Observing Tucson And The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Tucson Observer Archives

Thousands Gather In London For Anti-Gay Hate Crimes Vigil

LONDON - Thousands gathered in Trafalgar Square in London last week for a vigil in response to a recent surge in anti-Gay hate crimes, and more specifically, the recent homophobic murder of Ian Baynham. and the attack on James Parkes, a police trainee who was beaten in Liverpool.

Army Secretary: Lifting DADT Can Be Done

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Secretary of the Army John McHugh told the Army Times that he does not believe lifting the military's Gay ban would have detrimental effects on the Army, reported advocate.com.

According to the Army Times, "When asked specifically if lifting the Gay ban would seriously disrupt the military, as predicted by those who oppose repeal, McHugh said there is no reason to think major turmoil would ensue. 'Anytime you have a broad-based policy change, there are challenges to that,' he said. 'The Army has a big history of taking on similar issues, [with] predictions of doom and gloom that did not play out,' he said."

McHugh's comments are the first signal from someone inside the Defense Department that allowing Gays to serve openly in the military is an achievable goal. "He is the highest-level person at the Pentagon to say that we can do this, that the Pentagon is ready, and that all these doomsday scenarios are not to be taken seriously," said Dr. Nathaniel Frank, a senior research fellow at the Palm Center, a think tank at the University of California, Santa Barbara, that studies gender, sexuality, and the military.

Congressman Patrick Murphy of Pennsylvania, an Army veteran and the lead sponsor of the House's "don't ask, don't tell" repeal bill – the Military Readiness Enhancement Act – said the remarks from Secretary McHugh could help assuage the fears of some members on the Hill. "It's encouraging to see that Army secretary McHugh recognizes that the critics of overturning 'don't ask, don't tell' are out of touch with the realities of military life – it's very clear that the defense community knows we can't afford to be letting go of nearly two brave service members a day," said Murphy, who served with McHugh on the House Armed Services Committee before he was appointed to his current post.

Getting the green light on repeal from the military leadership was also emphasized during a Meet the Press segment earlier this month with senators Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat, and Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina. Levin said he believed Obama would make good on his pledge to end the Gay ban. "I think it has to be done in the – in the right way," he said, "which is to get a buy-in from the military, which I think is now possible."

Graham agreed that he would take his cues from the military about how to move forward on the policy. "I'm open-minded to what the military may suggest," he said. Secretary McHugh did not indicate his personal views on "don't ask, don't tell" during the Army Times interview, but White House press secretary Robert Gibbs told The Advocate earlier this year that McHugh and President Barack Obama "are in agreement on changing the policy they both don't think is working for this country right now."

More Immigrants Cite Sexual Orientation For Asylum

WORCESTER, MA (Observer Update) - For weeks, Nathaniel Cunningham and his boyfriend secretly lived together in rural Jamaica. They showed no affection in public and rarely spoke to neighbors, reported the Associated Press on pageoneq.com. Then one morning, Cunningham picked up a local newspaper with a front-page story under the headline, "Homosexual Prostitutes Move into Residential Neighborhood." His address was listed below.

For days afterward, Cunningham said an angry mob gathered on his lawn hurling rocks and bricks and calling them "batty boys" – a Jamaican slang term for Gay. Eventually, the pair grabbed what they could and fled on foot. Cunningham said neither he nor his boyfriend were prostitutes – the slur was just another example of the abuse Gay men faced in Jamaica. The story was one of many that Cunningham, now 32 and living in Worcester, recently shared with a federal immigration judge in his successful bid to win asylum in the United States. And it's similar to other stories cited by a small but growing number of other Gay, Lesbian and Transgender asylum seekers who are using U.S. immigration courts to argue that their sexual orientation makes it too dangerous for them to return home.

"I had no choice," said Andre Azevedo, 39, a Transgender man from Brazil who recently won asylum and now lives in New York. "Where I'm from, heterosexual men practice hate crimes against us like a sport, and the police do nothing to stop it." Since 1994, sexual orientation has been grounds for asylum in the United States. That's when former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno ruled in a case that persecution based on sexual orientation could be potential grounds for asylum. Until recently, those grounds have been rarely used and such cases represent only a fraction of all asylum cases.

But now immigrant and Gay activists say more asylum seekers from the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean are citing sexual orientation as reasons for seeking asylum. Activists say the asylum seekers are escaping rape, persecution, violence, and threats of death from places where homosexuality is either outlawed or strongly, socially shunned. Federal immigration law allows individuals asylum if they can prove a well-founded fear of persecution in their country of origin based upon race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Those applying for asylum are already in the United States, legally or illegally.

No one knows for sure just how many have sought asylum on sexual orientation grounds. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services doesn't keep data on asylum cases won on that basis. Still, last year Immigration Equality, a New York-based nonprofit group that helps Gay clients with immigration cases, successfully won 55 asylum cases using sexual orientation as grounds, a record for the organization, said the group's legal director Victoria Neilson. That's up from 30 wins in 2007 and 27 in 2006, Neilson said.

And a Worcester, Mass.-based nonprofit group, Lutheran Social Services, has recently won five cases and is looking to help others. "I think more people are finding out that this is an option," said Lisa Laurel Weinberg, an attorney with the group. However, not all cases for asylum based on sexual orientation have been successful. For example, a Gay Brazilian man who was married in Massachusetts and whose American husband remains in the state was recently denied asylum by the Obama administration on humanitarian grounds, despite pleas from Sen. John Kerry. Genesio "Junior" Januario Oliveira had originally requested asylum because he was raped as a teenager, but an immigration judge denied the application, saying Oliveira repeatedly said in the hearing that he "was never physically harmed" by anyone in Brazil. He was forced to return to Brazil in 2007.

Cunningham said he decided to file for asylum after working for a few years in the United States on a work visa. He conducted research online but couldn't find an immigration group to help him with the case. "One group said my case clashed with their Christian values," Cunningham said.

Many Gay rights groups, he said, also had limited services for immigrants. It wasn't until Cunningham connected with Jozefina Lantz, the director of immigrant services at Lutheran Social Services, that Cunningham gained support. To win, however, Cunningham had to revisit painful moments of running from mobs in Jamaica. Even the police would point him out for persecution, he said. In successfully arguing Cunningham's case for asylum, Weinberg also said Jamaica's sodomy laws banning sex between men and "dancehall" music – whose lyrics often advocate violence against Gays – made life for Cunningham unbearable. Cunningham won asylum in January 2008.

During his asylum hearing, Azevedo had to recall violent episodes in Brazil when he and a group of

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UPDATE

Editor's Note

Voters in Maine and Washington went to the polls to decide two matters of concern to the LGBT community there and across the country.

Maine was deciding whether to allow a law permitting same-sex couples to get married in the state, while Washington voters were deciding whether to allow the expansion of the state's domestic partnership law, to cover everything similar to marriage.

Full results in next week's Observer.

Desert Voices Concert Nov. 14-15

TUCSON (Observer Update) - There are still tickets available for the upcoming Desert Voices November 14 and 15 performances (season tickets as well), so it's not too late to get great entertainment by your favorite non-profit chorus at a gonga price - one ticket for $15/two for $25 - and you will be supporting a local business, important in difficult economic times. (Season tickets are one for $50/two for $100 - also a gonga deal!)

Check out the website at desertvoices.org to purchase your tickets on line through Brown Paper Tickets (a very secure internet site), call the Desert Voices Box Office at 791-9662 to purchase via mastercard or visa, or mail your check (made out to Desert Voices) to PO Box 270, Tucson 85702-0270. See how easy it is?!

Performances will be held at the Proscenium Theatre, West Pima Campus, 2202 W. Anklam Road - 7:30 pm on the 14th and 3:00 pm on the 15th. Join Desert Voices as the chorus pays tribute to memorable musicals from Broadway and Tinseltown in Upstaged! Divas and Mis(s)Leading Men. See you at the theatre!

Kate Clinton In Tucson Nov. 8

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Tickets are now on sale for Kate Clinton's YES on K8 show, Sunday, November 8 at 7 p.m. at the Temple of Music and Art, 330 S. Scott Avenue.

This performance benefits The Alliance Fund, a special project of the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona.

This year YES on K8 will tour the US and Canada. Clinton has said, "Our long mental curfew has been lifted! It's time for some restoration comedy."

From ponzi schemes to stimulus packages, from Obama to Rick Warren, nothing is sacred and Clinton will bring her unique levity to some of today's most controversial topics. Last presidential year, Kate's show Hilarity Clinton '08 toured nationwide. It followed her 2007 show, Climate Change. In 2006, Kate Clinton celebrated her 25th Anniversary of performing with a 50-city It's Come To This! tour.

As an actress, humorist, panelist and host, Kate has worked with some of the great writers and performers of our time. Kate participated in a staged reading of Tony Kushner's play, SLAVS, with Olympia Dukakis, Tracey Ullman and Madeline Kahn at the Walter Kerr Theatre in New York.

Kate was a panelist in a public discussion Satire in America and hosted an evening at The Kennedy Center when Richard Pryor received the first-ever Mark Twain Award. Kate has performed nationally since 1981 from Joe's Pub in New York City to the Park West in Chicago to the Herbst Theater in San Francisco, and back to New York for several off-Broadway runs, with hundreds of comedy club dates in between. She has come a long way from those first performances in Unitarian Church basements.

Tickets are $30 balcony, $50 main floor, $100 VIP Main Floor and can be purchased at the Temple of Music and Art Box Office or by calling (520) 622-2823.

TIHAN Volunteer Orientation Fast Approaching

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (TIHAN) will be holding our volunteer orientation on November 12th from 5:15pm to 9:15pm. The orientation will take place at First Congregational UCC which is located at 1350 N Arcadia Ave, Tucson.

TIHAN is a volunteer driven organization with a commitment to providing compassionate, nonjudgmental care to those living with HIV/AIDS. Visit us at tihan.org to learn more. Here are some of our volunteer positions:

Care Team Member - Make someone's day brighter by visiting them, running errands with them, or helping them get to their doctors appointments. Care Teams provide compassionate nonmedical support to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Link Specialist - This position was rated the second most important to wellbeing by the people living with HIV that we serve. Link specialists provide referrals and well calls to our CarePartners.

Administrative Support for TIHAN Staff - The TIHAN office seeks fun-loving people to help with a data entry and administrative tasks.

Grants Team Member - Looking to keep your grant writing skills fresh? Looking for experience in grant writing, editing, or research? TIHAN is searching for both experienced and inexperienced-but-interested volunteers to join our grants team. We are a small, but dynamic nonprofit and your skills will make a huge difference here!

To sign up for orientation, simply contact Katelyn, Volunteer Resources Coordinator at (520) 299-6647 or email her at katelyn@tihan.org. We hope to see you there!

TGLBTCC Breakfast Meeting November 19

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The November breakfast meeting of the Tucson Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Chamber of Commerce will take place Thursday, November 19, 7:30 - 9:00 a.m., at the Hotel Tucson City Center Conference Suite Resort (formerly Inn Suites), 475 N. Granada Ave.

The program, is a Town Meeting: An Action Plan to Promote Economic Development in Our Community, Chair: City Councilman Rodney Glassman. The Tucson GLBT Chamber of Commerce Advocacy Committee is putting this forum together as part of its mission to provide leadership in the business community on local government issues.

RSVP by Monday, November 16, noon (any member who RSVP's after this day will be charged $20), 615-6436 or info@tucsonglbtchamber.org.

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P.O. BOX 50733,
TUCSON, AZ 85703
(520) 622-7176 (Voice)

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EDITOR/PUBLISHER:
Bob Ellis
ARTS & GRAPHICS:
Gary Clark
MANAGING EDITOR:
Mark Kerr
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Informing the Community
The Observer

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All Souls Procession - 20th Anniversary - Grand Finale & Dance Of The Dead - Sunday, November 8 - 5pm - 8pm

TUCSON - Tucson's ALL SOULS PROCESSION is perhaps one of the most important, inclusive and authentic public ceremonies in North America today. The Procession had its beginnings in 1990 with a ritualistic performance piece created by local artist Susan Johnson, who was grieving the passing of her father. Inspired by Mexico's Dia de los Muertos holiday, Johnson felt she should honor her father in celebration and creativity. The performance was very well received and many artists were inspired to continue growing the Procession into its modern incarnation.

Many Mouths One Stomach (www.manymouths.org), a non-profit arts collective based in Tucson, Arizona, is the organizing body for the annual Procession and serves as a vehicle for working artists to collaborate, create, and inspire the public through "Festal Culture". Today the entirely volunteer-driven group is charged with organizing over 20,000 participants on the streets of downtown Tucson. The nearly two-mile long human-powered procession ends in the finalizing pageantry of burning a huge urn filled with the hopes, offerings and wishes of the public for those who have passed. Along the route are myriads of installation art, altars, performers, and creatives of all kinds collaborating for nearly a year to prepare their offerings to this amazing event. The annual All Souls Procession, now an entire All Souls Weekend, is a celebration and mourning of the lives of our loved ones who have passed.

The All Souls Procession will include the carrying AIDS Ribbon Tucson

"Festal Culture" is the expression and fulfillment of core human needs through public celebration, ceremony, and ritual. The All Souls Procession is an event that was created to serve the public's need to mourn, reflect, and celebrate the universal experience of Death, through their ancestors, loved ones, as well as the living. The Procession is a sanctuary for community members from all walks of life to express their grief and loss in a celebration of creative energy and a rejoice of living.

In keeping with that concept, AIDS Ribbon Tucson, Southern Arizona's interactive public memorial to the 25 million people lost to AIDS, was unfurled and blessed by faith leaders and clergy in the 2008 Procession earning it official memorial status. According to Jeffrey Scott Brown, the memorial's caretaker, there are exciting plans to return for this year's event. "Anyone wishing to help carry AIDS Ribbon Tucson is invited to gather at 5pm this Sunday near 4th Street and 4th Avenue", Brown says. "The largest traditional red ribbon this City has ever seen will flow along the route, paying tribute to those who have gone before us while honoring the brave men, women and children living the daily battle against HIV/AIDS", he adds.

Date: Sunday November 8, 2009
Time: 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Location: Starting at 4th Avenue and University Boulevard, winding through Downtown Tucson to the historic Warehouse Docks at Stone & Toole

Info: http://www.manymouths.org/2009/09/all-souls-2009/

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New Study Offers First Demographic Picture Of G/L Spouses

LOS ANGELES, CA (Observer Update) - The Williams Institute for Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy at UCLA Law issued a report today analyzing newly released data from the US Census Bureau. The study examines data from the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS).

For the first time, the Census Bureau has released data in which same-sex couples who refer to one another as "husband" or "wife" are differentiated from those who refer to one another as "unmarried partners." This study is the first to examine the difference and similarities among same-sex couples and married different-sex couples in the ACS.

More than one-quarter of the estimated 565,000 same-sex couples in the United States designated themselves as spouses. Same-sex spouses were reported in every state.

"While nearly 150,000 same-sex couples consider themselves to be spouses, we estimate that 32,000 same-sex couples were legally married in the United States by the end of 2008," said Gary J. Gates, the Williams Distinguished Scholar and the study's author. Some couples may have had religious ceremonies or commitment ceremonies, others may be in civil unions or registered domestic partnerships, and some may simply believe themselves to have a marriage-like relationship regardless of their legal relationship status.

The report finds that same-sex spouses are more common in states that permit marriage for same-sex couples or some form of legal recognition. For example, Massachusetts, in which same-sex have been able to legally marry since 2004, has 3.63 same-sex spousal couples per 1,000 households, the most of any state.

When comparing same-sex spouses to same-sex unmarried couples and to married different-sex couples, the report finds many similarities between same-sex and different-sex spouses. They are similar in terms of age, education, household income, and homeownership rates.

Other notable findings include:

* Massachusetts, the first state to permit marriage for same-sex couples in 2004, had an estimated 3.63 same-sex spousal couples per 1,000 households in 2008, ranking first among all states. Vermont, which has offered civil unions since 2000, ranked second at 2.71. The remaining top five states ranked by same-sex spouse prevalence were Hawaii (2.43), Utah (2.32), and Wyoming (2.28).

* The District of Columbia had the highest prevalence of same-sex unmarried partners per 1,000 households (13.22), followed by Maine (6.81), Washington (5.84), Oregon (5.73), and New York (5.15).

* Same-sex spouses were more likely to be female; 56% of same-sex spouses were female while unmarried same-sex partners were evenly split between the sexes. This characteristic mirrors the higher rate of actual marriages by female couples in states that have extended marriage to same-sex couples.

* Same-sex spouses were twice as likely to be raising children- more than 31% of spouses are raising children as opposed to 17% of unmarried partners.

* Same-sex unmarried partners do differ in many ways from their different-sex unmarried counterparts. They are older, more educated, wealthier, more likely to own a home, more likely to be employed, and less likely to be raising children.

Gates notes that, "Despite the complicated legal status of same-sex couples in this country, many see themselves and spouses and, demographically, they look very much like married couples." The report's findings underscore the significance of the Census Bureau's recent decision to more accurately report the responses of same-sex couples in the United States, whether as spouses or as unmarried partners.

More Immigrants Cite Sexual Orientation For Asylum

Continued from Page One

transsexuals were attacked in bars. He recalled a Transgender woman set on fire. Each time Azevedo said he went to police about an attack or a threat, the officers didn't even bother to file a report. "I had such a horrific experience," said Azevedo, who was granted asylum in July. "I was always in fear of being raped, maybe even killed." After winning their cases, both Cunningham and Azevedo have become advocates for other asylum-seekers by giving them counseling and directing them toward legal help.

In Worcester, for example, Cunningham has helped a Lebanese and three others Jamaicans win asylum with the legal help provided by the Lutheran Social Services' "LGBT Human Rights Protection Project." Another case, involving an Ugandan woman, is pending in the courts. But while those who have been granted asylum are eager to help, Azevedo said many still haven't resolved the pain from the past and can't go back home to visit family – those who haven't disowned them. Cunningham said he hasn't gotten over the fear that, at any moment, he may be forced to flee. "I've never really owned furniture," Cunningham said. "You just never know."

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Johnson Apologizes For Anti-Gay Slurs

Larry Johnson

KANSAS CITY, MO (Observer Update) - Kansas City Chiefs running back Larry Johnson apologized for his use of antiGay slurs, but his team advised him to keep a distance while they and the National Football League complete an investigation, reported advocate.com. "I regret my actions," said Johnson through a spokesman, according to the Associated Press. "The words were used by me in frustration, and they were not appropriate. I did not intend to offend anyone, but that is no excuse for what I said," he said.

Kansas City Chiefs coach Todd Haley said the matter was still being investigated, while the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation called for disciplinary action against Johnson, according to the AP. Several websites were reporting he had been suspended, which the team denied. Johnson, who has a history of assault charges, sparked an outcry with his utterance of anti Gay slurs after his team lost to the San Diego Chargers. In the first instance he called a Twitter follower's profile picture a "fag pic" and referred to the person as a "Christopher Street boy," TheKansas City Star reported.

Johnson used an anti Gay slur in a request for reporters to leave the locker room. "Then Johnson turned away and whispered, 'Get your faggot ass out of here,'" the Star reported.

Buble': Girlfriend Thought I Was Gay

LONDON, UK (Observer Update) - In an interview with Britain's The Sun, Michael Bublé revealed that his current girlfriend thought the singer was Gay when she first met him, reported advocate.com.

Bublé met girlfriend Luisana Lopilato last year backstage at one of his concerts. Lopilato, a singer, actress, and model from Argentina, was with a male friend at the time. Intimidated by her beauty and deficient in his Spanish fluency, Buble spoke to her English-speaking companion instead.

"I was saying to him, 'You're a good-looking dude' and 'You guys are a good-looking couple,'" Bublé told The Sun. "I later found out she was on the phone to her mother the whole time saying, 'Bublé's Gay. He's hitting on my friend.'" Bublé also revealed in his interview that contrary to his innocent image, the crooner regularly bought marijuana on the streets of Vancouver, Canada, as a young man. "I grew up in Vancouver, which has the best weed in the world and good alcohol. You can score [drugs] just walking down the street, so I did," he said. "I've never done cocaine or heroin or anything stronger. But I don't see anything wrong with relaxing with a joint."

Pro Baseball Team Has Open Lesbian As Owner

CHICAGO, IL (Observer Update) - The Chicago Cubs have reached a baseball milestone and it has nothing to do with their century-plus World Series drought. With the team's purchase by the Ricketts Family, the Cubs are the first Major League Baseball team to have an openly Gay owner.

Laura Ricketts

Among the new owners is Laura Ricketts, an out lesbian who is also on the board of the Gay rights organization Lambda Legal, the Windy City Times reports. Ricketts, who is a member of the Cubs board of directors, came out to her family in her 30's. "I think for a long time I wasn't really out to myself growing up in Omaha, Neb., to a Catholic conservative family," Ricketts said. "It took me a while to come out to myself and not long after that I came out to them. I think that it really couldn't of been a better experience. They were all immediately supportive. ... I have been really really fortunate in that regard."

The Ricketts family bought the Cubs and Wrigley Field from the Tribune Co. for $845 million in a deal that was finalized Oct. 27. The league owners unanimously approved the Cubs sale to the Ricketts family.

Obama Signs HIV/AIDS Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - President Barack Obama has signed an extension of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS bill, reported advocate.com The legislation provides care, treatment and support services to nearly half a million people, most of whom are low-income. Obama also announced that the Department of Health and Human services has finally crafted a new regulation spelling the end to the HIV Travel and Immigration Ban. The regulation goes into effect in January.

"We often speak as if AIDS is going on somewhere else. Often overlooked is that we face a serious HIV/AIDS epidemic of our own," Obama said prior to the signing. He noted that early on, AIDS was considered a "gay disease, and those who had it were viewed with suspicion." This is the fourth re-authorization of the Ryan White bill, and Obama said it was the first time that the bill was not controversial or divisive, and passed with bi-partisian support.

There are 1.1 million living with HIV/AIDs in the United States; more than 56,000 cases are added each year. Obama noted that gay men, though they comprise 2 to 3 percent of the population, make up about half of all new cases, and that African-Americans make up almost half. Obama said he hoped the lifting of the travel ban would help end the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS. He also said that he and his wife Michelle would be getting a second AIDS test soon. For 22 years, United States had one of the most restrictive policies on the immigration and travel of HIV-positive people in the world. According to a historian writing for SHAFR.org:

"It compelled all non-citizens to attest that they were HIV-negative before being admitted to the United States for any reason – despite the obvious impossibility of enforcing this provision. At the same time, non-citizens living long-term in the United States were denied permanent resident categorization solely on basis of their HIV-positive status. While invoking its sovereign rights to control immigration and tourism, the U.S. government clung to policies suffused with the ignorance and bias toward HIV-positive people illustrated at the earliest stages of the AIDS pandemic.

"It disregarded the fact that for almost 25 years, it has been common medical knowledge that one cannot contract or transmit HIV casually. AIDS activists asserted that the HIV bar dissuaded immigrants unsure of their HIV status from getting tested; prompted HIV-positive immigrants not to seek to medical treatment until they had full-blown AIDS; and caused HIV-positive people seeking visas to lie on their applications and then enter the U.S. without their medications – situations posing exactly the threats to public health the 1987 ban aimed to prevent."

In July 2008 as part of an AIDS bill, Congress voted to restore the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to remove HIV from the immigration and visitor ban list. George W. Bush signed it into law – but HHS had not yet issued a revised rule until today, which meant that those with HIV and AIDS were still banned from the country.

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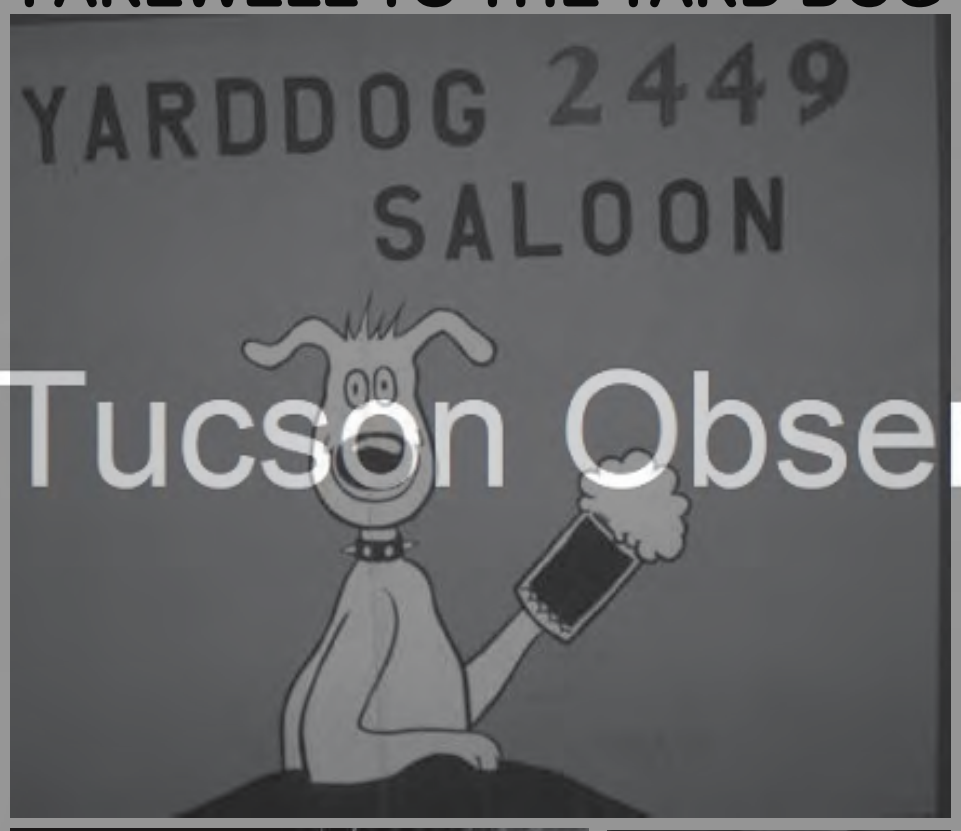

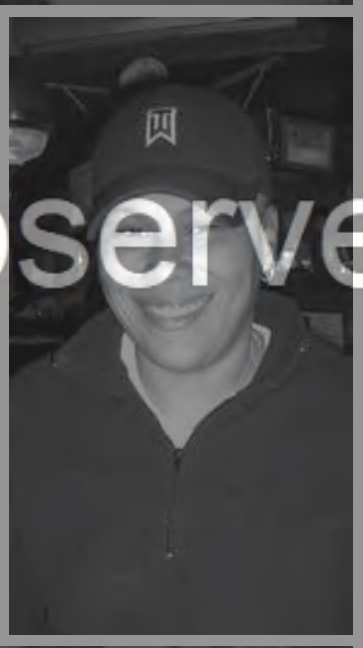

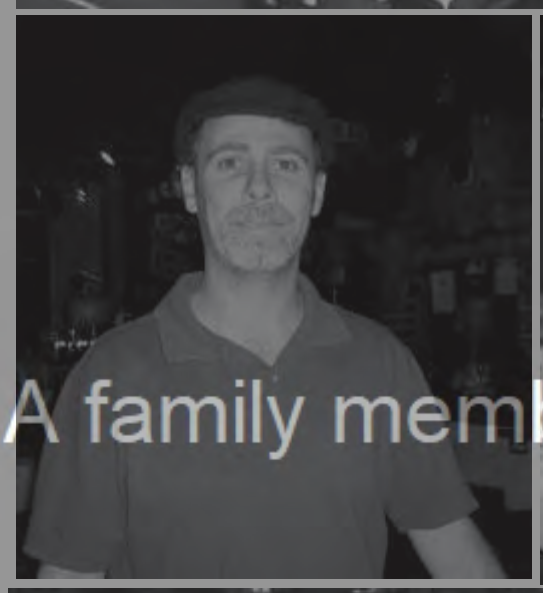

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POLITICS 2009

by Mark R. Kerr

An Historic Day For The LGBT Community

On Wednesday, October President Barack Obama Wednesday signed into law the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act as part of the 2010 National Defense Authorization Act.

What follow's are the President's remarks on that new, historic day, for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you so much, everybody. Thank you so much, and welcome to the White House.

There are several people here that I want to just make mention of because they helped to make today possible. We've got Attorney General Eric Holder. (Applause.) A champion of this legislation, and a great Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi. (Applause.) My dear friend, senior Senator from the great state of Illinois, Dick Durbin. (Applause.) The outstanding Chairman of Armed Services, Carl Levin. (Applause.) Senator Arlen Specter. (Applause.) Chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the House, Representative John Conyers. (Applause.) Representative Barney Frank. (Applause.) Representative Tammy Baldwin. (Applause.) Representative Jerry Nadler. (Applause.) Representative Jared Polis. (Applause.) All the members of Congress who are here today, we thank you.

Mr. David Bohnett and Mr. Tom Gregory and the David Bohnett Foundation – they are partners for this reception. Thank you so much, guys, for helping to host this. (Applause.) And finally, and most importantly, because these were really the spearheads of this effort – Denis, Judy, and Logan Shepard. (Applause.) As well as Betty Byrd Boatner and Louvon Harris – sisters of James Byrd, Jr. (Applause.) To all the activists, all the organizers, all the people who helped make this day happen, thank you for your years of advocacy and activism, pushing and protesting that made this victory possible. You know, as a nation we've come far on the journey towards a more perfect union. And today, we've taken another step forward. This afternoon, I signed into law the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. (Applause.)

This is the culmination of a struggle that has lasted more than a decade. Time and again, we faced opposition. Time and again, the measure was defeated or delayed. Time and again we've been reminded of the difficulty of building a nation in which we're all free to live and love as we see fit. But the cause endured and the struggle continued, waged by the family of Matthew Shepard, by the family of James Byrd, by folks who held vigils and led marches, by those who rallied and organized and refused to give up, by the late Senator Ted Kennedy who fought so hard for this legislation – (applause) – and all who toiled for years to reach this day. You understood that we must stand against crimes that are meant not only to break bones, but to break spirits – not only to inflict harm, but to instill fear. You understand that the rights afforded every citizen under our Constitution mean nothing if we do not protect those rights – both from unjust laws and violent acts. And you understand how necessary this law continues to be.

In the most recent year for which we have data, the FBI reported roughly 7,600 hate crimes in this country. Over the past 10 years, there were more than 12,000 reported hate crimes based on sexual orientation alone. And we will never know how many incidents were never reported at all. And that's why, through this law, we will strengthen the protections against crimes based on the color of your skin, the faith in your heart, or the place of your birth. We will finally add federal protections against crimes based on gender, disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation. (Applause.) And prosecutors will have new tools to work with states in order to prosecute to the fullest those who would perpetrate such crimes. Because no one in America should ever be afraid to walk down the street holding the hands of the person they love. No one in America should be forced to look over their shoulder because of who they are or because they live with a disability.

At root, this isn't just about our laws; this is about who we are as a people. This is about whether we value one another – whether we embrace our differences, rather than allowing them to become a source of animus. It's hard for any of us to imagine the mind-set of someone who would kidnap a young man and beat him to within an inch of his life, tie him to a fence, and leave him for dead. It's hard for any of us to imagine the twisted mentality of those who'd offer a neighbor a ride home, attack him, chain him to the back of a truck, and drag him for miles until he finally died.

But we sense where such cruelty begins: the moment we fail to see in another our common humanity – the very moment when we fail to recognize in a person the same fears and hopes, the same passions and imperfections, the same dreams that we all share. We have for centuries strived to live up to our founding ideal, of a nation where all are free and equal and able to pursue their own version of happiness. Through conflict and tumult, through the morass of hatred and prejudice, through periods of division and discord we have endured and grown stronger and fairer and freer. And at every turn, we've made progress not only by changing laws but by changing hearts, by our willingness to walk in another's shoes, by our capacity to love and accept even in the face of rage and bigotry. In April of 1968, just one week after the assassination of Martin Luther King, as our nation mourned in grief and shuddered in anger, President Lyndon Johnson signed landmark civil rights legislation. This was the first time we enshrined into law federal protections against crimes motivated by religious or racial hatred – the law on which we build today.

As he signed his name, at a difficult moment for our country, President Johnson said that through this law "the bells of freedom ring out a little louder." That is the promise of America. Over the sounds of hatred and chaos, over the din of grief and anger, we can still hear those ideals – even when they are faint, even when some would try to drown them out. At our best we seek to make sure those ideals can be heard and felt by Americans everywhere. And that work did not end in 1968. It certainly does not end today. But because of the efforts of the folks in this room – particularly those family members who are standing behind me – we can be proud that that bell rings even louder now and each day grows louder still. So thank you very much. God bless you and God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)

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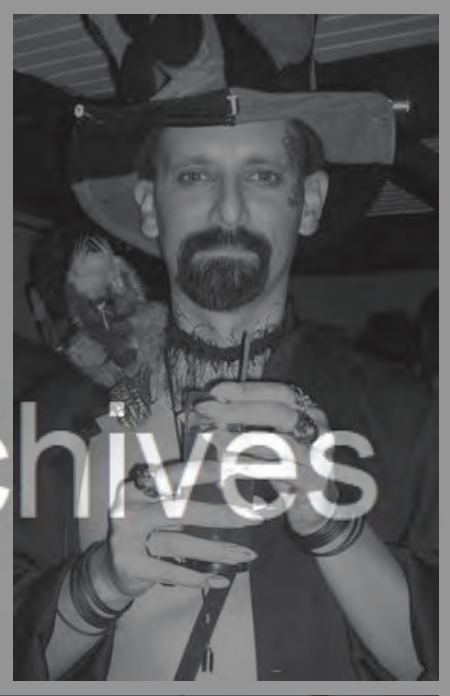

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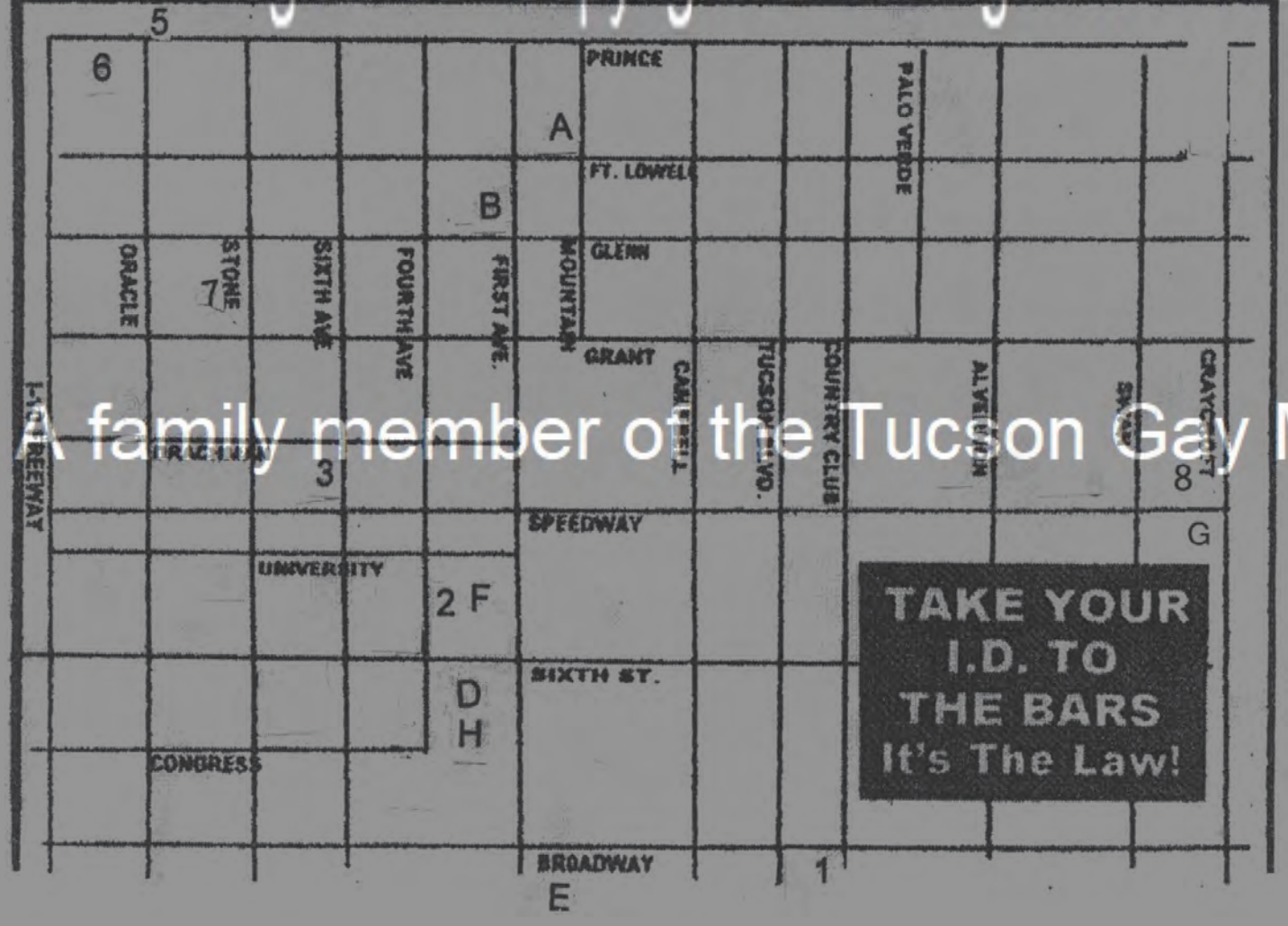

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430 E. 7th Street -624-1779

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

G. **TIHAN** - Tucson Interfaith HIV-AIDS Network - 1101 N. Craycroft Suite 301 - 299-6647

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Ft. Worth Police Appoint LGBT Liaison

FORT WORTH, TX (Observer Update) - The Fort Worth, Texas, police have taken a major step toward repairing its relatioship with the LGBT community after a violent bar raid on June 28, 2009-,the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising. The fracas came in for criticism from government officials and eventually police officials themselves, edgeboston.com reported.

After intense media scrutiny and protests from the Fort Worth LGBT community in the weeks following the Rainbow Lounge incident, the Fort Worth Police Department began a number of initiatives meant to mend fences with the LGBT community. One such action (in addition to an official apology from the Chief of Police) is the appointment of Sara Straten to the interim position of LGBT liaison. Straten, who serves as the liaison in addition to her full-time job as a neighborhood police officer in the far north part of town, hopes the position will become an official, full-time one. She's made it clear that she wants the job.

Rafael McDonnell, strategic communications and program manager for Resource Center Dallas, first met with Straten the evening she was, then again over lunch several weeks later. A native of Fort Worth who still lives there, McDonnell notes Straten has "been physically present at many events and has made herself available to the community. As a result of that, she has gained their trust and support." Jonathan Nelson, spokesperson for Fairness Fort Worth, serves with Straten on the city's recently created Diversity Task Force. He has not been involved in or is not privy to any incidents which would shed light on her effectiveness as an LGBT liaison when comes to crime and the community.

Still, Nelson says it's too early to judge the effectiveness of the position on those matters. "From working with her on the Diversity Task Force dealing with the issue of partner benefits for city employees, including LGBTs, she's been very vocal and positive and strong about the necessity for partner benefits," he added. Straten says that when the position becomes an official, full-time one, he hopes the Police Department will create a job description after "discussions with the LGBT community."

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PROBATE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Federal Judge Rejects Anti-Gay Rights Group

SEATTLE, WA (Observer) - A federal judge has denied emergency requests from opponents of Washington's new "everything but marriage" same-sex domestic partner law to suspend a ban on big campaign contributions and a requirement that those donors identify themselves, reported spi.com.

A new political action committee, Family PAC, said the laws were hurting its ability to collect last-minute political contributions before the Nov. 3 election. U.S. District Judge Ronald B. Leighton said the group hadn't shown strong enough evidence to back its case. "I do not believe it is in the public interest for court, the week before an election, to intervene and change the rules of the game at the last minute," he said.

The case revolves around Referendum 71, which would broaden domestic partnership rights for gay couples. State campaign finance laws violate free speech rights, Family PAC said. Family PAC was created after the legal deadline for large campaign contributions had passed. That unfairly keeps people who want to donate large amounts of money from participating in the political process, lawyer Scott Bieniek argued. The requirement to identify all but the smallest donors, with that information readily available to the public, also frustrates some people's right to speak their political mind, since a donation could draw retribution from others, Bieniek said. "It takes one angry customer call to your boss to say, 'I don't like the fact that you employ someone who gave money to reject R-71 or approve R-71,'" he said.

The U.S. Supreme Court blocked the release of names of people who signed R-71 petitions. The High Court will now consider whether to hear the merits of the case - whether people signing petitions are engaging in protected political speech.

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Callahan: It's Always TimeTo Do The Right Thing

DALLAS, TX (Observer Update) - Judge Tena Callahan stood at the front of the room inside Ojeda's Restaurant, and held up a small, red cloth bag, reported the Dallas Voice. Callahan said she has "millions" of bags like it, because they're frequently given to judges and attorneys at legal seminars. She said she uses them for groceries and leaves them hanging over a chair in her dining room.

But Callahan said it was this particular bag – and the quotation printed on the back – that ultimately helped her muster the courage she needed to recently declare Texas' marriage amendment unconstitutional. "I was sitting at my dining room table and I was thinking, I've got to make this decision, I've got to rip this Band-Aid off and I've got to make this decision," Callahan said, adding that she wasn't struggling with the constitutional principle behind the ruling, but with the backlash she was sure to face.

"My dad always used to tell me that a billion people can believe in a bad idea, and it's still a bad idea. And that man taught me to have the courage of my convictions and to do what's right – it's always the right time to do the right thing. And as I'm sitting there and all this is going through my head, I'm looking at the back of this bag, and I went, 'Oh my God, I just got my answer.'"

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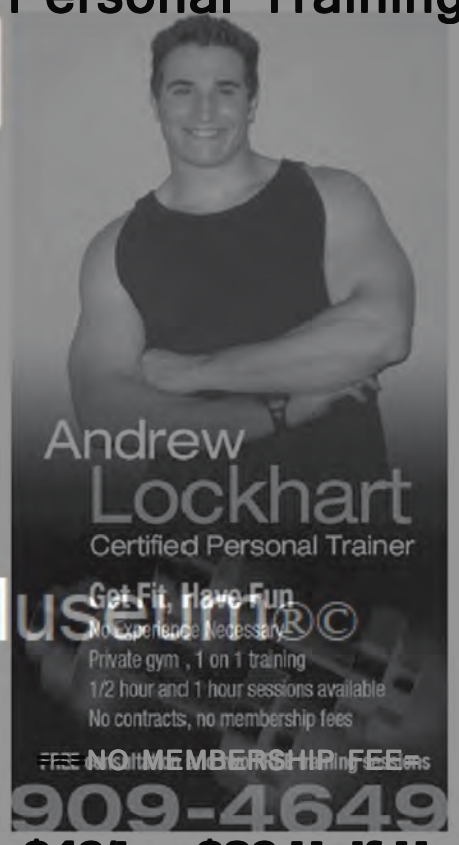

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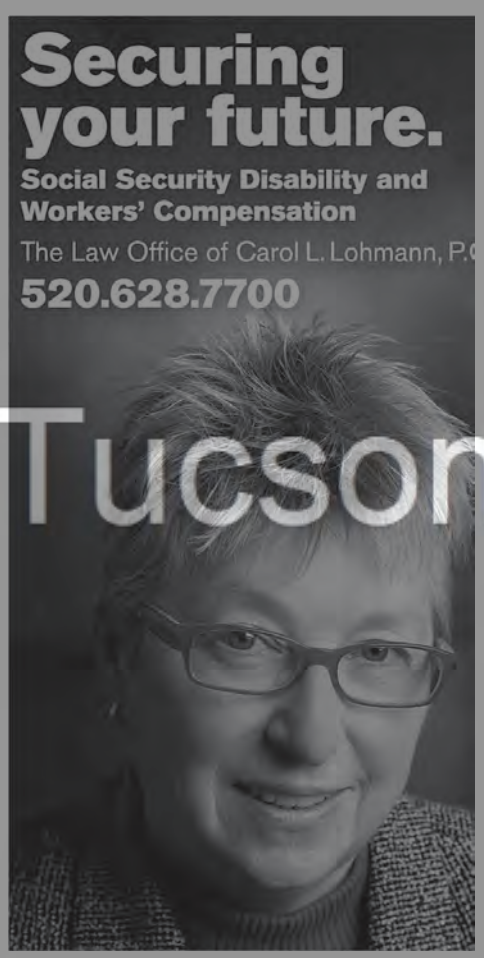

Theatre Review

by Jack Melichar

WARNING! Don't buy tickets for GEORGE IS DEAD if you love your "woe is me" syndrome or if you won't get off your cross even though you know we need the wood. You will have a miserable evening, and despise me for recommending it. However, if you enjoy comedy, GEORGE IS DEAD is a play for you. I was curious as to how someone's death could be amusing, but Elaine May, along with a superb cast has done just that. George, played by Don Murray (an Academy Award nominee) is a right wing Republican married to Doreen (Marlo Thomas, an Emmy Award winner for Best Dramatic Actress) who can only be described as a bitchy self-centered socialite.

On her way to a fund raiser, Doreen learns of George's death, and retreats to the home of a former employee, Carla (Julia Brothers). Carla's sole purpose in life seems to be pleasing others (as opposed to Doreen's self-centeredness), and it is not until the end of the play that she smartens up. The interplay between Carla and Doreen is, by itself, well worth the price of admission. Carla: "You're not listening to me, are you?"

Doreen: "I never listen to anyone. Why would I do that? It's like keeping someone's dirty underwear in a drawer. Why would you do that?" Note: I have paraphrased this conversation. My mind is not the steel trap it used to be, and I sometimes forget - a lot!

Once again, ATC has disappointed me. It is far easier and much more fun to critique a play that s horrible. It allows my sarcasm to run wild. Damn! I can't do it here. The play is too well crafter, too well staged and too well acted to be anything but wonderful. I recommend it highly. GEORGE IS DEAD will play at the Temple of Music and Art - 330 S Scott through Nov. 7. For ticket information call 520-620-2823 or go online to Arizonatheatre.org.

ANGELS IN AMERICA - PART ONE : MILLENNIUM. Studio Connections presents the epic story of a time that changed the world - the early years of the Aids epidemic. Tony Kushner's ANGELS IN AMERICA has been making headlines since its May 4, 1993 opening on Broadway. With two Tony Awards for "Best Play" and two Drama Desk Awards for "Outstanding Play," the show has proven to be timeless.

The cast of the play is extremely competent and convincing. Suffice it to say they were able to keep my attention for the duration, and it is not a short play. While I would like to acknowledge each one individually, space will not permit it. Therefore, I am left in the unenviable position of selecting only two to represent the entire cast.

David Zinke plays the part of Roy M. Cohen, a sleeze ball of the first of the first order. He was more that a little responsible for the execution of Ethel Rosenberg (June 19, 1953) as a spy for the Soviet Union - more than likely she was innocent, and her spirit returns to haunt him as he prepares to meet his Maker. He had close associations with Senator McCarthy, another scum bag. The play also brings out other unsavory ele4ments of his character. Zinke plays the part to perfection. He comes across as a real scum bag and if you didn't know better - which I do - you would think he wasn't acting!

David James Olson plays Prior Walker, and in that role elicits a great deal of sympathy. Early on in the show, we learn that he has aids. He is terrified that his lover will desert him, and he will die alone. Olson plays the part so well that I could feel Prior's pain and fear.

Kudos to the entire cast, you did a superb job. This is an evening of great theatre, and I highly recommend it. Toward the end of the play, however, I was reminded of Vivian Leigh's comment upon seeing the premier of GONE WITH THE WIND in Atlanta: "It was really quite good, but a bit hard on one's ass". The play will run at Studio Connections, 9071 E Old Spanish Trail, until November 8. Call 520-730-1559 for ticket information and directions.

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Scientologists Deny Anti-Gay Claims

NEW YORK, NY (Observer Update) - A spokesman for the Church of Scientology responded to public claims by Crash director Paul Haggis that the church is anti Gay, saying that the church's San Diego branch was incorrectly put on a list of Proposition 8 supporters, reported advocate.com.

Scientology spokesman Tommy Davis denied the charges Haggis made in a letter that found its way online, according to MSNBC. Haggis recently left the church after many years, citing its support for the effort to eliminate the right of same-sex couples to marry in California. "Church of Scientology San Diego had been put on a list of churches that supported Proposition 8 out in California," said Davis, according to MSNBC. "It was incorrectly included and named when it should have never been on the list to begin with," he said.

Davis added that Haggis wanted the church to take a more active political stance against Prop. 8, but the church is prohibited from doing so because of its tax-exempt status.

Alabama School Board Protects LGBT Kids

BIRMINGHAM, AL (Observer Update) - The Birmingham, Ala., board of education made a bold statement by passing an anti bullying policy that protects not only LGBT kids from harassment and bullying, but LGBT teachers as well, reported advocate.com.

Birmingham board member Howard Bayless oversaw the monumental decision. He told GayPolitics.com, "This process began over a year ago. Being the first openly Gay man elected in the state and the first openly Gay school board member anywhere in Alabama, I knew I wanted our system to be more inclusive and welcoming to ALL of our students, but I also knew this would have to be a process that involved my eight fellow board members."

Bayless says he spoke to all the board members and explained how damaging anti Gay bullying is and how it personally affected him when he was a student in Birmingham's schools.

LGBT Victory In Florida City

TALLAHASSEE, FL (Observer Update) - The Tallahassee city commission unanimously approved domestic-partner benefits for city employees in the capital of Florida, while it also agreed to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the city's anti discrimination and anti harassment policies, reported advocate.com.

The domestic-partner policy change will allow same-sex partners of city workers access to health, dental, vision, and other benefits coverage, according to the Tallahassee Democrat. "That means significant others, no matter their sexual orientation, will be eligible for the same benefits currently available to married couples," the Democrat reported. "The policy change also means a non-married couple that has been together for a number of years is eligible for benefits."

Prospective domestic partners will be required to provide proof of the relationship, such as joint mortgage statements or bank accounts.

Scholastic Relents On Lesbian Book

NEW YORK CITY, NY (Observer Update) - Children's publishing company Scholastic says that it will include a book that it previously banned from its book fairs over a set of lesbian characters, advocate.com reported.

Lauren Myracle, author of the four-book series Luv Ya Bunches, told School Library Journal that she was asked by the publisher to tone down some mildly offensive language, and to consider swapping out the lesbian mothers of a character for a set of heterosexual parents. Myracle said she agreed to remove the language, but not the moms. However, she said her decision caused her book to be kept away from elementary school book fairs. Scholastic said in response that it would continue to keep the books in its catalog.

As a result a round of petitioning was launched on Change.org, which garnered more than 4,000 signatures. However, a statement posted on Scholastic's blog says that the publisher "does not censor books" and that it is committed to being fair in its book selection. "Having completed our review of Luv Ya Bunches, Scholastic Book Fairs will carry the title in our spring fairs for middle school," the statement read. "Scholastic is proud of our long history of providing books that will appeal to the wide range of interests and reading abilities of children in the many diverse cultures and communities we serve. Luv Ya Bunches is just one example."

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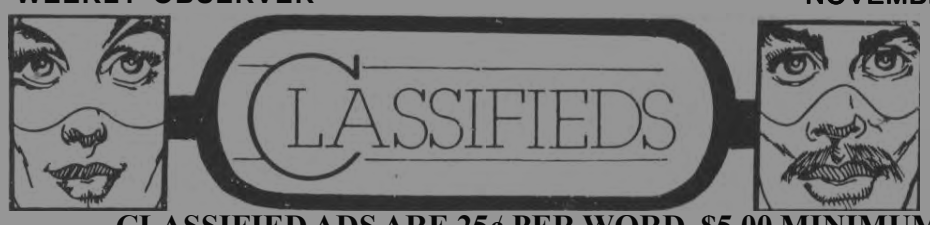

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Non-Bar Calendar

Sunday, November 8

Tucson's 'All Souls Procession' will take place this evening from 5:00 untill 8:00 p.m. starting at 4th Avenue and University Blvd, winding through downtown Tucson to the historsic Warehouse Docks at Stone and Toole. This is the 20th anniversary for the Procession and it is perhaps one of the most important, inclusive and auathentic public ceremonies in North Ameerica today. For more information - http://www.manymouths.org/2009/all-souls-2009/

Tickets are now on sale for Kate Clinton's YES on K8 show at 7:00 p.m. at the Temple of Music and Art, 330 S. Scott Avenue. Tickets are $30 balcony, $50 main floor, $100 VIP main floor and can be purchased at the Temple of Music and Art Box Office or by calling (520)622-2823.

Saturday & Sunday, November 14-15

Desert Voices Concert at the Prescenium Theatrre, West Pima Campus, 2202 W. Anklam Road, 7:30 p.m. on the 14th and 3:00 p.m. on the 15t. Join Desert Voices as the chorus pays tribute to memorable musicals from Broadway and Tinseltown in Upstaged! Divas and Mis(s)Leading men.

Sunday, November 15 Ethica with the support of The Alliance Fund is holding an informational meeting to release sthe recently published "Navigating LGBT Adoptions: Pitfalls, Protectoins on the Road to Parenthood".

The event details will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Lighthouse YMCA at 2900 N. Columbus Blvd. There will be a panel discusssion aboutr adoptiion issues in the lGBT community with adoptive parents, adults and prospective parents. For information call Melissa (520)975-0385

Thursday, November 19

The November breakfast meeting of the Tucson Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Chamber of Commerce will take place today at 9:00 a.m. at the Hotel Tucson City Center Conference Suite Resort (formerly Inn Suites), 475 N. Granada Ave. RSVP by Monday, November 16. 615-6436 or info@tucsonglbtchamber.org

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)

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Poet's Corner

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by Ron Rose - Tucson

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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

Humane Society of Southern Arizona
3450 North Kelvin Boulevard
Tucson, AZ 85716
(520) 327-6088

http://www.humane-so-arizona.org

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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, Tucson's Gay & Lesbian square dance club, dances Tuesdays 6:30-9 pm at the Cornerstone Fellowship Social Hall, 2902 N Geronimo Ave (Northwest of 1st Ave & Glenn St). No experience needed, no partner required! For more information contact Barb at 886-0716, 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.

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.

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

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).

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".

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.

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. Y-Not Karaoke with Anna at 8:00 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.

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.

WEDNESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. 5-9 Wild Wednesdays $1 Hump Day Drinks DJ Hill. College Night. 18 to party - 21 to drink. $8 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.

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 with DJ Cliint 9 til closing.

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.

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..

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.

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.

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".

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.

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

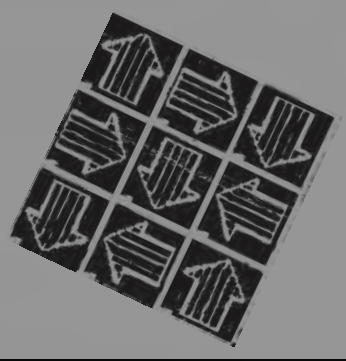
Friday, November 6

WOODY'S - Woody's celebrating their 10th anniversary with a gala party and the best drink special that Tucson has seen in years.

Saturday, November 7

COYOTE MOON - Latin Night! DJ and Show.

WOODY'S - "Meow Mix" at 8 p.m. with live girl dancers and drink specials and from her national tour - Joanna - the hottest comedy act ever. $5 Cover.



Mississippi School Refuses To Publish Yearbook Photo Of Lesbian In Tux

JACKSON, MS (Observer Update) - Wesson Attendance Center, a K-12 school located south of Jackson, Mississippi, is refusing to allow out Lesbian Ceara Sturgis to publish a photo in the yearbook in which she is wearing a tuxedo, towleroad.com reported.

The AP's Shelia Byrd reports: "Traditionally, female students dress in drapes and males wear tuxedos. Now, the American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi has gotten involved, issuing a demand letter to Principal Ronald Greer to publish the picture of Sturgis in the tuxedo. The ACLU says it's giving the school until Oct. 23 to respond before pursuing court action, said Kristy L. Bennett, the ACLU's legal director. A secretary for Greer referred questions to Copiah County Schools Superintendent Rickey Clopton, who declined to comment. Sturgis said she should get to decide how she looks in the senior photo."

Said Sturgis: "I feel like I'm not important, that the school is dismissing who I am as a Gay student and that they don't even care about me. All I want is to be able to be me, and to be included in the yearbook."

Oregon GroupTakesFirst Step To Repeal Marriage Ban

SALEM, OR (Observer Update) - Basic Rights Oregon, the state's largest Gay rights group, has launched a grassroots educational campaign as a primary step to repeal the state's five-year-old constitutional amendment banning marriage rights for same-sex couples, advocate.com reported.

The group is sponsoring a community outreach effort that encourages broad public dialogue on marriage rights in communities, churches, and civic organizations. "This is a concerted, smart effort to get people to talk to their friends, their neighbors, and their coworkers," said Evan Wolfson, executive director of Freedom to Marry. "It's a major public education effort that will play out over the coming months – and years." Wolfson was invited by Basic Rights Oregon to speak Monday at a kickoff event at Portland State University, followed by similar events in Bend and Eugene later in the week.

The Oregonian reports that BRO may support a 2012 repeal of Ballot Measure 36, one of 11 state constitutional amendments banning Gay marriage that passed in 2004. Oregon's measure passed with 57% of voters in support. In 2007 the Oregon state legislature established a domestic-partnership registry and passed antidiscrimination laws in employment, housing, and public facilities based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The statewide campaign kicks off on the eve of multiple battles over the rights of same-sex couples across the country. In Maine, voters will decide whether to uphold a law passed by the state legislature and signed by Gov. John E. Baldacci in May that would legalize same-sex marriage (implementation of the law was delayed pending ballot results), while Washington state voters will be asked to accept or reject a recent expansion of the state's domestic-partnership law that grants marriage-like rights to registered Gay and Lesbian couples.

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COMMENTARY. . . .

by Jon Stolz

On Don't Ask Don't Tell, Army's Ready, So What's The Hold-up?

Former Republican Congressman John McHugh, the new secretary of the Army, said that the Army is ready to deal with repealing Don't Ask, Don't Tell without a problem. So why hasn't a repeal been enacted?

To that, I say, we're getting there. In the House, Representative Patrick Murphy, an Iraq veteran, has taken the lead on the bill to repeal the policy, and has the support of other Iraq and Afghanistan era war veterans, like Tim Walz and Joe Sestak. At VoteVets.org, we're now better than 10,000 signatures (over 5,000 veterans) in favor of a repeal on our online petition.

In the Senate, we're very close to seeing companion legislation introduced. A number of Senators, from Kirsten Gillibrand, to Mark Udall, to John Kerry, to Barbara Boxer have been working on the issue, with many more ready to jump on a bill.

Meanwhile, those opposed to a repeal hang on to this notion that a repeal would affect unit cohesion. Hurt unit cohesion? For years, the military accepted those with "serious criminal misconduct" issues–aggravated assault, robbery, vehicular manslaughter, receiving stolen property and making terrorist threats–because recruiting under normal standards was falling fast. According to USA Today, one-in-eight Army recruits required a waiver by 2008.

One such recruit was Steven Green, guilty of the brutal murder of a family, and the rape of their young daughter, in Mahmudiya, Iraq. After Green killed the family and raped the young girl, he covered her head with a pillow and shot her. Her body was then burned. The murders set off a wave of anti-American sentiment in Iraq, pushing our battle to win hearts and minds even further back. Green was allowed in on a waiver, despite his three alcohol and drug related arrests.

Meanwhile, a highly decorated Airman is fighting a discharge under Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Lt. Col. Victor Fehrenbach served in the Air Force, defending America for 18 years. Fehrenbach is now being represented by the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, and has nine Air Medals - including one for valor for assaulting an Iraqi ambush position while under heavy anti-aircraft fire. He and his wingman spotted armored personnel carriers laying in wait for U.S. troops on their way to Baghdad. Fehrenbach's wingman's plane malfunctioned, so he couldn't accurately fire his weapons. Fehrenbach not only fired his own weapons but he guided the wingman so that he could fire on target. All this while they were under fire.

Tell me now about which person affects cohesion and readiness?

Here's an idea: Let's just keep our best troops, no matter what their background or orientation. Those with a criminal history who have proven to be good troops can stay. Those who are openly Gay will abide by the same strict rules that govern heterosexual relationships in the military. If they break the rules, they're out. But if they also prove to be valuable soldiers, we keep them, too. When our top concern is a military made up of the very best society has to offer, America wins.

Momentum is picking up in Congress behind that notion, and that's a good thing. But we still need the President to make his move. Like most issues, it will take the President to put this issue over the top. During the campaign, he vowed to repeal the policy. Once in office, he deferred to the military, first ordering a study to examine how a repeal might affect things. Now, his own hand-picked Secretary of the Army has given him an answer: It won't affect much. The fact of the matter is that implementing a repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell is not a problem for the military. They can do it quickly and easily. The delay in a repeal has been and continues to be a political problem for politicians.

(Jon Soltz is a co-Founder of VoteVets.org, served as a Captain in Operation Iraqi Freedom. This post was reprinted from the Huffington Post.)

Chaz Bono To Open Up On TV

LOS ANGELES, CA (Observer Update) - Chaz Bono, the son of Gay icon Cher, will be interviewed on television for the first time since announcing he will undergo gender-reassignment surgery, advocate.com reported.

Bono, 40, was interviewed by Entertainment Tonight's Mary Hart and Mark Steines at Bono's Los Angeles home for a series of segments that will appear on the entertainment news program.

A source reports that Bono, who was born biologically female but is transitioning to male, has also posed for a photo shoot showing off his newly reconstructed man chest. Bono's memoir, titled Coming Clean, is scheduled to be published in the spring of 2011.

Miami Beach To Improve Gay Rights Ordinance

MIAMI BEACH, FL (Observer Update) - When it comes to Gay rights in Florida, the Miami Beach is an island of awesomeness, the Miami New Times reported, It's almost like discovering a San Francisco in a sea of Alabama. In 1992, city commissioners were among the first to advocate protecting LGBT folks from workplace discrimination.

During a recent meeting, , the commission unanimously passed a first reading to improve the ordinance.

Sponsored by Miami Beach Commissioner Victor Diaz, the improvements will sharpen the ordinance's existing language. It will clarify definitions of gender identity and expression. And it will add phrases about on-the-job dress code policy. (The language is still being drafted.) CJ Ortuño, executive director of SAVE Dade, says, "It's more comprehensive and more in touch with what's happening nationally."

Seventeen Slammed For Transphobic Article

NEW YORK, NY (Observer Update) - A young LGBT activist has launched a Facebook campaign against Seventeen magazine in response to its publication of an article that portrays Transgender people in a highly negative way, reported advocate.com.

The November issue of the teen glossy includes an article called "True Life Drama: My Boyfriend Turned Out to Be a Girl," written by a young woman named Sheri, as told to editor Jessica Press. In the article Sheri recounts her experience with Derek, who is ultimately revealed to be a young trans man. "It felt like my whole first love was a lie," Sheri writes, in a piece that equates Derek with men who lie about being fathers or those who have a drug problem.

Activist Ariel Bustamante created a Facebook page asking readers to respond to Seventeen with letters of complaint and demands for an apology.

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