



Observing Tucson And
The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Jell-O Extravaganza Raises A Record Of Over \$43,000

TUCSON - This past Sunday, May 6th, the 20th Annual Reno Gannon Memorial Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza put on a terrific party with the help of the community and raised over \$43,800 for the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation. We think that Reno would be amazed, and so proud. This year the Jell-O was rainbow in color, the weather was sunny but moderate, the wrestlers were all entertaining and the crowd had a marvelous time!

This year's wrestling teams did an outstanding job of raising funds for SAAF, bringing in a total (thus far) of over \$14,305, and their sponsoring bars are to be commended as well for raising \$5,850 in support of SAAF. This combined total of \$20,155 is the most raised in support of wrestlers in the history of Jell-O. Our top individual wrestling fundraiser this year was John Lochert of Colors Food & Spirits who raised \$1,630, and the bar that raised the most funds (independent of their wrestling team) was Woody's with \$4,192.

We owe a huge thank you to Dave Huff, Frank Schepis and Danny Scott, owners of Woody's for hosting this famous event. Their generosity and commitment to this cause are truly outstanding. The day began at 2pm with Bunny Fu Fu and Ajia Simone hosting the pre-event party complete with carnival games, a silent auction and great food served by our grill team, Mitch Bart of Philly's Finest and Gerry Oldenski of DynaSet. The amazing Lucinda Holliday took the stage at 4pm, assisted by Diana Flair, and kept the show running from there on out. We thank them for the gift of time and entertainment, and for their ongoing dedication to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Warm thanks go to Joe Roos who again served this year as the referee to keep all the wrestlers safe and Bob Fischella who was our trusty "hoser-off-er" again this year! Robin Stancliff donated her amazing photographic talents to document the day, as well as photographing our four hostesses and arranging for a large print to be made by Photo Centric, which was auctioned off for \$350! Thanks also go to La Cocina Restaurant at Old Town Artisans, for donating the Jell-O and dye, to Flowerbee for providing beautiful leis for our hostesses, and to the great Jell-O making crew, headed up by Willie Gradillas who turned out 60 5-gallon buckets in record time last Tuesday.

We were pleased and honored this year to receive outstand-

ing event sponsorship contributions from many local businesses. Title Sponsor Woody's, Champion Sponsors Fascinations and Dean Groth, Raffle Sponsor John Swain, Patron Sponsors Century 21-Centra Realty, Colors Food & Spirits, History Y Hall, IBT's, Speedway Veterinary Hospital, Those Feng Shui Guys, and the Tucson GLBT Chamber of Commerce, and Supporting Sponsors All You Do Is Pack Travel (Gari-Sue Greene), Carlos & Co, Farmers Insurance (Tim Brown), Professional Bartenders Unlimited, Reveille Gay Men's Chorus, Stand Firm Personal Training and Tucson Pride. In addition we received generous media coverage from ION Arizona Magazine and 'N Touch News, and as always The Observer. Thank you!

The Reno Gannon Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza has become one of the hottest tickets in town and would not go on without the dedication of the committee of Steve Barreto, Eddie Gallego, Willie Gradillas, Dave Huff, Harry Lewis, Dave Locke, Natalie Perry, Joe Roos, Frank Schepis, Danny Scott and Helga Wöcherl. The Jell-O magic could not happen without them and we are so grateful to them.

We had a wonderful range of items to auction this year, and we want to express our appreciation for the businesses and individuals who donated so generously. This year the auction raised over \$8,000 for SAAF.

As always, we had a great group of loyal volunteers on the scene to help everything run smoothly. SAAF could not host such a great event without their help. Thanks to the staff and board of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation as well for their dedication. Special recognition goes to Angela Putman for her assistance with our remarkable website, www.jello-wrestling.org which will soon display our final totals from the event. And of course, special thanks to The Observer for covering the event and helping us with advertising!

To EVERYONE who made this day so successful and enjoyable, our heartfelt thanks and gratitude go out to you. It is with your love and support that great things happen to create and sustain a healthier community.

Sincerely, Anne Maley, Executive Director

More Jell-O Photos Inside



UPDATE

Clock In For Equality May 15

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - Join thousands across the country in taking small and large actions for Workplace Equality on May 15.

By coordinating organizations and individuals to take action on the same day, participants will: Educate the public about the harassment and discrimination LGBT people and those living with HIV face at work. Increase support for efforts to win legal protections for LGBT employees. Activate people to fight for the rights of LGBT and HIV-affected workers

LGBT people and people with HIV continue to face real discrimination in the workplace. Workplace fairness is the number one issue for callers to Lambda Legal's Help Desk, with over 1,000 people calling about workplace rights in 2006. In Lambda Legal's 2005 Workplace Fairness Survey, 39 percent of respondents reported experiencing some form of discrimination or harassment in the workplace during the past five years because of their sexual orientation.

Although people with HIV are protected from discrimination by the Americans with Disabilities Act and similar state laws, they still experience workplace discrimination due to confidentiality breaches, unjustified fears about transmission and refusals to provide reasonable accommodations. From 2002-2006, HIV-related employment discrimination claims have been nationally with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at an average rate of nearly one per day. Even though recent polls show that close to 90 percent of people in the United States think Lesbians and Gay men should have equal rights in the workplace: There is still no federal law that expressly forbids sexual orientation or gender identity discrimination in the private sector. There is no statewide law providing express protection against sexual orientation discrimination in the workplace in 32 states. There is no statewide law providing express protection against gender identity discrimination in the workplace in 42 states.

Over the last few years, Lambda Legal has activated nearly 25,000 people through a series of

educational and advocacy campaigns for workplace equality for LGBT and HIV-positive workers. Clock In For Equality will engage these people and others like them to change and strengthen employment laws and policies and improve life in the workplace for LGBT people and those living with HIV. The Arizona Human Rights Fund is participating in Lambda Legal's Clock in for Equality to ensure equal protections exist for Arizona's LGBT workers. Help make a difference by educating your coworkers, supporting current efforts to obtain legal protections, and activating others to fight for equal rights. To sign up, go online to: ga4.org/campaign/CIFE_signup. Learn more at ahrf.org or call (602) 650-0900.

'Evening Of Music & Friends', May 11

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Straight (LGBT&S) Alliance Fund announces its annual "Evening of Music and Friends," May 11, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. This year's gala features elegant hors d'oeuvres by Dakota, great wines, music by jazz singer Marilyn Harris, and the special University of Arizona group The Tuba Cats. Karen Uhlich of the Tucson City Council moderates a fine evening at the stunning home of Randy Soderstrom and Steve Quinlan.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Straight (LGBT&S) Alliance Fund is a special project of the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona (CFSA), created in 1999 in partnership with the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. The Alliance Fund addresses the chronic pattern of underfunding of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender programs and supports efforts to address these issues through philanthropy and endowment building. The Alliance Fund connects donors with the LGBT community. The Fund has become known for making grants available at critical times during the development of an organization's infrastructure. Since its inception, the Fund has awarded more than 49 grants totaling nearly \$300,000 to local nonprofits.

Tickets are \$75 per person, and tickets must be purchased in

advance since space is limited. Tickets can be ordered by mail. Make check out to: Community Foundation of Southern Arizona (add "Alliance Fund" to the memo line) and mail to: Martin Rivera, CFSA-Program Coordinator LGBT Alliance Fund, 2250 E. Broadway Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85710 or online at: cfsoaz.org/page33432.cfm. For more information, go online to alliancefund.org.

24th International AIDS Candlelight Memorial May 20

TUCSON - SAAF, Wingspan, and TIHAN announced that Tucson will participate in the 24th Annual International AIDS Candlelight Memorial.

This event will take place on May 20, at Himmel Park (Tucson Blvd., 1 block south of Speedway) in solidarity with memorials and events worldwide. Tucson's Candlelight Memorial will highlight the effects of AIDS on African-American and youth communities. Bring a blanket and/or lawn chair.

For more information, contact Madeline Porta, (520) 624-1779, E-mail: mporta@wingspan.org, and candlelightmemorial.org/.

Tucson Knight Owls Upcoming Events

TUCSON - Tucson Knight Owls (T.K.O.), Yard Dog, staff, and friends held a successful fund raiser for Wess and his children. Our hearts go out to them and their family. (T.K.O.) Openly invites new members to our monthly meetings which occur on the first Saturday of every month at 12:00 pm., followed by a beer bust from 2pm to 6pm., at our home bar the Yard Dog saloon.

'Day At The Park': Come join us for a fun filled day with Food, Fun, Friends and Beer. The picnic will be held on May 12th at ramada #6 Reid park 900 S. Randolph Way. 10am to 4pm.

T.K.O.'s annual spring/summer fling is now called "Owls Fling". This year we will be going to Holly Lake July 27th-30th. The run fee is \$60 for members and \$70 for non-members. Applications will be available at our next beer bust. You can also pick one up from any T.K.O. member.

'Maxed Out!', May 14

TUCSON - The provocative and thought provoking movie, Maxed Out, will be shown Monday, May 14, at 7:00 p.m. at the Loft Cinema, 3233 East Speedway.

Maxed Out takes viewers on a journey deep inside the American style of debt, where things are fine as long as the minimum monthly payment arrives on time. It shows how the modern financial industry really works and paints a picture of a national nightmare which is real to most of us. The film is hilarious, shocking and incisive.

This screening is sponsored by the SW Center for Economic Integrity and an introduction by Karin Uhlich, Executive Director and Tucson Councilmember. Tickets are \$10 (students \$5) Advance tickets through the Loft (795-0844) or beginning at 6:00 p.m. the night of the screening. For more information, call (520) 882-2165, go online to economicintegrity.org or E-mail: info@economicintegrity.org.

Looking for information on HIV/AIDS?



Our Speakers Bureau provides free presentations to the community about HIV transmission, testing, risk reduction and living with HIV/AIDS.

For more info contact our Volunteer Resources Coordinator at 628-7223 or VolCoord@saaF.org



Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation



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no cover



Tori Steele



China Collins

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U.S. House Passes Hate Crimes Bill

By Mark R. Kerr

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - By a vote of 237-180, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 1592, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act (LLEHCPA).

Arizona's Congressional Delegation were split along party lines with their vote - Democrats Gabrielle Giffords, Raul Grijalva, Ed Pastor and Harry Mitchell supporting the measure while Republicans John Shaddegg, Rick Renzi, Trent Franks and Jake Flake cast "no" votes.

LLEHCPA was introduced Mar. 20 by Representative John Conyers, D-MI and had 171 co-sponsors. If approved and signed into law, the LLEHCPA would strengthen the ability of federal, state and local governments to investigate and prosecute hate crimes based on race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity.

H.R. 1592 would strengthen state and local efforts by enabling the Justice Department to assist in the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes. The bill will also provide grants to help state and local governments meet the extraordinary expenses involved in hate crime cases.

At the federal level, the LLEHCPA would eliminate the outdated intent requirement in current law that prevents the Justice Department from working with state and local officials in the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes. It would allow the federal government to step in when needed, but only after the

department has certified that a federal prosecution is necessary.

Federal hate crime legislation already covers people on the basis of race and religion.

Openly Gay Rep. Barney Frank, D-MA, presided over the chamber as the final vote was taken.

During the lengthy debate over H.R. 1592, House Republicans complained that the LLEHCPA didn't cover the Armed Forces and senior citizens. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-MD and Judiciary Committee Chair, John Conyers, D-MI, offered to add an amendment to add the two groups but the Republicans then objected, killing their own proposal and raising questions about their intent or whether this parliamentary maneuver was just a political stunt.

Reaction was swift after the debate and vote.

"This is a historic day that moves all Americans closer to safety from the scourge of hate violence," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "Today, legislators sided with the 73 percent of the American people who support the expansion of hate crimes laws to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

"I am personally grateful to the United States House for recognizing the grave reality of hate crimes in America," said Judy Shepard, executive director of the Matthew Shepard Foundation.

As the House was preparing to vote the White House issued a

statement saying that if the measure passed both houses and goes to the President, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto it. A statement from the Executive Office of the President said: "The Administration favors strong criminal penalties for violent crime, including crime based on personal characteristics, such as race, color, religion, or national origin. "However, the Administration believes that H.R. 1592 is unnecessary and constitutionally questionable." The White House statement said that state and local criminal laws already provide penalties for the crimes defined by the bill and "there has been no persuasive demonstration of any need to federalize such a potentially large range of violent crime enforcement."

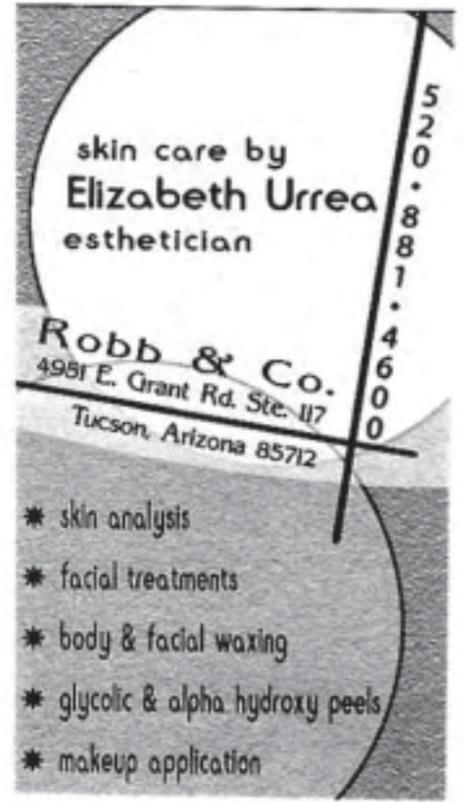
The veto threat was immediately denounced by LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Democrats. "By issuing a premature veto threat, President Bush fails to understand that he is not the sole decider regarding the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act," said Jo Wyrick, NSD Executive Director, in a statement. "Once again, the majority of American oppose the position of the President, and that is why we are urging the Senate Leadership to quickly move on this important legislation. We need Senate Democrats to step up before President Bush can step down."

Bush's statement came on the heels of intense lobbying by social conservatives for Bush to issue statement condemning the bill.

LLEHCPA has the support of LGBT civil rights groups and has been endorsed by more than 210 law enforcement, civil rights, civic and

religious organizations, including: the National Sheriffs' Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association.

A parallel bill is working its way through the Senate. S. 1105, the Matthew Shepard Act, also called the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, would allow the Department of Justice to assist local authorities in investigating and prosecuting cases in which violence occurs against people based on their sexuality.





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Tucson Selected To Host International Transgender Conference

TUCSON - The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) recently awarded the hosting contract for next year's international conference to organizers in Southern Arizona. "Transgender 2008" is the first Transgender conference of national significance to come to Tucson, with the conference to be held Apr. 1-5, 2008, at the DoubleTree Hotel Reid Park.

"Transgender 2008" is a week-long conference brings together Transgender, Transsexual, and other gender-diverse people, as well as friends, families, service providers, and other allies. IFGE advocates for freedom of gender expression; the group's annual summit aims to strengthen understanding, encourage collaboration, develop resource networks, and forge alliances intended to improve the treatment and acceptance of Transgender and Transsexual people. As many as 400 or more participants are expected. "Toward a Greater Diversity" is the theme for the conference in Tucson and will focus on the lesser heard voices of the Transgender community, including people of color, youth, elders, faith communities, and others. Program-

ming plans include workshops for individuals in or considering gender transition, professional advocacy and political activism topics, and much more.

IFGE traditionally rotates the conference between Philadelphia, PA and Austin, TX. Tucson was chosen as the host for 2008 after local community members lobbied the IFGE board and the conference administration company, TransEvents USA, Inc., to try something new. Tucson's beautiful spring weather, low-cost conference expenses, outstanding tourist attractions, supportive community, and inclusive government policies all contribute to the city's appropriateness as a conference host, according to planning committee chair, Erin Russ. In addition to seminars and workshops, the conference will offer a charity golf tournament, social events, and tours of many local attractions.

Brochures outlining details of the conference schedule and faculty for this landmark event will be available later this year. To join the local planning committee, please call (520) 624-1779, x17, or E-mail: mwoodward@wingspan.org.

McCain: Repealing DADT Would Undermine Troops

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Republican presidential hopeful John McCain continues to move further to right as he campaigns for the GOP nomination, 365Gay.com reported. McCain reiterated his support for "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" the military's ban on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual service members.

In a letter responding to questions from the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, McCain said that the law, passed in 1993, "unambiguously maintains that open homosexuality within the military services presents an intolerable risk to morale, cohesion and discipline." He then went on to say that the U.S. Supreme Court "has ruled that the military may constitutionally discharge a service member for overt homosexual behavior."

The high court, though has yet to rule on DADT. Two lawsuits challenging the ban are currently before federal courts.

"I believe polarization of personnel and breakdown of unit effectiveness is too high a price to pay for well-intentioned but misguided efforts to elevate the interests of a minority of homosexual service members above those of their units," McCain said in the letter "Most importantly, the national security of the United States, not to mention the lives of our men and women in uniform, are put at grave risk by policies detrimental to the good order and discipline which so distinguish America's Armed Services," he wrote

"Senator McCain's comments are out of step with the overwhelming majority of the American people, and out of touch with the best interests of our armed forces," said Sharra E. Greer, SLDN's director of law and policy. Greer also said that the senator's defense of the policy is "disrespectful" to the estimated 65,000 Lesbian and Gay servicemembers currently in the military. "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" prevents our military from recruiting and retaining the best and brightest Americans, and undermines our country's ability to assemble the strongest fighting force possible," said Greer. "Now, more than ever, elected

officials should be primarily concerned about military readiness."

Congressman Marty Meehan (D-MA), chair of the House Armed Services Sub-Committee on Oversight and Investigations, reintroduced legislation to repeal the law. Meehan said that more than 120 Members of Congress from both parties have signed on to co-sponsor the bill, called the Military Readiness Enhancement Act.

Study Shows Lesbian Moms Make Good Parents

OTTAWA (Observer Update) - Parenting by same-sex families is just as good - if not slightly advantageous - for children when compared to heterosexual families, a Canadian Justice Department study has concluded, Canada.com reported. Commissioned by the then-Liberal federal government in 2003 at the height of the same-sex marriage debate, the academic study was not released until recently when its main author, Prof. Paul Hastings at Concordia University, obtained it by making a request using the Access to Information Act.

Hastings, with the assistance of research students, reached the study's conclusion after reviewing existing research relating to the impact on children of being raised in different family types. The report says the strongest conclusion that can be drawn from empirical literature is that the vast majority of studies show children living with two mothers and children living with a mother and father have the same levels and qualities of social competence.

"A few studies suggest that children with two Lesbian mothers may have marginally better social competence than children in 'traditional nuclear' families, even fewer studies show the opposite, and most studies fail to find any differences," says the 25,000, 74-page study. The study found that most of the available research on Gay parents is on Lesbian mothers, which fits into other studies that conclude women generally spend more time with their children than men. But the report says there is still too little research, especially about Gay male parents, to reach any final conclusions.

'Fag Bug' Vandal Victim Plans Road Trip



Student Erin Davies plans Cross-Country tour in her vandalized 'Bug' to promote tolerance

ALBANY, N.Y. - Out graduate student Erin Davies, whose Volkswagen Beetle was spray-painted with hate slogans on Apr. 18, the Day of Silence, plans to drive the vandalized "Fag Bug" on a cross-country tour to promote tolerance, *advocate.com* reported. Davies, 29, who came out as a Lesbian 12 years ago, got many messages of support after the vandalism incident, which she figures was triggered by a rainbow sticker on the car.

At first, Davies said, she was mortified. She reported the crime to Albany police, who are investigating but say they have heard of no similar incidents. An insurance company claims adjuster—one of many people who advised her to remove the slurs from the car—estimated the cost of repairing cosmetic damages at \$350. "But even as I drove through my neighborhood in the rental car, I was stopped by friends and acquaintances and asked what I planned to do next," she told the *Troy Record* newspaper. "I'm gonna rainbow my whole car out!" Davies, an arts education student at Russell Sage College, told *Gay.com*.

She decided to keep the slurs on the car to raise awareness. When people see it around town, she writes on her site, *FagBug.com*, they often leave letters of support on the dash. In July, Davies plans to drive the 2002 Beetle across the country as a way to protest hate crimes. Along the way, she wants to get 1 million people—Gay and straight—to put rainbow stickers on their own cars, figuring that if the symbol proliferates, its bearers will no longer be targeted as weak. She hopes to get coverage from MTV.

Sage students and faculty recently staged a rally to support her. "She is a very strong individual, for her to turn such a negative into a positive thing," Cheryl VanDemark, coordinator of education programs at Sage and Davies's adviser, told Albany's *Metroland* weekly. "If it had happened to any typical individual, they would have been hesitant to drive it, but Erin is strong enough to know how other people think, to know how this might affect other people," VanDemark said.

Davies is not new to activism. After her undergraduate years in Baltimore, the Syracuse, N.Y., native worked with LGBT youths, working on a documentary about the Living Proof theater group. "The kids each made a vision statement: 'I'm living proof that'...they had not committed suicide, or whatever. That they were still strong. This is the same response, but to a situation of mine," Davies said.

The Volkswagen vandalism was not the only backlash to this year's Day of Silence, an annual demonstration at schools and colleges nationwide to dramatize the discrimination and suffering young Gays endure. High schoolers in South San Francisco, Calif., held their Day of Silence on a campus that had been blanketed with hate graffiti over spring break. Rumors of violence forced a lockdown at a participating high school in New Castle, Ind., and in Jonesborough, Tenn., the Gay teen organizer of a high school Day of Silence event was sent home, allegedly for his own safety.

For more information about Davies and her efforts, go to her website: fagbug.com.

Closeted Men At Suicide Risk

SYDNEY, Australia - A recent survey revealed that men who lead heavily closeted lives have contemplated suicide at the prospect of their wives or female partners finding out, *Gay.com* Australia reported.

The survey, carried out by Jeff Hudson, a Ph.D candidate in the Graduate Program in Sexual Health at the University of Sydney, involved 240 participants recruited through online advertising and at sex-on-premises venues. The men who took part were predominantly from Western Sydney and in professional occupations. Hudson presented the results of his study of married men who have sex with men at the World Congress for Sexual Health, recently held in Sydney.

Of those surveyed, more than half the men were having sex with other men at least weekly, and 82.5 per cent currently have casual sex with other men. According to the results, more than half of the men's partners did not know about their activities. Despite their sexual behavior, a large proportion of the currently married men (28 percent) identified as heterosexual. Hudson said that many of the men expressed a strong desire for 'normalized' heterosexual relationships and marriages, which lead to secrecy about their other sex lives. But this very secrecy makes them (and their female partners) more vulnerable to sexually transmitted disease. "These men don't see themselves as at risk or at risk for their wives because they don't identify with the usual Gay man or Bisexual man," Hudson said, adding that to make matters worse, health professionals don't usually ask married men about homosexual activity.

Hudson added that the pressure to conform to heterosexual norms is so strong that some of the men interviewed said they would rather die than risk losing their families. "A lot of men will commit suicide because they

don't see any other way out. What is needed is for health professionals to be aware of married men who have sex with men and support them in a non judgmental way." Hudson said. "It's necessary for the community to accept reality that these sexual activities occur to enable positive support and health education."

Vermont Lawmakers Pass Bill Banning Gender Identity Discrimination

MONTPELIER, Vermont - The Vermont legislature has approved a bill that would ban discrimination on the basis of gender identity and expression. The bill, if signed into law by Gov. Jim Douglas, would go into effect July 1, *advocate.com* reported. Gov. Douglas has indicated that he will sign this bill, despite vetoing a similar bill last year. If passed, Vermont will be one of a handful of states that ban discrimination based on gender identity and expression.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has worked for the past several years with Vermont TransAction and Vermont state representative Bill Lippert to get this measure passed. "Transgender people are among the most vulnerable to acts of bigotry," said task force executive director Matt Foreman. "We urge Governor Douglas to swiftly sign this measure into law. Only then will transgender Vermonters finally crack the dehumanizing and untenable barrier of second-class citizenship and the pervasive discrimination it encompasses."

The bill would ban discrimination in employment, housing, credit, public accommodations, and other areas.

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EDITORIAL

Time Has Passed, But AIDS Hasn't

On Sunday, May 6, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, questioning and straight supportive community of the Old Pueblo gathered at Woody's on North Oracle for an annual event, raising monies to help those in need.

As of press time, close to \$44,000 was raised, through pledges, sponsorships, auction items and donations given, at the twentieth annual Reno Gannon Memorial Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza, which the proceeds go for the services and programs offered to people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS by the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF).

This event was conceived by a bright, young man, Reno Gannon. In 1987, Gannon, then a bartender at the bar Rumor Hazzit, located at 2222 N. Stone, returned from a vacation in Mexico with a new idea for a fund raising event, Jell-O wrestling.

Reno spoke with Rumor Hazzitt owner Bruce Peg and his management staff of Peter Sitig and Michael Bennett about putting on the event as a fund raiser to help people living with HIV/AIDS.

At that time, AIDS was called "a Gay disease," AZT and protease inhibitors were still years away, and no help was being given or offered by the Reagan administration, state or local governments. People fighting the disease needed assistance since they couldn't turn to anyone or any entity for help.

Committed to doing something to help, Gannon and the owners and management of Rumor Hazzitt made the event a reality. At age 23, Reno died from AIDS and the year following his death, the event became a memorial to him.

Jell-O Wrestling became the biggest fund raiser for the AIDS service organizations, which eventually merged

to form SAAF.

With the passage of time, government funding through such programs as the Ryan White fund, ADAP and research resulting in the advent of life-prolonging medications a reality but AIDS is still with us.

AIDS isn't a "Gay disease," or "God's revenge against the homosexuals" but a communicable disease that has affected more people: young, old, straight and Gay.

Despite the advances and the potential to find a vaccine or hopefully, a cure, the funds to continue this important work are shrinking both in the corporate and governmental sectors.

Over the past several years alone, the current administration in Washington, D.C. has either not increased or reduced funding for research, programs and services for HIV/AIDS and in many instances, thrown up theocratic hurdles to programs which try to raise awareness about this dreaded disease to stop the spread of it.

Even during these economically troubled times, we as a community must continue Reno's legacy of hope and dedication by getting over these obstacles and do what can be done to help those living with or affected by HIV/AIDS.

If you didn't make a pledge to or sponsored a wrestler, made a donation, bid on an auction item or even purchased a raffle ticket, considered making a donation to SAAF. Though the annual event may have taken place, funds are still needed to continue the work and efforts.

To make a donation, either go online to: jello-wrestling.org/donate/index.html or saaf.org/MerchantAccount.htm. Checks made to SAAF can be sent to: SAAF, 375 S. Euclid, Tucson, AZ 85719.

European Court Blasts Polish Pride Ban

STRASBOURG, France (Observer Update) - The European Court of Human Rights ruled that Warsaw Mayor Lech Kaczynski in 2005 acted illegally and discriminatory in banning a Gay pride march in the Polish capital, 365Gay.com reported. Polish Gay and Lesbian organizations filed a lawsuit against Kaczynski, who is now Poland's President, after he banned the 2005 parade. Despite the ban more than 2,500 people ignored the order and march anyway. Hundreds of police officers were on hand to keep order, but did not try to stop the march. Some officers joined in the parade to cheers from the marchers. Members of a right wing group got into skirmishes with marchers and there were a number of arrests.

In its ruling the European Court cited three articles of the European Convention on Human Rights that Kaczynski had violated - the right to freedom of association and assembly, the right to live free of discrimination and the right to an effective remedy. This is the first case of a banned LGBT Pride march being challenged in the court. "We are pleased that the Court firmly and unanimously confirmed that the free-

dom of assembly and expression belongs to all, said Patricia Prendiville, Executive Director of the International Lesbian and Gay Association - Europe "There is a significant case-law already established by the Court in regards to freedom of assembly and now we know that the same principles are equally applicable to LGBT citizens."

Poland has come under increasing criticism for its treatment of Gays. The ruling League of Polish Families has introduced legislation in Parliament to fight "homosexual propaganda." The bill has been fast tracked by the government and has the support of President Kaczynski. Under the legislation discussions of LGBT civil rights and safe-sex practices to prevent HIV/AIDS among Gays would be banned. LGBT organizations would be barred from schools and "teachers who reveal their homosexuality will be fired from work."



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Discharged Gay Sailor Is Called Back To Active Duty

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On his wedding night in July 2004, then-Petty Officer 3rd Class Jason Knight finally accepted a truth he had fought against for years: he was Gay, reported Stars & Stripes. Almost immediately, he moved to get his marriage annulled. He apologized to the woman he'd married. And when it came time to explain his changing circumstances to the Navy, he left nothing out. Under the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, he was quickly discharged from the service.

But now - whether through a clerical oversight or what some claim is an unwritten change in policy to keep more Gay servicemembers in the ranks at a time of war - Jason Knight is back on active duty. Since promoted to petty officer second class, Knight is finishing a scheduled one-year tour in Kuwait with Naval Customs Battalion Bravo. And, already kicked out of the Navy once, he sees no need to hide his sexual orientation. "I thought it was a joke at first," he said, remembering the day he received his recall orders. "It was the ultimate kick in the ass. But then I thought, there isn't much they can do to me they haven't done the first time."

It was comments by Marine Gen. Peter Pace, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that spurred Knight to come out publicly a second time. In defending the military's policy, Pace called homosexual acts immoral and contrary to military values. "Though I respect [Pace] as a leader, it made me so mad," Knight said. "I spent four years in the Navy, buried fallen servicemembers as part of the Ceremonial Guard, served as a Hebrew Linguist in Navy Intelligence, and received awards for exemplary service," he wrote in a letter to Stripes. "However, because I was Gay, the Navy discharged me and recouped my 13k sign-on bonus. Nine months later, the Navy recalled me to active duty. Did I accept despite everything that happened? Of course I did, and I would do it again. Because I love the Navy and I love my country. And despite Pace's opinion, my shipmates support me."

Those shipmates include his direct supervisors in the customs battalion. "He's better than the average sailor at his job," said Bill Driver, the leading petty officer of Knight's 15-person customs crew in Kuwait. "It's not at all a strange situation. As open as he is now, it was under wraps for quite a while. It wasn't an issue at work." Another sailor with the detail, Petty Officer 1st Class Tisha Hanson, works in admin and has had to process discharges for homosexual sailors before. "I've obviously never heard of

something like this happening before," she said of Knight's return to active duty. "But it doesn't bother me. The Navy tends to keep people who don't want to be here, but Jason does."

In Knight's case, he was given an honorable discharge when booted from the Navy on Apr. 4, 2005. Though it's not widely known, a clause in the military's policy on discharging Gays allows commanders discretion on what form of discharge to give a Gay servicemember. In many cases, a legal expert at an advocacy group working to repeal the policy said, that's exactly what happens. "The vast majority of [discharge papers] give the narrative reason as 'homosexual conduct,'" said Kathi Westcott, the deputy director for law at the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network in Washington, D.C. But, "individual commanders sometimes think the servicemember is a good troop, and they don't want them to begin their next life with a 'black mark,'" she said. Westcott said that Pace's comments - and a study showing declining numbers of discharges for Gay servicemembers - have reignited debate about the "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

The renewed debate includes suggestions that the Pentagon is less interested in kicking out Gay servicemembers during war. Pentagon stats show that discharges of Gay servicemembers dropped to 612 in 2006. The peak of such discharges was in 2001, when 1,273 were reported. The numbers have fallen steadily each year - from 906 in 2002 to 787 in 2003, and on down. At a time when the Pentagon is struggling to meet recruiting goals, many point to the numbers as a wartime trend. Others reject that claim. And the majority of servicemembers are still opposed to openly serving Gay troops.

Defenders of the policy say even, or especially, during war, the harm outdoes the good. "I believe polarization of personnel and breakdown of unit effectiveness is too high a price to pay for well-intentioned but misguided efforts to elevate the interests of a minority of homosexual servicemembers above those of their units," Sen. John McCain, a presidential candidate and former Navy officer, wrote in an April 16 letter explaining his support of the policy. "Most importantly, the national security of the United States, not to mention the lives of our men and women in uniform, are put at grave risk by policies detrimental to the good order and discipline which so distinguish America's armed services."

Still, Pentagon stats show that

only .3 percent of all discharges are for homosexual conduct. In many cases, a legal expert at an advocacy group working to repeal the policy said, that's exactly what happens. "The vast majority of [discharge papers] give the narrative reason as 'homosexual conduct,'" said Kathi Westcott, the deputy director for law at the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network in Washington, D.C. But, "individual commanders sometimes think the servicemember is a good troop, and they don't want them to begin their next life with a 'black mark,'" she said. Westcott said that Pace's comments - and a study showing declining numbers of discharges for Gay servicemembers - have reignited debate about the "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

Navy personnel officials declined to comment on personnel cases in particular. But one official, speaking on background, said his reading of the policy wouldn't preclude a second discharge for Knight. Though, the source said, it was more likely the Navy would simply allow his short-term active-duty recall to expire. Knight's current orders, issued on June 6, 2006, call for him to be on active duty for 365 days. Knight said he wants to complete that service and is even looking for ways to return to active duty full time, perhaps through the officers candidate school. Brandy Jackson has known Knight since they served in the Ceremonial Guard in 2001. Later, both were sent to the DLI, he as a Hebrew linguist and she as a Mandarin Chinese specialist. When she washed out of the program, she was sent to the USS John C. Stennis in San Diego, but soon made her way out of the Navy. Jackson is also Gay and "never looked back. I no longer wanted to live in hiding, and saw the opportunity to get out, so I did," she said. She calls Knight's situation "horrible," but finds an odd justice in his recall to active duty. "He is such an honest person with so much integrity, I could not believe when he told me he was going back in after what they did to him," said Jackson, a 25-year-old now

studying to be a game programmer. "There are outstanding sailors out there that just happen to be Gay, like Jason, that contribute a great deal to the United States military and the cause we fight for."

Austin Welcomes Pride Center

AUSTIN, Texas - There's a new place for Austin's Gay and Lesbian community to gather.

The Austin Pride Center held its grand opening celebration Sunday, May 6, reported News 8. Austin's Pride Center offers weekly social events and support groups to the community. "The whole point of the center is to bring together the community. You know in Austin there's no Gay neighborhood. There's no physical place where the Gay community can collect," President of the Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Jimmy Flannigan said. The center, located on 427 Sterzing Street, is open seven days a week starting at 4:00 p.m.

For more information on center activities, call (512) 902-0657.



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By Jim David

The hysterical right wing response to the House passage of the hate crimes bill to include sexual orientation is more of the conservative campaign to equate Gays with terrorists: if Al Queda doesn't get you, Al Gayda will.

They claim that the bill will criminalize antiGay speech, which of course it won't. They will still be able to say nasty things about Gays, they just won't be able to beat them up, which, of course, most of them want to do.

But where are the voices of conservative Gays in opposition to them? Silent, as usual, locked in the conservative closet. It must be a nightmare being Gay in today's Republican party. Working side by side with raging homophobes with toupees and beehives can't be easy. I know many Gay conservatives and they all have the same refrain – my private life is no one's business, being Gay is not the main issue in my life, etc. Then they give lame reasons why either they aren't out to their families or co-workers or tell me to go fuck myself, like Dick Cheney to Sen. Patrick Leahy.

But trust me, they're there. While surfing a Gay "meet and greet" website (for research, I swear), I was struck by the number of "closeted" guys looking for "discreet" hookups. "Closeted, curious guy wants to meet other good looking guy – discretion a must, sensitive job and family here," followed by a headless X-rated photo right out of Unzipped. To me, nothing screams discretion like a picture from a proctology exam.

Maybe it's me, but sex with a

COMMENTARY . . .

Hanging In The Conservative Closet

schizophrenic, compartmentalized closet case is about as satisfying as eating fake food, like Spam or Chicken McNuggets.

Conservatives count on keeping their Gays locked away, but human nature has a way of crying uncle. Just look at 2006, the year the conservative closet burst open.

Bill Maher outed deer-in-the-headlights Republican National Committee chair Ken Mehlman to a "surprised" Larry King. Rep. Mark Foley succumbed to instant message-aholism with Congressional page boys. The late Spokane Mayor James West confided his anguish to unseen strangers, lurking at rest areas on the information highway and getting picked up by the cyber cops.

Rev. Ted Haggard resorted to rentboy.com to find salvation. Didn't his church have an organist? I went to a Southern Methodist church, and I had no trouble meeting Gays. I just joined the choir.

I want to start a hotline for closeted conservatives – "Hello, Right Wing And A Prayer, may I help you?" "Uh, hello, I'm Ted, I'm Gay and I'm trapped leading the evangelical movement. Help!"

"Hi, I'm James, I'm a politician and I've voted on every antiGay bill so no one would figure it out. I just want someone to hold me."

"Hi, I'm Mark, from Palm Beach. I'm not Jewish. Enough said."

Bizarrely, conservatives have played host to male hustlers and porn stars. Jeff Gannon gained entrance to the White House pressroom, and Matt Sanchez was honored at CPAC for speaking out against anti-military Columbia University leftists. Both of these muscular mooks are available in all their tumescent glory for your late night downloading pleasure. I eagerly await Gay porn icon Jeff Stryker to come out in favor of supply side economics – "Ooh, yeah, you like that tax cut, don't cha?"

But conservatives are only OK with these boys in the band if they don't-ask-don't-tell or renounce their past completely. Sanchez claims he is not Gay, never was, and that his boogie nights were a youthful indiscretion, like David Duke's Klan membership. Having sampled some of Sanchez's film oeuvre, I'll tell you this: if he's really not Gay, he gave some Oscar worthy performances. Sean Penn has nothing on this dude.

Conservatives endlessly bash Gays and legislate against them, then deny that they are anti-Gay, sort of like having your cock and eating it too. The biggest lie to come out of CPAC was Ann Coulter's whopper "We're not anti-Gay, we're just against Gay marriage," which is

sort of like Stanley Kowalski saying to Blanche DuBois, "This isn't a rape, it's just hospitality."

No wonder conservative Gays are twisted into such emotional pretzels. Somehow, they have to learn that life is short and coming out isn't going to end it. Is it too much to ask them to develop the miniscule courage to stand up to the lies being told about them by their buddies?

Maybe some entrepreneur could start a chain of Gay bars for conservative closet cases. Bartenders could share duties with on-call therapists. Like in the hidden 50's joint in Far From Heaven, they could discreetly meet, share their troubles, blow each other in the bathroom, and then discuss trickle down theories.

The funniest, and saddest, online profile I saw asked for only this: "J/O by phone, or permanent relationship."

When you're in the conservative closet, you take what you can get.

(Jim David is a comedian and writer whose special, COMEDY CENTRAL PRESENTS JIM DAVID, airs frequently on Comedy Central and Logo. He was also seen on Comedy Central's TOUGH CROWD WITH COLIN QUINN, the variety special OUT ON THE EDGE, as a guest 'comedy consultant' on Bravo's QUEER EYE FOR THE STRAIGHT GUY, BBC America's THE WORLD STANDS UP and Bravo's GREATEST THINGS ABOUT BEING...as well as many other shows. He headlines nationwide and is also a writer for The Advocate. This post is reprinted from the May 6 edition of huffingtonpost.com.)

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British Top Oil Exec Quits Over Outing

LONDON - The chair of international oil giant British Petroleum has resigned after it emerged he had lied in court during a lawsuit to prevent his former Gay lover from doing a tell-all interview with a tabloid, 365Gay.com reported. Lord Browne of Madingley, said to be the most powerful businessman in Britain, tendered his resignation after documents related to the trial were made public by the House of Lords, the UK's highest court.



Lord Browne

Lord Browne asked the law lords to block The Mail on Sunday from publishing a story about him and Canadian Jeff Chevalier. Chevalier was set to tell The Mail all the details about the relationship and of the "palimony" agreement after the affair ended. In court Chevalier took the stand and said that during the four year relationship Lord Browne kept him in the lap of luxury, that the two regularly traveled together and he was given a substantial amount of money over the period of their relationship - paid by check. The court also heard that Lord Browne paid for a university course so that Chevalier could get a student visa and remain in the UK. Chevalier said when the relationship ended he returned to Toronto, Canada and Browne gave him the money for a 12 month lease on an apartment and paid for his furnishings. But Browne told the court that most of the allegations were false or misleading and they were matters about which he had a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Lord Browne went to deny many of Chevalier's statements. But in rendering a verdict the court accused

him of perjury. The ruling also refused to block publication of the story. The ruling said that although Browne's sexuality and that he was keeping Chevalier were never reported before in the press a sufficient number of Browne's employees and associates knew. The ruling means Browne could be charged with perjury. Shortly after the Lords released the documents Browne resigned. He was to have stepped down later this year. His decision to leave now means he forfeits an estimated \$25 million bonus from BP. During his tenure at the oil company he amended the company's worldwide employment policy to add sexuality to the categories protected from on the job harassment.

Bette Midler Signs Two-Year Vegas Contract

LAS VEGAS, Nevada -The Divine Miss M is making her way to Sin City next February to replace Las Vegas entertainment staple Celine Dion at the Caesars Palace Colosseum, reported Reuters on advocate.com. Bette Midler signed a two-year contract to take over the spot as the resident performer at the 4,100-seat theater.

"The stage is so enormous, there's a terror that you might not be able to fill it all by your lonesome; you know, a little person in high heels," Midler said in a statement. Midler, who

became a household name after the Broadway production of Fiddler on the Roof, built a devoted Gay following early on in her career, performing at Manhattan's Continental Baths. She will be among other big-name headliners who are entertaining crowds along the strip, including Prince, Elton John, and Barry Manilow.

The agreement has Midler slated at five nights per week for 20 weeks over the next two years, beginning Feb. 20, 2008. Her shows will run 90 minutes, with ticket prices ranging from \$95 to \$250 per seat.



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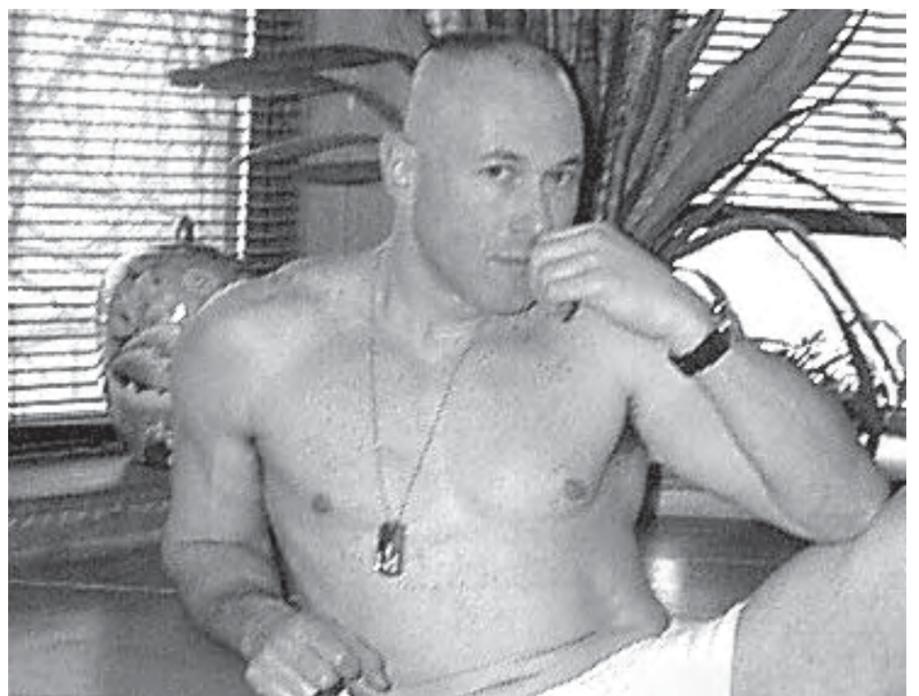
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Dozens Of Heads Were Bowed



James Guckert aka Jeff Gannon

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Let us pray that, on next year's National Day of Prayer, there is better attendance at the "Bible Reading Marathon" on the West Front of the Capitol, reported Dana Milbank of the Washington Post, Friday, May 4.

Organizers put out 600 folding chairs on the lawn - the spot where presidents are inaugurated - and set up a huge stage with powerful amplifiers. But at 9:30 a.m. yesterday, not one of the 600 seats was occupied. By 11 a.m., as a woman read a passage from Revelations, attendance had grown - to four people. Finally, at 1 p.m., 37 of the 600 seats were occupied, though many of those people were tourists eating lunch.

Where was everybody? "This isn't that kind of event," explained Jeff

Gannon, spokesman for the host, the International Bible Reading Association. Gannon, actually a pseudonym for James Guckert, had earned fame in 2005 representing a conservative Web site at White House briefings until it was revealed that he posted nude pictures of himself on the Web to offer his services as a \$200-an-hour Gay escort. Let us pray for the power to understand how Gannon made his way from HotMilitaryStud.com to the International Bible Reading Association.

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POLITICS 2007

by Mark R. Kerr

Federal Legislative Updates

With the approval of H.R. 1592, expanding current federal hate crimes statutes to cover race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity, all eyes are now turned to the U.S. Senate, and its companion bill, S. 1105. Also known as the Matthew Shepard Act, S.1105 was introduced by Senator Edward Kennedy and has 43 other cosponsors. S.1105 has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee for consideration.

In other legislative news, H.R.1246, the Military Readiness Enhancement Act of 2007, which would amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance the readiness of the Armed Forces by replacing the current policy concerning homosexuality in the Armed Forces, referred to as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," with a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, was introduced by Representative Marty Meehan, D-MA, with 122 cosponsors. Meehan's bill was referred to the House Armed Services Committee's subcommittee on Military Personnel for consideration.

Senator Frank Lautenberg, D-NJ and Representative Barbara Lee, D-CA, introduced the Responsible Education About Life or "REAL" Act (S. 972, H.R. 1653), measures that would create a grant program administered by the Department of Health and Human Services that would award \$206 million per year to states for comprehensive and age appropriate, sexuality education.

Lautenberg's proposal has 11 cosponsors and Lee's has 60 other House members who have signed onto H.R. 1653. S. 972 has been assigned to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and H.R. 1653 has been assigned to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

H.R. 1820, The Tax Equity for Health Plan Beneficiaries Act, introduced by Representative Jim McDermott, D-WA, would simplify the tax code and address - and encourage, McDermott hopes - a growing national trend by private and public employers to provide domestic partner benefits in order to promote fairness and equality in the workplace.

McDermott's bill would "provide equitable tax treatment to all employees, regardless of their sexual orientation, is as fair and common sense as it gets," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese in a statement. "Over half of Fortune 500 companies now offer domestic partner health benefits to their employees, and there is no logical reason why these benefits should be taxed any differently. This bill is a win-win proposal for both workers and businesses."

Both public and private employers across the country have made the business decision to provide health benefits to domestic partners of their employees and as of Jan. 1, 2007, a majority (265) of the Fortune 500 corporations offered health benefits to employees' domestic partners but current federal tax law has not kept up with corporate change in this area and both employers and employees who offer these benefits are being taxed inequitably. H.R. 1820 has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

H.R. 2015, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007, would make it illegal to fire, refuse to hire or refuse to promote employees simply based on a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, perceived or otherwise, and as in past versions of the legislation, ENDA would exempt the U.S. armed services, religious institutions, including churches and church-operated institutions and schools, from the sexual orientation and gender identity provisions, as well as employers with fewer than 15 employees. In addition, the bill prohibits hiring quotas or affirmative action requirements on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and explicitly states that employers are not required to provide benefits to domestic partners of employees.

Introduced by openly Gay Representative Barney Frank, D-MA, H.R. 2015 was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, Oversight and Government Reform, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

It has been reported, as of press time, that the Uniting American Families Act (UAFSA) (formerly the Permanent Partners Immigration Act), was introduced Tuesday (May 8), by Senator Patrick Leahy, D-VT and Representative Jerrold Nadler, D-NY, for consideration.

If enacted, UAFSA would require bi-national same-sex couples meet the same requirements as bi-national, married couples. Some requirements include providing proof of the relationship, including affidavits from friends and family or evidence of financial support. UAFSA will apply the same standards to same-sex couples that the United States applies to opposite-sex couples where one member is seeking to bring a foreign partner into the country. As with current immigration laws for married couples, the UAFSA would impose harsh penalties for fraud, including up to five years in prison and as much as \$250,000 in fines. In addition, if the partnership is dissolved in less than two years, the legal immigrant status of the partner would be revoked.

Under the measure, a permanent partner is any person 18 or older who is: in a committed, intimate relationship with another adult 18 or older in which both parties intend a lifelong commitment; financially interdependent with that other person; not married to, or in a permanent partnership with, anyone other than that other person; and unable to contract with that person a marriage cognizable under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

To express your support for these and other measures of concern, go online to: hrcactioncenter.org/actioncenter/home.html, thetaskforce.org/hatecrimes07/hatecrimes07.html or go to aclu.org, click on the link to their action center.

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Michelle Rodriguez Hits Back At Curve Magazine

LOS ANGELES - Michelle Rodriguez (Lost, Girlfight) criticized Lesbian magazine Curve on her Web site forum for outing her in this month's issue. Rodriguez is on the magazine's cover and says she "wasn't informed of it" and "had no idea they were using my image to sell magazines," advocate.com reported. Actress and Advocate cover girl Kristanna Loken revealed to The Advocate last Nov. 2006, that she and Rodriguez were intimate, but Rodriguez herself has been mum on the subject.



Rodriguez

and for whatever reasons they show me love I'm never going to shun, disrespect or neglect anybody who shows me genuine non-psychotic Love.... But I will Say this, to put words in someone's mouth and place people in categories affects them for sure, especially in this business."

She also notes, "If I were Ellen, I may get away with 'The I'm Gay' level of exposure, but I'm not a comedian, I like men; (real ones anyway) and I've only bin in this business for 7 years not 20. Years of recognition can give a person lots of leverage especially if you have many years of positive recognition under your belt. There are certain things that can close doors between a celebrity and certain audiences. Especially in a world where walls are constantly being put up by people seeking comfort and groups to belong to."

"As far as rumors go of me coming out, I guess Curve magazine took it upon themselves to out me on the premise of their own suspicions." Rodriguez wrote. "Whatever, I'm not insulted, I have a big Lesbian following,

Pride Wants A Place In Small-Town Parade

ST. JOSEPH, Michigan - An LGBT group that plans to enter a float in the town's biggest parade of the year is being threatened for plans to take part in the festivities, reported the Associated Press on advocate.com. The Out and Affirmations Center, based in the Berrien County, Mich., YWCA, took flak after the local Herald-Palladium newspaper ran a front-page story April 27 about the first Gay float in the Blossomtime Festival Parade, scheduled for this weekend.

explain what being Gay means. The float is covered by a large, waving American flag. The end of the flag wraps around a blossoming fruit tree, from which a few rainbow-colored ribbons dangle.

Gorman, who grew up in St. Joseph, returned after spending several years away. Now he says St. Joseph needs to be more aware of what he describes as a "close-knit, vibrant" Gay community. After several years when the community thought about sponsoring a float, he put in the legwork to make it happen. Three months ago, Gorman met with parade organizers, who were skeptical at first about putting a Gay float in a politically and socially neutral parade. But after an hour of conversation, he was able to persuade the organizers to let the Out and Affirmations Center march its float down the parade route. "I turned to Cullen yesterday and I said, 'I think we're about five years too early with this float, and he said, 'No, I think we're 10 years too late,'" said Gorman.

Creators and life partners Brad Gorman and Cullen Kemp say the display contains nothing too off-putting or overtly Gay. "Me and my boyfriend are walking next to the float," Kemp told The Advocate. "So I'm a little nervous. The parade rules allow only two people to accompany each float as well as a driver, and we can't stand on the float." Kemp, who hails from California, said his love of building floats came from six years' experience helping at the Rose Parade in Pasadena. But his involvement with building the Out and Affirmations Center's parade float has worried him.

Blossomtime officials could not be reached for comment, but Gorman said the committee has continued to be helpful in keeping the Out and Affirmations Center involved in the parade. The program coordinator for the Out and Affirmations center, Stephen Jukuri, said that the group isn't used to controversy but that some people have publicly expressed support. "Now that it's been three or four days (since the feature first ran in the Herald-Palladium), the more thoughtful people are stepping up and showing their support," Jukuri said. "We're feeling very good at this point. Certainly our float will be in the Blossomtime Parade, and it is keeping with the patriotic theme. There's nothing in-your-face about the float at all." Jukuri also says that, given the local outcry, the outreach by the YWCA was doubly important. "The YWCA, a while back, decided that this was an issue that was needed improvement in this community," he said, "so that's how the Out and Affirmations Center was created." Jukuri, Kemp and Gorman agree that the float was the group's way of showing pride in their community, country, and, subtly, their sexual orientation. "This float was just an earnest attempt that has opened up opportunities for real dialogue in the community," Jukuri said.

"What is next year going to bring," one reader wrote, "a float about abortion rights, with a beauty queen holding a dead fetus?" Some readers said they had canceled their plans to bring out-of-town friends and family to the 101-year-old festival, which has become a standard annual celebration for Michigan residents. Some called the Blossomtime parade committee to argue that the float will raise questions from children, forcing parents to



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NOTES FROM THE FOR-REAL SIDE

by Lee Thorn

Senator Harry Reid has famously said that Bush is "in a state of denial" about the Iraq war. I'm not at all sure that Bush has the requisite mental equipment to be in a state of denial, but, if he's actually in one, that state is being enabled by his cowardly generals. I don't know who these cowardly generals are by name, but any general who has passed up the opportunity to tell Bush that there is no military solution to the war is, in my view, not only cowardly but criminal.

I write from the perspective of a Vietnam veteran who has led troops under fire. That doesn't make me right, but it does ground my view in experience as well as reflection. Furthermore, as a former soldier I'm not in principle opposed to suicide missions. I believe that you have a reasonable motive for a suicide mission when you think that what you're fighting for is more important to you than your life is.

My problem with Iraq is that our people are dying there without a mission. Bush says we're fighting "them" there so we won't have to fight them here. Leaving aside the utter illogic of that statement, I literally know absolutely no one who believes it. Bush says we're fighting to stabilize Iraq when the consensus of informed opinion is that our very presence there is destabilizing. Bush says all hell will break loose if we leave. Don't look now but that's already happened: hundreds of thousand dead, millions displaced.

Any general who has passed up the opportunity to tell Bush we need to get out is guilty of depraved indifference to human life. We are not on a suicide mission in Iraq simply because we are not on a mission in Iraq. Our troop dying there are human sacrifices, sacrifices to the cause of saving Bush's face until he can run out the clock on his presidency and hand the disaster over to the new guy.

Most people find it hard to impossible to even wrap their minds around the enormity of that crime, the crime of letting thousands and thousands of people die to save yourself from embarrassment.

Imagine a situation, admittedly fanciful, in which you had a choice of going on TV and admitting the most embarrassing thing you've ever done or some American soldier chosen at random would be executed. If your answer is, "Shoot him," you should consider running for public office. Bush's people didn't invent the run-out-the-clock strategy. LBJ committed the identical crime for the identical reason in Vietnam and thousands of Americans and Vietnamese paid for it with their lives.

Why aren't our generals SCREAMING at Bush that the "mission" of saving his face isn't a valid military mission? The most obvious supposition is that they're simply afraid of losing their jobs. All I can say is that you've really got to love your job to let innocent people die so you can keep it.

What is the "surge" supposed to do? How are 20 or 30 thousand troops supposed to impact a country the size of Iraq in the throws of a civil war? This is delusional thinking. Why are our generals supporting absurd delusions? I call it cowardice, but I'd love to see anyone's alternative description or explanation.

Why are our troops going out on patrol? Are they looking for the "bad

guys"? If 80% of the population wants you out of their country and 60% wouldn't mind seeing you dead, from the point of view of your health and welfare, isn't just about everybody you see on patrol a "bad guy"? Patrolling in Iraq makes about as much sense as sticking your hand into an alligator's mouth to see if he's hungry.

When I was trained as an army officer, we were told we had a responsibility for the welfare of our troops. I interpret that to mean that you shouldn't let them become human sacrifices to the vanity of criminal politicians, even if one of those criminal politicians is the president.

When this war is over, assuming we haven't yet slipped into George Orwell's predicted state of permanent war (a big assumption), some of these generals should be asked some very tough questions about the complete disappearance of their character.

(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.)

Isaiah Washington To Do PSAs For GLAAD & GLSEN



NEW YORK CITY - Isaiah Washington, who came under fire after using an anti-Gay slur, will appear in a public service announcement on behalf of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation and the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com. "We're gonna have - I want to say at least two versions of it at this point. We may broaden our message a little," the actor's publicist, Howard Bragman, told The Associated Press in a phone interview.

Washington ran into trouble at the Golden Globe Awards in January after he used an anti-Gay slur during a backstage press conference while denying he'd used it previously against "Grey's Anatomy" castmate T.R. Knight. People magazine reported in Oct. 2006, that Washington had allegedly used the slur during an on-set dustup with co-star Patrick Dempsey. Knight said soon after the incident that he was Gay. After being criticized by GLAAD and the ABC network, Washington issued an apology and sought counseling. Bragman said ABC, which is owned by The Walt Disney Co., was planning to shoot the ad in the next few weeks.

Bragman said Washington plans to return to "Grey's Anatomy" next year. "We've heard nothing to the contrary, and we have no plans to the contrary," Bragman said.

Bowing To Pressure, Micron Adds Sexual Orientation To Non-Discrimination Policy

BOISE, Idaho (Observer Update) - Micron Technology decided to amend its company policy so employees can no longer be fired on the basis of their sexual orientation, advocate.com reported. The move comes after the company's board of directors had ignored an unprecedented 55% shareholder vote that favored adding both sexual orientation and gender identity to Micron's nondiscrimination policies.

That shareholder resolution, filed by New York City comptroller William C. Thompson Jr. on behalf of the New York City Pension Fund System last June, was the first concerning sexual orientation nondiscrimination to receive a majority vote at any U.S. company. In a letter to Thompson, Micron's vice president of human resources, Patrick T. Otte, wrote, "Following conversations with our shareholders regarding nondiscrimination in the workplace, the Micron board today revisited its equal opportunity employment policies and came to a decision to add sexual orientation to its nondiscrimination language." The company said in its letter that the change would make its policy consistent across all its work sites, since its California employees already have sexual orientation protections. The company was also in the process of revising its nondiscrimination policies at its Oregon site to include sexual orientation, following recent changes in that state's law. The Micron board, however, did not move to add gender identity protections to its policies. Company spokesperson Daniel Francisco gave no reasoning for the decision but said they were simply not considering that change at this time.

Jeff Simmons, communications director for the New York City Pension Fund System, said Thompson was pleased that Micron had acquiesced to its shareholders. "However," Simmons added, "we are disappointed that Micron has not fully embraced the scope of our resolution and instead has only amended its policy to include sexual orientation but not gender identity." Simmons said the comptroller would continue to push for Micron to include gender identity protections. Micron, which makes memory components and image sensors used in computers, cell phones, and cameras, employs about 11,000 people in Idaho, making it the largest private employer statewide. The company has about 23,000 employees worldwide.

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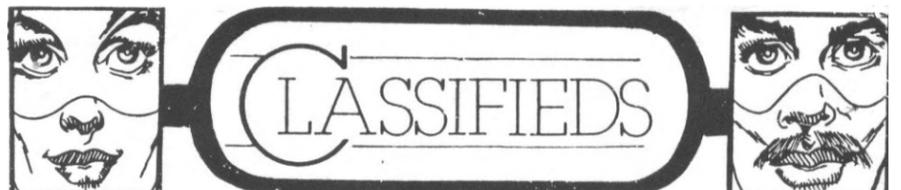
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Non Bar Calendar

Wednesday, May 9
 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Canasta hosted by Marv & Steve. MSN Canasta is played every Wednesday at 7pm, but check back here for the specific host. Call Marv at 745-0304.

Join us for a wonderful potluck dinner to see what the new Man to Man Club is all about. 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. The very popular Meeting Men Parties were the past version of this organization. It's a great way to meet healthy attractive men in a balanced environment, with increased awareness and presence. Call Marc at 881-4582 between 8am and 8pm. Space is limited. Only 10 men per evening. This is a structured experience of what the tantric man is about.

Thursday, May 10
 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Triangle Tribe-A Men's Circle. According to a recent study, very few people have as many close friends as they would like. Are you as connected with other men as you want to be? Do you get the support you need for issues in your life? Do you wish you had more meaningful friendships and relationships with other men? Join like-minded men at Wingspan to share feelings, thoughts and ideas in a safe, respectful space. For the same experience with both straight and gay men, join us at the regular Circle of Men meetings. Call Tom at 591-2828 for dates and times.

Friday, May 11
 Tucson Prime Timers, Cocktails - 5:30 PM, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Saturday, May 12
 #1 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:30p.m. MSN CLASSIC MOVIE NIGHT hosted by Ross. Enjoy an evening of good, clean fun and this month's great film. Three spectacular Busby Berkeley musical productions top off this fast-paced story about 'movie prologues'—live stage musicals that were produced and shown in theatres before the feature film. Sassy Joan Blondell gets all of the good lines in between the music! You will never be the same after seeing 'Honeymoon Hotel', 'By a Waterfall', and 'Shanghai Lil'!

#2 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Shuffle over for Floating Pinochle every Saturday of the month except for first Saturday MSN Monthly Pot Luck. Contact Jack at 887-3736.

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

Sunday, May 13
 Tucson Prime Timers, Brunch, Colors, 5305 E. Speedway

Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:30p.m. Dinner Out at one of Tucson's Ultra-Fabulous Buffets. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 623-2941, e-mail thomsepals@hotmail.com, or Ken at 294-6606. Please contact Thom or Ken by Sunday at Noon to facilitate reservations. Price is usually under \$10. Check the Yahoo MSN on-line calendar for the scheduled place. The venue is rotated to include all parts of town, and may occasionally be held at a full-service menu restaurant.

Monday, May 14
 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Trivial Pursuit. Please call Karol at 744-9017 for information and to reserve your place at this limited seating event.

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

Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00 p.m. Lloyd hosts a word for word fun evening of Scrabble. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call Lloyd at 792-8537. If you're loquacious, erudite, or a wordsmith; this man's game just may be a triple word score for you!

Tuesday, May 15
 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Hand and Foot with Bruce. Call for info and directions: 743-3890. Please call ahead to assist your host in planning the evening.

Wednesday, May 16
 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Canasta hosted by Jack. 887-3736. MSN Canasta is played every Wednesday at 7pm, but check back here for the specific host.

Thursday, May 17
 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Triangle Tribe-A Men's Circle. According to a recent study, very few people have as many close friends as they would like. Are you as connected with other men as you want to be? Do you get the support you need for issues in your life? Do you wish you had more meaningful friendships and relationships with other men? Join like-minded men at Wingspan to share feelings, thoughts and ideas in a safe, respectful space. For the same experience with both straight and gay men, join us at the regular Circle of Men meetings. Call Tom at 591-2828 for dates and times.

Friday, May 18
 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. MSN Pizza Night! Usually the 3rd Friday of each month. This month there was no willing host among the MSN membership. Plan to attend the next MSN Pizza night on June 15th, and please consider becoming an MSN Pizza Night host.

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

Saturday, May 19
 #1 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:30a.m. Join Robert for a morning of Volleyball. This is played for fun, and you'll get to know some nice guys as you play. Two great ways to work on your game! For details and directions, please call Robert at 400-1376.

#2 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Shuffle over for Floating Pinochle every Saturday of the month except for first Saturday MSN Monthly Pot Luck. Contact Steve at 664-2076.

Sunday, May 20
 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:30p.m. Dinner Out at one of Tucson's Ultra-Fabulous Buffets. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 623-2941, e-mail thomsepals@hotmail.com, or Ken at 294-6606. Please contact Thom or Ken by Sunday at Noon to facilitate reservations. Price is usually under \$10. Check the Yahoo MSN on-line calendar for the scheduled place. The venue is rotated to include all parts of town, and may occasionally be held at a full-service menu restaurant.

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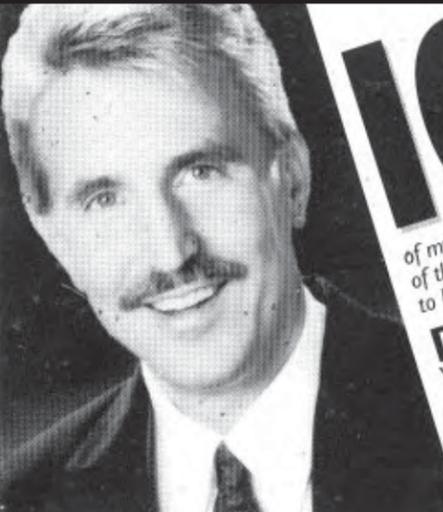
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10%

of my gross income generated by members & friends of the Gay & Lesbian Community will be donated to local AIDS service organizations.

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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 11am - 11pm Champagne Brunch 11am - 2pm with choice of complimentary mimosa, Bloody Mary or Screwdriver. Dickie Steed on piano during brunch. Brunch served until 2pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm \$3.50 Skyy Cocktails, \$2.75 Domestic and well. Reduced price appetizers. Dinner served until 10pm.

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

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.

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 \$3.50 Skyy cocktails, \$2.75 Domestic and well and reduced price appetizers. Dinner served until 10pm.

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. Dart Tourney at 9am. 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, \$3.50 Skyy cocktails, \$2.75 Domestic and well and reduced price appetizers. Dinner served until 10pm.

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

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. Dart Tourney 8pm.

THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open 3pm-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 4pm-11pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$3.50 Skyy cocktails, \$2.75 Domestic and Well and reduced price appetizers. Dinner served until 10pm.

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, \$3.50 Skyy cocktails, \$2.75 Domestic and Well and reduced prize appetizers. Dinner served until 10pm. "Hot Jazz, Cool Martinis" with Susan Artemis and Craig Faltin 6:30-9:30pm. "Guys & Dolls" comedy drag show hosted by Lucinda Holliday at 10pm.

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. Lunch served until 4pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, \$3.50 Skyy cocktails, \$2.75 Domestic and Well, reduced price appetizers. Dinner served until 10pm. Nightly dinner specials.

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 play 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.

Governor To Sign LGBT Rights Bill

DENVER, Colorado (Observer Update) - Legislation making it illegal to discriminate in the workplace on the basis of sexuality has been sent to the desk of Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter, 365Gay.com reported. The governor has already said he will put his name to the bill.

The measure passed its final hurdle Thursday (May 3) when the Senate approved amendments to a House version of the legislation. Sen. Jennifer Veiga (D) has been trying for more than a decade to have a civil rights bill enacted. Measures she proposed were passed by the legislature in 2005

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

SATURDAY, MAY 12

HOWL AT THE MOON - Tori Steele is your host for an evening with great female illusionists. 9:00 p.m. \$5.00 cover.

VENTURE-n - Join the Venture staff as they celebrate the life and art of John Dubs, longtime friend and bartender here. 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 13

YARD DOG SALOON - Steak Night begins at 7:00 p.m. Cooked to order!

THURSDAY, MAY 17

THE BIZ - Thursday Thunder with a Drag Show at 9:30 p.m. hosted by Boy Sean.

SATURDAY, MAY 19

THE BIZ - Beach Party! \$3 drink specials: Sea Breeze and Bay Breeze.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Miss Desert States Pageant at 7:00 p.m. Come and see who wins the crown!

SUNDAY, MAY 20

THE BIZ - New on Sundays beginning tonight - Latin Sundays with doors open at 9:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 22

HOWL AT THE MOON - Amber Sound is here playing acoustical favorites and original songs. 8:30 p.m. No Cover

SATURDAY, MAY 26

HOWL AT THE MOON - Viva! Latino Drag Show starting at 10:00 p.m. \$3.00 Cover.

THURSDAY, L MAY 31

THE BIZ - Thursday Thunder with a Drag Show at 9:30 p.m. hosted by Boy Sean.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9

HOWL AT THE MOON - Too Much Information is here playing classic rock and blues. 9:00 p.m. \$5.00 Cover.

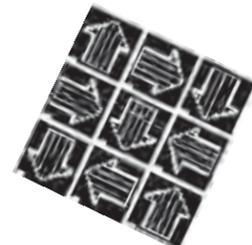
SATURDAY, JUNE 23

HOWL AT THE MOON - Mark your calendars for Gay West at Old Tucson.

and 2006 but vetoed by Republican Gov. Bill Owens.

Colorado law already bars discrimination in hiring, firing or in demotions or promotions based on race, age or disability. Republicans attempted to weaken the new bid to pass the legislation by proposing a long list of categories to be covered. All of the amendments were defeated. Some of those proposed amendment sparked heated debate when the bill was before the House last month. Rep. Ray Rose (R) proposed an amendment that would bar discrimination based on weight, body shape, height, hair and eye color. Fellow Republican Marsha Looper stood up and mockingly said that she frequently is subject of blonde jokes. Denver Democrat Terrance Carroll, who is African American left to the floor accusing Republicans of trivializing discrimination against minorities. Two more Republicans came to Looper's defense. Rep. Bob Gardner said it was Carroll who was being trivial. He said studies have shown that tall people are more likely to get jobs, and Rep. Debbie Stafford claimed that obese people are less likely to get hired. "There's never been anyone lynched because of their height in this nation," Carroll shot back.

When Ritter signs the bill into law, Colorado will become the twentieth U.S. state to ban workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and the twelfth to ban discrimination on the basis of gender identity. "We are very proud and pleased in Colorado that after a decade of hard work, patience, and education, we join the ranks of states which give basic employment rights to Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender people," said Michael Brewer, a spokesperson for Equal Rights Colorado.



NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

TUCSON KNIGHT OWLS (T.K.O) Openly invites new members to our monthly meetings which occur on the first Saturday of every month at 12:00 pm., followed by a beer bust from 2pm to 6pm., at our home bar the Yard Dog saloon. T.K.O.'s annual spring/summer fling is now called owls fling. This year we will be going to Holly Lake July 27th - 30th. The run fee is \$60 for members and \$70 for non-members. Applications will be available at our next beer bust. You can also pick one up from any T.K.O. member.

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

IINNER 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 or 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.

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@yahoo.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.



'I Underestimated America

DENVER, Colorado (Observer Update) - When John Amaechi told the world he was Gay, he steeled himself for a torrent of negativity that never really materialized, the former pro basketball player told the GOP's largest Gay organization Saturday (May 5), reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com. "I underestimated America. I braced myself for the wrath of a nation under God," Amaechi said at the Log Cabin Republicans' annual convention. "I imagined that it would be a firestorm, that it would be some insane number of letters demanding my deportation or my death."

"And in fact, 95 percent of the correspondence I've had have been overwhelmingly supportive and positive," Amaechi said. "But I will say that the 5 percent that I've had have been unbelievably, viscerally, frighteningly negative." Amaechi is a psychologist who works with corporations and also with children, "and I worried what America would make of that," he said. "And it is not an issue."

Among the most vitriolic of critics was former NBA All-Star Tim Hardaway, whose anti-Gay remarks led to his disassociation with the league. Amaechi, who was raised in England, played in 301 NBA games over five seasons with stops in Cleveland, Orlando, Utah, Houston and New York. The 36-year-old former player said that while he's heard from everyone he played with at Penn State, he has yet to hear from a single former NBA teammate since coming out in Feb. "Probably 30 of my former (NBA) teammates have my e-mail and my telephone contacts and probably 16 or so of those I was in regular touch with and there are probably 10 people who I have (on instant messenger). And zero

—nobody— who's active in the NBA has been in touch with me since the day I came out, despite the fact that most of them knew I was Gay in the first place," Amaechi said.

He also wondered why nba.com has never mentioned his homosexuality when it was such a huge sports story everywhere else. Amaechi said he thinks the sports world is slowly accepting Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender athletes but he wasn't sure if that was indicative of society's acceptance or even whether sports was an appropriate barometer. "They are our gladiators, our heroes. On the other hand, there's not many of you would trust them with your children, with your car keys or to do your accounting," he said. "Let's face it, for the most part, the stereotype is that they — we — are dumb as rocks. So, I don't know if they are a terribly good group to be looked at as kind of indicative of societal change or as leaders in that respect."

At times, Amaechi said he finds himself a little out of place as a Gay sports ambassador. "I've spent a lot of time in this country and I do adore it on many levels, but we live in a country where a man can be lured to a parking lot, beaten and chased to his death on a freeway," Amaechi said. "We live in a country where a shoeless child can be strapped to a fence post and left to die. ... And yet somehow we expect that the general public will sit up and pay attention when they can focus on 'Gay Shaq.' I don't understand that. What happens to human empathy when the death of children, of innocents, do not inspire the kind of change we're looking for? But an athlete potentially sacrificing an endorsement here or there or the chiding

of his teammates, that would cause this kind of change?"

In his speech titled "Is Pro Sports Changing?" Amaechi said not all change is relevant, a point he illustrated with a story about doing plyometric training in Phoenix with other elite athletes during his playing days. A young football player begged to be allowed to jump onto the highest of three boxes. He almost made it but clipped the edge and fell to the floor, skinning his shins. "Until he grew up, until he got the strength that he needed, until he got the size he needed, until his physical ability and his experiences matched his will, he is indistinguishable from those who could jump on the middle box," Amaechi said. "All he has to show for his attempt at this top box is shins with no skin. Sometimes change has a threshold, and until you reach it, there is not really any progress."

As for politics, Amaechi chided Democrats and Republicans alike. "It's hard for me to hide the fact that I am no fan of this administration, as much for their foreign policy as for their stance on (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender) issues," he said. "However, I am no fan of the Democratic candidates who take four days before they decide that Gen. Pace's comments were not very nice."

Amaechi surprised many in the audience by declaring he's not a sports fan and that he has no desire to pick up a basketball again, although he is intrigued by the thought of playing for a Gay team. "I haven't watched a professional basketball game in three, maybe four years," he said. "And it's not because I hate the NBA or I harbor any kind of (resentment). None of that. It's just that Saturday afternoon, I can think of something better to do."

Campaign Urges Religious Not To Be Victims Of Anti-LGBT Extremists

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The nondenominational group Faith in America announced the launch of a five-city "Call to Courage" campaign to educate Americans about what it calls the misuse of religious teachings to discriminate and isolate LGBT people, 365Gay.com reported. The campaign kicked off in Ames, Iowa.

"Today marks an important day in the shared history of America's religious and GLBT communities. For a long time we've stood on separate sides of an impasse" said Jimmy Creech, Executive Director of Faith In America. "But through this education campaign we will begin a deep and sustained dialogue, to bridge the gaps of tolerance and understanding in this country." Creech served twenty-nine years as a minister in the United Methodist Church and is considered a leading expert and spokesperson on faith and the GLBT community.

FIA's national campaign also will include Reno, Nevada; Greenville, South Carolina; Manchester, New Hampshire; and Colorado Springs, Colorado. The five campaigns will be held between May and the end of Nov. 2007. It will employ direct mail and paid advertisements to educate the public on what the organization considers the parallels between historical precedents of religion-based bigotry and today's struggle for full and equal rights for Gay people. The campaign will provide a forum for citizens to express their sentiments about religion-based bigotry and to discuss its harm on society and the LGBT community.

It is working with the Metropolitan Community Church Worldwide, Soulforce, Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

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