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OBSERVER

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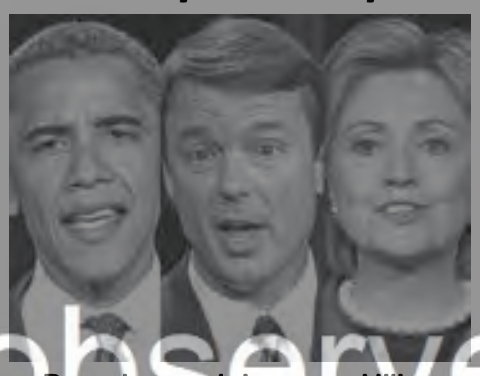
EDITORIAL

Use Your Voice And Vote Tuesday, February 5



Barack Obama | John Edwards | Hillary Clinton

Voters in Arizona and 21 other states will go to the polls on Tuesday, February 5 in their party's presidential primary or caucuses to determine their standard bearer for the presidential election to be held Tuesday, November 5.

Only two political parties are taking part in Arizona's election, the Democratic and the Republican. People must be registered with one or the other party to be eligible to cast ballots since this is a "closed primary," where people who are registered independents or with another political party not participating in this election, are not allowed to vote.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Arizonans, as well as those living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, have three good choices to consider for this election and they are listed on the Democratic presidential primary ballot, Senator Hillary Clinton of New York, Senator Barack Obama of Illinois and former Senator John Edwards of North Carolina.

In previous editions of this publication, all the main Republican contenders had been profiled and their statements, writings of note, actions (such as their refusal to ever appear at the Logo presidential forum or Arizona Senator John McCain's support of Proposition 107 in 2006, the failed at the ballot box, proposed state constitutional amendment barring governmental and legal recognition of same-sex marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships, to name two of many such examples), voting records and positions on issues of concern have clearly shown their lack of support of the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities, so the Observer cannot find reason for those who may be registered Republicans to take part on Tuesday, February 5.

Through their statements, Senator's Obama, Clinton and Edwards have expressed support for: prohibiting employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; expanding current federal hate crimes' law to include sexual orientation and gender identity; increased funding for HIV/AIDS research and programs; repealing "Don't ask, don't tell" and allowing Gays and Lesbians to serve openly in the armed services; governmental and legal recognition of committed same-sex couples and their families to name just a few of the many positive remarks made on issues of concern to the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities, for whom they could cast their vote for any of the three in the November 5, presidential election but that is a "bridge to be crossed" for later so the question presently is for whom should people cast their vote on Tuesday, February 5?

Former Senator John Edwards' campaign offers the answers to those who "have not" benefitted from the current President's policies toward his political supporters, which Bush described at a fund raising event in New York City a few years ago, "This is an impressive crowd–the haves and the have mores. Some people call you the elite. I call you my base."

His proposal to deal with the nation's health care problems is the most progressive of the three and can be converted into a universal health care program, something that would benefit the entire nation and which the Observer wholeheartedly supports.

Edwards has been in the forefront in offering quality solutions and not "band aids" to the nation's economic problems, even before the Bush Administration would finally admit to them.

To solve this malaise, Edwards has proposed a $25 billion economic package (that can increase to $100 billion if things don't improve) that would invest in clean energy, expand unemployment benefits, help states that are cash-strapped and establish a "home rescue fund" to keep homes out of foreclosure.

Dealing with the ongoing Iraq war, Edwards has proposed reducing troop levels by 40,000 to 50,000 immediately and then withdrawing all "combat" troops in 10 months.

For LGBT voters in the February 5 presidential primary election, it will boil down to subsequent issues other than ones in the forefront, such as: employment discrimination, hate crimes, recognition of same-sex relationships and for The Observer, Edward's populist message is one that would result in change, for the better, even if he doesn't get the nomination but his proposals are implemented, since America will have "their voice" again.

This election provides the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities a hard choice between three candidates that clearly warrant support. Whatever the results on February 5, there will be a gain, resulting in giving all voters a choice in the November general election for either the status quo or positive change to correct the errors made in the past seven years by the current administration, only if people go to the ballot box on Tuesday, February 5.

If you are unsure of where you need to go and vote, in Pima County, call (520) 740-4330 or go online to recorder.pima.gov/poll_search.aspx. For all other counties in Arizona, go online to azsos.gov/election/county.htm, for further information.

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Napolitano: Abstinence-Only Education A Failure

Governor Janet Napolitano

Phoenix, Arizona (Observer Update) - Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano (D) is telling the Bush administration that the state does not want $1 million in federal funding for abstinence-only education because the programs don't work, 365Gay.com reported.

The move makes Arizona the 16th state to reject the federal money.

A raft of studies have shown that abstinence only programs in schools have done nothing to reduce teen sex and can actually harm LGBT students. The most recent was released in November.

The study found that while abstinence-only efforts appear to have little positive impact, more comprehensive sex education programs were having "positive outcomes" including teenagers "delaying the initiation of sex, reducing the frequency of sex, reducing the number of sexual partners and increasing condom or contraceptive use."

Since 1996, the federal government has spent over a half a billion taxpayer dollars on abstinence-only programs.

A 2006 study by the independent Society for Adolescent Medicine called the programs "scientifically and ethically flawed".

When the report's authors looked specifically and LGBT teens they found that abstinence-only education was "unlikely to meet the health needs" of the group because abstinence-only programs focus heavily on no sex until marriage and ignore homosexuality. This could lead to increased risk of infection among these youngsters, the investigators said.

In July the Gay Men's Health Crisis, in New York, called abstinence only programs dangerous to Gay youth.

Napolitano's rejection of federally funded abstinence education follows her approval in December of a $100,000 campaign to urge Gay men to get tested for syphilis after state health officials warned the disease is reaching crisis proportions.

In Maricopa County, which includes the city of Phoenix, the number of cases for the first six months of 2007 was 25 times higher than it was seven years earlier. The majority of the cases was among men who have sex with men.

Despite Napolitano's decision whether to teach abstinence-only is left up to individual school districts.

CDC Disputes Study On Staph Infection Among Gays

ATLANTA, Georgia (Observer Update) - The Centers for Disease Control is disputing the results of a study that claims a drug-resistant bacteria, MRSA, is now being found primarily among Gay men in major cities, reported 365Gay.com.

The study which appears in the online version of the journal Annals of Internal Medicine. The researchers examined records from outpatient clinics and found that methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA, is showing up in large numbers among men who have sex with men in New York, San Francisco, Boston and Los Angeles. In San Francisco the bacteria was found to be 13 times more likely in Gay patients than other people in the city. The researchers said the bacteria appears to be spread through sexual contact.

But in a statement the CDC says that sex and sexuality appear to have nothing to do with transmission. "It is important to note that the groups of MSM in which these isolates have been described are not representative of all MSM, so conclusions can not be drawn about the prevalence of these strains among all MSM," the CDC statement said. "The groups studied in this report may share other characteristics or behaviors that facilitate spread of MRSA, such as frequent skin-to-skin contact ... There is no evidence at this time to suggest that it MRSA is a sexually-transmitted infection in the

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UPDATE

New Mexico House Passes Domestic-Partnership Bill

New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson

SANTA FE, New Mexico (Observer Update) - The state house of representatives passed a bill Thursday (January 24) that would permit domestic partnerships for Gay and straight couples, reported advocate.com. The measure, proposed by former presidential candidate and current governor Bill Richardson, will give registered unmarried couples the same rights and benefits as married couples, according to the Las Cruces Sun-News. The vote was 33-31 along party lines, with Democrats supporting the bill, HB9. The legislation would also recognize same-sex partnerships legalized in 10 other states and Washington, D.C.

The bill will go to the senate next, where a similar measure failed in 2007.

Under the legislation, registered partners would be able to obtain medical coverage through their partner's health insurance plan, visit a partner in the hospital, or take medical leave to care for each other. They would also be afforded rights to make property and inheritance decisions on behalf of a dead or dying partner. The law would also grant couples the same responsibilities in child support, visitation, and custody in divorce.

"Is this bill contrary to God, contrary to marriage?" asked Rep. Antonio "Moe" Maestas, an Albuquerque Democrat, as quoted by the Sun-News. "And the answer is no. Not a single married couple in this state will get divorced because of this bill. Not a single couple that is engaged ... will cancel that wedding as a result of this bill. Not a single straight person will become Gay as a result of this bill."

House Republicans, like Nora Espinoza, told the Sun-News that she worries the bill will jeopardize the sanctity of marriage. "If this bill passes, courts will not be able to favor traditional families involving one man and one woman over a homosexual couple in matters of adoption," she said.

In 2003, Richardson enacted an executive order to extend similar rights to Gay employees of the state.

Desert Voices "Come Out And Play' Auction, February 9

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Desert Voices (DV) Chorus members are busy gathering wonderful items for our auction scheduled for February 9 at the Historic Y, 300 East University and busy rehearsing for the cabaret, this year entitled "Come Out & Play."

Desert Voice's first parental guidance performance, it promises to be just naughty enough to tickle all funny bones. This show features the best of our chorus and their hobbies and special interests. Desert Voices has a group of women that aren't afraid of power tools (A Girl's Best Friend), men who aren't afraid of getting older (When I'm Sixty-Four), and another group that's trying to figure out vectors of transmission (I Got It From Agnes). One young woman is sharing her not-so-secret desire to be used as a plaything (The Masochism Tango), and another young man is sharing his secret life in the suburbs (Sam and Me).

The doors to the Y will open at 6:00 p.m. for perusal of the auction tables. Tables will close at 7:30 with the entertainment to follow and there is ample seating for all. We are again offering stage-side tables seating 4/5. This is Desert Voices only fund raiser of the year, so come out and see what Desert Voices has for sale, then enjoy chorus members at their best.

Chris Tackett, the artistic director of Desert Voices, Tucson's gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and supportive others mixed chorus, said they "have been working, playing, and making music for nineteen years now, striving to reach out and heal divisions among the diverse communities in Southern Arizona through singing and performing." For all of our serious singing and performing, though, these people know how to throw a party, Tackett added.

Tickets will go on sale at Antigones and are also available as well through our box office (520) 791-9662 and from any chorus member.

PFLAG Annual Couples Celebration February 6

TUCSON (Observer Update) - PFLAG Tucson's (online at pflagtucson.org) annual couples celebration will be held on Wednesday, February 6, from 7:00-9:00 pm at the Ward VI City Council Offices at 3202 E. 1st Street, one block east of Country Club Road and one block South of Speedway Boulevard.

The stories of Tucson's LGBT couples is always an uplifting demonstration of the love and devotion that LGBT couples share.

Please call PFLAG-Tucson's help line (360-3795) or send them an e-mail message (pflagtuc@pflagtucson.org) if you want or need immediate support.

CDC Disputes Study

Continued from Page One

classical sense."

The statement also provided ways of ensuring that MRSA is not passed on. These include keeping hands clean, keeping any open wounds bandaged, and not sharing utensils. The study also has been criticized by LGBT rights groups who said that the researchers were attempting to portray the disease the way HIV/AIDS was at the onset - as the "Gay cancer".

Henry Chambers, one of the study's authors and a professor of medicine at UCSF, said he regretted that the study has been made a political issue. "We deplore negative targeting of specific populations in association with MRSA infections or other public health concerns ...[We were] "looking at this from a scientific point of view and not projecting any political impact."

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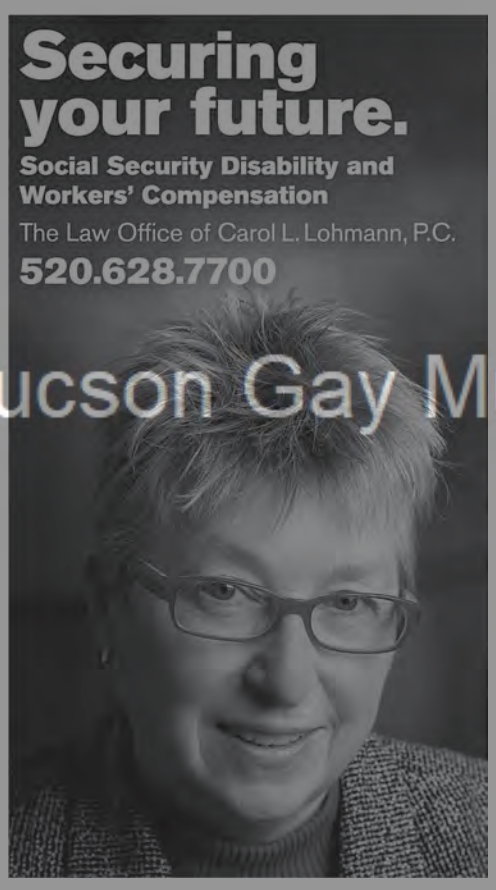

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For LGBT Democrats, A Primary Where Our Rights Are Not An Issue, -- This Time

NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - The impromptu debate, over light beers and dirty martinis, was at once mundane and remarkable. Provoked by a reporter, four middle-aged men at a Greenwich Village Gay bar made fiery pitches for the Democratic presidential front-runners, the New York Times reported. Two backed Senator Barack Obama, one argued for Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, and the fourth made an emotional plea for the cause of John Edwards, the former senator from North Carolina.

"Edwards is the only one who really cares about the underdog," one of the men, Farid Martinez, 41, a clothing designer from Brooklyn, shouted above the din at the bar, the Monster, across from Sheridan Square. His friend Edmund Taylor, 37, disagreed, and nearly sputtered with rage: "The guy is a millionaire lawyer obsessed with his hair. Obama is the only one who can really transform this country."

What was notable about the exchange last week was what was not mentioned: the word "Gay."

For the first time in two decades, Gay voters find themselves in an unusual, if happy, predicament. The three leading Democrats have staked out similar positions on issues that resonate with Gay men and Lesbians. Although none of the three candidates back Gay marriage, they all support same-sex civil unions and say they would fight to repeal the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. And each of them says he or she would champion a federal anti-discrimination law that would protect Lesbians and Gay men.

"You would need a magnifying glass to see any real or substantive differences between the three candidates," said Alan Van Capelle, the executive director of the Empire State Pride Agenda, a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender civil rights group in New York.

The Republican field is a different story. All of the candidates hold opposite positions from the Democrats on those matters, and although Gay rights have not dominated the Republican contest so far, if past elections are any guide, they will become an issue after the primaries, political strategists say.

For the moment, however, Gay voters in New York are looking past the issues that have long guided them toward a candidate. They are talking about the conflict in Iraq, universal health care and whether it is more important to have a president with experience or exuberance.

"I think there's also a lot of excitement over having someone other than George Bush in the White House," said Matthew W. Carlin, president of the Stonewall Democratic Club, a Gay political group that endorsed Senator Clinton in September. "And there's a feeling that people could be happy with any of the Democrats."

In what many Gay leaders described as a fairly momentous occasion, Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Obama and Mr. Edwards showed up at a forum in August sponsored by the Gay cable channel Logo and talked about the bravery of Gay soldiers, adoption rights for same-sex couples and the problems faced by homeless Gay teenagers. All three candidates employ Gay strategists at the national and state levels, and in the two weeks leading up to the New York primary on Feb. 5, representatives from each campaign said, they planned to concentrate on the state's Gay vote through mailings and rallies.

"We're going to get the word out best we can to show that Hillary has done more for the community than any other political figure in America," said Ethan Geto, a veteran Democratic consultant who is the Clinton campaign's senior policy adviser on Gay and Lesbian concerns.

Although an exact count is elusive, pollsters estimate that Lesbians and Gay men make up between 5 and 13 percent of the Democratic vote in New York; even if the lower figure is accepted, it is a voting bloc worth courting. Ken Sherrill, a political scientist at Hunter College who studies the Gay electorate, said Lesbians and Gay men are far more likely to be interested in politics than are mainstream voters. "This is a group of people whose lives are intimately affected by government policy," he said.

With about a week left before the primary, the Gay vote appears to be mirroring the statewide electorate, which is leaning toward Senator Clinton but has yet to coalesce around one candidate. As one of the state's most powerful politicians, Mrs. Clinton enjoys widespread institutional support in the Gay community; most of the city's Gay Democratic groups have endorsed her, as have the state's highest-ranking openly Gay officials, including the speaker of the New York City Council, Christine C. Quinn, and State Senator Thomas K. Duane of Manhattan. Last week, The New York Blade, a local Gay newspaper, endorsed Mrs. Clinton as well.

But the campaigns of Mr. Edwards and Mr. Obama have been eagerly courting – and raising money from – Gay men and Lesbians, and both have put together lists of prominent Gay supporters.

"Hillary has an advantage, but she certainly does not have a lock on the Gay vote," said Matt Foreman, the executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, who has remained neutral.

The Democratic field stands in contrast to the Republican contenders. Mike Huckabee, the former Arkansas governor, has not repudiated his suggestion, made in 1992, that people with AIDS be isolated from the general population. He and the other leading candidates – Senator John McCain of Arizona, former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York and Mitt Romney, the former Massachusetts governor – are opposed to same-sex civil unions and any compromise that would allow Gays to serve openly in the military.

Still, compared with the last two presidential elections, when Gay rights were a call to arms among conservatives and an issue to be avoided by Democrats, many political experts agreed that this year, Gay-related themes had been overshadowed by the economy, the war in Iraq and illegal immigration.

Much seems to have changed since 1988, when the Democratic nominee, Michael S. Dukakis, turned down an offer of a Gay fund-raising campaign. Four years later, Gay delegates threatened to storm out of the Democratic convention unless Bill Clinton mentioned Gays in his acceptance speech. (He did.)

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UPDATE

Jailed Drunk Driver Mocks 'Dead Gay Guy'

Melissa Arrington

TUCSON - A judge sentenced a woman to nearly the maximum prison term for negligent homicide after hearing a recorded jail conversation in which she made light of the bicyclist she killed, reported the Associated Press on pageoneq.com.

Melissa Arrington, 27, was convicted two months ago of negligent homicide and two counts of aggravated DUI in connection with the December 2006 death of Paul L'Ecuyer. She could have gotten as few as four years behind bars, but Superior Court Judge Michael Cruikshank sentenced her Tuesday to 10 1/2 years – one year shy of the maximum.

Cruikshank said he found a telephone conversation between Arrington and an unknown male friend, a week after L'Ecuyer was killed, to be "breathtaking in its inhumanity." During the conversation, the man told Arrington that an acquaintance believed she should get a medal and a parade because she had "taken out" a "tree hugger, a bicyclist, a Frenchman and a gay guy all in one shot."

Arrington laughed. When the man said he knew it was a terrible thing to say, she responded, "No, it's not."

Assistant Public Defender Michael Rosenbluth told the judge his client has never been "cold, callous or flippant" about L'Ecuyer's death and has always felt remorseful.

Arrington said words couldn't express how she feels, and that once she's out of prison, she hopes to share her story with Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

L'Ecuyer, 45, was riding his bike the night of December 1, 2006 when Arrington swerved off the road, hit him and then continued for 800 feet before stopping, according to Deputy Pima County Attorney Jonathan Mosher. Arrington's blood-alcohol content was .156 percent, nearly double Arizona's .08 legal limit. She had been driving on a suspended license for a prior DUI.

Job Opening At TIHAN

TUCSON - TIHAN is recruiting a Director of CarePartner Support to oversee support services for people living with HIV/AIDS. Responsibilities include coordination of CarePartner support services, supervision of volunteer CareTeams, Poz Cafe monthly lunch program, and other volunteer-based support services for CarePartners living with HIV/AIDS. Additional responsibilities include recognition and retention practices that will support TIHAN volunteers and programs, and maintaining relationships with healthcare providers and social service agencies.

Full-time position (32-40 hours) requires Bachelor's degree, 3 years experience in client support services and volunteer coordination, sensitivity to HIV-related issues, interfaith and multi-cultural issues, and confidentiality. Requires some evening and weekend availability. Salary DOE; benefit package includes health/dental insurance. Bilingual persons and persons living with HIV encouraged to apply. AA/EOE. Complete job description with minimum qualifications is available under Job Openings at www.tihan.org. Submit resume and list of three professional references to scott@tihan.org or TIHAN, 1011 North Craycroft Road #301, Tucson, Arizona 85711.

LGBT Immigrants And Refugees Sought For Needs Assessment

TUCSON - Are you an immigrant or refugee? Are you or do you know people who are also Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT)? Would you like the needs of these communities to be better met in Southern Arizona? If any of the above questions apply to you, please keep reading.

WHAT: We are conducting a study called: "LGBT Immigrants & Refugees in Southern Arizona: A Needs Assessment"

WHO: We are seeking 25-30 people who fit one of the following categories: 1. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) immigrant or refugee; 2. An immigrant or refugee who is a man who has sex with men (MSM) or a woman who has sex with women (WSW) and, 3. A friend or ally of an LGBT, MSM, or WSW immigrant or refugee.

WHY: We would like to interview you in order to determine what special needs LGBT, MSM, and WSW immigrants and refugees have in Southern Arizona and how those needs could be better met.

WHEN: If you agree to participate, we would like to conduct an interview of 1-2 hours at a location and time of your convenience.

OTHER: If you agree to participate, your responses to the interview will be kept strictly confidential – only the two researchers, Eithne Luibhéid (University of Arizona) and Karma Chávez (Arizona State University) will see your responses. If you give permission, your responses to the interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Eithne and Karma will change your name and remove identifying information from the transcriptions and destroy the audio recordings as soon as the transcriptions are complete. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary.

If you have questions about the study and/or would like to be a part of it, please contact Eithne at (520) 626-0029 or Karma at (480) 586-5848. Only Eithne and Karma answer these phones, and they will keep your name completely confidential if you call.

DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

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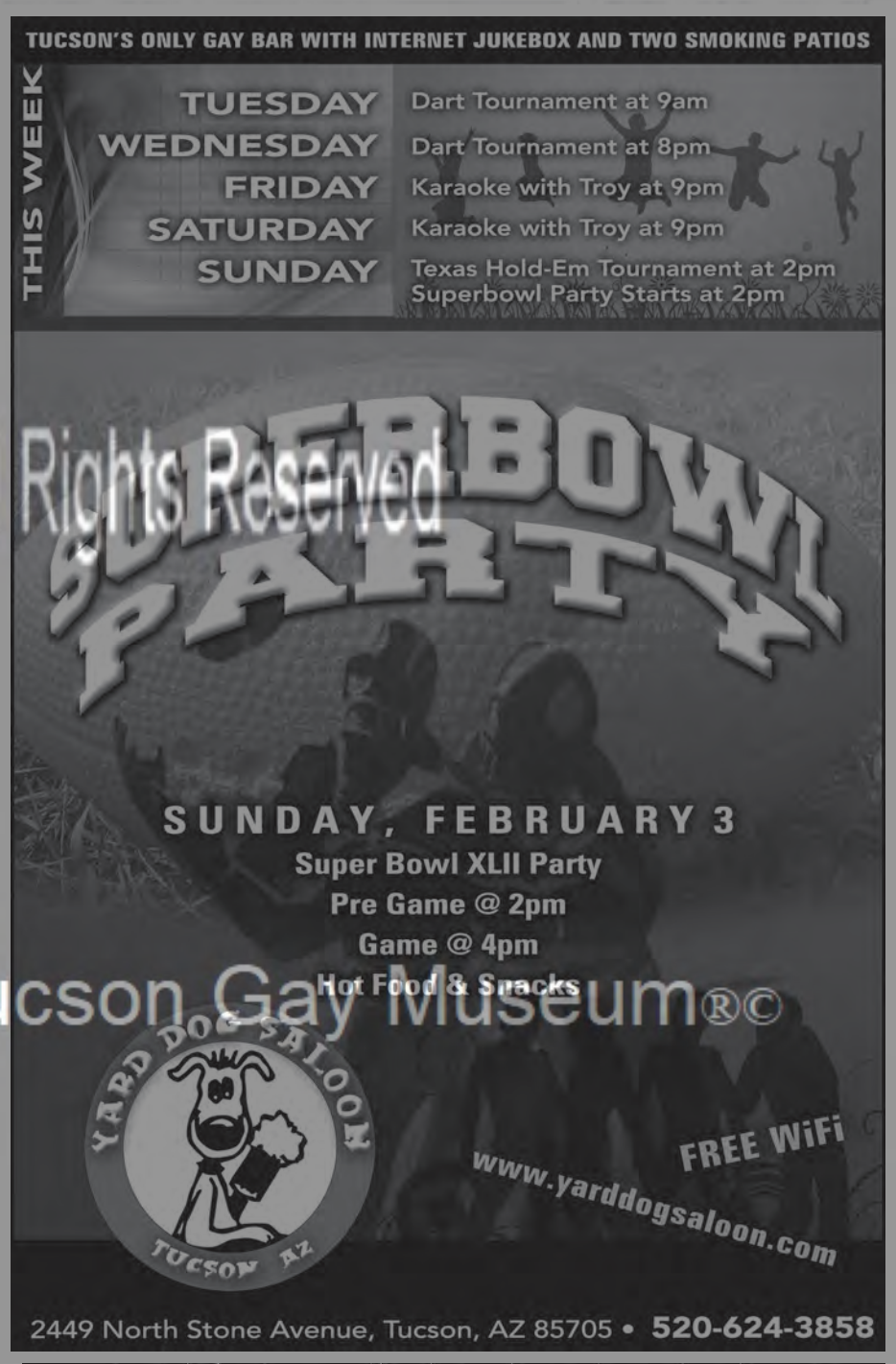

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TIHAN Raffle For 2008 Mustang Bullitt

TUCSON - Buy your raffle ticket now, and get a chance to win a limited edition 2008 Ford Mustang (Bullitt model). Tickets are $25 each, or five for $100. Jim Click is trying to raise ONE MILLION DOLLARS for Tucson area 501(c)(3) charities. He's giving away a 2008 Bullitt Mustang!

TIHAN is participating in this event and we get to keep 100% of the money raised from our raffle ticket sales in order to help us in our mission of a compassionate response to HIV/AIDS. By purchasing a ticket, you get a chance to win a great car, and help support TIHAN! Act now—the drawing is in just a few weeks!

Get your tickets by contacting TIHAN at 299-6647 (credit card orders can be taken over the phone), or stop in and see us at 1011 N. Craycroft Road, #301. We would love to see one of TIHAN's supporters win this great Mustang. The drawing will be held February 18, 2008. Jim Click must have all entries by February 11, 2008, so purchase your ticket now! You must be 21 years of age or older to win. Winner need not be present. The winner will be responsible for all taxes, registration, and travel to claim the vehicle. Color and options on the 2008 Mustang "Bullitt" are subject to Jim Click Automotive Team discretion.

Thanks to the generosity of the Jim Click Automotive group, all the money from every raffle ticket that TIHAN sells will directly support the programs and services of TIHAN!

LGBT Scholarships Offered

TUCSON (Observer Update) - It's that time of year again to apply for LGBT scholarships offered through PFLAG Tucson and Men's Social Network.

This year six $1,000 scholarships will be awarded through PFLAG to LGBT persons to attend an institution of higher education. In addition, Men's Social Network will award two $1,000 Jerry Curl Scholarships to gay male students through PFLAG's application process. The application deadline is March 31, 2008.

The requirements for application are: Must be a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender person to receive a PFLAG scholarship and a gay male student to receive a Jerry Curl Scholarship; and must be accepted to an institution of higher education for the period for which the scholarship is requested.

A complete application packet, which can be downloaded at pflagtucson.org/scholarships/index.htmshall, shall consist of: The application (personal information page); an essay detailing the applicant's plan for higher education, activities within the community, and why PFLAG Tucson/Men's Social Network should award a scholarship to them; two letters of recommendation (one must be from someone other than a family member); and a copy of the student's admission acceptance letter (if the applicant is a current student, then a copy of the most recent grade report).

The essay should be typed, double-spaced, no longer than two one-sided pages or one front-to-back page and detailed enough to describe the applicant and his/her situation to the committee. Remember, any information that is provided will be used only to select the seven worthy candidates and will be kept in the strictest confidence. All information must be submitted to the following address in one envelope and postmarked by March 31, 2008: PFLAG Tucson Scholarship Application, P O Box 36264, Tucson AZ 85740-6264

The applications for the PFLAG Tucson Scholarships are reviewed by the Board of Directors, or by a committee established by the Board, and a representative from Men's Social Network. Applications will be judged on an individual basis using only the information provided by the applicant. All applicants will be notified by mail of the committee's decisions by April 30, 2008. The board of directors of PFLAG Tucson and their families are excluded from receiving or applying for this scholarship.

If you have any questions, please contact PFLAG Tucson at pflagtuc@pflagtucson.org or call (520) 360-3795.

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A Primary Where Our Rights Are Not An Issue - This Time

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In an address last week honoring the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at a black church in Atlanta, Senator Obama made waves by lecturing the audience about homophobia. "We have scorned our Gay brothers and sisters instead of embracing them," he said during the speech at Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Dr. King served as co-pastor with his father.

Joe Solmonese, the president of the Human Rights Campaign, a Gay lobbying group, said he thought Mr. Obama's speech was the first time a presidential candidate had brought up Gay issues in front of a nonGay audience without being prompted to do so. "This is dramatically refreshing," he said. "It's a great day when we can look at a field of candidates and determine that we are comfortable with all of them on Gay rights and move on to other issues."

Still, many Gay leaders said they are unhappy that none of the Democrats have embraced the cause of Gay marriage, even if they understood the political calculus at play.

"There's a feeling that supporting Gay marriage would be politically unacceptable," said Mr. Geto, the Clinton strategist. "Still, we've come a long way. Four years ago, civil unions created such a huge firestorm. I think things will be different one or two election cycles from now."

Douglas J. Newman, P.C.
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Transcending The Feared 'Pink Ceiling'

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania - Alba Martinez, chief executive officer of the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, didn't know her father was Gay until he contracted AIDS and died when she was 21, reported the Philadelphia Inquirer.

To the world, Antonio Martinez, an administrator at the University of Puerto Rico, was a heterosexual family man. Only when his disease was diagnosed, in 1986, did he reveal his secret life. Six months later, he was dead at 55.

The traumatic event "reaffirmed my belief in being true to yourself," says Alba Martinez, 45. "I felt really sad that my father had to lead a double life. Nobody should have to go through life hiding who they are."

In the buttoned-down business corridors of Philadelphia and other large cities, an increasing number of Gay CEOs are not hiding anymore. Some, like Martinez and Sean Buffington, new president of the University of the Arts, have been open about their sexual orientation for their entire professional lives.

They are in the minority. Coming out is serious business in business. Especially for a CEO.

It can stall, or even derail, careers. It can spark backlash from clients or shareholders or boards of directors. It can trigger consumer boycotts or alumni mutinies.

For Gay CEOs who keep their sexual orientation under wraps, much of that fear is self-generated, says Kirk Snyder, author of The G Quotient: Why Gay Executives Are Excelling as Leaders.

"That closet has become very familiar," says Snyder, 47, who came out 15 years ago. "You're not fooling anybody. Employees take their cues from you. Everybody knows, but nobody talks about it. We can't live that way anymore."

Still, not a single CEO of a Fortune 500 company is openly Gay, according to Snyder's research. He says he knows of five who are closeted, however, and he predicts that at least one of them will come out within five years.

Five openly Gay CEOs in Philadelphia were interviewed for this article. An equal number declined. Despite being out to their companies and to the Gay community at large, several said they weren't comfortable, or weren't ready, to be totally public.

One said she wanted the spotlight to be on her company, not on her, regardless of her sexuality. Another was advised by his company not to participate. All agreed it was more difficult to be out in the business world.

Difficulty aside, "I would never even consider working in an environment where I couldn't be open about who I am," says Martinez, former commissioner of Philadelphia's Department of Human Services, the city's largest operating department, and a former columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News.

Martinez came out while attending Georgetown Law School. (An academic whiz, she began at 19.) Her partner, Roberta Trombetta, 40, an executive with the Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania, is also a lawyer.

Gay CEOs "are more reticent to stand out in a crowd," says Bob Witeck, openly Gay CEO of Witeck-Combs Communications in Washington and author of Business Inside Out.

"It's more important to represent the company than yourself. You don't want to go off script. You don't want to be perceived by a conservative board of directors as pushing an agenda."

Martinez says she does not judge other Gay leaders on how public - or private - they choose to be. For her and numerous others, however, personal authenticity is essential for good leadership.

"You can't be in leadership and not be who you are," she says. "You lead by example. Leaders have to be truthful and open. I couldn't live any other way."

Neither could the University of the Arts' Buffington. One of a handful of openly Gay college presidents in the United States, he is also, at 38, one of the youngest.

Born and raised in rural Maryland, Buffington was an altar boy for 10 years. He came out during his junior year at Harvard.

He and his partner of 14 years, Boston Globe arts editor Scott Heller, 46, were married in July in Lenox, Mass. They've been commuting since Buffington began his five-year, $200,000-plus contract in mid-August.

Buffington, an arts administrator at Harvard for 13 years, says he was totally up-front with UArt's search committee about his "marital status."

It was such a nonissue, he says, that Heller joined him for dinner with the chairman and vice chairman of the board.

Around the 2,400-student campus, "I have gotten absolutely no negative response," says Buffington, who hosts pizza parties to get to know students. "That doesn't mean people don't think it."

For a university president, being out presents special challenges. Boards of trustees, which tend to be older and conservative, fear it will hurt fund-raising, a huge part of any president's job.

Some fret over the image of a president attending university functions with his same-sex partner. Or playing golf with donors and not talking about the wife and kids. (News flash: Buffington, who stands 6-foot-2 and wears size 13 shoes, doesn't like sports.)

Continued on Page Ten

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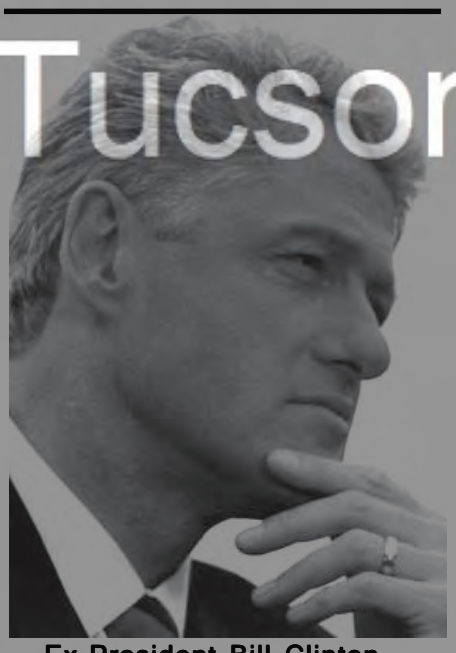
Fifteen Years Of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'

By Mark R. Kerr

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Tuesday (January 29), marks the fifteenth year of when then President Bill Clinton rolled out the policy that came to be known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," (Pub.L. 103-160 (10 U.S.C. § 654). which relaxed the long-standing bar against Gay men and Lesbians serving in the U.S. military.



Ex-President Bill Clinton

While the move was initially hailed as progress for the rights of Gays and Lesbians in the military, it is now seen as a liability.

"Don't Ask, Don't Tell," is the only law in the country that forces people to be dishonest about their personal lives or be fired or possibly imprisoned, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) website stated.

"This discriminatory policy hurts military readiness and national security while putting American soldiers fighting overseas at risk," HRC continued.

Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John Shalikashvili (Ret.) and former Senator and Secretary of Defense William Cohen[citation needed] spoke against the policy publicly in early January 2007: "I now believe that if Gay men and Lesbians served openly in the United States military, they would not undermine the efficacy of the armed forces," General Shalikashvili wrote. "Our military has been stretched thin by our deployments in the Middle East, and we must welcome the service of any American who is willing and able to do the job."

In December 2007, 28 retired generals and admirals urged Congress to repeal the policy. They cited evidence that 65,000 Gay men and women are currently serving in the armed forces, and that there are over 1,000,000 Gay veterans.

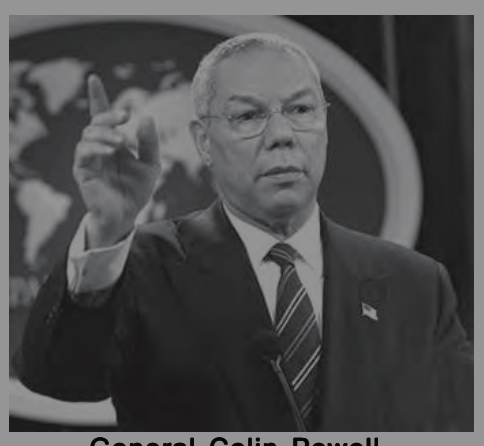
From 1993 through 2006, at least 12,000 members have been discharged for being openly Gay or Lesbian, among them 800 in highly crucial jobs, according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Congress's investigative arm.

In February 2006, a University of California Blue Ribbon Commission including Lawrence Korb, a former assistant defense secretary during the Reagan administration, former Defense Secretary William Perry, a member of the Clinton administration, and professors from West Point U.S. Military Academy concluded that figure should be closer to $363 million, including $14.3 million for "separation travel" once a service member is discharged, $17.8 million for training officers, $252.4 million for training enlistees and $79.3 million in recruiting costs. The commission report stated that the GAO didn't take into account the value the military lost from the departures.

American taxpayers have paid between $250 million and $1.2 billion to investigate, eliminate and replace qualified, patriotic service members who want to serve their country but can't because expressing their sexual orientation violates DADT, according to the GAO report.

Various polls taken have shown that a large majority of the American public favors allowing Gay and Lesbian people to serve openly in the U.S. military.

Numerous groups such as HRC,



General Colin Powell

the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network and the ACLU have been fighting to overturn the law so that Gays and Lesbians who want to serve their country in the armed forces can do so, openly, honestly and without fear of retribution.

Volunteers place 12,000 flags on the National Mall to honor the 12,000 servicemembers who have been discharged as a result of the discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell' law.

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POLITICS 2008

by Mark R. Kerr

'H.R. 1246'

Tuesday, January 29, marks the fifteenth year of "Don't ask, don't tell," of when then President Bill Clinton approved Pub.L. 103-160 (10 U.S.C. § 654).

Drafted by then General Colin Powell, the policy prohibits anyone who "demonstrate(s) a propensity or intent to engage in homosexual acts" from serving in the armed forces of the United States, because it "would create an unacceptable risk to the high standards of morale, good order and discipline, and unit cohesion that are the essence of military capability."

Since the implementation of this policy, at least 12,000 service members had been discharged under "Don't ask, don't tell," including 800 Arabic translators, costing the country billions for training these individuals.

As the Human Rights Campaign said of the policy, " . . . it is the only law in the country that forces people to be dishonest about their personal lives or be fired or possibly imprisoned. This discriminatory policy hurts military readiness and national security while putting American soldiers fighting overseas at risk."

Efforts to overturn the policy have continued through the courts and in the nation's capital.

U.S. Representative Marty Meehan (D-MA), along with 141 other sponsors, has introduced H.R. 1246, entitled the "Military Readiness Enhancement Act of 2007," for consideration in the current (110th) Congress.

If approved and enacted, H.R. 1246 would:

Repeal current Department of Defense (DOD) policy concerning homosexuality in the Armed Forces.

Prohibits the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Homeland Security with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation against any member of the Armed Forces or any person seeking to become a member. Authorizes the reaccession into the Armed Forces of otherwise qualified individuals previously separated for homosexuality, bisexuality, or homosexual conduct.

Requires such Secretaries to ensure that regulations governing the personal conduct of members of the Armed Forces are written and enforced without regard to sexual orientation.

H.R. 1246 was referred to the House Committee on Armed Services which referred it to its Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

Representative Ellen Tauscher, (D-CA), a member of the House Armed Services Committee and chair of its Subcommittee on Military Personnel is now spearheading the drive for H.R. 1246 since Meehan is now longer in Congress, resigning to become a University chancellor.

"This is an issue that I've cared about since before I went to Congress (in 1996)," said Tauscher in an interview. "I've been an original co- sponsor on the Employment Nondiscrimination Act, on the Hate Crimes Act, and on this when Marty took the lead on it."

"Don't ask, don't tell," didn't work and must be repealed and not mark another year of existence. Action must be taken by letting our Members of Congress know that the policy is discriminatory, wrong and puts the country at risk."

Call your local Congressional or Senatorial office and let them know of your opinion on "Don't ask, don't tell." For those with Internet access, go online to: hrcactioncenter.org/campaign/dont_ask_dont_tell, sldn.org (and follow the links).

Gay Journalist Appointed To Head Arizona Republic

Randy Lovely

PHOENIX - Randy Lovely has become the only openly Gay editor of a major U.S. newspaper after his promotion as vice president of news of The Arizona Republic, according to Editor and Publisher, advocate.com reported.

Lovely, 43, is a 16-year employee at Gannett, which owns the newspaper. He joined the Republic in 2002 as managing editor and was then promoted to executive editor in 2005. Lovely previously worked at The [Fort Myers, Fla.] News-Press; The Times in Shreveport, La.; and the Desert Sun in Palm Springs, Calif. He is replacing Ward Bushee, who is moving to the San Francisco Chronicle.

According to Editor and Publisher, Lovely is possibly the first openly Gay editor ever appointed to the top post of a major daily in the U.S.; he follows Roy Aarons, the former executive editor of the Oakland Tribune who came out in 1990 after serving in his position for seven years. Aarons died in 2004.

Brokeback Director, Producer Comments On Ledger's Death

Heath Ledger as Ennis from the film "Brokeback Mountain"

HOLLYWOOD, California (Observer Update) - Hollywood is mourning the unexpected death of Australian-born actor Heath Ledger, 28, whose body was discovered in his apartment on Tuesday (January 22) by his housekeeper and a massage therapist, advocate.com reported.

Among the tributes pouring in is one from Ang Lee, who directed Ledger in arguably his most famous role, Gay ranch hand Ennis del Mar, in the acclaimed 2005 film Brokeback Mountain. "Working with Heath was one of the purest joys of my life," Lee said in a statement Wednesday. "He brought to the role of Ennis more than any of us could have imagined – a thirst for life, for love, and for truth, and a vulnerability that made everyone who knew him love him. His death is heartbreaking."

Brokeback Mountain producer James Schamus called Ledger a "courageous actor and a great soul. He gave us the gift of sharing his fearless and beautiful love – of his craft and of all who worked with him – for which all of us will be eternally grateful."

Ledger was known for gruelling, intense roles that became his trademark after he got his start in teen movies like 10 Things I Hate About You. Thereafter, he took on roles that forced him to bury his Australian accent and downplay his leading-man looks: the tormented Ennis, a drug addict in Candy, and, most recently, an incarnation of Bob Dylan in I'm Not There.

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COMMENTARY. . . .

by Lisa Neff

Why I'm Voting For Hillary

I will vote in Florida's presidential preference primary.

My vote won't count for much in the delegate column because Florida and the Democratic National Party are at odds over the state bumping up its primary date. To punish the state for advancing the primary, the Democratic candidates agreed to forgo campaigning and the Democratic National Committee vowed not to count Florida's delegates at the convention in Denver.

But in my heart, my vote will matter immensely. I'll be casting my vote for Hillary Rodham Clinton, who quite possibly will become the first woman elected to the White House.

If you don't think that matters, if you think we should be beyond concern over the gender or the race of the candidate we elect to the presidency, please think again. Maybe we can get beyond such concerns when we've actually elected someone other than a white man to the White House.

I will tell you that I was a kid in bell bottoms, suede sneakers and a wide-collared shirt when I first thought about Americans electing a woman president. It was the year of the Bicentennial celebration and I remember a contingent of pro-ERA women in my hometown's Fourth of July parade. Some marched. Some rode on a float. One wore a raggedy "Shirley Chisholm for President" T-shirt with the sleeves cut off. "I Am Woman" blasted from speakers on the float and it seemed every woman and girl standing along the parade route waved her arms or raised her fists to "I am strong, I am invincible, I am woman." A lot of women didn't watch the parade go by that July 4, they joined in the march.

There was something about that era, about the mood, the attitudes, the music, the culture, the politics that led me to believe that gender barriers would shatter and soon our nation would elect a woman president.

Well, America grew out of that time and mood and, by the mid-1980s, I had gone to college, learned that the first woman to run for president was Victoria Woodhull in long-ago 1872 and that many women had run after her. I had gone to college and graduated to cynicism. There was something about that era too.

Some inspiration came from Carol Moseley Braun's U.S. Senate run and victory and again with her brief bid for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2004 – she dropped out of the race four days before the Iowa caucuses and before I could vote for her.

So honestly the last time I felt as inspired as I feel today was 32 years ago, when I was a shaggy-haired baby butch in bell bottoms and sneakers raising my fist to "I Am Woman" and confiding to my mom, "I'm going to play in the Major Leagues."

I will vote for Hillary Rodham Clinton for president. I will vote for her because she has the will, the drive, the intellect and the experience to do the job – and no I do not work for the campaign. Also – and I am not shy about sharing this – I will vote for her because I am woman.

Yes, I'm feeling inspirationally nostalgic for more than three decades ago when I sensed the Oval Office glass ceiling in the United States would be lifted, when I felt the promise of a woman's presidency. That promise seems as groovy and cool as the bright Bicentennial Day it was born.

Here's hoping Hillary Clinton's numbers are too big to ignore.

(Lisa Neff is a reporter with The Islander, a weekly newspaper on Anna Maria Island, Fl. This oped was reprinted from 365Gay.com.)

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Favorite Books Of The New Queerlenium

The GLBT Services Committee was established in 1997 to better serve southern Arizona's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender library users.On a daily basis they review, order and make GLBT materials available for all PCPL users, regardless of age, location or sexual orientation.

The Pima County Public Library's (PCPL) GLBT Services Committee is dedicated to upholding the library's Mission Statement as well as the Library Users Bill of Rights for all of our customers. PCPL is one of the few public libraries in the country to have an established GLBT Services Committee. I's an exciting time for GLBT-themed publishing.

More and more books reflecting the strength, experience and vision of GLBT people appear on the shelves of book stores and libraries. The Pima County Public Library's GLBT Services Committee are proud to offer our favorite recent books that are by and about GLBT people. We hope this offering inspires you to read one or more of these marvelous books

Outspoken: Role Models from the Lesbian and Gay Community, Michael Thomas Ford (HarperCollins). Ford's collection of 11 interviews sensitively introduces men and women who have left the sexual angst and turmoil of adolescence behind to accept their homosexuality.

The Year They Burned the Books, Nancy Garden (Farrar). When high-school senior Jamie Crawford writes an editorial in favor of a health curriculum that includes condom distribution and frank discussion of homosexuality, she becomes embroiled in a controversy that leads to violence. (Gina Macaluso)

Out of the Shadows, Sue Hines (Avon/Tempest). Sassy humor leavens some of the serious concerns as three high-school friends grapple with sexual identity. Ro, year 9 in high school, faces a new life after a drunk driver accidentally kills her mother and she is adopted by her mother's girlfriend. There are plenty of laughs, but the strength of this book comes towards the end when Ro decides she can't go on without writing down the horror she felt when she discovered her mother was Gay.

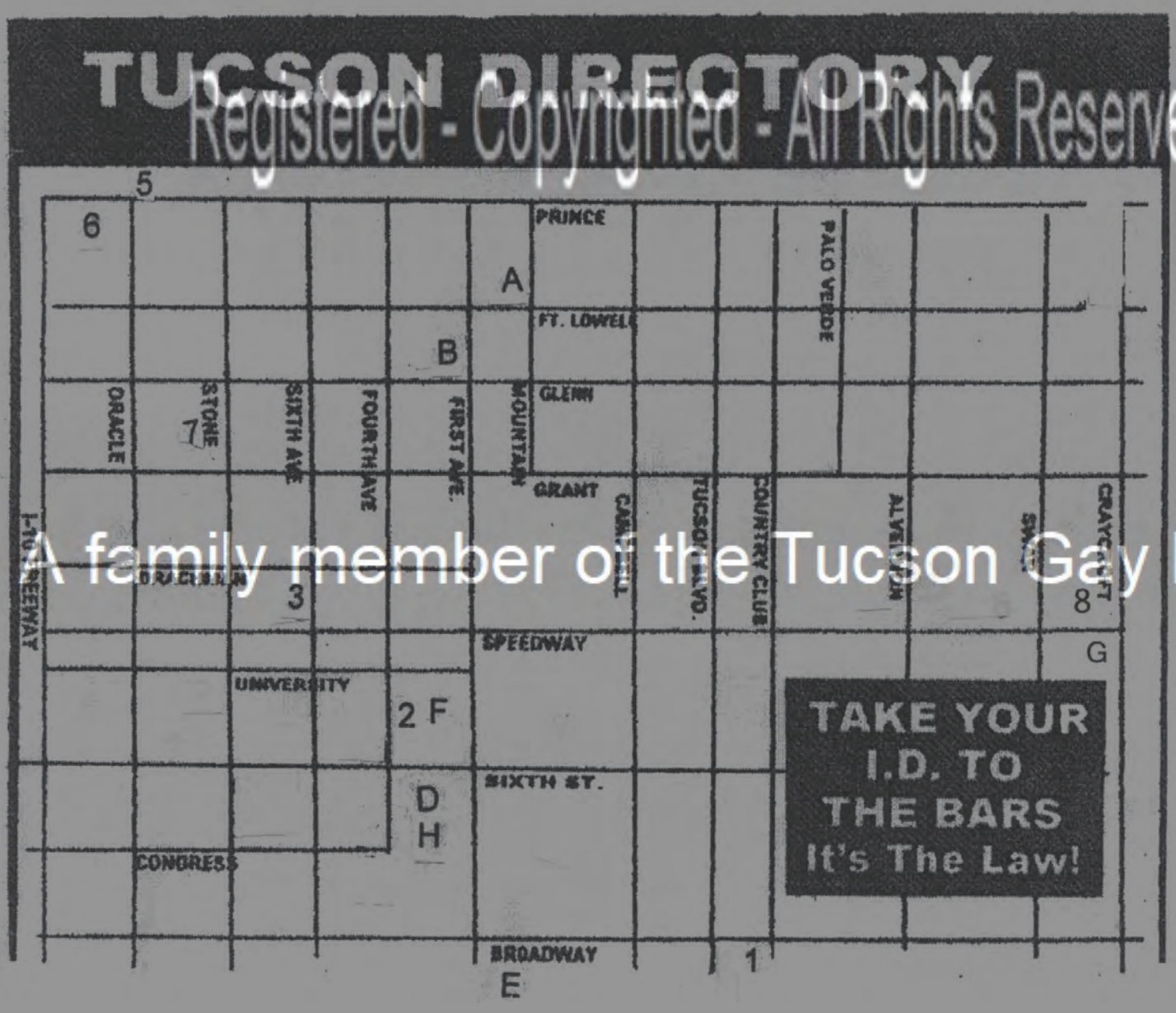
For more information, visit your local Pima County library or go online to tppl.org/community/glbt/index.cfm.

Lesbian Author Becomes A Character Herself

BOSTON, Massachusetts - American crime writer Patricia Cornwell finds herself the real-life character in a story fit to be penned by her, the First Post reports. Caitlin Rother and John Hess' Twisted Triangle, to be published in the United States, will highlight Cornwell's affair with former FBI agent Marguerite Bennett, later the target of an attempt on her life by her husband after he discovered her Lesbian relationship. Eugene Bennett is currently serving a 23-year prison term, reported pageoneq.com.

Notably, Cornwell, a Massachusetts resident, is legally married to a woman, Dr. Staci Gruber. In a candid interview with the UK's Daily Telegraph, she spoke openly about her life, her relationship and her stance on marriage rights.

"I've never been a soapbox person for Gay rights," she says, "but now [that] I'm in a same-sex marriage I tend to be more open, because I am outraged that it should be illegal in other states." "I don't do things that are illegal," Cornwell continues. "I pay my taxes, I give millions to charity, so why am I less than other people?"



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Transcending The Feared 'Pink Ceiling'

For public universities - UArts is private - there's the additional fear that conservative lawmakers will lobby state legislatures to reduce funding.

As part of a generation that grew up enjoying benefits hard won by older activists, Buffington says he doesn't sweat the Gay stuff. Given the changing sexual landscape, he doesn't have to.

"It's easier now. There isn't the sense of a day-to-day insecurity or fear or anger. Being Gay is in my consciousness every day, but it's not the defining sense of who I am."

Geography matters, too. Martin Sellers, 59, CEO of Sellers Feinberg, a health-care strategy firm in Center City, says it's easier for a CEO to be out in Gay-friendly Philadelphia than in many other cities.

"You see a lot more [openly Gay CEOs] than you used to," says Sellers, whose 15-year partner, Brian Dorsey, 41, is an actor and playwright. "If you turned the clock back 25 years, there might not have been a single one."

United Way's Martinez agrees. "The business community here, as I've experienced it, is very enlightened. Leaders understand they have a diverse workforce and a diverse customer base. You can't be exclusive anymore."

David Jefferys, CEO and founder of the marketing firm Altus Group, learned that lesson about 10 years ago. That's when he began adding Gay-related businesses to the company's all-heterosexual accounts.

At the same time, he came out professionally, too. Today, 50 percent of Altus Group's business is targeted to Gays, and Jefferys feels 100 percent whole.

"It doesn't feel like I'm living two separate lives," says Jefferys, 50, who grew up in tony Darien, Conn.

"Before, I had to have my private life hidden when I was at work. I had to play a lot of games. You can't have integrity without honesty."

Authenticity is what drives leadership ability, in Sellers' view. "It's what attracts people, what makes them interested in what you have to say. It's what forms trust."

Jefferys came out during his senior year at Villanova. He and his partner, dentist Ron Hayes, 40, have been together 12 years.

Continued from Page Six

Mark Stiffler doesn't understand what all the noise is about.

Stiffler, 45, CEO of Synygy, an incentive-compensation company based in Chester, has been out since he was 16. He has two degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and owns homes in Gladwyne, Florida and Arizona.

"I'm clueless why anybody isn't out," says the Harrisburg native, who is single. "I've never experienced any problems. I think it helps to be educated and rich."

Stiffler says he's been hearing the same arguments for 25 years against letting one's rainbow flag fly. He's over it. Even if he didn't own the company.

"If you lose a job, it wasn't the right job. If you lose friends, they weren't really your friends. If your family doesn't talk to you for 10 years, oh, well.

"Things happen. How you react to them iis within your power and control."

Spoken like a CEO. Gay, straight or otherwise.

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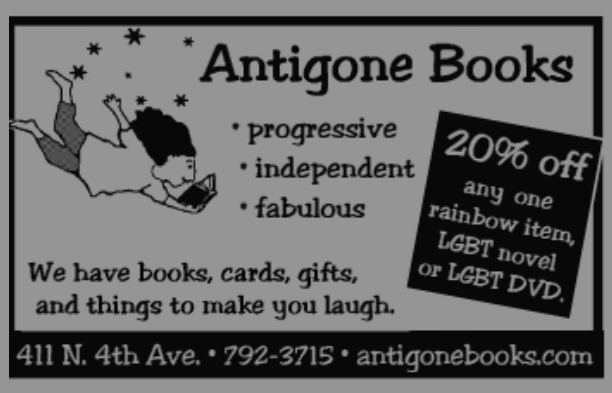

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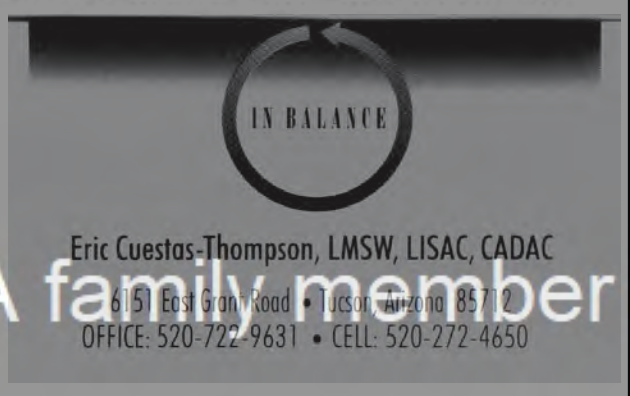

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HOROSCOPES

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Expect a whirlwind of romantic dreams as February gets underway and Mars trines Neptune. We live in a magic state. So give and get your assorted valentines while the heat and your heart smolder. Will you get burnt? Do you care?

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

While there is something to be said for modesty and restraint, all bets are off this February when Mars trines Neptune. Gay Rams practically bleat their needs at every opportunity. But in opening your heart, you find many new admirers from the most unlikely of sources. Discover a gem among your usual rubble by checking every rock pile just to be sure.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Queer Bulls put much more effort into their career this February and why not? There is something ineffable there that seems to draw in all your effort and attention. Will you sleep your way to the starchamber? I suppose there are worse ways of unlocking the golden door. But there is nothing as secure as achieving success on your own steam rather than on moist clouds.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Push yourself this February no matter how tired or shy you feel. Mars trines Neptune and creates opportunities for you to make yourself known, admired and worshiped for the deity you strive to be. Pink Twins can now command center stage. Don't strut and fret your time and signify nothing. Maneuver carefully, elevate yourself socially and plant seeds for future gains.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

Gay Crabs need a great deal of rest and relaxation this February. Not only can you become overstimulated, you also discover many stressful secrets. What is the best way to handle all this rush of information? The answer becomes clearer as the month progresses. Meanwhile, find any excuse to lose yourself in some obvious, relaxing pastime. No names please!

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

Relationships are on the brink of change this February. Maybe that is because there are certain friends who goad you into taking action while Mars trine Neptune clouds your judgment. Rather than rock the boat, just add a bit of gentle breeze and enjoy your time together. Proud Lions who are on the prowl can charm just about anyone into their lair. Then watch out!

VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

There is a valentine on the job this February. Are you paying enough attention to your surroundings to even notice? Queer Virgins find themselves spending more time toiling at their desks and less time bubbling and gurgling at the watercooler. That would be a mistake. Mars trine Neptune makes you especially alluring ... for a boring paper pusher that is.

LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

Mars trines Neptune and delivers a box full of valentines to your mailbox. How can you best choose between all of your many admirers? Step back, take your time and hold on to your heart, proud Libra. This February you might go head over heels for a loafer or two. Can you keep your feet on the ground as your heart floats in the clouds? Unlikely.

SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

Spend some time getting your house in order this February. Maybe that means a pre-spring cleaning or maybe it means settling the score with some difficult relatives. Proud Scorps are destined to lure their valentine home and need to have the perfect atmosphere for any occasion or possible scenario. Love is in the air! Ah yes, I thought I smelled something funny.

SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

Even though you are usually frank and out spoken, there is something holding you back. Why? Whisper the words of love to you-know-who this February and watch what can happen! There is no reason to be shy and retiring, Gay Archer. This is the time to wear your heart on your sleeve and take a chance. Relationships can be created, improved and strengthened now.

CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

Working hard can get you to your goals faster than you think pink Cap. You are full of extra energy and a clear and focused purpose. And your imagination is in high gear which enables you to set some lofty but delicious rewards. This February, as Mars trines Neptune, you can achieve almost anything you set your mind to do. So dream big. No bigger!

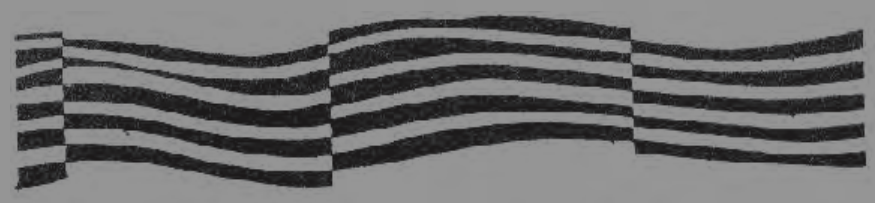
AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

Aqueerians are focused on getting out in front of the crowds and having fun this February. Mars trine Neptune creates opportunities for you to maneuver into the social epicenter of any fabulous event. Keep things under control so others (and you) do not get out of hand. Of course there can never be too many hands when the body politic is involved....

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

Guppies seem to know what is up with relatives without being told about anything juicy. That is because Mars trines Neptune and more finely attunes your intuition. Get out in front of things before everyone wants your attention and advice. If you find that you are stressing by the familial responsibility, be sure to put the "treat" into any treatment. Spa date anyone?

A man who doesn't advertise is like one who winks in the dark: he knows he's doing it, but nobody else does.



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COMMENTARY. . . .

Parents Need To Tell Their Stories About Military's Gay Ban

By Deb Price

The three moms talk glowingly about their sons.

One son is Darren Manzella, a decorated Army medic who, while in Iraq, provided medical services to U.S. troops and Iraqi civilians during more than 100 street patrols in Baghdad.

Then there's Barry Winchell, a private first class who had just one more test to pass before achieving his dream of being an Army helicopter pilot.

And Allen Schindler, a 22-year-old Navy radioman, who planned to go to college to pursue his passion of studying animals.

Like most parents whose children enlist in the military, these moms were proud but worried.

But, whether they knew it or not, these moms also needed to be fearful because of the military's anti-Gay climate. Their stories are a reminder that the hostile climate doesn't just victimize Gay men and women in uniform.

These moms also represent the growing number of parents actively speaking out against Don't Ask, Don't Tell and the pain it causes families.

A worried Nancy Manzella is waiting to see whether the Army brass will toss out Darren for having talked on "60 Minutes" in December about fellow soldiers' positive reactions when he told them he's Gay.

Darren is one of about 500 men and women in uniform that the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network says are serving openly despite the ban on being uncloseted.

"His father and I are very proud of him," says Nancy, whose son came out in 2006 to his superiors and fellow soldiers after receiving threats he'd be outed.

"Darren really wants to continue serving his country. But he doesn't want to live a lie," Nancy adds.

Patricia Kutteles, Barry's mom, and Dorothy Hadjys, Allen's mom, share a more painful story: Their sons were killed in anti-Gay assaults.

Allen was kicked and beaten so badly that Dorothy identified his body by a tattoo on his arm.

"I made up my mind that I wasn't going to let this happen to any other mother's son," says Dorothy, who still takes anti-depressants to try to cope with her loss. "If I stayed quiet, I would have just been giving up on Allen. People think once a trial is over, that it's all over. But not for the family. You just can't go on with your life."

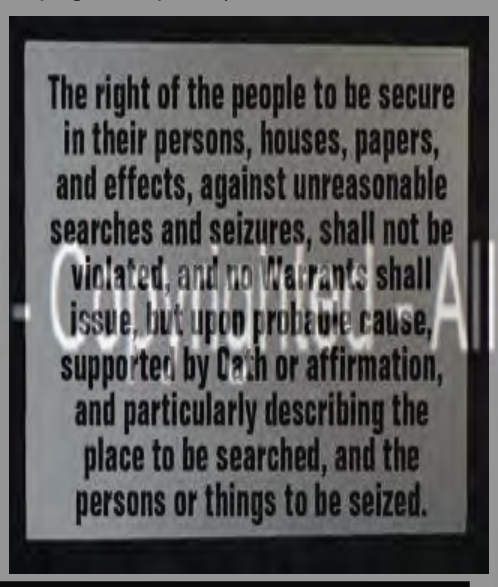
Patricia's son, Barry, was beaten to death in 1999 by a fellow soldier who assumed he was Gay because he was dating a male-to-female Transgender dancer.

"Barry's murder changed my whole life. You don't get over it," says Patricia, who gives out an award each year to a servicemember or other leader in the effort to repeal the ban. "The hardest part was taking Barry off the respirator. He was brain dead. It was difficult to think that someone could join the military to represent their country and yet be murdered because of their perceived sexual orientation."

Each spring, moms like these join others in lobbying Congress to lift the ban on Gays serving openly in the military and to end the anti-Gay climate that can literally be deadly. (To participate in the March 7 lobby day, go to sldn.org.)

Don't Ask, Don't Tell doesn't just hurt Gay men and women in uniform. Congress needs to hear first-hand about the pain it causes their moms and dads.

(Deb Price of The Detroit News writes the first nationally syndicated column on Gay issues. This oped is reprinted from pageoneq.com)



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NON-BAR CALENDAR

Wednesday, January 30
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Hand and Foot with Peter at 881-8276. MSN Hand and Foot is played every Wednesday at 7pm, but check back here for the specific host.

Thursday, January 31
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, Feb 1
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Join Merlin and Lee for an evening of Charades. Come out and totally enjoy putting your acting/ miming and pantomime skills to the test! For directions and reservations [(a limited space event, please plan ahead and phone early)], place a telephone call to Lee and Merlin, your gracious yet competitive emcees and moderators, at 207-5336.

Tucson Prime Timers, part of the world's largest social organization for mature gay/bi men and their younger (21+) admirers, invites you to our weekly Friday no-host Cocktail Mixer at 5:30PM. Colors, 5350 E Speedway. See our website for club info: www.tucsonprimetimers.org

Saturday, Feb 2
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:00p.m. MSN Potluck and Annual AUCTION! This year's auction kicks off Jerry Curl month, honoring our founder and continuing our fundraising for the Memorial Scholarship. Join us for a rambunctious evening of food and bidding starring our favorite auctioneer, Mr. John Barnes.

Sunday, Feb 3
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:00p.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.

Tucson Prime Timers, welcomes guests to our weekly Sunday Brunch at 11:00AM Colors, 5350 E. Speedway

Monday, Feb 4
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00 p.m. Lee and Merlin host 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 207-5336. If you're loquacious, erudite, or a wordsmith; this man's game just may be a triple word score for you!

Tucson Prime Timers, welcomes visitors to our weekly drop-in Luncheon at 12:30PM The Wildcat House, 1800 North Stone.

Tuesday, Feb 5
#1Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Gay Reading Group meets at Wingspan. For info, contact Doug at 529-0014

Wednesday, Feb 6
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Hand and Foot with Bruce. 743-3890

Thursday, Feb 7
#1 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.

#2 Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Play Bridge with Ike and company! Call for info: 207-6264

Friday, February 8
Tucson Prime Timers, invites you to our weekly Friday no-host Cocktail Mixer at 5:30PM.Colors, 5350 E Speedway

Saturday, Feb 9
Desert Voices Chorus members hve been gathering wonderful items for their auction at the Historic Y. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. for perusal of auction tables. Tables will close at 7:30 with entertainment to follow. This is the Desert Voices only fundraiser of the year. Tilckets will go on sale at Antigone's and are also available through their box office (520)791-9662. Prices for this event are $30 (no discounts) which includes entrance to the auction, complimentary hors d-hoeuvres and spirits (beer, wine and champagne), and fun-filled entertainment from the chorus members.

#1 Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 10:00a.m. Sabino Canyon Hike. MSN members are invited to join Desert Adventures up the Canyon along the Esperero Trail to Cardiac Gap. Wonderful views, 8 miles, elevation to 1600'. Call for info: Peter 881-8276.

#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 Marvin at 745-0304.

Tucson Prime Timers, invites you to attend an important forum on Estate Planning for Gay Men. The guest speaker will be Kate McMillan, Attorney at Law Regular TPT meeting and no-host lunch to follow. 11AM at Wingspan, 425 E 7 St.

Sunday, Feb 10
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:00p.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.

Tucson Prime Timers, men and their younger (21+) admirers, welcomes guests to our weekly Sunday Brunch at 11:00AM Colors, 5350 East Speedway

Monday, Feb 11
Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Trivial Pursuit. Please call Lee and Merlin at 207-5336 for information and to reserve your place at this limited seating event.

Tucson Prime Timers, welcomes visitors to our weekly drop-in Luncheon at 12:30PM. The Wildcat House 1800 North Stone

Wednesday, Feb 13
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Hand and Foot with Marvin at 745-0304.

Thursday, Feb 14
#1Men'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.

#2Please call Lloyd at 792-8537 before Noon today to reserve for tomorrow night's MSN Pizza Night!

Friday, Feb 15
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. MSN Pizza Night! Did you phone in your reservation on time? Then join Lloyd for a great MSN Pizza Night!

Tucson Prime Timers, invites you to our weekly Friday no-host Cocktail Mixer at 5:30PM Colors, 5350 East Speedway

Saturday, Feb 16
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, Feb 17
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:00p.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.

Tucson Prime Timers, welcomes guests to our weekly Sunday Brunch at 11:00AM Colors, 5350 East Speedway

Monday, Feb 18
#1Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:30p.m. Meet Stephen and the group monthly for dinner and discussion of an agreed upon work of gay fiction. Currently, the group meets the 3rd Monday. Contact Stephen at 241-7854 to add yourself to their e-mail list.

#2Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Newsletter Night & Movie! Help us bend, fold, spindle, mutilate, and mail the MSN Newsletter, and enjoy snacks and this month's movie. Info at 323-7414.

Tucson Prime Timers, welcomes you to our weekly drop-in Luncheon at 12:30PM The Wildcat House 1800 North Stone

Tuesday, Feb 19
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Join Bruce for Canasta. Phone 743-3890.

Wednesday, Feb 20
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Hand & Foot with Jack 887-3736

Thursday, Feb 21
#1Men'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.

#2 Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Play Bridge with Ike and company! Call for info: 207-6264

Friday, February 22
Tucson Prime Timers, Invites you to our weekly Friday no-host Cocktail Mixer at 5:30PM Colors, 5350 East Speedway

Saturday, Feb 23
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 Marvin at 745-0304.

Sunday, Feb 24
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:00p.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.

Tucson Prime Timers, welcomes guests to our weekly Sunday Brunch at 11:00AM Colors, 5350 East Speedway

Monday, February 25
Tucson Prime Timers, welcomes you to our weekly Monday drop-in Luncheon at 12:30PM The Wildcat House, 1800 North Stone

Wednesday, Feb 27
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Canasta hosted by Merlin and Lee at 207-5336. MSN Canasta is played every Wednesday at 7pm, but check back here for the specific host.

Thursday, Feb. 28
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. Call Tom at 591-2828 for dates and times.

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NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

WRITE NOW is an LGBT writers' group that meets at Wingspan, twice monthly, on the 2nd and 4th Sunday afternoons, 2:30 to 4:00. For more info please call 323-2465 or email evynrubin@yahoo.com.

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.

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.
Start getting more out of life with TUCSON PRIME TIMERS. We're the local chapter of Prime Timers Worldwide, the preeminent social organization for mature gay and bi men as well as younger (21+) men who enjoy their company. Each month we sponsor a wide range of dining events, cultural enrichment activities, parties, meetings, bowling, day trips, picnics, tours and much more. Visitors are always welcome. For info call our message phone 520 731-3485. Visit our website: www.tucsonprimetimers.org

TUCSON 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 325-2111 - 7am-7pm M-F - 9am-5pm weekend and holidays.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DESERT VOICES, Tucson's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Straight Chorus, has been singing songs of pride, hope and laughter for 19 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, contract TEAM ARIZONA at their website: teamarizona.org

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

THE MEN'S MASSAGE GROUP meets the 2nd 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 OUToberFEST. Inquiries about support groups and individual needs should be directed to Wingspan and other local agencies listed here. For more information call 622-3200 or visit the TPI website at www.tucsonpride.com

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

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

ANONYMOUS HIV COUNSELING AND TESTING is available through the Pima County Health Department at sites throughout Tucson, Very Gay Friendly. For more information or to make an appointment call 791-7675.

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.

THIS WAY OUT, 1/2 hour national GLBT show. 4:30 p.m. daily 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 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 toSAGE-Tucson-subscribe @yahoogroups.com. See you on the trails.

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

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

Ending the violence.

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

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

WINGSPAN
Southern Arizona's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center
www.wingspan.org

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am; L Word Sundays. L Word shows at 7pm on two 51" flatscreens. Beer Bust 5pm-10pm. DJ HILL following til 2am.

COLORS - Open 10am - 10pm Champagne Brunch 10am - 2pm with choice of complimentary mimosa, Bloody Mary or Screwdriver included. Happy Hour 4-7pm $3.50 Skyy Cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and well. Appetizers ½ price 4-6. Brunch served until 2pm. Full menu served until 10;m. Nightly dinner specials.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 11am. Wear an NFL team t-shirt or jersey and get 50¢ off your drink. Smirnoff Vodkas $2.50. Texas Hold'Em Poker at 3 and 6 pm. Play for points and prizes - no cash involved. $1 hot dogs, $2 chili dogs during game. SIN Nite Drink Discounts for Service Industry employees with ID or payroll receipt. Latin Dance Music 8:30 to close.

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

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

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

YARD DOG - Open 10am - 2am. Mimosas & Bloody Mary Bar (Build your own)

MONDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Poker Pub...FREE. No Happy Hour on this day. Games at 6:30 and again at 9:00pm. 21 and up.

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7. $3.50 Skyy Cocktails, $2.75 well & domestics. Appetizers ½ price 4-6m. Full menu served until 10pm.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 3pm. Happy Hour all day $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Texas Hold-Em Poker at 6 & 8:30, Play for points and prizes. No cash involved.

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. Beer Bust 4-8pm.

TUESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. No Happy Hour on this day. Spin Tuesdays with Karaoke. Spin the drink wheel every hour for incredible drink prices...nothing over $2!! Karaoke at 8pm. 21 and up.

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7 $3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and well and ½ price appetizers 4-6. Full menu served until 10pm.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 3pm. $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints.$3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitcher. $2.50 well margaritas and tequila. 75¢ off call tequilas. Ladies Only Texas Hold-Em Poker at 6:00 p.m. Play for points and prizes - no cash involved. $2 U-call-it drink special 9pm to midnight (some restrictions apply).

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). Havana Night with Woody's own Specialty Mojitos, Caprioskas and Martinis.

YARD DOG - Open daily. .Beer Bust 4-8pm.

WEDNESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. 1/2 Price Happy Hour til 8pm. Wild Wednesdays. DJHill Spins til 2am. This is an 18 and over event..

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and ½ price appetizers 4-6. Full menu served until 10pm. Nightly dinner specials. Every Wednesday is "Cabaret Open Mic Night". Sign up at 6:30 - Show starts at 7. MC: Cabaret Diva Liz McMahon. Music Director: Marilyn Harris.

HOWL AT THE MOON -Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 _ 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitchers. $5.00 Jager Bombs and Long Island Ice Tea. Texas Hold_'Em Poker Tournaments at 6 & 8:30 pm Play for points & Prizes. No cash involved.

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; Service Industry Day - $1 off all drinks except schnapps and draft. Happy Hour Noon-8pm (excl Spec Events); Chili Dog Buffet 5-9pm; Underwear/Fetish/Leather Party 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 Beer Bust 4-8pm.

THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. 1/2 Price Happy Hour til 8pm. 20/20 Thursday's a night guaranteed to F*UCK,, with your vision!! $20 at the door we take care of the rest (premium top shelf not included). DJHill spins hip hop & R&B all night. 21'n up

COLORS - Open 4pm-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm,$3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and Well and ½ price appetizers. Full menu served until 10. Nightly dinner specials.. .

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 _ 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg.. Pitcher. Mexican Beers $2.50 all day, all night. Starting 1/17/08 TNT Thursday Night Temptation for 18 & over. Eat-drink-dance Music with DJ Shorty v2.0

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. Beer Bust 4-8pm..

FRIDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. NOCHE de CALOR. 1/2 price Happy Hour til 8pm. Every Friday DJ Hill spins the best norteno, Cumbias, Salsa, Bachata Reggaeton, Rock en Espanol and anything else that makes you shake your hips!!

COLORS - Open 4pm-midnight. Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and Well and ½ price appetizers. Finlandia martinis $5.50 open to close! Full menu served until 10. "Hot Jazz, Cool Martinis" with Susan Artemis & Craig Faltin 6:30 to 9:30. "Guys & Dolls" drag show hosted by Lucinda Holliday at 10pm. Nightly dinner specials. Drink specials during the drag show.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 _ 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.,50 Sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitcher. $2.50 Smirnoff Ice. Triple Black, Green Apple and Raspberry Twisters. Free Country dance lessons at 7:30p.m. DJ Pat plays classic country 8:30 to close..

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)Enjoy the sounds of Simon Crown 6-9 p.m.; Martini Happy Hour 5-8pm-$1 off all call Martinis; Back Pocket Patio Bar open 8-close. Watch for special events.

YARD DOG - Open daily 8am. Beer Bust 4-8pm. Patio Bar Opens 8pm

SATURDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm - 2am. $2.00 U-Call-Its til 11pm. Saturday night dance party with DJ Hill9pm. Patio Bar opens at 10:30pm.

COLORS - Open 4pm-10pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and Well, ½ price appetizers 4-6. Pianist/Vocalist Marilyn Harris 6:30-9:30. Full menu served until 10. Nightly dinner specials.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 2pm. Happy Hour 2-8pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. $4.50 cheeseburger & fries.$2.50 Captain Morgan or Malibu Rum all day, all night. Check our calendar for the Saturday Night Special Entertainment.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, 5-8pm karaoke and Teryaki Kabobs on the patio. 8:30pm Show time w/ Bunny FuFu 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. Patio Bar Opens 8pm.

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30
WOODY'S - Twister Party 9:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31
HOWL AT THE MOON -'TNT' with DJ Shorty. 18 and over. 9:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1
IBT'S - Parti Gras beginning of a big Mardi Gras. See Tuesday Feb. 5

HOWL AT THE MOON - Couples dance lessons with Amanda at 7:30 p.m. and DJ Pat at 8:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2
HOWL AT THE MOON - DJ Shorty playing Latino and Dance Mix 9 p.m. No Cover

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3
HOWL AT THE MOON - Super Bowl Party with drink and food specials. Then at 9:00 p.m. Miss Gay Tucson UsofA 2008 Pageant featuring Jessica Deveraux, Barbara Seville, Lucinda Holliday. Special entertainment by Bunny FUFu, Miss Model, Layla Manilla, Amanda Nicole and Jasmine Bouvier.

WOODY'S - Super Bowl Party. Watch the Super Bowl on their 72" Projection TV.

YARD DOG - Super Bowl XLII Party. Pre-game 2 p.m. Game 4 p.m. Hot Food and Snacks

VENTURE-N - 4:00 P.M. Join the Venture gang for the Super Bowl Game and Commercials. Friends, Food, Fun, and Drink Specials.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5
THE BIZ - Fat Tuesday. Come celebrate and enjoy Karaoke at 9:00 p.m.

IBT'S - Fat Tuesday. Join the crowd for fabulous music, drink specials, beads and more!

WOODYS - Mardi Gras Party. Be bad 4 beads and Woody's Bad Boy Dancers.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9
THE BIZ Mardi Gras Ball. Come dressed in your best Mardi Gras attire. Show your boobs - get some beads! Drink Specials all night. DJ Hill til 2:00 a.m.

VENTURE-N - The Tucson Leather/Levi Committee will hold a benefit here starting at 10:00 p.m. to raise fund for the next Leather/Levi Weekend which will be held March 14-15-16. For more information contact the Tucson Leather Committee at TucsonLeather@Yahoo.com

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14
IBT'S - Valentine's Day Red Party. Bar staff in their underwear; Go-Go Boys, drink specials and DJ Hurricane spinning the hottest top 40 and R&B. Come, feel the love.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26
IBT'S - Janet Jackson CD Release Party. Listen to her new album and enter to win the CD.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29
IBT'S - Leap Year Party. A party 4 years in the making.

Informing The Community

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COMMENTARY. . . .

A President Like My Father

By Caroline Kennedy

Over the years, I've been deeply moved by the people who've told me they wished they could feel inspired and hopeful about America the way people did when my father was president. This sense is even more profound today. That is why I am supporting a presidential candidate in the Democratic primaries, Barack Obama.

My reasons are patriotic, political and personal, and the three are intertwined. All my life, people have told me that my father changed their lives, that they got involved in public service or politics because he asked them to. And the generation he inspired has passed that spirit on to its children. I meet young people who were born long after John F. Kennedy was president, yet who ask me how to live out his ideals.

Sometimes it takes a while to recognize that someone has a special ability to get us to believe in ourselves, to tie that belief to our highest ideals and imagine that together we can do great things. In those rare moments, when such a person comes along, we need to put aside our plans and reach for what we know is possible.

We have that kind of opportunity with Senator Obama. It isn't that the other candidates are not experienced or knowledgeable. But this year, that may not be enough. We need a change in the leadership of this country - just as we did in 1960.

Most of us would prefer to base our voting decision on policy differences. However, the candidates' goals are similar. They have all laid out detailed plans on everything from strengthening our middle class to investing in early childhood education. So qualities of leadership, character and judgment play a larger role than usual.

Senator Obama has demonstrated these qualities throughout his more than two decades of public service, not just in the United States Senate but in Illinois, where he helped turn around struggling communities, taught constitutional law and was an elected state official for eight years. And Senator Obama is showing the same qualities today. He has built a movement that is changing the face of politics in this country, and he has demonstrated a special gift for inspiring young people - known for a willingness to volunteer, but an aversion to politics - to become engaged in the political process.

I have spent the past five years working in the New York City public schools and have three teenage children of my own. There is a generation coming of age that is hopeful, hard-working, innovative and imaginative. But too many of them are also hopeless, defeated and disengaged. As parents, we have a responsibility to help our children to believe in themselves and in their power to shape their future. Senator Obama is inspiring my children, my parents' grandchildren, with that sense of possibility.

Senator Obama is running a dignified and honest campaign. He has spoken eloquently about the role of faith in his life, and opened a window into his character in two compelling books. And when it comes to judgment, Barack Obama made the right call on the most important issue of our time by opposing the war in Iraq from the beginning.

I want a president who understands that his responsibility is to articulate a vision and encourage others to achieve it; who holds himself, and those around him, to the highest ethical standards; who appeals to the hopes of those who still believe in the American Dream, and those around the world who still believe in the American ideal; and who can lift our spirits, and make us believe again that our country needs every one of us to get involved.

I have never had a president who inspired me the way people tell me that my father inspired them. But for the first time, I believe I have found the man who could be that president - not just for me, but for a new generation of Americans.

(Caroline Kennedy is the author of "A Patriot's Handbook: Songs, Poems, Stories and Speeches Celebrating the Land We Love." This oped was from the New York Times, January 27 edition and reprinted from commondreams.org.)

Tucson Observer Archives

Al Gore Backs Marriage Equality

Former Vice President Al Gore

NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - "Gay men and women ought to have the same rights as heterosexual men and women ... to join together in marriage, he says on his Current TV.

Former Vice President Al Gore has gone on record saying that same-sex couples should have the right to marry. Gore put out the message via a video posted on Current TV, his news and information network, and it was picked up by Andy Towle at Towleroad.com.

Here is the statement in its entirety: "I think it's wrong for the government to discriminate against people because of that person's sexual orientation. I think that Gay men and women ought to have the same rights as heterosexual men and women – to make contracts, to have hospital visiting rights, to join together in marriage, and I don't understand why it is considered by some people to be a threat to heterosexual marriage to allow it by Gays and Lesbians. Shouldn't we be promoting the kind of faithfulness and loyalty to one's partner regardless of sexual orientation?

"Because if you don't do that, then to that extent you're promoting promiscuity – you're promoting all the problems that can result from promiscuity. And the loyalty and love that two people feel for one another when they fall in love ought to be celebrated and encouraged and shouldn't be prevented by any form of discrimination in the law."

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