Observing Tucson And
The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Tucson Observer Archives

Nation's Largest LGBT Newspaper Publisher Closes

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ATLANTA, GA (Observer Update) - The nation's largest publisher of newspapers serving the Gay and Lesbian community has shut down, 365Gay.com reported.

Laura Douglas-Brown, editor of Southern Voice newspaper in Atlanta, said she arrived at work Monday to find the locks changed and a note saying parent company Window Media LLC had closed down. She said the company's other publications – including the Washington Blade, Houston Voice and South Florida Blade – were also being closed.

"From my understanding, there was just no more money to keep these companies running," she said in a telephone interview as she sat with her former employees outside their locked Atlanta office. "We had all been told that the companies would be sold. The fact that we were shut down was a complete shock."

The company's financial trouble stemmed from a number of factors. Besides an industrywide drop in advertising revenue amid the economic meltdown, mainstream publications are writing more about Gay and Lesbian issues, reducing dependency on niche publications such as Window Media's.

Steven Myers, co-president of Window Media in Washington, D.C., declined comment. He said he'd be able to talk more about the closures later.

The company had been struggling financially since last year. The company's majority stockholder, New York City-based Avalon Equity Partners, was taken over by the U.S. Small Business Administration in August 2008, Douglas-Brown said. Avalon owner David Unger said he was "not involved any more," then hung up the phone abruptly.

Just last month, the Washington Blade celebrated its 40th anniversary. News editor Joshua Lynsen declined comment on the newspaper's closure.

"Window Media long provided a very special outlet for the Gay community to learn about itself way before there were a lot of other places to find that type of thing," said Michael Musto, an openly Gay writer for the Village Voice in New York, which is owned by Village Voice Media Holdings. "This was the Gay community writing about itself, and that's a voice we should never lose."

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A family member of the Tucson Gay Museum

AIDS Patients To President: 'Send More Money South'

JACKSON, MS (Observer Update) - When Robin Webb lived in New York City, he was treated by HIV specialists and had access to counseling and nutritional programs. Now he lives in Mississippi, where few of those services exist, reported 365Gay.com. Mississippi is just one of several mostly rural states across the South with a dearth of resources for HIV and AIDS patients. "Here, there's no support group, no case management. There's no daily reinforcement," said Webb, 52, who has been HIV-positive for two decades.

Activists and the health care providers cite a need for more federal and state funding for outreach and drug assistance programs, as well as transportation for patients who have to travel from small towns to get care. That's the message they'll deliver when a top White House aide holds a rare community discussion in Jackson. Jeffrey S. Crowley, director of the White House's Office of National AIDS Policy, said the meeting will highlight two realities of the national epidemic – the significant number of cases in the South, and how the disease disproportionately affects minorities.

The spread of the disease in the South has been attributed to numerous factors, including poverty and a social stigma that discourages many from getting tested or seeking treatment. Patrick Packer, executive director of the Southern AIDS Coalition and a moderator for the discussion, wants to pose this question: "Why is it that the South is not getting its fair share of federal money based on the epidemic?"

The South leads the nation in the percentage of AIDS-related deaths. Yet, the region ranks last when it comes to overall federal dollars spent on an HIV-infected person at $6,565 a year, according to the coalition. Forty-six percent of new AIDS cases in 2007 were in the South, according to the latest figures from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Twenty-five percent of the new cases were in the Northeast, and 17 percent in the West, two regions with the nation's largest metropolitan areas that have for many years received most of the federal money.

However, the South stands to get more funding. President Barack Obama signed the $2.2 billion Ryan White HIV/AIDS extension act last month, which continued funding for rural areas, putting the South second in federal money behind the northern region. Activists said it's still not enough to keep pace with the new cases.

Debbie Konkle-Parker, a nurse practitioner in Jackson, said the act also added federal money to the South in 2006, but didn't put rural areas on the same level as big cities. "The inequities were pretty huge," she said. "People were spending (Ryan White) money in New York City to do journal writing conferences, and in Mississippi, we couldn't even get people to the clinics."

Konkle-Parker said Mississippi has about eight public clinics to treat the majority of the 9,000 HIV patients in the state.

The current economic crunch has exacerbated the situation. Some states, like Kentucky, have cut funding for HIV/AIDS programs. The state had been contributing $250,000 a year prior to 2007, but now almost no state money is set aside for the AIDS Drug Assistance program, said Sigga Jagne, a program manager for the Kentucky Department of Health.

There are 1,277 enrolled in Kentucky's program with 100 more on a waiting list, she said. Arkansas and Tennessee also now have waiting lists for the program, which is mostly federally funded but receives some state money. Packer said funding cuts have led to the waiting lists.

"We're already disproportionately impacted by poverty and high rates of umemployment. It's important for people who are HIV positive to be provided with life-sustaining drugs," Jagne said.

Mysterious Layoffs At Equality Arizona

PHOENIX, AZ (Observer Update) - Equality Arizona, the statewide LGBT advocacy organization, laid off its two staff members for reasons that remain unknown, advocate.com reported.

The moves presage a re-characterization of the organization, the vision for which caused tension between the board and affected staff, according to AZCentral.com, the news website of the Arizona Republic. "The group, which is Arizona's only statewide advocacy organization for GLBT people, laid off executive director Barbara McCullough-Jones and field coordinator Meta Goforth-Zinn," reported AZCentral.com. "McCullough-Jones, who became the first openly lesbian woman to seek political office in Arizona when she ran for Tempe City Council in 1994, had led Equality Arizona since 2005."

Annie Groth, co-chairwoman of the Equality Arizona board, declined to discuss the layoffs when contacted. "Groth confirmed the layoffs but would not address the motivation behind them, saying she first wanted to speak with a lawyer. McCullough-Jones did not immediately return a call to her cell phone," AZCentral.com reported.

UPDATE

At Antigone Books

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Please join in for an event at Antigone Books, 411 N. 4th Ave., Friday, November 20, 7:00 p.m.

Join us for talks and slide presentations from Linda and Dick Buscher, authors of Historic Photos of Arizona (Turner, $39.95) and Roger Carpenter, editor of 2 volumes of Letters from Tucson (1925-1927 and 1933-1942). The Buschers' book is a photographic journey depicting the unique history, culture and natural beauty of Arizona captured in nearly 200 black and white images. The authors have been writing and teaching the history of Arizona for more than 35 years. Roger Carpenter's two volumes comprise a treasure trove of letters written by his mother in the first years of her life in Tucson, starting in 1925. In truly charming words and fascinating photos, they give an intimate portrait of Tucson from the point of view of an enthusiastic and very observant young biology teacher at the U of A. The wonderful 2nd volume, beginning during the depression and continuing into World War II, has just been released.

The reading will be followed by a question and answer period. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call (520) 792-3715.

Transgender Day Of Remembrance, Nov. 20

TUCSON - Tucson's fourth annual Transgender Awareness Week, filled with performances, panels, workshops, discussions, trainings, and many important speakers, culminates on Friday November 20, in Catalina Park with the 11th Annual International Transgender Day of Remembrance, which is intended to be a time to memorialize those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice during the last year.

The events of this week are proudly sponsored by many organizations at the University of Arizona and at Wingspan, including all of the following: Wingspan's Southern Arizona Gender Alliance (SAGA) and Eon; the University of Arizona's Office of LGBTQ Affairs, ASUA's Pride Alliance, Dean of Students Office, the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership and the Student Services Fee.

For more information, go online to sagatucson.org.

Wingspan Golf Classic Nov. 20

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The First Annual Wingspan Golf Classic, a competition that tees off at the Ritz-Carlton Dove Mountain Golf Club at Dove Mountain, on Friday, November 20.

Proceeds from the event will be donated entirely to Wingspan, Southern Arizona's GLBT community Center which provides a variety of programs critical to youth and the prevention of violence.

For more details and to register to play or be a sponsor, see Wingspan Classic online at www.wingspanclassic.org

EAA-Tucson Meeting Dec. 6

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Equality Across America Tucson Congressional District Action Team (EAA-Tucson) will meet December 6, 2009 2 to 4:00 p.m. at Colors, 5305 E. Speedway Blvd.

EAA continues the work of achieving full federal equality for LGBT Americans in all matters of civil law.

Please bring your ideas, passion, and a friend! This meeting will focus on creating a sustainable organization and outreach to allies and allied organizations. For more information visit: www.eaatucson.org.

Festival For Life November 22

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The 21st Annual Jerôme Beillard Festival for Life hopes to bring in unprecedented community funding and support for local services and programs of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF).

This year's event will take place at the University of Arizona, Student Union Grand Ballroom, 1303 E. University Blvd., Sunday, November 22, 4 - 7:30 p.m.

"Every year the attendance at this event is wonderful. This year we're hoping that it will be even greater. SAAF's local programs and services are depending on increased holiday giving during this challenging time. I can't say enough how much raising funds right now means to the stability and sustainability of the local services and outreach that the community needs and SAAF gives, so that we can address HIV and AIDS in a comprehensive and effective way.", says Wendell Hicks, the organization's Executive Director.

Tickets to the event are on sale now by calling (520) 628-7223 or you can purchase them online at festivalforlife.org.

"We've lowered ticket prices this year in hopes that even more people will enjoy the event. Last year ticket prices were $60 and $75 at the door. This year the tickets are $25 in advance and $35 at the door. More people at the event means the possibility of raising more funds to help support programs and services. Most of the funds raised at this event are from the live and silent auction.", says Hicks.

This year's event aims to increase attendance and giving by making the evening more affordable and attractive to all. Auction items vary from unbelievable donated fine art from local and well-known artists, travel packages, and jewelry, to items like lunch and dinner gift certificates, personal services, pet baskets, and local attraction passes so that people of any income level can enjoy bidding and purchasing items. For more details about this event, please visit festivalforlife.org or contact (520) 628-7223.

Fort Worth Bans Transgender Discrimination

FORT WORTH, TX (Observer Update) - The Fort Worth City Council voted 6-3 late Tuesday (Nov. 10) to expand its anti discrimination ordinance to include Transgender people, reports the Star-Telegram. The ordinance already forbids discrimination based on race, sex, religion, or sexual orientation, advocate.com.

The vote comes after Fort Worth, Texas, officials appointed a task force to recommend ways to mend fences following a controversial inspection of a Gay bar, the Rainbow Lounge, in June. The vote dealt only with one facet of the litany of proposals brought before the city council. Other recommendations from the task force include offering domestic-partner benefits and expanding the city health insurance plan to cover gender-reassignment procedures, including sex changes.

Both Gay rights advocates and conservative opponents attended the meeting. According to the Star-Telegram, at one point the two sides sang competing hymns: "We Shall Overcome" from Gay activists and "Amazing Grace" from religious protesters.

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Informing the Community
The Observer

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Fierstein To Replace Topol In February Tucson Music Hall Show

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Four-time Tony Award-winner Harvey Fierstein will replace Topol in the North American tour of the Tony Award-winning musical FIDDLER ON THE ROOF. Chaim Topol regrettably informed the show's producers this week that he would leave the production due to a shoulder injury requiring emergency long-term treatment.

"We were saddened to hear that, because of an injury, Topol would not be able to complete the remainder of the scheduled North American Tour of FIDDLER ON THE ROOF," said Lendre Kearns, General Manager of Broadway in Tucson. "But we are thrilled that the producers of this tour were able to secure the incomparable Harvey Fierstein to play Tevye. He is a Broadway legend, a consummate entertainer and we are certain that Tucson audiences will give him a warm welcome at the Music Hall."

Harvey Fierstein

Mr. Fierstein starred as iconic milkman Tevye in the critically acclaimed 2004 Broadway revival of FIDDLER ON THE ROOF. And now, Fierstein will delight audiences in this Jerome Robbins-inspired production. Mr. Fierstein has won four Tony Awards including Best Book of a Play and Best Actor in a Play for Torch Song Trilogy and Best Book of a Musical for La Cage aux Folles. His most recent win was the 2003 Tony Award for Best Actor in a Musical for the Broadway production of Hairspray. In addition to his Tony Award-winning role in Torch Song Trilogy, Mr. Fierstein recreated the role in the film adaptation, thus winning him an Independent Spirit Award nomination as Best Male Lead. Other film work includes Mrs. Doubtfire, Woody Allen's Bullets Over Broadway and Independence Day.

Tickets for FIDDLER ON THE ROOF went on sale October 23 and great seats still remain! Order online at broadwayintucson.com, by phone 24/7 with Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000, or in person at the Tucson Convention Center Ticket Office during regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.). Tickets range from $30-$75 and discounts are available for most performances for students, seniors and members of the military.

Customers wishing to purchase tickets to three or more events in the season can save money by purchasing season tickets. Ticket packages are available online at broadwayintucson.com or by calling the Season Ticket Box Office at 1-866-821-2929. Season tickets offer the best seats at the best savings (up to 20% off regular prices) and are the only way to guarantee you don't miss a single moment! Patrons who previously purchased tickets to FIDDLER ON THE ROOF and have questions are asked to call Broadway in Tucson at (520) 903-2929, ext. 0 or email info@broadwayintucson.com.

Lambda Legal Files Suit To Prevent Ariz. From Stripping Domestic Partner Benefits

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Lambda Legal has filed a federal lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Tucson to block a move to strip domestic partner benefits from Gay and Lesbian state employees. Arizona lawmakers included a provision stripping domestic partner health benefits from state employees as part of a last-minute budget deal signed by Governor Jan Brewer in September, while retaining spousal health benefits for heterosexual workers, 365Gay.com reported.

Lambda Legal represents 10 state employees – including from the Arizona Highway Patrol, the State Department of Game and Fish, and state universities – who rely on health benefits from their employers to keep their families safe.

"This is an issue of equal pay for equal work," said Tara Borelli, staff attorney for Lambda Legal. "By stripping away these vital benefits from loyal state employees, the state isn't just paying them less for the same work than their heterosexual colleagues — it's pulling away a vital lifeline that all workers need. This is simply cruel and saves the state next to nothing."

State lawmakers voted over the summer to eliminate the state's domestic partner benefits, which were adopted with the leadership of former Governor Janet Napolitano, now Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. Current Arizona Governor Jan Brewer signed the budget bill with the provision revoking the health insurance coverage for domestic partners.

Arizona Highway Patrol Officer Tracy Collins is lead plaintiff and relies on her work-provided health benefits to protect her partner of 11 years, Diana Forrest, and their family. "I put my life on the line every day for the people of Arizona just by going to work," said Collins. "Though the stress of working a dangerous job takes a toll on my family, I'm proud to be a public servant. But losing Diana's health coverage will put us in a desperate situation."

"This discriminatory elimination of vital health benefits denies equal pay for equal work to a small, politically vulnerable group of dedicated public workers who perform valuable services and pay equal taxes. By stripping Gay and Lesbian state employees of health coverage for a domestic partner, the new law unfairly and unconstitutionally inflicts severe hardship upon a targeted group of Arizona families," added Borelli.

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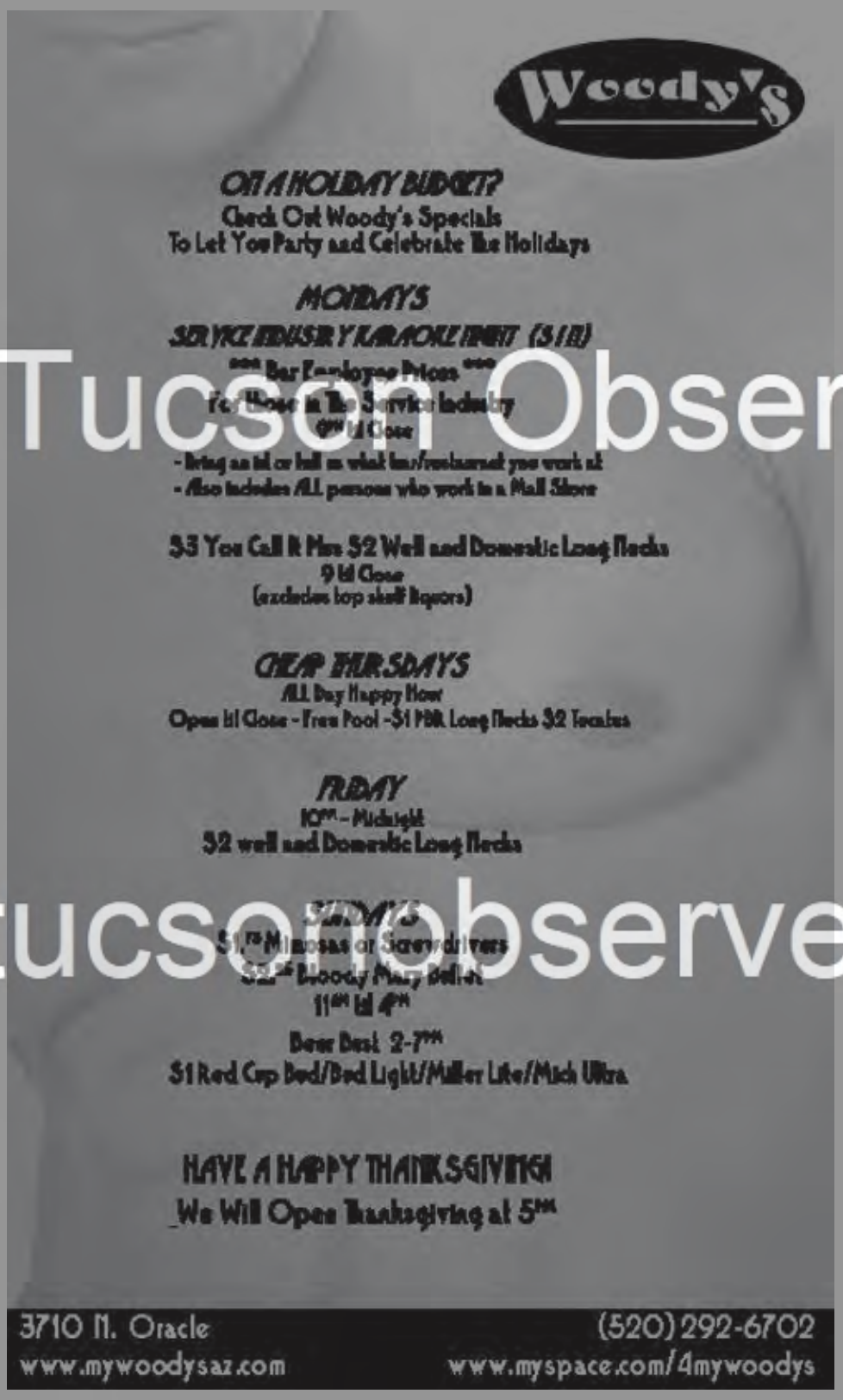

Will Pro-LGBT Changes Make Health Reform?

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Provisions in the House version of health reform legislation that would equalize tax treatment for domestic-partner benefits are not likely to be included in the Senate bill. Instead, LGBT advocates hope the House language will be incorporated into the final bill when the two versions are reconciled in conference.

"Right now, we're working to protect the language during the House-Senate conference," said Allison Herwitt, legislative director of the Human Rights Campaign. "We are optimistic that we will be able to keep the specific provisions in the final bill that gets sent to the president's desk."

The federal government currently treats domestic-partner benefits as taxable income, which results in higher taxation of both employees who cover their same-sex partners and employers who offer such benefits. But under the guidelines authored by Rep. Jim McDermott of Washington, enrolling a same-sex partner, a partner's dependent children, or an employee's adult children in employer-based benefits would carry no extra tax penalties. Supporters of the change hope that more medium and small businesses would offer the benefits if the complexities and additional tax burdens were eliminated.

Other pro-LGBT provisions that made the House health legislation include:

Inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in federal data collection and health disparity programs;

Early treatment for HIV under Medicaid, so that individuals do not have to receive an AIDS diagnosis before accessing coverage;

Protections for LGBT people from discrimination by insurance companies or health care providers based on personal characteristics that are unrelated to health care.

Herwitt said no specific congressional members have emerged as detractors of the language at this time.

The House legislation passed by a vote of 220 to 215, but the timing of the Senate bill is still in flux. Majority Leader Harry Reid has suggested that the vote might move into next year.

But Herwitt still senses a push to move the legislation before next year. "My sources on the Hill say there's an incredible amount of pressure to get the bill started next week on the floor, have it be held over during the Thanksgiving recess, and then get right back to work so they can finish it before the end of the year," Herwitt said.

CDC: Syphilis On The Rise

ATLANTA, GA (Observer Update) - Syphilis rates have risen, and according to a new study by the CDC, men who have sex with men accounted for 63% of syphilis cases in 2008, reported advocate.com.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that America is among the highest rates of STDs of any developed country in the world. According to the latest statistics, Chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis infections continue to spread in the United States.

"Chlamydia and gonorrhea are stable at unacceptably high levels and syphilis is resurgent after almost being eliminated," said John Douglas, director of the division of sexually transmitted diseases at the CDC, reports Reuters.

One of the reasons offered to explain the prevalent STD infection rates, particularly among teenagers, is the abstinence-only sex education approach promoted during the Bush administration.

Several studies suggest that such a method does not work well, and that it is better to encourage abstinence while also offering age-appropriate, comprehensive sex education.

Among the notable findings within the report, men who have sex with men accounted for 63% of syphilis cases in 200.

Douglas also added that if you are a man who has sex with men you should to be getting comprehensive STD tests every year.

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Film Documents Mormon Role In G/L Marriage Debate

SALT LAKE CITY, UT (Observer Update) - Reed Cowan's reasons for making a film about the Mormon church's activism against Gay marriage in California are personal, 365Gay.com reported.

Himself Gay and Mormon, Cowan clashed with his family over his sexual orientation and the beliefs of their faith, but it was a conversation between him and a sibling about her support of Proposition 8 cemented his commitment to make the film: "8: The Mormon Proposition." "I thought, if this is the dialogue in my Mormon family, then what is like in other Mormon households," the Miami-area filmmaker and former Utah television journalist said. "If this is the pain I feel over Prop. 8 and other Mormon efforts to quash (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) rights, what is the pain of others multiplied all over the world?"

While the 80-minute documentary is still in production, a trailer posted on the Internet has caught the eye of both sides of the debate, viewed by roughly 70,000 people in its first 78 hours online. And the Web site that hosts the video has had nearly 28,000 visitors since it went online last month. Cowan contends that the church was the most influential force in the campaign and paints the faith's theology and culture as historically anti-Gay.

Internet commentary on the trailer is divided. Depending on the source, the movie is either an emotional and scathing indictment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or an unfair characterization of the Utah-based church's beliefs and motivation for political involvement. The church was part of a coalition of faiths and conservative groups that pushed for approval of a Gay marriage ban in California's constitution.

Church officials have seen the trailer and other online materials about the film, LDS spokeswoman Kim Farah said, and "it is obvious that anyone looking for balance and thoughtful discussion of a serious subject will need to look elsewhere." Like many faiths, Mormonism defends traditional marriage as an institution ordained by God that is central to a healthy society. The church has consistently worked against legislation to legalize Gay marriage since the 1990s. Last week, however, church leaders endorsed a pair of Salt Lake City ordinances that make it illegal to discriminate against LGBT persons in employment and housing.

Narrated by Academy Award winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black – also Gay and raised Mormon – the film chronicles the campaign and includes personal stories from straight and Gay Mormons, including newly-weds Tyler Barrick and Spencer Jones, who married in San Francisco on June 17, 2008, the first day same sex marriage was legal in California.

The film touches on Gay suicide and homelessness, which many believe occur at higher-than-average rates among Gay Mormons and highlights the strong opposition to Gay rights from the Utah Legislature and lobbyists who are predominantly Latter-day Saints. It also draws on past statements of former leaders and efforts to cure homosexuality with electroshock therapy at the church-owned Brigham Young University.

Mormon church officials appear in the film in footage obtained through other filmmakers, media outlets and in a church-produced video that appeared on the Web. Cowan said he "begged" for church participation - through both official channels and personal connections – but was rejected. "I got an immediate no," he said.

Alex Nibley, a Utah filmmaker and digital media instructor said the trailer's powerful, high-quality footage promises an emotional look at it subject. Still, he said, it appears to fit within the typically polaraized spectrum of film takes on the Mormon church – most either that promote the faith or attack its views. "I suspect that the impact will be to confirm certain ideas that people have about the church," Nibley said. "It may expand some perceptions in the public at large, but it will probably not shake the faith of a lot of those who aren't going to pay much attention to it."

Cowan said his goal for the film was to document what he believes is a crusade against Gay people and to illustrate that the faith operates as both a church and a political action committee. A release date for the film, believed to be the first about Prop. 8, is uncertain. Cowan is shopping the film to festivals.

Arkansas 10-Year-Old Won't Pledge Allegiance Until Gays Gain Equality

Will Phillips And Father

LITTLE ROCK, AR (Observer Update) - A 10-year-old Arkansas boy name Will Phillips has decided that he cannot in good conscience pledge allegiance to the flag as long as the country for which it stands refuses legal equality to its GLBT citizens.

That stand has brought young Mr. Phillips anti-Gay taunts in the lunch room, but admiration from around the country, reports a Nov. 5 Arkansas Times article. The West Fork School District fifth grader clashed with a substitute teacher for his refusal to stand for the pledge, prompting a call to Will's mother, Laura Phillips. When the principal acknowledged that Will has the right to refuse to say the pledge, Ms. Phillips asked that her son receive an apology–a request that the principal declined to honor.

That led the young man to his decision not to pledge his allegiance due to the injustice he perceived to prevail against Gays and lesbians. He discussed the matter with his family and then took his stand–or rather, refused to stand with the rest of the kids when the time for the pledge came around each morning. The first week of the young man's protest happened to be a week when a substitute teacher, a friend of Will's grandparents, was in charge of the class; as days went by, the teacher grew more aggravated, until finally she took Will to task.

"She got a lot more angry and raised her voice and brought my mom and my grandma up," Will told the Arkansas Times. "I was fuming and was too furious to really pay attention to what she was saying. After a few minutes, I said, 'With all due respect, ma'am, you can go jump off a bridge.'"

Moreover, Will's stand for equal rights for Gays has led those who disagree to attack him personally with anti-Gay epithets: "In the lunchroom and in the hallway, they've been making comments and doing pranks, and calling me Gay," Will said. "It's always the same people, walking up and calling me a Gaywad."

That hasn't been easy for Will, who skipped fourth grade but seems older than his age, especially in contrast to some of his peers. Said Laura Phillips, "It's really frustrating to him that people are being so immature."

The interviewer from The Arkansas Times asked Will what it means to be an American. The answer: "Freedom of speech. The freedom to disagree. That's what I think pretty much being an American represents."

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www.stonewall.org.uk

Columnist: Church Threat 'Uncharitable And Cruel'

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Washington Post columnist Petula Dvorak takes on the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington for its threat to cut vital social services like support to the homeless if a proposed marriage equality law passes the D.C. city council.

Although the proposed law would not require the church to perform same-sex weddings or provide space for the ceremonies, the archdiocese fears that it would be forced to extend employee benefits for same-sex married couples. The church threatened to sever its social service contracts with the city, which help nearly 70,000 residents with adoption, health care, and homelessness. "For folks on the street, those words are nothing more than the sound of a door slamming shut," writes Dvorak.

"By trying to play political hardball with the District, no matter how carefully they word their objection to the bill, officials at the Archdiocese of Washington and Catholic Charities are telling our city's most vulnerable people – homeless families, sick children, low-income mothers – that they are willing to throw them on the table as a bargaining chip."

"What the Church is doing is an uncharitable and cruel maneuver," Dvorak wrote.

Gay Sex Cut From Classic Army Novel

LOS ANGELES, CA (Observer Update) - A major Gay sex story line was cut from James Jones's 1951 novel From Here to Eternity, reveals Kaylie Jones, the author's daughter, on The Daily Beast.

Jones wrote the novel about his experience on an Army base in Hawaii in the years preceding World War II, and his use of profane language – particularly the f word – was considered shocking at the time. But publishers forced Jones to omit passages in which the character Maggio made extra money by providing sexual favors to older Gay men. Jones writes that her father "believed...that homosexuality was a natural condition of men in close quarters, and that it in no way affected a soldier's capabilities on the battlefield."

The novel was adapted into the 1953 Academy Award-winning film starring Montgomery Clift, Burt Lancaster, and Frank Sinatra in his Oscar-winning performance as Maggio, advocate.com reported.

Right-Winger Calls FBI On Joe.My.God

NEW YORK, NY (Observer Update) - Joe Jervis is not afraid of anti Gay activists like Maggie Gallagher, Matt Barber, and Peter LaBarbera, but they may be afraid of him. Barber recently alerted the FBI about comments made on Jervis's Gay news blog Joe.My.God, claiming they amounted to terrorist threats, advocate.com reported.

In a post from last week, Jervis wrote about LaBarbera – president of Americans for Truth About Homosexuality – taking umbrage with the group Stand for Marriage and its successful campaign to ban same-sex marriage in Maine. In its commercials, Stand for Marriage advocated against same-sex marriage, but endorsed Maine's domestic-partnership laws. LaBarbera wrote on the website of AFTAH, "We who claim to follow God are lacking in integrity if we promote the normalization of homosexuality as part of some (perhaps well-intentioned) utilitarian plan to ostensibly 'save' traditional marriage. Indeed, the irony of the ad text above is that progressive concessions on 'domestic partnership' and 'civil unions' legislation will, in fact, dismantle traditional marriage... It's time to reject Political Correctness and get back to basics in the pro-family movement."

When Jervis pointed out LaBarbera's thinking – that Gays should not be allowed any relationship protections whatsoever – his readers were incensed. A commenter was worried that efforts by people like LaBarbera would incite violence: "What I fear is that once Gay and lesbian people give up hope of achieving equality through nonviolent means, there will be radicals who will begin to hunt down haters like LaBarbera and Gallagher." A Joe.My.God reader replied to that comment by writing, "You say this like it's a bad thing? Maybe a bit of well organized terrorism is just what we need, er, I mean 'civil disobedience.'"

Liberty Council president Matt Barber, another enemy of same-sex marriage, alerted the FBI to this comment, citing the recent mass murder at Fort Hood as reason for federal authorities to get involved. Jervis – even though he has yet to hear from the FBI – has since taken the post down. In an e-mail to Advocate.com, Jervis writes, "Even a casual reading of the comments in question will show that no direct threats of 'terrorism' were made towards anyone. In fact, the comment that LaBarbera has fed to every right wing news site in the country actually expresses concern that an unbalanced person might do something violent and hurt the LGBT cause in doing so. But that doesn't matter to the Christian right, who in an internet game of 'Telephone' have ratcheted up the story to the point where it looks like I, myself, have made terrorist threats."

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COMMENTARY. . . .

by John Corvino

On Not Being Like Other Boys

It's November, which means bookstores have next year's calendars on display. When I was a teenager, this annual occurrence unnerved me. The "male interest" calendars"—think "Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Model of the Month"—held no appeal for me. Instead, I would nervously reach for a Chippendales calendar, hiding it behind something innocuously themed (race cars, puppies, whatever) so that I could stare admiringly at half-naked men.

As soon as I noticed anyone approaching, I would throw both calendars back on the shelf and dart out of the store. I laugh now at the thought that I could ever find the overly pumped and coiffed 1980's Chippendales dancers appealing. But when I see these calendars on the shelves today, I still feel a residual emotional tug. Like the underwear models in the J.C. Penney catalog (and so many other ordinary features of American life), the calendars were a painful signal: you are not like other boys.

I noticed a calendar display in a bookstore the other day just shortly after receiving an e-mail from a reader complaining that I waste too much time trying to win over straight society's approval. "When are you going to stop seeking other people's acceptance?" he asks. My answer? I'll stop seeking it once we get it. The calendars reminded me of why. It's not because I'm still scared that other people will know my "secret." Today, I can walk into a bookstore and look at whatever I want. Indeed, I sometimes make a point of picking up the "female interest" calendars just to remind myself—and anyone else watching—that I can. It's my way of saying: No, I am not like (most) other boys, and I'm okay with that. Honestly, I really don't give a flying fig whether you give me a dirty look when I do it.

But there are plenty of boys and girls growing up who are not there yet. They still get unnerved when they see the calendars, or the catalogs, or countless other possible triggers. They still feel that nauseous shame and isolation. They have yet to learn that the feelings they dread can eventually be a source of great joy, and beauty, and comfort. Social approval can make a huge difference in the lives of these kids, not to mention those who come after them.

This is one significant way in which LGBT people differ from most other minority groups. Whereas black children generally have black parents, Jewish children generally have Jewish parents, and so on, LGBT people can have any sort of parents—and most often have straight ones. Far from being able to take for granted our parents' understanding of the discrimination we face, we often have to struggle for their acceptance, too.

So while their parents' opinion on homosexuality may not directly matter to me, you can be damn sure it matters to them. I don't mean that they can't go on to have happy, fulfilling, successful lives even if their parents ultimately reject them. I just mean that doing so will be harder—needlessly, sometimes tragically so.

Moreover, it's not as if I have no stake at all in their parents' opinion. As we've seen over and over, their opinion affects how they vote. And their votes make a difference to our legal rights, whether we like it or not. Of course it isn't fair. But that doesn't mean it isn't true.

So I'll stop seeking their approval when we get it, and not a moment sooner. Because their approval helps make our political struggle easier. Because it's crucial to the lives of their kids, some of whom are LGBT. And because it's the right thing.

(John Corvino, Ph.D. is an author, speaker, and philosophy professor at Wayne State University in Detroit and this is reprinted from his column online at 365Gay.com.)

Death Sentence Upheld For Killer Of Gay Man

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The U.S. Supreme Court has reinstated the death sentence of a man who was found guilty of killing a man he met at a Gay bar in 1985, advocate.com reported. Robert Van Hook's attorneys had argued before the 6th U.S. circuit court of appeals in Cincinnati that the lawyers who represented him during his sentencing process more than 20 years ago were ineffective. The circuit court agreed and commuted Van Hook's death sentence.

But in an unsigned opinion the Supreme Court justices wrote that the circuit court had improperly used guidelines established by the American Bar Association 18 years after the murder of David Self. Van Hook, now 49, went to a Gay bar in Cincinnati in 1985 looking for someone to rob and met Self. According to the justices' decision, the two drank for hours, then returned to Self's apartment. Van Hook "lured Self into a vulnerable position," strangled him, and then stabbed him to death with a kitchen knife before mutilating his body. Before fleeing with Self's valuables, Van Hook attempted to cover his tracks, stuffing the knife and other items into the body and smearing fingerprints he had left behind. Six weeks later, police found him in Florida, where he confessed.

Van Hook waived his right to a jury trial, and he was found guilty of aggravated murder and aggravated robbery. A trial court dealt him the death penalty, and he has since requested several appeals over the past two decades. According to the Associated Press, Keith Yeazel, an attorney for Van Hook, said another appeal issue on his client's behalf is still pending before the 6th circuit court.

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It Was A Bumpy Night!

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POLITICS 2009

by Mark R. Kerr

Federal Legislative Update

On Wednesday, November 18 (after press time), the U.S. House of Representatives, Oversight and Government Reform Committee has scheduled a markup of H.R. 2517, the Domestic Partner Benefits and Obligations Act (DPBO), introduced by open Lesbian U.S. Representative Tammy Baldwin, D-WI.

If approved and signed into law, DPBO would provide the same family benefits to Lesbian and Gay federal civilian employees as are already provided to employees with different-sex spouses.

H.R. 2517 orovides that a federal employee and his or her domestic partner shall be entitled to benefits available to, and shall be subject to obligations imposed upon, a married federal employee and his or her spouse. Defines "domestic partner" to mean an adult unmarried person living with another adult unmarried person of the same sex in a committed, intimate relationship. Defines "benefits" to include federal health insurance and enhanced dental and vision benefits, retirement and disability benefits, family, medical, and emergency leave, group life insurance, long-term care insurance, compensation for work injuries, and benefits for disability, death, or captivity. Excludes members of the uniformed services from the definition of "employee."

DPBO sets forth requirements for filing: (1) an affidavit of eligibility as such a domestic partner, which shall include a certification that the employee and the domestic partner are each other's sole domestic partners and intend to remain so indefinitely; and (2) a statement upon dissolution of such a domestic partnership.

If H.R. 2517 is approved by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, it will go to the floor for a vote by the entire U.S. House of Representatives. In the U.S. Senate, the companion measure is S. 1102 which hasn't received a hearing yet during this session of Congress.

A House Education and Labor Committee vote on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), H.R. 3017, that was originally scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, at 10 a.m. has been postponed.

The ENDA markup will likely be delayed for two to three weeks, according to a Hill staffer, and should be rescheduled for sometime after the Thanksgiving holiday. H.R. 3017 was introduced by openly Gay U.S. Representative Barney Frank, D-MA.

Argentine Judge Rules For Gay Marriage

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (Observer Update) - An Argentine judge ruled that a same-sex couple may marry, a decision that could advance a marriage equality bill stalled in the congress, reported advocate.com. The ruling from Judge Gabriela Seijas in Buenos Aires likely makes Alex Freyre and Jose Maria Di Bello the first same-sex couple to be allowed to marry in Argentina, according to Reuters.

"The law should treat everyone with the same respect according to their singularities, without the need to understand or regulate them," said Seijas in her ruling, reported Reuters. The ruling could be overturned by authorities in Buenos Aires, which in 2002 became the first city in the region to approve civil unions for same-sex couples.

According to Reuters, the new ruling could influence lawmakers, who remain deadlocked on a pending marriage equality bill. UPDATE: Buenos Aires Mayor Mauricio Macri said on Friday following the ruling, that he supports Gay marriage, and that the city government would not move to overturn the ruling because he wants to "improve the liberties of citizens."

"This is an important step, because we must learn how to live in freedom without hurting the rights of others," he said in a statement. "We must cohabit and accept this reality. The world is heading toward that direction."

French Lesbian Adopts After Decade In Court

PARIS, France (Observer Update) - After a 10-year legal battle, a court in eastern France on granted a Lesbian schoolteacher the right to adopt a child, advocate.com reported. Despite allowing the woman to adopt, the government reiterated that it opposes adoption by same-sex couples. "The government and the president [Nicolas Sarkozy] have on several occasions expressed our position, which is that we are not in favor of the adoption of children by same-sex couples," said government spokesman Luc Chatel, reports the BBC.

The woman, identified only as Emmanuelle B, was granted the adoption because she filed the request as an individual, not as part of a couple. In January 2008, the European Court of Human Rights, the international judicial body established under the European Convention of Human Rights, ruled in support of the 48-year-old woman, and ordered France to pay her court costs of 14,528 euros as well as damages of 10,000 euros.

While finding that Emmanuelle B faced unjust discrimination based on her sexual orientation, the European Court of Human Rights could not force France to comply with its ruling. As a result, her adoption plea remained denied. After a decade of struggle, Emmanuelle B was finally granted her request on when a Besancon court overruled the Jura regional assembly's prior ruling.

Theatre Review

by Jack Melichar

Boys and girls, I know you will find this difficult – if not impossible – to believe. I didn't submit an article to the Observer last week because I was kidnaped! That's right – kidnaped! Now, this was no ordinary kidnaping, oh no. not at all! I was abducted by aliens. I don't know if they were from Mars or Saturn or Venus. After all, they all look alike to me. As soon as they loaded me onto their spaceship it became evident that they had one thing on their mind – sex! Of course, I struggled mightily (or as mightily as one my age is able), but it was soon apparent that I would lose the battle. Therefore I applied the old adage "when rape is inevitable, lie back and enjoy it."

This scenario is, of course, B.S., but it is more interesting than the truth – my browser went kaput, and I couldn't get the article to Mark. Anyway, now to the review. A DELICATE BALANCE, a Pulitzer prize winning play by Edward Albee (who also won the prize for WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF), is now playing at the Rogue Theatre's new home – the old gym of the Historic YWCA, 303 E. University Blvd. It is, without doubt "must see" theatre. In the play, Albee explores how we make choices and what happens once we make them – especially if they are made dishonestly. Most of Albvee's plays, and this one is no exception, deal with the upper-middle class and all their weaknesses – avoiding issues and the love of martinis for starters. "These privileged people have all they need to create a life of value, worth and they come to realize it is fairly empty," said David Morden, director.

And what characters there are. Agnes (Cynthia Meier) and her husband, Tobias (Joseph McGrath) live with Agnes' sister, Claire (Amy Almquist) – who is often three sheets to the wind, as it were. Agnes and Claire do not really share sisterly love, and both have serpentine tongues, which creates a rather strained atmosphere in this upscale home. Add to the mix Julia (Avis Judd), a thirty-something bimbo, who has just left her forth husband. As after the other three failures, she heads to her parent's home and the bedroom she had as a child. But the pot requires more ingredients – and sure enough, Albee supplies them. Harry (David Morden) and Edna (Maxine Gillespie), "best friends" of Tobias and Agnes have fled their own home because of some unidentified terror and made their nest in Julia's room. Upon her return home, Julia shows us her real stuff. To say that she is a self-centered shrew is being too kind.

With Albee, self-awareness always happens on some level. And in A DELICATE BALANCE, each of the characters is struggling (whether they know it or not) to find out who they really are. This, of course, makes for interesting tension. It goes without saying that the play is well crafted with beautiful dialog, and with only minor glitches, the director and cast have done an admirable job of pulling it off. Thanks to all for a very good evening of theatre.

A DELICATE BALANCE will be playing at the Rogue through November 29 – no show on Thanksgiving. For ticket information, call (520) 551-2053 or go online to theroguetheatre.org.

NJ Lawmaker: Not Enough Votes To Address Marriage Equality Bill

Senator Paul Sarlo

TRENTON, NJ (Observer Update) - Doubt has been cast on the chances of marriage equality being brought for a vote in New Jersey by the time Governor Jon Corzine leaves office at the end of January.

State senator Paul Sarlo says he won't vote on the bill in the Senate Judiciary Committee unless he knows the votes are there: "The Bergen County Democrat said that, currently, the bill does not have sufficient support in the committee for a recommendation to the Senate. 'Today, as I stand here, we do not have the votes in the Judiciary Committee,' Sarlo said after he and Gov.-elect Chris Christie toured the Xanadu entertainment complex under construction in the Meadowlands. 'Until somebody can demonstrate that we have the votes in the Judiciary Committee, it will not be posted.' Gay rights activists are pushing lawmakers to adopt a bill before Corzine leaves office in January. Corzine has said he would sign the legislation to allow same-sex unions. But Gov.-elect Christie has said he would veto such a bill.' I'm not going to put people in harm's way where they have to vote 'yes' or 'no' when we don't have the votes to get it out (of committee),' Sarlo said Friday. The bill must clear the Judiciary Committee before it can be voted on by the Senate. There, Senate President Richard Codey would control whether it is put to a vote. It also must be voted on by the Assembly before it goes to the governor."

Another question: Will Governor-elect Chris Christie insert himself into the process? New Jersey has been allowing same-sex couple to enter into civil unions since February 2007.

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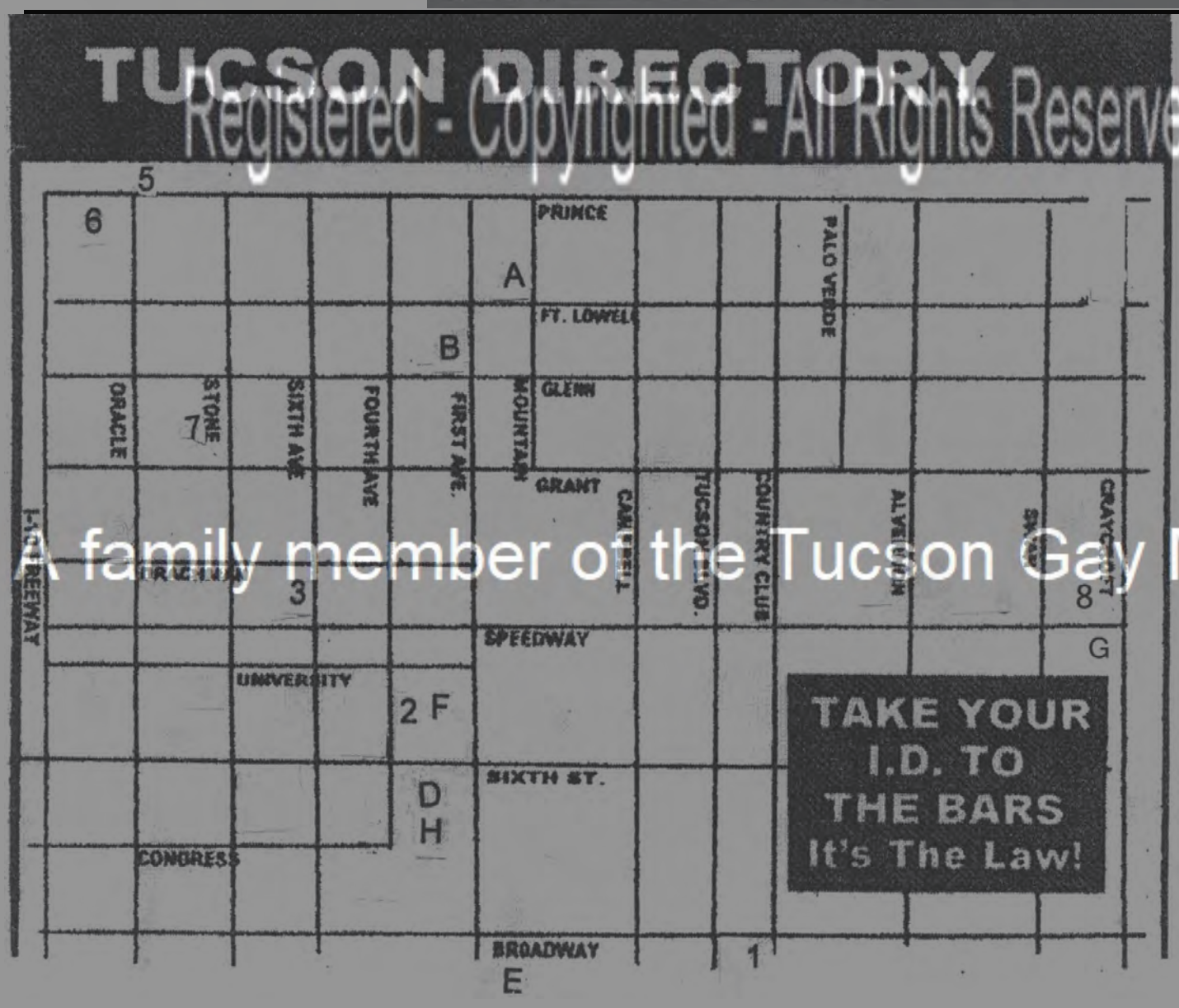

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5. **WOODY'S**
   3710 N. Oracle Rd, 292-6702
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   915 W. Prince Rd. 293-7339
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B. **CORNERSTONE FELLOWSHIP**
2902 N. Geronimo - 622-4626

D. **WINGSPAN**
430 E. 7th Street -624-1779

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

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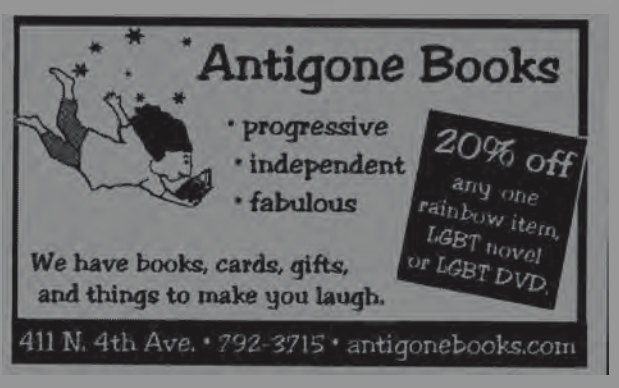

Man Arrested After Trying To Burn Flag

MEMPHIS, TN (Observer Update) - Memphis police arrested a man early Wednesday morning (Nov. 11) after he attempted to burn the gay pride flag at the Memphis Gay & Lesbian Community Center.

Plainclothes officers observed Ross Burton and another man attempting to set fire to the rope that runs up the flagpole in front of the Tennessee center. When police officers approached the men, an altercation ensued. Additional police were dispatched and some reportedly received lacerations and abrasions from the struggle. While both suspects fled the scene, Burton was located and arrested. Now he is being charged with aggravated assault and vandalism. The second, unidentified suspect is currently at large, advocate.com reported.

"Public incidents such as this shed light on the larger issue of intolerance and hatred that our LGBT citizens face every day," said MGLCC director Will Batts, reports the Memphis Flyer. "Once again, attempts to silence or frighten our community will not succeed, but will make us more determined to fight for equality. We appreciate the support of the community in this struggle." This incident marks the second act of vandalism against the center in two months. In September, an MGLCC National Coming Out Day billboard was destroyed. There is no word on whether the two crimes were related.

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Prof Draws Fire For Anti-Gay Blog

LAFAYETTE, IN (Observer Update) - A Purdue University professor sparked a campus-wide debate on free speech with a recent posting to his personal blog that makes an "economic case against homosexuality." Bert Chapman, a library science professor, wrote a post on the Conservative Librarian blog on October 27 about what the acceptance of Gay people "costs" society, in areas such as AIDS research and treatment, domestic-partnership benefits, and life insurance, advocate.com reported.

Student activists demanded that Chapman, the university's government information and political science librarian, be fired, or at least strongly reprimanded by the Purdue administration, according to the Indianapolis Star. However, university officials said they have no plans to remove or discipline Chapman for exercising his right to free speech. They encourage students and anyone offended by the remarks to speak up.

"There are many things on the Internet that would be offensive to a lot of people but protected by the First Amendment," said Purdue spokeswoman Jeanne Norberg, according to the Indianapolis Star. "The best response is to speak up, which is exactly what our students and some faculty are doing."

Prom Returns With Lesbian Couple

THARPTOWN, AL (Observer Update) - A north Alabama school district reversed its decision and may now allow a high school student to bring her girlfriend to the prom after initially canceling the event, according to the Associated Press.

As The Advocate had reported, the principal at Tharptown High School in Russell Count canceled the prom after student Cynthia Stewart asked to bring her girlfriend as her date.

After intervention from the American Civil Liberties Union, assistant superintendent Donald Borden announced that Stewart's date, who lives out of the school district, must be screened like anyone else who does not attend the school. But Borden confirms that the two will be allowed to attend if Stewart's date is approved. The prom is in March.

R.I. Gov. Open To D.P. Law

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (Observer Update) - Rhode Island governor Don Carcieri, who drew fire for his veto of a bill that would give funeral-arrangement rights to same-sex partners, has met with a Gay rights group in Providence and expressed his openness to an "everything but marriage" domestic partnership law, reported advocate.com.

Carcieri, a Republican and avowed opponent of marriage equality, met privately with six members of Queer Action of Rhode Island, according to TheProvidence Journal. "Citing as a possible model the 'everything but marriage' referendum that won approval in the state of Washington earlier this month, Carcieri said: 'I don't know enough, yet. All I am saying is I understand the circumstances. I understand the difficulties" that can arise for same-sex couples and others – such as widows living with widowers, and widows with other widows – outside the legal framework of a traditional marriage," reported the Journal.

Carcieri vetoed a bill that would authorize domestic partners to claim one another's remains and make funeral arrangements for each other. The governor said the bill represented a "disturbing trend over the past few years of the incremental erosion of the principles surrounding traditional marriage." State attorney general Patrick Lynch, a Democratic gubernatorial hopeful, called Carcieri "cruel and heartless" for vetoing the legislation. Legislators may override the veto.

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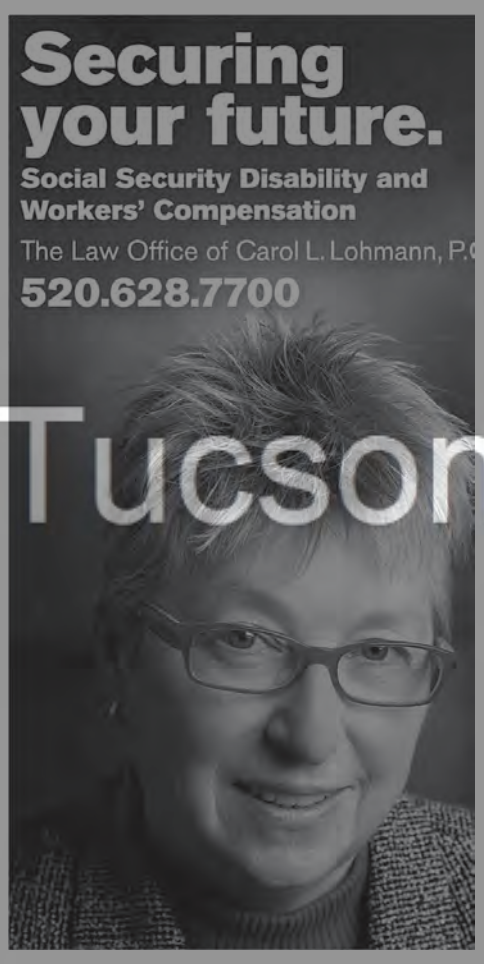

COMMENTARY. . . .

by David Mixner

What Now?

Over the next weeks, there will be numerous well-meaning proposals to deal with the aftermath of our brutally unfair defeat in Maine. Clearly there are many ways to respond. However, with all the energy I can muster, I have come to the clear conclusion that we can't continue on the path we have been following the last two decades. The time has come for a major shake-up in ideas, tactics and priorities.

Those who hang on to the nostalgia of the past can live in it. There is no question in my mind that the vast majority of the LGBT community is ready to move forward with new visions and new tactics. What is happening to us with this expanding system of Gay Apartheid in America cannot be allowed to continue and if it does, we cannot go quietly into the night enabling such abuse anymore.

How can we have any dignity, honor or pride in ourselves if we validate this continued process of ballot box terrorism? How can we stand tall next to each other if we explain away another's cowardliness? How can we allow people to dehumanize our relationships and our very integrity if we give people passes to sit out the battle for our very freedom? No longer are political timelines a reason for delay, no longer are incremental approaches acceptable and no longer can the political process expect us to be patient and wait our turn. Our turn came long ago and there will be no more waiting.

Our national organizations should be put on notice that we expect more from them and that we want more accountability and more dynamic leadership. For example, who talked to the President about Maine? Why did the White House refuse to become heavily involved? Why was Attorney General Eric Holder's statement not disavowed by the White House? Did we have direct access to the President or not? Wanting to know these answers is fair. Holding organizations that ask for our money and support accountable is not divisive it is common sense. We want leaders and organizations that represent our interests and are not beholden to the trappings of political power. Time to end the cozy relationship between our national leaders and Washington power brokers and start playing tough.

Organizations should follow the role model of Empire State Pride Agenda (ESPA) in New York. They must refuse to allow anyone to speak at their dinners who is not for marriage equality. That includes the President of the United States. If they insist on doing so, we should stop enabling them and stop buying tickets. Guess what? ESPA, because of their policy, is not viewed as fringe or ineffective. In fact, they are one of the toughest and best state organizations in the country. Why in the world would we give people platforms and honors who don't support full equality now? We must stop it. They are abusers of our graciousness and our kindness. There is no room for them anymore.

As so many others have said, "The Gay ATM Machine is closed." Not one penny more for those who are fair weather friends, who ask us to delay and who insist patience is a virtue in the face of injustice. I was astounded a few weeks ago in Washington when all my liberal friends were urging me to support the Democrat Owen in upstate New York who won election on Tuesday. When I responded that he was strongly against marriage equality and opined that they shouldn't be supporting him, it was quickly pointed out to me that the Human Rights Campaign was supporting him. Well, you know what? I don't care. If we support people who are against full equality, how can we expect others to do differently? No more excuses. Stop it. Close the checkbooks to those who are not fully on our side.

Promises are not enough. Before we support people they must be CO-SPONSORS for the repeal of DOMA and DADT. How in the world can Speaker Pelosi justify not being on Congressman Nadler's "Respect for Marriage Act?" No sponsorship equals getting no money, it is really that simple In addition, we must cease giving money to groups that contribute to those 'Blue Dog' Democrats who are holding so much of our legislation up. Instead of national party committees, give to those politicans who have proven themselves directly. How can we possibly

Continued on Page Thirteen

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Let me keep your clothes fitting properly and in good repair. Experienced - Economical - Prompt. Merle Hudson, (520)888-7264 in Tucson . 1315

MASSAGE

THERAPEUTIC MASSAGE FOR MEN Trained and certified by Body Electric School. Offering a complete full body massage to provide a relaxing and rejuvenating experience. Steve - CMT www.gaymanmassage.com 520-247-8139. 1317

RELAXING FULL BODY MASSAGE. Swedish, Deep Tissue also feather-touch sensual hands. Private. Open minded. Also back by popular demand group massage once a month. Benson area. Twenty-five minutes East of Kolb Road. Call Victor Victoria (520)971-5884 1321

QUALITY TERRIFIC MASSAGE & very Sensual TANTRIC SESSIONS! My sensitive touch gives you a dynamic experience! Creating a sacred space, for 28 years. Call Marc - 881-4582 (8 AM - 8 PM) Touching Tucson men since 1983. Professionally trained.. 1323

COMMENTARY

Continued from Page Twelve

send money to the Democratic National Committee which urges the people of Maine to phone New Jersey and not a word about our struggle? How can you justify it?

New tactics must be embraced and honored. Civil disobedience must now be on the table and it is time for a long discussion about how it is to take place in the community. Perhaps we have to fill the jails, block military bases, sit in Congressional offices, block marriage bureaus, etc in order for them to know that business as usual has stopped. Careful and thoughtful consideration must be given now to this option.

Watching the coverage on Maine and the results tells me the press doesn't really take us seriously as a civil rights movement. If that initiative had said people of different faiths could not marry does anyone really believe that it would be a sidebar story this week? The media has grown used to us being abused and we are enabling them to ignore it. "Oh yeah, another loss, how sad, we support you." GLAAD has to consider making this a priority and force the media to accept us as the civil rights movement we have become in the last months. Nothing could be more important. I will take a stereotype on a television show in exchange for serious and comprehensive coverage of our civil rights struggle.

There is so much more to say and be debated over the next months. Maybe the ideas above are not the best but at least they are bold and not more of the same. We can't survive more of the same. Apartheid for the LGBT community is becoming a way of life and everyone is beginning to adjust to it. We can't, we simply can't, allow that to happen.

For over thirty years I have been fighting ballot box measures and even have won some. What I have seen is a system of laws go in place around the country that prevents us from full equality. Some laws are specific like banning our participation in the military or DOMA. Some states ban adoption or foster care. Others give people permission to discriminate against us. We are not denied a few rights, we are being denied our basic freedom and dignity.

No longer can I stand before you in speeches and rallies urging you to stay the course. The course needs changing and we need to toughen up in the process. Yes, we must continue fighting but this time, instead of responding to their strategy, we must forge our own. Make no mistake about it. The days of acquiesce are over. There is no option except one at this stage and that is full equality now.

Freedom,Liberty,Justice are not mere words. They represent a way of life that is being denied to LGBT Americans every day of our lives.

Enough. No More, Enough

(David Mixner is a writer and activist and this is reprinted from his website.)

Poet's Corner

THE MEANING OF LIFE?
By Ron Rose - Tucson

Throw away your money, Honey
Worthless, can't you see?
A buck ain't worth a nickel
Best things in life are free.
Empty Wall Street Towers,
Vacant mansions by the score,
The Amish till their fertile fields
While we rot to the core.
The rich have no insurance,
The poor, they clap with glee,
The bankers plead for handouts
Bonus dollars spent, you see.
While the Amish till their fertile fields
And ring their churches bell
We continue with greedy ways
We're headed straight to Hell.

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

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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 20

THE BIZ - Lingerie Party 9:00 p.m.- 2:00 a.m. 18 - to Party / 21 to Drink. Win free toys. DJ Shorty 9pm-2am.

Saturday, November 21

COYOTE MOON - Benefit show for MCC Water of Life Church 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 28

COYOTE MOON - Tea Dance 4 to 8 p.m.

CLASSIFIED ADS GET RESULTS TRY IT!

SLC Gay Rights Win May Go Statewide

SALT LAKE CITY, UT (Observer Update) - Following the Salt Lake City Council's passage of two Gay rights measures with the backing of the Church of Latter-day Saints, the possibility of passing a similar law in the state may come with the church's support, advocate.com reported.

"Anything good is shareable," said Elder Jeffrey R. Holland in the Salt Lake City Tribune, adding that his city's legislation could be a model for the state. The city ordinances will ban employment or housing discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. They will go into effect in April. Each bill has an exemption for religious organizations and their affiliates, which LDS spokesman Michael Otterson praised during a recent city council meeting.

"The church supports these ordinances because they are fair and reasonable and do not do violence to the institution of marriage," Otterson said after the council passed the legislation. The Utah legislature may address an anti discrimination statute to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the fair-employment law.

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Media Erroneously Links Man's Firing To Gay Marriage Debate

Peter Vadala

BOSTON, MA (Observer Update) - The news headlines say he was fired for expressing opposition to same-sex marriage, but by his own admission, Peter Vadala lost his job as a store manager because he believed God wanted him to tell a co-worker that homosexuality is wrong, rawstory.com reported. And the retailer he worked for says he was fired because he used the word "deviant" to describe homosexuals, and added that he "hates" Gay people.

Vadala's story has become a popular topic among conservative activists in recent weeks, who last August lost his job an assistant manager at a Brookstone outlet at Boston's Logan Airport. "Man fired for advocating traditional marriage," says a headline at the conservative OneNewsNow site. "Massachusetts man says he was fired for telling colleague her Gay marriage is wrong," says the headline at the Fox News site. But the story the 24-year-old Vadala told Fox News indicates he lost his job for expressing views against homosexuals as a whole, and not against same-sex marriage.

Vadala told Fox News he confronted a Brookstone store manager who was visiting from another location after she repeatedly mentioned her engagement to another woman. "I found it offensive that she repeatedly brought it up," Vadala said. "By the fourth time she mentioned it, I felt God wanted me to express how I felt about the matter, so I did. But my tone was downright apologetic. I said, 'Regarding your homosexuality, I think that's bad stuff.'" According to Vadala, the woman replied, "Human resources, buddy – keep your opinions to yourself."

But according to the Gay-issues news site Tips-Q, Brookstone says Vadala "used the word 'deviant' with both the manager in question and the Brookstone HR executive. He also referred to "the homosexual lifestyle" and told a co-worker "I hate people like that." Vadala disputes that he ever said those words. In an interview with Fox News on Monday morning, he said he had not yet decided whether he would pursue a legal case against his former employer. Fox News quoted Brookstone CEO Ron Boire, who said, "Brookstone is an equal opportunity employer. ... We are proud of our diverse workforce of varying cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds." "Obviously Christians are excluded from that," Vadala retorted. "I can't believe that [Boire] had the audacity to say something so erroneously false."

Progressive bloggers say Vedala's right to believe whatever he chooses does not extend to criticizing co-workers for their sexual orientation. "He didn't defend traditional marriage, he didn't attack Gay marriage. He told the woman that her homosexuality was wrong," writes James Urbaniak at LiveJournal. "He knew she was Gay because she'd mentioned the sex of her fiance but Peter Vadala's issue with her was that she was Gay, period. Her marriage was so much icing on her Gay cake."

But conservative bloggers insist that the political issue of Gay marriage, and not Vedala's actions, are the key issue here. "This is a chilling example of the ultimate consequences of imposing the concept of same-sex 'marriage' through force of law," says an unsigned posting at the MassResistance blog. "We've certainly seen it coming. What happened to Peter is actually what was intended by the homosexual movement. It's about making people accept what they normally would not accept and punishing those who resist."

BUZZ FLASHES . . . .

The American Medical Association has declared that the "don't ask, don't tell" policy creates an ethical dilemma for Gay service members and the doctors who treat them, reports the Associated Press. In an interim policy meeting in Houston, the AMA also voted to declare that Gay marriage bans contribute to health disparities for Gay couples and their children. Furthermore, marriage bans leave Gays vulnerable to being excluded from health care benefits, including health insurance and family and medical leave rights. The new AMA policy on same-sex marriage stops short of opposing the bans. ...

Wanda Sykes' talk show on Fox debuted on Saturday up against Saturday Night Live's season-high episode featuring musical guests and host Taylor Swift. The Wanda Sykes Show is Fox's replacement for the sketch comedy show MadTV, which in May ended its 14-season run as the alternative to NBC's late-night mainstay. According to The Hollywood Reporter, Sykes' shows rating were 16% higher than MadTV's winter average, and 100% higher than the six week-trial average of Spike Feresten's talk show.

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