Observing Tucson And The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Tucson Observer Archives

Change Coming To HIV Immigration Ban

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The U.S. Customs and Immigration Service has issued a memo directing its officers to put a hold on any decisions on green card applications that are based solely on HIV status, pending a rule change to eliminate the HIV restriction that Health and Human Services is scheduled to issue later this year, reported advocate.com.

Under current regulations, non-U.S. citizens who are HIV-positive cannot travel to the United States unless they are granted a waiver, and immigrants are denied entry to the United States if they are HIV-positive. The CIS memo's intent is to halt any green card denials that are based on HIV status in anticipation that the policy change proposed earlier this year by HHS will soon be ushered through to completion.

"It's very good news for people who have pending green card applications," said Steve Ralls, communications director at Immigration Equality, a group that advocates to equalize immigration policy for LGBT people. "It's a strong indication that U.S. CIS expects this to move forward soon and it's a very good indicator that the administration is moving forward on repeal."

Congress originally passed the policy reversal last summer, but the Bush administration was unable to implement the shift before leaving office. HHS put the wheels of change in motion in late June by publishing the proposed regulation, and the 45-day public comment period on the proposal has already expired.

"HHS is reviewing those comments and the Administration has said that they expect the entire repeal process to be completed by the end of the calendar year," Ralls said. "This memo indicates that they're approaching the finish line in that process."

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Tucson Latin LGBT Pride Festival 2009

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Sponsored by Wingspan.

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Latino/as can celebrate their heritage through music, art, poetry, dance and film at the second annual Tucson Latin Gay Pride festival Sept. 30-Oct. 3.

Coordinated by Wingspan, the festival will highlight the theme "Familia! (Family!)" with a Latin Dance Party, a local documentary, a community forum, a cultural showcase, a resource fair and a program for area youth. The festival, which falls in the middle of National Hispanic Heritage Month and just before the beginning of Tucson Gay Pride celebrations, is designed to foster community and address concerns relevant to LGBT Latinos.

Wednesday, September 30, "Intersections of Latino/LGBT Identities" Forum, 5:00 p.m., Catalina Room, Student Union. University of Arizona - Free, Open to All Ages. Sponsored by UA Chicano/Hispano Student Affairs.

Thursday, October 1, "Reunion De Jovenes" Youth Gathering, 5:00 p.m., Eon Youth Center, 630 E. 7th St., Free, Open to Ages 13 to 23.

Friday, October 2, Latin Dance Party! 9:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., at the Biz Nightclub, 2900 E. Broadway Blvd. Free, Ages 21 and up. Sponsored by the Biz. Resource Fair in Breezeway, 9 - 11:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 3, Mshape Picnic at Himmel Park, 3 - 6:00 p.m., Reid Park, Free, Open to All Ages. Sponsored by SAAF.

Cultural Showcase: Art Festival Featureing Film, Poetry, Dance and Music by Local LGBT Latino Artists, 7 to 10:00 p.m., Lost Barrio, 299 S. Park Ave. Free, All Ages. Sponsored by Wingspan and the Biz.

Saturday, October 10, Latin Dance Tent, 3 - 8:00 p.m., Tucson Pride, Reid Park.

For the schedule of events, go online to tucsongaylatin.webs.com/schedule.htm or for information, please contact Oscar Jimenez at (520) 954-2343 or ojimenez@wingspan.org.

A family member of the Tucson Gay Museum

U.S. House Hears ENDA Testimony

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The Employment Non-Discrimination Act elicited predominantly favorable reactions during a congressional hearing from lawmakers who lauded the legislation as a means to protect more Americans from workplace discrimination, reported the Washington Blade. The House Education & Labor Committee heard testimony regarding ENDA, which would bar job bias based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), the committee's chair, said the measure would "ensure that employment decisions are based on merit and performance and not prejudice." "Fully qualified individuals are being denied employment or are being fired from their jobs for completely non-work-related reasons," he said. "This is profoundly unfair and, indeed, un-American. And, it is bad for business." A version of ENDA passed the House in 2007, but that bill offered protections based only on sexual orientation, omitting gender identity. After former President George W. Bush pledged to veto the legislation, the Senate never took up the bill.

Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), the sponsor of ENDA, testified before the committee in favor of his bill. "I find it hard to argue for legislation that bans discrimination," Frank said. "It just seems to be so self-evident that an American who would like to work and support himself or herself ought to be allowed to be judged solely on his or her work ethic and talent that I don't know what more to say." Frank encouraged House members to support ENDA's gender identity protections. He said he didn't think the House had the votes to pass ENDA with such language in the last Congress, but he hopes there are enough votes now to include the protections. "There is no more reason to discriminate against someone because he or she is Transgender than because he or she is Gay or Lesbian or any other category," Frank said.

Joining Frank to testify in favor of ENDA was Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), the only out Lesbian in Congress, who said the legislation was important to help put an end to documented workplace discrimination against LGBT people throughout the country. "There is a clear record demonstrating the need for these protections: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender employees are harassed, fired, not hired and passed over for advancement without regard to their merit," she said. Baldwin cited a 2007 study from the American Civil Liberties Union, which found that nearly 30 percent of LGBT workers reported that they experience workplace discrimination and that one in four said they experience it on a weekly basis.

Representing the administration and President Obama's support for ENDA was Stuart Ishimaru, acting chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. He said he came to voice the administration's "strong support for legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity." "Unfortunately, this right remains elusive, or almost non-existent for many Americans, because of the lack of federal legislation explicitly prohibiting sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination in employment," Ishimaru said. "Study after study has shown that employment discrimination against LGBT individuals remains a significant problem."

With few exceptions, committee members spoke favorably about ENDA. Rep. Jared Polis (D-Colo.), the only other openly Gay member of Congress, noted that Colorado had instituted similar workplace protections and urged for such legislation on the national level. "It's a moral issue for our country to ensure that every American has the opportunity to succeed regardless of their race, their gender, their sexual orientation, their gender identity, their religion," he said.

The only lawmaker during the hearing to voice significant concern regarding ENDA was Rep. John Kline (R-Minn.), the committee's senior GOP member. He said the House passed ENDA in 2007 even though many lawmakers had concerns about the legislation and many of these issues had not been resolved. "H.R. 3017 represents a significant departure from longstanding civil rights law," he said. "It creates an entirely new protected class that is vaguely defined and often subjective." Kline took particular issue with creating protections based on "perceived" sexual orientation. "Attempting to legislate individual perceptions is truly uncharted territory, and it does not take a legal scholar to recognize that such vaguely defined protections will lead to an explosion in litigation and inconsistent judicial decisions," he said.

But noting that numerous states had enacted similar workplace protection laws, Frank disputed the notion that enacting ENDA would cause a backlog of legal challenges against employers in court. "The opponents of discrimination predict disruption and it never happens," he said. "The secret about anti-discrimination legislation is that it becomes very hard to enforce.

Continued on Page Three

UPDATE

Voter Registration Correction

THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER FOR THE NOVEMBER CITY ELECTIONS IS OCTOBER 5TH NOT THE 15TH AS EARLIER REPORTED.

You still have time! Your vote is important. Forms are available at Wingspan, Antigone Books and on-Line or vote by mail 740-4330.

Motorcycle Riders Wanted

TUCSON - Looking for all motorcycle riders interested in riding in the 2009 Pride Parade on Friday, October 9. The Parade starts at 6:00 p.m. Riders need to be at the staging area between 5:00 - 5:30 p.m. The staging area is Catalina Park at 2nd and 4th Avenue.

All riders must provide proof of insurance and registration and have a valid motorcycle endorcement on their driver's license. Please contact April Moss at mizpo@yahoo.com or at (520)891-2288.

Lesbian Looks Film Series - Straight-Laced And Pariah, October 9

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The 17th annual Lesbian Looks Film Series opens Friday October 9, 7:30 p.m. at the Gallagher Theater, U of A Student Union, with Straightlaced, a documentary about the toll that deeply held stereotypes and rigid gender policing have on all of our lives.

Also screening: the award-winning narrative short Pariah, a coming-of-age drama about a Lesbian teenager unsuccessfully juggling multiple identities to avoid rejection from her friends and family. FREE and open to the public. Co-sponsors: School of Media Arts, Hanson Film Institute, McClelland Institute for Children, Youth and Families, Gender & Sexuality Studies, School of Anthropology, Center for Student Involvement in Leadership

For more Information, contact Beverly Seckinger, (520) 621-1239, website: lgbcom.web.arizona.edu/lesbianlooks/lobbydoor.html.

Tucson Pride Parade And Block Party, Friday, Oct. 9

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Tucson's LGBT community will take to the streets to march in Pride of who they are and who they love. Now in its 5th year, Pride on Parade will continue to delight Tucson with a colorful procession taking place this year on Friday, October 9, 2009 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.!

Come see Celebrity Grand Marshal Margaret Cho and hear Community Grand Marshal Desert Voices. The parade starts at E 2nd Street at 4th Avenue and marches down to E 7th Street where a block party with live music, Bunny FuFu, food, games, and fun continues in front of Wingspan.

For more information, contact David, (520) 622-3200, pride@tucsonpride.org, tucsonpride.org/

Pride In The Desert October 10

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Pride in the Desert is an all-day, Oct. 10, 10 a.m. - 8:00 p.m., festival held at Reid Park (22nd Street and Country Club), organized by Tucson Pride, that attracts more than 6,500 participants each year.

Highlights of the festival are local, regional, and national entertainers performing live on our main stage as well as several smaller stages and dance areas featuring drag shows and other live entertainment.

In addition to the multitude of entertainment venues, Pride in the Desert features commercial and non-profit exhibitors, a food court, and interactive displays and activities. Every year, our event grows to accommodate an ever-expanding number of vendors, exhibitors, and entertainers.

For more information, call (520) 622-3200, pride@tucsonpride.org, online, tucsonpride.org.

AIDSWALK, Oct. 11

TUCSON (Observer Update) - On Sunday, October 11, 2009, the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF) and Title Sponsor Desert Diamond Casino and Hotel will be hosting the 21st annual AIDSWALK Tucson.

AIDSWALK 2009 will be an important day for the Southern Arizona community in helping to raise funds in support of people living with, affected by, or at risk for HIV/AIDS who utilize SAAF's programs and services. Annually SAAF reaches thousands of southern Arizonans through critical care services or targeted education, outreach, and intervention. "To stand by and do nothing about the HIV epidemic is not an option. Today is about making a difference in a healthier community for all of us" says, Wendell Hicks, Executive Director.

SAAF provides care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS in Southern Arizona, including case management, housing, transportation, food support, medications and dental assistance and support groups. SAAF also provides outreach to groups at high risk of HIV/AIDS through targeted prevention programs as well as general community education to help reduce the risk of HIV. The funds raised at this year's AIDSWALK are more important than ever. Come out to AIDSWALK on October 11th, stand up to the stigma, show support for those living with HIV/AIDS, and help bring an end to new infections in our community! The people SAAF serves will feel the impact of your support and they will know that the community cares.

For more information about AIDSWALK visit aidswalktucson.com or call (520) 791-WALK (9255).

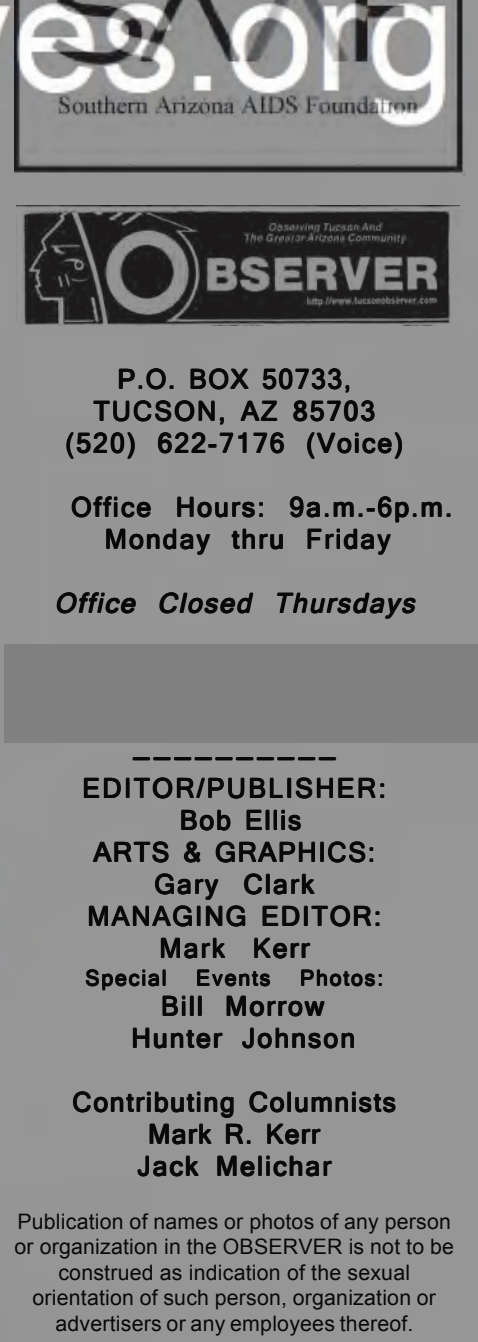
Arizona Rally For Equal Rights Set In Support Of The National Equality March Oct. 10

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - A rally in the state capital will take place in support of the National Equality March on Saturday, October 10, 10:00 am, Cesar Chavez Plaza, 201 W. West Washington.

Sponsored by the Arizona Stonewall Democrats, who stated in a press release, "We are guaranteed equal protection by the 14th Amendment of the US Constitution. Free and equal people do not bargain for or prioritize our rights, so we are rallying in support of the National Equality March in Washington, D.C. this October 10th to demand equal protection in all matters governed by civil law in Arizona and all 50 states.

"The rally is not our final destination. It is our first step toward building a statewide grassroots network that will continue organizing until we have achieved full equality."

For more information, go online to ArizonaStonewallDemocrats.org.



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Informing the Community
The Observer

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San Diego Mayor To Join Laramie Cast

San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders

SAN DIEGO, CA (Observer Update) - San Diego's Republican mayor Jerry Sanders, who endorsed marriage equality in support of his Lesbian daughter in 2007, will join the cast of the San Diego reading of The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later, to be performed October 12 at La Jolla Playhouse, advocate.com reported.

The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later, by the Tectonic Theater Project, explores the long-term impact of the 1998 murder of Matthew Shepard, a 21-year-old Gay college student, on the small town of Laramie, Wyo. This epilogue to the original play The Laramie Project will be read in more than 100 theaters across the country on October 12. In San Diego, according to a press release from La Jolla Playhouse, "the reading will be helmed by acclaimed director Darko Tresnjak. In addition to the mayor, the cast includes Doug Wright, Pulitzer Prize-winner and adapter/director of the Playhouse's upcoming production of Creditors, San Diego Rep Artistic Director Sam Woodhouse, as well as the acclaimed actors Mare Winningham, Robert Foxworth, Amanda Naughton, James Newcomb, Stark Sands, T. Ryder Smith, James Sutorius, among many others."

Mayor Sanders reversed his opposition to marriage equality in 2007 during a press conference in which he also revealed that his daughter Lisa is a Lesbian. He announced in March that she was engaged to her partner, Meaghan Yaple.

VIP Tickets To Pride In The Desert 2009 Now On Sale

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Join your friends in the newly expanded VIP Tent at Pride in the Desert and get the best seat in the house for this year's mainstage entertainement. Enjoy complimentary food and drinks (4 free drink tickets with each VIP Pass purchase). The VIP Tent also affords you one of the best views in the park of the mainstage entertainers.Tickets are $50 and are available at tucsonpride.org.

Your ticket purchase gets you: Free admission to Pride in the Desert; 4 complimentary drink tickets; Catered food; Free water and soda; Shade; A chance to win a Tucson Pride/ GayTucson.com party pack which includes Broadway in Tucson season tickets, an autographed Margaret Cho CD, and a GayTucson.com t-shirt.

Deadline for VIP ticket purchases is September 30 so get your tickets today!

U.S. House Hears ENDA Testimony

Continued from Page One

They have historically been under-enforced rather than over-enforced."

The extent to which the state and public workforce discriminates against LGBT people drew significant attention during the hearing. One witness, Vandy Beth Glenn, who's Transgender, described how she was terminated from her job as an aide to the Georgia General Assembly in 2007 after she announced she was transitioning from male to female. She said Sewell Brumby, legislative counsel to the General Assembly and head of her office, asked to speak with her after she informed her supervisor about her decision. "Mr. Brumby told me that people would think I was immoral," she said. "He told me I'd make other people uncomfortable, just by being myself. He told me that my transition was unacceptable. And, over and over, he told me it was inappropriate." Glenn said she was then fired, escorted back to her desk, told to clean it out and was marched out of the building. "The only thing that changed was my gender – and because of that, the legislature I'd worked so hard for no longer had any use for my skills," she said. "I was devastated."

The Education & Labor Committee is expected to report out ENDA as the next step in the process before House lawmakers can vote on the measure on the House floor. Aaron Albright, a committee spokesperson, said the mark up on ENDA has yet to be scheduled. In the Senate, Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) introduced a version of ENDA for that chamber in August. Activists are hoping the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee will hold a hearing on the legislation this fall.

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The Double-Barreled Boycott Of San Diego Hyatt

By Stephen Whitburn

The publicist for local hotelier Doug Manchester announced recently in the Gay and Lesbian Times that Manchester intends to launch a Web site where Gay and Lesbian organizations can apply for $125,000 in grants – money he hopes will end our community's boycott of his Grand Hyatt hotel downtown. The boycott, however, stems not only from the LGBT community but also from the Labor community – and neither community will end its boycott of Manchester until he settles with both.

Thus far, LGBT organizations have rightly refused to take Manchester's money. Groups like Marriage Equality USA, the San Diego Alliance for Marriage Equality, the San Diego Equality Campaign, The San Diego LGBT Community Center and Pride At Work, and community figures ranging from City Commissioner Nicole Murray-Ramirez to Democratic Party Chair Jess Durfee to former Republican consultant Fred Karger have stood firm in the boycott. It is the right thing to do.

The LGBT community and the Labor community have formed a powerful coalition to jointly boycott Manchester until he respects the rights of both of our communities. Manchester gave $125,000 to the "YES on 8? campaign that took away the right of Gay and Lesbian couples to marry. Communities are stronger when they work in coalition with other communities, and this coalition is no exception. There is strength in numbers. There are more than one million LGBT individuals in California alone and millions more workers who have - or should have - the representation of labor unions to ensure they are treated fairly. Combining our forces and standing together in coalition will go a long way toward advancing the human rights of both of our communities.

The Manchester boycott is honored by LGBT and Labor organizations not only in California but nationwide. The joint boycott has cost Manchester more than seven million dollars in lost business from potential customers in our state and elsewhere. He is attempting to break up this effective coalition by seeking to settle only with the LGBT community. The San Diego LGBT community will honor its commitment to stand in coalition with Labor, just as Labor has honored its past commitments to stand in coalition with us (including Labor's major support for our "NO on 8? campaign last year). Trying to divide our coalition by offering money to LGBT organizations on the condition that they cross Labor's picket line is transparent and unacceptable.

Indeed, Manchester may ultimately address the LGBT community's anger toward him by apologizing, acknowledging the equal rights of Gay and Lesbian couples, and contributing towards the repeal of Proposition 8. But a settlement with the LGBT community will only be achieved in tandem with a settlement with our coalition partners in Labor. Our communities are stronger when we stand together.

(Stephen Whitburn is an activist in the San Diego, California LGBT community, and this article is reprinted from the San Diego News Network.)

G/L Couples As Fit To Adopt As Heterosexuals: Study

NEW YORK- Gay or straight, the sexual orientation of adoptive parents does not have an impact on the emotional development of their children, according to a new study, reported Reuters through pageoneq.com. But researchers said that if parents were satisfied with the adoption process, had a stable income and functioned well as a family the risk of emotional problems in children were reduced.

"We found that sexual orientation of the adoptive parents was not a significant predictor of emotional problems," Paige Averett, an assistant professor of social work at East Carolina University, said in a statement. "We did find, however, that age and pre-adoptive sexual abuse were," she added. Averett, Blace Nalavany, also of East Carolina University, and Scott Ryan, dean of the University of Texas School of Social Work, questioned nearly 1,400 couples in the United States, including 155 Gay and Lesbian parents.

They used information from Florida's public child welfare system and data from Gay and Lesbian couples throughout the U.S. for the study. Each couple was questioned about themselves and their children, the family composition and dynamics, and the history of the child before the adoption. The researchers said the findings, which are reported in the journal Adoption Quarterly, are important because it compared Gay and Lesbian and heterosexual couples. "There are implications for social work educators, adoption professionals, and policy makers in this and other recent studies," said Averett.

"We must pay attention to the data indicating that Gay and Lesbian parents are as fit as heterosexual parents to adopt," Averett added, "because at least 130,000 children are depending on us to act as informed advocates on their behalf." The American Civil Liberties Union has said that laws and adoption agency policies have created obstacles for Gay and Lesbian couple who want to adopt children.

No LGBT Language In Senate Health Care Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The version of health care reform legislation made public by Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) contains no LGBT-specific language, unlike similar bills in the House, according to the Human Rights Campaign, reported the Washington Blade. Baucus, chair of the Senate Finance Committee, unveiled his mark of his committee's version of the health care reform legislation. The mark was produced by the "Gang of Six," a group of three Democrats and three Republicans who worked toward producing a bipartisan health care reform bill.

But Allison Herwitt, HRC's legislative director, said in a statement that Baucus' legislation lacks language that would specifically address the needs of LGBT people. "Unfortunately, the Senate Finance Committee did not include any LGBT-specific language in its health reform measure," she said. Erin Shields, spokesperson for the Senate Finance Committee, said the full Senate Finance Committee will consider the bill for its markup and senators can offer amendments to the legislation. Similarly, legislation unveiled earlier by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee contains no LGBT-specific language.

But the situation is different in the House. In that chamber, legislation contains provisions that would provide Medicaid coverage to people who have HIV, help people with AIDS gain access to drugs under Medicare Part D, bar discrimination in health care and allow for health data collection among LGBT people. But at this point, there's more than one version of House legislation. The Education & Labor Committee, the Ways & Means Committee and the Energy & Commerce Committee produced different versions of health care reform legislation. The committees will produce a unified bill after lawmakers meet in conference committee.

Two House committees included additional LGBT provisions in their legislation. The Ways & Means Committee adopted an amendment that would eliminate the taxation of domestic partner health benefits; the Energy & Commerce Committee approved a provision permitting state Medicaid programs to provide HIV treatment to individuals before they develop AIDS. Laurie Young, interim director of public policy and government affairs for the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, said activists are hoping that LGBT-specific provisions in House legislation will make it through as part of the final version of the health care bill.

"There were really some important provisions that were in the multitude of House bills that have come out of the committees, and what we want in the final product is the retention of some of those things brought out in the House bills," she said. Herwitt said HRC will continue to advocate for LGBT provisions in health care as legislation makes its way through Congress.

"As the legislative process moves forward in both chambers, HRC will continue to push Congress to address the health needs of LGBT people as it works to reform our nation's health care system," she said.

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Across The Gay Globe

The Five Worst World Leaders On LGBT Rights

UNITED NATIONS (Observer Update) - A parade of world leaders traveled through the United Nations, with some of them (hello, Libya!) calling attention to the fact that around the world, there are some pretty bad leaders when it comes to the subject of LGBT rights. Below is our hit parade of crazy, covering the five worst leaders when it comes to LGBT rights, change.org reported.

Muammar Qaddafi (Libya) - When he's not giving 96-minute screeds in front of the entire United Nations, suggesting that Barack Obama become U.S. President for life or that the UN should relocate its headquarters to Libya, Qaddafi helms an administration that ain't too proud to trash LGBT rights. That climate was fostered all too succinctly earlier this week when the Libyan secretary of African Union Affairs took over the presidency of the UN General Assembly and used it as an occasion to dis homosexuality. "[Homosexuality] is not acceptable in the majority of the world. And there are some countries that allow that, thinking it is a kind of democracy...I think it is not," said the secretary. Yuck. So now homosexuality is undemocratic, too?

Yahya Jammeh - He's the President of The Gambia, and last year he threatened to behead every LGBT person in his country. He also said that any hotel or restaurant that caters to LGBT people would be in trouble with the law, too. And if you thought his tirades and hatred were so 2008, think again. Human rights groups are condemning him for...you guessed it, threatening to kill human rights activists. "If you think that you can collaborate with so-called human rights defenders and get away with it, you must be living in a dream world. I will kill you, and nothing will come out of it," said the fine President on state TV in Gambia. So Gay people and human rights activists are on his list. What next, puppies?

Bruce Golding - As Prime Minister of Jamaica, Golding has gotten his anti-LGBT groove on many a time. He pledged not to hire any cabinet official who might be perceived to be Gay, and he has proudly defended colonial-era laws that criminalize sodomy (thanks, Britain, for these wonderful gifts from the 19th century!). He's also at the helm of what might just be the most homophobic country in the entire Western Hemisphere, where LGBT people are routinely assaulted, tortured or killed. While there are excellent voices for to justice from within Jamaica, the continuing violence has caused a number of activists to boycott vacation to the country until Mr. Golding figures out how to run a place where LGBT folks don't have persecution.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad - How could any list leave off Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He's said previously that homosexuality doesn't exist in his country, while at the same time heading an administration that executes people for being Gay. Then he goes in front of the world and denies the Holocaust, where many LGBT lost their lives, and bashes democracies that recognize the rights of LGBT people. Not good, but then again, not entirely surprising coming from this unstable dude.

Pope Benedict XVI - OK, we feel a little guilty about this one, but if this is the company that the Vatican wants to keep, then it has to be prepared to deal with it. Pope Benedict XVI has made it one of his legacies to root out homosexuality from with the Catholic Church. That includes scouring seminaries to question priests about their sexual orientation, and now it includes investigating American convents to make sure they're toeing the line on holding to the Vatican's anti-Gay beliefs. The Vatican also condemned a UN resolution calling for the decriminalization of homosexuality, has equated homosexuality to the scourge of climate change, and has now gotten mixed up in the debate over whether Democrats or pro-Gay Republicans should be allowed to have Catholic funerals. This is not a Church that inspires spiritual well-being, but rather one that has increasingly marched to the fringes of the anti-LGBT world.

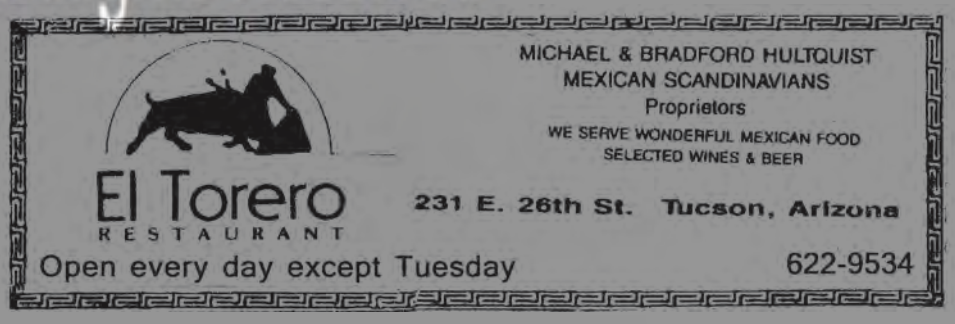
Cleve Jones: "We Can Do This"

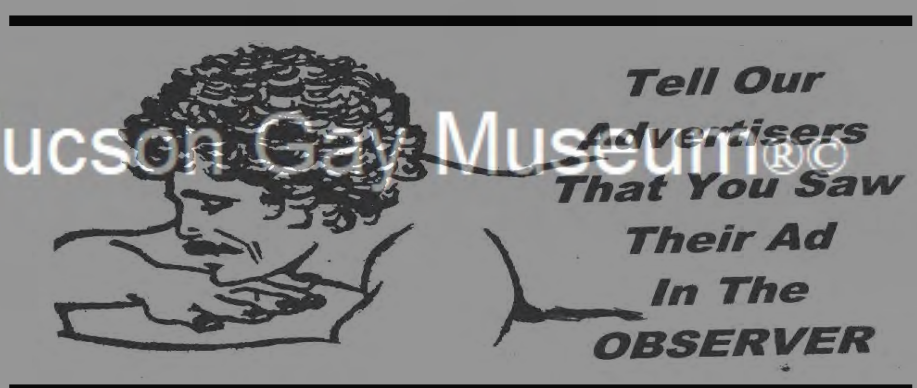
NEW YORK, NY (Observer Update) - Gay activist Cleve Jones, lead organizer of the National Equality March, brought his message of a federal equality strategy to New York City on Wednesday, taking the opportunity to rebuke some of the chief criticisms of the event scheduled for next month in Washington, D.C., reported advocate.com.

Jones, a self-described "cynical old bitch," spoke to a packed room of more than 140 people at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center, where he broached concerns about the timing and finances of the march scheduled for October 10 and 11, Columbus Day weekend, a period when targeted legislators will be on holiday. "Why are we doing it on a three-day weekend?" Jones asked. "So you can go there. Because most of you work, don't you? You work, you go to school. Wouldn't it be a little more difficult for you to get down there on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday as opposed to a three-day weekend?"

Even so, Jones declined to predict how many people were going to attend, noting only that the Porta Potti formula anticipated 100,000 participants, and that he believed the march would be "big." "I have no clue how many people are going to show up," he said. Jones also addressed the concern that funding for the march, which is budgeted at a slight $200,000, would pull resources from urgent election battles in Maine and Washington. He expressed confidence that the LGBT community holds the capacity to support battles on multiple fronts, and suggested that allocations were a matter of personal priorities.

"Where do people get this idea that there's this finite, limited amount of money?" he said. "That it's only this, and this finite, limited number of volunteers and hours." "Even during this recession, I go out," Jones said afterward, "and everywhere I go, I see the clubs are filled with people. Thousands and thousands of people every night, drinking high-priced drinks, spending money on their clothes. We can do this."





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POLITICS 2009

by Mark R. Kerr

Electoral Facts Versus Fiction

Monday, October 5, is the deadline to be registered to vote for the City of Tucson general election that is taking place on Tuesday, November 3.

For this upcoming Tucson election, registered voters who live within the city limits will be considering two ballot measures as well as voting on City Council elections.

October 5 is also the deadline to be registered to vote for other elections that are being held, concurrently, by the respective school districts whose boundaries may interlope with the City of Tucson's.

So with all this electoral and bond override, continuation and whatsoever, the Pima County Division of Elections (pima.gov/elections) is overseeing the entire process.

Under the provisions of its charter, the City of Tucson will be conducting elections for three Council seats, for Ward 3, Ward 5 and Ward 6 respectively.

Voters throughout the entire city will have an opportunity to cast their ballot for all three Council races.

Living in a specific Ward doesn't enter into it under the Tucson charter, drafted in 1929, every registered voter gets the chance to vote for all three seats.

In addition to three contested races for the Council seats, Tucson voters will also consider two ballot propositions.

Proposition 200 would mandate the Mayor and Council to hire more individuals for the City's police and fire departments to reach a specific number but doesn't provide a funding source to achieve the intent of the proposition.

Proposition 400 would allow the City of Tucson to continue funding services, government operations and programs at current levels by renewing the "home rule" proclamation set to expire.

This is a process the City must go through since the Arizona Legislature passed a measure stating cities and towns must only spend at the levels set in 1980, when this was approved. In 2005, and every four years prior, Tucson voters has had to cast their vote on the "home rule" proposal - which is a loophole utilized thanks to the holes in the enacted legislation.

In most of the school districts in Tucson and Pima County, voters will be asked to approve bond override, bond continuance (in the case of the Amphitheatre District) or other measures dealing with funding of schools and educational programs.

Despite the fact that most LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Tucsonans and those living in Pima County may not have or want a family with children, they are still a part of this process as taxpayers, since most of the proposals would involve the taxes that they pay annually to the Pima County Treasurer's office.

If you are still confused about this, which would not be surprising, there is help online for the dazed voter.

For those who live within the Tucson city limits, and want to know more about the candidates and the ballot propositions, go online to www.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/elections.php.

People who may not live in Tucson but are concerned about the school district elections, go online to pima.gov/elections/canpage.htm.

To find out which political district you are registered to vote in, go online to recorder.pima.gov/poll_search.aspx.

Perhaps you are not registered vote and wish to do so, go online to servicearizona.com/webapp/evoter/.

Kevin Jennings, Under Fire Again From The Radical Right

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Critics are continuing to go after Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network founder Kevin Jennings, whom President Obama recently appointed as the assistant deputy secretary of education for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. And joining the team of critics this time around? Fox News.

In a new article on FoxNews.com, Maxim Lott has branded Jennings the "safe schools czar," saying he has advocated "promoting homosexuality" in schools and is a questionable choice for the position because of his writings detailing his past drug use and issues with organized religion. The article is the latest to question Jennings's character. In the weeks following his appointment to the position, ads ran quoting Jennings's writings and asking people to, "Let President Obama know what you think of his choice for this position."

The FoxNews.com article quotes Peter Sprigg, a senior fellow at the anti-Gay Family Research Council, one of the critics the title of the piece alludes to. "Jennings was obviously chosen for this job because of the safe schools aspect... defining 'safe schools' narrowly in terms of 'safe for homosexuality'. But at least half of the job involves creating drug-free schools, and we've not been offered any evidence about what qualifications Jennings has for promoting drug-free schools."

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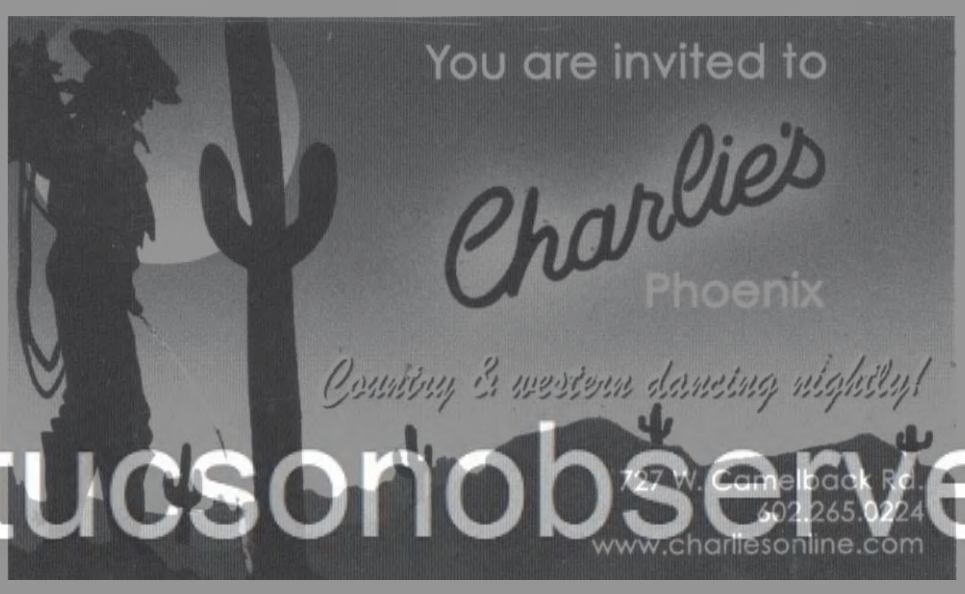

COMMENTARY. . . .

by Pam Spaulding

Pam Spaulding

The LGBT community has always been an early adopter of Internet and the opportunities it presented for personal and professional activism. In fact, it was a necessity for a slice of the American public faced with few legal rights that faced hostility and violence just for being who they were. In the 1990s, when AOL ruled the roost of online communication, there were bustling chat rooms. While many were geared to the novelty of hooking up online (as it was for the straight world), for many LGBTs in padlocked closets who lived in remote, extremely anti-gay small towns, it was their first time making any kind of social connection to others who shared their pain and their dreams of equality. These were not connections to LGBT advocacy organizations led by cosmopolitan power gays; this was the germination of grassroots activism online.

Fast forward to today. With web sites, blogs, and social networking tools like Twitter and Facebook, the online LGBT community has emerged as an example of both leadership and rabble-rousing success. It is a community shaping the equality agenda, by using just a few clicks of the mouse, diligence and taking advantage of the speed of the Internet that confounds, perplexes and often frustrates offline establishment LGBT advocacy organizations. It's a headless monster in many ways – digital activists in this world are frequently not Big Gay insiders. They are often part-time activists – people who feel strongly about issues and use the Internet daily. They never intended to lead or even follow movement leaders; they are just handy with the Internet tools of the trade, and have something to say about equality that resonates with readers.

The irony is that traditional LGBT organizations want desperately to replicate the success and speed of online grassroots activists. But their very structure – non-profits built on top-down management decision-making that is always beholden to influential donors – cripples them in ways the independent LGBT Netroots never have to be concerned about. And that goes for LGBT news media as well. Feeling the same financial pain the traditional print publications are experiencing with the economic downturn and drop in ad revenue, there is no pleasure in seeing LGBT publications shutter. Bloggers and activists are highly dependent on the strength of news media with an LGBT focus that has a budget to send reporters to do stories the online activists simply don't have the funds to do. It's a symbiotic relationship as well – many LGBT reporters want their stories linked on high-traffic or influential gay blogs because it expands their reader reach, and builds support to continue doing the work critical for both journalism and the equality movement overall.

Here's an oddity about the growth of online activism: experienced grassroots offline activists are often less well-connected to Internet activists than you would think. Field work, equally important to the movement, doesn't require knowledge of Twitter, for instance, and so many long-time successful activists are just getting their feet wet on the Internet. But what does the world of the online amateur LGBT activist have to show for itself? Aside from being the Town Crier with a call to action, blogs in particular take advantage of listservs and social networking to virally spread the word. And there have been many successful actions that have occurred – many are usually launched in response to:

* Negative or offensive act toward the community in the media or by an organization.

* A need to generate interest in a topic, event or person.

* The desire to get elected officials' attention on an issue.

An incredibly successful example of online activism that bubbled up nationally was Join the Impact's (JTI) completely spontaneous grassroots, online-driven effort to organize protests around the country in response to Proposition 8's passage in California, rolling back marriage equality. Over 500 Facebook groups were created. This led to 300 city international protests on November 15, 2008. People reported on the actions by posting photos in real time to their blogs and photo sites, and used Twitter to handle logistics and report on crowd size and action. This was something organized so quickly that no traditional LGBT organization could have mobilized anything of that magnitude.

While the JTI Prop 8 demonstrations were well-attended, subsequent events saw significant drop in participation outside of cities with large LGBT enclaves. Some speculate the reason for this may have to do with the fact that organizers were everyday people wanting to make a difference and statement about Prop 8, but didn't have field organizing experience to follow up with additional protests without a galvanizing event to motivate and sustain the level of participation. That's where the strength of traditional organizations comes into play.

It's why the hastily organized National Equality March, which will be held in Washington, D.C. on October 11 (with state events going on concurrently), sought endorsements from advocacy organizations, bloggers and grassroots activists to help build name recognition, enthusiasm – and resources. Connecting to a large slice of LGBTs surfing and connecting on the Net is now an essential piece of offline actions produced by traditional activists. You cannot have a successful event without it – and you have to have Net-savvy folks on board to make it happen.

(Pam Spaulding is a writer and proprietor of the great LGBT blog, pamshouseblend.com and this is reprinted from her submission to huffingtonpost.com.)

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LGBT Groups Defend Wis. Domestic Partner Law

MADISON, WI (Observer Update) - Lambda Legal and the American Civil Liberties Union are seeking to intervene on behalf of Fair Wisconsin and five same-sex couples in a lawsuit attempting to end newly enacted domestic-partnership protections for same-sex couples in the state, advocate.com reported.

"There are almost 15,000 same-sex couples and their families living in Wisconsin who need the basic protections provided by domestic partnerships. The law is far from marriage equality, but it helps couples in times of illness and crisis," said Lambda Legal senior staff attorney Christopher Clark, according to a press release from the gay rights organization. In June, Wisconsin governor Jim Doyle signed into law a provision allowing same-sex couples to register as domestic partners. Registering provides couples with certain legal protections such as the right to visit each other in the hospital, take medical leave to care for an ill partner, and inherit assets when a partner dies.

The following month, anti-Gay group Wisconsin Family Action, in partnership with the Alliance Defense Fund, filed a lawsuit claiming that the registry violates the state's constitutional ban on same-sex marriage and civil unions, which was approved by voters in 2006. "To suggest that these few protections granted to same-sex couples and their families resemble the much-revered status of marriage is preposterous. The domestic-partnership law and the constitutional amendment barring same-sex couples from marriage are not in conflict with each other," said Clark.

Both sides are currently awaiting a decision by the Wisconsin supreme court to determine whether the case will be heard directly by the court or if it will first receive a trial date in the circuit court in order to develop a fuller factual record.

Prop. 8 Repeal Filed

SACRAMENTO, CA (Observer Update) - Language was filed to repeal Proposition 8 and bring marriage equality back to the Golden State, advocate.com reported. A coalition of grassroots organizations including Love Honor Cherish, WhiteKnot.org, and Equality Network submitted the proposal for the November 2010 election, which includes California's gubernatorial race and midterm congressional races.

The new proposition, if passed, would replace the language of Section 7.5 of the state constitution – "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California" – with "Marriage is between only two persons and shall not be restricted on the basis of race, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, or religion."

The amendment would also add the following: "Section 1. To protect religious freedom, no court shall interpret this measure to require any priest, minister, pastor, rabbi, or other person authorized to perform marriages by any religious denomination, church, or other non-profit religious institution to perform any marriage in violation of his or her religious beliefs. The refusal to perform a marriage under this provision shall not be the basis for lawsuit or liability, and shall not affect the tax-exempt status of any religious denomination, church, or other religious institution."

Last month, Equality California's marriage director, Marc Solomon, announced that the statewide organization would concentrate its efforts on repealing Proposition 8 in 2012. "It's extremely hard to win a campaign like this," Solomon said during a telephone press conference on August 12. "It's a $40 million to $60 million venture. It's moving people who just voted on this less than a year ago. It would be really irresponsible to say to a group or an organization that we're going to contribute dollars even though we don't think this is the smarter approach."

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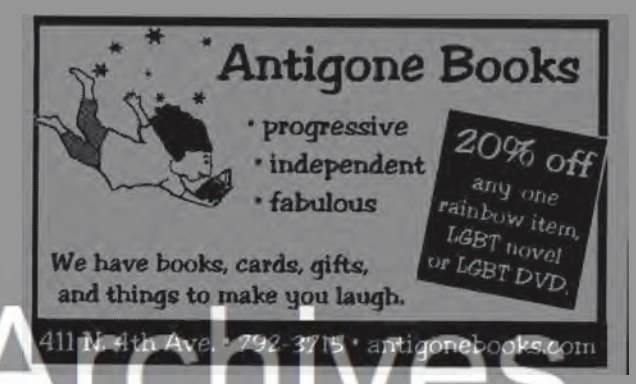

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Rep. Wants Answers On Abused Gay Sailor

Petty Officer Joseph Rocha

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - A congressman is asking for detailed information about a sailor who was abused by his cohorts, one of whom was promoted despite his superiors' knowledge of the abuse. U.S. representative Joe Sestak sent a letter on September 11 to Navy secretary Raymond Mabus asking for an investigation into Petty Officer Third Class Joseph Rocha's case, advocate.com reported.

"Since 2006, Joseph Rocha has developed symptoms of PTSD and was discharged from the Navy under 10 U.S.C. Section 654, commonly referred to as 'don't ask, don't tell,'" Sestak wrote. "Prior to his time in Bahrain, Petty Officer Rocha had graduated at the top of his military class and served his country honorably as a military police officer. He received favorable performance evaluations throughout his career."

Rocha was assigned to a military canine unit in Bahrain. It was revealed earlier this month that he was abused by unit mates, who allegedly forced him into a dog kennel full of feces while bound to a chair. Rocha said he was also forced to simulate oral sex with a man more than 30 times. Sestak, a former admiral, said his inquiry for more information on Rocha's case is because of the danger such actions put on other military personnel.

Congressman: Gay Marriage Is 'Socialism'

WINGNUTLAND, USA (Observer Update) - In an extreme formulation of a tired anti-Gay argument, U.S. representative Steve King of Iowa said that same-sex marriage is a "purely socialist concept" during an interview with a conservative radio network, reported advocate.com. King, a Republican who represents the 5th congressional district, spoke with Greg Corumbus of Radio America for World Net Daily about his concern that congressional Democrats and the Obama administration are "pushing closer and closer" to repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act.

Unsatisfied with comparing the prospect of same-sex marriage to the legalization of incest, as opponents such as former senator Rick Santorum have done, King said he wanted to "take this along the rationale even further." "If relationships between individuals cannot be prohibited by the state legislature, then there's no ban that can actually be constitutional that would ban group marriage, and it wouldn't have to be for reasons of, let me say, love or lust, it could be reasons of profitability or avoiding taxes or accessing benefits," King said. "So in the end, this is something that has to come with a, if there's a push for a socialist society, a society where the foundations of individual rights and liberties are undermined and everybody is thrown together living collectively off one pot of resources earned by everyone; this is one of the goals they have to go through is same-sex marriage because it has to plow through marriage in order to get to their goal," he said.

"Not only is it a radical social idea, it is a purely socialist concept in the final analysis," King said.

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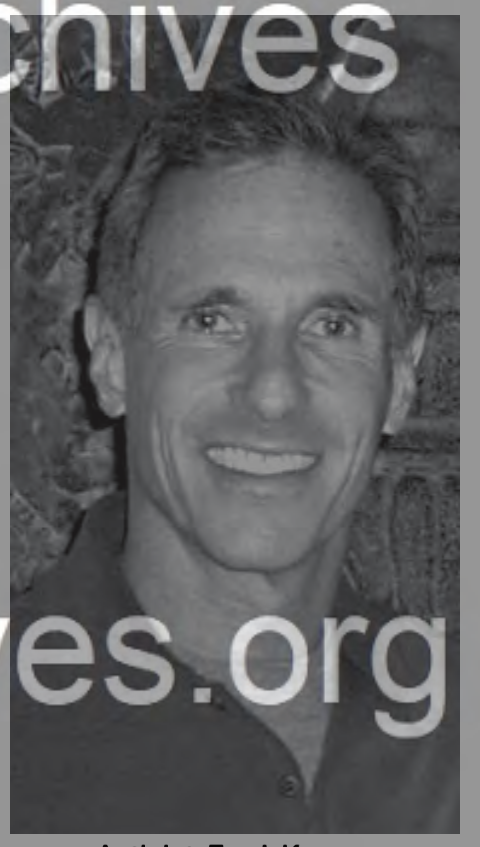

Activist Fred Karger

LOS ANGELES, CA (Observer Update) - California activist Fred Karger will appear in court on October 13 after being subpoenaed earlier this month by the National Organization for Marriage to turn over all e-mails, correspondence, faxes, and stored information relating to his grassroots organization Californians Against Hate, advocate.com.

The subpoena is part of an effort to protect the identity of those who contributed to the Proposition 8 campaign to rescind marriage equality in California. NOM is working to stop the state from revealing the identities of donors by challenging the constitutionality of campaign finance disclosure requirements. Some who donated to the campaign claim they have received harassing e-mails, phone calls, letters, and death threats. The subpoena is related to a lawsuit NOM filed in January against California secretary of state Debra Bowen, attorney general Jerry Brown, and Ross Johnson, chairman of the Fair Political Practices Commission, according to The Daily Journal, a legal newspaper.

In an essay posted on The Huffington Post, Karger wrote that the subpoena asks for documentation for three of his four websites, CaliforniansAgainstHate.com, BoycottManchesterHotels.com, and BoycottA1Self Storage.com. His websites target major donors for the Yes on 8 campaign, like hotel magnate Doug Manchester and A-1 Self Storage owner Terry Caster.

It Took 32 Years , But Mark Shemukenas' Killer Has Been Caught

ST. PAUL, MN (Observer Update) - In 1977, St. Paul's Mark Shemukenas, a potter, was found dead: bound with electrical wire, stabbed, and castrated, reported queerty.com.

"Police at the time suspected Shemukenas [pictured] had been killed by a Gay lover, and they placed posters in Gay bars in St. Paul and Minneapolis, but leads did not pan out," remembers the Pioneer Press. But in 1983, Richard Hubert Ireland Jr. "emerged as a suspect after being arrested for groping a 15-year-old boy in a sauna and kissing him on the mouth. He was convicted of fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct. His fingerprints were taken after his arrest and matched one found on a cabinet in Shemukenas' apartment, but tests results on hair samples did not match. Ireland told police at the time that he did not remember ever being in the apartment, according to press clippings." The case went cold, until investigators last summer began matching DNA evidence from the crime scene.

And bingo, they found was irrefutable evidence Ireland was the killer. He was arrested in a halfway house and was charged with second-degree murder.

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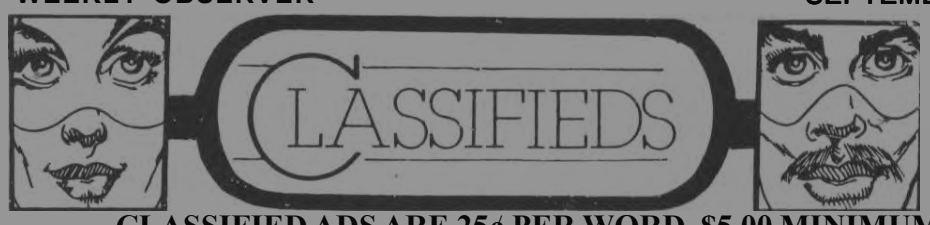

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Non-Bar Calendar

Wednesday, September 30

Men's Social Network-Open to men of all ages. Newcomers welcomed. 7 p.m. Hand and Foot, a canasta-like game, is hosted weekly by MSN members in their homes. Please call Peter at 881-8276.

Wednesday, Sept. 30 - Saturday, October 3

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Latino/as can celebrate their heritage through music, art, dance and film at the second annual Tucson Latin Gay Pride festival. Coordinated by Wingspan, the festival will highlight the theme "Familia! (Family!)" With a Latin dance party, a local documentary, a community forum, a cultural showcase., a resource fair and a program for area youth. The festival, which falls in the middle of National Hispanic Heritage Month and just before the beginning of Tucson Gay Pride celebrations, is designed to foster community and address concerns relevant to LGBT Latinos. For the schedule of events, go online to tucsongaylatin.webs.com/schedule.htm or for information contact Oscar Jimenez at 954-2343 or ojimenez@wingspan.org

Friday, October 9

Tucson's LGBT Community will take to the streets to march in Pride of who they are and who they love. Now in its 5th year, Pride on Parade will continue to delight Tucson with a colorful procession taking place this year from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Come see Grand Marshall Margaret Cho and hear Community Grand Marshals Desert Voices. Parade starts at East 2nd Street at 4th Avenue and marches down to E. 7th Street where a block party with live music, Bunny FuFu, food, games and fun continues in front of Wingspan. For more info contact David (520)622-3200.

The 17th annual Lesbian Looks Series opens tonight at 7:30 p.m. At the Gallagher Theater, UofA Student Union with "Straightlaced", a documentary about the toll that deepy held stereotypes and rigid gender policing have on all of our lives. For more info contact Beverly Seckinger (520) 621-1239.

Saturday, October 10

Pride In The Desert is an all-day event from 10a.m. until 8:00 p.m.. The Pride festival is held at Reid Park (22nd St. & Country Club), organized by Tucson Pride and attracts more than 6,500 participants each year. In addition to the entertainment venues, Pride in the Desert features commercial and non-profit exhibitors, a food court and interactive displays and activities. For more info call 520-622-3200 or www.pride@tucsonpride.org, online, tucsonpride.org.

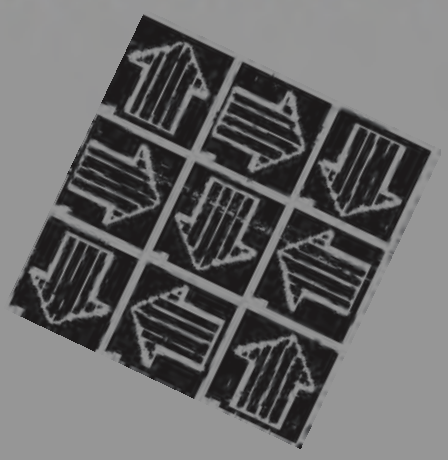
A rally at the state capital in Phoenix will take place in support of the National Equality March at 10:00 a.m. Caesar Chavez Plaza, 201 West Washington. For more info go online to ArizonaStonewallDemocrats.org

Sunday, October 11

Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF) and Title Sponsor Desert Diamond Casino and Hotel will be hosting the 21st Annual AIDSWALK Tucson. For information about AIDSWALK visit aidswalktucson.com or call (520)791-WALK (9255).

Friday, November 20

First Annual Wingspan Golf Classic, a competition that tees off at the Ritz-Carlton Dove Mountain Golf Club today. The proceeds of the event will be donated entirely to Wingspan which provides a variety of programs critical to youth and the prevention of violence. Entry fee is $150/golfer for the 12:30 p.m. shotgun start. For more details and to register to play or be a sponsor see Wingspan Classic (wingspanclassic.org)



Water of Life
Metropolitan Community Church
The Rev. William H. Knight, D.D., **Interim Pastor**
"It is the greatest of all mistakes to do nothing because you can only do a little." Sydney Smith, (1771-1845)
Sunday Worship: 10:15am Wednesday Worship 7:00 p.m.
3269 North Mountain Avenue
Tucson AZ 85719
(Just North of Ft. Lowell)
292-9151
www.wolmcc.org

Survey: Most LGBT Stay Closeted At Work

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Fifty-one percent of LGBT employees say they hide their sexual orientation or gender identity from most or all of their coworkers, according to a survey by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, reported advocate.com.

Despite major gains at many American companies and antidiscrimination laws on the books in several states, 42% of LGBT employees say they've lied about their personal relationships in the past year. Only 5% of workers ages 18-24 say they are open about their sexual orientation or gender identity, while 20% of their older colleagues say they are.

"We've found that inclusive nondiscrimination policies and equal benefits are the essential first step toward cultivating a productive and engaged LGBT employee, but they are not the last step," said Daryl Herrschaft, director of the Workplace Project. "By understanding how LGBT identity surfaces and unfolds in the workplace, we will be better able to turn policy into practice and address opportunities to improve productivity and retention of LGBT employees."

The survey also found that only 18% of LGBT Latinos are willing to be open with everyone at work, compared to 25% of African-Americans and 29% of whites.

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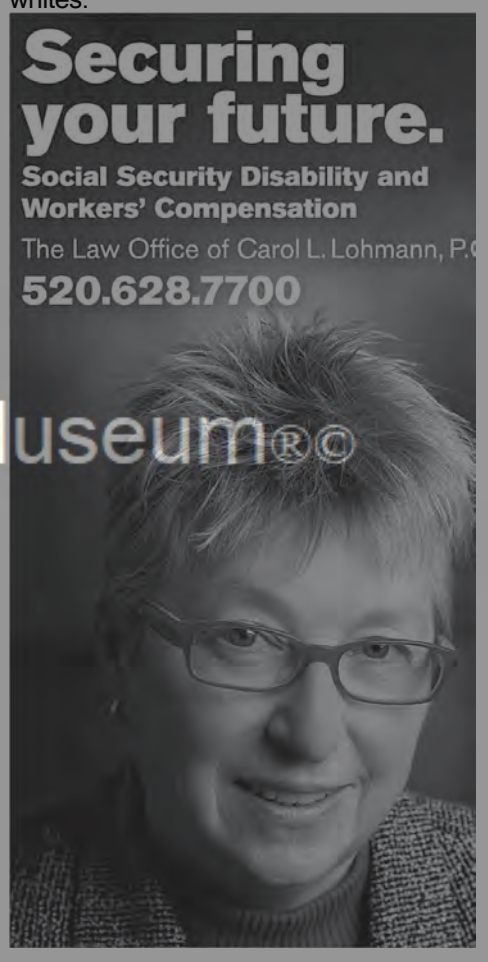

NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

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

TUCSON INFORMATION AND REFERRAL
For Information on human service organizations, health and mental health services, financial and government assistance, emergency services such as food and shelter, education, etc. Call Information and Referral 325-2111 - 7am-7pm M-F - 9am-5pm weekend and holidays.

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

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

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

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

BEARS OF THE OLD PUEBLO – a social club for bears and bigger, more robust men (and of course, those who prefer their company). For more info, Call the Bears Hotline (520)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.

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, 426 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 Monday 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.

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

NA MEETING WITH GLBT FOCUS meets Mondays, 6:30pm at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th Street. This is an open meeting of Narcotics Anonymous - all are welcome. For more info call Bernie W.: (520) 406-0740.

TUCSON LATINO M2M - A social group for Tucson and Sonora Lastinos, and those who appreciate them.. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TucsonM2M

COPPER RAINBOW BISTRO at David's Oasis Camping Resort, Bisbee, AZ 520-979-6650
www.azgaycamping.com
Membership Beer and Wine Bar. Annual Member $15.00
Bar Hours:
*Open Fridays, 5-10 p.m. or until last member leaves. Happy Hour 5-7 all drinks $100 off.
*Open Saturdays 5-10 p.m or until the last member leaves. Happy Hour 5-7 all drinks $1.00 off.
*Open Sundays 2-7 p.m. or until last member leaves. Bottle Beer starts at $1.00

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

THE BIZ - Garage Sundays. $1 Well Drinks until Midnight. Bring your band and come rock with us.

COLORS - Open 10am - 10pm Champagne Brunch 10am - 2pm with choice of complimentary mimosa, Bloody Mary or Screwdriver included. Happy Hour 4-7pm $3.75 Skyy Cocktails, $3.00 Domestics and well. Appetizers ½ price 4-6. Brunch served until 2pm. Dinner served until 10pm. 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 1 & 4 p.m. 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 5-8. $4.25 Long Island, Tokyo and Long Beach Teas, all nite with sexy Spencer.

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm $3.75 Skyy Cocktails, $3 Domestics & Well. ½ price appetizers 4-6pm. Dinner served until 10;m. Nightly dinner specials.

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 5-8. PHAT Tuesday's 50 cent Pabst cans 9pm-close, $1.50 pints all nite and DJ Lover Boy spinnin' 80's.

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7 $3.75 Skyy cocktails, $3.00 Domestics and well and ½ price appetizers 4-6. Full menu served until 10pm. Nightly dinner specials.

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. 5-9 Wild Wednesdays $1 Hump Day Drinks DJ Hill. College Night. 18 to party - 21 to drink. $3 Cover 18+ No Cover 21+. DJ Spins Hip Hop, R&B Top 40 remix dance.

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.75 Skyy cocktails, $3.00 Domestics and Well. 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. 5-9 $3 glasses of wine. Y-NOT Karaoke starts @9:00pm to close. 2-4-1 starts 10;pm.

COLORS - Open 4pm-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm,$3.75 Skyy cocktails, $3.00 Domestics and Well and ½ price appetizers 4-6pm. 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. Flirt Friday with Happy Hour extended to 9 p.m. and munchies. DJ Hill & guest DJs. COLORS - Open 4pm-midnight. Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.75 Skyy cocktails, $3.00 Domestics and Well and ½ price appetizers. 4-6 pm. Dinner served until 10pm. Finlandia martinis $5.50 open to close! . "Guys & Dolls" comedy drag show hosted by Lucinda Holliday at 10pm. 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. $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. LATINLICIOUS . Hourly rotating drink specials. DJ Kool-A

COLORS - Open 4pm-10pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.75 Skyy cocktails, $3.00 Domestics and Well, ½ price appetizers 4-6. Dinner 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.

IBT'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.

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 2

THE BIZ - 2nd Annual Latin Pride Party @ the Biz 9pm. DJ Hill spinnin' all your Latin favorites. In part with Wingspan, SAAF, UofA Chicano/Hispano Student Affairs Program & Pride Alliance.

Thursday, October 9

THE BIZ - Pre-Pride Party with Latin Carnaval! One massive Latin Party to kick off Gay Pride Weekend! Special guest Live from Sonora Dinamita Live!

Friday, October 10

THE BIZ - Pride Party Biz opens @ 5:00 p.m. Pride Party all the way til 6:00 a.m.! Arrive early to avoid the lines. DJ Hill killing you on the dance floor until 6a.m. 18+ afterhours til 6 a.m.

Friday, October 16

THE BIZ - Spin Babez wrap-up Party. Poles, toys and all the sexiness you could ask for! Free Goodie Bag to the first 150 guests and some lucky person will win a stripper pole! One incredibly hot & sexy night - DJ Hill til 2 a.m.

Saturday, October 17

THE BIZ - Flame Halloween style. Come dressed and enjoy the fun, the friends, and the great time. DJ Tweet Tweet scratchin' the Mac! Costumes encouraged. 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Groundbreaking Study on On LGBT Parents Released By APA

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The American Psychological Association published Dr. Abbie E. Goldberg's Lesbian and Gay Parents and Their Children: Research on the Family Life Cycle, a comprehensive summary and analysis of the research on Gay and Lesbian parents and their families to date.

Goldberg's new book is the first full-length analysis of the research on Gay parenting, summarizing research data on the subject from the 1970's to the present day. The research is consistent in suggesting that the outcomes and well-being of children raised by Gay and Lesbian parents are no different than those of children raised by heterosexual parents.

According to Dr. Goldberg, Lesbian and Gay Parents and Their Children: Research on the Family Life Cycle is a response to the increased public awareness and debate about both marriage equality and Lesbian/Gay parenting, and the corresponding growth in research on this topic. While a number of journal articles and book chapters summarize much of the research in this area, no in-depth book-length synthesis and analysis has existed to date.

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White House Hosts HIV/AIDS Forum In D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - There were several memorable moments at the White House-hosted community discussion forum on HIV and AIDS in an auditorium at the University of the District of Columbia – a young man who is thriving who contracted HIV via a blood transfusion when he was an infant, a homeless woman who dissolved into tears upon speaking of the lack of housing for those with AIDS and another woman who said she got the disease when she was date raped.

But a handful of openly Gay men also provided some of the most pointed and dramatic moments as well. Matt Cavanaugh, a stack of D.C. Fights Back leaflets in hand, angrily demanded to know why D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty wasn't in attendance. "I'm tired of people dying, I'm tired of the fact that we continue every year to have more and more infections and I'm tired of waiting for the plan of Washington, D.C. that's going to be at least as robust as the plan in Zambia," Cavanaugh said. "I'm tired of the fact that the mayor isn't here." Cavanaugh then used his remaining moments – each speaker was given 90 seconds to speak – to offer 30 seconds for Fenty to comment and explain why he wasn't present. The room was silent.

Another Gay man, David Phillips, chided the Centers for Disease Control for its politically correct euphemisms. "It's ridiculous that we cannot have frank, explicit education aimed at our communities," Phillips said. "I'm not an MSM. I'm a Gay man. I wanna s**k c**k. I wanna f**k another man." He also took a shot at U.S. Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, who'd spoken previously but left before public remarks. "I wish that Eleanor Norton was still here," he said. "Statistically speaking, in the time it took her to speak and recite history to us, two people were infected with HIV. One of them was a Gay man."

The large auditorium appeared to be about 30 percent full. Several spoke of the need to have the Ryan White Care Act in effect for longer than a three-year period. The Act is set to expire on Sept. 30, but members of Congress have pledged that it will be renewed. Jeffrey Crowley, who's Gay and is director of the White House's Office of National AIDS Policy, presided over the event and reaffirmed what he said was President Obama's commitment to a national HIV/AIDS strategy. The meeting was ostensibly an opportunity for locals to weigh in on what that should entail. A previous session was held in Atlanta. Others are planned in Albuquerque, Houston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, San Francisco and other cities. Dates haven't been set.

Shannon Hader, director of the D.C. AIDS Office, read brief prepared remarks from a laptop and said she was more interested in hearing from the crowd than speaking herself. Norton spoke extemporaneously and faulted Congress for Washington's cataclysmic HIV rates because Congress stopped the District's needle exchange program for many years. Washington has the highest per capita HIV rates of any U.S. city, according to Hader's office.

Indiana Court Turns Down Same-Sex Divorce Request

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (Observer Update) - An Indiana judge has turned down a divorce request from two women married in Canada, ruling that state law doesn't give courts the authority to dissolve same-sex marriages, reported the Associated Press.

Larissa Chism and Tara Ranzy lived in Pennsylvania at the time of their 2005 marriage but had since moved to South Bend. Ranzy asked an Indianapolis attorney to handle the divorce that involved no children. A Marion County court held a hearing on the case after an employee noticed the petition bore two women's names. Marion Superior Court Commissioner Jeffrey Marchal wrote in a Sept. 4 order that it would be logical for the state to permit same-sex divorce since it has chosen to prohibit such marriages.

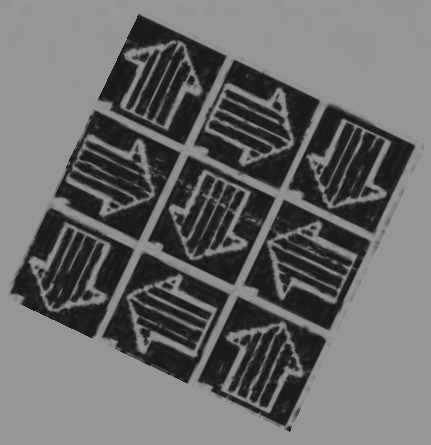
Divorce attorney Karen Jensen told The Indianapolis Star no decision had been made to appeal.

Kept A Go!

NEW YORK, NY (Observer Update) - MTV has The Hills. Now Logo will have Kept. The Gay "real Real Housewives" reality show that's been rumored about is a go for the network, and its working title suggests good looking Manhattanites starring on the program will require some financial finessing from some sugar daddies. Apparently this is what the post-Brian Graden network is looking like.

It's too soon to surmise what the show will actually end up looking like; the casting call hasn't even gone out yet. But you should expect a gaggle of pretty nobodies one-upping each other in skinny jeans, invite-only events, Fire Island shares, and sex partners. Throw in some 40-year-old Wall Street finance type who bankrolls his twentysomething boyfriend's lifestyle, and we've got magic, people.

Because this is the version of Gay America that viewers want to see, the same way haggling over a wretched Justin Bobby or Brody Jenner once counted as entertainment.



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