Observing Tucson And The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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House OKs Faith-Based Bill, Hiring Bias

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Some advocates for LGBT rights are concerned after the House approved a job-training bill Wednesday, March 2, allowing federally funded, faith-based organizations to discriminate based on religious beliefs, the PlanetOut Network reported.

The House passed the Workforce Investment Act on a largely party-line vote of 224-200. The bill would repeal workplace protections in job training programs signed into law by President Reagan and written by former Sen. Dan Quayle.

If approved by the Senate and the president, the bill would allow religious organizations that receive federal funds to operate job-training programs that discriminate in employment based on religious grounds, which could include rejecting job applicants who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender .

During debate on the amendment, Rep. James P. McGovern, D-Mass., said the bill was equivalent to "turning the clock back on civil rights."

"This provision is offensive, it is ugly, it is wrong, and beyond that, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is unconstitutional. It is important that we oppose discrimination at every turn," McGovern said in a quote published by the Los Angeles Times.

Eric Stern, the executive director of the National Stonewall Democrats, agreed that the bill only furthered the cause of discrimination. "No American should have to pass a religious test in order to receive a federally funded job. The valuable work of our religious institutions should not be corrupted by discriminatory policies advanced by Republicans," Stern said.

Stern also expressed disappointment that "congressional Republicans, who claim to support our community, have consistently voted against our equality when pressured by the Republican leadership."

Among the Republicans who voted for passage of the legislation were Charlie Bass (NH), Judy Biggert (IL), Mary Bono (CA), Mark Foley (FL), Rodney Frelinghuysen (NJ), Nancy Johnson (CT), Jim Kolbe (AZ), Jim Leach (IA), Deborah Price (OH), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL), Joe Schwarz (MI) and John Sweeney (NY), all of whom received endorsements and financial support from national LGBT organizations last November.

Kolbe is an openly Gay Republican. His office did not return calls for comment from the PlanetOut Network.

According to an action alert from the conservative Family Research Council, the bill would shield "organizations that oppose homosexuality" from nondiscrimination provisions.

"Organizations that oppose homosexuality and abortion often need extra protection when receiving federal aid or using federal facilities," wrote Tony Perkins, the Family Research Council president.

The Rev. Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, told the PlanetOut Network, "Most of the beneficiaries of this money are people with attitudes like Pat Robertson, who are supporters of the president and supporters of the president's issues, like his position on same-sex marriage. This money is going to friends of the president and enemies of equality."

"I think it's amazing for the first time in our nation's history we're actually talking about repealing a civil rights protection," Lynn added.

Lynn does not believe the bill will become law. "I think the Senate is going to hold firm to maintain civil rights and protections."

However, President Bush may intervene. A day before the bill was passed in the House, the Los Angeles Times reported that President Bush told a group of religious leaders he would issue an executive order to institute discriminatory protections for churches if Congress did not approve them this year.

Gays & Lesbians Need To Be More Visible Shepard's Mother Says

STATELINE - Judy Shepard, whose Gay son was beaten to death five years ago, says Gays and Lesbians need to present a united front against discrimination of any sort, the Associated Press reported on 365Gay.com.

"Hate is not a Gay thing. It's everywhere. We need to take care of each other," she told a gathering of primarily Gay people.

"You're being denied rights because people don't know anything about you. You have to let them know who you are."

Shepard, whose 21-year-old son was murdered in Wyoming in 1998, was the principal speaker during the weeklong "Ascent: The Winter Party at Lake Tahoe" sponsored by the Lake Tahoe Gay Lesbian Foundation.

It's the first of two back-to-back Gay and Lesbian skiing and entertainment events this month at Tahoe's casino-lined south shore. WinterFest, sponsored by a Reno-based group, opens on Sunday, the final day of Ascent.

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Openly G/L Legislators Often Fight Solitary Battles

RICHMOND - Surrounded by kindergarten classmates chanting "Nixon! Nixon!" on Election Day 1968, 4-year-old Adam Ebbin began shouting something else: "Humphrey! Humphrey!" "I don't think I knew what it meant, but I knew I was different," Virginia's first openly Gay lawmaker recalled with a chuckle, reported the Associated Press on Advocate.com.

Times and presidents may have changed since that day, but Ebbin is still fighting to have his voice heard—no small feat during what some consider the most anti-Gay legislative session in Virginia's history. "People say, 'Isn't it discouraging?'...and I disagree totally," said Ebbin, a Democrat from Alexandria, in suburban Washington, D.C. "I know that any time that people are going to tell lies about Gays and Lesbians on the House floor, that I can grab my mike and speak—and that's really empowering."

Ebbin is a rare openly Gay legislator in the South and part of a small national fraternity of lawmakers who have publicly declared that they are Gay or Lesbian.

As the debate over same-sex marriage reaches legislatures across the nation, Gay lawmakers are confronting legislation that personally affects their lives—including adoption by Gay couples and other issues.

"It's very difficult to sit in a legislative body, watching them putting their stamp of approval on discriminatory laws," said state senator Ernesto Scorsone, who came out to his colleagues two years ago after 18 years in the Kentucky legislature. "But as in any other civil rights struggle, it's a long road, and we're going to have some bumps in the road."

Some say it's a challenge to be a voice for Gay rights legislation while still representing all their constituents. "I represent 125,000 people, except, at some level, I also represent all the Gay people," said New York assemblyman Daniel O'Donnell, whose sister is comedian Rosie O'Donnell. "So it becomes a harder line to balance those different interests, because those interest groups didn't elect me."

At the same time, however, openly Gay legislators struggle not to be pigeonholed as one-issue candidates. "That's been the most disheartening thing," said Karla Drenner, the only openly Gay legislator in Georgia and an advocate of environmental legislation. "I traded in the title of 'representative' for 'Lesbian legislator.'"

Drenner said it has been a lonely experience. "I don't really fit in anywhere. I'm still an outcast," said Drenner, adding that some people refuse to ride in the elevator with her. "And I think it's especially hard in the South."

Still, advocates say openly Gay lawmakers can put a face on their cause, as Ebbin has done in Virginia.

"He brings a real voice and face for our community to the general assembly, and that is invaluable," said Dyana Mason, executive director of Equality Virginia. "I believe it does change the debate for some people."

The 2005 session, which ended February 27, gave Ebbin plenty to speak out about. The house of delegates passed measures that would make it difficult for same-sex couples to adopt children and that would authorize license plates celebrating "Traditional Marriage." The adoption bill was later rejected by a senate committee, and the license plate measure withdrawn by its sponsor. But the house and senate passed a bill that would write a ban on same-sex marriage into the state constitution. "While Massachusetts and Vermont are entering the 21st century, Virginia is still struggling," Ebbin said.

In the socially conservative South, Ebbin, Drenner, and Scorsone are joined by only one other openly Gay lawmaker, Sen. Julia Boseman in North Carolina, according to the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, a Washington political action committee that supports and tracks the success of out Gay candidates nationally. Out of roughly 7,400 state legislators nationwide, 54 are openly Gay, according to the group's latest count.

Gay lawmakers in blue states are not immune to the frustrations and challenges confronting their Southern counterparts. New York assemblywoman Deborah Glick said that while things have improved since she was elected as the state's first openly Gay legislator 15 years ago, there is still much work to be done. "There were and continue to be instances of homophobia that come up in debates, which I always welcome, because it is rare that my colleagues who are straight get to hear directly some of the incredibly mean-spirited attitudes so clearly enunciated," Glick said.

Openly Gay legislators, in turn, can clearly enunciate another view.

Just before the Virginia house voted 78-18 to approve the constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, Ebbin made a passionate speech, likening the action to slavery, the Trail of Tears forced migration for American Indians, lynchings, and Massive Resistance, Virginia's official effort to thwart court-ordered public school desegregation. "Today is one of those moments for which we shall one day be ashamed," Ebbin told his colleagues. "I cannot stand by as this body continues to use Gays and Lesbians as scapegoats."

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UPDATE

Rainbow Build Coalition Raises Walls

TUCSON - The Rainbow Build Coalition (RBC) of over 35 LGBT and Allied Organizations are the first such coalition in the nation to join forces with Habitat for Humanity. RBC has raised the walls on a home for the Rubio-Fisher family, and volunteers have made record-breaking progress during this first week of construction.

In two weeks, eleven students and two advisors from New Hampshire Community Technical College will be coming out to help build the Rainbow House. The group will be flying out all the way from New Hampshire to work along side the Rubio-Fisher family and us.

Now is an excellent time for organization and groups to join the coalition, and for groups and individuals to participate by volunteering to be a part of a work crew building the home. If hammers and nails are not your thing, we still need help with volunteers bringing out refreshments for our hardworking builders. Please contact the volunteer coordinator at: volunteer@rainbowbuild.org.

Individuals may provide financial support by sending a check made out to "Habitat for Humanity," and you should write on the memo line, "Rainbow Build." If you would like a specific LGBT or Allied organization to get credit for your donation please also put their name on the memo line of the check. Checks should be sent to Habitat for Humanity, 621 W. Lester Street, Tucson, AZ 85705. You may also call Habitat for Humanity, (520) 326-1217 or use their website - http://www.hfhtucson.org with your credit card information.

'Laughing Out Loud' April 8

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

Seattle's Lisa Koch (pronounced "Coke") is an irreverent comedian/singer who blends comedy, theater and music with dysfunctional characters and demented songs (original and parody). Lisa's show features such memorable characters as Sister Mary Agnes (a repressed nun who enjoys discipline) who will be joining Lisa for the evening. Lisa has performed all over the globe and is a regular on Olivia Cruises at the Michigan Women's Festival and the Vancouver Comedy Festival. She has released three solo recording including "Both of Me, "You Make My Pants Pound', 'Stainies in My Undies Always Get Me Down" and other show tunes. She was recently nominated for an OutMusic Award and is currently touring her one woman cabaret show; Twos Company, I'm a Crowd". Some of you might remember Lisa as one half of Dos Fallopia, who made famous the songs my 'Breast Are Out of Control' and 'I'll be a Homo For Xmas". Lisa also finds work as an actor and last year appeared with the Tucson/Phx Theater Company as Mae West in 'Dirty Blond'. She recently toured a one-woman version of the Vagina Monologues. Lisa's shows are always "outrageous and memorable".

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

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

Wingspan FilmFest Through March 13

TUCSON - With The L Word and Queer Eye on cable, you may think that Lesbians and Gays have disappeared from the big screen; fortunately for the 10th annual Wingspan FilmFest, there more great queer films than ever. This year's FilmFest presents Gay and Lesbian classics and six new feature-length films.

On Thursday, March 10, we fast forward a decade with Classic IV: Go Fish, showing at 7 p.m. Go Fish won acclaim in 1994 because of its irreverence in gazing at the lives of a group of young Lesbians; in celebration of the Wingspan FilmFest 10th anniversary, we're bringing it back to the big screen.

The new works begin on March 11, and each is destined to become a classic: Women's Feature I: Girl Play. Co-sponsored by Rubyfruit Friday, March 11, 7 p.m. Based on the lives of the screenwriters Robin Greenspan and Lacie Harmon, this painfully funny and sexy love story raises the complicated question: Is this relationship created for the sake of the 'girl play' or is it, 'true love' requiring major personal choices and life altering changes?

Women's Feature II: April's Shower Saturday, March 12, 2:30 p.m. April's Shower is a comedy about love, romance and expectation.

Women's Feature III: D.E.B.S, Co-sponsored by KXCI Broad Perspectives & Lesbian Looks Saturday. March 12, 9 p.m. Written and directed by Angela Robinson, D.E.B.S. is a hysterical, "girl-power" satire of American teen films.

Spotlight on Gay Film, with new works begin on March 11 with three great Gay features:

Men's Feature I: Bear Cub (Cachorro) Co-sponsored by the Bears of the Old Pueblo & Puertas Abiertas, Friday, March 11, 12:30 p.m. Parenthood is about to get a little hairier. In Spanish with English Subtitles.

Men's Feature II: Straight Jacket Co-sponsored by the Men's Social Network, Saturday, March 12, 7 p.m. A 1950s Hollywood sex symbol, a 'lavender' marriage, and love on the set sets up this silly, fun, romantic comedy. The greatest love story Hollywood never told!

Men's Feature III: Cowboys & Angels Co-sponsored by GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, Sunday, March 13, 7:15 p.m. This film takes the Queer Eye for the Straight Guy approach to asking the question: Did you ever think something was missing?

All in all, it's a jam-packed festival-so c'mon out and watch. All-festival passes and advance tickets are going fast (and are only available online at http://www.wingspan.org/FilmFest through March 10); get yours today!

Win A Tucson, Help Desert Voices

TUCSON - Time is running out on a terrific opportunity to win a brand-new 2005 Tucson, while helping out your local LGBT&S chorus.

Desert Voices - Tucson's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and straight/supportive others chorus still has raffle tickets available from the Tucson for Tucson campaign, sponsored by Jim Click.

While the grand prize is a 2005 Hyundai Tucson, ticket buyers could also walk away with two UA Season Basketball Tickets for the 2005-06 season, four tickets to the 2005 Notre Dame vs. USC game in South Bend (including airfare and hotel accommodations), two tickets to the 2006 Fiesta Bowl, or a cruise for two to the Mexican Riviera! In addition, each ticket has six coupons on the back for discounts to Metro Restaurants, a $30 value.

Chorus members will be selling the tickets through March 14 for $25 each, and 100% of the proceeds go to the non-profit organization. If you would like to help Desert Voices continue to make a difference in the Tucson community through their songs, please contact their office at (520) 791-9662 to purchase a raffle ticket today!

Desert Voices will present their Spring show titled "Our True Colors" on

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Informing the Community
The Observer

COMMENTARY. . . . by Jessica Knutsen

'EMPOWERMENT'

One hundred thirty people came to the capitol for Lobby Day organized by Arizona Human Rights Fund on February 28, 2005 in Phoenix. I was one of many people there to show the LGBT and allied community is not some nameless faceless group of people, that we are people who hold jobs, pay taxes, vote, and above all, love our families.

There was a wide range of feelings from the representatives. Some didn't care what we had to say because we were outnumbered by those who were against us. Some didn't care because they are part of the religious right.

But there were other representatives who re-instilled my faith in the democratic process. Some ate lunch with us, took us to floor of the representatives, and were proud to introduce us as their constituents. There were speakers present at our lunch, both Republicans and Democrats: Representatives Kyrsten Sinema, Robert Meza, David Lujan, Senator Carolyn Allen, and former Representative Jack Jackson Jr. all of whom are supportive of LGBT issues. I am not sure if we changed hearts and minds, but on that day, we weren't victims – we were American citizens exercising our rights.

This feeling of empowerment was reaffirmed later that week at the Arizona Coalition for Fairness (ACF) strategic planning meeting. We had over 40 diverse people in attendance making-up seven committees. There were parents and friends of our community, all different ages, religious and community leaders – all saying they wanted to change history. I felt the power of this group uniting to defend the rights of the LGBT and allied community; uniting to defend everyone's rights.

Those present discussed polling data showing that we in Arizona can beat this constitutional amendment proposed by the Center for Arizona Policy (CAP). We had the realization that we are part of history in the making.

With the help of Cindy and Steven Gilliland Professors at the University of Arizona, each committee created a set of goals. Our goal is to get 200 more volunteers in the next three months and to register 300 voters in the next three months. If you are looking to have faith again, faith in people, in democracy, in the power of individuals, this is the group to join.

The truth is that no state has yet defeated one of these amendments. On the other hand, no state
has had as much time to prepare as Arizona. Recent polling data shows that 60% of Arizona voters want to define marriage as between a man and a woman, but that 56% of people want civil unions or domestic partnerships for all people. The ACF believes we can beat this amendment and this attack on civil rights. It stops here in Arizona.

The ACF will educate the community at large. We will be out. But above all, we will win. If you are interested in being part of a powerful agent for change contact Jess Knutson, (520) 624-1779 x22.

[Jess Knutson is the political organizer for the Arizona Coalition for Fairness.]

Gay Bashing Victim Released From Hospital

SANTA FE - A 21-year-old Santa Fe man beaten to unconsciousness was released from hospital Tuesday, March 8, more than a week after he was attacked by five men, 365Gay.com reported.

But, the future for James Maestas remains uncertain. He was taken off a respirator at St. Vincent Hospital on Monday, March 7, and is breathing on his own, but he is still very sick a family spokesperson said.

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

Three men have been charged in the February 27 beating.

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

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

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

A man identified as the person who had waited on them in the restaurant, David Trinidad, 17, was just finishing work and came outside. The statement said that Trinidad knew the five men and joined in the rock throwing.

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

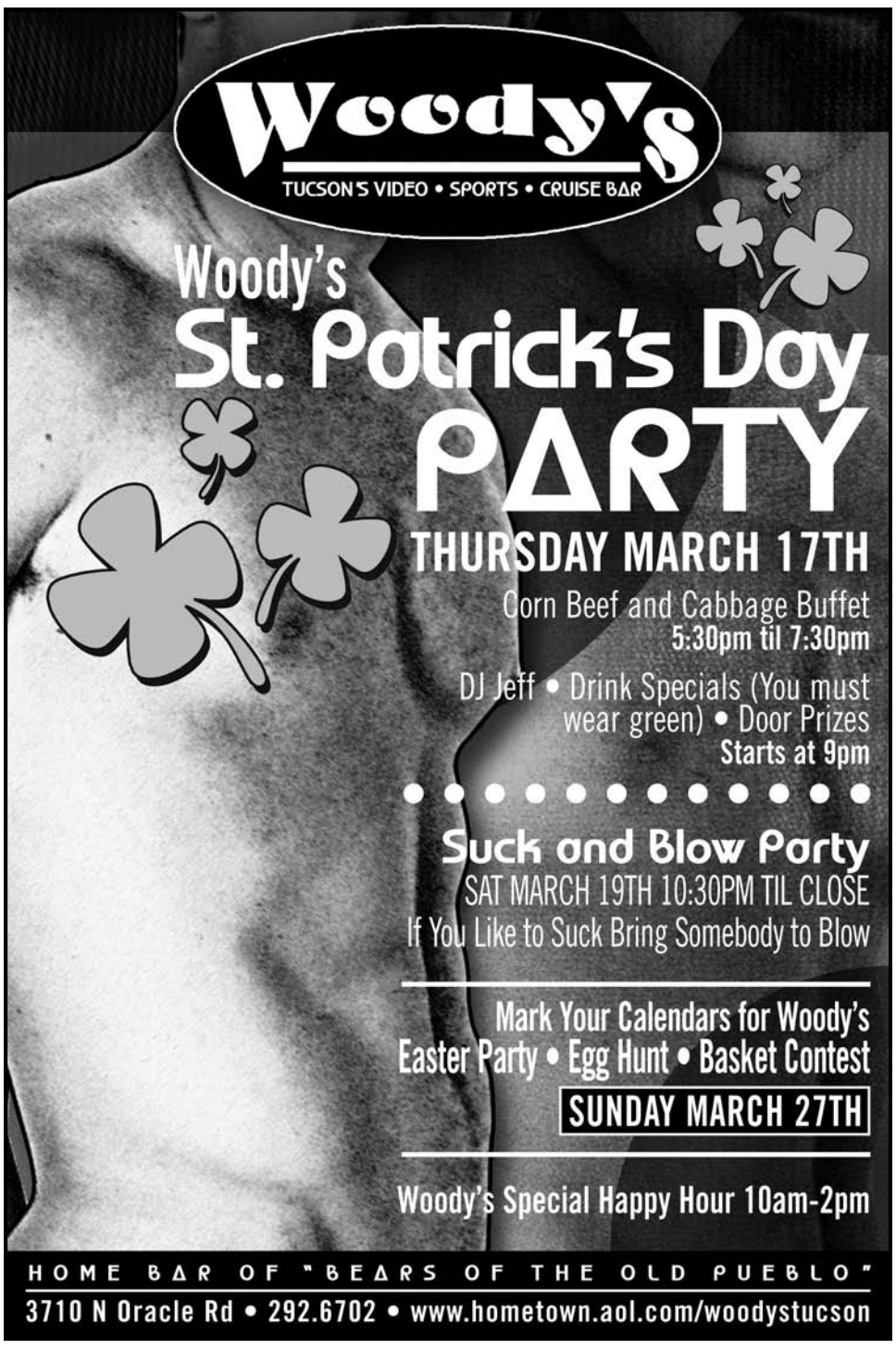
He told investigators that he and the five men followed the group to the hotel and along the way they "pumped" themselves up by talking about "fucking those faggots up". The statement also quotes Trinidad as telling investigators that they referred to Stockham and Maestas as "fucking white boys."

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

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

Trinidad, Gabriel Maturin, 20, and Isaia Medina, 19, each face charges of aggravated battery. Prosecutors have charged the 17 year old Trinidad as an adult. All three face hate-crimes enhancements the prosecutor said.

On Saturday, March 5, about 300 people attended a candlelight vigil to show support for Maestas. Among the attendees was Gov. Bill Richardson and Police Chief Beverly Lennen.



Heat On Scott Bloch Intensifies Over Anti-G/L Practices

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Five Members of the House of Representatives are accusing Scott Bloch, director of the U.S. Office of Special Counsel, of stonewalling in their call for a clear answer on whether LGBT federal workers are protected from discrimination, 365Gay.com reported.

The OSC is responsible for enforcing workplace guidelines in the civil service.

Last September Bloch told Reps. Barney Frank (D-MA), Eliot Engel (D-NY), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), George Miller (D-CA) and Henry Waxman (D-CA) he would give them a written answer "soon". Five months later the five say Bloch has not provided the answer.

Bloch has been under fire for the past year. In February 2004 he ordered references to sexual orientation removed from the OSC website. Since 1998, when President Bill Clinton issued an executive order prohibiting bias in the civil service, the OSC has taken that to include sexuality.

A month after the references disappeared from the OSC website Bloch said Gay workers were no longer protected.

Bloch said that the while a Gay employee would have no recourse for being fired or demoted for being Gay, that same worker could not be fired for attending a Gay Pride event.

In his interpretation, Bloch made a distinction between one's conduct as a Gay or Lesbian and one's status as a Gay or Lesbian.

After intense pressure from Federal Globe, an organization for Gay and Lesbian workers, and from Democrats on The Hill, the White House said it would honor an Executive Order signed by President Clinton

Last September, with Bloch's approval, several union contracts negotiated with various branches of the government removed the list of categories that are protected replacing them with the more nebulous phrase "any class protected by law."

While the change meant little to African Americans or other minorities, it effectively removed LGBT workers from being protected from being fired or harassed on the job.

"We are writing to you regarding your letter sent to us on September 28, 2004 in which you stated that due to your busy schedule, you were unable at that time to provide us with an answer to our question and that you would write back soon. Now that five months have passed, either you wrote back and we did not receive your response or you have a very odd definition of soon," the five members of Congress say in their new letter to Bloch.

The letters comes as a group of unnamed OSC employees, three national whistleblower protection organizations, and the Human Rights Campaign - the country's largest Gay, Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender equal rights organization - called for a special investigation into the way Bloch runs his office.

The group accuses Bloch of issuing illegal gag orders, cronyism, invidious discrimination, and retaliation. In addition, the complaint seeks to stop an unfolding purge of OSC headquarters staff, in which a number of attorneys and investigators have been ordered to resign for refusing to accept involuntary transfers to Detroit or Dallas.

The employees and the groups are asking that Bloch refer their complaint to the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, an umbrella group of inspector general and other government oversight agencies, that has the power to review such complaints when referred by a member agency.

Win A Tucson, Help Desert Voices

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April 16, at The Muse Community Arts center, 516 N. 5th Avenue in Tucson The chorus will also be holding their annual silent auction fundraiser that evening, with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. for shopping and the concert beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The show includes an entertaining variety of songs ranging from "True Colors" to "De Colores," as well as a few totally silly and colorful numbers like "Purple People Eater." All of the songs were selected by chorus members to showcase the true spirit, talent, pride and beauty of the LGBT community in all its marvelous color and diversity.

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

Gays & Lesbians Need To Be More Visible Shepard's Mother Says

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Judy Shepard noted that this was her third visit to Tahoe. The previous two were as a family.

"We weren't sure we wanted Matt to be the martyr for the cause," she said. "What I do now is not about Matt any more. We can't help Matt any more.

"I just couldn't let Matt see me come apart, so I figured this was the best way for me to not come apart."

Two men are serving life sentences for the murder.

The program also featured actress Judith Light, representing The Point Foundation, which offers financial assistance to prospective college students who have been kicked out of their homes.

She introduced two Point scholars— Julie Schell, a doctoral student at Columbia University's Teachers College, and Zach Zyskowski, a violin student at UCLA.

"We are the parents that they don't have — that they should have had," Light said. "This is what 'no child left behind' truly means."

Part of the proceeds from Ascent help fund The Point Foundation and The Matthew Shepard Foundation, along with a half dozen local organizations.

CARD ADS IN THE RESOURCE SECTION OF THE OBSERVER GET RESULTS

Gannongate: The Beginning Of The End, Or The End Of The Begfinning

WASHINGTON, D.C. - While all-too-common claims that the controversy surrounding Jeff Gannon is all about racy web sites and quirky characteristics seem to have had most news organizations to drop — or ignore completely — Gannongate, serious questions remain about how and why he got into the White House. And serious people continue to seek the answers to those questions, Media Matters for America reported.

The Philadelphia Inquirer's Dick Polman wrote: [T]the Jeff Gannon/James Guckert saga is far from over. It remains unclear how a graduate of a conservative training program, someone with no previous journalism experience, someone whose writings were often lifted directly from White House press releases, still managed to gain access to the White House press room, where he spent two years lobbing gentle questions at the press secretary and the President.

And some political analysts who monitor President Bush's relations with the media insist that Gannon ... should not be viewed as an isolated case. Rather, they contend that Gannon is symptomatic of a broader White House strategy to undermine the traditional media by disseminating the Bush message in creative new ways. [...]

[H]istorians say that Bush, unhappy with what he calls "the filter," is courting controversy in his quest for innovative formats. Several conservative commentators have been paid to trumpet Bush policies in their work; one recipient, Armstrong Williams, is being investigated by the Federal Communications Commission. And two agencies have disseminated pro-Bush videos that look like TV newscasts, without disclosing the Bush sponsorship - a breach of federal law, according to the Government Accountability Office.

The White House has stated that these media decisions were made independently by the agencies. Nevertheless, former Republican strategist Jim Pinkerton, who later worked in the senior George Bush's administration, says: "It's quite clear this White House is exploring radical alternative ways to getting its message out - through the aggressive hiring of flacks like Williams, and the presence, or even planting, of friendly so-called journalists like Gannon.

"The Bush people are challenging all the old assumptions about how to work the press. They are ambitious - visionary, if you will - in ways that Washington has yet to fathom."

Larry Gross, who runs the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Southern California, says: "Richard Nixon hated the press, Bill Clinton hated the press - but they accepted the basic rules of the game. Bush has a strategy of discrediting, end-running, and even faking the news. Those prepackaged videos sent to local TV stations 'looked' like news, much the way Gannon 'looked' like a reporter. We're seeing something new: Potemkin-village journalism."

New York Times columnist Frank Rich threw down the gauntlet, challenging his fellow journalists to follow the story: We still don't know how this Zelig, using a false name, was given a daily White House pass every day for two years. Last weekend, Jim Pinkerton, a former official in the Reagan and Bush I White Houses, said on "Fox News Watch," no less, that such a feat "takes an incredible amount of intervention from somebody high up in the White House," that it had to be "conscious" and that "some investigation should proceed and they should find that out."

Given an all-Republican government, the only investigation possible will have to come from the press.

While Rich is skeptical the "all-Republican government" will find answers, that hasn't stopped 26 members of the House of Representatives from trying; led by the ranking members on the House Judiciary, Rules, Homeland Security, Ways & Means, and Government Reform committees, they are trying to require "the Justice Department and Department of Homeland Security to turn over all documentation in their possession about how James Guckert (also known as Jeff Gannon) gained access to White House press events."

Play Safe!

Solitary Battles

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Supporters of the amendment have argued it is vital to preserve marriage as an institution applying uniquely to one woman and one man and ward off court rulings such as one in Massachusetts that legalized same-sex marriage. "I knew that there would be anti-Gay measures that would be very difficult to turn back," said Ebbin, who is single but hopes to someday get married and adopt children. "But I don't think anyone anticipated a year and a half ago how many different ways through how many different committees people who call themselves Christians would try and marginalize us and try to go back to a time when they could deny we exist."

Del. Richard Black, who was the sponsor of the Virginia adoption bill, said he's not trying to stamp out Gay rights but is simply trying to preserve tradition. As for his personal feelings on Ebbin, after a lengthy pause, Black offered, "He's always prompt and, you know, on time to meetings." A moment later he added, "I think he works hard."

Ebbin likes to recite a quote that appears on the walls of the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. It reads, in part: "I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and constitutions, but laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed... institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times."

Ebbin said he takes comfort in those words. "If you were a slave when you read that quote, it speaks to you," he said. "If you're a woman denied the right to vote, it speaks to you. And I think Gays and Lesbians can see that it speaks to them."

YARD DOG SALOON

"Where Everybody Wags Their Tail"

THURSDAY, MARCH 10
MERLIN'S BIRTHDAY BASH
7:00 P.M.

* *

SATURDAY, MARCH 12
FRIED CHICKEN DINNER $5.00
7:00 P.M.

**

THURSDAY, MARCH 17
ST. PATRICK'S DAY CORNED BEEF AND CABBAGE
2:00 P.M.

Little Merlin Cummins
Circa 1957

COMING - COMING - COMING - COMING
SATURDAY, MARCH 19
TOGA PARTY
COSTUME CONTEST
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UPDATE

Farrakhan Welcomess Gays For October March

LITHONIA - Controversial Nation of Islam leader Minister Louis Farrakhan wants Gay people to march in the 10th anniversary commemoration of the Million Man March this October, Advocate.com reported.

Farrakhan made the announcement Saturday, March 5, to a crowd of about 2,000 people at the sixth annual State of the Black Union symposium in Lithonia, Ga. The assembly of black leaders gathered to discuss race relations and proposed political goals. They also met to put together what the group called an African-American contract. The contract would be something leaders of the community could present to politicians, so the politicians know best how to court the African-American community's vote.

Farrakhan spoke to the crowd about how political parties have short-changed the African-American population. In the course of discussing how the community needs to help itself, he made reference to the 10-year anniversary of the Million Man March in Washington, Oct. 14-16.

In one of his first directly inclusive statements about the Gay community, Farrakhan said this march will reach out to more people than the first, which encouraged only men to participate.

"The makeup will be our people, whatever we are," Farrakhan said. "Male, female. Gay, straight. Light, dark. Rich, poor. Ignorant, wise. We are family. We will be coming together to discuss family business."

Farrakhan has also called for Gay leaders to help plan the march. A group called BLAGOSAH, the Bisexual, Lesbian and Gay Organization of Students at Howard University, is already meeting to help.

About 200 representatives of the Gay community did march the first time around. They carried signs — which had slogans such as "Black by Birth/Gay by God/Proud by Choice" — and chanted, "We're black! We're Gay! We wouldn't have it any other way!" But the speakers at the first march mentioned little about the Gay community. In this upcoming march groups such as the National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC), a civil rights organization of black LGBT people and their allies, says it will encourage its members to attend the march.

"This inclusive statement is a big deal," said Jasmyne Cannick, the NBJC's media contact. "There are a lot of African-American Muslims who are Gay, and they struggle with what their religion teaches and their sexual orientation and identity. The bigger picture is one of solidarity — that's what this inclusive statement about this march is all about. There's already too much division in the community. Now we all need to be in this together if we want to be at the table and have a true political voice."

Trio Alleges HIV Bias By American Airlines

SAN FRANCISCO - Three men who say they were rejected for jobs as flight attendants with American Airlines because they are HIV-positive will be allowed to sue the carrier a federal appeals court has ruled, the PlanetOut Network reported.

The decision overturns a ruling in U.S. District court in 2003 and sends the case back to that court for further proceedings.

Walber Leone, Vincent Fusco and Richard Branton claim that between 1998 and 1999 American had offered them jobs as flight attendants.

During their interviews they were asked about their medical histories and none mentioned having HIV. The three were then hired on the provision that they pass medical exams and background checks.

The medical tests were given the same day at the airline's onsite testing service.

When blood tests showed they were using HIV medication they acknowledged that they were positive. Shortly after that they received letters withdrawing the job offers citing their concealment of HIV.

The men hired civil rights lawyer Todd Schneider and sued the airline. Schneider said that American had violated the the American's with Disabilities Act.

In April 2003 U.S. District Judge Phyllis Hamilton ruled the case was without merit and Schneider appealed to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

"American cannot require applicants to disclose personal medical information — and penalize them for not doing so — before it assures them that they have successfully passed through all non-medical stages of the hiring process," Judge Raymond Fisher wrote in the Appeals Court ruling.

And "by consenting to pre-employment blood tests, the appellants did not consent to any and all medical tests that American wished to run on their blood samples," Fisher wrote.

"It's a huge victory for people with hidden disabilities,'' Schneider told the Oakland Tribune.

American Airlines has not commented on the ruling. The airline has a long history of being active in the LGBT community. The company has a 100 percent rating on the Human Right's Campaign's Corporate Equality Index and recently was named one of the best employers for Gays in the UK.

Play Safe!

Conservative Group Admits Stealing Gay Couple's Picture

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A conservative group admitted late Friday, March 4, that it illegally used a wedding photograph of a Portland, Oregon Gay couple in an ad attacking the American Association for Retired People, reported 365Gay.com.

On Tuesday, March 1, 365Gay.com reported that M. Raymen and Steven P. Hansen were threatening to sue over the use of the picture.

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

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

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

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

In addition, ABC news has linked some of the members of USA Next to the same people behind the controversial Swift Boat Veterans for Truth ads that challenged the war record of Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry. And, there have been unverified suggestions that Montini has links to Talon News the now defunct conservative online publication that employed J.D. Guckert the man who posed as a White House reporter while working as a male prostitute

Both USA Next and Montini initially said that they had bought the rights to the photo of Raymen and Hansen from the Portland Tribune. A Tribune photographer had shot the picture during Portland's brief attempt to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples last year.

The Tribune issued a statement that it had not sold rights to the photo.

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

Such a request, if submitted, would have been rejected anyway, Jewett said, because the paper won't sell photos for commercial use without the permission of people shown in the photo.

The Tribune also says that when it informed Montini of his illegal use of the photo he clandestinely attempted to buy a similar photo of the couple that appears in the Tribune's online library.

"Montini tested the newspaper's photo-sales policies and submitted an Internet request and payment to buy a similar but not identical photo for private use," the paper said. "Virginia Meyers, the Tribune photo assistant who monitors photo Web sales, called him to ask for what purpose he was using the photo. At that point, he said he was only checking to see how the paper's policy worked, and Meyers refunded his money .

"... after Montini had been told by Meyers by phone and via e-mail that the paper would not sell him the photo for use in an ad, he tried another tack. He sent $600 — the typical fee for such commercial use of a photo— through PayPal, the electronic money transfer system, in payment for using the photo. The money was quickly refunded in full via PayPal because the newspaper would not grant permission for an ad agency to use a photo in this way."

Montini and USA Next could be looking at huge payout for illegally using the picture. They would have to settle with both the paper and with Raymen and Hansen.

Gay 'Survivor' Rejects Tax Fraud Plea Deal

PROVIDENCE - "Survivor" Richard Hatch has changed his mind and decided not to accept a plea bargain on charges of tax evasion, the PlanetOut Network reported.

The million-dollar reality show winner neglected to declare his "Survivor" prize on his 2000 federal income tax form, and subsequently did not report some $321,000 in broadcast salary in 2001.

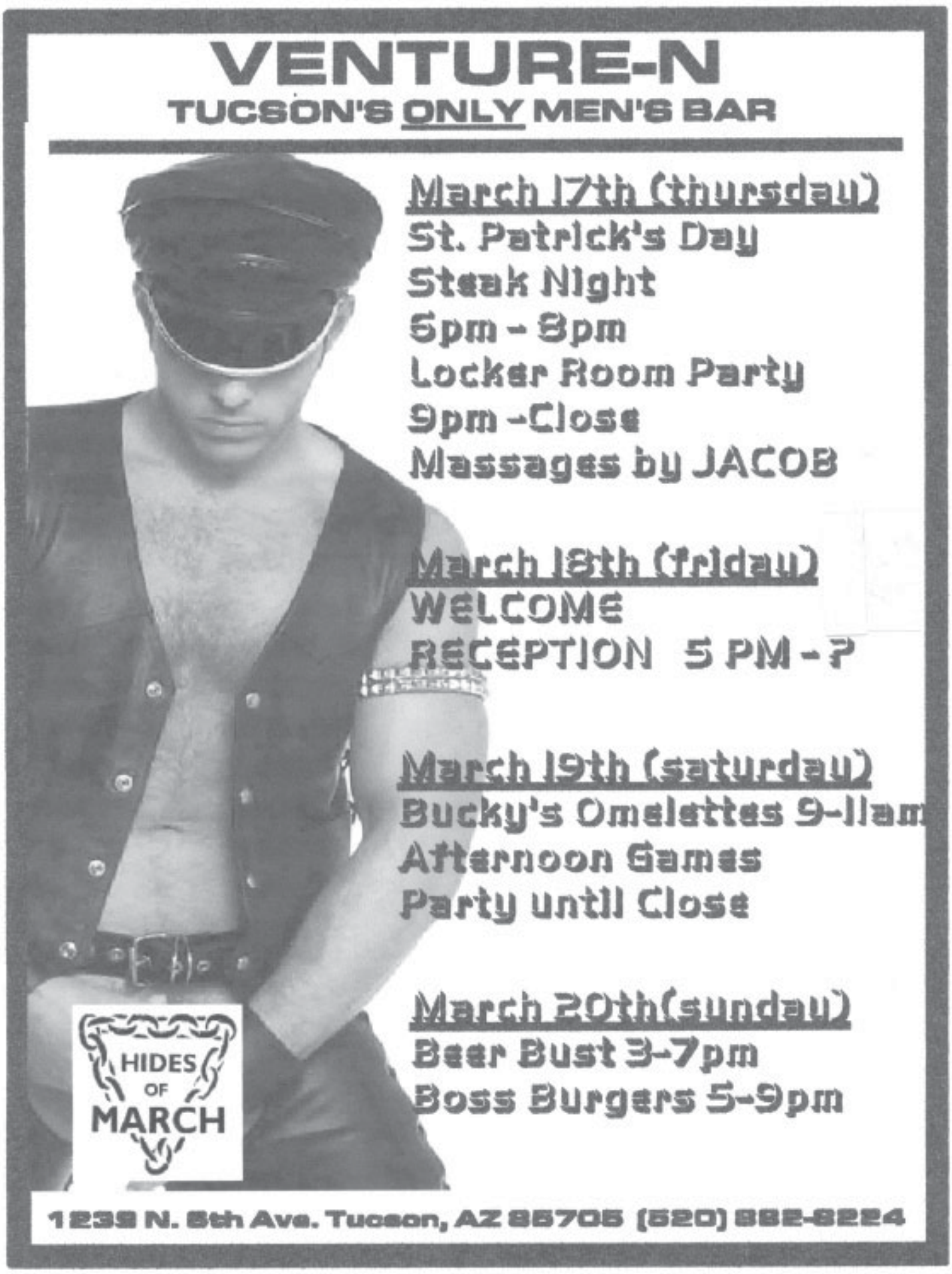
Hatch was charged with two counts of federal tax evasion in January, and agreed to plead guilty in exchange for a request for leniency from the government. The maximum sentence for each count is five years in prison and $250,000 in fines. A copy of Hatch's plea agreement, dated Jan. 6, is posted on the Smoking Gun investigative Web site, as is a copy of the original "information" sheet from the U.S. Attorney's office, describing the offenses.

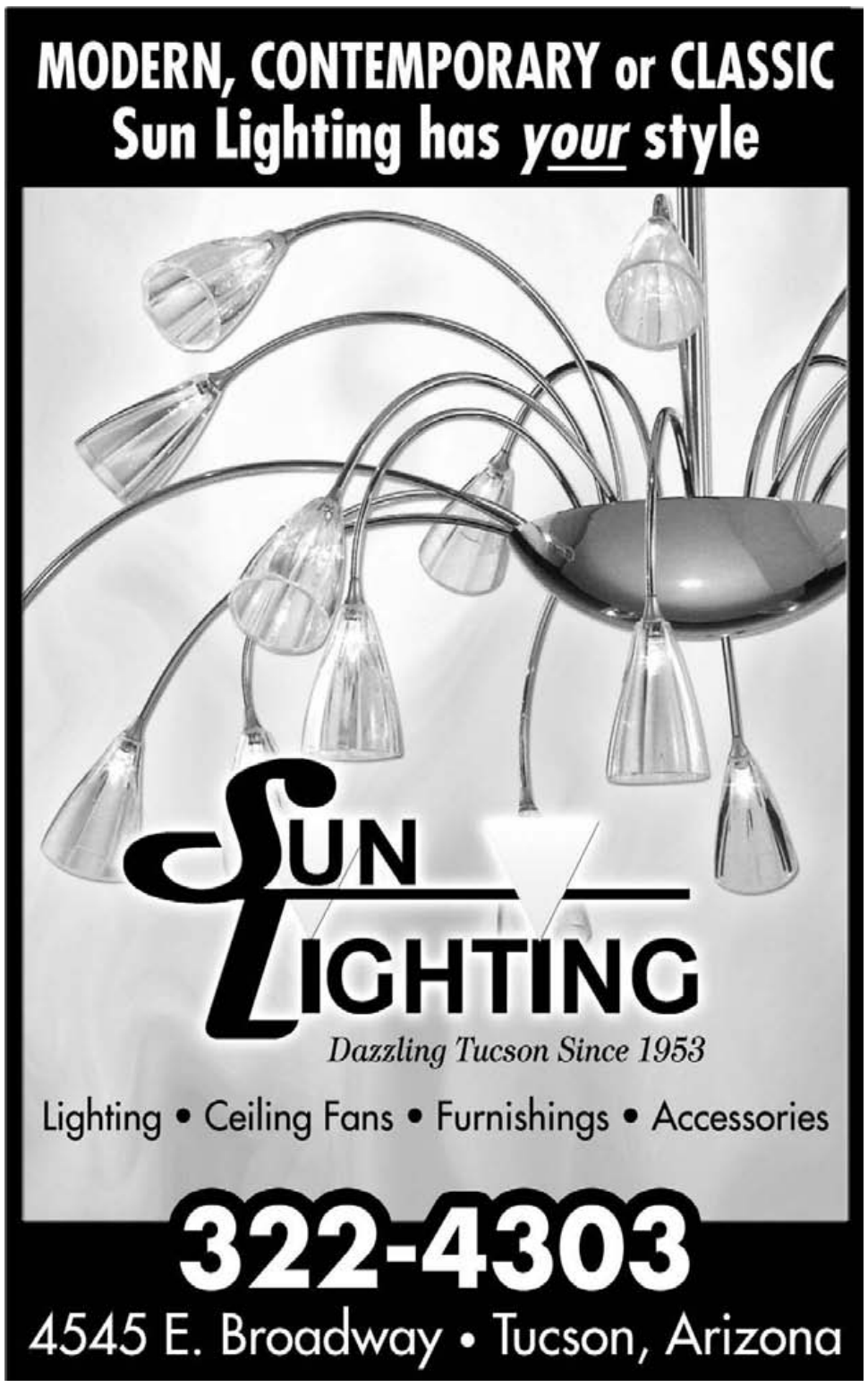
Hatch, a resident of Newport, R.I., was scheduled to plead guilty in federal court on Friday, March 4. According to the Associated Press, both sides announced on Thursday that the deal had unraveled. Authorities will now be obliged to present their evidence to a grand jury and seek an indictment. Meanwhile, Hatch remains free on $50,000 bail.

According to the documents, Survivor Entertainment Group paid Hatch $1,010,000 in 2000, and sent a 1099 report to the IRS. But when Hatch filed his 1040 for that year (not until November of 2002), "the return did not include the $1,010,000 in taxable income that defendant Richard Hatch received from Survivor Entertainment Group." As a result, "a substantial additional tax is due and owing to the United States."

A similar problem marred the "Survivor" winner's 2001 return, which left off his income as co-host of the "Wilde Show" on a Boston radio station. The $321,000 was routed through a one-man S-Corporation and deposited into Hatch's personal account without a provision for Uncle Sam. Hatch's 2001 return was filed in October of 2002.

Hatch's run-ins with the law date back to 2000, when he was accused of abusing his young son. In 2002, he was found innocent of assaulting an ex-boyfriend.





The Ellen Degeneres Show Scores 11 Daytime Emmy Nominations

NEW YORK - ABC's All My Children earned a leading 18 Daytime Emmy nominations Wednesday, March 2, while The Ellen DeGeneres Show and The View both had 11 in talk-show categories, Advocate.com reported.

DeGeneres's show won last year's award for Best Talk Show—in its freshman season—and will be competing in that category this year against The View, Live With Regis & Kelly, Dr. Phil, and Soap Talk. Martha Stewart Living received three nominations; she's being released from prison and if she wants, can ask federal probation officials for permission to attend the awards ceremony. General Hospital and Guiding Light both received 13 nominations, as did the venerable children's show Sesame Street.

The hosts of all the nominated talk shows also earned nominations for Best Talk-Show Host. The 32nd annual awards are scheduled for May 20 at Radio City Music Hall in New York, televised by CBS.

Lesbian Teen's Killer Pleads Guilty

NEWARK - A man charged with fatally stabbing a 15-year-old because she was a Lesbian has pleaded guilty to aggravated manslaughter in a deal with prosecutors that will likely get him a prison sentence of 25 years or less. Richard McCullough had been charged with bias murder in the May 2003 killing of Sakia Gunn, reported Advocate.com.

That charge was dropped in exchange for Thursday's plea, which he seemed reluctant at first to give. "I stood in a defensive stance with my knife in my hand, and she lunged at me," McCullough told superior court judge Paul Vichness. The judge did not accept that explanation. He threatened to reject the plea and order that the case be sent to a jury trial, where McCullough could have been sentenced to prison for 118 years had he been found guilty on all the charges he faced. It was then that McCullough, 30, said he slashed Gunn. McCullough also pleaded guilty to aggravated assault and bias intimidation.

Gunn and four other girls were waiting for a bus at 3:30 a.m. in downtown Newark, N.J., after a night in New York's Greenwich Village when McCullough and another man drove up and asked them if they wanted to go to a party. Officials say the girls responded that they were Lesbians and were uninterested. The men began spewing homophobic insults, and then a physical fight began, authorities said. Gunn was stabbed as she came to the defense of a friend.

The case galvanized the previously quiet Gay and Lesbian population in New Jersey's biggest city and led to a debate about bias crime laws. McCullough's lawyer at one point challenged the constitutionality of the state's 24-year-old statute, which gives stiffer penalties to people convicted of committing crimes because they don't like a victim's race, sexual orientation, or nationality. Vichness said he would sentence McCullough on April 21, most likely to a prison term between 20 and 25 years. He would have to serve 85% of of his sentence before being eligible for parole.

ACLU: Health Center 'Smears' Lesbian Pair

UTICA - The ACLU has accused a health center of retaliating against a Lesbian couple because the two women are suing the center for discrimination, reported Advocate.com.

Representatives of the Charles T. Sitrin Health Care Center in Utica, N.Y., are allegedly accusing two Lesbians of "inappropriate behavior" at their facility. The charges, widely reported on local radio and television, were made in response to a discrimination lawsuit filed by the ACLU on Feb. 24 after the couple was "dismissed" from the center's swimming program, apparently on account of their sexual orientation.

The ACLU fired off an angry press release on Friday, March 4, lambasting the center for making "wild accusations" in a "ham-fisted attempt to distract the public from the Sitrin Center's own disgraceful behavior."

Louise Bizzari and Barbara Hackett are life partners in their 50s and 60s, respectively. Not only was there no inappropriate behavior at poolside, ACLU spokespeople say, but many of the friends they made at the center never even knew the women were Lesbians until they were summarily told not to return.

The dispute began after Bizzari called Sitrin's director of clinical rehabilitative services, Jackie Warmuth, in order to arrange to use the center's therapeutic pools. Bizzari, who had been misdiagnosed with cancer and severely disabled by nine years of cancer treatment, was under doctor's orders to get into shape for future surgery. When Warmuth learned Bizzari planned to use her domestic partner insurance policy to pay for therapy, Warmuth told her the insurance was unacceptable. She also declined Bizzari's offer to pay her own way.

Subsequently, Bizzari and Hackett signed up for an inexpensive wellness program that included use of the pools. But when Warmuth later learned the women were using the facility, she had them "dismissed" from the center in January, calling Bizzari and her partner "faggots" as a parting gesture.

Now, according to the ACLU, local radio shows are disparaging the women. Their friends have called them dozens of times to report hearing slanderous accusations. After appearing on the local news, Barbara Hackett was called "pervert" as she walked down the street in this small upstate town.

Utica's Channel 10 news ran the text of a quote from Rosemary Bonacci, Sitrin's director of communications, who said Bizzari was kicked out "solely based on her inappropriate conduct in the facility and her sexual orientation was not a factor." According to the ACLU, Sitrin has also suggested the women were kissing at the pool, a "ludicrous" statement that "only proves the Sitrin Center's discrimination against the Gay community."

"We know that there are people out there who support Barbara and Louise and are outraged at the way they've been treated ... and we urge those members of the community to speak out publicly against the Sitrin Center's behavior," wrote the civil libertarians. "Our plaintiffs have been through enough without the Sitrin Center adding insult to injury through such base, incendiary tactics."

The ACLU's lawsuit was brought in state court, under New York's sexual orientation nondiscrimination act. That law prohibits sexual orientation discrimination in the workplace, housing and in public accommodations like the Sitrin Center. A hearing on the ACLU's request for a preliminary injunction is scheduled later this month.

Voters Reject Repeal Of Pro-G/L Law

TOPEKA - Voters on Tuesday night, March 1, upheld an ordinance banning discrimination against Gays and Lesbians in municipal hiring, rejecting a repeal movement led by Fred Phelps Sr., known for his local church's intense antiGay pickets across the nation. And one of Phelps's granddaughters fell far short in her efforts to unseat an openly Gay member of the Topeka city council, the Associated Press reported on Advocate.com.

Phelps sought to remove from the books a city ordinance that prohibits discrimination against Gays in municipal hiring. The repeal measure also would have barred Topeka from reinstating such protections for 10 years. The final unofficial results showed 53% opposed to the repeal, with 14,285 voting no and 12,795 voting yes.

Phelps's granddaughter Jael Phelps was among three candidates challenging Lesbian council member Tiffany Muller in a nonpartisan primary. Complete results showed Jael Phelps finishing a distant fourth and Muller second, allowing Muller to advance to an April 5 general election. Attorney Richard Harmon finished first and also advanced to the general election.

After the vote, the senior Phelps dared the city council to consider another, broader ordinance and promised to continue his activities. Phelps was far from the only clergy member hoping to see the ordinance repealed. But other supporters of the effort—who viewed the ordinance as creating special rights for Gays and Lesbians—were frustrated in being tied to what they saw as Phelps's extreme rhetoric. "Phelps has established a reputation," said the Reverend Dr. Alan Benson, a pastor at two Topeka churches and the president of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. "I do not agree with him. God loves everybody."

Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, said the tie to Phelps was crucial in defeating the repeal effort. The Task Force said it provided staff, organized phone banks, and donated about $20,000 to the campaign against the effort. "This really was a question in every Gay American's mind whether Fred Phelps represented the voters of Topeka," Foreman said.

Voter Barry Elfant, 52, said he opposed repeal—but not because of Phelps. "The whole thing is just stupid—it's 2005," Elfant said. "I'm ashamed to be a resident of a community still struggling with these issues." Some voters who supported the repeal found the Phelps church's picketing offensive. Jim Paramore, a 65-year-old retired teacher, said he is "not for Fred Phelps." He said he voted to repeal the ordinance because "my feeling is that there doesn't need to be special consideration made for homosexuality."

Muller, a 26-year-old grant writer, received national attention for her race because of the candidacy of Jael Phelps, a 20-year-old nursing student. Jael Phelps said she didn't mind the focus on her church's antiGay picketing or its attempt to repeal the antidiscrimination ordinance. Muller, however, was frustrated because issues normally prominent in city races, such as creating jobs, weren't debated. And, Muller said, "there is never a final battle between the Phelpses and the Gay community."

The Washington-based Gay rights group Human Rights Campaign said approval of the Phelps-backed proposal would have made Topeka the only American city with an ordinance blocking antidiscrimination policies for 10 years. The ballot measure was patterned after a Cincinnati ordinance adopted in 1993 but repealed last year. Last year, after the city council appointed Muller to fill a vacancy, she sought a broad antidiscrimination ordinance applying to private employment, housing, and public accommodations. When it became clear the council wouldn't approve it, she and other backers settled for a narrower ordinance in November. Only three local governments in Kansas have such an ordinance. One in Shawnee County applies only to government employment, but one in Lawrence, home of the University of Kansas, is broader.

The senior Phelps and his Westboro Baptist Church then launched a petition drive against the ordinance. That wasn't surprising. His church began its antiGay pickets more than a decade ago, with signs such as "God hates fags." Phelps's demonstration at the 1998 funeral of Wyoming beating victim Matthew Shepherd led to his portrayal in the play The Laramie Project. His targets include churches—even conservative ones—he deems too soft on homosexuality and labels "fag-enablers." He said he didn't care how the vote turned out because his job is to preach. "This fight has just barely begun," he said.

Also supporting the ordinance's repeal were clergy who viewed it as a small step toward governmental acceptance of homosexuality. "We're always painted in Fred Phelps's camp," said the Reverend Bob Hanson, pastor at Topeka's Shawnee Heights Baptist Church. "We don't agree with his preaching and teaching. We don't agree with his signs."

Middle School Students Stand Up For Gay Classmate

BEATRICE - Twelve Beatrice Middle School students in Beatrice, Neb., staged a brief walkout this week (ending March 5) to protest what they called the unfair treatment of a Gay student. The students refused to go to class after a teacher took Gay pride posters away from a Gay student who had brought them to school, said Stevie Woodrum, one of the eighth-graders involved, reported the Associated Press on Advocate.com.

The students also claim the Gay student is bullied by other students and that school administrators have not done anything about it. "People shove [the student's] head into lockers," Woodrum said. "[The student] gets treated way worse than any other kids." School principal Randy Schlueter said the alleged bullying was brought to the attention of school officials, who have taken steps to deal with it.

As for the posters, Schlueter said the school does not allow any potentially inflammatory political statements that might distract from school. He said the content of the statement was not the reason the school objected to the posters. School policy states administrators must approve anything students want to hang in the school, Schlueter said. But Woodrum said the students were going to put the posters in their lockers and not on the walls of the school.

When the posters were taken away, the students decided not to go to class in protest. Woodrum said that after the students' parents were contacted, they were given the option of going back to class or going home, and most chose to return to class. Woodrum said the students involved were all friends of the Gay student, the only one they know of at the school. "We were there to support [the student]," she said.

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Shorts II: Image Co-sponsored by Gay Men's Health Project

If image is everything, then we've come a long way baby . . . or have we? The shorts in this program examine gay male love, sexuality, body- and self-image.

David Leddick's The Male Nude (Andrew Decaplaine, 2003, USA, 28 minutes)

Eat Cake (John Caffery and Jeremy Laing, 2003, Canada, 3 minutes)

Ideal Man (David Gilmore and Hess Rose DeRooy, 2004, USA, 18 minutes)

Lucky Bugger (Matthew Fox, 2001, UK, 3 minutes)

Tongues Untied (Marlon Riggs, 1990, USA, 55 minutes)

Gay Men's Health Project is a collaboration of Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation, Wingspan and Pima County Health Department.

Gay Men's Health Project

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www.wingspan.org/FilmFest

film descriptions / showtimes / ticket information

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Parade starts at 11:00 am

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California Considers Ban On 'Gay Panic' Defense

SACRAMENTO - Legislation has been introduced in the California Assembly to ban the use of the so-called "panic" defense in murder trials, 365Gay.com reported.

If passed it would prevent defense lawyers from arguing that the discovery of a victim's sexual orientation, gender, race or religion so enraged the defendant that they cannot be held fully accountable for their actions.

The "panic" strategy was used successfully in high profile cases recently in two states.

In Kentucky, a man who killed a Gay man, stuffed his body in a suitcase and then threw it into a lake was found guilty of manslaughter rather than murder. The prosecution had sought a murder conviction but the defense argued that Joshua Cottrell, 23, went into Gay rage brought on by panic after Richie Phillips, 36, "came on to him" Cottrell could be eligible for parole in 30 months.

In California last year, a mistrial was declared in the case of three men charged with the killing of trans teen Gwen Araujo. The men's lawyer had argued that they panicked after discovering that Araujo, with whom at least one of the men had sex with, had been born with male genitals.

In Georgia, last August, for the second time in a year the so-called Gay panic defense was used as an excuse for murdering Gay men. Both times the jury discounted the prosecution arguments. But, the use of the defense tactics led Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard to begin a campaign to end 'Gay panic' as a defense.

The California bill to end the use of the strategy was filed by Assemblywoman Sally Lieber (D-San Jose).

"We should not allow criminal defendants to blame their victims," said Lieber. "We prohibit discrimination based on race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation in nearly all areas of public life. Why should we allow killers to use bias and intolerance as a justification for murder."

The legislation was sponsored by Equality California.

"This legislation is necessary so that these bogus panic strategies cannot be used to achieve a lighter sentence," said Geoffrey Kors, Equality California's Executive Director. "California's enhanced sentencing laws are meant to punish the offender and protect the community, and it is unfair that bigotry be used to circumvent the system."

HIV Care Saved Two Million Years Of Life

BOSTON - Researchers at the Harvard University Medical School reported at the 12th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections in Boston that improvements in HIV care in the United States saved at least 2 million years of life between 1989 and 2003, Reuters Health reported on Advocate.com.

Had the estimated 280,000 HIV-positive people in the country that don't know that they are infected with the virus also received care during the same period, a total of 4 million years of life would have been saved, says lead researcher Rochelle Walensky. Most of the extra years of life were gained through the widespread availability of highly active anti-retroviral therapy and by preventing mother-to-child HIV transmissions by administering anti-HIV medications to HIV-positive pregnant women and their infants.

The benefits from improved HIV care significantly outpaced the number of years of life saved by improvements in treatment for other chronic diseases, including using chemotherapy for breast cancer, bone marrow transplantation for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and surgery for coronary artery disease, Walensky says.

Mexican Pro-Gay Ad Campaign Stirs Debate

MEXICO CITY - A government-sponsored radio campaign featuring a mother nervously preparing dinner for her son's boyfriend has conservative groups here opposing what they see as official approval for the "Gay lifestyle," the Associated Press reported on the PlanetOut Network.

The campaign is part of a new law, signed by President Vicente Fox in June 2003, that outlaws several types of discrimination, including bias based on sexual orientation. The law also requires federal agencies to launch campaigns to promote tolerance.

While Gays and Lesbians have experienced a growing acceptance within Mexican society, they still have a long way to go before obtaining full equal rights. And there are still occasional reports of attacks against transvestites and people suspected of being Gay.

The two radio spots will air this month in 15 Mexican cities. But a lack of funds will keep them from being heard in Mexico's three major cities: Monterrey, Guadalajara and Mexico City.

An official date hasn't been set for their release. The campaign hopes to add more cities and even create television versions in the future.

In one of the radio spots, a mother prepares dinner before her son brings his date home for the first time. She asks her son several questions about how long the two have been dating and the date's likes and dislikes.

Then, she asks, "What's your date's name?"

"Oscar," her son replies, revealing to the audience that he is Gay.

A narrator then says equality begins with acceptance of those who are different.

Religious and conservative groups, including the National Unity of Parents, are trying to stop the campaign, arguing it promotes homosexuality.

"We are not saying homosexuals should be discriminated, disrespected or hurt," said Guillermo Bustamante Manilla, National Unity president. "But homosexuality is not natural. It is aberrant, and we don't believe it should be promoted with our taxes."

The organization created its own radio spots, hoping they could replace those produced by the government. In one, a daughter tells her mother she is attracted to women. The mother thanks her daughter for confiding in her but then says her family will help her so she "won't act out tendencies that could affect her gravely."

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POLITICS 2005

by Mark R. Kerr

'The Legislation Spells It Out'

When asked Monday, March 7, by the quintuple-married, right-wing, homophobe extraordinare, state Senator Karen Johnson, R-Mesa, the chair of none other than the Senate Family Services Committee to explain the bill being considered - the only one on the schedule which is set by Johnson, in a pathetic attempt to show impartiality, just like the Fox News Channel, the legislative staff person said, "the legislation spells it out."

Indeed, HCM 2005, the legislative postcard urging Congress to pass an amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning performing or recognizing same-sex marriages - enshrining discrimination and taking away rights for a group of hard working, tax paying citizens for a document known for expanding rights.

Johnson's pathetic attempt at impartiality and reason, the Family Services Committee started late, a few minutes behind the 4:00 p.m. start time listed. Present for this fiasco, in addition to Johnson, were Senators Linda Gray, R-Glendale, Thayer Verschoor, R-Gilbert, two more homophobes with voting records to boot, and Senator Victor Soltero, D-South Tucson, one of the few voices of support presently at 1700 West Washington.

State Representative Warde Nichols, R-Chandler, the lead sponsor of HCM 2005, started this error of comedy with his testimony. After profusely thanking Johnson and Gray, calling it an honor to have served with them in the Arizona House, and Verschoor in that order, Nichols began blathering on about the "enormous national, legal campaign by activists and activist lawyers for court imposed, same-sex marriages." Oh, pity the poor oppressed straight majority!

Nichols continued, saying that "the future of marriage should be through the democratic process and not by the activists," then citing Dubya, adding that he said, "marriage should not be determined by the courts to defined, but by elected representatives." Just like they had done outlawing interracial marriage perhaps? That legislative travesty was overturned in the 1967 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Loving v. Virginia,* which leads to how Clarence Thomas, the conservative, homophobic, African-American member of the U.S. Supreme Court feels about it, since he's married to a Caucasian woman?

Johnson then asked if there were "any questions," sounds of crickets followed.

Next to testify was Ron Johnson, the Executive Director of the Arizona Catholic Conference, a Department of the Diocese of Phoenix and Tucson which brings up questions about their tax-exempt status but digressing, speaking on behalf of the group, expressed support for HCM 2005, adding "the institution should be protected from the activists," and "marriage is under attack in a lot of places," but only citing one, Massachusetts. Again, Johnson asked if there were "any questions," resulting in more crickets chirping.

A citizen, Craig McPike, followed, speaking against HCM 2005, saying it would "purport discrimination against a class of people." McPike said that according to the 2000 U.S. Census, there are 1-million children who live with Gay and Lesbian parents and HCM 2005, "allows these families to be treated less." "Discriminating against Gay and Lesbian couples ignores the reality of these families," McPike said, finishing his testimony. Those sounds of crickets again followed when Johnson threw the floor open to questioning.

Rev. Charlotte Strayhorne, followed McPike, stating the state should not stand in the way of her or anyone being able to marry a "beloved." Senator Gray asked, during question time, tartly if Strayhorne, during her testimony had said something about "be able to do something in the bedroom," which Strayhorne countered that she knows that it is not part of HCM 2005.

Following Strayhorne was Peter Gentala, legal counsel for the Center for Arizona Policy, an ultra right-wing, homophobic group, who said HCM 2005 was "the only way to prevent same-sex marriage in Arizona by protecting the common definition, which is between a man and a woman."

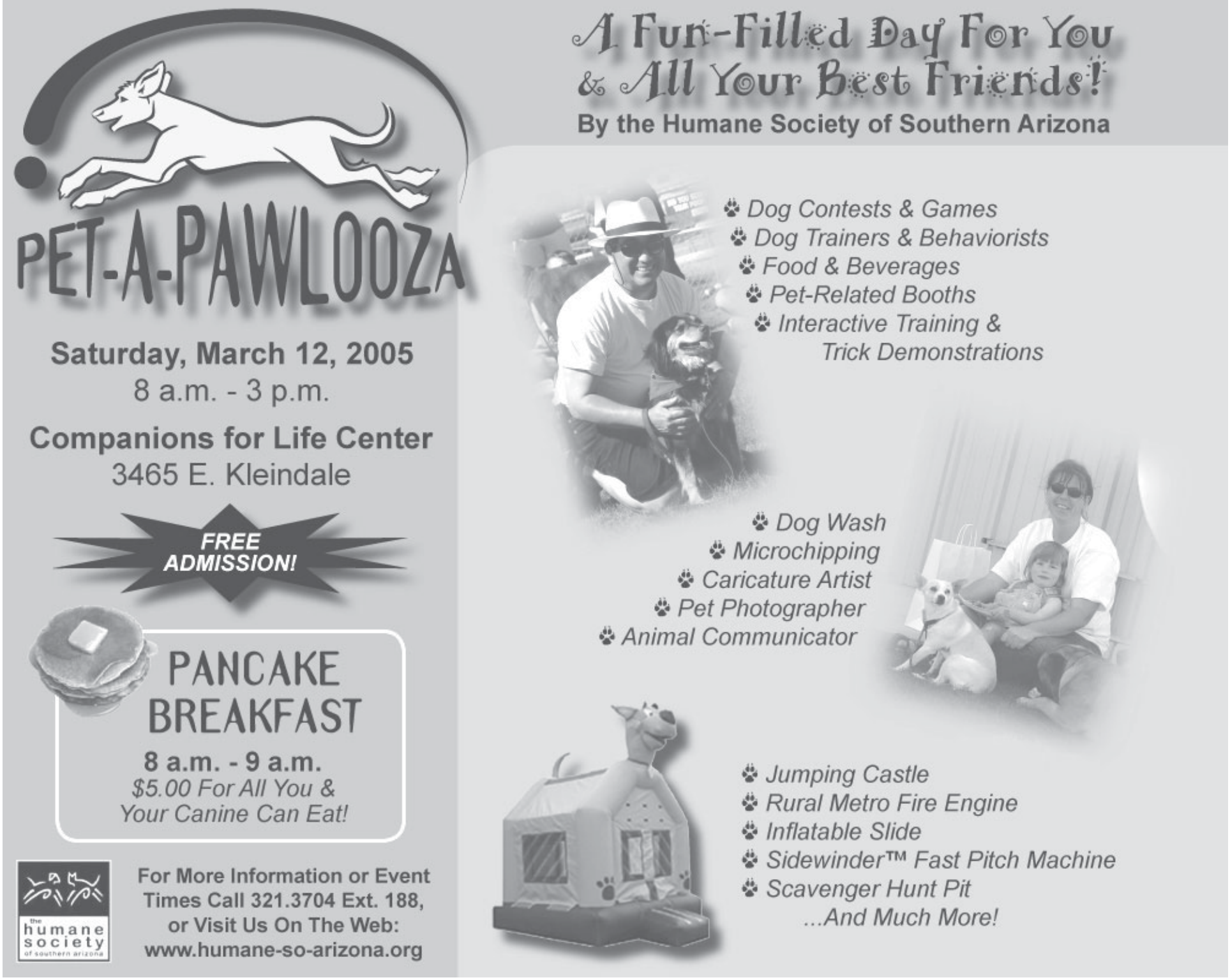
"Activists," according to Gentala, are proceeding "state by state in legal challenges and that Massachusetts is the first of several states to have their marriage laws overturned, for which he blamed the American Civil Liberties Union and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. Darn them!

"Arizona's courts will have to deal with these out-of-state, same-sex marriage licenses," Gentala opined, suggested that since 1996, "numerous law reviews that Arizona's law will be reviewed and overturned." Gee Pete, what about the recent case of the Phoenix Gay couple who filed suit in 2003 and to have the Arizona Supreme Court uphold the ruling, in 2004, of the Arizona Defense of Marriage Act, passed and signed into law in 1996?

Johnson sweetly thanked Gentala and asked if there were "any questions," getting the same cricket responses as before.

Senator Thayer Verschoor, the vice-chair, was asked by Johnson about further testimony, and he proceeded to read off the names and some of the statements given - twenty four in total - all against HCM 2005. During this, Senator Gray whined about this wasn't usually done and Johnson put an end to it. So for the grand total, 26 people and organizations were present to either speak (two did) or express opposition to HCM 2005, and for those in favor, only the two mentioned who testified. In fact, the word "activist" was used more times than the two proponents and the three, Republican wingnut Senators.

By a vote of 3-1, Victor Soltero voting no, HCM 2005 was approved with a due pass recognition, and will be the sent to the Senate Rules Committee, which will probably hear the bill on March 14 to continue to the wingnut steamroller on this measure, showing how your tax dollars are being put to "work."



Around the Gay World. . . . . .

Hungary Moves To Recognize Gay Couples

BUDAPEST - Hungary could have a civil partnership system for Lesbian and Gay couples in place by 2007, according to press reports, with the government unveiling plans that will give same-sex couples legal recognition for the first time, the PlanetOut Network reported.

The registry system would be similar to the U.K.'s Civil Partnerships scheme, which is due to take effect in December.

However, following a court's earlier decision that access to marriage should be reserved for heterosexual couples, certain rights and responsibilities will be excluded from the proposals.

According to the Budapest Sun, same-sex couples would still be unable to adopt children, and would still be blocked from holding a traditional marriage ceremony.

Government officials say the proposed framework follows an examination of other systems currently in place in many countries across Europe.

"The government is now working to lay down clear legal foundations while amending the Civil Code and Family Code," Katalin Makai, head of the department for civilian issues at the country's Ministry of Justice, told the newspaper.

She said that the proposals will be made public by the end of the year and ready for parliamentary debate next year.

Although warmly welcoming the plans, many Gay groups are apparently calling for full marriage rights.

The newspaper reports that a general election next year may result in liberal opposition parties also calling for full marriage access in a bid to win the Gay vote.

The changes are thought to be an attempt by the country to bring itself in line with other European Union members. Hungary joined the E.U. last year, and other countries already offering civil union packages to Lesbian and Gay couples include Germany and France.

Greece was recently advised by a human rights body to introduce a similar system into its legal structure, so as to

Mardi Gras Returns To Its Activist Roots

SYDNEY - A shift to the far right in Australian politics brought Sydney's Mardi Gras back to its roots as a protest for Gay rights, 365Gay.com reported.

An estimated half-million people lined the streets under a moonlit sky for the annual Gay parade. They cheered, they danced, and they demanded an equal place in Australian society.

Marti Gras began as a demonstration for Gay rights 28 years ago. Since then it has grown to become one of the world's biggest Gay festivals - attracting people from around the globe - and over the years its emphasis turned more to partying and less to LGBT civil rights.

But, this year the feisty spirit of Aussie Gays was back as marchers called for full marriage rights - something the government banned last year.

Characterizations of Prime Minister John Howard and US President George W Bush featured heavily in the parade that had 130 floats.

On one float, Howard and Bush were being married.

Among the marchers were a Prince Charles holding hands with a rough drag Camilla.

This year's grand marshals were Vicki Harding and her partner Jackie who were made famous after they and their daughter were featured on a popular Australian kids program.

Just as the packed streets represented a league of nations, so too did the march. Participants from more than 80 nations were represented in the parade, many of which still consider homosexuality a crime.

The lead float this year was a symbol of the nations which have criminalized homosexuality and carried a call for civil rights in Afghanistan, India and Iran.

But there was still time for frivolity. There was an assortment of outlandish costumes, drag queens, and leather boys.

Swedish Lesbians Win Right To Obtain Fertility Services

STOCKHOLM - Lesbians who live together as registered partners in Sweden will be able to undergo artificial insemination at state-run clinics after lawmakers there on Thursday, March 3, said they would amend a law that had prevented it.

Currently, the state-run health system permitted assisted fertilization only for women who were either married to a man or lived with a male partner.

The change in the law, which is expected to pass easily this month and take effect July 1, will give Lesbian couples who are in a registered union the same benefit. After the child is born, both women would be regarded as its mother. "The basis for the bill is that Lesbian couples will be on an equal footing with heterosexual couples when it comes to assisted fertilization," the government said.

Sweden has a liberal attitude toward Gays, but same-sex marriage is not legal. Since 1994, however, the country has allowed same-sex couples to be legally joined in official partnerships. The country also permits adoption by Gay couples. Soeren Andersson, president of the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, and Transgender Rights, said the change marked another step for equality in the Scandinavian country, which is renowned for its sense of egalitarianism. "It means a lot to the Lesbian community because it means that Lesbian couples are now accepted in the Swedish health care system on the same level as heterosexual couples," he said. "The big thing now is that the government has removed the rule that Lesbian couples are not allowed to have in vitro fertilization." Before the change, if a Lesbian couple sought in vitro fertilization, it had to be done either through a private clinic or abroad.

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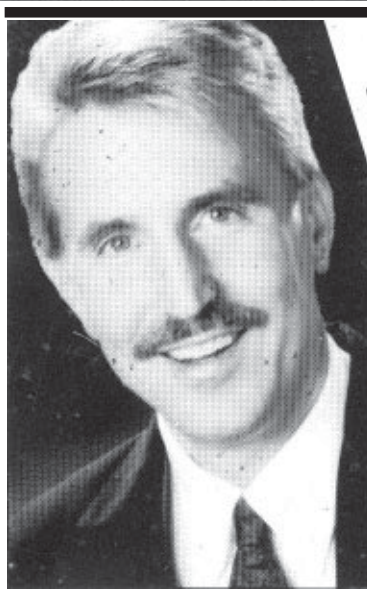
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Let's get a jump on the market when the Sun pokes Venus and Uranus. Armed with boundless love, optimism and a spark of energy, we take a leap of faith off any and all cliffs. So take that risk, comrade. Yippee! What a cool and refreshing feeling … all the way down.

ARIES (MAR. 21 - APR. 20)
Who are those ghouls, the voices from the past who haunt your dreams and every waking hour? Every passing spirit with a gripe chimes in with an opinion while Venus, Uranus and Sun rubabdub. Gay Rams begin to doubt their decisions and prefer to be swept up by the cosmic ebb and flow. But the secret to success is to listen to your gut and avoid back seat spirit drivers.

TAURUS (APR. 21 - MAY 21)
Your social card fills to overflowing with Venus, Sun and Uranus vying for a dance. Queer Bulls are up for anything and anyone and can get into extreme mischief if they are lucky. Polish those pearlies and see who notices. But before you trot off to new grazing areas check to see if the resident herd is to your liking. You have quite a few choices. Sample every beefcake.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)
There is a new corporate star on the horizon thanks to Venus, Sun and Uranus. Yes it is a sparkly pink Twin who manages to impress senior staff with a heretofore hidden talent or two. Make your mark now by revealing your best and brightest ideas. But timing and place are everything. Mumbling to yourself in the restroom has very little corporate impact.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)
Your life is suffused with more fizz than actual soda but what the heck. Sun, Venus and Uranus conjunct and float your boat to new adventure and new who-knows-who. Don't linger in drydock, pink Crab. Pull up your anchor and ride this joyful effervescence to a new port of call. You may find some buried treasure along the way. Aarrg. Who are you calling a yo ho ho?

LEO (JULY 24 - AUG. 23)
They say it is not the heat but the humidity that make things uncomfortably sticky. I say that when Sun, Venus and Uranus tango, proud Lions take it upon themselves to raise the temperature and must live with the sticky consequences. Avoid catastrophe by carefully watching the signposts. Will you become slippery when wet or just another falling rock zone?

VIRGO (AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23)
Queer Virgins wax poetic about how they cherish relationships above all else. There is some truth to the sentiment. But when Sun, Venus and Uranus conjunct all best laid partnership plans take some surprising turns. Emotions run high and you can fall in love with the concept of love. Will you wander from pillar to post with your heart in your hand? Yuk. Pack a paper towel.

LIBRA (SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)
More can be accomplished at the water cooler than at your desk now. Sun, Venus and Uranus bring a combo of luck, timing and shocking honesty. Gay Libras can use their diplomatic flair to capture a few golden nuggets of gossip and other useful information that will make their work easier. Ask the right questions and carefully listen. Then go for the jugular.

SCORPIO (OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)
Every now and then an opportunity comes along that is irresistibly tempting. Proud Scorps surrender to the overwhelming urge while Venus, Sun and Uranus conjunct. Life can become one big party where anything goes. But how far are you prepared to go? The trick is to balance these impressive offerings and make the most of them. Trick can then lead to treat. Boo!

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)
Ever mobile Gay Archers may find that they are more home centered this week. Rather than feel hemmed in, the happy home tides will fuel the fun which is both unexpected and memorable. More activity and dust are stirred up while Venus, Sun and Uranus conjunct. Speaking about dust, how about a little housekeeping while you are at it. Hint hint.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)
Even your whispers can shout volumes so think before you speak now. Venus, Uranus and Sun conjunct and foment some rather compelling, creative and shocking theories. Who is this otherwise mild mannered pink Cap? This can be a time of change, albeit brief and potentially temporary if not thought out sufficiently. Revolution! Or something like that.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)
Money comes and goes. It would be nice to try to harness and divert a bit of it for retirement. An enticing fiscal opportunity presents itself now. Unfortunately, if it seems to good to be true, it probably is. Protect yourself by carefully examining all monetary schemes, doing your financial homework and reading the fine print. It may take you beyond 2042 …. Or maybe not.

PISCES (FEB. 20 - MAR. 20)
Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all? It must be you, Guppie so dress up and take it to town. Venus, Sun and Uranus turn up the volume on your innate personal charm. The people you meet this week will have an explosive effect on your activities and projects over the next few months. Choose your groups and make merry. Make a few others too while you are at it.

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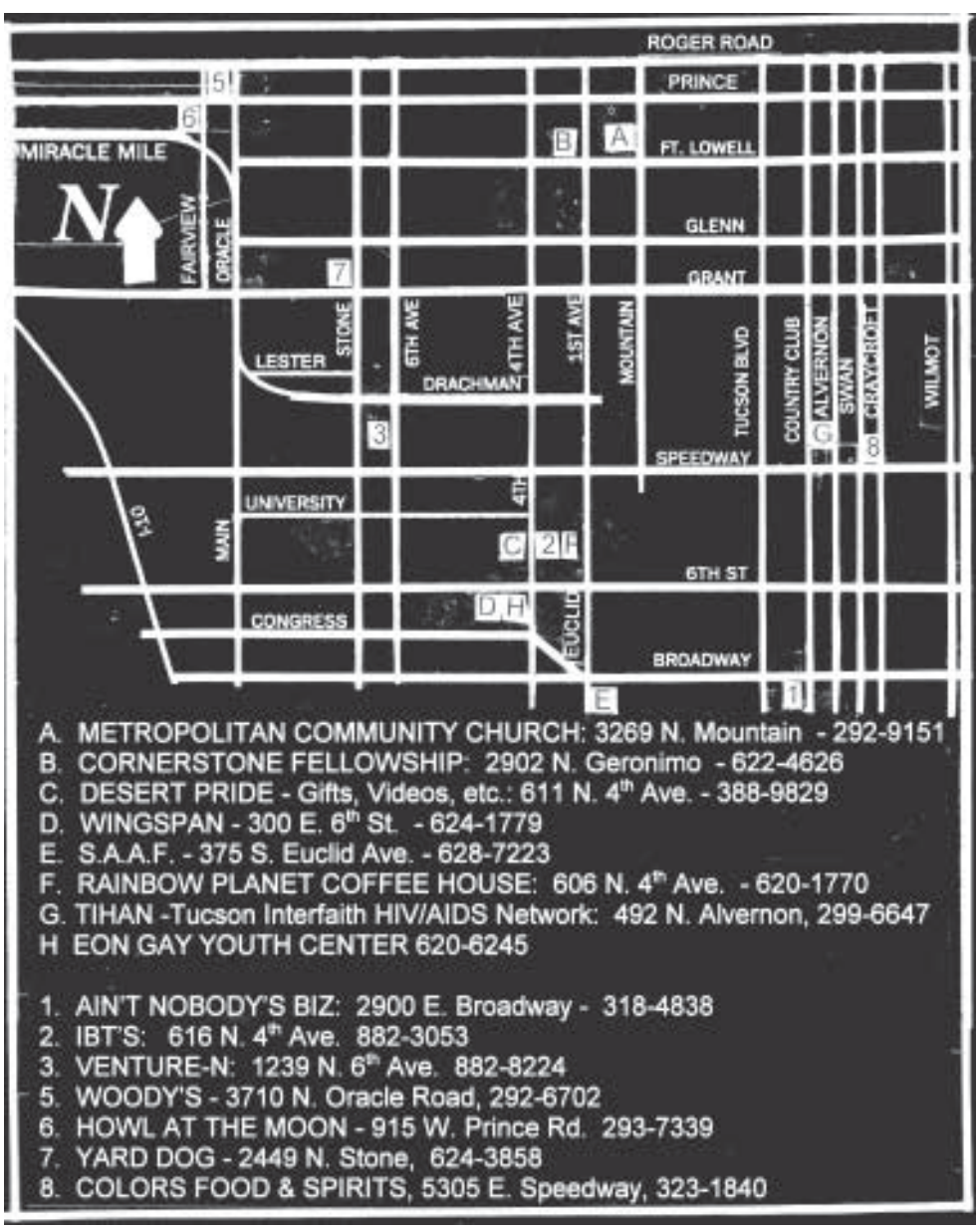

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NOTES FROM THE FOR-REAL SIDE

by Lee Thorn

Class Matters

As the last remnants of the mask fall away from the Bush administration, and even a NEW YORK TIMES columnist feels bold enough to characterize it in terms of class warfare on behalf of the rich, one question that arises is this: If it is in fact class warfare, how can the small class of rich people dominate the large class of non-rich people in a modern democracy?

The question is so large and so potentially complicated that it may be unanswerable. Perhaps we can only attempt partial answers in the hope they'll coalesce into something substantive. What possible combination of history, economics, sociology, philosophy, religion, etc. could have led us to a place where one single individual can possess over 40 billion dollars while tens of millions of his fellow citizens go without the most basic health insurance?

The notion that I'm about to propose to explain the situation is so immature at this stage that I won't even call it a hypothesis, much less a theory. Here goes: Maybe some part of the power of the "haves" derives from their loyalties being less divided than the loyalties of the "have nots." The "have nots" are loyal to self, to family, to employer, to neighborhood, to country, to religion, etc., and these loyalties can come into conflict with each other. Loyalty to family, for example, might make a parent want to keep a child out of a war at the same time that loyalty to country might pull in the opposite direction.

Reading biographies of members of the privileged class gives me the impression that their loyalties are much more focused and less frequently conflicted. Their primary loyalty, the one that seems to trump everything else, is to the principle of privilege, the idea that members of their class are entitled to things that non-members are not entitled to.

The idea that I'm working with, or attempting to begin to work with, is that the more focused loyalty of the rich has a multiplying effect that gives that class far greater power than their numbers or even their wealth can account for.

In reading Kitty Kelley's "THE FAMILY: THE REAL STORY OF THE BUSH DYNASTY",
I was struck by the first Bush's explanation for why he despised Texas Governor John Connelly. Connelly was a fellow politician, a three-term governor, a fellow Republican (after being made Nixon's Treasury Secretary), a fellow rich guy, "a poor... boy who had hard-scrabbled his way to millions" (364). When a friend was teasing the first Bush about why he didn't like Connelly, Bush said, "You really don't understand me, do you?"

The friend replied, "What do you mean?"

Bush explained, "None of the clubs that I belong to would accept John Connelly"

Here's a grown man on the verge of running for the presidency of the United States talking about his clubs with the seriousness of a high school junior. And clubs are an incredibly big deal to the haves. Kelley's book has an exhaustive description of the history and rituals of what may be America's most important club, Yale's famous Skull and Bones. In reading her description I couldn't help thinking, "We have stuff like that out West too, but we do it in high school."

THE FAMILY also goes into great detail about how loyalty to class trumps loyalty to family in cases of divorce and in the case of the dynasty's most famous black sheep, James Smith Bush.

My observations on this subject are not limited to the Bush family. A few years ago I read an unauthorized biography of Joseph Kennedy. The utter amorality of the man was breathtaking in itself. Of nearly equal interest was Kennedy's ability to simultaneously feel sorry for himself as an Irish outsider and feel entitled to literally anything he wanted --recognizing no legal, moral, religious or other restraint -- based on his membership in the privileged class. And no, Virginia, he was not the self-made man of popular myth.

A bio I read many years ago of FDR had him explaining this country to two of his top aides, one a Catholic and the other a Jew. When these gentlemen were complaining to him about some aspect of religious bigotry, he replied that they had no business carping because this was a Protestant country and they were both here ''on sufferance.~~

An approximate model for the notion I'm suggesting might be a small secret society whose members have pledged their wealth and lives to accomplishing one particular political goal, this group operating in a large society in which most folks weren't especially fanatical about anything, and certainly not organized.

I'm not suggesting a conspiracy or anything clandestine, just an attitude of extremely focused loyalty that keeps real power in the hands of the very few. Or, to quote a famous remark of Hemingway as accurately as I can remember it, "The rich are different from you and me."

[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]

Rapid HIV Testing Slow To Catch On With Doctors

LOS ANGELES - Although new rapid HIV tests can provide results in as little as 20 minutes—drastically cutting the days-long wait common with standard HIV antibody testing—few doctors are using the quicker tests, the Los Angeles Times reported on Advocate.com.

An American Academy of HIV Medicine survey of 300 doctors in 10 states found that only 5% of general practitioners were using the rapid tests. Most cited concerns over whether health insurance companies would pay for the newer tests instead of the standard blood tests. Doctors also cited time demands of training staff and counseling patients who test positive as reasons they were reluctant to use the rapid tests. However, most public clinics and emergency rooms are offering the rapid tests, according to the AAHIVM study.

"Ethically, you want to offer these things, and yet the other side of the coin is that we can't afford not to get reimbursed for them," Marcy Zwelling, a Long Beach, Calif., physician told the Times. The tests cost about $10 each. Doctors who use the rapid tests typically pay for the screenings themselves and hope health care companies will reimburse them. Traditional HIV antibody tests that are covered by health insurance companies send blood drawn from patients to company-approved labs for testing. Blood drawn through the rapid HIV antibody tests is screened in the physician's office, and results are available 20 minutes later.

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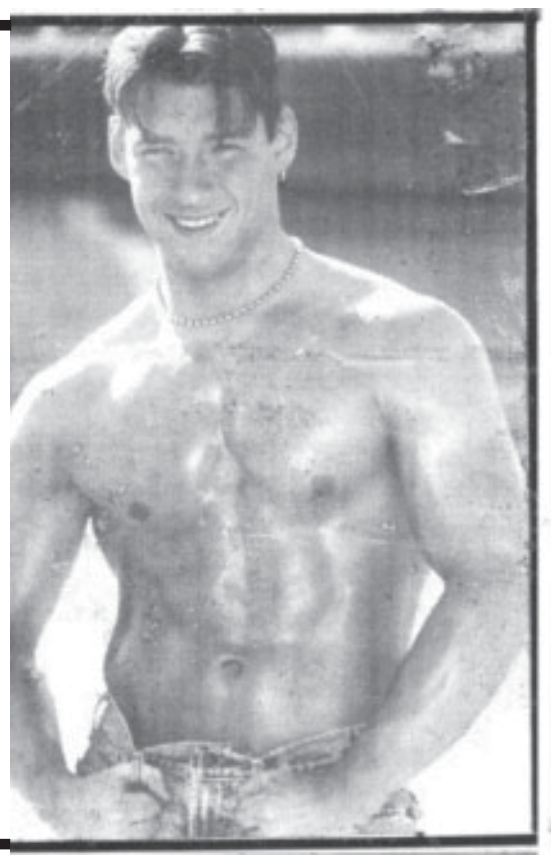
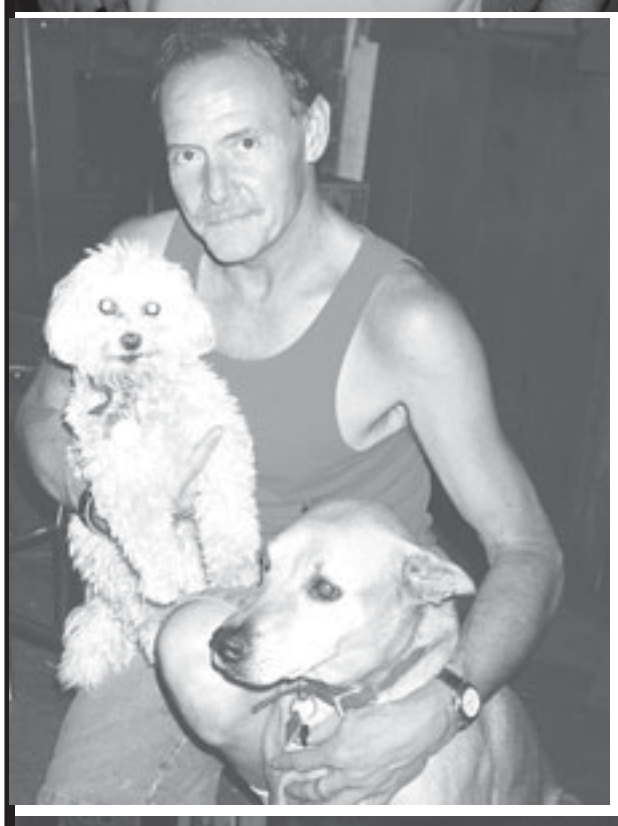
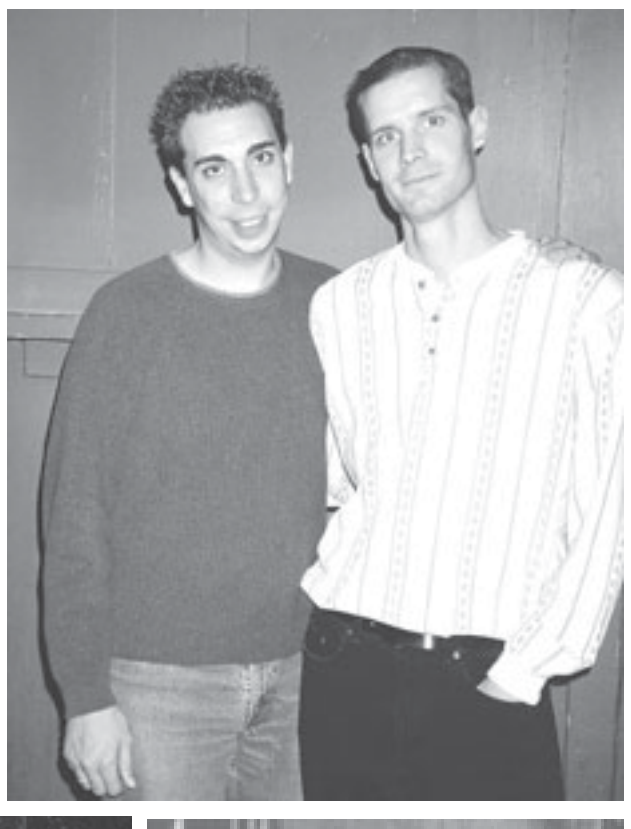


Local Luminaries





HIV+ Youths Are Taking More Sex Risks

LOS ANGELES - More HIV-positive youths are engaging in risky sex since the advent of highly active anti-retroviral therapy in 1996 than their pre-HAART peers, according to a study by researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported on Advocate.com.

The 1999-2000 study of HIV-positive teenagers in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, and Miami showed that the post-HAART teens were twice as likely to have had unprotected sex in the prior three months than 1994-1996 pre-HAART study subjects.

The post-HAART youths also had almost double the number of sex partners and were more likely to have had an injection drug-using sexual partner than pre-HAART teens, according to the study. The study does not prove the increase in risk behavior is HAART-related, but "these findings indicate the need for continued attention to the issue of sexual risk and the impact" of the new

Test May Detect Early Testicular Cancer

COPENHAGEN - Danish scientists said on Thursday, March 3 they had discovered a new method that could help to detect very early signs of testicular cancer, Reuters reported on Advocate.com.

They diagnosed the disease in a 23-year-old man, who had fertility problems but showed no signs of the illness, by looking for a specific protein in semen. "This is the first time there may be a potential method of detecting testicular cancer in a semen sample," Christina Hoei-Hansen, of Rigshospitalet-Copenhagen University Hospital, told Reuters. She believes the findings could lead to the development of a cheap, noninvasive diagnostic test and perhaps a screening program for testicular cancer.

The researchers had earlier discovered that a protein called AP-2gamma was found in testicular carcinoma in situ, a very early stage of the disease before it has started to spread. They were doing a study comparing levels of the protein in semen samples from testicular cancer patients and healthy men who acted as a control group. "When we were evaluating the first series of semen samples we detected AP-2gamma positive cells in a sample from one of the healthy controls," Hoei-Hansen said.

The man was having a routine semen analysis because he and his partner had been trying for 18 months to have a baby. Further tests confirmed he had carcinoma in situ, according to the research reported in the journal Human Reproduction. The man diagnosed with the illness had surgery to remove the diseased testicle. He and his partner are now awaiting the birth of their first child, which was conceived naturally, according to the study.

Testicular cancer affects young men, and there are close to 50,000 new cases each year worldwide, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer in Lyon, France.

Dear Dr. X,

I could use some help. My boyfriend and I picked up a guy a few months back for a three way, and it was hot. Since then we have had him over many more times. Now he is over about once a week to play. I think I am falling for this guy, but I still really love my boyfriend! How do I do this without messing everything up?

Signed, Cautious

Dear Cautious,

Before I give you any advice on how to handle your feelings, I would like you to ask yourself this question: "why are we doing this so often?" Some couples entertain a third (or more) partner into their sex life occasionally for fun and variety. However, once a week suggests to me that there is something else going on besides just random fun. Are there issues between you and your boyfriend that would lead you to chase someone else? Are you trying to end it on purpose by introducing a way out? Who sets up these rendezvous-you or your boyfriend?

My advice to you is to put a hold on these visits for a while, and spend some time talking with your boyfriend about what you both want and need. Now is the time to be totally honest (which, by the way, does not mean being mean or hurtful). After you both have worked out what is going on between you, you will know the answer to what you should do about this other guy. You may find that you both no longer need him there. Or you may find that you both really like him, and enter into a polyamorous relationship. I know several three-way relationships that have been together for years, and work very well. Whatever the solution, you will only arrive at it by open and honest communication. Good luck to you!

Dear Dr. X,

Do you have advice for how long a couple should wait before moving in together?

Signed, Calling U-Haul

Dear Calling,

There is no way for me to tell you when the right time to move in together is-it's different for everyone. I can some tidbits of advice though:

Understand that you can have a great, loving relationship without living together. Talk about and agree on how the household finances will be handled, and by whom. If possible, move into a place that is new for both of you. Remember that you will both need some space and time apart-allow for that. Remember that living with him is not the same as living through him. And never use his toothbrush or his deodorant. Let me know what you decide to do and how it goes!

[Send your questions to Dr. X at gmhp@saaf.org or mail them to SAAF/ GMHP, 375 S. Euclid, Tucson, AZ 85719. You can also check out Dr. X online at www.gmhp.org.]

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Friday	12:30 – 3:30 P.M

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U.K. Reveals Plan For One Equality Agency

LONDON - The U.K. government revealed its controversial Equality Bill Thursday, arguing that the establishment of a single equality commission will give more power to Lesbian and Gay victims of discrimination, the PlanetOut Network reported.

The bill includes the outline of the single Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR), which will become an umbrella group protecting British people in a range of equality areas.

It aims to replace the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Disability Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission, becoming a "one-stop shop" for those who believe they have been discriminated against.

It will be the first time sexual orientation will be included in a U.K.-wide equality body, along with age and religion.

The inclusion of Lesbian and Gay people has been celebrated by Stonewall's chief executive Ben Summerskill, who told Gay.com U.K. in an interview last year that the LGBT group was "committed to the single commission."

"We really believe that the way you will tackle prejudice across Britain is by actually having one commission whose job it is to tackle prejudice and whose job it is to tackle discrimination," he said last year. "The problems that have happened historically are that they have been pigeonholed as issues and only actually tackled one at a time."

"One of the key arguments of having one commission in all these areas is that there are many people who are black and Gay, or Lesbian and disabled," he said. "It's all of these issues that have bedeviled the existing commissions; now you can start dealing with people's lives as they are, rather than how some civil servants imagine them to be."

However, the CEHR has been criticized by other Gay groups, who fear it will help create a "hierarchy" of equality. Some claim that the side-by-side inclusion of religion and sexual orientation could lead to conflict in coming months.

Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Minister for Women and Equality Patricia Hewitt said the bill would "transform" the way discrimination is tackled in Britain.

"The new Commission on Equality and Human Rights will help ensure that every individual can fulfill their potential and that discrimination, prejudice and inequality have no place in modern British society," she said Thursday.

Her comments were backed by Human Rights Minister David Lammy, who said the bill was a "landmark" in how minority communities are dealt with.

"As well as promoting the importance of human rights, the new Commission will be well-placed to build links between work on human rights, equality and strong communities," he said.

Suit Against Clerk Who Allowed G/L Marriages Dropped

SANTA FE - New Mexico attorney general Patricia Madrid's lawsuit over the issuance of same-sex marriage licenses in Sandoval County has been dismissed at her request, reported the Associated Press on Advocate.com.

State district judge Louis McDonald on Monday, January 3, tossed out the lawsuit without prejudice, meaning the case could be refiled. "At this point, the attorney general is not planning further action," said Sam Thompson, spokeswoman for Madrid.

The dismissal came three days after the expiration of Victoria Dunlap's term as Sandoval County clerk. Dunlap issued 66 marriage licenses to same-sex couples last February 20, but she stopped late in the day after an advisory letter from Madrid declared them illegal. Madrid's office had sued to prevent Dunlap from issuing the licenses.

Sally Padilla, who took office January 1 as county clerk, said she would not issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Before dismissing the case, McDonald approved a motion by the attorney general to make Padilla the defendant. Padilla and Madrid reached a mutual agreement to dismiss the case without prejudice, Thompson said.

Paul Livingston, Dunlap's attorney, said he and his client were caught off guard by the dismissal. "I guess I shouldn't be surprised they would do this without letting us know," he said. "The judge substituted and dismissed it as if no one else had any rights in this case." Dunlap, who now lives in Ohio, said Monday she did the right thing when she issued the licenses. "It is not illegal in New Mexico," she said. "The law is wide open, and it is embarrassing that the attorney general can't figure it out. Those couples [issued licenses] need to get together and sue the hell out of Patricia Madrid."

Thompson said the dismissal of the lawsuit does not affect the licenses issued to same-sex couples. "The court has made no determination on the licenses," Thompson said. "I am not aware of any plans to address that issue."

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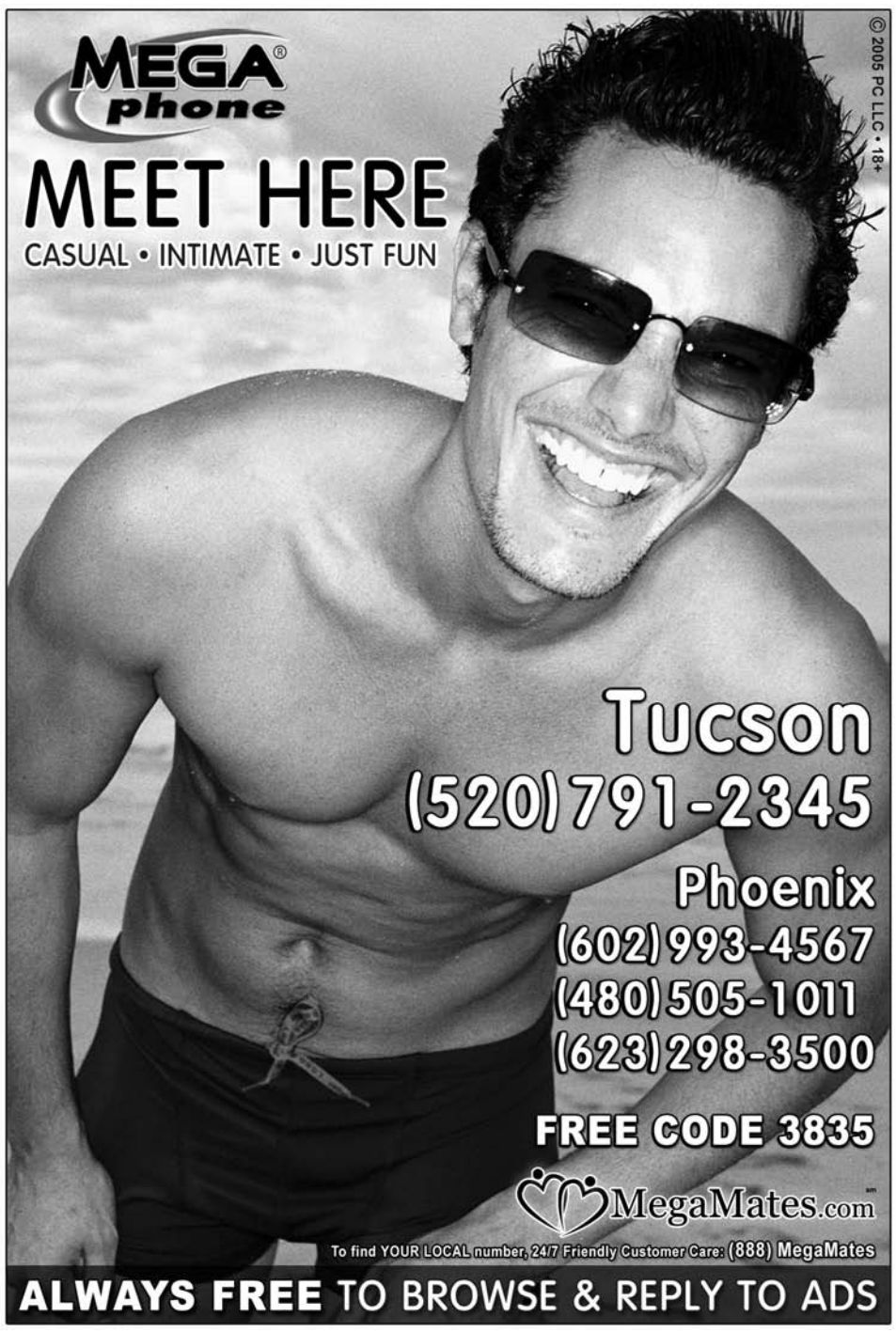

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NON-BAR CALENDAR
Groups / Clubs / Organizations /

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9
#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Jack for Canasta. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call Jack at 887-3736.
#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.

THURSDAY, MARCH 10
#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join the men of MSN for an evening of High Tea and Play Reading. High Tea (or coffee) and light refreshments will be served, then take part by being part of the audience or by reading a part in the play. The play to be read depends on who shows up and script availability. Please call Tom at 744-9036 for reservations (limited to 16 people) and directions.
#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join the men of MSN for an evening out at Rainbow Planet Coffee House. This is a chance to have a cup of coffee and chat with the men of MSN. This is a No-host event, so please ask Barista to point you in our direction.

FRIDAY, MARCH 11
Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Merlin and Lee for an evening of Charades. Come and put your acting/miming skills to the test. For directions and reservations, please call Lee and Merlin at 207-5336.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12
Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Marv hosts Pinochle Night. If you don't know how to play, but would like to learn, this is the place. For more information, please call Marv at 745-0304.

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 13
Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 3:00 p.m. Lee invites you to join him at the matinee showing of the live theater production of ""Dial M For Murder"". Price is $13.00 per person and must RSVP by Wednesday, March 9. After the play join the MSN gang at the Thai-China Palace for dinner. Please call Lee or Merlin at 207-5336 for reservations and directions.

MONDAY, MARCH 14
Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Paul hosts a Dinner Out at Zona 78. For reservations and directions, please call Paul at 293-1238.

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

TUESDAY, MARCH 15
#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 1:00 p.m. Join Karol for an evening of elegant hors d''oeuvres and a funny movie; ""The Addams Family"". Karol will prepare an assortment of appetizers to share with you throughout the afternoon. For details and directions, please call Karol at 744-9017
#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16
#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join Terry for Canasta. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call Terry at 577-2396.
#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. The Circle of Men is a support group that helps you deal with yourself and your relationships with others. For directions and reservations, please call Tom at 591-2828.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17
Coyote Moon Health Resort & Spa, St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Show. Dinner is 5:30 - 7:30 PM ($18). The Bunny O'Fu Fu Show starts at 8:00 p.m.and features Lucinda Holliday, Janee Starr, and Ajia Simone. Reservations Required. Call 744-2355 or check out www.coyotemoonresort.com
Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. Join the men of MSN for an evening out at Rainbow Planet Coffee House. This is a chance to have a cup of coffee and chat with the men of MSN. This is a No-host event, so please ask Barista to point you in our direction.

BAR CALENDAR
Of Upcoming Events

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9
WOODY'S - Gay Men's Health Project 'Underwear/Sarong Party' from 9:00 p.m. until closing. $50 First Prize in a contest for the most innovative Sarong. Limited number of sarongs available. Tropical drink specials for those in their sarongs.

THURSDAY, MARCH 10
YARD DOG SALOON - It's Merlin's Birthday. Come watch him grow older. 7:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12
YARD DOG SALOON - Fried Chicken Dinner tonight, 7:00 p.m. $5.00

SUNDAY, MARCH 13
IBT'S - Benefit show for Reveille Gay Men's Chorus at 8:00 p.m. 2-for-1 drink specials 10:00 p.m. to closing with DJ Mike Lopez spinning the latest top 40 and Hip Hop 10:00 p.m. to closing.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17
IBT'S - St. Patrick's Day "Green Party" here from 10:00 p.m. to closing. Drink specials all night. Underwear contest with cash prizes. Bar staff doing their dances on the bar. Don't forget to wear your hottest underwear and green.

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

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

YARD DOG SALOON - Celebrate St. Paddy's day here with a corned beef and cabbage buffet served from 2:00 p.m. until it runs out.
.
FRIDAY, MARCH 18
VENTURE-N - Hides of March 3-day celebration and party!!! Welcome reception 5:00 p.m., drink specials, prizes and a whole lot more.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19
VENTURE-N - Day Two of the Hides of March Party. Bucky will be serving Omelettes from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m. Afternoon Games and the party continues until closing.

WOODY'S - 'Suck and Blow Party 10:30 p.m. til closing. If you like to suck, bring somebody to blow!

YARD DOG SALOON - Toga Party tonight with the contest starting at 10:00 p.m.

DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY
COLORS - Fabulous Brunch 11am - 2pm with complimentary mimosa. Dinner 5-10pm..
HOWL AT THE MOON –Open at 11:00 am. Chuckwagon Breakfast 10:30 am - 1:30 pm, includes Bloody Mary or Mimosa. $2 Smirnoff Sunday. Free Texas Hold-'Em Poker Tournaments at 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm. Sign-up begins one hour before playing time. No Cash - Play for Prizes and Points. Great chance to learn the hottest game around
IBT's -Open Noon. $1.75 Bloodys, Screws or mimosas. til 4pm 4-7:30 Karaoke with Michael D. on the patio 5:30-8 Benefit BBQ for community organizations 7:30-2Am Dance with David Z.All drink specials not available during special events
VENTURE-N - Open 10am. Patio open 3pm. $1.75 Bloody Marys or Screws til 3pm Patio Beer Bust 3-7.Burger BBQ 5-7. Selection of burger meats to choose from. $2 proceeds go to Pet Watch (helping HIV/AIDS clients with their veterinary bills).
WOODY'S - Open 11am. Sunday Brunch 11:30 - 2:30. Eggs and meat du jour plus BMs, Mims or Screws $5. $1.50 Bloody Marys, screwdrivers, Mimosas; Happy Hour 11am-8pm. Patio Bar open 5-close. Pick-up Beach Volleyball games 5-?. $2.50 sirloin burger w/salad 5-9pm. Karaoke with Michael D. 9pm
YARD DOG - Open Sundays 10am - 1am. Bloody Marys or Screwdrivers $1.75 from 10am - 3pm.

MONDAY
COLORS - Open 11am for lunch; 5pm for dinner. Happy Hour 4-7pm. Domestic beer and well cocktails $2.25
HOWL AT THE MOON –Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3 sm pitchers, $5 lg pitchers. Monday Munchies 3 - 8 pm with reduced prices on appetizers - best deal in town! Free Texas Hold-'Em Poker Tournaments at 6:00 pm and 9:00 pm. Sign-up begins one hour before playing time. No Cash - Play for Prizes and Points.
IBT's -Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, Audio Anomoly 9pm-2am with DJ Trinidad, 10pm-2am $1.50 well vodka drinks, All drink specials not available during special events.
VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio 6pm. Free pool til 4pm. $2.75 Skyy Martinis 4-8. Free Hot Dogs.
WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Karaoke w/Michael D. 9-1
YARD DOG - Open daily 6am. 50¢ off any Scotch until 7pm. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

TUESDAY
COLORS - Open 11am for lunch, 5pm dinner. Happy Hour 4-7pm. Domestic beers and well cocktails $2.25. Karaoke 10:30pm to close w/Johnny DJ.
HOWL AT THE MOON – Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3 sm pitchers, $5 lg pitchers. Tequila Tuesday: $2.00 well margaritas, 50¢ off call tequilas. Karaoke with Debbie from 8 - midnight
IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, Tropical Tuesdays $2.50 Tropical drinks and DJ Q playing Retro Music 70's, 80's and 90's 9pm-close, All drink specials not available during special events.
VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm.
WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Bartender Calls rink specials..
YARD DOG - Open daily 6am.50¢ off any Tequila until 7pm Beer Bust 3-7pm.

WEDNESDAY
COLORS - Open 11am for lunch; 5pm dinner. Happy Hour 4-7pm Domestic Beers or Well cocktails $2.25.
HOWL AT THE MOON – Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3 sm pitchers, $5 lg pitchers. Free Pool all day. Draught Beer Specials all day. Beginning couples dance lessons with Amanda 7:30 - 8:30 pm. Country DJ Jake plays 8:30 - close
IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, 9pm "Diva-Licious" show w/ Bunny Fu Fu. HiNrgy dance with DJ Q, All drink specials not available during special events.
VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Draft Special 12-4pm. $2.75 Cuervo Margaritas 4-8pm
WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Free Hot Dog Buffet 5-11pm. Underwear- fetish- leather nite w/Gary and Chris with GMHP. $1 off any drink or bottled beer.(Excludes draft & schnapps) for all in leather or underwear.
YARD DOG - Open daily 6am.50¢ off any Vodka until 7pm Beer Bust 3-7pm.

THURSDAY
COLORS - Open 11am for lunch, 5pm dinner. 4-7pm Happy Hour Domestic Beers or Well cocktails $2.25. Karaoke 10:30 - close with Johnny DJ.
HOWL AT THE MOON –Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3 sm pitchers, $5 lg pitchers. $2.00 Mexican Beers all day. Karaoke with Debbie from 8 to midnight.
IBT's -Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, Tricked Out Thursday with your Bartenders in their undies and DJ Mike Lopez spinning Top 40 & All request $1.75 Long Islands and $1.50 Cocksucker shots 10pm-2am, All drink specials not available during special events.
VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio open 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Pool Tourney 7pm. $3 entry. Special prices for players. Steak Nite (4th Thursday of each month). Bring your own or get it here $5.
WOODY'S - Open 10am.Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Free Pool 8 to close. Volleyball Court is Open. See bartender.
YARD DOG - Open daily 6am.50¢ off any Bourbon til 7pm. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

FRIDAY
COLORS - Open 11am for lunch. Dinner 5-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm domestic beers or well cocktails $2.25.
HOWL AT THE MOON – Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3 sm pitchers, $5 lg pitchers. Line Dance Lessons 7:30 to 8:30 pm. DJ Pat plays your favorite country dance songs 8:30 to midnight then a mix of dance & country 'til close. Kitchen open 10 pm - 2 am for late night munchies.
IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, Live Jazz on the Patio with Susan 6pm-9pm, Hot Dance with David Z from 9pm-2am, All drink specials not available during special events.
VENTURE-N - Open 8am. Patio open 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm. DJ 9pm to close.
WOODY'S - 10am.Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Martini Party - Well Martini's $2.00 3-4pm. Call Martinis $3 from 3-4pm. Complimentary Shrimp Cocktail 4-8pm. Patio Bar Open 7pm - midnight.
YARD DOG - Open daily 6am.50¢ off any Gin until 7pm. Beer Bust 3-7pm. Kennel open 9pm.

SATURDAY
COLORS - Open 11am for lunch; 5-10pm full dinner.
HOWL AT THE MOON –Open at 11:00 am. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3 sm pitchers, $5 lg pitchers. $3.00 Burger & Fries all day. DJ playing your favorite country songs 8:30 - midnight, then "anything goes" requests until close. Kitchen open 10 pm - 2 am for late night munchies.
IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-7pm, 8:30pm Show time w/ Ajia Simone or Janee Starr, Circuit Saturday's with DJ Q spinning Hot Club Music. All drink specials not available during special events.
VENTURE-N - Open 10am. Patio Bar open 3pm. Patio Beer Bust 3-7pm. DJ 9-1.
WOODY'S - Open 10am. Special Happy Hour 10am-2pm. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. Patio Bar opens 5pm. 5-9pm Steak or Mahi Mahi BBQ with all the trimmings $5, Live Jazz with Arthur Migliazza 6-9pm.
YARD DOG - Open daily 6am. Beer Bust 3-7pm. 75¢ glass, $2.25 pitcher. 50¢ off any Rum 1pm to 7pm. Beer Bust 3-7pm. Kennel Open 9pm.

NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

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

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

SOUTHERN ARIZONA AIDS FOUNDATION (SAAF), 375 S. EUCLID. Office Hours 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. Direct services and emotional support for persons with and affected by HIV. Anonymous HIV testing and support groups available. Prevention education programs. 628-SAAF (7223). World wide web: http://www.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 575-8660 or write P.O. Box 36264, Tucson, AZ 85740-6264. All replies confidential.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

COMMUNITY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (CBA), Tucson's Gay and Lesbian business networking group holds regular meetings the third Thursday of every month. Call 615-6436 for more info.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LGBT SUPPORT GROUP FOR VICTIM/ SURVIVORS OF
Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Hate Crimes, Bias Acts, Harassment. Call Lori at Wingspan, 624-1779, ext. 20. Services are free.

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

MEN'S KINK DISCUSSION GROUP (Open to all who identify as male and are 118 or older). 7:00 p.m. at Desert Dominion, 3843 E. 37th Street, Tucson, AZ. (Map at www.desertdominion,org) For those who are kinky or just curious. No fee, contributions are appreciated, but not required
.
GET NAKED with TNTucson MEN! We're a social and recreational club. Have you ever longed to camp, swim, hike or play with others who enjoy the same, dropping all the masks, pretensions? TNTucsonMEN@nethere.com P.O. Box 12176, Tucson 85792 or call 514-9894

DESERT PRIDE - Your store for Gay Pride and more!

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

WINGSPAN

FilmFest

March 08-13

C'mon out and watch…

Here are just a few of this year's films
All films on March 08-09 will be shown at The Screening Room, 127 E Congress St. Tucson, Arizona.
All films on March 10-13 will be shown at The Loft Cinema, 3233 E Speedway Blvd. Tucson, Arizona.
For a full list of films, complete descriptions, up-to-date schedules, and prices please see the FilmFest website at www.wingspan.org/FilmFest. Programs are subject to change.

March 10, 7 pm
Classic IV: Go Fish In 1994, *Go Fish* won acclaim because of its irreverence in gazing at the lives of a group of young lesbians. In celebration of the Wingspan FilmFest 10th anniversary, we're bringing this modern classic back to the screen.

March 10, 8:30 pm
Q&A with Christine Vachon Free with ticket to either March 10 screening. Film producer Christine Vachon will be our special guest, to discuss her work, "queer cinema" old and new, and the future of LGBT indie film.

March 10, 10 pm
Classic V: I Shot Andy Warhol You only get one shot at fame but you can see a near-classic film again and again. See this one, directed by Mary Harron and produced by Christine Vachon, as it should be seen – on the big screen.

March 11, 12:30 pm, co-sponsored by Bears of the Old Pueblo and Puertas Abiertas
Men's Feature I: Bear Cub (Cachorro) Parenthood is about to get a little hairier.

March 11, 7 pm, co-sponsored by *Rubyfruit*
Women's Feature I: Girl Play Based on the lives of the screenwriters Robin Greenspan and Lacie Harmon, this painfully funny and sexy love story raises the complicated question: Is this relationship created for the sake of the 'girl play' or is it, 'true love' requiring major personal choices and life altering changes?

March 12, 2:30 pm
Women's Feature II: April's Shower Come out for the shower of all wedding showers! *April's Shower* is a comedy about love, romance and expectation. Alex, the disgruntled maid-of-honor, carries a secret that affects not just the course of her life, but that of almost everyone at the shower.

March 12, 7:00 pm
Men's Feature II: Straight Jacket In 1950s Hollywood, Guy Stone is at the top of the sex symbol list. He has fame, money, girls… What's his secret?

March 12, 9:15 pm, co-sponsored by KXCI Broad Perspectives and Lesbian Looks
Women's Feature III: DEBS If you wished last year's popular FilmFest short, *DEBS,* was a little longer… wish no more. Don't miss Angela Robinson's full-length feature by the same name. The plaid-skirted schoolgirl spies are back to take down the super-gorgeous, super-villain, Lucy Diamond – done with a little romance thrown in!

March 12, 11:30 pm
Midnight Classic: The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert Come in drag for a special screening of this classic, voted favorite film in our FilmFest online poll.

March 13, 7:15 pm co-sponsored by GLSEN
Men's Feature III: Cowboys & Angels A film about experiencing life, finding love, and discovering your path.

www.wingspan.org/FilmFest

film descriptions / showtimes / ticket information