Observing Tucson And
The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Senate Votes To Repeal Ban On Visitors With HIV

WASHINGTON, D.C (Observer Update) - The U.S. Senate has approved repeal of a law barring HIV-positive visitors and immigrants from entering the country. The measure was included in legislation reauthorizing PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

The ban repeal measure was tacked onto the bill by Sens. John Kerry (D-MA) and Gordon Smith (R-OR) despite an effort by Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL) to block it.

PEPFAR passed the Senate with the Kerry-Smith provision by a vote of 80 to 16 and now moves to conference committee before being sent to the President.

The travel and immigration ban prohibits HIV-positive foreign nationals from entering the U.S. unless they obtain a special waiver, which can only allow for short-term travel. Current policy also prevents the vast majority of foreign nationals with HIV from obtaining legal permanent residency in the United States.

The ban originated in 1987, and explicitly codified by Congress in 1993 with the then Helms-Burton Travel Ban (named after the late Repulbican North Carolina Senate Jesse Helms and Congressman Dan Burton, R-Indiana), despite efforts in the public health community to remove the ban when Congress reformed U.S. immigration law in the early 1990s.

While immigration law currently excludes foreigners with any "communicable disease of public health significance" from entering the U.S., only HIV is explicitly named in the statute. For all other illnesses, the Secretary of Health and Human Services retains the ability, with the medical expertise of his department, to determine which illnesses truly pose a risk to public health. Gay and HIV/AIDS rights advocates have been fighting for repeal of the ban for more than a decade. The battle now focuses on keeping the language intact while PEPFAR moves through conference.

"We call on the leaders of the House and Senate to retain the Kerry-Smith provision in conference and ensure it is included in the final legislation sent to the President's desk," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "The HIV ban is ineffective, unnecessary, and simply bad public health policy," said Rachel B. Tiven, executive director of Immigration Equality. "It is especially harmful to gay and lesbian families, who do not benefit from the waiver available to opposite-sex couples. The Senate's change is welcome, and long overdue."

Meanwhile, PEPFAR triples spending for the program that has treated and protected millions in Africa and elsewhere from AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

It commits the United States to spending up to $48 billion over the next five years for the most ambitious foreign public health program ever launched by the United States.

The legislation would replace and expand the current $15 billion act that President Bush championed in a State of the Union address and Congress passed in 2003. That act expires at the end of September.

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Poll: Acceptance Of Gays And Lesbians In Military Grows

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Public attitudes about Gays in the military have shifted dramatically since President Bill Clinton unveiled what became his administration's "don't ask, don't tell" policy 15 years ago, reported washingtonpost.com.

Seventy-five percent of Americans in a new Washington Post-ABC News poll said Gay people who are open about their sexual orientation should be allowed to serve in the U.S. military, up from 62 percent in early 2001 and 44 percent in 1993.

Majorities of Democrats, Republicans and independents alike now believe it is acceptable for openly Gay people to serve in the U.S. armed forces. Shortly after he took office in 1993, Clinton faced strong resistance to his campaign pledge to lift the military's ban on allowing Gay people to enlist. At that time, 67 percent of Republicans and 75 percent of conservatives opposed the idea. A majority of independents, 56 percent, and 45 percent of Democrats also opposed changing the policy.

Today, Americans have become more supportive of allowing openly Gay men and women to serve in the armed forces. Support from Republicans has doubled over the past 15 years, from 32 to 64 percent. More than eight in 10 Democrats and more than three-quarters of independents now support the idea, as did nearly two-thirds of self-described conservatives.

Changing attitudes on the issue parallel broader swings in public views about homosexuality. In their recent review of 20 years of polling data, the Pew Research Center reported "a major shift away from highly negative attitudes toward Gays and support for punitive actions against Gays." In the 2007 Pew data, for example, 28 percent said local school boards should have the right to fire teachers known to be Gay; that was down sharply from the 51 percent who said so in 1987.

In the new Post-ABC poll, military veterans are less apt than others to say Gay people should be allowed in the military. While 71 percent of veterans said Gay people who do not declare themselves as such should be allowed to serve, that number drops sharply, to 50 percent, for those who are open about their sexuality. Non-veterans, by contrast, are as likely to support those who "tell" as those who do not.

Fifty-seven percent of white evangelical Protestants now support allowing openly Gay service members in the military, compared with 82 percent of white Catholics and 80 percent of those with no declared religious affiliation. Three-quarters of both married and single people support the idea, both significantly higher than in 1993.

Across all three periodic Post-ABC surveys on the issue, women have been more apt than men to support Gays in the military. Today, more than eight in 10 women support allowing openly Gay soldiers, compared with nearly two-thirds of men. Fifteen years ago, half of women supported this stance; nearly two-thirds of men opposed it.

Furthermore, large majorities across age and education categories now support allowing openly Gay individuals to serve in the military.

The Post-ABC poll was conducted by telephone July 10 to 13, among a random national sample of 1,119 adults. The results have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points. Error margins are larger for subgroups.

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Protest Announced For Radio Hall Of Fame Awards Dinner After James Dobson Is Voted In

NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - Truth Wins Out (TWO) assailed The Museum of Broadcast Communications for announcing they would induct right wing extremist James Dobson into its Radio Hall of Fame. TWO vowed to protest the annual awards dinner to inform the world of Dobson's shameful and bigoted record.

"It is an affront for the Radio Hall of Fame to honor James Dobson, a right wing demagogue, who built his radio empire on the backs of Gay and Lesbian people," said Wayne Besen, Executive Director of Truth Wins Out. "We vow to stand up and protest this outrageous insult and let the world know that Dobson is a dishonest, hatemongering ideologue."

Dobson told The Daily Oklahoman on Oct. 23, 2004, "Homosexuals are not monogamous. They want to destroy the institution of marriage. It will destroy marriage. It will destroy the Earth."

In the past two years, at least seven researchers have accused Dobson of manipulating or cherry picking their results to back his anti-Gay teachings. Letters and videos documenting the concerns of these respected professors can be viewed at TruthWinsOut.org and RespectMyResearch.org.

Dobson also profits from intolerance. He founded a ministry, Love Won Out, that promises to "cure" homosexuals - even though the so-called "ex-Gay" leader of Love Won Out, John Paulk, was photographed in a Gay bar. Dobson also continues to promote dishonest psychological theories about Gay people that are rejected by every respected medical and mental health association in America, including the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association.

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AUGUST 4 IS THE DEADLINE FOR THE SEPT. 2 PRIMARY ELECTION

Forms are available at Wingspan and Antigone Books. Also on line at www.arizonaservice.com.

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UPDATE

Marriage Equality Supporters Protest At San Dlego Hyatt

SAN DIEGO, California (Observer Update) - About 150 protesters gathered outside San Diego's Manchester Grand Hyatt on Friday (July 18) to protest owner Doug Manchester's financial donation to a ballot initiative that could ban same-sex marriage in California, reports the San Diego Union-Tribune.

The protest, organized by Fred Karger and his group Californians Against Hate, coincides with a boycott of the Hyatt and two other hotels owned by Manchester, who is a strict Catholic who doesn't believe in same-sex marriage, reported advocate.com. He donated $125,000 to get Proposition 8 on California's November ballot. Manchester told advocate.com that he believes local unions are aiding the boycott and protest because the Manchester Grand Hyatt is not unionized.

There was also a counter-protest on Friday, but only about 50 Manchester supporters showed up. "I'm committed to marriage," Christopher Miladian, one of those attending, told the Union-Tribune. "I want to protect our culture."

PFLAG Tucson Holding Meeting August 6

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Tucson's Chapter of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) will be holding their monthly meeting, Wednesday, August 6, 7:00 p.m. at the Ward VI City Council office, 3202 E. 1st St.

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual and Transgender persons, their families and friends through: Support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. PFLAG provides opportunity to dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identify, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

For more information, call (520) 360-3795 or go online to

Turnabout For TIHAN Benefit Aug. 24

TUCSON (Observer Update) - "Turnabout for TIHAN" is an annual show put on by Tucson's LGBT clubs and their bar staff. The staff request donations from their friends and customers in order to do a "turn-about" from male to female (or vice versa) and put on a show to benefit the work and programs of TIHAN, the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (tihan.org)

This year's show will take place on Sunday, August 24 at the Doubletree Hotel at 445 South Alvernon Way. The doors open at 4:30 p.m., and the show starts at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are only $15.00. Admission includes the show and finger food hors d'oeuvres at 4:30 p.m. The evening also features a raffle with some great prizes..

For more information on how you can participate in the fun, contact Scott Blades at (520) 299-6647. Tickets are on sale now through the TIHAN office (credit card orders can be taken), or at participating bars.

Alternative Theater Company Holding Auditions July 29

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The Alternative Theater Company will hold an open audition for Dirty Secrets on July 29 at 7pm. Scheduled auditions will be held on July 28 at 7pm. To schedule an audition, contact Joe Marshall. Needed: Three Strong Male Actors (ages: 18-55). Roles: Nick: 18-21, Shane: 25-35, Tom: 40-55. Performances at: Temple of Music and Art Cabaret Theatre 330 S. Scott Avenue, Downtown Tucson. Show Dates: September 5 and 6, 12 and 13, at 8:00 p.m., September 7 and 14, at 2:00 p.m.

All actors will be paid a stipend on closing night.

Review: Marshall's script is bursting with red herrings: As soon as we've named our hero, he reveals himself as a scoundrel, and we're back to square one, waiting for one of these tormented lovers to turn up a winner. Every one of these men is a sick ticket." - Phoenix New Times

Synopsis: Dirty Secrets is a smart, gender-bent thriller that pokes fun at brainless Gay stereotypes. Right from the opening scene you know you're watching a play about homosexuals. Instead of boring us with platitudes about the evils of pigeonholing people, the characters skewer stereotypes by spouting spout earnest lines like, "You don't act Gay – you're masculine!" It's all about Tom, who shows up at the home of Nick and Shane, a Gay couple who live in Manhattan. Tom is depressed because he's just discovered that his lover of eight years has had sex with another man. He doesn't tell Nick the other man is Shane. It turns out that Tom has come to torture Shane, to seek retribution for his messed up romance. It's the ways in which Tom carries out his revenge – first demanding sex with Shane, later seducing Nick – that move the play along. He has a worthy opponent in the snaky Shane, who trumps Tom's attempts at blackmail, but can't keep up with his nasty houseguest's vile temper.

For More Information Contact Joe Marshall, (520) 883-8246, altrcompany@aol.com.

The Observer Blog Is Blogtastic!

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Ever wondered what's going on after you've read the print edition of Tucson's weekly LGBT newspaper?

Go online to tucsonobserver.blogspot.com and read up and comment on the posts dealing with latest comings and goings of concern to Tucson and Southern Arizona's LGBT community.

The Observer blog also provide links to the candidates who support the community, links to register to vote or listen to Equality Arizona radio or Out In The West online.

Around The Old Pueblo

On Saturday, August 2, Wingspan will be holding their next in their Community Conversation series, Home Matters: Immigration and LGBT Life. This conversation will take place from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th Street. For more information, call (520) 624-1779.

On Saturday, July 26, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m., Senior Pride and Eon will meet in the library at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St., surrounded by books and words and have some intergenerational poetry fun. This is not a slam, no judges, no competition. It's a chance to share your favorite poems/poets with the Wingspan community and everyone is invited. We'll have two featured readers and then time for open mic. If you want to read (or recite) contact Penelope to get on the list. All ages encouraged to participate. For more information, contact Penelope Starr, (520) 624-1779.

Enjoy a trip up, August 17, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., to the cool temperatures of Mt. Lemmon. Meet at the NE corner of Tanque Verde and Catalina Hwy at the McDonalds at 11:00 a.m. to caravan/car pool up the mountian. There is a $5 per vehicle park pass required. If you want to meet later in the afternoon, take the Catalina Highway off Tanque Verde Road in Tucson. Drive 4.2 miles to the Forest boundary and continue 25.6 miles (through Summerhaven). Marshall Gulch Picnic Area is a quarter mile beyond the village. Look for the rainbow flag at our picnic area. For more information, contact Peter Lake, (520) 245-6659.

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Marriage Amendment Update

By Mark R. Kerr

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - A total of 11 measures (initiatives, referendum and proposed amendment to Arizona's constitution) will be on Arizona's general election ballot, taking place Tuesday, November 4.

Of the 11 proposals, one was placed by state commission, nine were through the petition process and the signatures are being verified as of presstime and the other proposal, the proposed state constitutional amendment to define marriage as "only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state" was placed on the ballot by the Republican controlled Arizona Legislature at the behest of the Center for Arizona Policy (CAP), the right-wing, homophobic policy group led by Cathi Herrod.

This proposed amendment will be on the ballot as Proposition 102.

Herrod's group has filed to raise funds in their effort to pass Proposition 102, the current name of the organization is Arizona for Marriage in favor of SCR 1042 and have a blog, azpolicyblog.org/ espousing their "information." CAP has a campaign website, azformarriage.com.

Despite the erroneous reporting in a recent Arizona Daily Star article, opposition has been formed, in the guise of the No on SCR 1042 committee, PO Box 25044, Phoenix 85002, Phone: (602) 650-0900. Barbara McCullough-Jones, executive director of Equality Arizona is the campaign's current chair and Jason Cianciotto, the executive director of Wingspan is the Treasurer.

In other ballot news, one of the other ten ballot propositions is Proposition 300, recommended by the Commission on Salaries for Elective State Officers, this measure would give the Arizona Legislature a pay raise for their work (passing regulations on botox injections, prohibiting taxation on breast implants and preventing equine tripping, going over their 100-day mandate by 66 days and receiving per diem checks for the time well wasted), increasing their base salary to $30,000.

If you want a reason to vote against this proposition, other than the economic crisis, job losses and pending budget cuts, remember the vote taken on SCR (Senate Concurrent Resolution) 1042 and the 49 Legislators (47 Republicans and two Democrats in Name Only) who voted to place the proposed state constitutional amendment to define "marriage" on the November general election ballot despite current state law and court precedent.

Gay And Lesbian Couples Banned From 'Newlywed Game'

LOS ANGELES, California - The Game Show Network is relaunching "The Newlywed Game." Of course, same-sex couples are currently marrying in two of our nation's states, as well as obtaining civil unions in four more, reported Good As You (GAY)

So that means that newly-wedded Gay and Lesbian couples will be totally eligible for the revised version of the 70's era game show classic, right? Not so fast, queer fans of televised compatibility tests.

For if the "Newlywed Game" rules and requirements that were sent to us by a reader are to be believed, it seems that our unions might not make the cut. Show rules require couples to be "legally married" and that's defined as "legally valid in all 50 states of the United States."

Suzanne Westenhoefer At The Rialto August 22

TUCSON - Trailblazing comedian Suzanne Westenhoefer will be performing on August 22, 8:00 p.m. at the Rialto Theatre, 318 E. Congress.

Suzanne vaulted onto the national comedy scene in the early 1990's as the first openly Gay comedian and she has been thrilling both mainstream and Gay and Lesbian audiences ever since. Her acclaimed career includes appearances on popular late night television shows as well as performances across the U.S. in popular theatres, clubs, and fundraisers.

Fearless. Bold. Sparkly. Hilarious. That's Suzanne Westenhoefer in a nutshell. She's made a career out of telling the truth. And, the truth is, life is funny (and no one is off limits). From her sister's obsession with "Passion of the Christ" to her girlfriend's Herculean thighs, Suzanne tells stories that leave audiences in stitches. Suzanne works mostly unscripted, so when she hits the stage it's an unpredictable, original night of comedy magic.

For tickets or more information, either call (520) 740-1000 or go online to rialtotheatre.com.

King's Death Part Of Bigger Problem

Lawrence King

LOS ANGELES, California (Observer Update) - Fifteen-year old Lawrence King's murder last February at school shocked the nation. It also pointed to timely, troubling questions: Newsweek's current cover story highlights some lingering, troubling questions, reported queerty.com.

What you might call "the shrinking closet" is arguably a major factor in Larry's death. Even as homosexuality has become more accepted, the prospect of being openly gay in middle school raises a troubling set of issues. Kids may want to express who they are, but they are playing grown-up without fully knowing what that means.

At the same time, teachers and parents are often uncomfortable dealing with sexual issues in children so young. Schools are caught in between. How do you protect legitimate, personal expression while preventing inappropriate, sometimes harmful, behavior?

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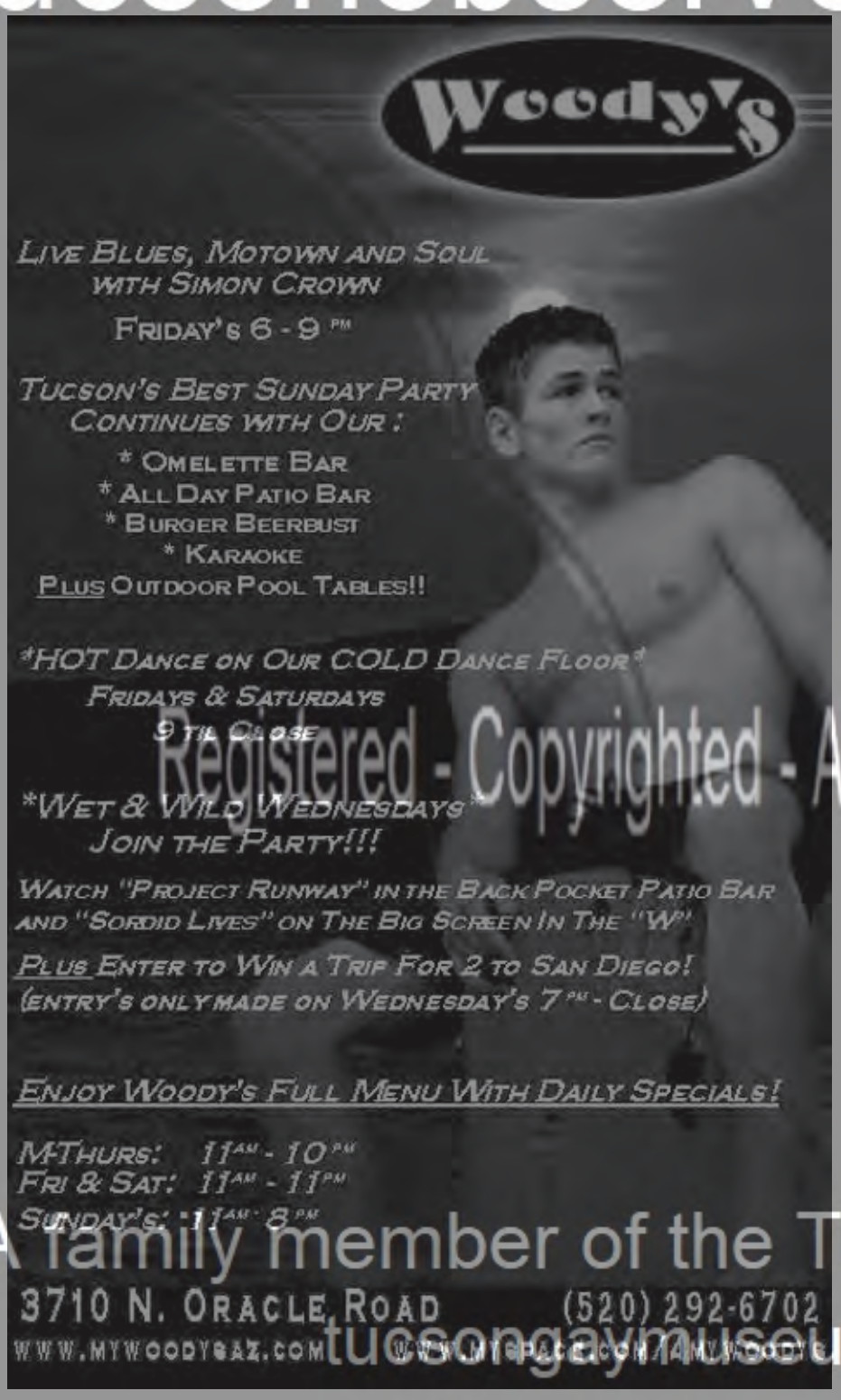


COMMENTARY. . . .

by Brian Dickerson

Exclusion Looks Even Dumber Now

As far as I can tell, no reputable pollster has taken our state's temperature on Gay marriage since 2004, when Michigan voters overwhelmingly opted to outlaw it.

But I've a hunch that at least a few thousand of those who voted to ban same-sex unions just four years ago would happily pony up for a mass wedding ceremony at Comerica Park if enough creditworthy Gay couples could be found to purchase all their houses today.

Tread water long enough and you're bound to become a little less particular about who tosses you a lifeline. God may not have created Adam and Steve, but if that happy couple opened a factory in southeast Michigan, I know a whole lot of straight guys who'd be willing to work in it.

Of course, Gay home buyers and entrepreneurs have been even less likely than straight folk to invest their hard-earned dollars here since Michigan voters went out of their way to let same-sex couples know they weren't welcome – as if economic stasis and long winters weren't disincentive enough.

Today, as Michigan stews in its own family values, other economically pinched states are competing for Gay favor.

In California, the public backlash against a state Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriages is being tempered by the recognition that Gay weddings are a growth industry.

And in Massachusetts, where then-Gov. Mitt Romney invoked an ancient antimiscegenation statute to bar marriages of out-of-state couples whose own states forbade them to wed, state legislators recently repealed said statute, so eager were they for a piece of California's Gay nuptials action.

As Michigan wages a mostly unsuccessful struggle to retain good jobs and well-educated workers, its policy of excluding Gays (or exempting them from rights and privileges enjoyed by other citizens, which is the same thing) looks stupider with each passing day.

What, exactly, have we accomplished by erecting one more obstacle to fresh talent and investment? (And please don't talk to me about protecting Michigan's children; they're bailing faster than anyone.)
Perpetuating a bad rep

I don't know if you've talked to anyone outside Michigan lately, but all banning Gay marriage and affirmative action has done is to buttress our state's reputation for confronting 21st-Century challenges with a 1960s mindset.

To the rest of the world, running Gay couples out of the state is of a piece with banning stem cell research and building trucks no one wants to buy. Banning same-sex unions has done less to preserve marriage than it has to reinforce Michigan's retrograde image.

Repealing Michigan's ban on Gay marriage wouldn't solve unemployment, end the foreclosure crisis or restore medical benefits to retired autoworkers. And it wouldn't transform Detroit into a world-class city, or even a sustainable one.

But it would be a signal – the first in many years – that Michigan had given up trying to barricade itself against the future and begun, however tentatively, to embrace it.

(Bryan Dickerson is a columnist for the Detroit Free Press, from which this is reprinted from their July 18 edition.)

Estelle Getty Has Died At 87

LOS ANGELES - Sophia Petrillo has joined her husband Salvador in Heaven.

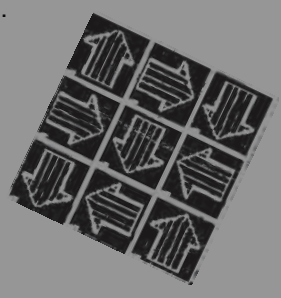
For those who watched television, especially Lifetime Television (for Women and Gay men) Estelle Getty, the diminutive actress who spent 40 years struggling for success before landing a role of a lifetime in 1985 as the sarcastic octogenarian Sophia on TV's "The Golden Girls," has died. She was 84, the Associated Press reported on huffingtonpost.com.

Getty, who suffered from advanced dementia, died at about 5:30 a.m. Tuesday (July 22) at her Hollywood Boulevard home, said her son, Carl Gettleman of Santa Monica. "She was loved throughout the world in six continents, and if they loved sitcoms in Antarctica she would have been loved on seven continents," her son said. "She was one of the most talented comedic actresses who ever lived."

"The Golden Girls," featuring four female retirees sharing a house in Miami, grew out of NBC programming chief Brandon Tartikoff's belief that television was ignoring its older viewers. Three of its stars had already appeared in previous series: Bea Arthur in "Maude," Betty White in "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and Rue McClanahan in "Mama's Family." The last character to be cast was Sophia Petrillo, the feisty 80-something mother of Arthur's character.

When she auditioned, Getty was appearing on stage in Hollywood as the carping Jewish mother in Harvey Fierstein's play "Torch Song Trilogy." In her early 60s, she flunked her "Golden Girls" test twice because it was believed she didn't look old enough to play 80. "I could understand that," she told an interviewer a year after the show debuted. "I walk fast, I move fast, I talk fast."

She came prepared for the third audition, however, wearing dowdy clothes and telling an NBC makeup artist, "To you this is just a job. To me it's my entire career down the toilet unless you make me look 80." The artist did, Getty got the job and won two Emmys.



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G/L Adoptions: Where Do The Candidates Stand?

By Mark R. Kerr

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - With the recent controversy over the remarks made by the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, Arizona Senator John McCain, regarding adoptions by Gays and Lesbians, either as individuals or in committed relationships, the question arises of where does the other primary contender to move into 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue on January 20, 2009 stand on the issue.

Illinois Senator Barack Obama has been supportive on the issue and according to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) questionnaire the Senator filled out in 2007, he reiterated that support.

The question from the HRC questionnaire said, "While 47 states allow Gay and Lesbian people to adopt children, some legislators are pushing to prohibit capable, committed adults from adopting because of their sexual orientation. As president, would you support giving appropriate judicial authorities the full authority to make decisions on adoption based on the best interest of the child, without bans based solely on sexual orientation?"

Senator Obama circled support and added, "I believe there are too many children who need loving parents to deny one group of people adoption rights. A child will benefit from a healthy, loving home, whether the parents are Gay or not."

'Poster Boy' May Be Turkey's First Gay Honor Killing

ISTANBUL, Turkey - In a corner of Istanbul, the man who might be described as Turkey's Gay poster boy was buried - a victim, his friends believe, of the country's deepening friction between an increasingly liberal society and its entrenched conservative traditions.

Ahmet Yildiz, 26, a physics student who represented his country at an international gay gathering in San Francisco last year, was shot leaving a cafe near the Bosphorus strait. Fatally wounded, the student tried to flee the attackers in his car, but lost control, crashed at the side of the road and died shortly afterwards in hospital, reported The Independent.

His friends believe Yildiz was the victim of the country's first Gay honor killing. "He fell victim to a war between old mentalities and growing civil liberties," says Sedef Cakmak, a friend and a member of the Gay rights lobby group Lambda.

Calif. Justices Won't Take Marriage Ban Off Ballot

SAN FRANCISCO, California (Observer Update) - The California Supreme Court on Wednesday (July 16) refused to hear a challenge to a ballot initiative that seeks to ban same-sex marriages, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

The unanimous decision means that, barring further legal action, voters will consider a constitutional amendment in November that would again limit marriage in California to a union between a man and a woman. The court did not give a reason for deciding not to accept the case.

"This was a frivolous lawsuit. It was a desperate attempt to try to keep the voter initiative off the ballot in November," said Glen Lavy, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund representing the measure's sponsors.

If it passes, the amendment, known as Proposition 8, would overrule the Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage in the state as of June 16.

Equality California and other Gay rights groups issued a statement Wednesday saying they were confident that the initiative, similar to Gay marriage bans enacted in 26 other states, will fail.

"We're disappointed, but this ruling does not affect the campaign against Prop. 8 in any way," the groups said. "We have been focused on continuing the election and moving forward."

Equality California filed a petition last month arguing that the signature petitions used to put the proposal on the ballot, printed up before the court struck down the state's marriage laws, were misleading because they stated that the initiative would have no legal or financial effect.

The Gay rights group also claimed that Proposition 8 would so drastically alter the promise of equality written into the California Constitution that it was improper to put it before voters as an amendment.

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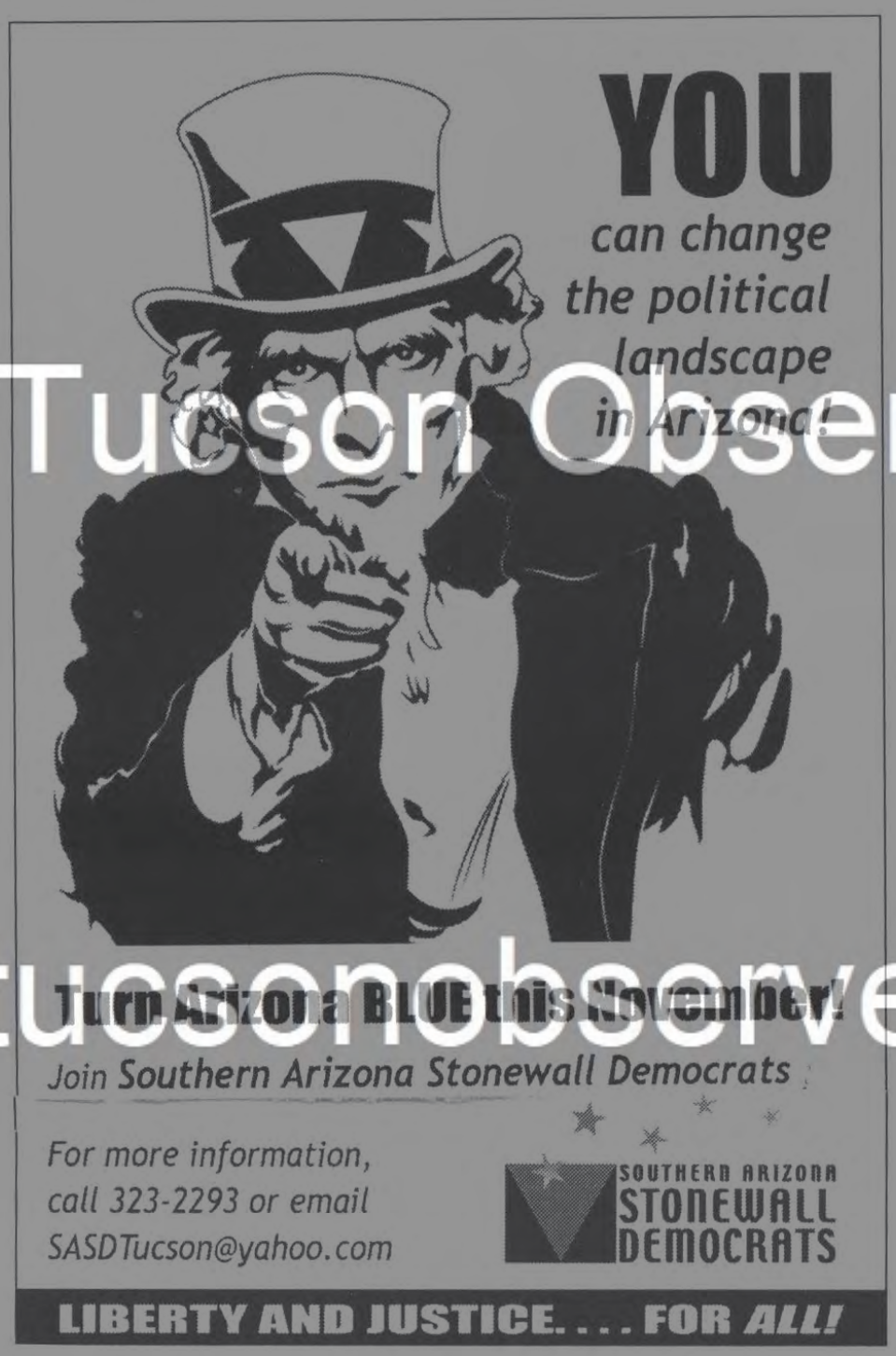


Fueled By Petrol

by Jimmy Petrol

The Jury Is Out

Jury duty hit me from behind, so to speak. Odd to be called, what with mandatory sentencing and all. I thought they just locked you up if the DA issued an indictment; that is unless you have lots of cash. Then I know they just change the address of your country-club membership; when those congressmen go to jail, it isn't where we go. They still get to play golf and have phones. I'll bet if Donald Trump goes to jail he'll get to keep the hairpiece.

But that is all beside the point. It isn't the job of the Jury to design appropriate detention facilities for the hardened Senatorial Criminal. Curious as to the exact job the jury might have, I toddled on downtown and sequestered myself the rest of the Chosen, ready for anything. After all, I might be called upon to unravel a particularly salacious divorce proceeding! Dish that dirt, sister!

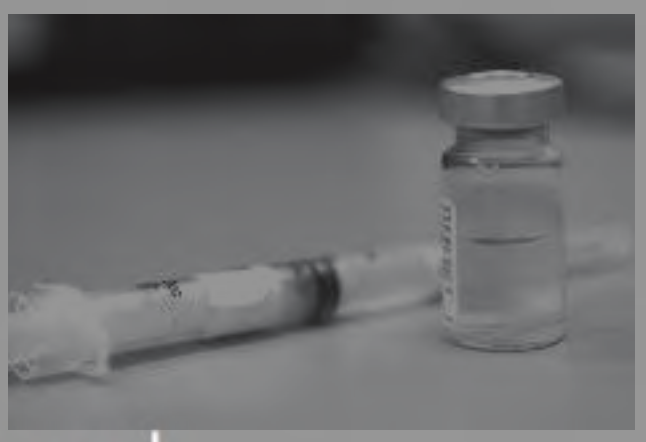
Oddly, the whole thing felt good. How nice to have a chance to be a part of the great social machine, to perhaps lend a hand to Dame Justice in her tireless quest! I saw myself as part of the "sacred twelve" that, nodding wisely, would help preserve truth, justice and the American way. Before the bus managed to lumber into the city center, I was leaping tall buildings and saving infants from burning orphanages in my adolescent heroic fantasies. But then came reality.

If you have had jury duty, maybe that you had a good time. Certainly, the work was easy. In fact, the work was too easy. There were the preliminaries; no parking, so take the bus. Be on time! But wait until noon to get gathered into a hallway with fifty others and filed (eventually, around one P.M.) into a courtroom full of lawyers, cops, the accused and The Judge. Here comes the easy part.

The "work" of the Juror is simple. Review the evidence and the law, as written. Just don't bring along any of your own ideas of right and wrong; the judge doesn't want 'em. All you have to do to get on a jury is to promise that you can "find a verdict in the law, without regard to your personally held moral beliefs". That is about as simple as they can make it; leave your brain at home. If you happen to have any morals, forget about it. The law isn't about Justice, so moral judgements are inappropriate in the American courtroom.

I wanted to be on the Jury. Really. But then, I had to take exception when the Good 'Ole Boy Judge asked me to promise not to let my silly little moral values intrude on the workings of the law. He misunderstood, of course; he thought my moral issues were specific to the case. Quite wrong, you know. I just won't do what I'm told. Pretty much ever. Unless, of course, you're in three-inch heels and carry a riding crop.

Plans Dropped For Large Scale AIDS Vaccine Test



WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Plans for a large-scale trial of a potential AIDS vaccine are being dropped in favor of a smaller, more focused study, the National Institutes of Health said Thursday (July 17), reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

The trial of the vaccine, developed by the Vaccine Research Center at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, had been planned to include 2,400 men in the United States in a study called PAVE 100.

However, the agency said that it decided that the vaccine did not warrant a trial of this size and scope. Instead NIAID said it will plan a smaller, more focused clinical trial designed to see whether the product has a significant effect on the amount of virus in a person's blood. If an effect is found, then additional studies, or an expansion of the study could be carried out.

NIAID said it acted after reviewing the results of the STEP trial, a study of another vaccine that was halted last fall after reports of an increased number of infections among volunteers taking part in the test.

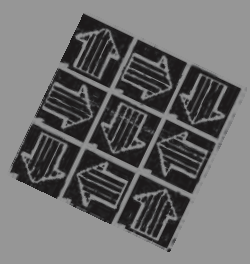
The agency said it still considers its vaccine scientifically intriguing and sufficiently different from other vaccines to proceed with the smaller trial.

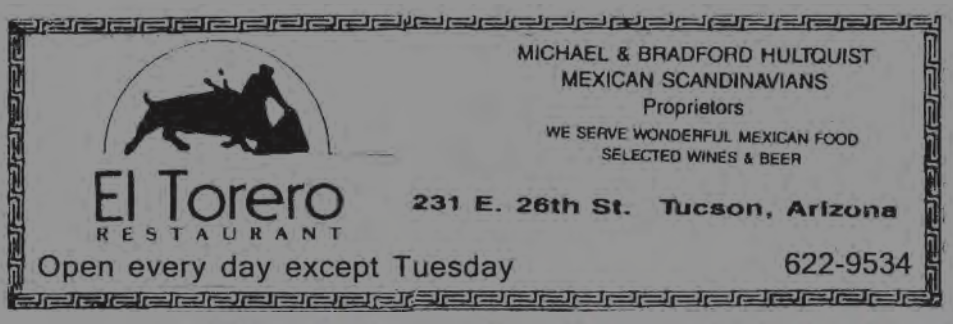
Federal Appeals Court OKs Removal Of Anti-LGBT Picket

PHILADELPHIA, Pennsylvania (Observer Update) - In a closely watched First Amendment case stemming from a clash between a group of Christian protesters and the attendees of a LGBT pride event, the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that Philadelphia police acted properly in removing the protesters because they were disrupting the event with bullhorns and disobeying police orders to move.

"The right of free speech does not encompass the right to cause disruption, and that is particularly true when those claiming protection of the First Amendment cause actual disruption of an event covered by a permit," U.S. Circuit Judge Dolores K. Sloviter wrote in Susan Startzell, et al. v. City of Philadelphia, et al.

"When protesters move from distributing literature and wearing signs to disruption of the permitted activities, the existence of a permit tilts the balance in favor of the permit-holders," Sloviter wrote.





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PHOTOS BY KELLEY CAP

Oklahoma Official Defends Comic Linking Gays To Satan

OKLAHOMA CITY, Oklahoma (Observer Update) - A county commissioner who is running for re-election in Oklahoma City is defending the virulently anti-Gay comic he sent to local Republicans by insisting that the "homosexual agenda" is an issue in the campaign.

In the comic, which Commissioner Brent Rinehart created along with a friend, a devil threatens a small child with a pitchfork, saying "If I can get the kids to believe homosexuality is normal!" while an angel yells, "Not with Brent around you won't!"

CNN's John Roberts spoke to Rinehart, who told him,"One person's mud-slinging , I guess, is another man's issues. ... I believe the homosexual agenda is an issue in this campaign. ... I thought that it was a very good campaign piece." "Are you homophobic?" Roberts asked.

"I'm not even sure as to what 'homophobic' means," Rinehart replied, "but let's just keep in mind that we are in a cultural war." Rinehart refused to acknowledge that his comic could be considered Gay-bashing. He insisted, "We have an attorney general here in the state of Oklahoma that has used his office for political means, filed campaign charges against me, and it's based on my opposition to the homosexual agenda. ... The attorney general, Mr. Drew Edmondson, sued the Boy Scouts of America because they would not allow homosexual boy scout leaders as leaders."

Attorney General Edmondson appears in Rinehart's comic holding a sign saying, "Gay rights now!" A caption explains that "Drew Edmondson put Oklahoma on record to force the Boy Scots to accept homosexuals as scout leaders, a pedifile's [sic] dream come true."

"A drowning man tends to thrash about," was Edmondson's only comment on Rinehart's comic.

"This is one of the strangest things I've ever seen," noted political science professor Keith Gaddie. "I've never seen a comic book with the phrase 'anal sodomy' in it before. ... He's pretty much grinding every ax he's got from his days in the county commission."

County Assessor Leonard Sullivan stated, "I've really encouraged him on more than one occasion to get professional help. He really needs it."

Rinehart is facing a difficult re-election battle, in large part because of his questionable purchasing decisions and other actions. Attorney General Edmondson filed felony campaign finance charges against him last year, accusing him of perjury, conspiracy, and money laundering in connection with his 2004 campaign. It has also been suggested that Rinehart "is pushing a road and bridge improvement project ... to help Del City developer Ray Pelfrey who is building a new home next to the road and once held the mortgage on Rinehart's home."

"Is this some desperate and weird attempt at payback against the attorney general?" Roberts asked.

"It's getting a message out," Rinehart insisted. "It's telling a story of how I got to where I'm at. ... It exposes Drew Edmondson for his true agenda. ... It exposes others here in county government for their true agenda. ... When I ran for county commissioner, my agenda was roads and bridges, limited government and less taxation, and family values. ... I've stuck to my guns. ... I'm not going to back down."

BUZZ -- BUZZ -- BUZZ

ATHENS, Greece (Observer Update) - A Greek court Tuesday (July 22) dismissed a lawsuit accusing an LGBT rights group of demeaning the people of the Aegean island of Lesbos by purloining the word Lesbian, a term islanders have used to name themselves for centuries. The lawsuit was brought by three islanders from Lesbos, home of the ancient poet Sappho, who praised love between women. The island is a popular holiday destination for Gay women. The suit said hat the name of the LGBT group - Homosexual and Lesbian Community of Greece - "insults the identity" of the people of Lesbos. In dismissing the case, the court said that islanders did not have sole claim to the name. Attorneys for the three islanders said they may appeal to the European Court.

TITUSVILLE, Florida (Observer Update) - Florida GOP Rep. Bob Allen, who was convicted of solicitation after offering a police officer $20 for the opportunity to blow the officer in a public restroom last summer, is still insisting he's innocent and trying to be cleared in the case. He went to court in May to appeal, but yesterday the Brevard County Circuit court rejected it. No doubt we'll soon see Allen in the 5th District Court of Appeals, reported towleroad.com.

PORTLAND, Maine (Observer Update) - "Radical queer provocateurs" in Portland, Maine, Infoshop News reports, have kicked off a parodical poster campaign to protest the treatment of Gay and Bisexual men who wish to donate blood, reported pageoneq.com. Any man who has engaged in any sexual activity with another man since 1977 is barred from donating blood in the United States. The policy, adopted by the Food and Drug Administration in 1983, has been upheld despite repeated challenges from the community at large. Gay and Bisexual men, regardless of current HIV status, are automatically classified as "high risk" individuals for the purpose of determining blood donation eligibility. "Instead of using blood drives as an opportunity for free, anonymous, confidential, non-compulsory HIV testing for all people, since all blood entering hospitals, research labs, blood banks, etc must be tested anyways," the article charges, "the American Red Cross has chosen to exclude already marginalized populations under the guise of public health and safety." The American Red Cross has in the past fought the FDA to ease the blanket restriction.

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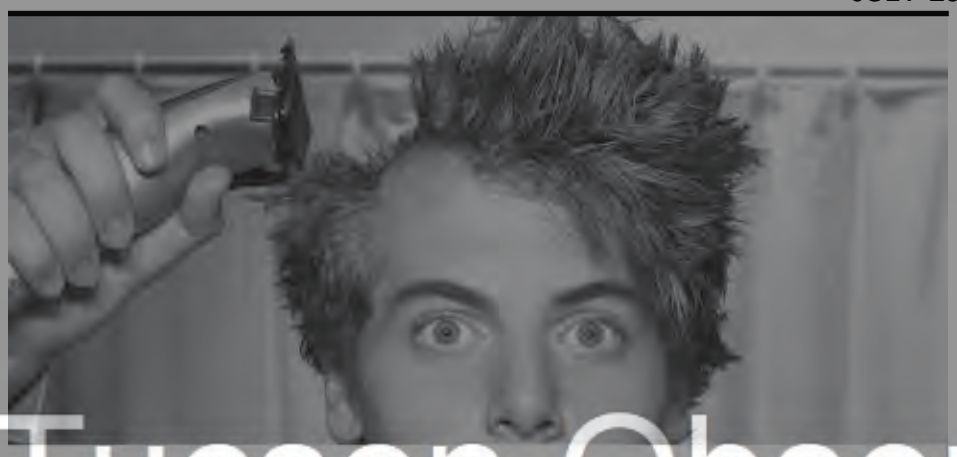

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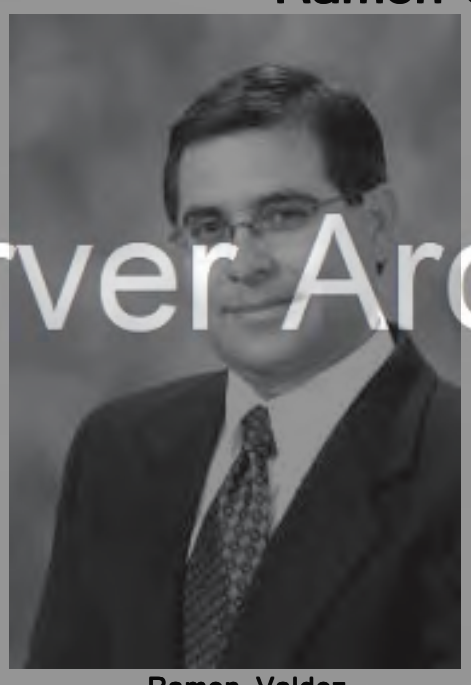
POLITICS 2008

by Mark R. Kerr

Ramon & Sharon



Ramon Valdez

Sharon Bronson

As previously reported in this column, Thursday, July 31, registered Arizona voters will be able to cast their votes for their party's standard bearers or who will run for a position for various political offices, ranging from school districts and county posts up through the U.S. Congress.

Early voting, absentee or vote at home, whichever term used to describe the Arizona law, begins next Thursday for the primary election which will be held, with polling places opening at 6:00 a.m. and closing at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 2.

For many political campaigns, early voting will provide the critical number of votes needed to ensure victory in the September primary election and during this campaign, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) and HIV/AIDS communities must vote for those elected officials and candidates who have backed us, through their words and actions.

Two contested primary elections of note deal with the five member Pima County Board of Supervisors for District's Two and Three. Both of the current office holders, District 2 Supervisor Ramon Valadez and District 3 Supervisor Sharon Bronson are being challenged in the September 2 primary over their votes in regards to whether the County should turn over the election database from the 2006 RTA and prior elections to the Pima County Democratic Party.

Through their votes, as well as those from Supervisor's Richard Elias (District 5) and Ann Day (District 1), the initial proposal failed, resulting in a subsequent court challenge and a judge ruling, this issue has been dealt within a manner which will now lead to the effort to ensure that the votes are being counted. When asked about their vote, they all cited information given to them from the County Administrator, Chuck Huckleberry, County staff and their Information Technology department, as reason for their initial vote for which they have had a "change of heart and mind" on the issue and subsequent responses, votes and directives have shown this to be the case.

This reporter and registered voter didn't agree with the Board of Supervisor's initial vote on the issue but when can someone support every action taken by an elected official on issues? Disappointments have been the case on all levels of government but this isn't a case for change during this election year since both individuals have been there when the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities needed support.

It was Sharon Bronson who was the key third vote in 1997, when the Pima County Board of Supervisors became the first governmental entity in Arizona to formally recognize committed same-sex relationships by extending medical and dental benefits to the domestic partners (and families) of county employees. Bronson voted to fight the legal challenge to this vote for which was upheld in 1998.

Ramon Valadez has been a strong friend to the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities since his initial election to the Arizona House of Representatives and Arizona Senate.

From sponsoring pro-LGBT rights bills, such as using medically accurate information to teach about HIV/AIDS in Arizona's schools and expanding Arizona's hate crimes law to cover misdemeanor offenses to name just two of the many bills introduced; helping to pass legislation striking down the state's "archaic laws" dealing with sodomy and cohabitation; helping to defeat legislation to prevent governmental entities, such as the Pima County Board of Supervisors, from extending medical and dental benefits to the same-sex domestic partners of county employees (and their subsequent families) and singlehandedly saving a measure prohibiting discrimination in employment because of sexual orientation, perceived or otherwise, Ramon Valadez has been there for the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities.

Both Sharon and Ramon continue to ensure that Pima County's AIDS Service Organizations and groups receive funding, as well as organizations that serve the LGBT community. They, as well as Supervisor Richard Elias publicly opposed Proposition 107 in 2006 when very few elected officials would step forward on the ballot measure during that campaign.

LGBT residents of Pima County have done well with Richard Elias, Sharon Bronson and Ramon Valadez serving on the Board of Supervisors and the community from Thursday, July 31 through Tuesday, September 2 must step up and vote for Sharon and Ramon and return the favor and thank them for their support.

Donations can be made payable to: Valadez for County Supervisor Campaign Committee, and sent to: Valadez for County Supervisor Campaign Committee, 2829 East Paseo La Tierra Buena, Tucson, AZ 85706.

To contribute to Sharon Bronson's campaign, go online to bronson08.com/donate/.

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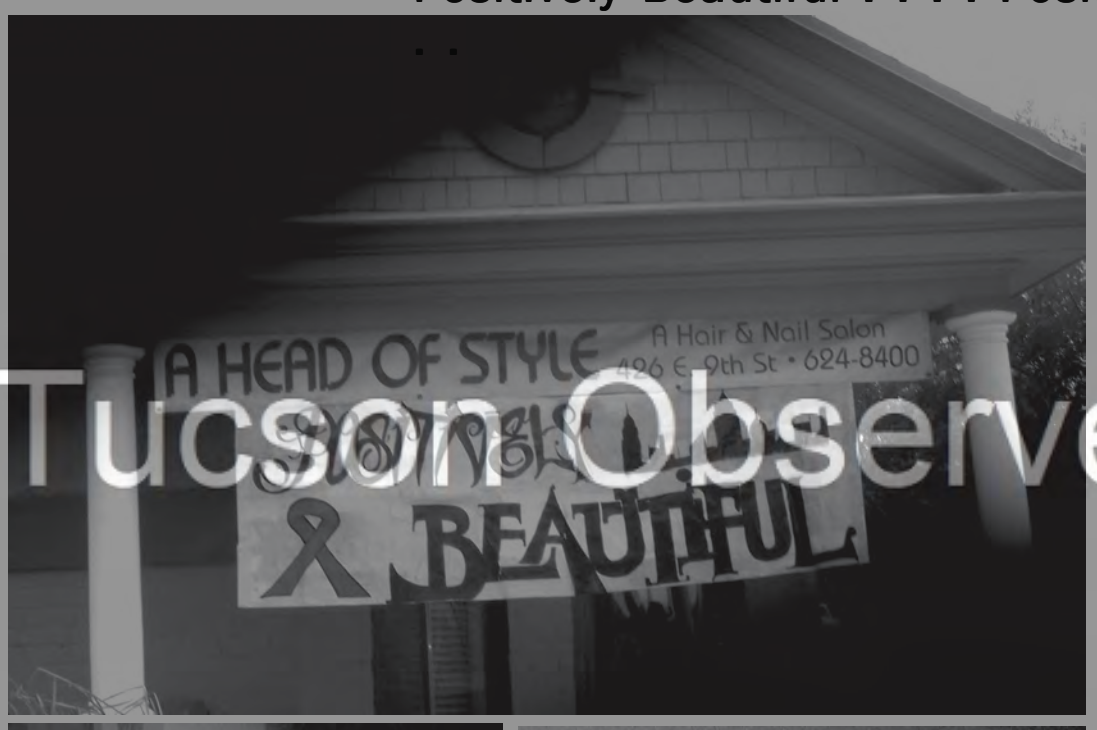

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TUCSON - On Monday, July 21st over 20 men living with HIV and AIDS were provided free professional hair cut, color and style, specialized skin care lessons and make-up that focuses on erasing the look of HIV/AIDS while still looking masculine - and make-up free.

Salon owners Scott Sutherland and Ajia Simone at "A Head Of Style" hosted the free event with help from other local Tucson stylists. La Cocina restaurant donated a woderful dinner for participants served in their beautiful outdoor patio.

In the 1980s the diagnosis of HIV was all about learning to stay alive - in 2008 it's about learning to live. Due to the discovery of successful HIV medications in the 1990s - we are now faced with a unique problem - people are now living with HIV/AIDS. Those medications have allowed people living with HIV to survive, but they come at the cost of many side effects. Some include, visible physical changes such as distinctively sunken cheeks, change in fat distribution, increased sensitivity to sun, and changes in vasculature. All of these create the 'look' of HIV/AIDS. There is not a feasible prescription for these side effects

In March 2007, "Positively Beautiful" was founded by Dr. Heather Moroso. The group has become an official not-for-profit grassroots organization. Until now Positively Beautiful focused mainly on women living with HIV/AIDS. "Now, it is time to include the men!" said Dr. Moroso. She started this organization due to her experience working as a naturopathic medical doctor for El Ro/Special Immunology Associates and the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF). While treating the problems ranging from stomach troubles to depression she realized there was a sense of embarrassment of the visible changes as well.

She learned that people living with HIV/AIDS who suffered these side effects felt that the 'look' created a sense of stigma and patients felt it was an identifying mark of their HIV status. Through the generosity of MAC cosmetics, Good Spirits Program, local M-A-C cosmetics artists, Tucson hairstylists and neighborhood restaurants have all joined in making Positively Beautiful also Handsome!

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   3710 N. Oracle Road, 292-6702
6. HOWL AT THE MOON
   915 W. Prince Rd. 293-7339
7. YARD DOG SALOON
   2449 N. Stone, 624-3858
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Organizations

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

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

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

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

F. RAINBOW PLANET COFFEE HOUSE
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G. TIHAN -Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network
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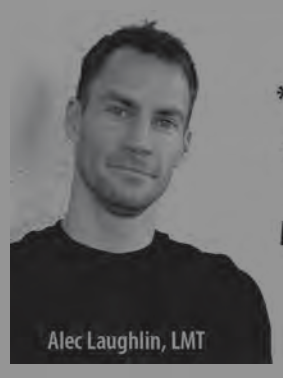

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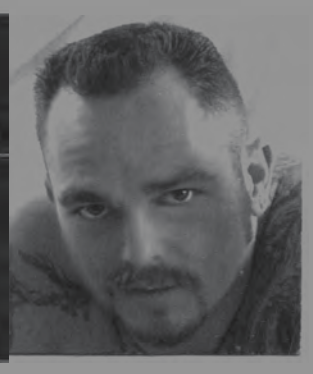

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HOROSCOPES

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The Sun enters Leo and forges some happy inroads in our personal goals and ambitions. Life becomes more optimistic and expansive. Not a moment too soon!

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Hang on tight; Gay Rams find time in their busy schedules to hop on the party train and take the grand tour. Wilde romances are possible but is it a trip to the moon on gossamer wings? (Pack a parachute.) On the bright side, it is the perfect time to spread yourself thin in anything artistic and creative. You're in top form. Thin is one thing, dissipated is another....

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Queer Bulls turn their attention to intractable family issues, with some success. Sun in Leo hits home so be prepared to handle a range of heavy physical and psychological tasks. Have you allowed your surroundings to stagnate? Have you been true to yourself? Or have you been conforming to others expectations and values? Be free! Be yourself! But don't Behave!!

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Pink Twins can't help but open their big yaps, spill the beans and feed the rumor mill with gusto. Keep the speculation high - it will make you the one in the know, to know. Everyday encounters offer new opportunities for profit. So be especially cognizant of the little neighborly things you need to do that brings others joy. Ah but when in doubt, offer cash.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

What do you truly value, pink Crab? Sun in Leo tests the limits of all that you hold near and dear. If you have been less than generous in the past, the fates now empty your pockets. If you feel trapped by the trappings of life, you are now given an escape hatch. If you're one of the many deserving, the money will be there when you need it. Buddy, can you spare a dime??

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

Proud Lions are given a ticket to a great new adventure. This is the week to find room to roam. Any relationship that confines you will be tossed aside like so much trash. You'll present a new face to the world and the world will graciously respond. So don't barricade yourself in your house. There's no time like the present to get up and Out and about.

VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

Feel the breeze, Gay Virgo; Sun in Leo brings a breath of fresh air. Anything that you've repressed and stuffed away in that closet explodes on the scene. Seek psychological and spiritual enlightenment. Problems that remain hidden and repressed lead to compulsions and obsessive behavior. We don't want that, do we? Do we? Do we? Do we? Do we? Do we?

LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

Proud Libras can become pushier and impatient with Sun in Leo. This is good. Have you reached your limit with all the rules? Seek a change of scenery or a revolution! The pablum that the group think has been serving is beginning to curdle. Disembark and find new social circles. Start with the "A" list and work down through the alphabet. It gets better as you go, I've heard.

SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

Gay Scorps try to overthrow the status quo. Clashes with authority figures become unavoidable, especially if you are less than pleased with your current position and feel stale and bored. Plot your ascent and corporate takeover. You have ample verve and charm to make any effort a strong, successful one. They say that it is lonely at the top but I say give it a try!

SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

Sun in Leo changes your global outlook and sends you off on some much needed international travel. Open your mind to new ideas and view the world from a different angle (...side-long?). You can go though a much needed reflection phase. Call it a learning experience. Yes, even brilliant Gay Archers need a nudge in the right direction every so often. Nudge nudge.

CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

Feel a volcano erupting? It's Sun in Leo throwing some weight around. Pink Caps get their mojo in motion. Whoo hoo! The old way of doing things will no longer do. Free yourself from the past and let yourself enjoy every delicious moment. You need fresh air to breathe and will seek it consciously or subconsciously. Resistance is futile, but restraints can be sexy..

AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

Examine the quality of one-to-one relationships, Aqueerian. Sun in Leo tests any limited partnerships. For those in a feathered nest, use this week to fluff and rearrange. For those who ache to sip the waters at another well, you may be tempted to dive in. You require more adoration now but the secret to your success will be when you give more to your special someone than you receive.

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

Guppies respond in an entirely new way to obligations. Cast off your chains, comrade. Break free from the repressive working patterns of your life. Find an antidote to all your physical and mental stress. This may mean that you explore other job options. Or it can mean that you find better ways of channeling your stress. In lieu of the economy, I advise the latter.

Mass Set To Repeal 1913 Law That Limits G/L Marriage

BOSTON, Massachusetts (Observer Update) - Massachusetts may have been the first state to legalize same-sex marriage for its residents, but when California last month invited out-of-state Gay and Lesbian couples to get married, the potential economic benefits did not go unnoticed here. Now Massachusetts wants to extend the same invitation.

On Tuesday (July 15), the State Senate voted to repeal a 1913 law that prevents Massachusetts from marrying out-of-state couples if their marriages would not be legal in their home states. The repeal, which passed with no objections on a voice vote, is expected to pass the House later this week.

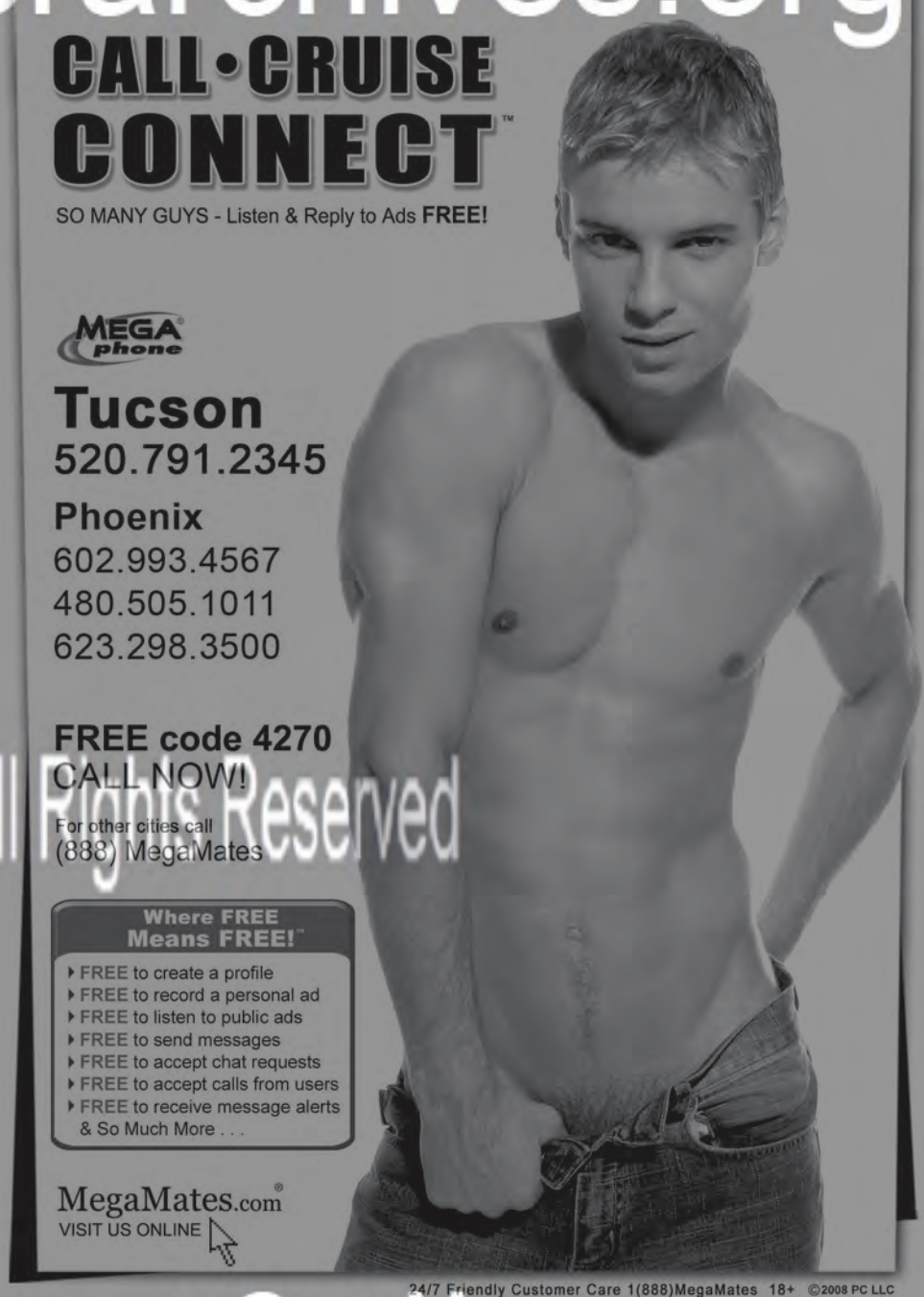
Gov. Deval Patrick, a Democrat and a supporter of same-sex marriage whose 18-year-old daughter recently disclosed publicly that she is a Lesbian, has said he will sign the repeal.

H&R Block Apologizes For Civil Union Tax Filing Problems

NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - Tax preparation company H&R Block has agreed to give $100 coupons or free TaxCut software to Gay and Lesbian couples who paid additional costs because they were barred from using the company's online tax service, TaxCut Online. After urging from the American Civil Liberties Union, the company is also offering free online tax support for couples who joined in civil unions.

Connecticut couple Jason Smith and Settimio Pisu received a message that the company's online service didn't support tax returns for couples who'd had civil unions; those couples were directed to visit an H&R Block office to complete their returns. The ACLU sent a letter to H&R Block in March demanding that it stop penalizing such couples. Connecticut law bans discrimination based on civil union status.

ACLU staff attorney Rebecca Shore said in a statement, "Saying you've been civilly united will never be the same as saying you're married, but at least gay couples will no longer face the prospect of paying more to prepare their taxes." Those interested can request a coupon at taxcut.com/tax_tips/aclu.html.



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COMMENTARY. . . .

It's Our Time To Make National Change By Working At Home

By Angie Buhl

PIERRE, South Dakota - By the time I noticed my cell phone vibrating with a California number, I had already missed three messages from the East Coast. As I sat in the corner diner of my small, South Dakota town, friends across the country eagerly wanted to know if I had seen the current Rasmussen poll placing our deeply red state into play for the Obama campaign.

I'm sure that many are shocked to see only four points separating Barack Obama and John McCain in a state that George Bush last carried with 60% of the vote (we haven't voted for a Democratic presidential candidate in 44 years). But this isn't a surprise to local advocates here. We've been diligently organizing for some time to change the political climate of our state.

Grassroots organizing is tough work, but it pays a large dividend. Those inside the Beltway should learn from our successful partnership efforts here in South Dakota.

I have heard Democrats excuse too often their inaction on legislation such as the fully-inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) by blaming the conservative nature of local politics. "You don't understand. Voters in my state are too conservative to support this legislation if I vote for it," is the typical refrain. When I hear this line tried out by politicians in liberal beachheads like Berkley and Boston, it convinces me that it is not conservative values but only our conservative approach that keeps us from moving forward.

Two weeks ago, members of Stonewall Democrats and Equality South Dakota gathered to witness the South Dakota Democratic Party enact pro-equality positions unthinkable just two years ago. In addition to electing a record-number of openly-Gay delegates to the Democratic National Convention, state Democrats unanimously passed a platform plank requiring our Democratic congressional delegation to work to pass a fully-inclusive ENDA (as well as asking our local lawmakers to do the same with state-level legislation).

The initial platform language excluded protections on the basis of gender identity. The lead sponsor first feared that legally inclusive language would prevent Democrats from approving the plank. However, advocates on behalf of Stonewall Democrats and Equality South Dakota organized to provide key testimony and support which convinced the sponsor to move an inclusive plank forward for a vote. The plank was unanimously approved with praise from South Dakota Democrats.

This is a significant shift for the South Dakota Democratic Party whose leaders, only two years ago, killed resolutions opposing an anti-marriage ballot initiative being pushed by the Republican Party. Party leaders, at the time, feared that supporting a pro-equality position would cost Democrats votes at the ballot box. They were wrong.

Despite the lack of support from the state party in 2006, Stonewall Democrats partnered with local advocates to create an unprecedented organizing effort (which ultimately grew with bipartisan support into Equality South Dakota). Even as state Democratic leaders stood on the sideline, grassroots advocates built a local network that nearly defeated a nationally-funded initiative. This organizing effort also helped sweep pro-equality Democrats into state office that November. That made Democratic Party take notice.

After demonstrating our electoral prowess, Democrats turned to the LGBT and allied community in 2007 to bolster state efforts. Working with the Stonewall Democrats Pride in the Party program, we set out to change our party by electing members of our community to key policy positions and fairly adjusting party rules to increase the participation of LGBT and allied Democrats in the South Dakota Democratic Party.

As a result of our efforts, South Dakota will send a record number of LGBT and allied delegates to the Democratic National Convention next month. Organizing within the party has also enabled us to educate our elected officials, secure support for pro-equality positions among policy makers and build a network that will increase the number of pro-equality Democrats elected across South Dakota.

This ground-up effort is changing South Dakota politics even as it shocks some outside observers. And South Dakota isn't alone. Statewide members of the Equality Federation, Stonewall Democrats and national partners like the Task Force are creating change in communities across our country. Even if those in Washington haven't caught on, this local organizing approach has already changed the future of national politics.

This election year has presented LGBT and allied Americans with a crucial opportunity to get involved in our electoral process. You can act on this by joining with your local statewide LGBT group and Stonewall Democrats chapter. We've used this moment to change South Dakota. Now it's your turn to change your state and our country at the same time.

(Angie Buhl is a native of Vermilion, South Dakota and a Member of the Stonewall Democrats Board of Directors and a Member of the Equality South Dakota Board of Directors. For more information on grassroots organizing, visit: StonewallDemocrats.org or EQSD.org.)

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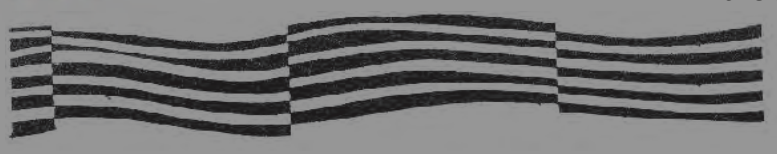
Thank you so so much to Lucinda Holliday, Barbara Seville, Bunny Fu Fu and all the other roasters for making our fundraiser at Colors this past Friday such a huge success. Larry Moore graciously offer to let his colleges roast him to help our Team JC Jigglers raise funds towards the Susan G. Komen 3-Day Breast Cancer walk. Each team member has to raise $2,300 to participate in the walk. Our team goal this year is to raise $15,000. Thanks to Larry we raised $3,261, over one third of our goal this past Friday. This exceeds any expectation we may have had for this one event. We are so thrilled

I lost my partner to breast cancer on July 20, 2005 and have pledged to walk the walk every year in her memory until either breast cancer no longer exists or until my feet fall off which ever comes first. The Susan G. Komen Foundation raises thundreds of millions of dollars each year for Breast Cancer Research. In past years Larry has helped our team raise in excess of $11,000 collecting not only cash donations but donations of household items for our yard sale, he always remembers our team whenever his is performing by donating his tips back to us. We could not have reached our goals without him and the support of the community. Thank you all from the bottoms of our hearts and our blistered feet come November when we take on the challenge of completing the walk one more time.

We are always looking for new walkers to join our team so please contact me if you want more information or just log onto www.the3day.org and enter our team name JCjigglers to join or make a donation.

Thank you Lucinda... Janet loved you and so do the JC Jigglers.

Pat Clark



NON-BAR CALENDAR

Thursday July 24th
Men's Social Network. Open to men of all ages. Bridge Join your MSN friends for a night of fun and cards. Call Ike at 207-6264.

Saturday July 26th
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, July 27th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:00p.m. Dinner Out at Le Rendev-Vous. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 908_6160, e-mail thomsepals@hotmail.com. Please contact Thom by Sunday at Noon to facilitate reservations. Price is usually under $10. Check the Yahoo MSN on-line calendar for the scheduled place.

Wednesday, July 30th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Hand & Foot with Peter at 881-8276.

Gays And Lesbians Deserve Right To Get Married

By Melissa Levine

Last week the Star reported that in 2006 almost $3 million was spent by both sides over an anti-Gay-marriage initiative ("Nups-issue re-write may dim passions on both sides," July 14). Arizona statute already defines marriage as between a man and a woman, yet our Legislature has seen fit to put this on the ballot again this November.

Quite honestly I can think of about 300,000 better ways to spend the money. Let's feed the hungry; help seniors who must choose between food and medication; teach physical education, art and music in the schools . . . I can go on.

On June 17, I got married in California. Somehow, this was deemed newsworthy. We had two paragraphs in The New York Times, were the lead story on KOLD-TV at 5 and 6 o'clock, and had a multimedia slide show in the Palm Springs Desert Sun, to name only a few of our contacts with the media.

The reason we garnered so much attention was that I married a woman. I was not trying to make a political statement. I just got married.

My marriage is not recognized by the state of Arizona or by the federal government. I could have married a man I met on the street and if I died the next day, he would get my Social Security benefits. Yet my partner of 18 years, who has stayed home for the last 10 years to raise our sons, would get nothing. There is something inherently wrong about that.

I don't see how my marriage threatens anyone else's. If your church does not want to perform Gay ceremonies, I'm OK with that. I won't get married there. I have no desire to impose my beliefs on anyone else. I am perfectly comfortable with my relationship with God. If my love is wrong, God will deal with me later.

Our country was founded on the separation of church and state. That was to protect churches from government interference with religious practices. Yet now we have religion interfering with government practices.

Forty years ago Mildred Jeter married Richard Loving. Soon after they were arrested because Mildred was black and Richard was white. On June 12, 1967, in the case of Loving vs. the State of Virginia, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that, "The freedom to marry has long been recognized as one of the vital personal rights essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free men," a "basic civil right." I agree.

(Melissa Levine is a family physician and this oped is reprinted from the July 22 edition of the Arizona Daily Star.)

Prudential To Court LGBT Market

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Prudential will begin marketing its long-term care insurance plans to LGBTs in a partnership with the Human Rights Campaign, the insurance company announced Wednesday (July 16), advocate.com reported. Sales representatives for Prudential's long-term care resources were trained to handle some of the unique financial challenges Gay men and Lesbians face.

A 2006 study by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force shows that 90 percent of Gay and Lesbian seniors have no children to help them, while only 20 percent of heterosexual seniors are childless. Assets for married spouses are protected when one spouse is in a nursing home or long-term facility, but same-sex couples have no such protection. Surviving heterosexual widows and widowers can receive Social Security benefits of the deceased spouse. Federal and most states' tax laws also exclude same-sex couples from cost-cutting benefits that straight couples are privy to.

"Having choices and protecting retirement assets and personal savings from long term care costs should be important to everyone, however, it may be especially significant for the LGBT community," Prudential Vice President Eric Holtzman said in a statement. "The reality is the LGBT community lacks the traditional support that married heterosexuals enjoy and as a result face a greater need for long-term care insurance. Our financial professional training program will allow us to deliver a planning experience sensitive to the specific needs of this community."

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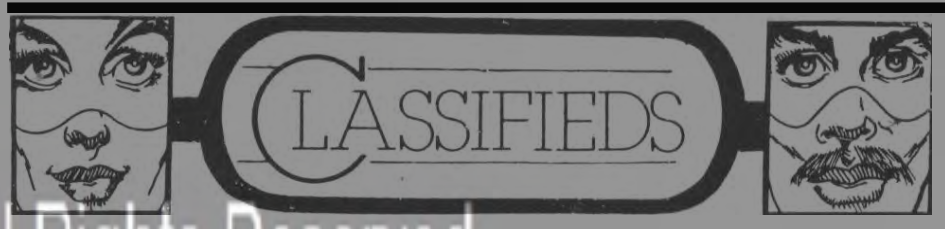

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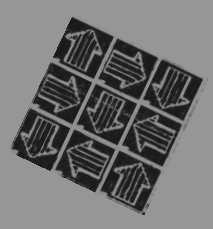

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NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

TUCSON KNIGHT OWLS (T.K.O)
We are a non profit social club that is open to every one. T.K.O. contributes to the fellowship and support of the community, and openly invites new members and/or guests. Monthly meetings occur on the first Saturday of every month at 11:00 pm., Please come and join us! Our next meeting will be held at the Venture-N.

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.

YOUNG AND GAY?
GLBT Youth 23 and under, meet Tucson for sharing, support and information. 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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 207-5336 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 (TIHAN) offers trained, compassionate and commited 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

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. 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.

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

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

THIS WAY OUT, 1/2 hour national GLBT show. 4:30 p.m. on Sundays only 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.

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.

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 3 Jewels, 314 E. 6th St. Donations accepted. Contact Maurice Grossman for more info. 323-2293.

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

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

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

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

NA MEETING WITH GLBT FOCUS meets Mondays, 6:30pm at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th Street. This is an open meeting of Narcotics Anonymous - all are welcome. For more info call Bernie W.: 406-0740

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am; Visit the outdoor patio enjoy aa cocktail or two. Sports on all day!!! MLB; WNBA; You call it!! Music with DJ/Hill starts at 9pm.

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. Beer Bust Sunday - $1 draft beers (12 oz), domestic only; $2 domestic long necks. Texas Hold-Em Poker at 3 & 6. No cash involved - Play for Points & Prizes. SIN Nite - drink discounts for Service Industry employees

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-2am. Peter's Build Your Own Bloody Mary Bar 11am-2pm. Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excluding special events). Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-8pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar 2pm-2am. Beer Bust 2pm-7pm. Karaoke with Michael D 9pm-Close. Drag Bingo every other Sunday 8-9pm. Check our Ad for Special Events or Parties

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

MONDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Visit the outdoor patio enjoy aa cocktail or two. Drink specials every hour.

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 3 - 8 p.m. $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Bucket o" Beer - $10.00 Domestic, $12.00 Imports (5 beers to a bucket, for 2 or more people, Guinness excluded). Texas Hold-Em Poker at 6 & 8:30 p.m. No cash involved - Play for points & Prizes

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 11am-2am. Happy Hour 11am--8pm (excl spec events) Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-10pm Back Pocket Patio Bar 8pm-close. Karaoke with Michael D. 9pm-close.

YARD DOG - Open 11am. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

TUESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Visit the outdoor patio enjoy aa cocktail or two. Drink specials every hour.

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. Happy Hour 3-8. $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. Pitcher Special $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.00 lg. Pitcher (excluding Blue Moon & Alaskan Amber). Ladies Only Texas Hold-Em Poker at 6:00 p.m.

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 11am- 2am. Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excl spec events). Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-10pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar open 8pm-close, Caribbean Party Night with Woody's own Specialty Mojitos, Caprioskas and Martinis with Tucson's Hottest Bartenders.

YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

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.

HOWL AT THE MOON –Open 3pm. Happy Hour All Day $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitchers. Texas Hold-'Em Poker 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 11am-2am;. Happy Hour 11am-8pm excl. special events). Ful Kitchen open 11am-10pm. Back Pocket Bar open 8pm-close. Service Industry Employee Special All Day Long - $1 off all drinks except schnapps and draft. Different Themed Underwear Party 9pm-close with $1.00 off for those who participate (excl. Schnapps and Draft). Retro 80s & 90s Dance with DJ Clint 9 til close..

YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Karaoke starts @9:30pm. With 2 for 1 starting after the first singer! (Poker Pub will resume in the Fall).

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. Bicardi Thursdays - $2.50 Bicardi Rum. July 3rd Karaoke's back 8-10:30pm

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 11am-2am; Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excl Spec Events); Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-10pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar open 8pm-close. Cheap Party Day **FREE POOL**, $1.00 PBR Longnecks, $2.00 Tecate Longnecks. Techno and Top 40 Dance with DJ Jeff 9pm - close..

YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm..

FRIDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. With incredible Happy Hour pricing from 5-8pm. Noche de calor w/DJ Hill jugando la mejor en musicia latino! Todos los viernes por la noche, la musica comienza a las 9. Shot specials cada nora!!

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. $2.25 All Mexican Beers. Free Dance Lessons at 7:30 p.m. Country Dancing 8:30 p.m. to close with DJ Pat.

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 11am-2am; Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excl spec events). Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-11pm Back Pocket Patio Bar open 5pm-close. Enjoy the Live Blues/Motown/Soul sounds of Simon Crown 6-9 p.m.; Request your favorite Music Dance Night with DJ Clint 9pm-close. Monthly Birthday Party every 2nd Friday Night of the month. YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm. Patio Bar Opens 8pm

SATURDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm - 2am. Patio opens @9pm. BEER PONG tournament on the patio every Saturday night!! DJ Hill 9pm. Don't forget to catch the WNBA games every Sat on our 51" flat screens!!

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. Plus check out the bartenders choice of shot specials. $5.00 cheeseburger & fries. $3.00 Cuervo and $4.75 Jager Bombs. Check our calendar for the Saturday Night Special Entertainment.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, 5-8pm karaoke & Teryaki Kabobs on the patio. 8:30pm Show time w/ Bunny FuFu or Janee Starr. DJ Q spinning Club Music inside & 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 11am-2am; Happy Hour 10am-8pm (excl spec events); Full Menu Kitchen open11am-11pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar open 5pm-close. Techno and Top 40 Dance with DJ Jeff 9pm til close. Check our ad for Twice-A-Month Special Events or Themed Parties.

YARD DOG - Open 8am-2am. Patio Bar Opens 8pm.

COMMENTARY

The Census Bureau Must Stop Turning A Blind Eye To Gay And Lesbian Couples

By Gary J. Gates

When same-sex couples wed in California and Massachusetts, they do so believing that their marriage licenses mean that their relationships finally count in the eyes of the state. Unfortunately, they won't count in the eyes of the U.S. Census Bureau.

According to its mission statement, the Census Bureau "serves as the leading source of quality data about the nation's people." Well, not all of the people, it turns out. Census Bureau procedures essentially hide legally married Lesbian and Gay couples by altering their truthful responses about their relationship.

The Census Bureau argues that the federal Defense of Marriage Act – which defines marriage as solely between a man and a woman for all purposes related to federal regulations – prohibits it from recognizing same-sex marriages. For the 2010 survey, the bureau intends to maintain the policy established in 2000, whereby it will edit the responses of married same-sex couples. Same-sex spouses will be reported as "unmarried partners" in all census tabulations.

In 2000, before same-sex couples could legally marry anywhere in the U.S., the argument could be made that the bureau was changing responses to something more accurate. (In fact, that change was, at the time, viewed by many as an improvement. In 1990, the bureau edited the sex of any same-sex spouses, thereby transforming the same-sex couple into a different-sex married couple.) Rather than completely editing them out of the data, the 2000 census included them in counts of same-sex "unmarried partners." Although that decision might have been the right one then, conditions have changed.

Today, same-sex couples can marry in California and Massachusetts, and these marriages are recognized in New York. That means more than one in five Americans lives in a state that recognizes the marriages of same-sex couples. Yet none of these legally recognized couples will show up in publicly released census tabulations. They will all be relegated to an unmarried status.

The Census Bureau has a well-deserved reputation for producing "gold standard" data of uniformly high quality – and its accuracy is relied on by journalists, researchers and the government itself. Since 2000, more than 400 newspaper stories and scholarly journal articles have referenced the census counts of same-sex couples. Government agencies, such as the Congressional Budget Office, used census data to estimate the effect on the federal budget if same-sex couples were permitted to marry.

Bureau officials should acknowledge the reality that same-sex couples are legally married in this country – and fix their procedures for counting and describing America's estimated 780,000 same-sex couples and their families. They should certainly stop altering the accurate responses of same-sex couples who describe themselves as married.

Decisions about data collection should not be driven by political and value-laden judgments about marriage. They should be grounded in the demographic and legal realities of this nation. Regardless of how one feels about the recognition of Gay men and Lesbians, all sides in these debates could benefit from accurate data. Taking steps to improve data quality on same-sex couples would permit scholars, policymakers and the American public to form opinions based on facts instead of anecdotes and stereotypes.

(Gary J. Gates is a senior research fellow at the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law and the coauthor of "The Gay and Lesbian Atlas." This oped is reprinted from the L.A. Times.)

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Nurture vs. Nature Heads To Court

SAN JOSE, California (Observer Update) - The issue over whether homosexuality is the result of nature or nurture is likely to be key in a wrongful dismissal suit brought by a former San Jose City College professor who claims she was fired for advocating people chose to be Gay, reported 365Gay.com.

The conservative Christian Alliance Defense Fund filed the suit on behalf of June Sheldon. The lawsuit alleges that Sheldon was fired in February from her job as a biology professor when a student complained about her answer to a question about the impact of heredity on "homosexual behavior in males and females."

In her answer Sheldon referenced a German study claiming a link between homosexuality and maternal stress. The student complained to college administrators that the answer was "offensive and unscientific," according to court documents filed. The college began a seven month investigation of Sheldon who had taught at the school since 2004 and subsequently let her go. In its lawsuit the Arizona-based ADF argues that Sheldon was properly providing students with information on the issue of nature versus nurture. "The textbook itself points out that the causes of homosexual behavior are a subject of debate in the scientific community," ADF attorney David Hacker told the Mercury News. "This teacher did nothing more than explain this fact."

Hacker said that Sheldon's views may be controversial, but in firing her, the college trampled on academic freedoms and violated her free speech rights. The college, through its attorney, said it would defend the firing.

Around The Nation

FATHER CHASES GAY SON FROM HOME WITH A BASEBALL BAT

ANDERSON, South Carolina - Violence broke out when an 18-year-old man returned home from a Gay pride parade and was assaulted by his father.

According to the Anderson County Sheriff's Office, during the assault, the teen's 49-year-old father yelled, cursed, swung a baseball bat, prayed and tried to "cast the demon of homosexuality out of him," according to the teen's version of events to Deputy S.C. Weymouth, the incident report states.

The teen said his father punched him when he returned to the house for clothes that he left on Sunday, the report states. The teen told deputies that his father "has a problem with him being gay and that is why he hit him with the baseball bat Sunday," Weymouth said in his report.

GAY COUPLE HARASSED BUT IT'S NOT A HATE CRIME

TULSA, Oklahoma - Twice within the past week, Robert Stotler and his partner have been targets of anti-Gay messages at their Tulsa home.

About seven days ago, the message "Gays Must Go" was spray-painted on their garage door, and a symbol resembling a swastika, which is used by some white supremacist groups, was spray-painted on the side of their home. Holes were punched in a friend's pickup's tires and the truck was set on fire while parked in Stotler's driveway.

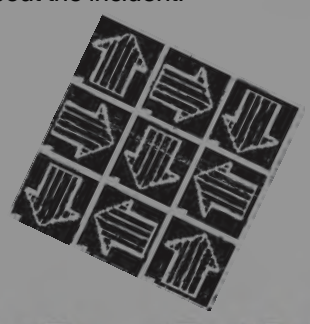
The message "I'll be back" was spray-painted on both sides of the vehicle. And back the person came. A few days later, holes were punched in the front door of their home in the 11800 block of East 25th Street, and the message "Gay Go Away" was painted on it. Stotler and his partner say they are victims of hate crimes, but police say they are not. Their reports call the crimes acts of vandalism or malicious mischief.

Performer Fatally Shot In San Diego Gay Boat Cruise Tragedy

SAN DIEGO - A Gay party cruise on the Hornblower yacht 'Inspiration' being run by promoter Bill Hardt to coincide with the city's Gay Pride festival on Saturday (July 19) night turned tragic, as one of the go-go boys hired to dance on the cruise somehow fell overboard, and after a series of events was ultimately shot and killed by police attempting to rescue him, towleroad.com reported.

The cruise, which featured DJs Manny Lehman and Chris Cox, ran from 10pm to 2am in San Diego's harbor. When the man, identified as Steven Hirschfield, from West Hollywood, first went overboard, the ship immediately called police who responded while crew members from the ship attempted a rescue. Crew members reported that Hirschfield resisted their attempts to rescue him.

According to the San Diego Union Tribune, "Hornblower crew members threw flotation devices to Hirschfield and stayed near him until Harbor Police arrived, Unger said. A police boat found Hirschfield in the water about 500 feet south of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station on Harbor Drive across from Lindbergh Field. The water is about 40 feet deep in that part of the bay, authorities said. When Hirschfield boarded the Harbor Police boat, he scuffled with the two officers on board, Harbor Police said. Hirschfield knocked one officer to the deck, took the officer's Taser gun and began beating him in the face with it, Harbor Police said. Hirschfield then tried to get the injured officer's firearm. As he struggled to get control of the gun, the second officer shot Hirschfield once, Harbor Police said." Hirschfield was pronounced dead at the dock. Emails from Towleroad readers report that it took more than two hours for all to fully disembark from the boat as officers interrogated each and every passenger about the incident.



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