Observing Tucson And The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

WEEKLY OBSERVER July 15, 2009 ISSUE 1303

Tucson Observer Archives

Allies Stance Cited In DADT Debate

NEW YORK CITY, NY (Observer Update) - When it comes to dealing with Gay and Lesbian personnel in the ranks, the contrasts are stark among some of the world's proudest, toughest militaries - and these differing approaches are invoked by both sides as Americans renew debate over the Pentagon's "don't ask, don't tell" (DADT) policy, the Associated Press reported in the Washington Post.

In the United States, more than 12,000 service members have been dismissed since 1994 because it became known they were Gay. Current targets for discharge include a West Point graduate and Iraq war veteran, Army National Guard Lt. Dan Choi. In Britain, on the other hand, uniformed Gay and Lesbian service members marched in the annual Pride London parade July 4. Gay Australian soldiers and sailors had their own float in Sydney's Gay Mardi Gras parade. In Israel, the army magazine earlier this year featured two male soldiers on the cover, hugging one another.

America's "don't ask, don't tell" policy - which prohibits Gays from serving openly - is the target of intensifying opposition, and President Barack Obama says he favors lifting the ban. But he wants to win over skeptics in Congress and the Pentagon, and a fierce debate lies ahead that will inevitably touch on the experiences of allied nations that have no bans. U.S. Rep. Patrick Murphy, D-Pa., the first Iraq war veteran elected to Congress, has just launched a campaign for a bill to repeal "don't ask." He observed British troops in Iraq operating smoothly with a serve-openly policy and bristles at the contention that American forces would suffer morale and recruiting problems if they followed suit. "I take it as a personal affront to our warriors," he said. "To say that other countries' soldiers are professional enough to handle this and American soldiers aren't is really a slap in the face."

Those seeking to preserve the U.S. ban question whether the allies' experiences have been as smooth as advertised and depict America's military as so unique that lessons from overseas should be ignored anyway. "We are the military leaders in the world - everybody wants to be like us," said Brian Jones, a retired sergeant major who served in the Army Rangers. "Why in the world would we try to adjust our military model to be like them?" With such polarized views as a backdrop, Associated Press reporters examined how the militaries of Israel, Britain and Australia have managed with serve-openly policies, and interviewed partisans on both sides of the debate in the United States about the relevance of those experiences.

Israel: A nation in a constant state of combat readiness, Israel has had no restrictions on military service by Gays since 1993. Gays were permitted to serve even before then, but not in certain intelligence positions where, at the time, they were deemed possible security risks vulnerable to blackmail. Now, Gays and Lesbians serve in all branches of the military, including combat duty. Maj. Yoni Schoenfeld, a Gay officer who is the editor of the military magazine, Bamahane, said there was little friction in the ranks related to Gay soldiers. He served as a combat soldier and as commander of a paratrooper company, and said his sexual orientation - though known to fellow soldiers - was never an issue. Gay jokes would sometimes surface, unusually not malicious, he said, while receptiveness to Gays in combat units could vary. "Those who are more feminine in their speech and appearance have a harder time fitting in."

Schoenfeld's magazine has reflected the evolving attitudes. In 2001, it was shut down briefly after featuring an interview with a retired colonel who had come out of the closet. Yet this year, there was no adverse reaction to the cover picture of two male soldiers embracing. The military also provided the backdrop for the 2002 movie "Yossi & Jagger" about two Israeli combat soldiers who fall in love on the front lines. It was a hit with critics and the public, and was even screened on military bases.

Australia: Back in 1992, Anita Van Der Meer was threatened with discharge from the Australian navy for being a Lesbian. She denied the allegation to save her job - and later that year the military's ban on Gays and Lesbians was lifted. This spring, Van Der Meer marched proudly with more than 100 other service members in Sydney's annual Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade under an Australian Defense Force banner. Now a chief petty officer, Van Der Meer was a junior sailor in 1992 when someone reported she was engaged in a same-sex relationship. "It was very traumatic for me," said Van Der Meer, 41. "But I still had the cooperation of my supervisors and my peers."

Chief Petty Officer Stuart O'Brien, who joined the navy 19 years ago, said being openly Gay has not been an issue, even when working alongside U.S. military personnel in Baghdad in 2006. "They valued the work that I did and that's all that it comes down to at the end of the day," O'Brien said. The lifting of the ban was preceded by heated debate, yet the change itself was relatively uneventful. Among opponents of the change at the time was Australia's main veterans group, which later withdrew its objections. The group's president, retired Maj. Gen. Bill Crews, said concerns about lowered morale and HIV transmission on the battlefield proved ill-founded. "I thought there'd be a continuing problem because of prejudice that exists in parts of the community," Crews said. "I don't see any evidence now that homosexuals are in any way discriminated against. ...A homosexual can be just as effective a soldier as a heterosexual."

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Mass. Sues Feds Over Definition Of Marriage

Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley

BOSTON, MA (Observer Update) - Massachusetts, the first state to legalize Gay marriage, sued the U.S. Government Wednesday, (July 7) over a federal law that defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.-

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The lawsuit argues the federal Defense of Marriage Act interferes with the right of Massachusetts to define and regulate marriage as it sees fit, Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley said. The 1996 law denies federal recognition of Gay marriage and gives states the right to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states. The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Boston, argues the act "constitutes an overreaching and discriminatory federal law." It says the approximately 16,000 same-sex couples who have married in Massachusetts since the state began performing Gay marriages in 2004 are being unfairly denied federal benefits given to heterosexual couples.-

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Besides Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine and Iowa - have legalized Gay marriage. Gay marriage opponents in Maine said Wednesday that they had collected enough signatures to put the state's new law on the November ballot for a possible overide.-

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The Massachusetts lawsuit challenges the section of the federal law that creates a federal definition of marriage as "a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife."-

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Before the federal law was passed, Coakley said, the federal government recognized that defining marital status was the "exclusive perogative of the states." Now, because of the U.S. law's definition of marriages, same-sex couples are denied access to benefits given to heterosexual married couples, including federal benefits, tax benefits, health insurance coverage and Social Security payments, the lawsuit says.-

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The lawsuit also argues that the federal law violates the constitutional rights of its citizens by treating married heterosexual couples and married same-sex couples differently when determining eligibility of Medicaid benefits and when determining whether the spouse of a veteran can be buried in a Massachusetts veterans' cemetery.-

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The lawsuit charges that DOMA, Congress overstepped its authority by limiting states' efforts to recognize marriages between same-sex couples, and codified an animus towards Gay and Lesbian people," the lawsuit states. The Justice department had not seen the lawsuit and cannot respond until it has a chance to review it, spokesman Charles Miller said.-

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The Defense of Marriage Act was enacted in 1996 when many believed Congress would soon legalize same-sex marriages and opponents worried that other states would be forced to recognize them.-

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President Barack Obama has pledged to repeal the law, although Gay rights activists criticized the administration last month after Justice Department lawyers defended it in a court brief. White House aides said they were doing their jobs to support a law that is on the books. This is the second lawsuit filed in Massachusetts challenging the law.-

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Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders claimed the law discriminates against Gay couples and is unconstitutional

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UPDATE

New Warrior Training Adventure

TUCSON - The New Warrior Training Adventure, sponsored by ManKind Project, is a weekend experience during which we look at our lives as men, particularly how our lives work and don't work. The training adventure offers us a powerful and challenging opportunity to look at all aspects of our lives in a richly supportive environment. As men, we will learn how to be accountable for our choices and consequences, how to begin integrating the dark and soulful qualities of our masculine nature and how to stand up and take responsibility for our lives. We will learn to step forward as men without apologizing for whom we are, to accept and believe that we are enough and what we do is enough. We will begin to understand that our achievements are a function of our building a community of men working together to build relationships with men. The New Warrior is the initiated man who sets about living his life passionately and compassionately because he has learned to face his demons, lives his life with intention, pursues his personal life mission with integrity and is open to the support and service of other men. The training adventure runs from August 7 to 9 in Flagstaff with a focus on Gay and Bi-sexual men. Carpooling will be arranged. While open to any man interested, and while straight men will both attend and staff, Gay and Bi-sexual men will predominate. The training provides a unique perspective of how we can function together to create acceptance and alliances that effect all of society. For more information or to sign up for the adventure, contact Thomas (520) 591-2828, tsbtucson@hotmail.com or go online to azwarriortraining.com.

Summer Tea Dance July 25

TUCSON (Observer Update) - A Summer Tea Dance for LGBT Seniors and their Friends, Saturday, July 25, 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Coyote Moon, 915 W. Prince.

The DJ will play a mix of '40s big band, '50s/'60s oldies, country western, and the best of disco. Burgers, fries and other food items are available for purchase, and be sure to ask about the "Howl/Senior Pride" food and drink special.

For more information, call (520) 624-1779.

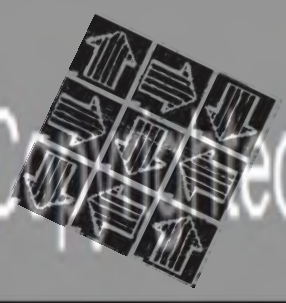
HIV Social Marketing Campaign Requires Community Input

TUCSON (Observer Update) - "We're looking for community input. The Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF) is developing an engaging, creative prevention marketing campaign for the entire Tucson community that will help increase awareness and knowledge about HIV in a strong effort to increase HIV testing and eliminate new HIV infections," says Wendell Hicks, Executive Director at the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation.

SAAF is launching its first ever community-wide social marketing campaign to increase awareness and education of HIV/AIDS, publicize the services and programs provided through the organization, and get people motivated to get tested. However, before the campaign is launched, there will be a chance for the public to give input and share ideas about what this important awareness effort will look like. "It's important to have a dynamic, interactive campaign that will educate and engage people to take action and stay safe through innovative approaches" says Hicks.

To Participate visit www.saaf.org/UandHIV or contact Hank Knaack, Marketing Coordinator at focusgroup@saaf.org or (520) 628-7223. Each year SAAF provides services to nearly 1,200 people and delivers targeted prevention outreach and education programs to over 20,000 people who are at risk for infection. For more information about the programs and services of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF) or to schedule a tour of SAAF, please visit www.saaf.org or call (520) 628-7223.

SAAF's mission is to create and sustain a healthier community through a compassionate, comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS.



Find Out About Business Opportunities With The City Of Tucson

By Leondra Price

TUCSON (Observer Update) - I would like to take a minute to introduce myself. I am Leondra Price, Outreach Coordinator for the City of Tucson's Business Enterprise Programs. We would like to do a better job of connecting with the community and sharing information about programs and opportunities available to the business community.

The City of Tucson has several business enterprise programs that we would like to make you and the Chamber aware of that are designed to provide opportunities and incentives to certified firms located in Pima County. The goal is to increase the opportunities for local firms to do business with the City of Tucson on projects and contracts administered by the City's Procurement Department and may include, bid preferences and subcontracting goals in the areas of construction, goods, services, and materials. All of the programs are certification programs that offers yet another opportunity for businesses in the Tucson Metropolitan Area to potentially do business with the City of Tucson . These programs foster economic growth and serve to enhance business opportunities for local firms.

Minority Business Enterprise Program (MBE) - includes all minority business owners (as defined under Federal Regulations) regardless of gender; Woman-owned Business Enterprise Program (WBE) - this certification is specific and designated for Caucasian women only; Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE) - certification includes minorities (as defined under Federal Regulations), women, and is specific to federally funded contracting opportunities such as FHA, FAA, FTA and others and Small Business Enterprise Program (SBE) - is a race and gender neutral program in that, SBE applicants may be representative of any and all ethnic and gender groups.

As you can see there is a business enterprise program available to almost any business entity that is interested in doing business through these programs and with the City of Tucson. For more information please consider attending an upcoming workshop that will give an overview of the programs and will literally take you line-by-line through the application process.

There are two dates available: Monday, July 20, 1 - 4:00 p.m., Westside Police Sub-Station, 1310 W. Miracle Mile Rd., Wednesday, August 19, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m., Hardesty Police Sub-Station, 1100 S. Alvernon (22nd & Alvernon). If you have questions or need more specific information, please call (520) 837-4010 or (520) 791-4593 or via e-mail at Leondra.Price@tucsonaz.gov. Be sure to make your reservation, mark your calendar, and join us.

Mass. Sues Feds

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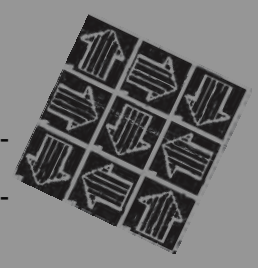
federal benefits that other married couples receive, such as health insurance and pensions.-



Calling for friendly and reliable people to join SAAF's Client Services Team as volunteer Peer Counselors.

If you are interested in offering peer support to clients, educating on HIV/AIDS and more, contact Volunteer Resources at 628-7223 or volcoord@saaf.org

SAAF.org

Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation

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Office Hours: 9a.m.-6p.m.
Monday thru Friday

Office Closed Thursdays

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Informing the Community
The Observer

Coyote Moon Pub
sports pub & dance club

COMING UP AT THE MOON!

Sat 7/18 - Miss Gay Arizona Show
Sat, 7/25 - Tea Dance 4 - 8pm
Sat, 7/25 - Koyote Kingz 9:30 pm
Sat 8/1 - Ellas de Noche
Sat 8/8 - TMI 9pm

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Allies' Stance Cited In DADT Debate

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Britain: British policymakers had been wrestling for years with whether to scrap a long-standing ban on Gays in the military - but the pivotal decision was made abroad, by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France. The court ruled in 1999 that Britain had violated the rights of four former service members who were dismissed for being Gay and Lesbian. At the time, there was significant opposition to the change among military officers. There were predictions that unit cohesion would suffer and that large numbers of personnel would leave the military if Gays could serve. Lord Alan West, former head of the Royal Navy and now Britain's terrorism minister, served before and after the ban was lifted. "It's much better where we are now," West said. "For countries that don't do that - I don't believe it's got anything to do with how efficient or capable their forces will be. It's to do with other prejudices, I'm afraid." He added: "I think the Americans really need to make the move."

Mandy McBain joined the Royal Navy at age 19, in 1986, at the lowest possible rank. Now a lieutenant commander, she remembers what it was like to serve when being a Lesbian had to be a secret. "It's exhausting," she said. "It's quite incredible to look back and see how much time and energy I spent leading a double life." Military expert Amyas Godfrey of the Royal United Services Institute, a London think tank, was serving with the army in Northern Ireland when the policy changed. "I remember our commanding officer at the time called the entire battalion together and said, 'This is how it is going to be now. ... We are not going to bully. If someone in your group says that he is Gay, you treat them as normal,'" Godfrey recalled. "And that, really, was the implementation of it. For all the years I served after that, it was never an issue."

United States: For those in the U.S. military community who oppose letting Gays serve openly, there's a widely shared sentiment that America has nothing to learn from the two dozen nations that have no bans. "Who's the only superpower military out there?" argued Maj. Brian Maue, a professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy, in a debate in June in Chicago. "This is hardly convincing to say, 'Ah, the others are doing it. We should too.'" Maue - who says he's been speaking out on his own, not as a military spokesman - also suggested in an online forum that "an openly Gay military would be the heterosexual equivalent to forcing women to constantly share bathrooms, locker rooms and bedrooms with men." Retired Army Lt. Col. Robert Maginnis, another supporter of the ban, contends that some field commanders in nations that allow Gays to serve openly have resorted to "tacit discrimination" - excluding them from front-line units for fear that problems would surface in rugged, close-quarters living conditions. Repealing the U.S. ban would trigger the departure of some career service members who object to homosexuality and deter some people from enlisting, said Maginnis.

Advocates of open service for Gays acknowledge there would be some hitches, but predict the overall change would be smooth. "There's been very little trouble in the nations that lifted their ban," said professor David Segal, director of the University of Maryland's Center for Research on Military Organization. "My guess is there will be slightly more in the U.S. - we have a somewhat higher level of intolerance." However, Segal doubted the change would spur a large exodus or hamper recruitment. "There will be some Gay bashing at the unit level, and that will be a problem in the short run for NCOs and junior officers," he said. "But they will deal with it, just as they dealt with racial integration and gender integration." Nathaniel Frank, a researcher at the University of California, Santa Barbara's Palm Center and author of a book on "don't ask, don't tell," says his studies of allied nations suggest that lifting the ban in the U.S. would not impair overall military effectiveness. "There will be some forms of de facto discrimination and prejudice - a policy change is not going to wipe that out of people's hearts and minds overnight," he said. "But more and more people in the military are seeing it doesn't serve them to have this policy in place." There's no question, Frank said, that the U.S. military is unique. But he said it should be embarrassing that "our allies can tell the truth about Gay soldiers and the U.S. stands with China, Iran, North Korea among the nations that can't." The key to a smooth transition, Frank added, is emphatic direction from top commanders and adoption of a code of conduct spelling out unacceptable behavior.

Dan Choi, the Army lieutenant facing dismissal, says "don't ask" forces Gays who are serving to be furtive and dishonest. "Closeting is what causes instability," he said. "It's the most toxic poison." As for the U.S. being different from its allies, Choi agrees. "We are exceptional - because we take the lead on things," he said. "To me, it's an insult to the idea of American exceptionalism to say we're somehow scared of Gays."

Member Of Congress Demands Probe Of Gay Sailor's Death

U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee

HOUSTON, TX (Observer Update) - U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee is calling for an investigation into the shooting death of a Gay Houston sailor while he was on duty in California last month.Lee said Sunday the killing of 29-year-old Navy Seaman August Provost III was "bizarre" and more facts need to be uncovered.

Navy officials have said Provost's body was burned after he was shot to death June 30 while standing guard at Camp Pendleton north of San Diego.

Jackson Lee spoke alongside family members who say they believe the shooting was a hate crime because Provost had complained about being harassed because he was Gay.

Investigators called Provost's death a random act.

Navy officials say another sailor was implicated through physical evidence and his statement.

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UPDATE

'Bible Belt Playright's Night, A Fundraiser For EON Youth Lounge, July 18

Paul Bonin-Rodriguez

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Enjoy a night with Paul Bonin-Rodriguez, the playwright of the nationally acclaimed "Talk of the Town" and "The Bible Belt...and other Accessories", director Kevin Johnson, and the young star of the Tucson productions, Ryan DeLuca. Both shows are one-man plays about a teenager in a small Texas town coming out, and were performed in Tucson in recent years.

"Bible Belt, " which won 2008 Arizona Daily Star MAC Award for both Best Comedy and Best Actor will return for limited run in August. "Talk..." and "Bible Belt..." are part of a sequence five plays about the same young man as he matures, and are reflections of the playwright's life. There will be a reception with light refreshments following the talk. Eon have asked Paul to talk about coming out as a teenager, as well as coming out in the theater world. We will also have a performance of a scene from THE BIBLE BELT by Mr. DeLuca as well as a reading from Part Five of the series from the playwright.

This event is a pay-what-you-can event so everyone can enjoy the evening. A portion of proceeds will benefit Wingspan's Youth and Family Programs and takes place, Jul 18, 2009, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m., Beowulf Alley Theatre, 11 S. 6th Ave. For more information, contact Kevin Johnson, (520) 270-3332, azonstage@yahoo.com, website: http://www.arizonaonstage.org.

Rainbow Families - Mt. Lemmon Trip, July 25

TUCSON (Observer Update) - On Saturday, July 25, 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., enjoy a trip up 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. We will have a rainbow flag at the picnic area.

Rainbow Families is a group of LGBT parents with children who get together for monthly social events. Everyone is welcome and for more information, contact Peter, (520) 245-6659, lakepet@cox.net.

Boys R Us Presents: Life's A Drag - A Community Drag Event, July 25

TUCSON - Boys R Us presents: Life's a Drag - A community drag event, Saturday, July 25, 8:00 p.m. - midnight, benefiting IDKE XI, featuring performances by Janee' Starr, Turkish Delights, Switchblade Parade and DJ Motion all on one stage to raise funds for this year's International Drag King Community Extravaganza! Eegees, drinks, auctions!

Life's a Drag will take place at the Fourth Ave. Winsett Outdoor Performance Center, just south of Bison Witches, 326 N. Fourth Ave.

For more information, contact Rachel Castillo, (520) 551-0778.

U.S. Military: Gays Are Not Welcome; White Supremacists 'OK?'

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Recently, an Army National Guardsman and Arabic translator who openly challenged the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, was recommended for discharge by a military administrative board because he has publicly said that he is Gay. Yet a watchdog group claims dozens of US military personnel have been spotted on a white supremacist social networking Web site in an apparent violation of Pentagon regulations prohibiting racist extremism.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, a hate-group watchdog based in Alabama, presented a report to Congress and urged them to investigate evidence "that racial extremists are infiltrating the U.S. military in order to ensure that the armed forces are not inadvertently training future domestic terrorists."

The SPLC also notes: In recent months, SPLC investigators found approximately 40 personal profiles that listed "military" as an occupation on the Internet forum New Saxon, which is operated by the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement. One individual, who claims to be serving in Afghanistan, lists as his favorite book The Turner Diaries, which was written by neo-Nazi leader William Pierce. The book served as a blueprint for the Oklahoma City bombing by Gulf War veteran Timothy McVeigh. Another individual said he was about to be deployed overseas and was looking forward to "killing all the bloody sand niggers." Still another spoke of his hatred for undocumented immigrants.

Furthermore, from the SPLC: In 2008, the FBI released an unclassified report that supported the SPLC's findings. This past April, the Department of Homeland Security issued a report stating that right-wing extremists currently pose the most significant threat of domestic terrorism and expressing the concern that they may attempt to exploit the combat training and experience of returning veterans. The SPLC letter notes that since 1994 the military has discharged more than 12,500 servicemembers simply because of their homosexuality. "It seems quite anomalous that the Pentagon would consider homosexuals more of a threat to the good order of the military than neo-Nazis and other white supremacists who reject our Constitution's most cherished principles," said Mark Potok, director of the SPLC's Intelligence Project, which monitors extremist activity.

General Motors Pulls Gay Themed Commercials From The Internet

DETROIT, MI (Observer Update) - General Motors has ordered all videos created for their Chevrolet "Gay Day at the Movies" promotion be removed from You Tube. The videos, which featured amateur footage of two "go go boys" washing a Camaro, were deemed inappropriate by GM, reported advocate.com.

"The video was not appropriate and not in good taste," said GM spokesman Dave Barthmuss. The videos were seen as a bad representation for the company by GM executives said Barthmuss. In the videos, two men washed a Chevy Camaro wearing nothing but yellow underwear with the word CAMARO on it. The boys were nicknamed the Bumble Bee Boys after a character from the recent Transformers movie, a yellow Camaro named Bumblebee.

The videos are no longer available online. On June 28, Chevrolet held a "Gay Day at the Movies" promotional event and screening of Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen for their gay customers.

Out-Of-State G/L Marriages Now Recognized In D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - As of 12:01 (July 7) , Gays and Lesbians who are married in Iowa, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine or Vermont now also have their marriages recognized in Washington, D.C., reported 365Gay.com.

The D.C. City Council approved the measure last month, but it was subject to a 30-day Congressional review period.

Since Congress took no action, Gay and Lesbian marriages performed legally in other states are now legal in D.C. as well. No same-sex marriages, however, are recognized by the Federal government.

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COMMENTARY. . . .

Making Gay People Count

The Obama administration believes the Defense of Marriage Act doesn't prevent their number from being reported in the census. That's fine, but Obama should push for the repeal of the law. Counting married same-sex couples should be easy; there aren't that many of them. Instead, the federal Defense of Marriage Act:H.R.3396.ENR: has forced lawyers to jump through legal hoops so this country can obtain a more realistic picture of the diverse families within its borders. And even when the U.S. census count begins in 2010, it won't provide useful information about the marital status of Gay and Lesbian couples. Nor is it likely even to call them married.

The Obama administration has delivered a logic-defying interpretation of the act, which prohibits the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriage: It does not stop the Census Bureau from reporting the number of married Gay couples, the president's lawyers said. Yet isn't counting these marriages the purest form of recognizing them? It takes a love of wonkery and hairsplitting debate to get around what would seem an obvious obstacle. Up to now, the census has simply asked an adult member of the household about the other members and their relationships. If a male said the other adult was his wife, the census would count them as a married couple. If a male said the other adult was his husband, the computer was directed to categorize them as "unmarried partners."

Under the new rules, the computer will stop doing that, though the census probably won't classify these couples as married but as something legally safe, such as "spousal-designated same-sex couple." Even trickier is the annual American Community Survey, also conducted by the Census Bureau, which asks out-and-out if people are married. It's unclear what will be done about the survey, though thankfully, it probably won't switch to asking all couples if they are spousally designated. Neither the census nor the survey will differentiate between same-sex couples who are legally married and those who consider themselves so. In the 2000 census, before any states recognized Gay marriage, one-third of the people in same-sex households identified their partners as spouses. But the census already takes the word of heterosexual couples as to whether they're married, so the new count will be fair. It just won't be very informative.

The 13-year-old Defense of Marriage Act has always been discriminatory, and now it is out of sync with the realities of a changing society. With same-sex marriage legalized in six states, the District of Columbia recognizing such marriages performed elsewhere and an estimated 18,000 married Gay couples living in California, what's needed aren't convoluted interpretations of the federal law but a push from President Obama for Congress to repeal it.

(The following was the editorial reprinted from the July 11 edition of the Los Angeles Times.)

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SCLC Threatens To Fire L.A. Leader For G/L Marriage Endorsement

LOS ANGELES, CA (Observer Update) - The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a civil rights group partly founded by Martin Luther King Jr., has threatened to fire the president of its Los Angeles chapter because he supports same-sex marriage, reported the Los Angeles Times. The Rev. Eric P. Lee, president of the local SCLC chapter for two years, became an outspoken advocate of same-sex marriage during the recent campaign against Proposition 8, an amendment to the state Constitution that banned such unions.

The SCLC national board notified Lee on May 27 that he would have to attend a hearing at its Atlanta headquarters on June 4 to explain his stance on same-sex marriage. If he did not show up, they said, they would suspend and fire him. Lee did not attend the hearing. He told the board he could not afford the last-minute trip but could participate via conference call. He said he never heard back from the board. When Lee failed to appear for the hearing, he received an e-mail warning him to set a date to appear or face removal. The national group's lawyer, Dexter M. Wimbish, and other leaders did not return phone calls seeking comment.

Lee maintained a high profile in the Proposition 8 fight. He wrote articles in favor of same-sex marriage and self-published a book, "Marriage Equality: Proposition 8 The California Divide." He also appeared at public demonstrations. "That was an extremely courageous thing for an ordained minister, African American, straight man to do," said Courage Campaign leader Rick Jacobs. The local SCLC chapter's board voted to support Lee's advocacy of same-sex marriage. But Lee knew he faced opposition within the black community. An Edison/Mitofsky exit poll in California found that 70% of black voters backed Proposition 8, which passed with 52% of the vote. Friends at SCLC headquarters in Atlanta warned Lee that they were fielding complaints from conservative pastors upset about his work. "Marriage equality is not a priority in the African American community," Lee said. "We're dealing with unemployment and underemployment, a lack of public education and affordable healthcare." But Lee said he was driven to support same-sex marriage by the teachings of King, who helped found the SCLC to champion civil rights 50 years ago. "Any time one group of people are denied the same rights as other people, it is unequivocally a denial of civil rights," Lee said.

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Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, the local SCLC board leader and secretary of the state's Democratic Party, has defended Lee and challenged the national leaders' ability to fire him. City Council President Eric Garcetti also wrote a letter of support. Lee said he is not waiting for approval to continue his advocacy for same-sex marriage. "I'm not going to let their inaction handcuff me from fighting for justice," he said.

POLITICS 2009

by Mark R. Kerr

DOMA-Me-Me

When the American Foundation for Equal Rights and former Bush v. Gore attorneys, former Solicitor General Ted Olson and David Boies, had teamed up to file suit (May 22) in federal court, the Ninth U.S. Circuit, located in San Francisco, California, challenging California's Proposition 8, on the grounds that it violates the federal Constitution, specifically the Fourteenth Amendment and the equal protection clause when the California Supreme Court, in its ruling, said Gay and Lesbians could be treated "separate but equal" under the law, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) rights groups reacted with disdain.

This "premature" legal challenge, in a statement, on May 27 by the ACLU, GLAD (Gay and Lesbian Alliance of Defenders), Lambda Legal, National Center for Lesbian Rights, Freedom to marry, GLAAD (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), the Human Rights Campaign and the National Gay Lesbian Task Force "may well not win the right to marry back in California." and that a legal defeat "would likely set back the fight for marriage nationwide, and hurt LGBT parents, employees, and students all over America," but now more than a month later, these groups have filed a legal brief asking to be a part of this legal challenge.

Jennifer Pizer, Lambda Legal's national marriage director, said in an interview that their full participation is vital now that U.S. District Court Judge Vaughn Walker has put the Proposition 8 challenge on a fast-track to trial. "We think it will be very helpful to Judge Walker and the ultimate resolution of the questions in the case for the litigation to have the benefit of the presence of the community in all its diversity," Pizer said.

Chad Griffin, the Board President of the American Foundation for Equal Rights, called the legal maneuvering, "too late" since the same groups originally criticized a federal civil rights claim as premature.

"You have unrelentingly and unequivocally acted to undermine this case even before it was filed. Considering this, it is inconceivable that you would zealously and effectively litigate this case if you were successful in intervening," Griffin said in a letter to the groups. "Therefore, we will vigorously oppose any motion to intervene."

More lawyers, Griffin continued would "delay and unnecessarily complicate the proceedings" but the public interest groups were welcome to continue participating as consultants, something the groups should do since they were initially loath to join this legal challenge, something they now see as a possibility but "if you snooze, you lose!"

Protecting and advancing equal rights through legal and policy advocacy, for all Americans is the reason, according to their website (equalrightsfoundation.org) why the American Foundation for Equal Rights was formed. For more information about this case, the American Foundation or to support their efforts, go to their website.

Is LGBT Publisher Window Dead By Month's End?

NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - Could the federal Small Business Association shut down Window Media as early as July 31?

That's what we're hearing is the plan – if the gay media company can't unload its assets, which include The Washington Blade, The Southern Voice, Express Gay News, David, Houston Voice, The South Florida Blade and 411 Magazine (Window's The New York Blade closed last month; it has/had a stake in HX, which is being sold to Next.), reports queerty.com. The SBA, which lent some $38 million to Window publisher David Unger's Avalon Equity Fund to invest in gay media, is also looking into what happened to the major cash it lent in his direction, which according to a source was "diverted" into Genre – which then folded. SBA wants to know where the money is.

Recall that we already heard Unger was trying to unload Window's titles; then Unger was kicked out by SBA (or "resigned," as he insists). Unger's name has already been removed from Window's management profiles. This SBA-mandated deadline is very problematic since we're hearing nobody has expressed any serious interest in Window's publications. And then there are the rumors that Unger (pictured, right) himself is being looked into for possible criminal allegations if he can't explain the money trail. Then again, as Queerty has proven before, sometimes "rumors" is just a coy term for "what will eventually happen."

All this reminds of us of what a reader pointed out to us earlier this summer: The South Florida Blade was advertising office space for lease. It's own office space. The address where there's square footage available is the same address as the SoFlo Blade and 411's offices; interested parties were asked to contact the the rags for details. Yes, the Window titles are looking to sublet their space – which means the Blade snapped up more space than it needed, or it can't afford its current lease (or knows it won't need it moving forward). (They don't own the building, but they do lease space there.) We reached out to Window COO Michael Kitchens and CFO Steve Myers (both are acting co-presidents) for comment; we'll update as needed.

India Supreme Court Steps Into Gay Sex Law Dispute

NEW DELHI, India (Observer Update) - India's Supreme Court agreed to hear a petition from a Hindu astrologer who is seeking to annul a recent landmark ruling that decriminalized Gay sex, 365Gay.com reported. Sushil Kumar Kaushal said "even animals don't indulge in such activities," adding that allowing Gay sex would help spread HIV/AIDS.

The latest development indicated that despite a recent Delhi High Court ruling, Gays in India still face a long battle to gain acceptance - social and legal - in this deeply conservative country where even heterosexual sex is talked about in hushed tones. "If such abnormality is permitted, then tomorrow people might seek permission for having sex with animals," Kaushal said.

Gays in India are shackled by a law known as Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, which makes sex between people of the same gender punishable by up to 10 years in prison. The British colonial era law classifies Gay sex as "against the order of nature." Gays achieved a small victory when the Delhi High Court struck down the law on July 2. While there was no major outcry against the ruling, some conservative religious groups made it clear they would fight it. Among those was Kaushal, a Hindu astrologer, who filed the first petition with the Supreme Court. Leaders of religious groups are also contemplating filing petitions.

The Supreme Court said it will hear Kaushal's petition on July 20 to decide whether it has merit, said Anand Grover, the lawyer for Naz Foundation, a Gay rights group that filed the original petition against Section 377 eight years ago. The Supreme Court also asked the Indian government and the Naz Foundation to appear before it to hear their views. After listening to all parties, the court will decide whether to temporarily suspend the Delhi High Court order while Kaushal's petition is heard. The Supreme Court ruling will be binding nationally. While actual criminal prosecutions are rare, the law frequently has been used to harass people. Muslim and Christian groups have also criticized the ruling with some equating homosexuality with Western culture. But rights activists say the law sanctions discrimination and marginalizes the Gay community. Health experts say the law discourages safe sex and has been a hurdle in fighting HIV and AIDS. Roughly 2.5 million Indians have HIV.

The U.N. agency UNAIDS has welcomed the court ruling and said it would make it easier to reach homosexual men with programs to combat the spread of HIV. Homosexuality is slowly gaining acceptance in some parts of India, especially in its big cities. Many bars have Gay nights, and some high-profile Bollywood films have dealt with Gay issues. The last two years have also seen large Gay pride parades in New Delhi and other big cities such as Mumbai and Calcutta. Still, being Gay remains deeply taboo in most of the country, and many homosexuals hide their sexual orientation from friends and families.

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COMMENTARY. . . .

by,Bill Bowman

Why LGBT Organizations Should Refuse Contributions From Russell Weiner And Rockstar Energy Drink!

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Simply put: Because it's hush money.

I have no doubt that the folks at Change.org and The Bilerico Project, The Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Southern Nevada, GLSEN, The Trevor Project, and Michael Rogers of PageOneQ.com are and were sincere in their efforts to get Rockstar's CEO and founder, Russell Goldencould Weiner, to disavow the anti-gay statements made by his father, our favorite radio blowhard, Michael Savage.

But while I don't doubt the sincerity of those groups, I do doubt Weiner's. Why? Because I'm a firm believer in the adage, the nut doesn't fall far from the tree. To catch you up to speed, a number of gay rights groups have called for a boycott of Rockstar after it was "discovered" that the company's CEO, Weiner, is Savage's son, and that Savage's wife, Janet, is also an officer.

Russel sent his lawyers after those sites, threatening to sue them for defamation if they continued to assert that Michael Savage had anything to do with the creation of the company. That's in spite of early Rockstar Web site statements in which Russell credited his mom and dad with helping develop the formula for the drink. So maybe Savage didn't help found the company, but Russell is apparently saying he did help create the product. Pick nits, much?

Here's why I say the groups should return any contribution made by Weiner or Rockstar: Remember, recently the gubernatorial campaign of San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsome returned a $25,000 donation Weiner made after an LGBT activist reminded Newsome of Weiner's views on gays. And when he was asked about it, Weiner said he made the doantion because he's friends with Newsome and, most tellingly, he thought Newsome would be "good for business."

And that, my friends, is the bottom line. It's all about business.

Russell Weiner is no fool. You have to look carefully at yesterday's press release and study the language he uses in his statement (the bolding is mine):

"It has recently come to ROCKSTAR's attention that there might be a misconception about our company's policy and my personal support for LGBT rights," said Weiner. "We apologize for that misunderstanding, and **want to make clear today that our company fully supports our LGBT employees and our LGBT customers**."

"Some have erroneously associated our company with offensive language directed at LGBT people, specifically statements coming from Michael Savage, who is not and has never been a shareholder or officer of ROCKSTAR Energy Drink. On behalf of our company and directors, including myself and CFO Janet Weiner, **I would like to take this opportunity to disavow any offensive statements directed toward LGBT people, including statements from Michael Savage. ROCKSTAR assures our customers and the general public that our brand will never be associated with any language that does not affirm the essential dignity of every person in our diverse national community**."

Notice how he phrases the "disavowal:" "any" offensive statements. That's tantamount to saying, I'm sorry if you were offended by what I said. No acknowledgment that the statement was, in fact, offensive, just apologizing if you took it that way.

Secondly, it's all about the business: the Rockstar brand will never be associated with offensive comments. That means Weiner could go on the radio tomorrow and continue his father's rants on the "Gay mafia," and preface it all by saying, "I'm speaking for myself, not on behalf of Rockstar."

Why didn't he say, neither I, Janet Weiner, nor the Rockstar brand will ever be associated ...?" Because that's not how he or his mother feel. So I urge these groups to stand back for a few days, really read what Weiner said, and hopefully come to the realization that any contributions from Rockstar are made with unclean hands.

Say "no!" to the hush money. Keep the faith.

(Bowman is a writer and columnist for Talking Points Memo, from which this article is reprinted.)

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Police Arrest 25 AIDS Activists At Capitol Protest

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) A group of AIDS activists was arrested Thursday (July 9) for unlawfully demonstrating in the Capitol rotunda, a Capitol Police spokeswoman said, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com. Sgt. Kimberly Schneider said 11 men and 15 women each face a charge of unlawful assembly, disorderly conduct and loud and boisterous behavior. Their names and ages were not immediately released.

Schneider said the group entered the rotunda, located beneath the Capitol dome, and linked themselves together with a white chain at about 10 a.m. The area is usually crowded with tourists, but police restricted the traffic while they made arrests. The activists carried signs in support of funding for needle exchange, HIV/AIDS housing and programs aimed at fighting AIDS. They chanted, "Fight global AIDS now," and, "Clean needles save lives." They marched in a circle before lying down on the floor. Police bound the activists hands together and dragged some of the demonstrators to their feet as they arrested them.

The activists were part of a coalition of five AIDS groups from Washington, Philadelphia and New York. They included ACT UP Philadelphia, DC Fights Back, Health GAP, New York City AIDS Network and Housing Works. Omolola Adele-Oso of DC Fights Back questioned why lawmakers were bailing out financial institutions instead of devoting more dollars to AIDS programs. "HIV is not in a recession," Adele-Oso said in a written statement from the coalition about the demonstration.

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Calls For Investigation Into Police After El Paso Restaurant Ejects Two Men For Kissing

EL PASO, TX (Observer Update) - Gay-rights proponents protested outside a Chico's Tacos restaurant in El Paso, TX, on Friday after media reported that five men were ejected from the restaurant because two of them were seen kissing, reported rawstory.com. The American Civil Liberties Union has called for an investigation into the El Paso Police Department over its handling of the situation.

According to the El Paso Times, in the early morning hours of June 29 police responded to a call to a Chico's Tacos restaurant in El Paso after security guards at the eatery ordered five men to leave the premises after two of them were seen kissing. The restaurant patrons allege one of the security guards told them the restaurant didn't allow "that faggot stuff" on the premises. Under El Paso by-laws, it is illegal for restaurants to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, the ACLU says. But, instead of enforcing the by-law, police allegedly threatened the restaurant patrons with a citation for "homosexual activity."

According to the local Fox affiliate, police cited "a Texas law banning homosexual activity," but "the law, however, has been struck down by the Supreme Court and is not enforced." "Police reportedly told the men that same-sex kissing was forbidden in public," the ACLU stated. "We're extremely concerned that the actions of the restaurant employees and the El Paso police may have violated the law," ACLU of Texas legal director Lisa Graybill said in a statement. "The City of El Paso prohibits restaurants from refusing service to anyone based on their sexual orientation, and the police should have enforced that ordinance."

Protesters demonstrated outside the Chico's Tacos location for the second day in a row, the local ABC affiliate reports. Carlos Diaz de Leon, one of the men involved in the altercation, has filed a complaint with the El Paso police. ABC reports that he has been the subject of hate calls since the story broke in El Paso over the past few days.

Science Fiction's Thomas Disch Ends His Life

NEW YORK CITY - Science fiction writer and poet Thomas Disch has committed suicide, authorities said. Disch died July 4 and his body was discovered July 5, according to the New York City Police Department. He was 68, Gay.com reported.

The author of seminal science-fiction novels "Camp Concentration" and "334," Disch had been openly Gay since 1968. Awarded many honors for his fiction, including two O. Henry awards, the genre-bending Disch also published more than a half-dozen books of poetry, a whimsical "Child's Garden of Grammar" (1997), a history of speculative fiction, "The Dreams Our Stuff Is Made Of" (1998) and the "Brave Little Toaster" series for children. Born in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1940, Disch moved to New York City to study architecture at New York University. A writing class in his junior year intrigued him into trying pulp fiction; he sold an early effort to Fantastic Stories for $112.50, according to the Minnesota Historical Society, and was hooked.

Holding a series of classic authorial grunt jobs, including Metropolitan Opera supernumerary and graveyard-shift newsman, Disch eventually became part of science fiction's New Wave, which took advantage of the 1960s' freedom to take on relevant topics in adult language and thereby gain cultural weight. Though some of his books, notably "334," derive from Disch's Gay experience, he was rarely touted as a "Gay writer." "I was pleased when a book called 'The Gay Canon' included 'On Wings of Song'; I thought, well, finally! they seem to notice me," Disch told Strange Horizons' David Horwich in 2001. Following the 2004 death of his partner, poet Charles Naylor, Disch was obliged to give up their longtime home and reportedly began suffering from depression.

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New Salt Lake City Crime: Being A Man While Kissing Another Man

SALT LAKE CITY, UT (Observer Update) - Meet Matt Aune and Derek Jones, your new favorite Salt Lake City residents. Sneaking a smooch, on the cheek, Thursday (July 9) in front of the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Main Street Plaza, the pair were detained by church security guards for "inappropriate behavior."

And then the Salt Lake police cited them for trespassing. Of course, the church says they didn't target these two men because they were gay, but because "two individuals came on church property and were politely asked to stop engaging in inappropriate behavior – just as any other couple would have been," according to a spokeswoman, queerty.com reported. The path where they walked is officially church property, but is used as a pedestrian avenue open to the public. That's because it was a public walkway until 2003, when, reports the Salt Lake Tribune, "in a controversial land-swap deal ... the easement became private property, allowing the church to ban protesting, smoking, sunbathing and other 'offensive, indecent, obscene, lewd or disorderly speech, dress or conduct,' church officials said at the time. In exchange, the city got church property for a west-side community center."

Meanwhile, the police are refusing to provide a copy of their report just yet, and the church won't say why, exactly, their security guards even notified police. Which begs the question: Shouldn't they have alerted God instead, because only he knows how to deal with sinners?

Partner Benefits Sent See's Packing

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Observer Update) - Regional retailer See's Candies left one of its San Francisco locations after city officials deemed it noncompliant in its domestic-partnership access for Gay and Lesbian employees, advocate.com reported. See's was leasing the Union Square space from the San Francisco Parks Trust, but ownership was transferred to the city, making that location an official city contractor.

When its lease was up for renewal, See's Candies was asked to submit several documents proving that it extended domestic-partnership benefits to the workers employed at the Union Square location, mandatory for all city contractors. Larry Brinkin, the deputy division manager for equal benefits for the city of San Francisco, said the location's owners did not complete the proper paperwork. Brinkin added that it was not clear whether the company left its spot in Union Square because of the debacle, but Sarah Siler, a spokeswoman for See's Candy, said they were not evicted, which was alleged by the San Francisco Examiner.

The company had been extending partner benefits to employees for years. However, "our Union Square location lease was taken over by the City of San Francisco who has additional requirements for benefits beyond those offered by See's," the company said in a statement to The Advocate. Extending more benefits would have required opening all related union contracts for negotiation, Siler added. "[The] added benefits required were relatively minor and not consistent with our overall benefit plan. See's attempted to seek a compromise with the City on its required benefit package. Unable to agree, and not wishing to renegotiate the union benefits offered to a single store in San Francisco, we elected to not renew our Union Square lease when it expired." The retailer left the Union Square store on June 5.

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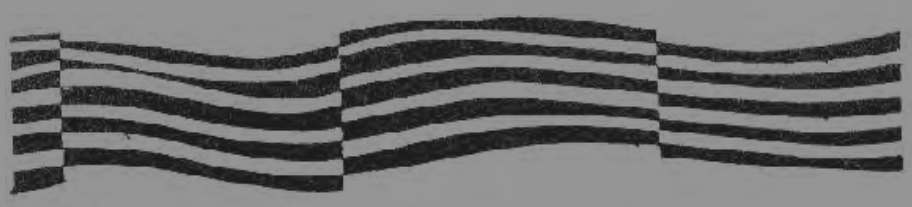

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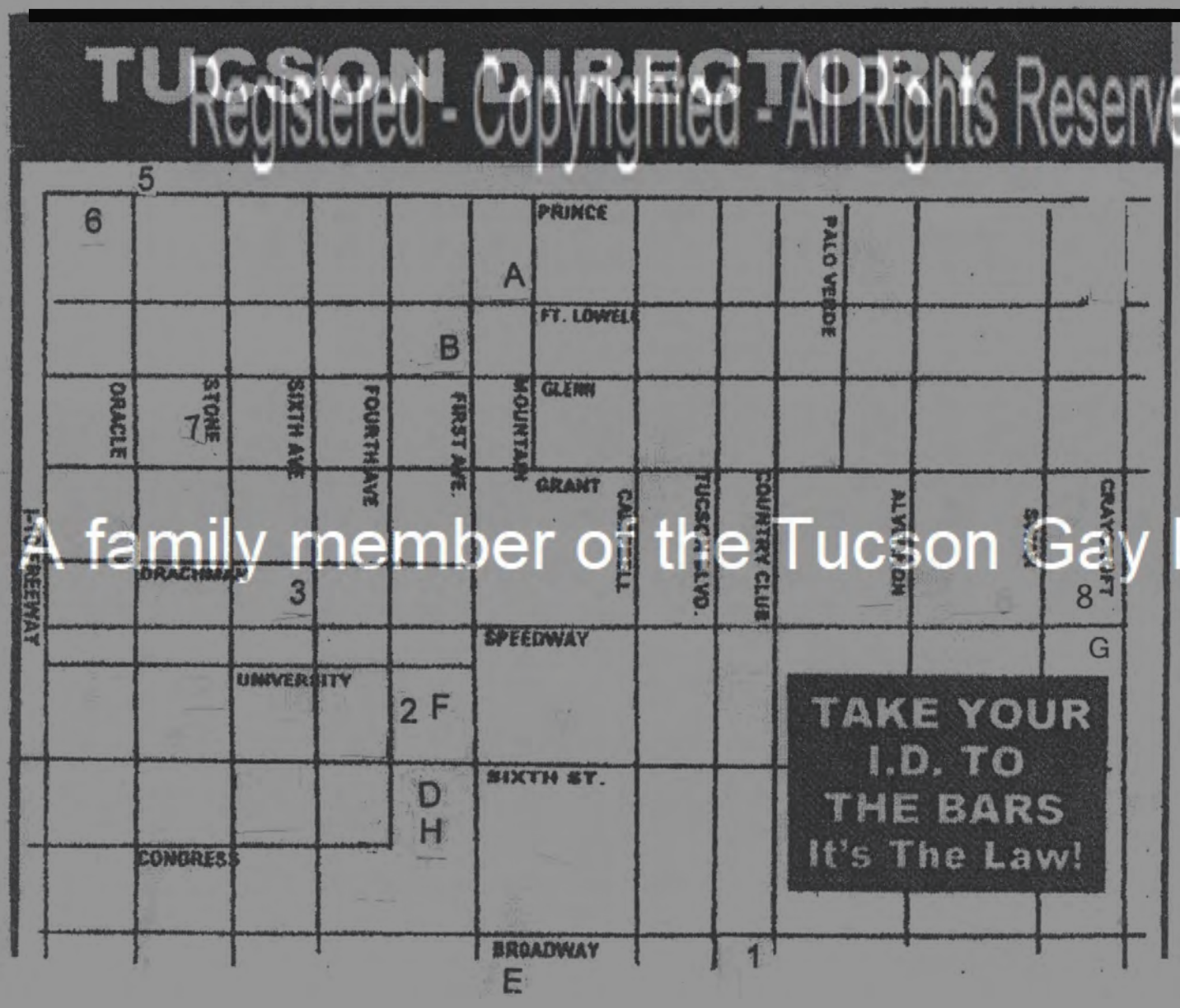

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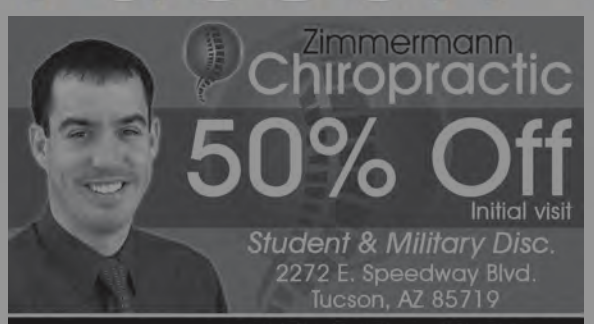
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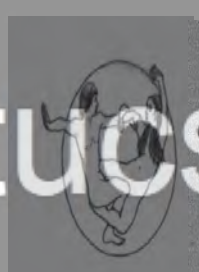
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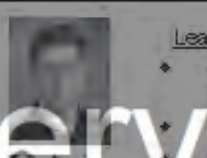
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Fort Worth Resident Breaks His Silence About Rainbow Lounge Raid

FORT WORTH, TX (Observer Update) - Chad Gibson, a Fort Worth resident who was allegedly hurt the worst during a police raid of the Gay club the Rainbow Lounge, is finally speaking out about his arrest, 365Gay.com reported.

Protestors have frequently been speaking out about the questionable raid that resulted in sending Gibson to the hospital for seven days with head injuries. The incident occurred on June 28 when two TABC and seven Fort Worth police officers raided the newly opened Rainbow Lounge nightclub. This is the first time Gibson has spoken about his arrest. According to witnesses, Gibson was man-handled by officers and slammed to the ground, even though they were unprovoked. Police have constructed a different story, saying an intoxicated Gibson grabbed an officer's groin.

Gibson finally broke his silence last night to WFAA-TV in Fort Worth. He told a WFAA reporter that he wants the officers involved in the raid to be prosecuted, saying the response by the city of Fort Worth has been a cover up. "They have blamed it on me, that I was drunk [and] that I hit my head," he said. "I groped the officer. I did this. I did that. You know what, no … Accept responsibility." Gibson is still fearful of a blood clot located behind his right eye. "I'm scared that something might happen," Gibson said. "It might start bleeding." The incident is currently being investigated by Forth Worth police.

Wisconsin G/L Marriage Ban May Go Down

MADISON, WI (Observer Update) - Days after the Governor of Wisconsin signed a bill granting the state's same-sex couples access to a domestic-partnership benefits, a state-level challenge to Wisconsin's same-sex marriage ban presents a potent legal argument for overturning one of the most comprehensive state prohibitions on same-sex marriage in the nation, reported advocate.com.

The Wisconsin Supreme Court is hearing a case on the constitutionality of the 2006 referendum banning Gay marriage, and any legal status identical or substantially similar to marriage for unmarried individuals. Ironically, in 1982, Wisconsin passed the first statute banning employment discrimination against Gays and Lesbians. The case, William C. McConkey v. J. B. Van Hollen, challenges the anti-Gay marriage referendum on several procedural grounds, and legal observers see a compelling argument in the challenge to overturn the state's resulting constitutional amendment.

Two consecutive legislative sessions in 2003 and 2005 saw the then-Republican controlled state Senate and Assembly shepherd the referendum resolution through the legislature without a single Democratic vote. The November 2006 election propelling the Gay marriage ban to victory with an unexpectedly resounding 59% to 40 % statewide result saw only Madison-based Dane County voting down the proposition 66% to 33%, alone among Wisconsin's 72 counties.

Wisconsin's Senate and Assembly are now controlled by the Democrats. The legal brief filed July 8 with the Court challenges the anti-Gay amendment on several grounds, finding fault with the form and compound language of the referendum, and related issues of ambiguity and state prohibitions against logrolling – the practice of exchanging political favors to achieve passage of separate initiatives.

Appeals Court Rules For Abbott In AIDS Drug Case

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Observer Update) - A federal appeals court has rejected a lawsuit accusing Abbott Laboratories of antitrust violations over a sudden 400-percent price hike of a popular AIDS drug, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

Advocacy groups and drug benefit providers sued Abbott in 2004. They alleged the North Chicago, Ill., drugmaker raised the price of the HIV-fighting Norvir to stifle competition and boost sales of its own alternative, Kaletra. The company paid $10 million to settle the lawsuit and agreed to let the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals still determine if the price hike was an illegal business practice.

The court ruled in Abbott's favor. If it had lost, Abbott would have had to pay an additional $17.5 million. A lawyer for the advocacy groups says they're weighing whether to appeal the decision.

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COMMENTARY. . . .

As Congress Moves To End G/L Military Ban, Don't Let History Repeat Itself

By Nathaniel Frank

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Rep. Ellen Tauscher has just announced she'll introduce a bill to repeal the ban on open Gays in the military, a momentous step that comes on the 15th anniversary of this highly unpopular policy. While the bill has been introduced before, Democratic control of Congress and the White House means this time it has a real chance of becoming law.

But not before the Congress–and the nation–have a protracted debate about whether to lift the ban. The last time this all happened, at the beginning of the Clinton presidency, the policy that emerged was a disaster that pleased no one and ended up hurting, rather than helping, our troops. And the resulting political damage helped the GOP wrest control of Congress in 1994. If we want to minimize the chances of another catastrophic conversation, we must take a glance at that history. The blueprint for the current policy was written by a panel of six admirals and generals who made up the Military Working Group, which was appointed by the Pentagon to recommend how to carry out Clinton's campaign promise to end the ban. Instead, they created "don't ask, don't tell," a policy of collective denial that requires deception in the name of "morale." In the course of research for my new book, "Unfriendly Fire," I spoke to members of, and advisors to, that panel, and obtained surprising information about just how flawed and dishonest the creation of the policy was.

The general who initially headed the MWG, Robert Alexander, said the group didn't fully understand what "sexual orientation" even meant. "We had to define in the first few sessions what we figured they were talking about." He said the MWG "didn't have any empirical data" so the conclusions they drew were purely "subjective." It was "very difficult to get an objective, rational review of this policy" he said. In this debate, "passion leads, and rationale follows." One group staffer provided a wealth of research to the flag officers in charge, but said it was never even considered. He said the policy was created "behind closed doors" by people who were totally closed to lifting the ban, and that it relied on anti-Gay stereotypes and resistance to outside forces.

Charles Moskos, the renowned military sociologist and close friend of Sen. Sam Nunn, advised the MWG, and was ultimately credited as the academic architect of "don't ask, don't tell." While he said publicly that the problem with openly Gay service was that it would threaten "unit cohesion," he told me privately something quite different: "Fuck unit cohesion," he said, "I don't care about that." For Moskos, the last serious defender of "don't ask, don't tell," the ban was about the "moral right" of straight people not to be forced into intimate quarters with Gays. Shortly before he died last summer, he admitted that he clung to his policy, in part, because he was afraid of disappointing his friends if he "turncoated." Moskos also helped Sen. Nunn, the Congressional architect of the ban, orchestrate his notorious hearings in 1993. According to witnesses and activists I spoke with, Nunn's hearings were "rigged" from the start. Judith Stiehm, another sociologist who testified on the academic panel of the hearings, arrived to find that Moskos and Nunn "had already found an agreement" about the policy before the hearings began. Nunn even removed two witnesses when he learned they would oppose the Gay ban, retired colonel Lucian Truscott III and former senator Barry Goldwater, and replaced them with a virulently homophobic general who was not an academic at all.

The MWG was also supposed to take recommendations from working groups convened by the individual services. Rear Admiral John Hutson, former Judge Advocate General of the Navy was a participant in the talks about whether to lift the ban in 1993. Hutson told me the assessment of Gay service was "based on nothing. It wasn't empirical, it wasn't studied, it was completely visceral, intuitive." The policy, he said, was rooted in "our own prejudices and our own fears." Hutson now says "don't ask, don't tell" was a "moral passing of the buck." Another advisor to the MWG was Lt. Col. Robert Maginnis, a deeply homophobic evangelical who became vice president of the Family Research Council. While Maginnis admitted that he found homosexuality "morally repugnant," he cast the question of Gay service in terms of "unit cohesion" for what he called "political reasons"–because he knew this approach would be more effective than moral tirades against equal treatment for Gays. Maginnis, who believes Gays are "unstable" hedonists who can't control themselves and are tainted by something called "Gay bowel syndrome," was only the tip of the iceberg: in fact the "unit cohesion" rationale was an elaborate strategy created by a network of evangelical military officers and supporters who knowingly sold an anti-Gay policy rooted in religion as though it were essential to protecting national security. And for too long, the nation drank the coolaid.

What all this shows is just how dangerous it is to allow the debate to be conducted by ill-informed or disingenuously motivated participants. Whoever takes the lead in framing the conversation–whether the Obama White House or the Congress–must insist on an honest, research-based approach. Thankfully, the prospects for this seem good. Nearly every last person who created, supported, rationalized or otherwise propped up discrimination in the military has either reversed course or died (or both), or, in the case of the religious right, had their cover blown.

Colin Powell has called for the policy's "review," a polite way of saying it's time to move on. And this week, the Palm Center is reporting more dominoes are falling: In a letter which first appears in my book, the former senator goes further than he did last year in public remarks echoing Powell's call to "review" the policy: he now says the ban is actually "getting in the way" of military readiness. And not only has Gen. John Shalikashvili, Colin Powell's successor as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called for repeal, but Adm. William Crowe, Powell's predecessor, told the Palm Center before he died that he now favors repeal too. More than 100 more retired admirals and generals have joined them, signing a document that says it's time to end the ban. Sure, the effort to repeal the Gay ban carries political risks. But as Rep. Ellen Tauscher has said, "it is always the right time to right a wrong."

(Nathaniel Frank is author of "Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America," and senior research fellow at the Palm Center, University of California, Santa Barbara. This article is reprinted from Huffington Post.)

POET'S CORNER

SIGN OF THE TIMES
by Ron Rose - Tucson

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With scribbled sign held high
If he's what he claims to be
He makes me want to cry.
He's hungry and he's homeless
This poor Vietnam vet
Can this poor guy cope with life
How hopeless can he get?
I really want to help him
As others fly right by
I'm reaching for a dollar
While thinking, does he lie.
God bless the veteran mumbles
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I wonder, did I help him
Or was it me I helped the most?

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Argentina Officially Ends Trials For Homosexual Acts In The Military

SACRAMENTO, California (Observer Update) - Legislation has been filed in the California Assembly to expand domestic violence services for members of the LGBT community, 365Gay.com reported. The bill would broaden access for LGBT service providers to a state fund within the California Emergency Management Agency, which supports LGBT-specific domestic violence programs across the state and is subsidized by a $23 fee on new domestic partner registrations. The fund was originally established by the legislature in 2006.

Few studies have been done on the issue of abuse within Gay households but it is believed to be as widespread as among opposite-sex relationships. One recent study found that nationwide LGBT domestic violence victims, especially Gay men, often are reluctant to report abuse. Another study found that 57 percent of LGBT victims become homeless due to the abuse; 18 percent "lose everything." Agencies that deal with the abused across the country frequently have little understanding of LGBT partner abuse and few services, including shelter are available.

The California law, originally passed in 2006, was the first of its kind in the country. The new bill, filed by Assembly Member John A. Perez (D) would make more resources available. "This bill would help support innovative program models that are proven most effective in serving LGBT survivors of violence, such as those being pioneered by LGBT centers and organizations across the state," said Perez in a statement. The legislation would expand the number of providers who can apply for grants through CALEMA and eliminate the requirement to provide shelter services in order to qualify for funding. Studies have shown that most LGBT domestic violence survivors do not typically access services through shelters.

"We must take whatever steps we can to ensure that LGBT survivors of domestic violence have access to culturally competent care and resources," said Geoff Kors, executive director of Equality California.

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NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP for Lesbians, Bisexuals, Trans, Queer, Women. Meets Mondays (6:00 - 7:30pm) at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th Street, Tucson, AZ 85701. For more info, pleases contact Brenda Casey, LMSW 520-694-0247 or bcassey@umcaz.edu

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 11:00a.m., Please come and join us! Our next meeting will be held at the Yard Dog.

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 520 742-1271. Visit our website: www.tucsonprimetimers.org

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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

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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)829-0117 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 20 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 committed volunteers to provide services including friendly visits, light housekeeping, assistance with meals, shopping, errands, transportation and companionship for medical appointments, and respite care for primary care givers. No judgement or proselytizing - we are here to be of service. For information call Scott at 299-6647.

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

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, 5:30 p.m. each month at Lutheran Church of the Foothills, 5102 N. Craycroft Rd. For information visit www.lctucson.org or write: Lutherans Concerned/Tucson, P.O. Box 40702, Tucson, AZ 85717-0702.

REVEILLE MEN'S CHORUS rehearses Thursday evenings 7-10pm at the Historic Y, corner of University Blvd. And 5th Ave. Join us!! For info call 304-1758

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 Megan at Wingspan, 624-1779, ext. 116. 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.

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.: (520) 406-0740.

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

THE BIZ - 'L' Word showing 7pm & 9:30pm (Progressive drink specials) - First: $3 Well; Second: $1.50 pints. Last Special is 2-4-1. Following L Word, Out Loud Open Mic. If you have talent join our open night mic - Starts10:45 pm.

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.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 11am. Beer Bust Sunday - $1 draft beers (12 oz), domestic only; $2.25 domestic long necks. Texas Hold-Em Poker at 3 & 6. No cash involved - Play for Points & Prizes.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm $2 Well or Domestic Beer. Karaoke on the Patio 4-8:30pm. Burger BBQ 5-8pm + $1 pint draft. 9pm-close Karaoke inside with Troy & $1.50 Well or Domestic Beer, $2.50 Call or Premium Beer. DJ Hurricane on the Patio.

VENTURE-N - Open 10am-2am. Patio Bar open 3pm. Beer Bust $2.25/pitcher, 3-7pm. Burger BBQ, 5-7pm, $3 proceeds to Petwatch (Helping HIVAIDS 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. Happy Hour 3-8. EDAN...Exotic dancer appreciation night. DJ spins Hip Hop & R&B and all request dance. $5.25 drink specials.

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.

COYOTE MOON PUB - 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 Domestic, $12 Imports and microbrews (4 beers to a bucket, for 2 or more people, Some brands 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 $2 Well or Domestic Beer. 8pm-close $5 Scratch Long Island Varieties. 9pm-close DJ Hurricane with "All Request Music".

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am. SKYY Matinis $3 ea., 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. Happy Hour 3-8. PHAT Tuesday's 50 cent Pabst cans 9pm-close Come play our Wii gaming system. Beer Pong Tournament w/cash prizes starts 9pm.

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.

COYOTE MOON PUB - 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 & Dos XX Amber).Girlz Nite Out. Girlz pay only .75 for well liquors or domestic drafts 8-10pm. Ladies only Texas Hold 'Em Poker 6 p.m.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestic Beer. 8pm-close "2'sDay" - $2 Well or Domestic Beer. DJ Q 9pm-close.
and DJ Craig Carter playing Retro Music 70's, 80's and 90's 9pm-close.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am. Dart Tournament, 7pm $3 entry fee/Pot Match.

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. Happy Hour til 8pm. Wild Wednesdays College Night. 18 to party - 21 to drink. $7 Cover 18+ No Cover 21+. DJ Spins Hip Hop, R&B Top 40 remix dance.

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.

COYOTE MOON PUB -Open 3pm. Happy Hour All Day $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitchers. Karaoke with Ynot Entertainment at 9pm.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics. "Diva-Licious" show w/Bunny FuFu. 11pm - -close "Reverse Happy Hour". DJ Q Inside & DJ Mike Lopez playing 80s music on the Patio.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am. Beer Bust, 8pm-11pm $2.50/Pitcher.

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. Happy Hour 3-8. Y-NOT Karaoke starts @9:00pm to close. 2-4-1 starts 10;pm.

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.. .

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg.. Pitcher. Boyz Nite Out - boys pay only .75 for well liquors or domestic drafts 8-10pm. Bicardi Thursdays - $3.00 Bicardi Rum - all flavors.

IBT's -Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics. 10pm-close "Boyz Nite Out" w/ Bartenders in their underwear. DJ Hurricane spinning Top 40 & DJ Mike Lopez on the patio. $1.75 Long Island, $1.50 Tequila Shots, $3 Dkyy Cape Cods and $4 Skyy Cosmos.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am..

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. Happy Hour UNTIL 8. Hip Hop & R&B. Drink Specials all night called out by DJs. Special Performances.

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.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 Sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitcher. $2.75 All Mexican Beers and Dos XX Amber. Dance lessons at 7pm $5 per person, Country Dancing 8:30 p.m. to close with DJ Pat.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics. 9pm -close DJ Hurricane inside. 10pm-close DJ Mike Lopez with "I'm a Sexy Bitch Night" on the patio.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am Patio Bar Open 7pm-2m Cuervo Margaritas $3 ea., 4-8pm.

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. Starting Feb. 13th Escandalo Saturdays w/Carnival Latino. Latin Hip Hop, Top 40s & Reggaeton music will be spun. Guest DJs. $5 Cover. oGo dancers male and female. Shot specials allnight. .

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.

COYOTE MOON PUB - 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.

!BT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics. 5-8pm Karaoke on the patio $1Draft Pints. 9pm "Saturday Starrlett's" w/Bunny FuFu & Janee Starr. After the show, DJ Q spinning inside & 10pm-close, DJ Mike Lopez with the "Party on the Patio".

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am. Patio Bar open 7pm-2am. Beer Bust $2.25/Pitcher. 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.

G/L Marriage Foes Reach Signature Goal In Maine

AUGUSTA, ME (Observer Update) - G/L marriage foes in Maine say they've collected enough signatures to stop a new law from going into effect and to force a statewide vote, 365Gay.com reported.

Mark Mutty from the Stand for Marriage Maine coalition said it took four weeks to gather the more than 55,000 signatures necessary to put G/L marriage to a vote.

The law allowing G/L marriage was scheduled to take effect Sept. 12 but will be put on hold after the signatures are submitted and certified. Six states allow same-sex marriage. Maine became the fifth to allow it in May, and New Hampshire followed suit.

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

Wednesday, July 15
WOODY'S - 9:00 p.m. until ??? Play Twister with host Brock. Drop by anytime 11 a.m. until 2 a.m. Great drinks and full menu until 9:00 p.m.

Friday, July 17
WOODY"S - July Birthday??? Celebrate here beginning at10:00 p.m. with cake, balloons and a champagne toast.

Saturday, July 18
THE BIZ - Flame Retro Dance for ladies.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Miss Gay Arizona Show

Friday, July 24
THE BIZ - Tribute to Michael Jackson Party

WOODY'S - Tori Steele's "Cover Girl Revue 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 25
COYOTE MOON PUB - Tea Dance 408 p.m. Then at 9:30 p.m. a Koyote Kingz Show.

WOODY'S - The "Wett Party" returns starring adult entertainer TJ Hawke with the Men With Woody's Dancers.

Friday, July 31
THE BIZ - Neiphi Rock Band Playing Live at 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 1
COYOTE MOON PUB - Ellas de Noche

Friday, August 7
THE BIZ - Hardcore Hotness

Saturday, August 8
COYOTE MOON PUB - tmi AT 9:00 P.M.

Friday, August 14
THE BIZ - Pole Nasty

Friday, August 28
THE BIZ - Battle for DJ begins tonight. Any interested DJs contact DJ Hill @ 318-4838

NEA Calls For LGBT Rights

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The National Education Association adopted two resolutions calling for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender rights at its annual conference, 365Gay.com reported.

The resolutions say that the organization opposes the "discriminatory treatment of same-sex couples and its belief that such couples should have the same legal rights and benefits as similarly-situated heterosexual couples." They also call for the "passage of a federal statute prohibiting federal discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression." The NEA also committed itself to supporting the enactment of LGBT equality at local, state and federal levels. The NEA falls short of asking for Gay marriage - instead, it says: "NEA does not believe that a single term must be used to designate this legally recognized "equal treatment" relationship, and recommends that each state decide for itself whether "marriage," "civil union," "domestic partnership," or some other term is most appropriate based upon the cultural, social, and religious values of its citizenry."

The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization with over 3.2 million members. Members work at every level of education – from pre-school to university graduate programs.

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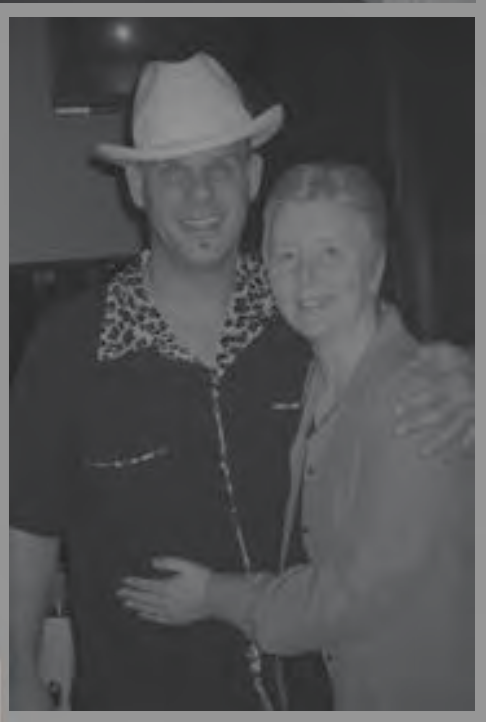
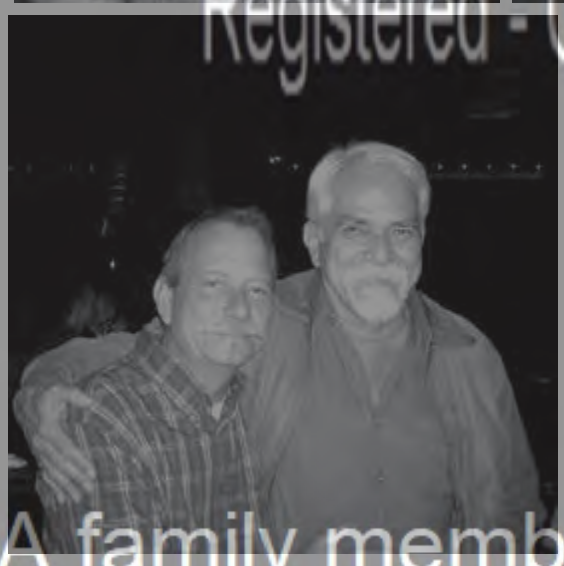

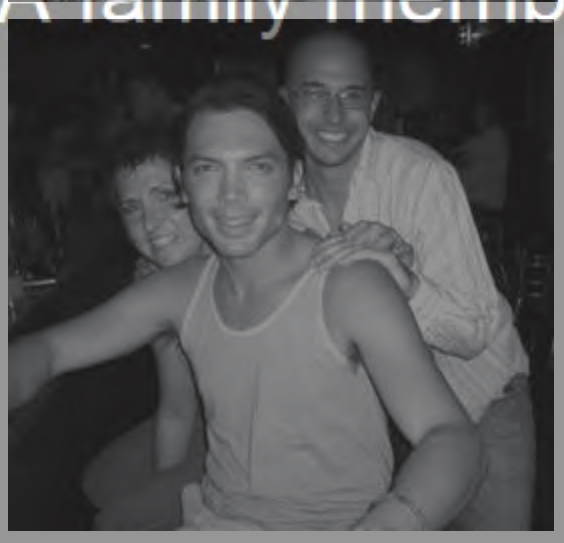

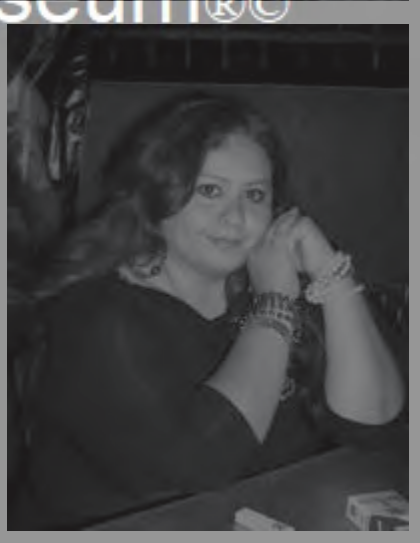

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