

Happy New Year!



Observing Tucson And
The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Bush Surveillance Moves Rile LGBT Groups

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Several groups are criticizing the Pentagon after press reports claimed it has been spying on civilian groups, including student groups opposed to the military's "don't ask, don't tell" ban on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual personnel, the PlanetOut Network reported.

Lisa Myers of NBC News reported Pentagon investigators had records citing a February protest at New York University, with the law school's LGBT advocacy group OUTlaw classified as "possibly violent" by the Pentagon. The news report also uncovered surveillance of military-ban protests at the State University of New York at Albany and William Patterson College in New Jersey during April.

In addition, a "don't ask, don't tell" protest at the University of California at Santa Cruz that featured a Gay kiss-in was labeled by the Pentagon as a "credible threat" of terrorism.

"To suggest that a Gay kiss-in is a 'credible threat' is absurd, homophobic and irrational," said C. Dixon Osburn, executive director of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN). "The Pentagon is supposed to defend the Constitution, not turn it upside down."

"Every high school civics class is taught that the United States does not spy on its own citizens," said John Marble, spokesman for the National Stonewall Democrats. "The fact that Gay student groups are being spied on shows just how loopy the Bush administration is. They are acting like the Nixon administration."

The new reports of civilian surveillance come right after the New York Times revealed last week the president personally approved spying on American civilians without a court order. The president admitted to approving the spy measures and, on Monday, added he had nothing to be sorry about.

"Do I have the legal authority to do this? And the answer is, absolutely," said President Bush. "I've reauthorized this program more than 30 times since the September 11th attacks, and I intend to do so for so long as the nation faces the continuing threat of an enemy that wants to kill our American citizens," he added.

But Marble is not convinced with the president's reasoning. "That was a key reason why we fought a cold

war for 50 years: Spying on our citizens thing that communist countries do. It is not something the Bush administration should be doing."

"If what is described is true, it's outrageous. It raises various legal and constitutional questions," said Michael Adams, director of education and public affairs for Lambda Legal, about the reports that the Pentagon has been spying on civilian organizations. "There needs to be an investigation to find out who's behind this and those people need to be held accountable."

"The Pentagon, by its own rules, cannot be keeping information about people that are not threats to the military," Ben Wizner, staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) national legal department, told the PlanetOut Network.

While Wizner would not predict the next steps Congress would take with the president regarding an investigation, he added, "If the claims that President Bush authorized spying on civilians without a court order are substantiated, it could possibly be an impeachable offense."

Drug Companies Lack Vaccine Incentive

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The federal chief of AIDS research says he believes drug companies don't have an incentive to create a vaccine for the HIV and are likely to wait to profit from it after the government develops one, the Associated Press reported on 365Gay.com.

And that means the government has had to spend more time focusing on the processes that drug companies ordinarily follow in developing new medicines and bringing them to market.

"We had to spend some time and energy paying attention to those aspects of development because the private side isn't picking it up," Dr. Edmund Tramont testified in a deposition in a recent employment lawsuit obtained by The Associated Press.

Tramont is head of the AIDS research division of the National Institutes of Health, and he predicted in his testimony that the government will eventually create a vaccine. He testified in July in the whistleblower case of Dr. Jonathan Fishbein.

"If we look at the vaccine, HIV

vaccine, we're going to have an HIV vaccine. It's not going to be made by a company," Tramont said. "They're dropping out like flies because there's no real incentive for them to do it. We have to do it."

"They will eventually - if it works, they won't have to make that big investment. And they can make it and sell it and make a profit," he said.

An official of the group representing the country's major drug companies took sharp exception to Tramont's comments.

"That is simply not true. America's pharmaceutical research companies are firmly committed to HIV/AIDS vaccine research and development with 15 potential vaccines in development today," said Ken Johnson, senior vice president of PhRMA, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

"Vaccine research is crucial to controlling the AIDS pandemic and our companies are well aware of the need to succeed in this vital area of science," Johnson said.

In an e-mail response for comment, Tramont said the HIV vaccine mirrors the history of other vaccines. "It is not just a HIV vaccine - it's all vaccines - that is why there was/is a shortage of flu vaccines," Tramont wrote.

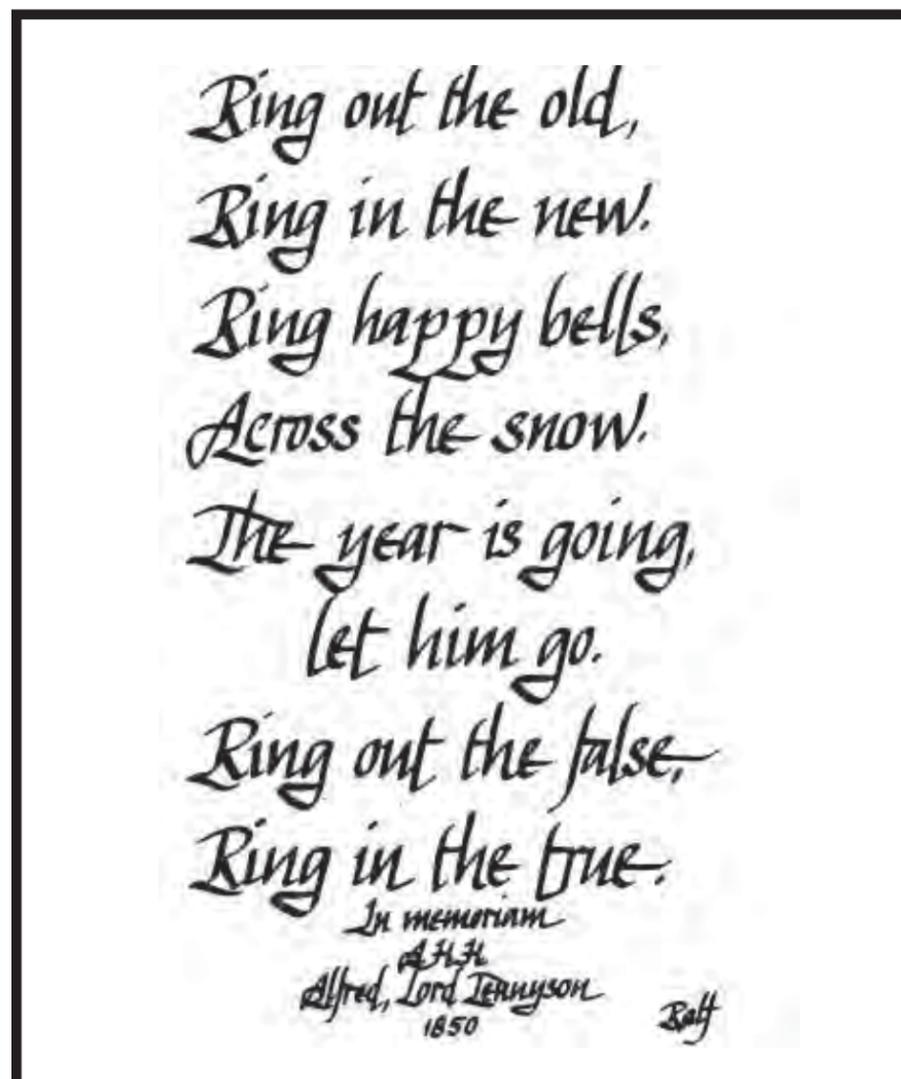
The quest for an AIDS vaccine has been one of science's biggest disappointments despite billions of dollars and years of research. Part of the dilemma is that such a vaccine must work through the very immune system that AIDS compromises.

The failure in the last couple years of one of the more promising vaccine candidates has bred some frustration.

The United Nations' top HIV/AIDS official acknowledged earlier this year at a conference that it was no longer realistic to hope that the world will meet its goal of halting and reversing the spread of the pandemic by 2015. A British delegate to that conference predicted it might take 20 years before such a vaccine is created.

The International AIDS Vaccines Initiative, a not-for-profit group

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UPDATE

Desert Voices Open House Jan. 2

TUCSON - Come sing in a new year at Desert Voices (DV) Open House, Monday, Jan. 2, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., at MCC-Water for Life Church, 3269 N. Mountain.

DV, a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) and straight supportive chorus also welcomes all singers and supporters who feel drawn to our cause of uniting the LGBT community and in promoting acceptance of all people throughout Tucson and Arizona.

Desert Voices performs two to three concerts during their season, as well as appearing at numerous community events. The concerts are multi-faceted performances that include large choral pieces performed by the whole choir, in addition to solos, small group numbers, humorous skits, and spoken parts. And, if that isn't enough, the whole show from the script to the refreshments is produced by the members. So whether you feel like being the star of the show, or someone who would quietly work in the background, there is something for everyone.

This open house is free and open to all who are interested in DV. For more information, call (520) 791-9662, E-mail: info@desertvoices.org, or go online

Arizona Together Benefit Concert Fund Raiser Jan. 6

TUCSON - Kathleen Williamson will be performing a benefit concert for Arizona Together, Friday, Jan. 6, 8 p.m., at the Historic Y, 738 N. Fifth Street.

Dr. Kathleen Williamson is an award-winning original songwriter whose music uses elements of folk, jazz, soul and rock who has toured the U.S., Europe and Asia.

Her recently released album "The Sacred Spud" features songs written by Kathleen over the last two years concerned with the current

state of political affairs, integrating personal and global worlds. A real toe-tapper, this Americana album seeks to "take back God, Country and country music from the evildoers!"

Arizona Together invites you to enjoy this concert with your friends, family, and co-workers. The ticket price is a minimum donation of \$25 and tickets are on sale at Antigone Bookstore, hurry and get yours before this fantastic show sells out! For more information please contact Jess Knutson at jk@aztogether.org or call (520) 275-4790.

Wingspan Volunteer Orientation Jan. 7

TUCSON - Are you resolved to get more involved in Tucson's LGBT community this year? Have you thought about volunteering for Wingspan, but didn't know what it might involve? Here's your chance to find out. A Volunteer Orientation will take place at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St., Saturday, Jan. 7, 2006, 10:30 to 12 p.m.

This orientation is geared for new and potential Wingspan volunteers, and is open to anyone wanting to learn about Wingspan's history, organizational structure, and the many opportunities to volunteer. Whether you want to volunteer intermittently, on a regular basis, or for a specific project or committee, Wingspan can accommodate most levels of commitment. To continue commitment to diversity, Wingspan strongly urges people of color, Lesbian and Bi women, Gay and Bi men, people with disabilities, bilingual and bicultural folks, Transmen and Transwomen, sign language interpreters, people living with HIV/AIDS, youth, older adults, and straight allies to volunteer.

Drop by Wingspan for a volunteer application, or contact Ashley Nowe, Wingspan's Volunteer Coordinator, (520) 624-1779 ext 15, or anowe@wingspan.org for more information.

Gifted By Otherness Jan. 9

TUCSON - A study and discussion of the book, Gifted by Otherness by L.W. Countryman and M.R. Ritley, will take place Monday, Jan. 9, 2006, 7 - 9 p.m., at Grace St. Paul's, 2331 E. Adams St.

Gifted by Otherness by L.W. Countryman and M.R. Ritley which encourages gay and lesbian people to adopt a positive attitude to spirituality and to take a pro-active role in the Church through telling our own stories, recognizing our spiritual gifts, interpreting spiritual writings in our own context, and refusing to apologize for who we are. Intended for Gay and Lesbian people from inside and outside the Grace St. Paul's community. Non-Gay and non-Lesbian participants who are contending with spiritual issues relating to sexuality and who are willing to maintain safe space for other participants are also welcome.

This event will be led by Chris Eastoe, Ph.D., a Gay member of Grace and then Grace St. Paul's since 1982; former treasurer, vestry member, and senior warden. Staff Scientist (Geosciences) at U of A. For more information, call (520) 327-6857, or E-mail: eastoe@geo.arizona.edu.

Commit To Quit In 2006

TUCSON - Look and feel better with free Smoking Cessation Class on Tuesdays, Jan. 10 - Feb. 7, 5:00 - 6:15 p.m., at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St., and commit to quit!

This program is co-sponsored by Wingspan with, Tobacco-Free Ways, Pima County's comprehensive tobacco education and prevention program. The program is funded by the Arizona Department of Health Services Office of Tobacco Education and Prevention Program and the Pima County Health Department.

Call (520) 740-3031 to register or for more information. Enrollees and participants can get 50% off nicotine patches, gum, lozenges, prescription medication in the effort.

California Anti-G/L Marriage Group Misses Deadline

SAN FRANCISCO - A group trying to get a proposed amendment to ban same-sex marriage put to voters in California has failed to collect enough names to put the issue on the June 2006 ballot and may not make it in November, 365Gay.com reported.

The amendment would not only prevent Gay marriages but also void the state's landmark domestic partner registry and all benefits for same-sex couples. Randy Thomasson, the president of Campaign for Children and Families said he is not giving up. "Whether it be November 2006 or sometime in 2008, it doesn't matter," he said. In the meantime, he said, the organization will continue to fight in the courts.

Another group collecting names for a second ballot measure also says it has not collected as many signatures as it had hoped. ProtectMarriage says it is now aiming for an April 13 deadline to make on November's ballot. Both groups say they are far behind LGBT rights group Equality California in fundraising and organization.

EQCA last month announced it had hired five new field organizers and is opening additional offices in Palm Springs and San Diego. It already has offices in San Francisco, Sacramento and Los Angeles. California has the largest LGBT population in the nation. Lawsuits brought by same-sex couples wishing to marry are slowly working their way to state Supreme Court.

From Feb. 12 to Mar. 11, 2004, the City of San Francisco issued marriage licenses to same-sex couples after Mayor Gavin Newsom determined that the state Constitution's guarantees of equality and due process required him to issue licenses to same-sex couples. The California Supreme Court eventually ruled that Newsom did not have the authority to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples before the state courts had reviewed the constitutionality of the law limiting licenses to different-sex couples only, and invalidated the marriages of over 4,000 same-sex couples. In September, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed legislation that would have allowed same-sex marriage in California.

Best Wishes
for a Happy
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for you
and yours.



Thanks for your support.

SA&F

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By Elizabeth MacDonald

Wedding Banned

Opponents of same-sex marriage so far have succeeded in getting bills passed in 38 states that seek to cement in stone the notion that marriage means the union of a man and a woman.

Arnold Schwarzenegger recently couldn't resist jumping into the fight to make his case for straight marriage. The California governor, who now wants to veto recently passed state legislation allowing same-sex marriages, says if such rights are approved, "all of a sudden, we see riots, we see protests, we see people clashing," adding, "The next thing we know, there is injured or there is [sic] dead people. We don't want to get to that extent."

Set aside for now the fact that Canada and Massachusetts have yet to see such apocalyptic hysteria worthy of "The Terminator," much less civil unrest, since they have approved same-sex marriages. And put aside the fact that no straight marriage has come undone by the 6,600 same-sex marriages so far, and that even the Massachusetts Republicans who had insisted that same-sex marriage be outlawed have since dropped their fight for a constitutional amendment, realizing nothing has happened since same-sex marriage was allowed. "Gay marriage has begun, and life has not changed for the citizens of the commonwealth, with the exception of those who can now marry," admitted state Sen. Brian Lees, a Republican co-sponsor of the amendment.

Schwarzenegger and most conservatives still stubbornly hold in a blind crab grip their received history, their "traditional" view that marriage means the union of a man and a woman. President George W. Bush, in calling for a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, says:

"The union of a man and woman is the most enduring human institution," adding that straight, monogamous marriages are "honored and encouraged in all cultures and by every religious faith."

When preconceived notions are at play, history telescopes effortlessly. Has any elected official ever bothered to look at the history of marriage, at marital "traditions?"

Never mind for now the fact that the institution of marriage has been degraded and undermined more by the actions of the very straight people it's supposed to support, be it child abuse (including abuse by the Catholic Church), domestic violence, high divorce rates, Britney Spears' turnstile weddings, or polygamy as practiced by the Mormons or by Saudi princes that the White House routinely kowtows to. And never mind for now the fact that the Catholic Church's immovable position—that marriage must be between straight, monogamous people because marriage is about procreation—is a belief better served by those polygamists who are now seemingly thronging heaven with their armies of children. Though conservatives flog their case using the twin bully pulpits of tradition and religion, tradition and religion have not always supported the notion of straight, monogamous marriages.

When speaking of tradition, right wing conservatives typically don't bring up this "tradition," the fact that Abraham and Jacob practiced polygamy, as both had multiple wives. Never addressed is the fact that Jewish law at one time stipulated that a man whose wife did not bear a child within ten years must marry another—with or without divorcing the first. And often ignored is the fact that, of 1,154

past and present societies studied by anthropologists that practiced marriage, a majority, 980, allowed polygamy. Another "tradition" conservatives typically don't cite is the fact that the Christian Church was largely dismissive of, even vituperative towards, the idea of married love in the first 1,500 years of its history. Pope Gregory the Great wrote that while marriage was not technically sinful, the "carnal pleasure" that husband and wife derived from sex "cannot under any circumstances be without blame." In the Christian hierarchy of respectable womanhood, the virgin ranked highest, the widow next, and the wife, dead last, says Stephanie Coontz, a history professor at Evergreen State College.

Even Valentine's Day, the holiday most associated with marriage, wasn't the holiday the Roman Catholic Church originally championed. When the church declared Feb. 14 as St. Valentine's feast day in 498 A.D., it envisioned a holiday that would ascetically celebrate St. Valentine's martyrdom so as to stifle the insatiable sexual passions unleashed by the Roman fertility festival of Lupercalia, which began Feb. 15, says Coontz. Other "traditions" not cited include the fact that, for centuries, people routinely married only to complete a property deal or political alliance, or to work a farm together. Violence and adultery were considered normal in a marriage. And another ignored tradition is the fact that, for centuries, slave systems—including those run by the Greeks, Romans, Hebrews, medieval Germans, and Americans—denied legal recognition to slave marriages.

Not so fast, says former Congressman Christopher Cox, a Gay marriage opponent who is now

chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. He avers in a windy column that has made the rounds in Washington that the Massachusetts justices who approved marital rights for same-sex couples displayed a "willingness to 'discover' a right that appears nowhere in the law," a willingness that "is breathtaking in its ambition." Unlike most conservatives who beat the Massachusetts judges about the head with their own view of religion and tradition, Cox goes one step further and nearly herniates himself to make the point that the Massachusetts justices' interpretation must be "moored to the law's text and the intentions of its authors." Again, have Cox and other conservatives ever bothered to look at the intentions of the authors of marital law in Massachusetts, of those who helped found this country?

The Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth in 1620 wanted nothing to do with religious marriages. Instead, they immediately instituted the Dutch custom of civil, not religious, marriage with which they had become familiar during their lengthy sojourn in the Netherlands, notes Peter Gomes, the Plummer Professor of Christian Morals at Harvard University. Marriage would be a civil affair, as these Puritans hotly opposed the English custom of clerical marriage as unscriptural.

To be sure, religious ceremonies abound in Massachusetts, but to this day, the clergy solemnize marriage merely as agents of the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts court ruling on same-sex marriage was understood as a civil matter. And so the Massachusetts justices concluded, based on the state's history, that same-sex marriage is a civil rights issue, as marriage there has been treated since 1621.

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Second-Parent Curbs Drives Same-Sex Couple From Tucson

TUCSON - Jeanine, Nichole and Isaac Soterwood left a home they loved, solid careers and a wide circle of friends, reported the Arizona Daily Star. The state of Arizona does not allow them to be a legal family, so the Soterwoods moved from Tucson to California, where Nichole and Jeanine will file papers to become the legal parents of Isaac, who is 22 months old.

"This is tough for us. We love Tucson. And I had a great workplace and a promising, good career," said Nichole, 35, who was a systems engineer at Raytheon Missile Systems. "I was disappointed to leave and my co-workers at Raytheon were disappointed. But they understood that family comes first."

Like most other states, Arizona law does not allow unmarried couples to do what's known as second-parent adoption - when the non-biological parent adopts a partner's child. Stepparents in heterosexual unions can adopt the children of their spouses in Arizona. Gay couples can be foster parents. And Gay people, as long as they are single, can adopt. But couples like the Soterwoods, who can't legally marry here, can't both be parents of a child.

Gay rights advocates say it's a growing issue because more same-sex couples are raising children. But challenging Arizona's law could backfire - lawmakers could react by passing laws prohibiting same-sex

couples from adopting, as they did in Mississippi in 2000. "Unfortunately, the political climate in Arizona is one that would not be welcoming of that change," said Amy Kobeta, director of public affairs for the Arizona Human Rights Fund. "We have a conservative Legislature, and the topic of Gays and Lesbians being parents is a very hot-button issue with the conservative movement."

Research by the city of Tucson's Urban Planning and Design Department, based on U.S. Census data, shows 1,253 same-sex male couples in Pima County, and 1,399 same-sex female couples, although many Gay rights advocates believe those numbers are conservative because of underreporting. At least one of three Lesbian couples and one of five Gay male couples are raising children nationwide, according to a 2004 research paper from the Washington, D.C.-based Urban Institute, based on an analysis of 2000 Census data. The research also says Pima County's numbers are higher than the national average for same-sex couples living with minor children.

The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a policy paper in 2002 endorsing second-parent adoption laws for same-sex couples, saying that children who are born to or adopted by one member of a same-sex couple deserve the security of two legally recognized parents. But at the moment, Gay and Lesbian rights

advocates in Arizona are focused on preventing the passage of a proposed constitutional amendment that's slated to appear on the November 2006 general election ballot, rather than lobbying for second-parent adoption rights. The constitutional amendment, backed by a coalition that believes children should be raised in families with married, heterosexual parents, would prohibit same-sex couples from marrying and also would bar local governments from offering insurance benefits to domestic partners.

"I think the majority of Arizonans would agree that children being raised in a family of one man and one woman - a husband and a wife - is the environment we want to have in Arizona," said Nathan Sproul, a spokesman for Protect Marriage Arizona, the group backing the proposed amendment. State Sen. Karen S. Johnson, the GOP chair of the Senate's Family Services Committee, did not return calls about second-parent adoption but sent a message through an assistant that she does not support same-sex couples. In her legislative biography, Johnson pledges to stand "resolutely against the homosexual agenda."

Kobeta noted there are alternatives same-sex parents in Arizona can use now to give the second parent power of attorney for emergency medical decisions and school record access. But she said the options are complicated and expensive, and schools and hospitals don't necessarily respect them.

Local attorney Amelia Craig

Cramer knows the imperfection of those options too well. She is the former executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation and former managing attorney for the Western office of Lambda Legal, a national group that works for the full recognition of the civil rights of Lesbians, Gay men, Bisexuals and Transgender people. She also is raising a 6-year-old child with her female partner. "I'm the legal parent and it's in my will that my partner has guardianship, but that is not a guarantee," Craig Cramer said. "It terrifies me to think about what would happen if I were to die or become incapacitated."

The Soterwoods met as graduate students in applied mathematics at the University of Arizona in 1998. They had a commitment ceremony with 65 friends and family in 2001. In 2003, they again exchanged vows, when they obtained a civil union in Vermont. That's when they also took the same last name, a combination of Nichole's surname, Soter, and Jeanine's last name, Smallwood. They always knew they wanted a family and they wanted to live in Tucson, which they describe as a diverse and accepting community. Nichole gave birth to Isaac in February 2004 and is his sole legal guardian. Every six months since his birth, she's had to fill out papers to give power of attorney to Jeanine, so Jeanine can legally make health and school decisions about Isaac.

"If, God forbid, we were to split up, I'd have no rights as a parent," said Jeanine, 31, who recently finished her doctorate at the UA, where she was an adjunct engineering instructor. Jeanine and Nichole ultimately decided to move to Santa Clara, Calif., where Nichole already has a job and they will be near Jeanine's parents. One of the first things they'll do is sign on to California's domestic partner registry and find a lawyer to guide them through a second-parent adoption.

"I've heard of folks who have left Tucson and adopted children in another state. But they have to establish residency in that other state before they come back. It's a real hardship and it underscores the fact that we have a somewhat broken system in the United States," said Kent Burbank, executive director of Wingspan. "If there are more people like Nichole and Jeanine leaving, it is a big loss, not just for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community, but for the community as a whole."

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Annie Proulx Tells The Story Behind 'Brokeback Mountain'

Annie Proulx figured no magazine would touch her short story "Brokeback Mountain," the tale of two Wyoming cowboys whose romance is so intense, it sometimes leaves them black and blue. But The New Yorker published it in 1997, and it went on to win an O. Henry prize and a National Magazine Award. Now the movie version is a leading Oscar contender, with starring performances from Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal as Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist.

In a telephone conversation with the Associated Press from her home in Wyoming, Proulx, a 70-year-old Pulitzer Prize-winner, declined to discuss the origins of her two roughneck lovers, citing an upcoming book written with screenwriters Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana. Instead, she spoke about homophobia, her fascination with rural life, and the process of making Twist and Del Mar live and breathe.

working it out, trying to do it in a fair kind of way.

How did you feel about seeing it on the big screen?

Proulx: It was really quite a shock because I had had nothing to do with the film. So for 18 months, I had no idea what was happening. I had no idea if it was going to be good or frightful or scary, if it was going to be terribly lost or sentimentalized or what. When I saw it in September, I was astonished. The thing that happened while I was writing the story eight years ago is that from thinking so much about the characters and putting so much time into them, they became embedded in my consciousness. They became as real to me as real, walk-around, breathe-oxygen people. It took a long time to get these characters out of my head so I could get on with work. Then when I saw the film, they came rushing back. It was extraordinary—just wham—they were with me again.

What did you think of the performances by Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal?

Proulx: I thought they were magnificent, both of them. Jake Gyllenhaal's Jack Twist...wasn't the Jack Twist that I had in mind when I wrote this story. The Jack that I saw was jumpier, homely. But Gyllenhaal's sensitivity and subtleness in this role is just huge. The scenes he's in have a kind of quicksilver feel to them. Heath Ledger is just almost really beyond description as far as I'm concerned. He got inside the story more deeply than I did. All that thinking about the character of Ennis that was so hard for me to get, Ledger just was there. He did indeed move inside the skin of the character, not just in the shirt but inside the person. It was remarkable.



Annie Proulx

You've said "Brokeback Mountain" began as an examination of homophobia in the land of the pure, noble cowboy.

Proulx: Everything I write has a rural situation, and the Wyoming stories, in the collection Close Range, which includes "Brokeback Mountain," did contain a number of those social-observation stories—what things are like for people there. It's my subject matter, what can I say?

Were you trying to accomplish something specific with this story?

Proulx: No. It was just another story when I started writing it. I had no idea it was going to even end up on the screen. I didn't even think it was going to be published when I was first working on it because the subject matter was not in the usual ruts in the literary road.

You've said this story took twice as long to write as a novel. Why?

Proulx: Because I had to imagine my way into the minds of two uneducated, rough-spoken, uninformed young men, and that takes some doing if you happen to be an elderly female person. I spent a great deal of time thinking about each character and the balance of the story,

Would you characterize the story as groundbreaking?

I hope that it is going to start conversations and discussions, that it's going to awaken in people an empathy for diversity, for each other and the larger world. I'm really hoping that the idea of tolerance will come through discussions about the film. People tend to walk out of the theater with a sense of compassion, which I think is very fine. It is a love story. It has been called both universal and specific, and I think that's true. It's an old, old story. We've heard this story a million times; we just haven't heard it quite with this cast.

Have you gotten any response from Gay organizations?

No. When the story was first published eight years ago, I did expect that. But there was a deafening silence. What I had instead were letters from individuals, Gay people, some of them absolutely heartbreaking. And over the years, those letters have continued and certainly are continuing now. Some of them are extremely fine, people who write and say, "This is my story. This is why I left Idaho, Wyoming, Iowa." Perhaps the most touching ones are from fathers, who say, "Now I understand the kind of

Continued on Page Six

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'Twas The Night Before Christmas



BY KEITH BOYKIN

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the land
 The war was proceeding exactly as planned.
 Conservatives were plotting against liberals and Gays
 With threats that the left would take Christmas away.

The president was worried and 2,000 were dead,
 As visions of Baghdad still danced in his head.
 And Condi in her 'kerchief, and George in his cap,
 Had finally decided to pull out a map.

When in the next office they heard such a clatter,
 They sprang from the desk to see what was a matter.
 There Cheney appeared in undisclosed location,
 With a poll-tested soundbite – "The war on creation."

On that little strategy, they would all agree
 So they took a quick break and pulled out the TV.
 When, what to their wondering eyes should appear,
 But a new evil demon, a cowboy quite queer.

With Iraq and Miers and indictments and scandal
 The dropping poll numbers were too much to handle,
 This new little target could shift the blame,
 As they recalled the disasters and said them by name!

"Now Katrina! now, FEMA! now, torture and leaks!
 They would all disappear if we picked on the weak!
 Get O'Reilly and Dobson to start a new brawl!
 Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

But a strange thing had happened as they plotted this sneak
 The White House had lost its big winning streak
 Social Security "reform" had now been suspended
 And the Patriot Act was barely extended.

The critics demanded an end to the lying
 When the next thing they knew, they heard about spying
 The Congress was forced to start to impeach
 So the president decided to give one last final speech

There was only one way to get out of this mess

The president knew he had to confess
 There was one other person who had just left the town
 And the president decided to call Michael Brown

If he handled a hurricane, he could handle this too
 But when the story leaked out, the public was through
 Bush flew to New York to exploit nine eleven
 When there at the towers came a message from heaven

Don't support your agenda by using my name
 When things fall apart, they will know who to blame
 I wiped out great Egypt and Greece and Rome
 Now you will seek shelter in the old Superdome.

So the people chased Bush from the north to the south
 When on his way out he opened his mouth
 And I heard him exclaim, as he ran from the mob,
 "Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job!"

[Keith Boykin has become one of the nation's leading commentators on race, sexuality and politics. A former White House aide to President Clinton, Keith is also a New York Times bestselling author, reality television star, lawyer, educator and activist. Boykin's poem from his Website keithboykin.com was a reprint from the Dec. 24 online edition.]

Drug Companies Lack Vaccine Incentive

Continued from Page One

that is pushing for an AIDS vaccine, said there are more than 30 vaccine candidates being tested mostly on a small scale in 19 counties, but it acknowledges many are pursuing a similar theory of science that may prove futile.

"If the hypothesis is proven incorrect, the pipeline of candidates now in trials will be rendered mostly irrelevant. Strong alternative hypotheses have been largely neglected," the group said.

IAVI estimates total annual spending on an AIDS vaccine is \$682 million.

"This represents less than 1% of total spending on all health product development," IAVI said. "Private sector efforts amount to just \$100 million annually. This is mainly due to the lack of incentives for the private sector to invest in an AIDS vaccine – the science is difficult, and the developing countries that need a vaccine most are least able to pay."



Annie Proulx Tells The Story Behind 'Brokeback Mountain'

Continued from Page Five

hell my son went through." It's enormously wonderful to know that you've touched people, that you've truly moved them.

Is that why you write?

It's not why I write. I had no idea I was going to get any response of this sort. I wrote it from my long-term stance of trying to describe sections of rural life, individuals in particular rural situations and places, well, first the places. That it came out this way—it just happened to touch certain nerves in people. I think this country is hungry for this story.

Why?

Because it's a love story and there's hardly much love around these days. I think people are sick of divisiveness, hate-mongering, disasters, war, loss; and need and want a reminder that sometimes love comes along that is strong and permanent, and that it can happen to anyone.

Do you think straight men will watch this movie?

They are watching this movie. Of course, why wouldn't they watch it? Straight men fall in love. Not necessarily with each other or with a Gay man. My son-in-law, who prides himself on being a Bud-drinking, NRA-member redneck, liked the movie so much, he went to it twice. Straight men are seeing it, and they're not having

any problem with it. The only people who would have problems with it are people who are very insecure about themselves and their own sexuality and who would be putting up a defense, and that's usually young men who haven't figured things out yet. Jack and Ennis would probably have trouble with this movie.

Do you think Jack and Ennis will come back?

They're not coming back. There's no way. They're going to stay where they are. I've got other things to write.

[Brokeback Mountain will premiere at the Loft Cinema (loftcinema.com, 3233 E. Speedway, Friday, Jan 13., and will be in more cinemas across Tucson the following week. For more information about the movie, go online to brokebackmountain.com.]



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POLITICS 2005

by Mark R. Kerr

Had Enough?

In the past twelve months, it has been reported that the Bush Crime Family and its GOP Culture of Congressional Corruption have (citing just a few of their many transgressions):

Overruled the federal Voting Rights Act in the case of Georgia's redistricting, as well as the state's law requiring photo identification for voting. Dubya's Justice Department also approved for Arizona with its similar plan known as Proposition 200;

Secretly spied on Americans and groups (straight and Gay) without merit or warrants, violating the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, for which Dubya said he will continue to authorize;

Monitored calls made from the U.S. to other countries, with the support of the phone companies;

Compiled information without merit or warrant, on all Internet activity, including E-mails made by American citizens and put pressure on the mainstream media to not publish stories, acting as the "Censor and Chief," about spying, phone-taps and monitoring of the Internet and E-mails, a violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution;

Slashed funding for healthcare programs for veterans, the poor, the infirmed, senior citizens and for HIV/AIDS research and medicine to pay for their excesses, Culture of Corruption and failed their unilateral invasion of Iraq;

Required more abstinence-based federal programs, dealing with sex, sexuality, and STD's, including HIV/AIDS, that have been proven not to work while the number of new cases of HIV rise, especially among young people, age 15-24;

Giving tax credits to the pharmaceutical industry while allowing more Americans to not have health insurance, now totaling 45-million, and changing the nation's bankruptcy laws

so that medical emergencies aren't "as excuse;"

Gutted the will of local government officials and the people, by overruling local anti-discrimination ordinances by allowing groups which discriminate access to public facilities with all the benefits; and,

Began yet again, the politically convenient movement to make a group of people: working, voting, taxpaying citizens, have second class status, with the proposed federal constitutional amendment, first known as the Federal Marriage Amendment and now reconstituted as the Marriage Protection Amendment.

In Arizona, the GOP controlled state Legislature, in 2005, let measures defining "marriage," despite ARS 25-101 and ARS 25-112, allowing guns in government buildings, on school grounds and in taverns see the light of day while bills expanding the state's hate crimes statutes to include misdemeanor offenses, creating a domestic partner registry, allowing for the accurate information about HIV/AIDS to be presented in the schools are quashed.

Meanwhile in the Grand Canyon State this year was the start of the petition drive, led by Gawd's, GOP Gubernatorial Candidate, Lynden Munsil, and the Center for Arizona Policy, to bar recognition of same-sex marriage, civil unions and domestic partnerships, as well as the extension of benefits, medical or otherwise, to only families consisting of a "husband and wife," citing several of the many draconian provisions of their proposed Protect Marriage Arizona amendment (PMAA).

Had enough? As the clock, including the "leap second" strikes midnight and the Times Square Ball hits bottom marking the proverbial beginning of a new year, get involved and change things so that the new year doesn't become "1984."

Lean Body Mass May Lower Prostate Cancer Risk

SAN FRANCISCO - A high lean body mass—calculated using an equation to determine body mass minus the fat—may lower the risk of prostate cancer, a new study indicates, reported Reuters on Advocate.com.

Prostate cancer is a hormone-related disease affected by a variety of other factors including genetics, age, ethnicity, and family history. In the last few years, researchers started to suspect that body size might also affect the risk of prostate cancer, but research has provided conflicting results. Most studies investigated body mass index, but this index includes lean and fat tissue, which may have different influences on the risk of cancer.

In an attempt to settle things, John S. Witte from the University of California, San Francisco, and his colleagues conducted a study of 439 men with prostate cancer and 479 of their siblings without prostate cancer.

They examined the effects of weight, height, body mass index, and lean body mass, which they thought might be more relevant than body mass index to the risk of prostate cancer and aggressiveness of the disease.

The researchers found that the higher the lean body mass, the lower the risk of prostate cancer, especially in men with more aggressive disease or who were older when their cancer was diagnosed. They also observed a similar, though weaker, inverse pattern for weight, but found no associations between risk of prostate cancer and body mass index or height. The investigators suspect that the inverse associations between higher lean body mass and prostate cancer risk may reflect the potentially protective effect of high levels of the male hormone androgen in patients with high lean body mass on the development and progression of prostate cancer.



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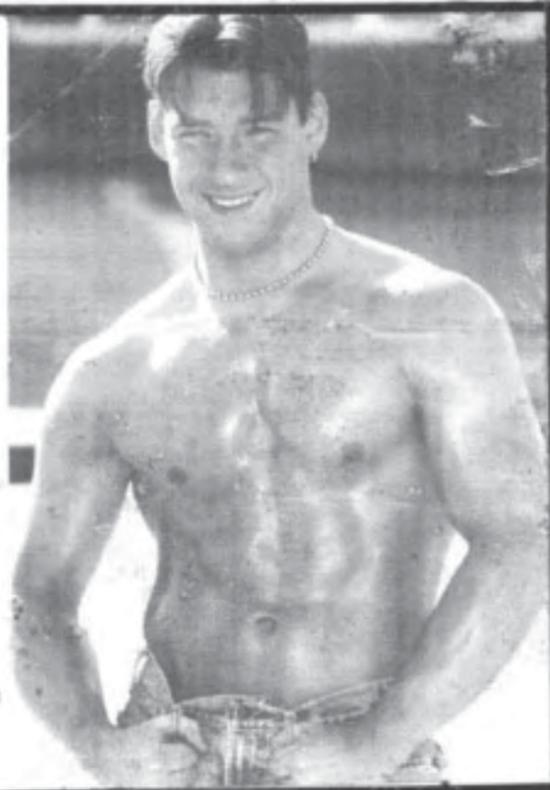
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Wedding Banned

Continued from Page Three

To be sure, religious ceremonies abound in Massachusetts, but to this day, the clergy solemnize marriage merely as agents of the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts court ruling on same-sex marriage was understood as a civil matter. And so the Massachusetts justices concluded, based on the state's history, that same-sex marriage is a civil rights issue, as marriage there has been treated since 1621.

Like many conservatives, Cox misapprehends democratic principles, which holds that similarly situated people should be similarly treated by law, when he writes that same-sex marriage proponents "pursued undemocratic means" in that "they turned to the courts," that, "predictably, the [Massachusetts] court's usurpation of legislative power was cloaked in the conceit of protecting minority rights." But then, risking whiplash, Cox oddly allows: "It is true that our constitutions protect minority as well as majority rights."

Go figure. Gay people have seen this incoherent, truculent blathering from the crank outposts of the right before, a blathering that in essence merely seeks to enshrine the status quo. Gay people saw it in the fight to topple long-established laws sanctioned by church and society that outlawed interracial marriage. Watch the code words at play—and watch how you don't hear about this "tradition" in the current fight against same-sex marriage. In *Loving v. Virginia*, a married, interracial couple was arrested in Virginia and faced up to five years in prison. The state court upheld their conviction because it found interracial relationships to be "unnatural," as the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund notes. Justices who sought to overturn "miscegenation" laws were also vilified as interfering, activist judges who wanted to usurp the will of the majority as championed by Strom Thurmond and George Wallace. If it weren't for these justices, the Plessy "separate but equal" Supreme Court ruling of 1896, (which even the now deceased Chief Justice, William H. Rehnquist, had at one time supported) would still be enshrined in the law, and segregation would be rampant throughout American society.

As a practical matter, there are plenty of things that American society has lived with for decades that are not codified in the Constitution, such as Congressional districts, political parties, executive orders, even the right to travel and marriage itself. So why carve out a marriage amendment? Cox is right to say that, were Congress to ratify a marriage amendment, it would unleash on the country the worst kind of judicial activism. By putting marriage under the purview of the federal government, judges would be given the power to nullify anything they don't like in straight marriages, including divorce, child custody, adoption, visitation rights, even medical decisions made by families.

However, people who think the movie "The Exorcism of Emily Rose" is a documentary will never see that Gay marriage is a social gain and a steadying influence in society. They'll never see that Gay relationships are not going to go away. They'll

never see that the act of entwining the Bible with the Constitution can bring to fruition a weapon of prejudice. They'll never see that being Gay is not a lifestyle choice, but being ignorant is. One thing opponents of same-sex marriage can't argue with, in fact, they remain miserably, consciously silent about, is the unequal protection in the law of Gay people who seek to live in monogamous, committed relationships. The Government Accountability Office says there are some 1,049 federal benefits that come with marriage, benefits that Gay couples cannot avail themselves of, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) points out.

Opponents of same-sex marriage will continue to willfully ignore the massive tax gouging the government does to Gay people. And although Gay tax overpayments support all sorts of social welfare programs like child welfare, Gay people can't become foster parents or adopt children in many states, as the Alliance for Same-Sex Marriage notes. Gay tax overpayments also support the military, even though Gay soldiers are discharged and refused military benefits if they violate the "don't ask, don't tell policy," the Alliance adds.

But what opponents of same-sex marriage should see clearly is that, by objecting to same-sex marriage rights, they are battling their own conservative interests. For one, although conservatives, notably libertarians, are vehemently opposed to government meddling of any kind, they are silent about the fact that it is simply not the government's business to decide whom a person should legally marry. Also, Gay marriages fasten down family values—of constancy, responsibility and tolerance. Opponents of same-sex marriage like to argue that only straight marriages will secure the care of children, that only straight marriages will fortify families who in turn will help themselves, rather than look for taxpayer-financed hand-outs from the government.

But that ignores the fact that upwards of a third of Gay couples now have children (a percentage now rising), children who need the basic support systems that government-recognized marriages confer. Marriage bestows civil protections for these children, in the event of a parent's sudden death or illness. Without it, the government often must step in and support them. Nothing could be less conservative.

[Elizabeth MacDonald is an award-winning writer with *Forbes Magazine*. MacDonald is a regular on the Fox News channel's show, *Forbes on Fox* and has also appeared as a guest on *The O'Reilly Factor*, *The Greta Van Susteren Show*, CNN, *Cspan*, *Court TV*, *CNBC*, *The Today Show* and *CBS This Morning*.]



Hotel Cancels 'Mr. Hetro' Contest

WORCESTER - The Reverend Thomas Crouse still plans to hold his "Mr. Heterosexual Massachusetts" contest in February—he just won't be doing it at the Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center in the town of Worcester, the local newspaper reported Monday (Dec. 19), reported Advocate.com.

"They told me it was breach of contract because [the facility] was rented to the Holland Congregation Church and I am holding the event," Crouse told the Worcester Telegram & Gazette. He is blaming local Gay rights groups for the cancellation but says the show will go on with the help of God. Officials at the hotel had no comment.

Gay activists have criticized the show because it will feature a speaker who claims he was "turned" from Gay to straight because "he was freed through the blood of Jesus Christ," Crouse told the newspaper. He is calling the contest a "fun event."

Indianapolis Bans Discrimination Against LGBT People

INDIANAPOLIS - The Indianapolis city council on Monday night (Dec. 19) narrowly approved a measure banning discrimination against Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender people in housing, employment, and public accommodations, Advocate.com reported.

After the same measure failed last April on an 18-11 vote, three

UPDATE

Democrats and one Republican changed course, resulting in a 15-14 vote to enact the pro-Gay protections. A controversial proposal about merging the city's police force also passed Monday after failing earlier this year, prompting opponents of both measures to accuse council members of vote trading. Hailing the vote as a symbolic victory, the Gay rights group Human Rights Campaign and the state Gay organization Indiana Equality didn't question the council members' motives. "Indianapolis is another great example of a city in the middle of America that is moving the country closer to equality and fairness for all Americans," said HRC president Joe Solmonese.

City and state government hiring policies already include such protections for Gays, but the new measure will apply to any business with six or more employees, excluding religious institutions and certain non-profits.

Victim Of Homophobic Bullying Wins \$440,000 Settlement

KANSAS CITY - A Kansas teenager who was bullied by his classmates because they believed he was Gay was awarded \$440,000 in a settlement, ending his longstanding legal battle with the Tonganoxie School District, his lawyer said, reported the

Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

Dylan Theno, 18, sued the district in May 2004, claiming he was harassed with homophobic slurs from the seventh grade until he quit school in his junior year. The settlement, reached Thursday, halts further appeals in the case, which has been presented in courts in Kansas and Colorado, said Theno's lawyer, Arthur Benson. Under the terms of the settlement, the school district and its insurance company will pay Theno \$440,000, which will also be used to pay his legal fees, Benson said. Theno had testified that he is not Gay.

"I expect this case will have profound effects nationwide in dealing with schoolyard bullying and harassment," said Benson. "Insurance companies will have a very powerful economic incentive to see that districts' anti-harassment policies are aggressive and effective."

Theno, who recently earned his GED and attends a vocational technical school in Kansas City, Kan., said he was surprised by the settlement. "I feel great," he said. "I mean, you have all that lifted off your shoulders at once. The school district has finally been held accountable for their actions." Repeated calls to the school district and to the district's attorney, Steven Pigg, were not immediately returned. The Theno family's suit claimed the harassment from other students was so severe and unbearable that Dylan was forced to leave school.

The Cost Of G/L Rights

AUGUSTA - Gay rights supporters outspent opponents by a 3-to-1 margin during this year's (2005) campaign over a statewide Gay rights law, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

Maine Won't Discriminate, the group that successfully derailed an attempt to repeal the state's Gay rights law, spent a total of \$1.1 million for its campaign, according to filings with the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices. That was nearly three times what the Maine Grassroots Coalition and the Coalition for Marriage, a political arm of the Christian Civic League of Maine, spent on their campaigns to repeal the law. Combined, they spent just short of \$412,000, according to spending documents filed with the state. Mainers in November voted 55-45 percent against repealing the law, which makes discrimination based on sexual orientation illegal in employment, housing, credit, public accommodations and education.

Paul Madore of the Maine Grassroots Coalition said that supporters of the repeal effort were simply outspent, especially in getting out the vote. "All of these things add up to votes, and in the end we had to realize they had more marbles than us," said Madore.

Gay rights supporters far outspent opponents in the final days of the campaign, according to finance reports. Maine Won't Discriminate raised about \$200,000 and spent more than \$300,000 between Oct. 28 and Dec. 13. That final push included an extensive television advertising buy and phone-banking operation designed to mobilize voters, according to Patricia Peard, the group's treasurer.

Madore said his group is now preparing for a fight over Gay marriage. "It will come as sure as night follows day," Madore said, predicting a push for same-sex unions in the near future. Gay rights advocates have dismissed any imminent plans to pursue such unions.

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Town Government Refuses To Budge On Dying Lesbian Cop's Last Wish



TOMS RIVER - Ocean County's Board of Freeholders is refusing to change its position in denying a cancer-stricken law enforcement officer her final wish - to have the board recognize her same-sex relationship so that her partner will get her death benefits, 365Gay.com.

Lt. Laurel Hester, 49, a 23-year investigator for the Ocean County Prosecutor's office is fighting lung cancer and has less than six-months to live. She wants the county to pass a resolution, as provided for by New Jersey's 18-month-old Domestic Partners Act, to extend pension and health care benefits to the Gay partners. Hester fears that without her \$13,000 death benefit, partner Stacie Andree will be forced to sell the house they now share after Hester dies.

Last month more than 100 Gay rights advocates, led by Garden State Equality, demonstrated to protest Ocean County's refusal to pass

the resolution. But while Ocean County is turning its back on Hester her plight has attracted the attention of other communities in New Jersey. Thursday night Monmouth County freeholders, by a 4-to-0 vote with one absence, approved pension benefits for the domestic partners of county employees.

Monmouth became the third county, along with Mercer and Union Counties, to vote to provide such benefits since Hester's situation became public. In all five counties in the Garden State provide such benefits. The others are Hudson and Bergen.

Garden State Equality said in a statement that it won't stop fighting the Ocean County freeholders. "Given how she has inspired other counties to do the right thing, Lieutenant Laurel Hester will be remembered as a civil rights hero for the ages," the group said in a statement.

Mapplethorpe Exhibit Opens In Cuba



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Spanish Prime Minister Named Person Of The Year



Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero

addition to the traditional selection from the editors, this year PlanetOut opened its online polls to let the millions of visitors to its flagship Web sites Gay.com and PlanetOut.com cast their votes.

Zapatero successfully championed marriage rights for same-sex couples in his country. Brokeback Mountain, a love story of two cowboys, is being hailed as a cultural breakthrough.

Said PlanetOut Inc. news director Tom Musbach: "2005 has been another decisive year in LGBT history and culture. The fact that our editorial team and our members chose different honorees suggests a wide range of very deserving, influential candidates this year. LGBT people are obviously inspired by the contributions of both Brokeback Mountain and Prime Minister Zapatero as signs of positive change for our future."

NEW YORK - Spanish prime minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero and the team behind Brokeback Mountain were named winners of the fifth annual PlanetOut Inc. Person of the Year awards on Wednesday (Dec. 21), reported Advocate.com.

The awards recognize the people that most profoundly impacted the lives of LGBT people in 2005, with nominees coming from politics, film, television, music, travel, business, fashion, and sport. In



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LGBT Community Brings The Spirit Of Giving To Homeless Youth Project

TUCSON - This holiday season, as many as 1.3 million young people are homeless or near_homeless across the United States. In Pima County, a recent study indicated that 15 _ 20% of these youth (about one of every 5) are LGBT.

The Eon Youth Program, which is a collaborative program of Wingspan, the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation, the Pima County Health Department, and CODAC, sees many of these LGBT homeless youth every day, as they drop in to the youth lounge for support, referrals, food, warmth, and hygiene supplies_ or, in some cases, simply a warm, safe place for a few hours. Especially during the winter months, the things that many people take for granted_ such as a warm meal, a jacket, and safe transportation_ are things that many LGBT youth are hoping for every day.

This winter, LGBT community members are stepping up to ensure that these homeless LGBT youth get the support that they deserve. The Cunningham Foundation recently donated hundreds of dollars worth of hygiene supplies, food, and other

essentials to the Eon Homeless Youth Project. And one family, Steve Sampson, Kirk Thomas, and Randy Shantz, also remembered the LGBT homeless youth with an enormous donation of supplies, bus passes, and other essentials.

"This is a wonderful thing for our family to get excited about," said Kirk Thomas. "It makes our holiday happier to do this work."

Garrett Dangerfield has also made Eon a regular stop on his errand route. Garrett has supplied the homeless youth program with food and hygiene supplies regularly since he moved to Tucson last year.

Courtney Jones, Eon's Homeless Youth Outreach Specialist, works with the homeless youth every day, and explained that these donations make a real difference in the lives of homeless and near homeless youth. In addition to providing necessary supplies, this generosity demonstrates to youth that they have not been forgotten_ and that the LGBT community cares about them.



Wingspan's youth programs coordinator JC Olson selects hygiene and other basic supplies for LGBT homeless youth. The Cunningham Foundation purchased hundreds of dollars of supplies for EON this holiday sseasons.



EON staff JC Olson and Courtney Jones accept generous donations from the Cunningham Foundation to help LGBT homeless youth.



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Elton John Ties Knot With Longtime Partner David Furnish

LONDON - Pop star Sir Elton John tied the knot with longtime partner David Furnish Wednesday (Dec. 21) in a civil union ceremony seen as a watershed in the struggle for Gay rights—and as the party of the season by celebrity-spotters, reported the Associated Press on Advocate.com.

Fans turned up before sunrise in the cobbled streets around Windsor, England's town hall, the Guildhall, where Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles wed in April. John and Furnish strode into the building for the ceremony at about 10:50 a.m., pausing briefly to smile and wave at the cameras. "It's a special day for Elton. I want to be a part of it, really—it's good fun and it's interesting to see what's going on," said Andrea Lever, who traveled 200 miles from Torquay in southwest England for the event. Suzi Uprichard, 33, of Maidenhead, was excited to take part in what she described as a historic day for same-sex couples. "It's a long time coming, really," Uprichard said. "Admittedly, it's Elton and David's day, but it's the first day that Gay couples can engage in civil ceremonies in...England. So I think it's something to celebrate."

Police erected security barriers outside the sturdy building of brick and Portland stone partly designed by Christopher Wren, but they expected no trouble. Relaxed officers, some on horseback, chatted with photographers, who stood four and five deep on the streets outside the Guildhall. "It's not a major police operation—it's not a royal wedding," Windsor police spokeswoman Sue Mahoney said. "The general atmosphere seems to be jolly, very good-humored." Fans got into the spirit of the event with posters featuring the couple and Queen Elizabeth II, who has a castle in Windsor, a centuries-old seat of British royalty west of London. A nearby shop wished the couple well with a hand-painted sign reading, "Go for it."

John and Furnish are the most prominent of hundreds of same-sex couples who were planning to form civil partnerships in England and Wales on Wednesday, the first day that such ceremonies become possible. Ceremonies were held earlier this week in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Three couples signed their documents moments after the register



office opened at 8 a.m. in Brighton, the south coast city known as the United Kingdom's Gay capital. "I'm really excited! I'm very happy to be one of the first," said Gino Meriano, who was with his partner, Mike Ullett.

Gay rights activists see the unions as joyous—and important in advancing efforts to give same-sex couples the same rights as heterosexuals. Peter Tatchell, spokesman for the Gay rights group OutRage! said the wedding "would raise the profile of Gay love and commitment." "Their same-sex civil partnership ceremony will be reported all over the world, including in countries where news about Gay issues is normally never reported," he said. "This will give hope to millions of isolated, vulnerable Lesbian and Gay people, especially those living in repressive and homophobic countries."

The new law—passed last year despite some opposition from Parliament's unelected House of Lords—allows civil ceremonies that will give same-sex couples the same social security, tax, pension, and inheritance rights as married couples.

John and Furnish acknowledged that their ceremony might have broader ramifications. "As far as I'm concerned, I've always considered myself committed to Elton, and he's the person that I want to spend the rest of my life with. So in that sense I don't feel like the dynamic of our relationship is going to change," Furnish told Attitude magazine. "But from a social standpoint, I think it's hugely significant. It is a major, major change. It is one of the defining issues of our times."

NOTES FROM THE FOR-REAL SIDE

Crisis Time

by Lee Thorn

The Bush Administration has created a Constitutional crisis that the media and the politicians would dearly love to ignore. We are living in interesting times.

For those of you who slept through your government, history or political science classes, a Constitutional crisis arises when a branch of government refuses to have its powers limited by the Constitution. To understand why that creates a crisis, one first needs to appreciate the fundamental nature of our government.

We are a constitutional democracy. That means that, even if you win an election by a landslide and people are writing songs about you, your powers as an elected official are limited by the fundamental document that originally legitimized the government.

In the case at hand, Bush's power to spy on Americans was limited by the need to get judicial authorization for the spying. The idea of getting authorization is an aspect of what's called "checks and balances," the system of one branch of government reviewing the actions of another to prevent those actions from becoming corrupt.

When Bush said that he'd been spying on Americans without judicial authorization and that he would continue the practice, he set himself above the Constitution. It's interesting that he didn't claim he couldn't have gotten judicial authorization to do the spying he wanted to do. He simply asserted his right to do it without authorization.

Although he didn't explain why his actions were necessary, Bush did give some justifications for them that are just pathetic: He said we shouldn't worry about his breaking the law because he was sworn to uphold the law. Is that Orwellian or what?

He said we shouldn't worry about his breaking the law because congress knew what he was doing. Presumably, under Bush's theory of jurisprudence, it's okay for a robber to stick a gun in your face and take your money if he says, "Of course you realize that I'm robbing you."

He said we shouldn't worry about his breaking the law because congress authorized it. I suppose it will come as a shock to him to learn that congress has no authority to permit the president to violate the Constitution. There is a very arduous procedure by

which congress can begin the process of amending the Constitution. There is no procedure that enables congress to say, "Mr. President, don't worry about it."

None of the above will come as news to anyone with even a vague familiarity with the law or with American government. Unfortunately, the vast majority of Americans lack even a vague familiarity with the law or with American government.

The big question now is, "Why are the media and the politicians pretty much playing dumb about all this instead of indignantly screaming bloody murder?" You might not be surprised that I have a theory.

If the public doesn't understand what's going on, if we don't understand what's at stake here, if we don't see that Bush is attempting to move us from a constitutional democracy to some sort of popular dictatorship, then he may well get away with it. As respected a news source as CNN said today that the issue is one of how much privacy Americans are willing to give up for more security. That's utter nonsense and CNN knows it. Bear in mind that no one has claimed that Bush couldn't have gotten the judicial authorizations he needed.

The issue isn't privacy versus security; the issue is Constitutionally limited power versus unlimited power. And that brings me to my theory of why the press and the pols are tiptoeing around so very carefully. If you unsuccessfully oppose someone who's going for unlimited power, the next phone that's going to be tapped will probably be yours.

Do I think that the big news guys and the big politicians could possibly be that craven? Do you really have to ask?

All of this comes at a time when the war in Iraq is falling apart. All the nonsense that's been spouted and spouted is finally being seen through. Political defections from Bush's irrational blather on the war are strongly and momentarily anticipated. What better time could there be for a president to threaten potential critics? What better threat could there be than, "I can tap your phones any damn time I want to?"

[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.]

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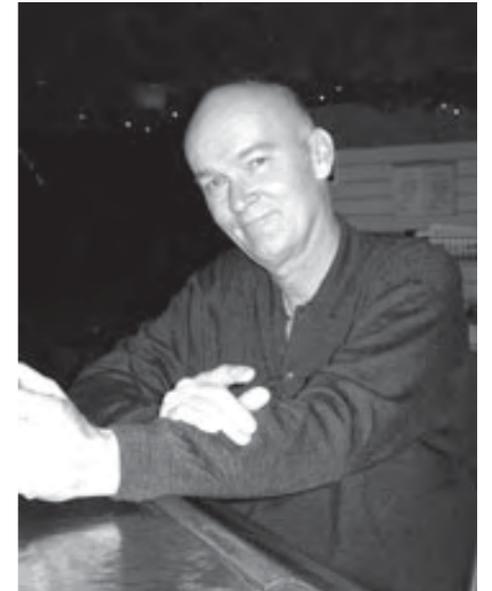
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Non Bar Calendar

Wednesday, December 28

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Join Jack for an evening of Canasta. If you don't know how to play, they'll teach you-and it's a very relaxed atmosphere. For directions and reservations, please call Jack at 887-3736.

Thursday, December 29

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

Saturday, December 31

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

Tuesday, January 3

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, January 4

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Join Karol for Canasta. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call Karol at 744-9017.

Thursday, January 5

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 1:00 p.m. Karol hosts a Lunch Out at Furr's Family Dining (on Oracle between Limberlost & Wetmore location). For reservations 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. Join the men of MSN for Coffee Night out at Rainbow Planet Coffee House. This is a chance to have a cup of coffee and chat with the men of MSN. This is a No-host event, so please ask Barista to point you in our direction.

Friday, January 6

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, January 7

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed): 7:00 p.m. We invite you to join us for our monthly Pot Luck dinner and to get to know the nice guys of MSN. It's a nice, safe setting in which to meet new men and greet old friends. While reservations are not necessary, please call Robert at 400-1376 for location and directions.

#2 If you would like to donate your gently used items to the MSN Auction at our February 4th Auction/Pot Luck, please contact Jack at home at 887-3736 or 745-8844 at work. He will store and if needed, pick up the articles from MSN members.

Tuesday, January 10

1 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.

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

7:00 p.m. Karol hosts Bridge Night. If you don't know how to play, they'll teach you-and it's a very relaxed atmosphere. For reservations and directions, please call Karol at 744-9017.

Wednesday, January 11

#1 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 7:00

p.m. Join Jack for an evening of Canasta. If you don't know how to play, they'll teach you-and it's a very relaxed atmosphere. For directions and reservations, please call Jack at 887-3736.

#2 If you would like to donate your gently used items to the MSN Auction at our February 4th Auction/Pot Luck, please contact Jack at home at 887-3736 or 745-8844 at work. He will store and if needed, pick up the articles from MSN members.

Thursday, January 12

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

Friday, January 13

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

Saturday, January 14

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.

Sunday, January 15

Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed: 10:00 a.m. Merlin & Bo host a Hike on Pontatoc Trail. There will be a choice of 2 trails, one strenuous and the other a bit easier. Bring lunch, water and dust off those ol' hiking boots. For more information, including carpooling and directions, call Merlin at 207-5336

Tuesday, January 17

#1 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.

#2 Men's Social Network (open to men of all ages; newcomers welcomed):7:00 p.m. Join Karol for an evening of Dinner and a Movie; "Grumpy Old Men". For details and directions, please call Karol at 744-9017.

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12th Stop:

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Friday December 16
Time: 7 pm – 10 pm

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Monday	12:30 – 3:30 P.M.
Tuesday	8:00 – 10:30 A.M.
Tues.	12:30 – 3:30 P.M.
Wednesday	12:30 – 3:30 P.M.
Thursday	4:00 – 6:30 P.M.
Friday	12:30 – 3:30 P.M.

HOROSCOPES

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Maurading Mars redirects this week, sending our great efforts in a different, more successful direction. We can do no wrong. Well most of us any way. But will you fool Santa?

ARIES (MAR. 21 - APR. 20)
Gay Rams have been terrible spend-thrifts, squandering their wealth by following foolish tangents and on worthless trinkets. (No names please!) And yet it has been fun, hasn't it? Gain some new fiscal insights and maximize your largess into something even larger for the new year. Make every penny spend like a dollar. Will you become well endowed? Ho ho ho.

TAURUS (APR. 21 - MAY 21)
Mars catapults you right into the center of the festivities whether you want to or not. It just seems that no matter how much queer Bulls try to hide, the spotlight seems to seek them out. Good thing. Why not go with the flow and see where all this jolly activity takes you. Begin new projects now; enthusiasm alone makes even a lousy idea seem radiantly inspirational.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)
Pink Twins empty out their closet with a grand flourish. It's time to turn over a new leaf and dump that smelly baggage. Resolve to sweep out the old and hearken in the true new lavender you in time for the new year. And while you are at it, increase your karma by volunteering for a good Gay cause (is the any other?). And yes, you can be both naughty and nice.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)
Friends and large social groups provide the impetus for change and fun. Will you be tempted? Mars makes even quiet pink Crabs part of the rousing action. So don't play shy and retiring. Join in the holiday revelry and and hang your mistletoe all around town. I suspect you'll not only join in the festivities but will also be elected grand marshall... or is it merry elf?

LEO (JULY 24 - AUG. 23)
Your career suddenly shifts from reverse into high gear this week thanks to direct Mars. It is a great time to make a great first impression on all the senior corporate sharks. Proud Lions usually like to play their politics according to their own rules. Sometimes you win and sometimes you lose with this method. If you take calculated risks now, you rule the forest later. Grrrr.

VIRGO (AUG. 24 - SEPT. 23)
Queer Virgins hanker to take a vacation to warmer climes or embark on a great global exploration as Mars redirects. You are restless and itchy. Wherever you decide to scratch to get out of your usual skin, make it manageable by planning it carefully before embarking. It saves time, energy and money and we know that all Virgos love that! Is that Santa in those speedos?

LIBRA (SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)
Is it getting hot in here? Melt the snow as Mars redirects and spikes your sexy sizzle. Gay Libras have been fairly sedate and quiet lately. Now unleash your animal magnetism in time to unwrap and show off your gifts. You can attract a bevy of desirable

lovers but choose carefully and wisely. You don't want to be just another sock hanging by the fireplace. Or do you?

SCORPIO (OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)
Make the most out of relationships when Mars redirects. Proud Scorps give partners everything they want and more this holiday season. You have the inspiration and the impetus to make dreams come true so be generous and magnanimous. Remember the more you give the more you will (eventually) receive. That alone should be a tempting reason to be good.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)
Queer Archers conquer the workplace when Mars redirects. Your power of concentration makes you a force with whom to be reckoned. Plot and plan your way out of a particularly dreary job. Tis the season to be healthy. Mars can also inspire you to buff your bod in preparation for summer or for those intimate apres ski evenings bobbing for rubber ducks in the hot tub.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)
Mars now lifts the curtain on your interpretative performance to an adoring audience. It's holiday party time! How much fun can one pink Cap have? I suppose it depends upon how much fun you feel you deserve. Don't sit home and wait for Santa to drop in. Kick up the rug at a pride dance or tap into your Gay muse and create a masterpiece. Do hanging balls and tinsel count?

AQUARIUS (JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)
Mars won't let you get stuck in your old routine. Aqueerians now demand change and improvement in their lives. Good. This is an excellent time to set things queer with family and prepare for new opportunities for the new year. No matter what, listen to your inner voice and don't take "no" for an answer. Compromise is not in the cards and life is too darn short.

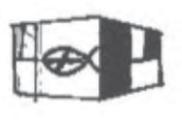
PISCES (FEB. 20 - MAR. 20)
Your speech packs a punch with loud, proud Mars. Even the most innocuous remarks have tremendous reverberations so choose your words with the proper care. Maybe it's time to get involved in a proactive community effort like planting trees or stoking political activism in the new year. Howdy neighbor; get involved! That's what we want for Christmas, Guppie.





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PERSONALS

LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO SHARE MY LIFE. G.W.M. Retired motorcycle cop. I'm a mentor. Successful, Hardworking, Honest and Good Looking. Write to: P.O. Box 885, Tucson, AZ 85702 1126

SERVICES

SENSUOUS/EROTIC MEN'S FULL BODY MASSAGE. Experienced Therapist. Satisfaction guaranteed., Tucson's Be\$t Deal. \$45/hr. Evenings/Weekends only. John 327-3135 1119

TENSE? STRESSED OUT? Relax for an hour with a full body rub by Frank. Private studio, off-street parking. 548-7019 days, evenings.

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

sunday

COLORS - Open 11am - 11pm Champagne Brunch 11am - 2pm with choice of complimentary mimosa, Bloody Mary or Screwdriver. Happy Hour 4-7pm \$3 skyy Cocktails, \$2.25 Domestic and half price appetizers. Full menu served 2-10pm. Nightly dinner specials. Live music from Bob Feldhaus during Brunch (11:30-2:30) & Dickie Steede during dinner (6:30-9:30)

HOWL AT THE MOON -Open at 11am. Kitchen open until 9pm. Watch the NFL here! \$1.00 Jumbo Hot Dogs, \$2 Chili Dogs. Free Texas Hold'em Poker Tournaments at 4 and 7pm. Sign-up begins one hour before playing time. No Cash - Play for Prizes and Points. Great chance to learn the hottest game around

IBT's - Troy's Recovery Bar noon-4pm. 4-7:30 Karaoke on the patio. Benefit B-B-Q for the Pride Parade 5:30-7:30 and dance with DJ Mike Lopez 9pm to close.

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

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

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

monday

COLORS - Closed on Mondays

HOWL AT THE MOON -Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Kitchen open 4-9 pm with reduced prices on appetizers - best deal in town! Free Texas Hold-Em Poker Tournaments at 6:00 pm and 9:00 pm. Sign-up begins one hour before playing time. No Cash - Play for Prizes and Points.

IBT's -Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, DJ Craig Carter 10pm-2am \$1.50 well vodka drinks, All drink specials not available during special events.

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

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

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

tuesday

COLORS - Open 4-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7 \$2 Skyy cocktails, \$2.25 Domestic and half-price appetizers. Full menu served until 10pm.

HOWL AT THE MOON -Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Tequila Tuesday: \$2.00 well margaritas, 50¢ off call tequilas. Kitchen open 4-9pm. Karaoke with Debbie from 8 - midnight

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, Tropical Tuesdays \$2.50 Tropical drinks and DJ Craig Carter playing Retro Music 70's, 80's and 90's 9pm-close.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Spaghetti Nite (2nd Tuesday every month \$2.00).

WOODY'S - Open 10am w/Special Happy Hour til 2pm \$1.50 well or domestic longneck. Regular Happy Hour 2-8. 80s Nite 9-close. \$1 off to those wearing 80s concert T-shirt. (Excludes draught & schnapps).

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

wednesday

COLORS - Open 4-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$3 Skyy cocktails, \$2.25 Domestic and half-price appetizers Full menu served 4-10pm. Nightly dinner specials.

HOWL AT THE MOON -Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Free Pool all day. Draught Beer Specials all day. Kitchen open 4-9pm.

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

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

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

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

thursday

COLORS - Open 4-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$2 Skyy cocktails, \$2.25 Domestic and half-price appetizers. Full menu served 4-10pm. Nightly dinner specials.

HOWL AT THE MOON -Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. \$2.00 Mexican Beers all day. Kitchen open 4-9pm. Karaoke with Debbie from 8 to midnight.

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

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio open 6pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Pool Tourney 7pm. \$3 entry. Special prices for players. Steak Nite (4th Thursday of each month). Bring your own or get it here \$6.00.

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

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

friday

COLORS - Open 4pm-1am. Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$2 Skyy cocktails, \$2.25 Domestic and half-price appetizers. Full menu served 4-11pm. Nightly Dinner Specials. 6:30-9:30pm. "Hot Jazz, Cool Martinis" with Susan Artemis 10pm "Guys & Dolls" hosted by Lucinda Holliday. Reservations suggested.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, \$2 well, domestic longnecks & pints, \$3 sm pitchers, \$5 lg pitchers. Line Dance Lessons 7:30 to 8:30 pm. DJ Pat plays your favorite country dance songs 8:30 to midnight then a mix of dance & country 'til close. Kitchen open 4-9pm.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm,, Hot Dance with DJ Mike Lopez 9pm-2am.

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

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

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

saturday

COLORS - Open 4pm-1am, Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$2 Skyy cocktails, \$2.25 Domestic and half-price appetizers Full menu served 4-11pm. Nightly dinner specials. Singer, piano player Marilyn Harris performs during dinner from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Reservations suggested.

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

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

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

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

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

CASINOS.

AVA AMPHITHEATER AT CASINO DEL SOL COMING ATTRACTIONS:(Box office 838-6700 -I-10 Exit Valencia West)

Feb. 26 - Brooks and Dunn (Tickets On Sale Now)

DESERT DIAMOND CASINO UPCOMING ATTRACTIONS: (Box office 393-2799 - I-19 & Pima Mine Road, Exit 80 - 7 minutes south of Tucson)

HARRAH'S AK-CHIN CASINO RESORTFrom Tucson take I-10 West to Queen Creek Road (Exit 164), turn left, drive 17 miles. Buses leave from Tucson daily. Call (520)743-4386..Ride freee and get cash. For more information 1-800-Harrahs or visit www.harrahs.com

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31

COLORS FOOD & SPIRITS - New Year's Eve "Black and White Ball". \$55 per person includes two well cocktails or domestics; appetizer, dinner, wine, dessert, champagne toast and party favors. 6pm: pianist Amiclar Guevara and Bassist Richard Shosie. 9pm: Improve comedy by "Not Burnt Out Just Unscrewed". 10pm: Stand-up comedian Kaynin Richardson, 10:30: Guys & Dolls Special Edition with Lucinda Holliday, Janee Starr & Veronica Halliwell. 11:30: Dancing with Johnny DJ.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open today from 2:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m. \$5.00 Cover starts at 8:00 p.m. includes a Light Buffet, Dancing beginning at 9:00 p.m., Party Favors, Balloon Drop, and Champagne at Midnight. Ring in the New Year here!

IBT'S - Fabulous New Year's Eve Party with No Cover!! 8:30 p.m. It's showtime with 'An Evening With Ajia Simone' hosted by Ajia with Bunny FuFu and Janee Starr. 10:00 Dance the New Year in with DJs spinning on the dance floor and also the patio. Champagne Toast at Midnight, Balloon Drop and More! No Cover!!

VENTURE-N - Bring the New Year in with Buster's Balloon Ball here! Champagne toast at midnight and party favors. No Cover

WOODY'S - Big New Year's Party here starting off with life jazz with Arthur Migliazza and a Buffet Dinner. Men of Phoenix strippers dance during the evening. Champagne Toast, party hats and favors. A mega Balloon drop. Special appearance by International Dance Diva Ms. Pepper MaShay singing her #1 hits "Dive in the Pool" from Queer As Folk, "I Got Pride" from Sex in the City and her newest hit "Beauty Shop". \$10.00 advance tickets available Dec. 15. \$15 at the door. Limited Tickets Available.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 2:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

VENTURE-N - Opens at 10:00 a.m.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 3

HOWL AT THE MOON - Beginning today and every Tuesday and Wednesday there will be Women-Only Texas Hold-Em Poker games beginning at 6:30 p.m.

...physical, verbal, sexual and psychological abuse, even isolation, intimidation, fear and economic abuse, all can be signs of **domestic violence** in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships. Don't kid yourself, anyone can be affected and it won't just go away. Do something about it. Call us.

Wingspan Anti-Violence Project 24-Hour Crisis Line

624-0348
1-800-553-9387

www.wingspan.org

NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

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

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

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

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

P.F.L.A.G. - Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays - is a support group available to anyone who has a son, daughter or friend who is Gay. Call 360-3795 or write P.O. Box 36264, Tucson, AZ 85740-6264. All replies confidential.

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

YOUNG AND GAY?

GLBT Youth 23 and under, meet every Saturday in Tucson for sharing, support and information. Meetings are held at 425 E. 7th Street from 3 to 4:30 pm. You are not alone. For more info call Wingspan, 624-1779.

The **TUCSON Chapter of PRIME TIMERS WORLDWIDE** invites Gay or Bisexual men and their admirers to join and share Prime Timers fellowship. We welcome mature men (and admirers) who wish to become involved with planned and future Prime Timers (TPT) activities. Meetings luncheons and dinners are held monthly. For dates, times and information call 743-0810, leave name and phone number. Tucsonpt@primetimersww.org

TUCSON GAY INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

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

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

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

WINGSPAN - Tucson's Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Community Center, 425 E. 7th St., offers support groups / info line / social events / library / meeting space. Volunteer Opportunities. Board meetings every 2nd Thursday (open to all), 6:00 p.m. Information 624-1779.

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

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

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

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

BEARS OF THE OLD PUEBLO - a social club for bears and bigger, more robust men (and of course, those who prefer their company). For more info, Call the Bears Hotline (520)790-5775 or write P.O. Box 43910, Tucson, AZ 85733-3910 of visit our website at www.botop.com All are welcome

to our general meetings/potlucks on the 2nd Friday of every month, at 3202 E. 1st St. (the "Ward 6" Office Bldg.) Just south of Speedway & East of Country Club. PotLuck Dinner begins at 6:30 and the monthly meeting follows at 7:15 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AA Meeting with HIV/AIDS focus, Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., Wingspan Annex, 425 E. 7th St. All alcoholics welcome.

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

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

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

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

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

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

TUCSON PRIDE, INC. (Formerly Tucson Lesbian and Gay Alliance - TLGA) meets on the second Tuesday at 845 S. Craycroft Road at 6pm. Tucson Pride events: Pride Week, Gay West and OUToberFEST. Inquiries about support groups and indi-

vidual needs should be directed to Wingspan and other local agencies listed here. For more information call 622-3200 or visit the TPI website at www.tucsonpride.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

9059 (Tucson) or Kim (602)534-6219 (Phoenix)

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

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

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

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

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

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

LIKE TO READ?

The Guys' Book Club (TGBC) invites new members to join us. The group meets once a month, on the 3rd Monday, at 6:30 p.m. Reading selections include Gay-themed novels, bios and other nonfiction. For location or more info, email Bryan at Bryansct@aol.com

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

LGBT BUDDHIST MEDITATION GROUP. Join us for two 20 minute silent sitting meditations, a reading from a Buddhist religious text and discussion. Bring a friend and a pillow or cushion. Meets every Sunday from 10:00 - 11:30am at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St.. Contact Sean Seeba at 622-8759 for more information.

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

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

MEN'S KINK DISCUSSION GROUP (Open to all who identify as male and are 18 or older) meets 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at Desert Dominion, 3843 E. 37th Street, Tucson, (Map available at www.desertdominion.org) For those who are kinky or just curious. No fee, contributions are appreciated, but not required.

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

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



LGBT Generation Gap

AMHERST - A generation gap as wide as a chasm divides younger and older Gays a think tank that deal with LGBT issues has found, 365Gay.com reported. Researchers at Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies say that the differences must be overcome.

Whether working specifically with LGBT youth groups or in other contexts, people from different age cohorts have very different experiences and beliefs that reflect the rapid changes over time in the treatment of LGBT people in families, workplaces, schools, and communities, the Institute says in a new report.

"In interviews with LGBT youth and adults, we found a noticeable gap in communications across generations," noted Dr. Glenda Russell, a co-author of the report. "LGBT adults tend to project their own experiences onto today's young people, when in fact the lives of today's young people are often quite different."

The study notes several examples of this generation gap. "Alternative proms" organized by LGBT adults for LGBT high school youth often seem to be designed to meet the needs of the adult organizers who missed their own proms rather than the needs of today's young people, the study found.

Adults tend to focus on the suffering and isolation of LGBT youth, even though many LGBT teens are actually doing well, Russell said. From the other direction, she said, young LGBT people sometimes complain that no one is doing anything about discrimination, apparently unaware of decades of prior activism by LGBT adults.

The challenge for the community is to turn these differences into opportunities for learning and growth the report says. Co-author Dr. Janis Bohan notes, "The good news is that both sides can learn from each other. LGBT adults should be willing to follow the lead of young people, and young LGBT people should be willing to use adults as mentors."

Young people often provide a fresh perspective on issues that is

both less constrained by past strategies for problem solving and less reliant on older-and perhaps incorrect-assumptions about the degree of homophobia, Bohan said.

Adults, on the other hand, have greater experience and resources and are more familiar with the historical roots of the LGBT movement. The study concludes that by virtue of growing up in so different a time, youth may often provide a fresh perspective on LGBT rights. But it also notes that adults often have greater experience and access to resources. It said that a number of youth-oriented initiatives in recent years have highlighted the need for LGBT communities to attend to "youth empowerment."

"Many have developed tools to assist in that process," the report said. "Employing their assistance will not only improve our work but also enact the prefigurative communication we are seeking."

George W. Bush Voted Villain Of The Year

NEW YORK - The public approval rating for U.S. President George W. Bush has been hitting all-time lows lately, so it may be no surprise that Gay.com and PlanetOut members voted overwhelmingly to name him Villain of the Year for 2005.

Pope Benedict XVI finished in second place, ahead of six runners-up, who are featured on the following slides.

George Bush has been a perennial foe for many LGBT Americans. His choices this year for the Supreme Court vacancies troubled many. His funding proposals for the domestic HIV/AIDS crisis are weak, and his continued emphasis on abstinence approaches to HIV prevention and education have insulted countless LGBT people.

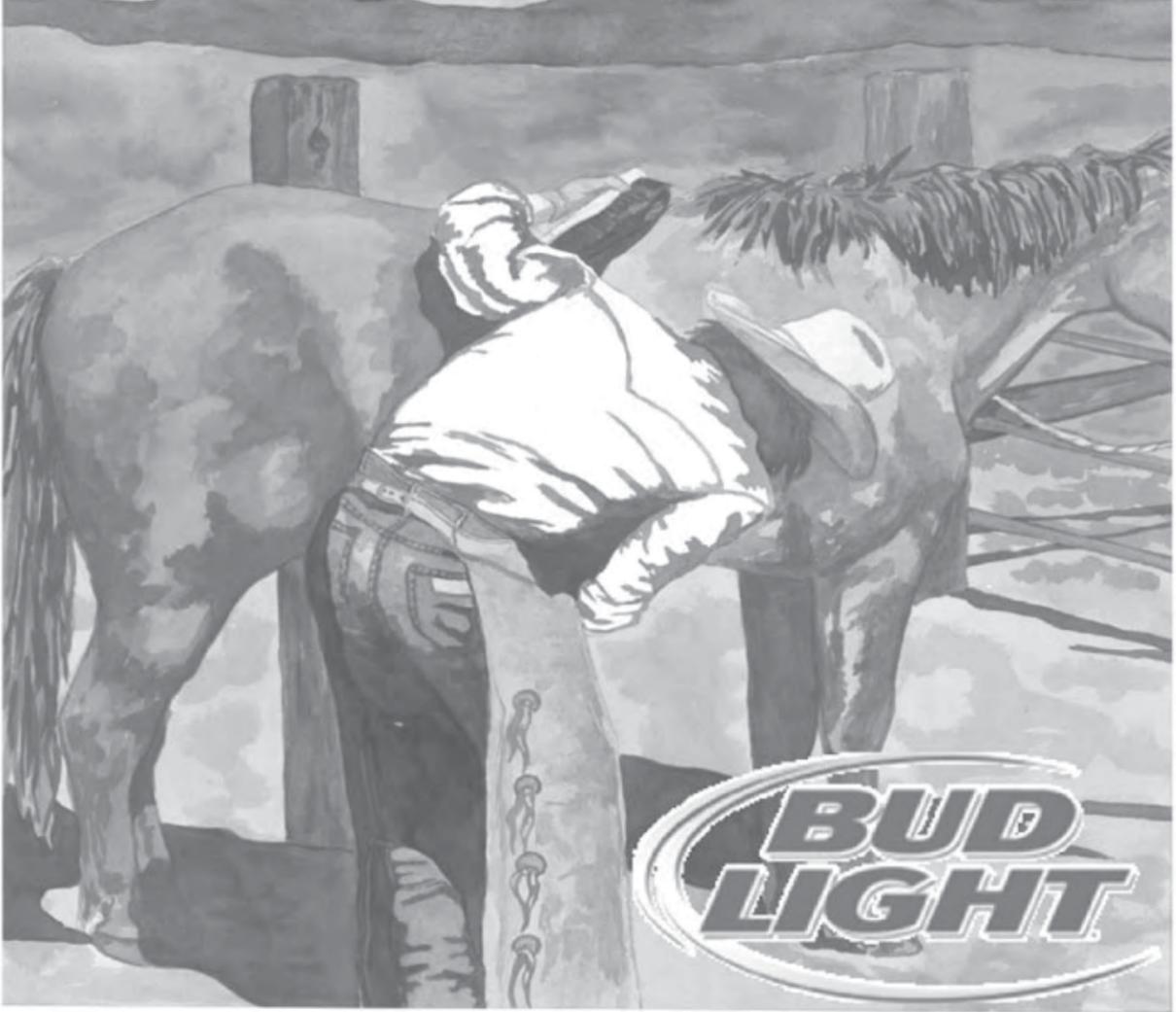
But his opposition to marriage equality may be the biggest affront. His support for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to forbid same-sex couples from marrying - support he



repeated on a number of occasions in 2005 - jeopardizes a multitude of children in same-sex households, not to mention their parents. He claims that writing discrimination into the Constitution is necessary to protect the "sanctity" of traditional marriage, whatever that means.

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