OF THE OBSERVER..
SUBJECT: JIM DONNISON RETIRING OWNERSHIP VENTURE'N.

Let's set the record correct, there are no new owners of the Venture-N. There was no 30-day public posting of a change of ownership, or change of liquor license as required by Arizona State Law. All Big Jim Donnison did was give up the day-to-day running of the bar, its sales etc.

His former Manager David Wallin and his partner Tom, publically published as new owners of the Venture-N are, in fact, only Lessees.

Big Jim Donnison, has repeatedly said the Venture-N is his Living Room, And only wants his kind of people in that space.

No women (Straight or Lesbian); Drag Personalities (except Halloween night); Transgenders; effeminate gay men; masculine gay men expressing gay slang (like Hey Girl, Darling, or any feminineness) - should you get to the bar for service, you will be made to feel uncomfortable, unwanted, and if big Jim Donnison is present made to leave his still-owned establishment...

Big Jim Donnison wanted these types out of the Venture-N, so he purchased another bar venue 5 years ago, a few blocks away on Stone/Alturus for us so-called 'undesirables' to go to for a cocktail or gay bonding. He wanted none of the above mentioned person(s) to taint his Venture-N bar image as "Tucson's only gay man's bar". Thank God, he sold his interest in that venue months ago and that gay venue is now thriving in its acceptance of all people are welcome without conditions of acceptance."

The weekly ads in the Observer from the Venture-N publish, "Maintaining the Tradition", from the new Lessee's. It's only a continuance of the prejudicial policies mentioned above by Big Jim Donnison, so there is no change at the Venture-N. Big Jim Donnison still runs the show at the Venture-N.

Only when we, as members of the gay community of Tucson, fully pay attention to Big Jim Donnison discriminating policies, can we make a change. Choose those gay establishments who support our gay goals - diversity, acceptance, fund-raising gay and straight charities: Yard Dog Saloon, Woody's, IBT's, Howl At The Moon, Colors and No Biz.

I Speak honestly as a 5 year former employee of the Venture-N.

Sincerely, Chuck Bayles

failings in life. President Bush and his blind followers have pushed an agenda of war, deceit, irresponsibility, and blaming others for their own failures. They have blurred the line between church and state in their political and religious dealings, making a mockery of our rights and tax laws. Legally, there is no tax exemption for churches and other organizations that engage in politics and discrimination.

Clearly, Arizona's Roman Catholic bishops are being disingenuous and hypocritical when they say that people of whatever orientation must always be treated with compassion and respect, and that their civil liberties must be protected. Talk is cheap, and the bishops actions speak louder than their words. As a Gay American Catholic, I think these bishops need to re-read the true words and deed of Jesus, and then visit the confessional booth themselves.

Sincerely,
Francis A. Podrebarac, M.D.,
Tucson

RICHMOND - A complicated parenting lawsuit that pits the state of Vermont against the state of Virginia traversed a speed bump Monday (Mar 13) when a Virginia judge refused to register a court-ordered visitation ruling out of Vermont, reported the PlanetOut Network. The decision by Circuit Court Judge John R. Prosser has no immediate impact, since the underlying issues are being litigated before the Vermont Supreme Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals. Nonetheless, conservative groups claimed a symbolic victory.

The case involves two former partners, Janet Miller-Jenkins and Lisa Miller-Jenkins, who had a child together during their relationship. The women had contracted a Vermont civil union, and subsequently moved from Virginia to Vermont to live under a more Gay-friendly legal system. After their breakup, Lisa Miller-Jenkins became a born-again Christian and moved back to Virginia, taking their daughter with her. After a brief period of amicable separation, Lisa severed ties between the little girl and her former partner. As civil union partners, Janet had never obtained a formal adoption decree, which is not necessary under Vermont law.

But Virginia law is another matter. Under a harsh statute passed in 2004, Virginia explicitly denies recognition to civil unions. In a succession of back-and-forth rulings in Vermont and Virginia, Janet has repeatedly won parental rights in Vermont, while Lisa has repeatedly had them overturned in Virginia. As the case now stands, Lisa has appealed three rulings from the Vermont courts to the Vermont Supreme Court. Oral arguments were heard in September, and a decision is imminent.

Meanwhile, a competing lawsuit lies before the Virginia Court of Appeals, which could eventually be appealed to the Virginia Supreme Court. During the interim, Janet Miller-Jenkins had asked a Virginia court to register the Vermont-based visitation and parenting decrees, a prelude to enforcing the orders - which could save time if the courts rule in her favor. A domestic-relations judge agreed, but on appeal, Judge Prosser overturned that decision, ruling that state law precludes any recognition of a civil union. Janet's lawyer has pledged to appeal.

But the main resolution will be delivered by the high courts of one or both states. At issue is not simply whether Virginia must recognize a civil union, but whether Virginia must recognize the actions of another state's court, when that court had original jurisdiction over the matter under review. Prolonged confusion over this basic principle could bring the case to the attention of the U.S. Supreme Court.

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