Observing Tucson And The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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WEEKLY OBSERVER | JANUARY 31, 2007 | ISSUE 1176

LGBT Leaders, Dems & Some In GOP Unimpressed By State Of The Union

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Faced by a Democratically controlled Congress a weakened President Bush Tuesday night (Jan. 23) pitched his plan to send more U.S. troops to Iraq "Give it a chance to work," he pleaded in his State of the Union address, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com. He also promoted proposals to expand health insurance coverage and to slash gasoline consumption by 20 percent in a decade.

But Bush did not mention attempting for a third time to breathe life into a proposed constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage. "[P]erhaps the election results served to check the president's use of dangerous wedge politics," said Matt Foreman, Executive Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. On Monday (Jan. 22) Sen. Wayne Allard and Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, both Colorado Republicans, said they have no plans to make a third try to advance the proposal. Allard and Musgrave were the sponsors of the proposed amendment that failed to get enough votes to advance in either 2004 or 2006 when Republicans dominated both houses of Congress.

"While this is positive news, it hardly erases the last six years of legislative and policy attacks our community has suffered under this administration," said Foreman. "We look forward to working with the new, more fair-minded Congress to repair the hurt created by President Bush's disastrous domestic and international policies and to restore our nation's reputation as a society in which dignity, equality and justice are available for all," Foreman said in a statement in reply to the State of the Union.

AIDS care groups also were unimpressed with the speech. Despite signing the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006 into law in December 2006, President George W. Bush failed to address the domestic HIV epidemic in his State of the Union address tonight," said the national AIDS Action Council. "In particular, the President failed to call upon lawmakers to prioritize the needs of people living with HIV by making life-saving drugs and medical treatment available to all who are HIV infected, nor did he highlight the importance of HIV prevention."

The Servicemembers Legal Defense Network also criticized the State of the Union as an opportunity lost. "With the war in Iraq raging on, and our military stretched thin, President Bush again missed an opportunity to strengthen our armed forces and renew our commitment to equality by welcoming the contributions of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Americans," said SLDN spokesperson Steve Ralls. "It is unfortunate that the commander-in-chief has neglected, over the past six years, to even mention the service and sacrifice of the LGBT community. While the President rightly salutes our nation's service men and women, he continues to implicitly push Gay service personnel into the shadows by supporting a policy of silence and exclusion," said Ralls. "The State of our Union is strongest when our country lives up to its ideals of inclusion and when every American can bring his or her contributions to the table. Until Gay Americans are welcomed in our fighting forces neither our military, nor our nation, is a strong as it could be."

Of Bush's plan to send more troops to Iraq, the Democratic response was quick. "While the president continues to ignore the will of the country, Congress will not ignore this president's failed policy," Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid gave Bush said in a joint statement after his address. "His plan will receive an up-or-down vote in both the House and Senate, and we will continue to hold him accountable for changing course in Iraq."

LGBT Clout To Be $835-Billion By 2011 Study Shows

NEW YORK CITY - A new economic impact study says that 2011 LGBT buying power in the US will exceed $835-billion per year, reported 365Gay.com. "Corporate America is waking up to the enormous opportunity of marketing to Gays and Lesbians," said market research firm Packaged Facts which prepared the study in collaboration with Witeck-Combs Communications, an LGBT marketing and public relations firm.

The report, The Gay and Lesbian Market in the U.S. says that this year the buying power of Gays and Lesbians will reach $660 billion. The study said that it is estimated there are about 15.3 million Gays and Lesbians in the country.

"What we're finding since our last report two years ago is a greater openness among Gays and Lesbians to share their consumer habits, leisure and media pursuits, and personal/social attitudes," said Don Montuori, the publisher of Packaged Facts. "At the same time there is a growing trend towards acceptance among the American people which is opening up greater opportunities to market to Gays and Lesbians in traditional and online venues." Montuori points to the commercial success of LOGO, the LGBT cable network which has more than 80 major brands as sponsors, and advertisers.

"As trendspotters, we see marketers hungry to acquire more appreciation of Gay Americas economic standing, as well as more sophistication about what makes Gay households like and unlike other households," said Bob Witeck, CEO of Witeck-Combs Communications. Last year Witeck and business partner Wes Combs co-authored Business Inside Out, considered the first-ever book on marketing insights, practical tips and strategies targeting the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender market.

Adoptions By G/L Couples Wanes As Issue In U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Opposition to letting Gay couples adopt children, currently roiling the British government, has forced relatively few changes in the United States, those familiar with the situation said, reported Reuters on advocate.com.

So far Roman Catholic organizations in only two cities–Boston and San Francisco–have said they have opted out of arranging all adoptions in response to laws designed to guarantee Gay couples' adoption rights. And on the political front what appeared to be a drive two years ago to encourage states to pass laws stopping adoptions by Gays seems to have petered out, with only a handful of states taking that route.

In the United Kingdom, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, leader of the world's 77 million Anglicans, and the nation's leading Catholic cardinal are pressing Prime Minister Tony Blair to exempt Catholic adoption agencies from new anti discrimination laws. The religious leaders contend the laws would force Catholic adoption agencies to place children with Gay couples. The Vatican in 2003 issued a condemnation of adoption by Gays, calling it "gravely immoral" and something that would "mean doing violence to these children." It's unclear how U.S. Catholic adoption organizations outside of Boston and San Francisco have chosen to address the Vatican's stance.

Laws regarding adoption are under the jurisdiction of U.S. states, not national policy, and the introduction of broad laws banning discrimination against Gays in California and Massachusetts brought the adoption issue to a head there. In Massachusetts it arose a year ago, ultimately causing Catholic Charities in the Boston archdiocese to halt its adoption services rather than be caught in a clash between the church's directive and state law.

The Boston organization said it had permanently placed 720 children since 1977 under a contract it had with the state but that only 13 were with same-sex families. It turned to a private organization to process the remaining cases it was handling and nothing has changed since, a spokeswoman said. It continues to handle birth parent counseling, infant adoption awareness training, and postplacement services.

Catholic Charities in the San Francisco archdiocese also no longer does direct adoptions but acts as a resource for an outside agency in what a spokeswoman said has turned out to be a "win-win" collaboration that benefits children in foster homes. But those two cities appear to be the only places where the issue has prompted such a major step by Catholic organizations, according to the Washington, D.C.-based Child Welfare League of America.

Carrie Evans, state legislative director for the Human Rights Campaign, said there has been very little movement toward banning adoptions by same-sex couples state-by-state, though a number of measures were considered in the last few years. Currently laws restricting such adoptions exist in four states–with Florida specifically banning adoptions by "homosexual couples" and three others saying unmarried couples may not adopt. Evans said the push for such statutes seems to have faltered because polls indicate many in the United States feel "such decisions need to be made by judges and child welfare experts" and not by lawmakers.

UPDATE

Desert Voices Stage Door Canteen & Silent Auction, Feb. 17

TUCSON - Come enjoy Desert Voices (DV) annual silent auction fundraiser/cabaret, featuring champagne, wine, beer, hors d'hoeuvres and shopping, Saturday, Feb. 17, 6:00 p.m. at the Historic Y Theatre (University and 5th Ave.)

Then as our guest, sit back and relax while individual DV chorus members and small groups entertain you. The cost is $30 per person (no discounts) with $20 tax deductible.

For ticket information, call the DV box office, (520) 791-9662 or contact your favorite chorus member. Tickets may also be purchased at Antigone's on 4th Avenue. A limited number of tickets will be available at the door the evening of the performance.

Protest 'Love Won Out' Feb. 10

PHOENIX - A protest of Focus on the Family's "Love Won Out" conference will take place Saturday, Feb. 10, 8 - 10:00 a.m. at the Bethany Bible Church, 6060 N. 7th Avenue in Phoenix.

Focus on the Family brings its anti-LGBT venom to Phoenix with the "Love Won Out" conference that teaches that homosexuality is a sin that can - and should - be cured. The day-long conference, featuring Anne Heche's mother, Rev. Nancy Heche.

Contact Amy at amyk@ahrf.org for details.

Lobby Day Feb. 6

PHOENIX - The Arizona Human Rights Fund (AHRF) is proud to come together with dozens of like-minded, progressive organziations to hold the 2007 Progressive Lobby Day, Tuesday, Feb. 6, at the Arizona State Capitol, 1700 West Washington St.

Join as your schedule allows - either 10:00 a.m. or noon, with the program ending by 1:30 p.m. Please RSVP either to Megan at political@ahrf.org. or by using the easy on-line registration form to the right. Even if you're just considering coming, please let us know - we have to order enough food and rather too much than too little!

AHRF needs volunteers to help with set-up, registration and general tasks so if you're interested in donating a few hours of your time, contact Kerry at kerbear94@yahoo.com.

Water Of Life MCC Fundraiser February 10

TUCSON - Water of Life announced that their Gala 2007 fundraiser will take place Saturday, Feb. 10, 7 p.m. at Water of Life-MCC, 3269 N. Mountain.

There will be a silent auction, hor d'oeuvres, deserts, live entertainment by Susan Artemis, Desert Voices, and others, as well as dancing.

Tickets for this evening of entertainment is only $25. For more information, call (520) 326-6202.

LGBT Couples Celebrate Feb. 7

TUCSON - PFLAG-Tucson will be hosting a celebration of GLBTI couples, Feb. 7.

All who wish to attend are welcome, as events like this also serve to inspire parents and allies who might not otherwise see the positive potential for our GLBTI children & friends. Our goal is to set a path by which all of society will be able to overcome the cultural misinformation that too often creates an atmosphere of fear and hatred, rather than one of love for all humankind. This heart-to-heart event will take place on Wed., Feb. 7, 7 p.m. in the El Portal building on the UA campus, NW corner of 6th St and Highland Ave. PFLAG signs will be posted on the building directing you.

Until society as a whole learns to recognize and honor these loving relationships, which we believe to be equal to heterosexual marriages, PFLAG Tucson will continue to provide opportunities to celebrate GLBTI partnerships. To respond as to whether or not you can attend, please email Jack Kressley at karenj7@cox.net or call (520) 207-9120 or 820-2367.

Desert Coyostes League Standings

TUCSON (ON) - The standings for Tucson's LGBT and straight supportive bowling league:

Totally off the Wall 41-15, RaPaDa 40-16, Puffy Bones 36-20, Boobs with Balls 35-21, Monster Balls 33-23, Headpin Hussies 33-23, UGOTABKIDN 32-24, Hi Balls 26-30, FKD 24-32, Pin Ups 24- 32, Lois Lanes 23-33, BarBitchUettes 21-35, Scratch Patch 20-36, Pin Busters 4-10.

The Desert Coyotes bowl every Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. at Santa Cruz Lanes, 3665 S. 16th Ave.

'Steel Magnolias' Feb. 10

TUCSON - Live Theatre Workshop announced that the curtain will rise on their next production, "Steel Magnolias," Feb. 10 and run through Mar.18.

Based on a true-story, "STEEL MAGNOLIAS" is a heartwarming comedy, revolving around the lives of a close-knit circle of friends who meet every Saturday morning in a beauty shop in the small Louisiana Parish of Chinquapin County. At the center of the group is Shelby Eatenton, about to be married and start her own family – despite the fact that her diabetes could get in the way. Her mother, M'Lynn Eatenton, looks to her four closest friends for strength and laughter as she battles her deepest fears to support her daughter's decisions. In Truvy's beauty salon, where all the ladies who are "anybody" come to have their hair done, Truvy and her assistant, Annelle, dispense shampoo and free advice to Shelby and M'Lynn, and enjoy the quick witted remarks of Miss Clairee; the local social leader, and the town's rich curmudgeon, Miss Ouiser. The play is alternately hilarious and touching - and, in the end, deeply revealing of the importance of friendship. A moving story wrapped in witty humor, and told by women who are lively, funny, and marvelously amiable company– in good times and bad.

The show opens on Saturday, Feb. 10 and runs through Sunday, Mar. 18. Show times are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinee at 3:00 p.m. Enjoy a post show opening reception Saturday, Feb. 10 and meet the cast. Tickets range from $17 – $14 and cash discounts available. There will be two preview performances, Thursday Feb. 8, and Friday Feb 9, and tickets for these two performances are $11. Call (520) 327-4242 for reservations.

Save the Date - February 16, 2007! Grab Your Sweetie And Bring Your Dancing Shoes!

TUCSON - Join TIHAN and COPE for a good old-fashioned Valentine's Day Social. Meet new friends, open up your heart, have a fabulous time, and dance the night away. 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm at the El Pueblo Activity Center, 101 W. Irvington Rd., Building #6.

RSVP: Glenn Wisch/COPE 798-1772-ext 33

Hepatitis Education Web Site Launched

ATLANTA, Georgia - A new online hepatitis education campaign for men who have sex with men has been launched by the American Social Health Association, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, reported advocate.com.

Both the CDC and the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association recommend that sexually active Gay men be vaccinated for both hepatitis A and B.

The program is a comprehensive five-year plan that includes Web-based evaluations and an educational campaign. Visit the site at ashastd.org/hepatitis_survey/hepsurvey.html.

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Informing the Community
The Observer

COMMENTARY. . . .

State Of The Delusion

By Wayne Besen

WASHINGTON, D.C. - With George W. Bush's popularity rating vacillating between Richard Nixon and the common cold, he limped on the television set to tell us he was doing a "heckuva job." His words falling on deaf ears and his policies turning a blind eye to reality, the only reason to watch the president's primetime address was to gauge the state of his delusion.

Well, there was the historic moment when Nancy Pelosi, the first woman Speaker of the House, took her seat in back of the president. Next to the sleepy Dick Cheney, who seemed to periodically be closing his eyes, Madam Speaker looked quite alert and spry. Pelosi's ascension, much like the Gina Davis character in the television drama Commander and Chief, is a major boost for Hillary Clinton. The more America gets used to seeing women in power, the easier it will be for Clinton to make her case that America is ready for a woman in the oval office.

The most amusing part of the evening was watching political rivals pretend they liked each other and had intentions of actually working together. Bush and Pelosi looked like parents in the aftermath of a shattered marriage that pledged to smile in divorce court for the sake of the kids.

Interestingly, with Bush's policies tied up in knots, Gay couples tying the knot were no longer considered a grave threat to marriage or society. For the first time in years, there was no mention of the odious Federal Marriage Amendment, which would essentially write Gay couples out of the U.S. Constitution. This omission alone was reason for GLBT Americans to celebrate and savor the new Democratic led Congress.

Like the dead marriage amendment, Bush also conveniently forgot to mention the damned city of New Orleans. Following Hurricane Katrina, the president made a dramatic speech in the glow of floodlights promising to fix the mess. However, it is now clear that his promises were just a bunch of political jazz and the only sinking city on his mind these days is Baghdad.

On a hawkish twist to John Lennon's hit, Bush asked Congress to give war a chance. But key Republicans, such as Sen. John Warner (R-VA), were already singing a different tune and figuring out how to extricate the nation from Iraq's civil war. Sen. Jim Webb (D-VA) gave one of the strongest responses to the State of the Union in memory, hinting that the Democrats may thankfully not act like Democrats for a change.

The truth is, the war has long been lost and soldiers will lose legs for the sake of Bush's legacy and die to keep his presidency alive. Some will have their faces burned off so this stubborn president can save face and others will sacrifice their mental health in the name of an insane policy that was doomed since the plot to invade Iraq was hatched.

At the heart of the matter is the harsh fact that there is no Iraq nor are there any Iraqis. The nation has contrived borders formed by Western nations that pay little attention to the needs or desires of the people who actually live there.

In retrospect, it is easy to see that the only way Iraq can survive in its present incarnation is to have the biggest SOB in the region firmly in control. Saddam Hussein was the perfect sociopath to fill this role and he did so with aplomb.

Still, it was instructive that a monster like Saddam, who punished his adversaries with acid baths, had to take extraordinary measures to survive. He had more doubles than a Hollywood action figure, employed food tasters and slept in a different location each night, so enemies could not predict his location. If this brutal dictator had to run through such machinations to survive, how can America make this land safe enough to rule?

The best we can hope for with Bush's surge is to temporarily take over small patches of real estate. But, the moment we leave the insurgents will move back in. Look, the Iraqi people don't want us there and the American people don't want to be there. It sounds like the beginning of common ground, don't you think?

Finally, the Iraqi misadventure has been a nightmare for minorities. There are ongoing reports that the Shiite militias are hunting down Gay people and women have less freedom, as the mullahs are trying to impose Islamic law in the areas they control.

As long as the state of our union is dependent on the state of Bush's delusions, our nation is in deep trouble. In the coming weeks, adults in both parties will have to decide for the "decider" that patriotism comes before parroting his failed strategies at home and abroad.

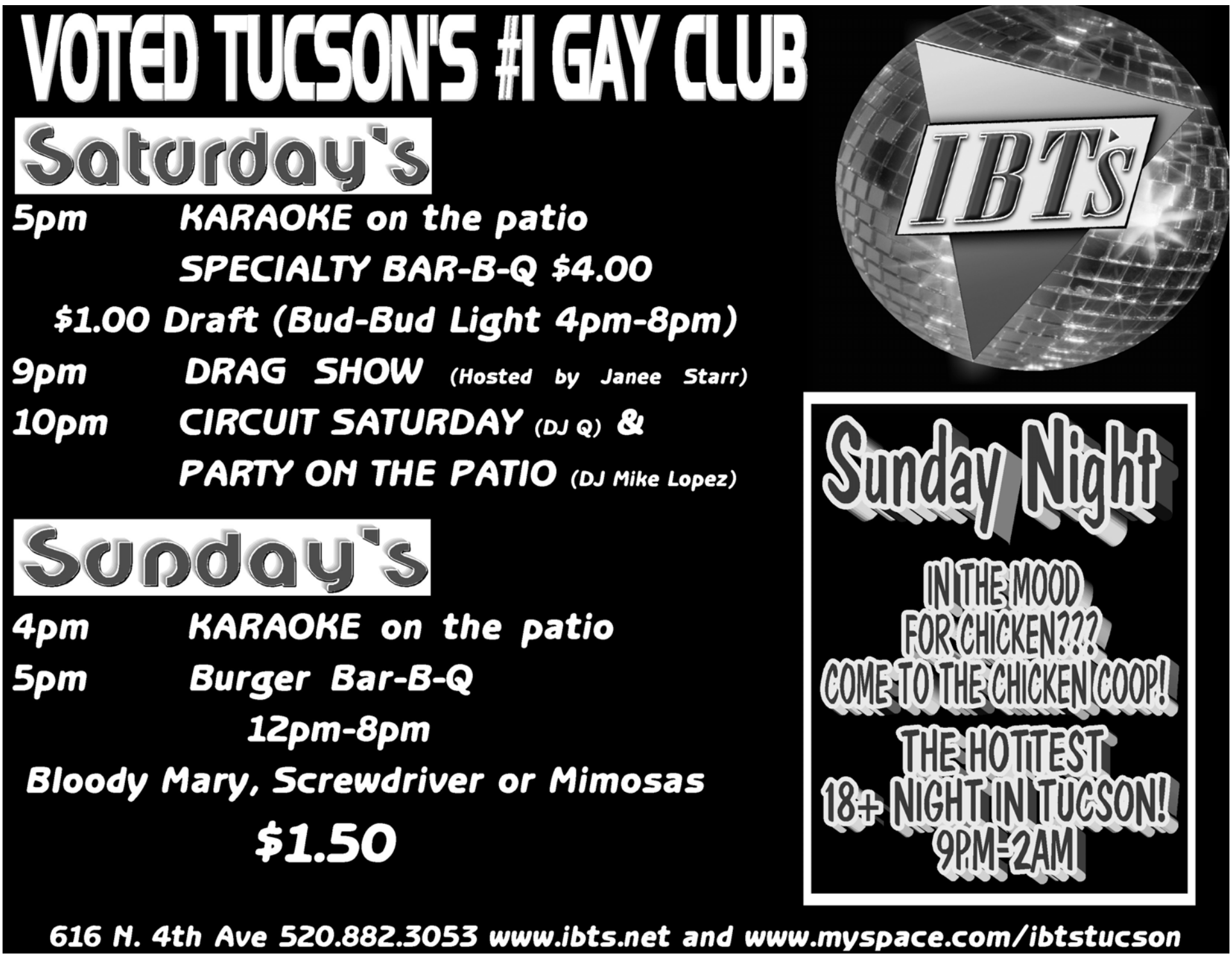
(Wayne Besen is an author, activist, columnist, public speaker and is the author of a book nominated this year for two Lambda Literary Awards, "Anything But Straight: Unmasking the Scandals and Lies Behind the Ex-Gay Myth." This op-ed is reprinted from 365Gay.com)

New York To Launch An Official City Condom

NEW YORK CITY - Available soon: an official New York City condom, reported the Associated Press on advocate.com. Mayor Michael Bloomberg's administration wants to reduce rates of sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS, and part of the strategy is the aggressive promotion of free condoms. Officials say more people will use them if they have jazzy packaging.

One idea is a subway theme with maps on the wrappers. ''Brands work, and people use branded items more than they use nonbranded items, whether it's a cola or a medicine even,'' health commissioner Thomas Frieden said. New York City hands out 1.5 million free condoms each month, or about 18 million a year. Hundreds of organizations get free condoms from the city and distribute them at health clinics, bars, restaurants, nail salons, nightclubs, and even prisons. Widespread free distribution started after Frieden became health commissioner in 2002 and found that the city's STD disease clinics were limiting each patient to receiving a small number.

''I thought that was nuts–of all the people you'd like to have an unlimited supply of condoms, it's people who have an STD,'' said Frieden. ''Condoms work–they're just not where they need to be as often as they need to be.'' There is now even a bowl of condoms outside Frieden's office. More than 100,000 New Yorkers are living with HIV and AIDS. AIDS remains the third-leading cause of death among New Yorkers under 65. The number of condoms distributed by the city multiplied several times after the health department launched its online ordering system in 2005. Individuals cannot order, but any organization or venue can request unlimited free condoms.



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Drag Bingo at 8 pm on the Back Pocket Patio followed by Karaoke Inside at 9 pm

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February 11th Rock, Paper Scissors Contest
Sponsored by Bud Light from 10-11pm
February 14th Valentine Day Red Party 8pm
February 16th Delta Lambda Phi
18+ Red Party 10pm-close
February 20th "Boys Gone Wild"
Mardi Gras Party
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Scottsdale City Workers Call For Pride Event

SCOTTSDALE - Some city employees are proposing a city-hosted celebration of its Gay community for this summer, reported the East Valley Tribune. However, some city officials have warned the employees to be prepared for a potential backlash, and to eliminate some elements of the proposal such as having a drag queen sing at the event, so as not to play into stereotypes.

"The city of Scottsdale doesn't have any Gay pride events so we thought we'd get the ball rolling and start one," said David Simmons, a city engineer who, along with planner Robert Hults, recently proposed a Gay cultural awareness event. Simmons said the idea is to hold an event at a city facility in June to celebrate the Gay community's culture and contributions to society. The initial celebration would be limited to city staff, but the plan would be to expand it to the public in future years.

"Bob and I were thinking we'd have some entertainment, some food from a couple vendors to get the ball rolling the first year to see where it goes," Simmons said. Hults said everyone would be welcome at the event. "We see this as more of an inclusive event for people outside the Gay community to come, also," he said.

Don Logan, Scottsdale diversity and dialogue director, said other cities in the Valley have their own celebrations for Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and the Transgendered. "I think there's an interest in the Scottsdale community, including our employee base, that parallels what's happening in other communities," he said. "The discussions are very preliminary at this point." But Logan told Simmons and Hults at Thursday's (Jan. 25) Diversity Advisory Committee meeting to be prepared for opposition from some segments of the community who might question whether it's appropriate for the city to support a Gay awareness event. "You know this is going to be controversial. I'm not telling you anything new. Everyone has an opinion about the Gay issue. Are you prepared to deal with the backlash that we know is going to be coming?" Logan asked. "We're going to get some serious push back from outside the agency."

The initial proposal for the Gay cultural awareness event called for a drag queen to perform. "There is actually an art out there called female impersonation," said Ryan Stee, a city technology specialist who attended the committee meeting in support of the proposal. Logan said it might not be a good idea, however, because having a drag queen could elicit negative stereotypes. Instead, the event should be focused on educating the community about Gay culture. "The whole Gay issue has stereotypes that are linked to it, and 'drag queen' brings that to the surface," he said. "The return on our investment is the learning that takes place with those who are different than the people who are being showcased."

The diversity committee plans to discuss the proposal further next month. Logan said funding for a Gay cultural celebration could come from the diversity committee's existing budget, or it could be suggested as part of next year's budget to the City Council. Scottsdale Mayor Mary Manross did not return phone messages seeking comment, but Vice Mayor Jim Lane said officials would have to look at whether there's a precedent for the city hosting similar events. "I think it would have a lot to do with if we offer the same kind of things to other groups," he said. "We'd have to look at it from the standpoint of fairness."

the BiZ

February 2007

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1 Thursty Thursdays Techno w/ LSD.J.	2 FAC* 3-8p Hip Hop w/ DJ Shorty	3 Hip Hop w/ DJ Shorty	4 L WORD Latin w/ DJ Dmenace SUPERBOWL
5 Poke-Her Night L WORD (replay)	6 Boozeday Tuesday 25 cent drafts	7 18 & Over Hip Hop & Reggaeton w/ DJ Shorty	8 Thursty Thursdays Techno w/ LSD.J.	9 FAC* 3-8p Latin w/ DJ Dmenace	10 RED BALL Hip Hop w/ DJ Shorty	11 L WORD Latin w/ DJ Dmenace
12 Poke-Her Night L WORD (replay)	13 Boozeday Tuesday 25 cent drafts Wine Tasting	14 18 & Over Hip Hop & Reggaeton w/ DJ Shorty LEZ-B-WED	15 Thursty Thursdays Techno w/ LSD.J.	16 FAC* 3-8p Hip Hop w/ DJ Shorty	17 Hip Hop w/ DJ Shorty	18 L WORD Latin w/ DJ Ddmenace
19 Poke-Her Night L WORD (replay)	20 Boozeday Tuesday 25 cent drafts	21 18 & Over Hip Hop & Reggaeton w/ DJ Shorty	22 Thursty Thursdays Techno w/ LSD.J.	23 FAC* 3-8p Latin w/ DJ Dmenace	24 Hip Hop w/ DJ Shorty	25 L WORD Latin w/ DJ Dmenace
26 Poke-Her Night L WORD (replay)	27 Boozeday Tuesday 25 cent drafts	28 18 & Over Hip Hop & Reggaeton w/ DJ Shorty	Notes: *The Friday Afternoon Club (FAC) is back!!! 1/2 price drinks & appetizers from 5-7pm...Ticket giveaway ever hour for drawing at 8pm - must be present to win.			

Trial Ends For Gay Pastor

ATLANTA, Georgia - An openly Gay pastor who told his bishop that he is in a same-sex relationship won't know his fate for about two weeks after his clerical trial ended on Tuesday (Jan. 23). The Rev. Bradley E. Schmeling could be disciplined or removed from his church.

Schmeling, of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Atlanta, says that he never kept his sexuality a secret and made it clear when he came to the diocese six years ago that he opposed a ban on non celibate Gay clergy. In August he informed Bishop Ronald B. Warren that he was in a committed relationship with another man. Warren immediately began proceedings against Schmeling. Schmeling said that he met Darin Easler when they were both Lutheran pastors. Easler moved to the Gay-welcoming United Church of Christ but Schmeling stayed at St. John's.

Last year the denomination voted to leave it up to individual bishops whether to maintain the ban on clergy in same-sex relationships. The measure - the product of three years' work by a special church task force - was meant as a compromise that will satisfy both those who support Gay clergy and those who regard Gay sex as sinful.

The church trial began Friday (Jan. 19) with Schmeling appearing in before a 12-member court. The public was not allowed to attend and all concerned are sworn to secrecy until a decision is released. The 12 committee members have only has four options if they find Schmeling guilty. The panel could call for a private censure

or admonition; it could suspend him from office either for a set period of time, or until there is "a sign of repentance"; or it could remove him from the roster of ordained clergy in the E.L.C.A. Schmeling's congregation is standing behind him and has been holding daily prayer vigils as the trial continued. Some members of St. John's have threatened that if Schmeling is struck off the E.L.C.A. list the church could defy the bishop and keep him on. If that occurred Bishop Warren could bring charges against the church.

Penn State Hit With Second Lesbian Discrimination Suit

PHILADELPHIA - A university professor who alleges she was denied tenure and let go by Penn State University because she is a Lesbian has filed a federal lawsuit against the school, reported 365Gay.com. Constance R. Matthews alleges that she was denied tenure and continued employment at Penn State on the basis of her gender, sexual orientation, and in retaliation for whistleblowing.

"During her years at Penn State, Dr. Matthews was a frequent and vocal advocate for LGBT and gender equality," said Equality Advocates attorney Katie Eyer who is representing Dr. Matthews. "Her willingness to step forward and address these important issues should have been commended. Instead, her advocacy - and her identity - ended her career at the institution."

The lawsuit claims that Matthews' advocacy regarding LGBT and gender issues often brought her into direct conflict with powerful individuals at Penn State. Several of these individuals, the lawsuit alleges, would later play a major role in the termination of Dr. Matthews' employment at the University. The suit, also claims that Matthews was not the first woman or sexual minority to be denied tenure within her academic program at Penn State. At the time that Dr. Matthews was denied tenure, in 2005, no woman or openly Lesbian or Gay faculty member in her academic program, Counselor Education, had ever been awarded tenure.

"I was deeply saddened to have to leave the institution that I expected to be my permanent home," Matthews said in a statement. "All I have ever wanted was to do an excellent job of being a faculty member, without compromising my beliefs. I believe that I did that at Penn State."

Court filings show that Matthews was described by external peer reviewers during her tenure review process as "a leading thinker and researcher" and "a well-known junior scholar" with "a national reputation." Internal reviewers also noted Matthews' contributions in the areas of teaching and service - the other key considerations in tenure determinations. Despite these positive evaluations, Matthews was ultimately told that her academic research record was not adequate to justify an award of tenure.

"It is baffling that a woman described by her peers as 'a leading thinker and researcher' could be told that her research did not qualify her for tenure," said Eyer. "Well-known junior scholars with national reputations are courted by institutions like Penn State, not terminated. Dr. Matthews' separation from the institution under these circumstances raises serious questions about the role that bias and retaliation played in the decision to deny her tenure."

A spokesperson for Penn State said the university generally does not comment on pending litigation. The case is not the only Lesbian discrimination suit the school is facing. Former Penn State women's basketball star Jennifer Harris filed a lawsuit in 2005 against Penn and coach Rene Portland, charging Harris' constitutional rights were violated. The case is yet to be resolved.

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COMMENTARY. . . .

Making A Good Case

By Kevin Cathcart

NEW YORK CITY - I love it when we launch a good case. I don't want to sound flippant. Our cases always come at the expense of people who've suffered terribly simply because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status. But sometimes the discrimination is so flagrant, we know our plaintiff's story will move everyone who hears it. Our best cases also shed light on an evolving area of law and help shape the cultural landscape.

Take the case of Izza Lopez. A 26-year-old Transgender woman, Izza interviewed for a position at River Oaks Imaging and Diagnostic, a medical and imaging company in Houston, where she lives. She impressed the manager and director who interviewed her, and after clearing the company's requisite background check and drug test, was asked to start work as soon as possible.

But less than a week later, Izza received a call from the human resources director rescinding the job offer because she had "misrepresented" herself as a woman. Needless to say Izza was devastated. She had already given notice at her then-current job and could not get it back. She was without work for several months.

Lambda Legal filed a lawsuit in federal court, charging that River Oaks violated Izza's rights under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits sex discrimination in employment. We believe we can win justice for Izza and help highlight the kind of hardships Transgender people face every day that other people, frankly, might not even think about.

Just two days after we launched Izza's case, New Jersey became the ninth state to make discrimination based on gender identity or expression illegal. States with similar laws are: California, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, New Mexico, Rhode Island and Washington. In addition, the District of Columbia and more than 80 cities and counties also have protections on the books for Transgender people.

As rights increase and Transgender people become more visible both in the LGBT community and in the general population, it's no surprise that we have been hearing more and more about discrimination based on gender identity. Calls to Lambda Legal's Help Desk on Transgender issues have increased considerably in the past few years.

A recent call, for instance, came in from a Transgender woman whose profile on the popular online dating site Match.com had been pulled because she described herself as "pre-op." Lambda Legal's Transgender rights project drafted a legal advocacy letter questioning the policy and immediately heard back from the company's general counsel, who informed us that term had once been excluded but is now perfectly fine. Match.com refunded the woman's money, offered her 60 days of free membership and stated that all Match.com customer care representatives would be retrained on the current policy.

When a company rushes to make amends for gender identity discrimination, you know you're making progress. Even as more states and municipalities add protections for Transgender people to their nondiscrimination policies, we need to keep up the fight for Transgender rights–one good case at a time.

(Kevin Cathcart is the Executive Director of Lambda Legal. This oped is reprinted from 365Gay.com)

Gill Goes National

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Denver Colorado-based Gill Action Fund announced Thursday (Jan. 25) it will open a national office in Washington D.C., reported 365Gay.com. The Gill Foundation was established in 1994 by openly Gay software entrepreneur Tim Gill to help fund LGBT civil rights campaigns.

It initially worked with groups in Colorado but has since expanded to help fund groups across the country. Today it is the nation's largest funder focusing primarily on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender civil rights. The Action Fund was created in 2005 to fund issue campaigns. From its Washington office the Action Fund will work with existing LGBT rights groups - the Human Rights Campaign, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Victory Fund and Lambda Legal. "Having a presence in Washington will allow Gill Action to be a more active participant in the political process at the local, state, and federal level," said Executive Director Patrick Guerriero, who previously headed up National Log Cabin Republicans.

Guerriero also announced a new leadership team. Robin Brand joins Gill as chief operating officer. Brand most recently served as senior vice president of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund and Leadership Institute where she developed strategies and oversaw programs for the nation's largest LGBT political action committee. During her three years with the Victory Fund, Brand oversaw the first advanced training for statewide and federal candidates, raised record-breaking amounts in candidate-specific funds, and helped elect the first openly LGBT legislators in several states. From 2001-2003, Brand was the eastern political director for the Democratic National Committee. Brand also held the position of executive director at the Senate Democratic Campaign Committee in Washington State.

Bill Smith has been named Gill Action as national political director. A political media and general consultant, Smith has filmed television commercials in over 16 states for candidates including governors, congressmen, state legislators, and judges, as well as several national political organizations. Smith started his own political consulting business five years ago after working for two national political firms, Karl Rove and Company and Wilson Grand Communications. In 2004, he produced Log Cabin's widely publicized print and television campaign against the Federal Marriage Amendment, as well as advertising that aired during the 2004 Republican National Convention.

Etheridge An Oscar Nominee For Gore's 'Inconvenient Truth'

Singer Melissa Etheridge

LOS ANGELES - Who says politics is show business for ugly people? An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore's film on the perils of global warming, scored two Oscar nominations Tuesday (Jan. 23) –for Best Documentary Feature and Best Original Song, reported the Associated Press on advocate.com. While he is not technically a nominee–the film's director, Davis Guggenheim, won the nod, as did singer Melissa Etheridge for the song ''I Need to Wake Up''–Gore said he was ''thrilled'' that his movie was honored.

''The film...has brought awareness of the climate crisis to people in the United States and all over the world,'' Gore said in an e-mail statement. ''I am so grateful to the entire team and pleased that the Academy has recognized their work. This film proves that movies really can make a difference.''

Aides say the former vice president plans to walk the red carpet with Hollywood's beautiful people at the Academy Awards ceremony next month. An Inconvenient Truth has been a critical and box office success, bringing in more than $24 million to make it the third highest-grossing documentary in history. A companion book has been on national best-seller lists for months. Other films nominated for best documentary feature include Deliver Us From Evil, about the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church; Iraq in Fragments, about the Sunni-Shiite conflict in that country; Jesus Camp, about a summer camp for evangelical Christians; and My Country, My Country, about the months leading up to the January 2005 election in Iraq.

Former Vice President Al Gore

Cheney Refuses To Discuss Lesbian Daughter On CNN

WASHINGTON, D.C. - During a sit-down interview with CNN's Wolf Blitzer on Wednesday (Jan. 24), Vice President Dick Cheney said questions about his Lesbian daughter and her recently announced pregnancy were "out of line," advocate.com reported. Mary Cheney, 37, and her partner of 15 years, Heather Poe, 45, are expecting a baby in late spring.

Anti Gay Christian leaders have voiced dismay at news of Mary Cheney's pregnancy, while the Gay rights group Family Pride has said the vice president faces ''a lifetime of sleepless nights'' for serving in an administration that has opposed legal recognition for same-sex couples. During Wednesday's interview Blitzer said, "All of us are happy" that Mary is having a baby, adding that "some critics, though, are suggesting, for example–a statement from someone representing Focus on the Family: 'Mary Cheney's pregnancy raises the question of what's best for children. Just because it's possible to conceive a child outside of the relationship of a married mother and father doesn't mean it's best for the child.' Do you want to respond to that?"

"No, I don't," Dick Cheney responded. "She's obviously a good daughter," Blitzer continued.? "I'm delighted I'm about to have a sixth grandchild, Wolf, and obviously think the world of both of my daughters and all of my grandchildren," Cheney said. "And I think, frankly, you're out of line with that question."?? "I think all of us appreciate..." Blitzer pressed.?? "I think you're out of–I think you're out of line with that question," Cheney said.?? "Your daughter. We like your daughters. Believe me, I'm very, very sympathetic to Liz and to Mary," Blitzer continued. "I like them both. That was just a question that's come up, and it's a responsible, fair question."?? "I just fundamentally disagree with your perspective," Cheney responded.

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Film On Dying Lesbian Cop's Battle For Domestic Partner Rights Wins Sundance Prize

Laurel Hester

LOS ANGELES - A documentary film on the struggle by New Jersey police officer Laurel Hester's struggle to have her domestic partner recognized as he next of kin has been awarded a Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival, 365Gay.com reported. The emotional film produced was Cynthia Wade.

Hester had been a lieutenant with the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office. Diagnosed with terminal cancer she was forced to retire. In late 2005, as the disease progressed she appealed to the Ocean County, New Jersey freeholders to give her same-sex partner her death benefits. Although New Jersey recognized same-sex couples it left it up to local governments to determine if benefits should be offered the partners of employees. After listening to her request, and her concern that when she died her partner, Stacie Andree, might lose their home, with little discussion the freeholders rejected the request.

The story was picked up across the country and as pressure mounted on freeholders she was allowed to make a second plea a month later. Filmmaker Wade traveled to Ocean County and chronicled the events that followed. Too ill to appear in person Hester appeared via video tape from her hospital room. In a frail voice, and often gasping for air, Hester begged for recognition of her partnership with Andree. "All I'm asking for is that you sign the resolution and that you make a change, a change for good, a change for righteousness and a change in the lives of so many people that have dedicated themselves to county government." After the moving tape was played a second vote was held and resolution passed. A month later Hester died.

"Freeheld: The Laurel Hester Story," premiered at Sundance. Wade said that she promised Hester she would submit the film for consideration for an Academy Award in 2008. Even Oscar consideration would give the issue of equality for gay couples more attention, Wade said in an interview. "This issue is so important to me - it's so important for me to see equality in my lifetime," Wade said. Next month New Jersey will become the third state to legalize civil unions. Same-sex marriage is legal only in Massachusetts.

School Wins Another Round In Ongoing Anti-Gay T-Shirt Case

SAN DIEGO, California - A federal court has ruled that a Southern California school had the power to suspend a student for wearing a T-shirt denouncing homosexuality, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

Tyler Chase Harper was kicked him out of class at Poway High School in 2004 for not removing the homemade T-shirt that said on the front "Be ashamed, our school embraced what God has condemned," and on the back "Homosexuality is shameful." The teen wore the shirt on the National Day of Silence in 2004. Harper, with the help of the Alliance Defense Fund sued the school and sought an injunction barring Poway from refusing to allow students to wear clothing with a political or social message. U.S. District Judge John A. Houston in his ruling cited a ruling last April by the Ninth Circuit that found Poway Unified School District had not violated Harper's First Amendment rights.

The Ninth Circuit panel addressed only the narrow issue of whether the dress code should be unenforced pending the outcome of the student's First Amendment suit. That part of the case as appealed to the US Supreme Court which will hear arguments next month. Houston was hearing the First Amendment applications of the lawsuit. Houston said that Harper's case had become moot because he has graduated from Poway, but agreed to hear it because Harper's sister is still a student at the school and shared his views on Gays. The school district argued that the issue was not one of free speech but of protecting the safety of students at Poway. The district noted that the year prior to the Harper incident the campus was disrupted by protests and conflicts between students over the Day of Silence.

Judge Houston's ruling agreed with the school's with that assessment that the issue was one of protecting students. Lawyers for the Harper family say they will appeal. Ultimately that aspect of the case may also reach the Supreme Court.

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POLITICS 2007

by Mark R. Kerr

Arizona Senate Bill 1468

According to statistics compiled and released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, 7,163 criminal incidents involving 8,380 offenses were reported in 2005 as a result of bias toward a particular race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity/national origin, or physical or mental disability.

Since 1991, a report on bias crimes has been compiled by the UCR Program. On Apr. 23, 1990, Congress passed the Hate Crime Statistics Act, which required the Attorney General to collect data "about crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity."

These responsibilities of developing the procedures for implementing, collecting, and managing hate crime data were assigned the tasks to the UCR Program. Under the direction of the Attorney General, the FBI Director and with the cooperation and assistance of many local and state law enforcement agencies, the UCR Program created a hate crime data collection system to comply with the congressional mandate.

In the fifteenth annual UCR report, Arizona ranked 14th nationally with a total of 173 cases reported.

Arizona has had a bias crimes statute on the books since 1997.

A.R.S. (Arizona Revised Statute) 13-702 maintains an "aggravated" or "increased sentencing" statute that provides that if a person is found to be responsible, and evidence satisfactory to the Court is presented, indicating the victim was intentionally selected because of race, religion, gender, National origin or sexual orientation (A.R.S. 41-1750), the court may impose a greater sentence of up to ten (10) additional years.

Unfortunately, Arizona's law only covers felony offenses.

A criminal's past background under current misdemeanor statues is not detailed and misdemeanor offenses, such as vandalism, graffiti and assault are commonly used to target, harass and intimidate such groups.

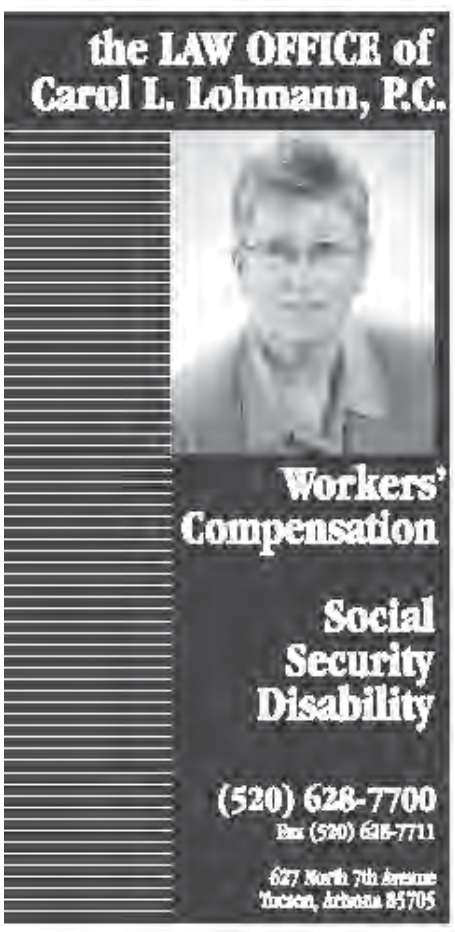
Fourteen legislators (six state Senators, eight state Representatives, four Republicans and ten Democrats) have introduced SB 1468.

If approved, SB 1468 would add A.R.S. 13-714, empowering the Courts to increase the sentence for a misdemeanor if the offense was committed toward a person because they are of a particular group, including those categories include race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

Additionally, with this classification, an offender's criminal history could be more detailed, allowing law enforcement to detect patterns and repeat offenses if SB 1468 is approved.

SB 1468 is a measure which would protect all citizens and strengthens a prosecutor's ability to prosecute all crimes if there is a preponderance of evidence. No thought crimes or limitation of free speech, this "law and order" bill deals only with the offense itself, after a conviction for the alleged offense has been obtained.

On Monday, Jan. 29, SB 1468 was first read in the Arizona Senate and awaits a second reading and being assigned to a committee for consideration.



Trainer From Bravo's Work Out, Dies

Doug Blasdell

LOS ANGELES - One of the Gay trainers who appeared on Bravo's reality television series Work Out died unexpectedly after being rushed to the hospital, reported advocate.com.

Bravo released the following statement on Wednesday (Jan. 24): "All of us at Bravo are deeply saddened by the terrible news of Doug Blasdell's untimely passing. He was an inspiring trainer, an exuberant colleague who made the gym a very fun place each and every day and was extraordinarily warm in all aspects of his life. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to his many friends and colleagues at this very difficult time."

In a magazine and online interview he talked about how much he enjoyed working on the Bravo show. "It's a beautiful thing because it really focuses on being Gay and the Gay community in general," he said. "The people they picked represent our community very well. I mean, there's drama, of course. There is in any community. But the three of us give different examples of what it is to be Gay. And none of it is negative." There has been no official report released on the cause of death. In July, AfterElton reported that Blasdell, a native Californian, was newly single after having been in a 14-year relationship.

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Out High School Football Player Dies In Car Crash

Anthony Castro

LOS ANGELES - Anthony Castro, a Southern California teen who came out to his high school football and wrestling teams, was killed in a car crash, OutSports.com reported on advocate.com. Castro was 19.

"Anthony was that rarest of people–an athlete out to his team," wrote Jim Buzinski of Outsports.com. "In Anthony's case, he was out in high school to his football and wrestling teams, our two most macho team sports. It took guts to take such a step, but Anthony never thought too much about it. He was not ashamed of who he was, and if you were uncomfortable, that was your problem."

Castro was a student in Banning, a conservative inland town about two hours east of Los Angeles. According to Buzinski, Castro had been rejected by his mother and wound up living with a legal guardian. Football, he said, was always a refuge for him. He played in a tournament at the Gay Games in Chicago where "he caught the go-ahead touchdown in the gold medal game and added an interception in the end zone to boot," Buzinski wrote. "Watching Anthony receive his gold medal from teammate Esera Tuaolo gave me goose bumps; two out jocks, separated by a generation but bonded nonetheless."

Federal Marriage Ban Shelved - For Now

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A proposed federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage nationwide has been shelved in light of the congressional takeover by the Democratic Party, Colorado's Pueblo Chieftain newspaper reported on advocate.com.

The proposal's sponsors, Sen. Wayne Allard and Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, both Colorado Republicans, said Monday (Jan. 22) they have no plans to reintroduce their anti-Gay legislation in the new Congress. "At this time, I haven't discussed it with anyone," Allard told the newspaper Thursday (Jan. 25). "If we thought there was a decent chance to bring it to the floor for debate, I would, but with the new Congress, I'm not sure we will ever have that opportunity." A Musgrave spokesman confirmed that the congresswoman would not introduce the legislation this year.

To amend the U.S Constitution, the proposal would have to win approval by two thirds of each house of Congress and be ratified by three fourths of the states. The proposal, which has been strongly supported by President Bush, has passed in the House a couple of times in recent years but has consistently stalled in the U.S Senate.

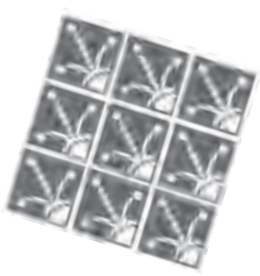
Isiah Washington Heads To Counseling

LOS ANGELES - After months of tension on the Grey's Anatomy set after costar Isaiah Washington spouted antiGay remarks, he will admit himself to counseling, possibly to save his job, reported advocate.com. "I regard this as a necessary step toward understanding why I did what I did and making sure it never happens again," Washington said in his statement. "I appreciate the fact that I have been given this opportunity, and I remain committed to transforming my negative actions into positive results, personally and professionally." According to Life & Style, Washington was spotted entering a counseling facility at 9 a.m. Wednesday (Jan. 24).

In Oct. 2006, Washington was allegedly involved in an altercation with cast member Patrick Dempsey after Washington used an antiGay epithet against cast mate T.R. Knight on the set. Knight later announced he was Gay after the altercation went public. On Jan. 15, talking to the press after the Golden Globes ceremony, Washington denied making the comment: "No, I did not call T.R. a faggot," he said. "Never happened; never happened." Later that night, Katherine Heigl, another cast mate, told Access Hollywood, "I'm going to be really honest right now: He needs to just not speak in public. Period. I'm sorry, that did not need to be said. I'm not OK with it." Days after the Golden Globes, Knight appeared on The Ellen DeGeneres Show to discuss the incident. "He referred to me as a 'faggot,'" Knight said on the show. "Everyone heard it."

The show's creator, Shonda Rhimes, released a statement Wednesday calling Washington's use of such language "shocking and dismaying" that "insulted not only Gays and Lesbians everywhere but anyone who has ever struggled for respect in a world that is not always accepting of difference." Rhimes said in the statement that the show's cast, crew, Touchstone Television, and ABC have been working to reach a resolution. "We applaud and encourage Isaiah's realization that he needs help and his subsequent choice to seek immediate treatment for his behavioral issues," she said.

In the past week Washington has met with both the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation and the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network.



Court: OK To Restrict Gay Men From Donating Sperm

OTTAWA - It does not violate the Charter of Rights to restrict Gay men from donating to sperm banks, says the Ontario Court of Appeal, reported canwest.com. The ruling rejected the claim of a Toronto Lesbian, known as Susan Doe, who argued that it violated her constitutional rights to exclude the semen of Gay men, including that of a Gay friend who was willing to help her become pregnant.

The ban, contained in the federal Processing of Semen for Assisted Contraception Regulations, is "rational and health based," said a three-judge panel. The federal regulations prohibit to use of semen from all men who have had sex with another man (MSM's), since 1977, to reduce the risk of infectious diseases such as HIV being spread to women and unborn children. "The medical evidence in the record establishes that there is a higher prevalence of HIV and hepatitis among men in the MSM category," said the decision. The ruling also upheld a restriction that also prevents men over 40 from donating to sperm banks because of an increased risk of genetic mutations. Assisted contraception means a reproductive technique performed on a woman for the purpose of becoming pregnant.

Susan Doe, 40, wanted the court to declare that federal regulations governing semen donations violate the equality guarantees of Gays and Lesbians in the Charter. She also argued they breach her right to life, liberty and security of the person by restricting her ability to determine who will be the father of her child. Susan Doe is in a long-term relationship with her partner, J. The couple already has a daughter, born to J., with sperm donated by a Gay man identified as D. Susan Doe was unable to conceive through self-insemination with D's sperm, so she turned to clinical assistance, which is subject to the regulations.

Men who are excluded can make a special application to the minister of health for the ban to be lifted. Their semen must be tested for infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis and then quarantined for six months and retested. Susan Doe unsuccessfully argued that it was unconstitutional that the federal rules impose restrictions on semen donated by men to women who aren't their sexual partners, a requirement she said is unfair to Lesbians. The regulations do not apply to men who are donating to a spouse or sexual partner, ostensibly because they are considered to be in a position of trust and can make their own decisions on whether the semen is safe.

Susan Doe maintained that knowing the donor should enough to be exempt for the regulations as well. "The main objection we had is that they unnecessarily require both D. and Susan Doe to go through a very rigorous regime, in circumstances where other people are not regulated at all," said Andrew Pinto, a lawyer for D. and the advocacy group Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere, which intervened on Susan Doe's side. "People in a known donor situation exercise care and they presumably wouldn't be choosing somebody who was going to be a risk factor."

Pinto said that he and Susan Doe's lawyers are considering asking the Supreme Court of Canada to review the decision. The ruling was released Jan. 12, but it received no coverage in the mainstream media at the time.

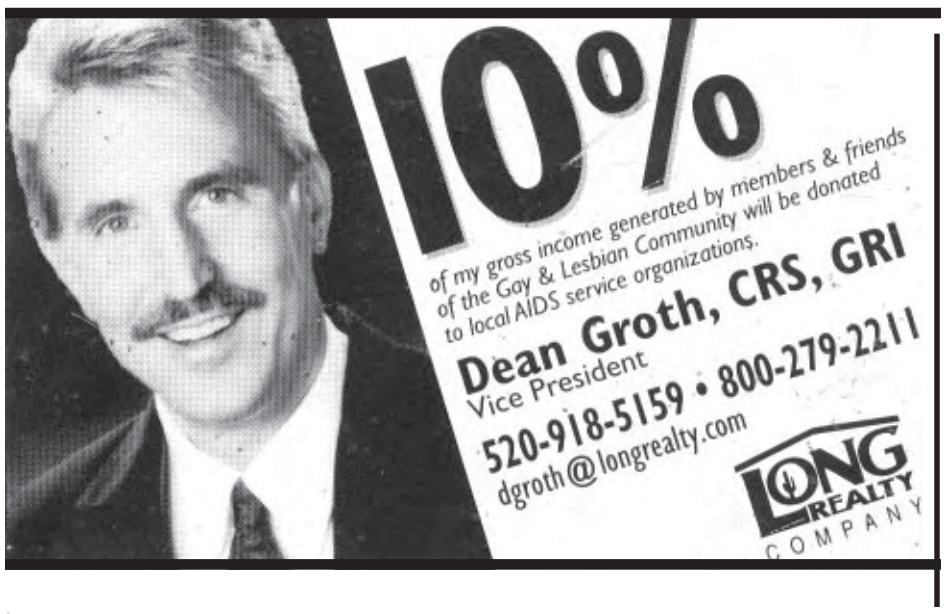
GLMA Urges FDA To Revise Blood Donation Policy

SAN FRANCISCO - The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA) Friday (Jan. 26) called for the Food and Drug Administration to revise its blood donation policy regarding men who have sex with men.

Within the past year the American Red Cross and other organizations that collect donated blood, including the American Association of Blood Banks and America's Blood Centers, have encouraged the FDA to review a policy in effect since the early 1980s that prohibits men who have sex with men "regardless of sexual activity, safer-sex practices or HIV status" from donating blood. The groups say that the likelihood of receiving a unit of HIV-infected blood is one in two million and that blood banks use nucleic acid testing, which detects HIV and hepatitis earlier and much more accurately than older testing methods.

GLMA Executive Director Joel Ginsberg stated, "Two decades ago, when the agent that causes AIDS was unknown, these guidelines might have made sense based on the very limited data available at that time. Today, however, all donated units of blood are tested, not just for antibodies to HIV, but for the presence of the virus itself. These guidelines, which prohibit any man who has had sex with another man since 1977, have the effect of excluding all Gay men from donating blood."

Ginsberg continued that the epidemiology of the HIV epidemic has changed and that heterosexual women are now the fastest-growing demographic group to be diagnosed with HIV infection. "Rational blood donation guidelines need to be founded upon the best evidence-based science and the behavior of individuals, not upon archaic data and preconceptions about groups of people. The FDA's current guidelines imply that Gay men are the primary agents for the spread of HIV, while giving heterosexuals a false sense of security about their sexual behavior and responsibility. These are two very dangerous messages for the FDA to be reinforcing," Ginsberg concluded, "We urge the FDA to revise these outdated and unscientific blood donation guidelines immediately."



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Syphilis is transmitted through vaginal, anal or oral sex. It can also be transmitted from a pregnant mother to her baby.

If left untreated, syphilis can cause brain and heart damage and may lead to death.

Symptoms:
- A **painless sore** in your vagina, rectum, mouth or on your penis.
- A **rash** on your face, arms, chest, legs, the palms of your hands, or the soles of your feet.
- Some people have **no symptoms** at all.
- A **blood test is the best** way to find out if you have syphilis

For testing call the Pima County Health Department: 624-8272.

For more information call Sedona or Roberto: 628-7223.

¡Casos de sífilis están en aumento en Tucson!
¡Hazte un examen!

Sífilis es *curable*

Sífilis es transmitida por sexo anal, vaginal o oral. Y es posible que una mujer puede pasar la infección a su bebe.

Si sífilis no esta tratada a tiempo, sífilis puede causar daño a cerebro o corazón y en veces puede matar a la persona.

Síntomas de sífilis:
- Una **llaga** en la piel, llamada chancro. Generalmente no duele.
- Un **salpullido** en todo el cuerpo, la boca, las palmas de las manos.
- Alguna persona **no tiene sintomas** Un **examen de sangre es la única forma** a detectar la infección.

Para hacerte un examen llama al departamento de salud, 624-8272.

Si tienes preguntas llama a Sedona o a Roberto al 628-7223.

NOTES FROM THE FOR-REAL SIDE

Breaking Point

by Lee Thorn

I'm wondering if we're approaching a breaking point in American history, a point where something's got togive and where the consequences of the rupture could be catastrophic and their limits unpredictable. I see a complete disconnect between what the newly empowered Democrats think the country wants from them and what the admittedly few people I talk to about politics expect from them.

I see a complete disconnect between what the political polls say people want and what the actual people I talk to want. Two possible explanations come to mind: The polls are conducted by the media which are owned by the corporations which control the government, and they simply can't be trusted. Alternatively, the media are playing it straight, playing it right down the middle, but the people I happen to talk politics with are a bunch of raving radicals.

The incoming Dems keep touting ethics reform and minimum wage. Swell. What I'm hearing that people want – at a minimum – is health care for all Americans and an end to the war. Not expanded health insurance. Not health care for children. Health care for everybody. Not a new way forward in Iraq. Not a gradual this or a gradual that. An end to the war.

Let me point out two media lines, lines that have become staples and lines that make the media seem to be less than honest brokers. The first concerns Bush's illegal warrantless wiretaps. The media, with amazing consistency, characterize the issue as a conflict between privacy and security. This just ain't so.

The government always has the right to violate your privacy if it can get a warrant. Privacy therefore isn't the issue. The issue is whether or not the government can secretly violate anyone's privacy and maintain the secrecy of that violation forever. The issue is a conflict between holding government accountable, monitoring and documenting its behavior, and letting it operate is secret and keep its secrets in perpetuity.

The second questionable media line, taken every bit as consistently as the first, is that extremism is a bad thing per se. If you're living in a country where the corporations have bought the government and are crushing the life out of the middle class, extremism is the only way the workers have of getting out from under.

If these disconnects I'm hearing are real and the media are out to an extended lunch, that brings us to the question of what will happen if the Democrats fail to deliver between now and the next presidential election.

What if we're still, at that point, contending with a lack of health care and a war? Obviously, it would be lunacy to vote the Republicans back in, but wouldn't it be equally lunatic to vote for the Democrats?

A friend of mine whose dad is dying of cancer and is unable to afford his medication wonders if it wouldn'tbe time for another American Revolution. His suggestion got me to thinking about whether it's even legal tocall for the violent overthrow of the government. I don't remember my civics well enough to know, but wouldn't it be ironic if a government that came into being via a violent overthrow had a law against advocating a violent overthrow?

Whatever the law may be, a violent overthrow isn't something I'd advocate, no matter how badly the Democrats might bungle things. For one thing, there's no way of knowing if the government you'll end up with will be any better than the one you've overthrown. Consider Iraq.

There are a lot of people who will consider the failure of the Dems to provide universal health care and end the war, both in the next two years, as proof that our electoral system, our democratic system, has come to a dead end. My suggestion is that those who feel that way should immediately start thinking of what their response will be. I'm tending away from violent overthrow and I'm also tending away from demonstrations.

Demonstrations in the civil rights mode are fine for raising awareness. At this point anyone who works for wages is probably sufficiently aware that he's getting screwed. We ought to be thinking of legal ways to disrupt commerce. Maybe some radical nerds of cyber space could come up with ideas along these lines. If they could figure out a way for the masses to shut down the stock market we might be home free. After a few days of disrupted trading, I can easily imagine the CEO of the stock exchange saying, "Okay, you want health care and an end to the war. No problem. I'll call the politicians and get it done. Now let us get back to making money."

(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.)

View From The Rock

It is always fun to watch the little children at Cornerstone our church. They have so much energy, so much love for everyone that they'll run up and give someone a hug or sit in someone¹s lap. One little boy is so happy, because he has a tie and shoes just like the Pastor's.

The children recently stood in front of the congregation and sang and signed some of the words to "Jesus Loves Me." "Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong. They are weak, but he is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so." These children do not doubt that Jesus loves them, and they pass this love on to others. It should be the same for us. We should not doubt that Jesus loves us. "We love because he first loved us." (1John 4:19) We at Cornerstone Fellowship pray that you know the love of Jesus Christ just like these children do.

Cornerstone Fellowship: cornerstonefellowshiptucson.com, is located at 2902 N. Geronimo, is committed to sharing His love and the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all persons regardless of race, culture, social standing, sexual orientation,or gender identity. Sunday worship services are held at the church at 10:30 a.m. In addition, Cornerstone offers a 6:30 p.m. Wednesday evening Bible study at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St. For more information, please call the church at (520) 622-4626 or E-mail: pastorpaul@qwest.net.

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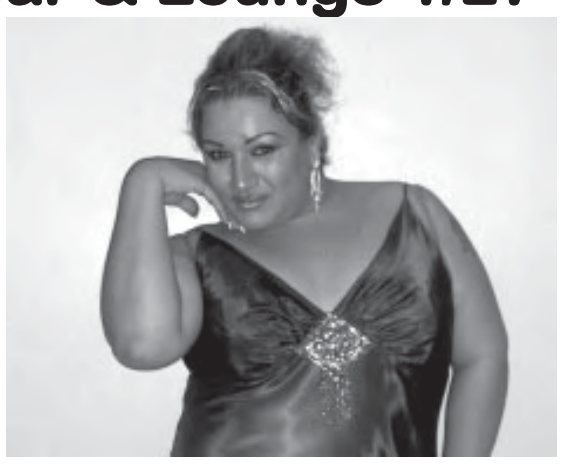
292-9151
www.wolmcc.org

Rose's Trasvesti Show At The Hollywood Bar & Lounge 1/27



HOROSCOPES

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February wraps itself around our hearts and promises love to the lovelorn, fun to the funlorn and glitter to the shopworn. Send Mars a smoochie valentine and get ready for your close-up, lover.

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Welcome February this week and put in the extra effort in your career. Even a small push will have great impact. Senior staff sits up and takes notice. Who knows who you can impress? Proud Rams are often too much energy for too little space. But now this is your secret advantage. Blow the lid off the place and let others pick up the pieces. You have bigger things to tackle.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Queer Bulls will not only be able to enjoy good times with various far flung friends, they will also be able to take their jolly show on the road to new and strange destinations. Mars encourages you to travel extensively through February. Spread your love and cheer across the hemispheres to all comers. Hmmm, isn't that the way you usually work?

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

What (or who) is stirring your soup now? Pink Twins have lots of extra oomph in their lovelife and not a moment too soon. Mars gives you an extra jolt of sensuality where you can pursue and be pursued with equal vigor. Enjoy the February valentines frenzy while you can and feast from many tasting trays. Too too soon you will revert back to your usual finicky appetite.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

If you yearn for a long term commitment, Mars gives you ample opportunity to find it all through February. But don't go for the fast and cheap, tempting though it may be. Pink Crabs should carefully consider what is most important in a partnership and not compromise on the details. Plan your move with an eye to something with a longer shelf life, honey.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

If your desk is filled to overflowing with paper, tackle it now as Mars moves into Capricorn. Not only will you clear your path to work accolades, you also feel less depressed about it. Proud Lions may dream of rowdy, fun times but their hours will be better spent on the nitty gritty. As boring as it may sound, your valentine's month will be filled with jobs well done! Oh goodie.

VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

What is it about queer Virgins now that gets everyone's blood pumping? Maybe its because they sure know how to have a good Gay time. Don't sit home and phone it in as usual. Hop on the party train and don't get off until the last stop. February now brings a light flirtation that can lead to a full blown romance. And that is better than half!

LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

There is energy buzzing around your hive through valentine's month. Proud Libras are not only domestic divas, they are also adept at massive renovations and reconstructions. Have an idea? Whatever you want to see sitting on your plate, be sure to draw up the plans early and set things in motion. I bet it will be more than the usual stuffed bird. Or am I wrong?

SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

You usually strive to be distant and diplomatic but as Mars moves into Cap, queer Scorps are apt to use their words to manipulate and control the group dynamic. This is not a bad thing. In fact you can use this talent to lure any valentine you choose into your lair. The trick will be to keep them there once they have entered. Have you tried rope? I mean champagne!

SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

Ka-ching! Mars in Capricorn makes you a successful capitalist, at least through February. Toss off the chains of your thriftiness and enjoy life. Gay Archers may find that money becomes an intoxicating lubricant that greases the wheels of their love life. How much of it can you spread around without slipping and falling? Oh, you should be so lucky!

CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

Even the shyest of pink Caps cannot help but feel a loosy goosy push when Mars moves into their sign. Not only do you become the center of attention, you yourself grab the limelight. What a nice change of pace. But don't strut and fret your hour upon the stage. Use this time to make several good connections and turn on a few new bulbs. Wear sunglasses to ward off glare.

AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

Aqueerians are not only comfortable in their own skin, they are apt to show it off now. Don't be bogged down by others expectations or fears. Don't be saddled with a bunch of old baggage. There is nothing as beautiful as confidence. You are sick and tired of hiding a bunch of secrets. Mars sez let it all hang out and wave in the wind. Where's my camera?

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

Mars in Cap encourages you to be more sociable. You can discover something surprising or shocking about yourself in the process. Guppies can benefit from swimming in new social pools or increasing the depth of their current pond. Look up a few old friends this February. You never know what they might be up to, or underneath.

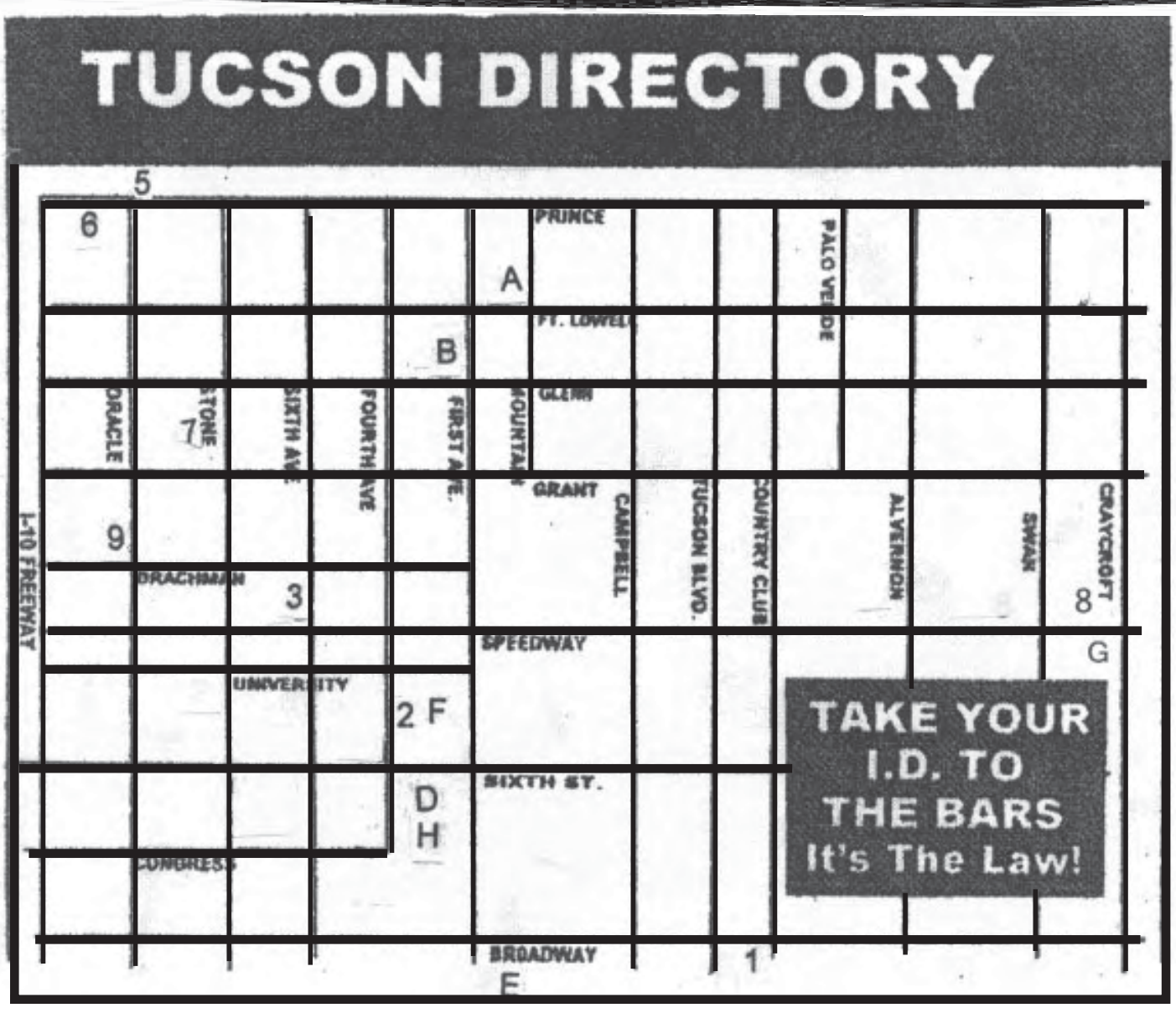
Officers Sentenced In Mississippi Gay Beating

JACKSON, Mississippi - State narcotics agents in Mississippi who pleaded guilty last year to assaulting two Gay men in 2004 have been sentenced to a year's house arrest, the PlanetOut Network reported. John Forman and Greg Reynolds of the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics were forced to resign upon admitting federal charges of violating the victims' civil rights.

Despite pressure from Assistant U.S. Attorney Paige Fitzgerald, who argued that the men be given jail time, Magistrate James Sumner on Tuesday (Jan. 23) sentenced Reynolds to a month in jail and both men to a year of home incarceration. "I know the sentences do not suit the Department of Justice and the victims," Sumner told the Associated Press, adding that he was satisfied with their resignation. The men also agreed not to seek any law enforcement positions for 18 months following sentencing.

In Aug. 2004, Forman and Greg Reynolds confronted James Buitt, then 42, and Michael Mathis, then 47, outside a Gay bar in Jackson, Miss., and hurled homophobic slurs before violently attacking them. Buitt received a broken nose and a spiral fracture to his arm, while Mathis sustained a broken hand. Narcotics agents filed numerous charges against Buitt and Mathis after the attack, but the charges were dismissed in court, their attorney, Robert Smith, told the Sun-Herald newspaper. Mathis and Buitt have brought a civil suit against the defendants, which has not yet been heard.

TUCSON DIRECTORY



Community Bars

1. **THE BIZ**
   2900 E. Broadway 318-4838
2. **IBT'S**
   616 N. 4th Ave. 882-3053
3. **VENTURE-N**
   1239 N. 6th Ave. 882-8224
5. **WOODY'S**
   3710 N. Oracle Road, 292-6702
6. **HOWL AT THE MOON**
   915 W. Prince Rd. 293-7339
7. **YARD DOG SALOON**
   2449 N. Stone, 624-3858
8. **COLORS FOOD & SPIRITS**
   5305 E. Speedway 323-1840
9. **HOLLYWOOD**
   1601 N. Oracle Rd.,628-3519

Community Organizations

A. **MCC - METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH**
3269 N. Mountain - 292-9151

B. **CORNERSTONE FELLOWSHIP**
2902 N. Geronimo - 622-4626

D. **WINGSPAN -** 425 E. 7th St. - 624-1779

E. **S.A.A.F. -** 375 S. Euclid Ave. - 628-7223

F. **RAINBOW PLANET** COFFEE HOUSE
606 N. 4th Ave. - 620-1770

G. **TIHAN -Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network**
1101 N. Craycroft, Ste 301. 299-6647

H. **EON YOUTH CENTER** 620-6245

Non Bar Calendar

Wednesday, January 31
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm. Canasta hosted by Merlin and Lee at 207-5336. MSN Canasta is played every Wednesday at 7pm, but check back here for the specific host.

Friday, February 2
Tucson Prime Timers Cocktails - 5:30 - 7:00. Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Sunday, February 4
Tucson Prime Timers Brunch - Noon, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Monday, February 5
Tucson Prime Timers Lunch - 12:30 P.M. The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

Friday, February 9
Tucson Prime Timers Cocktails - 5:30 PM, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Saturday, February 10
Tucson Prime Timers Business Meeting - 11 AM, Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St.

Sunday, February 11
Tucson Prime Timers Brunch, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Monday, February 12
Tucson Prime Timers Lunch - 12:30 P.M. The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

Friday, February 16
Valentine's Social sponsored by TIHAN and COPE at the El Pueblo Activity Center, 101 W. Irvington Road, Bldg. #6. 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. RSVP: Glenn Wisch/COPE, 798-1772 ext. 33

Tucson Prime Timers Cocktails - 5:30 PM, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Sunday, February 18
Tucson Prime Timers Brunch - Noon, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Monday, February 19
Tucson Prime Timers Lunch - 12:30 P.M., The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

Friday, February 23
Tucson Prime Timers Cocktails - 5:30 PM, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Sunday, February 25
Tucson Prime Timers Brunch - Noon, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Monday, February 26
Tucson Prime Timers Lunch - 12:30 P.M., The Wildcat House, 1800 N. Stone Ave.

Millions At Stake In Lesbian Adult Adoption Case

PORTLAND, Maine - A law that permits adult adoption is at the center of a legal dispute in two states and involves millions of dollars, reported 365Gay.com.

In 1991 Olive F. Watson used the law to adopt her partner of 14 years, Patricia A. Spado. Even though the couple lived in Connecticut Watson owned a summer home in Maine. Watson was the daughter of former IBM executive Thomas J. Watson Jr., who was the CEO of the company from 1956 to 1971 and built it from a small cash register maker to a computer giant.

Now Watson, Spado and the Watson estate are battling in court over whether Spado is entitled to a share of the late Thomas Watson's estate. When Watson adopted Spado there were no same-sex partnership agreements in the country and Watson believed it would provide Spado with security if anything happened to her. But a year later the couple broke up.

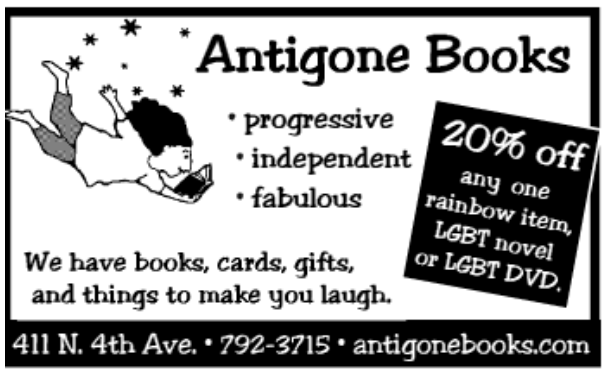
When Thomas Watson's widow died in 2004 his fortune went into a trust and her 18 grandchildren became eligible to receive income from two trusts until they turned 35, at which time they would receive the principal outright. Several months later a lawyer representing Spado notified the trust that there was a 19th grandchild, Spado, and that she also was entitled to a share of the trust.

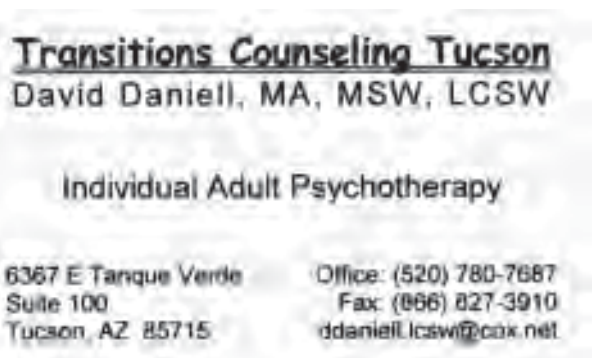
A probate court in Connecticut where the will was filed ruled that Spado was not a grandchild and not entitled to any month. The decision is now on appeal in the state's superior court. Meanwhile, the trustees of the estate went to court in Maine to have the adoption overturned. Ruling on a technicality a court said that Spado and Watson were not legally residents of Maine when the adoption was granted.

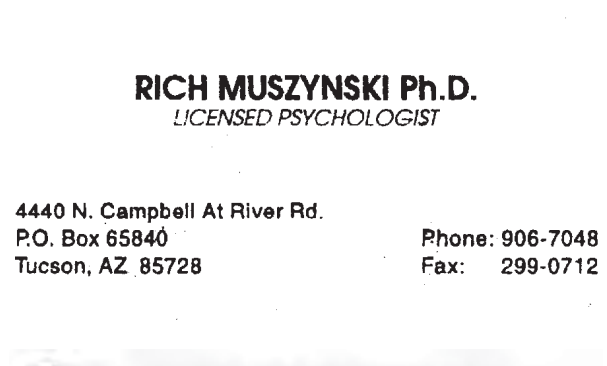
Spado appealed to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, and it overturned the ruling and sent the case back to lower court. The case will be heard next month. In papers filed with the court, the Watson family attorney argues that if a ruling is favorable to Spado it could have "far-reaching and national implications."

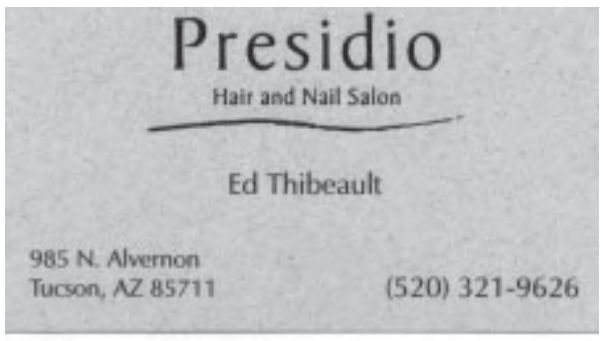
"It would mean that parties from anywhere in the country could come to Maine and adopt their sexual partner to manufacture inheritance rights for that person, even if neither party was a Maine resident and their state of residency would not have permitted the adoption," the court filing argues.

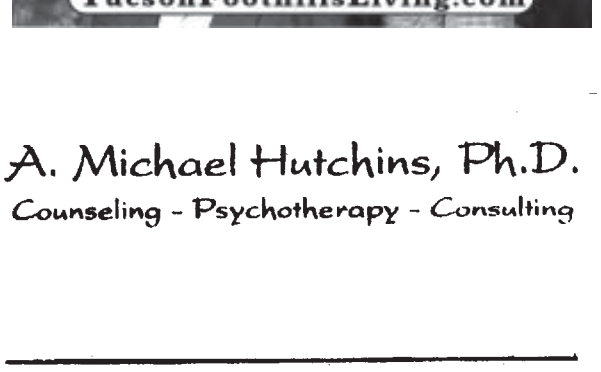
TUCSON RESOURCES - TUCSON RESOURCES - TUCSON RESOURCES

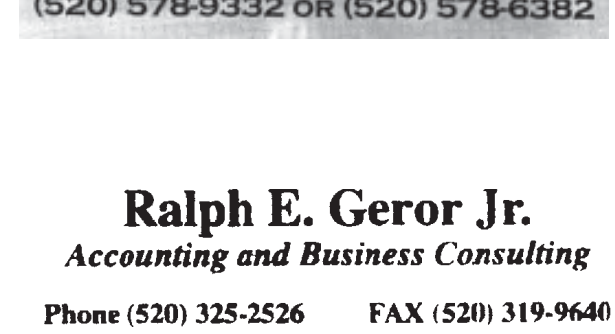












Gay Cop To Train Afghan Police

BILLINGS, Montana - An openly Gay Missoula, Montana police officer is taking a one year leave of absence to help train Afghanistan's National Police Force, 365Gay.com reported. Scott Oak, who serves as Missoula's liaison to the city's LGBT community tells the Billings Gazette he was approached by the State Department after seeing press coverage of his appointment as the city's first liaison officer.

A large part of his role in Afghanistan will be training officers in diversity and human and civil rights. Oak told the Gazette that he hopes his year in Kabul will ''enlighten them about cultural diversity.'' He said some of his friends think he's crazy. But, ''Ideally, I think that by going over there and helping out as a civilian instructor it will make for a smoother transition and allow America to pull out of there more quickly,'' Oak added. ''I want to go experience another culture without breaking my commitment to public service. I think I'll be fulfilling that by helping to build a police department kind of from the ground up.''

He said that his only regret is having to leave his partner of 12 years and the teenage foster son they are raising. ''In all that time, the longest we've been apart is 12 months,'' Oak told the paper. ''They'll both receive a lot of support through the foster program and from our families, but it's still going to be difficult on us.'' Missoula Mayor John Engen says Oak's job will be waiting for him when he returns. Another officer, Nicole Pifari, has been named the interim liaison officer.

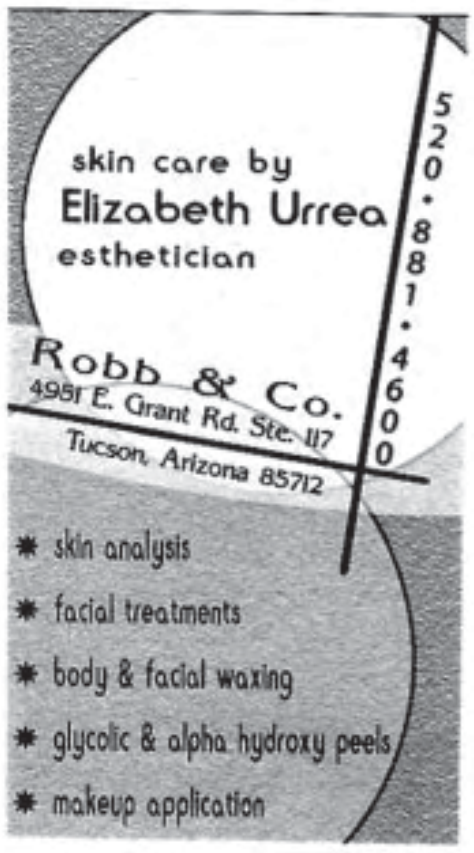
Ending the violence.

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

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

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

www.wingspan.org



SYPHILIS IS BACK!
&
HIV NEVER LEFT!

If you have had sex, you could be at risk for **Syphilis, HIV** and other **STD's.**
Although, condoms used correctly each and every time can reduce your risk, why not go the extra mile.
Protect yourself, your health and your community by getting tested today.

Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic Schedule
Theresa Lee Health Center
332 S. Freeway
Tucson, AZ 85745
(520) 624-8272

Monday	12:30 – 3:30 P.M.
Tuesday	8:00 – 10:30 A.M.
Tuesday	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

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1175.

DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

THE BIZ - Open 3pm-2am; $2 Pitchers til 10pm and Rotating Shot Specials all night; Latin Music with live DJ at 9:30pm. Get ready!!! L Word Season 4 begins Jan. 7th at 8pm!

COLORS - Open 11m - 11pm Champagne Brunch 11am - 2pm with choice of complimentary mimosa, Bloody Mary or Screwdriver. Happy Hour 4-7pm $3 Skyy Cocktails, $2.50 Domestics and well. Full menu served 2-10pm. Nightly dinner specials. Live music performed by Dickie Steed during Brunch (11:30-2:30)

HOLLYWOOD - Open 5:00pm. Happy Hour 5-7pm $1.75 well, domestic bottles and draft.

HOWL AT THE MOON -Open at 10am. $2.50 Smirnoff Vodkas all day. Free Texas Hold-'Em Poker Tournaments at 4:00, and 7:00 pm. Play for points and prizes - no cash involved.

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.Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excl spec events); Brunch 11:30am-2:30pm; Back Pocket Patio Bar 2pm til 2am. Beer Bust 2-7pm; Bar-B-Que 5-9pm; Karaoke with Michael D. 9p.m.; DJ Jeff in the Back Pocket 9pm; Drag Bingo every other Sunday 8-9pm Watch for special events.

YARD DOG - Open 10am - 2am. Patio Bar opens at 7pm.

MONDAY

THE BIZ - Open 3pm-10pm; Drink what you want with ½ priced Happy Hour. Poke-Her Monday! Free card lessons 5pm. Free Texas Hold-'em Tourney at 6pm; Prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd Places. Happy Hour pricing & Free Food

COLORS - Closed on Mondays.

HOLLYWOOD - Open 5pm. Happy Hour 5pm to 7pm. $1.75 well, domestic bottles, draft.

HOWL AT THE MOON – Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour all day & night with $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. Kitchen closed. $3 taco & tostada bar 4-8 pm. GLBT Movie Nite with shows at 6 & 8 pm,. Free pool all day.

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 Martinis 4-8pm..

WOODY'S - Open Noon til 2am. Happy Hour Noon-8pm (excl spec events) Karaoke with Michael D. 9pm

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am. 50¢ off any Top Shelf Rum until 8pm. Beer Bust 4-8pm. Patio Bar opens 7pm

TUESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 3pm-10pm; Drink What You Want with ½ priced Happy Hour. Monthly Wine Tasting on 2nd Tuesday of every month at 5:30pm. Please RSVP by the first Monday of the Month. Wine bottles will be for sale after the tasting at a special discounted price.

COLORS - Open 4-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7 $3 Skyy cocktails, $2.50 Domestics and well. Nightly dinner specials.

HOLLYWOOD - Open 5pm. Happy Hour 5pm to 7pm. $1.75 well, domestic bottles, draft. Karaoke 8pm-12am.

HOWL AT THE MOON – Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. Kitchen open 4-9pm. Free Texas Hold-Em Poker for women only at 6:30 p.m. Play for points and prizes - no cash involved. Tequila Nite with $2.50 well tequila & margaritas, 75¢ off call tequilas.

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 7pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Spaghetti Nite (2nd Tuesday every month $2.00).

WOODY'S - Open Noon til 2am. Happy Hour Noon-8pm (excl spec events) 80s Nite with Alex 8-close

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am.50¢ off any Top Shelf Tequila until 8pm Beer Bust 4-8pm. Patio Bar Opens 7pm.

WEDNESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 3pm-2am; Drink what You Want with ½ priced Happy Hour 3-8pm; 18 to Party, 21 to Drink! 18 & Over Night w/DJ Shorty at 9:30pm! Rotating Shot Specials all night.

COLORS - Open 4-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3 Skyy cocktails, $2.50 Domestics and well. Full menu served 4-10pm. Nightly dinner specials.

HOLLYWOOD - Open 5pm. Happy Hour 5pm to 7pm. $1.75 well, domestic bottles, draft. Movie Night. First show 6pm, Second show 8pm with movie theatre popcorn and hot dogs.

HOWL AT THE MOON – Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, Kitchen open 4 - 9 pm. Free Pool all day and night. Free Texas Hold-'Em Poker Tournament at 6:30 pm for Women Only and open tournaments at 7 and 10. Play for points & prizes - no cash involved. Great way to learn the game or sharpen your skills.

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 9am. Patio 7pm. Free Pool til 4pm. $2.75 Cuervo Margaritas 4-8pm

WEDNESDAY CALENDAR CONTINUED

WOODY'S - Open Noon til 2am; Happy Hour Noon-8pm (Excl Spec Events); Chili Dog Buffet 5-9pm; Underwear/Fetish/Leather Party with Alex and Blake 9-close - $1 off all drinks for those who participate (50¢ off draught/schnapps) Back Pocket Patio Bar open 9pm-close.

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am.50¢ off any Top Shelf Vodka until 8pm Beer Bust 4-8pm. Patio Bar Opens 7pm.

THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open3pm-2am; Drink What You Want with ½ priced Happy Hour 3-8pm; 'Thirsty Thursday' with Tori Steele & Friends! Drag show starts at 9:30pm with Tori Steele, Janee Starr, Diana Flair and weekly special guests. $2 Pitchers and Rotating Shot Specials. Followed by a new Surprise guest DJ!

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

HOLLYWOOD - Open 5pm. Happy Hour 5pm to 7pm. $1.75 well, domestic bottles, draft. Stand-up Comedy Night - open mike 8-10p.m. Register 7pm. Prizes for winners.

HOWL AT THE MOON – Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. Kitchen open 4 - 9 pm. Karaoke with Rosemary at 8:30pm. $2.50 Mexican Beers all night, $1.00 Jello shots.

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 7pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Pool Tourney 7pm. $3 entry. Special prices for players. Steak Nite (3rd Thursday during summer). Bring your own or get it here $6.00.

WOODY'S - Open Noon-2am; Happy Hour Noon-8pm (excl Spec Events); Free Pool all day. Nacho Chip Buffet 5-9pm; $1 PBRs Longnecks and $2 Tecate Longnecks; Back Pocket Bar open 8-close.

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am.50¢ off any Top Shelf Bourbon til 8pm. Beer Bust 4-8pm. Patio Bar opens 7pm.

FRIDAY

THE BIZ - Open 3pm-2am; Drink What You Want with ½ priced Happy Hour 3-8pm; Rotating weeks Latin or Hip Hop Music with DJ Shorty at 9:30pm. Rotating Shot Specials all night!

COLORS - Open 4pm-1am. Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3 Skyy cocktails, $2.50 Domestics and Well . Full menu served 4-10pm. Nightly Dinner Specials. 6:30-9:30pm. "Hot Jazz, Cool Martinis" with Susan Artemis and Craig Faltin. 10pm "Guys & Dolls" hosted by Lucinda Holliday. 21 and over.

HOLLYWOOD - Open 5pm. Happy Hour 5pm to 7pm. $1.75 well, domestic bottles, draft. Two for One 9pm - 12am. With midnight specials.

HOWL AT THE MOON – Open at 3 pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. Kitchen open 4 - 9 pm. $4.50 Fried Chicken dinner with fries and slaw. Free Two-Step lessons with Amanda every other Friday. Call 293-7339 for schedule. DJ Pat plays the best of contemporary and classic country 8:30 to close. Kitchen open 9 pm - midnight serving late night munchies menu.

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

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio open 7pm. Free Pool til 4pm.

WOODY'S - Open Noon-2am; Happy Hour Noon-8pm (excl spec events); Martini Happy Hour 5-8pm-$1 off all call Martinis; Back Pocket Patio Bar open 8-close. DJ Jeff in the Back Pocket 9-close; Watch for special events.

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am.50¢ off any Top Shelf Gin until 8pm. Beer Bust 4-8pm. Patio Bar Opens 7pm

SATURDAY

THE BIZ - $1 Draught Beers until 10pm & $4 Finlandia Vodka Red Bull drinks until 11pm; Dance Party with DJ Shorty at 9:30 mixing it up and playing what you want to hear!

COLORS - Open 4pm-11pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3 Skyy cocktails, $2.50 Domestics and Well. Full menu served 4-10pm. Nightly dinner specials. "Pacific Breeze" performs 7-10pm.

HOLLYWOOD - Open 5pm. Happy Hour 5pm to 7pm. $1.75 well, domestic bottles, draft.

HOWL AT THE MOON – Open 11:00am. Happy Hour 11am-8pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. Kitchen open 11am-9pm. $2.50 Capt. Morgan or Mailbu. Cheeseburger & Fries Special for $4.50 all day. Best burgers around. Learn to plau Texas Hold-Em Poker Lessons at noon with a friendly game to follow - no money involved. DJ playing dance mix or check our ad for special events. Kitchen open 9pm to midnight serving late night munchies menu.

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.

WOODY'S - Open 10am-2am; Happy Hour 10am-8pm (excl spec events); Steak/Fish Dinner in the Back Pocket 5-9pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar open 5-close. Live Jazz with Arthur Migliazza in the Back Pocket 6-9pm; DJ Jeff in the Back Pocket 9-close. Watch for special events.

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am. Beer Bust 4-8pm. $1.25 glass, $2.25 pitcher. Patio Bar Opens 7pm.

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

Saturday, Feb. 3
Howl At The Moon - Texas Hold-Em Poker lessons at noon (that's right, partner, I said High Noon). A friendly game for the students will follow the lessons so you can try out your new skills.

Saturday, Feb. 3
Howl At The Moon - Benefit drag show to help send Somora DeHuni to Miss Gay Arizona. Show starts at 9:30 pm, $5.00 cover.

Sunday, Feb. 4
Howl At The Moon - Super Bowl Party here! Munch on free dogs, chili, and chips as you cheer on the Bears or Colts. $2.50 domestic longnecks and pints during the game, shot specials all night.

VENTURE-N - Mark, Michael and Brian are hosting thew Super Bowl Party here. The fun starts at 4:00 p.m.

YARD DOG - Superbowl Party at 4:00 p.m. Hot food and snacks.

Saturday, Feb. 10
Howl At The Moon - Too Much Information is here playing classic rock, blues, and dance favorites. This is a great band–don't miss them. 9pm. $5.00 cover

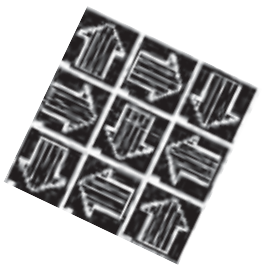
Saturday, Feb. 17
Howl At The Moon - It's Touché's birthday! Join in the celebration–TexMex band starting at 9 pm. No cover.

Saturday, Feb. 24
Howl At The Moon - IDOLS celebrity impersonators show starting at 10 pm. Madonna, Michael Jackson, Reba, Cher, and more. Hosted by Lucinda Holliday. $5.00 cover.

Sunday, Feb. 25
Howl At The Moon - It's Oscar Night! Predict the winners with Buzztime network. Play movie trivia before the show. Make a night of it! $2.00 champagne, $2.50 mimosas, and $3.00 house wines.

Saturday, Mar. 3
Howl At The Moon - NCC Entertainer of the Year Pageant Show. Special guest performances as well as the contestants vying for the title. 9pm. $5.00 cover.

Saturday, Mar. 17
Howl At The Moon - Royalty Show! All nine performers will be former Miss Gay Tucson title holders. This will be one hell of a show–plan now to attend! $5.00 cover



Arts and Entertainment

February 2 - 3
Invisible Theatre presents the world-renowned Broadway star Sanda Reaves-{hillips who lreturns to Tucson to take audiences on an unforgettable musical journey from Top Top Alley in South Carolina to Tin Pan Alley and the Great White Way in New York City. From Blues to Broadway and All That Jazz at the Berger Performing Arts Center. Call the Invisible Theatre 520-882-9721 for reservations and times.

Now Playing Thru February 3
Arizona Theatre Company presents Stephen Temperly's 'Souvenir' a the Temple of Music and Art, 330 S. Scott Avenue. Call for times, tickets and reservations 622-2823.

Now Playing Thru February 4
Beowulf Alley Theatre presents 'The Woman In Black' adapted by Stephen Mallatratt from the book by Susan Hill - one of the great ghost stories of all time. Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays 7:30 p.m.; Sundays 1:30 p.m. Preview performances January 11 & 12. 11 South Sixth Avenue. Tickets $18 with discounts; special on-line pricing at www.beowulfalley.org.

Now Playing Thru Feb. 4
"I Hate Hamlet" presented by the Live Theatre Workshop, 5317 E. Speedway. 7:30 Thursdays-Saturdays; 3:00 p.m. Sundays.

NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

TUCSON KNIGHT OWLS - (T.K.O)
We are a non profit social club that is open to every one. T.K.O. contributes to the fellowship and support of the community, and openly invites new members. Monthly meetings occur on the first Saturday of every month at 12:30 pm., followed by a beer bust from 2pm to 6pm., at our home bar the Yard Dog saloon. You will experience fun, food, and friends, because we're family caring about people. Please come and join us!

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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.

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

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

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

The TUCSON Chapter of PRIME TIMERS WORLDWIDE invites Gay or Bisexual men and their admirers to join and share Prime Timers fellowship. We welcome mature men (and admirers) who wish to become involved with planned and future Prime Timers (TPT) activities. Meetings luncheons and dinners are held monthly. For dates, times and information call 298-6727, leave name and phone number. Tucsonpt@primetimersww,org

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BEARS OF THE OLD PUEBLO – a social club for bears and bigger, more robust men (and of course, those who prefer their company). For more info, Call the Bears Hotline (520)790-5775 or write P.O. Box 43910, Tucson, AZ 85733-3910 of visit our website at www.botop.com All are welcome to our general meetings/potlucks on the 2nd Friday of every month, at 3202 E. 1st St. (the "Ward 6" Office Bldg.) Just south of Speedway & East of Country Club. PotLuck Dinner begins at 6:30 and the monthly meeting follows at 7:15 p.m.

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

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

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

T-SQUARES Lesbian and Gay Square Dance Club, dances Tuesdays. from 6:30-9 p.m. at Cornerstone Fellowship Social Hall, 2902 N. Geronimo (Northwest of 1st Ave. and Glenn). No experience, no partner required! For more info contact David at 325-6739, or visit www.azgaydance.org

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 Street. 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, contact 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 Wednesday at 845 S. Craycroft Road at 6pm. Tucson Pride events: Pride Week, Gay West and

Pride Weekend. Inquiries about support groups and individual needs should be directed to Wingspan and other local agencies listed here. For more information call 622-3200 or visit the TPI website at www.tucsonpride.com

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

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

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

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; Dezert Girlz (MTF Support) meets 2nd Mondays at 7pm; Dezert Boyz (FTM Support) meets 3rd Tuesdays at 7pm. Also serving partners, youth, intersex, service providers and allies. Call (520)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)

GLSEN - Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network meets first Thursday of every month at 4:30pm at Wingspan, 425 E.7th Street. 743-4800.

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 Thursday evenings 7-10pm at the Historic Y, corner of University Blvd. And 5th Ave. Join us!! Call 304-1758 for more info.

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

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

LGBT Buddhist Meditation Group. Join us for two 20 minute silent sitting meditations, and reading from Buddhist Spiritual text and discussion. Bring a friend and a pillow or cushion. Takes place every Sunday from 10-11:30AM at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St. Donations accepted. Contact Maurice Grossman for more info. 323-2293.

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

MEN'S HIKING CLUB - A peer-run MEN's outdoor club for hiking, biking, camping, boating etc, is now up and running in the Tucson area. To join, go to SAGE-Tucson-subscribe @yahoogroups.com. See you on the trails.

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, AZ. (Map available at www.desertdominion,org) For those who are kinky or just curious. No fee, contributions are appreciated, but not required.

The new MAN TO MAN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY is meeting about honoring the spiritual side of ourselves. It is the men's social/erotic group that offers passionate friendships, fun activities, and real tantric sex education. Call Marc 881-4582 in advance Check it out. We meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 7-9pm. Potluck dinner. Donation.

BROTHERS OF THE COMPASSIONATE WAY. Pagan spiritual group for gay, bisexual, transgendered men. Box 41623, Tucson, AZ 85717.

Got A News Tip?
Call The
WEEKLY OBSERVER
(520) 622-7176
Or FAX Us At
(520) 792-8382

Same-Sex Weddings Shore Up Declining Canadian Marriage Rate

OTTAWA, Canada - The percentage of Canadians marrying has dropped by half over the past 60 years but had it not been for the legalization of same-sex marriage the number would have been even lower according to new government statistics, 365Gay.com reported. The figures, released Wednesday by Statistics Canada, are for 2003, the year that same-sex marriage became legal in Ontario and British Columbia. Stats Can says that A total of 147,391 couples tied the knot in 2003, only 653 more than in 2002 and just 773 more than in 2001, according to vital statistics data from the provinces and the territories. The agency says that the marriage rate in 2003 stayed at a three year record low of 4.7 marriages for every 1,000 population. This was less than half the rate seen in the 1940s when the rate peaked at 10.9.

While Ontario does not keep statistics on whether marriage licenses were given to same-or opposite-sex couples British Columbia does. Of the 21,981 marriages that occurred in British Columbia in 2003, 774, or 3.5%, were between people of the same sex. But more than half of those people who entered into a same-sex marriage in British Columbia were not residents of Canada. On the other hand, less than five percent of people marrying someone of the opposite sex in that province did not reside in Canada. Of the 774 same-sex marriages in BC, 422, or 54.5 percent, were female couples and 352, or 45.5 percent, were male couples.

In addition, people who married someone of the same sex were around 13 years older than people who married someone of the opposite sex. The average age for same-sex male couples was 44 years, and for Lesbians it was 42 years. However, the average age for opposite-sex couples was 31years for men and 29 years for women. While Ontario does not keep statistics on the sexuality of marriage license applicants the total number of marriages increased by three percent in 2003 over the previous year - about the same percentage as British Columbia recorded as same-sex marriages.

Episcopal Church Rocked By Schism In Virginia

RICHMOND, Virginia - Episcopal Church leaders are moving to strip clergy members at breakaway conservative churches of their licenses to practice in the diocese of Virginia, advocate.com reported. They warn that such clergy members have six months to reverse their decision to abandon the church before they are removed from the Episcopal ministry. The breakaway churches have cited disagreements with the denomination's liberal views on homosexuality.

Bishop Peter Lee has ''inhibited''–or officially warned–21 clergy members from Virginia churches where the majority of congregants have voted in the last year to leave the Episcopal Church, the diocese said Tuesday in a statement. Jim Pierobon, who has acted as spokesman for the breakaway churches, said he didn't think the diocese decision would matter much. Eleven churches in the diocese, including two of its most prominent, have voted to leave the Episcopal Church and align with the Convocation of Anglicans in North America, established by the Nigerian archbishop. Four others have voted to join the Church of Uganda.

The diocese said it would take legal action to secure land and buildings from the breakaway churches, believed to be worth tens of millions of dollars.

France Pays Homage To Priest Who Advocated For Gays, Homeless

PARIS - France paid national tribute Friday (Jan. 26) to one of its most beloved public figures, a feisty priest who had battled on behalf of the homeless, poor, and disenfranchised for more than half a century. Abbe Pierre, who founded the Emmaus Community for the poor, now established in 39 countries, has been honored, and mourned, at several gatherings since his death Monday at age 94.

The tributes culminated in a funeral Mass Friday at Notre Dame cathedral in Paris. President Jacques Chirac declared a day of national homage Friday to the priest considered by many to be the conscience of France. Chirac was among the prominent figures attending the Mass, led by Archbishop of Paris Andre Vingt-Trois. Abbe Pierre's trademark black cape was draped over the coffin for the ceremony. Two enormous screens on the square in front of Notre Dame broadcast the Mass, also shown live on several French television channels. The Roman Catholic priest was to be buried later Friday in a small ceremony in the town of Esteville in Normandy.

Abbe Pierre, or Abbot Pierre, the code name he used in the French Resistance in World War II, had served as a spokesman for the homeless since the 1950s, when he persuaded parliament to pass a law forbidding landlords to evict tenants during winter months. He topped polls year after year as France's most beloved public figure. Last year he addressed parliament from his wheelchair, urging lawmakers not to tamper with a law on low-income housing.

Born Henry Groues on Aug. 5, 1912, one of eight children in a well-heeled Lyon family, he exchanged comfort for a monk's cell for six years before joining the priesthood in 1938. He entered the Resistance in World War II, taking the name Abbe Pierre in 1942 as a cover for his work manufacturing fake identity papers and helping Jews cross the border to Switzerland. Always frank, Abbe Pierre became even more so in old age. In a 2005 book he said he favored allowing priests to marry. In Mon Dieu...Pourquoi? (My God...Why?) he wrote that he supported unions of Gay couples and the ordination of women. In an interview with AP in 1994 he acknowledged one regret: "Everything I was not able to do."

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