

Court Considers Televising Calif. Federal Gay Marriage Trial

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The possibility of having the first federal case to challenge the constitutionality of a gay marriage ban televised will be considered, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker will explore the possibility of allowing cameras in the courtroom during a January 6 hearing. Walker is acting after a pilot program that would for the first time allow cameras in civil trials was approved last week by the governing body for federal courts in Western states, reported On Top Magazine.

The trial of Proposition 8, the voter-approved measure that placed a gay marriage ban in the California Constitution and trumped a state

Supreme Court ruling that granted gay couples the right to marry, is set to begin on January 11 before Judge Walker in San Francisco.

Opponents of the gay marriage ban say they welcome the opportunity to have the trial - which is expected to last a month - broadcast. Supporter of Proposition 8, however, have protested the idea, saying it posed a potential threat to trial participants.

Kristin Perry v Arnold Schwarzenegger is the first such case to be heard in a federal courtroom, but three more are wending their way through the courts, including a suit brought by Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley, who is campaigning for the Senate seat vacated by the late Senator Ted Kennedy.

Amanda Simpson Appointed To Position In Obama Administration



Amanda Simpson

TUCSON (Observer) - Amanda Simpson has been appointed by the Obama Administration as a Senior Technical Advisor to the Department of Commerce, working in the Bureau of Industry and Security.

"I'm truly honored to have received this appointment and am eager and excited about this opportunity that is before me. And at the same time, as one of the first transgender presidential appointees to the federal government, I hope that I will soon be one of hundreds, and that this appointment opens future opportunities for many others."

Simpson brings considerable professional credentials to her new job. For thirty years, she has worked in the aerospace and defense industry, most recently serving as Deputy Director in Advanced Technology Development at Raytheon Missile Systems in Tucson, Arizona. She holds degrees in physics, engineering and business administration along with an extensive flight background. She is a certified flight instructor and test pilot with 20 years of experience.

She has also been very active in political and community groups. She has served on the Board of Directors of two national organizations: Out & Equal and NCTE. In

Arizona, she has been on the board of Wingspan, the Southern Arizona Gender Alliance, the Southern Arizona ACLU and the Arizona Human Rights Fund (now Equality Arizona).

In 2004, the YWCA recognized her as one of their "Women on the Move," and in the same year, she won the Democratic nomination to the Arizona House of Representatives. In 2005, she was given the Arizona Human Rights Foundation Individual Award.

Gay Marriage Became Legal On New Year's Day In New Hampshire

CONCORD, NH (Observer Update) - Jubilant gay couples have rung in the New Year in New Hampshire with wedding vows to celebrate the state's new law legalizing same-sex marriage.

At midnight, New Hampshire joined Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut and Iowa in allowing gay marriage.

About 15 couples braved the cold to exchange vows outside the New Hampshire State House in Concord. Others planned private ceremonies.
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Top 10 LGBT Stories Of 2009

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (Observer Update) - 2009 was a year of momentum for the LGBT community, reported The Bilerico Project. For the first time, federal legislation was passed that included sexual orientation and gender identity, over 250,000+ LGBT people and allies marched on Washington for civil rights, same-sex marriage was legalized in several states, and the Obama administration fulfilled some campaign promises while ignoring others. Every December, Bilerico Project Managing Editor Alex Blaze and I get together and pick our top ten stories of 2009. Here's our picks for this year, but we've added in an honorable mention since so much happened over the past year.

Honorable Mention: ENDA Doesn't Pass - While the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) was one of Bilerico Project's top legislative goals this session, unfortunately it didn't pass in 2009. Congressional leaders have repeatedly assured the community that this version of ENDA will be fully inclusive of both sexual orientation and gender identity, but delays in the House pushed passage back until 2010 at the earliest. Activists have become more vocal about passing the landmark non-discrimination bill after it was left floundering in committee, and earlier this year ENDA was pushed to the side by the battles over relationship recognition in Maine and Washington. House members told Bilerico Project in exclusive interviews that ENDA should be voted on in the House sometime in February before being sent to the Senate. LGBT activists and pundits, however, worry that the timing would put potential passage right before the mid-term elections which could scare off Democrats in conservative districts. The fate of ENDA is still unknown.

10. Adam Lambert, Lady Gaga, & Chaz Bono Come Out - Everyone's favorite American Idol contestant, Adam Lambert, came out this year, but found himself the center of controversy after he performed his new song at the American Music Awards. Lambert deviated from his planned performance to include simulated oral sex with a guy, kissing both a woman and a man, and leading another guy around on a chain. ABC quickly canceled his Good Morning America appearance the next morning citing concerns that he might not be family friendly, and the LGBT community quickly called out the double standard of chastising Lambert for a racy performance while idolizing female artists like Britney Spears or Madonna. Peggy Noonan, however, blamed Lambert as a symbol of the degradation of American culture. Oh, the horror of two men kissing on television.

Pop superstar Lady Gaga came out as a bisexual in 2009 with no cost to her career. Gaga has gone on to become one of the biggest celebrity LGBT activists including marching and speaking at the National Equality March.

Chaz Bono also had a coming out this year, when he announced he was starting to transition. Celebrity gossip site TMZ broke the story and handled the item with professionalism and respect. The LGBT community adapted and defended Chaz's decision faster than any other announced transition, hopefully showing that transgender issues are becoming more understood by the wider community. Chaz's mother, pop diva Cher, has also accepted his decision without blinking and has offered her support.

UPDATE

TIHAN Volunteer Orientation

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Come join us, at 1011 N. Craycroft, #301 Saturday, January 23rd from 1pm-5pm to learn more about TIHAN, our volunteer opportunities, HIV/AIDS and what you can do to make a difference in our community.

The cost of the orientation is \$17.00 to cover materials and snacks. Scholarships are available.

To register or for more information, contact TIHAN's Volunteer Resources Coordinator, Katelyn McDonald at (520) 299-6647 or katelyn@tihan.org.

Mr. Phoenix Leather January 9

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - The Mr. Phoenix Leather Contest, a local preliminary to International Mr. Leather, will take place January 9, 2010 at Velocity Leather/Fetish bar, 2303 E Indian School Road.

The contest will be part of a weekend long leather event which will include a Cigar Social, a Meet and Greet, a Bar Crawl, a Happy Hour Social, and a Victory Party. The winner will represent the Phoenix area at IML 2010, in Chicago, in May.

Any male-identified leatherman who lives in Phoenix area at least 75% of the time, who wishes to compete, will be welcome. Instructions and applications can be found at: mrphoenixleather.com

The contest will be judged by Bob Weber, Mr. Phoenix Leather 2009; Jeffery Payne, International Mr. Leather 2009; boy Justin, Southwest Leather boy 2009; Eli Edgin, Southwest Ms. Leather 2009; and Master Dennis, Patriarch of the Dragon Clan; and hosted by Daddy Kenneth, Mr. Cellblock Phoenix Leather 2008 and Hobbit; International Ms. Leather 2008. At the time of printing, the schedule of events and locations was still being finalized, for the most up to date information; please visit the Mr. Phoenix Leather Contest website at mrphoenixleather.com.

Wingspan In The Tucson Weekly

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Last summer, the LGBT organization had to cut staff, move to a smaller space and reevaluate its future due to the economy. Wingspan also said it needed to raise \$125,000 by the end of October to create a reserve fund, and wanted to find 1,000 donors able to give \$25 a month. (See "Drastic Decreases," July 23, Tucson Weekly.)

On Dec. 21, Wingspan's board president Cynthia Garcia announced that the organization reached its first goal, raising \$133,880. Although the goal to find 1,000 donors to give \$25 a month hasn't been reached, Garcia says the \$133,880 shows the community feels Wingspan is needed.

In Garcia's e-mail, she noted that Wingspan has 17 secured grants and collaborator contracts to support core programs and services, totaling more than \$460,000. The core programs—including the Anti-Violence Program, the Eon Youth Program, the Southern Arizona Gender Alliance (SAGA), Senior Pride, Rainbow Families and the community center—continue on thanks to a volunteer staff and 10 employees.

While the agency has made a remarkable turnaround, Garcia says funding concerns remain due to the state budget. Wingspan and other agencies that depend on state grants are looking at certain cuts.

"We're fully expecting that this coming fiscal year," Garcia said in an interview for the Tucson Weekly. "Those in state government are going to make their choices, but we have to make sure Wingspan is still around and that it remains relevant to the community and self-sufficient."

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TGLBTCC Meeting January 21

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Local, regional and homegrown products and services are being sought and marketed more than ever. Learn more about two Tucson organizations dedicated to promoting area business at the January 21st Chamber Breakfast at the Hotel Tucson City Center, 475 N. Granada

Speakers include Lisette DeMars from Local First Arizona as well as a representative from Tucson Originals.

\$20 members, \$25 guests, (\$5 discount for members and guests who RSVP by Jan. 18), (520) 615-6436 or info@TucsonGLBTChamber.org.

Gender-Free Contra Dance, January 9

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Be part of Arizona's first Gender Free Contra Dance hosted by Tucson Friends of Traditional Music, Jan. 9, 2010, First United Methodist Church, 915 E. 4th.

Join the Tucson Friends of Traditional Music for an evening of Gender Free Contra Dancing. Gender Free, or Gender-Role Free Contra, is meant for everyone who loves this style of American traditional folk dancing, but with a fun twist. In Gender Free, which originated in New England about 20 years ago, dancers can dance either role.

For those unfamiliar with the style, Contra is like Square Dancing, but done in long lines and with simplified calls. Any beginner can easily master the basics in one lesson on the night of the dance.

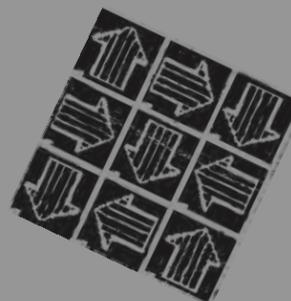
Free Dance Lesson at 7:30 pm. Dance 8:00 - 11:00 pm. First United Methodist Church, 915 4th Street (near Park Ave.). \$6 student, \$7 TFTM member, \$8 general public. For more information, call (520) 408-6181.

Welcome To Oz Looking For Dorothy

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Welcome to Oz, the LGBT and straight supportive bowling league is looking for Dorothy or an individual who wants to take part bowling.

Welcome to Oz bowls at Tucson Bowl, 7020 E. 21st, (520) 747-1363, Thursday night's at 7:00 PM, with practice at 6:50 PM. The weekly fee is \$11 and there is a one-time, sanctioning fee of \$20.

Average is not important but having fun is, so follow the "Yellow Brick Road" to Oz, Thursday's at Tucson Bowl.



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



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- EDITOR/PUBLISHER: Bob Ellis
- ARTS & GRAPHICS: Gary Clark
- MANAGING EDITOR: Mark Kerr
- Special Events Photos: Bill Morrow, Hunter Johnson, Amanda Irvin
- Contributing Columnists: Mark R. Kerr, Jack Melichar

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Bunny FuFu Steps Down As Regular Performer After 13 Years



Fans of female impersonations or better known as drag shows, were saddened to hear about the sudden decision of Tucson's 'Veteran Queen' Bunny FuFu to step down from her two-a-week shows at IBT's. Her stint at IBT's has been enjoyed for nearly 13 years where she was entertainment Director, Show Director, as well as Host at the shows every Wednesday and Saturday. The grueling schedule was a most difficult one.

In addition Bunny (aka Mark Fetgatter) would appear in different cities (when time was available) including Phoenix, El Paso, Seattle, Portland, Minneapolis, La Crosse, Little Rock, Indianapolis, etc.

Bunny performed her last show as IBT's Headliner last Saturday, January 2nd with a packed house enjoying the finale.

"Beyond drag,"Bunny said, "I love my home life! My partner Albert, and our dogs Buddy, Newton and Bibi." "Albert and I consider ourselves very lucky in life! We have each other, our good health, a wonderful and supportive family and amazing friends! We like to travel together! We make our best effort to return to our favorite place on earth - Hawaii - each year. Though we have skipped a year here and there, I still think we may move there someday!"

"I am just your average guy with a kick! Yeah, I'm a gay male and yeah I'm a drag queen, but I also find

myself all too normal at times! I have a deep interest and dedication for the well being of my community, particularly the LGBTQ community. I work in the non-profit sector (yes, I have a day job!). I advocate and support Gay issues from Gay Rights to Marriage! I lead educational training sessions on Anti-Violence, Gay Rights and Safe Sex!"

So there you have it. An excellent entertainer, a spirited community leader and a wonderful person who loves her audiences and their loyalty. But she is not giving up entertaining altogether! She will make special appearances on special occasions. So watch out for one of these and be sure to attend - and enjoy. Good Luck Bunny!!!



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Lesbian Sister Of Prop. 8 Mastermind Announces Run For Superior Court Judge

SACRAMENTO, CA (Observer Update) - Proposition 8 and Yes On 1 (Maine) campaign manager Frank Schubert has a domestically-partnered lesbian sister with two kids, not that he cared about his own family when he went about wrecking and ridiculing the lives of gay people.

The Bay Area Reporter notes that Anne Schubert is now running for Superior Court judge in Sacramento, but she says that campaign rules prevent her from commenting on Prop 8 or her rotten brother, reported queerty.com.



Anne Marie Schubert

"Because I am running for a judicial seat, I am bound by the California Code of Judicial Ethics. This code applies to both sitting judges and attorneys running for judicial office," Anne Marie Schubert said in an e-mail. "This code makes it clear that 'Candidates may not make statements that commit the candidate with respect to cases, controversies,

or issues that could come before the courts.' This code also states, 'Judges involved in judicial campaigns must also avoid comment concerning a matter pending or impending in any court.'" Frank Schubert says that of course he loves his sister and her family. Watch out, Anne - he'll be coming after your domestic partnership next.

BUZZ - BUZZ - BUZZ - BUZZ -

'One Life To Live' Airs Gay Romantic Scene

NEW YORK (Observer Update) - ABC is not the most gay friendly station, but they have taken a big step forward: airing a sex scene between two male characters on the soap opera "One Life to Live." The scene, romantic and adorable, is a pretty amazing break though.

that one of the male actors is out of closet in real life. This means that "One Life to Live" actually showed a gay actor having gay sex on television.

As many out actors can tell you, it's one thing to play a homosexual and another to actually be a homosexual. How incredible that Scott Evans (Oliver) gets to do both.

What was really incredible is

Gov't Backs Out Of OutGames

VANCOUVER, Canada (Observer Update) -The British Columbia government has backed out of a verbal commitment to financially support the 2011 Outgames in Vancouver, Canada's Xtra reports. Government officials initially promised to contribute \$400,000 to the event, according to an Outgames chairman John Boychuk. That commitment was then reduced to \$150,000 to \$200,000. Now they say, "We can't continue to commit to any amount," Boychuk says, reported advocate.com.

residents and programs that provide food, shelter, and support for at-risk individuals. Boychuk says Outgames organizers have instead sought out a corporate partner, International Conference Services, which will no provide secretarial, sponsorship, accommodation, registration, and accounting services for the event. ICS will also assist the Outgames organizers in their pursuit of civic and provincial grants.

"We're taking a very prudent approach," says Dan Quon, president of Team Vancouver. "We know what happened in Montreal. We certainly don't want to repeat that." Organizers of Montreal's Outgames in 2006 finished the event with a \$5.3 million deficit.

Provincial officials say the economic climate has caused them to rethink their community grants, placing focus on low-income and disabled

Now Both Rosie O'Donnell + Kelli Carpenter Have New Girlfriends

NEW YORK CITY, NY (Observer Update) - We spotted Kelli Carpenter on what appeared to be a date with Sweet travel company owner Shannon Wentworth, queerty.com reported.

child group Open Arms Campaign, according to a RadarOnline post.

Looks like all parties are moving on - and, if we might say, scored some hot new army candy. But it might also be time for Tracy to update her Examiner.com columnist profile, which still says she's a "single lesbian mother of six children."

And now the paps have snapped Rosie O'Donnell holding hands fingers in Miami with Tracy Kachtick-Anders, founder of the foster

Top Soap Couples Of The Year Are Gay And Lesbian

Soap website Daytime Confidential has ranked its top ten soap couples of the year, and in a first, a same-sex couple has topped the list, and taken second.

One Life to Live's Kyle (Brett Claywell) and Fish (Scott Evans) claimed second place, while the now-cancelled Guiding Light's (pictured) Natalia (Jessica Leccia) and Olivia (Crystal Chappell) taking top honors.

Should The Lesbian Couple Be All That Surprised That The Boy Scouts Won't Let Them Volunteer

MONTPELIER, VT (Observer Update) - While we feel for Cate and Elizabeth Wirth, it's sort of like, "C'mon ladies, get with the times." The lesbian Vermont couple wanted to help out their 10-year-old son's Boy Scout troop after the district director Erik Tanney asked for parent volunteers, but were rejected because Tanney supposedly said "we wouldn't want you pushing your lifestyle on the boys." (Which they so would!), reported queerty.com.

we don't know, PULL YOUR KID OUT OF A HOMOPHOBIC ORGANIZATION.

Which they won't be doing: "I still think Scouts is a good thing for him because he doesn't have a dad and he's really drawn to a lot of stereotypical male stuff that Scouting does, outdoorsy stuff," says Cate Wirth. "I don't want my personal issues to impact his life in that way. I was concerned if he knew about it he might be uncomfortable going. Politically, if he weren't a 10-year-old boy I'd feel differently about it. I wouldn't support the organization. But his needs come first." Indeed.

Except, anti-gay attitudes is always what the Boy Scouts - which turns 100 next year - have been about, and the Supreme Court ruled in a 5-4 decision in 2000 they were allowed to discriminate about The Gays. So either quit trying to volunteer and remain content with being allowed to even participate in the Boy Scouts with other parents in scouting activities, or,



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Pioneering Plaintiff Wants DC's First Gay Marriage

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Craig Dean's first wedding was attended by thousands, and as he recited his vows, gay couples behind him on Constitution Avenue echoed their own.

It was 1993, and Dean and boyfriend Patrick Gill headlined what was billed as the largest gay marriage ceremony at the time. Dean, 29, and Gill, 26, were celebrities after suing the city of Washington for denying them a marriage license. They'd been on CNN, were profiled in The Washington Post and sat on Oprah's couch.

And though they lost their landmark case, the city last month finally did what it had refused to do back then: Legalize gay marriage. Dean, who now lives in South Carolina and runs a talent agency for gay and lesbian speakers, said he cried when he read the news. "They owe me a marriage license," he said.

The law still has to survive a review by Congress, which has final say over the district's laws. Lawmakers appear unlikely to intervene though, so gay couples could be marrying in Washington - legally this time - by March. It would be the sixth place in the country where gay marriages are allowed. And Dean, who carries bittersweet memories of his and Gill's pioneering effort, wants the first spot in line.

Dean and Gill were not practiced advocates when they applied for a marriage license in November 1990. Dean had just graduated from Georgetown University's law school. Gill worked in the men's accessories department of Macy's, selling pens and umbrellas.

But Dean was "young and brash and ambitious and forthright," said their lawyer, William Eskridge Jr., and Gill, though less publicly confident, was "charming" and a "babe." They made for a model case, Eskridge said.

"It was really the first lawsuit of this new era," said Eskridge, a Georgetown law professor at the time who now teaches at Yale University.

Just filing for the marriage license made many established gay groups angry. Some thought the pair was asking for too much and feared a backlash. Lambda Legal Defense Fund executive director Tom Stoddard called their challenge "shortsighted." Washington was "probably the worst jurisdiction in the country" to try to legalize same-sex marriage, said Stoddard, an influential advocate who died of AIDS in 1997. Let other places do it first, he urged, then come back to the city.

Dean didn't back down, drawing motivation from the time Gill was rushed to the hospital and Dean hurried to the emergency room, only to be told he couldn't see his partner. If they were married, things would be different, Dean thought. So he researched the city's laws and was convinced nothing in the code prevented them from getting married.

The lawsuit went on five years. Ultimately, a three-judge panel of the D.C. Court of Appeals ruled against the pair. District laws were never intended to let gay couples



Craig Dean at home in Washington D.C.

marry, wrote Judge John Ferren, who still sits on the court.

His colleague, John Terry, also a sitting justice, was more blunt: "They are, of course, free to refer to their relationship by whatever name they wish. But it is not a marriage, and calling it a marriage will not make it one." For Dean, the defeat was personal. Dean said he believes the pressure of the case also affected the health of his boyfriend, who had AIDS. "He was really holding on in the hopes that we would win," Dean said. Gill died in June 1997, just over two years after the decision. "Whether it became legal or not, he was my husband," Dean said. "If anything it was a marriage in the way we lived our lives."

In Dean's garage sit five boxes with typed briefs, notes and letters from the case. A marriage rights banner he helped carry in marches in San Francisco and Washington is in his attic. His current partner, photographer John Blevins,

told him not to cry when the district passed its law last month; he should be proud. Blevins and Dean met several months ago on a blind date, but their romance has moved fast. On Christmas, Blevins put a ring in Dean's stocking and asked, "Would

Gay Marriage Became Legal On New Year's Day In New Hampshire

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emonies around the state.

The law grants no new rights to gays but eliminates the separate status for civil unions.

Couples already in civil unions have three options to convert their statuses to marriages. They can have marriage ceremonies, file marriage paperwork with their town clerks to convert their statuses during 2010 or wait until the unions are automatically converted in 2011.

you do the honor of marrying me?"

"Yes," Dean said, as long as he gets a real Washington wedding. And he has a message for the marriage bureau: "The first name on the list should be the one who is waiting 20 years." PHOTO: A.P.

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Continued from Page One

Top 10 LGBT Stories Of 2009

9. **Stonewall Repeats 40 Years Later** - On the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall riots, the Texas ABC and the Fort Worth police raided a gay bar on its opening weekend. One patron was hospitalized with brain injuries. The police claimed the gay panic defense. The Texas ABC ended up firing two agents over the incident, but the Ft. Worth police department reviewed their actions and blamed the gay guy's brain injuries on himself.

It was part of a bigger story of police brutality increasing across the board, with LGBT people taking the brunt of the increased violence. A gay bar was similarly raided in Atlanta, and a Lambda Legal lawsuit against the police department is in the works. A lesbian couple's political fundraiser was busted by cops pepper spraying people. All the while the police continue to spend inordinate amounts of resources trying to arrest men cruising for gay sex, falsely arrest gay men to try to close down legal, sex-based establishments, and ignore crimes with LGBT victims.

8. **California Tries to Overturn Prop 8** - It's not surprising that our top story of 2008 would keep on coming back as California's marriage activists decide what to do to overcome the fact that a majority of their state didn't think they deserved equal rights. Early in the year, our hope lay in the lawsuit to overturn Prop 8, which lost in May. Later that month, a newly formed marriage org hired to big shot straight lawyers to challenge Prop 8 in federal court. A divisive debate started among California LGBT activists as they decided whether to put Prop 8 back on the ballot in 2010 or 2012.

The Supreme Court may not be friendly to Olson and Boies's arguments, and the Californian people may not move as quickly as we want them to. We're confident California same-sex marriage advocates will eventually prevail, but the big question is "How?"

7. **The Justice Department Defends DOMA and LGBT's Sour on Obama** - Tension between the LGBT community and Barack Obama started with some of his less fortunate statements on the campaign trail, built when he called on homophobe Rick Warren to deliver the invocation at the Inauguration in January, intensified with the lack of action on LGBT issues throughout the first months of his year, creating a powder keg of resentment in the LGBT population. The spark came in June when the Department of Justice filed a brief defending DOMA in *Smelt*, a challenge to that law that *Gay, Inc.*, wanted nothing to do with because they knew it wasn't going anywhere.

The explosion that followed showed that the first Democratic constituency to end its honeymoon with Obama was the gay community. Anger, betrayal, and disappointment flowed all over the LGBT blogosphere, and the White House made little attempt to smooth things over with the community. A straight line can be drawn from the rancor that followed to anger against the Democratic Party that will likely continue throughout Obama's term. While the *Smelt* case was later dismissed on a technicality, and while the DOJ, according to most LGBT law scholars, was legally required to defend DOMA, the brief was a symbol for all the lack of progress on LGBT policy over the last decade. The community's hope for change after our bitter loss in California in 2008 was hung around the president's neck, and the language used in the brief made it clear that he wasn't our fierce advocate.

6. **Print Media Takes a Nosedive; Online Media Soars** - 2009 was a horrible year for LGBT print media. The *Advocate* shed a good portion of their workers and announced the venerable magazine would become an insert in sister publication, *Out*. Newspapers also fared poorly in the new media environment. Employees and the LGBT community were shocked when longtime institutions *The Washington Blade* and *Southern Voice* were suddenly shut down by owner Windows Media. While all three papers re-organized into new publications with new owners, the *Washington Blade* was America's oldest LGBT newspaper. It has been replaced by *DC Agenda*. Other publications shutting down this year included: *The South Florida Blade*, *411 Magazine*, *David Magazine*, the *New Mexico Voice*, the *New York Blade*, *HX magazine*, *Genre magazine*, the *New England Blade*, and the *Houston Voice*. Also hit hard were LGBT bookstores. Longtime institutions like *New York City's Oscar Wilde Bookstore*, *Washington DC's Lambda Rising Bookstore*, and *Indianapolis' Out Word Bound Books*, all shut their doors in 2009.

Online LGBT media, however, continued to rise as more Americans took to the internet to get their LGBT news, entertainment and gossip. Blogs were often honored in 2009 for their coverage of LGBT events (including the *New York City Anti-Violence Project's Courage Award* given to *Bilerico Project* Editor-In-Chief *Bil Browning*, *Joe Jervis*, *Pam Spaulding*, and *Andy Towle*) and queer political bloggers broke into the mainstream media and were cited nationwide in newspapers, magazines, and on television and radio. *Bilerico Project* was named the *Advocate* magazine's Top Political Blog in 2009, called "a must read" by the *Washington Post* in their list of influential political blogs, and was a finalist for *The Blog Awards' Best LGBT Blog* for the second year in a row.

5. **Congress Lifts the HIV Travel Ban** - After decades of lagging the world in respect for HIV+ visitors and immigrants, the federal government finally dropped the ban on HIV+ people into the country. This shameful period of America's war on people with HIV. Decades after most countries had dropped their own bans on travel by PWAs since there was no scientific basis for the laws, America continued to enforce it while the rest of the world denounced our discriminatory behavior. President Obama promised to end the ban during his campaign and kept his promise within months of his inauguration.

4. **The National Equality March** - One of the biggest stories of the year was the National Equality March in Washington DC. The march was called for by

veteran activists *David Mixner* and *Cleve Jones*, but was quickly poo-pooed by other activists and bloggers worried about timing issues and the possibility for bad press if no one showed up. After a few months of wrangling and hand wringing, bloggers, celebrities, and other activists started endorsing the march and got the ball rolling nationwide. Contributor *Kip Williams* led the organizing initiative for the NEM, while contributors *Bil Browning*, *Nadine Smith*, and *Rev Irene Monroe* sat on the executive steering committee for the event. Over 250,000 people attended the early October protest - including celebrities like *Lady Gaga*, the cast of *Hair*, *Cynthia Nixon*, and *Dustin Lance Black*. All told, the march was accomplished in under 6 months with less than \$175,000 unlike previous marches that cost millions of dollars and took years to plan.

3. **LGBT Activists Win Washington and Kalamazoo, but Lose in Maine** - Ballot initiative fatigue set in a long time ago, but we were involved in three more battles this past year in Kalamazoo, Maine, and Washington. The summer and autumn saw attack ads from the right claiming that we were going to sexually molest grandma in the bathroom, use schools to turn kids gay, and overturn God's natural order.

Each campaign often struggled to get attention over the cacophony on federal issues, but our attention came crashing down on them in November. Kalamazoo maintained their law outlawing discrimination against LGBT people, Washington voted to keep their expanded "everything but the word" civil unions law, but Maine decided, by a close margin, to overturn the same-sex marriage law that was passed in May, leaving them with civil unions.

The strategic debate ensued, since the community saw Maine's Question 1 as a well-run do-over of the Prop 8 that still lost, while anti-discrimination legislation that included transgender people and civil unions prevailed.

2. **The Marriage Map Expands from Two to Six** - On the positive side, it's quite an accomplishment that same-sex marriage was recognized by two states in January and is now recognized in four, with two more set to go in 2010.

Connecticut, which started performing same-sex marriages in November of 2008, codified its supreme court's ruling in favor of marriage rights in March. Marriage started in 2008, but they specifically carved out a religious exemption in the legislation. Then *Love Makes a Family* shut down.

In April, the Iowa supreme court ruled for same-sex marriage, and licenses started being handed out later that month. Following this decision was a whole lot of "Iowa?" and "Iowa!"

In Vermont, a bill to legalize same-sex marriage passed the senate in March and the house in April, overriding the Republican governor's veto in March. Marriage started in Vermont in August.

New Hampshire's house passed a marriage bill in March, and it passed the senate and was signed by the governor in June. Marriages will start this Friday, and, even though that's technically 2010, it's pretty damn close.

DC's city council passed a marriage bill two times, and the mayor signed into law in December. It will become law in January if Congress doesn't act, which it's not expected to do.

Five years ago, any of these states legalizing same-sex marriage would have generated blog posts for months, and now another state doing so is greeted with a yawn by both the mainstream media and queer media. Progress?

1. **Inclusive Hate Crimes Legislation Passes** - President Obama signed the first pro-LGBT piece of legislation in United States history when he put his signature on the *Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act*. The legislation was first proposed a decade before after *Shepard*, a gay college student from Wyoming, was beaten and tied to a fence to die. Contributor *Cathy Renna* was one of the first LGBT activists to reach *Matthew's* hospital bedside and worked with his mother, *Judy Shepard*, to ensure passage of the legislation. The new law has already been instrumental in forcing an investigation into the death of Puerto Rican teenager *Jorge Steven Lopez Mercado*.

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COMMENTARY . . .

by Deb Price

The 2010 Forecast: More Delays For Gays

Imagine looking up at an airport monitor. Next to the list of flights scheduled for departure is "delayed," "delayed," "delayed." Got the image?

Then you have a fairly good feel for how gay Americans ended 2009, a year in which Democrats ran the control towers. Long-promised flights toward equality were, well, you got it, largely delayed.

Lots of flights took off for other destinations. But the two top priorities of gay Americans — getting rid of the Defense of Marriage Act prohibiting federal recognition of same-sex marriages and rid of the anti-gay Don't Ask, Don't Tell military ban — remained grounded.

As president, Barack Obama repeated his campaign statements supporting repeal of DOMA and Don't Ask. Yet his Justice Department and Office of Personnel Management vigorously demanded that federal courts make married and uniformed gays keep waiting and waiting.

Will 2010 be similarly marred by delaying tactics? Here's a guide for would-be travelers:

Honeymoon trips: The new year takes off like a rocket. Gay couples start marrying in New Hampshire as it follows the lead of Massachusetts, Iowa, Connecticut and Vermont. So, 10 senators will now represent marriage-equality states. That count doesn't include those from California, where 18,000 gay couples legally wed, or from places that honor out-of-state gay marriages. The Senate, where most legislation needs 60 supporters to be cleared for takeoff, prides itself on its glacial pace. DOMA repeal hasn't even been introduced there yet. Don't expect it to pass in 2010.

But watch for marriage reality to begin influencing more senators. Same-sex marriages are set to begin in Washington, D.C., around St. Patrick's Day. Congress has 30 legislative days to block D.C. laws, but it rarely does. We can expect a lot of gay Capitol Hill staffers to begin marrying. Think that'll have an impact on the lawmaking bosses they interact with all day long? I do.

Fragile cargo: The House health care bill — but not the Senate version — would get rid of the federal tax slapped on gay workers who put their partners on their health plans. Can that gay-friendly provision get airborne? I'm dubious, since Senate Democratic leaders passed up countless opportunities to get it onto the runway.

Gay-rights lobbyists contend all sorts of gay gains are most likely to be achieved by amending non-gay legislation, not by pushing stand-alone bills. We'll see.

Inflight update: House and Senate committees passed bills to extend health care benefits to federal workers' partners. Will Democratic leaders schedule floor votes?

Engines started: Having held hearings, will House and Senate committees vote to ban workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity? Ditto for the Senate panel that held hearings on treating the foreign partners of gay Americans like spouses for immigration purposes.

Waiting for pilots: The chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services committees have yet to hold promised hearings on Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Repeal has been introduced in the House, not the Senate. Key congressional allies talk of inserting repeal into the Defense Authorization bill. But unless the president gets the military brass on board, don't expect this flight to leave the hangar in 2010.

Stormy skies: History tells us the party holding the White House will lose seats next November. Watch for lots of defensive flight plans from the White House and Congress. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada will be worrying about his own re-election.

Friendly pilots: More lawmakers than ever before are heartfelt advocates of gay rights. That makes it harder for skittish Democratic leaders in the control towers on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue to just ignore demands for equality flights. Harder, but not yet impossible. Equality travelers beware: Expect plenty of delays and turbulence in 2010. Keep those motion sickness bags nearby.

(Deb Price of the Detroit News writes the first nationally syndicated column on gay issues. This article is reprinted from the Detroit News.)

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Xmas Gift For Memphis Gay, Lesbian Center

MEMPHIS, TN (Observer Update) - An anonymous donor has recently gifted the Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center with a \$50,000 endowment.

The money was earmarked for the MGLCC's youth program, which provides emergency assistance to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender teens and young adults in need of financial, medical, psychological, and legal support. Will Batts, executive director of the MGLCC, says the money could not have come at a better time, as the center is currently encountering an increasing number of gay youths in need of support, possibly because of the recession, reported advocate.com.

"The suicide rate among gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender teens is two-three times that of heterosexual youth," says Batts. "The rates of homeless youth are much higher as well. We can't continue to let that happen in our community. In the past few months, we have barely been able to keep up with the number of kids who need our help. We haven't had the



resources or the staff to provide for all of these kids. Thankfully, this grant will provide the next steps in ensuring a better future for all youth in need of our services." The grant will help fund a paid position at the center that will help spearhead the new expanded youth program.



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by Ron Rose - Tucson

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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 Domestic and Well and ½ price appetizers 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 Domestic & Well. ½ price appetizers 4-6pm. Dinner served until 10pm. 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 Domestic 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 Domestic 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 Domestic. "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). Full Menu 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 Clint 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 Domestic 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 Domestic. 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 Domestic 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 Domestic. 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 Domestic 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 Domestic. 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 open 11am-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.

South Korea Grants Refugee Status To Gay Man

SEOUL, S. Korea (Observer Update) - A South Korean court has ruled that a gay man from Pakistan who fled his country for fear of being persecuted because of his sexual orientation should be granted refugee status in South Korea, The Korea Times reports.

The man had petitioned the South Korea government for refugee status last February, but his application was rejected by the Justice Ministry, which said his petition did not meet the criteria of a "well-founded fear of being persecuted" as stipulated by the United Nations. This court ruling reverses the Justice Ministry's decision.

"My life, as a homosexual, was in danger in my country," the man told Yonhop News Agency. "My family and relatives were my enemy. They said I was insulting my family, Islam, and my country and threatened that they would report me to the police."

Openly Gay Man To Join Salt Lake City Council

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) - An openly gay man has joined the Salt Lake City Council, reported the Associated Press on pageoneq.com. Stan Penfold, who was elected to represent the liberal Avenues and Capitol Hill areas, is thought to be the council's first openly gay member.

Penfold says the city has done a "remarkable job" on social issues and he doesn't intend to become a lightning rod for gay rights. He says he will focus on grass-roots issues such as affordable housing and improving neighborhoods' quality of life.

Penfold grew up Mormon in Humboldt County, Calif., and ran nurseries in Sandy and West Jordan after moving to Utah nearly 30 years ago. He was executive director of the Utah AIDS Foundation over the last decade.



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Court To Decide Wash G/L Rights Measure Jan. 15

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The Supreme Court is expected to decide January 15 whether to accept a Washington State gay rights ballot measure, the Seattle Times reported.

The court agreed to consider taking the case in October after the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of public release of 138,000 signatures collected this summer to put the state's gay-inclusive "everything but marriage" domestic partnership law up for a vote, reported On Top Magazine. Protect Marriage Washington, the group responsible for putting Referendum 71 on the November ballot, appealed to the Supreme Court.

Judges meeting in a private conference on January 15 will decide whether to accept John Doe vs. Sam Reed. If the court rejects the case, then the lower court's order would take effect, according to the Secretary of State. If accepted, the case will likely be argued in April, with a decision expected in June.

Gay rights group WhoSigned.org wants to publish the names on the Internet. Under the

state's Public Record Act, names of people who sign petitions become public record after the Secretary of State verifies a petition.

Opponents say releasing the names would put those people at risk of harassment, reprisals and boycotts of their businesses, amounting to an unconstitutional infringement on free speech rights. They argue the Public Record Act violates the First Amendment rights of voters who sign ballot petitions. Protect Marriage Washington is being represented by the Christian-based legal group Alliance Defense Fund (ADF). The ADF earlier set up a Referendum 71 webpage to collect data from people who "have been threatened or suffered retaliation after signing an R-71 petition" or were prevented from signing a petition.

Referendum 71 was approved by voters, upholding the law approved by lawmakers in the spring that expands a 2007 domestic partnership law for a second time, granting gay and lesbian couples all the remaining state-provided rights, benefits and responsibilities of marriage. Opponents say the law violates a 1998 gay marriage ban ruled constitutional by the state's Supreme Court.

Gay Cruise To Set Sail In Mainland China

SHANGHAI, China (Observer Update) - Banana hammocks, sandy beaches, mai tais, and maybe an afternoon of sightseeing for those willing to put on shirts are all things you can expect on a gay cruise—but maybe not the homeland of Chairman Mao, advocate.com reported.

Shanghai, home of one of the world's busiest ports, will be the launching pad for what's being called the first gay cruise in mainland China. Despite the fact that a government-backed gay bar is in the works, China isn't exactly known for its progress on human rights or freedom of expression. Nonetheless, Atlantis CEO Rich Campbell told Advocate.com that local businesses, like hotels and clubs, are "literally falling all over themselves" for gay dollars. "I've been doing this now for 20 years, and there are very few places on the planet that have issues with gay people coming there," Campbell said. "First of all, we wouldn't pick those places. We wouldn't do a gay

cruise to Saudi Arabia, nor is it really easy to get there by ship. We've gone to places where people are like, 'Why would you go there?' We go there because they're great tourist destinations."

Campbell promises a highly customized itinerary for travelers on this 10-day cruise. Since Atlantis's customers tend to be younger than the typical cruising set for a luxury-style destination like Asia, guests would likely be more interested in exploring more and experiencing more intimate parts of the culture. Travelers will be encouraged to shop in Kyoto, revel in Shanghai's rapidly developed landscape (linked to a Beijing-style makeover for Expo 2010), or hit the gay nightlife in Taipei. The 10-day cruise sets off March 20. Customers who reserve space on the ship before January 12 can take advantage of a \$399 roundtrip airfare offer from any continental U.S. or Canadian city. More information on the cruise and the airfare is available at atlantisevents.com.

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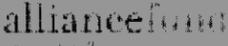
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