

Tucson Observer Archives

Don Lemon: Tyler Clementi's Suicide Affected My Decision To Come Out



NEW YORK (Observer Update) - CNN anchor Don Lemon has said his decision to come out gay was influenced by Tyler Clementi's suicide, reported on Top Magazine.

Clementi is the 18-year-old gay Rutgers University student who jumped off the George Washington Bridge to his death after learning that his roommate, Dharun Ravi, had secretly streamed live video of him having sex with another man onto the Internet. Ravi faces 15 charges, including bias intimidation, and witness and evidence tampering. A second student, Molly Wei, has been charged with invading Clementi's privacy.

Lemon told the New York Times that he's gay, ahead of the release of his upcoming 264-page memoir titled *Transparent*, in which he talks about his

experience. The book is now available for pre-order at Amazon.com.

In an interview on HLN's Joy Behar Show, Lemon discussed his reasons for coming out now. "I was nervous," he told Behar. "And I could have taken it out at any point. But then when the student at Rutgers University killed himself I said, 'Leave it in there.'"

"Because there shouldn't have to be people like him. And if I had had someone like me who had chosen to live their lives out and proud, there would be no need for the Tyler Clementis of the world or teenagers to want to kill themselves because they are concerned about their sexuality."

Hillary Clinton Marks International Day Against Homophobia And Transphobia

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has released a statement in support of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (I.D.A.H.O.), which was being recognized around the world.

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY CLINTON:

International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia

In every part of the world, men and women are persecuted and attacked because of who they are or whom they love.

Homophobia, transphobia and the brutal hostility associated with them are often rooted in a lack of understanding of what it actually means to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT).

So to combat this terrible scourge

and break the cycle of fear and violence, we must work together to improve education and support those who stand up against laws that criminalize love and promote hate.

As we mark the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia this May 17, let us resolve to redouble our efforts.

On behalf of President Obama and the people of the United States, I am proud to reaffirm our support for LGBT communities at home and abroad, and to call for an end to discrimination and mistreatment of LGBT persons wherever it occurs.

Whether by supporting LGBT advocates marching in Belgrade, leading the effort at the United Nations to affirm the human rights of LGBT persons, or condemning a vile law under consideration in Uganda, we

Pressure Mounts On DOMA Defense

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - More Congressional Democrats are pressing House Speaker John Boehner for answers on the leadership's planned legal defense of the Defense of Marriage Act, reports advocate.com.

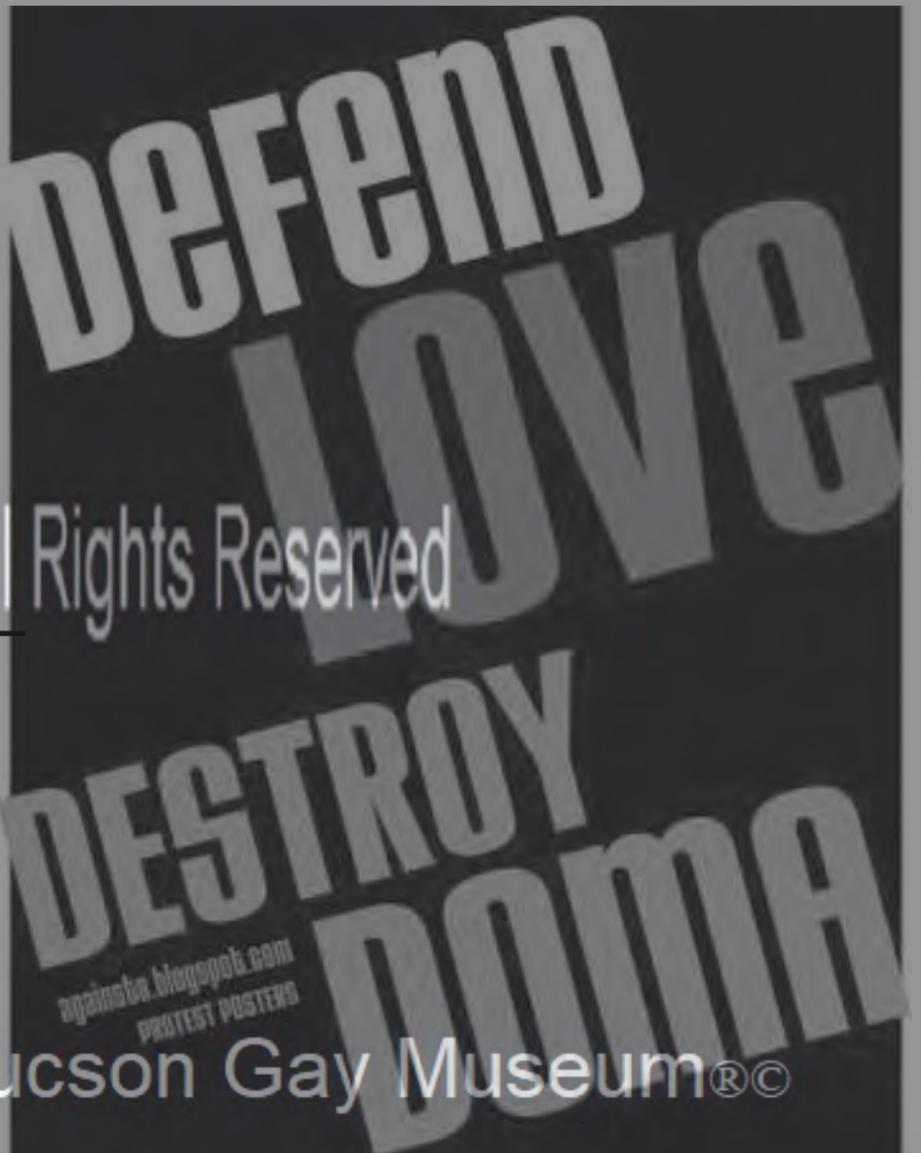
In a letter, three members of the Committee on House Administration - Ranking member Robert A. Brady of Pennsylvania, and Reps. Zoe Lofgren and Charles Gonzalez - asked for information on a contract signed by the House general counsel and former solicitor general Paul Clement, who left his previous firm, King & Spaulding, after it abruptly withdrew from the litigation last month.

Clement subsequently became a partner at Bancroft PLLC in

Washington, D.C., which has since taken on the litigation for the House.

But the three Democrats questioned whether taxpayer funds have been appropriately authorized for the \$520-an-hour, blended-rate attorney fee, as well as discounts for non-attorney time.

"We request you instruct the General Counsel to furnish the Committee a list of the hourly rate paid each employee of the Bancroft firm working on the litigation and an explanation on how the blended rate was calculated," the representatives wrote. "The American people deserve a fuller explanation about the circumstances surrounding the decision to spend \$500,000, and most likely much more, of their tax dollars to defend this indefensible statute."



are committed to our friends and allies in every region of the world who are fighting for equality and justice. These are not Western concepts; these are universal human rights.

Despite these gains and hard work, there is more to do to turn the

tide of inequality and discrimination against the LGBT community. If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, know that the United States stands with you and we are unwavering in our commitment to ending this cycle of hate.

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UPDATE

Cancer Support Group For LGBT People

TUCSON (Observer Update) - This group's next meeting is Monday, June 6, 4 - 6 p.m. at the Arizona Cancer Center at UMC-North, Rm # 1127, 3838 N Campbell Ave, Tucson

This is a weekly cancer support group for lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. Some advantages to being in a support group: You can connect with others and remember that you are not alone; You can provide support in hard times; You can provide information and coping skills

You can offer tips that only cancer survivors, friends of cancer survivors, and family of cancer survivors understand and that you are not alone. Spread the Word!

Contact: Brenda Casey, LMSW. Email: bcasey@umcaz.edu. Phone: 520-694-0347.

Reveille Men's Chorus Open Rehearsal

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Do you enjoy singing in the shower?

When you belt-out karaoke, do people actually stay in the room? Then Reveille wants YOU!

Auditions are a very simple process of checking each individual's voice placement within the chorus, as a Bass, Baritone, Tenor II or Tenor I. They are open throughout the year and can be taken at any regular rehearsal.

Contact: Shawn Cullen, Director. Phone: 520-304-1758. Email: director@reveillechorus.org.

Volunteer Appreciation Picnic Rescheduled

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The picnic, which was rained out last month, has been rescheduled for 6:00 - 8:00 pm on Thursday, June 9, at the Historic Y, 738 N. Fifth Ave.

The event this year is a joint affair by the staffs of Wingspan, TIHAN (Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network) and SAAF to say thank you to all who have given their time and talent to make our organizations work.

All volunteers and their guests are welcome. RSVP by June 6 to wingspan@wingspan.org.

Welcome To OZ Finishes Winter Season; Summerfest Begins June 2

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Welcome to OZ, Tucson's LGBT and straight supportive bowling league concluded their winter season this past Thursday at Tucson Bowl.

Gumm on the Shoes, consisting of Richard Burch, Doug Weiner and Mark Kerr won the league championship in convincing fashion, sweeping the Men Behind the Curtain in four games, winning by 309 pins.

Welcome to Oz will be bowling a summer league, starting Thursday, June 2, 6:30 p.m. at Tucson Bowl, 7020 E. 21st St.

Third Person Arrested In Beating Of Man Outside El Paso Nightclub

EL PASO - The El Paso Police Department's Intelligence Unit has arrested and charged a 17-year-old male in the aggravated assault that occurred outside the Old Plantation nightclub on May 7. He is the second person arrested in the case. A 16-year-old juvenile also has been detained in the case.

Ivan Gallardo, 17, of the 900 block of S. Tays, has been charged with Aggravated Assault and booked into the El Paso County Jail on a bond of \$50,000.00. Roman Olvera, 19, of the 2200 block of Bassett, has been charged with aggravated assault and booked into the El Paso County Jail on a bond of \$50,000. Police had previously detained a 16-year-old boy in the assault of 22-year-old Lionel Martinez outside of the Old Plantation (OP) nightclub. The unnamed juvenile was referred to the Juvenile Probation Department for the offense of aggravated assault.

Martinez remains in critical condition. Police have classified the assault as being gang related and "was not not committed based on bias of race, color, disability, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, gender or sexual preference," according to police officials. Police investigators and Special Agents from the FBI continue the investigation and anticipate more arrests, police officials said. The FBI is investigating the incident as a civil rights violation.

Tenn. Dismantles Discrimination Ordinances; Passes Don't Say Gay Bill

NASHVILLE (Observer Update) - In response to an ordinance banning LGBT discrimination in Nashville, the Tennessee legislature has passed a bill that bans all cities and counties from enacting non-discrimination ordinances.

The bill prohibits localities from adopting all anti-discrimination laws, including those based on race, religion, sex, and age. The Human Rights Campaign says the Tennessee legislature took action on the bill after Nashville's gay-inclusive law was recently enacted.

SB 632/HB 600 now heads to the desk of Republican governor Bill Haslam.

"Limiting the rights and protections cities and counties can provide their own citizens is fundamentally unjust," HRC president Joe Solmonese said in a press release.

In other news, a bill passed the Tennessee Senate would forbid public school teachers and students in grades kindergarten through eight from discussing the fact that some people are gay.

Opponents deride the measure as the "don't say gay bill." They say it's unfair to the children of gay parents and could lead to more bullying. Supporters say it is intended to give teachers clear guidance for dealing with younger children on a potentially explosive topic.

First Lady Touts DADT Repeal

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - First Lady Michelle Obama made her first appearance on the official 2012 campaign trail, asking supporters to work for her husband harder than they did to get him elected in 2008.

Obama mentioned the several accomplishments that the President spearheaded during his two-and-a-half years in office, including the ongoing repeal of "don't ask, don't tell." She also spoke of the health care overhaul, appointing justices Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan to the U.S. Supreme Court, and providing more financial aid for college students, the Associated Press reports.

The First Lady was addressing 500 attendees at the Democratic National Committee's Women's Leadership Forum's annual national issues conference.

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Gallup:

Majority Support Gay Marriage

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - A Gallup poll released shows a narrow majority of Americans support giving gay and lesbian couples the right to marry.

Firth-three percent of respondents said they support the legalization of gay marriage, while forty-five percent disagree, while two percent don't know. The poll was the polling group's first in 15 years to find opponents of the institution in the minority.

Gallup's survey finds a 9-point increase in support for gay marriage in its polling since last year.

"This most recent poll reaffirms that Americans have been listening and, in Lincoln's words, 'thinking anew' or, as President Obama would put it 'evolving.'," Evan Wolfson president of Freedom to Marry said in a statement. "As they've heard the stories of loving and committed couples harmed by the denial of marriage and the safety-net it brings, their hearts have opened and minds have changed."

While the poll found large increases in support among Democrats (13%) and independents (10%), Republican support for the institution remained unchanged at 28 percent from last year.

Younger Americans (18 to 34) also support gay marriage in greater numbers, 70 percent, while support dropped to 39% among those 55 and older.

"While big majorities of Democrats and young people support the idea of legalizing same-sex marriage, fewer than 4 in 10 Republicans and older Americans agree," Gallup said in releasing its findings. "Republicans in particular seem fixed in their opinions; there was no change at all in their support level this year, while independents' and Democrats' support jumped by double-digit margins."

The findings are in line with several recent nationwide polls, including cabler CNN, ABC News and The Washington Post, and The Associated Press, which found majority support for marriage equality.

Suns CEO Says He Is Gay

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - Rick Welts, the president and CEO of the Phoenix Suns, has come out gay, reports On Top Magazine.

commissioner of the National Basketball Association, about his sexual orientation at a meeting last month in New York, the New York Times reported. That discussion occurred after Welts had already spoken with

Welts told David Stern, the



several stars of the sport, including Bill Russell and Val Ackerman.

"This is one of the last industries where the subject is off limits," Welts told the paper. "Nobody's comfortable in engaging in a conversation." The 58-year-old Welts joined the Phoenix Suns in 2002 as president and chief operating officer and was named chief executive officer seven years later, capping off a journey that began 40 years earlier when he joined the NBA as a ball boy. He becomes the first openly gay man in a prominent position in the NBA.

In the article, Welts talked about having to silently grieve the death of one lover from AIDS and the high toll he's paid for remaining in the closet.

"My high profile in this community, and my need to have him be invisible," Welts regrettfully

said about a recently failed relationship. "That ultimately became something we couldn't overcome."

Welts said Stern was "supportive but didn't ask questions" and the pair hugged after their meeting. "What I didn't say at the time was: I think there's a good chance the world will find this unremarkable," Stern said. "I don't know if I was confusing my thoughts with my hopes."



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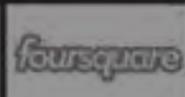
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Minnesota Voters To Decide On Gay Marriage Ban

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Minnesota has a long and potentially polarizing campaign in store after state lawmakers agreed to allow voters to decide whether to limit civil marriage to heterosexual couples - a prohibition that already exists in state law, the Huffington Post reported.

The House voted 70-63 just before midnight Saturday after nearly six hours of emotional debate that raised many of the issues likely to resonate in the coming campaign.

Critics of the amendment said it would divide families and neighbors and harm the dignity of gay people, while its supporters said the definition of marriage is important enough that voters alone - not judges or legislators - should decide how it's addressed in the constitution.

The vote split mostly along party lines, with Republicans in support and Democrats opposed. Four Republicans crossed over to vote 'no,' and two Democrats voted 'yes.' The statewide vote itself is nearly a year and a half off, an unusually long lead time for both supporters and opponents to organize, raise money and try to sway Minnesotans. Both sides were already laying plans for respective coalitions for and against the amendment, with supporters calling themselves "Minnesota for Marriage" and opponents gathering under the banner of a group called "Minnesotans United for All Families."

Gay rights activists said they believe public opinion about gay relationships is quickly shifting in their favor and that the next 18 months would give them time to reach a lot of voters with a message that gay relationships don't threaten other families.

"This isn't necessarily a case you can make to people in a sound bite," said Monica Meyer, executive director of the gay rights group OutFront Minnesota. "But if you have the chance to sit down with someone and explain to them that this hurts real families and doesn't help anyone, that's how you win people over."

Jason Adkins is executive director of the Minnesota Catholic Conference, which lobbied for the amendment at the Legislature. He said if opponents of the amendment think they can win over the public then they wouldn't have lobbied the Legislature so hard to reject it. "If they were so confident of winning the debate in the public square, I'm not sure why they were so afraid to put it on the ballot," Adkins said.

He said the Minnesota for Marriage group would be a joint venture of Catholic and evangelical churches and other religious and secular groups. He said they'd try to mount "the largest and most intensive grassroots political campaign the state has ever seen." Adkins said their principle argument would be that "children thrive and are nurtured best when they are raised by a mother and a father."

"Marriage under civil law is about attaching children to their parents, not just a relationship based on a consensual agreement between two adults who love each other," he said.

Residents of 30 U.S. states have voted on the definition of marriage; opponents of gay marriage have prevailed in every single one of those votes. But recent polls have shown growing support for gay marriage, particularly among young voters, including a recent Star Tribune Minnesota Poll that found a majority of respondents opposed to the constitutional ban.

Few House Republicans spoke in favor of the ban in the Saturday night debate, a contrast to similar debates in past years. Democratic members showed no similar hesitation, and opposition was no longer limited to members from Minneapolis and St. Paul: Democrats from Bemidji, Brainerd, Hibbing, Duluth, Rochester, Mankato and the Twin Cities suburbs all took turns speaking against the amendment.

A few Republicans joined them. Rep. John Kriesel, a freshman Republican from Cottage Grove and an Iraq war veteran who lost his legs in combat, delivered an impassioned speech against the amendment.

"Happiness is so hard to find for people, so they find someone who makes them happy and we want to take that away?" Kriesel said. "We say you can be together but you can't marry them? That's wrong and I don't agree with it."

Rep. Rod Hamilton, R-Mountain Lake, said he supported giving voters the ultimate say. But he said his teenage daughter recently pointed out to him that she would be 18 by November 2012 - and that she would vote against it.

"She said, 'Dad, I think a person should be able to marry whomever they love whether it's the opposite sex or not,'" Hamilton said.

Away from the Capitol, views on the amendment were complicated among voters in several suburbs south of Minneapolis.

Kathryn Cuhlmann, a 20-year-old massage therapist from Burnsville, said her religious upbringing influenced her belief that marriage should be reserved for opposite-sex couples.

"The Bible says marriage is between one man and one woman, I would vote to keep it that way," Cuhlmann said. But she mentioned that finding out her closest friend, who recently died, was a lesbian had made her views evolve a bit.

"I'm not like 'You guys can't be happy,'" Cuhlmann said. "I want them to be happy. So it's kind of a hard spot to be in."



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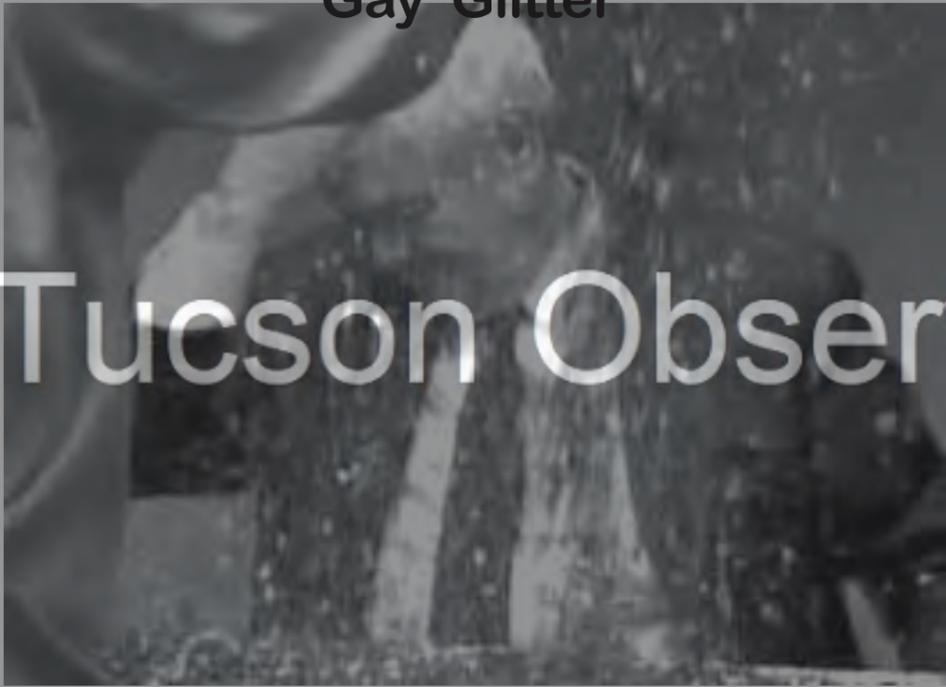
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Newt Gingrich Showered With 'Gay Glitter'



MINNEAPOLIS (Observer Update) - At a campaign stop in Minnesota on Tuesday, gay rights activist Nick Espinosa dumped "gay" glitter on former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, ABC News reported.

Gingrich and his wife Callista were participating in a book signing in Minneapolis before attending a benefit for the Minnesota Family Council, a group that opposes gay rights, reported On Top Magazine.

"Feel the rainbow, Newt," Espinosa said as he doused the presidential candidate with glitter. "Stop the hate. Stop the anti-gay politics. It's dividing our country and it's not fixing our country." "Nice to live in a free country," Gingrich said as he cleaned the glitter off

the table he was seated at.

The 24-year-old unemployed Espinosa said he was protesting Gingrich's opposition to gay marriage. "Today, I invited Newt to feel the rainbow because he decided to bring his anti-gay politics to my state," he told ABC News. "Newt has a long history of anti-gay politics and has chosen to focus on divisive social issues instead of working to fix our economy. I don't think a free will adulterer like Newt has any ground to stand up while telling others who they can and can't love."

Last July, Espinosa protested Republican gubernatorial candidate Tom Emmer, an opponent of gay rights, by dumping 2,000 pennies on the candidate.

Professional Bowling Champ Comes Out



BOWLING STR SCOTT NORTON

website, that his experience on the tour "surpassed nearly everything I could hope for in terms of acceptance."

"I am very proud and happy with who I am and who I have become as a person," he added, "and I would hope that this will empower other gay athletes - past, present, or future - to come to terms with the truth about who they are and love themselves for who they are."



Gay Dads Lose LA. Birth Certificate Case

LAS VEGAS (Observer Update) - A professional bowler who was named Rookie of the Year says being openly gay while on the tour was "extremely important" to him, so that he could act as a role model for fellow gay athletes, reported advocate.com.

After passing the California bar exam in 2009, Scott Norton went on to pursue another lifelong dream of becoming a professional bowler. In his first season, 2010-2011, Norton won a Professional Bowling Association tour title and was named PBA Rookie of the Year by his peers. Norton wrote on the league's

NEW ORLEANS (Observer Update) - A gay couple who wanted both their names to appear on the birth certificate of the Louisiana child they adopted in New York have lost their latest round in federal court, reported 365Gay.com.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said Tuesday that a Louisiana registrar's insistence that only one father's name can go on the certificate does not violate the child's right to equal protection under the law; nor does it deny legal recognition of the New York adoption by both men.

An attorney for the gay rights

ESPN New York Radio Host Jared Max: 'I Am Gay'



JARED MAX

NEW YORK (Observer Update) - Jared Max, one of the best-known voices in New York sports radio and current ESPN New York 1050 morning host of 'Maxed Out in the Morning', came out of the closet this morning after talking about the other sports figures who have come out of the closet this week, towleroad.com reports.

Said Max (my transcript):

"Are we ready to have our sports information delivered by someone who is gay? Well we are gonna

find out. Because for the last 16 years, I've been living a free life among my close friends and family, and I've hidden behind what is a gargantuan sized secret here in the sports world. I am gay. Yeah. Jared Max. The sports guy who is one of the most familiar faces in New York sports isn't quite like the majority. And while you already knew I was a little different, this might help make sense of it. But more so, I'm taking this courageous jump into the unknown having no idea how I will be perceived..."

Will Sheridan Follows Rick Wells Out Of The Closet



MILFORD (Observer Update) - Will Sheridan, a former Villanova basketball player, announced in an interview on ESPN that he's gay.

Sheridan came forward a day after Phoenix Suns' CEO and President Rick Welts came out of the closet in an interview with the New York Times.

The 26-year-old Sheridan dis-

cussed his sexuality during an appearance on the network's Outside The Lines.

When asked why he decided to come out, Sheridan replied: "I'm kind of over it. Everyone close to me knows. Everyone who matters to me knows. I'm at a point where someone else can learn from my experience."

A family member of the Tucson Gay Museum

New Gay Policy Is Simple: 'It's An Order' Marines Told

Camp Pendleton, Calif. - Marine instructor Maj. Daryl Desimone stood before an auditorium filled with fatigue-clad troops, carrying an unequivocal message: It's OK to disagree with letting gays serve openly in the military. It's not OK to disobey orders, the Associated Press reported.

roommates to preserve peace, just as they do now when roommates argue.

Marines will not be allowed an early discharge for opposing the policy, but exceptions will be considered, Desimone said. "You can't just walk up and say 'I Don't like this. I'm out of here,'" he said.

He explained that the repeal of 'don't ask, don't tell' is an order, one heard by generals and rank-and-file alike, as the military tries to change the culture of a historically conservative institution.

Classes like this are being held at military bases around the world. The Marines expect to finish training by June 1 with all military branches done by summer's end.

Only a few of the roughly 150 Marines stepped up to ask questions. One stood up from a back row and demanded to know why his religious beliefs were being "put aside" in favor of gays, forcing him to "basically grit my teeth and bear it". It's not really open to discussion," Desimone said. "Nobodys' trying to change your mind.

The repeal of the 17-year "don't ask, don't tell" would go into effect 60 days after the president, the defense secretary and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff certify that lifting the ban won't hurt the military's ability to fight.

Sexual orientation will now be a private matter, just like religion or politics, he said.

If a Marine spots two men in his battalion kissing off-duty at a shopping mall, he should react as if he were seeing a man and woman according to the training materials. If he turns on the television news to see a fellow Marine dressed as a civilian and marching in a parade with a banner that reads, "Support Gays and Lesbians in the Military!" he should accept it as a free right of expression.

Another Marine stood up to ask what would happen if a Marine refused Gay roommates. Marines won't have separate barracks or showers based on sexual orientation, Desimone said. He added that signing up for the Marines comes with a expectation of less privacy. That said, officers may decide to separate

One Marine summed it up by saying, "It would matter that I would save their lives, and they would save mine. We all wear the same uniform.

Orthodox Jewish Gays Coming Out

Jerusalem - A once unimaginable movement is emerging from within Israel's insular Orthodox Jewish community: Homosexuals demanding to be accepted and embraced, no matter what the Bible says according to an Associated Press report.

tourist destination, and Jerusalem has an annual gay parade. More liberal streams of Judaism embrace gay couples and even gay rabbis.

Living along side a secular majority that was largely embraced their Western gay-rights movement, Israel's religious gays are increasingly rejecting age-old dictates to ignore their attractions, abstain from sex or undergo therapy that supposedly makes them straight.

Now, the idea that one can be both gay and religious is catching on even at the fringes of Orthodoxy, a socially conservative, entrenched culture that prides itself on its differences from the modern secular world.

A decade ago, says Yuval Cherlow, a heterosexual Orthodox rabbi, he would have dismissed the phenomenon as "two or four crazy people that are assimilating into western world culture.

Today, there are gay Orthodox prayer grupos. Support services and a large Web presence.

Then he was invited to a meeting of Orthodox homosexuals. More than 50 people turned up, nearly all graduates of Orthodox religious seminaries. Cherlow said he began to realize the issue had to be addressed, and he now advises religious gay groups.

In March, a religious gay group called Havruta celebrated Purim at a gay-friendly nightclub in central Jerusalem with a reading of the Megillah, the traditional scroll read on this Jewish holiday, drawing implicit parallels between the persecution of Jews in ancient Persia and the struggle of Jewish gays against intolerance today.

In Orthodox Judaism, as with traditional streams of Islam and Christianity, homosexuality is generally frowned upon. Gay observant Jews may be ostracized by their families, while in the Muslim world, gays can face violence. In Iran, for instance, homosexuality is punishable by death.

The event attracted about 40 yarmulke-clad men, mostly in their 20s and early 30s, and a handful of women. Like secular Israelis who celebrate Purim by dressing up, they donned elaborate costumes and sipped beer.

Yet in Israel, homosexuals openly serve in the army, same-sex couples get some benefits, the country markets itself as a gay-friendly

But religious gays know that to be taken seriously by rabbinical authorities, they must carefully frame their demands within the boundaries of Halacha, or traditional Jewish law. Most steer clear of asking for religious recognition for their relationships.

As a result, the movement is fractured and bogged down by internal clashes over where to draw the line between respecting tradition and ap-

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AROUND THE GAY GLOBE...

RIGHTS WORKER WANTS BISHOP TO PUBLICLY APOLOGIZE TO GAYS

BELGRADE, SERBIA - A Serbian human-rights official said that a hardline Orthodox Church bishop must publicly apologize for the anti-gay remarks he made after last year's pride march that erupted in violence.

Bishop Amfilohije violated Serbia's anti-discrimination laws when he criticized gays in a speech. There was no immediate comment from Amfilohije or the church. The bishop could face legal action if he does not apologize.

In his speech, Amfilohije called gays "stench and poison littering capital Belgrade" and blamed them for clashes that broke out when extremists attacked police securing the Oct. 10 pride event,

Serbia's first in years. More than 100 people were injured and dozens detained during the clashes.

DOZENS CELEBRATE SEXUAL DIVERSITY

Cubans have held a short but colorful parade celebrating sexual diversity to mark the International Day Against Homophobia.

Dozens of people waving rainbow flags and banging drums marched through the capital. One participant held a portrait of ex-leader Fidel Castro, the Associated Press reported.

Castro's niece Mariela Castro campaigns for gay rights and heads the government-backed National Sexual Education Center. She says the march is meant to raise awareness about discrimination.

Cuba is far more tolerant of homosexuality than in the early years after the 1959 revolution, when many gays lost jobs, were imprisoned or sent to work camps or fled to exile. The government has even begun paying for Cubans' sex-change operations in recent years.



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There are two things we've learned from GOProud, the small, often obnoxious right-wing gay group that makes the Log Cabin Republicans seem like liberals. For the uninitiated, this is the group that supports outspokenly anti-equality public figures – from Ann Coulter, who was paid to speak to the group, to Donald Trump, who is opposed to any gay unions—and targeted gay congressman Barney Frank during the 2010 election with an ad that called him “catty.”

First off, denialists and elitists who believe they are superior to other gays – even if the attitude masks a pitiful self-loathing – are clearly as prevalent as ever in the LGBT movement, except that they can now be out of the closet. Perversely, the fact that we can find such people in GOProud is a measure of our success.

The other thing we've learned is that the Christian right, contrary to all the media blather about it losing steam as the Tea Party ascends, still has a grip on the GOP, and this can actually be helpful in gaining civil rights through the Democratic Party—if the Democrats recognize a useful wedge issue staring them in the face.

On the first count, let's look back in history. There've always been gays in even the most extreme corners of the Republican Party. There was the reckless senator Joseph McCarthy's right-hand man, Roy Cohn, who helped his boss ferret out both alleged communists and homosexuals in the government in the 1950s. In the '80s closeted conservative activist Terry Dolan vocally supported the antigay agenda of Christian right leaders as chair of the National Conservative Political Action Committee. He helped elect—and wrote a book about—Ronald Reagan, who bowed to religious extremists and ignored AIDS, the disease that took Dolan's life in 1986 at the age of 35.

Justin Raimondo was the openly gay campaign manager of the virulently antigay Pat Buchanan's 1992 presidential campaign. In the new century we had Ken Mehlman, chair of the Republican National Committee and, later, George W. Bush's reelection campaign manager, who promoted anti-gay marriage amendments across the country, helping the GOP to win with hate. And let's not forget Mary Cheney, who, like Mehlman now, is out, but gives money to antigay politicians even as she enjoys the benefits of hard-won gay rights advances.

Their motivations are probably unique to each but there are some commonalities: a desire to be close to power; a hunger for attention and GOP approval; a selfish devotion to Republi-

COMMENTARY

BY MICHELANGELO SIGNORILE

Lessons Learned

can “fiscal” policies over civil rights; and a belligerence toward gay activists, whom they seem to detest.

GOProud's Chris Barron fits right in, often appearing desperate for Republican acceptance, compromising his positions at a moment's notice—if he even had any to begin with. Formerly political director for the Log Cabin Republicans, he broke away and cofounded GOProud, claiming that Log Cabin wasn't conservative enough. Since its founding in 2009, GOProud slowly moved in the direction of not taking any pro-gay positions, all in an attempt to be included in the Republican Party, even though Barron oddly once tweeted that GOProud is “a gay organization, we only work on gay issues.” GOProud is opposed to the proposed Employment Non-Discrimination Act and the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which is now law. And fearing being cut out of the annual Conservative Political Action Conference – which for 2012 has banned groups that support any pro-gay legislation – Barron told the blog RedState last February, “Considering we don't support gay marriage and DADT isn't part of our 2011 legislative agenda [I'm] not sure how this affects us at all.”

Barron and GOProud now also support House speaker John Boehner defending section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act in federal appeals court after President Obama announced he believed the law is unconstitutional – though Barron himself is legally married to a man in Washington, D.C. Barron's husband, to whom he refers a lot in his tweets, is a D.C. teacher who wrote a piece in MetroWeekly about how kids learn to be bullies from adults who bully one another. But there couldn't possibly be a better example of an adult bullying other adults than Barron tweeting this: “The gay left = the American Taliban. Hateful, angry and dumb as shit.” He's also tweeted that Andrew Sullivan is “fat,” “pathetic,” and “self-important” and that Meghan McCain is “intensely stupid.”

Barron has said in a radio interview that he wanted to see as many candidates as possible in the Republican primaries – including,

presumably, even the antigay ones, which is most of them – but then tweeted that Fred Karger, the only openly gay announced candidate (who is associated with GOProud's rival group, Log Cabin, and actually forcefully takes on homophobic politicians), is a “fake candidate.”

Barron's impulsive tweets are telling in a variety of ways. He obsessively tweets about his abs and his workouts in a way that betrays a guy who's pretty insecure about his body and perhaps his very manhood, out to prove he's a real guy, not like those other gays, such as the “catty” Barney Frank, who Barron tweeted has a “purse” and wants to “sit in Scott Brown's lap.”

This insecurity over masculinity seems to be a theme at GOProud. In a YouTube clip that received much attention over the winter, GOProud member Matt Hissey says he doesn't like most gays: “I don't really like gay people that much. Gay people frustrate me, the stereotypical gay people, it frustrates me...”

In an interview on my radio program, Barron had a meltdown after I noted blatant hypocrisy in his apologizing for having rightly called conservative power attorney Cleta Mitchell a “nasty bigot” in a public forum. Conservatives at CPAC and across the right-wing blogosphere expressed outrage at his comment, and conservative lesbian radio host Tammy Bruce quit the GOProud board within days. GOProud's invitation back to CPAC was jeopardized as well, in yet another example of Barron's volatile nature getting him in trouble. Attempting to stop the bleeding, he issued a slobbering apology for his bad “language.”

When I noted that it was “wussy” of him to apologize to Mitchell while refusing to apologize for calling the gay left “dumb as shit,” Barron lashed out, and I had to bring the interview to a close.

In the end, CPAC chair Alberto Cardenas indicated GOProud likely won't be invited back, bowing to conservative groups like the Family Research Council, which, along with other groups, boycotted CPAC.

“They used that platform to be quite aggressive,” Cardenas told conservative publication Human Events of GOProud. “The ideal GOProud participation would have been, ‘You know what,

guys? This is an inclusive society. We're as interested in these fiscal issues as you are. Fill your website with fiscal issues that you're for and be a mainstream discussor of issues. We just happen to have a different lifestyle.’” In other words, sit down, shut up, and don't challenge homophobia.

And that's what GOProud's drama tells us about the endurance of the Christian right: It still wields a great deal of power in the GOP (witness how abortion became front and center in the budget battle), even as mainstream America is well beyond its issues.

The media claimed that the Tea Party was something new, focused on fiscal issues, not social ones, and had supplanted the religious right. But in fact, what we've come to learn is that it is often the same old crowd, and many of the Tea Party activists are also moral crusaders. That was borne out in the campaigns by two of the most prominent Tea Party Senate candidates in 2010, Sharron Angle and Christine O'Donnell.

GOProud is useful to the GOP insofar as it provides the cover of being “tolerant” of gays at a time when a majority of Americans now support marriage equality, and as younger voters support full equality in huge numbers. But Cardenas's statement shows the limit of that tolerance. Those who control the GOP don't want to see open gays in the party at all – even if they're only supporting “fiscal” reforms.

That makes LGBT rights a wedge issue for Democrats to now wield against Republicans instead of the other way around, as it had been for so long. When President Obama decided not to defend DOMA, it was good for the LGBT movement but also great politics for him, something we all hope he and Democratic leaders have realized. It put the GOP on the defensive, as John Boehner showed no passion in defending DOMA – and knows most Americans don't support DOMA – but had no choice because of that antigay base, which GOProud's wild ride underscores is still very much in charge. ?

(Signorile is a writer, activist and hosts a radio show on Sirius Out-Q Radio. This was reprinted from advocate.com.)

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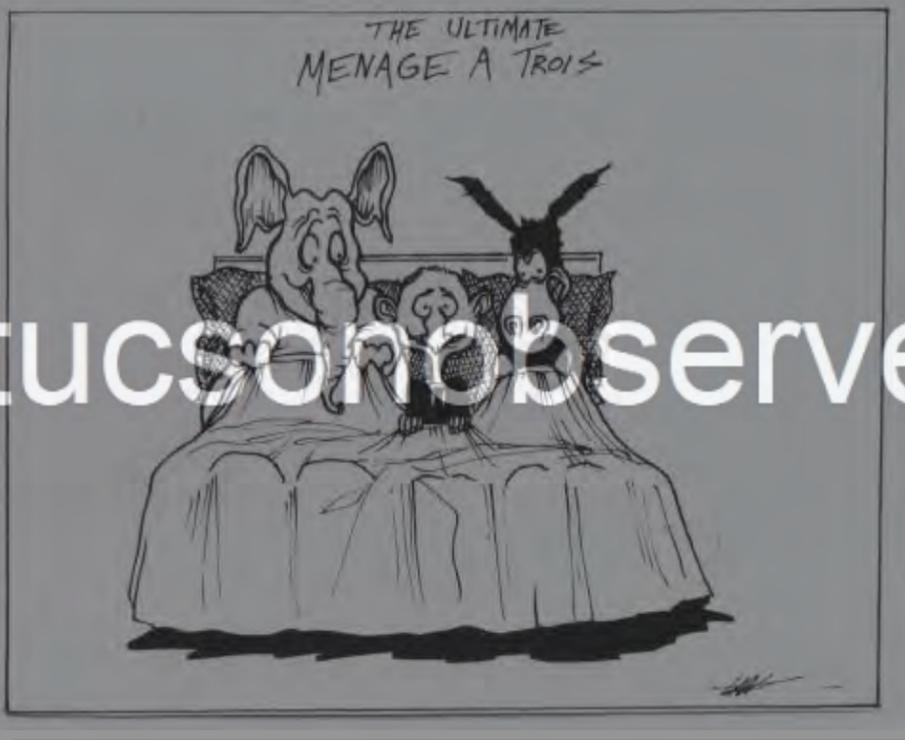
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The Way I Saw It. . .by Gary Clark



NOTE: Before his untimely death, Gary Clark had worked on this newspaper for nearly 40 years as graphic artist and Entertainment Editor. Part of his heritage was producing a weekly humorous drawing of life 'as he saw it'. It is amazing that most of these drawings are as funny and entertaining today as they were in past years. We have decided to open the 'vaults' on these faultless viewpoints. Enjoy!

Gay Dads Lose Continued from Page Five

children of unmarried parents differently from adoptive children with married parents.

"This theory is unavailing in the face of the state's rational preference for stable adoptive families, and the state's decision to have its birth certificate requirements flow from its domestic adoption law," Jones wrote. Also at issue was whether the constitutional requirement that states give "full faith and credit" to each other's laws required the inclusion of both men's names on the birth certificate of the child. That, Jones said, does not mean that Louisiana must "confer particular benefits on unmarried adoptive parents contrary to its law."

Two other judges concurred in part with the majority. Judge Jacques L. Wiener Jr., wrote the dissent, joined by four others. Saying New York recognizes both men as parents, Wiener wrote, "I have searched the Constitution in vain for a 'Half Faith and Credit Clause.'"

As for the equal protection argument, Wiener's opinion noted that Louisiana puts the names of both unmarried parents on the birth certificates of children kept by their biological parents. He said the state has no legitimate interest in denying that same right to adoptive parents Adar and Smith.

Orthodox Jewish Gays

CONTINUED FROM PAGE SIX

peasing intolerance.

reject conversion therapy.

Most conservative is decade-old Atzat Nefesh, "soul counseling" the first Israeli group to openly address same-sex attraction can be overcome by so-called conversion therapy.

"We know of three people who tried, and eventually took their lives", said Ron Yosef, an openly gay Orthodox rabbi from the coastal city of Netanya.

In 2008 Yosef created Hod, a Hebrew acronym meaning "religious homosexuals," and compiled a referral list of therapists.

Its CEO, Rabbi Shlomo Goldreich, contends that it works for more than 80 percent of those the group refers to therapists. But critics note that not all of its providers are licensed or trained, and that all major medical psychological associations

Yosef said Hod has received 3,700 phone and e-mail inquiries - the vast majority from people 25 or younger.

COMMENTARY...

Ruling On Constitutionality Of Marriage Act Is Needed

Paul Wilson Dorman, a citizen of the United Kingdom, came to the United States on a visitor's visa in 1996 and never left. He met an American man who became his partner of 15 years. They have jointly purchased property and made out wills with the other as beneficiary. In 2009 they entered into a civil union in New Jersey.

ment would no longer defend DOMA in court, after concluding that it is unconstitutional.

Their lives were upended when Dorman was targeted for deportation after a chance encounter with an immigration agent at an airport. Dorman, 52, does not dispute that he has been in the country illegally but argues that he should be allowed to stay because of his relationship with his partner.

The attorney general has vacated the court decision and asked the Board of Immigration Appeals whether Dormans civil union makes him a 'spouse' under New Jersey law. Holder should erase any confusion by declaring a moratorium on removal of foreign national in state-recognized same-sex unions until federal courts determine DOMA's constitutionality. He should ensure that the government is not focusing on breaking up otherwise law-abiding families.

(Reprinted from an Editorial in The Washington Post).

The law allows foreign nationals to fend off deportation by proving they have been in the country continuously for at least 10 years; substantiating a relationship with a "qualifying relative"; and showing that deportation would inflict an "extraordinary and extremely unusual hardship." Two immigration courts concluded that the defenses of Marriage Act (DOMA) precludes recognition of his same-sex partner as a spouse.

DOMA has been an impediment to the rights of gay men and lesbians since its inception in 1996. It withholds from same-sex couples the legal protections, obligations and privileges enjoyed by their heterosexual counterparts. Repeal appears out of reach, but Attorney General Eric Holder announced in February that the Justice Depart-

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 WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am. Beer specials and Trailer Trash Martini's All Day. Check our Ad for Special Events or Parties

MONDAY

THE BIZ - Closed
 BRODIES - Open 10am-2am. Happy Hour 10am-8pm.
 IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm \$2 Well or Domestic Beer. 8pm-close \$5 Scratch Long Island Varieties. 9pm-close DJ Hurricane with "All Request Music".
 WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am. Service Industry Night - Employee prices all day..

TUESDAY

THE BIZ - Closed Tuesdays
 BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am - 8pm.
 IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, \$2 Well or Domestic Beer. 8pm-close "2'sDay" - \$2 Well or Domestic Beer. DJ Q 9pm-close.
 WOODY'S - Open 11am- 2am. 2-4-1 Night

WEDNESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 5-9pm (2 for 1). College Night 18 & Over. Drink & Shot specials every half hour.
 BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am - 8pm.
 IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, \$2 Well or Domestic.. 11pm - -close "Reverse Happy Hour".
 WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am;. Happy Hour Prices all day.

THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 5-9pm. 2 for 1 All Night Long. Karaoke 9pm. Come out and play.
 BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am - 8pm.
 IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, \$2 Well or Domestic. 10pm-close "Boyz Nite Out" w/Bartenders in their underwear. DJ Hurricane spinning Top 40 & DJ Mike Lopez on the patio. \$1.75 Long Island, \$1.50 Tequila Shots, \$3 Skyy Cape Cods and \$4 Skyy Cosmos.
 WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am; Free pool and Happy Hour prices all day.

FRIDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 5-9 pm (2 for 1) Latino Night. \$2 Tequila, \$1.50 Tecate, \$5 Buckets of Beer.
 BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am-8pm. Karaoke 9pm.
 IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, \$2 Well or Domestic. 9pm -close DJ Hurricane inside. 10pm-close DJ Mike Lopez with "I'm a Sexy Bitch Night" on the patio.
 WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am; Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excl spec events). Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-11pm Back Pocket Patio Bar open 5pm-close. Enjoy the Live vocals and piano styling of Susan Artemis 6-9pm. Tori Steele Show 10pm



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 IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, \$2 Well or Domestic. 5-8pm Karaoke on the patio \$1Draft Pints. 9pm "Saturday Starrlett's" w/Bunny FuFu & Janee Starr. After the show, DJ Q spinning inside & 10pm-close, DJ Mike Lopez with the "Party on the Patio".
 WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am; Happy Hour 10am-8pm (excl spec events); Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-11pm.

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